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# C COMPASS



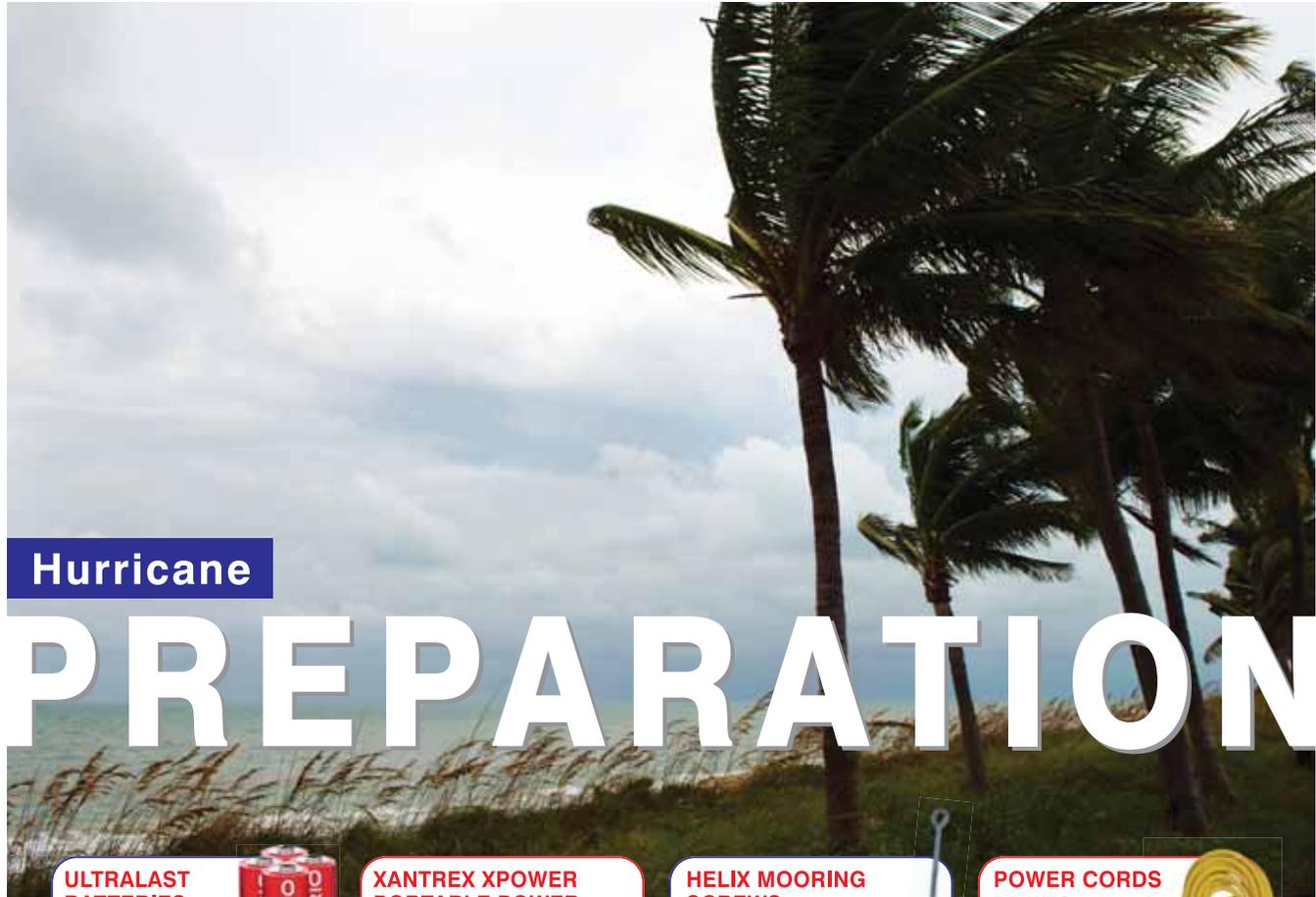
AUGUST 2008 NO. 155

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



## REGATTA TIME IN ABACO 2008

See story on page 14



**Hurricane**

# PREPARATION

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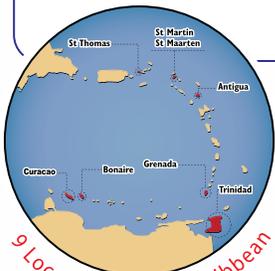
We have purchased these very heavy duty shore power cords to help our customers avoid the disasters that occur when voltages for power tools in boatyards drop.

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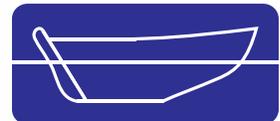
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9 Locations in the Caribbean

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Chaguaramas

# CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

www.caribbeancompass.com

AUGUST 2008 • NUMBER 155



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## CALENDAR

# AUGUST

- July 27 to 3 Aug** Tour des Yoles Rondes, Martinique. Traditional boats' round the island regatta. Société des Yoles Rondes, www.yoles-rondes.org
- 1** Emancipation Day. Public holiday in Barbados, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago
- 1** Carriacou Children's Education Fund Auction, Carriacou. boatmille@aol.com
- 3 - 7** Crop Over Festival, Barbados. www.cropoverfestival.bb
- 4** August Monday. Public holiday in some places.
- 4** Kadooment Day. Public holiday in Barbados
- 10** Constitution Day. Public holiday in Anguilla
- 11 - 12** Grenada Carnival. Public holiday in Grenada. www.grenadagrenadines.com/fest.html
- 11 - 17** 55th San Juan International Billfish Tournament, Puerto Rico. www.sanjuaninternational.com
- 15** Feast of the Assumption. Public holiday in French West Indies
- 16** FULL MOON
- 23** Great Race (powerboats) Trinidad to Tobago. www.ttpba.com
- 24** Festival of St. Barthelemy, St. Barths. Boat races
- 25** St. Louis Festival, Corosol, St. Barths. Fishing contests, boat races
- 31** Local Fishing Tournament, Bonaire
- 31** Independence Day. Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago



# SEPTEMBER

- 1** Labor Day, Public holiday in USVI
- 5 - 11** Dia di Bonaire sailing races, Bonaire
- 6** Bonaire Day, Public holiday in Bonaire; boat races
- 6 - 7** Back to Schools Regatta, BVI
- 8** Virgin of the Valley Festival, Margarita, Venezuela
- 15** FULL MOON
- 17** National Heroes Day, Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis
- 19** Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis
- 20** Clean-Up Dive, Bonaire
- 24** Our Lady of las Mercedes. Public holiday in Dominican Republic
- 24** Republic Day. Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago

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

Cover photo: *Abaco Rage* - Regatta Time in Abaco (Sally Erdle)  
Inset: *Abaco Rage* (Robert Dunkley)

# Info & Updates

**Electronic Clearance for Yachts Introduced**  
Keats Compton, President of the Caribbean Marine Association, reports: The Caribbean Marine

Association (CMA) and the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC) are pleased to announce the introduction of electronic clearance for



*It's voluntary and user-friendly. The eSeaClear website guides you step by step through filling out your Customs clearance forms electronically. You'll still have to go to Customs on arrival, but won't have to fill out declaration forms there by hand. Intended for eventual Caribbean-wide use, the system is now being tested in St. Lucia and user feedback is encouraged.*

yachts traveling within the Caribbean. The system was launched on July 1st with a pilot project in St. Lucia, which permits yachts entering and leaving St. Lucia to submit the relevant documentation either on computers at the Customs office on arrival, or remotely, via the internet at [www.eSeaClear.com](http://www.eSeaClear.com). You must still report at Customs upon arrival, but Customs can access the notification information to process your clearance more efficiently — without the need for you to fill out the declaration forms by hand. The system is scheduled to be launched in the British Virgin Islands shortly, with progressive roll-out around the region. Yachts must, of course, continue to adhere to each country's specific rules of reporting.

The electronic clearance system, known as eSeaClear, was developed by CCLEC, a union of some 35 Customs entities, including the EU and US, as part of the Regional Clearance System, which was set up to facilitate the processing of yachts traveling around the region. The use of eSeaClear is completely voluntary, so that yacht skippers with a preference for existing paper documentation will not be forced to clear electronically. Yachts departing from countries that do not subscribe to eSeaClear will need to use existing paper-based procedures, but the developers are confident that the system will win converts quickly, because of its intrinsic utility.

Registered users can access the system to enter and maintain information about their vessel or vessels, crew and passengers. Once all Caribbean countries are aboard, prior to arrival at a new country the vessel operator simply ensures the information is accurate for the upcoming voyage and submits a new notification: you won't have to fill in declaration forms by hand at each country you arrive in. By using eSeaClear to make your arrival notifications, you'll be able to clear Customs faster and more efficiently so you can start enjoying your visit sooner.

The importance of this development cannot be overstated, as *Compass* readers might remember the fury of the storm over the introduction of the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) by CARICOM governments late last year. The CMA has argued that APIS is not yacht-friendly, and would destroy the yachting industry in the ten Eastern Caribbean countries (all English-speaking) that had signed on to it. Most of these countries chose to ignore APIS in light of the sustained opposition coming from the yachting trade.

—Continued on next page

## LE MARIN - MARTINIQUE F.W.I

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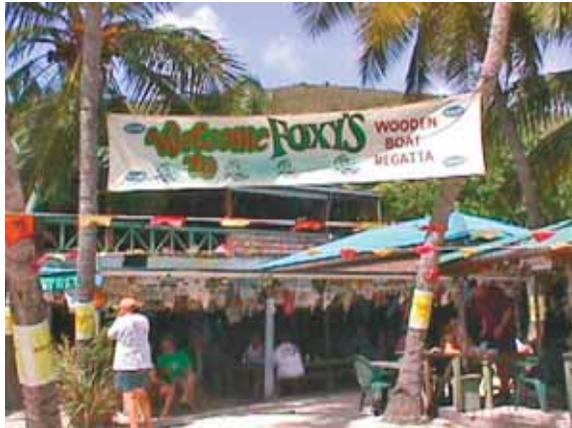
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The CMA remains at the forefront of the opposition to APIS as foisted upon the trade, arguing that CCLEC provides a more realistic and practical vehicle for providing the relevant authorities with the required yacht-clearance information. As such, the CMA has successfully lobbied the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to withdraw that group's support for APIS in its current form. The OECS's position was formally conveyed to the CARICOM Heads of Government meeting in Antigua in June.

We would like to encourage all yachtspeople who are able, to participate fully in the trials of eSeaClear and to provide feedback on the forms provided by CCLEC.

To register for electronic yacht clearance visit [www.eSeaClear.com](http://www.eSeaClear.com).

**BVI Defers Implementation of New Yacht Fees**  
The British Virgin Islands' Government Information



The British Virgin Islands' economy relies on yacht tourism, and the BVI Cabinet has decided to set aside prohibitively expensive harbour fees

Service reports: Cabinet has decided to indefinitely defer the implementation of harbour fees for vessels entering or remaining in Territorial waters or those using a BVI Ports Authority facility.

In a statement made on July 15th, Premier Honourable Ralph T. O'Neal, OBE, revealed that the decision was taken at a specially convened sitting of the Cabinet on the previous day.

It was previously announced that the new fee structure would have taken effect on July 1st but was subsequently deferred until July 15th.

However, the Premier explained that based on representations made to Government by local associations, maritime agents and others involved in the yachting industry both locally and abroad, the decision was taken to defer the introduction of fees in an attempt to protect the Territory's competitive edge as a yachting destination.

"After all, the BVI has been known as the sailing capital of the Western Hemisphere, if not of the world, and therefore it was extremely important for Cabinet to consider the representations that were made, as the Cabinet will do for any representation that the people will make," the Premier stated.

He added: "It must be remembered that the yachting industry contributes to the economy of the Territory and the yachtsmen enjoy our waters from Anegada to Jost Van Dyke." The Premier further explained that the yachting industry must be safe-guarded against adverse impacts.

"Cabinet reviewed the new fee structure and also we considered the cost implications of the charges when compared to the rising cost of fuel," the Premier said. He added, "In addition, Cabinet determined that if the BVI were to implement this new fee structure, the Territory may have become the most expensive destination in the world for mariners and

yachts." (Editor's note: Under the new fee structure, a 43-foot yacht, for example, would have paid approximately US\$675 per month to visit the BVI.)

In addition to indefinitely deferring the introduction of harbour fees, the BVI Cabinet has agreed to establish a seven-member focus group to review the said fees. This group will be chaired by yachtsman Peter Haycraft and will include local agent, Francis David; Acting Chairman of the BVI Tourist Board, Terrance Ford; Managing Director of the BVI Ports Authority, Vincent O'Neal; Comptroller of Customs, Wade Smith; Lorraine Stoutt of Caribbean Transport and a representative from the BVI Chamber of Commerce and Hotel Association. The group is expected to submit its report to Cabinet by September.

The Government is committed to ensuring maximum economic development for the Territory and providing the necessary protections for the sectors that propel this growth.

**Optional Moorings for Tobago Cays Park**

Lesroy Noel, Education Coordinator of the Tobago Cays Marine Park, St. Vincent & the Grenadines reports:

—Continued on next page



Tobago Cays Marine Park rangers assembling the new yacht moorings. The Park Board is deciding on a mooring-fee schedule as this issue of Compass goes to press. Meanwhile, the cost will be EC\$45 per 24 hours for any yacht under 70 feet. Mooring users will still pay the normal per-person park entry fee



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In an effort to further develop the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) and to make it user-friendly, the management of the park is now in the final stage of putting down 32 yacht moorings. It is our view that these moorings will limit damage to the park's fragile habitats. The moorings are strategically placed to deter yachts from dropping their anchors too close to the turtle nesting area and the coral reefs, which are two of the many attractions in the Cays.

We encourage the use of these moorings, even though they are optional, as they are affordable and help in the preservation of the marine life in the park.

The moorings were funded by the Government of SVG and were installed by TCMP park rangers and Sunsail charter company, the latter of which contributed technical and physical support.

For more information visit [www.tobagocays.com](http://www.tobagocays.com) or phone (784) 485-8191.

**Cruisers Site-ings**

The irrepressible self-described "ink-slinging sea gypsy" Captain Fatty Goodlander has a new web page at [www.fattygoodlander.com](http://www.fattygoodlander.com). Check it out!

The unique marine artwork of Patrick Chevalier, resident doctor on Palm Island in the Grenadines, can be seen at [www.artandsea.com](http://www.artandsea.com).

Aargh! There be some great new seafaring music on Latitudes & Attitudes Seafaring radio, now on the air 24/7/365 and commercial free! Most of the artists featured are true boating singers and songwriters who you won't hear on any other radio station. Visit [www.seafaring.com](http://www.seafaring.com).

**Trinis Join IGFA Observers Worldwide**

Jason Schratwieser, Conservation Director for the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) was recently invited to Trinidad & Tobago by the Trinidad & Tobago Game Fishing Association (TTGFA) to train several locals in an observer's course at The Lure Restaurant in Chaguaramas.

Jason's primary duties at the IGFA include directing conservation efforts such as participation in national and international fisheries management panels, collaborative game fish research and liaison between anglers and fisheries management. Jason said, "I've been at IGFA about five years and we typically do about five classes each year. We've held these classes in five US states, Bermuda, Turks & Caicos, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Venezuela and now in Trinidad & Tobago. These newly certified Trinidad &

Tobago observers will join a prestigious group of 1,000 observers worldwide."

Jason also directs IGFA's World Record and Observer Training Programmes. He holds a Masters Degree in Biology from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia and previously worked in fisheries management with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Chris Mouttet, President of the TTGFA said, "Jason is an avid angler who enjoys all types of fishing and we are very fortunate to have him come here to train several key Trinidad and Tobago fishermen in this very important training programme."

**'Sink the Flying Cloud' Project**

The British Virgin Islands Scuba organization and the BVI Tourist Board are in the process of bringing the three-masted, 200-foot, 400-ton tall ship *Flying Cloud*

to BVI waters to be sunk as a dive site attraction.

Built as a cadet training ship for the French Navy in 1935 as *Oliseau des Isles*, the ship was based in Tahiti during World War II and later hauled freight in Mexico. The renamed ship became part of the Windjammer Barefoot Cruises charter fleet in 1968 and sailed regularly in the BVI, where she was joking called by some the "Frying Crowd". She was retired from the charter fleet in 2002 because she was too expensive to maintain. *Flying Cloud* was donated to a museum in Trinidad but that institution reportedly declined to accept the ship.

Plans are now underway to have *Flying Cloud* towed from Port of Spain, Trinidad, to the BVI. Her final "resting place" has not yet been announced.

For more information visit [www.windjammerflyingcloud.com](http://www.windjammerflyingcloud.com).

—Continued on page 55



The once proud Flying Cloud is to be sunk as a BVI dive site

A warm welcome awaits you and your yacht at Port Louis



**Port Louis, Grenada**

Nowhere extends a warmer welcome than Port Louis, Grenada. Visitors can expect powder-white beaches, rainforests, spice plantations and a calendar packed with regattas and festivals. Grenada is also the gateway to the Grenadines, one of the world's most beautiful and unspoilt cruising areas.

Now there's another good reason to visit. There are 50 new fully serviced slips for yachts of all sizes up to 90m available right now for sale or rental.

Sitting alongside the marina, the forthcoming Port Louis Maritime Village will include luxury hotels, villas, restaurants and bars, plus some of the finest boutiques and shops in the region.

**Limited availability**

Slips are available for sale or rental. For a private consultation to discuss the advantages of slip ownership, please contact our International Sales Manager, Anna Tabone, on +356 2248 0000 or email [anna.tabone@cnmarinas.com](mailto:anna.tabone@cnmarinas.com)

To fully appreciate this rare opportunity, we highly recommend a visit. To arrange an on-site meeting please contact our Sales and Marketing Co-ordinator, Danny Donelan on +1(473) 435 7432 or email [danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com](mailto:danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com)



# BUSINESS BRIEFS

## New Manager for Port Louis, Grenada



Clyde Rawls is Port Louis, Grenada's, new general manager

Camper & Nicholson's Marinas have appointed Clyde Rawls to serve as Port Louis marina's general manager in Grenada. Rawls, who relocated from the USA for the position, has many years' experience having managed three resort marinas in Florida, including the Bahia Mar Beach Resort & Yachting Center in Ft. Lauderdale. Situated in St. George's Lagoon, Port Louis marina is expected to be complete in Spring 2009. Prior to this, Rawls will be on site to oversee the construction schedule, new customer enquiries, and the day-to-day operations for the 50 fully serviced berths currently in operation. From November he will also oversee the opening of nine additional super-yacht slips ranging from 75 to 85 metres in length. Rawls said: "I am delighted to be joining the Camper & Nicholson's team and look forward to helping establish a world-class marina with the high standards that C&NM have established all over the world for more than 200 years. Grenada is in a

perfect position for charters and cruisers wanting to explore the islands of Grenada and the Grenadines."

Currently being developed alongside an EC\$1.5 billion Maritime Village project, the completed marina will offer more than 350 berths for craft from ten to 90 metres. For more information on Port Louis marina see ad on page 7.

## Errol Flynn, Jamaica, Offers Summer Discount

You can save 25 percent on dockage at Jamaica's Errol Flynn marina through November 1st. For every three days at standard transient dockage rates, you'll get one day free. This discount does not apply to already discounted long term and seasonal dockage rates. Normal electrical and water charges apply to each day of dockage. Port Antonio, in which Errol Flynn Marina is located, is an ISPS (International Ship and Port Security Code) Compliant Facility, which means that there is a high level of security applied to all areas of operation. At the marina level, there is 24/7 security provided by a combination of marina personnel and private security services. The premises also now have a 24-hour mobile patrol for the several kilometers of roadway and walkway area within the compound. Marina management says, "It is important also that we emphasize that Port Antonio and the Portland Parish in which we are located have the lowest incidence of crime anywhere in the Caribbean." For more information see ad on page 6.

## Russians Discover Grenada's Marine Scene

Russian tour operators and travel agents visited Grenada's luxury seaside properties, neighboring islands and coral reefs in June.

Twenty-five operators based in Moscow and Kiev visited numerous hotels and resorts including the soon-to-be-opened Waterside Resort at Prickly Bay Marina. In addition to enjoying an island tour with Caribbean Horizons Tours & Services, the group visited the unique underwater sculpture park at Moliniere Reef and took a day sail to Hog Island, site of the proposed Four Seasons Resort. The group also visited St. Lucia, Barbados and Canouan.

For more information on Prickly Bay Marina see ad on page 11.

For more information on Caribbean Horizons Tours & Services see ad on page 47.

## Rally Originator Opens Yacht Consultancy

Jean-Marc Rutin, who founded the popular annual Transcarraibes yacht rally that now runs from Guadeloupe to Cuba under the auspices of Stéphane Legendre, has opened a recreational-boating consultancy service called Conseiller Nautique.

A life-long sailor, Jean-Marc offers his experience to future cruisers, giving guidance on every aspect of preparation from buying the right boat to provisioning it for an extended cruise with family or crew. With his background in organizing rallies in the Caribbean, Mediterranean and Pacific, as well as an annual transatlantic event, Jean-Marc's expertise is also available to yachting event organizers.

For more information contact Jean-Marc at jm.rutin@neuf.fr.

## Medicinal Plants of Trinidad and Tobago

A new paperback book has been published giving information on 63 local plants used mainly — sometimes exclusively — by the East Indian/South Asian community of Trinidad & Tobago. Plants including supari, katahar, madar, chalta, lauki, jhingi, saigan, til and datur, as well as the more common ones such as black pepper, ganja, nutmeg, baigan, pomegranate and wild cucumber are documented, complete with botanical names, descriptions, origins and chemical composition. Each plant entry is accompanied by original drawings to aid identification.

The price of TT\$65 or US\$20 includes packaging, registration and postage.

Available from major bookstores in Trinidad, and from the publisher at dmahabir@gmail.com.

## Discovery St. Lucia Angles for Fishing Visitors

Discovery at Marigot Bay, St. Lucia, is offering a special summer package that is sure to reel in fishing enthusiasts.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

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half-day sportfishing excursions on a private fishing boat. If you've never fished before, an experienced fishing-boat crew will be happy to show you the ropes. Experienced anglers can come and enjoy the thrill of new fishing grounds.

For more information visit [www.discoverystlucia.com](http://www.discoverystlucia.com).

#### RYA Training Expected for Antigua

The Antigua-based sailing charter and training company, Ondeck, has announced the imminent opening of "Ondeck Training Antigua". The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) of the UK will visit Antigua to credit the new facility with the capability of training all ages, beginners to experts at the Ondeck base in Falmouth Harbour. Ondeck hopes to open up sailing to more Antiguan and aid them in developing careers on the water.

Ondeck has made plans for Antiguan skipper Logan Knight to go to the UK to further his qualifications through Ondeck Training UK, which will qualify him to become Ondeck Training Antigua's chief instructor. Logan will be trained to the Yachtmaster Instructor level, which will allow him to teach all of Ondeck's courses on yachts.

Ondeck is headquartered in the UK and runs operations in Antigua, Portugal, and the US Virgin Islands. The company will draw on the successful model of Ondeck Training in the UK and Portugal to ensure that the Caribbean equivalent is as highly regarded and respected.

For more information contact Liz Holder, manager of Ondeck's Antiguan operation, at [lh@ondeck.co.uk](mailto:lh@ondeck.co.uk).

#### Windjammer Barefoot Cruises Sunk

Although no official statement to that effect has come from Windjammer Barefoot Cruises, all available information indicates that the company has gone out of business.

For six decades, the Florida-based company founded by Captain Mike Burke ran a fleet of historic and romantic tall ships in the Caribbean. Passengers loved the laid-back ambience and reasonable rates, and many Caribbean men and women found long-term work aboard the ships. Unlike large cruise ships, where everything a passenger could want, from food to entertainment to shops, is found aboard, "jam-mers" were famous for exploring and spending their money ashore, a boon to many Caribbean communities' economies. The fleet included the *Yankee Clipper* (built in 1927), the *Mandalay* (1923), the *Polynesia* (1938) and the *Fantome* (1927), which was lost with 31 crewmembers in Hurricane Mitch off Honduras in 1999.

After ceasing operations for several weeks last year, the Burke family-owned company planned to relaunch cruises on its fleet of ships, starting with the *Legacy* on November 3rd, 2007, followed by the other ships in the spring of this year. In a series of late-2007 press releases, however, the company canceled all sailings through at least January 2008. April 1st, 2008 — April Fool's Day — was the day that the most recent CEO of the company, Joey Burke, had promised Windjammer's faithful followers that the fleet would once again be in full service.

But April is long gone and no Windjammer cruises have taken place since last November. Many of the ships have reportedly been seized by creditors. As of this writing, one of the former Windjammer fleet, the *Flying Cloud*, is scheduled to be sunk in the British Virgin Islands as a dive site. (See related story on page 7.)

A posting on [www.cruisemates.com](http://www.cruisemates.com) says, "Throughout early 2008 the Burke family went quietly underground. They stopped commenting in public and put out no press releases. In March, the Miami headquarters went silently dark. The company still owed millions of dollars in unfulfilled cruises alone, plus other financial liabilities. Yet, they never declared bankruptcy or made any other formal financial moves at all."

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has received numerous complaints about Windjammer since its shutdown, because the company has not refunded prepaid fares for the canceled cruises. A letter reportedly received by a former Windjammer client from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services stated that Windjammer Barefoot Cruises Ltd. is "no longer in business".

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# CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

## Study Links Sunscreen to Coral Bleaching

A recent study indicates that chemicals in sunscreen products might threaten tropical coral reefs. Corals, among the most biologically productive and diverse ecosystems of the world, are highly sensitive to changes in their environment.

According to the April 2008 issue of the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*, scientists at the Polytechnic University, Italy, who carried out the study, say chemical compounds in sunscreen products, even at extremely low concentrations, can cause abrupt and complete bleaching of hard corals. They studied the effect of sunscreen exposure on samples from tropical reefs in the Red Sea, the Caribbean Sea, the Indian Ocean off Thailand and the Pacific Ocean near Indonesia.

The corals were suspended in bags of virus-free seawater supplemented with various quantities of sunscreen lotions. They found that the corals started bleaching within a few hours and it took them just a few days to become completely bleached. The samples were compared with control samples of corals in seawater without sunscreen. The controls remained healthy.

The researchers found that sunscreens stimulated dormant viruses in zooxanthellae, the symbiotic algae that live in a healthy coral. The chemicals — paraben, benzophenone, cinnamate and camphor — caused the virus within the algae to replicate until the algae exploded. That led to spilling of the viruses into the surrounding seawater, which spread the infection.

## Caribbean Monk Seal Declared Extinct

On June 6th, the US government declared the Caribbean monk seal extinct, making it the first seal species to vanish because of human activity. The US National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) blamed the

demise of the species on overhunting in the first half of the 20th century. "Humans left the Caribbean Monk Seal population unsustainable after overhunting them," said Kyle Baker, a biologist for the NMFS.

The seals (*Monachus tropicalis*) once inhabited the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico. They were listed as an endangered species in 1967, after hundreds of years of being hunted for food and their skins and blubber. The last reliable records of this species are of a small colony at Serranilla Bank, about 210 miles north-northeast of Nicaragua, in 1952.

The Caribbean Monk Seal was a relatively small seal (six to nine feet long). The males weighed up to 400 pounds. The seals spent much of their time in the water, occupying rocky and sandy coastlines for shelter and breeding. Their diet included lobsters, octopus, and reef fish. It is believed that the average lifespan was approximately 20 years. Like other true seals, the Caribbean Monk Seal was sluggish on land. Its lack of fear of humans also contributed to its demise.

According to The Ocean Conservancy, the surviving Hawaiian and Mediterranean monk seals are also endangered. Hunting of monk seals has been banned, but dwindling populations are hurt when young seals play with trash and get entangled, often leading to death. Additionally, the Conservancy stated that discarded and lost fishing gear are likely culprits in entangling and killing the seals.

## The Caribbean and the IWC

Among the main issues discussed by members of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) at their 2008 annual meeting, which began June 23rd in Santiago, Chile, were the possible lifting of the global ban on commercial whaling as requested by Japan, and a proposal by Brazil, Argentina and South Africa for a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary. In the end, the ban remained in effect and the South Atlantic Sanctuary did not come up for a vote.

Kelvin Allie, senior program manager of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), is from Dominica. Dominica made news recently by reversing its former "sustainable use" position on whaling: the "Nature Island" now supports the IWC's worldwide ban

on commercial whaling. *Compass* asked Kelvin to comment on Caribbean countries' involvement in the IWC.

Regarding the ban on commercial whaling, Kevin says, "Caribbean countries should vote at the IWC how they see fit and not sell out to Japan's bribes. By protecting whales we're making the best choice for the Caribbean and ensuring our economic future."

Although the vote on a proposed South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary has been postponed, we asked Kelvin why people in the Caribbean should care about a southern hemisphere issue. He replied, "Absolutely you should care! Whales have migration routes thousands of miles long and, for many species, we don't even know where they go. Protecting a large swath of ocean means that whales that migrate through the South Atlantic Ocean, from warmer waters where they breed to cooler waters where they feed, offers the best chance of protecting these animals that know no political boundaries. Creating sanctuaries is the first step to protecting whales. There remains much to be done to protect them from these other threats (such as noise, pollution, ship strikes and climate change), but the first step, and one with the most impact, is protecting whales from whaling. Sanctuaries are also good for the economy by attracting eco-tourists: a healthy ocean means a healthy economy."

## Cayman Turtle Farm Heeds Alarm

Basio Piore reported in the June 30th issue of the *Caymanian Compass* newspaper that "It seems some viable solutions are on the horizon for dealing the millions of gallons of untreated effluent the Cayman Islands Turtle Farm has been pumping into the ocean for the past 40 years." Excess nutrients from the Turtle Farm have contributed to an overgrowth of green algae, which subsequently resulted in the death or disease of virtually all the nearby coral reef.

The Cayman Turtle Farm was established in 1968 as Mariculture Ltd. by a group of investors from the United States and Great Britain as a facility to raise the green sea turtle, *Chelonia mydas*, for commercial purposes. The intention was to supply the market with a source of product that did not deplete the wild populations further. By releasing turtles and facilitating research, any harm created by removing turtles and eggs from the wild would be mitigated.

Turtle Farm Managing Director Joseph Ebanks invited experts to address the effluent situation. Thomas Goreau, president of the Global Coral Reef Alliance and Henning Gatz of Aquacare Environment gave a presentation on June 25th, outlining their plans. "Our goal is to bring this reef back to life, which means cleaning up the water and regeneration of the reef," said Goreau. Gatz added, "We are here to devise a cost-effective means of dealing with aquatic waste, and the Turtle Farm as an awareness-building facility makes it an ideal place to do a project like this."

Options the Turtle Farm might choose to control effluent discharge include aeration, filtration and use of artificial wetlands.

Goreau noted that Grand Cayman is not alone in its water issues. He said that Turks & Caicos is the only country in the Caribbean that requires every tourist development to have a wastewater plant and to recycle its wastewater.

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A captive Caribbean monk seal at the New York Aquarium in around 1910. The species has now been declared extinct

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**St. Thomas's Hull Bay Cleans Up**

Carol Bareuther reports: Over 50 members of the Northside St. Thomas community – adults and children alike – joined together on June 29th to clean, beautify and make safer the public beach at Hull Bay, in preparation for the 20th Annual Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament, which took place on July 13th.

"The clean-up had the added benefit of bringing the community together to share resources, work hard and improve a common resource," says David Berry, vice president of the Northside Sportfishing Club. The Club and Hull Bay Hideaway co-sponsored the clean-up.

Over the course of the daylong beautification effort, volunteers removed every speck of garbage from Hull Bay Beach, an amount that nearly overflowed a huge trash bin that was later hauled away for disposal. PR Construction donated use of a backhoe and Gregory Berry volunteered as machine operator for the day.

The effort was also entertaining and educational. Participating school children painted and decorated

Organizers would like to thank Bellows International for product and all of the hardworking community members who gave their time and energy to clean this beautiful natural resource.

**Tourism Expansion:  
Conservation Threat or Opportunity?**

A publication of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) states: "Tourism generates 11 per cent of global GDP and employs 200 million people, but produces 4.8 million tonnes of waste yearly and consumes as much energy as a country the size and development level of Japan. The number of tourists is expected, at least, to double to 1.6 billion by the year 2020. Sustainable management of natural resources and wastes is essential for the wellbeing of this economic sector and natural ecosystems."

"Tourism is a fast-growing sector and an increasing source of pressure on the environment and natural resources. Its constant growth may not always be compatible with sustainable development.... The chief burdens come from transport, land development, water consumption, excessive energy demand, increased waste generation and impacts on biodiversity. The seasonality of tourism, and the fact that popular destinations often coincide with environmentally sensitive areas, have resulted in some places becoming victims of their own attraction."

"Tourism pressure is extraordinarily high in countries where tourists outnumber local residents in certain places. Tourism development often takes place in a rapid and unplanned manner, resulting in drastic landscape transformation in a very short period of time, including deforestation and drainage of wetlands. Such habitat disruption can result in significant biodiversity losses."

International tourist arrivals (2002) given as a percentage of total local population in selected Caribbean nations and territories are: Bahamas 496%, Turks & Caicos Islands, 779%, Cayman Islands 774%, Virgin Islands 500%, Anguilla 378%, St. Kitts and Nevis 163%, Antigua and Barbuda 326%, Montserrat 300%, Guadeloupe 120%, Martinique 115%, Barbados 185%, Saint Lucia 171%, Grenada 164%, Aruba 659%.

According to UNEP, an international tourist typically generates around 180 litres (about 40 gallons) of wastewater per day. Used wastewater is a major environmental concern and can threaten human and wildlife health. Many tourist facilities are located in isolated areas and are not connected to water treatment networks; the result is large volumes of sewage discharged directly to seas and rivers. In tropical areas,

sewage runoff causes serious damage to coral reefs, stimulating algae growth, covering filter-feeding corals and hindering their ability to survive.

It is now generally understood that tourism will remain a successful industry only if it is developed and managed by integrating environmental best practices. In 1976 UNEP launched the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP), an unparalleled joint endeavor of nations in the Wider Caribbean region, which embraces the region's diversity in its efforts to advance economic prosperity and environmental health.

For more information visit [www.unep.org/regional-seas/programmes/unpro/Caribbean](http://www.unep.org/regional-seas/programmes/unpro/Caribbean).

**Eastern Caribbean Whale News**

Here is an excellent resource for anyone interested in cetaceans in the Eastern Caribbean. Check out the Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Network's newsletter at [www.eccnwhale.org/pdf/new\\_EC\\_newsletter.pdf](http://www.eccnwhale.org/pdf/new_EC_newsletter.pdf).

**Environmentalists Study Puerto La Cruz Canals**

The word Venezuela derives from "Venice-like", and the El Morro complex at the coastal city of Puerto la



NORTHSIDE SPORTSFISHING CLUB/HULL BAY HIDEAWAY

Youngsters in St. Thomas beautified trash receptacles as well as the beach

trashcans donated by The Hull Bay Hideaway with colorful beach scenes and environmental slogans.

"The cans, which will be permanently secured on the beach and maintained by Hull Bay Hideaway, turned out beautifully and we hope they will remind visitors to the beach to put their trash where it belongs and to continue to help keep our beaches clean," says Sarah Haynes, general manager of Hull Bay Hideaway.



A project has been launched to determine the health of El Morro's unique canal ecosystem

Cruz was developed reflecting this, with an extensive system of canals linking the sea with residential areas and marinas, both of which are popular with Venezuelans and visitors alike.

On July 2nd and 3rd, scientists with the Venezuelan environmental group Fundación La Tortuga completed preliminary inspections for a project to monitor the water quality of the canals in the El Morro complex.

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The project will determine the current water quality in the canal system and devise plans to mitigate any environmental deterioration. Among other things, the scientists determined the location of permanent sampling stations that will take into account run-off and effluent from the nearby community of Lecheria.

Along with working with the relevant authorities on the water-testing program, Fundación La Tortuga will also be hosting workshops for the residents and users of the canal complex aimed at creating an ongoing culture of protection for these unique ecosystems.

For more information visit [www.fundacionlatortuga.org](http://www.fundacionlatortuga.org).

**Cruisers' Site Launches Cetacean Collision Survey**

noonsite.com — the global website for cruising sailors — has joined forces with marine environmental group MEER to launch a worldwide survey of collisions and near misses between cetaceans and sailing yachts. Collisions between ships and cetaceans are increasing around the world, but information on collisions involving sailing vessels is scarce.

Marine biologist Fabian Ritter, working for the non-profit organisation MEER, is investigating reports of collisions and near-miss events between sailing vessels and cetaceans, to help understand the reasons for the collisions and to help reduce the risk both for sailors and for cetaceans. As part of this research noonsite.com and MEER are inviting all sailors around the world to provide information on any whale/dolphin collisions or near misses during their sailing careers.

noonsite.com manager, Sue Richards, commented: "Whales and dolphins are held in special affection by all sailors around the world. We know from the feedback from our site visitors — all of whom are cruising sailors — that concern for the marine environment is a high priority for them. We welcome this opportunity to help focus research through the global sailing community, for the benefit of both sailors and the marine mammals, and I urge all sailors to look back through their logs and help build up some significant research data."

The MEER research project will run on noonsite.com until the end of 2008. To log a report, visit [www.noonsite.com](http://www.noonsite.com).

**International Year of the Reef Continues**

Audrey Alleyne-Quiniou reports: The beauty of coral reefs is featured in the English poet John Keats' poem "Endymion", which states: "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever: Its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness; but still will keep a bower quiet for us, and a sleep full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing... Methought I fainted at the charmed touch, yet held the recollection, even as one who dives three fathoms where the waters run gurgling in beds of coral."

The International Year of the Reef 2008 continues to focus on a global campaign to raise awareness of the value of coral reefs and the threats facing them. Not only do coral reefs possess aesthetic value, they also serve as a natural barrier that protects land from erosion and the worst ravages of tropical storms. They supply sand to beaches and draw divers and snorkelers to explore the diversity of the marine environment.

According to scientist Dr. Camilo Mora of Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada, the losses from the decline of coral reefs in the Caribbean alone "are endangering

a large number of species, from corals to sharks, and jeopardizing four billion dollars in services worth of fisheries, tourism and coastal protection." According to Mora's study, "Coastal development causes the most damage to coral reefs and fish populations, because of increased sewage and fishing pressure; while proximity to agriculture results in macro algae due to runoff of agricultural chemicals." It is estimated that currently 121 million people live along the Caribbean coasts — four times the population of Canada.

Mora further states in his study that "the future of coral reefs in the Caribbean and the services they provide to a growing human population depend on how

soon countries in the region become seriously committed to regulating human threats... The expected increase of the world's human population from six billion today to nine billion for the year 2050 suggests that coral reefs are likely to witness a significant ecological crisis in the coming half century if effective conservation strategies, including policies on population planning, are not implemented soon."

Education of tourists and locals alike is critical. Among educational materials found at [www.iyor.org/resources/education.asp](http://www.iyor.org/resources/education.asp) are regularly updated resources, projects and articles such as "Coral Guidelines for Tourists", and "Coral Issue Briefs".



*It's still the International Year of the Reef. What's in your plans for protecting thriving reefs like this one?*

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# First Female Winner in Record Participation

by Carol Bareuther

Maria José Cucalon isn't used to sailing in heavy winds at home in Ecuador. "But I've traveled and raced in many countries where the conditions are windier and that helped a lot in this regatta," says Cucalon, winner of the 2008 Scotiabank International Optimist Regatta (SIOR), raced June 20th through 22nd out of the St. Thomas Yacht Club in the US Virgin Islands.



DEN BARNES

First lady! Maria José Cucalon is the first girl ever to become overall winner since the Scotiabank event was established in the early 1990s — and in a record-sized fleet, too

Cucalon's win, the first for a girl in this event, also earns her the title of Caribbean Optimist Champion 2008, as this regatta is a Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA)-sanctioned event.

A record 96 eight- to 15-year-old junior sailors from 14 nations — Anguilla, Barbados, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Puerto Rico, Spain, St. Maarten, Trinidad & Tobago, the United States, all three US Virgin Islands and Venezuela — sailed in this event, which is credited with jump-starting Optimist sailing for kids in the Caribbean.

As well as winning the Overall, Best Girl and CSA titles, Cucalon also won the 13- to 15-year-old Red Fleet.

The USA's Christopher Williford led the 11- to 12-year-old Blue Fleet, while the British Virgin Islands' Jonathan Woods topped the age 10-and under White Fleet.

"This regatta was good for me because it was medium," says Woods. "The wind was really strong the first day and not blowing so hard the last day. It was perfect for me," says Woods.

Finally, it was Puerto Rico's Victor Rodriguez that placed first in the beginner Green Fleet.

"It was really tight between me and my friend Jorge (Gonzalez) to win," says Rodriguez. "I felt bad for him when I beat him and I was happy for him when he did good."

The Sea Star Clinic and Team Racing Regatta, powered by Optisailors.com, preceded the SIOR. Seventy sailors attended the three-day clinic taught by coaches from South America, the USA and the Caribbean. Puerto Rico Team 1 won the Team Racing event, sailed June 19th. Team members were Ivan Aponte, Raul Rios, Fernando Monllor and Fernando Monllor. The Virgin Islands Team 1 finished second with members Alex Coyle, Alec Taylor, Ian Barrows and Nikki Barnes.

Optimist sailing is definitely on a roll in the Caribbean. Not only are island kids winning continental and international championships, but the island chain is destined to host the Optimist North American Championships four times in five years — Tobago in 2005, Puerto Rico in 2006, Curaçao in 2008 and the Dominican Republic in 2009.

Looking ahead, the Dominican Republic's Omar "Mono" Bros, whose son Sebastian sailed in the Red Fleet, says, "We'll sail the 2009 Optimist North Americans out of Boca Chica, where we hosted the 1996 Sunfish Worlds and the 2003 Pan American Games. The bay is well protected and there's open-ocean racing with a good breeze."

The Optimist is an eight-foot long, single-sail dinghy sailed by some 150,000 kids in 110 countries worldwide. At the Athens Olympics over 60 percent of the skippers and 70 percent of the medal-winning skippers were former Optimist sailors.

## SIOR 2008 Winners

### Overall

- 1) Maria José Cucalon, Ecuador (49)
- 2) Ivan Aponte, Puerto Rico (53)
- 3) Jordi Hernandez, Spain (57)

### Red Fleet

- 1) Maria José Cucalon, Ecuador (49)
- 2) Ivan Aponte, Puerto Rico (53)
- 3) Jordi Hernandez, Spain (57)

### Blue Fleet

- 1) Christopher Williford, USA (135)
- 2) Victor Aponte, Puerto Rico (157)
- 3) Carlos Llorente, Spain (188)

### White Fleet

- 1) Jonathan Woods, BVI (430)
- 2) Colin Brego, St. John, USVI (484)
- 3) Myles Kaufmann, Trinidad & Tobago (506)

### Green Fleet

- 1) Victor Rodriguez, Puerto Rico (27)
- 2) Jorge Gonzalez, Puerto Rico (29)
- 3) Lucas Miranda, Puerto Rico (94)

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## Long-Running 'Family Event' Innovates for Success



Left: Starts were close even in Mother Tub Classes, which included boats ranging from a traditional Bahamian sloop to a Hunter 33.5 and, for the first time, cats among the monohulls

Below: The C&C115 Rock Star sailed over from Florida to steal the show with five bullets in RTIA Class

et rockets or beach cats need apply — raced in RTIA, PHRF, Mother Tub and Multihull fleets. RTIA is for light to medium displacement yachts that normally race under the PHRF handicap rules, using spinnakers and other specialty sails. PHRF class is for heavier displacement racer/cruisers who also wish to use spinnakers.

The Mother Tub classes have been established for boats equipped for cruising that do not normally race competitively. No spinnakers or other specialty sails are allowed, and handicaps assigned by the Race Committee may be adjusted from race to race in order to afford all Mother Tub yachts an equal opportunity to win. Unorthodox, yes, but 46 boats signed up to be this year's "tubs" — enough for three big classes. There are no overall prizes in the Mother Tub classes, since their handicaps may change from day to day.

Although the races are run to a professional standard and competition is, well, competitive, protests are discouraged. (There weren't any this year.)

—Continued on next page

"Cruising and racing is the best!" announced 18-year-old foredeck crew Jillian Aydelotte at one of the daily prizegiving parties, and the 33rd Annual Regatta Time in Abaco, July 3rd through 11th, provided a taste of both. The five-race series included round-the-buoys courses and destination races between neighboring cays.

This year's Regatta Time in Abaco (RTIA), the premier sailing event of the Bahamas, attracted 61 entries to race in six classes. Scheduled between the US Independence holiday and The Bahamas' Independence Day, and before the height of the hurricane season, the regatta attracts mainly yachts from the southeastern US to race along with Bahamian-based boats. RTIA draws a big social following in addition to the racers, being only one hour by air, one day by powerboat or two days by sailboat from Florida, at a time when the kids are out of school.

But most regattas last a long weekend, maybe five days at most. How does RTIA continue to induce so many amateurs to race their yachts in a nine-day event? Regatta Coordinator Ruth Saunders says, "They like it because it's a family event, not just racing."

Plenty of limin' time is built into the schedule, with three lay days included. RTIA Commodore Dave Ralph says, "We want to provide an event that reflects our interesting and diverse location while allowing families to enjoy time to explore... Each cay and each community is unique with its own personality." The Sea of Abaco offers a hundred-mile cruising ground sheltered from Atlantic rollers by a system of reefs and numerous cays, with a mixture of civilization and isolation. Abaco boasts more marinas than any other Bahamian island, and you can easily sail to a nearby cay for lunch or dinner.

The boats in this year's regatta, all of which had to be not less than 20 feet long and capable (at least in theory) of being lived aboard — no stripped-out pock-



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—Continued from previous page

One of the innovations at this year's event apparently solved the perennial problem (unless there are sufficient entries for separate classes) of having big, relatively slow catamarans racing in the same multi-

ing are wonderful — I'm loving it."

More RTIA first-timers were John Bolduc, his wife and their three kids aged 14, 13 and 11 on the 30-foot Hunter *Latitudes*. The Bolducs said, "We



The RTIA classes saw some close-in spinnaker duels. Here Tampa Girl tries to edge past Rock Star

hull class with zippy little trimarans. Race Committee co-chair Carol Ewing had the innovative idea to put this year's small handful of cats in the Mother Tub fleet and the let the three tris duke it out in Multihull Class. Her co-chair and husband Jon says, "It's working out great." Carol and Jon's Gulfstar 44 trawler, *Great Scott*, was a great committee boat. The Ewings were ably assisted by Barbara Dwyer taking times and John Lowe helping set marks.

Also new for RTIA 2008 was holding that day's prizegiving at the party after every race. The unique daily prizes — small bronze sculptures of dolphins, sharks and other marine life mounted on wooden plaques — were made by local artist Pete Johnston of Little Harbour.

Former full-time cruisers Carol and Jack Ward from South Carolina raced their Island Packet 40 *Zippity Doo Dah* in Mother Tubs Class E. Carol explains, "Jack and I have done the Newport to Bermuda Race and the Charleston to Bermuda Race, and one of our crew suggested Abaco. It's great! Tuesday's race was exciting with a very close start." She notes, "The trip from Charleston via Fort Pierce was beautiful, although there wasn't much wind so we motored a lot. There are five or six other boats from Charleston, and we brought sailing friends as crew." Her crew Pam adds, "I can't believe we're having so much fun." "It's our first time in Abaco," Carol says, "but not our last!"

Captain Roger Carrol, who took time out from working on the 72-foot Alden schooner *Keewatin* to race his first RTIA on his cousin Janet Harding's Pearson 33 *Harding's EZ Dock*, agrees. From Long Island, Bahamas, Roger says, "The Abacos are great. All the people rac-

do a lot of day and weekend sailing at home in Florida, but making the crossing and racing at Abaco has broadened the kids' horizons tremendously." And, especially since *Latitudes* won third place among nine boats racing in Mother Tub E Class in the Marsh Harbour Race, despite a broken boom, "Now they're hooked. We'll have to come back next year!"

The Marsh Harbour Race, held on July 9th, was typical: light to moderate breeze, the occasional squall and minimal seas. The Mother Tub classes sailed a



DEREK LEE

Above: Try this with your Fountaine Pajot! No? Then into the Mother Tubs with you!

Left: Race courses hopscotched through the islands from Green Turtle Cay (a part of entry) to Elbow Cay, all in the sheltered and shallow Sea of Abaco

course of 8.8 nautical miles, and the RTIA, PHRF and Multihull Classes course was 12.8 nautical miles.

Skipper Michael Carrington said of his *Susimi's* win of the day, "It's our fifth year, so we have some idea of what's the right place at the right time, but the real secret of our success is crew work with young people. We're racing with a crew of five teenagers and two dogs. Today we had a wild upwind leg with the windward mark going adrift in a squall, but all the kids were really into it."

—Continued on next page

PHOTOS (2): ROBERT DUNKLE/WWW.DUNKLESIMULOUS.COM

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One of *Susimi's* teenage crew, Hope Winkler, is a Laser racer back home in Kansas. This was her second time in Abaco, racing on the Sweden 37 where she helps call tactics and work the spinnaker. Her friend Jillian, from Melbourne Beach, Florida, was racing on the Pearson 30 *Abaco Glow* with skipper Andy Burke. "I think it's shocking you don't see more young people sailing," Jillian says. "It's so much fun."

The grown-up females were out in force at Abaco, too. From Florida's Melbourne Yacht Club, a women's team including Rochelle Yates, Karen Minette and Amy Pearce that usually races *Mouse*, a Lindenberg 28, came to race on two friends' boats, *Abaco Glow* and *Rock Star*, the C&C 115 that emerged victorious overall in RTIA Class. "It's a long regatta, but the racing is just great," says Rochelle.



SALLY BENTLE



ROBERT DUNKLE/WWW.DUNKES.SAILGANG.COM

Top: Competitors on the water, teenaged crew from different boats got together at the daily parties. Here are (front row, left to right) Sam, KK, Hope, Freddie and Rose, and (back row) Jillian and Maddie

Bottom: Showing the way! Youth power was the secret of *Susimi's* success in an overall PHRF Class win

A Mount Gay "red cap" event in the past, Bacardi became RTIA's new sponsoring rum this year. In addition to the many commercial sponsors, the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism has sponsored this regatta for the past 15 years. Don Cornish, Director of the Abaco Tourist Office notes: "We appreciate avid sailors coming. Boating is a stable part of the economy. People commit to coming for the regatta, and these are the kinds of visitors who will sustain us for a long time. They let their friends know, too." At this year's RTIA, a special prize was given in honor of the fact that one South Carolina sailor who left last year saying, "I'll be back with my friends" was. He brought five other boats from Charleston this year.

"This event has facilitated the growth of our boating niche and served as a catalyst to encouraging business in the summer months," Cornish says.

"The committee's success in organizing this event every year and maintaining its high standards is best evidenced through the amount of repeat boaters participating in this event as well as the many sailing enthusiasts that schedule their visit in order to enjoy the festivities. A summer would not be the same in the Abacos without Regatta Time...."

Commodore Ralph says, "When the regatta started in 1976, summers were slow, but the high points of the year are now Christmas, Easter and Regatta. We want to continue making Regatta Time in Abaco a better event, giving our visitors an experience that will bring them back year after year." Ruth Saunders and Committee Member Wynsone Ferguson traveled to Antigua Sail Week in April, looking for ideas "to inject

new life into Regatta Time in Abaco so that people will not be bored with the same thing year after year," so stay tuned for more innovations.

We'll bet that in some future summer, the young sailors who raced in Regatta Time in Abaco 2008 will be bringing their own kids here, too.

Special thanks to all the RTIA crew, the Abaco Tourist Office, Island Breezes Motel, and everyone else who made Compass's visit to Abaco not only possible, but comfortable and fun. For more information and next year's dates visit <http://regattatimeinabaco.com>.

## Overall Winners

### RTIA Class

- 1) *Rock Star*, C&C 155, Tim Tucker, USA
- 2) *Blue Moon*, Beneteau 47.7, Oliver Liddell, The Bahamas
- 3) *Tampa Girl*, J/120, William Terry, USA

### PHRF Class

- 1) *Susimi*, Sweden 37, Michael Carrington, GBR
- 2) *Buena Vida*, Sabre 36, David Rodate, USA
- 3) *Tanglefoot*, Morgan 35, Andrew Wilhoite, The Bahamas

### Multihull Class

- 1) *Evolution*, Corsair F28R, Kathryn Garlick, USA
- 2) *Bad Boys*, Corsair 28R, Bob Harkrider, USA
- 3) *Overdo*, Corsair F28R, John Novak, USA

## Mother Tubs First Place Winners

### Mother Tubs C

GREEN TURTLE RACE  
*Louise*, Buzzard's Bay, Chris Thompson, The Bahamas

GUANA CAY RACE  
*Odin*, Jensen 40, Carlo Morato, USA

MAN-O-WAR RACE  
*Skylark*, Morgan 45, Ronald Polin, USA

MARSH HARBOUR RACE  
*Dancing Girls*, Fontaine Pajot, George Floyd, USA

HOPE TOWN RACE  
*Skylark*, Morgan 45, Ronald Polin, USA

### Mother Tubs D

GREEN TURTLE RACE  
*Backdraft*, Nonsuch 33, Mike Kramer, USA

GUANA CAY RACE  
*Sempre Amantes*, Hunter Passage 42, Colin Whittaker, USA

MAN-O-WAR RACE  
*Shenanigan*, Gulfstar 50, Bradford Law, USA

MARSH HARBOUR RACE  
*Shenanigan*, Gulfstar 50, Bradford Law, USA

HOPE TOWN RACE  
*Ragtime*, Gulfstar 44, John Wright, USA

### Mother Tubs E

GREEN TURTLE RACE  
*Abaco Glow*, Pearson 30, Andy Burke, USA

GUANA CAY RACE  
*Larkspur*, Hinkley 40, Tom Carpenter, USA

MAN-O-WAR RACE  
*Harding's EZ Dock*, Pearson 33, Janet Harding, The Bahamas

MARSH HARBOUR RACE  
*Monkey's Uncle*, Hunter 45, Carter Quillen, USA

HOPE TOWN RACE  
*Sinderella*, Catalina 25, Robert Fritz, USA



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**IF** you want to kick off a regatta with happy sailors, giving away 1,200 free cheeseburgers, a hundred pounds of french fries, a hundred gallons of rum punch and hundred gallons of Margaritas on a gorgeous stretch of sea-lapped sand certainly sets the right tone. And that's just what happened at the July 3rd "Cheeseburger in Paradise Party" on Fiddle Cay, Abaco, sponsored by Bobb and Patricia Henderson of the houseboat *Stranded Naked*. Then, after four hours of partying on the beach, participants in Regatta Time in Abaco 2008 had their skippers' briefing. Whew!

A high standard had been set for the numerous lay-day parties and daily race prizegiving celebrations to follow. Festivities included in this truly movable feast were a street party at Settlement Point and a fête at Green Turtle Club and Marina, both on Green Turtle Cay; a get-together at Grabber's Bar & Grill on Guana Cay; and parties at Snappa's Bar & Grill, Crossing Beach and Bristol Wines & Spirits, all on Great Abaco island.

Parties featured a wide variety of danceable live music ranging from mellow guitar tunes, to the grin-inducing Browntip Rake and Scrape musical saw players, to the heart-pounding drums, bells and whistles of traditionally costumed Bahamian Junkanoo marching bands.

Copious quantities of the sponsors' beverages were available, and vendors were on hand here and there with down-home culinary offerings such as conch salad, barbecue, and deep-fried lobster tails with peas and rice. Also on sale at some venues, along with regatta T-shirts of course, were local handicrafts like straw and shell-work. There were abundant give-aways of regatta caps, bags and other goodies, along with the daily prizes.

The gala final awards party was held around the seaside swimming pool at pretty Hope Town Harbour Lodge on Elbow Cay. As expected, there were many triumphs celebrated and many losses mourned, while at least one winning skipper inevitably ended up being sent for a fully clothed victory swim by his crew. Finally, after a marathon of five yacht-race days and at least eight parties, the Regatta Committee and all their helpers had the chance to really let themselves go and party, too. And while some of the Mother Tub families took their kids back to the boat early to get some sleep, rumor has it that others celebrated till dawn. Whew!

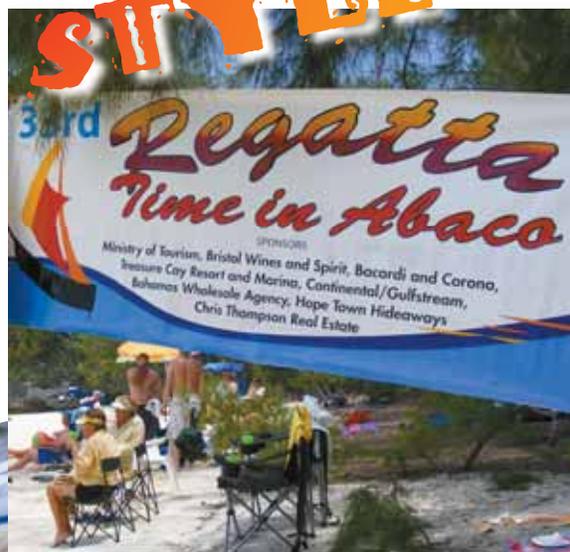


SALTY ENJOIE

# REGATTA PARTIES! ABACO STYLE



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Top: Thrilling Junkanoo bands were a post-race hit

Middle: The sponsors did not stint

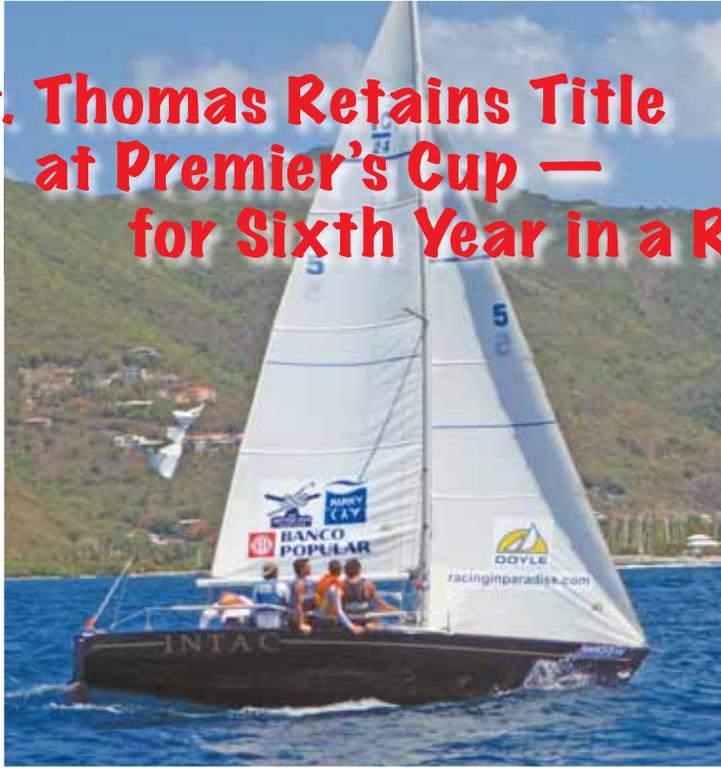
Below: Susimi's skipper and crew celebrating at Wednesday's prize party

Top: Beachside festivities at Guana Cay after Race Two from Green Turtle Cay  
Bottom: Did anyone mention that there were also hot dogs at the Cheeseburger bash?



SALTY ENJOIE

# St. Thomas Retains Title at Premier's Cup — for Sixth Year in a Row!



by Carol Bareuther

The format changed and so did the name, but the winning team stayed the same despite some very skilled competition at the 10th annual Premier's Cup Youth Regatta, formerly the Chief Minister's Cup, sailed out of Nanny Cay Marina, in Tortola, BVI, July 12th and 13th.

Tom Gerker, regatta organizer, says, "There was much keener competition this year. St. Thomas sailed very well on both days, but they didn't make mistakes on the second day, which is how they won."

Team St. Thomas extended its winning streak to six years with this year's win. However, at the end of the first day's five races, Team Trinidad & Tobago was in the lead with Team BVI second.

Rian Bareuther, tactician for Team St. Thomas, says, "We ended up making a lot of mistakes — colli-

sions, fouls on mark roundings — the first day and finished with a couple of protests. One resulted in a DSQ and dropped us down to third."

Stuart Leighton, aboard Team Trinidad & Tobago, comments, "We had a very good first day. In fact, the performance of the team was excellent considering this was the first time this crew had all got together on one boat to sail and not to mention none of us had ever sailed an IC24 before."

Leighton adds, "However, on the second day, we had three bad races due to some mistakes we made as a result of inexperience and not being accustomed to the shifty and wavy conditions."

In final results, following St. Thomas's (24 points) win in Gold Fleet and Trinidad & Tobago (29.25 points) second, the BVI (30 points) finished third, St. Lucia (36.75 points) fourth and St. Croix (37 points) fifth. The

Cayman Islands (12.25 points) won the Silver Fleet, with Anguilla (24.5 points) second, Puerto Rico (27.5 points) third and Bequia (32.5 points) fourth.

A new format this year saw three preliminary races on the first day that were used to divide teams from nine island nations into a Gold Fleet and Silver Fleet.

"This new format enabled the weaker teams to have a shot at walking off with a prize," says Gerker.

More than just sailing, Gerker adds, "The fellowship aspect is very important for this event and was one of the reasons for starting it. We want the young men and women to meet their counterparts from other islands and nations, and establish a dialogue that will hopefully last well into their careers. They are the future political and business leaders. This is a Rotary sponsored event and one of Rotary's goals is to promote world peace and understanding."

Trinidad & Tobago's Leighton says, "This event was a great experience; being around other teams and meeting people was really nice. The whole experience of sleeping in tents amongst the other teams was excellent. If we were to go again, now having sailed the boat and having some experience, not promising any-

Left: Team St. Thomas under sail

Below: Back row, left to right: Team St. Thomas: Rian Bareuther, Spencer Winkles, Olin Davis, William Bailey, Tyler Rice. Front row, left to right: Coach Christine Thompson, BVI Premier Ralph T. O'Neal



CHRISTINE THOMPSON (2)

thing but the odds of the team coming first would be pretty high."

The Rotary Club of Tortola initiated and sponsored KATS (Kids and the Sea) BVI, a seamanship program, more than a decade ago and this is what led to the advent of this regatta. The Honorable Ralph T. O'Neal, a long-time supporter KATS BVI and for whom this event is named, helped with this year's 10th anniversary prizegiving.

The next Premier's Cup is planned for 2010. Gerker explains, "Due to a severely burned-out group of volunteers, most of whom have done this for ten years, we think that it will be fresher if we do it every other year. We'll see."

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# REGATTA NEWS

## Trini Team Tops Caribbean Keelboat Championship

Heather Tackling reports: High winds and tight competition made for a great weekend of sailing June 21st and 22nd at the Caribbean Keelboat Championship regatta, held in St. Maarten. The event, hosted by the Sint Maarten Yacht Club, was raced in boats provided by Lagoon Sailboat Rental.



Lookin' fine in one-design. The Caribbean Keelboat Champs' title went to the Trinidad team headed by Paul Amon

Each of 14 teams sailed a total of nine races over the course of two days as shifting winds made it difficult for them to implement any of their well-thought-out strategies. Seven teams were from the host island, with others coming from Trinidad (2), St. Lucia, the BVI, St. Barths, Curaçao and Martinique. Saturday proved the most grueling with each team completing six or seven races. Every race coughed up a new winner and no team had back-to-back first place wins.

Eric Baray of Martinique came up with an amazing win. Early on he had the lead. When his jib halyard broke, using his quick thinking he used his main topping lift to replace it and, after dropping behind, managed to climb back to finish in first place.

By the end of the day it looked like the ladies' team headed by Emma Paull of Tortola was sitting in a good spot to start off Sunday's races. Andrea Scarabelli of St. Maarten was also looking good, having sailed consistently and pulling off a first place finish

in Saturday's last race.

But with stronger and steadier winds, Sunday proved to be an entirely different day for all sailors. The final placing came down to the last race as most of the top teams were within four points of each other. In the end, St. Lucia's Mike Green placed third, while local sailor Frits Bus walked away with a second place finish. Trinidad's Paul Amon brought home first place overall, including a first in the last race of the day. He said, "I had a lot of fun; the partying was just as good as the sailing. We changed tactician since last year and that made a big improvement. We are now back to sailing with our regular crew and that helped." Mike Green commented, "It is always nice sailing one-design boats against the best in the Caribbean, and I enjoyed being on the *Explorer*, which is great for the spectators and for the teams changing boats. This event is always well organized and it shows."

After racing, all of the teams made their way back to the Sint Maarten Yacht Club for lunch and prizegiving at the Spinnaker Bar & Grill.

For more information contact Cary Byerley at [director@bigboatseries.com](mailto:director@bigboatseries.com).

## Bio-Boat Breaks World Speed Record

*Earthrace*, the world's fastest eco-boat, has smashed the world speed record for a powerboat to circumnavigate the globe, completing the 24,000-kilometre journey in just 60 days, 23 hours and 49 minutes. The boat, which crossed the finish line in Spain on June 27th, completed the journey using 100-percent biofuel to demonstrate and draw global attention to the potential for alternative fuel sources.

*Earthrace* is a 24-metre tri-hull wavepiercer built in New Zealand, run by a team of international volunteers including engineer Tino de Freitas from Guyana. "Pit stops" in the Caribbean were made at San Juan, Puerto Rico and Colon, Panama.

Skipper Pete Bethune, a former oil worker, has dedicated the past six years of his life towards reaching his goal of smashing the record using biodiesel. He says, "*Earthrace*'s success has proved that any form of transport, including marine, can be non-damaging to the environment as well as being high performance."

## TTSA Gives Awards, Announces New Circuit

The 2007-2008 Racing Season at the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association (TTSA) culminated in the annual Prize Giving Dinner and Dance held at TTSA on Saturday evening, June 28th.

—Continued on next page

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were his results outstanding, but *Business Machine* participated in every race and John was recognised for his enthusiasm and sportsmanship.  
Special thanks were given to the sponsors of the races, and to the members of the media for their coverage of the sport of sailing.

**St. Lucia Yacht Club's First Opti Championships**  
Ted Bull reports: June 28th saw the start of the St. Lucia Yacht Club Inaugural Optimist Championships for the youngsters of the St. Lucia Sailing Training programme. This was an open event, with girls and boys competing against each other. Senior sailing coach Benjamin Todd and junior coach Teresa Aylott arranged the event to conclude the sailing instruction given over the past two school terms. The junior sailors' ages ranged from eight to 13 years.  
—Continued on next page

Left: The crew of *Business Machine* at TTSA's annual awards

Below: SLYC's junior sailors — everyone's a winner

—Continued from previous page

Yacht crews gathered at reserved tables for dinner and the much-anticipated overall results for the season.

President of TTSA, David Leighton welcomed the members and made mention of some highlights of the season, notably the Cancer Benefit Regatta. He praised Cancer Benefit Regatta Committee Chairman Calder Hart for his tremendous efforts in making this a successful fundraising event: since its inception in 2000, the Cancer Benefit Regatta has raised over three million TT dollars.

Vice President of TTSA, Jerome McQuilkin, outlined plans for a Southern Caribbean Racing Circuit in 2009.

The new Circuit will include the Carriacou Sailing Series, previously held in November and now moved to January, followed by the Grenada Sailing Festival (January 30th through February 3rd), and then Tobago Sail Week, which will also change to new dates — moving from April to February, just prior to Trinidad Carnival. The new dates for the Carriacou and Tobago events are expected to increase participation at these regattas, allowing for adequate time for movement from one regatta to another.

The Prize Giving Ceremony began with the four most coveted awards for the Youth Sailors. These successful youths were also given gift vouchers and caps courte-

sy Budget Marine (Trinidad) Ltd. Peter Knox, Chairman of the Dinghy Committee, announced the winners:

**YOUTH SAILING RESULTS (DINGHIES)**  
Best Female Dinghy Skipper: Kelly-Ann Arrindell  
Best Optimist Skipper (12 to 15 years): Wesley Scott  
Best Optimist Skipper (under 12 years): Myles Kaufmann  
Dinghy Skipper of the Year: James Leighton  
The overall positions were calculated by the results of 17 races. Mark "Fish" Loe, Race Committee, announced the top three yachts overall in each of the four classes, and the winners were awarded "Boat of the Year" trophies in their class.

**BOAT OF THE YEAR FIRST PLACE WINNERS**  
Racing Class: *Mojo*, Marc De Verteuil & Syndicate  
Racer-Cruiser (Spinnaker) 1 Class: *Morning Tide*, Peter Morris  
Racer-Cruiser 2 Class: *Business Machine*, Brenda Farfan  
Navigator Class: *Mariposa*, S. Guilland  
The "Skipper of the Year" trophy was awarded to John Holland, skipper of *Business Machine*. Not only



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The day dawned with a forecast of northeasterly winds of 18 knots with heavier gusts and occasional rain showers, so it was decided to proceed using the sheltered side of Rodney Bay. Two safety boats were manned throughout the event. The sailing yacht // Restless graced the event as the Committee Boat. The race instructions planned for a possible six races (three in the morning and three in the afternoon) with the option of a discard. The event attracted ten eager competitors despite the forecast and a heavy downpour just at registration time.

The longest courses took approximately 40 minutes to complete and all racers, identified with a numbered bib over their lifejackets, stayed the programme. The third and sixth races were shortened to combat the weather, which came with heavy gusts. Having on-the-water judges (coach Ben Todd and assistant Fredric Sweeney) did away with the usual time-consuming protest hearings. Infringements and their penalties were settled immediately and with creditable discipline, which spoke highly of the training. Credit must be given to all the helpers in this successful regatta and in particular the organizing committee of Senior Coach Ben and Sailing Instructor Teresa, with a helping hand from Ted, Danielle, Uli and Lily.

Prizegiving for the Championship Regatta was held on July 5th at the End of Season Fun Day at the St. Lucia Yacht Club. Overall winners were Thomas Meixner in first place, Stephanie Lovell second, and Marcus Sweeney third. In the girls' division, winners were Stephanie Lovell first, Raina Bergasse second, and Marion Bardief third. The top prize in the Under 12s went to Marc Spurway. The St. Lucia Yacht Club Best Junior Helmsperson Trophy was donated by Edgar Roe and won by Fredric Sweeney.

Fun Day saw about 20 young participants divided into two co-ed teams: "Pirates of the Caribbean" and "The High Spirits". Coach Ben showed his inventive nature and produced a fun-filled day while Lily headed the organization assisted by junior coaches Teresa and Freddy and other willing helpers. Lunch was laid on by the SLYC restaurant staff and helpers. Following the prizegiving for SLYC's Inaugural Optimist Championships, the teams continued with an afternoon of games including the Sailing Baseball event sailed in 12 Optimists. The High Spirits won the day and individual prizes were distributed to all.

A special presentation to departing coaches Ben, Teresa and Fredric on completion of their contract

with SLYC, was made by organizing director Lily Bergasse. She made the point that the training session this year had been outstanding and we all regret losing our coaching team.

Sponsors for these events were numerous and included Ferrand's Dairy, Home Services Ltd, Renwick & Company, Jonathan Everette, Ted Bull, Ulrich Meixner, Cheryl Renwick, Edgar Roe, Conrad Lovell and Franck Chevrier. A big "Thank You" is given as well to all volunteers involved in making the Championship and the Fun Day a success. Particular mention is also to SLYC's photographer, Danielle, who has captured both occasions. Her pictures can be viewed at [www.stluciayachtclub.com](http://www.stluciayachtclub.com).

#### Puerto Ricans Dominate OPTINAM 2008

Marjolein van Aanholt reports: The North American

Championship of the International Optimist Dinghy Association ended in Curaçao on July 5th.

Reigning champion Raul Rios of Puerto Rico retained his title by the narrowest of margins in the final race. If he had not won the race or if Rachel Lee of Singapore had registered another bullet, their positions would have been reversed. 2006 North American champion Ivan Aponte and Singapore's Russell Kan were also still very much in contention.

The Singaporean team had been specially invited to raise the level of sailing at the event, and with three of their four sailors in the top ten they certainly did that. Otherwise the Caribbean dominated the leaderboard, with four Puerto Ricans, two USVI sailors and Ard van Aanholt from Curaçao in the top ten.

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Raul Rios of Puerto Rico retained his title of North American Optimist Champion in extremely close competition in Curaçao. Young sailors from a record 25 countries participated this year

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Other islands also showed promise, with sailors from the Dominican Republic, Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados all figuring in the top 60 of the 204-boat fleet from 25 countries. The Netherlands Antilles team, which is sponsored by Seven Island Investments, showed remarkable progress. Coach Martin Jenkins, two times World Champion in the Optimist class, managed to raise the level of sailing, putting five sailors in the top 50.

In the girls' ranking it was a different story. South American sailors Lucia Falasca (Argentina) and Kamilla Sabogal (Ecuador) took open silver and bronze, while the closed North American prizes went to Morgan Kiss (USA), Nikki Barnes (USVI) and Christina Lewis (USA).

In the team racing, Puerto Rico retained the North American championship. But host Netherlands Antilles surprised everybody by winning the silver.

With a record of 25 participating countries, sailors from five continents and the premiere of the race tracking system, plus the opening in the center of Willemstad and the rocking closing ceremony with fireworks and dance shows by Optimist sailors, this was an OPTINAM not to be forgotten. The 12 races can still be seen through the race tracking system at [www.optinam2008.org](http://www.optinam2008.org).

The Dominican Republic will organize the North American Optimist Championship in 2009.

**New Spice Race Attracts Entries**

Louay Habib reports: As of the end of June, the Spice Race, starting on November 15th in England and finishing in Grenada, has had nearly 20 serious enquiries from Class 40 and IRC yachts, and more are expected. Interest has come from countries including China, Norway, South Africa, Germany, France and the UK. As well as boats wanting to race, there have been enquiries from people wanting to charter boats and individuals looking for crew positions, both paid and paying.

The race to Grenada is the modern version of a classic route. The first new trans-ocean race out of the Solent in nearly 50 years follows the route of the trading ships that plied under sail between British ports and the West Indies.

The focus of the race is on the Class 40 competitors. This is the fastest growing fleet of ocean racers, with over 70 yachts built to date and more being launched on a regular basis. The race is also looking forward to attracting IRC yachts, especially those looking for a more challenging race than the current options. Class 40s and IRC yachts will have the same

start and course but will sail as two separate classes for the purpose of awarding prizes. Class 40s will sail boat for boat, IRC yachts according to their handicap ratings.

The Spice Race is working in association with the Royal Southampton Yacht Club which, as the organizing body, will be hosting the event; overseeing the inspections, the race start in the UK and the finish in Grenada. Spice Race CEO, Tony Lawson, has just returned from a fact-finding trip to Marblehead, Massachusetts (for the finish of the Artemis Transat) and Grenada where he was pleased to find a lot of enthusiasm for the Spice Race.

"It was good to know that some of the Class 40 racers in Marblehead were keen on the Spice Race and see it as a great opportunity to race this winter. Nobody wanted to keep their yachts in Europe when they could be sailing in the Caribbean. I met with both the Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism and firmed up details of our reception in Grenada."

In a letter to the race organizers the Minister said, "Grenada has enjoyed a long and successful relationship with yachts and the sailing community. Whereas we can only wish for fair winds and a safe journey for the sailors who race, we can definitely guarantee you all a truly hospitable welcome from our wonderful people when you arrive in St. George's."

Spice Race will be putting on various events in St. George's including a mini-regatta and entertainment before the yachts disperse.

Lawson said, "I had a great response from the local hotels and businesses on the island, many of whom I know well. I am sure the fleet will enjoy a superb welcome. Prizes have already been offered in the form of free yacht services and new sails. Some of the top hotels, such as Laluna and The Calabash, are arranging accommodation. True Blue Resort, which is renowned for its parties, is working on the entertainment. With local groups and businesses in Grenada we are arranging an "adopt a yacht" programme, an idea I got from my only Transpac Race. Those participating will support 'their' boats and welcome them in, regardless of the arrival time, with fresh food (steak sandwiches and cold beer are my crew's preference!), gifts and the like.

Spice Race is also trying to ensure that entry fees remain as reasonable as possible. At this point in time, the estimate is £2950 per boat, which will include the installation and monitoring of the necessary safety/tracking beacons, dockage before and after the race, inspection and entertainment. There will be an

online tracking system that will enable family, friends and sponsors to track the fleet's progress throughout the race.

For more information contact [louayhabib@gmail.com](mailto:louayhabib@gmail.com).

**5th Course de L'Alliance Set for November 28 to 30**

Organisers have announced that the 5th Annual Course de L'Alliance will take place from Friday November 28th to Sunday November 30th.

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Sailing in last year's tri-island Course de L'Alliance

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As usual, this popular regatta starts in Simpson Bay, St. Maarten, and follows a triangular course of three legs, taking in overnight stops at Gustavia Harbour, St. Barths, and Anguilla's Road Bay. The last leg is from Anguilla to Marina Fort Louis at Marigot, Saint-Martin.

Originally conceived in 2004 by Yacht Club Fort Louis, the regatta aims to promote goodwill and camaraderie between the sailing communities of all three islands. Course de L'Alliance offers sailors contrasting views of the other islands, from the sophistication of St. Barths, to the laid-back charm of Anguilla, to the dynamism of St. Martin.

The respective yacht clubs each have a hand in organising the regatta, however the Sint Maarten Yacht Club is the technical organiser. Aside from excellent racing, sailors also look forward to the post-race parties and entertainment on each island.

This year organisers hope to attract some 50 yachts and are actively promoting the event throughout the French Antilles and the Virgin Islands. There will be six classes: Racing, Cruising, Multihulls, Beach Cats, Open, and a new class for companies. The entry fee for the regatta is 150 euros and includes breakfasts and dinners for four crewmembers on Friday and Saturday, dock space at the quay in the port of Gustavia, dockage at Marina Fort Louis in Marigot, and water taxis in Anguilla. A supplement of 50 euros is charged for extra crewmembers. Beach Cat crews are 50 euros each.

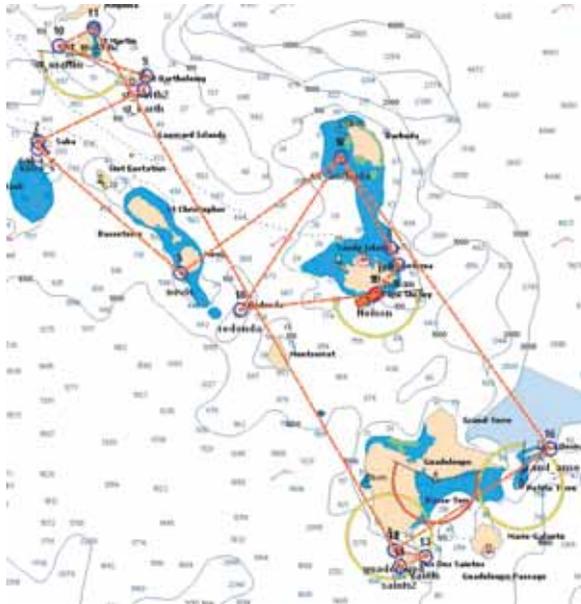
For more information contact Hervé Dorvil at Marina Fort Louis [hdorvil.mfi@wanadoo.fr](mailto:hdorvil.mfi@wanadoo.fr).

#### New Offshore Race for the Caribbean

The Caribbean will have a new long-distance offshore race series next year: the RORC Caribbean 600, run by the UK-based Royal Ocean Racing Club and Antigua Yacht Club.

The event, conceived by a group of RORC members living in the Caribbean, is scheduled to start on February 23rd 2009 outside English Harbour, Antigua. The course first takes the fleet to the north, passing a mark off Barbuda. After taking Nevis and Saba to port and St. Barths to starboard, the fleet will circle St. Martin before heading south to Guadeloupe. After taking Guadeloupe and Desirade to port, they'll sail back up to a mark off Barbuda before returning to finish in Antigua. The course is a total of 605 nautical miles.

RORC Commodore David Aisher says he is delighted to be working with Antigua Yacht Club and believes that in time, the RORC Caribbean 600 will become



Who needs inflatable buoys when you've got islands for marks? The proposed course for the Caribbean's new ocean-racing event is 605 miles

one of the world's classic offshore races: "We are pleased that RORC members approached us with the idea to start the first offshore race in Caribbean waters. Preliminary discussion with likely competitors has had a very enthusiastic response. I can see this race joining the Bermuda Race, Rolex Sydney Hobart Race and Rolex Fastnet Race as one of the 'must do'

races on the offshore circuit."

Elizabeth Jordan, commodore of Antigua Yacht Club, welcomes the opportunity to support RORC to ensure the success of the race: "The Antigua Yacht Club is excited at the prospect of working alongside such a prestigious yacht club as the RORC."

Members of our club used their years of local knowledge to create a course that was sufficiently interesting and challenging to excite the best offshore race boats around the world."

The date, 23rd February, has been chosen to fit in with the major events in the Caribbean calendar. Peter Harrison's Farr-designed 115 foot ketch *Sojana* has already agreed to enter the race. *Sojana's* skipper Marc Fitzgerald was one of the RORC members who conceived the idea. "This race will appeal to all types of offshore sailors, both monohull and multihull, and there will be no upper size limit. The conditions in the Caribbean in February are so perfect that the race will attract a wide variety of yachts. Our aim on *Sojana* is to be the first to set the course record."

Mike Slade's *ICAP Leopard* will also join the race to try for the course record. Skipper Chris Sherlock thinks this race will provide a very interesting challenge.

"For a boat like *ICAP Leopard*, this race with over 13 legs will be the toughest of the 600-milers we have done and I am sure it will appeal to all the top ocean race boats."

The race is to be run under RORC's IRC rating rule, which is used by race boats all over the world. The lower size limit of yacht has yet to be set and consideration is being given to have a division run under the CSA (Caribbean Sailing Association) rule.

A Notice of Race will be issued shortly and a detailed study of the course is available on the RORC website, [www.rorc.org](http://www.rorc.org). For more information contact [info@rorc.org.uk](mailto:info@rorc.org.uk).

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# DESTINATIONS



A lot has been written about Cuba during the past months, but we all have different experiences and interpret foreign cultures differently. So this is my summary of our visit, which I hope will be of interest to those planning to visit Cuba.

My wife Yvonne and I aboard *Chaser II* and our friends Chris and Tony on *Waylander* toured Cuba for a few weeks recently. Our journey continued on from Jamaica. We had originally planned to leave Ile-a-Vache, Haiti [see "Haiti: A Step Back in Time" in the June 2008 issue of *Compass*], and sail to Santiago de Cuba, but we discovered this port was currently closed, at least to foreign-flagged vessels. We therefore decided to sail to Port Antonio, Jamaica (a beautiful area), before crossing over to Cabo Cruz, the southernmost tip of Cuba's coast.

We arrived at Playa Colorado, the beach just behind the Cape, made famous by Fidel Castro's landing in the revolutionary period. We passed Cabo Cruz flying our yellow "quarantine" flag and were called by the Cuban coast guard on VHF channel 16. They told us we could not enter there because it is not a port of entry. I said that we were not intending to clear Customs, only to anchor outside overnight for a rest before moving on. He said that was not possible and we should make our way to Santiago, Manzanillo or Trinidad for clearance. I informed him that we'd been told Santiago was closed and Manzanillo, as we understood, was not an international port of clearance. I added that Trinidad was our destination and we would leave first thing in the morning after resting. Again he said we could not stay and should move on. I explained we were only two people and under the circumstances I considered it dangerous to travel through these waters until rested, but would do so at daybreak. He said he would contact his boss and call back. He did, and said we could stay.

We made several stops at the outer cays on the way to Trinidad, hampered though by the fact we couldn't or shouldn't go ashore. We'd heard that lobster were readily available and were looking forward to meeting some fisherman on our travels through the cays. Unfortunately, fishermen and anything shrimp-like were conspicuous by their absence. We had to resort to Sausage Thermidor.

On arrival in the port of Casilda in the city of Trinidad, we anchored near where our pilotbook said the Customs office was and waited. In the meantime we put our dinghies into the water and Chris and Tony made their way over to *Chaser* for a "welcome to Cuba (finally)" beer. Sitting in the cockpit we stared at the Customs dock, waiting for signs of life. About 90 minutes later a splashing was heard from the opposite direction. Looking over the bow of *Chaser* we saw a Customs man in a borrowed Tinker Tramp dinghy coming towards us from the hotel/marina area about a mile away. On arrival he took off his shoes and climbed aboard.

"Buenas tardes," he said. "What do you want?" I told him we wanted international clearance to enter Cuba. He said he was sorry but this was not a port of clearance and we must immediately move on to Cienfuegos.

By this time we were not only disappointed but frustrated, too. We'd been in Cuban waters for nearly a week and hadn't been able to see anything. It seemed the right hand doesn't know what the left was doing; we had been told by two Cuban authorities to come to Trinidad for clearance, and nobody knew Santiago was closed. But having heard that Cuban bureaucracy

could be "difficult" we stayed calm and said, "Okay, we'll sleep and leave first thing in the morning." Again the officer apologized and said we must leave immediately. I told him that was not possible: I am responsible for the safety of my vessel and crew and was not prepared to leave in the dark and without sleep.

He said he'd speak to his boss and let us know by radio. We never heard anything from him after that, so we slept and left in the morning. We arrived at Cienfuegos through a narrow channel into a magnificent huge bay. "Welcome to Socialist Cuba" the big red sign said as we motored past the Guardia Costa. They waved us through, telling us to go to the marina. We called the marina by radio, trying all sorts of names given to us by websites and guidebooks, but received no answer so we just went in.

We were greeted at the marina (now called Marlin,

plague or other disease and that the boat was suitable for the veterinary and Customs people to come aboard, which they duly did. Our fruit and vegetables were checked and the sniffer dogs had a look round, as did the Immigration and Customs officers. All very polite and efficient, and all liking a coldie or two (three in one case).

Then they slowly made their way ashore, leaving us legally in Cuba at last. We were told the clearing in would be difficult but when it finally happened it was easy. Yes, there were many people involved, but no long waits, no asking for bribes or "tips" as in the Dominican Republic — they came and went. One item the Customs man was concerned about was our satellite phone. He said it should be handed in, as should any weapons. However, our sat phone is permanently wired to the ship's power supply and can't be removed. He wasn't

## CUBA, AS WE FOUND IT

by Phil Chapman



We were (finally) officially welcomed to Cuba at the port of Cienfuegos

and listening on an American VHF channel) by the dockmaster and security personnel. "Welcome to Cuba and Cienfuegos!" they shouted. So, finally, we are here.

Once we were tied up and settled, the onslaught arrived. "Sanidad" was first, making sure we had no

happy with this arrangement but after a quiet chat he allowed it to remain in service, though he did remove it from his list of electronics we had on board. It's probably best simply not to mention one if you have it. Guns, of course, must be left with Customs.

—Continued on next page

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Since we've been here, Chris, Tony, Yvonne and I have spent many an evening talking about the social and economic system in Cuba, maybe hoping that we

governments. Even the US and the UK would find it impossible to maintain any standard of living, but Cuba has, almost.

So on to aspects of our travels and experiences, which I will list in order to illustrate our impression of

the Cuba we managed to encounter. I hope this will help any other cruisers planning a visit. Remember, the above and below are only my opinion, based on personal experience.

**Customs and Immigration**

Santiago de Cuba, Cienfuegos, Cayo Largo and Marina Hemingway (Havana) are ports of entry, unless someone closes one. Soon after our Cuban visit, Santiago re-opened.

As mentioned above, it does appear the left hand often doesn't know what the right is doing. Nevertheless, the individuals who cleared us in were efficient and very professional. Upon arrival in Cienfuegos, all the officials were aboard, papers filled out, documents signed and witnessed, all within a couple of hours and without any hassle or problems apart from the sat phone question.

Yachts have to clear out of each port and get a *despacho* to the next port. This is very straightforward and Immigration will assist whatever the time of day.

Our problem when leaving Cuba was not knowing whether or not Santiago had re-opened. If not, we wouldn't be able to clear out internationally there. We therefore considered two possible options. One was to clear out internationally at Cienfuegos then head back east, again not being able to go ashore and see any of the towns or sites en route. Or, we could hope Santiago was open. But if it wasn't, we'd risk arriving in Haiti or Jamaica with only a *despacho* to our next Cuban port and not international clearance. Our experience said that the authorities in the next country would probably understand, but nevertheless we decided to clear out of Cuba in Cienfuegos. By this time we had seen a lot of the sights by car.

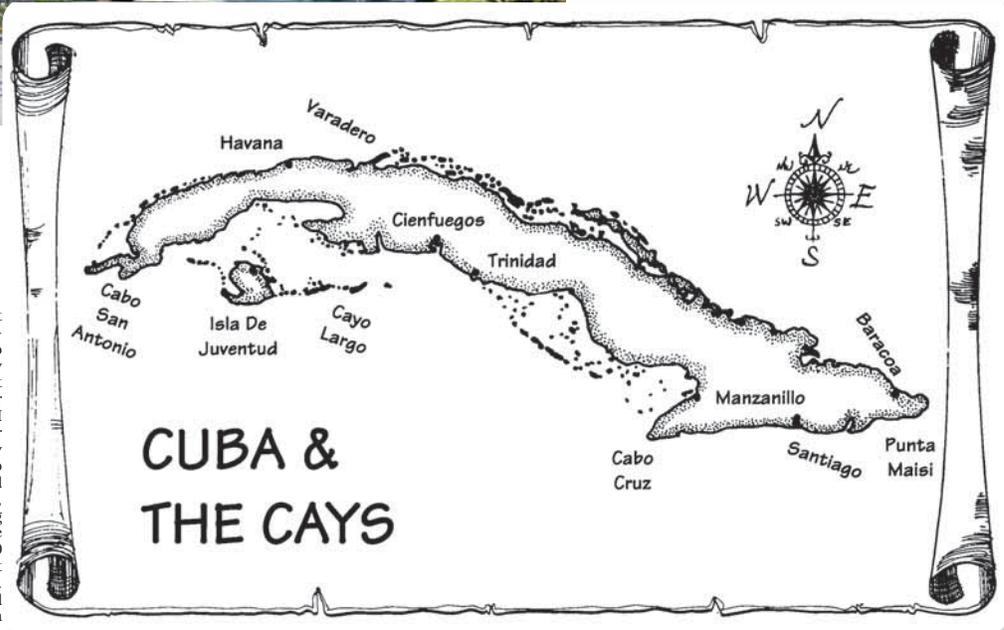
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Above: Many architectural gems, such as the Palacio de Valle in Cienfuegos, are now restaurants

Right: Arriving from the east, we originally intended to clear into Cuba at Santiago. We eventually were able to do so at Cienfuegos

could leave with a firm conviction that socialism is good — or bad — for some countries. But we all found it difficult to come to any definite conclusions after our stay. Tony sees Cuba as a "grey" country, meaning that he tends to see other countries as black or white, e.g. "I really like that system" or "I hate this attitude". But in Cuba we never felt that way: everything was just "fairly okay" or maybe "not quite so good". So, to avoid any politics or propaganda, I would just say that under the circumstances, Cuba's administration has done an amazing job for its people given that not only has the US continued a blockade during the past 40 years but also encouraged or insisted that other nations do not assist Cuba in any way. Very few countries the size of Cuba could survive without the assistance of foreign



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—Continued from previous page

**Currency**

The two forms of currency in Cuba are the Convertible Peso, known as the CUC, and the local peso known as

rickshaws, lorries and taxicabs were the way to travel locally, the air-conditioned taxicabs being the most expensive. We found the opposite. In Cienfuegos, for example, a horse and cart should

be one local peso per person into town, but they would ask a tourist for one CUC per person. With some negotiation you can get it down to one CUC for four people. Nevertheless this is far more than the local rate.

A regular car-type taxi was two CUCs for the same journey. So, for local people it is expensive but for us it was the better buy, though maybe not so much fun as the horse cart. However, the fun wears a bit thin as do your shorts in the back of a wagon with wooden wheels and no springs!

**Places to Stay and Places to Eat**

You can of course stay overnight in a hotel, where the price per room per night is more or less 150 CUCs. We stayed in *casas particulares* (private houses). These government-approved houses are privately owned or rented and have a white plaque on the wall outside with what looks like a blue inverted anchor printed on. There are many in the major towns but if you can't find one, just ask someone.

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Left: Cubans are now allowed to offer meals for sale, and we found private houses the best places to eat

the *moneda nacional*. The local peso you need for buying fruit and veg in the markets, maybe the occasional ice cream and street food. Other than that, visitors will need to use the CUCs. You can change local pesos in a bank called a *cadeca*. Don't change too much, maybe just 20 CUCs at first, as they go a long way — there are 24 national pesos to one CUC. In banks or hotels you will be deducted 20 percent for changing US dollars to CUCs and ten percent for changing British pounds or Euros, so US dollars are not the currency to take to Cuba. Cuba isn't cheap and it's not expensive, but we did seem to get rid of some cash.

**Driving**

We hired a car for a couple of weeks; the cost was about US\$50 per day for a small car with air conditioning. The price was all-inclusive: insurance, etcetera. Our European driving licences and passports were all that was needed.

Driving in Cuba is a dream. There is very little traffic; even in Havana we could cruise around and look at the sights, stop and park without any hooters blowing. Most parking areas seem to employ an official parking man — at least that's what he told us, but he did have an ID. It normally costs one CUC.

You drive on the right and the roads are generally very good. Signposts are a little bit lacking, however, so a good map and navigator are important. We had a good map! When you get lost the local people are very happy to show you the way. One guy on a bicycle said, "Follow me!" and pedaled frantically for more than a mile. We had a job to keep up sometimes. Across a final set of traffic lights he said to go straight on. Then he turned round and peddled back to where he came from. Wonderful!

**Public Transport**

Our cruising guides told us that horse-drawn carts,



Below: Chris and Tony outside our casa particular

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These houses, some quite large, usually have one or two rooms available, most with en-suite bathrooms. These rooms are priced between 20 and 25 CUCs per room per night. We usually had either a lounge or balcony to use; otherwise we were welcome to use the same lounge as the owners. Some *casas particulares* include a breakfast that would otherwise cost three or four CUCs per person.

The owners of the houses in most circumstances will provide lunch or evening meals, too. If not they will surely know where there is a *paladar* (a private restaurant). These, too, are private houses offering meals for parties of up to about 12 people. We found the private houses and private restaurants to be the best places to eat. A lobster or chicken meal including salad, and sometimes soup and dessert, cost about eight to ten CUCs. Drinks were extra, but the quality of the food was better than any of the more expensive restaurants we tried.

Because, I suppose, of Cuba's struggling economy, private enterprise is now allowed in certain occupations. It's not all profit though. Once registered, the *casas particulares* with two rooms to let must pay 5,000 CUCs per year in tax to the government, whether they let their rooms or not. With little or no access to the internet it's difficult for them to advertise to foreign visitors. Even so, renting rooms does contribute well to their living, as long as the tourists keep coming.

**Communications, Internet and WiFi**

Mobile phones work in most built-up areas without a problem. We have a "Gymsim" worldwide card, which enabled us to make very cheap international calls from Cuba. Check out Gymsim on the net. Internet cafes are very few and far between, and they are expensive — six CUCs per hour, far more than many local people can afford. WiFi doesn't really exist and broadband doesn't appear to exist either: even the internet cafes we used had dial-up connections.

**Museums and the Like**

All the major towns have wonderful buildings such as museums, theatres and palaces that are generally open to the public for a CUC or two per person. Some of the former parliament buildings now house museums and some "palaces" have been converted to restaurants. They are fantastic buildings, the architecture amazing, although some need TLC or a complete restoration job.

All these places seem to employ a great number of people. The Museum of the Revolution in Havana, a huge building, has one person sitting on a chair in each room doing nothing apart from watching the visitors. The beautiful white marble staircase needed cleaning, it was just grubby, but nobody did it. This was typical in all these places, whether theatre or museum. The automobile museum was a typical albeit small example, which to me highlights the way things are here. Maybe that's the mentality within a communist regime. This small museum in the center of old Havana had at least four people working inside. One was selling postcards, one was taking the entry money, (one CUC each person and two if you wish to use your camera), and one or two were sitting around making sure no visitors used their cameras without paying. The dozen or so historic vehicles on display were covered in dust, rust was beginning to form, tyres were allowed to go flat. A lovely exhibit of auto history, but nobody thinks to clean the cars. I know the workers get paid peanuts, so I suppose there is no enthusiasm to do any more than the basic, but (unlike the well-cared-for cars on the street) the vehicles here will soon be not worth looking at.

Next month: Touring the Cuban countryside, Havana, Trinidad and Cienfuegos.



Above: Today's public transportation

Below: And a remnant of the capitalist past, Club Náutico, the yacht club in Cienfuegos



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# DESTINATIONS



## A Little Off the Rhumb Line in Guatemala

by Chuck Cherry

You've heard about it. You've thought about it. You may have read about it. You've probably wondered why so many people go out of their way to get to the Rio Dulce — a river all the way over on the left side of the Caribbean Sea — for hurricane season. I'm here to tell you that if you haven't, you should. It's far enough away from the Eastern Caribbean to weed out the faint of heart and cruisers with a schedule. You might think the seasoned hard core would check this box off and move on. But the truth is the return traffic is over 50 percent.

The big deal is that the Rio Dulce is a double-header. It is a really good hurricane hole AND it's in Guatemala.

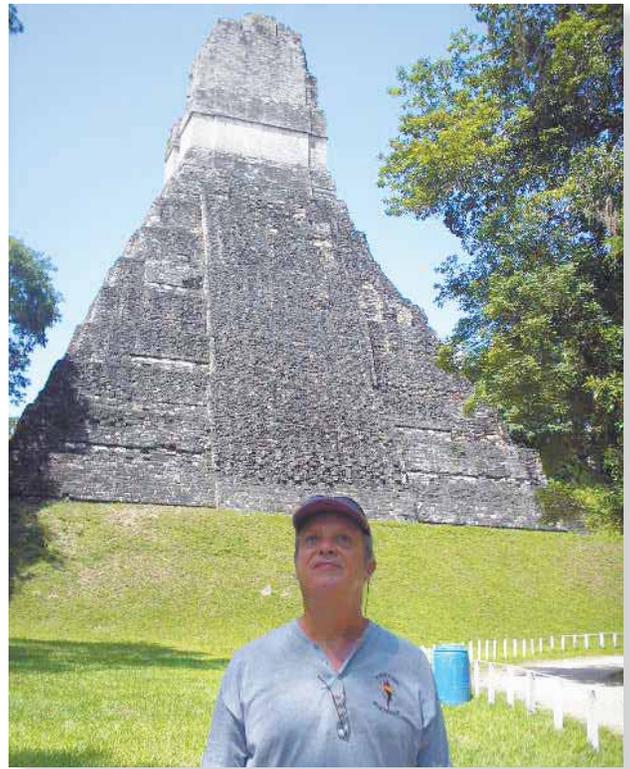
With over ten marinas, five haul-outs and a smattering of resorts and little hotels, it's a haven for marina types. Even the most driven multi-taskers will have difficulty keeping up with the variety of radio nets, potluck dinners, volleyball games and sewing bees. The returnees and year-rounders welcome newcomers with generosity and enthusiasm.

Some marinas are big, some are small. Some specialize in repairs, some in parties, some in seclusion. The towns of Livingston, at the mouth of the river, and Rio Dulce, six miles up, provide tourists and cruisers with the usual assortment of bars, restaurants and vendors. Livingston is the larger; Rio town is primarily a bus stop with connections to everywhere. The water-taxi ride between the two is a "must do" with its mandatory stop at the conveniently located Indian co-op midway. The river has a little something for everyone.

I personally like the Rio Dulce for a different reason (with all due respect to Bounos Bar): the river is a great place to leave the boat and venture into the greater Guatemala by "chicken bus".

—Continued on next page

*The Rio Dulce is a really good hurricane hole. Once our boat was secured, we set off to explore sites such as the ancient Mayan city of Tikal*



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—Continued from previous page

Despite being one of the poorest countries in the world, and certainly the least developed in Central America, the people in this variety adventure-land are always smiling and willing to help travelers get what they want. The political strife apparently fizzled out at the beginning of the new millennium and the different races, classes and religious seem to have settled into a kind of casual existence with low expectations.

The lack of government and infrastructure has created a vacuum for volunteers. There are so many NGOs (non-governmental organizations) that the whole place looks like a Peace Corps training camp. Quite a few cruisers find the hurricane season is a good time to light one candle instead of cruising the darkness. So if you find yourself in that do-gooder mood just ask one of the gringos without a camera where to sign up. They are everywhere and they can tell you where to get off the chicken bus and get involved.

The really big adventure here for Monica and me was climbing the active volcano without getting toasted. But along the way there were several significant stops.

The first is almost always the city of Antigua. The former capital of Guatemala is still the quintessential colonial mountain town. Perched among three volcanoes it is cool, charming and charismatic. Bring a jacket and get started here.

There are over 60 Spanish-language schools featuring immersion classes in the morning, field trips in the afternoon, and rooming in private homes (meals included) all for about US\$75 per week. It's a great way to brush up on those useful phrases, see the sights and mix with the locals all at the same time for a week or three.

Brush up on your religion by visiting some of the restored and unrestored churches dating back to the 16th century. If you're not feeling well, get in line at St. Anthony's, rub old St. Pedro's casket and throw away those pills. He is the only saint interred (or I should say on exhibit) in the western hemisphere.

Enjoy the festivals, bistros and cobblestone streets, horses, coffee farms, hiking and street food. See at least some of the museums and spend a day with a volunteer to see what that's about. Then plan your excursions from here.

Go to Lake Atitlan. Try to make arrangements to spend the rest of your life there. This is the most beautiful lake in the world, marred only by the multitude of street vendors. Get off the beaten path by hiking to the next town and catching a sunset.

Go to Tikal, the largest of the ancient ruined cities of the Mayan civilization. You can do it in a two-day excursion from Antigua. On the way, read *Collapse: How Societies Choose To Fail Or Succeed*, Jared Diamond's book about the rise and fall of certain civilizations. Tikal was the Paris of the ancient Mayan world, and when you see it you will know why.

Go spelunking. Guatemala sits on top of three different tectonic plates — hence the nearly 40 volcanoes, frequent earthquakes and copious quantities of caves. Read up on where to go spelunking as there are several different types of caves. Take a chicken bus and a flashlight.

Last but far from least, get up close and personal with a volcano: Pacaya to be exact. Where else in the world can you walk right up and jump into a volcano? No walls, no ropes, no rules.

It's a night thing. For about US\$25 you catch the bus at 6:00PM in Antigua for a two-hour ride to the bottom of the mountain. Fortified with a jacket, water and very good shoes, you begin the hour-long climb with a guide and 24 others in your group. For about 20 dollars more, you can rent a horse.

The climb is about medium difficulty, generally following a trail sometimes a pas-

ture. Bandits, once a danger, are no longer much of a problem.

At the top there is a butte or ledge where you are about 200 yards from the fiery, glowing and flowing lava. It is considered mature and prudent to remain here and take photos.

Or you can join the young and foolish and cross the wickedly uneven, razor-sharp dried lava bed over to the actual flow itself, hoping as you go that if you make it without slipping and shredding your leg there won't be a sudden course change. Every year there are a couple of tourists who lose that gamble.



Why do so many cruisers go out of their way to get to the Rio Dulce, all the way over on the left side of the Caribbean Sea?

Here you can see the lava flowing almost under your feet as you inch along. Where your shoes don't melt, they get cut up by the sharp lava. Intense heat replaces the chill of the climb. The last 20 yards are loose, charred gravel, making it almost impossible to keep your balance as you approach the flames. But there are always four or five blithe spirits (or blithering idiots) who make that final climb to be photographed by a girlfriend who halted a more respectful 20 feet back. A little too much fun for me.

You get home a little after midnight, tired and short one pair of tennis shoes, but happy in the knowledge that you are the only one on your dock to have kissed a volcano flow.

As you sail away from the Rio Dulce, you'll be planning your return trip.

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Grenada

# Another Yacht Attacked Off Puerto Santos, Venezuela

by Katie Lee

In June of last year I had the pleasure of sailing along Venezuela's Peninsula de Paria on the way from Isla Margarita to Trinidad. I was sailing with my parents, Peter and Betty, and their Gambian ridgeback, Kankuntu, aboard the 41-foot British sailing yacht *Raven Eye*.

Before leaving Margarita we had heard many scare stories about this particular part of Venezuela, including the story of two Frenchmen who had been attacked, robbed and severely beaten at Puerto Santos — but that had happened in the previous year. We decided to go ahead and take the adventure as things happen all over the world and if you're a landlubber you could quite easily be run over by a bus.

We left Porlamar at 7:00PM on the 25th of June 2007, motorsailing against wind, waves and current. We arrived in Puerto Santos at 3:45AM, glad to have a rest. I was extremely glad not to have to look over my shoulder every five minutes as the scare stories were stuck in my head.

We were awakened at 8:45AM by the Coastguard asking our intentions. They said that if there were any incidents when we left Puerto Santos harbour, to call them straightaway and they would be with us. We felt this was a very nice thing for the Coastguard to do and it left me feeling more secure about the onward leg to Trinidad.

We left the harbour at 5:00PM and headed east. As the sun went down we were left in total darkness, as

there was no moon and no stars. Shortly after 10:00PM the scare stories reappeared in my head and I suddenly realized we were out of radio range for the Coastguard to help us or hear us. I told myself to get a grip and buckle up.

—Continued on next page



Above: My father, Peter, at the helm of *Raven Eye*



Right and below: The best-protected anchorage between Esmeralda and Punta Pargo on the Peninsula de Paria, Puerto Santos has been the scene of a number of armed robberies of yachts over the past eight years



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As the hours passed I saw a few individual lights near the coastline and my eyes never moved from them, trying to determine which way they were headed. With every light I saw I got into defence mode, just in case we became one of those scary stories.

As the stars came out near midnight I had never



a military uniform. My father's first thoughts were, "I'm not stupid — these guys are going to try and board us." Then he saw the guns.

He turned *Raven Eye* around and slammed the pirogue, then there was a shot fired. He ducked down in the cockpit and was amazed that neither he nor the boat had been hit. Again he went for another ramming manoeuvre but more shots were fired. The pirogue was faster than *Raven Eye*, so my dad thought about getting the flare gun ready to shoot back. But then there were four guns on him and he decided it would be better not to get the attackers



Photos, left to right:  
I enjoyed the same passage in 2007

My mother, Betty, did too!

The brave Kankuntu, who survived his wounds

seen such phosphorescence on a passage: the water was aglow with every moving wave and around the hull of *Raven Eye* it looked like a million fairy wings flying. Beautiful.

We reached Trinidad at 10 o'clock the following morning feeling very tired and drained. After such a wonderful passage I felt a little silly for letting my thoughts run away on negative things.

But this year, if I had done the same trip with my parents they would not have been silly thoughts but a nightmarish reality.

My parents checked out of Porlamar, Margarita, on the 4th of July 2008, again heading for Puerto Santos. They had a good trip, making it in nine hours against the current. They told me they thought there was some kind of party going on there the next day, as the harbour was filled with pirogues and there were lots of people on shore. [Editor's note: July 5th is Venezuela's Independence Day.] Last year there were no pirogues, just a few Venezuelan fishing boats. There was no Coastguard to greet them this time.

My parents left the harbour just before the sun went down. They were in good spirits, looking forward to getting to Trinidad and getting their generator's charger fixed. About 40 minutes past sunset they were roughly ten miles out when my father saw a pirogue approaching with six men on board; one was wearing

angry. There was no way of out-running them, and if he shot, when eventually they did board they would be in more of a fighting spirit.

Five men boarded *Raven Eye*, getting my father and tying him up on deck with a gun pointed at his back. Three of the men went down below where my mother was, two of them pointing guns at her head. My brave dog Kankuntu was shot in the leg but this did not stop him from launching himself at the men. One was too fast for Kankuntu and stabbed him in the back. Fortunately, he survived his wounds.

The only money my parents had on board was US\$200 and about a hundred dollars worth of Bolivars, all of which was in my father's shorts. My mother pointed to the shorts and got a reaction of "This is not enough". They tried to take off my mother's wedding ring and in the process injured her hand very badly. (I can tell you that that ring would have to be cut off her finger, it's on so tight.) She cannot remember how it happened as she went into shock mode.

They continued their pillage while holding guns on my parents. They took a mobile phone, laptop computer, SSB radio, eight-horsepower Mercury outboard and toolboxes. They ripped the microphones off the VHF radios, ripped the compass out, ripped cables elsewhere and left the boat in total disarray. They even tried to rip out the forward-looking sonar, but to no

avail (my father and I fitted that last year pretty damn well!). Then they proceeded to try and disconnect the radar, also unsuccessfully (my father tried to take that off last year with a wrench but got nowhere).

Once the scum had gone my parents had the choice of turning back or carrying on. They had no communication at all. My father took the decision to carry on to Trinidad and get out of Venezuelan waters.

Once in Trinidad, still in shock and traumatized, they informed Customs of what had happened. The Customs officers could do nothing but console them. A good friend in Trinidad gave them the British High Commission's number, but they informed my father he had to file a police report in Trinidad, then the police would contact the British High Commission, then the British High Commission would contact the British Embassy in Venezuela, and so on. It seems this will be a long process for my parents but if these people are caught so they cannot harm others it will be worth the strain and effort.

It seems to me that my parents were being watched in Puerto Santos while the party was going on and the perpetrators waited for them to go offshore so they could do their dirty work unseen. I've been told that there were two families a couple of years ago that were running a piracy group around the location where my parents were attacked and they got caught, so this is keeping us optimistic that if the British and Venezuelan authorities do their utmost in this case then hopefully these pirates will be caught, too.

It is now the 10th of July, so these events and feelings are still very fresh to my parents and my mother is in total shock still. To say I am angry is a huge



understatement. So to all of you who read this piece, please take note of any legitimate reports of attacks on yachts and avoid those specific locations. We thought it would never happen to us but, like being hit by a bus, it can happen to anyone. Be aware.

The only additional bit of advice that came to mind after speaking with my parents is to carry an extra mobile phone or handheld VHF and hide it in a safe place.

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# M/V Lady Susan

by Amal Thomas

Regional sea service is a very important trade within the Caribbean. I'd like to tell you about the *M/V Lady Susan*, the captain who runs her, and the shipping agent who keeps her cargo service on a steady course. Based in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, the *M/V Lady Susan* departs Kingstown twice a month on Saturdays and makes port calls at St. Kitts, Anguilla, Tortola and St. Maarten. She returns twice a month on Wednesdays to offload.

The *M/V Lady Susan* carries general cargo, traffickers' produce such as ground provisions and bananas, drinks, foodstuffs, vehicles and mail. She can also take passengers. If you want to take a trip, it's best to check with the captain aboard or phone Harry's Shipping Agency in Kingstown at (784) 457-1373. (Make sure to have a valid passport.) That will be a very exciting adventure to experience.

*M/V Lady Susan* is a white and black steel-hulled ship with an open aft deck. It has a crane that is used to stow cargo on deck and also through a hatch into the hold. Her engines are GMs that whistle as she maneuvers into the dock — you always know when *M/V Lady Susan* is in port.

Formerly owned by the late Maurice Jones, she is now captained by his son, Nicholas Jones. The ship has five crewmembers who work very hard to maintain and secure the cargo properly. *M/V Lady Susan* has some of the latest navigation systems and Captain Nicholas ensures his systems are up to the mark. Captain Nick's personality is very warm, and I've the privilege to be friends with him through my work around vessels.

**Meet Captain Nicholas**

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Capt. Nick: Hey, man, what's up?  
Amal: Well, I just decided to bring you aboard my story.  
Capt. Nick: No problem! You safe anytime?  
Amal: How long have you been a captain?  
Capt. Nick: I've been a captain for eight years now.  
Amal: What inspired you to be a seaman?  
Capt. Nick: Let me say, I never saw myself becoming a captain. This is what really changed me. One day my father told me he was going to buy a new vessel, which is now the *Lady Susan*, since back in 1991. His previous vessel was *M/V Sea Cyprus*. Anyway, we traveled together to America. Trust me, partner, it changed my thinking. I said to myself, if whites, Indians and Syrians can be a part of their fathers' businesses, why cannot a young black boy like me do the same? It just motivated me. And I also graduated from school as an electrician and *Lady Susan* had a lot of electronic devices. So I knew it was time to prove myself, and step up to the helm. And before my father died, I was always his electrician.



NICHOLSON QUAMME

*M/V Lady Susan* plies the Caribbean Sea between St. Vincent and Tortola

Amal: Okay, pretty impressive! What are the happiest occasions you experienced aboard *Lady Susan*?

Capt. Nick: Man, it was not easy at the start, because, one — it was hard to be accepted by my father, and two — his teaching was hard. It was not father and son; it was more captain and crew. But when he finally accepted me was when I proved to him I can handle the ship. And any electrical problem, I always solved it. That, I will say, made the most happy occasions for me and my father. When he gave the boat to me, I sailed the route from St. Vincent to Dominica, Barbados and back to St. Vincent. The second voyage also included St. Lucia. Also I proved myself after battling two storms, in 2002 and 2003. All these things made me happy that I really can handle the sea.

Amal: Challenges are always a part of life: what are your experiences like aboard *Lady Susan*?  
Capt. Nick: Well, it's not easy out there at times. I will say that navigation problems posed by other boats and ships are my main challenges at nights. Also you've got to be always looking out for late-night bad guys and abandoned ships at nights. Sometimes I come across bad weather and even if I am not on watch, my mind always has to be on the alert for any call to check out the course or any problems. I've got to always make sure my cargo is packed properly for safety.

Amal: Well, that's a great nutshell of stuff and I wish you the best for the upcoming season, Captain.  
Capt. Nick: Yeah man, thanks a lot. And respect to you.

**Meet Miss Adina Harry**

Miss Adina Harry of Harry's Shipping Agency is a very nice lady and very serious with her work — she takes on a man's job with a passion. Let's meet her.

Amal: Good day, Miss Harry, and how are you?  
Miss Harry: Hey, Amal. I am fine!  
Amal: Would you spare your time to give me a little insight into your business?  
Miss Harry: Sure! That's no problem, my dear.  
Amal: How long have you been the agent for *M/V Lady Susan*?  
Miss Harry: It has been seven years now.

Amal: Do you have any regrets about being the agent and if so, why?  
Miss Harry: No! The captain is a very understanding person to get along with. I've got more exposure in handling different ships and vessels who have approached me to be their agent. And it has also given me the gear to prepare more for the advanced 21st century.

Amal: What are the challenges you experience in clearing the ship in and out of port?  
Miss Harry: Well, let me say that when it comes to Customs, I've got to ensure you have documentation which deals with making sure the right goods are aboard the ship. This can be very challenging at times. Also working along with Customs procedures can be a hassle at times. When dealing with customers within holidays and peak seasons it can be frustrating, and they themselves are difficult at times. And sometimes we don't close until midnight to make sure things are in the system.

Amal: What benefits do you achieve?  
Miss Harry: I must say that as a woman, it's not easy. But at the end of the day when things go as planned, I am happy, and so are the captain, workers and customers. In terms of income I benefit, due to more vessels. And I've created more employment — you are one, because Customs wanted a proper account of goods, so I decided to have you as my Tally Clerk on Saturdays. And I have two other employees. All in all, it's good exposure as a woman.

Amal: That's really nice; I really appreciated your time.  
Miss Harry: Thanks again and any time, feel free.  
Not many can cruise for pleasure. But we have seamen who still ply the cargo trade as a living, sailors and captains sailing on a regular routine in Caribbean waters, and their hardworking agents who provide support systems ashore. All the best wishes to working and recreational sailors alike, and be careful with hurricane season!

**M/V Lady Susan's Schedule**

DEPARTURES  
St. Vincent, Saturdays, 11:30PM\*  
St. Kitts, Mondays, 8:00PM  
Anguilla, Tuesdays, 10:00PM  
Tortola, Sundays, 8:00PM  
St. Maarten (Mon or Tues) 8:00PM

ARRIVALS  
St. Kitts, Mondays, 8:00AM  
Anguilla, Tuesdays, 8:30AM  
Tortola, Wednesdays, 9:00AM  
St. Maarten, Mondays, 8:00AM  
St. Vincent (Wed or Thurs) 8:00AM

\* Departs twice a month from St. Vincent.

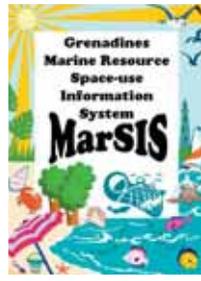
# Grassroots Research Cruise for the Grenadines this Month

Be on the lookout this month in the Grenadine Islands for a community-based research yacht sponsored in part by The Moorings. The Grenadines "MarSIS" or Marine Resource and Space-use Information System is an on-going research project led by Kim Baldwin, a PhD student of the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of West Indies together with the Sustainable Grenadines Project based in Union Island. Kim has been working with local marine resource users of the Grenadines to map the various marine resources as well as identify areas of importance for conservation as well as for the livelihoods of the Grenadine communities.

As many of you may know, the Grenadines are recognized for their beautiful natural scenery consisting of rolling hills, spectacular beaches, clear blue waters and diverse marine habitats. The Grenadines are one of the few areas within the Lesser Antilles with an extensive shelf supporting the most extensive coral reefs and related habitats in the southeastern Caribbean, including seagrass and lagoon, areas of mangrove, and a variety of patch, fringing and bank barrier reefs. Marine-based activities are the mainstay of the economy of the area, in which artisanal fishing (primarily for lobster, conch and reef fish), transport and a variety of tourism activities are major sources of employment.

The vital importance of marine resources to the people of the Grenadines is well known, yet planning and management of the use of marine resources of the Grenadines is becoming increasingly complex. Not only are the marine resources distributed across the Grenada Bank but they are managed by two countries and utilized by a variety of marine resource users (fishers, water-taxis, yachts, ferries, ships, day tour operators to name a few) emanating from the nine inhabited Grenadine Islands as well as from both of the respective mainlands of Grenada and St. Vincent. Due to this dispersed and transboundary nature of the Grenadines, marine management is extremely challenging. Furthermore, marine management of the Grenadines has not been integrated among sectors, nations or between scientific and local knowledge systems. This segregated management approach has not been effective thus far and has failed to prevent the environmental degradation of the Grenadines in recent years.

A collaborative spatial approach derived from the fullest possible information base was identified by the Sustainable Grenadines Project to effectively understand, plan and manage the transboundary and multifaceted nature of the marine resources and their associated users. In 2005, Kim Baldwin began work to quantify the number of people within each community whose livelihood depends on the sea. She has then



CHRIS DOYLE

The MarSIS research yacht will be investigating the Grenadines from August 4th through 31st

been working with these groups to capture their local knowledge not only of the location but also of the importance of the various marine habitats for each Grenadine community. She has taken this information and combined it with a Geographical Information System (GIS) to integrate the range of social, economic, cultural and conventional biophysical information available into a single framework. This on-going research will result in the development of a "public-access multi-knowledge transboundary marine space-use information system". This information can be used as a planning tool that will provide a more holistic understanding of the value of coastal and marine resources in regards to conservation, biodiversity and to the livelihoods of the Grenadine people thereby assisting more sustainable development.

As a part of this research, an intensive "ground-truthing" or validation cruise will be conducted during the month of August to assess the accuracy of this collaboratively built marine habitat and space-use map. The crew will consist of a diverse team of six divers, including two Grenadines fishers, a local captain, two fisheries biologists (one from the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Fisheries Division and one from the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism) and a CERMES MSc student. They will live and work together to achieve a better understanding of the differences between scientific and local knowledge of the various marine habitats and areas of importance for each.

Emphasis will also be given to explore and map the little-known deeper areas (40 to 100 metres) of the Grenada Bank by either SCUBA diving or using a drop-camera to collect data. A secondary, yet equally important objective of this grassroots research cruise will be to conduct an initial or baseline assessment of the abundance and distribution of the key fisheries of lobster and conch in the Grenadines.

A variety of donors have helped fund this unique research, namely: The Moorings yacht charter company, the Mustique Company shareholders, a number of private donors, The Sustainable Grenadines Project, CERMES of the University of the West Indies, ESRI, the Nature Conservancy and the Governments of St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada. The project coordinators also thank all of the local marine resource users from every Grenadine Island — without their continual help throughout this three-year process, none of it would have been possible.

The crew is inviting interested community members to come aboard the Moorings MarSIS catamaran for a day as they travel through the Grenadines and explore the marine habitats of the Grenadines with them. For more information on how you can get involved or to plan a day-trip please contact the Sustainable Grenadines Project in Union Island at (784) 485-8779 or contact Kim Baldwin at [baldwin.kimberly@gmail.com](mailto:baldwin.kimberly@gmail.com).

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## AUGUST 2008

### ♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)

Write the last drop out of that creative inspiration before it floats away around the 21st. Your sense of humor won't get out of its sailbag this month.

### ♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)

Look to your female friends for boat business tips — you may be surprised at what they come up with. There will also be the promise of romance sailing into your harbor in the last week.

### ♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)

This month could bring squally times with crew or cruising buddies and possible rough seas with your inamorata in the last week. Reef down and ease the main; you'll sail through.

### ♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)

You may find humor at low ebb and a rather black cloud over everything, especially in the last week. Don't fret — the skies will clear eventually.

### ♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)

Use the creative currents you feel to best advantage before the 23rd. Concentrate on your communicative skills to sail through any rough seas.

### ♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)

Nautical business will benefit from your close female friends until the second week. Jump aboard this aspect while it lasts — you could make some long-lasting contacts.

### ♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)

Things will be boringly balanced for the month. Perhaps boredom will make you appreciate the stimulation of the day-to-day in an active cruising life.

### ♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)

Your creativity may be in the doldrums along with your ability to express yourself as your love life follows suit. So why not just drop your sails and enjoy the calm?

### ♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)

Crew or cruising buddies may become picky and critical in the second half of the month. Details in any marine-related business may prove frustrating. Time for a solo sail to a secluded anchorage, perhaps.

### ♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

You may make some new sailing friends through business. Try to take some time off the boat and refresh yourself through new experiences.

### ♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

Creative matters and relationships with the opposite sex may cause you frustration and stress in the first two weeks. Focus on routine boat chores instead.

### ♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

Difficulties in your love life could prove very disruptive to your cruising or boat-maintenance plans, and may end up in arguments and distrust which could put your relationship on the rocks. This is no time for "the captain's word is law" — talk everything through during a calm.

## HOTEL GUEST

for Robby Robinson

Out through green fronds,  
I see a schooner  
of rakish proportions,  
tautly rigged  
and tugging at her mooring;  
feel again the tug  
of the wheel's spokes,  
the salt taste of spray  
driven stinging  
down the slanting decks,  
the lure of the yard  
and my belly hard  
against it, hauling in  
the belying canvas,  
as we approach  
a foreign land.

Time, then, on watch  
or off, held me  
like a squaresail,  
full and pulling;  
time, then, was to roll  
with the boat and go.  
Is it any wonder  
I'm most at home  
here, on Bequia,  
where I'm a guest  
and the boisterous Trade Wind  
blows undying?

— Richard Dey



## Nicoya Nights

Vivid sunset's  
tropic splendour  
quickly fades  
to sudden  
scented darkness.  
Sweetly perfumed  
night-wind sighs  
through open  
jalousied apertures.  
Then vivid flash,  
a mighty crash,  
and thunderous,  
sudden, soaking  
downpour,  
loud upon  
a hot tin roof.  
Sensuous cool,  
a draught spills in  
through  
welcoming windows,  
bringing with it  
sounds of surf  
out on the reef.  
Then it's off  
to the land of Nod.

— Nicholas Lee

## MARINA CAY TOAST

Here's to good captains and their fine crews  
that sail the BVIs.  
Here's to the Trades and the islands made  
and the blue Caribbean skies.

Here's to the rum and to having fun  
(for that's the "real" treasure, I trust):  
Here's to our dreams — here's to our schemes  
and to the Pirate in each of us.

— James K. Richardson

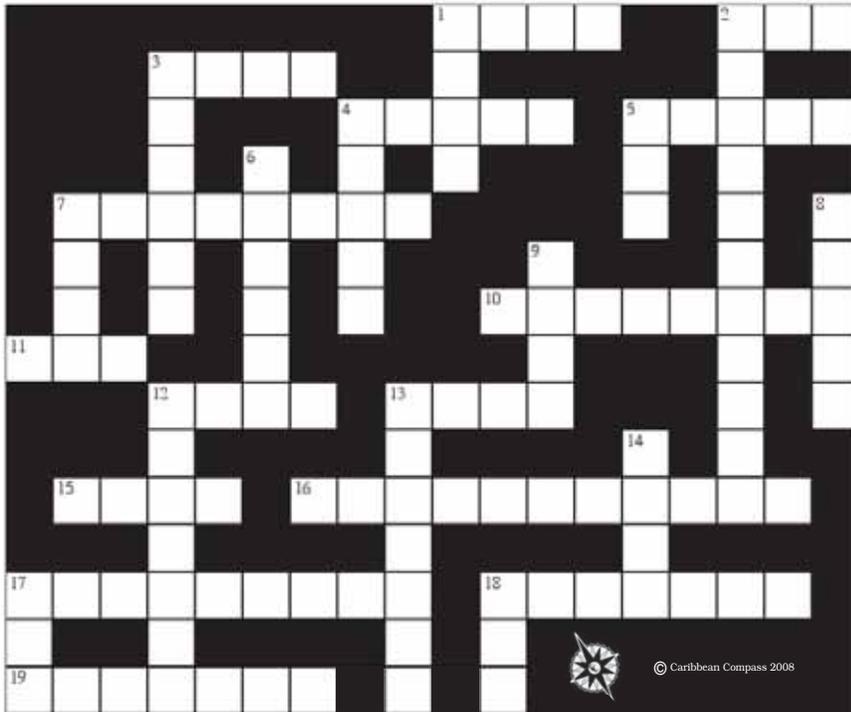
## parlumps marooned



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# Compass Cruising Crossword



## 'Nautical Alphabet: W1'

### ACROSS

- 1) Alert
- 2) Come in first
- 3) \_\_\_ room: mess cabin
- 4) Old word for a ford
- 5) Crew's duty while others sleep
- 7) Contract of marine insurance
- 10) Charge for using shore boat
- 11) \_\_\_ and wherefore
- 12) Timber spoiled by wetness
- 13) Track of vessel through water
- 15) \_\_\_ the plank: pirate's punishment
- 16) Boards on gunwales to keep out spray
- 17) Storage place for bonded goods
- 18) To \_\_\_: toward the point from which the wind blows
- 19) Fighting vessel

### DOWN

- 1) Light hawser
- 2) A jigger plus a handy billy
- 3) Large sea mammal with tusks
- 4) \_\_\_ courses: limber holes
- 5) Under \_\_\_: having forward motion
- 6) Provision boat from Maine
- 7) Blade of an oar
- 8) Lion's \_\_\_: famous 1929 schooner
- 9) Wax and \_\_\_
- 12) Knots used on end of rigging lanyard where deadeyes are used
- 13) Disk-shaped plates used to spread loads of threaded fasteners
- 14) Crank or tottering, like a sprung spar
- 17) Exclamation of surprise
- 18) Is no more

*Crossword Solution on page 37*

## Caribbean Sea Life

*Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski*

Part of the fun of cruising the Caribbean is searching for sea life. But you can't dive, snorkel or beach-comb all the time! Sit in the shade for a while with this word search puzzle and see how many kinds of Caribbean sea life you can find.

### CARIBBEAN SEA LIFE



- |               |           |          |
|---------------|-----------|----------|
| ANGEL         | MARLIN    | SHRIMP   |
| BARRACUDA     | MORAY EEL | SNAILS   |
| BILL          | OYSTER    | SNAPPER  |
| BONEFISH      | PERMIT    | SPONGE   |
| BUTTERFLYFISH | POMPANO   | STINGRAY |
| CONCH         | PUFFER    | SWORD    |
| GROUPER       | PYGMY     | TANGS    |
| HI-HAT        | SAIL      | TARPON   |
| MAHI          | SCALLOPS  | URCHIN   |
|               | SEA       | WAHOO    |
|               | SEA STARS | WRASSE   |

*Word Search Puzzle solution on page 26*

"But I don't want to be a soldier!" Abudef was shocked to hear his young son say this, especially as he was the commander of all the fish forces located in Cutie Cove on the northward coast of St. Lucia. But not only that, Sergeant Majors, being the biggest and strongest, are the leaders of all the Damsel Fishes and are born and bred to be soldiers. "It is in our very genes — good heavens what was wrong with Sim?" thought the worried father. Admittedly Sim was the only one left out of the brood he had so recently nurtured: all the rest could hardly wait to join the rest of the young trainees. "But, but, but," Abudef stammered in reply, "if you don't want to be a soldier, what do you want to be?" Of course Sim couldn't answer this because he had never thought about it but now he wondered why he didn't want to be a soldier, he just knew that he didn't. Abudef was so put out by the audacity of his son that he didn't stay to wait for an answer but went off to sulk under a ledge on the edge of the reef. His first thought was that he must have chosen the wrong mate and he frowned angrily. It was very unkind and nasty of him to think this of Thea who was and always had been the most loyal and loving wife any Sergeant Major, indeed any fish at all, could possibly have.

As Abudef sulked, thinking negative thoughts, he started to relax as he remembered the day he had decided to get married and raise a family. He had chosen a nest site for his bride-to-be on the vertical face of a smooth rock, nibbling away all the algae, moss and little sponges that had made their home there. He had worked very hard to clear a big three-foot diameter area of the rock face making it as smooth as a dinner plate. He had gnawed at hard coral bases and uneven rock with his strong jaws and sharp teeth and fanned away the fine dust and rubbish with vigorous sweepings of his fins. Only when he was sure that his nest would attract the most sought after young lady, did he venture out to find her. Abudef himself was no ordinary Sergeant Major; he was the strongest, the biggest and the most handsome of all the eligible young men. His alternating yellow and black stripes were the brightest and his silver belly scales were polished until they shone like pure silver, but now he changed this daily uniform for one of an aggressively barred steel blue, his warning to other males not to interfere and his signal to flirtatious young girls that he was courting. So Abudef swam with a proud swagger up and around his nest site until there she was!

Other bachelors were after her as well, all making frantic dashes about their own nests but lovely Thea wasn't interested in any of them. Abudef made strong vertical jumps above his nest, higher than anyone had ever jumped before and then he swam in loops, leaping, looping, until Thea was hypnotized and before she could help herself, Abudef had looped about his bride and she was laying her purple eggs in the nest and he

was the proud father-in-waiting. Thea wasn't allowed to care for the eggs; no, that is Damsel Fish fathers' work. Abudef, still in his impeccable steel blue uniform, fanned, nuzzled, cleaned and protected the brood from all harm. With these memories, Abudef smiled and knew he had indeed chosen the best of all possible mates. He would let Sim think about his fate for a while and in the meantime he would get on with commanding his forces that protected all the fish living in the bay.

## THE FISH ARMY GOES INTO BATTLE

by Lee Kessell

The very next day while on patrol, an army messenger swam briskly to Abudef's side and finned to attention. Abudef waved his right fin and the messenger gave his report.

"Commander sir, a strong force of enemy fish are attacking the brooding nests on our reefs and the solitary guards are being overcome."

Abudef immediately sent for all the regiments, squadrons and platoons that he could muster and swam off to reconnoiter. What he saw was horrible indeed for he had never seen such carnage. He saw that the worst of the marauders were the vicious Blue Headed Wrasses, the Blue Striped Grunts, the Red Lipped Blennies and the pink eyed Slippery Dicks, but there were others too and crabs and sea urchins were swarming everywhere, picking up the leftovers. The guards on duty had not given up without a struggle and while many were slaughtered, others shivered, wounded on the sand. Unless Abudef could organize a counter-attack quickly, there would be no brood left and a whole generation of young fish would be lost.

Abudef didn't have to wait very long for reinforcements as the Sergeant Major soldiers arrived from all directions, bringing with them the trainees. These youngsters had never seen a real battle and now their colours blanched, but still they begged to be allowed to fight. Abudef knew that he needed every soldier he could command so he agreed. He organized his forces into tight groups that would defend each other while attacking the enemy. One force, led by him would try to hold the enemy advance. This was a suicidal

defense, but it would give the groups attacking from the rear and to the sides the chance they needed. Abudef hoped it would work.

Back in her sheltered home deep within the rock ledge of the outer reef, Thea had gathered all the mothers and wives that could make it away from the enemy and Sim was there as well. They waved their fins in agitation and looked at young Sim with disapproval but Thea put a tender fin around the top of her son's head and gave him a hug. Now, whether or not it was his mother's love that jolted through his heart, but Sim woke as if from a long dream. Without any question, Sim at last knew his fate; he was indeed a Sergeant Major, a born soldier. Sim shrugged his mother away. "I'm joining Dad!" he cried and swam quickly to the very front of the attackers, finning to attention beside his father.

"Reporting for duty, Commander!" Abudef's heart filled with pride and although he feared for the life of his own dear son he let him stay, keeping him safe on his left side.

And so Commander Abudef led his brave soldiers into battle. They head butted the advancing killers, knocking them aside and biting down with their sharp teeth on backs and fins. The troops in the rear joined in, swooping down upon the enemy, causing the killers to turn in panic, but there was no escape as the troops blazed into the battle from all sides. The crabs and the hermit crabs lost their claws to friend and enemy alike for all was frenzy and confusion. The Wrasses and Blennies turned upon each other. Blood darkened the water until all the fish were blinded by it but the Sergeant Majors were on home ground and knew the reefs blindfold.

Those of the marauding fish who still lived swam for their lives, never to return, the rest perished. At last all was quiet. The Sergeant Majors could not give their dead comrades a military burial as the frenzied enemy had consumed them, but they collected their wounded and carried them to the hospital under the reef ledge where the Surgeon Fish in their powder blue surgical robes and the Doctor Fish in their smart black medical uniforms with white fin edgings took charge of their patients. There were many of the wounded but by a miracle not one soldier was killed after those solitary guards who had defended the broods so valiantly. All the fish in the bay rejoiced in the victory that night and many a toast was raised to the fallen heroes.

"You are all heroes!" shouted a voice from the crowd and with that every voice was raised in praise. Sim looked proudly towards his father and Abudef smiled, he was a very happy Sergeant Major. As for the enemy dead, the night tide swirled around them and carried their bodies far out to sea to be eaten by the sharks.

THE END

Note: Damselfishes belong to the family Pomacentridae. Sergeant Majors are the genus Abudefduf.

## PROUDLY SPONSORED BY PETIT ST. VINCENT RESORT

Hello! My name is Dolly and my home is in the sea.



## DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

A peculiar white, blind, lobster-like creature was found at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean during surveys of the Census of Marine Life. **Do you remember what it was called?** Scientists named it the Yeti Crab but gave it the scientific name, *Kiwa hirsuta*.

**Why are scientific names important?** Up until the 18th century, there was no organized system for naming plants and animals. One organism might have several names depending on who first found it or where it was found. Even today, each island of the Caribbean may have its own local name for a fish or a bird or a tree, for example. And, of course, there are the names of those same living things in other languages, say, French or Spanish. This can be very confusing. So if every plant or animal has one specific scientific name, everyone will know exactly what they are talking about!

**Who first thought of scientific names?** In 1735, a Swedish doctor and botanist, Carl Linnaeus, published the first attempt at classification of all living things: *Systema Naturae*. He met or corresponded with eminent scientists around

Europe and sent students out on expeditions to collect plant specimens from around the world. As the number of known organisms increased, Linnaeus had to update the *Systema Naturae* several times to include the new species. The names Linnaeus gave to the species in his lists became their scientific names.

**How did Linnaeus' classification work?** He sorted all organisms into a system of seven different levels or **taxa** (singular, **taxon**). We still use seven today although they are slightly different from the original set. These are:

- Kingdom
- Phylum (or Division)
- Class
- Order
- Family
- Genus
- Species

The lowest level is the most specific. A **species** is a group of individuals which have certain characteristics in common and can interbreed. In modern terms, they are **genetically distinct**. Several similar species make a **genus**. Several genera (or genera) make a **family**, several families make an **order** and so on up the chain. There are also some subdivisions but we'll look at those another time. The names in each level are based on Latin or Greek words so they look very complicated. Let's look at two examples from the marine environment.

	Great white shark	Yeti crab
Kingdom	Animalia	Animalia
Phylum	Chordata	Arthropoda
Class	Chondrichthyes	Malacostraca
Order	Lamniformes	Decapoda
Family	Lamnidae	Kiwaidae
Genus	<i>Carchardon</i>	<i>Kiwa</i>
Species (scientific name)	<i>Carchardon carcharias</i>	<i>Kiwa hirsuta</i>

Next month, we'll take a closer look at what these names mean.

If you've ever been to Florida you've seen the pretty, pink conch (pronounced "conk") shells that abound at souvenir shops throughout the state. In the Bahamas, driveways are lined with them and fences and walls decorated. These are the shells of the queen conch, a marine snail that, in its wild state, is found throughout the Caribbean.

In early days, Amerindians and European settlers harvested them as a food source because they were slow-moving and lived in shallow water, thus making them easy prey. The settlers were nicknamed "conchs," a term still used in the Florida Keys. Bahamians, who considered the Florida Keys as out islands, referred to Key West as The Conch Republic.

Today the conch is a food staple that is becoming scarce as commercial interests demand larger and larger supplies. Historically, sailing boards were used to hunt for conchs. Today, outboards are used. A glass-bottomed bucket (jokingly called a Bahamian TV) is used to spot the conchs. Then swimmers free-dive to catch them. Since the conchs pretty much just sit there, they are easy to "capture." Because of this, like many other creatures of the sea, they have been over-fished.

But at the eastern end of Leeward Highway on the island of Providenciales in the Turks & Caicos, there is a conch farm, the only one in the world, where conchs are cultivated.

We visited Caicos Conch Farm and took their tour. It was pretty interesting. Portia, our tour guide, guided us through the facility, explaining the various stages of breeding conchs. Scientifically, the queen conch, *Strombus gigas*, is one of the largest herbivorous gastropod mollusks. Its natural habitat is on sandy bottoms where there are algae and sea grasses. Adults migrate — inshore during the summer months, and farther offshore during the winter months — with a range of two to eight kilometers during a season. While conchs have no known diseases or parasites, natural predators include sea turtles, nurse sharks, porcupine fish, rays, marine snails, and larger crabs and lobsters. Conchs burrow in the sand to escape from predators. As they mature, their shells become larger and harder, with spiny protrusions which serve as protection.

The female conch reaches sexual maturity at approximately three and a half years of age, just a few months after the flared lip of her shell is formed. Conchs gather in large spawning populations to breed. The reproductive season lasts from about May to November, and an individual female may spawn up to nine times during that span. Fertilization takes place internally, and copulation with the male may occur several weeks before spawning. It usually takes 24 to 36 hours to produce an egg mass, which consists of a single continuous egg-filled tube folded over upon itself to form a croissant-shaped collection of eggs. It is estimated that anywhere from 350,000 to 500,000 eggs are contained in a single egg mass.

The eggs float several miles out and fall to the ocean floor where the juveniles hatch and bury themselves in the sand to protect themselves from predators. They take three or four years to mature and can live as long as 20 years. In recent years, declining populations have resulted in the conch not breeding, thus adding to the decreasing number of conchs caused by over-harvesting.

At the conch farm, we got to meet Sally and Jerry, a female and male conch respectively, kept in a shallow tank. When Portia picked them up out of the water, they immediately extended their bodies out of their shells. Portia could then use them to demonstrate how to tell a male from a female.

# What We Learned at the Conch Farm in Turks & Caicos

by Jacquelyn Milman

The male has a dark appendage high up; that's his sex organ. When he feels amorous, he climbs on top of a female and, if she is receptive, injects his sperm, fertilizing her eggs. When the eggs are spawned at the conch farm, they are placed in an incubator until they hatch. The hatchlings, tadpole-like forms called veligers, are then placed in the nursery. In a month, they begin to grow a shell and become bottom dwellers. At this point, they actually look like conch, but so tiny they are like grains of sand. Then they are moved from "The Nursery," large tray-like enclosures, to sea ponds, where they are fed until ready to harvest (about two years). The ponds are enclosed by fences to keep other animals out. The major market for the harvested conch is Florida restaurants.

At the end of the tour, there is a small gift shop and museum where we were able to see a rare conch pearl.



Not surprisingly, they are pink in color, like the inside of the conch shell.

The tour was far more interesting than we had anticipated, and we've developed a keener appreciation for conch salad and conch fritters.

For more information visit [www.caicosconchfarm.com](http://www.caicosconchfarm.com).

A fisherman taps a hole in a conch shell to extract the meat. Farmed conchs now meet the demand for this delicacy

## CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 1) WARN
- 2) WIN
- 3) WARD
- 4) WARTH
- 5) WATCH
- 7) WARRANTY
- 10) WATERAGE
- 11) WHY
- 12) WANY
- 13) WAKE
- 15) WALK
- 16) WASHSTRAKES
- 17) WAREHOUSE
- 18) WEATHER
- 19) WARSHIP

DOWN

- 1) WARP
- 2) WATCHTACKLE
- 3) WALRUS
- 4) WATER
- 5) WAY
- 6) WANGAN
- 7) WASH
- 8) WHELP
- 9) WANE
- 12) WALKERS
- 13) WASHERS
- 14) WALT
- 17) WOW
- 18) WAS

**ON** the southern Caribbean island of Trinidad, one ventures into isolated sandy-beach bays that are for the most part vacant, with dense vegetation, giving them the sense of prehistoric times.

We were heading from the marinas of Chaguaramas to the neighboring island of Tobago in anticipation of visiting its world-renowned beautiful white beaches and clear waters. As light rose on the horizon we pulled anchor in Scotland Bay and headed along the north coast of Trinidad. We had told Customs in Trinidad that we planned on spending three days to make the journey to Tobago.

We worked our way along the coast and into Grande Riviere Bay, our jumping-off spot for the daylong sail over to Tobago. This bay is reputed to have more nesting leatherback turtles than anywhere else in the world.

We followed the anchoring recommendations in Chris Doyle's *Cruising Guide to Trinidad and Tobago* and anchored on the east side of the bay. The rolling of the surf called for a second anchor.

Approaching the shore by dinghy, we found two- to three-foot rollers breaking onto the sandy beach. As we feared capsizing the dinghy on landing, we searched further and on the east end of the beach found a concrete structure that turned out to be a creek's exit to the bay. Here we found shelter from the pounding surf and secured our dinghy.

A community-based environmental group controls beach access between 6:00PM and 6:00AM daily during turtle nesting season. Arriving to sign up for turtle watching at 6:00PM we were greeted by a very friendly and informative staff that advised us on the rules and regulations. The required turtle-watching fee of TT\$65 per person (about US\$10) included the viewing of an informative video and being accompanied by a knowledgeable certified guide on the beach later in the eve-



Watching a leatherback turtle digging her meticulously engineered nest

ning (it is illegal to go alone). We learned from the video that leatherback turtles date back to prehistoric times and are, in fact, among the few inhabitants of the earth who have survived, like our nuisance friend the cockroach, right through the eons to today's world. We also were told that many individual turtles have been recorded and tagged for identification in various parts of the world.

However, one of the things we learned was distressing. The leatherback turtle is on the "critically endan-



## Turtle-Watching in Trinidad:

# A LITTLE MORE INTERACTION THAN WE EXPECTED!

by Bill Bate

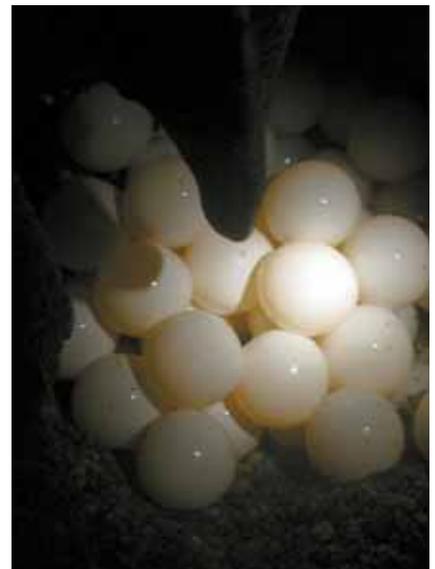
gered species" list due partly to the fact that many of the beach areas they need for nesting have been taken over by human development. When conditions permit, turtles will nest on the same beach where they were hatched. But turtles apparently will not land to nest where they perceive danger, such as humans or structures on the beach. In this case, the turtle moves on, seeking a new nesting site and abandoning egg-laying if a suitable site isn't found.

On Grande Riviere beach, researchers have found turtles that were tagged as far away as Mexico and Australia, indicating that turtles might have come here in search of a safe nesting site. The result is a crisis on this beach, which is now grossly overpopulated with nesting turtles. This gives the illusion that there are more than enough turtles — until one realizes that these are a large proportion of the world's last remaining leatherbacks.

The number-one destroyer of sea turtles is gill-net fishing. In some areas one or more turtles per night are trapped in these nets, preventing them from surfacing for air, and they invariably drown.

With the sun setting and darkness closing in on us, we saw black moving masses as they began to invade the shoreline. They were leatherback turtles, approximately five feet long and three feet wide. Their deliberate move from water to beach appeared agonized yet determined.

The flippers turned to legs, inching the 1,000-plus pounds of marine reptile out of the water and up the uneven beach of soft sand. Each turtle seemed to be searching for just the right spot. Our guide informed us that they were actually sensing the warmth of the sand to find the perfect temperature where they would dig their nests.



Some 80 to 100 fertile eggs are dropped into the nest

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

As each turtle arrived at the location she had chosen, her massive flippers began rotating her bulk in a circle. Then she used her back flippers to scoop sand from under her shell and throw it out to the sides.

The nest-digging process takes about 30 minutes once the site has been chosen. The digging in itself is of a miraculous design: each turtle deliberately digs a hole that is hourglass-shaped and meticulously engineered. The first eggs laid at completion of the hole are smaller, yellowish-colored and unfertilized. The grey, larger, fertile eggs, about the size of a golf ball, are laid on top. After some 80 to 100 fertile eggs are dropped into the nest, a covering of unfertilized eggs serves as protection from the compacting sand above, ensures that oxygen gets down to the eggs and acts as a deterrent to dog and bird predators.

At the waist of the hourglass design, the turtle gently fills the small opening with sand, then covers over the larger hole above and compacts it all with her back flippers. Finally, the entire site is camouflaged, obliterating any evidence of the nest.

Now comes the disaster caused by overcrowding on this beach — a direct result of destruction worldwide of turtles' original destination beaches.



Over a beachfront area that is not greater than 100 yards, as many as 350 turtles have been seen lining up on the beach to come and lay their eggs, with a second rank following behind, blocking the first turtles from returning to the water and causing a traffic jam.

Finally the second rank moves onto the beach and finds just the right spots. They begin digging their nests over the top of the previous nests, throwing the first turtles' eggs out and depositing their own. This process continues through the night, finishing around 6:00AM when the last egg-laying turtles slowly begin to move back to the sea.

We understand that in order to return to the sea after laying their eggs, the turtles identify the location of the ocean as being the brightest area in the surrounding darkness. Flashes of a camera or flashlight coming from another direction can confuse a turtle, causing it to head in the wrong direction. Therefore,

Right and below:  
After laying the eggs,  
the leatherbacks lumber back  
into the sea



no flashlights or camera flashes are permitted on the beach. In developed areas, lights from houses, hotels, etcetera, also confuse the turtles.

We saw approximately 20 turtles in various locations in close proximity to us between 7:00 and 10:0PM when we headed back to our boat.

Settling in for a good night's rest after an exciting day, we looked forward to a gentle rocking to sleep. The anchor was set and all was quiet in our "house": not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. When out on the bow there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter. In my nightshirt and cap I climbed the companionway, to the deck to find the anchor rope in a swing and sway.

To my surprise there was a giant leatherback tangled in our second anchor rode!

Judging by what we'd seen on the beach, this was one of the big ones. Caught in the rope, she was managing to pull the 16 tons of our boat. Then she swam back toward the boat, dove under it, and swam circles round and round the chain anchor rode, first to starboard then to port.

The rope was across her back, under her neck and around her left flipper at the shoulder. It would have been a simple matter for her to stop and back up to release the rode, but she seemed to be panicking and was seeing only forward as a way of escape.

We searched for a way to free her safely and were tempted to get in the dinghy and untangle her. We quickly determined that would be too dangerous in view of her size and strength, and therefore resolved that the only solution would be to sacrifice our anchor by releasing the rode. This we did and she was quickly set free.

We were saddened by the loss of one of our anchors but happy that the turtle was free to roam the oceans. We once again settled in for a good night's rest — only to hear the low grumble and rumble of an anchor dragging across rock.

We were reluctant to pull our main anchor in the dark, not knowing if the turtle had wrapped the rope around our rudder and propeller, so we deployed a second anchor for safety. Finally the boat was no longer dragging and with the second anchor holding we were able to sleep.

In the morning we returned to shore to get daylight photos of the turtles on the beach. Then came the arduous task of diving under the boat to see if any damage had occurred the night before. Visibility was only two or three feet.

We tried to bring in the second anchor only to find that we couldn't break it free. We proceeded to bring up the main anchor on its chain rode, but the windlass was under great stress. The reason for this was quickly revealed as the chain brought up a huge black iron anchor similar to that of old sailing ships, grossly corroded and covered in barnacles. Once released it sank to the bottom.

We returned to bringing in the remaining chain rode. To our delight our rope rode was wrapped around the chain and on the end of this was our sacrificed anchor, which we recovered. So the day was good — the sea had returned our missing anchor.

We rested for the remainder of the day and readied ourselves for an early morning departure to Tobago. We looked forward to the pristine, clear waters and sandy beaches there. Although not to a Jurassic Park scale, we mused at the thought we had actually experienced a world wonder of prehistoric reptiles here at Grande Riviere.

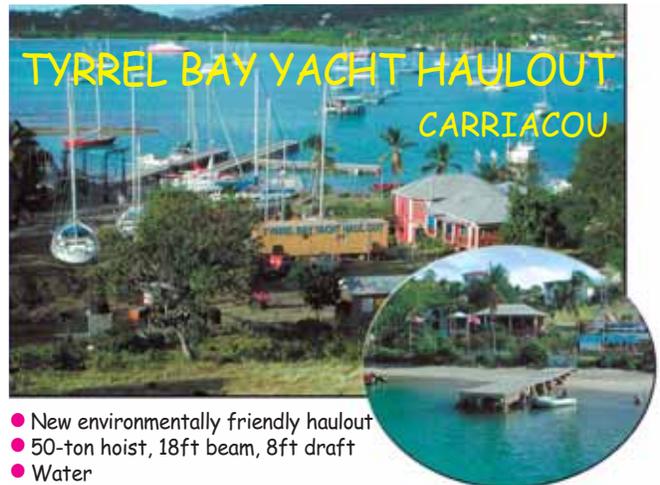
We recommend this experience, less the anchor problem, to all those who cruise in this area during the turtle nesting season. It can also be experienced without the boat through tours arranged by Jesse James of Members Only Maxi Taxi Service in Chaguaramas, Trinidad.



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# This is the House That Jack Built

*This is the farmer sowing his corn  
That kept the cock that crowed in the morn  
That waked the priest all shaven and shorn  
That married the man all tattered and torn  
That kissed the maiden all forlorn  
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn  
That tossed the dog that worried the cat  
That killed the rat that ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built.*

Wikipedia tells us: "This Is the House That Jack Built" is a popular nursery rhyme... It is a cumulative tale that doesn't tell the story of Jack, who builds a house, but instead shows how the house is indirectly linked to numerous things and people..."

Many years ago, Jack Dausend and his wife Cathy Winn came to Trinidad aboard their yacht *Wind Psalm* and decided to stay. That decision helped transform the port of Chaguaramas into the vibrant yacht-service mecca it is today.

Jack founded a business called Boaters' Enterprise, which for 13 years promoted Trinidad & Tobago's yacht-service industry through the 250-page annual *Boaters' Directory of Trinidad & Tobago*, a monthly free newsletter called *The Boca*, and the Boaters' Enterprise website. Boaters' Enterprise has also partnered with Chris Doyle on the *Cruising Guide to Trinidad & Tobago*, and for a decade Jack has been the Trinidad advertising sales and distribution agent for *Caribbean Compass*.

Among many other activities, Jack hosted seminars to introduce visiting boaters to the culture of his adopted country, including the popular "Taste of Carnival". In 2007, Jack was presented with the prestigious Bateman Cruising Station of the Year Award by the international Seven Seas Cruising Association.

Over the years, Boaters' Enterprise employed many talented young Trinidadians to help man the office, produce its publications, design advertising material, maintain its website and organize its numerous activities.

With Jack reaching the age of 75, Boaters' Enterprise restructured last year, moving to smaller quarters from its Chaguaramas office, downsizing staff and suspending publication of *The Boca*. Boaters' continues to offer graphic design, advertising and promotional services, and remains as agent for the *Compass*. The next edition of the *Boaters' Directory of Trinidad & Tobago* is scheduled for June 2008 delivery.

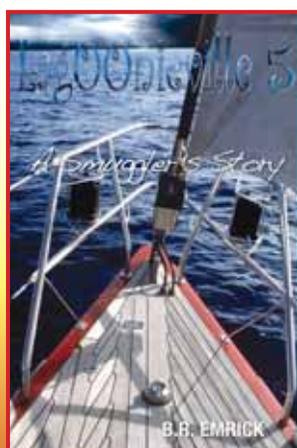
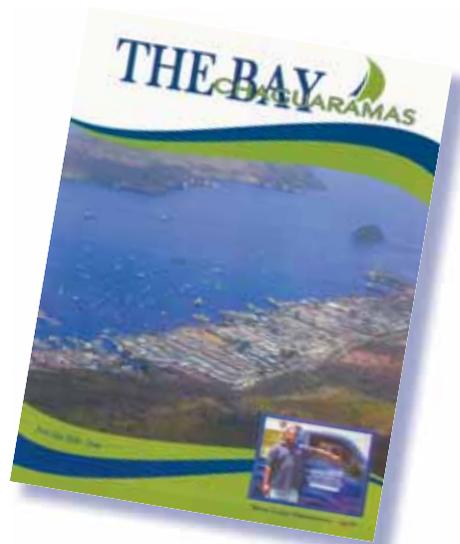
Meanwhile, a new publication has appeared on the Trinidad boating scene. *The Bay: Chaguaramas* is the magazine of the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT). Its inaugural, June/July 2008, issue contains 16 full-color pages in an 8 1/2 by 11-inch format. YSATT's manager, Gina Hatt-Carvalho, says, "Our vision is to use this magazine as a tool to get the wants and needs, wrongs and rights and the concerns and comments of the boating public — both local and foreign — across to the relevant authorities."

Despite the larger format and unique cover design, *The Bay's* inside pages will look familiar to readers of *The Boca*, and its first editorial column pays abundant homage to Jack Dausend: "The management committee of YSATT considered the effects of the closure of *The Boca* and agreed that it is important to publish a periodical that would continue to provide news and views... *The Bay* comes about almost by default, essentially to continue the good work that Jack Dausend began..." The editorial outlines even more of Jack's good works than we have room to list here, and, in answer to the question "Why did he do it?" replies, "... it certainly hasn't got anything to do with money... It's about passion: passion for the industry of which he's been such an integral part..."

Boaters' Enterprise alumnus Catherine Whitby is now on the staff of YSATT.

But wait — there's more! The proposed annual *Trinidad & Tobago Island escape: your navigator guide* is scheduled to appear in January 2009. Promotional material promises a "detailed directory and guide publication aimed at the tourism and yachting industry". The 240-page publication will feature information on tours, restaurants, festivities, accommodation and shopping, as well as tide tables, a comprehensive "yellow pages" for all advertisers and a quick alphabetical listing. If this sounds like a page or two has been taken from the *Boaters' Directory*, it's not surprising: Boaters' Enterprise graduates Janna-Lise Chung and Tiffany Campbell are two of this new publication's three top managers.

*This is the cruiser reading a new mag  
That took over now from his favorite old rag  
That first gave a voice to both whiners and boat bards  
That perused the ads for the chandlers and boatyards  
and taxi services, maxis and minis,  
That were designed by bright young Trinis  
That now are involved in new publications  
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to enjoy the pleasures of the bay  
That rest on the foundations that Jack built.*



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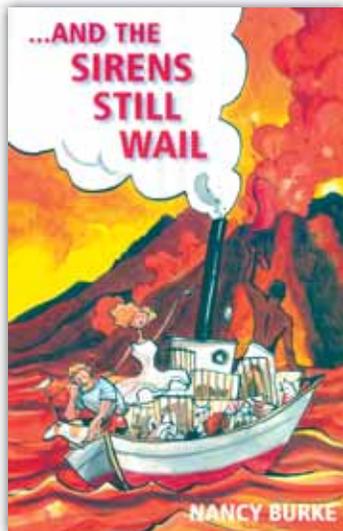
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# WHERE THEY WENT WHEN THE VOLCANO BLEW

...And the Sirens Still Wail, by Nancy Burke © 2006. Macmillan Caribbean. Paperback, 166 pages. ISBN 979-4050-1703-9.



This is the first non-fiction title to appear in the Macmillan Caribbean Writers Series, and it's a worthy one.

Nancy Burke relates with a warm intelligence how she and her husband, Richard, coped with a twist of fate. She writes, "It had always been our dream to retire from New York City to 'the good life'. No smog, no traffic. We wanted to get away from the greasy soot that found its way onto our windowsills the minute they were opened..."

But after they finally found the retirement island of their dreams, settled into a new home there in 1992, built a happy social life — and, not incidentally, acquired numerous cats and dogs — Montserrat's Soufriere Hills volcano came hideously alive in 1995 after a 350-year nap. And although the Burke's house was in the "safe zone", instead of merely having city soot to contend with, "Ash came by the inch. Accompanied by small warm rocks. The brooms gave way to shovels... Ash, rocks ground fine like baby powder, is the most invasive thing I've ever experienced. No door, no window, no tied plastic bag could keep it out. You eat it and breathe it... It is on your toothbrush, in your bed, in your fridge, and in the oven. It gets sucked up by your car's engine and thrown about by the simple running of a small animal in the grass."

It wasn't the volcano's increasingly violent fiery explosions that drove the couple out of their beloved Montserrat. It wasn't the swift, incinerating pyroclastic flows that killed every living thing in their path. It wasn't the debris that buried the town of Plymouth. It wasn't the evacuations or even the deaths of people they had come to know. It was the insidious, unrelenting ash that covered everything, the film that grimed every surface, the dust that invaded every lung and burrowed down to the skin of each living creature. As the eruptions continued and more and more people left the island or moved into shelters, more and more dogs and cats were dumped on their doorstep, and the Burkes never turned an animal away. The fright, misery and endangered health of their collection of pets played a large part in the couple's decision to leave their home for a temporary reprieve.

Determined to remain in the Caribbean, Nancy set off on a reconnaissance mission to St. Lucia and Grenada, but after a chance communication with a friend she took a detour to St. Vincent — and it was love at first sight.

Her saga of crating up their pack of dogs and tribe of cats, and traveling with them for days aboard a small inter-island freighter to St. Vincent, is like the story of Noah's Ark.

After a year and a half in the countryside of St. Vincent, where Nancy was involved and contented, and Richard was bored and "homesick" for Montserrat, they figured it was safe to go back. They'd received word that the volcano was quieting down. Their house in the safe zone was still intact but needed attention. They packed up the animals, chartered another small freighter and sailed back to Montserrat.

But life in Montserrat proved to be untenable for them. "I had supposed we would fall back into the old groove... [but] there was no old groove to fall back into." Too much had changed. And the volcano was still erupting.

They packed up the animals, boarded a small freighter yet again and went back to St. Vincent for good.

The book contains some minor editing glitches (notably misspellings of local place names), but the narrative is engaging and the structure follows an interesting non-chronological order.

Despite their heroic exertions on behalf of their pets, this is not an account written by people who "love animals more than they love people", as foreigners in the Caribbean are often accused of doing. The Burkes took many displaced Montserrations into their home and assisted countless more. In St. Vincent, they let passers-by use their outdoor water tap to the extent that it became a regular neighborhood meeting place: "Our washbasin actually afforded us the opportunity to meet almost the entire community."

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One of a skipper's most important tasks when new crewmembers come aboard is to "teach them the ropes" — although few if any ropes are called ropes on a boat. There is running rigging: sheets, halyards, guys, preventers and what have you. There are anchor rodes, warps and hawsers. And there are lines, including clewlines, buntlines and dock lines.

And then we have all those ingenious things you can make with them, called knots, bends and splices...

Learning how to handle all these ropes properly, including coiling, tying and throwing them, is critical to the efficient functioning of any boat. Having a poorly coiled main halyard go halfway up the mast in a tangle is an embarrassment, but losing the end of the anchor rode because the lubber's knot at the bitter end came undone can be a tragedy. We've all forgotten to put a stopper knot in the end of a jib sheet and seen it go flying through the block, or had the dinghy go adrift because the rabbit didn't go through the hole. But maybe we've redeemed ourselves by going on deck one dark and stormy night and using our best rolling hitch to tie off a halyard that's been slatting against the mast and keeping everyone awake. Or we've been heroes during the regatta's last race when a line parted and we were able to throw in a quick sheet bend and save the day.

Coming alongside a dock, going stern to a quay, and entering a marina slip or a lock — especially when wind or current aren't being helpful — can be a major challenge. As Don Street says, "Bad line handling and throwing can ruin a good approach, good line handling and throwing can bail out a poor approach."

In this one-hour DVD, the "sailor's sailor" Don Street walks you through the essentials of knot tying and line handling.

## Don Street's Knots



DVD is ideal for teaching practical skills and after decades of ocean sailing in "Iolaire", his 46' engineless yawl, Don certainly knows the ropes. In only sixty minutes he shows you everything you need to know about knots and line handling.

In the knot tying section, you are advised to follow along with two pieces of line in hand as the DVD uses slow motion and freeze frames to show each step explaining the uses of basic knots and how to tie them. Basic knots shown include the stopper knot, square knot, bowline, half hitches, sheet bend and rolling hitch. Advanced knots include the useful fisherman's bend and towboat hitch.

The section on line handling includes cleating and handling halyards, tying sail stops, coiling line for stowage, and throwing a dock line — using a monkey fist and messenger if necessary. (In demonstrating this, there's a little hiccup: It's a good idea to secure the dock line to the messenger before throwing the latter!)

The section on splicing might be the least used information on this DVD. While watching, we first wondered how many yachtsmen would use their teak deck for a cutting board, as Don does in his demonstration. Then we went on to wonder how many of today's sailors would take the trouble to repair a chafed section of three-strand line by worming new strands into the worn part, rather than just replacing it? (Honest now, when was the last time you used a hollow fid?) A little background music, as for the knot demonstrations, would've been nice here, too.

*Ashley's Book of Knots* might be the bible, but this DVD is much easier to carry around. Everyone aspiring to be good crew should watch, study and learn.

Available at [www.sea-toproductions.com/catalog.html](http://www.sea-toproductions.com/catalog.html).

## MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2008

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

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

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

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

August 2008					
DATE	TIME				
1	1212 (new)	23	0457	11	2114
2	1304	24	0556	12	2201
3	1354	25	0658	13	2247
4	1437	26	0801	14	2333
5	1521	27	0902	15	0000 (full)
6	1604	28	0959	16	0019
7	1649	29	1053	17	0107
8	1734	30	1142	18	0157
9	1822	31	1228	19	0252
10	1911			20	0350
11	2002			21	0452
12	2054			22	0554
13	2145			23	0655
14	2235			24	0753
15	2322			25	0846
16	0000 (full)			26	0936
17	0009			27	1022
18	0054			28	1107
19	0138			29	1151
20	0224			30	1234

September 2008			
DATE	TIME		
1	1313 (new)	23	0655
2	1357	24	0753
3	1441	25	0846
4	1527	26	0936
5	1614	27	1022
6	1703	28	1107
7	1724	29	1151
8	1845	30	1234

## More Easy Stovetop Bread:

# Irish Soda Farls

by Jim and Barbara McConn

Take a tip from the Irish and make your boat bread the quick and easy way: with baking soda or baking powder rather than yeast. Various types of soda bread are made in Ireland. A loaf form can be made in the oven, but the "farl" version, cooked in a skillet or frying pan on the stovetop, will hardly heat up your galley at all.

- 2 Cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 Cup milk or buttermilk

Mix the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. Make a well in the center and add the milk all at once. Stir immediately and vigorously. Turn out of bowl onto flat surface. (If there's any dry stuff left in the bowl, place it on top.)

Knead to mix all together and form a ball. But knead less than 30 seconds! Don't handle the dough too much, and don't use extra flour if possible.

Flatten the ball into a ten-inch circle approximately half an inch thick. Cut into fourths (like a pie) with a table knife.

Warm a heavy bottomed, non-stick frying pan on low heat. Transfer the pieces to the warmed pan (I use a pancake spatula to lift and transfer them). Arrange the pieces back into a pie shape, leaving a quarter of an inch between the pieces.

Cover with a lid and cook on low heat for about five minutes on each side until golden brown. (If the pan is too hot, the outside of the bread will burn before the inside is cooked through.)

We usually eat at least one piece immediately by cutting it crosswise (like an English muffin) and spreading it with butter and jam.

They are also good later if cut crosswise and toasted, then spread with butter and jam. We also use them for:

- Pizza farls: Cut crosswise, top with pizza sauce, pepperoni, onions, whatever, and sprinkle with parmesan cheese before heating under the broiler.
- Tuna farls: Cut crosswise, top with tuna salad and sprinkle with parmesan cheese before heating under the broiler.
- Garlic farls: Cut crosswise and coat with butter before toasting under the broiler, then rub with a fresh, peeled garlic bulb while still hot.

*Jim and Barbara McConn sailed their 31-foot Southern Cross, the Spanish Stroll, out of Redondo Beach, California on April 9th, 2004. They have since logged over 30,000 miles while crossing four oceans and visiting over 20 countries. Their recent 5,400-mile passage around the Cape of Good Hope and up to the Caribbean lasted 65 days and took them across the equator for the fourth time. They plan to transit the Panama Canal and complete their first circumnavigation early next year.*



The oven version of Irish Soda Bread shown here is more rounded. The skillet, or farl version, will be somewhat flatter. Both are traditionally cut into fourths to allow the bread to expand while cooking

## CRUISIN' SHOES

by Debby on Sunshine

What happened to that shoe on the side of the road? That old shoe used to have a best friend (Lefty or Mister Right), and possibly belonged to a conscientious owner. But one day this old shoe decided to be adventurous and "took to the road" by bursting a strap.

In my shoes' experience, this would not be for the first time. Because the first time one of my shoes experiences a blow-out it gets taken back to the boat to be glued, especially if it is a favourite shoe.

Having to take a shoe home for re-gluing is an indignity. Obviously the intact shoe also has to be removed, because you would look really silly with one shoe on and the other shoe off. Most of the people who see you barefooted think you must have had a "liquid lunch". Who would walk barefooted on the coral and stones of a boatyard if they were sober? Not only that, you have to keep up a regular pace, as if nothing happened, and the pain through the soles of your feet causes your brain to burst with little pebbles of pain.

So the shoes finally get back aboard, and the owner, too. As we all know, every boatowner has superglue. The glue has been in the refrigerator, repaired dinghies, fixed just about anything. Just when it is required to repair the favourite shoe, oh yes, it has gone hard.

A trip to the over-priced nearby store is required. Hey, we can even get some bread and onions, so that means the lunch problem will be solved. A few dollars more and the glue is purchased. Then it's back to the dinghy, rinse off the aching dirty feet, and back aboard to have lunch and repair the shoes!

Onion and cheese sandwiches have always been a favourite. Just wipe a frying pan with a little olive oil and heat it while you are preparing sandwiches with lots of cheese, chopped onion, a sprinkle of herbs, white pepper and a dash of chili. Place the sandwiches in the hot frying pan, toast for about a minute each side, slice and serve. Delicious!

Now lunch is over, we can get back to the shoe repair. But where did I put the glue? Why don't they make superglue in bigger, brighter containers? Oh, there it is. Then in just two minutes, that is if the broken shoe is in a nearby findable location, the glue job is done. Eureka! A good day has been had — can't wait for happy hour to celebrate.

The repaired shoe looks almost perfect, and since I have had a lovely nap I'm ready to meet friends in the pub — with shoes on. Good friends, great times, and finally time to go back home. It was just a little stumble, I mean a really small trip, and the shoe broke again. This time, the broken shoe remains where it failed me and the good shoe stays on, because it deserves to.

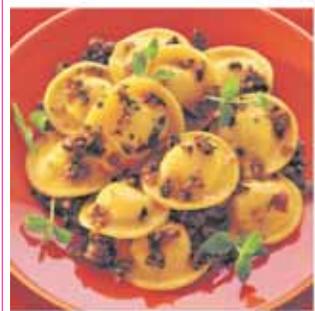
The shoe that died will remain on the side of the road as a permanent reminder to anyone who has a blow-out not to waste time trying to repair shoes. I take my hat off (the hat is another story), to the barefooters out there, or are you just returning from lunch? Go and buy another pair of shoes; save the superglue for boat repairs.

Epilogue: Having written this little story, I decided to wait until the story settled and I could make objective improvements before sending it to *Compass*. Meanwhile, on Isla Margarita, Venezuela, I went to Sambil Shopping Centre. Anyone who knows this centre knows that you have to dress up somewhat. Suddenly my gold sandal had a blow-out. Guess where I went? To the false nail shop, and bought, yes (I can't believe I actually did it), superglue! New shoes are a trifle expensive at this centre. A few days later I had to buy new shoes to replace both the gold sandals AND the pair I wrote the above missive about. Makes one wonder doesn't it? Now I am a happier soul, with two new pairs of shoes, and lots of half-used tubes of superglue.

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## SERVING AT SEA BY SHIRLEY HALL

# Marvelous Mangos

Mangos, mangos, juice dripping, shirt staining mangos are a true Caribbean treat. I've read articles on how to eat this fruit without a mess, but does it really matter? Some recommend consuming a juicy mango while wearing a bib! You can lean uncomfortably forward so the juice drips to the ground, but why bother? Eat them at the beach and take a wash-off dip.

About 4,000 years ago the mango originated in East India in the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains. Mangos were one of the first fruits humans farmed. Asian kings had vast orchards of trees. An Emperor of Delhi, Akbar (1556 to 1606) had 100,000 hectares of mango trees. The word 'mango' is derived from the Tamil word, man-kay, which Portuguese explorers changed to manga. India is still the largest producer of mangos with very few exported. Mangos traveled to the Caribbean in the mid-1700s. More mangos are eaten throughout the world than any other fruit. There are over 20 million metric tons of mangos grown yearly.

Mango is a true 'comfort food' because, like papaya, mango contains a stomach-soothing enzyme. Mangos not only make you feel good, they are great healthwise because they contain plenty of fiber, vitamins A and C, and potassium. One large mango has about 100 calories with no cholesterol and half of the necessary daily fiber.

There are over 1,000 varieties of mangos throughout the world. The Caribbean has starch, rose, Julie, calabash, dou-dou, turpentine, Graham, ten-pound, spice, grafted, Ceylon and others. My personal favorites are dou-dou and calabash. Green mango can be prepared into kutchela, chutney, preserves, takari and amchar.

### Mango Chow

This is a unique way to eat this sweet fruit.

Slice at least two half-ripe mangos, with the peel and seed removed, as thinly as possible. Put in a bowl and mix with salt to taste. Add two cloves of garlic, grated, and three leaves of chadon bene, chopped fine. Mix together and let sit for an hour. Add a quartered, seeded hot pepper if you "have a hot mouth".

### Mango Pie

3 Cups of sliced mangos (peeled and sliced)

2 Tablespoons quick tapioca

3/4 Cup brown sugar

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 Tablespoon butter or margarine, melted

Two 9-inch pastry crusts

Combine all ingredients except pastry and let stand for 15 minutes. Line a pie pan with one pastry crust. Fill it with fruit mix and cover with the other crust. Wet your fingers and press edges of both crusts together. Using a fork, neatly jab the top to let steam escape. Bake at 400°F for one hour. Let stand till cool before serving. (Serve with vanilla ice cream or whipped cream if desired.)

### Mango Crisp

5 Cups ripe mangos (peeled and sliced)

1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg

1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 Tablespoon lemon juice

1/2 Cup brown sugar

1/2 Cup flour

1/4 Cup soft butter or margarine

Mix mangos, nutmeg, 1 teaspoon of the cinnamon, and lemon juice and place in a greased 10 by 10-inch baking dish. Blend brown sugar, flour, remaining cinnamon and butter until mixture is crumbly. Drop the flour mix over the mango. Bake at a 350°F for 35 minutes.

### Mango Bread

2 Cups flour

2 Tablespoons baking soda

2 Tablespoons ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 Cup brown sugar

3/4 Cup canola oil

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

3 eggs

2 Cups diced mangos

In a bowl, combine dry ingredients. Create a pond in the center and add everything else. Mix with a big spoon. Place in a greased and floured bread pan. Let the mixture sit for half an hour before baking at 350°F for one hour.

### Mango Salsa

1 Cup diced mangos

1/2 Cup diced red sweet peppers

1/2 Cup diced red Spanish onion

1 small hot pepper, minced

1 Tablespoon fresh lime juice

Combine all ingredients and chill. Use as an accompanying sauce or marinade with meat, chicken, or fish dishes. Eat with sada roti, or chips.

### Mango Stuffed Chicken

1 whole chicken

2 very ripe mangos, peeled, halved and pitted

1 small hot pepper, minced

2 chadon bene leaves, chopped fine

1 medium onion, chopped

Prepare chicken for roasting. Mix remaining ingredients and stuff the chicken. Place in a covered roasting pan. Bake at 350°F for one hour, then uncover and bake for another fifteen minutes.

### For the Gardener

Choose your favorite type of mango and seek out a tree vendor. Unless you choose a dwarf grafted mango, allow a circumference of at least 50 feet for the tree. It should bear in about the third year. Keep young trees adequately watered. In the dry season run the hose to water for at least an hour a month for excellent fruit. Tend with a high-nitrogen fertilizer mix monthly, and watch for pests. Your tree should give you a lifetime of shade and delicious fruit.

# The Pressure Cooker: A Most Valuable Tool

by Ross Mavis

Whenever I mention pressure cookers, some folks run for cover. Nothing could be safer when used properly. In fact, the most dangerous tool in your galley is definitely a knife. It can be deadly if used incorrectly.

So don't shy away from a pressure cooker. Reduced cooking time, barely any loss of nutrition. Incredibly tender, savory dishes — even from the cheapest cuts of meat — emanate from a properly used pressure cooker.

A few simple rules make pressure-cooking a breeze and not a hurricane.

- Never fill the cooker more than two thirds full. Bubbling lentils or split peas can block the rocking pressure valve. Not good.

- Always make sure the pressure relief valve is clear of any blockage before you put the cooker on the heat.

- Never use high heat; medium is fine.

- Use the exact amount of liquid called for in the recipe. This will assure no burnt offerings.

- Finally, don't try to open the cooker until the pressure has dropped.

Ah yes, you say, but I'm still frightened to use one. Well, look at it this way: it can be a lot like sailing when you pop the chute. Granted, more care and attention are necessary then, but the results are wonderfully exhilarating and most gratifying.

Someone asked what I would take with me if left on a deserted island. A good knife, a small fire grate and a basic pressure cooker were the only cooking utensils



need to replace the rubber gasket that seals the lid to the pan or the small rubber relief valve. Other than that, only a good clean up is necessary, just like any other pot or pan.

Follow the directions that come with your cooker for best results. Basically, brown meats in the pan over medium heat. When nicely browned, add veggies and the required amount of cooking liquid. Bring this nicely to the boil and clamp on the cooker lid. Let steam escape for 30 seconds or so from the relief valve and then add the rocking pressure regulator. Reduce the heat to low and wait until the regulator starts to rock. Start your cooking time at that point. The gentle sound of escaping steam as the pressure regulator rocks back and forth assures you all is well. When the required cooking time is reached, turn off the heat and remove the cooker from the stove.

Either of two methods can be used for cooling the cooker before opening it. The cold water method is the fastest. Simply run cold water over the entire pressure cooker and you will hear the pressure drop quickly. The small pressure safety valve will drop and you can then remove the regulating rocker. Now it's fine to unlock the cooker and savor the results. Everything inside will still be very hot so be careful.

If the recipe calls for slow cooling, then let the pot cool naturally before opening it. The contents continue to cook until the pot is nicely cooled.

There. Now you know everything I know about pressure cookery. It is my preferred way to make baked beans, chili, stews, soups and incredibly tender cuts of meat from cheap, tougher cuts. Here's a recipe you'll want to try.

## Vesuvius Chicken

An easy chicken dish that is full of flavor and a breeze to prepare. Don't let the name frighten you. It has nothing to do with the volcano.

- 3 Tablespoons (45 ml) olive oil
- 1 three- to five-pound (1.5 to 2 kg) chicken, cut up
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) salt and pepper mixed
- 4 to 6 small potatoes, peeled and halved
- 6 cloves garlic, diced
- 1/4 Cup (60 ml) chicken broth
- 1/2 Cup (125 ml) white wine
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- a sprinkle of red pepper flakes
- 1 lemon, sliced
- parsley or chopped chives to garnish

Heat oil in cooker and brown chicken pieces over medium heat. Season with salt and pepper. Remove chicken when browned.

Put potatoes in the cooker. Add balance of ingredients except for lemon slices and place chicken on top. Lay lemon slices on chicken. Bring mixture to a boil and close cooker lid. When steam starts to come from vent, add pressure regulator. Once regulator starts to rock, start timing and cook for 15 minutes, adjusting heat to keep regulator rocking gently.

After 15 minutes, remove cooker from heat and cool quickly with cold water. When pressure has dropped, remove lid. Remove chicken and potatoes to a platter. Reduce liquid over medium heat (no lid this time) until nicely thickened and pour over chicken and potatoes. Serve hot. Garnish with parsley or chopped chives.



A pressure cooker can provide easy one-pot meals like Vesuvius Chicken, to serve solo or dress up with a salad and crusty bread

I chose. The chance of having electricity or gas for cooking would be remote at best, so leave all those high-fangled gadgets behind. A pressure cooker can be used over a wood fire. The toughest wild pig can be cooked into tender succulent pork dishes and fruit turned into delicious puddings.

Furthermore, on board a boat, pressure cookers work well during a heavy slop, when other pots spill their contents. Also, pressure cookers can be used quite safely to temporarily keep excess food. If you are only able to consume half the pot of stew, carefully pour out only that amount you will be consuming. Replace the lid, bring the contents to the boil until the safety valve jiggles, and then remove the pot from the stove. While cooling, the valve is sucked tightly to the pan, keeping everything inside vacuum sealed, as in a tin can. This method depends upon not introducing a spoon or ladle into the cooker. The spoon or ladle may contain bacteria that can lead to spoilage.

What exactly is the secret to pressure cookery? Quite simply, water boils at 212°F or 100°C at sea level. At 15 pounds pressure, the top pressure-cooking pressure, water boils at 250°F. The higher temperature cooks foods faster. Furthermore, the retention of juices and flavors allows nutrient-rich and scrumptious broths and gravies to be made with little effort. Seafood stews, poultry dishes and even steamed clams are easy fare for the pressure cooker. Custards, cakes and stewed fruit exhibit the cooker's full repertoire.

There are several models of pressure cookers now on the market. I still use my old standard Presto model that is more than 30 years old. Occasionally you may



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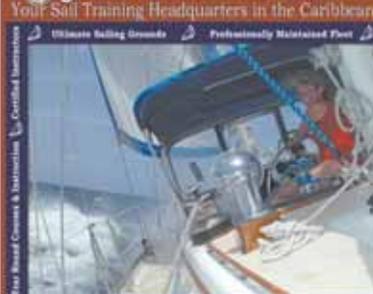
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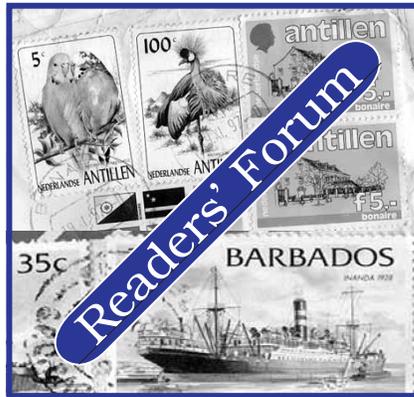
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**Dear Compass,**

Re: Robbie Ferron's letter in May's Readers' Forum accusing me of writing "drivel" in my article about marine pollution which appeared in the February 2008 issue of *Compass*. In that article I looked at the situation harbor by harbor in the Eastern Caribbean, starting with St. Thomas and continuing south to Grenada.

Robbie insists: "It is not true that the Simpson Bay Lagoon (St. Maarten) has a particularly serious pollution problem". His letter makes some very good points, but I'd like to take issue with some other statements.

First, the points we agree on. It's true that yacht heads pumping untreated human waste directly into the sea actually produce little pollution because this organic discharge breaks down rapidly and the fish love it. Witness the Street family, who raised four children on *Iolaire* without using any disposable (and non-biodegradable) diapers: four cloth diapers were sufficient, and the fish did a great job of cleaning them.

It's also true that human waste mixed with fresh water (and chemicals) in holding tanks and then discharged into the sea is very polluting.

True: Where current is strong, flushing action is good. True: The pollution in Simpson Bay Lagoon, as elsewhere in the Caribbean Sea, is largely from shore-based sources.

All the above are true, but let's examine some other statements.

Robbie's letter states: "All" mega-yachts "have treatment facilities so their contribution is relatively small." Can it be categorically stated that ALL have adequate treatment facilities? Do they never discharge their holding tanks in Simpson Bay Lagoon, as I've personally seen them do (evidenced by huge, foul-smelling "brown clouds") in certain other yacht harbours?

Flushing action of an enclosed body of water demands not only adequate openings but also a large tidal range. The tidal range in the Caribbean is usually 12 inches at neaps, 18 inches at springs; at the spring and fall equinox it will reach 24 inches and sometimes a bit more. With this small tidal range there is little or no flushing action in enclosed harbors in the Caribbean.

As for my not having been in Simpson Bay Lagoon "for a very long time", I have viewed the lagoon from the shore every year from 1960 to 2006. Needless to say, my engineless *Iolaire* and *Li'l Iolaire* never visited the lagoon. However in 2005 while sailing on *Kinship*, a 52-foot Baltic, for the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, not only was I in Simpson Bay Lagoon but I witnessed the poor skipper diving into it to clear a clogged seacock. *Kinship's* skipper took a LONG shower to clean up after his dive.

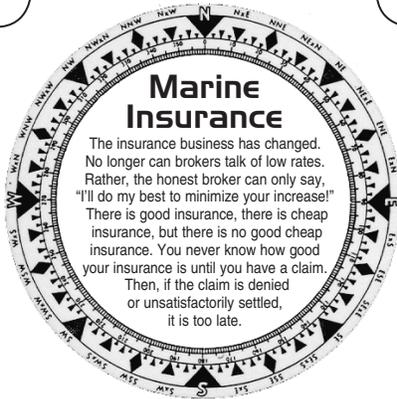
Water quality in all harbors can be improved if the authorities enact and enforce the British Virgin Islands' rule: no discharge of holding tanks unless at least 1,000 yards off shore. But the problem of poor water quality in lagoons and other enclosed bodies of water in the Eastern Caribbean is insoluble until shore-based pollution is stopped.

**Don Street**  
*Iolaire*

**Dear Compass,**

Big kudos to Clayton Lewis for his terrific article "Understanding Tropical Weather and Hurricanes" [*Compass* June 2008]. He put together a wonderful, easy to read and understand, as well as detailed report about tropical weather.

Having spent over 14 years aboard *Pizazz* (11 of those in the Caribbean), we learned to watch, listen, and gather the various weather forecasts in order to stay out of harm's way. Living on a boat you give up some security for the freedom that you gain. You also give up easy access to weather broadcasts and, therefore, become dependent upon high-frequency radio broadcasts from "the experts". However, oftentimes, the experts never explain what they are talking about. You have to learn that yourself.



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Clayton explained it all in simple terms. Thank you, Clayton, for a great job! We hope that most cruisers read this article and now understand what tropical weather is all about. And, Clayton, we hope that you and Fiona are enjoying Colombia and Panama.

**Lourea and Randy**  
**Formerly aboard Pizazz but now living on land in Bonaire**

P.S. We continue to receive requests for our Colombia Guide and information. We gladly share our gathered data with all cruisers heading west (or east) along the Colombia coast. That coast is subject to its own weather — more than just tropical conditions. Anyone interested, can request a copy of our guide by contacting us at [sy\\_pizazz@yahoo.com](mailto:sy_pizazz@yahoo.com).

*Editor's note: An electronic copy of Clayton's article can be requested from [sally@caribbeancompass.com](mailto:sally@caribbeancompass.com).*

**Dear Compass,**

From the fifth floor of my little condo in Porlamar, Margarita, Venezuela, I enjoy watching the comings and goings of the cruisers who come to enjoy the best weather in the Caribbean and do their provisioning at the supermarkets here. I also enjoy the Sunday Mexican Train domino sessions that take place weekly.

After reading the June issue of *Compass* (in which they reported their incident) I was happy to see the return of the yacht *Moon Goddess*. I knew Joe in Ft. Lauderdale several lifetimes ago when I had my own 27-foot Dufour, and I was pleased to meet Diane here in Porlamar when they came to play dominoes on Sundays. They are a welcome couple at the games and I am so glad they didn't stay away from Venezuela because of an unfortunate experience. Their boat was boarded while they were aboard at Puerto Santos. They were locked in and no harm came to them after they fired flares through a small hatch. They knew it wasn't a safe place to anchor for the night but they were tired! The incident shook them up badly but not enough to keep them away. Good thing!

**Sandi Pomeroy**  
**Call sign: Sea-Mistress**

**Hi Compass,**

Thank you for publishing my letter in the June issue. However, your response explaining the sorts of visas appropriate for foreign yacht crews entering the United States does not address my particular problem. My crewmember/fiancée is not an employee on my boat so she has no working contract. My problem is that the US Immigration refuses a visa because my crewmember/fiancée cannot prove that she will go back to her country, Venezuela. Rule 214B says that a visa application will be denied when the applicant cannot prove that he/she has good reasons to go back to their country (for example, proof of strong family connections such as a spouse or children). My crewmember/fiancée has family — two sisters and a mother — but that is apparently not enough for the US government.

In the US embassy they told us to make another appointment — which means paying another US\$200 and getting a lot of frustration — for what, another "no"?

Can any *Compass* readers tell me if there is an office where I can go with my problem about getting a visitor's visa for my crewmember/fiancée so we can cruise US territories such as Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands?

**Regards,**  
**Eddy Huybs**  
**S/V Helena**

**Dear Compass,**

It is with regret that I feel the need to inform your readers of our recent incident in Roseau, Dominica.

We arrived early in the afternoon of June 13, 2008 on a Samsal bareboat catamaran and proceeded to pick up a mooring ball in front of Sea Cat's boat (he does tours, yacht services, etcetera). It is just north of the Anchorage Inn. Of course this decision was assisted by the prompt arrival of a local boat boy, whom I'll call "X", to make the mooring available, collect a fee, etcetera. Having never been to Dominica, we decided to avail ourselves of a bit of local knowledge and comply.

After clearing Customs, we explored a bit of the south end of the island, had dinner and returned to the boat around 10:30PM. We were both quite exhausted and went to bed early.

Not being familiar with this boat and her "night sounds" we were aware of some noises but not alarmed enough to investigate them as we thought it was the mooring ball on the hulls.

I left my purse in the cabin and about 20 minutes after turning in, decided to switch cabins to enjoy the mist of an evening drizzle in another bunk (under an open hatch). The night passed quietly and was seemingly uneventful.

The next day at breakfast ashore, we went to pay the bill and discovered that all the cash had been removed from the wallet on the boat while we were sleeping. Yes, I know, it should have been divided and hidden better but — hindsight. The good news is they left the passports and credit cards.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

There is no question as to when the money was stolen, only "who done it!" We have our theories.

We checked around with other locals and Sea Cat himself has a good name and reputation. He was quite upset about the incident.

The incident was also reported to the Dominican Coast Guard and the Board of Tourism as well. Most everyone on the island whom we met was very sad to hear of our misfortune and assured us that Dominica is usually a safe and trouble-free place. These folks take a lot of pride in their beautiful island.

One other word of caution: the Dominican Coast Guard, while very respectful, likes to check your boat coming and going. It is understandable that they are combating drug smuggling and want to maintain a strong presence. Do be advised however, that they don't make a practice of putting out fenders when they come to check your vessel, so be prepared.

**Happy cruising,  
Tanya and Marion**

**Dear Compass Readers,**

As I sit here on *El Vagabond* a few days away from my 126th birthday (18 years to you humans), rolling to the left and then to the right, I must confess to occasional nostalgic feelings for the warm, cosy, unmoving apartment where I used to live.

Having crossed the Bay of Biscay twice and the Atlantic Ocean last year I guess I'm a pretty experienced sailor with over 12,000 sea miles and looking forward to many more.



*It's a Sea Cat's Life for  
Mishima aboard  
El Vagabond*

Would I change things? No chance — I rule the roost in this confined space my parents call a boat. I've got loads of cosy hideaways, food available 24 hours a day and am constantly spoilt with Mum and Dad on permanent call.

I'm not sure what is meant by a "dog's life" but I sure am enjoying this Sea Cat's Life.

Mind you, I'm cruising the Caribbean for now but I am a bit concerned as I keep hearing mentions of "Chile next year". I just hope it's warm there....

**Mishima Mortimer  
El Vagabond**

**Dear Compass,**

Yes, the Caribbean Safety and Security Net has received yet another report of an armed boarding in Chateaubelair, St. Vincent. And seven reports from Venezuela, including armed boardings off the Paria Peninsula and in Isla Margarita, at both Porlamar and Pampatar: all this since the beginning of June, when security issues traditionally slow down.

Crime against yachts has received lots of press over the past six months or so: the January issue of the US-based magazine *Cruising World*, the March issue of the UK-based magazine *Yachting Monthly*, and the June 6th issue of the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper, which article was picked up and reprinted by the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Detroit News*, the *Seattle Times*, the South Florida *Sun-Sentinel*, and numerous websites and blogs.

Maybe it's good news that the problem is receiving some attention, but the bad news is that the rate of incidents has been vastly exaggerated. The *LA Times* says: "attacks on yachts...with increasing frequency" and "dozens of incidents involving beatings and stabblings". And what is most embarrassing to me is that they are quoting the Security Net's website as the source of that misinformation!

While I acknowledge that the Security Net does not receive reports of all crimes against yachts, I believe that what we do receive is a fair indication of what and where the problems are. Yes, Chateaubelair has been a problem spot since the recent rash of armed robberies began in November 2007. But the data indicates

that in the time period since then, the increase in reports has come almost exclusively from Venezuela, an area not even mentioned in either the *LA Times* story nor the *Yachting Monthly* article. And "the increase in the use of weapons", a direct quote from me in the *LA Times* article, is evenly spread among the island chain covered by the article and Venezuela.

*Yachting Monthly* reported initially on one of the Chateaubelair incidents but went on to include so-called "expert" commentary, rumors and recollections of isolated incidents from a number of sources, some of which were looking back some 40 years, but with the implication that all of these incidents were very recent. Hardly factual reporting! Their response to criticism is that they must advise and protect their readers, but instead they are promulgating the rumors.

None of this is to detract from the trauma of those on board the yachts involved. All of the people were in fear for their lives and with good reason, with someone flailing a machete or a pistol in their faces. But let's not fall back on blaming poverty as the excuse — these men were not robbing in order to feed their families. As one fellow quoted in the *LA Times* article said, "It's guys who don't want to work" but still want cell phones, CD and DVD players, and yes, probably drugs. If in fact, poverty were to blame for the crimes against yachts, the incidence of crime would be much higher. Most of the people in the island chain and in Venezuela are good, honest, hard-working folks who do not consider crime as a means to an end. In fact, they are as horrified as we are when their community is damaged by one of these incidents and are insulted

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## WHAT'S ON MY MIND

# Swimming, When it Stops

by Bruce Parnham

One of the worst sounds you will ever hear is the sound of swimming, when it stops.

Jan Berkey joined me in St. Martin for a leisurely sail down the islands. She was a cruising newbie and wanted to see it all and do it all, all on the first day. Having spent much of her life raising kids and plants, especially flowers, she was quite familiar with them. She was thrilled to be able to see bougainvillea, orchids, flamboyant and so many other tropical flowers on their own turf.

We visited St. Barths, St. Kitts and Nevis before moving on to Montserrat, where we anchored right next to the 246-foot yacht *Leander*, with Prince Charles and Camilla on board, and watched while they enjoyed the beach.

Slowly we moved along the island chain before going east to Antigua, where we enjoyed the festivities of the Classic Yacht Regatta. Lots of fun, parties, friends — and, of course, the racing. Those classics are wonderful and Jan took a real interest in what was going on.

Jan had always dreamed of being a reporter or travel writer, so at every opportunity, she would interview people to learn their take on life, while taking endless pictures of the exotic places she was seeing.

We did Guadeloupe and the Saints, and went on to Dominica, where Jan found the rainforests breathtaking, the waterfalls refreshing and the people very friendly.

Jan seemed very happy to be meeting the other cruisers along the way and would ask endless questions. She wanted to know it all, and right now, Everyone was happy to answer her questions and to help guide her along on her adventure into discovery.

When we arrived at Martinique, I had another crewmember joining us. Pat

*She was a cruising newbie and wanted to see it all and do it all*

arrived on Wednesday May 21st and we moved the boat to the main city, Fort de France. By Friday the 23rd, Jan was dead.

We had spent much of Friday in Fort de France, checking out the stores, finding Internet, getting some provisions and just looking around. Jan discovered when she checked her bank that her income tax refund had arrived and she was quite pleased. We all went back to the boat for lunch and Jan asked if I would take her back to shore for the afternoon. Pat and I met her on the dock later and we all went back to the boat.

We had dinner together and then settled in to watch a movie. Jan had seen it before, however, so she went out on the bow to watch the moon come up. After the movie was over I went to the bow and talked with her for a few minutes. She mentioned that she wanted to go swimming. I replied that she had been drinking, it was dark, and swimming would not be a good idea. She simply replied that she was a good swimmer, which she had proven several times.

When I went back to the cockpit, a splash was heard. Jan soon swam to the stern and was laughing and splashing around. She did a few laps around the boat, and then began swimming out and back in several different directions. When she came back to the boat I suggested that she had had enough fun and should come back onboard. She merely stated that she would come back when she was ready. It was during her next swim away from the boat that the sound of swimming stopped.

I grabbed a large spotlight and looked in the direction of the last sounds. I couldn't spot her and I jumped into the dinghy to go looking. After an hour of making many ever-increasing circles I returned to the boat and called the French Coast Guard, who took the information, asked several questions and said to stand by.

When they had not called back a couple of hours later, Pat and I reluctantly went to get some sleep. We were up at sunrise to check the area again and when nothing was found, I called the Coast Guard again. They took the same information, gave me directions to the police station and told me to go there to make a report.

The French police were thorough and efficient. They interviewed Pat and me numerous times, together and separately. Divers searched the area around the boat and nothing was found. Eventually Jan's body was seen floating by a French Army helicopter, and was recovered by an Army boat on Saturday afternoon.

This began a week of lots of questions. Our passports and the ship's papers were seized. I contacted the person whose name Jan had written in her passport to notify in case of emergency, and he informed her family. The US Embassy became involved and everyone was very professional in their efforts.

An autopsy was performed which determined that the cause of death was accidental drowning. Our passports and the ship's papers were returned.

Take a lesson here. When having someone on board, get contact information, even for someone you know, and strongly discourage any swimming after drinking.

*Bruce Parnham has been cruising for 12 years, has circumnavigated and is now cruising the Caribbean aboard S/V RPhurst.*

WHAT'S ON MY MIND

# Black Pirates and How We Should Portray Them

by Norman Faria

When most people hear of pirates, they think of their activities in the 17th and 18th Centuries right here in the Caribbean area. From our schoolbooks, many of us might remember names such as Henry Morgan and Blackbeard. We've read books such as *Treasure Island* in which pirates came ashore to bury their treasure. Older folks recall Hollywood actors such as Errol Flynn starring as swashbuckling heroes in 1940s and 1950s movies.

A little known fact is that in the later half of the "Golden Age of Piracy" (from 1650 to 1725), nearly a third of the estimated 5,000 pirates (sometimes known as buccaneers) then operating in the circum-Caribbean were of African descent. Some histories depict them as the "shock troops" that led initial charges onto the decks of treasure-laden vessels. Others served as cooks, ordinary sailors and even onboard musicians. Most were escaped slaves.

Unlike the relatively straightforward task undertaken in recent times of highlighting the role of black US cowboys in doing largely (a small number were common outlaws) honest work, the chronicling of the role of black pirates needs a more careful approach.

Let us be frank. Despite Hollywood's glamorization of them and *Treasure Island* author Robert Louis Stevenson's storytelling license, pirates were in general ruthless murderers, rapists and other low types. They would chop off a captive's hand with a cutlass to get the ring on his finger. They kept slaves.

There have been attempts to revise history by painting pirates as humane with their own brand of democracy. For example, an article by William J. Broad, "Archaeologists Revise Portrait of Buccaneers as Monsters" (*The New York Times*, July 6th, 2008), points to excavations of the wreck of a 100-foot pirate ship found in 1984 off the coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. It had sunk in a ferocious storm in 1717.

The name of the wrecked three-masted ship was the *Whydah* (pronounced WID-da). As was true for the pirate population overall, about a third of the approximately 150-man crew were people of colour, mainly of African descent. One of the two men who escaped the wrath of the storm that sank the ship was John Julian, an Amerindian from what is today Belize.

The eventual owners of the wreck and recovered artifacts wanted to set up a "Whydah Pirate Complex", first in Boston and then in Tampa, Florida. They met with stiff opposition from, among others, Byron Rushing who is African-American and a Massachusetts State Representative. This opposition, which resulted in no theme park being set up in those cities, argued that to insensitively portray black men as pirates and slaves in a commercial "side show" would erode the ongoing campaigns to portray African-Americans in a positive light. The *Whydah* was, in fact, built as a slave ship in London in 1715. It was captured by pirate Sam Bellamy on its way back to Africa after discharging a cargo of slaves at Cuba. "Haven't the wealthy and powerful profited enough from the bestiality of slavery?" one Tampa protester asked, as recorded in the interesting book *The Black Ship: the quest to recover an English pirate ship and its lost treasure* (by Barry Clifford and Paul Perry, Headline Press, 1999) and for which I am grateful for some of my information on pirates.

The *Whydah* wreck discoverers and their business partners objected to these protests. Their case appeared convincing. They took the traditional liberal-democratic position that it was a historical fact that African pirates existed and this needed to be told. Indeed, the organizers contended, the fact that black pirates lived alongside whites in apparent equality in a relatively democratic setting should be highlighted.

A selection of the artifacts recovered from the *Whydah* is now on public display at the Expedition Whydah Sea Lab & Learning Center on Cape Cod (<http://whydah.com>). "Real Pirates: The Untold Story of the Whydah", a traveling exhibition of *Whydah* artifacts sponsored by *National Geographic* magazine, opened at the Franklin Institute Science Museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on May 31st and will run throughout this summer. Last year the show appeared at the Cincinnati (Ohio) Museum Center. To make sure that slavery's role was properly explained, the organizers of the exhibition, *National Geographic* and Arts and Exhibitions International, and the Cincinnati Museum Center, formed an advisory panel of academics and scholars to review the content of the show. Stuart Ferguson wrote in the September 12th, 2007, edition of the *Wall Street Journal*: "Happily, the panel seems to have provided more than just political insulation, and emphasizing the ties between Africa and America, both profitable and cruel, has lifted 'Real Pirates' from easy popularity and made it revelatory..." The exhibit features profiles of some of *Whydah*'s crew, including black pirate Hendrick Quintor, a former sailor turned pirate when the Spanish ship he crewed on was captured. According to the *National Geographic* website ([www.nationalgeographic.com/whydah/main.html](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/whydah/main.html)), Quintor had the reputation of being one of the toughest in the crew.

In a way, sections of the African-American community had valid criticisms about the original Whydah Pirate Complex project as it was put forward at the time. The wreck and its history should nevertheless be permitted to fit into an authentic museum setting, properly researched and displayed, with the right emphases and context. The campaigns against stereotyping of black people in the mass media, including newspaper cartoons and movies, has been an important work area for the civil rights movement in the US. Educational campaigns to discredit and remove from public circulation repugnant cartoons and advertisements showing black people with, for example, oversized and grotesque physical features, eating watermelons and dancing, was totally just and correct. Tellingly, a native peoples' group in the US, the American Indian Movement (AIM), also condemned the *Whydah* theme park. The AIM had previously spoken out against stereotypical portrayal of "Indians" in movies and mass media. The Carib/Garifuna communities in Dominica and St. Vincent have also expressed disappointment about portrayal of indigenous peoples in the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies.

They were correct in arguing that such derogatory and insulting references need to be exposed. Future ones need to be prevented from appearing. This needs to be done so as not to influence impressionable minds. There should be no freedom of speech for those peddling misrepresentations that can stir up racial and other tensions and divide people of different races, colours and religions. This of course does not apply to law enforcement agencies and the mass media when they identify the race or colour of criminals or wanted persons in modern day societies. They have to.

Out of the debate and discussion about the *Whydah* should not have come division but a better understanding of and sensitivity towards the display of maritime artifacts, especially those linked to slavery.

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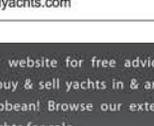
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# What's In a Boat Name?

by Julia Bartlett



The first time I saw the Catalina 30 I recently bought, with her yellow hull and all her yellow awnings up, I was reminded of my mother in her yellow "shirt-waister" half a century ago.

A shirt-waister was a dress with a bodice like a shirt and a full, gathered skirt that was drawn in at the waist with a wide belt. Under the dress one wore a multitude of net petticoats stiffened with a sugar solution. They were popular in the days of Bill Haley and the Comets and rock 'n' roll and jiving, the days when my mother hit the local Palais de Dance and when all her positive energy shone out — long before she became a bitter and angry old lady.

I never saw my mother sad or even disgruntled wearing that dress; it was her happy dress.

That's when I thought of calling my boat the *Netta Davies*, after her. I wrote and told one of my brothers of my idea but I didn't get any feedback. I didn't know what to do, as my mother really disliked me at that moment: she wouldn't see or even talk to me.

Then my mother became ill. My brothers and an old family friend were wonderful in the way took on caring for a very difficult old lady and here I was doing what I love best, pottering around on my "new" boat in paradise.

Many of us are going to be placed in the position of trying to decide whether or not we should go "home" because of our family's needs. In my case, I decided to trust my brothers' judgment. I wouldn't be much help if

my mother wouldn't even see me, let alone let me help look after her. They knew that I was ready to jump on a plane at a moment's notice if they said the word.

I was feeling pretty useless, although I was phoning every day and absorbing as much of their frustrations as I could. I wasn't worried about feeling bad when my mother died because I had done everything that I could think of to make my peace with her.

My mother is vain. I have inherited that vice and so I thought I would have another go at the naming-the-boat-after-her idea. I sent my other brother a photo of the boat and asked him to show it to Mum and tell her that I was going to name it after her because it reminded me of her in that shirt-waister dress.

When I phoned next, my brother told me that Mum knew exactly which dress I was talking about and it had bought a secret little smile to her face. He said that she didn't want the boat called the *Netta Davies* because her name had been a source of unhappiness for her as a child. Instead she suggested that I called it the *Marietta*. Her second name is Mary and so is mine. That way it would combine both of our names, she said.

What it means to me that my mother thought of a name that would combine our names is beyond words.

Later in the day he had shown her the photo of the boat again and it had bought the same smile to her face. And whenever I use my boat's new name it will bring a smile to my face, too, and an image of my mother's swirling yellow skirt.



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#### Seismic Activity in Montserrat

Scientists have reported a significant increase in seismic activity on Montserrat. After a series of earthquakes, the island's Soufriere Hills volcano vented gas and steam in late July and a series of blasts released ash from inside a hardened lava dome. One of the ash columns rose to about 2.5 kilometres (8,000 feet) above sea level. Wind blowing from the east pushed most of the ash from the 3,000-foot (900-meter) high volcano over open water. Small pyroclastic flows were also reported.



EILEEN SANFIERE

*The Montserrat Volcano Observatory is a safe distance from the crater and provides an excellent view*

A report from the Montserrat Volcano Observatory ([www.mvo.ms](http://www.mvo.ms)) says, "The amount and types of activity seen during the week (of July 18th to 25th) are probably not caused only by instability of the lava dome. It is very likely that there is an increase in pressure beneath the volcano and possibly a fresh injection of magma, which may lead to a resumption of dome growth. Even if lava extrusion does not restart, the dome is still a very large mass of very hot material which is capable of collapsing or exploding at any time."

For more information visit [www.mvo.ms](http://www.mvo.ms).

#### Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of Compass we welcome new advertisers Boatshed International yacht brokers of the BVI, page 50; Trintrac Honda sales and service of Trinidad, page 50; and Fortress Woodworking, Marc One Marine of Trinidad and Pro Marine of Trinidad, in the Caribbean Compass Market Place, pages 51 through 53. Good to have you with us!



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August

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Features: Wind speed, Max wind speed, Temperature, Wind chill, Backlight, Stainless steel back, Replaceable battery, Water resistant, Includes lanyard. DE00200



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