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NOVEMBER 2014 NO. 230

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



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Cover Photo: Beautiful Barbuda as seen by cruiser, photographer and blogger Mira Nencheva



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Info & Updates

New Dominica Entry Tax on Hold

Although technically now effective, having been approved by Cabinet and Gazetted in July, a new entry tax of EC\$27 (approximately US\$10) for the island



CHRIS BOYLE

nation of Dominica has reportedly been put on indefinite hold, pending consultation with various stakeholders. An additional new EC\$5 port security tax has also been deferred. Ports Minister Rayburn Blackmoore was quoted in the *Jamaica Observer* newspaper as saying that the new taxes were as a result of a recommendation made by the Dominica Air and Sea Ports Authority to help it maintain facilities.

Critics say that the new taxes will damage the tourism industry, but others say the new fees will merely bring Dominica in line with fees charged in other neighboring countries.

In Dominica, there are currently no entry charges for yachts during office hours (Mondays 0800-1300 and 1400-1700; Tuesday-Friday 0800-1300 and 1400-1600). Moderate overtime fees are payable at other times. There is a nominal environmental fee of EC\$4 per person.

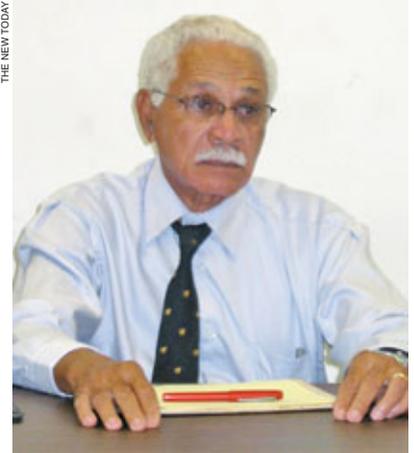
Eight Bells

Carol Bristol passed away on September 30th following a brief illness. Mr. Bristol was a past Commodore and a trustee of the Grenada Yacht Club. He was always a great supporter of GYC and he will be greatly missed.

Carol Bristol, QC was born in St. Lucia and educated in Grenada. He was called to the Bar at Grays Inn, England in 1954 and returned to the Caribbean as an Associate in the legal firm of Gordon, Sales, Miquell & Mathurin in St. Lucia. From 1955 to 1957 he held various posts including Acting Registrar of the Supreme Court in St. Lucia, Registrar of the Supreme Court in St. Kitts, Nevis & Anguilla and Chief Registrar of the Supreme Court of the Windward & Leeward Islands, headquartered in Grenada, and then Assistant to the Attorney General of the Windward Islands. In April 1959 he joined FM Henry & Denis Henry to establish the firm of Henry, Henry & Bristol. In 1981 he became senior partner on the retirement of Sir Denis Henry QC. Mr. Bristol took silk in 1986.

From 1990 he was Chief Justice of Grenada until restoration of the OECs Court in 1991.

THE NEW TODAY



—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

He then resumed private practice as the Senior Partner. Mr. Bristol was widely recognized throughout the Eastern Caribbean as one of the foremost authorities on Property and Conveyance law.

In addition to being Commodore of the Grenada Yacht Club, Mr. Bristol served as the president of organizations including the Rotary Club of Grenada, the Grenada Jaycees, the West Indies Jaycees, the Grenada Bar Association and the Grenada Sports Council.

Hurricane Gonzalo

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, Hurricane Gonzalo struck St. Maarten/St. Martin and St. Barths on the evening of October 13th. As of this writing, estimates of boats sunk or destroyed ranged from 40 up to 80. Many more were washed ashore; some are missing.



Three or four deaths of persons aboard yachts were reported but as yet only one has been confirmed. The extent of the destruction caused by the Category 1 storm was reportedly owing to people being caught off guard: what was a Tropical Storm intensified very rapidly into a hurricane. The Coast Guard on the Dutch side of island estimated winds at 120 mph. A webpage for the identification of boats damaged in the storm has been set up at www.hurricanegonzalostmartin.wordpress.com. We'll have a follow-up in the December issue of *Compass*.

Sail Training for St. Lucian Youth

Jus' Sail's training programme for unemployed youth this year started on September 8th. Managing Director James Crockett says, "Our focus is training, certification (through IYT) and employment within the yachting sector, along with increasing environmental awareness amongst the youth of the island."



Jus' Sail's youth sail training program includes sailing on the traditional Carriacou Sloop Good Expectation, as well as on yachts

At the end of the programme, the students themselves take the helm, chart the course, clean the boat, prepare the meals and generally ensure the smooth running of a vessel during a four-day cruise. This year, the 46-foot catamaran *Mid-Fifty* was kindly donated by The Moorings.

After departing from Rodney Bay Marina, the group explored St. Lucia's leeward coast, first snorkeling and spending a night anchored at Anse Cochon. Rangers from the Soufriere Marine management Area (SMMA) then visited the group and taught them about the purpose of the marine protected area. The Rangers also gave the group the opportunity to fillet and cook lionfish.

—Continued on next page

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MEMBERS OF SPLIETHOFF GROUP

—Continued from previous page

Jus' Sail thanks all the staff at SMMA for their engagement with the students and support of efforts to introduce them to the joys of the marine realm and the importance of its protection.

After the lionfish lunch the crew embarked on a fish survey using the REEF.org system that has been employed by Jus' Sail and can be uploaded to the NGO's worldwide database. In a 30-minute snorkel session the group identified almost 30 species of fish. A great result for a group of amateurs who days before had never before donned a mask, snorkel and fins!

Another night was spent on a mooring below Gros Piton, which the students climbed the following day. The guide confirmed that this was the first group of locals in as long as she could remember that she had led up the trail.

Returning to the boat in the early afternoon the crew set sail for Laborie but, put off by a thick carpet of Sargasso weed, they chose to head back north to find clearer waters. An hour later, moored Mediterranean style close to the beach at Anse Mahaut, they practiced their swimming and stand-up paddle boarding and enjoyed another wonderful evening under the stars.

The following morning, as a thank-you to the beautiful beach that had been a source of great enjoyment, an impromptu litter clean-up delivered six heavy bags of litter back to the boat for later disposal back in Rodney Bay Marina. This civic-minded activity was quickly repaid in full by Mother Nature who delivered a large pod of dolphins around the boat as it headed north off Anse La Raye. The excitement was palpable amongst the crew, who had never before witnessed the enthralling display of dolphins.

A stop in Marigot Bay Marina to practice docking for their crew certificates and a final leg back to Rodney Bay delivered *Mid-Fifty* with her full complement of crew back to home base.

After the cruise, the students embarked on a customer-service training workshop with Human Resources professional Sannyu Clarke-Isaac, a visit with the St. Lucia Marine Police force, a half-day tour around the IGY Rodney Bay Marina and Boatyard, their Swim to Survive test and interviews prior to undertaking work experience with various private sector businesses such as The Moorings and IGY Rodney Bay Marina.

Jus' Sail would like to thank The Moorings for their generous support that allowed this voyage to take place.

For more information on Jus' Sail visit www.jussail.com.

Project: Sail to Ile-à-Vache

Mandy Thody reports: The Good Samaritan Foundation of Haiti is forming a small group of yachts to sail from the Virgin Islands at the end of December to Ile-à-Vache, Haiti, returning by around January 25th. We will be delivering donated equipment and participating in a week of workshops focusing on health and construction.

For information about joining the trip as yacht owners, crew, or teachers please contact Mandy at mandy.thody@gmail.com. For donations of useful goods, please ask for list.

Donations towards fuel and costs of trip, medical supplies etc. gratefully received, by Paypal on our website www.goodsamaritanofhaiti.com.

St. Croix Christmas Boat Parade

This year's St. Croix Christmas Boat Parade will take place in Christiansted Harbor on December 13th.

The marine and boating community on St. Croix invites residents and visitors to launch the holiday season watching beautifully decorated boats sail through the Christiansted Harbor, followed by a fabulous fireworks display. Arrive early to the Christiansted Boardwalk for the best seating; the festivities on the boardwalk begin



around 5:30PM, with the boat parade starting at 6:00. To continue the evening's special fun, enjoy a harborside dinner and drinks, wander the shops of Christiansted, and check out local vendors and music along the Boardwalk.

St. Croix's annual boat parade has been featured on the Travel Channel. Every year, dedicated St. Croix boaters organize this event for the St. Croix community and it has become one of the biggest boat parades in the Caribbean.

For more information contact Sal Sanpere (340) 690-0006, Trish Rhodes: (340) 643-0555, trish1rhodes@gmail.com or visit www.christmasparadestcroix.com.

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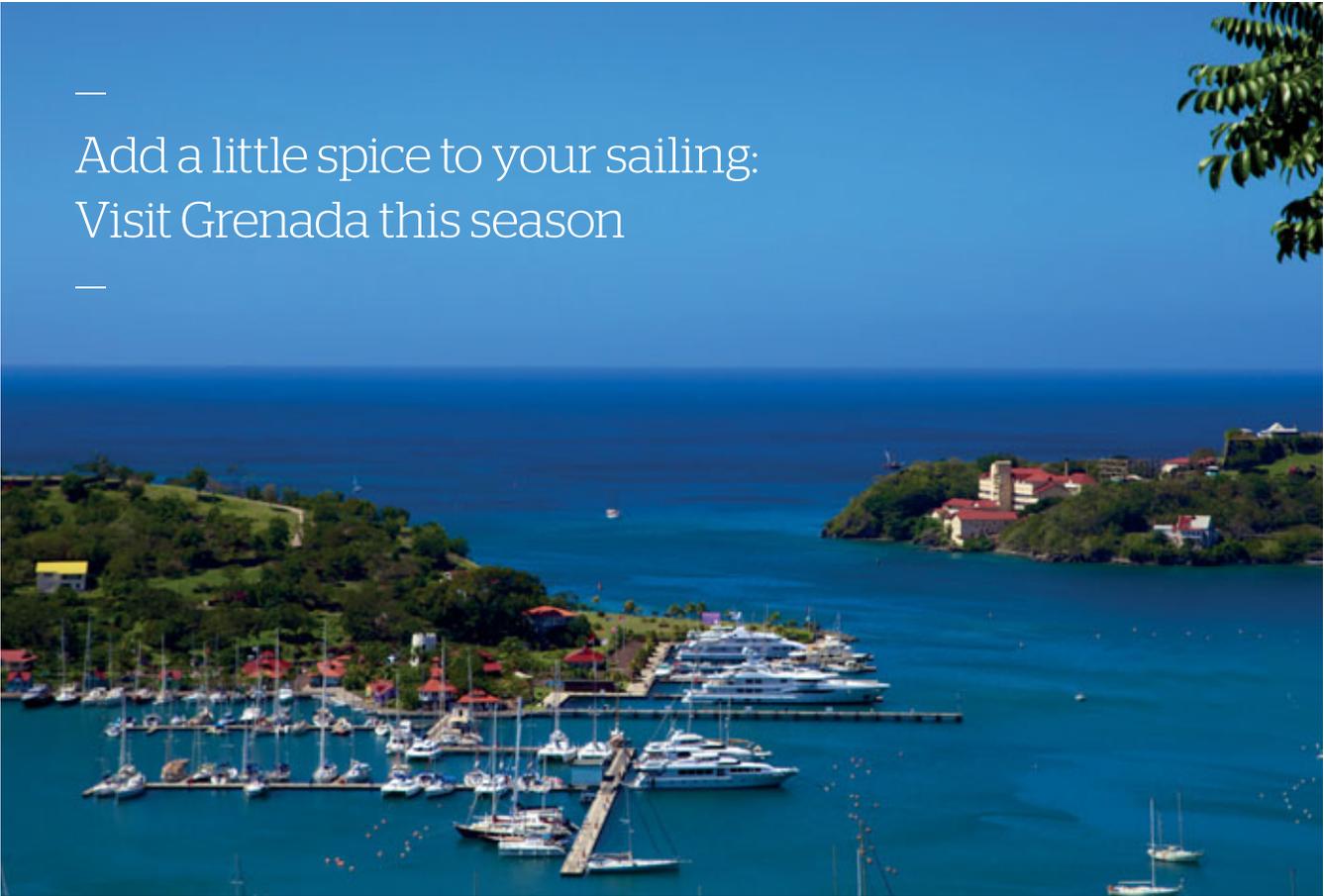
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up to 65	\$1.45	\$1.31	\$1.23
up to 75	\$1.50	\$1.35	\$1.28
up to 80	\$1.65	\$1.49	\$1.40
up to 100	\$1.70	\$1.53	\$1.45

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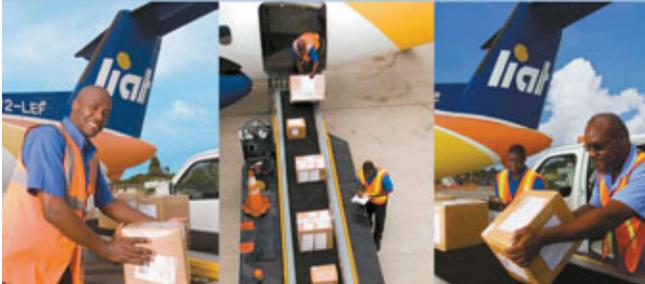
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IS NO LONGER DORMANT!

by Hank Henry

Established in 1967, the Montserrat Yacht Club was originally located on the beach at Wapping, half a mile from the port in Plymouth, the old capital of Montserrat.

In 1995 disaster struck, not in the form of a tsunami as one might expect, but in the eruption of the Soufriere volcano. Plymouth, built in the shadow of the Soufriere Hills, was swept away by pyroclastic flows that gradually covered the old town in ash to a depth of 20 feet. The yacht clubhouse suffered the same fate as Plymouth, which was evacuated and abandoned to the ravages of the volcano.

More than half the population of the island of Montserrat, their businesses and homes destroyed, emigrated to the UK and North America. The volcano continued to erupt erratically for a period of 15 years and land and maritime exclusion zones were imposed in the southwest of the island.

During this period of volcanic activity the yacht club became inactive. Reduced to a population of less than 4,000 people, the island's economy was shattered.



But Montserrat had two things in its favour: resilient and determined residents and the fact that it is a British Overseas Territory.

The people stoically awaited the inevitable pause in the volcanic activity and the United Kingdom provided financial aid to rebuild the infrastructure.

Today, after a pause in volcanic activity of almost five years, the island is back on course:

- a new electricity power station is being built
- geothermal drilling to tap the volcano's underground energy is in progress
- two airlines provide flights into the new airport
- an upgraded ferry service is in operation. Ferries connect Montserrat to Antigua and St. Kitts
- and the Montserrat Development Corporation funded, by DFID, the UK Foreign Office's international aid and development organization, is responsible for attracting investment in the new capital, port and marina which are being built in the north of the island at Little Bay and Carr's Bay.

Dormant for 15 years while the volcano was active, the Montserrat Yacht Club has been revived and is now based on the beach at Isles Bay. (See photo above.)

Isles Bay Beach Bar is a new purpose-built facility for the yacht club, with immediate access to what is considered the best anchorage on Montserrat. The holding is excellent in deep gravelly sand along the one-mile stretch of the sandy shoreline. Helical-screw moorings will be installed in 2015 at 16°44'N, 62°14'W. We already have one screw mooring installed in 30 feet of water and plan another six to ten next year. We've been experimenting to find the best combination. Double helix moorings provide the best holding with 30 feet of ground chain, 30 feet of chain riser and a 30-foot pick-up rope. In 30 feet of water, the moorings are far enough from the shore to minimize the ground swell effect on the boat.

What Montserrat has lacked is a yacht-friendly environment for visiting yachties. The MYC aims to extend a warm sailors welcome to all who visit our shores. The club's signature drink is Weston's Herefordshire cider, exclusively imported to the Caribbean, and we are busy frying as many lionfish as we can catch!

It is proposed that we become a second port of entry, in addition to the existing port of entry at Little Bay port in the north.

SailClear yacht entry software has been implemented by Montserrat Customs and Immigration and on-line entry and departure clearance can now be done electronically. WiFi is also available at the yacht club for visiting yachts.

The yacht club is situated four miles as the crow flies from the Soufriere volcano, which has now become the biggest tourist attraction on the island. Guided tours from Isles Bay into the exclusion zone and to the Montserrat Volcano Observatory can be organized for visitors.

The other tourist attraction that draws a lot of visitors is the St Patrick's Day week of celebrations. Originally settled by indentured Irish labourers, Montserrat is the only country besides Ireland to mark St. Patrick's Day with a national holiday. A week of festivities around March 17th includes a travelling Dublin celtidh band, the Masquerade dancers with fife and drum, and a recent innovation: the African music day when bands from Africa add spice to the blarney.

Arrow, Montserrat's most famous musical son, has now departed this world but his Soca legacy lives on and the island that hosted the rock world's biggest stars at Air Studios is now back in business. The Rock has been "Hot, Hot, Hot" for too long — but now we're cool!

To see a map of the exclusion zone and current volcano hazard levels visit <http://www.mvo.ms>.

For more information about the Montserrat Yacht Club contact Hank at hankhenry@me.com.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Trinidad: Best of Both Worlds

Stacey Honoré reports: Trinidad & Tobago's Yachting Industry is concentrated in the Chaguaramas Bay area, which contains many marinas and a plethora of providers of first-class repair and maintenance services at competitive prices. These advantages, complemented with a modern business environment, a unique cultural diversity and the fact that T&T is geographically located below the hurricane belt, make it an ideal location for many cruisers who sail to the Caribbean.



The yachting hub in T&T is a safe haven and an enjoyable place for visitors. In a single mile of protected coastline, a host of yachting services has evolved over the past few years that now make this area the most inclusive and diverse cluster in the entire Caribbean. Five separate boatyards provide travel hoists ranging from 50 to 200 tons in capacity, with storage facilities for well over 600 boats on land and about 200 boats on docks and on moorings.

The range of yachting services includes painting and refinishing, stainless and aluminium fabrication, fibreglass work, woodwork, electronics and electrical work, osmosis repairs, sail making, rigging, upholstery and canvas work, propeller repairs, engine repairs, other mechanical work and watermaker construction — all executed by competent professionals in the industry.

Moreover, visitors to T&T can experience activities such as world-class diving and exciting game fishing, kiteboarding and cruising, mainly in the clean clear waters and serenity of Tobago. While in Trinidad, cruisers can enjoy fine dining and multi-ethnic cuisine, lively entertainment, adventurous eco-tours, multi-cultural festivals and events and visits to multiple historical sites.

A public-private partnership model is used to facilitate further developments in the industry to ensure maximum cruiser satisfaction. Two organizations, one private sector (Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago) and the other public sector (Yachting Steering Committee) work closely together to provide the regulatory and institutional framework that advances Trinidad & Tobago's position as the most idyllic location for cruisers in the Southern Caribbean.

The twin-island state of Trinidad & Tobago offers premier yacht repair and maintenance services, a safe haven for boats and yachts and natural beauty coupled with the warmth of a multicultural society. You are invited to come and experience the best of both worlds!

For more information see ad on page 47.

St. Maarten Sails Joins Ullman Sails

St. Maarten Sails is pleased to announce it will now be operating as Ullman Sails St. Maarten. Owner Rob Gilders opted to join the Ullman Sails group earlier this year, retaining his highly successful association with its South African manufacturer, Jan Reuvers at Ullman Sails South Africa (formerly Jannie Reuvers Sails).

Rob's strong ties and the longstanding relationship with his main supplier made the



switch to Ullman Sails an easy decision. "We are greatly looking forward to a highly successful association with Ullman Sails and continuing to offer the products and services in tune with the special requirements of the Caribbean."

Jan, who joined forces with the Ullman Sails group in 2013, has established an excellent reputation throughout the Caribbean for producing high-end quality sails, ideally suited to our Caribbean conditions at affordable prices.

Ullman Sails St. Maarten and St. Maarten Sails & Canvas is a full-service sail loft based in Cole Bay Lagoon that provides a full range of new sails and canvas for sailors, including comprehensive sail maintenance and repairs. St. Maarten Sails is one of the oldest sailmakers in the Caribbean — Rob has been sailmaking on St. Maarten since 1979.

Contact Rob and his team to find out how Ullman Sails St. Maarten can help you enjoy more time on the water: E-mail rob@ullmansails.com or phone (721) 544-5231. For more information see ad on this page.

—Continued on next page



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ORM Offshore Risk Management

—Continued from previous page

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It's a valuable addition to the existing four-stroke range and now also available at Budget Marine, the official dealer for Tohatsu Outboards in the Caribbean.

For more information on Budget Marine see ad on page 2.

Nauti Solutions Grenada Delivers!

Danny Gray reports: Nauti Solutions, your one-stop service, welding and fabrication shop in Grenada, also offers yacht delivery service for short and long distances. If you get caught out, have to go home for some reason, and need to move your boat — call us.

We can also look after your boat long and short term, we have storage sheds for all your bits and pieces. We are on Lagoon Road just across the water and the road from Port Louis Marina.

Look forward to see you all in Grenada soon. There is a good net at 0730, six days a week, and a Grenada Cruisers Facebook page with lots of info. Many things are happening in Grenada coming up to Christmas time. Have a great season and fair winds!

For more information see ad in Market Place section, pages 42 through 44.

More Facilities at Power Boats, Trinidad

Following the construction of a large shower and toilet block last year, Power Boats in Trinidad recently completed another toilet and shower block to better serve their yachting customers while their boats are on land.

The new block, comprising two toilets and two showers (both with hot water) plus seven small storeroom/lockers is located at the northern section of the boatyard. The addition of this block means that yachting visitors are now served with the convenience of five "satellite" clean toilet and shower buildings, so no one has to walk far to use one of the facilities regardless of their boat's location.

Don Stollmeyer, Power Boats' CEO remarked, "We don't fool around when we say we are serious about service. In this regard clean showers and toilets are high on our priority list." Laughing, he added, "Reports are, the new toilets have been well tested and they are working fine!"

For more information on Power Boats visit www.powerboats.co.tt.

Pacific Odyssey to Depart from Martinique

Doina Cornell reports: The Pacific Odyssey is a new annual rally organized by Cornell Sailing Events, for sailors bound for the South Seas. We will have two starts, from Key West, Florida on January 10th, 2015, and from Martinique on January 18th. Yachts will sail to the San Blas, through the Panama Canal to the Galapagos and on to finish in the Marquesas. Fees include docking along the route as well as fees for the Canal and the Galapagos.

This year Pacific Odyssey yachts will be part of the Blue Planet Odyssey round-the-world event, which aims to highlight climate change by visiting those parts of the world most affected, and all yachts taking part will have the opportunity to join our Odyssey science, education and community programs.

CHRIS DOYLE



The Pacific Odyssey 2015's Martinique start will leave from Port Le Marin, chosen for its excellent facilities for cruising sailors. Port Le Marin is one of the largest marinas in the Caribbean, with 750 pontoon berths and 100 moorings. The town of Marin has earned Blue Flag status for its efforts in maintaining high water quality; environmental education and information; environmental management; safety and services.

Le Marin also has a large boatyard, Carenanilles, with space for around 200 boats and facilities for the lifting of larger vessels (55-ton travelift, 18-metre/20-ton catamaran launching trolley). As well as the haulout facilities, a wide range of marine and repair services is based in or around the port.

Sailing conditions in January are usually excellent, with the tradewinds being consistent and occasionally strong. This should ensure a fast and exhilarating passage to San Blas.

For more information visit <http://cornellsailing.com/sail-the-odyssey/pacific-odyssey>.

New US Waters Navigation Rules Handbook

Heads up, USVI and Puerto Rico! A new book of navigation rules for US waters now supersedes commandant instruction M16672.2D.

The Official USCG Navigation Rules book is now called *Navigation Rules & Regulations Handbook*. It contains international and inland rules of the road and their respective annexes, bridge-to-bridge radiotelephone regulations, vessel traffic management regulations, and other pertinent regulations for US waterway users.

33 CFR 83.01(g) requires: "The operator of each self-propelled vessel 12 meters or more in length shall carry, on board and maintain for ready reference, a copy of these Rules."

This book is available from Paradise Cay Publications, www.parcay.com.

St. Vincent's Blue Lagoon Marina Opening Soon

The team at Blue Lagoon hopes to target those winter season travelers for the opening and launching of the hotel and marina by December 2014.

—Continued on next page

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These travelers would be the first to stay in their 19 spacious, ocean-view guest rooms equipped as an ideal and comfortable living space. The team welcomes arriving guests with a Vincy-style rum punch.

Safe to say this is the only hotel-and-marina complex on the beautiful island of St. Vincent. It is located in Ratho Mill on the south end of St. Vincent, which is nine miles from Bequia. The compound, formerly known as CSY, has been acquired by New Zealander Kelly Glass.

Over the past year the property has been undergoing major refurbishments to not only the rooms and hotel itself but to the docks and the entire property's surroundings. One of the major changes is that Blue Lagoon has now been declared a brand new port of entry and will be equipped with a fully functioning Customs and Immigration office, which is set to open at the end of this month.



On site the amenities include:
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The Blue Lagoon Team is a very able and functioning one with the ability to provide for all future customers needs.

For more information visit our website <http://bluelagoonsvg.com> and follow us on Twitter: @BlueLagoonSVG. See ad on page 21.



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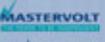
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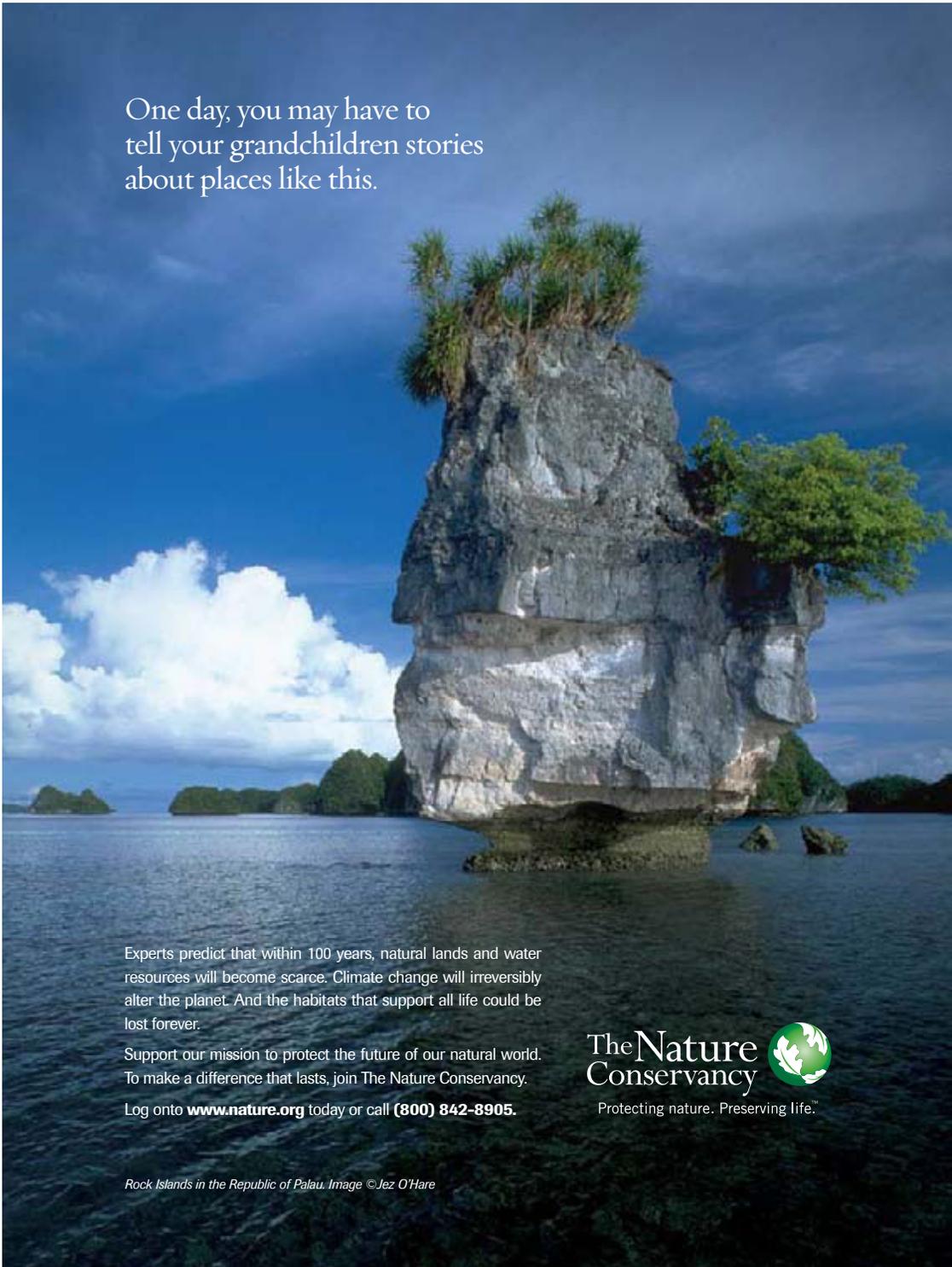


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Rock Islands in the Republic of Palau. Image ©Jez O'Hare

REGATTA NEWS

Carriacou Sailor at US Leukemia Cup

Carriacou sailor Cuthbert Snagg competed in the 21st annual Leukemia Cup Regatta, held in Alexandria, Virginia in September. The event helped raise US\$172,000 for blood cancer research. Over 60 boats raced, each raising money to support the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Over US\$3.2 million has been raised since the event was founded 21 years ago.

This is especially important for safety.

- Racing for a cause, not just for trophies or personal gain, engages the entire community and reaches well beyond the sailing community.
- We should all aspire to having No Shouting Boats. It makes a big difference in the morale of the crew and tactical maneuvering.
- Improving the regattas would attract the participation of boaters and racers from the region and beyond, a huge opportunity for tourism in Grenada.
- No matter what — have fun!

For more information on the Leukemia Cup regatta visit www.leukemicup.org.

ON THE HORIZON...

Route du Rhum Bound for Guadeloupe

The Route du Rhum transatlantic single-handed yacht race takes place every four years in

November, sailing between St. Malo, France and Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe.

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, a record number of 91 boats have entered the tenth edition of this event, to race in five classes. Entries include a 40-metre multihull, and skippers range from 19-year-old Paul Hignard to 75-year-old sailing legend Sir Robin Knox-Johnston. The race departs St. Malo on November 2nd. The current course record, set by Frenchman Lionel Lemonchois in 2006, is 7 days 17 hours and 19 minutes.

For more information visit www.routedurhum.com.

St. Lucia's Atlantic Rally for Cruisers Flotilla

Alana Mathurin reports: St. Lucia's ARC Flotilla 2014 will take place on November 23rd starting at 1:00pm, parading from Castries Harbour to Rodney Bay Marina to celebrate the official start of the 29th edition of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) from Las Palmas, Gran Canaria to St. Lucia. All water craft are welcome: big yachts, small yachts, pleasure boats, Hobie cats, Lasers, Fireballs, fishing boats and more — we motor, sail, windsurf and kitesurf!

The flotilla is organized by the St. Lucia Tourist Board, St. Lucia Yacht Club, and IGY Rodney Bay Marina in cooperation with the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers. Last year the ARC Flotilla attracted 62 entries and more than 300 participants! Registration is free for non-branded boats. After-party takes place at IGY Rodney Bay Marina where there will be live entertainment and lots to eat and drink.

For more information contact arcflotillastlucia@mail.com.

Mango Bowl Welcomes Massey United Insurance as Gold Sponsor

Dee Lundy-Charles reports: As St. Lucia Yacht Club counts down to its third Mango Bowl Regatta (MBR), an impressive lineup of sponsors have come onboard to support the island's only international regatta, which this year takes place in Rodney Bay from November 28th to 30th.

—Continued on next page



JAMES LITTLE

2014 Leukemia Cup participants and fundraisers, Team *Paradiso*: (left to right) John Leary, Melody Robinson, David Robinson, Judy Diamond, Cuthbert Snagg and Jim Little

The sailors and volunteers at the regatta each had a personal connection to or personal involvement with blood cancer. Cuthbert crewed on David Robinson's 30-foot *Paradiso*, along with Judy Diamond, Jim Little and John Leary. David was diagnosed in 2010 with a rare form of lymphoma for which there is no known cure.

Cuthbert, a trustee with the Carriacou & Petite Martinique Cancer Society, says, "I was racing for more than experience. I was racing for four people in my life who were personally affected by cancer: Alan Stracke, Joe Palmer, Margaret Brooks and my wife, Margaret. Now that I know more about Captain David's struggle with lymphoma I should say that I was racing for him as well... Different water in a different place, but I took Carriacou with me throughout the day." *Paradiso* placed second in her class.

"On my way back to Richmond I had a couple of hours to think about our regattas back home in Carriacou. The Leukemia Cup Regatta was definitely something to learn from," Cuthbert adds, suggesting the following:

- Radios on our boats would create more order and better communication to and from the stake boat, and between racing boats, than our loudspeakers.



Go, go, go at St. Lucia's Mango Bowl!

www.grenadasailingweek.com

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—Continued from previous page

For 2014, United Insurance will head the roster as Gold Sponsor in a collaboration that continues from 2013. The insurance company has a strong presence in supporting youth and sports activities, but competitive sailing is a relatively new inclusion to their corporate responsibility strategy in St. Lucia. Their participation as the key sponsor this year comes at a time when the private sector on the island has tightened its purse strings for sponsorship across the board, so the MBR organisers are particularly delighted at the confidence United Insurance is showing in the event.

Silver sponsors for this year's Mango Bowl include newcomers to the island's marine tourism sector, Dive St. Lucia.

In an ongoing partnership with St. Lucia Yacht Club, Island Global Yachting's IGY Rodney Bay Marina continues as Silver Sponsor, and will be the venue for the Day 1 Racing Results. The marina company has been committed to supporting and sponsoring youth sailing at SLYC for the past five years, and continues to help disadvantaged children from the local community to experience the joys and career opportunities of the sport.

Blue Waters, St. Lucia's favourite bottled water brand, will also continue in their support, as they have since its inception in 2012. As Silver Sponsor, their contribution to Mango Bowl is practical as well as financial, and Blue Waters will once again include keeping the crews well hydrated by providing a case of water for every boat registered.

Bronze Sponsors for this year will once again include Island Water World, the marine store that has served Caribbean sailors and water sports enthusiasts for more than 40 years in the region.

Five classes of vessels will participate in the racing off Reduit Beach in Rodney Bay on November 29th and 30th, and teams are already signed up from Martinique, Barbados, Grenada, St. Maarten, England and of course, St. Lucia. Two on-the-water judges have been added to the team of race officials led by James Benoit from Grenada.

The social side of the weekend will include the usual Free Spectator Boat on both days, hosted once again this year on the catamaran *Endless Summer*. On Saturday night after the Day 1 results, St Lucia Yacht Club will be throwing a massive beach party with live music and barbecue, aided and abetted by the team from restaurant and nightclub venue Delirius,

who have been managing the SLYC Clubhouse bar and restaurant since September.

For more information see ad on page 11.

Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series 2015

Planning next racing season's calendar? Sign up now for the Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series 2015, January 16th through 24th!

This event was re-launched in 2014 with a new race format and plenty of record-breaking opportunities. It proved such a success that an even bigger entry is expected in 2015.

Organized by the Barbados Cruising Club in association with the Barbados Tourism Authority and Mount Gay, the Series encompasses the established Mount Gay Round Barbados Race plus a series of coastal races, and a final 300-mile sprint to Antigua to tie up with the Superyacht Challenge.

The Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series attracts race teams keen to use the event as a warm-up for the rest of the Caribbean season. One of the biggest draws is the opportunity to break records.

—Continued on next page



PETER MARSHALL



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The headline event is the 60-nautical-mile Mount Gay Round Barbados Race on January 21st, in which teams race to set Round Barbados records. There are currently 14 record categories, all of which offer the skipper's weight in Mount Gay Extra Old Rum if broken.

Raphaël Grisoni and his Mount Gay team aboard the British VO70 *Monster Project* are the current outright monohull round Barbados record holders with a time of 4 hours 42 minutes 28 seconds. Andy Budgen, owner of the charter yacht *Monster Project* says he will be back in 2015 to compete in the 89th edition of the race.

Budgen commented: "This event is arguably the best of the circuit not just because of the fantastic racing and legendary parties, but also logistically. Most of the event is run from one location, which means you don't need to have to travel miles round the island if you don't want to. Even if we don't manage to pick up a charter, we'll be back in January to defend our title for sure."

Other teams already lined up for the 2015 event include two VO60s, *Cuba Libre* and *Spirit of Adventure*; two TP52s, *BOSS* and *Baleria*; the Farr 65 *Spirit of Juno*; and Ralph Johnson's Beneteau 53 *Rapajam* — overall winner of Racing Class 2014.

For teams looking for one-design racing, the Series offers the super-competitive local J/24 fleet. This sort of short-format regatta is ideal for this exciting class. The 2014 event attracted a fleet of ten boats, and although there are several local boats available for charter, the organizers are keen to enhance the number of entries by offering a special shipping package deal for teams from the UK.

Interest is building among other smaller classes, multi-hulls and windsurfers, too. Charles Hunt, who set a new windsurfer record in 2014 with a time of 7 hours, 59 minutes 10 seconds, will be joined by at least one other: Fabi Cornic.

As expected at the home of Mount Gay Rum, fine Caribbean hospitality will be in full flow throughout the week with a party every night, including the legendary Mount Gay Red Cap party. Following the success of the lay-day activities in 2014, the organizers have lined up another Barbados Polo Club exhibition match, and a visit to Mount Gay Distilleries.

For more information see ad on this page.

Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week

Louay Habib reports: As autumn falls across the Northern Hemisphere, an estimated 2,000 yachts head

for the Caribbean. There are a number of Caribbean regattas throughout the season and one of the growing regattas is Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week.

Yacht racing in Grenada dates back to the 1950s but Grenada Sailing Week was only established in 2012 and has been growing in popularity ever since. Thirty-six yachts entered last year, from France, Australia, Canada, Austria, Great Britain, Spain and the USA, as well as from a number of Caribbean islands.

The regatta committee has put great effort into organizing well-managed racing for a variety of sailors. The Fun Fleet is ideal for crews that don't want to take racing too seriously. Cruising and Racing Class

yachts can have several races per day, and Classics and traditional Carriacou Sloops make up an eclectic mix, giving the regatta a flavour as spicy as Grenada. Many of the local boats welcome sailors on board.

IWW Grenada Sailing Week 2015 — January 29th through February 3rd — is based at two venues: Camper & Nicholson's Port Louis Marina and Prickly Bay Marina. For people staying ashore logistics are easy; the two marinas are just a few miles apart.

One of the world's most prestigious yachting businesses, C&N Marinas opened Port Louis in 2007, transforming Grenada's yachting amenities. The heart of the luxury marina is 170 berths with six-metre draught suitable for superyachts.

—Continued on page 45



DEREK PICKELL



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THREE REASONS WHY NOT TO SAIL TO BARBUDA

by Mira Nencheva

BIG or small, noisy or quiet, some very popular and easygoing, others much more unknown and relaxed, each of the Caribbean islands has its own unique character, like schoolchildren. Barbuda is one of those that remain in the corner almost unnoticed, small, shy, and unpopular. Only 25 nautical miles north of Antigua, yet cruisers rarely venture this way. And why bother? Barbuda is:

- 1) dangerous for navigation,
- 2) away from the main Caribbean Cruising Highway,
- 3) flat, and has very few weather-protected bays.

These are the three main reasons why boaters dread and avoid Barbuda.

In the times of the sextant, Barbuda, lurking low beneath the horizon with claws of rock and jaws of coral ready to snatch another careless vessel, was feared as one

only a couple of relatively protected bays, just doesn't make sense.

Or does it? We decide to check it out for ourselves. Sailing north to Barbuda on a beam reach from Deep Bay, Antigua in moderate Trades aboard our 38-foot cat is a sheer pleasure. We get there in less than five hours and we even catch a small tuna on the way. It's only 80 feet or less under the keels the entire time. Usually in the Caribbean when we sail from one island to another, we can see our destination from many miles away but Barbuda's shores remain hidden until we are but five to six miles from them. We carefully approach the southwest corner of the island, sneak in between the breakers and the shoals, and keep sailing north along the west coast, very close to shore, between the beach and the reefs, in 12 to 14 feet of water.

We drop anchor in front of the longest, most beautiful beach in waters as blue and transparent as the waters in the Bahamas. There are no other boats around. Not a single soul for miles and miles. In east winds, the sea on this side of the island is



Lighthouse Bay Resort sits in solitary splendor on 'the longest, most beautiful beach'

of the biggest perils to navigation in the West Indies. Hundreds of boats lost in the blackness of night found their final resting place near the reefs around Barbuda. And even those sailing in broad daylight wouldn't see the island, its highest point a mere 125 feet above the sea, until they reached the shoals. Today, in the times of the GPS, many unfamiliar with the area still prefer not to risk sailing there.

Moreover, Barbuda is "off road". To sail to Barbuda means to take the exit from the main highway and head in the wrong direction. Coming from St. Maarten going south to Grenada, the reasonable cruiser stops in Antigua, not Barbuda. In Antigua, twice the size of Barbuda, the cruiser can chose from myriad big and small sheltered anchorages and popular hurricane holes, with all sorts of facilities. Next logical stop would be Guadeloupe, to the south. Barbuda, away from the main road and with

still, like a lake. There are no swells, and the waves that reach the shore are tiny and gentle.

On the beach, the sand is like white powder peppered with pink miniature sea-shells giving it its unusual pink hues specific and unique to this place. There are no footsteps for 12 miles, only vines with purple flowers, driftwood sculptures, and sea turtle tracks.

There are no buildings on shore either except for a small hotel, yellow with a red roof. Lighthouse Bay is a luxurious all-inclusive boutique resort with thousand-dollar suites, where wealthy visitors arrive by helicopter. But at this time of the year there are no guests, not even staff. We are alone.

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THREE REASONS WHY NOT TO SAIL TO BARBUDA



Ivo and Maya journey along the beach to the frigatebird colony. Ivo is the engine (one horsepower); Maya holds the sail on a beam reach

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Clockwise from above:
A hawksbill turtle rushing back to the sea after a nesting attempt; Mira, dancing with the bonfire at sunset; watching a frigatebird watching us



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It's the first full moon of August tonight. This time of the year, this time of the month, sea turtles are laying eggs.

In the evening, as we go on the beach for a walk, we spot a black shadow in the water slowly approaching land. A hawksbill turtle pops her head above the water and looks around before emerging, her wet dark shell shining in the silver moonlight. We freeze and watch in awe from a distance as the big creature makes her way up, painfully crawling in the sand. Up on the sandbank



near a bush she stops for a while. Did she see us? Did we spook her? Or she simply didn't like the spot and started heading back to sea? I can't resist and snap a picture before she enters the water and disappears in the ocean even though I know it is not a good idea to flash the poor creatures in the dark. Forgive me, mama turtle. Hope you found the perfect spot to lay your eggs. May all your hundred babies hatch healthy, reach the sea safely and live to be a thousand years old.

The next day we jump in the kayak, all three of us, and start paddling in the shallows parallel to the shore for about a mile and a half to the north end of the beach. We reach a spot where there is a strange art-like installation: a piece of driftwood adorned with conchs and all sorts of plastic garbage the sea has spewed ashore. It is the marker indicating a cut

across to the mangrove maze.

The narrow 12-mile, pink-sand strip of a beach on the west lee side of Barbuda is separated from the island's mainland and biggest village by a shallow swampy area, Codrington Lagoon. The water inside the lagoon is dark-colored thanks to the mangroves and with high salinity. The only way to access our pink beach from the mainland is by small boat, and it is not a short ride. That is why there is no one here and the place remains secluded.

The remote mangroves on the northwest side of

Barbuda, where humans rarely venture, provide habitat for the largest Magnificent Frigatebird breeding colony in the Caribbean, one of the biggest frigatebird sanctuaries in the world. With about 1,700 nests, the site has been declared a national park.

The Magnificent Frigatebird, also known as man o'war bird, is a long-winged, fork-tailed black bird of the tropical seas. An agile, silent flier he snatches fish off the surface of the ocean and pirates food from other birds. Being unable to take off from the water, frigatebirds never land on the sea and thus take their food in flight. They spend days and nights on the wing, with an average ground speed of just over six miles per hour, covering up to 139 miles before landing.

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To visit the frigatebird sanctuary in Barbuda you can hire a local guide from Codrington who will take you there by a small motorboat. Or, if you have time and muscle, you can take your kayak along the beach, all the way to the north corner until you reach the driftwood decorated with ocean garbage, drag it across to the mangrove lagoon and paddle inside the bird sanctuary, exploring noiselessly its many narrow shallow channels. Thus, you will be able to spend as much time in the colony as you wish, for free, like we did.



CHRIS DOYLE

Above: The anchorage at Low Bay, Codrington Lagoon is just on the other side of the beach

Right: S/V Fata Morgana at anchor in 'absolute tranquility'

We spent over an hour paddling in the mangrove maze surrounded by hundreds of nesting frigates, their white heads with long beaks popping up from the bushes like curious blossoms, or hovering above us like dark kites watching us suspiciously as we were watching them with amazement, clacking and chattering, telling us something important but, alas, incomprehensible to us.

By early afternoon we are back on the boat. After splashing in the warm crystal-blue waters, a math lesson, and some rest, we decide to make a fire on the beach around sunset. Barbuda's deserted beaches rich with driftwood are perfect for full-moon-celebration fires. We love beach fires and fires in general. We think they are fascinating and have their own short lives, and it is always a great excitement building them, lighting them and watching them burn.

As we are eating fire-roasted potatoes and sipping white wine, the full moon watching over us, turtles crawling out of the sea in the darkness, black birds sleeping in the branches of the mangrove world, we are counting the reasons why sailing to Barbuda is in fact a good idea.

1) True, the reefs are dangerous for navigation, but with an adequate chart, a GPS, a depth finder, and the good old eyeball technique, you will be fine! Once anchored, the reefs teeming with fish, with their many wrecks, maybe even treasure chests waiting to be found, are safe and beautiful to explore underwater. You may find the

best diving and snorkeling spots around Barbuda.

2) True, the island is away from the main Caribbean Cruising Highway (as I call it), but it only means that there are no crowded anchorages and hordes of noisy tourists. Instead there are secluded, pristine, unspoiled beaches, pink on top of that! The people of Barbuda like their island to remain unpopular. They are not interested much in tourist development, big hotels, and McDonalds. They are more interested in peace and tranquility, tradition, and clean water and land.

3) True, there are not many weather-protected bays around Barbuda, except two on the south side, but in calm weather and prevailing tradewinds you can anchor safely and comfortably anywhere on the west side between the beach and the reefs, in excellent holding. Only in wintertime when a northerly descends, are you better off some other place.

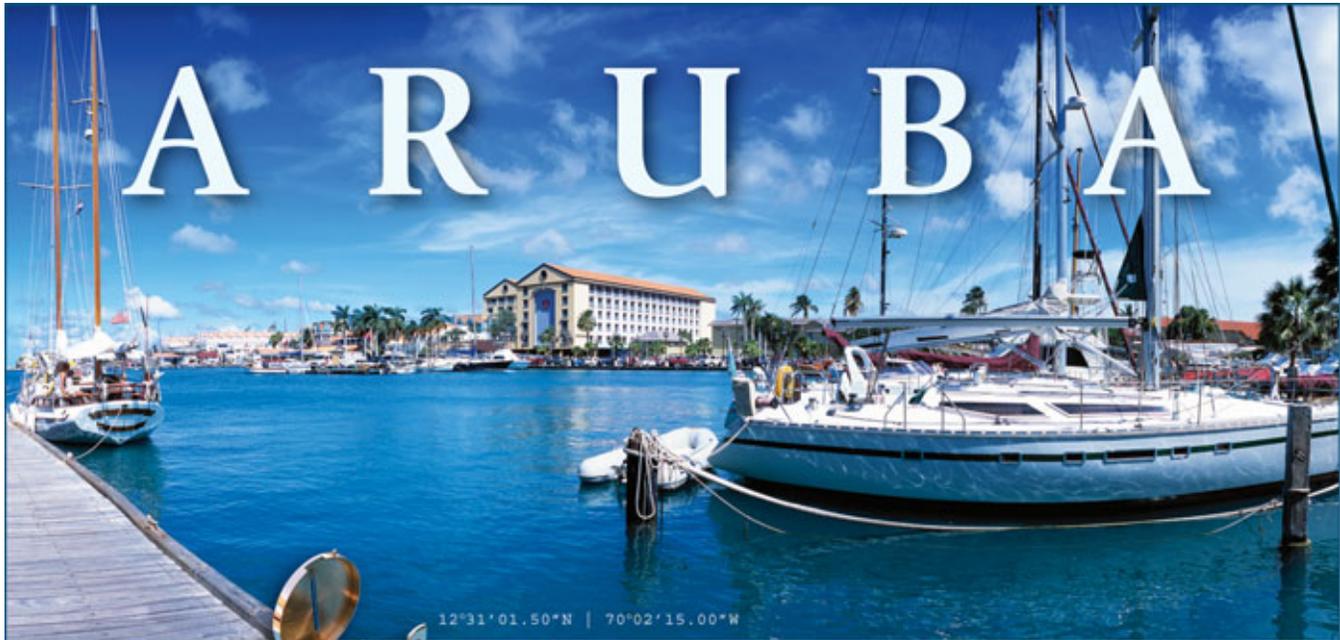


MIRA NENCHEVA

And if you want to explore even more of the island, where horses and donkeys roam free, take your dinghy or the water taxi across the lagoon to Codrington. There are beautiful cliffs and caves at the edge of the highlands and you can check out the ruins of Codrington Estate, the Darby Sink Hole, or one of the few restaurants where you can enjoy traditional local dishes including the best charcoal-grilled lobster in the region (and most probably in the world).

Turquoise waters, coral reefs, sea turtles, pink beaches, absolute tranquility and seclusion, a mangrove maze, nesting frigatebirds, driftwood sculptures, beach fires, caves, cliffs, a small quiet village, authenticity, good food, unforgettable sunsets, unforgettable moonrises: how many more reasons do you need to sail to Barbuda?

Visit Mira's blog at www.thelifenomadtik.com.



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Caribbean Eco-News

USVI Commits to Coastal Preservation

As reported at www.caribjournal.com, the United States Virgin Islands has endorsed the Caribbean Challenge Initiative. The CCI, launched in 2008 with support from the Nature Conservancy, aims to promote greater regional leadership in protecting the Caribbean's coastlines and harbors. The endorsement means the USVI has committed to conserving at least 20 percent of marine and coastal environments as national marine protected systems by 2020.

A number of Caribbean countries and territories have already signed on to the initiative, including Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, the British Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

"The United States Virgin Islands welcomes the opportunity to collaborate on initiatives which will safeguard the Caribbean region's marine and coastal environment for the betterment of all," said Karl Knight, director of the Virgin Islands Energy Office, who will be the territory's lead for the initiative.

Grenadines Dive Certifies Mayreau Youths

Rachael Smith reports: This summer, Grenadines Dive offered an introduction to SCUBA diving workshop to 23 young men and women from the island of Mayreau. Thanks to The United Nations' Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Program and the work of Mayreau Regatta and Sporting Committee, ten of the participants in the workshop moved on to complete an Open Water SCUBA diving certification course.



The Open Water Diver course teaches the foundational knowledge and skills they need to dive with a buddy without supervision by a dive professional. This course includes knowledge development and theory, confined water training, open water training, and open water dives. They received thorough practical training and open water experience. The youths of Mayreau participating in the Open Water training were Andre Wilson, Philman Ollivierre, Shandy John, Akeem Alexander, Janelle Alexander, Tarik Alexander, Samuel Cupid, Tevin Cupid, Emmanuel Forde, and Keon Forde.

In addition to the dive training course the group went on a cleanup dive in the nearby Tobago Cays Marine Park, finding less trash underwater in this area than expected. Also in the Cays, the students planted a total of 22 almond and palm trees on the island of Baradol. We also did a trash clean up on the beaches of Mayreau, collecting 17 bags of garbage, which were taken back to Union Island to be properly disposed of.

Glenroy Adams, owner of Grenadines Dive, stresses that the future condition of the environment is in the hands of today's youth. The health of the local environment, particularly the coral reefs, is crucial to the future of the tourism industry and of the country. We hope that cultivating a love of diving also builds in these youths a sense of environmental responsibility and inspires them to pursue further dive training as well as environmental education.

This course is part of a two-year project that the Mayreau Regatta and Sporting Committee has undertaken in an effort to control the invasive lionfish population. These divers will be able to make their dives count by capturing lionfish in the cays and the areas around Mayreau.

The course culminated in an awards ceremony. Southern Grenadines Parliamentary Representative the Honourable Terrence Ollivierre spoke about the significance of diver training for the future of Mayreau and the responsibility the youth have to continue their education and participation in environmental and community efforts. Every student who took part in the introduction to SCUBA diving workshop received an award and the ten divers who went on to complete the Open Water course were presented with their official PADI or NAUI certification cards.

More Blue Flags for St. Maarten

Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) is continuing to work with the tourism industry of St. Maarten to provide the international Blue Flag Beach and Marina eco-label to sites that meet strict environmental and safety criteria. As the Blue Flag National Operator, EPIC submitted an application for an additional site this year. With support from the St. Maarten Hospitality and Trade Association, EPIC is also working with pilot sites wishing to join the eco-label Green Key, which is awarded to tourism facilities such as hotels. These eco-labels are a win-win, providing a marketing opportunity for businesses while also helping to protect natural resources.

The St. Maarten Hospitality & Trade Association (SHTA), the largest business representative on the island, recently donated US\$2,000 from its Dollar-A-Day fund to Environmental Protection in the Caribbean - Sint Maarten to assist with the management of the Blue Flag and in particular the Green Key eco-labels which the Foundation operates locally.

The beach at Divi Little Bay Beach Resort and the yacht club at Isle de Sol obtained Blue Flag status almost three years ago and the beach at Oyster Bay Beach Resort is working towards obtaining certification.

For more information visit www.facebook.com/epicislands.

Carriacou Joins International Coastal Cleanup

The International Coastal Cleanup day is a worldwide initiative. Thousands of people all over the planet contribute to cleaning our beaches. This year Lumbadive of Carriacou were asked by the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs to do their annual International Coastal Cleanup Day activity in the boatbuilding village of Windward. More than 50 people showed up on September 24th; the majority were youths from many villages. They spent all morn-

ing collecting trash from Sundance Bar to the fish market.

Sponsors were very responsive this year, as usual. More than 40 businesses contributed items including water, gloves, fruits, bags and gifts for the participants. After hard work everyone returned to Sundance Bar for a snack and to receive a Project Aware Certificate of Recognition.



The following Monday, wardens from the Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area joined the Lumbadive team at Harvey Vale jetty for an underwater cleanup. According to one warden, a month could be spent cleaning under the jetty! More than one ton of rubbish was collected, including plastic bottles, tires, caps, bags, beer bottles, plastic plates and styrofoam, utensils, a fan, a bed, and food containers. Thanks go to Kingman, who voluntarily provided transportation for trash, and Linky, who transported people from other villages.

Diane Martino, owner of Lumbadive, says, "Human activities are the biggest threat for our environment. The beach cleanup is one effort to give back what was taken from Mother Nature." See you all at Paradise Beach on September 19th, 2015!

Saba Limits Conch Catch

The Caribbean Queen Conch is an important part of Caribbean food culture, found on many menus and considered a delicacy. However, because of overfishing, conch has been placed on the endangered species list, which is why a regulation was enacted on Saba to limit the amount of conch caught to 20 per fisher, per year. Internationally the conch trade is regulated by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), to which the Netherlands and the territory of Saba are signatories, restricting the import and export of conch.

The Saba Bank Management Unit, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, is conducting research into the conch population on the Saba Bank, utilizing specialized underwater video rigs and diver surveys. Conch of different sizes are collected to retrieve gonad and tissue samples for lab analysis. These samples will be used to help determine when conch are mature and able to reproduce, which allows us to better understand conch life cycles and implement protection measures to allow sustainable harvesting in the future.

The Saba Conservation Foundation (SCF) is a non-governmental organization established in 1987 with a mission to preserve and manage Saba's natural and cultural heritage. Based in Fort Bay and at the Trail Shop in Windwardside, SCF are here to provide you with the necessary information to make your visit a truly fulfilling and unforgettable experience. SCF is committed to the belief that a stronger island economy will result from the sustainable use of Saba's rich and virtually unspoiled resources.

For more information www.sabapark.org.

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Sea Turtle Surveyors Taught in Antigua

As reported at www.caribbean-times.com, after a week on the water and with the expert assistance of two marine biologists of Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire, ten volunteers have now been trained in methods for surveying turtle populations in their marine habitats around Antigua & Barbuda. The first survey of sea turtles within the Cades Bay Marine Reserve on the southwest coast of Antigua was also conducted. The effort was a collaboration of the Antigua Sea Turtle Project (ASTP) of the Environmental



Awareness Group and the Jumby Bay Hawksbill Project, who have been working to expand their research program from studying turtles on nesting beaches on Antigua and Long Island, to include studies of turtles in key marine habitats. Thanks to the Sandals Foundation, the first steps have been made towards the development of an ongoing in-water monitoring program on Antigua's endangered sea turtles. The surveys identified a number of endangered green and hawksbill sea turtles at various life stages from juvenile to adult, using sea grass and coral reef habitats within the Cades Bay Marine Reserve. Turtle mating was also observed in the area.

The training course involved extensive practice in snorkel survey techniques, turtle spotting, capture, and recording of essential data on size, health, identification of individuals, and mapping locations of sea

turtle sightings and habitats. Turtles were tagged and safely released to the same area of initial capture. All work was done with the permission of the Fisheries Division of Antigua & Barbuda, and under strict adherence to best practices and protocols for the safety of the animals. The Coordinator of the ASTP, Mykl Clovis Fuller, noted that "in general handling of turtles is strictly prohibited, so all our researchers are trained in specific handling methods for the purpose of the study, and every effort is made to minimize stress to the animals and return them to the water as quickly as possible."

The public is encouraged to report sightings of nesting turtles, fresh turtle tracks, or hatchings on beaches around the island to the ASTP hotline at (268) 720-6955. For more information contact the Antigua Sea Turtle Project at abseaturtles@gmail.com.

Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire Report

Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) was founded in the early 1990s to protect the island's marine turtle populations. Their current research and monitoring efforts, which were standardized more than a decade ago, include monitoring important nesting beaches around Bonaire, conducting intensive in-water netting and snorkel surveys (capture-mark-recapture), and tracking post-breeding turtle migration using satellite telemetry. These techniques provide us with a better understanding of Bonaire sea turtles' breeding success, abundance, health, residency duration, habitat quality, growth rates, migratory paths, distant feeding grounds, and threats.

The 2013 STCB Research & Monitoring Report is now online. Download the full report at www.bonaireturtles.org/explore/publications/files/STCB%202013%20Annual%20Report.pdf.

Coral Reef Health Measured Across the Grenadines

Park rangers and wardens from Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines have taken part in joint training on monitoring coral reef health. A team of rangers and wardens then travelled to each other's parks to help complete underwater surveying work.



Organized by Sustainable Grenadines Inc., this was the first Grenadines-wide fieldwork expedition by and for members of the Grenadines Network of Marine Protected Areas. Six rangers and wardens representing the six marine protected areas took part in the expedition, together with expert trainers.

"The participants spent the first four days in Grenada where they learned how to survey fish, corals and the sea bottom, using a well-recognized scientific method to gather information," explained Myles Phillips, of Sustainable Grenadines Inc. "Following the training, we established permanent monitoring sites and did surveys in the six member marine protected areas, from land and over the course of a five-day sailing expedition."

The work covered Grenada's Moliniere-Beausejour Marine Protected Area, Woburn/Clarke's Court Marine Protected Area, and Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area, and in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Tobago Cays Marine Park, Mustique Marine Conservation Area and the South Coast Marine Conservation Area. Since 2011 these six sites have shared information and collaborated to promote the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources that are so important to local communities and to local livelihoods. Now the network is actively monitoring the health of coastal and marine resources in the Grenadines.

"This is a milestone achievement for the marine protected areas and can yield far-reaching benefits for the effective management of these national reserves," commented Orisha Joseph, Programme and Communications Officer of Sustainable Grenadines Inc. "It has equipped the members of the Grenadines Network of Marine Protected Areas with trained staff who will be able to recognize and track changes on the reefs as they occur."

The next stage of the work is to analyze the findings, compare them with past surveys and report back to coastal managers, local fishers and communities. Sustainable Grenadines Inc. will continue to work with the marine protected areas and local communities as they consider appropriate actions based on the findings of the research.

The research was made possible through sponsorship from the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to strengthen coral reef management practices on the Grenada Bank. Scientific expertise was provided by the Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment (AGRRA) Program, an international collaboration of scientists and managers aimed at determining the regional condition of reefs in the Western Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico.

For more information contact susgrenpm@vincysurf.com.

Seabird Tracking Map

Check out the Caribbean seabird tracking at <http://www.atlanticseabirds.org/mafr-maps>.



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Shortly a new cruising season will begin in the Caribbean. The single factor that will affect everything we plan and do is time.

Were this article only about the value of planning, it would be simple enough to lay out. However, the "color of time" is much more than just chronology — it is the elusive essence of time.

If we become overly focused on time, we become anxious; we move too fast and often overlook a great deal. If, on the other hand, we disregard time and choose to "take it as it comes" we can get stuck and grow barnacles on our anchor; many do! The normal approach is to try to find the balance between the two extremes. But what makes time so elusive is that, try as we may, there is no way to balance time; it has a life of its own.

Time does not run at a uniform speed. Did you ever notice that when the wind is just right and you are sailing along with everything going really well how quickly time passes? On the other hand, get caught in a "long winded" squall and an hour can seem like a day. Many say that time is all the same, but how long a minute is depends on which side of the bathroom door you're on! This changeable aspect of time plays on our minds as we value our pleasure and disdain what makes us uncomfortable.

We are creatures of habit and we tend to repeat, in automatic fashion, our way of organizing the "time of our lives".

Just when we think we have everything in order, we find ourselves out of time.

You Can't Replenish the 'Time Kitty'

It has taken most of us some degree of effort, time and money to arrive in the Caribbean. We owe it to ourselves to optimize what we have invested. We can account for the funds we have expended, but time is very different from money: *money can be spent and replaced, but time can only be spent.* People ask, "How will you spend your cruising season?" with the key word being *spend*.

For the upcoming cruising season, it is probably best to first review our finances and to then review the condition of our boat so that we know what she can do. How long can we afford to cruise? How far can our boat take us? It then serves us to review what we want out of our Caribbean cruise. How much time do we have, how much of the Caribbean do we want to experience, and how do we want to experience it?

The Caribbean Sea covers more than 1,000,000 square miles. In all the time that I have cruised it, nearly four decades, I have never felt like I have "seen it all". There is so much geography, so much culture, so many places and so much beauty. All of this interspersed with hurricane seasons, boat maintenance down time, "under the weather" time, and so forth.

Most of us have some sort of financial plan, but a time utilization plan is necessary if we want the most out of our investment. The type and distance of the cruising we have in mind will be crucial to our plans. A time utilization plan provides us with an overview of how we will invest our time to get the most out of our cruise — in all the very personal ways that such reflection allows for.

Be Clockwise Wise

Whether you arrive from North America or from Europe, logistically, the best way to cruise the entire Caribbean is clockwise. There are many good reasons for this.

The current runs east to west at varying velocities. Stronger currents can be found from Trinidad to Colombia than can be found from the Virgin Islands to Cuba.

In addition, fetch is a big factor and the fetch into what I refer to as "the hole" — that area between the east side of Aruba and Cape Gracias a Dios at the tip of Nicaragua — makes it nearly impossible to head eastward from that area. Wind that

CRUISING AND THE COLOR OF TIME



by Frank Virgintino

is unabated, higher than average seas and stronger than average adverse currents make heading east from "the hole" difficult and often impossible. Many have tried; most have given up.

Alternatively, heading eastward along the Greater Antilles is much easier. The Greater Antilles is framed by very high mountain ranges. The cooling air that slides down the mountainsides after the sun sets is called Katabatic Wind. Most often it stalls the tradewind and heading east can normally be accomplished at night on a port tack, in shore, driven by light offshore breezes.

Add to all of these factors the question of distance, and time becomes increasingly significant. Whereas in the Lesser Antilles one can usually see the next island, as we proceed westward that is often not the case. Additionally, the Lesser Antilles most often can be sailed on some type of reach, whereas heading west we vary from a broad reach to a run. (Autopilots do not like runs and most often we find ourselves tacking downwind, which requires more distance. Tacking downwind is more comfortable in every way and allows the autopilot to do its job. It is also safer, as "sailing by the lee" involves bigger risk, which risk grows even larger as the seas increase.)

Different 'Times' of the Year

The time of the year that we sail the "Trades" has a big impact on our cruise. The keywords here are *time of the year* — with the accent on time. Time of the year in the

Caribbean is a significant factor and one that is often overlooked when planning. Many believe there are two seasons, a cruising season and a hurricane season, but in fact, there are a number of seasons and they all have different wind and weather patterns that should weigh heavily on our selection of destinations and routes.

Shortly the Christmas Winds will be upon us; we think of them as reinforced tradewinds. However, during the time of Christmas Winds, there are times of great lapse when there is no wind at all. The tradewind is much more constant the older the tradewind season is. By the time we get to late spring, it normally blows 15 to 20 knots like clockwork every day.

Plan the Big Picture

Review a map of the Caribbean — the entire Caribbean — such as the one on page 3 of this issue of *Compass*. Then lay out what it is that you plan to accomplish over a given period of time. Having done that, do some research to see what different areas offer and what interest they have. You can then sketch out your cruise based on what areas of the Caribbean you wish to visit, and what your time frame is, expressed in broad terms that include such factors as seasonal changes.

From the plan, you can get an idea of how much time you want to invest in each area, allowing flexibility for spontaneity and enough time to achieve what it is you want to accomplish without ever being rushed — for being rushed while cruising is anathema to the very essence of the avocation!

Having the Time of Your Life

The concept of time when cruising is difficult to express because so many think of time as being chronological. Yet the "time of your life" is really based on the breadth, depth and quality of your experience. There are quotes that sum this up in ways that may help you reflect on it:

"But what minutes! Count them by sensation, and not by calendars, and each moment is a day."

— Benjamin Disraeli

—Continued on next page



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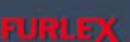
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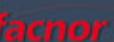
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More than 3 000 spare parts references in 300 sqm of sales area & 250 sqm of workshop with Technical Staff

—Continued from previous page

“Time is the most indefinable yet paradoxical of things: the past is gone, the future is not come, and the present becomes the past even while we attempt to define it, and, like the flash of lightning, at once exists and expires.”

— Charles Caleb Colton

The last quote I'd like to share is by the famed author and orator William F. Buckley, who was also a lifelong sailor and cruiser. At first glance, it can be read as somewhat morose — he was selling his last sailboat — but I think the time that you have before you in the Caribbean becomes more valuable in the light of his final thought on the subject:

“So deciding that the time has come to sell *Patito* and forfeit all that is not lightly done, and it brings to light the step yet ahead, which is giving up life itself.”

Frank Virgintino is the author of Free Cruising Guides, <http://freecruisingguides.com>.



DAVID MORGAN

You can't top up the 'time kitty', so plan carefully how and where you want to spend it — feeling the buzz of a modern marina, hanging out at a remote beach bar, or maybe doing a little of each... and more?

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WHEN sailing the Windward and Leeward Islands, the majority of your time underway will be spent on a reach, whether close, beam or broad.

To maximize your time on a beam reach, study the tidal information on the back of all Imray *Lolaire* charts. If inter-island passages are planned so the open-water part of the trip will be made during a weather-going tide, the course sailed to stay on (or to windward of) the rhumb line will be 15 to 20 degrees lower than if the same passage is made with a lee-going tide. This often means that the passage is an eased-sheet reach rather than having the sails strapped down hard with spray flying in all directions and crew getting seasick.

Lolaire, built in 1905 and still going strong, is 46 feet long, heavy displacement, narrow and deep. She should not be particularly fast on a reach but ask anyone who has raced against her and they will certify that she is a reaching fool. This is achieved by opening the slot between the headsails and the main, re-trimming the genoa or yankee (Number One jib topsail) to the end of the boom, moving the staysail sheet out to the rail cap, and carefully trimming the main, adjusting both boom vang and mainsheet.

That trimming correctly greatly increases speed is perfectly illustrated by *Lolaire*'s delivery after I sold her at the end of 52 years and two months of ownership. The new owner wanted me to skipper her on her trip to England from Ireland. I said, "No. You bought her; you are the owner/skipper. But I will happily go along as sailing master!" We sailed out of Glandore, on

trip was so good that I never want to sail on *Lolaire* again, as no matter how good the sail, it could never match our wonderful delivery trip.

Okay, folks: brush up your boat talk for the next part.

Headsail Trim

After her 80th birthday I retired *Lolaire* from racing, other than in classic regattas. I then sailed for many years on various boats as "rock, tide and wind pilot". I often introduced crews to the idea, when reaching, of

Improve Your Reaching Performance



Leading the jib sheet to the end of the boom opens the slot between the headsails or between the jib and main, greatly increasing your speed on a reach. Notice the main boom preventer

Also note the advice of the Norie and Wilson 1879 *Sailing Directions to the West Indies*, which served as my guide until I wrote *Cruising Guide to the Lesser Antilles* in 1966. It states: "When sailing to leeward of the high islands in the Caribbean, stay within two pistol shots distance of shore or seven leagues off." This is still true today. Boats should sail, motor sail or motor along the lee coast within a hundred yards of shore. Although there may be no wind, you'll have a smooth sea and the crew will be able to enjoy a close-up view of the shoreline scenery.

At the ends of the islands, the boat should follow the coast around to the east until the sea and wind build up and make sailing, motor sailing or motoring difficult. At that point bear off and cross the passage. By following the coast as far eastward as possible you gain distance to windward, maximizing the chances of an eased-sheet reach.

Ireland's south coast, very early in the morning in light airs, so I went back to bed. I woke up a couple of hours later, realizing the wind had filled in, she was sailing rail down, and having sailed *Lolaire* for more than half a century I could feel, lying in my bunk, that things were not right.

When I arrived on deck, I discovered that the new owner had so much weather helm that the tiller was up under his chin. The boat was rail down, but doing only five knots. I organized re-trimming, moving the jib sheet to the end of the boom, the staysail sheet to the outboard reaching lead, eased the main, hardened up on the boom vang, and played with trimming and re-trimming everything.

Within an hour we were doing seven and a half and occasionally eight knots, with neutral helm. We had a glorious beam reach across the Irish Sea, almost dry decks, under a huge full moon that night. The delivery



You'll need an ample bail at the end of the boom for all the 'spaghetti'

sheeting the genoa or yankee to the end of the main boom. On every boat, when speed was checked, it was discovered that the boat was faster with the sheet to the end of the main boom than it was when sheeted to the deck. On a number of boats, the sheet rigged through the end of the boom was referred to as the "Street sheet".

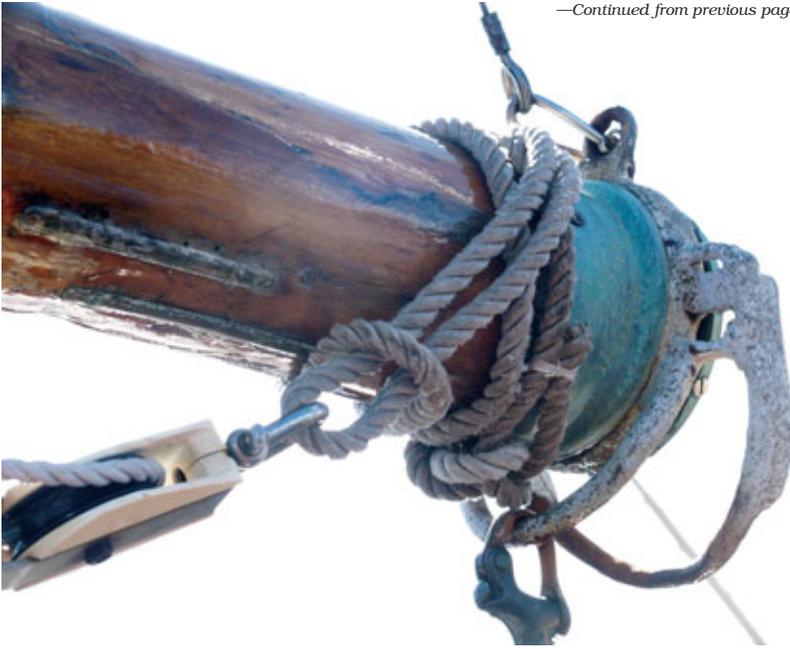
To sheet the headsail to the end of the main boom, make up a combination reaching sheet and main boom preventer. Secure a becket block to a bail on the end of the boom, a wire or high-strength line (Dyneema or similar) secured to the becket on the becket block. The wire or line should be slightly shorter than the length of the boom, secured to the gooseneck via a light lashing line. This line is used as a main boom preventer when sailing broad off or dead down wind. (Rigging this will be described in a subsequent article.) A reaching sheet should be led through the becket block and both ends tied off at the gooseneck.

If you do not have a bail at the end of the boom that can be used to secure the becket block, all is not lost. Make up an endless loop of line, secure the ends together with a double sheet bend, and mouse the ends of the knot. Then loop the line around the end of the boom, pass it back through itself, pull tight, and secure a becket block to the loop.

Once sheets are eased, attach one end of the reaching sheet to the clew of the headsail, run the other end forward to a block on or near the rail cap then back to a winch. Take up on the reaching sheet, throw off the normal sheet and re-trim the headsail. The slot will be opened and you will be able to ease the main; the boat will come up on her feet and begin to really travel.

If you have a high-cut headsail, with the clew so high it is difficult or impossible to reach, try the following. Sheet the headsail for going to windward and mark the sheet about four feet above the deck.

—Continued from previous page



Clockwise from top:

If the boom has no bail or other secure attachment point, a rope strop will serve the same purpose

A strop can be made by tying a length of line into a loop with a double sheet bend and seizing the ends

Iolaire's reaching sheet clips onto the bail at the end of the boom



Then roll up the jib, cut the sheet at the mark, tie the two ends of the sheet together with a double sheet bend, and mouse the ends with tape (old salts can mouse the ends with Italian tarred marline).

When the sheets are eased, secure the reaching sheet to the normal jib sheet above the knot; use either a snap shackle or two half hitches. Then, as described above, re-sheet to the end of the main boom.

If the boat is double headsail rigged, take a line, run it through a block on the rail cap, lead the line outside the shrouds, attach it to the clew of the staysail, take the load on the reaching sheet, and throw off the normal sheet. On *Iolaire*, this third sheet was always coiled in a gasket and hung on the lifeline ready to use.

Trim the headsails so that the telltales on both the lee and the windward side of the headsails are streaming aft. If the windward one is lifting, the headsail needs to be trimmed. If the leeward one is lifting, the headsail needs to be eased.

Mainsail Trim

To properly trim the mainsail on a reach, it is essential to have a boom vang that can be adjusted. Most boats have a centerline boom vang, a rig I do not like as the loads skyrocket compared to a tackle secured to the rail cap with the lead leading outboard at a 45-degree angle. Also with a centerline boom vang, the dinghy cannot be stowed in its traditional place on (or almost on) center immediately aft of the mast.

To secure the tackle to the boom, make a big long endless loop of line as previously described, loop it around the boom twice, pass the end through itself, pull tight and secure the block for the boom vang. Looped twice around the boom it will not slip.

Play with trimming the main, eliminating or minimizing the twist in the main by altering tension on the boom vang.

To properly trim the main you should have four telltales secured to the leach of the sail, one by each batten or, if there are no battens, just evenly spaced up the leach. If you have ribbon, cut it in lengths suitable for the size of your boat and sew them onto the leach of the sail. If you can't find ribbon, go to the nearest sailmaker and ask him or her to sell you the length of two-inch-wide spinnaker



rip-stop tape necessary to make four leach telltales. Fold the tape in half, sticking both sides together, making a ribbon one inch wide.

After securing the telltales to the leach of the mail, start playing with the sheet and vang until you get all four of them flying. Once you have achieved this, the main is perfectly trimmed. If you get three flying you are doing well. If only one or two are flying, continue to play with sheet and vang.

For the fine points on mainsail trimming consult the "North U" videos or talk a hotshot racer to go sailing with you and demonstrate how to get all four telltales flying. Note: I have found that females are excellent at sail trimming, as a woman's attention span is generally longer than a man's.

On a reach, if headsails and main are properly trimmed, the helm should be neutral, and the boat fast and easily handled.

Sailing broad off or dead downwind, mizzen staysails for ketches and yawls, and the use of a main boom preventer, will all be discussed in a future article.

Bill Cooper, in his book *Sell Up and Sail*, writes: "... if you plan to go offshore, read *The Ocean Sailing Yacht* by Don Street. Don is an opinionated eccentric, but he is a seaman." Visit Don Street's website at www.street-iolaire.com.

What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger: One Year After the Attack

by Mira Nencheva

"Sometimes, bad things happen to good people," Tina said, trying to help Maya, my 11-year-old daughter who believes in Karma, to make sense of all this unprovoked violence, all this blood.

She smiled and added:

"Bad things happen to good people, but not all the time, though. Don't worry; it won't happen to you, sweetie."

But you never know...

We were looking with horror at two small pictures she was showing us: one of the interior of a boat all covered with blood, and one of a wounded face where a surreal gash recently patched up with big dark stitches cut across the entire left side. The bloody boat was *S/V Rainbow*, a 39-foot Westerly Sealord ketch built in 1984. The face with the gash was Tina's, although I would never recognize it from that picture.

Tina's Story

Tina is a sea-gypsy, a third generation of adventurous women who traveled full-time. Born near Toronto, Canada in March of 1963, she later moved with her family to Florida.

"I grew up on a six-acre ranch in the Everglades, riding horses."

Tina first discovered the joy of travel thanks to her grandmother who had a Volkswagen.

"When I was about eight we went on these camping trips, just me and my grandmother with her Volkswagen, orange with a pop-up tent. We had the best time."

After she retired, Tina's grandmother upgraded. She got a Winnebago and took off to join a community of people with campers called Loners on Wheels, never to return to house life.

Tina started sailing with her parents when she was a kid back in Florida. She loved the ocean and the boats. Later, she started working on sailboats doing day-sails and term charters in the US Virgin Islands. She even worked on the commercial fishing vessel *Arctic Dawn* as bait-girl in the Bering Sea, grinding and stuffing frozen fish in jars, preparing the cages for the Brown King Crab.

"When I first met Mark five years ago he had an Irwin 34, *Carefree II*. After one year of dating he asked me: Do you want to go cruising? Sure thing. But with our three cats we needed a bigger boat. We started looking for a boat and two years ago we found *S/V Rainbow* in St. Croix. We began cruising in May 2013."

Bad Things Happen

On October 3rd, 2013, at 8:30PM, Mark and Tina were having dinner aboard *Rainbow*, anchored off Frigate Rock near Union Island in the Grenadines, when Tina heard a noise outside. She stepped out in the cockpit to check it out. There was only one other sailboat in the anchorage.

"I saw a shadow in the dark. But I didn't think of a person; I thought it was a towel hanging from the bimini."

Someone had boarded *Rainbow*. Suddenly, without a word and without provocation, he attacked Tina with a machete. With the weapon, locally known as a cutlass, he slashed across her face and once again across her left shoulder. If the first blow had been just a few inches lower, or the second just a few inches higher, he could have cut off her head.

What happened after is like a dark hazy nightmare in Tina's memory.

"Mark came out immediately with a fish filleting knife, the first thing he could grab, and started fighting in the dark. Managed to stab him twice."

The intruder jumped off the boat. There was another man with a speargun on the aft deck. He jumped off too when he heard the screaming. A third guy was waiting in the rowing boat. They fled.

Silence. Darkness.

The other sailboat in the anchorage hastily left too. Tina and Mark, both injured, were alone.

Tina was bleeding badly. They raised the alarm on the VHF radio and immediately started sailing to Carriacou, to the nearest hospital.

"I was conscious the whole time. On the VHF they instructed Mark to keep me awake. I lost one third of my blood."

Tina was admitted to hospital. The police mobilized. The attacker, wounded by Mark during the assault, went to seek medical treatment, at which point he was apprehended. He was a 15-year-old local kid. He turned in the two other guys, a 16-year-old and a 17-year-old, who were arrested immediately.

In the St. Vincent & the Grenadines court, at the hearing back in October 2013, when Tina saw her attacker clearly for the first time, she was surprised at how young he was.

"I am so sorry that you maimed my life — and ruined yours."

Why did they do this? What were their motives that evening? No one knows for sure. One year later, two of the three perpetrators, charged with "causing grievous bodily harm, wounding and attempted burglary" are, as this issue of *Compass* goes to press, scheduled to appear in High Court during the current session of Criminal Assizes. The third guy, who hadn't boarded *Rainbow*, became "crown witness" and testified against the other two, thus helping the prosecution, and was later released.

Healing the Wounds

Tina got better with time, the wounds healed well, life went on.

But a scar remains. Not the scar on Tina's face: that one is barely visible today, one year after the attack, and Tina looks more beautiful than ever. It's the psychological one, which is deeper and still hurts. It's the coping with the aftermath of a disaster, unexpected, unannounced, undeserved. It's the question that persists: "Why me?" The scar wounded not only Tina but the entire cruising community and beyond.

In the aftermath of a traumatic event of such magnitude, for which there is no reason or logical explanation, surviving victims experience various stages of grief, trying to cope with their shock and their loss. One of the first stages is denial and disbelief, a hopeless desire to turn back time in order to prevent it from happening, to avoid it. In such instances, many lose faith. Only later, after a period of getting used to the fact that what had happened cannot be undone, one accepts the event and adapts to it, learns to move on.

In Tina's case, that period of denial was remarkably short. And she never lost faith.

"When I was lying in the hospital I remember thinking, Why me? Why me? But then I started thinking, Why anyone? It could have been an elderly couple that couldn't defend themselves or a family with young children. I started thinking that we were lucky. It could have been a lot worse."

Thinking about the grisly attack that had changed her life, Tina also realized that

if some things had been different, it could have been prevented. The news of the attack had shaken up cruisers throughout the world and was widely publicized, as it is an uncommon event that generated much media attention. Tina decided to use her misfortune for the greater good of the cruising community, trying to improve anchorage safety as well as to create awareness for personal safety on board. And she did.

In St. Vincent & the Grenadines, where tourism is the main source of income, the government implemented VHF radios in all police stations, monitoring channel 16. A new coast guard station on Canouan is now also keeping an eye on the area between St. Vincent and Grenada. Moreover, under certain circumstances, persons testifying in court now have the possibility of doing it remotely during court procedures, via an electronic system, making it easier to prosecute crimes against visitors.

—Continued on next page

MIRA NENCHEVA (ALL PHOTOS)



S/V Rainbow underway

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—Continued from previous page

Overall, thanks to heightened awareness on the part of both the authorities and the cruising community, many anchorages are today safer than ever: the positive effect of a terrible event.

Many sailors now have better security measures and better preparedness on board, including us, the crew of *S/V Fata Morgana*, thanks to what happened to Tina. As soon as she was out of the hospital Tina, with the help of three other boats and friends, organized a meeting at the Port Louis Marina in St. George's, Grenada where 200 cruisers showed up to discuss crime prevention and security procedures on boats.



Above: Tina. You can't keep a good woman down!

Right: Tina and Mark, with ship's cat Manta, aboard their floating home

What You Can Do

Tina wants her story to be a lesson for all cruisers. Something they can benefit from. Yes, bad things sometimes do happen to good people, but in many cases they can be prevented using appropriate measures:

- **LIGHTS** on board are essential. A darker vessel is more likely to become a target than a vessel with some lights on. Lights should be installed in the cockpit with the possibility to switch them on from the salon or the cabin. If a vandal tries to board the boat and you turn the lights on, chances are he will get spooked and run away. A bright flashlight might blind intruders, but it also pinpoints your location to a shooter.

- **STAY CONNECTED.** Introduce yourself to the others in the anchorage; see what VHF channel they are monitoring and make sure you keep the radio on at night to be able to call for help if necessary. Avoid lonely anchorages in sensitive areas.

- **NOISE.** In the event of an intrusion, make noise. Any racket will do. Shout, bang on a metal pot, blow an air horn, ring a bell — anything that will not only scare the uninvited person, but will also be heard by all neighbors.

- **WEAPONS?** Tina is convinced that having guns on board is not the best idea. Often they are confiscated by the Customs officials upon entry and returned upon leaving the country. But even if you get to keep a gun, it might just bring more violence. If you pull a gun at someone who is also pointing a gun at you, a shootout is inevitable and you might get killed.

But it is a good idea to have some sort of a self-defense weapon readily available,

such as a pepper spray or even a wasp spray, which is intended to spray wasps and wasp nests from a great distance and will blind an intruder.

- **AN ALARM SYSTEM** is a great thing. There are motion and touch detectors you can install, but even a simple bell on a fishing cord strung across the companionway will work as a motion detector just fine. A dog will do, too.

There are a number of other safety measures: bars on the hatches, gates, an easily accessible card with the boat and crew information clearly visible that might be asked over the VHF radio by officials trying to identify and locate you. Also, everyone aboard should be able to operate the vessel, the dinghy, and the radio in case of the captain becoming disabled. And always have an emergency plan. Discuss with all crewmembers and guests aboard possible situations and be prepared.

Still Living the Dream

On October 3rd, 2013 Tina survived an attack aboard *S/V Rainbow*. But she didn't stop cruising. One year later, she is still a bit jumpy at sounds, and some of the affected nerves on her face are not completely healed, but she is back on the boat, back on the water, with Mark. They are determined to continue living their dream, planning to cruise in the Caribbean, the Bahamas, and Florida next.

The following is the status update I just read on her Facebook wall. Made me smile. Love you Tina!



"Yeah, back on our favorite little island! What a passage, woke up to a beautiful cloud angel, we were escorted out to sea by a dolphin, greeted by breaching whales in Martinique, the French Navy kept us company all night through St. Lucia, three flying fish boarded the boat and Jamesy (one of our cats) feasted happily; unfortunately we did not find the third one till this morning underneath Mark's bunk (stinky). Yesterday morn off of St. Vincent, we saw the biggest pod of dolphins I've ever seen in the Caribbean. As we sailed by Union Island and Frigate Rock, the place of our attack last year, the most amazing rainbow covered the whole island. Yes, we are blessed and yes I do believe in Angels. Hello Carriacou! Good to be back!"

Author's Note: All the information in this article was gathered through my conversations with Christina Curtin and the notes I took during our talks, as well as from a few publications which Tina provided for me. Thank you so much, Tina!

Mira Nencheva, writer, photographer, wanderer, is sailing around the world and living full-time aboard her 38-foot Leopard catamaran, Fata Morgana, with her husband, Ivo, and their 11-year-old daughter Maya since July 2013. Their journey is documented in a travel-adventure blog www.thelifenomadik.com and in their Facebook page [Facebook/TheLifeNomadik](https://www.facebook.com/TheLifeNomadik) where Mira is publishing stories and pictures.

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Rusty old cargo ships, known locally as schooners, are the lifeblood of Caribbean trade.

In maritime trade, most cargo ships are also allowed to carry a few passengers on every voyage. The number of passengers they can carry is usually limited to 12, after which the ship would have to be re-classified as a passenger vessel.

Many lifetimes ago I used to work in shipping, and I've crossed the Atlantic several times in cargo and passenger ships. It takes a while to get used to life at

that this cured me of seasickness forever.

We disembarked at Basseterre, St. Kitts, ferried to shore by small boats or lighters. As I walked unsteadily down the swaying jetty, I was surrounded by a posse of Kittitian boys.

"You from Jamaica?"

"Yes."

"You have ganja?"

"No."

"You have ratchet knife?"

"No."

In unison they all kissed their teeth; then moved onto the next disembarking passenger.

Grenada to Trinidad Aboard M/V 'Nameless'

Fast forward a few decades later, and I again found myself on board some of the Caribbean's less salubrious trading ships — which hadn't improved any with the passage of time. Among the islands of the Eastern Caribbean, there are many such vessels, discarded old European ships that long ago failed any internationally recognized safety tests, and found themselves washed upon the lawless shores of the Caribbean. Here they continue to eke out a living for their owner/captains, moving from port to port as the trade demands — the original tramp steamers.

Perhaps due to its very island nature, St. Vincent & the Grenadines is the Caribbean leader in the maritime industry. The country has an open ship registry (what used to be called a flag of convenience), and thousands of ships worldwide now fly the Vincentian flag, whether for convenience or otherwise. Many Caribbean schooners are captained and crewed by Vincentians; it's in their blood.

—Continued on next page

Sooner by Schooner

by S. Brian Samuel

sea: ten days with nothing on the horizon but the horizon itself. In those days there was no television or internet; your only contact with the outside world would be the scratchy shortwave radio. There's just you, the crew, your books and your thoughts for company. But once you get used to it, once your mind and metabolism slow down to match the pace of the ocean, there's nothing quite like a long ocean voyage, to relax and rejuvenate you at the same time.

Actually, that's not quite true. An ocean voyage can be relaxing and rejuvenating — it can also be hell on the sea! Just ask passengers from the *Costa Concordia*: in ships when things go wrong, they can go very wrong. However, for the most part, traveling by sea is still one of the safest means of travel — if not always the most comfortable.

Jamaica to St. Kitts Aboard M/V Federal Maple

My first rough trip was on board the late great M/V *Federal Maple*: two weeks from Jamaica to Grenada, stopping at all islands en route. This ship and her sister, the *Federal Palm*, were gifts to the West Indies Federation from Canada, and for years plied a regular route up and down the islands. By the time I boarded the *Maple* in Kingston in the summer of '72, as a 19-year old student at the University of the West Indies, the old girl had seen better days — much better. I was traveling at the lowest fare class: deck passage. Which meant just what it said: you find yourself someplace under the stars, lay down your foam mattress and hope it doesn't rain. There was a sort of accommodation hold below decks at the back of the boat, but you needed a really strong stomach to venture down there; for one thing the hold was awash with a foot of swashing bilge water, which also seemed to contain a fair amount of the effluent of the vessel.

From Jamaica to St. Kitts is three days of hard sailing: directly into wind and current, rocking and rolling all the way. Even though I had crossed the Atlantic twice before, on that particular voyage I was constantly seasick — as a dawg! Eat, puke, and then don't even think about eating again. The only silver lining was



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—Continued from previous page

So far I have travelled on two of these schooners, which for the purposes of this article shall remain nameless (I may need to travel on them again!). Weather permitting, it's actually quite a pleasant trip from Grenada to Trinidad, about 12 to 13 hours overnight. However, it is *not* for the faint hearted. These schooners are the living embodiment of the word "unseaworthy"; any half-qualified marine surveyor would have conniptions at the state of some of these vessels! Rusted and broken stanchions; important pieces of deck equipment falling to bits; clumsy cargo handling gear; atrocious accommodation; zero safety features and rust, rust and more rust everywhere. In one of the ships, what passed for a lifeboat was a broken old dinghy haphazardly lashed on deck and swamped with all kinds of junk. To be fair, I did see a couple of inflatable life rafts, but I wouldn't want to bet my life that they were in working order.

Every Tuesday evening, three vessels sail from St. George's bound for Port of Spain, all departing at around 8:00PM and arriving in Trinidad by about 9:00 or 10:00 the following morning. A fourth vessel sails from Grenville, arriving at the same time. In addition, vessels arrive from St. Lucia and St. Vincent; the CARICOM wharf in Port of Spain can get pretty congested on a Wednesday morning.

There is very little cargo moving southbound, mainly agricultural produce such as yams, plantains, bananas and whatever else is in season, all packed in pallets haphazardly knocked together and loaded on board using the ship's cranes (there are no shore cranes). The process for loading fuel is even more haphazard; the ship's cranes lift enormous drums of diesel from trucks into the ship's hold, swaying ominously and invariably spilling fuel in the process. The loaded drums are manhandled into position in the hold, from whence the fuel is siphoned off into the ship's fuel tanks — more spillage.

On this trip I was accompanied by my friend Mike Edmund, a.k.a. "Zoo". We were off to Trinidad to do what everyone else does: buy stuff. Bring your own foam, cooler and sleeping bag; and find whatever space on deck that looks reasonably clean. Correction: whatever space that isn't absolutely filthy and covered in oil. Fortunately the seas that night were calm, which made our sleeping quarters (i.e. the deck) fairly pleasant under the stars — apart from the brief shower at two o'clock in the morning. We all crowded into the companionway, waiting bleary-eyed for the shower to pass, and then headed back out to our appointed spots on deck. Apart from the constant smell of diesel, which fills your nostrils and impregnates every item of clothing, you can get a fairly decent night's sleep.

We awoke to the beautiful sight of the northern mountain range of Trinidad looming in the distance. Approaching Port of Spain you thread your way through the islands of the Bocas, plus dozens of man-made obstacles: ships at anchor, oil rigs, and any number of passing craft in the water. I took a picture as we passed Carrera Island Prison, Trinidad's own version of Devil's Island. It's only half a mile from the shore but the waters are said to be shark infested. Right on cue, we passed close by a huge shark in the water. We docked at the CARICOM wharf at 9:00AM, squeezing in between *Ocean Princess* and a Vincy boat: grimy, grubby but happy!

With all Trinidad's oil money, downtown Port of Spain has changed out of all recognition: there are new skyscrapers galore! The enormous fast ferry to Tobago, *T&T Spirit*, swept majestically past us on her way into port, while her opposite number was just heading out in the other direction. Added to that are the four 300-passenger capacity water taxis that ply the PoS-San Fernando sea route, and Trinidad and Tobago are well served by way of water transportation.



We then headed straight to the guesthouse in Woodbrook for a long shower! We spent a frantic two days in Trinidad, running from Chaguanas to Chaguaramas, scouring parts shops and chandleries for essential supplies. We didn't have much time; the boats were scheduled to depart back to Grenada at about 6:00PM on Thursday.

Trinidad to Grenada
By comparison with the journey southbound, where the vessels are almost empty, for the northbound leg they are all loaded to the gills with an assorted cargo of soft drinks, steel rods and other building materials, foodstuffs, gas bottles, diapers, tampons and practically everything else that Grenada imports from our industrialized neighbour to the south. Sleeping space on deck is always a valuable commodity on the return trip.

By this time I had realized that the alternator for my Pajero would not be re-wound by Reno Electrical in St. James in time to make the return trip on the boat, so I decided to extend my trip and fly back. Of course that could never be a simple process; and after one hot sweaty morning tramping up and down Wrightson Road from the CARICOM Wharf to the Immigration Department and back — several times — I finally got my treasured visa extension, and my passport back. Zoo was returning with the boat on Thursday evening — or thought he was.

After several delays, Zoo's boat sailed for Grenada at

around 9:00PM. By 10:00 it was back in Trinidad. The ship's steering gear had broken; they wouldn't be going anywhere that night. Zoo had to sweet talk the security guard to let him out for the night to join me at the guesthouse for a welcome shower and bed, because technically he had not re-cleared into Trinidad. The following morning, repairs were made to the boat's steering gear; and Zoo finally sailed for Grenada at around two on Friday afternoon. *Bon voyage et bonne chance, mon ami!*

For the northbound leg, vessels are loaded to the gills with an assorted cargo of soft drinks, building materials, foodstuffs...

Sea Stories

In the realm of possibilities, that was a fairly benign breakdown; there are many horror stories of the things that can go wrong at sea. In one infamous voyage, a Grenadian vessel broke down midway between Trinidad and Grenada. She drifted slowly southwestwards for three days before washing ashore on Isla Margarita, Venezuela — whereupon all the passengers and crew were promptly arrested for entering the country illegally! This sparked an "international incident" which wasn't resolved until Grenada sent another boat to pick up its stranded citizens.

In another breakdown, passengers and crew ran out of food and broke into the cargo hold in search of sustenance, where all they found were Cris crackers and Coke. After three days adrift, they thought salvation was at hand when a Trinidadian Coast Guard vessel discovered them and took them under tow. But their elation was short-lived, as the Coast Guard towed the stricken vessel only as far as a nearby oil rig, tied the vessel to the rig and left them to their own devices! After another Cris and Coke day alongside the rig, they were finally rescued by another vessel sent from Grenada.

It's a tough old life on the Caribbean Sea!



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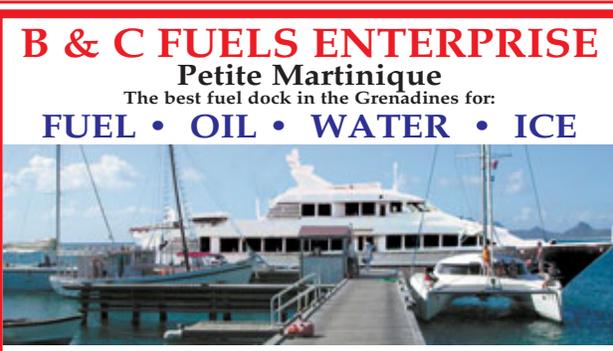
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NOVEMBER 2014

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)

Though energy may be in the doldrums, a romantic breeze will pick up in the third week. Creative inspiration will climb aboard before month's end.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)

Immerse yourself in onboard projects, as shore-side life will be full of aggravation. With four planets in Scorpio, tacking through it all will put your good vibes to the test.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)

Use your sweet-talking skills to best advantage before the 12th, as after the 17th romance will sail into contrary currents. Deploy your sense of humor as a good sea anchor.

♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)

Aspects in creativity, love and communication will give you crucial insight into boat-business solutions. Your work energy may be in irons, but your mental skills will be on course and make excellent way.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)

Your ability to have fun will provide a firm hand on the helm to hold your course through any choppy seas in relationships, ingenuity and communications.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)

You'll have lots of energy, but a lack of direction will have you tacking from one course to another throughout the month.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)

You are aspect free this month, so just take a break from the usual concerns of boat ownership and set the hook. Rest up, as there will be busy times in the near future.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)

The planets of romance, creativity, communications and business are all in Scorpio, so now is an excellent time to make the most of these positive influences to have social fun and make new business contacts and agreements.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)

Your cargo of good humor will serve you well when romance sets the hook off your stern in the third week, just in time to lift your spirits.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

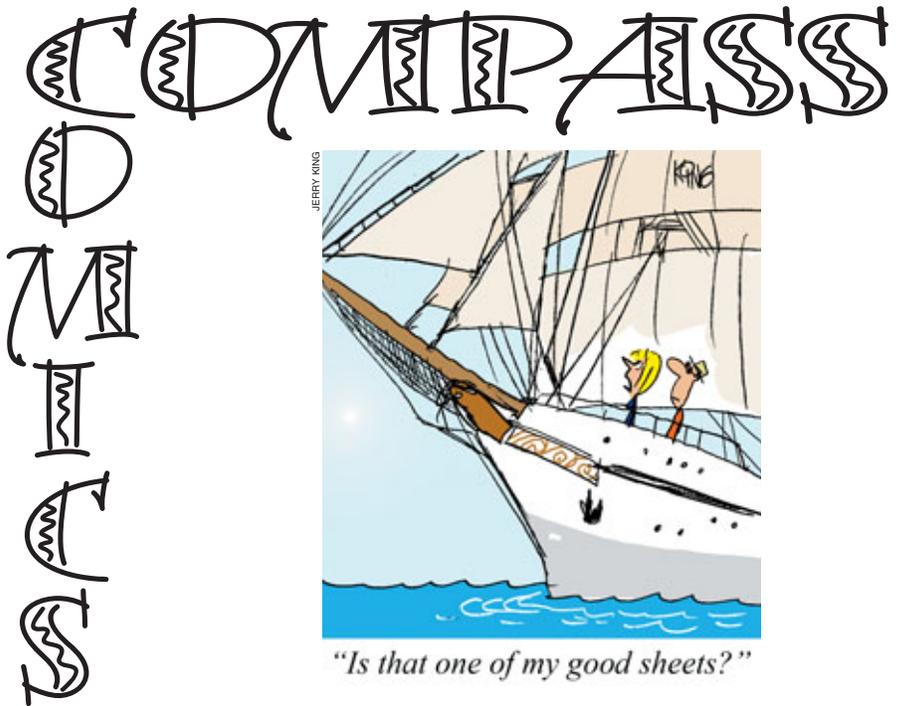
Mars will spend the month cruising through your sign and bless you with the energy to finish any uncompleted boat projects.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

Ingenuity has jumped overboard and your love life will be complicated by garbled communications. All these will combine to make progress in commercial or financial dealings rough sailing. After the 17th, skies will slowly clear.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

Romance will assist creativity in boat business and communications will be crisp and clear, so make contacts and contracts while these good aspects prevail.



Seaweed

CHIKUNGUNYA SYMPTOMS IN FISH...

- HEADACHE
- FEVER
- FIN PAIN
- LOSS OF BALANCE



KEN DYER
Ken Dyer
© NOV 2014

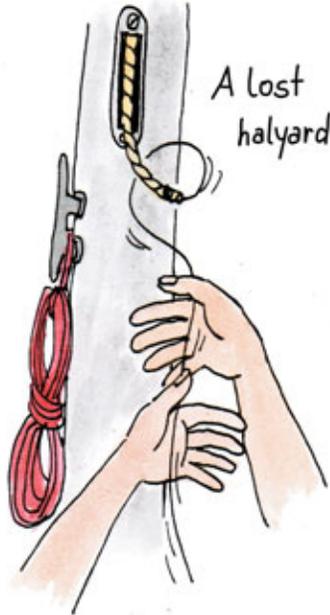
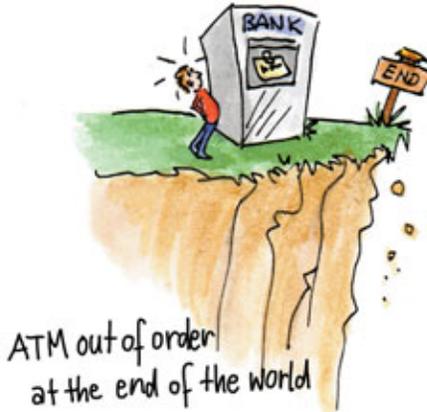
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BOOK REVIEW BY SALLY ERDLE

TENACITY AND RESILIENCE

Bamboo & Fern, by Ava Brown, New Generation Publishing ©2014. 272 pages, color photos.

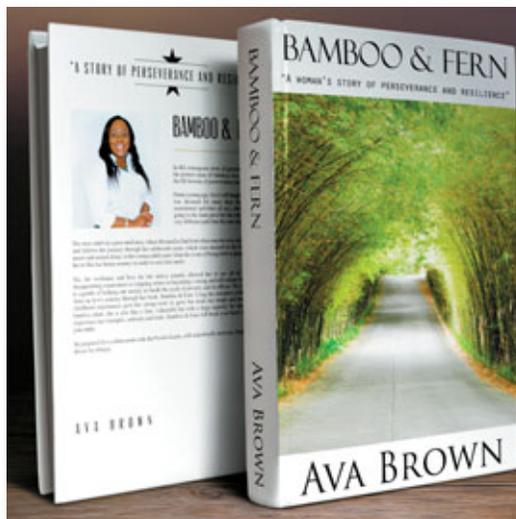
In her autobiography, *Bamboo & Fern*, Jamaican-born Ava Brown recounts part of her remarkable transition from street-selling Jamaican pauper to the MBA-wielding Global Business Development Manager she is today.

Ava was one of nine children and spent much of her time selling mangoes on the suburban streets of St. Elizabeth. A life of making babies, street-selling or working on a farm might have been all that awaited her. But despite often missing school in order to earn the money that her family desperately needed, Ava retained an unquenchable thirst for education.

As an adolescent, Ava experienced incest and sexual abuse, and as a young adult, being held at gunpoint was the catalyst that led her to look toward a different life overseas. Her resilience allowed her to see all of her harsh and disappointing experiences as steppingstones to becoming a strong and self-reliant woman. Using the metaphor of the bamboo, her childhood experiences gave her strong roots to grow but made her tough and bendable like the bamboo plant. She is also like a fern, vulnerable but with a huge capacity for survival.

Ava qualified as a teacher and went on to study for a US-based business degree before moving to the UK in 2002 to work as a teacher, accompanied by her three-year-old daughter. At this point, Ava decided to follow her heart and pursue her dreams of becoming a businesswoman and complete an MBA. Today, Ava thrives in her position as Global Business Development Manager in the maritime sector.

Ava tells *Compass*, "My Caribbean upbringing was one that was surrounded by water in some shape or form, be it rivers or the sea. I was always fishing as a child. This was one means of survival to some extent, and so, being a survivor, I took advantage of that."



"What helped to steer my maritime career, especially in early adulthood, was the fact that my ex-husband worked in ships' husbandry, so I had a taste for going on the tugboats when they came into Kingston Harbour on numerous occasions. When I was later approached to work in the maritime sector I was excited. I also volunteered at the Montego Bay Marine Park while in teachers' college and I went on a semi-submersible vessel that intrigued me — I was fascinated with the seabed.

"I always loved how the ocean cascaded, how free and endless it was. The Caribbean Sea made me feel like there were endless possibilities. Like the picture on the front of my book, where there is a road that could lead anywhere, I saw the ocean and Jamaica's rivers in that same way."

Ava's voyage was not all smooth, even in the UK. A tumultuous relationship with the semi-estranged husband who followed her, problems with immigration, difficulties finding and keeping work and lodging, constant financial worries — all while raising a young daughter and dreaming of a career — among other twists, turns and pitfalls, are recounted in detail. She acknowledges that the inspiration for her book was that "I was going through a difficult patch and felt overwhelmed, so putting my feelings on paper was cathartic. It just developed from there." This gives the book a somewhat diary-like aspect. The author's qualities of strength and determination often come across to others in her life as stubbornness and selfishness, and she acknowledges that many of her problems, as well as her successes, are of her own making.

As many autobiographies do, this account exposes real or perceived injustices, sometimes at great length. But any flaws in the writing of this book by a first-time writer (and there are several that the editor should have amended) are superseded by the spirit that infuses it. You get a vivid sense of who this Ava Brown is.

The book finishes on an unexpected note. The reader is prepared to find Ava eventually triumphing over all odds (which she apparently has done in life). This autobiography ends, however, with her feeling "traumatized and fearful" after being arrested and briefly jailed on spurious assault charges brought by her soon-to-be-ex husband. She is once again out of work, in debt and on the verge of losing her recently purchased home, her relationship with her sister is in shambles, she seems to have lost her nerve. She writes, "I suggested [to my daughter] that we may be in a better position if we were to quit London and go back to Jamaica for a while... As the day neared for us to return to the homeland, I assaulted myself with blame for the mess that had led all of us to this moment in time... I convinced myself that I was a complete failure in all aspects of my life: as a wife, as a mother, and as a career woman. It was in this fog of self-hate and depression that I booked our flights back to Jamaica and led my child back home to the land of her ancestors in hope of rejoining the well-worn path that they had forged from the slave ships to independence. After all, we were both born of their spirit of tenacity and resilience, and our path still had many steps to go."

BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

ALMOST A WHISPER

Breath, Eyes, Memory, by Edwidge Danticat. Vintage Books, Second Contemporaries Edition, 1998. 236 pages. ISBN 0-375-70504-X

Can you imagine a book in which the story is told in such a gentle voice that it's almost whisper-like? Haitian-born Edwidge Danticat's debut novel, *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, is such a book. The story is one that's infused with unforgettable sadness. But, as the saying goes, "sad stories make good books". It's a story moving and eloquent in its telling.

The novel's first person narrator, Sophie Caco, was brought up from infancy by her Tante Atie in Croix-des-Rosets, an impoverished village in Haiti. At the age of 12, she goes to New York to be reunited with her mother.

Before going to America, Sophie had asked Tante Atie, "How it was that I was born with a mother and no father?" She told me the story of a little girl who was born out of the petals of roses, water from the stream, and a chunk of the sky. That little girl, she said, was me."

Sophie's existence in this world was not the result of an act of love, but a criminal act. And Danticat has Sophie's mother, Martine, break the news to her in a most delicate manner. One day her mother asked, "Did Atie tell you how you were born?" Sophie thought, "From the sadness in her voice, I knew that her story was sadder than the chunk of the sky and flower petals story that Tante Atie liked to tell..."

Martine continued, "It happened like this. A man grabbed me from the side of the road, pulled me into a cane field, and put you in my body. I was still a young girl then, just barely older than you."

But this loathsome act has far reaching consequences for Martine, who for most of the story is referred to as "Sophie's mother". It is as if the act rendered her nameless; it is an act from which Martine never fully recovers. She suffers from insomnia. Stress and anxiety take hold of her. Finally depression sets in, and when she becomes pregnant for her lover, Marc, that only makes matters worse. Martine is torn between having the child and aborting it.

Sophie's problems run deep, too. Besides having to deal with her mother's illnesses, she resents the "testing" that is a Haitian custom perpetuated from mother to daughter to make sure the daughter's virginity is intact, all in the name of honour and tradition.

Sophie works hard at her schoolwork and is a wonderful daughter, until a much older man, Joseph, who is a musician, moves in next door. Sophie starts having conversations with him. One evening her mother comes home from work and finds Sophie talking to Joseph and hauls her inside. That's when Martine begins her testing.

"I closed my eyes upon the images of my mother slipping her hand under the sheets and poking her pinky at a void, hoping that it would go no further than the length of her fingernail.

"Like Tante Atie, she had told me stories while she was doing it, weaving elaborate tales to keep my mind off the finger, which I knew one day would slip into me and condemn me. I had learned to *double* while being *tested*."

This unwanted act also has far reaching repercussions for Sophie. She impales herself with a pestle. "I took the pestle and the bloody sheet and stuffed them into a bag. It was gone, the veil that always held my mother's finger back every time she *tested* me... Finally I failed the test."

Sophie becomes alienated from her mother. She hates her body, and later when she marries Joseph she continues to "double up", affecting sexual relations with him.

One day while Joseph is away playing his music Sophie flees back to Haiti with her baby daughter. She goes to the women who first reared her: Tante Atie and her grandmother. But life notifies Martine where Sophie is so that she could come and be reconciled with her. He also questions Sophie. "Your husband, why did you leave him so suddenly?"

"I did not leave him for good," I said. "This is just a short vacation."

"Are you having trouble with any marital duties?"

"Yes," I answered honestly.

"What is it?"

"They say it is most important to a man."

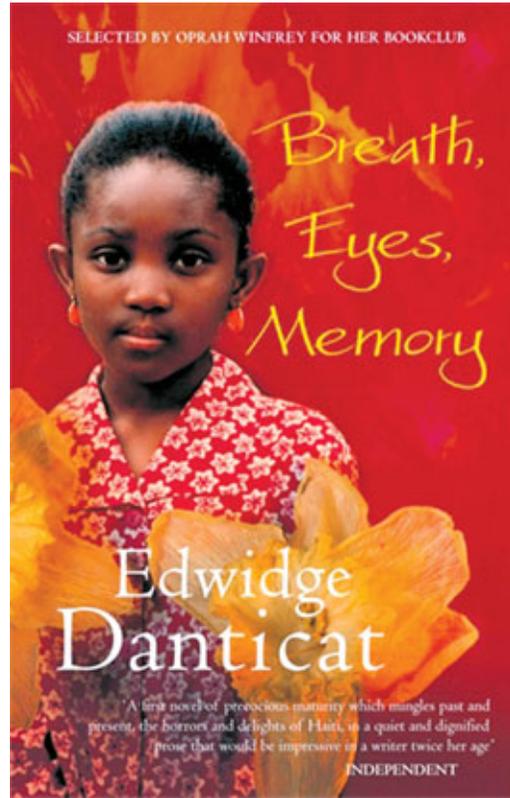
"The night?"

"Oui."

"You cannot perform?" she asked. "You have trouble with the night? There must be some fulfillment — you have a child."

"It is very painful for me," I said.

As one reviewer noted, "The burden of being a woman in Haiti, where purity and chastity are a matter of family honor, and where 'nightmares are passed on through generations like heirlooms,' is Danticat's theme." No need to shout it. Danticat's voice is so very soft as she relates a woman's story, one rooted in Haitian culture, in her gracious novel *Breath, Eyes, Memory*.



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Street's Guides describe some of Donald Street's favourite Caribbean cruising grounds, many of which are not even covered in most of the other sailing

Every charter skipper who has ever sailed in blue water has the primary responsibility of bringing crew and guests safely to port. When I took over as a part owner of *Apogee*, a Carib 41 sloop, in 1977, I had every confidence that I could safely navigate the often turbulent seas and inter-island channels of the Grenadines. The greenest bareboaters from CSY in St. Vincent had been doing it for eight years without a single loss of life, despite numerous reefs hit and mistakes made. How difficult could it be? On my very first day charter I would find out.



My experience? I had sailed since I was six on a Saffish and moved up to a Sunfish — which as a teen I'd pitchpoled and dismasted surfing a sandbar break 200 yards offshore Ocean City, New Jersey. Many times I'd crewed with my father, a devoted sailor who enjoyed cruising the Virgins when the pioneer charter company CSY (Caribbean Sailing Yachts) had their marina on Tortola. Add onto that one trip through the Grenadines with my parents and a few trips of my own down to PSV and back with friends. But being on charter is quite a different matter altogether.

These days, to charter a yacht, the insurance companies require a basic license, whether it be the US 100-ton license or the more stringent British version,



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True Charterboat Confessions: My First Day Charter

by Bob Berlinghof

the RYA Yachtmaster's. I had taken a basic US Coast Guard navigation course in the States, which wasn't very useful since it taught me the Inland Waterway, Great Lakes, and IntraCoastal rules of the road, plus lots of other arcane information. But even with a license, the first time on charter can be a bit daunting. In my case, it was very nearly horrifying.

Ross Wagenseil was the manager of the Sugar Mill Inn above Blue Lagoon on St. Vincent. He and I discovered we were born on the same day in the same year and hit it off pretty well despite it. His lone hotel guest, a slim southern gentleman named Al Keats, wanted to day sail to Bequia in mid-December. I assured him I'd been sailing for years. He didn't blink when I asked for the princely sum of US\$120. I wanted to ask for more but he was alone and said he would provide all the drinks. All I needed was ice. We were on for eight-thirty the next morning, I had hoped Ross would come along, but he was busy preparing for the arrival of more guests.

The day of the charter was balmy and windy, the first day of the "Christmas Winds". For crew, I asked Callaqua resident Lawrence "Sam" Haynes to join me. Sam was a diligent worker and we had become very friendly in the four months I'd lived aboard *Apogee*, moored in Blue Lagoon next to the CSY Marina. Sam had also sailed with me once, to PSV and back with no engine.

I was given permission to back stern-to the marina dock, which by now we could do without drama, Sam handling the anchor. We picked up Al and his guest, a worker from the CSY commissary, whom I shall call Eddie, and we set off for Bequia before nine o'clock.

The broad reach to Bequia was uneventful. We were anchored off Princess Margaret Beach by 10:30. Sam asked if he could take Eddie to the beach in the dinghy. Saying yes was my first mistake; they went to the beach to chat up some girls, and then headed to Port Elizabeth. Al and I had a drink on board while I wondered when Sam would return. After about an hour he returned alone. Al and I took some drinks ashore in a cooler while Sam headed off back to town.

Al had invited us all to lunch at the Sunny Caribbee Hotel (later renamed the Plantation House), then Bequia's finest restaurant. Sam and Eddie returned, but turned down the lunch date in favor of puttering around in the dinghy. After a splendid lunch, Sam returned and ferried Al and me back to Princess Margaret Beach.

"Where have you been all this time?" I asked him, annoyed, as Al stretched out on a towel. This nonsense with the dinghy had not occurred on our PSV trip. I was being played for a sucker.

"Eddie had to find some sheaths," he said, grinning. Not comprehending, I grumbled about the gas consumption and drank a beer while Al sunbathed. Before long it was 3:30.

"Sam, we have to get going soon. Can you pick up Eddie?"

Eddie was still in town. I thought, but Sam headed straight for *Apogee*. A minute later Eddie emerged from the aft cabin with a young lady in tow! The three headed to town to drop off Eddie's paramour while I sat silently fuming. The nerve! Using my double-berth!

By the time we were underway it was after four o'clock, leaving us only an hour and a half before dark. I was steaming from both ears but didn't want to upset Al, so I said nothing to Eddie.

The trip home started out fine. I knew we had to make time, so I was motoring up Bequia's northeast coast under full sail, hard on a starboard tack. The gusts laid us over, but it was fun. Within ten minutes the waves grew larger and a sudden drop of the bow caused the chain locker cover to fly off. Without realizing the danger I asked Sam to replace it so that the V berth forward wouldn't get soaked. But as soon as he did the next wave loomed ahead, three meters high, massive and steep.

"Hold on!" I yelled, but the boat was traveling way too fast. We buried the bow, water washing over the foredeck. I ducked as a small part of the greenie splashed over the cockpit coaming, wetting us. When I looked up, Sam was gone! The lower port lifeline hung uselessly from the stanchions where Sam had snapped it like a thread.

"Sam's overboard!" I shouted, and when I looked back he was already 60 yards behind us.

"Eddie, you watch Sam. Don't take your eyes off him!" It was too late to throw the horseshoe life preserver.



If Sam had injured his head and couldn't swim, he would never reach it in time anyway. I told Al to duck as I put the helm hard to port to gybe. But even with the engine at 2200 rpms, the boat didn't respond, and I didn't know why! With panic rising in my throat I threw off the jib sheet. The noise of the flailing sail was like cannon fire, but the helm responded as I brought in the mainsheet. We gybed 200 yards upwind of Sam.

"Do you see him?" I screamed over the flogging jib as I hauled in the starboard sheet.

"Yeah," said Eddie, to my relief. We flew downwind but stayed about 30 yards to windward of Sam's bobbing head. While passing him I circled my hand over my head, signaling we would have to head back up for him. He was trying to swim after us so we all shouted, "Stay there!"

Sixty yards downwind we headed up, luffing both sails as we got close enough to approach Sam, who was now treading water. Leaving him to port, I put the engine in neutral and let *Apogee* ease past him to leeward so that he could climb into the fiberglass dinghy we were towing. As the boat came to a dead halt I told Eddie to ease the dinghy painter and Sam flopped in. Eddie hauled in the line and Sam scrambled up the transom and then tumbled into the cockpit, exhausted. It was the longest two or three minutes of my life, and most likely Sam's as well.

Once on board, Sam was shivering, nearly in shock. We wrapped him in towels and a blanket, but he barely said a word on the trip home. When asked what he had thought out there, his only reply was, "Shahks!" He was deathly afraid of sharks. We slammed through the waves for another hour, but with the engine off we made it home salty but without another wave boarding us.

I wasn't proud of my role in the incident. I should have reefed the main, or used the working jib, and not run the engine so hard into that green water. It nearly ended my chartering career 13 years before I eventually sold *Apogee* in 1990. But when we reached shore Al Keats tipped us each 20 bucks.

After Al left I tried to make light of it to Sam while I paid him his EC\$30 crew wages.

"We should try that on every trip!" I joked.

He didn't even smile. But to his undying credit, Sam remained my friend, and he never went off gallivanting with the dinghy again. Less than two weeks later I spent Christmas Day at his home in Callaqua. We barbecued chicken and fish outside his back stoop, drank beer and wine in abundance, and his mother and sisters all thanked me for saving Sam.

LOOK OUT FOR...

Devil Nettle - The Name Says It All!

by Lynn Kaak

As you travel through the Caribbean, every month there's something special to look out for.

While this may be paradise for many cruisers, there are still botanical "snakes" to be found in this Garden of Eden for the unlucky wanderer. These are definitely plants to "Look Out For!"

One of these plants is the Devil Nettle, also known as callaloo chaude, pica-pica, burn bush, bull nettle and a few other descriptive names. This can be a very irritating plant should you inadvertently brush up against it.

With a height from 30cm to 150cm (about one to five feet), it can catch uncovered skin quite easily. The leaves have a shape reminiscent of a maple leaf, and the stalks have little hairs or bristles, about 1cm long, ready to sting unsuspecting passers-by. During the rainy season, the plant has small white trumpet-shaped flowers. This plant starts out more herb-like, and the stalks become woody with time.

Devil Nettle is generally found in elevations less than 300 metres (about 980 feet), growing in sandy soil where there is moderate to low rainfall. It also loves to live on and around wide trails and in open pastures, as it likes the sun (but can tolerate some shade). The hiking trails around Carriacou are a prime example of its habitat, but it can be also found throughout the Caribbean and Southern United States.

The bristles on the plant are perfectly designed to ensure that one does not knowingly go back for a repeat encounter with the burn bush. The tips of the hairs are slightly enlarged for maximum effect. The rest of the hair is designed to inject the toxin, like a hypodermic syringe. For most people of European descent, it will give a stinging, irritating sensation for up to 45 minutes, but for many people of African descent, it can create welts and sores that can last for several days. The white sap is also not conducive to a happy hike, as it is quite corrosive. If one were tempted to eat it, it might cause swelling, vomiting and even unconsciousness.

The scientific name *Cnidoscolus Urens* is derived from the Greek *knide* - nettle and *skolos* - thorn; *urens* means burning. That name is well chosen, don't you agree?



MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2014

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

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

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

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

November 2014					
DATE	TIME				
1	1925	22	1148	12	0419
2	2018	23	1243	13	0502
3	2110	24	1339	14	0544
4	2203	25	1436	15	0627
5	2256	26	1533	16	0710
6	2349	27	1628	17	0756
7	0000 (full moon)	28	1722	18	0843
8	0043	29	1814	19	0934
9	0137	30	1906	20	1028
10	0230			21	1125
11	0320			22	1224
12	0409	1	1957	23	1323
13	0456	2	2048	24	1421
14	0541	3	2140	25	1557
15	0624	4	2232	26	1611
16	0707	5	2325	27	1703
17	0750	6	0000 (full moon)	28	1754
18	0833	7	0018	29	1845
19	0918	8	0110	30	1936
20	1005	9	0200	31	2027
		10	0248		

YOUR USED SAILS WANTED!

Designed to benefit fishermen in Haiti, **SECOND LIFE SAILS** is a Clean Wake Project of the Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) in a joint venture with Free Cruising Guides.

Donations of used sails and fishing equipment can be sent to either Minneford Marina at 150 City Island Ave., Bronx, NY 10464 (www.minnefordmarina.com) or to Marina ZarPar in Boca Chica, Dominican Republic (www.marinazarpar.com). School and first-aid supplies are also welcome. A receipt for your donation will be given upon request.

Frank Virgintino, developer of Free Cruising Guides, will take all donated items to Haiti during February 2015 and distribute them to fishermen in a number of communities.

For more information contact Frank Virgintino at fvirgintino@gmail.com or SSCA board member Catherine Hebson at cmvhebson@gmail.com.

The Sky from Mid-November to Mid-December

by Jim Ulrik

In recent articles I addressed some causes of "unidentified" objects in the sky. Some of the objects covered were iridium flares, unusual star twinkle and satellites. Weather balloons may be another reason, but they are unlikely to be found flying over the Caribbean Basin.

You happen to see a passing point of light in the sky. What could that one be? The International Space Station is not scheduled to pass over. Well there is another space station that hasn't received much press. That would be the *Tiangong-1*, Chinese for "Heavenly Palace". The China National Space Administration (CNSA) placed its first experimental Chinese space station module into low Earth orbit in

2011. The number of viewable passes of *Tiangong-1* from mid-November to mid-December will range from 16 in Grenada to 19 in Antigua. The launches of *Tiangong-2* and *Tiangong-3* will follow over the next few years leading to a permanent space station for China.

Of course it would be better to have dark skies for the best view of the objects in the night sky. Lights are a distraction and they reduce the awareness of the celestial sky. It is getting harder to find any place that doesn't have some degree of light pollution. Outdoor lighting is intended to reduce crime, increase home security and provide for road safety. Of course we all know that even daylight doesn't offer much benefit to the goals mentioned above. Take a look at Figure 1 to see the lights of the Caribbean.

During this period Jupiter is located between Cancer and Leo. Mars can be found in the west at dusk and will move from Sagittarius then enter Capricornus on December 11th. Saturn, Venus and Mercury are all daytime objects throughout this period. They will line up behind the Sun on November 18th. And the New Moon will join the lineup on November 22nd.

Tuesday, November 18th

Leonid meteors will peak this morning. The source of these meteors is the constellation Leo. Look east after midnight and you will find Jupiter with Leo rising just before 0100 hours. The maximum number of meteors expected to be visible from a dark location is around 20 per hour and traveling at 160,164 mph (257,760 km/h). The interference from moonlight will be minimal. The Moon rises at 0240 but will only be 16 percent illuminated.

—Continued on next page

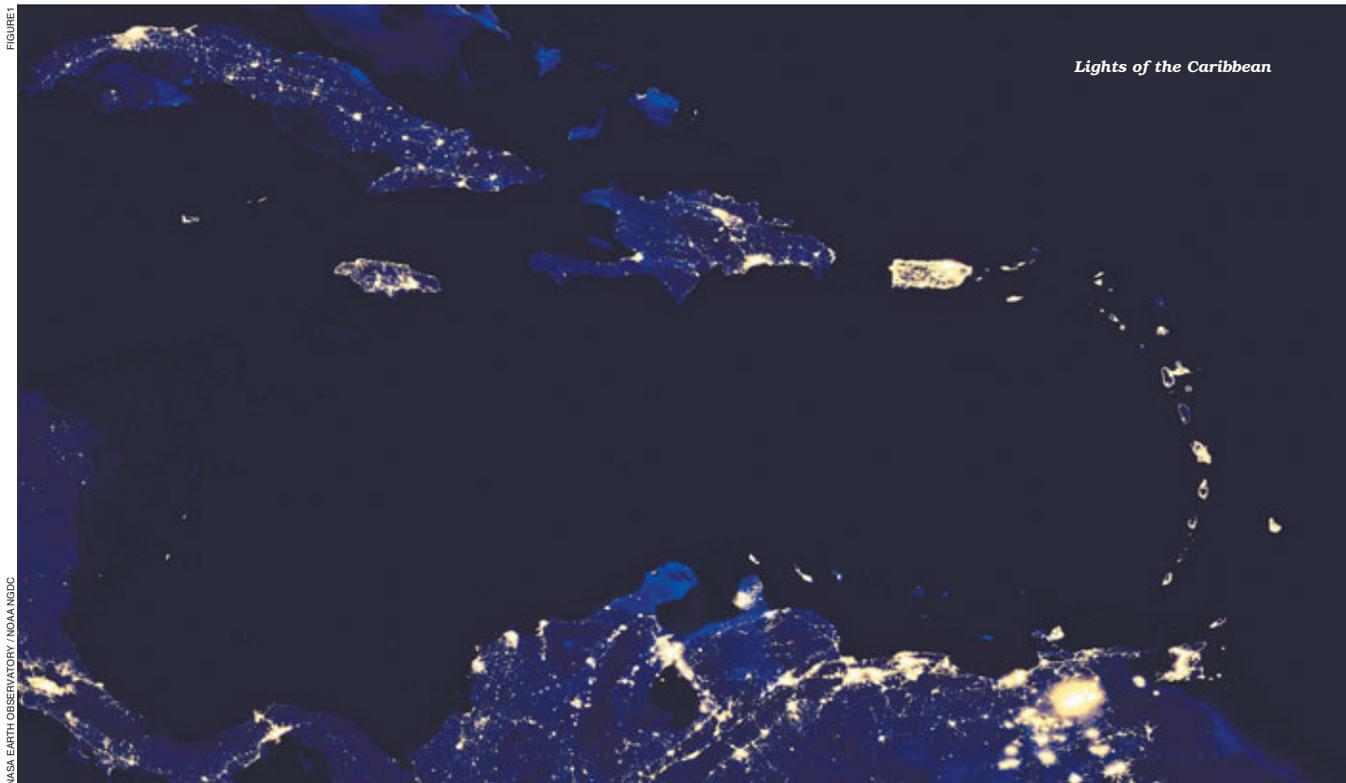


FIGURE 1

NASA EARTH OBSERVATORY / NOAA NGDC



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—Continued from previous page

Friday, November 21st
The Alpha-Monocerotids meteor shower will reach its peak. The source of the shower is the Canis Minor constellation. Canis Minor can be found rising in the east around 2200. The meteor quantity is highly variable. So, this year's number of meteors remains to be seen. The greatest volume of meteors present appears to be in ten-year intervals. That interval falls in 2015. Next year's shower could bring over 100 meteors per hour.

Saturday, November 22nd
The New Moon moment is at 0833. Because the Sun and Moon are in line, look for a higher low tide today.

Tuesday, November 25th
The crescent Moon pairs up with red planet Mars at dusk in the western sky. Both will be near Sagittarius. The ERBS satellite will pass in front of the Moon at 1930. NASA's Earth Radiation Budget Satellite (ERBS) was designed to investigate how energy from the Sun is absorbed and re-radiated by the Earth.

Sunday, November 30th
The Sun takes its place in the constellation Ophiuchus. Poor Ophiuchus is destined to be left out of the Zodiac. The Sun will remain there from November 30th to December 18th.

Wednesday, December 3rd
NASA has predicted that the orbit of the International Space Station will pass near the Moon on December 3rd at 1808 hours, plus or minus 11 minutes. A second prediction from NASA is for the International Space Station to pass near Mars on Saturday, December 6th. That is supposed to occur at 1716. For the greatest accuracy, most predictions posted are for no more than ten days out. These predictions were dated September 26th. Check <http://spothstation.nasa.gov>.

Monday, December 8th
Look for the Moon to be in Gemini, the radiant of the Geminid meteors. Today marks the beginning of the shower activity.

Tuesday, December 9th
The Puppis-Velid meteor shower will reach its maximum rate of activity. The meteors radiate from the poop deck (Puppis) and the sail (Vela) on the great ship constellation Argo Navis. Look for 15 meteors an hour to pass overhead. The meteors will be traveling at 82,766 mph (133,200 km/h).

Sunday, December 14th
Tonight marks the maximum shower activity for the Geminid meteor shower. The number of meteors expected to be visible from a dark location could be around 100 per hour. Check Figure 2 for the source of the shooting stars. The Geminids are often bright and intensely colored. Take advantage of the early show because the meteors may start to be visible at 1900. The Moon at 50 percent illumination won't rise until 0032 on December 15th.

Figure 2: X marks the source of the Geminid meteor shower at 1900 on December 14th.

Figure 3: The probe from the Rosetta spacecraft will set down on the plus sign.

Figure 4: Current coral bleaching hotspots.

In The News

The asteroid capture spacecraft and probes that orbit or land on asteroids will advance the knowledge base of these objects. For space exploration, the water found on asteroids can be used as fuel. It is also estimated that the mineral wealth on the asteroids between Mars and Jupiter is valued at over 120 million in US Dollars for every person on Earth. Of course if that materialized, a loaf of bread would probably cost 120 thousand dollars. Rosetta is orbiting and the lander *Philae* was scheduled to touch down on comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko on November 12th. See the landing spot on Figure 3.

In more news from space and to Earth, satellites and collaborations between Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES), European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT), NASA, NOAA and approximately 40 research institutes study coral bleaching. Their observations have concluded that areas of the Caribbean are currently under a coral bleaching warning. Reef mortality is predicted south of Grenada to the coast of South America. Satellites help determine when there is an increase in ocean temperatures and acid levels. The coral bleaching is due in part to these increases. That will have a negative impact on the habitat and population levels of fish and shellfish.

* All times are given as Atlantic Standard Time (AST) unless otherwise noted. The times are based on the viewing position in Grenada and may vary by only a few minutes in different Caribbean locations.
Jim Ulík is a photographer and cruiser currently based in Grenada.

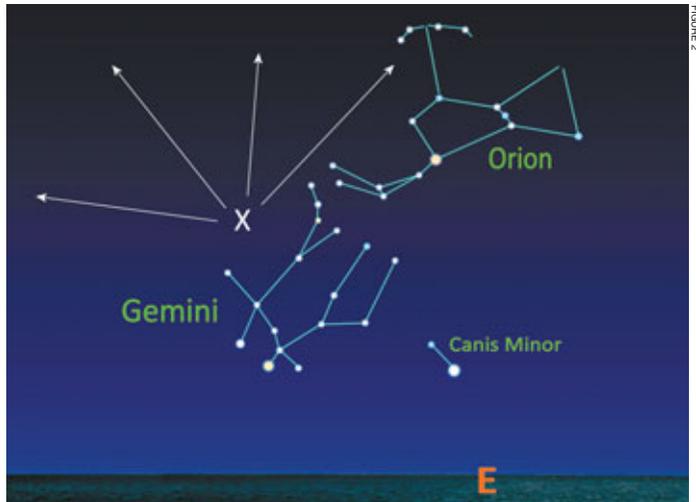


FIGURE 2

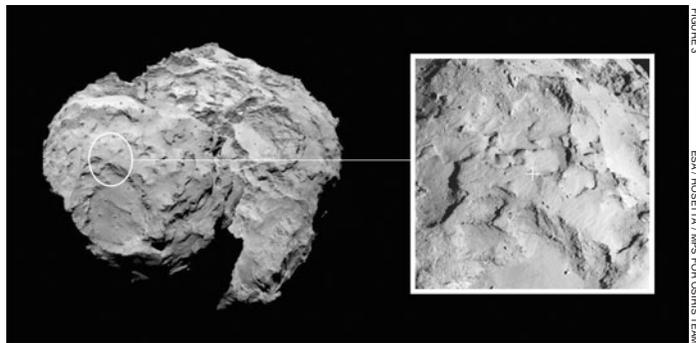


FIGURE 3

ESA / ROSETTA / AMS FOR OSIRIS-REXTM

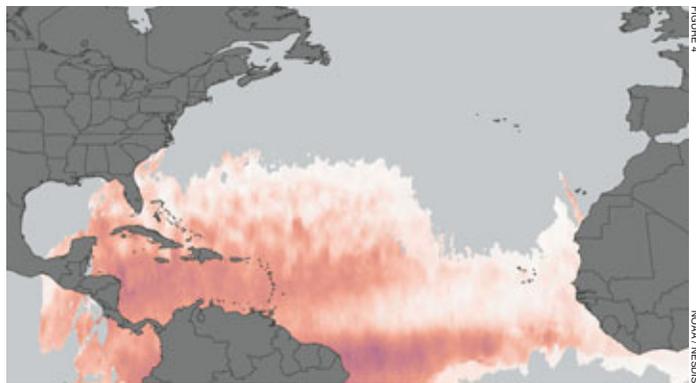


FIGURE 4

NOAA / NESDIS



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UNIQUE CINNAMON

Traveling throughout the Caribbean you must encounter spice vendors. Local spices are authentic souvenirs that will continue to remind you of the place and people where they were purchased.

Cinnamon is grown on many Caribbean islands. Raw cinnamon comes in strips of bark rolled one in another, called "quills". Cinnamon should smell sweet when you buy it, and will stay fresh in a sealed container until you grate or grind and measure it for your recipes. I love the fresh sweet fragrance of cinnamon.

Cinnamon is the inner bark of a tropical evergreen tree and one of the oldest spices. True cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*), or Ceylon cinnamon, is native to Sri Lanka and much high-quality cinnamon is still grown there. Cassia is a related spice that is sometimes sold as "cinnamon". Ceylon cinnamon has a more subtle taste than the more pungent cassia. Much of the "cinnamon powder" sold in the United States is actually cassia, grown in China and Southeast Asia.

Cinnamon is mentioned in Chinese writings as far back as 2800 BC. The Queen of Sheba gave cinnamon as a gift to King Solomon. In ancient Egypt it was used as a drink, medicine, a preservative for embalming, and could be considered more valuable to the Pharaohs than gold. The Portuguese conquered Sri Lanka in 1536 to control the world's cinnamon supply. A century later the Dutch took control of Sri Lanka and

started the planned cultivation of the spice that still exists. Instead of permitting the trees to grow tall, the Dutch transformed the tree into almost a bush by continually cropping and topping. The Dutch fought to control the valuable cinnamon monopoly for two hundred years until the English imported cinnamon farming to South America and the Caribbean. Today, cinnamon is one of the flavors used in "cola" soft drinks.

A trimmed cinnamon tree will grow from ten to 25 feet with a thick, very scabby, rough bark. Cinnamon grows better in sandy, well-drained soil with good,

3 Tablespoons vegetable oil (prefer canola)
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
salt to taste

Peel, seed and cube the pumpkin or squash to make about eight Cups.

In a sizable bowl, thoroughly combine pumpkin or squash cubes with honey or syrup and oil. Arrange on a foil-lined baking tin. Combine cinnamon and salt and sprinkle over the cubes. Bake at 400°F for 20 minutes. Stir and continue baking for another 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with rice.



Use a box grater to roughly grate the cinnamon in quill form, and then a spice grinder to pulverize it. Caution: freshly ground cinnamon is much more potent than the supermarket variety



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A Cruise to Grand Cayman
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... and much more!

constant moisture. The leaves are shiny, and the blooms are small pale yellow flowers that become dark purple berries.

Cinnamon has many health benefits. It is considered a mild tranquilizer and relieves nausea, gas and diarrhea. A tea of cinnamon and ginger is great for fighting a cold or flu as well as indigestion. One-half teaspoon of cinnamon each day may reduce blood sugar and cholesterol in Type II diabetes sufferers. It has also shown promise in the treatment of arthritis, high cholesterol and memory function. Cinnamon can help with weight loss because it helps reduce blood sugar.

Those with any condition of the digestive system such as an ulcer should be careful when eating cinnamon. More than half a teaspoon may cause the lining of the stomach to become irritated. Large amounts of cinnamon have been reported to increase heart rate, which could be dangerous for those with a heart condition.

One tablespoon of cinnamon has 17 calories with only one calorie from fat and five from carbohydrates. It is a source of manganese, calcium, and iron.

Cinnamon is essential in my kitchen here in Trinidad. I use it in cakes, cookies, puddings, drinks, and curries, and it pleasantly changes the usual taste of bean and eggplant dishes. On cold rainy days, make a tasty drink of warmed milk with cinnamon and honey, or add it to coffee with cocoa powder. And don't forget the old standby, cinnamon toast: buttered toasted bread sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon is an easy treat.

A pinch of grated nutmeg often goes well with cinnamon, so be sure to grab some whole nutmegs, too, when you visit the spice vendors for your cinnamon.

Cinnamon West Indian Pumpkin

A large piece of West Indian pumpkin (or one large yellow "winter" squash such as butternut, acorn or crookneck)

1/4 Cup honey or maple syrup

Easy Cinnamon Apples

4 tart apples (prefer Granny Smith or McIntosh)

2 Tablespoons brown sugar

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

pinch grated nutmeg

2 Tablespoons water

1 Tablespoon butter

It used to be hard to find good apples in the Caribbean, but today it's much easier. If you can't find apples, or prefer to buy local, try this recipe with under-ripe mangoes. Makes a great side dish with roast meats, an accompaniment for waffles or French toast at breakfast, or a yummy dessert atop ice cream.

Core apples and slice about a quarter inch thick. (It is up to you whether or not to peel the apples. Do peel mangoes.) In a small pot, combine all dry ingredients with apples. Stir in water and butter. Cook over medium heat for ten minutes, stirring so it doesn't stick or burn. Cover and remove from heat. Let sit for 15 minutes so the flavors soak in.

Cinnamon-Apple Oatmeal Crisp

4 apples

1 Cup oatmeal

1 Cup baker's flour

1/2 Cup local brown sugar

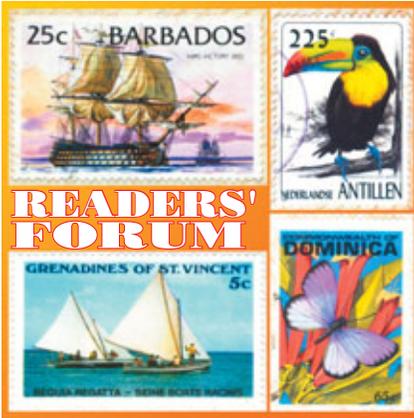
1/2 Cup melted butter

1 can applesauce or apple pie filling

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

pinch grated nutmeg

Here's a perennial favorite that would be nothing without cinnamon. Core and chunk the apples. In a bowl combine oatmeal, flour, sugar, and melted butter. In a greased baking dish, combine apple pieces and applesauce or pie filling with one teaspoon of the ground cinnamon and the nutmeg. Cover apples with oatmeal mix. Sprinkle top with remaining cinnamon. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes or until top has browned.



WINDWARD WORDS

Dear Compass,

In the July 2014 issue of *Compass*, Christine Gooch wrote an excellent article on Mayreau. In it, she wondered about the anchorage on the windward side of this little Grenadine island: is it sheltered if the wind is blowing hard?

It is perfectly sheltered by the barrier reef no matter how hard it blows. Look at Imray Iolaire chart B311 and use the range transit to enter, with Six Penny Hill bearing 022 degrees magnetic. Use eyeball navigation; do not rely on a chart plotter. This anchorage is described on the back of charts B31 and B311, and also in *Street's Guide Martinique to Trinidad*.

That it is well sheltered is confirmed by an article in the September 2014 issue of *Cruising World* magazine, "Try a Ride on the Windward Side". The author enjoyed uncrowded anchorages on the windward sides of both Mayreau and Canouan. The author also had a wonderful time on the windward side of Martinique, which is covered in *Street's Guide Martinique to Trinidad* and by Imray Iolaire chart A301 (front and back).

What the *Cruising World* article missed was the windward side of Carriacou at Grand and Watering Bays: four miles of barrier reef perfectly protecting the anchorages with the wonderful boatbuilding village of Windward at the north end of the bays. See chart B311, sailing directions on back of both B31/B311.

Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

'EIGHT BELLS' APPLIES

Dear Compass,

It is my good fortune to live near Andover, Massachusetts, USA, where, in the Addison Gallery of Art, Winslow Homer's magnificent "Eight Bells" is on display. There was a time, in my college years, when I went to see it explicitly; recently, no longer young, I have seen it, while seeing other exhibits, two or three times.

The bells account as many know — or used to know — to the three times in the day when the ship's clock's sound cycle — marked on the half hour, beginning with one bell, from eight or twelve or four — was concluded. These corresponded to the beginning and end of a sailor's watch. Which is why "Eight Bells," used by *Caribbean Compass* and many other publications, is appropriated for the end of a sailor's watch, or — need one say? — his or her life.

Re: his letter in September's *Compass*, let Don Street, whose reputation and very long life hardly need my amplification, rest easy at anchor in Ireland or wherever and find, in a Mount Gay's or Heineken's comfort, that "Eight Bells" will apply to him and the rest of us who, still writing and sailing, remain so unrestful.

Richard Dey
Massachusetts, USA

I LIKE JAMAICA

Dear Compass,

I have cruised Jamaica a number of times and have written the *Free Cruising Guide to Jamaica*.

In the October edition of *Caribbean Compass*, an article entitled "What's On My Mind... Port Antonio, Jamaica: The Beauty and the Buts" reports that the author and her husband were "hassled" while in Port Antonio, albeit how they were hassled is not indicated. They found their taxi driver "aggressive and incompetent" and the town of Port Antonio "busy, dirty and incredibly noisy". The author says she was pushed and shoved in the supermarket. She also commented that, "being at anchor was a refuge".

Obviously they did not like the town. Port Antonio is a quaint old Victorian town, down on her heels, perhaps dusty and maybe even dirty here and there. It can be noisy, as many Caribbean towns cover their poverty with noise, color and loud music. But all the times I have visited Port Antonio I have never felt in danger nor have I been hassled. On the contrary, I found the open market in Port Antonio is a place full

of celebration and wonder. I took this photo in that open market and all I felt and saw was the joy that was in the moment.

I would like more people to visit Jamaica and experience what was once the Caribbean jewel of the British Empire. Don't let an article like this dissuade you.

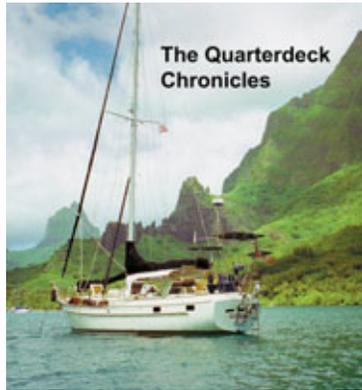


Read the free cruising guide to Jamaica (www.freecruisingguide.com) and go to Jamaica.
Frank Virgintino, Author
Free Cruising Guides

ADVICE TO CRUISERS

Dear Compass,

It's been three years since my last Kindle e-book was made available on Amazon. It seems to be doing well. I wrote another e-book, also on cruising, and published it last night!



My first book, published in December 2011, was *The World is My Oyster*. My husband, Paul and I were out cruising full time for 23 years. The book is about our life, sailing around the world on our CSY44, *Quarterdeck*. That first book told of the joy of discovering exotic ports.

This second book, named *The Quarterdeck Chronicles*, is about all the bad things we (and companion boats we traveled with) ran into. If the first book was "the good", this second is "the bad and the ugly".

We met so many friends in our cruising life; that life is so social and there's nothing like it on land, not even cruising in an RV. We still visit and write to our many friends living everywhere from Malaysia and Thailand to the States. Last summer we were in Puerto Rico looking after a boat for friends who had to leave their boat in hurricane territory; it was a nice break for us. For three months we enjoyed cruising life again, even meeting friends from our previous years in the Caribbean.

A fellow we met there was just starting cruising and had read my first book. He commented that we had such good weather; he said if more cruisers knew that you could plan such good weather they would cruise further afield, even go bluewater cruising. So that's what this book started out as. But as with my first book, the second gives advice to cruisers about things to avoid, the drug areas, the robberies, even murders, and inevitably things one cannot avoid: a tsunami or an El Niño year.
Sandra Johnston
Quarterdeck

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Dear Compass Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!
Be sure to 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. Please keep letters shorter than 600 words. Letters may be edited for length, clarity and fair play.

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CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- 1 Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda (Independence Day), and Colombia and Haiti (All Saints' Day)
- 2 Public holiday in Haiti (All Souls' Day)
- 2 Start of Caribbean 1500 and ARC Bahamas rallies from Virginia, USA to Tortola, BVI and Green Turtle Cay, Bahamas. www.worldcruising.com/carib1500. Start of Route du Rhum race from St. Malo, France to Guadeloupe
- 3 Public holiday in Dominica (Independence Day)
- 6 FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Pinney's Beach, Nevis
- 8 - 10 Triskell Cup Regatta, Guadeloupe. www.triskellcup.com
- 9 Start of ARC+ from Gran Canaria to St. Lucia via Cape Verdes. www.worldcruising.com/arc
- 11 Public holiday in Colombia (Independence of Cartagena)
- 13-18 Golden Rock Regatta, St. Maarten/Stafia. www.goldenrockregatta.com
- 14 - 16 St. Croix International Regatta. www.stcroixyc.com/regatta
- 18 Public holiday in Haiti (Battle of Vertieres Day)
- 19 Public holiday in Belize (Garifuna Settlement Day) and Cayman Islands (Remembrance Day)
- 19 - 23 St. Barth Cata Cup (F18 catamarans). www.stbarthcatacup.com
- 21 Round Tortola Race, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC). www.royalbvivc.org
- 22 - 23 Jolly Harbour Annual Regatta, Antigua. Jolly Harbour Yacht Club, Antigua (JHYC). www.jhycantigua.com
- 22 - 29 17th Annual Hobie Fun Week, Virgin Gorda. Bitter End Yacht Club (BEYC). www.beyc.com
- 23 Public holiday in Montserrat (Liberation Day)
- 23 Start of ARC from Gran Canaria to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia www.worldcruising.com/arc. Also St. Lucia's ARC Flotilla 2014 from Castries Harbour to Rodney Bay, arcflotillastlucia@mail.com
- 25 Public holiday in Suriname (Republic Day)
- 28 - 29 Thanksgiving Regatta, St. John, USVI. henstjohn@yahoo.com, (340) 513-4955
- 28 - 30 Course de l'Alliance, St. Martin. www.coursedelalliance.com
- 28 - 30 Mango Bowl Regatta, St. Lucia. <http://stluciayachtclub.com>. **See ad on page 11**
- 30 Public holiday in Barbados (Independence Day)
- TBA Carlos Aguilar Match Race, St. Thomas. www.carlosmatchrace.com

DECEMBER

- 5 Sinterklaas Birthday Celebration, Bonaire
- 5 - 11 Antigua Charter Yacht Show. www.antiguayachtshow.com
- 6 Gustav Wilmerding Regatta, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), (284) 496-8685, martin@sailsistership.com
- 6 FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Pinney's Beach, Nevis
- 7 24th Annual Gustav Wilmerding Memorial Challenge, Tortola. WEYC
- 13 Public holiday in St. Lucia (National Day)
- 13 St. Croix Christmas Boat Parade. www.christmasparadestcroix.com
- 13 Commodore's Cup Race, BVI. RBVIYC
- 14 'Christmas Caribbean Rally' departs Canary Islands bound for Antigua. www.sailingrallies.com
- 15 Public holiday in Bonaire (Kingdom Day)
- 16 - 24 Nine Mornings Festival, St. Vincent. <http://discoversvg.com>
- 18 - 21 30th Annual Havana International Jazz Festival, Cuba. www.apassion4jazz.net/havana.html
- 19 Public holiday in Anguilla (National Heroes' Day)
- 21 Winter Solstice
- 24 14th Annual North Sound Holiday Lighted Boat Parade, Virgin Gorda. BEYC
- 25 Public holiday in many places (Christmas Day)
- 26 Public holiday in many places (Boxing Day)
- 26 Boxing Day Race, Barbados. Barbados Cruising Club (BCC). www.barbadoscruisingclub.org
- 26 Tobago Kite Festival
- 27 - 28 Dominica Christmas Regatta. info@dominicamarinecenter.com
- 28 First Annual Dominica Poker Run, Mark@CaptainMarksWay.com
- 31 Nelson Pursuit Race, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC). www.antiguayachtclub.com
- 31 New Year's Eve/Old Year's Night. Fireworks in many places, including Trellis Bay, Tortola; Admiralty Bay, Bequia; Kralendijk, Bonaire; and Fort-de-France, Martinique. Public holiday in Montserrat; half-day holiday in Curaçao

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

We are on-line:
www.caribbeancompass.com

Letter of
the Month

Dear Compass,

This is Diana and Harold Thompson of *S/Y Zephyrus*. We recently did a trip up to St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands that, on arrival, turned into a nightmare. We are United States citizens. Because we sailed from Venezuela we were apparently profiled as drug smugglers. Thank you for letting us share our experience.

First some background information on us.

In 1990 we started sailing the open ocean, which included a three-year circumnavigation of the Caribbean. We then purchased our current boat, *Zephyrus*, which has been our home for the last 14 years. Starting a circumnavigation of the world in 2000, we traveled some 65,000 nautical miles and visited about 65 different countries and island groups. We have been subjected to numerous boardings and drug inspections by different Customs agents in the course of our travels.

After completing our world circumnavigation, we went to Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela to haul the boat and have the bottom painted. We found that we liked the protected sailing of the barrier islands of Venezuela and have made the Marina Bahia Redonda our home base for the last seven years. During this time we have made a number of trips to the islands of the Caribbean. We had never before had a problem with Customs when we declared that we were arriving from Venezuela. This includes a trip to St. Thomas in 2007 to test for our Ham radio license.

Our reason to sail to St. Thomas this time was to access US postal services and to do some shopping for items difficult to find in Venezuela (such as cooking oil, brown sugar and toilet paper). The situation in Venezuela is becoming increasingly unstable and we had decided that this was to be our last sail. We are putting *Zephyrus* on the market.

The sail from Puerto La Cruz to St. Thomas was five days in total. On the third day we lost our headsail due to equipment failure. We motorsailed the last two days under mainsail.

At dawn on May 29th, 2014 we motorsailed into the port of Charlotte Amalie. The weather was unsettled with gusty winds. We were having difficulty, as the red entrance buoy light was not operating. There was a lot of ship traffic; we contacted one ship and altered course to avoid a collision.

The Coast Guard called us on VHF radio, asking whether we needed assistance. We declined. Several minutes later we were approached by a Coast Guard inflatable and asked where we were coming from. We said inbound from Venezuela. The Coast Guard personnel said that they wanted to do a safety inspection and asked where we were going. We said that we were heading for the anchorage. They said to proceed.

With Harold forward to ready the anchor, we motored into the harbor with the Coast Guard behind us. Coast Guard personnel appeared to be on a telephone and told someone "Venezuela". The Coast Guard personnel then told us that they wanted us to tie to the Coast Guard pier for the safety inspection.

We said that we had been sailing for five days and were not set up to tie to a pier: all our equipment had been stowed for passage. The Coast Guard personnel said that they would provide us with fenders and that we would be side-tied to their inflatable inside the Coast Guard Pier area. We found some dock lines, secured them and proceeded to motor into the harbor under Coast Guard supervision.

The Coast Guard inflatable went ahead to the inside pier area. We started to follow. Suddenly, a man dressed in shorts, shirt and flip-flops and holding up a dinghy fender yelled at us that we were to tie up on the outside of the pier. We turned *Zephyrus*, passed the pier about five feet off and expressed concern about the condition of the rough concrete pier. Diana explained to this unknown man that the fender he was providing was not appropriate and that we had been told fenders would be provided. In a sarcastic tone the man said, "What, don't you have any fenders?" Diana told him that we had been at sea and were prepared to anchor, not to come into a dock. He rudely said, "How were you going to check into Customs? What are you, fish? Were you going to swim? You walk on water?" We said that we had planned to anchor and dinghy into Customs as we had done in the past.

We were confused as to this treatment. In the past Coast Guard personnel have always been polite, courteous and very helpful. It got worse.

By pointing to the pier, Harold indicated to the man that he was concerned that the pier was unsuitable for our vessel. The man yelled that he "would be disrespected by being pointed at" and that if Harold spoke again he would be handcuffed and placed under arrest! We explained that we needed to dig out our own fenders (as appropriate fenders had not been provided as promised). At this point the man said, "I give you permission to use your own fenders."

We tied our fenders to the lifeline and turned into position to come alongside. The bow and stern lines were passed to Coast Guard personnel on the pier. We were not given an opportunity to correctly dock our vessel; everyone seemed very anxious that we get tied up as quickly as possible. As Harold was going forward to adjust fenders to the proper height, Coast Guard personnel pulled on the bow line, dragging *Zephyrus* full length against the broken cement of the pier. We were not given an opportunity to adjust the fenders until after the damage had been done.

Dismayed by the damage, we were still expecting the Coast Guard to begin their safety inspection, but were ordered off the boat by the man in shorts. At no time did he offer his name or any explanation as to what was happening. Harold shut the engine down and was yelled at for touching the engine controls. We were not allowed to turn off any of our navigation equipment, so alarms and whistles were constantly sounding. We dug out some shoes, as the pier was rough, and were disembarking when we saw the Customs personnel with a large dog. We explained that we had a cat on board, and asked permission for Diana to retrieve our cat in its carrier. This took a couple of minutes as everything was stowed for sea. Everyone on dock was yelling: "Hurry up!" "What's the problem?" "What is she doing down there?"

With Tigger finally in the cat carrier and on the dock, we were both told to sit down and not move.

The man in shorts went aboard *Zephyrus*; again no explanation as to what was happening. We had been through Customs boardings involving drug dogs previously and this did not appear to be proper procedure. In the past, we have always been told the agent's name and informed that the vessel would be searched for drugs. Normally one of the yacht's crewmembers is to accompany Customs personnel so that the crew is assured of nothing being planted and no damage to personal property. This was not the case in this instance.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

We were made to sit in the sun on the raw cement pier while numerous personnel went aboard our vessel. The Customs man with the dog had difficulty in opening the lifeline gate. Harold offered assistance. He was yelled at to sit down and "Don't come anywhere near me!" and was again threatened with being handcuffed.

More Customs personnel showed up. Others in casual attire showed up and stayed away from us, but would look at us and then make some remark to the man in shorts. The Customs personnel never identified themselves. There was an atmosphere of a show being performed, with the man in shorts strutting around showing off. We were both in shock. We did not understand what was happening.

The man in shorts said, "Well, you came from Venezuela!" He asked Diana sharply about being in California in 2012, even though he had her passport, which showed she had been in Venezuela throughout 2012. He asked her height, and had she ever been arrested in California. Diana told him that she had not been in California since 1967 at the age of seven.

The man in shorts later asked Harold why the bottom of the boat was so clean. Harold explained that the bottom had a good cleaning before departing Venezuela. The man in shorts then made a statement about being able to buy toxic bottom paint in Venezuela. Harold explained that our bottom paint was purchased from West Marine in the US. Then a Customs officer asked us if we had any pot on board. Harold replied, "I am 76 years old and have never smoked pot in my life!"

Diana engaged in conversation with another Customs agent, saying that we had come to St. Thomas to pick up our mail and to do some shopping. She told him that this boat has been our home for the last 14 years and that this was going to be our last sail. "We started sailing in St. Thomas and wanted to make it our final landfall." She also said she wished she had never come here, and was confused by the abusive treatment. Harold then overheard a conversation between two men: "Aren't these people US citizens? What are you doing?"

Eventually the man in shorts emerged from *Zephyrus*, making a remark about needing a shower after being down in a hot boat for hours.

Finally the Coast Guard safety inspection was carried out. Their only comment was that the head discharge needed to be in the closed position.

Harold asked about the damage done to our boat. We were told to wait. Then we were told that the person responsible for assessing the damage was busy and did not want to come down.

We were told we could proceed to anchor, but that we must check in with Customs — and "tell them you are the boat from Venezuela".

Harold asked the man in shorts if he could take photos of the damage to *Zephyrus* and the pier. The man in shorts whispered, "Don't even think about it — besides, you are not getting a dime for your damage; you were driving the boat." Harold stated that when lines are passed to personnel on a dock, command of a vessel passes into their hands. The man in shorts said, "Get off the dock."

At anchor, we assessed the interior of the boat. Personal effects were thrown everywhere. We got ourselves cleaned up and dressed and went to the Customs office, but found it closed for lunch. At around 1400 we entered the Customs office and informed them that we were the boat arriving from Venezuela. The lady behind the counter said, "Okay, fill out these forms." We were expecting that there would be some kind of report pending, but she seemed unaware of the situation. We then told her what had happened. She could tell that we were both distraught and that Diana especially was upset by what had occurred. She helped us complete the necessary entrance paperwork and then told us she would get a supervisor.

After waiting about an hour, we were able to talk to a Customs supervisor, who informed us that we needed to complete Form 95 'Claim for Damage, Injury, or Death'. We explained to him that we did not know the names of any of the personnel involved in our boarding, but that the man in shorts and flip-flops had been very rude and that we wanted to file a complaint about violation of our civil rights.

He explained that Customs personnel all wear uniforms and have nametags, that this had been a Coast Guard operation, not Customs, and that we would need to contact the Coast Guard to file the complaint. We were given the name of a Coast Guard supervisor. By this time it was 1630 and the Customs office was closing.

We proceeded the next day to the Coast Guard station. We recounted the story of our boarding — and were told that this was a Customs operation, and not Coast Guard!

We explained to him that the Coast Guard had approached us for safety inspection and we were brought into the Coast Guard pier. He said that "as a courtesy we let Customs use our pier". We explained to him that we were brought to the pier under the statement that the Coast Guard would be doing safety inspection. We were never informed that Customs wanted to board.

We added that we wanted to make a complaint against the man in shorts for violation of our civil rights. He said he did not know who the man in shorts was, but that he would find out. We waited over an hour while he made inquiries. Later, he returned with the name and said that the man in question was on his way over to talk to us. We informed him that we had no desire to speak with the man, and could we please have the form to file our complaint.

We were put in touch via telephone with Scott Moore, Director Marine Operations, Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. We gave him a summary of the boarding and tried to express our concerns about the violation of our civil rights. Director Moore asked us to compose this summary of events. [Editor's note: This letter contains an edited version of the longer summary sent to Director Moore.]

We filed a complaint with the US Department of Homeland Security (of which Customs is a part) about the treatment we received and told them we would give them time to resolve our complaint. Since then, we have heard nothing from them.

We have returned to Marina Bahía Redonda in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela. We received a courteous reception from the Venezuelan Customs and Immigration. We were boarded by the Venezuelan Coast Guard for a safety inspection while we were anchored off one of the Venezuelan islands. Again we were treated with respect and courtesy.

Harold and Diana Thompson
S/V Zephyrus

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NOVEMBER 2014 NO. 230 The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

COMPASS COVERS & YOU!

The amazing ongoing technological advances in digital photography have really lifted the quality of images we are able to offer in *Caribbean Compass*. Whereas in years gone by, most of our cover shots were taken by pros, today an amateur photographer with good-quality equipment and an eye for color and composition also has — no pun intended — a shot.

If you would like to submit a photo for consideration as a *Compass* cover, read on.

We love images of people on sailboats having fun in the Caribbean. If you can show some coastline recognizable as Caribbean, or other recognizable Caribbean landmark or subject of interest to boaters, all the better. Action and color are good.

Although a tiny distant boat in swathes of sea and sky isn't too interesting, do try to make sure there is some space at the top of the image (usually a bit of sky) for our header.

Remember to shoot in portrait (vertical) format — just turn your camera sideways for a "tall" shot! Images should be at least 10.2 inches wide by 12.5 inches high at 300dpi or greater. If you don't know what this means, set your camera to take the largest photos possible. Image quality must be sharp. If your images are too large for e-mail, send them through an online service such as Dropbox.

Please don't get all artsy with Photoshop. Please. Just don't.

We can't use photos that have appeared previously, or will appear simultaneously, in any other Caribbean publication or anywhere on-line.

Cover photos are judged and chosen by a number of criteria including technical specifications and our particular needs at the time. If your photo isn't used, it doesn't mean it wasn't good.

Send submissions for cover photos to sally@caribbeancompass.com. Be sure to tell us the name of the photographer, and include a brief description of the shot (i.e. who is in it, when and where it was taken, etcetera). We look forward to seeing Caribbean sailing through your lens!

—Continued from page 15 ...Regatta News

Marine services from experienced companies are in plentiful supply and the capital of Grenada, St. George's, is just a few minutes away. Yachts entered for Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week get 25 percent off docking fees for up to ten days at Port Louis Marina.

Prickly Bay Marina is party central for the regatta with a lively bar and daily prizegivings. There is top quality live music every night with a fantastic last night dinner and prizegiving. Traditional Grenadian entertainment, including the Tivoli Drummers and a 40-piece steel band, play their hearts out.

IWW Grenada Sailing Week is not the biggest regatta in the Caribbean but the organizing committee is passionate about attracting more sailors to the event and making sure they have a memorable visit.

"Friendship is a deep part of our culture and we take immense pride in welcoming visitors to Grenada but this is not enough; race management is very important. If our guests come ashore happy then that is a great way to get the party started.

Everybody is welcome to the regatta and where practical we can provide courses that suit groups of boats. Last year we ran 12 different race courses, suitable for out-and-out racers to coastal courses for beginners. If you are thinking of coming to Grenada for the first time, we assure you that you will not be disappointed and for those of you returning to Grenada; we will be delighted to see you again," says Marc DeCaul, Board Chairman of Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week.

For more information see ad on page 13.

Round Martinique Carnival Regatta

The Round Martinique Carnival Regatta will run from February 13th through 15th, 2015. This new regatta is the result of combining the former Tour de la Martinique and the Martinique Carnival Regatta.

The program will include three races along Martinique's southern and eastern coasts, through Marin and Robert to return to Fort-de-France Bay along the northern and western coasts. The regatta is open to all, with adjusted courses for the Tempest, Class40 and Cruising Classes.

For more information visit www.theroundmartinique.com.

Early Discount for St. Thomas International Regatta

Register now! The St. Thomas International Regatta (STIR) will take place March 27th through 29th, 2015, continuing into its fourth decade with an exceptional program of world-class yacht racing. The STIR is renowned for its serious racing reputation that attracts both the latest yacht designs and greatest skippers and crews from across the globe as well as the Caribbean's hottest rock stars.

No other regatta in the Caribbean offers so many classes and rating rules under which to compete. Teams are invited to enter in Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA); IRC; High Performance Rule (HPR); Mullihull; CSA Bareboat; PHRF for boats from the U.S. Virgin Islands, British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico; Beach Cats; and One-Design classes with a minimum length of 20 feet.

Take advantage now of a big discount on early registration. Entries received and paid for in full by 5:00PM AST January 31, 2015 pay only US\$250. The registration fee between February 1st and March 24th, 2015 increases to US\$400 for all boats, except US\$250 for beach cats and US\$300 for IC24s and PHRF boats.

Register online at www.yachtscoring.com. The NOR is available at www.stthomasinternationalregatta.com. For more information contact stycisv@gmail.com

First Annual Dominica Poker Run for December 2014

The First Annual Dominica Poker Run is scheduled to run from 12:00 to 5:00PM on December 28th, 2014, starting and ending at the Portsmouth Area Yachting Services (PAYS) pavilion at the north end of Prince Rupert Bay. Dinghies, riverboats and other motorcraft are invited to participate in this event.

The Poker Run stops at four local beach bars — Prince Rupert's Tavern, Blue Bay Restaurant, Indian River Restaurant and Purple Turtle Restaurant — and culminates with the traditional PAYS Sunday barbecue party. The best poker hands made from the six cards collected from around the bay win prizes donated by local businesses and individuals. Proceeds from the event are distributed to the not-for-profit PAYS group, the Portsmouth Community Tourism Association (PCTA), and to local charities with the overall goal to promote yachting and tourism in the Portsmouth area of Dominica.

"It will be a fun day for everyone and we have lined up some great prizes, music and sponsors," reports Mark Denebeim who, along with yachting enthusiast

Lisa Bellot, organized the Dominica Poker Run. "We are adding to the list of reasons to drop by Prince Rupert Bay while supporting these important local associations and charities."

Indian River boats and their skippers are available for those who don't want to "drink, drink and drive" or don't have their own water transport.

"We are happy to participate in this unique and fun event along with our PAYS brothers," says PCTA President Andrew "Cobra" O'Brian, "and to help promote the Portsmouth area tourist attractions."

Tickets can be purchased from the PCTA at their Indian River office, Sanctuary Yacht Charters in Picard, PAYS in Lagon, and participating restaurants and sponsors. The infamous PAYS rum punch is included with all ticket purchases!

For more information contact Mark@CaptainMarksWay.com or LisaH.Bellot@gmail.com; PCTA pctaindianriver@hotmail.com, (767) 445-4237; PAYS seabird123@hotmail.com, (767) 245-0125, or Andrew "Cobra" O'Brian (767) 245-6332.

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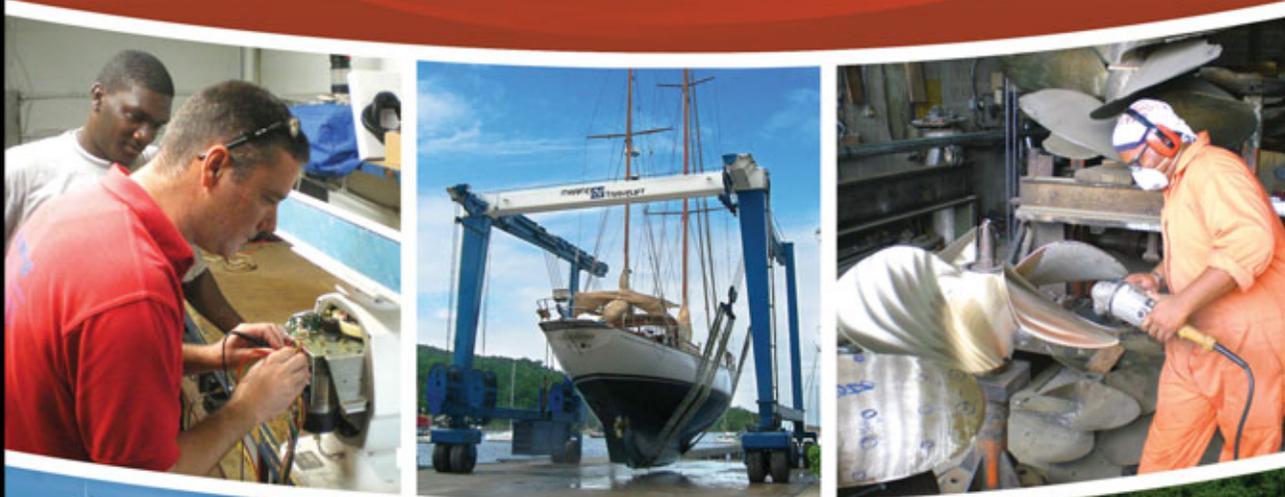
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