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MAY 2011 NO. 188
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



WILFRED DEDERER

30th Anniversary BEQUIA HEINEKEN EASTER REGATTA

See story on page 13



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MLL/003711 & MLL/004933



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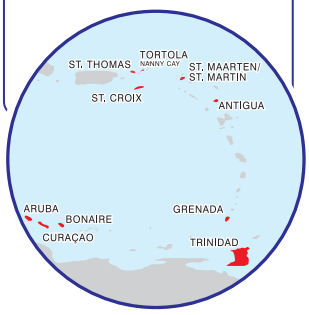
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Tel: (784) 457-3409, Fax: (784) 457-3410
compass@vincysurf.com
www.caribbeancompass.com

Editor.....Sally Erdle
sally@caribbeancompass.com

Assistant Editor.....Elaine Ollivierre
jsprat@vincysurf.com

Advertising & Distribution.....Tom Hopman
tom@caribbeancompass.com

Art, Design & Production.....Wilfred Dederer
wide@caribbeancompass.com

Accounting.....Debra Davis
debra@caribbeancompass.com

Compass Agents by Island:

Antigua: Ad Sales & Distribution - Lucy Tulloch
Tel (268) 720-6868
lucy@thelucy.com

Barbados: Distribution - Doyle Sails
Tel/Fax: (246) 423-4600

Curaçao: Distribution - Budget Marine Curaçao
curacao@budgetmarine.com Tel: (5999) 462 77 33

Dominica: Distribution - Hubert J. Winston
Dominica Marine Center, Tel: (767) 448-2705,
info@dominicamarinecenter.com

Grenada/Carriacou/Petite Martinique:
Ad Sales & Distribution - Karen Maarouf
Cell: (473) 457-2151 Office: (473) 444-3222
compassgrenada@gmail.com

Martinique: Ad Sales & Distribution - Isabelle Prado
Tel: (0596) 596 68 69 71, Mob: + 596 (0) 696 93 26 38
isabelle.prado@wanadoo.fr

Puerto Rico: Ad Sales - Ellen Birrell
787-504-5163, ellenbirrell@gmail.com
Distribution - Sunbay Marina, Fajardo
Olga Diaz de Perez
Tel: (787) 863 0313 Fax: (787) 863 5282
sunbaymarina@aol.com

St. Lucia: Ad Sales & Distribution - Maurice Moffat
Tel: (758) 452 0147 Cell: (758) 720 8432.
mauricemoffat@hotmail.com

St. Maarten/St. Barths/Guadeloupe:
Ad Sales - Stéphane Legendre
Mob: + 590 690 760 100
steflegendre@wanadoo.fr
Distribution - Eric Bendahan
Tel: (599) 553 3850, ericb@cirexpresslogistics.com

St. Thomas/USVI: Ad Sales - Ellen Birrell
787-504-5163, ellenbirrell@gmail.com
Distribution - Bryan Lezama
Tel: (340) 774 7931, blezama1@earthlink.net

St. Vincent & the Grenadines: Ad Sales - Debra Davis
Tel: (784) 457-3527, debra@caribbeancompass.com

Tortola/BVI: Ad Sales - Ellen Birrell
787-504-5163, ellenbirrell@gmail.com
Distribution - Gladys Jones
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Trinidad: Ad Sales & Distribution - Chris Bissondath,
Tel: (868) 222-1011, Cell: (868) 347-4890,
chrisbiss@yahoo.com

Venezuela: Ad Sales & Distribution - Patty Tomasik
Tel: (58-281) 265-3844 Tel/Fax: (58-281) 265-2448
xanadumarine@hotmail.com

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Cover photo: Photographer Wilfred Dederer seizes a memorable J/24 moment at Bequia Heineken Easter Regatta 2011



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Info & Updates

OECS Director General Highlights Yachting Tourism

In an address given to the Workshop on a Common OECS Tourism Policy held in St. Lucia on March 23rd, Director General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States' Secretariat, Dr. Len Ishmael, focused her remarks on "one of the tourism niche areas in which the OECS has a demonstrated competitive advantage — that of yachting". Dr. Ishmael told delegates including Ministers and Directors of Tourism from the OECS member states — Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis and St. Vincent & the Grenadines — that, "In terms of average daily expenditure per visitor, even in the face of far less numbers, yachting continues to outperform the cruise sector in many OECS destinations… yet this sector remains one whose huge potential is still largely untapped, even though the OECS lies at the very heart of the best sailing waters in the Caribbean — if not the world." She added that although the OECS Council of Tourism Ministers has agreed on a number of concepts, including facilitating the adoption of a common policy and approach to the clearance of vessels into and out of OECS sailing waters, not enough is being done to implement these ideas. Dr. Ishmael stated, "The potential of this industry is too vital to the social and economic development of the OECS to be left to the vagaries of chance; it represents an incredible resource literally on our doorstep and must be given the attention it deserves. It lends itself exquisitely to the development of a common policy framework." She highlighted input received from the yachting community stressing the importance of simplification and harmonization of clearance procedures and entry fees throughout these English-speaking islands, and the need for simple infrastructure such as dinghy docks. She also noted the willingness of members of the yachting community to work with the public sector to ensure that plans for the industry are practical and result in the best outcomes.

She concluded, "We must reshape our thinking to embrace the unique qualities of the totality of this space which is the OECS and celebrate that which each Member State contributes in the making of one of the most beautiful corners of the world. Instead of trying to be like everywhere else, let us focus instead on identifying, promoting, protecting and projecting what makes the OECS Space special, and different from any other. Let that be our brand."

For more information on the OECS visit www.oecs.org.

—Continued on next page



Visiting yachts at Rodney Bay, St. Lucia. 'Yachting is too vital to the social and economic development of the OECS to be left to the vagaries of chance.' So is a common subregional approach to yacht clearance in the works?



—Continued from previous page

Eight Bells

MIKE HARKER

Circumnavigator Mike Harker, 64, died in early April after suffering a stroke aboard his Hunter 49, *Wanderlust 3*, at Marigot, St. Martin. As a pioneer hang-glider, a 400-foot free-fall in 1977 while flying off Grenada left him in a nearly yearlong coma and paralyzed from the waist down. Owing to his strong will, he recovered and went on



to enjoy long solo bluewater passages and cruising and racing in the Caribbean. Last June, Harker was attacked and badly beaten by robbers, also while anchored at St. Martin.

DAN HEMLEY

Denise Cluistra reports: Dan Hemley moved from England recently to live on his Colvic 50, *Davara Manu* ("Sea Bird"). He fell in love with Grenada and its people and decided to make Grenada his new home.

While dinghying to his boat at about 9:00PM on March 5th, he hit an un-lit concrete channel marker buoy. Judging from the gash on his head he was knocked unconscious, fell into the sea, and drowned.

Friends on boats nearby heard the collision and rushed to see what had happened. They dived in with an underwater torch and sadly found Dan on the bottom next to one of the buoys. Sadly, too much time had elapsed for them to be able to resuscitate him. He was 32 years old.

Other cruisers say that this was not the first time people have hit these concrete buoys in the dark. They are by the northwest end of Prickly Bay, directly in front of the Spice Island Marine travel-lift, next to the Grenada coast guard. The buoys cannot be seen easily, even with a torch, by those commuting by dinghy at night. If there is cloud cover, it is exceptionally hard to see them against a dark sea surface with many shadows. Thankfully, a few days after Dan's death, the Grenada Coast Guard quickly responded and fixed all the channel marker lights.

A dedicated account has been set up by Dan's family in England to collect money for the Coast Guard in Grenada to help them maintain the lights and buy lifesaving equipment for the area. Any donations would be much appreciated. The account details are: Barclays Bank plc, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, UK. Sort code 20-74-09. Account 73969568.

We can all learn from this tragic incident.

Firstly, on the water at night (especially with cloud cover) there are many reflections off the dark sea playing tricks on your eyes, therefore you need to motor slowly and have "all eyes peeled" (you should never presume that channel buoys are always lit). If you find any lights not working, please report it in writing to your local Coast Guard.

Secondly, sometimes boats are tethered to buoys by ropes that are so long they hang below the water. This can also cause terrible dinghy accidents. Again, please report it in writing to your local Coast Guard and hopefully they can address the problem.

Thirdly, shine a waterproof torch or mount a fixed light on your outboard so that other people can see you clearly to avoid collisions in the dark.

Fourthly, have at least two underwater torches, say one in the dinghy and one on board, sealed in a waterproof pack with back-up batteries included, for any night-time emergencies in the water.

Dan's family flew out from England for his memorial service. It was a very sad occasion, however they have said they will return to see his cruising friends again, get to know Grenada and do some sailing on *Davara Manu*.

Cruisers' Site-ings

• Know the nature of St. Martin. The journal of the Réserve Naturelle of Saint-Martin is published three times per year, in French and English. The most recent edition can be downloaded at www.reservenaturelle-saint-martin.com/doc/journal11.pdf.

• Miss the Tobago Carnival Regatta this year? See the Windsurfing and Kite Boarding fun at www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUx1V9oa8cs&feature=autofb and the Optimist racing at www.youtube.com/watch?v=DR278Nit9DE.

• Helping Haiti. Peter Dybing and Mandy Thody have been building a new blog to be a multipurpose forum for discussion on how small organizations can best help Haiti. Visit http://100percentforhaiti.blogspot.com.

• Interested in oceans? The quarterly electronic newsletter of the World Ocean Observatory has a new format. To subscribe to the *World Ocean Observer* visit www.thew2o.net and click on "Information and Resources".

• *Compass* contributor and cruiser Ellen Birrell is developing her writing. Check it out at http://boldlygo.us/Boldly_Go/Log_of_Boldly_Go/Log_of_Boldly_Go.html.

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Guyana Port Says 'Welcome' to Yachts

The small town of Bartica, about 35 miles up the Essequibo River, is the most popular port of entry for yachts visiting Guyana, and Immigration officer Corporal Dodson tells *Compass* readers, "By all means, come — we welcome you!"



TOM HOPMAN

The commercial wharf, or 'stelling', at the yacht-friendly Essequibo River port of Bartica

Guyana remains off the beaten track for most cruisers, however. Corporal Dodson says that while he has seen an increase in yacht arrivals over the past year or two, Customs and Immigration at Bartica currently clear an average of about one yacht a month. Most arrive in July and August, making the roughly 400-mile passage from Trinidad.

At Bartica, you no longer have to call Customs and Immigration and wait for them to come to the boat. Upon arrival, anchor, dinghy in to the *stelling* (ask the ferry drivers or wharf coordinator where to tie up) and go to the nearby offices. The Customs clearance fee is about US$13 in and another US$13 out. Immigration wants to see all crew, and will give you 90 days, after which you can apply in Georgetown for an extension. Bartica's airport could allow for crew changes. After clearing out, some leeway is given about actual departure time: "We understand about tides and weather!"

Anchorage in the river is generally unrestricted, but use your common sense in light of river traffic and currents. The Essequibo River offers no yacht services *per se*, but groceries and basic services are available in Bartica, and the riverside Baganara Island resort (www.baganara.com) offers a scenic anchorage and welcomes cruisers to its friendly bar and restaurant. Ask at Baganara about air tours to Kaieteur Falls. For major shopping or sightseeing, take a small passenger ferry (a little over an hour) from Bartica to Parika and from there a bus or taxi to Georgetown. As Guyana is the only English-speaking country in South America, some of the culture is West Indian, but the wildlife and geology are most impressively South American.

For more information visit www.doyleguides.com/updatesguyana.html and contact Kit Nascimento at kitnasc@gol.net.gy. Part One of Jack Cooley's comprehensive 2004 cruising guide to the Essequibo is archived on the Compass *website at www.caribbeancompass.com/guyanaguide.htm; if you'd like Parts Two and Three e-mailed to you, contact sally@caribbeancompass.com.*

Here We Go Again…

The Department of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University is forecasting well-above-average activity for the 2011 Atlantic hurricane season, and anticipates an above-average probability of a major hurricane landfall for the Caribbean.

The "extended range forecast of Atlantic seasonal hurricane activity and landfall strike probability for 2011" report by the William Gray-led department specifically states that the 2011 Atlantic hurricane season will have significantly more activity than the average 1950-2000 season.

The report states that 2011 will have about nine hurricanes (average is 5.9), 16 named storms (average is 9.6), 80 named storm days (average is 49.1), 35 hurricane days (average is 24.5), five major hurricanes (average is 2.3) and ten major hurricane days (average is 5.0).

The Colorado officials said the cause of the stormy season was a combination of high water surface temperatures in the Atlantic and neutral surface temperatures in the Pacific.

Jazz on the Pier in Jamaica

For the third consecutive year, Errol Flynn Marina in Port Antonio, Jamaica, will be the site of the Ocho Rios Jazz Festival's "Jazz on the Pier" featuring an international and local array of top musicians. This year's Jazz on the Pier is set for June 17th.

For more information visit www.errolflynnmarina.com.

Eleventh Annual Benefit Auction in Carriacou

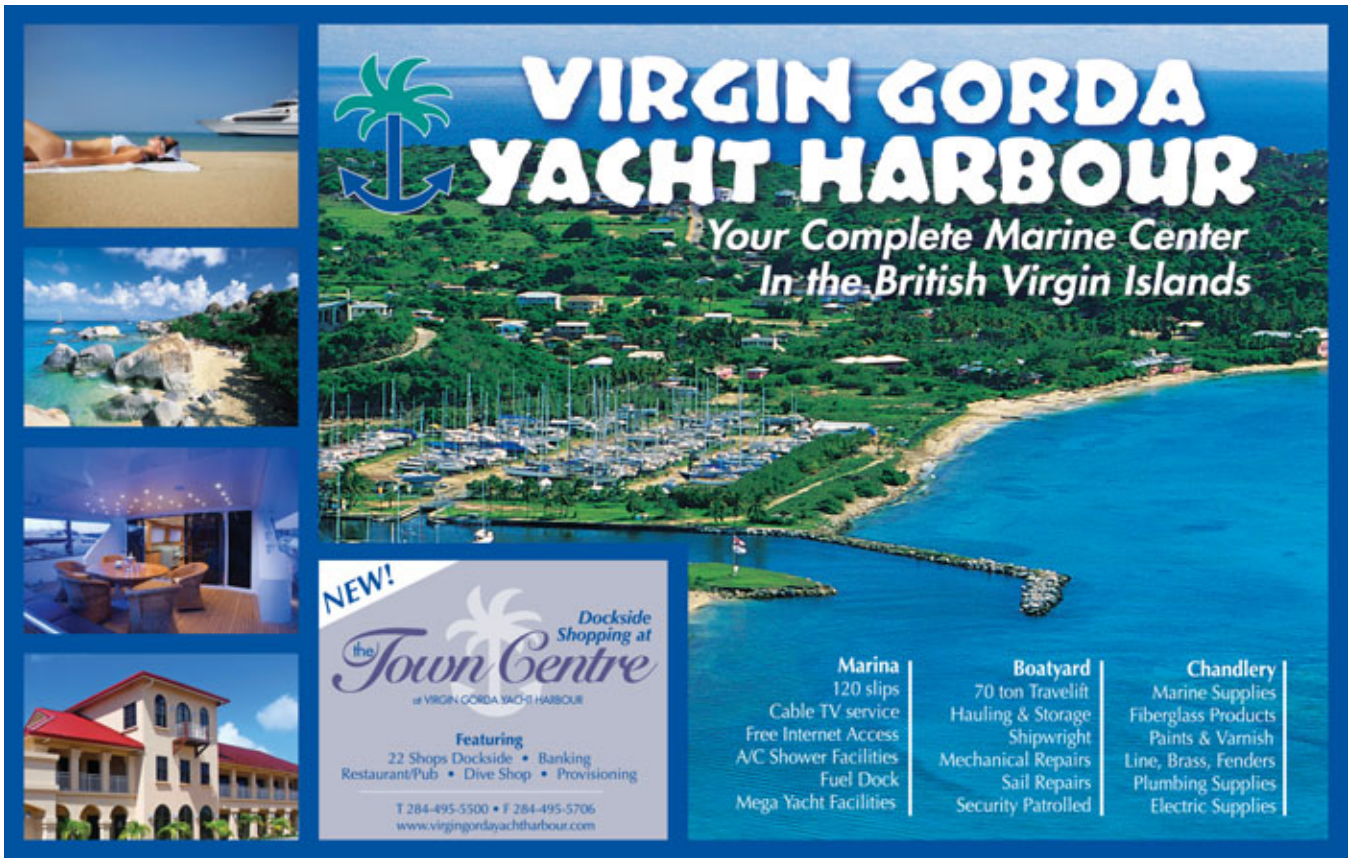
The Carriacou Children's Education Fund will hold its 11th Annual Benefit Auction on July 29th to raise funds for purchasing school uniforms and supplies for needy children of Carriacou to begin the next school year. Start cleaning out your lockers and bilges! If you haven't even seen or thought of a particular article for over a year, chances are it is a good candidate for donation. If you have already made plans to be somewhere else during the Carriacou Regatta Festival, consider leaving your donations with the staff at the Carriacou Yacht Club on your way through. And, don't forget that there is free wireless in Tyrrel Bay — just make a contribution to CCEF.

For more information contact ccefinfo@gmail.com.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome aboard new advertisers PRI fuel treatments of Trinidad, on page 28; the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association, on page 17; Villamar gourmet foods of St. Vincent, on page 36 and Capital Signal of Trinidad, in the Market Place section pages 42 through 45.

Good to have you with us!



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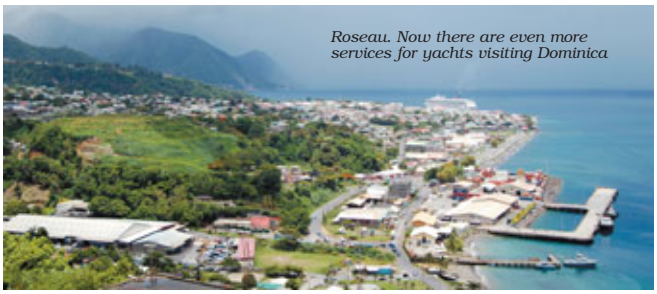
Business Briefs

***Compass* in Puerto Rico**
It's good to be back! We are pleased to announce that regular distribution of



Caribbean Compass has resumed in Puerto Rico. Pick up your monthly copy in Fajardo at Sunbay Marina's office or Puerto del Rey Marina's office, or in Humacao at the Palmas del Mar YC office.

New Yacht Services in Dominica
Hubert Winston reports: I would like to introduce *Compass* readers to Dominica Yacht Service, the island's newest, most comprehensive professional yachting service company, with offices on Victoria Street in Roseau and Bay Street in Portsmouth. As an affiliate of the Dominica Marine Center, Dominica Yacht Services can capably handle any yachting service needs, whether large or small.
In addition to fuel, lubricant and engine sales, this local company handles yacht clearance, transportation, provisioning, tours and scuba diving. Dominica Yacht Services also includes mechanical engineering, dinghy and small-engine sales through the Dominica Marine Center.
Knowing that you have a comprehensive yachting service to handle all your needs quickly, professionally and locally, what are you waiting for? Join us on Dominica, the beautiful Nature Island, for the best the Caribbean has to offer.
Contact us at info@dominicayachtservices.com or visit www.dominicayachtservices.com.


Roseau. Now there are even more services for yachts visiting Dominica

For information about Dominica Marine Center see ad on page 29.

Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour Offers Summer Specials
Check out Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour's summer dockage rates, effective May 1st to October 15th, 2011. Here are just some sample summer rates (per foot per day based on the overall length with a minimum footage of 32 feet. Vessels requiring more than one slip due to beam will be charged 1 1/2 times the stated rates):

VESSEL/SLIP LENGTH	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	SEASONAL
0 – 50ft	1.00	.90	.80	.80
51 –79 ft	1.25	1.15	1.00	1.00

For full details on Summer Special Dockage Rates visit www.virgingordayachtharbour.com/vgyh/Specials.aspx.
For more information on Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour see ad on page 6.

Dockwise Yacht Transport and Floating Life
When Floating Life was introduced to Dockwise Yacht Transport (DYT) a year and a half ago, it became clear that this match between two corporate dynamos would be one made in heaven. Floating Life (www.floatinglife.com), with offices in Switzerland, Italy, Monaco and Shanghai, offers comprehensive management and technical services to an international clientele of yacht owners, and in so doing it demands the highest degree of professional competence from its own employees as well as any outside entity that becomes involved with the company's coordination of countless technical, administrative and logistical details. In the case of transporting Floating Life's three 131-foot (41-meter) Norman Foster-designed motor yachts back and forth between the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, there is no other yacht transport company with which Floating Life would rather involve itself than DYT.


The motor yacht Ocean Emerald *on standby at DYT's* Super Servant 4 *in Martinique*
JONATHAN ZIER

—Continued on next page

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M/Y Ocean Emerald, M/Y Ocean Pearl and *M/Y Ocean Sapphire* are the basis of Floating Life's unique fractional ownership program, by which 24 families — eight per boat — have owner access to the yachts for a certain number of days a year. Floating Life owners can enjoy time aboard their yachts in the Med this summer. Toward that end, both *Ocean Emerald* and *Ocean Pearl* completed a voyage in March from Martinique to Toulon aboard DYT's *Super Servant 4*.
Dockwise owns a total of four yacht carriers, including the 686-foot (209-meter) super ship *Yacht Express*, and operates on a regular schedule to deliver yachts around the world. The ships, looking something like giant moving marinas, use their unique loading method to allow yachts of any size to be safely floated on and off as cargo. The carriers submerge themselves by pumping nine million gallons of water into their ballast tanks; the vessels are floated into place one-by-one, then sea-fastened before the ship pumps dry to prepare for boat transport. Once the ship reaches its final destination, the process is reversed so the yachts can safely disembark with captains, owners and/or crews aboard to take them by their own power to new adventures. DYT also orchestrates lift-on/lift-off arrangements with third-party carriers for clients wanting a more flexible shipping schedule or to explore destinations where the float-on/float-off ships are not scheduled to go.
DYT's global yacht transport routes include St. Thomas and Martinique.
For more information see ad on page 15.

Low Season Specials at Lagoon Marina, St. Maarten
Lagoon Marina, Cole Bay St. Maarten is offering low season specials from July 1st till November 1st! The summer rate for monthly dockage is US$8.00 per foot. Hurricane conditions apply!
Look for details at www.lagoon-marina.com/marina rates.

Gateway to the Grenadines
Shafia London reports: The BridgeHouse, a hotel located in Kingstown, St. Vincent, is ideally situated to accommodate persons traveling to and from Bequia and the other Grenadine islands. Characterized by colonial Spanish architecture and modern interior decor, The BridgeHouse is an inviting boutique hotel that offers a fusion of elegance, affordable accommodation and the warmth of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. All rooms are fitted with air-conditioning, en suite baths, free high-speed wireless internet access and cable television. The staff at the BridgeHouse is ready to assist with airport pick-up and drop-offs and to help plan and organize trips and meetings. Ten minutes away from the airport and the Grenadines wharf, we are bright and cozy for that relaxing getaway or pre-Grenadines stopover.
For more information visit www.bridgehousesvg.com.

New Digital-Only Sail Racing Mag
A new monthly digital-only publication targeted at the worldwide sail racing community has been launched. *Sail Racing Magazine* will cost readers $3.99 per issue to download or view online.
Visit www.sailracingmagazine.com.

Caribbean Cruise Board Game App
Clive Ramsden reports: I recently published an abbreviated version of the WorldWide Cruise Line Caribbean Cruise board game for the iPhone and iPad. There are a total of 400 Island Cards and Ship Cards involved in the game, visiting 160 different island destinations. Players will learn of the history and culture of the Caribbean, of pirates and explorers, of unbelievable riches and desperate poverty, and of grand development and ecological preservation.
See the app at http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/wwcl-caribbean-cruise/id410802639?mt=8. For more information visit http://worldwidecruiselineink.wordpress.com.

New Chart Apps from Imray
Willie Wilson reports: The first of the Imray charts apps, Marine Imray Charts: North Sea and Marine Imray Charts: English Channel is now in the iTunes store. This will run on both iPhone and iPad. The app combines the quality of Imray's charts with an easy to use but comprehensive set of functions for planning routes, seeing tides, saving waypoints, capturing tracks and more. Aerial photographs are included. Caribbean and Mediterranean coverage are due by next month. There is a free trial app called Marine Imray Charts: Introduction.
See a short video of the app at www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoohiqKzn7o.

Barbados to Become 100% WiFi accessible by November
Accomplishing island-wide WiFi access in Barbados by November 11th is the Barbados Entrepreneurship Foundation's first major milestone in its quest to make "Barbados the Number One entrepreneurial hub in the world by 2020".
One pioneer in offering free WiFi is Italia Coffee House. General Manager Cecil Yearwood said that the provision of free WiFi "improves the customer experience and gives us a different demographic of customer that we would not normally see, and improves customer stay and 'spend' in the shops."


J. MILMAN

With this accomplished, Barbados will be the first country in the world to have total WiFi access "from bus stop to rum shop." Achievement of this goal will have tremendous marketing benefits for the island, especially in tourism.

Antigua Show 2011 Dates Set
Dates have been announced for the 50th anniversary Antigua Charter Yacht Show: December 4th through 10th, 2011.
For more information visit www.antigua-charter-yacht-meeting.com.





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Caribbean Eco-News

St. Maarten Establishes its First National Marine Park

St. Maarten established its first national marine park – the Man of War Shoal Marine Park — in late December 2010. It is the first step St. Maarten has taken towards preserving Proselyte Reef, the island's most important underwater habitat.

"The development of the marine park has been long in the making and we are pleased to have begun the first and most crucial phase of the process. By creating the marine park, St. Maarten is taking steps to preserve the local environment as well as enhancing sustainable tourism," said Honorable Franklin Meyers, Minister of Economic Affairs, Tourism, Transportation and Telecommunications.

Proselyte Reef includes coral reefs and sea grass beds as well as a large population of aquatic animals, including whales, dolphins, sharks, sea turtles and fish. The reef also acts as a migratory stopover and breeding site for three IUCN Red List Species, ten CITES Appendix I species and 89 Appendix II species. The reef was named after the *HMS Proselyte*, a 32-gun frigate that struck Man of War Shoal in 1801, and artifacts such as anchors, cannons, barrel hoops, cannon balls and pottery are still present at the site, which is considered an archaeological treasure.

The new Man of War Shoal Marine Park allows St. Maarten to have an official protected area that is enforced in accordance with the Specially Protected Areas of Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol and the federal decree on Maritime Management. The marine park designation will also help boost tourism to the island as diving in marine parks is on the rise globally and is a tourist "must do" while on vacation.

700 Kilos of Trash Collected in Venezuela's Mochima National Park

On March 26th, 700 kilos of underwater garbage were taken from El Faro beach on the island of Chimana Segunda in Venezuela's Mochima National Park. Divers and "snorkelistas" were given the task of taking the garbage that unfortunately many people still throw in the sea. Thanks go to the Guanta Coast Guard, Inparques, SPAO, Bay Divers, Association of the Anzoátegui State underwater activities and the sponsors of this event: Pepsi Cola Venezuela, EPA hardware store and City Mansion bakery. Most of the extracted elements were beer and liquor bottles, soft drink and beer cans, plastic bags and other plastic containers.

For more information contact infofundatortuga@gmail.com.

Environmental Education for USVI and Puerto Rico Tourists

According to the March 29th issue of the *St. Thomas Source*, tourists' habit of collecting coral and shells for souvenirs is hurting the territory's marine environments, but the University of the Virgin Islands and scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and are hoping to help reverse the trend. NOAA and For the Sea Productions have put together a seven-minute etiquette video and 30-second public service announcement that will be played on the local airwaves in hopes of deterring visitors from pilfering from the territory's beaches.



It's no picnic. Clean-up efforts like this one organized by Fundación la Tortuga will be required as long as ignorant people throw rubbish in the sea



Local laws prohibit anyone from taking living or dead corals and shells from the beaches and reefs, but every year almost 260 pounds of these natural resources are confiscated at airports in the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Taking them contributes to the erosion of marine habitats for fish and coral species. The video and corresponding PSA are meant to encourage visitors to "leave paradise where it is" by just looking and not touching. Making sure snorkelers don't step on coral reefs with their fins, and telling boaters the importance of anchoring on a sandy bottom instead of in coral or seagrass beds, are also included in the etiquette tips.

The video and PSA will be aired on television and radio stations and in hotels and dive shops throughout the US Caribbean, while educational posters will be put up at airports and cruise ship terminals in an attempt to stop potential violators before they even get to the beach.

The video is available in both English and Spanish, with Academy Award-winning actor Benicio Del Toro voicing the main character of a smooth trunkfish. Grisel Mamery, host of the Puerto Rican television show Que Noche, is the voice of the spotted eagle ray in the Spanish-language version.

Help Plan the Future of Marine Resources in the Grenadines!

Are you concerned about the future of the marine areas surrounding the Grenadine Islands? The Sustainable Grenadines Inc. invites marine resource users (fishers, cruisers, dive shop operators, day tour operators, water taxi operators, ferries, etcetera) and other community members to take part in a series of community meetings about planning for long-term management of the marine and coastal resources of the Grenadine Islands. The meetings are part of a project to develop a draft regional marine multi-use zoning plan that would incorporate a broad range of interests and management goals to promote sustainable development in the area. The project spans from October 2010 to March 2012 and is funded by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP).

Community meetings are scheduled to take place in June 2011 on every inhabited island of the Grenadines. The meetings are a follow-up to the regional stakeholder-visioning workshop that kicked off the project in Hillsborough, Carriacou at the end of January. Meetings will involve introductions and discussions of the project components, and initial discussions on local priorities for marine space and resources.

The tentative schedule for Marine Resource Users and Community meetings is as follows:

June 9th & 10th – Carriacou
June 11th – Petite Martinique
June 12th & 13th – Union Island
June 14th – Mayreau
June 15th & 16th – Canouan
June 18th & 19th – Bequia
June 20th & 21st – Mustique

The venues for the community meetings will be known before the end of May.

If you would like to attend and/or require additional information contact Martin Barriteau (susgrenpm@vincysurf.com), Kim Baldwin (baldwin.kimberly@gmail.com), Valerie Francella (valerie.francella@mail.mcgill.ca) or SusGren (784 485-8779).

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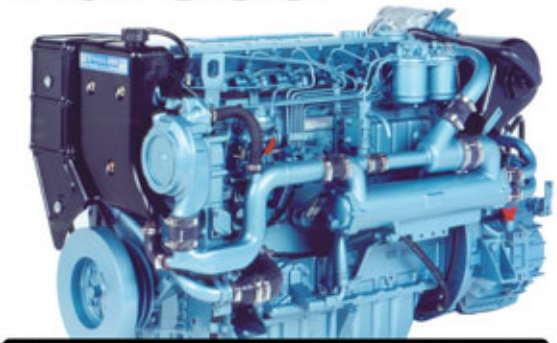
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NINE BOATS TAKE ON NEW CAPE AIR C.O.R.C. CHALLENGE

by Carol Bareuther



DEAN BARNES (2)

Spinnaker A Class winner of the new four-regatta circuit, Puerto Rico's Jaime Torres' Beneteau First 40, Smile & Wave

There's nearly a regatta every weekend in the Caribbean come spring. Many sailors like to leapfrog from island to island to compete. Regatta organizers, such as Puerto Rico's Angel Ayala, have come up with a fix for these competitive spirits: a regatta series that offers even more ways to win.

This year, and thanks to the sponsorship of Cape Air, Ayala turned the traditional Caribbean Ocean Racing Triangle into a four-event series. The new Cape Air Caribbean Ocean Racing Circuit, or C.O.R.C. for short, included two US Virgin Islands' regattas, one in Puerto Rico and one in the British Virgin Islands. Nine boats met the challenge, three sailed the whole circuit and ties in two classes weren't broken until the last race.

The circuit kicked off in February with the St. Croix Yacht Club Hospice Regatta, where five boats (out of a fleet of 17 for the regatta) registered in the initial C.O.R.C. sign-up. Sailing under near-perfect 16 to 18 knots of breeze and sunny skies, three of these boats saw success early and it was a trend that followed them right through to the end. Puerto Rico's Jaime Torres on his Beneteau First 40, *Smile and Wave*, led Spinnaker Racing A, St. Thomas's Paul Davis driving his J/27, *Mag 7*, topped the Spinnaker B class and St. Croix's Tony Sanpere's J/36, *Cayennita Grande*, firmly placed on the scoreboard second in Performance Cruising.

"It was a great regatta," says *Mag 7*'s Davis. "We finished third in class in the regatta, first in our C.O.R.C. class, and I even won the raffle for a Cape Air ticket."

The next leg of the circuit — the Puerto Rico Heineken International Regatta — took place in mid-March at Palmas del Mar. There was a second sign-up for the Cape Air C.O.R.C. and four more boats, including two IC24s to make a class, entered. Circuit rules called for boats to race in at least three of the four regattas — one in the US Virgin Islands, one in Puerto Rico and one in the BVI — to be eligible for raffle drawings and prizes.

Sunny skies and blustery winds topping 20-plus knots set the scene for the Puerto Rico regatta. In the end, Torres' *Smile and Wave* continued his lead in the Spinnaker Racing A class.

"We got the boat last year and have been training about five days a month since then, getting ready for regatta season," says Torres, who is the co-owner of Vela Uno, San Juan's largest windsurfing, kite-boarding and paddle-boarding operation. "It looks like it's paying off."

Davis's *Mag 7* continued its reign in Spinnaker B, while Sanpere's *Cayennita Grande* had to settle for second again in Performance Cruising, behind Puerto Rico's Bernardo Gonzalez' Beneteau First 35, *Bonne Chance*. A newcomer, Puerto Rico's Dwight Rodriguez's Beneteau First 38S5, *Toda Via*, topped the Jib & Main Class, while in the IC24 Class, Puerto Rico's Fraito Lugo's *Orion* led over fellow islander, Carlos Sierra, on *Fuakata*.

St. Thomas' International Rolex Regatta, held March 25th through 27th, was back this year after a couple of years' hiatus as the third leg in the circuit. "Where else in the world will you find a series of events with our weather and breeze in such a short period of time?" says regatta director, Bill Canfield.

Indeed, perfect racing conditions continued over the round-the-buoy and round-the-island courses that characterize the Rolex Regatta. As for the Cape Air C.O.R.C. standings, this was the regatta that set up ties in two classes. One was Spinnaker A where Puerto Rico's Luis Juarbe's Henderson 30, *Soca*, and St. Maarten's Frits Bus on his Melges 24, *Coors Light*, tied for second place in Spinnaker A with five points apiece. In Performance Cruising, Sanpere's *Cayennita Grande* bested *Bonne Chance* giving both boats three points each.

The circuit concluded and ties were broken at the BVI Spring Regatta, held out of Nanny Cay Marina, in Tortola, during the first weekend of April.

This is where Puerto Rico's *Soca* beat out St. Maarten's *Coors Light* for a class second by one point when *Coors Light* didn't start the last race, and when St. Croix's *Cayennita Grande* pulled ahead to win the Performance Cruising Class by one point over Puerto Rico's Bonne Chance.

"It was a great circuit," says Sanpere.

Each of the 2011 Cape Air C.O.R.C. class winners received a complimentary round-trip ticket for one to anywhere in the Caribbean that Cape Air flies. The regional airline, based in the US, flies between Puerto Rico, St. Thomas, St. Croix, Tortola, Vieques and Anguilla.

2011 Cape Air C.O.R.C. Winners

Spinnaker Racing A
1) *Smile and Wave*, Beneteau First 40, Jaime Torres, Puerto Rico (4)
2) *Soca*, Henderson 30, Luis Juarbe, Puerto Rico (7)
2) *Coors Light*, Melges 24, Frits Bus, St. Maarten (8)

Spinnaker Racing B
1) *Mag 7*, J/27, Paul Davis, St. Thomas, USVI (4)



The crew of Spinnaker Racing B winner, Mag 7 *from St. Thomas*

Performance Cruiser
1) *Cayennita Grande*, J/36, Antonio Sanpere, St. Croix, USVI (4)
2) *Bonne Chance*, Beneteau First 35, Bernardo Gonzalez, Puerto Rico (5)

Jib & Main
1) *Toda Via*, Beneteau First 38S5, Dwight Rodriguez, Puerto Rico (3)

IC24
1) *Team Maximus*, Jorge Santiago, Puerto Rico (5)
2) *Fuakata*, Carlos Sierra, Puerto Rico (6)





Above: 'The competitors could not complain about lack of wind...'

Below: Overall Winner, Richard Szyjan of Category 5, *earned the North South Wines Veuve Cliquot Cup*



HIGH WINDS, HIGH SEAS, HIGH SPIRITS

Weather described by the organizers as "challenging" didn't dampen spirits at the 2011 edition of the South Grenada Regatta, based at Le Phare Bleu Marina on the island's south coast.

Nineteen entries, slightly fewer than last year, encountered 15- to 35-knot winds and exceptionally rough seas from February 25th through 27th. Committee member Damon DuBois concludes, "Against all odds, the sailing crews showed great seamanship and actually enjoyed spectacular sailing. The management of Le Phare Bleu succeeded in creating a great atmosphere even on the Saturday when it was pouring down with rain the whole day. Probably the guys who got the worst of the rain were the guys in the marker boat and the photographer in the press boat!"

The goal of the organizers of the South Grenada Regatta is always to attract racing boats as well as keen sailors with less racing experience. This year most of the boats raced either in Cruising Class 2 (non-spinnaker) or in the Fun Class, with only two — Richard Sjyjan's Hobie 33, *Category 5*, and Rene Froehlich's *Dione* — braving spinnakers in Cruising Class 1. Both Cruising Class 1 boats are Grenada-based.

The first race on the Saturday went from Le Phare Bleu Marina around Glover Island and back. The winner in the Cruising Class 1 was *Category 5*, in Cruising Class 2, Mike Bingley's Beneteau 38, *Tulaichean II*, and in the Fun Class the Dufour 41 *Alexa*, with skipper Paul Dale.

The second race had the same winners as the first, except in Cruising Class 2, which was won by Scott Watson on the 52-foot *Boxxer*.

The Sunday races took place under the shining Caribbean sun, but the sea was even rougher than it had been the day before. In the end, the winners were the same as in the first race: Richard Szyjan on *Category 5* in Cruising Class 1, Mike Bingley on *Tulaichean II* in Cruising Class 2 and Paul Dale on *Alexa* in Fun Class. The regatta's overall winner was *Category 5*.

Race Officer James Benoit comments: "The regatta was enjoyed by all. The competitors could not complain about lack of wind for the two days and the courses were challenging for all boats sailing in rolling seas. The starts were quite demanding with some boats arriving at the start line too early which meant a restart for them."

While the big boats were fighting high waves and strong winds along the south coast, the junior sailors turned their rounds in the Petit Calivigny Bay, organized by the South Grenada Regatta committee in co-operation with the Grenada Yacht Club. The results of the Junior Sailing Races on the Saturday were, in the Mosquito Class: first place, Kwasi Paul, second place, Mozart St. John and third place Rondell Ferguson; and in the Optimist Class: Brent McQueen first, Noah Bullen second and Rees Evans third.

Throughout both days, a lot of activities were going on both on shore and on the water for non-racers. Speedboat rides with Seafaris gave many Grenadians the opportunity to see the south coast for the first time from a different perspective. Others had a trial sail with a Hobie Cat. Sunday's "15-horsepower dinghy race" was the favorite for grown-up boys. The other children enjoyed themselves with the Pirates' Trail, where all different skills in the water and on the beach were necessary. The after-race parties rocked.

Committee member Jana Caniga points out: "The South Grenada Regatta is a small and friendly regatta. And after the third edition we think we have figured out the concept for this sort of event. There will be changes next year but not in the main structure of the regatta."

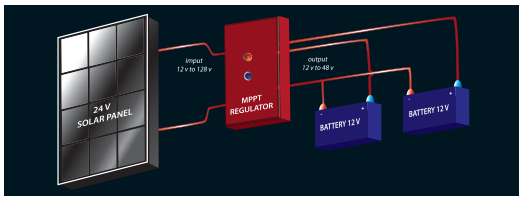
The SGR committee would like to thank Gold Sponsors Westerhall Rum, North South Trading, Netherlands Insurance, Real Value IGA Supermarket and Le Phare Bleu; Silver Sponsors Budget Marine, Island Water World, Act-Art&Design, Carib, The Wiremans House/ACDC and the Grenada Board of Tourism. Other sponsors included Turbulence Sails, McIntyre Brothers, Spice Island Marine Services, Palm Tree Marine, Gary Adams Chiropractor, Island Dreams Yacht Services, C&J Car Hire, The Canvas Shop, Petite Anse Hotel, ModOne, Grenada Marine, Underwater Solutions, Glenelg, Art Fabrik, Dive Grenada, Dion Healing Hands Massage, Carib Sushi, Coconut Beach Restaurant, Seafaris and The Moorings.

The fourth edition of the South Grenada Regatta will take place February 24th through 26th, 2012.

For full results, videos and more information visit www.southgrenadaregatta.com.

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Easter's Late, but BEQUIA'S GREAT!



ALL PHOTOS: WILFRED DEDERER

The boats and the breeze turned up for the Bequia Heineken Easter Regatta 2011, held April 22nd through 25th, making the event's 30th anniversary an Alleluia Chorus of glorious sailing, despite earlier fears that an extraordinarily late Easter and a preceding spell of calms and heavy rain might make it flat.

A "moveable feast", Easter is the first Sunday after the full moon following the northern hemisphere's ecclesiastical vernal equinox, March 21st, so its date varies between March 22nd and April 25th. Easter fell on April 24th this year, but pre-event anxiety about Bequia's turnout suffering owing to coincidence with the Round Guadeloupe Race (April 21st through 25th) and Antigua Sailing Week (April 24th through 29th) was unfounded. (Easter will not be this late again until 2095, something the current organizers will not have to worry about!) Moreover, new title sponsor Heineken added a touch of "fresh green" to this spring calendar feature. At the prizegiving, Bequia Sailing Club founder Sir James Mitchell noted that decades ago neighboring Grenada had races at Easter. He got a laugh by "thanking the Communists" on that island for the 1979-to-1983 People's Revolutionary Government's neglect of sailing, which allowed Bequia to usurp this desirable time slot in 1982.

Top: All from Martinique, the Surprise Class is a Bequia favorite
Below left: Cruising I winner, Nirvana *from Trinidad*
Below right: Cruising II winner, No Fear *from SVG*
Right: The J/24 Southern Caribbean Champion 2011, Sumtin's Happ'nin *from Barbados*





With 39 yachts in three handicap classes and two one-design classes, and 28 of the famous local open sloops in seven classes, all racing in the same waters, Bequia Regatta 2011 was a vibrant spectacle. Sailors from Antigua, Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia, Trinidad, the UK, the USA and the US Virgin Islands joined competitors from Bequia and St. Vincent, plus a strong contingent from Martinique ("France" on the scoreboard) that has swelled the Racing and Surprise classes since 2000. All classes completed three races, except for the J/24s, which knocked off six. Three race days of tried-and-true courses — Admiralty Bay to Friendship Bay and back on the Friday, around the island on the Saturday, and a tactical harbor triangle on Easter Monday — plus windward-leeward and Olympics for the J/24s, exercised the fleet on every point of sail.

While racing in all classes was intense, with the leaders in both Racing Class and Cruising I going into the last day neck-and-neck, the J/24s competed not only for Easter Regatta prizes, but also for the title of J/24 Southern Caribbean Champion 2011. Another new regatta sponsor, United Insurance, lent their name to the J/24s' three-race series on the Saturday, with the United Insurance Trophy for that series going to *Xpelair Fadeaway*.

Going into the last day, *Fadeaway* and *Die Hard* shared the lead at ten points, three points ahead of *Sumtin's Happ'nin*. Then *Sumtin's Happ'nin* took first in the Monday's first race, with *Fadeaway* nine seconds behind and *Die Hard* edged into fourth by *Salt Fish*. So, with one race to go, *Fadeaway* had 12 points, and *Die Hard* and *Sumtin's Happ'nin* 14 points each. In the last race's surprise finish, St. Lucia's youth team in *Claudio Vogul* took first and *Sumtin's Happ'nin* second, while *Salt Fish* beat *Fadeaway* by just one second for third, leaving *Die Hard* fifth. That left *Sumtin's Happ'nin* and Fadeaway tied with 16 points each. After application of the CSA tie-break rules, *Sumtin's Happ'nin* was declared both the Overall Winner of the Bequia Regatta J/24 Class and the J/24 Southern Caribbean Champion 2011.

Thanks go out to Race Officer James Benoit from Grenada, the Bequia Sailing Club race committee, all the hard-working BSC volunteers, premier sponsors Heineken (St. Vincent Brewery) and the SVG Tourism Authority, main sponsors Mount Gay Rum (Bryden's, St. Vincent), United Insurance, Mountain Top Water, Tradewinds Cruise Club, the Frangipani Hotel, Bequia Beach Hotel, De Reef, Windward Island Plantation and CK Greaves, and the many more generous supporters who make this little island's regatta a big success.

For full results and a slideshow visit www.begos.com/easterregatta.
Thanks to the Bequia Sailing Club for information used in this report.
Next month: A full report on the local double-ender division of Bequia Easter Regatta 2011.



BEQUIA HEINEKEN EASTER REGATTA 2011 WINNERS



SVG's Minister of Tourism, Saboto Caesar, presents first prize in Racing Class to Team Regis Guillemot

Racing Class (CSA spinnaker, 5 entries)
1) *Regis Guillemot Charters*, Melges 24, Regis Guillemot, France (4)
2) *Category 5*, Hobie 33, Romain Szyjan, Grenada (6)
3) *Vandanvwell 2*, Jeanneau 3200, Aymric Pinto, France (9)
Cruising Class I (CSA non-spinnaker, 6 entries)
1) *Nirvana*, San Juan 34, Lloyd DeRoche, Trinidad & Tobago (4)
2) *Bloody Mary*, Hughes 38, Jerry Stewart, Grenada (5)
3) *Tabasco*, Swan 40, Henry Crallan, UK (9)
Cruising Class II (12 entries)
1) *No Fear*, Dubois 33, Robin Smith, SVG (3)
2) *Dionysus*, Hallberg Rassy 39, Jack Burns, USA (9)
3) *Madonna*, IW Varvet 31, Tom Batty, UK (11)
Surprise Class (one-design, 7 entries)
1) *GFA Caraibes*, Nicolas Gillet, France (3)
2) *Digilife*, Vianney Saintenoy, France (6)
3) *Clippers Ship*, Nicolas Poix, France (11)
J/24 Class (one-design, 9 entries)
1) *Sumtin's Happ'nin*, Paul Johnson, Barbados (16)
2) *Xpelair Fadeaway*, Charlie Gloumeau, Barbados (16)
3) *Die Hard*, Robbie Yearwood, Grenada (19)
Single-Handed Round the Island
CSA rated: *GFA Caraibes*, Surprise, Nicolas Gillet, France
Non-CSA rated: *Madonna*, IW Varvet 31, Tom Batty, UK



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REGATTA NEWS

Record Entry for ClubSwan Caribbean Rendezvous

Nautor's Swan saw a record entry this year for the eighth edition of their ClubSwan Caribbean Rendezvous held in the British Virgin Islands from March 14th through 19th. For the 2011 cruising event 26 Swan yachts attended with more than a hundred participants.



YACHT SHOTS

The ClubSwan Caribbean Rendezvous 2011 fleet in the BVI

The ClubSwan Rendezvous programme is designed to offer structured cruising and social occasions organized by Nautor's Swan with the option of low-key racing in some of the world's most sought-after sailing locations. The Caribbean venue suits those intent on enjoying local island hospitality mixed with Swan cruising organization, taking the fleet to a range of island stop-overs.

This year the cruising route started at Bitter End Yacht Club and took in Virgin Gorda, Norman Island, Jost Van Dyke and Marina Cay in six days of comfortable activity.

The highly coveted 'Spirit of Swan Award' was presented by Nautor's Swan Board Members Berndt Brunow and Sir Anthony Greener to the crew of the Swan 66 *Godot* from Norway, which sailed the week including children among its crew with a wonderful philosophy of fun with competitive spirit. The award for Best Boat was given to Twanette Tharp's Swan 62 *Glisse* following an intensive judging session.

For more information contact racing-office@nautorswan.com.

25th St Barth's Bucket

A fleet of 40 yachts celebrated 25 years of great large-yacht racing at the St. Barths' Bucket, March 24th through 27th.

Smiled upon by the Wind Gods, all three days of racing provided exciting courses, with stunningly accurate starts and increasingly close finishes every day, proving again that Jim Teeter and his team have applied their lessons learned from gathering Bucket ratings data for several years.

The 40-boat fleet ranged from 30 to 88 metres, from Grande Dames to Gazelles and the newest Bucket class, Les Elegantes des Mers. With racers such as *P2* and *Leopard* on the water, joining a couple of beautiful Js, a slew of Perini Navis, Royal Huismans, Alloys and a wide range of yachts in between, establishing ratings was a tricky business. Yet on the final day of racing, in a spectacular downwind finish, some 24 yachts finished in the space of just over 20 minutes, with the rest of the pack not far behind. The first three yachts across the finish line — *Helios* as the Grande Dame, Gazelle *Virago*, and *Elena*, representing Les Elegantes — came in together in under three minutes, a sight to warm the hearts of any yacht enthusiast.

The three Overall St. Barths Bucket winners, *Virago, Hanuman*, and *Symmetry*, were previous Bucket participants, but had never before won the elusive top prizes.

Other prizes went to All-Star Crew *Rebecca*, and to Axia family earning the Skulduggery Cravat for some successfully aggressive maneuvers. The Walter Huisman Memorial Award went to the owners of *Marie*, who generously arranged for the daily air shows as four WWII era fighter planes buzzed the fleet and the island, capping off each day's racing in spectacular style.

Congratulations go to those who work hard year-round to organize a regatta of this magnitude, led by Hank Halsted, Tim Laughridge and Ian Craddock. The new Bucket Race management team, spearheaded by Peter Craig, did an outstanding job in their first — but surely not their last — Bucket Regatta. Thanks too to the many volunteers, sponsors and participants who make this all possible.

For full results visit www.bucketregattas.com/stbarths/results.html.

Fun Fundraiser for Fajardo

The Brisa Association is hosting a charity fundraising regatta at Isleta Marina, Fajardo, Puerto Rico on May 14th. All are welcome. There will be classes for Spinnaker Racing, Jib & Main Racing, "Race As You Are" (Cruisers' Class) and the native folk boats.

For more information contact Rey Gandarillas at (305) 726-5397 or reyg@onelinkpr.net, or visit www.brisaweb.net.

World ARC Circumnavigation Rally Goes Annual

World Cruising Club is delighted to announce that from 2014 the World ARC round-the-world sailing rally will become an annual event starting every January from Rodney Bay in St. Lucia.

World ARC is currently a biennial event, starting in January and finishing 15 months later. The current event started in January 2010 and the next will start in January 2012.

Joining World ARC provides practical support in port and at sea, the camaraderie of a close group of fellow cruisers, and a structure that provides peace of mind. Interest in World ARC has increased in the last year, with more than 30 boats ready to take part in World ARC 2012.

Demand from sailors for a rally in the "off" years led to the decision to make World ARC an annual event. This will make it easier for cruisers to sail half the rally, then take a year out to explore on their own, before rejoining the subsequent rally to complete their circumnavigation. An annual event also enables more people to join the rally.

World ARC is a multicultural event, with participants drawn from many nationalities. Participants are drawn from many backgrounds: some are taking a sabbatical before returning to work, while others are enjoying retirement. There are usually family boats sailing with children.

The boats themselves are a cross-section of popular cruising designs, from proven blue-water marques such as Hallberg Rassy, Oyster, OVNI and Amel to production cruisers from high-volume builders such as Bavaria, Lagoon and Jeanneau.

World Cruising Club organized the first-ever circumnavigation rally, Europa 92. Since then, the company has organized seven successful circumnavigations.

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The first World ARC was held in 2008-09, and the current edition, World ARC 2010-11, recently drew to a close in St. Lucia after 26,000 nautical miles and 15 months.

World ARC follows a route that makes the most of the tradewinds and seasonal weather systems, while enabling the participants to enjoy some of the most beautiful and remote cruising destinations. From the first World ARC, World Cruising Club made a decision to follow the classic sailing route around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, avoiding areas of political instability and piracy.

Since 1992, World Cruising Club has helped more than 200 boats and 950 people to realize their dream of sailing safely around the world.

For more information visit www.worldcruising.com/WORLDARC2012/index.aspx.

Second Les Voiles de St. Barth

The Weather Gods blessed St. Barthélemy from April 5th through 9th, offering more than 400 competitors from 20 nations and on 48 yachts a week of perfect Caribbean sailing during the second annual Les Voiles de St. Barth. Dominating the conditions were tradewind breezes that ranged from 17 to 32 knots, a fairly gentle Atlantic swell, and blue skies. After four days of intense racing, the second edition of Les Voiles de St. Barth seems to have etched out a place in the growing list of "must do" Caribbean events. As yachts ranging from Maxis to Classics crossed the finish line they were greeted by a tender manned with Les Voiles de St. Barth officials, who presented each of the crews with a bottle of Taittinger champagne —thus putting a final French touch on a ritual that in other parts of the world involves cold beer.

Event organizers Francois Tolede, Luc Poupon and Annelisa Gee were understandably pleased with the second edition of the event. Tolede and his organizing committee are already busy planning the 2012 Les Voiles de St. Barth, April 2nd through 7th.

For full results visit www.lesvoilesdesaintbarth.com.

Team INTAC/Crowley Dominate Northern Island Regattas

Team *INTAC* GlobalInvestments and Crowley won five of the major Caribbean regattas in 2011 and achieved an average result of 1.1 out of 49 races competed.

Virgin Islands' Team *INTAC/Crowley* did it again at the 40th Annual BVI Spring Regatta with a convincing victory in their class, CSA Spinnaker Racing 2, and also won the trophy for Best Overall Boat of the Regatta, matching their results achieved at the Heineken International Regatta and the International Rolex Regatta in the weeks prior. "It is very hard to win one regatta, but to win Best Boat at three of the Caribbean's premier regattas is unheard of. Our company could not be happier with the results, the team delivered beyond our expectations. All I can say is a big congratulation to Mr. Plaxton and his entire crew," stated INTAC's President Tim Vermeulen.

J/24 World Champion Anthony Kotoun, main trimmer on the *INTAC/Crowley* team, said, "We worked very hard together as a team for the last several months and it has paid off handsomely for us and our sponsor".

Team INTAC Results in the Caribbean Racing Season 2011:

- 1st Place Budget Marine Match Racing Cup (14 firsts in 14 races)
- 1st Place CSA Spinnaker Racing 2, Gill Commodores Cup (three firsts in three races)
- 1st Place CSA Spinnaker Racing 2, St. Maarten Heineken International Regatta (four firsts in four races)
- Best Overall Boat of the Regatta, St. Maarten Heineken International Regatta
- Best Overall Performance Round the Island Race, St. Maarten Heineken International Regatta
- 1st Place CSA Spinnaker Racing 2, Rolex International Regatta (three firsts and three seconds in six races)
- Best Overall CSA Boat of the Regatta, Rolex International Regatta
- 1st Place Gill BVI Match Racing Championships (14 firsts in 14 races)
- 1st Place CSA Spinnaker Racing 2, BVI Spring Regatta (seven firsts and one third in eight races)
- Best Overall Boat of the Regatta, BVI Spring Regatta

"Due to the hard work, dedication, and professionalism of the entire INTAC/Crowley racing team we are very pleased to have been fortunate enough to achieve these results for the Virgin Islands. I thank my entire crew, our sponsors, and all those who make these Caribbean regattas such a fantastic experience. The Caribbean regattas are among the very best run and most fun Regattas in the World!" said Skipper and Owner Mark Plaxton.



From racers to classics, 48 yachts met in St. Barth's for the second Les Voiles event



The Melges 32 Team INTAC*: 'to win Best Boat at three of the Caribbean's premier regattas is unheard of'*



VOYAGES FROM THE CARIBBEAN

Through December 2011

TO THE MEDITERRANEAN			
Martinique	→	Toulon	06/2011
Martinique	→	Palma de Mallorca	11/2011
TO THE EAST COAST USA			
St. Thomas	→	Newport	05/2011
Martinique	→	Port Everglades	06/2011
St. Thomas	→	Port Everglades	11/2011
Martinique	→	Port Everglades	12/2011
Martinique	→	Port Everglades	12/2011



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SAN BLAS — AN EMBARRASSMENT OF MOLAS

DESTINATIONS



by Elizabeth Brouse

I live with my family (husband, Kirk, and 12-year-old twins, Claire and Wesley) on board *Discovery V*, a 57-foot Bowman cutter-rigged ketch. We left Toronto, Canada almost two years ago, explored the island chain from the BVI down to Trinidad and back up again to St. Lucia to make the jump to the ABCs in early January of this year. In true living-in-the-moment fashion, we decided in Bonaire to head for the Panama Canal via the San Blas Islands we had heard so much about. We had some terrific sails along the Colombian coastline and thoroughly enjoyed our time in Santa Marta, Cartagena, and Cholon Bay.

We became a few pounds lighter as the outboard engine for our dinghy was stolen in the wee hours of the night before leaving Cholon Bay on an uneventful 24-hour sail to the southeastern end of the San Blas Islands (Kuna Yala). Large dark dolphins came by to say hello periodically during the passage.

We arrived at mid-morning and scouted out an anchorage at Escosés (a failed Scottish settlement from the 1700s). As the only sailboat in sight we enjoyed four days of isolation in the most idyllic setting near the very traditional small Kuna village of Caledonia. I thought Kirk was going to jump ship and pull a Robinson Crusoe on me… really!

The residents here were very shy, with only a few boys in a dugout canoe (*ulu*) daring to come by to check us out from a respectful distance. Claire and Wes broke the ice by paddling out in our inflatable kayak and engaging the boys, taking turns in each other's boats, and swimming together amidst much laughter. These boys came to visit each day after school and the relationship, while largely non-verbal (the boys speak Kuna and Spanish), grew to include paddling over to play on the beach and explore together.

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Caption

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The community of Caledonia takes up every square inch of the island on which it is built. The reed huts with palm-leaf roofs are built very close together (often sharing walls within family compounds). David, a young man who speaks a bit of English from his schooling in Panama, came out to collect the US$8 anchoring fee (a receipt was issued, good for 30 days) and brought with him a list of rules for the area which included no dumping of trash, no giving sweets to the children, no taking photographs without permission and a per-person fee to visit the community. When I inquired about coming to the village to get some bread he said the fee was not really required and that he would be happy to show us around the next morning at 11:00AM.





Above: We spent a few days enjoying the tranquility of Kanildup (Green Island)
Left: The author with mola makers in Nargana

We had a guarded audience as we arrived, paddling our dinghy the next morning to the main dock. David was summoned while we waited outside the store with two women and ten young children quietly giggling at my attempts to speak Spanish. As David walked us through the village some of the braver children followed at a discreet distance, becoming bolder with encouragement. We stopped to shoot some hoops with a few local boys at the basketball court near the school where the children are taught in Kuna and Spanish. Walking through narrow lanes, we passed through small yards just feet from the windowless walls of homes to see faces of curious children and women peeking through the cracks in the reed walls. The glimpses we caught of life inside these homes were of hammocks strung over earthen floors, a wooden table and a few chairs. This village of 900 residents relies on solar panels for electricity and a few homes have TV and radio. Mini loaves of bread are sold for ten cents apiece. The store has three shelves with canned meat (good ole Spam) and rice along with an assortment of cold beverages (no beer or alcohol).

The people of the San Blas divide their time between fishing and tending the small plots of land on which they farm subsistence-style along the riverbanks of the mainland. The wives and grandmothers make the world-famous *molas*, which command a good price (everything is in US dollars here) and make a valuable contribution to the family.

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Molas are the traditional way of dress for the Kuna women and are a combination of hand-sewn appliqué and embroidery in geometric patterns with animals or symbols from the Kuna religion and history incorporated into the design. These fetch from between $10 and $100 apiece depending on the intricacy of design, size of the stitching, and number of layers of cloth required. In all but the most isolated of anchorages, at least one ulu will approach from communities often up to seven miles away to sell you their molas. Other features of the traditional Kuna adornment for adult women are the intricate beadwork designs adorning the calves and forearms, gold nose rings and rouged cheeks.



Discovery *at anchor with Caledonia behind and mainland Panama in the distance*

When we started cruising the Eastern Caribbean we finally understood the title of a book we had read years earlier called "An Embarrassment of Mangoes" as mangoes are so plentiful you cannot eat them fast enough to keep up with the endless supply. Here in the San Blas there is an embarrassment of molas, and as each mola-maker has their own style it is hard not to at least have a look!

The San Blas is called Kuna Yala by the local Kuna and each island is known by its traditional Kuna name as well as a Spanish or English name. Pulling ourselves away from Caledonia we began our exploration westward and met up with a few other boats in Tubak (Isla Pinos). A couple of the boats had kids on board and we enjoyed sunset bonfires on the beach most evenings. We gathered quite a crowd of ulus in Achutupu a bit further on in the chain. This community seemed very accustomed to yachts coming through and the race was on between mola makers to get our attention first. A big ulu filled with kids of varying ages hung out to watch the action as our kids swam and paddled kayaks between boats. Claire and her friend on an Australian boat got a lift in the dugout and managed to exchange names with a few of the kids. We enjoyed a couple of quieter days at anchor in Snug Harbour between the islands of Apaitup and Ogumnaga near the community of Playon Chico before heading to the twin settlements of Corazon de Jesus/Nargana, one of the largest communities in these islands.

My frantic provisioning in Cartagena proved wise as in our three and a half weeks in Kuna Yala we only twice encountered a fruit-selling ulu in a couple of the more popular anchorages. We spent a few days in the Nargana/Corazon de Jesus area waiting in vain for the new dinghy motor we ordered to be flown into the nearby airstrip from Panama. Nargana had a plane or two each day flying in a few tourists and some supplies (but oddly enough, never our dinghy motor!).

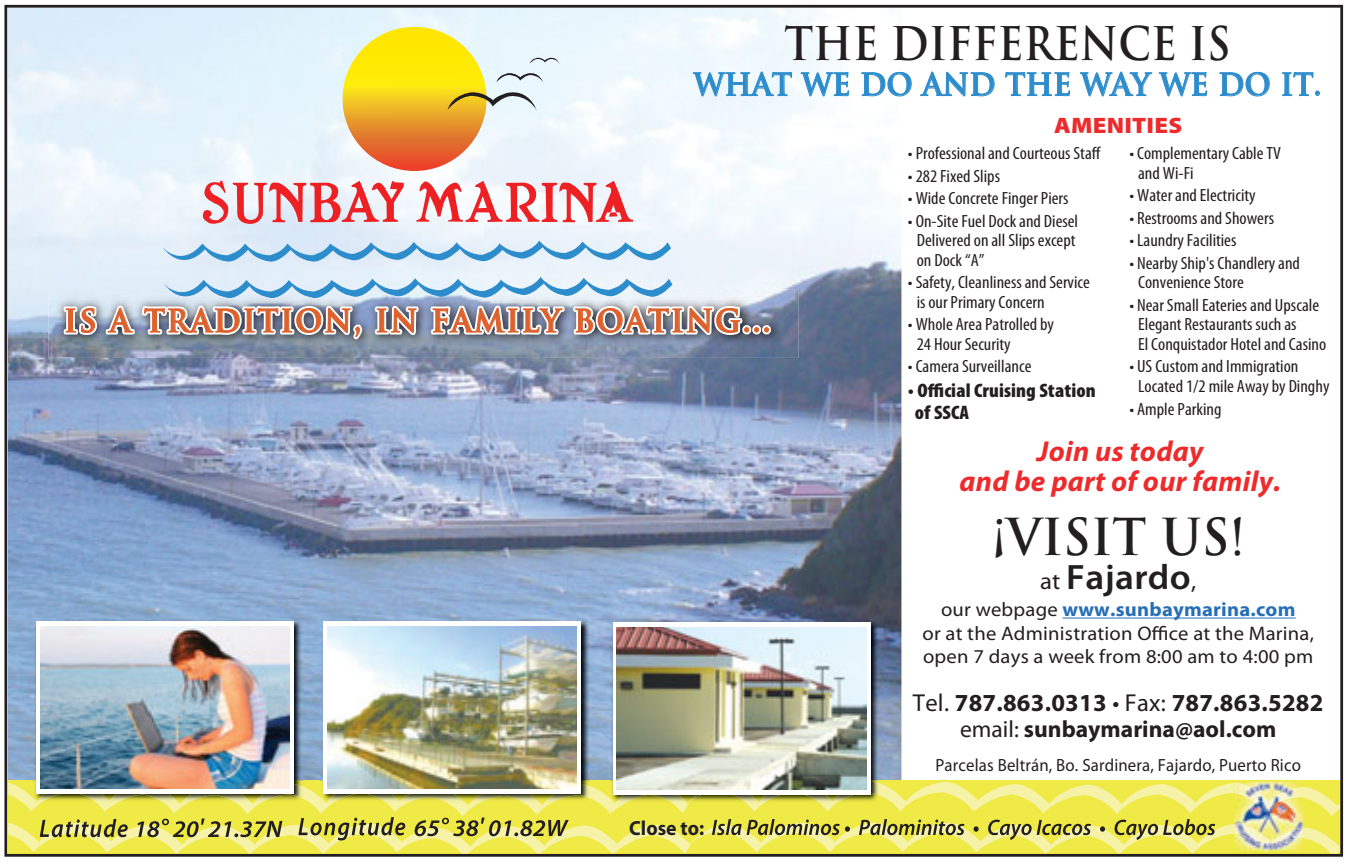
While in the area we joined the group of cruisers we had been travelling with for a few days on a trip up the Rio Diablo. Our local guide, Frederico, spoke a smattering of English and was quite the entertainer. A half mile up the river, with 14 of us crowded onto a large dugout with an outboard motor, the engine quit and we were kindly towed farther up stream to the place where we would be disembarking our shore party to hike through the trails to lead us to all kinds of wildlife (looking for crocodiles, monkeys and armadillos). Frederico would stop every ten minutes or so to hold court and generally let us know how blessed he was to have so many international friends (he later confided to me that the Canadians were really his favourites), to be so in love with his four daughters, and to thank God for all his blessings. All the wildlife I saw was huge spiders and a four-foot-long black snake, thankfully heading in the opposite direction. The highlight was watching the kids (and Frederico) jump off a large overhanging tree into the crocodile-infested waters (but none right here, Frederico assured us) before being towed back to our boats by a sympathetic cruising couple heading down stream in their dinghy.

We moved on from the busy twin communities of Corazon de Jesus and Nargana (joined by a pedestrian bridge) after stocking up on fresh fruit and veggies, to the tranquility of Kanildup (Green Island). We spent a few days enjoying this uninhabited island surrounded by shallow reefs and hunting the crocodile reputed to have recently claimed the lives of a couple of dogs. No sign of the croc but we certainly did enjoy snorkelling in the shallow waters and playing with the huge red starfish.

Our next stop was to do a quick snorkel and exploration of the picturesque tiny island of Chichitupu before anchoring off Canbombia, home to two Kuna families, one at either end of this small island. We discovered friendly kids and dogs on shore and of course more molas to consider. The adults in the family had a good laugh as I bungled the word for husband (*esposo*) and accidentally called Kirk my wife (*esposa*)!

Back in Colombia, I had been unwillingly nominated chief translator by my family, and while my "Spanish for Dummies" book is well thumbed through and I fall back on French in a pinch, I find it very frustrating not to be able to get beyond basic conversations. I can negotiate for molas and *langosta* (lobster) and tell folks we've traveled almost two years from Canada to get here.

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I can exchange greetings and names and ask where to find bread, fruit, fish, etcetera. I often exchange words with local children as a few have some basic words in English like fish, dog, and cat. I have learned a couple of words in the Kuna language: "more" is turtle, "dup" is island and "achu" is Kuna for dog. (There doesn't seem to be a significant feral dog population in these islands and the dogs we encountered belonged to families, seemed well cared for, are allowed inside the dwellings and often accompany their masters in their ulus.)

By March 21st we had made our way to the Eastern Holandés Cays to spend five days anchored in the "Swimming Pool" area behind Moredup (Barbecue Island) and the south side of Banedup or Bug Island (nicer than it sounds!). It was here we met Laura Dekker on board *Guppy*. Laura is the 15-year-old from Holland who is endeavouring to become the youngest solo circumnavigator. She and the kids enjoyed a few days of some serious snorkelling, skin diving (Claire and Wes went down to 40 feet with no air and no weights) and drift diving in the six-knot current just inside the outer reef with Laura and a Master Dive Instructor from a neighbouring boat. Sharks, man-sized rays, and lionfish were a few highlights. Laura will be transiting the Panama Canal around the same time as we will and we will no doubt see more of this mature, determined and competent young lady in the months to come as we all head to the Galápagos and points beyond.

We spent a couple of nights in the Eastern and Western Lemon Cays where we finally encountered one of the famous mola makers we'd heard about for weeks, Venancio. Buying molas from Venancio was an experience of almost two hours, as he came aboard and proudly displayed each of his molas, often with an interpretation of the scene or design and the details involved. He certainly is a talented craftsman; his stitches are minute and designs very refined. After viewing the couple of hundred in his collection he then shows each one again as he puts them back into his large Tupperware container, watching you closely for a simple nod to create the "second look" pile. Our "second look" pile had about 40 molas in it and with one more quick pass we had it down to a dozen. Only at this point will Venancio talk money! Next followed negotiations between Kirk and myself as we have discovered over three weeks of almost daily mola purchasing, that we have slightly different tastes in molas. We vowed, as Venancio paddled away from *Discovery* several hundred dollars richer, that this was our last mola purchase and we would stop at the grand count of 19 in our possession. This vow lasted 24 hours until Kirk caved in and bought one more from a young lady in the Chichime Cays, where we sit now preparing for our early morning departure out of the San Blas to sail the 55 miles to Portobello, Panama.



Twelve-year-old Wes had fun playing with the starfish at uninhabited Kanildup

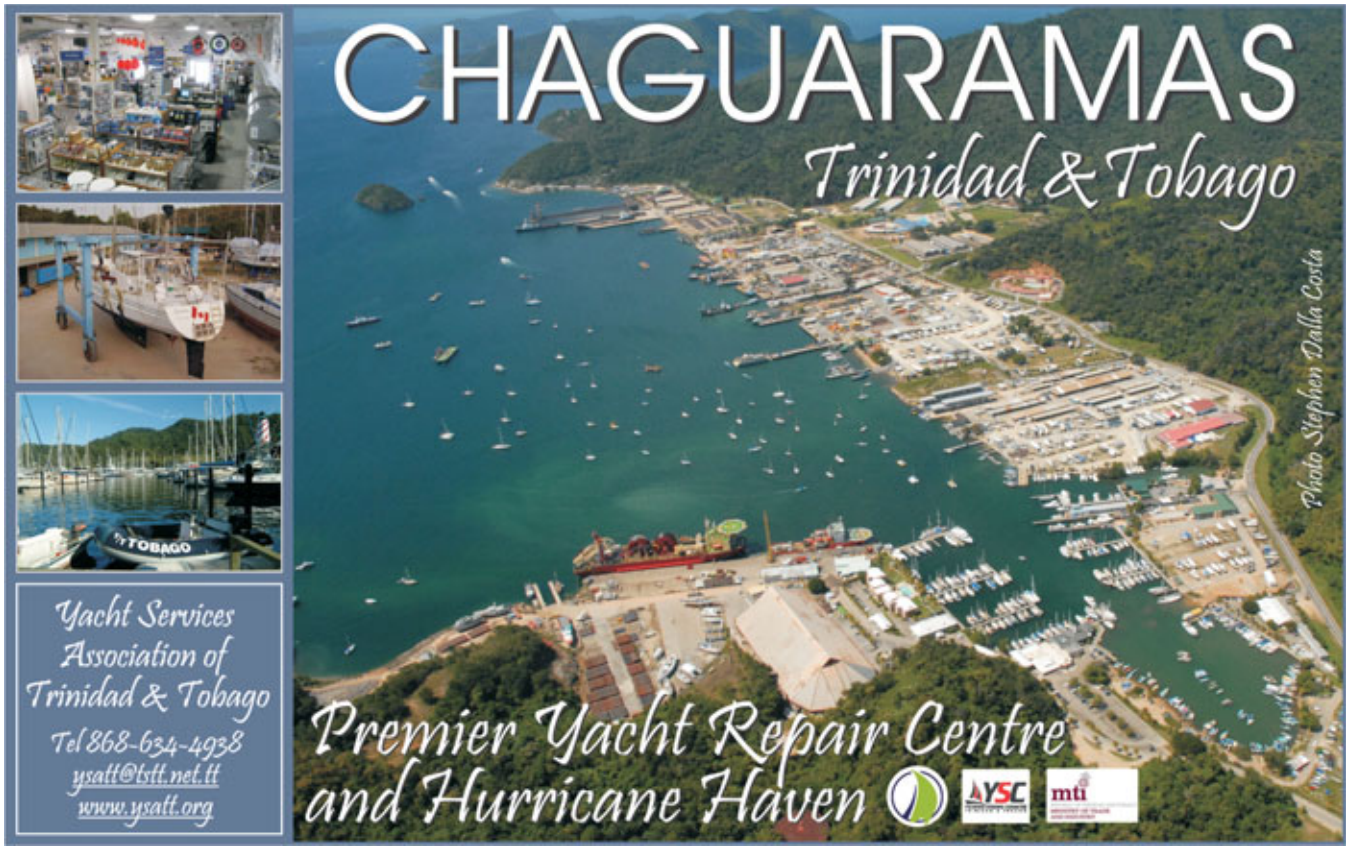
Yesterday we dropped the hook in the crowded anchorage in the West Lemons to go to the internet bar on shore at Nugaruachirdup to get our first internet access in a month. The bar has three plugs to connect to the ethernet and the connection is painfully slow. For US$3 an hour you can drink one-dollar cold beers and chat with the other sailors waiting for their e-mails to come and go. We have met many sailors here from around the world, with interesting stories to exchange of places and adventures.

The San Blas has been an experience we won't soon forget. We are so glad we started our exploration of this huge archipelago at the most remote eastern end. The traditional Kuna way of life in communities like Caledonia has not changed significantly in 100 years. The Kuna are eager to tell you about their history and the great Kuna revolution of 1925 when the historically peaceful Kuna got fed up with the "Spanish" (Panamanian government) trying to tell them where they could live and what language to speak, and attempts to take over the fertile fishing and farming the Kuna had established. The Kuna took up arms and a bloody battle ensued. I've read something about the US stepping in to discourage a massive Panamanian retribution at the time. Now the 55,000 remaining Kuna, who numbered more than half a million at the time of the Spanish arrival, are divided between those in the more remote eastern section that does not see many yachts or tourism and those in the western portion who are giving up traditional dress for modern style and have frequent contact with yachties and backpackers, and mainland Panama.

This is definitely a people and culture in transition. We've had old Kuna fishermen paddling their dugout ulu over to us to ask if we could plug their cell phones in for a couple of hours of charging. I have shopped for molas in a reed hut with dirt floors while listening to the latest hits of Canadian singing sensation Justin Bieber. On the island of Tubak in the small village of Mamimatu there is a raised wooden platform on the windward side of the community with a "Digicel" sign (cellular provider in the east and west Caribbean) on top, as this is the only place one can hope to get a cell signal from on the island and only when the wind is blowing the right way! Kuna women dressed in the traditional molas, with beadwork on their arms and legs, gold nose rings, and rouged cheeks will paddle over to ask for fashion magazines.

In our nearly two years of cruising, the San Blas has been a highlight as the culture and way of life is more removed from our own than any place we've yet to see. If you plan to visit this intriguing land I would advise you do so soon before too many things change. And bring lots of cash for molas!

Visit the sailing Brouse family's website, web.me.com/saildiscovery.



DESTINATIONS

Summer Camp for Cruisers:
Bonaire, Curaçao and Returning to the Eastern Caribbean

by Devi Sharp

LAST month I took you on a trip through the Venezuelan offshore islands and this month I will tell you about Bonaire, Curaçao and the return trip to the Eastern Caribbean.

There are several attractions to spending summer in Bonaire and Curaçao. These are dry islands and more than half of the 22 inches (52.8 cm) of average annual precipitation falls from October to January. Bonaire offers world-class scuba diving and snorkeling and Curaçao offers an anchorage that is well protected and has cruiser amenities and a large cruiser community.

Bonaire

Bonaire is a daysail (33 nautical miles) from Venezuela's Aves de Sotavento (the western Aves islands). Customs and Immigration are co-located in the Customs building and there is a dinghy dock near Customs. The Immigration rules have changed since Bonaire recently became a municipality of the Netherlands (they were formerly part of the Netherlands Antilles). Under the new rules, when you first check in, a six-month clock begins. You can stay for a total of three months while that six-month clock runs, possibly coming and going from the island, so long as the accumulated duration on the island does not exceed three months. If you leave and then return after the six-month clock has run out, a new six-month clock begins, during which you can stay for three months. In other words, you can stay three months out of every six months.

Kralendijk is the capital of Bonaire and the center of the island's small yachting industry. You must use a mooring ball; anchoring is not permitted. There are about 40 mooring balls anchored by six-ton blocks spread out along the shoreline of Kralendijk; the cost is US$10 per night on a first-come, first-served basis. You pay the fee at the nearby Harbour Village Marina. If you have a choice of mooring balls give some thought to location. The balls in front of bars may provide you with loud music at unwelcome times and some of the balls in the inner row are closer to shore and might have too shallow a draft if the wind reverses.

Fresh water is made at a desalination plant and you can fill up your boat's tank at the full service Harbour Village Marina (US$0.10 a gallon in 2010). Cruisers stand by on VHF channel 77 and change to 71 or 88A to talk. There is no cruiser net, but people do make announcements for upcoming events.

A few times a year the wind reverses direction and comes out of the southwest and the mooring area can become quite rolly and uncomfortable. If the governor declares an official emergency, dockage at the marina is at a reduced rate. Hurricanes do occasionally graze Bonaire and Curaçao, but they are rare and not usually direct hits. The last hurricane to hit Bonaire was in 1831, but it is good to have a plan just in case. Our plan was to head to coastal Venezuela near Tucacas and hang out in the mangroves until it passed.

Bonairians are very friendly and welcoming to visitors. The two main industries are tourism (mostly diving) and salt production. Dutch is the official language of both Bonaire and Curaçao although most people speak English. The language of the streets and among locals is Papiamentu, which is a mixture of Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English and French; it even has some Arawak and African influences.

Above: The solar salt works are in the south end of Bonaire. Salt production is still important to the island's economy
Below: Venezuelan boat unloading vegetables in Bonaire. Fresh local produce is sold in a sheltered area near the Customs building



There is a Budget Marine that carries basic supplies. If they don't have what you need they can have items shipped from their larger stores in Curaçao. There is a laundromat where you can drop off your laundry or do it yourself, and they will pick you up at the dock.

There are a few grocery stores that carry a variety of American and Dutch products. I do not speak Dutch or a related language and I often found myself reading the ingredients or directions in French, or just asking someone in the store for help in translation. I bought a small Dutch/English dictionary and found that very helpful. The inventory varies depending upon when the container comes in and if the item was in the shipment, so the adage of "if you see it, buy it" applies here more than on most islands.

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Not far from the Customs office there is a covered area where produce from Venezuela is sold. The variety is small, but it is all more or less local and fresh. This is a good place to use a bit of basic Spanish.

Bonaire is a world-renowned scuba diving destination and for good reason — the reef is protected and the diving is fantastic. The Bonaire National Marine Park encompasses the entire coast of Bonaire and Klein Bonaire. You must pay a one-time "Nature Fee" (US$25 for diving and US$10 for snorkeling) to dive or to visit the Washington Slagbaai National Park. You pay the fee at a dive shop and you will be given a plastic disc to wire-tie onto your diving vest. Keep your receipt so you do not have to pay again if you visit the Washington Slagbaai National Park. The fees are used for resource protection. You might be given a park orientation that stresses conservation and protection of the undersea resources. If you are not a certified scuba diver, but would like to be, you can easily find a class to train and certify you as a basic diver. You can load your tanks in your dinghy and motor the half mile to the island of Klein Bonaire and tie onto a mooring for the duration of your dive. The diving and snorkeling are also very good at the mooring field. The average water temperature is 80 degrees Fahrenheit (29°C). We used our light wetsuits for diving.

There are several dive shops that will refill your tanks; in 2010 US$100 would buy you 20 refills. You can find good deals on new and used equipment and the dive shops will help you with equipment repairs. Some of the hotels host evening presentations by well-known fish experts. During our stay the local research center was hosting fish identification workshops.

After a few weeks of non-stop diving, my husband, Hunter, and I decided to dry out for a few days and rented a pick-up truck to explore the island. We drove through Washington Slagbaai National Park in the north end and got some really nice looks at flamingos. The next day we explored the south end and drove through the salt flats and salt production areas and found caves with pictographs (rock paintings) from the Arawak Indians dated at approximately 1,000 AD.

Curaçao

After six weeks of enjoying Bonaire we sailed our Island Packet 45, *Arctic Tern*, the 30 nautical miles to Curaçao to prepare for our annual haul-out at Curaçao Marine. The major anchorage in Curaçao is Spanish (Spaanse) Water, which is a very large bay with several marinas and services. The entrance is a narrow channel, but it is well marked and quickly widens. The noonsite webpage (www.noonsite.com/Members/val/R2009-05-14-2) contains a wealth of current information about checking into Customs, Immigration and obtaining an anchoring permit. This document also has information about the shopping buses, laundry, filling cooking gas, etcetera. The WiFi provider also has a very helpful document (similar and perhaps more current) that is available on the homepage at no charge. There is a morning net on VHF channel 72 at 7:45 and the net is in English, even though English is not the first language of most of the cruisers.





The floating Queen Emma bridge opened just enough for us to fit through
Inset: The floating market in Willemstad has fresh produce from Venezuela

You must check in at Customs, Immigration and the Harbor Authority within 24 hours of arriving in Curaçao waters. You can anchor in Spanish Water and take a bus to Willemstad, which is the capital city of Curaçao. Willemstad is in two distinct parts: Punda and Otrobanda. They are separated by the St. Anna Bay (St. Annabaii), an inlet that leads into the large natural harbor called the Schottegat. Willemstad is a picturesque town with bright pastel-colored buildings. Parts of the town are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There are duty-free shops that cater to cruise ship clientele. This is a reasonable place to shop for electronics and name-brand clothing.

Customs is a large yellow building at Punda, north of the floating bridge and west of the floating produce market. Immigration is at Otrabanda, over the floating bridge to the right, directly under the high bridge. The Harbor Authority office is next to Immigration and here you can obtain an anchoring permit. They will ask you to mark where you are anchored and you must be in one of the permitted anchorages (Spanish Water, Fuik Baii, Piscadera Baii, Porto Marie, Santa Marta and Santa Cruz). *Wherever you anchor, you must have an anchoring permit.* The skipper or captain can go to clear in alone. I think you can take your boat to the Customs dock in Willemstad, but I cannot recommend it as the dock is not set up for smaller boats and there is a lot of commercial traffic.

After a few days in Spanish Water we motored to Willemstad to haul *Arctic Tern* out at Curaçao Marine. The passage through St. Annabaii to Schottegat is busy and the first obstacle is the Queen Emma floating pontoon bridge. The bridge operator answers to "Fort Nassau" on VHF channel 12 and will clear the bridge and move it open only as much as necessary. Cruise ships enter through the bridge, so it can open wide, but for a small boat like ours they just move it a bit.

Curaçao Marine is a full-service yard with secure storage and service workers on site. They haul boats with a hydraulic trailer pulled by a large tractor. Budget Marine has a small and very well stocked store within the yard. You can also rent an air conditioner from Budget Marine, for which we were very grateful as the daytime temperatures approached 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The yard is a bit remote from grocery stores, but one of the large supermarkets sends a bus to Curaçao Marine Monday through Saturday. A 15-minute walk will get you to Willemstad where you can get a meal or walk around the scenic town.

We left our boat in the working yard for five weeks while we went to visit family in the United States. Before our flight we went to the Immigration office to check off the boat. At that time yachts received a permit to stay in Curaçao for six months. In the April 2011 issue of the *Caribbean Compass* (page 8), Curaçao Marine announced that they will be obtaining Customs Free Zone status, enabling the yard to store yachts without time restriction. I am not clear if this will apply to the marinas and boats at anchor, so be sure to check the regulations before you leave your boat.

We returned from our shore leave and finished up painting the bottom and our other "on the hard" chores. I re-provisioned in Curaçao, which seems to have a more consistent inventory of foods than Bonaire.

Returning to the Eastern Caribbean

If you choose to return to the Eastern Caribbean you must balance the light winds of summer and the risk of hurricanes. Late October and early November can provide a good weather window. If you wait until the end of November you risk the onset of the tradewinds or early "Christmas Winds". Regardless, you must keep a sharp eye out for hurricanes brewing in the eastern Atlantic. You might get lucky and find a few days of west or southwest winds. At worst you might have to settle for a nearly windless period, and motor. If you make the easting from Bonaire to Isla Blanquilla (223 nautical miles), an east or southeast wind will give you a good trip to Puerto Rico.

Our return to the Eastern Caribbean was not as leisurely as our one-month trip west had been. We checked out of Curaçao and sailed to Bonaire for a few last days of diving. We motor-sailed to Las Aves de Sotavento and hung out with friends for a few days. Hurricane Tomas passed us by to the north giving us a brief window of west winds and we took that opportunity to move east to Las Aves de Barlovento and on to Cayo de Agua, Los Roques. We lost our west wind three-quarters of the way to Cayo de Agua, but the east wind was light and it was an easy motor-sail. The light winds continued for a few days and we made a nice few-hour trip to Boca de Sebastopol channel in the southeastern Roques and anchored behind a reef for the night. We departed at mid-day and spent a windless night motoring the 120 nautical miles to Isla Blanquilla. We got into Blanquilla before sunrise and, being unfamiliar with the anchorage, hove to until daylight when we could see to anchor at Playa Yaque. There were several other boats in the anchorage resting and waiting for a weather window.

From Blanquilla you can choose where you want to make landfall and then see where the wind takes you. Three to four days can get you to Puerto Rico, with the right conditions. The forecast continued to be favorable so after a day of rest we headed northeast to Chatham Bay, Union Island in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, where our westward adventure had started four-and-a-half months before.

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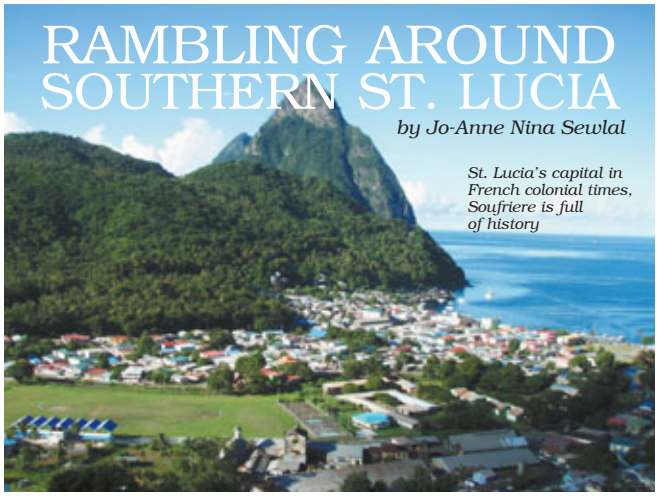


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RAMBLING AROUND SOUTHERN ST. LUCIA

by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal



St. Lucia's capital in French colonial times, Soufriere is full of history

In August of last year I was fortunate to call St. Lucia my home for two weeks. One of the first things I noticed about the island was the language. The official language of St. Lucia is English, however, the unofficial language is Kweyol (French Creole). A majority of the language is composed of French dialect but it also contains some Spanish and Hindi and many speakers cannot recognize Parisian French.

Most visitors to St. Lucia stay in the northern part of the island. While I was in St. Lucia I lived in the town of Soufriere, in the south of the island, and found it full of interesting things to see and do. It may be tiny by metropolitan standards, but it is full of history. This was the first official town on the island, recognized by the French government in 1746. It also served as the first capital city of the country but when the British took over the island around 1803, Castries became the official capital and still is to this day.

It's worth spending some time in this area as, aside from the well-known snorkeling and diving, Soufriere has quite a number of attractions to offer the visitor, many relating to the area's volcanic nature. Around Soufriere (the name refers to sulphur) you'll notice that there are patches of earth that have low-growing vegetation — an indication of how hot the earth is, as nothing taller than grasses can grow on these hot spots. If you have a good view, you can see steam escaping from vents on the sides of the hills around the Pitons.

If you like a walk, visit the Diamond Botanical Gardens. It is quite large and in its grounds there are mineral baths fed by underground hot springs and the Diamond Waterfall. If you want to visit both the gardens and the sulphur spring and waterfall, you need to buy two tickets. On entering the garden you can look around on your own or join a guided group. When you are ready to take a dip in the mineral baths and waterfall, you can change in the rooms provided, give up your second ticket and have more fun.

But the real "stars" of Soufriere are the Pitons, a pair of impressive conical mountains rising right out of the sea. The area around them is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Moorings are available at Soufriere, Malgretout (just north of the Pitons) and right between the Pitons. The Gros and Petit Pitons are volcanic plugs — over the years the more brittle rock around the plugs has eroded. If you want to climb the Pitons, bear in mind that it is a very challenging climb taking two or more hours each way. As you approach the road to the Pitons you'll be greeted by eager young men who want to act as guides (for a fee of course). They will say the climb is "easy", but you know your capabilities. The Gros Piton (at 2,619 feet or 786 metres) is supposedly the "easier" climb, with some steps cut into parts of the steep trail. Pick a clear day — the views are spectacular.

If you want a less strenuous hike, a trip to the Canaries River might be just the thing. Ask for directions at Palmer's Gas Station on the road into Soufriere. The trail is not steep and a 30- to 45-minute walk takes you past two waterfalls; the second is larger than the first. At the second one there are picnic tables and chairs set up so you can eat, relax and swim.

A bit farther from Soufriere, you might enjoy a trek along the Des Cartier Nature Trail in the Quilesse Forest. Located in the southeast of the island near the village of Micoud, this forest has a network of gently undulating trails. If you are lucky, you may even see the St. Lucia Oriole and the St. Lucia Parrot, the national bird of the island, both of which are endemic species.

During my stay I also visited the Mankoté mangrove forest, located in the south of the island in the district of Vieux Fort, and currently the only pocket of mangrove on the island. The wood from the mangroves used to be used to fuel sugar cane factories in St. Lucia and Barbados, but now it is used for making charcoal, primarily used for cooking. I was surprised to come upon the old landing strip of a US air base placed here during the Second World War.

After touring this wonderful island you will need some souvenirs. There are many stores in the Rodney Bay area, but if bargaining is your thing, you'll be in paradise in the craft section of the Castries Central Market, where there are rows and rows of stalls with handicraft items. Other craft stores include the Choiseul Arts Centre in the village of Choiseul. In the centre of Soufriere you can visit The Image Tree store, which has a wide selection of souvenirs at affordable prices. Sought-after items include batik in the unique St. Lucian style. You can visit the batik boutique "St. Lucie" at the Hummingbird Resort, located about a five-minute walk from the centre of Soufriere.

St. Lucia is an island full of natural beauty, but tourism is its major source of income so be prepared to pay to see the sights, with costs ranging from admission fees, to mooring fees, to hiring a guide. Even at tiny waterfalls, one has to pay an admission fee. Note that the fees apply to everyone, both locals and tourists. At most locations the fees and access hours are posted.



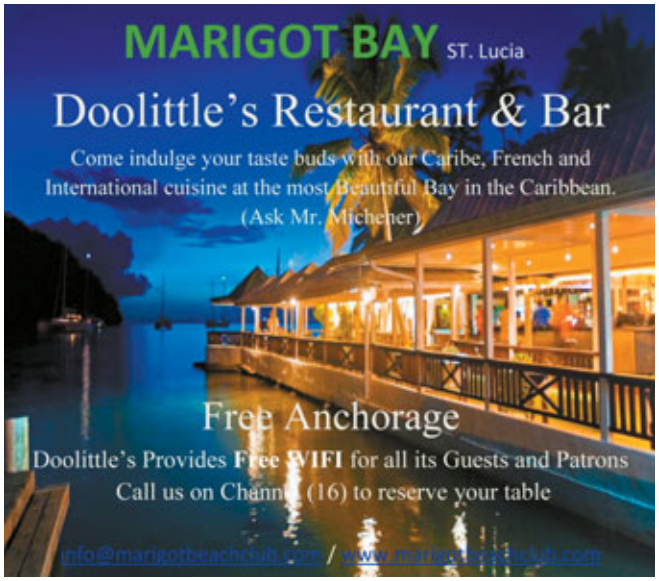


Above: Above: Admission fees are ubiquitous

Right: A copra house. Coconut oil is extracted from copra, the dried meat of the coconut

My two weeks in southern St. Lucia were great. However, I could not see everything this island has to offer. A good excuse to visit it again!

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





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Grenada: Water Wonderful

by Rosie Burr

Grenada is one of those islands that has it all, from beautiful beaches to lush tropical rainforests. It's no wonder tourists and cruisers alike flock there by the boatload. What better way for us to explore this island than through our love of water?

Underwater Sculpture Park

The underwater sculpture park at Moliniere Bay was designed by artist Jason de Caires Taylor. It is accessible either by road and a short walk, by organized tour, or in your own boat. Free mooring buoys have been put in place but if you find the area a little rolly, try anchoring in Grand Mal Bay to the south and dinghying around the corner. With a total of 65 sculptures the aim of the park is to provide an environment for marine life to grow and to provide an alternative for water activities that elsewhere are damaging to the fragile coral reefs.

Standing in the sand, each sculpture tells a different story, changing and growing each day as marine life and weather conditions affect them and their environment. The most recognizable and perhaps easiest-to-find sculpture is the circle of life-sized children holding hands; it is called Vicissitudes (meaning the ups and downs and changes in your life). As the lives of children change and evolve over time, so do the statues, adapting to the environment around them as light and marine conditions change. Grace Reef in the northern part of the bay plays host to 16 figures of Grenadian women. Scattered about in an area that suffered considerable storm damage, these figures depict the ongoing development of the island and its people as the women become hidden by and re-emerge from the shifting sands of the sea floor.

To find out more information about these and the other sculptures and where to find them visit www.underwatersculpture.com.



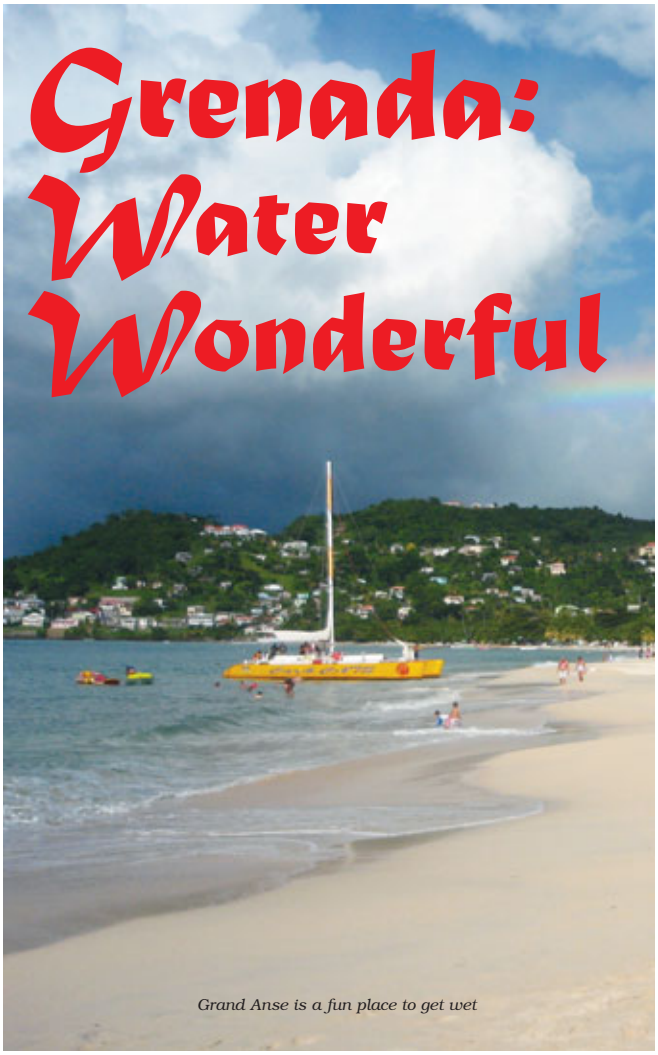
Peace and quiet at La Sagesse

Gems of Beaches

Grenada is not well known for its beaches but if you dig a little deeper some real gems can be found. Many of the beaches you are unable to anchor off, in order to reserve them for swimming or owing to pollution concerns. Grand Anse beach is one of those, a large expanse of white sand beach stretching for more than two miles. Popular with both locals and tourists alike, it is lined with hotels and beachside restaurants and makes a fun and lively place to hang out for the day. You can anchor just to the north or dock at Port Louis and come by dinghy, or arrive from other anchorages and marinas by road.

For something a little more serene, the pristine beach at Morne Rouge is the perfect place to escape and relax in the quiet shallow waters of the secluded bay. In favourable conditions it makes a charming anchorage for those with a shallow enough draft.

If it's a day of snorkeling you fancy then try heading farther west along the north side of Point Saline to Magazine Beach. Not only does it have glorious white sand and turquoise blue sea but offers some good and safe snorkeling in relatively shallow water. The Aquarium restaurant right on the beach makes a nice place to refresh with a cold beer.



Grand Anse is a fun place to get wet

Over on Grenada's southeast corner, La Sagesse is a beach for nature lovers. It is a long stretch of undisturbed sand lined with palm trees and laced with nature trails and walks. It is home to La Sagesse resort and restaurant. You can anchor nearby at St. David's Harbour.

For something a little more wild and rugged, any of the beaches on the northeast coast are worth a visit by road. Bathway beach is another popular spot with a couple of rickety beach bars. A rocky outcrop provides an area to swim in, sheltered from the Atlantic Ocean. Levera Beach is somewhat more off the beaten track where you are more than likely to have the place to yourself. It faces Sugar Loaf Island and is a wild and windswept beach that forms part of Grenada's national parks.

—Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

Wayside Waterfalls

To whet your appetite for wetness even further, Grenada has some of the best waterfalls in the Caribbean. One of the most popular and easiest to drive to is



Magazine Beach, ideal for lunch and a swim

Annandale Falls near Grand Etang. A short walk leads you to the falls that drop 30 feet to pools below. Locals like to jump from great heights while you snap them with your camera for a small fee. Be warned that on cruise ships days these falls can get very busy.

Seven Sisters is not one but a series of falls — seven to be precise! A small fee and a 45-minute walk through a private plantation takes you on a trail with tropical vistas, past nutmeg and cocoa trees and down through verdant rainforest. Not to be done on a rainy day, flip-flops are a "no-no". At the first waterfall, known as St. Margaret's, you can swim in the pools below. The very adventurous can take a guide and carry on up the rest of the Seven Sisters falls — the only way back down being through the river and falls themselves!



Underwater sculptures at Moliniere Bay provide a unique snorkeling site

Mount Carmel is a less-visited site a few miles south of Grenville on the east coast. This again takes you through private land where a small fee may be charged. A guide is useful as he takes you on a 20-minute walk through tropical foliage, explaining all the flora and fauna. Two falls drop from over 70 feet and are the highest in Grenada.

Concord Falls is situated halfway up the west coast. You can take a bus and a long walk up the hill, or drive and park directly outside. A small fee is charged and allows you access to toilets and changing facilities. Concord is the first of three falls. The deep pool offers a refreshing dip in the clear water as it cascades down into the River Concord; if you are brave enough you can swim around the back of the falls and let the currents push you out the other side. Farther up — about a 45-minute hike — you will find two larger falls, Au Coin and Fontainbleu. The paths are marked, so a guide is not necessary, but it is nevertheless interesting to have someone point out plants and other points of interest around you.

So whether you want to swim off a beautiful beach, explore underwater artwork, or get into a cool mountain stream, there is something water-wonderful in Grenada for you!

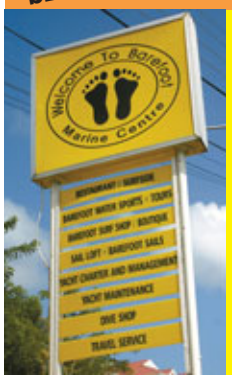
Rosie Burr and Sim Hoggarth are cruising the Caribbean aboard their Corbin 39, Alianna. They have traveled through 23 countries and more than 12,000 miles in six years. Visit their blog at www.sailblogs.com/member/alianna39.



Hiking to Mount Carmel Falls, the highest in Grenada

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THIS CRUISING LIFE

The Best Volunteer Job in the Caribbean!

by Suzanne Longacre

"Good afternoon! We're John and Suzanne, your National Park volunteer Bay Hosts for this area. Welcome to Caneel Bay. May we give you some information about the Virgin Islands Marine National Park on St. John? Do you have any questions we can help answer? Are you aware of the overnight mooring fee? We have payment envelopes here for your use, which you can place in the secure slot of the Mooring Payment Station of that float over there."

The most frequent response: "I want YOUR job!"

So it went every afternoon from 5:00 to 7:00PM five days a week for three months, when my husband, John, and I embarked in our dinghy to make the rounds of the cruising boats moored in either Caneel or Honeymoon Bays on the northwest coast of St. John in the US Virgin Islands.

We had applied for the volunteer positions a few months ago on the recommendation of cruising friends who had served as hosts in a different bay last season. We thought it sounded like a really worthwhile endeavor and would give us an opportunity to 'plant' ourselves for the minimum-required three months to see how the community and environment would suit us for a longer period than our usual short-term harbor-hopping Caribbean cruising itinerary. Now in our mid-seventies, after spending 16 years circumnavigating both the world and the Caribbean, perhaps it was time to slow down a bit and smell those roses more than once.

The position of Bay Host offered no pay, but we would be provided with ten gallons of gasoline a month for our outboard and a free mooring, mandatory for boats under 60 feet in the Marine National Park bays. The pristine Park, comprising 85 percent of the charming island of St. John, is located 20 minutes across Pillsbury Sound from the lively and heavily visited island of St. Thomas. After a US Federal Criminal Background check, a National Park Law Enforcement check, registration of our catamaran in the US Virgin Islands and a thorough vessel inspection by a Park Ranger to verify that we fully complied with Park Regulations, we were accepted. Proudly hoisting our new National Park burgee in the rigging, we posted a NP pennant to our dinghy and started our official duties in mid-December 2010.

As National Park Bay Hosts, we felt that we should set the very best example of caretaking of this precious resource. With no overboard dumping allowed in park waters and no pump-out stations, we wanted an environmentally correct alternative to activating our never-commissioned holding tank. One of the boat purchases we made, in anticipation of being accepted as Bay Hosts, was a portable Nature's Head composting toilet. How marvelous it has turned out to be: compact in size, quiet, odor-free, self-tending for three months and producing perfect garden fertilizer after that — three months after being fully composted from its peat moss base. (Our onboard aloe plant thrives on it!). An extra added attraction is its ideal use when living aboard in semi-civilized fashion on the hard.


JOHN GIDEONSE

While the job does indeed sound idyllic, it is worth noting that there is a resemblance to the early days of the US Postal Service, when "neither rain nor heat… stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds". The same was true for us in our notoriously rolly northwest bays, especially in the northerlies — but the sunsets made up for it, as did meeting and helping the many mostly lovely and interesting yachties every evening. I am the social persona and John a former Dutch Sea Scout, so our duties worked out perfectly for us as a couple. Our workplace setting — in front of the famous Caneel Bay Eco Resort built by Lawrence Rockefeller (way before it was "in" to be so environmentally conscious), and then bequeathed to the National Park Service along with most of the island of St. John — was postcard-perfect. The waters were perfectly clear, so the swimming, snorkeling and kayaking were marvelous. The white sand beaches are clean. No jet skis are allowed in the Park and the 10:00PM commencement of Quiet Hours made for a very peaceful neighborhood. We also valued the proximity of our assigned bays to Cruz Bay, St. John's capital, for ease of provisioning, shopping, cultural activities and dining out in the many excellent and interesting restaurants there.

We also found the convenience of being able to sail over to St. Thomas in less than an hour quite handy on our days off. We loved being able to get to the many shops there — all duty- and tax-free — as well as the St. Thomas Yacht Club, the diverse restaurants and lovely beaches, plus films and concerts at the Reinhold Performing Arts Center, the "Arts Alive" programs in the Tillett Gardens and the "Forum" presentations at the Antilles Prep School. While not as soul-nourishing as our cultural activities, the highly pragmatic tax- and duty-free access for cruising yachties to Budget Marine, Offshore Marine (where we needed to purchase a new Yamaha outboard, as well as repair our old ones), Office Max for a new laptop, KMart and Home Depot was so very convenient.

On St. John, we established a Mailbox at Connections for receiving USPS mail, magazines, Netflix (!) and boat parts. We began to establish social connections with the Friends of the National Park, the Animal Care Center, the Art Gallery exhibition openings, charity races and the St. John Film Society, as well as with some fellow writers, artists and actors… our kind of folks.

Yes, we began to feel ties to the land-based wintering community and can truly envision returning again to this lovely spot in our advancing years. But first, it's off to the Leewards and Windwards once more while we're still young and able enough!

Author Suzanne Longacre and her photographer husband John Gideonse cruise the Caribbean six months of the year aboard their catamaran Zeelander, returning to their New Jersey beach home, and land travel in the US and Europe, for the summer and early fall months.

For more information on the Virgin Islands National Park visit www.nps.gov/viis.

STOP? NOT!

Enjoyment Lessons Aboard *S/V Stopp Knot*

by Laurie Corbett

Our first visit to *Stopp Knot* was at least 15 years ago, but it doesn't seem it. Dawn and I landed for the first time at the quaint little airport on Beef Island, Tortola and, following written instructions, we cleared Customs with our carry-on luggage that included our snorkel gear, walked out the door, politely turned down the taxi drivers, and made our way down the potholed little road to the sea, parallel to the runway.

As instructed, we went to the end of the nearest rickety dock, and just started to wave our hands. In front of us was the strange and exotic Trellis Bay, crowded with sailboats of all shapes and sizes, and a little island that we heard had a restaurant with a donkey. Shortly, almost out of nowhere, a dinghy appeared in our view, under the control of Jeanne, the very close friend from home who had convinced us to join her on this adventure.

We hopped in with our bags and headed out through the dozens of boats to see our captain and accommodations for the next week. The captain, John Fallon, could not come to meet us at the dock, as a mid-afternoon cockpit/cocktail party was in full swing, with other seasonal cruisers in attendance. We soon learned that it was not a party for our arrival, just a typical event aboard *Stopp Knot*.

Stopp Knot was a single-masted, cutter-rigged, 1980 C&C Landfall 48, with the typical lines and styling of the C&C yachts: always built with both racing and cruising in mind. With a stronger lean towards cruising, *Stopp Knot* had a large cockpit, flat vertical stern, flat foredecks over a raked bow, and a well-defined pilothouse. Under the large cockpit was a very large owner's cabin, with two beds and a private head with shower. The fully windowed pilothouse made for a high ceiling over an airy, bright and vast salon, with easy seating for ten around the portside table, and a quarter berth/couch on the starboard side. Farther forward was a large galley, with a midships cabin on the opposite side, a second full head, and a V-berth cabin. The spacious cockpit seemed to hold as many as could show up for a drink, and was also a great place to sleep after a full day of sun and sail.

When we first visited this beautiful boat, John shared its ownership with five other partners, all friends from the Royal Kennebecasis Yacht Club in Saint John, Canada. Together, they had purchased the boat from a New England gentleman, Dr. Topp, in the spring of 1994, changed her name from *Topp Knot* to *Stopp Knot*, sailed her to Canada, and overhauled her systems and interior. Humorously, they had to sign a federal document saying they would not "enjoy her" in Canadian waters to avoid paying significant duty and taxes during the refit. The next year, they organized crews and sailed her to the British Virgin Islands, and began the mostly friendly bickering over vacation rotations, maintenance schedules, and management schemes.

Under sail, *Stopp Knot* was magnificent, the long waterline making even an upwind tack in the Christmas Winds seldom more than an enjoyable romp. The open-water sails to Anegada often had crewmembers at the bow, enjoying the spray as each great wave was sliced, and being airborne in each trough.

Life aboard *Stopp Knot* was always easy. The captains/owners often filled the boat with their friends, and always had an adventure. Each new crew charted their special courses back and forth around the British and Spanish Virgins, and likely made hundreds of trips across the Sir Francis Drake Channel. The great majority of meals were managed by the many restaurants of the area, with their staff often recognizing the crews. At least they all recognized Captain John, with his easy, positive, extrovert personality. Under John's management, the crew appeared to favour the many Pusser's outlets; as well as the Norman's Bight area with its unique restaurants, anchorage, and snorkeling. Any arguments or ill humour would result in a caution from the captain: "We don't come down here for that foolishness."

During our times on board, we usually woke up to hear John communicating by ham radio on the Mississauga Maritime Net with his friends in Canada, and then enjoyed his pancakes with Aunt Jemima Syrup (topped up with Pusser's Rum). We learned about daily engine checks, other maintenance chores and schedules, and sail handling — all very valuable to our future. Anyone who knows John or visited *Stopp Knot* knows that we learned nothing about housekeeping from John. Indeed, the first day of our vacation was usually spent getting *Stopp Knot* clean enough to enjoy her.

John was no stranger to tragedy. After finding the love of his life late in his own life, he lost an adopted son to a motorcycle accident, and lost his wife only two years later in a skiing accident. He honoured a promise to raise his remaining young daughter in the Jewish faith, and did so with love and patience, even though John remains an outspoken atheist.



DAWN CORBETT (2)



One can assume that his personal tragedies had some bearing on his insistence on a positive attitude and positive experiences aboard *Stopp Knot*. Indeed, John's approach to life in the Caribbean is legendary. I can remember one early experience with him that demonstrated his approach. He and I had determined to take care of the ship's laundry one morning at Leverick Bay, Virgin Gorda. The large laundry facility was soon full of quiet women: housekeepers, chambermaids, cruiser first mates, and charter first mates. Strangers to each other; they were all very busy, quiet, and making no eye contact. John would ask a local woman if she was being good, then ask her why, no matter what the answer. He would start up a conversation with another regarding their particular laundry, ask another advice on his own laundry, start a joke with a fourth, and include the fifth in the teasing. Within minutes, everyone was acknowledging and enjoying the company of the rest of the people in their surroundings, and enjoying the time being spent on their chores.

The crews, at least under Captain John Fallon, and at least when we were aboard, enjoyed their tots, and a lot of disposable income went to the islands via the bars and "rum houses". One story that I am allowed to tell, since I am the protagonist, involved a Christmas day trip to Anegada. We arrived early enough to enjoy the beach bar at the Anegada Beach Hotel, with a crowd of other sailors and a few locals. Apparently, I was deep in my cups, and possibly a little disrespectful in my attempts to be humorous. The captain told me later that I regaled the crowd with Canadian "Great White North/MacKenzie Brothers" howls that caused the locals to cover their ears in obvious pain, imitated Christmas greetings from the Queen with my best fake British accent, and sang "People Who Need People" as if I were Rich Little, just as Barbara Streisand and her bodyguards were walking their bikes by the bar on their way back to a mega-yacht in the harbour.

The repercussions of the evening were not complete until a week later, as we were preparing for a New Year's Eve supper while tied to a deep-water mooring in Soper's Hole, Tortola. Alone on deck, I engaged a gentleman who was moored in front of us. I mentioned that these moorings were so close that I could jump aboard and serve their wine at supper. He responded with a very British accent: "Eww, I wouldn't like that!" Hoping I hadn't just somehow insulted him, I engaged him further by asking him where he was from and how long he had been on this particular cruise. He advised that he and his family had come down from their home in England, just north of Essex, last year. I responded by explaining that we were all Canadians from New Brunswick, enjoying a short vacation. He responded: "I know. We met you in Anegada a week ago." With lingering guilt and apparent masochism, I responded with: "Sorry I don't remember... How was that for you?" His response, again with the strong but musical British accent was: "Awful really. But we're having counseling." I guess I expected a shot across the bow, but that hit me right at the waterline. He went down his companionway to join his family, and I slunk quietly down below to share this exchange with our crew. The next morning, the British boat left its mooring and their complete crew saluted *Stopp Knot* as it turned and left harbour.

The adventures were not limited to the Virgins. Over the years, the captains moved the boat to Grenada and the Grenadines, and ultimately to Rodney Bay in St. Lucia. With six years in the Virgins, four years in Grenada, and in St. Lucia since 2004, *Stopp Knot* introduced many eastern Canadians to the beauty of the Caribbean. However, over the years, some attrition occurred with respect to the number of owners, until the boat, the chores, and all the bills were Captain John's alone.

Left: Stopp Knot, *a C&C Landfall 48, underway in her prime*

Below: Captain John has introduced many Canadians to happy Caribbean cruising

Certainly, *Stopp Knot* provided the lessons and motivation for my wife and me buying our own boat, *Cat Tales*, and traveling up and down the chain each winter. We have enjoyed each trip to St. Lucia, stopping in and joining John, *Stopp Knot*, and their many friends in and around Rodney Bay. Often enough, John and crew would sail *Stopp Knot* along with us to the Pitons, Fort de France, or the many other bays in the region. We have many pictures of the boat surfing along beside us in both the waters of Martinique and St. Lucia.

Stopp Knot met her demise by accidental fire on June 12th, 2010, while John was in Canada, enjoying his grandchildren.

The loss of *Stopp Knot* is a difficult one for John, but he has not abandoned us in the Caribbean. While dreaming of repairing or replacing *Stopp Knot*, he is trying out shore living in Rodney Bay, with the support of his many friends in the area. I hope John finds a way to get another boat or accepts another way to stay in the part of the world he loves. He deserves it and we deserve to have him around down here, teaching us how to enjoy this life.

(Mis)Adventures in Colombia

Part Two: SURVEYED, PAID AND AWAY!

by Luis Blondet

Recap from Part One: In December 2009, I sailed to Colombia aboard my 1985 Tayana 37, S/V Coqui. *Experiencing an engine problem, I anchored in Rodadero Bay (11°12.27N 74°13.70W), which is not a port of entry. While I was ashore doing the paperwork required to remain in Rodadero, a fire broke out aboard* Coqui. *Although it was eventually extinguished, there was extensive damage below. After submitting a claim to my insurance company, an agent from a claims processing company that handles claims for them arrived in late January. However, I had no luck finding a local surveyor to do a survey describing the damages and estimated costs for repairs, and enquiries proved that the cost of having* Coqui *towed to the nearest yacht repair facility, in Cartagena, was prohibitive.*

After some weeks, I was advised by my marine agent that the Colombian equivalent of Customs and Internal Revenue (DIAN) was requiring that I do a temporary importation of my sailboat as there was no known date when the vessel would leave Rodadero. The required paperwork and DIAN visit to the vessel was completed and the vessel was given the same number of days to stay in the country that Immigration (DAS) had given me on my passport. In late June, I went to DAS renew my tourist visa and was told that my 180 days would expire on July 7th.

PANIC! I knew that if I had to leave for 180 days, as required, there would be no S/V Coqui *for me to come back to because DIAN would have impounded the boat as contraband due to my failure to renew the temporary importation.*

I discussed the situation with my marine agent. We went back to DAS and asked what I could do to extend my stay legally. The very helpful and attractive young lady said, with a very wide smile, that I could get married and that would give me a spousal visa good for two years. Ah, temptation.... But I asked what else I could do. By this time the local head of DAS got into the picture and asked me if I was retired and on a pension. I responded that I was, and he suggested that a pensioner's visa good for 12 months could be processed in a week and that would solve my problem if done no later than July 7th.

I went to a local travel agency that does the paperwork and submits it to DAS in Bogota, the Colombian capital. I was told the visa would be back in a week or less. The 400,000-peso (US$200) fee was well worth the cost. The visa arrived by the end of June and I was set — or so I thought.

I went to DIAN to provide the new visa information. It was not accepted. DIAN claimed I needed a tourist visa and would not accept the fact that a tourist visa is not available after the initial 180-day period. This situation made me nervous because the vessel's temporary importation had expired and the vessel could have been impounded.

Four weeks later, the issue was settled through a third-party intervention. I was granted an extension on my temporary importation until December 2nd, 2010.

As I could not locate a marine surveyor I felt comfortable with, my agent contacted the marine engineer who had done the fire inspection to do the survey. I provided a sample survey from my previous boat so he could follow the format. On February 20th I FedExed the completed survey to the claims processing company. They had several clarification issues and contacted the marine engineer to clear them up.

On April 22nd, after much disagreement by their subject-matter experts about the information provided in the survey I had sent them, I was informed that a surveyor would be coming from Trinidad to conduct a survey for the insurance company. He arrived a few days later and completed his survey in one day. Four months wasted!

On May 26th the claims processing representative told me an offer of settlement was coming in a few days. I finally received an offer of settlement on June 15th and, after a brief negotiation on several items, I accepted the offer. It was not nearly enough to



An accidental fire in a foreign port led to nearly a year of complications

restore *Coqui* to its pre-fire condition but I knew that to fight for more would be an exercise in futility. The settlement funds were wired to my bank on July 23rd.

Enquiries did not locate a company capable of transporting *Coqui* to Cartagena by land. Towing by sea was prohibitively expensive. So the only option left was to make sufficient electrical repairs so that I could have navigation lights, and to replace the engine mounts, and then move *Coqui* under her own power.

November 24th: The *zarpe* has finally been issued and I am ready to leave for Cartagena tomorrow at noon.

November 25th**:** Departed Rodadero headed for Club Naútico, Cartagena.

November 26th: Arrived at Club Naútico without any major problems along the way. We passed by the dreaded mouth of the Magdalena River in darkness without a hitch.

Luis Blondet has single-handed in the Eastern Caribbean and Colombia since 1998. He currently lives in Barranquilla, Colombia and Coqui *is in Club Naútico, Cartagena undergoing repairs.*

Luis says, "I have additional information concerning Immigration, Customs, and local practices that Compass *readers headed for Colombia may find of use. Readers may reach me by e-mail at coqui811@yahoo.com or coqui811@gmail.com."*



Diesel Fuel and the Caribbean Boatowner

by Gordon Dalgliesh

We are all familiar with diesel fuel: it runs our engines and generators and most of us can't enjoy our boats without it. Diesel fuel, however, comes with a number of side effects that may damage the life and reliability of our boats.

Diesel fuel, like any carbon-based fuel, comes with a specific shelf life. Fuel degrades owing to many factors, and once it degrades it becomes harmful to our engines. Also, the quality of fuel that we get in many of the Caribbean islands is pretty bad.

The main reason for the degradation of our fuel is water. This water gets into our tanks via condensation or leaks in our seals or in some cases osmosis. The fact that we are in the Caribbean makes matters worse. This region's high humidity means that we get more water in our fuel owing to condensation. Also our seas are generally choppy, so we get some more water coming in through the breathers and tank seals, etcetera. Once this water gets into our fuel it becomes a breeding ground for microorganisms such as bacteria, algae and fungi. Once these microorganisms are present in our fuel they feed off of the hydrocarbons in the diesel and create a by-product that is corrosive and harmful. It also creates a layer of emulsified oil that increases the rate at which they multiply and also increases the rate of degradation of your diesel fuel. These organisms also die and settle to the bottom of our tanks as sludge.

This degradation of fuel is made even worse by the fact that during the summers we tend to haul our boats out to do whatever repairs are necessary, or to safeguard them for the hurricane season. This extended amount of time that the diesel sits in our tank allows it to degrade even further by allowing the microorganisms to have more time to feed on the hydrocarbons and keep on multiplying, thus creating more sludge and becoming more and more harmful to our engines as time goes on.

In addition to the above, diesel fuel inherently comes with a slight disadvantage owing to the fact that it is a carbon-based fuel. High heat is created in your fuel in a very short space of time when it goes from low pressure to high pressure passing through your fuel pump. The carbon molecules tend to clump together under heat and pressure. When these tiny carbon clumps pass through your injector it's very hard for the engine's natural combustion to burn these clumps completely. (Consider: a piece of coal will take a long time to burn but coal dust will burn in an instant.)

These carbon clumps that have not burnt completely settle on your piston crowns, valves and injector tips, and in the piston chambers. Also the lighter unburnt particles pass through the exhaust and on to our turbos, and eventually pass out of our exhaust as black smoke. This causes the sooting up of our transoms and, worse yet, it causes our engines to run inefficiently. These deposits on our valves cause the valves to not seat properly and thus lose compression, which results in a loss of power. Also, when we have all that excess carbon build-up on our turbos, it causes them to run inefficiently because it now becomes more difficult for the turbo to spool.

Another slight drawback that diesel fuel faces is the fact that it is a very "dry" fuel. The reason that I use the word "dry" is that it does not lubricate as it passes, so things like injector seals, plungers and all the rubber elements get damaged as fuel passes. If the rubber elements in your injector pump start to deteriorate, not only does it become harder for the pump to move the fuel but you start to lose power over time and it will eventually lead up to a trip to our favourite fuel pump and injector store — which is not only costly but leads to downtime for our beloved vessels.

Degradation of fuel is made even worse by the fact that during the summers we tend to haul our boats out

All of these problems can be avoided by the simple use of the correct fuel treatments and proper maintenance of your fuel systems.

The proper maintenance of your fuel system will include the changing of filters when it is necessary to do so; place gauges on top of your Racors so that you may be able to tell when they should be changed. Ensure that your fuel tank seals are not leaking. Pull and clean the pick-up meshing every now and again and if necessary, clean your tank.

However if you use the correct fuel treatments, you will eliminate or at least significantly reduce problems. The reason why I say to use the correct fuel treatments is that not all fuel treatments are the same. Some treatments in fact do more damage than good. For example, some fuel treatments contain cetane boosters. This idea seems great to most people, but think about it. If your engine is designed to run off of a certain amount of cetane and you add more cetane you are adding more explosion in your piston chamber than the manufacturers catered for, so more explosions equals more damage done to your pistons, rings, valves and injectors. Also the use of increased cetane in diesel will void most if not all manufacturers' warranties.

The use of harsh injector cleaners is also not good, because over time your valves develop little craters in them that get packed with carbon and, believe it or not, the carbon acts as a seal for the valve. These harsh injector cleaners take the hard carbon away and you are left with basically a crater in your valve that leaks compression, which causes loss of power and black smoke.

Be careful of false claims. There are treatments that claim to be a two-in-one product: a biocide and a diesel treatment. But you have to read the labels when it comes to these, because a biocide is in essence a type of poison and if it is a poison it has to be registered with the EPA and assigned an EPA number that has to be displayed on the label on the bottle. There are also fuel treatments that claim to have biological enzymes that "eat" algae. The fact is, enzymes are amino acids and amino acids cannot survive in a hydrocarbon base such as diesel or hydrocarbon carriers such as xylene.

My recommendation to avoid all of these problems pertaining to fuel and microorganism growth is the use of two fuel treatments.

Firstly, the continuous use of a biocide will kill all organisms in your diesel. Remember that even fresh diesel contains algae, etcetera. Ensure that the biocide is dual-action: that is it has both an initial "kill" as well as a residual treatment.

Secondly, you can also use a fuel stabilizer (not a fuel treatment). The reason why I recommend this is that the stabilizer is designed to keep the diesel fresh and up to spec (for up to a year). It keeps carbon molecules from clumping up, which in turn gives you a better burn. A more complete burn maximizes your fuel efficiency, increases power, and minimizes the amount of carbon left on your cylinders, valves, etcetera. It also significantly reduces the amount of smoke. It breaks up the existing sludge and algae into fine molecules that can be burnt off during the combustion process, it assists with burning off (small amounts of) water in your tank, and it increases the lubricity of the diesel to help lubricate the fuel pump and injectors and keep seals from drying out.

There is a caution, however, when using biocides and treatments in a boat with a heavily sludged and infected tank. These treatments will kill the bio-organisms, as well as break up the sludge. This mess will eventually find its way through to your filters, most often at the worst time (say, in ten-foot seas 50 miles from shore). You must expect to change your filters frequently when these are first introduced. However, in a reasonable time, you will find that the frequency of your filter changes will decrease, to the point where you will be changing filters mainly out of caution or regular servicing.

With the fuel stabilizer and the fuel micro-biocide together you can't lose. You can rest easier at night knowing that your boat's fuel is algae-free and will not deteriorate over time.

An avid angler, Captain Gordon Dalgliesh of Trinidad is associated with the SCL Group. *See related ad on page 28.*



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31) AS
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36) MAST
37) HURT

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3) USER
4) EPA
5) STEER
6) HEAD
9) TEREDOS
11) ALGAE
15) GULLS
16) CAT
17) PESTS
19) RATTER
20) MINI
22) FIRST
23) WOOD
24) MAY
26) FAST
27) TOWN
29) BOAT
30) WASH
33) AIR

TURTLE WATCH SEASON 2011

Supermoon Sand Dune Turtle Watch

by Jonathan Underwood

It's the month of March and the start of the Turtle Watch Season 2011 on Union Island. On the night of the 19th, many members of the Union Island Environmental Attackers, a local community-based organization in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, were out in force. Most had already donned headlamps and dark clothing — they had done this before, and something had kept them coming back.

We arrived at a secluded path at the crest of the hill leading down to Bloody Bay at around 10:00PM. Katrina Collins, president of the group, led us in a prayer for safe return, Roseman Adams gave the requisite safety and conservation talk for the first-timers of the group, and we set off down the trail. The full moon peeked through the sparse clouds, shining so brightly it cast shadows through the trees during our descent. I've heard a lot about how the moon was very close to the Earth at that moment — I believe it. Apollo held a spotlight over Union that night.

Our guest of honour could not have arrived with better timing. After only 20 minutes on the beach, a huge Leatherback sea turtle bumped her way in on the surf. The excitement in the group was remarkable. At first quiet, still, tense — so as not to discourage her from coming up. Once Roseman (who is a certified handler, and was on the front line of contact) identified her as a Leatherback, and saw she was settling and beginning to 'body pit', he gave the okay to come closer. I was finally witnessing one of these giants, lit by the moon, stroke her way up the beach, and start throwing sand around. What a scene.



STANTON GOMES (2)

The Union Island Environmental Attackers and friends, ready for turtle watching

We waited while she pitted, wallowed, flung sand around, and finally settled on her spot. Then, she began to dig. With her hind flippers, which are about the size of a small dinner plate, she made her nest. Each stroke resembled the most practiced and attentive of motions. Like the hands of a surgeon, she dug a perfectly round pit, about 60 centimetres in diameter, and almost a metre deep. We waited, with lights off, as she finished her nest.

I wasn't expecting the switch to flip so fast: Roseman had described the trance state turtles enter while they're laying — but these, the experienced watchers, resembled a conservation swat team as the turtle began to lay.

"Get ready..." Roseman said calmly, his red light already trained on her carapace, several other red turtle lights glowing on the perimeter. "NOW! There's the first one!" Five watchers, with pre-assigned roles descended on the creature. "Switch to white, and start the count." Two members of the squad, young, small, and comfortably perched on the side of the nest switched their headlamps to bright white light and relayed the count of blanks to the record keeper. The blanks are infertile eggs, slightly smaller which are intended to insulate and protect the bottom and top of the nest. They are the first and last eggs laid.

Stanton, the photographer for the night, immediately started snapping shots of the creature and the people at the watch. Others drew measuring tapes for several dimensions; it measured six feet seven inches from mouth to flipper tip. A diagram was drawn depicting body shape, previous injuries and distinguishing features. In this flurry of action, all had an opportunity to touch the turtle — and see her up close. She laid over a hundred eggs, and afterwards took great care in covering them and patting the sand down.

Judging by her size, it very well could have been her first laying season. She may be as young as 25, or as old as 27, but it is unlikely she is much older. What that means is this may be her first time on land since she hatched a quarter century ago. She has lived with no parental care, and no instructions on nesting. Instinct has guided her through the motions, over three hours of surgical motions, to lay her eggs here at Bloody Bay. That kind of meticulous genetic programming, of complex adaptation must be a reason the species has lasted millions of years, through mass extinctions, and environmental changes. We can only hope that they also survive perhaps their biggest challenge in an epoch: problematic primates.



A nesting turtle should only be approached when she is in the egg-laying 'trance'

And then came the tag. This girl had not been tagged. Roseman acquired the pre-fab stainless number tag, the application forceps, and placed it on her hind-left flipper — out of the way in a comfortable position. He asked two of the tourist guests, Germans living in Canada, to name her. They chose "Anneliese", and so it was. Anneliese's name, and tag number were added to her data sheet and the group retreated back to the perimeter.

Anneliese rose from her trance and began the final stage of her task. Like a three-year-old in a sandbox, she tossed sand grains left and right — and scooted around from side to side. At times she was smoothing the areas, at other making big divots. This went on for another half an hour, while the group chatted and cracked jokes. As Anneliese began her descent towards the water, Roseman noticed a slight problem: she was headed towards me. Turtles navigate down the beach by looking for white light — which is naturally only seen on the foamy break line of the surf. My T-shirt however, was white, and glowing under the moon. I quickly juked to the side, behind the shadow of a dude dressed in black, but I think she was a little disoriented...

"I could take this thing off — but I'm afraid my skin might be whiter!" I said, gaining some quality belly laughs from the Union Islanders around me. Sorry Anneliese, I know that was a long night. Next time, I'll wear black.

She circled around one more time, and finally made her way, arduous sweep by arduous sweep, back into the waves. She took a deep breath, and disappeared into the sea.

The turtle watching work was not quite over. All 16 of us started a sort of turtle watch 'dust-up'. Kicking sand, raking sand, throwing sand, and rolling around on the sand are all acceptable techniques. The purpose? To cover her tracks, body pits, flipper strokes, and ultimately her nest. In essence, turtle tracks were changed to human tracks — hiding her bounty from poachers who walk this beach. They carry long sticks to probe the sand until they come up slimy-wet from the eggs. It's a simple way of finding a nest, but the turtle watch dust-up should make it a little more difficult to narrow the search, since the whole beach was covered in footprints — without turtle tracks.

So off we went, back up the hill, back into the van, back to Ashton, Clifton, and spots in between. I returned home with the hope that some of the thousands of Leatherbacks that hatch in the Caribbean this year will mature — avoiding plastic bags, propellers, and poachers in the Atlantic. I wish them a safe welcome to Bloody Bay, to carefully lay the nests of the next generation.

You can be a part of our Turtle Patrols by contacting the UIEA at http://environmentalattackers.org/contact-us or calling Roseman Adams on (784) 526-4500.

TURTLE WATCH SEASON 2011

A DETOUR TO TOBAGO FOR TURTLES

by Katy Winter

It's gone nine o'clock at night on March 28th, 2011 and my fiancé, John, and I are sitting on Turtle Beach in Tobago hoping to catch a glimpse of the largest sea turtle in our oceans: the Leatherback. Tobago is one of the nesting sites of these magnificent creatures, and it has been for probably thousands of years. Every year the females return to the same spot where they were born and lay their eggs (they lay every two to three years).

John and I were sailing from Grenada to Trinidad in our 35-foot Dufour, *Susan*, and we made a detour to Tobago specifically to watch the Leatherbacks.



G LAISINGH

All sea turtles are endangered. Turtle watching raises awareness of the dangers they face, including egg collecting, pollution and beachside development

We sit very still — turtles can be put off from coming up onto a beach or scared off in the middle of nesting by activity and by lights. At least the moonlight is bright enough to see when they do come ashore. All you can hear is the lap of the waves coming ashore and it's just a question of waiting and watching.

Although John and I got to Turtle Beach via a hire car from our anchorage in Store Bay, you can go on organized tours. Save Our Seaturtles (SOS) Tobago, a charity set up to preserve the island's turtle population, gives guidelines on how you should watch turtles so as not to disturb them during the laying and hatching process. Using flash photography, driving onto the beach and lighting beach fires are not allowed. SOS Tobago Volunteers patrol the beach during the nesting season (March to August) and SOS Tobago has a list of approved tour guides for this magical experience.

John and I have dived for years; he was lucky enough to see a Leatherback off Buccoo Reef in Tobago but I have never seen one in the wild. I come from Cornwall, England, and we have had Leatherbacks washed up on the beaches there; some are stranded but sadly often dead, tied up in fishing gear or starved to death after eating marine rubbish and plastic bags mistaken for jellyfish. Researchers at the University of Exeter's Cornwall campus have carried out extensive research into the migration patterns of these creatures to try and find out why this species is in decline. There are fears that in the next five to ten years Leatherbacks could become extinct in certain oceans — another reason I am here to grab an opportunity to try and see one.

After about an hour we're rewarded by the sound of something moving up the beach. John and I can just make out a shadow of something about the size of a suitcase lumbering along. It's a female Leatherback. You can see the effort it takes her, full of eggs, to come up onto the beach. She could have travelled thousands of miles to come back to the beach where she was born. We keep really still so as not to frighten her. She moves slowly along the sand, up and down for about half an hour until she finds a place to make her nest above the high-tide line.

Slowly she starts to dig with her flippers, you can see how hard it is for her and you sit there thinking about helping but knowing you can't. Finally, after around three quarters of an hour, her nest is dug and then she lays her eggs. It's a lot — apparently a female lays up to a hundred eggs each time she nests. It looks like she is crying as she lays her eggs — you can actually see tears in her eyes. You think she must be in pain or is somehow displaying emotion in some way (the females are long gone before the eggs hatch). I later found out it's how they get rid of the excess salt in their system after being at sea for so long.

Once she lays, she then carefully covers up her nest and flicks sand over the top to hide it from any predators and then she heads back out to sea. The whole process has taken around two hours.

It is perhaps one of the most humbling experiences I have ever had and it's probably an experience future generations won't have if Leatherback numbers continue to decline. Come to Tobago and see this amazing feat of nature before it's too late.

You can get further information on Tobago's leatherback turtles by going to the SOS Tobago website at www.sos-tobago.org or the charity's Facebook page, SOS Tobago.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

MAY & JUNE 2011

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

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

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

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

May					
DATE	TIME	21	0321	10	1923
1	1032	22	0412	11	2016
2	1116 (new)	23	0459	12	2112
3	1203	24	0543	13	2210
4	1252	25	0625	14	2310
5	1343	26	0706	15	0000 (full)
6	1436	27	0747	16	0010
7	1529	28	0826	17	0117
8	1622	29	0912	18	0200
9	1714	30	0957	19	0250
10	1805	31	1046	20	0336
11	1856	**June**		21	0420
12	1946	1	1137	22	0501
13	2037	2	1230 (new)	23	0543
14	2131	3	1325	24	0624
15	2227	4	1419	25	0706
16	2326	5	1511	26	0751
17	0000 (full)	6	1603	27	0838
18	0046	7	1653	28	0928
19	0127	8	1742	29	1021
20	0226	9	1832	30	1116



MAY 2011

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)
Romance will hog your helm this month. Let boat business stay in its sailbag and indulge yourself in the senses.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)
This is a time for romance for you. The influence of the sun sailing into your sign will add creative inspiration to the mix. Have a great time, especially on the 17th during the full moon, when things will really heat up.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)
Boat business aspects are still positive, so keep a firm hand on the helm of this influence and it will pay off in due course.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Relationship difficulties among crew or cruising pals may be frustrating. Petty arguments and disagreements abound, so decide when a captain's word needs to be law.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)
Your cruising creativity will be diverted by romantic inclinations and the possibility of true love sailing into port. Just relax and go with the flow.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)
Hello, Sailor! Creative juices will be flowing and will be further stimulated by the possibility of a madcap love affair late in the month.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)
Once again boat business is the focus of your attention. Try to remember that too much attention outside of the main cabin could leave your co-captain feeling left out. It's a good time to rethink your priorities.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)
Line squalls of arguments, misunderstandings and unfathomable silences will culminate on the full moon. Keep your stinger sheathed if you want a positive outcome with your cruising partner or racing crew.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)
The arrows of romance start the month flying fast and furious but will thin out as the days pass. They will fade into a dim memory around the full moon on the 17th.

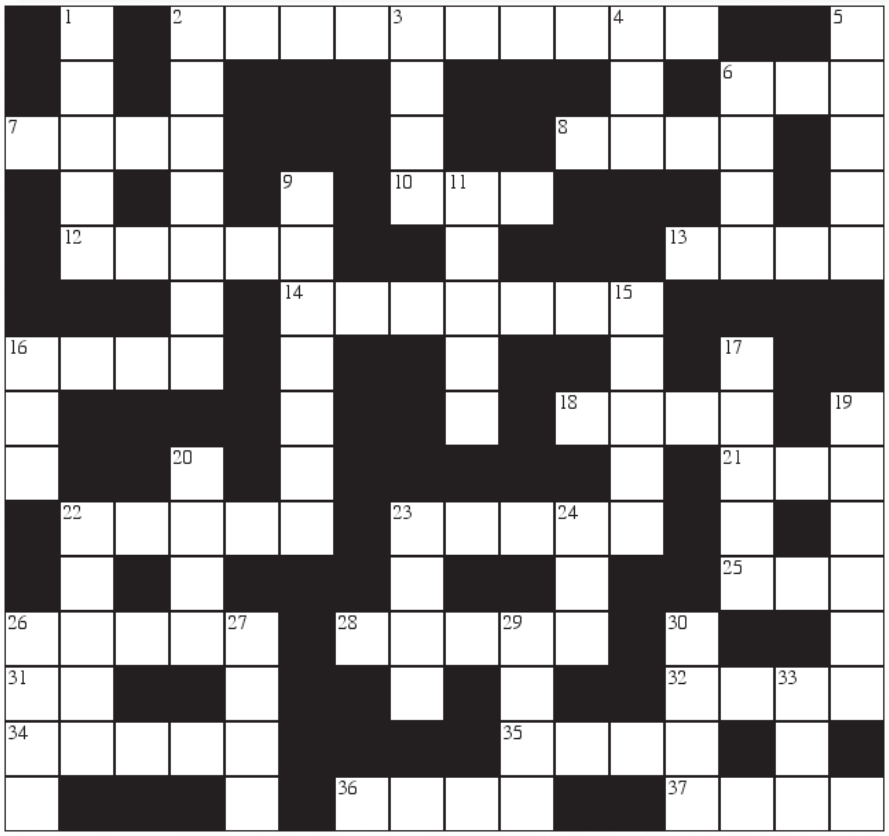
♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)
Concentrate your energies on your creative muse. Let inspiration guide your course around the time of the full moon.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)
You will still be juggling your business with your love life. Though you may feel that romance is overpowering, you will have fresh winds in the business area next month so it will all balance out in the end.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)
You may feel no fair wind on any course this month. Be self-indulgent and just let the current carry you where it may. Give yourself a break from the daily stresses of cruising life and renew your energies with pleasurable diversions.

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Compass Cruising Crossword



'PESTS'

ACROSS

2) The evening choir?
6) Temperature many insects thrive in
7) 2 Across can breed in a ____ of water
8) Breed
10) Pest that flees a sinking ship
12) Pest _____: hospital for persons with communicable diseases
13) Distinctive smell
14) This can be standing or running
16) Nature's alarm clock or sleeper's annoyance?
18) Some types of 28 Across have ____ feet
21) The Caribbean is one
22) 12 Across, 26 Across and horse are all _____
23) Squirmy lawn pests
25) Don't let 22 Across ____ on your food
26) Mangoes, papayas, bananas, etcetera
28) Large fish-eating sea bird
31) 'Catch __ catch can'
32) 2 Across and 22 Across can come in if you leave the hatch ____
34) Plant fiber used to make baskets and hats
35) Uninvited picnic guests?
36) A 28 Across might 25 Across at the top of this
37) A 10 Across bite will ____

DOWN

1) The two main types of 16 Across_____ are German and American
2) Member of the largest marine phylum
3) Employer, of a sort
4) Agency that protects us from certain pests (abbrev.)
5) Take the helm
6) Top of 36 Across
9) Ship 23 Acrosses
11) Scrub the bottom to get this off
15) Birds who sit in the 14 Across and poop on your deck
16) Chases 10 Across
17) Subject of this puzzle
19) A good ship's cat is a _____
20) Prefix meaning tiny
22) 11 Down is the _____ thing to attach to a newly painted hull
23) 9 Down love to eat this
24) What this month is
26) A 19 Down should move ____
27) A 10 Across is likely to come aboard a vessel moored alongside in a ____
29) A 26 Down speed____ can be a pest in an anchorage
30) What you need to do to the deck after a visit by 15 Down
33) 22 Across are ___-borne pests

Solution on page 30

MY CARNIVALS!

Island Poets

I remember sweet and clear
The Carnivals of yesteryear.
We could not miss an ol' mas' fête,
That got as rude as it could get!
Till sad to say, they got too rude,
And now it seems they've gone for good,
Replaced by 'all inclusive' nights,
Jumpin' wavin' winin' fights,
And boy, don't talk about the money
Paid to see Machel — not funny!
I can remember when the tents
Were where our favourites came and went,
Sparrow, Kitchener, Lord Funny,
Boy, those men were worth their money!
We sang along with words we knew
And our excitement grew and grew,
Till we were all set for Jou'vert,
Tired, but when the steel band played
We'd find the strength to sway and chip
On down the road, at a good clip.
The sound, 'ping pong' and then the 'shush'
Of slippers on the road, the crush,
The sharing of a rum or two
And hugging up some guy you knew!

Boy, oh boy! Those were the days,
I'm glad that the Jou'vert still plays
A strong part in the festival,
A fine and fancy fête for all.
Then Monday Mas', slightly subdued,
See that your cart has all the brews
Make sure there's ham and hops for all
For the two days, then have a ball,
Come Tuesday! We are on our way!
Full costumes at the break of day,
Chipping our way to competition,
Sequins, beads and glitter glisten,
Boots made specially for the road,
Took us across the stage, we showed
Our paces, drank our fill,
And feted down the place until...
Exhausted, weary we would cool
Ourselves down in some good friend's pool,
Then ever-ready to collapse,
We'd find ourselves at some las' lap.
What saved us all, what made it right,
Was all this finished at midnight!
The long drive home, the work next day,
No sympathy for us, no way!
Our Carnivals! I would not change them
If some great force could rearrange them....

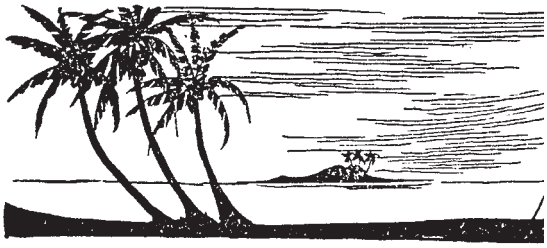
Perhaps next year you never know...
I feel I could put on a show,
Bedecked in feathers, glitter glistening,
In retro Mas' dancin' and listening
To Sparrow's tunes and Kitch's beat,
Oblivious to age or heat,
Jiggling and wiggling down the road,
With drink in hand and boobs exposed,
For that's the fashion of the day,
In dreams, that's me. Awake? No way!
My energy is now depleted,
Its dying flame can't be reheated.

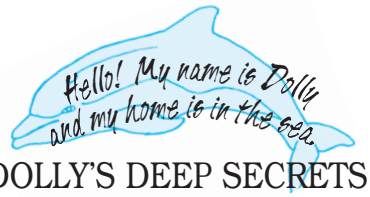
If criticism comes from me –
Don't mind, it's only jealousy.

— Nan Hatch

parlumps marooned







DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

We've looked at the formation of wind waves in the ocean. Are there any other kinds of waves? What about **tidal waves**?

The name 'tidal wave' is actually incorrect because tides do not make waves as winds do. What used to be called a tidal wave is now more properly known as a **tsunami**. In many parts of the Caribbean, the terms **tide** and **current** are used interchangeably. However, in scientific terms, tides and currents are very different. Let's look at tides in more detail.

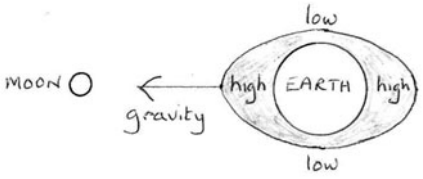
Tides refer to the regular movement of the sea caused by the relative motion of the Earth, Moon and Sun. High tide is when the sea comes far up the shore and low tide is when the sea is furthest out. Gravitational forces between the Earth and the Moon and between the Earth and the Sun are responsible for this rise and fall of sea water.

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

When the Moon is overhead, gravitational forces pull on the water below it. The water rises and there is high tide. There is also a high tide on the opposite side of the Earth at the same time, caused by a rotational force as the Earth spins on its axis. The bulge of water on the two 'sides' means that there is a corresponding fall in water level in between (*see diagram*). This is low tide. There are two tides every 24 hours and 50 minutes. The extra minutes are accounted for by a time lag between the spinning of the Earth and the orbiting of the Moon.

The Sun also pulls on Earth's oceans but its effect is less because it is so much farther away. If the Sun, Earth and Moon are in line (at new moon and full moon), solar high tides and lunar high tides "add up" and cause an extra-high high tide and an extra-low low tide. These are called **spring tides**. If the positions of the Sun, Earth and Moon form a right angle, the high solar tides coincide with the low lunar tides (and vice versa) so, at that point, the high tide is at its lowest and the low tide is at its highest. These are called **neap tides**. The height and time of high tide may not be exactly the same at all points along a coastline. Both the shape of the coastline and the profile of the sea floor affect the size of the tides.

Unlike wind waves, which are difficult to predict, the times of high and low tides on Earth can be calculated with some precision. This enables the publication of **tide tables**, so helpful to sailors everywhere.



WORD PUZZLE

Cross out the letters of the following words from the diagram on the left. Unscramble those letters remaining to find a topical word.

COASTLINE, EARTH, FORCE, GRAVITY, HEIGHT, LUNAR, MOON, NEAP, PREDICT, SOLAR, SPRING, SUN, TIDE, WAVE

— Answer on page 30

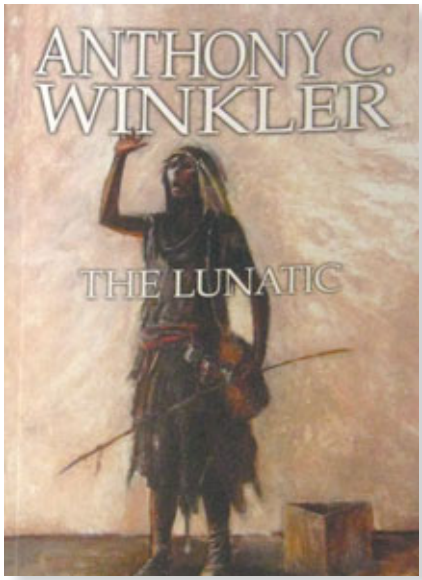
ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2011 ©

BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

Out of Order

The Lunatic *by Anthony C. Winkler, Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2006 edition, ISBN 10: 1-4050-6881-7.*

Anthony C. Winkler has scored an offbeat novel, first published in 1987. The Jamaican author tells the story of Aloysius Hobson, a madman with matted, dirty hair, unkempt wild looks, and a thousand other names: "Aloysius Gossamer Longshoreman Technocracy Predominate Involuted Enraptured Parliamentarian Patriarch Verdure Emulative…" who lived on a diet of wild fruit in the wilderness near the village of Moneague in the Parish of St. Ann, Jamaica.



And how did Aloysius, with little schooling, learn so many words? Some from hanging around with the Rastafarians on street corners in Ocho Rios, but most, by lurking under the windowsill of the schoolroom as the new teacher taught her pupils "words, words and more words".

This side-splitting, artistically distilled narrative will delight many readers, except those of pious sensibilities who will be offended by its raw Jamaican vernacular, a couple of irreverent passages and incessant sex.

Although Winkler has said in the introduction to the 2006 edition, that *The Lunatic* has been his most satisfying work in terms of feedback from readers, including cancer patients who told him that reading the book made them laugh so hard that it helped them get through chemotherapy or endure postoperative pain, the initial response to the book by his immediate family was disappointing. His American wife, who is usually very supportive of his work, did not like the story. His Jamaican mother's reaction was, "What a fool-fool book! … Tony, you don't see you write a stupid book?"

But regardless of the language, the sex, or talk about sex at almost every turn of the page, and the pros and cons about the book, Winkler has created an endearing character in *The Lunatic*. The supporting characters are the unconventional white woman, Inga, who tells Aloysius that she was a cow in another life; Service the unbelieving butcher who proclaims, "My God is mud"; and Busha, the rich landowner who is preoccupied with the location of his final resting place.

Since Aloysius is shunned by the villagers, his communication is mostly with the animals in the field, and trees and bushes. The author's depiction of his characters, human, animal and plant life presents a wonderful read. In *The Painted Canoe* he used the sea and shark as characters; in *The Lunatic* Winkler has given the trees and bushes personalities all of their own.

At night Aloysius sleeps under a flame heart tree which is his special friend. In the vicinity there is a profane mango tree which belts out Jamaican cuss words like any human. There is also a preaching "bush that claimed to have taken a correspondence course from an American seminary".

We first meet Aloysius dancing and prancing along a mountainous countryside road. He hears a noise and ducks behind a cut-stone wall from where he sees a village woman coming out of the bush with a basket of yams on the way to market. She puts down her basket, looks around furtively, lifts her dress, drops her panties and begins to empty her bladder from an upright position.

Offended, Aloysius springs out from behind the wall. Words ensue between the two even as the woman picks up her basket and continues along the country road and Aloysius covers the puddle made by the woman with stones and dirt, fretting, "De woman was rude and out of order!"

Following this episode, Aloysius encounters another 'out of order' woman in the person of Inga, a German tourist. She's taking pictures of birds in the bushland where Aloysius is fast asleep. She sees him and trains her camera on him. When he awakes and finds out why she's taking pictures of him, some very amusing dialogue takes place with even the bushes chiming in. Both the bushes and Aloysius are in accord: "What a out of order woman!"

Inga remains in the bush with Aloysius and soon the two become lovers. They take long walks exploring the countryside. During one of their walks they come across Service, a butcher who has been hired to slaughter a goat. They stop to look on as Service carries out his job. Inga is impressed with the way Service slaughters the animal, comparing him to a sculptor at work. She invites him to come and live with them under the flame heart tree, much to the discontent of Aloysius and the tree.

Eventually, Inga's father stops sending her money and she hatches a plan to break open Busha's house and steal his money. Aloysius is not in agreement. He has no problem with Busha. They "went back a long way. Before his first bout of madness, Aloysius had worked for Busha, living in a back room in the servants' quarters… The two of them played together on the village cricket team."

Inga tells Aloysius if she does not get money she would have to go back to Germany. He pleads with her not to leave. He breaks down and confesses his love for her and eventually agrees to the robbery. The bushland trio starts rehearsing and sets the date for the Sunday, the day after the village cricket match.

"The sidelines of the playing fields were thick with spectators" for the cricket match, which was a personal success for both Busha and Aloysius. Their team defeated the opposing village by 20 runs with Busha and Aloysius being their team's heroes, but not before the opposing captain "ranted and raved at the umpire. Moneague had emptied its lunatic asylum to come and bowl against their team!"

The following afternoon, Inga, Aloysius and Service break into Busha's home. But the robbery is botched when Busha and his wife return home earlier than anticipated and catch the bandits in the act. Aloysius throws himself in the way when Service raises his machete to kill Busha. Aloysius' obstruction gives Busha's wife time to get a gun. Holding the gun on them, she calls the police. They are taken away and charged "for breaking and entering, felonious assault and attempted murder of a St. Ann landowner."

To learn the outcome of the case, get a copy of *The Lunatic* and know the fate of the three offbeat characters. Believe me, the plot is not the only element to the story; you need to read *The Lunatic* to experience the essence of the writing and of the characters and their interaction with each other, especially the rapport between Aloysius and the plant and animal life, which in this narrative seems as if it's the most natural thing in the world to have.

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THE SKY IN MAY

by Scott Welty

The Planets in May, 2011

MERCURY, VENUS, MARS, JUPITER — Wow… Get up! Look east! They're all there!

Take a look at Figure 1 showing the eastern horizon



FIGURE 1

at 0500 hours on May 12th. A nice clear horizon will help as usual. Figure 2 shows a view from space, high above the North Pole of the Earth. Since the Earth spins



FIGURE 2

counter-clockwise, the four planets are going to rise just before the sun. This will be a treat all month and the crescent moon joins the party on the 1st and the 29th. So get out of that bunk and make pot of coffee!

If you watch day by day you'll get a feel for the relative motions here. It's not simple because everything is moving around the sun including us! There are several nice pairings of the planets all month long.

EARTH - Left the dance alone.

SATURN - Rising in the afternoon and setting in the wee hours all month. Riding in Virgo.

Sky Events This Month

1st - Crescent moon and four planets
3rd - New Moon
17th - Full Moon
29th - Crescent moon and four planets

Featured Constellations for May: Hercules and the Southern Cross

Of the 88 agreed-upon constellations, Hercules is the fifth largest and easy to find this month. Hercules (Figure 3) will be rising in the northeast around 2000 hours all month. He's pretty easy to spot with his characteristic trapezoid body with arms and legs sticking out. His right arm is swinging a club. Of recent



FIGURE 3

interest in this column and elsewhere is the confirmation of extra solar planets. Eleven of the stars in Hercules are known to have planets circling them. Life? Who knows?

You notice M13 is located within the Hercules constellation. M13 is one of the more famous globular star clusters. With a nice dark sky you should be able to make this out and with your Steiners even better. Let Hercules rise high in the sky, as viewing is better overhead owing to less atmosphere for the light to go through and less light pollution from shore. M13 is composed of more than 400,000 stars spread out over 140 light years of space. Originally discovered by Edmund Halley of comet fame it is a popular target for amateur astronomers. It was a target for the pros, too, when they sent a radio message toward M13 in 1974 from the giant radio dish in Arecibo, Puerto Rico just in case anyone there was listening. This was a big deal at the time and Carl Sagan was one of the people involved in deciding what the message should contain. Figure 4 shows the message that was sent as strings of 1's and 0's with such information as the numbers one through ten, things about our DNA, and the dimensions of the Arecibo dish. If anyone is going to answer it's going to be a while as the cluster is about 25,000 light years away. That makes it a minimum of 50,000 years to get a reply! The other bad news is that in 25,000 years the cluster won't be where we aimed the message! Incomplete pass, I guess. Oh well, it was really more of a demonstration of the capability of the new equipment at the time. Still, it's fun to think that that message is still screaming across empty space now 37 light years away from Earth!

I always like to mention the Southern Cross (the smallest of all the constellations) in May. This is the best month to see it, as it will be due south around


FIGURE 4

2100 hours all month. No figure here… it looks like a cross! For those of us who have traveled to the Caribbean from exotic climes such as Chicago, the first sighting of the Southern Cross lets you know that you have indeed sailed far from home.

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

Why do clocks go "clockwise"? An early timekeeping device was a simple stick stuck vertically into the ground. As the sun moves east to west through the sky, the shadow of the stick will move "clockwise" round the stick. This is why clocks have hands as well to simulate the shadow of the stick.

Quiz Question: Would such a stick have a clockwise turning shadow in Australia?

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

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A Chocoholic's Guide to the Windwards and T&T

by Ann Vanderhoof

When it comes to food, I'm a savoury rather than a sweet person — with one exception: I *love* chocolate. Any type will do in a pinch, but given a choice, I'll go for dark chocolate with a high percentage of cocoa every time. I even rationalize it (as I do with red wine) as actually being good for me. (To my mind, the folks who discovered cocoa contains anti-aging and heart-disease-fighting antioxidants and mood-elevating serotonin deserve more research grants.)

When we first cruised the Windwards and Trinidad in the late '90s, all the high-end chocolate for sale was imported. Island-grown cocoa beans were exported and turned into chocolate elsewhere; the beans that remained behind were used to make cocoa balls and sticks, and not much else. Not that I have anything against a nice cup of West Indian cocoa tea made from one of these balls (truth be told, I'm a big fan), but it's just not the same as a silken bar of dark chocolate, a truffle, or a bonbon slowly melting on the tongue.

Oh, how times have changed. Cocoa estates that became uneconomical during the last century, and were left derelict with cocoa pods rotting on the trees, are now being brought back to life as the world price for fine-flavoured cocoa beans rises and consumers buy into the trend towards "single-origin" and "single-estate" chocolate. And the beans aren't merely exported anymore. Island entrepreneurs are now "adding value" to them *in* the Caribbean, making first-rate chocolate where the cocoa grows: Good news for cocoa farmers, who are being better paid for their beans, and good news for chocolate-craving cruisers who like to "buy local".

Wherever we anchor our Tartan 42, *Receta*, I'm on the lookout for great island-made chocolate. Here is my Chocoholic's Guide to what I've found:



ALL PHOTOS STEVE MANLEY



This worker at Grenada's Belmont Estate is removing excess liquid, twigs, and other debris from a local farmer's pulp-covered beans — called "wet cocoa" — before they're weighed



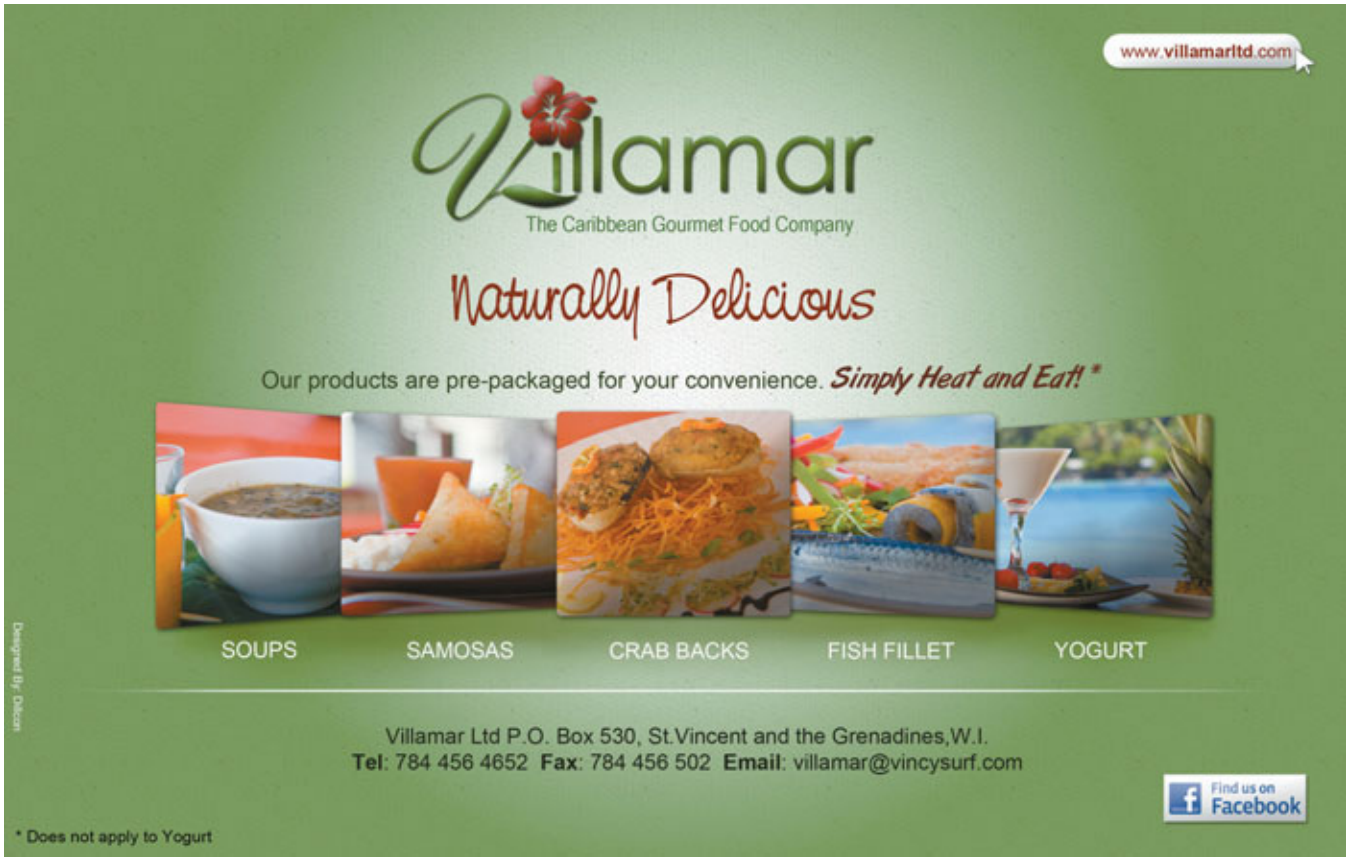
Right out of the pod, cocoa beans are surrounded by a sweet white pulp. It's delicious sucked straight off the beans — and in Hotel Chocolat's inventive Cacao Bellinis

Grenada's Bars and Bonbons

The Grenada Chocolate Company is the best-established of the new breed of island chocolate makers, and its 60-percent and 71-percent dark-chocolate bars have long been cruiser favourites. But a visit to the company's recently opened shop, Bonbon Chocolates, at Belmont Estate (at the northeast end of Grenada) reveals new pleasures. The Grenada Chocolate Company is now producing two additional bars that have surpassed the original two in my affections — one that's 82 percent cocoa, and one called "Nib-A-Licious," a 60-percent bar with pieces of cocoa nibs. The 82-percent is intensely fruity, and if you want the flavour of pure, rich cocoa unadulterated by much sugar, this is the bar for you. Eating the Nib-A-Licious is sort of like biting into a chocolate-covered espresso bean: the slight bitterness and crunch of the nibs — crushed roasted cocoa beans — contrasting beautifully with the smooth, slightly sweet chocolate around them.

As the name suggests, you'll also find bonbons in the new Bonbon shop. Under the tutelage of Philadelphia chocolatier Eric Chocolates (surely a *nom de guerre*), several young Grenadians combine the Grenada Chocolate Company's chocolate with island fruits, nuts and spices to produce treats such as chocolate-covered ginger (rationalize buying it as a seasickness preventative) and filled bonbons with passionfruit, guava, and other tropical-fruit centres.

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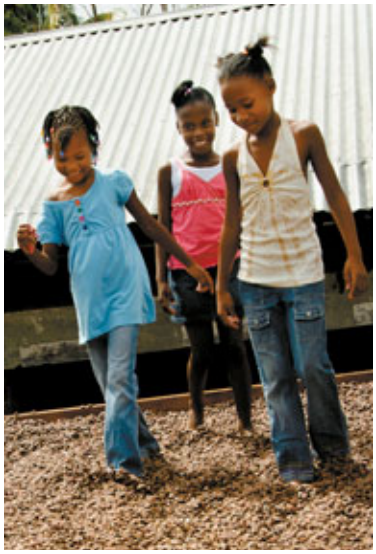
The cocoa-dusted truffle filled with local Rivers rum was, surprisingly, a standout — the harsh (some, like me, would say undrinkable), high-octane Rivers somehow mellowed when combined with high-octane chocolate.

If you're lucky when you visit Bonbon, you'll also find slices of a chocolate layer cake. It's baked in a solar oven and then sandwiched with homemade sorrel, golden apple, or other fruit jam, depending on the season. Grenada Chocolate Company co-owner Mott Green describes the cake as kind of like a science experiment — it combines vinegar and baking soda (remember from your school days what happens?), which gives it a moist, light, fluffy texture.

You can feel good about buying Grenada Chocolate. It's completely organic, and Mott and his partner Edmund Brown (a third founding partner is now deceased) have given the farmers who supply their main ingredient a real leg up: they've created a cocoa farmers' cooperative, which owns a portion of the company.

(Aside: If you're sailing between Grenada and Carriacou, you may spot a 13-foot Hobie Cat bouncing over the waves, and you'll likely say to yourself something along the lines of, "Who in their right mind would sail a 13-foot Hobie Cat from Grenada to Carriacou?" Here's the answer: it's the Grenada Chocolate Company's Mott Green, delivering chocolate bars to Grenada's sister island. He even catches fish along the way. (When you're in Carriacou, check for his bars at Patty's Deli.)

The Grenada Chocolate Company's tiny candy-box of a factory in Hermitage, up the road from Belmont Estate, doesn't offer tours — a lot of people in a small space isn't good for fine chocolate, which is very sensitive and picks up odours readily — but you can see part of the beans-to-bar process at Belmont Estate, where cocoa is grown and the beans fermented and sun-dried. If you visit the estate on a "buying day" during the cocoa harvest season, you'll see farmers bringing their "wet cocoa" to the estate, and it's fascinating to see it being inspected, weighed, and purchased.





Left: At Belmont Estate, Grenada, visitors — schoolkids and adults alike — are given a chance to 'walk the cocoa'. Done regularly throughout the day, this process turns the beans so they dry evenly in the sun. Right: Hotel Chocolat in St. Lucia serves up a view of the Pitons and divine desserts such as homemade ice creams and dark chocolate mousse

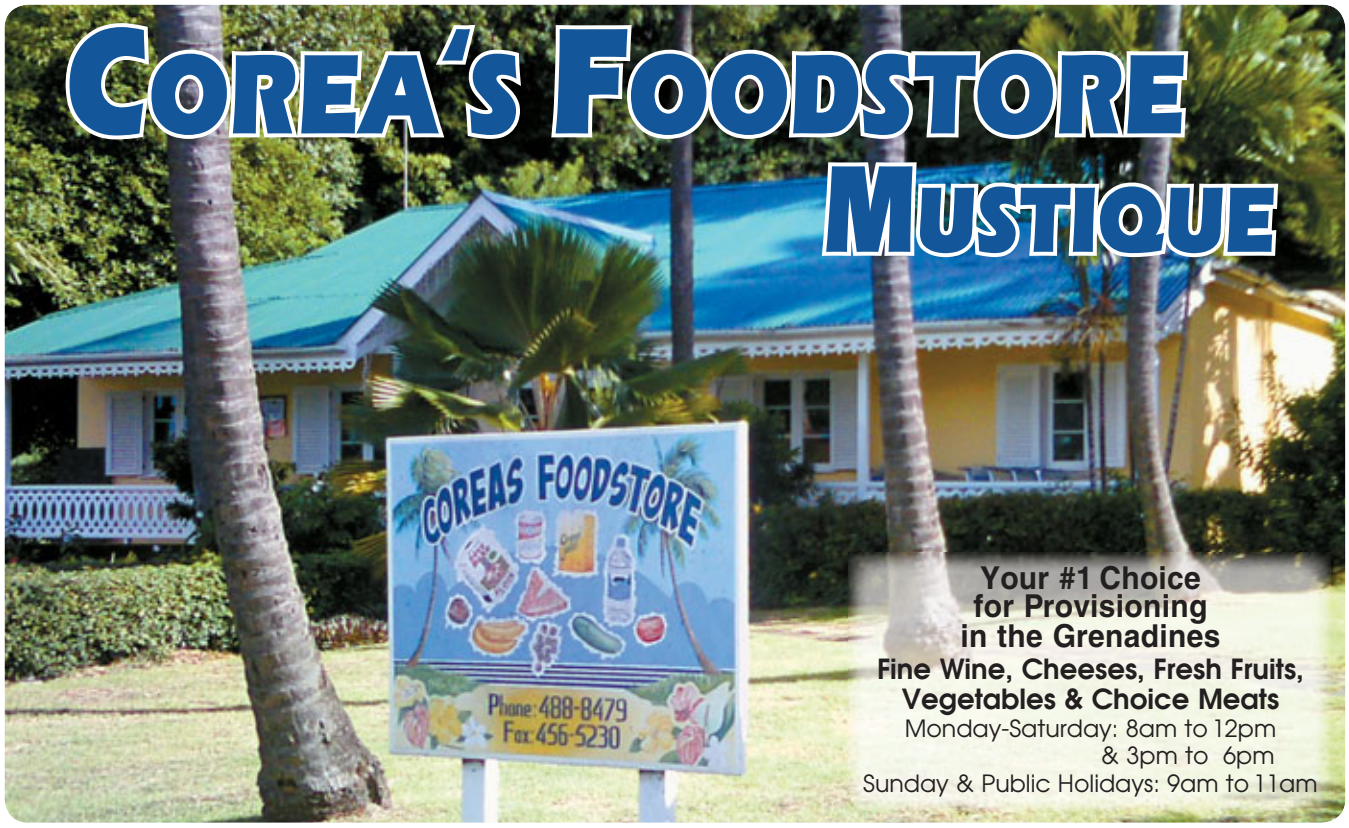
St. Lucia's Cocoa Cuisine

If the Grenada Chocolate Company is the old master of Windward Island chocolate-making, then St. Lucia's Hotel Chocolat, which opened in March near Soufriere, is the new kid on the block — a bold initiative to revitalize the island's once-flourishing cocoa industry. Yes, it's actually a hotel, but it's much more than that. Five years ago, Angus Thirlwell and Peter Harris, founders of the beloved British chocolatier Hotel Chocolat, bought derelict Rabot Estate, St. Lucia's oldest cocoa estate (it dates from 1745), and began rehabilitating the cocoa groves and restoring the old estate house. They started what they call an Engaged Ethics Cocoa Programme, signing on 112 St. Lucian farmers so far and guaranteeing that Hotel Chocolat will buy all the cocoa they grow, paying them 30 to 40 percent above world market price for their beans and guaranteeing them payment within seven days. (They're also offering technical assistance and subsidized cocoa tree seedlings.)

Construction will start soon on a chocolate factory; for now, the beans are shipped to Hotel Chocolat in the UK and transformed into chocolate there.

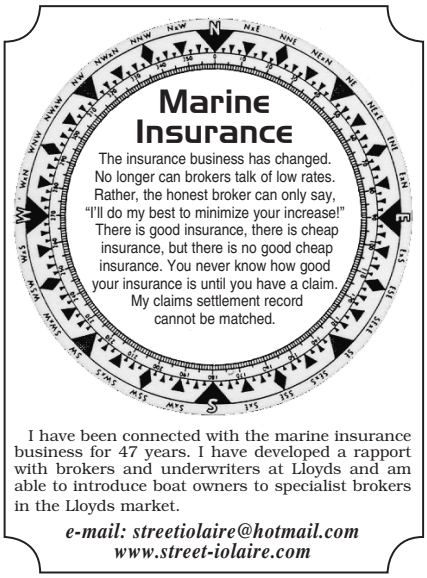
The only bar available when we visited shortly after Hotel Chocolat's St. Lucia opening this spring was a smooth, fruity 70-percent bar of "Island Growers" dark chocolate — which I can tell you disappeared *way* too quickly on our boat. But there was cocoa and chocolate aplenty in the Hotel Chocolat restaurant, Boucan (the Creole word for a traditional cocoa drying shed). The restaurant offers a menu of "cacao cuisine": some form of cocoa in almost every dish. It sounded like a gimmick — over the top, even for an inveterate chocolate lover — but it turned out to be completely delicious.

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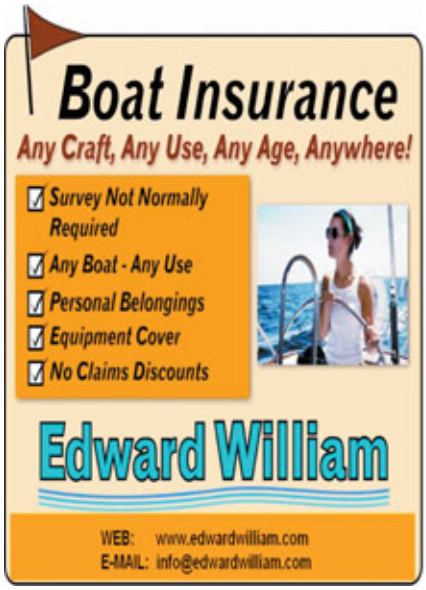
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Dear *Compass*,

Frank Virgintino has written an excellent article in the January 2011 issue of *Compass* regarding repair and maintenance of a yacht in the Caribbean, and I would like to make a few additional comments.

When you arrive on an island, before you make any commitments for having work done, hauling or storing your boat, spend four or five evenings at the most popular sailors' watering hole at Happy Hour. Sit, listen and ask questions, see how the land lies, and then start making your arrangements.

In North America and Europe, most independent contractors will have insurance policies covering both liability for work they do and also insurance for injury to their employees. However, very few independent contractors in the Caribbean have this type of liability insurance.

Ultra-violet rays not only ruin sails but also travel lift slings. They have been known to fail and when they do, the boat in the slings is damaged. So before you haul, ascertain whether or not the hauling facility has insurance to cover damage to boats they are hauling. If they have insurance, fine. If not, and your boat is insured, the boat's insurance will cover the cost of damage incurred while hauling, BUT unless an arrangement has been made with the yard, the owner of the boat will have to pay the insurance deductible ("excess" on European policies). If your boat is not insured and the hauling facility does not have insurance, do not haul.

Similarly, does the hauling facility's insurance cover damage caused by mistakes when chocking? For boats falling over in a windstorm? If so, fine. If not, and your boat is insured, the boat's insurance will cover the cost of damage. If your boat does not have insurance, find a yard that is fully insured.

Finally, remember that the person immediately available to do your repair work may be available because everyone else has avoided him!

Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

Dear *Compass*,

Finally, a breath of fresh air after all the regular Trinidad bashing. I would like to thank Elizabeth Brouse for her article "*Discovery* Discovers Trinidad", *Compass* March 2011, for her succinct, non-emotional and very apt report on her family's days in Trinidad.

Not only is Trinidad a hurricane haven, Trinidad also provides good services, tradespeople, friendly locals, great food and culture and excursions. Without glossing over the security issues, Elizabeth has been able to put into words what we have felt over the past five years and not been able to write ourselves.

All I may add is: as long as we are in the area, we will continue to return.

Louise Kupka and Gordon Nicholl
S/V Coho

Dear *Compass*,

Lynn Kaak of *Silverheels* in her letter in the March issue's Readers' Forum was, I believe, referring to us when she condemned "the couple who had three teenagers on board" (as mentioned in Elizabeth Brouse's article about Chateaubelair, St. Vincent in the January issue). Ms. Kaak may recall that the local teenagers were invited aboard a visiting yacht to play Scrabble in the cockpit.

We can talk about wanting good relations with people of the Windwards, but if we build psychological walls and treat the locals who allow us in their harbors and communities as potential thieves, they might indeed live up to our expectations.

That Kirk Brouse and Jim Hutchins worked with 15-year-old Vincentian George Small to help him repair his raft, and that we all reached out to local business owners and others in the community during our visit, sends a positive signal — a hand of friendship.

Only by example do people lead. If we believe that education and empowerment of women is part of the formula for improving the plight of developing nations, then doing things like Cheryl Johnson does in Bequia with the Children's Reading Club, and inviting three teenaged girls into the cockpit for a game of Scrabble, are small gestures on that path.

Ellen Birrell
S/V Boldly Go

Dear *Compass*,

Following on Ann Westergard's excellent article on barnacles in Cartagena in the April issue, another anchorage that is terrible for barnacle growth is the Lagoon at Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, where the marina is. The original plan when they dredged the mangroves to make the lagoon was to have an entrance at the far end (the southwest corner) to provide some circulation, but when they started to dig they found a layer of practically impenetrable rock and gave up. This meant that with a tidal range of around two feet there is almost no circulation in the lagoon and as result marine growth on the hulls of yachts is incredible!

I have used the most modern antifouling paints and they all last only around six months in there. I have a local friend who used to mix a bottle of super hot sauce in a gallon of paint to try to stop the little critters. When you run a dinghy across the lagoon after dark the most amazing phosphorescent trail is left giving some idea of the marine organisms floating around, just waiting for a new hull to show up!

Below is a photo of a barnacle I picked up from the floor of the dry dock in Fort de France when I was



hauled out there some years back. I can't imagine how long it had been since the ship this came off was cleaned!

John Kessell
St. Lucia

Dear *Compass*,

What a sad pass we've come to when we are advised never to admit liability — even if we are in the wrong (see Business Briefs in the April issue). No doubt this is good insurance advice, but it is not the way I want to live or to have my children behave. My daughter, driving my car back in Scotland, put a scrape in another car while manoevering in the supermarket carpark. She got the staff to call over the tannoy and she admitted liability. I had to pay as she was an impecunious student but I was much more proud of my daughter than if she had "hit and run". The other car-owner thanked her and said he would endeavour to get the cheapest repair he could and added that he had never heard of anyone doing such a thing before.

Why I am writing for the first time to *Compass* is that my wife and I have recently been the victim of possibly this kind of insurance advice. A large yacht dragged onto our boat and T-boned onto our bow at 0430 hours. The wife apologized most sincerely for dragging onto us and between us we got the yacht on our port side. The captain then tried to motor off and unfortunately dragged us onto another boat. We spent the next several hours sorting out the mess with no recrimination and lots of help including the owner of the third party donning scuba gear and spending perhaps 15 minutes extricating the tangled chains. This is because the large yacht had managed, as well as picking up our chain, to get the third party's chain round his bulb keel.

To our amazement the large yacht, once free, departed with the scuba diver still in the water and ourselves still totally tangled. We tried to get him to re-anchor and come and talk about the affair but he denied any responsibility, claiming (over the VHF, and without inspection) that the other boats were undamaged. I might add that at no time were we thinking of claiming for the three or four hours' restoration of the cosmetic damage to our boat.

Is this the new way? We have been cruising continuously in the North and South Atlantic for 11 years and of course have dragged and been dragged upon. Every cruiser worth his salt has dragged. If this has ever resulted in boat-to-boat contact it has always resulted in mutual help and a new friend acquired. Never have I been party to denying responsibility or heard of responsible boats denying blame. Things have been settled in the fashion of the cruising fraternity: a cup of tea together and a joint effort to straighten a pulpit, etcetera.

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Is the advent of the ubiquitous, gleaming million-dollar yacht changing all this?

I hope not!

I am happy to report that we have since had an "unreserved apology" from the owner of the large boat. Perhaps the cruising spirit lives on!

Yours sincerely,
John Quin

Dear *Compass*,

Almost two years ago I bought the ferro schooner *Gloria*. She was in a very sad way, I made a very low offer, and it was accepted. I was at that point thinking "houseboat". But after cleaning her up and replacing the old rotten coach roof with a new one, and re-stepping the masts, she started to look like a boat that could go places! I was then attempting to earn a living by doing the occasional yacht delivery, doing yacht maintenance and a bit of sail training from time to time. I had some dealings with a gentleman called Edmund Whelan, who for many years was the head barrister at the Royal Yachting Association. On his retirement he took up sail training and that's where I met him: we were on the RYA Cruising Instructor course together. I told him about the schooner, and he suggested we take it across to the Caribbean. And so a plan was hatched: if I could get it to the Canaries, he would meet me there.

That is just what happened, and on January 6th, 2011 we made St. Lucia.

I was not terribly impressed with St. Lucia: Customs were bad tempered at Rodney Bay, and the marina could have been in Europe. My girlfriend, Helen, rejoined the boat at Vieux Fort, where Customs were a lot friendlier, and we cleared out. We sailed over to Bequia, where the engine died completely. Ed was meeting another boatload of friends at Bequia and then going back to the UK, so we sadly said good-bye to him and went off to Mayreau. We stopped at the lovely Salt Whistle Bay, more like the Caribbean I was looking for! But it did get crowded. Our inflatable dinghy started giving big trouble then, and I had to pump it up each time we used it. So we went to Union Island, and anchored at Frigate Island so we were close to Ashton. There I tried to get the local boatbuilders to build me a hard dinghy, but after a week I concluded they wanted too much money and too much time. We made great friends there in the shape of a German couple who had sailed a Folkboat across the Atlantic, and Christine and Duff who own and run a huge charter yacht. We all became good pals and spent several happy evenings together — what a mix!

From Union we went to Carriacou's Tyrrel Bay, where we met a wonderful man called Jerry Stewart who runs the haul-out there. He did not have a dinghy he could sell me, and the ones in the catalogue were far too expensive, but he lent me a bit of space and I built one myself. While I was doing that I met several of the local shipwrights; it really was an honour to have their friendship and advice. Once the dinghy was completed (in a week), the shipwrights insisted we had a proper West Indian launching. I thought there was some leg-pulling going on at first, but then I got it: boats are so important to these people that even a dinghy got to get blessed! So we had a little party, and to my relief *Helen* floated!

We have been staying in Tyrell Bay ever since. I love the place: it's exactly what I thought the Caribbean would be like, with friendly people, tropical and unspoilt. The only bad moment came when a Sun Odyssey 54 dragged her anchor at 0400 on a dark and blustery morning, dragged into another yacht, *Ventoso*, and got tangled up with their anchor and then both yachts dragged onto my bow! I had *Ventoso*, a steel 45-footer, on the port side and the Sun Odyssey 54 on my starboard bow, and only my anchors were holding; fortunately I had set two. After four hours' work, including a fair bit of underwater scuba time, we got free. Although the Sun Odyssey's owner denied there was any damage done and did a runner, we have now made good friends with Janet and John of *Ventoso*, so even this dark episode has a silver lining.

Gloria and I will be sailing back to the UK next month, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the wonderful people we have met and be sure that I will rave about how good the area is to my friends back home. Some years ago my father, Trevor Liberson, and my stepmother, Ley Liberson, used to sail around here aboard their *Boon*. I have to say it's still a brilliant cruising ground and I will miss it very much while I am away, but hope that won't be too long!

Kind regards,
Max Liberson
Schooner Gloria

Dear *Compass* Readers,

Be suspicious about moorings in Clifton, Union Island! We had a bad experience. This is what happened.

We came from Chatham Bay with our *Septima*, a Hallberg Rassy 382, in strong headwinds (as usual here) and motored into Clifton. The week before we had some trouble in Clifton with our anchor and we drifted into the channel between the reefs, so we thought this time we should spend some dollars on a mooring to be safe!

When we approached, a boat boy was quick to offer a mooring and we accepted. He took our line, pulled it through a loop in the mooring and back to *Septima*. We felt safe with a bow line from the starboard cleat to the mooring and back to the port cleat. We paid him EC$65 and then took the dinghy ashore for some shopping and internet. We had a good lunch in the village and went back to *Septima* with the dinghy loaded with fresh vegetables, beers, etcetera. Everything seemed fine.

In the evening we were invited to dinner on another Swedish boat moored about 100 metres away from *Septima*. We turned on our light and dinghied over to our friends in the dark for a nice evening together. It was hard to see the boats around us in the darkness but could distinguish them by their lights.

At about 9:00PM a boat passed by and shouted into the wind something about a boat on the reef. We



Frayed mooring ropes led to frayed nerves. 'Guess whether we choose mooring or anchoring next time!'

looked for *Septima* but could not identify her lights. I jumped into the dinghy and sped in her direction. Not there! I turned the dinghy to leeward and found *Septima* tied up to a catamaran with the bow line that had earlier been attached to the mooring now hanging, undamaged, under the bow.

A friendly neighbour came up to me on *Septima* and told how he had seen her drifting, hitting a moored wreck, and finally stranding on the reef. He had called for help at the Anchorage Yacht Club and some young men had pulled her off the reef and tied her to the catamaran.

She was eventually taken back to the mooring in the dark and we secured her with two lines to the mooring and dropped our anchor as well.

In the morning, in daylight, we could snorkel and check out damage on *Septima* and determine what had happened with the mooring. This had a number of loops and some loose ends, which seemed to have been earlier loops now broken. One of them had a "fresh" fractured loop which was probably the one used by *Septima*.

Luckily, *Septima* only suffered minor damage on the teak rail, the port sidelight torn away and some scratches on the keel.

Guess whether we choose mooring or anchoring next time we're in Clifton! Only if there is limited space for anchoring would we consider a mooring. If so, we will definitely make sure the line through a loop is returned to the same cleat to minimize any relative movement between line and loop. We will also secure with a second line through *another* loop. And we would probably also lower an anchor with sufficient chain in case the mooring gives up.

Claes Tornberg
S/Y Septima

Editor's note: This is a good opportunity for a reminder that, whenever possible, it's prudent to dive on unfamiliar moorings to inspect their condition.

Dear *Compass* and cruising kids,

I am 12 years old and I'm living aboard *S/V Lala* for three years. I am currently in Le Marin, Martinique and attending school at Collège Gérard Café. I would just like to tell other cruising kids that it's not so bad! I mean, sure, they'll laugh at your accent sometimes. But it's natural for them to laugh! At school here you don't bring "packed lunches" but you get a good hot meal (salad, main course and dessert). If you live close by, you can go home for lunch. The teachers are all nice (except for the biology teacher :)). And to be really popular you can say that you've been to Miami. You'll make friends fast, like I did with my best friend, Marie Josephe. But before going to school I recommend learning the language (Rosetta Stone is the best).

Thank you, Readers,
Lala
S/V Lala

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Dear *Compass*,

Thank you Sean Fuller for your interesting article about *Granary Loafer* in the April issue of *Compass*. I have a little to add.

Back in the late 1960s, being out of work in England, I had set myself up as a "Yacht Delivery Contractor". This was way before my time as an RYA Instructor/Examiner, with no paperwork at all, really, but with as much "hands on" experience as one can accumulate in 25 years.

Out of the blue, I had a phone call from a rather worried Bill O'Brian, the Southampton-based builder and designer of the 36-foot BOB Cat. He was selling a new catamaran to a couple who intended to sail her around the world, yet they apparently had little knowledge of sailing. He asked me to come over from Poole and give them some instruction.

I duly arrived in Woolston and met the couple, Rosie and Robin Swale: Robin a quiet intellectual man, Rosie a ravishingly attractive ball of fire. I fell in love straight away! (With her, not him, of course.)

Taking them sailing out of Southampton Water I realized that they actually did know nothing about sailing, but they were full of enthusiasm about their proposed trip around the world. I found myself in a bit of a quandary. With all respect to the Bill O'Brian design, I don't think he had in mind a world-girdling yacht and — certainly in those days, when multihull yachts were hardly proven (I'll bet that brings a flood of protest from multihull enthusiasts) — she was not my idea of the perfect yacht; for me something like a 45-foot Colin Archer design would fit the bill. I seem to recall that I suggested that they go down through the French canal system to the Med, hoping that perhaps they would like it there and stay. After a couple of days I left them to complete their preparations, no doubt having advised them as best as I could.

Against all odds, they did go on to complete the circumnavigation, Rosie giving birth to children on the way, one result of which was her book *Children of Cape Horn* — which goes to show how enthusiasm and determination can succeed where my "dyed in the wool" old-fashioned principles would not.

Some years later I saw *Granary Loafer* on the hard in St. Helier, Jersey, Channel Islands, and heard that she had been built for Rosie Swale to take part in the Whitbread Around the World Race, but the plans had been shelved. Next time I saw the boat was in Antigua laid up ashore, probably in about 1993.

The new owners engaged Peter Smith, a renowned shipwright who was then based in Crabb's Boatyard at Parham, to prepare her for day charter work. He installed two large diesel engines and proper awnings and made her into the excellent day charter boat that she now is. So if you are in Antigua and see the catamaran *Caribbean Queen* with "Caribbean Cruises" painted on the topsides, look closely and on the stern you will see in small letters the real name, *Granary Loafer*.

Rosie has gone on to have further adventures, including running around the world for charity, and has written five books. Have a search on Google to find out more about an amazing and inspirational woman.

Frank Pearce
Samadhi

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Letter of the Month

Dear *Compass*,

I have read with interest Liesbet Collaert's article about Saltwhistle Bay and power boaters, featured in the January issue of the *Caribbean Compass*. This has prompted me to respond, not only about Saltwhistle Bay in particular, but about the seemingly insurmountable rift between the sailing "yachties" and the power boaters in general.

There are three main differences between yachties and power boaters. One is that power boaters anchor bow and stern, while sailboats swing in the wind. The second is that powerboats have generators. The third is that (some) yachties have the opinion that God decreed that the Caribbean belongs to them alone.

I can only speak as a power boater and give my personal experiences, and those related to me.

Firstly, on the issue of anchorage, a 30-foot yacht with 40 feet of anchor chain has a swing diameter of more than 140 feet. In this space more than ten powerboats can anchor safely.

At home (Trinidad) almost every weekend, powerboats anchor in Scotland Bay for the weekend, rafting up along the inner western shore. It annoys me that I have had, on several occasions, foreign yachties anchor right in the middle of where we normally anchor, and when asked to secure their stern so that we can all share the area, they are hostile to us and their attitude is that they have a right to be there. Guess what? So do we. And furthermore, we are local boats, employing local people and paying local taxes.

Almost every week in Scotland Bay, we, the power boaters, clean up the area that our boats are tied to, and collect several garbage bags of rubbish. During the Prime Minister's Clean-Up Campaign, five of us power boaters (accompanied by one local yachtie) completely cleaned up the Scotland Bay area, arranging a barge to remove the rubbish. During this exercise, we discovered that several foreign yachties, seemingly resident there for years, were happily putting garbage bags deep in the bush rather than disposing of them properly. Furthermore, out of the seven or eight foreign yachts anchored in the bay, only one offered to briefly help us.

Let's go back to Saltwhistle Bay in the Grenadines.

It's true that power boaters anchor bow and stern close to the shore. However, the power boaters also patronize the bar and restaurant. The owners and crews of several powerboats, namely *Finesse, Sirena, Jordie III* and others, have adopted the school at Mayreau, and every trip we donate schoolbooks, textbooks and supplies, so surely we have also earned the right to be in Saltwhistle Bay. What do the day-trippers and charter boats contribute? NOTHING.

Let's discuss our generators.

I purchased a boat that has all the comforts that I desire: air conditioning, water heater, watermaker, electric stove, etcetera, etcetera. If yachties do not want these modern conveniences, that's not my problem. Why can't I use them? Yet several of my friends and I have been openly threatened by yachties (mostly French) that if we do not turn off our generators we will have our anchor rope cut or our boat holed. We have also been verbally abused.

While most yachties don't like us to use our generators, I take great offence in seeing a big white bottom hanging over the side of a yacht "doing their numbers" while I have a holding tank to protect the environment. I think that my generator is the lesser of the evils.

In August last year, several of us returning from Grenada to Trinidad were verbally abused on the air by an American yachtie in Grenada for being on VHF channel 68 at 6:30 in the morning. As I told him, Channel 68 is a public hailing channel, and if he wanted quiet, he should have turned it off. We power boaters in Trinidad, however, tolerate the yachties monopolizing channel 68 for an hour or more each day.

On two occasions, I have personally saved a sailing yacht from destruction. Once when a yacht was becalmed off Cannings Point in current, and once in Scotland Bay in a storm. Yet with the latter, even though there were several other yachties around, there were no thanks given.

Let's talk about what the powerboats have contributed in addition to the above.

After Hurricane Ivan hit Grenada in 2004, Trinidad powerboats made hundreds of trips to Grenada with aid. The Trinidad & Tobago Game Fishing Association arranged that year's tournament so that ALL the sponsorship funding, entrance fees and prize money was donated to the Grenada relief effort. Last year, after Hurricane Tomas damaged St. Lucia, the TTGFA members taking part in the St. Lucia tournament once again donated all the prize money and prizes to the relief effort, and several Trinidad boats also donated cash on the spot.

The powerboats in Trinidad are actively co-operating with the T&T Coast Guard in the setting up of an Auxiliary Coast Guard for the betterment of all boating in T&T as well as the protection and safety of ALL boaters in the surrounding regions.

I have always in the past had the attitude of live and let live. Unfortunately, over the past few years, because of the attitude and actions of a few yachties, both in Trinidad and abroad, I have changed this attitude to my current opinion of "If you don't like my powerboat being here, feel free to leave!"

Stuart Dalgliesh
Trinidad

CALENDAR

MAY

1	Start of Atlantic Cup Rally, Tortola to Virginia. www.carib1500.com
1	Local Fishing Tournament, Montserrat
2	Public holiday in many places (Labour Day celebrated)
3 – 7	Freelander Fishing Festival, Guadeloupe. www.landroverfishingfestival.com
3 – 15	St. Barth Theatre Festival. www.festivaldetheatredesaintbarthelemy.com
6 – 8	Grenada Drum Festival. www.grenadagrenadines.com
7	Start of ARC Europe, Tortola to Portugal. www.worldcruising.com/arceurope
7 - 8	Commodore's Cup, St. John, USVI. jamesswanstj@yahoo.com
7 – 9	Anguilla Sailing Festival. www.anguillaregatta.com
8	Public holiday in some places (Armistice Day)
12 – 15	Mount Gay Rum Barbados Regatta. www.sailbarbados.com
14	Fundraiser Yacht Race, Isleta Marina, Fajardo, Puerto Rico. Contact Rey Gandarillas (305) 726-5397
14 - 15	Martinique to St. Lucia Race. ycmq@wanadoo.fr
14 – 15	Guadeloupe Nautical Days. www.facebook.com/marinabasdufort
14 – 15	Metimer Boat Show, St. Martin
14 – 15	Captain Oliver's Regatta, St. Martin. www.coyc-sxm.com
14 - 15	Quantum IC24 International Regatta, BVI. www.rbviyc.org
16	Public holiday in the Cayman Islands (Discovery Day)
16 – 21	Tobago Underwater Carnival. www.tobagounderwatercarnival.com
17	FULL MOON
18	Public holiday in Haiti (Flag Day)
18 - 20	Morro Castle Race, Havana, Cuba. yachtclub@cnih.mh.tur.cu
21 – 22	Lowell Wheatley Anegada Pursuit Race & Cruise. www.rbviyc.org
23 – 27	Association of Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean 35th Scientific Meeting, San Jose, Costa Rica. All Professional Environmental and Marine Scientists and Resource Managers welcome to attend. www.amlc-carib.org
27 - 29	Foxy's Wooden Boat Regatta, Jost Van Dyke, BVI. www.foxysbar.com/woodenRegatta.html
27 - 29	Puerto Rico Vela Cup. www.puertoricovelacup.com
27 – 29	BVI Poker Run. www.pokerrunbvi.com
28 – 29	Les Saintes Regatta. www.triskellcup.com
29	St. Croix Reef Jam. www.ReefJam.com
30	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Indian Arrival Day), Anguilla (Anguilla Day) and Haiti (Mother's Day)
TBA	Feeder Race, St. Lucia to Mount Gay Rum Barbados Regatta. www.stluciayachtclub.com

JUNE

2	Public holiday in some places (Ascension Day)
2 – 4	Combat des Cocques Race, Marin, Martinique. www.clubnautiquedumarin.com
2 – 5	Bonaire Heineken Jazz Festival 2011. www.bonairejazz.com
3	Public holiday in the Bahamas (Labour Day)
5	World Environment Day
6 – 11	Ernest Hemingway International Billfish Tournament, Havana, Cuba. www.hemingwaycuba.com/hemingway-fishing-tournament.html
9 – 13	Canouan Regatta, Grenadines
10 – 13	Antigua & Barbuda Sport Fishing Tournament. www.antiguabarbudasportfishing.com
11	St. Lucia Optimist & Laser Championships. www.stluciayachtclub.com
11 – 12	Caribbean Laser Championships, St. Maarten. www.smyc.com
11 – 12	Petite Martinique Whit Monday Regatta, Grenadines
11 – 12	Barbados International J/24 Open Championships. www.sailbarbados.com
12	Public holiday in Bonaire (Pentecost)
12 – 19	Sunfish World Championship, Curaçao. www.sunfishclass.org
12 – 19	Jamaica International Jazz Festival, Ocho Rios. www.ochoriosjazz.com
13	Public holiday in many places (Whit Monday)
13	Public holiday in the BVI, Montserrat and some other places (UK Queen's Birthday celebrated)
15	FULL MOON
17	Jazz on the Pier, Errol Flynn Marina, Port Antonio, Jamaica. www.erroflynnmarina.com
18 – 19	Scotiabank International Optimist Regatta, St. Thomas, USVI. www.styc.net
18 – 19	Marlow One Design Championship, St. Maarten. www.smyc.com
19	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Labour Day)
21	Summer Solstice
21	Fête de la Musique, Martinique. www.fete-musique.net
23	Public holiday in many places (Corpus Christi)
24 – 26	Offshore Regatta, St. Maarten to Statia/Nevis. www.smyc.com
25 – 26	Fishermen's Festival, Charlotteville, Tobago
26 – 3 July	Highland Spring HIHO 2011, BVI (windsurf and SUP). http://go-hiho.com
29	Fisherman's Birthday. Celebrations in many fishing villages

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

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44' Lagoon 440 2008, Owner's Version	499K	42' Beneteau First 42s7 '95, Great Design	89K
42' Lagoon 420 2008, New Diesel Eng.'s	385K	41' Beneteau 411 '99, 3 cabin, Sound	89K
40' Robertson & Caine 40 '09, 3 cab/2hd	349K	40' O'Day 1986, Major Refit Race/Cruise	69K
37' Maxim Yachts 1999, Light, Strong	145K	39' Beneteau 4051994, New Keel Bolts	70K
36' Fount. Pajot Mahe '07/08 - 2 Start @	189K	38' Freedom '86/'88 - 2 of Starting at	75K
SAIL:		38' Catalina 38 1979, Value Priced	29K
54' Ta Chiao CT54 '82, Strong, Beautiful	299K	37' Nautor's Swan '85, Beautiful Design	99K
52' Colvin Brigantine Schooner '82 CC	149K	37' Peterson 1977, Budget Cruiser	39K
51' Van De Stadt Custom '99, Alum. Hull	299K	36' Feeling 36 '07, Performance Cruiser	139K
51' Ben. Frers Idylle 15.5 '86, 2 cab/2 hd	149K	35' Beneteau 351 1995, 2 cab/1 hd	49K
47' Beneteau 473 '07, Private & Loaded	270K	33' Nonsuch Hinterhoeller '89, Fast	69K
47' Beneteau 473 '05, Many Upgrades	189K	32' Downeaster DE32 '77 Cutter, aft ckpt	39K
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46' Beneteau 461 1998, Well Equipped	149K	82' Steel Motoryacht '05, 2 cab/2 hd	249K
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A Chocoholic's Guide...

Drinks such as Chocolate Daiquiris and Cacao Bellinis (featuring the pulp that surrounds the cocoa beans in the pod) and dishes such as seared yellowfin tuna with a cocoa-and-herb pesto and dorado with a red wine and cocoa sauce take the bean



Left: Cocobel's bonbons with tropical fillings look too pretty to eat. Yeah, right...
Right: Try the Rivers truffle! Lauren Charles with some of her creations at Bonbon Chocolates

in wonderful new directions. And don't even get me started on the desserts.

Cruisers on moorings between the Pitons or around the corner at Malgretout can arrange a free shoreside pickup if they want to visit for lunch or dinner, or you can hoof it up the hill. (Hotel Chocolat is across the road from another place frequented by cruisers, the restaurant at Ladera resort.)

Chocolate Becomes Edible Art in Trinidad

From Brasso Seco in the north to Rancho Quemado in the south, cocoa estates are being revitalized with a vengeance on Trinidad. Demand still outpaces supply for the highly regarded Trinitario beans grown on the island. (Trinitario is a flavourful, high-yielding, hardy variety of cocoa that developed on Trinidad and is now also grown elsewhere, including St. Lucia and Grenada.) So prized are Trinidad cocoa beans that they fetch a premium price on the world market.

This cocoa renaissance has been accompanied by a bloom of small, high-end chocolatiers. Among them is architect-turned-fanatical-chocolate-maker Isabel Brash. She calls her business Cocobel, and her filled bonbons — their soft centres infused with Caribbean flavours such as sorrel, guava, passion fruit, ginger rum, and mango pepper — completely stole my chocolate-loving heart. Her beans come from her brother's estate in southern Trinidad, and she makes the chocolate and processes the fruits for the fillings herself. Because of her background in architecture, she wanted her chocolates to look as good as they taste, and each flavour of bonbon is a different piece of tiny, perfect art — so perfect you hate (for a split second anyway) to bite in.

Since Brash's fillings are made without preservatives, her bonbons require strict temperature control, and are best enjoyed within a couple of weeks — which means they can't be sold very far from where they're produced: in her home kitchen. She's currently located near Westmall, but is moving to the Woodbrook section of Port of Spain soon. Luckily for cruisers, both spots are convenient to the anchorages and marinas in Chaguaramas. (She also sells at craft and gourmet fairs.)

When US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton paid a recent visit to sweet T&T, she was given a box of Cocobel bonbons, no doubt a very good thing for US–Trinidad relations. So, too, a gift was given to President Barack Obama when he was in Trinidad for the 2009 Summit of the Americas. Obama was given a box of Gina's Chocolate Truffles, made by former lawyer Gina Hardy. These little gems are flavoured with ingredients such as Trinidadian rum and coffee. Her "Trini Truffle," made with 54-percent dark chocolate and finely ground Trinidadian coffee, is apparently her most popular (and given the rate at which it disappeared from our box, I'm inclined to agree).

Due to the scarcity of Trinidadian beans, Hardy was working with imported cocoa beans when I met her last year. But times are changing quickly in the cocoa biz, and she's now managed to get her hands on a supply of Trini cocoa. She's experimenting with the best way to showcase chocolate made from it, and she reports that she's developing a rum-and-raisin truffle especially to suit the raisiny flavour of her Trinidadian beans. I'll be looking for it when *Receta* returns to Trinidad this hurricane season. If you're not a visiting politician, you can look for Gina's truffles in the Stechers chain of stores.

Pairing Chocolate with Rum on Tobago

I can't vouch for Tobagonian Duane Dove's chocolate firsthand — Dove was away when we visited Tobago, and at the time his chocolates were only available on the island at his estate — but they certainly get good reviews from others. His 70-percent Tobago Estate Chocolate bar is the first single-estate chocolate made from Tobago beans by a Tobagonian (albeit with the collaboration of a French chocolatier, and manufactured abroad. Which is kind of cheaty, but I'm inclined to forgive him.)

Dove's shtick is more than just plain chocolate, however. He offers tours at his Tobago Cocoa Estate, near Roxborough, which include the option of a Creole dinner — followed by a rum and chocolate tasting session. It's no accident that Dove is also a sommelier, who developed a special taste for rum while growing up on Tobago and Guadeloupe. (He subsequently settled in Sweden, and now splits his time between there and Tobago.) He believes that when these two tastes of the Caribbean are combined, they complement each other, "opening the palate to a new dimension in taste," and he takes pleasure in matching up different styles of rum with various of his chocolates. Like all good cruisers, we have an ongoing "to do" list on *Receta*. One item on it doesn't involve chores such as keeping up with the brightwork or solving that pesky leak in the head. "Go visit Duane Dove," it reads.

Admittedly, there have been disappointments in my search to feed my chocolate addiction. I was tickled recently to find a very reasonably priced bar called "Elot Intense" in the *hypermarchés* of Martinique. The wrapper said this "chocolat noir" contained a minimum of 52 percent cacao and was made from beans and cane sugar grown on the island. Elot is a long-established Martiniquais chocolate company (founded in 1911), but most of its products qualify (at least to this taster) as candy more than fine dark chocolate. I was hoping the "Elot Intense" would be different. Sadly, no: It tasted of sugar front and centre, with cocoa taking a distant back seat.

Not all French West Indian chocolate is created equal, however, and in Deshaies, Guadeloupe (okay, okay, I know it's not in the Windwards), I found a 90-percent bar called "Les Planteurs de La Côte," produced by Les Suprêmes, an artisanal chocolate company. This one was the real deal. Although it had a less-distinctive flavour profile — less personality — than bars such as Hotel Chocolat's and the Grenada Chocolate Company's, it was smooth and rich and definitely worth a re-buy. Except for one thing: Even in the high-priced world of fine dark chocolate, it is *ferociously* high-priced: when you convert from euros, it cost almost US$9 for a 100-gram bar! And even a confirmed chocoholic can't let her addiction deplete the cruising kitty *too* much.

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Ann Vanderhoof is the author of The Spice Necklace *and* An Embarrassment of Mangoes, *both available in paperback and Kindle editions. You can read more about her Caribbean adventures — including an occasional chocolate blog — on her website: www.spicenecklace.com.*

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