CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
JULY 2011 NO. 190
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



SAILORS GET AWAY TO GUYANA

See story on page 23

KAY E. GILMOUR



WATER FUN
IN THE SUMMER

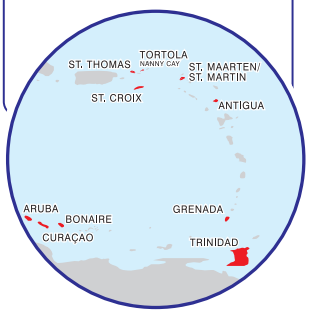
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Caribbean Compass is published monthly by Compass Publishing Ltd., P.O. Box 175 BQ, Bequia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
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ISSN 1605 - 1998

Cover photo: Veteran traveler Kay E. Gilmour's portrait of the 251-metre (822-foot) Kaieteur Falls, one of Guyana's major attractions



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 truly enjoy the *Compass* for each of the six months we are in the area each year. It is entertaining and a great resource for all the cruising community. We also frequently do business with your advertisers — this is the way a publication should work, meeting the needs of all stakeholders.
Great job and thanks!
— Bill Bouchard
S/V Dolce Vita

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Info & Updates

Colombia Aims to Develop Yachting

In 2007 the Government of Colombia hosted the United Nations World Tourism Organization's General Assembly with more than a hundred ministers of tourism and a thousand participants from around the world gathering in Cartagena de Indias. Now, Colombia's Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism reports that this South American country aims to develop its nautical tourism industry to bring more tourists to its Caribbean coast.

A joint forum between public and private entities in the field was held in March in the popular tourism and yachting destination of Santa Marta with the aim of including the Colombian coast in cruising routes between the Caribbean islands, Central and South America. The Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Sergio Diaz-Granados, presented policies that his agency has designed for businesses in this sector, which seek to make nautical tourism endeavors both attractive and profitable. There are approximately two million pleasure boats in the Caribbean Sea each year, said Diaz-Granados. He estimated that more than US$1 billion would be needed to develop the industry in Colombia with ten marinas and other tourism services.



CONSTANCE ELSON

Colombian yacht-tourism interests met in the newly popular cruising destination of Santa Marta to discuss developing the industry along this country's Caribbean coast

Welcome St. Maarten's New MTA Board!

On May 26th the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association had its annual general meeting and elections. The new board consists of President Brian Deher (IGY); Vice President Kass Johnson (Dockside Management); Treasurer Lorraine Talmi (The Wired Sailor); Secretary Valeska Luckert (Palapa Marina); and members Patrick Barrett (Yacht Club Port De Plaissance); Michael Ferrier (Napa); Robbie Ferron (Budget Marine); Mark Mingo (Simpson Bay Lagoon Authority) and Garth Steyn (Aqua Mania).



The St. Maarten Marine Trades Association's new board: from left to right, Valeska Luckert, Kass Johnson, Lorraine Talmi and Brian Deher

—Continued on next page



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Small Vessel Reporting System for Puerto Rico and USVI

On May 25th, the US Customs and Border Protection announced the availability of the Small Vessel Reporting System in areas including Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. The online reporting tool is a voluntary program and will expedite the entry process for participating boaters coming back into US waters. The system is open to US citizens and permanent residents, and Canadian citizens.

"The Small Vessel Reporting System allows boaters to pre-register with (Customs) in order to obtain an expedited clearance upon arrival in the US," executive director John Wagner said. "The (system) makes the reporting process easier and faster."

Once enrolled, boat owners file a small vessel reporting float plan prior to their departure from the United States if the trip begins there or prior to their entry into that country if the trip begins elsewhere.

Upon arrival in US waters, boat masters can then call Customs at the closest port of entry with the float plan identification number they received when the plan was filed, answer a few Customs questions and receive clearance to enter the country.

For more information visit https://svrs.cbp.dhs.gov.

Light Relief…

The Grenada Board of Tourism thanks the general public for its kind assistance in the preservation of the 31 solar lampposts on the Carenage waterfront in the historic capital, St. George's. These solar-powered lampposts complement the ambiance and natural aesthetics of the Carenage, and also give an additional sense of security to anyone enjoying an evening walk along the harbour. However, boaters are reminded that these lampposts are not to be used for tying up dinghies or other vessels. The Grenada Board of Tourism would like to encourage everyone to preserve the integrity and beauty of this unique waterfront.



CHRIS DOYLE

Visit Grenada's pretty Carenage — but please don't tie up to the lampposts!

Eight Bells

JOE RUSSELL

Patsy Bolling reports: Sailing writer Joe Russell died of cancer in April in California. Joe was a bluewater sailor, Caribbean charter skipper, and author of cruising guides, articles for *Cruising World* magazine, and the book The Last Schoonerman.

MALCOLM MAIDWELL

The CSA Newsletter reports: Relatives and friends of Malcolm Maidwell are mourning their loss as he passed away at age 73 on May 7th. He was born in 1938 and came to St. Maarten in 1968 from Grenada where he met and married Liz Lyder after crossing the Atlantic in a 25-foot boat from South Africa. He made St. Maarten his home and started the first boatbuilding yard in Cole Bay (Land Sea Air) with Peter Spronk.

Caribbean's Oldest Shipwreck Found?

A Utah-based underwater exploration company, Deep Blue Marine Inc., working under contract with the Dominican Republic's National Office of the Ministry of Underwater Culture might have "rediscovered" the oldest shipwreck ever found in the Caribbean, off the north coast of the Dominican Republic. "We have found a shipwreck that we can definitively date back to 1535," Deep Blue Marine CEO Wilf Blum says, according to Utah journalist Matt Hopkins.

The company's website notes, "At this point we are unable to identify the actual name of the ship… We initially located a ballast pile in the area of the reef, as well as a small, corroded falcon-type cannon made of foundry iron. The wreck's location has been a well-kept secret amongst the local fishermen, who for years have occasionally recovered cannons, coins, and ceramic pieces that have worked their way to the surface of the sandy bottom. We don't consider ourselves to be the discoverers of this site, but rather the re-discoverers of what is potentially a very historic shipwreck. The history of this wreck is not totally clear at this point, but we hope to gain more insights as our recovery work continues."

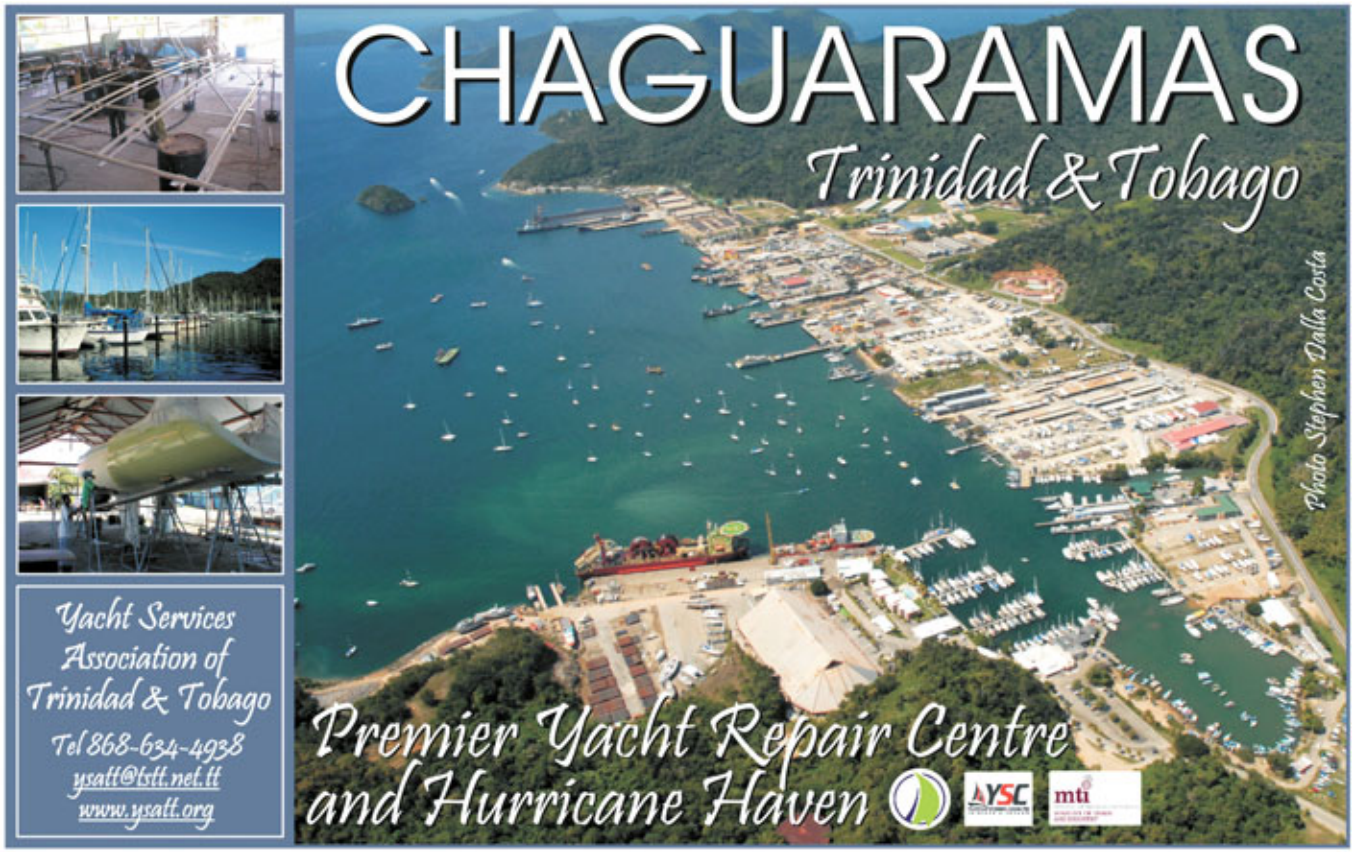
The 16th century was the beginning of the golden age of the Spanish treasure galleons and the resultant rise of piracy in the Caribbean. One of their most frequented shipping routes from Panama to Europe was via the Windward Passage between Cuba and Hispaniola, and over the top of Hispaniola — past the north shore of what is now the Dominican Republic.

For more information visit www.alldeepblue.com.

Cruisers Site-ings

• Author and environmental correspondent Julia Whitty considers all things oceanic at ***http://deepbluehome.blogspot.com***. Check out her June 1st explanation of why this will be an unusually active hurricane season.

—Continued on next page



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• ***www.sailingspokenhere.com*** is a website launched by Mt. Gay Rum. Whether you're a casual cruiser or a competitive racer, this is a place where sailors can celebrate every facet of the sport. Connect with fellow sailors, discuss a race, argue a protest, upload regatta pictures, or even find a crew.

• Single and sailing? Visit ***LoveSail.com***, an online dating site and social network for sailors.

• Heading for Los Roques? Visit ***http://losroques.org***.

• Even if you're not desperate, check out ***www.desperatesailors.com***. It's a free boat, crew and services site for boaters, by boaters.

Helping Hands Across the Sea

Hands Across the Sea is a non-profit charitable organization founded by cruisers TL and Harriet Linskey and dedicated to raising the literacy levels of Caribbean children by assisting schools and libraries in Caribbean communities.

Hands Across the Sea, a Dolphin 460 sailboat, is the Linskeys' mobile base of operations for assisting children, schools and community libraries in the islands of the Caribbean. In 2007 TL and Harriet sold their house in Massachusetts and bought *Hands Across the Sea*, which is now their home. The Linskeys spend June to October fulfilling "Wish List" requests, and then spend November to May sailing among the islands of the Caribbean, working hands-on with local teachers, school principals and US Peace Corps Volunteers.

Of their most recent cruise, Harriet says, "*Hands* crew had a very productive experience working on-site in the Eastern Caribbean. We visited more than 60 schools, local libraries and community centers on Anguilla, Antigua, St. Kitts & Nevis, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada, and we saw firsthand that Hands Across the Sea is indeed making a big difference in the lives of Caribbean children. From pre-school to kindergarten to primary school to high-school students starved for new books, to principals and teachers in need of teaching supplies, to rural schools devastated by hurricanes, to local libraries desperate for books, the positive change — all of it made possible by donors' generous support — was wonderful to behold."

A great way to support Hands is to go to the Wish Lists at www.handsacrossthesea.net, find a project that appeals to you, and "adopt" it (the fundraising goal for each school is listed) by specifying (either in the Comments field of their website's Pay Pal "Donate" button or in a note with your check) that your donation must go toward your adopted project. Please note that the Linskeys own and maintain their sailboat with their own funds; no part of any donation to Hands Across the Sea, Inc. goes toward paying for any aspect of the sailboat nor for any of the Linskeys' living expenses.

For more information visit www.handsacrossthesea.net.

Carriacou Auction's Coming!

Are you thinking that you should be planning to raise your waterline during your haulout this hurricane season? Too much stuff on your boat? Think about this: any spare parts you don't need, any clean used clothing, any household goods — leave them at the Carriacou Yacht Club for the annual auction at the end of this month (July 29th), sponsored by the Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF). And think about this: come join the fun and the fundraising! Don't forget there is free wireless in Tyrrel Bay — just make a donation to CCEF.

For more information contact ccefinfo@gmail.com.

PAM SHANNON

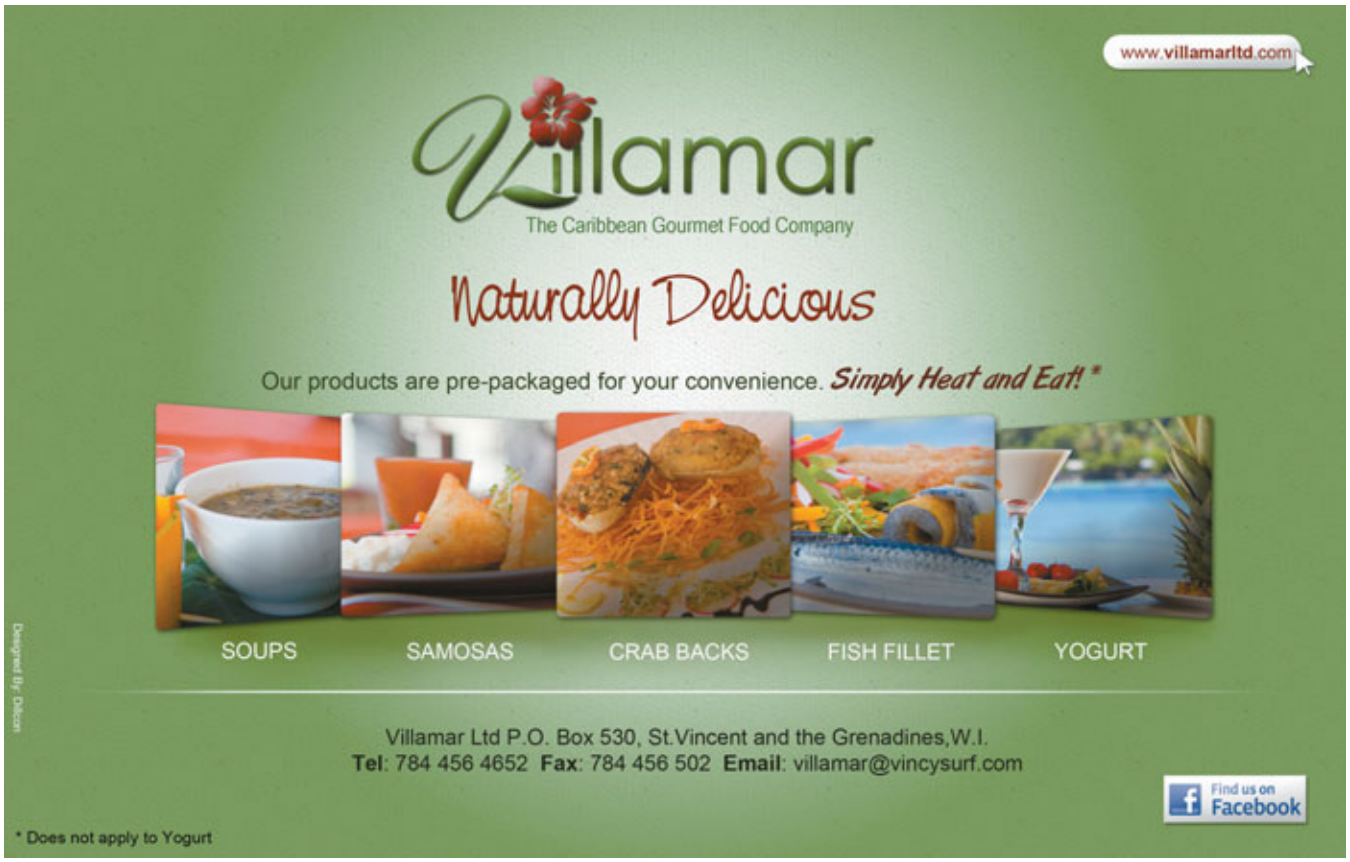


Want to raise your waterline this haulout? Donate your unused gear to the CCEF auction!

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome aboard new advertisers Integra Marine Coatings of Trinidad, on page 9; and Oceans Watch international on page 47.

Good to have you with us!



BUSINESS BRIEFS

Free Cruising Guides Now Reformatted
Frank Virgintino reports: The *Free Cruising Guides* that are available at www.free-cruisingguide.com have now been released in newly formatted editions and can be downloaded in EPUB format as well as PDF format — absolutely free. The guides are also available in Kindle format at the Amazon bookstore.
I am also pleased to announce the forthcoming release of *A Thinking Man's Guide to Voyaging South: The many facets of Caribbean Cruising*. This nearly 200-page book covers all routes from North America to the Caribbean and breaks the Caribbean down into four quadrants with discussions of cruising in each quadrant. The book will be available free at www.freecruisingguide.com and also through the Amazon bookstore as a Kindle e-book.
For more information see ad on page 14.


CHRIS DOYLE

Charter Yachts: Register Now for Antigua Show
The Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting has announced the opening of registration for the 50th Annual Antigua charter yacht show for agents, press, non-exhibiting vendors and yachts. Early registration discount for yachts only: yachts that register from now till August 31st will receive ten percent discount on their registration fee.
For more information visit www.antiguayachtshow.com.

New Company to Provide TTSA Training
A new local company, Marine Maven, has been appointed as an accredited training service provider to the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association (TTSA). A range of yacht and pleasure boat training courses are now available as part of the new National Sailing Scheme in Trinidad & Tobago. The training is aimed at all boat users, including sailing, power and motor boating, and is designed to provide qualifications of an international standard. The training will be delivered by Marine Maven (T&T) Ltd and headed by Hedge Shuter, an MCA/RYA Ocean Yachtmaster with many years experience in the training field and the senior yacht instructor at TTSA. Both practical boating and shore-based navigation courses are available from beginner to expert level.
For more information visit www.marinemaven.com and www.ttsailing.org.

Second Edition of *The Last Schoonerman*
Now available is a new edition of *The Last Schoonerman, The Remarkable Life of Captain Lou Kenedy*, by Joe Russell. This history of the Atlantic and Caribbean commercial schooner trade documents the life of Captain Lou Kenedy (1910-1991), founder of the recently revived schooner race around Barbados. The book has been redesigned and updated with more historical detail and scores of photos. Fine Edge Nautical & Recreational Publishing is now taking orders for the second edition.
For more information contact sales@fineedge.com.

Free 'Chip and Putt' at Ali Baba's
Mark Denebeim reports: Ali Baba's Restaurant and Bar located on Jost Van Dyke, BVI offers the Caribbean's only two-hole "chip and putt" golf course — and it's free! It was donated by www.oceanbreezetours.com, so when you enjoy a happy hour round or two, please make sure you say, "Thanks, Ocean Breeze!"

Marine WiFi Perfected with The Wirie^{AP}
As a result of months of research, testing, development and collaboration with Alfa Network, Inc. (a leading provider of networking hardware), Island Consulting brings you a new product that will fulfill the needs of modern long-range WiFi users: The Wirie^{AP}.
The Wirie^{AP} uses most of the high-grade components of the original Wirie and is still fully waterproof, but contains a wireless access point (router). This "hot spot" allows the customer to create his/her own local wireless network on their boat. No Ethernet or USB cable is required and the unit is powered by a simple 12-volt DC electrical cable.
The Wirie^{AP} allows all WiFi enabled devices, such as laptops, iPods, iPhones, chart plotters and printers to connect to the local access point and share the long-range internet connection. Information can also be shared among the different devices without needing access to the internet.
For more information visit www.thewirie.com.

New Inter-Island Ferry Service Announced
It seems that a new ferry service is announced every year or so, but few actually get underway. We hope this one does. L'Express Des Iles recently announced that the Jeans Ferry Service will begin on October 20th, offering travel between Dominica, St. Lucia, Guadeloupe and Martinique, plus weekend charters to Montserrat, Antigua, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Martin and St. Vincent & the Grenadines.
For more information visit www.express-des-iles.com.

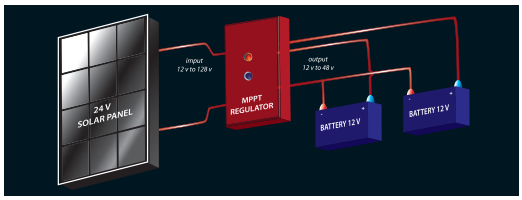
Panama's Red Frog Marina
Daniel Cranney reports: The new Red Frog Marina and Resort is located in Bocas del Toro, Panama, about 150 miles from the Panama Canal on the leeward side of Isla Bastimentos.



Red Frog Marina can handle monohulls and multihulls up to 180 feet with deep-water access all the way into the marina. All docks have floating decking with an anchoring system engineered to 85 knots of wind. There is a workshop, secure storage for boat equipment, dinghies and outboards, and weekly free transportation into Bocas town. The resort offers luxury villa accommodations as well as an affordable jungle lodge for yacht crews.
For more information visit www.redfrogbeach.com.

Montserrat Nature Guidebook Bargain
A Guide to the Centre Hills, a comprehensive guidebook on Montserrat's nature and wildlife written by Steve Holliday of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, is now available at a reduced price of EC$30. This comprehensive 140-page full-colour book provides an insight into the unique biodiversity of the Centre Hills, which are home to a dazzling array of plants and animals, including the endemic Montserrat Oriole. The Guide also provides information on the island's eight main hiking trails and the main features on each trail.
For more information contact info@montserrattourism.ms.

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Grenada Bids 'Fair Winds' to Jonathan Fisher

by Chris Doyle

It is 0730 in Grenada, the cruisers' VHF net has just started and the net controller says, "Let's go to Jonathan at Island Water World for the weather." Jonathan booms back: "Yes, this is Jonathan at Island Water World with the weather reports which are in two main sections: the first for those staying on the island, then the offshore forecast for those going to sea."

Most mornings Jonathan has been getting up at about 0500, so he can be in the office way before anyone else, to analyze the weather and give the forecast a good half-hour before the store opens. We have got used to it, and we are going to miss it, because Jonathan is heading back to the UK.

In 2002 Jonathan was cruising around looking for some work. He had an excellent technical background in racing cars and big yachts, but wanted something ashore where he could spend more time with his wife, Fenella. He was enquiring about a job at Island Water World in Sint Maarten, and was waiting for a response when the job of managing the Grenada store came up. Jonathan gave it some thought. Grenada was a very pleasant island, and also way south, well below the hurricane belt. He accepted and started work towards the end of 2002.

He was right about the pleasant island, wrong about the hurricanes. Ivan hit in 2004, on Fenella's birthday, and what a present! Ivan turned out to be the tenth most intense storm ever, an experience Jonathan is happy he survived but hopes never to experience again. After the first hard winds, Jonathan had slipped outside to clear some fallen guttering when he looked up and saw a wall of white water littered with scads of debris hurtling towards him. He managed to duck behind a wall before it reached him, and then in a slight lull slip back into the house while he had the chance, so he could watch the windows bowing in on the gusts and all the palm trees in front of the house being ripped out of the ground. After the storm, back at the store, he made sure his staff were all alive and then got everyone working part time so they could also fix up their homes during the rest of the day.



When Jonathan started at Island Water World, the Grenada Cruisers' Net was only operating a few days a week. Jonathan got his radio set up and started by filling in on the spare days. His delivery was so appreciated that he was quickly co-opted into doing the weather every day. Leroy Baptiste, Grenada's main communications man, hearing his presence on the air, invited him to connect to the big Grenada repeaters, and ever since he has boomed in loud and clear — not only all over Grenada but even down to Tobago and up to St. Vincent.

Having a good VHF presence helped in other ways. One time Jonathan helped coordinate the rescue of a local fishing boat that was lost at sea. Another time it proved useful at dealing with a theft. Someone had walked out of the shop with a valuable fridge part. They had taken the item into the toilet, unwrapped it, and slipped out with it in their bag. Jonathon came on the next morning and said, "We want the person who stole the refrigeration part to know we not only know who did it, but have it all on record on our store camera. If the part comes back today we will not prosecute." The part arrived via a taxi driver. Oh, the power of the net!

Jonathan has brought to Island Water World a climate of first class service. He always gave good and knowledgeable advice. He would help people clear their boat parts out through Customs, even when they did not originate with Island Water World (a service that was well appreciated and brought many people into the store, where sooner or later they would spend money). He came up with the idea of a book-swap coffee morning, which became a popular event on the first Wednesday of each month. The idea was to raise money for the Grenada Heart Foundation, which helps people get advanced treatment in the US. Foodland supermarket and Le Phare Bleu Marina partnered by supplying the coffee and bread. Over the years it has raised many thousands of dollars. Jonathan also kept a big barrel in the store so people could donate stuff they no longer needed to Grensave.

Jonathan introduced Island Water World's free, bay-wide WiFi service. The yachts loved it, it was good for business, and while Jonathan was there the store more than doubled in size and turnover. He has also kept his customers amused, as during the months when he looked after a cruiser's parrot. At first he kept it at home, but its screeching drove Fenella crazy, so Jonathan brought it to the store where it became a major attraction.

Jonathan, you are heading back to the UK, with its pensions and healthcare, and we know you will find something interesting to turn your attention to. You have made a major mark on Grenada's cruising community, and we will all miss you.

St. Lucia Yachting:

From Uncharted to Mainstream Waters

by Christy Recaii

It may be hard for avid yachties to grasp that the yachting sector in St. Lucia is considered the underdog compared to the other aspects of the local tourism industry, particularly when the world-renowned Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) has had its finish line in St. Lucian waters for the last 20 years and the IGY Rodney Bay Marina is considered to have some of the best amenities in the Eastern Caribbean. On June 3rd, a press conference was held by the St. Lucia Tourist Board to address just that.



JOHN EMMANUEL / SLTB

Above: Ian Herman, Marketing Manager of the St. Lucia Tourist Board, and Cuthbert Didier, Director of Yachting, announced a project aimed at increasing this country's yacht arrivals by 15 percent

Below: More yachts mean more business opportunities



SALLY ERDLE

Cuthbert Didier, Director of Yachting for St. Lucia, highlighted that the yachting sector is moving from a niche market to a strong vibrant yachting industry as the St. Lucia Tourist Board is embarking on a project to increase the number of visitors arriving by yacht by 15 percent.

"The primary objectives are to develop and review the legislation and regulatory framework that can guide the yachting sector to be competitive. And when we say competitive, we are not looking at our immediate neighbors, we are looking at Monaco, Cannes — the Mediterranean market," he said.

But what exactly has made yachting and tourism officials confident that the local yachting sector can go 'bow to bow' with more established markets? Certainly that can be credited to the increased figures over the past year. In 2010, a total of 32,052 persons arriving by yacht were recorded from the IGY Rodney Bay Marina — an increase of 0.2 percent from 2009, and a total of 6,383 yacht calls were made at the IGY Rodney Bay Marina — an increase of 4.3 percent from the previous year. SLASPA (St. Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority) and SLTB only began recording data from the Marigot Bay Marina in January 2010. For that year, a total of 10,259 arrivals were recorded at that port, bringing the total number of persons arriving by yacht in 2010 to 42,311 and the total number of yachts calling at both ports to 8,446. Year to date data (January to April 2011) reveals that total arrivals for the four-month period is 18,196 — a three percent increase from 2010; 72 percent of that total (13,098) was recorded at the IGY Rodney Bay Marina.

Ian Herman, Marketing Manager with responsibility for special markets, said that, with an expenditure by the yachting sector in 2010 estimated at US$60 million, another component of the efforts going forward is diversifying St. Lucia's yachting beyond the ARC through marketing, particularly online. "We have identified critical websites or more important websites that we can put things like promotional banners on. We will be presenting things like e-newsletters, which of course we can share with the media, but obviously they will be tailored for captains, boat charterers and crewmembers. It is critical to understand that both the captains and crew are the ones making the final decisions." The decisions Herman is referring to are the coveted destination decisions, when keeping in mind the aimed-for 15 percent increase in yacht arrivals.

Other strategies projected are lengthening the stay of visitors from the average 28 days to three months and increasing business opportunities in areas such as boat repairs and waterfront condos. Another aspect officials are including on the agenda is what they describe as facilitating "a strong sense of law enforcement presence on the waters" as the numbers are expected to increase.

Christy Recaii is a Saint Lucian journalist who has a passion for sailing. She is a Hunter College graduate with a BA in Media Studies. You can find her either on the water or the docks seeking out the next marine scoop! She can be contacted at sailingonthebrain@gmail.com.






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CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Now: Don't Toss Even a Banana Peel!

On May 1st the Caribbean Sea became a Special Area for the prevention of pollution by garbage generated from ships in accordance with the provisions of the



ROD LLEWELLYN

New regulations will help reduce the amount of garbage in Caribbean waters

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1978 as amended, commonly known as the MARPOL Convention. From now on ships trading in the Caribbean, including pleasure craft, are prohibited from discharging any ship-generated garbage — including all plastics, paper products, rags, glass, metals, crockery, dunnage and packing materials — into the sea.

Disposal into the sea of food wastes shall be made as far as practicable from land, but in any case not less than 12 nautical miles from the nearest land; an exception being food wastes which have been passed through a grinder (and are capable of passing through a screen with openings no greater than 25 millimetres), which shall be disposed of as far as practicable from land, but in any case not less than three nautical miles from the nearest land.

Caribbean countries are now able to enforce stricter standards on ships calling at ports and marinas or when they are transiting territorial waters. At the 60th session of the IMO's Marine Environmental Protection Committee last March, it was agreed that adequate reception facilities for garbage are now available in the Caribbean area, and the provisions can be enforced.

NGOs Support Venezuela's Reintroduction to IWC

In late May, some 20 cetacean conservation organizations from throughout Latin America demonstrated their support for the reintroduction of Venezuela into the International Whaling Commission by delivering petitions to the Venezuelan embassies in their respective countries. The petitions requested that Venezuela rejoin that international body, which regulates the hunting and conservation of global whale stocks. The point was made that as a united bloc with a conservationist position, the Latin American countries would have increased power to advance actions aimed at the protection of cetaceans.

The Dominican Republic and Colombia recently rejoined the IWC.

Researchers: Caribbean Whales Speak 'Patois'

A group of researchers from the Dominica Sperm Whale Project have determined that whales from the Caribbean have different 'dialects' than those from the North



THE DOMINICA SPERM WHALE PROJECT

Atlantic or Pacific — similar to Caribbean 'patois' or 'creole' being distinct from other regional human dialects. The researchers also discovered that baby sperm whales 'babble', just like human infants, before they have learned to 'talk' properly.

The researchers have been closely following one group of sperm whales, called the "group of seven", made up of four sisters, their aunt and two juvenile males, as they fed, played and cruised off the coast of Dominica. The research team, which included Shane Gero, of Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, determined that sperm whales use accents to identify themselves to others in their extended family group.

The pattern of clicks used by the sperm whales to communicate are known as codas and the scientists realized they know which whale is speaking and they are able to recognize strangers from any region due to the sound of the codas. Codas can be heard up to one kilometer away.

According to Gero, "Just as we can tell our friends apart by the sounds of their voices and the way they pronounce their words, sperm whales can identify each other by the different accents of the clicks. We also discovered that Caribbean and Pacific whales have different repertoires of codas, much like regional dialects."

The findings of the researchers were recently published in *Animal Behaviour* magazine.

For more information on the Dominica Sperm Whale Project visit http://whitelab.biology.dal.ca/dswp.

Caribbean Tsunami Warning Program Launched

The US National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently launched a new Caribbean Tsunami Warning Program, which aims to increase awareness and preparedness throughout the Caribbean. On June 10th, NOAA and its federal partners met with East Coast, Gulf and Caribbean state officials to discuss tsunami warning capabilities and the need for better local preparedness.

The tsunami threat is often overlooked in the Atlantic Basin, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea, because catastrophic events in that region have been rare. However, in January 2010, an earthquake off the coast of Haiti generated a 10-foot high tsunami, and nearly 2,000 people were killed in 1946 when a tsunami struck the Dominican Republic.

NOAA's two tsunami warning centers provide around-the-clock monitoring and warning of tsunami threats for the United States and many other parts of the world. Assisting in the effort to deliver accurate tsunami forecasts is a vast network of NOAA tsunami detection buoys, which use satellite technology to transmit wave height to the warning centers as a tsunami passes, and coastal tide and water-level gauges positioned near coastlines and harbors to measure waves at impact.

For tsunami warnings in the Caribbean Sea visit http://ptwc.weather.gov/?region=4.

Extend your Anchor Rode!

Cuban scientists calculate that median sea levels around that Caribbean nation will rise more than 30 inches by the end of the century due to global climate change.

According to a June 17th report in the newspaper *Granma*, Abel Centella, scientific director of the country's Meteorological Institute, said that models predict the sea will rise 10.6 inches (27 centimeters) by 2050, and 33.5 inches (85 centimeters) by 2100. International scientific studies have projected sea levels will rise between 30 and 75 inches (190 centimeters) by the end of the century, fed by melting glaciers and ice caps. Sea level rises will not be uniform worldwide due to currents, winds and other factors.

Cuban Government scientist Marcelino Hernandez warned of the need to protect environments that can mitigate the effects of sea encroachment. "Right now it is urgent to preserve mangroves, coral reefs, sea grass and sand beaches," Hernandez said. "Each of these ecosystems is a natural barrier to defend the coasts from the impact of climate change. If they deteriorate, the consequences will be worse."

Trinidad Sportsfishermen Demand Answers

Steven Valdez reports: Sportsfishermen of Trinidad and Tobago say that in recent years they have seen a marked drop in their catch rate. Many of the fishermen that participate in the Trinidad and Tobago Game Fishing Association's (TTGFA) tournaments throughout the year complain that it is the fault of the long-liners. They say that these mostly foreign vessels rape the waters around our beautiful Twin Island State of the pelagic fish (including but not limited to marlin, sailfish, kingfish and wahoo). Many of them question why foreign long-liners are allowed to operate in our country since they create very little local employment and most of their catch is exported to foreign countries. Dominic "Wally" Wallace of Reel Tackle and Seafood



Ltd says Trinidad and Tobago consumes a very small amount of marlin, sailfish and swordfish but notes that eight to 15 refrigerated containers of marlin, sailfish, swordfish and white marlin leave Trinidad every seven to ten days. Wally said that when the Taiwanese boats offload in Chaguaramas, there are approximately 15 tons of billfish per boat being packed into refrigerated containers for export and that there are more than three boats lined up at any given time waiting to be offloaded.

The TTGFA recently invited the popular Trini Eco Warriors group to a meeting with TTGFA management committee members at the Trinidad & Tobago Yacht Club in Bayshore, Trinidad to develop a strategy to bring awareness to the fishermen's campaign for more stringent laws relating to conservation. Both groups, along with the Tobago Game Fishing Tournament (TGFT) and the Southern Bill Fish Circuit will seek to identify the problems and meet with the relevant stakeholders to get action on this pressing matter.

The president of the TTGFA, Reginald MacLean, said that his committee will not rest until something is done to reverse the current trend. "At the rate we are going we will not be in a position to host tournaments in years to come as there will be very few fish to catch," he stated. TTGFA main tournaments are strict release tournaments.

The gamefishing industry has many players including the many tackle and bait shops, boatbuilders and repair craftsmen, boat accessory suppliers and boatyard staff. They rely on a vibrant fishing community to pay their bank loans and earn their salary at the end of the month.

Not to be forgotten are the many fishing villages all along Trinidad and Tobago's coasts that rely on fishing to feed their families. Gary Aboud, President of the Fishermen and Friends Of the Sea (FFOS), which represents these fishing communities, adds that "for almost a decade fishermen in Tobago detected a distinct and significant drop in their catch rates during and long after marine seismic surveys were conducted. Seismic surveys involve specialized vessels towing an array of air guns and hydrophone streamers while steaming slowly along a series of predefined lines. The air guns create extremely loud sounds (loud enough to kill marine animals within a few metres of the source), while the hydrophones detect echoes of structures in the bedrock far below. In 2003, through the offices of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, FFOS became informed of scientific studies done to determine the impact of seismic surveys on bottom dwelling and pelagic (surface dwelling) commercial species. These technical studies done in Canada, USA, Norway, and the North Sea to name a few, all show a 30 to 80 percent reduction in the average abundance of catch rates during and after seismic surveys and some studies advise prohibition of seismic surveys in spawning areas, at spawning times and along migratory paths. Any seasoned fisherman will confirm that seismic surveys cause significant and unacceptable impacts on catch rates."

Anyone with intimate knowledge of the subject of declining fish catch and willing to assist is asked to contact PRO of the TTGFA, Steven Valdez, at info@ttgfa.com.

REGATTA NEWS

Mount Gay Rum Barbados Regatta a Hit!

Renata Goodridge reports: The weekend of May 13th through 15th saw 35 boats racing along the south and west coasts of the island in the Mount Gay Rum Barbados Regatta 2011. It was truly an Eastern



PETER MARSHALL

Caribbean regatta, with competitors sailing their boats from Trinidad, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Martinique to join the Bajan boats for great racing and fun liming at the Barbados Yacht Club. And with an age spread of about 60 years between the youngest and oldest skippers, sailors of all ages could be found racing in every class.

Four classes participated: Racing (four entries), Cruising A (five), Cruising B (11) and the J/24 one design fleet (15). Racing Class was honoured to have two boats from Martinique, with our very favorite Jean Trudo helming one. The Bajan sailors were also happy to see Reggie Williams and his Soverel 43, the famous *Legacy,* sail up from Trinidad, and race to win Cruising Class A, with the local Beneteau 53 *Rapajam* giving tough competition. In Cruising Class B, races started in Carlisle Bay and raced up the west coast. John Still's Hunter 42, *Perseverance,* won that class, enjoying the west coast scenery as a change from the Bay and south-coast courses of the other fleets.

In the J/24 fleet, the local boats sailed against Trini, Grenadian and Vincentian sailors, and the racing was tight. Although Neil Burke's *Impulse* came out on top, the point spread was close, and a tie for second place overall went to Philip Barnard's *Saltfish* from St. Vincent over Robert Povey's *Hawkeye.*

One of the continuing pleasures of this regatta is that *every* participating sailor receives the regatta's Mount Gay red cap — something that all sailors treasure — as well as a regatta shirt! And the rum and coconut water vendor is always a big treat down by the beach, something the sailors enjoyed on both afternoons before the prizegivings.

Thanks go to the sponsors Mount Gay Distilleries, the Barbados Yacht Club, the Barbados Sailing Association, and Banks Breweries, with special thanks to the Barbados Yacht Club — host and venue for the whole regatta.

For full results visit www.sailbarbados.com.

Meesemaecker is New Caribbean Laser Champion

In St. Maarten, the second weekend of June saw Benoit Meesemaecker of St. Barth's emerge the winner of the 22nd Heineken Light Caribbean Laser Championships, sailing the Standard rig and dominating the regatta from start to finish.

Superb concentration and tactical skill saw the Frenchman win every race but one to nudge Dutch St. Maarten's most successful sailor, Frits Bus, into second place. Bus was unable to break Benoit's vice-like grip on the fleet and had to be content with all second place finishes except the penultimate race, which he won.

"I was more consistent this year than last year," remarked Benoit, who finished second last year. "I would have preferred more wind, because I'm in good shape and Frits is also in good shape — needed to sail Lasers."

Third place in the Standard Class went to the Dominican Republic's 17-year-old Sebastian Bros. Manuel Lehoux (16 years), also from the Dominican Republic, won the Radial Class, ahead of St. Maarten sailmaker Ernst Looser, with Stéphane Ferron in third place.

François de Corlien won the Masters Category, regular stalwart Rien Korteknie was second and Henry Fondeur took third place.

Winners in each class won Antoine Chapon paintings.

Light conditions prevailed both on Saturday and on Sunday, producing a southeasterly breeze of about ten knots. Six races were run over the windward-leeward course on the Saturday and three on the Sunday. "It was ideal conditions for Laser racing, because everyone from the youngest to the oldest could handle it," said Race Officer Andrew Rapley.

The regatta saw just 15 sailors participating — the lowest turnout in years. Frits Bus attributed the low turnout to the general economic crisis and expensive inter-island airfares.

The regatta was sponsored by Heineken Light and Club Orient Resort and organized by the Sint Maarten Yacht Club. Heineken's Managing Director John Leone had the unusual distinction of being both a participant and sponsor. "It's one thing sponsoring and another to be a participant," said Leone, who raced his own Laser. "It does give you an appreciation for the hard work that goes into organizing the event."

Barbados Hosts J/24 International Open Regatta

The weekend of June 11th and 12th saw 14 J/24s racing in Barbados, with two days of competitive racing and camaraderie in the First Citizens Investment Services J/24 International Open Regatta. Boats and



PETER MARSHALL

crews from Trinidad, Grenada and St. Vincent competed against the local J/24 sailors in a total of eight races, allowing for one race drop. On the Saturday, racing took place in Carlisle Bay, while on the Sunday racing took place in front of Tapas Bar and Restaurant on the boardwalk.

—Continued on next page

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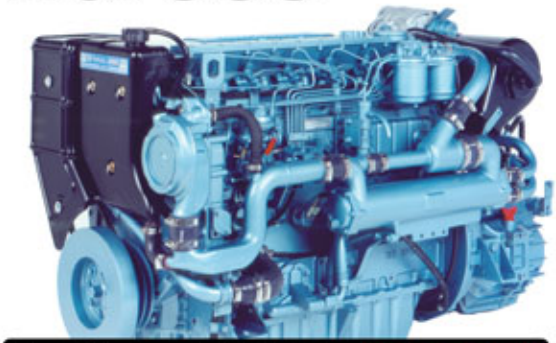
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—Continued from previous page

Tapas' second floor was host to the VIP lounge for spectators and sponsors. The Sunday racing was emceed by Renata Goodridge, allowing everyone along the boardwalk to understand what was going on out on the water. This was a great idea, as there was plenty of positive feedback from both sailors and non-sailors who watched the (very) nearshore racing from land.

First and second place were tightly contested between Ian Mayers' *Banks Esperanza* and Bruce Bailey's *Fully Covered*, with the former winning by just one point. Third place was taken by Russell Corrie's *Fadeaway*, whose skipper Charlie Gloumeau won the unofficial "Bump and Tack" award during a tack out of the breakers in front of Blakey's Boardwalk Bar and Restaurant, the daily sponsor for Saturday's racing in the Bay.

Special thanks also go to sponsors First Citizens Investment Service, Powerade, Banks Beer, the Barbados Yacht Club and United Insurance, and to intrepid race committee members Anne Tindale and Peter Burke.

For full results visit www.j24barbados.com.

13th Premier's Cup International Youth Regatta This Month

From July 8th through 10th, Kids And The Sea (KATS) BVI along with the Rotary, Rotaract and Interact Clubs of the BVI, and Platinum Sponsor Digicel, will host the 13th Annual Premier's Cup International Youth Regatta at Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola.

The event is the only youth team sailing event in the Caribbean and brings together young people between the ages of ten and 18 for a weekend of fellowship and competition. This year nine teams will be attending, from Anguilla, Antigua, Grenada, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Lucia, St. Thomas, Tortola, and the United States.

Teams arrive the Friday afternoon, to be welcomed that evening by Premier, the Honourable Ralph T. O'Neal, at the Welcome Reception at Peg Leg Restaurant at Nanny Cay Resort & Marina. Multiple races will be run on the Saturday from 9:00AM to 3:00PM and on the Sunday from 9:00AM to 1:00PM in Drake's Passage. The Awards Ceremony will take place at 3:00PM on the Sunday.

The public is welcome to the event to meet the competitors and watch the action. There will be a VIP boat to take spectators out on the course to see the sailing up close.

For more information contact Tom Gerker at (284) 494-2830, John Lewis at (284) 340-8581 or Regatta Chairman Brent Brydon at (284) 494-1407.

Round Guadeloupe Race in Traditional Sailing Canoes

The revival of traditional boat racing around the



STEPHANE LEGENDRE

Caribbean is a reminder of the nautical traditions of our islands, and also a beautiful way to get young islanders involved in sailing.

The 10th annual Round Guadeloupe Race in traditional "Saintoise" sailing canoes will take place from July 9th through 17th under the ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing, organized by the Comité Guadeloupéen de Voile Traditionnelle. Strict rating rules have been established. The Saintoise must be unsinkable. Its overall length shall be 5.35 meters, maximum beam 1.8 metres, mast height 7.25 metres and boom length 6.50 metres. But hull design is said to be less important than the five-person crew that sails the boat. Steering a Saintoise, with its stone ballast, is a tricky job in unsheltered waters.

Legs of this year's regatta will take the fleet from Pointe-à-Pitre to Morne-à-l'eau, Sainte-Rose, Bouillante, Baillif, Terre de haut, Marie Galante (St. Louis), St. François and Gosier, with celebrations at each destination.

For more information contact infocgvt@gmail.com.

Coming 'Just Now': The 46th Carriacou Regatta Festival

The Carriacou Regatta Festival will celebrate its 46th anniversary from July 24th through August 1st, with races for international yachts, Carriacou sloops and open boats from throughout the Grenadines. The two-handed round-the-island race for yachts is always a favorite.

This regatta started in 1965 as a small racing event in Hillsborough Bay. The festival has now grown to become the largest annual summer festival in the region. Held over the Emancipation weekend each year, it now includes a wide variety of sporting and cultural activities. The regatta race events focus mainly on locally and regionally built workboats with some 12 different classes of boats, ranging from 14 to 35 or more feet in length. Participating islands include sister islands Grenada and Petite Martinique; also Antigua and Tobago; as well as Canouan, Mayreau and Bequia from the Saint Vincent Grenadines; and of course, host island, Carriacou.

Other aspects of the festival include donkey racing, greasy pole, road races, Miss Wet T-Shirt, and the Miss Aquaval Queen Pageant, with participation from Trinidad, Tobago, Grenada, Barbados, Canouan, Union Island and Carriacou.

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page


DAVON BAKER

Open boats Hurricane *and* Ace *racing in Carriacou*

The Carriacou Regatta Festival Committee invites you to experience a true Caribbean traditional festival.
For more information see ad on page 13.

2011 Caribbean Dinghy Championships for August

The 2011 Caribbean Dinghy Championships will be held from August 19th through 21st in Antigua. The Organising Authority is the Antigua Yacht Club, and the regatta is sanctioned by the Caribbean Sailing Association.

Classes will include Laser Open, Laser Radial Open, Zoom 8 (age 16 and under), Optimist (age 11 and under), Sport 16s Open (two persons) jib and main only. First, second and third prizes will be given in each class and the CSA Dinghy Championship trophy will be awarded to the winning team.

Final Registration will be on August 19th from 9:00AM to 7:00PM at the Antigua Yacht Club.

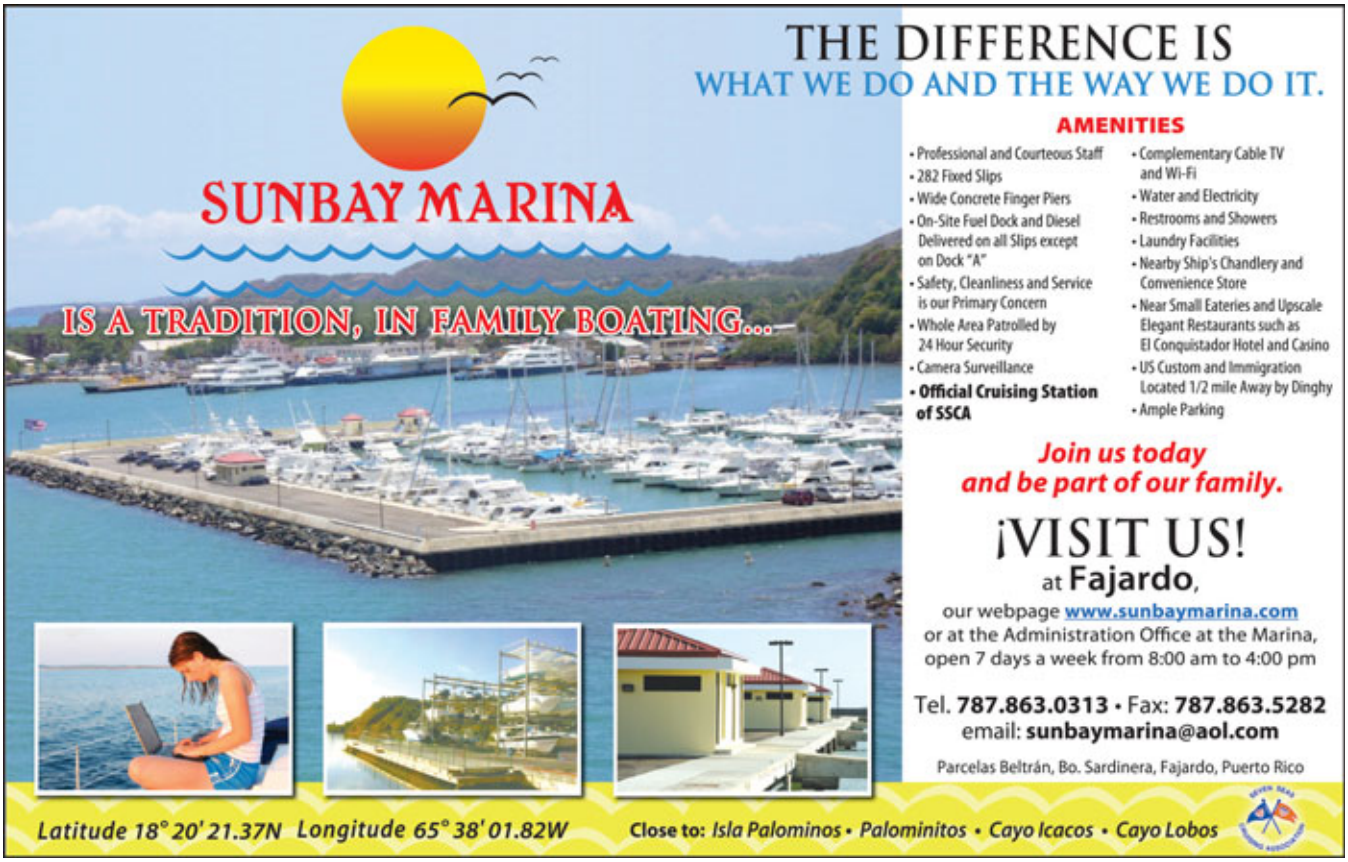
For more information visit www.antiguayachtclub.com.

Belize Joins the International Sailing Federation

The Council of the International Sailing Federation (ISAF) has approved the Belize Sailing Association (BzSA) to become a full Member National Authority of the world governing body for sailing. Belize has been allocated, by geographic location, to the Group O, which includes 24 countries of North and South America, Central America and the Caribbean. Belize now has full access to all benefits of membership including the ability to participate in global sailing events and utilize all ISAF services.

Prior to 1870, individual yacht clubs developed their own sets of rules, creating confusion over different measurement standards. Consequently, sailboats from different countries could not compete on equal terms. In 1881, the Yacht Racing Association developed a set of rules for British waters. In 1906, the International Yacht Racing Union (IRYU) was formed by most European countries. By 1929, the North American Yacht Racing Union worded its rules equally, and reached agreement that neither would change its rules without first informing the other. In 1960, a universal code of racing rules was agreed upon and implemented.

The Belize Sailing Association was formed on February 17th, 2010, with aspirations to develop sailing as a sport in Belize and participate in international events in due course. Two core projects to provide "meaningful activity" for youth and adults have been initiated as follows: Project Optimist for nine to 14 year old boys and girls and Grand Fleet Sailing for young adults and older, to sail the traditional craft unique to Belize such as the sand lighters, sailing dories and sloops.



THE CARIBBEAN YACHTING INDUSTRY NOW What's the Problem? (And What's the Strength?)

Summer 2011 is a good time to look at the "big picture" of the Caribbean yachting industry — the enterprises that support recreational sailing in the region. We asked several key figures in this sector for their views on its current problems and strengths. There was no doubt that they had already given this much thought — responses were fired back almost immediately. Many thanks to all who participated.

The Big Problems

We asked, "In your view, what is the biggest single problem facing the Caribbean yachting industry today?"

• "CRIME!" chorused Robert Phillips, Managing Director of Doyle Sailmakers in the BVI; Hubert Winston, Managing Director of Dominica Marine Center; Ian Cowan, General Manager of Island Water World St. Lucia; and Donald Stollmeyer, Managing Director of Powerboats in Trinidad. Yachts have a powerful communication network and destinations where crime is reportedly a problem have suffered profound economic losses.

• "THE ECONOMY!" say Frank Virgintino, a cruising guide author who is also associated with Marina Zarpar in the Dominican Republic; Dale Westin, General Manager of Jamaica's Errol Flynn Marina; and author and yacht insurance broker Don Street.

Frank states, "The biggest problem facing the yacht service industry is the worldwide recession. I have been in the marina and service business all my life, and recessions hit very hard on boatowners as boats are considered a luxury. This year at the marina in the DR, US-flagged boats were almost non-existent and Canadian boats in short supply. This represents a big problem for the marine service businesses because fixed costs remain the same and vacancies and loss of service jobs hurt the bottom line."

Dale adds, "The escalating cost of fuel is having a definite effect on the industry. We are about mid-point between South Florida and the Panama Canal, and what was once a continuous stream of motor yachts heading to the canal is now only a trickle."

Isabelle Prado of Mermer Location yacht charters in Martinique adds, "Airfares are very expensive and this is a brake to our development."

Don warns that another sort of economic impact could be on the horizon. "Increasing numbers of boats are stored ashore during hurricane season. Some yards are jamming them in so close together that if a hurricane comes there will be disasters. My boss asked me to investigate selling yacht yard and marina liability insurance in the Caribbean. With very few exceptions I would not ask my worst enemy to give yacht yard or marina liability insurance."



Crime is identified as one of the Caribbean yachting industry's biggest problems. Stakeholders say awareness is increasing, but more needs to be done

• "BUREAUCRACY!" — especially Customs clearance regulations — say cruising guide author Chris Doyle; John Duffy, Past President of the Antigua & Barbuda Marine Association; and Isabelle Prado. Isabelle sums it up: "One point that can give yachting a big help would be a great reduction in the clearance procedures between the different islands and standardization of the Customs fees."

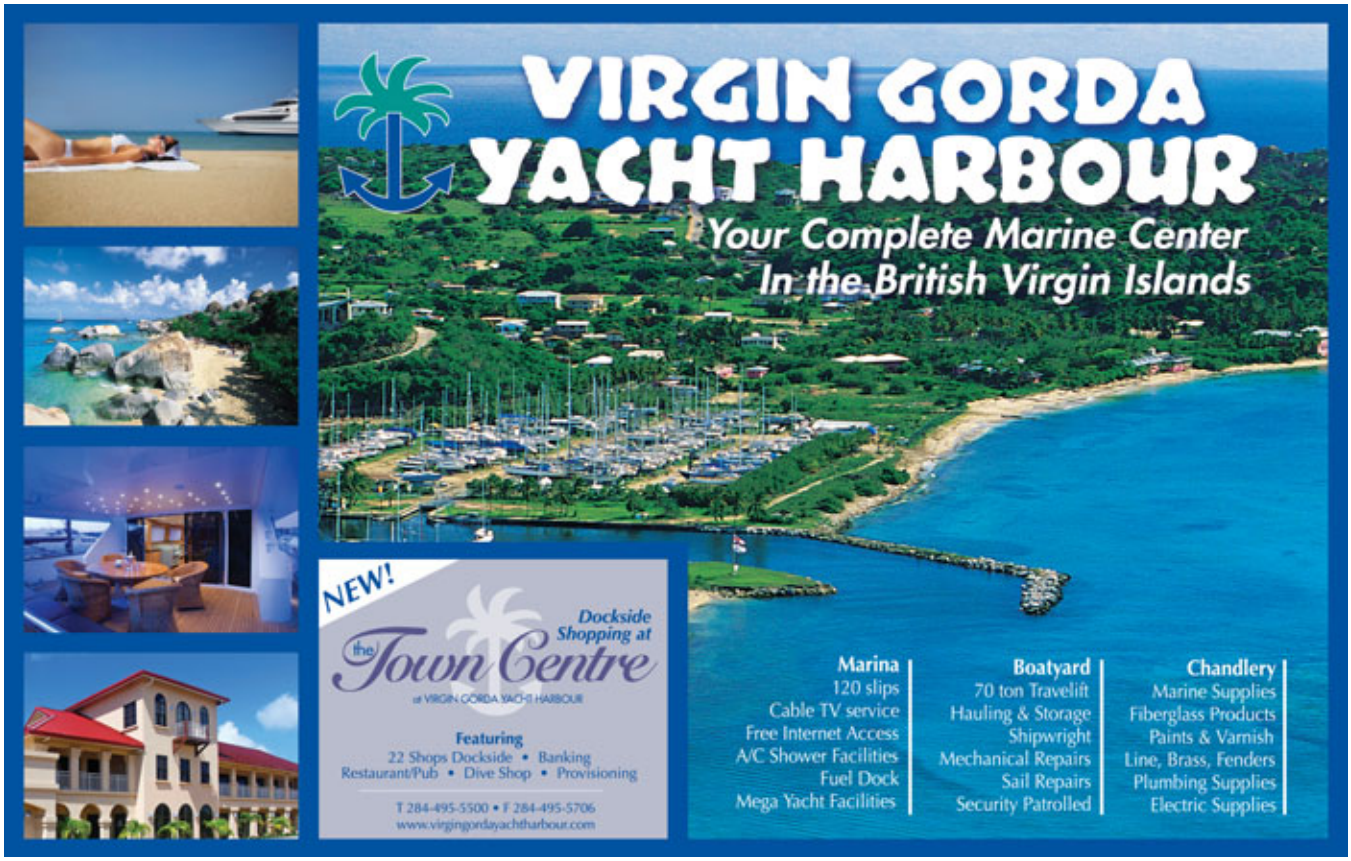
Perhaps shedding light on why the problems of crime and bureaucracy have not yet been solved, Robbie Ferron, Group Manager of the Caribbean-wide Budget Marine chandleries, says, "The biggest problem is that Caribbean people do not see the value of the industry, probably because with few exceptions they have not experienced the benefits of the industry. The beneficiaries are insufficient in numbers to influence governments any more than getting them to support the industry rhetorically."

Addressing the Crime Problem

• Is the problem of crime being addressed? If so, how?

Hubert Winston says, "There are stakeholder-based security initiatives going on Caribbean-wide, such as those provided by the Portsmouth Association of Yacht Security and the Dominica Marine Association, but these are at small interest-group level. The local police and governments need to take tourist security more seriously."

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And while Ian Cowan says, "There is an awareness in the system that crime has to be addressed, but not much has actually been done yet," Donald Stollmeyer feels that "the police and coast guard are becoming more aware of the problem and the value of the yachting industry to their economies, and are being mandated by the various governments to provide protection."

• *What IDEALLY could be done to solve the crime problem?*

Bob Phillips: "The tourist boards should be pressuring the police departments and courts, pushing the concept of economic prosperity when there is low or no crime."

Donald advocates "establishment of marine police to patrol and take action in problem areas" and Hubert would like to see "local police teaming up with the small stakeholder-based security teams to give them support and coverage."

Ian suggests "night courts to provide the instant hearing of the case against the suspect, with the tourist actually there to provide evidence before a judge."

• *What REALISTICALLY can be done to solve the crime problem?*

Donald and Hubert feel that their ideal solutions are also realistic.

Ian says, in the absence of night courts, "Accept a video of the tourist's evidence and allow that to be used as a court document in a later trial."

Bob urges, "Write articles addressing the issue and outlining the positive things countries can do to educate their populations."

Addressing the Economic Problems

• *Are the problems related the economy being addressed? If so, how?"*

Frank Virgintino: "The problem of the recession is not being addressed, as the marine industry does not have the consolidated economic and political clout to seek help."

Don Street: "The problem of disaster risk in the yachting industry is not being addressed, and it won't be until there is a major disaster or the local governments insist that the yards and marinas have proper liability insurance."

• *What IDEALLY could be done to solve the economic problems?*

Frank: "The various Caribbean countries could create advertising to bring customers to the Caribbean. Last year at the northern boat show circuit there were very few exhibitors from the Caribbean. When the economy declines, there must be more displays at boat shows, not less. Many cruisers have put off their dream of coming to the Caribbean because finances have become tight. We need to show them that the Caribbean (in most places) is very affordable."

Dale Westin: "Alternative fuels and/or new methods of propulsion are probably the only answer [to the problem of fuel prices]."

Don: "To solve the problem of disaster risk, the yacht yards and marinas should sort out their hurricane season storage and fire-fighting strategies themselves."

• *What REALISTICALLY can be done to solve the economic problems?*

Frank: "The marine industry needs to agree on how to proceed to attract business. This can be done by having a — or the — marine association working on shared programs and space at the northern boat shows."

Dale: "More folks will switch to sail [in reaction to high fuel prices]."

Don: "Why not just do a really good job of running whatever business you are in, and not feel you have to expand, expand, expand?"

Addressing the Bureaucracy Problem

• *Is the problem of bureaucracy being addressed? If so, how?*

Chris Doyle says, "Entry procedures have been made a bit easier with eSeaClear.com. Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines are holding talks to see what they can do about becoming a common yachting space."

• *What IDEALLY could be done to solve the bureaucracy problem?*

Chris: "We should be able to run with the eSeaClear idea and do everything online, and never have to actually go into Customs unless specially requested. A credit card account could be held at eSeaClear to make the necessary payments. We should be able to dispense with outward clearance altogether for short stays (say two weeks). Outward clearance is also a bit redundant on the eSeaClear system, as the officials can check when you left by seeing when and where you cleared in next. All this data is available to them." John Duffy takes it a step further: "Have a system of entry to one island allowing entry to all."

WORLD CRUISING CLUB



The warm, natural, famous Caribbean itself is recognized as the yachting industry's greatest strength

• *What REALISTICALLY could be done to solve the bureaucracy problem?*

John Duffy: "[Yachts should be able to clear in with] one form, and one person dealing with Customs, Immigration and Port Authority. It happens in some islands and should happen in all." Chris concurs: "Dominica is way ahead of the game here. Unless you are changing crew you only visit Customs — they take care of Immigration and Port Authority. Then, as long as you are not staying longer than two weeks, your inward clearance is also your outward clearance: you can leave without going back to Customs. ESeaClear makes it even easier."

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On the issue that Caribbean people generally do not see the value of the yachting industry and therefore do not influence their governments to support it, Robbie Ferron says, "The extent to which this problem is being addressed is minimal. Ideally, major efforts could be made to 'sell' the industry to the people, but realistically this is unsure of success and the required funding and motivation by investors are not present." John agrees: "Governments have been slow to recognize the value of yachting tourism. More is being done to promote the product, but nowhere near enough compared with its value."

The Big Strengths

We asked, "In your view, what is the Caribbean yachting industry's greatest single strength today?"

• "THE CARIBBEAN!" was a not surprising response, evoking its marine environment, its beauty and climate, and its fame. "Our greatest strength is the Caribbean Sea, including the bays, harbours, reefs, coastal areas, etcetera," says Donald Stollmeyer. Bob Phillips says, "The industry is lucky in that we are easy to get to when the weather is bad elsewhere" and Dale Westin states, "Yachts in the Caribbean enjoy the most beautiful venue in the world."

Robbie Ferron: "The greatest strength is the branding 'Caribbean' when associated with sailing."

Frank Virgintino: "The biggest single strength of the Caribbean yacht industry is climate and competitive pricing (compared to the States, Canada and Europe)" and Chris Doyle underscores this: "We have an excellent combination of lovely anchorages and good yacht services" — which brings us to…

• "YACHT SERVICES!" As Don Street points out, "A double strength is the availability of gear and the availability of some of the finest tradesmen in the world (if the sailor is willing to search them out)" and Bob Phillips elaborates: "We have a wide range of products to offer. As the quality of services ranges from abysmal to world class and it doesn't take a lot of effort to be in the top percentile, our strength is the ease with which we can improve customer service."

Ian Cowan says, "The best thing that yachting has to offer *to* the islands — all of them — is the fact that yachts have to be cared for. They have a lot of people on them who have to buy produce and products of all kinds and are very much more inclined to eat at a shoreside restaurant than any hotel or cruise ship guests. They employ a large number of technical service guys, and pay them directly in cash. These service providers are the breadwinners of their families in a lot of isolated places with little hope of work other than on the yachts."

Interestingly, Isabelle Prado adds: "The main strength of the French islands' yachting industry is that there is no important problem with security. However, it's a very fragile situation and local governments must be very attentive to this. If there are too many security problems in our area, the good activity that we have now can disappear in one season."

Optimizing the Strength of 'The Caribbean'

• *Are steps being taken to optimize the strength of "the Caribbean", i.e. its environment and name? If so, what are they?*

Chris Doyle says, "Some attempt has been made to preserve the natural beauty both below and above the water with marine parks; Tobago Cays is an excellent example. However, all too often the pressures for development are so strong that more and more of the places we consider outstanding will get covered in concrete."

Robbie Ferron, on the Caribbean name, says, "No, on the contrary, the brand is being allowed to be compromised by the many negative stories that inevitably develop as customer satisfaction repeatedly does not match up to expectations."

• *What could be done to optimize the strength of the Caribbean's environment?*

Don Stollmeyer: "[Ideally and realistically] the Caribbean Sea needs to be protected through stringent antifouling laws, anchoring laws in sensitive areas, and education, particularly of local people, about the marine ecosystem." Chris: "[Ideally and realistically] Caribbean countries need to take a serious look at their resources and think about conserving more coastal land, especially in areas accessible for boating. Rainforests have been successfully preserved and protected; now we need to think more about our coastal areas before it has all changed beyond recognition."

Optimizing the Strength of the Yacht Service Sector

• *Are steps being taken to optimize the strength of the yacht service sector? If so, what are they?*

Ian Cowan: "Only in as far as that the resource is noted for each place and put out as a public sort of display. Some effort is being made via the tourist boards and other concerned entities, including the yacht magazines, but not by the local newspapers that could get to the population and explain the sector's benefits."

Bob Phillips: "The companies that want to survive this tough economic cycle are improving customer service to keep the customers they have and to attract new ones. I was very impressed with the attitude change this year in Antigua, where everyone I interacted with over the course of several visits, both marine and non-marine, had a positive attitude, smiled, greeted me, and seemingly genuinely wanted to help. There was even a group doing exit surveys at the airport in early June asking what visitors liked and what the island could be doing to improve. Antigua is having a tough time since Stanford folded, but is using the experience to improve their product."

• *What IDEALLY could be done to optimize the strength of the yacht service sector?*

Ian: "Encourage local people to see that there is a market for their services, and offer the services available direct to the yachts; just be certain that each business has a good reputation."

Bob: "Ideally everyone, both private and public sector, would try to be more welcoming and provide better services."

John Duffy: "A unified approach from the *whole* Caribbean working together at shows, and with joint advertising and joint promotions. Together, the Caribbean can attract more yachts."

• *What REALISTICALLY could be done to optimize the strength of the service sector?*

Ian: "Just try to do as much as possible along the above lines. For example, it would not be hard to raise local awareness of the sector with a weekly column in the local papers."

Dale Westin: "Optimization of the Caribbean as a yachting venue will happen when the USA lifts its 50-year travel ban on Cuba."

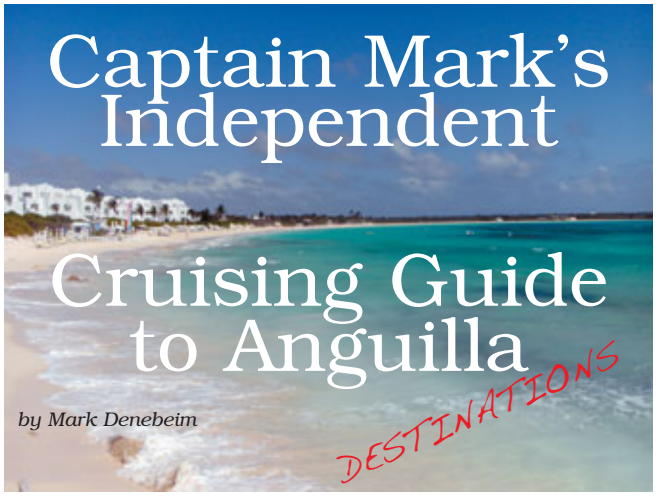
Frank Virgintino: "Ideally and realistically, it's the same answer: More advertising for the Caribbean with regard to the climate and the costs, and participation in the boat shows in the United States, Canada and Europe to generate interest."

John: "Make the Caribbean Marine Association a body that can work to unify the Caribbean's approach to the yachting world. With just a very little funding from each island's government, it would make a big difference."

Robbie Ferron takes us back to square one: to optimize the strengths of the Caribbean yachting industry we need to "deal with the problems; realistically they are not hard to identify." And the consensus seems to be that to deal with our problems and optimize our strengths, unity in the yachting industry will be the key.



Captain Mark's Independent Cruising Guide to Anguilla



by Mark Denebeim

DESTINATIONS

'There is much to enjoy, including 33 beaches, on this tiny sunny island...'

A British colony, Anguilla is a small, low (peak elevation is 220 feet) island of about 13,000 inhabitants. In 1967, Anguillians fought to keep their government under English rule, sort of a counter-revolution, and this spirit remains with the populace today. There is no marina on the island, no hurricane hole, and no large cruise ships come here. Jet-skis and spearfishing are not permitted. The currency is Eastern Caribbean (EC), but US dollars are accepted everywhere and are used to price items herein.

Anguillians are friendly, accommodating people with a love of sailing, music, cricket and good food. Their carnival, in August, is reputed to be the biggest in the area. Anguilla Day, May 30th, features an around-the-island race on 28-foot traditional wooden boats with movable sandbag and iron ballast and more sail area than any boat of that size in creation.

Many families have been visiting for years, and I met a few people who are planning to move here soon, because of the people and their enthusiastic lust for life. There is much to enjoy, including 33 beaches, on this tiny sunny island, so make sure to visit soon and tell them Captain Mark sent you!

Customs and the Cruising Permit

Anguilla has some arcane and illogical cruising requirements and the highest yacht fees of any island in the Caribbean. They determine the cost of your cruising permit by the Gross Tonnage (GT) of your vessel. GT is not how much your boat displaces or weighs, it is the volume of your hypothetical interior cargo space. This is a measurement designed for commercial vessels and was first implemented more than 35 years ago. Thus, catamarans cost more than monohulls of equal length. My 36-foot catamaran supposedly holds 18 GT of cargo, thus I must pay US$38 per day for the privilege of cruising Anguillian waters; over 20 GT, add $5. All yachts also pay $15 per day for the National Marine Park permit, whether you visit any of their parks and use the moorings there or not! If you stay overnight in Crocus Bay, the only approved overnight anchorage other than Sandy Ground, you will be charged for two days, in my case 2 x $53 = $106.



Above and right: Making like The Bachelor and jumping off the cliffs at Little Bay

There are only two places to clear in and out: Blowing Point and Road Bay. Blowing Point is a difficult and exposed commercial anchorage on the south side of the island. Thus, the preferred Customs office is in Road Bay. If you clear in and out there (open 8:00AM to 4:00PM daily, with an hour off from noon to 1:00PM for lunch), and don't leave the anchorage except to arrive and depart Anguillian waters, you will be charged nothing; that's right, *nada*. (If the officials are out somewhere, those at the commercial dock will also clear you in or out.)

Mega-yachts can hire an agent to represent their interests while in Anguillian waters. With an agent, you may anchor anywhere but the marine parks. Thus, the restricted anchoring rules are not to protect the sea bottom, they are designed to accommodate the big spenders!

Cruising Anguilla Waters

Sailing from French St. Martin, it is a nice five- or six- mile reach until you turn the corner at Anguillita and the east-northeast winds are on the nose for six miles to Sandy Ground. Do not attempt to intersect Anguillita and the mainland as the large shoal-draft boats do in calm seas. Instead, I recommend rounding the point and sailing on starboard five miles west to Prickly Pear Cays, visit there, and then close reach to Road Bay, with a short stop at Sandy Island if you have the time. There is no good snorkeling in Road Bay.

In Road Bay, try to find a spot close to the Snake Head Point side of the bay as there are several bright white lights shining from the commercial dock at night and the cargo ships, when in port, make quite a racket; every Monday morning the *Tropic Mist* blasts its horn several times and offloads cargo.

This location, however, is subject to the loud music from Elvis' Beach Bar, often lasting past midnight (they are closed Tuesdays). Don't get too close to the land where it gets shallow about 100 yards out. Anchoring is okay on the west side of the bay, away from the music, but if there is a swell, it is more noticeable there and a longer ride to the dinghy dock. Dinghies should tie up to the south side of the police dock; the north is reserved for commercial boats. Beware stern anchors and do not tie up too close to the beach where it is shallow.



C'mon over!' The author and Sanctuary *in Anguilla*

The marine parks are worth visiting, if you want to pay the fees and there is not a large northerly swell running. Be advised that you are not allowed to anchor or moor overnight at any of the parks.

• LITTLE BAY, where The Bachelor jumped off the cliff with his date, is three miles from Road Bay, and has about six mooring balls and a dinghy mooring closer to shore. You can jump off the cliff, snorkel amongst the turtles and tarpon, and go ashore to the tiny beach to rub mud from the walls onto your skin as a natural spa treatment. The coral was covered with sand and the water cloudy the first time I visited, but it was clearer with each subsequent visit. Next door is Crocus Bay, where anchoring is permitted.

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• PRICKLY PEAR CAYS offer a gorgeous horseshoe-shaped inner beach with lots of coral heads. Outside are about eight mooring balls for deep-draft yachts or if the inside is crowded. To get inside, you must hug the right side of the entrance until you see the light-colored opening between the reefs where you make a left then a quick right in line with the three mooring balls that await your use. Anchor in about ten feet of water if the moorings are full, which is often the case when the large day



Tired of glitzy resorts? The Dune Preserve will appeal to your bohemian side

catamarans out of St. Martin pack the beach, ruining the special nature of the island. You can escape the sunburned mass of humanity by walking north along the beach. If a swell is running, it is better to tie up outside and dinghy in. The snorkeling is pretty good, though not great. The restaurant, open Tuesday through Saturday, is pretty good too.

• SANDY ISLAND, only a mile and a half west of Road Bay, is a small, remote, "one tree" island with about five mooring balls, a couple of which have sawed-off pennants, so attach your own or anchor in about 15 feet of water. The restaurant, Crusoe's (264 772-0787), is usually open and has excellent food though it's a bit pricey unless you consider the unique location. If you want to visit without paying the cruising fees, *Happiness*, an open motor boat, will take you there and back from



At Sandy Ground, Mark likes to munch at Murray's, and then slide over to Elvis's for the music

Sandy Ground for $10 round trip; call JoJo at (264) 476-4104 or call VHF 16. You can take your dinghy there if you have a big outboard and enough gas. The snorkeling is fair at best, though Coral Island nearby is cool.

• OTHER CRUISING AREAS: Dog Island is a good dive and snorkel day spot but then you must prepare to beat upwind (or motor) the ten miles back to Sandy Ground**.** Scrub Island is very pretty but is only worth a visit in very calm seas and light winds and since you are not allowed there overnight, plan for the five miles back to Sandy Ground. There are anchorages on the south side of the island, particularly Maunday's Bay where Cap Juluca resort sits, Cove Bay which has a small reef protecting it from the easterly swells, and Rendezvous Bay, where CuisinArt Resort and Spa and the Dune Preserve exist side by side, providing a nice contrast of material excess and bohemian nature. Technically you are not allowed to anchor in these bays, but the mega-yachts do.

I did no diving this time around so you would best be served by consulting one of the cruising guides or calling Douglas Carty at (264) 497-4567. Call my pal Nature Boy at (264) 729-5587 for fishing and snorkeling trips. Chocolate takes people to Prickly Pear from Sandy Ground on his 35-foot catamaran for $80 per person; call (264) 497-3394.

Ashore at Sandy Ground

Road Bay, which is home to Sandy Ground, has many shoreside fun hangouts. My favorite night-time chillin' spot is Elvis' Beach Bar located at the far north end. Opening at 4:00PM, the beers are $3, mixed drinks $6 with drink specials at the carved-out boat-bar and large entertaining area. Elvis wears US sports team jerseys and hats and the social scene has a nice mix of locals, visitors and regulars. There is a six-foot TV screen for watching sports (I was there for the Super Bowl along with about 200 other folks) and you are right on the beach. While they serve passable food, it is a bit expensive ($14 hamburgers, $16 chicken wings), so the best time to visit is at sunset and later at night after dinner (eat at Murray's), especially when a band is playing. It has a great vibe with decent music and Elvis is a great guy who has sailed on my cat many times.

Other restaurants with beachfront views worth a look include The Sand Bar, where a former CuisinArt chef has created a nice upscale reasonably-priced ($7 to $9) tapas restaurant that is very popular, especially on weekends; Johnno's, which has been there for 27 years and has a thumping late-night band on Fridays, is sometimes open for lunch (average food), but is better known for the Sunday afternoon (12:30 to 4:00PM) Jazz on the Beach. Sammy's, next door to Johnno's, is home to good ribs on Friday and Saturday, domino-playing fanatics and sports a ring-toss game that I installed for him. The Barrel Stay, which is very intimate and pricey, has some of the best food (fish soup, wahoo) on the island. Newcomer Dolce Vita offers nice Italian food (duck reduction in the homemade pasta, try the $18 lasagna or seafood pasta) in a bright cheery atmosphere and is open for lunch and dinner every day but Sunday. Roy's food (great hamburger) never disappoints though this is where the large St. Martin catamarans take their guests when the swells make Prickly Pear untenable and it is located right next to the commercial dock, which can be annoying.

Murray's Jamaican Jerk Centre, a relatively new spot, is a laid-back beach bar and restaurant, offering tasty $8 ribs with Jamaican "Carnival" buns, $6 jerk chicken, exceptional $5 Goat Water (stew), and other Jamaican specialties, and drinks, every day, noon to 10:00PM, later on weekends. Call (264) 582-6688 to order out, or just show up! Look for the two flagpoles with the Anguillian and Jamaican flags flapping in the breeze.

Along the road separating the salt pond from the bay are a few other places worth knowing about. Syd/An's grocery store (264 497-3180) and inn on the salt pond (clean rooms for about $45 to $60 per night) will help you get a rental car (Bass is the best), find and deliver just about anything you need from The Valley, and if you ask nicely, will do your laundry. Three C's market can top up your Lime account, but both Syd/An's and Three C's have very limited grocery supplies.

On Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, Kenny sets up his excellent roadside barbecue takeout across from the police station, with $6 rack of ribs, $3 chicken legs and $6 conch soup. The Recession Bar, behind the sailing school, offers $3 chicken kebabs, $2 beers, $5 chicken or pea soup and "make me an offer" cocktails, provided by "Mama" Cassie and served from beneath a big white tent between the road and the beach. Ripples has a two-for-one happy hour and a reputation for good food though I didn't eat there.

Free WiFi can be found at Elvis', The Sand Bar, The Pump House, Dolce Vita, and Roy's. The ATM in Sandy Ground hasn't worked for over a year so bring cash.

Other Good Eats

The west side of Anguilla is home to D & B's six-dollar rib barbecue tents on weekends and there is fine seaside dining at Mango's, though a bit expensive. The Klassic Café has intimate quality dining at a reasonable price while seated in semi-enclosed shutter and polished wood table enclaves. Smokey's**,** in Cove Bay, has a live band every Saturday 1200-1600 (but pricey food). I didn't get to the east side of the island so I can't comment on places there but if you are on the main road (George Hill Rd.) overlooking the airport, check out Mala's Cottage Roti Hut for great $6 or $7 rotis (but add $5 for plantains and salad), Guyanese style, and if you see Hungry's coach in The Valley, he makes nice low cost ($10 to $12) fish and meat pastas and $5 soups to go.

Marine Supplies, Etcetera

There is only one marine store, called Anguilla Techni-Sales Ltd, on Dolly Hill (264 497-2419), which has a limited supply of parts and supplies for yachts. It is owned by Chris Carty, the brother of David Carty who owns Rebel Marine boat builders.

Anguilla has no water or fuel dock, except cruiser-unfriendly Blowing Point, so fill up in St. Martin.

For a mechanic, call Troy at (264) 235-5278 to diagnose your problem, but without parts (check with Techni-Sales) it could take a few days to get it fixed.

Albert Lake's Hardware Store has the lowest, though not very low, prices.

There is a good-sized Ace Hardware next to the roundabout but they have no galvanized or stainless fittings other than screws and bolts, and not marine grade.

Albert's, in The Valley, is the biggest grocery store though a new combination department/grocery store has a nice selection in the El Dorado Plaza.

Other than Irie Life and Why Knot, there is little shopping of interest unless you can afford the high-priced boutiques at the mega-resorts, not part of this guide.

Taxis are expensive here, $20 from Sandy Ground to The Valley, so it's best to rent a car (about $45 per day), ask An to help you.



STEPHANE LEGENDRE

Take time for a stop at little Sandy Island

For direct transportation to the St. Martin airport ($380) or to St. Barth's ($1,800), or just about anything else (with a fleet of six boats), contact Garfield's Sea Tours at (264) 235-7902.

For more information on Anguilla, see www.anguilla-beaches.com, where a young gal from Montreal covers many areas of the island from her and her family's experiences.

Anguilla is fun and tasty, and is worth at least a two-day trip from St. Martin. You will easily make friends, both with locals and with visiting tourists from the resorts who often frequent the Sandy Ground bars. Make sure you tell them all that Captain Mark sent you!

Captain Mark Denebeim offers charters and is writing articles and his memoirs aboard Sanctuary *as he sails throughout the Caribbean. For more information visit www.oceanbreezetours.com.*

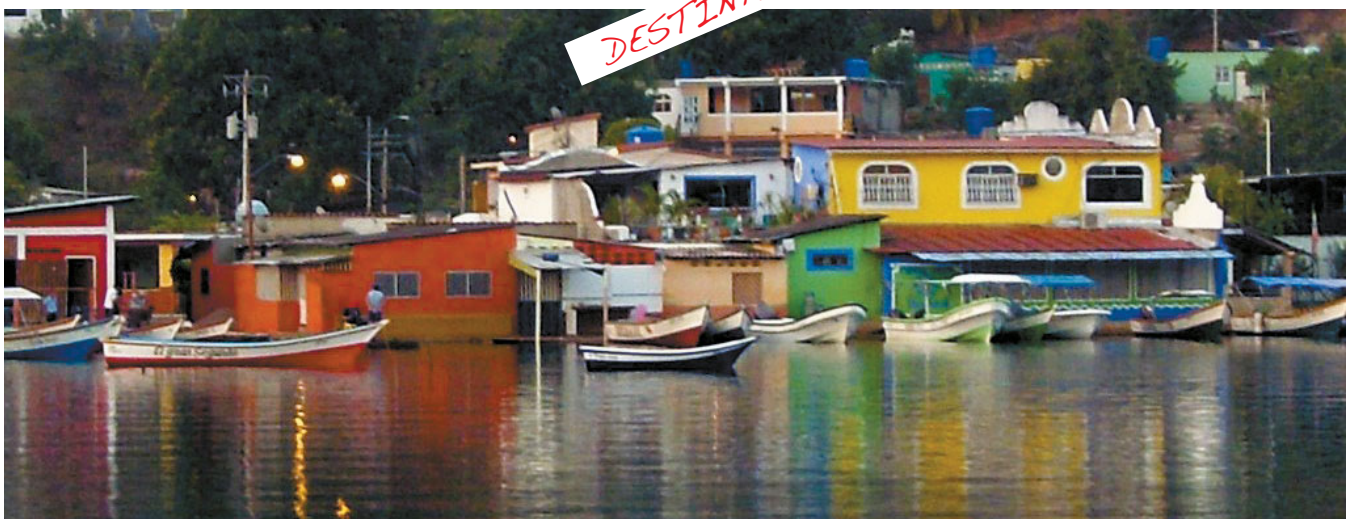
WHERE IN THE WORLD?

by Phil Chapman



'The beaches were gorgeous, as was the water...'

DESTINATIONS



'An inlet led to a small fishing village reputed to have charming restaurants and busy nightlife'

A Roundish Trip

My wife, Yvonne, and I left Grenada on a vaguely southwesterly course early evening. The sea was calm and the wind from the northeast, which made for a slow passage aboard our 44-foot Hunter Legend deck saloon sailboat. We spotted a few fishing boats during the night and early morning; some had lights, some didn't, but I was sure they could see our lights clearly enough and would shout or wave if we were too close to them or their nets.

As always, we towed a magic lure in search of the elusive fish and by mid-morning we'd caught nothing, as is often the case. (I fail to see why the companies that make these things aren't penalized for contravening the trade descriptions act, because they certainly don't seem to 'lure' very much at all to our boat!) By midday we sighted an island and as we drew closer we could see half a dozen islands. We anchored off the largest island where we could see a military outpost on one side and a couple of buildings and houses on the other. The beaches looked stunning.

We dinghied ashore and spoke to the friendly coastguard officer, who gave us a book to sign and fill in our boat details. It is not possible to clear in here, but we were allowed to stay a few days to enjoy the beautiful white powder beaches and waters.

It would seem the people here survive on fishing; they must do better than we do. There is no agriculture to speak of; the land is dry and barren. The locals do have some goats and chickens, and there are many wild iguanas, but most things have to be bought and brought from the mainland. There are no gas stations, no telephones, newspapers or even shops. They do have electricity from their generators. Once or twice a week the men get into their boats for a trip to the mainland to buy fuel for their generators and outboards, some stores maybe, and if they have room a couple more planks of wood for the fishing boat they are building. There is a school for the children up to the age of 14, they then choose whether to continue their education on the mainland or join the fathers and grandfathers as fishermen. The boys often choose to fish. There are far worse places to be poor in. They live as many of us caught up in the rat race dream we could do when we retire.



'At our first stop the waters were clear, albeit with a greenish tinge'

The snorkelling was good, as good as in Tobago; the waters were clear albeit with a greenish tinge. A moray eel stuck his head out as I was passing; he didn't like my camera and appeared to silently growl as I took his picture. We spotted two huge cowfish, two feet long at least, and many angelfish.

On the day we left, we waved goodbye to the coastguard officer and set sail, a little north of west this time. Again we departed around dusk, not because we enjoy night sailing, far from it, but because we wanted to arrive at our destination in good daylight. We'd towed our fishing lures thousands of miles but this day they brought us dinner, a dorado. The evening winds were quite light but picked up in the morning, allowing us a good sail on a broad reach. We saw in the distance another group of islands: two groups of three small but high islands that stood in front of their big brother island five miles distant. We passed between the two groups and continued towards the larger flatter island behind.

Our guidebook shows us four anchorages, two to the south and two to the west. As we neared a military coastguard station, they called us on VHF channel 16 to ask our intentions. We said we were passing through and would be anchoring somewhere for the night. The anchorage below their station looked absolutely beautiful, so we headed in. The water was inviting, but there were a lot of coral heads less than two metres from the surface, so we carefully eyeballed our way in and out.

We dinghied over to the beach and walked up to the coastguard station. Some of these guys live on the island and some work a shift pattern of two months on and two months off. Their office building and barracks were a little basic but set in beautiful surroundings with a well-kept garden and parrots in the trees. We explained our route and said we would clear in at the first port available for such things. They were not too bothered; just took our details and said "have a good day" — which we did, snorkelling over and around the excellent coral. That evening we enjoyed a good meal and a bottle of wine in a calm anchorage with a beautiful backdrop, and, after a sundowner or two, fell asleep in the cockpit.

Next day, after a swim and brunch, we upped anchor and carefully headed out to the west of the island, maybe a 90-minute sail to the next anchorage. There were two other boats anchored off the main beach so we decided to anchor to the northern end inside two reefs, room enough only for one boat. The snorkelling here was even better, with turtles, octopus, squids, large angelfish and more. The beaches here too were gorgeous, as was the water. No onlookers here either, apart from the birdlife and a couple of palm trees. Later in the day we dinghied over to the other boats, being careful to avoid the time of day when they might be skinny-dipping or some such thing. But these guys were American and Australian so sufficiently modest.

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

We introduced ourselves and told our brief stories and routes; they were heading to Grenada or Bequia, depending on the wind.

We spent two weeks anchored here and nobody seemed to mind. We flew our yellow flag and went ashore every day, but there were no shops, people, buildings or anything else that might have made any officialdom concerned with our presence.

When our relaxing stay came to an end, we saw on our AIS a ship travelling west, 12 miles north of the island. We called her on channel 16 and asked the captain for a weather forecast. He told us that the sea was good and wind at 20 knots a little north of east — perfect for the 120-mile sail due west to our next anchorage. We thanked him and he wished us a pleasant voyage.



Above: This island's village is delightful, with beachfront bars and restaurants

Right: In this bay there are a lot of coral heads, so anchor carefully

We departed around 4:00PM, planning to get in by midday, although a little earlier or later would not be a problem. We motored out of the lee of the island for an hour or so, partly to see what wind we were to obtain and also to charge our batteries. The wind was unusually good and we unfurled our downwind twizzle rig, two identical headsails mounted on the same twin-track furler, held out with a couple of thin whisker poles that connect to each other with a flexible coupling. *Chaser 2* has no backstay and consequently very swept-back spreaders. This design is not good for sailing downwind under mainsail: an accidental gybe could wipe the mast out. Therefore our twizzle rig allows us safe sailing downwind, even in strong winds. We can furl the headsails and both sails come in, flying a small handkerchief either side if necessary with the whisker poles pointing forward.

During the early hours we passed a military base on an island we were not allowed to stop at; we could just see the glow of lights. The sail was good if not interesting until we sighted our destination. We anchored in five metres of water in a small bay with beautiful waters, several other cruising boats and a couple of motorboats. We lowered our dinghy, tied her on our stern, poured a couple of coldies, relaxed in the cockpit and read our latest edition of *Caribbean Compass*, which we'd obtained in Grenada.

This archipelago consisted of many beautiful islands and islets. After a couple of weeks visiting many anchorages, we sailed to the main island and anchored off the village in a stiff breeze. After two or three hours, having assured ourselves the anchor was solid we took the dinghy ashore. This picturesque group of islands is a national park and various articles we read told us that we would have to check in (not clear in), pay a rather large park fee, and limit our stay to a maximum of two weeks. We still had our yellow flag flying to be on the legal side, but nobody came to board us and when we walked past the coastguard station in the village none of the officers asked for anything, just bid us good day. We decided that as they didn't ask for money or papers we wouldn't volunteer them.

The village was delightful, with many shops, small hotels and guesthouses, bars, restaurants, and even a bank. The streets are of sand, with no vehicles apart from those that service the small airfield. There are dive schools for beginners and, for the more expert, you can fill tanks too. Stores keep a limited supply of most things, so you can stock up to a certain extent. Getting diesel and petrol is more a problem, but if desperate just ask a fisherman on the beach. Water is available on the main beach, by jugs.

After a few weeks our journey took us south, 75 miles to the mainland and our first marina for a long time. Our plan: clear in, fill the water tanks, fill the fuel tanks, plug into mains electricity. Clearing in wasn't a problem, getting fuel and water was more difficult. Floods and landslides had destroyed the marina 12 years previously. Since then, the marina has been under reconstruction but very slowly. The marina was now nearly finished, but the water and fuel docks were the last to be completed. Nevertheless the marina staff was eager to help. Fuel would be brought by *piñero* and water would be delivered in the morning. Sure enough, the fishing boat brought us 120 litres of diesel, and in the morning the *bomberos*, the fire fighters, brought us water in their truck! How is that for service? The marina's restaurant was excellent, too — an old fishing boat on land, using the forward cabin as a store, the saloon as the kitchen and the cockpit as a serving area. The transom was the sit-at bar and dining tables surrounded the boat. Restaurant prices were good, and although the marina prices seemed a little expensive for this part of the world they were cheap compared to anywhere else we had been in the Caribbean. We spent two nights, then moved eastward along the coast, day sailing in contrary winds enabling us to close reach along the coast to our next anchorage which was outside a marina in the mangroves.

The following morning we continued east to an anchorage in the lee of two islands just off the mainland. In the morning we continued on the same course to an inlet three miles long that led to a small fishing village reputed to have charming restaurants and busy nightlife. At anchor just off the village, while enjoying a sundowner we looked through the bring-'em-nears for an enticing restaurant. We decided to dinghy ashore for an evening meal; the restaurant we spied looked good. As we arrived at the dock the shutters came down and the lights went out. Seems it was the low season and everywhere closed early! We dinghied back to *Chaser* and cooked. The next day it was on to the final destination of our roundish trip.

The Reveal

Those cruisers who have ventured to the southeast Caribbean will know, from the clues I have given, that we cruised from Grenada to a few of Venezuela's offshore islands and returned eastward along the South American coast as far as the Golfo de Cariaco.

Our first anchorage southwest of Grenada was Islas Los Testigos. From here we moved west-ish to Islas Los Hermanos and on to Isla Blanquilla. Later, we sailed west past the military island of Orchila to the archipelago of Los Roques — the main village with sandy streets being Gran Roque. From here we headed south to Caraballeda, the marina lacking in fuel and water but with a staff pleased to help in any way they can. Our next overnight stop was at Carenero, anchored outside the marina adjacent to the mangroves (10°32.05N, 66°07.25W). It's a busy little area and the water is not so good for swimming, but a great spot to watch the sunset and listen to the birds at sunrise. The following night's respite was at Islas Piritu (10°08.99N, 64°57.50W) and then we sailed onward to Mochima, a village at the end of a three-mile inlet with an excellent safe anchorage off the village (10°20.27N, 64°22.08W).

Medregal Village Marina was our final destination at the end of the Gulf of Cariaco (10°32.01N, 63°47.55W). The nearest town is a 45-minute car drive and the surrounding area is peaceful, with only the bird and animal life to keep you company. Apart, that is, from the local community, comprised of Venezuelan fisherman and some expat cruisers who have bought a beach house here. Also on a busy day there may be as many as 20 cruising boats in the Medregal anchorage. When we arrived there were only six, but the huge anchorage has room for a hundred boats. Medregal isn't really a marina, but a haul-out and adjacent accommodations where the swimming pool, table tennis, bar and restaurant are available to cruising boats in the area. (There is no charge, but it would be thought impolite to use the facilities without purchasing a meal or drinks.) We have used the haulout facility. Prices for the haulout, storage, painting, etcetera are excellent. Restaurant and bar prices are good too as is the food served. If you are working on the hard and prefer not to live aboard, air conditioned rooms are available at a special price for sailors.

So now we have travelled approximately 1,300 kilometres, westward then back east. Some people say we cruisers should avoid Venezuela. If you do you will miss some of the best sailing and anchorages in the Caribbean. Read Chris Doyle's *Cruising Guide to Venezuela and Bonaire* for more detailed information on this country. During the past years we have sailed the Windward Islands, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Cuba, Trinidad and elsewhere, but we have decided to spend more time here in this undiscovered paradise of Venezuela and its offshore islands.



We found beautiful waters, gorgeous beaches, unpopulated islands, a wonderful hurricane-free climate, peace and tranquillity, uncrowded anchorages, and some high-life too if you want it. The local people are friendly and eager to please; the cost of living is economical for us foreigners. Diesel is equal to 50 cents for one hundred litres, rum can be found for about three euros and fillet steak for around three euros per kilo. If you are a vegetarian, turnips, *arepas* and fruit juice are available everywhere. There is no hassle from boat vendors trying to sell you bananas or "sail fast" T-shirts here. In fact, it's quite the reverse: you need to call the fishermen over if you want something. Foreign tourism hasn't really reached here yet — there are few if any charter boats to be seen. This is the real Caribbean, as it was in the Windward and Virgin Islands before tourism took hold. Here though, there is year-round sailing along the 1,760 miles of coastline and more than 300 offshore islands.

Phil and Yvonne keep a blog at http://blog.mailasail.com/chaser2. They invite cruisers wanting more information regarding their experiences in Venezuela to e-mail them at svchaser@gmail.com.

Editor's note: In a two-month period late last year, there were two violent armed attacks on yachts transiting the waters between Los Testigos and Isla Margarita.

On October 15th, 2010 at 10:00AM, the yacht Boldly Go, *crewed by Ellen Birrell and Jim Hutchins, was attacked about four and a half hours after leaving Los Testigos en route to Porlamar, at approximately 11°05.000 N, 63°23.000W. The couple were assaulted and held at gunpoint while the pirates ransacked* Boldly Go, *taking all valuable items they could carry away in their 16-foot piñero.*

On December 12th, 2010, a yacht heading from Porlamar to Los Testigos was attacked approximately 20 miles west of Los Testigos by five armed men (according to reports received by the Caribbean Safety & Security Net, four had pistols and one was armed with an assault rifle). Shots were fired into the yacht's hull and bimini top, but the yacht's crew drove off the assailants by firing a flare gun.

Because of these fairly recent incidents and others in the same general area in the past, some cruisers now advise those heading west from the Windwards to sail the 170 miles from Grenada directly to Isla Blanquilla, and begin a Venezuelan cruise there — avoiding the Los Testigos-Isla Margarita route and the ill-famed Peninsula de Paria entirely. Others advocate passing west of Los Testigos and south of Margarita and continuing non-stop to Puerto La Cruz, or stopping at Cumaná to check in and then proceeding to Medregal.

In the past few years there have been relatively few yacht-related crime reports from areas such as Isla Blanquilla, Los Roques, Las Aves, the Venezuelan mainland west of Islas Piritu, and the Golfo de Cariaco. A notable exception is the death of Philippe Armand Leudiere, who died of gunshot wounds after attempting to defend his catamaran, which he and his wife were aboard, from boarding by three or four armed men while anchored off Caraballeda in September 2008. At that time, Melodye Pompa of the Caribbean Safety & Security Net recommended, "This incident adds Caraballeda to the list of those places, like Puerto Cabello and Carenero, where one should go into the marina rather than anchor out."

Research your planned route for any current hot spots.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JULY & AUGUST 2011

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

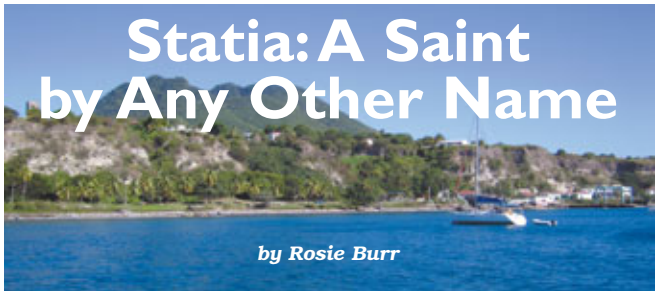
Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide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

July				**August**			
DATE	TIME						
1	1211	21	0419	11	2234		
2	1305	22	0501	12	2323		
3	1358	23	0545	13	0000 (full)		
4	1450	24	0630	14	0019		
5	1540	25	0719	15	0052		
6	1630	26	0810	16	0134		
7	1720	27	0903	17	0216		
8	1812	28	0958	18	0257		
9	1906	29	1053	19	0340		
10	2002	30	1148	20	0424		
11	2100	31	1241 (new)	21	0511		
12	2158	**August**		22	0600		
13	2255	1	1333	23	0657		
14	2350	2	1425	24	0745		
15	0000 (full)	3	1516	25	0839		
16	0041	4	1608	26	0933		
17	0129	5	1702	27	1027		
18	0214	6	1758	28	1121		
19	0256	7	1854	29	1213 (new)		
20	0338	8	1952	30	1306		
		9	2048	31	1400		
		10	2143				

Statia: A Saint by Any Other Name



by Rosie Burr

St. Eustatius — or Statia as it is more commonly known — is a tiny island located between Saba and St. Kitts with an area of just 21 square kilometers (eight square miles). The island is steep-to with limited protection for yachts. Oranje Baai is the only anchorage and moorings have been put in place by the marine park, although when we were there last season the moorings were not in good condition. It is however acceptable to anchor, and the bottom is sandy and offers good holding. Customs and Immigration are on the main dock and are very straightforward*. It is then a short walk to the Port office to pay the port fees, whether you take a mooring or not.

Sailing in today, it is hard to believe that this modest speck was once the hub of Caribbean trading and is as rich in history as it is in marine life.

Known as the Golden Rock for its role as a major sea trading port in the Leeward Islands, Statia was Europe's gateway to the Caribbean in the 18th century when the Dutch made it a free port. While the European powers fought amongst themselves, Statia was selling arms and ammunition to the rebellious British colonies in North America and making firm friends in the process. This friendship resulted in the legendary "First Salute" on November 16th, 1776, when the Commander of St. Eustatius decided to return the salute of a visiting American brig by firing the cannons of Fort Oranje. It was the first formal acknowledgement of the independent United States of America. The British (being British) took this event very seriously and protested against the trade between the United States and St. Eustatius. This resulted in the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1780–1784), which was disastrous to the Dutch economy. As sea trade died and plantations shut down the island lost its commercial significance.



ROSIE BURR

History buffs will want to explore the ruins of the Dutch Reformed Church

Now, despite being a major fuel transshipment port in the Caribbean, where large tanker vessels distribute their fuel into smaller ones, the Golden Rock retains a quiet charm. The tidy streets of Oranjestad are a pleasure to walk around. Today, all that remain of its past are ruins.

During the golden years a number of Jewish merchants arrived on the island and a synagogue was built in 1739. The Honen Dalim is the second oldest synagogue in the western hemisphere. The neglected shell of the building still stands, along with the *mikvah*, which is a ritual bath for women.

One of Statia's prettiest ruins is that of the Dutch Reformed Church built in 1755 and damaged in 1792 by a hurricane. It is now left abandoned in the company of those who have been laid to rest there.

The remains of many forts can be seen across the island. Perhaps the most notable is Fort Oranje, which still retains its original cannons and defenses as it overlooks the harbor.

Snorkelers can also enjoy remnants of 18th century colonial Statia, as portions of the old quay wall have slipped into the shallow waters of the island's only decent anchorage, Oranje Baai. Divers travel from afar to dive in the spectacular coral gardens and wrecks off Statia's coast. All of the waters surrounding St. Eustatius are protected as a marine park.

Another of the appeals that attract cruisers and other tourists to Statia is the allure of the elusive blue bead. Found in museums throughout the world, the unimposing blue bead was misidentified for many years and had even been "dated" back to the Middle Ages and earlier. The mystery was finally solved: it was discovered that the owner of the Dutch East India Company decided to have these beads made for the purpose of trading with native peoples on the ships' travels. The seafaring ships of the Dutch East India Company sailed with the beads all over the world in the 1660s. It is said that 30 of these beads were used in the purchase of Manhattan from the Indians. The beads were used in colonial St. Eustatius for barter and were worn as a sign of wealth, but after the abolition of slavery the former slaves threw the beads into the sea as a sign of their release. Hunting for these beads has become a favorite pastime. It is said that you don't find the beads, but the beads find you, and once you have found a blue bead you will return to the Golden Rock again and again.

** Statia has recently changed status from being a part of the Netherlands Antilles to being a special municipality of the Netherlands. Under new Immigration regulations, yachts must leave on the same day they clear out and must depart during office hours.*

GET AWAY TO GUYANA!

Part One:

Navigating Up the Essequibo

by Peter Ward



A catfish caught in the Essequibo

The author's yacht, Follower, *on the Mazaruni River*

Introduction

Guyana brings to mind (for Baby Boomers anyway) Jonestown and the mass-induced suicide in 1978 of 913 people, at the time the single largest loss of American civilian life. Apparently, the members of the cult believed, following Jim Jones's teaching, that a nuclear holocaust was imminent. Go figure.

For Guyana historians, there was also the Burnham Period. After Britain relinquished its colonial ties in the 1960s Winds of Change, the new boss apparently was a little offbeat. Certain foodstuffs were banned, particularly those with "colonial" connotations — such as *bread*. As a result, there was little to eat. Guyana is also known for its Demerara Rum, a potent contribution to alcoholism in the Caribbean Basin. It is a pity that a country with such a lot to offer has to live with negative connotations of the past as its introduction, but let's give it a go....

Guyana is a small to middling-sized South American country stuck between Suriname and Venezuela on the upper eastern bulge of the continent between one and nine degrees north, and bordered inland by Brazil. The countryside is largely Amazon-



type rainforest dissected by a network of rivers, the longest being the Essequibo; at about a thousand kilometres long, it is the longest river located between the Amazon and Orinoco. Guyana also has a highland and mountain zone, providing catchment for the huge rivers. The Kaieteur Falls on the Potaro River boast one of the longest sheer drops in the world and are a focal point for tourism. There is prolific wildlife, but without a guide, you will not see much in the dense jungle except birds and occasionally monkeys. However, the night sounds are impressive in remote areas.

The economy revolves around intensive agriculture on the coastal alluvial flats where the rich soil supports sugar, rice and other major crops, and gold, diamonds, timber and bauxite that are sourced from the interior. The capital is Georgetown, with a scattering of small towns and villages dotted around the coast and interior.

Of importance to us as cruisers are the river entry town of Parika, and the yachting port of entry Bartica, 40 miles up the Essequibo. The rivers provide the key to the interior, with few useable roads in the more remote areas. Small freighters, ferries and water taxis zip back and forth, and light aircraft are used by the wealthier businesspeople and tourists.

English is the official language, with a Caribbean-style patois used by many, and the Amerindians have a variety of dialects. The country carries its legacy of slavery and indentured labour in its racial makeup. Africans were brought here as slaves and Asian Indians as indentured workers, and these now form the largest groups — Amerindians are a minority. Politics and business seem to be dominated by Asian Indians. Population is low, around 750,000 and draining at an official rate of 17 per day. Guyanese are scattered around the world, but concentrate in Canada, the USA, the UK and the Caribbean. They are well educated and hard working but the local economy cannot support them all.

Like many of the other far-flung corners of the empire, Guyana had a patchwork of modern history after the original settling of the Amerindians around 900 AD. The English, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese — all had an interest in the area, believing that gold lurked "in them thar hills". It came down to the Dutch and English, with the Brits waiting for the Hollanders to complete the wonderful dyke system on the coastal flats before moving in and taking over around 1814. Independence was



Above: The excellent anchorage at friendly Baganara Resort

Left: Vendors outside Bartica's fresh produce market. Bartica is the main port of entry for yachts

granted in 1966. Guyana is a member of the Caribbean Community, commonly known as CARICOM.

The *Cruising Guide to Trinidad & Tobago plus Barbados and Guyana* by Chris Doyle is very useful, but we did find some of the information outdated and/or no longer applicable. This article is in no way designed to replace or supersede this excellent guide, and is more to share information, update some information and to provide a little insight into a great destination when you want to avoid the hurricane season and experience rainforests and large rivers, without going up the Amazon.

Why Sail to Guyana?

So, why should cruisers consider Guyana as a destination? It is certainly not geared up for us in terms of maintenance and spares; navigation is not hazardous, but it is challenging and the water in the rivers while fresh, is not clear and certainly not drinkable in raw form. It is hot, humid and rainy (well, it IS the rainforest after all!) most of the year, WiFi connections are patchy and goods generally more expensive than in Brazil.

—Continued on next page

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But Guyana is a beautiful country with friendly people, and it is a great place to hide out for the hurricane season or just chill in an area that has so few visiting yachts, you'll be happy to see one! Checking in is easy, and nobody hassles you. Even if there are no chandlers, local workshops and hardware stores will go out of their way to help solve on-board problems. Diesel costs around US$1.25/litre, and if you stick to basic foodstuffs, the budget can handle it. It is only 300-odd miles to Trinidad-Tobago.

You soon get in tune with the somewhat laid-back attitudes, daily rainstorms and strong tidal currents in the rivers, and start appreciating the nature around you and the people who make a living in this tropical environment.

The currency is the Guyana Dollar, running at around 200 to the US Dollar.

Cellphones are GSM-based; you can buy SIM cards here. WiFi is patchy at best, and we have used internet shops, our own satphone, and WiFi at one of the resorts. Cellphones with internet capacity do work. You can get the G3-type dongle but you have to prove local residential address and then sign a contract, so it's probably not a viable option.



Georgetown is a must for sightseeing. Gracing the 1887 High Court building is a statue of Queen Victoria

Crime has been, for us, a zero experience with not a single incident or threat thereof, but that is certainly not to say this is a crime-free paradise. Squeezed between at least two countries involved actively in drugs, smuggling and other nasty habits, Guyana is no angel and there are occasional gang battles, thefts and murders. The gang wars are mainly centred around Georgetown and cocaine, but as the gold comes down the river systems through a chain of miners, brokers and agents, some of them trying to avoid government involvement in their profits, funny business does go on. One rule for us: Do Not Get Involved. If someone offers gold, diamonds or happy dust at great prices, just walk away. It's going to be a trap or worse. Treat crime like you would anywhere else: take precautions, lock up, be aware, dress down, do not carry all your cash and cards in one go, talk to local people and other cruisers.

Check-in for yachts is officially at the mining town of Bartica, 40 miles up the Essequibo from Parika. Renewals have to be done in Georgetown at Home Affairs. We found all staff to be courteous and helpful and check-in took less than an hour.

Bartica then becomes your base for the area, with movements between various points always returning to Bartica for resupply, internet or "liming" (drinking beer or rum with your mates for no apparent other purpose). Bartica has it all: banks, ATM, stores, bars, food places and so on. It's a bit rough and ready in a frontier mining town way, but has a buzz. There is a hospital that can handle most minor emergencies; serious cases go to Georgetown. Treatment is free at state hospitals, even for visitors. You pay for medicines, but at state pharmacies even these are subsidized.

Our favourite hangout is Baganara Resort, four miles south of Bartica, a private island resort with great views, trimmed lawns and colonial style buildings. Yachts are welcome and there is no charge for anchoring off. Once you have introduced yourself, you are welcomed as a permanent guest, with free use of the facilities, these being the toilets, bar, lounge, restaurant, games, kayaks, walks, beach, hammocks and WiFi when it is switched on. If there are no guests, the bar and kitchen are closed, but you can still come ashore as long as you announce your presence.

There are other places to anchor off, and you can really just choose a spot of your own anywhere you like, making sure you are not parked in a channel used by the ore barges or freighters. The only other lodge in the area is Hurakabra, a few miles north of Bartica on the Mazaruni River, and there are some ex-cruising private residents who welcome visitors. You'll recognize them by the yachts parked off their riverside homes. If you are settled on your own anchor near any settlement, it would be good etiquette to introduce yourself to the nearest village elder and ensure you are not encroaching on night-time netting areas or anyone's privacy.

Navigating Upriver from the Mouth of the Essequibo River

HAZARDS

What about getting here? You'll find it no problem, but there are some serious aspects of the approach to take into account. Guyana has problems with its economy, and some of these affect navigation. *There are no buoys, no lights, no markers, no lighthouses, no sirens, no bells and no flags.* You are on your own, cruiser.



A boat with a message

The Caribbean coastline is so low (below sea level for much of the region around Georgetown-Parika) that you wonder where the land has gone! The seawalls only become apparent when you are in spitting distance.

There are dozens of what they call "piles", which are long thick poles sunk into the seabed, between which are strung semi-permanent fishnets. These piles can be as far as ten to 15 miles offshore, and are un-marked, unlit and hard to see in darkness.

It is essential to stand off at least 20 miles if you arrive in darkness. The Atlantic is so shallow out there, you can anchor in anything but heavy seas. Try and time your arrival to pick up an early morning rising tide going in past Parika at the entrance to the Essequibo, and aim for an overnight at Roed-en-Rust, a few miles past Parika, before picking up the next rising tide for the up-river run.

You will see the pilings dotted around as you approach Parika, and also many small fishing smacks with outboard engines. Shrimping trawlers are well lit and easy to see with their outrigger booms and nets, but the small smacks often put out several hundred metres of net with only a little flag marking the end. Other traffic is sparse, maybe a freighter or two.

Parika Port Control is supposed to listen on VHF Channel 16, but we didn't hear a peep from any traffic and did not bother after several calls trying to announce our arrival.

You may be approached by one of the fast smacks and asked for cigarettes or whatever. If they have fish, do a trade or just tell them you don't smoke and have limited food supplies after a long voyage.

WAYPOINTS

The waypoints given are a combination of Chris Doyle's *Cruising Guide to Trinidad and Tobago plus Barbados and Guyana* (www.Doyleguides.com), downloads from other cruisers, ferries and local knowledge. The Doyle waypoints proved quite adequate, and any deviations noted are just our preference for an anchorage or turn point. As usual, if you run into a rock, bank, tree or truck: *don't blame us.* Use your eyes, depth sounder, charts and discretion.

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—*Continued from previous page*

We use a Garmin GPS Map and the data card shows details up to and including Bartica, but goes blank about a mile south of Bartica. Admiralty charts are good for rocks and general navigation, but sand banks and bars can be seasonal and changeable.

Always use the tides to your advantage, ensuring that if you do go aground at least it won't be for too long. The tidal range is up to three metres, and the tidal race and currents are fierce, with little point fighting against them and burning diesel when you can ride them and make like a Ferrari! Our draft is 2.2 metres loaded and we never touched bottom. Average depths range around five metres.

WAYPOINTS FROM THE ATLANTIC TO BARTICA

- Stand-off point 07 01 40N 58 11 40W
- Channel 1 06 57 00N 58 16 00W
- Channel 2 06 54 50N 58 20 00W
- Parika 06 51 90N 58 25 50W
- Two Brothers Wharf 06 51 45N 58 26 13W
- Roed-en-Rust 06 50 00N 58 27 70W (Overnight here)

If you have come in from the stand-off point or farther back, it may be better to overnight at Roed-en-Rust, which although styled as a marina has no facilities for yachts whatsoever. You will however get a warm welcome from Cleo da Silva who will help where possible, but don't expect to find diesel, ice, spares or expertise on hand. Strictly speaking you should not put ashore here as you are still not checked in, but if you have to, nobody seems to mind. Anchor off quite far (around 300 metres) to avoid the shallows and fast taxi and ferry services.

- Fort Island 06 47 35N 58 30 02W
- Onward 06 45 85N 58 31 26W
- To Baboon Island 06 43 00N 58 32 40W
- Close to shore1 06 40 50N 58 33 75W
- Onward 06 38 70N 58 34 30W
- Lanaballi 06 36 25N 58 34 65W
- Onward 06 34 20N 58 35 50W
- Close inshore 2 06 32 59N 58 35 05W
- Close inshore 3 06 31 22N 58 34 57W
- Close inshore 4 06 30 42N 58 34 58W
- Shanklands Resort 06 29 37N 58 35 12W (Not operating in 2010)
- Sail Rock/Makauria Island 06 27 90N 58 35 08W (Use caution in this area!)
- Church 06 26 66N 58 35 30W
- Rattlesnake Passage 06 26 30N 58 36 50W
- Approach Bartica 06 25 70N 58 36 70W
- Bartica 06 24 07N 58 37 00W

When navigating on the river, keep a sharp eye out for floating or semi-submerged debris, especially logs and large palm fronds. If your eyes see a change in water colour and you think shallows, then act shallows. Channels tend to be closer to the bank you are following than not.

At Bartica

When approaching Bartica, you will see on your starboard side a large shed-like building with wharf and probably some small freighters or a ferry. This is the *stelling* or ferry terminal. Do not anchor anywhere near here as the ships need turning space and it is very busy with water taxis. Proceed farther up, past the power station (diesel smoke and noise apparent) and up to the municipal market, a very big building with green roof and small wharf. Anchor at least 200 meters offshore around this area, allowing plenty of space for the huge ore barges to pass in the channel between you and the market. There are some rocks about 400 meters out and forward of the market position. Watch for them at low tide and mark them well. Anchor in good holding at around six metres.

When going ashore, look to the right of the power station for Kool Breezes, a riverside bar and taxi terminal. Cruisers are welcome to tie their dinghies up at the small floating pontoon to the left of the bar; try to get around the back or side of the pontoon to avoid wash from passing traffic or inconsiderate parkers.

If you do not have a dinghy engine, rowing to and from your yacht is going to be an exercise (in more ways than one!) in balancing tide and time. The current is strong, but judged right, you can cut across diagonally at least on the one leg. Getting back may be a challenge as you are now down (or up) stream from the boat and may have to work close inshore until ready to cut across again. Be aware that if you miss the yacht on the first go, you are unlikely to be able to fight back directly in the teeth of the current. If you get into trouble, wave and shout — a taxi or workboat is sure to come to your rescue. It's that or head for the shore again!

When overnighting at Bartica, ensure your anchor light is distinct or put out more lights, and if worried, move even farther off shore, being aware of the shallows and *that* rock. The ore barges come through day and night and cannot stop or turn easily. Be seen, be safe!

From Bartica to Baganara Resort

This is an easy leg, but there are some rocks and shallows and waypoints should be adhered to until you know the area.

- Bartica Anchorage to Bag 1 06 23 25N 58 36 75W
- Bag 1 to Bag 2 06 22 73N 58 36 77W
- Bag 2 to Bag 3 06 20 20N 58 35 92W

Anchor off Baganara anywhere except in line with the airstrip. We found the most pleasant place to be about 80 to 100 metres off shore, slightly past the huge bamboo grove, giving some privacy to both boat and lodge. This is well within range of the WiFi transmitter.

From Bartica to Hurakabra Lodge

- Bartica Anchorage to Hur 1 06 24 91N 58 36 81W
- Hur 1 to Hur 2 06 25 14N 58 36 97W
- Hur 2 to Hur 3 06 25 46N 58 37 84W
- Hur 3 to Hur 4 06 25 70N 58 37 76W
- Hur 4 to Hur 5 06 26 28N 58 37 52W
- Hur 5 to Hur 6 06 26 62N 58 37 77W
- Hur 6 to Hurakabra 06 27 02N 58 37 50W

Stay well off the sawmill on the island — there are extensive shallows here, and only use this route at a good high tide.

(The Doyle guide provides waypoints from Shanklands Resort so that you approach Hurakabra from the northern side. There are huge submerged rocks on the Shanklands-Hurakabra approach and we preferred the Bartica-sawmill-Hurakabra approach, as given above.)

Anchor slightly upstream of Hurakabra; do not go far beyond the northern limit of the property as there are some rocks past there. You will see some mooring buoys — you have to pay to use them, but anchoring is easy in good holding anywhere in the channel nearby.

On your way in, at Waypoint 6, you will probably have seen Joyce Davis's yacht, *Mood Indigo*. When you want to visit, just anchor anywhere close by and go ashore, watching out for the little monsters, Duke and Ella — cute little dogs with an attitude until they get to know you.

Exiting Guyana through the Western Channel towards Trinidad & Tobago

We exited Guyana through this route but we did experience some anxious moments, when the depth sounder showed the depth to be 2.4 meters (our draft is 2.2 meters) – on what we thought was a high tide. You also may need to make provision for two overnights in order to make best use of the rising tides to get to the Atlantic (depending on the moon and resulting tides).

- Bartica to WChan1 06 25 70N 58 36 70W
- Rattlesnake Passage 06 26 30N 58 36 50W
- Church 06 26 66N 58 35 30W
- Sail Rock/Makauria Island 06 27 90N 58 35 08W (Use caution in this area!)
- Shanklands Resort 06 29 37N 58 35 12W (Not operating in 2010)
- Close inshore 4 06 30 42N 58 34 58W
- Close inshore 3 06 31 22N 58 34 57W
- Close inshore 2 06 32 59N 58 35 05W
- Onward 06 34 20N 58 35 50W
- Lanaballi 06 36 25N 58 34 65W
- WChan 2 06 41 04N 58 34 486W
- WChan 3 06 43 13N 58 34 29W
- WChan 4 06 45 69N 58 34 086W
- WChan 5 06 48 445N 58 34 303W
- WChan 6 06 49 345N 58 34 143W
- WChan 7 06 53 327N 58 32 159W
- WChan 8 06 56 751N 58 29 321W

To go to Supenaam, make a sharp left to 06 56 998N 58 29 831W

- WChan 9 07 01 5N 58 26 9W
- WChan 10 07 08 8N 58 24 2W
- WChan 11 07 10 400N 58 22 400W
- WChan 12 07 23 000N 58 21 300W.

Next month, Part Two: Logistics for Cruisers in Guyana



Small passenger ferries are the busy 'buses' of the Guyanese rivers



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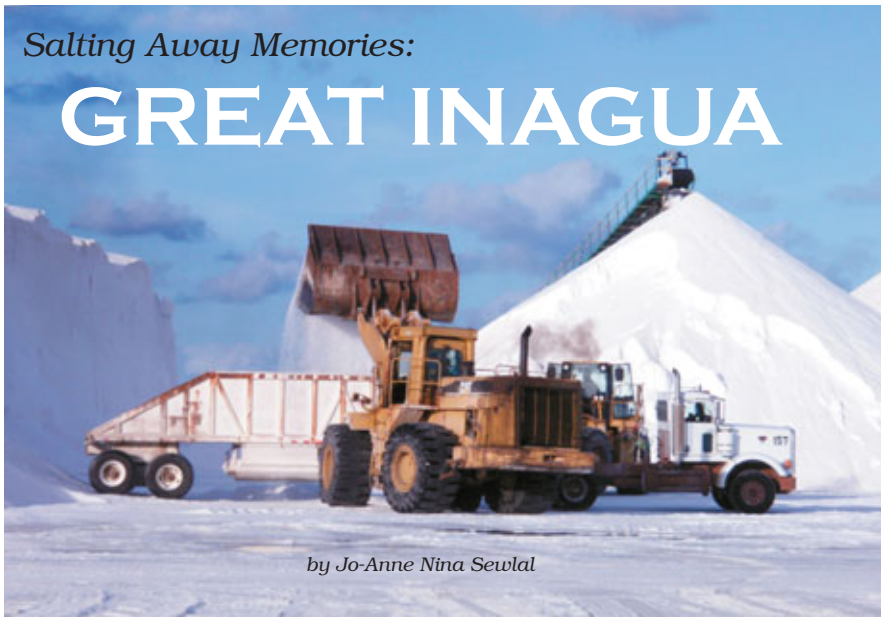
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Salting Away Memories:

GREAT INAGUA



by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

When you think of a vacation in the Bahamas, you think of lying on the beach and enjoying the sea, sand and sunshine. I had the great fortune of visiting the island of Great Inagua, the third largest island in the Bahamas, for a little less than two weeks studying the biodiversity of the island. Shaped like a teardrop, Great Inagua is located about 485 miles off the coast of Florida and is the most southerly island of the Bahamian archipelago. The population of Great Inagua is quite small, around 1,000 people, most of whom reside in and around the capital, Matthew Town. With such a small population you get to be one of the locals really quickly, and don't be deceived — there is a lot more to do on this tiny island than lie on the beach.

My colleagues and I stayed at the Morton Main House. This stylish two-storey guesthouse has been operating for more than 30 years. It is owned and operated by Morton Bahamas Limited, the company that produces the same Morton Salt that ends up on our tables at mealtime. Great Inagua is home to Morton Salt's main facility, and the major source of income to island residents is salt production. The island, on average, exports a million tonnes of salt annually to countries in the Caribbean, South America, North America and Europe.

The Main House has six huge rooms each with cable TV and internet, so we were never out of contact with our friends and family. As it was the end of December, there were not many visitors to the island except those who were involved with the salt company. Representing the Main House for the duration of our stay was Dulcia Pennerman, who quickly advised us where everything was located in the town and where to get a meal as they were renovating their own kitchen and restaurant.

The Main House is located in the middle of town within walking distance of the grocery, bank, post office and library. There is also a local museum run by the National Trust, which you have to call ahead to visit.

This brings me to one thing that you will find surprising when you arrive on Great Inagua: most businesses do not keep regular opening hours; instead there is usually a sign with a telephone number you can call. The same thing with restaurants, and you usually have to order ahead since there is not a great demand for restaurant meals. Remember, there are only about 1,000 people on the island.

During our visit, most of the owners of the small restaurants were on vacation, either on or off the island. Also, in addition to it being Christmas time it was also the time for Junkanoo (Bahamian Carnival). We were fortunate to see some people practising for Junkanoo, beating drums and other homemade instruments and parading up and down the main street.

Our contact on the island was Captain Stephen Fawkes, the island's historian and former mayor of Matthew Town. No one on the island works in ecotourism full time, but this does not mean that the service in this area is lacking.

Although there is lots of sunshine, you don't get very hot, as there are no mountains to block the soothing coastal breezes that blow across the island. Like many of the islands in the Bahamas, Great Inagua is flat, with the highest point reaching a little over 160 feet above sea level, thus making Great Inagua great for hiking. That is exactly what we did. An easy hike is along the main road, passing through the town and up to the lighthouse. If one is lucky and if the lighthouse keeper is in, one can ask to go up to the top and take some photos. Unfortunately when we visited, the lighthouse keeper was not in.

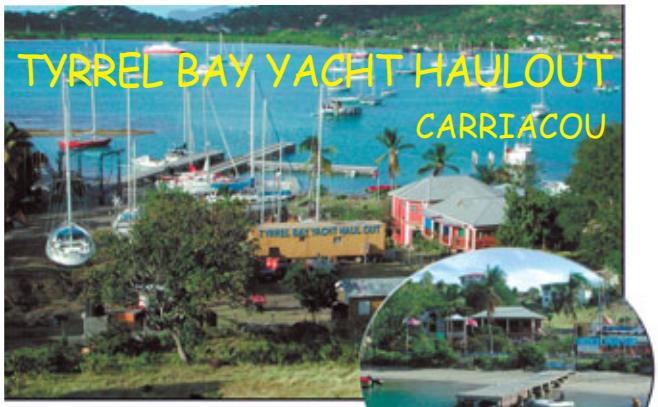


Above: Salt is trucked to the port, then shipped to countries in the Caribbean, North and South America, and Europe

Left: Conveyer belts move the salt at 44 tons per minute

We took a tour with Colin Ingraham of Great Inagua Tours, who explained how salt is extracted from seawater and processed before it is exported. First the seawater is pumped into shallow ponds where it is left to allow the water to evaporate. When a certain percentage of the water has evaporated it is then pumped into other ponds and allowed to rest for further evaporation to occur. The ponds left are filled with seawater so that there is a constant supply of seawater and salt.

—Continued on next page



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—*Continued from previous page*

The only thing that can throw a wrench into the salt operations is rainfall, which will dilute the salt ponds and delay salt production. The salt crystals produced are huge and we were allowed to take some with us. These crystals are washed and ground to produce the table salt we are familiar with. It takes approximately two months to harvest salt for export after the process has started as saltwater pumped into the ponds.

Mr. Ingraham also took us to the eastern part of the island around Lake Windsor and to the border of the Inagua National Park where we saw flamingos, the national bird of the Bahamas. You might want to park and walk along the road to get closer to look at or photograph them, as the sound of engines scares them away. They visit the ponds near the road early in the morning and retreat to the farther ponds as the day progresses and the roads get more traffic. Besides flamingos, you can see herons, egrets, cormorants and parrots.

Of course, a trip to the Bahamas would not be complete without a trip to the beach, and the closest beach is just a five-minute walk from the centre of Matthew Town. Another great place you can visit is Devil's Point on the southwest of the island, also known as Fawke's Beach. As you drive along the west coast, you will see some abandoned buildings including a church, where there was once a small settlement.

You can also visit Conch Shell Point, on the southeast of the island. A glance around the beach and you will realize how it got its name as conch shells are littered about the sand. The surrounding vegetation is classified as dwarf forest, where species of trees usually attaining a height of 15 feet or more are here only a little over five feet tall.



Since the island is flat, it's an easy hike to the lighthouse

After all that touring, hiking and relaxing, one needs to eat. We enjoyed the Inagua Island restaurant. Like most other businesses, it is located within walking distance of the Main House. It opens from around 11:00AM and closes at around 9:00PM and also serves as a mini cyber café. As soon as you walk in, the friendly owners, Merlin and Ron, greet you. Merlin's grandmother is from Great Inagua and was a principal of a nearby school and Ron is from the US. After living in Atlanta, Georgia for 40 years they decided to settle here on retiring. Their menu not only has local dishes, but some American dishes as well, such as nachos. The prices are also very affordable — where else can you get ice cream or a portion of fries for a US dollar? We also feasted on conch fritters, chowder, salad and cracked conch, thanks to Dulcia.

As I mentioned earlier, you have to call ahead to most stores before you visit and the same goes for souvenir shops. Dulcia came through again and directed me to Theresa Lewis who sells some of the most beautiful and affordable handmade souvenir items, for instance, plants and animals carved on conch shells. This is done after the animal has been harvested for food, so there is no wastage and no destruction of these animals solely for craft. Theresa is also a primary school teacher so this is a part time job for her. She is known by everyone — just ask for "Resie" as she is also called.

Although we celebrated New Year's Eve on the island we did not attend any wild parties. This is because traditionally on Old Year's Night people attend church from ten to midnight and afterwards one goes for eats and drinks at the church hall — which can go on until four o'clock in the morning.

When people think of the Bahamas they usually think of Nassau or the Abacos. To me, Great Inagua is an undiscovered gem. Take the time to get here and you will experience the best of both worlds: being a wide-eyed tourist and living like a local. Great Inagua is definitely an island I would like to visit again.

Jo-Anne N. Sewlal BSc., MPhil., is studying for her doctoral degree at the Department of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies.

Things to Know

- Matthew Town is an official port of entry.
- Anchorages on Great Inagua include the waters just off Matthew Town, Lantern Head Harbour, and Man-O-War Bay at Northwest Point. Fuel and water are available at the Government dock in town. The private pier at Morton Salt can be utilized by prior arrangement.
- The Bahamas dollar is equivalent to the United States dollar; you can pay for purchases in either the local or US currency.
- The tap water is desalinated and is safe for drinking. In the past, residents constructed underground tanks called cisterns. These were built on the property as a separate structure with its own roof, so that they look like very short houses.
- There is no public transportation on the island but one can rent a vehicle or hire a tour guide to take you around the island. I would recommend taking a guide to go anywhere past the outskirts of Matthew Town as the roads leading out of the capital form a confusing network. (Following them as hiking trails should also be done with caution.)
- If you want to go diving or snorkeling, ask for Perry Fawkes, Stephen's brother.
- You can read *The Bahamas Boating and Fishing Guide* at http://issuu.com/aircurrentsmagazine/docs/bm.fishingguide2010?viewMode=magazine

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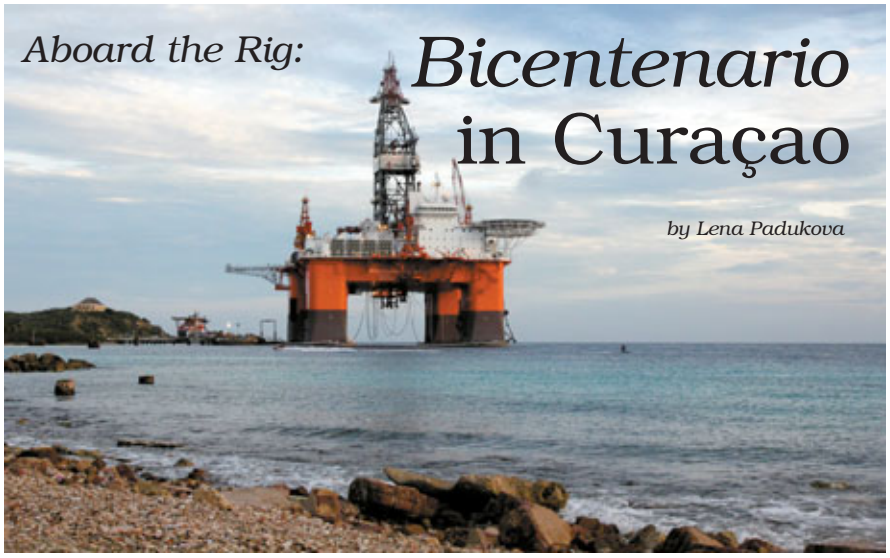
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Aboard the Rig: Bicentenario in Curaçao

by Lena Padukova



Bicentenario, *a vast sight just off the Curaçao beach*

Acrophobia is the fear of heights. This Latin word is throbbing in my head, the only thing I can think of, while I am trying frantically not to look down. The staircase is painted bright orange. The steps are made of welded thick metal rods, and between them, I can see all the way down to the water. Mooring lines thick as my forearm now appear thin as threads far below.

I am determined to reach the top, and find reassurance in the steadily stepping heavy boots of the man walking in front of me, his coveralls matching the colour of the stairs. If he can handle this untroubled, then so can I. This is not like climbing my 16-metre mast to check up on the rig in a nice Leeward Island anchorage, which seems like a joke in comparison. This is almost four times higher, and my pulse is pounding. My head starts spinning lightly, but finally, the stairway ends and I find myself on the deck of an oil rig. The captain stretches out his hand.

You have probably seen them near Trinidad and Tobago or off the long Caribbean coast of Venezuela, and definitely so if you have recently been to Curaçao. The thousands of bright lights from the oil rig make it look like a 130-metre high Christmas tree, and it casts such a bright light into the anchorage of Spaanse Water that it's almost possible to read by it.

No, it's not pumping some newly discovered oil from below the island; it's just moored there to get some equipment fitted before moving farther towards the Gulf of Mexico. There was just enough time for *Caribbean Compass* to come aboard this local point of interest and investigate what it's like to live and work on an oil platform.

The brand-new 37,600kW semi-submersible oil rig *Bicentenario*, a Gotaverken GVA 7500, was made in Korea and shipped to Curaçao by submersible barge. Upon entering the Caribbean Sea, the crew prepared for the work, which includes the installation of eight 35-ton thruster propellers. Between watches, the crew get their feet on dry land, spending some time in the local pubs on Curaçao. The owner of the nearest pub, just walking distance from Spaanse Water, must have started to believe in supernatural forces when the sales increased several times over in just a few days.

As I walk along the light-drenched deck, I have the acute feeling that I am in a completely different world, jerked away from the Caribbean into a starkly futuristic, unexplored milieu. More lights, cables, oil drums, hoses, pipes, boxes with life vests huge enough to shelter a family of four. A sign: "No Fishing". My mind wanders to why this sign came to exist, and I once again become painfully aware of how high I am right now, the adrenaline in my blood sending a spark of electricity to my fingertips. The island stretches out below me, Curaçao by night, as might be seen from a skyscraper: fluorescent glimmerings of cars and lanterns, houses lit up, streetlights and neon signs. All of it so distant.

The captain, a casually clad, no-nonsense man (why are all Norwegians so no-nonsense?), shows me around. Here is a 15-ton emergency anchor. There, the stashed pipes for retrieving the oil: the rig will be drilling at water depths of 10,000 feet, down to a maximum depth of 40,000 feet, a vast distance. The pipe weighs 450 tons when assembled, and is held in place by a huge hydraulic gadget that provides constant tension while it's connected. The rig is held positioned above the drilling hole with the 4,000-horsepower thrusters, not always very still of course — there is a margin for movement within a diameter of about 100 metres. The platform will be operating during all seasons, so if a hurricane strikes, the oil rig will be disconnected and moved away using the thrusters. The thrusters are constantly engaged — after the installation, they will run non-stop for about five years.

We look down, where the enormous propellers are being lifted with a crane positioned on a boat with white letters, *Buccaneer*, on its side. This boat, a so-called "supplier ship", is the very visible accessory of an oil rig, standing by just beyond the danger zone of 500 metres from the platform. When offshore, it does the monitoring of the weather, sea traffic and the like, while the staff on the platform is busy with the actual oil retrieval.

On the rig, there are quite a few things to keep an eye on as well. The oil rig bridge is full of displays and monitors, some familiar, like a radar screen and a chart plotter, some mysterious and mesmerizing. The floor is tiled, the windows are tilted downwards to catch a glimpse of the sea below, and the atmosphere is crisp and clean, which sends away my thoughts in a chain reaction, associating the space with a laboratory in a sci-fi movie. The two gentlemen currently on shift guide me through the monitors while the captain is attending to some urgent business: all part of his job.

The captain comes back, the business settled (minor issue with the lighting system on deck), and I have time to chat with him about his personal background. Born into a Norwegian fisherman family, the sea is his life and career. Currently living in Indonesia, he is enjoying his four-week shift work as the *Bicentenario*'s captain, interacting with people of 29 different nationalities, delegating duties and responsibilities, participating in the meticulous process of choosing the staff to hire, and constantly alert and ready for all kinds of situations. I ask him to tell some catchy story from his work, but he doesn't find any. Everything always goes smoothly, he says, but then mentions his previous work — ten years at sea with smaller cargo ships — with a smile. From that time, he says, he could tell stories and stories, enough to write several books, he laughed. Maybe some day....

He tells me more about the daily life on the oil platform. The platform is actually a ship — it can make way on its own using the propellers (and will do that all the way from Curaçao to its final destination), thus having all the usual trimmings that we yachties are used to seeing on our own boats: a set of signal flags, the lanterns, a courtesy flag hoisted high — in fact, so high that it will not be seen from the sea surface, but rules are rules. The oil rig will not travel very fast, making about seven knots, but it's nevertheless a considerable speed, keeping in mind the size of the vessel.

We enter a door with a big "HABITATIONAL" sign on it, and start talking about this ship's crew. It has places for about 200 people, all working in shifts, their chores differing vastly, from cleaning and catering to working as engineers, doctors and the like. Off-shift, there are a variety of things one can choose to do — there is a library, a gym, a cinema, even a sauna! On Sundays, a barbecue is set up out on deck. As we advance through the crew space, we pass a small galley with a coffeemaker, cooler, and a fridge packed with sodas, looking like your regular office kitchen. There is a strict no-alcohol policy on the ship.

The captain's quarters consist of a working space and a sleeping space. Quite spacious, at least in my opinion (being used to living on small sailing vessels), and very neat: a bed nicely made, an armchair, a minifridge, no clutter, no personal things except for some clothes hanging from the wall hooks. I look behind me and see a flat TV screen — the entertainment is broadcast when offshore. There is also internet free to use for all the crew while off watch.

Now, as I am visiting the platform, I have seen several crew passing by, dressed in orange coveralls, the dress code being a security measure. Most are very busy, but nevertheless quick with a smile and a welcoming nod. I only see men, and ask the captain whether any women work here at all. Yes, they are rare, but on *Bicentenario* there are in fact two female crew — one in the catering team, and the other a helicopter landing officer. It's very positive to have women in the crew, the captain says. They positively affect the working climate, and have a good effect on their fellow crew who are male — the guys keep themselves neat and polite.

As we talk, our stroll around the rig continues. The final destination is the helicopter pad.

—*Continued on next page*

ALL PHOTOS: SERGEI GRATCHEV



Signing in, a security procedure carried out before climbing the stairs to the first deck

—Continued from previous page

I approach its edge and look down to see the dark waters of the Caribbean far, far below. The air is warm and moist, a contrast to the air-conditioned bowels of the rig. The captain lights a cigarette. My instincts scream about how wrong that is, and I toss a tentative query to the captain. It turns out to be fine to have a smoke on an oil rig, believe it or not, when not engaged in action, of course. Who would have thought that? The captain asks about my own Caribbean experience, and I give him the short story of sailing off from cold Sweden, through the North Sea speckled with oil platforms very similar to the one we are standing on, towards southern Europe and across "the puddle" to the sweet Caribbean. I tell him about my plans ahead, sailing around in the tropics. He smiles, offers jokingly to trade jobs.

And frankly, after seeing this fantastic, surrealistic hidden world of the oil rig by a Caribbean island, I find myself considering it.



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Container Encounter

by Tom Scott

On February 14th, 2011 I departed Chatham Bay, Union Island at 6:00AM aboard *Monet II*, my 47-foot Beneteau. I left the bay with the mainsail set to the second reef and the headsail rolled out approximately two thirds. This is my usual procedure as it is difficult to know exactly what is happening with respect to the wind until you are outside of a bay and beyond the lee of an island in the Caribbean. I find it easier and more comfortable to increase sail area if the winds are in fact light as opposed to decreasing and reefing if the wind is too strong.

The day started out with approximately 15 to 17 knots of wind. As time went on the wind grew in strength and occasionally squalls came through. At approximately 9:30AM the winds were out of the east at 20 to 25 knots with occasional gusts to 27 knots. The seas were approximately three to six feet, growing to six to nine feet later in the morning.

Everyone aboard was in a good mood as we'd had six wonderful days of sailing in the Grenadines and were on our way to St. Lucia with a planned overnight at Wallilabou, St. Vincent. We planned to have dinner at the Rock Side Café and clear out of Customs to continue on to Rodney Bay the next morning.

At approximately 9:45AM, while Peter Chocholak was at the helm and I sat on the starboard side of the cockpit, *Monet II* began to shudder violently and make a loud crunching sound. This lasted for approximately three gut-wrenching seconds. In the final second the stern felt as if it had been lifted up a foot or two. As this was happening my mind was racing. I knew we had not hit a reef — we were in 1,000 feet of water and nowhere near any shoal water. Consequently I knew we had hit something very big and probably metallic just under the surface. Peter yelled, "I cannot steer, the rudder is stuck!" I went to the helm, looked into the water behind us and saw a flat orange object just below the surface.

Knowing that we had just hit something quite hard, hard enough to shake the boat to its core and lift up the stern, my first concern was "are we taking in water?" I immediately went into the stern portion of the bilge to see. By this time the boat was out of control, sails flapping in the wind. There was a fair amount of water in the stern section of the bilge but it did not seem to be increasing and the automatic bilge pump had not activated. So I turned my attention to the sails and to attempt to stabilize the boat as it was rocking badly and turning in circles to port. I took down the headsail and adjusted the mainsheet to the close-hauled position. With the mainsail set to the first reef, this configuration seemed to be ideal as it stopped the turning and actually had us in a very stable "hove to" position.



Above: Monet II's *rudder was seriously damaged in the collision*

Below: The crew: from left to right, Peter, Tu, Mylinh, Captain Tom and Arlen



I still had cell phone reception and got out my folder with emergency phone numbers and called the Coast Guard in San Juan, Puerto Rico. They patched me through to the St. Vincent Coast Guard. We explained our situation to them and they informed us that they did not have a vessel available that would be able to tow us in, however they would send out a 27-foot skiff to stay near us in the event we began to take on water. They gave us an ETA at our position of 30 to 40 minutes, but did not arrive until four hours later. (Telling the story to a local sailor, he quipped, "Man, you should have told them you had five tons of cocaine on board; they would have been there in five minutes!")

I attempted to use the emergency tiller, however it was useless as the rudder shaft housing had been ripped right out of the hull and there was no way to insert the tiller into position. It didn't matter anyway, as we discovered later the rudder was completely frozen in a left-rudder position and was jammed right up into the hull. I got out a large crowbar and began to attempt to straighten things out to see if I could dislodge the rudder. However almost immediately I thought, "Maybe not such a good idea: I might loosen the rudder and make it somewhat usable but put a hole in the boat at the same time".

Still very concerned about the damage below, I wrestled with the thought of putting a mask on and diving under, with lines under the hull, to see what further damage might be there. I weighed the pluses and minuses and decided that the best course of action was to do everything I could to find out what exactly was going on below the hull. Considering I am a very strong swimmer and a scuba instructor and the boat was very stable in a hove to position moving forward at approximately a knot and a half, I decided to take a look. Once below I examined the rudder, the shaft and propeller, and the keel as far up the hull as I could see. Much to my relief, there appeared to be no further damage.

My crew/passengers seemed to have a lot of confidence in my ability to take care of the problem, perhaps a little too much, as they were enjoying themselves, viewing it as an adventure. I wasn't real happy about that, but I decided that was better than a panicked crew. I told them what I saw under the hull, that the boat was not in imminent danger of sinking and that I felt our only serious problem was the fact that we could not steer. However, I told them, "Just in case I am wrong, get the life vests out, pack a small bag of your important personal belongings and come back up on deck." We then had a briefing on how to use the life raft and the procedure that we would follow to abandon ship if need be.

Later on the Coast Guard put us in touch with Toosie, a guy who had a large enough salvage/towing vessel to bring us in. They informed us that there would be a charge for that. I spoke with Toosie on the cell phone (by this time we were on the verge of losing cell reception and I was alternating between cell phone and satellite phone, not only with Toosie but the Coast Guard as well). Toosie told me his brother, "Captain Sparrow" (I'm not making this up and I do not know if his first name is Jack!), was on his way to fire up *Geronimo* from Bequia and was on his way to tow us to wherever we wanted to go.

Finally connected with Capt. Sparrow, I gave him our position. Capt. Sparrow informed us that he was having problems with his GPS, so I explained our position using bearings from Canouan and Bequia. This turned out to be a mistake as for some reason Capt. Sparrow thought we were just off the coast of Canouan and proceeded to head to Canouan, going right by us about six miles east. After four hours he found us.

I told him I was hove to and suggested I leave the mainsail up for the tow. However he wanted me to take it down. I explained to him if I did that, the boat was going to drift in circles to the left. He thought that was okay and that's what he wanted to do. So I took down the mainsail and they threw us a towline. We hooked it up to the bow but sure enough *Monet II* was drifting in circles and the line got caught up in the keel. So we had to let the line go and try again.

The second attempt was successful and *Geronimo* began to tow us to Ottley Hall, St. Vincent, the only place nearby where we could haul the boat out of the water. I told my crew, "Let's talk about what we are going to do WHEN, not if, the rope breaks". They laughed, thinking I was being overly pessimistic. About an hour and a half into the tow the rope broke. It had been chafing on *Geronimo*'s stern ramp. But we were prepared, and it took us very little time to get re-secured and we were back on our way again.

We arrived in Ottley Hall at about 5:30PM and rafted up alongside *Geronimo* for the night, as there was no one there at that hour to haul us out. By this time the boat had begun taking on water and it was too much for the electric bilge pump to handle so we took shifts to manually pump throughout the night.

Finally, the next morning at approximately 9:00AM, *Monet II* was on the hard and safe. I am now a firm believer in having "kick ass" bilge pumps and an emergency rudder system.

A Holding Tank for Dummies:

In Search of the Perfectly Simple, Idiot-Proof Holding Tank

by Chris Doyle

Many years ago I wrote an article for *Compass* titled "Hold the Holding Tank." My point at that time was that there was no evidence that the small amount of waste from yacht toilets did any ecological harm, so why not just flush away? My opinion regarding ecological damage has not changed; as far as I can see there is none. The marine environment that most of us anchor in can easily deal with the small amount of effluent from yacht toilets.

But these days, when there are so many more yachts, I look at it more from an aesthetic point of view. It would be much better not to flush the heads if there is anyone swimming anywhere close, and there are times when it is good to be able to control just when your effluent goes in the sea. For example in Fort de France, Martinique; Bridgetown, Barbados; and Gosier, Guadeloupe, many locals like to swim around the bay, among all the yachts, in early morning. They should certainly be able to do this without even having the slightest chance of meeting anyone's discharge.

In addition, more and more marine parks are asking us to have holding tanks, and I think it is time to comply. I think of it as a way to be courteous to others. Ever since my catamaran, *Ti Kanot*, was built, I always intended to have a holding tank, but it has taken some ten years to get round to installing one; plenty of time to think about how it should be done and to come up with the simplest, easiest, most dummy-proof way of achieving it.

In searching for a design I was influenced by an incident that happened many years ago. I was cruising in Sweden on a yacht with a holding tank. It was a complicated affair with lots of hoses and valves, including a Y-valve. I did not understand how it all worked and somehow I managed to flip the wrong switch and create a brown disturbance around the boat that did not move for hours in the calm water — very embarrassing. I wanted something simpler and more foolproof than this.



Hold it! This simple installation offers the option of discharging waste appropriately

I see no objection to fecal matter ending up in the sea. The solution to pollution is dilution, and this is best achieved by depositing small amounts over a wide area in deep water. It is perfectly ecologically friendly; the sea, after all, deals with the feces from many more animals than humans — whales, dolphins, sea lions, fish and seabirds, to mention just a few. It all gets recycled. I remember once, while anchored in very still water in Trinidad, being curious about what happened after I pumped the head, so I went to the stern and looked. The effluent was quickly set upon by a school of sergeant majors, which seemed to find it the perfect breakfast snack.

It is just a question of whether you dump effluent in an anchorage, or farther out at sea where there can be no logical objection. The idea of using pump-out stations does not make any sense, except for long-term marina guests. Anyone who wants to know where land-based sewage ends up can take a whiff of the water as they sail past Point Saline in Grenada or Pointe Plum in St. Martin.

Eliminating the pump-out mechanism makes the construction of a holding tank much easier. You can also forget the Y-valve and any extra hoses.

It struck me that the simplest possible holding tank was a small tank plumbed right in line with the effluent hose. The effluent from the toilet goes into the top of the tank, flows through the tank and out of the bottom of the tank, from where it goes straight into the sea. At this point you have a normally operating toilet with a tank plumbed into it. And for much of the time you might well want to use it like this.

To make this work as a holding tank all it needs is a valve on top of the tank with an air vent. To deploy the tank, just close the seacock and open the vent. Waste will now start building up in the tank instead of flowing through. To empty it, simply open the seacock. Gravity feeds it right out, then you close the air vent. To flush out the tank, simply pump the head with the air valve closed and the seacock open. The tank does not have to be that big, just enough to hold a few flushes.

I had lots of different ideas as to how to do this on my boat, but since it was new territory I opted for something I could see and remove easily if the project turned out badly. I had my friend Rolly in Trinidad build me a box that would fit in the space behind the toilet. It is 26 inches wide, 8 inches high and 6 inches deep. He built it out of ply and fibreglassed it inside and out. Before we glassed the lid on I installed a four-inch inspection hatch at each end of the top, so if there were ever any blocks (so far there have not been) I would be able to deal with them. I plumbed the vent into a nearby rope locker. We gave the tank about a five-degree list to starboard to ensure it would completely drain. We attached the hoses and it has worked perfectly up to now.

I do like having it. It makes me feel more comfortable when people are swimming around, and gives me more control over when to flush. The tank does take up space, but the top of it forms a handy place to store things like tissues and, in this installation, a towel on the towel rack completely hides it. It seems completely foolproof and simple to use. I recommend it.

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JULY 2011

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)
Your verbal skills will be under full sail for the month. Use this aspect to show how talented you are with words and also as an opportunity to smooth out any rough waters in the public areas of your life.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)
Jupiter is in your sign until next June. This will give you lots of time to apply its beneficial effects to your life. It could help you break old habits of negative thinking that have kept you in irons in the past.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)
You will be a gale of work energy and are in good aspect to Saturn, the planet of business, so here's a good opportunity for progress, especially around the 11th and for several weeks after that. Use these aspects to the fullest and they will pay off royally in the future.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Concentrate on the creative boat projects you started last month and you will make rapid headway. You will find unexpected support from a female friend who will assist you in clearing the decks for good things to come.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)
You can make creative headway using your verbal skills and will receive helpful inspiration during the first week from an unexpected source.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)
This will be a good month to just sit on the hook in some secluded cove away from the usual vibes and just veg out. You need time to recharge your batteries to be prepared to deal in a positive manner with aspects heading your way.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)
While creativity and romance are surrounded by choppy seas you will feel an upswing of work energy, and with Saturn in your sign it's a good time to invest this energy in boat business.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)
There's no place like home, and this month that is where your creativity and romance are anchored. You can make great positive way forward if you center your efforts on making things comfortable on board on both the physical and emotional levels.

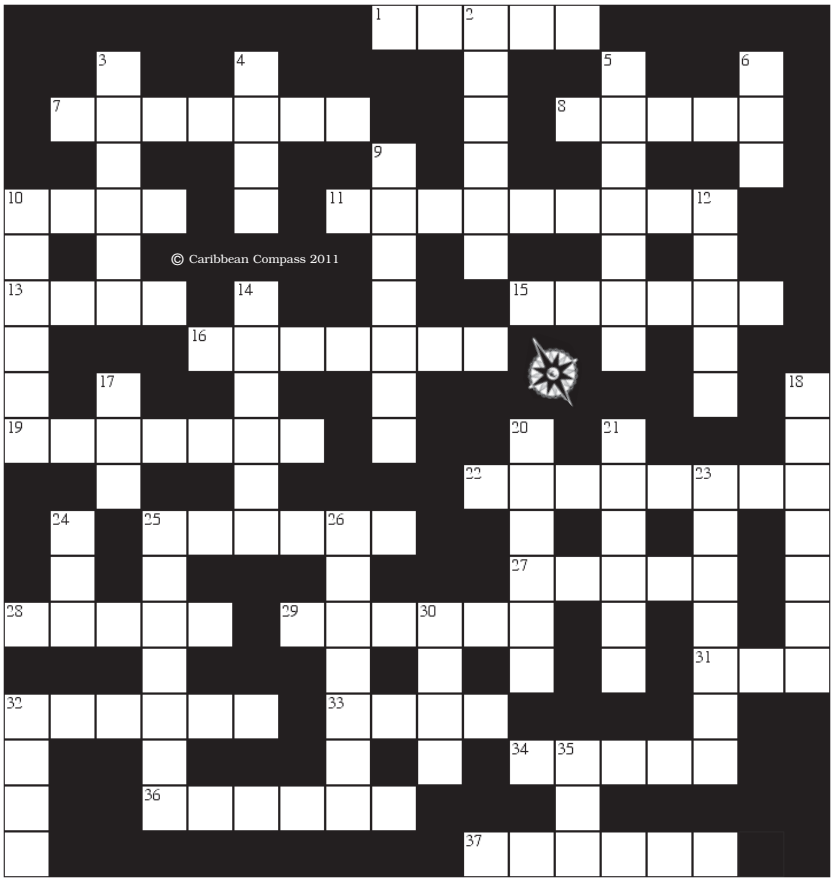
♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)
Even though you'll be feeling no wind in your sails this month, there are good aspects for creative verbal skills. Perhaps a stint as a stand-up comic would be in order.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)
There may be problems with your main squeeze on board and it could interfere with boatwork progress. You will need to revise your priorities and decide what areas of your life need the most attention.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)
Use your increased energy in marine business and you'll make headway and contacts that will serve you well in the future.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)
You will be full of enthusiasm but will be at a loss as to where to direct it. Romance will be frustrating and you may find it hard to see what course to take, but keep a positive outlook and you'll find calm seas just over the horizon.

Compass Cruising Crossword



Tall Ships of the Northern Hemisphere

ACROSS

1) The *Nippon Maru* is from this island nation
7) The *Kobenhavn* is from this Scandinavian country
8) Above the 26 Down
10) 36 Across rigged vessel with two masts
11) The *Concordia* was homeported in Nova Scotia, south of New_____
13) Sea ____: space to maneuver
15) Joined
16) The *Asgard II* was from this nation
19) The *Cutty Sark*'s homeport is here
22) The *Sagres III* is from this country located west of 28 Across
25) The *Najaden* is in this Scandinavian country
27) H_2O
28) The *Juan Sebastián de Elcano* is from this former ruler of the high seas
29) The *Sedov*, once the largest 32 Across + 32 Down, is from this former part of the USSR
31) "Hang him from the yard ___!"
32) Institution of education
33) 36 Across rigged 32 Down with top 4 Downs
34) The *Amerigo Vespucci* is from _____, the "boot" country
36) Shape of 4 Downs on a full-rigged 33 Across + 32 Down
37) The *Maple Leaf* is the national 32 Down of _____

DOWN

2) The *Dar Mlodziezy* is from this country east of 23 Down
3) The *Cuauhtémoc* is named after the Aztec emperor of this country
4) It could be 36 Across or triangular
5) The *Mircea* is from this country on the Black Sea
6) Affectionate pronoun for a 32 Down
9) The *Stad Amsterdam* is from _____
10) 32 Down with three masts, the forward two being the same height
12) Horatio Hornblower captured the ship *Le Rêve*, or *The* _____
14) The *Etoile*, sister 32 Down of the *Belle Poule*, is from _____
17) Number of years since launch
18) The *Mercator* is from this nation south of 9 Down
20) The *Christian Radich* is from this country whose capital is Oslo
21) With 15 Across, the country whose coast guard runs the *Eagle*
23) The *Alexander von Humboldt* is from this northern European country
24) Chart for landlubbers
25) Cadets are young _____
26) The waist of the Earth
30) The type of 27 Across in the sea
32) 4 Downing vessel
35) Unit of weight used to describe a 32 Down

Solution on page 33



Island Poets

ISLAND DREAMING

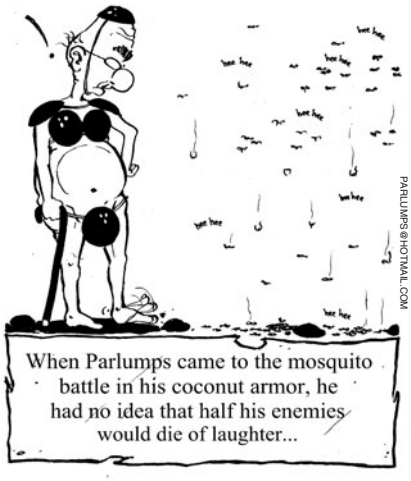
I do not like marine parks. I do not like the 'greenies',
But I do love these islands — maybe I'm an 'inbetweeny'.
I do not like the foreigners who tell us what is right.
They don't consult the locals, and cause bitterness and fights.
Have they no imagination? Do they never really see
That their constant scathing comments on our inadequacy
Are cruel and demeaning? Make us feel small and vexed?
But we take it, shrug and wonder what the fools will come with next.

But never mind, one day for sure they will all go away
And leave us our inheritance, and then perhaps we may
Find the camaraderie there was in days gone by,
When folks would help each other, and then maybe we could try
To teach our kids to be aware that garbage in the sea
Is ugly, nasty, dirty, and it won't help you or me.
Train everyone to pelt their plastics in disposal sites,
And care the reefs and spawning grounds of fish, for then we might
Become the island people that God must have meant we'd be,
With pride and local knowledge of the winds, the tides, the sea.

Progress will only happen when we do things for ourselves
And discard our tendency to stuff our projects on a shelf.
Keep our islands free of drugs that rot young peoples' brains,
Then they can make their contribution to the island chain.
Oh yes, I am a dreamer, for me dreaming is a must,
For our islands could be heaven for our kids, for all of us!

— Nan Hatch

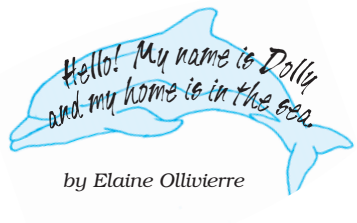
parlumps marooned



Crossword Solution

ACROSS
1) JAPAN
7) DENMARK
8) NORTH
10) BRIG
11) FOUNDLAND
13) ROOM
15) UNITED
16) IRELAND
19) ENGLAND
22) PORTUGAL
25) SWEDEN
27) WATER
28) SPAIN
29) RUSSIA
31) ARM
32) SCHOOL
33) TALL
34) ITALY
36) SQUARE
37) CANADA

DOWN
2) POLAND
3) MEXICO
4) SAIL
5) ROMANIA
6) SHE
9) HOLLAND
10) BARQUE
12) DREAM
14) FRANCE
17) AGE
18) BELGIUM
20) NORWAY
21) STATES
23) GERMANY
24) MAP
25) SAILORS
26) EQUATOR
30) SALT
32) SHIP
35) TON



by Elaine Ollivierre

DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

In order to explain what tsunamis are and how they are formed, we began by looking at the structure of the Earth and the theory of continental drift. One piece of evidence in support of this theory was shown to be the discovery of the Mid-Atlantic ridge with its active volcanoes and formation of new crust material. **Where else are volcanoes found?**

Geographers mapped the positions of known volcanoes. Their locations showed that most volcanoes were concentrated in places around large areas of the Earth's crust known as **plates**. Scientists theorized that, as the plates moved, magma from under the Earth's crust could rise up at the plate edges and form volcanoes, just as it did under the Atlantic.

However, some volcanoes were found in the middle of the plates, not round the edge. **How could this happen?**

A scientist called J. Tuzo Wilson proposed a theory of '**hot spots**'. Beneath the Earth's crust is the hot liquid mantle. Wilson suggested that some areas under the crust are particularly hot. Convection currents in the mantle would move the hottest material upwards and, at these hot spots, the magma is forced up through cracks in the crust where it becomes known as lava. The lava continues to pour out and forms a volcano. At first, the volcano is under water but, as more and more lava comes out, the volcano height increases until the volcano breaks the surface and forms an island.

The hot spot theory by itself doesn't involve continental drift. It explains how ONE volcano might be formed in the middle of a plate but it doesn't explain how a chain of volcanoes might be formed. That's where continental drift comes in. Let's look at an example.

The chain of volcanic islands that make up the US state of Hawaii are in the middle of the Pacific plate. The rocks of the northernmost islands have been found to be older than the rocks of the islands in the south. If you think of the Pacific plate moving slowly to the north over ONE hot spot, you can see that, over millions of years, the magma works its way to the surface in more and more southerly positions, forming new volcanoes as it comes up. The 'Big Island' of Hawaii is the youngest island of the chain and is currently over the hot spot. But as the plate moves on (at a speed of about 11 centimetres per year), the next volcanic island has already started to form. Lo'ihi is now only a few thousand feet under water and should surface in the next 100,000 years!

VOLCANO EXPERIMENT

Take a plastic soda bottle (with its cap) and half fill with vinegar. Add a large spoonful of baking soda and rest the cap back on the top of the bottle. (Do not screw it down.) As the soda and vinegar react to form carbon dioxide gas, pressure builds up in the bottle until it pops off the cap and foam seeps over the top and down the sides, just like lava from a real volcano. This is how a volcano erupts, from the pressure of the magma beneath.

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2011 ©

THE SKY IN JULY

by Scott Welty

The Planets in July

MERCURY - Rising after the sun but setting around 2000 hours all month. Good chances to spot this little guy!

VENUS - Rises around 0500 early in the month moving to 0600 late in the month.

EARTH - Contemplating, deciding to pick a tentative date to perhaps announce it is not running for office.

MARS - Rising around 0315.

JUPITER - Rising between midnight and 0100 and riding in Aries.

SATURN - Setting around 2300 to 2400 hours and riding in Virgo



FIGURE 1

FIGURE 1:
Crescent moon and Mercury on July 2nd at 1845 hours

FIGURE 2:
Mercury setting on July 19th just under the bright star Regulus

FIGURE 3:
The relative positions of Sun, Earth and Mercury on the 19th. Notice Mercury is at aphelion

Sky Events This Month

1st - New Moon

2nd - Crescent moon setting with Mercury (see Figure 1)

4th - Earth at aphelion! Farthest distance from the sun. (You'll not notice!)

15th - Full Moon

19th - Mercury at maximum elongation for the year (see below) — setting farthest east from the sun at 2011 hours (see Figure 2)

27th - See Mars in the early morning twilight with the crescent moon sitting on top of it!

30th – Next New Moon

31st - Bright satellite: Genesis 2 rises at 1959:08 and sets at 2011:35* traveling fast and low in the southwesterly sky. Look for it rising in the northwest and setting due south. Around the 2005-hour mark it will appear very near Saturn in the skies of Grenada.



FIGURE 2

** Farther north in the Caribbean, Genesis will rise a little earlier, be lower in the sky, and be up for shorter duration.*

Tiny Mercury

Good chances to see Mercury this month. Figure 3 shows the relative positions of Earth, Mercury and the Sun on July 19th. Double bonus: we have a wide angular separation between the sun and Mercury because of their relative positions, plus Mercury is at aphelion (its farthest distance from the sun), which goes to make the angle its biggest possible value of 26.8 degrees.

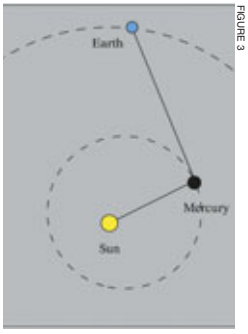


FIGURE 3

Mercury is the closest planet to the sun and not so far from Earth, and yet Mercury has remained a mystery to planetary scientists. Why is Mercury so dense? Why do it and Earth have a magnetic field but not Venus or Mars? Is there frozen water in the craters? To answer these questions and more the Messenger probe was launched in March and at this writing has completed more than a hundred orbits of Mercury. The last time Mercury was visited by a space probe was in 1974 by the Mariner (nice name!) probe and it only made three passes and basically photographed the same side of the planet. Then that film had to be taken to Walgreen's and it became a bit of a mess. Since then we have yearned to see the 'other side' of Mercury. Mercury is in a synchronous orbit, which means it is spinning at the same rate that it is orbiting around the sun, much like our moon is around the Earth. That is, Mercury always presents the same face to the sun. But now we are getting tons of data on the entire surface of Mercury. It took this long to design and build a spacecraft that could survive the extreme conditions that exist this close to the sun. Mercury itself is a whopping 800-plus degrees Fahrenheit on the side facing the sun and -300 degrees on the side away. The Messenger probe carries a variety of detectors besides just cameras to answer those nagging questions about Mercury.

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

Summer = Milky Way (Figure 4)



FIGURE 4 JURVETSON (FLICKR)

Once again, mid-summer is the best time to see the magnificent Milky Way stretch up from the southern skies. In summer you are looking toward the central hub of our Milky Way galaxy in which our sun is one minor member. We're about halfway out on one of the spiral arms of a collection of hundreds of billions of stars, spread out over 100,000 light years of space. It's not really milky of course, but those stars are concentrated in space as viewed from here so that our eyes cannot distinguish one from the other. As you look about and contemplate billions of stars, each one with masses similar to or even gigantically bigger than our own sun it is hard to appreciate that all that 'stuff' (hydrogen and helium mostly) represents only about 0.4 percent of the mass of the galaxy.

What?

That's right. The motions of the stars in our galaxy should be fairly simple orbits about a central hub much like the planets orbit our sun. But they're not. All explanations point to "Dark Matter". Dark matter is MOST of the galaxy and even the space between galaxies. You can't see it, we're not sure what it is made of (brown dwarfs, neutrinos, black holes, chubby unicorns?), but it HAS to be there to explain the motions that we see. This is similar to when we couldn't initially explain why Uranus' orbit didn't exactly conform to the Newtonian ideal. It was posited that there could be a planet outside of Uranus' orbit that was disturbing the motion. Telescopes were pointed to where that planet would have to be and, BINGO, we discovered Neptune.

OH, and there's "Dark Energy" too… stay tuned.

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

Scott is cruising the Caribbean with Sue and Mismo the Wondercat aboard the 1983 Endeavour 40 center cockpit S/V Enee Marie. *Scott tells* Compass *readers, "We look forward to perhaps seeing you as we sail the waters of the Caribbean. Stop and say hi!"*

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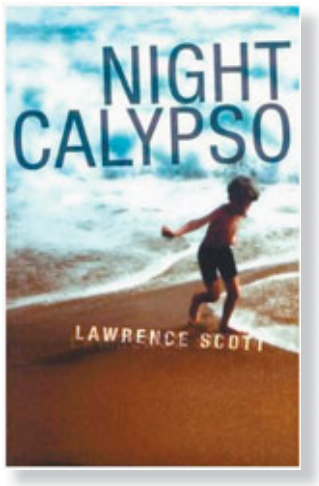
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BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER



Returning to the Main Road

Night Calypso *by Lawrence Scott, Allison & Busby Limited, 2004 edition, 418 pages, ISBN 0-7490-0663-3.*

As if Dr. Vincent Metivier did not have enough to do in his work with the patients at the leprosarium on the small Trinidadian island of El Caracol, a letter from Father Dominic from the Priory of Our Lady of the Rosary, Santa Ana, Porta España, added further to his responsibilities. The letter asked Dr. Metivier to take abused Theo, an educated 12-year-old boy with psychological problems and physical scars, off his hands as the priest was unable to cope with him.

In part, the letter read, "The boy does not talk anymore. He will not talk here. He cannot stay here. I believe that you can get him to talk. When he does, his story will go in fits and starts, wander here and there, but it will return. It does return to the main road…."

Dr. Metivier obliges. He brings Theo to live with him on the island. But what Father Dominic did not mention was that the boy's story takes forever to return to the main road. So, that's how Trinidadian author, a previous winner of the Commonwealth Writers Prize and former Benedictine monk, Lawrence Scott, sets up his readers to listen to Theo's series of sleeptalks, namely "Night Calypso", in what is the main theme of the book.

Meanwhile traffic on the side roads gets just as heavy as Theo's solo rendition on the way to the main road. Readers are right there, driving along with Dr. Metivier as he makes his rounds on the wards, lovingly attending to his patients with the help of his young assistant from France, Sister Thérèse Weil, a researcher and one of the nursing nuns who worked at the hospital. Scott's prodigious attention to detail makes the experience of the ward rounds unforgettable, as in fact, are all the doctor's encounters with his patients.

The relationship between Dr. Metivier and Sister Thérèse begins as one of mutual respect and admiration for each other's work. As they get to know each other better, they share confidences during conversations snatched whenever they get a chance; they are not allowed to have personal conversations. Gradually, Dr. Metivier confides his concerns about Theo to Sister Thérèse, who has her own worries and eventually has a nervous breakdown.

It is 1938. Sister Thérèse's father, a doctor who is a French Jew, sends her disturbing letters about unfolding events in Europe, the pogroms and the "little corporal's" quest for world domination. Sister Thérèse is afraid for her father's life. In the Gulf below her, "a German destroyer, gun-metal grey and gleaming on the lit sea, its Swastika appearing and disappearing as the wind tore at the pennant in the stern" did not make matters any better.

As Dr. Metivier and Sister Thérèse draw closer to each other, Mother Superior is on the lookout. She warns Sister Thérèse, "Dr. Metivier has his own ideas, Sister. You, on the other hand, must follow the ideals of our Order." And she reminds the doctor that her nuns are the brides of Christ.

But Mother Superior has more than difference of opinion with the doctor. They are on opposite sides when it comes to administering care for their patients; theirs is an issue of faith versus science. Mother Superior said, "We don't have the drugs. But what we've got is prayer and faith." Dr. Metivier believed in research, research, research, giving sulfa, the new wonder drug a try, and showing love and affection for the younger patients. Mother Superior was on the side of decorum. "She was of the school of thought who believed, despite the evidence, that infection was easy. She believed in quarantines. Vincent's new regime meant increasingly open nursing and proper education in hygiene."

Krishna Singh, the El Caracol pharmacist, who is an admirer of the "black labour leader, Butler, who had been imprisoned for inciting riots in thirty-seven down South" is also frustrated by the lack of drugs and amenities for the people, as he called the patients. In a heated meeting with Mother Superior he told her, "Mother Superior, you can't have people living in these hovels, these barrack rooms. You can't have men living away from their women. These people are people, you know."

The drive for the improved rights of the people is taking place in another of the side roads, spearheaded by Dr. Metivier and Krishna Singh, and aided by Jonah, the boatman who daily rows Dr. Metivier to and fro across the bay from the doctor's house to the hospital. Meanwhile, Theo still renders his night calypsos in installments.

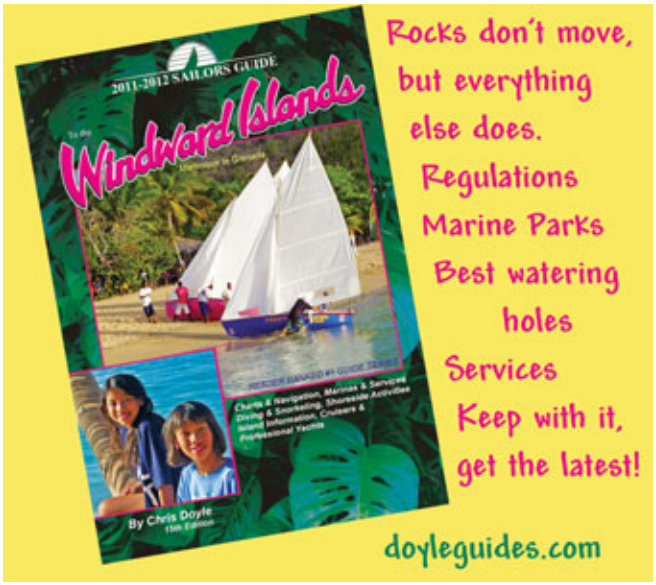
Theo mimics the voices of the characters he's telling about as he sleeptalks/sleepwalks, and, as his story unfolds, Dr. Metivier learns that Theo's mother was the black housekeeper of a white family, and that one of the family was Theo's father. It's a story that takes the doctor back to his youth. During his teenage days he, too, impregnated the daughter of his own family's black maid.

Adding to the drama is the advent of an American base on El Caracol, when, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Uncle Sam enters the war and makes a deal with the British, swapping destroyers for bases in Trinidad. *Night Calypso* also gives an insight into the leper colony off Trinidad's west coast at the time.

Mission accomplished: Dr. Metivier succeeds in getting the boy to talk, just as Father Dominic believed he would. Although Theo's sleeptalk is the way back to the main road, it is slow and bumpy, and exasperating for readers. At times it seems as if Theo needs a map to get him there. Nevertheless, Scott has remained faithful to presenting a character with a psychological disorder and has created a realistic picture of Theo's troubled personality.

Be prepared to devote much time to this book. Make it a long leisurely read. You will savour Scott's prose describing the sea and landscapes.

This book is available via www.allisonandbusby.co.uk/book/night-calypso.





Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

Magical Mayreau

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Carriacou Kids' Sailing Club

… and more!

Tide's Table

BY ROSS MAVIS

Eggs Get a Bum Rap

In my humble opinion, condemning eggs as cholesterol-laden killers is like condemning all sharks because some have been responsible for attacks on humans. Too often we go to extremes in trying to solve a problem and in doing so we create other problems. Eggs have been eaten by man for countless centuries. As early as 2,500 BC, fowl were raised domestically for eggs and meat. However, in the past hundred years, more and more of us expect and demand as much as possible from life. Many people today not only want their share of everything good, but also their neighbors' share as well. It is this insatiable appetite to have more than we require, that causes us so much difficulty. This applies to food, resources, money and probably sex.

Okay, enough with the philosophy: let's talk about cooking — let's get cracking! Eggs, in moderation, should be a part of your diet. Egg whites are an excellent source of protein and riboflavin. Egg yolks are a good source of protein, iron, vitamins A and D, choline and phosphorus. It is the egg yolk that contains cholesterol; about 200mg of the suggested 300mg daily maximum recommended for adults. Some low-cholesterol eggs are now on the market. These have less than 200mg of cholesterol due mainly to the manner in which the chickens are bred and fed. However, these sophisticated eggs are in small supply and are somewhat expensive.

Egg substitutes are available in small cartons. This product is usually comprised of egg whites, starch, skim-milk powder, vegetable oil and other additives. These imitation eggs contain no cholesterol but have almost as much sodium as real eggs. Let's face it, God has been making eggs for eons and they can't be beaten as a simple food or as an additive to many recipes.

Remember to store your eggs in a refrigerator. Storing eggs at room temperature causes them to lose a great deal of their quality very quickly. Keep eggs in their carton. Don't unpack them or put them in your refrigerator egg holder. Eggs will pick up odours from food stored in their proximity. Fresh eggs can be refrigerated for up to a month.

An easy way to measure an egg's freshness is to place it unbroken in a deep dish of water. Newly laid eggs have little air buoyancy in them, are relatively heavy and will sink and lie flat on the bottom of the container. Week-old eggs have had time to develop an air pocket in the broad end of the shell, providing buoyancy and will tilt with the broad end slightly upward. Eggs several weeks old will stand upright in the water.

Remember, don't remove eggs from your diet but do eat them in moderation. Here



is a unique way for you and a few friends invited for onboard brunch to enjoy the benefit of eggs.

Egg Omelet Roll

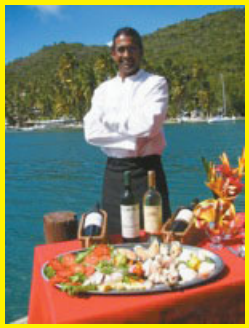
10 eggs, beaten
1 Cup milk
1/3 Cup flour
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 sweet pepper, diced
1 Cup grated cheddar cheese
1 teaspoon chopped oregano
Preheat oven to 350° F.

Prepare a 10 x 16 inch baking pan by lining with parchment paper and spraying lightly with non-stick spray. (If parchment paper is not available, use aluminum foil to line the pan and spray well with non-stick spray.)

In a large bowl, beat eggs well and add milk and continue to beat. Add flour, salt and pepper and diced sweet pepper. Mix well to fully incorporate and pour mixture onto the baking sheet. Place in oven and cook for about 12 to 15 minutes. When edges are partially done, remove from oven and sprinkle with cheese and chopped oregano. Place back in the oven for about two or three more minutes until eggs are set and cheese is nicely melted. At this point, remove from oven and carefully roll egg up by lifting parchment paper from narrow end of pan. Be careful, as egg is hot.

When rolled, let rest for a couple of minutes and then slice and serve with your choice of salsa. What a great way to enjoy eggs!

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Dear *Compass*,

Stuart Dalgliesh's Letter of the Month in the May issue of *Compass* is right on — except he uses too broad a term when referring to "yachties". The proper yachtsman or yachtswoman, of which there are all too few sailing today, when anchored in Saltwhistle Bay would be either moored bow and stern (with either bow or stern facing into the swell depending on the design of the boat), or anchored on a proper Bahamian moor as is described on the back of all Imray Iolaire charts. If anchored with a Bahamian moor — i.e. two widely spaced anchors set from the bow — the boat will swing to wind or current, but will take up little more space than a circle slightly larger than the length of the boat.

The proper yachtsman or yachtswoman would not be bringing garbage ashore and throwing it in the mangroves, and when they saw the beach and mangroves being cleaned up would immediately pitch in and help.

What Stuart is describing as "yachties" the late Ross Lulley (1923 – 1991) would describe as "water people". Ross founded a fishing supply shop in Bequia in 1950. I remember Ross saying, "I have been watching the yachting scene develop over the last 40 years. I spent 18 months in China right after World War Two on a navy ship in various harbors. We dealt continually with water people, so I know what water people are. As each year goes by, I see more and more water people and fewer and fewer yachtsmen."

Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

Dear *Compass*,

We are liveaboards who have been traveling the beautiful Caribbean for more than two years. Recently, while anchored in Tyrell Bay, Carriacou, I was witness to the most shocking and sad event I'd seen in my whole trip. On May 28th two local men who are often aboard an old wooden sailboat at anchor in Tyrell Bay were cleaning their boat. One filled up a big cardboard box with trash and handed it to the other man on deck, who dumped all of its contents overboard, right in the middle of the anchorage in front of everybody. This was shocking enough, but they filled up the cardboard box again and dumped some more. The box must have held around four cubic feet of garbage. Not the biodegradable kind, either: mostly tin cans and plastic tied up in bundles. This dumping went on for about an hour under the eyes of many horrified boaters. By the time the two dumpers were finished, the floating garbage line stretched about a mile out the



bay and off the coast of the new marine park, a delicate, supposedly "protected" area. But can we still call that a marine protected area if dumping goes on without any sanction?

Actually, one visiting boater, coming back to her yacht in her dinghy, did slow down and ask, "What are you doing?" One of the men loudly told her to go to hell and threw trash at her, yelling that the water was "his". These guys' behavior was clearly a danger to the environment, and we visiting boaters got the feeling that they might be a danger to us, too!

When I saw this trashing, I went to one of the local dive shops in Tyrell Bay to let them know what was going on, and to make them aware that a mile-long garbage line was sadly but surely traveling toward the park's reserve. The dive shop phoned the Port Authority, hoping they could stop this guy's trashing. As far as I know, no one from the Port Authority showed up.

More dumping occurred on May 30th. These madmen got rid of more cans, plus an old rusty freezer that almost hit a catamaran as it floated out of the anchorage.

I am outraged. How could something like this happen? Was it all we could do to watch silently? But these incidents are in the past, and we still have the future. In the future, there is at least one thing we can do. These guys, in addition to dumping trash into the pristine waters of Tyrell Bay, also sell wine to the boaters anchored there. Next time one of them arrives at your boat, you can decide if you want to support these litterbugs or not. I also encourage everybody who witnessed any of this dumping to mention it while clearing out at Customs. Let's hope that if enough people spread the news, it might reach the Board of Tourism. Then maybe action can be taken against such activity before it drives away all the tourists.

Please sign me,
Concerned for a Clean Carriacou

Dear Concerned,

We passed your letter on to Edwin Frank of the Grenada Board of Tourism for his response, which follows.

CC

Dear *Compass* Readers,

Further to being made aware of a letter of complaint regarding the experience of dumping that was witnessed in Tyrell Bay in Carriacou, the Grenada Board of Tourism is both shocked and appalled that this behaviour was indeed factual.

Indeed, the Board is grateful that this opportunity is being provided by the popular *Compass* magazine for it to express its total abhorrence of such behaviour, and to make it known that the matter has been drawn to the attention of the Royal Grenada Police Force who are at present being aided in their investigations by the alleged culprits. It is important to note that there was an immediate reaction by one of the dive shops in Carriacou, Lumba Dive, who contacted the wardens of the Marine Protected Areas (SIOBMPA).

Clearly by its own modus operandi, the Grenada Board of Tourism is aware of the need to constantly protect both the land and marine environment. It is therefore truly regrettable that unscrupulous individuals would have chosen to embarrass Grenada so wantonly by their actions.

There is no doubt about the huge contributions that yachting visitors make towards the sustainable and balanced development of Carriacou's tourism industry. Indeed the people of Carriacou are saddened to learn of this incident, since they pride themselves as being environmentally conscious and frown constantly on any form of littering. Just recently a group of 34 divers and non-divers on the island participated in a massive beach clean-up campaign, which is one of several such clean-up initiatives that are organized annually.

The Grenada Board of Tourism expresses its gratitude to the visiting yacht personnel for expressing their disappointments and urges all yacht users to call (473) 405-7490 to report any illegal activity that they may witness.

Sincerely,
Edwin Frank
Public Relations Officer
Grenada Board of Tourism

Dear *Compass*,

Kudos to Kyocera and Island Water World!

When I built my cat, *Ti Kanot*, back in 2001, I bought enough 50-watt Kyocera solar panels from Island Water World in St. Maarten to take up the available space on my hardtop. At first these worked like a giant; I was delighted when my panels actually broke a 20-amp fuse, and they easily kept up with my small fridge, lighting and computer.

However as the years passed, it seemed to me I was getting a little less power each year. In order to keep up I added another solar panel (different make), and that got me by for a couple of years. Then even that was not enough, so I bought a windmill to try and make up the difference. But by last year, in full sun, the panels which once broke a 20-amp fuse almost never limped as high as ten amps even in the strongest sunlight.

I complained about this to Brian at Caribbean Marine in Trinidad and he told me, "The panels almost never go bad; it must be your system." So I had him come and check everything and eventually he agreed — the panels were not performing as they should. He added, "Kyocera are an excellent company. You should contact them".

I think to myself, "It is now ten years later. I know where I bought the panels, but I have no receipt or record of the purchase. I doubt I will get far."

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

Nonetheless, I took the serial numbers and dropped an e-mail to Kyocera. I was delighted and surprised when they were completely helpful from the start and offered to replace the panels at my convenience. We had a little back-and-forth about which panels they should replace the old ones with, as panels of the original size were no longer available. Once that was decided, they shipped the new panels to arrive at Island Water World when I was in St. Maarten. Island Water World also went beyond the bounds of reasonable service: they not only received the new panels for me, but took care of all the packaging of the old panels (no small job) which had to be returned to Kyocera. (Kyocera paid for the freight.)

I have been absolutely delighted with the result. The new panels, watt for watt, are putting out about twice as much as the old ones, once again giving me ample power. It is a great pleasure to be able to report on such excellent service from both companies.

Sincerely,
Chris Doyle
Ti Kanot

Dear Compass,

Having crewed on yachts myself and searched for crew work I completely understand a common and growing frustration among crew-workers about free crew labor. In a blog written by Alistair Le Poer Trench on dockwalk.com (www.dockwalk.com/MyDockwalk/Blogs.aspx?id=41054&blogid=33356), he describes how newbies in the industry in the Mediterranean are sometimes forced into working for free to gain experience.

Unfortunately a similar situation can be seen in the Caribbean, and in some ways the situation is even worse in the Caribbean than what Alistair describes in Palma. Some captains now expect you to pay in exchange for work and a couple of sea miles. As far as I know this is an unheard-of phenomenon outside the sailing industry. Furthermore, often the owners forget to inform the crew about the regulation laid down by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), which states that repatriation is required for deliveries and moreover, that the crew have the right to get a flight back to their country or place of embarkation or the boat can be held until Immigration for that country is satisfied.

As pointed out by Alistair, working for free is "a slippery slope for other dayworkers that are also trying to get work." It's not good for you or the industry. For the industry as a whole it is bad, as it will force the quality of the crew down. As Alistair writes on his blog, "Experienced dayworkers will be forced to lower their rates to compete. Owners will reduce their budget for dayworkers and so it goes on until it is 'the norm' for newbies to be paid nothing for daywork in exchange for 'experience' and something to write on their CV." This may in the long run force the better qualified to leave the industry they love until there is nothing else left than inexperienced and unprofessional crew.

I feel that even these inexperienced or less experienced crew should be paid, perhaps less than the experienced crew, but they still hold value and if the shit hits the fan, they could prove to be essential. Owners would expect if the boat got into troubled water that even the unpaid crew would assist the captain with every request that is asked. But how much can you as an owner expect from an unpaid crew? You get what you pay for!

Best,
Karin Rosen Christensen

Hello *Compass*,

I'm writing this to try and raise awareness of our fantastic and healthy coral reefs around Bequia. I live and work on Bequia as a scuba diving instructor.

On June 8th at Devil's Table reef, I was teaching scuba diving to our three PADI Divemaster candidates when we witnessed a big charter catamaran dropping lots of chain and their anchor directly onto the five metre (15 foot) pristine coral reef. This reef is on charts and has the west cardinal marker at the corner of it (no excuses for not knowing it is there). Two of my candidates work for a well-established local charter company as captain and first mate and the other is an international solo sailor. My three Divemaster trainees and I asked the people on board to move their boat to an area with no reef and use their tender to come out over the reef. They responded by saying they only wanted to snorkel. We could see underwater that there was already damage to the reef from their anchor and I told them that the reef wouldn't be there much longer if people anchored directly onto it. The captain of the boat then came on deck and told us "I know the waters around here — I know the laws" (obviously not as his keel was about one metre off the top of the reef) and dismissed our request for the catamaran to be moved. Eventually after much show they raised anchor and repositioned out from the reef.

We also had a well-displayed "diver down" flag (red with white diagonal stripe) on our dive boat which is used to indicate to other water-users that divers are in the water and to stay clear. The catamaran drifted directly over us. To protect my students I immediately sent up an additional delayed surface marker buoy, even though we were within the area protected by the dive boat's flag. With increased use of the same areas for boating, fishing, diving and other watersports we all need to be aware of other users and be considerate towards each other.

Dive Bequia (www.divebequia.com) has installed and maintains buoys on all the reef sites around the leeward coast, including two on Devil's Table. Everyone is welcome to use them, alongside the Dive Bequia boats, and they are designed to hold small-sized tenders (dinghies, etcetera). I have dived with many professional underwater photographers who claim that Devil's Table reef is the best site for breeding, macro life and healthy reef. The SVG Department of Tourism recently sent Emmy-award winning cinematographer Marty Snyderman and *Blue Caribbean* magazine's Solomon Baksh to take promotional underwater photos at this dive site with us.

Please, please respect the beautiful coral reefs and breeding areas so your friends, families and future generations of water-users can enjoy them too.

Wishing you safe, fun and exciting times on Bequia.
Polly Philipson
Bequia

Dear Polly,

According to the laws of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, "the northwestern coast of Bequia including the area known as Devil's Table between Latitudes 13°00.5'N and 13°00.9N and between Longitudes 61°15.37'W and 61°15.6'W" is a Conservation Area. Conservation Areas are the most lightly protected of the various types of marine protected areas, though, and currently anchoring is not prohibited in Conservation Areas.

However, it is illegal to "take or collect" corals anywhere in SVG's marine environment (without the written permission of the Chief Fisheries Officer), and one of the particular aims of Conservation Areas is to protect corals, so it seems obvious that inflicting anchor damage on coral — especially in Conservation Areas — should also be illegal. Chief Fisheries Officer Raymond Ryan tells us that the SVG government is, in fact, looking at revising the existing legislation and moving toward putting mechanisms in place to prevent anchoring in sensitive areas such as coral reefs.

Meanwhile, charter captains please be aware that if you damage coral, you are destroying the very beauty that you'll want to bring your guests to see next week or next year. Coral is a living organism and the bite of a metal hook and the dragging of chain over it spell death to the coral polyps and the reef. Destructive anchoring, even if technically legal, is not a sign of a truly professional charter skipper.

CC

Dear *Compass* Readers,

We just found a gem of a bay made especially for cruisers. It is called Salinas and it is on the southeast coast of the Dominican Republic. It is a large bay, protected on all sides creating nice, flat, calm water for a comfortable life on board.

We are anchored in front of the Salinas Hotel where owner Jorge Domenech has given us a great welcome and help with all our needs. The hotel serves delicious Dominican specialties at a reasonable price and docking at the marina is only US$10 a day. Power and water are available for an extra fee.

In the small, peaceful pueblo of Salinas we found a wonderful little restaurant named Rincon Marino. You are taken to a refrigerator where you select your fish. Then they prepare it to your order with salad, rice, plantains *frito* or french fries. The cost — around $5.

A former "client" of the restaurant was Natalia, the goat, who developed a strong fondness for beer, so much so she died at the early age of seven years of alcoholism. A painting of Natalia adorns the restaurant wall in a prominent place.

The main industries here are fishing and salt ponds where we see large pyramids of salt ready to be bagged.

The bay has a backdrop of the high Dominican mountains that reach the surprising altitude of 10,000 feet, the highest in the Caribbean.

We give this anchorage a big Five Stars and our recommendation for cruisers.

Bill and Soon Gloege
S/V Gaia
Morgan 38

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

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

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

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Letter of the Month

Dear Readers' Forum,

Having recently spent five months in Venezuela (Puerto La Cruz, Los Roques, Tortuga and Margarita; February through June 2011), we'd like to offer our perspective on visiting these areas by yacht. Although many fellow cruisers in Trinidad (who had never set foot in Venezuela) advised us adamantly that visiting Venezuela would be a big mistake, we made our own risk-benefit trade-off and decided to give it a try. We had three primary goals: spend several weeks in Puerto La Cruz to get numerous long-needed repairs done to our boat, spend some leisurely time exploring Los Roques National Park, and make a quick stop in Margarita to stock up on duty-free wine and rum.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit, to the extent that we have abandoned our earlier plan to continue westward (to spend the 2011 hurricane season in Curaçao) and now plan to keep our boat in Bahia Redonda Marina in Puerto La Cruz (PLC) for the rest of 2011. While crime remains a real concern, and the economic situation in the country continues to be difficult, there is much to enjoy in Venezuela. The climate is marvelous and the Venezuelan people lovely. Venezuelan fruit, vegetables, beef, chicken and seafood are outstanding and reasonably priced. Fuel is extremely cheap, and medical care is good and very affordable. As of current writing (June 2011), and mindful of the ongoing 25- to 30-percent inflation rates, Venezuelan prices are especially a bargain for anyone arriving with US dollars, as the "black market" exchange rate, easily obtained, is about double the official rate. This black market rate can also be a big advantage for planning inland travel to South American destinations or for visiting the US or Europe. Currently the official rate is about 4.3B/US$ and the black market rate is around 8.0B/US$.

Regarding crime, during our five-month visit, we never had any type of criminal incident, either in town or on our boat. Yes, some of the prior crimes against yachties have been especially heinous, but they seem to be the small minority now compared to the amount of "petty crime". A quick look at crimes reported on various websites (Safety & Security Net, Noonsite, WiFiGuy) show very few crimes against yachts *on the mainland* in the past 18 months, and *none* in 2011. A big reason for the reduction of crimes reported recently is undoubtedly the drastic reduction in the number of yachts visiting Venezuela, but the statistics are encouraging.

Margarita and Testigos seem to have the worst record for crime and yachts are behaving accordingly. We saw about 25 yachts in Porlamar in February 2011 (as opposed to at least 100 when we visited there in 2003); a friend reported only 12 there in May 2011. However, the Venezuelan Coast Guard is patrolling very visibly around Margarita and also eastward along the Paria Peninsula, and we understand the Coast Guard station at Testigos is taking more assertive steps to prevent crime in that vicinity.

All this said, most yachties we met who had been in Venezuela for more than a year had all experienced some type of criminal event (purse/bag snatching or petty theft being the most common). Such street crime is unfortunately also the case for almost all South American nations. We were very careful travelling around Puerto La Cruz: we never wore "good" watches or jewelry; we went to the big central produce market in small groups, but using the local *por puesto* taxis; we avoided walking in known *barrio* (slum) areas; we took bona-fide taxis in the evening if we went out to dinner. When anchored out, once the sun goes down, we always have our ventilated "burglar bars" well secured in our companionway and hatches, and of course the dinghy is locked up. When travelling any distance offshore or between islands, we paid special attention to nearby or approaching vessels, and had our response plan well rehearsed ahead of time. We sailed direct from Trinidad to Margarita, starting at night and staying 20 miles north of the Paria Peninsula, running with lights to simulate a fishing vessel rather than a sailboat. It was comforting to have AIS (receive only) on board, as there was always a large ship within eight miles of us that we could hail by name to request assistance. Although the ship wouldn't have guns, it would have cameras and perhaps be able to render medical or other assistance if needed.

Puerto La Cruz is clearly the yachting capital of Venezuela. The Doyle *Cruising Guide to Venezuela and Bonaire* (3rd Edition, 2006) gives a pretty good summary of the numerous marinas, major chandleries and marine services available, although it's becoming dated now that we are into 2011. For security reasons, yachts no longer anchor off the PLC downtown area (Paseo Colon); all yachts put into a marina in the El Morro Lagoon development area. We chose Bahia Redonda Marina, once the favorite of American yachties, and still where most cruising yachts choose to stay although the cruising community is now more European now that Americans have chosen to pass Venezuela up. Bahia Redonda is located in a well-protected cove, has floating docks, lovely grounds, a gorgeous pool, showers/toilets, barbecue area, cable TV and WiFi internet as well as two travel agents, a laundry, minimarket and a restaurant all located on-site. Directly next to the marina is a full-service boatyard with travelift. But best of all, Bahia Redonda has outstanding security 24 by 7, and several security guards are stationed around the grounds, on-duty all night long (one was even stationed at the end of our pier, 20 feet from our stern).

For our needs, PLC was ideal to get many long-needed labor-intensive projects done, such as paint, gelcoat and fiberglass repairs. We were so pleased with the workmanship and affordability that we also now plan to get even more improvements done during hurricane season. Less skilled but still very competent laborers for general boat cleaning, waxing and polishing can be hired for about 150 bolivars a day or you can contract by the job. US name-brand marine products can usually be purchased, but at a premium price due to import taxes, so bring your own or consider using similar Venezuelan (or other South American) brands that may be equally good and much cheaper.

The Margarita Customs, Immigration and Capitania offices are now all co-located there in Porlamar just a bit east of Marina Juan, thus making clearance a much easier process than before. You can clear in/out yourself, although some knowledge of Spanish will be helpful, or Marina Juan can also be hired to serve as your agent. Marina Juan still provides a secure dinghy dock and arranges a free shuttle bus several times a week to the Sigo supermarket, which has a great grocery selection as well as the duty free shop. In February 2011, there was no longer any WiFi service in the anchorage although some yachts anchored on the western side could poach off private signals from the beachfront hotels.

We also spent several memorable weeks in the truly magnificent and very special Los Roques Archipelago, a Venezuelan National Park. Crime continues to be unheard of here. Gran Roque is still not a port of entry and if yachts present themselves to the authorities without proper clearance into Venezuela, they will not receive a warm welcome. The current park fees (just increased in March 2011) are 152 Bolivares per person and 22.8 Bolivares per foot boat length for a 15-day stay. This can be renewed for a second 15-day period by paying the same fees again.

Regarding other cruising grounds in eastern Venezuela, the prevailing advice for the Mochima area and the western parts of the Golfo de Cariaco is to travel in groups of two or three boats and to be careful at night (no removable gear on deck; prevent human access to the cabin; lock or raise dinghy). The eastern end of Cariaco, particularly the village of Medregal, is still regarded as very safe and also an affordable place for long-term storage on the hard.

We hope this helps fellow yachties make a more informed decision about visiting eastern Venezuela in the next few years. We have also submitted articles to both Noonsite and the Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) which provide many more specific details on services, prices, etc, that would be helpful for a cruiser's visit.

John and Ruth Martin
Yacht *Moon Dog*
53' Amel Super Maramu ketch

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WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Shore Leave in St. Thomas

by Nanette Eldridge

At the end of May, Bruno and I spent Memorial Day weekend in St. Thomas with family members who were there on vacation. They had reservations for a condo at the Sapphire Beach Resort and Marina. We had docked our boat at the Sapphire Beach Marina two months previously for the Rolex Regatta, so we already knew our way around — or so we thought!

Our homeport is Ponce, Puerto Rico and we think of Sapphire Beach Marina as a convenient stepping-stone on our way to the BVI. It is located at the east end of St. Thomas near Red Hook and puts us right into the Sir Francis Drake Channel. It takes us close to 24 hours to sail from Ponce to St. Thomas. When we arrive, we like to spend a night in Sapphire Beach Marina to catch up on our sleep and regroup.

From Red Hook or Sapphire, it is less than two hours' sail to Tortola's West End for check in at BVI Customs. The Customs officials there are really helpful, and can make your check in/check out at the same time to save you a trip back. Grab a mooring ball, check in with Customs, then dinghy over to Pusser's at Soper's Hole for a Painkiller. From there, you can sail the calm waters of the Sir Francis Drake Channel to enjoy all of the British Virgin Islands — you will sail past some of the most beautiful scenic islands of the Caribbean, with easy line-of-sight sailing even for newbies.



What a thrill to wake up in the morning and sail a couple of hours to another island for lunch or dinner! There are numerous safe anchorages and a variety of marinas to choose from to suit your taste, and every island has its own local color.

Back on St. Thomas, one of the main reasons we like the Sapphire Beach Marina is the manager: Niles Pearsall is just one of the nicest people you will ever meet. He's always around to lend a helping hand. There are also larger marinas in St. Thomas. For example, in Charlotte Amalie, the IGY Yacht Haven Grand Marina (see photo) is ideal if you want to be in the center of town and do some serious duty-free shopping. You can also try the American Yacht Harbour Marina, which is centrally located in Red Hook. However, we prefer a more laid-back feel and Niles' personal touch, which reminds me of the theme from Cheers: "Where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came".

At Sapphire there is a pleasant private beach with a volleyball net already set up and a fabulous pool area. Bruno's 13-year-old grandson really loved snorkeling right off the beach — there are colorful corals, fish and sea turtles that you can swim right up to. I prefer just lounging on the beach, but it was nice to see Dominic having a ball in the water with his fins and mask.

The marina is located just a short taxi ride from Red Hook, about US$5 per person and well worth the trip. There is a wonderful outdoor café on the waterfront named Latte's, perfect for your morning cup of Joe and the bonus of people-watching. Across the street, you'll find a grocery store and some cool local restaurants if you are ready for a night out. Molly Malone's is a fun casual restaurant with live entertainment and a two-storey view of the water. You will find Mexican, Italian, Thai, and various types of Caribbean dining in Red Hook, so you have plenty of options.

We did not have a car when we visited St. Thomas in March, so I admit to not being conscious of the parking situation in Red Hook. On Saturday night, we drove around Red Hook looking for a parking spot near the restaurants. There was a parking lot that was obviously paid parking but no lot attendant, so we drove down the main drag and pulled into the only space we could find: a parking lot attached to some condominiums. We parked the car and took our chances that it would be all right for a couple of hours. I do vaguely remember seeing a large sign that read "PARK AT YOUR OWN RISK". But naturally, we didn't pay any attention to the sign!

We were in the mood for fine dining and ate at Pesce. After a wonderful dinner, we returned to the parking lot for the car. Too bad — the parking lot was locked up for the evening, and it was obvious that without a gate opener our car was going nowhere. So we caught a cab back to Sapphire Beach and prayed the car would be there in the morning.

The next day, Niles gave us a two-minute dinghy ride to Red Hook to get the car. It was sitting there right where we left it. Lucky for us, the lot attendant on hand was your average cool Reggae man. We explained the situation and he graciously informed us that we owed him $5 for leaving the car there overnight. He only works until 9:00PM, and then the gates are closed for the evening. He was not too surprised, so I assume this happens with tourists quite often. Car problem solved, we drove back to the hotel and marina, and enjoyed another great day ashore in St. Thomas.

Bruno Bruch and Nanette Eldridge of S/V Geronimo *are active racers who placed third in the Classics Division at the 2011 BVI Spring Regatta. They continue to cruise around the Caribbean while making Ponce Yacht and Fishing Club their homeport.*

CALENDAR

JULY

1 Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda (Vere Cornwall Bird Sr. Day) and the BVI (Territory Day)
1 - 3 Firecracker 500 Race, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), mcmechanics@surfbvi.com
4 Public holiday in the Cayman Islands (Constitution Day)
4 – 5 Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (St. Vincent Carnival)
8 – 10 KATS Premier's Cup, Tortola (IC24 youth sailing)
8 – 17 Dominica Dive Fest. www.dominica.dm/site/divefest.cfm
9 Bequia Fishermen's Day Competition. www.bequiatourism.com
9 – 17 Round Guadeloupe Race for Traditional Sailing Canoes. infocgvt@gmail.com
10 Public holiday in the Bahamas (Independence Day)
10 Underwater Clean-Up, Bonaire. www.dive-friends-bonaire.com/clean_up_dives
14 Bastille Day. Celebrations on French islands
15 FULL MOON
16 Cruzan Open One Design Regatta, St. Croix, USVI. St. Croix Yacht Club (SCYC), www.stcroixyc.com
16 – 1 Aug Tobago Heritage Festival. www.visittobago.gov.tt
17 – 20 BVI Billfish Tournament. www.beyc.com/index.php/bvi-billfish-tournament.html
17 – 24 Calabash Festival, Montserrat. www.visitmontserrat.com/Calabash_Festival
22 – 6 Aug BVI Emancipation Festival
23 Guy Eldridge Memorial Race/Cruise, BVI. Royal BVI Yacht Club (RBVIYC), www.rbviyc.org
24 – 1 Aug Carriacou Regatta Festival. www.carriacouregatta.com
27 Carriacou Children's Education Fund Barbecue, Carriacou. ccefinfo@gmail.com
28 – 1 Aug Canouan Carnival, Grenadines
29 Carriacou Children's Education Fund Charity Auction, Carriacou. ccefinfo@gmail.com
30 Cudjoe Head Celebrations, Montserrat.
31 Emancipation Day Regatta, St. Lucia. SLYC, www.stluciayachtclub.com
31 – 7 Aug Tour des Yoles Rondes, Martinique. www.tourdesyoles.com

AUGUST

1 Public holiday in many places (Emancipation Day) and Jamaica (Independence Day). Kadooment Day celebration in Barbados
1 – 2 Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda (Antigua Carnival) and the BVI (Festival Monday and Tuesday)
2 Governor vs. Premier Island Sloop Shootout, BVI
2 Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Culturama)
3 Public holiday in the BVI (Festival Wednesday)
5 Black Boaters' Summit, BVI. blackboaterssummit.com
6 Marigot Bay Race, St. Lucia. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), www.stluciayachtclub.com
6 – 7 Windward Fête, Lorient, St Barth's (boat races and fishing tournament)
8 Public holiday in Anguilla (Constitution Day)
8 – 9 Grenada Carnival
13 FULL MOON
15 Public holiday in Haiti (Assumption Day). Public Fête, St. Barth's
24 St. Barthélemy Day, Gustavia, St. Barth's (boat races, music)
25 St. Louis Fête, Corossol, St. Barth's (boat races, music)
27 Great Race (powerboats) from Trinidad to Tobago
28 Fishermen's Beach Fête, Castara, Tobago
31 Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (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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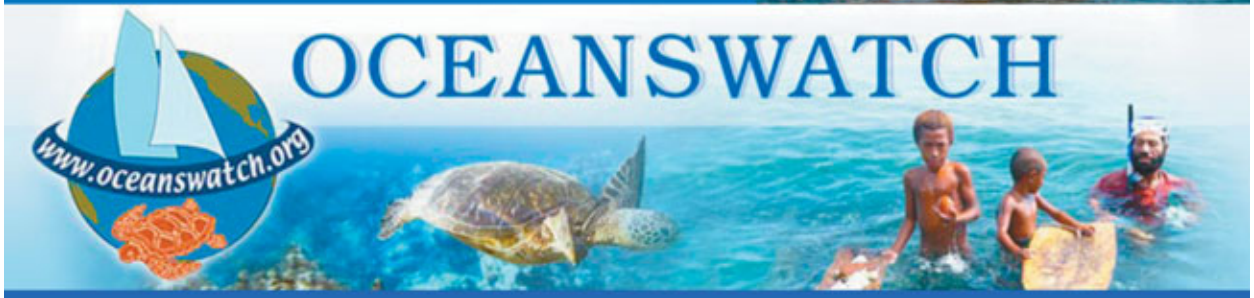
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Published by Compass Publishing Limited, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and printed by Guardian Media Limited, Trinidad & Tobago