

C A R I B B E A N

On-line

COMPASS

DECEMBER 2008 NO. 159

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



SUSAN PAVETTA

TRADITIONAL LAUNCHING IN CARRIACOU

See story on page 20



See what Fatty says

about Intruder Alarms, LEDs and Good Vibrations



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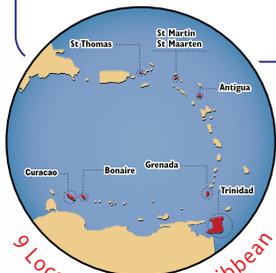


Compatible with Garmin G2 Vision SD cards for detailed marine cartography.

The Budget Marine 2009 product Catalog has been launched!

Improved organization, more technical information and tables, and special features, such as the Unit Conversion tool, info boxes, our Special Bud tips make it easier to find what product is right for you.

And see what Fatty has to say about pretty much everything!

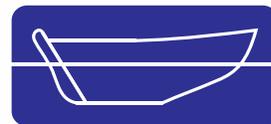


9 Locations in the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN CHANDLERIES

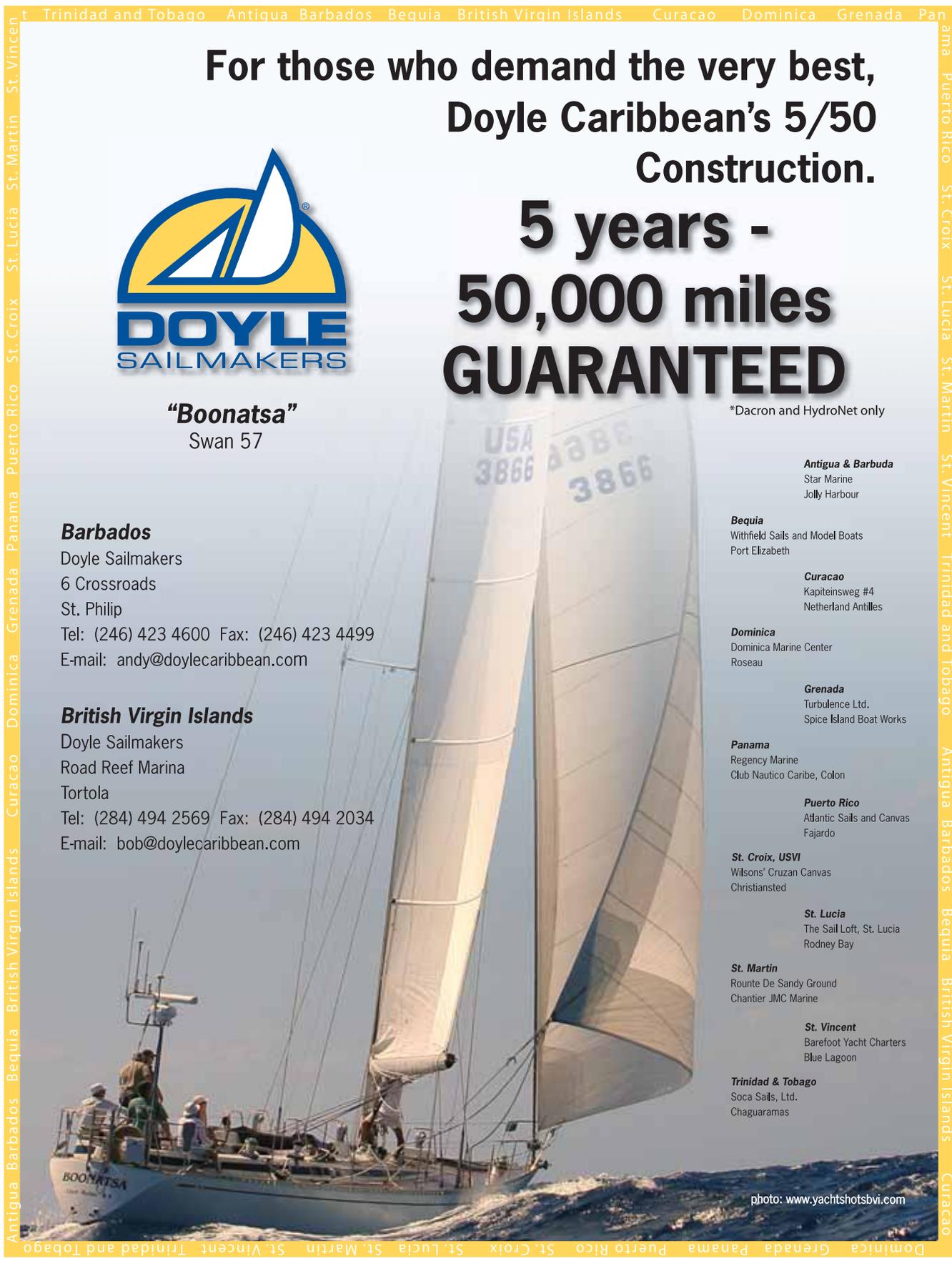
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St. Martin
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photo: www.yachtshotsbvi.com

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

www.caribbeancompass.com

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Editor.....**Sally Erdle**
sally@caribbeancompass.com
Assistant Editor.....**Elaine Ollivierre**
jsprat@vincysurf.com
Advertising & Distribution.....**Tom Hopman**
tom@caribbeancompass.com
Art, Design & Production.....**Wilfred Dederer**
wide@caribbeancompass.com
Accounting.....**Debra Davis**
debra@caribbeancompass.com

Compass Agents by Island:

Antigua: Ad Sales & Distribution - Lucy Tulloch
Tel: (268) 720-8868
lucy@thelucy.com

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

Caracas: Distribution - Cees de Jong
Tel: (5999) 767-9042, Fax: (5999) 767-9003,
sbarba@attglobal.net

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

Grenada/Carriacou/Petite Martinique:
Ad Sales & Distribution - Alan Hooper
Tel: (473) 409-9451, sari6@spireisle.com

Martinique: Ad Sales & Distribution - Isabelle Prado
Tel: (0596) 936 68 69 71, Mob: + 596 (0) 696 93 26 33
isabelle.prado@wanadoo.fr

St. Lucia: Distribution - Lisa Kessell
Tel: (758) 484-0555,
kessell@candw.lc

St. Maarten/St. Barths/Guadeloupe:
Distribution - Eric Bendahan
Tel: (599) 553 3850, cirexpress@gmail.com

Ad Sales & Distribution
Stéphane Legendre
Mob: + 590 (0) 9 49 45 90
steplegendre@wanadoo.fr

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

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

Tortola/BVI: Distribution - Gladys Jones
Tel: (284) 494-2830, Fax: (284) 494-1584

Trinidad: Ad Sales & Distribution - Jack Dausend
Tel: (868) 634-2622 Mob: (868) 620-0978
jackd@boatersenterprise.com

Venezuela: Ad Sales & Distribution - Patty Tomaski
Tel: (58-281) 265-3844 Tel/Fax: (58-281) 265-2448,
xanadumarine@cantv.net

Caribbean Compass welcomes submissions of short articles, news items, photos and drawings. See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.



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CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2008

- 1 Independence Day. Public holiday in Barbados
- 3 Saba Day. Public holiday in Saba
- 4 - 9 47th Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting. www.antiguayachtshow.com
- 5 - 6 Gustav Wilmerding 18th Annual Memorial Challenge. BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), Tortola, BVI, tel (284) 495-1002, fax (284) 495-4184, mvh@suffbvi.com, www.weyc.net
- 5 - 7 JHR Caribbean Regatta, Jolly Harbour, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com/regattas.html
- 5 - 7 Carlos Aguilar Memorial Match Race, St. Thomas. St. Thomas Yacht Club (STYC), tel (340) 775-6320, manager@styc.net www.styc.net
- 6 St. John Christmas Music Festival, USVI. stevesimonlive@yahoo.com
- 6 - 9 St. Maarten Charter Yacht Exhibition. www.mybacaribbeanshow.com
- 7 Start of J/24 and Big Boats Series, St. Lucia. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), tel (758) 452-8350, secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
- 9 - 12 The Superyacht Cup Antigua. www.thesuperyachtcup.com
- 12 FULL MOON
- 13 National Day, Public holiday in St. Lucia. Boat races.
- 13 - 14 Quantum Sails IC24 International Regatta, BVI
- 14 St. Lucia Yacht Club ARC Fun Day, SLYC
- 19 Separation Day, Public holiday in Anguilla
- 19 - 21 Carriacou Parang Festival. collinswallace@hotmail.com
- 20 Commodore's Cup Race, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, rbviyc.com, www.rbviyc.net
- 21 Winter Solstice
- 21 - 28 Hightide Series, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
- 21 - 29 Chanukah (sunset to sunset)
- 25 Christmas Day. Public holiday in many places
- 26 Boxing Day. Public holiday in many places
- 31 Nelson's Pursuit Race, Antigua. AYC
- 31 St. Barts New Year's Eve Regatta

JANUARY 2009

- 1 New Year's Day. Public holiday or "recovery day" in many places. Also St. Kitts Carnival
- 2 Victory of Armed Forces Day. Public holiday in Cuba
- 2 - 3 St. Croix Christmas Festival Parades. www.stxfestival.com
- 6 Three Kings Day. Public holiday in many places
- 8 - 22 St. Barts Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org
- 10 FULL MOON
- 12 Eugenio María de Hostos Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
- 12 - 18 Barbados Jazz Festival. www.barbadosjazzfestival.com
- 14 - 18 Carriacou Sailing Series. www.ttsailing.org
- 16 - 18 7th Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta, Cabarete, Dominican Republic. www.carbwind.com/ltc
- 19 Martin Luther King Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
- 20 - 21 Spanish Water Lagoon Regatta, Curaçao. www.cyc2009.org
- 20 - 23 40th Annual Spice Island Billfish Tournament, Grenada. www.sibtgrenada.com
- 21 Errol Barrow Day. Public holiday in Barbados
- 21 - 4 Feb. 14th Annual Mustique Blues Festival. www.basilbar.com
- 22 - 24 Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival, Montego Bay. www.airjamaicajazzandblues.com
- 22 - 25 St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta. www.ClassicRegatta.com
- 22 - 25 Bequia Music Fest. See *ad on page 6*
- 24 - 25 Round Antigua Race. AYC
- 30 - 3 Feb. Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival. www.grenadasailingfestival.com

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of *Compass* went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation.

If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

ATTENTION EVENT ORGANIZERS!

The *Compass* annual calendar of events for 2009 is now being compiled. Send information for your FREE listing to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

Cover photo: Susan Payetta, Traditional Boat Launching in Carriacou

Info & Updates

Tap into the Coconut Net!

Rose Hansmeyer and Tom McMaster on *S/V Sojourn* report: The Coconut Telegraph Cruisers Net is on SSB 4060 USB at 0800 local (Atlantic) time (1200 UTC). This net tends to include cruisers communicating within the Eastern Caribbean from the Dominican Republic to Venezuela. The purpose of this net is to keep cruisers connected and share marine security/general information.

Mustique Mooring Fees Rise



CHRIS DOVILE

New mooring fees are in effect as of December 1st in Mustique's sole yacht harbor, Britannia Bay

At the island of Mustique, in the Grenadines, yachts are only allowed to stay in Britannia Bay. All the waters surrounding the island have been declared a marine protected area.

With effect from December 1st, the Mustique Company has increased the mooring fee to EC\$200 (approximately US\$75) for boats up to 70 feet; EC\$300 (approximately US\$112) for boats 71 to 85 feet; EC\$400 (approximately US\$150) for boats 86 to 100 feet; and EC\$500 (approximately US\$187) for boats over 100 feet. Note: This charge is for one night with two free consecutive nights.

The use of moorings is mandatory. Visiting vessels will be met by the harbour master, who will collect fees and issue receipts. If no moorings are available or your yacht is over 50 feet long, contact Mustique Moorings on VHF 16/68 and anchor under the direction of the harbour master. Yachts at anchor pay a conservation fee equal to the mooring fee.

For more information contact mustique@mustique.vc or tel. (784) 457-1531.

Help Find the Sea Lions and Seals

The Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Network reports: Seven pinnipeds, including four South American sea lions and three endangered South American fur seals, escaped from a marine park in St. Kitts during Hurricane Omar in October. The US National Marine Fisheries Service is working with authorities in the region to organize their recovery. As of this writing in late November, one sea lion has been retrieved from Antigua and two others have been reported near St. Thomas, but the location of the remaining animals is not known.

If you see or hear of a sighting or interaction with anything resembling a seal or sea lion please call Blair Mase at 786-382-9585 or e-mail blair.mase@noaa.gov.

Dominican Republic Cruising Guide

Now there's yet another reason to join the international Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA). SSCA member Frank Virgintino has written a new guide for cruising the Dominican Republic. The entire 147-page guidebook is available free to SSCA members as a download from the SSCA website (under Additional Publications). Frank's excellent guide is available in English, Spanish and French. For information on how to join the SSCA visit www.scca.org.

Sea Program Student Rescued from St. Lucia Mountain Fall

Seamaster reports: Seamaster is a Florida-based semester at sea program for college students that has been running educational programs aboard sailing vessels in the Lesser Antilles since 1998.

At 6:00AM on October 23rd, a team of 11 Seamaster students, three Seamaster staff members and two local guides departed to climb the Petit Piton, the smaller of two mountains overlooking Soufrière Bay on the southwest coast of St. Lucia.

After a successful climb to the top, one of the students, Mac, slipped and fell down the slope, landing on a ledge within voice range but out of sight of his companions. He communicated that he was okay but could not climb up, and there was no way to hike down to his position.

A base of operations was established at the headquarters of the nearby Soufrière Marine Management Area (SMMA) and the General Manager, Kai Wulf, assumed the role of Chief Rescue Coordinator.

—Continued on next page

Come visit the Wind for Grenada Sailing Festival

Sail into the Spice of the Caribbean

GRENADA

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www.grenadagrenadines.com

—Continued from previous page

An island helicopter flew to the scene and located Mac on the side of the mountain, sitting on a tree on a ledge. The pilot, Alex Groutchy, suggested that an air rescue was the only way to extract Mac. A French Coast Guard rescue helicopter, stationed on the nearby island of Martinique, was deemed to be the closest and best option. Mac was located and two Mountain Rescue Specialists were dropped from the helicopter to his location. The helicopter returned to Castries to refuel while the



SOCIÉTÉ MARINE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Seamaster student Mac was interviewed for St. Lucia television after his unexpected adventure

three moved to a better location for pick-up. Mac and the Rescue Crew were extracted from the mountain at approximately 9:40PM.

Seamaster would like to express sincere gratitude to Kai Wulf and the entire staff at the SMMA, the crew of the French Coast Guard helicopter, Alex Groutchy and Saint Lucia Helicopters, Dawn French of the Saint Lucia National Emergency Organization Agency; Amanda Hicks and the staff at the US embassy in Barbados; Capt. Daniel Wurzbacher and the Seamaster operational staff; the Soufrière hiking guides; the St. Lucia Police and Fire & Rescue Department; and John Cornelius with Antigua & Barbuda Search and Rescue.

Hurricane Paloma, Last of the 2008 Season

Hurricane Paloma, the last of the 2008 season, passed through the Cayman Islands on November 8th as a Category Four storm with winds approaching 140 mph (122 knots) and heavy rain. According to a report in the *Caymanian Compass* newspaper, a yacht carrying a crew of seven men washed ashore and beached on the north side of Little Cayman during the hurricane. The crew reportedly included five Cuban-Americans and two Mexicans.

"I understand they were on a yacht and were heading to another Caribbean island when they got caught in the storm," the report quoted Chief Immigration Officer Franz Manderson as saying. "The police in Little Cayman are interviewing the men who washed ashore to determine exactly what happened and to find out what their true intentions were."

The storm continued onward to make landfall as a Category Three hurricane on Cuba's southeast coast the next day, after which it weakened to a Tropical Storm. No fatalities were reported.

Hotspots

AUGUST, CUMBERLAND BAY, ST. VINCENT

We have recently received a report from the skipper that on August 30th, the French cruising yacht *Akela* was boarded at Cumberland Bay, St. Vincent, by three men armed with machetes and a speargun. The four people aboard were robbed of cash, a watch and a camera. The robbers left in a pirogue with a large engine.

—Continued on next page



The yacht *Akela*, which was boarded in August in Cumberland Bay, St. Vincent, then had an uneventful cruise here to Venezuela

The Bequia Tourism Association presents:

6TH BEQUIA MOUNT GAY RUM MUSIC FEST
 January 22 - January 25, 2009

SINGLE TICKET EC\$60
 (Fri or Sat, EC\$70 at the door)

2-NIGHT TICKET EC\$99
 (Friday & Saturday,
 De Reef, Lower Bay)

SUNDAY TICKET EC\$20
 (De Reef, EC\$25 door)

Tickets available at:
 Bequia Tourism Office
 Phone: (784) 458 3286
 Quik-Print, St. Vincent
 Phone: (784) 456 2217

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 KELCOM INTERNATIONAL

MOUNT GAY RUM BARBADOS

CRS
 music association

the frangipani

Duna
 Natural Spring Water
 Taste the good life

Thurs 22nd January - Frangipani Hotel from 8.30pm

From St. Vincent - **STEEL PAN CELEBRATION** - world-famous 13-piece **ELITE** Steel Pan Orchestra

Fri 23rd January - De Reef, Lower Bay at 8.30pm

Blues Night with artistes from the **MUSTIQUE BLUES FESTIVAL**

DANA GILLESPIE AND THE LONDON BLUES BAND:

Alain Baudry, Enrico Morena, Mike Paice, Jeff Walker, Jake Zeitz

Featuring: Joe Louis Walker, Ian Siegal, Ronnie Jones, Julien Brunetaud,

The Two Timers with Sarah James and Gordon Russell

Sat 24th January - De Reef, Lower Bay at 8.30pm

From Bequia: **KINGS OF STRINGS**

COUNTRY RELATIVES - Country & Western

KYRON BAPTISTE

AMANDA GOODING - Singer & Songwriter

COLIN PETERS & FRIENDS - Reggae, Calypso & more

From Barbados: **TOBY ARMSTRONG & BLUES EXPLOSION**

Plus "All-Star" Band - Blues & Jazz pianist **DAVID MAXWELL** & guest artistes

Sun 25th January - De Reef, Lower Bay from noon

Blues & Jazz Jam Session - "All Star" Band & guest performers!

Plus Bequia's own - **HONKY TONICS & FRIENDS**

From Barbados - Mount Gay Rum - **BIG SURPRISE PARTY** and Finale Performance

For more info on events see our last-minute flyer!

Phone: (784) 458 3280 musicfest@begos.com

www.bequiaturism.com/bequiamicfest

—Continued from previous page

Akela's skipper says, "The next morning, Mr. Bruno from the restaurant ashore called the coast guard for us, who came immediately and took our statements. We have since heard that the police arrested two suspects. We are glad that nobody was hurt and would like to remind the cruising community that in such circumstances to avoid violent confrontation at any cost. Stay calm and avoid drama."

A November 17th report on local television stated that law-enforcement patrols on the leeward coast of St. Vincent would be increased.

NOVEMBER, ISLA BORRACHA, VENEZUELA

On Saturday 8 November, the US-flagged yachts *S/V Chill* and *S/V I'Lean* were anchored for the night at Isla Borracha, an offshore island near Puerto La Cruz. Cruisers Ken and Cathy Peters and Steve and Gloria Davis had gathered aboard *I'Lean* to discuss their plans for the following day.

At about sunset, they saw three men in a pirogue approach *Chill* and shouted over that there was no one on board. The men then came to *I'Lean* and asked for water, which they were given. Guns came out on the pirogue, and 55-year-old Ken was shot twice, and apparently killed instantly. Steve was shot once and wounded in the thigh. Gloria retrieved a gun from below which Steve fired at the pirogue and the three attackers sped off. Gloria then called a MAYDAY on the VHF and, since they were only a few miles from the marinas in Puerto La Cruz, the incident received immediate attention.

The Coast Guard arrived about an hour later, put a soldier on *I'Lean* to assist Cathy and Gloria to take the boat to Bahia Redonda marina. Steve was able to move *Chill* to the marina on his own. Steve was taken to hospital upon arrival and Ken's body was removed from *I'Lean*, which tied alongside at the Coast Guard dock. All have been questioned by the police and reports submitted. The American Embassy had a representative on site within a couple of hours.

Thanks to Melody Pompa and others for information in this report.

For information on reported crimes against yachts in the Caribbean visit www.safetyandsecuritynet.com.

Cruisers' Site-ings

The Renaissance Marina in Aruba has redesigned its website, making it a source of information not only for guests of the marina but also for visiting yachts in general. In addition to information about the marina, there is also information on the clearing procedures for Aruba, which are a bit different than most other places. There are charts and aerial pictures, provided by the Aruba Port Authorities, to assist visitors in visualizing the entry to the harbor of their choice. Customs and Immigration forms can be printed out and filled in before arrival, making the clearing procedure faster. For users with a slow internet connection, the website has the option of being downloaded in low bandwidth. Check it out at www.renaissancemarina.com.

The website for Grenada's unique underwater sculpture gallery has been updated with new images documenting some of the amazing marine life that has colonized the works over the past year. Take a look at www.underwatersculpture.com/pages/gallery/underwater-gallery/index.htm.

Available in five languages, NauticExpo — www.NauticExpo.com — is one of the most visited nautical exhibitions online. Every month, a million marine amateurs and professionals source from over 2,400 manufacturers and 15,000 products. Essentially a "virtual boat show", NauticExpo exposes brands and products to new markets worldwide in a comprehensive and simple-to-use site.

Ringin in the New Year in Bequia

The fireworks crew reports: If you are wondering where to drop your anchor on New Year's Eve, Admiralty Bay in Bequia is an excellent place to be. The popular anchorage teems with yachts over the holiday period, building up to the climax on "Old Year's Night" when the whole island is in full party mode. The climax comes on



WILFRED DEBERNER

the stroke of midnight with a spectacular 15-minute firework display that bursts over the harbour. Don't miss it!

Your Extras Can Assist Carriacou Students

The CCEF reports: Help the Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF) exceed EC\$100,000 in nine years of fundraising. The CCEF provides deserving students on this Grenadine Isle with school uniforms, supplies, lunches, and scholarships to TA Maryshow Community College. Leave your unneeded boat gear, household goods, clean gently-used clothing for children and adults, school supplies and cash with Trevor Stanislaus at the Carriacou Yacht Club at Tyrrel Bay. Major fundraising activities — including an auction of all that donated "boat stuff" — will take place from July 28th through 31st, 2009, directly preceding the annual Carriacou Regatta Festival.

For more information contact boatmille@aol.com.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Caribbean Marine Electrical of Trinidad; LED Lights, Caribbean-wide; Old Fort Estates of Bequia; Psychic Readings by Diana of Antigua; and www.catamaran.at, Caribbean-wide; all in the *Caribbean Compass Market Place* on pages 52 to 54. Good to have you with us!

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The Caribbean you're looking for

Young Island • Bequia • Mustique • Canouan • Tobago Cays
• Mayreau • Union Island • Palm Island • Petit St Vincent

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Budget Marine Launches 2009 Catalogue

The official launch party for Budget Marine's 2009 catalogue took place back in October, at the Budget Marine premises on St. Maarten. A highlight of the



Budget Marine's 2009 catalogue launching party included staff modeling nautical fashions

evening was the Nautique Collection fashion show where spunky Budget Marine staff showed off the clothing line that was added to the St. Maarten flagship store in 2007.

The new year's 528-page catalogue promises to be better than ever, with enhancements to the design, layout and content. Look out for improved technical information, greater organization and better images than in previous years. Also new for 2009 are special features such as the Unit Conversion tool, Fatty Tips, Info Boxes and Bud Tips that advise on the company's wide range of top marine brands.

The Budget Marine catalogue is available free of charge in each of their nine locations in Antigua, Bonaire, Curaçao (Parera and Caracasbaaiweg), Grenada, St. Maarten, St. Martin, USVI and Trinidad, along with a CD-Rom catalogue. A PDF version of the catalogue can also be downloaded from www.budgetmarine.com.

For more information see ad on page 2.

Grenada's First Gift Shop Turns 50!

Tikal, the oldest tourist shop in Grenada, is celebrating 50 years in business, having opened way back in 1959 when Grenada's tourism industry was really in its infancy. Located right across the street from Art Fabrik on Young Street in historic St. George's, Tikal stocks a large and varied selection of local and worldwide arts and crafts, including basketry, dolls, jewelry, accessories, clothing, books, music and souvenirs, as well as paintings and sculptures from Grenada and Latin America.

Pop in and say "Happy Birthday" while in Grenada for the holiday season! You'll be sure to pick up a gift or two, some unique stocking stuffers, and something special for yourself. (Note for boaters: Their wooden wares are great for cruising — if they fall overboard, they float!)

For more information see ad on page 46.

Intellian and FLIR Pick Electropics as Caribbean Dealer

Citing the need for quality installation and technical support, Intellian Technologies has chosen Electropics



Now you see it. Thermal imaging technology is available from Electropics in Trinidad

Marine Services Ltd. as their dealer for TV and communications antennas in Trinidad and the nearby islands. "Electropics has maintained and grown their reputation in a competitive business. Although we simplify our stabilized antenna control systems, we still need the help from people like Rainer and Andreas, who will look after the details for us," said John Minetola, Intellian's Sales Director for the Americas.

Intellian's antenna systems are compatible with a wide range of satellite television service providers and utilize Intellian's proprietary Wide Range Search (WRS) algorithm, which enables rapid identification and acquisition of satellite signals. A patented filtering method allows smaller satellite dishes to track as well as larger products from other manufacturers, which is of particular value in the Caribbean.

"I look forward to showing these new systems to our customers as they arrive this season," said Rainer. "Like anything new, electronic designs get better all the time, and this time the prices are getting better, too!"

Electropics has also recently been appointed the authorized Caribbean Dealer for FLIR Thermal Imagers — a new way for boat owners to dramatically improve safety and security. Featuring FLIR's powerful thermal imaging technology, operators can see heat signatures of people and objects, making them ideal for navigation, search and rescue, and security. Using the same high-tech imagery as the US military, navigators can see debris, channel markers, and vessels over 500 meters away, and in complete darkness as well as through smoke and light fog.

For more information visit www.intelliantech.com or www.flir.com/maritime, and see Electropics ad on page 33.

Erol Flynn Marina Shows Its Stuff

Jamaica's Erol Flynn Marina and Boatyard will be represented at the 47th Annual Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting at English Harbour, December 4th through 9th, and at the Port de Plaisance, Simpson Bay, St. Maarten, December 6th through 9th for the Mediterranean Yacht Broker's Association Caribbean Charter Show. At both shows the thriving new marina at Port Antonio, Jamaica, will be promoting its high level of services available to all yachts ranging in size from 37 to 600 feet and up to 32-foot draft, in a secure, high-tech, service-orientated environment.

For more information see ad on page 14.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Grenada-Based Turbulence Spreads Green Power

Long familiar with solar and wind generating systems for yachts, Turbulence Ltd. of Grenada recently



'Dirt dwellers' can harness wind power, too — ask Turbulence in Grenada how

installed its first residential hybrid alternative energy system on Bequia. The system consists of one 1-kilowatt wind turbine and six solar panels, which feed into batteries. It allows you to switch back to your local power company instantly, any time the elements let you down. The basic hybrid packages with a 3000W Outback inverter start at US\$15,000 for an average

house. If you landlubbers are fed up with monthly power bills, and want to go green and utilize wind and solar energy like the yachting community does — your chance is now here!

For more information see ad in the Market Place pages 52 to 54

Petit St. Vincent Resort Finalist in Top Travel Awards

The readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* have named Petit St. Vincent Resort, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, a finalist in the magazine's 21st Annual Readers' Choice Awards. The awards are derived from the *Condé Nast Traveler* Choice Survey, the largest independent poll of consumers' preferences. Over 32,000 readers voted this year. Petit St. Vincent Resort, a privately owned island, lies 40 miles south of St. Vincent in the Grenadines.

"My staff and I would like to thank the readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* for their support and *Condé Nast Traveler* for their efforts in creating this Readers' Choice Award survey," said Managing Director and owner Lynn Richardson. "We are thrilled to receive this prestigious award. Having only 22 cottages on our own private 113-acre island allows us to pay special attention to all of our guests. We will continue to work towards our goal of ensuring that every one of our guests has a spectacular holiday at Petit St. Vincent Resort"

"These awards celebrate the destinations, lodgings, and modes of transportation that manage to exceed our expectations," said *Condé Nast Traveler* Editor in Chief Klara Glowczewska. "The Readers' Choice Awards are a credit to the worldly expertise of our readers — passionate travelers for whom no island is too remote, no city too challenging, and no hotel too untested."

The resort sponsors the Compass's monthly marine educational column, "Dolly's Deep Secrets", page 38.

Bequia's L'Auberge des Grenadines has New Location

L'Auberge des Grenadines, the popular French restaurant with Bequia's first-ever live lobster pool, has re-located to the fishing village of Hamilton on the north shore of Admiralty Bay. The stylish, aqua blue and white-painted new premises are on the site of the former Schooner's restaurant. The bar and restaurant are situated on the airy upper deck with a spectacular 180-degree view over Admiralty Bay and down towards West Cay. Courtyard dining is also available

at sea level.

Hosts Jacques and Eileen have put together a creative and delicious new French/Caribbean menu that includes an unbeatable range of lobster dishes, all



Bequia's long-established French restaurant, L'Auberge des Grenadines, has relocated to the north shore of Admiralty Bay

prepared fresh from their on-site live lobster pool.

If you are approaching from the water, look out for the bright yellow-and-green roof sign "L'Auberge Restaurant". Open seven days a week for lunch and dinner, from 9:00AM to 9:30PM. Jacques, Eileen and their friendly staff look forward to welcoming you.

For more information see ad on page 44.

Hot off the Press: Spanish for Cruisers Second Edition

It's time to replace your dog-eared copies of the first edition of *Spanish for Cruisers!* The much-expanded second edition of this popular language guide is now available and covers all the language and vocabulary necessary to cruise the Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean, Central and South America and Europe.

The new edition still contains all the "Boat Maintenance and Repair" vocabulary that made the first edition so popular, but now also includes ten additional topics requested by cruisers, including: Customs and Immigration, Food Shopping, Restaurants, Medical Care, Fishing, Diving, Banking, Phone, Internet, Shipping and Laundry.

—Continued on next page



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Also new is indexing in both English and Spanish, and a Table of Contents in Spanish so that your Spanish-speaking friends can use the book to communicate with you as well. With even more illustrations of boat parts and systems, and easy-to-use pronunciation for every word, *Spanish for Cruisers* will be your essential companion throughout your stay in Spanish-speaking countries. Don't forget there's also *French for Cruisers*, too!

Both books are available at local chandleries or through www.forcruisers.com. For more information contact kathy@forcruisers.com.

Ponton du Bakoua, Martinique, Demolished by Omar

A popular yachting facility in Anse Mitan, Martinique, was swept away in October by swells generated by Hurricane Omar. Offering dockage, water,



Surf's up, Ponton's down. October's Hurricane Omar sent swells that swept away this venerable Martinique marina

electricity, fuel, Customs clearance and communication services, this 20-berth marina also had a lively open-air bar and restaurant offering French and Creole specialties, tropical salads and barbecue.

Owner Philippe says he intends to rebuild the marina as soon as circumstances permit. Meanwhile, you can enjoy equally delicious cuisine prepared by the Ponton crew at his new Kaf-kons' restaurant, located

at the golf course in nearby Trois Ilets. For reservations phone (696) 34 15 66.

GRPro-Clean Opens Second Caribbean Location

GRPro-Clean Antilles is proud to announce the opening of its second location in the Caribbean, in Guadeloupe.



Let your boat shine. Now GRPro-Clean's services are also available in Guadeloupe

Since 2004, GRpro-Clean has been serving the Caribbean market, providing high-quality services for cleaning and refurbishing GRP (fiberglass) boats. Based in Martinique, GRPro-Clean Antilles has developed a professional reputation using a dedicated non-abrasive process.

Starting this month, Olivier Preteselle will provide the same valuable services to yachties in every Guadeloupean marina. You are welcome to contact him and get a free estimate to deep clean and protect your boat!

For more information contact guadeloupe@grpro-clean-antilles.com.

Antigua Achieves Top Certification through OnDeck

Ahead of the imminent opening of their new training centre in Falmouth Harbour, OnDeck welcomed back their newly qualified RYA Yachtmaster Instructor,

Logan Knight, who will be their new Chief Instructor in Antigua.

Following a gruelling month at the company's UK base, Logan, who has been an RYA Yachtmaster for Sail and Power Boats for five years, passed one of the highest qualifications achievable in the yachting industry: RYA Yachtmaster Instructor. This certificate



Logan Knight is Antigua's newest Royal Yachting Association-certified Yachtmaster Instructor

makes Logan one of the most qualified yachtsmen in the Caribbean.

The opening of the OnDeck Training School in Antigua will enable locals and visitors alike to gain sailing qualifications in a professional and friendly environment. With OnDeck in a position to certify both professional and leisure sailors, opportunities will be opened for many to pursue careers in the marine industry.

—Continued on next page

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Logan will run the training school for yachts and powerboats from OnDeck's base in Falmouth Harbour. Principal of OnDeck's worldwide training operations, Ian Jinks said, "We have a very positive approach to employing and developing local staff within our sailing operations. Logan will be a key asset to our school, and we are delighted to have him onboard."
For more information visit www.ondeck.co.uk.

Blue Flag Award for Cape Eleuthera Marina

According to *The Bahamas Weekly*, the new US\$85 million Cape Eleuthera Resort & Yacht Club in The Bahamas was awarded the prestigious Blue Flag certification for its marina by the non-profit Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) based in Denmark. The marina achieved this certification for exceeding standards relevant to sustainable development and environment responsibility, and for appreciating the value of the marine ecosystem and how it affects the future social and economic development of the islands.

"We are honored to achieve this internationally recognized certification, especially as Cape Eleuthera is the third to receive the Blue Flag out of 64 total marinas in The Bahamas," Cape Eleuthera's General Manager, Stephen Kappeler, said. "The Bahamas now hosts more accredited marinas than any other country in the Caribbean."

Earlston McPhee, Director of Sustainable Tourism Planning with the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism said, "We are collaborating with a number of agencies to ensure that all marinas operating in The Bahamas operate to standards which protect the marine ecosystems that are so important to the economic sustainability of these islands. I congratulate the management of Cape Eleuthera Resort for achieving this prestigious certification which is in the best interest of the resort, its customers and the islands of The Bahamas."

New Chandlery Opens Marigot Bay, St. Lucia

Michael Marine Supplies opened its doors in August in Marigot Bay, St. Lucia. This was a landmark accomplishment for brothers Joel and Michael Ambrose and an important addition to the amenities available to visiting yachts. Yachts in the marina can now source parts and marine merchandise for their vessels right there in the bay.

"We embraced the opportunity to capitalize on the need to provide yachters with marine merchandise, a

service that had not been previously available in Marigot Bay. Our mission is to be the leading supplier of marine parts and supplies in St. Lucia. In keeping with our motto, "We'll get you underway", our vision is to increase market share by expanding our reach



In Marigot Bay, St. Lucia, brothers Michael and Joel Ambrose have opened a new chandlery

across the Caribbean," said Joel.

The chandlery is currently stocked with small marine supplies. The focus, however, is on spare-part ordering and delivery within 72 to 96 hours, a service that is supported through partnerships with Amerijet and American Airlines.

"The opening of Michael Marine Supplies in Marigot Bay continues to demonstrate the commitment of The Marina at Marigot Bay to provide the amenities necessary to support the yachting industry in St. Lucia," added marina manager Bob Hathaway.

For more information visit www.michaelmarinesupply.com.

Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, on Schedule for ARC

The multi-million dollar reconstruction of the Rodney Bay Marina in St. Lucia is nearing completion and on schedule for opening this month, in time for arrival of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC). Upon completion, Rodney Bay Marina will feature 248 fully reconstructed slips and a refurbished upland component with retail

and restaurant facilities.

The redevelopment also introduces a new mega-yacht pier offering 32 berths for yachts up to 250 feet in length. The mega-yacht dock will feature wide docks,



on-site Customs and Immigration, multi-phase power, WiFi, crew facilities, concierge and guest relations.
For more information visit www.igy-rodneybay.com.

New England Air Charter Co. Expands Service to Caribbean

Nantucket Island's premier private air charter service, Ocean Wings, has expanded its charter flight service throughout the Caribbean just as the holiday vacation travel season begins. Ocean Wings' private group and corporate charters now serve Tortola, St. Maarten, Guadeloupe, Antigua, Virgin Gorda, Anguilla, Nevis, The Bahamas, Turks & Caicos, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Ocean Wings offers flexible flight routes throughout the islands of the Caribbean, which makes it the first choice for many business and vacation travelers.

As company owner Herb Cabral explains: "Ocean Wings' Caribbean air charter service expansion allows us to bring flexible private charter service to business and vacation travelers throughout the region. Our passengers bypass lines and delays and are able to arrive at Caribbean resorts, yacht departure ports or marinas relaxed and ready to work or play."

Ocean Wings' fleet includes: Piper Seneca four-passenger aircraft, Cessna 402 eight-passenger aircraft, Cessna 414A seven-passenger aircraft, and Beechcraft King Air 100 nine-passenger aircraft. Ocean Wings has a proud, twenty-year excellent record of safety.

For more information visit www.flyoceanwings.com.

A large aerial photograph of a marina filled with numerous yachts of various sizes. The water is a deep blue, and the sky is clear. The marina is surrounded by greenery and buildings.

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The 7th annual Budget Marine Women's Caribbean One-Design Keelboat Championships took place November 1st and 2nd, with many teams enthusiastically agreeing that this was one of the best-run women's regattas they have attended.

The racing was based out of St. Maarten Yacht Club. Windward/leeward courses with an offset windward mark and a leeward gate were set up in Simpson Bay Lagoon. A total of 14 races were sailed on a rotational basis on a fleet of seven Lagoon Sailboat Rentals Sunfast 20s, each team sailing eight races. Teams rotated boats after each race, which gave those sitting out an opportunity to watch the racing. Aqua Mania provided a "change boat" that offered the waiting teams shade, good views of the racing, and a place for serious strategy talks.

The Race Committee set a starting sequence of three minutes and race duration of 20 minutes, which meant clean-air starts were vital for the short, sharp races in very shifty conditions.

An exiting weekend for the 12 participating teams culminated in victory for host island St. Maarten. Kim Frye and her Scuba Shop team took the gold for a second year in a row, firmly breaking the prior four-year winning streak of teams from overseas. This is the third time a local team has won the title.

Frye and her team had consistent results, finishing first or second in most of the races. They had some close competition from one of the favorites, past winner Karen Portch and her Antigua Yacht Club team.



St. Maarten Team Takes '08 Title in Tight Fight

The Antigua Yacht Club Team, skippered by Karen Portch, on their way to a close second place in the Women's Keelboat Championships



T&T's Women's Youth Team is a force to watch out for. From left to right: Megan Chan Chow, Rushell Rousseau, Ella Bayne, Alexandra Amon and Nephema Callender



Kim Frye's Scuba Shop team from St. Maarten as they nail the 2008 title

points, proving how close the competition was.

Janneke Brouwer's Amstel Bright Babes team from St. Maarten showed that practice pays off as she and her team were awarded Most Improved, even finishing first in one of the races. For Sunday's last two races, one boat was put out of commission due to a collision between the Amstel Bright Babes and Kim Stuart's Voodoo Dolls team from California, resulting in a broken mast. No one was hurt.

The Trinidad & Tobago's Women's Youth Sailing Team, consisting of 18-year-old skipper Megan Chan Chow and crewmembers Alexandra Amon (17 years), Nephema Callender (15 years), Ella Bayne (15 years) and Rushell Rousseau (14 years), was by far the youngest team competing at the 7th Caribbean Women's One-Design Keelboat Championships. The team, sponsored by Budget Marine Trinidad, started off impressively by winning their first race. Although they couldn't quite stay up in the rankings this time, they improved on their last year's performance and it is felt that they will be back next year as serious contenders for a top spot.

Sailing is a great sport to level the playing field between the sexes, as it doesn't rely just on brute strength but also on strategy and tactics. Women's

regattas spotlight the best female crews and captains, who might sometimes take a back seat to their male counterparts in other regattas. This regatta, organized by the St. Maarten Yacht Club (www.smyc.com), is a laudable effort towards the expansion of women's sailing in the Caribbean. Budget Marine is proud to support one of the few women's championships in the region, and Chris Marshall, manager of Budget Marine St. Maarten, mentioned in his closing speech that the Yacht Club can expect Budget Marine to be a part of this event in the future.

who grabbed four firsts. However, coming in third in the last two races, the AYC ladies lost the top position overall by just two points.

Emma Paull, from the BVI, was happy to have placed in the top three, although in the past she, too, had returned home with the first prize. Her team also sailed very steadily, finishing in the top three in every race.

Even though they managed to stay in the top three in most races, Penny McIntyre and her team from Barbados missed taking third place overall by only two



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Triskell Cup 2008 Class Winners

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- 1) *Mac Village*, Muscadet, Eric Michel, Guadeloupe
- 2) *Ecole de Navigation Luc Coquelin, J/24*, Luc Coquelin, Guadeloupe
- 3) *Mangareva*, First 27, Pascal Poisson, Guadeloupe

Beach Cats

- 1) *Dell - Snicker Quicksilver*, Hobie Tiger, Marchais/Maurin, Guadeloupe
- 2) (no name), Hobie Tiger, Birgit Krahe/Christian Roux, Guadeloupe
- 3) (no name), Hobie Cat, Lois Silvy/ Anthony Pioche, Guadeloupe

Multihulls

- 1) *Super U*, CDK 28, Vincent De Maynard, Guadeloupe
- 2) *LOL*, Jean Luc Boisseux, Guadeloupe
- 3) *Cocokafe*, Alexandre Bonvoisin, Guadeloupe

Spinnaker 1

- 1) *Sailing Style Caraïbes*, A40, Arnaud De Meillac, Martinique
- 2) *Lost Horizon 2*, J/122, James Dobbs, Antigua
- 3) *Caccia Alla Volpe*, One Off, Carlo Falcone, Antigua

Spinnaker 2

- 1) *WIND 971*, First Class 8, Belleut Mael, Guadeloupe
- 2) *Digitlife*, Surprise, Vianney Saintenoy, Martinique
- 3) *Idem Interim*, J/80, Eric Mary, Guadeloupe

Marina Bas du Fort at Gosier, Guadeloupe, and the waters around Gosier Islet, just off the capital city of Pointe-à-Pitre, offered participants and spectators an intense sailing competition and a very festive weekend, November 8th through 10th, at the 8th edition of the Triskell Cup Regatta.

The well-practiced Triskell organization, its 40 volunteers and their main partners — Région Guadeloupe, Marina Bas du Fort and internet operator Mediaserv — did things well in order to reach the level of excellence everyone was expecting.

More than 600 crewmembers and friends gathered on the water to race by day and ashore to party at night. On the Saturday, a huge barbecue at the marina fed everybody with grilled goat, paella, couscous and other local specialties. On the Sunday a finger-food cocktail party sponsored by Cap Créole, a local seafood manufacturer, offered hungry sailors a chance to taste its products.

Sixty boats in five classes — Coastal, Beach Cats, Multihulls, Spinnaker 1 and Spinnaker 2 — competed under ideal conditions of between ten to 13 knots of wind under blue skies during three days of very competitive sailing. Martinique and Antigua together represented more than a quarter of the fleet with a combined total exceeding 15 boats. The Coastal Class increased from six to 19 boats since last year.

There was a lot of pressure in Spinnaker 1 Class, where 22 boats had great fights on the water, especially during the starts, which were spectacular for the fans ashore. Well-trained crews aboard beautifully prepared boats including A40s, J/122s, J/120s, JODs, Melges and Swans gave everyone sailing lessons on starts, tactics and maneuvering.

Spinnaker 2 was also an interesting class, where great skills were displayed by the youngsters who manned the First Class 8 and the Surprise. (Unfortunately, many younger members of the Surprise crew from Martinique could not make it due to their school schedule.) We can undoubtedly say that our future champions were there.

In conclusion, there is no doubt in the mind of anyone who was there that both on water and on land, this was an excellent nautical event, full of fun, fair play, and superb racing, to launch the 2008-2009 Caribbean sailing calendar.

See you all in 2009 for the 9th Triskell Cup from October 31st to November 2nd. For more information and full results visit www.triskellcup.com.

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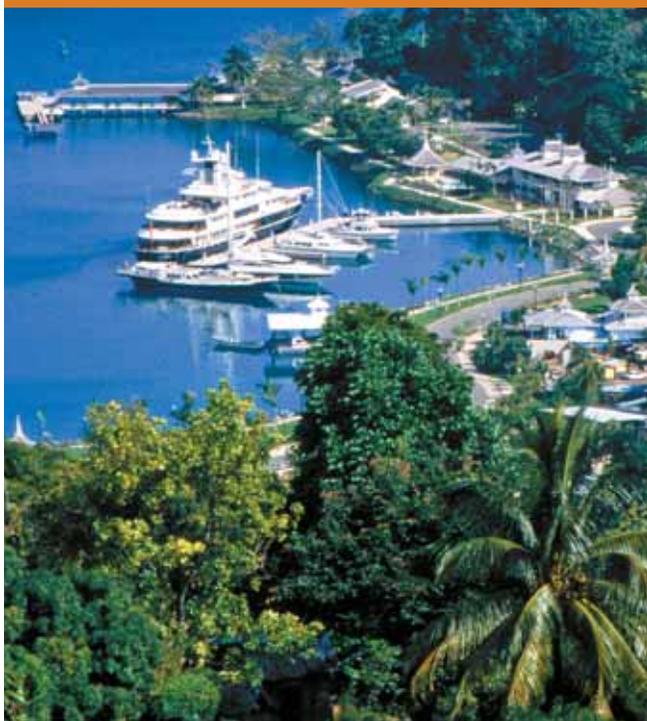
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Regatta Organizers Say 'CSA Rule Rules!'

The Caribbean Sailing Association's fifth annual Caribbean Regatta Organizers' Conference took place at Divi Little Bay Resort, St. Maarten, on October 25th and 26th. Twenty-six people representing 11 Caribbean sailing regattas willingly shared their hard-won knowledge and experience in order to improve their individual events and Caribbean racing as a whole. Two days of intense discussion gave participants new and innovative ideas to help them organize regattas held in a range of venues extending from Puerto Rico to Bonaire.

Among those present were Stuart Knaggs of Captain Oliver's Regatta, Herve Dorvil of the Course de l'Alliance, Bob and Linda Phillips and Judy Petz of the BVI Spring Regatta, Julie and Joe San Martin of the St. Croix International Regatta, Angel Ayala of the Culebra Heineken International Regatta, Neil Forrester of Stanford Antigua Sailing Week, Byron Tromp of the Bonaire Regatta, Laurie Gumbs and Donal Curtis of the Anguilla Sailing Festival, Niki Borde and Peter Baillie of the Tobago Carnival Regatta, Steve Sleight of Cowes on Line, Jean Michel Marziou and Michel Corbel of the Triskell Cup Regatta and Elizabeth Brooks of OnDeck Racing. A five-strong contingent from the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta included Robbie Ferron, Heather Tackling, Rien Korteknic, Gerty Vaftenhout and Michele Korteweg.

Organized by CSA president Cary Byerley, and assisted by the CSA secretary's Petra Gilders, the annual conference's aim is to bring together Caribbean regatta organizers in a central location to share information and to facilitate



Regional regatta organizers recently put their heads together, to the benefit of each event and Caribbean yacht racing as a whole

networking with others in their industry. The conference is held at a different venue each year to encourage participation from throughout the island chain. Cooperation between the islands is key to maintaining a level high of competition with the rest of the world's regattas, as well as maintaining the strength of the Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA).

According to Heather Tackling, "It is great to meet with other regatta organizers and compare notes. We are all working on the same things but are able to help each other out with tips, ideas and contacts. Year after year, I continue to walk away with new ideas and concepts and I am able to implement them in our event. It is an invaluable resource for information, no matter what size your event is."

Topics covered in this most recent conference included rescue and disaster management, scoring, registration and marketing.

One of the liveliest discussions dealt with the CSA's handicapping system and why the CSA rule works so well in the Caribbean. Paul Miller, Director of Caribdata, led this session, as he is qualified with a vast amount of experience with CSA as well as a number of other handicapping systems. For the past seven years Paul has been working closely with CSA, helping move to a paperless system and analyzing race results for fairness.

While a number of other handicapping systems have enjoyed short-term popularity in the region, the CSA Rule has been in continuous use for more than 40 years. Here, as explained by Paul, are the reasons why:

Boats perform differently as conditions change and boats that perform well in 20 knots of wind are unlikely to perform well in five knots, or vice-versa. The small geographic area of the Eastern Caribbean is blessed with fairly consistent conditions and a one-number rule works well in our narrow wind range, which is why the CSA Rule is still in use, making it the oldest continuously used sailboat measurement handicapping system. Administrators in the area are able to react quickly to changes in boat design and equipment to ensure as level a playing field as possible for both visiting and local boats.

Paul has had the opportunity to closely analyze the results of a number of regattas using the CSA Rule, and has found that it consistently produces tight results for the top competitors; with few exceptions, corrected times are normally within two percent of each other. When "rule beater" boats do appear, problems are relatively quickly sorted out. The CSA measurers, led by Chief Measurer Jeffery Chen, meet yearly to discuss how the rule may need to be fine-tuned.

The ratings of every CSA-measured boat are easily accessed on-line at <http://csa.cdl.vg>, and although the formulae from which the handicaps are produced are secret, the handicaps and measurements are available to the public.

Linda Phillips says, "We in the Caribbean take a great deal of pride in the CSA rule. It works well here because it was designed for Caribbean conditions and it is constantly being evaluated and tweaked to ensure fairness. Although the rating rule which enjoys the short-term popular status of 'flavor of the month' may seem attractive to some, the CSA handicapping system rules in the Caribbean because it works in the Caribbean."

Thanks to Linda Phillips and Cary Byerley for information in this report. For more information on Caribbean regattas visit www.caribbeanracing.com. For more information on the CSA visit www.caribbean-sailing.com.

REGATTA NEWS

Sea Brat of Nevis Tops Montserrat Tourney

Ishwar Persad reports: The 14th Annual Montserrat Fishing Tournament, held on October 25th at Little Bay, saw 15 fishermen on 14 boats, with seven boats coming from the neighbouring islands of Antigua, Nevis, St.



Wahoo! Capt. Julian Rigby shows off the 40-pound fish that helped his Sea Brat become Montserrat's Champion Boat

Kitts, and St. Maarten. A crowd at Moose's Place witnessed the weigh-in and prizegiving, where Sea Brat from Nevis was crowned Champion Boat and received a cheque for EC\$2,500, sponsored by the Montserrat Tourist Board. Sea Brat also secured three other wins: the largest wahoo, caught by Capt. Julian Rigby and weighing 40 pounds; the largest fish caught by a lady; and the vessel catching the most fish. The prize for the largest tuna went to Thomas Sheill of Lady Desnee from Montserrat. Emarie Estwick on the boat Bruce B from Montserrat won the prize for the largest fish caught by a youth.

The Montserrat Fisheries Co-op and the Montserrat Tourist Board thank all participants as well as the sponsors and volunteers who contributed to the success of this year's event.

For more information visit www.visitmontserrat.com.

Workboats Celebrate Grenada's Thanksgiving Under Sail

The Grenada Sailing Association reports: Grenada's October 25th and 26th Thanksgiving weekend was well spent at Clarke's Court Bay, Woburn, with a great mix of competitive sailing and "tuning-up" as boats and crews prepped for the Grenada Sailing Festival Digicel Work Boat Regatta (January 30 through February 1, 2009). The annual Thanksgiving Regatta, organized by the Island View Sports Bar and Island Breeze Restaurant, was bigger than past years, as a Youth Laser Dinghy Regatta was added to the traditional workboat racing. And for the first time, thanks to sponsorship support from Four Seasons/Cinnamon88, boats from the villages of Gouyave and Grand Mal came to Woburn, adding a second class of indigenous sailing craft to the Woburn event.

Five young sailors from the Grenada Yacht Club

Youth Sailing Programme competed in the Laser fleet. The first day's racing, sponsored by Budget Marine, provided frustrations, as winds were very light. The top honors went to John Gill, with Michael McQueen coming second and Vaughn Bruno third. The second day, sponsored by Spice Island Marine Services, provided better conditions and enabled the fleet to complete more races. Vaughn and Michael again featured in third and second places, but Kevin Banfield, a sailing instructor at the Grenada Yacht Club, overcame technical problems to take first place. After the two days of racing, Michael McQueen took the prize as overall winner of the Laser Dinghy Regatta.

Saturday's light winds also affected the workboat fleet, and the Race Officer shortened some courses in order to complete all four sponsored races.

Day One results were: Woburn Class: first place, *Unity*, with guest skipper Alex Good from the UK on board; joint second place went to *Lionheart* (skipper "Jerry")



Above: *Swift* lived up to her name by winning Grenada's Thanksgiving 'All In' Race
Below: Thanksgiving Laser Dinghy Regatta winner Michael McQueen, at left, receiving a prize from organizer Cletus Pascal



and *Top Ranking* (skipper Michael Charles). Gouyave/Grand Mal Sloops: first place, *Classic*, skippered by Gouyave's Ted Richards; *Passage*, skippered by Camilo Griffith took second; and skipper Martin Alexander brought *Swift* into third place.

Day Two results are as follows: Woburn Class: first,

Unity; second, *Top Ranking*; third, *Lionheart*. Gouyave/Grand Mal Sloops: first, *Swift*; second, *Passage*; third, *Classic*.

The second day's racing ended with a fun 'All In' Race sponsored by Budget Marine, where all boats sailed as one class and the crews swapped boats. *Swift* proved to be the boat to beat, as even with a different crew sailing her, she came first in the 'All In' Race.

Prizes were given for overall winners in each class. In Woburn Class, *Unity*, unbeaten, took first place, with *Top Ranking* second and *Lionheart* third. The Race Committee had some hard calculations to compute in the Gouyave/Grand Mal Class, as three boats finished with the same number of points. The final results were: *Swift* in first place, *Classic* second, and *Passage* third.

There were food and drinks from Island View Sports Bar and Island Breeze Restaurant, and a great DJ from Splendid Sounds. The After Race Party kicked off with a Happy Hour sponsored by Bryden & Minors, plus live music from local band Caress. The organisers thank all sponsors and supporters who helped this popular event grow: Four Seasons/Cinnamon88, Bryden & Minors, Le Phare Bleu, Budget Marine, Spice Island Marine Services, Independence Agencies, Boats & Harbours at Prickly Bay Waterside, Island Dreams Yacht Services, Clarke's Court Bay Marina, Bulk Buy Frozen Foods, D Sugar Daddy Bakery, Grenada Yacht Club, Grenada Sailing Association, True Blue Bay Resort, Glenelg Natural Spring Water, Horizon Yacht Charters, Palm Tree Marine, ValMart, Turbulence Grenada, Carib Sushi, Grenada Canvas, Di Vino Wine Bar, Bananas Sports Bar, Fish & Chick and SubZero.

For information about next year's regatta tel (473) 443-2645 or 407-4722.

Route du Rhum Yacht Found on Eleuthera Two Years After Capsizing

A UK yachtsman has reportedly found the wreckage of his vessel two years after it capsized during a transatlantic race. Ross Hobson was taking part in the solo 2006 Route du Rhum race from France to the Caribbean on his trimaran, *Ideal Stelrad*, when it capsized 1,760 miles from the Guadeloupe finish line. He was rescued and apparently thought the boat had sunk. *Ideal Stelrad* was recently discovered some 2,000 miles from where it capsized, washed up on a beach on Eleuthera in the Bahamas.

The sailor told the British press, "The hull, although superficially in good condition, is unfortunately irreparable. I have asked for a few things to be removed from her before she breaks up completely and is buried by the shifting sands of the Bahamas, which are likely to claim her very soon."

First Heineken Regatta Curaçao 'Beyond All Expectations'

Karin Wooning reports: One-and-a-half years ago, the Curaçao Sailing Festival started with an idea, and from November 7th through 9th, it became a reality. No one expected our first regatta to be so great, with Anna Bay, in the center of historic Willemstad, the centre of lots of activities both on the water and on land.

In 2007, Gijs Boer, along with other enthusiasts, founded the Curaçao Sailing Festival (CSF) foundation. We contacted Heineken, well known for supporting regattas, and the local manager was thrilled with the sponsorship opportunity. We contacted other sailing organizations, sponsors and volunteers. The harbor authority gave full cooperation and we even had the Maritime Museum as our Regatta Home.

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The regatta was officially opened by our Minister of Tourism, Eugene Ruggenaath. Hundreds of people



showed up for the opening party, and enjoyed great music and a very positive atmosphere.

All weekend the boats raced: two classes of racing yachts, racing/cruising yachts, cruising yachts, open-class yachts, beach cats, Optimists, windsurfers, Sunfish team racing, Centaur match racing, Microboat sailing, Seascouts rowing. Demonstrations were given of seadoos and wakeboards, and between all the activities a helicopter even dropped a few divers into the bay. We chose the slogan 'Real Different' for the regatta, and that it was!

On land there were bars, food stands, and music, and the public had a perfect view of all the on-water activities. At night, performers like DJ Tico, winner of the Caribbean Green Synergy DJ competition, the Aruban band Basic One, and the undisputed queen of Soca, Allison Hinds, were on stage giving their best. We can't wait to start organizing next year's Heineken Regatta Curaçao!

For more information and results visit www.heineken-regattacuracao.com.

Local Talent Wins St Lucia J/24 Open

The St. Lucia Yacht Club reports: The SLYC held its J/24 St. Lucia Open on November 8th and 9th, with



J/24s — the legendary match-racing machines — at the invitational in St. Lucia last month

two Barbados teams joining four local teams for the regatta. The event was raced on the island's six J/24 one-design boats, with a series of 12 races over the weekend. Light and shifty winds made for some very

close racing, with exciting gains and losses. Boats were changed after each session of races with no owners sailing their own boats, making it fairer to the visitors and fun for owners to see how their boats performed with different crews on board.

The local team of Michael Green, Gerard Bergasse, Duncan Ince and Chris Pilgrim took charge of the event after the first day with seven firsts and one second, and finished the regatta with nine firsts and four seconds. There was a tight race between the Bajon team "Fade Away" and a local team skippered by Nick Fosberg. In the end, the Barbados team took second with Nick and his crew third.

Mike Green said, "The visiting teams really enjoyed the event and have agreed to run a similar event in Barbados, inviting the St. Lucia crews to participate. Next year our event is planned to get bigger, with invitations going out to all the other Caribbean islands, and the event is to be sponsored by BMW Prestige Motors, who are keenly on-board to ensure it becomes a premier Caribbean sailing event."

For more information and full results visit www.stluciyachtclub.com.

Keen Kids: St. Maarten Opti Open Champs 2008

Ruaragh Findlay reports: Young sailors from nearby islands traveled with their boats to Simpson Bay



Winners of the St. Maarten Optimist Open Championship's Silver Fleet. Left to right, Julian Delguidice (St. Barths), second place; Alec Scarabelli (St. Maarten), first place; Brin Herve (St. Barths), third place

Lagoon, St. Maarten, to compete in this Optimist Championship on November 8th and 9th.

On the Saturday morning, boats that had transported competitors from Anguilla and St. Barths tied up at the Sint Maarten Yacht Club jetty, and the wind promised an excellent day of competition. Many of the children had never participated in an international regatta, thus creating the nine-strong Silver Fleet, many of whom were seven and eight years old. The 15 more experienced children, racing in the Gold Fleet, were more calm and collected; many were old friends, having competed against each other on other islands.

This was the largest inter-island Optimist regatta that the SMYC has ever organized. Entries were limited by the availability of boats, but 24 were available for the regatta, thanks to recent sponsorship adding six new boats to the club's fleet.

In the Gold Fleet, Rhône Findlay put a tremendous amount of training to good use and crossed the finish line first in every race but one, even with a recall in

the first race. Rhône is no stranger to international regattas, having won the Anguilla Inter-Island Optimist Regatta in February, represented St. Maarten and the Netherlands Antilles in St. Thomas at the Caribbean Optimist Championships in June, and raced in the Volvo Musto British Open Championships in Wales in July and the Volvo Swiss Open Championships on Lake Geneva in August this year. However, Rhône says, "I really had to work hard; I was worried about Jolyon, Saskia and Steven, who often beat me, as well



Gold Fleet winner Rhône Findlay sails AHO 59 back up the course, having rounded the leeward buoy well ahead of the competition

as Louis Olo from St Barths, who is very good. So I just watched the water and watched the sail and, more than ever, I watched the wind. I did not stop concentrating once." Louis Olo came in second, and Jolyon Ferron of St. Maarten came third by only one point.

The Silver Fleet sailed shorter courses, but competition was just as intense. The top places were very well contested, with congratulations to Alec Scarabelli on a spectacular first-place performance. Second and third places went to two St. Barths youths: Julian Delguidice and Brin Herve respectively.

Prizegiving at the SMYC was well attended. The MC, Sir Robbie Ferron, thanked the main sponsor SOL NV and all those who contributed so much to make the event such a success. All participants were awarded a prize for their placing. Roll on, Sint Maarten Optimist Open Championships 2009!

For more information and full results visit www.smyc.com.

England-to-Grenada Spice Race Postponed

Originally scheduled for November 15th, 2008, the start of the 4,321-mile race from the Solent, England, to St. George's, Grenada, has been delayed until November 2009. After meeting with the sailors in the UK and France, the Royal Southampton Yacht Club and Spice Race promoter Tony Lawson have agreed to postpone the race, which is to be raced on Class 40 sailboats.

Lawson said, "The decision to delay the race was a mutual one. Both the RSYC and I were committed to providing nothing less than a first class event. Whereas we had enough boats for an inaugural race, we did not think there were sufficient entries to support the associated social, educational and charity programmes we had wanted. It is a disappointment, but our efforts to date have given us a great deal of information and we will build on this for next year." RSYC Commodore Colin Lewis added, "While the club is disappointed, we totally endorse the decision to postpone the race and look forward to continuing our association with this exciting project in the run-up to next year."

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Asked why the expected number of ten to 15 boats had not entered, Lawson commented, "The race was originally a response to a gap in the Class 40 calendar, and the wish for several of us owners to do something with our boats this winter rather than lay them up. Unfortunately, the deteriorating economic situation made it difficult for some of the early supporters to fully commit to the race in terms of time and money. Some of the yachts proposed shipping back to meet other commitments here in Europe, but the cost of freight from the West Indies escalated. Sadly, the general consensus among owners was that we had better stick close to home and keep an eye on next year's summer programme and hope for more settled times."

Asked about the future of the race, Lawson said, "The emphasis will change. The event will still be open to all Class 40 racers and IRC yachts, but there will be a focus on fully crewed National Women's Teams. We hope to have teams from the UK, France, Holland, America, Norway and Germany, all of whom are currently represented in the Class 40 fleet. We believe this will be the first event of its type — an offshore race of classic proportions with women's teams. With a more generous lead time and showcasing women's offshore sailing, we feel that there is a better chance of sponsorship, as well as providing women with the offshore experience they seek. We have already been approached by companies wanting to get involved. Meanwhile, the Government of Grenada has changed and some of its key members are keen sailors. We hope to cement our relationship there. Camper & Nicholson's new marina will be further advanced with nearly all 350 berths completed. We will continue to work with them and our other existing partners."

For more information visit www.spicerace.com.

Flotilla in St. Lucia Heralds Start of ARC 2008

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers 2008 from Las Palmas, Gran Canaria to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia is scheduled to start on November 23rd. To celebrate the occasion on the same day, the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia and the St. Lucia Yacht Club, in co-operation with the St. Lucia Tourist Board and IGY Marinas, has organized an ARC Flotilla in St. Lucia, to start from Castries Harbour at 10:00AM and finish at Rodney Bay Marina, with a reception for all participants immediately following the sail.

The mid-December arrival of 200 or more international yachts in the transatlantic ARC is an annual highlight in St. Lucia. Now in its 23rd year, the ARC will bring 220 yachts to Rodney Bay this month, carrying some 1,100 crewmembers of 25 nationalities. The largest yacht in this year's fleet is the US-registered Oyster 82, *Sundowner*, at 24.99 metres (82 feet). The smallest is *Madonna*, a Norwegian-registered Beneteau First 31, at 9.95 metres (31 feet). The ARC distinguishes itself by successfully combining racing and cruising yachts with a mix of older and younger participants, all of whom thoroughly enjoy the varied entertainment that is on offer for all ages at both the start and finish ports.

We'll have a full report on ARC 2008 in an upcoming issue of *Compass*!

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

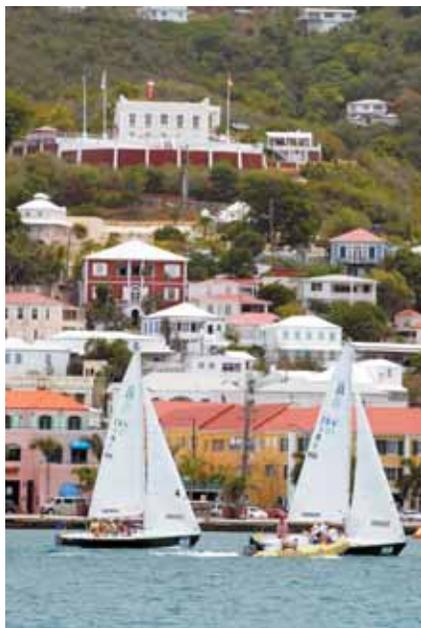
1st Annual Carlos Aguilar Memorial Match Race

Carol Bareuther reports: Six of the world's top female match racers and eight of the best male sailors in the Caribbean will put their sailing skills to the test in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, at the first Annual Carlos Aguilar Memorial Match Race Championship, December 5th through 7th.

Anna Tunnicliffe, 2008 Olympic Gold medal winner in

the Laser Radial Class; Liz Baylis, ranked fourth in the world's women's match racing rankings; and Sandy Hayes, 2008 Rolex Women's Match winner, will be headlining the talent in the Invitational Women's Division.

In the Men's Open Division, skippers will be St. Thomas' Taylor Canfield, St. Croix's Peter Stanton, the British Virgin Islands' Alec Anderson, Puerto Rico's Efrain 'Fraitto' Lugo, St. Maarten's Frits Bus, St. Lucia's



Historic Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, will be the backdrop for this month's inaugural Carlos Aguilar Memorial Yacht Race

Mike Green, Trinidad's Paul Amon, and St. Thomas' Chris Currier helming a team of sailors from El Salvador, Aguilar's native country.

"We're committed to leading match racing in the Caribbean," says regatta organizer and host St. Thomas Yacht Club (STYC) manager, Bill Canfield, of this Caribbean Sailing Association-sanctioned event. "We intend to make this event an annual affair, make it more international and model it after US Sailing's Bermuda Gold Cup."

St. Thomas' own Henry Menin was instrumental in getting the ISAF (International Sailing Federation) to accept match racing. The event's namesake, Carlos Aguilar, who was killed in 2007, was an avid match racer himself and used every opportunity to encourage others, especially young sailors, to follow in the sport. Match racing has come so far since, that in 2012 Women's Match Racing will be included for the first time as an Olympic sailing event. "Hopefully in years to come," says Canfield, "we'll have plenty of representation from the Caribbean in international match racing events around the globe."

The event will be sailed in IC24s. The IC24 (Inter-Club 24) was conceived by two STYC members, and is a converted J/24 equipped with a Melges 24-style deck mold that is wider than the original design and has no traveler. America's Cup sailor, Olympic silver medalist, former number-one ranked match racer, and US Virgin Islands' native son, Peter Holmberg, will run clinics prior to the event.

The event's Notice of Race is available at www.styc.net. For more information about attending, contact Bill Canfield at styc@vipowernet.net or (340) 775-6320.

JHYC to Host JHR Caribbean Annual Regatta

Brian Turton reports: Jolly Harbour Yacht Club of Antigua is proud to host the JHR Caribbean Annual Regatta to be held December 5th through 7th. JHR Caribbean, a premier real estate company in the Caribbean, is particularly keen to continue sponsorship of this popular regatta as the main beneficiary will be the JHYC Youth Development Program, which aims to provide free dinghy sail-training to Antigua youths, with a view to future employment in the marine industry.

JHYC is also grateful to their secondary sponsors: Carib Beer, English Harbour 5 Year Old Rum and LIAT Airlines, for their very generous donations of product for use in the raising of funds for the JHYC YDP.

Two days of racing are scheduled off Jolly Harbour and Five Islands Harbour, with four races on the Saturday and three on the Sunday. The Skippers' Registration and Briefing will be on the Friday evening at the Dogwatch Tavern from 1600 to 1800 hours, followed by Happy Hour and the Skipper-Crew Barbecue at the Foredeck Bar.

There will be a Regatta Party on the Saturday at Castaways from 1930, with food and dancing till midnight to the band Triple Feature + One. The Regatta Party is open to all — tickets in advance are EC\$75.

For more information and online entry form visit www.jhycantigua.com or call (268) 770-6172.

Superyacht Cup Antigua Joins 'Bucket' Rating System

Organisers of The Superyacht Cup regattas in Antigua and Palma have joined forces with the organisers of the St. Barths and Newport Bucket Regattas to adopt the "Bucket Rating" system. The next Superyacht Cup Antigua, December 9th through 12th, will use the Bucket Rating for all classes.

The system was developed by Jim Teeters, Associate Offshore Director at US Sailing, and has been refined over the last six years, creating an accurate and transparent system for rating superyachts of all designs and sizes. Hank Halsted, Bucket Race Committee Chairman, has welcomed the move: "It is a great opportunity to bring the four regattas together on the same standard for pursuit racing, streamlining the application process and bringing parity to the regatta results. With nearly a hundred superyachts in the system, the Bucket Rule has truly hit its stride."

The goal of the Bucket Rating system is to provide starting times for each yacht that result in the entire fleet converging on the finish line at the same time, doing this for a variety of courses in any wind speed. Modified over the years, the system proved itself with the results of the 2008 St. Barths Bucket where the first ten of 26 boats finished within 150 seconds in a two-hour race, many of them overlapping.

For more information on The Superyacht Cup Antigua visit www.thesuperyachtcup.com.

'Welcome ARC' SLYC Fun Day 2008

Danielle of the St. Lucia Yacht Club reports: The SLYC's "Welcome ARC" Fun Day 2008 will be held on December 14th at our clubhouse on Reduit Beach, together with a Pig-in-the-Bun at Spinnakers restaurant next door.

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There will be water- and beach-based games and sailing with the Optimists and Lasers as well! All ARC participants — children and adults — are welcome to come meet SLYC club members and join us for a day of fun. Participants receive a free T-shirt at the registration. For more information visit www.stluciayachtclub.com or call (758) 452-8350.

Regional Indigenous Boats Challenged!

Regatta Promoters Ltd. is challenging regional island teams to take on the local Tobago Bum Boats (traditional work boats) at the Tobago Carnival Regatta Bum Boat race, to be held at Pigeon Point, Tobago from February 10th through 14th, 2009. Local sailing boats — called bum boats, double-enders, heritage boats, open boats or workboats depending on the island — can vie for bragging rights as the best in the Southern Caribbean.

The competition could start, as a feature of the new Caribbean Sailing Circuit, from January 14th through 18th at the Carriacou Sailing Series. Those winners could take on teams from Grenada in the second regatta on the circuit — the Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival, January 30th to February 3rd — with the top team from Grenada winning a trip to the Tobago competition. The grand finale will take place at the Tobago Carnival Regatta, February 10th to 14th.

The Tobago House of Assembly and the Tourism Company of Trinidad & Tobago have a keen interest in seeing sailing develop further among the local population and are supporting Regatta Promoters Ltd. in this effort. As one local proudly pointed out, the final race for Caribbean sailing craft could be one of the biggest draws of the Carnival Regatta: "We go show dem how we does do it down here. Is Carnival time, yuh know? So ah hope dem island boys ready for dat! Is real tempo!" For more information visit www.sailweek.com.

St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic to Include Tall Ships

West Indies Events (WIE) and the St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta Foundation have announced the regatta program for the Invitational St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta 2009, January 22nd through 25th. It is the first classic regatta of the Caribbean season, with the Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta second in February, and Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta the third in April. WIE is also in the process of establishing classic regattas in Curaçao and Cuba.

The January regatta and all related social events will be moved from Simpson Bay to Great Bay, as organizers had received questions from several worried classic yacht owners and captains about the high bridge and lagoon fees that participants would have to pay. By relocating to Great Bay, yachts will not have to enter the lagoon. The participants can come to the Bobby's Marina docks or go on anchor right after the races. Classic and Vintage Yachts, Schooners and Spirit of Tradition yachts will be accommodated for free on the Bobby's Marina docks (subject to availability) and will also receive complimentary docking on the Friday afternoon and overnight at Fort Louis Marina in Marigot. Organizers are very happy with the Greenhouse Bar and Restaurant accommodation where the skippers' briefing and opening party on the 22nd, as well as the final prize giving and closing buffet on the 25th will be held.

The race on the Friday goes from Great Bay to Marigot in Saint Martin. Free drinks will be supplied for all captains and crew upon arrival at the Fort Louis Marina.

The Saturday race goes back to Great Bay. This is also the Tall Ships Race Day. Tall Ships will start after the other yachts and sail to Great Bay, where they will

anchor or dock at the Cruise Ship Pier. A free beach buffet at Great Bay Beach in front of Passangrahan Hotel will be offered to all captains, crew, VIPs and press, and there's a regatta party with live band for the general public at Taloula Mango's from 7:00PM. The VIP lounge above Taloula Mango's will be open for VIPs, captains, crew and press from 9:00PM.

On the Sunday, the Tall Ships will be open to the general public from 9:00 to 11:00AM. The race for all other yachts starts at 10:00AM out of Great Bay, going towards Anguilla and back to Great Bay. For more information visit www.ClassicRegatta.com.

joining the 2009 event as a new Captain's Club Member sponsor. Festival Chairman Jimmy Bristol commented: "We are extremely pleased to welcome Scotiabank. The company has a long history of sponsorship support for sport and community activities in Grenada and will be a strong partner for the Festival and the Digicel Work Boat Regatta."

The event, now in its 16th year, has an impressive list of long-standing sponsors, including True Blue Bay Resort, British Airways, Colombian Emeralds, Mount Gay Rum, Heineken, North South Wines with Moët & Chandon, United Insurance, and TSL Grenada. The organisers also wish to thank Budget Marine, Boval, Island Dreams



Both yachts (above) and workboats (below) will show their prowess at the Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival, starting January 30th



Scotiabank Joins Grenada Sailing Festival Sponsors
Organisers of the Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival, to be staged from January 30th through February 3rd, have announced that the Bank of Nova Scotia will be

Yacht Services, 809 Design and COT Caribbean Graphics for their support for the 2009 Festival.

As always, there will be four days of challenging international yacht racing off the island's southern coast, and the crowd-pulling traditional Digicel Workboat Regatta will make for a fantastic weekend of sailing, music and fun on Grand Anse Beach.

Once the racing is over, skippers and crews will be treated to new events and themed parties, adding to the Mount Gay Red Cap Party. There will be a different mix of locations to enjoy, including the new Camper & Nicholson's Port Louis Marina and Le Phare Bleu Marina, as well as the ever-popular Dodgy Dock at True Blue Bay Resort & Marina.

For more information see ads on pages 20 and 21.

Super-Maxis to do Battle in RORC Caribbean 600

The Royal Ocean Racing Club's inaugural RORC Caribbean 600 looks set to stage the first battle between the two 100-foot super-maxis *Leopard* and *Speedboat*. Chris Sherlock, boat captain of Mike Slade's *Leopard*, announced recently, "It is likely that we will be racing against each other for the first time in the RORC Caribbean 600 which starts in Antigua on February 23rd."

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Interest in the race has been growing since the announcement was made earlier this year by the RORC and Antigua Yacht Club that they would hold the first-ever offshore race to circumnavigate several of the Caribbean islands. George David's maxi, *Rambler*, which won the 2007 Rolex Middle Sea Race, is joining the battle with *Leopard* and *Speedboat*. Peter Harrison's 115-foot super yacht, *Sojana*, is another entry and classic yachts such as the 155-foot schooner *Windrose* and J Class *Velsheda* also intend to join the race scheduled to fit snugly between other major regattas in the busy Caribbean racing calendar.

Eddie Warden Owen, the Chief Executive of RORC, says, "The quality of the boats interested in joining the race is very good. For these big boats, the number of islands to round will make it a very tough race for the crew, as all the sails in the inventory are likely to be used at some time during the race, which will be run under IRC and CSA." The 605-nautical-mile non-stop race comprises 13 legs around the Leeward Islands. It will also be hotly contested amongst the smaller classes, with expressions of interest received from a number of yachts including the Corby 45 *Inclisor of Wight*, Bernie Evan-Wong's Mumm 36 *High Tension*, the Stimson 42, *GVR-P42 Caspian Services* and Markus Seebich's Class 40.

For more information visit www.caribbean600.rorc.org.

Big Event Sponsors Little Sailor

The 2008 St. Maarten Heineken Regatta was not only a success with regards to record-breaking entries and huge crowds on shore, but it was also a success for one local child. On the 2008 online entry form, participants were able to make a donation to the youth sailing program of the Sint Maarten Yacht Club, which enabled the club to sponsor one local child to have sailing lessons for an entire year. Donations were made by participants from countries all over the world, including France, St. Maarten, England, Holland and the USA.

Eight-year-old Zack Sabaroche was the chosen candidate, and according to Zach's mother, "He is so excited about sailing on the Optis that he comes home after each lesson and tells his father what he should be doing." Zach's father works for a local marina running a tender service. "He even talks about it at school, so much that his teacher called home to learn more about the program because so many fellow students were excited about it after hearing Zach talk".

The success of this program is extremely important to the SMYC, whose goal is to increase sailing on the island of St. Maarten.

For the 2009 St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, March 5th through 8th, entrants will again have the opportunity to check the donation box and make a change in the life of a local child.

For more information visit www.heinekenregatta.com.

The First 'Clean Regatta' of the Caribbean

Organizers of the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, one of the Caribbean's longest running regattas, have teamed up with the Sailors for the Sea, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the world's oceans, to help make the 2009 event a Clean Regatta. The 2009 regatta, March 5th through 8th, will see many simple changes aimed at making the sailing event more environmentally friendly. These changes include re-usable bow numbers, educating all participants about the rules that exist in the Natural Reserve on the French side of the island, and encouraging the island's youth to create boat models with recycled materials. Over the years, the regatta organizers have teamed up with Heineken St Maarten, the event title

sponsor, selling bracelets to raise money to protect the natural environment of both the French and Dutch marine parks on the island. During the last three St. Maarten Heineken Regattas almost US\$8,000 was raised for the Nature Foundation of St. Maarten and the Marine Reserve of St Martin.

For the 2009 regatta, the organizers aim to implement a nearly paper-free registration system, which



Above: Happy Zack Sabaroche, ready to hit the water with his sailing instructor

Below: Thanks to St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2008 racers, Zack is part of the yacht club's Optimist program



will significantly reduce the total paper use. They will also follow the rules to obtain a Bronze level "Clean Regatta" certification from Sailors for the Sea. Chris Mancini, Program Manager at Sailors for the Sea said, "Clean Regattas is a great program for regattas and

yacht clubs that need guidance in reaching higher environmental standards. It also serves to help publicize the ongoing efforts of other clubs and events, and lets them lead by example. Our goal is to have every regatta, club and program be a 'clean regatta' whether they are certified by Sailors for the Sea or not."

Some of the Clean Regattas requirements include: No discharge of untreated sewage or blackwater in harbor areas or no-discharge zones (NDZs); no over-board discharge of trash or littering at shore facilities; and including a list of "green" cleaning products in skipper's packet. A volunteer will be assigned as a liaison between the two organizations to ensure all steps are taken and a regatta report is filed.

Clean Regattas is a third-party certification program that helps regattas, yacht clubs and sailing programs voluntarily achieve higher environmental standards. Participants have the option of choosing a Bronze, Silver or Gold level of engagement, and work to fulfill each of the requirements necessary to be certified at that level. Sailors for the Sea provides support and materials and grades the club or event for its Clean Regatta certification.

For more information on Sailors for the Sea visit www.sailorsforthesea.org.

For more information on the regatta visit www.heinekenregatta.com.

Virgin Islands Raceweek — A Natural Combination

A combination of the St. Thomas International Rolex Regatta, the BVI Sailing Festival and the BVI Spring Regatta is back by popular demand. Given that the three events are back to back, March 27th through April 5th, 2009, and happen within 12 miles of each other, VI Raceweek is a natural. The prize for winning the IRC division is a week's holiday on St. Thomas at the Frenchman's Cove Resort, and the CSA division prize is an all-inclusive week's stay at the Bitter End Yacht Club in the BVI.

The 2009 Raceweek kicks off with the 36th St. Thomas International Rolex Regatta, with racing scheduled for Friday, March 27th through Sunday, March 29th, mixing long course sailing with windward/leeward formats. While it is part of the US-IRC Gulf Stream Series, the event also hosts classes for CSA racing as well as one-designs, beach cats and large multihulls.

On the Monday, the fleet moves 12 miles east from Cowpet Bay in St. Thomas to Nanny Cay Marina in the BVI for the BVI Sailing Festival. This event is designed to be very relaxed, creating a laid-back filler between two power-hitter regattas. This low-pressure precursor to the BVI Spring Regatta starts in Nanny Cay with boats racing to Bitter End for the Bitter End Cup. Once there, guests are entertained with cocktail parties and layday activities. The Sailing Festival wraps up on the Thursday with the Nanny Cay Cup, which moves the fleet from Bitter End back to Nanny Cay.

On April 3rd, competition heats up again when BVI Spring Regatta kicks off. Organizers of the BVI Spring Regatta understand that not all sailors want the same type of racing, so choices abound. Drake Channel will be the venue for three race areas. Closest to the beach is the One Design area, hosting the IC24s, Lasers and Beach Cats. To the southeast is the Cooper race area, where traditional keelboat racers will see both round the island racing as well as windward/leeward courses. And to the west, for those who would rather race around islands than buoys and want to carry a kite, there is the Norman race area.

Registration for VI Raceweek is simple, as boats registered in the Rolex Regatta and/or the Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival are automatically entered.

For more information visit <http://caribbeanracing.com/VIWR>.




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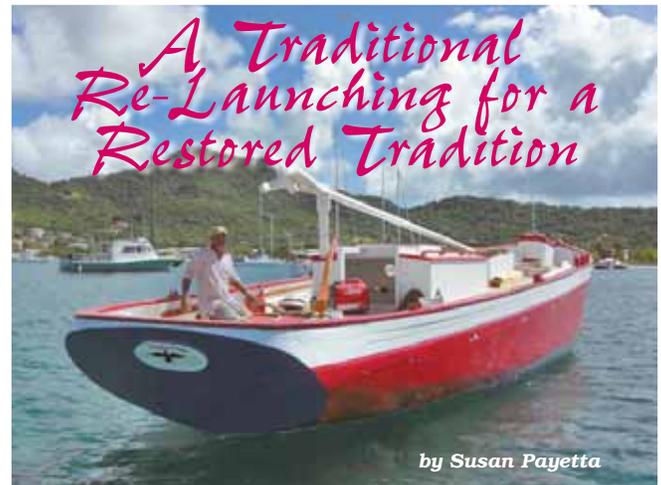
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WHEN

Frank Pearce, Vice Commodore of the Antigua Yacht Club, sailed into Carriacou last June aboard his very sleek and modern 50-foot schooner *Samadhi*, he could not have imagined he would be the proud new owner of an old Carriacou sloop in less than six months time.

Originally built in 1982 as a work boat, *Tradition* carried cargo from the Leeward Islands of St. Barts and St. Maarten down island to Carriacou in the same fashion her big sister *Yankee Girl* plied the route from Trinidad to St. Lucia in the Seventies. Frank spotted *Tradition* lying at Windward, where Norman Roberts was working on her, adding a new wheelhouse and replacing the planking on the hull and deck. Frank thought how lovely it would be if someone were to restore the wooden sloop to her original splendour and, to Frank's surprise, Norman agreed to sell her.

With the help of a team of local shipwrights, Frank started by removing the wheelhouse, a shame given that it was brand new and meticulously made with care, but Norman or one of his colleagues will likely find another vessel in need before long. They replaced the gaping hole with new planking and added a bowsprit to carry a jib and staysail, giving her a pretty new profile and an extra ten feet overall.



by Susan Payetta

Above: Typical of many Carriacou-built vessels, *Tradition* shows straight sides, long overhangs, a wide counter stern and a smart red-and-white paint job

Below: The cutting-down is a solemn and synchronized process



Looking resplendent in her fresh coat of paint, *Tradition* was re-launched on Sunday November 2nd, at Windward, Carriacou, on the same beach she was built on by Norman's father, Urban Roberts.

There are modern and possibly more efficient ways to launch a vessel of this size, but in the interest of keeping the island tradition alive, Frank opted to fund the fête and asked Norman Roberts to organize the proceedings.

While the priest blessed the vessel, ladies sang psalms. Rum, water and the blood of a fowl were spilled to appease whatever gods are meant to be appeased, a mix of Christianity and superstition. The cutting-down ceremony was a beautiful sight, the honour shared by the boatbuilders who worked together on the job. They hacked down the supports with axes in quiet unison, dropping the vessel abruptly onto her port side.

Hauling lines were "knitted" to the hull and anchors set in the bay as preparations began in earnest. Old rum barrels were set aflame for the fête. Huge cast iron cauldrons, each supported by three large stones, were used to cook up the coo-coo and rice, pigeon peas and stew meat, to eventually feed the hungry workers.

Carriacou historian Edward Kent recalls the story of *Island Star*, a locally built schooner that took 13 days to launch. "We sang chanties and pulled, slowly gaining a few inches at a time, no more than a couple of feet each day."

—Continued on next page

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She finally reached the water long after the owner's funds had dried up and all the rum was gone, when there were no animals left to slaughter to feed the crowd."

An eager group of volunteers begin pulling the line running out to an anchor, brought back and wrapped around a coconut tree, or pushing on the bow of *Tradition*. Without the customary aid of a string band to coordinate the team's rhythm, progress is slow.



SUSAN PAVETTA

Above: The blood of a sacrificed fowl sprinkles the foredeck

Below: Assisted by Norman Robert's locally built motor vessel *Resolution*, *Tradition* is welcomed back to the sea

Inset: The deck beams partly in



FRANK PEARCE

SUSAN PAVETTA



To ease the rollers under the keel, a few strong men pull down aggressively on the bowsprit. A distinct "crack" sounds a warning, but it is only *Tradition's* planking voicing her opinion. "E gone break," is the consensus from the group of men gathered around the coconut tree, but the young son of one of the many shipwrights who worked on the restoration contends, "Nah b'y, I use one big piece ah wood inside ah dere, she ent gone break. She flexible, she could bend right dung an' touch de grung."

With only a few inches left between the bow and the shoreline, only the men too old to push or too young to pull are sidelined, but they have strong opinions and weigh in on the subject of why the boat still isn't in the water. "De boat too beeg, dey shoudla make 'e smallah!" a little boy exclaims, while an exhausted Ras Vaughn tells Frank, "Dat dead fowl bad luck b'y. It jumble." Without hesitation Frank reaches up and removes the offering from her open grave on deck.

Following this revelation it isn't long before the bow is liberated from the shore. Assisted by *Resolution*, Norman Robert's locally-built motor vessel, a half dozen brave men who don't mind getting wet give a final push on the stern while Frank scuttles up onto the bow in time to grab the tiller as she floats free. *Tradition* is back in the sea, ready to start a new career that is yet to be determined.

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DESTINATIONS

The Exumas are a group of islands in the Bahamas and my personal favorite. They were settled in 1783 by American Loyalists who wished to retain their allegiance to the British king following the American Revolution.

Allan's Cay is famous for its iguanas, so we took the dinghy ashore to see them. Before we even got to shore, they heard the motor and started down the beach. They came right up to us, to see if we had anything to feed them. Then we went over to the south cay. That beach was empty when we arrived, but before we were out of the boat, one iguana came out of the reeds. Then another, then another.... When we took the dinghy in to the smaller beach on Leaf Cay, we came prepared and fed the iguanas there some leftovers — potatoes, lettuce and spinach.

Continuing south, we came to Norman's Cay. Most of Norman's Cay was bought by the German-Colombian drug lord, Carlos Lehder, in the 1970s. He built an airstrip there to bring in illegal drugs. The government apparently turned a blind eye to his activities until an NBC television documentary in 1983 raised public awareness. We went ashore, crossing to the outer beach and exploring the ruins. The wreckage of a DC-3 drug-running plane that missed the runway now rests in shallow water. There are also the remains of a boat that capsized, overloaded with Haitian refugees. We found the old airstrip, apparently still in use by a small, private plane. We also found the old beach bar, MacDuff's, which sadly is no longer open.

Compass Cay Marina is set in a delightful little cove at, you guessed it, Compass Cay. The marina has "pet" nurse sharks — all their names are on a sign on the dock. Some of the cruisers swam with them. I know nurse sharks don't bother people, but I didn't want to do that!

We walked several of the well-marked trails on Compass Cay. Painted driftwood signs humorously point the way to Low Tide Landing Strip, Land Crab Watering Hole, etcetera. On the eastern side of the island is Crescent Beach, one of the most captivatingly beautiful beaches I've ever seen, and totally deserted. We saw footprints but didn't encounter a single other person.

We made our way to Black Point on Great Guana Cay (not the same one that is in the Abacos). It's a small, very friendly community with a couple of stores, a couple of restaurants, a laundromat, a post office, several people making straw products, and not much else.

Underway from Great Guana Cay to Little Farmer's Cay we put out the fishing line and trolled and caught a mackerel — dinner! We took a mooring on the Great Guana Cay side of Little Farmer's Cay, then dinghied over to the town dock and took a walk. It's another tiny community with a friendly dog, Little Bit, who follows everyone around. We visited the wood carver's shop and met a driftwood artist. The wood used

for carving is tamarind; we had also seen items made from this wood in Nassau, too, at the straw market. It has a dark core and a light ring on the outside, so when carved, it is two-toned — very pretty.

The charts showed an anchorage on the Great Bahama Bank side of the island so we walked over there to have a look. We found a lovely beach and several boats there; it was a calm anchorage in the easterly winds. When the mail boat came in through the cut, half the island came to the dock — to get mail or merchandise, or just to socialize. A small twin-engine charter plane landed and took off at the little airport by the yacht club.

The Extraordinary Exumas

by Jacquie Milman



We stopped at a little store just to see what they had. A heavysset, elderly lady was sitting on a stool and told us we were welcome to look. She only had one shelf with anything on it; she said she had just returned from Nassau (where she had gone for medical reasons) and was trying to get the store started again. She chatted for the longest time, and told me her name was Eugenia Nixon Percentie. "I'm a Nixon but I married a Percentie. The Nixons and the Browns own this island." She was sad for us being so far from Guam, our home, and not going back. I explained that our family is scattered and none are there, so we weren't sad. She said she wasn't sure she could bear to be separated from her family like that.

At the settlement dock, a man was butchering a goat (they call goat "mutton" here, and sheep, "lamb") for the restaurant up the hill. We went to the restaurant, Ocean Cabin, checked the dinner menu and decided to dine. The diners were all seated at one long table (actually three tables pushed together), family style. There was good food and conversation, lots of laughing — a fun evening. Dessert (ice cream) was included in the price of the meal. When asked what flavors, Terry, the owner, said, "Any flavor you want." Whatever you asked for, he had it, but it all came to the table as vanilla.

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—Continued from previous page

They play the ring game there, which we had also seen in Bimini. A ring is attached to a string and you swing it and try to loop it over a hook on the wall, or a tree, or whatever. A little girl showed us how to do it — she was good and got “ringers” four times out of ten. Terry’s ten-year-old daughter challenged one of the guests to the game. He countered with a new twist — standing by the wall with your back to it and throwing the ring out away from the wall, trying to hook the nail as it swings back. He actually did it a few times and she wasn’t able to beat him, so she dismissed him and challenged another. They were more evenly matched — neither of them could do it!

Big Major Spot’s draw is its famous swimming pigs. The undomesticated pigs swim out to your dinghy for carrots (or whatever you bring). We fed them a bag of carrots

Straw hats, friendly faces and time to chat are features of this lightly populated island group



Just 300 miles southeast of Miami, the anchorages of the Exumas are another world



and some apples. They whined and begged and pushed each other to be first: it was funny. Along the shore are several caves where goats live. You can hear them bleating and we spotted a few as it began to get dark.

From Big Major Spot, we took the dinghy over to the settlement on Staniel Cay. It’s quite small, not much there. We stepped inside at The Happy People Bar (the bar stools have happy faces on them) to get something cold to drink. There was a pool table, so we played a game. Leaving the bar, we found The Pink Pearl grocery store and also checked out the grocery “in the blue building at the top of the hill”, as the sign said.

Then, gathering our snorkeling gear, we dinghied over to Thunderball Grotto, where the James Bond movie Thunderball was filmed. (We did our research the previous night by watching the video.) It is BEAUTIFUL and there were SO many fish! They are used to being fed and although we didn’t have anything for them, some people there did, and they would flock so thick you couldn’t see the person feeding them.

We had planned to go to Club Thunderball for dinner — it was barbecue night — but they were closed due to a death in the family, so we made reservations for the Yacht Club. Here you make your selection from the menu by 5:00PM and seating is at 7:30. I like that method: you get your meal without a long wait. We went early and had cocktails at the bar first. Dinner was excellent and we returned to the boat full and happy.

At Warderick Wells is the Exuma Land and Sea Park. It is a very pretty spot and the snorkeling is excellent. We took the dinghy in to one of the beaches in the park and hiked the trail to Boo Boo Hill. There is quite a view from the top. There are other trails as well and various snorkeling spots. Since the park is a protected area, fish, turtles, and lobsters show themselves with impunity, knowing humans cannot legally take them. On one of the beaches is the reconstructed skeleton of a 52-foot sperm whale.

There are more islands and cays that we didn’t explore, but the most wondrous thing about the Exumas is the water. It is the most incredible array of aquas, turquoises, greens and blues I have ever seen. If the Bahamas were farther south and didn’t get cool in the winter, we might never leave.

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A few more blocks took us to Avenida Santiago Mariño, which crosses 4 de Mayo, the biggest street in Porlamar, where dozens of quality clothing stores abounded. Shoes were another item found in many stores. Because Margarita is a duty-free island, it is a shopping mecca for Europeans and South, Central and North Americans. Quality imported goods are found in profusion.

Then there's "Centro," near the huge, domed cathedral that is a landmark in Porlamar. This area is where the locals shop. Many Middle-Easterners and Chinese operate businesses selling small appliances and household items. It is where you find the bargain clothes and shoes imported from the Middle East and China. There are three pedestrian streets crossed by one-way vehicular traffic.

Everywhere are street vendors, selling fresh fruits and veggies, dessert cakes and flan, and stalls selling arepas filled with cheese or chicken or beans or fish. Also sold on the streets are *empanadas*. They too are made from corn flour and water, though these are flattened out like a tortilla. Then a dollop of cheese, fish, chicken or beans is placed in the center and the dough is folded over and the edges are sealed before they are dropped into hot grease (heated by a propane tank) and fried to a golden brown. Yummy!

Another treat is called *cachapa*, which is made from fresh kernel corn, ground up, and mixed with milk and water. The batter is then ladled out onto a hot griddle and fried like a giant pancake, eight inches around and half an inch thick. When it is brown, a piece of soft cheese is laid on, and it is folded and secured in a napkin and off you go. One will fill most grown men! As we walked, young men with ice cooler chests would approach and offer quietly (as it was frowned upon by the police) a cold one saying, "Polar, Polar, Polar". So for about 20 cents you could enjoy a cold *cerveza* on the street. (That was NOT frowned upon!)



In Margarita, life below the water is as interesting as that on land. Sea turtles are frequent visitors

We learned that buses ran all over the island and went though Centro. So explore we did, for about ten cents a ride! Most of the buses are old school buses painted by their owners, with the main areas and maybe a route number written on the windshield and the side windows in bold, white hand-done lettering. In an hour or so you could reach most destinations on the island.

That's how I discovered Juangriego, before we sailed there. It is a small tourist town, much more typical of a Caribbean island village with its souvenir shops. Up on the hill overlooking the anchorage is El Fortin de la Galera, a relic of an old fort that played an important role in Venezuela's fight for independence from Spain in 1815. The expansive view is gorgeous. (Most visitors don't realize it also overlooks the settling ponds of the local wastewater facility.) And of course there are souvenirs to be had in Juangriego.

At the street level, on the beach, is one of my favorite restaurants, El Viejo Muelle (The Old Wharf). *Peñeros*, small fishing boats, are tethered to palm trees on shore near a blue-and-white replica lighthouse (about 20 inches tall). As we waited for lunch I strolled along the beach and found a few small collectible shells. Then we were served our fish soup and the requisite "Polaritas" (little Polar beers). Young girls came by our table selling homemade (maybe by mom or auntie) pearl rings and hematite bracelets and necklaces — my kind of jewelry. I still have some of my favorites from that day!

On another day we went to the state capital. Within the country of Venezuela, Margarita is a state unto itself, Nueva Esparta, and its capital is La Asunción. La Asunción is located up in the mountains where the temperature drops at least ten degrees as you leave sea level. The government offices and the courthouse are busy during the week. There are art museums and La Casa de la Cultura (the House of Culture), where symphonies are performed by the local orchestras. Music is highly esteemed in Venezuela and children in elementary schools are offered free lessons. There is one such school in Porlamar that I now frequently walk past and hear them rehearsing.

There is the usual Plaza Bolívar (virtually every Venezuelan town has one) in front of the church. On a Sunday when we visited, there were four generations of women all working on making one hammock. Watching them hand-tying one of these heirlooms is a picture to behold. And for only sixty dollars, I could have owned one of my own, but it was not meant to be.

For those who visit by air, probably one of the top three reasons to come to Margarita is for the beaches. From Centro it is possible to get to the Playa el Agua region, where along miles of white sand beaches are dozens of businesses set up with lounges and umbrellas for rent. There are souvenir and surf shops, restaurants and local vendors plying their wares and fares. And with about 360 days of sunshine the beaches are usually full or PACKED!

There are plenty of other things to do here. There is the Museo Marino, which has marine history exhibits and live tanks where there are sharks and turtles, big kingfish and a tank where you can touch starfish, sea cucumbers and conchs. There is an audio-visual show several times a day and the entry fee is only a few dollars.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

You can spend several hours learning about the history of the pearling industry on the island of Cubagua, off Margarita. In 1498 Columbus noticed pearls along the nearby Peninsula de Paria, and Nuevo Cadiz was founded on Cubagua, one of the first European settlements in the Americas. Until an earthquake in 1541 and the ensuing tidal wave, which destroyed the settlement, many hundreds of pounds of pearls were sent back to Spain. The ruins of Nuevo Cadiz can still be seen and there is now talk of resurrecting the village.

The mangrove area on Margarita, called La Restinga, is where you can go out for an hour or so in a small boat with a guide who with a trained eye can spot wonders of this unique eco-system. Palm-sized octopus or wee orange starfish, exotic birds and interesting flora can entrance you as you motor slowly through arching branches where someone has placed a sign saying "tunnel of love".

Most cruisers live their lives by the sun, rising in the early dawn and bedding down as the stars come out. But for those who seek nightlife, Margarita has that, too. There are casinos and bingo halls, piano bars and karaoke bars. Though I quit cruising in 2000, I still find myself letting the daylight hours fill my life with sufficient adventure, so I leave the nightlife to others.

I still have many cruising friends and one such, from St. Thomas, where I lived from 2000 to 2006, sold his boat and bought a condo here on Margarita. It overlooks the anchorage in Porlamar. In 2005 I visited friends on the mainland of Venezuela, near Puerto la Cruz. I couldn't get so close to Margarita (only a two-and-a-half hour ferry ride away) and not go and see Marty.



Sunset time at Porlamar. If CLODs need an even bigger yacht fix than this gathering place provides, Puerto La Cruz is only a ferry ride away

I just went to Margarita to visit and do a bit of clothes- and shoe-shopping, but on the second day of my two-day visit he told me about an apartment for sale on the fifth floor of his building, overlooking the anchorage. I stayed for a third day and decided that my life would not be complete until I moved into my own little Venezuelan nest. It's a one-bedroom condo that is just right for me and my two cats.

I have been here for two years and am now a member of the "board" in my building. I cannot think of a nicer place to wake up! The weather suits my clothes and there are no hurricanes. I have swallowed the anchor and am now a real C.L.O.D. — still hooked on the Caribbean, but hooked on dirt!

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THINK

of wildlife on tropical islands and, right after brightly feathered and raucous birds, you'll probably picture lizards. Scurrying up trees, gliding between twigs and leaves, or dashing through leaf litter, lizards are among the most abundant animals on most tropical islands.

Unfortunately, not all lizards are as abundant as they once were.

Visitors to the West Indies may be fortunate enough to observe the rare dragons of the Caribbean. These "dragon" lizards are actually nine species of rock iguanas and two species of common, or green, iguanas that inhabit the rugged terrains of Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, the Puerto Rican Bank, the Caymans, the Bahamas, the Turks & Caicos, and the Lesser Antilles. Each species is unique to only one or a few islands — similar to the Galapagos tortoises — and are as distinctive as the islands themselves.



by Charles Knapp

Left: The Lesser Antillean iguana used to be found on almost every island from Martinique to Anguilla. It is now restricted to a few islands, including Dominica. This iguana is endangered because of cats, dogs, mongoose, hunting, and development

Below: The Cuban iguana has the largest of all West Indian iguana populations but is still in need of protection. This picture shows two males in combat



CHARLES KNAPP

GLENN GERBER

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Yet they originated from a single mainland stock that at different times was uprooted and scattered by tropical storms. Thanks to lizards' scaly skin, which prevents water loss, and their ability to survive long periods without food, iguanas clinging to or entangled in floating mats of vegetation sooner or later had a chance of making landfall among the region's many islands. These isolated colonists evolved into the diverse species we know today.

The smallest West Indian iguanas are one-and-a-half feet long and weigh half a pound, while the largest species can reach a length of four feet and strain a field biologist's scales at 20 pounds. Color and pattern range from solid battleship gray to a kaleidoscope of green, orange, red, blue, yellow and pink.

Most species are territorial and will defend a specific area or individual space. Territorial conflicts can be intense. Two males vying for the same space will face off with vigorous head bobs to intimidate each other. Head bobbing can escalate into circling as they puff out their sides and extend their dewlaps (the folds of skin below the chin). This posturing exaggerates body size in a bout of brinkmanship. If one doesn't back down, the animals may charge, finally settling the dispute with a series of body shoves, head rams and bites.

West Indian iguanas are vegetarians and, territoriality aside, they have been peaceably munching leaves and nibbling fruit for millennia. As the largest naturally occurring animals on the islands, adult iguanas have no natural predators, although young iguanas

may fall prey to birds and snakes. This comfortable existence was disrupted when Amerindians such as Island Arawaks and Caribs canoed north from South America and began to colonize the islands roughly between one and two thousand years ago. These peoples hunted iguanas for food and may have transported them between islands.

The real threat to the iguanas' survival, however, came in the 16th century with the arrival of Europeans — and their cats, dogs, hogs, goats and even mongoose. Allowed to roam, and sometimes becoming feral, these introduced animals have competed with or preyed on the native iguanas.

The second wave of human settlers also signaled the



ELIZABETH COHRY



GLENN GERBER

Above: The St. Lucia iguana is endangered, restricted to the northeast coast of St. Lucia, and down to fewer than 1,000 adults. It has been adopted recently by the St. Lucia Forestry Department as a flagship species for St. Lucia's threatened dry tropical forests

Left: The San Salvador iguana is found on the Bahamian island of San Salvador and other islands in the Crooked/Acklins chain, as well as on a tiny cay off of Great Exuma. It, too, is endangered because of cats, dogs, and development

beginning of an unprecedented, and often unsustainable, level of hunting. As human populations have continued to increase in these finite areas, iguana habitat has been destroyed or degraded. This group of iguanas now has the dubious distinction of being the most endangered lizards in the world. All are considered threatened, endangered, or critically endangered.

Although the overall situation for iguanas remains tenuous in the West Indies, there are a few inspiring and remarkable stories of recovery. The Blue Iguana population of Grand Cayman was reduced to only 20 individuals in the wild, but thanks to an aggressive conservation breeding program on the island, over 200 introduced iguanas thrive in an established reserve today.

—Continued on next page

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C A R I B B E A N

—Continued from previous page

The Jamaican Iguana was thought to be extinct until a pig hunter encountered one in 1990. Efforts have been underway to bring this species back from the brink of extinction with a conservation breeding program and subsequent releases into the wild.

These programs have been successful thanks to the extreme dedication of a few individuals and the contributions raised through charitable organizations such as the International Iguana Foundation (IIF). The IIF distributes donations from other organizations and from the general public in the form of grants to worthy iguana conservation projects. Please visit the International Iguana Foundation's website at www.iguanafoundation.org for more information and to learn how you can help.

During your travels in the Caribbean, you might be lucky enough to see one of these massive yet harmless lizards in a natural setting. Please remember, these lizards are protected by local and international laws. They are to be enjoyed from a distance and left undisturbed. West Indian iguanas are as integral to these tropical islands as the white sand beaches, lush palms and mangroves and colorful birds, and perhaps more than anything else, these iguanas embody the unique and exotic character of the islands they call home.



GLENN GERBER

Top right: The Anegada iguana is one of the most endangered iguanas in the world. It is found only on the British Virgin Island of Anegada and on other cays in the BVI where other small populations have been established



CHARLES KNAPP

Right: The Exuma island iguana is found on only a few cays in the Exuma island chain, Bahamas. It is endangered because of small population size, development, and harmful feeding by tourists



GLENN GERBER

Left: The Turks & Caicos iguana is endangered because of many factors, including introduced cats and dogs as well as development



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My Hate-Love Affair with Cumaná

by Zipporah Gichumbi

When Gordon, my husband, and I arrived in Marina Cumanagoto in Cumaná, Venezuela, I felt relieved. Since we started sailing together in December 2007, we were almost always anchored in lonely places like Scotland Bay, Trinidad, or Isla Coche or Puerto Real, Venezuela. At times ours would be the only boat anchored. We would spend the nights feeling jittery, wondering if anybody had any devious plans for our sailing yacht, *Peacemaker*. We did get ourselves a dog in Trinidad to alert us in case of intruders. We also got an electric alarm system. These did not do much to ease our fears, though, because according to the sailors' grapevine, the police would take forever to render help — if they came at all. We had therefore learned to sleep on guard.

So when we got to Marina Cumanagoto I was anticipating a long, peaceful, stress-free night and a relaxing stay. Little did I know what Cumaná had in store for me.

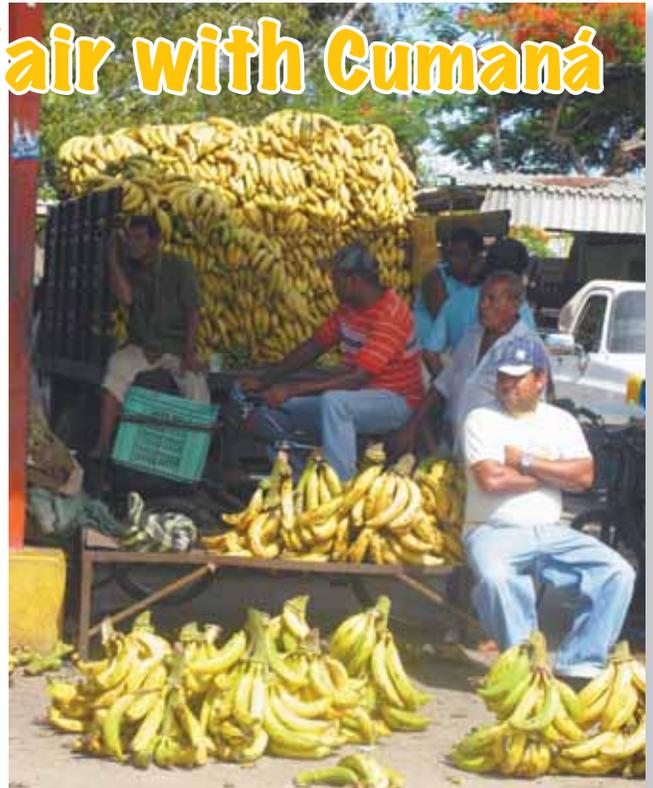
We arrived in the marina on a Friday morning. After checking in at the office we were looking forward to exploring the city of Cumaná. As soon as we got into the Marina Plaza vicinity, I started noticing people staring at us. We are a striking couple — striking in a way of being a rare treat. Gordon is Caucasian (German) and yet to get suntanned. He is 6'4" tall. I am a black African from Kenya and a mere 5'2" tall, or should I say short. The age difference between us is another issue, as I am much younger than he is.

Since we almost always walk holding hands, we are used to people staring at us and thinking of us as an oddity. We have thus developed tough skins and are able to overlook the stares. However, in Cumaná my sixth sense said things were different. I tried to convince myself that it was all in my imagination, but somehow I could not. We got a bus to take us into the city centre and the moment we got in I had my sixth sense confirmed. Things were definitely different. During the whole bus ride to Cumaná centre, all eyes in the bus were on me. Gordon and I were seated far apart, so this time I couldn't blame the stares on the contrast between our appearances.

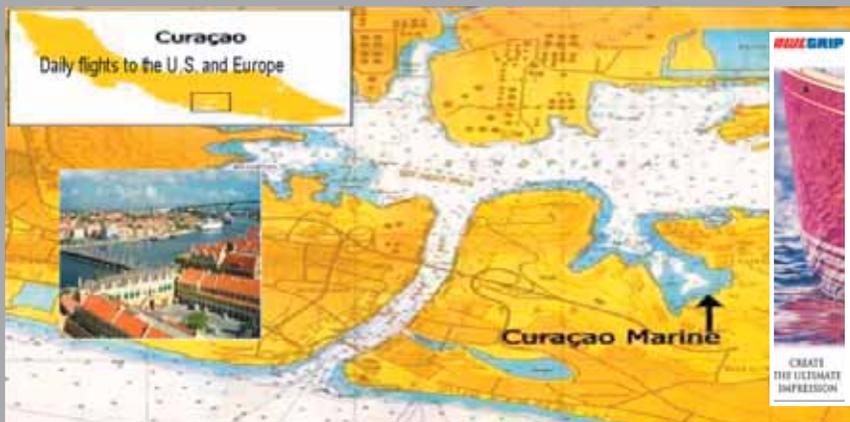
It is funny how, whether you can understand a language or not, whenever people talk about you, you can sense it. I'll bet my last penny that I was everybody's topic of the day in that bus. They were all staring at me while talking and all I could hear was, "Negro blah blah negro blah negro blah blah". I was ready to jump out of the window by the time we arrived at our destination.

—Continued on next page

Once upon a time, the market at Cumaná, Venezuela, was a place I hated to visit



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Gordon at first thought it was funny but one look at my face wiped the grin from his. I thought that walking among the crowds would help, but the crowds were parting for us so as to be able to escort us with their eyes. I hoped to see other black people but there were none to be seen. Because of the crowd, Gordon and I couldn't walk side-by-side holding hands, but we were attracting enough attention as it was. I had to walk ahead of Gordon and, predictably, the bulk of attention was on me. Unlike in the bus, the people on the streets were not discreet — they openly stared and pointed at me as if I were an animal in the zoo.

I come from Kenya, which is a great tourist destination. I know that Kenyans, especially in rural areas, get excited when they see white people. They stare at times, but discreetly, and every once in awhile there is one who touches the white man to really confirm that the skin is the same. If anyone had told me that one day I would receive the same kind of attention due to my skin colour I would have laughed them off as crazy. Yet, here I was, hearing the word "negro" like a chant on the streets and getting pointed at everywhere. After three miserable hours in the city I was as taut as a guitar string. Nothing I did could help me relax and I did not look forward to the market trip we had planned for the next day.

I woke up with a sense of doom and I dragged myself behind Gordon, but he always insists I walk in front of him so he can make sure I am okay. "Is that male instinct talking or was he just enjoying my misery?" I wondered as I sullenly soldiered on.

In the market, Gordon and I had to become a team as we conferred on what we needed. Soon all the merchants and buyers were looking at us and there was another chant, "blah blah gringo negro blah blah". On and on it went.

We had planned to stay in the marina for a week but we had had enough. No sooner had we returned to the boat than we were headed to the office to check out. After another fitful night I could hardly wake Gordon early enough on Sunday morning. By 4:00AM we were well on our way to the Gulf of Cariaco. We could hardly wait to get there. I couldn't have appreciated the isolation more.

For two months we alternated between Medregal, Guacarapo and Muelle de Cariaco. I couldn't have been happier — the people in all the places were very friendly. I did receive a few curious glances but never a vibe of hostility. They seemed to like my skin colour and, if anything, I felt honoured to be representing Africans.

One man was particularly fascinated by my skin colour to the point he kept on touching my hands. When he saw me admiring his mangoes he climbed up the tree and gave me a big basketful. Life was good.

After two months we had to move on and, sad as I was to leave, I wanted to see new places. Talk about fate. Just as we were about to pass Cumaná — with me urging Gordon to keep a distance because my feelings were still sore — our Volvo Penta engine chose that very moment to give up. I almost cried. Gordon managed to fix it a bit while we drifted around on a totally windless day. We barely managed to get into a



A view of Cumaná. My own view of the city suddenly changed...

slot in Marina Cumanagoto without damaging anything. I avoided going into town during the three days it took Gordon to fix the problem. We planned to leave on the next day after some shopping and I braced myself for the ordeal.

With fate being fate, that evening we got a call and matters of life and death required Gordon's immediate attention in Germany. We couldn't sail to any other place in time for Gordon to catch a flight, so I had to stay in Cumaná. After a hurried shopping trip during which I spent my time hiding behind Gordon, I could

feel doom closing in on me. What was I supposed to do for 24 days here alone?

We had become friends with Cathy and Ron aboard sailing yacht *At Last* and I was glad for their company when Gordon left, although they would only be in the marina for five more days. Once my food stock was finished, I was weak with relief when Cathy offered to go shopping with me and do all the talking. I was sad when they left but they had introduced me to Bill and Bev aboard sailing yacht *El Shaddai*. Being the parasite I had become, I was glad to have Bill and Bev go shopping with me the next time.

I did try to stretch my food supply for as long as possible, but eventually I had to venture out on my own. I had the shopping trip all mapped out in my mind. I meekly asked the bus driver whether he was going to the landmark Gordon and I always used on our market trips: the Brasil Monument. When he said yes, I hopped in and sat as far back as I could with my eyes glued to the window. There was a lot of traffic so when the driver did not take the usual turn I thought he was using a detour to avoid the traffic. Normally the ride into the city took between 10 to 15 minutes but on this day 30 minutes after I got in the bus we were still going. I frantically looked for any familiar landmark. I decided to sit it out and hope that our final stop would be a terminal from where I could ask for transportation back to Marina Plaza.

I called on God with a desperation borne of the situation, which, considering I spoke almost no Spanish, was pretty desperate. Then something inspired me to flash my million-dollar smile at everyone looking at me. There was the usual "negro blah blah" chant, but I replied with a very big smile. After a while, by which time my jaws hurt, the man next to me asked where I was going. I managed to say "Cumaná central" which had everybody in the bus laughing.

After numerous attempts at communication I was able to tell him my nationality. The moment I said I was from Kenya in Africa, those were the magic words. He announced to everybody in the bus that I was from Kenya and suddenly the bus came alive with everybody trying to talk to me at once. Unfortunately, all I could reply was "no comprendo". They tried to talk to me in various dialects but it was no good. After 45 minutes in the bus, I gathered I was on my way to a place called Brasil. They told me not to worry, though, as they would help me. I also got to learn the new words *muy exquisito*, *muy bello* and *muy espléndido* — and all referring to me. Need I say more?

—Continued on page 51



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While in New York recently, I walked in splendid sunny September weather from the Staten Island ferry docks to the South Street Seaport Museum (SSSM). It is located on the East River shoreline on the southern tip of Manhattan. There, an ambitious educational and tourism attraction, at a disused commercial waterfront area, is one of the wonderful attractions of this remarkable American city.

With its preserved old buildings, ongoing art and lifestyle exhibitions, fine restaurants and a selection of historic vessels, the SSSM was originally designed to transport the visitor back to the 1800s in what was part of the bustling commercial life of the country's largest seaport. Notes the Museum's website at www.southstreetmuseum.org: "(The Museum) preserves and interprets the history of New York City as a world port, a place where goods, labor and culture are exchanged through work, commerce and the interaction of diverse communities."

The idea behind the SSSM and its ongoing challenges are worth looking at in the context of maritime preservation work in some of the Caribbean island states.

My first stop was aboard one of the preserved vessels, the square-rigged sailing ship *Peking*. What a sight to look up at the towering spars and imagine this once mighty vessel cutting a swath through the southern oceans off Cape Horn and bringing cargoes like wheat from Australia! The steel-hulled, four-masted ship was built in Germany in 1911, one of the last such vessels. The *Peking* was a sail-training vessel for youngsters in the UK until the SSSM acquired it in 1974. Many thanks to volunteer guide Gerry Dalzell, who gave us an excellent tour of the ship.

The Museum has exhibitions from time to time in several of the renovated buildings. This past summer, there was a video presentation on US whaling. I was intrigued by the similarities of the North American whaling culture with that in Bequia, a small island in the Grenadines, where the tradition of harpooning (and eating) humpback whales still continues. In the industry's heyday, some of the islanders had signed as crewmembers on Yankee whaling ships in the Caribbean. The whaleboats, equipment, and hunting techniques in Bequia and the (now discontinued) North American whaling industry are virtually identical.

In the Museum's Art Gallery there are some fine oil paintings of square-riggers. There are other displays including cutaway drawings of some of the world's renowned ocean liners of the 1950s and 1960s that called at the port, plus model boats and scrimshaw. It was all really fascinating and I enjoyed my visit.

The Schermerhorn family bought the dockside area in the early 1700s and began its commercial development. They were shipmasters and chandlers. They leased out shops to merchants of associated trades. By the 1960s however, much of the area was abandoned and had dilapidated buildings. Real estate sharks were buying up property for speculation. The wreckers were due to tear down the old buildings. A group of concerned citizens who, while respecting the need for modern skyscrapers which efficiently utilized small spaces using modern building techniques, felt strongly that this part of the city's cultural history should be preserved. Led by people such as Peter and Norma Stanford, they got sympathetic hearing from the communities and progressive and realistic-minded City

Preserving Our Caribbean Maritime Heritage

by Norman Faria



Seeing the *Peking* at the South Street Seaport Museum this past September inspired the author to wonder how the Caribbean can also sustainably preserve the remaining artifacts of its own rich maritime history

Council people. In 1967 the SSSM was established.

Over the years, there were challenges (as reported in the March 29th, 1998, *New York Times* article "Rough Sailing for South Street Seaport"). In 1977, the Rouse Corporation, which was involved in waterfront development in Boston and Baltimore, brought a "festival marketplace" approach. This was designed to be self-financing, with more retail shops.

The public nevertheless read about fiscal problems. Attendance dropped from 700,000 in the late 1990s to 450,000 last year. The deficits became larger. Staff cut-backs included Norman Brouwer, the ship historian. The boatbuilding and metal working workshops were closed. The *Peking*, which costs US\$750,000 annually to maintain, was put up for sale for \$10 million.

—Continued on next page



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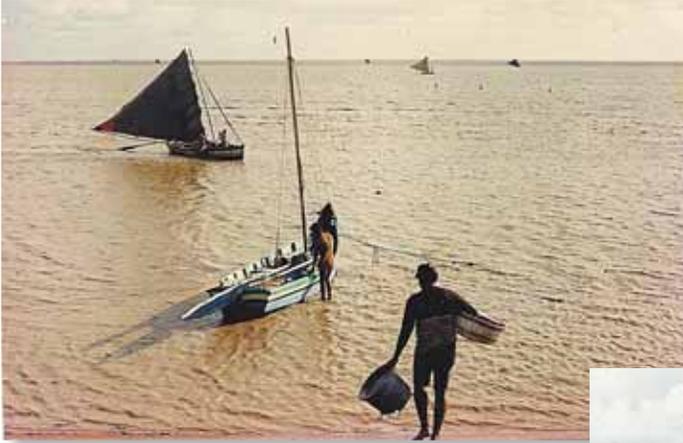
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—Continued from previous page

Some diehard preservationists like Peter Stanford thought there was too much commercialism and the museum's idea and implementation was losing its original focus. "The commercial development is all trash. It's international airport style junk," he said on his resignation as Museum President in 1971.

NORMAN FARIA (2)



Left: Traditional Guyanese fishing boats off the north Better Hope seawall, just east of Georgetown. Will these craft be forgotten?

To avoid overly irrelevant commercial glitz, maritime preservation projects need state assistance and guidance to complement community-based and private-sector involvement. As with people-centered projects such as national parks, mass transit systems, and general infrastructures, museums like SSSM with a developmental focus appear to be financially viable and sustainable only with taxpayers' subsidies. New York leases the valuable real estate property to the Museum for "peppercorn" rent, for example. Sometimes the people's representatives in government, and who oversee the public sector, have to look at the wider picture. In the people's interests, they have to take a longer view.

For what its worth, my view is that this will also have to happen in the Caribbean Basin countries. We have a rich maritime history, perhaps even more so than New York. Yet at regional museums in the Eastern Caribbean — and I have visited almost every one of them — the maritime exhibits are few and far between. Historic vessels and working watercraft have simply rotted away, though there are remarkable exceptions.

The various Ministries of Culture, or other appropriate government departments in the islands are probably keen on building on existing maritime exhibits, or encouraging dimensions of it in private sector ventures. Trinidad & Tobago administrations, for example, provided assistance in the preservation of the plywood *Humming Bird II*, the ketch sailed by Trinidadians Harold and Kwailan La Borde around the world (see

article in the June 2000 issue of *Compass*). In addition to the Bequia Maritime Museum opened by Lawson Sargent in 2005, members of the Bequia Heritage Foundation have over the years collected artifacts from that island's schooner and whaling activity with the aim of setting up a new nautical heritage museum. There is a maritime component in plans to develop a

systems generally, can benefit our people's development, from an economic standpoint and other ways. In Bequia, there is an annual Easter Regatta featuring highly competitive races among the descendants of the traditional, sprit-rigged whaling boats. The Bahamas, Grenada, Carriacou, Tobago, Guadeloupe, Anguilla and Martinique, among others, also have regattas featuring traditional sailing craft, originally used as fishing boats, lighters and small cargo vessels. The world-famous Antigua Sailing Week now features races for traditional wooden Carriacou cargo sloops. These events attract thousands of tourists who come specifically for these gatherings.

Museums with a maritime focus have to be well thought out and have authentic exhibits in a realistic and appropriate setting rather than, for example, being part of a pseudo-seafront facade in a commercial enterprise. Trained personnel from national museums may be called upon to provide expertise, including evaluation of artwork influenced by maritime culture. Overseas assistance, perhaps from reputable museums in North America and Europe, may be available through funding from international agencies. Business plans have to be formulated to look at possible visitor figures. What is important is to take the first steps. Let us save what we can before everything, including wooden shipwright's skills, rots away.

As you walk away from the salty waterfront smells on New York's East River area, the looming cliffs of

Right: The good ship Barima pulls into Georgetown, Guyana's stelling docks on the Demerara River last year. Steel-hulled vessels like this are also an integral part of Caribbean maritime history



convention centre/hotel around the screw dock and near the former Carenage Harbour in Barbados' Carlisle Bay. I was happy to assist in identifying and securing the last remaining examples of a Carlisle Bay *bateau* and a "Moses" rowboat for the Barbados Museum. Excited too, to take drawings of and do research about the traditional Guyanese wooden fishing boats still being sailed from two anchorages near the capital, Georgetown. Maritime preservation projects, as with museum

steel-and-glass skyscrapers may seem a sign of progress. But they are built on the past achievements of the American people, including the port workers, seamen and marine businesspeople there. Those tall buildings remind you to give thanks for what you just left. They remind you to offer gratitude for the good things in his oasis of memory that is the South Street Seaport Museum.

Can we look forward to similar ideas bearing fruit in the Caribbean?

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In the St. Vincent Grenadines in recent years, as throughout much of the Caribbean, there has been extensive "development" — the construction of hotels and resorts, guesthouses, restaurants, schools and private homes, and the expansion of the jetport on Canouan. The movement of the required labour force and more visitors, as well as equipment and supplies, has created an increased need for both passenger and cargo services. Inter-island shipping is usually the most efficient and cost-effective method.

One vessel that has helped mightily with the flow of passengers and cargo is the *M/V Gemstar*. The *Gemstar* leaves Kingstown, St. Vincent on Tuesdays and Fridays at 11:30AM, making port calls at Canouan, Mayreau and Union Island. She overnights at Union Island, departing the next morning (Wednesdays and Saturdays) at 7:45AM and stopping again at Mayreau and Canouan on her way back to Kingstown. The one-way fare from Kingstown to Union Island is EC\$40 (approximately US\$15). Twice a month, the *Gemstar* calls at Carriacou in the Grenada Grenadines, and will also call at Bequia occasionally (this will be announced by the Bequia Tourism Association). To check schedules and fares, contact Inter-Island Trading Company (784) 457-1172, ittrading@vincysurf.com.

Traveling by commercial vessel between the islands is an old tradition, and will always be interesting and fun. If you don't have your own boat, embarking on the *Gemstar* is a unique way to experience the Grenadines. The white-and-black vessel was brought all the way from Norway, where many steel-hulled ships are built and employed as cargo boats and passenger ferries. *Gemstar* features two passenger saloons, one below the cargo deck and one below the wheelhouse. In the wheelhouse everything is operated electronically — not even a manual wheel is available. *M/V Gemstar* is powered by a single Caterpillar engine and can make a maximum speed of 12 knots.

Interested in getting to know the people involved this enterprise, I caught up with the owner of *M/V Gemstar*, Gus Deroche. Let's find out something about him and his business.

Amal: Good day Mr. Deroche. Thanks for taking time to tell us about your business.

Mr. Deroche: Well, it's always nice to share, and the *Compass* is a very interesting paper.

Amal: Thanks — it's a seaman's favourite. So, how did you come up with the name "Gemstar"?

Mr. Deroche: Well, it came about by looking at our Grenadines as a jewel, which refers to the "gem", and — at least back in the days of the sextant — the navigational stars created a guide to your destination.

Amal: How long have you been in the ferry business?

Mr. Deroche: It has been over eight years.

Amal: What really motivated you to get into the ferry industry?

Mr. Deroche: I could see the need of the people in the Grenadines. My father is from Canouan and, traveling through the islands, the need was seen very much. The people also wanted a ferry operation to make frequent passages through the Southern Grenadines. Being a seafaring person, I decided to take up the challenge to get into the business.

Amal: A trip by sea through the Grenadines must be really interesting.

Mr. Deroche: Yeah man, it's an exciting journey and passengers do interact, especially visitors.

Meet the Gemstar, an Inter-Island Vessel

by Amal Thomas

Amal: What are a few good experiences you've had in the business?

Mr. Deroche: Well, I must say it's a challenge, because of commercial activities. But, by a lot of people's perseverance to meet the demand of the ferry service through the Southern Grenadines, it just kept me pushing. And that experience is very exciting for me. I also implemented a shuttle into the island of Carriacou, which is being tried to develop twice-a-month service. Also, I recently invested in this modern vessel, which can carry 28 cars on deck and has the capacity for 350 to 400 passengers.

Amal: Tell me about the challenges which occur in the business and at sea.

Mr. Deroche: Well, my friend, it's not easy. It cost me

have charters to other islands for private transportation of cargo. Everyone fell in love with the saloons and the comfort they create. It makes me happy that I've made a business that is appreciated. As a businessman it's hard at times, due to up-and-down fluctuations, but at the same time you know you are giving people a service. I try to maintain a standard for people in the Southern Grenadines. Other than those issues, I enjoy tow fishing, which is relaxation for me during the journey, or I engage in interaction with passengers. There are brochures on board for visitors to read and learn about the islands as they travel. My seven-member crew is always there to assist in any way, also.

Amal: Really interesting. The facts on the matter of sea transport are fun but serious at the same time. Thanks for sharing your information on your business and seafaring life.



Above: The Gemstar's crew
Below: Built in Scandinavia, the Gemstar now plies the warmer waters of the Grenadines



a bit to upgrade the new vessel. To be in operation in the ferry class, I've got to meet proper standards for operation at sea. I had to ensure keeping up to the ISPS code and the safety standards of the IMO, which are very important. But I am happy that my ship meets the demands of the Maritime Directorate.

Amal: What is the feedback from people towards the business?

Mr. Deroche: The feedback is good. We get credit for the twice-monthly route to Carriacou, and we also

Mr. Deroche: Hey man, it's my pleasure. Keep up the good work.

Amal: Okay then, many thanks, sir.

With better inter-island ferry services, residents and visitors in the Grenadines will be able to enjoy passages more comfortably and efficiently. I wish to give my regards to Mr. Deroche, Captain Sherwin Hazell, and all the *M/V Gemstar* crew and passengers and wish them good voyages throughout the year as they travel through the gems of the Grenadines.

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AS a cruising couple, you are only one major injury from becoming a single-hander — with the added duty of being a nurse. A few years back in Georgetown, Exuma, some younger kids were complaining about all the assigned tasks each one had to do while cruising on their parents' boat. I quickly set them straight when I told them, "Hey, you got it easy. I single-hand; I have to do it all, every time!"

I am always amused while hanging out at a sailor's bar when some skipper tucks his thumbs in his belt and outs with something like, "I've been sailing for more than ten years now..." and then goes on to pontificate about what he knows to be carved-in-stone true. I sit back and listen and say nothing. Having learned to sail when I was ten years old, I now have 49 years of experience sailing and can safely say nothing is carved in stone. There is more to know than one person can remember and yes, you will make the same mistakes more than once.

Single-Handing, Sometimes with Company

by John St. John

Running a private law practice in south Mississippi for 17 years, I spent every bit of time off I could get sailing the northern Gulf of Mexico. Being able to juggle my schedule to take off Thursday noon resulted in many single-handed trips. Not only did I get used to it, I got to like the self-reliance and confidence gained from it. Company would have been preferred, but its lack did not keep me ashore.

After early retirement, I have single-handed to the Caribbean three times and back to south Mississippi twice, always taking the "thorny path" through the Bahamas, Turks and the Dominican Republic. It is not easy but at least you can get some secure, anchored sleep every few days.

Autopilots with complete backups and knowledge of how to repair them are a must! I prefer the electronic kind, as no wind is necessary. Constant steering tires a solo sailor out quickly.

Three days is just about anyone's limit to stay awake without some real REM sleep. Never trusting electronics, I believe in taking a look around every 20 minutes. (It used to be 30, but a ship crossing my wake near Mayaguana helped me shorten my interval.) If you do see something, you will have to stay up longer to see where it is going so you cannot count on anything. These days, a ship can come over a clear horizon and be on top of you faster than you could ever believe. Take short naps and set timers and back-up timers. Stay down as much as possible so you are rested if a problem develops. If your little voice says take a look around, do it, even if you just looked.

Energy-efficient radar with sleep cycles and perimeter alarms were not available when I started and I still do not trust them. If you do not yet believe that everything

*When your little voice tells you
to do something, go do it*

on your boat will quit working (sooner or later) then you have not spent much time on a boat. After two days of short naps you will begin to hear voices and see lights at night that you know do not exist. Somewhere into the third day you will not be able to tell the difference. If nothing else, heave to, turn on all your lights, announce your position on VHF 16 and say that you are disabled, and then get three hours of sleep. Better yet, do not get in these situations.

With modern weather and the ham "weather dogs", it is almost impossible not to know what is coming. Pay attention and give yourself plenty of extra time to get to your next destination.

Never put off anything. When your little voice tells you to do something, go do it! And if you can't at the moment, then, write it down in big letters and hang it where it will haunt you till it gets done.

Happiness is a warm engine, so start it frequently is case you have to use it. I have learned to run mine for 15 to 30 minutes after sunset, 15 to 30 minutes at midnight and 15 to 30 minutes before dawn. This way you cut down on your night-time power drain, have a hot battery the next morning, and a warm engine so you can run from ships passing too close in the night. Always start it before you douse your sails and wrap them up beyond the chance of a quick hoist.

Chances are for idiots — you cannot afford the consequences. A smashed toe because you did something barefooted after conditions warranted wearing shoes makes everything else harder and sleep-inducing pain pills are not an option.

Think ahead, plan out how you will get something done safely with the least expenditure of energy and the most control.

As for couples, try to share all jobs so you can each be an instant single-hander when necessary. Having "pink her jobs" and "blue his jobs" is just plain silly. If "significant him" breaks an arm and "significant her" has never changed the fan belt or the water pump impeller (or even watched), things will quickly become discordant.

It is a recipe for unpleasant disaster if the guy always maneuvers the boat to fuel docks and moorings; she always handles the lines; she always cooks; he always repairs the autopilot. Learning and doing the other's tasks goes along way with mutual respect and compatibility on a small boat. (Because most women want a bigger boat, most boats are "small".)

When things are going well, try to imagine how you would do something all by yourself. Give the significant other a day off and run the boat entirely by yourself. Try picking up a mooring or setting an anchor by yourself. We single-handers do it all the time.

So take care of yourselves out there and try to learn how to do everything, it is confidence-building and could pay off big.

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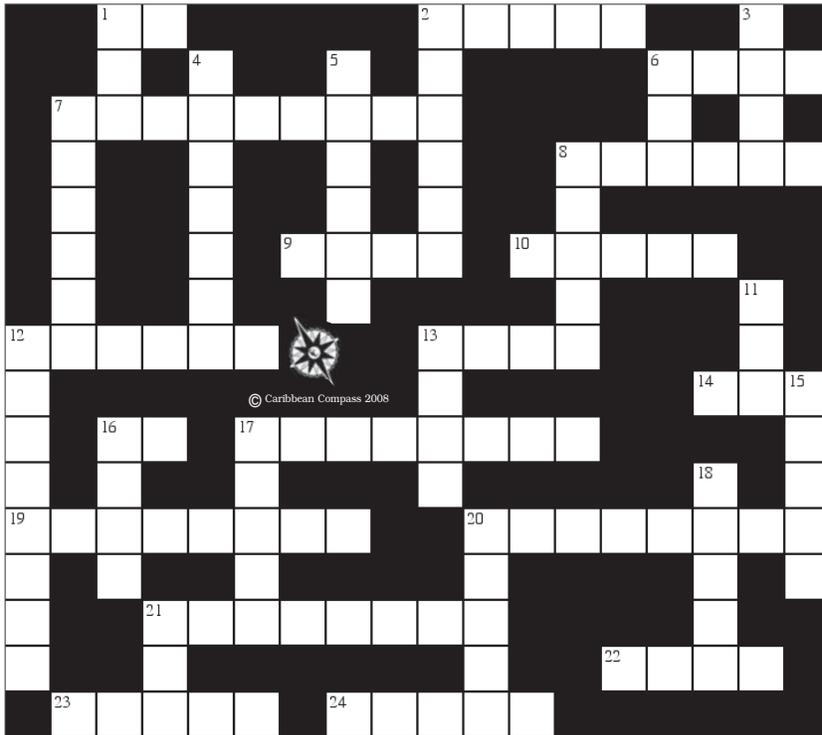
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DOLLY'S ANSWERS

- 1) angel sharks
- 2) dogfish sharks
- 3) saw sharks
- 4) mackerel sharks
- 5) ground sharks
- 6) carpet sharks
- 7) bullhead sharks
- 8) frilled (or cow) sharks

Compass Cruising Crossword



Nautical Alphabet: 'W'

ACROSS

- 1) Who all lives in a yellow submarine?
- 2) With 15 Down, undecided
- 6) Traditional shipbuilding material
- 7) Ring bolt with two holes (2 words)
- 8) Roll from side to side
- 9) Break from a habit
- 10) Projected parts of a ship's wheelhouse
- 12) Old Wife fish
- 13) Metal line
- 14) Compass point
- 16) Abbreviation for West Indies
- 17) Ship at anchor, heeling over from strong wind (2 words)
- 19) Hatch device for ventilation
- 20) Catfish (2 words)
- 21) What's left after 20 Down
- 22) This is a cross _____ puzzle
- 23) If not there, then _____?
- 24) What a poorly built hull does in a seaway

DOWN

- 1) Man o' _____
- 2) Yachts must complete the racecourse _____ the time limit
- 3) Material for a warm watch cap
- 4) Small casks stowed along hull in cargo hold
- 5) "_____ ships and iron men"
- 6) Spider's home
- 7) Coldest time of the year
- 8) Sound of wind in rigging
- 11) Took first prize
- 12) Weather side
- 13) "Gone _____ the Wind"
- 15) With 2 Across, undecided
- 16) Moving air
- 17) Large cetacean
- 18) Menial engine-room job
- 20) Destruction, as of a ship
- 21) Sadness

Crossword Solution on page 37

How to stuff a cruiser's stocking

Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski

Ho, ho, ho! This word-search puzzle will give you lots of ideas about what to give your cruising buddies this year — or maybe some ideas for your own wish list!



- | | | |
|------------|---------|------------|
| BICYCLE | DVDS | MODEL BOAT |
| BINOCULARS | FAN | MONEY |
| BOOKS | FOOD | MOVIES |
| | | MUSIC |
| CAMERA | GAMES | |
| CANDLES | GIN | NUTS |
| CANDY | GLOVES | ORNAMENT |
| CARDS | GOGGLES | |
| CARIBBEAN | | PUZZLE |
| CDS | HAMMOCK | |
| CHAIR | HAT | RUM |
| CHARTS | JIGSAW | |
| CHOCOLATE | | TEA |
| COMPASS | KITE | |
| COOKIES | LURES | WINE |

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 49



DECEMBER 2008

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)

Keep a firm hand on the tiller over the holidays. There will be so many wind shifts and currents in all directions it will be a challenge to keep on course.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)

Here's a gift: You may have some good news in your business around the third week. Don't let problems with female crew or cruising pals distract you.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)

Deck the halls or haul the decks??? Business or financial frustrations may be complicated by difficulties getting your creative ideas across to shipmates.

♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)

Your creative course will seem in irons this month. Try to control your temper; there could be drastic after-effects if you don't. Just say "Ho, ho, ho!"

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)

It's run-a-tight-ship time! Female crew or cruising buddies will be a hassle this month. You could alienate them if you don't exercise self-control.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)

Romantic disagreements could cause problems in your business or finances in the first two weeks. After that the situation should clear up — just in time to broad-reach into the holidays.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)

You may find difficulties in communications after the second week. Maybe ask Santa for a new radio? Things should improve in your love life, however.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)

Other than a few squalls with females in the crew, marina or anchorage, the month should sail along smoothly.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)

You will be very creatively productive this month. Use it on board to clear the decks of those unfinished projects and don't let a holiday romance be too much of a distraction.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

This month has all the aspects of love and good times. Throw a Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanzaa party on the poop deck!

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

December is full of opportunity to dream up new cruises or boat projects. Romance, however, is becalmed until after the 7th, when Venus, the goddess of love, enters your sign and stays there into the New Year. Overspending at mid-month could be costly.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

Business is still giving you contrary winds and possible disagreements in your love life will not help. But the weather on the romantic front should clear up in the third week, so your Christmas will be merry after all!

Crossword Solution

ACROSS

- 1) WE
- 2) WASHY
- 6) WOOD
- 7) WRAIN BOLT
- 8) WOBBLE
- 9) WEAN
- 10) WINGS
- 12) WRASSE
- 13) WIRE
- 14) WNW
- 16) WI
- 17) WIND TAUT
- 19) WINDSAIL
- 20) WOLF FISH
- 21) WRECKAGE
- 22) WORD
- 23) WHERE
- 24) WORKS

DOWN

- 1) WAR
- 2) WITHIN
- 3) WOOL
- 4) WINGERS
- 5) WOODEN
- 6) WEB
- 7) WINTER
- 8) WHINE
- 11) WON
- 12) WINDWARD
- 13) WITH
- 15) WISHY
- 16) WIND
- 17) WHALE
- 18) WIPER
- 20) WRECK
- 21) WOE

The Night

Before Christmas



'Twas the night before Christmas, I swung on the hook
Flaked out on the settee, asleep with my book
When up on the deck I heard footsteps and stuff
"I've been boarded!" I thought, and I tried to be tough

Then down the companionway hatch came a dude
He was dressed like a nut and I thought, "I'm so screwed"
But he laughed and he hummed as he surveyed my junk
So I figured he must be the resident drunk

His eyes were lit up like a junkie on speed
But he gave me a whole bunch of stuff that I need
Like rum and cigars and new charts and a dinghy
And some kind of fancy electrical thingy

I knew it was stolen but I wasn't telling
I hoped he was giving and wasn't just selling
And I poured him a grog which he downed with a wink
Then I poured one for me (I sure needed a drink!)

Then he staggered above to the dark tropic night
As I pecked I beheld an incredible sight
Eight tiny dolphins and a beautiful sleigh
And the dude hopped aboard and prepared to make way

The dolphins were ready to power the sled
But the guy raised a genny and mains! instead
With a burp and a chuckle he gathered the breeze
And called to the dolphins, now swimming with ease

"On Fatty and Foxy and Old Barracuda!
On Teva and Mountgay, Antigua, Barbuda!
Or whatever your names are, you cute little fishes,
Here's to every last sailor, my best Christmas wishes!"

As he sailed away leaving a wobbly wake
I hoped he had not many stops left to make
He got close to shore and he soon was aground
But the dolphins proceeded to pull him around

And I heard him exclaim as he sailed out of sight
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a goodnight!"

— Cruiser Claus

ON LEAVING THE CAPE VERDES

The winds were right,
the sky was blue.
We'd run out of jobs to do.
Barbados lies across the waves
in the Caribbean with beaches bright.

The trade winds blow,
the nights are warm,
time to patch the sails torn.
Where else is there to go?

— Mike Dorsett

bela-toon



"Trust me, I've been sailing the Caribbean
for thirty years..."

parlumps marooned



Ever since that day when a group of human families and friends arrived in their small boats to celebrate Christmas Day in Cutie Cove on the northwest coast of St. Lucia, all the fish living in the bay, including the reef dwellers, the sand burrowers, the weed clingers and the free roamers, agreed that it all looked such fun that they decided to celebrate Christmas, too. So every Christmas Day all the fish and other creatures such as sea urchins, sea stars, crabs and anemones, decorated the reef and brought lots of food and drinks and partied until the sun set.

could make the trip in an hour or two.

The larger fish and sea creatures were more of a problem. There was only one way out and that was to harness his friends the nurse sharks to pods or sleighs and designate certain residents to a suitable nurse shark carrier. All the eels would go together in one sleigh, the big sea stars in another, the giant anemones with their caretaker crabs and damsel fish in a more specialized pod, sea horses in their pods fitted out with perches for them to cling to. Fish like the large parrotfish, large angels, filefish and ocean surgeons would all have their comfortable conveyors.

Gem knew that there would be a lot of resistance to the idea of traveling with sharks, but this was the only way and he would just have to convince the other sea creatures that they were in no danger. For the fast swimmers like the bar jacks and the chubs, Gem would provide a guide to lead the way. The flying fish of course would take to the air in those wonderful fast dashes they are noted for and would be given easy-to-follow directions.

Back at the seamount home, Mermaid Merry was in charge of the food, drinks and party games. Merry had lots of eager helpers and she allotted various tasks to everyone.

Food was gathered from all over the seamount. Heaps of water lettuce, ripe sea grapes, Swiss cheese alga, seawater cress, sea oats and many other delicious plants were piled into heaps waiting to be spread out on tables for the feast. Naturally all party eats and drinks were strictly vegetarian because the residents of the seamount certainly didn't eat each other!

Many of the seamount mothers were clever at organizing party games for the children with Hide and Seek a great favourite with everyone. Merry herself had chosen to read stories when the little ones got tired.

So Christmas Day arrived and it wasn't long before all the guests started to arrive. The flying fish got there first, then the fast swimmers, next the scads and last, the nurse shark carriers. How did these get on? Everyone agreed it had been an exciting trip and declared that they would trust those nurse sharks to take them anywhere!

Just before the feast began, Merman Marcus, King of the Seas, arrived hand in hand with his much-loved wife, Mother Mermaid. Gifts were handed out and a toast was made to Gem and Merry. Everyone cheered and wished each other a Happy Christmas and then the fun began in earnest, finishing with the usual carol singing.

By the time the party ended there were lots of full bellies and drowsy children clinging to their mothers. Last but not least, there were all the happy pledges made to share next Christmas together in Cutie Cove.

And so the last of the travelers returned home just as the sun was dipping into the indigo sea casting a golden glow over the bay. It had been a very special Christmas.

THE END

CHRISTMAS ON THE SEAMOUNT

by Lee Kessell

But this year was to be different. This year everyone was invited to have Christmas fun with Merman Gem and Mermaid Merry at their new seamount home. You might remember that Gem was the son of Merman Marcus and Mother Mermaid and that Gem and Merry had fallen in love the first time they set eyes on each other. As you know, Mermen live in the calm deeps undisturbed by waves or storms, while mermaids must have sun and airy reefs.

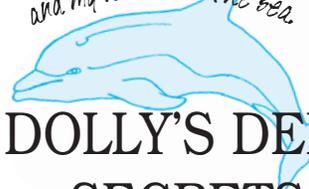
What were Gem and Merry to do once they married? Well, Gem had found the perfect solution: they would build their home on top of a small seamount that had risen like a pinnacle up from the sea floor. This seamount was only a hilltop really and it wasn't way out in the deep sea where the true seamounts are, so when the invitations went out, the first thing the children asked their mothers was, "How will we get there?"

"I'm sure that Gem and Merry will organize the whole thing, so don't worry about it" was the smiling answer.

And sure enough, Gem had organized the transport for everyone. As the seamount rose from just beyond the edge of the reef drop-off, Gem didn't have too many problems. First he called upon the squadrons of fast-swimming scads and got each one to carry a young or a small adult fish or sea creature upon its back. They

*Last but not least,
there were all the happy
pledges made to share
next Christmas together in
Cutie Cove*

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

DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

This month, let's look at sharks. There are many different kinds of sharks from the tiny spined pygmy shark to the massive whale shark. How are they classified into orders?

First we must look at their fins. Some sharks have an anal fin — that's the one on the underside near the tail — and some don't. So that's the first division. Of the sharks without anal fins, some are flat-bodied and look like stingrays. These form the order of angel sharks or **squatiformes**. The others do not look like rays and they are classified

according to the size of their nose! Those with a long snout are saw sharks or **pristiophoriformes**. Those with a short snout are dogfish sharks or **squaliformes**.

Now we have to back to the first division and look at the sharks which do not have anal fins. There are more of these so their classification is more complicated.

Look at their gill slits first. If they have six or seven gill slits, they are the frilled or cow sharks of the order **hexanchiformes**. If they have five gill slits, you need to look at their dorsal fins — the ones on the sharks' backs. Do they have spines? If they do, they are bull-head sharks or **heterodontiformes**. If they don't, then look at the mouth. Is it behind the eyes or in front?

Sharks with spineless dorsal fins and mouths in front of their eyes are carpet sharks or **orectolobiformes**.

What's left? Well, sharks with spineless dorsal fins and mouths behind their eyes are divided into two orders depending on the kind of eyes they have. Do they have a nictitating membrane? This is a sort of transparent third eyelid which the shark can draw across its eye for protection. If they do have a nictitating membrane, they are ground sharks or **carchariformes**. If they don't have one, they are mackerel sharks or **lamniformes**.

Let's make all this clearer in a table. You fill in the last column.

Answers on page 35

CHARACTERISTICS				Type of shark
No anal fin	Flat body like a ray			1
	Not like a ray	Short snout		2
		Long snout		3
Anal fin	5 gill slits	Spineless dorsal fin	Mouth behind eyes	4
			No nictitating membrane	5
				Nictitating membrane
		Mouth in front of eyes		7
		Dorsal fin with spines		8
6 or 7 gill slits				

Christmas Fish Story

by Billy Jno Hope

Little Anne bounces like a rubber ball in her room. She darts from one corner to the next till she is soaked in sweat and yet she never thinks to stop. She is too excited. Her mind is filled with the most vivid imaginings. She closes her eyes and the magic sweeps her away. A big fishing boat painted in blue and white falls from the sky landing directly in front of her. She climbs in and the boat slides freely across the Caribbean Sea. Her daddy steers them out to the fishing grounds. She sits up at the front, giddy with happiness.

Soon the village is a speck in the distance. Anne barely notices. She is starry-eyed watching the water open up in front of her as the boat cuts through it. The water churns on the sides of the boat and splashes her face. She laughs and licks the salt. It is a mild morning so far. The sun seemed to have lessened just for her. And why not? She is the luckiest little girl in the entire world. Who else gets to fish with their daddy as a Christmas present? Only the most fortunate, she muses. He waves at her as another splash hits them both. They giggle together.

The boat slows suddenly. The water is now a deep greenish blue. Mr. Michael turns off the motor and beckons to Anne to join him in the center of the boat where the fishing gear is stowed.

"Be careful, Anne," he calls to her as she stands up in the boat. She giggles. "I know, Daddy. I won't fall." She moves to the center without a hitch. He watches her and smiles.

"Dad, can I take off the life jacket?" she jokes. He watches her with a twinkle in his eyes.

Anne gets a small exquisite fishing lure. Her first Christmas gift. It glimmers in the sun that has brightened as if in anticipation of a generous fishing day. She holds it like a prize. Mr. Michael shows her how to throw the line. He takes his time and she listens like a ballet dancer. She loosens just an adequate amount of line into the water, which causes small fish to jump.

"Daddy! Daddy! I see some fishes! I see some fishes!" she exclaims.

"Yes Anne, the sea is a whole big yard of fish, just fish, my child."

"I want to catch some. I wish Mami was here with us."

"I know, babe, but you know Mami 'fraid the sea," he replies. She shakes her head knowingly.

"It's okay, Anne — we will catch some big ones for her, all right?"

"Thank you, Daddy."

Anne catches her first fish and loses it when she is reeling it in. She pouts. Daddy gives her the "don't give up look." She acknowledges it and swings out again with renewed vigor. Her daddy catches the big ones to sell later and for their home. Anne catches small ones that make her roll her eyes.

Soon the boat is filled with all kinds of fish. Grouper, snapper, jacks and bonita flop around in the bottom of the boat. Anne is overjoyed. Just before lunch Anne feels an enormous tug on her line. She gasps. Her father catches her surprised look. He immediately comes over and takes hold of the line.

"Give it to me, Anne. I will help you bring him in."

"No!" she screams, "I want to do it by myself."

He is surprised. His face grimaces but he lets go of the line with a strange look in his eye. She grips the line like a warrior and pulls with all her might. He watches her with worry but he does not intervene. With a grim determination that involves muscle strains and face contortions the deed is done. She is breathing hard but a small silver fish flops on deck. Another gasp and then they both burst out laughing.

"It so small, Daddy," she exclaims.

"Yup, I thought you had caught a whale," he laughs.

"Me too, Daddy. I am sorry I got vex."

"It's okay, baby, you did good."

They hug and laugh till the fish asks them why they are laughing at it.

They both jump and Anne almost falls off the boat. Her father grabs her just in time.

"Oh, baby!" he screams. "What the hell!" She jumps up on him. He holds her tight and they back away from the fish. The fish sits up and watches them.

"So you gonna eat my family and you think it is funny?"

They are speechless. Mr. Michael slowly reaches for the knife in his pocket. Anne trembles against her father.

"Well, you can eat them for your Christmas but I don't taste good in broth, okay?"

I was not born for your pot, if you don't mind." The fish suddenly sprouts wings and dives back into the water. They both scream out.

"Wake up, Anne! Wake up, darling!" Mrs. Michael shakes Anne who is slumped on the floor.

"Mami, Mami, the fish coming! The fish coming!" Anne screams and flies into her mother's arms.

"You were just dreaming, honey. The fish is in the sea."

"Oh Mami, the fish was coming for me," she sobs.

"It's okay now baby, you safe. I will not cook fish today, okay?"

Mr. Michael enters the room. "Anne and I going out to catch some big ones for the Christmas dinner," he exclaims. "You ready, honey?"

She does not answer.

"What's the matter, Anne?" her father asks. Her mom signals him to stop but he continues. "Daddy bought a nice fishing line for you."

"I don't want it, Daddy, the fish will get me," she exclaims sobbing.

"No they won't, honey."

"What happen?" he whispers to his wife.

She whispers back. "She was dreaming." He smiles.

"Okay honey, come here. Let me tell you about the first time that my father brought me fishing and the fish that tried to dance on the boat." Anne starts to laugh, a giggle at first and then huge torrents of joy. It infects them all as they head to the kitchen to prepare lunch, fish broth actually.



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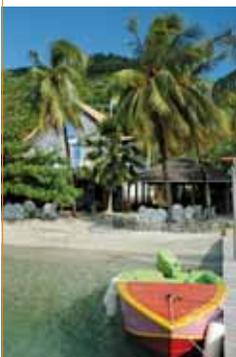
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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

DECEMBER & JANUARY 2008/9

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-Iolair 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 Iolair charts. Fair tides!

December 2008		January 2009	
DATE	TIME	DATE	TIME
1	1454	22	0711
2	1540	23	0756
3	1625	24	0842
4	1708	25	0930
5	1751	26	1020
6	1834	27	1111
7	1920	28	1201 (new)
8	2008	29	1250
9	2102	30	1338
10	2201	31	1423
11	2306	1	1506
12	0000 (full)	2	1549
13	0013	3	1631
14	0120	4	1714
15	0223	5	1800
16	0320	6	1849
17	0412	7	1943
18	0459	8	2034
19	0544	9	2148
20	0628	10	2255
		11	2359
		12	0000 (full)
		13	0102
		14	0158
		15	0249
		16	0337
		17	0442
		18	0507
		19	0552
		20	0638
		21	0726
		22	0815
		23	0906
		24	0957
		25	1046
		26	1135
		27	1221 (new)
		28	1305
		29	1348
		30	1403
		31	1513
			1557

STOCKING STUFFERS FOR SAILORS



Aaaarrrggghhh!!!!!! "Present Day" is almost present, and there are still a whole bunch of names on your list that you haven't crossed off yet. You can't give a set of dominoes to *everybody*. What to get your former neighbor who has bought a boat and plans to start cruising next year? Your buddy-boat's resident foodie? The folks you met in the boatyard last summer who kept an eye on your boat while you were away? The gang who will be at the Christmas Eve potluck? A few little extras for your very own significant other shipmate?

Here are a few small ideas, and a couple of larger ones. And don't fret if you can't get an item by the holidays — remember, you're in *mañana* country. Make a gift certificate for now, and you'll have another excuse for a get-together later.

To Keep in Touch

If you want to blow a couple hundred bucks on that special sailor who needs to be connected to work, the grandkids, or just cyberspace in general, here's an item that will slide into a two-foot-long stocking, Shakespeare Electronic Products Group's



Galaxy Style 5248 Wi-Fi Antenna helps extend the range of laptops and other Wi-Fi enabled devices that can be connected to external antennas. The sturdy 61cm white antenna features an 8dB gain and operates on the 2.4 GHz bandwidth. It incorporates high-tech PCB copper elements and includes an N-type connector. The 5248 Wi-Fi antenna's unique 25.4 mm, 14-thread stainless steel sleeve-collar ferrule design accommodates larger diameter coaxial cables. Compatible with Shakespeare's 4187 and 5187 style mounts, this powerful little Wi-Fi antenna is DC-grounded, and carries a five-year limited warranty.

Available at *chandleries* and at www.shakespeare-marine.com.

A Pinch of Old Salt



Don "I've been sailing in the Caribbean for 50 years" Street shares timeless cruising tips in his DVD "Street Wise, Part 1". Back in the 1990s, Don contributed to a video magazine called *Sailing Quarterly*. This DVD, along with the soon-to-be-released Part 2, is a collection of his favorite clips from that publication. He shares useful knowledge on a number of seamanship subjects, including coming alongside a dock short-handed; raising an anchor when the windlass gives up — without breaking your back; cruising with kids (using his then eight-year-old son Mark as an example); and sail repairs you can do yourself, whether to save money, linger longer in a remote anchorage or save the day at sea. Along the way, Street debunks the myth of the significance of giving or taking a tow-line in regard to a salvage claim, and demonstrates that ice really does sink in Jack

Iron rum. The knot-tying and whipping segment may seem a bit slow, but when you eventually need one of these skills in a pinch, you'll be glad you paid attention. At about US\$30, this would be a thoughtful gift for newbie cruisers or for your yacht club back home whose members are dreaming of heading out.

Available from *Armchair Sailor/Bluewater Books* (www.bluewaterweb.com) in the US, *Imray* (www.imray.com) and *Kelvin Hughes* (www.kelvinhughes.com) in the UK; or direct from Don at streetolaire@hotmail.com.

A Boon for the Fumble-Fingered

If your crew hasn't watched Don Street's DVDs and still can't tie a proper clove hitch, a couple of these babies in his or her stocking will be appreciated a lot more than getting yelled at next time you dock or raft up. Using the convenient new 401-R Fender Hangers from *Accon Marine*, you simply attach the fender to a loop that snaps into a fixed base. An innovative quick release allows the loop to remain attached to the fender line when separated. By eliminating the need for repetitive tying and untying, these hangers provide effortless placement and removal of fenders. Crafted from 316 stainless steel, the durable hangers can withstand even the most abrasive marine environment. Easy to install, the flush Fender Hangers are surface mounted and require no cut-outs. In the US\$30 price range, they are available with 1.25cm or 2.5cm loops to accommodate most fender line.



Available at *chandleries* or at www.acconmarine.com.

Make a Foodie Basket

For the cuisine-minded cruiser or the sailor bound for a long ocean voyage facing a diet of canned food, little things in the galley mean a lot. In the Caribbean, you can pick up some small items that add big returns to a meal. Hot pepper sauce is produced in a variety of colors, flavors and velocities on almost every island. Give a bottle, and the recipient will think of you often! Spice baskets from the market or gift shops in Grenada also make a lovely little gift, and after the spices have been used the cute basket takes on a new life. (Don't forget to get a tiny nutmeg grater for the rum punch and eggnog.) A couple of saltwater fishing lures will also be welcome. Hey, if the recipient doesn't fancy using them to catch a meal, some of them would make zany Christmas tree ornaments....



Give any of these inexpensive items as individually wrapped prezzies, or gang them up in a flour-sack tote bag from the market. Throw in a Caribbean cookbook (see page 42 for two examples) and the chef might be inspired to invite you aboard for a meal.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page
Hold that Call!



You really don't want to make a satellite call to locate the cell phone somebody misplaced on the boat, and your Admiral is tired of asking, "Where did you put the GPS this time?" Portable electronics require safe and convenient storage on board. Beckson Marine offers its Soft-Mate radio holders to keep handheld radios and cell phones in a handy spot. Easy to install and under US\$20 each, they are available in two sizes. The larger HH-8 unit is ideal for large handheld radios, GPS devices and scanners. The HH-81 mini unit is great for storing smaller handheld radios, cell phones, eyeglass cases, pens, pencils and calculators. Both models are available in black and white. If users don't want to drill screw holes or just want a temporary mount, the HH-Series is available with a trustworthy suction cup mount. Beckson Marine's Soft-Mate line also includes holders for knives, winch handles, books, binoculars, beverages and emergency equipment. The neat freak on board will thank you.

Available at chandleries or www.beckson.com.

Keeping Your Friends Sweet

In the tropics, people spend a lot of time in the sea — swimming, snorkeling, diving, windsurfing, bathing or just cooling off. But every dip wants a fresh water rinse or shower and fresh water is often at a premium on boats. For the girly-girl cruiser on your list, or perhaps that slightly sour-smelling single-hander pal, here's a super new product: Savon de Mer shampoo and body gel. Savon de Mer lathers richly in salt water as well as fresh, is effective for shampooing and bathing, and contains special emollients to counteract the drying effect of salt and sun on your hair and skin. It is pH neutral, biodegradable and leaves no residue. Move over, Joy.

Available at selected stores, boat shows and savondemer@gmail.com.



Worth 1,000 Words

Antigua-based photographer Alexis Andrews has created something that's a bit too big to fit in anything but a really big stocking. But for that certain sailor who loves traditional wooden boats, at US\$65 this deluxe two-volume boxed set of photo books, *Carriacou Sloops*, might be the perfect Caribbean-themed gift.

Available at bookshops and at www.indiancreek-books.com.



Everyone Will Love You

Do you have some well-loved cruising buddies who are avoided by everyone else in the anchorage? Your gift to them this Christmas could change their lives — and everyone else's. Give them a nice new set of wind generator blades by Spreco. The introductory price is 176 Euro. These can replace the blades on Air Marine wind generators and are reported by users to be "remarkably quiet". The blades do not



require any modification to the Air Marine unit and the installation is simple. The new blades are easily identified by their bright blue color. In addition to their quiet operation and no loss of output, the blades start turning at a lower wind speed, thus increasing the power generated. All together now, "Silent night..."

Available at www.silentwindgenerator.com.

DIY

And last but not least are the gifts you make or do yourself. Give a massage, a haircut, or an hour of your time in a friend's engine room. Bake a batch of cookies (see page 45) or crochet a home-made "croakie" for sunglasses. Frame a photo of a special moment or decoupage a box with a memorable paper chart. Suggest a fun day out together. Use your creativity to give a gift that will be long remembered.



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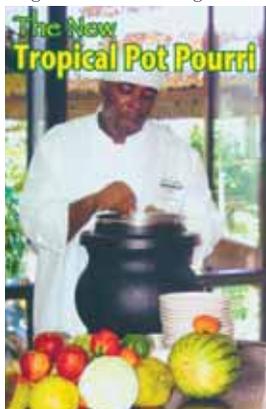
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A Potpourri of Tropical Recipes

FROM BELMONT ESTATE TO YOU

The New Tropical Pot Pourri. House of Hope Society, Kingstown, St. Vincent. Soft cover, spiral bound, color photos, 214 pages. US\$20.

Thirty-odd years ago, Bishop Cuthbert Woodroffe and his congregation at St. George's Cathedral in Kingstown, St. Vincent, were trying to raise funds for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Anglican Diocese of the Windward Islands.



In response, a group of parishioners and their friends got together and produced a cookbook of local recipes, which sold well. The book was called *Tropical Pot Pourri* and is now available in an up-dated edition, this time to raise funds for the House of Hope Society and the cathedral's organ fund.

The House of Hope Society was formed after Archdeacon Charles Adams saw the problems encountered by AIDS patients who had no family to care for them while they were dying. A building to house a hospice for the terminally ill has now been purchased in Kingstown and funds are once again needed to sustain the project and provide on-going care for those whose own families are unable to meet their needs.

The New Tropical Pot Pourri contains recipes using locally grown ingredients and locally caught animals. The recipes make interesting (and possibly cringe-making if you're a vegetarian) reading. Where else can you find instructions on how to prepare and

serve maniocu (opossum), iguana or agouti, for example?

All the usual culinary sections on different kinds of meals and snacks — appetizers, soups, main courses, pastries, desserts, etcetera — are there, with clear directions and lists of ingredients. My favourite section is "Miscellaneous" where literally everything that couldn't fit in to any other section is found. In no apparent order, it covers meals for diabetics, tips for caring for your dog, wedding anniversaries, making tea for 50 guests, preparing for a cruise on a yacht (particularly useful for *Compass* readers!), freezing, frying, pressure-cooking and flowers, among other things.

The book is on good quality paper with stiff card covers, and it is spiral-bound so can be opened out flat to make for easier use while cooking. Colourful photos introduce each section. The sponsors' ads are a little distracting but we have to appreciate their contribution to the production of this excellent little book. It would make a worthwhile addition to any kitchen and, at EC\$50 (US\$20), it's also priced just right for Christmas presents for those friends for whom you didn't know what to get.

Tropical Pot Pourri is currently available at the House of Hope Society office in Stoney Ground, Kingstown, St. Vincent, but arrangements are being made for it to also be sold from St. Mary's Rectory office, next to the Anglican Church, in Port Elizabeth, Bequia.

Great Caribbean Recipes. Island Recipes Unlimited, St. George's, Grenada. Soft cover, spiral bound, color photos, 80 pages. ISBN 978-976-8212-6.

Great Caribbean Recipes is the third cookbook produced by Island Recipes Unlimited. Its name is a little misleading as all the recipes in the book come from Grenada: from the restaurant of Belmont Estate in St. Patrick parish. But the ingredients are available throughout the Caribbean and a short introduction at the beginning of the book gives descriptions of some of the fruit and vegetables required in the recipes, in case they are known by different names in different territories.

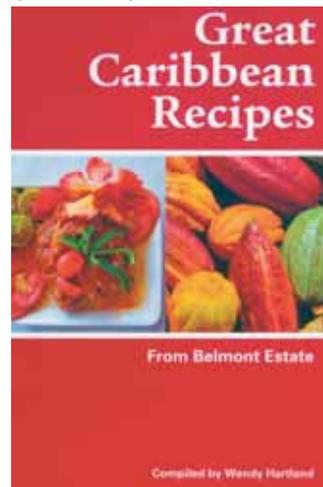
Grenada's Belmont Estate is an agri-tourism plantation with a cocoa farm with processing facilities for organic chocolate, fruit orchards, goat dairy and other agri-cultural attractions. It has a museum which is run by the Belmont Estate Heritage Foundation, formed to preserve and promote a greater appreciation for Grenada's heritage and culture, and it has a restaurant where all the tasty dishes in the book have been tried and tested.

The cookbook contains a small but varied selection of recipes in eleven different sections. There's a separate section on chocolate/cocoa dishes, not surprising given the source of the recipes.

Instructions are easy to read and clear enough for even a novice cook. The wipe-clean pages are a boon for cooks as messy as I am. The ringback format makes for easier use in the kitchen or galley, as the book can lie flat on the counter while you are cooking. There are not many photos but they are bright and colourful and guaranteed to make your mouth water.

Sales of this cookbook will aid the charitable arm of the Foundation, Heart and Hands of Grenada, in the organization of community development programmes. Its size makes it another perfect stocking stuffer for Christmas.

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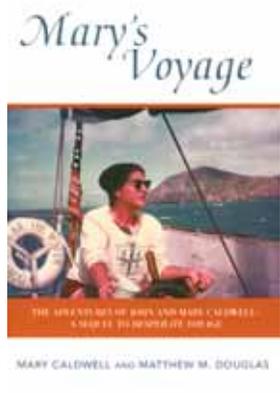
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ADVENTURE'S WIFE

Mary's Voyage. by Mary Caldwell and Matthew M. Douglas. Sheridan House, © 2008, Paperback. ISBN: 978-1-57409-7.



Mary Caldwell is the widow of adventurer John Caldwell who died in St. Vincent in 1998. *Mary's Voyage* is less an autobiography, as the title suggests, than a memoir of her years with the sailor, author, and hotelier known in the Lesser Antilles as "Johnny Coconut." And the book really is the story of John as recalled by Mary and told by a co-author who writes on her behalf.

John Caldwell, who died at age 76, was a legend in his own time. How much of a legend he is today I don't know. It seems probable he is remembered only by the old hands in the islands who knew him or knew of him, and there are fewer and fewer of them every year. But one thing will live a long time, as it already has, and that is his first book, *Desperate Voyage*.

Published in the US in 1949, the book made him a sailor-celebrity. The narrative recounts an epic solo sail across the South Pacific in *Pagan*, a 27-foot wooden cutter. Caldwell had served in the US Merchant Marine in the early years of the Second World War, traveling through the Far East, but he knew nothing about sailing when he departed Panama, bound for Australia and his wife — Mary. They had met in 1944 while serving in the Australian Air Force, and were married before the war ended. John, after rejoining the merchant marine, returned to the States to be discharged in 1946, while Mary remained in her homeland. So what there was structurally was a kind of modern *Odyssey* trying to get home to Penelope.

Like *Odysseus*, Caldwell faced countless trials, which culminated in a storm that left *Pagan* dismasted. Caldwell drifted under a jury-rig and without water or food for 49 days, before the hull struck a reef and he was washed ashore hanging onto a spar. On Tuvutha, a remote island in the Fijis, he was nursed back to health. It is his account of his survival that makes the book one that has never been out of print and has been translated into a dozen languages.

In time, the Caldwells settled in southern California and started a family. John returned to college and took a job as a social worker. But their dream was to sail away and so, not without the help of royalties from his book, they bought *Tropic Seas*, a 36-foot Tahiti ketch. Beginning in 1952, they sailed to Australia for two years, and along the way, in Tahiti, had their third son.

Settling in Australia, they found jobs and after a time built the 46-foot ketch *Outward Bound*, a Francis Herreshoff design. In 1958, they continued their westward wandering. John had written a second book, *Family at Sea* (1956), about their Pacific crossing, and the proceeds from that helped finance the voyage that took them across the Indian and Atlantic oceans.

Like countless others, on reaching the Lesser Antilles they ran out of money and got in the chartering game. For the next five years, working out of English Harbor, they chartered *Outward Bound* up and down the islands. Caldwell started to plant coconuts everywhere he went and, with the stern of the ketch looking with its seedlings something like the *Bounty* with breadfruit, this was how he first went ashore on a barren, mosquito-ridden swamp of an islet in the Grenadines called Prune.

Caldwell, having had a kind of vision, talked the

government into letting him lease the islet for 99 years for one dollar. With no relevant experience and no money to speak of, he went to work. With Mary, his two sons, and workers from Union Island, he transformed the swamp into Palm Island, the beach club and residential community. If *The Odyssey* was the prototype for *Desperate Voyage*, Herman Wouk's *Don't Stop the Carnival* (1965) was a model for the Palm Island development.

After opening for Christmas 1967, the resort had its ups and downs but it was successful, in part because readers of *Desperate Voyage* came from as far away as Russia just to meet the author. Upon John's death, Mary sold out and Palm exists today under different ownership.

After opening for Christmas 1967, the resort had its ups and downs but it was successful, in part because readers of *Desperate Voyage* came from as far away as Russia just to meet the author. Upon John's death, Mary sold out and Palm exists today under different ownership. We don't learn much about John's wife in *Mary's Voyage*, really. She casts herself as a long-suffering but strong "seawife," an anxious mother, an anti-intellectual, and a full-time companion in John's adventuring. Mary took her turns on watch even as she oversaw the boys' schoolwork. She suffered chronic seasickness even as she cooked and cleaned. Later, in the charterboat phase, she did the bookkeeping, cooking, and other chores while John did the sailing and regaling. On Palm, she helped in every way, and designed the original beach club buildings. Through most of the account, this is what you get. John was the dominant personality, the indomitable spirit, and the voyage was his; she was along for the ride. She had been preceded by women like Gwen Tompkins and Exy Johnson, who brought up children at sea with their adventurous husbands.

Left to her own devices, *Mary's Voyage* would not likely exist. John's first two books covered their early years, many others covered chartering in the 1960s, and plenty of press was given to Palm Island. However, there has been the idea of turning *Desperate Voyage* into a movie for decades. The problem was that the narrative of a single man's survival at sea, no matter how astounding, was unpromising movie material.

Matthew M. Douglas, the co-writer, is advertised on the book's back cover as having written a screenplay based on *Desperate Voyage*. (He is, according to Google, the author of one book, *The Lives of Butterflies*, a natural-history book published by a university press in 1987.) *Mary's Voyage* reads like a prose draft for a screenplay, for in Douglas's telling, *Desperate Voyage* is alluded to all along the storyline until, toward the end, we are given the account of John's epic voyage, enhanced not only by his final visit to the Fijis but by an account of his unhappy childhood — which, perhaps, explains it all.

Well, it could work — a movie based on the long arc of the Caldwells' journey, with *Desperate Voyage* presented as something recalled in dialogue and flashbacks. But *Mary's Voyage* is, as a book, flawed. Chiefly, there is no character development or change, and no conflict among the characters. Late in the book we learn all was not well with the Caldwell family, nor with the larger Palm Island family, but by then the sentimental narrative has pretty much lulled you into reverie. The narrative itself is thick with cliché ("teeth of the storm") and sudsy, formulaic dialogue. Copyediting errors jar both with fact (Douglas Terman, not Doug Terman, wrote thrillers not mystery tales) and nautical usage ("Like all ketches, she sported two raked masts... The smaller sails on a ketch are easier to handle than the large sheets of a sloop.") An important final chapter is called "Secrets of Desperate Voyage Revealed" (sic), but it turns out there are no secrets — the story is all in John's own book. Further, certain important details of motivation and their personal lives are left out. And the underlying sensibility, surprisingly, is rooted less in Third World realities than in neo-colonial notions of "paradise."

John Caldwell was an unusual man, a contradictory man. He was the personification of the anti-establishment, independent spirit that went to sea to escape dull routine and seek adventure. He wanted that and he wanted a family too. And then he wanted his own island, his own "paradise." A driven, goal-oriented man, he was a ferocious worker in an islandscape considered idyllic. He was also something of a socialist in an upscale capitalist environment. He was a man on the margins of the world when there were still margins — unspoiled coral reefs and pristine island beaches, all open and free for the taking; unpolluted seas, uncrowded anchorages, and peoples still unaffected by Western industrial society. The experiences of John and Mary Caldwell simply cannot be replicated today, and we are the richer for their remembrances.

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SERVING AT SEA BY SHIRLEY HALL

EGGPLANT OR MELONGENE

Sometimes known as melongene in the islands, eggplant ranks among the world's most popular vegetables. Eggplant is native to southeastern India and what is now Pakistan, where it was first domesticated over 4,000 years ago. In its home region, the eggplant is used in many local dishes and carries a wide range of names. The eggplant's species name, *Melongena*, is derived from an ancient name for eggplant in Sanskrit.

Related to the tomato, potato and the pepper, eggplant is the only member of the nightshade family to originate in the Eastern Hemisphere. Just as tomatoes were once believed to be poisonous, eggplant was believed to cause mental illness, and became known as the "Mad Apple". The Spanish explorers believed it to be a powerful aphrodisiac. When a variety with egg-shaped white fruit was grown in Germany around 1600, the English gave it the name "eggplant". The Spanish introduced eggplant to Brazil before 1650.

Eating eggplant is good for you. It can reduce high cholesterol. One cup of cooked eggplant has 27 calories, one gram of protein, six grams of carbohydrates, two grams of fiber (if eaten with the skin), plus some phosphorus and potassium. Eggplant has an agreeable texture and slightly bitter taste. Cooked eggplant soaks up a lot of oil, so to prevent this, slice, salt and press the air and water out before cooking. To peel or not to peel the eggplant depends on the recipe.

Eggplant can be baked with onions and chopped tomatoes, or stuffed with minced meat. It can be sliced and grilled, pickled, steamed, sautéed or curried. It is versatile and works well with tomatoes, onions, garlic and cheese. Popular dishes include Eggplant Parmesan, ratatouille, and moussaka. For babaganoush, blend roasted eggplant, garlic, lemon juice and olive oil together and use as a dip or as a sandwich spread — great on *sada roti*.

My puppy loves raw eggplant!

Easiest Eggplant

Two eggplants
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
Jerk, geera or curry spice
Hot pepper to taste
1/2 Cup grated cheese

Wash and slice the eggplant into rounds, leaving the skin on. Put in a baking pan and coat with oil. Then sprinkle with the spice of your choice. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes, turning once with a spatula. Sprinkle with cheese and turn oven off. Keep in oven ten more minutes, until cheese melts. Serves four.

Eggplant Casserole

One large eggplant
1 teaspoon grated onion
1/8 teaspoon salt
4 Tablespoons butter
4 Tablespoons flour
1 1/4 Cups milk
1 green pepper, chopped
3/4 Cup grated cheese
2 eggs, separated
Hot pepper to taste

Cook peeled and cubed eggplant in boiling water with onion, salt and pepper until tender. Drain. Melt butter and blend in flour. Add milk gradually, stirring constantly. Add chopped pepper, cheese and slightly beaten egg yolks, hot pepper and eggplant. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Bake in greased oven dish 40 minutes at 350°F. Serves 6.

Ratatouille

2 Tablespoons olive oil
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 eggplant, cubed
2 green peppers, chopped
4 large tomatoes, chopped
3 potatoes, sliced 1/4 inch thick
1 teaspoon dried basil
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
2 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley (or use two tablespoons Italian seasoning).

In a 4-quart pot, heat oil. Add garlic and onions and cook until soft. Stir in eggplant until coated with oil, and then add peppers. Cover pot and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep

the vegetables from sticking. Add tomatoes, potatoes, and herbs; mix well. Cover, and simmer about 15 to 20 minutes. The eggplant should be tender, but not mushy. Serve hot or cold. Serves 4.



Stuffed Eggplant Creole Style

2 eggplants, about 1 pound each
1/4 Cup olive oil
3 Tablespoons butter
1 small onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Cup peeled and chopped ripe tomatoes
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
Hot pepper to taste
1/2 pound cooked minced meat (ham or beef)
2 Cups fresh breadcrumbs
2 green chives, chopped
2 Tablespoons chopped parsley

Halve the eggplants lengthwise and make a 1/2-inch thick shell by spooning out the pulp. Chop pulp and set aside. Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan and gently cook the eggplant shells, cut side down, for 5 minutes. Put shells in a shallow baking dish. Add butter to frying pan, with any remaining oil, and sauté onions and garlic for 2 minutes. Add eggplant pulp, tomatoes, thyme and hot pepper and cook until most of the liquid has evaporated, leaving a thick mixture. Remove from heat and mix in meat, breadcrumbs, chives and parsley. Fill the eggplant shells and bake in a preheated 400°F oven for 15 minutes until slightly browned.

Fried Parmesan Eggplant

1 eggplant
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 Cup cornmeal
Hot pepper to taste
2 cloves minced garlic, or garlic powder
Vegetable oil
1/4 Cup grated Parmesan cheese

Peel and cut eggplant into 3/4-inch strips; sprinkle with salt, and let stand 30 minutes. Pat dry. Combine cornmeal, pepper, and garlic or garlic powder. Dredge eggplant strips in cornmeal mixture, and fry in deep, hot oil (375°F) until golden brown, cooking only a few at a time. Sprinkle with cheese.

For the Gardener

Eggplant is grown in many shapes, sizes and colors. Anyone will become a true fan of eggplant that is selected, grown, and prepared properly. Two or three plants will yield enough for most families. Eggplant is best started from transplants spaced 18 to 24 inches apart. Eggplant prefers a well-drained, sunny location for the best results. Use starter fertilizer for transplanting and a high nitrogen fertilizer when the plants are half grown and again immediately after harvest of the first fruits. Water the plants regularly and add a potassium-rich fertilizer with each watering when the eggplant fruits begin to swell.

To test if the fruit is ripe, hold it in your palm and gently press it with your thumb. If the flesh presses in but bounces back, it is ready. If the flesh is hard and does not give, the eggplant is too young. Eggplants bruise easily, so harvest gently and cut the eggplant with the cap and some of the stem attached.

Give of Yourself at Christmas



by Ross Mavis

There is no better gift than a gift from your galley to express sincere love and caring. A special box of cookies, fudge, candied nuts or chocolates makes a wonderful gift of love.

I remember vividly my first Christmas away from home. As the days dwindled down to a precious few before the 25th of December I became extremely homesick. I was 20 years old, working as a banker for the Bank of Montreal in Whitehorse, Yukon. The temperature had fallen to 40°F below zero and I missed the Christmas comforts of my family thousands of miles away.

Imagine my excitement at getting a parcel from home. Inside the large brown-paper wrapped box were several metal containers packed in shredded paper to cushion their trip of some 3,000 miles. Some were round tins and one was a large rectangular tin. Each had tightly fitting lids, carefully sealed with tape. To this very day, I remember gingerly removing the sticky tape and gently slipping off the lids to expose the interiors.

The sight of Mum's Christmas butter cookies, shortbreads, macaroons, dark fruit-cake with almond paste and icing was overwhelming. In another tin, multi-colored, hard ribbon candy glistened like jewels in a treasure chest. Under this layer of gems was hidden a trove of peanut brittle. It was as if I had been transported back home for the holidays. My immediate pleasure was of the olfactory kind as I enjoyed the



fragrance of butter, coconut, cinnamon, cloves and almond. The crunch of ribbon candy and the deep strawberry sweetness as it filled my senses was over-powering. I must admit that now, almost half a century later, I truly understand the love and caring that went into these gifts from home.

Why not consider some holiday baking for gifts this year? Use a little imagination when it comes to containers for your home cooked gifts. Inexpensive glass or plastic jars with lids make classy candy containers when topped with a piece of fabric and a ribbon. Kids can make a great gift for Nana or Grampy by using new plastic flowerpots. Have your children suggest a type of candy or nuts to fill the pot and add a dried flower inserted into this unique "potting soil".

Baskets lined with foil or plastic wrap also afford an easy way to deliver cookies or baked treats to a neighboring yacht. Metal containers are best used if you plan on sending these gifts through the mail.

You may find now is none too soon to plan your gift baking and to get it delivered. Cookies, candy or other confections are enjoyable at any time of the holidays. Here are some holiday food treats that stand up well for extended delivery periods.

Peanut Brittle

This candy forms part of my early childhood memories of my father. He enjoyed sweets and would munch large quantities of this brittle until Mum would remind him he'd had enough. I often marveled at how easily Mum could whip up a batch of this great crunchy treat.

- 1 Cup light corn syrup
- 1 1/2 Cups white sugar
- 1/2 Cup water
- 2 Cups shelled peanuts
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (unless peanuts are salted)
- 1 teaspoon baking soda

In a saucepan with heavy bottom, combine corn syrup, sugar and water, mixing well over medium heat. Carefully boil mixture until it registers 234°F (112°C) or forms a soft thread when a small amount of the sugar syrup is dropped into ice water.

At this point, add peanuts and salt if they are unsalted. Continue to cook briefly and don't let the peanuts get too brown. Remove from heat, add baking soda and stir vigorously. Pour onto a greased baking tray. Cool. Break into pieces by striking with a table knife handle. Place in a waxed paper-lined tin.

Frosted Butter Cookies

Butter cookies are a holiday favorite that can be cut into many shapes using whatever cookie cutter you wish. Colored sugar crystals can be sprinkled on the cookies before baking, or bake them plain and eat them that way or add icing when they are cool.

- 1 Cup butter, softened
- 1 Cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla flavouring
- 2 1/2 Cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add egg, lemon juice and vanilla. Mix well. Add dry ingredients and mix well. When mixture is formed into dough, chill before using for easier handling.

On waxed paper, roll out a portion of the dough to about 1/4 inch thick. Cut into desired shapes with cookie cutters. Place on ungreased baking trays and bake for 7 to 8 minutes until lightly browned.

Have a happy holiday season no matter where you may be moored.

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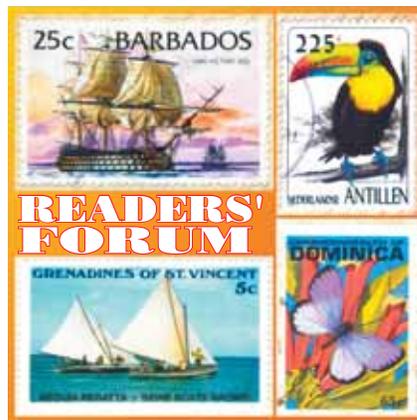
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Dear Compass,

We have been following the various letters and comments in recent issues of the *Compass* about issues with Customs and Immigration in some of the Eastern Caribbean countries, as well as the news about eSeaClear and, while we understand that eSeaClear is optional (as opposed to mandatory, like APIS) and easy to use, we don't see any value to yachtsmen, especially when one considers the number of issues that need attention.

[Editor's note: eSeaClear is the pilot project for voluntary electronic yacht clearance, www.eSeaClear.com, recently introduced in St. Lucia and the British Virgin Islands. APIS was an Advance Passenger Information System introduced in early 2007, which legally required all air and sea carriers, including yachts, to fill out a detailed form online and submit it to the next port of entry according to a strict timetable relevant to times of departure and/or arrival, with different advance times depending on whether the yacht was arriving in, departing from, or traveling within the CARICOM area. Basically unworkable, APIS has generally been abandoned in regard to yachts in the Caribbean.]

Use of the online system to create vessel records and travel logs may be more convenient if the yacht has wireless internet access on board, but if one must visit an internet café ("...assumed that a significant number of yachtsmen are able to access the Internet from land-based computers"), that visit adds another step as well as additional time and cost to the clearance process.

While one can enter departure and entry information during one visit to the website, the yachtsman must still make TWO visits to Customs and Immigration, one for departing and one for entering. The only exceptions to that process that we know of are St. Lucia if one wants to stay three days or less and Dominica, where one can clear in and out while staying two weeks. In addition, both St. Lucia and Grenada require stamping passports to clear out. AND, in Hillsborough (Carriacou), Soufriere (St. Lucia), Union Island (SVG), Portsmouth (Dominica) and Charlestown (Nevis), the offices are some distance apart, in two cases not very far, but in the other cases, a considerable walk or a taxi ride.

We have never spent much time completing the paper forms but have waited as much as two hours, either in line or for an officer to arrive, to do the clearing in or clearing out. The suggestion that one call ahead on a cell phone to see if there are staff in the office during posted working hours begs the issue: there should be someone there during posted hours and asking that the yachtsman purchase a cell phone for each coverage area, as well as maintain a list of all the phone numbers for Customs, Immigration and Port Control for each port on each island, is an absurd suggestion.

We can see the eSeaClear process actually taking longer than the current paper form: if a country requires information not required online, the officer must ask those questions and write the answers on each copy of the form; i.e., Grenada wants our cell phone number and the manufacturer and model of our main GPS.

With respect to the required online check-in in Le Marin, the French have ALWAYS been less bureaucratic and their process faster, even with their new online requirement, not to mention there are no fees. So suggesting that Martinique convert to eSeaClear is arrogant, to say the least.

If the data collected by eSeaClear will be used for marketing and analysis of the yachting tourism sector, we might be inclined to agree, although we object to doing the data entry for that purpose under the guise of its value to us. When Dick Stoute (past president and secretary of the Barbados Yachting Association) states that "this electronic clearance will encourage more people to sail through the region and spend more money" (*Compass*, October 2008), he is only stating his opinion but offers nothing to support his statement. If Mr. Stoute is suggesting that yachtsmen will choose their destinations because of the availability of eSeaClear, he is mistaken: eSeaClear provides no

added value to the yachtsman and thus will not be a consideration or factor in trip planning.

What WILL encourage more people to sail through the Caribbean and spend more money is the implementation of the many initiatives to enhance the yachting experience that the ECLAC studies of 2002 identified. Keats Compton's organization(s), the Caribbean Marine Association (CMA) and the Marine Industry Association of St. Lucia (MIASL), were created as a result of the ECLAC studies and were thus mandated to implement the recommendations FOR THE FINANCIAL BENEFIT OF THE ISLANDS' CITIZENS.

On the other hand, if eSeaClear is the precursor to the OECS (Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States) or CARICOM (Caribbean Economic Community) pass through all member states for yachts (as has been promised various times in the past several years), we are heartily in favor of it, but tell us that's the purpose: don't try to fool us with lofty words about inherent value.

This is a process issue, not a forms or data issue, as CMA claims. Computers should be used to streamline the process, not just because they're there. The issues and concerns with Customs and Immigration described by yachtsmen in the past several years of the *Compass* all have to do with the process, not the length of time required to complete the paper forms, or even the forms themselves. The regulations seem to change, sometimes from day to day, from port to port, and even from official to official, within a given country. Yachtsmen are hard-pressed to understand what is required, as often times, an official will bypass or ignore a regulation, and that news travels as the current and correct way in that particular country.

While each country has the right to its laws and regulations concerning Customs and Immigration, and the process for clearing in and out for the visiting yacht, there is no single source, even within each country, where we can obtain the correct information: not even a sign on the office doors as to hours open and what to do if one arrives after hours. In addition, there seems to be room for exceptions: we listened to a conversation on the high frequency radio a couple of weeks ago with a yacht leaving Trinidad for Grenada in the face of the incoming Hurricane Omar's heavy seas, as his time in Trinidad was up and Immigration insisted he leave.

The Caribbean Marine Association and the various marine trades groups on the islands would better spend their time acting as advocates for their yachting customers in relationship with Customs and Immigration, rather than jumping on the bandwagon of slick Internet applications that do not address the issues. eSeaClear is another example of the lack of understanding of the concerns of yachtsmen and demonstrates, once more, the need for the marine trades groups and the tourism officials to talk with their customers, not relying on a select few individuals, prior to implementing across-the-board changes.

**John and Melody Pompa
S/V Second Millennium**

Dear Compass,

Dear Messers Huybs, Johnston and any other sailors who have problems with Customs and Immigration and written letters about them in the October and other recent issues of *Caribbean Compass*: BEFORE you write to the *Compass* (and bore your fellow sailors at happy hour with your tales of woe), write your letter and send one copy to the Prime Minister of the country in question, one copy to the Minister of Tourism and one to the Head of the Tourist Department/Board. Once you have done this, wait a week or ten days, and then send your letter along with the replies (or non-replies) from the above people to the *Compass*.

Possibly if the ridiculous stands sometimes (but not always) taken by Customs and Immigration are brought to the attention of the above-listed individuals, changes might happen. Letters to the editor of the *Compass* do little good unless the case is brought to the attention of the above-listed people as well.

On another matter, regattas in Grenada, the Carriacou Sailing Series has the best dates; Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival has bad timing.

Immediately after the first Sunday in January, bookings for hotels, crewed charter boats and bareboats traditionally go dead flat. They stay that way until the beginning of the third week in January, when bookings again begin to climb. By the end of January, hotels, crewed yachts and bareboats are usually almost fully booked.

The Carriacou Sailing Series, being in the low January period, means that the competitors, visiting spectators and international journalists can find accommodations with no problem. In fact, they may be able to obtain accommodations at a reduced rate.

In contrast, the Port Louis regatta is at the end of the month when the hotels, crewed yachts and bareboats tend to be fully booked at the high-season rate. This makes it difficult and expensive for boats to find accommodations ashore for their crew; ditto for spectators and visiting journalists.

That the Grenada Sailing Festival is scheduled as it is, is not fully the fault of Port St Louis as they inherited a regatta that from its inception has been run at the wrong time.

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I can well remember the late Ron Smith asking me to meet him at the Grenada Yacht Club for a conference on the establishment of a Grenada Regatta. I pointed out that in the early days the Round Grenada race was successful as it was held on the first Sunday in January, when charter boats were either not booked and their crew thus available to race, or just ending a charter with a good chance of talking the guests into racing. I suggested that the regatta be held in the second or third week in January, when the hotels could be talked into reduced accommodations for competitors and visiting journalists, and giving two days' bed and breakfast for two people as prizes, the most important prize winners staying at the best hotels. Since many bareboats would be sitting at the docks unused, the bareboat companies could be talked into reduced rates.

If all the above was done, and the info on reduced rates on hotels, crewed yachts and bareboats, and the fact that airfares were also reduced for that period, was passed on to yacht clubs in the States, Canada and Europe, the regatta would fly. However, the powers to be that organized the Grenada regatta evidently threw Ron's report in the scrap basket.

The regatta continued, but never really grew to its full potential, and never will until the dates are switched so it is immediately after the Carriacou Sailing Series. The Carriacou Sailing Series 2009 is scheduled to run from the 14th to the 18th of January; the Grenada Sailing Festival, January 30th to February 3rd.

Hopefully the above advice will not fall on deaf ears and the powers that be at Port Louis will move the regatta in 2010 to the low period in January. If this write-up persuades Port Louis to move the Grenada Sailing Festival dates I will have really contributed something to the island of Grenada, which I still look at as home.

Speaking of Port Louis marina, having watched the yachting industry in Grenada from its earliest beginnings to the present (see my two-part series, "The History of Yachting in Grenada", in the October and November 2008 issues of the *Compass*) I am 100 percent behind the Port St Louis development.

For 40 years I have said that the economic position of Grenada is heavily influenced by the state of Grenada Yacht Services. As GYS slowly went down hill and finally died, the whole island was affected. Note in my article in the October issue the amount of employment and money produced by the yachting industry as compared to the hotel industry in the late Sixties.

I realize that, at times, Port Louis may have run roughshod over certain people. Anchoring in St. George's Lagoon is now out. Dredging out the shelf that protected the lagoon means that a northwest ground swell at times will enter the lagoon. At these times boats may have to move off the docks and anchor outside the lagoon. But when one considers how much employment will be generated by the yachts that are attracted to Grenada by Port Louis marina, I and many others feel that, overall, the whole operation is a plus for the entire island.

I note in the October *Compass's* Business Briefs that Port Louis marina is in the process of installing pump-out facilities for yachts. However, once pumped out of the yachts, where does the sewage go? Through a purification facility built by Port Louis marina? Into the city of St. George's sewage system (which is then pumped into the sea)? Or trucked over to the south coast and dumped into the sewage system there (that also goes into the sea)?

When all is said and done, the pump-out system may be an expensive installation that achieves nothing, as the lagoon has been polluted from shoreside sources for the entire time I have known Grenada, starting in 1962.

Grenada should enact the same law that the British Virgin Islands have enacted: no discharge of holding tanks within 1,000 yards of shore.

I realize all this will ruffle a few feathers, but that is what makes life interesting to a WPOF (well preserved old fart).

D.M. Street, Jr.
Yacht Iolaire

Dear Compass,

Regarding the article in last month's issue which mentioned damage done to yachts in Christiansted Harbor, St. Croix, by Hurricane Omar:

From what I hear, the storm came up suddenly, going from a Tropical Depression to Tropical Storm in the middle of the Caribbean just north of Curaçao, becoming a Category 3 hurricane near St. Croix. In such a short period of time, people did not have adequate time to take it seriously, let alone to prepare properly for five hours of winds over a hundred miles per hour.

The first US National Hurricane Center advisory came at 11:00AM on October 13th when a TD was at 14.8°N, 69.6°W, or 175 miles north-northwest of Curaçao, moving northwest, with winds of 35 mph. By 1:00AM on the 15th, it was just barely a Cat 1, located at 14.4°N, 68.0°W, packing 75 mph wind. At 7:00PM that day, it was Cat 3, with 105 mph wind, at 16.6°N, 65.2°W. Five hours later (12:00AM on the 16th) it was

blowing 120 mph at 17.9°N, 64.2°W. The good news is that the storm did not linger over St. Croix any longer than that. (For reference, The Buccaneer Hotel is at 17°45'17"N, 64°40'54"W on the East End.)

I understand that there are approximately 400 boats registered on the island, but most of those are small, trailerable vessels that can be parked on land. Many of the larger vessels were hauled out already. Several sportfishing boats were still at the Silver Bay Dock and sank in their slips, after destroying the dock. The majority of boats harbored at Green Cay and Salt River marinas had only slight damage, if any.

Fair winds,
Ellen Sanpere
Cayenne III

Dear Compass Crew,

We are Pat and Pieter Stoecken of *Independence*. St. Thomas-based, long-time Caribbean residents. We spent a lot of time in the St. Vincent area in the early Seventies, chartered our old schooner, *Evoe*, for day-sails to Bequia and Mustique, and have some good friends there.

There are lots of wonderful places in the Caribbean and all have their loyal followers. I am writing this because I am tired of hearing the negatives of St. Vincent. I know there is crime; I'd just like to point out that it is not peculiar to St. Vincent. *Second Millennium* is right: "lock it or lose it" and take proper safety precautions wherever you choose to sail!

That said, St. Vincent is wonderful. *Independence* spent two months at the boatyard at Otley Hall. Our plan was to fly in on a Thursday and launch on Friday and we knew (Pieter ran Independent Boat Yard in St. Thomas for many years, so we know) that the chances of all our projects being finished to our satisfaction and on time were pretty slim. Well, guess what? It was all done, done well and on budget, too. We had a new boot stripe done by the Awlgrip guy; he also had the hull compound-



In our experience, St. Vincent is wonderful... and everything grows

ed and polished, the bottom was sanded and painted, dinghy too, and the zincs replaced on the shaft.

We did have some help: Joe Brown is a local marine surveyor and good friend, so he kept an eye on things, and our old mate on *Evoe*, Lorraine Ross, was between skipper jobs so he did the bottom painting and a ton of varnishing for us. I know that they are friends and that definitely helps, but the yard manager is Paul Cyrus and he is very professional and takes the initiative to protect his customers (even moving boats in the middle of the night to protect them from surge during Hurricane Omar!). We count him a friend now and we will definitely bring our boat back.

We had a refrigeration problem and with the hard work and commitment of Rondale Dowers, Sunsail's outboard and refrigeration man, and his friend Carlos DeNobriga, the system was completely rebuilt. They are young men, recently qualified at the Technical School in St. Vincent. When they couldn't solve the last puzzle they went to their instructor, Gary Peters; he came to our boat on Sunday night to help his students and by 9:00PM we had refrigeration. (Thanks, guys — it still works great!) They were professional, neat and so pleasant to work with.

Sparrow is the man at Young Island anchorage. We were on a borrowed mooring but he still came by to say "hi" and help us tie up. He helped with garbage disposal and finding ice but we had to wave him over or call; no one ever came and harassed us.

We had the Decoran crew come to polish the galley counters that they had installed five years ago. Another pleasant experience; Pedro is pleasant and professional. I did finally get all the dust cleaned up and everything is as good as new. They don't take credit cards but trusted us to come with cash the next day; again, pleasant staff and no surprise charges.

When Pieter flew to St. Thomas to close up our house for Hurricane Omar, I stayed with the boat on the dock in the Blue Lagoon. The staff at Sunsail kept an eye on me and offered to help when the swells were forecast. Thankfully we were okay, but it was very comforting to know that they were there if needed.

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The island of St. Vincent is beautiful; everything grows and we pigged out on mangos and avocados, which are very expensive here in St. Thomas. I love waterfalls, also in short supply up here, but you have lots of choices in St. Vincent.

We loved the barbecue at Sunset Shores hotel (and they have a computer for e-mail) and Sue Demmans' new place for (not just) pizza, and we had a great lunch at Beachcombers. We even made it by car to Wallilabou Bay to check out the remains of the Pirates of the Caribbean movie set and the great little restaurant there.

We are extolling the virtues of St. Vincent not to put down anywhere else. We spent time in the Grenadines and several fabulous days in Dominica — we loved them all and will be back as often as possible. We just think St. Vincent is pretty terrific, too!

Thanks to everyone who made our summer so wonderful and thank you, *Compass*, for a great publication.

Pat and Pieter Stoeken
Yacht Independence
Red Hook, St. Thomas

Dear Compass,

I totally agree with Frederic Dalle's comments about the installation of yacht moorings in the Tobago Cays in last month's *Compass*.

The Tobago Cays is, without doubt, an area of outstanding natural beauty — "leave nothing but footprints" we are constantly reminded. Yet in one move the TCMF has destroyed that unique and untouched image and these plastic, manmade visual eyesores now greet our arrival.

If, as the Tobago Cays Marine Park's Education Officer, Lesroy Noel, states, the moorings are optional then surely there was little point in going to the considerable expense of installing them in the first place!

A better way to ensure that boats don't anchor too close to the reef or near coral heads is simply through the vigilance of park rangers who need to be on visible duty throughout the day and are available to advise on fragile anchoring areas.

I'm afraid I also have to agree with Frederic regarding the lack of patrolling carried out by the rangers. Yes, they are indeed polite and pleasant but once they've collected the money, they're gone! As a charter boat based in the Grenadines we visit the Cays at least 15 to 20 times a year with guests and I can honestly say this has been the case on each occasion.

They certainly weren't around last season when one of our guests was hit on the head by a local boat while snorkeling, or when a jet ski was deployed off a large yacht [note: jet skis are illegal in all St. Vincent & the Grenadines' waters], or when some idiot managed to grab a turtle and hold it aloft for all to see — and we all know that dozens of turtles were netted last year in the absence of round-the-clock protection.

I love the Tobago Cays with a passion but I strongly believe that there has to be a vigilant presence maintained by park rangers both day and night in order to protect them and this is where funds should be directed — not frittered away on "optional, user-friendly" eyesores.

One further point. It concerns me that in the August *Compass* in Info and Updates, in an article about the moorings, Lesroy Noel stated, "In an effort to further develop the Tobago Cays..." The Tobago Cays is not a

theme park: it doesn't need developing, it simply needs protecting.

On a different environmental matter, the annoying but occasional fuel spillages in Admiralty Bay, Bequia (mainly from ferries pumping out their bilges at night), have recently escalated to an unprecedented and unacceptable number as a result of the daily deliveries of cheap diesel by Venezuelan fishing boats to local ferries and any other interested parties.

For whatever reason — faulty hose connections, lack of care or whatever — boats lying at anchor or on moorings in the bay are now subjected to an almost daily covering of diesel along their topsides as spillages float past and on out to open sea. The stench is disgusting and can last for hours.

This is obviously not only detrimental and damaging for the marine environment but surely cannot be allowed to continue as we approach the upcoming holiday season when the bay is full of tourists expecting a safe and clean environment in which to swim and sail.

Complaints by a number of concerned people to the Tourist Board, Customs and Coastguard do not seem to have made any difference.

This is a real problem and needs addressing urgently. Comments anyone please?

Susan Bruce
S/Y Makayabella

Dear Compass,

I recently spent a month cruising the Venezuelan islands of Las Tortugas and Los Roques. As always in this beautiful area we had a marvelous time. The only problem we encountered was in the Carenero anchorage of the Tortugas. For the second year running there have been swarms of mosquitoes. The little horrors love me so I had an uncomfortable few days until we moved.

One thing we enjoy doing is snorkelling. Watching the life on a reef is a pleasure I certainly never get tired of. Sadly, the reefs in Las Tortugas and Los Roques are virtually empty of fish.

It is not difficult to figure out why. Every year, what amounts to a fleet of French yachts meet in this area. They congregate in sociable groups anywhere from two to 15 yachts and spend many months anchored off the reefs. Every day these yachtspeople feed themselves by killing fish on the reef. Wet-suited figures with the ubiquitous spearguns spend hours combing every nook and cranny of the reefs and killing any creature that can be considered vaguely edible.

The devastation the French yachting fraternity has caused with their obsession with speargunning for food has caused an unbelievable amount of harm to these fragile ecosystems. They observe no closed breeding season, killing the juvenile lobsters and the females with eggs. Although spearfishing is banned in Los Roques, they ignore the Park rules (as do the local Italians). To avoid the Park authorities they go to the reef to spearfish at dusk.

I am not exaggerating when I say that over the years yachtsmen originating in the countries fringing the Mediterranean have virtually destroyed the life on reefs throughout the Eastern Caribbean. A total ban on the use of spearguns in the region is long overdue. In areas where a ban is rigidly enforced, such as Bonaire, the fish inhabit the reefs without the fear of some idiot with a speargun hunting them from dawn till dusk.

Tim Sadler
S/Y Nanou

Dear Compass,

Although I've lived in the Caribbean since the late 1960s, usually aboard boats, for many years I have spent my summers in Vermont, USA. So what to do when Don Stollmeyer, from Power Boats in Trinidad, a fellow sailor, comes visiting to see the fall colors? Hot air ballooning, a kind of sky sailing, seemed a bit like the local version of day sailing. Like sailing, you use the winds; unlike sailing, steering and stopping are different.

Ballooning is something I had never done before, and my preliminary scouting left me wondering when I saw that I was signing on to fly several hundred feet in the air in a craft that bore an uncanny resemblance to a hospital laundry bin.

Balloons take off most days from the nearby Post Mills airport, guided by Brian, for whom ballooning has been a passion for many years. He also owns the



Nice docking! Caribbean sailor Donald Stollmeyer comes ashore after his first sky sailing experience

airport, which, as Don was quick to notice, abuts a large graveyard. Even by Caribbean standards this is a quiet and laid back airport: just a grassy field containing a few gliders.

It was a misty morning; the river fog had just started to lift. Our tiny craft lay on its side with three large gas cylinders attached, and the balloon, which is akin to a ballroom-sized spinnaker, lay stretched out on the ground. To fill the balloon, two people hold it open and blast the inside with a couple of big fans. It slowly starts filling, then writhing like some giant beast. Then it takes the shape of a balloon, and a blast of hot air lifts it and sets the basket upright. We climb in.

There is no sensation as we take off. The little basket, which barely holds the three of us, is perfectly still. At the same time, the land is disappearing into the mist below. We climb about 300 feet to emerge in the sunshine on a vast sea of fog dotted with little islands. Brian has two controls to work with: the burners, which he can use to heat the air in the balloon, and a vent at the top of the balloon, which is attached to a cord he can pull, to let hot air out. Vermont is 80 percent forest and a tree balloon is a messy affair, so how do you navigate to land in a field when completely at the mercy of the wind?

—Continued on next page



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MONO-HULLS			
30' 1995	Henderson 30 (Racing Yacht)	US\$60,000.00	
34' 1978	Steel Sloop/ROB	US\$45,000.00	51' 1987
36' 1977	Roberts (Home Built)	US\$40,000.00	Beneteau Idylle 15.5
37' 1977	Gin Fizz (Reduced for quick sale!!)	€ 30,800.00	51' 1986
39' 1968	Cheoy Lee Off Shore 40	US\$ 95,000.00	Beneteau
40' 1986	Ta Shing Tashiba (Excellent condition!!)	US\$199,000.00	53' 1995
42' 1986	Endeavour (Price Reduced!!)	US\$ 98,000.00	Super Marama (Reduced!!)
43' 1999	Wauquiez Pilot Saloon	€ 247,500.00	53' 1984
43' 1985	Gitana	US\$115,000.00	Amel Custom Mango
44' 1999	Finn Gulf (Reduced!!)	Under Offer!!	55' 1994
45' 1992	Fortuna	US\$150,000.00	Oyster 55
45' 1988	Peterson 48 Cutter	US\$220,000.00	55' 1998
46' 2001	Tayana (Vancouver Pilot House)	US\$329,000.00	Zerft Motor Sailer (Reduced for quick sale!!)
50' 1991	Celestial Pilot House	US\$268,000.00	56' 1973
50' 1974	Motor Yacht (Local Built)	US\$100,000.00	Vach Motor Yacht
51' 1990	Jeanneau Sun Odyssey	€159,000.00	

MULTI-HULLS			
35' 2002	Wildcat 350	US\$157,000.00	
36.5' 1993	Dean Catamaran (Reduced for quick sale!!)	US\$ 99,500.00	
37' 2002	Fountain Pajot	US\$325,000.00	
43' 2001	Lagoon Catamaran (Reduced for quick sale!!)	US\$334,000.00	
44' 2007	Lagoon 440 Catamaran (Excellent condition!!)	€ 438,700.00	
54' 1980	Norman Cross Trimaran	US\$350,000.00	
55' 1995	Custom Built Trimaran	US\$350,000.00	
63' 1998	Polynesian Double Canoe	€190,000.00	

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Don and I quickly notice something curious — as we ascend we drift in a northeasterly direction, when we descend we head east. It is these differences in wind direction that Brian uses to steer his craft. If he wanted to go to the north, he could drop down close to the river where the valley funnels any breeze up or down. We pass over one of the hilltops sticking up through the mist and start to drop down Lake Morey.

The fall colors, subdued from a distance, become a blaze of red, gold, yellow and purple. Except for brief bursts of the burners, there is no sound. It would be easy to hold a conversation with someone a couple of hundred feet below. Up in the air, wind is no problem: we would not even feel it. But takeoff and landing are a nightmare in a stiff breeze. I wonder about this as we come in low over a hedge at about 15 miles an hour.

Brian, who has been talking to his two ground assistants throughout the trip, has them run out into the field as we approach. He throws down a long strand of webbing, they hang on with gloved hands and act like a human anchor, albeit one that is easily dragged across the turf. Brian tells us to hold on tight and spills air out of the balloon. The basket touches down, and gently capsizes, saving us the problem of clambering over the side. So that is how it is done!

Don and I enjoyed our first sailing adventure. Sailing in two dimensions will never be quite the same.

Chris Doyle
Yacht Ti Kanot

Dear Compass Readers,

Greetings from a *Compass* fan and on-line subscriber. About two years ago, one of your readers sent in a letter discussing their positive experience with medical insurance for cruisers. I thought that I kept the article, but alas it's nowhere to be found.

We are now looking for international medical insurance as we live full time on our boat cruising the Caribbean. Can any other *Compass* readers recommend medical insurance? Any advice or leads you could give would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,
Susan Wales
M/V Island Roamer

Dear Compass Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!
Please include your name, boat name or shoreside address, and a way we can contact you (preferably by e-mail) if clarification is required.

We do not publish individual consumer complaints or individual regatta results complaints. (Kudos are okay!) We do not publish anonymous letters; however, your name may be withheld from print at your request.

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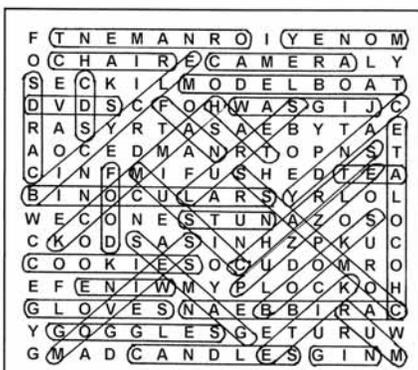
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Letter of the Month

Hi there, Compass Crew!

We would like to submit the following in answer to the What's On My Mind article in the October issue: "Who's Out There?" by Bruce Van Sant.

You pose a very good question, Bruce. Who are today's cruisers? Things HAVE changed, very noticeably so. They will change a lot more, too, if the trend for local governments to assume that every boatie is a millionaire doesn't! But in answer to your question:

My husband Mark and I left UK shores for a "two-year round-the-world cruise" on our catamaran, *Manatee*, in early 2003. On our way we met and got to know hundreds of cruisers and are still in touch with most of them. Some have gone onwards to South American and Pacific lands, some are "hangin' in de Cribbian" and some have "swallowed the anchor" and returned home, wherever that was. One of the instant big benefits of becoming a cruiser is that you join a huge and welcoming family circle. Like most families we sometimes have our squabbles and differences, but there is usually someone around to help out in the case of difficulties and problems or to provide advice.



Who are today's cruisers? Lee and Mark enthusiastically say, 'Count us in!'

One of the answers to your question that we have found is that there is now a new breed of cruiser, who is only happy while constantly moving on. When we were planning our trip we counted ourselves fortunate to be able to buy nearly all the charts we needed from a couple just returning from a two-year round-the-world trip. However, as we sat and listened to their stories over a few drinks, we realized that although they had been round the world, they had never stopped in any one place long enough to become familiar with it, much less meet any of the people living there and learn of their thoughts and beliefs, hopes and dreams. This insight changed our plans radically and we vowed that wherever we landed, we would stay long enough to explore, enjoy it and get to know some of the people living there.

It took us two extremely enjoyable years just to journey along the coasts of France, Spain, Portugal and the Canary Islands before crossing to the Caribbean. Of course there were many places we missed, but they are for next time. Since here, we have travelled the chain of islands from Trinidad up to the Dominican Republic. (Yes, know Luperon well — would YOU swim in that lagoon? Or disagree with the Commandant of the Navy?) We have worked charter boats round many of the islands and have delivered a boat here from Florida. We are willingly lost in our new lifestyle and it is looking likely now that there will never be a return to the UK, apart from brief visits to the family, though most family and friends are only too happy to come visit us.

At present we are in St John, USVI — one of the loveliest places we have so far visited (two-thirds National Park, one town, one village, great people) and we have been here a while now. Far from being one of the "cluster" in "a bubble of back-home air", we put ourselves up for adoption by the local community and have been absorbed into it. We join fund-raisers for the schools, collect trash, look after houses, children and pets, join the local regattas and races, support the local Yacht Club and children's sail-training programs, provide willing hands for mast-raising and boat repairs, look after boats for those cruisers suddenly called home for any reason, help out with pre- and post-hurricane activities, in general do anything that we would do if we lived here permanently. THAT is the way to get to know foreign life and foreign lands.

We know we are not the only cruisers to be doing this — many of our yachtie friends have come to similar conclusions: they are extending their stays and throwing themselves into the local affairs in whichever location they sail to, finding that life is all the better for it! Perhaps we are all "escaping to" rather than "escaping from".

Lee Maunder
Yacht Manatee

Read in Next Month's Compass:

The Ultimate Caribbean Calendar of 2009 Events!

Selected Shortwave Weather Reports

Snorkeling with 'Invaders'

and more!

—Continued from page 31

Could a girl be happier? They said I was very beautiful and just about everybody wanted to touch me, especially the children.

When we got to our final destination, or rather their final destination, the driver said the trip was on him and wouldn't take my money. Three men, two of them with their families, stayed with me until I got another bus. They explained we were in a *barrio* and, using their hands to depict a gun, they told me we could get mobbed. They helped me get another bus and before departing they explained to the new driver that I am from Kenya in Africa. After getting many kisses blown at me and hugs from the women, I was off to Cumaná central.

I smiled at everybody who entered the bus and the driver kept explaining to all the passengers that I was from Kenya, Africa, which meant I had to smile more. The pain



Once I learned to use my million-dollar smile, Cumaná became a different place — and I loved it

in my jaws at the end of the day did leave me wondering how toothpaste spokes-people manage to smile all the time. I got another free ride — the driver wouldn't accept my money.

Back in Cumaná central, I felt like a new person. I walked confidently and smiled at everybody looking at me. Talk about the power of a smile and being African. After telling the market vendors I was from Kenya and flashing my smile, I ended up with an extra of just about everything I bought. The best for a fruit fanatic like me was when I got two kilos of passion fruit free from a lovely lady.

But leaving the market, I became lost. Armed with my new defense-breaking weapon known as a smile, I asked two ladies for the direction of Marina Plaza bus. In the process of explaining I could not comprehend their directions, I squeezed in the fact that I am a Kenyan from Africa. As usual they were fascinated and they took me all the way to the bus stop and waited with me until I was safely in the bus. I knew then I would never be the same again.

I now smile much more often and my love for Mother Africa is back. I now have a dictionary and am learning a few more Spanish words. I venture into the city a lot more — and I love Cumaná. My jaws ache much less, now that they are used to all the smiling. I have even made a few new friends. Not that we can communicate well, but we try.

Gordon is still yet to understand my transformation from hating to loving Cumaná. I tell him it's the combination of the smile and the mystery that is Africa, but he won't accept it. But then who knows, it could be because of my smile that he did his best to get me away from Kenya. And now here I am, explaining my love for Cumaná.

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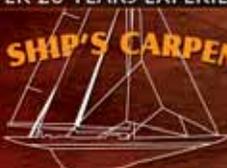
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Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year to all our Readers and Advertisers

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December

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