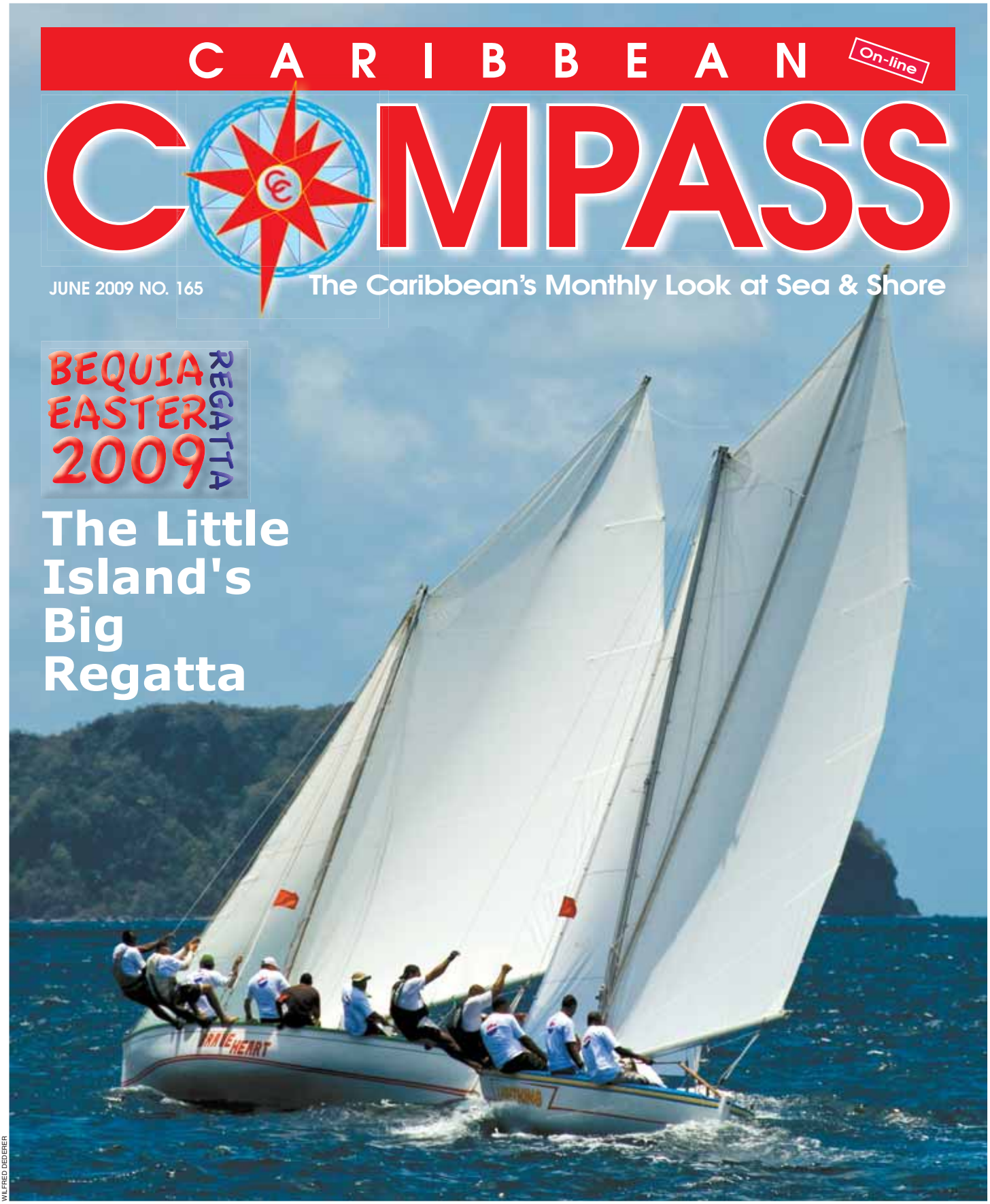
CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
JUNE 2009 NO. 165
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

BEQUIA EASTER REGATTA 2009

The Little Island's Big Regatta



WILFRED DEDERER



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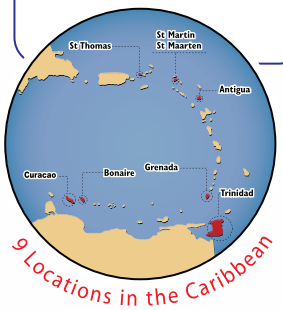
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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

www.caribbeancompass.com

JUNE 2009 • NUMBER 165



LEE WOLFF

Understanding Hurricanes

Know why they blow..... 20

Summer Cruising

Street says 'Do it!'..... 24



WILFRED DEDERER

Antigua Classics

Will, grace and gratitude..... 14



KATCHOR

Brunch Time!

Compass writers gather..... 26

Cuba, Yet Again

The Katchors can't stay away 18

Rainy Thoughts

A wet, wet day aboard 35

DEPARTMENTS

Business Briefs 8	Dolly's Deep Secrets 34
Regatta News..... 16	This Cruising Life..... 35
Destinations..... 18	Book Reviews..... 36
Meridian Passage..... 24	Cooking with Cruisers 37
Cruising Crossword..... 32	Readers' Forum..... 38
Word Search Puzzle..... 32	What's on My Mind..... 42
Island Poets..... 33	Caribbean Marketplace..... 44
Sailors' Horoscope..... 33	Sailors' Shots..... 45
Cartoons..... 33	Classified Ads 47
Cruising Kids' Corner..... 34	Advertisers' Index..... 47

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See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

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CALENDAR

JUNE

1 Whit Monday. Public holiday in many places
5 Labour Day. Public holiday in The Bahamas
6 St. Maarten Laser Regatta. St. Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC), tel (599) 544-2075, fax (599) 544-2091, info@smyc.com www.smyc.com
6 – 7 The Saintes Regatta, Cercle Sportif du Bas-du-Fort (CSBF), www.csbf-guadeloupe.com
6 – 7 Harris Paints Regattas, Barbados
7 FULL MOON
8 Queen's Birthday (UK). Public holiday in Anguilla
Corpus Christi. Public holiday in many places
14 – 21 19th Annual Jamaica Ocho Rios Intl. Jazz Festival. www.jamaicaculture.org/jazz
13 Public holiday in Cayman Islands and Montserrat (Queen's Birthday UK celebrated) and BVI (Territory Day)
19 Labour Day. Public holiday in Trinidad
20 St. Jean Pursuit Race, Martinique
20 - 21 Caribbean One-Design Keelboat Championships, St. Maarten. SMYC
20 – 27 International One Metre World Championship Regatta, Barbados. www.sailbarbados.com/iom.html
21 Summer Solstice
24 Battle of Carabobo Day. Public holiday in Venezuela
25 - 27 13th Annual St. Kitts Music Festival. www.stkittsmusicfestival.net
26 – 29 Charlotteville Fisherman Festival, Tobago
28 - July 5 HIHO Windsurfing Week, BVI. www.go-hiho.com
29 Fisherman's Birthday (St. Peter's Day). Boat and dinghy races in many fishing communities
30 – July 8 IODA North American Championships, Dominican Republic. www.optiworld.org

JULY

1 Public holiday in Antigua (Vere Bird Sr. Day) and Suriname (Eid-ul-Fitr)
2 Curaçao Flag Day. Public holiday in Curaçao
3 Emancipation Day. Public holiday in USVI
3 - 4 17th Annual Firecracker 500 Race, Tortola, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), Tortola, BVI, tel (284) 495-1002, fax (284) 495-4184, mvh@surfbvi.com, www.weyc.net
4 Independence Day (USA). Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI. Carnival in St. John, USVI
6 Public holiday in Cayman Islands (Constitution Day) and Guyana (Emancipation Day)
6 – 7 St. Vincent Carnival (Vincy Mas).
Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines. www.carnivalsvg.com
7 FULL MOON
10 Independence Day. Public holiday in The Bahamas
10 - 12 Chief Minister's Cup Youth Regatta, Tortola.
Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC),
tel (284) 494-3286, rbviyc@rbviyc.com, www.rbviyc.net
11 Bequia's 14th Annual Fisherman's Day, bequiatourism@vincysurf.com
11 – 19 Calabash Festival, Montserrat. www.visitmontserrat.com
11 - Aug 1 Tobago Heritage Festival. Tel (868) 639-4441
14 Bastille Day. Public holiday in French West Indies
18 Volcano Anniversary. Public holiday in Montserrat
20 Luis Muñoz Rivera's Birthday. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
20 - 21 St. Lucia Carnival. www.luciancarnival.com
21 Schoelcher Day. Public holiday in French West Indies
24 Birth of Simón Bolívar. Public holiday in Venezuela
24 - 26 USVI Lifestyle Festival, St. Thomas. www.usvimf.com
25 Constitution Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
25 - 27 Rebellion Days. Public holiday in Cuba
26 – 3 Aug 44th Annual Carriacou Regatta Festival. www.carriacouregatta.com
27 José Celso Barbosa's Birthday. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
29 Carriacou Children's Education Fund Potluck Barbecue, Carriacou Yacht Club. boatmillie@aol.com
30 – 1 Aug Canouan Carnival. Tel (784) 458 8197
31 Somer's Day. Public holiday in Bermuda
31 Carriacou Children's Education Fund Charity Auction, Carriacou Yacht Club. boatmillie@aol.com

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

Cover photo by Wilfred Dederer: Bequia double-enders racing at the Bequia Easter Regatta 2009

Info & Updates

BVI & Grenada Implement 'Swine Flu' Check-In Changes

Following an announcement by the World Health Organisation (WHO) that the global influenza pandemic alert was increased to Phase 5, the British Virgin Islands and Grenada have made changes to their Customs clearance procedures for yachts.

Starting May 1st, new clearance procedures were implemented in the BVI to mitigate the impact of Swine Flu (influenza A(H1N1)) on the Territory. Her Majesty's Customs has issued an advisory stating that all Customs clearance procedures for yachts and other non-commercial vessels will only be processed through three designated ports of entry: Road Town and West End ferry terminals in Tortola, and the Spanish Town ferry dock in Virgin Gorda. Yachts wishing to visit Jost Van Dyke, Anegada or any other sister islands must first clear Customs at one of the designated locations. Visitors who fail to comply with the new procedures may be charged with illegal entry into the Territory. Cargo vessels docking in the BVI will continue to be processed at Port Purcell.



SANDY PITT

At least for now, the only place yachts can clear in on the island of Grenada is the Grenada Yacht Club (above) in St. George's Lagoon. The BVI has also limited its yacht entry ports during the swine flu alert

Similarly, all yachts arriving in Grenada during the current period of surveillance for Swine Flu will only be processed through two designated ports of entry: Hillsborough, Carriacou, and St. George's (at the Grenada Yacht Club), Grenada. You must clear Customs, Immigration and Health at Hillsborough or the Yacht Club before proceeding to any other destinations in Carriacou, Petite Martinique or Grenada. After you check in at Hillsborough or the Yacht Club, the Health Authority will issue you a pass that must be produced on request. All persons who disembark having signs of flu-like illness will be detained for further screening.

The precautionary measures in both the BVI and Grenada will be in place until further notice.

Meanwhile, the WHO is not recommending travel restrictions related to the outbreak of the virus. The WHO website, www.who.int, says, "Limiting travel and imposing travel restrictions would have very little effect on stopping the virus from spreading, but would be highly disruptive to the global community... Although identifying signs and symptoms of influenza in travellers can help track the path of the outbreak, it will not reduce the spread of influenza, as the virus can be transmitted from person to person before the onset of symptoms."

Navigation Note, Martinique

Jeremy Hobday reports: There are four fishtrap lines off Cap Ferre, the easternmost point of Martinique. They are marked with a small white float, but have at least 100 feet of floating line (interspersed with very small floats just to make sure the line stays on the surface) and are in 75 to 100 meters of water, about 3/4 of a mile offshore.

Grenada's Beausejour-Moliniere Marine Park

Chris Doyle reports: It's worth knowing that yacht moorings are available in the Marine Park on Grenada's west coast. There are four in Flamingo Bay close to the reef on the south side, two in Dragon's Bay, five on Moliniere Point near the underwater sculptures, and one on the north side of Grand Mal Bay. You have to attach your own line (leaving plenty of scope) to these moorings. There are currently no fees being collected.

Please observe the following:

• Priority for moorings is given to local commercial vessels (dive and day-charter boats), which often use them between 0930 and 1630. There is almost no commercial traffic after 1630, so visiting yachts are welcome to use them overnight. If you are staying during the day, you are welcome to take one if it is not in use, but if it is the last one and a day-charter boat arrives, please vacate it till another becomes free.

—Continued on next page

Port Louis Marina – another great reason to visit Grenada

Port Louis GRENADA WEST INDIES






Grenada remains one of the most unspoilt and welcoming cruising destinations in the Caribbean.

Now, with Port Louis, visiting yachts can enjoy the security and convenience of a beautifully appointed, fully serviced marina – located in the lagoon adjacent to the island's capital, St George's.

Grenada's southern location allows for year-round cruising, including the summer months, and with an international airport just five miles away, Port Louis is the ideal base for exploring the wonderful islands of the Grenadines.

As a Port of Entry, it's easy to clear in and out through Port Louis, and our 24-hour security, dockside facilities and marina-wide wi-fi all contribute to making your stay safe and relaxed.

Port Louis is owned and operated by Camper & Nicholsons Marinas, and our friendly and knowledgeable staff are on hand 24 hours a day to welcome yachts of all sizes from 20ft to 300ft.

For more information about securing a berth at Port Louis, including the opportunity to purchase on a 30-year lease, please contact our Sales and Marketing Co-ordinator, Danny Donelan on +1 (473) 435 7432 or email danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com

Port Louis Marina – just one more reason to visit the 'Spice Island'.

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—Continued from previous page

Use a mooring if one is available. If not, it is possible to anchor in sand in Flamingo Bay. In Dragon's Bay there may not be room to anchor in the sand patch.



CHRIS DOYLE

Mooring and anchoring options are both available in Grenada's leeward coast marine park

In Moliniere, the moorings should be used, as there really is nowhere to anchor that will not damage the coral or sculpture. In Grand Mal there is a ton of room to anchor on the south side of the bay.

• All of the moorings are in ecologically sensitive areas and very close to coral reefs, which is great for snorkeling. Throw nothing off the boat. Do not use bleach or copious amounts of detergent, or pump your bilge while in the park. If possible, do not pump your head while in the park. If you must do so, throw any toilet paper in the garbage; do not pump it out where it can litter the reef.

New Yacht Trash Depot in Union Island

The Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) is continuing its efforts to ensure that garbage collection and disposal at the Clifton waterfront, on Union Island in the Grenadines, are managed in a sustainable way. As of April, a new garbage receptacle has been commissioned. The receptacle is intended only for garbage from yachts and vegetable vendors. Business houses will not be allowed to use the facility.

Pay a fee of EC$1 per bag when depositing your garbage. Your cooperation is anticipated. The fee will be used for the general upkeep of the facility and to pay an attendant. The receptacle was co-financed by the TCMP, Uniclean and the St. Joseph Catholic Church, at a cost of EC$17,000.

Dinghy Dock and More for Cumberland, St. Vincent

The mixed reputation of the leeward coast of St. Vincent is poised for a major upgrade, thanks to the plans of the community-based NGO the Cumberland Valley Eco-Tourism Organisation to run a new visitor-service and recreation facility for both cruisers and locals at Cumberland Bay. Cumberland Bay is well known as one of best and most beautiful anchorages on St. Vincent, but has also suffered over the years from security concerns.

With support from the government of St. Vincent & the Grenadines and funding from the European Commission, the new Cumberland Beach Recreation Park is designed to include a dinghy dock, office, restaurant, mini-market, washrooms, a laundry facility and areas for local handicraft sales, all located on the north side of the river that bisects the beach. There is also ample flat land that could be used for picnics and games such as volleyball, bocce ball (boules) or cricket. Construction of the complex has already begun, and is expected to be completed by late summer this year. The NGO members are well aware of the security concerns of visiting yachtspeople, and have had community members trained in security by the Port Police.



The new Cumberland Beach Park, being developed on the flat land seen behind the yacht in this photo, will include services and recreation facilities for visiting sailors and Vincentians alike

In addition to the new facilities on site, guides can be arranged for visits to natural attractions in the nearby rainforest, including the Cumberland Nature Trail for birdwatching and the spectacular, multi-drop Dark View Falls.

—Continued on next page



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- Seru Boca Marina is a safe harbor that offers 24 hours security.

Seru Boca MARINA

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E-mail: stbarba@attglobal.net
www.santabarbaraplantation.com

Santa Barbara Plantation
AT SPANISH WATER

—Continued from previous page

The Cumberland Beach Recreation Park is part of a program of developing sustainable tourism and recreation sites on the island of St. Vincent, along with a National Parks System, to create new employment to offset the decline of the island's banana sector. NGO members are being trained to manage and maintain sites in their own communities, especially those linking with the environment, heritage and culture of the island.

Montserrat Welcomes More Yachts

The Montserrat Tourist Board (MTB) is happy to announce that the yachting sector has seen a 62-percent increase in yacht arrivals since 2005. Up from 219 yacht arrivals in 2005, arrivals in 2008 reached 354 yachts and brought a total of 1,840 passengers to the island.

Yachtsmen can call at the Port of Little Bay. Immigration information and downloadable Customs forms are available on the MTB website, www.visitmontserrat.com.

In Memory of Paul van Beek

As reported in last month's *Compass*, long-time Caribbean charter skipper Paul "Piggy" van Beek, born in England in 1947, died on March 17th. At age 24, Paul bought one of the early Caribbean charter boats, *Flica II*, with a friend. Paul sailed *Flica II* to Bequia, but not finding any work there, he sailed her to Europe. Learning that owning a boat was not cheap, he and his girlfriend, Jojo Tobitt, took up running other people's boats, including the famous Ocean 71 *Sealestial*.

Having bought a plot of land in Antigua, Paul decided to build a house for Jojo and their daughter, Shayne. He bought into Seagull Services with Flemming Niehorster and also invested in Barbuda Express. Piggy was also very much involved in the Antigua Yacht Club, and was Vice Commodore in 1998; he may have been best known as the MC during Antigua Sailing Week's Lay Day at the Yacht Club. He also helped with the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta and Fincham Follies, a cabaret that is put on every year at the Nicholson Charter Show to raise money for charities in Antigua. He will be missed.

Thanks for Cary Byerley for information in this report.



ISHWAR PERSAD

Montserrat's efforts to welcome yachts have paid off with a big increase in arrivals at the island's port of entry, Little Bay

Cruisers' Site-ings

- Julia Bartlett reports: Folks preparing to visit the island of Margarita off the north coast of Venezuela will find the new website prepared by Robert the Wi-Fi Guy very useful. Check out www.wifiguy.co.cc. It contains the latest weather at a glance, information on local services, security (what to do and places to avoid), the local wi-fi service, links to a whole horde of useful and fun websites as well as sailing sites, 1001 things to do with a can of tuna, Wi-Fi Guy radio, plus a whole lot more.
- The CNN Mainsail program that was filmed in St. Barths in March is available at www.cnn.com/mainsail. CNN Mainsail's double Olympic gold medalist Shirley Robertson sailed in the St. Barths Bucket Regatta.
- World solo sailor Donna Lange is back in the Caribbean, and cruising with a cause. Check out her latest adventures in promoting marine conservation and aiding coastal communities in developing Caribbean countries at http://oceanswatch.org/north-america/story/exploratory-trip-haiti.

Errata

In last month's issue of *Compass*, the lower photo in the report on the Rolex Regatta on page 13 is mislabeled. The boat identified as *Three Harkoms* is in fact the Morris 48 *Barra*.

The article "Ten Things to Do in Trinidad" promised for this issue of *Compass* will appear next month instead.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome aboard new advertisers IGY with The Yacht Club at Isle de Sol and Simpson Bay Marina of St. Maarten on page 11, American Yacht Harbor of St. Thomas on page 26 and Rodney Bay Marina of St. Lucia on page 47; and Sea Shells Apartments of Bequia on page 21.

Good to have you with us!



BUSINESS BRIEFS

Spice Island Marine Services Update

There are exciting developments at Spice Island Marine Services in Prickly Bay, Grenada!

John Moren has come onboard as the new Yard Operations Manager. John has a wealth of experience in the industry, including most recently manag-



ing a 30-acre boatyard and 345-slip marina in South Florida. His friendliness and meticulous attention to detail have quickly become assets in the yard and are appreciated by customers.

Also, the addition of two new services within Spice Island Marine greatly improves the product and service offerings. One is a woodworking shop, managed by the yard, which can produce high-end joinery, decking and brightwork. Another new addition, GTech Marine, will be able to offer the full range of electrical engineering services for yachts, including design, schematics, installations, and repairs.

Already known as one of the cleanest, best located, and most efficient yards in the Caribbean, these new services, as well as John's background, further enhance Spice Island Marine's ability to take care of all their customer's needs. Everything from seasonal storage to total yacht refits is easily accommodated. Contact Spice Island Marine for any of your yacht repair and service needs while staying in or passing through Grenada.

For more information see ad on page 22.

News from St. Lucia's Marigot Bay

Years ago, Marigot Bay was a favourite getaway spot for St. Lucians with fun and romance in mind. But over the past ten years or so, the restaurants and nightclubs in the northern part of the island have proved to be a stronger attraction. Marigot restaurateurs and bar owners hope to change all that. "We want to see people coming back to the bay again and experiencing the Marigot magic," said Chef Jim of Rainforest Hideaway. "There are five restaurants, six bars and a coffee shop right here in the bay — and live entertainment most evenings.

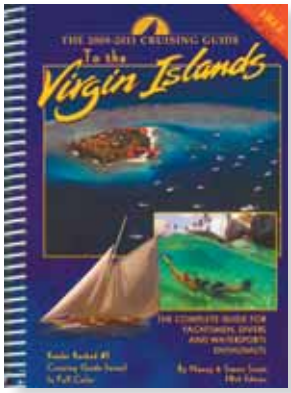
At a time when hotels and restaurants worldwide are closing for lack of guests, Mango Beach Inn at Marigot Bay (www.mangobeachmarigot.com) is opening its doors again. "We're busier than I dared hope," said proprietor Judith Verity, "and it's not just us. The smaller guest houses in Marigot seem to be surviving much better than the bigger hotels — we can keep our prices down and offer the kind of personal service that gives true value for money in these hard times. We're right by the beach and close to all the restaurants and bars and the Marina Village, so there's no chance of any of our guests getting bored."

The Marina at Marigot Bay welcomes boats over the summer. This year's St. Lucia carnival celebration culminates in a two-day parade of the bands on July 20th and 21st; call The Marina to reserve a berth and enjoy a luxury launch ride to the festivities. In hurricane and tropical storm conditions all moored yachts are separated from the dock and their neighbours by 13 feet and berthed with two ground lines/buoys and their own anchor. The marina's Hurricane Plan can be downloaded from www.marigotbay.com/pdfs/hurricane_info.pdf.

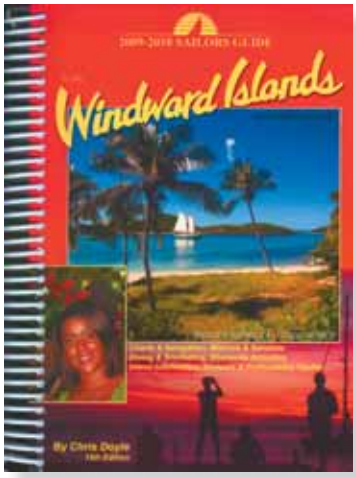
For more information on The Marina at Marigot Bay see ad on page 29.

New Editions of Top Cruising Guides

Cruising Guide Publications publishes comprehensive yachting guides that are perennially popular



among cruising and chartering sailors. For over 30 years they have been researching the islands and waters of the Caribbean for bareboat charterers, cruising yachtsmen, scuba divers and watersports enthusiasts. Two of their longest-running and best-selling guides are Nancy and Simon Scott's *Cruising Guide to the Virgin Islands,* and Chris Doyle's *Sailors Guide to the Windward Islands.* Both are now in their 14th editions, and these new and fully updated editions are now available.



Completely revised and updated for 2009-2011 with full color sketch charts, the Virgins guide has been indispensable for sailors since 1982. It includes a free 17" x 27" color planning chart covering the Virgin Islands from St. Thomas to Anegada.

Revised and updated for 2009-2010, the Windwards guide features detailed sketch charts based on Doyle's own surveys, aerial photos of most anchorages, and clear and concise navigational information. It covers the islands from Martinique to Grenada, with dazzling scenic photography, unsurpassed onshore information, sections on exploring, provisioning, watersports, services, restaurants and photography. Information is linked to the author's website where you can download town maps and GPS waypoints from the sketch charts, and obtain links to local weather, news and more.

Both books are available at bookstores and chandleries in the islands, or from www.cruisingguides.com.

Forum Ponders Caribbean Charter Show Conflict

As Michael Howorth reported to *IBI Magazine* on May 7th, charter brokers from around the world gathered in Genoa recently for a forum hosted by the Mediterranean Yacht Brokers Association (MYBA) to discuss the issue of conflicting dates for the two major Caribbean yacht charter shows.

—*Continued on next page*

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PARTS & POWER

—Continued from previous page

Last year, the 47th annual charter show in Antigua started on December 4th, and the newer (fifth annual) show in St. Maarten opened on December 6th, essentially forcing charter brokers and yachts alike to pick one show over the other.

According to Howorth's report, MYBA chairman Neil Cheston admitted that the MYBA had perhaps not made the right move when it rescued the then-failing St. Maarten show, but the association's action was with a clear mandate from its membership. He said that the MYBA would honor the terms of its contract with the St. Maarten Trades Association (SMTA) and support the show through 2009 and 2010.

Jeff Boyd, president of the SMTA, then offered to absolve the MYBA from that obligation to the 2010 show, but regretted that plans were too far advanced to do the same for this year's event. He did not specify how future shows would be handled, but said he was confident that there would be a show in St. Maarten in 2010.

Forum delegates were divided as to which of the two Caribbean shows should become the chosen vehicle to promote the aims of the yacht charter industry. A suggestion that the show alternate annually between St. Maarten and Antigua was emphatically refused by Janetta Miller, speaking on behalf of the organizers of the event in Antigua, a venue that has hosted a charter yacht show for the last 48 years.

At the end of the session, Howorth wrote, there remained no conclusive agreement and it seems that the two shows will continue to go head to head, despite suggestions from delegates that doing so would badly affect the industry at a time when it was already suffering from the global financial situation.

For more information on the Antigua Charter Yacht Show visit www.antigua-charter-yacht-meeting.com. For more information on the St. Maarten Charter Show visit www.mybacaribbeanshow.com.



Today, maritime vocational training and certification is essential for those entering careers in professional yachting and commercial shipping. Here, Kellee Myers of Bequia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, receives his diploma from the Chapman School of Seamanship in Florida

Bequia Student Graduates from Chapman Seamanship

Since opening its doors in 1971,the Chapman School of Seamanship in Stuart, Florida, has provided maritime vocational training for over 16,000 students from around the world, including many from the Caribbean. The school was founded by the late Glen D. Castle and the late Charles Frederic Chapman, author of the best-selling *Piloting, Seamanship & Small Boat Handling*, because of their concern for the lack of maritime vocational training other than at four-year institutions.

Kellee Myers of Paget Farm, Bequia, graduated from the Chapman School on March 27th. Kellee, age 19, is the son of Rosetta and Tim Myers of Bequia and is a 2008 graduate of the Bequia Seventh Day Adventist Secondary School. He was active in the Bequia Rotary Club's sail-training programme, Bequia Youth and the Sea, and was captain of the programme's J/24, *Yellowbird*. Kellee also participated in the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Coast Guard's educational summer programmes.

The photo shows Kellee (at right) receiving his Diploma and Certificates from Dean of the Chapman School, Stephen Miller. At the Chapman School, Kellee studied Seamanship, Rules of the Road, Marlinespike Seamanship, Weather, First Aid/CPR, Boat Handling, Piloting, Dead Reckoning & Electronic Navigation, and Boat & Engine Maintenance. In addition, he gained experience in close-quarter maneuvering, docking and undocking, sailing, and man-overboard procedures, and earned the STCW-95 qualification.

Dean Miller says, "It was a great pleasure to work with Kellee and I am sure all of his instructors here at Chapman feel the same way. We all wish him the best of luck in his maritime career. We all are sure that he will go a long way and be very successful."

For more information on the Chapman School visit www.chapman.org.

New Services at Nanny Cay, Tortola

Two new businesses have recently opened at Nanny Cay Marina: Solé Spa, offering spa and personal care treatments; and Island Roots, a clothing and coffee shop. Cameron McColl, co-owner of the resort and marina, says, "We are constantly striving to improve the services we can offer our hotel and marina guests."

Nanny Cay Resort and Marina is the host and presenting sponsor of the BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival, the Nanny Cay Nations Cup, the KATS (Kids And The Sea) Swim programme and the KATS Premiers Cup. It is host to ARC Europe and the Caribbean 1500's Atlantic Cup for the first time this year.

For more information www.nannycay.com.

Flynn for Mega-Yachts Only? No Way!

While Errol Flynn Marina in Port Antonio, Jamaica, is capable of handling larger yachts than any other marina in the Caribbean, some folks seem to have gotten the idea that they only cater to the "big ones". The marina's manager, Dale Weston, says, "Nothing could be farther from the truth; in fact, we have yachts as small as 20 feet in the marina and we welcome any size vessel. Regardless of who or what you are, you'll all get the same courteous, welcoming treatment that has become a tradition at Errol Flynn Marina."

For more information visit www.errolflynnmarina.com.



BEQUIA EASTER REGATTA 2009

DOUBLE-ENDERS' DRAMA AND DETERMINATION



ALL PHOTOS: WILFRED DEDERER

Top: On Easter Sunday, Class 5 boats at the start of the Friendship Bay to Admiralty Bay Race
Above: Waiting for Saturday's starts on Lower Bay Beach. The smallest class will start first

by Orbin Ollivierre

Oh boy, how time flies as de sayin' goes! But fo' some of us, it ain't reach fast enough. Fo' ah few months now, dey was ah lot ah gaffin' an' tongue-lashin' about who could beat who. Well, de day is here.

Yes, it's Saturday, 11th April, Easter Saturday an' we standin' on Lower Bay beach an' what a picture! We got 50 yacht wid all colour sail an' spinnaker an' 30 double-ender line up de beach, ready to do battle.

11:30, off dem go. We got some new names dis time. In de big class, we got *Bequia Pride, Lightning, Passion, Confusion, Bluff* an' *Braveheart. Cloudy Bay* enter but she not in de line-up today. In de next class, we got *Limbo* an' *Iron Duke*. Sorry, *Iron Duke* just break she mast, retired hurt. In de 18-foot 5A class, we got ah new name too, *Irie*. She in wid *Tornado* an' *Nerissa J*. In de 5B class is *Shamu, Devine, More Worries, Shannalou* an' *Dem Say*. After dat, is de small one dem. Ah can't tell yo' all dem name because de page go' full!

As ah say, dem all gone, de skies clear, sun hot an' de wind hittin' 18 to 20 in puffs from de southeast. Dat why we not feelin' much in Lower Bay. But when we get down West Cay, ah in de rescue boat an' ah begin fo' see sails in de water. One, two, three, four down already, t'ings bad. Lucky t'ing is de small one dem. Wait ah minute, ah say small but *Tornado* down too an' she is ah 18-footer. Rescue dem we will. On de south side, another 18-footer down, too, *Dem Say*, but she go' free sheself. Dem got about ah dozen empty plastic jugs strapped in so dem go' bail fo' dem life. Ah go' keep me eye on dem but ah not goin' close yet because is ah habit dem got ah rollin'. Dem got de record after *More Worries*; he down too. Fo' tell yo' de truth, ah ain't got time fo' watch de big boat, only fo' check all who in de water an' who left standin'! Ah see *Braveheart* sails flappin' an' she goin' nowhere. Dem old people say de ship dat cannot be controlled by de rudder will go on de rock — yes, she rudder gone! Another one in tow.



Left: Lightning's *Bob DeCouteau accepts Class 7 winner's trophy from Parliamentary Representative for the Northern Grenadines, Dr. Godwin Friday*

Right: Class 7's Passion *overtaking Class 2 champion,* My Love



We tek everybody on shore an' get to de finish line just in time fo' see *Lightning* flashin' through an' *Confusion* behind den *Bluff*. *Bequia Pride* break she dagger board so she drop way back after bein' in de lead. An' *Passion*, she limpin' slowly to de finish. In Class 5A, is *Irie* an' *Nerissa J* an' in 5B is only *Shamu, Shannalou* an' *Dem Say*. Fo' dem who capsize, dey done reach shore an' wettin' dem thirst an' t'inkin' 'bout tomorrow.

Sunday mornin' is here, de weather fair to fine, de breeze touchin' 10 to 12 knots. Clear skies an' everybody in good spirits. 10:30 an' off we go, 18-footers first. Dem doin' ah triangle off Paget Farm an' finish at Admiralty Bay Point. Den de big boys. *Limbo* tek de lead in her class an' so did *Confusion* wid *Bluff* right behind an' *Lightning* trailin'. As ah say, de weather was fine so nobody roll or break down.

Monday is here an' ah don't like what ah seein'. Nine o'clock an' not ah breath of air. Dem yacht out in de bay gettin' ready fo' start an' dem only bobbin' an' weavin', sails can't trap nothin'.

But dem man say let dem go downwind to West Cay. When dem go' reach dey, ah don't know. Dey tek over ah hour fo' reach Ship's Stern. Ah never know it had so many ways fo' move ah boat — some rockin', some scullin', some jumpin' in forward motion. Fo' tell yo' de truth, it workin' because dem reach West Cay but ah see some ah dem done burn out. When dey turn West Cay an' look up to Semple Cay, it sure look ah far way away but is only t'ree miles. But sun hot an' telltale can't even fly! *Bluff* out in front by ah long way. Somehow, dey all get to de Semple Cay mark an' downwind again. It got ah little air now but when dey reach outside Adams Bay, it cut off like ah tap. All boats, big one, small one together.

As dey turn West Cay fo' de last upwind leg, dem spinnin' round like top: some goin' north, some goin' south tryin' to pick up de air. It like it comin' from all direction. *Lightning* tack up de shore in Moonhole an' like she getting' ah little t'ing off de land. *Confusion* an' *Bequia Pride* goin' out north an' all de others stick up like blackboard. Is about t'ree o'clock an' ah see ah few clouds start risin' an' ah little ripple start on de water. At dis time, *Lightning* up front, *Bequia Pride* next, den *Confusion*. But ah tell yo' what it go' be, ah long wait fo' me on de finish line because de wind drop off again. Ah been around dis Regatta t'ing ah long time but dis race break de record an' is de longest dem boat ever tek fo' do dat course. An' ah ha' fo' give dem man credit fo' not ever t'inkin' 'bout retiring, no sah! De tension out dey too tight, nobody want to be chicken.

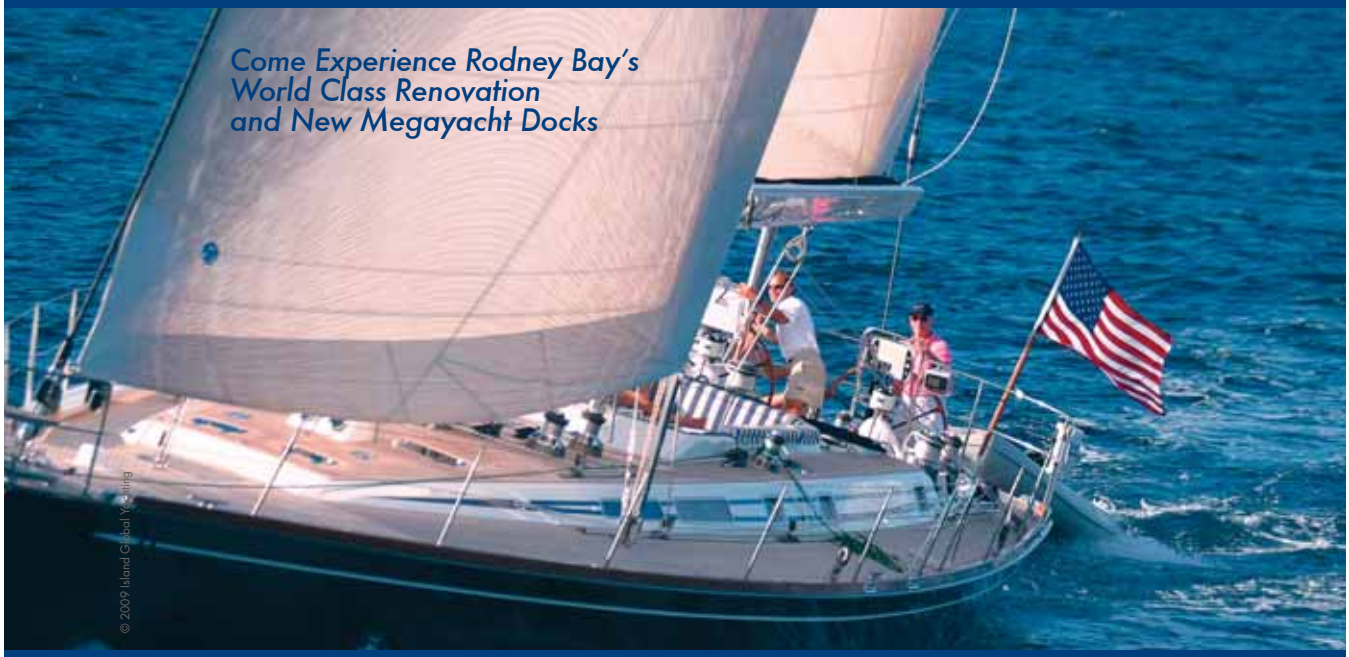
Dat good. Dey go' get fo' prove dem point in Canouan fo' Whitsuntide!

OVERALL WINNERS

Class 1 *Knowledge*, Ryan Marks, Bequia
Class 2 *My Love,* Stanley Harry, Bequia
Class 4 *Liberty*, Jamien Bess, Canouan
Class 5A *Irie*, David Taylor, Bequia
Class 5B *More Worries*, Andy Mitchell, Bequia (tied) *Shamu*, Ekron Bunyan, Bequia
Class 6 *Limbo*, Allick Daniel, Bequia
Class 7 *Lightning*, Benson Patrice, Bequia

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The Little Island's Big Regatta

by Sally Erdle

IT was Bequia Easter Regatta for the 28th time, and sailing to the eight-mile-long, northernmost Grenadine island to join 30 indigenous double-ended open sloops for a weekend of racing and good times were a record-setting number of yachts. Fifty came to compete from the proverbial "near and far" — but mostly near.

The yachts included one each from The Bahamas and Canada, three registered in the UK and six flying US flags, but the rest — with the sole exception of Bernie Evans-Wong's Bénéteau 40.7 *First Home* from Antigua, some 275 miles distant — boasted homeports in islands within about a 170-mile radius of Race Headquarters at Admiralty Bay. There were four teams from St. Lucia, five from Grenada/Carriacou, six from Barbados, seven from Trinidad, one from Dominica, and a *magnifique* 13 from Martinique. Bequia Easter Regatta 2009 was the southeastern Caribbean's own "neighborhood ball".

The ten-percent jump over last year's attendance was unusual in a year when many regattas in the Wider Caribbean Region saw numbers slump. Boosting the size of a yacht fleet that made Bequia Easter Regatta 2009 the biggest regatta in the Southern Caribbean were two one-design classes: a 13-strong J/24 Class and a brand-new Surprise Class — a 25-foot Joubert-Nivelt design — with seven entries. There were also a CSA spinnaker Racing Class (seven boats) and two non-spinnaker Cruising Classes, one for CSA-rated boats (11 boats) and one for full-time liveaboards and other "fun" competitors (ten boats). An additional two yachts signed up to compete only in the Singlehanded Race. Contenders in the Racing and Cruising Classes ranged from *Volterra*, a custom 80-footer, to *Caraïbes Gréement*, a Melges 24. Boats from Martinique made up more than half of the Racing Class and the entire Surprise Class.

During the regatta, April 9th through 13th, breezes started out briskly but dwindled to near calm on the last day. The J/24s raced six times over the holiday weekend on windward/leeward and Olympic courses. The other classes raced one course on each of three race days: Admiralty Bay to Friendship Bay and back on the Friday, around the island on the Saturday, and a harbor triangle on Easter Monday. Veteran CSA Race Officer James Benoit, from Grenada, and the dedicated volunteers of the Bequia Sailing Club, including Rear Commodore Noel Mawer as race office liason, did a very professional job of running the races.

Philippe Leconte's *Caraïbes Gréement* from Martinique dominated Racing Class with three wins to take overall first place. Richard Szyjan's modified Hobie 33 from Grenada, *Category 5*, came second overall, despite David Cillen's J/109 *Pocket Rocket*, also from Grenada, blasting from two fifth places up to a second place finish in the very light airs of the last day. *Category 5*'s being bumped into third place on Day Three in turn sent Martinican racing star Eric Baray on the A40, *Sonadio III*, from two previous third places to a fourth for the day, but that didn't spoil *Sonadio*'s overall third in class.

In Cruising Class I, *Acadia*, Burt Keenan's Frers 48 from the USA, scored a first and two seconds to emerge with class honors in her first Bequia Regatta. Frequent regional regatta winner *Petit Careme*, Trinidadian racing legend Rawle Barrow's Bénéteau 38, won Day Two's Round Bequia race, and with a second place, a first and a fourth, took overall second in class. Day Three's calm wrought a big change in this class also, with Peter Morris's Frers 43 *Jaguar* from Trinidad leaping out of a solid seventh place to grab top spot in the harbor triangle. Nevertheless, it was fellow Trini Lloyd de Roche's San Juan 34, *Nirvana*, which took overall third with two thirds and a fourth.

—Continued on next page



The Surprise Class winner, Padig (left), battling third in class, Clippers Ship

Peter Asselstine and his wife receiving prizes for their Cruising II win

Newcomer Acadia on her way to the top of Cruising Class I



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—Continued from previous page

Cruising II honors went to last year's second-place class winner, *Appleseeds*, with two firsts and a second. *Appleseeds* is Canadian Peter Asselstine's Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 40. Dave Baker's US-flagged J/37, *Carina*, placed second overall with two seconds and a third. Going into the last day, overall third was up for grabs among three boats having eight points each: *Dionysus*, American Jack Burns' Hallberg-Rassy 39, had a third place and a fifth; his fellow American Johnny Pollis' Hinkley B40, *Concinnity*, had a fifth and a third; and Thierry Paris' GibSea 51 *Fetard*, out of Martinique, had two fourths. *Dionysus* decisively settled the matter by snaring victory in the nearly windless last race.

The Surprise Class was equally fierce. Day One's results board showed Vianney Saintenoy's *Padig* first, followed by Nicolas Gillet's *Only* and Emmanuel Velasquez's *Clippers Ship*. On Day Two, the top three were reversed. Then came yet another Day Three upset: Gérard Corlay's *GFA Caraïbes* charged out of the basement into first place to shove *Padig* to a second place, *Only* to third and *Clippers Ship* to fourth. When the points were tallied, *Padig* emerged class victor with six points. *Only* came second with seven points, and *Clippers Ship* third with eight points.

Among the J/24s, Ian Mayers' *Esperanza* and Charlie Gloumeau's *Fadeaway* came from Barbados intending to take Bequia by storm, but met with intense competition in all six races — sometimes only hundredths of a second separated the first three boats. *Esperanza* ultimately topped the class, with four wins out of six races, followed by *Fadeaway* in second place with 23 points, and a hard-fought third for Robbie Yearwood's *Die Hard* from Grenada with 25 points. James Arrindell's *Jahaji Bhai* from Trinidad, Nick Forsberg's *Jabal* from St. Lucia and Trinidadian Stephen Bushe's *Ambushe* had their own tight tussle for the next three positions, ending up with 28, 29 and 30 points respectively.



Above: A J fray, with victor Esperanza *second from left*

Left: The J/24 Class rounds Admiralty Bay mark with other classes in the distance

ALL PHOTOS: WILFRED DEDEKER





Above: The Melges 24 Caraïbes Gréement *was unbeatable in Racing Class*

Right: A model Bequia boat for skipper Vianney Saintenoy and the Padig *crew*

Fourteen boats, including all seven Surprises, entered the lay-day's Singlehanded Round the Island race, which was not scored as part of the regatta series. The non-CSA class winner (and sole finisher) was *Klondike*, Donald Radcliffe's Bénéteau 456 from the USA, followed in less than three minutes elapsed time by the CSA spinnaker class winner, Nicolas Gillet aboard the Surprise *Only*.

Also energizing the Easter Sunday lay-day were the ever-hilarious Crazy Craft Race, Sandcastle Competition and other entertaining activities, and Easter Monday featured the Almond Tree Fête with cultural performances and music. Further enhancing the camaraderie, there was a daily prizegiving and party to wrap up each race day.

An estimated hundred or so additional yachts, bearing cruisers, tourists and former yacht racers from surrounding islands, came to Bequia to follow the sailing action, participate in the shoreside activities and simply enjoy Bequia *en fête*. Trinidadian-born, Antiguan-based racer Bernie Evans-Wong, a regular on the northern islands' circuit, said, "I'm seeing people here I haven't seen in 20 years — this is great!" And Trinidadian J/24 racer Donald Stollmeyer said, "We just love coming to Bequia. Rawle Barrow told me that even if he wasn't racing — even if there *weren't* yacht races — he'd still love coming to Bequia at Easter."

At the final prizegiving in the waterfront garden of the Gingerbread Hotel, Parliamentary Representative for the Northern Grenadines, Dr. Godwin Friday, told *Compass*, "In terms of numbers of people participating, this is the single most important sporting event in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It is also the most important annual event in Bequia, both economically and culturally. I hope to see it grow."

The Bequia Sailing Club would like to thank main sponsors Heineken (St. Vincent Brewery), Mount Gay and Pepsi (Bottlers Ltd.), The SVG Ministry of Tourism, Mountain Top Water, Tradewinds Cruise Club, the Frangipani Hotel, Windward Island Plantation and C.K. Greaves, and all the other business and private donors, plus the hardworking volunteers within the Sailing Club, and of course all the participants, for making this little island's regatta such a big success.

Bequia Easter Regatta 2010 will be run from April 1st through 5th — plan to be there and have a ball!

Thanks to Nicola Redway for information used in this report.

For full results visit www.begos.com/easterregatta.





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A Confluence of Paths

by Lee Wolff

ALONG with the universal symbol of Gratitude, I have the words "Will, Grace and Gratitude" tattooed along the outside of my right calf running from knee to ankle. "Will" for the will to pursue my dreams, "Grace" for the grace to receive and allow them (and all else that enters my life), and "Gratitude" for what I have. These are not in order of importance, and how I regard them changes from day to day or week to week.

At the moment, it is "Gratitude" that is uppermost in my mind, as I have just spent the past week in circumstances where, to this sailing girl, it would be hard to think of life being any better, perhaps with one exception.

I am presently in Antigua. April 16th through 21st, 2009 was the 22nd Annual Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. It's over now but the memories will remain with me for the rest of my days.

According to the official website (www.antiguaclassics.com), the race grew from an informal competition in the '60s to the formal Antigua Race Week in 1967 — "in those days, all the boats were classics." In 1988 the classics were separated out from the growing numbers of modern yachts in the event, and the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta was born.

"Over the years, The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta has maintained a steady growth hosting between 50 and 60 yachts every year," says the website. "These include a superb variety of competitors including traditional craft from the islands, classic ketches, sloops, schooners, and yawls making the bulk of the fleet, together with the stunningly beautiful Spirit of Tradition yachts, J Class yachts, and Tall Ships." Even through the eyes of the uninitiated, it is not difficult to spot a "classic".

This is my first year in the Caribbean and so my first as witness to this stunning spectacle. On each of the four days, the races began at 10:00AM and each morning my crewmates (affectionately labeled "boat groupies") and I were up early for the short dinghy ride from our boat, anchored in Falmouth Harbour, to the pier where we would begin the hike to the top of the hill that served as our vantage point, known as Snapper Point.

We sat under a wind-worn tree, one we shared with a couple of dozen geckos, a colony of ants (the kind that are too busy to bother us) and several varieties of bird life. This tree clings precariously to the hillside overlooking the body of water between Antigua and Guadeloupe that is the "race track" for this Classic Regatta.

On the first day of the races we arrived a few minutes before the "staggered start", meaning each Division starts at a different time, with the smallest and slowest boats getting the first gun.

To say I was overwhelmed by what I saw is an understatement. Whether I am actually sailing or just watching one glide past, the elegance of a sailboat is never lost on me and never fails to fill my heart with joy. This day I was awestruck.

Imagine describing the color blue to a blind person; this is the same conundrum I have when attempting to describe this awesome vista. With the wind blowing around 12 to 15 knots, enough to create a few whitecaps on the magnificent sea, almost every type of sailboat hull, sail and rig went past and with the island of Montserrat in the background, the stage was set.

Three larger boats in the Spirit of Tradition Class, the two J Boats — *Velsheda* with her gleaming dark-blue hull that reflects the water so beautifully, and *Ranger*, her white freeboard glistening in the sun — and *Rebecca*, a glorious 130-foot ketch, came into view, dwarfing boats that would otherwise be considered large. These examples of pure elegance charged past our vantage point and took my breath away.

My senses were bombarded; I didn't know which way to look. Sloops, cutters, ketches, gaff schooners, gaff ketches, yawls, all with their white sails standing erect in the morning breeze. Boats with names such as *Astor, Diva, Wild Horses, When and If, Stormvogel, Veritas, Blues Traveler* —names as varied as the boats they represented. My gratitude for the opportunity to see this was growing rapidly and many times over the next few days I would whisper to the powers that be a heartfelt "thank you" for my good fortune.

Tactics, strategy and just downright courage, fortitude and a bit of ol' lady luck were the order of the days ahead.

—Continued on next page



Velsheda *and* Ranger *in Race Three, as seen from our vantage point*



LEE WOLFF (3)

Close encounter during the final day's race. This photo was taken three seconds before the two J's touched



—*Continued from previous page*

One highlight was *Ranger's* rounding of a mark on the second day of racing. Approaching on a beam reach, cutting as close to the mark as she could with *Rebecca* on her starboard side, gave *Ranger* right of way. It was a brave action that served her well and put her ahead of *Rebecca* in one smooth move.

On the final day, an incident between *Velsheda* and *Ranger* astonished entrants and spectators alike. From my vantage point up on Snapper Point, I watched as both sailed on a windward leg in the final race. *Velsheda* and *Ranger* were both on a port tack, *Ranger* in the lead by about two boat lengths. She then tacked to starboard, forcing *Velsheda* to do the same. However, *Velsheda* stayed firmly on her port tack, looking for all the world like she had no intention of turning and tacking to starboard. I'd been watching this through the viewfinder of my camera and managed to record the action. Through my viewfinder, I watched *Velsheda's* bowman in his dark-blue jacket run to the bow and, while clinging to the sail and forestay, lean over to see just how close the two boats were.

It's then that I took my eye from the viewfinder. For the next few hours, my crewmates and I would speculate on what we had just witnessed from our particular vantage point.

Quite suddenly, *Velsheda* pulled up wind and steered a 180-degree turn. At the same time, *Ranger* luffed her sails, then, with *Velsheda* now out of her way, turned back and continued on her starboard tack. Meanwhile, *Velsheda* was now clearly out of the race as she was heading in the wrong direction and taking down her sails. For a few moments, *Ranger* looked as though she would continue the race but a then she too turned downwind and headed back to the mouth of the harbor.

We were stunned! No one, not those in the race who were close enough to witness the incident or those spectators on the hill, could fathom what had happened as these two beautiful boats slowly made their way back to the docks. Shortly after we lost sight of them the VHF radio came to life and *Ranger* announced to the Committee Boat officials that she would be launching a protest against *Velsheda*.

We watched the other boats come in and were pleased for many of our friends, who were crossing the finish line one by one, but the wind had been taken out of our sails too and we were desperately hoping that no one had been injured. We diverted our disappointment by speculating on what had happened to make these two stars of the show limp home halfway through the final race as we hiked back to the dinghy with less than our usual vigor.

It truly bothered this journalist that what I "knew" was purely speculation and I couldn't get the scene out of my mind. Then I had a brainstorm: "I have pictures of the incident — perhaps the skipper of *Ranger* might be interested in seeing them." This would give us an opportunity to get the real story. Stopping only to collect the USB cable for my camera, just in case they might want a copy, we headed straight for the docks and *Ranger*.

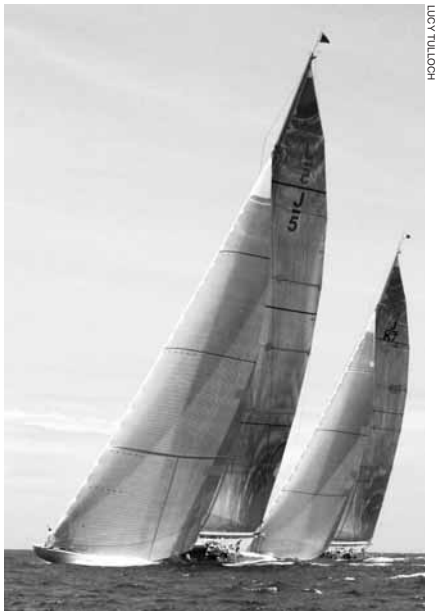
Most of the crew were busy taking down sails and cleaning the boat as we approached. Catching the attention of a crewmember that wasn't preoccupied, I told him of the photos I had. At that moment, I was more popular than Paris Hilton at the opening of an envelope. My excitement at my unexpected popularity keeps me from remembering exactly how many interested parties there were — at least three or four. I have no idea what their place or position may have been but they crowded around to have a look at the photos. Perhaps one of them was the skipper, though I didn't ask them to identify themselves so I still don't know. Regardless of this, once they had a look at the photos, they were very interested in downloading them and were doubly pleased that I had brought the necessary cable.

Most of the entries to the Classic Regatta have T-shirts, and sometimes hats, made with the name of the boat embroidered on them. These are then provided exclusively to the crew and serve as coveted souvenirs for the participants. This was true for *Ranger* and the desirability of these articles increases with the size and perceived importance of the boat. To my amazement, we were presented with both hats and T-shirts as a thank-you for the photos. Some say we should have held out for a lot more, but these gifts were so very unexpected and we were delighted.

My main motivation, of course, was getting the real story from a reliable source, a crewmember. As one of the crew handed us our "booty", we asked the question, "What happened?"

"We clashed masts," came the matter-of-fact answer. I was later to be told by someone on *Velsheda* that they clashed sterns as well but this was not mentioned in our conversation with crew on *Ranger*. "With *Ranger* on a starboard tack and *Velsheda* on port just behind us, I guess it's really not surprising: these are huge boats". He went on to say that "We had to take the strain off the mast and rigging by taking down the sails 'cause there is no way to tell if there's been any structural damage, so for us, the race was over. We won't know till we have some tests done; looks as though *Velsheda* has started with the inspection already." With that he pointed over to *Velsheda's* mast. Sure enough, someone was up in the mast inspecting her rigging. With that, we said our goodbyes, wishing them well and good luck. I do hope to see them again next year.





LUCY TULLOCH

Above: Before the incident, Ranger *(left) and* Velsheda *had some elegant duels*

Below, left: On Day Two, Velsheda *and* Ranger *at left, and the big ketch* Rebecca *at right, with others in the fleet: 'a superb variety of competitors'*

I don't know a great deal about J Boats and you can be sure when I return home to Canada I will be doing a lot of research into these elegant giants. Beautiful, sleek, with graceful hulls that slice through the water like a knife through butter, any research done will be a labor of love. Close your eyes and imagine yourself standing on her bow in a 15-knot wind on a beam reach. Yes, that would be heaven, wouldn't it?

It's time for us to leave Antigua. The overall results will be announced tonight at the prizegiving in English Harbour, an event I wouldn't miss for any type of inducement or enticement. If the past few nights are anything to go by, a good time will be had by all. Each night has offered varied types of entertainment, food, drink and atmosphere. The time and effort put into an event like this is monumental. If the efforts are reflected in the success of the event, then this Antigua Classic Regatta has been a huge success. I, for one, will never forget it and for a sailing girl it doesn't get much better than this: Will, Grace and Gratitude together in Antigua's 23rd Classic Yacht Regatta.

The exception that I mentioned is perhaps to crew during next year's race. Time will tell.

For full results visit www.antiguaclassics.com.

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REGATTA NEWS

Dominica Yacht Club at Bequia Easter Regatta

For the second time, the Dominica Yacht Club ventured into regional competition without one of its founding members, Anthony Gunn. This year, the DYC



DOMINICA YACHT CLUB

crew of Fitzgerald Charles, Allan Daisley, Natalie Pigeon, Kerry Verrahou, Joe Peters and team captain Hubert Winston sailed at Bequia Easter Regatta, April 9th through 13th, under skipper Ronan Budet.

The Bequia Sailing Club has always been welcoming to the young Dominican club, which participated in its first-ever regatta competition in Bequia back in 2006. Team DYC also gives special thanks to Robbie Yearwood and the Grenada Yacht Club for having the J/24 *Blue by You* brought to Bequia for them to sail. Team captain Hubert Winston says, "The Caribbean sailing clubs and associations can show regional leaders a thing or two about unity and working together for a common cause!"

With only their team captain having had experience racing a J/24 prior to Bequia, Team DYC did not fare too well this year, placing last. But if the last leg of the last race hadn't been forfeited due to light winds, they would have beaten one other boat. Winston says, "We have now gained much experience, and with added aids such as the CDs provided as gifts from the Bequia Sailing Club, we are already excited about Bequia Easter Regatta 2010!"

Dominica will host its first regatta in 2010 and looks forward to regional support. Stay tuned for further details.

***Rio* Rules at 42nd Antigua Sailing Week**

The list of boat names is legendary, and the roster of yachts that have captured overall honors at Antigua Sailing Week includes legendary names such as *Titan, Kialoa, Infinity, Sayonara, Morning Glory* and *Pyewacket*.

The 42nd Antigua Sailing Week was run from April 25th through May 1st, and on the final day of competition for the Division A race boats, a new boat joined the list when Charles Dunstone's Transpac 52, *Rio*, capped a dominating performance in Racing 1 with two more victories.

"We got what we came for, sunshine and 25 knots every day," said *Rio's* captain, Richy O'Farrell. *Rio's* largely professional crew (including many members of England's Team Origin America's Cup squad) also included former Duran Duran lead singer and Whitbread Round-the-World Race veteran, Simon Le Bon.

Rio, a Judel/Vrolijk design, has been overhauled for IRC competition and recorded second-place finishes in both Skandia Race Week and the Acura Miami Grand Prix, and a third in IRC-1 at the 2009 Acura Key West Race Week.

O'Farrell said, "Our Racing 1 class was pretty small in the end which was a shame. *ICAP Leopard* broke their boom on the first day and I think *Windemere* did some damage to one of their bulkheads so it was down to us (and the Rogers 46, *Yeoman XXXII*). But it's been good fun."

Early in the week, Antigua-based Jamie Dobbs's J/122, *Lost Horizon*, appeared to have a lock on the Racing 4 title. But when *Lost Horizon* suffered a broken boom midway through the week, Dig Van der Slikke's Grand Soleil 43, *Curaçao Marine*, from the Netherlands Antilles leapt at the opportunity, and earned the class honors.

In Division B's Performance Cruiser 1, Clive Llewellyn and Alec Schwed's Grand Soleil 50, *Mad IV*, from France had a runaway class victory. In Performance Cruiser 2, Hong Kong-based sailor Nick Burns earned eight straight victories aboard the chartered Swan 44, *Crescendo*. And in Performance Cruiser 3, Antigua-based Geoffrey Pidduck's 6-Meter, *Biwi Magic*, completed a stirring comeback after a sluggish start to win the very competitive ten-boat class.

In Cruising 2, Antiguan sailor Hugh Bailey finished a strong week aboard the First 456, *Hugo B*, to top the 15-boat fleet. The overall winner in Cruising 2 was USA-based Ulrich Rohde aboard the Swan 53, *Dragon Fly Plus*, which edged out *Hugo B* to earn the Cruising Overall title. The Danish sailor Poul-Richard Hoj-Jensen capped a perfect week — six wins in six starts — to capture in the International Dragon class. *Running Cloud*, Larry Pollock's Flint 54 from the USA, was the winner in Cruising Multihulls.

On Day Two of the event, Division A fleets raced 50 nautical miles in the Yachting World Around the Island Race; the Performance Cruising classes negotiated a 34-nautical-mile race to Fort James, while the Cruising divisions, Bareboats and Multihulls sailed a 17-nautical mile contest.

British racer Peter Harrison's Farr 115 ketch *Sojana* shattered the record for the Round the Island Race. With Virgin Island Olympic medalist and America's Cup veteran Peter Holmberg at the helm, *Sojana's* time of four hours, 37 minutes, and five seconds surpassed *Titan's* previous mark of five hours, four minutes, and 45 seconds.

For full results visit http://asw.result.vg/public/regattaindex.

825-Pounder Caught at 'Marlin Madness' in Tobago

Angler Jovan Jango on the 50-foot Bertram *Reel Fanatic* caught a 825-pound Blue Marlin on the final



The prize winner in Tobago's annual 'Marlin Madness' was only 65 pounds short of the event record

day of the TTGFA (Trinidad & Tobago Game Fishing Association) International 2009 Marlin Madness Tournament held on April 29th, 30th and May 2nd at Pigeon Point Heritage Park, Tobago. Twenty-nine boats with 143 anglers from the US, UK, Barbados, Martinique, Grenada, Venezuela and Trinidad & Tobago competed.

The TTGFA allowed 130-pound rod and reel tackle for the first time in the 29-year history of this tournament to give anglers a better chance at landing a 1,000-pound Blue Marlin. If anyone had been successful, they would have won TT$1,000,000 (approximately US$160,000). If anyone had broken the local record of 890 pounds held by 15-year-old Sean Mendonca, they would have received TT$60,000.

Jovan came the closest as he fought the big fish for six hours and 15 minutes. His team placed first overall as a result. Second place went to *Viking 4*, and third to *Fun Now*. Jovan also won Best Angler, with the Best Female Angler prize going to Teressa Jack of *Viking 4*. Best Junior Angler was Oma Davis, also of *Viking 4*. Seventeen blue marlin and seven sailfish were released during the tournament.

TTGFA President Chris Mouttet thanked the platinum sponsors Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, the Tobago House of Assembly and Carib Beer for their tremendous support, and promised that the new venue of Pigeon Point Heritage Park will be the home of many more big catches. The TTGFA President said, "Last year Tobago was put on the world map with Sean Mendonca's junior world record Blue Marlin. We will remain on the world's fishing map for 2009 as a result of Jovan's catch — and who knows what surprise catches are in store for us in 2010?"

For full results visit www.ttgfa.com/home.html.

Mount Gay/Boatyard Regatta Reaches Record Numbers

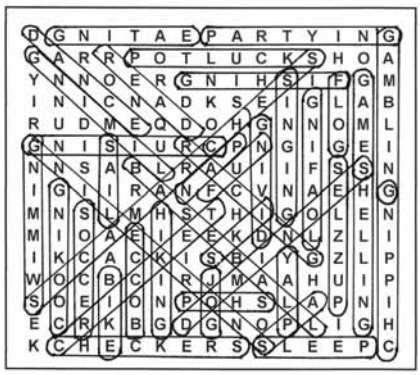
It was a record regatta in more ways than one. There was an all-time high of 37 boats, way up from last year's 23. They ranged from 24 to 80 feet long, and it was fantastic to see so many boats from Martinique, St. Lucia, Grenada and Trinidad make the beat to windward to race in Barbados!

Racing courses were not only in Carlisle Bay, but also along the south and west coasts of the island.

—Continued on next page



Fun & Games Solution



—Continued from previous page

The three days of racing showed variable wind strengths, with normal breezes on the Friday and Sunday race days and unheard-of zephyrs boxing the compass on the Saturday. Protests were minimal, despite the 14 keenly competitive J/24s battling from their own start line.



WILFRED DEDERER

Sonadio, *seen here 'warming up' in Bequia, was triumphant in Racing A at Barbados's biggest-ever Mount Gay/Boatyard Regatta*

There were two racing classes, two cruising classes and a J/24 class. In Racing A, the A40 *Sonadio* from Martinique, skippered by Eric Baray, beat local boats *Bruggadung II*, a Bénéteau 10 Metre sailed by owner Paul Johnson, and *Ninja*, skippered by former Olympian Shane Atwell, into second and third place overall respectively. In Racing B, *Tangalanga* from Grenada was dominant, taking overall honors ahead of the Ralph Johnson's local Beneteau 53F5 *Rapajam* and Steve Schmidt's Santa Cruz 70, *Hotel California, Too,* from the US.

Cruising Class A attracted only three boats, all local. Ron Hunt's J/30, *Jaystar,* took all the bullets, with Jerome Reid's *Jump Up* placing second in all races. Last was Geoffrey Evelyn's *Lantana.* Mike Krimholz's *Indigo* was the overall winner in Cruising B, with Irwin Gaffin's *MoGuffy* from the British Virgin Islands second, and third overall was John Hanshell's Beneteau 505 *Vagabond.*

In the J/24s, first overall was Robert Povey on *Hawkeye,* followed by Peter Hoad on *Jabulani* and Colin Symes on *Maximum.*

The Barbados Yacht Club and the Boatyard were wonderful hosts for the parties held each evening, where plenty of Mount Gay rum was readily available for thirsty crews. Next year's regatta — the 25th — will be from May 13th through 16th. Hope to see you there!

For full results visit www.sailbarbados.com.

2009 IOM Worlds for Barbados This Month

Renata Goodridge reports: The International One Meter World Championship Regatta will be held on Carlisle Bay, Barbados from June 20th through 27th. This will be the first time the International One Meter (IOM) Class has staged an event of this stature in this part of the world. Up to 76 skippers from more than 15 countries are expected to compete with their radio-controlled sailboats. Organizers hope to complete 25 to 30 races in the prevailing 12- to 18-knot winds.

The IOM Class was formulated in the late 1980s to provide a low-cost, uncomplicated box rule for radio-controlled yachts. The rule was worked out by a group of designers including John Spencer of New Zealand and Graham Bantock of the UK, who set out to create a class where amateur designer/builders could compete with professionals. The concept seems to have worked as the IOM has the strongest worldwide representation of any radio-controlled yacht class. The biggest fleets are presently in the UK, France, the US, and Australia — where registration numbers are approaching 1,200.

Only two-function radios are allowed to control the sail winch and rudder servos. Three rigs are available: to handle 0-10 knots, 10-17 knots, and 17-whatever wind blows the boats off the water. Spectators will be able to watch live webcasts of the racing at the event site, and results will be posted daily. The Barbados Yacht Club will also provide daily reports to their official event media partner www.sailinganarchy.com.

For more information visit the 2009 IOM Barbados Worlds event site www.sailbarbados.com/iom.html, or contact Penny at barbadosworlds@gmail.com.

Martinique Billfish Tournament Set for November

Audrey Quiniou reports: Martinique's 19th Annual International Billfish Tournament, is scheduled to take place November 10th through 13th at Port Marin on the south coast of the island.

There is a chance to not only fish, but also to win a beautiful car by breaking the Blue Marlin record of 767.5 pounds. The record has been held by Reynald Pasquier of Guadeloupe since 2003. There are several other attractive prizes to be won, including an engine for the tournament's winning boat. Breakfast, electricity and parking are free for all registered boats, and ice, bait, water and drinks will be offered to all tournament participants. As well, tax-free gasoline is reserved uniquely for foreign boats.

Registration takes place on Monday, November 9th, with a briefing for boat captains, followed by cocktails. November 10th and 11th are fishing days, with the 12th as a rest day. Friday, November 13th will be the last day of the tournament and end with a prize-giving ceremony followed by dinner.

For more information contact dupstzeb@hotmail.fr or duplan@cg972.fr

St. Croix Regatta 2010 to Raise Awareness for Hospice Care

Ellen Sanpere reports: The St. Croix Yacht Club has announced acceptance of their annual international regatta by the National Hospice Regatta Alliance with fiscal non-profit sponsorship by the St. Croix Foundation. Regatta organizers intend to attract both new sponsors and new racers to this 501(c)(3) charitable event, while raising awareness and funds for their local hospice, Continuum Care, Inc. The dates to save are February 19th through 21st, 2010.

New race courses, including a long distance course especially designed for first-time racers and live-aboard cruisers, will entice heavy displacement vessels that don't normally participate in standard windward/leeward racing. Hard-core racers (those without a six-month supply of wine and canned goods aboard!) will find the "sausage" and "triangle" courses they love in the Buck Island Channel, and one-design dinghy racers will race inside the reef in beautiful Teague Bay. A separate Teague Bay racing circle will host the under-15 set in Optimist dinghies. According to regatta director, Juliet San Martin, "We'll give a start to anybody who shows up to race."

The St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta is the first leg of the Caribbean Ocean Racing Triangle (CORT), which will continue in Culebra and the British Virgin Islands in March.

Shoreside activities will include the famous Cruzan Rum party on the Friday evening, daily continental breakfast, live musical entertainment, and a weigh-in for winning skippers to receive his/her weight in Cruzan Rum. New in 2010: expanded on-site first aid facilities and a fundraising component to benefit Continuum Care, Inc., provider of hospice care in the Virgin Islands since 2000.

While hospice care is a fully covered benefit under Medicare Part A and other health care plans, more than 40 percent of patients on St. Croix have no insurance coverage at all. Continuum Care's end-of-life services, including emergency care, pain relief, caregiver and family education and grief counseling, are provided regardless of a patient's ability to pay, according to CCI founder Tracy Sanders. Funds raised by the regatta will help to ensure continuing coverage for all who require supportive care in their final days.

St. Croix Yacht Club, founded in 1952, has hosted an annual international regatta since 1993. The regatta continues to be an all-volunteer event, well known for its legendary Crucian hospitality. The regatta's affiliation with the National Hospice Regatta Alliance brings to the Virgin Islands great racing inspired by competition, enhanced with compassion.

For more information, contact:
Juliet San Martin, Regatta Director:
julie@teamsanmartin.com; (340) 690-1917
St Croix Yacht Club: stcroixyc@gmail.com;
www.stcroixyc.com; (340) 773-9531
Continuum Care, Inc.: continuumcare@attglobal.net; (340) 772-2273

New Offshore Racing Event Planned for Grenada

This year's Grenada Round-the-Island Race, hosted by the Grenada South Coast Yacht Club, was such a success that the race committee is already planning to expand the event from a single round-the-island race to a four-day offshore racing series. Stand by to learn the event's new name, which will reflect its evolution!

For more information visit www.aroundgrenada.com.

2010 Fireball Worlds Coming to Barbados

The Barbados Sailing Association is proud to announce that it will host the 2010 Fireball Worlds in late April and early May of next year. The Fireball is a two-person sailing dinghy. The Barbados Yacht Club will be the main venue for the regatta, with racing to take place in Carlisle Bay. The regatta is open to all interested in participating in the two-week racing event.



The Barbados Sailing Association is the governing body of sailing in Barbados. It has several affiliates, including the local J/24 Club, the Barbados Optimist Dinghy Association, the Barbados International One Meter (IOM) Association and the Barbados Windsurfing Association. The BSA is an affiliate of the Barbados Olympic Association, the Caribbean Sailing Association, the International Laser Class Association, and the International Sailing Federation (ISAF).

For more information visit www.sailbarbados.com.

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DESTINATIONS

Cuba: OUR THIRD INTRODUCTION

by Bernie Katchor



OUR third cruise to Cuba was planned and the forward cabin of *Australia 31* was completely full of clothing, 68 pairs of shoes, saucepans, cutlery, rope — anything we knew from past visits that Cubans would appreciate, we collected. I only hoped I did not have to get into the chain locker, which was accessed by passing through this impossibly full space.

December 2008 was not the best time to depart the US for Cuba as the tradewinds as well as the cold fronts brought strong winds. Added to this, we wanted to head for the eastern end of Cuba's north coast. From this point we could day sail westward along the coast for months with the wind behind us.

We set off with a good forecast, "brisk" — which changed to "bad". We pounded our way along and after 30 hours, as we were all too slowly passing through Santaren Channel, the wind went crazy and on the nose so we ran off to the Bahamian Anguilla Cays (23°30'01"N 79°32'30"W). Here we spent two days hiding and reviewed our plan. We decided that when the wind lessened or changed direction, the 50 miles to Marina Cayo Coco-Guillermo (22°25'N; 78°28'W) would be a better option than our original destination, Puerto de Vita (21°05'48"N, 75°57'36"W). These are the only two ports in this part of Cuba where we could "enter" and get our cruising permits for a month with a month's extension.

Arriving in Cuba, we anchored in the lee of a reef as we arrived too late to attempt the shallow pass into Marina Cayo Coco-Guillermo. Arriving at the entrance to the shallow channel we radioed the marina. Media, the public relations lady, replied in perfect English. We had to wait for high tide at 4:00PM to go in, but as long as we did not touch land before clearing in we could use the dinghy. So I surveyed the course — finding it bloody shallow! At 3:00PM the channel's depth was just six feet — our draft. Finally Media sent out a pilot to lead us in and we followed with our depth sounder showing as little as 6.3 feet.

—Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

No sooner had we tied alongside the wall than, led by the attractive Media, an army of 16 officials and two dogs marched towards us to clear us in. This is Cuba, and a part we enjoy, including young Customs ladies in the briefest of miniskirts, some with coarse, black net stockings, and every one with a briefcase or satchel.

First a doctor confirmed our good health, then a veterinarian checked food supplies, then Immigration officials — three of them — handled our ship's papers and passports. On it went. The Guardia came and searched our boat, looking in drawers and other amazing places. I made the stupid mistake of telling them we had 231 storage places on the boat, but my poor Spanish was lost and Yvonne kicked me. Next the Port Authority people came aboard to make out our cruising permit. After three hours we were in Cuba officially and we bid the "army" good-bye. Media then offered us a five-page marina contract in Spanish that she wanted to translate, but I just signed it as I offered her a beer. This mature lass was most helpful and was surprised we were not, by this time, angry. But we had enjoyed the banter with those officials who would, or could, banter although a few were most serious.



Above: Safe inside Guillermo Marina after negotiating the shallow entry channel

The next morning we walked to the nearby little village, which had a small ship unloading at the port at one end. Cuba has 11 million people and three million are in uniform, so even in this tiny town Guardia were everywhere. Officially we are forbidden to give Cubans gifts so we walked with clothing discreetly inside two backpacks, greeting the friendly villagers.

The workers are employed at the many tourist resorts in the vicinity. One ancient woman sent a cute tiny boy, her grandchild, to shake my hand and give Yvonne a kiss on each cheek. (This custom of a kiss on each cheek from perfect strangers gives me an opportunity to view up close and even touch the beautiful Cuban women. I have recommended to President Obama to make this compulsory in the USA. Then even Australia may adopt the custom.) Their warmth is the reason we love the Cubans so much.

A family invited us to their home, and as soon as we were indoors they all crammed into the room and we enjoyed their faces as we handed out clothes to these poverty-stricken people. Some ran off to bring back a potato or a few beans as a gift for us. A large fresh fish arrived with a request for men's trousers. Yvonne had long discussions with people in the crowded house and translated some of it to me. I must learn Spanish one day.

The following day, with three full backpacks, including one of baby clothes and one of shoes, we were stopped for inspection at the marina gate. "It is washing," Yvonne said as the Guardia unloaded the bags, "and the shoes are for repair in the village."

"You have a lot of babies aboard your boat," the guard knowingly replied as he allowed us to pass.

The village was waiting and I was in charge of women's shoes. I have heard stories of how women try on 50 pairs of shoes before buying, and found them as true here as anywhere else. I made a note not to bring more than five pairs of shoes ashore next time. Examples of shoes were passed from hand to hand, and the second shoe demanded for a short stroll while every other woman commented on them. Then it began all over again. Two hours to dispose of the shoes. Some women even asked if we had their choice in a different colour.

Below: Yvonne enjoying the 20-cent street pizzas



One man took us to meet his blind father whom we found could see in a blurry fashion. We had 50 or so pairs of eyeglasses that friends had given us and one pair was immensely strong. I fitted them on him and he shouted with joy and amazement as once again he could see the pretty girls passing his house.

We were the new heroes of the town and the next morning, as we passed its total length on the way to find a bus to a resort to buy CUC, the Cuban tourism currency, everyone greeted us.

We bought CUC as well as *moneda nacional*, the local currency which tourists are not meant to have. One CUC (overvalued to 0.9 Euro or US$1.30) equals 24 local pesos. We use local currency in markets and street stalls. An eight-inch pizza costs 20 cents US in local money but US$3 in tourist money.

The plastic all-inclusive resorts were set around a plastic town (that only dealt in CUC) crowded with tourists wearing armbands. The market was outside this town but was devoid of vegetables except for some local potato-like tubers. The three hurricanes that recently hit this coast destroyed all the crops and new ones had not grown to date. In any Cuban market, buy what you see as you never know when or where you will see it again. Yvonne excels at trading in the markets, asking for unavailables such as eggs. Someone always knows someone and black market eggs appear within the hour from an unknown source.

The weather was still bad for sailing, so we decided to take a trip inland.

Foreigners are not allowed to travel on local Cuban buses; they have their own CUC buses to travel on. But, having given him a gift, on New Year's Eve the driver of a workers-only bus allowed us to travel from Guillermo with the partying workers to the town of Ceigo de Avila where we had friends we wanted to visit.

It was wonderful to stay with the family, which includes three children. We walked around the town with them discovering all the bargains — for example, large ice creams for one peso (five cents). The greatest thrill for the children was to go to Coppelia, the two-level ice cream parlour for Cubans. The line was long and we waited for two hours along with many happy Cuban families. Waiting is never a problem for Cubans. A day's wait for a bus is normal — and if the bus never arrives, "that's life" the Cubans laugh. We sat in the gutter and waited. Finally we were allowed to climb the stairs to find more than half the tables were empty! I commented on the empty tables to our friends who shrugged their shoulders and said, "The wages are low, 15 dollars a month, and the job is Government, so keeping tables empty makes the work easier." Glasses of water arrived and half an hour later our orders were taken. The boys asked for a budget for our order and I replied "about two CUC". Yvonne and I ordered the three-peso sundae and there was much babbling between the parents and children. A half hour later our order arrived, one sundae each for the adults and five each for the boys. Total bill: about two dollars.

The town of Camaguey with its music halls beckoned so our friend, telling me not to talk, ordered *bici-taxis* to the bus terminal for a few pennies. Foreigners are forbidden to ride on bicycle-driven taxis and must use normal taxis and pay in CUC.

—*Continued on next page*

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—Continued from previous page

The pulsating bus terminal was chaotic, so our friend told us to wait and he would fix tickets. We waited and eventually a driver asked us where we were going and on hearing our destination told us his bus was about to leave. Aboard the bus we worried about our friend. Fifteen minutes later the bus had an hour's stop at a restaurant. Here we phoned our friend on his cell phone, but he was at home and unworried.

From the equally effervescent Camaguey bus terminal a young man helped us find a horse and cart into the town centre. We were looking for a private house to stay in and the passengers had much advice. Finally we were let out on a corner and walked. A *bocito* is a bread roll with freshly cut pork inside, delicious, for a couple of cents, so I was delighted to see a roast pig being carved on a table in the street. Replenished we soldiered on, finding a door with the sign for room to rent. We were welcomed inside and offered a cold drink. Their room was occupied, however, so the husband and wife phoned around to find us a bed. Eventually one was found and bici-taxis were about to be ordered when we said we would walk. A map was drawn after we insisted we would enjoy walking. Finally the man changed his clothes and walked for half an hour with us to find the room. This is a typical happening in Cuba.

The room was delightful at US$25 and we rested. Dinner at a Cuban-money restaurant consisted of soup and fish, and with two beers included cost US$3.50. The music house was the next stop and we squeezed in to listen to a fabulous Cuban group.

Next day we walked to the market and bought what was available to stock up the boat. Almost all the plantain had been destroyed by the hurricanes but one enterprising stall had plantain and the line waiting to buy was long. As every one chats with the vendor, these lines take forever to move. We decided we did not need the vegetable that badly.

A large cart full of four-foot-long by six-inch-diameter sausages was being pushed through the market. They trembled at every bump with their large globules of fat seemingly desperate to escape the translucent skin. I am sure they would have fallen from the cart but for the two huge pig legs on top that held them aboard.

A local cheese is normally available and Yvonne asked for it. We followed a man from stall to stall and even out of the market to a CUC shop where imported cheese at a high price was available. We thanked the man, who was desperate to help at no reward to himself, but declined the expensive cheese.

Our suitcase on wheels was full of tomatoes, carrots, oranges, grapefruit and local sweet potatoes. We began the walk home but the enthusiasm of a bici-taxi youth got us aboard his vehicle. If the Guardia catch him with foreigners aboard there is jail time, so his route to our rented room took him miles out of the way so he could avoid the police. He was exhausted, so I gave him a tip as he moved to rest in the seat we vacated.

That night we visited another Cuban restaurant, where we ate a delightfully spiced pork stew. Then the chef, who had a magnificently thunderous operatic voice, sang many arias accompanied by two guitarists. This we enjoyed and when he was done we went to two more music halls. Cuba is music and song.

Wandering home in the wee small hours we noted all the night guards at commercial buildings. At one art gallery, an old man invited us to enter and view the paintings. He opened the whole gallery and we spent an hour enjoying Cuban art.

Next morning found us at the money-changers, where there was a long line, but foreigners line up on the left of the door and are admitted before the Cubans. Accordingly, the clerk was surprised when we bought only local currency and not CUC as foreigners are meant to do.

Camaguey has a long shopping avenue with many shops selling goods in CUC. These had a variety of goods that followed no trend. For example, one shop sold buckets, televisions, clothing and perfume. Dozens of staff ignored customers who actually wanted to buy and were not those just gazing, wishing they had CUC to buy.

There were also Cuban-peso shops, similarly set up. One had a hardware section where I saw electric switches in a glass case but was not allowed to hold and examine them. Finally, authority was given by a senior staff member and I opened the box of the switch and found it to be exactly what I needed, at a tenth of the USA price.

There were Cuban-money clothing shops as well, with reasonably priced clothing. It must be extremely difficult to live for a month on US$15, even without buying shoes or clothes. Tourism bought tips, and qualified dentists, doctors or other professionals often worked as hotel staff and taxi drivers just to survive. Many Cubans we met had some illegal way of earning a few more pesos.

It seemed impossible to get back to our boat by bus, carrying all the food we had bought, so we took a taxi — which was driven by a specialist doctor.

Back aboard *Australia 31*, we stowed our provisions and headed out for Puerto de Vita, into the wind and current. Crossing the shallow channel out of Marina Cayo Coco-Guillermo, we only bumped the bottom twice.



Left: Cubans are accustomed to queues. Here, the line-up is for ice cream cones



Right: Spurning the more expensive CUC 'tourist taxis', Yvonne arranges transportation for a market trip with a bici-taxi driver



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GUY DEAN

SELECTED CARIBBEAN SHORTWAVE WEATHER REPORTS

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

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

Frequencies (in kHz):

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

B) 4316, 8502, 12788, 17144.5

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

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

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

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

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

SELECTED CRUISERS' VHF NETS

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

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



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Understanding Tropical Weather and Hurricanes

by Clayton Lewis

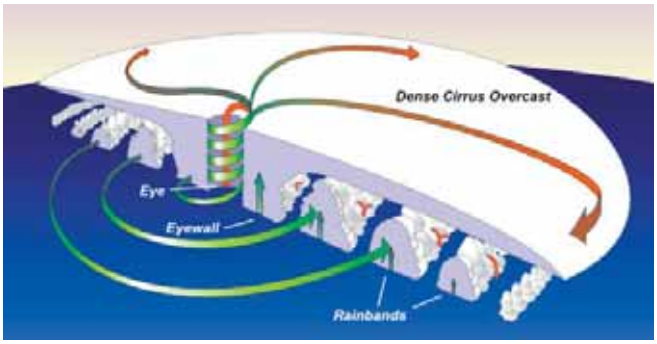
What's a Tropical Wave?

The flow of the tradewinds in the band between the equator and mid-latitudes can be affected by land features. During the summer in particular, the strong contrast in Africa between the wet equatorial jungles and the dry, hot Sahara to the north has a powerful influence on the northern hemisphere tradewind flow. Think of the tradewind flow as a river and the African climate contrast as a writhing disturbance that tends to disrupt the flow. The result is that waves form in the river of air. These waves have a period of about two days and, like any waves, consist of low- and high-pressure bands. The bands stretch north and south from the equatorial area upwards to mid-latitudes. You can think of them as enormous rollers that form over Africa and roll west. The troughs, that is, the low-pressure parts of the waves, are called tropical waves. When a trough reaches far north it's called a "high amplitude" wave; "low amplitude" waves don't stretch very far northward.

Tropical waves don't form every two days except in the peak of the summer. If they did, the six-month hurricane season from June through November should see about 90 tropical waves. Instead we get about 60 per year as the historical average.

What is the ITCZ?

If you've read the classic cruising books by Eric Hiscock or Miles and Beryl Smeeton you will have read about the doldrums. In this era of acronyms that very descriptive word has been replaced by "the ITCZ," the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone. What are converging in the zone between the tropics are the two tradewind



bands, the southern hemisphere trades and our northern hemisphere trades. The trades meet in the equatorial area where intense heat causes the rising of hot air. This is where the tradewinds finally taper off. The ITCZ is characterized by large amounts of moisture being driven aloft, resulting in heavy cloud formation, little wind and frequent showers and thunderstorms.

The ITCZ, a.k.a. the doldrums, varies from about 20 to 150 miles wide and is most intense when it is narrowest.

Strong winter trades in either hemisphere push the ITCZ away towards the other pole. So in *our* winter, the ITCZ is pushed south, as far as 5°S. Likewise, strong winter trades in the southern hemisphere push the ITCZ north during our summer, sometimes as far as 15°N, bringing unsettled weather as it passes over us. This north-south movement of the ITCZ lags behind the sun's annual north-south migration by about two months, so the ITCZ is farthest north in August, typically about 10°N. It is no coincidence that this is also prime hurricane season.

What Causes Hurricanes in the Mid-Atlantic?

Most Atlantic hurricanes start near tropical waves. We've all experienced the wind patterns associated with a tropical wave: wind north of east as the wave approaches and south of east behind it. Imagine riding a satellite above the wave. You look down and see the winds to the left of the wave are coming from the northeast — angling downward from your viewpoint while the southeast winds to the right of the wave are angling upward from the equator. The cloud formations near tropical waves show these "down left" and "up right" patterns and are known as the signature "inverted V curvature" of a tropical wave, visible in satellite imagery.

Imagine standing just inside the inverted V. Winds on both sides are trying to spin you counterclockwise, down-left and up-right. It's a prime location for cyclonic circulation to begin.

If the ITCZ gets involved at the same time, pushing north with a bump protruding into the inverted V of a wave, it brings the southern trades into the picture. Now well north of the equator, the southern trades bend to the right due to Coriolis force, adding westerly winds to the open bottom of our inverted V; this strong force helps the system to rotate counterclockwise.

These conditions of interaction between a tropical wave and a northern bump in the ITCZ are often implicated in forming tropical systems and can be the birthplace of hurricanes.

Hurricanes and Water Temperatures

If you go to Chris Parker's site (http://caribwx.mwxc.com/marine.html) during the hurricane season, the first thing in his forecast is the SST — the Sea Surface Temperature. Of course, the reason is that SST is perhaps the most important factor in the formation of hurricanes.

The average hurricane releases energy each day equivalent to 600 terawatts: $6x10^{14}$ Watts. What the heck does that mean in real-life terms? It's 200 times the electric generating capacity of the entire world. All that energy comes from the warm water. After a hurricane passes, sea temperatures are cooler by as much as 6°C (11°F) — in one case of a super typhoon, 9°C (16°F). All that energy has been absorbed into the weather system with the evaporating water.

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In order to have an adequate source of surface energy, the ocean should be at least 26°C (79°F). Furthermore, this layer of warm water should be at least 200 feet deep. As the passing hurricane stirs up the water it can kill itself by dredging up water that is too cool.

Sometimes when a hurricane runs over a particularly warm spot in the ocean (an anomaly) such as the Gulf Stream or a warm eddy, it goes through a rapid intensification. Meteorologists first recognized the importance of deep, warm eddies during Hurricane Opal in 1995. Opal encountered a warm-water eddy in the Gulf of Mexico and strengthened in intensity from Category 1 to Category 4 in only 14 hours. Both Katrina and Rita in 2005 intensified to Category 5 over hot eddies in the Gulf of Mexico.

Similarly, a hurricane can stumble if it passes over a cooler area of water, such as the track of a recent hurricane. This is one reason that it is rare to have two intense storms in the same general area in the same season.

So long as the hurricane remains over warm water it may gain strength. Once it hits land the source of fuel is gone and it runs out of steam (pun intended).

Wind Shear: What is It?

Over and over again in the National Hurricane Center forecasts and Jeff Master's blog (www.wunderground.com/blog/JeffMasters) we've been seeing the words "wind shear" when a low threatens to develop into a tropical system. Low wind shear is necessary for hurricanes to develop and high wind shear can cripple or collapse a storm that has already developed.

Wind shear is the difference between the wind speed and direction at the jet stream level and that at the surface. Ideally a developing hurricane wants zero wind shear — that is, no difference in speed or direction of the wind at all levels from the surface up to about 40,000 feet. Wind shear of 20 knots or less is considered "favorable for hurricane development".

Here's why: The center of a hurricane system becomes a hollow column, like a drinking straw, around which warm, moist air is sucked aloft. The column pumps up water vapor, which cools and condenses, releasing untold energy and lots of rain. This heat pump is the engine driving the hurricane. The straighter and more vertical it is, the better it will pump. Higher winds aloft will tilt the column; a different wind direction aloft will also tilt it. Enough tilt and the upper level core will be torn away and detached from the circulation feeding it from below, killing the heat engine and destroying the system.



NOAA

What is Coriolis Force?

Coriolis force plays a part in the formation of hurricanes and in steering them once they form. But what is it?

The equator is 25,000 miles long. Imagine standing on the equator for a full 24 hours. As the earth spun through one revolution you would travel 25,000 miles to the east in 24 hours — about 1,000 miles per hour. But if you stood still at one of the poles for a whole day, you would not have traveled at all since you are at the center, the axis, of the earth's rotation. (However, you would have very cold feet.) Points between the equator and the poles move at different rates — fastest closest to the equator. Points at 30° north or south latitude, for example, move at about 850 mph.

So imagine standing in Jacksonville, Florida, at 30°N and hurling a ball directly south, aiming at the point on the equator. You would be aiming for Quito, Ecuador. As you let go of the ball, you, the ball and Jacksonville are traveling east at about 850 mph but Quito is traveling east at 1,000 mph. By the time your ball dropped on the equator, Quito would have moved well off to the east. The ball would fall into the Pacific. If you drew a line on the globe to follow the trajectory of the ball, it would curve off to the right of your intended flight. Play the same mental game for throwing a ball from Quito aimed at Jacksonville directly to the north and you get the same result — the trajectory gets bent to the right because the ball is moving east faster than Jacksonville. In fact, any flight of the ball in the northern hemisphere will be deflected to the right. The apparent force causing this movement is named the Coriolis force. And it doesn't just affect balls! Air currents are subjected to the same force.

In the southern hemisphere, Coriolis deflects trajectories to the left. Imagine flinging that ball again! This makes southern hemisphere tropical storms spin clockwise, not counterclockwise as they do here in the north.

South Atlantic Hurricanes

The South Atlantic doesn't get hurricanes. Why is that?

Recall that most hurricanes are formed by the right interaction between the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and a tropical wave (provided a few other factors co-operate too, like wind shear and sea surface temperatures — SSTs). But the tropical wave factory in Africa lies mostly between the Sahara and the African rainforest. That whole area is north of the equator. In the southern hemisphere there is no tropical wave factory in Africa and so tropical waves are rare in the South Atlantic.

Also, the ITCZ wanders around from season to season. It reaches about 15°N but only about 5°S, and at 5°S there isn't a strong enough Coriolis Force to start rotation.

Furthermore, the water of the South Atlantic is colder than our North Atlantic and wind shear tends to be higher there. So SST and wind shear in the South Atlantic don't tend to be favorable for hurricane development.

So there are no — well, almost no — South Atlantic hurricanes. In March 2004 (the southern hemisphere equivalent of our September) the one and only South Atlantic hurricane ever recorded went ashore in Santa Catarina in southeastern Brazil. Since there was no ready list of names, it was named after the landfall. Hurricane Catarina was a Category 1. Scientists still debate whether it is one more sign of global climate change.





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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JUNE & JULY 2009

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

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

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

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

June

DATE	TIME
1	1919
2	2005
3	2051
4	2138
5	2227
6	2318
7	0000 (full)
8	0010
9	0101
10	0151
11	0238
12	0323
13	0406
14	0448
15	0529
16	0611
17	0655
18	0743
19	0835
20	0933
21	1035
22	1141
23	1247 (new)
24	1350
25	1447
26	1540
27	1630
28	1717
29	1803
30	1849

July

DATE	TIME
1	1936
2	2029
3	2114
4	2206
5	2257
6	2347
7	0000 (full)
8	0035
9	0121
10	0204
11	0246
12	0327
13	0408
14	0451
15	0536
16	0624
17	0718
18	0816
19	0920
20	1025
21	1129
22	1230
23	1327 (new)
24	1419
25	1509
26	1557
27	1644
28	1732
29	1821
30	1915
31	2002

You *Can* Cruise During Hurricane Season

by Don Street

In the Caribbean, the best sailing months of the year are May, June and July. The tradewinds are well settled in. Generally it blows 12 to 15 knots. If you check the British and American pilot books covering the Eastern Caribbean you will discover the highest average wind velocity of the year is in July! This is because in July it blows a relatively constant 12 to 15 knots — seldom less, seldom more — while in the winter months the wind is all over the scale: it can blow 25 to 30 knots for a week or ten days, only to be followed by a period of light airs or calm.

If you are planning to cruise the Eastern Caribbean during the summer, the first thing to do is to check your insurance policy. All policies will exclude damage caused by named storms within the hurricane box — usually 12°N to 32°N — during hurricane season. Some underwriters define hurricane season as being the period from June 1st to November 1st, but practically all Lloyds underwriters give December 1st as the closing date to hurricane season.

Properly worded policies will exclude all damage due to named storms in the hurricane box, but they do not exclude damage incurred in the hurricane box if it is not due to a named storm. In other words, if you run aground, have a fire or lose a rig, if the damage is not as a result of a named storm, you are covered despite the fact you are in the hurricane box.

As long as you are cruising in the area from Martinique south, if you listen to the weather reports twice a day and plot (preferably on your Imray-Iolaire Atlantic Passage Chart 100) the position of hurricanes the minute they are reported, you can make sure you are well clear of the hurricane when it hits the Eastern Caribbean island chain.

> *If you listen to the weather reports twice a day, you can make sure you are well clear of a hurricane*

This is possible, as until hurricanes hit the islands of the Eastern Caribbean they virtually never change direction more than five degrees in 24 hours. As soon as a hurricane is reported, draw a ten-degree cone extending from its position outward in the direction of its track. Needless to say, when the hurricane is just off the African coast the cone will cover a wide area of the island chain but as the cone approaches the Eastern Caribbean the area of the cone covering the islands will get smaller and smaller.

Check your location and make plans to be at least 60 miles south of the south edge of the cone you have plotted. Unless there is no other alternative, do not even think of finding a hurricane hole within the cone and trying to secure. The islands have become so crowded that there is no such thing as a hurricane hole. You might secure your boat perfectly, but there will likely be dozens of other boats — including large commercial vessels — that are not so well secured and could drag down and damage your boat.

You must plan to be south of the hurricane, as although a hurricane approaching the Caribbean almost never changes direction more than five degrees in 24 hours, once they hit the islands they can do anything. There have been a few hurricanes that have hit the Grenadines, then made a right-angle turn and headed north, passing over all the islands as far as Barbuda, before heading off across the Atlantic.

If your plotting shows that the south coast of Grenada will be 60 miles south of the southern edge of the danger cone, then being well secured in the sheltered anchorages on the south coast should be fine. But, if the plot shows that Grenada is less than 60 miles from the south edge of the cone, head farther south.

If heading farther south and west from the Eastern Caribbean chain, there are basically three choices before you go so far west it's challenging to get back: Chaguaramas (Trinidad), and the Golfo de Cariaco and Puerto La Cruz (Venezuela). Chaguaramas might be overcrowded — check before you go.

If heading to Venezuela, do not go to Margarita as it is not that much farther south than Grenada. Also, the anchorages in Margarita are not very well sheltered. Rather, head directly west from Grenada along 12 degrees of latitude to keep you will off the Paria coast and its pirates. Once past the western end of Margarita at the longitude of the entrance to the Golfo de Cariaco, turn directly south and then tuck back east inside the Gulf. Proceed to Gran Laguna de Obispo and find yourself a sheltered anchorage. Or continue due west until you reach the longitude of Puerto La Cruz then head due south and into the marinas at El Morro.

If you follow these directions you can have an enjoyable time actively cruising through the hurricane season, rather than sitting at anchor in one harbor and going "rock happy" or laying up your boat for the entire summer.

For more information on hurricane avoidance and, if worse comes to worst, survival strategies, visit www.street-iolaire.com.

OMAR AND US

by Linda Hutchinson

During our four years of living aboard *Sandcastle*, a 42-foot Catalina sailboat, Roger and I thought we had experienced most of the weather we would ever submit ourselves to. That was until Tropical Storm Omar surprised us and everyone else by developing right on top of the ABC islands. Anchored in Curaçao, there wasn't much we could do but stay with the boat, make sure it was anchored as securely as possible, sit back, watch the skies and ride the wind. And ride we did. Our Catalina, known for sailing at anchor, did just that. We whipped side to side, on and on, heeling sometimes so severely that things in the boat would jump off their shelves as though we were sailing on the high seas.

During the first night of this unusual storm, Monday, October 13th, 2008, winds were in the 25- to 30-knot range. Boats were dragging, with some bumping into others, but superb boat handling prevented any harm to bodies or boats. This was impressive given the black of the night, the blinding amount of water falling from the sky and the heavy winds pushing boats broadside into one another. But the wind and rain weren't yet at their peak, as we would find out the following day.

The first full day of the official storm featured increasing wind and rain. Most crews stayed on their boats. More boats dragged and tried to find somewhere to reanchor. Others moved to the marinas or known hurricane holes to sit out the blow. We were entertained by a group of sailboarders riding the winds and waves in the harbor with full abandon, turning at the last minute before crashing into the sides of the boats. What fun they had!

At night, it is common practice to haul the dinghy out of the water, engine in place, and secure it to the side of the boat to prevent theft. Ours was in such a position when, broadside to the wind, it was flipped vertical. Quick teamwork got the dinghy righted and down into the water before the gas tank, flip-flops and other contents were lost overboard.

News from other islands started dribbling in. In Bonaire, the dinghy docks at Nautica Yacht Club and Karel's were turned into matchsticks. A yacht that left for



Colombia ahead of the storm was hit by lightning, lost an autopilot and had a rudder problem. The skipper turned toward Aruba, where he was assisted through the reef into the harbor by the Coast Guard. There was talk of waves hitting the shore and spraying up to 45 feet into the air. Someone said there was enough wood on a Bonaire beach to build a house.

Plans to haul out or head for other islands were put on hold. We all held our breaths as we sat tight and hoped for the best, especially those of us who had not been through a storm of this magnitude before. Our memories of our first nights as liveaboards, when we huddled together as 15 to 20 knots of "howling" wind jerked at the anchor rode (we didn't have all chain then) as if to pull the bow off, seemed like baby stuff to us now. It's all relative, I guess.

The night always brings on the monsters, and a monster Omar was. Once you meet a monster it isn't nearly as frightening, but still to be respected. Our Catalina whipped side to side, tacking at the end of its anchor chain, hour after hour. Only when the strongest of winds came did *Sandcastle* stay vertical and somewhat stationary, nose into the wind. The winds kicked up to an average of 35 to 40 knots with 43-knot gusts on the Tuesday night. That is a lot of wind when your house moves about as freely as ours does!

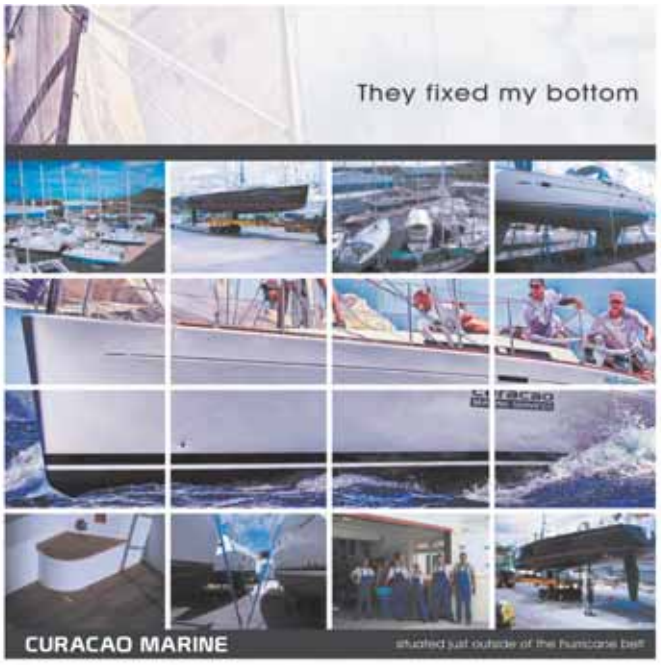
There was a period when the wind and rain were at their peak, steady and no longer howling but making a vacillating, high-pitched whine that seemed to go on and on. Each feeder band of the storm going over was slightly different from the previous one. The boat stayed secure, seemingly held by a sunken freight train; how else could it stay in one place for so long while being so punished by Mother Nature?

On the Wednesday we heard reports that the storm was finally moving away. However, all day we remained braced for more squalls and all day we got continuing rain and no sun. As John on *Mermaid of Carriacou* would say, "There's not a sky in the cloud."

The radio was full of chatter: friends checking on friends, getting weather updates and rearranging plans previously made. Some caught up on sleep before the night brought on what it would. But Omar was finally finished with us.

The amazing thing was how this community of cruisers worked together to protect itself against the blow. All stood ready to help one another without question as to who or why or how. We had no president, congress or law. We just did what was necessary to safeguard ourselves and keep our neighbors out of harm's way. Too bad we can't pass this spirit of cooperation along to the rest of the world.

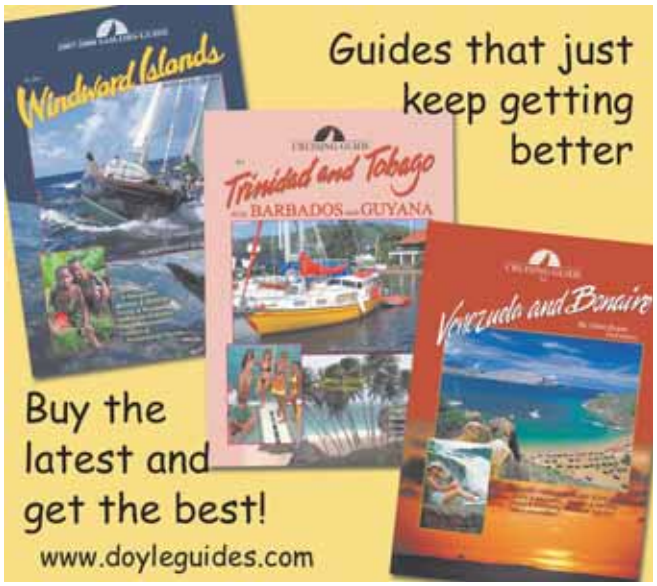
As the storm is moved on and the squalls diminished, our thoughts turned to moving on, with the regret of leaving new friends tempered by anticipation of the adventures ahead. Come and go with us. We assure you, you will never regret a minute of it. Sail well and safe seas!











I know it sounds strange, but living in Alaska and camping in bear country prepared us in a small way for cruising in Venezuela. We did not forgo camping in bear country and we did not forgo cruising in Venezuela — we just took sensible precautions. Having said that, I do not consider myself smarter than the folks who have been victims of crime and violence in Venezuela; I consider it largely good fortune that we remained unmolested for the five months we enjoyed cruising Venezuela in summer of 2008.

Back to bears. When you camp in bear country you become very aware of your surroundings. You take stock of the vegetation and the sources of attractants such as food — camping in heavy brush or near a salmon stream is not a good idea. At any location you need to make a plan to protect yourself and prevent the bear from entering camp and being successful in getting your food. We used bear-resistant food containers and carried bear spray and a flare gun, and at times a shotgun. We never had to use any of our protective equipment, but we always knew where they were and how to use them.

Okay, now back to boats and the discomforting reality that there is a lot of crime in various anchorages in Venezuela. And no matter how hard you are struggling to make your fixed income meet your cruising kitty, you are rich compared to many folks living in the Caribbean and Venezuela and are an attractive target for burglars and thieves.

Pirates and Bears in the Caribbean

by Devi Sharp

My husband and I talked about what we would do in a variety of scenarios. We broke down the potentially most dangerous scenarios — those that might involve assault — to three possibilities: a boat approaching while we were underway, a boat approaching while we were at anchor, and a nighttime boarding.

We reviewed our defensive equipment: flares and flare gun, pepper spray and air horn. (I have intentionally not discussed the use of firearms in this article. That is a personal decision that comes with great consequences.) We reviewed radio procedures.

Like avoiding camping in heavy brush near a salmon stream in Alaska, our choice of anchorages in Venezuela was important. Before we traveled to an area we researched security reports so we could evaluate the risk and the nature of previous incidents. We consulted the Caribbean safety net at www.safetyandsecuritynet.com and the Caribbean section of the Noonsite website, www.noonsite.com/General/Piracy, for accounts of incidents in each area. We looked in the cruising guides for advice about the safety of a location. We also spoke with cruisers who had been around a while and listened to their experiences.

Like preventing bears from entering our campsites in Alaska, our focus in Venezuela was on not letting the bad guys board our boat.

In case of an approaching boat full of bad guys we decided we would first try to outrun or out-maneuver it and avoid contact, but this can be hard to do in a sailboat. After reading many accounts of piracy while underway we determined that many boardings were avoided by shooting a flare at, or into, an open boat. The gas tank is a powerful incentive to avoid a flare. If approached we planned to use the flare gun, or pepper spray at closer range, to deter boarders. If shots were fired we would stay low in the hope that the hull would absorb some of the impact of the bullet. If possible we would call the Guardia on the radio.

At anchor, we avoided behavior that we thought would make us vulnerable, such as running the generator at night, going over to another boat for drinks, or going below and becoming engrossed in a movie. Until we knew their intentions, we would not lean out over the lifeline to talk to visitors; we would stay low in the cockpit. We also used what we call the "gut check" — if we had a bad feeling about the situation we would go elsewhere. If there were other yachts in the anchorage we made contact and asked what VHF channel they monitored at night. In case of being approached by baddies while at anchor, we would follow the same general plan as if approached at sea — use the flare gun, horn, and pepper spray to keep boarders off of the boat — and would use the VHF to notify other boats or the Guardia if we were being boarded or harassed. (Venezuela has a very active Guardia and in one anchorage the Guardia gave us their cell phone number so we could call them if we had a problem at night in an anchorage. We had all of the Guardia numbers programmed in our cell phone.)

We always slept with a steel grate in our companionway and have installed a bar across the hatch above our bed. We closed all other access points. I have heard people express concern about being "locked in", but people do this all the time in houses. The grate gives us the opportunity to see what is happening outside and evaluate the situation, and the lock is on the inside. We kept a bright flashlight and other defensive equipment handy. If you shine a light at the bad guy you have just given away your position, so you must hold the light away from your body. We are able to turn on cockpit and deck lights from the interior of the boat in hopes that the lights would scare off a boarder. We also turned down the volume on the cockpit radio, so we could call from inside without being heard.

We removed the easy-to-take stuff, such as fenders, cushions, boat hooks and life rings and put them down below. We tried using a motion detector but found that it was too sensitive to waves and boat movement and if we turned down the sensitivity we could sneak up on it. We plan to work on improving the alarm system. We kept a few stashes of cash that were easy to find in hopes that if boarded the cash would satisfy the thieves, but at that point you are in a very poor position to manage the situation.

It surprised us that we met so many cruisers who had no security plan and just lived in fear of "something happening". They had never given any thought to what specific defensive actions they could take if a hostile boat approached while they were at sea or at anchor. That would be like camping in bear country beside a salmon stream without planning what to do if a bear comes into camp.

My husband and I both understand that the best plan could be useless in a second, but on the other hand a plan could save our lives.

—Continued on next page

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Cruisers — Don't Be Losers!



Many of these tips on how yachtspeople can avoid being victims of burglary or theft come from www.safetyandsecurity-net.com/precautions.html where, over the years, a list of tips has been developed through the suggestions of many cruisers. These precautions are not very different from the way you'd take care of your house or your car: most people lock their house when they are away and lock their car when they leave it. Your yacht is your house and your dinghy is your car.

1) It is always prudent to lock the yacht when you leave for a trip to shore or a visit to another yacht. Secure all access points, including hatches and ports: it's amazing how small an opening a skinny kid can get through!

2) Have a stash, in case thieves do get below. Separate and hide valuables in multiple unpredictable areas. In addition to hiding passports and ship's papers, hide a copy of each in a different spot. Make two copies of the contents of your wallet: credit cards (both sides), licenses, etcetera. Send one copy to a contact at home and hide one copy. If possible, hide a spare GPS and handheld VHF.

3) Outboards are a major target: always lock them, either to the dinghy when in use or to the yacht if not. Lock dinghy to dock when ashore (using a long enough cable or chain so others can get their dinghies to the dock, too). Hoist and chain the dinghy to the yacht at night. Chain the outboard separately to the rail or in the cockpit, or stow it below.

4) Don't leave attractive items (scuba/snorkeling gear, gas tanks, etcetera) unlocked in the dinghy, or on deck when you're away from the yacht or sleeping.

5) Why broadcast that your yacht will be unoccupied? If using VHF radio to make plans to be off the yacht (e.g. restaurant reservations, tour arrangements or get-togethers with friends), use your name, not the boat's name. If someone is calling a neighboring boat on the VHF, don't helpfully advise the caller that the neighbors are off the boat. If you call another boat on the VHF and they don't answer, don't keep calling — you could be alerting someone listening in that they are off the boat. Consider getting a cell phone so you can make arrangements discreetly.

The yacht's name painted on a dinghy ashore indicates that at least one person is away from the yacht.

6) Avoid known high-risk anchorages; especially, do not anchor alone there if you can avoid it. If you must, use full security precautions.

7) Ashore, be aware of your environment and dress/act accordingly. Avoid wearing flashy clothing and expensive-looking jewelry, displaying large wads of cash, staggering back drunk to the dinghy-dock, etcetera.

8) Many thefts occur while the boat is on the hard. Don't forget about security precautions when the yacht is out of the water.

9) If you are involved in an incident, report it to the local authorities (police, coast guard, marina management, tourist office and yachting/marine trade organization) and to the Caribbean Safety and Security Net. An incident unreported, for all practical purposes, never happened.

10) Make security precautions a regular habit. The more difficult you make things for the criminal, the more likely he is to leave you and your property alone. Developing safety habits and contingency plans will contribute to a more enjoyable cruise.

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13th Annual Compass Writers' Brunch:

GOOD FOOD AND FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There *is* such a thing as a free brunch! Compass Publishing Ltd.'s annual pre-Easter Writers' Brunch is our way of getting together with and saying "thank you" in person to as many as possible of the past year's contributors for the writing, artwork and photography that makes *Caribbean Compass* the "must read" publication for sailors in the Caribbean.

The *Compass* is a forum, shaped more by writers' ideas and talents than by a rigid editorial policy. Most of its content is generated by active cruisers, yacht racers and residents sharing their adventures in, passion for and concerns about 'The Caribbean's Sea and Shore'. The annual Brunch invitation honors those who most recently made the effort to put their thoughts down in words, record a special event or experience, or gather information about a particular place, and then send in the result for publication so that their ideas and experiences can be shared with *Compass* readers throughout the region and the world.

On Thursday, April 9th, some 30 guests gathered in Bequia at Mac's Pizzeria, an ideal meeting place for old friends and new acquaintances in the *Compass* community.

A farewell was bidden to four Compass contributors who had passed away during the past year: Norma Prudhon, Mariann Palmborg, Fred Gunther and John "St. John" Bryan IV.

Joining the Compass Cockpit Crew — Managing Director Tom Hopman, Editor Sally Erdle, Assistant Editor Elaine Ollivierre, Production Manager Wilfred Dederer and Bookkeeper Debra Davis — as well as one of our very first guest speakers, yachtsman and former Prime Minister of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Sir James Mitchell, was a diverse and talented group of contributors. In alphabetical order:

Cruiser Tom Barkdull is a veterinarian who volunteered his skills in Grenada after his boat was damaged there by Hurricane Ivan. Tom is a poet whose "Thoughts on a Midnight Watch" was published in September 2003, and it took him this long to pick up his rain-check for the Writers' Brunch! Book reviewer Bob Berlinghof is a former yacht skipper, voracious reader and rock 'n' roll guitarist. Bequia resident and circumnavigating sailor Cornelia Brewer is another poet, whose poem "Adrift" was published in September 2008. Cruising guide author Chris Doyle is a well-known *Compass* columnist and photographer. Sailor and Carriacou, Trinidad and Barbados resident Nan Hatch's poems include the March 2009 issue's "Grenada Morning". Martinique-based yachtsman Jeremy Hobday has written on subjects ranging from cruising on a budget to avoiding fishtraps. Best known as an artist, Bequia resident Julie Lea's written portrait of pioneering Caribbean yacht skipper Morris Nicholson is scheduled to appear this summer. Trinidad-based liveaboard sailor and yacht chandlery specialist Ruth Lund has written poems, cruising budget tips, race reports and cruising accounts, most recently about a voyage up the Manamo River in Venezuela. Book reviewer Morris Nicholson sailed to the Caribbean in the 1950s and skippered the 62-foot ketch *Eleuthera II* for many years before settling ashore on Bequia. A regular regatta reporter is Jerry Stewart from Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout in Carriacou.

This year's scheduled guest speaker was Barbadian sailor and writer Dick Stoute who, however, was delayed in Barbados by the funeral of his fellow Barbadian yachtsman Andrew Burke. His timely and thought-provoking presentation (see next page) was read by Jerry Stewart.

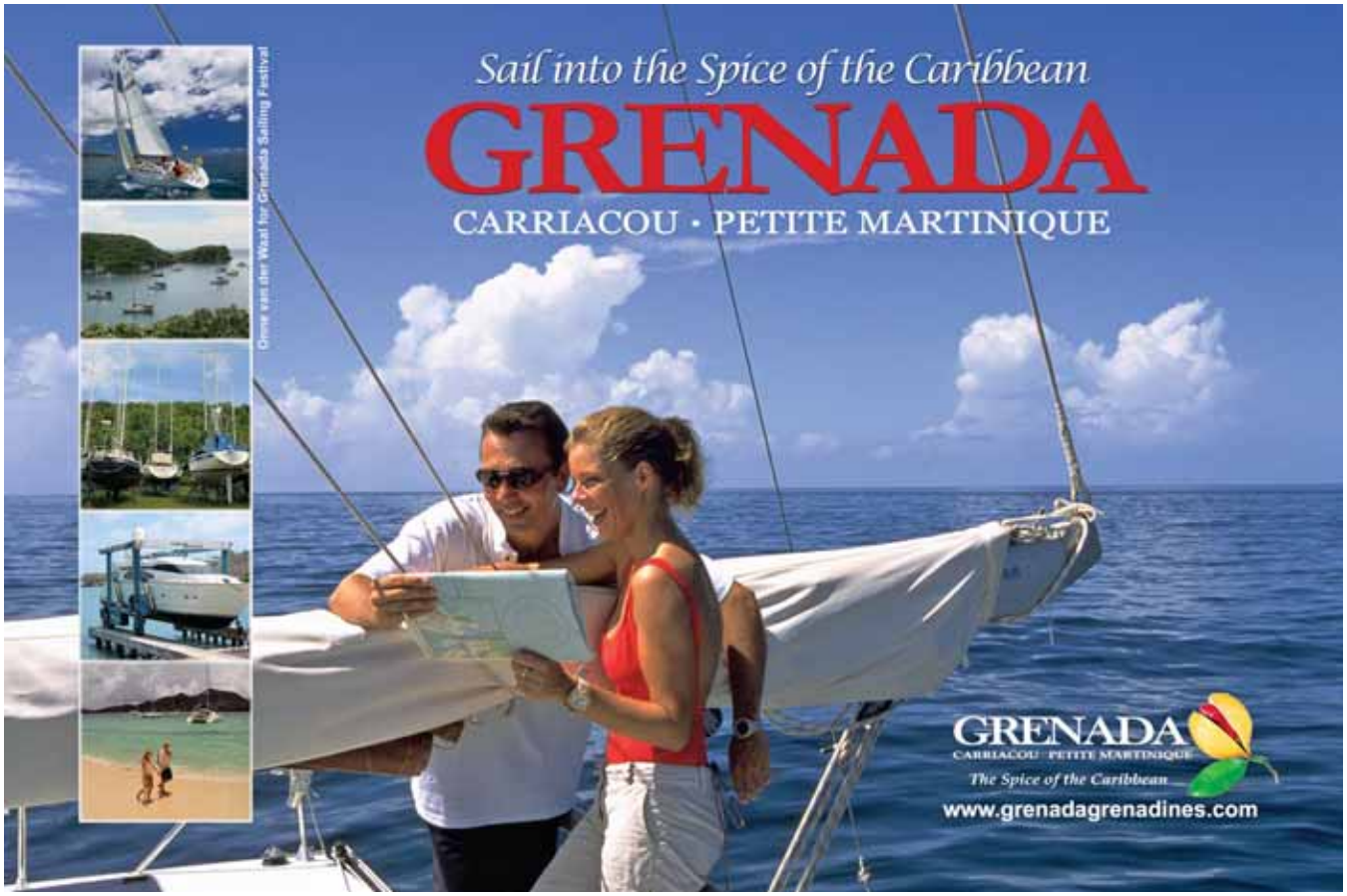
Conversations continued over a scrumptious brunch buffet, including treats such as tortilla omelet slices and mango mousse, prepared by Judy Simmons and her Mac's Pizzeria staff.

To those many contributors unable to attend this year, we thank you, too, for all your talent and efforts and hope to see you at a future Compass Writers' Brunch, always the Thursday before Easter.





Jerry Stewart (right), delivering Dick Stoute's presentation on the Caribbean sailing community's response to economic recession to a thoughtful crowd of Compass *contributors and guests*



The Caribbean Sailing Community in a World in Recession: WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

by Dick Stoute



The following speech was presented at the Compass Publishing Writers' Brunch 2009 and appears in print by popular demand from our guests. Dick Stoute is a racing yachtsman who has served as president of the Barbados Yachting Association, secretary and chief measurer of the Caribbean Yachting Association (now the Caribbean Sailing Association), and president of the Barbados Chamber of Commerce and Industry. An engineer by profession, Dick recently retired and is now at Reading University studying philosophy.

Everyone knows that the world is in an economic recession, but everyone also knows that we will come out of it and, just as we expect things to be difficult for a while, we expect that the recovery will blossom forth with new opportunities. We can take comfort in knowing that the economic death we are currently experiencing has happened many times before and there has always been rebirth. But even as we batten down for the recession we need to prepare for the recovery. What can we expect? How can we position ourselves to participate in the recovery?

The downturn will be economically challenging for everyone and prudent financial management will be needed to get through it. This will be more easily achieved if the economic challenges do not lead to escalating crime. Should crime increase significantly this will likely compound the effects of the downturn, as it could drive visitors from our shores and trigger the type of social degradation that we have seen in some Caribbean countries. The Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to this social degradation, as it has inherited many social conflicts. These lie dormant during good times, but can erupt when economic quakes stir up long-buried fears and grievances. So even as you tighten your belt, be mindful of this effect and wherever possible direct your spending at engaging everyone in the community in earning a living.

But even as this economic downturn threatens hardship it can also bring benefits. The hectic pace of economic wellbeing leads to social separation — there is no time to talk, to build up friendships, to nurture the emotions that need deep, meaningful social contact, but which are ignored when times are good. Hard times provide this opportunity. There are many examples of hardships creating enduring bonds of friendship in a well-managed family or community, bonds that improve the quality of life even as "things get harder". These relationships of friendship and trust that are built in hard times can bind our community together and create a solid foundation for the economic recovery when that comes along. For example, Goddard Enterprises in Barbados has a long-lasting relationship with the First Caribbean Bank. This relationship started when the then Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (now First Caribbean) gave Fred Goddard a loan when he was struggling to expand his small shop during difficult economic times. The trust between these organizations has been nurtured by prudent management over the years and both have gained significantly. We need to build these types of relationships in the Caribbean sailing community.

But how do we develop trust in a recession, when economic strains are naturally driving us in the opposite direction? This question requires a personal examination of ourselves to answer the question, who do you trust and why? You can be reasonably sure that other people are very similar to you and your reasons for trusting will be their reasons for trusting. As writers, we are in a good position to do this, as we are naturally students of human nature. A good understanding of human nature and with realistic expectations about the world are both necessary to get through this recession and prepare for the coming recovery. So I am now going to very briefly outline a model of human nature that I think will be very useful, and link this to the changes I expect that this recession will bring to the world community.

The Biblical story of Genesis issues a warning for humanity, which has been misinterpreted and ignored. It warns us not to "eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil."

—Continued on next page

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NORTH SAILS REPRESENTATIVE

—Continued from previous page

The Church has turned this into an enduring, unavoidable curse, and then proceeded to do exactly what Genesis warns us against: it judges people to be either good or evil. This judgmental attitude is widespread. It is an ancient, well-accepted way of thinking, but it has serious repercussions. It is very destructive and we need to understand how it operates so we can change the way we think. Because we believe that there are bad people, we put various social systems in place to restrain their behavior. This seems to work and we are lulled into believing that this is the only way to do things. As a result, laws and regulations proliferate. The obvious result is that more people are found to be breaking laws and the belief that "we are bad" is confirmed and proliferates.

As the society evolves, people respond to this and gradually a 'game' emerges which changes people's behavior. Each person's individual success depends on how well that person can play this game and, as with all games, to be successful you have to know the rules and use them for your own advantage. All the old guidelines about relationships and trust are tossed aside and the game of living becomes one in which everyone is out for him- or herself. This approach evolves slowly, from simple things like breaking the speed limit (it's okay, if you don't get caught) to a systematic approach that seeks to use whatever loopholes exist in the laws for your own benefit. This way of living becomes the norm, the 'right' thing to do, and law schools and business schools teach it as if it is the smart thing to do. This slow evolution pervades the whole community and gradually destroys relationships and the community as it goes. There is a clamor for more laws, more regulation and more policing of laws, and the society slowly stagnates as it becomes less and less efficient.

We can trace this evolution in sailing. First there are simple rules to avoid collisions at sea, but these are not adequate to deal with racing, so racing rules are adopted which are more complicated. Then the game evolves from simply avoiding collisions to using the rules to gain an advantage. This forces even more complicated rules, and skill at the protest hearing then becomes an integral part of the skills needed for the sport. The next step is match racing where rules become dominant and sailing skills perhaps secondary. These don't quite do the trick, so we then start using 'on the course judges'. All this adds significantly to the cost of administering a regatta. As resources are shifted into policing and regulation — things that increase stress — fewer resources are devoted to the things we enjoy. The same evolution has taken place in business and in finance, but while yacht racing is something we can walk away from, we cannot walk away from society and the stresses continue to build up.

Occasionally this system fails, as it has now done, and we have an opportunity to build a better one. What can we expect in the current redesign?

I expect that there will be a great effort to make things simpler. This has been the drive, for example in the sailing rules, and I expect that similar reasoning will prevail and our financial regulations will become simpler. Our current financial system attracted too much of the world's talent and then used it to create an elaborate gambling casino. This took expensive resources away from the places that needed it. A redesigned system will, I think, release much of these resources to other areas of endeavor. This redesign will make finances simpler for the average person and produce a long period of low inflation and low interest rates that will be of great benefit to the world.

I expect that there will be a real effort to address the issue of poverty and lack of education. I don't think this can be done with aid, because, apart from being expensive and economically inefficient, giving aid insults the people it is given to. It tells them that they are somehow less than equal, inferior, and unable to fend for themselves. Even as it relieves hunger, it provides a negative self-image and builds resentment.

The solution has to be one that engages everyone in the process of generating economic value. It entails the working community finding ways to encourage everyone's participation, especially those who find it difficult to carve out an economic niche.

Coming out of this financial crisis, I think we can expect a more equitable balance between the haves and have-nots. This will be driven by economics, rather than altruism. The borrowing spree that led to this financial crunch was a stopgap mechanism. This lending/borrowing allowed poorer people to consume more and so bridge the gap between low consumption and high production. Lending solved this problem by providing a means of boosting consumption. As we work our way through this crunch and the borrowing drops, consumption will collapse unless the lower-income consumers get more money to spend. It is obvious that, to get the world's balance sheet to balance with less borrowing, the borrowers will have to earn more and the lenders earn less. I think our economists are smart enough to work out a way of achieving this without driving inflation too high, so I expect low-end incomes to increase while high-end incomes and interest rates reduce.

There are other benefits as well. From a purely economic perspective, add up the costs that are a direct result of income and education disparity: wars of all types, fighting terrorism, fighting illegal drug trading, policing the community, legal costs, imprisonment costs and private security costs. Include the cost of white-collar crime and the cost of redistributing wealth (the vast cost of tax collection and the cost of the tax-avoidance games). Include also the medical costs associated with high stress. Add all these up and then compare this total with the costs involved in reducing income disparity so that the incentives that drive antisocial behavior are substantially reduced and the stresses associated with this system are also reduced.

Although these costs cannot be accurately assessed, I think that we are getting to the stage where they are high enough to drive a radical change in economic thinking. Why not simply pay people more and let them decide how to spend the money, rather than having a large inefficient administration to achieve roughly the same goals? The question, "Do we want to live in a protected enclave and give up the world to violent forces, or do we want to make the world a good place to live for everyone?" will be addressed in unique ways. I believe that a community that finds a way of effectively dealing with income disparity will be much better off economically as well as socially and, as we improve our decision-making ability, this will become more apparent.

To achieve all this we need to improve our decision-making skills. But how do we, as a community, make good decisions? No one at present can tell us how to do this, but we are sure that being well informed and well educated helps. In addition, the role of emotions like fear and confidence are coming under the spotlight in regard to their role in decision-making.

Many people are now emphasizing the need for confidence. This is very interesting to me because, leading up to the millennium, I was researching the effects of fear on our communities, our governments and religions. That led me to write a book called *The Fear Factor*. Fear is the opposite of confidence. It seems that while we cannot create confidence directly, we can build it up slowly by understanding the very human "fight or flight" response to fear. It may come as a surprise to many that violence and aggression are fear responses. The person that is carrying a gun is doing this because he is frightened. Anger is a product of fear, as are all the negative emotions: hate, prejudice, greed, etcetera. Fear undermines confidence and so understanding fear is key to building confidence.

There are several apparently contradictory social responses to fear. For example, "privacy" is a fear response. We want privacy to protect ourselves, because "the world is full of people who would try to take advantage of us", but privacy also creates the environment that allows tricksters to flourish.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

Privacy is like darkness — it inhibits information flow. Darkness facilitates crime. Just as street crime is suppressed by streetlights, white-collar crime is suppressed by free information flow. In the Caribbean, restriction of information flow encourages a lot of antisocial activity. The metaphor that links information to light is very apt. When there is no light our imagination conjures up many threats, so we need light — we need to address the privacy issue at a social level and reduce our people's fear of disclosure — so we can make progress against crime.

This recession provides an ideal environment and opportunity to focus on the skills needed to increase confidence. In the Caribbean, this is the key to reducing crime and violence. The light of understanding is essential for this to happen. Increased confidence also leads to increased investment, helps you make friends, and adds considerably to your quality of life.

We need to be able to accept that it is fear that makes us want to be dominant. When we realize this, we will automatically want to distance ourselves from demonstrating that we are frightened by the way we behave, and this will put emphasis on an alternative mode of organization — networking. Networking builds confidence through equitable interaction and allows a plan to evolve from discussion rather than being imposed by some dominant faction. The world will be a better place if we can agree to work with each other for our mutual benefit and we now need to give the networking alternative a good shot.

If we are lucky, we will emerge from this recession with a different attitude to business, one that places more emphasis on integrity and trust and less effort in antisocial directions. If the USA's business community takes its leadership cues from its current President, we can expect that they will focus more on relationships and working out deals that benefit all the stakeholders. Should this happen, I think the Caribbean businesspeople will welcome it, as this is the way we prefer to operate.

I expect that there will be significant effort devoted to making things simpler — especially in finance and business, and hopefully in government as well. The information revolution is poised to assist with this. The current hurdle is human emotion: fear of change, fear of being disadvantaged, fear of exposure. These are what we need to focus on now and overcome while we engage in the very competitive struggle to achieve simplicity and efficiency.

With this in mind I ask, what can we do as writers? How can we use our considerable influence to help this trend along? I think that history will deal harshly with writers who have taken the easy road and used their skill to simply escalate fear in the society. It takes little skill to point out what can go wrong, gloat over what has gone wrong, or be judgmental and point fingers. It is easy to evoke the fear response; little skill is needed to do this. The skill comes in providing readers with an alternative viewpoint, one that they may not have considered, one that illuminates issues from another perspective, or provides insights about human nature. As writers we must be wary of seeing issues in terms of right and wrong. Remember the Genesis warning about the consequences of "eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil" and avoid being judgmental — it is very destructive.

We can get beyond the very superficial good and evil "reasons" that are so popular in the Caribbean and illustrate the simple formula that people are socially destructive when they are frightened and socially constructive when confident; encourage readers to understand how they can tell when someone is responding to a threat and encourage them to display confidence. We can help to provide that confidence by illuminating the issues we write about in a way that sensitizes our readers to the human issues lurking in the darkness behind the judgmental good/evil façade. This is a great opportunity for writers to probe in the darkness — find out and explain why people behave as they do while avoiding being judgmental and steering clear of the fruit of that mythical tree.

As writers our role is to seek understanding and explain what we learn while we entertain and inform. This will help our readers to become more confident, have a more open dialogue and feel freer to enjoy each other. We need to focus on building communities by illustrating what can be done and not destroying them by dwelling on the negative. The Caribbean is a great place. Its biggest challenge is income-imbalance resulting from lack of knowledge and lack of trust. We can help build the trust and help with the educational project. This is how we can help the yachting community gain strength during an economic recession and prepare it to take advantage of the recovery when it comes.

In closing I would like to thank *Compass* for inviting me to make this presentation and thank you for listening.



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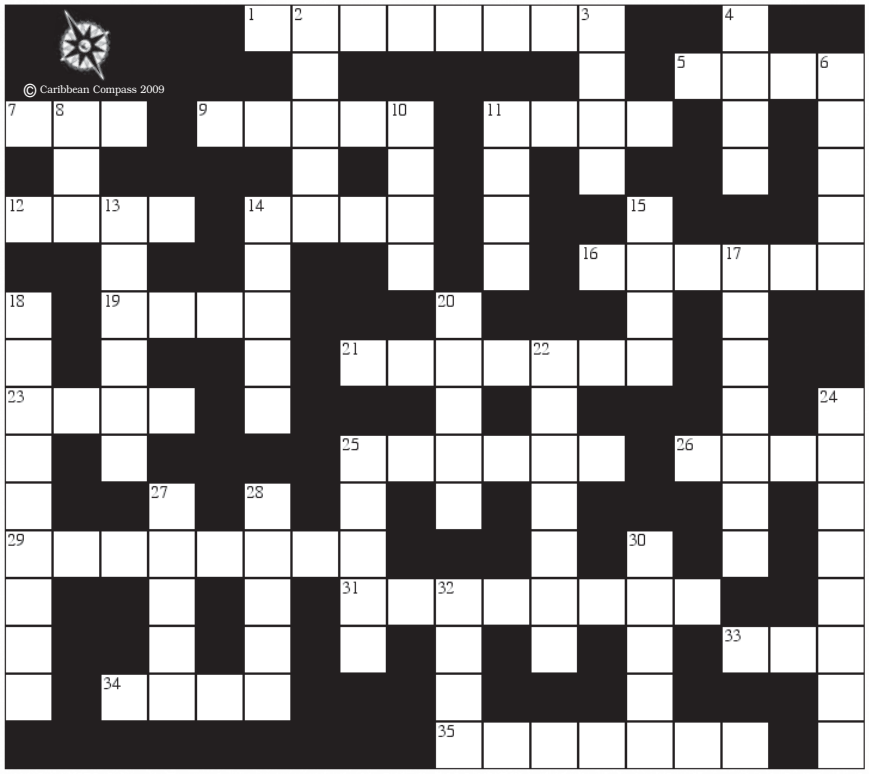
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Compass Cruising Crossword



'ON THE HALF SHELL'

ACROSS

1) French 2 Down
5) 28 Down___ turtles are famous for their shells
7) __food includes bivalves and crustaceans
9) Large shrimp
11) This can be soft-shelled
12) Conch have just one
14) Steam it and dip it in lemon butter
16) 11 Across who moves into others' 25 Downs
19) ___4 Down: echinoderm also known as Sea Star
21) One side of its 25 Down is flat
23) Many 25 Down 4 Down live on a 14 Down ____
25) Delicious decapod
26) Geo___: large saltwater 14 Across
29) A turtle's 25 Down
31) These can be spiny, slipper or clawed
33) Another word for 4 Down 3 Down
34) A 21 Across has many blue ones
35) Largest 7 Across creatures having a 25 Down

DOWN

2) Gastropod with a 25 Down
3) 11 Acrosses and 31 Acrosses can be caught in this
4) Members of some religions don't eat 25 Down ____
6) Cone 25 Down 4 Down are sensitive to this
8) __24 Down: external physical framework, such as a 25 Down
10) Most 25 Down 4 Down have a common and a Latin ____
11) ___4 Down: small freshwater 31 Across
13) Hero of story on page 34
14) Reef-building marine organism
15) ___-fried: popular way to eat bivalves
17) Animal belonging to the largest marine phylum
18) Arthropods that slow your 32 Down
20) Variety of 11 Across or 24 Across
22) 2 Downs shaped like volcanoes that spend their lives on rocks
24) Hard framework of an animal's body
25) Hard outer covering of certain organisms
27) *Grapsus grapsus*: ____ 6 Down 12 Across 11 Across
28) A ____-wing conch shell has a brown-and-white pattern
30) Whale food
32) Tongers and dredgers are types of this used to harvest the 14 Across

Crossword Solution on page 21

HIGH SEASON IS WINDING DOWN — AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR SOME SUMMER FUN AND GAMES!

Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski

FUN AND GAMES

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

BASEBALL
BIKE
BOCCE

CHECKERS
CHESS
CHIPPING
COOKING
CRICKET
CRUISING

DANCE
DIVING
DOMINOES
EATING

FISHING
FUN

GAMBLING
GAMES
GOLF
HIKING
JOG
LIMING
LOAFING
NAP
PAN
PARTYING
PLAY
POTLUCKS

PUZZLES
RACING
READ

SAIL
SHELLING
SHOP
SINGING
SKI
SLEEP
SNORKELING
SOCA MARCH
SOCCER
SPA
SWIMMING

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 31



JUNE 2009

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)
This month should give you a welcome break from the emotional squalls you slogged through last month. Ease the sheets and set a course for the positive and pleasant aspects of your life.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)
The rough seas that made Aries' life an emotional wet ride in May are storming their way through Taurus this June. These conditions will last for several weeks. Your strength of character will sail you through if you exercise your famous Taurus patience and cheerfulness.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)
You've got three weeks to clear up those boat projects you started last month. Communications from an old friend will be a nice addition to your positive attitude.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
The skies should be clear and seas boringly calm this June. Try to do fun things with crew at this time to cement good relationships on board.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)
A newly found romance might head for the rocks as temper-tempests rise. Only working on shipboard cooperation will save you from a breakup.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)
Keep steering a steady business course and you will reach a harbor full of benefits in the coming months. Your attention to detail will serve you well at this time.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)
Last month's storm is over, the sun is shining and dark clouds are sailing away. Gather friends on board to celebrate!

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)
Relationships on board will have attained an even keel by now, so use this month to rebuild the good feelings damaged by the climate of antagonism suffered during May.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)
After last month's hit-or-miss environment, this month should be back on course. Your generous sense of humor will sail back to see you through any leftover problems.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)
Time to up anchor and be on your way, both in your sailing life and in your romantic one.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)
Start thinking about things that need doing on board to be prepared for the fresh winds of energy arriving on the 15th.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)
It's time to make and mend. Your business or financial situation might be in the doldrums, but there are still projects on board that you can accomplish.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS
1) ESCARGOT
5) BILL
7) SEA
9) PRAWN
11) CRAB
12) FOOT
14) CLAM
16) HERMIT
19) STAR
21) SCALLOP
23) REEF
25) SHRIMP
26) DUCK
29) CARAPACE
31) LOBSTERS
33) POT
34) EYES
35) TURTLES

DOWN
2) SNAIL
3) TRAP
4) FISH
6) LIGHT
8) EXO
10) NAME
11) CRAY
13) OYSTER
14) CORAL
15) DEEP
17) MOLLUSK
18) BARNACLES
20) FAIRY
22) LIMPETS
24) SKELETON
25) SHELL
27) SALLY
28) HAWKS
30) KRILL
32) BOAT



NOAA

Island Poets

Spawned on the dark continent,
Driven by ravenous hunger,
They emerge from the jungle
And take eagerly to the sea.

Guided by Nature's forces,
Each takes a solitary path.
Like the sea turtles and the fishes,
Only the strong survive.

Growing, feeding on heat and moisture,
Following the whims of the gods,
The move ever westward,
Oblivious to all in their path.

They growl and snarl and trample.
They rain havoc in floods of terror.
Howling winds leave twisted debris,
Marking their merciless path.

No technology we have can turn them;
No spell we cast will defeat them;
No weapon we have will thwart them;
To them we matter not at all.

Rich or poor, black or white,
All cower as they approach.
Powerless before their onslaught,
We can only watch and wait and pray.

— John Rowland

On Selling

Good-bye, dear friend of our sailing life,
You took good care of me and my wife
Through all our adventures, great and small
You were the vessel that enabled it all.

But now our bones ache, although yours remain strong.
We two won't be able to sail the seas long
But you can keep voyaging into the blue.
Our hearts will go with you, and with your new owners, too.

— Keith Blount

parlumps marooned



FACT-OIDS



Don't You Know a Noise Annoys an Oyster?

by Lee Kessell

"Who said that?"

"Me, you fool!"

Terry the Angel Fish looked up. There above him on the big rock just under the surface of the water he saw a very large Oyster. It was clapping its shells together in agitation. "I said, don't you know a noise annoys an Oyster?"

"What rubbish!" butted in Mike, the aggressive Damsel Fish. "How can a noise annoy anyone who has no ears?"

"You're not only a fool but an ignorant one! We Oysters have very sensitive hearing and that outlandish din the crowd of you is making is annoying! Now go away and make your noise somewhere else."

"But Mr. Oyster, sir," spoke up Fred, a timid little Jaw Fish, "My wife has been kidnapped by Bullet the Dog Snapper and we're trying to think of a way to rescue her!"

Mr. Oyster was not an unkind person and he at once calmed down. "But how do you know Bullet the Dog Snapper has not swallowed your poor wife already?"

"Oh no, Mr. Oyster. Bullet held her in his mouth behind his sharp teeth and as he carried her away, she screamed for help and we heard her until they both disappeared into his den beneath the reef. He's keeping her a prisoner and perhaps he will eat her later, so we have no time to lose!"

"Hmmmm," Mr. Oyster rumbled, "I can see that you have no chance against a Dog Snapper, so I will do what I can to help. Although I cemented myself to this rock a long time ago, I have very influential friends that are only a call away."

"But where are they?" demanded Mike, "and how can you call them?"

"Oh, we Oysters can all communicate with each other and together we will call for reinforcements. Now, be quiet."

Mr. Oyster began to make a low rumbling sound and it grew louder and louder until the water began to shiver. When he stopped at last, answering rumbles came from all around the small bay until the vibrations shook the rocks themselves. When there was silence again and the trembling in the water had ceased, Mr. Oyster told the assembled fish that the message was received, had been passed on and before long, help would be on its way.

Fred the Jaw Fish, who had a pretty pale-blue body ending in a blunt yellow head, and all the many fish that had gathered around him, wondered where and what this help would be. While they waited, Mike, who hadn't taken any notice of the Oysters attached to the rocks, wanted some questions answered. He began in his loud way: "Mr. Oyster, why did you cement yourself to the rock? Isn't it better if you can chase your dinner?"

The wise, old Mr. Oyster, who liked to keep himself to himself, sighed wearily. "I do not have to chase my dinner because all I do is open my shell a crack and the little creatures that you, with your impatience, can't see, get carried into my mouth by the smallest of currents."

Mike was about to ask Mr. Oyster why big fish didn't just scrape him off the rock, pluck out his innards and swallow them whole, when all the other sea creatures that lived in the bay interrupted with a great deal of excitement, saying that an entire navy was entering the bay. And that was exactly right — an entire navy of big, battleship fighting Dog Snappers had arrived.

When the fishes saw what sort of a navy this was, they all began to shake with fright but Mike plucked up the courage to say, "So that was what you had planned all along, to get rid of us so you could enjoy your precious silence!"

"No, no!" Mr. Oyster boomed. "The Dog Snappers owe us Oysters a favour and they have come to save Mr. Jaw Fish's wife. They don't want to eat anyone in this bay and never will."

Mike and the others hovered where they were and watched as the Dog Snappers surrounded the den where the kidnapper hid with his prisoner. The biggest of the Dog Snappers called out in a commanding voice, "Come on out! We have you surrounded."

You can be sure that the cowardly Bullet thought he had better obey and hoped that his fellows would see his point in collecting an easy dinner, but Bullet was immediately pushed and butted and nipped at until they had him safely away from the reef.

After Fred the Jaw Fish and the others had rescued Fred's terrified wife, they returned to Mr. Oyster to thank him and all the other Oysters in the bay for saving the little Jaw Fish wife and ridding the bay of such an unwelcome neighbour as

'What did you Oysters do to make those Dog Snappers promise to answer your call?'

Bullet. After the clapping and cheering had died down, Mike turned to his new friend, Mr. Oyster, and asked, "Just one last thing and then we'll promise never to disturb you again. What did you Oysters do to make those Dog Snappers promise to answer your call?"

Mr. Oyster smiled. "One day a number of fishing boats with their noisy outboard engines came into this bay and dropped a very large net. It woke us all up and we waited to see what they were up to. Before long we saw that more fishing boats were driving a great number of Dog Snappers towards the big net. Well, we Oysters believe that wild creatures should be allowed to live their lives according to their natures, so we set up such a huge rumbling that the whole bay shook just like the very worst earthquake and the fishermen believed that is what it was, so they pulled in the net before the Dog Snappers could be caught and roared off to save themselves". Mr. Oyster chuckled at the memory. "So, in gratitude the Dog Snappers said to call them in any emergency and they would come. And so they did, even to save the life of just one little Jaw Fish. So you see, every life, no matter how small, is precious."

THE END

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

If we are going to conserve and protect our coral reefs, perhaps we should know more about them. **What are they and how are they made?**

When you think of coral reefs, I'm sure you think of some hard, rocky, strangely shaped structures on the seabed with some waving plant-like organisms attached. In fact, both the 'rocks' and the 'plants' are made from tiny animals called coral polyps.

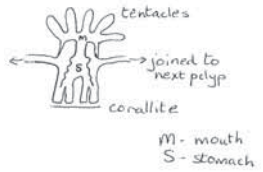
Some polyps are as tiny as a grain of sand while others may be a few centimetres long. A polyp is made up of a tube with an opening in the top. This opening is the mouth and it is surrounded by six or eight tentacles. The coral polyp looks like a miniature sea anemone.

The inside of the polyp is taken up mostly by its digestive system. The tentacles of the polyp have special stinging cells on the outside, like those of jellyfish. These are called nematocysts and they help to catch food for the polyp. The polyp feeds mostly on animal plankton. It takes the plankton from the seawater, digests it and then expels the waste material back through the mouth.

How many types of coral polyps are there? One type forms hard corals, those that look like rocks. Stony coral polyps have no bones inside their bodies. Instead, they form an exo-skeleton outside of their bodies. Special cells on the base of the polyp produce a hard substance like limestone (calcium carbonate). This supports the body of the polyp in a sort of cup called a **corallite**. Special tissues connect each polyp with those around it so that, eventually, millions of polyps are joined together in their limestone cups. The patterns made by how the polyp cups join will show you the different kinds of hard coral. For example, brain coral polyps join in lines that look like the grooves on a brain.

As the polyps die, their skeletons are left. These hard stony structures form reefs. The living polyps always live on the surface of the reef, sitting on the rocky remains of the dead polyps.

What about the corals that look like plants? These are another type of polyp which does not produce the limestone cup. Instead, these soft coral polyps have flexible skeletons made of a tough protein called **gorgonin**. The calcium carbonate they produce is formed in small spikes called **spicules** set in a soft gel so that the corals can bend.



EXPERIMENT

Find a small piece of dead coral on the beach. Drop some limejuice or vinegar on it. What do you notice?

You should see some fizzing and some bubbles given off. The acid liquid reacts with the calcium carbonate of the coral to make carbon dioxide gas.

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2008 ©

Tropical Depression

by Julia Bartlett

It's raining colourless, cool cascades that drum down the deck in waves.

In the twilight of mid-morning I'm curled up below, feet chilled from a precarious, barefoot trip along the slick planks that form the dock. Planks that only two days ago glared white and fierce, searing my soles, now shimmer a wet, slinky black, treacherously lying in wait for the unwary who dare tread in haste. So patiently I shuffled, taking my full quota of a soaking, my reward was finding a toilet that still had a full cistern so avoiding the embarrassment of leaving behind a pan of pooh, and I snagged a hot coffee laden with sugar to boot. I don't normally take sugar so now I'm on a buzz.

Back on board I dripped below, pushing the humidity to 199 percent and fostering a new bloom of *mancha negra*, black spot, across my newly oiled teak.

It's another day of restricted activity, a slowing of pace and of introspection. The electricity went off at 4:20AM while I was checking my docklines against the rising floodwaters. At 11:00AM it still hasn't come back on. I'm saving the ship's batteries for this evening, when the tropical night will descend before 6:00PM, and the generator for tomorrow. At the moment I have a single candle-lamp lit for comfort rather than the light.

No luz means no internet, no BBC news with cosy British voices relaying the latest chapter of the global plunge into a financial abyss that's happening out there, in the developed world. The words recession and depression are bandied around and I gather that "recession" is curable and "depression" is terminal but I haven't heard any informed explanation.

Out there, somewhere far away, history is being made on fast forward, fast enough for me to become terrifyingly aware that that we, the humans who thought up the financial systems of the planet, have lost control. We are creating things we can't control, even our exchange system, and that's all it really is — a glorified barter system.

However, I'm going to be all right because the British Government is guaranteeing my minuscule savings. Mind you, these are the very people who lied to me about Iraq having weapons of mass destruction, so why would I believe them? I don't! I'm thinking of buying gold instead.

From my tiny 30-foot sailboat in the jungles of Guatemala, I Skyped a bullion dealer in the UK. How incongruous is that?

From my tiny 30-foot sailboat in the jungles of Guatemala, I Skyped a bullion dealer in the UK and discussed the price of gold and the best form to buy. How incongruous is that? They recommended Krugerrands.

The pirates of old relied on gold. They wore a gold earring to pay for a decent burial. Imagine going into a funeral director's now and offering a gold earring in payment for a funeral.

I haven't done any research, the internet is down, but I would guess a funeral would cost about four Krugerrands; that's a quarter of a pound of gold. Even the spunkiest punk isn't going to find enough places to pierce to carry around that weight of body ornaments. And imagine trying to cash a Krugerrand in places where it's difficult to get change for bank note worth US$10?

I do think though that death is a great equalizer and the newspapers and the BBC would better off comparing the cost of funerals in different countries, rather than groceries, to guage the cost of living, if you see what I mean. After all, the cost of disposing of a corpse isn't going to be affected by the weather or hungry locusts.

If I could work out how many earrings there are in a Krugerrand I could work out the rate of inflation since the days when Anne Bonnie and Mary Read romped across the Spanish Main. That information would be just as useful as all the statistics we pay a fortune for now and that were obviously above the heads of the politicians, or studiously ignored, before this financial mess forced itself on my Caribbean mind set.

It's raining even harder now, the river is the colour of milk chocolate but not nearly so appetizing and the wind is getting up so I'm definitely still under the influence of Tropical Depression Number 16 and the coffee/sugar buzz has worn off, in case you hadn't guessed.

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BOOK REVIEW BY THE CARIBBEAN BOOKWORM

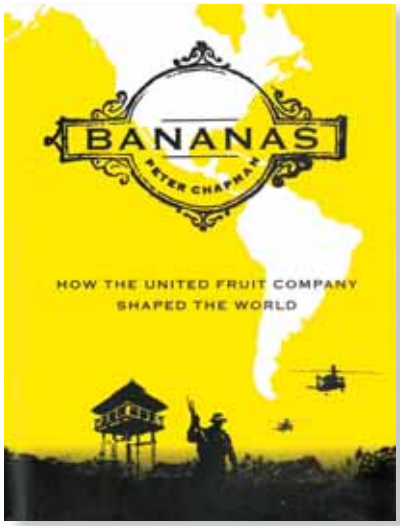
THE BIG BANANA

Bananas: How the United Fruit Company Shaped the World, *by Peter Chapman. Canongate Books, Edinburgh and New York, ©2007. 224 pages. ISBN-10:84195-881-6.*

A book about bananas? There's more to the ubiquitous yellow fruit than you might think.

Bananas were at the heart of the trade war between the United States and Europe that occupied the 1990s. Should European countries be able to give preference to agricultural produce from their former colonies? Or, as the US preferred, should there be "free trade" between the multi-national conglomerates? Eventually, the latter view prevailed.

The ubiquity of bananas in the modern fruit bowl is a story of modern marketing. Popular demand for bananas did not arise, it was created by the early banana barons.



Bananas come from "banana republics", right? It's a derogatory term for countries whose leaders have "sold out", whose decisions are based more on their personal economic interests than the good of their populations. Or, you could say that unbridled capitalism has swung the balance of power away from small, impoverished countries and toward extra-legal corporations.

Bananas are dying. They have been cultivated as a mono-culture for so long that disease is rife, and can barely be controlled without a witch's brew of chemicals that is damaging to land, water and population. They're a cautionary example of unhealthy modern agriculture.

Enter United Fruit Company, which was synonymous with the banana in each of the above iterations. Maybe the company should have been called United Railroad and Land Company, though, because founder Minor Keith first came to Costa Rica in 1871 it was to build the railroad that would move the country's coffee to market.

United Fruit, throughout its history, made full use of every opportunity that came its way, and these were many in the Gilded Age, and beyond. The American Centennial Exhibit created interest in bananas; a Boston schooner captain looking for cargo sold them for such a profit that he returned again and again.

The railroad brought political power and economic access to markets. Control of vast acreage, much of it unused, prevented competition, and had the effect of stifling any government reform initiatives benefitting peasants.

Add to this notoriously ruthless labor practices, bribery and exploitation, well, it's no wonder United Fruit became known at El Pulpo, the octopus, with "tentacle prints" all over Central America, for the next century.

That is the short version, which can be varied and expanded for each country in the region. Conveniently for United Fruit, its youthful lawyer, named Dulles, eventually became Eisenhower's Secretary of State and head of the CIA. In Guatemala, for example, they stood by as a reform government was overthrown in 1954. At one point United Fruit owned the majority of the land in that country.

I find it fascinating how interwoven politics, economics, even marketing, are in this hemisphere. The effects of United Fruit Company's (now rebranded as Chiquita) actions have irrevocably shaped the Americas. This book's epilogue, probably written at the end of 2007, seemed strangely prescient on the subject of the global economy and the nearly neo-colonial power of multi-national conglomerates.

But Chapman could have written a better book with such ripe material at hand. "Where's the editor?" I kept wondering. It's loose and unfocussed, even tone-deaf, with major events glossed over and minor ones played discordantly loud. Still, this is pretty painless reading, and will pique your interest and prime your mind for the better book that's bound to emerge about such a fruitful subject.

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BOOK REVIEW BY BOB BERLINGHOF

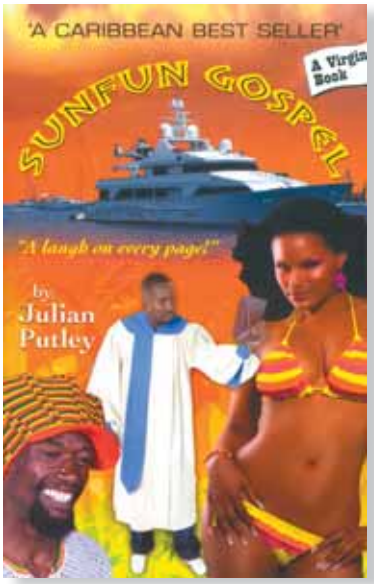
Fun, with Moral Undertones

Sunfun Gospel, *by Julian Putley, Virgin Island Books, ©2009, Cruz Bay, St. John, USVI, 301 pages. ISBN 978-0-9667923-7-9.*

Julian Putley's first novel, *Sunfun Calypso* (reviewed by *Compass* in May, 1999), was a lighthearted romp that showed promise; Putley's follow-up, *Sunfun Gospel*, is an enjoyable satire — but one that also takes on the issue of the exploitation of islanders. As a result, *Sunfun Gospel* emerges as a more mature work of fiction, in fact a work of art.

Putley skillfully threads together his stories of the comeuppance of an amoral billionaire and the ascent of a poor but pious local fisherman. Solomon Welch is the CEO of the United Fruit Company, the corporation that successfully lobbied for the end of price supports for Windward Island bananas in Europe, so that cheaper bananas from Costa Rica could flood the market. Welch is now on the lookout to buy up the failed banana estates as he cruises in his mega-yacht, the *Big Banana*, run by skipper JC and his wife, Shirley. The two are more typical of island cruisers with their concern for locals, while Welch is a racist as well as a corrupt capitalist. JC and Shirley soon part ways with Welch and join the locals who are organizing against him.

Opposing Welch's land lust on the fictional island of Dominada is Delroy Frazer, the "miracle minister". Delroy was a typical rum-drinking fisherman who literally had his prayers answered, which caused his conversion to Christianity. He studied the Bible under Pastor Charles and soon became his star preacher. Delroy was more in touch with people's everyday dilemmas and moral quandaries than Charles, whose chief concern seemed to be the building of his 5,000-square-foot house with a swimming pool. Delroy forms the Dominada Action Movement to try and block Welch's acquisition of huge tracts of land. With JC's help, they manage to outwit Welch and limit his purchases to only one estate.



There are many side characters to round out the action. William Murphy is an offshore banker who is of use to both Solomon Welch and Pastor Charles in their quest for maximum return on investment. Welch wants to privatize his company in a series of offshore shell companies to avoid taxes, while Charles wishes to start his own bank. In an ironic twist, Murphy has evidence that sends the innocent Delroy to jail, but the case is thrown out of court and Delroy emerges as a hero with a newfound concern for downtrodden Haitian refugees. Other characters include the corrupt government minister, Clem Harrington, who allies himself with Welch; an Asian-African beauty known as Sooni who works at Mello's rumshop; Inspectors Botch and Bungle as well as Sergeant Balzup, Keystone Cops who provide comic relief; Reephoff the lawyer, and Ras Frankie, an outspoken ganja farmer and historian. Ras Frankie tells the true story of United Fruit's CIA connections in bringing down the elected government in Guatemala, as well as other examples of corporate malfeasance, in an effort to mobilize people against selling their land to Welch.

The murder of Harrington provides a brief mystery, but the author punctures the suspense by telling us who the murderer is in the next chapter. It is up to Botch, Bungle, and Ballzup to destroy the evidence and allow the killer to remain free. This normally would have a chilling effect on the tone of a novel, but by identifying the perp the reader finds out the murder was in fact an accident, and because his low status, a fair trial is out of the question. Once this is established it is far better for the killer to go free.

In another moral twist, JC and Shirley are not above blackmailing their former boss, though this is excused because they only wanted a glowing letter of recommendation as yacht crew. JC and Delroy also conspire to bring down Welch in a way that is not strictly legal, but the reader forgives them their trespasses because of their just cause. So what appears on the surface to be a simple good guy/bad guy story is muddled somewhat by ambiguity. The tone remains light and breezy throughout, though at times the action is slowed by the overlong sermons of Charles, who in his own way is exploiting the islanders as much as Welch and Harrington.

Sunfun Gospel is basically a fun read with moral undertones that do not ruin the action, but add to the importance of it. The seriousness and timeliness of the issue of foreigners buying up large tracts of land makes this novel resonate while it entertains. The local dialect is well written and the novel shines when it comes to areas of seamanship, as when JC is on the bridge of the *Big Banana*. Congratulations Julian Putley; I hope you can get the screenplay produced!

BREADNUT: The Caribbean Chestnut

The breadnut fruit can fool you by its appearance, so closely does it resemble its less bumpy cousin the breadfruit. But its large, white-fleshed seeds make the breadnut a unique and flavorful island delicacy. This is a nutritious treat you'll seldom find in any restaurant.

In the Caribbean, and especially in Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana, both the seeds and pulp of the breadnut fruit are consumed. In the ripened stage, the seeds are roasted, steamed or boiled and consumed as a snack. They are chestnut-like in size, composition and flavor. The fruit is cooked in the green, partially immature stage as a vegetable.

Breadnut trees (*Artocarpus camansi*) originated in Southeast Asia and are believed to have been brought to the Caribbean along with breadfruit trees by Captain Bligh in 1793. On some islands they are known as chataigne, and are called katahar in Guyana. The fruit itself is a bright green pod usually



CYNTHIA NELSON

five to eight inches in diameter. Unless picked, the seeds — the breadnuts — will continue to grow until the fruit bursts open for the birds to enjoy.

The easiest way to enjoy breadnuts is to buy the seeds — already taken from the fruit and cleaned — in the market or from a roadside vendor. Then boil them in salted water for about 40 minutes, cool and peel off both the outer brown shell and the papery inner covering. For something quick and different, peel the boiled seeds, chop, and sauté briefly with butter, garlic and chadon bene (cilantro). Serve over bow-tie pasta.

Red Breadnuts

1 Tablespoon vegetable oil (peanut preferred)
1/4 teaspoon each cumin seed and mustard seed
1 Cup finely chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 Cups chopped fresh tomatoes
1 bunch chadon bene (cilantro), chopped finely
1 hot pepper, seeded and chopped finely
1 Cup breadnut seeds, boiled, peeled and chopped
2 Cups cooked chickpeas (chana)
1 Tablespoon garam massala
Turmeric and salt to taste
2 Cups water
1 teaspoon lemon juice

In a large frying pan heat the oil with the cumin and mustard seeds until the seeds start to pop open. Add the onion and garlic and fry till brown. Add the chopped tomatoes and simmer until it becomes a thin paste. Add chadon bene, pepper, breadnuts and chickpeas with the garam massala, turmeric, salt and water. (Amount of water depends on the consistency you desire: less for thick, more for thin.) Simmer for half an hour. Add lemon juice. Serve with rice.

Option: For an Italian flavor, use olive instead of peanut oil; substitute oregano, basil and thyme for the chadon bene and spices; and add more garlic. Serve over pasta.

Deomatie's Chataigne Curry

One good-sized, partially immature breadnut fruit
2 Tablespoons oil
1 Tablespoon curry powder
1/2 teaspoon anchar massala
1 1/2 Cups water
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 medium onion, chopped
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 Cup coconut milk
1/2 teaspoon roasted geera

Halve the breadnut fruit, remove and discard core. Remove seeds and peel. Strip the surrounding husk into thin pieces and peel. Wash seeds and husk and set aside.

In a good-sized pot heat the oil, and add curry powder and anchar massala. As the powder starts to sizzle, add 1/2 Cup of the water and stir until it thickens. Add garlic and onion and simmer until it becomes a thin paste. Add breadnut husk, seeds and salt. Lower heat and cover.

Cook until mixture just begins to stick. Add coconut milk with remaining Cup of water and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and cover. Simmer for half an hour till the seeds are soft. Cook off all extra liquid. Add geera and cook five more minutes. Cool and serve.

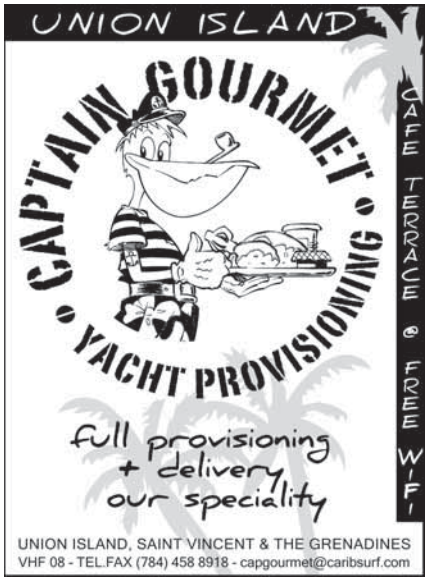
FOR THE GARDENER

A breadnut tree makes a great addition to any tropical garden that has deep, well-drained soil and adequate rainfall. Find someone that has a healthy tree and check around for shoots near rotting fruit, or try your luck with seeds. The breadnut shoot can first be potted and used indoors.

Leave a 20-foot radius clear where you finally put this tree. Make certain the area is well drained and away from your septic tank as the roots will invade it. This tree is best planted where it doesn't get sunshine the entire day and will enjoy occasionally moist soil. Plant in a hole worked about a foot and a half deep.

Water during the dry months and every two months broadcast some starter 12-24-12 fertilizer. A breadnut tree is very adaptable. Given the right conditions the tree can reach a spreading 60 feet tall. Cut the center stem at about 25 feet to have a shorter, fuller tree for easier picking.







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Dear *Compass*,

Wallilabou again! Further to letters in the Readers' Forums of the March and April 2009 issues of *Compass*: I came to Wallilabou on April 27th to do check-in formalities for St. Vincent & the Grenadines. A friendly boat boy showed me a mooring and helped to take a line ashore.

After this he came alongside and asked for EC$10 for his help with the line and EC$20 for the mooring rental — plus a cold beer. I paid, and I gave him a cold beer.

The next morning the "owner" of the mooring came and demanded another mooring fee. How many owners does one mooring have? I did not pay the second time, despite being threatened with calling the coastguard. I simply sailed away.

If this is a system of extortion, it's a crime. If not, the mooring owners and the other boat boys have to learn to work together and not drive away the yachts from which they all make their living.

Rene Braunmüller
S/Y Amigo

Dear *Compass*,

We have been reading with interest all the comments regarding Customs in Trinidad. It is usually a painless but necessary ordeal, and we have not experienced an undue amount of hassle. Hopefully the Ministry of Tourism will help to figure out how to streamline and simplify the process.

But this letter is not about that, but about an event that took place recently in Trinidad. Recently, a cruiser who was in Chaguaramas passed away while working on his boat. His wife, who is a friend of mine, was there. The medical staff did everything possible to help. I heard that the hospital staff was very professional, patient and helpful, but they needed to know how to proceed after the death was confirmed. My friend was, to say the least, distraught and not quite sure how she should proceed at that point. She asked the staff if they could give her a minute so she could ask her driver and tour guide — but mainly her good friend — Jesse James of Members Only Taxi Service. Jesse and his wife, Sharon Rose, were with my friend at the hospital during the ordeal and stayed with her to help with the information she needed to make her decisions.

Jesse has been given many accolades and awards for his outstanding work, but once again, he delivered his assistance at a crucial time. Not enough can be said about him and his wife and the people of Trinidad.

Ginny and John Hannon
S/V Wind Shepherd

Dear *Compass* Readers,

Here's another to add to Chris Doyle's list of reasons to visit Dominica (*Compass*, May 2009). There is a shop on Harbour Lane in Portsmouth (the next street back from Bay Street) whose owner is an absolute WIZARD at fixing computer problems, both hardware and software.

My husband, John, and I initially met John Bruno during a casual conversation about our laptop screen beginning to look like an Etch-a-Sketch. John told us that replacing the screen was easy, once you had the correct part in hand. He proceeded to give us instructions — rather than suggesting that he order the screen and do the work himself! His shop is full of all sorts of hardware supplies having to do with computers at reasonable prices.

A week or so later, we were back at Town Network with a computer (the same one) which would not connect to the Internet, via either a wireless signal or on a direct cable. John spent about an hour diagnosing the problem, sent us back to the boat to back up the hard drive, and then spent several hours reloading Windows and the drivers we needed for our various devices, all the while explaining to John (my John) exactly what he was doing and why.

John Bruno lived in Florida for many years, obtained a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in engineering, worked for several companies doing network design and installation, and received a commercial pilot's license in his free time. He has come back to Portsmouth, which he left at the tender age of six when his parents moved to Florida.

So if your computer is acting quirky and you are near Dominica, stop to talk with John. It may be a quick, simple fix, and if it is not, he will give you the straight scoop.

Melodye Pompa
S/V Second Millennium

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,

Admiralty Bay, Bequia, used to be my favourite port of call in the Eastern Caribbean, and perhaps it still is. Twenty-five years ago the Thursday night jump-up at the Frangipani Hotel was a must, followed often by a chess tournament amongst the resident yacht owners. The Frangi still has the jump-up, but gone are the days when a small rowing boat containing a few shy youngsters would come alongside your yacht once your anchor was down and sing sweet shanties in close harmony for the pleasure of receiving a biscuit or a soft drink. That was traditional Bequia!

There are still many worthwhile places here, and lots of action, especially during the Bequia Easter Regatta week. But I found the town of Port Elizabeth is now falling behind other Caribbean ports, which are making a very notable effort to improve their image (Portsmouth in Dominica and Soufriere in St. Lucia are notable examples).

The dinghy dock in town is now very good; the Belmont Walkway is always clean and pretty; the water is still clear, and music still floats across the harbour. However, the centre of Port Elizabeth now looks uncared for (with some fine exceptions) and the streets are not as clean as they could be. The charm is still there, but is marred by a generally unkempt air. The anchorage is often rocky from the wash of the speeding taxi boats, and some of the Bequia ferries trail a plume of dense black diesel smoke on their thrice-daily passage — I even saw one steam up the harbour at more then ten knots and wondered how many cups of coffee were spilled on anchored yachts. During Easter weekend I saw more than 80 people making their way uncomfortably back from Princess Margaret Beach along the rocky foreshore to the Plantation House area, now that the time-honoured footpath over the cliffs has been obstructed.

My crew was enchanted to find a place on a regatta boat, and I barely saw her for four days. Congratulations to the regatta organisers and to Heineken and Mount Gay for some hot races and warm starts to the evenings' fun.

A visit to Chris Doyle (author of the excellent Cruising and Sailors Guides) on his 12-metre catamaran always brings my current information up to date together with many useful tips concerning "boat problems". He has been sailing in the Caribbean even longer than I have! Invited out for a sail with him during the regatta, I was amazed when we beat up to the finish line (but keeping well out of the way of the racers) ahead of reputed cruising monohulls. How about a multihull class next year?

My thanks again to the organizers for a memorable Easter; it was certainly worth the trip from Martinique.

Jeremy Hobday
Yacht Tchin

Dear *Compass*,

My wife and I arrived in the Caribbean several years ago. Having never sailed in the region before then, the many pieces of advice I received from seasoned Caribbean cruisers were gratefully received. One snippet was that it was imperative that we listen to the Safety and Security Net on 8104.

The following morning I turned the radio dial and was introduced to the very scary and xenophobic world of the American cruiser, where things that go bump in the night could be a fishing boat touching the hull loaded with drug- and rum-crazed locals intent on robbery, at the very least. Or a pirogue on the same heading was a signal to "git out yer gun" just in case. Or somebody for the hundredth time asked for a repeat of the position of the oilrig between Trinidad and Tobago. (I mean, it's only about 200 feet tall and carries more lights than the average airport.)

I quickly became swept up in this daily soap opera of missing dinghies, suspicious characters, and reports of islands and bays where the citizens lurked in the palm trees filing their teeth waiting for the next innocent victim on his yacht!

I started hauling my dinghy halfway up the mast. On a visit to Trinidad's Radio Shack I bought a sensor that let off a piercing shriek if anybody on the shore even looked at my boat with attitude. Plus I super-glued drawing pins all over boards and placed them in my boat's potential access points. (My wife pointed out that this was not one of my better ideas, given my habit of getting up in the middle of the night to gaze at the stars while having a pee over the stern. She was, of course, right. It took about two nights before this rum-soaked idiot was hopping around on the deck screaming and trying to prize a chopping board off his foot.)

What finally made me switch the radio off was, again, an observation made by my wife.

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

You see, I had decided that the person who ran this net had a voice that reminded me of the appalling Wilma in the Flintstones cartoon. It became my daily habit, just before the net started, to sing the theme song. (You remember? "Flintstones, meet the Flintstones. They're the modern stone-age fam-il-eee…") Then at appropriate, to me, times during the programme I would chime in with a cheery "yabba-dabba-doo!" On this particular day my beloved said that if I did not shut up and stop listening to that stupid bl____ programme she would remove my bits with a blunt knife.

Aware that she is not one to make idle threats, that was the end of my listening days. And you know something? The Caribbean became a much friendlier place.

Tim Sadler
S/Y Nanou

Dear *Compass* Readers,

I'm proud to be able to share with you a short story of a much loved and admired sailing cat who quietly passed away on the 20th of March 2009.

Captain Peanuts began his life as a kitten called Blackie, rescued from the sugarcane fields of Swaziland in Africa. He began writing his legacy as a boat cat by surviving a nasty spell of cat flu and numerous bloody encounters with neighbouring wild cats, but always had the determination to continue. He took full advantage of his multiple lives and kept coming back round with a new lease and look on life every time.

With the highest pedigree of a "pavement special", he did not care anything for fellow cats. Instead he had an unusual fondness for four-legged friends of the dog variety. On numerous occasions he was found proudly grinning with delight while a terrified pooch cowered up to a wall. Another trick was his ability to balance objects of different shapes and sizes stacked up on his furry head. They would precariously wobble, up to five pieces high, as the boat rolled to and fro.

His sixth sense for food made it impossible to bring any tasty morsel down the hatch, be it mince, fish or steak. Should the fridge door make a sound, or the fishing reel pull tight, like a flash he was there — meowing and pawing, asking sooooo nicely for a piece of the action. He was so consistent that cooking in the galley became almost unbearable.

And just to show his appreciation, he chose to smother you with wet sloppy kisses and then curl up on top of your book, chart, chest or pillow, depending on what you were doing at the time. I can't say how many times I have woken up because my neck had gone stiff, only to find Captain Peanuts fast asleep on my pillow, purring loudly.

He lives on in memory in the hearts of friends and foes from all over the world, and in the archives of foreign newspapers and magazines. He lived a life so unique and adventurous that most cats wouldn't dare to dream of it.

Alex Nebe
Yacht Sparrow

Dear *Compass*,

I picked up a copy of your publication in early January and really enjoyed the articles, editorials and letters. I've put the San Blas Islands on my list of "to visit"!

Although I'm a land traveler, I thought your readers might be interested in some of my observations.

The first two months of my winter away from snow were spent in Petite Martinique (PM), a tiny island in the Grenadines with one road along the south coast and two branches up the hills. The 900 people are truly warm and friendly, and the four supermarkets have an excellent selection of very well priced wines and liquor. The bank is open three mornings per week (where money can be exchanged, but not obtained from a bank or credit card). The one beach is really more for the motorboats (fishing and dive support) and boatbuilding and repair.

For those wanting a strenuous hike, walk to the west end of the road, through a pasture past tethered cattle, and climb a "path" along the ridge. The views are spectacular and it's peaceful. You'll come down the steep hill past the lovely Catholic Church where you would be warmly welcomed on Sundays ("We love you, yes, we do") and treated to lively music, too!

There are several little shops to the west, and one owner cuts lettuce when available from her garden. Gloria generally bakes bread (available about 2:00 in the afternoon) in her shop on the first paved road heading up the hill. Near the docks, the Palm Beach Restaurant has delicious food and a loyal international following.

PM is a really un-touristy island with many sheep, goats and chickens running free. But be prepared for road graders and dump trucks, and fast (up to 50 mph!) and noisy Suzukis, and a truck —reminders of the city you thought you left behind. One wonders what the rush is and why golf carts aren't the norm.

PM is also very close to excellent swimming and a long beach at Petit St. Vincent, a truly out-of-this-world resort, with private cottages and excellent dining.

Carriacou I visited from PM — on the school boat with students in their uniforms riding on the roof! I was looking for more vegetables and supplies. Carriacou is a beautiful island, and easy to get around in the shared taxi mini-vans which all start and end in Hillsborough, some heading to Windward and others to Tyrell Bay. I did find many more fruits and vegetables at colorful street stalls and at the Agri Co-op market. I fell in love with Henviette's baking in the village at the far end of beautiful Paradise Beach, especially her "special" bread, which is dense with a real crust.

The month of March I spent on Mayreau (no banks!) at the idyllic Saltwhistle Bay Hotel, right on the beach, discreet with its five traditional stone bungalows. It is picture perfect with the yachts visiting and the frigate birds fishing. A very steep road leads up the hill, at the top of which is a gorgeous stone church with a view from its back of the Tobago Cays.

The village is on the other side of the hill, and there you have a choice of five or six restaurants and bars and two supermarkets. One stop, below the café at the end of the village proper, gets fresh bread, fruits and vegetables three times a week, but don't trust the posted hours! And if you're hungry, there are rotis or a barbecue on Saturday at noon. Eileen, a greengrocer entrepreneur from Union Island, has started visiting Mayreau on Fridays at the Rastas with her wares. She also visits PM on Saturday mornings and announces her arrival with a conch shell blow. On Saturday mornings near the church a lovely woman sells her fruits and vegetables from Saint Vincent, where almost all the produce is grown.

Mayreau has five lovely beaches. Keep walking down the hill through the village to Saline Bay where the *Barracuda* and *Gemstar* ferries come in, or head to the left past the huge power plant (five years ago Mayreau was without electricity) over to another lovely beach and bay for snorkeling.

As in PM, there are hiking trails on Mayreau that could use the attention of a machete or two. From Saltwhistle Bay on the leeward side we walked the length of the windward beach to its end and found a path which took us up and down, through brambles, over some rocks, near the water and past isolated bays, with the view of the Tobago Cays becoming steadily clearer. Finally the long beach on the opposite side of the island from Saline Bay was reached, and we trudged past the power plant, up the hill, stopped at Dennis' for callalou soup and garlic toast, and then headed back down to Saltwhistle Bay as the sun was setting. It was a good three-hour workout for a land-starved exercise addict! But it could take all day if you sat and listened and walked and swam — you know how to enjoy the world.

Local people have, for the most part, been helpful, kind and respectful, but there have been several unsolicited and blatant propositions. I was informed that it was my fault, in that I'm Canadian and in the 1960s and '70s Canadian women were notorious for coming to the islands looking for black boyfriends. So, if any of you were there then, a big "no thanks" to you!

The waters are gorgeous, as are the beaches — except for the garbage and its thoughtless disposal. There seems to be no recycling program and garbage disposal is a very real problem. A bottle recycling/deposit programme would be a start, as would composting of organic refuse and a ban on styrofoam and plastic bags and water bottles. Both PM and Mayreau lack adequate landfill space for their own rubbish and certainly don't want other people's. The Caribbean is a long way behind North America and Europe in its control of garbage and litter, and needs visitors' co-operation not to exacerbate their problem.

I've met travelers from many places: an Irish couple going from island to island on the ferries; an Australian couple with their three young children sailing around the world; two British gentlemen sailing from England to New Zealand, a life-long dream, in a 36-foot yacht; six hard-working Dutchmen who "stay alive" because of their yearly cruises all over our globe. Some people are down for a week or two, others for eight months or more, and I met a French Canadian who has been sailing for 15 years. Most of the visitors to PM and Mayreau like places which are off the beaten track or they wouldn't be here.

You accept the weather: almost always gorgeous, especially with the showers that fill the cisterns with rain. Even when there are two days of high winds and the week-long aftermath of murky water and a bench strewn with piles of black sea grass, who cares, really? It's still divine.

The joys of blue skies, cloud patterns, bright stars and clear moons, long deserted beaches, turquoise waters, reefs and waves, the wind in the palms, sea birds fishing, doves cooing, friendly island dogs who search you out on a hike, and warm and friendly people — all this will remain in my soul forever.

Clair Soper
Ontario, Canada

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Letter of the Month

Dear *Compass*,

It is a relief to read in recent letters that *Compass* is opening up a wider discussion on yacht clearance procedures. I hope the various Caribbean authorities will take notice and carry out the major review of the whole process that is now overdue. Clearing in and out as currently practised (by those yacht skippers that bother) is the perpetuation of an often-farcical bureaucratic procedure seemingly of Dickensian origin. With a process as immutable as an ancient religious rite, devising a system to do the same thing electronically is like translating words from Latin to English — the content does not change. The process in all its ludicrous glory will remain unless hugely changed!

As I sit down in yet another "cramped little dusty office" (to quote Larry Jeram Croft) scarcely able to provide the minimal desk space (but sometimes well chilled by a/c, with the TV showing test match cricket) I find it difficult to avoid giggling as, once again, I work my way through the many inconsequential questions and try to decide which ones really need an answer and which need an answer sufficient to pass scrutiny. Recently in the Rodney Bay office I was so diverted by an exciting moment in a test match, I only later noticed (but the Customs officer did not) that I had quite unintentionally missed out answering many of the questions. What I did notice, looking towards the TV, was that the rear office wall was lined to the ten-foot level with boxed copies of past clearance forms, a feature I had also come across in Georgetown, Bahamas, where I had had to work my way into the office past four-foot-high piles of completed forms to gain access. The scene is reminiscent of (and as useful as) Indian Railways where reputedly they hold records of all journeys made for over 50 years.

Inventing and introducing an electronic form-filling process such as eSeaClear, however elegant, easy to use and well-considered (and I am not sure that it is well-researched if it cannot be used for checking out, or you still have to see Immigration), merely serves to perpetuate the present nonsense which has no apparent purpose other than to frustrate the visiting yachtsman and provide a good income for the Customs and Immigration people.

Way back (1924 in the UK and the Romans well before that), most countries with a tax system established a Customs department and, later, excise or revenue collection service, tasked to ensure all appropriate taxes were paid by their citizens and, maybe, their visitors. They chased smugglers with varied success and hunted down contraband. Forty years ago in the Caribbean when, I remember, rum and all other goods were moved between islands mostly aboard inter-island sloops and schooners, Customs might have had a function in this regard: to check that import duties and taxes were paid. These days a bottle of spirits, and most other more essential items, costs much the same wherever you buy it (with the possible exception of St. Thomas where in Kmart good gin or rum is still cheaper than an equivalent volume of mouth-wash). Some may agree that most prices for food and other vital items slowly reduce as you move through the islands towards Trinidad and then Venezuela. But that does NOT make smuggling, in the sense of bringing duty-free or lower-tax items into a country for landing and resale, an activity for cruisers whose boats rarely have spare room for anything non-essential. So what about drugs? Most entry/exit forms handle that by asking if you have any illegal drugs. But who in their right mind is going to say they have such items, whether they do or not? Maybe only the same captain who admits, further down in the form, that he has a stowaway!

Repeatedly answering a welter of questions about one's boat, which may or may not later be transcribed to a computer or inserted in some prehistoric-looking register or just left in a box — how does that help a Customs officer serve his country or anyone? How many wrongdoers have ever been detected or deterred by this kind of form filling? Customs staff in Europe indicate that most successful apprehensions of smugglers, drug-runners, illegal immigrants, etcetera, have come from tip-offs or intelligence. Virtually nothing useful comes from yachting tourists lining up in an office and filling in lengthy forms.

Am I the only one to notice that a significant minority does not clear in and out? Typically, while at anchor in Bequia this year, a pair of yachts flying St. Lucia courtesy flags anchored mid-afternoon next to my boat. We noticed they did not go ashore towards town although their dogs were taken to "exercise" (nasty habit) on beautiful Princess Margaret Beach at dusk. By first thing next morning the SVG flags had appeared, the water boat summoned and by mid-day they had sailed on south.

Incidentally, about 20 percent of the boats anchored in Rodney Bay in early March did not display courtesy flags. Could it just be that some of them did not follow the rest of the entry procedure either? Maybe they are the same boats without an adequate anchor light and perhaps even without any third party insurance? The police amongst others have long appreciated that if someone flouts one law he probably disregards others, too!

And what about the pirogues which zip from island to island? Fresh Dominican produce coming in to Les Saintes, boatloads of visitors going from Union Island to Carriacou for Carnival, trips to St. Lucia from Martinique for gas during the strike — none of them are ever seen lining up to clear in/out at Customs and Immigration.

The oft-quoted process of unknown legality of "yellow flagging it" down the islands (but often without the use of a Q flag!) appears also to have become increasingly popular: "Just stop where you want and put a courtesy flag up if you feel like it." Most yacht skippers have also worked out that if you are going on to a French island (and also now Portsmouth, Dominica) you will not be asked for clearance papers from your previous port, and so you can easily start a new paper trail if you have somehow "overlooked" clearance elsewhere.

Only in the Dominican Republic and Portugal have officials actually boarded my boat, and then for no useful purpose. Bermuda remains the only place in my experience where the opening word of officials has been "welcome", said with a smile and followed by an offer for use of their dock overnight and then taking over the filling in of their forms as "You must be tired"! Most other officials I have found businesslike at best but sometimes, I am sorry to say, surly and unhelpful. Given that they are gatekeepers to their country, it is their attitude that makes the lasting impression and sets the scene for the visit. In Marigot, a few weeks ago, I was directed by the Customs officer to give the Immigration element of the form to the Immigration officer — "if he was there" — if not, to give it back to him. Well, he knew the official was not there, so why was the form not taken from me in the first place?

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Trinidad & Tobago officials long ago established their reputation as being unfriendly to cruisers. They have enhanced their position by placing limitations on anchoring options and times of departure, and charging overtime simply because you arrived at their country's border, but not their dock, at a time when overtime is charged. In Tobago, officials in Scarborough and Charlottesville seem to be involved in some kind of turf war that makes transiting between the two areas difficult and unpleasant. Unfortunate, too, for the rest of Tobago which relies on tourism, when their hotels are at a record low occupancy rate, that the officials are so discouraging to cruisers who, according to a study published in the *Compass*, spend an average of US$2,200 per boat each month, most of which goes directly back into the economy at grass-roots level. And what about Barbados, where you are usually obliged by most Customs officers to bring your boat alongside a huge Yokohama fender in the cruise ship harbour and then clamber up a ladderless wall while leaving your boat to the mercy of the ever-present swell? Then there is Nevis, where a huge number of (ugly, some say) moorings have been provided but the dinghy dock is dangerously inadequate. The simple message is that there is a choice of islands to visit; those that make it easy get my vote.

And why is overtime payable? If you clear in or out of Union Island, for example, at the airport on a weekend where staff are already awaiting aircraft — guess what? You as a cruiser will be required to cough up an overtime payment.

And what about charterers, who bring a significant income to the islands? Usually they are on a tight schedule. Does it make sense to keep the charter guests on board for sometimes up to two hours (yes, I lined up for at least that time in Marigot, St. Martin, last March, and other places can be the same) while the skipper goes to clear in? Why make it difficult for these people to get ashore and spend money? Charterers with a deposit to reclaim on their return to base and a return flight to catch are the least likely to abscond onto a Caribbean island however delightful — why put them through lengthy Immigration procedures? Any more than the long-term cruisers who are most unlikely to abandon their floating, and sometimes only, home for residence ashore. Those exceptionally rare few who do are hardly going to be unnoticed and are likely to want to do so legally!

Few cruisers, I suspect, have a problem with fees as such — that is not the cause of hassle or delay. Such fees as there are — overtime apart — are mostly reasonable, with the possible exception of Mustique (why part with loads of cash to linger in a rolly anchorage?), the DR where fees have escalated to more than US$120, or the Bahamas where US$300 for a seasonal cruising license for a 35-foot boat is over the top for a short transit. And now both sides of St. Martin have joined the big-fees bandwagon.

Government officers could see for themselves, during an actual inter-island cruise, how ridiculous and unwelcoming the yacht entry/exit procedures can be

I would suggest that 99.99 percent of cruisers are not smugglers and are not clandestinely trying to immigrate to an island of their choice. We are paying visitors who deserve to be given a reception similar to when arriving in a good hotel: polite and welcoming. That is, if our presence is wanted, and the Tourism Ministers of most islands proclaim that it is.

Even after negotiating the entry procedure you will need to leave eventually; that is provided you were not trying to have spare parts shipped in for your boat. Then Customs appear to want to erect as many hurdles as they can to delay you getting your stores. They are particularly accomplished in being awkward in Chaguaramas and Port of Spain, but there are many imitators.

Outbound clearance is just as loopy as inbound, and often demands that you declare your intention well in advance by filling in yet more forms (although usually the same ones, with "departure" rather than "arrival" ticked) and see the Customs again. As well as wasting time, the "advance" bit is an issue as office opening times can seriously constrain the options for leaving and fail to take account of short-notice decisions (to go or stay) necessarily made on receipt of weather updates. And why see the Customs when leaving? Did we buy too much/not enough? Martinique and Dominica have both worked it out that simultaneous check in/out causes the least hassle and pleases the customer. Why not other islands?

How to improve things? A regional review is quite clearly essential. The review must be by senior government officials who are above the fiefdoms and self-interest that clearly exist within the Customs service. Charter companies could help by using their under-used (at this difficult time) assets to offer invitations to a selection of government officers so these people can see for themselves, during an actual inter-island cruise, just how ridiculous, unwelcoming, annoying and useless the entry/exit procedures can be.

One would hope the solution would include a cruising permit issued electronically on first check-in to any Eastern Caribbean island, which would remain valid for say, three or six months in all islands, with boat and personal data held on a central database. A seasonal fee could be matched to the average level paid now and shared among countries visited. Ultimately a WiFi network in all clearance ports, funded by an enhanced fee if necessary, would enable checking in and out, and updating if needed, to be carried out remotely or in an office following first permit issue. And anyone who does not know what a simple cruiser-friendly system is, need look no further than Martinique.

An easy system such as outlined above would release many officers from menial office work to apprehend or discourage wrongdoers (drug traffickers or whatever), make sure taxes are paid, etcetera. Any spare manpower, still funded as now, could be diverted towards establishing a degree of harbour management now so obviously missing. Overseeing safe and licensed moorings in appropriate places, managing/procuring resources such as dinghy docks, and becoming goodwill ambassadors for their countries would encourage (and thereby improve income from) yachting visitors. Common international agreement could also perhaps be reached on mandatory third-party insurance for boats and local rules devised and enforced for safety issues such as use of jetskis, anchor lights, channel fairways, speed limits, etcetera.

Simon Julien
Yacht Calisto

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THE barque *Picton Castle* recently sailed into Carriacou from Brazil and Senegal, West Africa, while on a one-year voyage of the Atlantic Basin.

In Hillsborough we had a couple of days of Carnival with plenty of dancing in the streets and crazy parades and steel bands, followed by a nice day-sail down to Grenada. After a pleasant stay in St. George's we set off for sailing, tacking and anchoring our 300-ton square-rigger all around the Grenadines and Windward and Leeward Isles — very good seamanship drill for the crew of a sail-training ship like ours and lots of fun. Both at sea and ashore our gang have been having the times of their lives here in these islands of the Eastern Caribbean.

From time to time, however, along the beaches, in the waterfront haunts and at the dinghy docks up and down these sun-drenched isles of the blest we sometimes — actually quite often — have heard various forms of whingeing about how tough or bad it is in the Caribbean and more significantly, how much it has changed since — oh, pick a year, any year, and how it has inevitably changed for the worse somehow from that wonderful year in the past.

After hearing talk like this over many years I have to say that I have little sympathy and no empathy for these critics and those that bemoan the Caribbean. There seems to be always some whining about how it's all "gone and over" in the West Indies — somehow "it was cool then but it sucks now."

Maybe one's fantasy fell apart when he learned that life is work here, too. Or maybe bitching about the Caribbean "not being as good as it was before" is just a sideways way of informing the listener of a self-conferred "island veteran" status.

Or maybe it's just that some folks just don't know how good they have it when they are having it so good.

Who hasn't been there? But if that negative feeling regarding these superb islands is truly how one from some northern nation has come to feel, well, so be it, but then do get on back home as soon as possible and complain about the islands there. Perhaps the sufferer will find a sympathetic audience for these complaints back in Chicago, London or Toronto.

Maybe.

Hey shipmate, that gangway goes down to the quay and towards a taxi as well as up to the rail to your vessel.

That plane that brought such dissatisfied souls here also flies back north and can take many a whining sunburned sailor with it. And if you didn't fly but sailed here, well, you don't have to sail all that way back. Buy a ticket, you can probably afford it — and nothing gets to windward like a 747.

Or, and this I recommend, you could take another look at the islands. And maybe take a little peek at yourself, too, and start to really enjoy and embrace this wonderful part of the world and make truly great memories starting now.

In my view, the Eastern Caribbean islands are just as sweet as ever. I need to qualify myself and point out that my sailing and seafaring career began here as a kid almost 40 years ago sailing in windjammers and charter boats among and between the Virgin Islands and the Grenadines. We had some good times, let me tell you. Still today these very same islands still boast fantastic anchorages (some of the very best in the world), some of the best and most reliable tradewinds to be found anywhere in any ocean with great sailing reaches, stunning blue skies followed by dazzling sunsets, excellent weather so much of the time, superb music, beaches, cold beer, great food, jump-ups, fascinating and very significant history and art, enchanting architecture, gorgeous landscapes, lovely welcoming folks ashore, and on and on. Snorkelling, diving, fishing and swimming are not too shabby either, and the rum is fine any time of year.

I would not want to deny anyone their well-deserved and cherished nostalgia. However, to my way of thinking these islands are not only as awesome as ever but maybe even just a little bit better than before in many ways. Provisioning is better, mechanics are better, medical resources are better, supplies are better, communications are better, shipping and transport are better. Being truly in a period well past the colonial days, islanders have access to better education today and are generally more prosperous and well-travelled with sophisticated world experiences and views. Independence has served the islands well. Islanders generally and graciously treat both visitors and each other as equals, which is the only real way be taken as one, just be equal.

Sure, it would be nice if development were a bit less on some islands. And sure, things have changed — it would be great if these West Indies were still inhabited by traditional island-built schooners trading and smuggling back and forth and with all that old folksy charm of yore fully intact. However, "charm" at the price of crushing poverty is not anything I would want to see more of. Every one of our hometowns has changed too; so be it.

Hey, what the hell, talk about change and not always for the better, I have changed, too! I ain't what I used to be! I'm not a lean and wiry 18-year-old anymore with a full head of hair, a belly you could light a match on, running around like a monkey in the rigging of brigantines and schooners reaching up and down the Lesser Antilles, sailing Carriacou sloops back and forth from Grenada, drinking way too much Jack Iron and getting up in the early morning heaving on the anchor windlass, sailing to the next island and doing it all again, no way. But after a great deal of sailing all around the globe and having been sailing in the Caribbean steadily and on and off since "the good old days", I know the Caribbean is still just great and I can think of no better place to cruise. Is the glass 90 percent full or ten percent empty? Hey, no place is perfect but it ain't over in the islands, far from it — dey plenty cool, man. These are the "good old days" right here, right now. Towards the end of our next circumnavigation (2010-2011) you will find the crew of the *Picton Castle* sailing and limin' and loving being in these very islands, some of the best in the world.

Daniel Moreland, former crew of the brigantine Romance *and Brixham trawler* Maverick *back in the "good old days", is now the Master of the barque* Picton Castle. *For more information visit www.picton-castle.com.*

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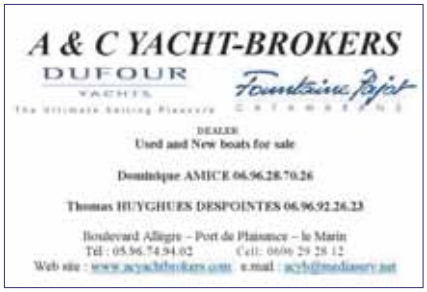


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SAILORS' SHOTS



Does your dog do foredeck? This one does!

Evelyn Drew of S/V *Aquarelle* reports: The Morejohn family — Chris, wife Rachel and daughter Lilly — recently sailed *Hogfish Maximus* from the Bahamas to the Windward Islands. Another daughter, Kalessin, 19, is now tackling the world on her own. Chris has been on the water since he was a teen and sailed from California through the Panama Canal and up to Florida and the Bahamas with his parents' boat.

Hogfish Maximus is named after *Lachnolaimus maximus*, a type of wrasse with a long snout. Designed and built by Chris, it's a 38-foot engineless, sharpie-type shoal-draft sloop. With centerboard up, it only draws 27 inches!

Hogfish Maximus — with foredeck dog — was photographed while I was sitting in our din- ghy, tied up to an anchored boat near the start of the second day's race in this year's Bequia Easter Regatta. They came alarmingly close and I found myself looking up at the dog, aptly named Bequia, staring down at me! Chris yelled, "Don't worry, I haven't hit a boat yet!"

Rachel says, "We acquired Bequia, the self-tacking wonder dog, four years ago in Bequia with the help of the late Mariann Palmborg of Why Knot fame. Mariann was very much involved with animal welfare in Bequia and chose Bequia for us out of a five- or six-week-old litter of pot hounds. She thought Bequia was a kind, well-mannered pup.





"Bequia took to the boat very well and swimming extra well. She's very energetic and a sweetheart who lets us know if anyone is near the boat. Like most dogs, she is fascinated by dolphins and whales. She has sailed the islands from Grenada to the Bahamas, stopping along the way at the few ports where dogs are let ashore."

Would you like to see your favorite photo of your boat, your sailing buddies or yourself in 'Sailors' Shots'? E-mail high-resolution jpegs to compass@vincysurf.com with "sailors' shots" in the subject line. Include a brief description identifying the boat, the people and where and when your shot was taken — then watch out for it in a future issue of Compass!

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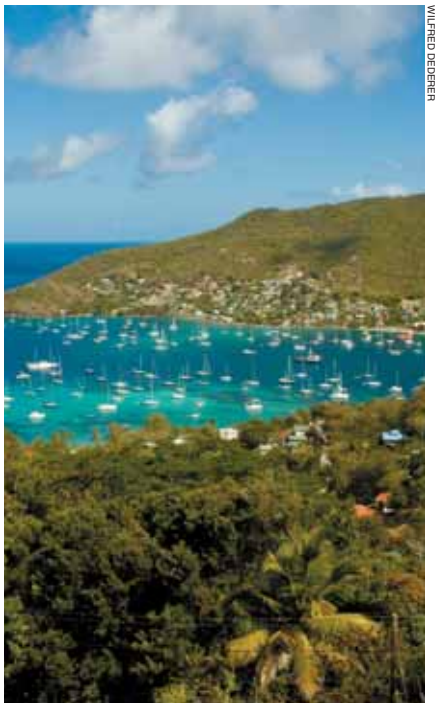
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Camper & Nicholsons	Grenada	5
Captain Gourmet	Union Island	37
Caraibe Greement	Martinique	9
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Doyle's Guides	USA	26
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