

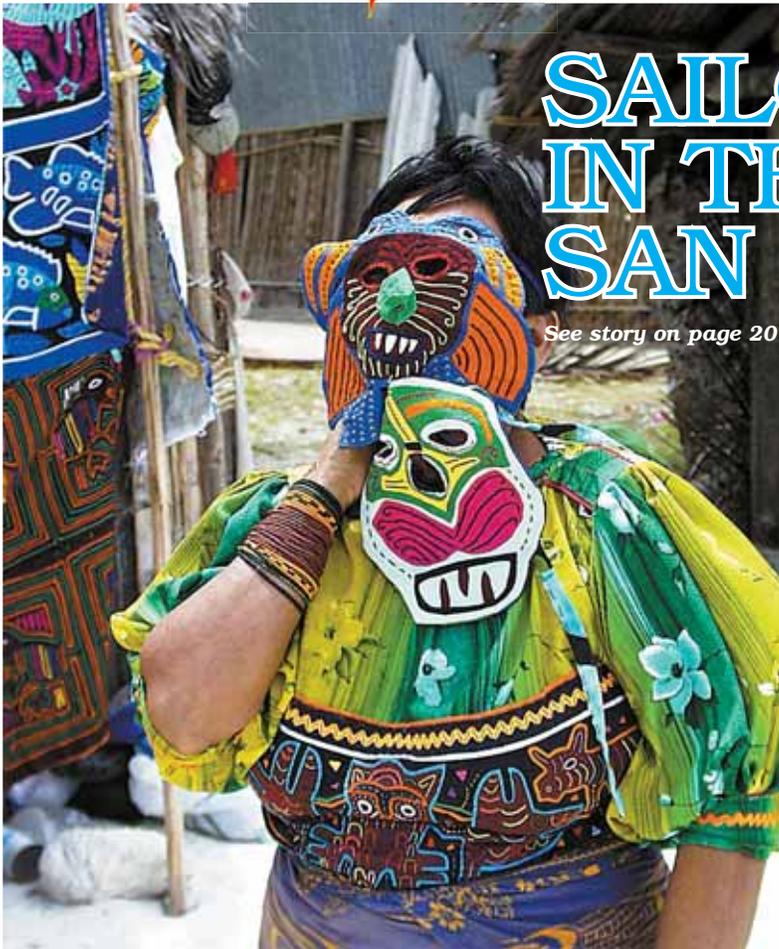
C A R I B B E A N

On-line

C MPASS

FEBRUARY 2009 NO. 161

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



SAILORS IN THE SAN BLAS

See story on page 20



JEANNIE MILLER (2)

Old-Time Trinidad Carnival

See story on page 24



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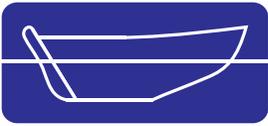
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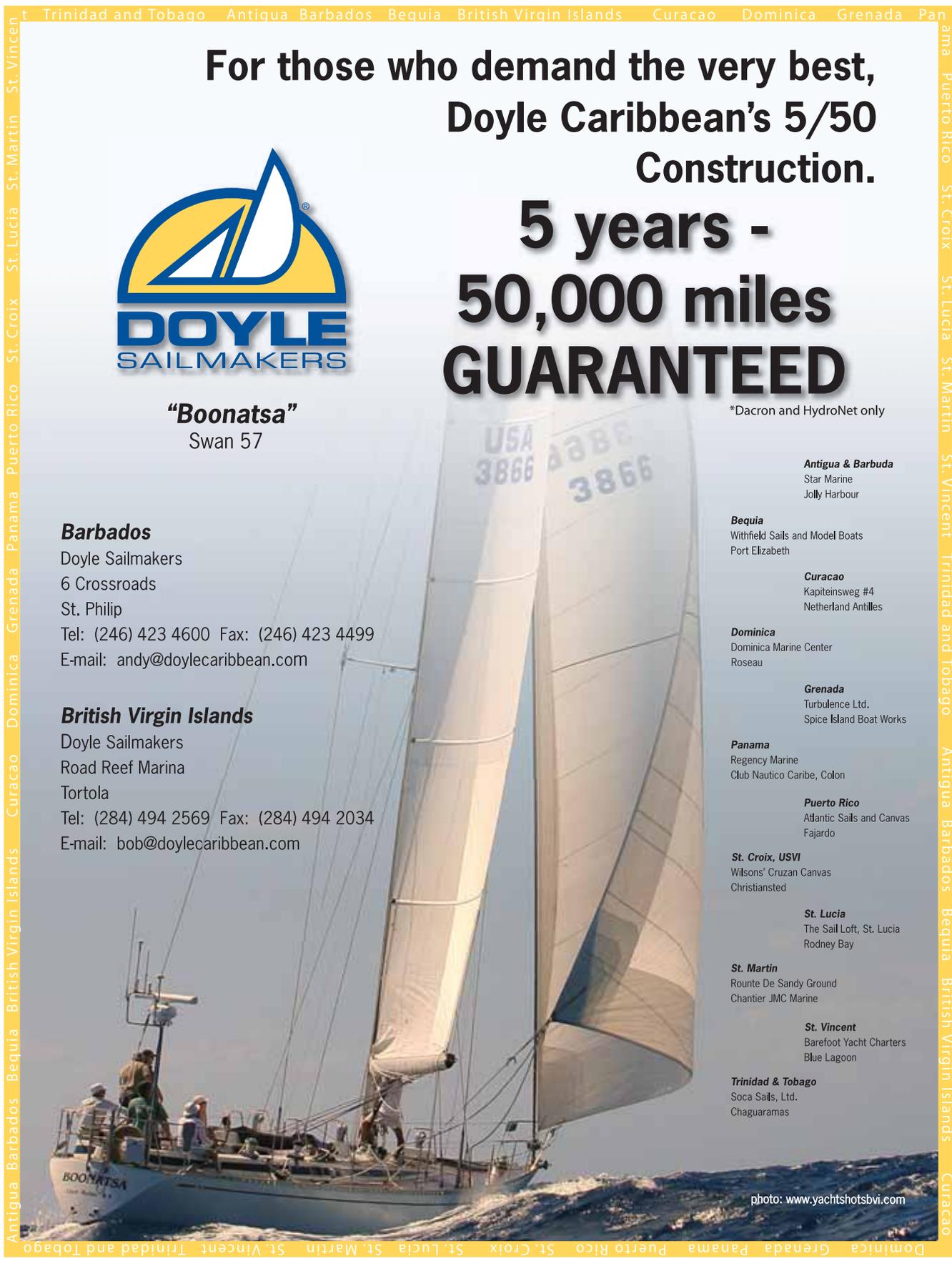


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photo: www.yachtshotsbvi.com

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

www.caribbeancompass.com

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CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 2 World Wetlands Day
- 6 Pineapple Cup Race, Montego Bay, Jamaica.
www.montegobayrace.com
- 6 - 27 45th Annual Art Exhibition, Grenada
- 7 Independence Day. Public holiday in Grenada
- 7 - 8 Necol One-Design Regatta, St. Maarten. www.smyc.com
- 8 Cruiser/Racer Offshore Regatta, Barbados. Barbados Yacht Club (BYC),
byc@sunbeach.net
- 8 - 17 Havana International Jazz Festival, Cuba. www.jazzcuba.com
- 9 FULL MOON
- 10 - 14 Tobago Carnival Regatta. www.sailweek.com
- 12 - 15 8th International Club Náutico de San Juan Regatta, Puerto Rico.
www.nauticodesanjuan.com
- 13 - 15 Budget Marine Valentines Regatta, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com
- 14 Man-o-War Cay Craft Fair, Bahamas. (242) 365-6049
- 14 - 16 31st Annual Sweethearts of the Caribbean and 27th Annual
Classic Yacht Regatta, Tortola. www.weyc.net
- 14 - 24 La Route du Carnival rally, Martinique to Trinidad.
www.transcaribees.com
- 15 Sunshine School Fundraising Auction, Bequia
- 15 J/24 Regatta, Barbados. BYC
- 16 Presidents' Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
- 19 - 22 Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta. www.grenadaclassicregatta.com
- 20 - 22 16th St. Croix International Regatta (first regatta of COIRT).
www.stcroixyc.com
- 20 - 22 6th Annual Optimist Valentine Regatta, St. Croix. www.stcroixyc.com
- 20 - 22 Sir John Compton Memorial Trophy and Diamond Dash Race, St. Lucia
to Martinique and back. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), tel (758) 452-8350,
secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
- 20 - 24 20th Semaine Nautique Schoelcher, Martinique.
www.optworld.org/09norMartinique.pdf
- 22 Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Lucia.
- 22 Cruiser/Racer Offshore Regatta, Barbados. BYC
- 23 - 24 Carnival Monday and Tuesday in most Dutch and French islands,
Puerto Rico, Dominica, Carriacou, Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela,
and other places
- 23 - 27 RORC Caribbean 600 Offshore Race. http://caribbean600.rorc.org
- 25 Ash Wednesday. Public holiday in Cayman Islands
- 27 Independence Day. Public holiday in the Dominican Republic
- 27 - 1 March 1st South Grenada Regatta. See ad on page 17
- 28 - 1 March Boatyard Regatta, Barbados. BYC

MARCH

- 3 Budget Marine Match Racing, St. Maarten. St. Maarten Yacht Club
(SMYC), tel (599) 544-2075, fax (599) 544-2091, info@smyc.com,
www.smyc.com
- 5 - 8 29th St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. www.heinekenregatta.com
- 6 - 7 10th Blues & Rhythms Festival, St. Vincent. www.svgtourism.com
- 6 - 9 12th Annual Dark and Stormy Regatta, BVI. West End Yacht Club
(WEYC), Tortola, BVI, tel (284) 495-1002, fax (284) 495-4184,
mvh@surfbvi.com, www.weyc.net
- 6 - 11 Caribbean Arts & Crafts Festival, BVI. www.caribbeanartisan.net
- 8 International Women's Day
- 8 J/24 Regatta, Barbados. BYC
- 9 Commonwealth Day. Public holiday in some places
- 9 Baron Bliss Day, Public holiday in Belize
- 11 FULL MOON, Public holiday in Suriname (Phagwa)
- 13 - 15 Grenada Round-the-Island Race. See ad on page 11
- 14 National Heroes Day. Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines
- 14 - 15 Bananas Cup Regatta, Martinique. Yacht Club de la Martinique (YCM),
tel (596) 63 26 76, fax (596) 63 94 48, ycmq@wanadoo.fr
- 14 - 15 J/24 Invitational, Barbados. BYC
- 14 - 15 Around St. Lucia Race (to be confirmed). SLYC
- 17 St. Patrick's Day. Public holiday in Montserrat;
Festival in St. Patrick's, Grenada
- 18 Flag Day. Public holiday in Aruba
- 18 - 22 7th Annual St. John Blues Festival, USVI. www.stjohnbluesfestival.com
- 19 - 22 13th Annual Tobago Game Fishing Tournament. www.tgff.com
- 20 International Earth Day
- 20 - 22 Culebra Heineken International Regatta and Culebra International
Dinghy Regatta, Puerto Rico. www.culebrainternationalregatta.com
- 21 - 22 Gardel Trophy Race, Guadeloupe. www.triskellcup.com
- 22 Emancipation Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
- 22 Cruiser/Racer Offshore Regatta, Barbados. BYC
- 26 - 29 International Rolex Regatta, St. Thomas, USVI. www.rolexcupregatta.com
- 26 - 29 St. Barths Bucket Race. www.newportbucket.com/StBarthsIndex.htm
- 28 J/24 Regatta, Barbados. BYC
- 30 Spiritual Baptist Liberation Day. Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago
- 30 - Apr 5 BVI Spring Regatta & Sailing Festival. www.bvispringregatta.org

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.

Info & Updates

New Fees for Marigot, St. Martin

All vessels anchoring in Marigot, French Saint Martin, must now pay anchorage fees that were implemented by the Ports Authority effective January 1st.



CHRIS DOYLE

Yachts anchored last year in Marigot, St. Martin

The initial administrative fee for arriving non-resident yachts, which includes the first day's anchoring charges, is charged according to length and ranges from 20 euros for boats 8 to 13 metres long to 150 euros for boats of more than 75 metres. Non-resident boats are then charged an anchoring fee of 0.25 euros per metre per day for Days 2 and 3; and 0.35 euros per metre per day for Day 4 and thereafter. Residents of French St. Martin pay a reduced rate of 0.13 euros per metre per day. One euro is currently

approximately US\$1.40.

The daily anchoring charge is currently only for Marigot and does not affect other French-side anchorages (although discussions are ongoing about also implementing their collection in Grand Case Bay) or the lagoon. There is also an additional charge of 5 euros to clear out.

According to a report in *The Daily Herald* newspaper, Ports Authority Director Alberic Ellis said the new anchorage fees were necessary for the better development of the bay: "Efforts are currently being put in place to provide more security on the dock. We have already installed surveillance cameras to watch over dinghies and more cameras will be added. The Collectivité is also looking into improving the lighting on the waterfront, and on the dock in particular where the dinghies are tied up... If we are to continue giving the level of service expected of us, that comes with a price. That said, we fully recognize the yachting and marine industry's significant contribution to our economy. Naturally we want to keep St. Martin/St. Maarten as an important port of call."

However, feedback from visiting yachtsmen indicates that "boats are leaving here in droves" and "St. Martin/St. Maarten is now a less attractive destination altogether, considering that the other alternative — clearing on the Dutch side — is so tedious and expensive." One boatowner calculated that the new anchoring fee would add US\$176 to his proposed month's stay in Marigot. "We were planning to stay and buy new anchor chain and have some rigging work done, but this adds too much to the price so we left."

SVG's Higher Fees Now in Effect

The former per-day entry fee for persons entering St. Vincent & the Grenadines by yacht (EC\$5 per person per day, up to a maximum of seven days, and no charge thereafter) has been changed to a flat fee of EC\$35 (approximately US\$13) per person per month. The charter yacht license fee is now EC\$5 per foot per month, and the occasional charter yacht license fee is now EC\$125 for yachts from 31 to 50 feet (the occasional charter yacht license fee for other sizes remains the same).

This fee schedule was announced early last year, but has only recently been put into effect.

US Visits Now Require Travel Authorization

Beginning January 12, 2009, all nationals and citizens of Visa Waiver Program countries are required to obtain a travel authorization prior to initiating travel by air or sea to the United States and its territories for temporary business or pleasure. Visa Waiver Program countries include Australia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, among others.

This authorization may be obtained online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA), at <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. According to a press release from the US Embassy in Barbados, "ESTA counterbalances vulnerabilities inherent in visa-free travel by establishing an additional layer of advanced scrutiny that will enable DHS officers to focus on the small population of potentially dangerous travelers."

Application is free. According to the Embassy, you are not required to have specific plans to travel to the United States before applying for an ESTA and may apply at any time, but at least 48 hours in advance of travel. The website is available in 16 languages and includes a help section that provides additional information to guide travelers through the application process. In most cases, ESTA will provide an almost immediate determination of eligibility for travel. If authorization is denied, the traveler must obtain a non-immigrant visa at a US Embassy before traveling to the US. If the on-line form is not filled out, the traveler may be denied entry to the US.

Each approved ESTA application generally will be valid for two years and allows for multiple visits to the US within that period.

—Continued on next page

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www.grenadagrenadines.com

—Continued from previous page

Travelers whose applications are approved, but whose passports will expire in less than two years, will receive an ESTA valid until the passport's expiration date.

For more information visit www.cbp.gov/esta.

French Family Rescued from Liferaft

The Trinidad & Tobago Coast Guard picked up the French Bazin family from their liferaft on December 28th, 2008, after their catamaran, *L'île Deal*, sank while sailing from Martinique to Venezuela. The family, Pascal and Joelle and their children Melanie and Alexis, had spent four days in the raft.

Speaking with the aid of a translator, Pascal told local newspapers that the family's catamaran had been docked in Martinique since April, after the Bazins made a successful transatlantic journey from France. But while sailing to Venezuela, the Bazins encountered "terrible" weather and a big wave crashed against the catamaran, cracking its hull, Bazin said. More large waves crashed against the weakened hull, causing it to open, and the boat began to sink. Bazin said he tried to effect repairs but ultimately had to abandon ship.

A distress signal was sent. A collaborative effort between several regional Coast Guard units, including Barbados, Martinique and Trinidad & Tobago, was launched. Both Barbados and Martinique also launched aircraft to join the search. On the Sunday night, one of the Barbados aircraft spotted a flare fired in the sky, 85 nautical miles south-west of St. Vincent. They requested backup from the T&T Coast Guard. A Pacific 24 speedboat was launched from the Coast Guard vessel *T/S Chacachacare* and the Bazins along with their liferaft were brought on board. Inside their raft were bags of water, several flares, a medical kit, rations, torchlights and other survival tools. The Coast Guard believes these items were instrumental in the family's survival.

Despite the incident, Bazin said he still wants to sail.

Eight Bells

We regret to report the passing last month of three well-known figures in the Caribbean sailing community.

On Jan 3rd, Utz Müller Treu died at his home in Portlamar, Venezuela, at age 76. The German-born sailor went to sea at the age of 16 with the Norwegian Merchant Navy, right after World War II. He completed four single-handed circumnavigations on a 31-foot

wooden Norwegian fishing vessel before settling down to cruise the Caribbean aboard the Norwegian-flagged, Colin Archer-designed wooden cutter *Fröken*. He soloed *Fröken* across the Atlantic five times. In January of last year, Utz sold *Fröken* and moved ashore to live with friends in Portlamar.



The late Utz Müller Treu, four-time solo circumnavigator and long-time Caribbean cruiser

On January 7th, Ramault Chassol, known to generations of boaters in Grenada as Frenchie, passed away in the hospital in St. George's, Grenada, after a brief illness. He had no known close relatives on the island and had been looked after by the sister of his shipwright friend Bones (also known as Pilgrim) since being rendered homeless by Hurricane Ivan in 2004. According to cruising guide author Don Street, Frenchie was born in Martinique and fled to Grenada to escape service in the French army, telling Don, "What the hell was a black West Indian doing in a French army shooting up Arabs in the hills of Algeria? So I left." Frenchie crewed aboard Street's legendary

engineless yawl, *lolaire*, in many regional regattas in the late 1960s and early '70s, during which he demonstrated "Black Power" by bending winch handles. Shortly after construction of the Grenada Yacht Club in 1960, the club installed a marine railway upon which yachts were hauled out by a hand-powered winch operated by Frenchie and Bones. Grenadian engineer and yachtman Ray Smith says, "Had there been no Frenchie and Bones there would not have been the golden era in Grenada's history of yachting development in the Eastern Caribbean."

On January 15th, Mariann "Why Knot" Palmberg died in her native Norway, after having been recently diagnosed with cancer. A long-time resident of the island of Bequia, Mariann arrived in the Caribbean in 1984 aboard the 50-foot, gaff-rigged Colin Archer ketch *Fredag*, which she and her then partner Peter Roren had built in their back garden in Oslo. Mariann and Peter chartered *Fredag* in the Southern Caribbean, and organized the first marine auction to benefit Bequia's Sunshine School on *Fredag's* spacious deck. Mariann moved ashore on Bequia in 1995, where she became famous for her knot-tying ropework. There will be a story about Mariann in next month's *Compass*.

New Ferry Service Links Guadeloupe, Martinique

The Compagnie Maritime de la Caraïbe has begun a ferry service between Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe and Fort-de-France, Martinique, offering five round-trip voyages per week. The "cruise ferry" service will be aboard the 106-metre *Spirit Star*, a roll-on/roll-off vessel with room for 674 passengers and 148 cars. There is a bar and restaurant aboard, a souvenir shop and, for night voyages, 119 cabins are available.

For more information visit www.caribbean-spirit.net.

New Brochure for the Tobago Cays

Chris Doyle Publishing, the company that produces all those good cruising guides, is happy to announce that in collaboration with the Tobago Cays Marine Park, it has produced a new brochure for the Park. This should now be given to visitors on arrival so they understand both the features of the park and the main regulations. The Tobago Cays are one of the most popular yachting destinations in the Grenadines.

For more information on the marine park visit www.tobagocays.com.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page
See Grenada's Best Art!

From the 6th to the 27th of February, the Grenada Arts Council will stage its annual exhibit in a very convenient location, across the street from Courts on Young Street in St. George's. This is an open exhibit, and will display works by artists resident in Grenada as well as Grenadians living abroad.

For more information contact Susan Mains at mains@spiceisle.com.

Sailors' and Landlubbers' Auction, Bequia

Bequia's annual Sailors' and Landlubbers' Auction to benefit the Sunshine School for children with special needs will be held on Sunday, February 15th, at Portofino (same location as in previous years) on the shore of Admiralty Bay. A preview begins at 1:00PM, and the auction starts at 2:00.

It all began in 1990 when Norwegian sailors Mariann and Peter decided to "give back" to their favourite island, and held a Marine Gear Auction aboard their double-ended ketch *Fredag*. In those days, cruisers brought items they wanted to sell and put a price on them. Any amount over this price went to the Sunshine School.

In subsequent years, more and more items have been donated that have nothing to do with the sea. Recently, in between the anchors and winches appear paintings by well-known local artists, lawn furniture and more, and landlubbers are happy to join in. Snacks and beverages will be on sale and all proceeds from these sales go to the school, as well.

Even if you are not going to be in Bequia on February 15th, look around your boat or home at all that stuff which is just too good to toss, and pass it on. Drop off donated items before February 13th at the Sunshine School between 9:00AM and 3:00PM weekdays.

For information on the auction contact Lisa at (784) 431-6332.

For information about the Sunshine School visit www.bequiasunshineschool.org.

Cruisers Continue to Assist Carriacou Students

Visiting yachts and local businesses continue to assist local students through the fundraising efforts of the Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF).

Following their initial award of two scholarships in 2007, CCEF has awarded four additional scholarships to T.A. Maryshow Community College, Carriacou campus, for the 2008-10 school years, bringing the total amount

of CCEF scholarships to EC\$10,000. Joining the 2007 recipients, Stacy Bain and Rena Noel, are Camisha Charles, Reann Martineau, Tahera



Thanks in part to cruisers' generosity, Mt. Pleasant second and third graders learn computer skills

Paul and Marcia Scott. For the school year beginning September 2008, CCEF is providing full tuition for two years at TAMCC for each of the recipients, along with EC\$1000 for each student to be used to help cover the cost of textbooks. Scholarship recipients are selected by the principals of the two secondary schools in Carriacou, based on CXC scores and financial need.

In another project, graduate students from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at North Carolina State University who have done research on Carriacou have helped raise funds to donate computers to the island's primary schools. The CCEF has provided more than EC\$4,500, matching funds raised locally two-to-one, for the completion of electrical wiring at Dover Government School and the purchase and installation of air conditioners for the computer labs at Dover and Mt. Pleasant schools. The CCEF has also committed to matching grants to help the island's other schools with their computer labs.

The CCEF is an informal, voluntary group of individuals from visiting yachts, and a number of concerned local businessmen and women. Since 2000, the CCEF has conducted fundraising activities during the first week of August at the Carriacou Yacht Club in

Hermitage, Carriacou, coinciding with the Carriacou Regatta Festival.

For more information contact boatmillie@aol.com.

Martinique to Puerto Rico Paddle Planned

Under the scientific direction of the archaeologist Benoit Bérard from the Université des Antilles et de la Guyane, the Martinique-based Karisko association is developing an experimental archaeological research program concerning the pre-Columbian use of canoes in the Antilles. As part of the program, two 60-foot offshore dugout canoes made by Kalina Amerindians from Surinam and French Guyana crossed the channel between Martinique and Dominica in May of last year, paddled by a 28-man team including people from the Dominican Carib Territory, Germany, Austria, Great Britain and Martinique.

The group's next goal is to paddle the 400-plus miles from Martinique to Puerto Rico in May 2009 — a voyage estimated to take some 160 paddling hours. The



MARINA NEUBAUER

A Karisko crew crossing the Dominica Channel

organization of this type of expedition is far from being easy and cheap, and Karisko is looking for captains and crew to man the five liveaboard catamarans that will act as supply and safety vessels accompanying the canoes.

For more information contact benoit.berard@orange.fr.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers South Grenada Regatta, page 17, and Marina ZarPar of the Dominican Republic, page 29. Good to have you with us!



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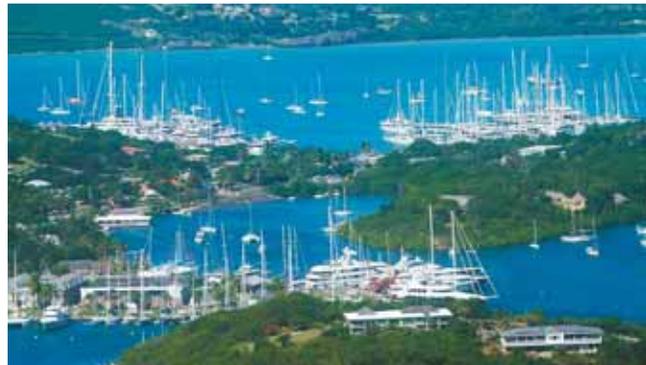
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Charter Shows Show Their Stuff

The 47th annual Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting, held December 4th through 9th, and the St. Maarten Charter Show, December 6th through 9th, showcased many of the finest yachts chartering this winter in the Caribbean.

More than 70 sailing and motor yachts signed up for the venerable Antigua show, ranging from 56 to 198 feet in length. The gleaming yachts and their beaming crews — many of them new to the show — were viewed and interviewed by some 200 representatives of more than a hundred yacht charter agencies from around the world as well as members of the international yachting press. Antigua is famous for



The fleet at the Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting was on view at two adjacent harbours: English, in the foreground, and Falmouth, behind

parties, and according to many, the highlight of this year's show was the Welcome Dinner Party.

The St. Maarten show, now in its fifth year and set at the Port de Plaisance marina in Simpson Bay Lagoon, featured more than 30 crewed megayachts. *Lady Sheridan*, a 190-foot Abeking and Rasmussen powerboat launched last year, won the "Best Boat in Show" award.

Both shows have much to commend them. The long-established Antigua show attracts a larger number of yachts and includes magnificent sailing vessels as well as powerboats. But being so large, it is divided between two locations — English and Falmouth Harbours. The St. Maarten event displays fewer yachts, and those only large powerboats, but being more compactly contained in one marina, it gives brokers more time to spend aboard each yacht.

Holding the two shows at the same time is problematic. Some boats would like to appear at both shows, and brokers now have to make a tough decision regarding what boats to see — and what boats to miss seeing. Regarding the simultaneous shows, Neil Moore, director and head of charter management for Burgess yachts, was quoted in a recent issue of *Dockwalk* magazine as saying, "I can't see that it's in anybody's interest."

The regatta organizers of the Caribbean are increasingly showing a spirit of mutually beneficial cooperation in scheduling non-conflicting events. Will the charter show organizers be far behind?

Caribbean Yachting Season Launched at Port Louis, Grenada

Speaking at the exclusive launch of the yachting season on Saturday December 20th at the Camper & Nicholson's Port Louis Marina, Grenadian Minister of Tourism the Hon. Peter David spoke highly of the efforts being made by the private and



In Grenada, Port Louis's season launch said, 'Big up and go green!'

public sectors in partnership to develop the yachting industry in Grenada. The event, which was marked by one of the largest fireworks displays ever seen on Grenada, was organized to officially open the first stage of the marina's superyacht berths. The marina can now accommodate 30 superyachts in excess of 30 metres in length. When completed, Port Louis will offer almost 400 berths for craft from ten to 90 metres, including 73 superyacht berths of more than 25 metres in length.

Looking ahead, Camper & Nicholson's is in the process of obtaining "Blue Flag" status for their Port Louis Marina. Blue Flag is a voluntary eco-label owned and operated by the independent, non-profit organization Foundation for Environmental Education. The goal is sustainable development at beaches and marinas worldwide, through the establishment of strict criteria regarding water quality, environmental education, environmental management and safety, and other services.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

"From the inception of the project we had Blue Flag certification as a goal," says Clyde Rawls, General Manager. "The marina will not just be complying with the requirements, but we are building it in a way as to have as little impact on the environment as possible." Camper & Nicholson's has taken many steps to ensure strict environmental standards are adhered to. The pontoons being installed are floating docks, which promote marine life and minimize disturbance to the seabed. In addition, the company prohibits the dumping of waste and other harmful materials into the Lagoon. The marina has also installed a sewage pump-out system that removes waste from docked boats and puts it into the national sewage system. Until now, the waste-generating activities of vessels utilizing the Lagoon have not been monitored, creating potential environmental hazards and over the years, diminishing water clarity and quality.

"In order for the project to be successful, we must properly manage vessels and their activities in the Lagoon. To this end, all vessels anchored within the marina's boundaries must register and dock in our berthing areas. The navigational channel will, of course, remain open, however, those remaining at anchor within Camper and Nicholson's' boundaries will be charged a usage fee," Rawls said.

Grenadian boatowners will be allowed to leave their vessels at anchor with no charge, until continued construction no longer makes it practical. Grenadian citizens will also receive a 30-percent discount on berthing rates.

For more information see ad on page 20.

News from Port Antonio, Jamaica

Errol Flynn Marina reports that Jamaica's new North Coast Highway should have reached the marina's location at Port Antonio by the end of last month, cutting transit time from the capital city of Kingston to Port Antonio by at least half an hour. The poor condition of the old road has been considered a major deterrent in the tourism development of Port Antonio. Now, boatowners and crew arriving by air at the



River rafting is the thing to do in Jamaica, but the new North Coast Highway provides an easier way to get to Errol Flynn Marina!

Norman Manley International Airport will be aboard at Errol Flynn that much faster. Unlike many other parts of Jamaica, Port Antonio prides itself on its distinctive "laid back" traditional West Indian atmosphere, and on the fact that Portland Parish, in which Port Antonio is located, boasts not only the lowest crime rate in Jamaica, but also the entire Caribbean.

The Errol Flynn Marina and Boatyard will be exhibiting at the Miami International Boat Show, February 12th through 16th, at the Miami Beach Convention Center. The Miami show is one of the largest marine shows in the world and runs concurrently with the Miami Brokerage and Super Yacht Show, plus Strictly Sail at Miami Marina. In March, Errol Flynn Marina and Boatyard will be at the San Juan Convention Center, March 6th through 8th for the Puerto Rico International Boat Show.

For more information see ad on page 14.

Caraibe-Yachts Expands with New Name

The Caraibe-Yachts brokerage company is expanding rapidly, opening new offices around the Caribbean. In the future, the name Caraibe-Yachts will only be used in Martinique and Guadeloupe. In other places the name will be Caribbean-Yachts. Stéphane Legendre, well known as the organizer of the popular Transcarabes and other Caribbean yacht rallies, has recently joined the Caribbean-Yachts office in St. Martin as a sales agent.

For more information see ad on page 43.

Newest Marina in Dominican Republic

Marina ZarPar is the Dominican Republic's newest marina with space for 360 boats up to 120 feet long. The marina has a controlling depth of ten feet with slips and moorings providing 30/50 and 100-amp service, and free WiFi.

Marina ZarPar is located 12 miles east of the capital, Santo Domingo, and seven miles east of the Dominican Republic's international airport.

Marina ZarPar sponsored the development of the first complete *Cruising Guide to the Dominican Republic*. The book is available free at www.noonsite.com and at www.scca.org. It can be downloaded at no charge in English, French and Spanish and it has been hailed as the most comprehensive guide ever written for the entire Dominican Republic. As well as a complete commentary on the culture of the Dominican Republic, it also includes new strategies on those cruisers going east and south from the Bahamas and Turks & Caicos.

The marina has bilingual staff who are anxious to assist cruisers in the exploration of the Dominican Republic.

For more information see ad on page 29.

Shipwrights Ltd. Moves to New Grenada Location

Shipwrights Limited, formerly operating in the Grenada Marine boatyard, recently announced the relocation of its operations. The new facility is located on the waterfront in the same bay, St. David's Harbour, but as an independent enterprise.

Shipwrights Limited is now back to being a one-stop boat shop. A new side-to, boat-friendly wooden dock with a 14-foot draft will facilitate in-the-water projects just steps from the shop.

The company and its owner, Fred Thomas, have a long history in the Caribbean, having initially operated in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, from the late 1970s through 1990. After a short stint in Trinidad, Shipwrights moved to Grenada to contribute expertise during the development stage of Grenada Marine boatyard and the overall recreational marine industry in Grenada with Jason Fletcher, owner of Grenada Marine.

—Continued on next page

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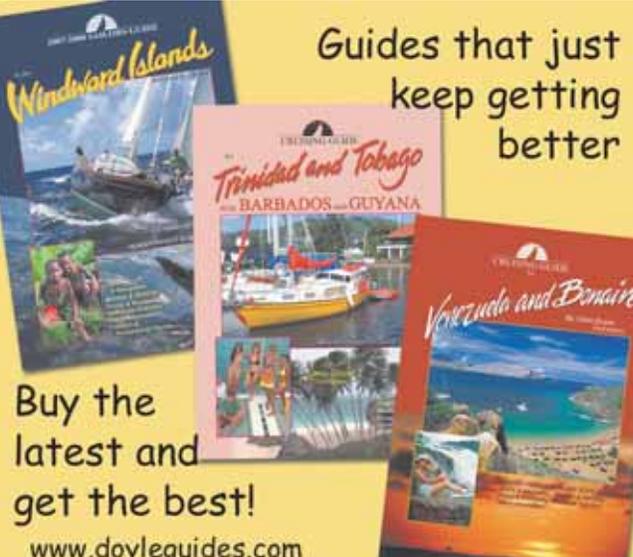
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—Continued from previous page
 Shipwrights continues to maintain an excellent working relationship with Grenada Marine.
 The focus of the company is in the refit and restoration of fine yachts. Renowned for superior quality, Fred and his crew always provide very personalized service and pride themselves on giving projects, small or large, that little bit of extra attention by



The new Shipwrights' building and dock at St. David's, Grenada

limiting the number of projects accepted. Other services include total or partial project management and haul or launch supervision. They are dealers for Teak Decking Systems, and still also offer hand-laid decks.
 For more information contact Fred Thomas at (473) 443-1062, info@shipwrights.com.

DVD: Chronicles of Montserrat
 Since the start of eruptions from Montserrat's Soufrière Hills volcano in the mid-1990s, thrill-seekers and adventure travelers have ventured to the secluded island to view its most famous resident. Once there, it is evident to see that the destination flourish-



A new DVD chronicles the recent history of Montserrat and its Soufriere Hills volcano

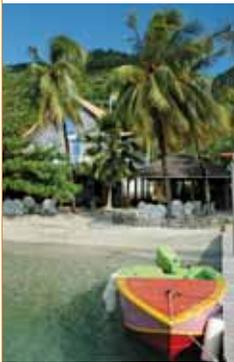
es despite continuous volcanic activity, boasting lush green mountains, deserted dark-sand beaches, untouched reefs and world-class nature trails.
 In tribute to the island's resilience and meteoric rise from the ashes, Montserrat-based Living Letters Productions has completed a commemorative DVD box-set entitled *The Price of Paradise*. The nine-volume collection features the precursors to the volcano's eruption, the devastation that followed, and the inspiring narrative of Montserrat's perseverance through difficult times. The story begins with the depiction of the active steam vents in the Tar River Valley and develops into the dramatic explosions that caused dome collapses, ash falls, blackouts and the extensive evacuation procedures for the island's residents and visitors. Also included is a bonus DVD that highlights the rebirth of Montserrat and the magic that makes the island such a special place.
 Those eager to learn more about the valiant struggle that is Montserrat's success story can enjoy the DVD package at an introductory price of US\$100.
 For more information contact Living Letters Productions at lead@candw.ms.

Getting to Montserrat by Sea...
 Transport links to Montserrat are being boosted with the re-introduction of fast-ferry services from neighbouring Antigua. Montserrat has been without a regular ferry service for almost three and a half years, but thanks to financial support from the UK's Department for International Development, a renewed service has been in operation since December 2008. From February 16th, the large and speedy *Provincetown III* will be operating two daily return services on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. This air-conditioned ferry carries 149 passengers and will complete the 27-mile crossing in approximately one hour. Return trips cost EC\$350 (about \$90 or US\$130), while one-way fares are EC\$200 (\$50 or US\$75). Passengers do not need to make advance reservations and can buy a ticket at the departure port.
 For further information contact monair@candw.ms (for Montserrat information) or info@carib-world.com (for Antigua information).

...or by Air
 Carib Aviation currently offers charter air services into and out of Montserrat from a number of islands. These include Antigua and St. Kitts, where the vast majority of international connecting passengers transit. A weekly scheduled service between London's Gatwick Airport and St Kitts' Robert L. Bradshaw International Airport began in January.
 The Carib fleet currently consists of one eight-passenger Britten Norman Islander, and one five-passenger Beechcraft Queen Air. A second Britten Norman Islander is planned for later this year.
 For more information email reservations@carib-aviation.com

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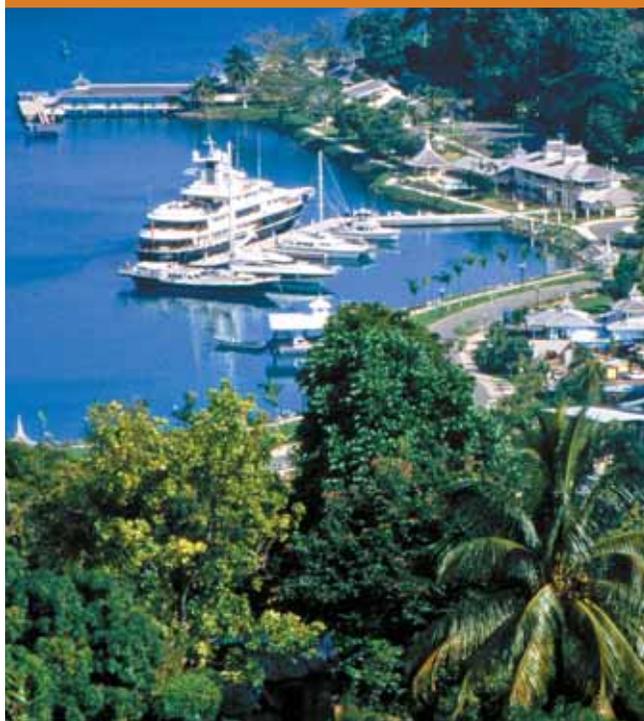


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PLEASE DON'T APIS-OFF THE YACHTS

In 2007, Chris Doyle wrote, "It is hard to think of anything that will disrupt yachting tourism in the Eastern Caribbean more," and Don Street agreed: "It will put chartering and cruising in the Caribbean back 20 years." "It" was something called APIS, and after a period of hibernation it might be waking up at a seriously inopportune time.

In early 2007, ten member states of the Caribbean Economic Community (CARICOM) passed legislation requiring Advance Passenger Information to be transmitted to the Joint Regional Communication Centre (JRCC) in Barbados by all air and sea carriers, including yachts, arriving at and departing from each member state. These included Jamaica, Antigua & Barbuda, St. Kitts & Nevis, Dominica, Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Grenada, Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana. The system was intended to enhance border security by detecting terrorists and other criminals before arrival.

Although this Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) officially went into effect on February 1st, 2007, only three countries — Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines — ever tried making yachts comply. The problems that the average recreational sailor had with the API system have been well documented, with yacht skippers reportedly struggling for anything up to four hours to access the website (www.caricomeapis.org) and accurately complete an on-line form that asked for times of arrival to the minute and "5 Letter Port Codes", and had room for a thousand passenger names. Submissions of the completed form were to be made according to a strict but complex timetable relevant to times of departure and/or arrival, which was sometimes not feasible given yacht speeds and distances between islands.

As yacht skippers discovered how problematic compliance with APIS was, they began to avoid destinations that demanded this extra step in addition to existing Customs and Immigration procedures. Alarmed at this threat to the regional yachting industry, the Caribbean Marine Association (CMA), the umbrella body for national recreational marine trades associations, hosted a meeting with JRCC representa-

tives on October 8th, 2007, in Trinidad. At that time, JRCC's Compliance Officer said they would be willing to make the form more user-friendly and to improve the website, and agreed to take yachting stakeholders' concerns into consideration.

Meanwhile, the three requests for yachts' APIS compliance were abandoned and most other countries involved prudently let their APIS laws go unenforced regarding yachts. St. Lucia enacted legislation in December 2007 to waive the APIS requirement for yachts pending its revision specific to the yachting sector.

The Secretariat of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS: Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands) expressed concern that "the [API] system in its present form will serve as a deterrent to yacht visitors to the islands. Given the well-known fact that yacht visitors contribute more to the economy than cruise visitors, it is a sector in which sustainable growth should be encouraged." At the meeting of the OECS Council of Tourism Ministers held in April 2008, and at the May 2008 meeting of the OECS Authority (Heads of Government), discussions were held on the consequences of the application of APIS to the yachting industry in the Eastern Caribbean.

In June 2008, OECS Director General Dr. Len Ishmael wrote to JRCC Director Commander Louis Baptiste: "As you may be aware, a number of concerns are being expressed by both public and private stakeholders in the Eastern Caribbean yachting industry about the adverse, albeit unintended, consequences of the application of requirements of [APIS] as proposed under regional security arrangements, to the operations of yachts visiting the Caribbean region... The OECS Authority has taken the position that the APIS requirements are onerous and would impact negatively on yachting tourism in the OECS sub-region. The Authority accordingly agreed that the OECS as a sub-regional grouping could not commit to the implementation of these procedures, as proposed, at this time."

Dr. Ishmael suggested that this was "an opportunity... [to] revisit the requirements of the APIS, as it

pertains to the yachting sector; this in a bid to resolve the economic concerns of the yachting industry in a manner that does not compromise the objective of enhancing border security." A meeting between OECS representatives, the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), JRCC personnel and yachting industry stakeholders was duly held on November 27th, 2008, in St. Lucia.

There Dr. Ishmael said, "For the OECS, unlike other CARICOM countries, yachting plays a crucial part in the economic life of the people." Referring to the current global economic situation's effect on land-based tourism, she noted, "In 1991 when hotels in the OECS countries found themselves in a similar plight... it was the sailing business that remained healthy and helped keep tourism afloat." She emphasized that the launch of APIS had an intrusive impact on the yachting sector and that OECS Prime Ministers have clearly stated that they would not like to see APIS continue.

Lynne Anne Williams, Executive Director IMPACS, replied that her delegation was attending the meeting in order to understand the concerns of the yachting industry and to see how best to take account of these concerns while ensuring that the Caribbean remained a safe region. However, she indicated that her team did not have a mandate to waive any existing requirements and was insistent that, because all CARICOM Governments had signed up to APIS, it had to be implemented in respect of yachts.

It's a challenge to facilitate yacht tourism in a single cruising area with numerous national borders. A key recommendation of the study entitled "Development of a Subregional Marine Based Tourism Strategy" undertaken by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2004 was having standardized Customs and Immigration procedures in order to simplify the process of clearing in and out for yachts, thus facilitating yacht visits. Even if APIS's regulations and on-line form are made more user-friendly, can the small countries that depend on yacht visits tolerate this added barrier to inter-island travel in tough economic times?

This issue will be raised at regional and subregional ministerial-level meetings this month and in April and May. As Dr. Ishmael pointed out in last November's meeting, a secure environment is important, but security is meant to support economic benefit and enhance international competitiveness, not hinder it. Can APIS somehow be made a benefit to yachting rather than a barrier, or can security concerns be addressed through some other, less damaging, mechanism?

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Getting Clear on eSeaClear

Much has been written about eSeaClear since it was introduced last year. Comments have ranged from "It's useless to me" to "It works great" to "What is it?"

What It Is

eSeaClear is a voluntary system of electronic pre-arrival Customs notification for yachts traveling in the Eastern Caribbean, based on a standardized Customs clearance form. Basically, it gives yacht skippers the option of filling out Customs clearance forms on-line in advance of arrival (and in some places, on arrival), at a port of entry rather than doing so by hand upon arrival.

The eSeaClear-using skipper must still go to Customs to clear in. There, you give the Customs officer your pre-arrival notification (PAN) I.D. number provided by the on-line system. Your name will also work, if you've forgotten your number. The Customs officer will pull up your form on his computer and print it out for you to sign. Any fees will be paid as usual.

The on-line form, found at www.eSeaClear.com, asks for routine data similar to that on the various paper Customs forms. After the first data entry, subsequent uses are easy because all data is stored. Unless, for example, there is a crew change, the only changes in subsequent uses will be voyage data. Step 5, "Review", shows what you've entered in case any edits are needed before you hit "Submit". Changes can be made at any time.

Having started as a pilot program in St. Lucia in July 2008, eSeaClear is being introduced gradually throughout the Eastern Caribbean. St. Lucia, the British Virgin Islands, St. Kitts & Nevis, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines are now aboard. Among the countries using the system, there are still some ports of entry that don't have computers. These ports' names won't appear on the drop-down menu until computers are installed.

CMA and CCLEC Cooperation

eSeaClear was developed by the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC) as part of a Regional Clearance System set up to facilitate the processing of yachts traveling around the Caribbean. The Caribbean Marine Association (CMA), the umbrella body for national recreational marine trades associations in the region, supports eSeaClear and promotes its use to yachtsmen.

Keats Compton, President of the CMA, wrote to Merton Moore, CCLEC Permanent Secretary, in 2006: "The primary aim of the Caribbean Marine Association is to make the region the premier yachting destination with the theme 'many islands, one sea'. We recognize that Customs formalities are an integral part of the yachting experience, and that the existence of a regional Customs entity presents a unique opportunity for cooperation between our organizations. We are aware, for instance, of the existence of a proposed common clearance form, which we would be happy to ask our member associations to lobby their Governments to implement."

Mr. Moore responded, "CCLEC welcomes the initiative... to improve the efficiency and standardize practice in the yachting business in the region. As you recognized in your letter, we are in the process of standardizing the yacht reporting form for use in the region. This is not an easy undertaking as some countries would bring forth different needs at different times, some of those needs emanating from the yachting fraternity, and others emanating from the government sector. As a consequence, it is probably timely and appropriate for our two organizations to join forces and ensure that concrete positions are agreed on that would satisfy all sides."

At that time, the expectation was that a standardized paper form would be adopted throughout the region. CCLEC has taken the concept a step further, and presented a common screen on line, thus achieving standardization (and hastening the obsolescence of carbon paper!).

eSeaClear Compared to APIS

Probably because both systems feature on-line forms, some people have confused eAPIS (see story on preceding page) with eSeaClear, but they are very different.

In brief, APIS is intended to gather information about security risks and places a mandatory additional round of form-filling on every cross-border movement a

yacht makes. In its existing form, its requirements are impractical and sometimes impossible for the average yacht's skipper to comply with, fines for non-compliance are draconian, and it was imposed without any prior consultation with the regional yachting industry. APIS is administered by an organization headed by ex-military personnel who seem to have little contact with, or knowledge of, the yachting industry.

In contrast, eSeaClear is simply an alternative method for providing data to Customs for yacht clearance. Rather than adding another layer of red tape, it can minimize form-filling duties both by saving data and because both entry and departure details are entered at the same time, on the same screen. Use of the eSeaClear system is voluntary, so there are no problems with non-compliance. eSeaClear was developed through cooperation between the public and private sectors, and users' feedback is solicited. eSeaClear is driven by Customs and yachting interests. We've all had our hassles with Customs, but Customs has worked with yachts for the past 40 years or so and continues to do so on a daily basis. And the CMA's mission is to promote the regional yachting industry.

What About Risk Assessment?

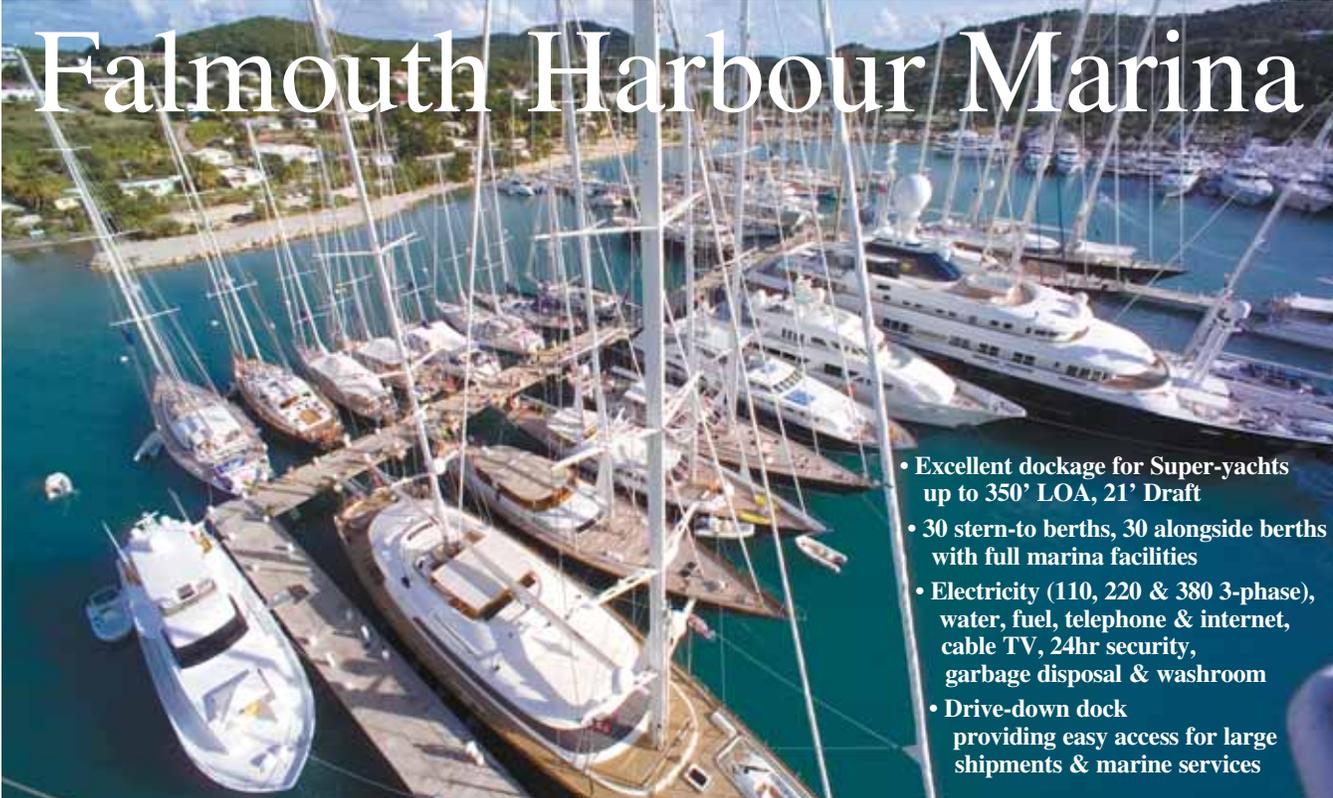
With eSeaClear, authorities have the possibility of conducting risk assessments prior to the arrival of the vessel and its crew and the clearance information is effortlessly transmitted to the Regional Clearance System. APIS proponents have criticized eSeaClear for being voluntary, but would persons with reason to evade the law be likely to volunteer information by either system?

Ultimately, eSeaClear could have a wider spread. APIS was signed onto by ten CARICOM member states. CCLEC is a union of some 35 Customs entities including EU and US territories.

Looking Forward

Customs offices in countries now implementing eSeaClear have, or are in the process of getting, computers for officers' use. It is intended that computers will eventually be available for skippers' eSeaClear data input on arrival as well.

Many observers hope that eSeaClear will some day replace all existing Customs and Immigration forms in all participating countries, and that having completed an eSeaClear declaration prior to or on arrival at the first participating country only an update of the eSeaClear declaration would be required when a yacht visits other participating countries.



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Caribbean Eco-News

Marine Resources Assessed in Jost van Dyke

The Jost van Dykes Preservation Society reports: During November 2008, Clive Petrovic, a British Virgin Islands-based marine scientist and former head of the Applied Marine Studies Centre at the H. Laverty Stoutt Community College on Tortola, made several visits to Jost van Dyke to conduct an assessment of the coastal and marine resources of that island.

During his first visit, he identified coastal erosion, algal blooms and land reclamation, all of which have a significant effect on the natural environment.

On his second visit, Petrovic spoke to local resident, business owner and fisherman Foxy Callwood about the changes in Great Harbour over the last 60 years. They discussed changes in the yachting industry both in the types of boats used (from island sloops to fiberglass motorboats) and in the increase in numbers of boats anchoring there. Last year, 7,714 boats cleared Immigration in Great Harbour.

Petrovic's third visit included the nearby islets of Sandy Cay, Sandy Spit, Green Cay and Diamond Cay. Extensive damage to the coral reefs from both bad anchoring practice and from storms was noted. An assessment of fish and other marine life present was also done.

Along with information previously collected, Mr. Petrovic's observations will form Chapter Seven of an environmental profile, a draft of which is expected to be available for review by the end of this month.

For more information visit www.jvdps.org.

Puerto Rican Coastal Reserve Expands

Puerto Rico Correspondent Maria Miranda Sierra reported last month in *Caribbean Net News* that in January, on the 15th anniversary of the million-gallon Berman Oil Spill that damaged the coastline of Puerto Rico, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and various other organizations celebrated the purchase of 152 acres to expand a coastal

reserve near one of the areas hardest areas hit by the spill on the northeastern part of the island. The land has been added to the San Miguel Natural Reserve, east of San Juan. The purchase of this land expands the reserve to 422 acres and contributes to an ongoing effort to create the Northeast Ecological Corridor, one of the Caribbean's last great unprotected areas.

The San Miguel Natural Reserve is a mosaic of coastal habitats including near-shore coral reefs, more than a mile of beachfront, inter-tidal areas, wetlands,

tion of critical habitat," the Trust for Public Land's Puerto Rico Project Manager Mildred Ramos Majoros said. "It also ensures that publicly accessible coastal lands and waters are not privately developed and will continue to provide recreational areas for boating, swimming, and fishing."

Bonaire Group Protects Seagrass Beds

In a move to protect the vital seagrass beds in Lac Bay, Bonaire, the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire group (STCB) has joined with others in establishing protected areas with an in-water system of buoys and lines.

Seagrass provides an important food source for Bonaire's juvenile green turtles. Lac Bay's seagrass beds also provide shelter, food and oxygen for other marine life, ranging from microorganisms to fish, crabs, shrimp and queen conch. Seagrass roots in the near-shore beds prevent sand from eroding. Areas with dense seagrass bottoms have been in jeopardy in Lac Bay due to heavy recreational use there. The line-and-buoy boundaries are visual markers to warn bay users of the seagrass beds below the surface.

Roped-off areas designated by buoys are now located in the heavy-traffic windsurfer area in front of Jibe City and around the point to the windsurfing competition area.

STCB is being joined in this project by Progressive Environment Solutions and the National Parks Foundation Bonaire. Two local businesses, Jibe City and The Windsurf Place, have joined the project as supporting partners, providing technical and financial assistance, and on-site encouragement to users to stay outside of the marked areas. Lac Bay is a critical, sensitive environment, and this project will benefit not only the sea turtles, but also Bonaire's biodiversity in general.



Sea turtles and other creatures are now better protected in the expanded Puerto Rican coastal reserve

coastal dry forests, mangroves, the confluence of two rivers, and the remnants of a 19th century *hacienda* used for sugarcane farming. The reserve is home to 16 federally listed threatened and endangered species, including the leatherback turtle, which nests here.

"Preserving this site provides a continuous stretch of protected coastal shoreline, preventing the fragmenta-

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CARLOS AGUILAR MEMORIAL CHAMPIONSHIP

So, the creators of the Rolex Cup Regatta have come up with another great race concept — and this one gives a new twist to international match racing. From December 5th through 7th 2008, the St. Thomas Yacht Club hosted the first International Carlos Aguilar Memorial Championship in St. Thomas Harbor, right off the downtown Charlotte Amalie waterfront, and it was a doozy.

there, the men raced later in the afternoon, and several of the men's teams didn't even make it in until the end of the meeting. Fellow racers collected their papers and race instructions for them. Like all St. Thomas races, it's a friendly one.

But that relaxation heated up fast. The tension as the teams discussed race strategy was palpable.

A small crowd of onlookers, including the Governor of

Carlos Aguilar, the dynamic local sailor killed last year and memorialized in the race, would have been in his element as the world-class field cut aggressively and tightly around marks, VIP boats, the committee boat, and the occasional landing seaplane. His father sailed in the Olympics for El Salvador and Carlos was well known in St. Thomas sailing circles for galvanizing local racers.

In the early segments, local familiarity with the shifty winds was key, but the non-locals quickly picked up the quirks of the conditions. They're not national and international-class racers for nothing!

The women's field included Genny Tulloch, silver medalist in the US Women's Match Racing Championships, teamed with an Olympic-caliber crew including Sally Barkow, Jen Glass, and Liz Hall. This team took the win in a series of aggressive matches among the women's boats. They won over hot competitors including Liz Baylis, 2002 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year and silver medalist in the 2008 Women's Match Racing World Championships; Anna Tunnicliffe, 2008 Olympic gold medalist with an international match-caliber team; and a slew of other top sailors.

The men's field, including top racers from St. Thomas, Tortola, St. Maarten, St. Croix, Puerto Rico and El Salvador, fell to Taylor Canfield, a 19-year-old prodigy who has managed to combine an active Boston College curriculum with first and second places at the 420 North American Championships. He and his team came back from a penalty in the finals to win a tight match series here, catching a good break when another boat lost a crew member overboard (grabbing for a loose flag in the wind), and bringing it in first thanks

Match Racing in Paradise:

World-Class Sailors Against World-Class Winds ...and Really Cool Course Hazards

by Barbara Gail Warden



In this race, course conditions are a little different. They may include seaplanes landing, fast ferries screaming past the start line, cruise ships docking (well, that didn't happen, but it conceivably could), and mega-yachts stopping to watch the race. Despite these conditions — or maybe because they add extra spice to course changes and make for really zany wind patterns — this race lured the top six women racers in the United States and eight of the top ten men racers in the Caribbean.

Or maybe the parties drew them. Every night, locals and visitors were eyeing a crowd of racers unwinding at a private outdoor party right on the water, eating, drinking, dancing and trading sailing stories to a really excellent soundtrack of reggae, Eighties hits, and classics. Many people passing by or seeing the fun from nearby bars wandered in and joined the dancing, attracted by a tanned and healthy crowd just bursting with enthusiasm after a day on the water.

Every morning saw the racers strolling in, relaxed (some of them still rubbing sleep out of their eyes), to the pre-race meeting — heading straight for the coffee-fruit-and-muffin fuel. On the Saturday, when I was

Above: The race-courses were just off a favorite dinghy docking spot in Charlotte Amalie

Right: Jockeying for starting positions



the Virgin Islands, a couple of senators, journalists, professional photographers, racing fans, and random pedestrians, watched from the shade of a festive yellow-and-white tent set up on the waterfront as the boats screamed through the course, which principal race officer Peter Holmberg admitted was set equally to challenge the racers and to put on a good show for watchers.

And it worked. As the women were ferried off the course, Governor de Jongh said to one of the teams, "This was very exciting! For a minute I thought you were going to sink each other."

to the team's experience.

The St. Thomas Yacht Club is no newcomer to world-class races. The organizer of the popular International Rolex Cup Regatta also hosted the first Grade I international match race held in the Caribbean, and played host to the 2006 TAG-Heuer Nation's Cup Regional Final.

And next year, the club will host the 2009 US Women's Match Racing Championships. Look out for ferries!

For results, see related item in this month's Regatta News department, page 15.



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REGATTA NEWS

Statia Rocks! Golden Rock Regatta 2008

Bea Hootsmans reports: The island of St. Eustatius was once known as The Golden Rock, and Golden Rock Regatta, finishing here every November, is as alluring as that precious metal. The regatta's island-to-island format attracted a dozen boats totaling almost 100 participants for the 2008 event, held November 10th through 15th.



Rockin' for the Golden Rock!

On Monday morning, November 10th, *NIX*, an X612 racing yacht, crossed the St. Maarten start line first and finished about two hours later in Gustavia, St. Barths, with one of the three entered Sunfast 37s arriving half an hour later — only six minutes behind on corrected time.

The race from St. Barths to St. Kitts started next morning; originally planned to be 53 miles, the course was shortened to 40 thanks to a forecast of light winds. *NIX* again took line honors but was beaten on handicap by *Kate*, the St. Kitts-built 12 metre, which on corrected time had 23 minutes in hand!

The next day the fleet sailed to St. Eustatius, the Golden Rock, today better known as Statia. That race was abandoned owing to lack of wind, but the following morning the exciting upwind/downwind races started at 9:00AM.

The Golden Rock Regatta prizegiving was held in historic Fort Orange. Jan Verhagen's team, a group of 60-year-old beach cat sailors from s'Gravenzande, Holland, took the last two days' prizes, holding off John Burns' Canadian team with three minutes in the first race and one minute in the second. But Verhagen's team could not overcome their bad results of the first two days, so the "Canadian Yankees" went home with the Governor's Trophy. Both teams, racing Sunfast 37s, were participating in the event for the first time.

The "reverse feeder race" back to St. Maarten started in turbulent weather with 25 knots of wind, six-foot seas and rain. The first boat in was *Tiffi Racoon*, winning the Presidente Cup.

For more information visit www.goldenrockregatta.com.

Inaugural Carlos Aguilar Match Race a Success

Carol Bareuther reports: The inaugural Carlos Aguilar Memorial Match Race took place from December 5th through 7th, 2008, in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club.



The winning Men's Open Division Team, with skipper Taylor Canfield at far left

The first day of racing in the harbor off Charlotte Amalie saw all conditions, from near calm in the morning to blustery gusts later, and also saw St. Thomas's Taylor Canfield lead the Men's Open Division and Florida's Anna Tunnicliffe top the Women's Division, while there was a three-way tie for third among the Women. This Grade Two event was contested in IC24s with each team consisting of a skipper and three crewmembers.

Shifty wind conditions saw several lead changes throughout the Women's Division racing in the morning of Day Two, followed by Men's Open Division competition in the afternoon. The completion of the second round-robin saw the leader board change, with St. Thomas's 16-year-old William Bailey skippering the winning team for the Men, and California's Genny Tulloch helming the winning Women's team.

On Day Three, visitors and locals alike lined up along the Charlotte Amalie waterfront to watch the concluding matches in which the top four teams in each division sailed to determine the overall winners. Following racing that was razor close, St. Thomas's Taylor Canfield won the Men's Division. "I've done a fair amount of match racing this past year and this win is an incentive for me to keep going," says 19-year-old Canfield, currently ranked 152 in ISAF's Open Match Race rankings and who would eventually like to compete in the ultimate match race, the America's Cup. Texas native Genny Tulloch and her crew beat Californian and former Rolex Yachswoman of the Year, Liz Baylis, for the Women's Division title.

This event honors the memory of Carlos Aguilar, an avid sailor and match racer, who was gunned down last year following a robbery at his home. "Carlos loved match racing and he loved a good party," says Pat Bailey, a St. Thomas-based International Sailing Judge at the awards ceremony at Yacht Haven Grande. "He would have loved to be here."

WINNERS

Men's Open

- 1) Taylor Canfield, St. Thomas, USVI
 - 2) William Bailey, St. Thomas, USVI
 - 3) Alec Anderson, Tortola, BVI
- #### Women's Division
- 1) Genny Tulloch, Texas, USA
 - 2) Liz Baylis, California, USA
 - 3) Anna Tunnicliffe, Florida, USA

Timoneer Tops Antigua Superyacht Cup

Kate Branagh reports: Blue skies, black clouds, sunshine and rain all in one afternoon marked the first day of racing at the Superyacht Cup Antigua, held December 10th through 13th. The forecast was pretty accurate at 17 to 20 knots with occasional squalls — but no one expected squalls on every leg, with winds reaching over 35 knots several times during the two-and-one-half hour race.

The Bruce King-designed 35-metre ketch *Signe* started first and led the fleet round the course to convincingly take the Ship Equip Race One. Captain Alistair Marshall showed clear signs of taking the racing very seriously: "It seemed a great shame to interrupt everyone with multiple tacks — we were enjoying our sandwiches on the last windward leg, so heading out to sea on one long tack was the logical move. A lucky wind shift on our final tack back to the finish helped us to stay ahead and finish just over three minutes in front of *Timoneer*." Several Superyacht Cup sponsors joined the crew of *Signe*, with Mark Preston and Andrew Porter from Hinckley Yacht Services trimming mainsheet and headsails respectively. Also onboard, representatives from sponsors Atollvic Shipyard from Vigo thoroughly enjoyed their first Superyacht Cup race in Antigua despite damp conditions.

Dubois-designed 44-metre ketch *Timoneer* managed to claw back two places on her way around, and had the usual team of experts, pulled together by crew boss Greg Yeo. With Barry Jones at the helm and world-class tactician Tomac of North Sails US, their experience showed by close to perfect lay-lines despite the very variable winds. Veteran Superyacht Cup Captain Phil Wade kept a close watch on all the team, including *Timoneer*'s owners and guests, a group of keen sailors with the most senior member being 94 years old.

On Day Two, *Timoneer* stole the lead from *Signe* after winning both races, despite having cracked their mizzen boom in the first race. *Timoneer* started 22 minutes after *Tenacious*, choosing to go offshore on the first leg resulting in big gains and eventually the lead. *Tenacious*, after a promising start in the second race, lost their main halyard and had to send someone aloft, a daring call in such big seas. Despite their best efforts to effect repairs at sea they were forced to retire. The Faroux-designed *Kalkobass II* had a more successful day, moving steadily up the fleet to score a third and second. The only boat to hoist a spinnaker today in both races in the gusty conditions, the *Kalkobass* crew were proud of their improved results, which brought them to third overall in the series.

After a very close Day Three of racing in what had to be one of the most nail-biting finishes to the Superyacht Cup Antigua ever, *Timoneer* claimed victory. With winds ranging from 14 to 27 knots on the Abu Dhabi race, the competition for first place was between *Timoneer* and *Signe*. *Signe* had to put at least one other boat between them to take the title and sailed hard around the course keeping the other boats behind. As the fleet closed up together within a mile of the finish, it still looked like it could be *Signe*'s day for glory. Yet another powerful rain squall approached, shifting the breeze by 20 to 30 degrees. *Signe* slightly under-stood her lay-line to the finish and brushed the mark, earning a points penalty from the race committee. *Timoneer*, which finished second, claimed the overall title for the Superyacht Cup Antigua. *Kalkobass* sailed across the line just 45 seconds later.

These three yachts finished within two minutes, and credit must be given to Jim Teeters' Bucket Rating System, which had all of the yachts finishing within five minutes of each other.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

The prizegiving for 160 people was held at the Copper and Lumber Hotel in Nelson's Dockyard, where each boat collected a trophy for at least one race.

For more information visit www.thesuperyachtcup.com.

St. Lucia Yacht Club's ARC Fun Day

Lily Bergasse reports: The St. Lucia Yacht Club hosted its second annual Fun Day at Reduit Beach in front of the clubhouse on December 14th, 2008. Participants



ARC participants joined St. Lucia Yacht Club members for water games and lots of laughs on Fun Day

in the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) 2008 and the families were invited to join the St. Lucia Yacht Club dinghy sailors in both morning and afternoon sessions of water and beach games, including paddling an Optimist dinghy filled with six team members of all sizes, and a (really) short Laser course for able seamen/women/children. The morning session was enjoyed by four teams of junior sailors as well as the one and only early rising ARC crew, the "Wesley Team" of four young boys and one girl. The Wesley Team were awarded the Fun Day ARC Crew prize, compliments of Island Water World, while the team to accumulate the most points in the morning was the "Billions and Billions of Blue Billious Blistering Barnacles", winning a hamper, compliments of Renwick & Co.

The afternoon session saw more ARC sailors, including crews from *Uhuru* and *Margratha*. *Uhuru* was the overall winner of the afternoon games, which aimed to be short, entertaining and full of laughs.

Many thanks must go to the organizer of the Fun Day, SLYC Membership Secretary Danielle De Rouck and her volunteers, as well as the two instructors of the junior sailing Programme, Rob Hemming and Chris Lowe. The day would not have been a success without the generous sponsorship of Digicel, Island Water World, Renwick & Co., Royal Bank of Canada (who sponsored 12 new safety jackets for the Junior Sailing Programme), Johnson's Marine Hardware, J. E. Bergasse & Co, Sunset Heights, Delirius, Chris Doyle Guides, and the St. Lucia Tourist Board.

For more information visit www.stluciayachtclub.com.

ARC 2008 Delivered on All Fronts

Peta Stuart-Hunt reports: Whatever the weather, participating in the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) is all about the experience. "Fair but at times frustrating" is a good summary of the ARC 2008. The winds and waves were fair this last running of the event, though with some frustrating holes at times, especially for heavy displacement cruising boats. However, the plus side is that less wind meant fewer breakages than is typical during 2,700 nautical miles of open ocean sailing.

"One of the happiest moments of my life! What a wonderful feeling" is how Ollie Holden, skipper of the Nicholson 38 *Nutmeg of Shoreham* described his arrival at Rodney Bay, St. Lucia after 23 days at sea. It is a sentiment echoed by many of the crews as they reach the ARC finish line. Many report feeling elated with the achievement but also tinged with sadness at finishing an extraordinary adventure. They now join the ever-growing band of sailors who can proudly proclaim, "I've done the ARC!"

The final part of the ARC experience for its participants is the official prizegiving. This took place on December 20th, and marked the close of ARC 2008. Crews, families, friends and invited guests gathered at the Gaiety Theatre for entertainment generously hosted by the St. Lucia Tourist Board. As well as

recognizing the achievements of the sailors, the evening was also an opportunity for the ARC organizers, World Cruising Club, to officially thank everyone who participated in the ARC this year, a sentiment seconded by IGY Rodney Bay Marina General Manager, Cuthbert Didier, who also thanked the crews on behalf of the people of St. Lucia, for whom the ARC is so important.

In addition to prizes for line honours and podium places in each Division and Class, there were awards for special achievements, such as the volunteer radio net controllers; the ARC finish line boats; and the four yachts — *Magic Pelagic*, *Windancer*, *Ohana* and *Valva* — which gave assistance to other yachts during the crossing.

Norwegian Edvard Brook-Bratbak's young family, including eight-month-old Marina, were called up for four awards, including the Jimmy Cornell Trophy for overall winner of Division One, as well as youngest participant, and winner of Class H, with their Beneteau First 31.7, *Madonna*. All the ARC children — 32 of them this year — were welcomed on stage to some of the loudest cheers of the evening, and presented with a gift and certificate to mark their achievement. The evening culminated with the presentation of the most significant award, The Spirit of the ARC, which recognizes the individual or crew who most represents the ethos of the ARC. ARC 2008's winner was the crew of *Free to Be*.

While some crews fly home immediately, most skippers and their yachts spend the winter cruising the Caribbean, exploring the islands and anchorages for which the region is famous, and enjoying life afloat. Their ARC experience may be over, but many months

of living their dream of Caribbean cruising lie ahead.

The ARC programme has received widespread praise, improving year after year through closer ties with local businesses, sponsors, and service support specialists. Against this backdrop, Andrew Bishop, managing director of World Cruising Club has announced the signing of a five-year contract to keep the Caribbean stage of the ARC at the new IGY Rodney Bay Marina. Major sponsors in St. Lucia include the Ministry of Tourism, Digicel, Heineken, and Colombian Emeralds.

The entry list is open for ARC 2009 and already over 40 yachts have registered.

For more information visit www.worldcruising.com.

Eight Take the Latitude 18 Halyard Challenge

Emma Paull reports: At the Latitude 18 Halyard Challenge, held on January 3rd, organized by the Royal BVI Yacht Club and sponsored by Latitude 18, Dave West's Melges 32, *Jurakan*, crossed the finish line of both of two races comfortably ahead to take line honours. However, once handicaps were applied it came down to a close duel between the Haycraft family's Sirena 38, *Pipe Dream*, and the First 10R *Luxury Girl*, skippered by Guy Eldridge.

In the first race, the fleet was too eager and all eight boats were called back by Race Committee Chairman Ron Gurney. The race started cleanly at the second attempt and the fleet beat out of the harbour



Luxury Girl, heading for a win

with *Jurakan* and *Luxury Girl* playing shifts up the shoreline to pull ahead. Both chose a conservative central line to cross the current of the Sir Francis Drake Channel and round Cooper Island. This was the first time many of the racers had seen the backside of Cooper, but as Bob Phillips, *Luxury Girl's* tactician and Chairman of the BVI Spring Regatta Committee put it, "You'd better get used to seeing the outside of the islands, we have several courses planned for out there this spring."

On the run between Dead Chest and Peter Island, *Pipe Dream* made a late charge and closed up to third on corrected time, followed in by Kevin Rowlette's Olson 30 *Willy T*.

Ron and Diane Lewis entertained the moored bare-boaters by setting a start line in the bay, with competitors manoeuvring around the anchored Moorings cats. —Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Pipe Dream judged it perfectly and hammered off to an excellent midline start while *Luxury Girl* approached the line early and had to run off to the pin end, starting well down the fleet. The lightweight sportboats *Jurakan* and Andrew Thompson's *Melges 24*, *Crewclothing.co.uk*, struggled in the dying breeze, while *Luxury Girl* overtook *Willy T*. The best gain was made by Colin Rathbun at the helm of *Team Lime*, one of three IC24s, the smallest boats in the fleet, who persisted in staying close enough to win the race on corrected time. *Team Lime's* second race win was enough to lift Colin Rathbun to third overall.

WINNERS

- 1) *Luxury Girl*, First 10R, Guy Eldridge
 - 2) *Pipe Dream*, Sirena 38, Peter Haycraft
 - 3) *Team Lime*, IC24, Colin Rathbun
- For more information visit www.rbvlyc.com.

Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta This Month

Fred Thomas reports: Here's an opportunity for sailors to become part of a very special occasion, bringing



Racing gracefully... Classics will spread their wings in Grenada this month

together yachts steeped in tradition and history, each with its own distinctive style and story to tell. Vintage yachts, schooners, wooden boats, "spirit of tradition" and other classics will be competing in the second annual Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta, which will start on February 19th with a skippers' briefing and registration, followed by three days of racing. An Awards Ceremony and party will conclude the event

on the Sunday evening. Kenny Coombs of the Antigua Classic Regatta and Jan Roosens of the St. Maarten Classic Regatta, along with myself, Fred Thomas of Shipwrights Limited in Grenada, are all involved with this prestigious event. The Grenada Classic is positioned well in the sailing calendar between the Classic Yacht Regattas of St. Maarten and Antigua, and feeder races between the classic regattas are planned for the future.

The courses for 2009 are off the rugged and scenic southeastern coast of Grenada. They have been designed to give skippers and crews some exhilarating, yet not too arduous racing. International classic yacht photographer Cory Silken will be on hand.

For more information visit www.grenadaclassicregatta.com.

Superyacht Captains Aim to Claim RORC Caribbean 600

A team of superyacht captains has announced their intention to participate in the new RORC Caribbean 600 Race, sailing on Claude Theiler's Orma 60 trimaran, *Region Guadeloupe*. Their aim is to set a course

of the 54-metre Huisman *Hyperion*; Ben Cameron of the 75-metre Holland *Mirabella V*; and Steve Branagh of the 110-foot Wally *Narida*.

The team will benefit from crewmembers Ed Danby and Ben Wood, boatbuilders and multihull specialists par excellence. Ed Danby is probably best known for the key roles he played on Grant Dalton's super-maxi cat, *Club Med*.

The legendary French multihull sailor Claude Theiler will sail as team captain and the crew line-up is completed with Guadeloupe-based navigator Stéphane Squarcioni and Antigua Yacht Club member Richard Watson.

Mark Stevens says, "Ben, John, Steve and I have known each other for a number of years and have raced together at different regattas on various vessels... However racing a pedigree Orma 60 trimaran over 600 miles is very different and really appeals to our aging sense of adventure — it will be a close-to-the-water, white-knuckle ride, slightly different from Bucket sailing! We will be looking to the experience of Claude, Ed, Stéphane and Ben to see us around the course quickly and safely. The aim clearly is however to be first home and set the multihull record."

The RORC 600 Caribbean Race has attracted wide interest. Regular Antigua winner Bernie Evan Wong has already entered his Mumm 36 *High Tension* and participation announcements have been made by *Leopard*, *Sojana*, *Windrose*, *Velsheda* and the recently launched 145-foot Wally, *Saudade*.

For more information visit <http://caribbean600.rorc.org>.

Heineken Regatta Funds for Nature Organizations

Heather Tackling reports: Funds raised through the sale of black bracelets during the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2008 were given to the Nature Foundation St. Maarten and the St. Martin Réserve Naturelle to put towards their conservation programmes on both sides of the island. "During the regatta, we want to raise the exposure concerning the importance of keeping our island and its waters clean," says Heineken St. Maarten Managing Director John Leone. "We started with the green Meet You There bracelets which we donated in 2006 and followed up with Serious, Clean Fun bracelets in 2007. Through the sales of these bracelets we were able to donate a total of US\$6,000."

"We are extremely grateful for this contribution," says Beverly Mae Nisbeth of the Nature Foundation. "The Foundation is funded purely through grants and fundraising efforts. A donation like this makes a significant difference to the work we do. The natural environment is one of St. Maarten's most important resources: clean beaches, healthy seas and green hills are the reason why many of our visitors come here every year." When asked what Nature Foundation would spend their money on, Ms. Nisbeth replied, "Staff training and mooring maintenance."

The Foundations and Heineken St. Maarten would also like to especially thank the Shipwreck Shop and the St. Maarten Yacht Club for merchandising these items and individual volunteers for their efforts in selling these items during the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta.

The new bracelets for the 2009 St. Maarten Heineken Regatta will be on sale soon, and the 2007 and 2008 bracelets are still available from the Nature Foundation offices and Heineken St. Maarten.

For more information on the Nature Foundation visit info@naturefoundationsxm.org. For more information on Réserve Naturelle visit reservenaturelle@domaccess.com.

For more information on the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2009, March 5th through 8th, visit www.heinekenregatta.com.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page
Grenada's Round-the-Island Race Shaping Up to be Best Yet

Jovanna Giannasio-Fern reports: The Grenada South Coast Yacht Club announces the exciting Grenada Round-the-Island Race to be held March 13th through 15th, based at Garfield's Beach Bar on Grand Anse Beach. Free dockage for all participating boats during the race weekend is provided by the new Camper and Nicholson's Port Louis Marina.

This year's event will continue a time-honored tradition of sailing competition, as well as family fun and entertainment to Grenada residents, visiting sailors and tourists. Highlights of the weekend include the first-ever A Taste of Grenada food festival as well as youth sailing and a Bath Tub Derby. The weekend schedule is as follows:

After registration, captains' briefing and welcome party on the Friday, one of the oldest sailing events in the Caribbean is back for another year: the Grenada Round-the-Island Race on the Saturday. Also on the Saturday, Budget Marine will be hosting an event for youth to learn more about the joys of sailing, and families are invited to gather at Grand Anse for kid-friendly games such as tug of war, potato sack races and an egg toss.

The Bath Tub Derby, in which creative participants float their own version of a sailboat and compete for a grand prize, takes place on the Sunday, along with A Taste of Grenada, which will feature a wide cross-section of local vendors selling their delicious food. The awards ceremony and party, including food, drinks and music, will follow.

For more information see ad on page 14.

Jet-Ski Championship Set for Guadeloupe

Agence BeCom Caraibes reports: Karujet, the Rally



There's a time and a place for everything, and the time and place for jet-skis is next month in Guadeloupe

Jet-Ski World Championship, will take place off the Viard beach of Petit-Bourg, Guadeloupe, from March 18th to 22nd. Organizers expect more than a hundred competitors of 20 different nationalities, both amateurs and world championship participants, and more than 50,000 visitors. Radio and TV networks from all over the world will cover the event, which includes nine legs and 550 kilometres of racing. The event will be preceded by the Freestyle World Championship at Fort de France, Martinique, on March 14th.

After the machines' technical check and the opening ceremony on the 18th, the first day of racing will feature three legs: Viard to Marie-Galante; circuit racing at Marie-Galante; and Marie-Galante to Les Saintes to Viard.

Day Two will see circuit racing from Gosier to Rivière-Sens to Pointe-Noire and return, plus a Freestyle show at Pointe-à-Pitre Harbour.

The two legs on Day Three will be Viard to Saint-François and Saint-François to Viard, followed by a party in the evening.

The final day of racing features a circuit and the final leg, both off Viard beach, followed by the closing cocktail party.

For more information contact epaulin@hotmail.com

Culebra Heineken International Regatta in March

Carol Bareuther reports: The 5th Annual Culebra Heineken International Regatta and Culebra International Dinghy Regatta are set for March 20th through 22nd.

Top-notch racing, laid-back Caribbean-style parties and boatloads of island hospitality are what you'll find at this regatta, and Puerto Rico's offshore island of Culebra has quickly become a hot spot for racing in the northern Caribbean. Costa Bonita Villas is once again the regatta's host resort, hosting registration, Customs and Immigration officials, and rooms will be available for those who want to stay ashore. Most of the expected 70-plus fleet's mother ships will anchor in Ensenada Honda, Daiquiri Bay or Fulladosa Bay, all beautifully sheltered spots. In addition to mixed fleet racing and cruising classes, they expect to have one-design classes for Melges 24s, J/24s, IC24s, and J/80s. There will also be a large beach cat fleet and the native Chalanas.

The first day's racing will see windward-leeward courses for the racing classes south of Punto Soldado and round-the-cays courses for cruisers. The second day's race will be an island circumnavigation for all but the IC24 and J/24 classes. The CIDR offers Optimist, Laser and Laser Radial racing for kids in Ensenada Honda while the big boats sail offshore. Classes of entry to the CHIR will include CSA



More top-notch sailboat racing is in store at Culebra's upcoming International Regatta

Spinnaker Racing, CSA Spinnaker Racer-Cruiser, CSA J/24, IC24, CSA Performance Cruiser, CSA Jib & Main, IC24s, Beach Cat and native-built Chalanas. "We would be happy to dual score IRC-rated yachts that request it, but they must also have a CSA rating," Ayala says.

The entry fee is US\$200 for all classes except Beach Cats and Chalanas; the Beach Cat fee is US\$100 and the Chalanas fee is US\$150. Entries received after February 20 will be charged \$250 for all the classes except Beach Cats and Chalanas. Entry fee for Optimist and Laser Classes is US\$50. An Awards Ceremony will cap the two days of racing.

The CHIR marks the second leg of the Caribbean Ocean Racing Triangle, or CORT Series, which begins with the St. Croix International Regatta, February 20th to 22nd, and concludes with the BVI Spring Regatta April 3rd to 5th.

For more information visit www.culebrainternationalregatta.com.

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DESTINATIONS

We had just returned from a walk on the picture-perfect Caribbean beach on Isla Piños in Panama's San Blas Islands. These are the islands we had been longing to visit since we first began planning our Caribbean adventure three years ago. "I am sooooo happy!" Desiré smiled up at me from the dinghy as Lady Pitkeathly sprang onto the sugar scoop of our catamaran, *Famous Potatoes*. I do believe our dog, Lady P, had a smile on her slim little face too.

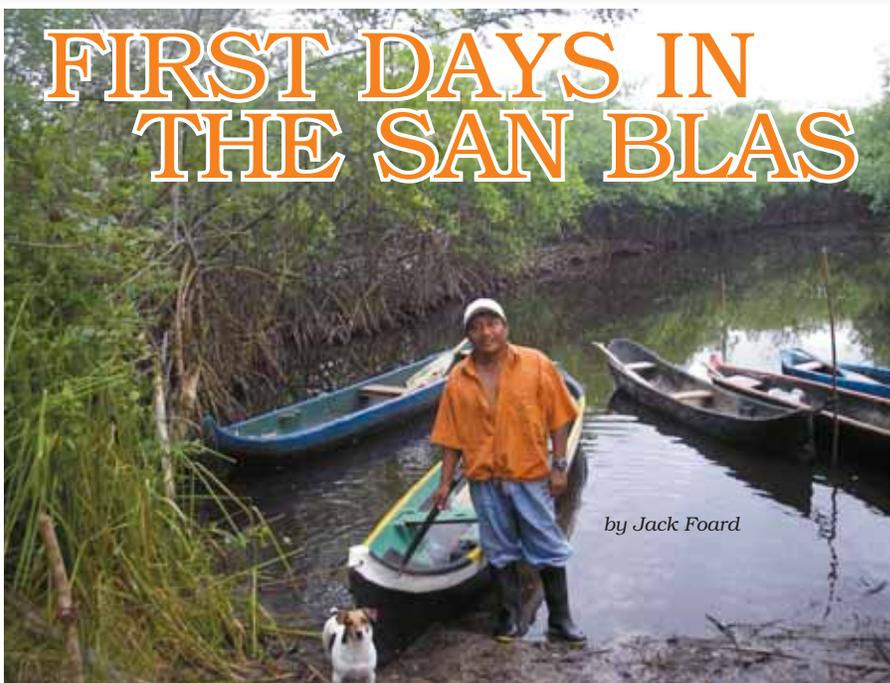
We'd had a rough sail over from the Colombian Isla Rosario the day before with crazy conditions: 12- to 14-foot seas and almost no wind. Storms to the north had the western Caribbean stirred into a tempest. It was a sweet moment when we dropped the hook just off the tan sand beach lined with swooning coconut palms and raucous green parrots squawking as they flew overhead.

The Kuna Indian village of Tupak is half a mile up the beach and we found the inhabitants to be delightful in many ways. They were genuinely friendly, yet reserved, and they seemed to be as happy to see us as we were them. The women were dressed in their colorful traditional Kuna outfits, giving the village a faraway foreign feel. The Kuna are very short in stature, second only to the famed Pygmies. We could not have felt more removed from "civilization" if we were in the middle of Africa or the South Pacific.

The first evening a Kuna man came paddling up in his *ulu*, a dugout canoe, just after sunset. He was the town tax collector and came to welcome us and to collect a US\$8 anchoring fee that gave us the privilege of staying for up to 30 days. Not a bad deal, even though we just planned to stay for three nights.

The next day, all of the cruisers in the four boats in the anchorage headed ashore to hike around the island. We were met on the village dock by a handsome young Kuna named David who said he spoke English and was assigned to be our guide. David did tell me right from the get-go that dogs were not allowed on the island, but if I had a leash we could take Lady P with us. We had left the leash on the boat, never dreaming that we would need it here, but David allowed us to take Lady P with us anyway. That turned out to be a mistake. I learned later that the *sahila*, or chief, was very upset with him.

David was a nice guy, although he charged our group US\$40 to simply walk around the perimeter of the island with him. (To put that in perspective, a Kuna woman may labor a full week to make an embroidered



by Jack Foard

Brigilio Suarez took me (and Lady P) by dugout canoe to see his gardens on the mainland

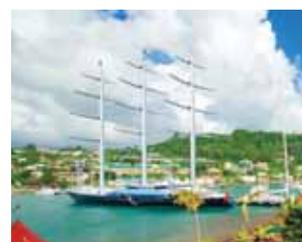
reverse-appliqué *mola* she sells for \$15 or \$20, and you can buy a dugout canoe for about \$100.) But the island was so beautiful and the walk so invigorating that no one really cared about his exorbitant fee.

The next day in town I was lucky to meet another

English-speaking Kuna named Brigilio Suarez. Brigilio's English was passable and his Spanish was spoken clearly and deliberately, so we were able to converse quite adequately.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Brigilio took me to meet the head *sahila*, who was not feeling well. I had a bag of gifts for the village and I also brought along my stethoscope and volunteered to help with any medical needs the village might have.

of vitamin pills that might make him feel stronger.

I gave him five yards of bright blue vinyl cloth we had bought for exterior cushions, a bag of school supplies and pens and Post-It pads. He was a serious old man and never smiled but he seemed pleased. He asked

island. The Kunas who owned dogs had to get rid of them. This seemed a bit harsh to me, but it was my first insight into how the Kuna culture operates at the basic village unit. The *sahila* is the leader, but he is even more like the wise father-figure who takes the protection of his people very seriously. This is the first place in all of our travels that Lady Pitkeathly was truly banned from visiting, but that was fine.

I wanted to see what life was like in a Kuna village and asked if I could spend one night in the village if I brought my own hammock. The *sahila* nodded his assent and told Brigilio to take me to the number two *sahila* to assign me a place. I had hoped to stay with a family but instead was given what was the equivalent of the presidential suite, a large new hut with a concrete floor right on the waterfront with a constant breeze that kept it cool and bug free. My closest neighbors were a few pigs in cages built over the water's edge.

Brigilio invited me to go fishing with him, so we made a quick stop at his hut to grab his simple fishing gear: a tiny spool of line, a baggie containing four hooks (two too dull to use), and a sinker. I thought of my massive tackle box with five trays and 20 compartments and felt a bit of envy for the simpler way of life. The next day I gave him a new spool of 14-pound test line, a handline with some 100-pound test line, several sizes of sharp new hooks and a few sinkers.

We hiked out along the north coast of the island until we got to just the right place: part sandy beach, with some boulders and hard rocky shore mixed in. We were followed closely by a small band of children who vied for the privilege of holding my hand. Occasionally I had two or three laughing children grasping fingers on each hand.

Brigilio searched for crab burrows in the sand and dug them out by hand, carefully dropping them in a bucket until he had enough for bait. Fishing was not so good this day but I enjoyed watching the fishing, playing with the kids and doing a little beachcombing.

I asked Brigilio if he would take me to the mainland the next day to see the garden plots the village men had in the hillsides over the swamps. He was pleased to do so.

Later in the day when Desiré and I were walking through the village we were surrounded by a cloud of children who followed us everywhere. I had promised one of the Kuna women a pair of reading glasses for her mother and dropped by their compound to deliver them.

—Continued on next page



When they discovered that our boat's name was Famous Potatoes, the Idaho Potato Commission sent us hundreds of souvenir pins. The children on Isla Piños each got one

The chief was my first patient. After listening to his heart and lungs and poking around a little it was obvious he had a cold. He was a strong old man and he seemed to be doing quite well without medication so I advised him of that fact but gave him a week's worth

Brigilio to explain to me why dogs were not allowed in the village. In the past, many Kunas in his village had dogs but one day a dog viciously bit a child. The *sahila* passed an edict at the next *congreso* (village meeting) that dogs were no longer allowed on the



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There were four generations living there: the children, the mother, the grandmother and, swinging in a hammock in the shade behind us, the old great-grandmother who chanted nonstop as she shook out a rhythm with a dried gourd shaker as she prayed to her god.

The Idaho Potato Commission had sent me a box with 500 Idaho potato pins when they learned of our boat name and journey. I had a pocketful with me and

extract. She ran up to me and placed the baby at my feet and, without a word, she stepped away. I didn't know if the baby was sick or what she wanted me to do, so I picked him up and put him on my knee and looked him over for a few minutes, poked his belly, took his picture and returned him to Mom with what I hoped were soothing and reassuring words as I could see no infirmity in the little black cherub. Before we could leave, his brothers and sisters were pinned.



A Kuna child and her traditionally dressed mother visit us in their ulu

That evening at sunset I returned to the village for the night and Briglio met me at the dock. I had hoped to attend the evening village meeting at the biggest hut in the village, the *congreso* hut, but the meetings were temporarily halted as the old woman who lived next door was dying and the *sahila* did not want to disturb her. Typically, the three village *sahilas* recline in their hammocks in the center of the hut with the women and children surrounding them, sitting on little stools or on mats on the dirt floor, with the men sitting on benches around the perimeter. This is where any and all problems (including marital) in the village are discussed and the law laid down by the chiefs.

In many villages, the mandatory *congreso* meetings are held nearly every night. But if I understood Briglio correctly, only three meetings a month were absolutely mandatory and these were the nights that the number one *sahila* spent much of the meeting praying to Jesus for the safety and well-being of the community.

the kids were thrilled when I "pinned" them and pronounced them members in good standing in the Brotherhood of the Famous Idaho Potato. I believe every kid in the village was wearing a new Idaho Potato pin before we left.

As we strolled back toward the dock a woman came running out of her hut carrying a fat little baby whom she had dyed black from head to toe with a local plant

With no *congreso* that evening there was nothing for the people of the village, or me, to do other than to hit the hammock. Briglio escorted me to my hut just before dark and he told me to go inside for the night. I

just could not obey completely and sneaked out and sat on the step to watch the darkness fall. The village was already quiet. There is no electricity and no one uses lights at night except for a flashlight or two on very dark nights. Within 60 seconds three children were suddenly sitting at my feet and within minutes there were a dozen kids vying for the privilege of holding my hand or just sitting by my side. I had the Bauhaus *Panama Cruising Guide* with me to study the Kuna words listed in the back. I practiced them out loud, drawing whoops of laughter from the kids.

They wanted to see my book so I opened to the pages about their island to show them the chart, but it was the photographs that got them excited. They all knew the people in the pictures and suddenly I had a steady stream of adults coming to see. They were excited to see that one of them had made it to the big time. Finally I realized I had caused a bit of an after-hours uproar and remembered Briglio's last words, so I smiled and bid a goodnight to all. Within 60 seconds the village was quiet and not a creature was stirring.

I slept miserably. I had never even tried to sleep in a hammock before. With the sea breeze blowing across my hammock all night, I was cold and all I could do was take the pillowcase off and pull it over my head and shoulders and hug the pillow to try to keep warm. I even put my feet in a plastic bag but I was stuck and in for a long night. I occasionally heard one of the pigs mutter and groan as though he was as miserable as I.

In the morning, after a sleepless night, Briglio and I paddled his dugout canoe three miles to the mainland and hiked several miles through swamps and hills, well into the jungle, to see the village garden plots of pineapples, bananas, and yucca. We ran into several bands of loud howler monkeys that followed us, howling at us high above in the treetops.

After rowing home later in the day, I was as tired as I think I can get. I had spent 24 hours living like a Kuna Indian and it was not easy. I suspect that if given a few weeks I'd learn to sleep in a hammock, and I'd make sure I had a blanket to ward off the cool night breeze. Then, after I learned to sleep, maybe I could learn to live in paradise like a real Kuna.

Briglio Suarez speaks enough English to serve as a guide for visiting cruisers. I recommend him highly if you ever visit the lovely Isla Piños. Look for the hut with a Florida license plate on the door. Be sure to take a copy of the *Compass* with you to show the pictures.

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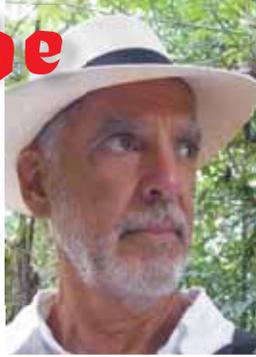
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Love the Kuna Culture

by Jack Foard



Our days among the Kuna people and their wonderful San Blas Islands were some of the very best of all our days circumnavigating the Caribbean. However, we cruisers are visiting in such large numbers now that we are having a noticeable negative impact on the Kuna way of life. Here are a few ideas to minimize our impact on their culture.

Giving Gifts

We know some cruisers who brought a big box of Western gifts for some of the children. The children who got a "Chatty Cathy" doll were thrilled beyond belief, but many kids got nothing but a giant dose of Western envy. At Isla Piños, where the people are not supposed to come out to the boats, some are learning that if they ignore the *sahila's* (chief's) edict they have a good chance of "getting the goodies" before their neighbors. Are these "gifts" a blessing or a curse? If you would like to give something to the Kuna, bring gifts for the village, not individuals. We gave the *sahila* five yards of blue waterproof cushion material for the village and a box of school supplies, which are always appreciated.

Buying Seafood

It was suggested in the past that we bring snorkel gear to give to the young men. It seemed an act of kindness, but an unfortunate result is that so many men are diving and selling seafood now that they have just about wiped out some species. It is very difficult to find a legal-sized lobster, so the boys are taking mostly juveniles to sell to cruisers. If we don't stop buying "shorts" the Kuna will soon have no breeding lobsters left. We have taught them that if they kill the baby lobsters, no problem — cruisers will buy them anyway. If you care about the future of these dear people, please do not buy immature, egg-bearing or out-of-season lobster, conch or crabs.

Buying Molas

On Isla Piños the *sahila* does not allow the women to come to the boats to sell *molas*. He wants all the women to have an equal chance, so when cruisers come ashore all the women of the village get to display their lovely creations together. As we sailed north, the *mola*-selling women became more and more aggressive. Trying



The author, upper left, reminds us that our actions — including purchasing habits — can have negative as well as positive impacts on the people we visit

to avoid them, we anchored as far from the villages as we could, yet fleets of women would paddle their dugout canoes for several miles to bang on the side of our boat or just climb aboard uninvited. Then, they would ask us to tow them back to their village in our dinghy. As is true throughout the islands, a friendly but firm "no" is understood. If we allow people to board our boats without permission and pester us into buying things we don't want, we are teaching them that aggressive behavior pays, just like the boatboys of St. Vincent learned years ago.

If you would like to read more stories about their experiences circumnavigating the Caribbean Basin, Jack and his wife, Destrè, have an excellent website. Visit web.mac.com/famouspotatoes2 and go to the "Captain's Blog."

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Critical Mas: Old-Time Carnival in Trinidad & Tobago

by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

Carnival in the sister isles of Trinidad and Tobago is a time of partying. Usually held in February, the climactic two days of street parades actually mark the end of a month or more of celebrations and are the final opportunity for merrymaking before Lent.

Carnival was celebrated by both the English and French who occupied these islands in colonial times. Trinidad Carnival evolved from the street parades of the 19th century and was once celebrated differently by the upper and lower classes. Before 1838, people of African descent or of mixed race were forbidden to take part in street parades but this did not mean that they did not hold their own celebrations. Meanwhile, the upper classes had masquerade balls at the Great Houses on their sugar estates. (From these masquerades comes the word "mas" for today's costumed Carnival festivities.) Many of the Carnival costumes were symbolic, reflecting the cultures of the various ethnic groups on the islands or those who governed them.

Some characters directly made fun of the rich folks. For example, the Dame Lorraine or Dame Lorine character was an imitation of the upper-class ladies at their masquerade balls. The liberated slaves used costume jewellery and scraps of cloth to produce the elaborate dresses of the period; however, they would emphasize the bum and bust areas to comical proportions.

The pinnacle of Carnival celebrations in Trinidad and Tobago spans two days, the Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. The Tuesday, especially, has come to be called a festival of "bikinis and beads" owing to the similarity of many of the parading bands' costumes to those seen at Mardi Gras in Brazil. But the Monday is what many consider to be the "real Carnival".

Carnival Monday day starts off with what is called J'ouvert (from the French *jour ouvert*, or daybreak), which typically begins around 4:30AM. Here people can participate in Mud Mas, which is exactly what it says: you put on old clothes and smear yourself with mud.

Oh, You Devils!

If mud is not your style, you can play Devil Mas, which hosts many old-time Carnival characters. It is also a form of what is termed "mas for money": masqueraders covered in grease, oil or

paint can threaten to dirty the clothes of spectators (often by hugging them) unless paid not to.

To play a Devil, you smear yourself with coloured body paint — red, blue, green or black — and don a pair of horns. Previously, there were only black devils when people would cover themselves in tar, grease or oil. But the resultant loss of the ability to sweat, coupled with the hot tropical weather, proved to be a dangerous combination. You can play this character on your own or with a band. Some play a Jab (Diable) Molassie — French patois for Molasses Devil. In addition to body paint, they carry pitchforks and wear chains and padlocks to represent the Devil restrained by his minions.

—Continued on next page



In Devil Mas, a Carnival costume can be as simple as paint, as these cruisers demonstrate



A rather elegant Dame Lorraine



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—Continued from previous page

Members of the band also attach neck straps to large biscuit-tins to make drums, and beat on car-tire rims and blow whistles to the chant of "Pay the Devil!" You can hear them coming a mile away, which gives you a head start to make a clean getaway — pardon the pun.

Another form of Devil Mas is the Jab Jab, which again is derived from French patois and is commonly called Pretty Devil Mas. Here the costume resembles that of a court jester from the Middle Ages, having a hat with padded horns. They carry whips which they crack every so often and which can reduce another Jab Jab's costume to shreds.

The Bat also forms part of Devil Mas. Persons clad in tight black or brown body-hugging costumes wear a papier-mâché headpiece in the form of a bat, shoes and gloves with claws, and bat wings made from wire and cane or bamboo covered in the same costume material. And of course they imitate the movements of bats, crawling on the ground or opening and closing their wings and flapping around. But there is method to the madness and these movements are choreographed to form a bat dance.

Then there is the Bookman, also called the Ruler or Gownman, who forms a part of Devil Mas. He is dressed in either a satin or velvet gown with rich embroidery or Tudor-style pants, a large flowing cape emblazoned with Biblical scenes, a ruffled shirt and an oversized headpiece that resembles the Devil. He carries a large book and a pen and writes down the names of prospective souls for the Devil. Accompanied by an orchestra of saxophones, trumpets and drums, his dance is quite elegant and waltz-like. This is expected, as any sudden movements might cause his large headpiece to fall off.

Old-Time Caribbean Characters

During J'ouvert there is an Ol' Mas competition where masqueraders wear homemade costumes depicting any current or popular topic — usually of social or political importance, but sometimes just an interesting twist on a saying. For instance there is a saying "Ah pushing a lime" which means that you are hanging out ("lime" is our slang for hanging out). So when my mom was young, she dressed as a boy and pushed a lime with a stick down the street.

Another common J'ouvert character is the Baby Doll, which was most popular in the 1930s but is still portrayed at Ol' Mas competitions. Dressed in a frilly dress and bonnet and carrying a doll (symbolizing an illegitimate baby), the masquerader accuses male spectators and passers-by of being the father and demands money for milk for the baby. This character is portrayed by both men and women, but is much funnier when done by men who speak in high-pitched voices.

Another old-time character is the Burrokeet, which comes from the Venezuelan Spanish cultures. The name of the character is derived from the Spanish word *burro*, meaning "little donkey". Here the masquerader wears a wire frame (originally made out of bamboo) made to resemble a donkey, giving the illusion that he is riding this beast. The masquerader wears a large straw hat and a large satin dress, the skirt of which covers the donkey's body. The tail is made of rope and may be decorated with flowers. There are reins leading from the donkey's head, and the masquerader dances in a way that mimics the bucking action of a donkey. The Burrokeets may also perform a dance called Burriqueite, which originated in Venezuela.

Staying with the four-legged theme, there is the Cow Band where small groups of men wear costumes made from rice bags covered with dried plantain leaves, and a papier-mâché cow's head mask. It was usually portrayed by abattoir employees, who would behave like stampeding cattle and run through the crowds. It became part of Carnival Tuesday celebrations, when the cows, matadors and male and female singers were all dressed in colourful costumes and masks. Here the music was provided by banjo, cuatro, guitar, mandolin, violin and chac-chacs or maracas.

Outside Influences

Some Carnival characters were solely influenced by North American culture. This is shown by minstrels, who imitated the minstrel shows which were popular at the turn of the last century, dressing in tail coats, striped trousers, top hats and gloves, and playing guitars and singing. In contrast to the North American minstrels, however, here black persons paint their faces white.

Other characters include the Fancy Indian, based on Native Americans from North America but with more elaborate costumes including immense headdresses of beads, mirrors and feathers, some of which are so large they have to be built over a frame. Another feature of this character is the "Indian language" they speak, which is adapted from that used by the Black Indians at Mardi Gras in New Orleans. There are other types of Indian characters generally referred to as Wild Indians. These include the Blue Indians and Red Indians (Warahoons) of Venezuela and Black or African Indians. To me, the best thing about playing this character is that entire families can participate as a tribe.

There are two more characters that display linguistic skills as part of their performance. The first is the Pierrot Grenade who is derived from the Pierrot, a richly dressed scholar who would spell long words and quote Shakespeare. He is armed with a whip and leads a band of female supporters who fight on his behalf against other Pierrot groups. The Pierrot Grenade is dressed in a suit made of burlap material, covered in strips of coloured rags, with small boxes and tins containing pebbles that rattle when he moves.

The second such character is the Midnight Robber who, dressed all in black, is well

known for his "Robber Talk" where he boasts of his exploits, bravery, ancestry and invincibility. This is derived from the African storytelling tradition while at the same



EEK! Blue Devils interact with parade spectators

time imitating the vocabulary and speech patterns of the plantation owners. However, some of his attire, such as the shirt and pantaloons, is influenced by the cowboys of North America. He also wears a large flowing cape painted with a skull and crossbones, and a huge fringed broad-brimmed hat. He is armed with a sword or gun; he has a wooden moneybox in the shape of a coffin and a whistle around his neck that he blows after each of his recitations as a means of indicating the end of one and the start of another.

The Sailor character came about in the 1880s with the arrival of French, British and American naval ships, and some variations on the character included Fancy Sailor and King Sailor. The Sailor costumes are decorated in medals, braids, sashes, epaulettes and other embellishments, such as a crown for the King Sailor and papier-mâché headpieces in the shapes of animals, birds or plants. Portraying this character means performing the dances that go along with it, including Crab, Rock de Boat, Camel Walk and Skip Jack.

There is one character that is portrayed throughout the year as well as at Carnival. This is the Moko Jumbie. Moko, from the Congo language, means "diviner" and Jumbie (or zombie) means "ghost". These masqueraders walk on stilts up to 12 feet high which are covered by long colourful pants. They also wear bright shirts and hats and some even wear masks. The concept behind this authentic African masquerade is that its great height allows this protector of the village to see evil faster than ordinary humans can. In the old days they would dance a sort of a jig to drums, flutes and triangles while collecting money from persons in the balconies of houses.

One character that is now extinct is the Negre Jardin. This is French for "garden slave" and was once portrayed by plantation owners. After emancipation, the character was adopted by the former slaves. Other extinct Carnival characters include Firemen or Stokers who dressed in baggy pants, thick gloves and goggles and would push a long thin iron rod as though they were stoking a fire. They would usually precede the Sailors. The Yard Sweeps wore long skirts, old clothes, large floppy hats and a mask and carried a coconut frond broom. They would offer to sweep one's yard for a fee, refusal of which usually meant acts of vandalism. The Fancy Clowns' colourful costumes included a crown and an elaborate large fan-like collar with baggy pants and shirt and oversized shoes. Pai Banan or Banana Trash characters covered their faces with brown cloth or a papier-mâché mask and wore a white headpiece with either two long wire antennae or horns and would scare people at night. In the 1920s, some would dress up as Charlie Chaplin, wearing their shoes left-to-right. There was also Police and Thief where one person dressed as a thief holding a "stolen" chicken and would run away from another dressed as a police officer. When the "thief" was caught he would be spanked and released.

Some characters were vulgar, such as the Jamets — women who wore many starched petticoats and large hats with flowers and feathers and exposed their breasts, while the men wore lots of gold chains and their pants low on their hips. Pissenlit ("wet the bed") were men and women dressed in long nightgowns who used foul language and danced in the fashion known as "wining" today.

Catching Traditional Mas

Although the Ol' Mas characters are not played in mainstream "bikinis and beads" Carnival, they are still portrayed by smaller groups on Carnival Monday. J'ouvert lasts only a few hours, with various bands and competitions happening simultaneously, so it is up to you which one you want to participate in or look at. In Port of Spain, Trinidad, after the J'ouvert celebrations end around 9:00AM, the Carnival bands take to the streets to parade. Characters like Bat, Minstrel, Moko Jumbie, Fancy Sailor, Jab Jab and Gownman are performed by small to medium-sized bands numbering a few hundred. Fancy Indian mas is still big in the city of San Fernando in the south of the island.

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

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

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

February		20	0840	9	2314
DATE	TIME	21	0929	10	0000 (full)
1	1644	22	1016	11	0008
2	1735	23	1102	12	0047
3	1831	24	1145	13	0134
4	1931	25	1228	14	0221
5	2035	26	1312 (new)	15	0310
6	2139	27	1356	16	0359
7	2241			17	0450
8	2340	28	1442	18	0542
9	0000			19	0632
10	0035 (full)			20	0722
11	0124	March		21	0809
12	0211	DATE	TIME	22	1855
13	0258	1	1532	23	1939
14	0344	2	1626	24	1032
15	0431	3	1724	25	1106
16	0519	4	1825	26	1151
17	0609	5	1927	27	1237 (new)
18	0659	6	2028		
19	0750	7	2126		
		8	2220		

More Than a Yacht Sales Agent: The Late, Great Norma Prudhon

by Clare Sudlow

As reported in last month's Compass, long-time Antigua resident Norma Prudhon died on November 11th, 2008. English-born Norma and her husband, Marc Prudhon, sailed their 50-foot Anahita to Antigua in the late 1960s and chartered with the Nicholson fleet. The couple later ran the 63-foot schooner Lord Jim for owner Jol Byerley, and then the 114-foot Marie Pierre for Baron Bic. After Marc and Norma separated in the early 1970s, Norma settled ashore in Antigua, working in various businesses at English Harbour including the Galley Boutique and Nicholson Caribbean Yacht Sales. In the early days of Caribbean Compass, Norma was our Antigua island agent. She was one of the first members of the Antigua Yacht Club.

Former cruiser Clare Sudlow shares two anecdotes relating to Norma Prudhon.



Above: 'How lucky we were to have our lives touched, albeit briefly, by Norma'

Below: 'It is doubtful that Joe and I would have bought such a sizeable yacht as Grand Alliance II if it hadn't been for her'



Norma Sells Us S/Y Grand Alliance II

It is doubtful that my partner Joe and I would have bought such a sizable, handsome yacht as *Grand Alliance* if it hadn't been for Norma, our broker — then of Nicholson's Yacht Sales — encouraging the unlikely scenario of agent and prospective buyers partaking in an onboard afternoon kip while viewing the boat lying "high and dry" in a boatyard in Tortola!

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

This unlikely story came about on a hot and humid tropical summer's day in 1998 when, following a very early start to catch a typically complicated and erratic LIAT flight from Antigua to Tortola, Joe, Norma and I grabbed a taxi (by way of a quick "swing by" to check out the newly renovated horse race track) to arrive eventually at our destination, Nanny Cay Marina. Here we had an appointment to view *Grand Alliance II*, a once splendid CT54 ketch, on the hard and sadly neglected. Now mid-morning with the sun blazing down, we had to first find a ladder to get aboard and secondly a man with a key so that we could open the blisteringly hot boat. Once both had been obtained, we spent the remainder of the morning in great heat and discomfort familiarizing ourselves with the systems, layout, rig, etcetera, as best we could while Norma did what only Norma could so well when selling boats: she never ceased chatting away, seemingly about the most trivial facts but, in fact, always cleverly out-weighting any negative attributes we came across with many more positive ones that we may have overlooked!

It was a couple of hours in the afternoon that clinched the deal. Replete from a surprisingly good lunch in the boatyard café, we returned to a now much cooler *Grand Alliance* with the full and sensible intention of making best use of this, our one-and-only day of viewing, to really get down to a thorough further inspection — cabin soles up to check the bilges and through-hull fittings, bottlescrews checked for rust, chainplates scrutinized, etcetera — but no, with barely a word exchanged between the three of us, as if by unspoken mutual agreement, I went aft to get a better "feel" of the main cabin. Joe went forward to do likewise in the guest cabin, while Norma, God bless her, snoozed the afternoon away in the saloon! During that afternoon *Grand Alliance* worked her special magic on us all and Joe and I went on to buy her as our home and to enjoy possibly the best (and often most frustrating!) six years of our lives cruising the islands from the BVI to Trinidad. We were always thankful to return to our home base and welcoming friends in Antigua, feeling lucky to include Norma as one of these special friends.

Norma Sells Grand Alliance II on Our Behalf

As often happens, life had to move on and much as we loved our seemingly idyllic cruiser/liveaboard lifestyle a decision had to be made — to continue to break our backs maintaining our now beautifully restored *Grand Alliance II* or take an opportu-



'Life had to move on...' Joe and the author eventually sold *Grand Alliance II* (with Norma's help, of course), worked in Europe for a few years, and are now back in Antigua

nity to travel and work in Europe. We decided on the latter and in 2004 sadly called up Norma at Nicholson's Yacht Sales to ask her to act on our behalf as broker.

She soon found an interested couple from the UK and, after much negotiating, they booked a flight to come and view the boat. Luckily for us they were immediately impressed with *Grand Alliance* and requested a sea trial. This was duly arranged, but considering our prospective buyers' total lack of seagoing experience, Norma advised that it might be best to treat the "sea trial" like a day charter: Joe, Norma and I would take them for a gentle sail under genoa and mizzen only down to Carlisle Bay and anchor there for a special lunch served in the cockpit. Then, having put the main up at anchor, it would be a tack, tack motor-sail back to English Harbour.

On the chosen day, most fortunately in many ways (and most unusually), there was not a breath of wind. So having motored down to Carlisle Bay under the sweltering winter sun, on anchoring we all decided that a swim was going to be the savior of the day! Norma had come prepared and was already attired in a "bathing dress", and lowered herself into the beautiful water by way of the swimming ladder while the rest of us leapt in and enjoyed a lovely cool-off. With lunch in mind, Joe and I soon skimmed up the ladder and back on board to make the necessary preparations, leaving Norma and our two enthusiastic prospective buyers to admire *Grand Alliance's* waterline, hang off the anchor rode, and do all the other things one does.

The young couple were eventually back on board and Joe and I were handing out towels and serving drinks when we heard a great deal of huffing, puffing, shrieking, laughing and splashing coming from the swim ladder. Looking over the side we soon realized that we had rather a "large" problem on our hands — there was no way Norma was able to haul herself out of the water, let alone propel herself up the ladder.

Now, very thankfully one of the very "Grand" accessories fitted by *Grand Alliance's* previous owner was an electric, submersible dinghy platform. As a last hope of ever getting Norma aboard again, Joe lowered the platform to its deepest extent. With more shrieks, giggles and splashes Norma negotiated herself onto the lift and was electrically elevated like a self-confessed "beached whale" up to deck height to be safely roly-polly'd back on board!

Her memorably self-effacing enjoyment of the whole situation, where others might have cringed with embarrassment, forged an instant bond between herself and the young prospective buyers. And, to our advantage, she had proved the "multiple-use value" of *Grand Alliance's* dinghy lift as an extra selling point. What a broker!

The young couple went on to buy *Grand Alliance II* and remained in touch with Norma over the years, feeling as we and many others do how lucky they were to have had their lives touched, albeit briefly, by dear Norma — one of life's most special, fun and kind people.

Clare Sudlow and Joe are former Caribbean cruiser/liveaboards who have for the past five years been co-authors of the Superyacht Services Guide to the Mediterranean. They have now come home to roost in Antigua.

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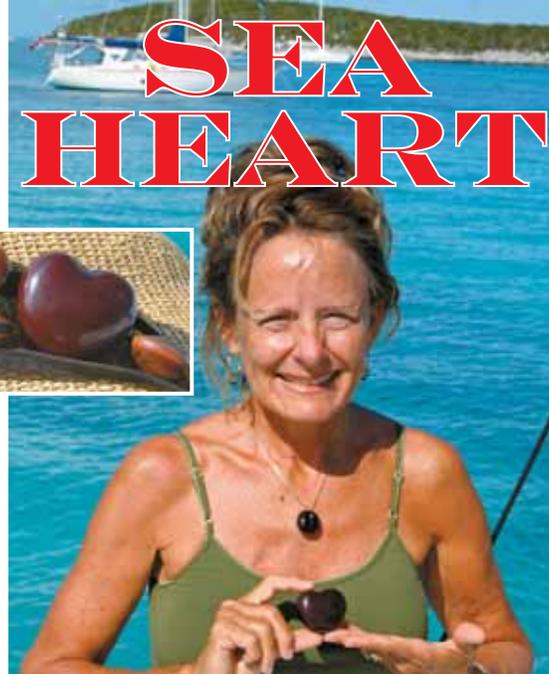
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This floating seed seems to be a Valentine's Day gift designed for sailors by Mother Nature

by Tina Dreffin

She raced down the beach in Orient Bay of St. Martin like a wild mare, with her tangled blond mane streaming behind her. Taken aback, I charged after her, considering my new cruising buddy to be in dire need of help. Had she been stung by a bee? Seen a child bolt in front of a speeding car? We had been discussing the merits of extended cruising, while our husbands traded outboard engine life-saving techniques at a streetside café nearby. And then Debbie simply launched into overdrive, nose to the sands.

Suddenly, she halted in her tracks, bent forward into a stunning yoga pose, and retrieved a faultless sea heart from the high-water tide mark. Arms stretched to the blue heavens with fingertips wriggling, she shouted a prayerful "thank-you!" Her exclamation resounded into the bars and cafés, shops and homes alongside the road. Curious bystanders stopped to view the commotion.

A sea heart! My heart soared — good fortune strikes the lucky person who finds one so near to St. Valentine's Day. Sea hearts are an augury of better things to come and for safe passages — the perfect gift for a kind lady of the sea who was cruising the Caribbean for the first time on *Island Fever*, a Lagoon 42.

It is said that a sea heart gave Columbus the inspiration to sail west from Europe in search of new sea-routes to Asia. When embarking on long ocean voyages, the sea hearts were worn by his crew as amulets, and called *favas de Colum* or Columbus beans. Sailors believed they would be protected from evil spirits and illness if they wore the heart, for the bean can survive long perilous journeys across oceans for years.

Sea hearts are more widely known as sea beans or drift seeds. Coconuts and tropical almonds are larger examples of drift seeds. The smaller sea hearts originate as seeds inside large pods of a wild tropical vine (*Entada gigas*), like those found in the Amazon River Basin and other rainforests around the world. Clusters of blossoms dangle from upper rainforest canopies, where they are easily accessed by night-flying bats. The bats sip the sweet nectar, transferring the pollen to other plants. Once pollination occurs, the ovary of each flower develops into a legume pod containing several large seeds. Some resemble hearts, others miniature hamburgers because of the attachment scar from the vine. The tropical vines twine through the forest canopy like botanical boa constrictors, creating "monkey ladders" — arboreal thoroughfares for forest animals. Because of the intense competition between plants for space and light, the monkey ladder can quickly climb to heights of a hundred feet or more in just 18 months. Monkeys, sloths, lizards, and snakes become adept trapeze artists of the forest by using it.

Once the giant velvety legume pods produce the large, heart-shaped seeds, hurricane-force winds force them out of the pod and onto the forest floor, where gullies and creeks collect them and carry them out to sea. Because of their hard, thick, woody seed coat, the seeds are impervious to water, and internal air cavities make them buoyant, allowing them to ride ocean currents for years to a distant port. Due to strong Caribbean ocean currents, thousands of drift seeds are found each year on beaches in Florida, the UK, and Europe.

Not only are sea beans symbols of good luck, they have a multitude of medicinal purposes. The bean pods contain the brain neurotransmitter dopamine, which is given to patients suffering from Parkinson's disease. Male and female seeds from one particular rainforest liana are believed to prevent hemorrhoids and are carried between villages by natives in the Amazon River Basin. They have been ground into poultices to relieve painful inflammations and taken internally for contraception, constipation, snake bites, or as an aphrodisiac. Village women use the poultice as shampoo or laundry soap.

Few Caribbean ports are without these lovely sea beans: in Belize they are called *ojo de buey* (eye of the bull) by local residents; in Dominica, they are used as an ornamental shaker gourd. I've seen them used as rosaries at Catholic mass, and sold as stunning necklaces and bracelets in Jamaica and throughout the Caribbean.

A week later, I caught up with Debbie at the local farmers' market. From her neck dangled a lacquered sea-heart that glistened brightly in the morning sunlight. Little did I know that good fortune awaited me, too, as I later strolled down the beach, nose to the sands. My prize: a Mary sea bean, considered rare amongst beachcombers, as only one in 1,000 is ever found. On the face rests a perfectly formed crucifix, a symbol for faith, hope, and love for the New Year. It now dangles from my neck, the perfect amulet for 2009.

Please keep up the extremely good work — we look forward very much to each month's Compass!



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Historic Hassel Island

by Jacquie Milman

Hassel Island is a small US Virgin Island of 135 acres set in St. Thomas Harbor, just off the town of Charlotte Amalie. It gets its name from the Hazzel (or Hazel) family, prominent residents in the early 1800s.

Once upon a time, it was a peninsula of the island of St. Thomas, forming an *orkan-hullet*, or hurricane hole, where ships took shelter during storms. The peninsula was separated from the main island by the Danish government in 1860, to allow better water circulation in the harbor, thus decreasing sewage build-up and ensuing cholera epidemics. The cut was widened by the US Army Corps of Engineers in 1919.

The entire island can be seen from atop any of several high promontories on St. Thomas, and an old fort and other ruins are visible from the harbor — so, intrigued, we took the dinghy over from Long Bay to explore. It is also sometimes possible to find room to anchor at Hassel Island among the local boats at Careening Cove, home of the famous sailmaker, Manfred Dietrich.

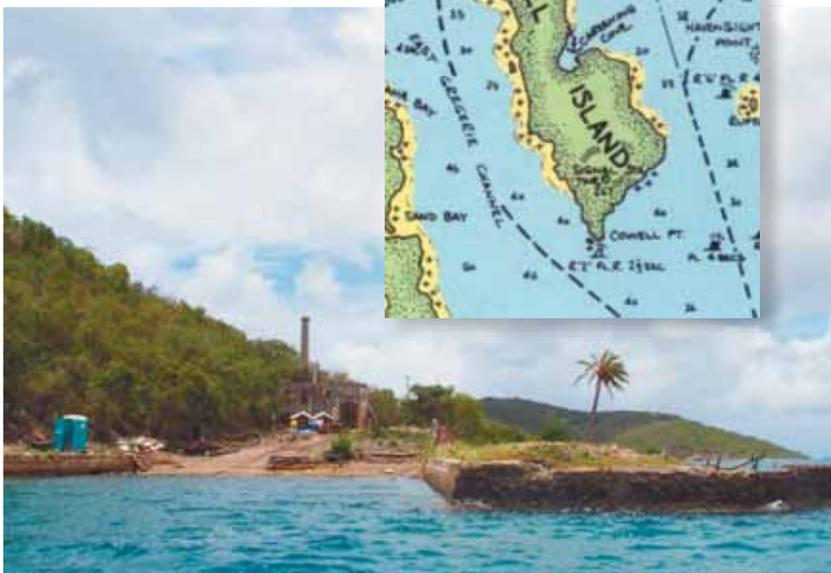
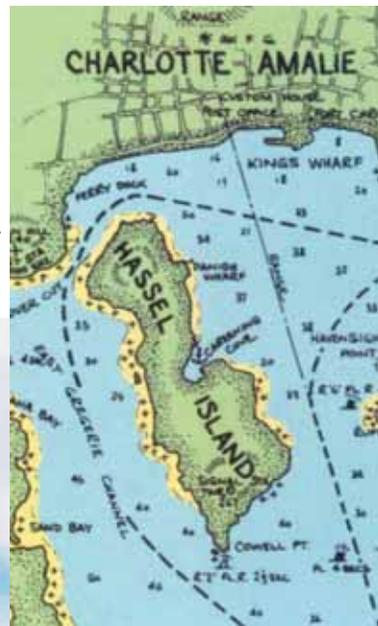
In colonial times, Hassel Island's strategic location was utilized by the Danish to defend the harbor. The British occupied St. Thomas during the Napoleonic Wars from 1801 to 1815, when Denmark allied with Napoleonic France. The British constructed Fort Shipley (or Shipley's Battery) on the highest point of the then Hassel Peninsula. These are the ruins that had attracted us to the island.

In 1840, a British shipping company based its operations on the island and built a dock, warehouse, coal station and other facilities. These installations were referred to as Fort Willoughby and were in use until 1885.

The Danish built a marine railway and made great use of it until 1910, when it failed commercially due to worn-out structures and hurricane damage. Henry O. Creque bought it at auction, restored it and reopened it as the Creque Marine Railway in 1912. The railway was purchased by another family in the 1930s and remained in use until the 1960s. In 1978 it was sold to the Department of the Interior and incorporated into the Park system. It was one of the earliest steam-powered marine railways in the western hemisphere and may be the oldest surviving example of such a railway in the world.

In the mid-1900s, most of the island was owned by the Paiewonskis, a prominent local family. There was a small hotel on the island, which became the setting for Herman Wouk's novel, *Don't Stop the Carnival*. Today most of the island is part of the Virgin Islands National Park. A few private residences remain. The entire island is included in the Hassel Island Historic District and the fort and marine railway are listed on the National Historic Places Registry. Work is being done to restore the ruins and uncover other, still hidden remains.

Just a stone's throw from teeming Charlotte Amalie, Hassel Island (below) is a quiet reminder of Virgin Islands' history. These are the ruins of Creque's steam-powered marine railway



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PARTS & POWER

Much has been written about the treasure that the frightful pirate Blackbeard hid on the island of Tortuga and of the Brotherhood of the Coast, the armed privateers and buccaneers who protected it. All this happened on the island of Tortuga off the coast of Haiti and not the Isla La Tortuga off the coast of Venezuela, as is sometimes thought. Nevertheless, Venezuelan waters, with almost 3,700 kilometers of Caribbean coastline and 314 islands, also constituted a suitable stage for nautical drama.

For the Venezuelan Isla La Tortuga, the story opened in May of 1499, when Spain sent towards the New World Alonso de Ojeda, the navigator Américo Vespuccio and the cartographer Juan de la Cosa. Initially they followed the route

of the third voyage of Columbus, but a detour allowed them to make the first complete exploration by Europeans of the Venezuelan coast, during which Juan de la Cosa took the opportunity to carry out the first known survey of Venezuelan waters.

One of the oldest known references to Isla La Tortuga appears in *Relación Geográfica de Nuestra Señora de Caraballeda y Santiago de León*, of 1578. There, Don Governor Juan de Pimentel indicates that salt was being extracted from the island. But it was not until the mandate of the Governor of Cumaná, Don Francisco Núñez Meleán, that this industry — comparable in importance to today's oil industry — reached its peak.

In 1605, after the Spanish expelled the Dutch from the salt mines of the Araya peninsula, the Dutch settled on Isla La Tortuga to mine salt there. According to an old map that rests in the Archivo de Indias, in Spain, the Dutch constructed a fort of bricks containing numerous pieces of artillery. The salt mines were located in the eastern part of the island and the port of embarkation was on the southeastern coast where they had constructed a wharf for loading the valuable commodity onto their ships.

The Dutch remained on the island until the beginning of 1631, when Núñez Meleán removed them with the support of a flotilla equipped with 40 selected Spanish soldiers and 116 native South American "Indians" armed with bows and arrows. Under the command of Captain Benito Arias Montano, the expedition took the Dutch by surprise. Although they tried to flee in two ships, the Dutch were quickly intercepted by the Spanish forces. After a short but intense hand-to-hand battle, the Dutch were taken prisoner, the Spaniards proclaimed victory and a large shipment of salt was carried to the mainland port of La Guaira as if it were pirates' booty. This was the first battle on the high seas over salt. With it, the Spanish crown regained possession of territories that it already considered part of its domain, expelling those it saw as usurping enemies who removed wealth that should rightfully have gone to Spain.

For 500 years, the island of La Tortuga has been considered strategically important for Venezuelan national defense. But not much is known of what occurred on the island after the decline of the salt industry. Pejoratively called "of little commercial value", it has remained outside the general interest, although fishermen always realized its importance. Nevertheless, it is the second largest Venezuelan island after Isla Margarita. In 1903, the Venezuelan Congress decided to use this extensive area to found estates for the growing of fruit trees, and the raising of goats, cattle, pigs and poultry, as mentioned by Pablo Ramirez in his book, *Diccionario de Islas Venezolanas*. This initiative did not prosper and by January 1910, the executive of the State of Nueva Esparta leased the land to a resident

of Pampatar, Margarita, for the production of charcoal.

In recent years, Isla La Tortuga has been discovered by yachtsmen looking for beautiful, unspoiled anchorages below the hurricane belt and off the beaten track. Playa Caldera and Cayo Herradura are favorites.

Gradually, and largely unnoticed, Isla La Tortuga has been damaged environmentally over the years. Today the island continues almost uninhabited but increasingly susceptible to deterioration if suitable measures are not taken to control inappropriate development and other detrimental activities now taking place, and instead, encourage low-impact uses. The investigations made over the past four years by the

non-profit group Fundación La Tortuga have shown that this space serves as fragile habitat for hundreds of species of animals and plants, many of them endemic and in danger of extinction. The protection of this biodiversity, along with the historical, geological and archaeological value of the island, is a necessity.

Thanks to Fundación La Tortuga for information in this article. For more information visit www.fundacionlatortuga.com.

Isla La Tortuga: Fought Over and Forgotten



As indicated by the grid of squares drawn on this map, Caribbean salt 'mines' were often, in fact, salt 'pans' — a system of shallow, man-made ponds where seawater was allowed to evaporate and the salt left behind was then collected

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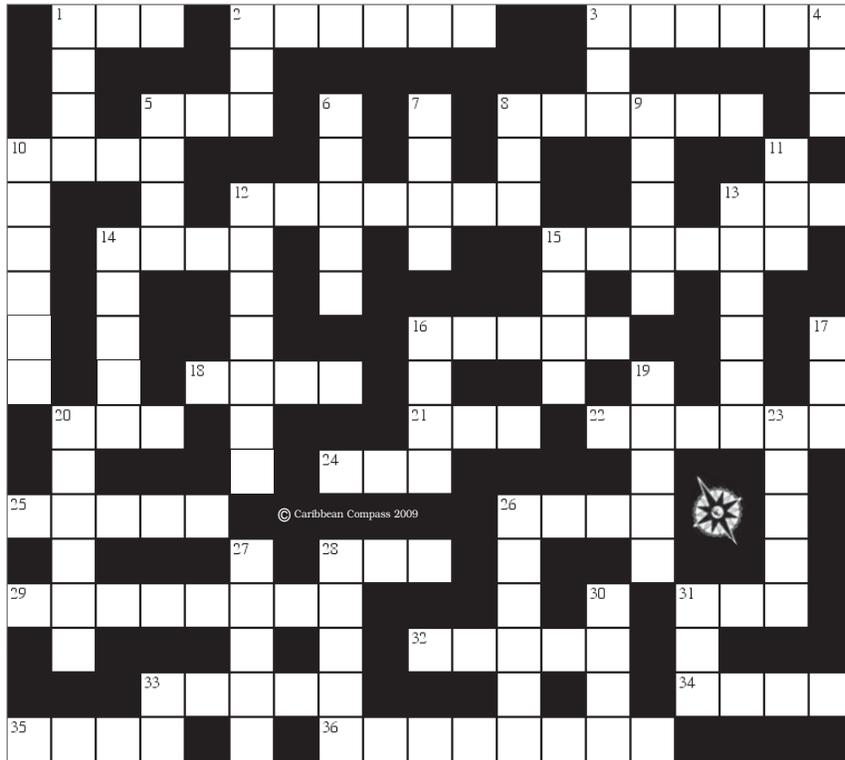
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Compass Cruising Crossword



Nautical Alphabet: X Y Z ACROSS

- 1) "___ distant shore"
- 2) Largest working schooner on US West Coast
- 3) Color of Q signal flag
- 5) Mate to 2 Down
- 8) Chinese sampan (2 words)
- 10) ___ Time: standard time of the sea
- 12) Outboard end of crosstree
- 13) Guadeloupe regatta (or place for captive animals)
- 14) Rod-and-rope tiller substitute
- 15) Sail-training pioneer Irving Johnson's schooner
- 16) "...teach them to ___ for the vast and endless sea"
— Antoine de Saint-Exupery
- 18) Holds boom in place in harbor
- 20) Japanese currency
- 21) The feminine opposite of yang
- 22) Light, pleasant breeze
- 24) "___-hoo!": landlubber language for "Ahoy!"
- 25) Hot wind of Argentine pampas
- 26) Dexterous or quick (archaic)
- 28) Heave to
- 29) Line used to hoist spar aloft (2 words)
- 31) Affirmative
- 32) Second bank of rowers in ancient galleys
- 33) A bluewater galley staple
- 34) Yacht with mizzen aft of rudder
- 35) The alphabet's last letter, in radio-speak
- 36) Sailing for pleasure

DOWN

- 1) Mrs. John Lennon
- 2) With 5 Across, irregular course
- 3) Pitch, roll and ___
- 4) A vessel's movement through the water
- 5) Naught
- 6) Horizontal spars aloft
- 7) The alphabet's third-to-last letter, in radio-speak
- 8) Cousin to sweet potato
- 9) Resort island off St. Vincent
- 10) Extreme enthusiast
- 11) Woman's name
- 12) What some sailcloth does in the sun
- 13) Highest point in sky
- 14) "___ got to see this!" (contraction)
- 15) On the hard in the ___
- 16) Child's toy
- 17) Archaic slang for quick to the helm
- 19) Barbary Coast three-masted ship with squaresail on foremast
- 20) Crewmember in charge of stores
- 23) An insecure captain does this
- 26) Old spelling for pleasure boat
- 27) Pertaining to 10 Across
- 28) Foaming, breaking sea
- 30) Sailor's tall story
- 31) Hooray!
- 33) Ancient Chinese emperor known for flood control

Crossword Solution on page 33

FEBRUARY MEANS CARNIVAL TIME IN MANY PARTS OF THE CARIBBEAN. GET IN THE MOOD FOR 'MAS' WITH THIS WORD SEARCH PUZZLE.

Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski



- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|----------------|
| BAND | HAT | PARADE |
| BATS | IMPS | QUEEN |
| BEADS | JAB | REVELERS |
| BEER | JOUVERT | ROBBERS |
| CARIBBEAN | KING | RUM |
| CARNIVAL | LIME | |
| CHIP | LOOT | SAILOR |
| COMPASS | | SEQUINS |
| | MARDI GRAS | SOCA |
| DAME | MAS | SONG |
| LORRAINE | MASK | STEEL |
| | MINSTREL | STICK |
| DANCE | MOKOJUMBIES | STILT |
| DEVILS | MOVE | STRUT |
| FEATHERS | MUD | TRANSPORTATION |
| FESTIVAL | MUSIC | TUNE |
| FUN | PAN | VIEY LA COU |

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 36



FEBRUARY 2009

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)

It's your turn for romantic distractions, so just ease your mainsheet and enjoy!

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)

Your productive energy will dissipate during the second week, so get those boat chores done while it lasts.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)

Your powers of persuasion will serve you well this month, except where your heart is concerned.

♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)

While romance sails over the horizon, your creativity will blossom.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)

Seas will rise and winds howl to challenge your creativity; make sure your love life is well secured.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)

Just batten down the hatches for this month. Business may be slow, and rough seas could make things worse around the 20th.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)

Hold your course for the time being. Love might be in irons after the first week and you will have difficulty charting a new course until next month.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)

The creative juices will be flowing and the winds fair, so use these aspects to make progress with projects on board.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)

Pile on more sail! The rough seas of romance that hindered your progress last month will settle and you will make headway once again.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

Use the first three weeks to finish projects before you run out of wind and become distracted by a ship-board romance.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

This will be a productive time for you; use it to best advantage on boat projects and cruising plans.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

As your romantic distractions wane, your creative energies will gather way. Take this time to make progress with any onboard projects you've been putting off.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS

- 1) YON
- 2) ZODIAC
- 3) YELLOW
- 5) ZAG
- 8) YOW YOW
- 10) ZONE
- 12) YARDARM
- 13) ZOO
- 14) YORKE
- 15) YANKEE
- 16) YEARN
- 18) YOLK
- 20) YEN
- 21) YIN
- 22) ZEPHYR
- 24) YOO
- 25) ZONDA

DOWN

- 1) YOKO
- 2) ZIG
- 3) YAW
- 4) WAY
- 5) ZERO
- 6) YARDS
- 7) XRAY
- 8) YAM

9) YOUNG

- 10) ZEALOT
- 11) ZOE
- 12) YELLOWS
- 13) ZEMITH
- 14) YOUVE
- 15) YARD
- 16) YOYO
- 17) YAR
- 19) XEBEC
- 20) YEOMAN
- 23) YELLS
- 26) YAUGHT
- 27) ZONAL
- 28) YESTY
- 30) YARN
- 31) YAY
- 33) YU

A RAINY DAY ON BEQUIA

Island Poets

A rainy day on Bequia,
line squalls driving through.
A rainy day on Bequia —
hard not to think of you

and of the love we lost,
a schooner underway,
losing diesel, masts,
and anchor off Shark Bay.

A rainy day on Bequia,
halyards pull and slap;
a rainy day on Bequia
and my nerves snap

against the Trade Wind blowing,
line squalls driving through.
Where's that rainbow shining,
in bands yellow, red, and blue?

A rainy day on Bequia.
Squalls silence roads and clean
old hulls and nourish trees;
squalls keep the island green.

— Richard Dey



Poem on Valentine's Day

Mavis and John, brown skin and light
meet each other on a star-shining night.
The big man smiles, and the lady just now
looks in his eyes and they fall in love.

He bought her a ship as beauteous as she,
and talked about sailing — she said: "Yes sir!"
They crossed the Atlantic in very few days,
so in Seru Boca everyone says

That John is a sailor, really so great,
and we sailor-friends, we cannot wait
to see them kiss on Valentine's Day,
and sail farther on, living the loving way.

— Anne Hjelmsø

parlumps marooned



In Part One of this story, published in last month's Compass, the St. Lucian school-boy Trevor is in Barbados visiting his cousin Ernie. Their strange old aunt, Madam Cinta, has decided to take the boys and Ernie's little sister, Nyna, for a bizarre adventure — a night at a haunted hotel!

When Madam Cinta told Trevor, Ernie and his little sister Nyna that she was taking them to spend the night at the Hospice Inn with all its stories of bloodied ghosts and screams, they didn't know whether Madam Cinta was trying to frighten them or was having a joke. "Trying to scare us," Trevor mumbled, "but I don't scare easy." Little Nyna was scared before she even got there and Ernie didn't like ghosts of any kind and certainly not blood-dripping ones.

Now, Madam Cinta had a big old Cadillac and by the time Jameson had loaded Madam's elegant luggage and the children's bags into the boot, it was past four o'clock and the afternoon traffic was building up. Little Nyna had to sit in the front with stern Madam Cinta while the boys sat in the back. And what a nightmare it was! Madam Cinta paid no attention to the rules of the road, barging across intersections, ignoring red lights and occupying the middle of the road. The offended motorists got out of the way in the nick of time and screamed abuse as she speeded away.

When Madam Cinta pulled up in front of the Hospice Inn, she pointed to an outside staircase built against the side of the old Inn. "That staircase," Madam Cinta explained to the children "was the way to the operating room on the second floor and it is so steep that the patients had to be strapped to their stretchers to stop them from sliding off, and I'm told that they groaned with pain all the way." She paused to let this unpleasant information sink in. "Oh yes, and running right past the Hospital was a steam train and it stopped out front for the patients to be carried off. Of course the train and rails were taken away long ago."

Madam Cinta strode off to the reception desk, telling a frail, old porter to carry the bags to their rooms. Trevor, Ernie and Nyna followed meekly behind as they climbed the staircase from the foyer to their rooms. The porter, bent over with arthritis, dropped Madam Cinta's suitcase with a grunt outside her door, and then beckoned to the children. He opened a small door at the end of the corridor and switched on the light. In the middle of the room there was a narrow bed for two that was built on top of a platform and to reach it, there was a little ladder with three steps. "This was the old operating table", the old man said, "I'll show you how it worked." He pulled back the bed covers and revealed the original operating table beneath the mattress. "The table used to slope a little so that the blood gushing from the knife would run down the channels and through this tube into this crockery jug. The jug was under the table in its own little box to stop the patients from seeing all the blood and dying of fright. Anaesthetics weren't very good back then."

Little Nyna was paralyzed with fear, Ernie felt that he was about to be sick and even Trevor had turned pale. "Our guests like to know the history of the Inn and they tell me that they hear terrible screams in the night and see pale shadows of ghosts wringing their severed arms and legs dripping blood. Oh! They do enjoy it. I know how boys are and you'll have fun sleeping over the operating table. But for the little girl here we have a bed by the window." And he pulled back the heavy curtain allowing the bright tropical light to flood into the room. When he was gone Trevor grinned, "Stupid old goat!"

Madam Cinta ordered dinner in the downstairs dining room where the doddery old porter winked at the boys as he served them fish and chips. After dinner the children were allowed to watch TV in the sitting room, while Madam Cinta read, then at 9:30

they were sent up to bed. "I don't like to be disturbed once I'm asleep," she warned them, "so don't come banging on my door if you get scared."

Going to that ghostly room filled even Trevor with dread, but there was nothing for it but do as they were told. They left the door open so that the light from the landing could shine in and they certainly left their own light on. Satisfied that they had done what they could, Trevor and Ernie sat with Nyna on her little bed under the window,

the curtain pulled back to let in the pale light from a cloudy sky. They told each other stories until they couldn't keep their eyes open any longer and Trevor and Ernie were forced to retreat to their operating table bed while Nyna snuggled deep down under the sheet and faced the wall. Somehow they all fell asleep, but sometime during the night Trevor and Ernie woke up with a huge fright when their door slammed shut with a terrible bang. The light in their room went out and dragging footsteps sounded along the corridor. The bed tilted and the boys clung to each other to keep from falling off. A gurgling noise came from under the mattress and they could hear the slow running of liquid into the jug beneath them.

"Oh Trevor, it's blood, I can smell it," Ernie gasped as his heart almost leapt out of his chest. Trevor clung to his cousin and his heart thumped so loudly he thought it would wake the dead if they weren't awake already. It certainly woke up the ghost train that blew

its whistle with a piercing shriek and thundered straight through the lower half of the inn, and then it came to a shuddering and clanging stop. Trevor's breath, when he managed to catch it, formed a white mist in the air of the now ice cold room. There was a shuffling and scraping from below somewhere and then the dragging of feet as heavy stretchers were pulled and pushed up the outside staircase. The groans from the injured grew louder and louder as the stretcher-bearers neared the operating room. Suddenly the door to their room creaked open.

"Jump, Ernie jump!" Trevor came alive with a great burst of willpower. "We've got to get off this table before they cut us up!"

The boys jumped together and they heard their feet splash into running ooze. They leapt like sprites across to Nyna who was sound asleep in her bed. Pale ghosts dragged themselves about the operating table, groaning and sighing and waving their severed legs and arms. Blood dripped from their wounds and their black mouths screamed and their hollow eyes filled with luminous green tears.

Trevor and Ernie fainted dead away. Nyna woke up when the bright sun shone into the room and she was surprised to find Trevor and Ernie on her bed, so she shook them roughly.

"What? What?" Trevor blinked his eyes, surprised to find himself still alive. "What are you and Ernie doing on my bed? Get off!"

Now get dressed, I want my breakfast." When Madam Cinta asked Trevor and Ernie if ghosts had kept them awake, Trevor answered, "No, we slept like logs." Madam Cinta raised her eyebrow.

On the drive home that day, Trevor and Ernie agreed to keep their night of horrors a secret even from Uncle Solly, but they knew that they had seen and heard blood dripping ghosts and phantom trains and that memory would stay with them forever — the terrible night on the operating table bed in the old Hospice Inn.

"You know, Ernie," Trevor whispered to his cousin that night in bed, "I'm never going to boast about our ghosts in St. Lucia ever again. I think that people should believe what they want to believe and not think they are always the best."

"Right on!" agreed Ernie with relief.

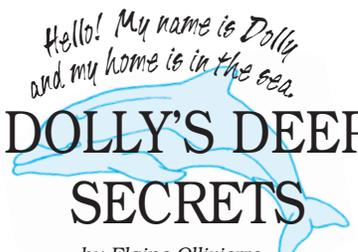
THE END

Trevor and Ernie Get Spooked!

Part Two

by Lee Kessell

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

This month, we're going to take a closer look at one particular shark. It belongs to the order *orectolobiformes* and is the only species in the rhinodontidae family. What is it?

The name 'orectolobiforme' means 'having a lengthened tail lobe'. The top part of this shark's tail fin is much longer than the bottom half.

The tale of the shark's generic name is quite interesting. When the shark was first described by British naturalist, Andrew Smith, in 1829, he gave it the scientific name of *Rhincodon typus*. This means 'rasp teeth' which accurately describes the more than 300 rows of tiny teeth in the shark's mouth. Later, the name changed to *Rhincodon typus*, perhaps through printer's error or perhaps because this means 'snout teeth'. The 1984 catalogue, *Sharks of the World*, uses the original name but, in the same year, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) formally declared that *Rhincodon typus* was the accepted scientific name.

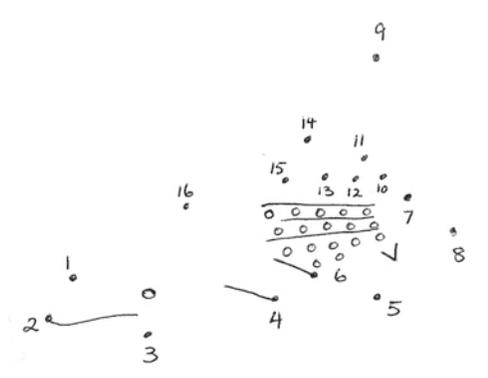
But we still haven't identified this particular shark. Let's give you some more clues. Despite its thousands of teeth, the shark doesn't use them for feeding. It eats mostly plankton and small aquatic creatures which it filters from the water through large sieve-like plates in its mouth.

The sharks of the order *Orectolobiformes* are also called carpet sharks because most of them have distinctive patterns on their skin. Our particular

shark has a grey body with a white belly, and a pattern of yellow spots and stripes on its back and sides. It has three distinct ridges along its back. It is not a very fast swimmer, averaging only a few kilometres an hour but it travels great distances through the world's tropical oceans. These sharks are quite placid and divers have been known to swim alongside these gentle giants.

And that's the last clue. This is the biggest fish in the world! The largest specimens measure over 40 feet in length and they can live for over 70 years.

Join the dots to see the shark.



So what is it? *Rhincodon typus* is more commonly known as the **whale shark**. Did you guess it correctly?

Caribbean Eco-News

Marine Resources Assessed in Jost van Dyke

The Jost van Dykes Preservation Society reports: During November 2008, Clive Petrovic, a British Virgin Islands-based marine scientist and former head of the Applied Marine Studies Centre at the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College on Tortola, made several visits to Jost van Dyke to conduct an assessment of the coastal and marine resources of that island.

During his first visit, he identified coastal erosion, algal blooms and land reclamation, all of which have a significant effect on the natural environment.

On his second visit, Petrovic spoke to local resident, business owner and fisherman Foxy Callwood about the changes in Great Harbour over the last 60 years. They discussed changes in the yachting industry both in the types of boats used (from island sloops to fiberglass motorboats) and in the increase in numbers of boats anchoring there. Last year, 7,714 boats cleared immigration in Great Harbour.

Petrovic's third visit included the nearby islets of Sandy Cay, Sandy Spit, Green Cay and Diamond Cay. Extensive damage to the coral reefs from both bad anchoring practice and from storms was noted. An assessment of fish and other marine life present was also done.

Along with information previously collected, Mr. Petrovic's observations will form Chapter Seven of an environmental profile, a draft of which is expected to be available for review by the end of this month.

For more information visit www.jdps.org.

Puerto Rican Coastal Reserve Expands

Puerto Rico Correspondent Maria Miranda Sierra reported last month in *Caribbean Net News* that in January, on the 15th anniversary of the million-gallon Berman Oil Spill that damaged the coastline of Puerto Rico, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and various other organizations celebrated the purchase of 152 acres to expand a coastal

reserve near one of the areas hardest areas hit by the spill on the northeastern part of the island. The land has been added to the San Miguel Natural Reserve, east of San Juan. The purchase of this land expands the reserve to 422 acres and contributes to an ongoing effort to create the Northeast Ecological Corridor, one of the Caribbean's last great unprotected areas.

The San Miguel Natural Reserve is a mosaic of coastal habitats including near-shore coral reefs, more than a mile of beachfront, inter-tidal areas, wetlands,



Sea turtles and other creatures are now better protected in the expanded Puerto Rican coastal reserve

coastal dry forests, mangroves, the confluence of two rivers, and the remnants of a 19th century hacienda used for sugarcane farming. The reserve is home to 16 federally listed threatened and endangered species, including the leatherback turtle, which nests here.

"Preserving this site provides a continuous stretch of protected coastal shoreline, preventing the fragmenta-

tion of critical habitat," the Trust for Public Land's Puerto Rico Project Manager Mildred Ramos Majoros said. "It also ensures that publicly accessible coastal lands and waters are not privately developed and will continue to provide recreational areas for boating, swimming, and fishing."

Bonaire Group Protects Seagrass Beds

In a move to protect the vital seagrass beds in Lac Bay, Bonaire, the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire group (STCB) has joined with others in establishing protected areas with an in-water system of buoys and lines.

Seagrass provides an important food source for Bonaire's juvenile green turtles. Lac Bay's seagrass beds also provide shelter, food and oxygen for other marine life, ranging from microorganisms to fish, crabs, shrimp and queen conch. Seagrass roots in the near-shore beds prevent sand from eroding. Areas with dense seagrass bottoms have been in jeopardy in Lac Bay due to heavy recreational use there. The line-and-buoy boundaries are visual markers to warn bay users of the seagrass beds below the surface.

Roped-off areas designated by buoys are now located in the heavy-traffic windsurfer area in front of Jibe City and around the point to the windsurfing competition area.

STCB is being joined in this project by Progressive Environment Solutions and the National Parks Foundation Bonaire. Two local businesses, Jibe City and The Windsurf Place, have joined the project as supporting partners, providing technical and financial assistance, and on-site encouragement to users to stay outside of the marked areas. Lac Bay is a critical, sensitive environment, and this project will benefit not only the sea turtles, but also Bonaire's biodiversity in general.

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- "Antigua Week '85" is the story of the engineless yawl Iolaire racing round the buoys to celebrate her 80th birthday. 1 hour
- "Street on Knots" demonstrates the essential knots and line-handling skills every sailor should know. 1 hour
- "Streetwise 1 and 2" give tips that appeared in the popular video Sailing Quarterly, plus cruises in the Grenadines, Venezuela and southwest coast of Ireland

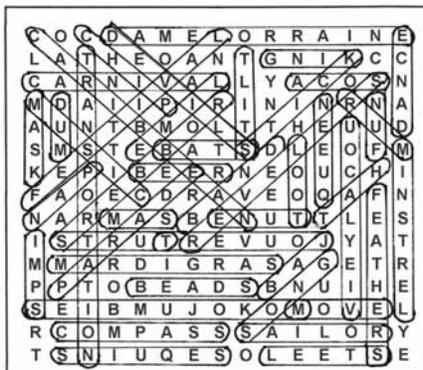
DVDs available at Imray, Kelvin Hughes, Armchair Sailor/Bluewater Books, and www.street-iolaire.com. Full information on DVDs at www.street-iolaire.com. **HURRICANE TIPS!** Visit www.street-iolaire.com for a wealth of information on tracking and securing for a storm.

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I always marveled at my grandmother's recipe for sticky buns: handfuls of this, pinches of that and butter the size of a walnut. When older generations of folks pass down the recipes to the next generation, it's often done "hands on", not written on a three-by-five-inch card. Such is the tradition of the national dish of Grenada, the amazing Oil Down of the Spice Island.

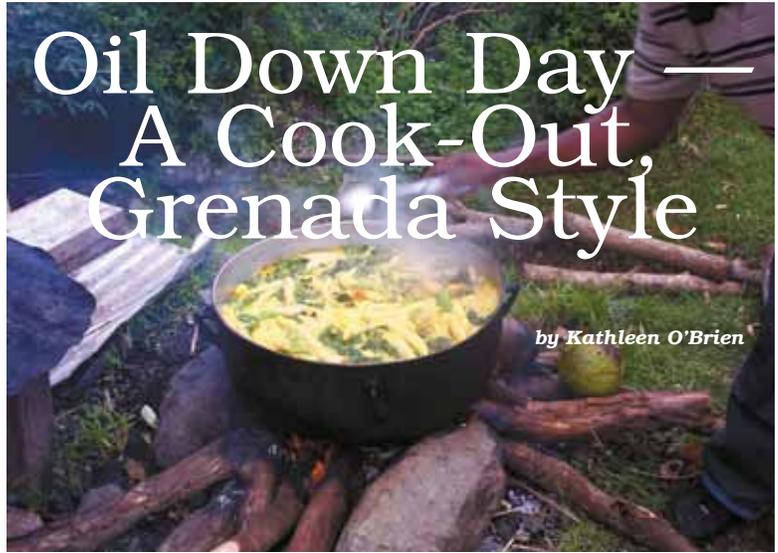
On Saturday, January 3rd, 2009, cruisers had the opportunity to participate in the fourth Oil Down Day arranged by Cutty, a Grenadian well known to the cruising community for island tours and taxi service to events such as Fish Friday in the village of Gouyave. Twenty-five adventurers in search of a gourmet feast filled two buses for the journey to the village of Laura in the parish of St. David, Cutty's neighborhood. From Prickly Bay and Clarke's Court Bay we traveled up winding roads and steep hills overlooking the south coast of Grenada. Our destination was a rum shop up the road from Cutty's home where some of the neighbors had gathered

the mix. Carrots were scraped before being cut into chunks. A large pumpkin was peeled, seeded and reduced to bite-sized pieces, as was a green papaya. Stem ends and tips were trimmed from the okra pods, which were added whole. There wasn't enough okra so one of the guys made a quick trip to the market for more. Half a dozen cucumbers were sliced in half the long way. Then came some onions and garlic. Sprigs of fresh parsley went into the pot. Water was poured on top of all the vegetables — the root crops are called "ground provisions" by Grenadians — in the kettle, and Andy, the head cook, squeezed the juice of halved lemons into the water. The lemon juice serves a dual purpose. The acid in the lemon juice helps get the sticky goo from all the veggies off the hands, and also keeps the ingredients from discoloring from exposure to the air.

Someone brought out a large stainless-steel bowl filled with slices of uncooked turkey wings and a small-

Oil Down Day — A Cook-Out, Grenada Style

by Kathleen O'Brien



The most authentic Oil Down contains bounteous ingredients and is cooked outdoors over an open fire

for the afternoon. And then the fun began!

Oil Down, the national dish of Grenada, is not just a dish. It's an event that has been compared to a Saturday barbecue with your family and friends, where men preside over the grill. At the Oil Down, men do the preparation and cooking, including building and tending the fire, but the cruisers are invited to help in the preparation. Many of the women did just that, but for the most part our men were content to watch with beers in hand.

The list of ingredients seemed endless: breadfruit, plantain, green bananas, pumpkin, cabbage, yams, cucumbers, green papaya, onions, okra, garlic, carrots, sprigs of fresh parsley, young callaloo leaves, dried coconut and turmeric. First, several breadfruit were quartered, peeled, cored and dropped into a large kettle. Bunches of green bananas and plantain were peeled, but left whole. A few cabbages were sliced into

er bowl of what we all guessed, rightly so, were pieces of pig snouts and maybe some pig tails, too. Everything would go into the really big cooking pot that would rest on three stones with the cooking fire underneath.

When all the vegetable ingredients were ready, Andy reached into the kettle, finding the slices of breadfruit, and placed them in the bottom of the pot as the base layer. The rest of the vegetables were then layered on top of the breadfruit. About halfway to the finish, seasoning sauces including ketchup, creole sauce and Baron's Hot Sauce, were liberally splashed on everything. The meat was added, and also splashed with seasonings. I thought it was odd that no salt or pepper was added, but I guess there was enough flavor in all the sauces. One of the neighbors explained that the hot sauce is not really hot, as that would overpower all the other flavors.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

While all this was happening, dry coconuts had been opened with the blunt side of a machete, the water poured out, and the pieces of coconut meat were rinsed in water. Along with the coconut, turmeric (locally called saffron because of its golden color) was grated into a large bowl to which water was added. After some stirring, the water was squeezed out of the grated coconut and turmeric,



and would be poured over the top of the layers in the pot, after which the gratings were discarded.

By now the fire was ready, so the callaloo leaves were placed over the top of the mixture like a blanket to keep all the flavors in and to help with the steaming and cooking of all those goodies. It's not surprising that it takes two men to carry that pot and place it on the stones. A piece of flattened corrugated tin was placed over the pot for a cover.

One of the cooks had been kneading a mixture of flour, salt and water for dumplings. When the dough had been sufficiently worked, pieces were rolled into dumplings that resembled the small green bananas in size and shape. These were placed on top of the callaloo leaves. Coconut/turmeric water was poured over the top of everything, and the cover was put in place for the one-and-a-half to two hours of cooking.

In the meantime, Cutty roasted a whole breadfruit on the edge of the fire, and when it was ready, charred and about to split open, we had samples spread with butter. Some of us had slices of ripe papaya and a taste of the coating around fresh cocoa beans. Cutty also showed us savory lemon leaves and berries containing allspice. There was plenty of time to talk to fellow cruisers and some of the neighbors, and to enjoy cold liquid refreshments from the rum shop.

Darkness had fallen by the time the Oil Down was ready to serve, and we were ready to eat. Cutty and Andy filled plates and passed them around. The aroma promised a tasty meal, and we weren't disappointed. All the flavors blended together. The liquid had boiled down to make tasty gravy. No one could walk away hungry.

And just when we thought we couldn't eat another bite, we remembered all the desserts the cruisers had brought to share. A few hardy souls danced to music from the rum shop bar. Before we knew it, it was time to board the buses and head for home. What great memories we all took home with us, the food, the camaraderie, and a wonderful opportunity provided by Cutty to experience a traditional island event. It was evident from Cutty's smiling face that he truly enjoyed sharing Oil Down with us.

Kathleen and Roland O'Brien are cruising the Windward Islands aboard S/V M'Lady Kathleen.

Cruisers help prepare essential ingredients such as breadfruit and 'ground provisions'



At last, Andy and Cutty heap plates with the savory, slow-cooked meat, vegetables and dumplings

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THE BOUNTIFUL BREADFRUIT

Breadfruit is a Caribbean island mainstay food. It's not an attractive fruit, an off shade of green often bearing brown marks, and the hardest part of cooking breadfruit is choosing one that hasn't over-ripened. I first tasted it cooked as oil down (pronounced "dong") in Grenada. Realizing that it was another inexpensive and tasty starch to add to my galley recipes, I quizzed the cook, and now breadfruit is a regular on my table.

Breadfruit originated in Micronesia in the Pacific Ocean. It is the fruit of a beautiful tree that grows to a hundred feet. Both the seeded and seedless varieties are grown on most of the Caribbean islands. The tree acquired its name because explorers found the fruit could be eaten before it is ripe, supposedly tasting and feeling like fresh bread. Polynesian sailors spread the fruit far and wide, bringing it to Hawaii around 1100 AD. European explorers first encountered breadfruit about 1600 and quickly realized its nutritional value to cost-effectively feed their slave labor.

Although credit for importing the breadfruit trees into the Caribbean is given to the famous Captain Bligh, a French sailor, Sonnerat, first brought seeds from the Philippines to Martinique in 1772. Bligh failed on his first attempt to carry a thousand breadfruit trees from Tahiti to the Caribbean in 1787. Six years later, Bligh delivered two thousand trees of five different types to St. Vincent and Jamaica. The real cause of the famous mutiny on the *HMS Bounty* wasn't just the beautiful Tahitian women, but breadfruit! The sailors didn't enjoy the thought of going thirsty while the breadfruit trees got watered. After all the problems, when the trees finally reached the Caribbean islands, the slaves didn't like the unfamiliar taste and at first refused to consume it!

Aside from having edible fruit, the wood of the breadfruit tree can be used to build houses, furniture, and even small boats. Pacific islanders make a cloth (*tapa*) from the inner bark. The rough skin of the fruit can be used as sandpaper.

A nice-sized breadfruit weighs two to three pounds. Cooked breadfruit freezes excellently. Breadfruit may be consumed before it ripens. Unripe fruit is usually green, turning yellowish green as it ripens to a yellow brown when it is fully ripe. Unripe breadfruit can be chunked and boiled with seasonings and other vegetables to make a type of chowder. Breadfruit can be steamed, boiled, roasted, or fried. Ripe fruits may be quartered and steamed with seasonings or it may be rolled in flour and fried. The pulp from very ripe breadfruits can be mixed with coconut milk, salt and sugar to create a pudding. In Barbados, breadfruit has been dried and made into flour as a substitute for wheat. Soft, slightly overripe fruit is best for frying as chips.

On some islands, you'll see blackened, charred-looking globes being sold by the roadside. These are breadfruit that have been roasted over an open fire — delicious.

An average breadfruit has about a hundred calories, two grams of protein and less than one gram of fat. It has 25 grams of carbohydrates. Breadfruit is a good source of Vitamin B, and there is more Vitamin C in the riper fruits. It contains calcium, phosphorus and iron.

Two-Day Breadfruit Crisps

1 green breadfruit
ice cubes
vegetable oil for frying (such as canola)
salt and spices to taste

Scrub, peel and core the fruit. Put pieces in ice water in the fridge overnight. Slice breadfruit pieces as thinly as possible and replace in ice water until ready to fry. Heat the oil, pat the breadfruit pieces dry with paper towel, and fry until golden brown. Don't overcrowd the pan. Drain, spice as you like, and serve as a cocktail snack or with sandwiches, burgers, etcetera.

Breadfruit Tuna Cakes

half of a soft breadfruit
1 pound fresh tuna (canned can be used)
1 egg, beaten
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt and spice to taste
1 Cup breadcrumbs
oil for frying

Peel and core the breadfruit, boil or steam until cooked, and then mash. Sauté or grill the tuna until just cooked, and flake.

Mix all ingredients except the oil and breadcrumbs into 10 four-inch cakes. Dip in breadcrumbs and fry until light brown on both sides.

Baked Stuffed Breadfruit

1 whole breadfruit
1 pound minced beef, chicken or fish
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium tomato, chopped
1 bunch chives
1 Tablespoon butter or canola oil
salt and spices to taste

Boil the breadfruit intact for ten minutes in salted water. It will not be fully cooked. Set aside to cool a bit. Fry onions, garlic, chives and minced meat, then add tomato and spices. Peel and core the breadfruit. Then stuff the fruit with the minced-meat mixture. Brush the outside of the fruit with butter or canola oil. Bake in a 350°F oven for 40 minutes. Every ten minutes brush the fruit with butter or oil. Serve hot.

Breadfruit Pie

One breadfruit peeled, cored and chunked
1 medium onion, chopped
1 carrot, grated
1 stalk of celery, chopped
1 Cup grated cheddar cheese
1/2 Cup milk (approximately)

Boil the breadfruit chunks and mash. Add the onion, grated carrot, and celery with just enough milk to keep it firm. Place mixture in an oven dish and top with grated cheese and spices. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes.



Simple Breadfruit Dessert

One well-ripened breadfruit
2 Tablespoons butter
2 eggs beaten
1/4 Cup brown sugar
spices to taste (e.g. cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg)
2 Tablespoons brandy (optional)

Peel, core, chunk and boil breadfruit. Mash and mix with remaining ingredients; blend well. Heat through, stirring constantly, until eggs are cooked. Serve warm or cold.

Candied Breadfruit

1 large ripe breadfruit
1 Tablespoon canola oil
1/2 Cup brown sugar
4 Tablespoons butter
1/4 Cup lemon juice

Peel breadfruit, leave whole, and simmer one hour in a pot of water. Slice the fruit in half, core it and slice one-half inch thick. Grease a baking dish with the canola oil. Place the slices in layers, coating each layer with sugar, butter and lemon juice. Bake in a 350°F oven for half an hour.

For the Gardener

Breadfruit needs space to grow and deep, fertile, well-drained soil. However breadfruit has adapted to various climate and soil conditions throughout the world. Some Pacific island varieties grow along rivers while others thrive on sandy coral soils. One variety is tolerant of the salty seaside environment. Transplant a sucker of the seedless breadfruit variety. It should be partially shaded and watered daily. These sucker trees should bear fruit in about five years. Mealy bugs and ants are enemies of these trees. Breadfruit is fragile and easily bruised. The fruit must be used within a week of picking. Jamaicans keep excess fruit submerged in water until they are needed. All parts of the breadfruit tree including the fruit are rich in milky latex. Jamaicans partially roast their breadfruit to congeal or thicken the latex for export markets.

FOND MEMORIES OF FONDUE



Fondue pots are again back in vogue. Like slow cookers, you could only find them at flea markets a year or so ago but now these unique cooking utensils are front and centre in many small appliance departments. No matter if you are entertaining onboard or ashore, a fondue provides the opportunity for good food, great entertainment and joyful conversation around a dining table. I have fond memories of fondue parties in the late 1960s and '70s. Copious quantities of wine were often consumed in the course of the meal, adding, no doubt, to the informality of the evening.

Fondue cooking was new to me then. From the French word *fondre* — to

guisher close at hand. Remember, it is hot oil cooking you are using and care must be exercised. Table coverings should not be your very best lace cloth or the plastic (i.e. meltable) picnic type, because drips and spills can and do occur. Hot forks can make a mess of a plastic cloth or place mat.

Dipping sauces are a wonderful part of fondue fare. Make some hot and spicy and others sweet and tangy.

Each guest should have his own colour-coded (for easy identity) long-handled fondue fork. A large supply of paper napkins or substantial cloth ones is also a good idea. Add to this, each person's own supply of raw meat or



Fork it – let's get out the pot and have a party!

melt, the term fondue has several meanings and does not pertain just to an entrée. Most fondue parties involve guests seated around a heated fondue pot in the centre of a table. Ideally four people can use one cooking pot. For larger groups, increase the number of pots. For best results, the hot oil must be kept at a temperature of close to 380°F (200°C). Broth fondues are kept close to boiling temperature. Remember, too many forks can spoil the broth or oil by lowering the temperature, thus retarding cooking. Good quality vegetable oil with a high smoke point is best. Canola, peanut or safflower oil works well. Olive oil should be avoided.

Forks bearing pieces of raw meat, vegetables or seafood are thrust into either hot oil or broth and left to cook to the liking of the "forkee". The deep bowl-shaped pot is heated by electricity or the flame of an alcohol burner. Electric fondues are more reliable and less hazardous. On board, use a metal tray to hold the fondue pot in case of spills. A good, tender cut of meat should be used for fondues, as it is seared in hot oil and is best eaten slightly rare.

A classic *fondue au fromage* consists of Swiss Gruyère or Emmental cheese melted in combination with white wine, kirsch and seasonings. Small, bite-sized chunks of French bread are forked into the hot savoury mixture and eaten while still hot and gooey.

The most decadent of all fondues involves rich, melted chocolate, cream and possibly a liqueur into which impaled fresh fruit or chunks of pound cake are immersed. Both cheese and chocolate fondues can be heated sufficiently with a chafing candle.

No matter which type of fondue you plan, the emphasis is on fun and enjoyment. The meal usually takes the better part of a couple of hours. Appetizers and salad can be served while the fondue pot is heating merrily in the centre of the table. I am a cautious individual and always have a small fire extin-

seafood and vegetables, a dinner plate, and various small dishes of dipping sauces. Hot crusty French bread or rolls are also a necessity. Allow about one-half pound of meat per person.

The etiquette for this type of dining is quite simple. Carefully impale the meat or vegetable you wish to cook upon your fork. The first time is quite easy. The second time requires more dexterity as the end of the fork will be extremely hot from the oil. Place your fork into the pot and let the meat fry for one or two minutes. Gently check its doneness, being careful not to knock another guest's meat from his fork. Remove the cooked morsel to your plate and then spear a second piece to cook while you eat the first.

The mix and match method of trying various sauces with various meat or vegetables you cook brings remarkable taste sensations. Expect lots of laughs from this great way to dine with new or normally stodgy guests. A plate of fresh fruit with or without a chocolate fondue makes a perfect, easy dessert. At the end of the meal you will probably feel as if you were a kid again, cooking wieners around the campfire. Try a fondue. It's fun, entertaining and a very social way to mix food and friends.

Don't hesitate to use commercially prepared sauces for fondues. There are many good ones on the market now. Hot Thai and peanut sauces are just two of these great time-savers. Here is a quick and easy sauce you can make yourself.

Ginger Soy Dipping Sauce

- 1/2 Cup soy sauce
- 1/4 Cup dry white wine
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tablespoon honey or sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 Tablespoons chopped fresh ginger root

In a small saucepan, add all ingredients and simmer over medium heat, stirring often. Bring to the boil and remove from heat. Strain and use for dipping beef, pork or chicken. Enjoy.

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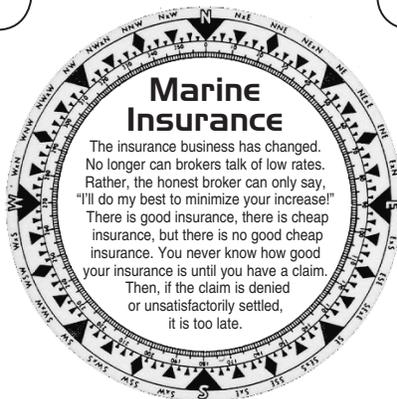
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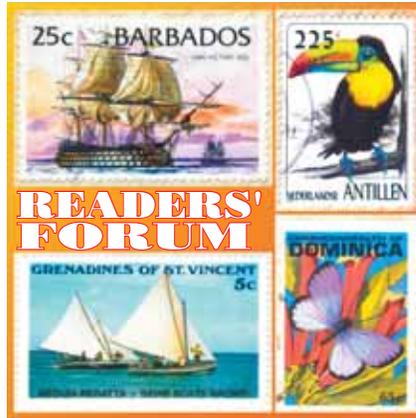
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Dear Compass,

Further to Richard Dey's review of the memoir *Mary's Voyage* by Mary Caldwell and Matthew M. Douglas in *Caribbean Compass* of December 2008. In 1970 and 1971, I was mate on the 70-foot schooner *So Fong*. My skipper, Laurie Jordan, always took charters over to Palm Island. He considered the place and people important to the Caribbean story.

The skipper and charterers would go ashore and have a great time at the little thatched bar. The skipper knew the Caldwells. I may have met the Caldwells though I don't recall it specifically.

I certainly heard some Caldwell and Palm Island stories as retold by Captain Jordan. In those days, the Caribbean was well stocked with interesting characters and stories. Captain Jordan knew them all.

He had lots of stories, some of which may have been true. At different times the skipper had sailed for the famous Mike Burke and Irving Johnson.

Fact is, I didn't get ashore very much that season. Mates did not have much time to chat with the guests, either. As mate, I was usually on anchor watch with a very long "to do" list. No complaints — that was the job. I learned it well and thank Captain Jordan and *So Fong* for training me well. Dey's review of *Mary's Voyage* reminds me of some of what I missed. Wish I had had time to learn from the Caldwells.

Interesting that Dey mentions Exy Johnson and Gwen Tompkins. I sailed many sea miles for Gwen's son, "the Commodore". I am told that the Tompkins introduced the Johnsons aboard *Wander Bird*.

Maybe. The Johnsons were great friends with my mother's parents, Norman and Meg White from Cape Cod. For years, letters from the Johnsons would arrive at the Whites' house. They were read with great ceremony. As a little kid, the sea tales were magic. The White and Johnson story began in the late 1920s when Grandfather White was invited to move aboard *Yankee* with his new wife and my mom, but Grandmother put her foot down. Mother grew up a shore-based sailor (and a darn good one, too). I know she always wished the invitation had been accepted. Had it been so, Meg White's name would be on the list of long-suffering seagoing wives.

I miss the old hands. They were remarkable men and women. Even with my roots back in those old traditions, I don't have their presence.

Few do. I don't think it is the plastic boats that have changed sailors as much as it is schedules. For example, I doubt we fueled *So Fong* twice that season. Our guests took time to sail. They also took time to spend a few days exploring an island. Also, the boats were complicated, requiring constant maintenance. Only a real sailing character could handle the job. It was fun.

Thanks for the review and comments about the old days. Time for me to collect the books by Caldwell.

Best regards,
Norman Martin
Nanny Cay, Tortola
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Compass,

Although I agree with Tim Sadler [Readers's Forum, December 2008] that visiting yachtsmen should not be spearfishing, he should perhaps investigate more thoroughly before he accuses Mediterranean yachtsmen of being responsible for the destruction of life on the reefs in the Caribbean.

For many years, large Venezuelan fishing boats have come out to the offshore Roques and Aves islands and literally vacuumed out the reefs of fish and lobsters, using nets, scuba gear, etcetera. This has been happening since the mid-1990s, when we were there, so it is not surprising that the reefs are devoid of fish. Of course, it is their country and they have a right to deplete their own fishing grounds.

On the other hand, most French spearfishermen spend a long time in the water, killing fish one at a time and exerting a lot of effort in the process.

I have seen French boaters spend hours in the water to catch just one or two small snappers for their dinner. As to the comment about them "killing any creature even vaguely edible", I would venture to guess that no self-respecting Frenchman would even think of having a soft-fleshed parrotfish or angelfish touch his sauté pan! And yet I have often seen these fish in the local markets!

As to the issue of spearfishing at dusk — people who know anything about fish behaviour know that dusk is fish feeding time. Thus, the best time to hunt is at dusk.

Please don't assume that the "Mediterranean" types are the only ones who break or bend rules. While anchored on the north side of Carriacou we've seen cruisers of various nationalities busily spearfishing on the reef.

A cursory read of scientific studies would provide more potent causes for fish depletion. These would include increase of ocean temperatures, global warming, changes in weather patterns, etcetera, as well as over-fishing.

Arlen Webster
Yacht Tiger Lily II

Dear Compass,

As we have seen from letters to *Compass* in the January 2009, December 2008 and several other issues, many cruisers have now tried the eSeaClear [electronic Customs clearance form] system. I think this will be the system for the future, so we should welcome the opportunity to give it a try and let the Customs people know what we think, so they can get it working really well.

The system in its initial trial was for St. Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis and the BVI. This means that until it expands, unless you are clearing from one of these countries to the other, you can only use it for inward clearance. That will soon change, as St. Vincent & the Grenadines will soon be on line.

Let me outline the advantages: The system stores your boat and crew details, so you do not need to fill in the same information time and time again. You can easily change these details, add crew details and store information about crew who are leaving to return at a future time. In the expanded phase, when you are sailing from St. Lucia to St. Vincent, if I understand it correctly, the entry into St. Vincent will also be your clearance from St. Lucia, so you will do both bits on one entry. When you do your entry, you receive a number, which is evidence you have done the entry.

Yes, you will still have to visit Customs and let them print out the paper and stamp it, as well as paying your fees. But there is no technical reason why, when the system is up and running, the departure part could not be automatic. If we can persuade Customs of this we could cut down our visits to Customs offices by half. This is not going to happen under the present system.

One criticism noted was in the case of a change in sailing plans. It shouldn't be a big deal. For example, you clear from Grenada to St. Vincent then something happens and you need to go direct to St. Lucia. Well, as soon as you can get on the internet (maybe at the port you arrive at), you change the form and resend it.

There is the problem that not all Customs ports currently have easily available internet access. Part of the plan for this system is that Customs offices will eventually be equipped with WiFi stations with free access to the eSeaClear internet page.

Then there are those that do not have computers on board. I can see two solutions here — the skipper could use an internet café, or the Customs stations could be equipped with one or two customer computers for those that do not have their own. (This is how you now do your entry in Martinique).

This system is not only going to be a boon for us, but a huge boon to Customs, who at this moment have to take all those forms you fill in and enter the data into a computer. With eSeaClear, it is automatic for both of us. Give it a try: <https://www.esaclear.com/>

Chris Doyle
Yacht Ti Kanot

Dear Compass,

I found Mr. Dorsett's Anchorage Rating System [*Caribbean Compass*, January 2009] quite interesting. An objective method to compare harbours would be useful indeed.

However, his placement of the sensing equipment would penalize an anchorage with seas coming from a different angle than the wind, inducing excessive roll into the motion of the boat. Delivery skippers and cruisers have been utilizing a solution to this rolling problem for decades.

By fixing snubber lines from both the bow AND stern to the anchor rode, and adjusting their length, the angle at which the boat takes the oncoming seas may be adjusted to have them meet the bow and eliminating most roll; transforming it into the more dampened and tolerable motion of pitch.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

[As bipeds, humans pitch slightly during the act of walking, so we are much more used to it than the uncomfortable side-to-side rolling.]

If I ever happen upon Mr. Dorsett, I would love to entertain a discussion on how a simple, inexpensive accelerometer could be fashioned into an effective sensing device. Perhaps we could provide a useful tool to provide those quiet nights for sailors everywhere.

Kevin L. Hughes
S/V *Windigo III*

Dear Compass,

Thanks for all the cruising-kitty-stretching tips in the January issue of *Compass*. I'd like to suggest another one suitable for boats in the tropics: solar cooking. Various types of compact, portable, collapsible and lightweight solar ovens are available, or you can easily make one yourself. Basically, a solar oven consists of a set of reflective panels or a box that surrounds a cooking pot and concentrates the sun's rays to cooking temperatures. Solar ovens commonly reach temperatures in the mid- to upper 200°Fs, making them especially suitable for slow-cooked stews, rice and beans, etcetera. They can also be used for drying fruit, baking bread and sterilizing water. Set one out on deck, and let the sun do the work. A basic "CookKit" from Solar Cookers International is just US\$25. There are many other types of solar cookers, including roasters, and solar cookbooks are also available. For more information about buying, making and using solar cookers, visit www.solarcookers.org.

Sign me,

Ray on Sol Patrol

Dear Compass,

We would like to report great service from the folks who make the WASI Powerball Anchor Connector. We have one of these fitted and recently opted for new set-screws to ensure that the connector remained properly assembled. Having ascertained that the Caribbean retailer from whom we bought the connector does not carry the spares, we e-mailed WASI in Germany. They immediately volunteered to send us new set-screws with no charge. The package reached our UK address (they preferred to use that rather than ship across the Atlantic) a few days later. They were also careful to point out that the whole connector should be inspected and maintained regularly.

In return, they asked us to pass on our report of their great service. So we have — they were delightful to deal with!

Best wishes and fair winds to all *Compass* staff and readers.

Peter & Robbie Nuttycombe
S/Y *PR2*

Dear Compass,

A two-week trip in December 2008 through the Leeward and Windward Islands showed me that since my last visit a few years ago some things have changed, others have not.

I travelled via LIAT airlines this time, rather than by sailboat. LIAT used to be an inexpensive way to travel, today it is not. But LIAT is the same in that they've stayed true to one of their nicknames: "Leave Islands at Any Time". I won't bother you with the gory details, but after arriving at the airport in Antigua at 0700 we landed in St. Maarten, with a plane change, at 1500. After arriving at the St. Maarten airport at 0615 for an 0700 departure to Grenada, I had two plane changes and six passages through security, and finally arrived in Grenada at 1600 — minus my mobile phone, lost somewhere in security. From Grenada, an 0700 scheduled departure, plane switch in Barbados, arrival in St. Lucia 1800. Scheduled departure from St. Lucia 1300; arrived Antigua 1730. On the other hand, the nickname "Luggage In Another Terminal" seems no longer true. They did not lose or delay my bag even once.

But to get back to boating, the chartmakers Imray are in the process of electronically re-drawing the following Imray-Iolaire charts: B4 Tobago, B30 St. Vincent, Bequia and Mustique, B31 Bequia to Carriacou, and B4 Barbados. It would be greatly appreciated if owners of these current charts would examine them front and back, and report any corrections or suggestions to streetiolaire@hotmail.com, s. deeves@imray.com, fax 011 (353) 283-3927 or D.M. Street, Rock Cottage, Glandore, County Cork, Republic of Ireland.

Many thanks,
Don Street
Yacht Iolaire

Open Letter to the Ministry of Tourism
Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

Dear Minister,

We have just recently departed your country and wish to bring to your attention a matter of concern to my wife and I.

We have made many visits to your country since 1994, but I fear this will be our last. We have always enjoyed the people of Trinidad & Tobago and the many sights of the islands, while sailing our yachts *Tiger Lily*

and *Tiger Lily II*. Your facilities are most impressive. However, dealing with officials has become so onerous that we will not be returning.

Instructions for departure provided by the Trinidad & Tobago Customs and Excise officials at the Chaguaramas boarding station were both contradictory and confusing. My wife and I are committed to complying with the regulations of the countries that we visit as guests. However, after three visits to the Chaguaramas office to obtain outbound clearance, at 9:00PM we were told to leave at 10:00PM. These clearance procedures, of course, are determined by the clearing official. We were most concerned and nervous about departing through the Boca in the dark because of several incidents of piracy in that area over the past few months.

The incident, however, which finalized our decision not to return to Trinidad, was what we viewed as the unprofessional conduct of the two Customs officials who made derogatory comments about my name and asked, "What kind of a name is that?" Such rude comments are not what might be expected from government officials.

Minister, I provide this information for your attention and action.

Denis Webster
Yacht Tiger Lily II

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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SAILORS' SHOTS




A recent photo of Windigo III, with Captain Kevin Hughes enjoying singlehanded sailing south from Anegada



When Caribbean cruising guide author Chris Doyle got homesick last fall in Vermont, he added PVC-pipe outriggers and a sail to a canoe and pretended he was back in the tradewinds!



The crew of the Bahamian fishing smack Abaco Rage — some onboard and some on boards (better known as 'riding pry')

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

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WHAT'S ON MY MIND

How Is It Being 'Old', While Still Cruising?

by Angelika Gruner

I'm in my fifties while my husband, Richard, is in his early seventies. He says I am young. Our son is 24. He says I'm very old.

When we started cruising in the 1980s, most yachties were about the same age as we were. There were not so many cruisers as nowadays. But, even then, we were told the Caribbean was overcrowded with boats. To give you an example of "overcrowded": for one week in June, 1989, our *Angelos* was one of only two boats in the Tobago Cays; in August, it was the only yacht in all of Tobago, and there were just three foreign-flagged vessels during the hurricane season in Trinidad till November.

Nowadays many, if not most, cruisers are grey-haired, as we are now as well. Many are pensioners. We all have one thing in common: we enjoy staying a bit longer in an anchorage. Some prefer staying in a marina to have easy access to land. We wait for the right weather to hop to another port or island.

All goes a bit slower, but we still enjoy the cruising life. We don't run around to get things done — we take our time, having a chat in between. What we can't do today — well, tomorrow is another day. We are time millionaires!



Still 'time millionaires' after all these years. *Angelos*, Richard and Angelika today and 20 years ago

And if we've found a good place, why not stay longer? We take it easy. "Don't worry, be happy," says the island slogan. The older we get, the shorter the distances to sail will be. Our limbs are getting stiffer. But still, we manage our cruising life. We still have to crawl and squeeze in between hull and engine, even if our beer-belly is in the way. Cruising keeps us busy and active.

And the young? They don't know anything about that. They are enthusiastic and energetic. They chase after things, work on their boats from early morning till late evening to get the boat ready as quickly as possible. "It's time to leave, the season is short, we've got to be in Panama by February. Hurry up!" they tell us. They don't understand our behaviour, staying sometimes for weeks in the same anchorage. "How boring!" We are getting nicknames like "Lagoon Johnny", "barnacle-grower", "water-camper" and so on. Places are getting nicknames too, like "old-timers' club" or "old people's home".

My reply to you youngsters: laugh at us! But if we had not been cruising 30 and more years ago, and telling our adventures, you would never have gotten the idea to go cruising yourselves. You don't understand us elders, but we understand you youngsters. Remember, we were young, too. Then, we also were hurrying to get to Panama and farther on at the right time.

And it was much more difficult than it is today. Parts for the boat were not easily available. Thanks to us old hands, boat parts of all variety are now on the market, where we never dreamed of finding them before. There was no GPS, no weatherfax, not even a good weather report, only NMN's automatic voice.

And by the time you get around, you too will be older. Quicker than you think, you are an old-timer with grizzled hair. Some of you will give up sailing. Some will not, to keep in shape, like we do now. What will you do then? Exactly what we do now — sit at a nice anchorage and watch the hyper-activities of the young.

But because of our longer stays, sometimes we have problems with Immigration. Some countries apparently don't want us old visitors, even if we have a monthly income and our own health insurance. They seem to overlook the fact that we don't take anything from the country; instead we pay for everything, plus keep local people employed with part of our income. It's not the young who spend their money easily. No, they live mostly on saved-up money. We did the same, and turned every penny ten times before we spent it — "a penny saved is a penny earned," said Benjamin Franklin. Old hands often spend money more easily because they live on a regular income, and "you can't take it with you".

From this perspective, it would be advisable for Caribbean governments to look out for us old-timers, maybe by giving us a special "pensioner visa" which would allow us to stay longer, to spend even more money. But, governments, don't forget the young cruisers — they are the future oldies wanting to apply for a pensioner visa for a longer stay as well! I hope that some day it will be a mark of pride and distinction for islands and nations to have the most "Lagoon Johnnies".

Read in Next Month's Compass:

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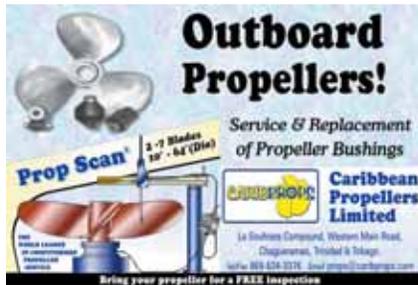
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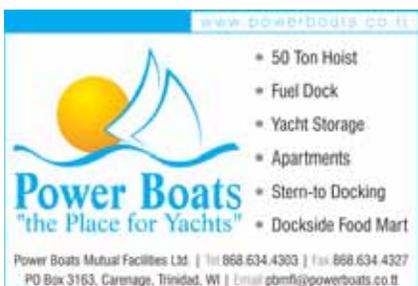
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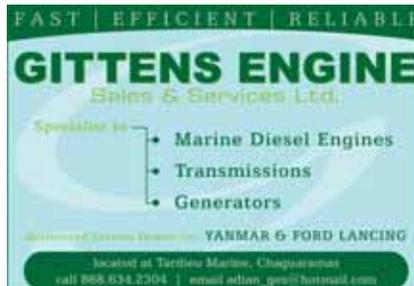


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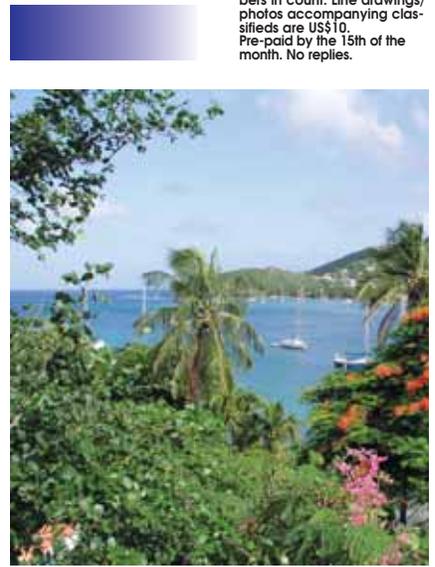
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- Made with crocslite™ material
- Footbed conforms to foot creating custom fit and increased arch support
- Loose fit allows feet to bend and expand naturally, reducing fatigue



Ace Boating*



Rule the waters with comfort.

- Non-marking sticky rubber outsole for wet traction
- Ventilation ports and drainage holes keep your feet dry
- Adjustable turbo strap™
- Constructed of crocslite™ material

*Available in all sizes and colors.

What you need

NAVMAN SAILING INSTRUMENTS NAVMAN

When you go sailing or boating with Navman you are using products designed and tested in the world's harshest marine conditions by people with a commitment to excellence. Navman's new generation sailing instruments are the cutting edge of digital marine technology: they feature the advanced NavBus system, which allows complete freedom to build the system you want by using any combination of displays with only one set of transducers. Visibility is fantastic with up to 38mm backlight keys. They are extremely simple to use and to connect. They now offer greater flexibility to meet your boating needs and best of all, they are a great Value!



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QUICK WINDLASSES All models 20%* OFF!



Incredibly priced and a great value, Quick Italian-crafted windlasses are built to last. The materials used to make them are innovative and attractive while guaranteeing the highest quality and reliability. They are light-weight, sturdy and resist corrosion provoked by salt, hydrocarbon and sunlight.



QUICK WATER HEATERS 20%* OFF!



The benefits of Quick water heaters:

- High quality materials
- Heat exchanger with wide exchange surface
- Produces hot water from the electric element, that is fitted with an adjustable safety thermostat
- Relief / non-return valve that allows discharging of the water heater in case of disuse

110 & 220 Volt / 20 to 40 Liter Capacity



QUICK BATTERY CHARGERS 20%* OFF!



- Three stage IUoU battery charging
- Multiple outputs in order to charge more groups of batteries
- Charge selector for liquid/gel electrolyte batteries
- Integrated fuses inside the battery chargers
- Able to provide full output power with low voltage
- Can use battery chargers as a power supply without batteries.

12 & 24 Volt / 3 Battery Banks / 30 to 80 Amps



DIVE BUDDY POOL FLOATS



Soft and permanently buoyant!

Extra large size: 26" x 74" x 2"

Full circle pillow for extra buoyancy. Honey-comb closed cell foam on one side and glossy smooth on the other side.

Sale Price: \$72.00*



*Discounts valid for February 2009 while stocks last.

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