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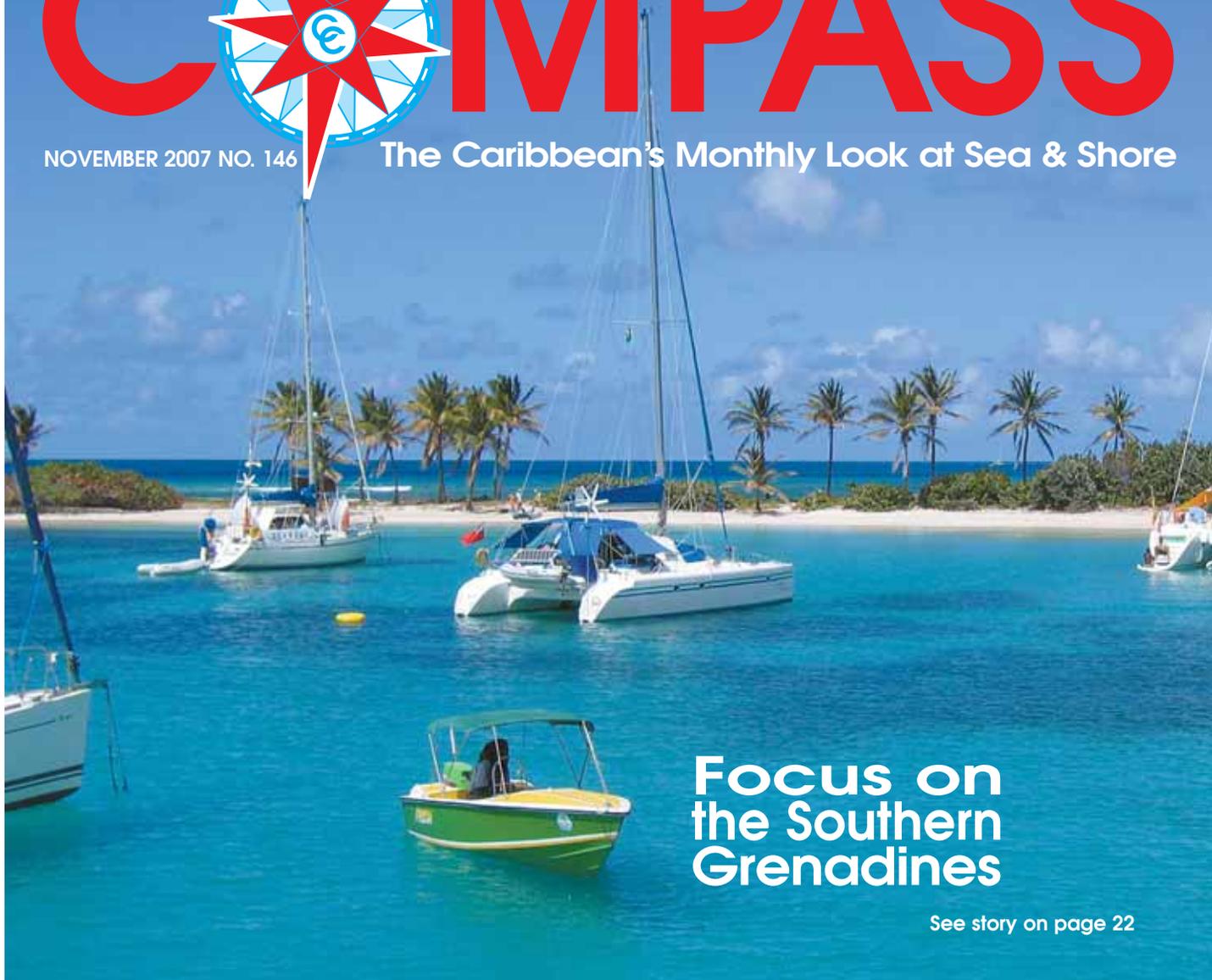
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COMPASS



NOVEMBER 2007 NO. 146

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



Focus on the Southern Grenadines

See story on page 22

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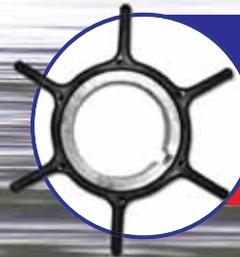
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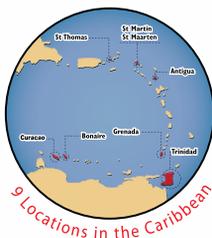
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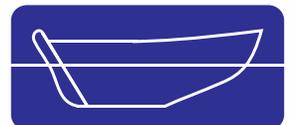
**) other stores will be supplied beginning of December.*



9 Locations in the Caribbean

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Info & Updates

Yacht Moorings Installed in Nevis

Spencer Hanley of the Nevis Air and Sea Ports Authority reports: I am happy to inform you that our yacht moorings are installed: 100 in total, from Oualle Beach to Gallows Bay. Five of these (in Gallows Bay) will be "quarantine" buoys for yachts arriving to clear in to Nevis; 90 will take yachts up to 60 feet (or 50 tons); and five will take yachts up to 90 feet (80 tons). The moorings are designed to withstand winds up to 60 mph while occupied. We will designate a safe area where yachts over 90 feet can drop anchor.

Most of the moorings are placed in three tiers along the stretch from the southern end of Pinney's Beach (in front of the Double Deuce restaurant) north to Sunshine's, just south of the Four Seasons Resort. Legislation governing the use of the moorings is not completed; fees have not yet been set.

In addition to the moorings, we have installed 50 swim buoys (300 feet from shore) along a section of Pinney's Beach to designate a safe swim zone. Jet skis and other watersports activities are prohibited in this area.

The sponsoring governmental agency, Nevis Air and Sea Port Authority, held an informational meeting on September 26th, at which David Moore, the installer, explained his MoorSecure mooring system to the public and noted that local people will be trained to do the required periodic maintenance.

In addition, Nevis-based cruiser Hudson Hoen tells *Compass*, "At the meeting, we were told of a welcome change to current procedures which will allow yachts that have cleared in at St. Kitts to simply call Nevis authorities on the VHF and be assigned a mooring — no more clearing out in St. Kitts and clearing in again in Nevis as if they're two separate countries. That requirement has been viewed as an extremely inconvenient and inexplicably unnecessary procedure by visiting yachtsies, so this will be a welcome decision."

Puerto La Cruz News

Ellen Sanpere reports: *Cayenne III* is back in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela. The fuel dock near the Bahía Redonda marina has a new paint job, but the fuel pumps are gone. Gasoline is available at the powerboat dock near Puerto del Este. When we need fuel, we will go to Cumaná.

Three "canal police" stopped us as we went from Plaza Mayor to Bahía Redonda in the dinghy the other night. They said a curfew has been imposed on dinghy traffic in the canals between 6:00PM and 8:00AM. Apparently, there was a serious accident one night involving some locals and some cruisers and an unlighted speeding dinghy. Vessels may enter the canal, but only to go home, and may not go outside. This certainly crimps our fun — no dinners at MareMares or the mall unless we take a taxi, and the roads are mobbed all day/night long. Traffic around Plaza Mayor is beyond belief!

The marinas and boatyards here are full, but there aren't as many people hanging around as in the past. The restaurant at Bahía Redonda was redecorated, and the food has improved under new management. In addition to the Sunday dominoes game, people are playing Texas Hold'em poker and Parcheesi on Saturdays. The navigational light at the offshore island of Chimana Segunda was not lit when we stopped there in mid-October, but people were in the national park station there all night, presumably available in case of trouble.

Bolivares are now at Bs5,000/USD and fluctuating. Next January, there will be new currency, BsFuerte, with the last three zeros dropped off. Prices are to be quoted until then in both: i.e. Bs50,000/BsF50. Cruisers need to be careful to avoid mistakes when paying for things.

Eight Bells

ANTHONY GUNN

Norman Faria reports: It came as a shock to family and friends, many in the Eastern Caribbean boating community and marine businesses when Anthony Gunn died last month at age 44. He had cancer.

From all accounts, the Vincentian-born "Zooms", to use his nickname, had a friendly disposition, was well-liked and a fine example to others. His commitment to business innovation led him to set up his own start-up telecomm company, Carliaccess, headquartered in Barbados, to battle what he saw as a monopolistic existing firm. He later established a financial management business.

—Continued on next page

Fantastic... full of information!

We are always looking forward to the next issue.

Jacqueline Schneider
Scheiling, Austria

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The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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NOVEMBER 2007 • NUMBER 146

Law in Limbo?

API for yachts on hold6



Louie, Louie

Mega-marina for Grenada12

Healthy Cruising

Tips and tales.....18



Just Another Day...

Cruising in Venezuela.....26

Yikes, Hikes!

To a Trinidad waterfall31



Fish Story

From a fan of freshness.....44

DEPARTMENTS

Business Briefs.....	10	Cartoons	37
Regatta News.....	14	Cruising Kids' Corner	38
Doyle's Deck View.....	19	Dolly's Deep Secrets.....	38
Destinations.....	22	Book Reviews	43
Meridian Passage	23	Cooking with Cruisers.....	46
All Ashore.....	28	Readers' Forum	48
Product Postings.....	33	Classified Ads.....	52
Sailors' Horoscope	36	Advertisers' Index	50
Island Poets	36	What's On My Mind	53
Cruising Crossword.....	37	Calendar.....	54

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

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

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

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

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

Compass Agents by Island:

Antigua: Ad Sales & Distribution - Lucy Tulloch
Tel: (268) 774-6657
lucy@thelucy.com

Barbados: Distribution - Norman Faria
Tel/Fax: (246) 426-0861
nfaria@caribsurf.com

Curacao: Distribution - Cees de Jong
Tel: (5989) 767-9042, Fax: (5999) 767-9003,
stbarba@attglobal.net

Dominica: Distribution - Hubert J. Winston
Dominica Marine Center, 24 Victoria Street, Roseau,
Tel: (767) 448-2705, info@dominicanmarinecenter.com

Grenada/Carriacou/Petite Martinique:
Ad Sales & Distribution - Bob and Judi Goodchild
Tel: (473) 443-5784, goodchilds@141.com

Guadeloupe: Ad Sales & Distribution Stéphane Legendre
Tel/Fax: + 590 (0) 5 90 84 53 10 Mob: + 590 (0) 6 90 49 45 90
contact@transcaribes.com

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

St. Lucia: Distribution - Wayne Barthelmy
Tel: (784) 584-1292,
waynebarthelmy@hotmail.com

St. Maarten/St. Barths/St. Kitts & Nevis:
Distribution - Eric Berdahan (699) 553 3850
Ad Sales - Stéphane Legendre
Tel/Fax: + 590 (0) 5 90 84 53 10 Mob: + 590 (0) 6 90 49 45 90
contact@transcaribes.com

St. Thomas/USVI: Distribution - Bryan Lezama
Tel: (340) 774 7931, biezama1@earthlink.net

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

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—Continued from previous page

In the field of sailing, "Zooms" was more than active. In his adopted homeland, Barbados, he got involved in the Barbados Optimist Dinghy Association (BODA). He joined the struggling Barbados Cruising Club (see related article on page 17) where he



Anthony Gunn, at center, with Dominica Yacht Club teammates and regatta stalwarts during prizegiving at Bequia Easter Regatta 2007

was an officer on the Executive Committee. He participated in or otherwise supported regional regattas, crewing on people's boats or racing his own Bacchanal Too. He sailed with the Dominica Yacht Club team at this year's Bequia Easter Regatta. In Dominica, Anthony Gunn was co-founder, along with Hubert Winston, of the Dominica Yacht Club in 2006, and was instrumental in kick-starting the Optimist dinghy sailing programme there with boats donated from BODA. Hubert told *Compass* that those in Dominica who knew him found it difficult "to accept someone so gifted and so young with so much to live for wasn't with us anymore." The DYC Commodore and President of the Dominica Marine Association thanked the Gunn family for "rearing a perfect son and sharing him with the world". Former Commodore of the Barbados Yacht Club, Charles Belle, noted that Gunn was a "truly Caribbean man, a friendly person and one who brought some innovative ideas to the Club".

The president of BODA, widely known as "Wipers" ("That name will do for now, thank you"), said Anthony's help to the programme in its formative years was greatly appreciated. "Anthony was always looking ahead and was optimistic about the continued success of sail training — especially that it reached the underprivileged, but he was concerned about the future of all children."

—Continued on next page



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Errol Flynn
MARINA



MARINAS
Navigating the good life

—Continued from previous page

For this writer, we didn't know each other that well. We met occasionally at functions. Of his involvement and good intentions about boating, whether cruising and racing, there can however be no doubt. Only weeks before his death, he kindly sent me a tracking website for a hurricane approaching Barbados.

'Cruisers for a Cure' Cross the Line in Trinidad

Ann Vanderhoof reports: We were the "Cruisers for a Cure" — nine women with



'Dey do run, run!' These visiting sailors joined the largest all-female race in the Caribbean to raise funds to fight cancer in Trinidad & Tobago

boats spending part or all of this year's hurricane season in Trinidad — and on September 8th, we joined some 4,400 Trinidadian women in the ninth annual Scotiabank "Women Against Breast Cancer 5k Classic" in downtown Port of Spain. The race route went around the Queen's Park Savannah, the vast expanse of parkland in the middle of the city (and the heart of the country's Carnival celebrations). Lush, green, and beautiful at any time of year, it was lump-in-the-throat lovely with a river of women flowing around its perimeter, all of us running/jogging/walking to raise money to provide free mammograms and breast ultrasounds for Trini women. According to Reena Panchorie, assistant manager of Public & Corporate Affairs for

Scotiabank in Trinidad and Tobago, this is the largest all-female race in the Caribbean, with an increase of 1,000 participants this year over last. There were mother-and-daughter teams (180 of them), corporate and government groups, social clubs (like the Canadian Women's Club, instantly recognizable by the red-and-white Canadian flags stenciled on their faces), lone women wearing shirts with slogans such as "I'm running for Terry," and our "Cruisers for a Cure," many of us with better sea legs than land legs.

"There was no question that I would take part," said Heather Mackey of the sailboat *Asseance*. "Harriet Gardner Eisen (on *Perseverance*, who organized the cruisers' group) was so passionate about the cause. And it was absolutely exhilarating to see all those women and to be part of it."

The other boats represented were *Alleluia!*, *Arctic Tern*, *Cheetah II*, *Gladys*, *Gypsy Wind*, *If Not Why Not*, *Receta*, and *Tranquility*. We had a cheering section — the men on *Grace*, *Asseance*, and *Arctic Tern* — who stationed themselves at the finish line, and snapped photos of each of us (and our time on the digital clock) as we crossed the line. None of us finished in the top 25 — though we all finished, and all went back to our boats with medals strung on pink ribbons and big smiles on tired faces.

More than US\$25,000 was raised for the cause that afternoon, and donations are still welcome, Panchorie says. They can be made at any Scotiabank branch, to the Women Against Breast Cancer account, #131247.

Don't Ditch the Dressings!

Friends of Bequia Hospital is appealing to all vessels planning visits to Bequia to donate date-expired medical kit to the island's hospital.

Bequia has a facility of 12 beds close to the harbour at Port Elizabeth. This is the island's primary first-aid and assessment point. From here patients can be released after treatment, referred to facilities elsewhere or returned for further treatment to the vessel which brought the patient to Bequia.

Difficulties with deliveries to Bequia result in there always being some basic items of stock medical equipment needed urgently by the nursing staff. To ease the position, hospital nursing staff are looking for equipment such as scissors, sutures, bandages, dressings, complete medical kits or any other similar equipment which is close to or past its use-by date. Such items can be recycled after sterilising and subsequently used perfectly safely rather than simply thrown away.

Arrangements have been made for the landing and immediate Customs clearance in Port Elizabeth of any donated equipment. Please note that currently no form of pharmaceutical or medicinal drugs can be accepted.

For further information and delivery arrangements call David Webber (784) 495-5607; Di Wheldon (784) 455-6529; or Mary or David Harvey (784) 458-3496.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Club Náutico de San Juan, Puerto Rico, page 15; Falmouth Harbour Marina of Antigua, page 14; LIAT, 'The Caribbean Airline', page 17; and Whisper Cove Marina of Grenada, page 4. Good to have you with us!



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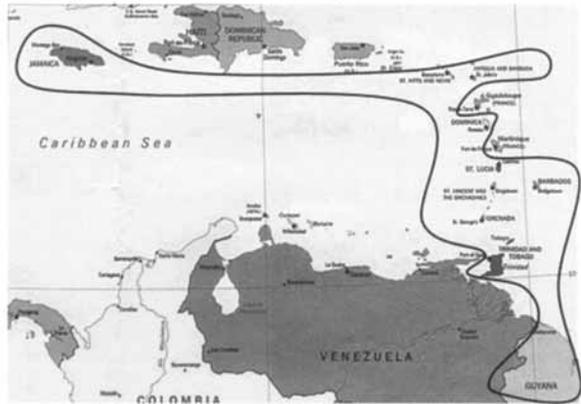


The Sword of Damocles: Passenger-Info Rule Still Hanging Over Yachts

"It will put chartering and cruising in the Caribbean back 20 years," declared veteran yachtsman Don Street upon learning that ten Eastern Caribbean countries had passed legislation which would require yachts to comply with the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) when traveling between island states.

The system, in its strictest version, requires the masters of "ALL air and sea carriers" to register on a website, fill out a detailed form (which asks for information such as passengers' names, nationalities and passport numbers, and the vessel or aircraft's dates and times — in hours and minutes — of departure and arrival), then submit the form on-line, as an e-mail attachment or by fax several hours before arrival in a port of entry. It is currently used in many parts of the world by commercial and private aircraft and large ships when crossing national borders.

Single domestic space



Countries that have passed legislation requiring compliance with APIS are circled. Will this redefine the popular cruising areas?

The Caribbean Economic Community, CARICOM, began officially requiring compliance with APIS in February of this year. Submissions are to be made according to a strict timetable related to times of departure and/or arrival, with different advance times depending on whether you are arriving in, departing from, or traveling within CARICOM space. CARICOM member states that have passed legislation requiring APIS compliance are Jamaica, Antigua & Barbuda, St. Kitts & Nevis, Dominica, Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Grenada, Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana.

Street's dire warning came during the same late-October week in which Chairman of the Caribbean Tourism Organization, Allen Chastanet, said that he wants regional tourism ministers and marketers to aim to make the Caribbean "the premier tourist destination in the world." Yacht tourism is recognized as being the second most economically important form of tourism in the Eastern Caribbean, behind hotels but ahead of cruise ships.

Background

According to an informational publication titled *One Team, One Space, One Caribbean* published by CARICOM's Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), IMPACS was made responsible for the implementation of APIS in this area. In this respect, IMPACS pursued the offer of technical assistance from the Government of the United States of America regarding the establishment and operation of the APIS by engaging in negotiations for the Operational Protocol to the Memorandum of Intent between CARICOM member states and the Government of the United States. The MOI was concluded in October 2006 at the Third Meeting of the CARICOM Council of Ministers responsible for National Security and Law Enforcement. Details of the type and level of cooperation were to be articulated in the Operational Protocol.

IMPACS wrote: "During the planning stage and in the course of negotiating the Protocol, it became evident that implementation of the APIS would not be as straightforward as it appeared on the surface... Airlines operating out of Canada, the United Kingdom and Europe were particularly concerned over compliance with their national legislation and the effect the APIS, configured as proposed by the United States, might have on their operations."

At that time the US and the European Union were engaged in discussions for a new API agreement, so CARICOM's negotiations with the US were put on hold so as to ensure uniformity with the provisions of any US/EU agreement. The IMPACS brochure says that due to time constraints related to the Cricket World Cup 2007 matches that were held in various Caribbean islands earlier this year, "...a parallel system owned, operated and controlled by CARICOM was established, pending the conclusion of negotiations for the Operational Protocol."

At the beginning of 2007, the ten CARICOM countries concerned each passed its own national legislation requiring APIS compliance. Although the Joint Regional Communications Centre (JRCC), which is the implementing arm of APIS for IMPACS, and its main point of contact, has always insisted that all ten countries should have been applying this legislation to yachts since February 2007, only two — Antigua & Barbuda and St. Vincent & the Grenadines — have ever done so, and briefly at that.

But a law "sleeping" on the books can be enforced at any time. As the high season nears, alarm over the damage that active enforcement by any or all ten countries would cause to regional yacht tourism recently launched stakeholders into action.

CMA Meets with JRCC

A meeting was held on October 8th in the conference room of Power Boats marina in Trinidad, organized by the Caribbean Marine Association (CMA) in response to discussions held between the CMA and the JRCC. The CMA is an umbrella body bringing together representatives of national recreational marine trades associations throughout the Caribbean. In attendance were a top-level three-person delegation from the JRCC, representatives of marine trades associations from a number of Caribbean nations, other CMA members, personnel from Immigration in Trinidad & Tobago, and other stakeholders.

In his welcoming address, CMA President Keats Compton possibly understated the case when he noted that "the peculiarities of our industry may not [be] fully considered" when measures such as APIS are conceptualized. This was underscored by John Duffy, President of the Antigua & Barbuda Marine Association, who asserted that there had been no prior consultation or introductory process involving APIS in regard to yachts: "The first I heard about it was when I started getting complaints from yachtsmen and marinas." Commander Louis Baptiste, Director of the JRCC, responded that the JRCC had attempted to inform the yachting community about APIS, but apologized for obviously not having done enough.

Commander Baptiste told the yachting stakeholders that JRCC's mission is "to provide effective functional support to regional border security systems and law enforcement operations thereby enhancing the strength and security of our borders." He noted "some of the misconceptions surrounding APIS", emphasizing that its purpose was anti-crime in general, not just anti-terrorism. "This is not just another cog in the wheel of bureaucracy," he said. "APIS is not just additional paperwork imposed on tourism; it must be viewed as an integral part of regional security. The Caribbean's maritime borders are our Achilles' heels."

Commander Baptiste said that the JRCC has asked all CARICOM member states to provide lists of "individuals of concern", and that the JRCC has access to Interpol's database on terrorists, criminals, missing children, human smugglers, lists of lost and stolen travel documents, etcetera. "APIS must not be viewed in isolation," he said. "Please view this in a wider context: it is part of a security package. Its intent is to find any 'individuals of concern', not just terrorists."

John Duffy then outlined some of the real-life challenges that yachtsmen and Immigration officials had been faced with while attempting to comply with APIS. He compared the difficulty for yachts clearing into a country requiring APIS as compared with one that doesn't: "An Antiguan friend of mine decided to sail to St. Barts for the weekend. It took him two and a quarter hours to check out of Antigua and an hour and three quarters to check back in. By contrast, he checked into St. Barts in ten minutes; he was given a three-day visa and checked out at the same time."

As noted by stakeholder Jane Peake, under the regulations as currently written, visiting yachtspeople are the only type of tourists in the Caribbean singled out as having to submit their own Advance Passenger Information; the airlines do it for those arriving by air, and the cruise ship companies take care of it for their passengers.

Duffy concluded: "Our wealthiest tourists tend to be those who come on yachts yet we put as many obstacles in their way as possible... APIS cannot, and I must emphasize this, cannot be allowed to continue in its present form. APIS must be changed before the season starts in November or, at the very least, Immigration officers must be instructed to apply the 100-ton limit [as specified in Antigua & Barbuda's relevant Act]. If nothing is done it won't be the 2007/2008 season which will suffer, it will be the subsequent seasons when yachts stop coming to the Caribbean, fed up with the over-riding and massive bureaucracy."

CMA Director Donald Stollmeyer told the meeting that the CMA recommends that APIS in its present form should be suspended for yachts pending a properly organized, in-depth analysis of the manner in which the yachting industry operates. Based on the information gathered, informed choices can then be made to address the needs of the yachting community/industry and, at the same time, satisfy the reasonable anti-crime/terrorism requirements of the JRCC.

Would Easier be Better?

It is our understanding that the API data currently asked for were culled from the "WCO/ICAO/IATA Guidelines on Advance Passenger Information", and this is the maximum set of API data that could be required by border control authorities.

A cruiser writes: "After reading the *Compass* article about APIS in the October issue, I went on line to see if I can figure out how to submit the required information. After nearly four hours I managed to build and save one record as a test. It says I left the USA from NPT in 2002 en-route to New Zealand AKL arriving in 2009."

One of the JRCC's stated goals is "to implement scalable technical solutions." In response to complaints raised at the CMA meeting about difficulties encountered with the website and form, JRCC Compliance Officer Wayne Beckles said that JRCC is willing to make changes to make the form more user-friendly and to improve the website.

But even if the form and website are made more user-friendly, can this sub-region's yacht tourism survive another round of form-filling every time a border is crossed? The Eastern Caribbean is a unique cruising destination in that the majority of islands of any size, and often just a few miles apart, are independent nations. Some other sailing destinations have recently begun to require Advance Passenger Information, notably Australia and Fiji, but once a yacht enters Australian or Fijian waters it is likely to remain cruising in those large geographical areas for periods of weeks or months, not days.

As CARICOM is working toward a Single Market and Economy, could yachting tourists not comply with APIS only when entering and leaving CARICOM as a single space? Moreover, could we work towards every CARICOM country acknowledging the entry procedures accepted by the first CARICOM country into which a yacht enters?

In addition to the necessity of the form being streamlined, if it is ever to be used by yachts, the process as currently required must also be changed radically. It is simply unworkable for the overwhelming majority of yacht skippers to submit information in the existing electronic format and in the time parameters given.

Who Knew?

How did this situation come about? Were the CARICOM Ministers of National Security who signed last year's Memorandum of Intent briefed about the potential impact of APIS on the regional yacht tourism industry? When the relevant national legislation was debated in Parliament or discussed at Cabinet level in the individual countries, were the implications for their yacht tourism sectors fully considered?

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Although many key officials are aware of APIS and concerned about its potential impact on yachting tourism, one CMA member said, "It is amazing how many people in government were unaware of it until this last couple of weeks."

A cruiser who wanted to know if he needed to file API for a certain CARICOM state said, "I phoned the administration to find out and was transferred six times, as people tried to figure out with whom I should be speaking. The last fellow said that 'they' (he wouldn't, or couldn't, tell me who 'they' were) had not decided to begin enforcing it yet."

It's a good thing enforcement has not been strict — the relevant laws provide subsections similar to Antigua & Barbuda's: "Subsection (2a): A person, being the master of a vessel bound for a port in Antigua & Barbuda, who intentionally or recklessly (a) fails to transmit the data in accordance with subsection (1); or (b) transmits incomplete or false data, commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding EC\$300,000" — more than US\$100,000.

The image shows a screenshot of the Electronic Advanced Passenger Information System (e-APIS) interface. At the top, it says "Electronic Advanced Passenger Information System (e-APIS)". Below that, there is a "CREW LIST" section with a table. The table has several columns, including "Name", "Position", "Age", "Sex", "Nationality", "Passport No.", "Date of Issue", "Date of Expiry", "Place of Issue", "Remarks", and "Signature". The table is mostly empty, with some asterisks in the "Remarks" column. The interface also includes a search bar and some navigation buttons.

Yacht skippers find this APIS form a major stumbling block. A simpler version could be in the works

Island by Island

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, the current situation to the best of our knowledge is as follows.

- Antigua & Barbuda, which had been asking yacht skippers to go to an internet café and fill out APIS forms this summer under its Immigration and Passport (Amendment) Act, 2007, has now suspended enforcement of this requirement for all yachts.

- St. Kitts and Nevis are not applying an APIS requirement at the moment and according to a correspondent have no plans to do so in the immediate future: "They think it would cause confusion among the yachts. They particularly appreciate that the 24-hour rule cannot work for them with yachts coming from non-API islands like St. Barts."

- In Dominica, "this would not be implemented any time soon," according to one official. Dominica, being located between the non-API islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, would be especially vulnerable to the 24-hour rule.

- St. Lucia has not yet enforced its APIS legislation either, and Keats Compton, as President of the Marine Industry Association of St. Lucia, is writing to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Tourism formally requesting the suspension of St. Lucia's Immigration Act of 2007 as it applies to yachts.

- St. Vincent & the Grenadines Immigration officers asked yachts to fill out APIS forms online for a brief period in October, and one or more boats arriving from Grenada waters were reportedly turned away at Union Island because they hadn't filed API forms before leaving Grenada. However, Melodye Pompa of the Caribbean Safety & Security Net says that yachts clearing out of Union Island have not reported any mention of APIS. The issue of API for yachts is set to be the top agenda item for an October 29th meeting of SVG's Tourism Advisory Board.

- Grenada has not enforced its Immigration (Amendment) Act of 2007 in regard to yachts.
- Trinidad & Tobago's legislation requiring APIS enforcement expired on June 30th and has not been renewed.

With relatively little visiting yacht traffic, especially at this time of year, we've had no feedback from Guyana, Barbados or Jamaica.

But just as simplification of the APIS form isn't the complete solution, and an overhaul of the filing process for yachts is required, so too suspension of enforcement of the laws on the books isn't the end of the story. The laws must be amended if yachting tourism is to be protected.

A Charter Company Director Says...

"The yacht charter industry is based on renting sailing vessels to competent individuals who share them with family and/or friends. The reason people do this is to enjoy freedom of movement. If this freedom is taken away from our clientele we will have no more business in the future, since our clients can enjoy this freedom in almost all other sailing areas of the world. Our industry is already very fragile due to weather impacts such as hurricanes, increasing crime rates, expensive flights to small destinations and, last but not least, bureaucracy. I hope that whoever is in charge of these new requirements is working on a suitable solution for small craft."

A Boater Says...

A visiting yacht owner recently wrote to the JRCC: "The consensus of many cruisers like myself is to avoid the island states that are participating in this action. It is just another straw that is breaking the back of cruisers along with the dramatic increases in clearance and user fees. The economic impact on your community of my deciding not to cruise in your islands will be the loss of US\$17,386; that is the amount I have spent in the Caribbean islands thus far this year."

"You see," he went on, "I have a choice: I can submit to your rules or I can take my yacht elsewhere. Last evening, my sailing partner and I sat down and started changing our plans to sail west from Trinidad rather than once again cruising in the Eastern Caribbean. It looks like we will spend 2008 in the offshore islands of Venezuela, the Dutch ABC islands, and next hurricane season in Cartagena, Colombia."

"But perhaps this is all much to do about nothing," he added hopefully. "Reading in the newspaper, it seems that not all islands have agreed to enforce this requirement. Perhaps there are sane heads in some governments after all."

The Way Out?

The four examples of the Immigration Acts of 2007 that we have seen are all very similar, being basically (in the words of St. Vincent & the Grenadines) "An Act to amend the Immigration Act to impose an obligation on the master of a vessel to transmit passenger data to the competent authority in advance of the arrival of the vessel..."

Mercifully, the four Acts we've seen also contain an escape clause, saying that some authority such as the Cabinet, the appropriate Minister, or the Governor General may waive the requirements of the key subsections of the Act.

Antigua & Barbuda's Immigration and Passport (Amendment) Act, 2007 also spec-

ifies that it does not apply to vessels under 100 net tons, leaving out most cruising yachts and bareboats. But John Duffy points out that a 100-net-ton cut-off point is still too low. "That would apply to sailing yachts of roughly 125 foot in length and motor yachts of about 100 foot in length," he says. "With nearly 800 super-yachts currently under construction, and a super-yacht starts at 120 foot, a large percentage of the yachts visiting the Caribbean would be subject to APIS. It would be much more appropriate to consider yachts by length rather than weight: tonnage applies to commercial vessels, feet applies to luxury yachts." Length is also much more easily measured for verification than is tonnage.

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, many Caribbean yachting stakeholders have been away at the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show, and government Ministers have been off island at the Annual Caribbean Tourism Organisation Conference in Puerto Rico or at a UNESCO meeting in Paris. We are cautiously optimistic that once everyone is back at their desks, there will be positive developments, even if the wheels of legislative change grind slowly.

The Way Forward

Caribbean cruising guide author Chris Doyle writes: "I fear the threat of this thing will still be around for a while. I wonder whether it would be helpful if one of the CARICOM member states' governments hosted a meeting for all the islands' relevant authorities and the yachting sector representatives, to see if there is a way we might move forward. At least, all the governments agreeing to exclude yachts below a certain length would certainly help. An extra layer of bureaucracy is the last thing we need."

Many Islands, One Sea

The IMPACS literature distributed at the Trinidad meeting tells us, "The host venue agreements for Cricket World Cup 2007 required the region to be treated as one geographical space facilitating unprecedented freedom of movement across borders by nationals of many countries... the challenge, therefore, was to facilitate such movement, so important to our many tourism-based economies, while at the same time preserving the security of our region. To achieve this objective, a Common CARICOM Visa Policy was developed and a decision taken to introduce Advance Passenger and Cargo Information Systems... Nationals and other persons already enjoying legal status would benefit from free movement within the Space. Visitors would also be able to move freely after entering the first port."

This free movement within the CARICOM space during CWC 2007 included no inspection or stamping of passports (unless considered necessary for identification as a result of an alert or any other reason as determined by the relevant Immigration authority), and the use of a common entry/departure and Customs form which was all people traveling within the space were required to provide.

The Chair of the Ad Hoc Sub-Committee for CWC 2007 visited all Immigration departments within the region prior to the commencement of the Single Domestic Space, providing briefings and advice to officials at all levels. According to IMPACS, this served to reinforce the level of commitment to the process and was well received.

If this all was done for a one-time series of sporting events, which entailed considerable public expense to bring venues up to standard and brought less revenue to many host countries than expected, why can't CARICOM be made a permanent single space for yachting tourism, a sustainable activity which brings the area significant income every year, with virtually all expenses being borne by the private sector, and which, if encouraged, has growth potential?

Under the motto "Many Islands, One Sea", the CMA not only unites national organizations, but also works with other regional bodies. The CMA is a member of the Caribbean Tourism Association, and it is to be hoped that the CTO can play a part in working with the CMA and the JRCC to decrease the threat that APIS, as currently configured, presents to the yachting industry, and perhaps eventually make CARICOM a single space for yacht tourism.

At the October 8th meeting, the following statements were made:

JRCC Director, Commander Baptiste said, "We must have a balance between tourism and security."

Stakeholder Kevin Kenny said, "We have to find a way that the JRCC can get what it wants without bureaucracy damaging our yachting industry."

CMA President Keats Compton asked, "How can we work together?"

It has been suggested that the CMA prepare a proposal to be discussed at the next CARICOM heads meeting in early 2008; any information that can be provided by CMA members, other marine colleagues, CTO officials, the JRCC and other key stakeholders is most welcome at info@caribbeanmarineassociation.com.

John Duffy says, "Hopefully, we can move forward and try to make bureaucrats understand exactly how important the yachting industry is to the Caribbean and how much it could grow if only they would allow it to do so. The best thing about APIS is that it has succeeded in getting much of the Caribbean to work together in the greater interest of the yachting industry. It has managed to get the Caribbean talking — and talking, in particular, about the free movement of yachts."

For updates on the APIS situation visit <http://safetyandsecuritynet.com/NEWS.html> and www.doyleguides.com/apis_regulations.htm.

LET'S TALK

When it comes to yachting in the Eastern Caribbean, we're all in the same boat. CARICOM and non-CARICOM countries, government officials and private-sector stakeholders, cruisers and charterers — the laws requiring yachts to submit APIS forms, as currently enacted, can affect us all.

Feedback can be sent to the following.

- General comments and suggestions: CMA, info@caribbeanmarineassociation.com

- Suggestions on improving the website (www.caricomapis.org) and APIS form: JRCC, d.myers@impacsjrcc.org (Denise Myers, Compliance Manager) or w.beckles@impacsjrcc.org (Wayne Beckles, Compliance Officer)

- Comments on how your experience of that country would be affected by APIS: MINISTRIES OF TOURISM

Antigua & Barbuda - deptourism@antigua.gov.gy

St. Kitts & Nevis - minister@stkitstourism.kn

Dominica - tourism@dominica.dm

St. Lucia - kallain@stlucia.org

St. Vincent & the Grenadines - tourism@caribsurf.com

Grenada - gbt@spiceisle.com

Trinidad & Tobago - info@tdc.co.tt

NATIONAL MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATIONS

Antigua & Barbuda - info@abma.gy

Dominica - info@dominicanarinecenter.com

St. Lucia - keats@miasl.org

St. Vincent & the Grenadines - info@indigodive.com

Grenada - mavag@caribsurf.com

Trinidad & Tobago - ysatt@trinidad.net

Caribbean Eco-News

Protecting Sea Turtles in Venezuela

Venezuela's Fundacion La Tortuga reports: Sea turtles, their hatchlings and eggs have many natural predators within the marine environment.



Nevertheless, it is human action that has principally placed this species in danger of extinction. Man has captured and exploited sea turtles for thousands of years with the purpose of consuming and selling their meat, eggs, oil, and shells, dramatically diminishing their populations during the last 300 years.

To this dramatic situation we may add the invasion and degradation carried out by men in many of the natural habitats of these species, for tourism, urban or industrial purposes, eliminating and obstructing the nesting possibilities of these creatures. This situation has devastated sea turtle populations all over the world, placing them on the edge of extinction.

In the face of this discouraging scene, different organizations at a world level are working very hard in the protection of these species, attaining national and international agreements with governments, and thanks to this task, sea turtles are now considered protected species.

In spite of this, along Venezuela's coasts and isles, sea turtles suffer from clandestine fishing activities promoted, in many cases, by the false belief that parts of them are aphrodisiac, medicinal or especially nourishing. This, together with the manufacture of jewelry and spurs for fighting cocks produced from the shell of the hawksbill turtle, and incidental captures carried out by fishing vessels with trawling nets, place these species in the critical situation of problematic re-population.

Fundacion La Tortuga has been assuming, over the past several years, a task that includes, among other activities, a survey on scientific and conservation information with the purpose of evaluating the present

situation of sea turtle populations, species amply protected by the laws of our country.

From the information collected by the team of specialists and scientists of the Fundacion La Tortuga (FLT) and the Working Group in Marine Turtles of the State of Nueva Esparta (GTTM-NE), evidence of illegal capture activities has been found of at least two marine turtle species, the green and the hawksbill turtles, both classified in danger of extinction in our country and in critical danger of extinction at a world level.

In the last two expeditions, which took place during the months of May and July of this year, the remains of 18 turtles sacrificed at less than one year old were observed. It is estimated that this represents between one and ten percent of the total actual capture, because the fishermen are acquainted with the laws and try to hide all evidence. As a matter of fact, 88.9 percent of these remains were found hidden in the vegetation close to the beach. The most affected species is the green turtle with 77.78 percent of the total of the remains observed, all juvenile and sub-adults, which indicates that these have been captured in their feeding areas. In contrast, 75 percent of the hawksbills were animals in reproductive sizes (adults) that may have been captured in the sea as well as on the beaches during the nesting process.

Up to this moment the team of scientists working in the project has confirmed the presence of three of the four species reported for the Isle of La Tortuga by the investigators Flores and Pritchard, during 1984. Likewise, a new registry on the *Dermochelys coriacea* species (leatherback turtle), has been made for the isle, documented by the scientist Pedro Vernet (scientific counselor of FTL).

It should be emphasized that only seven species of sea turtles exist in the world, of which five may be observed on the Venezuelan coasts and have been reported for the Isle of La Tortuga: *Chelonia mydas* (green turtle), *Eretmochelys imbricata* (hawksbill), *Caretta caretta* (loggerhead), the *Leptodochelys olivacea* (Olive ridley) and the *Dermochelys coriacea* (leatherback), and four of these species nest in the beaches of the island.

The above evidences the need for initiating urgent management plans for nesting and feeding areas, with the purpose of keeping a strict control of the fishing systems utilized in the zone, as well as vigilance and control for due respect of prohibition and protection of the species whose capture is forbidden.

Taking into consideration the delicate situation presented by the ecosystems of the Isle of La Tortuga and the danger that this implies for innumerable species

that make their habitat in them, the Fundacion La Tortuga has proposed the construction of a Marine, Oceanographic and Meteorological Investigations Station on the Isle of La Tortuga. This infrastructure is necessary for the proper development of scientific investigation and educational projects.

This station would allow the application *in situ*, of appropriate management and control plans, educating and sensitizing fishermen, residents and visitors with the purpose of mitigating environmental impacts and contributing to a better understanding of the benefits of sustainable development. It could also assist in the identification of sustainable alternatives for fisherfolk and tourists in the area.

Fundacion La Tortuga has raised the need for building, as promptly as possible, the "Isle of La Tortuga Marine, Oceanographic and Meteorological Station" at the highest levels of Venezuela's government. Fundacion La Tortuga invites you to be a part of the conservation of these and other threatened species. Do not purchase or consume products from sea turtles and other protected species.

For more information e-mail info@fundacionlafortuga.org or visit www.fundacionlafortuga.org.

Air Pollution from Large Ships

The issue of air pollution from large ships was highlighted when the environmental group Friends of the Earth filed a suit on September 5th in US federal district court, suing the Environmental Protection Agency for failing to meet a deadline to regulate this source of pollution.

Ocean-going vessels are among the largest mobile sources of air pollution in the world, according to Friends of the Earth. A press release from the group notes that ships burn asphalt-like bunker fuel that is thousands of times dirtier than the diesel used by trucks or trains, and most operate with engines that pre-date even weak international standards. Just one cargo or cruise ship in port can pollute as much as 350,000 cars, and major ports receive hundreds of ship calls a month, yet the air pollution from large ships is one of the least addressed environmental justice issues facing port communities.

Bequia Environmental Movement Launched

Alexandra Paolino reports: The Bequia Environmental Movement has officially begun, as many different independent and collaborating groups of all ages and from all over the island are looking into different key areas to start the clean-up process.

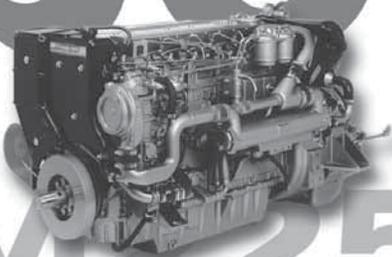
On Saturday September 8, 2007, a small group of friends from within the Bequia community joined forces to start cleaning up the numerous beaches and rocky bays where litter had accumulated.

The group filled over 30 large garbage bags with plastic bottles, plastic bags, plastic wrappers, aluminum packets, cans, rubber, etcetera from Hope Beach. The clean-up was very successful, as the bags were carried to the top of the hill and Karib Cable sponsored a truck to remove the garbage and take it to the disposal ground in Spring.

On Saturday October 13, 2007 the group filled 15 large and five extra-large garbage bags on Princess Margaret Beach — one of the most beautiful and frequently visited beaches of the island.

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—Continued from previous page

Most of the garbage collected included plastic bottles, cups, plates, straws and forks; cans; Styrofoam plates, cups and take-away boxes; food wrappers; aluminum foil; glass bottles; diapers and plastic bags.

Many thanks to the Bequia Tourism Association for donating the garbage bags and bottles of water, and to Karib Cable for sponsoring the truck, which is essential for the garbage removal.

Let's continue to work together to keep Bequia, St Vincent and the Grenadines clean, green and serene!

The Grenadines Shine in Coastal Clean-Ups

This year, as part of International Coastal Clean-Up Day, September 15th, the islands of the Grenadines, from Bequia to Carriacou, under the Sustainable Grenadines Project, joined forces with St. Vincent and Grenada in a concerted effort to clean up the coastal environment. Each island undertook activities to this



Carriacou got even sweeter thanks to this year's International Coastal Clean-Up volunteers

end and provided preliminary reports on their effort.

"Garbage at the Coast Chokes" was the theme for St. Vincent & the Grenadines in the annual International Coastal Clean-Up. There were two main sponsors of the activity: Karib Cable provided water, 70 garbage bags, 100 pairs of gloves and 24 T-shirts for Union Island while the Sustainable Grenadines Project donated over 300 T-shirts, hundreds of garbage bags and 400 pairs of gloves to participants across the Grenadines.

In Union Island there were approximately 83 volunteers, most of whom were students of the Mary Hutchinson and Stephanie Browne Primary Schools and members of the Union Island 4-H Club. A total estimated weight of 710 pounds of garbage was collected over a distance of approximately two miles. The Union Island event was documented on video.

In Bequia, the effort was supported by over 60 volunteers and was concentrated in three main areas: Port Elizabeth, Spring and Paget Farm. Over 165 bags of litter were collected in the Jeff Gregg area of Paget Farm. Larger items like parts from machines and building materials were lifted directly onto a truck. At Spring and Port Elizabeth approximately 32 and 12 bags of trash were collected respectively. Most of the garbage retrieved was related to shoreline or recreational activities, and included 943 food wrappers and containers and 805 plastic bottles. Also of concern were the 534 outboard lube-oil bottles collected.

In Mustique, activities began on September 21st with brief remarks to volunteers highlighting the need for and importance of such an activity, and describing the effects of coastal pollution and ways to prevent it. An appreciation of this, it is believed, will encourage people to be better stewards of their environment. The activity was led by the Principal of the Mustique Primary School and Ty Kovach and Simon Humphrey of the Mustique Company with over 50 volunteers including students and teachers of the primary school, parents and villagers. Three beaches were cleaned producing in total 23 bags of rubbish with an estimated weight of 69 pounds. The garbage collected on the three areas were mostly related to recreational activities with some dumping from the construction industry being evident.

Canouan undertook to clean up the entire village on Saturday September 22nd. Given the magnitude of that task, no records were kept of the types of garbage collected.

The activity on Mayreau was a great success. It revealed that much of the garbage — in the form of plastics and mainly plastic bottles — had washed ashore from the sea. The volunteers there collected 53 bags of garbage weighing approximately 318 pounds from five different beaches. The effort was supported by approximately 50 volunteers and was

spearheaded by the Mayreau Regatta and Sporting Committee. The villagers also used the opportunity to clean the village itself.

On Saturday September 22nd, 55 volunteers from Petite Martinique, clad in their SusGren cleanup T-shirts, cleaned the main beach of Sanchez and the community. The team, as part of a greater environmental drive, planted over 30 trees. These included coconut, almond, seagrave, neem and seaside mahoe trees. The volunteers were mainly from the local non-governmental organization called the Petite Martinique Catholic Youth Movement, community members and volunteers from Carriacou. Forty-five bags of garbage were collected in this effort which was coordinated by the Carriacou Environmental Committee.

Carriacou was a hive of activity when 160 volunteers descended on seven coastal communities across the island on September 15th. The cleanup effort was concentrated in Harvey Vale Beach, Bogies, Belvedere, Dover, Limlair, Bayaleau and Windward Beach. Villagers used the opportunity to also clean their surroundings, roadsides and to get rid of stockpiled debris. The boatbuilders of Windward, the main boat-building community in Carriacou, got a much needed face-lift for their dockyard by burning the remains of old boats and rotting wood.

The dive shops of Carriacou and the PADI Aware Project were also engaged in similar activities. For these dive shops this has become an annual activity. Over 240 garbage bags and 30 large feed bags of debris were collected. This was by no means the extent of garbage collected, as stoves, batteries and building materials from hurricane-damaged homes were piled onto trucks.

Alexcia Cooke of the Sustainable Grenadines Project says, "The results from the data cards are yet to reach me but already we have seen an amazing and disturbing amount of plastic bottles and food containers (mostly styrofoam boxes)."

Venezuela Cleans Up, Too

In Venezuela, Fundacion La Tortuga took advantage of International Coastal Clean-Up Day to perform some environmental recovery activities in two very important coastal areas in Venezuela including Mochima National Park and Morrocoy National Park. Over a hundred volunteers collected more than 30 tons of pollutants. Volunteers took the opportunity to distribute brochures with information regarding the reason for this event and different ways to collaborate in the conservation of our natural environment, seeking to promote and elevate citizens' participation in clean-up activities throughout the year.

Grenada Doves to Inhabit Four Seasons Resort?

Word has reached *Compass* that work is going ahead to develop land within Grenada's National Park at Mount Hartman for a Four Seasons Resort. This is despite ongoing international protests against development in the last remaining protected habitat of the Grenada Dove (*Leptotilla wellsi*), Grenada's national bird and one of the most critically endangered doves in the world. The 155-acre national park was created in 1996 to protect the species. In April 2007, the government of Grenada passed an amendment to the National Parks and Protected Areas Act allowing the Governor General to sell any national park to developers or other private interests.

On September 17, 2007, the American Bird Conservancy submitted a detailed critique of the project to the Government of Grenada. Four Seasons, Cinnamon 88 (resort builders) and its parent corporation in the UK, Capital 88. Some supporters of the resort project believe that the surviving Grenada doves, which number fewer than 200 and perhaps fewer than 100, will be able to co-exist with the hotel. Opponents believe that destruction of dry forest habitat to create a resort and golf course will spell their doom.

For more information on the Grenada Dove and the development issue visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grenada_Dove.

Reef Check in St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Kim Baldwin reports: "Reef Check" is the world's largest coral reef conservation and monitoring organization which was developed in 1997 as a voluntary, relatively simple method of measuring the health of coral reefs globally. Reef Check surveys monitor the health of coral reefs, fish and invertebrates (i.e. conch, lobster, sea eggs) as well as examine the effects of human activities such as pollution, fishing and coastal development. Reef Check is a community-based programme which relies on thousands of volunteer divers from more than 89 countries around the world to assist in conducting marine surveys and monitoring the health of coral reefs annually. The information collected is used locally by the Fisheries Division as well as sent to Reef Check headquarters in California where it is compared with data collected from hundreds of reefs around the world.

Currently there are a total of ten Reef Check sites that have been set up and surveyed by five teams in the country of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. These sites are located in St. Vincent at The Gardens -

Lowmans Bay and Sunset Point - Young Island (by Indigo Dive Centre and the Fisheries Division); in Bequia at Moonhole (by Bequia Dive Adventures and Sandwatch); in Mustique at Plantain (by Mustique Watersports); in Canouan at Bachelors Hall Reef and The Steps (by Canouan Dive Centre); and in the Tobago Cays Marine Park at Horseshoe Reef, Petit Tabac, Baradal and Petit Bateau (by the Tobago Cays Marine Park Rangers).

During the month of October, all of the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Reef Check teams participated by going out and conducting their yearly surveys. With the assistance of a grant received from Reef Check and PADI Project Aware as well as technical assistance from myself (a marine biologist from the University of the West Indies), this is the second year that these reefs have been monitored by these voluntary teams in St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

Special thanks must be given to those volunteers who have given their time and effort for such a worthwhile cause both locally and globally!

If you are interested in learning more about how you can help with future Reef Check surveys, please contact country coordinator Sophie Punnett of the SVG Fisheries Division at (784) 456-2738.

Debt-for-Nature Swap

The US Congress is poised to give developing nations in the Caribbean and elsewhere a chance to pay off some of their debt to the United States by preserving forests and coral reefs. Every dollar that qualified nations spend to preserve these fragile ecosystems would reduce their debt by a dollar under a bill passed by the House on October 9th and cleared for passage in the Senate.

"By providing incentives for developing nations to conserve their coral resources, we are in effect protecting coastal landscapes and maintaining coastal quality of water of some of the most important coral reef ecosystems in the world," said Representative Alcee Hastings.

The bill passed by voice vote, a procedure often used when legislation has little opposition. It extends the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, which provides "debt-for-nature swaps" with 12 nations. Over seven years, these swaps generated \$135 million of debt relief while conserving about 50 million acres of tropical forests. The new bill expands the number of eligible nations and adds preservation of coral reefs and marine ecosystems as well as all forests to the program.

"Deforestation and nutrient runoff from agriculture are killing coral reefs in much of the Caribbean," said Jan Petri, director of government affairs at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution of Fort Pierce, Florida. "A lot of the fertilizer used to grow crops gets washed into the ocean. Seaweeds and sea grasses then grow on reefs, suffocating the corals. It could have an impact if there is an economic incentive for nations to preserve the reefs. It helps maintain and encourage tourism, which is the mainstay of their economies."

Fellowships for Marine Resource Governance

The University of the West Indies (UWI) Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) at the Cave Hill Campus in Barbados is offering two MPhil degree fellowships for full-time interdisciplinary research on marine resource governance in the Eastern Caribbean available for 2007/08 and 2008/09 academic years. Each fellowship provides US\$17,500 per year for two years.

The fellowships are associated with the CERMES research project on "Marine Resource Governance in the Eastern Caribbean" (MarGov project). Before contacting CERMES, persons interested in this opportunity should first visit www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/margov_profile.html for information on the project. The focus is on examining coastal and marine resource governance at national and local levels in OECES countries and Barbados primarily using concepts from complex adaptive systems and network analysis.

Persons should also determine if they satisfy the UWI requirements for admission to an MPhil degree. Refer to the UWI School or Graduate Studies and Research Manual of procedures for graduate diplomas & degrees available at www.uwi.edu/documents/pdfs/Manual_of_Procedures_2005.pdf or consult the School directly. The minimum admission requirement for an MPhil programme is an Upper Second Class Honours first degree or its equivalent.

CERMES will consider persons with natural science, social science or interdisciplinary first degrees. Preference will be for degrees that included marine resource studies and for candidates familiar with Caribbean countries. Candidates in an MPhil programme are required to register for some graduate courses, but this degree is awarded primarily on the basis of a research thesis. Strong research and fieldwork skills are essential. The UWI Graduate Studies process for application to do an MPhil will apply.

Persons who are both interested and eligible may contact the project with an expression of interest, a recent CV and a copy of their academic transcript. E-mail the project at margov.project@cavehill.uwi.edu.

Got Eco-News? Send it to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Free Download from UKHO

The UK Hydrographic Office is making available as a free download from its website a comprehensive guide to electronic charts and chart carriage requirements — an essential tool for all mariners.

The second edition of "Facts about Electronic Charts and Carriage Requirements", updating the original 2005 guide, has been created by the two leading ENC centres — International Centre for ENCs (IC-ENC) and PRIMAR Stavanger. Written in an easy-to-read "question and answer" style, this guide answers over 20 of the most commonly asked questions. It details regulations in force today, and is set to provide a useful reference for anyone involved in the production, purchase, regulation or use of electronic charts. There are now many ECDIS systems on the market and almost 6,000 official ENCs are available from the UK Hydrographic Office. However, lack of knowledge and understanding of the relevant carriage regulations has long been highlighted by industry commentators as one of the main reasons for hesitation in adopting ECDIS as the primary navigation tool. The new guide, which will continue to be expanded and updated to ensure it remains accurate, was created by a Joint Information Working Group of the two regional centres.

To access the free download, visit www.ukho.gov.uk/amd/carriageRequirements.asp.

BVI Charter Companies' Staff Party Fun

At the end of September, Sunsail Tortola hosted a barbecue and party for all employees of Sunsail, Moorings, Moorings Power and Footloose charters in the BVI, at Long Bay Beach, Beef Island. "This is the first employee event we have had since becoming neighbors within the Wickhams Cay II Marina," said Nic Parton, Group Operations Manager. "We had an excellent turnout, with many families enjoying barbecued food, drinks, music and fun. The highlight of the



day was definitely the staff raffle, where staff won prizes donated by our friends at The Tamarind Club, Smiths Ferries, Boardsailing BVI, Leverick Bay, Mainsail Resort, Colombian Emeralds, Nexus, Renport, K Mart and B-Mobile."

Boaters' Enterprise of Trinidad Restructures

The well-known Boaters' Enterprise Ltd, which has served recreational boating interests in Trinidad and promoted Trinidad's yacht service industry to the world for the past 13 years, is currently undergoing restructuring. The Boaters' Enterprise office has temporarily moved to Cascade until new premises at Chaguaramas can be found. Phone, fax numbers and e-mail address remain unchanged (see below). The website BoatersEnterprise.com remains in operation as the major link between cruisers and Chaguaramas's yacht services and vendors.

The popular monthly Boca magazine will be temporarily suspended, possibly to be re-designed as a quarterly publication with more pages, a longer "ad life", and even more articles of interest to the boating community in Trinidad. Meanwhile, Boaters' Enterprise will offer uninterrupted professional graphic design, advertising and promotional services, and continue as the Trinidad advertising sales and distribution agent for *Caribbean Compass*. The indispensable annual *Boaters' Directory of Trinidad & Tobago* will continue publication, with the next edition on target for June 2008.

For more information, e-mail sales@boatersenterprise.com, or call or fax (868) 634-2622.

Grenada's Whisper Cove Marina Re-Opens

Long-time liveaboards Luke and Marie are now at the helm of Grenada's Whisper Cove Marina. According to Barbara Groome of *S/Y Turtle*, with all their experience of life on the ocean waves, the couple are ideally placed to understand the needs of cruisers and to accommodate their requirements effectively and without breaking the budget. Whisper Cove is a small, very



reasonably priced marina with power and water available as well as washing and drying facilities. Garbage can also be disposed of correctly for a small fee. The pretty, colourful restaurant is just steps away from the dinghy dock and offers free WiFi internet access. The beer is cold and the food is excellent — when not cruising, Luke and Marie previously ran a large hotel and restaurant at Cap Haïtien in Haiti, where they specialised in French Mediterranean cuisine. Whisper Cove is situated in a quiet location on the east side of Clarke's Court Bay. Luke and Marie are looking forward to welcoming cruisers — in English, French or German — and tempting tastebuds with Luke's great cooking.

For more information see ad on page 4.

Hiking in Richmond Vale, St. Vincent

Corbin Littell, a volunteer at the Richmond Vale Academy, St. Vincent writes: In a remote location in St. Vincent, just past Chateaubelair and close to the towering Soufriere volcano sits the Richmond Vale Academy. The Academy's grounds serve as a volunteer training...

—Continued on page 34

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Efforts Ongoing to Save Windjammer Cruises

by Norman Faria



NORMAN FARIA ©



Windjammer Barefoot Cruises ships, like those seen here in Grenada's Carenage in 1990, have not only provided fun and affordable sailing vacations for passengers but also steady employment for scores of Caribbean captains and crewmembers over the years

Up to press time in mid-October, efforts were ongoing to try and get the 60-year-old Florida-based Windjammer Barefoot Cruises off apparent financial sandbanks.

The family-owned operation, whose venerable schooners such as the *Yankee Clipper* (built in 1927) and the *Mandalay* (1923) — the much written about *Pantomime* was lost in Hurricane Mitch off the Central American coast in 1999 — were frequently seen in Eastern Caribbean ports, have cancelled cruises in recent weeks.

Press reports, including in Guyana from where several crew members are sourced, tell of some of the vessels being tied up in Aruba, Trinidad, Costa Rica and Panama. In the case of Aruba, the Red Cross there were called upon to help feed the crewmembers who included 20 Guyanese, six Jamaicans and three each from Grenada and St. Vincent, according to the report in the *Kaitaur News* newspaper in Georgetown (Guyana).

Web posts from disgruntled people who had paid for the Windjammer trips found recordings saying the sails were being kept furled "due to safety matters that cannot be ignored". In early October, Travelers Insurance said it would no longer insure cruises. The American Society of Travel Agents warned members about "safety of payments" to the Windjammer Barefoot Cruises firm.

According to the *Seattle Times* of 12 October, "critical payments" have been made to shipboard staff and debt obligations.

Questions still remain about the firm's difficulties. The *Times* article opined that "fierce divisions and legal battles among the family members who control the company" had "culminated in the cessation of cruises".

Those in the travel business, and the small island economies in the Eastern Caribbean as well as coastal ports in the circum-Caribbean area, depend on the income from visits of cruise ships. They hope a mutually satisfactory and amicable solution will soon be found to the present difficulties and that these fine vessels and happy visitors and crew will once again be sailing.



The Marina at Marigot Bay

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COME BACK TO THE BAY Marigot Bay - St Lucia

Okay, full disclosure: *Compass's* editor, along with five other regional journalists, was invited on an all-expense-paid visit to Grenada on October 10th and 11th by Peter de Savary, an entrepreneur who has been instrumental in developing top-end clubs, resorts and real estate ventures around the world. (Think Skibo Castle in Scotland, where Madonna got married.) This media trip was part of de Savary's effort to promote his new investments in Grenada — and Grenada itself as a destination — both regionally and internationally. Peter de Savary, or "PDS" as his staff all call him, has already invited over 50 journalists to Grenada from publications including British Airways' in-flight magazine *High Life*, *The Times* of London, the *Guardian* (UK), *All at Sea* and *Boat International*. Our group included freelance journalist Tony Fraser from Trinidad, who is a correspondent for BBC Caribbean, the *Associated Press* and the *Trinidad Express*; veteran reporter Trevor Yearwood and photographer Sandy Pitt from the *Nation* newspaper of Barbados; and reporter-presenter Keriann Lee and cameraman Raymond Lawson from Television Jamaica. As we were leaving, we met the next group of visiting international journalists, which included the Moscow desk editor of *Robb Report*. If the Revolution and Ivan didn't put Grenada on the map, PDS is determined to.

Compass's main interest, of course, was PDS's marina project which is transforming St. George's Lagoon. The EC\$1.5 billion Port Louis Grenada project plans to include a marina with up to 350 slips and facilities for yachts up to 100 metres, two hotels, 37 lots for villas



SANDY PITT

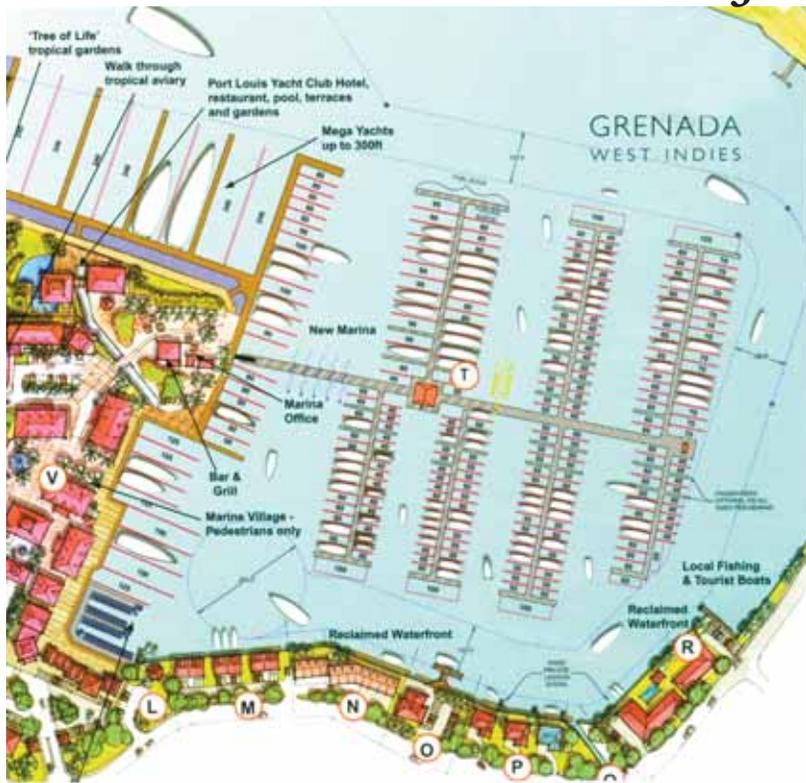
Above: The man with the plan — Peter de Savary and his constant companion, Louie

Right: The plan — a complete build-out of both proposed dock phases shown here would fill much of the currently open area of St. George's Lagoon

and 22 hillside apartments. Plans also call for a West Indian-style marina village ("We don't want to give people Florida in the Caribbean"), with shops ranging from designer goods to local handicrafts, which will be open to all; only the private residential area will be gated. A Customs and Immigration office will be on site. Port Louis has obtained a 99-year lease from the Grenada government on water rights in the Lagoon.

Knowing that people would say "you were bought!" if we published glowing reports after being wined and dined, we tried to find fault during our visit. It wasn't easy.

What's BIG, GREEN and AMBITIOUS? Grenada's Port Louis Project



GRENADA LIFE

Cruisers, especially those on a budget, have lamented the loss of free anchorage in the Lagoon (anchoring was prohibited during dredging this summer, and a complete build-out of both dock phases in the plans would virtually fill the Lagoon), so we raised the issue. PDS fired back, "I strongly object to those who pump sewage and detergent into the Lagoon. I have no sympathy for freeloaders, but anyone is welcome to pay the normal fee at the dock where every berth will have a pump-out." Marina plans include a small waste-treatment plant, which will feed into the existing

municipal sewage system, and assistance has been offered to the government to help prevent sewage and other contaminated run-off from the surrounding land entering the Lagoon.

The Port Louis people have already removed "hundreds of tons" of derelict vessels, cars, the tail of a US military helicopter and other junk from in and around the Lagoon, and transported most of the contents of master metalworker Lincoln Ross's large waterside scrapyards to another site.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Although the Lagoon has been used as a de facto dump and sewer for years, PDS says, "Give me another nine or ten months — it's not beyond repair." Marina Manager Danny Donelan adds that the marina is aiming for "Eco Marina" standards [see www.lee-ward.com/eco_marina.cfm].



SANDY PITT (2)

What of socio-economic issues? Since the demise of Grenada Yacht Services, a marina which had its heyday in the Lagoon in the 1960s and '70s, yachtspeople anchoring in the Lagoon have interacted with locals and contributed to the support of many businesses along the shoreline. What impact will the new marina have on the neighborhood and its existing businesses?

Jonathan Fisher, manager of the Island Water World chandlery on Lagoon Road, says he sees Port Louis as a step forward for Grenada's yachting infrastructure and feels that "competition is healthy." Charter yacht owner/operator Mosden Cumberbatch, who grew up in the neighborhood, tells *Compass*, "There are always people who object to change, but I know a lot of skilled guys from here working in Tortola or Fort Lauderdale on yachts who would want to come home, and this can be their chance." And although he notes that more public consultation on projects of this scope is always welcome, he is satisfied with the docking facility across the Lagoon that PDS has proposed for the locally owned charter and fishing boats that will be displaced from their former moorings. (The Grenada Yacht Club and the small locally owned docks on the east side of the Lagoon will not be displaced by the marina development.)

It is estimated that the new marina will create some 50 jobs. Key posts such as Marina Manager (Danny Donelan) and Dockmaster (Junior Cuffie) have already been filled by Grenadians. The marina's PR team of Francine Stewart and Barry Collymore are also Grenadians.

What about safety and security in the area? Boats at anchor in the Lagoon have been targets of theft, off

and on, for decades. And the old GYS site and its environs ("Ballast Ground") had become distinctly unsavory of late — in September 2006, there was a drug-related assassination in the then-secluded area, steps from where the marina's Victory Bar now stands. Danny tells us that there are now plans for a 24/7 Lagoon security patrol.

Who is this PDS, then, and why has he chosen to invest in Grenada? The intense, high-energy 63-year-old tells us that, of English parentage, he spent his early boyhood in Venezuela and first came to Grenada with his family, on vacation, in 1952. They stayed at the old Islander Hotel, which sat on the hilltop that is slated to be the centerpiece of Port Louis's residential and hotel area. "I learned to handle a boat in Grenada," he says. "It was here I fell in love with boats and the sea."

Grenada, he says, is an excellent location for a marina because, being below the hurricane belt, it can be enjoyed year round; plus there are good air links, a stable government and "a tremendous level of cooperation and understanding". He adds that there are many things to do off the boat ("some places you just want to get on the boat and leave"), as well as excellent sailing conditions, various anchorages, good snorkeling and dinghy-accessible restaurants, for those who want to day-sail from the marina.

Ground was broken for the marina one year ago. Buildings erected so far, such as the Victory Bar & Grill which opened in April, are mostly of simple wooden construction with galvanized roofs. The Dutch construction company that built Grenada's new cruise ship terminal was hired to do the "heavy lifting", using dredging and other equipment conveniently already on-island. The company, Volker Stevin, employs local labor.

The entrance to the Lagoon is being dredged to 20 feet. At the time of our visit, in the previous five weeks alone, two and a half acres of "reclaimed" land had been created behind a concrete sea-wall where yachts will

eventually tie up stern-to. A target date of December 1st has been set to be ready for up to 70 large boats which are planning to come here for the holidays.

"Boats have been my life," says PDS, who led the British team in its challenge for the America's Cup in 1983, aboard *Victory*. (It lost to *Australia II* in the heats.) "I understand what boatowners and crew want, and I think Port Louis is going to work for all of them."

Former Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Brenda Hood, told the visiting journalists that she feels it will work for Grenada, too: "We don't want mass tourism, we want upscale tourism that is year-round." And, rather than create a resented enclave for the elite, she said she feels that Port Louis will upgrade and enhance the St. George's area, especially if Grenadians feel they are part of it.

Prime Minister the Hon. Keith Mitchell told our group of journalists that Grenada's economy is still suffering the impacts of Hurricane Ivan in 2004: revenue from agriculture, tourism and taxes dried up; foreign aid was

Left: Piles being set for dock at eastern end of mega-berths

Below: Cautious optimism. Chandlery manager Jonathan Fisher, at left, sees healthy competition, and charter operator Mosden Cumberbatch anticipates opportunities for his countrymen



diverted to countries affected by the southeast Asian tsunami; and some infrastructure still needs repair. He says that Peter de Savary's extensive investments in Grenada are creating jobs, training opportunities, and awareness of Grenada as a destination in ways the government currently can't afford to do.

In his office with a bird's-eye view of the marina site, he told us, "There have been many marina proposals, but every time our hopes were raised, they were dashed. The proposals always lacked the necessary 'teeth' to make the project a reality." Glancing out the window, he added, "I, as a Grenadian, thought I would never see the Lagoon cleaned up in my lifetime."

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REGATTA NEWS

Young Grenadian Sailors' Race Day

After Tropical Storm Felix blew the first day off the calendar, the Grenada Sailing Association (GSA) together with the Grenada Yacht Club (GYC) re-scheduled



Tomorrow's sailors today. Graduates of Grenada's Summer Programme 2007 at their Race Day

their Junior Race Day for September 15th. The day marks the close of the Summer Sailing Programme run by GSA and GYC.

A group of 15 young sailors was divided into two classes — Optimist and Mosquito dinghies — and a day of competitive racing kicked off. The youngsters showed the skills they had learned throughout the summer and the positions were closely contested. The Optimist Class winners were: first, Kenzo Szyjan; second, Clinton Brathwaite; third, Shakeem Collins; fourth, Kendel

Martin. The Mosquito Class winners were: first, Joshua James; second, Johnathan Ellibox; third, Nicholas Cherman; fourth, brothers Shane and Shevon Harde. The day ended with a presentation attended by Veda Bruno Victor of the Grenada Olympic Committee and Ashley Steele, Treasurer of the Grenada Yacht Club. As well as prizes provided by the GSA, GYC and Budget Marine, all the youngsters were given certificates for the day, plus certificates acknowledging their attendance at the GSA/GYC Summer Sailing School. Certificates went to Taite Lehov, Tarvin Joseph, Sydney Baptiste, Neilon Aberdeen, Joshua Tuson, Michael Weber, Alvis Cudjoe and Ryan Mohan. Four young sailors from Carriacou who had taken part in the Summer Sailing Programme will also be receiving certificates. As well as his prize for first place in the Mosquito Class, Joshua James also received a special commendation and a Budget Marine Cap for attending every day of the Summer Programme. A family visiting in their yacht from the USA were also invited to take part in the day, and Solomon, Summer and Sam Jackson took home certificates as a reminder of a fun day sailing in Grenada.

Association Treasurer Jacqui Pascall commented: "The Summer Sailing Programme that we have run with the Yacht Club has been a huge success and many thanks go to our instructor Kevin Banfield and trainee instructors Vaughn Bruno and Michael McQueen who have worked very hard, and to our young Grenadian sailors who have been showing great commitment — whatever their level of experience."

She went on to thank the Grenada Olympic Association for help with funding for the important Instructor Training Course initiated this year, and the Management Committee of the Grenada Yacht Club for its support of the Programme as well as for providing the venue.

At the Prize Presentation, Mrs. Bruno Victor told the young sailors that the Grenada Olympic Committee was particularly pleased to add sailing to its list of sports supported in its Talent Identification Programme for summer 2007 and she encouraged them to continue to train for the future. Mr. Steele spoke of the Grenada Yacht Club's commitment and support for the continuation of this important Youth Sailing Programme and told the young sailors present to tell their friends to join in and enjoy the fun of sailing. The Grenada Sailing Association would also like to thank Budget Marine for its long-term backing of youth sailing, and Turbulence Grenada Ltd, the

Grenada Sailing Festival Committee and American Airlines for essential safety equipment.
For more information contact Jacqui Pascall (473) 415-2022/443 5452, or Sarah Baker 456-0914.

Near-Record Catch in 17th St. Lucia Billfish Tournament

The annual St. Lucia Billfish Tournament, which ended on September 29th, was this year held in Marigot Bay for the first time. The biggest catch, a marlin weighing 657 pounds, fell only 50 pounds short of the competition record. Daniel Agostini, fishing from Trinidadian boat *Tyme*, caught the winning marlin with 80-pound-test line.

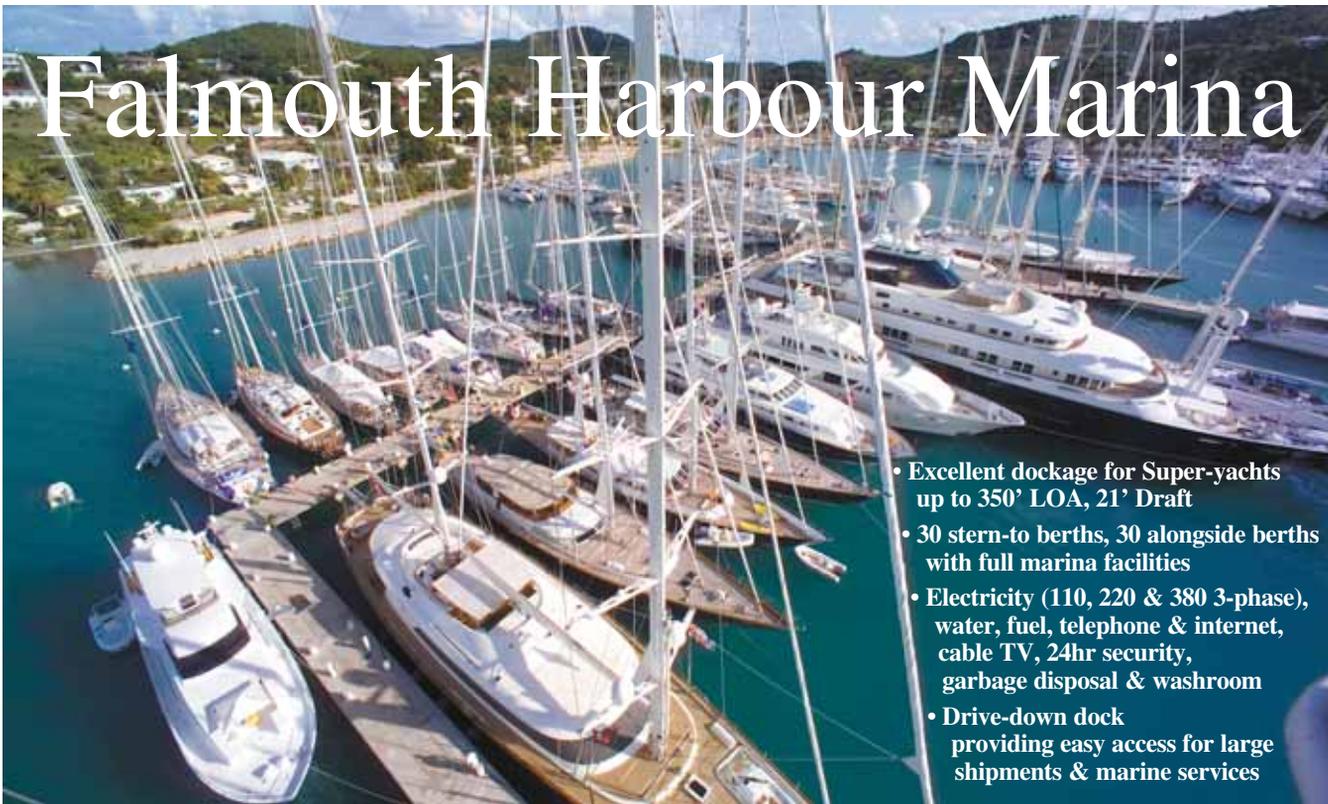
Out of 23 boats entered, only five were from St. Lucia



What a haul! St. Lucia's Exodus crew and their new billfish trophy collection

but it was a St. Lucian boat, *Exodus*, which won the biggest collection of prizes, including Best Overall Boat, SLGFA Change Trophy, Trinidad Game Fishing Association's Trophy for the Best Non-Trinidadian Boat, The Game Fishing Association of Martinique's Best St. Lucian Boat, Qualification for the Captain and Crew to take part in the 2008 IGFA Offshore Championship (to be held in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico), Best Boat Third Day, Most Releases and Best Angler by Releases.
—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Of the events' 56 strikes and hook-ups, a total of 26 billfish were caught. Twenty-five — 20 blue marlin, one white marlin, and four sailfish — were caught and released.

Among the winning anglers were: Best Lady Angler, Lisa Allen on *Crystal Blue*; Most Wahoo, Kevin White on *Discovery*; Most Sailfish, Ruth Liney on *Rum 'n' Coke*; Most White Marlin, "Cocco" on *Follow Me IV*; Best Angler by Releases, Serge Littee of *Exodus*; Best Angler by Points, Daniel Agostini on *Gud Tyne*.

7th Edition of Guadeloupe's Triskell Cup

From November 2nd through 4th, the 7th edition of the now-famous Triskell Cup will take place in Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe. In 2006, 83 teams representing almost 600 sailors competed on the superb waters of the Cul de Sac Marin in front of Gosier Island. After a first day of two races followed by a cocktail party, Day Two's two races will culminate in a special dinner and a show with zouk music. On Sunday, two more races precede the prizegiving ceremony at Marina Bas-du-Fort.
For more information contact organisation@triskell-cup.com, (590 690) 49.57.57.

Carriacou Sailing Series

The correct dates for the Carriacou Sailing Series 2007 are November 14th through 17th.
For more information contact eventsdesk@ttsailing.org.

Port Louis Sponsors Grenada's Sail Fest and Classic

The Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival, to be held from January 25th to 29th, 2008, will feature races in workboat and keelboat categories as well as kayak and junior races. The Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival 2008 was officially launched on September 25th. Over 200 persons from Grenada and the Caribbean joined the organizers and new sponsors Port Louis Grenada at the new Port Louis Marina's Victory Bar for the biggest pre-vent celebration in the history of the Sailing Festival. Among those enjoying the evening were Minister of Works, Hon. Brenda Hood; Minister of Private Sector Development, Hon. Einstein Louison; Sailing Festival Chairman, Jimmy Bristol, and his entire team, and Port Louis Chairman, Peter de Savary. Cocktails and champagne were followed by speeches as Minister Hood, Mr. Bristol and Mr. de Savary all endorsed the Festival and committed to developing it

into one of the best in the world. Both government and the festival committee commended Port Louis Grenada for making a long-term commitment to sponsoring the sailing festival. Port Louis Grenada has committed to sponsoring the Sailing Festival for the next three years. During this time Port Louis and the festival organizers will be marketing the festival globally.



Big splash! A large crowd enjoyed the official launch party of Grenada Sailing Festival 2008, to be sailed January 25th through 28th

Port Louis Grenada is also helping to bring another major sailing event to Grenada. On October 11th, Port Louis announced its Silver Sponsorship of the Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta. The Regatta will be held from February 21st through 24th, 2008. Port Louis Chairman, Peter de Savary, described the race as a unique event. "These classic yachts sailed our waters years ago and I know that most Grenadians have not seen these kinds of yachts for many years. We at Port Louis Grenada are therefore delighted to be a major sponsor of this event." He noted that his organization would continue to sponsor worthwhile events in Grenada, including the Grenada Round the Island Easter Regatta and the Grenada Billfish Tournament. Additional sponsors of the event include Bel Air Plantation (www.belairplantation.com) as a Silver Sponsor, Shipwrights Ltd. (www.shipwrights.com) and the Maritime School of the West Indies (www.mswi.org). Several other organizations are in the process of committing their sponsorship to the Grenada Classic Regatta. For more information visit on the Grenada Sailing Festival visit www.grenadasailingfestival.com. For

more information on the Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta visit www.classicregatta.com or e-mail grenada@classicregatta.com.

Nanny Cay Nations Cup, BVI

The 2007 Nanny Cay Nations Cup regatta will be held November 17th and 18th. This is a "Racing In Paradise" event in association with the RBVIYC, and is sponsored by Nanny Cay Marina and Resort. National pride is at stake: all team members must hold the same passport. Teams from all over the region are expected and entries will be closed at 22 teams. Already firmly committed are St. Maarten, Holland, Ireland, BVI (two teams), St. Lucia, USVI, "HIHO USA", and UK and US teams made up from local racers. Boats will be rotated, crews spend time ashore between races, the sails are identical. Be a true sailing Ambassador to your country and take on the world at the 2007 Nanny Cay Nations Cup! For more information visit www.racinginparadise.com.

26th Coral Bay, St. John, Thanksgiving Regatta

This popular regatta, organized by the Coral Bay Yacht Club, will be sailed on November 23rd and 24th, in Coral Bay and the adjacent waters of the east end of St. John, USVI. There will be classes for Gaffers, Single Handers, Traditional Boats, Cruising Boats, Optimists, Lasers and 420s. Sailing instructions will be available at time of registration. For more information visit www.skinnylegs.com.

Get Set for a Record ARC!

The Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) is on course for a record entry, with 240 yachts confirmed to take part in this year's transoceanic cruising rally from the Canary Islands to St. Lucia in November, topping the previous maximum of 234 entrants in ARC 1999. With more yachts currently on the waiting list, the final entry figure may be higher still. World Cruising Club, the organizers of the ARC, is currently gearing up for the departure of the ARC 2007 fleet from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria on the 25th of November. A continual programme of improvements made by the Las Palmas Port Authority to their marina in the heart of the city of Las Palmas has meant that more yachts than ever before can now be accommodated. Furthermore, all yachts will have a pontoon marina berth, essential while crews make their transatlantic preparations.

—Continued on next page



7th International Regatta 2008

Club Náutico de San Juan • San Juan, Puerto Rico

January 31 - February 3

Classes: Optimist (Green / White / Blue / Red)
• Laser (4.7 / Radial / Standard) • Snipe

Thursday, January 31st

3:00pm - 5:00pm Check-in
3:00pm Practice Race

Saturday, February 2nd

9:00am First Warning

Friday, February 1st

8:00am Skippers' Meeting
10:00am First Warning

Sunday, February 3rd

9:00am First Warning
2:30pm Awards Ceremony

Registration Fee:

Pre-Registration: US\$ 90.00 (on or before Dec 1st), Registration: US\$ 120.00 (after Dec. 1st & before Jan 19th)
Late Registration: US\$ 150.00 (after Jan 19th) Registration will be closed after Jan. 31st

Charter Boats: Optimist / Laser, used boats upon availability. Hotels: Hotel list available
For additional information, please contact Ana Julia or Gilberto Berrios at (787) 722-0177

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This regatta announcement is not intended as the Official Notice of Race for the Club Náutico de San Juan 7th International Regatta 2008. Club Náutico de San Juan reserves the right to make changes where appropriate and to invite additional classes to compete in this event.

—Continued from previous page

Plans have also been announced by IGY Marinas, the new owners of Rodney Bay Marina in St. Lucia, the finish destination for the ARC, to expand and improve berths, including adding more and larger docks, and increasing the navigable depth in the marina. Work is scheduled to start in early February and be complete in time for ARC 2008.

Now in its 22nd year, the ARC has always had an international audience, and 2007 is no exception, with 24 different nations represented within the fleet, and many more nationalities are represented across the crews, making the ARC not only the world's largest transoceanic sailing event, but also its most diverse. Entries this year range from the Ed Dubois-designed *Mariposa* at 29 metres (95 feet), down to the small but tough 7.60-metre (26-foot) Folkboat *Ariel* sailed by the youngest skipper in ARC 2007, 22-year-old Henry Adams from the UK. Fifty-three percent of the fleet lie in the 12 to 15.24-metre (40- to 50-foot) band, with a median size of 14.40 metres (47 feet two inches).

Dominating the entry list with 43 yachts are French builders Beneteau, well ahead of the next most popular make, Jeanneau with 20 yachts and Oyster with 15 yachts participating. Cruising catamarans continue to grow in popularity in the ARC fleet, with 21 taking part; the French yards Lagoon and Fountaine Pajot being most widely represented with ten and five yachts entered respectively.

Conceived and often described as "a friendly race" for cruising yachts to make the Atlantic crossing both safer and more enjoyable, those participating must carry a range of safety equipment including a liferaft, EPIRB and long-range communications. Daily radio nets contribute further to the safety of participants. While the majority of ARC yachts are there to enjoy the cruising fun, some skippers choose to race across the Atlantic, under the auspices of the Royal Ocean Racing Club in one of the ARC's two IRC Racing Divisions. This year 28 yachts will be racing, including seven yachts over 18.28 metres (60 feet). The Australian maxi *Loki* will be hoping to beat the ARC course record set last year by Italian maxi *Capricorno*, of 11 days, 5 hours, 32 minutes and 30 seconds, but will face some serious competition from two Volvo 60s: *AAG Big One* and *Pindar*, both with Russian crews racing as a warm-up for their Volvo Ocean Race campaigns.

St. Lucia is 2,700 nautical miles from Las Palmas; the passage will take most of the yachts between 18 and 21 days.

For more information visit www.worldcruising.com/arc.

Curaçao Youth Championships

The Curaçao Youth Championships will take place January 2nd through 4th, 2008 for Optimist and Splash dinghies. New for 2008 are the earlier dates and the availability of boats for charter in Curaçao rather than transportation of boats from Europe. And there is more! The venue will be different, too. This year the races will take place at Jan Thiel Beach, the same venue as for the Optimist that will take place on Curaçao June 28th to July 6th, 2008. So if you expect to participate in the Optimist, this is the opportunity to check out the bay, the wind and the water!

Before the event, there will be a clinic (December 28th to 31st) with a top coach. The organizers advise early sign-up.

For more information visit www.cyc2008.org or e-mail cyc2008.org@gmail.com.

Rallies, Ho!

Club Transcaribes will be hosting its two most popular yacht rallies again in 2008. These are great ways to visit a number of Caribbean islands aboard your own boat in the company of a fun flotilla of like-minded sailors. Shoreside parties are part of the package. The 3rd Edition of La Route du Carnaval starts on January 26th, with two free nights at Port du Marin in Martinique, moving on to overnights in Bequia and the Tobago Cays before arriving in Trinidad in time for the highlight events of the Trinidad Carnival 2008.

The Transcaribes rally will see its ninth running from March 29th to April 4th, 2008, sailing from Guadeloupe to Cuba. Stops will be made in St. Martin, the BVI and the Dominican Republic. Seven free nights at the marina will be provided to rally participants at the final destination, Santiago de Cuba.

For more information visit www.transcaribes.com.

BVI's HIHO Windsurfing Event Makes 'Best' List

The annual Highland Spring HIHO windsurfing and sailing event has been featured in the October 2007 issue of *Caribbean Travel & Life* magazine. The special issue identifies 100 of the Caribbean's "best sights, sounds and stories". The compilation is based on the personal experiences of the *Caribbean Travel & Life* team and Highland Spring HIHO was voted "the most fun you can have standing up". The well-known annual windsurfing and sailing event was the only watersports event featured in the list.

"This is certainly an accolade," commented Andy Morrell of Ocean Promotions Ltd, organizers of the event. "It's thrilling to hear that the Highland Spring HIHO and the BVI are being publicized in such widely read international magazines." Highland Spring HIHO is a week-long, international windsurfing and sailing event that takes place annually in the British Virgin Islands at the beginning of July.



The event is one of the best-known amateur windsurfing events in the world. Started in 1979, it takes racers and non-racing participants on a tour of the BVI. Highland Spring HIHO is sponsored by Highland Spring Natural Mineral Water, HIHO, The Moorings, and windsurfing industry companies, Neil Pryde and BIC Sport. The 2008 edition of the event is scheduled to begin on June 29th. For more information visit www.go-hiho.com.

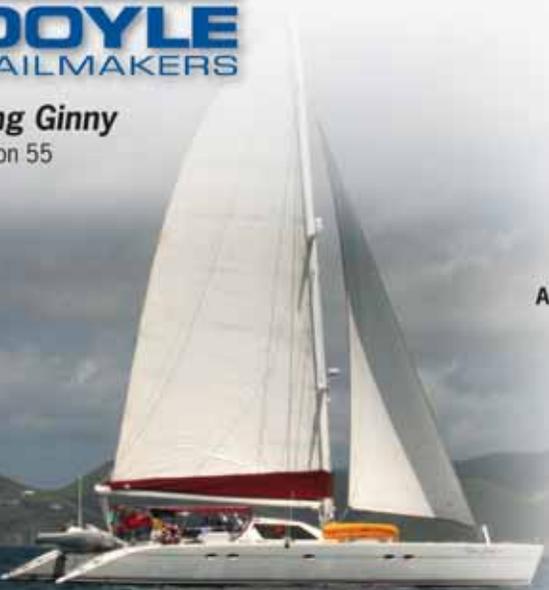
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New Wind in Barbados Cruising Club's Sails?

by Norman Faria

About a hundred supporters and members of the financially strapped 50-year-old Barbados Cruising Club gathered at the clubhouse in mid-October to go over a rescue proposal put forward by a group of local businesspeople.

The balance sheet report from Steering Committee members Dr. Mike Krimholtz and former Commodore Richard Leslie wasn't too encouraging: the outstanding debt to the Barbados government and Needham Point Holdings, from which the property is leased, could not be paid from subscriptions, the telephone was cut off and the wooden structure badly needed repairs, among other problems.

On hand to present a case from the management consortium was Duane Burke from the famous Burke group of Barbadian sailing families. The bail-out plan entailed the sorting out of the debts, commitments to pay monthly rent and utility bills, and refurbishing the clubhouse and environs, in return for them running the bar and part of the structure as a commercial enterprise. Plans are also on the board to renew contacts with the island's school system to get more youngsters from all strata of society involved in boating and marine activities including kayaking.

A Memorandum of Understanding was to be worked out and presented to an upcoming General Meeting for the membership to give final approval. From the sentiments expressed at the October get-together it appears that the consortium will indeed come on board.

The fresh wind in the sails of the boating institution should be welcomed by all, including regional and European and North American yachtspeople who knew it during its heyday in the 1960s.

The Club has an interesting history. It was founded in 1957 by a group of local and expatriate boating enthusiasts who had difficulties with the then-named Royal Barbados Yacht Club which is situated 200 metres along the shore of Carlisle Bay.

The Cruising Club's first Commodore was Ian Gale, the late proprietor of the Bequia Bookstore and a former editor of the *Barbados Advocate* newspaper. Reminisced Gale in an interview with Tony Vanterpool (*Weekend Nation*, 22 December 1989): "No reasonable person could assert that the Royal Barbados Yacht Club, as it was then, was not a very prejudiced institution. Of course it was, and to be fair, they discriminated against black and (poor) white."

In conversations with this writer when I visited with him at the Bookstore, he said they had a founding meeting in the old Aquatic Club which was then situated next to the Yacht Club. The Aquatic Club provided some vacant changing cubicles and the members used them until a new structure, modeled on the St. Lucia Yacht Club building, was erected in the early 1960s.

In fairness, the Club has in recent years received the support of BYC (its Royal Charter was removed by the Barbadian government) sailing members such as Ralph "Bruggadung" Johnson, Tony and Peter Hoad, and others knowledgeable about the significance of the Club's existence.

The Barbados Cruising Club was popular with visiting yachtsmen who in years gone by were permitted to anchor their boats off the Club in that part of Carlisle Bay among the local yachts (now special permission has to be obtained from the Coast Guard). It is hoped that the new generation of cruisers will once again patronise it.

The Club held an annual Regatta sponsored by the local Banks brewery company among other activities. However, during the 1990s membership fell off and the Club had trouble paying bills. Ironically, some former Cruising Club members took up membership at the Yacht Club; the Yacht Club's allure includes paid boat-hands and a tractor to pull up keelboats in their trailers.

On hand at the October gathering was Lesley Barrow, daughter of an early member and keen supporter, the late Barbadian Prime Minister and now one of its National Heroes, Rt. Hon. Errol Barrow. Also present was Sir Keith Hunte, former Chancellor of the Barbados campus of the University of the West Indies.

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Two Freshwater Warnings

by Tina Dreffin

You're in the tropics, heading deep into the dark rainforest for some cooling off at the local waterfall. Chances are, your excursion will be enhanced by the attendance of a horde of island children who will entertain and impress you with their waterfall antics.

But, before you jump in for a cool swim, you might consider the mysterious creatures that may lurk beneath the waters and like to bore into skin, lay eggs, invade organs, and generally wreak havoc! There are two parasitic diseases you can contract when swimming in Caribbean fresh waters: schistosomiasis (SHIS-toe-SO-my-uh-sis) and leptospirosis (lep-to-spy-RO-sis).

Schistosomiasis

Schistosomiasis first came to my attention when my husband Peter and I were invited aboard *M/V Red Dragon* in Puerto Rico, where I became acquainted with the captain's wife, a lovely wheelchair-bound woman, possessed with a lively cruising spirit. She'd contracted the disease from wading in the cool fresh waters of St. Lucia two years before. Because she was diabetic, and since an accurate diagnosis was delayed, her case had developed into a seizure, resulting in paralysis, then the wheelchair.

What is schistosomiasis? It is an infection caused by flukes, otherwise known as worms of the variety trematode, that live in fresh water. According to the article by Dr. Marybeth Ellison in the July 2005 issue of *Compass*, the worms' eggs are released via urine or stool of an infected animal; they then penetrate the tissue of a variety of freshwater snails. These snails then release the free-swimming parasitic larvae of the trematode worm into the water, where they then penetrate the skin of an unsuspecting swimmer. During the process of penetration, the larvae lose their tails and enter the blood circulation. These *schistosomulae*, as they are now called, then migrate to the portal blood supply in the liver, and mature into adult worms.

What are the symptoms? According to Dr. Ellison, symptoms can present as soon as two weeks after infection, but can also be delayed as long as several months. Initial presenting clinical symptoms include abdominal pain, diarrhea, and fever. On exam, one will have an enlarged, uncomfortable liver and spleen. The most common acute syndrome is Katayama Fever; which includes fever, lack of appetite, weight loss, abdominal pain, blood in the urine, weakness, headaches, joint and muscle pain, diarrhea, and nausea. Since the eggs are disseminated in the blood stream, one can also see a variety of symptoms and clinical findings depending on where the eggs migrate. For example, there can be pulmonary (lung) manifestations with cough and pulmonary hypertension. There can be ectopic eggs in the spinal cord, resulting in paraplegia, or other neurological manifestations, like my new friend in Puerto Rico aboard *Red Dragon*, who was sadly, very unlucky.

How do I know if I have it? The examination of stool samples is the simplest route to diagnosis. This can be performed at most island hospitals' microbiology sections; or it can be sent to larger laboratories on Puerto Rico or Trinidad by the local medical lab. Since the shedding of eggs can be sporadic, several stool samples would be optimal, to increase the likelihood of diagnosis. If tested outside the Caribbean, be sure to tell your doctor of your recent foreign travels, and that you may have come into contact with contaminated fresh water. A simple blood test is available at the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov).

What is the treatment? Treatment of any parasitic infection should be done in consultation with a physician, as the shedding of dead worms and eggs can result in increased symptoms for a transient period. But after a couple days of taking the appropriate tablets, you should be cured.

Leptospirosis

This serious disease is more common in the Caribbean islands than schistosomiasis. It first came to my attention when swimming in the waterfall pools in Grenada with our young family and friends. As bad luck would have it, my friend's son contracted the dreaded leptospirosis. Thankfully he recovered, after suffering terribly. His parents had despaired, trying to figure out what exactly was wrong with him, as the disease mimics other tropical diseases such as dengue fever, malaria and typhus. So, an accurate diagnosis was late in coming, very nearly resulting in the boy's death. (All this on the tail end of a raging hurricane too!)

What is leptospirosis? It is caused by a corkscrew-shaped *Leptospira bacterium* that resides in wild or domesticated mammals inhabiting areas around freshwater pools or streams. They excrete the organism through their urine or fluids of parturition into waters or

even damp soil. When summer rains come, it is spread through ground saturation and run-off into the nearby pools. The parasites then enter the body through broken skin, mucous membranes, or water ingestion.

What are the symptoms? At first, they are mild, like the flu or dengue fever, and many mild cases go undiagnosed. Usually between five and 20 days after infection, numerous symptoms are: fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle aches, eye inflammation, rash, anemia, or cough.



Waterfalls are a delight, but do your homework to avoid fresh water streams that could be home to parasites

Dr. Ellison wrote in the December 2004 issue of *Compass*: "The worrying thing about leptospirosis is that it has a very variable presentation, and it is in some cases fatal. Five to ten percent of people with leptospirosis will be unlucky enough to develop a second phase of the disease after a brief hiatus of improvement over a period of one to three days. During this biphasic, degenerating illness, one becomes very ill quickly and needs to seek out a medical facility. It is actually during this second phase (referred to as the immunologic phase) that one can develop liver failure, renal failure, splenic crisis, systemic collapse, meningitis, encephalitis, and death."

How do I know if I have it? A special blood test is available through medical laboratories or health departments.

What is the treatment? Early on in the disease process, leptospirosis is easily treatable through antibiotics: penicillin, amoxicillin, tetracycline, or doxycycline. If specific organ systems become involved in the second phase of the illness, then one will likely require life-sustaining care for those systems as well.

There is no vaccine available; however, if you are traveling and think you might be exposed to contaminated waters, chemoprophylaxis is advisable with doxycycline (200 gm orally, weekly), begun one or two days before, and continuing through, the period of exposure. Also, cover cuts and abrasions with occlusive dressings to minimize infection possibilities when swimming in fresh water near animals.

As an international cruiser with 100,000 blue water miles under my belt in over 25 years of living aboard *Scud*, our 44-foot catamaran, neither schistosomiasis nor leptospirosis will keep me from plunging into the gorgeous pools of the Caribbean islands. Now that I am empowered with information, I'll simply continue taking precautions and keep on jumping!

For more information, recorded messages on travel-related health topics are available by calling 877-FYI-TRIP toll free. Every two years, the CDC (www.cdc.gov) publishes the *Yellow Book: Health Information for International Travel*, which contains advice on health risks.

Grotty Yachties: A QUESTION OF BALANCE

A year or so ago, *Compass* ran a "cruiser's health" series, describing horrible illnesses that result from infections. This follows the trend that has been with us since Louis Pasteur's groundbreaking 19th-century research in bacteriology: to think of infections as the enemy, with cleanliness, Godliness and strong soap on the side of the angels.

There is much to recommend this approach, as apart from being struck by lightning or a truck, few things will smite you into oblivion faster than a really nasty infection. And there is no question that the discovery of bacteria and viruses and the implementation of public health measures to sidestep them has made us healthier. On the other hand, it is not the whole story, and there is evidence that maybe we have carried the battle against infection too far.

The world is full of life, which biologists divide into two groups according to cellular structure; prokaryotes (bacteria and cyanobacteria) and eukaryotes (the rest of us). We should also mention viruses, which, while not generally considered alive, consist of genetic material that can hook into your DNA and use it for replicating themselves, often with devastating effects.

Isolation is unhealthy

We humans think of ourselves as singular beings, separate from other life around us. The truth is messier. We might be more aptly described as colonial animals comprising one big multicellular eukaryote, plus numerous bacteria and a fungus or two. Most of the bacteria reside in our digestive tract and are essential to our proper functioning. Apart from helping us digest, they assume control of some of our genes and this helps us regulate water absorption and the formation of intestinal blood vessels.

The bacteria within our bodies outnumber the rest of our cells by something like ten to one. When all goes well, this collection of life forms exists in harmony. This happy circumstance is the result of millions of years of coevolution, and one reason the whole system works is that we have a complex immune system to sort out bad infections from good. Part of our immune system (called the innate immune system) evolved a long time ago, and we share it with insects, plants and fungi. Our more recently evolved adaptive immune system is shared only with other vertebrates. This system checks out an intruder, figures out the best way to kill it, then attacks it with specially designed and produced cells. It also remembers the intruder for a long time and will be ready to bop it the next time it shows its ugly face, a feature doctors make use of when they give us a vaccination.

The delicate balance of the whole setup is fascinating. If your immune system is not active enough, you get sick and can die (this can also happen if your immune system is good, but the infection has learnt how to fool it, or if it multiplies so fast it kills you before you kill it). On the other hand, if you have an overactive immune system, it may attack the dust in the air you breathe, or certain foods that you eat, giving you allergies. It may even attack some of your own cells as in multiple sclerosis, when the immune system attacks the myelin sheath of the nerves, and rheumatoid arthritis, when your joints get attacked. A significant number of humans die from infections or get autoimmune diseases, which shows how evolution is always a balance, what a juggling act our immune systems perform, and how lucky we are if we escape.

None of this is static — neither our immune system, nor our bacteria, nor the cells in our body. Changes in our mood, or environment, or even an infection that passes unnoticed, can have an effect. However, as we have become cleaner, autoimmune disease has become much more common. Allergies to food like nuts, once rare, are now so common many schools have banned them on their grounds. Asthma and hay fever have also increased dramatically. In a recent study it was found one in every three people was affected by some sort of allergy during their lifetime.

Because things like heavily polluted air and second-hand smoke can trigger asthma, it used to be thought

that allergies were the result of a dirty environment. In the 1990s Erika Von Mutius set out to show a correlation between dirt and asthma, and in one of those wonderful serendipitous science moments, found just the opposite to be true. Since then, it has been found that kids who have pets or are brought up on farms have fewer allergies than those brought up in spotless homes. This hygiene hypothesis for allergies is becoming more widely accepted. A recent headline in *Scotman.com* said: "A bath a day puts your baby at risk". It turns out that overbathed babies are more prone to eczema, and health officials now recommend bathing babies fewer than three times a week.

But it gets even weirder than that. With better food preparation, we have shucked off many of the intestinal parasites that used to plague us. But did they also confer some benefit? Crohn's disease happens when the immune system attacks the bacteria in the gut. It is found mainly in wealthy developed nations. Could it have something to do with a lack of parasites? Researcher Joel Weinstock thought it might. He tried feeding pig whipworm eggs to Crohn's sufferers and got a 72 percent remission rate. These results

have since been confirmed by others. Studies on mice show that worms might help prevent Type 1 diabetes and asthma.

The conclusion would seem to be we cannot, nor should we try, to avoid all infection; rather, we need to be choosy about our infections. An analogy might be human society — we need to interact with other people; isolation is unhealthy. However, we should try to avoid dealing with commensals, rapists, muggers and murderers. We can help ourselves, both in the case of people and infections, but life is not risk-free and there are no guarantees.

What does all this have to do with cruisers? I have noticed that some cruisers these days take what I would consider to be rather extensive precautions against infections. I have met people who would not walk barefoot in a river or swim in a waterfall. I have read about people who wash every piece of salad in potassium permanganate. Many only drink bottled water. And I am not going to say they are wrong — everyone has to navigate their own path in life. But the feeling I get is that being overprotective is a lot less fun and may not be doing you any favors, while avoiding obvious and dangerous infections is common sense. Taking precautions against AIDS is a good example, as is avoiding bathing in slow-running rivers in Guadeloupe or South America where bilharzia may be a risk. If a blood-sucking bat partook of my body, I would definitely get a rabies shot. When mosquito-borne dengue fever is around, I use "Off".

But the anti-bacteria message is so accepted that it is hard to find regular, as opposed to anti-bacterial, soap. The advertising industry seems to have sold us on the idea we will somehow be healthier if we kill off the bacteria on our skins. Washing our hands well with regular soap before eating does help get rid of extra bacteria or viruses that might be hitching a ride and would like nothing better than to be invited into our digestive tracts. But putting the ante by using anti-bacterial soap may not be wise. We have learnt to live with whatever bacteria regularly hang out on our skin. Attacking them with a specially prepared soap will either cause them to evolve a more resistant strain or kill them, in which case it may provide opportunities for other, tougher, and possibly meaner, bacteria to move in.

All in all, I take this as excellent news for the few original Caribbean sailors I still know who won't let a razor near their face, and would rather kiss a toad than take a bath.

Book references (I highly recommend these books, both of which are really fun to read):
Infection by Gerald N. Callahan, St. Martin's Press, 2006
Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers, Robert M. Sapolsky, Owl Books, 2004

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When I return to England every year, my landlubber friends groan when they see me.

"You're still so fit and slim!" (They mean despite my 63 years.) "But of course it's easy for you, pulling up all those anchors and sails, swimming every day and eating all that fish," they say.

Hmm! I hate to disillusion them, but the last boat I spent any serious amount of time on had an electric windlass and the owner preferred to hoist the sails himself when we went to sea, which was a rare event. Also they tend to forget that I'm allergic to fish. (I have now developed the habit of reminding them before every dinner invitation to save embarrassment.)

To tell the truth, I have the same problems keeping fit afloat as I did ashore. When the boat chores mount up I find it tempting to jump into a taxi to shop, farm the laundry out, use a watermaker instead of carrying jerry jugs and pay someone else to clean the bottom of the boat. After all, I didn't adopt this lifestyle to slave away at chores all day, did I? (Don't tell me, I know: it still seems to happen that way.)

So how do I keep reasonably fit and slim, even when it's not always easy to get ashore?

I tried yoga, which is recommended for overall physical and mental health and doesn't need bulky and expensive equipment. But try standing on your head in the saloon and I can guarantee that a jet-ski or fishing boat will come past at just the right speed to produce maximum wake. Then, just as you get yourself tied into an intricate knot, you hear your partner coming back so you decide to hold the pose to impress him/her and, lo and behold, they have bought a surprise guest with them and there you are, bent double, with your head between your legs and rear end in the air.

Weight training is efficiently effective for keeping in trim, but can you imagine the kind of damage a loose ten-pound dumbbell would do in Force Eight? And why not just carry the water, the fuel and the groceries?

Walking is a favourite activity of mine. I find it relaxing, mentally as well as physically. Sometimes I have come across other walkers and shared memorable hikes through the rainforests in Grenada and Trinidad, or gone out with local Hash House Harriers, groups organised for "drinkers with a running problem".

KEEPING IN SHAPE AFLOAT

by Julia Bartlett

But it isn't always easy to get ashore for exercise and I have had a couple of nasty falls out of the dinghy trying to beat the surf. (One was going ashore in Juangriego on the north coast of Isla Margarita, Venezuela, as the swells from Hurricane Ivan were felt, so that doesn't really count.) If there has had to be cooperation from a partner for launching the dinghy and it's given with ill grace, I find myself weighing up the options: have domestic strife plus exercise or put my feet up with a good book? Decisions, decisions!

Not all anchorages are suitable for swimming. And some of us, especially guys it seems, are self-conscious about dancing when there's the opportunity. But there is always some way of taking exercise.

I have decided that keeping fit is a state of mind and a matter of being flexible, forgive the pun. Where there is a will there's a way, even on long voyages, although sometimes it's a lot easier than others. But here are some exercises I have found easy to do anywhere.

- 1) I lie flat on my back and cycle in the air with my legs to get my heart rate up
- 2) Still on my back, I do stomach curls. I bend my knees, keeping my feet flat on the floor/bunk and, with my hands locked behind my neck supporting it, I use my stomach muscles to try to lift my shoulders up
- 3) Press ups (push ups). Keeping my back straight, I do them kneeling or against a flat surface like a table; it doesn't have to be the full army version
- 4) Sitting on the very edge of a bunk, and I put my hands on it, either side of me, then I move my body forward and dip down and lift up
- 5) When sitting at the wheel, I try to squash it between my hands, sit up straight and pull in my stomach and pelvic muscles, and roll my head around slowly in both directions
- 6) Standing in a doorway, I try to make it wider by pushing
- 7) Lifting the legs back, one at a time, holding on to something or while kneeling with my hands on the floor is good for the buns, I'm told (I keep getting a crick in my neck looking for improvement)

There are many more possibilities, and you'll find those that you enjoy most if you are on the look-out for them. I find that the more I can do comfortably, the more I want to do. Start with ten minutes a day and work up, adding swimming, walking and dancing whenever possible. Cans of food, full bottles of water and cartons of juice can be used for weights.

The old adage "use it or lose it" is certainly becoming truer as I get older and I always start a new exercise gradually. Nothing puts me off exercise more than feeling sore the next day.

Then there is diet. Over the 18 years that I have lived mostly onboard it has become increasingly easy to find great fresh veggies, even on tiny islands like Carriacou in the Grenadines, and in Luperón, in the Dominican Republic, where greens are not a part of the local food culture. I am a vegetarian these days and really enjoy fresh veggies and fruit, so that may be a part of the reason that I am slim. The fact is that if we eat and drink more calories than we burn our bodies will store them for a rainy day. It's a matter of simple arithmetic.

So turn up the music, get into your cruising exercise routine and have fun.

PS It's a pity exercise doesn't seem to do much for my wrinkles!

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Keeping a dry tail without wearing foul-weather trousers has been a difficult but often a successful operation. Some wouldn't think that this is an issue when sailing in the Caribbean, but on a squally day or during a rough overnight passage, you'll definitely want to keep the rain and sea off your nether regions. But foul-weather trousers are just too hot and cumbersome for the tropics.

The story of how the crew of *Iolaire* and *L'I Iolaire* achieved dry tails starts in Great South Bay, Long Island, in the early years of the last century when Joe Lawrence, owner of the Gil Smith 39-foot gaff-rigged centerboard sloop *Kid* had a set of Ratsley sails delivered.

A Tale of Dry Tails

by Don Street

Ratsley's head sailmaker bent on the sails and went for a trial sail with Joe to make sure everything was correct. The young apprentice accompanying the head sailmaker was Charlie "Butch" Ulmer, father of the Charlie Ulmer who later was head of Ulmer Koliuss sails. The senior Ulmer progressed through the ranks at Ratsley's to the point that he became head cutter, and made enough money to buy and race Star class boats quite extensively.

Joe Lawrence sold the *Kid* and raced Stars for a few years, then became Race Committee Chairman of the North Atlantic Star Championships which were held in the Great South Bay, as the Great South Bay Star sailors seemed to be the best and won the championships year after year — until Skip Etchells showed up on the scene.

He became the top Star sailor, won the North Atlantic Star Championship and moved it to western Long Island Sound in 1942.

Fast-forward to 1954 when I was hired as paid hand on Huey Long's beautiful, Abeking & Rasmussen-designed and built, 53-foot black yawl. The yawl's skipper got fired a month later, and I became skipper (with no increase in wages). As skipper, I had a lot of dealings with Charlie Ulmer who had by then split with Ratsley and had his own sailmaking business. He continued to race Stars.

When he discovered I was the grandson of North Atlantic Star Committee Chairman Joe Lawrence, he took me under his wing and, until his dying day, helped me in any way he could.

In the late 1950s and into the '70s, Ulmer made light foul-weather gear with a smock top, great in the warm weather of the SORC and the Caribbean, but not too good up north in cold weather.

A few years after buying *Iolaire* and suffering regularly from a wet tail, I had a bright idea. I asked Charlie if, the next time they were cutting out a bunch of foul-weather gear smocks, he would cut eight tops extra long to reach down to the knees.

"No problem," he said, and *Iolaire's* crew and charter parties had dry tails without wearing foul-weather trousers.

Needless to say, the light foul-weather gear eventually lost its waterproofness and had to be replaced, which we periodically did until the mid-1970s when Ulmer stopped making foul-weather gear.

What to do?

I had noticed, when sailing in the Saintes and Guadeloupe, the French islands' fishermen wearing long, yellow foul-weather coats. Not jackets, coats. So off to a store in Guadeloupe that catered to the fishermen. I bought eight of their long, yellow foul-weather coats, not very fashionable but available and the price

was right and we kept dry tails.

Then in the late 1970s, through some Irish friends, I was introduced to Allie Burns who made foul-weather gear for Aer Lingus and other airline ground crews. Together we designed coats that had zippered fronts with a velcro flap, good two-inch-wide velcro strips at the wrists, and an ample hood with a chin strap — a much better foul-weather coat than the French fishermen's.

I worked a deal and we shipped them to the Caribbean where they became quite popular for a number of years, but we finally gave up. It was not one of my profitable business ventures, as the routing from Ireland to the Caribbean had to go through the

UK, and was so complicated that the freight costs were more than the cost of the foul-weather gear! So back to the French fishermen's coats.

Then, a few years ago, I discovered that Henri Lloyd was making some very good, long, light foul-weather gear, absolutely ideal for the tropics, despite a slight design error: they should have been six inches longer as, unless you were wearing short shorts, the bottom edge of your shorts got wet. But at least the tail stayed dry. I discovered these coats just when Henri



GAIL ANDERSON

After cruising the Caribbean for 50 years, Don Street knows the importance of keeping your insides wet and your outsides dry

Lloyd had stopped production, as they said they were not selling.

I tried (unsuccessfully) to convince them that if they were not selling, it was not a fault of the gear but of the sales department. I stated I was sure they would sell if they were advertised in the Caribbean issues of the yachting magazines and the regional sailing monthlies. However, my views fell on deaf ears and the coats sold out and were not continued.

All is not lost, however. At the last Newport boat show, we discovered that Gill has just started a line of light foul-weather coats that actually look better than the Henri Lloyd coats as they seem to be a bit longer. I urged the sales staff at the show to pass on the suggestion to the head of the sales department to advertise in *Compass*, *All At Sea* and the Caribbean issues of all the yachting magazines. If the sales department does this I am sure the Gill foul weather coats will sell well and Caribbean sailors can have dry tails.

I also hear that Island Water World is importing long foul-weather coats from Australia, so Caribbean sailors will have a choice of two different foul-weather coats. I wonder which will prove to be the best?

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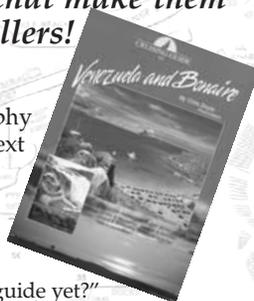
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Southern Grenadines in Focus

by Amal Thomas

Recent developments in the Southern Grenadines — Canouan, Mayreau, Union Island, Palm Island, Petit St. Vincent and the Tobago Cays — have drawn my interest. To get the facts, I interviewed St. Vincent & the Grenadines' former Director of Tourism, Vera Ann Brereton, and current Director of Grenadines Affairs, Edwin Snagg. First, let me give you some information about St. Vincent's Southern Grenadines.

The Isles

Of the southernmost islands of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, only Canouan, Union Island and Palm Island are accessible by air; the others can be reached only by sea. The most often used gateways to these are St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Puerto Rico, Barbados, Grenada and Trinidad. The airports are small, so you must go through the above-mentioned countries and fly with air-charter companies such as SVG Air, Mustique Airways, Grenadine Airways and Trans Island Air (TIA).

Shoreside accommodations include friendly guest houses, apartments, villas and the world-class resorts such as Petit St. Vincent, Palm Island and Raffles. The Grenadines are famous for seafood, and the restaurants are easy to find, because



Union Island's Clifton Harbour is the yachting hub of SVG's Southern Grenadines

each small island is one community.

Do enjoy the various beaches and the Tobago Cays Marine Park. Our precious clear water features some of the best diving, snorkeling and sailing in the Caribbean. Packages can be organized: each island has tour operators and dive companies, leaving no excuse for not experiencing the Grenadines at their best. However, the law states that all jet-skiing is prohibited. Instead of such noisy "thrills and spills", just enjoy the natural environment and mingle with locals who will give you insight into island life from their personal history. Tourism and seafaring are the key businesses of the Southern Grenadines people.

Sailors arriving in SVG waters from another country can clear Customs at Canouan or Union Island.

When entering Canouan, the favourable anchorage is Charlestown. Be careful and enter between the red and green markers because the harbour has some dangerous shoals. It's advised that you anchor more to the northeast side of the harbour.

Canouan has small shops where you can get groceries, the latest news on the island and other basic essentials. The island has one clinic and a police station. The clinic can be reached at (784) 458-8100. For any more information, the tourism bureau in Charlestown will assist you. Canouan's main attraction is its peaceful beaches.

Moving on a bit to the south, nine miles below Canouan is Mayreau. The little island has a population of approximately 275, and they are generally friendly people. The island has no airport and is only accessible by boat. The best anchorages on the island are Salt Whistle Bay (which can be crowded) and Saline Bay. On non-cruiseship days, Saline Bay is an idea get-away spot, perfect to hang out for few days. Be sure to visit the little museum next to the Catholic church on the hilltop. After taking in the eagle's-eye view of the Tobago Cays, stop for a cold drink or a meal at one of the island's colourful restaurants.

Just about four and a half miles from Mayreau is Union Island. Union Island is the Southern Grenadines' hub, which caters for yachts and other vessels entering or clearing out of St. Vincent & the Grenadines waters. Make sure to keep one eye on the navigational markers and one eye on the chart when entering Clifton Harbour: cruising guides give detailed directions. Union Island can be very sunny and windy at times, making the anchorage behind Newland's Reef dramatic. On shore you can get groceries, souvenirs and some boat accessories, have a restaurant meal or take a scenic hike. If you want to visit the Tobago Cays Marine Park, you can get information and pay your entry fee at the Park Office in Clifton.

Palm Island and Petit St. Vincent (PSV) are private resort islands. You can anchor off either one, but Palm is recommended only as a day stop.

The Interviews: Vera Ann Brereton, former Director of Tourism

Amal: As a Vincentian, what has inspired you to venture into the tourism field?

Miss Brereton: I have always been fascinated by the field of tourism since my secondary school days. Unfortunately, at that time, tourism was paid very little attention by successive administrations, and my attempts to obtain a scholarship to pursue studies in tourism were unsuccessful. When I was awarded a Canadian Aid Bursary to pursue university studies at the University of the West Indies' Cave Hill Campus in Barbados, my first reaction was to turn down the offer. However, I guess good sense prevailed and I accepted the Bursary, obtained a BA (Hons) Degree in Economics and History and returned to St. Vincent to work in the Public Service.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

I never lost my interest in tourism and continued my efforts to seek assistance to pursue post-graduate studies in this field. After many disappointments, I entered the University of Surrey in 1977 to pursue post-graduate studies in Tourism Management, returning to St. Vincent in 1978, and later being appointed the country's first local Director of Tourism in 1981.

Amal: As a former Director of Tourism, what is the greatest challenge you ever faced on a daily basis? And if you had the post now, what changes would be made to improve the situation?

Miss Brereton: The greatest challenge is getting the government financial authorities to understand what the responsibilities of government are in the development, management and marketing of tourism, and the need for greater financial commitment. If I held the post of Director of Tourism today, I would seek to impress the need for a properly structured National Tourism Authority that is staffed by experienced and professionally trained personnel and properly financed.

Amal: What do you think is the biggest problem in the Southern Grenadines?

Miss Brereton: I believe that the most critical issues facing the yachting industry in SVG today are the issues of visitor security, including crime and harassment, and user-friendly systems and procedures for clearing yachts in and out of SVG waters.



Getting the Grenadines' message at one of Mayreau's friendly bar/restaurants

Amal: What group or body is there to address the requirements of the sailing industry in the Southern Grenadines?

Miss Brereton: Before the end of my second stint as Director of Tourism, I established a Marine Tourism Task Force [in 2002] which had begun to look at the various issues affecting the yachting industry in SVG.

Amal: What is the greatest achievement being experienced from tourism in the Southern Grenadines?

Miss Brereton: It is, perhaps, a more sustainable form of income generation and an improved standard of living, including housing, roads, electricity, water and education.

The Interviews: Edwin Snagg, Director of Grenadines Affairs

Amal: This interview is geared towards tourism issues in the Southern Grenadines.

Mr. Snagg: Okay — there's a lot going on in the Southern Grenadines!

Amal: What inspired you to get involved in Southern Grenadines affairs?

Mr. Snagg: Well, as a person growing up in the Grenadines, I always wanted to give service back to the public. It's not easy, with ups and downs, and many times I have to question myself to push forward.

Amal: How have the Southern Grenadines benefited from your management?

Mr. Snagg: The Southern Grenadines have benefited through improvement in social services, environmental areas such as garbage-disposal sites, a transformation of the Clifton Harbour waterfront, and a secondary school on Union Island which was reconstructed with dormitories to house teachers and students from Mayreau and Canouan who cannot otherwise get a place to stay. In general, the Grenadines are part of the political and social landscape of this country.

Amal: What is being done to control yacht harassment in the Southern Grenadines?

Mr. Snagg: Well, let me say that the level of police work has stepped up; there are now seven Rangers employed at the Tobago Cays Marine Park and a new vessel for patrol is part of the step-up process. There are committee boards and a tourist bureau where information can be obtained. Also, the tour guides and tourist board work together to control the harassment in the Southern Grenadines.

Amal: What plans are in place to deal with the abandoned marina project at Ashton, Union Island, which can pose a threat to the environment?

Mr. Snagg: The mangroves have been destroyed, but the abandoned marina does not really pose any hazard. There's a hole opened up [in the causeway] for the water to flow in and out. There are talks in the pipeline on ways to put the site to good use. In doing this, it will be able to provide service, but we must stick to the environmental laws.

Amal: Are there any plans for youths in the Southern Grenadines to attend programs to gain knowledge in the marine industry?

Mr. Snagg: There is training done by various ministries alongside the Ministry of Tourism. It's a big industry. Also involved are the YES Program (Youth Empowerment Scheme) under the Ministry of Education, the tourist board and Customs.

There are also various non-governmental groups involved in protecting the Grenadines, such as MEDO (Mayreau Environmental Development Organisation), the 4H Club, the Union Island Ecological Group, the Archaeological Group and the Sustainable Grenadines Project. The Sustainable Grenadines Project is co-ordinating programs between the countries of St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada, to study eco-tourism in the Grenadines as a whole. I would like to say that the Union Island Tourist Board is doing a great job with environmental concerns.

The Southern Grenadines have the potential to transform the country's tourism product. It's like a hub. There is development of Canouan airport to become a jet-port soon, and also a beautification programme for the island. There are talks about having a marina on Canouan. I think the Grenadines on the whole will be blooming in the next ten years.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

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 Inray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this and next month, will help you calculate the tides. Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide runs eastward; and from just after its nadir to soon after its rising, the tide runs westward. Times given are local.

Note: the maximum tide is 3 or 4 days after the new and full moons.
For more information, see "Tides and Currents" on the back of all Inray Iolaire charts. Fair tides!

DATE	TIME	21	2108	10	1220	(new)
1	0533	22	2203	11	1323	
2	0623	23	2303	12	1415	
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8	1033	29	0320	18	1858	
9	1117	30	0415	19	1949	
10	1202	31	0504	20	2044	
11	1251	(new)		21	2145	
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13	1434	1	0549	23	2356	
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INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

In the workshop in the bottom flat of his stately two-storied wooden house on the west bank of the Pomeroon River in Guyana, Neilson Gomes gives his immaculately-maintained 1968 Chrysler 35-horsepower outboard engine yet another wipe-down.

Beside it, an equally seldom-heard, approximately 50-horsepower Force engine, of 1960s vintage, stands ready to purr into life at the touch of a button. Outside, moored to his small jetty on the other side of the river, facing the "Capital of Pomeroon", the town of Charity, is his 30-year-old lovingly-cared-for aluminum speedboat, *Pearly Mist*. It is powered, the retiree points out proudly, by a 20-horsepower Chrysler.

One of Gomes' retirement hobbies is now preserving and repairing classic and old outboards. But he was once a boatbuilder in an area renowned for building sturdy wooden craft that carried cargo and passengers throughout the Eastern Caribbean and even farther afield.

He started in the 1970s. But there were several skilled shipwrights in the area long before that. As he told me, one was Joe Stoll, whose yard built large two-masted

up, you place the ribbands (long lengths of flexible wood) on the inside and bends on the outside to get the shape," says Gomes as we watch his son Royston and a helper working on repairs to a 30-foot fishing boat. It is basically the same method carried out by shipwrights throughout the Eastern Caribbean.

There's still business for wooden boat-building in the Pomeroon, reckons Gomes. While fiberglass hulls may last longer, there is the cost factor. It is still cheaper to build in wood and, with good maintenance, the boats could last quite long enough for the owners to make money from them. It is true that using fiberglass and resin is kinder to the forests but they are oil-based products so still have to come from a non-renewable source, which is oil. The fiberglass and resin would also have to be imported, Gomes reminds you. "I'm not against it (use of more modern materials). In fact I use some epoxy resin for gluing, along with resorcinol, but we have to watch costs and pass them on to the customer."

Basically, the hull shapes of coastal and riverain boats in South America's only English-speaking country have changed little over the years. The smaller runabouts

are relatively narrow, reflecting their origins in the Amerindian canoe. The larger hulls reflect European influence, including Dutch. Mainly round-bottom hulls are made now, but Guyanese shipwrights also make "hard chine" (that is, flat sides and flat bottoms meeting at an edge called the chine), even in larger sizes such as those which once carried fruits and vegetables between St. Vincent and Barbados.

Local design variations occur to suit local economic changes. Hence, the advent of cheaper outboard engines meant changes to the stern section where engines are placed. The sterns became wider and had to be better reinforced to take additional stress.

Boat-building cultural changes influenced by everyday economics are readily apparent in the wider and larger "speedboats" (water-taxis) on the many rivers in the former British colony. More passengers on a trip means more money, though there are slightly higher fuel costs.

Before boat building, Neilson was a civil servant. He was also the representative in the Pomeroon area for Central Garage in Georgetown which imported (what else?) Chrysler outboards from the US.

Why did that brand stop selling in Guyana? After all, they had a good reputation in the US, where the first practical outboard was developed (by Norwegian-American Ole Evinrude) in 1909. Today, almost every outboard in Guyana is a Yamaha or a Mariner, which is also made by Yamaha.

Gomes explains: "At that time, Yamaha and other Asian outboard manufacturers were making a cheaper brand. I believe they had branches in Latin America. Chrysler was also bought in the early 1990s by Mercury Outboards. Fishermen in Guyana, as elsewhere, may have tended to stay away from a high-priced engine."

Strangely, despite the lower fuel and maintenance costs in the long run, not too many inboard diesel engines are used in small working boats in Guyana. Even large 40-footers may be seen to be powered by two large outboards at the back. Gomes feels there should be a choice. Outboards, with the coming on line of models adapted to use kerosene and the new bio-fuels, need not be expensive to run. There is also a Chinese-made diesel-powered outboard available in Guyana and, Gomes believes, Brazil.

What of the future of boat-building and the marine trades in Guyana? Gomes is optimistic. With the country's large coastal and riverain areas, he sees a need for river transport. As Guyana's economy continues to improve, better fuel-efficient and lower-maintenance materials and power systems will undoubtedly become available. He pointed to the aluminum and fiberglass "powerboats" already using ethanol and other environment-friendly fuels.

Traditional Guyanese wooden boat-builders could also get some orders from wooden boat aficionados in North America and Europe if their products are properly marketed. A schooner was ordered by an American and built a few hundred metres across the river from Gomes's home about five years ago.

Picking a few mangoes from his extensive fruit orchards (another hobby) for his visitor, he smiles and says the present and next generations will have to do what they have to do. He feels he's done his little part and the future looks bright for everyone.

Pomeroon River Boat-Building

Neilson Gomes Reflects on Changing Times

by Norman Faria



© NORMAN FARIA

Above: Guyanese boatbuilder Neilson Gomes is also a proud collector of classic outboard engines

Left: Wooden vessels are still built and repaired on the banks of the Pomeroon River

schooners from the 1940s to 1960s, such as the *Timothy H* and the *Anna Marie*. Other craftsmen were from the Gonsalves and the Van Slutyan families, while the April and Fiedtkou families at Supenaam still operate major yards.

These schooners, like those built in the Grenadines, were basically modeled on working fishing schooners of the northeastern United States and Canada. The two-masted vessels plied between Barbados, British Guiana and the Eastern Caribbean islands, carrying rice, fruits and vegetables, wallaba poles and other cargo. Some of the larger schooners also carried passengers, Gomes related.

By the time Gomes got into the trade, economic realities had taken the wind out of the sails of the "schooner trade". Steel-hulled freighters were bought in Europe. They could carry more cargo, faster, and on a dependable schedule. The use of large ocean-going wooden freighters in the islands has been on steady decline since then.

The majority of boats from the Gomes family business have been for the home market. A helpful, considerate man, Gomes built mainly smaller craft in the 40-foot range on average and all of them were "engine boats" for coastal trading and fishing. The largest he built was a 44-footer.

Typical of all Pomeroon boatbuilders, he used the brown-and-yellow silver balli wood for planking, fastened with galvanized iron nails to frames of mora and other types of wood. The harder greenheart was used for keels. At the time, builders could easily get 60-foot-long planks. This was ideal. Aside from the fact that silver balli is virtually free of knots and works beautifully with saws and planes, the long planks would run the whole length of the hull. This would make for a stronger boat. Some of the larger boats built, for example, by April and his sons, use more greenheart now for the planking.

Gomes, like most other boatbuilders in the area, never referred to blueprints, unless brought to them by a client who wanted specific features in the design. Everything was done by "ear and sight". First the keel was laid on blocks under the nearby mango trees.

"Then you set the middle rib, the bow rib and the stem bow. When you got them



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Our Last Venezuelan Cruise

by Mary Robinson

After years of Caribbean cruising, it was time for us to head back to the UK. But first, a last cruise in Venezuela.

We headed from Isla Blanquilla down to Cayo Herradura, off Isla Tortuga: a horseshoe of sandy beaches. There are some fishing camps ashore: basic shacks or shelters with hammocks hanging under a simple roof while the wind blows through. They look totally in keeping with the situation, but nowadays not all of them belong to the fishermen. Wealthy businessmen come in fast powerboats from the mainland to bring their families for a weekend "get-away-from-it-all". But fishermen are still in evidence, their beautiful craft, covered over with awnings against the sun, carrying multicoloured marker-flags for their fishing gear.

We were surprised that our papers were inspected yet again here by the Guarda Costa.

In previous years we had continued further west to the archipelagos of Los Roques and Las Aves. This time, not wanting to have to fight our way back upwind later, we abandoned the attractions of these remaining offshore islands. Instead we stopped for an excellent snorkel off Los Palanquinos, and anchored overnight in Playa Caldera on the northeastern tip of Tortuga.

The next day we made passage down to Isla Chimana Segunda, which is only a short distance from the mainland city of Puerto la Cruz. It is a beautiful anchorage with some more excellent snorkelling and a good beach restaurant ashore. There are a series of individual tables each in its own little stone enclosure with a pretty thatched awning-roof over it.

There is a tendency of wind and tide to circulate here — fine if you have the place to yourself but not so good if the anchorage should be busy. We made sure that we were not there over a weekend: local people love a day out. The whole bay becomes crammed full of boats, perhaps a couple of hundred or more, mostly small or medium-sized powerboats. They raft up together, music throbs. Small fast ferries bring yet more crowds and the restaurant does a roaring trade. Not until late Sunday night does peace return. Every Monday morning a massive clean-up operation can be observed on the beach and a 20-foot pirogue is piled high taking rubbish away.

From Chimana Segunda we proceeded to Bahía Redonda Marina in Puerto la Cruz. This year there was plenty of space, largely due to the fact that the fuel dock was closed and marine diesel more or less unobtainable. Marina rates were very reasonable and we were delighted to meet up with a number of local people who had done some invaluable work on *Skybird* a couple of years ago. Everyone was very welcoming and greeted us like old friends. I was also able to exchange the last of our American dollars to Bolivars at an even more favourable rate than in Porlamar, on Isla Margarita.

We always enjoy the dinghy trip from the marina through the maze of waterways that make up the "El

Morro" complex. This takes us for a couple of miles through channels lined with marinas, and pretty little flats and houses, all brightly painted with balconies over the water; most having private mooring facilities. There is also a five-star hotel and a golf course. From the water everything appears to be peaceful and relaxed, with free and easy access. One is not aware of the fact that all these places would be behind locked security gates and armed guards if one were to approach by road. We made our way to a quay where we tied up and visited the well-stocked supermarket — our first chance to restock since Porlamar over a month ago.

After Puerto la Cruz we followed a suggestion from an article under "Destinations" in *Compass* and decided to visit El Oculito, "the Hidden Bay". As promised, as we made our way there we saw more dolphins than we had seen anywhere else in the Caribbean. The



On a farewell cruise of Venezuela, Skybird anchored at Chimana Segunda, 'a beautiful anchorage with some excellent snorkelling and a good beach restaurant ashore'

islands in the area are steep and beautiful with many anchorages and with amazing, colourful rock formations. There was little evidence of human activity beyond a few fishing camps. As the weather was quiet, there was no breeze to alleviate the effect of the sun's rays. But for the heat we would like to have spent longer and to have stayed to explore. However, we had decided to check out of Venezuela before Easter, and so hastened our way back to Porlamar.

This wasn't a particularly good idea because we found that the Venezuelans regard the entire week prior to Easter as a holiday period. The "booze" area of

the supermarket was unbelievably busy; there was certainly no evidence of poverty amongst the milling crowds of shoppers many of whom were dressed in party gear. However, our final alcoholic buy-in was at last successfully completed, boxed, transported back to the dock and eventually stowed on board. The fuel and water boats filled our tanks with minimum cost and minimum fuss. On Good Friday we motor-sailed upwind to the tiny islands of Los Testigos.

Much to our surprise, even the peaceful beaches of Los Testigos had taken on the Easter Holiday mood. There were campers ashore on the beach. Powerboats from the mainland and overlaid local pirogues dashed about here and there with much good humour, laughter, music and noise.

This year we planned an east-bound transatlantic back to the UK and had arranged to pick up two extra crewmembers in Antigua in early June. So, we would need to make our way north. In past years, leaving Venezuela, we had bashed our way eastward, motor-sailing against wind and current from Los Testigos — once to Grenada, once to Trinidad. We hadn't enjoyed it either time! This time, leaving Venezuela, we were determined to sail.

The forecast promised winds just south of east, so we were optimistic. The autopilot had been working so well that we had given up worrying about it. We had clearance to Martinique but had decided that we

would head away from Los Testigos' Breakthrough Bay close-hauled. Anywhere in the Caribbean chain that we could point would become our destination. But equatorial current still kept its influence and the wind was not as helpful as we hoped. And the autopilot wasn't going to let us off so easily; it finally failed completely just after midnight on our second night out. After that we were hand steering, and found ourselves in increasingly choppy seas. So we were a weary couple when we arrived in Guadeloupe, 52 hours out of Los Testigos. At least we have plenty of time in hand to prepare for the transatlantic!



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Just Another Day

by Bill Shum

August 8th, 2007, was a day that started with a wreck and ended with a wreck, but in the nicest possible way!

Sailing southwest from Isla de Margarita, Venezuela, we had stopped at Isla Cubagua to dive on the wreck of the car ferry that has been lying against the rocks for some 30 years. It's a salutary warning to all boats, with its charred and rusted bow section starkly rising from the waters.

There is something quite different about wrecks that are half in/half out of the water, the ragged broken bones rusting away in the harsh sun. The ever-present pelicans guard their perches. Quite different from the pristine white pelicans of my home, these prehistoric-seeming birds are drab and dusty looking. Beautiful in flight but here, perched still, with all their odd angles it's hard not to tell if they are actually part of the wreck.

But below the waterline, a jewelled landscape of colour and texture. Barnacle-clustered, weed-shrouded, vague shapes. An old winch housing becomes home to a family of zebra fish, and through a rusted, encrusted porthole you can see the world within. Remains of vehicles now home to teeming life. Shafts of light and shadow playing tricks with your senses. Dangerously overhanging walls of rusty steel. Huge banks of little silver jacks twist and swirl; larger fish circle, waiting.

(As a newbie diver I must confess to an inability to identify most of the hordes of fish around the wreck!)

The morning brought a fresh wind and we sailed out westward for Isla Tortuga under a new mainsail. Carrying just enough speed for me to let out the line, I was soon rewarded with a nice little dorado. As I swung it aboard it slipped off the hook and started slithering and slapping, down the steps into the sugar scoop. Momentarily I flashed on the possibility of spikes and barbs as I had never actually handled one of these fish before. But hunger and pride took over. I leapt after it, pinning it to the step and getting my fingers into its gills. Someone had put me onto the idea of using rum to pacify fish and it works with the usual efficiency of rum. I have a small water bottle, half full of rum, with a hole in the cap. A short squirt down the gills and off she goes, a short squirt for me and I am ready to clean it.

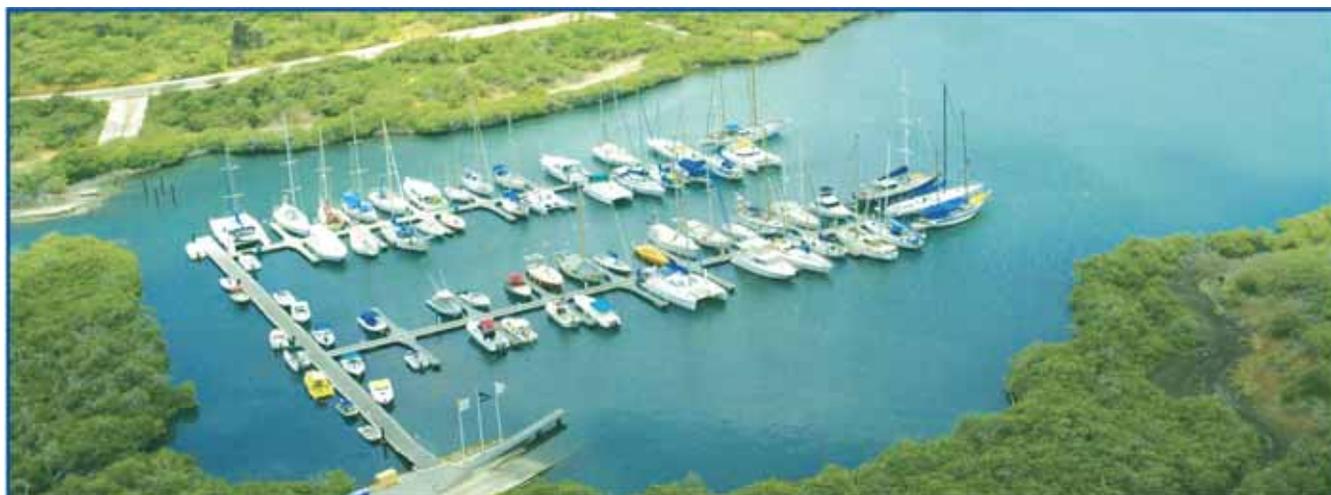
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Above: The author, happy and relaxed at the end of just another cruising day



Left: Who you callin' fish-face? Pretty soon, one of us is gonna be sashimi!



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In fact our routine has become quite polished, when the reel screams off, the skipper throttles back or luffs up. While the reel is being wound in, someone gets the big bucket ready. It's two by three feet, and two feet deep. If I ever catch a fish bigger than this I'm going to be in trouble. (My back-up plan is to try and get it into the dinghy!) Then we apply the rum and straightaway I cut it up and clean everything off.

Meanwhile, the line is back out and we are underway again. It's quite a long haul to wind in 80 to 100 metres of line, especially if we are underway and with a fish fighting, but I have found that with any less line out I haven't had any luck.

During the day the wind dropped and we motor-sailed, cruising at seven or eight knots and collecting two larger dorados and one small tuna. Sashimi tuna and dorado, with wasabe, soy and ginger, served less than an hour after catching the fish, is one of our favourite treats.

Mid-afternoon and I had just finished cleaning up after another dorado. Three of us were just standing in the cockpit looking around. Suddenly a massive shape rose up beside us. Not 20 feet from the yacht a huge whale, at least 30 feet long, launched itself out of the water, seemed to hang in the air, turned its pink-edged belly to us and crashed back. Then disappeared. We grabbed cameras and raced to the bow but only the swirling waters showed any sign of our big friend. The three of us were totally stunned, my legs were shaking. I think if the others hadn't seen it too, I might have doubted my own senses. Truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and clearly just showing itself to us. I'd like to think it was saying "Hello!"

An hour or so later we were joined by a pod of dolphins. These were only six feet or so long and a mottled brown colour. They bumped and jostled with each other, just inches clear of the bows. We lay on the trampoline and watched them. The water was so clear we could see them dive deep, deep down then come spearing up and out of the water. A small baby was keeping up with its mother, shadowing her every move with a telepathic accuracy. When she came out of the water to breathe, the little one would actually "get air", leaping right out of the water. I don't



know if he was just funning with us or if he needed the extra height to match his mother's next dive.

After an hour or so they grew bored of us and swam off. We were starting to wonder if anything else could possibly happen in one day.

We were almost at Isla Tortuga. The island is so low-lying it is hard to see until you are almost on it. Suddenly the skipper shut down the motors and veered to starboard, just missing the end of a fisherman's net. We had seen one end with the usual stick-and-rag flag, but his end had only a chunk of Styrofoam with no more than an inch showing above the water. Fortunately the skipper's quick reactions saved us getting tangled up.

At last we rounded the point and into the bay. The wreck of an old catamaran high on the rocks provided the most efficient warning you could want. We gave the point the respect it warranted (especially as the GPS was not 100-percent accu-

Above: Somerset Cat, a 47-foot Leopard catamaran

Left: Below the water, the car ferry wreck at Isla Cubagua becomes a bejeweled landscape of color and texture

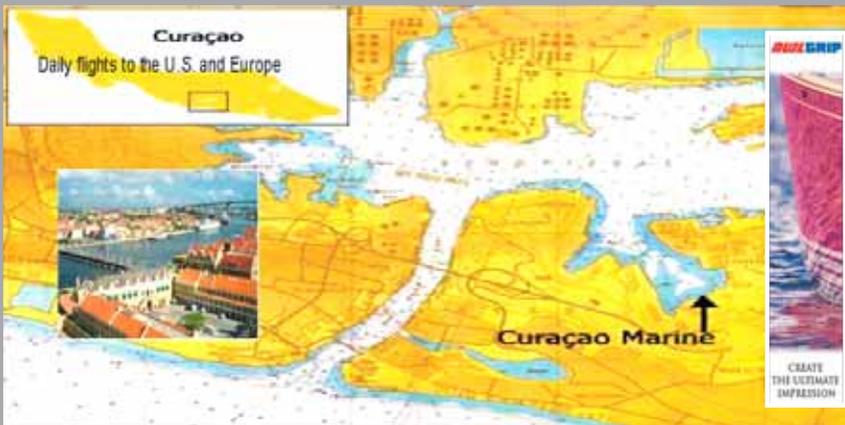
rate) and sailed into the pristine waters. A more intense blue than anything I'd seen, the hulls of the other boats appeared blue-coloured, even the underside of light planes flying over us picked up the colour. The effect is heightened by the contrasting blindingly white stretch of sand that circles the bay.

We dropped anchor and reflected.

Given the number of days aboard when the only surprise is what I can find to cook, this had been an extraordinary day.

Bill Shum is an Australian traveller, currently aboard his brother Michael's 47-foot Leopard catamaran, Somerset Cat, cruising the Caribbean before heading through the Panama Canal and westward bound. See more stories from his travels at www.travelblog.org/bloggers/unpaidbill.

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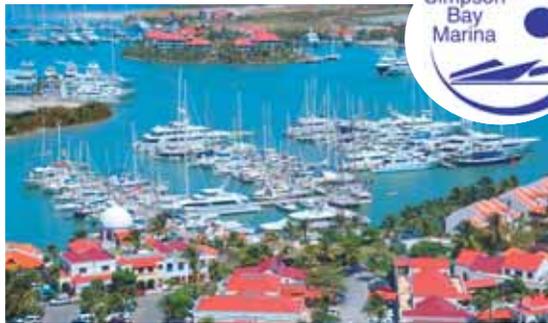


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ALL ASHORE...

Venezuela – Our Andes

by Phil Chapman

My wife Yvonne and I aboard *Chaser II*, along with our friends Tony and Chris aboard *S/V Waylander*, arrived in mainland Venezuela at the end of August. We first made landfall in Cumaná, and spent a couple of nights in Marina Cumanagoto. The scenery along this coast was warm and inviting, as was our welcome from the staff at the marina. After calling the marina to announce our intentions the staff were there waiting for us at the slip.

After mooring up, we went to the office to introduce ourselves. The manager and dockmaster were there, pleased to see us as if we were old friends. They lent us a plug for the electric, gave us our bill for about US\$6 for the night (which included electricity and water), and a voucher for a free rum punch at any one of the local bars or restaurants. This is a quaint but charming marina alongside a large modern shopping mall and cinema. Buses and taxis are available outside for those exploratory trips around town. Cumaná has a great market.

After two or three days, *Chaser* and *Waylander* moved on to Puerto La Cruz (PLC), and took a berth at TMO marina. As in Cumaná, the marina staff were helpful and friendly.



Mérida's cable-car ride was literally a HIGH light

In fact everyone, even in the crowded marinas, has been very pleasant. I won't comment on the politics of the country — I don't have any other experience of the country or peoples' opinions. Nevertheless the people we have met from all walks of life so far are happy to see us and give help or advice as necessary and we've had no security problems. Unfortunately, these good marinas are situated alongside a *barrio* renowned for security problems. Even the local people won't travel this area on foot after dark. Don't let this put you off coming here, though. There are plenty of places to go and see, near and far.

Our first priority was to buy a new dinghy, something both we and the *Waylanders* have been promising ourselves for a year now. Having purchased them, we wanted to make good covers to protect them, so after a short taxi ride into town we searched for a material shop. Back on board Yvonne got out the sewing machine and we all got together designing and making the new covers. Three days later they were all finished, a great professional achievement.

After a few days we looked into the idea of backpacking somewhere inland. Yes, organized tours are available from local tour operators, but we preferred the idea of doing our own thing. Mérida, a centuries-old town high in the Andes mountains, was the place we decided to go. Friends had been there and told us of the cable car that goes high up Pico Espejo, so we taxied back to downtown PLC to buy a bus ticket.

The following Wednesday we took a cab from the marina to the bus terminal, about a 20-minute ride. We loaded our gear aboard the Mérida bus and departed at midday. It's an 18-hour bus ride to Mérida but it's a comfortable bus with air conditioning, WC, TV and plenty of leg room. The fare was the equivalent of nine pounds each, but we had to either take our own food or buy it at a restaurant in one of the stops on route. Yvonne took a sandwich in her handbag in case we got peckish, and Tony and Chris took a rucksack in case they did. It's a long ride; we managed to get a little sleep. We stopped a few times en route, either to change drivers, fill with fuel or grab a bite to eat or drink.

The bus arrived in Mérida bus terminal about 8:00AM, so we grabbed a cab to our *posada*, which we had previously booked for two nights via the internet. The driver took us right to the guest-house door, so we unloaded our bags and checked in.

The *posada* had a lovely plant-lined entrance, really attractive. Our rooms were upstairs opposite each other; not the height of luxury but we had en suite shower and loo, TV, wardrobe and bed; a fan, too. We left our bags at reception and took a walk outside for some breakfast.

Mérida looked an impressive town so we were eager to do some exploring. After breakfast we went back to our room, unpacked and had a short siesta before going for a walk. That evening it rained hard so we decided to eat in the *posada* restaurant. They had a good menu and the prices looked reasonable. Unfortunately the owners tried to go upmarket by giving small portions in a highly decorated state, the steak was tough, and they had no beer or spirits, not even rum. They did have a bottle of red and one of white wine, so we had that. If anyone came in for a drink after that, they would have to drink water. But we had a nice evening.

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Next day, we booked for the coming Sunday on the Teleférico, the world's longest and highest cable car. There were many tour operators in town offering trips to various other attractions further inland as well. Chris had met some friends back in the marina who told her that a visit to Los Llanos (the Savannahs) was very worthwhile, so we also booked a four-day trip to The Savannahs leaving Monday morning. The trip included our transport (a new 4x4 Toyota Landcruiser), our driver and our guide for the four days. It also included our accommodation for three nights and all meals and drinks, as well as boat trips, safari trip and horse riding — but more on that next time.

We spent the intervening couple of days exploring Mérida, shopping around town and checking out some local hand-made products. Tony sampled half a dozen pots of local strawberries and cream. He said they were delicious, so I tried a bucket too, and he was right!

We went our separate ways to look at the shops. I knew Tony fancied a pair of real leather cowboy boots, so I bought a cowboy hat — I was sure he'd get back to our rooms with new boots. We got back a little later than the *Waylanders*, but soon after we got in Tony knocked on our door.

"Look at these!" he said, pulling up his jeans to show the quality of the leather. I then donned my hat and told him how stupid he was buying cowboy boots just for our coming horse-riding trip. When he looked round at me in my John Wayne som-



A visit to the 'for kids only' zoo was an unexpected treat

brero he nearly fell off the balcony laughing. "Kids", we were called by the ladies. We had bought ponchos as well!

We had asked the girl in the restaurant what the zoo was like in Mérida. She said it was okay, but really only for kids. We had a day to spare and we like kid stuff, so we took a cab to the zoo and, after a pot of cream and strawberries, paid the 35-pence entrance fee. What a beautiful zoo it was — we were really surprised. The animals were all in good condition. Yeah, I know they were caged, but we, and all the children, could see them without the aid of high-powered telescopes. You could have touched the lions, monkeys and jaguars if you were brave enough, but there was security there to stop you putting your hands in. We got told off once or twice.

Like many places we've seen so far here in Venezuela, they're not out to rip you off. I'm sure they could charge a lot more but then people couldn't afford to go, the animals would then suffer and the zoo would close. That is, I suppose, socialism, which is blatantly advertised on walls and buildings everywhere: "Socialism, Patriotism or Death!"

We had only booked two nights in our *posada*. We now wanted to stay another two nights but our landlady told us she was full, so we had to move on. There are plenty of *posadas* in Mérida. We found one that looked attractive overlooking the park and cable-car area to the mountains. They had rooms available, so we asked if we could look over the rooms first. We chose the two rooms on the top floor — they had the best view and hammocks on the balcony. The room was quite basic: no TV, no fans, no wardrobe (we did have a shelf; Tony and Chris didn't). There was a bed, a shower, WC, and a nice view. We can put up with that, we're backpackers now!

Next day we went for a ride in the cable car. Yvonne wasn't looking forward to this one — she doesn't like heights at the best of times and she won't even go in a glass lift in a shopping mall. But Tony talked her round and shakily she boarded, providing she could have a fur hat. It's the first time we had been on any substantial cable car. It takes 30 people seated and ten standing. After the base station there are four other stations to the top at over 14,000 feet.

We were lucky with the weather. The view was awesome, and once we got to Station Three Yvonne managed to grab a view too and began to enjoy it, but it was getting colder. After reaching the top we went outside the station for a walk around. I have never gotten so cold so quickly. Within ten minutes my hands were really hurting, my hair was literally frozen, and it was surprising how breathless you became at that altitude. Needless to say we didn't hang around too long out there. I would have guessed the temperature to be minus 20. It was very cccold!!

The ride down was equally breathtaking as the town of Mérida came into view through the clouds. By this time Yvonne had gotten over the fear of heights and really enjoyed the trip. The cable car setup is quite a feat of engineering. Each station is a major structure and getting materials to each site must have been an enormous task.

So we all had a good day. Back in our rooms we peeled off our layers of clothing, boots, etcetera, and chilled out for a while before going out for our evening meal. Mérida is a tourist area, so prices are correspondingly higher than some other areas, but for us Europeans it is still very reasonable. Most of the tourists are Venezuelan, but there are a lot of Europeans too.

Mérida is a beautiful, comparatively wealthy, university town with shopping centres good by any standard. The scenery is breathtaking and the people are friendly. One evening a Venezuelan family came up to Yvonne and me. The daughter, maybe 12 or 13 years old, asked us very nervously in the best schoolgirl English she could manage, if her mother could take a photo of her and her brother standing with us. I think it was because we are English, a rarish sight for them, and comparatively tall. Whatever the reason, that typifies the Venezuelan people we have met in the outer areas, untouched by too many foreigners, just inquisitive, friendly and helpful. The cynics may say check your pockets after, but it is no more necessary here than in any other large town in the world.

Tomorrow we go to Los Llanos: the Savannahs. This area is completely the opposite of where we are now in Mérida. It's low-lying and flat, with many rivers and canals which are now flooded as a result of the winter rains, so the whole area is wet underfoot, but it is hot.

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Botanical Garden(s) of Martinique

by Lorna Rudkin

True to our decision to visit botanical gardens around the world, while in Martinique we set off to see the Jardin de Balata.

We chose a wet day — not difficult in the rainy season — and hopped into a *taxi communal* (TC) in the island's capital, Fort de France. The drivers and our fellow-passengers in Martinique always enquire after our destination and take great pleasure in telling us whether we're on the right bus or not. If we are on the right bus they make it their personal quest to tell us when we have arrived at our destination. Or, if we are on the wrong TC, they accompany us to the right one and introduce us to the driver. This means, of course, that the driver and all the passengers are involved from the start of any journey.

The TC is a cheap transport system which stands alongside the normal bus system but is more far-reaching. One of the differences between the two is that the TC waits until it is full before it goes anywhere and will detour while on the way for an extra charge. The buses seem to leave at regular intervals and are a little cheaper.

We were dropped off at the Jardin de Balata just as the heavens opened yet again. The first thing we saw as we approached the entrance was a vegetarian restaurant, a wonderful sight, it being lunch time. However, it was shut, exceptionally, because they had no water!

The garden took our breath away from the moment we stepped onto the premises. It is around ten acres with zigzag paths winding through it. At any time we could look into the near distance and see a different view but never more than about 15 feet of pathway so that we were always enclosed in a tropical paradise.

The palm grove contains around 25 different species of palm tree and there are three large lily ponds, all different designs and containing fish and frog spawn. Large unblinking frogs sat on half submerged lily pads.

The garden was created 25 years ago from land on the side of a ravine. Many of the existing trees have been preserved, and provide height and much-needed shade. Fabulous tropical flowers, often looking as if carved from wax and usually red, sat alongside the biggest Busy Lizzies we've ever seen.

In all there are around 180 named plants and trees and this doesn't count a single bamboo, none of which was numbered or included in the sheet handed to us on entry. The sheet listed the botanical name, the family, the origin and the common name. We were given the English-language version.

After an hour and a half the pathway directed us back to the start of the walk. We had been guided around the garden by small boards with arrows at any point where the route might have been in doubt. Meanwhile there was an alternative route for cruise-line visitors who were given the 20-minute taste of a garden. They could go back to the ship saying they'd "seen everything" after a quick stop for the garden, then lunch, then a gift shop, then a rum distillery and a Ti Punch (*ti* meaning *petit*) before a night sail to the next island.

The biggest treat was yet to come as we got to the exit. Plastic bottles, decorated around the bottom edge with false red hibiscus, were suspended from the roof covering the terrace. The centre of each flower looked like the top of a pepper pot and from these little holes hummingbirds and enterprising yellow-chested bananaquits could drink the sugar-and-water mixture placed there at regular intervals during the day. Dozens of manic little hummingbirds, some with long straight beaks and some with curved beaks, flew around our heads desperate to get at the nectar. We were treated to flashes of iridescent purple, green and pink as these busy little birds hovered for a moment, popped their beaks into the holes, then flew away to a nearby tree only to fly back again moments later.

The whirring noise of the birds' wings is a memory to last a lifetime, especially as there are five types of hummingbird in Martinique and all five are to be seen at Balata.

There are several botanical gardens on Martinique so the next day we thought we would try to visit L'Habitation Anse Latouche. Again Martinique displayed its tropical weather with constant, and torrential, rain. As usual, because we were anchored at Pointe du Bout, we crossed over to Fort de France by ferry. We hopped onto a TC and, eventually, departed for the northwest side of the island.

Unusually, a fellow tourist was travelling on the same bus. We are very familiar with the buses being used by the locals while the tourists usually confine themselves to organised tours in air-conditioned transport. Our travelling companion, this time, was a Frenchman whose father was Lebanese-Armenian and mother Italian. He told us he had been born in Egypt and, when life got difficult for non-Muslims under Nasser, the family had gone to Lebanon before moving to Paris at the onset of the Lebanese War. This rather elderly gentleman, who couldn't remember how many languages he spoke, was having a week's break before going back to Paris to resume looking after his wife who, tragically, was in her tenth year of suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

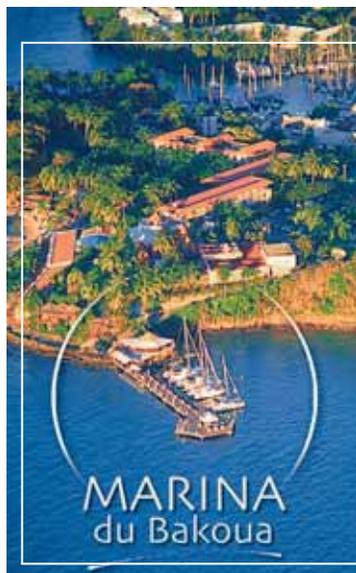
After 45 minutes of mountain roads, sea views and pouring rain we were dropped off in what felt like the middle of nowhere, but we saw a sign for the Gauguin Museum. Gauguin spent some months in Martinique before travelling to the Pacific and the museum documented his life, especially the times he spent on the island, with pictures, copies of letters and old photographs. We were the only visitors and were greeted by the daughter of the curator, accompanied by her two young children and a yapping dog. We spent a most pleasant hour following the life and times of Gauguin, together with a temporary exhibition of the 2007 Martinique Carnival, which included strange and fantastic costumes and a film. Eventually, the curator returned and gave us a detailed description of the various exhibits.

When we emerged from the museum it was still raining and the curator had trouble believing we were on foot. We eventually found L'Habitation Anse Latouche about a mile away. By now it was 2:00PM and the garden did not have a restaurant. The woman at the ticket desk directed us to a nearby restaurant down the road.

We were welcomed by the patron's wife into a restaurant at the side of an hotel, and seated on a terrace looking out onto a garden containing calabash and mango trees and a huge jasmine bush. Still it rained but we were under a roofed area in comfortable chairs with exotic flowers on each table. We decided it was time for a bottle of wine after the chef had been consulted about what he could produce for vegetarians who, as well as not eating meat, didn't even eat fish.

Hummingbirds whizzed over our heads, then flew through the inner dining room and out at the other side, having made a detour over the head of the waitress, to get at a feeder hanging from a tree at the back of the building.

By the time we'd had coffee it was nearly four o'clock and still raining. We thought we'd have a look at the garden up the road anyway, which wouldn't close until 5:00PM. We arrived at a very shut establishment and decided that the staff must have sat there all day with no visitors and we couldn't blame them for deciding to close early. So we found a bus stop, waited for half an hour for a TC and retraced our journey to Fort de France.



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When we met Jesse in the marina parking lot at 6:00AM it seemed quite early; the orange-winged parrots were still squawking loudly as they departed their nighttime roost to go wherever it is they go for the day. The nighttime air was just starting to warm up. As we drove out of Chaguaramas and into the hills of Petit Valley it was clear that many had started their day hours ago. Six AM is not too early to start a day of hiking.

Jesse James runs a tour and taxi service called Members Only Maxi Taxi, which provides regular shopping trips to the market, grocery and large hardware stores, as well as custom tours for hiking and evening trips into Port of Spain to listen to music. Jesse is a great ambassador for his county and was awarded with the Seven Seas Cruising Association "Camaraderie Award" in 2001 and the Seven Seas "South Bound II Award" in 2005.

Jesse says the Rincon Falls hike is an "eight" on a scale of one to ten, with one being the easiest. We all have our own basis of rating trails according to our level of experience and fitness. Regardless of rating, I can say we had a great day. You do need to be prepared for a few hours of hiking, a bit of steep terrain and whatever weather the day brings. The youngest hiker in our group, an 11-year-old, was consistently in the front of the line, hopping logs and ducking vines. Lunch, water, insect repellent and good shoes are essential for the trip.

We met our guide, "Snake" (his real name is Laurence), at the start of the trail. As we got ourselves together I saw Snake and his assistant unload a few ropes and a lifejacket from the trunk of his car. Snake gave us a safety talk and we were off down the road. We passed a few houses and active gardens. Snake stopped now and again to point out plants of interest and tell us their medical and practical uses. We all tried a plant that tasted a bit like spinach. I enjoyed the botanical lessons. At this point someone remarked about our good fortune to have an early start and to beat the heat.

The trail followed the contour of the hillside; it was an old path that was used for transporting coffee and cocoa to market in the town of St. Joseph in the days when it was the capital of the country of Trinidad & Tobago. We stopped at a field that was planted with pumpkin and cucumber. The cucumbers had been picked but a few were missed, and Snake used his cutlass (machete) to peel cucumbers and give us each a slice. He then tossed us each a mango as a dessert for our snack. After about two hours of hiking we reached Black Waterfall. We took a

Trinidad's Rincon Falls: A PERFECT EIGHT

by Devi Sharp



half-hour break for a swim. A few of us (okay, only Jesse and I) climbed up about ten feet in the chute of the waterfall and slid down into the water. It was a refreshing break.

Another hour or so and many "nature-food breaks" got us to the edge of Rincon Falls. Snake rigged a hand-line so we had something to grip as we walked down a slippery, muddy gully. We all arrived safely at a pool fed by a 300-foot waterfall. The falls stepped down the cliff in small shimmering ribbons and pooled on ledges and continued downward traversing the ledges. We lunched and swam for an hour. Snake rigged another safety rope in the deep pool just in case someone needed help. Snake had obviously spent a lot of time on his safety plan.

Seemingly out of nowhere Snake produced a red-tailed boa. I admit I am a fan of snakes, especially boas and pythons. We are too big for them to eat and we present no threat to them. Several of us enjoyed handling this gentle forest-dwelling creature.

Our natural trail snacks included mamey apples, known as apricots in some of the other Caribbean islands. We stopped at a breadfruit tree and Snake showed us that you can make a slash in the tree and the layer beneath the bark will weep a milky substance. If you let that milky gum sit there for a few days you can return and scrape the gum and have your self a nice wad of chewing gum. It has no taste, but a good consistency. It is best not to take it out of your mouth and look at the color of the gum — it is an unappetizing shade of gray. The color of chewing gum is overrated!

After a bit of steep downhill hiking we hit a dirt road and crossed a few streams. In a deep stream Snake got busy on a project. He was vigorously rubbing a palm fruit on a rock. A blob of yellow slime was growing and he reached up and started shampooing his hair with the yellow stuff. I admit that I am terminally curious and besides I felt that Snake would be disappointed if no one took him up on his offer of a shampoo. I wet my hair and offered up my head for anointing with the yellow goop. I lathered and rinsed and after a few more rinses my hair was clean and soft. In fact, I think even now, a few days later, it is a bit softer.

We got back to the van and changed out of our wet clothing and headed directly to Maracas Beach for a meal of "shark and bake". It was a great day.

The falls stepped down the cliff in small shimmering ribbons and pooled on ledges and continued downward...

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'Luperón Class of '06' Reunites in Grenada

by Jack Foard

Jack Foard reports: If you read my article "Luperón, The Rest of the Story" in the June issue of *Compass*, you may remember that one of the best things about spending the hurricane season in Luperón, Dominican Republic, was getting to know 60 or 70 other kindred spirits and bumping into one or two of them in nearly every anchorage you visit as you sail down-island for the rest of your days at sea. One of the worst things about Luperón was the dinghy dock was sinking (more about that in a minute).

Famous Potatoes was one of the first boats from the Luperón "Class of '06" to cruise into Prickly Bay, Grenada, this summer but over the next six weeks a good dozen of our old Luperón buddies dropped their hooks along the southern coast of Grenada. Desiré and I were getting ready to move on but after chatting with a few classmates we decided to organize a "class reunion" dinner party at our favorite restaurant, BB's Crabback Caribbean Restaurant, located on the Carenage in St. George's. "BB", Brian Benjamin, has won the Afro-Caribbean Chef's Award and holds regular cooking classes and demonstrations for cruisers. He's not only a great chef, but a heck of an entertainer.

Brian put together a five-course feast: avocado salad with guava purée; calaloo and okra soup; two appetizers — lambi sizzler (the best conch in the universe and I've got his top secret recipe!) and salt-cod fritters; fresh pan-seared snapper with Calypso Sauce; and the grand finale, bananas flambé with vanilla ice cream.

I had asked Bruce Van Sant, the infamous sailor and author of the book that got most of us safely down the "thorny path", to send a note of some sort to be read at the celebration. Bruce and his dear wife Rosa live in Luperón so he knows most of our class. Bruce outdid himself and e-mailed the following proclamation that I read during dinner to the delight of all.

Greetings to Luperón Alumni, Grenada Chapter.

Famous Potatoes, Valedictorian of the Class of '06, included your foundation in his Class Notes.

Due to his fine efforts the College Grounds Crew has finally repaired the end stage of the town dinghy dock, but this year's freshman class has already begun to bash its windward side. Good news however: the class has many talented marine engineers who have drawn up plans on the tables at Steve's Place and Puerto Blanco Marina (PBM) in the dust and condensation.

The Alumni Treasurer notes that the customary Class Grant has gone missing from the '06 account. Fortunately, Grenada currently hosts our Dockmaster and Harbormaster Emeriti, Katana and Seacomber.

An ad hoc committee of the Alumni Board formed at PBM to address this situation, and unanimously approved a motion to allow our two resident Emeriti to collect the

*debt from Grenada Chapter members in the form of beer.**

*Eagerly awaiting your participation in our On-Campus Alumni Reunion in '08,
Your Secretary,
Tidak Apa
(Bruce Van Sant)*

*Receta, Magus, Imagine, Molasses, Katana, Bendeción, Durban Dancer and Famous Potatoes where all there. We told stories about our adventures and mishaps and found out that one of the class had an excused absence. Daniel on *Esperanza* hit a whale off the north coast of Dominica and his poor old boat was just about to go under when a French helicopter pulled him out of the sea. Much to his delight he received a phone call from Dominica that evening to hear that the Dominican Navy had found *Esperanza* and saved her. She was safe in Dominica. (I later caught up with Daniel and heard the entire tale. I posted his story on my website, web.mac.com/famouspotatoes2.)*



Chef Brian Benjamin with the author at the 'class reunion'

It was a lovely evening, chatting with old Luperón friends, devouring a delightful Caribbean feast, and enjoying lots of laughter.

I wonder where the Class of '06 will be next hurricane season? Bruce has called for our second reunion to be back "on campus" in Luperón, but as Bruce might say, "I wonder who shall show up".

* If you read "The Book" (*The Gentleman's Guide to Passages South*) you may remember Bruce's use of becronomy.

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Sailing videos made by Don Street in the 1980s are now back on the market as DVDs. "Transatlantic with Street" details a transatlantic passage from Ireland to Antigua via the Cape Verdes: 2 hours. "Antigua Week" is the story of *loaire*'s round-the-buoy-racing swan song, celebrating her 80th birthday: 1 hour. "Street on Knots" demonstrates the essential knots every sailor should know: 1 hour. All DVDs are available via *Armchair Sailor* and *Bluewater Books*.

2nd Edition, Grenada to Virgins Guide

The second edition of Jacques Patuelli's cruising Guide to the Lesser Antilles, Grenada to the Virgin Islands, is now available. For a number of years Jacques Patuelli's *Les Petites Antilles - Croisière et Tourisme* has been regarded as the standard guide for French-speaking yachtsmen in the Caribbean. This popular book covering the Caribbean from Grenada and Barbados to the Virgin Islands is a translation from Jacques Patuelli's original French version by Stephen Davies and Elaine Morgan. The book is fully illustrated with photographs from ground level and the air, plus detailed charts. Each island is dealt with in detail and pilotage notes are followed by tourist information and the usual data on formalities and facilities. Available from bookstores and chandleries or from www.imray.com.

New Eco-Friendly, Mercury Free Float Switches

Rule, part of the ITT Marine & Leisure Group, have developed a completely new range of mercury-free float switches. The new models also offer many other design



enhancements creating "next generation" standards for performance and ease of use. Unlike traditional designs, none of the electrical elements are connected to the float, therefore protecting them from water ingress and stress faults from continuous movement. Instead, when the float is raised by bilge water, it turns a shaft that activates a "snap action" switch inside the main housing of the float switch.

Overall, the new units benefit from the best of Rule's submersible pump technology with long life seals, top mounted waterproof grommet protection for wiring and "blocked" wiring connectors, all of which prevent corrosion and water wicking. The switches now have a detachable mounting base to make them easier to locate and install.

All models have been tested up to 1 million cycles ensuring reliability, and the range will operate pumps drawing up to either 14 or 20 amps. For more information visit www.rule-industries.com.

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Once fired, the Jonbuoy Sling is easy to re-arm and repack. The Jonbuoy Inflatable Rescue Sling has a buoyancy of 175N with a 30-metre 8mm safety line. The system has a manual override and a top-up inflation tube.

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Hella's new LED Interior Lamps are well-suited for the chart table, as navigation and berth lighting, and as adjustable reading lamps. According to the manufacturers, with a current draw of less than 2W, the white or red LEDs provide outstanding light output with high energy efficiency. Featuring Hella Marine Multivolt technology, the lamp provides consistent illumination and circuit protection across a range of inputs from 9-31V DC. It is conveniently pre-wired. With no filaments to break, the lights are shock and vibration resistant, and the light's surface is cool and safe to touch.

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—Continued from previous page
 ...center for people from all over the world who are being prepared to volunteer in Africa. Apart from volunteer accommodation, there is also separate accommodation for visitors, available at for US\$25 per night or US\$50 with all meals included. The rooms have simple but comfortable layouts of two beds, a desk and room for storage. Accommodation must be booked in advance.

The area around the Academy contains miles of beautiful vegetation-covered mountains as far as the eye can see. A short walk down a hill will take you to a calm beach. There are many hiking paths all around the area that travel through the scenic "bush" of St. Vincent. The Academy's Hiking Center offers guided excursions to various places around the island. You can visit two of the breathtaking waterfalls, or even some of the filming locations of "Pirates of the Caribbean". Guided hikes up La Soufriere volcano are also available for those who enjoy exercise! Overnight visitors coming by sea can anchor in Chateaubelair or Cumberland Bay and be picked up free of charge. Massage is also available in the newly opened spa.

For more information about guided hikes or accommodation call (784) 492-4058 or visit www.richmondvaleacademy.org and follow the "Hiking" link.

Antigua Charter Yacht Show 2007

As of press time, the Antigua Yacht Show organizers report that 80 yachts have already registered, along with 178 charter brokers from 107 companies, 36 non-exhibiting vendor companies and 12 press agencies. The show opens on December 5th, and entries must be received before November 15th to guarantee inclusion in the official show catalogue. Arrival details should be given at the time of registration in order to be eligible for the all-day complimentary airport taxi shuttles on December 4th, 5th and 6th. Participants shipping brochures and other publicity material should complete the form on the "Shipping" page of the show's website (listed under "Show Information"). This will allow organisers to track, clear and distribute shipments on exhibitors' behalf. Shipments should arrive in Antigua no later than November 20th. Registration for the Chef's Competition opens on November 1st, and the first 25 entries will be accepted regardless of their size and type. More details of the competition will be published on the show's website in mid-November.

For more information visit www.antiguayachtshow.com or e-mail aycm@canad.ca.

Bequia Music Fest 2008 — By the Beach!

The four-day 5th Annual Bequia Music Fest (January 24th - 27th 2008) will include a great new location in Lower Bay. The combined beachfront premises of the popular De Reef restaurant and Dawn's Beach Bar will be transformed into a unique entertainment and dining venue for the Friday and Saturday night, ticket-only events. A new, enlarged stage is being built, and closed-circuit video will relay performances to a big screen monitor situated in the dining area under the stars. The Music Fest will kick off on the evening of Thursday 24th with a performance by the 13-piece Elite Steel Orchestra from St. Vincent at the Frangipani Hotel. On Friday night, the world-famous Mustique Blues Festival comes to Bequia, with Dana Gillespie and her London Blues Band joined by a superb line-up including Zach Prather from Chicago, and last year's favourite Papa George from the UK.

On Saturday 26th the evening will have both a local and international flavour, starting with Bequia String Band music, country music Bequia-style from the Country Relatives, and reggae bands from St. Vincent and Bequia. These acts will be joined by an All-Star

band of Bequia-loving musicians from around the world and many surprise guests to make an unmissable Saturday night line-up, with Toby Armstrong & the Mount Gay Blues Band from Barbados returning for another show-stopping performance.

Sunday at De Reef in Lower Bay will be the ever popular Music Fest Jazz & Blues Jam and Mount Gay Surprise Party on the Beach — free for all, and the climax to a great weekend of music. If you'd like to jam with other musicians on Sunday afternoon, please contact the organisers and they will try to fit you in! Tickets for each night will be EC\$50 in advance, or EC\$60 on the door. Special two-night tickets (Friday and Saturday) will be just EC\$585. Tickets will be on sale in Bequia from mid-December at the Bequia Tourism Office, Lina's Delicatessen, or from Quikprint in St. Vincent.

For more information visit www.bequiatourism.com/bequiamusicfest or email musicfest@begos.com.

Training Ship to Explore Atlantic and Caribbean

The barque *Picton Castle* — 2006 recipient of the American Sail Training Association's award for Sail Training Program of the Year — will be setting out next spring on an all-new, 12-month epic adventure exploring the Atlantic Ocean.

The *Picton Castle* has already circled the globe four times, delivering much-needed supplies to remote island schools, conducting impromptu medical clinics,



trading with remote islands and introducing nearly 1,000 people to the challenges and rewards of sailing a square-rigged ship.

The Atlantic voyage will present yet another once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience living and working aboard a traditional wind ship, calling at nearly 20 nations on four continents. No previous sailing experience is needed to join the *Picton Castle*. Trainees work alongside a professional crew of 14 who teach them the ropes — all 175 of them! — plus a boatload of other seafaring skills from sail making to splicing, celestial navigation and small boat handling.

The voyage will set sail from Lunenburg, Nova Scotia in May 2008, crossing the Atlantic for calls throughout the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway and Germany. From there the *Picton Castle* will sail south to ports in France, Spain, Gibraltar and on into the Mediterranean. Morocco, Madeira, the Canary Islands and Senegal will be the last ports of call before setting out across the Southern Atlantic — and Equator — to Fernando de Noronha, Brazil. From there, ship and crew will wind their way through the Caribbean stopping at Grenada, Anguilla, Bequia, Carriacou, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Nevis, Barbados and the British Virgin Islands before heading home to Lunenburg in May of 2009.

For more information visit www.picton-castle.com or call (902) 634-9984.

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THE RIVALS

Part One

by Bob Berlinghof

Dawn broke cool and hazy on an August day over Bellevue Island, in the little harbor port of Rancide. There were only a dozen yachts at anchor; in the high season the numbers swelled to over one hundred. Tourism was a relatively new thing here. There were no yachts until the late 1960s, but nowadays, in the high season from Christmas to Easter, the two-road village overflowed with European families, American yuppies, English nannies, Canadian secretaries, and French bare-breasted beauties, in numbers roughly in that order, thought Bruno.

Bruno Frankenheim, 63, sat in the cockpit of his 38-foot steel ketch, *Never Mind*, drinking black coffee and smoking the first of the cigarettes that his two-pack-a-day habit would inflict upon his lungs this day. Bruno always woke at or before dawn and had been doing so for 35 years. His was the first yacht to take up residence in Rancide Bay, back in '72, when, fresh out of university, Bruno had found *Aventure*, a narrow 27-foot wooden sloop. Instead of architecture, Bruno chose a life of sailing, with plenty of rum, sun, and greasy engines in bucket-sized engine rooms.

In the decades after Bruno's arrival, other yachties with no ties to the outside world settled in Rancide Bay, partly because of the natural beauty of the place, partly because Bruno could fix anything that moved, and partly due to the ambiance provided by the locals, who were usually laid-back to the point of being in a humble and comfortable vegetative torpor.

*He had sailed the Caribbean and the Pacific,
but in 1988 he returned to tiny Bellevue...*

Of course this was more evident during the summer season when there were no bucks to hustle, and it ignored the occasional outbreak of rum shop virulence, such as broken-bottle fights, which could spring up seemingly from nowhere. The dominant activity among the local fishermen, cargo smugglers, and the vast number of unemployed men seemed to be drinking rum, beer, or Guinness. This dovetailed nicely with many an ex-pat's daily life, starting soon after breakfast "tea," or in Bruno's case, coffee.

But unlike those idlers, thought Bruno, I work for a living. He had never been rich and had paid for his floating homes by hard physical labor and a skill for improvising repairs. After hitching a ride across the Atlantic, he had bought *Aventure* off the beach, where it had been holed by a tropical storm, for 500 US dollars. A year later he sold her for \$9,000 and bought a bigger wreck. He repeated the process three times.

He had sailed the Caribbean and the Pacific, circumnavigating the globe, but in 1988 he returned to tiny Bellevue, population 1,500, and garnered renown as a master seaman and mechanic. Everyone on the island, from visitors with multi-million-dollar stinkpots to the poorest families with burnt-out fan motors, took their problems to Bruno, and he would patiently sort them out.

He toiled in a rented workshop behind Maggie's rum shop, six doors down from the Customs shed. He charged his clients on a sliding scale of what he thought they could afford, but never more than EC\$60 per hour, unless it was overtime and his clients were rude Americans or overbearing Europeans. After work he was a fixture at Maggie's among the Old Guard, the ex-pats in residence on Bellevue for well over a decade.

Bruno crushed out his cig, took a sip of coffee, and sighed. *Today will be different*, he thought. Today he would give that Hal Everton a piece of his mind. Hal had done the unthinkable: he had stolen Jeanette, Bruno's girlfriend for six days.

It was only the latest of a series of breaches of etiquette, which, taken together, were far more serious than any woman was to Bruno. Hal would pay for this latest, no — his final faux pas, thought Bruno.

Bruno's love life was typically a mess. In '96, after he was well past 50, he had married beautiful, 19-year-old Bernice Quashie, a lithe, sable-skinned, big-bottomed local barmaid with beautiful teeth. Within three months she had left him for a weight-lifting bartender in Fort Lauderdale. Bruno had been stupid enough to take her there on vacation. Bernice bore the bartender twin boys, and Bruno slipped back into a life of fashioning homemade bushings, repairing self-steering worm gears, rebuilding transmissions, and hanging out at Maggie's.

He was known to suck down rum-and-cokes and hold forth to the Old Guard as well as the local men who ordered *petits* of strong rum, often joining them in their animated discussions of cricket. He had learned to shout over the din of the others when the subject came to the local fishing boat races. But today Bruno found his own audience after leaving work at noon.

Bruno was a creative raconteur and would cast a spell over the sweet young things and visiting bareboaters' wives who might wander into Maggie's for a piece of shade and an icy libation.

Maggie's was an unlikely oasis for visitors, but the summer heat drove people from Bay Street into the sickly green four-walled block shack with a pool table and a single overhead fan. Out front there was a 20-foot striped rectangular awning abutting the street, under which sat two wooden picnic tables with benches on either side. Inside, a rough pine bar overlooked three plastic tables and a dozen plastic armchairs.

Bruno loved a new audience for his tales of adventure and heroism on the high seas, particularly if the captive audience was female.

"Did I ever tell you about the time I was stranded in the Tuamotus?"

"Only about ten times," said Jim Gossett, a charter skipper and Old Guard regular.

"I did? Well, it bears repeating, anyway..." Bruno would say, and continue for two stout middle-aged women who sat at an adjacent table with their husbands.

"Then there was the time I was shipwrecked in the Bahamas. The local villagers salvaged what was left of my belongings and..."

"Put you up in their homes," Gossett prompted, teasing Bruno.

"If you don't like my stories then go drink at Musket's," retorted Bruno. Musket's bar was a quarter mile down the beach, known for its Jamaican rub-a-dub music and younger set. Hal Everton and his ilk hung out there, even though Hal was on the wrong side of 40.

"We love your stories, Bruno. Like fine wine they just get better with age," said Gossett, winking at the ladies.

Bruno went back to work and tried to forget about Gossett's rudeness. He changed the diodes of an alternator and welded stanchions from a boat that had been hit in the night by a squall. By 4:30 he was back at Maggie's, ready for his usual fix of four or five rum-and-cokes.

Not much was happening. A few locals watched an insipid rerun of *Knight Rider* on a set over the bar. About half of the Old Guard turned out, including Mike and Nina from their 40-foot sloop; George Crenshaw, a retired British Naval Officer; and Pete and Sue off *Calaloo*. No one mentioned Hal's name out of deference to Bruno, since everyone knew by now that Jeanette had defected to Bruno's rival.

Hal had also had the audacity to set up a competing workshop on his 45-foot catamaran six months ago. Bruno had lent him his wheel-puller before realizing that Hal was taking customers from him. And to top it off, Hal had yet to bring it back!

Bruno, who never lent tools to anyone, had been tricked by Hal's earnest demeanor, his easy smile, calm brown eyes, and chiseled, sunburned face. Hal reminded Bruno of himself 20 years ago, and Bruno had wondered if the lad might want to work for him next season, when he would be swamped. Instead, Bruno had been sabotaged.

Bruno walked unsteadily from Maggie's to a booth in town for a local repast of breadfruit and saltfish before retiring aboard *Never Mind* by 8:30. *Hal Everton was lucky I didn't bump into him today*, he thought. *I would have given that bastard a thrashing.*

To be continued in next month's Compass.

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NOVEMBER 2007

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)

Try not to nit-pick the crew or you may have a mutiny on your hands.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)

This month would be a good time to sail solo, as crewmembers will be critical of every creative idea you put forward.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)

Let love sail you away and distract you from all the rough spots in your business during the first week. That romantic glow will get you through the next three.

♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)

Your cabin-mates may find fault with all your ideas at mid-month. Stay on your course and don't let yourself be blown off it.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)

Your course choices will meet with opposition and criticism starting in the second week. Everyone is picky, picky, picky!

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)

Devote the first half of the month to business matters and try to finish up as many as possible before the 15th. Then go sailing.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)

Romance is in the air for you. There will be rough currents in the second week but you will sail through them with ease.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)

You will have lots of support from crew and loved ones. Communications will flow freely and lead to creative inspiration.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)

Don't let fluky winds blow you off course. There may be some business setbacks but your sense of humor will be your lifeline.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

Try to meditate on business or finance and not let your romantic problems rock your boat.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

You may meet lots of criticism with your creative ideas, especially during the last half of the month. A female friend will be very supportive — a fair breeze to keep your sails full.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

While business is in the doldrums you will get important suggestions from unexpected sources.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS	37) COAST	13) HOG
1) BEAR	38) ROE	16) DEVIL
3) CATGUT	39) FRET	18) ADDER
6) CAP	41) PUT	19) GREEN
9) MOUSE	43) BAT	21) GROW
12) WORTHY	44) WOLVES	22) PORT
14) LION	45) GATE	26) SLUG
15) SEA	46) AB	27) LAWS
16) DOG		28) WATER
17) HARE	DOWN	31) HORSE
20) EAGLE	1) BEANS	32) CRAFT
23) VANG	2) ROOM	33) COD
24) BOARD	4) APE	34) BORNE
23) LEGS	5) GULL	36) CROW
26) SWALLOW	6) CAT	40) EGG
29) AT	7) PAY	41) PIE
30) URCHIN	8) LOG	42) TEA
33) COW	10) STAR	43) BY
35) FROG	11) ROVERS	

Island Poets

Nicoya Nights Too

On the ferry
all
very merry,
coloured lights
corkscrew gently,
bright,
in reflected
moonlit
glassy swells,
as we
push through
the humid night
of a midnight passage.
Warm winds'
sensual caress
like angels' kisses
on my cheek.
Music beats
on the hurricane deck
where couples gyrate
to latest
bayoneta,
while all around
the violent, violet
lightning dances
in jagged
crazy flashes,
illuminating
towering tropic
cumulus
and distant
mountain ranges.
Final arrival,
disembarking now
for destinations unknown.

— Nicholas Lee

TURTLES IN LOVE

My name is D
I'm a turtle in the living sea
I was in love with T
The girl was such a beauty
The first time I saw her there was a spark
I knew love was bound to start

I introduced myself to her
She said, nice to meet you sir
She was a perfect lady
So she got to be my baby
I could see the love in her eyes
As she stared into mine

We spent time together
For me there was no other
But humans came and caught her
She screamed good-bye and tried to smile
They carried her ashore
But she was killed before...

They killed her for whatever reason
And it wasn't turtle season

— Dillon Ollivierre



- Admiral Marine Management
- Arawak
- Beautiful Touch Salon
- Blue Parrot Cafe
- Blue Water Divers

- BVI Apparel
- Caribbean Jewellers
- Culture Classic
- Day Sails
- First Caribbean ATM
- Harbour Market

- Hucksters
- Ice Cream Store
- Latitude 18
- Launch Catering
- Pusser's Landing
- Serenity Spa

- Smith Arneborg Architects
- Soper's Hole Marina Accommodations
- VOYAGE Charters
- Zenaida

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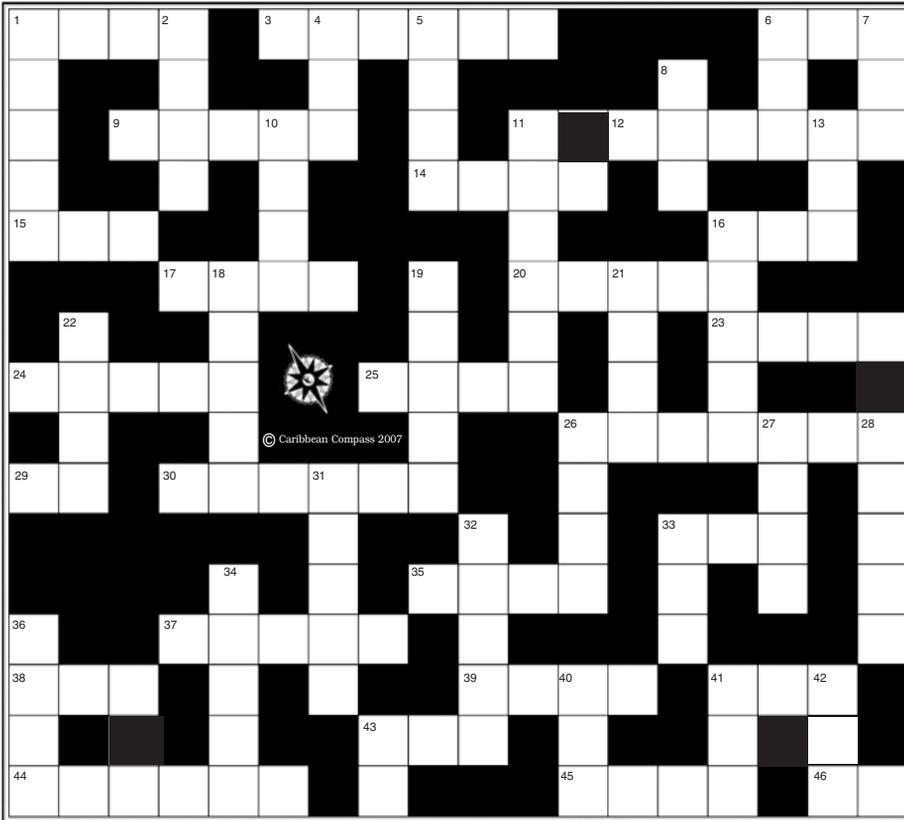
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ACROSS

- 1) 15 Across ____: deck sander
- 3) 15 Across laces or thread
- 6) Black-____ 15 Across 5 Down
- 9) To seize the hook of a block with small line
- 12) 15 Across ____: fitted for the voyage
- 14) 15 Across ____: large mammal with flippers
- 15) Topic of this puzzle
- 16) ____ fish: small shark
- 17) 15 Across ____: large, shell-less marine mollusk
- 20) Erne, or white-tailed 15 Across ____
- 23) Line to hold boom or gaff in place
- 24) Eastern 15 Across ____: East Coast of USA
- 23) 15 Across ____: power to walk the deck of a rolling ship
- 26) 15 Across ____: certain coastal tern species
- 29) "All ____ sea": confused, as a ship that has lost its bearings
- 30) 15 Across ____: spiny rock clinger
- 33) 15 Across ____: dugong
- 35) 15 Across ____: female pike
- 37) Where the sea meets the shore
- 38) Fish eggs
- 39) Chafe
- 41) ____ to 15 Across: embark on a voyage
- 43) 15 Across ____: a type of starfish
- 44) 15 Across ____: pirates
- 45) When two ships are thrown together by a wave they are said to be in a 15 Across ____
- 46) Able-bodied 15 Across-man (abbr..)

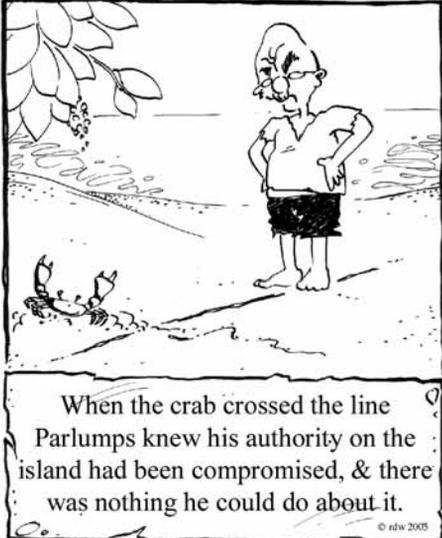
DOWN

- 1) 15 Across ____: small lateen-rigged Spanish boats
- 2) 15 Across ____: space to maneuver a boat
- 4) Muscular deck crew
- 5) 15 Across ____: common marine bird
- 6) 15 Across ____: octopus
- 7) Let out, as line
- 8) Ship's journal
- 10) ____ fish: five- or ten-legged 15 Across creature
- 11) 15 Across ____: privateers
- 13) 15 Across ____: porpoise
- 16) ____ fish: eagle ray
- 18) 15 Across ____: fifteen-spined stickleback fish
- 19) The evening flash is this color
- 21) Become larger
- 22) What "men and ships rot" in
- 26) Snail with no shell
- 27) Rules
- 28) 15 Across ____ is salty
- 31) 15 Across ____: the male of this species carries the eggs
- 32) Boat
- 33) Commonly salted fish
- 34) Suffix meaning carried by
- 36) ____'s nest: observation platform
- 40) 15 Across ____: white sea urchin
- 41) 15 Across ____: oyster catcher
- 42) British tars drink this at 4 o'clock?
- 43) Full and ____ (all sails drawing on a close-hauled course)

— Solution on page 36

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parlumps marooned



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"Ok, Ready? Let's jibe the kite."

Flying Fish Airmail

by Lee Kessell

Fish and other creatures that live under the sea communicate just like you and me. You think I'm making it up? Then let me show you how it works in my favourite sandy bay on the northern coast of my pretty island of St. Lucia. I know all the inhabitants of the bay personally and I often visit them. Sometimes I snorkel on the surface and watch my friends at work and at play, but when I want to communicate, then I put on my scuba gear and my friends know I'm there. Mums and dads show me their new babies, the gold spotted eel twines about my arm, the sea stars wave their arms in greeting and the big purple anemone waves her tentacles, asking me to hurry over for a chat. I can spend a whole morning or afternoon visiting friends all over the bay, because I know where the jaw fish hang out in the sandy rubble, where to find the glassy sweepers under the ledge, where to look for the sea horses clinging to the sea grass — oh, just everything!

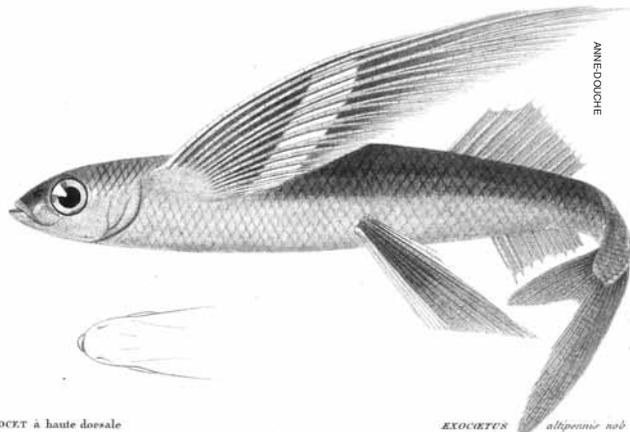
Now one day, not so long ago, Mistress Angelfish saw that her little girl, Queenie, wasn't so well. Queenie's bright blue stripes running across her body and outlining her delicate fins were just a dull grayish blue and her black eyes weren't as bright as they should be. So Mistress Angelfish stopped a passing damselfish to fetch a cleaner shrimp. Every fish on the reef knows that cleaner shrimps and small cleaner fish are just about the best doctors around. They pick away nasty parasites from scales, clean away dead tissue and when they say: "Open wide, please" they go right into the open mouth and clean tongues and teeth. Mistress Angelfish naturally thought that this would do the trick. But it didn't. Queenie perked up for an hour or so but then she hung her head and refused to eat her supper.

Queenie's mother started to worry and it wasn't long before the whole bay knew about baby Queenie. How did they know? Damsel fish had told everyone she met on the way to Mr. Cleaner Shrimp that Queenie wasn't too well and everyone she told then passed the news on to others. This is almost instant post without having the bother and expense of going to the post office for stamps. Of course the inhabitants of the bay lived together as a well-organized community like all marine communities but not only that, the bay inhabitants cared about each other and were always ready to help in times of need. So friends and neighbours gathered around Mistress

Angelfish, looked at Queenie and offered all sorts of advice. Some of the visitors even brought gifts of the most delicate and tempting foods they could find: pale green sea grapes ripened to perfection, young and tender sea lettuce, delicate bites of Swiss cheese alga, but Queenie wouldn't touch any of it. Mistress Angelfish put Queenie to bed and sat by her side all night.

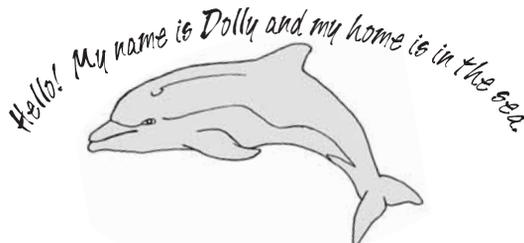
The next morning as soon as the sun came up over the far side of the hills behind the bay, Mistress Angelfish decided she needed a specialist doctor and the only way to get him in a hurry was to send for the airmail express. Word spread quickly to the flying fish having their breakfast on the edge of the reef and in no time at all they were off. Breaking through the surface of the sea like silver torpedoes, the flying fish opened their powerful wings and FLEW. Oh you should have seen them that morning, they dazzled the eye with the sun sparkling in rainbow diamonds on their sleek bodies. In only a matter of minutes, the flying fish squadron had reached the next bay and were telling the Doctor Fish all about Queenie. Actually the flying fish had gone straight to the hospital at the reef that was staffed by surgeonfish who specialized in many fields. The Black Doctor Fish was the specialist in internal medicine and he quickly selected the medicines required and followed the flying fish to the home of Mistress Angelfish. Of course Doctor Fish couldn't fly, so the flying fish had to be content with swimming at the speed of the rather slow physician. It wasn't often that surgeon fish needed to make house calls, so Black Doctor Fish was rather breathless by the time he reached the bay.

The doctor quickly diagnosed Queenie's trouble, and although she was a sick little angelfish for a few days, the big dose of medicine he gave her and the sea pearl full of the remedy he left with Mistress Angelfish soon had her up and about. You can imagine that all the neighbours invited the important medical fish for refresh-



ments, so he was well rested and fed by the time he turned back for the hospital. I don't know about you, but I'd be very happy if my postal service were as quick and efficient as this. E-mail can be almost instantaneous, but it can't get you a doctor in a hurry — or can it?
THE END

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

Did you try the melting ice experiment from last month? If you did, you will know that the water level in the container does not change when the ice melts. Now apply this observation to ice at the North Pole and, in the same way, when sea ice melts, it will not cause sea levels to rise around the world. A rise in sea levels will happen if land-based glaciers and ice sheets melt, not sea ice.

Does it make a difference that sea ice is formed from sea water, not fresh? How salty is sea ice?

When sea water begins to freeze, the water forms small ice crystals like needles, called **frazil**. The salt in the sea water does not freeze. Instead, it stays in droplets of water called **brine** which are trapped between the ice crystals. Eventually, the brine droplets will drain out, so what is left behind is mostly fresh water ice on extra salty water.

Do you know what salinity is? It is how you measure how much salt is in a liquid. High salinity means there is a lot of salt, low salinity means that there is not much. So we can say that the salinity of sea ice is low and the salinity of the surrounding water is high.

The frazil ice collects in sheets on the surface and continues to freeze through winter. When warmer temperatures come in spring and summer, the sea ice starts to melt. In the southern oceans, the sea ice can float northwards and melt completely but Arctic sheet ice is surrounded by land and tends to be thicker than Antarctic sea ice so it usually melts mostly around the edges.

So, for those of us who live in the Caribbean, why does it matter that the sea ice is melting faster than before? There are several reasons.

- Changes in salinity are very important to the world's climate and environment. In the Arctic, the dense salt water around the sea ice sinks and forms part of the global "conveyor belt" of currents around the world. If this belt stops, our weather will change, probably for the worse.
- When the sea ice melts, it opens up vast areas of dark ocean which absorb more heat from the sun and make the earth hotter.
- Animals which live in the snowy Arctic will have less land to live on.
- Crop production will be affected. Crops that require a spell of freezing temperatures (like winter wheat) will not grow, and more heat will dry up valuable agricultural land.

WORD PUZZLE

By replacing one letter at a time, how many steps does it take to change the word **POLE** to the word **HEAT**?

Answer on page 18

COME PLAY WITH ME

by Tina Dreffin

We were anchored aboard *Scud*, our 44-foot St. Francis catamaran, in turquoise waters clear as air in St. John, the US Virgin Islands. Onboard were my husband, Peter, and our two young sons: Adam age 9, and Warren, age 8. The boys' merry prattle had a lilt and cadence to which I listened with pleasure, as they completed afternoon school lessons. They were happy to have finally reached the Virgin Islands after our eventful passage down the "thorny path". Breathing in the pure ocean breeze that was scented with frangipani, I took in the stunning view of bay waters against a backdrop of island peaks, filled with languid melancholy.

I was brought out of my quiet reverie, when an odd percussion of beast against boat emanated from the bow. Curious, I sauntered on deck. The boys followed me, sensing something up with their faithful antennae. Together we peered over the



'The dolphin darted between us, stopping to pause two feet in front of the boys'

side, but nothing seemed amiss. The eerie sound came again. This time we ran forward to peer over the bow — no, nothing, again. "Mommy!" shouted Warren animatedly, and then added, "Look!" He pointed towards the waters where a slight ripple vibrated across the surface, then disappeared as fast as it had come. "There!" screamed Adam. He stabbed his forefinger into the depths of the sea, farther down along the hull.

A dark shape lingered in shadow beneath the hulls, then raced underneath, silent as a torpedo and just as fast. We rushed astern. The boys chorused, "Daddy!" He tossed aside his tools below-decks, then ambled into the cockpit with his usual calm, confident demeanor. The boys were revving into overdrive: A blurry wave of arms and legs surged from bow to stern, then back again. Robin, our Belgian barge dog (Schipperke), was going bananas from the tease of the mermaid in the waters below. The heightened cacophony of the boys' squeals together with the dog's hysteria was comical.

All at once, the dark shape shot out of the water, drove for the heavens, then slid back down the clouds, and somersaulted into a back flip, re-entering the waters at the exact spot it had exited. A hushed silence fell over the boat. A bottlenose dolphin! She streamlined to the bow, rubbed her back along our anchor rode, circled the boat, then repeated her massage on the bow — over and over again. We stared wide-eyed, mouths ajar, as we scurried across the deck, following her hypnotic sashaying around the boat.

Quickly, we grabbed our masks and fins to slither into the waters, careful not to alarm the dolphin. Before taking the plunge, Peter and I eyed the children: big white saucers blinked back at us from behind masks like twin headlights. The hot summer breeze was heavy with their unspoken words of eager anticipation, nerves vibrating like taut violin strings. In the waters, Adam hung close to Peter's side; Warren, nearly upon my back.

We hung back out of respect for the wild mammal, giving her ample room. With waters clear as cellophane, details were sharp on her shiny skin: a slight scar ran across the dorsal fin, and inconspicuous barnacle scrapes stretched along her snowy-white underbelly.

We followed the dolphin's movements. She frolicked on the periphery of our small family group, dipping and rising to the surface, never really going anywhere. She emitted a single-toned squeal to convey alarm — or possibly excitement? The click that projected from the "melon" on her forehead, located in front of the blowhole, acted as a sonar beam, bouncing off *Scud's* hulls to guide her away. This sonar beam enables dolphins to avoid collision in their herd when swimming fast: up to 25 mph. Typically, we see dolphins travel in small pods of five to ten animals, yet an immense school of up to 1,000 when we've crossed oceans.

In the shallow waters, the dolphin darted between us, stopping to pause two feet in front of the boys, barrel-rolling across the sandy bottom. If she swam too far into the glassy void, the boys back-pedaled to the safety of Mom and Dad. Sensing a disappearing audience, the dolphin turned back to tease them out again. For two hours she played cat and mouse. Her finale touched all our hearts: she swam up to the boys so close that out of sheer fright, Warren propelled himself out, willing to walk on water. The dolphin did likewise, breaking the surface like a rocket bent on speed alongside him, over half her body pointing to the heavens. In the late afternoon light, her glistening front towered over Warren's tiny frame.

Over the next few days, the dolphin returned to our boat for her daily massage on the anchor rode. We never did figure out where she came from, or why she seemed so tame. We named her Niki, for the little nick in her back, possibly from a close encounter with an angry shark.

We have long considered the presence of dolphins that cruised alongside our bows as a good omen and a promise of fair weather. Many classical writers have described how dolphins were once harnessed to chariots to help maidens in distress. We considered Niki our lucky talisman, a gift to continue our wandering cruise down the exotic island chain of the Caribbean, forever ready for our next big adventure that probably no one back home would believe. At least this time, we had the photo to prove it!

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Guy Dean is dead. An artist has passed. Guy Dean was a genuine Caribbean character. I met him the day before he hauled out *Cocoa* in Windward, Carriacou, Grenada. *Cocoa*, a Grenadines-built boat, needed repairs and bottom paint, a couple of weeks. Never mind that *Cocoa* was an aged wooden boat. Guy and I were beginning to be aged as well.

GUY DEAN

by Jim Hutchinson

Lynn was back in Colorado doing equestrian stuff that she loves. (I have watched my sister's equestrian work — satisfying stuff.) I never met Lynn. But she regularly sent Guy treasures crucial to his survival — guitar strings and artist's paints.

I visited Guy frequently in Windward, and he often visited Harvey Vale (Tyrrel Bay's village). We became friends and talked much. And we hiked all over the island. Guy was always looking for (and finding) artifacts of the island's previous inhabitants, both indigenous and European. He was always, also, seeking and finding objects of special qualities to be used in his art. Following him on goat trails (and less) through the bush of Carriacou, I came to remark, "I know why Guy Dean is always beat up. He earns it."

Each time I visited Guy, he would go on break and I would view his work, mostly wood, rock, and shell, made beautiful in color, amusing to study, innocent in humor, always, he said, containing a joke no one else could find. Usually containing one or more... call them trademarks. But color was what it was about, a color that grew by layers, to become a depth.

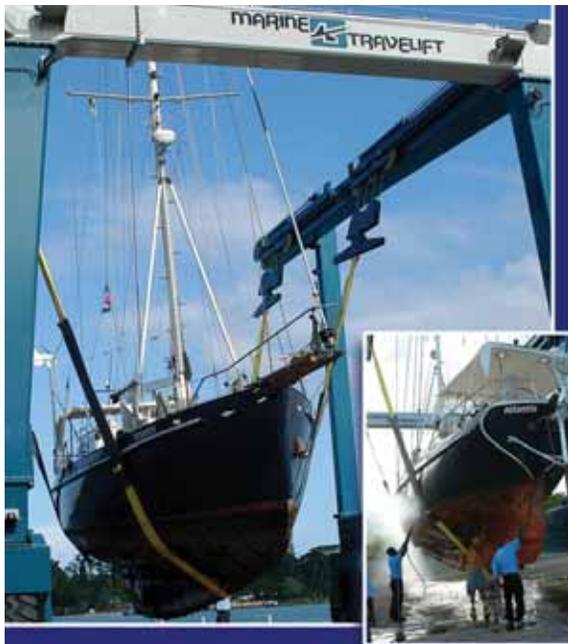
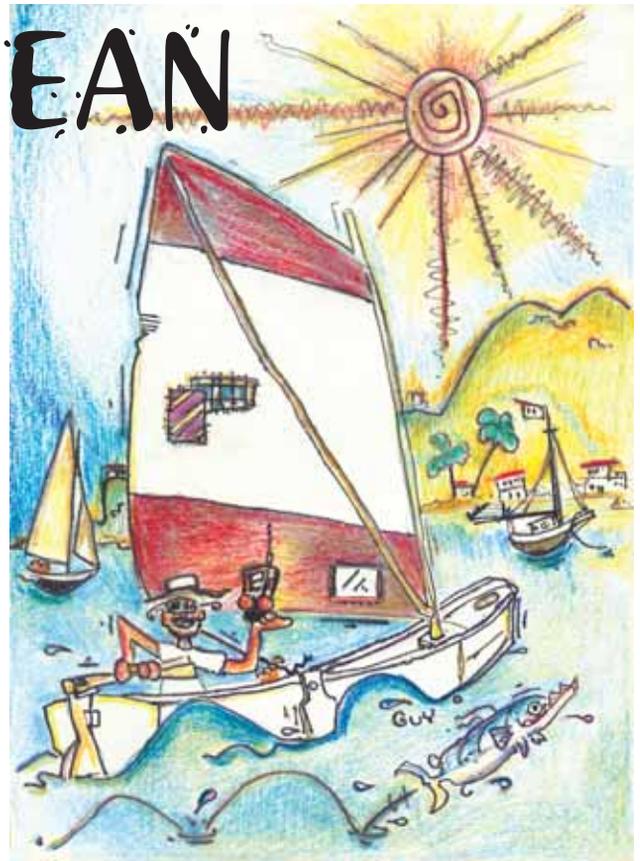
Cocoa was two weeks from launch for a year or two. Then Guy's official status became "shipwrecked". Meanwhile, he had been assimilating into the community, where nightlife had music (largely acoustic string) and strong rum (king of which is Jack Iron). Guy played his guitar at the fringe, respectful of the local musicians, whose music he admired. Respect is the currency of the West Indies. If you show respect, then, good or bad, rich or poor, it doesn't matter who you are. And when the food comes out in the West Indies, everybody eats. Same with the rum.

I come from an artistic family. Mom entered shows and won prizes. She worked in an art store and took home what she sold to see how it worked. We siblings all have our own art form: big brother is an actor, little brother's art is as colorful and fanciful as Guy's, and little sister is one with her horses. I am the writer, one of Pop's art forms. Guy and I touched on art. I usually bought some little piece when I visited Guy, and a bunch of the postcards made from three of his paintings. I thought he was a good artist. "Don't call me an artist!" he said. "I'm a sign painter." There are many of his signs on a number of Grenadine islands — they are art. The name on *Ambia's* transom is his work. Guy didn't refuse to do it the way I wanted, he simply did it his way — it's beautiful.

Guy began to paint wooden rum barrels, cleaning them up and covering them with his cartoons. "Is Gary Larson not an artist?" I asked.

The Grenadine Islands, though part of the countries to which they belong (Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines [SVG]), are islands of their own. Their culture is West Indian (which is, itself, a mix), but a different kind of West Indian, seafarers, not farmers. The Grenadines have their own ways, each island has its ways, portions of the islands have their ways. The line through the center of the Grenadines is a political boundary. The people and officials of the Grenadines live with and around it.

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

Guy's limit for being shipwrecked on Carriacou came at about four years. *Cocoa* was now way beyond two weeks from launching. And Guy had no means (nor inclination) to buy a ticket to the US. So, with what he could carry, Guy was put on a boat to neighboring Union Island, SVG. The "proper" procedure would have been to return him to his "home" country, just as the developed world



returns West Indians who have run afoul of their systems. Often, such people belong only where they are. Guy's nationality was US. But he had come to belong in the Grenadines.

Anyway, I found Guy living in the work area beyond the kitchen and dining area at The Anchorage in Clifton, Union. He was painting signs that, as he put it, "tell people like me to stay out." Over several visits I saw many signs with a variety of messages come to full color.

Then Guy wasn't on Union. I found him on Mayreau, helping Mrs. Forde in exchange for meals and a place to sleep. Guy and Lynn knew Mayreau well. Then Guy surfaced on Bequia. On Bequia, he migrated west to east, from Moonhole to Lower Bay to Belmont to Spring to Park, leaving a trail of art along the way. He wound up in a tent at the far end of Park Bay. It was a nice spot, on the beach, a nice piece of grass, nearly end-of-the-road rural — the kind of place I could live if I didn't have my boat. It was there that Guy added art for my articles to his *Compass* contributions.

Officially, Guy had no status. Visitors in these parts are required to have out-bound transportation — a vessel or ticket. Guy now had neither. Nor did the officials of SVG have official knowledge of his presence. Grenadine islanders have relatives on many islands which are separate countries, the people come and go. But Guy's tent was near a boundary dispute, and officials were forced to notice him. They did what they had to, put him in jail. He returned home to his tent after three days when one of the parties in the dispute stepped in for him. The finest of the pieces I had commissioned for my articles went to jail with him, missing its deadline. A drawing from a previous article was rerun in its place. Thus, one of Guy Dean's best went unpublished.

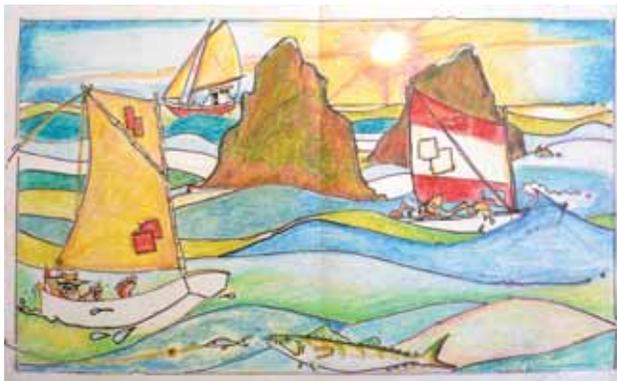
Eventually, they could no longer pretend not to notice. Guy was told to report to Immigration with his passport and a ticket. Which he did. I went with him, and heard for myself. Guy asked for an extension.

"You have been in my country illegally for a year and a quarter," the Immigration officer said. "I don't see that two more weeks will hurt anything."

I said good-bye to Guy at the ferry when he left Bequia bound for the US Once Virgin Islands.

That was years ago. Guy Dean recently died in St. Thomas waters. He is survived by family and friends, and by Caribbean characters too numerous to mention.
END

Artwork by the late Guy Dean: 'beautiful in color, amusing to study, innocent in humor'



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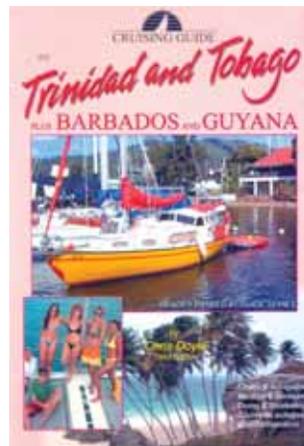
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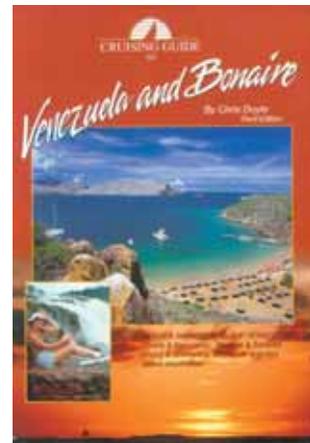
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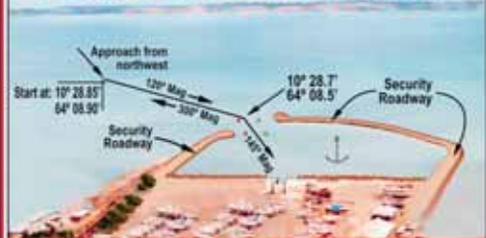


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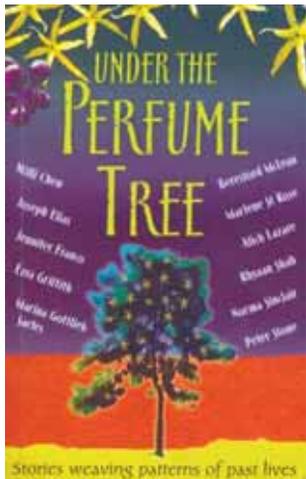


HUMAN HISTORIES

Under the Perfume Tree: Stories Weaving Patterns of Past Lives, edited by Judy Stone, Macmillan Education, paperback, 317 pages, with glossary, ISBN- 13: 978-1-4050-6518-4

This volume contains 12 Caribbean stories by different authors. Most are non-fiction and steeped in personal remembrance like a strong pot of tea. The quality of writing varies from serviceable and sentimental to brilliantly evocative: overall a very satisfying brew.

Two stories had special resonance for me, as their protagonists were great-something grandfathers of my wife and children. "Marooned by Pirates" tells the rather fanciful story of Hercules Hassell's arrival on Saba and his subsequent move to Bequia, where his name was changed to Hazell. Dutchman Hercules Hassell may indeed have arrived on Saba in the manner the author states, but, if so, he wasn't the first Hazell on Bequia. Author Peter Stone (a descendant from Trinidad) sets this story at the end of the 18th Century, but he didn't know at the time of writing that tax records show that a Richard Hazell had lived on Bequia before 1776; Mr. Stone may have taken certain liberties with the facts, but has written an entertaining account of the heroism of one early colonist.



The second Hazell story ("Emancipation School") is set in Bequia in the early 19th Century and taken from the autobiography of John Hercules Hazell, a grandson of the shipwright Hercules Hazell. Contrary to local myth, the Hazell family at the time was struggling financially; 12-year-old John Hercules walked several miles each dawn to teach the Bible to slaves at Paget Farm. In return he was allowed an education from his uncle, the schoolmaster and church clerk.

His father was a sea captain. While in this service — not a very lucrative one — my father would be often [away] from home for months, and my mother, an industrious old soul, kept house and brought up a large family, of whom I am the third son and fourth child, as best she could, by sending out to the villagers the commodities my father would from time to time bring home from foreign ports.... These "importations" not being on a very extensive scale rendered it necessary for the observance of the strictest economy in the management of our household and family affairs, and required that each member of the family be early trained to the system of self-support, there being no prospects of an endowment fund being established in our family.

The descriptions of Bequia at the time are fascinating, as is the self-deprecating humour of J.H. His first teacher was a very old lady with a large pair of spectacles on her nasal organ.... She taught us the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, and the alphabet, and to write "BA ba" in large black letters, and impressed each lesson upon the juvenile mind, or rather back, with a three-pronged leather strap, which had grown black from age, but not rusty from want of use.

He later established a night school for adults. It must not, however, be supposed that this sacrifice in time from a boy of thirteen was from philanthropy. I may, perhaps, be entitled to take credit for a tinge of such feeling, but there were little contributions of fruit, eggs, and occasionally a fowl, which served as a stimulus and incentive to teaching, and were found very useful as aids to housekeeping.

The account ends suddenly with 14-year-old John going to sea and becoming so searick that he ruled out a life like his father's. Instead, after a voyage to St. Thomas and Barbados, he sought and obtained employment in the grocery and liquor store of Alexander Glass, Esq, a Jewish Scotchman, which lasted three years. (In an odd coincidence, this was a relative of Kelly Glass, St. Vincent's cable TV founder and a naturalized New Zealander.) John Hercules then worked for another Bajan Scottish merchant until 1841, when I commenced my own career in business, at age 24. My only criticism of this selection is that it ends far too soon. I have tried to lobby Macmillan to find out where I could obtain the complete memoirs of John Hercules Hazell, to no avail.

"Protect Me" is the story of a bright eight-year-old Muslim boy living in a small village in northern Trinidad in the late 19th century. Sanwar's struggle with poverty and cultural identity are brought to life in this realistic and enlightening tale. "Dada" is the story of Granny, Prince, and Dada, three generations of an African family after Emancipation in rural Jamaica. Church, prayer, hard work, and a respect for elders were the glue which held this society together. Taken from a novel by Beresford McLean, "Dada" is a slice-of-life account of the fictitious village of Albion.

In "A Cupful of Love", Norma Sinclair recounts the true story of Grenadians John and Maria Bates. John was a local white lawyer who became a traveling judicial representative of the British Colonial Empire in the early 20th century. His family's story is recreated in such detail that even though they were considered upper class at the time, the reader realizes that they had far more status than worldly goods. They moved often to neighboring islands as a consequence of John's career. It must have been very difficult for this family of eight to have been uprooted so many times, but with each posting they seemed to surmount the difficulties of being in an unfamiliar society, and they thrived despite some inter-island prejudice.

The post-WWII remembrances of childhood in Barbados are exquisitely rendered in Ezra Griffith's "Sing Ins, Brams and the Odd-Pedal". Griffith's father, a preacher, moved the family to Trinidad for economic reasons during the war, but they returned to Bim in 1946, when the author was five. These fond recollections of that period resonate with love as well as the nostalgia of a bygone era.

Ryhaan Shah's "A Clouded Sun" tells the story of Aleyah, a young Guyanese girl in London, where she is enrolled in university after leaving her extensive Indian family for the first time. It is perhaps the best written story in this collection, due to Aleyah's descriptions of longing for home while striving to find her true identity in a foreign land.

—Continued on page 51

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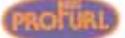
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I had a canvas sack thrown over my right shoulder. It was heavy with fish just purchased from the St. George's fish market down on the waterfront. The fish felt cool on my back as I hiked up the steep hill back to the bus that would take me back to Prickly Bay on the south shore of Grenada.

Suddenly something streaked by my head and there was a loud "thud!" by my feet. I jumped back, ducked and twirled all in the same motion and saw there, draped over the edge of a step, was a 14-inch mullet, eyes bugging out and bleeding from the gills. I was half a mile from the waterfront. I looked up, and circling overhead several hundred feet above was a majestic black frigate bird, sans breakfast. Actually, I doubt the culprit was the frigate bird. I've often seen them catch small fish in their bills but I've never seen them carry such a large fish as this sorry mullet. It must have been an osprey type of bird who bombarded me, but he was long gone.

I felt sorry for the poor mullet dead at my feet. But I also wondered what it would have been like to have a two-pound mullet hit me on the top of my head at maximum velocity? Ouch! It would be a shame for my poor 87-year-old mother to get a call from a stranger in Grenada informing her about the unfortunate death of her dear son Jack, bludgeoned to death by a fat flying mullet. At least it was fresh.

This had been my first visit to the fish market in Grenada and I was impressed.



by Jack Foard

It is a new modern building and it looked squeaky clean. It smelled like fish, fresh fish, a deep satisfying salty smell. There were two banks of U-shaped vendor's stalls, with six or seven smiling ladies on each side calling me to come see their offerings from the deep.

"I got de fresh dolphin, fresh, come look!" called a skinny young woman in a calico dress with a bright purple bandana wrapped tightly around her head.

To her right the plump woman in a black T-shirt sang out, "Look how fresh dem snapper! Dey still swimmin'. Very fresh — smell." I did, and it was.

Her neighbor, a large lady wearing a black dress with bright pink flowers sang out, "Here is de tuna, it very fresh, see!" and she held up a ten-pound hunk of fresh yellowfin tuna for my inspection.

"How much is the tuna?" I asked, hefting the great hunk of fish to my nose. It smelled like I had just pulled it from the deep blue sea.

"All de fish is seven EC per pound," she answered.

"All the fish?" I questioned, not believing I heard correctly, thinking about stories I'd heard of the Japanese paying us much as 300 US dollars a pound for sushi quality yellowfin.

"Ya, mon, all de fish seven EC," she repeated.

Hmmm, I thought to myself, that's only about US\$2.75 a pound! (Actually it comes out to US\$2.64). I was suddenly in the mood to buy fish.

This was going to be fun. I walked from stall to stall to see what was available. There were piles of bright red spotted snappers, anchovies, fat rounds of various kinds of really big fish, shark and marlin. A fresh basket of flying fish was being poured out to replace a rapidly dwindling supply.

"Is that marlin?" I asked, pointing to a huge tail section of something.

"No, dis shark, you want some?" a tiny wafer-thin grandmother urged as she grabbed her machete that was much longer than her arm.

"Is there any swordfish?" I asked, not really thinking I could be that lucky.

"She got de swordfish over dey," she waved me toward the tall woman at the end of her row.

I asked for five steaks, using my thumb and forefinger to indicate one inch thick. She grabbed her razor-sharp machete and began to slice. One, two, three, four, five deep cuts that easily sliced down to the backbone. She then picked up a large well-worn wooden club and whacked the huge knife to cut through the bone and finished with big cuts as the steaks fell in a stack one by one. It was a huge amount of fish, probably about 60 or 70 dollars worth back in Florida. I still did not completely believe that I had heard correctly, "all de fish seven EC per pound", so I waited to see the final tally.

"She scribbled numbers on a piece of brown paper bag and showed me her math: "Five pounds, so 35 EC," she told me. A mere US\$13.46. I had purchased far more than we needed for our dinner party, but I couldn't help myself.

I went back to the tuna lady and asked for a two-pound hunk of fresh pink yellowfin tuna. It was ironic that this beautiful fresh tuna was far cheaper than the canned tuna at the supermarket and infinitely better. This piece I bought to make tuna salad. I marinate it for a few hours in herbs and olive oil and then grill it medium-well, refrigerate it overnight, and chop it up for the best tuna salad you could ever dream of eating. It is also wonderful used like cold sliced beef for a sandwich, with lots of mayo, fresh grated sea-salt and pepper, topped with shredded lettuce. If I plan to use it that way medium-rare is better.

We had invited our old buddies from Luperón in the Dominican Republic, Chris and Yani from *Magus* and Big John Cooper from *Durban Dancer*, over for dinner. I made a fish stock with some of the fish scraps and bones, then added a handful of shrimp to cook. I chopped a cup of the fish and shrimp and mashed it into a brick of cream cheese, added some seasonings and Worcestershire sauce and quickly had our appetizer cooling in the refrigerator to serve with crisp water crackers.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

The swordfish steaks I prepared the same way as the tuna, marinating it in Italian herbs and olive oil. I made a fresh salsa with cooked green lentils, thinly sliced pear and diced mango. I added a few tablespoons of freshly grated coconut. I folded in a simple vinaigrette made with equal parts of olive oil and white balsamic vinegar and a splash of fresh lime juice. It was the perfect accompaniment to the grilled fish.

For dessert I sliced up a bunch of the mangoes I bought at the produce market the day before. All I added was a drizzle of fresh lime juice. I baked a yellow cake (I admit it, I used a cake mix) and served big slices nestled up to a scoop of mango and I smeared a thick stripe of hot fudge along the base of the plate for a tasty and artistic final touch.

Yes, it really was as good as it sounds. We stuffed ourselves as we talked and laughed into the night.

I will be making many trips to this wonderful fish market while we are in Grenada. But then again I could just stand around and see what drops at my feet.

Seafood Cream Cheese Spread

Try this with your favorite *crisp crackers* or use it to stuff celery sticks.

- 1 eight-ounce package cream cheese
- 1 Cup chopped cooked seafood (e.g. fish, conch, shrimp — combination of any or all)
- 1 heaping Tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh chives
- 1 teaspoon dried dill
- 1 dash Worcestershire sauce

Mash and mix the seafood and cream cheese together well, then add the other ingredients and mix until blended. Chill and serve.

Mango, Pear and Lentil Salsa

This salsa goes well with any grilled fish or meat.

- 1 Cup diced mango
- 1 Cup diced pear
- 1/2 Cup cooked green lentils, well drained
- 2 Tablespoons grated fresh coconut
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon white balsamic vinegar (other white vinegar could be used)
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 Tablespoon chopped fresh chives
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped hot peppers (optional)

Mix all ingredients except the chives and parsley which should be added just before serving. Stores well for up to two days.



I will be making many trips to this wonderful fish market while we are in Grenada'

Grilled Fish Steaks

Tuna or swordfish work great!

- Fresh fish steaks, 1 inch thick
- Dried herbs such as an Italian blend
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

The fresh fish steaks you use should be at least one inch thick or they could dry out while cooking. Rinse and dry them, then coat liberally with olive oil and your favorite dried herbs. Set aside for 20 minutes to several hours. (Refrigerate if necessary.) Grill on well-oiled medium hot grill.

Add salt and pepper to taste. Fish steaks should be slightly on the rare side as they will continue to cook a little after you remove them from the grill. (If using for tuna salad, cook it through but don't let it get dry.)

Serve with your favorite salsa on the side.

Tuna Fish Salad

- 2 Cups flaked or chopped grilled tuna
- 3/4 Cup finely diced celery
- 1/2 Cup mayonnaise
- 2 Tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Grill tuna as directed above, cool and chop or flake. Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. Serve on crisp greens or use in sandwiches.

Tuna Steak Sandwiches

Slice medium-rare grilled tuna steaks into 1/4 inch thick slices. Spread mayonnaise on your favorite bread, layer with tuna, add salt and pepper to taste, top with crisp lettuce.

Captain Jack Foard is cruising the Caribbean aboard the Admiral 38 catamaran Famous Potatoes. Visit his website at web.mac.com/famouspotatoes2.

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SERVING AT SEA BY SHIRLEY HALL

Ever see fruits and vegetables at a Caribbean veggie stand and just don't know what they are or taste like? Don't be afraid to ask and sample. PommeCythere is one of the fruits you may not have seen before. In the Caribbean, pommeCythere (pronounced pom-set-tye) is usually only found in the southern islands, especially in Trinidad. It is believed to have originated in Tahiti and is native to Polynesia and Malaysia. Captain Bligh brought pommeCythere to Jamaica in 1782.

PommeCythere is the French name, but it has a variety of other names such as ambarella, golden apple, Jew or June plum, Jamaican plum and mango jobo.

The oblong, yellow-orange pommeCythere tastes like a cross between a mango and a pineapple. PommeCythere's main distinguishing feature is its

Shirley's Soaked PommeCythere

About a dozen full, but not ripe, pommeCythere. (The amount depends on the size of the container you are planning to fill.)

- 1/2 Cup white vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 5 big cloves of garlic, minced
- 1/2 hot pepper, or to your taste

Soaked pommeCythere is a favorite of mine! It can be eaten as a snack or an accompaniment to other foods. Fill half of your container, jar or bowl, with water. Add remaining ingredients except for the fruit. Peel pommeCythere and make cuts into the flesh. Put into container and let sit for at least two days.

POMMECYTHERE

spiny seed. These spines harden when the fruit matures, so the sweet fully ripened fruit should be carefully sucked from the seed to avoid to an unwanted pierced lip or tongue.

PommeCythere has suffered by comparison with the taste and appearance of the mango. However, if the pommeCythere is picked at the correct time, ripe but still firm, it yields a delicious juice for cold beverages. (PommeCythere fruit have 160 calories per 100 grams: ten percent is sugar and 85 percent is water, which is why it is great for juice.) As the pommeCythere ripens the flesh changes from yellow to orange and becomes sweet. It can be frozen to make a delicious ice. Stewing the ripe flesh with a little water and sugar and then straining produces a rich apple-type sauce. By adding cinnamon or cloves this sauce can be slowly cooked to a thick preserve similar to apple butter. Unripe fruits can be made into chutney or pickled. (The pommeCythere is very popular in Asia, and eaten at all stages of ripeness.)

PommeCythere is also a good flavoring ingredient for sauces and soups and can be used like papaya as a meat tenderizer. PommeCythere leaves smell great, are slightly sour and are used for flavoring, particularly curries. Indonesians make a dish with steamed leaves, salt fish and rice. The fruit is a good source of vitamin C.

PommeCythere Chutney with Raisins

- 2 pounds pommeCythere fruit, half ripe
- 1/2 pound golden raisins
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 2 Tablespoons grated fresh ginger root
- 3 Cups clear vinegar
- 2 Cups refined (white) sugar
- 2 Tablespoons salt
- 5 hot peppers, cleaned of seeds, stems and membranes (more can be added to taste)
- 1 Tablespoon ground cinnamon, or 1 stick cinnamon
- 5 whole cloves

Thoroughly wash fruit, peel and slice away from seed. Put fruit with all other ingredients in a heavy stainless steel or cast iron pan or skillet (aluminum will blacken the chutney).

Bring to a boil and then simmer for an hour and a half until thick. Stir often to keep chutney from sticking and burning.

Fill jars which have been sterilized by immersing in boiling water. It is best to use containers that do not have metal lids.

PommeCythere Fruit Sauce

- 5 pounds fruit, peeled with seeds removed
- 1/2 Cup water
- 2 Tablespoons ground cinnamon, cloves and other spices to taste

Bring all ingredients to a boil and simmer for one hour with continuous stirring to mash up the fruit. Strain if the consistency is too thick. Continue cooking if the consistency is too thin. Serve hot or cold as an accompaniment for beef or chicken main dishes.

PommeCythere Conserve

- 1 pound pommeCythere fruit
- 1 Cup brown sugar
- 1 Cup water
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 6 drops Angostura bitters

Wash whole fruit and make many pricks in it with a fork. Combine water and sugar in a saucepan and boil. Add pommeCythere and cinnamon. Boil, stirring constantly, until fruit becomes clear and syrup is thick. Stir in bitters. Store in hot sterile jars or refrigerator.

To serve, remove seeds and use as you would chutney, or as jam on bread or biscuits.



Called golden apples in many islands, these pommeCythere fruit are worthy of W.B. Yeats: "...and pluck till time and times are done, the silver apples of the moon, the golden apples of the sun"

For the Gardeners

PommeCythere trees grow well in all types of well-drained soil. The trees can be grown from seeds, which take a month to sprout. Each seed produces multiple sprouts. After a few months, the sprouts can be planted in holes bedded with well-rotted manure. It is best to have the small trees at least partially shaded by mature banana plants. They should be spaced at least 15 feet apart, and away from fences or buildings. PommeCythere trees can grow as much as six feet a year. The trees should be topped to keep them at a reasonable height, otherwise they will grow rapidly to 40 feet or more, which makes the fruit difficult to harvest and susceptible to damage from high winds. These trees should bear in three to four years. Dwarf types bear in one to two years at a height of less than six feet. During the dry season the leaves turn yellow and drop. Just as the seasonal rains begin, clusters of small white blossoms of both sexes form, which can self-pollinate. The green fruit will appear in clusters of ten or more, and ripen to a golden skin. Using a high nitrogen fertilizer mix once a month with regular watering, a mature tree should annually bear about 200 pounds of fruit.

STORED ABOARD

Part One

When you're far out at sea, spending weeks at a remote anchorage, or just feeling lazy, open a tin/can of whatever you have Stored Aboard and have yourself an easy, tasty meal!

Veggie Curry

This should serve about six people (with plenty of boiled rice it might even go further) and is a great way of using up end-of-cruise supplies.

- 2 potatoes and 2 carrots, peeled and cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 can of sweet corn, drained
- 1 can of peas or beans, drained
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder (more if you want the curry hotter)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon powdered coriander
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 fourteen-ounce can of chopped tomatoes and their liquid. (If you have a can of whole tomatoes just take your galley scissors and slice them right in the can!)
- 1 can red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can of chickpeas/garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 6 Tablespoons (3 fluid ounces) water
- 1 fourteen-fluid-ounce can coconut milk (I use the "lite" version)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- Fresh coriander/cilantro (if available)

This recipe does not have to be adhered to exactly, so if you have other cans of veggies (or even some cans of meat or fish you want to use up) or you don't have some of the above, no problem — just mix and match.

Add the potatoes and carrots to a pan of boiling, salted water and cook for about five minutes. Add the corn and peas to the boiling water and turn off the heat. Allow them to sit for a minute, then drain the veggies and cover them to keep warm.

Heat the olive oil in a large pan, add the onions and cook until they are transparent, about five to seven minutes. Add the turmeric, chili powder, cumin, coriander and mustard seeds, stir them into the onions and cook for about one minute. Add the tomatoes, kidney beans, chickpea/garbanzo beans to the onions and spices. Stir together. Add the drained potatoes, carrots, corn and peas. Mix well and add salt and pepper to taste.

Turn the heat up quite high and cook the curry for five to ten minutes, stirring frequently. Lower the heat and cook for another five minutes.

Add the coconut milk and cook for only three minutes, making sure the coconut milk doesn't curdle or separate.

Serve over boiled rice with a little chopped fresh coriander/cilantro sprinkled over the top.

Creamy Spinach

As a child I couldn't stand spinach; even the smell would get a loud "Yuk!" from me. But now I adore it, raw in a salad or cooked any which way! Here's a nice quick easy recipe, using up canned/tinned spinach, that I love — and I feel sure so would Popeye. This will serve four people as a side dish, but to serve more just double or treble the amounts.

- 1 fourteen-ounce can of spinach
- 1/2 Cup of sour cream, fat free or normal
- 1/2 Cup of those ready fried onions that come in a cardboard tube! (Or you can fry your own if you have some fresh ones you want to use up.)
- Drain the spinach well and squeeze out as much liquid as possible (I put the spinach in a clean piece of muslin or cotton fabric and wring it out).

Mix the spinach and the sour cream together in an ovenproof dish and bake for about 30 minutes at 325°F (170°C), or if you have a microwave, you can heat it in that. Once it is piping hot, top with the onions and serve.

Always a good stand-by, those cans of whole (new) potatoes don't have to be as boring as they look. For example, you can drain and wash them to use in a potato salad. Here are two more ideas to bring them to life. Both the potato recipes are good accompaniments for roast meats as a change from ordinary roast or baked potatoes.

Onion Roasted Potatoes

- 6 fourteen- or sixteen-ounce cans whole potatoes, drained, rinsed and dried
- 1 packet onion soup mix
- 1/2 Cup (4 ounces) melted butter
- Garlic powder and black pepper to taste
- Heat oven to 350°F (180°C). Cut the larger potatoes in half. Place potatoes in a mixing bowl along with the onion soup mix and garlic powder and pepper to taste. Pour on the melted butter and mix well until all the potatoes are coated. Pop them into a greased oven dish or baking tray and bake until crisp and brown.

Caramelised Potatoes

- 1 fourteen or sixteen ounce can whole potatoes, drained, rinsed and dried
- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 1/2 Cup (3 1/2 ounces) brown sugar
- Melt the butter in a frying pan/skillet. Add the sugar and stir over heat till it bubbles. Let it carry on cooking till it starts to turn brown and caramelise, keeping a close eye on it so it doesn't burn. Add the potatoes and cook them for about four minutes stirring continuously, until they are heated through.



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Dear Compass,

The CARICOM Advance Passenger Information (API) reporting procedure which you have highlighted recently appears to be utter nonsense for privately operated cruising and non-passenger-carrying boats. Does it really apply to yachts, as you say? The website you quote in the news update in the September issue refers only to passenger-carrying ships and aircraft. No response has been received for my requests to CARICOM for clarification. It is vital that *Caribbean Compass* (whom we all rely on) gets stuck into this and points out the stupidity!

**Regards,
 Simon Julien
 UK**

Dear Compass,

I just read with intense outrage the article on API in the October *Compass*. There's no need to reiterate the reasons this is a stupid law; you did a pretty thorough job yourselves. My intention in writing to you is to try to figure out a way that all of us cruisers can put to rest the wrong this is causing, or will cause. Perhaps a website, where cruisers could sign a petition denouncing this idiot idea. If the teeth in this poll was that (we) cruisers would no longer visit those islands which require such API documentation, I wonder that the governments of those islands would not recognize the loss in tourist dollars (that which in most cases is their biggest industry) might suffer.

Prior to reading your very well-written article, I had only heard vague rumblings and hadn't really taken any of it to mean much. Now realizing how seriously it may affect my cruising plans, something needs to be done to educate these governments that application of that poorly-thought-out law will be a serious mistake, which could seriously affect their economies.

Cruisers are not terrorists. How could anyone even think that a (relatively) small boat which is typically crewed by a husband and wife be considered as a terrorist risk? Give me a break. That concept couldn't even seem reasonable to non-sailors. I can agree that it may be a realistic idea for large passenger ships, where I suppose it could theoretically be possible to import terrorists, but, in the Caribbean, I don't think so.

I read Chris Doyle's article also, and agree with him in the main, but, am more inclined to think that if the cruising community were able to band together, we could put a dead stop to this nonsense altogether. I realize, though, that's a pretty tall order to get all the cruisers to band together and put names to a document stating that this law is a bad idea. I've no idea how to implement such an idea, but am hopeful someone else might see it as valid and have a real idea how to do this, including passing the information on to the island governments involved.

Maybe we can put a stop to this silliness.

**Ron Oxford
 S/V Gypsy Wind**

Dear Compass,

It came to my attention, yesterday (October 18th), that Antigua and Barbuda are suspending APIS as regarding yachts. The entire community owes you a great debt of gratitude. You stoked the fire and brought the kettle to a boil.

I would like to express my greatest gratitude to Penny Tyas for coming forth originally. I realize that your article was the catalyst for change, but it was a local journalist who struck the match and lit the fire. Heart-felt gratitude from the cruising community to Penny and *Compass*.

**Steve
 S/V Certitude**

Dear Simon, Ron and Steve,

The intention of API — to detect terrorists and other criminals — is good. However, it seems that legislation was passed by "the powers that be" without realizing the current system's unworkability for the majority of

yachts and the resultant potential for severe damage to the Eastern Caribbean's yacht tourism industry.

We hope it is possible for appropriate amendments to be made. We hear that some governments are taking steps to do so as we go to press, although we have not yet received official confirmation of the suspension in Antigua & Barbuda. As we go to press, the facts as best we know them are outlined on pages 6 and 7.

There are regular updates on this situation at www.doyleguides.com/apis_regulations.html and <http://safetoyandsecuritynet.com/NEWS.html>. Chris Doyle suggests, and we agree, that the best way to let the governments involved know how the API requirements, as currently legislated, could adversely impact their economies, is by yachting visitors and stakeholders phoning, e-mailing or writing to the relevant Ministries of Tourism and letting them know of your concerns. You can also contact the local marine trades associations, who are well aware of the implications to their members' livelihoods. See e-addresses on page 7.

CC

**Open Letter to the Commandant of the Colombian Coast Guard
 Dear Captain Locarno,**

I wanted to take this opportunity to inform you of the excellent service the Coast Guard and Navy have provided in ensuring our safety and security while in Colombian waters since early May.

I would like to describe the reason we feel so secure in your country:

We crossed from Aruba to Cabo de la Vela with eight other sailing vessels and in the middle of the night shortly after entering Colombian waters, one of our fellow boats, *S/V Geremar*, was approached and boarded by your Coast Guard. After a short period of search and questioning they were happy to know that *S/V Geremar* was one of the eight vessels that had filed a float plan of our journey. [Editor's note: The Colombian Coast Guard suggests that visiting yachts voluntarily file a float plan with the Port Captain's office at navesmcp05@dimar.mtl.co] About one half hour later another of our friends, *S/V Common Crossing*, was similarly approached by your fine Coast Guard crew. Once again they departed, satisfied that this large flotilla was all the same group.

Shortly after arriving in Cabo de la Vela a Coast Guard vessel passed nearby the anchored fleet, slowed down, evaluated the group of eight and moved on.

We then moved on to Five Bays (Bahia Guayraca) and once the whole fleet had arrived and anchored we were once again investigated, this time by a helicopter that circled many times as it identified all of the vessels in the flotilla. We stayed in Bahia Guayraca for three days waiting for a weather opportunity to continue. When we did decide to move on we found the seas to be unfavourable to continue the next leg of our journey to Punta Hermosa (Puerto Velero) so we decided to go to Rodadero (Santa Marta) and hold up there for better weather.

This was a fine anchorage but it was not on our float plan and we failed to notify the Coast Guard of our change in plans. Hence, we were all boarded and searched by your courteous gentlemen of the Coast Guard and advised that we had 24 hours to move on. After some negotiation and understanding by your crew we were permitted to stay for the appropriate weather window.

On our next leg to Punt Hermosa, we arrived and notified the Coast Guard of our intentions and we were then met by another group of your fine men to inspect our boats and complete the necessary paper work that the Coast Guard performs.

The next day we proceeded to Cartagena and arrived without incident. All of this to say we felt so comfortable and secure knowing that there was always a Coast Guard crew nearby. Moreover, we have never felt threatened in any of our travels in Colombia, to Bogotá and in Cartagena. A real credit to the Coast Guard and all the security forces in the Country.

Thank you for making us feel so safe and welcome in your country. Keep up the good work, it is very much appreciated by all visitors and cruisers alike.

**Yours truly,
 Drury Porteous
 S/V Always Sunday**

Dear Mr. Drury,

We received your letter and are very grateful for your kind words. We of the Colombian Navy's Caribbean Coast Guard consider it very important that we complete our assigned mission to protect and guarantee the lives of all who work and enjoy themselves on the sea. Your words strengthen us, fill us with emotion, and encourage us all the more to complete our work.

In the Caribbean Coast Guard we have a motto we try to fulfill literally: "Safe lives, safe ships, sustainable seas and insurance."

We hope you and your shipmates return to our country. Thank you very much.

**Attentively,
 Commander Germán Humberto Locarno Blanco
 Caribbean Coastguard Commander
 Cuerpo Guardacostas Armada Nacional
 Cartagena de Indias
 Colombia**

—Continued from previous page

Dear Compass,

We are French cruisers who have been sailing for more than seven years through more than 30 different countries.

We'd like to draw attention to difficulties which have arisen in the anchorage of Spanish Water, Curaçao, regarding the use of VHF radio.

After research in the different guides, we gather that the authorities in Curaçao, in accordance with international regulations, have restricted boat-to-boat VHF radio traffic to the following channels: 6, 8, 72 and 77.

Why then, is Channel 72 arbitrarily occupied for half an hour or so every morning by a transmission, entirely and solely in English, which is baptized "The Net"? If anyone else wants or needs to use Channel 72 during that time, they run the risk of a severe scolding or even more serious threats. How have some cruisers been allowed to hijack this channel for their own use?

I am retired, 68 years old, and have the deepest respect for the rules and laws of the countries I visit. I think that equally, there should be respect for the means of communication put at our disposal in the countries we visit. The liberties some cruisers are taking with VHF radio are creating tensions and conflicts in our little community. Will official action by the authorities have to be taken to return serenity to the beautiful anchorage of Spanish Water?

Sign me,

A VHF User, Too

Dear Compass,

Readers have recently asked for information about insurance for yachts in the Caribbean. In answer to their queries I submit:

There are many reputable insurers who will provide coverage for a sailboat both afloat and on the hard. Any good insurance agent or broker who writes yacht business should be able to direct you to them.

Please remember that the cheapest policy is not always the best, and you should read a pro forma copy of the policy before you buy — I know it's boring, but not everything is covered.

I also suggest that if you are storing your boat on the hard in the islands, you should be certain that (1) damage from rats and other vermin is covered, (2) that the policy does not have any unrealistic requirements regarding the earth surface on which the vessel is stored and securing of the jack stands, and (3) conditions for a covered theft claim are realistic. I have seen several claims in which a vessel stored on the hard had its interior (wiring, food, electronic components, cushions, furnishings, head liner, etcetera) devastated by rats who somehow found a way to get inside, and have seen policies which have unrealistic requirements regarding securing the vessel while on the hard.

Good sailing,

**Guy Matthews
S/V Quite Nice**

Dear Compass,

On Monday, September 24th, St. Thomas residents Deborah Barton and Richard Baker were out for a day on the water on their 36-foot liveaboard trawler, *Mambo*, which is registered in the USVI. They were trolling with a cheap spinning reel and light tackle when they were boarded by Conservation and Fisheries in the British Virgin Islands and arrested for illegal entry and fishing without a license.

They were escorted to Road Town and not formally charged until 7:30PM on Monday evening. They were in court facing the magistrate at 9:30 the following morning. There were virtually no business hours between the time that they were charged and when they were in court for them to have contacted a barrister. Being by nature very honest people and not understanding the penalty that they were facing, Richard and Debbie pleaded guilty to the charges. Debbie was found guilty of illegal entry and fined US\$1,000. Richard was found guilty of illegal entry and fishing without a license. The combined fine for Richard was US\$46,000. In lieu of the \$46,000, Richard was sentenced to 12 months in prison in Tortola. Richard is now (October 4th) in a high security cell in Her Majesty's Prison in Tortola.

Richard and Debbie are a very nice semi-retired couple of modest means. Richard is a former US Army paratrooper and is retired from the Washington DC Police Department. They were relatively new to boating and have often made jokes about their inability to fish. The sentence that Richard received was harsher than any received thus far by any of the commercial fishermen who have faced the same charges in the BVI. Debbie is probably going to have to cash in an IRA, the only money that either of them has set aside for their retirement, in order to get Richard out of jail. Whether or not the fine is paid and Richard is released, this event will have a lasting negative impact on their future and their future financial stability.

Magistrate Valerie Stevens implied at Richard's sentencing that she wanted to send a message to the USVI that too many US Virgin Islanders are fishing in the British Virgin Islands and that it needs to stop. This message was made all too clear to US Virgin Islands' fishermen by actions taken by the British

Virgin Islands over the last few years without it having to be reiterated by the grossly unfair sentence of someone not at all related to the fishing industry. Most if not all of our fishermen are aware of the BVI fishing license law, and most try to obey the law. Richard Baker is not a commercial fisherman, nor is he a serious recreational fisherman. To penalize a cruiser of modest means because he had basically stumbled into the fray is outrageously unjust.

Paige Santiago-Passano

St. Thomas, USVI

Editor's note: For more information on this and similar incidents see www.virginislandsdailynews.com/index.pl/article_ho me?id=17616056.

Dear Compass,

We had a wonderful holiday in St. Lucia and we were looking forward to a catamaran trip along the coastline to Soufriere on the 2nd of October. We arrived at around 10:45AM and when we stepped onto the pier we were greeted by horror! Just a few yards away by the roadside, fishermen were slaughtering large sea turtles. We counted about a dozen captured individuals of these



Large sea turtles caught in St. Lucia last month

endangered species! What further baffled us is that Soufriere apparently lies in the midst of St. Lucia's Marine Park, as we were told by our taxi driver.

We traveled to many countries experiencing their cultures, which we much appreciate and respect. We don't dare to impose our way of life onto others. However, we believe that Soufriere's fishermen don't rely on turtle meat to sustain their livelihoods and St. Lucia, as part of the international community, has an important role to play in the conservation of nature, at least on a regional scale. Sea turtles are ancient creatures traveling great distances, exposed to many dangers and the destruction of their feeding and breeding grounds. They mature and reproduce very slowly, hence the incident witnessed today must have serious negative consequences further afield.

Would it be possible for the St. Lucian government to review its conservation policies? It would be a sad day for St. Lucia and humanity in general to lose these magnificent creatures forever. We would love to return to this beautiful island with our friends, enjoying unspoiled nature in a sustainable environment.

Sincerely,

Adrian and Heather Johnston

Dear Adrian and Heather,

After a decade-long moratorium on sea-turtle fishing, St. Lucia re-introduced turtle-fishing seasons (currently October 1st to February 28th) a few years ago, with restrictions on size and catch methods.

Turtles cannot be caught at all within the marine reserves of the SMMA; neither are gill nets, which are often used to catch these creatures, allowed within the SMMA. We have received information that the turtles you saw were caught outside the SMMA.

Although all species of sea turtles found in the Caribbean are considered endangered, they can still be legally caught (within the applicable fisheries regulations) in some countries, such as St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. Other neighboring countries forbid turtle fishing entirely, and Barbados, for example, has an exemplary turtle conservation program.

For a wealth of information on sea turtle conservation in the Caribbean, we recommend contacting the Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network, WIDE-CAST. Their website (www.widecast.org) is currently under construction, but the director, Dr. Karen Eckert, can be reached at keckert@widecast.org.
CC

Dear Compass,

As I write this I am in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, waiting for my passport and bail money to be returned. I have been jailed for three days, detained for 151 days, posted US\$100,000 bail, spent \$10,000 in attorney fees, and was fined \$18,000. I don't think I will be back any time soon. This is no paradise.

I got caught up in a legal trap that is immoral and I believe illegal.

—Continued on next page



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44 Beneteau Oceanis, 1994	\$ 185,000
44 CSY walkover, 1978	\$ 79,000
49 Hunter Passage, 1995	\$ 159,000
42 Catalina MKII, 1996	\$ 119,000
41 Formosa Ketch, 1975	\$ 99,000
40 Passport Sloop, 1981	\$ 85,000
38 Morgan/Catalina, 1996	\$ 119,000
37 Gulfstar, 1977/2002 refit	\$ 84,000
37 C&C, 1985	\$ 48,600
36 Frers, 1985	\$ 48,500
34 Tartan, 1988	\$ 49,000
32 Bristol Sloop, 1976	\$ 25,000
POWER	
55 Cheoy Lee LRC, 1980	\$ 329,000
50 Marine Trader, 1980	\$ 139,000
45 Silverton MY, 2003	\$ 399,000
49 Hershine Trawler	\$ 40,000
49 Cruisers Express, 1999	\$ 249,000
41 Sea Ray Express, 2001	\$ 245,000
37 Fountaine Pajot Power Cat	\$ 425,000
99 Proline, 1995 twin 225 hp	\$ 45,000
27 Grady White, 1997	\$ 40,000

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1999	30' Henderson 30 (Racing Yacht)	US\$ 60,000
1988	30' Jeanneau Sunlight 30	US\$ 40,000
1986	36' Lavaros Tosca	US\$ 53,000
1989	36' Reinke Super 10 Steel Sloop	US\$ 45,000
1977	37' Gin Fizz	EUR 42,500
1968	39' Cheoy Lee Off Shore 40	US\$ 95,000
1977	39' Roberts (Home built)	US\$ 40,000
1978	40' Atlantic 40	US\$ 70,000
1985	40' Offshore 40 (REDUCED!!!)	US\$ 149,000
1987	42' Ta Chiao Mermaid 42 (Under Offer!!!)	US\$ 80,000
1999	43' Wauquiez Pilot Saloon	EUR 247,500
1999	44' Fingulf	US\$ 240,000
1992	45' Fortuna	US\$ 150,000
1991	50' Celestial Pliothouse	US\$ 268,000
1987	51' Beneteau Idylle 15.5	US\$ 160,000
1995	53' Super Maramu (REDUCED!!!)	US\$ 329,000
1982	53' Hatteras Luxury Cruiser	US\$ 254,000
1994	55' Oyster 55	US\$ 776,000
1973	56' Visch Motor Yacht	US\$ 150,000

MULTIHULLS

1993	36.5' Dean Catamaran (REDUCED!!!)	US\$ 99,500
2002	37' Fountaine Pajot	US\$ 325,000
1998	47' Gancel Catamaran	US\$ 168,000
1980	54' Norman Cross Trimaran	US\$ 295,000
1995	55' Custom Built Trimaran	US\$ 350,000
1991	55' Lagoon Catamaran	US\$ 559,000
1990	72' Alumarine (Loungebin) Catamaran	US\$ 1,190,000

PEAKE

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VHF: CHANNEL 69

—Continued from previous page

I am sure that I am not the first sailboat cruiser entering USVI waters to be victimized by this well-hidden gun law.

Virgin Islanders are good people. To them I apologize. I think they deserve better.

Since selling my business in 2001, I have pursued a lifelong dream of sailing to exotic places. Piracy is a problem and violent crime against "cruisers" in the Caribbean and elsewhere is increasing. [Editor's note: Actually over the past year in the Caribbean, it's been decreasing.] For these reasons I carry firearms onboard. I register or surrender my guns whenever it is required. My problem here was not due to my negligence. I am a member of the National Rifle Association and have a valid Florida Concealed Weapons Permit as evidence of my responsible gun ownership. I was in an elite army airborne unit and trained to use a variety of firearms. I grew up on ranches in Montana where carrying a gun when leaving the ranch house was standard.

On April 24, 2007 in St. Thomas, ATF and local authorities confiscated my guns following a USCG Safety Inspection.

I was not arrested because the investigating officers were satisfied that I posed no threat to the community, and I had cause for possessing my guns. Weeks later, on May 22, I was arrested and jailed for three days. The arresting officer apologized; he knew it served no good purpose. A USVI prosecutor and my attorney agreed that \$3,500 bail was appropriate. However, the judge demanded a \$100,000 cash bail (O.J. Simpson only paid \$125,000 for armed robbery).

I was originally charged with Failure to Register Firearms. However, the over-zealous USVI Prosecutor's Office quickly upped the charges to Illegal Firearms Possession that carries mandatory prison sentences and heavy fines, completely disregarding my Florida Concealed Weapons Permit which is accepted in 30 States and by the USVI Gun Laws.

The USVI Prosecutor tried every way to get maximum penalties charged to me. Twice he tried to get the US Federal Government to press charges, but they refused. I broke no US Federal Laws! I am still puzzled as to why he pursued that route.

After a lot of backroom negotiation between the prosecutor and my attorney, and some encouragement by the ATF Agent, a first-class individual, I was offered a deal. It stipulated that if I pled guilty to Failure to Register Firearms, the prosecutor would recommend to the judge a \$5,000 fine with no jail term and the return of my shotgun. It was told that 99 percent of the time the judge accepts the prosecutor's recommendations. My attorney encouraged accepting the plea offer.

So, I made the change of plea, and, at the same hearing, I requested permission to travel because Hurricane Dean was aiming at the Virgin Islands. I explained that my sailboat represents a large part of my retirement net worth and my storm insurance is not valid at this latitude since July 1st. My request to travel was denied because the judge felt that if other boats were willing to stay in St. Thomas it was good enough for me. He also said that "\$100,000 is not enough to assure that you will return for sentencing, if you make another request."

On September 21st, I faced the judge again, this time for sentencing. The Pre-Sentence Report explained that boaters rely on the Customs clear-in procedure to define the rules; their cruising guides make no mention of USVI gun registration. He was given examples of other countries' Customs forms, with spaces for gun declarations, versus the US Customs Form (the one used for USVI clear-in). And, paying \$75 to register a gun and then having to apply for a separate permit (three local references are required) to actually possess your registered gun makes no sense for cruisers passing through the USVI.

The judge listened to our arguments and examples, unimpressed by their merit, ultimately stating, "You should have known that there was a USVI gun registration requirement; you could have searched the Internet." I was fined \$18,000. No guns were returned.

Is it reasonable to expect visitors to search the Internet to discover critical laws and requirements not defined at Customs clear-in?

A transient boater cannot legally register a firearm in the USVI. You must have a "bona fide residence or place of business within the Virgin Islands" to apply for gun registration. My attorney, a former USVI prosecutor, said, "By this legal wording you would have been arrested if you had tried to register your guns". How does a transient boater approach the USVI Government about gun registration without risk of being arrested?

Nothing relating to USVI gun registration and permitting was in print; no notices at Customs, no notices at the marinas. Boaters are left to chance to discover the USVI gun registration requirement. Some countries require boaters to carry their guns to Customs for surrender, others forbid it. Without a notice at Customs, or anything in print as guidance, what do you do? A wrong decision could get you arrested. In my case it did.

Wayne Lenoir
S/V Novatrix

PS I finally got my passport back, but the bail refund check will not be available until next Wednesday. Within minutes of getting the check I will be sailing to Trinidad.

Dear Compass,

On the morning of August 10th we arrived in Clifton Harbour, Union Island, aboard the catamaran *El Paseo*, and anchored with plenty of chain in two metres of water. In the evening, the wind picked up to 45 knots, with rain. Although I started the motors to ease the strain on the chain, a violent gust dislodged the anchor and we ended up dragging onto the reef.

When the wind and rain subsided, a water taxi came to help and carried an anchor out to the port side. The boat was resting on a plateau of coral sand. I decided to wait until high tide to try to kedge off. The water taxi driver said he would return to show us the way. At high tide, at 0225 hours, we got free, but in the pitch dark we ended up aground again.

The water taxi returned, with two others, too late to help but demanding EC\$2,000. I agreed to pay if they got us free. They tried, but with no success, and said they would return at the next high tide, in the afternoon.

In the morning I examined the boat: there was some paint and gelcoat damage, and damage to one transom, but the bilges were dry.

At 1400, seven water taxis came and tried to pull us off. After many tries, I decided to stop, having broken many lines and the galley hatch. We would wait for the next high tide, at 2330 hours. By 1800 I realized that the starboard keel was now buried deep in sand; it would be a miracle to free the boat. A man with equipment came and said that for EC\$7,000 he could vacuum the sand from around the keels. Again, I agreed to pay if the operation was successful. The work was difficult, but eventually *El Paseo* was freed and we were towed to the pontoon by the Palm Island Resort's service boat.

At the pontoon, about 20 people forced me to sign a US\$10,000 debt acknowledgment. I wrote on the paper that I was only signing it under duress. Once I signed it, the crowd dispersed. Despite interference from some water taxis, we moved *El Paseo* to the Anchorage Yacht Club, where I asked the manageress to phone the police. The police told us to remain at the Yacht Club. When the water taxi drivers arrived at the AYC, we told them they should go to the police station if they wanted to make a complaint, because we did not believe we owed them US\$10,000.

A meeting was then arranged with a judge, police, Customs, Immigration and two representatives of the water taxis. With witnesses, we proved that the debt acknowledgment was signed under duress, as I had written on it in French when signing it. A translator confirmed this. The meeting was, however, inconclusive. Having been threatened with physical harm by some of the water taxi drivers if we did not now pay US\$30,000, I asked to be placed under police protection, to lodge a complaint for extortion, and to contact the French Embassy. We were escorted back to the boat by the officers.

The water taxis came back later with the police and offered to settle for US\$7,000. At this point, after two extremely fatiguing days, I accepted. The police escorted me to the bank, where we obtained the money. I got a receipt and the US\$10,000 "debt acknowledgment" was returned to me.

The police escorted me back to the boat and protected me until the following morning when I departed for Guadeloupe.

Jean-Michel Corbinaud

Dear Compass Readers,

First we would like to thank all the yachtsmen that have helped us by filling out our survey at www.caribbeanyachting.info.

In case you have not heard of us, we are Koen Altena and Erwin Herbert, and as fourth-year marketing students from Holland we are doing research on the (lower) Caribbean yachting industry. Our main focal point is the yachting service sector, meaning yacht storage and maintenance/repair.

One of our research methods is an on-line survey. With the results of this survey we will find out what it is that yachtsmen look for in a good yachting service destination. We have some participants on this survey, but to make the results more trustworthy we need more input. So if you have not filled out our survey yet, please make sure to do so. It will only take five minutes of your time and is a great help to us!

If you participate in our research, you will have a chance to win several prizes like a Blue performance bag or a Xantrex power charger. These prizes will be given away by lottery. Please go to our website: www.caribbeanyachting.info.

This survey is supported by Budget Marine Caribbean chandleries.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Koen Altena and Erwin Herber
Holland

Book Review

For sheer fun, I enjoyed "Uncle Percy" the best. It is the true story of an old white oil-rig driller in Trinidad, who worked and played hard until his death at 93, and who, for the last 26 years of his life, lived with a much younger Indian woman named Coontie in an unlikely but harmonious union. The author, Jennifer Franco, was not blood related, but knew this giant of a man as "Uncle" from her childhood as a sign of respect. Her father had been Percy's close friend, and she spent many years vacationing with her husband and children at a small beach cottage belonging to Percy. Percy survived both her father and her husband. After her husband's funeral, the author allowed herself to cry for the first time in Percy's arms.

"Your husband was a good man," he said as he held me. "I liked him and I will miss him. But he is gone now and there is not one blasted thing we can do about it."

The same can be said of the old days recounted in these stories: they are gone, but they can still be remembered fondly.

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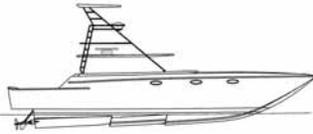
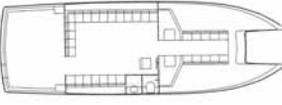

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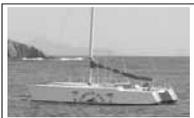


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ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#	ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#	ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#	ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#
A&C Yacht Brokers	Martinique	50	Diesel Outfitters	St. Maarten	22	Island Dreams	Grenada	46	Sea Services	Martinique	30
Admiral Yacht Insurance	UK	18	Discovery Marigot	St. Lucia	11	Island Water World	Sint Maarten	56/51	Seventeen Yacht Transport	UK	55
Aikane Trinidad	Trinidad	19	Dockwise Yacht Transport	Martinique	31	John Casey	Bequia	34	Silver Diving	Carriacou	23
Anjo Insurance	Antigua	43	Dominica Marine Center	Dominica	34	Johnson Hardware	St. Lucia	24	Simpson Bay Marina	St. Maarten	28
Art Fabrik	Grenada	46	Dopco Travel	Grenada	39	Jones Maritime	St. Croix	35	Soper's Hole	Tortola	36
B & C Fuel Dock	Petite Martinique	23	Down Island Real Estate	Carriacou	48	KP Marine	St. Vincent	35	Spice Island Marine	Grenada	44
Bahia Redonda Marina	Venezuela	33	Doyle Offshore Sails	Barbados	5	Lagoon Marina Hotel	St. Vincent	29	St. Maarten Sails	St. Maarten	29
Barefoot Yacht Charters	St. Vincent	18	Doyle Offshore Sails	Tortola	16	Latitudes & Attitudes	USA	39	St. Thomas Yacht Sales	St. Thomas	51
Basil's Bar	Mustique	47	Doyle's Guides	Caribbean	22	LIAT	Caribbean	17	Superwind	Germany	53
Bichik Services	Martinique	50	Echo Marine - Jotun Special	Trinidad	5	Mac's Pizza	Bequia	21	SVG Air	St. Vincent	42
Bogles Round House	Carriacou	54	Errol Flynn Marina	Jamaica	40	Maritime Yacht Sales	St. Thomas	49	Thomas Peake & Sons	Trinidad	19
Bougainville	Union Isand	42	Falmouth Harbour Marina	Antigua	14	McIntyre Bros. Ltd	Grenada	20	Tikal Arts & Crafts	Grenada	20
Budget Marine	Sint Maarten	2	Fernando's Hideaway	Bequia	21	Mid Atlantic Yacht Services	Azores	34	Trade Winds Cruising	Bequia	51
BVI Yacht Sales	Tortola	51	First Mate	Trinidad	22	Navima	Venezuela	42	True Blue Bay	Grenada	45
Canvas Shop	Grenada	46	Flamboyant Beachside Terrace	Grenada	20	Northern Lights Generators	Tortola	10	Turbulence Sails	Grenada	44
Caraibe Greement	Martinique	25	Flamboyant Owl Bar	Grenada	20	Peake Yacht Brokerage	Trinidad	50	Tyrral Bay Yacht Haulout	Carriacou	23
Caraibe Yachts	Guadeloupe	49	Flying Fish Ventures	Grenada	48	Perkins Engines	Tortola	8	Vemasca	Venezuela	33
Carenantilles	Martinique	32	Food Fair	Grenada	21	Petit St. Vincent	PSV	38	Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour	Virgin Gorda	28
Carene Shop	Martinique	53	Frangipani	Bequia	34	Ponton du Bakoua	Martinique	30	Voiles Assistance	Martinique	50
Caribbean Propellers Ltd.	Trinidad	19	Grenada Marine	Grenada	45	Porthole Restaurant	Bequia	21	Wallilabou Anchorage	St. Vincent	47
CIRExpress	St. Maarten	22	Grenadine Isalnd Villa	Bequia	13	Prickly Bay Marina	Grenada	43	Westrec Marinas	USA	4
Club Nautico de San Juan	Puerto Rico	15	Grenadines Sails	Bequia	4	Renaissance Marina	Aruba	41	Whisper Cove Marina	Grenada	4
Cooper Marine	USA	51	GRPro-Clean	Martinique	35	Santa Barbara Resorts	Curacao	26	Xanadu Marine	Venezuela	43
Corea's Food Store Mustique	Mustique	47	Horizon Yacht Management	Tortola	12	Schip-O-Case	Guadeloupe	34			
Curaçao Marine	Curaçao	27	Iolaire Enterprises	Caribbean	48/49	Sea and Sail	Guadeloupe	42			

Who Are You Calling a 'Cruiser?'

by Buddy Stockwell

When someone uses the term "Cruiser" what is it exactly that pops into your mind? I always thought the word was easy to define, but now I'm not so sure.

So here's the challenge: What is it that real Cruisers are made of these days? For example, are multi-millionaires Cruisers, or must you be on a budget? What if you only gunkhole the Chesapeake? What if you live aboard a stationary wreck? What about bareboat chartering? How about the magazine-inspired zero-experienced, can they be real Cruisers despite having no clue about clews? As of late, I've been asking. The deeper I dig, the more evasive the answers.

At dictionary.com the word "cruise" is defined: "to sail about on a pleasure trip." A "Cruiser" simply does precisely that. Sounds dead-dog simple, right? WRONG! Some people demand that real Cruisers meet tougher standards.

I came to this realization partly by reading *Caribbean Compass*. It's been fun to critique controversial articles and peruse travel logs. Further, the Readers' Forum is



spectacular when "firing squads" of experts emerge with guns blazing, "executing" the prior month's opinionated authors.

Strong opinion goes hand-in-hand with Cruising. Bona fide experts are everywhere, ready to pounce and opine ad nauseam. You find them at Customs, the chandlery, eavesdropping on every VHF transmission, and "holding court" at the bar. It is no surprise *Caribbean Compass* is also a favorite haunt.

But despite endless tides of expert opinion, defining "Cruiser" is elusive. To my knowledge, no Guru has coined a general definition. Such efforts might be fruitlessly narrow anyway. Gurus worth their own salt would surely define "Cruiser" by holding up their own picture, and that would be too narrow.

Articles in *Caribbean Compass* do not settle the issue either. Authors never state what a Cruiser is. Instead, efforts focus on articulating what a Cruiser is not by delineating alleged deficient behavior(s) and implying that some people are not fit.

I'm sure you've read the plethora of "they are not real Cruisers" remarks bantered about in *Caribbean Compass* akin to the following (exaggeration added by me, of course):

Instead of landing at the fuel dock under sail only, they doused that big beautiful spinnaker and motored up to the dock instead. They obviously do not have the incredible sail-handling skills real Cruisers do!

They avoided a beautiful anchorage merely because somebody got chopped up by an attacker's machete during a botched dinghy theft. What pitiful little small-minded stay-away non-Cruiser paranoids!

They didn't savor the flavor of the ultra-cheap fly-encrusted bacteria-seething street vendor food. They should have stayed home and stuck to reading magazines! They don't have the guts (literally) to appreciate culture (both historical and bacterial in nature).

They ran a generator and air conditioning last night. What noise-polluting paradise-destroying comfort-before-courage spoiled-rotten jerks! I'll tell you what: it was damn hot on our boat too, but we quietly suffered through as real Cruisers.

They talk about Mexican Train Dominoes on the VHF. True-grit Cruisers would never so much as peripherally participate in such immature, impractical, non-oceanic endeavors!

They have not sailed 30,000 miles and/or crossed an ocean, much less circum-navigated non-stop single-handed with no GPS and no autopilot while standing on one foot. They are stumbling toddlers, not real Cruisers!

They were worried about crime reports down-island. True Cruisers never worry and never lock anything. The world loves real Cruisers. Crime is reserved for inept Cruiser wannabe-fools and for "locals" with "axes to grind" among themselves. Crime never touches real Cruisers with good Karma!

They don't bathe naked on deck. The poor things have "issues" about their bodies and don't appreciate natural God-given freedoms real Cruisers enjoy such as getting naked on the transom steps and rubbing "soapy privates" while people on other boats watch through binoculars and gasp: "Good God! Honey! Take a peek at THIS! Hurry up! And please, PLEASE tell me I don't look like that yet!"

They don't pee over the rail at anchor while waving to neighboring boats for applause and scoring regarding impressive trajectories. They must have been potty-trained at gunpoint, poor things. They are clearly not real Cruisers or else they would heartily embrace the liberating joys of "fun with bodily functions and an audience."

And so it goes. Reading *Caribbean Compass* has been both hilarious and illuminating. On a sad note, I quickly learned that I can never be a real Cruiser in all circles. When this realization struck, I cried myself to sleep every night for about a week. But, I am happily over it now. Besides, as the old Groucho Marx quote goes: "I do not care to belong to a club that accepts people like me as members."

All kidding aside, I have been asking myself broader questions. For example, what is wrong with the simple dictionary.com "sailing around on a pleasure trip" definition? What is the big deal? What motivates some Cruisers to "slice the baloney thin" and concoct definitions that exclude others? I can offer theories based on actual experiences with various personality types I've encountered.

—Continued on next page

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NOVEMBER

- 1 All Saints' Day. Public holiday in French West Indies
- 1 Independence Day. Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda
- 1 D Hamilton Jackson Day. Public holiday in USVI
- 2 - 4 7th Triskell Cup, Guadeloupe. www.triskellcup.com
- 3 Independence Day. Public holiday in Dominica
- 3 - 4 Women's Caribbean One-Design Keelboat Championship, St. Maarten. St. Maarten Yacht Club/Lagoon Sailboat Rentals, (599)-543-6469, director@bigboatseries.com
- 4 Community Service Day. Public holiday in Dominica
- 4 18th West Marine Caribbean 1500 sets sail from Hampton, VA to Tortola. www.carlb1500.com
- 5 - 11 Triangle Emerald Rally, Guadeloupe/Dominica. www.triangle-emerald.com
- 6 Constitution Day. Public holiday in Dominican Republic
- 8 - 16 Heineken Aruba Catamaran Regatta. www.arubaregatta.com
- 9 - 11 St. Thomas Radiology Women's Regatta & Tennis Tournament, St. Thomas, USVI. St. Thomas Yacht Club (STYC), tel (340) 775-6320, styc@vipowernet.net, www.styc.net
- 10 - 12 North Sound and Back Race, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, fax (284) 494-6117, www.rbviyc.net
- 11 Armistice Day. Public holiday in French West Indies and BVI
- 11 St. Maarten Day. Public holiday in St. Maarten
- 12 Veterans' Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
- 12 - 16 Golden Rock Regatta, St. Maarten/Stafia. www.goldenrockregatta.com
- 14 - 17 Carriacou Sailing Series. Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Assn. (TISA), tel (868) 634-4210/4519, fax (868) 634-4376, info@tissailing.org, www.tissailing.org
- 16 Stafia Day. Public holiday in Stafia
- 17 BVI Schools Regatta, RBVIYC
- 17 - 18 Nanny Cay Nations Cup, Tortola. www.racinginparadise.com
- 19 Discovery Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
- 22 US Thanksgiving Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
- 23 - 25 Course de L'Alliance Regatta, St. Maarten/St. Barths/Anguilla. www.coursedelalliance.com
- 24 FULL MOON
- 24 Round Tortola Race, RBVIYC
- 25 ARC 2007 sets sail from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to St. Lucia. www.worldcruising.com
- 30 Independence Day. Public holiday in Barbados
- TBA One Man, One Woman, One Boat Race, Martinique. figueres.jm@wanadoo.fr
- TBA 9th Annual Wahoo Tournament, Havana, Cuba. Club Náutico Intl. Hemingway (CNIH), tel (537) 204-1689, fax (537) 204-6653, yachtclub@cnih.mh.cyt.cu

DECEMBER

- 1 - 2 17th Wilmerding Memorial Challenge Regatta, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), Tortola, tel (284) 495 1002, fax (284) 495-4184, mvh@surfbvi.com, www.weyc.net
- 3 - 7 MYBA St. Maarten Charter Show. www.mybacaribbeanshow.com
- 5 Saba Day. Public holiday in Saba
- 5 - 10 46th Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting. www.antiguayachtshow.com
- 5 - 12 Chanukah
- 9 National Heroes Day. Public holiday in Antigua
- 15 Kingdom Day. Public holiday in St. Maarten
- 15 Commodore's Cup Race, BVI, RBVIYC
- 16 - 18 St. John Christmas Music Festival, USVI
- 16 - 24 Nine Mornings Celebrations, St. Vincent. www.svgtourism.com
- 19 Separation Day. Public holiday in Anguilla
- 21 Winter Solstice
- 21 - 23 Carriacou Parang Festival. collinswallace@hotmail.com
- 23 - 24 Coral Bay Thanksgiving Regatta, St. John, USVI. www.skinnylegs.com
- 24 FULL MOON
- 24 - 1 Jan St. Kitts Carnival
- 25 Christmas Day. Public holiday in many places
- 26 Boxing Day. Public holiday in many places
- 26 Triumph of the Revolution Nautical Festival, Havana, Cuba. CNIH
- 26 - 1 Jan St. Croix USVI Festival
- 29 Merry Christmas Race, Havana, Cuba. CNIH
- 31 Festival Day. Public holiday in Montserrat
- 31 Nelson's Pursuit Race, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
- 31 St. Barts New Year's Eve Regatta
- TBA Sir John Compton Race, St. Lucia to Martinique and back. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), tel (758) 452-8350, info@stluciyachtclub.com, www.stluciyachtclub.com

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of Compass went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation.

If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our 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

—Continued from previous page

First, there are the "competitors". They are unmistakably out to prove something by cruising. They are ingenious at turning conversations so as to inform you that they are superior expert Cruisers sailing the best cruising boat. They don't want friends; they want audiences. They clearly reserve the label "real Cruiser" for themselves (and clones). They don't compliment anyone else and never praise other boats.

Personally, I can't imagine how anyone could perceive that cruising is, of all things, a competition. Why the edge? Are they constitutionally incapable of turning off a "rat race" mentality? Did they fail to earn respect in prior careers? It's as if the Mad World (that we all supposedly left behind) snuck onto their boat and is a permanent stowaway.

Another voice emanates from "sour grapes" types. If anybody has anything bigger or better, they automatically declare that those spoiled jerks aren't real Cruisers: "All we have on board is a bucket and a flashlight; real Cruisers only need one flashlight. People with two flashlights are not real Cruisers."

Of course, not all minimalist Cruisers feel that way. For a few, though, hardship and jealousy make a potent mix that eclipses their ability to accept more fortunate folks as real Cruisers too. I admire those who dare to cruise in small boats on pennies a day. Their sheer tenacity commands respect. Nonetheless, they alone do not represent the entire universe of legitimate Cruisers.

A third voice comes from the ranks of "credentialed" Cruisers. To be legitimate in their eyes, you must have all the right certificates and the right burgees flying from your spreaders, or else you're just a dummy on a boat. You have not earned the title of Cruiser. More important, you have not been voted on by them.

When I first started cruising, I was stunned to find a few people out here carefully tilting their noses up at just the right angle, like olfactory sextants continually marking the zenith of their alleged cruising superiority.

Last but not least, there is a fourth group: "adrenaline junkies" who get their kicks by traveling beyond the outer limits of caution and common sense. They love the thrill of risk-taking. Sure, they are real Cruisers too. But, the only expressions they define exclusively are "real lucky" and "real dumb" depending, of course, on the outcome of their latest stunt.

Shifting gears now, let's get back to the issue: generally defining "Cruiser". After shooting my mouth off, it would be ludicrous for me not to offer my thoughts.

It is my steadfast opinion that there is a solitary hurdle to becoming a real Cruiser: untying the lines in earnest on Day One. You say good-bye to a previous shoreside life (already liquidated with no easy way back). At some certain moment you look back and see your home port disappear over the horizon behind you. Sheer uncertainty rests upon the horizon ahead of you. Nonetheless, you stay the course. That is the moment that you cross the line and become a real Cruiser.

It took a lot more guts to sell my home, liquidate a successful career mid-stream, and depart the comfort zone of a well-established shoreside life than it took thereafter to face big waves, reef sails in midnight squalls, and suffer occasionally nasty Customs officials.

Being predisposed toward camaraderie, I'll go further. I say that if you are beset with an indelible, irrepressible dream of sailing away, and you sense a genuine kinship with all other people afflicted with an insane and tragic yet wonderful and magic love of boats and the sea, then you are surely a Cruiser for whom destiny simply waits.

My layman's opinions are romantic, I know. True-cruiter circumnavigators, know-it-alls, and voyaging experts are scoffing right now in utter disgust at my syrupy notions. But before you judge harshly, hold on a second. I might just be in good company.

Joshua Slocum's account of setting sail aboard *Spray* in 1895 demonstrates that at the very inception of his adventures a magical transformation occurred within him as well:

"I had resolved on a voyage around the world, and as the wind on the morning of April 24, 1895 was fair, at noon I weighed anchor.... A thrilling pulse beat high in me. My step was light on deck in the crisp air. I felt there could be no turning back, and that I was engaging in an adventure the meaning of which I thoroughly understood."

Captain Slocum's remarks may help augment the modern dictionary definition of "cruise" as follows: to sail about on a pleasure trip... having resolved at the outset to undertake the adventure with no turning back.

Hey, that's not too bad. But what do I know? I'm no expert.

So far, I've asked 50 people in the fleet to define "real Cruiser" and I have heard 50 different answers. One crotchety old salt didn't miss a beat, saying simply: "Not you." Go ahead and laugh, I can take it.

After ruminating about all of this further, it seems to me it would help if people would stop using the term "real Cruiser" as vague shorthand for extensive personal resúmes. For example, maybe you have mastered celestial navigation, or you have accomplished great feats of sail handling during oceanic passages. Those things are wonderful accomplishments, but they should not be used to define what a real Cruiser is or is not.

Make no mistake: I am not advocating that amazing skills should go unrecognized or unappreciated. I greatly respect and congratulate those with seamanship skills far superior to mine, and rightly so. What I am saying, however, is that no level of achievement, however great, entitles anyone to belittle others out here facing the same seas with lesser skills. Green as they may be, they had the guts to come out here and they are surely real Cruisers too.

All the same, I am still searching for the perfect general definition of "Cruiser" fashioned by Cruisers for Cruisers. If you would like to submit a "Real Cruiser" definition, or learn more about me and my adventures, see my website www.indigomoon.us.

Finally, many thanks to all of you who have appeared in *Caribbean Compass* and risked sharing your strongly-worded opinions with all of us over the years, despite a guaranteed date with destiny at the hands of next month's "firing-squad!"

By the way, could somebody please loan me a cigarette and a blindfold?

Buddy Stockwell and his wife Melissa are cruising the Caribbean aboard S/V Indigo Moon.

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