CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
JANUARY 2011 NO. 184
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

It Takes a Village:



ALL PHOTOS: TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

ARC 2010







See story on page 12



INNOVATIONS 2011

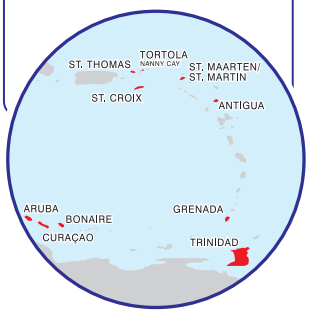
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- Tank fluid level
- Circuit status

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JANUARY 2011 • NUMBER 184

Radio Waves
Shortwave weather reports 7

Hurricane Tale
Riding out Tomas 22

It's All Happening!
Pull-Out 2011 Events Poster..27

Boat School
Cruising with Kids..... 37

Sweet!
Rio Dulce delights..... 18

For Cocoa Nuts
Visiting a cocoa estate 42

ROSIE BURR



JILL BRAYSHAW



J. WYNNER



DEPARTMENTS

Info & Updates 4
Business Briefs 8
Caribbean Eco-News..... 10
Regatta News..... 15
Doyle's Deck View 24
Fun Pages..... 34
Dolly's Deck Secrets 36
The Caribbean Sky..... 41
Cooking with Cruisers 43
Readers' Forum..... 44
Meridian Passage..... 48
What's on My Mind..... 48
Calendar of Events..... 49
Caribbean Marketplace..... 50
Classified Ads 54
Advertisers' Index..... 54

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Caribbean Compass welcomes submissions of short articles, news items, photos and drawings. See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

caribbean marine publishers association

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Cover photo: Tim Wright / www.photoaction.com. The ARC 2010 arrives in St. Lucia



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.**

Compass **is the only sailing publication I regularly read cover to cover.**

— Andy Morrell, Organizer
Highland Spring HIHO

Happy New Year to All from the *Compass* Crew!

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

http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?t=h&hl=en&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=112776612439699037380.000470658db371bf3282d&ll=14.54105,-65.830078&spn=10.196461,14.0625&z=6&source=embed

Info & Updates

Antigua Duty Free for Yachts in Transit

At a meeting held on December 2nd among the Antigua & Barbuda Marine Association (ABMA), the Ministry of Finance and the Comptroller of Customs, it was agreed that all goods and services for yachts genuinely in transit through Antigua & Barbuda will be free of all taxes and duties. These goods and services include fuel and provisioning to be used by charter guests.



CHRIS DOYLE

Support containers are considered a temporary import and will be free of all duties and taxes subject to the contents being re-exported and any spares consumed being used in the maintenance of the yacht. In instances where major items cannot be accounted for, the applicable duties and taxes will become payable. Once imported, crews will have free access to the containers.

Temporary import of goods in support of events will be discretionary and generally free of all duties and taxes, however, 14 days notice is required of any goods to be temporarily imported for these purposes. Event organizers such as those from the Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting, the Antigua Superyacht Cup, the RORC Caribbean 600 race, the Antigua Classic Regatta and Antigua Sailing Week should take special note. In the event of a disagreement, a liaison group comprising members of the ABMA, the Ministry of Finance and Customs will consult in order to reach a resolution.

For more information visit www.abma.ag.

Single-Handed Sailor Missing



Uwe Koellner, 40, sailing the 27-foot steel cutter *Esmerelda II* reportedly left Trinidad bound for St. Lucia in mid-October, prior to the passage of Hurricane Tomas, and has not been heard from since.

Esmerelda II is painted green, and has hard chines and a long bowsprit. Uwe is about 40 years of age but appears younger. He is a German national and the boat flies the German flag.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Claus Peter Oldag at (868) 760-7280 or auction@rave-tt.net.

Teen Solo Sailor Arrives in St. Maarten

Fifteen-year-old Laura Dekker arrived in St. Maarten on December 19th after sailing across the Atlantic Ocean alone on her 38-foot Jeanneau Gin Fizz ketch, *Guppy*. Dekker was born on a boat in New Zealand while her parents were cruising, and spent the first four years of her life at sea. The Dutch girl took 17 days to sail the 2,200 nautical miles from the Cape Verde Islands to Simpson Bay.

Almost exactly a year before, Dekker had run away from the Netherlands to St. Maarten to try to buy a boat there, after authorities in the Netherlands refused to allow her to embark on an attempt to sail around the world alone. She was found and brought back to the Netherlands. Eventually, the Dutch courts decided to let her attempt the feat.

Michael Perham of the UK sailed solo across the Atlantic at the age of 14 in 2007, with his father shadowing him in another boat. Perham went on to complete a solo circumnavigation at the age of 17.

In St. Maarten, Dekker was welcomed by a helicopter, speedboats and a small crowd.

—Continued on next page



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After tying *Guppy* to a mooring, "… I immediately went ashore and joined a Christmas party, the same party I was in last year on the same date. This was really weird, especially because I recognized everything and I met the same people I knew from last year." She has told the press that she intends to transit the Panama Canal this spring to continue her circumnavigation.

For more information visit www.lauradekker.nl/English/Home.html.



HELIPHOTOCARIB.COM

Find Laura in the white circle!!

Canadian Cruiser Killed in Honduras

Canadian cruiser Milan Egrmajer, 55, was shot and killed aboard his Ericson 35, *Adena*, in the Diamanté Lagoon, Honduras on December 2nd when he reportedly confronted four men who had approached the boat with the intention of robbing him and his 24-year-old daughter, Myda.

A family member says that Egrmajer usually spent the hurricane seasons in Rio Dulce, Guatemala, and spent the rest of his time sailing around the area. According to a cousin, on November 26th, Egrmajer, an electrical engineer with a naval background, departed from Guatemala with his daughter bound for the island of Utila. En route, they sought shelter from bad weather in the lagoon, which is at 15°52'0N, 87°37'60W near the mouth of the Rio Tinto. Myda managed to escape the assailants unharmed, and was taken by an Australian yacht to Belize.



Cruisers' Site-ings

• Frank Virgintino has announced the release of the FREE CRUISING GUIDE FOR THE CAYMAN ISLANDS. The comprehensive guide covers Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. It can be found at the home of Free Cruising Guides: ***www.freecruisingguide.com***.

• Jerry Blakeslee has recently updated the CRUISER'S GUIDE TO FRENCH CAY HARBOUR, Roatan. You can find the latest edition at ***http://fantasyislandmarinaroatan.blogspot.com***. Suggestions, additions and corrections are welcome!

• CHATTY PARROT is the new, free way for cruising yachtsmen and other travellers to find out if friends are nearby, and to share useful tips about places they have visited. Chatty Parrot lets members see, on a map, where their friends are, and sends alerts if any friends are nearby. It also functions as an on-line, constantly updated pilot or guidebook, by letting members leave information, warnings and advice on the map for their friends to use. Chatty Parrot hosts members' blogs, with a map of their voyage, and lets them send messages to each other. Chatty Parrot recognizes many people's desire to protect their personal details, making all privacy options easy to find and change, and giving new members, by default, the most private settings. Check it out at ***www.chattyparrot.net***.

• THE ROYAL NAVAL TOT CLUB OF ANTIGUA & BARBUDA now has its own website: ***www.royal-naval-tot-club.com***.

Now Available: 7th Edition of Ti'Ponton Guide to Martinique

The seventh edition of *Ti'Ponton: The Sailor's Guide to Martinique* is now available.

Ti'Ponton is bilingual, French and English, and offers the most extensive directory for sailors' needs in Madinina, The Isle of Flowers. It includes 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 visit www.tiponton.com.



User Groups to Discuss Grenadines Marine Resources

What will the marine and coastal areas of the Grenadines look like in 50 years? A workshop to be held this month will set the stage for developing a multi-use marine use planning process for the Grenadines.

Funded by grants from the US National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration and Global Environmental Facility Small Grant Project, The Sustainable Grenadines Inc. (SusGren) will bring together marine resource users, government officials, NGOs and CBOs, and other stakeholders to work with various interests including tourism, fishers, the yachting community and business to develop a framework for the management of the coastal and marine resources that are so important to life in the Grenadines.

—Continued on next page



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"SusGren is excited to complement its ongoing efforts in the Grenadines and to be assisting the countries of Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines to develop a national marine zoning design that can provide for and balance all marine uses. The project goal is to develop a design that can balance both traditional and



CHRIS DOYLE

future uses such as transportation, fishing, tourism, recreation, industry and renewable energy, while ensuring the protection and restoration of fish stocks, coral reefs, beaches, and other valuable natural resources," explained Martin Barriteau, the Director of SusGren.

On January 27th and 28th in Hillsborough, Carriacou, SusGren will be hosting a kick-off workshop for the project. The goal of this workshop is to begin the discussions between user groups to create a regionally appropriate framework for protection and sustainable development and management of the Grenadines' marine resources. In order to incorporate the values of marine resource users (fishers, dive shop operators, day tour operators, water taxi operators, the yachting community, ferries, etcetera) in the development of the marine multi-use zoning plan for the Grenadines, three series of meetings will be held on each inhabited Grenadine island throughout the life of the project. The project duration is from November 2010 to April 2012.

The project, which covers the entire Grenadine Bank and spans the nations of Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines, supports the goals of both countries' National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan and will enable each country to meet its obligations as a signatory to the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States' St. Georges' Declaration and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Ultimately, this project will provide a comprehensive vision for the management of the Grenadines' waters to ensure that future generations can continue to reap the economic, social, environmental and spiritual benefits from the marine environment.

The project will build on pre-existing initiatives in Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines by the Sustainable Grenadines Project, the University of the West Indies' Marine Resource and Space-use Information System Project, The Nature Conservancy and the Protected Area Systems Plans developed by both countries. Documentation of policy and legislative gaps and drafting policies for multi-use zoning collaboration for the Grenadines and designing an awareness campaign to support multi-use zone planning will be conducted as part of the project.

On the day before the Multi-use Marine Zoning workshop, January 26th, at the same location, SusGren will be holding another workshop under a different project entitled: Strengthening Reef Management in the Grenada Bank. This workshop will introduce the need for effective networking and collaboration among managers from the three participating marine protected areas: the Tobago Cays Marine Park, the Sandy Island/Oyster Bed MPA in Carriacou, and the Molinere/Beausejour MPA in Grenada. Current management practices, regulations, and policies to facilitate co-management of protected areas and the marine environment in the Grenadines will be reviewed. Funding for this project is being provided by the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

For more information contact Martin Barriteau at susgrenpm@vincysurf.com or Molly Brewis at molly.brewis@gmail.com, or phone SusGren at (784) 485-8779.

Come to Bequia's Sunshine School Auction!

The Bequia Sunshine School is a non-profit organization for children with special needs. The annual Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction has become a significant source of income for the school — and a huge source of fun for all who attend. The 2011 auction will be held at the Gingerbread Restaurant on the waterfront in Belmont, Bequia on Sunday, February 13th. Viewing starts at 11:30AM and the auction at 1:00PM sharp. Donated food and drink will be on sale, with all proceeds going directly to the school.

Lend your support by donating items for the auction such as boat gear, art and handicrafts, unwanted gifts, household goods, jewelry and other new or gently used items (donations can be dropped off at the school during regular school hours, or at Wallace & Co. Chandlery and Fishing Supplies next to the Porthole Restaurant in Port Elizabeth), or by attending the auction itself and bidding for that rare gem that you just can't resist!

For more information visit www.bequiasunshineschool.org.

Help the Carriacou Children's Education Fund!

Help the Carriacou Children's Education Fund go over EC$150,000 in 12 years of providing school uniforms, supplies, free lunches, and scholarships to TA Marryshow Community College. Leave unneeded boat gear, household goods, clean used clothing for children and adults, school supplies and cash with the staff at the Carriacou Yacht Club. Major fundraising activities run from July 27th through 29th, directly preceding Carriacou Regatta Festival. And, don't forget there is free wireless in Tyrrel Bay — just make a donation to CCEF.

For more information contact ccefinfo@gmail.com.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome aboard new advertisers Drop Anchor of Dominica, on page 42; and Lesson Plans Ahoy in the Market Place section, pages 50 through 53. Good to have you with us!





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	Carib. Emergency & Weather Net	3815	Voice	LSB/ham
1100	0700	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	8137	Voice	USB (Note 1)
1100	0700	Caribbean Maritime Mobile Net	7250	Voice	LSB/ham (Note 2)
1100	0700	Bahamas Weather Net	4003	Voice	USB
1110	0710	Puerto Rico/VI Weather Net	3930	Voice	LSB/ham
1120	0720	C6AGG Carolyn Wardle Weather Net	3696	Voice	LSB/ham
1200	0800	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
1200	0800	Coconut Telegraph	4060	Voice	USB
1230	0830	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	8104	Voice	USB (Note 1)
1300	0900	Caribbean Sea (WLO)	C	Voice	USB
1330	0930	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	12350	Voice	USB (Note 1)
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	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: 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 2: 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.
- For cruiser info, check out the Coconut Telegraph at 1200 UTC [0800 AST) at 4060 USB. Also of interest, with weather, security and genral info segments, are the Panama Connection Net at 1330 UTC on 8107 and the Northwest Caribbean Net at 1400 UTC on 6209.

SELECTED CRUISERS' VHF NETS

St. Martin/Maarten	0730	VHF 14	Monday-Saturday
English Harbour	0900	VHF 68/06	Daily
Rodney Bay	0830	VHF 68	Monday-Saturday
Grenada	0730	VHF 68	Monday-Saturday
Chaguaramas	0800	VHF 68	Monday-Sunday
Porlamar	0800	VHF 72	Monday-Saturday
Puerto La Cruz	0745	VHF 72	as available

Thanks to numerous cruisers for this information, which was correct to the best of our knowledge as this issue of *Compass* went to press. Radio heads: Interested in becoming a fact-checker of this schedule for future issues? Contact sally@caribbeancompass.com.

General Net Procedures

Nets are run by the Net Controller (NC). He or she will usually begin with a preamble, identifying himself, stating the objectives of the net, perhaps giving some emergency information or information of general interest (such as a weather forecast), and ending with a call for traffic. This is your signal to call in with your boat name or ham call sign. The NC will recognize you and perhaps several others, forming a call list. He will then call you in one at a time, giving each an opportunity to speak with him one-on-one — which everyone else will hear, of course.

You can ask to call another station for a brief conversation on the net frequency. If you wish to speak to that station at length, you should ask to take that station to another frequency (referred to as a "QSY").

When you are finished with your contact with the NC, you sign off with your boat name and your status ("standing by" or "shutting down"). The NC will then recognize the next boat, and so on. If you need to re-enter the net you can call "re-entry" anytime the NC is calling for new traffic. This should be used judiciously.

If you have information that someone is requesting, you may insert the word "info" at an appropriate break in the conversation. If the NC does not have the information he will usually ask if anyone does have it, and that is your entry. If you hear a station that you wish to speak to, insert the word "contact" and the NC will call you in at the first logical break.

Insertion of the word "break" infers a higher degree of urgency, which the NC will try to recognize. The use of the double break ("break, break") implies an emergency situation, which requires immediate attention. All of these "insertions" tend to disturb the natural flow of the net and should be used with care.

The NC will usually close the net officially at some specified time or after there are no more responses to calls for traffic.

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

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Email: diginav@wanadoo.fr

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Free Courtesy Bikes at Island Water World, St. Maarten

Sean Kennelly reports: Are you a cruiser with a road transportation problem while at Simpson Bay,



St. Maarten? Want to do a little sightseeing? Need to do a little shopping at the local stores and tired of walking?

No problem: we have a whole batch of bicycles at Island Water World available for your use. Just ask at reception or at the cashier and we will do our best to help you.

We do ask for a US$50 deposit, which is of course fully refundable if you return most of the bike!

For more information about Island Water World see ad on page 56.

Grenada Has New Director of Tourism

The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Grenada Board of Tourism, Richard Strachan, announced on November 23rd, 2010 that Simon Stiell has been appointed to serve as Director of Tourism.



Left to right: Nikoyan Roberts, Head of Product Development and Customer Services; Margaret Epps, Head of Marketing; Theresa La Touche, Head of Administrative Services; Richard Strachan, Chairman of the Board of Directors; Simon Stiell, Director of Tourism

He brings to the Grenada Board of Tourism more than two decades of accomplishments in sales, marketing and enterprise management, garnered during his tenure at a number of international blue chip companies. In addition, Mr. Stiell has also served as both a member and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Grenada Board of Tourism. Mr. Stiell is managing director of a property development and real estate company in Grenada and holds an MBA from the London Business Centre (University of Westminster).

Dockwise Delivers Four Shiploads of Yachts to Martinique

Nadine Massaly reports: As always at this time of year, sailors are ready for the Caribbean sailing season. An ever-growing number of yacht owners chose to have their boat transported by Dockwise Yacht Transport, the company that transfers boats from the Mediterranean Sea to the Caribbean. After 2009, a year of moderate business activity, in 2010 Martinique, for the first time, welcomed no fewer than four ships within a 45-day period. *Yacht Express*, the first one of those, arrived in Marin on November 18th, 2010, with 17 yachts on board.



The *Super Servant 3* (*SS3*) and *Super Servant 4* (*SS4*), two sister ships, raced across the Atlantic causing a "traffic jam" in Marin Bay when they arrived together. Immediately after it had unloaded, the *SS3* set to leave in the afternoon of November 28th to make room for the *SS4*. The harbor pilot had to jump from one ship to the other in that afternoon! The bay and entry channel in Marin are indeed too small to accommodate two such ships at the same time. The *SS4* had to circle around for 24 hours awaiting the *SS3's* departure. There again, about 20 yachts and smaller boats were unloaded into the Caribbean Sea. The docks of Marin Marina suddenly looked totally different with those wonderful yachts waiting in line.

Dockwise Yacht Transport, Douglas Yacht Services, the Tourism Office and the Port Authority welcomed the crewmembers with a party filled with music, dancing and local rum punch, to everyone's enjoyment.

As of this writing, *M/V Explorer*, the last ship expected in Marin at the end of 2010, was scheduled to arrive between Christmas and New Year's Day, also fully loaded.

The first return trip to the Mediterranean should start on March 9th, 2011.

DYT's unique float-on, float-off method makes it possible for yachts to board the semi-submersible yacht carrier under their own power, which makes operations safer and quicker.

For information about schedules, destinations and prices, contact Nadine, area representative in Marin: tel (596 596) 74 15 07, cell (596 696) 22 88 13, Nadine@dockwise-yt.com.

For more information on Dockwise Yacht Transport see ad on page 19.

Budget Marine to Sponsor Spice Island Billfish Tournament

Gary Clifford reports: The most popular and productive fishing tournament in the Southern Caribbean just moved up another notch with the induction of a prestigious title sponsor: Budget Marine, the leading chandlery in the Caribbean.

With a three-year contract signed, the event will now be known as the "Budget Marine Spice Island Billfish Tournament", starting with the 42nd tournament scheduled to run from January 23rd through 27th. Budget Marine have stated their desire to help the Spice Island Billfish Tournament become a truly world class event. Strategies to achieve this will commence with the marketing of the event through their outlets Caribbean wide. Tournament chairman, Richard McIntyre, commented that this is the first time since the event's inception in 1964 that it has had a title sponsor and he considers this a big step forward in the development of the event.

Mr. McIntyre expressed his gratitude to all the sponsors including Carib Beer, Grenada Board of Tourism and Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, without whom the event could not continue. He also thanked the Grenada Yacht Club, long-time home of the tournament, for the continued use of their facilities and AllyDay Creative Projects, the event's marketing representative since 2009.

SIBT remains a qualifying tournament in the IGFA Offshore championship. It is also the first event in the Southern Caribbean Billfish Circuit.

Generally acknowledged as the premier billfish tournament in the Southern Caribbean, SIBT attracted a record 51 boats in 2010 carrying 244 anglers who released 68 billfish. The anglers came from Antigua, Barbados, Grenada, Ireland, Martinique, St. Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago and the United Kingdom. With Budget Marine's help it is anticipated that even more boats will be attending in 2011. Anglers from the UK, Ireland, Barbados and Trinidad & Tobago have already registered online for this year's SIBT at www.sibtgrenada.com. Registration day is January 23rd at the Grenada Yacht Club.

For more information on the tournament call Kira Francis on (473) 435-3842 or 533-8454.

For more information on Budget Marine see ad on page 2.

Coming: Dominica's First Full-Service Boatyard

The Dominica Marine Center is in the final stages of setting up Dominica's first full-service boatyard. The yard will accommodate all vessels that could fit on a trailer, outboard or inboard, plus small keeled yachts. There will be a sales showroom for Mercury Marine, Northern Lights gensets, and Yanmar; a workroom with modern equipment; covered and un-covered boat storage; manual boat lifts and engine lifts; gel-coat and fiberglass repairs; carpentry; cleaning and pressure-washing facilities on site. The yard will also showcase Boston Whaler boat sales and rentals, and trailer sales and rentals. There will also be facilities for the easy installation of outboards as large as the Verado 350 SCi.

Dominica has been waiting patiently for a Marine Center where everything could be done in one location. This first-of-its-kind facility on the island will be located near Dominica Marine Center's main store in Roseau. A larger facility, offering similar services and equipped with 50- to 70-ton travellifts capable of handling large vessels, is planned in the near future at a location in Portsmouth.

For more information on Dominica Marine Services see ad on page 21.

—Continued on next page



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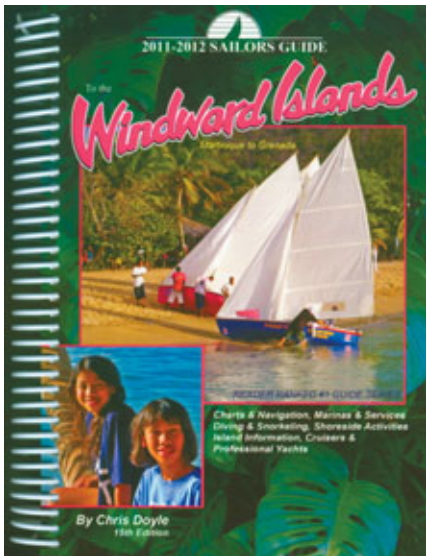
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For more information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 50 through 53.

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and it's still only US$29.95! Chris Doyle's *2011-2012 Sailors Guide to the Windward Islands* is now available. This 15th edition of the indispensable guide to navigation, Customs and Immigration regulations, marinas and services, diving and snorkeling, shoreside activities and more covers the very special area from Martinique to Grenada. Cruisers and professional crew alike will appreciate not only the informative text, but also the crisp sketch charts, evocative photos and — yes — the advertisements for everything from boatyards to bistros.

For more information see ad on page 32.

Island Water World Sponsors Training Boat

With the support of Barrington Harris, Oral Blagrove and Ricky Jamal from Aquamania, the Dufour 26 *Little Poe* was recently refurbished at the Island Water World boatyard in St. Maarten.

Little Poe is joining the St. Maarten Sailing School's growing fleet. Apart from teaching prospective sailors how to sail and sailors how to improve their skills, she will be made freely available to the SBO Foundation Maritime Assistants program in St. Maarten. The SBO aims to prepare disadvantaged young adults for entry-level employment within the marine industry on the island.



Island Water World staff, SBO students, sailing teachers, captains, plus members of the SBO, the marine industry and the press, gathered at the launch

Island Water World sponsored the haul-out, storage, and materials needed for the refit to underline their commitment to youth training and community support.

SBO students, sailing teachers, captains, members of the SBO, the marine industry and the press, as well as Island Water World staff, gathered to watch the launch and christening of the vessel.

Garth Steyn, owner of the St. Maarten Sailing School, expressed his gratitude to the former owner of the vessel, Alfred, who donated the boat; Rien Kortenkie, educator and founder of SBO, for his efficient networking; and Aquamania, Pelican Marina Residences and Island Water World for their sponsorship support.

For more information on Island Water World see ad on page 56.

Heineken Rededicated to St. Maarten Regatta

After more than 25 years of commitment to the event, Heineken has signed another three-year contract to fully support the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. This regatta, which has become a staple of many sailors' regatta schedules, has developed a long-lasting and very rewarding partnership with the international beer brand Heineken.

Regatta Director Heather Tackling noted, "The commitment that International Liquors & Tobacco (ILTT) and Heineken have made to the event over the years is something we admire and are proud of. The Sint Maarten Yacht Club is pleased to be sponsored once again by this premium brand. We pride ourselves on the quality of our event as our sponsor prides themselves on the quality of their product and together we aim to bring to the public one of the best events in the sailing Caribbean."

John Leone, Commercial Manager of ILTT remarked, "Heineken, our ILTT team, and myself, are very proud of the event we have built with the St. Maarten Yacht Club over the years. It is truly a unique and unmatched mix of music, sailing, fun and competition. The St. Maarten Heineken Regatta is a magnificently orchestrated sailing regatta that adds a dynamic party component which makes this event enjoyable to both visitors and our local population. Our goal is to get better and better every single year, and it is this drive that fuels the necessary hard work and long hours. We invite everyone to come and enjoy the music, racing and ice-cold Heineken with us on St. Maarten for the 31st edition!"

The first week in March will see yachting being the focus in this Dutch/French Caribbean island, where the residents pride themselves on being able to outdo all other competitive sailing parties.

New Director at Store Bay Marine, Tobago

Store Bay Marine Services in Tobago has a new Marketing Director, Katy Young. Katy tells us, "I grew up in Cornwall, England, where I learnt to sail and scuba dive. Diving and sailing has led to an interest in the marine environment and conservation, and has taken me to the Caribbean, the South Pacific and Egypt. Professionally I trained as a journalist, first working in newspapers before moving to radio. I've worked for the BBC for the past ten years and helped market new start-up businesses in Cornwall. My role at Store Bay Marine Services will be marketing director and expansion co-coordinator. The company is looking to open premises in Charlotteville, offering the same services that are on offer in Store Bay. Over the coming months I will be organizing the opening of these new premises. I will also be responsible for co-



writing a new cruising guide for Tobago, as well as keeping the sailing community informed about all the issues facing Tobago. I will also be keeping the Store Bay Marine Services' website (www.sbms.co.tt) up to date, and the SBMS Facebook page (the link is available on our home page), which has regular weather postings and information.

"This is a really exciting opportunity to become involved in developing a first class cruising environment for Tobago. This island has so much to offer — beautiful, safe, quiet anchorages, friendly locals and stunning scenery," says Katy.

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Caribbean Eco-News

Turtle Catch Prompts Formation of Trini Eco Warriors

In early October 2010, Kyle de Lima, a Trinidadian commercial diver, was on his way back to shore from a dive site when the owner of the chartered fishing pirogue made a detour to haul in a previously set net. Kyle thought nothing strange of this — until the moment he saw the net being hauled onto the boat, with five endangered Green turtles, helplessly flapping their fins, entangled in the net.



On his way home Kyle called Marc de Verteuil, a friend and avid outdoorsman, and told him the story. Both men were convinced that a crime had taken place, and were particularly outraged at the blatant manner in which the fishermen had displayed their catch. They agreed that "something should be done to stop this" and that it was time to start an organization to protect not only the turtles that pass through Trinidad & Tobago's waters, but also the environment.

The organization Trini Eco Warriors was formed on Facebook by Kyle, who invited Marc and Stephen Broadbridge, a nature photographer, to become members. Trini Eco Warriors is now registered as a not-for-profit company, focusing not just on turtles but on the environment as a whole, with a stated mission to "use engaging video, photography, investigative reporting and educational programs to bring environmental awareness to the public".

Like most Trinidadians, Kyle thought that turtles were a protected species. After all, Trinidad is home to the world's second-largest nesting population of the magnificent Leatherback turtle. The Leatherback's evolutionary roots go back more than 110 million years, but today some scientists fear they may become extinct in as little as 20 years. Trinidad has the world's second-largest nesting ground, with thousands of turtles (fewer than 30,000 are thought to exist in the entire Atlantic) laying their eggs on the island's beaches. Along Trinidad's northeast and eastern coast there are several community-based groups in villages such as Grand Riviere and Matura which, mainly through organized beach patrols, have managed to drastically reduce the poaching of the turtles and their eggs. To facilitate this, the government has declared the Matura and Grand Riviere beaches "protected" during the nesting season. To the casual observer it may seem as if sea turtles (listed as endangered or critically endangered by ICUN, the world's oldest, largest environmental network) are well protected in T&T, but nothing could be further from the truth.

The Fisheries Act of 1916 legalizes the turtle harvest during the hunting season, which takes place between October 1st and February 28th each year. A later amendment to this Act, in 1975, gives the turtles limited protection, but owing to loopholes in the law it is practically unenforceable, making the turtle hunt a virtual free-for-all.

Luckily the Leatherbacks' natural migratory pattern, which goes right around the Atlantic, leads them in to T&T's territorial waters and beaches outside of the hunting season. One danger for the Leatherback turtles is entanglement in nets. Per annum about 1,000 are estimated to drown due to entanglement in T&T's waters. Turtle Exclusion Devices could be used to prevent this, but the traditional use of artisan nets makes this impossible, meaning that local fishermen will have to be taught new fishing techniques, and the authorities will have to enforce their use, if the Leatherbacks are to survive. It is also very doubtful that the foreign trawlers in T&T's waters comply with this rule.



Although all species of sea turtles are listed as endangered, there are legal hunting seasons in many Caribbean countries including Trinidad & Tobago. A new group has been formed in Trinidad to address this and other concerns

The other species, i.e. the Green, Hawksbill, Loggerhead, and Olive Ridley turtles, are less migratory and spend more of their lifecycle in one spot, exposing them to the local turtle hunt.

Unfortunately the legal slaughter of turtles is not restricted to Trinidad & Tobago. They can be legally caught during hunting season in Anguilla (at present there is a moratorium in effect), Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, the BVI, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia (moratorium declared, which has lapsed without legislative change), St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and the Turks & Caicos Islands.

Because turtles migrate between nesting and feeding grounds throughout the Wider Caribbean, the conservation efforts of islands like Jamaica and Barbados are rendered meaningless when the turtles move on to other islands where it is legal to hunt.

Kyle and Marc decided to document the turtle hunt in Trinidad, which led to "The Legal Slaughter of Endangered Sea Turtles in Trinidad" — a 15-minute film recorded on a hand-held digital camera.

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The film opens with a scene of sea turtles lying on their backs in the sun (kept alive this way for days or weeks so the meat will be fresh for sale) followed by gruesome footage of a slaughter, in which a turtle is cut away from its shell and chopped repeatedly with a dull cutlass. The rest of the film shows Marc and Kyle investigating the turtle trade at fishing depots and markets throughout Trinidad. The video has a huge shock value. It has been aired on local television and is posted on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlWdryEyMtg) and the Trini Eco Warriors Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pages/Trini-Eco-Warriors/162715583747492), where it has already been viewed by thousands.

The Trini Eco Warriors crew wants to document and film the turtle hunt "up the islands", and are looking for a sympathetic yachtsman who will sail them as far north as St. Vincent or St. Lucia, stopping off at various islands along the way for filming. Marc says, it will be an Eco adventure for a good cause!

For more information contact the Trini Eco Warriors at triniecowarriors@gmail.com or call Marc de Verteuil at (868) 310-9099.

Compass Writer Wins Caribbean Young Scientist 2010 Award

At the 17th Biennial Conference of the Caribbean Academy of Sciences (CAS), held in Antigua in November 2010, Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal, a PhD student in arachnology at the University of the West Indies and a frequent contributor to *Caribbean Compass*, was announced the winner of the CAS-TWAS (The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World) Young Scientist Award for 2010. She was presented the award by the Honourable Mr. Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister of Antigua & Barbuda. Sewlal is the first female recipient of the award in the history of the Academy.

The CAS was inaugurated in Trinidad in 1988, and is organized under five divisions covering the natural, agricultural, medical, engineering and social sciences. The current membership stands at more than 200 members, and includes scientists from the English-speaking Caribbean, Guadeloupe, Cuba, Guyana and Suriname. It has chapters in Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Jamaica, Grenada and Antigua.

Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal holds B.Sc. and M.Phil degrees from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, and is currently pursuing her PhD. Most of her research focuses on the spider fauna of the Eastern Caribbean and South American regions. In addition to Trinidad and Tobago, she has conducted research on the islands of St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla, Antigua, Grenada, Montserrat and St. Lucia.

She is a Fellow of the Linnaean Society of London and a member of the Society of Biology, Royal Entomological Society and American Arachnological Society, from which she received a record three consecutive Vincent Roth Awards — a first in the Society's history. Sewlal is also one of the first recipients of the Darwin Scholarship Programme, which was awarded to 35 persons worldwide.

Sewlal is also the author of 23 scientific publications and more than 235 general publications in the areas of biodiversity, ecology and the environment. She is the author of the book entitled *Ecological Studies of Web-Building Spiders: Studies of Four Tropical Species*, based on her Master's research.

In addition to being an author, Sewlal has acted as a reviewer for the *Caribbean Journal of Science* and is a language reviewer for the journal *Zootaxa*, both international peer-reviewed journals. She is on international and local committees dealing with education and website development.

Sewlal was a visiting researcher at the Smithsonian Institution at Washington DC where she identified their collection of spiders from Tobago. She has also developed a website on her research which includes a photo gallery of the spider species found in Trinidad & Tobago and the Eastern Caribbean to facilitate their identification in the region.

In addition to her research on spiders, Sewlal has also written papers on two ant species found in Trinidad and was the second-prize winner of the Royal Entomological Society's Student Award 2007 for her essay on ants, the only winner from the Caribbean that year.



Antigua & Barbuda's Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer congratulates the Caribbean Young Scientist of 2010, Jo-Anne Sewlal

She is a member of various committees including the educational committee for the American Arachnological Society (AAS) and the local NGO, Environment TOBAGO, where she edits their quarterly newsletter and writes a weekly environmental column on their behalf which is published in *Tobago News*. She is also on the website committees for AAS and for the InterAmerican Network of Academies of Sciences (IANAS).

Carriacou MPA Representative Attends Regional Gathering of Marine Scientists

Davon Baker of Carriacou's Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area participated in the 63rd annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) held in San Juan, Puerto Rico in November. This is the largest gathering of scientists, researchers, fishers and natural resource managers in the Caribbean region, with some 300 participants from 36 countries.

Mr. Baker explains, "This regional meeting is a great opportunity for park managers, scientists and fishers to come together to share experience and knowledge on the current situation of marine and coastal resources. It is a place for all parties to share their experience and have a voice along with experts from around the region."

The week included an extensive program of presentations, meetings and training workshops, plus the announcement of the Gladding Memorial Award winner. This award recognizes fishers who demonstrate an ongoing and long-term commitment to the sustainable use and conservation of marine resources in the Wider Caribbean region. For the first time ever, the award this year was won by a female fisher, Angélica Méndez from Guatemala.

Executive Director of GCFI Dr. Bob Glazer remarked, "The award recipients represent true fisher visionaries



Davon Baker (back row, fourth from left) of Carriacou with other regional marine park managers, scientists and fishers at the 63rd annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute

and serve as excellent ambassadors for fisheries conservation in the Wider Caribbean. We believe that fishers must be engaged and empowered to be part of the process of managing our shared marine resources in a sustainable manner."

Mr. Baker commented, "We depend upon our natural resources for our livelihoods and we need to promote sustainable practices so that our children and their children can continue to fish and so that we can all benefit from a healthy environment in the future."

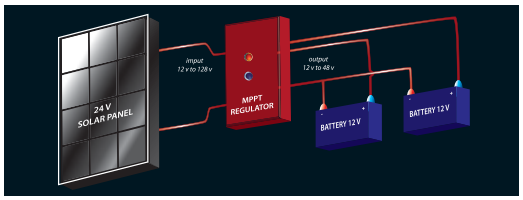
He described the outcomes of the meeting: "Our most important action now is to scale up currently successful local practices to the national and even the regional level. We want to apply what we've learned here from science to secure our livelihoods and contribute to sustainable fisheries and well-managed marine protected areas."

Mr. Baker also took part in an international training workshop offered at the meeting by the World Wildlife Fund and the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network to help local conservationists come to grips with the potential impacts of climate change.

The gathering of managers, fishers and scientists was made possible with funding from the Embassy of Finland to CARICOM as part of their commitment to encourage environmental conservation in the Wider Caribbean.

For more information see www.gcfi.org or contact Davon Baker on tel (473) 443-6026 or siobmpa@gmail.com.

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IT TAKES A VILLAGE

by Sally Erdle

EVERY year as the sailing season in Europe ends, hundreds of yachts voyage to the Caribbean to cruise for the winter or longer. What does it take to sail a yacht across the Atlantic? Basically, a seaworthy boat, some sailing skills, about two to three weeks, and the will to succeed. What does it take to organize more than 200 yachts — a veritable village of some 1,300 people — to sail across the Atlantic en masse? It takes… well, a village.

In 1986 Romanian–born Jimmy Cornell organized the first Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC), a fleet of yachts of various nationalities sailing from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean. As a result of the success of the first ARC he founded the World Cruising Club (WCC), which specializes in international sailing events including the ARC, which has run every year since. In 1999 Cornell sold his interest in the WCC, which is now a team headed up by UK-based Managing Director Andrew Bishop.

Belgian-Canadian Marc Verstraeete van de Weyer on the French-built Prometa catamaran *Bobobo* says, "This is my third ARC, and the start of a world sail with no coming back. We appreciate the ARC atmosphere; especially at the start of a circumnavigation or a long voyage, not to be totally on your own is a good way to begin, to test the boat and release from society step by step. It builds confidence; you can mess up and know you have backup. And there is lots of exchange of information and experience with other people — you have 230 other boats you can just go to and talk."

And just as the yachts in the ARC don't go it alone, neither does the WCC. ARC 2010 major sponsors included the Tourist Board of Gran Canaria, the Port Authority of Las Palmas, the Saint Lucia Tourist Board, IGY Marinas and Rolnautic chandlers, and was run in association with *Yachting World* magazine. And at the St. Lucia finish line, the Saint Lucia Tourist Board, IGY's Rodney Bay Marina, and the St. Lucia Yacht Club, plus a host of local businesses, joined forces with WCC to make the Silver Jubilee ARC extra-special.

One of the special aspects of the 25th annual ARC was unexpected: Hurricane Tomas hit the southern part of St. Lucia on October 30th. Would the island be ready to welcome the worlds' largest yacht rally? ARC headman Andrew says, "The authorities in St. Lucia assured us that everything in the north part of the island was fine, and the High Commissioner reinforced the message that the best thing we could do for St. Lucia was to come ahead. So we sent an e-mail to every past ARC participant on our database with details on how they could contribute to the hurricane relief, and got a good response. The ARC boats also brought food and other supplies."

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ALEX FOSTER

The 'ARC Village' at Rodney Bay Marina was a focal point by day and by night for the more than a thousand sailors arriving in St. Lucia during the Silver Jubilee event



—Continued from previous page

On November 21st 2010, 233 yachts from 26 nations sailed across the start line at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, bound for Rodney Bay, 2,700 nautical miles away.



TIM BISHOP / PPL

The World Cruising Club team, with Managing Director Andrew Bishop front and center — 'a good organization!' says the crew of yacht H20, *and marina manager Adam Foster says that when things got busy on the docks, 'they jumped right in'*

The voyage usually takes between 18 and 24 days. The ARC course record, set in 2006, is 11 days, 5 hours, 32 minutes and 30 seconds. It was not broken this year as the weather continued to be "special". The first sailboat to finish, the Swan 80 *Berenice*, took just over 14 days; the largest group of arrivals in a single day (41) finished on December 14th after a 23-day trip — with 71 more boats following behind. Some 50 boats made pit stops in the Cape Verde islands.

Marc on *Bonobo* says, "Ever since we heard about Hurricane Tomas, we thought there was something strange with the weather. The tradewinds never materialized, and we had headwinds from the south and the west that aren't supposed to exist. We had to stop in the Cape Verdes for 24 hours because of the strong headwinds. At one point, the Azores High was south of the Cape Verdes. We coped by zigzagging, trying to find places that didn't have headwinds, and using the engines when we had to." (To see wind direction charts for the ARC 2010 period, visit http://magicseaweed.com/msw-surf-charts2.php, and select the desired date.)

Cathy, who crewed on Graham Searle's Bowman 42, *Indra*, agreed: "The trip was long, and it was difficult to find good wind. We diverted to the Cape Verdes to refuel and wait for good wind. It was also more squally than anticipated, but stunningly beautiful at the same time. I liked the camaraderie and the sense you're not alone, and I loved the SSB radio nets."

The communal nature of the ARC was exemplified by a number of instances of help within the fleet, such as boats supplying one another at sea with a spare fuel filter, a replacement alternator, dive tanks to clear a fouled propeller, or simply some good advice.

A popular innovation that enhanced the community feeling of ARC 2010 was increased use of the internet. ARC 2010 supporters got together on Facebook, and lots of crews kept busy blogging and sending photos to the ARC website where daily yacht position reports and individual route maps were displayed for each yacht. Each yacht was fitted with a Yellowbrick iridium tracker, with positions updated automatically every six hours. There was an ARC Fanzone on the website as well, and a leaderboard where you could see each boat's estimated arrival date.

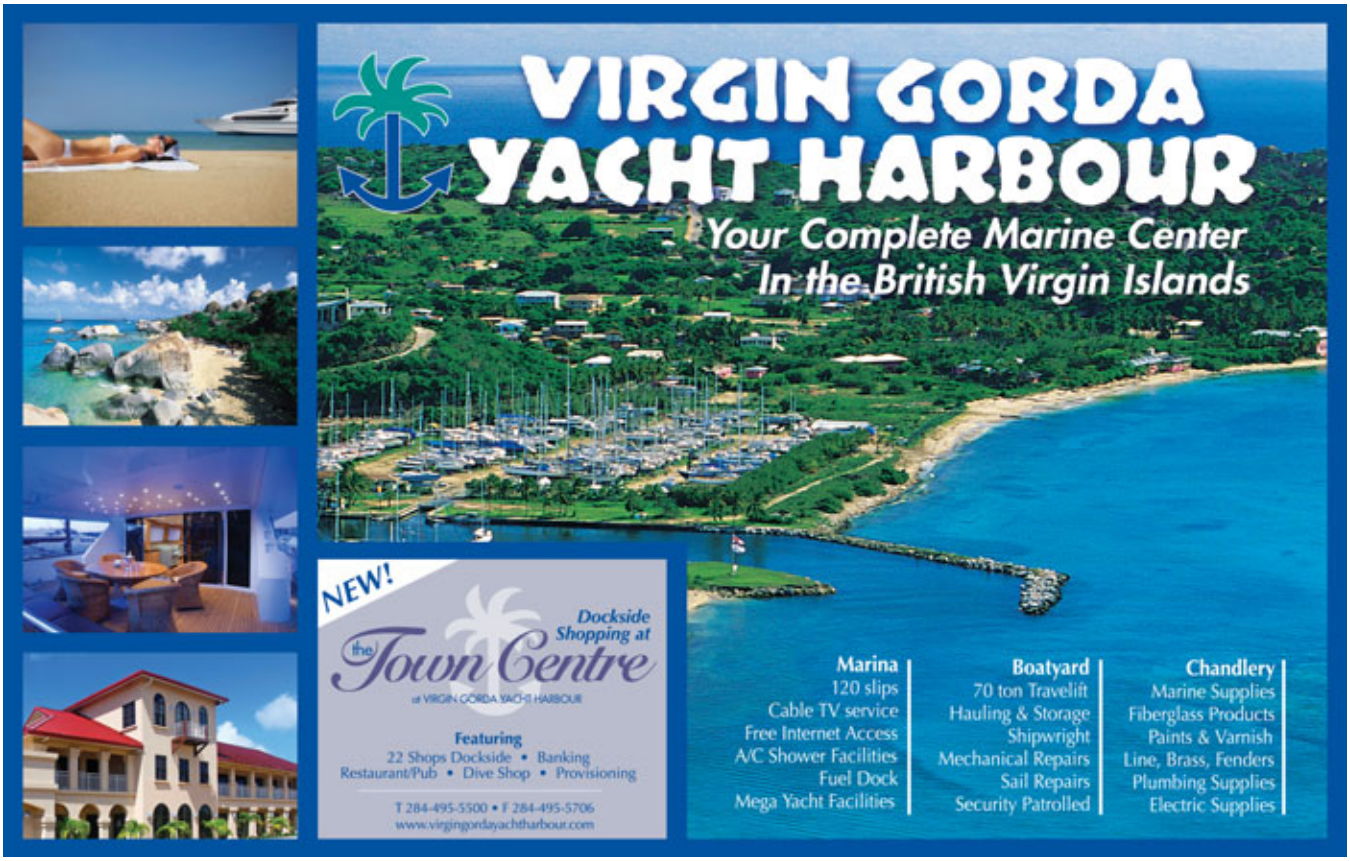


MAIN PHOTO: SALLY ERDLE INSET: ALEX FOSTER

Working together to say 'Welcome!' — St. Lucia Yacht Club's Danielle de Rouck, the Saint Lucia Tourist Board's John Emmanuel, WCC's Nick Martin and (inset) Rodney Bay Marina's Adam Foster

"This is the 21st time the ARC has finished in St. Lucia," Andrew Bishop notes. "At the time we moved from Barbados, there was really no place else in the southeastern Caribbean that could have accommodated a fleet of this size. But St. Lucia embraced the ARC and have been staunch supporters ever since. The St. Lucia Tourist Board is very supportive, especially organizing activities for participants to make the most of their visit. Arch Marez (former owner of Rodney Bay Marina) doubled the dockage, and IGY made further improvements — good for the ARC and for the marina as well."

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Adam Foster, Australian-born General Manager of IGY Rodney Bay Marina, says, "Thanks to the unseasonal weather patterns, at the marina there was a completely different operational situation than last year — the yachts were coming in waves. But the dock and office staff handled it really well, and the World Cruising guys were really like an addition to the marina staff — they jumped right in."

Senator the Honourable Allen Chastanet, St. Lucia's Minister of Tourism says, "The ARC is a huge stepping-stone for St. Lucia's yacht tourism, being their first port of call. We measure how long they stay and how often they return. With the added investment by IGY at Rodney Bay Marina and new and improved services, the length of stay is longer. We try to understand that the income in yachting is not in duties, it's in activities."



SALLY ERDLE (2)

The Dutch crew on the 46-foot Flying Swan *— the 217th boat to finish — had a joyous arrival in St. Lucia*

He adds, "St. Lucia has the combination of yachting facilities, airlift and incentives for yachts, plus we encourage village tourism with small waterfront restaurants, dinghy docks and Creole-themed arts and entertainment, so we offer an authentic Caribbean destination backed up by modern infrastructure."

For ARC 2010, Adam elected to move the ARC Village — temporary stalls offering local products, crafts and services, and also an entertainment venue — from the marina's back-lot car park to a prominent location on the walkway between the busy restaurants and docks. Marina tenants hosted nightly entertainment showcasing local culture and minimizing late-night noise ("Much appreciated by the arrivals," says Adam). Also new, the Boardwalk Bar on the walkway has become a hub for the marina's six diverse bar/restaurants. Thanks to these and other innovations, Adam says, "The arrivals are wowed, and stick around."

—Continued on page 26



Happy to help: Karlheinz Armbruster and Walter Seildhauer of the German Sunbeam 42C H20, with hurricane relief supplies they brought

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REGATTA NEWS

Grenada National Sailing Academy Celebrates Results

In November 2010, students of the Grenada National Sailing Academy celebrated the last day of their eight-week course with a fun sail around Grand Anse and a trophy celebration. The 12 sailors attended the Academy's Optimist dinghy sailing course for three months and raced every week for two months.

Founder and instructor Nick Walters is proud of the group's progress: "My aim has always been to provide great teaching and for the kids to enjoy themselves in the process. There is no reason why children with ambition cannot get through to Olympic level. The yachting community has proved supportive of what we are doing, and with continued support, Grenada can show the rest of the world that there is much talent here. Budget Marine and the Grenada Sailing Association have continued to be great supporters of youth sailing in Grenada."

Sailing is open to all children in Grenada aged eight and up, with scholarships available for those unable to pay tuition fees but keen to succeed.

For more information call Nick on (473) 420-9411.

St. Barth's One-Design Cata Cup Grows

Stéphane Legendre reports: F18 beach cats had some serious fun racing at St. Barth's from November 19th through 21st.



The event, which attracted 14 teams in 2008 and 35 in 2009, saw 45 teams coming this year from Belgium, Finland, France, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA, and also from Caribbean islands such as Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe, Martinique and of course St. Barth's. F18 world champions Olivier Backés (2010), Mischa Heemskerk (2007) and Emmanuel Boulogne (2003) were present.

Initially ideal conditions of 15-knot winds and sunshine turned into gusty conditions of more than 25 knots gusting to 30, which led the organizers to cancel the race to Pinel Island off St. Martin on the last day of the competition.

The US teams were remarkable in all conditions; their race tactics and maneuvering were just perfect and impressed all the specialists on board the press boats. John Casey (an Extreme 40 specialist) and Dalton Tebo finished first, and Robbie Daniel and Gary Chu came second. The French team of Christopher Jonsson and Jean Christophe Mourniac took third place, very surprised to finish so well in their first participation at this high-level competition.

Apart from what was happening on the water, the conviviality and parties in the evenings were what all competitors and friends enjoyed most. Things were well organized at Saint Jean's Nikki Beach restaurant.

The organizers hope to see more competitors from the Caribbean islands for the fourth edition of this wonderful competition later this year.

For more information visit www.stbarthcatacup.com.

***Smidge* Takes Top Honors in Caribbean 1500 Rally**

Waiting for late season Hurricane Tomas and a succession of lows to pass before leaving, the 21st Anniversary Caribbean 1500 fleet of 75 boats experienced strong northwest winds and northerly swells in its annual trek from the US East Coast to the Caribbean. *Smidge*, a Hallberg Rassey 43 owned by the Benbow family from Pennsylvania, took Overall Handicap Honors.

The Caribbean 1500 Rally, managed by the Cruising Rally Association, left Hampton, Virginia for Tortola on November 8th, 2010 after a week of preparatory briefings, safety inspections and social events. This year, the participants had a choice of destinations: Marsh Harbor in the Abacos, or Tortola in the British Virgin Islands. The Bahamas Class, made up of 11 boats, left a week earlier. The fleet sailed in two divisions, Cruising Class or Rally Class. The latter was divided into six handicap classes, five in the Tortola-bound fleet and one for the Bahamas-bound group.

Smidge skipper Maury Benbow said, "This was the first extended ocean passage for *Smidge* and we were extremely pleased with her performance. Crossing the Gulf Stream in a 25- to 30-knot north wind was never threatening. Our crew gelled into a tremendous team. When conditions were at their toughest, they cracked jokes and hot meals appeared from the galley. They pushed the boat speed day and night." He adds, "Our thoughts are with friends and family of Laura Zekoll, who did not survive the capsize of a liferaft following her vessel's grounding while attempting to enter a cut in the Bahamas." The owners of the Jeanneau 46DS on which Laura was sailing had made a decision to leave the fleet and divert to the Bahamas. Steve Black, Founder of the Rally added, "Maury's comment about Laura echoes the feelings of the entire fleet and staff of the Caribbean 1500."

All BVI-bound ralliers received cold champagne and a warm welcome at Nanny Cay Resort and Marina in Tortola, where the BVI Tourist Board and the Roadtown Wholesale hosted nightly parties for the sailors.

A return rally, the Atlantic Cup, is planned to start on May 1st, leaving from Nanny Cay Resort & Marina and finishing in Bermuda.

For more information visit www.carib1500.com.

5th ARC Flotilla Gains Full Support of St. Lucia Community

Christy Recaii reports: Excitement was in the air in St. Lucia on November 21st, 2010 — time for the 5th Annual ARC Flotilla, a celebration of the official start of the 25th edition of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers. As yachts left Las Palmas de Gran Canaria bound for St. Lucia, the local Lucian vessels sailed from Castries Harbour bound for the IGY Rodney Bay Marina, symbolizing the actual Las Palmas start.

As customary, the cannons were fired from day-sail cat *Mango Tango* at 1000 hours sharp.

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—Continued from previous page

It seemed as if every seaworthy local craft was there: sailing yachts, dinghies and even a barge, totaled 50 participating vessels.

"It is a huge turnout today which the island's boating community, and the local community in particular, have really supported. The island is behind the ARC and recognizes its value," Adam Foster, General Manager of IGY Rodney Bay Marina said.

Mother yacht *Reel Extreme,* veteran sailor Bernard Johnson's Viking 65, led the way, hosting special guests including St. Lucia's Minister of Tourism, Honorable Allen Chastanet; Director of Tourism, Lewis Louis; IGY Rodney Bay Marina's General Manager, Adam Foster; and Bob Hathaway representing the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia.

Back on land, participants enjoyed a barbecue, more drinks and live steel pan music by Digicel Pan Time at the marina's Boardwalk Bar, and participants were presented with certificates.

Increased participation in the ARC Flotilla shows that the St. Lucian community recognizes the value of the event to the island in both the short and long term. The 5th ARC Flotilla's supporters included platinum sponsor, Digicel; gold, Heineken; and silver, Chairman's Reserve Rum. The Flotilla is organized by IGY Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia Yacht Club and Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia in collaboration with the Saint Lucia Tourist Board.

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

USA's Tulloch & Portugal's Marinho Win Carlos Aguilar Match Race

Carol Bareuther reports: The ability to recover and learn from mistakes made early in the regatta paid off in the Women's Division win for the USA's Genny Tulloch, while it was a crack crew that could read the tricky wind shifts that led Portugal's Alvaro Marinho/Seth Sailing Team to champion the Open Division at the 3rd Annual Carlos Aguilar Match Race (CAMR), presented by Ulysse Nardin/Trident Jewels & Time from December 2nd through 5th, 2010, in St. Thomas, USVI.

In the Women's Division, Great Britain's Lucy MacGregor handily beat the Netherland's Klaartje Zuiderbaan (3-0) in the semi-finals, and Genny Tulloch bested the USA's Sally Barkow in extremely close matches (3-2), to give both MacGregor and Tulloch berths into the finals.

"It was good for us to take our losses early, figure out what we did wrong, do it better and clear our heads," says Tulloch. "I think that mental regrouping was a big reason for our success." Championing this International Sailing Federation (ISAF) Grade Two event also means a notch up in the ranking for Tulloch, currently ranked 12th in the ISAF women's match race standings. MacGregor is ranked second.

In the Open Division, semi-final action saw the USVI's Peter Holmberg beat the USA's Dave Perry (3-1), and Portugal's Alvaro Marinho/Seth Sailing Team triumph over the USVI's Taylor Canfield (3-1), launching Holmberg and Marinho into the finals.

For more information visit www.carlosmatchrace.com.

Award Winning Cinematographer to Film Round Barbados Race

The 75th anniversary Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race, to be held on January 21st, will be the first sporting event in Barbados to be covered by award-winning cinematographer Rick Deppe. British-born Deppe is an experienced documentarian. Director of Photography on Disney's "Morning Light" full-length feature and the "Deadliest Catch" series for the Discovery Channel, he had previously won multiple awards for his onboard coverage of the Volvo Ocean Race.

Deppe's filming of Barbados' unique sailing event, although focused upon *Elena,* the magnificent 55-metre A Class racing schooner competing in the 2011 Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race as part of her centennial tour, will also seek to highlight the natural beauty, heritage and landscapes of Barbados. The short films will be used by race organizers and the Barbados Tourism Authority to position Barbados as a major yachting destination throughout the world.

The Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race is organized by the Barbados Cruising Club, in association with Mount Gay Rum and The Barbados Tourism Authority.

For more information visit www.mountgayrumroundbarbadosrace.com.

Action Ahoy for Grenada Sailing Festival 2011!

The 2011 Grenada Sailing Festival offers two weekends of exciting action. Run in association with the Grenada Board of Tourism, racing will start on January 28th with four days of international yacht racing. The traditional local workboats will head for Grand Anse Beach the following weekend, February 5th and 6th, when the Grenada Sailing Festival Digicel Work Boat Regatta becomes a central part of the island's National Independence Celebrations. These high-quality events, each with its own unique Grenadian character, are two reasons to visit Grenada, sail, and enjoy the culture and warm hospitality.

The Festival, now in its 18th year, is home-ported for the third year at Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, a base with excellent facilities for participating racers, including the newly completed Victory Bar & Restaurant.



Racing starts and finishes off Port Louis, with a new mix of courses providing more challenging racing to attract competitive crews based in the region, and to provide an early sailing-season 'tune-up' for yachts visiting the Caribbean. These include separate Racing Series and different courses for the J/24s off Grand Anse Beach — a great sight for spectators.

Action continues when the crowd-pulling Grenada Sailing Festival Digicel Work Boat Regatta comes to Grand Anse Beach, with competition among the sailing communities of Carriacou, Gouyave, Grand Mal, Petite Martinique, Sauteurs and Woburn.

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New for 2011, there will be a Junior Dinghy Racing Championship on January 5th. The Grenada Sailing Festival thanks its sponsors and supporters including the Grenada Board of Tourism; Camper & Nicholsons Marinas; Digicel; United Insurance; FLOW; ScotiaBank; Mount Gay Rum & Heineken with their agent Bryden & Minors; Budget Marine; True Blue Bay Resort; The Moorings; North South Wines; The Victory Bar & Restaurant; Coca Cola; SOL EC Ltd.; American Airlines; British Airways; Island Dreams Yacht Services; Horizon Yacht Charters; Turbulence Grenada; Court's; Deyna's Tasty Foods; Grenada Electrical Contractors; Southern Electrical; Steele's Auto Supplies; Grenlec and Glenelg Spring Water.

For more information see ad on page 15.

Club Náutico de San Juan to Host its 10th International Regatta

Club Náutico de San Juan, a premier marina within the safe harbour of San Juan, Puerto Rico, will host its International Regatta 2011 from February 4th through 6th, with 80 to 100 participants in the Optimist, Sunfish, Laser, Snipe and 2.4 Meter levels, says Commodore Ralph "Agie" Vicente.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the regatta will serve as training grounds for sailors to compete in the Sunfish, Laser and Snipe classes in the 2011 Panamerican Games, at Guadalajara, Mexico.

Club Náutico de San Juan offers a comfortable area within a big plot of land on the San Antonio Channel, and plenty of support for competitors to feel "at home."

Registration includes meals, goody bag, and T-Shirt. If you don't have a boat, the Regatta Organizing Committee can arrange for a boat to charter. The skippers' meeting is on the Friday at 11:00AM and Awards Ceremony on the Sunday at 2:30PM, with a social gathering on the Saturday evening.

José Gilberto "Yoyo" Berríos, International Regatta Technical Director, said representatives from various countries are expected to participate, such as the USA, USVI, BVI, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Guatemala and Ecuador. English is the official language.

For more information visit www.nauticodesanjuan.com.

Big Boats to Race in Trinidad at February's Carnival Regatta

A major change will happen this year: the "big boat" portion of the annual Tobago Carnival Regatta will be moved to Trinidad. Tobago will continue to host the kiteboarding and bumboat events. The big boats' regatta village will be at the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association (TTSA) at Hart's Cut, Chaguaramas. Racing will be in the Gulf of Paria, February 10th through 13th.

TTSA President Jay Alvi says, "After so many years in Tobago, it was a difficult decision moving the big boats to Trinidad. The lack of facilities (e.g. jetty, water, fuel) was an issue when it came to attracting big boats to Tobago. Moving the regatta to TTSA provides for all these facilities. Of course February is Carnival season in Trinidad, so the onshore après-sailing festivities are unique.

"The Trinidad Carnival Regatta will commence on February 10th with a skippers' briefing and welcome lime. We are anticipating several racing classes, a racer cruiser division, Champagne class (cruisers and bareboats) and one-design classes for J/24s and Melges 24s."

For more information visit www.ttsailing.org.

Jolly Harbour Yacht Club Valentines Regatta, Antigua

The 18th Annual Jolly Harbour Yacht Club Valentines Regatta will take place on February 12th and 13th. The skippers' briefing will be held on the 11th at 1600 hours and registration starts at 1900, all at the Foredeck Bar in Jolly Harbour, Antigua. It is a weekend full of great sailing and celebrations with music, food and fun!

Online registration is available at www.jhycantigua.com. JHYC has some new things up its sleeve for 2011: visit its Facebook page for details.

Big Time: RORC Caribbean 600 Race 2011

The RORC Caribbean 600, starting in Antigua on February 21st, is set to provide one of the biggest offshore showdowns for years as Mike Slade's Farr 100, *ICAP Leopard*, takes on George David's Juan-K designed *Rambler 100* (formerly *Speedboat*). This approximately 600-mile offshore event will be the first time these two will race each other. "Competition will be fierce," predicted Slade.

Slade continues: "I have to take my hat off to the four clubs that have made this series happen; The New York Yacht Club, The Royal Yacht Squadron, Royal Ocean Racing Club and the Storm Trysail Yacht Club. Also, George David, who has been a real driving force and should be applauded for his efforts."

The RORC Caribbean 600 and the Pineapple Cup (Miami to Montego Bay) are the first events in the 2011 Atlantic Ocean Racing Series (AORS). This series is in its inaugural year and includes seven of the world's great bluewater races. After these two races in the Caribbean, the series moves up the US East Coast to the Annapolis-to-Newport Race. Right after comes the Transatlantic Race 2011 from Newport, Rhode Island to The Lizard, England. The European races then kick in with the Rolex Fastnet Race, a new Biscay Race, and the Rolex Middle Sea Race in Malta. Participation in three races, one of which must be the Transatlantic Race, are required to qualify for the AORS and IRC rating will be used throughout.

The RORC Caribbean 600 course record for monohulls is 44 hours, 5 minutes and 14 seconds, set by ICAP Leopard in 2009.

For more information visit http://caribbean600.rorc.org.

2011 South Grenada Sailing Regatta Launched

The South Grenada Regatta 2011 was officially launched recently at Le Phare Bleu Marina & Boutique Hotel, by The Hon. Minister of Tourism & Civil Aviation Peter David, who was warmly welcomed by the 80 invited guests, sponsors, yacht owners and volunteers.

Minister David congratulated the SGR committee for their continued success and commitment. Caniga said, "We are very happy to have such dedicated sponsors who are aware of what it takes to organize such an event on a regular basis. They appreciate our step-by-step developing strategy."

The SGR Committee, James Benoit, Jo-Ann Hypolite, Lucy Murchie, Damon Du Bois, Lynn Fletcher, Daniela Fröehlich, Dieter Burkhalter and Jana Caniga, were thanked for their hard work. Jana says, "It is a year-long commitment to be on the committee and I can tell you this committee is very prudent and a very reasonable one, standing with all 16 feet firmly on the ground, always developing on our last regatta and slowly growing. During the challenging economic climate the budget stayed the same and all sponsors came on board again." Two sponsors even upgraded their financial committment: North South Wines are now Gold Sponsors and Turbulence Rigging are now Silver Sponsors.

The SGR Committee would like to thank all their sponsors and supporters, especially Westerhall Estate Limited, Netherlands Insurance, Real Value IGA Supermarket, North South Wines and Le Phare Bleu Marina & Boutique Hotel as Gold Sponsors and Art Act & Design, Budget Marine, The Wireman's House ACDC, Island Water World and Carib as Silver Sponsors. Also thanked for their unwavering support were the small businesses that are part of Le Phare Bleu Village: Palm Tree Marine, The Canvas Shop, C&J Autos Rentals, Grenada Chiropractic Clinic, Island Dreams Yacht Services and Underwater Solutions.

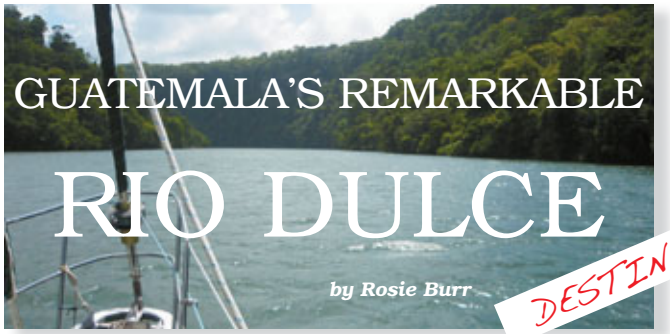
The 2011 South Grenada Regatta will be held from Febrary 25th through 27th.

For more information see ad on page 15.

— Continued on page 26







GUATEMALA'S REMARKABLE RIO DULCE

by Rosie Burr

DESTINATIONS

THE Rio Dulce is an incredible place: it covers great cruising ground, is a hurricane hole, is relatively cheap and gives you the opportunity to explore a beautiful country.

When arriving in Livingston at the beginning of the Rio to clear in, you need accurate timing to get across the sandbank, known as "The Bar", at the entrance. Simeon and I had no problem on *Alianna*, our Corbin 39, with a six-foot draft at high water springs, and friends with a seven-foot draft also made it. But we wouldn't have made it without spring tides, so careful planning is needed. Check out www.mayaparadise.com for tidal ranges.



Anchor south of the Texaco garage, flying your Q flag, and wait for the authorities to come to your boat. They are very friendly and will check your papers, but you will also need to go ashore and take your papers to Customs, Immigration and the Port Captain. Once the formalities are taken care of it's worth having a look around the little town, home to the only Garifuna* settlement in Guatemala. Or take a launch to Los Siete Altares — The Seven Altars — fresh waterfalls and pools.

When you are ready to go up the river you'll follow its twists and turns through awesome fjord-like limestone cliffs towering above, festooned with jungle vegetation, and pass Mayan Indians in their dugout canoes. It is possible to anchor here, but there is up to one knot of current and it would be wise to check first with locals to see if it's safe.

—Continued on next page



Top left: Motoring up the Rio Dulce

Left: Flower sellers on the steps of the old cathedral at Chichicastenango

Above: Don't miss a colorful visit to the largest indigenous market in Guatemala

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—Continued from previous page

A good safe place to stop is at Texan Bay, where a new marina has been opened by some good old Texan folk. They have a bar and a restaurant ashore with a very laid-back atmosphere. You can take a slip at the marina or anchor out. Either way, it's a beautiful place, being in the peace and quiet, watching the sun set on the floating lily pads.

Once you have navigated your way through El Golfete and come out on the other side, you will notice more marinas and finally the large steel bridge that sits behind the town of Fronteras. The marinas are all reasonably priced, even the most expensive; most have pools and bars. Check out www.mayaparadise.com again for a list of marinas and their contact details.

Once settled into your chosen marina it's time to explore your surroundings. We tied up at Tijax, an eco-jungle lodge with a small marina attached. Included in the monthly price are water and electricity, toilets and shower facilities, and use of the bar, restaurant and freshwater pool. It is unlike any marina I have been to before, with the jungle right on its doorstep. Tijax grounds include hiking trails that wind through the rainforest, across swinging bridges and to a small waterfall. Farther up is a rubber tree plantation that spans as far as the eye can see in neat orderly lines with cups attached to the tree trunks to catch the sap seeping from the scored bark. Farther up still is a lookout tower with panoramic views of the area.



It is possible to anchor in Lago Izabal (the "lake": a wide part of the river), especially outside Bruno's Marina, but with launches whizzing past it can get bouncy; anchor lights are very important at night. A VHF net is held every morning at 7:30 on channel 69 and a boat swap is held every Saturday at Mario's Marina.

A two-minute dinghy journey across the lake to the north side of the bridge is the town of Fronteras. This one-street town is an attack on your senses with the bright colors of the traditional clothes of the Mayan women, the colorful fruit and vegetable stalls covered by big sheets of shiny blue plastic, the noise of the traffic going by with large cattle trucks packed with doe-eyed cows awaiting their fate, and the sweet smells of the nut man selling bags of delicious cashews or caramelized peanuts.

For supplies, there are many local *tiendas* (stores) selling everything from food to household items. Plus there is the bigger La Dispensa belonging to the large US company Wal-Mart. Fuel is available from Puma, Esso and Shell. There are two haulout facilities and various engine repair places, metal fabricators and welders. Although it is possible to get various hardware and boat parts here, unless you don't mind traveling farther afield for specialty items or paying higher prices in the local chandlery, it's best to come well equipped. There are many small bars and local restaurants; a favorite of ours is the Sundog Café, which also bakes the most fabulous bread.

But the best reason by far for being in Guatemala is the diverse beauty of the country and its people. From stunning emerald green countryside to looming volcanoes and crater lakes, from the majestic pyramids of the Mayan temples piercing through the jungle tops at Tikal to the welcoming nature of the country's indigenous people, Guatemala has much to offer.

A mile or so dinghy ride west of the bridge will take you to El Castillo de San Felipe, a fortress and castle built to keep pirates from looting the villages of Izabal. On a breathless day its image is mirrored perfectly on the lake below.

A hairy chicken-bus ride from town will bring you to Finca Paraiso and Agua Caliente, where you can swim under warm water as it falls down a rock face into cool pools below.



Above: Antigua, founded in 1543, was the seat of the Spanish colonial government in Central America. Repeated earthquakes caused the removal of the capital in 1776 to present–day Guatemala City

Left: Today, the beautiful setting of Antigua is a popular place to learn Spanish

Farther afield, why not try your hand at learning Spanish in the colonial town of Antigua, a World Heritage site? Nestled between three volcanoes, this beautiful setting is filled with language students hanging out in the trendy bars and cafés. Many beautifully restored old churches, monasteries and other buildings line the streets. Volcán de Fuego ("Volcano of Fire") looms in the distance, smoking and smoldering away.

To get away from the heat, head to the highlands to Lake Atitlan, a collapsed volcanic cone filled with water, surrounded by three volcanoes. As the sun sets on another day, the water shimmers as it reflects the haze of the hills behind. Stay in Panajachel, a small one-street hippy town that now caters to tourists; it has fantastic views of the lake.

For a real brush with the locals, head to Chichicastenango on a Thursday or Sunday — market days. It is the largest indigenous market in Guatemala, where stalls selling carved wooden masks, jade and silver jewelry, and lengths of embroidered cloth line the cobbled streets. Or take in the Santo Tomás Church, where Mayan rituals have immersed themselves into the Catholic faith.

But to me, most spectacular of all are the ancient ruins of the Mayan temples impressively restored at Tikal. Leaving your hotel at dawn, a lovely cool time of day to start, ensures that you get to see the sun rise over the jungle canopy, the temples rising through the tree tops paying homage to another day of their 2,000-year existence. It truly is a breathtaking sight.

Having cruised the Caribbean for the last six years, Guatemala is one of the highlights that we did not expect. Despite the country's political unrest and some isolated incidents, using our own common sense we never felt unsafe. The people of Guatemala go to extremes to make sure that boaters feel safe and return each year to help support the economy. We look forward to returning to Guatemala and all that the charming country has to offer.

For more information visit www.mayaparadise.com and http://riodulcechisme.com.

** The Garifuna are descendants of indigenous Amerindians who were exiled to Central America from the island of St. Vincent in the Eastern Caribbean after the "Carib Wars" in 1797.*



CARIBBEAN SAILING SCHEDULE

Through June 2011

TO THE MEDITERRANEAN			
Martinique	→	Toulon	03/2011
Martinique	→	Toulon	06/2011
Martinique	→	Taranto	06/2011
St. Thomas	→	Palma de Mallorca	04/2011
St. Thomas	→	Toulon	03/2011
TO THE EAST COAST USA			
St. Thomas	→	Newport	05/2011
St. Thomas	→	Port Everglades	04/2011



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CHATEAUBELAIR, ST. VINCENT

by Elizabeth Brouse

DESTINATIONS



Main photo: Kirk, Claire, Ellen, Elizabeth and Jim under the arch at Fitz-Hughes at the beginning of our hike to Dark View Falls Inset: Discovery V *at anchor in Chateaubelair Bay*

IT was with some trepidation on May 15th, 2010 we sailed *Discovery V*, our 57-foot Bowman cutter-rigged ketch, from Port Elizabeth, Bequia up to Chateaubelair, St. Vincent. My family (husband, Kirk, 11-year-old twins Claire and Wesley, and Portuguese Water Dog, Skipper) sailed from Toronto July 1st, 2009. As a cruising family we employ a good measure of common sense and caution in our planning and choice of anchorages and have enjoyed a high level of personal safety throughout our travels.

Like many other cruisers, we purposely bypassed the island of St. Vincent because of concerns over reported crime and aggression aimed at yachties. We landed in Port Elizabeth, Bequia and fell in love with the island and the people. From the Bequia Easter Regatta, our visit to the whaling station, participation in Cheryl Johnson's Reading Club, making new friends and meeting up with some old ones, we managed to while away the better part of two months in Bequia. Occasionally the topic of sailing to St. Vincent came up among fellow cruisers and I summarily dismissed the possibility. It was a risk I preferred not to take, especially with two children on board.

My mind was changed largely due to the influence of our new friends, Ellen and Jim aboard *Boldly Go* (see "Re-Think Leeward St. Vincent" by Ellen Birrell in the November 2010 issue of *Compass*) and our relationship with Cheryl Johnson at the Bequia Book Store. "Miss Cheryl", a former resident of St. Vincent, encouraged us not to miss out on St. Vincent and the experience of Dark View Falls. Ellen and Jim had recently spent time in St. Vincent and, not ones to shy away from an adventure, suggested we go together to anchor in Chateaubelair Bay. Cheryl gave a heads-up to her friend Gail, who runs the Beach Front Restaurant and Bar at Chateaubelair Bay, to expect us. Knowing we had a friendly face with a local presence gave me a greater comfort level and we set a date to go.

We had a beautiful sail up to Chateaubelair, made even better by the fact that our children had jumped ship to sail there on *Boldly Go*. It was the first time since leaving home, almost 11 months prior, that Kirk and I were alone on our own boat!

We anchored quite near the cliff at the north end of the bay in about 30 feet of water, as the swells seemed a bit smaller in this location. We were later advised by those on shore that it was preferable, for security reasons, to anchor in the middle of the bay closer to the town dock. As it was, by this point we were more concerned about the roll than security and decided to stay put.

The island itself reminded our family of Portsmouth, Dominica in its lush rainforests, dramatic mountains and cliffs, and every colour of green imaginable. *Discovery V* and *Boldly Go* were the only two boats in the bay. We were setting anchor as three boat boys made their approach on makeshift surfboards, some paddling with their hands. The boat boys turned out more curious than aggressive. After greetings, conversation and negotiations for some limes (John delivered a fresh-picked shirtful for EC$5) they let go of the side of our boat and backed off a few feet to where two of them loitered on their surfboards for hours until just after dark.

One of the boat boys told us he was 15 years old. I was surprised to learn his age, as he was slim and small (Wesley at 11 was about the same height and probably close to twice his weight). He lived in a house on the beach, not attending school as he lacked the requisite uniform and had no means of buying one.

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He had a list of items he said were being sent by others he had met and was excited about getting to go to school. He had definite plans for education and career and volunteered that he did not do drugs. We gave him one of our backpacks to contribute to the back-to-school efforts and Kirk and Jim were happy to provide the necessary materials and labour to patch up his inflatable kayak (he had paddled out to our boat on three wooden planks tied together with vines).



With plans made to visit Dark View Falls the next morning, we slept with our ladder up, gates closed, the dinghy and our dog, Skipper, on deck. The next day we locked the boat up tight, left Skipper on deck and a boat boy, George, in charge of our dinghy, which we pulled up on the beach beside his home. George agreed to keep an eye on the boats and said if anyone approached the boats he would get the police and then tell Miss Gail. Feeling like things were as well looked after as possible, we began the hike up to Dark View Falls.

The relatively easy walk, mostly on roads, would take about 30 minutes for normal folk but we took twice that time as we had lots to look at and much fruit to eat along the way. How wonderful to come across a huge wax apple tree laden down with the ripe fruit. We also sampled some oranges and avocado from trees by the road. Paralleling our trail was a pipe that runs water down from the falls to the hydroelectric power generating plant near the town of Fitz-Hughes. The pipe was quite full and had several small leaks in it where the kids enjoyed drinking the water as if from a water fountain. As we got closer to the falls the bamboo stands were like none we had seen before. Closer to the falls they became forests that towered over us and the trail. The bamboo suspension bridge spanning the river was a highlight as the kids raced on, jumping to make it sway back and forth — oh, my nerves!

Dark View Falls is actually two falls (a third and highest one is inaccessible), the higher one feeding the lower one. Swimming in the cool freshwater pool of the lower falls and dunking our heads under the waterfall was a nice change from warm salt water. Climbing the trail to the upper falls, we hung out, playing a game of Scrabble and enjoying our picnic on a big flat rock. The place was all ours for an hour or more and we passed only a few other visitors as we descended.

On our return walk back to the boat many local people exchanged greetings with us and a few walked with us for a while to have longer conversations. As in Dominica, some people we passed walked with their machetes in hand to cut fruit or clear a path. There were offers of fruit but almost always something asked for in return. Did we have an electric drill we could lend? Could we spare any fiberglass or plastic paint to repair aging dinghies?

Groups of uniformed school children walked home and as we passed, the younger ones would stop and stare, some with mouths hanging open. When we spoke to them we would get huge smiles and laughter. The teenagers were quite bold and a few asked if they could swim out to our boats once they got home from school and changed out of their uniforms. Three did swim out and were invited on board *Boldly Go* for a game of Scrabble.

Left: Kirk crossing the bamboo bridge at the approach to Dark View Falls

Below: Along the way we passed an abandoned house of the typical style of past generations of Vincentians



We stopped for a cup of tea at the Beach Front Restaurant and Bar and to chat with Gail after our hike. The chalkboard menu announced the usual fish and chicken fare and we spied the cooks eating big plates of wonderful-smelling delights. The restaurant is the only one on this beach and has a large seating area set up on a raised patio looking over the beach.

We walked through the towns of Fitz-Hughes and Chateaubelair and the locals were friendly and cordial. This is definitely not an area that sees many tourists and there was not much going on by way of shopping and provisioning.

On the third day we sailed *Discovery V* back to Bequia feeling good about our adventure to Chateaubelair. Some of the crime issues we heard about are related to the marijuana-growing season (in between seasons money gets tight) and the trafficking and use of cocaine. This may be true, but like so many of our experiences on other islands we found if you treat people well they will, more often than not, show you the same courtesy in return.

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RIDING OUT HURRICANE TOMAS

by Bernard Logan

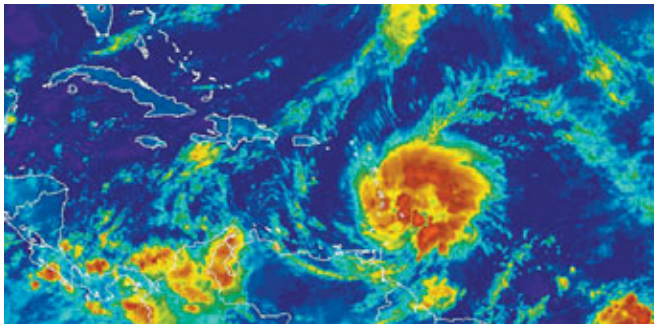
The majority of insured yachts are not allowed to be within the Caribbean during the hurricane season. I took out insurance for our new Manta 42 in 2008 through Pantaenius UK, as the yacht is UK registered. Reading the small print, it became clear, to my surprise and delight, that we could remain within the Caribbean for the entire year! However, there were conditions:

- If the yacht was damaged or lost during a *named* Tropical Storm or Hurricane, and the yacht was at anchor, we would receive zero compensation.
- If the yacht was damaged or lost during a *named* Tropical Storm or Hurricane, and the yacht was in a marina or a mangrove swamp AND was *securely* (my italics) attached to shore and seabed, we would receive 70 percent compensation.
- If the yacht was damaged or lost during a *named* Tropical Storm or Hurricane, and the yacht was under way at sea, we would get 100 percent compensation.

Last year, remaining in the Caribbean was an absolute breeze; there was, as you will remember, little in the way of weather trouble within the southeastern Caribbean. During the 2009 hurricane season, we based ourselves somewhere between St. Lucia and Grenada. The only disadvantage was the quantity of restaurants that were closed. Areas such as Tobago Cays we had essentially to ourselves.

2010 was likely to be different. We based ourselves in the ABCs until the middle of October, when I elected to transfer to Grenada. Shortly after our arrival, interest was being taken in Invest 91, a tropical disturbance that was developing in the Eastern Atlantic. I watched its progress with interest and growing concern. Almost all the computer models were predicting the track to pass between Grenada and Trinidad; it was big. One or two predictions included a swing to the northwest; but, in general, the feeling was it would continue westwards and only develop into a Tropical Low or worse when Invest 91 had entered the Caribbean. I decided to move north to Bequia, in order to avoid the worst of Invest 91.

We dropped anchor in Admiralty Bay at 1735 hours on October 28th. On the morning of Friday, October 29th, I learned that Invest 91 had changed course and was heading west-northwest to northwest, winds were increasing and there were indications of vorticity. Later that evening, Invest 91 was approaching Barbados and had been named Tropical Storm Tomas. There were quite a few yachts at anchor within Admiralty Bay and I became aware that, if I were to remain covered by insurance, we would have to put to sea.


NOAA

Hurricane Tomas on October 30th

Tomas was predicted to move between St. Vincent and St. Lucia; the sensible option was to sail south, but I wasn't happy about the numerous islands, rocks and reefs to our immediate south and east. St. Vincent had not received a direct hit from a hurricane since 1897, so I elected to place the yacht just off the west coast of St Vincent.

Everything movable was removed from the deck. There wasn't time to remove the sails so they were bound with dock lines. The dinghy was lifted into the davits and secured to the transoms of both hulls and the plug was removed. We have a sectioned-off PVC screen that covers half the cockpit; the central section was opened to reduce wind resistance. (Again, there wasn't time to remove the entire screen.) Fenders were placed in the forward lockers, as were any remaining dock lines. The ventilation flap to the generator in the portside forward locker was closed. The forward lockers were secured and locked. All hatches and portholes were shut tight. Our all-weather wind-scoops were removed and stowed.

At 0500 on Saturday, October 30th, the weather report stated that Tomas was close to being a hurricane and was heading toward the channel between St. Vincent and St. Lucia.

We weighed anchor at 0615 and headed for the west coast of St Vincent under engine power and stormsail, our main and self-tacking jib having been secured. Winds in the passage were 16 to 18 knots from the northeast with seas running at six or more feet. We arrived off Layou Bay at 0900 and "sat" about half a mile offshore. There was a slight swell and winds were six knots from the northeast. It was very hot. I elected to turn on the air-conditioning and, for that purpose, opened the forward hatch, in order to open the air intake access to the generator; the hatch was secured but not locked.

Maggie, my wife, stayed in the saloon, in the cool. I sat on the helm chair, waiting. The sea had become very calm.

Suddenly, without any warning ripple on the calm water surface, a sledgehammer of wind struck from the north. I just had enough time to switch off the generator. Both engines were fired up and left to run at Slow Forward. We were heading west, on starboard tack, at a knot and a half under storm jib and both engines on slow. The waves built up with amazing speed — within seconds, they were way above our gantry. How are you supposed to gauge the actual height of seas from inside your cockpit? They seemed to be halfway up the mast, but they couldn't have been more than 20 feet. Things had happened so fast that I dared not leave the cockpit to shut off the air intake to the generator. I dreaded to think how my generator would survive the influx of seawater.

It became quickly apparent that the most comfortable yacht motion occurred when the bows were at 40 to 45 degrees to the wind and seas, and on a starboard tack.

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Interestingly, with the centre screen up, I remained very dry; however, moving the bows to 50 degrees to the wind resulted in my getting deluged by seas through the open screen!

About half an hour into the storm, a wren appeared and landed on the halyards running between the cockpit and mast. It clung on for dear life; the winds were at 55 knots.

We were moving away from St. Vincent, albeit at a knot and a half, with sea conditions deteriorating rapidly. I elected to turn and seek cover in one of the island's bays. I warned Maggie and tacked at an appropriate moment. The wren disappeared. Of more significance was the fact that, despite being at 45 degrees to the wind, our speed had increased to 3.9 knots and the waves were broadside. It was incredibly uncomfortable so I tacked again. It was so helpful to have both engines fired up and ready to engage at a moment's notice. In the event, this was a lucky decision, as, when the winds backed to west, we would have been extremely vulnerable in any west-facing bay.

The yacht's motion became quite violent during the tack and a coconut shell that had been suspended from the front of the gantry came crashing down; a tiny egg fell out and cracked. It must have belonged to the wren; neither of us had been aware that the shell had become a nest.

Once we were back on our starboard tack the motion quieted down. I became aware that the helm was not too hard to handle and I tried the autohelm; it did not seem to struggle in the slightest. I set the autohelm to 45 degrees to the wind but, periodically, it would overshoot and I got soaked to the skin. The windvane mode was adjusted to 40 degrees and I had a peaceful time in the chair. But, being soaking wet and in a substantial draught, I began to get extremely cold. Maggie came out to the helm to keep watch while I had a hot shower; I then donned a wetsuit, which proved to be ideal.

Maggie tried to produce drinks but the kettle was a no-go. Even pouring water into a glass was an issue. It was just safer to sit down.

What surprised me was that, despite these huge winds, so many seabirds were still flying, but they were flying east-to-west or south. We also passed numerous seabirds on the water's surface.

I suppose the most disconcerting waves, approaching us, were the ones that began to break as they hit the yacht. The force was sufficient to break the weld on the forward starboard porthole. Fortunately, only a fine spray of seawater entered the cabin: the bunk remained bone dry but the carpet was damp and there were water droplets on the ceiling and walls.

At around 1300, the clouds north of us became very bright, a circular brightness, moving slowly west. I imagined this might be the eye of Tomas. Gradually the wind and waves began to clock round towards the west. Surprisingly, there were no confused waves; as the wind turned, the waves turned in unison. We found ourselves sailing south at speeds that varied from 1.9 to 3.1 knots. The autohelm behaved beautifully, keeping us at 35 to 45 degrees to the wind and waves.

At 1700 hrs, I tried to get us behind St. Vincent by motorsailing around the southern tip of the island; I hoped to "hide" off the east coast. But we were travelling at 5.7 knots in monstrous seas; neither of us felt happy with the motion. I turned to the southwest and locked the autohelm on 40 degrees to the wind, starboard tack. That improved the motion dramatically.

Later, as the wind backed to southwest, we found ourselves just southwest of Bequia.

I was able to steer the yacht, still under storm jib and both engines on slow, back into Admiralty Bay in winds not exceeding 35 knots. At the entrance to the bay, three ferries had found it necessary to anchor away from the west-facing ferry wharf. We anchored in 35-knot winds at the western end of Admiralty Bay at midnight on Saturday, October 30th. One hundred and fifty feet of chain connected to a 45-pound Bruce anchor was deployed in 20 feet of water. I didn't consider it necessary to perform my usual 1500 r.p.m. in reverse manoeuvre to set the anchor; the wind was strong enough to do the honours.

We both hit the sack with winds still howling above through the rigging; I was content that there were no yachts in our vicinity and there were no buildings. I felt secure. I took my GPS to bed with me and took frequent readings to ensure we were not dragging. At 0700, the GPS showed a sudden change and I went on deck; we were broadside on to the wind and heading for one of the anchored ferries! I re-anchored and, this time, did the reverse engine check. A welcome cup of tea awaited my return to the saloon!

Damage within Admiralty Bay was minimal; although the waves had entered the west-facing bay, only one yacht had been driven ashore. There was a lot of debris on the streets and walkways but remarkably little else.

Our yacht sustained little, if any, damage. There was fresh water floating on the floor in an aft cabin. The fresh water tank was okay and all pipe-work intact. There had been a vast amount of rainfall (St. Lucia quoted one inch per hour); it is possible one of the cockpit drains was leaking. This is yet to be checked. We have no further incidence of water in that cabin. In addition, some hard object, perhaps a coconut, had hit the starboard bow and taken off a chunk of gelcoat. We were lucky with the porthole; it remained secure, despite losing one of two hinges.

When I opened up the port forward locker to check the generator, I expected a flooded compartment and a submerged generator. All the air pipes, those leading to and from the generator, had dropped to the floor, presumably due to the sheer weight of water within them. The drains had coped admirably; the floor was relatively dry.

Lessons learned:

• Ideally, one should go south, away from the eye of the hurricane — perhaps fly a triple-reefed main and a storm jib and go like hell. At some point, that battering ram of wind would help us along. If we went too fast, I have a series drogue [a Dilley's Rat's Tail, as it used to be called] that would slow us down to a knot and a half.

• A few water bottles (plastic water bottles with screw tops would be the safest) within easy reach of the helm would save the wife from unnecessary injury in the heavy seas. We didn't really feel hungry in those sea conditions; bananas and chocolate bars would be best, and close to hand.

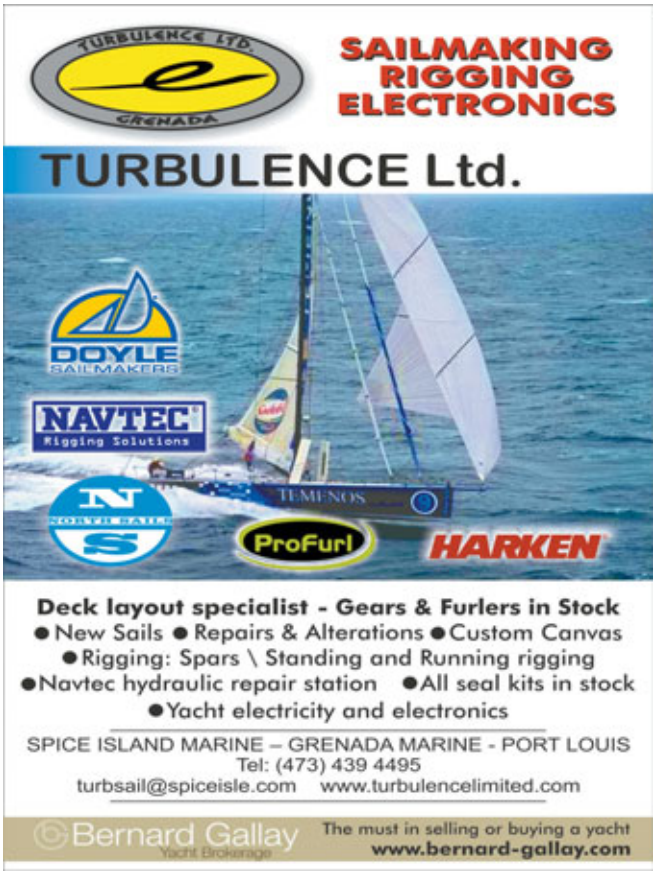
• Helm should wear a wetsuit; far more sensible than swimming trunks!

• All air pipes to and from the generator should be disconnected; the entry flap should remain closed. This is not an occasion for the luxury of air conditioning!

• Next time (!), the large icebox, which sits in the cockpit, will have a non-slip placed under it; it charged across the cockpit like a bull in a china shop.

In our catamaran, motion was best with the bows at 40 to 45 degrees to the wind and seas; and on a starboard tack. Any other direction proved extremely uncomfortable.

A storm jib with no main proved ideal to maintain a slow forward motion, aided by both engines in Slow Forward. The benefit of a smidgeon of forward sail as being of benefit, rather than lying-a-hull or hove-to, was one conclusion drawn by the enquiry into the Fastnet debacle; having experienced it, I think it is a good way to go. The ability to maintain slow forward motion was comfortable and re-assuring. If I cannot sail south from an approaching hurricane to the east of us, I will adopt storm sail and both engines at Slow Forward on a starboard tack.





A Container Port in Carriacou?

The Grenada Government is considering a plan that, if it comes to fruition, will change the landscape and culture of the island of Carriacou altogether, and will affect all of the Grenadines.

Carriacou, along with Petite Martinique, is part of the nation of Grenada, and the Grenada government is negotiating with Urbaniza, a company owned by a group of Brazilian businessmen that wants to lease about 221 acres (an area about twice the size of the nearby island of Petit St. Vincent) on the southeast coast of Carriacou. There they propose to put in a giant facility that will include a duty-free container port, a cruise ship port, a duty-free shopping center, warehouses for storing Brazilian goods, factories for assembling various products, hotels, tourist facilities, and even a school for the children of people employed in the complex. (You can read the Memorandum of Understanding at http://grenadabroadcast.net/past-shows/Carriacou--Memorandum%20of%20Understanding.) According to the proposal, the area will be fenced off and guarded, and Urbaniza will have control of this part of Carriacou for 60 years.



Left: The area marked in red includes the cliffs of Sabazan and Rock Hill. According to the 'ecoplan', this whole area is to be bulldozed flat to create the material for a 3/4-mile breakwater, and the reef that can be seen breaking just to the right will be dredged

Right: Artist's impression of what the area might look like if such a port were built

I am not much of a businessman and it takes me a while to get a grasp on such matters, so I e-mailed the link to a good friend who has been involved in building ports all over the world. He understands port building and contracts. He also understands the environmental impacts of such activities. I was surprised by the forcefulness of his opinion:

"The program is a giveaway by the government to private interests with no guaranteed return except for a few municipal facilities, which may well be third rate and inconsequential. It appears that the Brazilians will have complete autonomy to do what they want, and will accrue all of the economic benefits… environmental damage (both underwater and on land) appears to be large and there is no evidence of any real study of how extensive damage will be or any effort at mitigation."

The only possible benefit to the people in Carriacou would be the chance of employment. But in a project that envisages regular visits by 500-foot container ships bringing in 375 thousand tons of cargo a year, and creation of 5,000 jobs in five years, you can see it is not the people of Carriacou (population 6,000, about half of them children) who are going to be doing this work. No, the majority of the workers would come from elsewhere. A few Grenadians may benefit from jobs, but I imagine most of the workers would probably come from Brazil. If the project is a success, these people will be here to stay — the population of Carriacou would nearly double, with half of them in a fenced-off compound. This will forever change the culture and society of Carriacou.

The Carriacou free-port plan is on the Grenada Government website: www.gov.gd/egov/docs/other/carriacou_free_port-ecoplan_report.pdf. All my suspicions were confirmed when I looked at the Urbaniza's misnamed "ECOPLAN". They must think Caribbean people are stupid if they think they can fool them by naming a plan of such monumental environmental destruction an "ecoplan."

They plan to use about 221 acres of (government) land in the area called Dumfries. They plan to tear down the lovely cliffs at Sabazan (a place where much pre-Colombian pottery has been found), level off the sloping hills, and tear down the adjoining Rock Hill and use it to build a giant breakwater. They will then do a huge amount of dredging to make a 35-foot-deep harbor to accommodate container ships and cruise ships. This dredging would destroy the reefs that are currently in the way. Even with the best intentions, such an operation will result in a huge amount of run-off, which is likely to get taken by the currents up and down the coast and destroy all Carriacou's south coast reefs, including those around Saline Island and White Island, and quite likely the barrier reef all along the east coast up to Windward. And this quote: "Dredge material oftentimes is merely pumped to open sea depending on permit availability" (page 18) leads me to doubt that best practices would be observed here.

When all is done, the whole southeast coast in the area of Dumfries could end up being a fenced-off, flattened, giant industrial nightmare — or dream, depending on how much you like industrialization. Because it contains anti-competition clauses, it means no other smaller scale, locally run duty-free port could come into existence down the line. This section of the economy will have been given away to an overseas private company.

I also see risks here to the reputation of Grenada itself. What exactly are these guys up to? Why such a huge volume of cargo passing through little Carriacou; why not ship it from Brazil directly to its ultimate destination? This is not spelt out clearly, but the only thing I can imagine is that maybe by bringing Brazilian goods into Carriacou they may somehow become "Caribbean" and thus can be exported under different tariffs. If this is the case, I am not sure Grenada is going to become very popular with the rest of CARICOM and its other trading partners.

And since the containers would be coming from South America, just who is going to make sure that drugs don't get sewn into the furniture fabric? Once things get re-shipped out of Carriacou, they are coming from Carriacou. If there is a giant drug bust, who is going to get blamed? Yes, Grenada! And how are we going to stop that? I don't think Grenada has even one drug-sniffing dog, let alone a team or equipment that could carefully examine 375 thousand tons of cargo. If things go bad, Grenada could ruin whatever relations it has with its trading partners. Maybe it will become even harder than it is now to get a visa to the US. To me this plan raises more red flags than you are likely to see in Moscow on May Day.

It is unfortunate that due diligence has been lacking in some other fairly disastrous Caribbean projects. Among these I include the bankrupt Ashton Marina project on Union Island, which left St. Vincent & the Grenadines a huge debt, a damaged lagoon where there was formerly a living bay, and tons of rusting iron between Ashton Harbour and the sea; and an east coast St. Lucia development where the developers came in with bulldozers, trashed a whole hillside and then gave up, leaving a giant scar on the land. Neither of these were on as large a scale as this proposed plan.



People in Carriacou might want to talk to those who live in Canouan. In 1999 the island was divided in two and the government gave a 99-year lease on the larger part to a Swiss-Italian-owned resort business. I am told that those born on and who live on Canouan cannot even walk around the larger part of their own island without first getting permission. It seems the government has given the owners of the high-end resort virtually carte blanche to do what they want, although a court order recently stopped them from dredging that could have damaged a barrier reef that protects the island.

The size of the proposed Carriacou project is so large that it is doubtful the Grenada authorities would be able to police and control either its building or its operation. Grenada would in effect give away a big chunk of Carriacou, allow it to become a suburb of Brazil in the hands of a private company with few local controls, and risk destroying much of Carriacou's natural environment and existing culture.

Not many people seem to know about this proposal, despite its presence on the Government website. It is a plan of such enormous consequence that it would be terrible if it becomes a done deal without a full and active debate and discussion with the people of Carriacou.

The good part is that, at this stage, it is just a plan — it is an offer that has been made to the Government of Grenada, which the Government has posted for review. Although the Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding, this is by no means a "done deal" and it can still come up with an alternative plan that is more favorable to Carriacou.

I hope that the Government of Grenada, after further examining this proposal and discussing it with the people of Carriacou, will realize it would be a disaster and ditch it quickly.

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Having Boat Work done in the Caribbean: A PRIMER

by Frank Virgintino

"IF it's not broken, don't fix it" is not necessarily the best axiom for boaters. Without maintenance, we put our safety at risk. Beyond safety are matters of comfort and convenience. Life is better without having the mainsail blown out or the head clogged up, or a major problem with our motor or electrical system.

The maintenance of a boat is never simple, especially when complicated by budget and compounded by sun, wind, salt, occasional groundings, and other factors that cause wear on the boat and its equipment.

The good news is that the Caribbean is simply loaded with both talent and facilities. While parts may cost about the same, the cost of labor and the cost of rent for a contractor is much less than in the USA, Canada or Europe. This is something we can use to our advantage.

Talent varies widely, however, as does price. And all the islands are not the same as to what they have to offer.

For basic work, such as sanding and painting, we should head for an island that has a good pool of labor at an opportunistic price. There are sailors who have spent time at Ile à Vache, Haiti and had basic work done at very attractive prices and were very happy with the outcome. The same is true for Cuba and the Dominican Republic. These islands, and Venezuela, have the best day rates in the Caribbean. Knowing how to speak a little Spanish is a big help and being able to oversee the work as it is being done is absolutely necessary. You can contract workers who would be happy to get work for US$100 to $150 per week.


JANE GIBB

Compare that to Antigua and St. Maarten where such work can easily be billed for US$150 per day, and the savings add up quickly. Keep in mind the quality of the work may not be as good in every instance; however unless you are having varnish work done on a gold-plater, it may not make that much of a difference.

At the other end of the spectrum is highly specialized work. Of course prices will be higher than for basic sanding or bottom painting. Work on electronics, autopilots, hydraulics and work such as fibreglass de-blistering is best left to specialists: Antigua, St. Maarten, Grenada and Trinidad come to mind. St. Maarten has a large concentration of high-end yachts with professional crews and captains. St. Maarten might have high prices but if your repair is complicated, the highest billing rate may get you the best result in the shortest time. The contractors there also have a great deal of experience with steering issues and communication systems.

In Grenada and Trinidad, most of the boats in the marinas and boatyards are cruising boats, not mega-yachts. Thus the contractors are attuned to working on mid-size boats and their equipment in that size range.

There are major sail lofts throughout the Caribbean. Doyle has manufacturing facilities in Barbados and the price for a new suit of sails from Doyle and other sailmakers is significantly less locally than the cost would be back home (wherever home is). And I have always found the quality of the sails to meet my needs.

How to Get the Work Done on Your Boat

After 35 years of running and owning marinas, I've learned a few things:

- Keep a maintenance log and an ongoing "to do" list. If your budget is adequate, do not delay getting the work done. Delay is never worth it.
- Plan all of your work in advance.
- Be realistic about what needs to be done.
- Become familiar with the job(s).
- Research where in the Caribbean would be the best place to get the work done.
- Decide if you will you stay with the boat or leave.

All these factors will affect the cost and outcome of the work.

The most direct way to do boat work is to do it yourself. There are owners who can fix everything, all the time; there's not a system they don't know. They understand the job at hand and have the time and ability to do the work as well as source all necessary parts and tools.

Other owners either cannot do the work or just are not interested. These owners must contract their work to boatyards and marine contractors. To get work done properly at a market-reasonable price, they must understand how to be the agent for the boat.

Many owners simply look for the cheapest price and then hope for the best. When the job does not turn out right, they blame everyone else and avoid taking responsibility for the outcome.

Keep this in mind: if you give out a job, no matter where the boat is, and then leave, the chances are that the work will not be done properly or not be done on time, or both. If you are going to contract out work to various contractors, ideally you should stay with the boat to watch the way the work is being done and to monitor that everyone shows up on a continuous basis. The point is that if your interests are at risk, there is no substitute for your physical presence.

Let's assume that you plan to stay with the boat while the work is undertaken. You must first locate the tradesmen who can do the work. This is not as easy as it may appear. Ask other yachtsmen if they've had similar work done, and by whom. Ask the marina for recommendations.

Interview the tradesmen and get detailed estimates. The estimates must be detailed otherwise you will not be able to compare. You must also ask what the time frame for the job will be. Another very important question to ask is if the contractor has insurance. What if you retain someone and they lose a limb or worse while working on your boat? The consequences could be quite complicated.

Once you have all the estimates in hand, and not before, call the contractor that you favor and have a meeting. At this meeting you have an opportunity to negotiate the price as well as the time frame and materials used. When you negotiate, keep in mind that everyone must come out a winner or in the end everyone will be a loser. You might meet with several contractors before you select one.

Many boat owners put much too much emphasis solely on the price. They do not give enough thought to the materials that will be used or the quality of the tradesman doing the job. In my 35 years in the marina business, I've seen that people often ask just two things: the price and when the work will be done. Rarely do they ask the details of how the job will be done, or for a specific list of materials needed to do the job.

Will the fasteners be stainless steel? Will the cleat that is being installed have a backing plate? Will the battery connections be changed when the new batteries are installed? What kind of final sanding will be done prior to painting? What kind of teak is being used? The list goes on and on, but without it you are "buying a pig in a poke" and may get the job done only to find out down the line that it needs to be done over.

Remember, when you employ a tradesman, the lowest price is not always the best deal. The contractor must want the job and must feel he is being paid properly to do it. When you over-negotiate the job and refuse to pay what is fair, you may feel you won, but in the end you will lose, as the tradesman will find shortcuts to match the price. Pretty much you get what you pay for. However, that being said you may sometimes pay well and not get a good job. You must have all the details clearly listed, types of materials and methods of installation stated, and a time frame understood — and you should be there to watch the job.

If you simply cannot stay with the boat while the work is being done, you MUST have a third party oversee the job. It is no fun calling a contractor long distance, over and over again, and having him avoid the phone call, especially after you gave him a deposit to get started. Seek the help of the marina, a project manager, or a surveyor — someone you are paying who understands that their job is to protect your interests. You must interview your agent as you would a tradesman, and they must have experience and credentials.

Even with the help of a third party, remember that you still must research all details of the job, and understand them, in order to get what you are paying for. Everything must be in writing, in detail, and both the contractor as well as the person who will oversee the job must agree that they understand and sign off. The more effort you put into the job before it starts, the better the job will go and the better the outcome will be.

It may cost you on average ten to 15 percent more, but if you picked a professional to represent you, the work will be done on time and properly.

Remember, too, that any shortcut you take, either in labor quality or materials, will almost always result in the job turning out poorly. Also remember that you cannot rush a job. Working on a boat is complicated and many times the weather does not cooperate. Rain, wind, extremely high temperatures: all affect the job. In the planning stage, allow sufficient time by scheduling the work long before you need it done, so that there is no rush. This will almost always result in a better job at a better price.

Owning a boat requires managing it as an asset in order to enjoy it fully. Work on the boat should be exciting as well. After all, you are making something better, whether by repairing or improving — why not look at it that way? If you try to get the job done cheaply and do not invest sufficient time to expedite the job appropriately, you will become frustrated and the boat will lose its appeal.

Again, the key is to understand the work and to research every facet of it. The proposed work must be understood by all parties. What the scope of the work is, what parts and materials will be used, what type of labor will do the job, and even where you do the job, will determine the outcome.

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

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—Continued from page 14 ...ARC 2010

Another magnet that keeps ARC sailors in St. Lucia is the hospitality offered by the St. Lucia Yacht Club. SLYC invites ARC participants to fun events at the club, plus it organizes the Christmas Carols Afloat boat parade and, new this year, Optimist and J/24 demonstration races just off the marina. SLYC's Social Secretary, Belgian-born Danielle de Rouck, says, "It's fun getting together and getting more visitors to the club!"



SLYC member Duncan Gray manned the ARC finish line. Having arrived with ARC 2009, he received a request for volunteers from among past ARC participants who are still in the Caribbean. Another past ARC skipper, Marjan on *Spalax*, plus a cruising couple, Cindy and Lee on *Tranquility*, helped out aboard Duncan's 35-foot ketch, *Sephina*, which was anchored at one end of the line during much of the month of December. The boat was festooned with flags and showed a big orange flashing light "like a lighthouse" at night. (Duncan adds that it would be extremely helpful if other yachts anchored in the bay used anchor lights!) He says, "We had WiFi and received a schedule of daily arrivals, with updates about every six hours. We get a call from the boats when they're five miles out, acknowledge the call, and when they're two miles out we inform the finish-line photographer, Tim Wright. There's a GPS position given for both ends of the line, and we saved a couple of boats from missing the line. We record the finish times and relay them to the ARC office by VHF.

Above: Still fun after 25 years. Norwegians Stale and Annelise Larson aboard the Sweden 40 Viking Crusader. *They sailed in the first, tenth and 25th ARCs*
Below: St. Lucian skipper Nico Philip, left, and the British crew of the Oyster 70 Apollonia



"Sleep can be a bit of a challenge," Duncan admits, "but it's exciting. We had three boats finish with 18 seconds, two within six seconds and two crossed the line within five seconds: that's about a boat length. It's great to see all the happy, relieved faces — and you can tell when the Italian and Spanish boats are approaching the line because the party's already started!"

Of course, everyone who crosses the finish line wins the trophy of fulfilling a dream, but the ARC is famous for giving abundant awards in numerous divisions and classes, and fun prizes as well.

Nico Philip, the only St. Lucian skipper in ARC 2010, sailed the Oyster 70 *Apollonia*, which won the prize for the most fish caught: 30. Not surprising, as growing up in Soufriere, Nico's father was a fisherman "and I was swimming like a fish at four years."

Best Family Performance on corrected time, third place on handicap in Class H, and a prize for Best Pictures at Sea went to the Witso-Bjollmer family from Norway — Thomas, Hege, and five-year-old son Storm, aboard the 32-foot *Honningpupp II*, this year's smallest yacht. It was their first ARC, and Hege says, "We'll definitely do it again!"

Their countrymen Stale and Annelise Larson of the Sweden 40 *Viking Crusader* have done it again — and again. The Larsons sailed in the first, tenth and 25th ARCs. Why three ARCs? Annelise says, "It's fun. In the very first one we felt secure, and enjoyed the social life and the contact with the other boats. We had such a good experience that we went again in the tenth, and thought it would be fun to go again in the 25th." The practice paid off: Stale and Annelise won Best Double-Handed Performance in 2010.

The ARC Silver Jubilee Prize Giving on December 18th was a gala event — although several boats arrived too late for their crews to attend it. So a unique "Later Arrivals Party" was thrown and they were welcomed by Andrew Bishop of World Cruising Club, John Emmanuel of the Saint Lucia Tourist Board, Adam Foster of IGY Rodney Bay Marina and Danielle de Rourke of the St. Lucia Yacht Club — where else but at the Boardwalk Bar in the heart of the ARC 2010 Village.

For complete results, visit www.worldcruising.com. Entries for ARC 2011 are now open.

ARC Europe starts from Tortola, BVI, on May 5th, crossing to the first rally destination port, St. George's in Bermuda. An alternative start in Hampton, Virginia on May 6th for North American-based yachts also crosses to Bermuda. From Bermuda the combined fleet crosses the Atlantic to the Azores. The final leg departs from São Miguel to Portugal, with support provided for yachts heading to northern Europe.

Thanks to the Saint Lucia Tourist Board and the Palm Haven Hotel for making Compass's *research trip to St. Lucia so enjoyable. And special thanks to all the interviewed ARC crews.*



With one voice: At the 15th ARC's gala prize giving, Radio Net Group B sings their own nautical version of 'The 12 Days of Christmas'

—continued from page 17 ...*Regatta News*

***Triple Jack* Wins Round Tortola Again**

Contending with 20- to 25-knot gusting winds on the north side of Tortola, *Triple Jack*, a 32-year-old Kelsall one-off skippered by George Lane, won the Peg Legs Round Tortola Race on November 20th, 2010 for the second year in a row, beating second-placer *igoodia* by one minute on elapsed time. *Jack Dusty III*, a Pearson 40 skippered by 84-year-old Bill Hirst, won Cruising Class.

The 45-foot *Triple Jack* circumnavigated Tortola in three hours, 53 minutes and 27 seconds, missing her personal best set last year by exactly 20 minutes; breaking a daggerboard cost some of the precious minutes needed to beat last year's time, as did the outhaul giving way near Scrub Island.

The fleet, which showed increased numbers this year, started in the Sir Francis Drake Channel off Nanny Cay, then headed anti-clockwise around Tortola. After the beat, the fleet turned the corner at Great Camanoe and headed on a downwind run to West End where, after a quick wiggle through Soper's Hole, it was a beat back to the finish off Nanny Cay.

"Get onto port, get out into the Channel and get out into the true breeze," was the winning plan according to George.

For more information visit www.royalbviyc.org.

19 for Course de L'Alliance 2010

The 7th edition of the Course de L'Alliance, run November 26th through 29th, 2010, had three classes — Multihull, Racing and Racer-Cruiser — taking the 19-boat fleet through swells and rough seas from Simpson Bay, St. Maarten to neighboring island St. Barth's on the Friday.

The Saturday saw a bit less wind and lighter seas, allowing for a great sail to Sandy Ground, Anguilla. On the final day, the fleet sailed back to St. Martin. La Course de l'Alliance is an initiative of Marina Fort Louis and Yacht Club Fort Louis to cement the alliance between St. Martin, St. Maarten, St. Barth's and Anguilla.

First place prize in Racing Class went to the Melges 24 *Team Budget Marine/Gill*, skippered by Chris Marshall; Jamie Dobbs' J/122, *Lost Horizon* of Antigua, took first in Racer-Cruiser; while Will Secher's cat, *Altair*, placed first and received the Jean Allaire trophy for the Mulithull Class.

For more information visit www.coursedelalliance.com.

Pacific Puddle Jump Party in Panama

Heading west? The Balboa Yacht Club will be hosting the 2nd Annual Pacific Puddle Jump Party in Panama City on the Pacific side of Panama on February 12th. This free event for cruisers heading to the Pacific is co-sponsored by *Latitude 38* magazine and Tahiti Tourism. There will be seminars, slide shows, video presentations, raffle prizes, and many free giveaways.

For more information contact nittefrank@hotmail.com.

April's Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta 2011 is scheduled to begin on April 14th. This is a venerable event for very special boats: all sailing yachts should have a full keel, be of heavy to moderate displacement, built of wood or steel and be of traditional rig and appearance. Old craft using modern materials such as epoxy or glass sheathing, or new craft built along the lines of an old design, are acceptable. Vessels built of ferro-cement may be accepted if they have a gaff or traditional schooner rig. Fiberglass yachts must have a full, long keel with a keel-hung rudder and be a descendant of a wooden boat design.

The day before the official start of the Yacht Regatta is the *Boat International* Concours d'Elegance, an opportunity for owners and crew to show off the care and attention they give to their yacht, with prizes for both privately and professionally maintained yachts. The beauty of more than 50 classic yachts docked at the Antigua Yacht Club Marina is magnificent.

There follows three days of racing out of Falmouth Harbour, easily viewed from many points along the coastline.

The regatta has the feel of a bygone era, with the inclusion of The English Harbour Sail Past, where you can catch sailors bedecked in period costume after the last day of racing. The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta is a spectacle not to be missed.

For more information see ad on page 16.

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CRUISERS' PROFILE

Captured by Carnival Culture

by J. Wynner


COURTESY PARSONS

George and Ruth Parsons with Harvard Harps arranger D. Redon

Meet George and Ruth Parsons who hail from the USA. Ruth, Research Professor, Institute for Conflict Resolution, University of Denver, and George, a pharmacist by profession, are now both retired. Although born in land-locked Colorado, this adventurous couple always had a great love for the water. When they were young they owned a ski boat and were both lifeguards. So they were absolutely delighted by an invitation to go sailing with friends who rented and skippered a boat themselves. From then on their romance with the water surged.

Since 1998 they have been sailing their boat, *S/V Makaru*, in the Caribbean for several months a year. Because they have become so immersed in Trinidad's Carnival culture, they fly down in January and usually live on board *Makaru*, based at Power Boats in Chaguaramas, until after Carnival. "This has been *Makaru's* home base for twelve years. After Carnival we go up island sailing, coming back to Trinidad, from where we return home. We keep the boat here for the summer during the hurricane season. We are really only on the boat four or five months out of the year," explains Ruth.

George, who had visited Trinidad in 1989 on a sailing trip, liked the place so much that it was only natural that when they were looking for somewhere to keep *Makaru*, Trinidad was the preferred choice, especially since it was below the hurricane belt.

"It was nice to find Trinidad. It's a special place, we kind of got stuck here," says George.

They did a lot of chartering themselves for about two weeks at a time before they bought their own vessel. Two years they chartered in the Bahamas and two years in Puerto Rican waters. They have also ventured to Belize and Honduras several times, and the Parsons have visited the BVI, too.

When George and Ruth first arrived in Trinidad in 1998, they had no idea that they would keep coming back to the island. But they caught the Carnival fever. In fact, their initial Carnival excursion was one of mixed feelings, as George relates: "When we came, we ran into quite a character called Cosmos, who is deceased now. He used to haul the yachties around. So for our first Carnival experience we were taken to a fête at Queen's Hall but did not understand what all the excitement was about. Cosmos had us there at one o'clock. The Prime Minister was there, also Wendy FitzWilliam who was then Miss Universe. We sat around feeling rather bored. However, later on the popular calypsonian David Rudder showed up…" at which point Ruth chimes in, "And we have been here ever since!" After a hearty chuckle George resumes, "Cosmos usually took the yachties home at seven. But the party had only just begun. So we stayed on. We loved David Rudder but we did not know a thing about Carnival. We could not sort out what on earth was going on," adds Ruth.

From that first Carnival outing, their love affair with Carnival flourished. Like their fellow cruisers Krister and Anna Malm on *S/V Kaiso* (see the July 2010 issue of *Compass*), Ruth and George became fascinated with the steel pan. They attended a workshop and learned about the history of the pan and how to play it. That first year they bought a steel pan to take home with them and continued practicing. But the steel pan venture did not end there.

On their return the following year they played with several steelbands. Believe me, the Parsons have seen the inside of more pan yards than many a Trini-born like myself. They even played one year in the preliminaries of the Panorama steel pan competition until that band was eliminated, before settling with Harvard Harps where they played pan in the J'ouvert Bomb competition for four years from 2007 to 2010. This proved to be very rewarding — Harvard Harps placed first in the Bomb competition in 2008, and tied for second place in 2009.

And, of course, it's impossible to be so immersed in the Carnival culture and not get all decked out in fancy dress and parade on the streets come Carnival Monday and Tuesday! Performing in the "theatre of the street" represented another Carnival highlight for the Parsons: "playing mas" one year, fully costumed in Peter Minshall's 2000 presentation and, another year, with prominent band leader/designer and 2010 winner of Band of the Year, Brian MacFarlane.

But in 2011 Ruth and George will be moving on. "It's time we shove loose and do something else. We have grandchildren, they are growing older and they want to experience sand and sea, and the boat and sailing," says Ruth. "We want to start a new chapter with our boat. The Trinidad chapter in some ways has been life-altering for us because we have immersed ourselves in another culture and when you do that you learn so much about yourself and it gives you a different perspective about the world. It has been a great experience, something you do that you just would not trade."

However, Ruth and George will not be forgetting about the steel pan anytime soon. As Ruth puts it, "As a result of us learning to play pan and, by a bunch of happenstances, a very fine internationally known pan arranger has moved to Colorado. He has a pan ensemble at the University of Colorado, from where I retired, and we are now playing at the University in the summers."

So from this year they will be based in Grenada, and, as they reminded, "We would not be giving up Trinidad completely. Since we have many friends here we will fly in and out from the Isle of Spice."

I hope that when their grandchildren hear the pan, Ruth and George will quickly bring them back to revisit The Land of the Hummingbird, and birthplace of the limbo, calypso, and the steelband.



DEVI SHARP

Participate in Trinidad Carnival!

by J. Wynner

George and Ruth Parsons of Colorado, USA have been sailing the Caribbean waters for the last 12 years on their yacht *Makaru*, and have participated in various aspects of Trinidad Carnival, thoroughly enjoying the experience.

They offer this advice: "We tell yachties to get out and get to know this culture. It is so rich. Don't just watch on, participate!" Trinidad Carnival 2011 climaxes on Carnival Monday and Tuesday, March 7th and 8th.

Carnival, the artistic and festive expression of the people of Trinidad & Tobago, represents many things to many people. It is a celebration. It is bacchanal. It is an industry. Carnival takes pride of place in the psyche of the people. It is T&T's national festival that displays their culture to the world.

The national celebration showcases the country's musicians, makers of the steelpan (originally made from discarded oil drums), steelpan tuners and arrangers, calypsonians, soca and chutney singers, steelband and brass band players — much to the enjoyment of their loyal followers. For these artists, as well as those employed in costume production for "mas'" or masquerade, the season is also a paramount source of extra income. To bandleaders, Carnival is big, big business.

The creative blends which comprise the gala experience, the music, song and dance, costume design with its multiple facets of sewing, shoe making, wire bending, beading, and braiding, culminate in what Peter Minshall, mas' man extraordinaire, calls "Theatre of the Streets" — the grand parade of bands by masqueraders on the Monday and Tuesday prior to Ash Wednesday.

Starting before dawn on Carnival Monday and lasting until mid-day, *J'ouvert* is the time of "ol' mas'" when masqueraders parade on the streets in rags and old clothing and, in more recent times, splashed down from head to toe in mud. Many cruisers enjoy participating in this "mud mas'", which signals the official start of the two days of street revelry. J'ouvert is seen by some as a spiritual journey acted out every year with the gathering of the various tribes at their favourite meeting place to make their annual pilgrimage along the nation's streets, "chipping" and swaying to the sound of iron and steel drums. Popular calypsonian David Rudder, a former calypso monarch, likens the ritual to High Mass. Others say it is a freeing up — time to get rid of all the anxieties and stresses of the previous year. Playing mas' sure beats a psychiatrist's couch.

For Ruth and George, who have both played pan with Harvard Harps for the J'ouvert steelpan competition, this is their favourite Carnival time — "If you do nothing else, the one experience should be J'ouvert". "I think J'ouvert is the true spirit of Carnival", says Ruth. "It should not be missed. It is our favourite part. Everybody participates. I love J'ouvert with the guys in the women's dresses and the ol' mas', unlike the Carnival Monday and Tuesday mas', for which you have to buy the costume and be here and be there, and dress up and look pretty." George expands: "There is something special about coming down Western Main Road in St. James at daybreak, then on to Ariapita Avenue in Woodbrook, with the sun coming up. Sometimes there is a light drizzle, and the older people are out on their decks waving and jamming to the music. It feels so exhilarating".

Another long-standing carnival couple, yachties Anna and Krister Malm from Sweden, who have been sailing in the Caribbean for more than 40 years, share the Parsons' love for J'ouvert — the Carnival happening that they insist should not be missed. "For me J'ouvert is special, very special," says Anna who has also played pan for J'ouvert, with bands such as Birdsong, Merry Makers, Harvard Harps, as well as their own Swedish band, Hot Pans, which the Malms brought to Trinidad for Carnival in 2009.

So sailors take note! If you are musically inclined, the steelband doors are open wide to everyone. You too can participate in playing pan. If not, you can always have a good jump-up on the streets either by joining a fancy costume band or a J'ouvert ol' mas' band.

But long before J'ouvert, pre-Carnival events, starting right after Christmas, launch the season. Yes, Carnival is a season, too — a season of shows, competitions, making the rounds at the various pan yards, visiting the mas' camps, fêting, partying. There is a maxi-taxi and tour service based at Irena Trans-Continental Travel Ltd., Tropical Marine, Chaguaramas that offers transport and help to yachties in planning Carnival schedules for the shows and calypso competitions. Operator Jesse James of Members' Only taxi service says that a very popular request from yachties is transport to see the Carnival Tuesday Parade of Bands.

Other outings include taking in the King and Queen of the Bands costume competition. This starts with a preliminary group of about 30 to 40 King and Queen contestants crossing the stage, with half their number being selected to go into the semi-finals. From there the final ten move on to the big show on Dimanche Gras night when the King and Queen of Carnival, as well as the Calypso Monarch, are crowned. Dimanche Gras takes place on the Carnival Sunday night preceding J'ouvert.

Making the rounds of the various pan yards — a yard is normally a large open-air location where the steelbands hold their rehearsals — is a must if you are to truly soak in the Carnival vibes. There you will hear pan players hell bent on rehearsing their piece for the big Panorama Carnival steelpan competition on Carnival Saturday night. The excitement is intensified on judging night when the adjudicators move from one pan yard to another, judging the bands, with the pan fans following in their wake. Fortunately, most of the pan yards located in and around Port of Spain (POS) are within easy reach of Chaguaramas. There are the long established bands, such as Starlift on Mucurapo Road, Invaders and Silver Stars (the current steel band champions for two consecutive years), both on Tragarete Road; and recent past Panorama champs, Phase II, another popular band with a large following on Hamilton Street, off Damien Street just behind One Woodbrook Place. On the periphery, in POS east, are Renegades on Charlotte Street, and All Stars at the eastern end of Duke Street. Up the hill, in Laventille, is the pride and joy of the people on the hill, Desperados steelband. All these bands have been previous Panorama champions.

A visit to a pan manufacturer to see how the modern pans are crafted should be of great interest, too. The present-day manufacturing process that makes use of large imported sheets of steel represents a far cry from the methods implemented in the days of old when pans were shaped into musical instruments from old oil drums and other discarded metal containers.

Left: At carnivals throughout the Caribbean you can join a costume band and be part of the street parade action

Below: On de road, J'ouvert morning. A surprising number of musical cruisers have joined steel pan bands



Visiting the mas' camps and viewing the various costume designs for the fancy dress masquerade bands is another event high on the Carnival "to do" list. Many of the popular POS mas' camps are also within easy reach of Chaguaramas and are all close to each other.

High on the agenda also, is the fête phase, which brings out the party animals in their multitudes at all-inclusive fêtes — where entrance fee, food and drink are paid in advance — taking place throughout the land, in which the crazed crowd seems to catch the spirit.

Despite all the positive vibrations, however, there are the puritans who perceive the national festival in a negative light — as complete bacchanal and a "bloody nuisance" with debauchery as its main element. In its large, noisy, big-party, and bickering sense, Carnival embraces the sum total of the national experience including the various calypso, masquerade and steelband contests, attendant with their usual rivalry and grumblings at the final results — all an integral part of the public's Carnival awareness. But on whatever side of the spiritual divide these passions fall, Carnival does have a religious connotation, if for no other reason than it heralds the advent of the Lenten season for Christians.

Carnival is an annual encounter that is deeply embedded in the national consciousness of T&T, and participation in it is the social and cultural highlight of many yachties' adventures in Trinidad.

For more information on attending or participating in Trinidad Carnival, listen to the Chaguaramas, Trinidad Cruisers' Net on VHF 68 at 0800 hours local time.

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JANUARY 2011

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
The communications glitches you'll suffer in the beginning of the month will clear up after the 13th. Your love life, however, will gybe unexpectedly to take up the slack. Tack to get back on course and reset your sails, and all will be smooth sailing.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
Concentrate on your cruising creativity and on completing boat projects before the 20th while communications are in positive aspect and you will make good headway.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
Love will prove fickle this month, but your sense of humor will sail in to rescue you from any rough emotional seas.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Mid-month will see some choppy seas in your ingenuity, with communication breakdowns and a lack of enthusiasm affecting your imaginative vision. These adverse aspects will clear on the 20th with only a little static left to annoy you for a few days.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
The sweet-hulled ship of romance will anchor off your stern on the 8th, so get your act together and clear the decks to free up time to dedicate to this pleasant aspect.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
Be as creative as you can before the 20th. Explore the positive aspects of new ideas and don't let a lapse of breeze in your sense-of-humor sails bring you down in the last week.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Saturn, the planet of business, is still in your sign so hold on to your positive attitude and dedicate your energies to getting as much work as possible completed before the 26th when this aspect wanes.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
If your love life sails off into the sunset, placate your bruised heart by hoisting your sense of humor and spending time with good, supportive boat buddies.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
Love, once again, is on your horizon on the 8th and will improve your attitude and sense of self-esteem. Enjoy it while it lasts, which should be until the 2nd of March. If you chart the right course this could develop into a truly meaningful time. Concentrate on keeping your arrows in their quiver and don't shoot at everything that sails past.

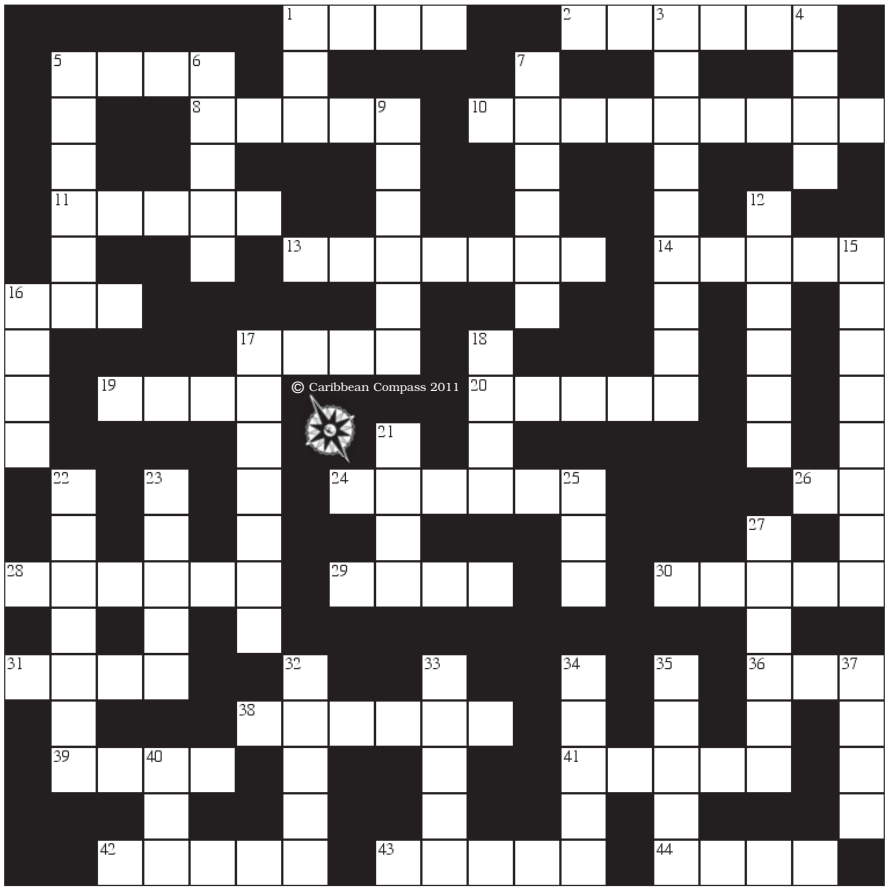
♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
There's still a nice breeze filling your sails of inspiration and your communications skills are running well, so make the most of it while the winds are in your favor.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
There will be a warm gust of wind in your business dealings around the 16th. Make the most of it before the 26th.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
There will be a patch of rough seas in your love life this month that will abate in early February. Hold your course and let your sense of humor take the helm.

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Compass Cruising Crossword



'THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS'

ACROSS

1) One more than 8 Across
2) Win silver for this place
5) 2 Across day of the workweek (abbrev.)
8) This number!
10) Plump brown game bird
11) Number of 27 Down hens
13) "Four _____ 30 Across"
14) Win bronze for this place
16) Number of toes humans have
17) "... my 44 Across ____ 19 Across to me"
19) Delivered unto
20) "Five 39 Across _____"
24) Players of certain wind instruments
26) ___, myself and I
28) "_____ 24 Across piping"
29) A white fruit from which a liquor is made
30) Avians
31) What couples do at midnight on 36 Across Year's Eve
36) Happy ___ Year!
38) "Nine _____ dancing"
39) Yellow precious metal
41) Direction in which to sally
42) "6 Down _____ a-swimming"
43) The number after ninth
44) Not false

DOWN

1) Alcoholic egg drink
3) 'The 12 Days of _____'
4) Canines
5) "Two _____ doves"
6) Good luck number
7) "Six 33 Down a-_____"
9) A dozen
12) Rigid tubing
15) "9 Down _____ drumming"
16) Song
17) "16 Across lords a-_____"
18) "...and a 10 Across in a 29 Across _____"
21) Number of gold rings
22) "Eight maids a-_____"
23) 30 Acrosses of peace
25) ___day: Sabbath, for many
27) Nationality of Parisians
32) Female servants
33) Famously silly birds
34) Date before Three Kings Day
35) January is the _____ month
37) 30 Across have this for an arm
40) Tenor and bass are ___ voices

Solution on page 53

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The LOST City

by Jennifer Gay



Everyone has heard about mermaids but have you ever seen one? There has been one reported sighting in Carriacou and now Alice was about to make that two. Alice is a young girl who lives on a boat in Tyrrel Bay. Today was her birthday so she decided to go to Anse la Roche for the day all by herself.

When she got there the beach was deserted. She walked along looking for shells and then suddenly she heard a faraway wailing and screaming. Alice looked around and saw a head bobbing around in the water. Alice quickly jumped into the water to go and help whoever it was. When she got there she saw it was a mermaid with long flowing golden blond hair with a tiara on her head.

"What is your name?" the mermaid asked.

"I'm Alice, who..." she didn't finish her sentence because she was dragged under by the mermaid. Once underwater Alice found that she could breathe. She turned around and found the mermaid staring at her. "Who are you?" Alice asked.

"My name is Anastasia," the mermaid replied, "I am the Princess of the lost city, but one day three years ago when I had gone out of the city exploring, I came back and the city had disappeared. The only things left were a tablet of paper, a pencil, and a note that said 'Alice will draw the lost city and it will appear', So when you said your name was Alice I had to see if it was really you. Here is everything you need to draw, so will you try?"

"Of course I will!" exclaimed Alice grabbing the pad of paper and the pencil. "Now tell me exactly what it looked like and I will draw what you say, but don't look at it until I'm done."

"Okay, here is everything I remember..." Anastasia poured out her memories and Alice drew everything like she heard it.

"I'm almost done," said Alice, "but first draw the symbols around the gate for me right here."

"That's easy," said Anastasia as she wrote them down, "I remember them so well. I spent a lot of time trying to figure it out. I never could find out the meaning, but maybe you can." Anastasia wrote out a series of strange markings. Some were made of straight lines and others curved.

Alice looked at it and exclaimed, "I know that code! It says 'If the princess leaves the lost city alone it will disappear.' That's why it disappeared! You left alone to explore, so the city disappeared."

"I've left alone before though," said Anastasia sounding confused. She thought some more and then realized, "Oh, now I remember that was the first time I was allowed out alone."

"Well I guess you can't go out alone again," said Alice laughing. "That sure was a once in a lifetime pleasure. Now look at this picture and you might find the lost city."

"You're right; that was a once in a lifetime pleasure," Anastasia laughed. Then after she looked at the picture and looked back up she squealed with delight. The lost city was back and her parents, the King and Queen, were swimming out to find her. Anastasia swam into their arms and promised never to leave the city alone again. She told them how Alice brought back the city so they swam over to thank her.

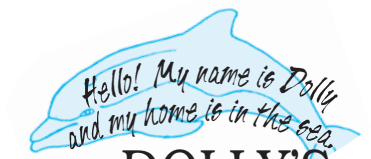
"Thank you so much Alice," the King and Queen said. "You are welcome any time. Just come when the beach is deserted or swim down and tell any mermaid you see 'Alice is here to see Princess Anastasia' and they will take you to her immediately."

"Well thanks for inviting me back. It was fun meeting Anastasia and I will certainly come to visit sometimes. I have to go now before my parents think I'm lost but I will be back soon. Bye, everyone!" With that Alice left but she would be back soon to visit Anastasia.

Next time you go to Carriacou go to Anse la Roche and see if you can find Anastasia. You never know, Alice might be there too.

Jennifer Gay is 13 years old and has been living on S/V Opus *in the Caribbean for two years.*

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

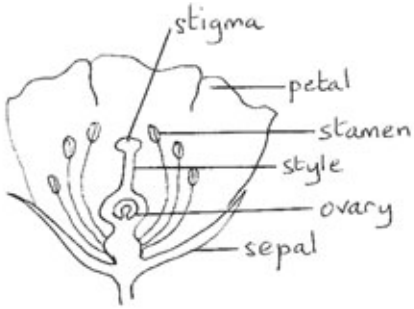
by Elaine Ollivierre

Before we look at how mangroves reproduce, let's look at plant reproduction in general. Some plants (like the papaya tree) have separate male trees and female trees but most flowering plants have both male and female reproductive organs. The male parts are the stamens and the female parts are the stigma, style and ovary (*see diagram*). Pollen is produced in the stamens and is carried either by wind, water, insect or some other means to the stigma, usually of another flower. The pollen grain grows down the style to the ovary where it fuses with an ovule and forms a seed. The ovary forms a fruit around the seed.

So far, this is a general description of how ALL plants produce seeds. What happens to the seeds afterwards depends on the type of plant. Seed dispersal is carried out in several different ways. Some seeds simply drop off the parent plant and grow where they land. Some are blown away by wind or float away in water. Some fruits are eaten by birds or animals and the seeds will pass through the creature and be deposited far away. Some seeds have prickles which stick to an animal's fur (or a human's clothing!) and are carried away. Some fruits explode and shoot their seeds out. **What do mangroves do?**

Mangroves are viviparous. This means that the seeds do not drop off the plant. Instead, they stay on the plant while they grow into seedlings.

Baby mangrove plants look like seedpods. They are called **propagules** and differ in shape according to the type of mangrove. Red mangrove propagules are cigar-shaped. They grow on the tree for up to a year then they drop off into the water below. Some touch bottom and anchor themselves in the mud. Others float horizontally at first, but the root ends keep growing and getting heavier so that, eventually, the heavy end sinks and the propagules float vertically. When they float into a place where the water is shallow enough for the roots to touch bottom, they plant themselves and grow. In rough water, the waves can wash the propagules away so they are most often found where the water is calm.



Black mangrove propagules are shaped like reddish lima beans. White mangrove propagules look like flattened green peas. Both types are too small to anchor themselves anywhere but in very shallow water so they grow closer to land than red mangroves.

Mangroves are an important part of the shoreline environment. They are often cut down for tourism development but this is a dangerous practice as it will leave the shoreline less protected against storms, tsunamis and other natural disasters.

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2011 ©

Home Schooling Aboard:

PROS AND CONS FROM A PRO



by Jill Brayshaw

Extended periods at sea with school age children are sometimes viewed with trepidation on the part of the future education department, read: parents. We home-schooled our son, Henry, now aged 15, for five academic years and emerged from the experience unscathed but with a much better understanding of both our son and the educational process, with several undeniable benefits thrown in.

Embarking on a suitable school programme for your children has been made much easier in some respects as there is a lot of information available on the internet; some programmes are free, some are fee-paying. The first step, however, should be to approach the education service in your hometown to find out if any of the education programmes could be accessed, either on-line or by mail. Try not to have everything only accessible on-line — there will be times when you are on a passage or the WiFi is scratchy in the marina or on anchor.

The next decision is how to structure the school day. This depends largely on your understanding of your children's attention span (and yours too!). We found Henry's attention was probably best in the morning, as early as possible — it is usually cooler then anyway, and for concentrated work, no more than four hours a day.

Your location — on passage, on anchor or in a marina — alters the way work can be done. Dashing between the islands in the swell does not make for a suitable school day, so schedule the algebra test on a day you are in a calm location.

Think carefully about your new role. You have been your children's parents and thus will be now seen in a different light. This is more crucial in the early ages — we began when Henry was nine, so he had already experienced school routine and teachers. By age 12 he was able to work on his own more effectively. There is no easy way around this except to say that I think parent-educators are probably more strict than the strictest teacher you have in your memory, so don't forget, praise is always well received by your little pupils!

Without doubt, one of the marvelous advantages of home schooling on a boat in the Caribbean is the diversity of languages spoken in the island chain. There are so many opportunities for your children to practise what they have learnt in their programme or even begin a new language. Even young children can ask for "deux baguettes" in the *boulangerie* and their efforts will melt the heart of even the surliest baker! French nationality home schoolers can take advantage of the many English-speaking islands to practise their English. Don't forget the Spanish-speaking islands such as Cuba and Margarita, where a little gringo speaking some of the native language is so irresistible.

Where else can you easily conduct a marine biology lesson if not from your boat? Conveniently, one of Henry's biology lessons began, "Go down to the fishmonger and purchase a fish in order to dissect the head to inspect the gills." In one of those bizarre coincidences (certainly for us, as we are not lucky sea-harvesters) we had just caught a 15-pound kingfish, so not only did the fish feed us well, the head was duly dissected and said gills inspected and drawn. A simple shell collection can provide much information about the mollusc species, and that's in addition to fish and sea-creature identification while snorkeling or diving.

Children love doing simple science experiments aboard, such as growing mustard and cress or sprouting seeds. Even boring old mathematics can be made more bearable with course calculations, provisioning bills, even working out the volume of a space and how many packets or boxes will fit in there. Hang on a minute; that sounds very useful! In fact, there is a real possibility that your kid's education will benefit everyone. This is what education specialists all over the world are trying to promote, in that education should be a means to provide your child with a greater understanding of the world at large and you are fitting this in with passage making, boat maintenance, energy production — oh yes, and a little bit of sailing thrown in!

—Continued on next page

Above: Henry still lives aboard, but now attends Beacon High School in Grenada

Below: Reading is a good learning activity underway



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—Continued from previous page

A nice way to encourage English skills is to have your children keep a log. I am of the old school promoting hand-written logs, as you will be able to assess your child's grasp of spelling and grammar without them resorting to the spell-check guru on your lap-top. I would, however, encourage any medium for creative writing, whether it be blog, Facebook, or just plain e-mails to their friends, as any handling of written language is an asset in their programme.

If your children have been to a land school, a good way to promote communication skills in English is to try and set up links between their class or the whole school so that the pupils can contact your children to follow their progress — geography teachers love this especially, it really pinpoints where each individual island is in the Caribbean.

Pique your child's interest in history and politics by introducing them to Caribbean history. There are plenty of forts with cannons to visit. Get them to consider what it must have been like in the days of slavery. (Warning, though, don't go too far down this road as they may start asking questions like, "so people were taken from their native lands, put on a ship, sailed to the Caribbean, made to work, then set free" — hmmm, this may sound too familiar to children fed up in a hot salon being asked to work complicated maths problems!)

The reality of living and schooling on the boat is that you will need a bit of space both for your kids to actually read comfortably and write stuff down. We thought the nav station would be adequate, but on our 40-foot Endeavour it was a bit uncomfortable for a small body so the table in the salon was put to use. What we seriously underestimated was the amount of space needed for storage of school materials. Even if a lot of your programme is on-line you still need some space just to store the paper stuff. For example, if your children make notes on a trip ashore there will be an amount of drawings and hard copy to store.

Unless you are on a catamaran, schoolwork on a passage is difficult — even keeping the books or computer in one place is hard. So be flexible about the programme or lesson plan: get them to read, or if you are home schooling young children ask them to draw animals, birds, etcetera, and talk about the different species, explaining different terms — hoof, fin and wing, for example.



One of the obvious downsides to home schooling is the lack of other children for your children to interact with. It was considered one of the reasons why home schooling was talked down and discouraged in the past. Thankfully this is now unfashionable and the merits of home schooling outweigh the disadvantages. Finding other children on boats in the Caribbean is pretty easy; there are lots of cruiser nets, dinghy docks and activities where you can meet up with other families with children.

Don't think your children will get on with all other children just because they are all in the same boat, so to speak. Kids are just like us, and relationship dynamics being what they are there will be times when children just don't get on with another set of boat kids.

It is sometimes difficult to assess how well your children are getting on, as at times there are no other kids around. It is a very good idea to involve other cruisers in this and find out if there are any skills that could be useful in your home schooling. You will be surprised how diverse our cruiser knowledge is, and this can be put to good use in helping children with individual subjects or even formalising extra tuition. For instance, I am a trained linguist and help out with modern languages where necessary.



Above: Blogs, Facebook or e-mails can improve handling of written language

Left: Students will need a bit of space to do their schoolwork

After five years of home schooling we have now put Henry into Beacon High School, in St. George's, Grenada, and although we were naturally apprehensive about how he would get on, our fears were unfounded. The other children are very interested in our boat and life on the ocean in general and we found that the teachers appreciate the fact that a child who is used to working on his own has a much longer attention span than a normal 15-year-old. Henry has been able to fully integrate with his age group and loves hanging out with his friends at school, proof being that he preferred to have his photo taken in his Beacon uniform for his passport renewal rather than jeans and T-shirt, in order to have a memory of his school days in Grenada.

Don't underestimate your own input; you, as parents, are crucial. You are the ones to set the routine, oversee the duration and content of lessons, and correct the work done. It is not necessary to be a teacher or have been involved in any educational field beforehand. The way certain subjects, maths being one, for example, are taught nowadays is different from when we were at school, so be ready to read one chapter ahead of where your children are so you can be prepared!

Think of your home schooling as benefit to the whole family. Indeed, you will revise stuff you once knew and learn new things as well. We would have welcomed, but never did find, the physics lesson that covered how to fix our ageing Perkins 4-108 engine!

Jill, Andrew and Henry Brayshaw are currently berthed in Port Louis Marina, St. George's, Grenada after a five-year circumnavigation in their Endeavour 40, S/V Escapado. *Jill can be contacted for help with French, German and Spanish tuition on (473) 419-0702 or jill.brayshaw@ymail.com.*

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FLOATING GARDEN



by Flora van Heteren

It all started with the avocado seeds. One season I grew about ten small avocado trees on board *Heros*, our 34-foot wooden sloop, and had to find good garden homes for them before we sailed out of Bequia to go south to Trinidad for our yearly haul-out. That was not hard — a friendly old lady in Hamilton village was happy to take them all!

My longing for a lush garden increased as the cruising years went by, to have greens around me instead of blues in various shades and tones. Instead of seagulls and their shrieking call, I craved the song of the blackbird, or the sounds of the tree frogs and the crickets. One of the latter was brought aboard in the dinghy one time, and its music sent me to sleep many evenings, till it discontinued the same sudden way as it had begun.

After occasionally satisfying my need for a shore life by housesitting, the moving of belongings on and off the boat became a heavy ordeal. I had duties on board as well, so I decided it was time to look into other ways to fulfill my yearning. Why not bring some plants over from the shore, especially while sailing was not a frequent occupation?

After that decision was made, an aloe vera plant, found uprooted and dried up by the side of the road in Union Island, was carried back to the boat and put in some dirt in a plastic container. Our boat was small, and we had not much water, so water from doing the dishes was what it grew upon. This same plant has been re-potted since then several times and has grown so huge that it is now decorated every Christmas, and serves as our Irie Christmas tree. It has bloomed several times, and while in the boatyard in St. Martin, a bananaquit came flying in and out many times to inspect the flowers.

My husband came back from the shore one day in Bequia, carrying a cutting with a very beautiful pink flower to add to the collection. It grows in a pot, hanging outside where it makes us happy with its daily flowers.

From Day One on boats it has been my concern to collect rainwater and store it, so that we never need to buy water. On our big boat now, we have two awnings with two spouts each, of which two go directly into our tanks. The rest goes into two big buckets on deck, for showers and laundry. Here in St. Maarten we haven't bought water for five years, and the quality of the rainwater is better then the brackish water that less fortunate people have to buy from the local gas station.

While "on the hard" for 20 months during a major refit I started a compost heap in a huge plant pot on the ground. We put it on deck when we re-launched. In it I planted the green pepper bush and the spinach vine that had been growing spontaneously in the sand next to the boat. Later I separated them and put the pepper in another pot. After we ate the three small peppers it made, the plant died, and also the spinach gave up after it produced many seeds in the dry season. I supposed it was time for a rest, and as soon as the rainy season started they would grow again. I took all the old dried-up leftovers out of the pot and loosened up the dirt, ready for the new crop to be planted, but to my surprise two papaya trees started to grow in it! I did remember the summer before to have eaten an extremely delicious papaya, the seeds and skin of which I threw in the compost pot, *et voila*, there it was — a new generation! To my great regret I had to plant those trees ashore when they were almost two feet tall.

Just when I had put the papayas in front of the Thai Restaurant, I met the delivery skipper of a Beneteau who had just accomplished the Atlantic crossing from France, together with three crewmembers, all young and new to sailing big distances. He had bought a hot pepper plant in the market in the Canary Islands to keep the crew busy with compassion and care for something alive during difficult times and rough weather. It was the crew's duty to deliver the plant alive to St. Maarten, the end of their sea voyage, and indeed they did very well. It grew four small red-hot peppers, although when it came into my care, it had only three, as they had put the other one in their last evening meal together.

It found a place on deck, re-potted, and after I took away its fruits and pruned some of the branches, it started to grow with new vigour and made flowers every day. Soon I found out that it was necessary to pollinate them myself, as no bees or other insects that are busy with that job were coming over to our anchorage in the middle of Simpson Bay Lagoon. A small soft paintbrush, as for water-colours, was selected, and every day, early in the morning, I brushed gently in the middle of each flower in turn, making sure not to forget to go back to the first one to deposit some pollen on that flower as well. After a week I saw the result of my doings and found great joy in watching the growing of the peppers. Seven it gave this time. It was re-potted again, and after more pruning the whole process was repeated. It was just marvelous to witness this all. Four times it gave us a bunch of peppers, this plant that crossed the Atlantic to grow on our boat, after which it finally died in a spell of bad weather with a lot of wind.

Left: Papyrus is decorative and the ship's cats like to snack on it

Below: Disco relaxing in her pot of common grass

Then there was more spinach, and a spontaneous tomato plant that gave one small tomato just before it was uprooted by the new kitten that we adopted, Disco. She made sure that the agricultural project would fail from then on. Everything was uprooted because she had a problem getting used to the litter box. The only plant she left alone was the aloe vera.



On one of my shopping trips, I saw papyrus growing in a smelly roadside gutter. I remembered that cats like to eat this plant, and took a little of it to put in one of the vacant pots on board. It was received with great enthusiasm by Disco and her new friend Cleo, another one of the feline sort. They ate so much of it that I started a second one, so we have two papyri now. As the cats need other sorts of grass, I bring them back samples of different varieties that are welcomed with more or less gusto. One of the favorite ones I stuck in a pot, and so we have some common grass growing now. No, it hasn't been uprooted — Disco loves to lie in it. (Could this be couch grass?)

So this is my plant story. I hope to inspire some of you, especially the ones that spend more time at anchor then sailing. If it makes you happy to grow something, do it now! If it is impossible to keep your plants when it is time to weigh the anchor, just look for a friendly person on land. There is always room for another plant in a garden.



Pepper pot. A hot-pepper plant that crossed the Atlantic and added spice to many meals



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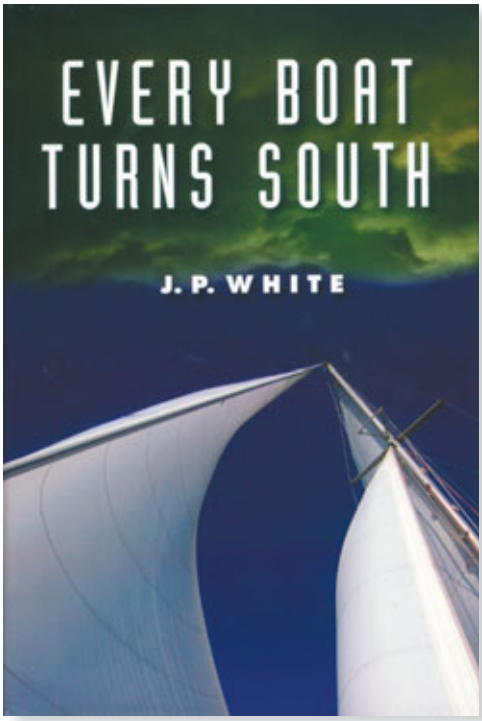
BOOK REVIEW BY BOB BERLINGHOF

Voyage to Redemption

***Every Boat Turns South**, by J.P. White, The Permanent Press, ©2009, hardback, 240 pages. ISBN-13: 978-1-57962-188-9. US$28.*

This novel, the author's first, has a rollicking fantastic plot intertwined with a rather lengthy meditation on dying. The narrator, a 30-year-old yacht delivery skipper, is at his ailing father's bedside after a three-year absence, and the story unfolds as the hero, Matt Younger, confesses where he's been and why he's done a stint in prison in the Dominican Republic.

Younger's father, Skip, a former sea gypsy, is the most interesting character in the novel, and Matt is compelled to witness Skip's passage into the next world while seeking absolution. Matt's guilt and his horrible relationship with his mother are complicated by family history: his older brother, Hale, a straight-A student with Olympic swimming potential, was killed in a drug-related accident at sea, and Matt feels guilt over not trying to persuade him out of it as well as over surviving the ordeal. As a result, Matt dropped out of high school and took to the sea with a phony skipper's license, but he never told his parents what really happened that fateful night. He feels unjustly branded as the "bad brother" who led his lily-white perfect sibling to death, and his relationship with his mother never recovered.



As for the plot itself, there are more holes in it than Swiss cheese. Matt meets a she-devil named Jesse, an evil cokehead psycho with a cobra tattoo who happens to be blonde and gorgeous, and with a gay Frenchman, Philip, as crew, the three take off on a delivery of an ocean-going catamaran from Florida to St. Thomas. The entire plot hinges around the fact that halfway there, Matt is afraid to beat to windward against the Trades and is convinced that the weather won't change for six more months. He waits for three weeks in the Turks & Caicos until the boat's owner fires him. Then he steals 45 kilos of coke and... are you still with me? It just gets more and more unlikely.

Matt winds up in the Dominican Republic where he meets Rosario, a local hooker, and falls in love. Meanwhile the drug lord has tracked down his missing coke, but he doesn't have Matt killed — he ends up offering him another job. Improbability is piled onto improbability and then a splash of coincidence is added.

The weakest character in the book is the balding drug lord, Jimmy Q, who looks like an "unemployed plumber". I found it impossible to believe that this gringo could control the drug trade in the DR to the extent that he did. Jesse keeps turning up like a bad penny and inserting herself in the plot. I didn't buy any of it, but I still had to admire the author's lyrical turn of phrase and perceptive insights regarding family:

The death of a favorite son can twist a rope around a family's heart so tight it can't be cut, dissolved, or undone. We each keep a whetstone ready to sharpen a knife. We each slice down on the hard wet strands of rope, but no matter how hot the blade's edge, it can't bite through the line and no one can break free.

When you ask me, Skip, if I know anything of Hale's disappearance, I say hell no. You punish me with silence. I punish you with lies.

The author's veracity may be challenged when it comes to sailing, as when he says Matt tested the injectors before sailing as if he were checking the dipstick, or when Matt replies, "Is that a tough job?" after Philip says the engine mounts need redrilling. But when it comes to matters of family guilt, he's right on the money. There are some beautiful descriptions of the Dominican Republic's street life, and *Every Boat Turns South* is well written despite its flaws, with "south" being a metaphor for decline and death as well as a place holding the promise of a new life.

This book is available at bookstores or from www.thepermanentpress.com.

THE SKY IN JANUARY

by Scott Welty

The Planets in January

MERCURY - At nearly maximum elongation. Rising about 0500 hours just off the tip of Scorpio.

VENUS - Rises at around 0300 to 0400 hours all month. Pretty morning star!

EARTH - Sets at around noon all month… if you're ON MARS!

MARS - No Mars for you this month! Up in the daytime all month.

JUPITER - Setting between 2200 and 2300 hours all month.

SATURN - Rising around midnight all month.

Sky Events This Month

1st - Pretty crescent moon rising with Mercury and Venus (see Figure 1).



FIGURE 1

3rd - Earth at perihelion (see below).

4th - New Moon

9th - Moon and Jupiter set together (see Figure 2).



FIGURE 2

19th - Full Moon

24th - Saturn and the Moon rise together in the east at about midnight.

Perihelion

Happy New Year and, as happens every year (well, so far), the Earth makes its closest approach to the sun on January 3rd. Not much to notice as the Earth's orbit is only slightly elliptical. Of course that's no reason to NOT have a party!

The Gemini Twins

This is a pretty easy constellation to find (see Figure 3). Castor is the one on the left and Pollux the one on the right — although being twins I often get them confused. Pollux is of particular interest as it is one of many stars we now know to have planets like our very own sun has. The discovery of extra-solar planets is fairly new and the methods being used to detect them are quite extraordinary and rapidly evolving.

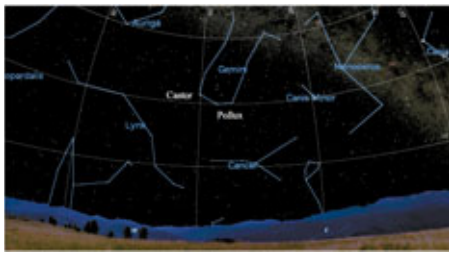


FIGURE 3

First of all, don't bother getting out your Steiners. No planets have been imaged directly. That is, there are no telescope pictures of these planets like we have of our own solar system. Even the closest ones are on the order of 20 to 30 light years away. A light year is how far light travels in a year. Compare that to our own solar system, where it takes light at most several hours to get to a planet from our sun (four hours to Neptune!). Like all planets, these extra-solar ones do not emit light of their own but only the feeble reflected light from their star. Also, to try to image them from Earth you have the problem of the star washing out any light that might be coming from the planet.

So, how do we know they are there?

At first we were able to detect a slight 'wiggle' in the star itself. This can only be explained by a planet circling the star. True orbital motion involves a star and a planet jointly orbiting a balance point between them. Because a star is many orders of magnitude heavier than a planet, that puts this balance point very near (and probably inside) the star so the wiggle is slight. This method, then, tended to only detect freakish systems with Jupiter-size planets orbiting in Mercury-size orbits! Certainly none of these are on the list for possible life forms.

A more recent method involves putting a telescope on a satellite and having it stare at the same place in the sky for a long time. This is the ongoing Kepler mission. Computers monitor the brightness of each star in the field and look for periodic dimming of that star. This can indicate that a planet has passed in front of the star, robbing us of some of the light. This method can reveal a wealth of information including the mass and size of the planet. From the light that passes around the edge of the planet we can also determine if there is an atmosphere and what its components are. Think about THAT! We're probing the makeup of a planet that we can't see that is maybe 30 light years away… that's about 200 trillion miles!

Here's some stats on this planet named HD 62509 b (why do we let astronomers be in charge of the naming?). Mass is about 2.3 Jupiters. Distance to Pollux = 1.64 x Earth - sun distance. Orbital period is 589.6 days (wow… precise!). Pollux itself has a mass of about 1.7 times that of our sun and is 34 light years away. Notice this planet, although huge, has orbital characteristics not so different from Earth. (Information is from a very nice website: http://planetquest.jpl.nasa.gov. Go there and you can 'explore' these newfound worlds for yourself.)

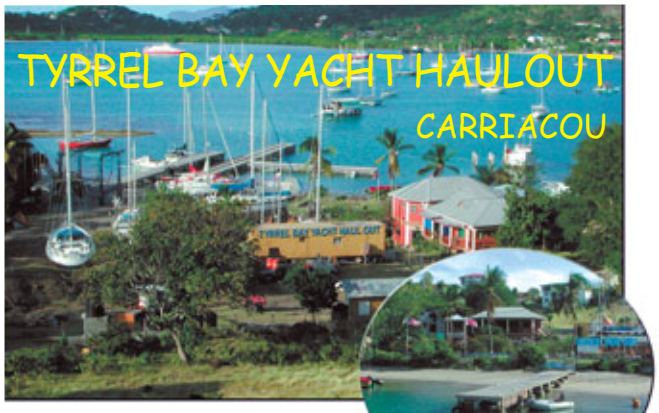
And we're just getting started. We've been looking through telescopes in one way or another for over 400 years since the time of Galileo. Now we are 'seeing' farther than ever and using brand-new techniques. What will all this reveal in another 400 years?

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

Planning a trip to Pollux to visit HD 62509 b? Call ahead for reservations… of course it will take 34 years for your call to get there and another 34 years to hear the reply: " …press 1 for Klingon, press 2 for Romulan…"

Happy New Year, everybody!

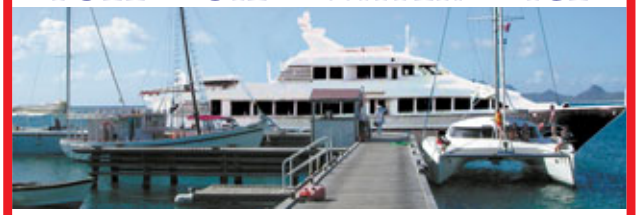
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The Chocolate Connection

by J. Wynner



A cocoa pod on the tree at the estate in Moka

Ever give a thought to the chocolate you're enjoying while cruising the Caribbean? Well, the farther south you sail in the archipelago the better your chances for learning more about the genesis of that chocolate bar, drink, cake, dessert, or whichever way you favour the flavour.

Trinidad is one place to go for that chocolate connection. If you like the great outdoors, a visit to a cocoa estate will delight you. It is a nature outing with a difference — interesting, informative and pleasurable.

According to a recent report in the local *Newsday* newspaper, there is a "Trinidad & Tobago cocoa will be king again" thrust on to help restore the domestic cocoa industry to its former glory — and glory T&T cocoa did have, once upon a time. In 1921 the country harvested 30,000 tonnes of one of the finest grades of cocoa in the world, compared to 600 tonnes at present. Currently, talks are being held with an international chocolatier who is prepared to purchase all the cocoa from small farmers and to work with them to help bring their products up to international standards for export.

Trinidad cocoa farmers usually sell their cocoa to a local exporter who in turn ships it abroad where it undergoes more drying and grading before it is pulverized into chocolate powder. The large international chocolate producers buy T&T's cocoa, which is used chiefly for flavoring and blending with the imported Ivory Coast cocoa utilized as mass or bulk.

So if you're looking for something unique to do while docked in Chaguaramas, you can be part of the first wave to witness Trinidad's cocoa renaissance. Make a day of it and enjoy a historical and cultural outing that focuses on a cocoa plantation where you come face to face with cocoa trees and learn first-hand all about the growing, pruning and maintenance procedures.

There are one or two professional companies that organize these tours. One of these is Caribbean Discovery Tours (www.caribbeandiscoverytours.com). On request they will provide excursions to Brasso Seco or one of the other cocoa estates along the northern range where a sumptuous Creole lunch is served in a grand old estate house. However, reservations are preferred long in advance — the longer the better.

But a three- or four-day advance reservation should do at the working Carmel Valley cocoa estate located a little north of the St. Andrews golf course at Moka in Maraval, where the proprietor himself or his family members provide conducted tours of their cocoa fields. (Wayne Johnson, cuspec@hotmail.com, tel [868] 629-3840, cell [868] 290-3911.) On arrival, guests are greeted with a drink made from freshly squeezed fruit in season grown on the estate, before trekking through the fields. During the trek you will see a cocoa house with its sliding roof which, when pulled back, exposes the cocoa beans to the sun to dry. Visitors are also introduced to the different processing stages, including "dancing", "sweating", and grading the beans. If the tour is conducted on a day when these activities are not taking place, guests can witness them at the end of the tour via a short video clip about cocoa production shown on the veranda.



While going through the fields, you can taste the cocoa bean directly from the pod, and also learn all you ever wanted to know about cocoa and more — the best soil conditions for growing cocoa, different types of cocoa, harvesting, extracting beans from the pod, etcetera.

The estate in Moka rears rabbits too, and included as part of the tour is a visit to the rabbit hutches where the entire rearing process is explained. And that's not all. The excursion also takes in a trip to the beehives that are located on the estate's steeper terrain. The hike ends in the honey room, where guests are taken through the various stages of production from extracting the honey from the frames to the bottling of 'nature's syrup'.



Above: Ever wonder where that delicious flavor comes from? The Caribbean produces exceptionally tasty cocoa

Right: A pod split open to show the pulp-covered beans

Back at the estate house, a delicious home-cooked three-course lunch of local produce, with a choice of rabbit, chicken or fish as the main course, is presented on an elegantly set table on the veranda. Wine is provided throughout the meal. After dessert and coffee served at the table, guests mingle around the large television in the sitting area of the veranda where they are offered a hot drink of estate-grown cocoa, flavoured with cinnamon and bay leaf. Enjoy!



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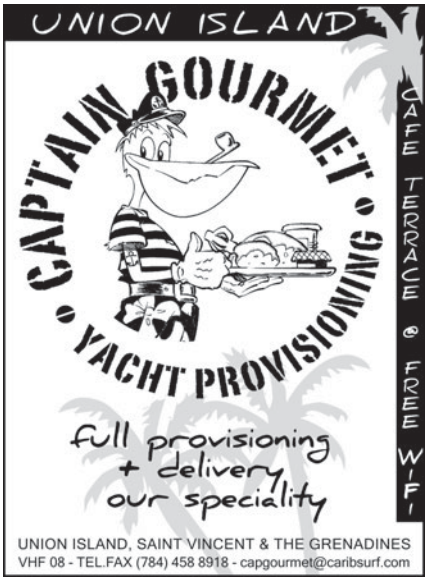
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A Refreshing Dip — But Not in the Sea

I'm not sure when 'dips' first surfaced, but they are still popular at both casual functions and those more highbrow, and are a natural for yachtie potlucks and cockpit sundowners.



Many of my youthful excursions into different food types took place with my parents while at the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver, British Columbia. The show is the west coast Canadian counterpart to many exhibitions taking place in large cities and small communities worldwide. My father loved the Food Building, where free samples of all kinds were always available.

Line-ups are also part of most exhibition experiences, especially to the Food Building where some different, tasty free food samples were in abundance. Dips, except of the watery kind in the ocean or pool, were new to many of us then. Small dry pieces of bread were offered with the encouragement to 'dip' them into various containers of sour cream and herbs. Although double dipping wasn't allowed, my mum thought the whole process to be somewhat revolting, unsanitary and unsophisticated at the very least. Mum participated only with reluctance. My father on the other hand not only considered the food a bonus but also looked on the food queues as a chance to talk to people.

Dad seemed to know almost everyone in the whole world, I thought. In fact, it was simply that he spoke with virtually everyone he came in contact with. You never wanted to send my dad into a general store in the middle of nowhere to ask for directions to anywhere. After 30 or 40 minutes, he would return to the car and regale us with how he had met a friend of a friend whose cousin he had worked with while stringing telephone wire across... etcetera, etcetera. On one trip to visit our cousins in Seattle, Washington, my dad stopped to get directions. Half an hour later he returned to the car with a story about the person he had met and (holding up two small tins) how this person had encouraged him to try a newfangled Spanish dip.

"It's made of beans," Dad said. My dad would try anything made from beans. He sometimes would brag that in more than 30 years of eating bag lunches, his favorite sandwich was cold pork and beans on buttered bread. It really is quite amazing if you stop and consider how bean dishes of all kinds have nourished families of all sizes over the years throughout the world. My family tried bean dip for the first time those many years ago and pronounced it a great casual food.

Now decades later, my wife, Willa, and I often look for the very same dip when we are in the USA. One such trip yielded two jars of a spicy black bean dip that we found even more delicious than the regular bean variety. It was double the price of the regular dip but the taste was excellent. Imagine our disappointment when the last morsel was swabbed from the bottom of the jar.

I noticed that all the ingredients listed on the jar's label were readily available and decided to try making my own bean dip. Personalized hot sauces and other condiments, made by experimenting with the contents found listed on the label of a commercial product, have become a part of my culinary repertoire. I'm sure I could have been a mad scientist or even possibly a uni-bomber had I fallen in with the wrong people when growing up.

Here then is my personal take on black bean dip. Various kinds can be easily made either from a tin of kidney beans, black beans or refried beans. The choice is up to you. This dip, plus a large bag of fresh tortilla chips and a supply of cold beer goes a long way to making your next casual deck party a success. *¡Olé!*

Black Bean Dip
1 tin black beans, drained
1 Tablespoon (15 ml) onion, finely minced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1/4 Cup (50 ml) canola or olive oil
2 teaspoons (10 ml) apple cider vinegar
1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced
1 teaspoon (5 ml) salt
1/2 teaspoon (2 ml) chili pepper flakes
1 teaspoon (5 ml) sugar

Place all ingredients into a food processor and process until a smooth puree is obtained. Spoon the dip into a decorative glass dish and serve with tortilla chips. This won't keep long in the refrigerator but don't worry, there seldom is any left to refrigerate.

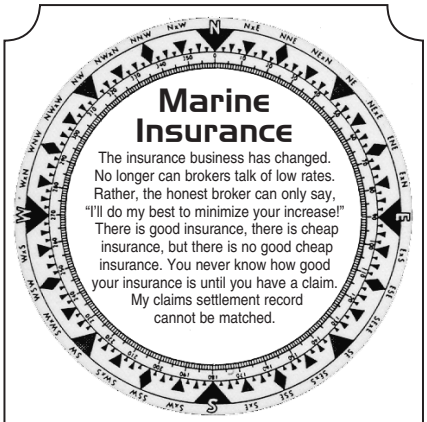
Ross Mavis is a food and travel writer living in Canada. He can be contacted at Ross@innonthecove.com.











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Dear *Compass Readers*,

Caribbean Compass is a printed and on-line publication created on the island of Bequia, part of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. It is a periodical much appreciated by the thousands of cruisers who travel through the islands of the Caribbean, especially sailors who come from all over the globe. Mentioned in a poem entitled 'Pirates of the Southern Caribbean' by the skipper of *S/Y Rocco Relic*, published in the July 2010 issue, is a subject that I have heard talked about on various occasions and that the national press in Venezuela has mentioned on several occasions, without any noticeable effort by the local authorities to resolve these issues.

I am referring to the acts of piracy and robbery on the high seas of sailing vessels that approach our shores, especially from the Eastern Caribbean. The poet refers to the hardship of the sea itself, compounded by the tragedy of being boarded at gunpoint and the traps that the Venezuelan pirates lay in their paths: "…and the Venezuelan pirates some traps for us have laid". The author refers to having to sail at night without running lights in order to avoid being detected and pursued. Many are boarded or confronted and he also writes that many are left in peace only when "the yachtmen's guns are seen". Recently, a Venezuelan diplomat was telling me about sailing from Puerto La Cruz to Trinidad with a friend and being chased for several hours by these delinquents of the sea.

The central question is: what is the coastguard doing to help these tourists who today represent a nautical industry that is beneficial to many Caribbean countries including Venezuela, which not long ago was considered a country with a major capacity for the development of the yachting industry in the region?

It would seem that there are no clear policies in place to address and avoid the terrible image of my country shared by the many internationally flagged vessels that ply the waters of Venezuela. Many sailors have excluded Venezuela as a destination on account of this insecurity. Some negative press in international publications and specialized magazines has made sad mention of this subject. Reports of unanswered emergency calls made to the coastguard are among the often-mentioned frustrations. Without a doubt, this is one of the issues that need to be addressed not only by the nautical authorities but also by the ministry responsible for tourism. It is not enough that we have marvels of nature if those who want to enjoy them cannot count on the proper support and security. This is a theme that needs to be evaluated as part of our tourism policies.

The poet ends by saying how pretty and calm the coastguard boats appear tied to the dock, but are not seen at sea: "They should patrol these waters and get us safely through. This will be good for training and use their boats so new".

Oscar Hernandez Bernalette
Venezuela

Dear *Compass*,

I would like to congratulate Jerry Stewart of Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout facility on his brilliant letter in the October issue of *Compass* concerning the Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Park. As one of the most knowledgeable persons involved with maritime conditions around Carriacou, his suggestions and proposals should be seriously considered.

Mike Hatch
Las Tortugas
L'Esterre, Carriacou

Dear *Compass*,

While there are many issues I could respond to from the November issue's cover story, "Time to Re-Think Leeward St. Vincent", one issue in particular needs to be addressed. This is concerning swimming at Trinity Falls.

The unfortunate deaths of the three Czech citizens at Trinity Falls this past summer were not due to wet unstable ground, but rather (as is well known locally) that these unfortunate people were advised that it was safe to swim in the whirlpool at the bottom of the falls. The Czech woman went in to swim in the whirlpool, got into difficulties, her husband and his friend went to her aid, and all three were drowned.

The swirling vortex of water in the whirlpool is extremely dangerous and has claimed at least six lives in the past ten years. Anyone advising visitors that it is "safe" to swim in the whirlpool does not know, understand or care about the extreme forces of water at work at the bottom of the Trinity Falls. While the river and falls do flood during the rainy season, which cause additional difficulties, at no time of year should the whirlpool be considered safe to swim in, and it is grossly irresponsible for anyone to advise others to swim in the whirlpool. [*Editor's note: The article mentioned did not recommend swimming in the whirlpool.*]

I have been taking visitors to Trinity Falls for more than 20 years and always advise people never to get out of their depth or out of reach of the shore when cooling off in the waters at the base of the falls. Those who have failed to heed my advice have invariably found themselves being carried uncontrollably around the whirlpool, where even the strongest swimmers have difficulties in these swirling churning waters. On more than one occasion only that I had a rescue rope ready to throw to the person in difficulties, the death toll at Trinity Falls could well be higher.

Trinity Falls are truly amazing, but extreme care is required by everybody visiting who wishes to cool off in the whirlpool at the bottom of the falls, no matter what time of year you choose to visit.

Yours,
Donnaka O'Fionnalaigh
www.hiking-bequia.com

Dear *Compass* Readers,

The section entitled A Fresh Look at Security Facts in the November article "Time to Re-Think Leeward St. Vincent" draws some unwarranted conclusions from the reports listed on www.safetyandsecuritynet.com. These conclusions are not unusual but it is appropriate to clear the air on what that data tells us.

First of all, the data should be viewed as an indicator or barometer of what is happening. The website does not list reports for all incidents which occur throughout the island chain; Trinidad, as demonstrated by the recent letters in the *Compass*, is a case in point, where there have been anywhere from one to 17 incidents, depending on which source you use. The Caribbean Safety and Security Net receives very few reports from Trinidad, with only four in the time period January through October of this year. Any assumption that the data is complete is in error.

Furthermore, all reports are classed into one of five groups, based on a suggestion several years ago, to delineate the more serious crimes. Nine outboard thefts in Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou, for instance, is certainly not as serious as nine robberies in Chateaubelair, St. Vincent.

Lastly, any attempt to perform a statistical analysis of any kind on this data is futile, as there is no means of normalizing the data. For instance, a government will publish statistics about crime and it can do that because it knows how many reports have been made and the number of citizens. Without a yacht population figure against which to balance the reports of crimes against yachts, the number of reports is raw data only. Lacking that piece of information one cannot say that a particular anchorage is as safe as or less safe than any other anchorage.

We can, however, form some opinions, and that is the purpose of the data provided on the website. With a population in Tyrrel Bay, for instance, of between 30 and 80 yachts throughout the year, the nine reports mentioned above are considerably less serious than the nine robberies in Chateaubelair, where the yacht population is possibly ONLY two boats per day during high season. In fact, I suspect the reason we have not had any reports from Chateaubelair in the past year is that very few yachts visit that anchorage!

The whole point of the listings of reports is so that cruisers can make informed decisions about where to visit and how to behave while there. Those decisions should be based on valid information, though, rather than on manipulation of the data to make a point.

Melodye Pompa
S/Y Second Millennium
for the Caribbean Safety and Security Net
SSB 8104.0 at 1215 UTC
www.safetyandsecuritynet.com

Editor's note: We passed Melodye's letter on the to the author of "Time to Re-Think Leeward St. Vincent", Ellen Birrell, for response, which follows.

Dear *Compass*,

Melodye's points are well taken. I appreciate her desire to clarify.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

I made some of those distinctions and used Chris Doyle's quote regarding "anchorage populations" to help readers consider that Leeward St. Vincent doesn't get many yachts these days.

I stand by my encouragement of cruisers to visit St. Vincent.

Ellen Birrell
Yacht Boldly Go

Dear Compass,

I was interested to see that in the December issue's Caribbean Eco-News you commented constructively on the Costa Rica "world shame" e-mail and want to share the detailed information below which WIDECAST has used on other occasions in response to this e-mail:

I don't know how mass circulation of these photos got "started", but the originator would have been wise to have done his/her homework first. The photos depict a formal co-management model between the University of Costa Rica, a community organization called ADIO, and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MINAET) in Costa Rica. It's a legal harvest of surplus eggs from the Olive Ridley *arribada* colony at Playa Ostional on the Pacific coast — an arribada is a mass nesting of sea turtles, characteristic of Kemp's and Olive Ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys kempii* and *Lepidochelys olivacea*).

In such a nesting strategy, the turtles will nest simultaneously with the result that natural predators may be "overwhelmed" and sufficient numbers of eggs/hatchlings are produced to maintain the species. Arribadas can involve many thousands of turtles nesting day and night for several days. The downside is that the turtles regularly dig up each other's eggs, causing destruction not only to those eggs, but, due to bacterial decomposition of the broken eggs, gross contamination of the surrounding sand. As a result, arribada beaches often realize a very small (1-2%) hatch success. The scenario may seem maladapted, but in reality the Olive Ridley is the most numerous sea turtle species in the world, so the strategy clearly reflects a successful evolutionary strategy.

The egg harvest at Ostional is a strongly regulated and legal, emphasizing a sustainable harvest of eggs that are doomed to be destroyed by subsequent arribadas.

The program is regulated under a co-management model between University of Costa Rica, a community organization called ADIO, and the Costa Rica Ministry of Natural Resources. Every five years the program is reviewed and the egg harvest management plan is reviewed and updated as needed, then submitted to the Government for approval.

The current plan notes that the current density of nests is 11 nests per square metre (Olive Ridleys can only sustain about two nests per square metre without impacting hatchling emergence success).

During the arribadas (which happen more or less monthly), the females dig up the nests of previous nesting events. Due to the high level of egg breakage, putrefaction rates are very high and the resulting high levels of fungus and bacteria contaminate 100 percent of nests, reducing emergence success to near zero. Removal of surplus eggs has actually helped the population because it increases the hatch success rate by five percent.

Eggs can only be harvested during the first 36 hours of an arribada. To be declared an "arribada", more than 80 adult females must be nesting simultaneously.

The egg harvest program employs 300 local people and the gross income from the program is about US$150,000. About 15 percent of the eggs are harvested. While there are constant concerns about the balance between maintaining the community's desire and tradition to harvest and consume (or sell) the eggs and the need to protect this precious resource, on balance the program is widely viewed as a progressive example of pragmatic conservation.

Bottom line: The program is legal, it is well regulated, and the turtle population is rising. Please take the time to learn more about it. For example, see www.ecocostas.org/index.php/component/content/article/45-socios/189-cinco-casos-de-manejo-de-recursos-naturales-en-costa-rica.

Emma Doyle
WIDECAST

Dear *Compass* Readers,

The reaction by participants of volunteer security patrols in Chaguaramas, Trinidad in December's Reader's Forum to my prior reference to "vigilante cowboys" was as predictable as the collapse of these same patrols. Just as predictable was the tone of the respondents who chose to attack my character and veracity rather than the matters I have been bringing to public attention.

Whether the patrols were "vigilante", "volunteer" or "neighborhood watch" is academic, as they now go down in history as another ineffective attempt to stem the crime rate in the anchorage. During the just over three months that these on-again, off-again, patrols were operating there were at least ten motors and four dinghies stolen from both Chaguaramas and TTSA. I leave it to your interpretation of how effective these patrols were. (I have confirmed and recorded these figures with the 'Trinidad Cruising Sailors' database.) The end result of these patrols was simply to frustrate the campaign to have a permanent, professional patrol installed.

I do not doubt that those who volunteered their services did so with all good intentions but in discussion with one cruiser who volunteered his service he advised that for his patrol he was alone in the patrol boat and had no radio, cell phone or even a torch. The Coast Guard, being aware of the danger these people were placing themselves in, thought these patrols ill conceived. Perhaps my military and security industry background also allowed me to see aspects of these patrols that the untrained were oblivious to.

The anchorage in Chaguaramas is, in my opinion, no different from a car park at a large shopping mall. We have a right to expect that our car/boat will be secure while we are spending our money in that shopping mall. How many of you would volunteer to patrol Walmart's car park?

True, I did offer my services, professionally, and why shouldn't I?

As I have been portrayed as such a negative influence on the "yacht industry" here in Trinidad it came as some surprise when the Chaguaramas Business Community asked me to give an interview with a national newspaper. When I queried this request they said that my letters were getting attention from the authorities.

There is and has been, I suspect for a long time, a culture of downplay and cover-up of incidents in Trinidad aimed at protecting its image. This is not restricted to commercial interests but also involves an element of the yachting community. Just ask the Caribbean Safety and Security Net how much information they receive from Trinidad.

I stand by every statement, claim, observation and statistic that I have presented over the course of this lengthy exchange of views. When taken to task I have met face to face with those who have questioned my content and verified all of it. I have throughout met regularly with members of the CBC and YSATT to ensure that what I report is factual.

My loudest detractors and deriders have been from within the yachting community. Mr. Perrin and Mrs. Dunlop have been the loudest of them, so no surprise at their December letters (although Alan Dunlop's name appears).

It has now been announced that as from November 26th, there is a professional security patrol in the Chaguaramas anchorage funded by local businesses. Unfortunately even this presence has not received the blessing of the CG.

With the responsibility for the security of the anchorage finally accepted by the yacht industry, it is hoped that the problems that have plagued last year's crop of cruisers are now in the past, and those of you thinking of visiting or returning to Trinidad this year should now have a safer place.

I wish a successful and prosperous year for the businesses of Chaguaramas, in particular Jesse James, Carlos Fensom and Niels Lund, who are working hard to improve the experience for the yacht community in Trinidad.

I would like to thank the *Compass* for recognizing that Trinidad stood, in the long term, to benefit from the, at times, negative publicity that was necessary to get things moving in the right direction, and facilitating the medium for the required dialogue.

Happy New Year!
Ron Llewellyn
S/V Sula

Dear *Compass* Readers,

This is to those of you who have complained that the Sailors' Horoscopes are sometimes "too negative".

Throughout millennia astrologers — like weather forecasters — have been trusted to warn people about potentially problematic conditions and thus help you prepare to deal with them. Our job is not to gloss over negative influences, but to make you aware of them. Remember that these are just influences — what occurs in the end is entirely up to how you, Dear Reader, deal with them.

Thanks for your input and know that I care about you all and therefore do not want to lie to you or misrepresent what's in store!

Have a Happy New Year,
Madame Claire Voyage

Dear *Compass* Readers,

As the new season is upon us I felt it was time to update the readers of *Compass* of the latest news from Tobago. There has been much comment in *Compass* and other publications of late about the problems facing cruisers in Trinidad. I would like to take this opportunity to point out to readers that while "no man is an island entire of itself", Tobago is. Part of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, we are separated from our sister island by far more than the 23 miles of Galleons Passage.

—Continued on next page

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



Real sailors use Street's Guides for inter-island and harbor piloting directions, plus interesting anecdotes of people, places and history. Street's Guides are the only ones that describe ALL the anchorages in the Eastern Caribbean.

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- "Transatlantic with Street" documents a sailing passage from Ireland to Antigua via the Cape Verdes. 2 hours
- "Antigua Week '85" is the story of the engineless yawl Iolaire racing round the buoys to celebrate her 80th birthday. 1 hour
- "Street on Knots" demonstrates the essential knots and line-handling skills every sailor should know. 1 hour
- "Streetwise 1 and 2" give tips that appeared in the popular video Sailing Quarterly, plus cruises in the Grenadines, Venezuela and southwest coast of Ireland

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HURRICANE TIPS! Visit www.street-iolaire.com for a wealth of information on tracking and securing for a storm.

Street's Guides and DVDs are available at all Island Waterworld stores and at Johnson's Hardware, or from www.iUniverse.com and www.seabooks.com

—*Continued from previous page*

In Tobago we lock our dinghies out of habit, not out of necessity, the island is welcoming to visiting yachts and islanders seek to enhance visitors' experiences.

While Tobago is a cruiser's paradise, we have not had a problem-free summer; I wanted to take this opportunity to let readers know what Store Bay Marine Services (SBMS) and other interested members of the community are doing to address them.

With regard to the noise pollution in Store Bay, I am happy to report that the situation has improved vastly. Bago's Beach Bar has now had a change of management. With this change, we have seen a dramatic decibel drop and the bar is a friendly and welcoming drinking hole where yachties can enjoy a quiet beer and food while overlooking the anchorage at Store Bay. There is a nice mix of locals, yachties and expats alike, which makes for a very pleasant atmosphere.

We, like many others in the Caribbean, are still trying to deal with the regulation and safety issues regarding jet-skis. Unfortunately over the summer one visiting yacht sustained damage after a jet-ski collided with it while at anchor. However, the recent ruling in the Seventh Civil Court of Trinidad in the case of Quesnel & Laso v. Tobago House of Assembly & Pigeon Point Heritage Park has clearly established that the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) has a duty of care to prevent injury to users of the water. With this in mind and the inherent dangers that these craft present to all water-users, the Association of Tobago Dive Operators, SBMS and other marine interests have started to lobby the relevant THA ministries and Coastguard to ensure that the existing legislation is enforced and if necessary further legislation is enacted to prevent any more accidents or injuries.

The mooring buoys which were laid in 2008 in Store Bay remain free of charge, however they also remain free of maintenance. We have contacted the Ministry of Fisheries about this and are still in discussions with them; in the meantime I would advise all cruisers to anchor in Store Bay, rather than pick up a buoy. At present fewer than half of the original buoys remain so there is plenty of space.

We are also in contact with the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Fisheries with regard to the building of a dinghy dock at Cable Beach/Store Bay to give both beach users and cruisers a bit more space.

We look forward to seeing you in the coming season and if you require any information on Tobago please visit our website www.sbms.co.tt or feel free to e-mail info@sbms.co.tt.

John Stickland, Operations Director
Store Bay Marine Services Limited
Tobago

Dear *Compass*,

The pastime of bird watching is now taking a tenacious hold on the consciousness of Vincentians. Even expatriates are turning to St. Vincent & the Grenadines to realize this passion in our local species that are to be found in our parks, valleys and nature trails. We must not become misguidedly overwhelmed, however, with this booming passion so that we look too far afield and thus miss out on our own backyard or, for that matter, front yard birding activities.

On April 26th 2008 I sat with my brother Richard and his wife Abbie and their two daughters under their porch in Bequia and was treated to a spectacular display that to Richard and family had been already tested and proven. I waited eagerly with them for the dogs to abandon their bowls, which were out in the front yard. We were not the only ones in wait. A few blackbirds too waited on the wall of the garden. Finally the dogs had had enough. The birds sprang into action, swooped down to one of the bowls retrieved a pellet of dog food, and returned to the wall to contemplate their next move. This was now to be executed on the other side of the wall, where they would dutifully dip the pellets in a fishpond until they were adequately soaked, thus softened and enlarged. The birds would then return to their perch on the wall, savor the pellets of their labor, and repeat the whole procedure again and again. It was a sight to behold: first the patience exercised in waiting on the dogs to leave the scene, the purposefulness of movement as they dived to secure the pellets, the return to the wall with the pellet in beak for the decision-making process, the execution of plans as the dipping of the pellet is undertaken, then the satisfaction of a mission accomplished on their return to the wall with the soaked, softened and much enlarged pellet in their beaks.

This was an appropriate moment to reflect deeply on the resilience of the birds in our own Spring Valley holding on the mainland's Leeward side. A true bird lover's paradise and sanctuary where many species can be spotted with ease, *Amazona Guildingi*, the national bird of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, reigning among them noble and free.

Birds come, birds go. The true bird watching experience comes, however, when we not only appreciate the bird as being "pretty" but also as smart, purposeful, organized — a true reflection of the many designs to be found in Nature, a feat that only a Grand Creator could have brought about.

Gerelyn John
St. Vincent

Dear *Compass*,

I read with interest Louisa Winter's letter in the December edition of *Compass*, and agree with everything she says about the difference between Tobago and Trinidad. They are two separate islands and Tobago is far nicer. It was my first time there and I found it friendly, easy going and quiet — the sort of laid-back sailing that I haven't experienced on other islands for years. It has beautiful anchorages up and down the coastline and an island charm that will definitely bring me back. There are no big marinas — a plus from my point of view — and you can cruise cheaply, which in this day and age is something definitely to consider. Although it is quiet it certainly doesn't lack anything. While at Store Bay I got WiFi to my boat, there is laundry on the doorstep, and a quiet bar next door where you can sit and have a beer while checking your e-mails and waiting for your laundry. All this, plus you can keep an eye on your boat (although it is so safe here and never heard of any security problems). I also had a problem with my anchor winch fixed perfectly by the marine services shop next to the bar. Really, what more can you ask for? I will definitely be coming back to Tobago.

Carter Hemmings
Yacht Tara

Dear *Compass* Readers,

In light of a number of letters recently received but not published, we'd like to remind those sending letters to the Readers' Forum that we do not publish individual consumer complaints. We also do not publish anonymous letters (i.e. those received without the writer's real name included), and it is important to include an e-mail address, phone number or other way we can contact you if clarification is required.

CC

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

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

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

Send your letters to:
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Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

Caribbean Cruising: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

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Letter of the Month

Dear Compass,

When I tell friends that I live on a boat in the Caribbean the first thing they think is that I daily jump off the boat into the warm, blue Caribbean water and take a swim. Obviously they do not know about dinghies and pirogues speeding through the anchorages where we anchor. There are plenty of places you might not want to swim due to hygienic reasons, but there are also places where you would love to swim, but worry about small boat traffic.



CHUCK SHIPLEY

I swim with a small brightly colored buoy on my back. My prototype swim buoy was just a red balloon tied around my waist. The balloons only lasted for two days before they deflated, and I wanted something I could just grab, put onto my waist and swim. In time I found a pink ball (children's toy ball) about six inches across.



BARBARA SHIPLEY

Swim safely! Reduce the chance of being hit by speeding small craft by wearing a brightly colored swim buoy

I fashioned a harness made of shoelaces glued to the ball with Shoe Goo and I tied this to a web belt. This has lasted for two years and it hangs in the head in between swims.

Fishermen have assured me that my pink ball got their attention. A larger ball will more easily be seen, but will also cause more drag for the swimmer. This is an opportunity to use your imagination and create your own swim buoy with materials you can find in local stores and aboard your boat.

Safe swimming!

Devi Sharp
Arctic Tern



MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2011

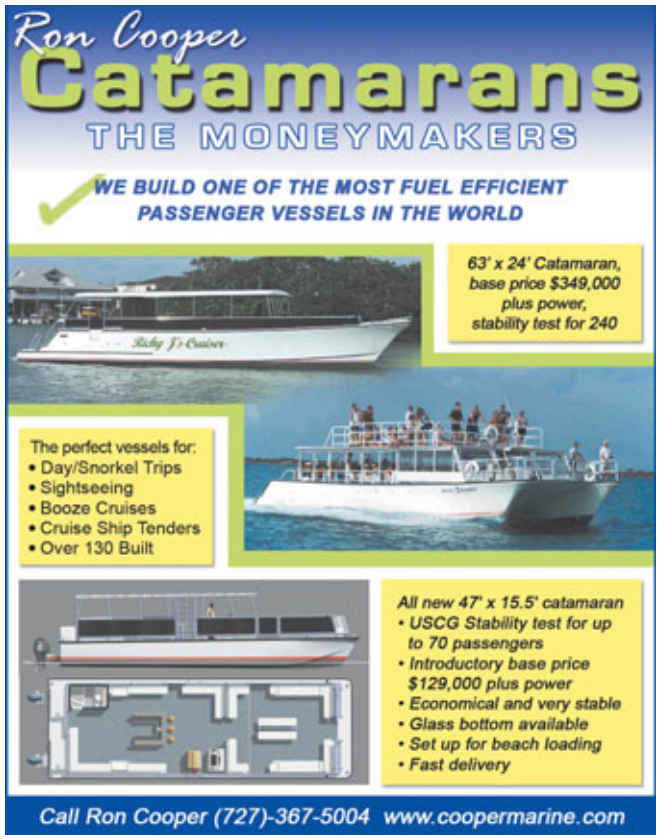
Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this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

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

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

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

January		20	0015	8	1554
DATE	TIME	21	0111	9	1638
1	0925	22	0204	10	1724
2	1022	23	0256	11	1814
3	1118	24	0348	12	1907
4	1211	25	0439	13	2002
5	1301	26	0532	14	2059
6	1346 (new)	27	0626	15	2157
7	1432	28	0721	16	2253
8	1513	29	0817	17	2349
9	1554	30	0912	18	0000 (full)
10	1654	31	1005	19	0043)
11	1715	**February**		20	0136
12	1758	DATE	TIME	21	0230
13	1844	1	1055	22	0324
14	1933	2	1143	23	0419
15	2025	3	1227	24	0516
16	2121	4	1310 (new)	25	0612
17	2219	5	1351	26	0708
18	2318	6	1431	27	0801
19	0000 (full)	7	1512	28	0852



WHAT'S ON MY MIND?

'It's Always Something'

by Liesbet Collaert

Salt Whistle Bay, Mayreau, the Grenadines. "Picture perfect and the star of countless racks of postcards, this white-sand beach defies description" writes Lonely Planet. According to Chris Doyle it is "a beautiful bay with a sweeping half-moon beach". A lot of cruisers say it is gorgeous and one of them even rated it as her favorite place in an overview about her Caribbean experience for *Caribbean Compass*. With all that mouthwatering publicity, it had to be stunning with no room for disappointment!

Irie pulls into the bay. Not bad. Looks like there is enough space and the sweeping beach with exotic palm trees looks very pretty. All three of us need shade on a beach and I have been on the lookout for that quintessential perfect beach with palm trees, white sand and turquoise water for three years. This one is definitely the closest I've gotten. It beckons to be pictured, sat on and walked on! But first we have to anchor, an easy feat in the sandy bottom.

A sportfisherman is anchored, stern line attached to shore, cutting off a third of the bay that way. A little bit later, another powerboat pulls in, stern to the beach. Hmmm, didn't know this was such a popular place for the non-sailors amongst us. Ah, that's why they have a picture of lined-up powerboats in the Salt Whistle Bay section of the Grenadines brochure. Well, I guess this isn't too bad then. But why do they have to take up twice the space by using two anchors? Why don't they just allow everybody space and swinging room by dropping one anchor? (I think I know the answer to that: they don't have opening hatches facing forward, only a back door, never mind the fact that their generator runs non-stop to provide air-conditioning. Oh, and this way the view is better from their verandah in the back as well.) Later in the afternoon, two more sportfishermen show up, throw the bow anchor out and raft up to "the mother ship". By 5:00PM, we have six motorboats in a row with a little gap separating the seventh one. Now that brochure picture starts to make sense.

Every powerboat has an average of ten people on board, mostly kids, so it doesn't take long before we have multiple dinghies buzzing around our boat, some with a wakeboarder behind. The peace is gone, the flat seas as well. Our dog, Darwin, shows his disapproval with a few barks. Snorkelers and swimmers beware, as all hell breaks loose! To the powerboaters' credit, the expected loud music never presents itself. When the tumult continues the following day, we decide to find respite in the quieter environs of Saline Bay.



Looks like the perfect getaway... but I didn't know this was such a popular place for the non-sailors amongst us

A week later, we try Salt Whistle again. Quick peek around the headland: no rafted up powerboats this time, but a monstrous motor yacht instead, bow and stern anchors keeping it in place. Since a sailboat just left when we entered, we took his spot "in the corner", close to the beach. Nice!

An hour later, a powerboat arrives and fixes itself very close to us, stern anchor towards the beach. Of course. If we swing (and we will since we are facing south right now and multiple squalls are headed this way), we will hit him. The crew comes over in a fancy super-dinghy and after hearing we are spending the night, offers his assistance: "If you get too close to us, I can help you move your anchor!" We? Move OUR anchor? After our surprised "We're not moving!" he re-anchors a bit farther away. Half an hour later *Irie* has her bum 30 feet from the beach, rudders one foot above the sandy floor. We have our own worries now, but it sure is nice to walk right off our back steps to the beach! The night is peaceful with a purring mega-yacht generator and the delightful smell of exhaust fumes.

The next day, Mark is scraping the bottom and I'm cleaning the interior of the boat. When we look up, we can't believe our eyes: everybody is gone, except for one sailboat! We feel totally privileged because ten minutes later, that one leaves as well. Then, the next batch of visitors shows up and the cycle starts all over again. Soon enough we are crammed between charter boats. The wind is non-present, the bugs over-present and the sweat over-abundant. Mark agrees with my statement of the previous day: "You're right. When we are finally not working and ready to relax, it's always something." It is. Too hot, too windy, too sunny, too rainy, too buggy, too swelly, too busy, too noisy, too risky, too stressy, too gusty. Since the perfect anchorage doesn't exist (if it did, everybody would be there and it wouldn't be perfect anymore...), I guess we'll have to wait for that once-in-a-while perfect day again!

CALENDAR

JANUARY 2011

1 New Year's Day. Public holiday or "recovery day" in many places. Junkanoo parade in Abaco, Bahamas; Grand Carnival Parade in St. Kitts; Street Parade in Montserrat
2 Public holidays in Cuba (Victory of Armed Forces Day), Haiti (Founding Fathers Day), and St. Lucia and Grenada (Second New Year's Day)
2 New Years Regatta, St. Lucia. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), tel (758) 452-8350, secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
3 Carnival Last Lap, St Kitts. www.stkittsneviscarnival.com
6 Three Kings Day. Public holiday in many places
7 – 8 Crucian Christmas Festival Parades, St. Croix. www.stxfestival.com
8 Latitude 18 Halyard Challenge, Tortola, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, rbviyc@rbviyc.com, www.rbviyc.org
10 Eugenio María de Hostos Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
10 – 16 18th Annual Barbados Jazz Festival. www.barbadosjazzfestival.com
11 – 12 Yacht Industry Security Conference, St. Thomas, USVI. www.maritimesecurity.org
14 – 16 9th Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta, Dominican Republic. www.caribwind.com
17 Martin Luther King Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
19 FULL MOON
21 Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race. www.mountgayrumroundbarbadosrace.com
21 Errol Barrow Day; public holiday in Barbados. Our Lady of Altagracia; public holiday in the Dominican Republic
22 Governor's Cup, Tortola, BVI. RBVIYC
22 – 23 Around Antigua Race. www.antiguayachtclub.com
23 Duke's Trophy Race, St. John, USVI. St. John Yacht Club (SJYC), tel (340) 776-6101, jamesswanstj@yahoo.com
23 – 27 42nd Spice Island Billfish Tournament, Grenada. www.sibtgrenada.com
23 – 29 Jamaica Jazz and Blues Festival, Montego Bay. http://jamaicajazzandblues.com
25 G.F. Croes Day; public holiday in Aruba
26 Duarte's Day; public holiday in the Dominican Republic
26 – 29 Antigua Superyacht Cup. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
26 – 9 Feb Mustique Blues Festival. www.basilsbar.com
27 – 30 Bequia Mount Gay Music Fest. www.begos.com/bequiamusicfest ***See ad on page 14***
28 – 6 Feb Grenada Sailing Festival. ***See ad on page 15***
29 – 30 Grenada Flower Show, Grand Anse Trade Centre.www.hortigrenada.com
29 – 5 Feb Manhattan Sailing Club's BVI Cruise. www.myc.org
TBA Carriacou Sailing Series. www.sailingcarriacou.com
TBA 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 - 6 10th Club Náutico de San Juan International Regatta, Puerto Rico. www.nauticodesanjuan.com/sailingprogram/regatta_int.htm
4 - 6 Digicel Workboat Regatta, Grenada. www.grenadasailingfestival.com
5 Pineapple Cup Montego Bay Race, Florida to Jamaica. www.montegobayrace.com
5 Anguilla Dinghy Regatta. www.anguillaregatta.com
5 – 6 Lowell Wheatley Anegada Pursuit Race, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org
7 Independence Day. Public holiday in Grenada
10 – 13 Trinidad Carnival Regatta. www.ttsailing.org
11 - 13 St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta. www.stcroixyc.com
11 – 13 Jolly Harbour Yacht Club Budget Marine Valentines Regatta, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com
13 Island Hopper Race, St. John, USVI
13 Fundraising Auction for Sunshine School, Gingerbread Hotel, Bequia. www.bequiasunshineschool.org
13 – 16 Carriacou Sailing Series. www.ttsailing.org
18 – 20 Tobago Carnival Regatta (kiteboards and bumboats), www.sailweek.com
15 Presidents' Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
18 – 20 33rd Annual Sweethearts of the Caribbean and 28th Annual Classic Yacht Regatta, Tortola. WEYC
20 – 21 Independence Day Round St Lucia Race/Cruise. SLYC
21 RORC Caribbean 600 start, Antigua. http://caribbean600.rorc.org
25 – 26 Multihull Regatta, St. Maarten. www.multihullregatta.com/frames.html
25 – 27 South Grenada Regatta. ***See ad on page 15***
27 – 8 March 6th La Route du Carnival rally, Martinique to Trinidad. ***See ad in Market Place pages 50 to 53***

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

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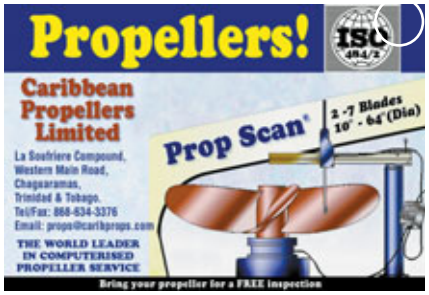
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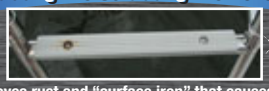
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MISSING DINGHY

This 12.5-foot, double-ended Chaisson Dory went missing from behind the yacht Ambergris, moored in Admiralty Bay, Bequia on the night of December 23rd. The rowing dory is made of unpainted aluminum, with bow and stern flotation chambers and another chamber in the middle.



The dory was built over 20 years ago by the owner and has sentimental value. A reward is offered for its return.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Peter Austin at svambergris@gmail.com or call (784) 458-3072 or (954) 241-3609.

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Crossword Solution

ACROSS
1) NINE
2) SECOND
5) TUES
8) EIGHT
10) PARTRIDGE
11) THREE
13) CALLING
14) THIRD
16) TEN
17) LOVE
19) GAVE
20) RINGS
24) PIPERS
26) ME
28) ELEVEN
29) PEAR
30) BIRDS
31) KISS
36) NEW
38) LADIES
39) GOLD
41) FORTH
42) SWANS
43) TENTH
44) TRUE

DOWN
1) NOG
3) CHRISTMAS
4) DOGS
5) TURTLE
6) SEVEN
7) LAYING
9) TWELVE
12) PIPING
15) DRUMMERS
16) TUNE
17) LEAPING
18) TREE
21) FIVE
22) MILKING
23) DOVES
25) SUN
27) FRENCH
32) MAIDS
33) GEESE
34) FIFTH
35) FIRST
37) WING
40) LOW

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Barrow Sails & Canvas	Trinidad	MP
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Bay Island Yachts	Trinidad	49
Bequia Music Fest	Bequia	53
Bequia Venture	Bequia	MP
Blanchards Customs Services	St. Lucia	39
Budget Marine	Sint Maarten	2
Business Development Co.	Trinidad	20
BVI Yacht Sales	Tortola	49
Camper & Nicholsons	Grenada	55
Captain Gourmet	Union Island	43
Caraibe Greement	Martinique	12
Caraibe Greement	Martinique	MP
Caribbean Yachts	Guadeloupe	46
Caribbean Marine Electrical	Trinidad	MP
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Club Nautico Regatta	Puerto Rico	19
Cooper Marine	USA	48
Curaçao Marine	Curaçao	9
De Kornah Ba	St. Lucia	40
Diesel Outfitters	St. Maarten	34
Dockwise Yacht Transport	Martinique	11
Dominica Marine Center	Dominica	26
Down Island Real Estate	Carriacou	MP
Doyle Offshore Sails	Tortola	4
Doyle's Guides	USA	37
Echo Marine - Jotun Special	Trinidad	5
Ed Willaims Insurance	C/W	44
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Fernando's Hideaway	Bequia	MP
Food Fair	Grenada	43
Ford Motors	Trinidad	42
Frangipani Hotel	Bequia	34
Free Cruising Guides	C/W	29
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Golden Taste	St. Lucia	MP
Gourmet Foods	Bequia	MP
Grenada Marine	Grenada	8
Grenada Sailing Festival	Grenada	18
Grenadines Sails	Bequia	31
Inboard Diesel Service	Martinique	MP
Iolaire Enterprises	UK	46
Island Water World	Sint Maarten	56
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Kerry's Marine Services	Bequia	MP
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Lagoon Marina	St. Maarten	14
Laurena Hotel	Carriacou	24
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Tikal Arts & Crafts	Grenada	MP
Trade Winds Cruising	Bequia	47
Trans Caraibes Rallies	St. Maarten	MP
Treasure Island Casino	Canouan	44
Turbulence Sails	Grenada	8
Turbulence Sails	Grenada	MP
Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout	Carriacou	28
Vemasca	Venezuela	27
Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour	Virgin Gorda	22
Voiles Assistance	Martinique	MP
Volvo	Martinique	6
Wallilabou Anchorage	St. Vincent	48
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CW = Caribbean wide
MP = Market Place pages 43 to 45

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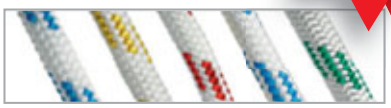
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