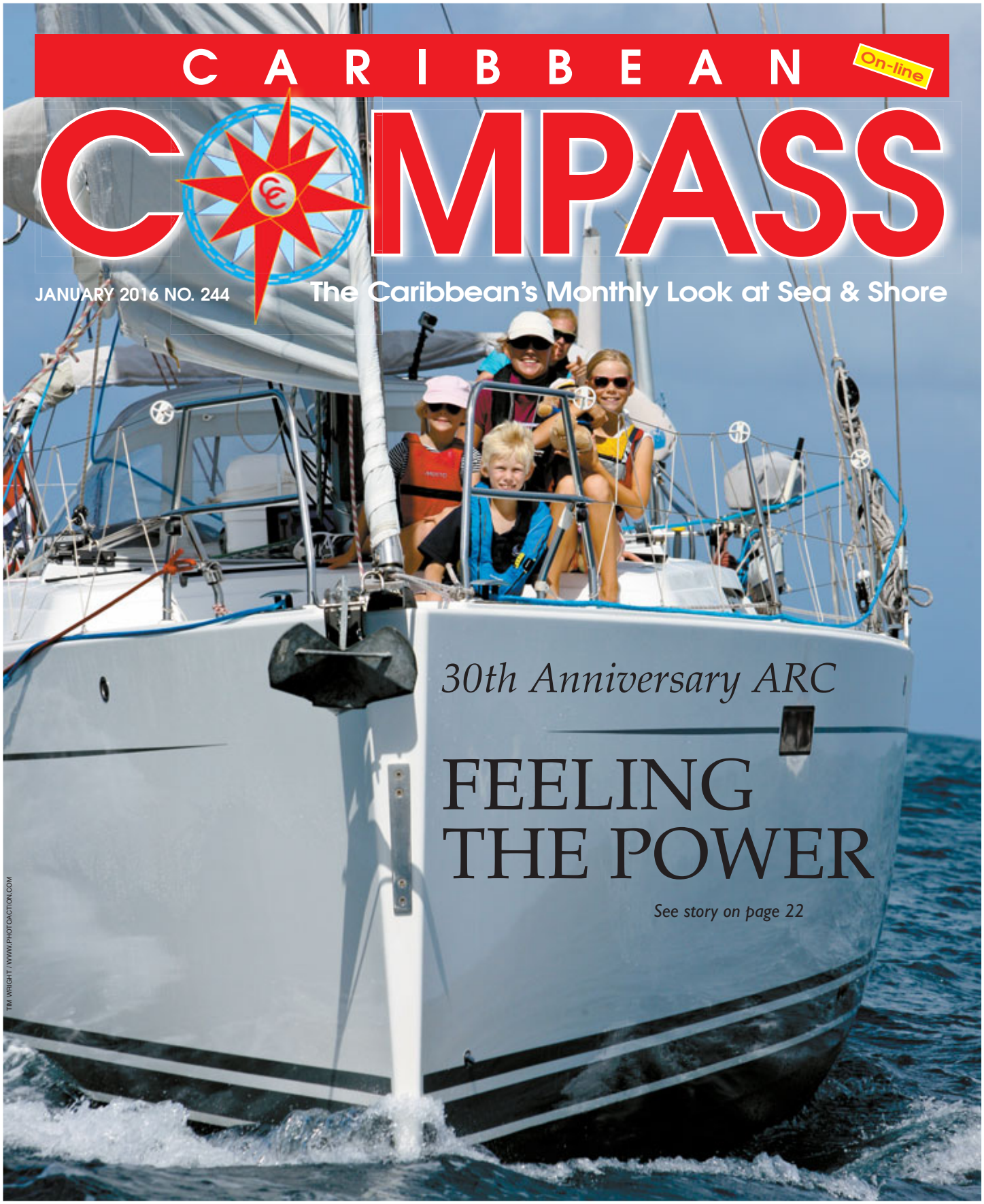
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The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



30th Anniversary ARC

FEELING THE POWER

See story on page 22

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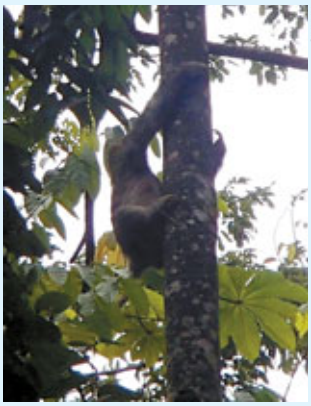
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St. Lucia's Rodney Bay Marina hosts local vendors at ARC arrival time. Here, the chocolatiers *from the newly established Chocolat Sainte Lucie display their organic products*

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ISSN 1605 - 1998

Photographer Tim Wright greeted the Brattum family aboard Friskus VI *on arrival in St. Lucia after their Atlantic crossing. See coverage of ARC 2015 on page 22*



***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.**

'We are "first timers", having started our circumnavigation in Turkey in May of 2014 and cruising this part of the world since January 2015 after a crossing from Cabo Verde to Antigua.
We have enjoyed the Lesser Antilles very much and reading *Compass* has added to that enjoyment, with lots of useful info!'
— Hugh and Priscilla Packer
S/Y Anemos

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Info & Updates

New Fee Set Aside in San Blas Islands

The word from cruisers in the San Blas islands (Guna Yala) of Panama is that a recent resolution that would have made yacht visits extraordinarily expensive has been set aside in favor of retaining the existing fee structure.

As reported, Resolution 05, dated August 9th, 2015, would have charged yachts US$5 per square foot as a monthly anchoring fee. For example, a 50-foot boat with a beam of 15 feet would have been charged US$3,750 per month. The fee was to have gone into effect on January 1st.

However, following enquiries to the Congreso Guna Administration in Porvenir, concerned cruisers were informed on December 6th that, after a meeting, Resolution 05 has been discarded.

For more information and updates visit www.noonsite.com/Countries/Panama?a=SanBlasIslands



OYER

Life Saving Equipment Donated in St. Croix

Ellen Sanpere reports: At St. Croix Marine on December 11th, the AED Fund presented new Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) to the St. Croix Rescue Squad, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), the Virgin Islands Police Department Marine Unit and the VIPD Training Unit.

Four years ago, there was just one AED on the island. The addition of four AEDs, purchased for US$6,000, brings their number to 124, in 91 St. Croix locations.

"When someone stops breathing, is non-responsive, and has no heartbeat, there is a ten-minute critical window before that person dies," said AED Fund Project Director Cher Will. "Having an AED nearby can be the difference between life and death for that person," she added, saying that AEDs on the Marine units of first responders means that visiting and resident boaters have a better chance of surviving a heart attack on board. The four new AEDs self-check daily, are easy to use, and can be adjusted for use on children weighing less than 55 pounds.

To use an AED, just turn it on and it will "talk you through" the procedure to save a life. "Odds of survival for a person who is in sudden cardiac arrest are six percent with immediate CPR; those odds increase to 49 to 90 percent when an AED is used along with CPR," said Mrs. Will.

The new AED units will be on or near the water in both Christiansted and Frederiksted, and are available by calling 911. St. Croix Rescue's Field Operations/Marine Commander Jason Henry said that the new AED locations would appear on the mobile app Crowdsav, when downloaded to any mobile device.

DPNR Director of Environmental Enforcement Howard Forbes, Sr. thanked Mrs. Will for the AED, saying it will be placed on a DPNR patrol vessel in Christiansted, just in time for the annual St. Croix Christmas Boat parade, December 12th, 2015.

St. Croix Rescue provides support to DPNR and the Park Service with quick response times in Frederiksted, launching from the fish market area, said Asst. Chief Modestus John-Baptiste as he accepted the new AED.

VIPD Marine Officer Sean Santos said that one unit will be kept in the Christiansted area, and the VIPD Training Unit will use the other one. All Police Department personnel have been trained to use AEDs along with CPR to save lives.

Cher Will founded the AED Fund seven years ago when local sailor, singer and Calypsonian Llewellyn Westerman collapsed from Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) on his boat at a St. Croix Yacht Club mooring:

"It was his lucky day," Mrs. Will said, "Someone at the yacht club knew a personal AED was nearby and relayed a call to us to rush to his aid. When we arrived, he was totally unresponsive: not breathing, no heartbeat, and blank, staring eyes. This is a sign of cardiac arrest. My husband, Bill, waded into the water, as the sailor was being brought to shore in a dinghy while Mike Webber and Stephanie Malanga were doing CPR. Bill handed up the AED and when they said they didn't know how to use it, he told them to turn it on and it will tell you exactly what to do.

—*Continued on next page*



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Christiansted

DOYLE CARIBBEAN

—Continued from previous page

When the orange shock button lit, they pressed it and soon he was breathing on his own with a heartbeat. The sailor was brought back to life and is called Lazarus by many of his friends. The ambulance arrived in 25 minutes. That would have been too late to save this sailor.



Nevis-born charter skipper Llewellyn Westerman of Llewellyn's Charter in St. Croix was saved by an AED. Now, more of the life-saving devices are available on the island

"When I found out that the local fire stations do not have equipment and training, a project was then started with the St. Croix Foundation called the AED Fund. The intention was to raise funds and purchase 13 AEDs for the fire stations to reduce the response time considerably. Now, seven years later, we are still placing AEDs far beyond the initial intent. Every police station, school and many government offices and non-profits have AEDs. In addition to the one furnished to the Coast Guard Auxiliary, there is one located on the Marine Units of DPNR, VIPD and St. Croix Rescue. This increases the possibility of saving a life at sea.

"The AED Fund is responsible for 40 of the known 124 AEDs on St. Croix."

For more information on the AED Fund contact aedfund@gmail.com

For more information on the St. Croix Foundation visit www.stxfoundation.org

Spanish Treasure Wreck Found off Cartagena

The wreck of the *San José*, a Spanish ship laden with treasure that was sunk by a British warship off Cartagena, Colombia in 1708, has recently been discovered. English Commodore Charles Wager had tracked down the ship 25 kilometres (16 miles) off Cartagena and it sank in 300 metres (1,000 feet) of water. The ship, part of



a 17-vessel fleet, was carrying one of the largest amounts of valuables ever to have been lost at sea.

The *San José* was carrying gold, silver, gems and jewelry collected in Spain's South American colonies to be shipped to Spain's king to help finance his war of succession against the British. At the time, the cargo's value reportedly exceeded Spain's annual income. Estimates of the current value of the cargo range up to US$17 billion.

Ownership of the wreck has been the subject of a long-running legal row. A group now owned by US-based salvage company Sea Search Armada (SSA) said in 1981 that it had located the area in which the ship sank, but in 2011 an American court ruled that the galleon was the property of the Colombian state. Colombian officials would not reveal the precise location of the wreck, but President Juan Manuel Santos said the find "constitutes one of the greatest discoveries of submerged patrimony in the history of mankind". He said that a museum would be built in Cartagena to house the ship's treasures.

For more information visit www.history.com/news/legendary-billion-dollar-shipwreck-found-off-colombian-coast

—Continued on page 48



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Kwame Hinds Joins Doyle Sails, Barbados



Doyle Offshore Sails in Barbados welcomes Kwame Hinds to its team of 45 professional sailmakers. Doyle has been advising, building and servicing the sailing community along with its Doyle Caribbean Network of 13 affiliated agents since 1988. Kwame learned to sail at the age of 11 in a Mirror dinghy. He has gone on to compete in many Caribbean championships in dinghies and keel boats. He holds seven National Championship Titles, among others. He earned his undergraduate degree in Electrical Engineering at Hampton University in Virginia where he was captain of the Sailing Team and voted MVP in his junior year. In 2015 he was awarded the coveted Alan Taylor Memorial Trophy; this award is given to an individual who has made a large contribution to the overall development and growth of sailing in Barbados. Kwame will be working with the design team as an engineer. His sailing experience and commitment to the sport will be a huge asset to Doyle Offshore Sails in the Caribbean.

Contact Kwame at kwame@doylecaribbean.com

For more information on Doyle Offshore Sails see ad on page 4.

Go Farther for Less with Suzuki's Lean Burn

With fuel cost becoming an important factor when buying an outboard, Suzuki Marine has developed a pioneering system that enables their outboards to go farther for less. Suzuki's Lean Burn Control System delivers significant improvements in fuel economy from low speed operation into the cruising range.

"Suzuki is recognized for being at the forefront of four-stroke technology. Our latest generation of outboards, from the portable DF 15A to our flagship DF 300AP, delivers class-leading fuel efficiency with the Lean Burn Control System," says Erving Rosario, sales and marketing manager of Suzuki Del Caribe.

Suzuki's Lean Burn Control System predicts fuel needs according to operating conditions. This system provides highest performance and efficiency while cutting down on fuel consumption to get even more out of every drop of fuel. Also this technology is designed, developed and tested to withstand the marine environment. The Suzuki Lean Burn Control System has been developed to deliver these benefits over a wide operating range, providing significant improvements in fuel economy from low speed operation into the cruising range.

Visit Suzuki Del Caribe's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/SuzukiCaribbeanMarine, and hit the "like" button for the latest news and information.

For more information see ad on page 33.

***Mermaid* Refreshed at Curaçao Marine**

Curaçao Marine reports: Yachts of similar size to the *Mermaid* previously had to deviate to other islands or cruise to boatyards on the South American coast to be hauled out for repairs and maintenance.



But for two years now, sailboats and motoryachts up to 25 metres and/or about 60,000 kilos can be hauled out at the technical marina and boatyard of Curaçao Marine. It's in economic favor of the island if repairs and maintenance of yachts can be done locally. Foreign yachts find their way to Curaçao Marine, but also for many local yacht owners it brings many advantages; it saves on fuel, time and preparation.

On the *Mermaid*, the repair and welding of the aluminum construction was carried out by Professional Welders, one of the sub-contractors of Curaçao Marine. Simultaneously the bottom of the yacht was cleaned and received three layers of fresh paint from the Curaçao Marine team. With the help of the crew of Mermaid Boat Trips it was possible to finish the job in only three days. On Saturday October 10th the yacht was hauled out and on Monday October 12th she was back in the water. On Tuesday, after detailing, provisioning and bunkering, the *Mermaid* was ready to bring another 130 happy customers to the beautiful island of Klein Curaçao!

For more information see ad on page 55.

—Continued on next page

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BASIL'S BOUTIQUE: Fabrics as bright as the sea and as light as air... perfect for island joy. Elegant island evening and playful day wear. For women, men and children, plus lots of T-shirts to take home. Basil's Boutique also offers silver and gemstone jewelry.

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ACROSS FOREVER: Imagine decorating your home with antiques from Bali and India. Across Forever has a magnificent collection of furniture from Asia and beyond, contemporary pieces, home furnishings, fabulous lighting accessories and more. Shipping is easily and efficiently arranged. Call (784) 488-8407.

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BASIL'S BAR: Located in Kingstown in an 18th century building named Cobblestone. Air conditioned, you will enjoy cocktails most delightful, the staff most welcoming and the meals are some of the best on the island. Now offering full catering services. Call (784) 457-2713.

AT BASIL'S: Collection of beautiful bamboo furniture, contemporary pieces from Asia and beyond, and more.
Call (784) 456-2602.

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• THE COUNTRY RELATIVES • BEQUIA BLUES BAND
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• ARTURO TAPPIN BAND
• Pretty Boy Records with: CH'AN,TOBIAS & LENNOX
K-NETIK • DJ SHATTA
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Cool Breezes at Clarkes Court Boatyard, Grenada

Arlene Telesford reports: The results are in for 2015 as clients who got hauled out at Clarkes Court Boatyard & Marina had this to say:

"The haulout of our boat for one week was by far one of the most professional experiences we have had in a while." *Yacht Harlequin*

"We were lifted out right on time with the most efficient yard staff we have ever come across." *Yacht Annecam*

"One thing you would not get at Clarkes Court Marina is a good sweat. If you want the nice cool breeze, come here; it is a very cool place to come and do your work." *Yacht Flying Ray*

To close the year, Clarkes Court gave clients the opportunity to lock into their 2015 discounts for the 2016 season by booking before December 31st. This offer allowed clients to save on their haulout and storage. It was all "thumbs up" for this offer, judging by the response received from clients.

Knock knock? Who's there? Clients! That's the sound approved subcontractors will hear at their doors from clients right in the yard, as they are moving into their spaces. Mechanical, Electrical, Woodwork, Rigging, Canvas and Composite are just a few of the services available.

A special thank-you to all the clients who hauled out with us in 2015. We have more in store for 2016. Stay tuned for the opening of the restaurant and chandlery!

For more information see ad on page 5.

Welcome to Red Frog Marina, Panama

Bocas del Toro, Panama represents a large thoroughfare for the international boating community. The location and accessibility of Bocas del Toro brings boaters from all areas of the world — and Red Frog Marina is at the heart of it all.

Current services and amenities at IGY Red Frog Marina include boat shuttle service to Bocas Town (ten-minute ride to shops, restaurants, air lift, etcetera), dockside power and water, WiFi internet, upscale bathhouse and laundry service, full-time security, and cell phone coverage (Cable & Wireless/Mas Movil only), plus access to Red Frog Marina Plaza, Red Frog Beach, Kayukos Activity Lounge, beaches and trails to explore.



The floating docks are from Structure Marine (www.structurmarine.com), a respected marina construction and administration firm which has built a world-class docking system at Red Frog Marina. With composite decking, aluminum alloy framing, and large concrete anchors, this dock is of unparalleled quality in the region. It has a flexible anchor system that allows for flexing in the anchors and moorings during inclement weather or disturbances.

Red Frog Marina offers customized Marina Service programs for absentee boat owners. These can include routine boat checks, running engine, wash/wax, bottom cleaning, airing out boat, etcetera, as well as more technical services that may be provided by our onsite service contractors as needed.

For more information see ad on page 6.

Free Cruising Guides' News

Free Cruising Guides has a completely new website. It is designed for enhanced ease of use by dedicated dedicated Free Cruising Guide readers and as the ultimate introduction for new fans to their comprehensive library of guides to the entire Caribbean. Their nine guides, including the three-volume *Free Cruising Guide to the Lesser Antilles* can be downloaded free at www.FreeCruisingGuides.com or purchased as e-books at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other e-book stores.

The website provides easy access to all guides and a treasure trove of articles about sailing to and into the Caribbean as well as about the cultural experiences cruisers can enjoy in the course of their Caribbean seafaring adventures.

Free Cruising Guides' signature Caribbean Security Index is also accessible at http://freecruisingguides.com/caribbean-security-index to allow cruisers to include an assessment of the probability of encountering crime in various parts of the Caribbean in their route planning.

Free Cruising Guides is pleased to announce that *A Cruising Guide to the Cayman Islands 2.0* is now available to download free at www.FreeCruisingguides.com or to purchase at Amazon and other e-bookstores. Visit http://freecruisingguides.com to download your copy today!

For more information see ad on page 43.

New Website for Boat Paint & Stuff, St. Martin

Boat Paint & Stuff in St. Martin has a brand-new website: www.boatpaintstuff.com. Visit it to see the Boat Paint & Stuff facility, including new dock in the French-side entry channel to Simpson Bay Lagoon.

For more information see ad on page 35.

Parts & Power Now Caribbean Kubota Distributor

Parts & Power, the British Virgin Islands-based Caribbean distributor for numerous industrial and marine products and brands, is now the Eastern Caribbean distributor for Kubota generators, engines and parts.

In 1890, Kubota Corporation started its history of innovation in Osaka, Japan. In 1922, Kubota launched production of the horizontal, liquid-cooled kerosene engine for agricultural use. The first compact diesel engine was sold in the United States in 1976. Today, Kubota has grown into the world's leading manufacturer of emission compliant compact multi-cylinder, liquid-cooled diesel engines below 100 HP.

—Continued on next page

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The Kubota generator range consists of the GL series (7kW to 10kW), SQ Series (14kW to 28kW), KJ series (14kW to 21kW) and J Series (6.5kW to 24kW).

Competitive pricing is matched only by class-leading sound attenuation — Kubota generators are super-silent.

Parts & Power holds stock of Kubota generators and parts to ensure immediate availability. Customers in the BVI can purchase directly from Parts & Power in Port Purcell, Tortola. A stock of generators is also held in a bonded warehouse, ready for immediate dispatch to customers in other parts of the Caribbean.

Parts & Power Ltd, based in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, was founded in 1973. Parts & Power Ltd has been serving the Marine and Industrial needs of the Caribbean for 40 years.

Visit www.partsandpower.com for more information.

Sailing Dinghies at Simpson Bay, St. Maarten



Four Optimist dinghies and two Lasers will be sailing the waters of Simpson Bay, St. Maarten at the start of 2016.

Sailing Club St. Maarten is a foundation set up by Pieter Bakker and Mirian Ebbers to stimulate sailing on St. Maarten. The foundation has acquired these boats through sponsoring by Seatrek, 12 Metre Regatta, Best Boatyard Services, SWM Group and Passaat Schooner. All sailing dinghies will be available on Kim Sha Beach.

"The idea is that local kids and adults who already know the basics of sailing can take them out on Saturdays and Sundays, when they have time off," says Pieter Bakker, Chairman of the Foundation. "We will be charging a small nominal fee for usage during these two days and there will be volunteers available to help, guard and instruct where needed. By making it affordable, hassle-free and membership-free, we hope to achieve our goal of getting more people living on St. Maarten sailing and having fun on the calm waters of Simpson Bay."

On weekdays the dinghies will be available to tourists, who can rent them to go sailing by themselves or with a small group. The management of the boats will be in the capable hands of Coconut Beach Watersports.

In January 2016 an official christening of all sailing dinghies combined with an open day, inviting all people to come out and try out the watersport facilities will be hosted. An official notice will be posted a week ahead of time.

For more information contact Mirian Ebbers at mebbers@caribserve.net or (721) 580-8111.

New Office for Members Only, Trinidad

Jesse James' Members Only Maxi Taxi Service in Chaguaramas, Trinidad has moved from Tropical Marine to the YSATT Office at CrewsInn Marina.

For more information phone (868) 683-5202.

The Loft Café, Dominica

The Loft Art & Café in Roseau, Dominica has launched an all-new US$10 lunch menu and is welcoming all passing yachts to come try it. Free "Soaked Rum", a local specialty of rum-marinated fruits, will be served with lunch to anyone who mentions this publication.

The Loft Art & Café is the home of the 24-hour security operated by Marcus. Free Customs & Immigration documents are available at the restaurant, located right off the fuel dock.

For mooring reservations contact tiffany@waitukubulitours.com.



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Caribbean ECO-News

Shipboard Samples Provide Sargasso Updates

Massive quantities of Sargassum, a distinctive brown seaweed, have flooded Caribbean shores in recent years, setting off local concerns about economic impacts on fishing and tourism. Trinidad & Tobago has even declared these so-called "inundation events" to be a natural disaster. But little is understood about the ecological implications of these Sargassum invasions or how they should be managed. New research published by Sea Education Association, a leading ocean education and research institution based in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, provides first-hand observations in support of these questions.



The tall ship Corwith Cramer *carried researchers from the Canary Islands to the Eastern Caribbean and then up to the US East Coast to gather data on the unprecedented 2014-2015* sargassum *inundation*

In the September 2015 issue of the journal *Oceanography*, Drs. Jeffrey Schell, Amy Siuda and Deb Goodwin, all SEA Semester oceanography faculty members, report the results of shipboard sampling during and after the latest Caribbean inundation event in 2014 and 2015.

Major findings include:

• PREVIOUSLY RARE TYPE: According to most existing resources, open-ocean forms of Sargassum consist of two main species: *S. fluitans* and *S. natans*, distinguished by their differing stems, blades and bladders. Decades of SEA sampling had indicated that two Sargassum forms within those species, *S. natans I Parr* and *S. fluitans Parr* were the most common in the North Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico.

However, in their latest fieldwork, SEA researchers found that a third form — *S. natans VIII Parr* — dominated the Western Tropical Atlantic, Eastern Caribbean, and Antilles. This abundance was significant because in the past this form rarely appeared in these areas.

• UNEXPECTED SOURCE: Based on the abundance and forms of Sargassum found through their net sampling, SEA researchers concluded that the Sargasso Sea, a vast region of the North Atlantic Ocean long known for hosting the biologically-important seaweed, has no connection to the recent Caribbean inundation events.

While *S. natans VIII* dominated the Caribbean samples, a different type of seaweed, *S. natans I*, dominated the South Sargasso Sea. These findings support the theory proposed by other scientists that the Sargassum washing ashore on Caribbean beaches is coming from another location, such as a more southern portion of the Atlantic known as the North Equatorial Recirculation Region.

• UNPRECEDENTED AMOUNTS: SEA research found that the average concentration of all Sargassum forms combined was ten times greater in samples collected during autumn 2014 than those analyzed during a previous 2011-12 inundation event — and a whopping 300 times greater than that of any other autumn over the last two decades of SEA research. Therefore, SEA researchers concluded that the 2014-15 Caribbean inundation event was truly unprecedented.

Data for this study was collected by SEA faculty, crew, and SEA Semester undergraduate students on board the institution's 135-foot tall sailing ship, the *SSV Corwith Cramer*, from November 2014 to May 2015. Cruises began in the Canary Islands, traversed the Sargasso Sea and Western Tropical Atlantic to the Lesser Antilles, and then sailed the Eastern Caribbean before heading to New England.

SEA researchers have been studying Sargassum in the field for about four decades in an effort to understand more fully the ecosystems that rely upon this floating seaweed. SEA's datasets are extraordinary in that they represent the only long-term quantitative record of Sargassum abundance before and during these Caribbean inundation events. The authors of this study note: "pressing future questions include the ecological impacts of inundation events on coral reefs, sea turtles and fisheries. Continued Sargassum field observations are essential to these efforts."

In an effort to better understand critical aspects of this phenomenon, the University of Southern Mississippi research team is accepting reports from cruisers in the Atlantic who come across large quantities of Pelagic Sargassum. Data received will help researchers identify the source and examine the movements and causes of this extraordinary event. Data can be submitted via the web or by e-mail.

Web: USM Website - use this form to report your sightings: www.usm.edu/gcrl/sargassum/sargassum.observation.form.php

E-mail: For yachts at sea who only have e-mail capability, Joan Conover of the SCCA has volunteered to receive feedback and post it to the Research website. E-mail sargasso@sv-growltiger.com with the following findings:

• Lat/Long from GPS
• Date and Time
• Description (to include direction of surface currents, approximate size, number of mats, observations of marine life)
• Photo (if possible)

The Sargasso Sea Commission is also interested in photographs of Sargasso weed as well as feedback on large mat sightings from cruisers in the Sargasso Sea area. Sightings from this area should be posted directly to the USM website (as above).

Meanwhile, participants in Caribbean-bound rallies last fall also helped collect information. Andrew Bishop, Managing Director of World Cruising Club, organisers of ARC Caribbean 1500, ARC+ and ARC, commented, "In ARC 2014, cruisers reported seeing large clumps of Sargasso weed on approach to the Cape Verdes.

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It appears the weed is much more widespread this year, and we are hoping that many of our rally participants will be able to report their sightings as they head to the Caribbean and assist with the research."

Belize Bans Oil Exploration on Reefs

The Belize Government recently approved a policy that will legally ban offshore oil exploration in all seven areas that make up the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System, a UNESCO World Heritage area and the second largest reef system in the world.

The decision will effectively exclude the entire World Heritage area from any future oil exploration and make the site consistent with the World Heritage Committee's position that oil exploration is incompatible with World Heritage status.

Visit http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1393 for more information.

Grenada Wins "This is Who We Are" Marine Conservation Competition

At an award ceremony held in Dominica in November, Grenada won first place in a competition involving conservation campaigns on six different islands. The campaigns are part of a regional initiative, "This Is Who We Are," that promotes the importance of protecting marine and coastal ecosystems.

The ceremony was held in Cabrits National Park, overlooking one of Dominica's marine protected areas. The Mayor of Portsmouth, Titus Francis, welcomed an audience of over 100 community members, international campaign teams, local fishers and government representatives.

Grenada won first place, with St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines in second and third place respectively. A panel of international judges determined the winners based on innovation, impact and campaign sustainability.

Grenada's campaign was extraordinary in its partnership with popular cultural ambassadors including fashion models and musician Mr. Killa, who amplified conservation messages to larger audiences.

All six campaigns will receive prize money to continue promoting the importance of marine protection and the "This Is Who We Are" initiative will continue as a regional effort.



Christabelle Andrews accepts Grenada's 'This is Who We Are' first-place trophy from Ian Douglas, Parliamentary Representative of Portsmouth, Dominica

The campaigns are sponsored by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety as part of the Climate-Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) project. The project is implemented by The Nature Conservancy and the campaigns are guided by PCI Media Impact.

Barbados Hosts International Lionfish Derby

The results of the Barbados International Lionfish Derby, held December 5th and 6th, are now in. Team Good Neighbours, with divers from Mayreau, Union Island, Tobago and Barbados, won the top prize for the largest lionfish culled during the two-day derby.

"With 11 teams bringing in a total of 897 lionfish, the competition was very strong," said team captain Nancy Saul-Demers. "Our scouting dives before the derby with West Side Scuba really paid off. When we saw five huge lionfish all together on the dive site called The Boot, we knew if we could find them again during the derby we could win Biggest Fish."

Their largest lionfish was 44 centimeters (17.32 inches) in length and tipped the scales at more than two pounds. It was clearly speared by Lorne Saul-Demers — one of his spear tips was still lodged in its head when it hit the scoring table!

Team Barbados Blue, which took second place in the largest lionfish category, also walked away with first prize for the most fish — 112 — caught in a single day. Team Free Speorit, also of Barbados, took second. Barbados teams also dominated the smallest lionfish category, with Team High Tide scoring first and Free Speorit placing second.

The derby also featured the unusual category of Best Underwater Photography, which was won by L.I.N.K with Julian Walcott coming in second.

"We thoroughly enjoyed competing in this derby," said Glenroy Adams of Grenadines Dive on Union Island. "And Barbados hospitality was super as usual. Special recognition goes to all the staff of West Side Scuba, especially owner Peter Grannum, for their support of our multi-nation team and their expert knowledge of the Barbados waters."

For more information contact Nancy Saul-Demers at nancyandlorne@gmail.com or Glenroy Adams at gdive@vincysurf.com.

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up to 50	$1.22	$1.10	$1.04
up to 60	$1.33	$1.19	$1.13
up to 65	$1.48	$1.34	$1.25
up to 75	$1.53	$1.38	$1.31
up to 80	$1.68	$1.52	$1.43
up to 100	$1.73	$1.56	$1.48

For yachts above 100 feet LOA, and for bookings of longer periods, please contact us for a personalised quote. Multihulls are charged at 1.5 times the standard rate. Weekly and monthly rates apply to yachts staying consecutively for 7 days or 30 days respectively.

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IT was on the island of Martinique, around 1998, that my dream started. I remember lying down on the family hammock, flipping through the pages of the first kitesurf magazine ever printed and dreaming about learning to kitesurf.

In those times, kitesurfing was in its beginnings. No one really knew how to get started or what gear to use. We were young. With a couple of friends playing with makeshift kites and our surfboards, we had to get creative — and God knows we were.

A few years later I was winning my first Caribbean championship and started to travel around the world for different competitions.

I quickly realized that I wasn't made to compete all year long. I was more interested in discovering new countries by meeting the local people, learning new languages and finding remote spots very few people had the chance to explore.

Living these amazing experiences comes with the need to share them, and this is when I started to get interested in movie making and photography. These were the perfect tools for me to share my experiences around the world, share my dream with everyone and help them build a dream of their own.

I spent ten years living out of my suitcases, changing destinations every few months and discovering the world. I didn't have a town or island I would call home any more, but the Caribbean had a very important place in my heart that I knew I would have to go back to.

I first discovered Union Island in St. Vincent & the Grenadines ten years ago during a sailing trip with Captain Toph, a skipper friend from Martinique whom I was helping out. I totally fell in love with Union Island and it became first on my list of places to live one day.

Union Island wasn't a kite spot at the time; no one was actually kitesurfing much from the island. The beach at Clifton was small but the beauty of the lagoon and the wind conditions were so special. It was hiding an amazing potential.

Four years ago the big adventure started when I opened my first kitesurfing school, JT Pro Center, right on Union Island. We partnered with the Anchorage Yacht Club; luckily the owners understood that we could bring a certain number of kitesurfing guests to their hotel.



Bringing a new kind of tourism to Union Island has been a blessing. Union Island is often considered by sailors as a place to stop for a day: just time to get groceries and buy some water and leave. Most people are missing out on all the things the island has to offer. Union Island should be a destination rather than a layover. The island has countless beautiful beaches, some very nice little bars and restaurants, and since kitesurfers have discovered it, there is a constant flow of people visiting the island and staying a few weeks or months at a time and enjoying every second of it. This new infatuation for the island is starting to attract new business owners and companies full of ideas that are making the island a new hub for activities and things to do. The nightlife is also growing and becoming very diverse with the Full Moon Beach parties from December to May at the kite center on "kite beach". It is a one-of-a-kind event with no entry fee, mixing all music genres with a light show and a big fire on the water, mixed with a great kitesurfing show.

All of this is finally pushing Union Island in the direction it deserves to be: a decent tourist destination with unique attractions and amazingly friendly people.

Anyone can learn kitesurfing and have the best time of their life; there is no age limit. The idea behind the JT Pro Center is to finally share the dream with everyone, not only with the magazines or on videos, but for real. Anyone can now experience that dream, come and kitesurf at one of the most beautiful kite spots I have ever seen and feel the amazing Caribbean vibe Union Island has to offer.

This is also one of the most convenient kite spots for sailors from all around the world where they can come and kite right next to where they anchor and keep an eye on their boat while having fun.

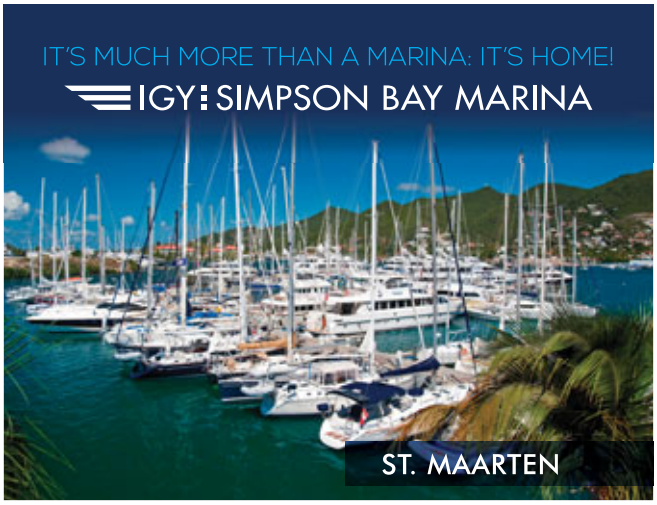
One of the things we are the most proud of at the JT Pro Center is to have taught some of the local kids on the island a few years ago. Some of them have become professional and are now teaching for us at an international level. Seeing the opportunities this sport is offering to the new generation is a great encouragement and reward for us.

Back in my hammock 14 years ago, if I knew how far kitesurfing would have got me I would have never believed it. I have lived my dream and I keep on living it here on Union Island where anyone can come and visit and share it.

With reliable tradewinds pouring into a reef-protected harbor, Clifton Harbour on Union Island has become a Mecca for kitesurfers.

For more information about JT Pro Center, visit www.kitesurfgrenadines.com.

Also check out Happykite kiteboarding school at www.happykitegrenadines.com.

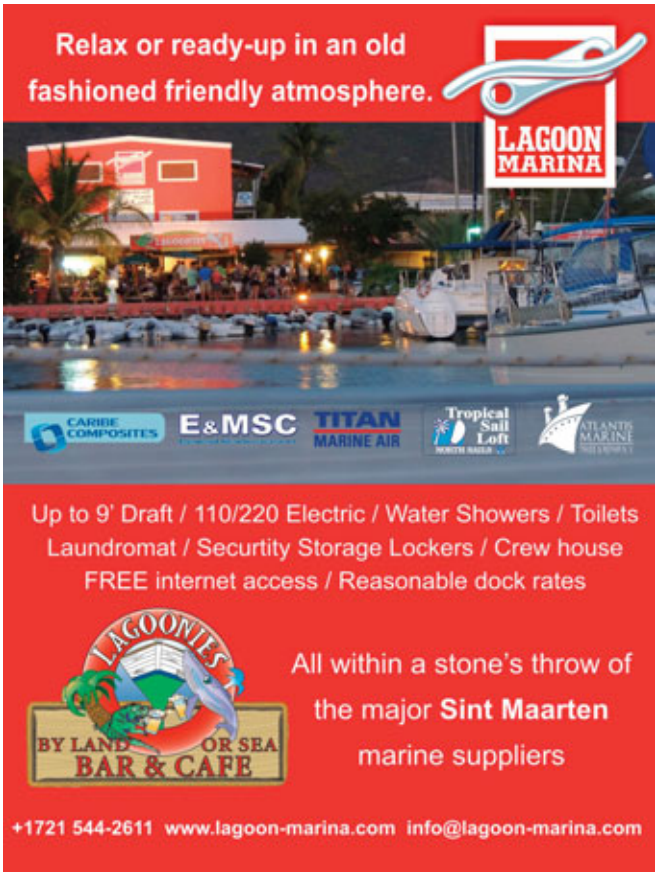


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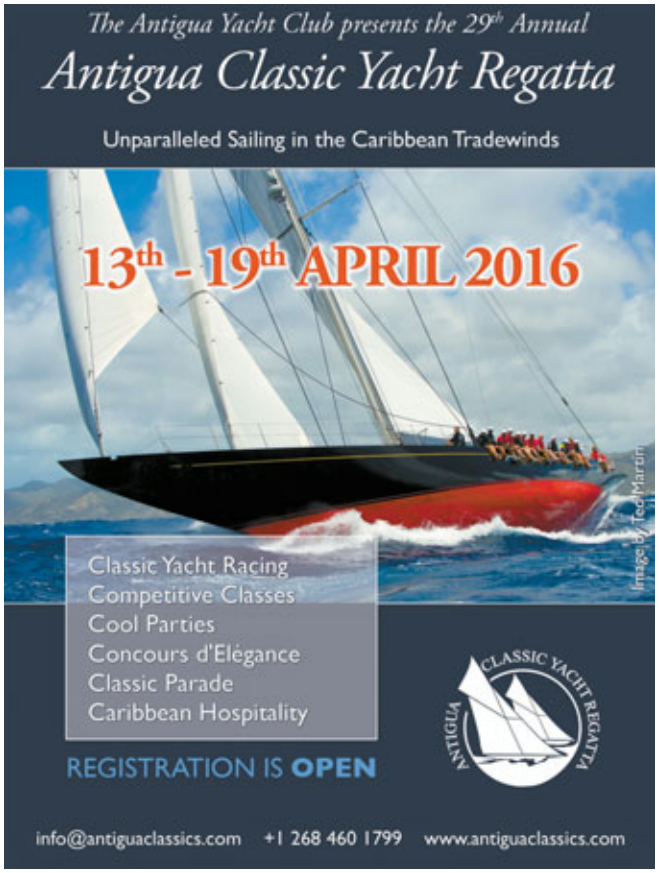
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REGATTA NEWS

ARC Caribbean 1500 Wraps Up in Tortola

A fast passage and downwind sailing marked the 26th running of this event. After a three-day weather delay thanks to late-season Hurricane Kate, and a fast passage at sea for most, the 2015 ARC Caribbean 1500 wrapped up in Tortola with the final prizegiving on November 23rd.

2015 was a tricky year for the 1500 departure. Traditionally the rally heads to sea from Hampton, Virginia on the first Sunday in November, but this year that was November 1st. The decision was made to push the start to November 8th to allow hurricane season to fizzle out. And it was the right one. Yachts that left from Hampton the week before experienced headwinds and calms, and some indeed saw wind speeds in the 60s as they skirted Hurricane Kate, which had formed after they'd departed.



Caribbean 1500 participants on an island tour of Tortola

The later start date, delayed even more by Kate, allowed for the weather to settle. After departure and a rough Gulf Stream crossing with sustained winds in the 20s, a high-pressure ridge filled in north of the fleet and made for reaching and running conditions for most of the passage and few motoring hours recorded.

"I only wish we would have rigged and learned how to use a spinnaker pole before the trip!" exclaimed Kirk of *Sweet Caroline*. "Most of the trip we really could have used it to wing out and stabilize the genoa."

The big winners in the Cruising Division were the two Swan 48s: *Catch 22*, the modern, faster Swan, which took Class A, and *Isbjorn*, a classic S&S Swan 48, which took Class B. *Seahorse*, a Leopard 48, won the Multihulls Division and took Line Honors in the Cruising Division. *Moonwave*, a Gunboat 60, took Line Honors with no motoring hours and was in fact the first boat to arrive in Tortola, but they had departed a day early. *Isbjorn* also took home the Steve Black Trophy for Overall Winner in the Cruising Division.

Yachts in the ARC Bahamas fleet started alongside the ARC Caribbean 1500 fleet after the weeklong pre-departure program in Portsmouth, then diverted south and west once across the Gulf Stream bound for Marsh Harbor in the Abacos and the finish port at Harbourview Marina. The Bahamas fleet enjoyed great sailing as well, reaching fast down to the islands. *Traveling Light*, an Atlantic 42 catamaran, took the prize for Line Honors.

In the BVI fleet, The Tempest Trophy, Navigator's Award and the Hal Sutphen Seamanship Award mark the highest honors. The Navigator's Award, sponsored by Weems & Plath, was awarded to *Free Spirit* for their prowess in taking celestial sights, while the Seamanship Award went to the crew on *Sweet Caroline* for their wonderful preparations, including passing the safety equipment checks in Portsmouth with flying colors.

The Tempest Trophy was presented to the yacht that best displayed the "Spirit of the Rally" and was in reality a lifetime achievement award for this year's winners. Miles and Anne Poor on *Karina*, their Tayana 55, are perennial entrants and through their MRP Refits business have helped dozens of owners outfit their boats for the rigors of ocean sailing.

Visit www.worldcruising.com/Carib1500/event.aspx for more information and full results.

Atlantic Odyssey Gets Underway

Northeasterly winds of 12 to 15 knots saw 38 Atlantic Odyssey boats start from Lanzarote, Canary Islands on November 18th, bound for the Eastern Caribbean.

"With 37 children under the age of 18 among the 40 boats preparing to take the start, the Atlantic Odyssey has been described by a French journalist as 'le transat des enfants'," said organizer Jimmy Cornell. "This apt description was in fact bettered at the welcome party held in the delightful setting of the Castillo San Jose looking out over the Arrecife seafront, when the tourism counsellor of Lanzarote suggested that a more fitting name of this successful event would be the Family Odyssey."

2015 sees the Atlantic Odyssey enter its third year, with an increase in entries year on year showing this original concept has hit a chord with cruising sailors. Spotting a gap in the market is Jimmy Cornell's specialty ever since he conceived the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers 30 years ago, which saw more than 200 yachts cross the Atlantic. The need for a smaller scale event prompted Jimmy to come out of retirement and launch the Atlantic Odyssey in 2013.

"We really want to encourage families to take part," said Doina Cornell, who coordinates the events alongside her father, Jimmy. "So we offer a special discount to boats with crew members under 16." Jimmy and Doina know better than most what cruising families want, having spent seven years sailing around the world together in the 1970s along with Jimmy's wife Gwenda and son Ivan.

Meanwhile the 12 yachts taking part in the inaugural Islands Odyssey have left the Canaries bound for the Cape Verde and Barbados. The Islands Odyssey is a pilot for an event later this year: the Barbados 50 rally, sponsored by Barbados Tourism, will commemorate the 50th anniversary of Barbadian independence by sailing a historic route from London to Barbados via West Africa and the Cape Verdes.

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The Martinique sponsor of the Atlantic Odyssey is the Regional Council of Martinique. While in Martinique, the Atlantic Odyssey will be hosted by Marina Le Marin.

The Atlantic Odyssey, Islands Odyssey and Barbados 50 are organized by Cornell Sailing Events. The Islands Odyssey and Barbados 50 are sponsored by Barbados Tourism Marketing.

Lucian *Attitude* Wins Mango Bowl 2015

It might be held on the last weekend of the rainy season, but St. Lucia's Mango Bowl Regatta was blessed by the weather gods on November 28th and 29th. Vessels from Martinique, Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia and the UK raced in six classes. Racing and Cruising yachts, Melges, J/24 and Surprise Classes fought a series of races over two days and the competition was fierce in every category.

Among six J/24s in the regatta were newcomer *Aurora Rose*, owned and crewed by local wellness resort BodyHoliday, the veteran *Die Hard* from Grenada, and St. Lucia's *Jabal*, *Grayling* and *Attitude*. By the end of the racing it was simply too close to call until the official results revealed that first place went to skipper Fredric Sweeney's *Attitude* on total first places, with *Die Hard* in second place and *Jabal* in third.

Six Surprise keelboats came from Martinique to compete, with the top spot captured by *Kreyol Sandwich Bip Bip* for the second year running, with *La Morrigane* in second and Digilife in third. In the new Melges class, also from Martinique, *GFA Caraibes* looked impressive as it took first, with *Regis Guillemot Charter* in second and *Maximarine* in third after being forced to miss the races on Day 1.

Cruising 1 had four entries, and the Sigma 36 *Happy Morning* from Great Britain was a convincing winner over the Beneteau Oceanis 473 *Leonora* from Barbados and the J/30 *Jaystar* from St. Lucia. Only two yachts competed in Cruising 2 class after one had to retire, and St. Lucia sail training charter company First 4 Sail's Choate 40, *Papagayo*, was on top form as they took four out of five first places over the Beneteau *Europa* from Martinique to win the class.

Finally in an extremely competitive fleet of six Racing yachts from Martinique, the JPK 960 *Elliott* made a whitewash of five firsts, with the Farr 40 *Fiser* in second and the J/111 *Jboss* in third.

Visit www.stluciayachtclub.com for full results.

First Ever USVI Paralympic Sailing Team

The first ever US Virgin Islands Paralympic Sailing Team — Dave Flaherty (skipper), Tony Sanpere, and Jim Kerr — competed in Australia at the 2015 Para World Sailing Championships, November 26th through December 3rd. The team, which raced a Sonar, had two reserves, Bill Canfield and Bob Blackwell. Six-time Olympian (Sailing and Luge) John Foster was coach, and Jan Robinson was manager.

Coach Foster reports: "We had a great regatta and our team held up well even though we had a borrowed boat. We do not own our own so we had to make do with what we could find in Australia. Unfortunately there are very few Sonar class boats there… (and) the measurer found that our boat had an illegal keel (according to Sonar class rules). Apparently after our boat was built, they changed the allowable keel profile and dimensions. We had to find a local boat builder to rebuild the keel so that we could race in the regatta. This took three days to do with the boat out of the water. This meant we were not able to train and practice out on the course with the other competitors. We were lucky to have the work done and the boat back in the water in time for the first day of racing... but we were not able to catch up with the leaders. In the end we were sailing at the back of the fleet with Korea, Japan and one Australian boat. Even so our team felt it was well worth all the effort we put in to get the US Virgin Islands onto the international scene for disabled sailors. I think we contributed well to our sport and we will always remember that it is not the size of your country that matters; it's the size of your courage and determination that makes the difference."



Representing the USVI at the 2015 Para World Sailing Championships in Australia Inset: Tony Sanpere gets a smooch from team manager Jan Robinson

The inaugural race for the USVI team was in June 2013, in the USA in Newport, Rhode Island where they won the bronze medal in the Sonar Class of Thomas C. Clagett Jr. Clinic and Memorial Regatta. In January 2014 they competed in Miami at the ISAF World Cup. In June they raced again in Newport. In August they sailed in events leading up to the World Championships in Halifax, Canada where the first seven countries won a coveted place in the Paralympics.

The US Virgin Islands Team (ISV) is the newest team to join the International Federation of Disabled Sailors with the oldest sailors — the average age being 75 years.

Visit www.usviparalympicsalingteam.com for more information.

RORC Transatlantic Race to Grenada

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, entrants in the second edition of the RORC Transatlantic Race are still pouring into Grenada's Port Louis Marina after racing from Lanzarote in the Canary Islands, where they started on November 28th.

Lloyd Thornburg's mighty green MOD70, *Phaedo3*, crossed the finish line off Quarantine Point, Grenada on December 4th, completing the RORC Transatlantic Race in 5 days, 22 hours, 46 minutes and 3 seconds. Team Phaedo finished less than two hours ahead of Tony Lawson's MOD70, *Ms Barbados* to take Line Honours.

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A group of Grenada's junior sailors visited *Phaedo* crewmember Sam Goodchild aboard at Port Louis Marina. Sam grew up and went to school in the Grenadian village of Woburn and did a lot of his early sailing here. What a great way to return, by setting a new record and winning Line Honours in the prestigious Royal Ocean Racing Club Transatlantic Race!

Visit http://rorctransatlantic.rorc.org/2015-race-updates for more information.

LYNN FLETCHER



Canfield Wins 7th Carlos Aguilar Match Race

Carol Bareuther reports: The USVI's Taylor Canfield's undefeated streak came to an end in the third and final day of racing in the seventh Carlos Aguilar Match Race, held December 3rd through 6th in St. Thomas, USVI. It proved a combination of conditions and competition. Sun, squalls, blustery and breathless, the conditions offered something for everyone. As for the competition, Canfield suffered his two defeats at the hands of fellow match-racing titans, the USA's Dave Perry and Stephanie Roble. However, this duo of losses didn't stand in the way of Canfield and his combination USOne-VI crew of Mike Rehe, Alden Reid, William Bailey and Sam Morrell from soundly securing a championship victory with a three-win lead.

"We came into today in the lead with 12 wins. I knew we only had to win one race or for a couple of the closer teams to lose a race for us to hold the lead, so there wasn't that much pressure on us," says Canfield, who is currently the number two ranked skipper in the world in the Open match race rankings.

Roble's win over Canfield in the final match of the regatta put her in a three-way tie for second place with the USVI's Peter Holmberg and USA's Dave Perry.

DEAN BARNES



The USA's Stephanie Roble, helming the black-hulled boat, leads the USVI's Taylor Canfield to win the final match of the 2015 CAMR

"It was hard with the double round-robin format and no knock-outs," explains Roble, the top woman match racer in the US, number four in the world, and 2014 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year, who won the tie-breaker to finish second overall. "We did better in the first round robin with seven wins compared to the second with four wins. I knew going into the last race today that I wanted to win and we pushed hard to make that happen."

The USVI's Holmberg rounded out the top three teams on the podium.

"The results were correct in the end," says Holmberg, Olympic silver medalist and America's Cup skipper. "Taylor and Stephanie overall sailed a better regatta. We are happy with third. It was like pulling a rabbit out of a hat, and we fought hard, although we didn't have our regular crew."

Junior sailors are a signature feature of the CAMR. Antilles School Sailing Team members Paige Clarke, Amanda Engeman, Ryan Hunter, Reid McHenry, Scott McKenzie, Sam Morrell, Graceann Nicolosi, Christopher Sharpless, Caroline Teare and Thomas Walden each crewed for one of the international skippers during the three-day event. In addition, over a dozen students from the Addelita Cancryn Junior High School's Aquatics Program participated in the CAMR Youth Regatta, which paired the juniors with an international skipper for a trio of fleet races.

Match racing took place in the ideal venue of St. Thomas' Charlotte Amalie Harbor. Not only is this location spectator friendly, it boasts no favoritism to local knowledge due to the extremely shifty winds blowing off the mountains.

The CAMR is an International Sailing Federation (ISAF)-provisional Grade Two event. The event is raced in IC-24s, a one-design modification of a J/24.

Visit www.carlosmatchrace.com for more information.

ON THE HORIZON…

Join the Barbados to Grenada Feeder Race!

For those who will be in Barbados at the time of the 2016 Mount Gay Round Barbados Regatta, there are plans underway to hold a feeder race between Barbados and Grenada, arriving in time to take part in the 2016 Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week.

This new development will benefit both events and full details will be posted on www.grenadasailingweek.com website and published in the GSW Newsletter and Facebook page.

Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week

A great bunch of boats have already signed up to "Spice it Up in Grenada!" from January 28th through February 2nd.

In the CSA Racing Class, *Taz* from Antigua, the Farr 40 *Fiser* from Martinique, the J/105 *Whistler* from Barbados and the modified Hobie 33 *Category 5* from Grenada are registered, among others. In the popular CSA Racer/Cruiser Class,…

—Continued on next page

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… the ever-competitive Frers 43 *Jaguar* from Trinidad, the Beneteau 53 *Rapajam* from Barbados, and *Piccolo* from the UK look set for another battle, but there are


GRENADA SAIL WEEK

also more yachts from the Caribbean, the UK, Europe and the USA likely to get into the fray. The J/24 Class and Classic Class are starting to fill up, each adding a different dimension to this sailing week. It is definitely time to sign up for lots of action both on and off the water!

Visit www.grenadasailingweek.com and register online.

80th Anniversary Mount Gay Round Barbados

The 80th anniversary Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series is set for January 16th through 24th.


PETER MARSHALL

Organized by the Barbados Cruising Club in association with Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. and Mount Gay Rum, this regatta always takes place during the third week in January to incorporate the headline event — the 60-nautical mile Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race — which traditionally takes place on Errol Barrow Day, January 21st.

For more information visit www.mountgayrumroundbarbadosrace.com

Les Voiles de St. Barth 2016: a Promising 7th Edition

The seventh edition of Les Voiles de St. Barth will run from April 11th through 16th, and a number of boats have already taken the necessary steps to make sure they are on the starting line at what has become one of the Caribbean's main sailing events. The 100-foot *Comanche*, the MOD70 *Phaedo3* and the Maxi72s *Momo* and *Proteus* are just some of the big names that have confirmed their presence.

Visit www.lesvoilesdesaintbarth.com/site for more information.


JOUANY CHRISTOPHE

New Race Officers for ASW 2016

The 49th edition of Antigua Sailing Week will commence with the Round Antigua Race on April 23rd. Following that will be five days of competitive racing off the south coast of Antigua.

Two new race officers will be joining the team in 2016. Stuart Childerley will be joining as Principal Race Officer and Stephen Parry as Race Officer on the Committee Boat B start line. Stuart twice represented Great Britain in the Olympic Games in the Finn Class and has won several National, European and World Championships in both dinghies and keelboats.

Stephen Parry has been a key player in the on-the-water race management team for Antigua Sailing Week for the past few years and has agreed to take on the role of Committee Boat B Race Officer for 2016. Stephen has owned and raced a variety of boats with great success over many years. He has been an RYA National Race Officer for ten years, running many events in Europe and the UK including acting as PRO for the Dartmouth Royal Regatta, CRO for the 'Big Boats Championships' in the Hamble Winter Series and acting as Assistant Race Officer at the Paralympic Games in 2012. Stephen is also RYA's Regional Race Management Coordinator organizing and running courses for race officers and mark layers.

Antigua Sailing Week is confident that the new blood Stuart will bring to the event combined with the past experiences Stephen has had with Antigua Sailing Week will combine perfectly to provide some of the most exciting racing yet. Their combined experience and professionalism will reinforce Antigua Sailing Week's tag line: "Where Sailing Comes First".

The Notice of Race for Antigua Sailing Week 2016 is now available.

Visit www.sailingweek.com for more information.



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Y2A BY ELLEN EBERT BIRRELL

THE BAHAMAS — TIES THAT BIND

I want to encourage those in the Caribbean and around the world to continue the good work. Sometimes it gets discouraging and you feel that you're in it alone. The benefits outweigh the discouraging times. When we continue to work with young people in a positive way, we not only affect the youth, but our communities, our country, our world.

— Melvin Higgins, Commodore

Harbour Island Sailing Club, Eleuthera, The Bahamas

Not all of us, like Melvin Higgins, have the tie that binds us to youth sailing. What better method for Caribbean youths to understand the sea and the weather and the opportunities within the marine industry than junior sailing? As we watch the lack of care being shown for the marine environment, what better method for a long-term solution than supporting a culture of education and caring? Youth sailing can be part of this process while alleviating unemployment and its associated societal ills by introducing marine skills and building self-esteem and confidence for children as they march toward adulthood. While Melvin's overarching remark seems broad, it is anchored in his solid belief that more men need to step to the plate to mentor children and teens. He wants to create ties that bind. As the commodore of a club whose driving force is youth sailing he says, "We have shifted our focus to training and keeping male teenagers around. Our country is broken-up islands. Young men leave to advance their careers. For example, one of our youth sailors just left for Florida to acquire his pilot's license."

Are coaching clinics the answer? Is remunerating young men for coaching going to be a game changer?

From the Bahamas to Grenada, sustainability is a challenge. The reality: men need a livelihood. Melvin reflects, "During the summer (a two-week sailing camp), we can pay a small amount. I think one of the mistakes that we made was placing our focus on the newer, younger sailors. Older sailors who had aged out of Optimists were getting neglected. As a result they lost interest and drifted away. We realized this and started an aggressive Sunfish and Laser push. We are still bringing the Lasers along but can now also carry 15 to 17 Sunfish sailors to regattas. Add to that, we have started to look within the club for help. Training our older teens, one has joined the workforce but is able to help out during our summer sailing program, another travelled to the Opti Nationals to assist younger sailors, yet another has become a main chaperone at Harbour Island and when we travel. By looking in-house, we have begun to solve the challenge of retaining older youth. I think holding national coaching clinics and having teenagers become internationally certified coaches would definitely be a positive boost for their confidence. Outside help is always welcome."

Says Bill Canfield of St. Thomas Yacht Club in the US Virgin islands, "We encourage our female teens to get US Sailing certified. They do magic to nurture and build confidence in our five- to ten-year-olds." This has also been the case with St. Lucia's Stephanie Devaux-Lovell leading local coaching efforts. Melvin says, "We have found out that the girls are excellent when it comes to helping the younger sailors, in terms of coaching and teaching them to sail. Some of our older girls have gone off to further their education, so we work to keep the trend going. It helps to have Melisha (his daughter), the top female Bahamian Opti sailor, here in Harbour Island."

With ten junior sailing programs within the Bahamas, Harbour Island has been the first and one of the only to build a clubhouse.

The Bahamas Sailing Association (BSA) has to be commended for the tremendous job that they have done and continue to do promoting and advancing youth sailing. A testimony to that, just last year the Nationals held in Hope Town, Abaco, boasted 50 Optimists. For the first time, a sailor from outside of the capital (Nassau) won the Nationals — Brandon Sands of the Cherokee Sound Sailing Club. Sailing's popularity continues to grow throughout the Bahamas. "We are hoping that our new generation of sailors continues the great tradition that was started by two of our Bahamian legends: Sir Durward Knowles and Cecil Cooke, who won the very first Olympic gold medal for our country sailing in 1964 in the Star class," Melvin says.

On a somber note, right before Opti Nationals in October, the Bahamas were hit by Category 4 Hurricane Joaquin. It inflicted major damage to the southern islands of Acklins Island, Crooked Island, Rum Cay, San Salvador, Long Cay, Ragged Island, Mayaguana and Long Island; many were left homeless and schools, churches, clinics and infrastructure were destroyed. Consequently, Mack Knowles Junior Sailing Club dropped out and the Nationals were delayed by two weeks. In November, the BSA and the Cooke Family saw to it that the Mack Knowles sailors participated in the Cecile Cooke Memorial Junior Regatta bringing the total to 57 sailors — the largest Bahamian junior regatta of all time!

Y2A Featured Youth

Melisha Higgins, 14 years old

Junior Sailing Program: Harbour Island Sailing Club, Eleuthera

Favorite Boat: Optimist

The draw of adventure brings Melisha Higgins to sailing. Though nurtured by her sailing father into the process, it is the exploration beyond her island and coming back to report on it to the younger children that calls to Melisha.



ROBERT DUNKLEY

—Continued on next page

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Her favorite subject at Harbour Island All Age School is geography. "When I grow up I would love to be a teacher," the 10th grader says. Harbour Island is located just north of its mainland, Eleuthera. Melisha's initial sailing forays to Nassau, Grand Bahamas, the Abacos and Long Island eventually gave way to broader travel to Miami for the 2012 Orange Bowl Regatta, Fort Lauderdale for the Boomerang Regatta and Bermuda in 2013 for the North Americans.

That Track and Field is her favorite school sport speaks of someone who is literally on the move! Melisha began sailing Optimists at eight years of age. At her first experience racing in the Nationals in 2010 "it was blowing very hard, I was very light and the boat heeled. I sat inside my boat and it just sank. One of the older sailors came to help. I didn't want to go back out, but he encouraged me." She's advanced through to Sunfish and Lasers. At 14, she admits the Optimist is still her favorite because "it is much smaller and easier to handle, and it was my first boat." Her first love.

Decision-making, taking responsibility, confidence, courage, social skills, sportsmanship and a regard for helping fellow sailors are the take-aways Melisha's received from learning to sail and race. "Commitment and dedication. Sailing requires a lot of dedication. I'm the top sailor and I've always been at the top of my (academic) class." She would like to see more people volunteering and helping with the coaching. "My father is the only one right now. The older sailors come to help. They are taking more responsibility and developing."

She has only one more year in Optimists. She sees herself racing Sunfish and Laser 4.7 after that. Eventually, "I'd like to be the first female to win a gold medal in the Nationals."

Her message: "Once you put your mind to it, you can do it. Work hard and stay committed."

Y2A Featured Adult
Melvin Higgins, 48 years old
Employment: Building contractor



We step out of our usual Y2A pattern of studying an adult who is employed in the marine industry, to look at the volunteer work that Melvin Higgins is doing on his small island. His influence on sailing development is anything but small. As commodore of Harbour Island Sailing Club, he not only sets the tone but also does much of the coaching himself. "The club was founded to promote junior sailing," he says.

As a Bahamian, his love for sailing was instilled by his father. Jacob Higgins was the first Bahamian executive chef. Originally from Mayaguana Island (the least populated island in The Bahamas), he started out washing dishes and worked his way up. Sent off to Canada to further his studies, he apprenticed for a year in the early '80s. Europeans and Americans had dominated the culinary field in the Bahamas, but he went on to run major hotel restaurants, private restaurants and even the Nassau YC. At that time, the government owned most of the Bahamian hotels. Eventually, he opened his own restaurant: The Guinep Tree.

Learning sailing from his father on their local wooden boat, *Cobra*, instilled courage and boldness in Melvin. *Cobra* comes from a lineage of open fishing boats that evolved into racing boats. All Melvin's sailing knowledge came from native boats. *Cobra* falls in the B Class, which is 21 feet long, using a crew of six in light air and as many as ten in heavy weather. There is also the A Class, which is 28 feet with a 16- to 18-person crew, and C Class with a five-person crew. "We went out sailing every weekend whether there was a race or not. It taught us how to be confident and responsible. When I was growing up, there were two distinct groups of sailors: local folks and Nassau YC modern yachtsmen. When Dad quit sailing, it was up to my brother and me to take the boat around. We had to be more aware of our surroundings. When others would go out partying, we had to stick around and make sure that the boat was secured. I learned sportsmanship and socializing. You meet people from all walks of life, from all around the world. Foreign yachtsmen would want to join us aboard *Cobra* to see what it was like to race in local boats."

Melvin continues, "After high school, I got certified as a building contractor. I got my experience in the field and worked my way up the ranks. Most recently, I'm involved in a 30 million dollar residential project."

An ordained minister, Melvin's major priorities are family, church and sailing. He is best known through the church and the sailing community. "Sailing (racing) is a sport that I love but I retired from it 20 years ago. I took on the role with the kids more as a ministry to see these youth sailors succeed in life. I'm more like a Big Brother counselor and father figure to kids who come from single-parent families. It isn't just the sailing that gets me going." A child asked one day, "Mr. Higgins, could you be my father?"

"If you can dream it, you can achieve it. It can be reached through sailing. There are so many benefits that you can get from sailing. We watch our kids and see the attitude change, the behavior change. We see the glow in their eyes when we travel. We see them do well. Regardless of social standing or background, which island you come from, which country or family you were born into, if you want something badly enough, go after it! There are people who will come forward and assist our young people to reach where they want to go. I definitely love the kids even more than I love sailing."

Melvin Higgins embodies dedication. He embraces the lasting ties that bind him and his country to a brighter future by investing in youth.

Innovation out of The Bahamas

• Teen retention through transitioning youth from Optimists to Lasers and Sunfish and empowering teens as trainers and chaperones.

• Regionalized support empowering all junior programs to compete in Nationals and other regional regattas.

To see how they've done it, visit bahsailing.org's Detailed History tab. And, they mean detailed! Insightful details from which any new junior sailing program can learn.

Youth2Adult — Y2A — is a series of articles celebrating sailing's role in youth development. Ellen Ebert Birrell attributes her opportunity to cruise the Caribbean aboard Boldly Go *with partner Jim Hutchins to life skills built in childhood. Believing swimming and sailing are essentials for island youth, she supports junior sailing and serves on the Caribbean Sailing Association Sailing Development Committee.*

Visit caribbean-sailing.com/youth/youth-programs for more information.

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The Launching of Free

by Maiwenn Beadle



ANNA LANDRY (ALL PHOTOS)

Travelift not required. On the Grenadine isle of Carriacou, launching by manpower is a time-honored tradition

In a sea of people, I press my face to her stem and whisper a self-conscious blessing. Sail fast little boat, sail fast and keep your people safe. She is a strong boat, well built, with clean sweet lines. Her frames are hand cut from island trees, her planking Silver Bali. She is strong but light. She does not need my blessing. We will race against her in Antigua and she will give her sisters a run for their money, you can see it in her deep forefoot, her beam, her sheer.

There is no discussion. These boats, built by hand and eye, their timbers hewn with an adze, are unbelievably fast and fleet. A Carriacou sloop, her hull shaped by tradition, is like nothing else to sail. She is built to work, to fish, to stay ahead of the Customs man. She is built with the pride of a village in every plank and every seam. In an island where there is precious little to inspire the youth, here is a tradition handed from father to son. Craft and skills taught, and, most important of all, a lesson of patience. For even in a world of iPhones and tweets, a world of constant communication and immediate gratification, you cannot hurry the build of a wooden boat. Each frame must be shaped, each plank. Each seam must be caulked and the ring of the caulking iron is steady and monotonous and will not be hurried. From model to sailing she is a lesson in the old ways.

But she is not a boat yet, not until she has tasted the water. Now she is a heavy solid box, and to make her into a boat the whole village will need to help her across the 150 feet of beach and through the shallows until she floats high on the ocean.

Three days ago she was a bare hull and in a week she will be underway to Antigua, 300 miles to the north. All the patience of her build is gone now, and there is a flurry of activity. Everyone will help. A goat head sits on the workbench and there is blood on her deck from the kill, a sacrifice that the boat demands. Later the priest will sprinkle holy water on her and bless her. The builders' mouths are dry from the sun and the shot of Jack Iron Rum shared to send her on her way. A last lick of sunshine yellow paint is going on her hull and somewhere in the island a truck is searching out utility poles for the rollers. An anchor is found, big and old and rusty. It will take the entire load on the line used to haul her from the beach. A flurry of articulated discussion ensues. How far out? Here, No there, Don't be stupid mon, it need to be there. Will it set? Is there enough line for the tackles? No? No problem, we will find more. Here you can clearly see the juxtaposition of two cultures. All the villagers know she will float by sunset; all the outsiders are unsure and concerned, missing the organization that peppers their lives. Where else could you find a village who will all turn out to drag a boat across a beach, not even for one of their own but for a complete stranger. For the last 150 years they have launched boats here in this way, and many have been much larger. There is nothing to be said, only work to be done.

Here is Cal Enoe, calmly in charge, the builder. Beside him Alexis Andrews, filmmaker and champion of these boats. We watched his amazing film Vanishing Sail last night in Hillsborough, the hall ringing with laughter and gentle ribbing. Hey Hopey, you a movie star now. To one side stands Thierry, the St. Barth restaurateur who will be this sloop's owner; his face is tense now but it will relax in the biggest grin when he sees her floating. The boat is a dream conjured up between Alexis and Thierry at the West Indies Regatta, always very generously supported by Thierry with a dinner for all comers at his fabulous beach restaurant, La Plage, where she will be the hotel's day charter boat.

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The crowd is drinking beer and rum and the advice is coming in coming stronger and more animated. A massive braid line is slung around her middle and tied in a knot, no, lots of knots. Well, if you are not sure of your knots, tie lots. Chocks are hammered into her pristine paint and the front of her keel is jacked with a car jack. The rollers have arrived and skids are run down the beach. Under the chocks, poles four inches in diameter take her load on the port side, and as she lists gently on to



Above: November 15th, 2015. 'I'm ready; let's go!'

Top right: A massive braid line is slung around her middle

Below: She comes down one lurch at a time until she rests on her keel and the turn of the bilge

Bottom right: She is poised at the steep slope of the beach



them the barrels that have supported her weight through the build are removed. A massive plank is nailed on the turn of her bilge where she will ie on the rollers. And then the heavens open. Not just a light shower, but a drenching tropical downpour. At least if nothing else the skids will be well lubricated for her launch.

Here is the priest and the band. She is blessed and christened and her name unfurls on the flag. *Free in St Barth*. Now we must set her free. Behind me I hear a voice say, either wistfully or resentfully, I am not sure which, "once we launch her we will not see her again, she will go off to Antigua and not come back" and indeed this is true, these boats have become so expensive to build that they are no longer island fishing boats and cargo boats, they have become yachts. Sadly, the islanders who build these boats can no longer afford to keep them. Gentrification has allowed the building tradition to continue where it would have died, and the future will always be different from the past but there is a tinge of sadness in this amelioration. Here is the dichotomy that, in keeping something alive, we have changed it irreconcilably, but with the price of timber doubling in the past few years the only way for the traditions to live on is for outside money to come and buy these boats. This boat is the first boat built by Alwyn Enoe's sons, the first boat built by a new generation of boat builders; with her the skills have lived to be passed on.

And so the Cutting Down commences. Three axes come down in unison on the bases of the poles, chop, chop, chop and she slips six inches as the bases narrow and break off in the sand. Chop, chop, and down she comes one lurch at a time until she rests on her keel and the turn of the bilge. Like a great whale lying on her side. Once the paint on her keel is touched up and the last welding is done on her rudder all hands start to pull and push her. Can it really be possible to move her like this? More hands to her transom and another haul and she lurches forward on the skids. She is headed to the sea. There is no choice, she must float now, she cannot go back. With each effort she moves a little closer, until she is poised at the



Caption



steep slope of the beach. The line holding her back, slowing her headlong dash to the sea snaps but she stops just in time. Over the rise she goes, and down with a crack. Again and again the crew on the line haul, then wait while the heaving anchor is reset. Her bow is pushed around by the power of many hands and once again the hands on her transom shove. The impossible is happening and she is moving inexorably toward her natural element. In the twilight she takes to the water not yet floating but close. A powerboat takes her bow line and *Free* is free from the land. A massive cheer erupts, tense faces relax and the bottle of rum is passed. She floats high and she is a beauty.

In a week I will see her again in Antigua, the impossible achieved, her rig stepped and a 44-hour trip covering the three hundred miles between English Harbour and Windwardside under her belt. She is a flyer all right, amazingly fast and by all accounts strong and comfortable. Thierry's face is grinning now, and Cal cracks a shy but proud smile. The tension of the launch is gone. Here on a dock usually frequented by megayachts and rock stars sits a beautiful little Carriacou sloop, and in her the story of an island tradition.

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EMPOWERMENT FOR 'BIGGER' SAILING



Sally Erdle (All Photos)

Mission accomplished. Ruby Rose, *one of the 195 yachts sailing in ARC 2015, pulls into Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia after 2,700 non-stop miles at sea*

by Sally Erdle

"It's an experience; you grow. You feel so great when you conquer your fear. Sometimes being at sea is even boring, but it's nice to learn how to be with yourself. It was great to be out there!" So said Marie Sundqvist, after crossing the Atlantic under sail for the first time.

When Marie's husband crossed the Atlantic in 2004, she didn't go. But when she recently turned 60, the Swedish sailor decided she wanted to cruise the Caribbean on her own boat, the Hallberg Rassy 42F *Cavatina* — and she wanted to make the crossing to get there. "We are sailing people, and it's good to widen your knowledge of sailing by sailing on different oceans," she says.

Along with 1,121 other sailors on 195 yachts sailing under the flags of 27 nations, Marie, her husband and three crewmembers — all friends and family — sailed in the 30th annual running of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, now known as the ARC.

The ARC idea was born in 1985 when *Yachting World* magazine sent Jimmy Cornell to the Canary Islands to interview Caribbean-bound skippers about their preparations for the 2,700-nautical-mile transatlantic passage. Jimmy got the idea of organizing a race across the Atlantic — a race that focused on camaraderie and one that would increase safety and confidence, especially among those making their first long ocean passage. The first ARC left Las Palmas in 1986 and has run every year since.

In 1989, an IRC Racing Division was introduced; it now holds some 15 percent of the fleet each year. Yachts in the Racing Division are not permitted to use their engines for propulsion, while those in the Cruising Division are allowed to motor, with motoring times calculated into the results. In 1990 the ARC's destination was switched from Barbados to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, to provide the arriving fleet with the amenities of a full-service marina. In 2013, a new route choice was introduced. ARC + Cape Verdes ("ARC+") departs two weeks ahead of the traditional ARC start and sees a smaller fleet depart Gran Canaria bound for the Cape Verde Islands, approximately 850 nautical miles. Following a three- to five-day stopover, the ARC+ fleet then continues the crossing to St. Lucia, about 2,150 nautical miles.

Since its inception the ARC has continued to thrive, reaching a record entry of 235 yachts in 1999, and regularly exceeding 220 entries each year. Following the introduction of ARC+, over 250 boats now sail under the ARC banner each year. 2015 saw a combined total of 294 yachts sailing the Atlantic in the ARC and ARC+ — a record number in the history of the rally.

Andrew Bishop, Managing Director of the ARC's organizing body, World Cruising Club, tells Compass, "The goal is to have both events at full capacity by 2020. ARC+ has about reached its capacity. There is a 75-boat limit and there were 64 entries this year. ARC had 195 entries this year and the limit is 225."

ARC+ departed the Canaries on November 8th and ARC departed on November 22nd, 2015.

Breaking the ARC Course Record set in ARC 2014 by *Leopard by Finland*, a Farr 100, by some seven hours, the first ARC yacht to finish was the Dutch VO65 *Team Brunel*, which sailed a zig-zag route of 3,342 nautical miles in an elapsed time of 8 days, 7 hours, 39 minutes, and 30 seconds, for an average speed of 13.5 knots. This is the third year in a row that the ARC Course Record has been beaten.

With "near perfect" conditions, it was a fast crossing for the entire fleet — unusually, all but two or three arrived in time for the annual Marina General Manager's Cocktail Party on December 15th.

The 30th ARC saw more firsts. Rumen Kotov's 37-foot Oluf Jørgensen-designed Luffe sloop, *Furia*, was the first-ever Bulgarian-flagged yacht to sail in the ARC and, for Rumen and his crew from a country with no sea coast, ARC 2015 was their very first ocean race.

The Danish-built Luffe Yachts sloop is fast and light, combining a traditional narrow hull form with a modern underbody. "I'd like to thank the builders," Rumen says. "The boat is capable of handling strong winds and is very seaworthy. After the first four days, we knew had no worries about the boat."

—Continued on next page



Elise (ten), Silje (five) and Øyvind (seven), who sailed ARC 2015 aboard the Hanse 445 Friskus VI, *set up their craft shop on the dock. Their parents are taking them on a one-year voyage 'to see what comes next'*



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—*Continued from previous page*

Furia sailed with two Bulgarian crew: Dian Zaykov is a well-known racing trainer and Mihail Kopanov has been sailing for 15 years as crew and as skipper of a private boat. Why did sailors from a country with no seacoast do the ARC? Rumen says, "I had been following the ARC and wanted to see how my team and I would do ocean racing with no previous ocean experience. Plus, we wanted to represent Bulgaria — when we first signed up, there wasn't even a Bulgarian flag on the ARC website to put with our entry!"

Furia stayed on a direct course as much as possible, once flying the spinnaker for seven days straight, while boats that do better on reaches zig-zagged. Chris Tibbs on the Wauquiez Centurion 40s *Taistealai*, who has raced round the world three times, was their main competitor. Rumen says, "We basically followed him." *Furia* placed first in Cruising Class F, ahead of *Taistealai* by about ten and a half hours on corrected time.

Rumen describes the Bulgarian sailing scene as a small "closed" community, although Olympic sailing is well developed, Q-boats have IRC races, Bulgarian sailors have participated in round-the-world races, and youth sailing is boosted with Optis and new clubs. *Furia's* accomplishment, Rumen hopes, will encourage more Bulgarian youth to sail, and more Bulgarians to do the ARC.



His advice is, "If you're keen to sail, start immediately and go for it — like I did. I had only five years' sailing experience on small boats before these past two years on *Furia*. Go for it; go sailing."

Geri, who crewed on the Swan 56 *Why Not*, says that she too discovered sailing as an adult and found the ARC a way to achieve a new sailing goal. The former white-water canoe and kayak wilderness guide says, "I've been sailing for eight years. I didn't know anyone who sailed when I was 50. Then for my 50th birthday, my partner gave me a surprise trip sailing in Desolation Sound. I loved it!" She jumped in, taking courses, racing, and joining a sailing club. "I spent as much time as possible sailing." She has crewed in the Salty Dawg rally and chartered in the BVI. Now she teaches adult sailing in Ottowa and races weekly on a women's team. "Sailing is not as limited by age as some other sports. I packed a lot of sailing into eight years."

Why the ARC? "As an older woman, I wasn't comfortable going on crew sites; I wanted to get on a boat with known standards. Plus, I knew the ARC passage was a good-weather trip, and the idea started to captivate me. I wanted to experience a longer trip to see how I would do, how I would deal with the time, with the other crew... I was the only woman in the crew with ten guys on this trip, and the crew duties were balanced. I cooked only four times, and because I volunteered to. Five of the crew were Italian and I got tired of pasta!"

In contrast to Geri being the only woman aboard, the crew of the Beneteau 40.7 *Hot Stuff* is all female, by intent. *Hot Stuff* is a regular ARC participant, and skipper Nikki Henderson explains: "The Girls for Sail company is primarily about teaching. Having an all-female crew provides a supportive environment in what can be a predominantly male environment. It builds confidence."

Nikki, aged 22, was taught to sail as a child by her dad. After earning her Day Skipper qualification, she wanted to travel, and thought sailing would be the way to go. She worked as a freelance sailing instructor before skippering *Hot Stuff*. She has this advice for other young women getting into ocean sailing: "If you go with the mindset that you are just as valuable as everyone else, they'll treat you that way. Just think of yourself as equal and accept that everyone has to cook and clean — even you." Her favorite sailing environment is a mixed crew with fair positions, but "Have a go sailing with all women; it's really good fun!"

On *Crackerjack's* first ocean crossing, Colum "Sully" O'Sullivan sailed his Oyster 53 with crew. Why join the ARC rather than go independently? "Well, my previous boat was a 16-foot cat! I bought this boat last May, and only decided to enter the ARC in August. Being with the ARC gave me a definite goal. The biggest thing with the ARC is preparation. You have to understand your boat so well, then you have no problems."

Why this boat? "Growing up I had seen some of my father's friends take their families out in light boats and bad weather, and their families never wanted to sail. I wanted a family boat that could handle bad weather. If you have kids, have a solid boat."

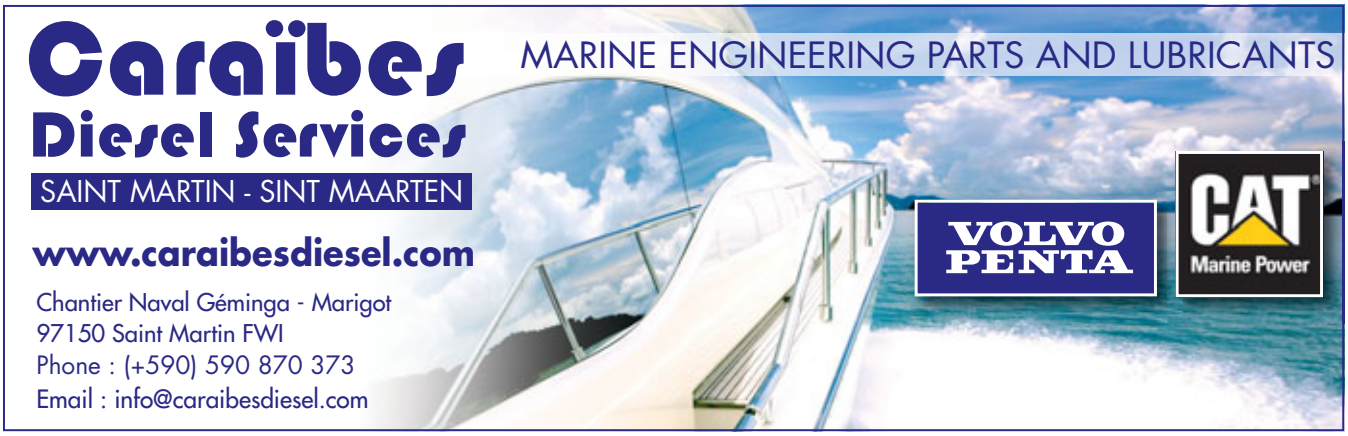
Sully and his wife have two kids, three and five years old, and decided that with a steep learning curve and not much prep time, it would be best for her and the children to fly to St. Lucia and join the boat there for a four-month cruise in the Caribbean and then onward. "My wife and I both had the cruising dream.

—*Continued on next page 25*





Clockwise from left: Rumen Kotov, Mihail Kopanov and Dian Zaykov, the first-ever Bulgarian crew to sail in the ARC; the youngest ARC skipper for two years in a row, 22-year-old Nikki Henderson of the UK is all about building sailors' confidence; Irish skipper Sully O'Sullivan says, 'The biggest thing with the ARC is preparation'





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MERCURY
Latin America & Caribbean

—Continued from previous page

"What an amazing experience to spend time with your kids outside the daily routine!"

Other families whose children did sail the ARC reported positive experiences… mostly. "Sailing across an ocean with a two-year-old is harder than we thought it would be," admits Johanna Gardner who sailed on *Azimuth*, an Amel Santorin, with her husband, Patrick, her father Jens (a child psychologist), the boat's former owner, John, and River, the youngest child in ARC 2015. Johanna sailed with ARC 2014 as crew on *Southern Child* and enjoyed repeating the experience *en famille*. Although Patrick notes that the ARC kids' activities are mostly geared to older children, "they are amazing with support, activities and fun. It really is a family event." Their advice to other parents considering the ARC: "Do it. Don't be afraid. And have large batteries to power non-stop cartoon DVDs!"



Sailor power! After her first Atlantic crossing, long-time Swedish sailor Marie Sundqvist says, 'You feel so great when you conquer your fear!'

After Jens and John depart for home, River's 12- and 13-year-old siblings will arrive in St. Lucia to cruise for a couple of weeks on school break, and then Patrick, Johanna and River, like many ARC crews, will continue to cruise the Caribbean.

"The Caribbean itself is a big part of the lure of the ARC," acknowledges Andrew Bishop. "All cruising yachtsmen want to come sailing in the Caribbean at least once in life. It's a cruising Mecca. That's why it's such a popular destination for bareboats as well. And of course there's the European weather in December…"

Andrew notes, however, "A big change I see in the ARC in recent years is that the number of people doing a non-stop year aboard to complete an Atlantic circuit has declined. They are still an important part of the ARC, but there are an increasing number now who do the Atlantic circuit in chunks between returning home to work."

Obviously, this trend is a storage boon to Caribbean marinas and boatyards. Andrew adds, "We bring boats across to the Caribbean, and now it's up to the Caribbean — the marine services, the tourism boards and the people themselves — to make the most of them being here. The better time they have, the more likely they are to come back and to tell their friends."

Paul Ash, General Manager of Rodney Bay Marina, emphasized that his staff and all the marina tenants worked hard to be ready for "the onslaught" and says, "We're delighted to see so many boats here. The value of the ARC should not be underestimated, and it's good to see the level of interest from our senior politicians. That is an indication of the way St. Lucia recognizes the importance of the sailing sector."

Skeptics have sometimes accused the ARC of "enabling" those otherwise incapable of sailing transatlantic, but while enabling and empowering are both ways of helping, enabling keeps the recipient dependent while empowering them gives them the skills, knowledge and confidence to be responsible for their own accomplishments, and the participants *Compass* spoke with this year were definitely feeling the power.

Andrew Bishop says, "It's about sharing knowledge, encouraging people to achieve their dream. ARC shares a wealth of experience, knowledge and partnerships. We help people realize that they, too, can do it. But it's not hand holding. We give a lecture in Las Palmas about preparation, but the sailors have to equip and prepare their boats, and — despite Yellowbrick tracking and radio contact — at the start line, they're on their own."

Geri on *Why Not* summed it up: "I was impressed. There's a lot to do to organize this many boats; it's a huge organization with a lot of people, and after 30 years there are no more growing pains. It's a good support system that empowers a lot of people to do 'bigger' sailing."

Visit www.worldcruising.com/arc for full results and more information.

Many thanks to World Cruising Club, the St. Lucia Tourist Board and Palm Haven Hotel for making Compass's *first hand coverage possible.*



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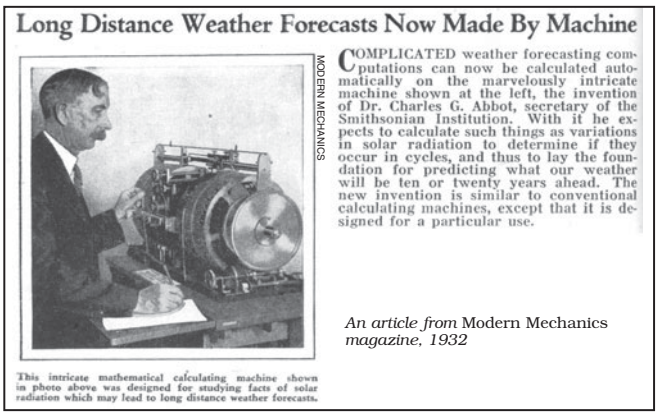
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Selected On-Line Weather Sources

"Red sky at night…" When was the last time you really looked at the sky during happy hour? For that matter, when was the last time you even tapped the barometer? Yet weather prediction occupies a large part of a Caribbean sailor's attention.

According to Wikipedia, it was not until the invention of the electric telegraph in 1835 that the modern age of weather forecasting began. Before this time, it was not widely practicable to transport information about the current state of the weather any faster than a steam train (and the train also was a very new technology at that time). By the late 1840s, the telegraph allowed reports of weather conditions from a wide area to be received almost instantaneously, allowing forecasts to be made from knowledge of weather conditions farther upwind… In the United States, the first public radio forecasts were made in 1925 on WEEI, the Edison Electric Illuminating station in Boston. Television forecasts followed in Cincinnati in 1940 or 1947 on the DuMont Television Network. The Weather Channel is a 24-hour cable network that began broadcasting in 1982, and sailors have been known to cluster around Caribbean beach-bar TVs during hurricane season.


Long Distance Weather Forecasts Now Made By Machine

MODERN MECHANICS

This intricate mathematical calculating machine shown in photo above was designed for studying facts of solar radiation which may lead to long distance weather forecasts.

COMPLICATED weather forecasting computations can now be calculated automatically on the marvelously intricate machine shown at the left, the invention of Dr. Charles G. Abbot, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. With it he expects to calculate such things as variations in solar radiation to determine if they occur in cycles, and thus to lay the foundation for predicting what our weather will be ten or twenty years ahead. The new invention is similar to conventional calculating machines, except that it is designed for a particular use.

An article from Modern Mechanics *magazine, 1932*

The technology used to disseminate weather forecasts is continually evolving. Although it's been a very long time since people tried seriously to predict the weather by examining onion skins or seeing whether or not the groundhog went back in his hole, it has also been a while since mariners routinely listened to good old WWV radio for marine storm warnings. The use of once-popular weatherfax has, to a great extent, been replaced by GRIB.

Although SSB radio is still indispensable, today, with WiFi so widely available in the Caribbean, increasing numbers of sailors get their weather information from on-line sources. Here we present a selection that various Caribbean cruisers have recommended.

Is your favorite weather website not listed here? Let us know!

Caribbean National, Regional and Island Weather Websites
- Barbados Weather Radar: www.barbadosweather.org/barbados-weather-Radar-SABDriver.php
- Cuba Met Institute: www.met.inf.cu (in Spanish)
- Curaçao Met Department: www.meteo.an
- Martinique Weather Radar: www.meteo.fr/temps/domtom/antilles/pack-public/animation/animMOSAIC_ant.html (in French)
- Panama Weather: www.hidromet.com.pa/index.php (in Spanish)
- SXM Cyclone/St. Martin: www.sxmcyclone.com (in French)
- Trinidad & Tobago Weather Radar: www.metoffice.gov.tt/radar
- US National Weather Service (for USVI and Puerto Rico): www.srh.noaa.gov/sju

International/General Weather Websites
- Desperate Sailors: www.desperatesailors.com/page/weather/carib_sxm
- NOAA's Environmental Visualization Laboratory: www.nnvl.noaa.gov (great satellite images, animations and more visual storm stuff)
- Mike's Weather Page: www.spaghettimodels.com
- PassageWeather: http://passageweather.com (provides seven-day wind, wave and weather forecasts to help sailors with passage planning and weather routing)
- Weather Underground: www.wunderground.com/hurricane
- www.windyty.com (shows speed and direction of the wind for 14 days in about three-hour increments)

Commercial Marine Weather Service Websites
- Buoyweather: www.buoyweather.com (supplies free two-day forecasts in addition to paid-for custom forecasts)
- Chris Parker's Marine Weather Center: www.mwxc.com (paid-for custom forecasts)
- Crown Weather Services: www.crownweather.com (provides a good Tropical Weather page in addition to paid-for custom forecasts)

Hurricane Information Websites
- Caribbean Hurricane Network: www.stormcarib.com
- US National Hurricane Center: www.nhc.noaa.gov

In addition, surf forecasts (great for those "iffy" anchorages) are provided at http://magicseaweed.com — see the animated swell height and swell period charts.

John J. Kettlewell says, "The map at earth.nullschool.net is an interactive pilot chart, showing current conditions around the world. When you first open the page you see the entire globe, but then you can zoom in to see smaller regions. Click on "Earth" in the lower left to get a menu. You can choose to see the world's current wind or current patterns, or ocean waves, all with animation. The current charts for the Caribbean are really interesting if you are planning a passage say from Key West down to Panama. The images are simply hypnotic to watch, but really informative."

Finally, this site includes a list of many other Caribbean weather sources: www.tropicalwx.com

Happy weather windows!

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High Frequency Single Sideband Radio for Caribbean Cruisers

by Ken Goodings



In the past three issues of *Compass* we've discussed the value of VHF radio communication for cruisers in the Caribbean. If VHF is so important, why add another radio system with Single Sideband (SSB)? Plus, we have other means of communication…

We've read that satellite phones, cellular mobiles, Messenger and EPIRBs have taken over from "old fashioned" SSB.

I'll admit that I'm a radio junkie, therefore a bit prejudiced on this topic.

Satellite phones can offer point-to-point voice and limited data communications, but do not allow you to speak to groups of boats or participate in cruising nets. Similarly, cellular mobiles will connect you with one person only. Messenger-style systems allow a distress call, but it's routed through an operator in another country. EPIRBS are a great safety device, but it's a one-way safety system: other yachts cannot hear it.

However, Maritime SSB is like a one big, long-distance party line. Anyone with a radio can hear you. You can participate in group or net discussions with other yachts on a daily basis. Your SSB's ability to simultaneously share news, security issues, sea conditions, weather reports and other concerns with cruisers in your general area is a valuable asset.

In addition, you can make an "all ships distress" May Day voice call with your SSB, or send a general DSC alarm over thousands of miles to any station that is listening, including Coast Guard Radio stations. Many cruisers in remote parts of the world have been rescued when aground or in distress by simply breaking into cruisers' SSB or Ham Radio nets. Rescue services were then dispatched by the net controllers using landline telephones.

All of these communications systems have their place on your yacht, but in my opinion, the two-way, the interactive general broadcasting communication abilities of HF SSB have yet to have been relegated to a rocking chair in the "radio retirement home".

Isn't SSB just like Marine VHF?

Not really. Long-distance HF SSB radio communication is made possible by first concentrating the sound of your voice into a very narrow, compact and efficient radio signal package. This radio energy is then virtually "bounced" along its way between the Earth's surface and a mirror-like, radio refracting layer high up in our Earth's upper atmosphere.

Compared to VHF, these long distance HF signals arrive at your boat in a severely weakened state after having travelled so far. Often referred to as "weak signals", they're often only a fraction of the strength of VHF, and they sound quite different, too. They're subject to periodic fading, distortion and interference from other stations. Man-made and natural sources of radio noise and static such as thunderstorms affect what you hear as well. These low-fidelity HF SSB signals are the trade-off we must make in exchange for their superior long distance capabilities.

Aren't SSB radios expensive?

Well, yes… and no. There are many fine new and second-hand HF SSB Maritime radios available, and really, in the cost department, the sky's the limit. However, there are now some affordable new alternatives to purchasing and installing a full-function SSB station on your boat.

Which SSB radio should we get?

Many cruisers acquire new or gently used Ham Radio transceivers. They are often much more affordable than a Maritime Band only SSB radio. They aren't generally marinized to resist saltwater corrosion and are not initially capable of transmitting on ITU Maritime channels. However, many of these Ham radios can be easily modified for Maritime HF channel service by a resourceful technician. Ham Radio flea markets, held year-round in many locales, are a great source of affordable new and used SSB radios for your boat. Ham radios may have many more bells and whistles than you're prepared to deal with, and they are not designed for channelized operation.

—Continued on next page



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It's not the same situation as a typical computer problem, where the nearest 12 year-old whiz kid can bail you out!

Some of the older Maritime SSB only radios are quite large. A good example is the venerable Icom IC-M700. It's an all-in-one package, quite heavy, robust and powerful, with large buttons and knobs. You'll need to secure it well to avoid shifting in "sporty" sea conditions. It's been a great performer for many years and it can still serve your radio needs very well.

Some of the more modern Maritime SSB radio transceivers have two separate parts: a main radio chassis and a remote control head. The main chassis, the heaviest part, can be securely mounted anywhere in your vessel within approximately 20 feet of your radio's operating position. Whether hidden in a locker or behind a panel, these radios will work quietly in the background while you happily spin the knobs on the remote, which you've installed conveniently at hand in your radio operating position.

What about HF DSC capability?

Some Maritime-only SSB transceivers have built-in DSC. This operates in a similar way to VHF DSC, but obviously over much longer distances. On many modern HF SSB radios manufactured since 2004, there's a little red "distress" button under a plastic door for you to punch should your boat ever be in distress. When equipped with a separate DSC receiving antenna and your vessel's distinctive MMSI number, it can afford you another level of safety or distress communications in an on-board emergency when you're far out to sea.

Your SSB's ability to simultaneously share news, security issues, sea conditions, weather reports and other concerns with cruisers in your general area is a valuable asset

HF propagation: speak to the world

The layer of charged particles that we conveniently use as a virtual radio mirror is known as the ionosphere. Normally, as in VHF, a radio signal is generally limited to the horizon between transmitting and receiving stations caused by Earth's curvature. HF frequencies can hop or refract many times between the Earth's surface and the ionosphere, commonly spanning distances of many thousands of miles.

However, this wonderful, convenient long-distance radio refractor isn't constant. The density, thickness and altitude of the ionosphere's layer of charged particles vary, as it's largely dependent on the strength of our Sun's radiation as it strikes the ionosphere. During daylight hours, the ionospheric layer thickens and becomes lower in altitude. Depending on frequency, HF radio waves, using this low altitude virtual mirror, cannot bounce your signals as far. Various radio bands are affected differently by time of day or night for each of the two stations.

At night, in the absence of sunlight, the ionosphere thins out considerably, effectively shifting our radio refractor much higher into the sky. It's still thick enough to bounce your HF SSB signal, but the increased altitude of this virtual mirror increases radio communication distances considerably over those achieved in daytime. This is when the true long-distance fun begins! Many readers may remember when we were kids, listening to exotic sounds while sitting long into the nights beside the family AM broadcast radio. I spent countless hours in Canada listening to broadcast stations in exotic places such as Wheeling West Virginia, Chicago, Detroit, New York and Miami. Long-distance Maritime HF SSB and Ham Radio often depend on this wonderful nighttime effect.

Where, when and what frequency?

Take heart. When it comes down to which particular radio band is best for your time of day and how far and in which direction you wish to speak, the difficult homework has already been turned in. Over the past few decades, various scientific, industrial and military agencies think that they have it all figured out. They've now analyzed the repetitive cycles of the ionosphere in terms of its effect on long-distance radio communication, then come up with Radio Propagation Tables. These tables are updated regularly to reflect daily, monthly and seasonal changes in the Sun's radiation as it falls toward the Earth's surface. HF radio propagation charts are published monthly in print, and also on the Web. Many on-line tables are available free of charge. There are also interactive computer utilities and apps for your tablet, which can help you to make good HF radio decisions re: direction, distance and the most effective bands for every hour of the day.

Roaming the airwaves

As with Marine VHF, ITU HF Maritime Radio channels are fixed in frequency, and are spaced well apart to help prevent interference with other band users. Maritime HF radios tune like a VHF radio, clicking up or down, one channel at a time. No squelch is required, and if squelching is available on your SSB radio, I suggest that you either switch it off or adjust it to minimum. That way, you won't miss anything.

The RF "talk power" of an SSB radio is often variable from 20 to 100, or as much as 150 watts.

Many Maritime and all Ham SSB transceivers will allow you to listen to both Medium Wave and Short Wave broadcasting stations. These powerful stations, such as BBC, broadcast current events and local programming from most every nation in the world.

What happens when I push the 'tune' button?

When the tune function is commanded, some radio energy is sent to the auto-tuner and antenna for split-second analysis by the tuner's microprocessor. Unfortunately, should you do this right on frequency during the progress of a net, many of the other participants listening will receive an annoyingly harsh loud tone in their ears. The voice of the net controller or weather routing station may be temporarily obliterated. Experienced, considerate radio operators always switch up or down a few channels and tune up there. Punching the "tune" button while right on net frequency during an active discussion is bad practice and very inconsiderate.

HF SSB, you're 'on the air'

Since your SSB radio signal is actually being partially driven by your voice, try to speak in a moderately forceful manner. Quiet talkers are more difficult to hear through the static over long distances. If you speak quite closely across the SSB microphone, rather than directly into it, the bass tones of your voice will be well reproduced without the clicking or popping of breath sounds.

Always use your own boat name when checking into an HF net. On HF bands, the use of longer, complete sentences and comments generally penetrates best through the inevitable radio fading and static and is much more effective than using short choppy phrases. When communicating on SSB, responding simply with "ROGER!" will likely be lost in the ether.

—Continued on next page



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—*Continued from previous page*

If you respond with a terse comment or phrase, the other station with which you're communicating won't know whether to reiterate their last transmission, and might not understand that you've received and understood what they've been saying.

As we've been discussing, HF signals are often quite weak, and it may be difficult to determine whether the other station has finished what they're saying. This is when good radio procedure helps. In the course of an HF SSB radio conversation, say "over" only when you've completed your thought and are ready for a response. When you are completely finished commenting, and wish to convey this to the net controller, stating your boat's name, e.g. "*Leakytub* clear" will open up the net for others. When conversing directly with another station, you can say "*Leakytub* out" when you're ready to move on.

On HF SSB nets, due to geographic or atmospheric effects, you might well be able to hear a particular station better than can the net controller. Give your boat name and say "relay". If you require a relay, kindly do the memory cells of the relaying station's operator a favour, by keeping your comments brief.

On HF nets, it's extremely important for each station to be clearly invited to speak by the net controller. They will address you by your boat name and tell you to go ahead. Speaking out of turn will likely result in a mashup of unintelligible signals, and the net controller will then have to waste time restoring order.

If you need the other station to reiterate their last statement, the use of "say again" is much more effective than saying "repeat".

Please, let's try to leave behind those meaningless and hackneyed Hollywood radio phrases such as "roger that", "repeat", "be advised" and "over and out".

Ken Goodings cruises the Eastern Caribbean with his wife, Lynn Kaak, on S/V Silverheels III. *As a Designated Maritime Radio Examiner with Industry Canada, he taught and examined students in VHF and HF-SSB DSC Maritime Radio boating classes in Toronto from 2002-2008. Working as a broadcast television and radio electronics technologist for 38 years at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario, Ken was licensed for Canadian Amateur Radio in 1981 with Ham call sign VE0SH.*

PS: WE ONLY WANT TO GET WEATHER REPORTS

Depending on where you plan to cruise, you might not need to invest in a SSB station at all. With the advent of modern, powerful WiFi antennas for your boat, coupled with the great proliferation of shore-based WiFi routers, receiving current weather information in the comfort of your vessel's saloon is now very easy. In the Greater Antilles, and all the way south through Leeward and Windward Islands to Trinidad, you're likely to discover WiFi signals in most anchorages. Using WiFi, we receive weather updates and routing advice in daily emails on our smartphone. HF SSB is still a valuable weather and safety aid to vessels that travel well offshore.

New technology: weather updates in the palm of your hand

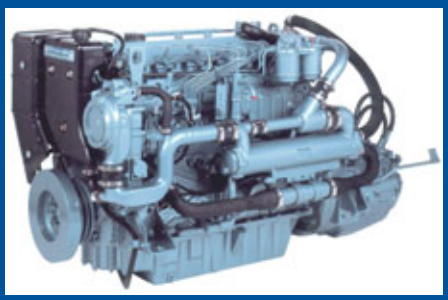
Some cruisers wish only to receive the US National Weather Service weather map faxes and High Seas text bulletins. There are now some very capable, modestly priced portable SSB receivers available. In addition, enterprising individuals have now developed apps for your smartphone or tablet that enable you to plug into a small receiver and retrieve and view official government weather updates on your portable smart devices. All this information can now be received over modest distances with a small, US$100-ish radio receiver using only a long piece of outdoor wire for an antenna.

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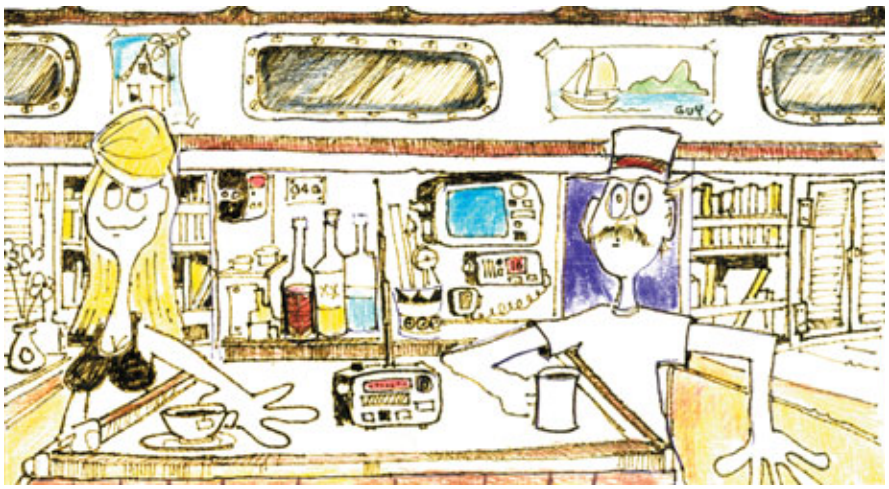
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GUY DEAN

SELECTED CARIBBEAN SHORTWAVE WEATHER REPORTS 2016

UTC	AST*	STATION & REPORT DESCRIPTION	FREQ	TYPE	MODE
0930	0530	Daily Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
1000	0600	Daily Caribbean Weather	6215 kHz	(Uncontrolled 1000-1200)	
1030	0630	Trinidad Emergency Net	3855	Voice	LSB/Ham
1030	0630	Carib. Emergency & Weather Net	3815	Voice	LSB/Ham
1100	0700	Eastern Carib. Weather (Chris)	4045 & 8137	Voice	USB (Note 1)
1100	0700	Carib. Maritime Mobile (George)	7250	Voice	LSB/Ham (Mon-Sat)
0700	(Local)	Bahamas BASRA Weather Net	4003	Voice	USB
1110	0710	Puerto Rico/VI Weather Net	3930	Voice	LSB/Ham
0720	(Local)	Bahamas Weather C6AGG Net	7096/3696	Voice	LSB/Ham
1130	0730	Bahamas Weather (Chris)	4045 & 8137	Voice	USB (Note 1)
1145	0745	KPK Cruising Safety Net (SSCA)	8104	Voice	USB
1200	0800	Coconut Telegraph	8170	Voice	USB
1230	0830	Atl. N&W of Bermuda (Chris)	8137 & 12350	Voice	USB (Note 1)
1330	0930	W Caribbean Weather (Chris)	8137 & 12350	Voice	USB (Note 1)
After 1300/0900		E & ESE sponsor requests (Chris)	8137 & 12350	Voice	USB (Note 1)
1530	1130	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
2030	1630	W'way Carib. Cocktail & Weather	7086	Voice	LSB/Ham (Note 2)
2130	1730	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
2200	1800	Carib. & Atlantic Weather (Chris)	8137 & 12350	Voice	USB (Notes 1 and 1a)
2230	1830	Carib. Emergency & Weather Net	3815	Voice	LSB/Ham
0330	2330	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
24/7/365		24-Hour Maritime Mobile Net (Emergency, Weather & Cruiser Assistance)	14300		USB/Ham

** Note: Atlantic Standard Time (AST) does not shift to DST in winter*

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

Notes:
Note 1: Unless severe weather threatens, this net is not conducted on Sundays.
When there are active Tropical systems in the Atlantic, Marine Weather Center (Chris) runs a net at 2300 UTC / 1900 AST on 8137, Voice USB.
Note 1a: Please hail Marine Weather Center (WCY) 15 minutes before the net so that Chris knows where to aim his antenna to reach you. This net is geared primarily to offshore Atlantic and Pacific passage makers. For schedule updates see www.mwxc.com
Note 2: This net now operates during hurricane season only.

- 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 (Switch to AM mode).
- 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 life-threatening or DISTRESS situations.
- For cruiser info, check out the Coconut Telegraph at 1200 UTC (0800 AST) at 4060 USB.

Also of interest, with weather, security and general info segments, is the Panama Connection Net at 1330 UTC on 8107 and the Northwest Caribbean Net at 1400 UTC on 6209.

- A more complete schedule of eastern North Atlantic and Caribbean cruising nets is available at www.docksideradio.com/east_coast.htm.

SELECTED CRUISERS' VHF NETS (Local Time)

Nassau, Bahamas	0715	Ch-14	
St. Martin/Maarten	0730	Ch-10	Monday-Saturday
English Harbour, Antigua	0900	Ch-68/06	Daily
Rodney Bay, St. Lucia	0830	Ch-68	Monday-Saturday
Bequia	0800	Ch-68	Daily
Grenada and Southern Grenadines	0730	Ch-66 (Intl.)	Monday-Saturday
(Note: If the 66 repeater is unavailable then listen on Ch-69 for this net in southern Grenada and Carriacou/Union Island)			
Chaguaramas, Trinidad	0800	Ch-68	Daily
Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela	0745	Ch-72	as available
Curaçao	0745	Ch-72	Monday-Saturday

Thanks to Ken Goodings and numerous other cruisers for this information, which was correct to the best of our knowledge as this issue of Compass *went to press.*
This schedule is valid through March 2016; we'll publish a Summer 2016 schedule soon. We welcome corrections and comments at sally@caribbeancompass.com.

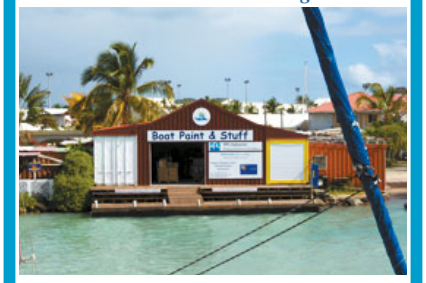
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After spending several years cruising the Eastern Caribbean, we sailed our trimaran, *Ultra*, on to the Western Caribbean. For the last year and a half, *Ultra* has been in Panama. We have thoroughly enjoyed our multi-year adventure of island hopping from the east to the west, including our introduction to some of the most beautiful and interesting creatures on Earth. And yes, some of them are the most deadly, as well!

After our 250-nautical-mile sail from the island of San Andrés, Colombia to Isla Porvenir in the San Blas Islands (the Kuna Yala nation) of Panama, we dropped the hook at a place nicknamed Bug Island. We had only been in San Blas for a couple of days, and were enjoying beachcombing the island while collecting sea beans (a seed that we collect for crafts) and firewood.

ENCOUNTERING CREATURES OF THE WESTERN CARIBBEAN

by Bill and JoAnne Harris

We reached a great spot that had the mother load of sea beans among a huge pile of driftwood and other debris. As we ventured into the pile, it suddenly moved. A gigantic saltwater crocodile came rushing out of it, thrashing its tail, and darted into the sea. Ultra scary! (We have heard crocodiles called caimans in this part of the world, but caimans do not seem to grow to 2,000-pound size.) We had heard they were in the rivers on the mainland, but not in the outer islands. We quickly headed back to the dinghy with whatever we had in our hands and got the heck out of there. We definitely were not ready to meet his or her gigantic companion. Seems to us that the new island nickname should be Crocodile Island.

At the Happy Hour party that night on a different island, we told the other cruisers of our croc/caiman encounter. They told us they'd seen lots of sharks, yes, but they had not heard of any crocs in San Blas. A few weeks later, we spotted a baby croc living in a small freshwater well several islands away.

The only other saltwater croc experience we have had was when we chartered a catamaran in Belize about ten years ago. We had dinghied to the mangroves to look for manatees and decided to stop for a skinny dip to cool off. Afterwards, we jumped back in the dink and had gone about 20 feet when Bill spotted two eyeballs dancing on the water just ahead. We headed in that direction and a croc popped up out of the water and began swimming so fast that within minutes it had vanished. We went to purchase lobsters from the fishermen at the next island, and told them of our experience. We were shocked to hear there were countless crocs in these waters. They said that local lore tells that many years ago Belize was overrun with snakes, so they imported mongoose to eat the snakes, then after some time, they were overrun by mongoose, so they brought in the crocs to eat the mongoose.

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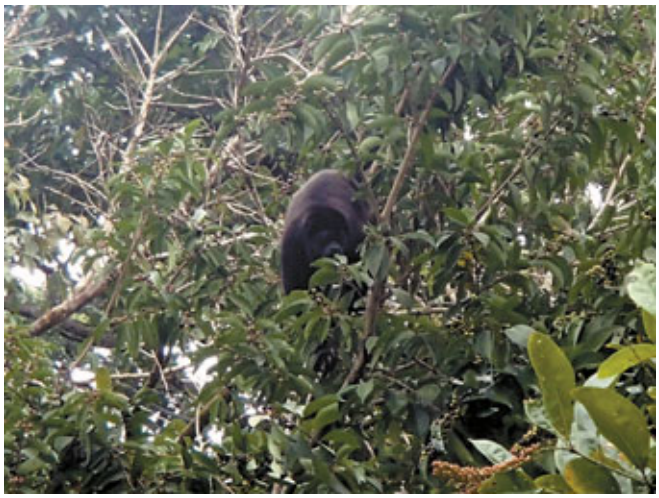


Ultra *at anchor in Panama's Dolphin Bay. Socializing ashore came with warnings of venomous snakes*



—Continued from previous page

After exploring the magical San Blas Islands, we took the next weather window and sailed to Isla Linton, Panama. We dropped the hook and headed out with our dinghy to explore the mangroves and to hike ashore. Our mission was to look for the fascinating sloths and entertaining howler monkeys. To our surprise, we were blessed to spot two sloths and a very large group of howler monkeys in a matter of a couple of hours. Since that time, we have had numerous sloth and howler monkey sightings.



HARRIS

Above: Numerous howler monkeys were spotted in Panama

Right: After a skinny-dip, we were shocked to hear there were countless crocs in Belize's waters

After slowly making our way from Isla Linton to the archipelago of Bocas Del Toro, we were ready for more amazing experiences. This part of the world is a birdwatcher's paradise and home of the infamous poison dart frogs. Their name comes from the secretion on the frog's skin that the indigenous people once used to coat their darts to kill their prey. If you handle these frogs in any fashion, you must wash your hands thoroughly or suffer nausea, vomiting and possibly worse.

During our month-long land-based adventure in Colombia, we completed an epic 12-hour hike through the enchanting and world famous Tayrona Park. During the first hour, while deep in the forest, we heard what sounded like a baby screaming off in the distance. We quickly ventured on quickly and were ready to perform a rescue. Upon our arrival, JoAnne discovered the origin of the screaming. It was a frog in the mouth of a very long, bright yellow snake. The frog was slowly becoming a meal. We wanted to rescue the frog, but our guide told us that the frog had already been injected with venom and was destined to die.

Upon our return to the boat, we sailed *Ultra* to further explore the Bocas Del Toro archipelago and headed to the mainland to a lovely spot appropriately nicknamed Dolphin Bay (local name is Bahia de Esperanza). This picturesque bay is filled with delightful pods of dolphins. Upon our arrival, former cruisers and current land dwellers Carl and Mary Heckrotte welcomed us to a superb happy hour at their charming home. The next day, we were invited to their neighbor Juana's home for yet another fun happy hour, and had such a fabulous time that we did not leave until 10:00PM. Knowing we needed to get down the long, winding path from the hill to the dock quickly, we made our way with our flashlights dancing in the dark down the hill. It was a little spooky — it was pitch black and the sounds of the forest were taking over. Right off the bat, JoAnne's flashlight spotted a gigantic toad, twice the size of Bill's palm.



WIKIMEDIA

The next morning, we were invited to the home of another couple, who had lived in their rainforest home for 30 years. They are avid gardeners and birdwatchers, so we were ecstatic to check out their property. It had rained about 20 inches the night before and was still raining.

—Continued on next page



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—*Continued from previous page*

Uphill and downhill we went, indulging in our favorite thing: slipping and sliding through the mud like kids. Only after we got deep into the rainforest at the back of their property, did the lovely wife begin to tell us the horror stories of the venomous



Hiking in Tayrona National Park, Colombia, we heard what sounded like a baby screaming. It was a frog being eaten by a very long, bright yellow snake

snakes in these parts. Yes, stories of enormous cows falling dead within minutes of getting bitten by deadly vipers. A local gardener had recently moved some debris and was bitten by a Bushmaster snake and died instantly. In this dense rainforest full of thousands of twisting vines hanging from the canopy and the webs of tree roots on the forest floor, we were getting quite anxious for the tour to come to an end. Armed with only our Teva river sandals and a walking stick, we wished we were wearing some steel-toed boots that laced up to our knees! We were extremely happy to reach the forest exit and arrive back on their beautifully manicured property. Yes, it was a spectacular adventure and we are always ready for a challenge, but knowing there were these extremely venomous snakes lurking out there made us remember to always take care and watch out for deadly creatures. We had not known that the previous night!

Interesting fact: During the countless miles of hiking we logged in the Eastern Caribbean, the only snakes we ever encountered were boas. For example, several years ago we saw a ten-foot boa guarding our path to the highest section of Fort Shirley in Dominica. We had not seen any venomous snakes during our travels, until now.

We have become accustomed to the island cruising life, and cruising near the Central and South American mainland is a new experience for us. We do not want to alarm you with all of this talk of wild creatures, but just make you more aware of what is out there, since some guidebooks do not provide this information. After all, seeing beautiful wildlife in its own environment is one of the reasons we are all cruising. Furthermore, we hope you appreciate wild animals as we do, but also respect the fact that they will employ their defensive instincts if need be. Admire them from afar!

We hope all of you get the opportunity to experience your own exhilarating "National Geographic moments" and make great memories of your own with the amazing creatures of the western Caribbean!

JoAnne and Bill Harris are from Clear Lake, Texas and both hold 100-ton USCG Master Licenses. They enjoy writing cruising articles and sharing their experiences. Visit www.jandbyachtultraadventure.blogspot.com to follow their sailing adventures.







Among our animal sightings were sloths and numerous reptiles including a giant toad and a poison dart frog



LOOK OUT FOR...

The Sea Almond — With More Aliases Than a Secret Agent

by Lynn Kaak

As you travel through the Caribbean, every month there's something special to look out for.

Walk along many of the popular Caribbean beaches, and you will see the Sea Almond tree. This transplant from the East (possibly the Indian subcontinent or Indonesia) has become a popular and common addition to the flora of the Caribbean. Its Latin name is *Terminalia Catappa*, but it is more commonly known as West Indian Almond or Tropical Almond. Further abroad, it has names such as Bombay or Singapore Almond, or simply Indian Almond. The tree is now generally found throughout the tropics, the seeds carried by humans or drifting on the sea.



Lest one be fooled, this is not the same almond that one usually thinks of, roasted and salted, seen on the shelf next to the peanuts in a grocery store. False Almond is another moniker for it. However, the Sea Almond is quite edible, in a different way. The outer fruit, which is approximately six centimetres long, almond shaped, ripening to a purplish colour, can be eaten as is, and the inner seed or nut can be consumed as well, roasted or raw. In St. Lucia, they make a kind of "bark", or something like a peanut brittle, with the nut. (It's a labour-intensive job to prepare this candy, so if you find it for sale, don't be surprised if it's a little pricey.) Due to the nature of the seed, it doesn't have the same ability to be stored like the more traditional almond, so must be eaten within a reasonable time. In South America, cooking oil is made from the nut.

The tree can grow up to a height of about 27 metres (90 feet). A branch will grow out from the central trunk, it will then send out horizontal branches, creating a distinct tiered canopy. With leaves that are quite broad, the trees are popular for their ability to provide excellent shade. Not surprisingly, these trees are often found on well-maintained beach areas, such as those of resorts and touristy areas, forming natural parasols. The large shady area under the famous "Almond Tree" in Port Elizabeth, Bequia, is a community gathering place.

Sea Almond trees tolerate salt well, preferring areas with good drainage (even sand) and while they revel in a moderate amount of rainfall, they can handle dry spells without too much difficulty. The wood withstands water very well.

This tree is deciduous, and the leaves are shed. While this is a semi-annual event for their occidental cousins, the Sea Almond trees in the Caribbean make this a year-round habit. The same goes for the fruit production. When you see someone raking a beach, it may well be because the almonds and leaves are strewn on the ground, and require cleaning up. The large leaves are multi-coloured, turning to pink or red or reddish brown with age, with the more colourful ones being the leaves ready to be dropped.

The flowers are not very showy. A group of the one-centimetre-wide "petal-less" flowers will grow at the end of a branch on a kind of spike, with either male and female flowers grouped together, or groups of just male flowers. The small, greenish-white blooms have a somewhat unpleasant scent (described as fetid by some sources).

As I've mentioned, the fruit and nut or stone are quite edible, but other components of this tree have been used for herbal medicine in many places for treating everything from skin problems, to dysentery, liver problems, coughs, asthma and wounds. Wherever it's grown, the fruit, leaves and bark have all been put to good use in traditional medicine. An extract from the leaves has even shown to have some effect on chloroquine-resistant malarias. The leaves are an excellent source of a number of nutrients and beneficial compounds.

Meet the Sea Almond, not just known by multiple names, but blessed with multiple uses as well!

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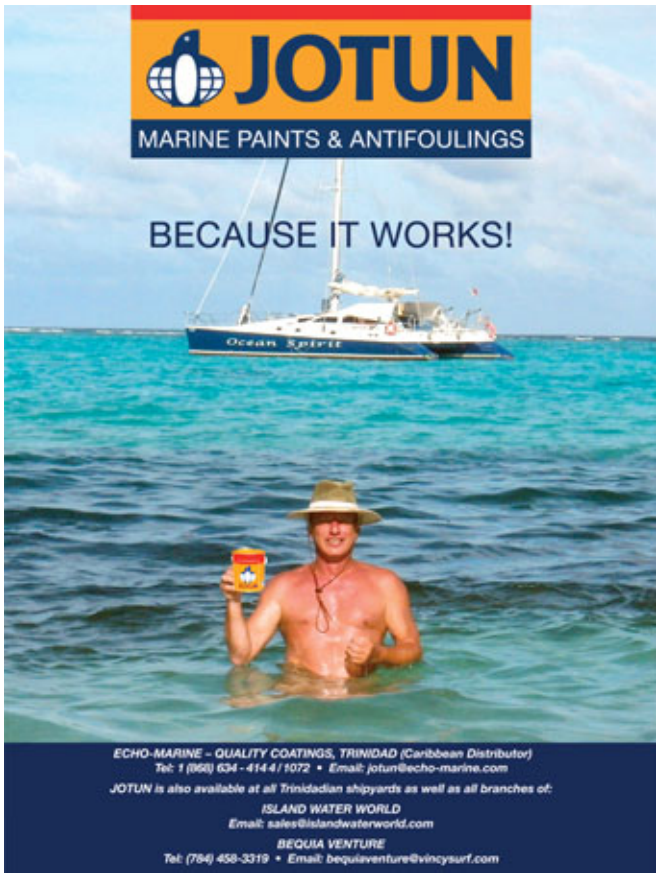
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The Sky from Mid-January to Mid-February

by Jim Ulik

"The Inquisition, what a show. The Inquisition, here we go..."
— Mel Brooks, from the movie 'History of the World Part One'

That may have been a comedic look at human nature but, beginning in the early 1200s, the Spanish Inquisition is only one example of what can happen when people have opinions and pass judgments without acquiring all the facts. The astronomer Galileo held the view, proposed by Copernicus in the early 1500s, that the Sun was the center of the universe. In February 1616 the church banned him from discussing the theory. In February 1633 he arrived in Rome for his heresy trial. Galileo was forced to admit guilt or face torture and execution. Consequently he was placed under house arrest. In 1992 the Catholic Church formally admitted that Galileo's views on the solar system are correct. Galileo Galilei, born February 15th, 1564, is considered the father of modern science. Unlike Facebook, he believed that you have to prove it. ("Global warming isn't real because I was cold today! Also great news: World hunger is over because I just ate." — Stephen Colbert.)

This month Jupiter is up all night while most of the other planets are only visible during the early morning hours. By January 16th, the conjunction between Venus and a bright Saturn is over and they are beginning to separate. By early February, Venus and Mercury will draw closer together for a short time. The planets will begin to separate by the end of the month. The Sun is not yet overhead but your solar panels will begin to produce more power this period. The days are getting longer and the Sun will move north from 21 degrees south latitude to 13 degrees south latitude. The Moon will be the body of choice, astronomically speaking, to watch as it moves through the sky. The Moon will line up with a number of celestial objects this period.

Tuesday, January 19th

The Moon will begin to rise above the horizon at 1416. As twilight approaches, Aldebaran will increase in brightness appearing just below the Moon. Looking east, the conjunction of these two celestial objects will be positioned in Taurus just above Orion.

At 2044 the Moon will cross the meridian or reach its highest position in the sky for St. George's, Grenada (61.75 degrees longitude). The location of that intersecting point can be found in Figure 2 (see page 41). If you are located on 66 degrees longitude (San Juan, PR) the Moon will cross the meridian at 2102. Continuing its westward movement the Moon will cross the meridian over Oranjestad, Aruba (70 degrees longitude) at 2118.

It is the 10th Anniversary (2006) of the *New Horizons* launch to Pluto. The spacecraft has now traveled over three billion miles. The team of scientists has extended the *New Horizons* mission to investigate additional objects beyond Pluto.

Thursday, January 21st

From night to night the Moon moves about 13 degrees to the east compared to the background stars. This will bring the Moon from Aldebaran towards the star Alhena, the left foot of the twin Pollux in Gemini. According to ancient Arabic culture, when the Moon transits this area it is a good time to plough and sow, but not to travel.

—Continued on next page

FIGURE 1



WELLCOME LIBRARY, LONDON

Galileo Galilei at his trial by the Inquisition in Rome in 1633

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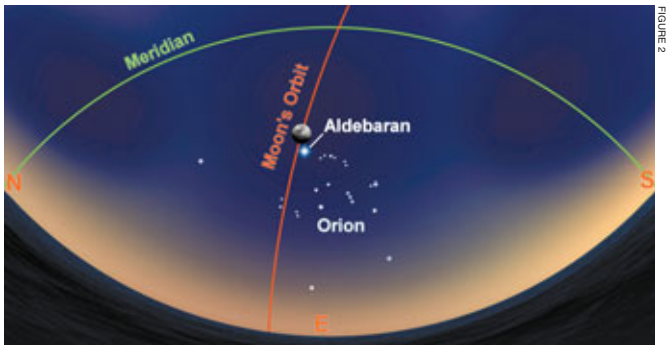


FIGURE 2

Monday, January 25th
It is two days past the Full Moon. The Moon continues its eastward shift, taking position near the star Regulus in the constellation Leo. Look for the Moon to rise at 1937 with Regulus to appear a short time later.

Wednesday, January 27th
The Moon is continuing to line up with celestial objects this period. Tonight is the Moon's conjunction with Jupiter. Jupiter will break the horizon at 2110. The Moon will rise at 2113. Both objects will be positioned near the head of Virgo as shown in Figure 3.

Monday, February 1st
The Moon is now taking its place near Mars and Zubenelgenubi. Zubenelgenubi, a star used in celestial navigation, is the second brightest star in the constellation Libra. The star's name originates from an Arabic phrase meaning the "Scorpion's southern claw".

Saturday, February 6th
Venus has been closing in on Mercury these past few days. Only illuminated at six percent, the Moon has joined the conjunction of planets this morning. Look for the trio to be 10 degrees above the eastern horizon after 0545. Mercury and Venus will remain close together through the remainder of this period. See Figure 4.

Friday, February 12th
Finding asteroids, determining their orbits and studying their composition has numerous benefits. Remember past articles covering the mineral wealth of an asteroid? Even though the original intention to fund such missions was to advance military technology, there is also a technological benefit to our everyday lives. That is except for daily computer maintenance and internet connection frustrations. A step in that positive direction was the NEAR (Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous). It is the 15th anniversary of that orbiter landing on the asteroid Eros.

Sunday, February 14th
Apophis makes another close approach to Earth today. Every pass past any planets or other celestial bodies will alter this asteroid's orbital path. The close approach to Earth and its gravitational pull will have a greater effect on altering Apophis' orbit. Researchers at NASA/JPL, Caltech, and Arecibo Observatory are continuing to monitor the asteroid's movements. The first close approach of any real concern is on Friday, April 13th, 2029. Apophis will pass Earth over the mid-Atlantic and within the orbits of the geosynchronous communication satellites. That pass could make Apophis the first asteroid in human history to be clearly visible to the naked eye. If Apophis passes closer than 18,900 miles from Earth it will negatively affect the asteroid's orbit. That could alter the orbit enough to cause Apophis to impact Earth on April 13th, 2036. Following multiple observations, the path of Apophis cannot be confirmed until 2021.

In the News
NASA has been searching for new battery technology and has accepted two of the numerous research proposals. Those organizations will get additional funding for their research. The battery designs proposed will be high-density, yet 50 percent lighter than conventional batteries. The proposed designs will also be able to withstand harsh environments. Those qualities will be essential for the future mission to Mars and other missions into deep space. I can only imagine what it would be like to install lightweight batteries on a boat. Anyway, back to space. NASA is also continuing to research propulsion technologies that will be better suited to send spacecraft and humans to asteroids, Mars and beyond. Those systems will use solar electric propulsion and large-scale solar sails.

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

Jim Ulik of S/V Merengue *is a photographer and cruiser currently based in Grenada.*

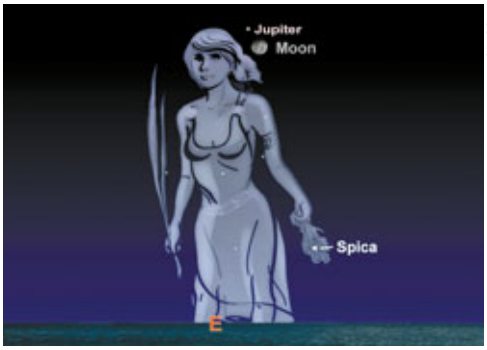


FIGURE 3

FIGURE 2 (left): *Meridian passage point and the conjunction of the Moon and Aldebaran*

FIGURE 3: *Virgo is shown in the east at 2358 on January 27th, with Jupiter and the Moon*



FIGURE 4

FIGURE 4: *The conjunction between the Moon, Venus and Mercury at 0545 on February 6th, with asteroids Apophis and Eros in the distance*



FIGURE 5

FIGURE 5: *Artist's concept of a solar electric propulsion system*

NASA

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2016

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

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

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

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

January 2016					
DATE	TIME	20	2123	9	1300
1	0517	21	2218	10	1354
2	0559	22	2312	11	1448
3	0642	23	0005	12	1542
4	0725	24	0000 (full moon)	13	1655
5	0811	25	0055	14	1729
6	0858	26	0142	15	1824
7	0948	27	0228	16	1918
8	1040	28	0313	17	2013
9	1134	29	0354	18	2106
10	1229	30	0337	19	2158
11	1325	31	0519	20	2248
12	1417	**February 2016**		21	2336
13	1519	1	0603	22	0022
14	1602	2	0649	23	0000 (full moon)
15	1654	3	0737	24	0106
16	1746	4	0827	25	0156
17	1839	5	0920	26	0232
18	1933	6	1014	27	0315
19	2027	7	1109	28	0358
		8	1205	29	0448

Island Poets

Did You Forget?

Did you forget the sound of the sea as it gently laps on the shore?
Did you forget the cooling breeze and the peace at your very core?
Did you forget the green of the hills, the unchanging village life?
Did you forget you could shed your cares, troubles, anxieties, strife?
Did you forget the water's caress as you swam in the evening's glow?
Did you forget the languorous feeling of bliss just because you know

That you don't have to fret or struggle or worry,
It's time for a meal, but you don't have to hurry,
Why not fix a cocktail, some wine or a beer?
Don't you know, friend, that time is irrelevant here?
Who cares about politics, outlook or news?
Relax and enjoy some incredible views!

Did you forget how the sun sank reluctantly into a calm blue sea?
Did you forget the green flash you saw, though you said it could never be?
Did you forget how you watched the sunset after that day in June,
When the sky was bathed in a crimson splendor that faded away too soon?
Did you forget the full moon rising over old Hillsborough town?
Or the ribbon of silver it threw on the sea and its sparkle as you gazed down?

Some people I know need time to unwind,
Decision-making still governs your mind,
You can't shake it off? My friend, don't despair,
There are serious choices to make even here....
You may have to decide on whether to go
Out to eat dinner, but hey, man, you know
There's a lobster awaiting your pleasure right here,
Should you stay to enjoy it? It's your choice, my dear!
Decisions! Decisions! Agonizing and bother,
Relax pal, for this is a place like no other!

You must have forgotten, or else you would be
Here in the Grenadines, sailing with me!

— Nan Hatch

COMPASS COMICS



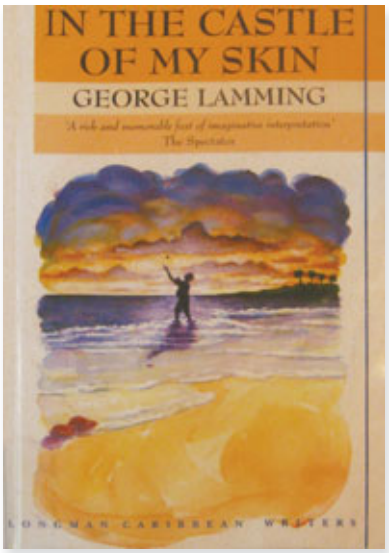


BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

A Childhood Remembered

In the Castle of My Skin, *by George Lamming. Longman Caribbean Writers ©1986, 24th impression 2007, 295 pages. ISBN 978-0-582-64267-6*

"Rain, rain, rain… my mother put her head through the window to let the neighbours know that I was nine, and they flattered me with the consolation that my birthday had brought showers of blessings."



Those blessings, though some time percolating, manifested, when, in 1953, two years after his arrival in London in his early twenties, Lamming penned his debut novel, *In the Castle of My Skin*. The book is about his childhood experiences in his native Barbados, between the ages of nine and 18. It "remains one of the most influential of Caribbean novels," says David Williams of the Department of English, Mona Campus, University of the West Indies.

In his scholarly introduction to the book, Williams also says of the novel, "Lamming demands that we acknowledge its element as autobiography," although the book has a vignette-based structure in which other voices speak.

Though some of the tales lag, when they take off again, the reader is flying through the pages with an ensemble of characters from Creighton village, the setting of the novel, which takes its name after the English landlord, Mr. Creighton.

Readers are introduced to every aspect of village life. You meet the author's childhood friends and some of their parents (including Lamming's mother, who doles out floggings to her disobedient son), the bread-man, a shoemaker and striking workers. In leading roles are Ma and Pa, the oldest residents in the village with a wealth of community knowledge. Also, in the forefront is Mr. Slime, once the head teacher in the village school then the village's new boss man, though his transition remains sketchy.

The title, *In the Castle of My Skin*, "is an adaptation of a line from an early poem by St. Lucian Nobel laureate Derek Walcott: 'You in the castle of your skin, I the swineherd'. Lamming's revision of the image extends its significance beyond the realms of racial and class privilege; in addition to its obvious reference to the position of the Black man in a colonial society, it is also an acknowledgement of the special loneliness conferred by the artistic imagination."

In some passages this loneliness is sensed; the author's shadow-like figure seems to be in the background. It's as if Lamming removed himself from the events around him in order to see them more clearly. You don't hear his voice but his presence is felt.

Another facet of Lamming's authorship is the mix of writing styles employed in *Castle*, which, throughout the story, shifts gears to suit the particular terrain that he's on, beginning with the birthday boy's lyrical opening sentence.

Pa's dream in chapter ten, in part is a historical journey back to the Middle Passage. "The old man was talking in his sleep. But it was a strange way to talk. He said something about light and then silver and the old woman moved to shake his shoulder. Then the words became coherent. He was saying something in which others were involved. She decided she wouldn't interrupt…. I make my peace with the Middle Passage to settle on that side of the sea the white man call a world that was west of another world. The tribes with gods and the one tribe without we all went the way of the white man's money. We were for a price that had no value; we were a value beyond any price. For the buyer and the seller 'twas no difference 'twixt these two, price and value, value and price, since silver is solution for every ready-made sorrow. And so 'tis today in the islands left and right of this your little island and for the village too that's not very important. Silver is more than what pass from hand to hand. 'Tis also a way of getting on…. I see the purchase of tribes on the silver sailing vessels, some to Jamaica, Antigua, Grenada, some to Barbados and the island of oil and the mountain tops…."

Lamming is very descriptive, even poetic, especially in the chapter that gives readers a sense of place when he goes down to the sea to swim with his friends. Sometimes he is realistic and informative. At times he is is observant narrator and other times he switches to the playwright format.

Lamming certainly has an amalgamation of ways to move his story onward.

This book is available at local bookstores and online booksellers.

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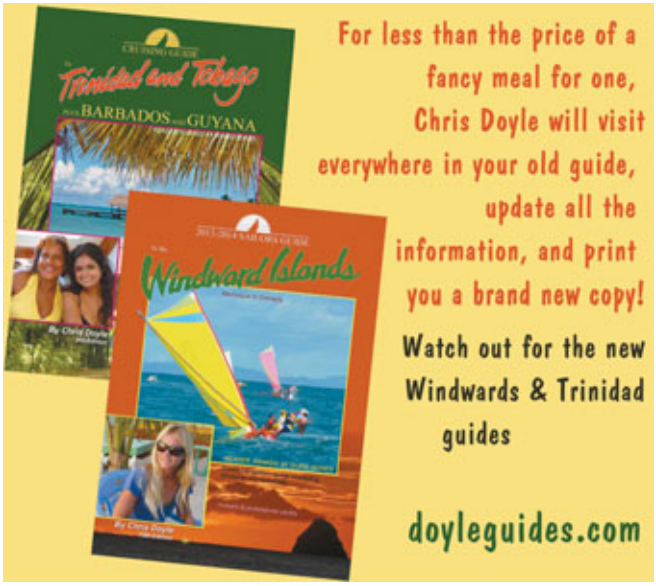
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Tide's Table

BY ROSS MAVIS

Quiche Without a Crust?

"Quiche without a crust? Come on, give me a break!" a friend said. He felt that after my recent bout in hospital for surgery I must also be a little touched in the head. On the contrary, my recovery and food adventures continue, and good food is even more important to me.

This delicious quiche recipe truly has no crust. Not only will the gluten-free folks love it, but so will anyone else who enjoys delicious vegetarian quiche. The secret is in the use of fresh vegetables, eggs, herbs and Mozzarella cheese. And, in addition to the elimination of crust, this recipe calls for zucchini!



Zucchini is one of those vegetables that North Americans grow in profusion and then delight in trucking them to any neighbour willing to take them. This squash is very low in calories and contains no saturated fats or cholesterol. In the Caribbean, however, christophene (chayote) is often more readily available than zucchini and makes a suitable substitute for this delicious, easy recipe. Furthermore, christophene contains small levels of aglycone flavonoid poly-phenolic antioxidants. These compounds help scavenge from the body harmful oxygen-derived free radicals and reactive oxygen species (ROS) that play a role in cancer, aging and various disease processes. That's probably more than you wanted to know about a simple squash, but there you have it.

I encourage you to try this very easily made crustless quiche. It really is good and has become one of our favorites. Should you not be a fan of squash, either zucchini or christophene, use sliced mushrooms as a substitute. Either way, this versatile recipe is easy and could become your favorite lunch or finger-food snack.

Quiche Without a Crust

1/4 Cup vegetable or olive oil
4 Cups (1 litre) sliced christophene
1 Cup (250 ml) finely chopped onions
2 eggs, well beaten
2 Cups (500 ml) grated Mozzarella cheese
1/4 Cup (50 ml) chopped fresh parsley
1 teaspoon (5 ml) dried basil
1/2 (2 ml) teaspoon oregano
1/2 (2 ml) teaspoon salt
1/2 (2 ml) teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon (5 ml) garlic powder

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C)
Peel, de-seed and slice christophene.
In a large fry pan over medium heat, sauté sliced christophene and onions until soft, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. In a large bowl, blend beaten eggs and cheese with all the spices, mixing well. Add the sautéed christophene and onions and mix well. Turn mixture into an oiled or lightly buttered non-stick pizza pan or quiche pan. Place in the preheated oven and bake 20 minutes until lightly browned. Remove from oven and let cool for about 10 minutes before slicing.
Delicious hot or serve any leftovers (I doubt you'll have any) warmed the next day.



TRINIDAD, PLEASE TAKE HEED!

Dear *Compass*,

Chris Doyle's article in last month's *Compass* on the reasons for the fall-off of yachts visiting Trinidad is right on. If the Trinidad government does not sort out the ridiculous Customs and Immigration procedures, the repair and storage business for visiting yachts is in danger of drying up and Grenada is going to largely replace Trinidad as the place to be in this area for the hurricane season.

Most yacht-insurance underwriters have moved the southern end of the hurricane box to 12°10'N, so boats in Grenada now have hurricane coverage. Since the disaster of Hurricane Ivan in 2004, the yards in Grenada have learned how to properly cradle and tie down boats. There is a major expansion of hauling and boat-storage options with the new facility in Clarkes Court Bay. It has a 240-ton boat lift, a massively heavy lift crane plus hydraulic trailer. The storage area, once completed, will have room for 300 boats. A large marina is also planned. This is in addition to the roughly 600 hauling berths that already exist in Grenada.

But yachts with certain problems will always go to Trinidad.

As Chris mentioned, if you have a bent-up prop, Trinidad is the place to go. I have seen props come into the prop shop that looked like a cauliflower yet came out looking like new.

For over 50 years metallurgists have stated that if stainless steel is encased in fiberglass it will eventually be destroyed by crevice corrosion. How fast the stainless will deteriorate depends on the quality of the stainless. Good surveyors, when they find chainplates buried in fiberglass on a boat that is ten or more years old, will insist on having the chainplates inspected by chopping through the fiberglass (often a very expensive operation) or X-raying the chainplates through the fiberglass, again a very expensive operation in most areas. However, in Trinidad, because of the oil industry where pipe welds are regularly X-rayed, they have mobile equipment. They will come to your boat and X-ray your chainplates at a very reasonable cost.

Hopefully someone in the Trinidad government will read Chris's article "The Yachting Decline in Trinidad — and Hopes for the Future", as well as this letter, and do something about the ridiculous Customs and Immigration procedures and regulations.

Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

A PAN-TASTIC EVENING

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,



John and Roberta on Freedom *and Laura and Jason on* Blue Blaze, *with Jesse James*

Just wanted to tell you about a fabulous evening we spent listening to four pan (steel drum) bands in Trinidad. It was held in an outdoor panyard where bands get to practice their music before the big event during Carnival in February. Our host was Jesse James, whom a lot of you might know as a fantastic organizer of all things Trini. He is incredibly enthusiastic about the Trini culture, which in turn makes you want to learn more.

The bands sounded amazing. Each band had at least 15 players and they danced as they played

Great fun and not to be missed on your travels to Trinidad!

Roberta Nunemaker
S/V Freedom

BIRDS IN DISTRESS

Dear *Compass* Readers,

No, I am not talking about damsels here, but about birds of the feathered kind!

While crossing from Santa Marta, Colombia to Snug Harbour in the San Blas islands in early November, we had a curious experience.

On Day Two, about 120 nautical miles away from the Colombian coast, we were visited by small birds. Our first visitor, with a greenish-yellow breast, dropped in mid-afternoon. (See photos on next page.)

His behaviour was a bit erratic; he hopped restlessly all over the cockpit, including on bits of us, whenever a foot or an arm or a head happened to be in his path. He occasionally flew off for a quick flight around the boat, but always came back. We could not understand where he came from, as we were quite a distance from any land. We tried to offer him water and small crumbs, but he did not seem interested.

When night fell, he flew into the cabin and eventually settled in one of my old slippers, tucked his head under his wing and went to sleep.

Next morning, as the sun came up, so did he, hopping up the steps of the companionway. But five minutes later, he was showing definite signs of distress. He flopped on his side and died.

That same morning, during a heavy downpour, another type of small bird appeared, brown feathered with a forked tail like a swallow. She huddled behind a winch, trying to get protection from the rain. Soon three more of the same kind had landed on board, and squabbled over the best place to settle down.

Again they seemed restless and uninterested in drink or food. And again when the light started to fail, they tried to fly into the cabin, but as their predecessor had poohed all over the chart, we did not think that was a good idea, so kept them in the cockpit where they all eventually settled for the night.

During the next morning, the same scenario was repeated: the birds all died, one after the other. An unpleasant smell two days later even uncovered one more victim who had managed to go inside!

We were perplexed and saddened by this phenomenon, never before encountered. Why were these birds so far out at sea? Were they migratory birds that got blown off their path by a sudden storm? (It was very stormy with sudden squalls and downpours throughout our passage.) Did they die of exhaustion? Could we have done anything to save them?

If anyone among your readers is an ornithologist, or just knows more about birds in this part of the world than we do, we would love to have some answers.

Hugh and Priscilla Packer
S/Y Anemos

Dear Hugh and Priscilla,

We asked Diana Doyle of Birding Aboard for her expert input, which follows.

CC

Hugh and Priscilla,

Your first visitor is a Blackpoll Warbler. It is interesting that you saw this particular species because just this year scientists confirmed, using new micro-geolocators, that this tiny half-ounce songbird flies nonstop for three days across the ocean. They breed in the boreal forests of Canada and winter in South America, taking a fall southbound route that departs from New England or the Canadian Maritimes, and making landfall 1,500 miles later in Colombia or Venezuela. (http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/03/150331-blackpoll-warbler-bird-migration-atlantic-animals-science/)

Your other visitors are Barn Swallows. These birds also migrate from North America, where they are common in summer through the US and Canada, to winter in Central and South America. They are also frequently seen flying over open water.

So your birds are known to be over-water migrants. But the fact that they landed on your boat and then perished suggests that they were fatigued and depleted of energy reserves. Migration is risky, and they make these herculean passages on a metabolic knife-edge. So the storms and squalls you mention likely delayed their landfall, or lengthened their route, as they flew to avoid the weather. Your Blackpoll Warbler is a first-year bird, so this was its first migration attempt.

Many boaters offer crumbs to their hitchhikers and wonder why the hungry birds don't take the food. Both the warbler and the swallows are insectivores, so it would not have helped to feed them seeds or bread. However, you can place droplets of fresh water nearby and hitchhiking birds will often rehydrate from these.

—Continued on next page



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Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

A Guyana Cruise

Running from Remoras

Soursop: The Tasty Fruit with the Funny Name

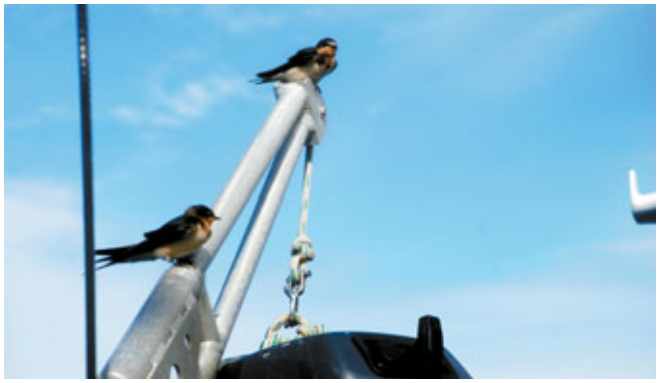
... and much, much more!

—Continued from previous page

You can also prepare a sugar-water solution (1 teaspoon sugar to 4 teaspoons warm water, then stir to fully dissolve the sugar). Be sure to only put the sugar solution on the outside of the bill, such as with a spoon against the beak, letting the bird sip, not pouring it into the bird's beak which risks fatal aspiration. Carol Simmons on S/V Gusto had an innovative idea for her warbler hitchhiker: She put out a half tomato. The bird ate with gusto, replenishing both fluid and fruit-sugar energy. However, by your description your visitors were already too dehydrated and weak to drink or feed.



Diana Doyle of Birding Aboard tells us that these avian hitchhikers on Anemos in the Western Caribbean are a Blackpoll Warbler (above) and Barn Swallows (below), which migrate over water from North to South America



Mortality during migration is extremely high, so in some way the loss of your birds is part of the natural cycle. However, as we better understand the metabolic challenges of migration it underscores the importance of preserving key staging habitat. For example, a Blackpoll Warbler must double its body mass with fat in order to make its nonstop three-day flight without food or water. A key component to protecting these neotropical migrants is the preservation of their critical feeding areas. If we don't preserve each species' key fueling stops, then they are unable to complete their evolved migration routes.

Diana Doyle
www.birdingaboard.org

OVERHEARD ONE NIGHT

Overheard one night at a quiet anchorage in the Caribbean:

He: "Sweetheart, have you seen the barbecue?"

She: "Yes, my love. It's down in the port cockpit locker — I saw it just last week. It's right there under the old galley sink, the metric socket wrenches, those used zinc anodes, the storm anchor and chain, Al's old starting battery he should never have given away, that extra set of pistons, the damaged prop we found that day, the emergency tiller, those conch shells, that old transmission and adaptor kit, the spare bilge pump, the roll of Pacific Ocean charts, the broken windlass you were going to rebuild, the two gallons of anti-fouling, the box of stainless steel self-tapping screws, that old Seagull outboard, our pool noodles and the bag of charcoal.

"Oh my God, we forgot to buy starter fluid! Well, screw it, my love — it's hamburger night at the marina and they're doing karaoke!"

He: "Oh, great!"

Al and Michele Stevens are from Nova Scotia, Canada and have been cruising the Eastern Caribbean on their CS 36, Easy Listening, for the past four years.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

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

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

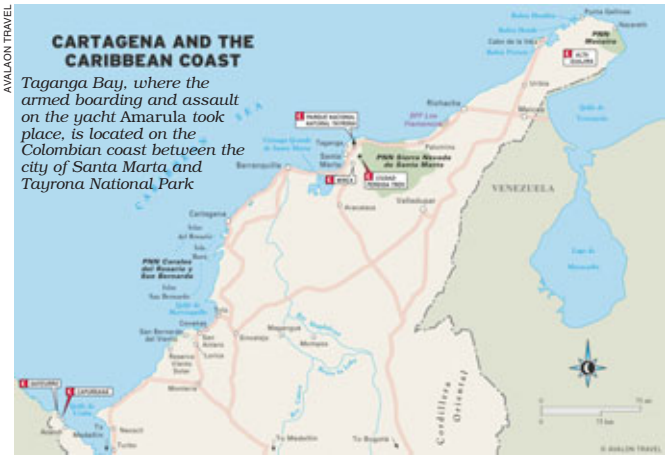
Send your letters to sally@caribbeancompass.com.



Letter of the Month

Dear *Compass*,

At approximately 0230 hours on November 25th 2015, armed thieves boarded our catamaran, *Amarula*. We were anchored about three-quarters of a mile offshore in the middle of Taganga Bay, which is approximately three miles north of Santa Marta in Colombia. We had been in the anchorage for eight days.



Taganga Bay, where the armed boarding and assault on the yacht Amarula took place, is located on the Colombian coast between the city of Santa Marta and Tayrona National Park

The previous evening we had entertained five local acquaintances, whom we had met through cruising friends, with a barbecue dinner and socializing. They left soon after 2300 hours.

We had planned to depart the next day for Cartagena.

At around 0230, I felt a slight bump to the boat and left my bed to investigate, thinking that the dugout fishing vessel that had been anchored near us all evening had swung with a windshift and hit our vessel.

It was full moon. I unlocked the door to the cockpit and went outside. I saw people aboard and saw that our dinghy had been launched. My split-second reaction was to yell out, but three men immediately confronted me. One placed a short-bladed knife to my face while another placed a gun to my head. I was naked and not wearing my glasses. They seemed very concerned about any noise. I had closed the saloon door when entering the cockpit.

I was forced to the cockpit floor and hit on the head with the gun, opening a scalp wound. While on the cockpit sole I counted four persons aboard *Amarula* and one person holding onto it by the port swim platform: five in all. I am unsure if I may have been unconscious for a short time but I saw three enter the vessel, taking everything of value and stowing it in three standard backpacks, one large backpack and one suitcase.

One bandit, aged about 18, with the gun to my head kept demanding "Coca, coca, coca!" He was very agitated and every time I tried to move or shout to Lynne he would slap my face, kick me, or both. I assume he was high on drugs, which was very disconcerting. Though the guy who was guarding me was crazy, I did not believe he would shoot, but at the same time I thought that if I challenged him he might shoot and that would make the situation so much worse for Lynne.

Lynne and I had been sleeping in separate cabins because of the heat. Three bandits worked their way to the port forward cabin where Lynne was sleeping, while the fourth bandit kept the gun at my head in the cockpit. I heard the confrontation when they woke Lynne, but there was nothing I could do without tempting the fate of being shot in the head at close range. It was horrifying!

Two of them woke Lynne and dragged her out of bed demanding money and *coca*. She was wearing knickers and managed to grab a sarong from her bedside to cover herself. The other held a gun in her face. She put up quite a fight and was slapped around the head. They grabbed her hair, pushing her face down while demanding money. We had collected around US$350 in small-denomination bills in preparation for our visit to San Blas. She opened the filing cabinet and gave them this but they became agitated and kept demanding "BIG money". We had 400,000 Colombian pesos (about US$125) in a plastic sleeve with our passports and ship's papers, which Lynne gave them. They took the pesos and thankfully left the papers and passports. After repeated demands for "big" money, Lynne grabbed my wallet and showed them a credit card saying that was our "big" money. They took all the cards from my wallet, plus Lynne's credit and debit cards and driving license, which were in the saloon.

They further ransacked the filing cabinet, cupboards, cabins and saloon, taking four laptop computers, four cameras, three phones, a pair of binoculars, two handheld VHF radios, our printer/scanner/copier, a modem, two fishing rods, a juicer, our watches and Lynne's entire jewelry collection from her years of travels, and some other very personal items, including my Vietnam veteran's medals — all gone.

Lynne was wearing her diamond ring, which she tried to take off and swallow, as there was nowhere she could hide it, but she was seen and they prized it from her grasp. They tried to tie her up with the sleeves of a cotton shirt, but she kept getting it off, so another bandit came back with some twine, which they tied around her wrists and her legs.

They continued ransacking the boat for a further few minutes, collecting other items of value and stashing it into the rucksacks and suitcase. Meanwhile they forced me into the saloon, put me face down and tied my hands behind my back then my feet and ankles. Then they left *Amarula*, towing the dugout with our dinghy.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

I managed to get only one loop of rope undone around my hands. Lynne managed to undo the ties on her feet and she came up to the saloon and untied my hands. I then untied her hands. It was now 0335.

Lynne immediately went to call the Coast Guard, Santa Marta Port Control and anyone who might have been listening on VHF Channel 16 and Channel 72 (the marina channel). She called a PAN PAN, but it was around 20 minutes before there was any response. In the meantime Lynne recalled that she had hidden her Galaxy tablet and she had a global SIM card, which she used to place a call to our agent, Dino at Caribbean Shipping Co. in Santa Marta. He also raised the alarm with the police and Coast Guard and the Coast Guard patrol boat arrived at around 0450.



Taganga Bay is well protected with good holding, but not recommended as an overnight anchorage

We saw that the bandits had discarded the dongle that was in the MacBook, so Lynne removed the SIM card from the dongle and inserted into the tablet and we were then able to check e-mails and Facebook to find phone numbers of friends who were staying in the marina at Santa Marta. Lynne also found the business card of our friend Arthur from Baguettes de Maria in Taganga, so she called him. He was devastated to hear what had happened, and called another friend, Octavio, who had been onboard with us the previous evening. Both Arthur and Octavio met Lynne at the beach to assist her with translations at the police station in Taganga.

At about 0550, Dino called back to say that the police in Taganga had been advised that an inflatable dinghy had been abandoned in a bay close to Playa Grande. It took some convincing to persuade the Coast Guard to take me to check it out. Our dinghy was there, stripped but intact, less than a mile from *Amarula*, but out of our line of sight.

I returned with the Coast Guard and dinghy to *Amarula*. Lynne then went ashore with the Coast Guard to meet with local police to make a statement.

At the insistence of our friends, at 1200 we relocated from Taganga to a berth in Santa Marta Marina, where we were secure. When it was evident that the police had no intention of making any further investigation, we washed the boat and all fingerprints and shoe prints away. This was a cleansing process for me, and Lynne washed all the bedding and clothes that had been "infected" by the invasion.

That night we sailed from Santa Marta to Cartagena, where we arrived at 1530 the next day, both still raw from the experience. The healing process will take time. It was a dreadful experience, but it could have been a great deal worse. We are thankful that we are physically fit, but very angry at the invasion.

Why risk Taganga?

• We have always consulted Noonsite (www.noonsite.com) in all our 14 years of cruising. We checked the security notices about Taganga. There was an almost identical boarding in 2012, reported on Noonsite. However responses to that review, on behalf of the marina and the authorities, were encouraging. There was also a very positive report about Taganga and Dino, our agent, on Noonsite. As far as we were aware, there had been no other boardings, and we were anchored a long way off the town beach.

We later met the crew of two French boats who had previously anchored off Playa Grande, out of sight of the main beach, and they told us they had been advised by the local restaurant owners not to spend the night there. No one told us this.

We had been told by our cruising friends that they had had a couple of incidents back in 2010, both in Taganga and anchored off Santa Marta before the marina was opened, but we made an educated, if unfortunate, decision. In retrospect, we would not choose to stop in this area if the only safe option is to go into a marina.

• The two main reasons for us choosing to visit Taganga were, first, to visit a Colombian friend who had a business there (although just before we arrived she had to relocate to Bogota for work) and secondly to visit Tayrona Park (but we heard just before we left Curaçao that it was closed for November). We contemplated going straight to Cartagena, as we had sail repairs to do that we couldn't do in Santa Marta. In retrospect, that most certainly would have been our best option.

• Taganga Bay itself is beautiful. There is good holding and we held during a number of days of sustained winds of 30 knots. We contemplated moving around to Santa Marta the day before the robbery, but had been told by friends that they had dragged twice in the anchorage off the marina and we knew our holding was good in Taganga, so we made the fateful decision to stay there. Also there are very pleasant walks around the headlands between the beaches, which are more appealing to us and our dogs than being anchored off a city or being in a marina. This stopover was meant to be a pleasant rural break before heading to Cartagena.

• Not long after our arrival, we were walking our dogs on a trail around the bay and met some local police. They advised us not to walk on the higher, more remote trails. We told them we were from the boat but they made no reference to any security issues at the anchorage.

• The day we arrived in the Taganga Bay anchorage, we had radio contact with the local Coast Guard patrol boat, from which our shipping agent called us. Every day we were in the anchorage, the Coast Guard passed us on at least one occasion, often two or three times per day. We did not see if there was a patrol at night, however in discussions prior to coming to Colombia, everyone we had spoken to said there was a high security presence and everyone felt safe cruising this coastline.

• We had met a friendly South African man named Arthur who owns Los Baguettes de Maria restaurant in Taganga. We delayed our departure so we could have him, his son and friends aboard for a barbecue.

• Prior to our recent day at Marina Santa Marta, in 14 years aboard we had spent only nine days in marinas. When we built our boat back in 2001 there were very few marinas. We built our boat as a "stand alone" operation, as we were working in East Africa many years ago, where there are no marinas. We left Australia in May 2002, spent seven years in East Africa and two years in South Africa, often in remote anchorages, without incident.

• We have had many amazing experiences meeting local people in remote anchorages in the Indian Ocean and on the East African coast. I was a fisherman myself and enjoy spending time with fishermen in remote communities and observing and learning about their methods.

• There are so many supposed "no go" zones, and if you follow the armchair advisers you do not go beyond the crowded anchorages. When in the USVI, Fredriksted in St. Croix was considered "dangerous" by many. We have spent a lot of time in that anchorage over the past three years and introduced many of our friends to Frederiksted. In fact on Lynne's birthday in February this year we had eight yachts join us, along with a whole group of friends we had met ashore, for a beach barbecue in that wonderful anchorage. In fact, the friends in Santa Marta marina who came to our aid were with us in Frederiksted at that party.

The greatest loss is undoubtedly that of my faith in fellow human trust, that has culminated in the violation of our home of 14 years and the threats to our wellbeing by a group of drug induced vermin who unfortunately cohabit the wonderful world that we live in.

Our thoughts

The incident was drug related. The first demand was for "Coca, coca, coca!" The guy on me with the gun appeared to be flying high. One of the bandits with Lynne behaved in a similar manner.

Nevertheless, the bandits were very efficient in the way they searched their way through the boat. This was not a learning curve. The fact that two wore shoes and long trousers suggests that they were generally land based, and not fishermen.

Unfortunately, although our dinghy was hoisted, I had left the keys with the kill switch in the motor. This made it easy to unlock the motor from the dinghy. I had removed the SS anchor and chain tail from the dinghy and had it stowed in the cockpit; it was found and taken.

Our 12-litre fuel tank was under the GRP stowage in the dinghy with the fuel line run internally with the hand pump and filter by the engine. The fuel line was cut; fittings, filter and tank were taken.

The SS snap clips to hoist the dinghy were also taken, so there was a degree of boat savvy involved.

I had a 25-litre fuel tank in the cockpit with a small amount of fuel. That was taken, as were two other 25-litre jugs that had rainwater in them. We recovered the fuel and water jugs with the dinghy.

The local police showed little interest. Lynne made a statement ashore in Taganga and was shown three mug shots that she could not positively identify. There were fingerprints all over the boat and railings, but the police did not come aboard to conduct any further investigation. Dino did whatever he could to promote an investigation but to no avail.

Lessons learned

• One surprising and disappointing thing is that our two Jack Russell dogs did not bark or offer any prior warning of a boarding, which indicates they may have slept through it or (wisely?) chosen not to react. During the time the bandits were aboard the dogs mostly kept to themselves, away from the interaction, which very possibly saved their lives. My first thought was that they had been silenced, as neither was in its bed in the cockpit. Scrumpy eventually came to the cockpit and went to his bed while a bandit was threatening me. When Lynne was being hit by three of them in front of Chui, he showed no interest, even when Lynne told him to bite them! He appeared mesmerized.

We thought that our dogs would always give us some degree of warning of any boarding. Plainly this has given us a false sense of security that needs review.

• We lock all hatches and cockpit door when retiring at night. The only hatches open are those to the sleeping cabins, for ventilation. Our strategy was (and still is) to switch on cockpit lights on and check before opening the locked door. I failed to follow our procedure.

• The dinghy was hoisted in the davits, but the kill switch lanyard was still in the motor. The lock and SS cable we use to lock the dinghy ashore were not attached to the vessel. This was a flaw on my part. Had I locked the dinghy to *Amarula* it would have been an extra, more difficult and time-consuming barrier to break.

• The keys to the locks for the outboard and the lock for the wire to the dinghy docks were attached to the kill switch. If these had been kept separately it would have created a further time and inconvenience barrier.

• Most of our valuables, cash and jewelry were together in a drawer in the filing cabinet. Had we placed them in different, less obvious locations we would most certainly have reduced our losses.

Follow-Up

Lynne sent reports to Noonsite and CSSN within days of this incident. Also she sent a report to Sally Erdle of the *Caribbean Compass*, who followed up by passing on the letter to various authorities in Colombia. Subsequently we received an e-mail from Miguel Franco Hossain, who is in charge of the Cruise and Nautical Tourism promotion at ProColombia, the national agency in charge of promoting Colombia internationally. We met in Cartagena with Miguel and an American long-term resident of Colombia, Leland Miles, who assists Miguel in promoting the Colombia coastline to cruisers. Miguel advised us that he is following up with the Coast Guard, the police at Taganga, Marina Santa Marta and others in the region, in an attempt to find the perpetrators and bring them to justice.

The Coast Guard submitted their report, which was for the most part correct, apart from errors in our passport and vessel details. As of this writing (December 3rd) we are waiting for a copy of the police report and further information.

Eric Toyer
S/V Amarula

—Continued on page 54

WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Portholes Face Both Ways

by John Smith

Sitting here on deck with my Rasta friend Odlin from the small island of St. Helene in Honduras, drinking coconut water while enjoying the fresh breeze and the shade. Odlin is in my small wooden rocking chair and I am in my hammock. He mentions that on account of the recent "spring tides" his yard and garden have been flooded.

I think about this for a few minutes. It is early October — frost-on-the-pumpkin weather back in New England. The western Caribbean has been calm and it has not rained for several weeks. There is not any wind at all and the sea is calm as a millpond. Not a ripple. No sign that we are less than 100 yards from a huge normally breaking reef. It is certainly not "spring".

Odlin and his family had survived and flourished here for a few centuries... Here in the islands he has seen a lot

I ponder this for a while. I consider all I have learned about the seasonal changes here. I consider summer, fall, winter and spring and decide that I should ask a bit more about these tides and the flooded yard.

"Surely, Odlin, these high tides must be a result of the autumn full moon or perhaps the lower atmospheric pressure... these cannot possibly be, as you say, the 'spring tides' ?"

"No mon," says my friend. "De tides just spring up and cover de yard!"

Oops. There is that old perspective thing lurking in the background again!

I get to pondering a little bit more and realize that I am talking to a 60-year-old man who has never in his life been out of the Bay Islands of Honduras, which lie at 16 degrees north latitude. Odlin has never seen snow or frost or the blossoms of a cherry tree. Here in the islands he has seen a lot, however. Kind of like that chap who lived for a while on the shore of Walden Pond "while traveling much throughout Concord." He had lived a very simple, unencumbered life on his small island and was perhaps in a better position to be aware of local changes than I was. After all, I was just a cruising sailor from New England who had only spent half of my life in the Caribbean. Odlin and his family had survived and flourished here for a few centuries and survived the dry season, the hurricane season and the "spring tides" before. He and his family lived on little and expected little but they celebrate large. Jumping from catastrophe to catastrophe with undiminished enthusiasm is after all the ultimate key to success. There is no room in their life for analogy to what I knew as "spring" from what they knew of "spring".

It reminded me of that cruising tale about the Bahamian fella who was asked by the visiting yachtsman if there was water in the nearby channel. The old Bahamian answered, "Yeh, suh — plenty of water in dat channel". Shortly after the grounding of his yacht the irate sailor asked the old man why he had misdirected him by saying that there was "plenty of water". The old man calmly replied, "Dere is plenty of water, but it is very thin." Perspective and priorities again.

Fact is that for the past few months the tides here have been exceptionally high and the water was frequently edging towards the upper level of the docks in French Harbor, which leads me to the conjecture that the sea is in fact rising a bit, or perhaps all the pilings are simply sinking into the seabed at the same rate.

Odlin knew what he was talking about, but both that yachtsman in the Bahamas and myself here in the Bay Islands have had to learn that these "portholes" face both ways and should not be confused with mirrors.

—*Continued from page 5* ...*Info & Updates*

Eight Bells

• JOHN KESSELL

John Kessell departed this life on November 20th at age 85. A long-time resident of St. Lucia, John was a cruising sailor, a writer, and an engineer who, among many other things, was one of the operators of the hyperbaric re-compression chamber located at Tapion Hospital on St. Lucia.

John's writing for *Caribbean Compass* embraced subjects ranging from the joys of old wooden boats ("Of Old Wooden Boats", October 2001) to semi-diesel engines ("And It Only Took Seven Minutes to Start", September 2005) to tall ships ("Sail Handling on the Royal Clipper", October 2005) to boatbuilding timber ("Lignum Vitae, the Tree of Life", August 2006).

His friend Earl Bousquet wrote: "If ever there was one head on which to fit the cap of the character in the book 'The Old Man and the Sea' it was John. An Australian when he first landed here, he soon eventually lost everything Aussie — except his accent and his ever-sharp educational wit. He simply knew a little bit of everything there was to know about anything."

John, whose ashes were scattered at sea off St. Lucia from the vessel *Pearl* on December 6th, is survived by his wife, Lee (long-time *Compass* children's-story writer); sons Christopher (a marine surveyor) and Sean (a sportfishing boat captain); daughter-in-law Lisa (former *Compass* distribution agent); and many more relatives and friends.

• PAT MITCHELL

Patricia Mae "Pat" Mitchell died at her home in Bequia on December 1st. The ex-wife of former prime minister of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Sir James F. Mitchell, Pat was a founding member of the Bequia Sailing Club, which launched the popular Bequia Easter Regatta in 1982, and was also a founding member of the Bequia Heritage Foundation, which built the Bequia Boat Museum overlooking Friendship Bay to display a variety of examples of indigenous vessels and related gear. She is the author of the book *Bequia Sweet, Sweet*.



The late Pat Mitchell at the Bequia Boat Museum. This museum was established by the Bequia Heritage Foundation, of which she was a founding member

After marrying "Son" Mitchell in England in 1965, the young Canadian sailed with him on the "banana boat" to his homeland in 1966. As her husband launched his political career, Pat ran the family's Frangipani Hotel and later established the Gingerbread Hotel, where she remained managing director until her death.

Pat is survived by her ex-husband, Sir James; daughters Sabrina, Gretel and Louise; grandchildren Ondine, Ella, Nile, Ila, James and Tai; and many more relatives and friends.



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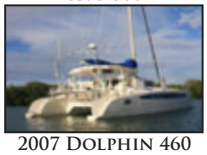

2002 Catana 581
$829,000


2013 Lagoon 52
€895.000


2003 Catana 521
$895,000


2004 Leopard 47
$295,000


1997 Catana 471
$449,000


2007 Dolphin 460
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2009 Catana 50
$879,000



2006 Privilege 745
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2002 Gunboat 62
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2006 Island Packet 445 "Tirnanog"
Excellent condition. Life raft, bow thrusters, stereo, VHF, 2 anchors, all Coast Guard equipment, 12' Caribe RIB, bimini/dodger, autopilot, chartplotter, electric winches.
Well priced at $399,950.



1987 Island Packet 38' "Salty Shores"
Rare centerboard two owner boat. Extremely well maintained by second owner. The centerboard and all centerboard brackets and hardware have been re-engineered. Also added, a rudder keel strap not on early IP's of this year. New rudder bearings and epoxy glassed rudder. This boat is set up perfectly for cruising the Caribbean. Upgrades include: Maxwell windlass, 55 lb bronze Barnacle anchor, new stanchions and lifelines, new genoa tracks, primary winches, chainplates, standing rigging. Stalok's Harken furling, new S/S arch, 6 x 65 watt solar panels with charge controller. New custom centerboard, new Yanmar 4JhJE 54hp.



2007 Island Packet 445
Lovely vessel with excellent maintenance record, one owner, always in IYC's care. Equipment includes: Fridgaboat Keel Cooled refrigeration, bow thrusters, Autopilot, Raymarine wind, knot and depth meters. Boat set up for bareboat chartering so has minimal electronics, perfect for adding the newest gear. **Asking $405,000.00.**

Andrea King, Island Yachts Charters, Red Hook, St. Thomas, USVI •
E-mail: sailing@iyc.vi Ph: 800-524-2019 • 340-344-2143



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The Bread Basket

CALENDAR

JANUARY 2016

1	Public holiday or "recovery day" in many places (New Year's Day); Junkanoo parades in The Bahamas; Annual Festival parade in Montserrat, www.facebook.com/MontserratAnnualFestival
1 – 2	Crucian Christmas Festival, St. Croix. www.stcroixtourism.com/christmas_festival.htm
1 – 3	St. Kitts & Nevis Carnival. www.stkittsneviscarnival.com
2	Public holiday in Cuba (Victory of Armed Forces Day) and Haiti (Founding Fathers' Day)
4	Public holiday in Dominican Republic (Epiphany observed)
6	Public holiday in some places (Three Kings Day/Epiphany)
9	Start of World ARC 2016-17, St. Lucia, www.worldcruising.com. Start of Atlantic Odyssey II (Canary Islands to Martinique), www.cornellsailing.com
10	Public holiday in the Bahamas (Majority Rule Day)
11	Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Eugenio María de Hostos Day)
12 – 24	St. Barts Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org
15 – 17	Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta, Cabarete, Dominican Republic. www.caribwind.com
16	Round Antigua Race. www.antiguayachtclub.com
16 – 24	Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race Series. www.mountgayrumroundbarbadosrace.com
17	Women's Cup Race, Martinique. http://yacht-club-martinique.com
18	Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Martin Luther King Day)
20– 23	Budget Marine Spice Island Billfish Tournament, Grenada. www.sibt.gd
20 – 3 Feb	Mustique Blues Festival. (784) 488-8350
21	Public holiday in Barbados (Errol Barrow Day) and the Dominican Republic (Our Lady of Altagracia)
21 – 24	Bequia Mount Gay Music Fest. www.bequiatourism.com/bequiamusicfest
23	FULL MOON
23 – 24	Budget Marine Challenge, St. Maarten, robbie.ferron@budgetmarine.com
25	Public holiday in Aruba (GF Croes Day), Cayman Islands (National Heroes' Day) and Dominican Republic (Duarte Day observed)
26 – 1 Feb	St. Barth Fun Cup. http://stbarthyachtclub.com
27 – 6 Feb	Conch Republic Cup Key West Cuba Race Week, www.ConchRepublicCup.com
28	Public holiday in Cuba (Birthday of José Martí)
28 – 30	Jamaica Jazz and Blues Festival, Montego Bay. http://jamaicajazzandblues.com
28 – 31	SuperYacht Challenge Antigua. http://thesuperyachtchallenge.com
28 – 2 Feb	IWW Grenada Sailing Week. http://grenadasailingweek.com
30	Cruising Outpost cruisers' party, Road Town, Tortola. www.cruisingoutpost.com
30 – 31	Grenada Sailing Festival Workboat Regatta. www.grenadasailingfestival.com

FEBRUARY

2	World Wetlands Day. www.ramsar.org
4 – 7	Club Náutico de San Juan Int'l Dinghy Regatta, Puerto Rico. www.nauticodesanjuan.com
5 - 9	Semaine Nautique Internationale de Schoelcher, Martinique. www.cnschoelcher.net/regates
6	Cruising Outpost cruisers' party, Kim Sha Beach, St. Maarten. www.cruisingoutpost.com
7	Public holiday in Grenada (Independence Day) and Aruba (Carnival). Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction, Bequia. www.bequiasunshineschool.org
8	Public holiday in Grenada (Independence Day observed)
8 – 9	Carnival Monday and Tuesday in most Dutch and French islands, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Dominica, Carriacou, Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela and other places
9	Public holiday in Haiti (Carnival/Shrove Tuesday)
10	Public holiday in many places (Ash Wednesday)
12 – 15	Jolly Harbour Valentine's Regatta, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com
14 – 21	Yachtie Appreciation Week, Portsmouth, Dominica. www.sailopo.com
15	Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Presidents' Day)
16	Round Redonda Race. www.jhycantigua.com
18	Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Birthday of Luis Muñoz Marín)
19	Antigua 360 Race. www.superyachtchallengeantigua.com
19 – 21	Round Martinique Regatta. www.theroundmartinique.com
22	FULL MOON. Public holiday in St. Lucia (Independence Day). Start of RORC Caribbean 600 race, Antigua, http://caribbean600.rorc.org
23	Public holiday in Guyana (Republic Day)
27	Public holiday in Dominican Republic (Independence Day)

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

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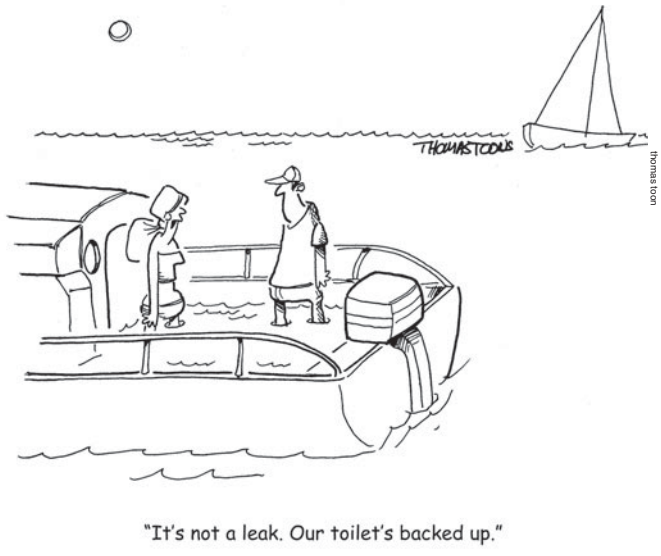
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—Continued from page 47 ...Letter of the Month

Dear Eric and *Compass* Readers,

We asked Colombia's Vice Minister of Tourism, Sandra Howard Taylor, for a response, which follows.

CC

Dear *Compass* Readers,

Upon the unfortunate events that took place in Taganga Bay last November 25th, where Eric and Lynne, the owners of *Amarula*, were boarded and robbed, we express our deepest concern and would like to assure you that the Colombian authorities are doing everything to bring those responsible to justice.

We have been informed that the local Police are following leads that should conduct them to those who participated in the robbery. Also, other visitors in that specific area have been advised to be aware of the situation and not buy any item that could be related to this case and instead make a report to the authorities.

Taganga Bay is a small area outside the town of Santa Marta that attracts visitors for its natural beauty and relaxed atmosphere. However, we recommend yachting visitors wishing to stay overnight to better use the modern facilities available in the nearby Santa Marta, where not only you can enjoy the beauties of this city, which combines history and modern life, but also the comfort and safety of an area that has the permanent presence of the Coast Guard and other authorities. In Santa Marta, visitors can use the modern and world-class services of the IGY Marina Internacional de Santa Marta.

Another alternative, very close to Taganga Bay, is the Tayrona National Park, with its 15,000 hectares, 3,000 of them marine area. The bays in this area are some of the nautical places most visited by national and international sailors, who can placidly anchor in one of the zones designated by the Maritime Authority (DIMAR). [*Editor's note: We are trying to ascertain which anchorages in the park are currently available, and will provide an update when possible.*]

The promotion of nautical tourism is one of the priorities for the National Government of Colombia and our strategy is included in the National Plan for Nautical Tourism. When atypical and unfortunate events like that which happened to Lynne and Eric on the *S/V Amarula* occur, all efforts go to find the responsible persons and bring them to justice as we offer our support to those involved. Currently, we are working to prevent this kind of situation and to ensure a better experience for visitors.

Sincerely,
Sandra Victoria Howard Taylor, Vice Minister
Vice Ministry of Tourism
Bogotá, Colombia

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