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SEPTEMBER 2006 NO. 132
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



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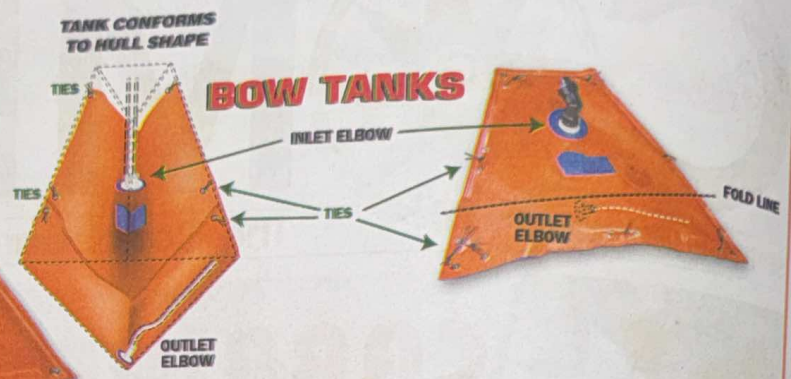
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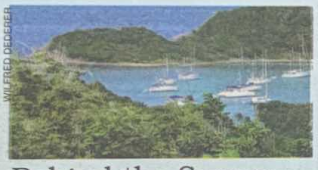
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Info & Updates

One Arrest in 'Death Yacht' Case

The Caribbean Media Corporation reported in July that local and international investigators have made a breakthrough in the case of 11 bodies discovered on a small yacht found drifting off Barbados earlier this year.

The investigating team, which includes Barbadians, Scandinavians, and Interpol, had been seeking to trace occurrences during the ill-fated voyage that started in the Cape Verde islands around December 24, 2005, and ended in Barbados, where the bodies were discovered about 72 miles off shore on April 29.

The 52 passengers who set sail aboard the hard-chined steel vessel were refugees from various West African countries. They boarded the yacht in the hope of reaching the Canary Islands, investigators say. Engine troubles apparently developed, and the yacht went adrift across the Atlantic without adequate supplies of food or water. Investigators theorize that the bodies of those who died were thrown overboard, until the last 11 no longer had the strength to do so.

The team has so far confirmed that authorities in Cape Verde, in close collaboration with colleagues in Senegal, have made one arrest and that one of the victims had been positively identified. However, the statement from the investigators did not give any details on the arrest, nor did it reveal the identity of the known victim, but said given that both local and international probes were continuing into the matter, "all relevant information has to be handled sensitively".

The investigators are using DNA and other available evidence to assist in carrying forward the probe. Included in the investigating team are an odontologist (dental forensic specialist), who is also the team leader from Norway; a pathologist and a fingerprint expert from Sweden; along with a forensics police officer/information technology expert from Denmark. "The Barbados police and forensic authorities, the Nordic team and Interpol will continue to work closely in this matter," the statement added.

Cruisers Help Clean Carriacou Beaches

Marjorie Mowry reports: Carriacou Regatta early-birds staged a clean-up campaign that schlepped tons of garbage from Tyrell Bay's beaches. Islanders joined dozens of cruisers in gathering discarded galvanized panels, abandoned chain, rusty barrels and innumerable bags of miscellaneous garbage, which were ferried away by launch, then trucked to the public waste facility. Planks, logs and other burnable flotsam were incinerated in several huge bonfires. Many thanks to organizers on *Windborne III* and other volunteers for a job well done.



RICHARD HAVER

Beach clean-up volunteers Andy Morris (yacht Happy Spirit*), Carriacou native Fitzroy Alexis, and John Eberhart (*Possible Dream*) celebrate 'the rake's progress'*

Plug Pulled on 'Water Park' in Barbados?

Norman Faria reports: "Tourists don't want to visit a Disney-type water playground — they come for the real Caribbean sea and sand and for genuine watersports." That was one of the main points brought up at a July 11th town hall meeting of some 200 Barbados residents which was held to discuss a "water park" proposed for the island's south coast by US investor Matthew Kerins. Also involved in the proposed project is Whitewater West Industries, which builds "aquatic attractions" and owns a large fiberglass and specialty plastics manufacturing facility in Canada. Plans for the proposed development include water slides, a large swimming pool and other attractions similar to such parks in the US.

The citizens' vehement opposition, which has the apparent backing of the island's Minister of Health who was in the audience, may have pulled the plug on the venture. It also still has to get permission from the Town and Planning Department, and reliable sources told *Compass* that's unlikely.

If given the go-ahead, the development would be adjacent to the Graeme Hall Wildlife Sanctuary, the island's major wetlands area. It is a stopover for migratory birds and a major roosting site for cattle egrets. Other negatives raised by the residents about the proposed US$22 million theme park: noise and light pollution, increase in traffic congestion, possible contamination of the wetlands in the adjacent sanctuary by chlorine used to treat the park's fresh water, and utilization of valuable agricultural land. Other concerned persons said that a "Coney Island type" theme park would detract from the island's high-end tourism product.

Kerins claimed the fears were unfounded and his company had put effective management measures in place to avoid certain problems. His project would have employed 125 people and assisted the island's tourism sector, he told the gathering. However, he said if it was turned down he would "pack up my bags and go to another island".

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St. Lucian PM Orders Visitor Crime Review

In July, St. Lucia's Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony ordered an immediate review of procedures adopted by government agencies following crimes committed against visitors to the island. The Prime Minister ordered the review following a meeting with officials of the Ministry of Tourism and the Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association.

According to the Prime Minister: "It is clear that crimes committed against visitors can have dire consequences for the visitors — and indeed, for all of us. Aggrieved visitors have a capacity to vent their anger on the Internet, thus causing severe damage to our reputation.

"Our Police Force, in particular," he explained, "has to be sensitized to better follow up on crimes against visitors, as this is where the major breakdown takes place. Equally, the roles of the respective agencies involved in following up on crimes committed, need to be clarified."

Prime Minister Anthony said: "Visitors to the island need to be reassured that they are not being neglected by our law officers." He added, "The need for sensitivity applies not only to the visitors, but also to all of our citizens who are victims of crime. They too need to be reassured that their concerns are being addressed."

Prime Minister Anthony reiterated that "our tourism industry is so important to our economy and to our national development that we all have to be as concerned about attacks on visitors as we are about crimes against citizens. It is important for all Saint Lucians to understand that one single incident can have grave consequences for all of us."

He urged that "the objective of all of us, including the law enforcement agencies and related bodies, must be to create a safe environment in Saint Lucia for ourselves, that visitors can also enjoy."

Hurricane Prediction Update

Teri Rothbauer reports: The prediction for this year's Atlantic basin hurricane activity was adjusted downward in early August by Professors Klotzbach and Gray of Colorado State University.

There were small changes in atmospheric and oceanic conditions in June and July. Did you notice the slightly above-average tradewind strength, the decrease in sea surface temperature or the slightly above average Atlantic sea level pressure? (Ha!)

These conditions, plus a slight rise in the eastern equatorial Pacific sea surface temperature, are forecast to produce an active hurricane season, but not as active as in 2004 or 2005. However, don't quit listening to the daily weather forecasts; the professors plan to issue further updates on September 1st and October 3rd.

Parameter	New Seasonal Forecast	Original Forecast	1950-2000 Season Average
Named Storms	15	17	9.6
Named Storm Days	75	85	9.1
Hurricanes	7	9	5.9
Hurricane Days	35	45	24.5
Intense Hurricanes	3	5	2.3
Intense H'cane Days	8	13	5

On August 24, a tropical wave developed into a tropical cyclone as it passed over the Windward Islands. Aircraft reconnaissance in Tropical Depression #5 reported sustained winds just under tropical storm force. On the ground, Barbados reported sustained winds of 37 miles per hour with wind gusts to 51 mph. Tobago had gusts to 36 mph, and St. Lucia reported sustained winds of 33 mph with gusts to 43 mph. The centre of the cyclone dissipated and re-formed over the Grenadines. As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, the system has formed into Tropical Storm Ernesto and is over Cuba.

New Rules for Flying from Caribbean

According to an August 11 report on the Caribbean Net News website (www.caribbeannetnews.com), enhanced security measures were implemented at most, if not all, of the region's airports following news of a foiled bomb plot in Britain.

The following enhanced security measures were typically applied to airline passengers departing from Caribbean airports.

1) No liquids or gels were permitted to enter the sterile area through the screening checkpoint or be in accessible property or on one's person except:

- Baby formula, breast milk or juice if a baby or small child is traveling
- Prescription medicine with a name that matches the passenger's ticket
- Insulin and essential other non-prescription medicines

2) Passengers were not permitted to take liquids and gels purchased inside the sterile area onboard the aircraft. (Ask whether duty-free purchases can be delivered to you aboard the aircraft.)

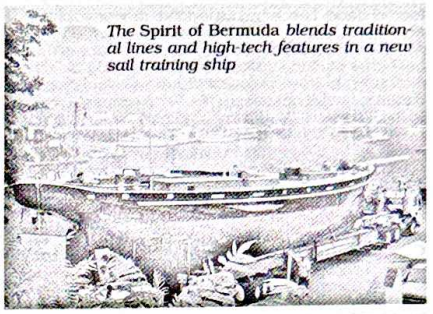
For purposes of the new security directive, liquids and gels include beverages, shampoo, suntan lotion, creams, toothpaste, hair gel, and other items of similar consistency.

3) All footwear had to be removed and x-ray screened. Passengers were advised to travel light and have minimal clutter to expedite the screening process. Passengers were also advised to be at the airport for check-in three hours before departure.

New aviation security measures are being directed by the UK's Department for Transport. However, with the threat being directed to US airlines, the CIAA will facilitate implementation of US directives to carriers flying to the US. Certain aspects of these regulations have eased somewhat since their implementation in August. For updates visit www.baa.com and www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assistant/new-procedures.shtm. Airlines may also choose to follow more stringent security measures. Check with your travel agent or airline before flying.

Spirit of Bermuda Launched

The Sail Training Ship *Spirit of Bermuda* was launched on August 13th. Designed by Langan Design Associates of Rhode Island, and built by Rockport



The Spirit of Bermuda blends traditional lines and high-tech features in a new sail training ship

Marine of Maine, the 88-gross-ton Bermudian schooner is based on designs of traditional Bermudian vessels and measures 112 feet from the tip of the boom to the bowsprit (85 feet on deck). While based on historic ...

—*Continued on next page*

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—Continued from previous page

...boats of the early 1700s, with her masts tilting back 17 degrees, the cold-molded schooner is not a replica and includes high-tech features. This was the largest vessel ever built by Rockport Marine. Bermuda cedar, shipped up from the island, lines the interior.

Bermudian dignitaries, supporters, sponsors and Bermuda Sloop Foundation team members present for the launching included Minister of Labour and Training, the Hon. Terry Lister; Jay Bluck, Mayor of Hamilton; and Nick Carter, Deputy Governor. Also on hand were six young Bermuda sailors who will join several other Bermuda youths on the maiden ocean voyage to Bermuda later this month.

The Bermuda Sloop Foundation was founded in 1999 as a non-profit Bermuda charity. The foundation's goal is to raise money through corporate and personal membership, tuition, fees for usage and large group chartering, retail sales, and endowments, all of which will fund the Spirit of Bermuda's education program.

For more information visit www.bermudasloop.org.

Charteryacht Owner Missing in St. Lucia

Patricia Lee, 60, an expatriate British woman who has lived in St. Lucia for over a decade, is missing and feared dead. Lee, who owned the charter yacht *Karen P*, a 50-foot Beneteau, and also ran the Three Amigos restaurant at Rodney Bay, disappeared from her home at Cap Estate in Gros Islet on August 10th.

According to a report by Richard Alleyne and Jeremy Bacon in the UK newspaper the *Telegraph*, she moved to the island in 1994 with her boyfriend Bernard Haddican to charter their yacht. They rented a house in the exclusive Cap Estate in Gros Islet while they renovated a home nearby. Haddican died three years ago.

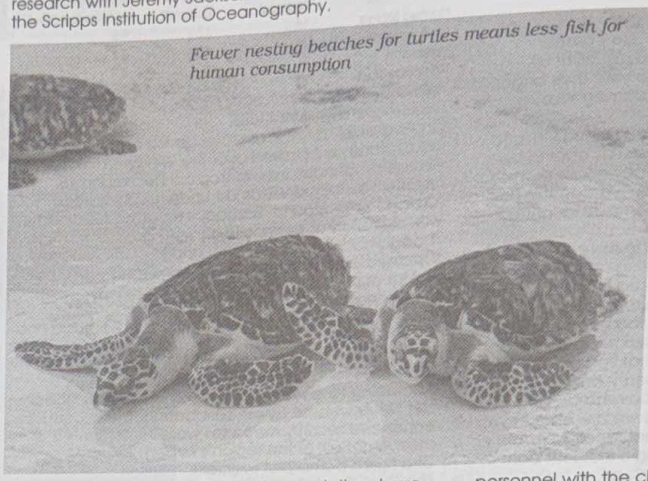
Police fear Lee was kidnapped and that a corpse discovered only a mile from her home two weeks after her unexplained disappearance might be hers.

Caribbean Sea Turtle Population Falls 99%

Current conservation assessments of endangered Caribbean sea turtles are too optimistic due to the decline of populations on historically important nesting beaches, according to new research from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

The study, published in the August issue of *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, says that while "conservation efforts since the 1970s have dramatically helped increase green and hawksbill turtle populations that nest on protected beaches... 20 percent of historic nesting sites have been lost entirely due to land development and turtle exploitation, and another 50 percent of the remaining sites have been reduced to dangerously low populations."

"The loss of even a single nesting site makes a permanent, irreversible dent in the sea turtle population," said Loren McClenachan, who conducted the research with Jeremy Jackson and Marah Newman of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.



Fewer nesting beaches for turtles means less fish for human consumption

The researchers estimate that turtle populations have declined significantly since the 17th century, with the number of green turtles living throughout the Caribbean falling from 91 million to 300,000 today and the population of Hawksbill turtles plunging from 11 million to less than 30,000 during this same time period. The change represents a 99.7 percent drop in historic Caribbean sea turtle populations for the two species.

McClenachan and colleagues suggest that the loss of nesting sites and nesting populations due to hunting contribute to the decline. They say that the re-establishment of lost nesting sites is "extremely unlikely" but that more protection is needed for existing sea turtle nesting sites.

The decline in sea turtles has had consequences for other marine life in the Caribbean. The researchers say that sea turtles, as "ecosystem engineers", shaped the environment around them by feeding on turtle grass (green turtles) and sponges (hawksbill turtles). "The ecological extinction of green turtles transformed an ecosystem with diverse species of seagrass dominated by large herbivores into a detritus-based ecosystem dominated by overgrown monocultures of one species of grass," said the researchers. "The decline in green turtles has led to a loss of productivity available to the animal food chain — including commercial reef fishes — reducing the protein-rich food available for the Caribbean people."

— Rhett A. Butler / mongabay.com

Help Wanted!

Want to help give a fresh start in life to some children in Venezuela?

From October 10 to 22, the non-profit Fundamigos group will be performing their 15th surgical mission for children with cleft palates, burns, skin cancer and other medical problems, at the Razetti Hospital in Puerto La Cruz. This is an invitation for anyone 18 years and older to participate in this mission, as so many cruisers have done in the past. Training will be provided.

Dr. Ana Velásquez de Manyon says, "We need people for the following: helping the hospital personnel with the children waiting for surgery and when they return; entertaining the children; translating for the parents; taking materials to other parts of the hospital; help with cleaning the operating room; getting equipment and materials; and help in the operating room."

Squeamish? No problem — kitchen help is also needed. Doctor Ana adds, "We also need snacks for the doctors and volunteers. We really appreciate your help, and await your comments, hoping we will receive help from the community as always."

For more information contact Doctor Ana at manyon@cantv.net.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome aboard new advertiser Fun Sail Tours of St. Lucia, page 22. Good to have you with us!

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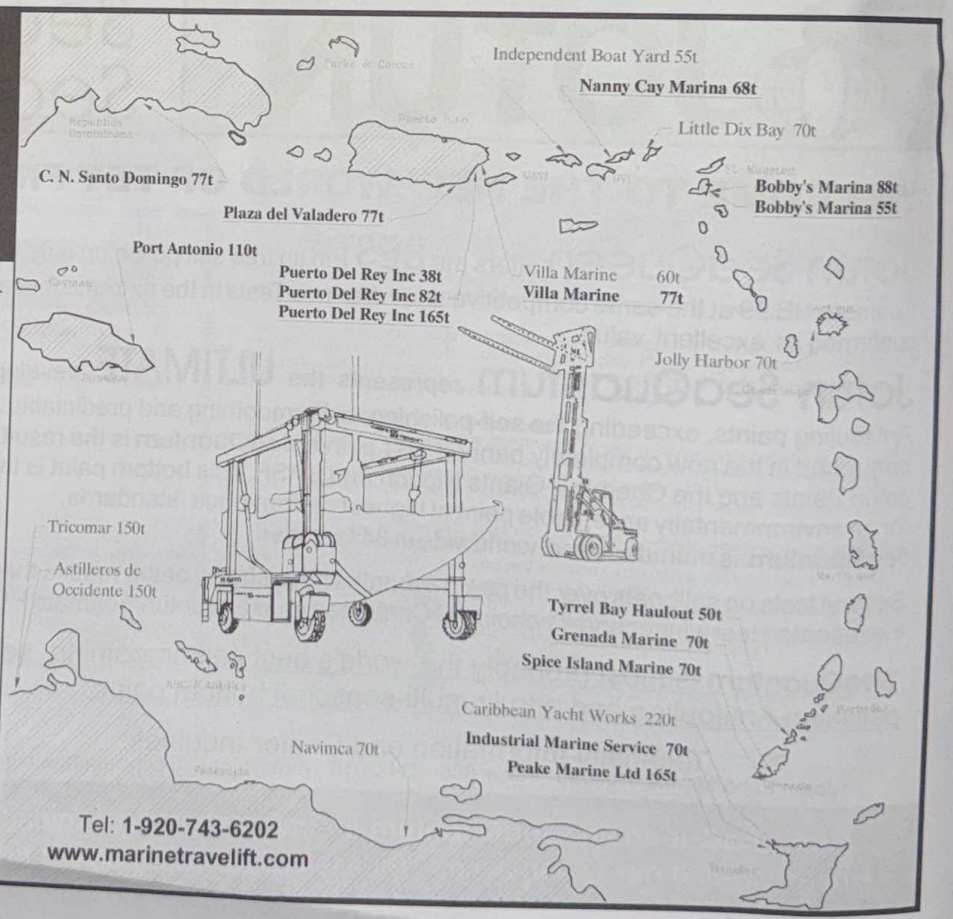
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Business Briefs

Budget Marine Donates used PCs to Schools
In July, Budget Marine Trinidad, the large retailer of boating equipment located in Chaguaramas, donated a used computer to each of the four schools in the nearby area. Carenage Boys Government Primary School, Carenage Girls Government School, Point Cumana RC Primary School and Point Cumana Government Primary School all benefited from Budget Marine's generosity. The passing on of this equipment is very much in keeping with Budget Marine's ongoing support for youth development through sailing.
For more information on Budget Marine see ad on page 2.



Geneva Pulchan, from Budget Marine Trinidad's marketing department, with appreciative pupils from the Point Cumana RC Primary School and their principal, Mrs. Mark

Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour Travelift Receives Full Certification
Marine Travelift, manufacturers of most of the world's straddle-style boat lifts, has notified Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour that its 70-ton lift has received full inspection and subsequently has been certified as a "quality approved marina lift", according to Keith Thomas, manager of shipyard activities at the marina. "The certification is further assurance to our many clients that our lift is deemed to be in excellent condition and approved to safely lift the maximum capacity of 70 tons it is rated for," Thomas said. It was noted that Virgin Gorda is only one of ten facilities in the Eastern Caribbean which has earned the certification. "When it comes to maintenance on our boat handling equipment," Thomas remarked, "nothing has a higher priority with our staff. The certification just tells us officially what we already knew."
Marine Travelift is the world's leading manufacturer of mobile boat hoists with more than 3,000 units worldwide.
For more information on Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour see ad on page 28.
For more information on Marine Travelift see ad on page 6.

New International Airport Terminal for Curaçao
Good news for cruisers summering in Curaçao! Flying home to visit friends and family, or having them come to visit you, is now even easier. Curaçao celebrated the grand opening of its new airport terminal in July, the first phase in a 30-year contract to develop and expand the Curaçao International Airport.
The new terminal is a state-of-the-art facility designed to meet international aviation standards and to accommodate future passenger traffic demands for approximately 1.6 million passengers per year. "The need for a new airport terminal in Curaçao is testimony to the island's growing popularity," said Clifton Walle, Executive Director of Tourism. "With the grand opening of the new terminal and with future airport expansions, we will be able to provide an even better experience for our visitors."
For more information visit www.curacao.com.

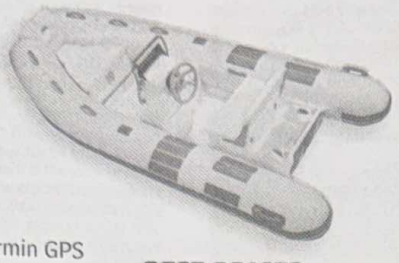
Changes at Woodstock Boatbuilders
Andrew Robinson, director of Woodstock Boatbuilders at English Harbour, Antigua, writes that after eight years working as first a boatbuilder, and ultimately as co-director, Vince White has left the company. "During this time the company saw huge growth to become one of the Caribbean's leading yacht...
—Continued on next page



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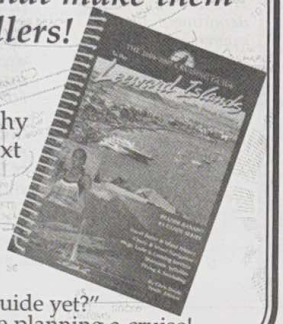
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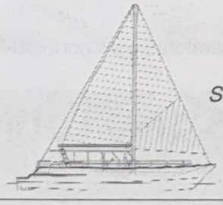
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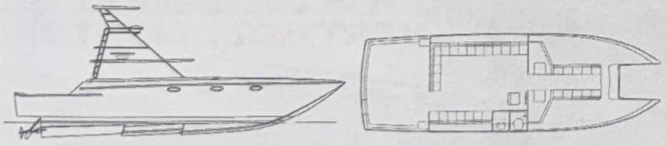
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...service companies, which in part can be credited to Vince's hard work, dedication and great experience in the field," said Robinson. "All at Woodstock wish Vince well in his future endeavours, which may well see us working together on joint ventures." During the summer months, Woodstock will be undergoing management re-structuring in preparation for what Robinson anticipates will be another very busy season. *For more information visit www.woodstockboats.com.*

Enhanced Security at Bas du Fort Marina

John Burnie, General Manager at Nautor's Swan Caribbean base in Bas du Fort Marina, Guadeloupe, reports that the marina management has installed new security gates at the entrance to a number of the key pontoons. "These gates are a very welcome addition and improvement to the marina security in general," writes Burnie. "In the past, the general open design of the marina facility allowed complete public access to many of the marina areas — including open access to many of the resident pontoon facilities. Sadly, modern attitudes to other people's possessions preclude such free and open access, and the boat owners in general are very pleased with the new security measure."

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Missing friends and family in Europe? Not able to get there yourself this summer? Why not invite them out to the sunny Caribbean! Sunsail, the yacht charter specialists, announce a one-off special price of £364 inclusive, to fly from the UK to Antigua on September 8th and return on September 29th.
Or, if you have crew leaving the boat, Sunsail offers a one way special, to London Gatwick from Antigua, on September 29th, US$416 inclusive.
Act now: there is limited availability.
Seats can only be booked by calling Sunsail in the UK on (0870) 770-6320 or e-mailing sales@sunsailflights.co.uk. Other last minute seats are available on www.sunsailflights.co.uk.

Coral Bay Marina Studies Requested

Newspaper articles in the USVI have reported that on August 10th, the St. John Coastal Zone Management Committee approved developer Coral Bay Marina LLC's permit requests to build a 116-slip marina facility on the island's East End, but in order to get the permits the developer must first submit to the agency a long list of studies, reports and plans.
Tim Fields of *The VI Daily News* reported that material required by the CZM includes an erosion and sedimentation control plan, a letter of compliance from the VI Fire Service, an air-quality certificate from the Department of Natural Resources, and a letter from the Water and Power Authority indicating it can provide enough power to the project.
Before permits are issued, the committee must also approve the following requested reports and plans:

- sediment control protections for culverts and storm drain inlets and outlets
- a sedimentation and nutrient monitoring program
- plans for an on-site generator and fuel storage
- a joint plan with Public Works to ensure public safety when crossing Route 107
- analysis ensuring that neighboring properties will not be adversely affected by the development
- a hazardous waste storage and management plan, including spill response measures, and
- a wastewater treatment and disposal plan.

Other special conditions involve the location of the marina and its wastewater treatment plant.
CZM mandated that Coral Bay Marina submit an engineering analysis that shows the docks could survive, at minimum, a Category 1 hurricane. CZM will hire an independent contractor to review that analysis.
The CZM committee is also requiring the developer to get a zoning variance on one parcel to allow for a proposed wastewater treatment plant.
Some St. John residents have expressed concerns over the project's current design, environmental impact and location. At a St. John Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Committee public hearing on July 13, the marina site's openness to the sea, inadequate depths and potential adverse environmental impacts were discussed. Another *Daily News* reporter, Jaime Elliot, quoted Dave Conro, commodore of the Coral Bay Yacht Club, as saying that the majority of the group's members are in favor of a marina, but not in this location. "The bottom line is that we think there is a better location in Coral Harbor," Conro said.
Phil Stringer, a 20-year Coral Bay resident and mariner with more than 50 years of experience, said that the proposed location for the marina is wrong. "I do professional boat delivery and have been to marinas from Nova Scotia to Venezuela," he said. "What concerns me is that this marina is in the most exposed location of any marina I've ever seen. It's wide open to the Caribbean Sea."
St. John resident Chris Clark, who called himself "extremely pro-marina," was also not in favor of Coral Bay Marina's proposed location: "A breakwater could be constructed for protection, but why bother when a marina could be constructed a hundred yards across the bay in a protected location?"
The principals in the project, which is expected to offer slips with electricity and telephone hook-ups, water, a pump-out station, showers and a laundromat, are all St. John natives. Trip Lea, owner of Compass Point Marina on St. Thomas, said another marina in the territory would help to bring back business lost to the British Virgin Islands.



Jazz in St. Thomas

It's not all Jimmy Buffett and calypso. Rob Kunkel reports that sailors are enjoying a thriving jazz scene at local watering holes in the USVI. The latest venue to join the trend is Bottoms Up in St. Thomas. The bar and restaurant has recently announced that Anna Tucker and Rhett Simmonds will be doing a Sunday gig there from 11AM to 2PM.
Best to call ahead at (340) 775-4817 to confirm the times — and the Sunday specials!

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Calling All Caribbean Potters!

Potters and sculptors working in the medium of fired ceramic are invited to submit work to the Second Annual Fireworks Show, now open Caribbean-wide, to be held 20 October to 9 November at Mango Tango Art Gallery, St. Thomas, USVI. The aim of the show, which it is hoped will become a yearly event, is to promote "excellence in ceramics as an art-form" in the Caribbean. Functional ware, both table and architectural, will be represented, as will representational and abstract sculpture. Ceramicists from Barbados, Antigua, St. Lucia, Anguilla, Tortola and all of the US Virgin Islands, have already committed to sending entries, and although online registration officially closed on September 1, artists can still contact the organisers directly by e-mail if they wish to take part. The actual entries must, however, be at the gallery in St. Thomas by October 6th.

Okay, this has nothing to do with boats, but if you're in St. Thomas, come along and enjoy the show!

For more information visit www.clayfireworks.com or e-mail fireworks@clayfireworks.com.

St. Maarten Charter Yacht Exhibition, December 2nd to 5th

After two successful events, developed entirely through the efforts of volunteers from the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association, the organisation of the 2006 St. Maarten Charter Yacht Exhibition has now been taken up by St. Maarten-based Super Yacht Services and a SCYE Committee chaired by Georgie Adamou. (The St. Maarten Marine Trades Association will still be hosting the event.)

Building on the feedback from captains and agents over the last two events, the 2006 show will again be centralized at Port de Plaisance, enabling easy access to the attending super-yachts. The Hospitality and Exhibition centre, reorganized to maximize attendee convenience, will contain a business centre, bar and food court, and complimentary wireless internet.

The dates for this year's show have sensibly been brought forward allowing captains and brokers access to both the SCYE and the region's other high-profile showcase, the Antigua Yacht Charter Show.

Because SCYE is a non-profit organization, anything left over gets put back into the community to educate the youth on St. Maarten. The first year, SCYE was able to donate US$10,000 to the St. Maarten Sea Scouts. SCYE's goal is to continue to contribute towards marine educational funds so that the yachting industry in St. Maarten can develop to its full potential; it is hoped that this in turn will help sustain the future of the charter industry throughout the Caribbean.

For more information visit www.scye.com or e-mail info@scye.com.

Sevenstar Yacht Transport Offer Ocean Crossing Discounts

Good news for participants of the St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta 2007 and the St. Maarten Charter Yacht Exhibition (SCYE) 2006. In an agreement between the Regatta organisers and Dutch-based Seven Star Yacht Transport, all participants in the upcoming St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht regatta in January 2007 will be eligible for a discount on their Atlantic crossing transport on board one of the cargo vessels operated by the company.

As an additional incentive and through the same agreement, sail and motor yachts which are not participating in the regatta, but who would like to attend the St. Maarten Charter Yacht Exhibition, will also receive the same discounts.

Captains are urged to contact Seven Star Yacht Transport or one of their European agents as early as possible to reserve space. Since this will be a special transport with rebate tariffs, only a limited amount of spaces will be available.

For more information contact info@sevenstar.nl.

Antigua Yacht Charter Show, December 6th to 11th

On-line registration for this year's Antigua Yacht Charter Show is now open for yachts, agents, press and marine vendors at www.antiguayachtshow.com. Organisers are urging participating yachts to book their dockage early at the three marinas to avoid disappointment. Dockage information is available on the website together with details of how to apply for the free airport pickup/ taxi shuttle to your hotel.

The Welcome Cocktail Party scheduled for Thursday 7th December will have live traditional music from the Carib Indians of Dominica. They will also be available everyday



at the Hospitality Desk giving information and showing a short film about their Gli Gli Canoe project. Interested show participants will have a chance to sail in this beautiful traditional dugout canoe, and donations will be gratefully accepted to fund their next project of sailing north to meet indigenous peoples on all the Caribbean islands.

For more information on the Gli Gli project visit www.gliglicaribcanoe.com.

For more information on the Antigua Yacht Carter show. visit www.antiguayachtshow.com.

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The second cruise is for the Finals, and includes tickets to one Super 8 match, the St. Lucia-based semi-final and the World Cup Final in Barbados on April 27. Additional tickets are also available. There will be world famous cricketers/commentators aboard to give pre- and post-match analyses and matches will be shown on a large flat-screen TV throughout the cruise. Some cabins have a third or fourth berth, and with lots of other special activities and parties aboard, it's a great deal for cricket-crazy groups!

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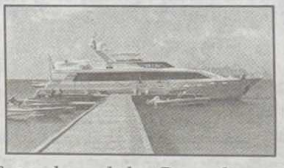
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Chaguaramas Meeting Seeks Solutions to Crimes Against Cruisers

by Linda Bloomfield

I arrived in Trinidad this week, from New Jersey, where I have grown up power-boating and sailing. I was joining my friend Roger Webb on the yacht *Cover Shot* for some relaxation and sailing. Roger has been writing about his experiences in the Caribbean and I became intrigued when Roger described his dinghy being stolen, and how there seemed to be an escalating rate of crimes committed against foreigners on boats. I was even more interested when I heard that there was a meeting to be held by the US Embassy, in response to being contacted about issues related to crimes committed against United States citizens in Trinidad.

Boat crime, security and immigration issues were topics addressed at the "Chaguaramas Warden's Meeting with the Yachting Community of Trinidad and Tobago" held at The Lure restaurant on Thursday, August 24th. I was very impressed that over 150 cruisers, as well as representatives of the US, British, Canadian and German Embassies, the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT), the Chaguaramas Crime Cruisers' Working Group, and many local businesses were in attendance.

Kevin O'Connor, from the US Embassy, explained that the US Embassy is there to promote the welfare of American citizens, helping with such things as passport and notary services, benefits, custody situations, and births, deaths and emergencies abroad. He explained that the US Embassy is NOT a security or safety agency, and that crime MUST be handled by the appropriate local enforcement agency. "Crime perpetrated against an American must be reported to the proper agencies," O'Connor emphasized. Once a US citizen overseas reports a crime against them, the US Embassy can then follow up, he went on to explain. If requested, *after* a report is made to local authorities, the US Embassy will try to expedite the investigation and outcomes in cooperation with the local authorities.

Ray Kahn, the US Embassy Regional Security Investigator, who is responsible for the security of the US Embassy, gave tips on personal security, as well as statistics that, unsurprisingly, reveal that crime has escalated in the last year or two. These numbers do not include many incidents that you see in the media, because they have not been reported to the police. Incidents must be reported!

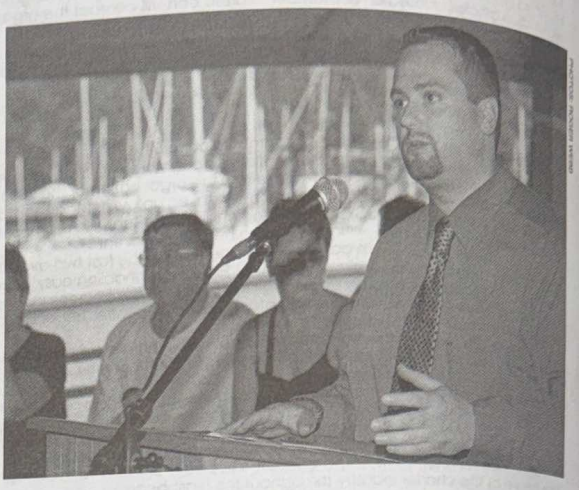
Since being made aware of the recent incidents, the US Embassy has requested that Trinidad & Tobago Police officers go out with the Coast Guard to conduct investigations on burglarized boats. The US Embassy has also requested that the Coast Guard investigate and attempt to locate stolen dinghies.

The following personal safety tips were reviewed:

- Be aware of what or who is around you in public places, including ATMs.
- Be suspicious of people approaching you while in public, or in your car, or on your boat.
- Lock in at night, and don't leave items on deck that would attract a thief.
- Secure your dinghy.

O'Connor then explained that US Embassies throughout the world use a system of US citizens residing overseas acting as "wardens" to disseminate information. Currently there are 23 volunteer wardens in Trinidad & Tobago. Kevin Kent, owner of The Lure, has volunteered to be the warden for the Chaguaramas community. If you register with the US Embassy you will get informational e-mails.

Don Perrine, chairman of the Chaguaramas Crime Cruisers' Working Group, explained that his group has put together a report on crime in Chaguaramas and its effect on local business. Business people have responded, and many were present.





Above: Kevin O'Connor of the US Embassy in Trinidad & Tobago emphasized that his Embassy can follow up — but only after crime reports are made to the proper local authorities

Left: All in favor of working together on security solutions, say aye!

Sharon MacIntosh, general manager of YSATT, stated that this association's mission is to develop T&T's yacht services industry in a controlled manner and to act as a government liaison. YSATT is NOT a policing agency, she noted, once again delivering the message that cruisers must report incidents to the police. She reminded the audience that things in Trinidad might not be done the way they are in cruisers' home countries, and that these problems will take time to fix. Meanwhile, YSATT has put together a free pamphlet of security tips specific to the problems in Chaguaramas. MacIntosh added that YSATT will keep in contact with the Coast Guard, and has proposed a Coast Guard outpost station that could be running within one year. YSATT also intends to extend hours of its harbor taxi service so yachties do not have to walk the roads between Chaguaramas businesses at night.

Allen Rost, yard manager at Powerboats, and Roger Flouk, CEO of Crew's Inn, both spoke about additional security measures that their facilities have taken. They expressed concern and ongoing commitment to address crime in the marinas.

After the meeting concluded, YSATT indicated that another meeting will occur within one month to update the cruisers on progress made concerning these serious issues.

I was very impressed by all who attended this meeting. The cruisers displayed concern and solidarity and I felt that the US Embassy personnel were very responsive to a situation that they've only recently been made aware of. YSATT and many yachting business owners in Chaguaramas are actively implementing short- and long-term solutions.

See related story on page 42, and letters in this month's Readers' Forum.

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Seven Seas Cruising Association
2006 Bermuda Cup 'Clean Wake Award' Winner

by Nancy Birnbaum

Every summer and fall, the Cruising Rally Association organizes offshore yacht rallies, including the Caribbean 1500 which takes sailors from the US East Coast to the Virgin Islands. Their summer event, the Bermuda Cup, is a 1,300-nautical-mile round trip from Hampton, Virginia, to St. George's, Bermuda. The Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) Clean Wake Award is presented to the individual, couple or family and their crew, who best exemplify the meaning of their motto: "Always leave a clean wake." All participants are eligible for the award and the winners are selected by the rally organizers. The award consists of a trophy and a one-year membership to the SSCA.

History of SSCA

The SSCA was founded in 1952 in Coronado, California, and was based on a single idea — that cruising sailors, both local and abroad, enjoy hearing from and about each other and that their experiences and discoveries can benefit all. From the start, the focus of SSCA was for members to share cruising information by sending letters about their experiences to the *Commodores' Bulletin*, to recommend others for membership, and to "leave a clean wake" so that others who follow will be warmly welcomed. Thus the Clean Wake Policy has been an integral part of SSCA from the beginning.

Camaraderie has also been an important feature of SSCA from the early days. The intention to go cruising, whether locally or worldwide, was extremely important to the membership. For nearly 54 years, SSCA had been a major influence in the cruising community.



The Abt family and crew, Ed Stepnoski, winners of the Clean Wake Award for this year's Bermuda Cup

Towards the end of 1975, after moving permanently to south Florida, SSCA was incorporated as a Florida "not for profit" corporation. Although the SSCA still depends on volunteers to organize all of its events and activities, there is a small and dedicated staff of three at "Home Base" in Fort Lauderdale.

Purpose of the Clean Wake Award

The primary purpose of this award is to recognize and reward those voyaging sailors who by their behaviors exemplify one of the main principles of the Seven Seas Cruising Association: to leave a clean wake, regardless of where the cruising occurs.

All individuals who cruise, whether they belong to the SSCA or not, should attempt to positively influence the environment and communities they come into contact with through their attitudes, communication and behaviors. At the very least, the cruising community must try not to unduly influence or change the cultures, peoples and lands which they come in contact with during their travels. We voyaging sailors are "out there" to experience other locations and cultures and our best compliment to these distant places is to leave them essentially as we found them, unspoiled, certainly in no way damaged by our visit, and hopefully better off as a result of our passage.

The Clean Wake Award is awarded annually to participants of the Bermuda Cruising Rally, the Caribbean 1500 and the Baja Ha Ha Cruising Rally. Additional rallies may be added to this list in the near future.

Criteria

The cruiser(s) picked to receive the award is (are) deemed the most worthy recipient(s) by fellow cruisers and event organizers at the conclusion of the cruise/race based on the following criteria:

1) A thorough understanding of what cruising means by actions that benefit other cruisers and/or persons in the host country where the group makes landfall.

2) Unselfish sharing of assistance, both before setting sail, en route, and upon arrival at the host country.

3) Ability to implement clean wake strategies that will make others take notice of and leave a good feeling about the visiting yachts and the cruising community within the host country/location.

4) Willingness to communicate actions to others so that they might be duplicated and spread to the cruising community at large.

5) Ultimately, to leave — by attitudes, behaviors and communication — the impression of a positive experience "in the wake" of the voyaging fleet.

The Winners

Over the last 13 years Bob and Karen Abt of Holly Springs, North Carolina, have owned a Compac 16, a San Juan 21, a Hunter 27 and their current boat *Aquila*, a Cal 39. Even with the smallest boats, they enjoyed sailing the North Carolina coast along the Neuse and Pamlico Rivers and Pamlico Sound. "We chose the Cal 39," (shoal draft version) says Bob, "because it seemed like a great boat for the Sound, could be handled easily by two, was seaworthy enough for bluewater adventures and fit our budget. It helps that she's also a pretty boat, because we've had to redefine what fitting our budget means exactly, but we have no regrets." When they bought *Aquila*, she had just returned from a Mediterranean trip, and so had most of the upgrades they thought she needed. The Bermuda Cup was the first bluewater adventure for the family. Ed Stepnoski, a sailing friend, joined as crew for the trip to Bermuda. "Highlights," reports Bob, "include meeting the second fleet in the fog, sailing into St. George's Harbor (no engine), and night watches. The trip was a success and there's more bluewater in our future."

When he's not sailing, Bob is the Director of Graduate Programs, Professor of Forest Economics at North Carolina State University, Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources.

Nancy Birnbaum is the editor of the SSCA Commodores' Bulletin. *For more information or to join SSCA, contact Home Base: membership@ssca.org or call (954) 771-5660. For more information on Cruising Rally Association events, including this year's Caribbean 1500, visit www.carib1500.com.*

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REGATTA NEWS

Nicolini is Queen at Kingfish Tourney

Carol Bareuther reports: Girls just want to have fun. And, that's just what St. Thomas' Jill Nicolini did on July 16, when she decided she didn't want to sit at home and instead accompanied her husband, Michael, and Capt. Lou Elias, as they headed out aboard Elias' 33-foot Proline Express, *Islander*, for a day of fishing in the Annual Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament, hosted by the Northside Sportfishing Club, at Hull Bay Hideaway.



Ruth Gomez, in green shirt, with some of the catch that gave her the Second Largest Kingfish, Third Largest Kingfish and Best Female Angler prizes

"My husband and I just moved to the island in February, after Hurricane Katrina destroyed our home. He fished in another tournament earlier this year, but this was the first one for me," says Nicolini, who does have experience sports fishing in the Gulf of Mexico.

The three-member crew of *Islander* set off from the south side of St. Thomas and trolled between Buck Island to the east and west of the Charlotte Amalie harbor. "We caught our first fish at 5:45AM," says Nicolini, as she and her fellow anglers enjoyed a Coors Light, distributed by the tournament's major sponsor, Bellows International Ltd.

Nicolini says "From then, until about 10AM, it was steady. We never had two on at the same time, but they just kept coming in. I ended up catching eight fish."

One of these was a 19.33-pound kingfish, which won the Largest Kingfish prize for Nicolini — US$2000 in cash, sponsored by N.E.M. (West Indies) Insurance Limited, managed in the USVI by Red Hook Agencies, Inc.

The Second Largest Kingfish and Third Largest Kingfish prize went to angler Ruth Gomez, with a 19.15-pound and 17.14-pound catch, respectively, aboard the *Lady Marie*. Gomez received US$750 cash sponsored by FedEx and US$500 cash sponsored by Bellows International Ltd., plus other luxury gifts.

With 17 fish caught total, Julian Aubain aboard the *Lady Marie* won the Best Boat award. He pocketed US$1000 cash from Offshore Marine and Yanmar, in addition to many other prizes. The catch of seven kingfish earned Lou Elias, at the helm of *Islander*, the Best Captain award and US$1000 cash award from Offshore Marine and Yanmar. Shawn Berry, fishing aboard the *Beva Feva*, caught 90.31-pounds of eligible species fish to land the Best Male Angler award and a US$500 cash prize from Offshore Marine and Yanmar. Ruth Gomez set a tournament record with a weight of 138.94-pounds of eligible species fish to earn the Best Female Angler award and a US$500 cash prize from Offshore Marine and Yanmar.

In the junior angler divisions, Antoine Greaux, fishing from the *Red Bikini*, caught 59.15-pounds of eligible species fish, won Best Junior Male and pocketed US$250 from Offshore Marine and Yanmar. Likewise, Celina Edwards, caught 32.65-pounds of eligible species fish from *Les Freres* to take home the Best Junior Female award of US$250 cash from Offshore Marine and Yanmar.

Although the tournament is focused on kingfish, other species earn anglers prizes too. Gerald Greaux caught the Largest Jack, a 13.97-pounder, aboard *Red Bikini*. Louis LaPlace reeled in the Largest Barracuda, a 25.36-pounder aboard *Ocean Runner*. The Largest Bonito was caught aboard *Rampage* by Brian Kamin, and was 5.06-pounds. Junior angler, Fernando Bryan, fishing from *Livin Rich*, caught the Largest Tuna, a 10.62-pounder. Johnny Questel reeled in the Largest Mackerel, a 6.80-pounder, from *Off Da Rock*. No dolphin were caught this year.

Judges Herman Richardson and Kevin LaPlace, Sr., officially weighed in the catches. After weigh-in, the fun continued onshore at Hull Bay Hideaway with special games — like drunken leapfrog and a crunch the nuts contest — all sponsored by Coors Light, distributed by Bellows International Ltd. More food and fun were all part of special Fun Day afternoon activities at Hull Bay Hideaway sponsored by the North Side Civic Organization.

All prizewinners except junior anglers were eligible for a grand prize drawing of a weekend for two at Divi Carina Bay Beach Resort & Casino, with airline tickets compliments of Seaborne Airlines. All 34 registered junior anglers were eligible for a special "Catch In The Hat" award. For this award, sponsored by Hull Bay Hideaway, the first eight names drawn from a hat received $50 cash and the ninth name called won $100 dollars.

Each year, the Northside Sportfishing Club makes donations to community organizations and individuals. This year's beneficiaries were the Joseph Sibilly School, St. Thomas Rescue, the American Red Cross, Kidscope and the Family Resource Center. The Club also awarded college scholarships to Shanelle Brin, Kimberly Olive and Matthew Cobb.

Caribbean Dinghy Championship Reflects Effort of Youth Programmes

The annual Caribbean Dinghy Championship that was sailed in Carlisle Bay, Barbados, over the week-end of 12 and 13 August, reflected the efforts that have been made by sailing associations in the region to teach youth the skills of sailboat racing.

Martinique achieved their first place win with a well balanced and well prepared team that never dropped many points, even though they did not win any class. Second place Antigua broke the tie on points with Trinidad by their two class wins in the Laser Full and Laser Radial classes. Trinidad settled for third place with a single class win .

Fourth place went to the British Virgin Islands, fifth to Barbados and sixth to Sint Maarten. A team from Puerto Rico cancelled at the last minute.

Karl James of Antigua won the Laser Full class with wins in every race. In the Echo 12, the Trinidad team of Nicholas Knox and Anthony Atkins took seven wins out of nine races.

The teams were more closely matched than in any previous championships with the scores ranging from 13 points for the winning team to 23 points for the last place. On the Saturday, the winds were stiff with gusts up to 20 knots, but on the Sunday a weather system had just passed leaving very light and variable winds that provided the basis for many strategic gambles. The first race started in a northerly wind and the final race finished with a southerly wind .

Race director for the Barbados Yacht Club was Penny McIntyre. Visitors to the club were able to see the refurbished facilities which make it one of the best endowed yacht clubs in the region .

At the closing ceremony, the Past President of the Caribbean Sailing Association, Robbie Ferron, pointed out that the three top teams in this event were all from sailing associations that had made great commitments to youth sailing development and the high standard and results were a result of efforts invested. The Eastern Caribbean has recently had some outstanding results in youth sailing, with Trinidadian sailors scoring very high in the Optimist class, USVI sailors scoring very high in the team racing , the USVI and Antigua scoring medals at the CAC games and numerous youths embarking on racing campaigns.

Cuban Yacht Club Welcomes World Underwater Federation

Commodore of the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba, José Miguel Díaz Escrich recently welcomed Achilles Ferrero, President of the World Underwater Federation (CMAS) at the headquarters of this Cuban boating institution. Ferrero was visiting Havana to witness the creation of the World Underwater Federation of America (CMAS-America). This meeting was held during a cocktail party offered by Commodore Escrich to the officials of the Cuban Federation of Underwater Activities (FCAS) and invited guests for the creation of CMAS-America. Deborah Andollo, President of the FCAS, Oscar Ruiz, Lin Chuan and Rogelio Fuentes, presidents of the Federations of Underwater Activities of Venezuela, Ecuador, and Mexico respectively, were among the guests.

"The HIYC of Cuba has dressed up today and we feel honoured with the presence of all of you, for giving us the possibility to continue widening the relations of friendship with those of us who love the sea and are willing to work for the rescue of the maritime traditions of our peoples," said Commodore Escrich while welcoming the guests. He added that the HIYC of Cuba is determined to closely work with the FCAS and announced the creation of the Committee for Sub Aquatic Activities in the HIYC, which will complement the existing committees for fishing, sailing and motorboat activities.

—Continued on next page



CMAS President Achilles Ferrero and Commodore José Miguel Díaz Escrich at the creation of the World Underwater Federation of America



—Continued from previous page

Week-End Sailing in Tortola

The Royal BVI Yacht Club is now offering week-end dinghy sailing for "any age, any dinghy, any body", says Emma Paull. Club boats are available, and there is a small charge for non-members for the fuel fund. *For more information contact Emma at emmapaull@gmail.com.*

The ICs are already racing on Friday nights and they are always looking for crew. Novices are welcome. *For more information contact Colin Rathbun at colin@alookingglass.com.*

Next: are there any ladies out there that want to do some sailing in either ICs or dinghies at the week-end? Can be anywhere from beginners to experts. *For more information contact Emma as above.*

Finally, don't forget RBVIYC's Back to School Regatta, 9 to 10 September, and Colombian Emeralds Ladies' Event, 23 to 24 September.

Guadeloupe's Triskell Cup Will Greet Route du Rhum

On the 3rd, 4th and 5th of November, Pointe à Pitre, Guadeloupe, will see the 6th edition of the Triskell Cup, a regatta open to liveaboards and multi-hulls. In 2005, 80 teams, representing almost 600 sailors, competed on the superb waters of the Cul de Sac Marin right in front of l'Ilet Gosier. Ranging from an old Muscadet to a Swan 63, Sun Fast 37, Dufour 40, Opium 39, J/120 and others, around a hundred sailing yachts are expected for an exceptional event in 2006 — the year of the arrival of the Route du Rhum/La Banque Postale transatlantic race.

The non-profit Association Le Triskell, the local event's organizer, was also officially designated by the regional sailing committee to organize the "Lever de Rideau" of the events that will take place for the arrival of the transatlantic race. This dynamic association promises to ensure the welcome of *all* competitors in the Route du Rhum, as some participants used to be a bit forgotten in the huge media hoopla surrounding the winner.

Route du Rhum participant Claude Thélier left Guadeloupe recently for a single-handed crossing to south Brittany in France in order to qualify for the event. He is on a 60-foot trimaran (ex-*Primagaz*) sponsored by Guadeloupe.

In connection with the SRR (Regatta Companies of La Rochelle, France), the season's winning team of the SSR regattas received six air tickets from the tour operator Nouvelles Antilles.com and an eight-day charter aboard an Archambeau 40 offered by Autremer Concept in Martinique, in order to participate in the Triskell Cup.

Teams from Nancy, Cherbourg and Marseilles, France are expected at this year's Triskell Cup, as well as *Caccia alla Volpe*, *Huey Too* and more excellent teams from Antigua. Teams from Martinique promise to be as numerous — a dozen or so — as they were last year. Rental boats are available.

Triskell Cup is an excellent formula combining sailing and fun: after the first day's two races, a finger-food cocktail party will take place. The next day features two races and a "show night" with dinner and zouk music. On the Sunday, there are two more races and the prizegiving ceremony at the Marina Bas-du-Fort. *For more information contact Association Le Triskell President Jean-Michel Marziou, tel (590 690) 49 57 57, organisation@triskellcup.com or* *see ad on page 12.*

Eastern Caribbean Yacht Rally is Back!

After taking a "time out" last year due to the pressure of other commitments, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States is once again organizing the Eastern Caribbean Yacht Rally (ECYR), scheduled to run this winter from December 28th to February 11th.

The ECYR fleet will sail south from St. Lucia to Grenada and return northward with stops in the OECS Member States and French Antilles to finish in Antigua.

Participating yachts will spend an average of four days at each stop, with special activities being organized by national tourism authorities and marine associations in each island visited. Rally Coordinators will liaise with the Customs and Immigration Departments to facilitate clearing in and out of ports of entry by rally participants.

The rally is open to all cruisers, and the post-Christmas start date in St. Lucia will no doubt encourage sailors arriving in this year's ARC to join the island-hopping fun.

Participants in the 2004 ECYR said, "It was an excellent way to learn about the islands, especially being with people from the tourist boards, who are very knowledgeable and very friendly — they give you a huge amount of information. It was a good way to start off our Caribbean experience: people have opened their hearts to us and it was wonderful to be part of this adventure."

For more information contact Daphne Vidal at dvidal@oecs.org.

12M Benefit Added to St. Maarten Classic

The St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta foundation has announced that an additional regatta will be held on Saturday, January 20th, during the second day of the Classic in 2007. The "12M STAR Regatta" will be a 12 Metre Americas Cup Challenge to be sailed right after the finish of the regular Classic Regatta and from which the proceeds will be donated to the Sint Maarten Diabetes Foundation.

Regatta board member Anke Roosens explained: "We came up with the idea to do something for the Sint Maarten Diabetes Foundation because one of the participants in our previous regatta, owner of the classic yacht *Norvantes*, was diagnosed with acute diabetes mellitus some years ago and is again hospitalized at this moment. One of our regatta board members, Ellie Sneep, is also a board member of the Sint Maarten Diabetes Foundation and she gave us some more information about the disease and the foundation.

"Being confronted closely with the medical facts and the knowledge that the Sint Maarten Diabetes Foundation has very limited budgets to work with, we decided to set up a special regatta in which local people, VIPs and popular stars from here and other countries will participate and can donate money which will go to the Sint Maarten Diabetes Foundation."

The 12M STAR Regatta will start out of Great Bay at 3:00PM, well after the Classic Regatta is finished. The event will include an exclusive cocktail reception and awards presentation for all the participants at the 12M Yacht Club at Bobby's Marina. A high-end dinner buffet will be served at the same venue later that evening, again exclusively for participants, members of the press and some invited guests. An internationally renowned chef will assist the existing cuisine crew at the 12M Yacht Club that evening.

Tickets will be available for purchase in advance of the "Star" regatta for individuals or groups who would like to participate in the event.

The cocktail reception and buffet dinner will be included in the ticket price. Only 60 tickets will be sold and the minimum donation per ticket has been set at US$250.

For more information about the St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta 2007 and the St. Maarten 12 Metre Star Regatta visit www.ClassicRegatta.com.





OPTIMIST NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2006

Young Sailors from Around the World Join 'North Americans' in Puerto Rico

A record 22 countries were represented at the 2006 Optimist North American Championships, sailed out of the Ponce Yacht & Fishing Club, in Ponce, Puerto Rico in early July. In addition to the North American countries, there was a strong contingent of teams from South America, plus a team each from Germany, New Zealand and Singapore. In fact, Singapore's 15-year-old Sean Lee placed first overall, and regatta organizer and president of the Puerto Rico Optimist Dinghy Association (PRODA), Jose "Quino" Nigaglioni, had purposely planned to up the ante on the competition. "I asked the permission of IODA (International Optimist Dinghy Association) at last year's Worlds to invite the best teams in the world, point-wise. My reasoning was that by raising the bar of competition, all sailors could improve. It would also be a way to encourage more Optimist sailing here in Puerto Rico."

The 189 young competitors experienced a range of wind conditions from near breathless calm in the wake of a tropical storm on the last day to over 20 knots throughout much of the competition.

Singapore's Lee dominated from the first day. However, Puerto Rican sailor Ivan Aponte, who won the Scotiabank Caribbean International Optimist Regatta in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, two weeks prior, ended the day in second place.

On Day Two, Lee faltered with a 14th place finish in the third and last race of the day, yet held onto his lead. Aponte also kept his second place position, and Venezuela's Victor Diaz de Leon jumped into the third place.

Team Racing took place on Day Three. Sixteen teams participated, with Peru emerging victorious, followed by Singapore second and Argentina third.

Competitors enjoyed a lay-day break and explored Ponce, the second largest city in Puerto Rico and a real jewel of Spanish-style charm. In spite of grand historic sites such as the Serralles Castle, home of the founders of Don Q Rum, the famous Ponce Museum of Art, and a grand restored coffee plantation, Hacienda Buena Vista, located about a half hour outside of the city, the kids all enjoyed the more playful activities this hospitable and friendly city provides such as the local water parks, beaches, malls and movie theaters.

Racing continued on Day Four, when the promise of light winds didn't pan out and gusts hit 22 knots just in front of a squall that blew through when most of the competitors were in the middle of their second of three races for the day. Singapore's Lee continued to hold his lead, yet Venezuela's Diaz de Leon displaced Puerto Rico's Aponte from the second place position, with Aponte third.

Sailors woke to heavy rains and lightning crackling over Ponce Harbor on the last day of racing. In the interest of safety, the Race Committee monitored the weather closely via Doppler radar and waited until it was miles away before launching the fleet just before noon. In the meantime, sailors enjoyed impromptu games of soccer played across the yacht club greens, showing almost as much enthusiasm as if they were in World Cup contention.

On the water, a near breathless calm in the wake of the tropical storm led the Race Committee to set the course just outside the harbor's breakwater, about half a mile offshore. Winds picked up to six to eight knots as the first fleet took its start, then dramatically built within a three-minute interval to 18 to 20-plus knots from the east and kicking up a two- to three-foot swell. These conditions continued for the second and final race of the regatta.



DEAN BARNES

Left: Close competition, with the USVI's Alex Coyle leading the pack

Below: Team Curaçao enters the Opening Ceremony



In spite of the variable conditions, Singapore's Lee won and became the Non-North American Country Optimist champion, and Puerto Rico's Aponte carried the Perpetual Trophy and became the North American Champion for 2006.

An Awards Ceremony took place in the early evening that treated visitors to all the fun fanfare and friendly festivity for which Puerto Rico is well known.

The top five Caribbean sailors' results, out of a total of 189 competitors, were: third place, Ivan Aponte, Puerto Rico (36 points); 19th, James Leighton, Trinidad (93); 31st, Jose Nigaglioni, Puerto Rico (124); 32nd, Yvann Thelier, Guadeloupe (124); 33rd, Ard Van Aanholt, Curaçao (125).

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Indigenous Boat Racing on the Rise

by Stéphane Legendre

This event is about to become as popular as the Martinique yoles regatta. More people are involved every year. At the fifth edition of this around-the-island regatta for local sailing craft, held July 14 to 22, up to 6,000 spectators watched the colourful sails while eating *boudin creole* and *accras* in a friendly Guadaloupean atmosphere.

The tired but happy President of the CGVT (Comité Guadeloupéen Voile Traditionnelle), Jacques Louisy, mentioned the great job accomplished by all members of the association. Since 2002, the number of participating boats has risen steadily, from seven to 14, then 20, 26 and finally to 34 this year, including one with an all-female crew.

Strict rating rules have been established. The "Saintoise" must be unsinkable. Its overall length shall be 5.35 meters, maximum beam 1.8 meters, mast height 7.25 meters and boom length 6.50 meters.

Like its ancestors, the traditional Saintoise uses different types of wood. Northern wood is used for the keel, mahogany for the sides and bottom, and pear-tree wood for the ribs and stern. The boom is bamboo and the mainsail is attached to it with lianas.

But hull design is said to be less important than the five-person crew which sails the boat. Steering a Saintoise, with its stone ballast, is a tricky job in unsheltered waters. Make a mistake and the boat either fills with water or turns over, your choice!

Building those Saintoises boosts the boating economy. At around 11,000 Euros per boat, built in a few weeks, the opportunity to build a Saintoise has helped the survival of some yards. Some have built up to five boats this year, for the 2006 edition of the race.

This year's race had eight legs:
Leg 1: La Désirade – Le Moule
Leg 2: Le Moule – Port Louis
Leg 3: Port Louis – Sainte Rose
Leg 4: Sainte Rose – Deshaies
Leg 5: Vieux Fort – Les Saintes
Leg 6: Les Saintes – Petit Bourg
Leg 7: Petit Bourg – Le Gosier
Leg 8: Le Gosier – Pointe à Pitre

La Désirade's hospitality was wonderful — the Town Hall bought more than 200 mattresses to accommodate the participants before the start.

Each hosting town did something special. There were fireworks and sailors' songs at La Désirade, a display of local food at Le Moule, and a local sailing competition at Port Louis. There was a competition of traditional kites at Sainte Rose, and a display of tropical plants at Deshaies. For the finish line at Pointe à Pitre, cars were prohibited to let the crowd freely walk around the harbour at the Place de la Victoire, the town's central main square.

This year's regatta was dominated by the active racing association A Dieu Vat from Les Saintes. As president Valentin Brudey puts it: "Every time we set sail, it's competition around the islands whatever the weather. We came all this way with five boats and our objective was to have one of us on the podium." In 2005 crews from Les Saintes took fourth and fifth places. This year their objective was achieved: the first two places of the Tour went to boats from Les Saintes.

Last year's winner, Claude Thélier on *Fouté Fé*, did not make it easy for them. Nor did Jean Forbin, who took second last year on *L'arme Fatale*, but in the end the race was between Philippe Petit on *La Philo* and Alain Dabriou on *Câlin du Matin*, both from Les Saintes.

Alain Dabriou took the lead very early and Philippe Petit was just behind. The last leg between Gosier and Pointe à Pitre was very challenging due to dying and shifting winds as participants reached the harbour of Pointe à Pitre. That tricky situation at first seemed to favour Alain Dabriou, who kept the lead up to 400 metres from the finish line, but a last disastrous option was fatal and Philippe Petit took advantage and won overall by only one point.

CGVT President Jacques Louisy concluded by saying that next year's goals are, of course, to have more boats and more support from local authorities, but also to try exchanging crews with other traditional boating organizations in the Caribbean.

Why not have a Saintoise crew participate in the Bequia Easter Regatta, or have a Saintoise boat manned by a crew from Bequia here next year? Contacts are being established at the moment, he said.



STEPHANE LEGENDRE

Let's go! The beach start at Gosier

What a good idea to promote all those traditional boats we have around the Caribbean, a reminder of the nautical traditions of our islands, and also a beautiful way to get young islanders involved in sailing.

Round Guadeloupe Traditional Boats 2006 Overall Winners

1) *La Philo*, Philippe Petit (30 points)
2) *Câlin du Matin*, Alain Dabriou (31 points)
3) *Guyto 1*, Wilbon Marcelin (38 points)
4) *L'arme Fatale*, Jean Forbin (40 points)
5) *Fouté Fé*, Claude Thélier (57 points)



AH COMBO AH SAILS ON DE SEA

by Kedisha Compton

Prologue

Boat building is an old tradition in Carriacou, Petite Martinique and Bequia.

Intertwined with this is the founding of local regattas.

Carriacou Regatta was founded by J. Linton Rigg, an American yachtsman who set up home in Carriacou after cruising the islands in the 1960s. His plan brought about a whole new purpose and comeback of boat-building in Carriacou and her sister Grenadines. It all began with workboats of different classes: open boats, decked sloops and canoes. Today, the regatta has evolved into something greater; carrying on a tradition. The result — 41 years of great sailing!

Bequia on the other hand established the Bequia Sailing Club in 1981. The sailing club had many founders, including former Prime Minister of St.Vincent & the Grenadines, Sir James Mitchell, Hodge Taylor and the late Ermina Antrobus. With their first regatta taking place in 1982, Bequia's local racing fleets consisted of mainly double-enders, which are clones of Nantucket whale boats. Bequia was also known for its schooners, which are cousins to the sloops. Today there is only one of its kind on the island: the Friendship Rose.

Together along these small chain of islands, boat builders, sailmakers, fishermen and even the not so seaworthy come together to take part in the annual regattas in Bequia and Carriacou to make them what and where they are today.





KEDISHA COMPTON

Above: All in order, the Long Open Boat B Class overall winners: third place Iron Duke, *second place* Limbo *and first place* Ace *show their downwind style*

Left: Second-place winner in Long Open Boat A Class, and the author's ride to Carriacou, Cloudy Bay. *On this issue's cover is the decked sloop* HOIC, *flying spinnaker and 'water sail'*

De Adventure

Ah can't believe it — 2006 an' "Toto, ah back in Carriacou."

Last year ah tek ah chance an' sail down 'pon *Cloudy Bay*, de new boat Arnold Hazell built fo' beat *Perseverance*. Ah had so much fun dat ah had to do it again.

Ah fit myself in de stern ah de boat along wid eight others an' we set sail — Carriacou ah comin'. We mek de 40-mile journey in five an' a half hours. Is ah good t'ing de weather wasn't so bad an' "Uncle Wilbert" Dewer bin dey to gi' we jokes. He is ah die hard *Cloudy Bay* enthusiast.

—*Continued on next page*

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—Continued from previous page

De island of reefs, ah way dem call Carriacou, an' is Grenada's biggest Grenadine isle. Dis year *Cloudy Bay*, *Perseverance*, *Limbo* an' *Iron Duke*, all dem come fo' de 41st Carriacou Regatta Festival. When we reach Hillsborough, sounds from Kayak FM radio, local supporters an' de committee members come fo' greet we. Not bad at all!

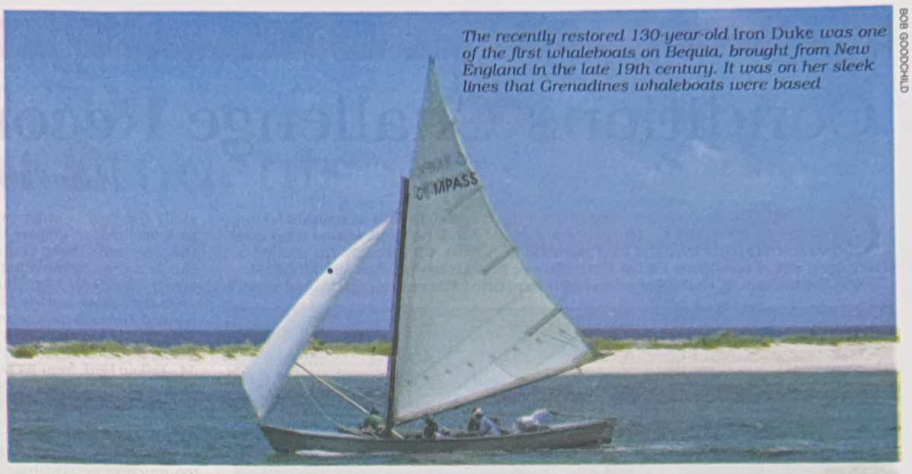
Ah t'ink dey start de Regatta in 1965 as ah local boat race usin' standard fishin' boats. But as de years pass by, it develop an' today it ha' big, big, boats from all over: St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Martinique an' Antigua jus' fo' name ah few. It ha' yachts, double-enders, stern boats an' sloops.

So de firs' day, Saturday, ah gone to L'esterre. Ah prayin' fo' de big bad wolf to huff and puff but still no win'. Ah sorry fo' dem big boats 'cause today all ah dem stern boat an' double-enders sailin' together. Dey call it de long open boat race an' it end up in Hillsborough wey de nex' race go' start tomorrow.

Now, is 11:30 de nex' day, an' ah feelin' ah piece ah Sahara sun passin'; Lard, send some rain. Still sails, crew shoutin', music pumpin' — yeah I agree it hot! Ah see some popcorn-looking clouds hoverin' nearby, boats done rig out an' race ready fo' start an' no *Hurricane* in sight. Same t'ing last year. Da' bad!

Well, yo' could spot *Cloudy Bay* from ah mile away. She got ah whole new paint job; blue an' beige an' she even got a beige sail wid ah little blue whale representing Bequia.

At last *Hurricane* reach an' de race ready to begin. Den again, is always more fun wid de bes' against de bes'. All ah dem paying attention now. Dey calling out boat classes, an' so de race begins, horn after horn. Wid de light rain last night an' ah little wind comin' from de south, de bigger boats go' sail better. As dey headed out ah Hillsborough, trouble began. *Passion* ballast man fall overboard, dem other boat ain't stop an' it look like dey wan fo' start de race over. Nah! So south of de Sisters, north ah Jack-a-dam dey go an' back into Hillsborough, wey de race concluded.



BOB GOODCHILD

The recently restored 130-year-old Iron Duke was one of the first whaleboats on Bequia, brought from New England in the late 19th century. It was on her sleek lines that Grenadines whaleboats were based

mek it today — too much wind. Ah follow dem closely and dey strike ah pose wid each gust. Snap, snap!!

After ah had an eye full, ah headed back to shore wey dey had de novelty games: cake eatin', tug ah war, greasy pole, apple eatin', beer drinkin' an' more, all part ah de cultural exhibition fo' Carriacou Regatta 2006. De day done an' me nah wan' go home.

As Eric Donaldson say, "Am in love wid dis woman", an' my version is "Am in love wid dis island!" But me ha' fo' go home an' all good t'ings must come to an end. And it's another day ah sailing 40 miles north. Home sweet home, Bequia.



KEDISHA COMPTON

Regatta regulars Bertie Frasier of Carriacou and Wilbert Dewar of Bequia keeping an eye on the action

So Monday is de final day, Lord ah ha so much fo' do. But ah little win' start fo' blow from de south, an' it go' sail dem boat good. De race course de same like yesterday, an dem Bequia men complainin', "Same course again!" Time fo' pictures.

Carriacou pretty you know, but de sun hot. All dem boat out to sea: *Passion*, *Perseverance*, *HOIC* — ah combo ah sails on de sea. Ah few ah de li'l boats can't

2006 Carriacou Regatta Workboat Results

Small Open Boat A Class
1) *Pimpy*, Verrol Compton, Carriacou
2) *Clean Sweep*, Roy Delisle, Petite Martinique
3) *Unity*, Silas Mulzac, Union Island

Small Open Boat B Class
1) *Parasite*, Adian Bethel, Petite Martinique
2) *Now For Now*, Clayton Deroche, Petite Martinique
3) *Matrix*, Leron Bethel, Petite Martinique

Small Open Boat C Class
(Sponsored by Budget Marine)
1) *Bad Feeling*, Samuel Forde, Mayreau
2) *My Love*, Stanley Harry, St. Vincent
3) *Hard Target*, Victor Hazell, Mayreau

Small Open Boat D Class
1) *Razor*, Jason Charles, Gouyave
2) *Classic*, Barry Alexis, Gouyave
3) *Riot Act*, Leon Marshall, Gouyave

Long Open Boat A Class
1) *Hurricane*, Benson Patrice, Carriacou
2) *Cloudy Bay*, Arnold Hazell, Bequia
3) *Perseverance*, Trevor Adams, Bequia

Long Open Boat B Class
1) *Ace*, Devas Joseph, Carriacou
2) *Limbo*, Alick Daniel, Bequia
3) *Iron Duke*, Sylvester Simmons, Bequia

Long Open Boats Class Saturday
1) *Outrage*, Emmanuel Bethel, Petite Martinique
2) *Passion*, Matthew Joseph, Carriacou
3) *Cloudy Bay*, Arnold Hazell, Bequia

Stern Boat Class
(Sponsored by Sol EC Ltd)
1) *Outrage*, Emmanuel Bethel, Petite Martinique
2) *East Wind*, Gerald Bethel, Petite Martinique
3) *Ghost*, Simeon Clement, Petite Martinique

Deck Sloop Class
(Sponsored by Republic Bank)
and Round-D-Island Race
1) *Glacier*, Calvin Patrice, Carriacou
2) *Pipe Dream*, Gordon Patrice, Carriacou
3) *Ariel B*, Norbert Bethel, Petite Martinique

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Your communication ll BlOWing in the Wind ll

Conditions Challenge Record Yacht Fleet

by Jerry Stewart

Carriacou 2006 was a regatta that pushed the parameters with a record-breaking number of 29 entries in the yacht races. Light wind, no wind, strong wind and extreme currents over the long weekend of August 4th through 7th created a challenging mix of conditions for the three classes: CSA Measured, Fun and Multihull.

Doyle Sailmakers of Barbados once again supported the entire regatta and especially the very popular two-handed Round Carriacou Race held on the Friday. This race was first to display the strong currents that would be a predominant feature of the weekend. These coupled with steadily lighter winds had the slower yachts, for the first time, completing the course too late for their crews to see the start of this year's (also record-breaking) fundraising auction [see story on next page].



SLOW DANCING

CSA Class start. Carriacou 2006 saw the largest number of yacht entries ever: nine in CSA Class, 17 in Fun Class and three in Multihulls

On the cover: Saga *and* Bloody Mary *battling to the finish line in Race Three*

On the Friday, among CSA class's nine entries the Peterson 34 *Antares*, sailed single-handed throughout the regatta, came third behind regulars Roy Hopper's Beneteau First 38, *Windborne*, and my Hughes 38, *Bloody Mary*. We were all happy to see Andrew Burke return with his Beneteau Idylle 43 *Regent One* to knock Andy Smelt's Spencer 44, *Yellow Bird*, from its accustomed first position in the Fun Class. In Multihulls, *Ned Kelly* beat *Bad Dog* (probably for biting the neighbour). The after-race party at the Pizzeria featured free Mount Gay rum punch.

Saturday's fully crewed race, sponsored by Island Water World, featured Frigate Island as a turning mark, which — in the light winds and a turbulent cauldron of swirling opposing currents to sail through — placed those with local knowledge at too much of an advantage. It was a case of knowing where NOT to put one's yacht! In the CSA Class, this time *Bloody Mary* beat *Windborne*, and again *Antares* came in third. Tim Sudell's S&S 44 *Saga* retired, her young crew having put up the spinnaker out of boredom! In Fun Class, the Jeanneau 47 *Sanctus*, sailed by Dominique Weber, sailed an outstanding current-dodging beat to put *Yellow Bird* into second for the first time, *Yellow Bird*'s brief park on the southwest corner of Carriacou was too short to have affected the result. No other Fun Class yacht managed to finish.

Sunday, the yachts' layday, gives everyone the opportunity to go to Hillsborough to watch the spectacle of local boat racing.

Budget Marine sponsored our third race — held in 20 to 25 knots, by way of a change. Although the sea in the lee of Carriacou remained flat, there were breakages in CSA Class, causing both the First 32 *Aquilo* and the Kiwi 35 *Sea Devil* to retire. *Bloody Mary*'s torn genoa did not stop her winning this race, while *Saga* beat *Windborne* into third. In Fun Class, *Yellow Bird* finally got back on form to win, with *Sanctus* second and *Mange Tout* third.

Overall, in CSA Class *Bloody Mary* beat old rival *Windborne*, with the Australian *Antares* coming third. In the Fun Class, it was *Yellow Bird* first, followed by *Sanctus*, and then Uwe Gerstmann's red "Joshua", *Salai*.

Prizegiving at the Carriacou Yacht Club after the race featured Doyle Sails bags, Mount Gay and Budget Marine hats, and key rings for all entrants. More prizes came from Island Water World, Budget Marine, Bogles Round House Restaurant, Turtle Dove Pizzeria, and Fidel Productions. Thanks to Toolmeister Engineering for the start boat, to the essential volunteers who manned it, and to race officer James Benoit from the Grenada Yacht Club, without whose continual efforts this regatta would not happen.

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Cruisers' Fundraiser Earns EC$12,700 for Carriacou Students

by Marjorie Mowry

Yet again, the mantra "It's for the kids!" energized the 6th Annual Carriacou Children's Education Fund benefit staged in Tyrell Bay during the recent Carriacou Regatta Festival. And when the week's activities — and total receipts — were wrapped up, a record-breaking EC$12,700 (a gratifying 50-percent boost over last year's high water mark) had been collected to support needy school children on the island. At this milestone, a total of over EC$40,000 has been contributed by visiting boaters and locals via this benefit, in the years since it was launched during the 2000 Carriacou Regatta by cruisers who wished to show their appreciation for Carriacou's friendly hospitality.

RICHARD HANER



On behalf of needy school children in Carriacou, Social Worker Susan Peters accepts a Carriacou Children's Educational Fund certificate from cruisers and local supporters

As always, the annual Benefit Auction was a highlight. Auctioneers Rick Johnston (*Panacea*), John Pompa (*Second Millennium*) and Jerry Stewart (*Bloody Mary*) kept the bids — and belly laughs — rolling as the crowd snapped up an eclectic collection of items donated by cruisers and landlubbers. On the block were marine electronics, including a complete radar system; sails; anchors; hand-made jewelry; home electronics; an inflatable dinghy; exquisite watercolor paintings; rare NASA memorabilia; camping gear; 300 cookies — and even a marine stove! Local businesses' generous contributions included a Tyrell Bay Yacht Haul Out package; scuba sessions and gear from Arawak Divers, Lumbadive and Carriacou Silver Diving; wi-fi services from Carriacou Wireless; and valuable gift certificates from Turtle Dove Pizzeria, Genevy's Massage and the *Caribbean Compass*.

A windfall of auction inventory was amassed through the Carriacou Yacht Club management's magnanimous offer to stockpile donations throughout the year, thereby allowing cruisers to contribute items even if they couldn't attend the fundraiser. An abundance of housewares, clothing and school supplies were also collected for local families hard-hit by back-to-back hurricanes Ivan and Emily in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

A certificate commemorating this year's Carriacou Children's Education Fund proceeds was graciously accepted by Susan Peters, the Social Worker attached to the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs. Guided by Ms. Peters' conscientious management, the Fund annually provides scores of local children with school uniforms, textbooks, and other educational materials.

Major kudos go to overachieving organizers Melodye and John Pompa; Carriacou Yacht Club's owners and staff for their warm hospitality; and Tyrell Bay Haul Out's management for their loyal support. Special thanks go to all participants, as well as cruisers who could only be present "in spirit" through donations and cash pledges. We hope to see you next year!

Marjorie Mowry and Richard Haner are cruising the Caribbean aboard S/V North Stand.

Finding the 'Fun' in 'Fundraising'

This year's Carriacou Children's Education Fundraiser was greatly enriched by an expanded menu of Tyrell Bay shoreside activities. These festive events were well attended by islanders together with visiting cruisers from almost 80 anchored boats, hailing from over a dozen countries.

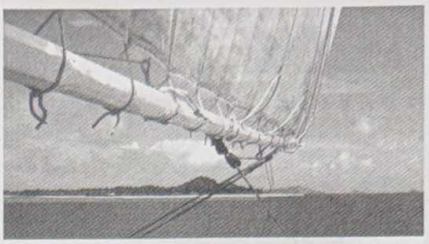
RICHARD HANER



To launch the fun fundraising, the Carriacou Yacht Club again hosted the annual Welcome Potluck Party, where Regatta regulars mingled with first-timers, forging new friendships while catching up with old mates. The mirth-meter jumped a notch during the concurrent "Dry T-Shirt Contest" (not to be confused with the infamous "wet" variety), in which entrants were judged on their garment's graphics, slogans, and provenance in categories such as "Bilge-Wear Beyond Belief," "Most Likely To Get You Arrested" and "Best Tall T-Shirt Tale." The happy hour conviviality lasted well into the night, accompanied by a spontaneous guitar sing-along. (Jimmy Buffett, are your ears still burning?)

Another big hit, the Beach Fun Day, featured a Sandcastle Building Contest, Kayak Races (winning relay team pictured above), Underwater Treasure Hunt, water skirmishes, various games and a million laughs. A lively dominoes tournament, cash pledges, and ongoing sales of hand-made crafts and commemorative photo CDs continued to fill the collection kitty, helping the Carriacou Children's Education Fund achieve its all-time high.

Congratulations to the organizers, supporters and participants who made the social — and socially conscious — activities in Tyrell Bay a runaway success! Special thanks go out to hard-working volunteers from visiting vessels *Illusions, Flying Cloud, New Passages, North Stand, Panacea, Possible Dream, Second Millennium, Slow Dancing, Windborne III* and *Zephyrus*. Next year will be even better!



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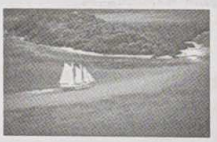
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Sooner or later most sailors either return to the United States or simply wish to cruise the US East Coast from their new Caribbean home. Heading north from the Caribbean, there are three obvious routes to consider:

1) Sail the Thorny Path northward from the Virgin Islands

2) Sail offshore direct, or

3) Ship your vessel on Dockwise from the Virgin Islands.

Option 1 is the most popular method with the greatest variety of cultural and sailing attractions.

You may have sailed down to the Caribbean using the Thorny Path but since that was such a long time ago, many things probably have changed since your keel last plied those azure waters. Or maybe this is your first time heading north and you would like some information on what lies ahead. Either way, here is some information we gathered while sailing the Thorny Path to Florida this summer.

THE THORNY PATH REVISITED

by Steve Siguaw

Obviously the wind and sea conditions remain unchanged from times long forgotten; yet the stops along the way have changed tremendously in the last two or three years. Most Caribbean sailors rarely sail north of St. Maarten in a cruising season before returning south to avoid hurricanes. We will therefore describe the changes from the BVI northward.

British Virgin Islands

Customs clearance can still be obtained at Spanish Town, Virgin Gorda, but they are not the friendliest officials. Jost Van Dyke is the best place to check in but be aware that you cannot stay in the BVI longer than 30 days. You cannot clear in and out at the same time unless you are staying less than 24 hours, either! There is a fee of approximately US$19 for a 40-foot boat.

Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbor is undergoing a tremendous renovation since its purchase by Sun Resorts in 2006. They have begun construction on their new "Town Centre" development located on the northeast corner of the present boatyard. All of the current shops will remain open and are unaffected by construction. Eventually, they plan to move the boatyard over to the north side of the marina and put in condos where the present boatyard is, in the course of ten to 15 years realistically.

Mooring buoys throughout the BVI cost US$20 to $25 per night at most of the anchorages, with $65 a night charged at Peter Island. Now for the sad news: Nude jumping from the *Willy-T* at Norman island is no longer permitted due to governmental decree, but body shots are still allowed at the bar. Times change....

The Bitter End Yacht Club is still very cruiser friendly and offers free WiFi everywhere near the resort. Saba Rock Resort also offers free WiFi on their grounds.

US Virgin Islands

ST. JOHN

Customs clearance is still available at Cruz Bay, St. John (if you can find a place for your dinghy at the overcrowded National Park Service dinghy dock). A US Customs User Fee Decal is NOT accepted in the USVI. Upon check-in you will receive the new lecture about importing trash, fresh food and fresh vegetables. No trash, fresh vegetables or fresh meat are allowed into the USVI. Somehow you must dispose of all these items before you make landfall. You must also sign a form at Customs stating your adherence to this policy. Clearance is free. No Customs/Immigration checkout is needed to leave the USVI.

It is best to leave your vessel on a National Park Service mooring at Caneel Bay and dinghy into Cruz Bay. Taking a taxi to Cruz Bay from Caneel Bay Resort is no longer permitted. You may only land your dinghy at Caneel Bay Resort to use the bar.

National Park Service moorings are available at all National Park anchorages on St. John for US$15 a night. The fee is mandatory, whether you anchor or pick up a mooring. Only Francis Bay has an anchoring area behind the mooring field. Pay Station boxes are located either on the beach or on a floating Pay Station vessel. Free Park Service moorings are available if you volunteer to be a seasonal Bay Host (limited positions are available!).

ST. THOMAS

Yacht Haven Grande Marina on St. Thomas is still under construction and is located where the old Yacht Haven Marina once stood. Completion of this mega-yacht marina is set for sometime in 2007 if all goes as planned (yeah, right!). There will be space for 50 mega-yachts, in case you were wondering!

ST. CROIX

The anchorage near St. Croix Marine is very busy, with constant rooster tails from the go-fast boats passing through the anchorage at all hours of the day and night. The police vessels and police on patrol are heavily armed and wearing body armor at all times.

Cruisers normally cannot use the anchorage behind Protestant Cay due to the abundance of local derelict boats and moored day-trip boats.

A permit is mandatory to visit Buck Island aboard your vessel. This permit is obtained by appearing in person at the National Park Service office at the Fort in Christiansted with your passport AND driver's license. There will be a US$10 charge for this permit beginning this month.

Spanish Virgin Islands

CULEBRA

Customs clearance is obtained in Dewey on Culebra. A US Customs User Fee Decal is required. Customs is rarely at the airport office so simply call Customs (787) 253-4533 to obtain your easy clearance. There are pay phones at the airport and a notice on the door giving the most recent information. People without decals have waited more than SEVEN days for Customs officials to open the airport office. A US Customs Decal can be obtained online at www.cbp.gov.

Mooring buoys that are installed around Culebra are still free! The largest grocery store on Culebra is now closed and up for sale. Limited supplies are still available at several other small grocery stores in Dewey.

VIEQUES

Customs clearance is available at the airport if needed. Again, a US Customs User Fee Decal is required.

Military operations have ceased on Vieques and the clean-up has begun. The clean-up may take years, but in the meantime we can enjoy the pristine anchorages that the military preserved for cruisers!

No anchoring is permitted at the extreme east end of Vieques. Off limits are the anchorages of Bahia Icacos and Bahia Salina del Sur. The US Navy is currently cleaning up these anchorages, so dropping the hook here may explode the ordnance that litters the bottom! You will be told to leave if you happen to visit these places. Ensenada Honda is a beautiful anchorage where you can stay as long as you like. There is a short, seven-foot-deep channel to navigate through to get to the anchorage. There are absolutely no facilities here or nearby.

Bio Bay (Puerto Mosquito) is off limits for anchoring and outboard motors of all kinds. Several companies offer kayak trips from Esperanza to Bio Bay. [*See related article on page 28.*]

Puerto Rico

No further Customs formalities are necessary if you cleared in at the Spanish Virgin Islands.

SALINAS

The anchorage is obtained by navigating a narrow deep-water channel that is difficult to read since the water is murky. A new small private buoy sits in the middle of the channel, and it is unclear which side it is meant to be taken on. We tried both sides and did not run aground on either side.

The small village of Salinas is still in shambles because most of the businesses have moved north to the newer section of town. However, Playa Marine is still open in the old town and is a spectacular marine hardware store with very friendly people who also speak English.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

PONCE

The Ponce Yacht Club still welcomes cruisers to their excellent marina. Expect to roll a bit at the dock if the wind pipes up. Clean fuel is also available at the fuel dock. This is the best place to rent a car, do self-service laundry, explore Ponce and the rest of Puerto Rico, go to a modern mall or reprovision at the nearby Walmarts (two of them!). An incredible bulk food store called Santiago's Cash and Carry is very close to the Yacht Club.

GILLIGAN'S ISLAND (CAYOS DE CANA GORDA)

The island is closed on Mondays!

BOQUERON

During the week most restaurants are closed or have limited opening hours. Diesel is available at the gasoline station across the street from Club Náutico. Club Náutico also has a fuel dock that is operated by the same gas station, so you have to walk over to the gas station to have an attendant open the fuel dock. The dockside water depth at the fuel dock is six feet.

Dominican Republic

SAMANA

We were advised not to stop in Samana by several cruisers due to security issues. The port captain is currently not friendly toward cruisers so obtaining a clearance can be very expensive.

LUPERON

The entrance channel is still not buoyed. Sea Comber Mike is no longer permitted (by the DR Navy) to guide boats into the harbor UNLESS you contact him directly when you are waiting outside. Every day we were there at least one boat went aground entering or exiting Luperon. Helpful cruisers were always trying to guide vessels in and out of the harbor, but with dismal results.

Customs, Immigration and port clearance are time consuming and fairly expensive. We paid US$101 for a seven-day stay. That included a negotiated $20 for the Commandante's pocket ("You want to leave, right?" as he smiled and rubbed his fingers together).

The Luperon Yacht Club is now open and has a commanding view of the harbor. Puerto Blanco Marina still has the Sunday flea market. Andy-Andy offers good clean diesel from tanks on his vessel that cruises through the anchorage every day. He also has a great bottom cleaning service! The cruiser's net is broadcast on Wednesdays and Sundays. Twenty-two-ounce Presidente and Bohemia beers are US$1.50.

Luperon remains a final destination for cruisers who have decided to pursue their Caribbean sailing dreams "another year".

Turks & Caicos

PROVIDENCIALES (SAPODILLA BAY)

Customs clearance is obtained by walking about half a mile to the commercial pier. The Customs officer seems to have lost her receipt book (for clearing in and again upon clearing out) so don't expect one.

The nice pier at the head of the anchorage that used to belong to the Provo Aquatic Center is now off limits to dinghies (according to the Spanish-speaking attendants) so you must haul your dinghy up onto the beach. We could not find a rental car company to deliver a car to Sapodilla Bay, so we went to their office near the airport instead.

An enormous building boom has taken over Provo. The main tourist road is now four lanes and high-rise condos and luxury brand-name hotels have sprouted along nearly every inch of Grace Bay. Provo reminded us of South Florida.

WEST CAICOS

A channel has been dredged near Company Point for a new luxury marina. Presently there is no marina, only a dredged channel and a nice protected area in which you can anchor. The marina is rumored to open next year, or within about 20 years at the current pace of construction!

Bahamas

MAYAGUANA

Mayaguana is now an official Bahamian port of entry. However, you must be anchored off the village of Abrahams Bay since the Customs officers will board your vessel (you provide the transportation for them). Most cruisers anchor inside the western end of Abrahams Bay, hoist their Q flag and later clear in at Georgetown. The east entrance to Abrahams Bay is still not buoyed and is very shallow and tricky.

The fee for clearing into the Bahamas is US$300 if your vessel is 35 feet or longer ($150 for all others). The vessel is issued a Cruising Permit for 12 months, yet Immigration allows you to stay for 70 days before you must apply for an extension. There is no onward clearance needed from the Bahamas when traveling to the USA.

As a point of interest, we talked with several Caribbean cruisers who refused to pay the US$300 clearance fee, but hoisted the Bahamian courtesy flag anyway or simply flew the Q flag during their entire journey through the Bahamas, avoiding all major ports.

RUM CAY

The Sumner Point Marina offers clean fuel, but you must tie up on the windward side of the dock. If you have a sailboat, getting off is a problem with any normal wind conditions. The marina is home to the Green Flash restaurant, home to the most expensive hamburger you will eat in the Bahamas!

A ground-breaking ceremony featuring Prime Minister Perry Gladstone Christie took place on May 18th for the new Rum Cay Resort mega-marina to be built on Rum Cay. The construction is scheduled to be finished in 2010. The Florida weekend sport-fishing crowd is very popular on Rum Cay!

GEORGETOWN

The channel into Lake Victoria may be open sometime soon. It seems that the road over the entrance channel was in danger of collapsing, so they removed the road and closed the channel. Construction was at a frenzied pace (?) to reopen both the road and the channel.

The second and third holes on Stocking Island are now off limits to anchoring. Mooring balls have been placed by private individuals in these two popular anchorages and can be rented.

Crab Cay, just south of Georgetown in the Red Shanks area, was purchased by a private North Carolina investor who has huge plans for development. The investor also decided that he purchased the waters surrounding the Cay — including the Red Shanks anchorages! Someone regularly patrols to make the anchorages uncomfortable for those who use them. The inside dinghy passage from Red Shanks to Georgetown may soon be blocked by a low bridge between Crab Cay and the mainland as well.

NORMANS CAY

McDuff's beach bar/restaurant is closed and has been sold. A skeleton staff is keeping the generators running for the new owners.

SHROUD CAY

Rumor has it that Johnny Depp of *Pirates of the Caribbean* fame has purchased the Cay.

NASSAU

Hurricane Hole Marina has been purchased by Atlantis Casino and Resorts so will soon be off-limits to cruisers, as is Atlantis Marina. Both will cater only to mega-yachts.

CHUB CAY

The new marina on Chub Cay may open any month now! They have dredged a deeper channel from the Northwest Providence Channel into the marina and placed steel pilings at the outside edge of the channel. Only one of the steel pilings was lit at night when we were there. The marina boasts floating docks and appears very well constructed.

Miami and Ft. Lauderdale

Customs and Immigration clearance can be obtained by telephone when you tie up at a marina. You must have a US Customs User Fee Decal! Normally you will be put on hold for only 20 minutes before getting your clearance. That is the easy part. You will then be told to report to either the Miami Cruise Ship dock if you check in at Miami (a US$42 taxi and bus ride) or Port Everglades if you check in at Ft. Lauderdale — within 24 hours. You are required to report to the specified office for an unknown reason, but at least you will have the company of other cruisers. After ten minutes of examining your passport in a back room you are impolitely told to leave. Very strange!

Changes in the islands seem to happen more quickly every year. The Thorny Path is no exception as you can see. Treasure your memories of sailing in the Caribbean, as it doesn't get any better than that!

Aspen is now on the hard waiting for Steve and Maria to replenish the bank account for the next voyage south to these "little latitudes".

The stops along the way have changed tremendously in the last two or three years

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Dolly's Answers

1) whales
2) stranding
3) German
4) nets
5) sonar
6) radiation
7) natural
8) live
9) echo
10) oceans

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Breaking Regatta News

Carlos Vazquez, General Manager of Marina Bahia Redonda in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela, reports that the Bahia Redonda Clasico Regatta slated for next month has been postponed until next year due to the recent deaths of the marina's boatyard manager, Pierre Roelens, and his wife. "During the last two years, Pierre and his wife were the key factors in the Clasico Regatta's success," he says. "We decided to reorganize our event during the rest of 2006 and relaunch the regatta in 2007."

The third edition of the Bahia Redonda Clasico Regatta was scheduled to be held in Bahia de Posuelo on October 14th and 15th, 2006. Organizers expected to host over 50 yachts in four categories this year: Ocean Cruising (reserved for heavy cruisers), Cruising/Racing, Cruising and Catamarans.

The regatta had made a splash by offering significant cash prizes for the first three places in each class. Free dockage with full services in the marina was also provided during the race weekend to all participating non-local yachts.

Stay tuned for news of Bahia Redonda Clasico Regatta 2007!

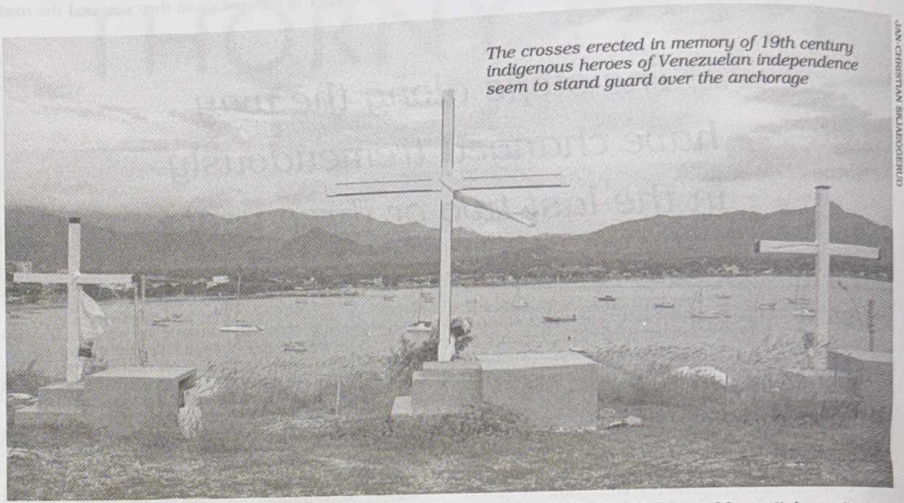
JUANGRIEGO'S FORT OF FREEDOM

by John Smith

It can't have been an easy port to invade by sea — Juangriego, "the Pearl of the Spanish Main", on the northwest point of the eastern half of Margarita. But, under order of the Spanish King Ferdinand VII, crown forces were sent in 1815 to destroy "El Fortin de la Galera". Douse the candle of Venezuelan rebellion, wipe out the Margariteños manning the fort, establish a beach head, move inland and finish it in the hills of Matasiete.

reached, Porlamar is on a lee shore with the dangers of Los Frailes, Roca Norte, La Sola and Los Testigos still to avoid. Many a ship has misjudged the strength of the current and the probability of being becalmed. A ship approaching from the west, unless it stays close to land, must needs be swept northwest in the strong equatorial current.

Even this sailor, aboard his moderately modern, 20-ton, fore-and-aft-rigged gaff cutter, took four days to



JAN-CHRISTIAN SKLADZOEREID

The crosses erected in memory of 19th century indigenous heroes of Venezuelan independence seem to stand guard over the anchorage

Juangriego and Venezuelan Independence

Colonial Venezuela's primary value to Spain was geographic: its long Caribbean coastline provided security from both foreign enemies and pirates for the Spanish bullion fleet during its annual journey between Portobelo, in present-day Panama, and Cuba. On this leg of their return to Europe, these ships invariably sailed via the Yucatan Channel and into the Florida Straits. (The Anegada Channel, to the northeast, is well to windward and was regularly patrolled by Dutch, French and English warships, not to mention countless privateers.)

In 1808, Napoleon's invasion of Spain irreparably weakened the link between Spain and her New World colonies. In Caracas, the *cabildo* (city council) refused to recognize Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, as the new ruler of Spain, and on April 19, 1810, the *cabildo* ousted the Governor and declared itself to be a *junta* governing in the name of Ferdinand VII. This *junta patriotica* ordered the construction of defenses in Juangriego.

Spanish America, meanwhile, had not been immune to the doctrines of 18th century European Enlightenment. Namely, that Mankind should be guided by reason; that religious and intellectual liberty be assured; that as the origin of society was a contract between its members, every citizen must be allowed to participate in the making of laws. And that man was born free.

On July 5, 1811, a congress convoked by the junta declared Venezuelan independence from Spain, and Francisco Miranda assumed command of the army and leadership of the junta. In 1812, after the loss of Puerto Cabello by his fellow freedom fighter Simon Bolivar and a devastating earthquake in Caracas, Miranda lost heart and capitulated to the Spanish. Bolivar and other officers thought he was a traitor and handed him over to the Royalist commander who sent him to Spain, where he died in a dungeon at Cadiz.

After Ferdinand VII regained the Spanish throne in late 1814, he sent reinforcements to the American colonies to crush resistance to royal control. It wouldn't have been an easy sail to land troops in Margarita.

It would have been virtually impossible for a square-rigged ship of the 19th century to successfully thread the channels between a base at Puerto Sucre, on the Venezuelan mainland, and Porlamar. And, once sail from Robledal village, on Margarita's west coast, to the shelter of Juangriego — and this was only accomplished by short tacking within five miles of the shore, turning south every time the water temperature rose two degrees Fahrenheit. The thicker, colder water along the shore actually flows eastward occasionally.

Plus, my boat had a clean bottom, freshly painted with two coats of modern antifouling. This coast is famous for its shellfish (pearls were why the Spanish were here, remember), and barnacles do pretty well here, too. It does not take much time for a crop of barnacles to seriously affect the maneuverability of a sailing ship. Any Spanish vessel large enough to provision the Royalist forces and carry both the gunnery and manpower for an extended inland campaign was probably too large to careen and probably had not been cleaned since before leaving Spain.

The Spanish Fleet under General Pablo Morillo arrived in Juangriego on March 25th, 1815, with 2,000 men and many cannon. The Venezuelan Declaration of Independence was only four years old and there would be more years of bloody fighting until that independence was won. El Fortin de La Galera, built in 1811 and named "La Libertad", was about to show its mettle.

Under the leadership of Colonel Ceferino Gonzalez, 500 Margariteños who "did not know fear nor the possibility of surrender" were to be immortalized by General Morrilo himself, who declared that they had "fought like Spartans", hence the state's name of Nueva Esparta. When the few surviving defenders did capitulate, they were all put to the sword with General Morillo personally killing 17.

The battle was lost and the fort was taken by the Royalist forces. The Spanish offloaded cannon, muskets, powder and ball — supplies that would be needed to destroy the rebels. The Spanish readied their war machine for the inland campaign that would end the idea of a Venezuelan republic forever.

And it might have ended there, except for the determination and courage shown by the native Guaiqueri Indian Francisco Adrian and his two sons. Unwilling to see their island remain in the hands of the Spanish, they swam across Juangriego's broad bay with lighted Margarita-tobacco cigars, crept into the fort and its magazine and destroyed the weaponry.

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

By depriving the Royalists of their cannon, the sacrifice of Francisco Adrian gave courage to the peasants, fishermen and Indians who, it is said, "fought like six tigers each" in the hills of Matasiete.

Not long afterwards, on November 15, 1815, a group of 50 *nueva espartino* patriots led by Margarita-born General Juan Bautista Arismendi defeated some 500 Royalist soldiers under J. Urreistieta in some of the fiercest hand-to-hand combat of the rebellion, retaking the little fort at Juangriego.



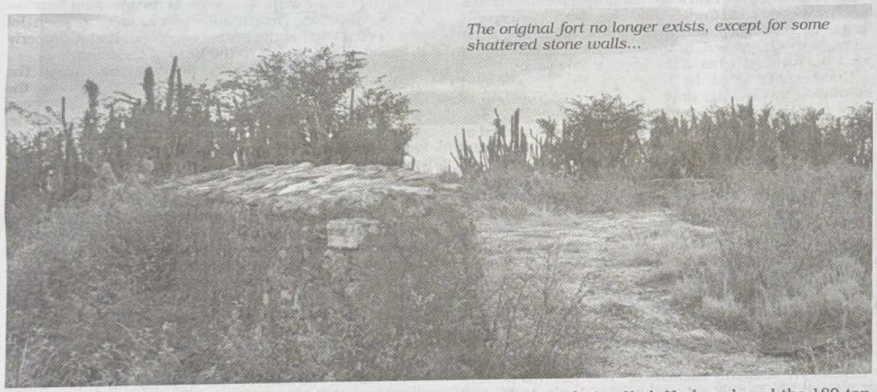
General Arismendi's wife, Luisa Cáceres de Arismendi, was imprisoned as a revolutionary at age 17, saw her first daughter die in the Citadel of Santa Rosa in Margarita's capital, La Asuncion, and was later shipped to and imprisoned in Spain, where she was tortured. She never betrayed her husband or her country. Having lost nothing of her revolutionary spirit, she returned to Venezuela where she re-united with her husband and bore him nine children. The central plaza here in Juangriego bears his name, and boasts a statue of him along with a bust of Luisa.

In 1821 the Venezuelan army defeated the Spanish in the decisive battle of Carabobo on the mainland.

Freedom in Common

So I think upon this crossing of minds and lives, and the events of these years of revolution. Certainly the Margariteños have earned the appellation *nueva espartinos*, but nevertheless have not ceased being "Nueva Americanos". It was not only the North Americans who rid themselves of a European king. Not only did the French rid themselves of the royalty. The Venezuelans freed themselves from Europe as well. El Fortin de la Galera was built in defiance of a European king rather than in the service of one, contrary to the forts of St. George's, Grenada, and Kingstown, St. Vincent, whose guns point inland and not out to sea. El Fortin de la Galera became known as the "Bunker of Freedom."

Treason is all it was — that same as for Washington or Jefferson, and I doubt very much whether these two would have been treated better by George III than Bolivar would have been treated (or as Francisco Miranda was treated) by Ferdinand VII. This fort was not built to protect the vested interests of conquistadores, slavemasters or tyrants. It grew out of Miranda's dream and Bolivar's rallying cry for a "Colombia". They stood their ground, not unlike the Yankees at Concord or Bunker Hill.



The original fort no longer exists, except for some shattered stone walls...

Thirty years after the USA won its independence, Francisco Miranda left New York Harbor aboard the 180-ton *Leandro* with 500 muskets, 500 sabres and 250 men most of whom were Austrians, Poles, French and Norte Americanos. This same man, who had led the Spanish attack on Pensacola against the British as an ally of the USA, had visited Philadelphia and met both George Washington and Alexander Hamilton. He studied much in the USA and approved of Yale College; he thought that their concept of open debate was a good preparation for public life. He is known to have remarked, however, that the Constitution of Massachusetts gave all the dignity and power to property owners, which he thought was a blight on such a democracy. He fought in the French Revolution and his name is today inscribed on the Arc de Triomphe. In Europe, many years later, Napoleon is said to have called him a "Don Quixote — with the difference that he is not mad," and added, "...that man has a sacred fire in his soul." He ran afoul of the Jacobins and fled to England where he was helped by William Pitt. Imbued with revolutionary ideas, he sought foreign aid (denied to him by the United States) and in 1806 led an unsuccessful expedition to Vela de Coro in northwestern Venezuela.

Given such similar and interwoven histories with a people whose national sport is baseball, who drink lots of beer, eat hot dogs and party on the beach, it would seem that we Norte Americanos are actually not so different. I mean, it was the Valencia Magellanes team that produced both the manager (Oswaldo Guillen) and the pitcher (Freddy Garcia) of the pennant-winning Chicago White Sox. As for fast food, no way you are going to convince me that a take-out burger on a white-flour roll is better than a hundred-percent cornmeal *arepa* with a filling of either chicken, fish, beef or cheese.

I am seated now under a thickly leaved arbor of grape vines at Mama's restaurant. It is certainly a different vantage point, seated here in an upscale waterfront restaurant 600 yards from El Fortin. There is little on this moonless night to remind people of its episode in history and how much they owe to those whose spilled blood reddened the waters of the adjacent "Lagoon of the Martyrs". The original fort no longer exists, except for some shattered stone walls farther west on the same peninsula. The three crosses on the separating ridge are purported to be in memory of Francisco Adrian and his two sons — the American Indians with their "tobaccos". So I wonder, where is the grave of Lieutenant-Colonel James Towers English, a British legionnaire who joined Bolivar's army and recruited scores of other volunteers, and who is said to have been interred in the shadow of El Fortin de la Galera?

As a summertime southern cruising destination with a taste of the Spanish Main, Margarita is hard to beat. I'll be at Hotel Patrick listening to the rock 'n' roll.

Viva Venezuela!

Viva Nueva Esparta!

John Smith has cruised in the Caribbean since 1972, when he first visited Margarita. He is currently aboard the engineless Carriacou cutter Mermaid *of Carriacou. John is the author of* Little Fish, Big Pond, *available at Amazon.com.*

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CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION, THEN AND NOW

As I read *Compass* lately, I thank the good Lord that I had the privilege of arriving in the Caribbean in the middle 1950s, a period which old timers refer to as the "good old days". And although in many ways they *were* good, in other ways they were not.

The sailing crowd then was quite different from those sailing the Caribbean today. The majority were veterans of WWII: most had fought for the Allies; a few Finns and Italians had fought on both sides; and some were Germans who had fought for the Nazis. One had skippered a German submarine at age 21, while his crew, Uwve Bolow and St. Thomas sailmaker Manfred Dietrich, had escaped through the Iron Curtain from East Germany. There were a few young Americans — Rudy Thompson, Jon Repke and myself, to name but a few — who had escaped from the States with a small grub stake.

No one had pensions or a regular income — it was a strictly hand-to-mouth existence — but everyone chipped in and helped each other. In St. Thomas we could not afford to drink beer, so we'd take a gallon bottle down to Reise's liquor store and get it filled with two-year-old St. Croix rum straight from the barrel for 75 cents. We were all sailors, by necessity. All too many boats had very unreliable gasoline engines, alternators had not been invented, and boats with diesel engines were frequently without power as the batteries were too low to start the engine. So we sailed.

Hauling facilities were scarce and primitive. The one in St. Lucia had a steam-driven winch; the chocking was done by a hard-hat diver whose air was supplied by two men working a pump. Marinas did not exist and marine stores were noticeable for their absence. Getting spares was extremely difficult; air freight was so erratic that paying for it was like giving money to charity (you give the money but never see the results). I once had an air freight package that took 50 weeks to arrive!

We did have problems with minor pilferage. Small boys would hang around, pick up something and run off. (Caribbean track coaches are missing the ball; they should enter the islands' ten-year-olds in the 100-yard dash, they would beat Lynford Christie.) Small boys liked oar locks, especially; the smart person carried them in their pockets when leaving their dinghies.

The only places where there were problems with dinghy stealing were in St. Lucia and St. Vincent, where skippers would wake up in the morning to find their dinghy painter neatly cut with a sharp knife. I dreamed up a solution: I wormed a piece of light stainless 7 x 19 wire up inside the three-strand dinghy painter. A number of times I woke in the morning to discover the dinghy painter partially cut through. I still had my dinghy, but the potential thief had a very dull knife!

Customs and Immigration officers, with one or two exceptions, were universally friendly, polite and helpful. I remember with great affection Mr. Blake, the Customs/Immigration officer in Road Town, Tortola. During the 1950s, *Iolaire* was based in St. Croix and I had a Montserratian crew, thus I had to clear out every 29 days. So on a Saturday at dawn we would hoist the main (a god-awful job involving 660 square feet of heavy canvas and a main halyard winch so small you needed a magnifying glass to find it), sail off the Comanche Club dock, and head off to Road Town on a glorious beam reach.

We would sail into Road Harbour with the 'Q' flag on the starboard spreader, drop the headsail, round up and sheet the main flat. Once way was lost we would drop the anchor, back her down and set the anchor.

Before the anchor was set we would see Mr. Blake approaching in his gray Tortola longboat, standing ramrod straight amidships in his blue uniform and peaked cap. The boat, driven by a small boy running a Seagull engine, was equipped with a flagstaff in the stern flying the defaced blue ensign.

Fenders would be rigged, as the longboat had rubstrakes secured with tenpenny nails with the heads exposed. We would break the lifeline on the starboard side, take Mr. Blake's bow line, and he would clamber aboard and shake my hand. We would exchange friendly greetings, have a beer together, and I'd give him one crew list, which he would pocket. He'd then wish us good sailing, climb back into the longboat and depart.

We would promptly hoist the staysail, sail the anchor out, clear Road Harbour and enjoy a quick reach back to St. Croix, arriving before dark on the same day as we'd left. We then searched out the Harbormaster/Customs officer/Immigration officer (one man, three hats in those days) — who would be found in the Comanche Club, Hamilton House, Stone Balloon or Gentleman John's — and report our arrival.

After a few months, problems arose. Sailors told the harbormaster that a boat 40 feet long with no engine could not sail from St. Croix to Road Town, anchor, clear and sail back all in one day. They alleged that we sailed out over the horizon, hove to, and then sailed back in the afternoon. For that reason we had to change the routine: we would give Mr. Blake two crew lists, so he could keep one and sign the other for us to deliver to the Harbormaster/Customs officer/Immigration officer in St. Croix.

Similarly, boats sailing across the Atlantic and arriving in Barbados were swiftly and efficiently cleared through Customs and Immigration. As boats approached Needham Point, the southwestern point of Barbados, the lighthouse keepers would notify Customs and Immigration in Bridgetown, who would get underway in their 25-foot longboat rowed by two men dressed in the garb of sailors in Nelson's day. Shortly after the yacht's anchor was down in Carlisle Bay, they would arrive, welcome the yachtsmen, and clear them immediately. Even at night this happened, as the lighthouse keepers would spot the running lights of the approaching yacht.

Entering Trinidad by yacht in the Sixties and Seventies was a long, drawn-out process. You had to visit four different offices in Port of Spain, all widely scattered. After one such ordeal, I had finally arrived at the last office, hot and tired. When my papers were stamped, I said to the Customs officer, "It's time for my mid-day Heineken; where is the nearest place I can buy one?" Looking at me he replied, "Mr. Street, you look tired and it's a long walk to the nearest bar — I don't think you'll make it." I obviously had a very crestfallen expression, as he then said, "All is not lost. I have here in my little fridge two cold Heinekens. Why don't you sit down and we both can enjoy a noontime beer?" Which we did, and he would not even let me pay for mine.

Another time, I was clearing *Iolaire's* crew into Trinidad for the Trinidad-to-Grenada race. We had a very friendly Immigration officer and all was well — until he came to Jill Hayter's passport, which was British. He suddenly exclaimed, "This girl was born in Umintali; she cannot get off the boat!" I asked why, and he replied, "She was born in Umintali — she is Rhodesian so she can't land." (In the Seventies, holders of Rhodesian and South African passports were unwelcome in many Caribbean countries.) This went back and forth, until finally I took the passport and asked, "What does it say on the cover?" He replied "British", so I said "Well, then, she is British." He quickly replied "NO — she was born in Umintali; she is Rhodesian," to which I responded: "If a cat has kittens in the oven, does that make them biscuits?" He roared with laughter and said "You win, skipper," stamped the passport and added, "Have a good time in Trinidad!"

In my *Cruising Guide to the Lesser Antilles*, published in 1966 and now back in print, I quoted Batchey of *Haufreuen's* advice on how to clear Customs and Immigration in Fort de France, Martinique: "Write out a crew list and give it to the first gendarme you see, who will put it in his pocket and lose it. Then proceed on to the Europe, an excellent, reasonable restaurant and bar favored by the yachtsmen for dinner and drinks."

The only problem with having this recommendation in the guide was that about three years after the book was printed, Mr. Breton, an enthusiastic young French official, arrived on the scene and decided that visiting yachts must enter Martinique properly and clear in at Fort de France. He developed a habit of arriving on boats to clear them in at about the time the crew were busy serving the charter guests' breakfast. After six or seven months of being asked to come back after breakfast, he started arriving on board accompanied by a couple of big, armed Gendarmes, complete with hobnailed boots.

Jol Byerley, who then owned and skippered the magnificent 72-foot gaff-rigged schooner *Lord Jim*, reported what was happening. In the news column he was then writing for *Yachting* magazine, he said there was nothing the charter skippers could do except "grin and bear it".

Subsequent to the report, every time *Lord Jim* arrived in Martinique, Jol was given a hard time by the authorities. He could not figure out what was happening until a Martinican friend told him there was a notice in the Customs office saying that Jol had insulted French officials in print by writing "beware of the grinning bear" — a mistranslation. The situation was cleared up when Jol obtained a copy of the issue concerned, had it properly translated and took it to the head of Customs.

At first Mr. Breton drove us nuts; he earned the nickname "Double O Seven" as he tore around the harbor enforcing the regulations in a high-speed launch that looked right out of a James Bond movie. But his rules, once established, worked well. His office, conveniently located on the fuel dock, was open from 0900 to 1300 and 1500 to 1900, seven days a week. Entry and clearance papers were one single form. Although it had to be filled out in sextuplicate, this was no problem as you were handed all six pages stapled together with the carbon already in place. There were no fees at all. This was actually quite a painless operation once he got it all organized.

I still run into very nice government officials, like the last time I cleared out from Carriacou. The Customs officer introduced himself as the son of Mr. Bristol, a Carriacou fisherman, caulker and carpenter who used to come to Grenada to caulk *Iolaire* when she was hauled on the old Spice Island boatyard slipway.

He stated, "Mr. Street, if it were not for you, I would be like my father in a small boat fishing with a line and pulling pots, instead of sitting in this nice office, wearing shiny shoes, pressed pants and a clean white shirt. Many thanks." It is comments like that which make me feel that my life has not been wasted.



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BUMMING A SAIL IN SVG

by Ryan Weaver

It's hard for me to get into a movie so completely that I forget what's going on behind the scenes, especially if what's going on behind the scenes is more exciting than the scene. For example, in the first *Pirates of the Caribbean* there is a scene in which Captain Jack Sparrow finds himself marooned on an abandoned rumrunners' island (he happens to know where the leftover cache is) with beautiful Elizabeth as his sole companion: not a bad fate.



RYAN WEAVER

Especially when, behind the scenes, I know that Johnny Depp and Keira Knightly were paid millions to make that movie; were probably flown in first class; were probably delivered gourmet catered meals by rosy-cheeked personal assistants; were *paid* to frolic together on that gorgeous island for hours and perhaps days. Meanwhile, thus removed from the film, I cannot help but realize that I've actually *paid* to sit in this dark box in the hope that it will allow me to pretend, for a scene, that I'm on a castaway island too.

Watching that scene, I was green with envy, red with rage, and plenty of other colors and emotions, too. Perhaps I was even a little blue, because *I* was the one in grade school who told adults in all sincerity that what I wanted to be when I grew up was marooned. I don't remember many ambitions to be an armchair adventurer.

Little did I know then that some months later I'd find myself in a kayak in the Caribbean, getting pelted by a tropical deluge, seriously contemplating a battle against 20-knot winds and a roller coaster swell all for the chance to beach on the scenic little island lying just over there, at a distance just shy of impossible.

We were in the Tobago Cays. My girlfriend had used her timeshare to snag a last-minute cabin on a TradeWinds catamaran cruise (which is akin to winning the lottery).

After I'd admitted to myself I'd be swept out to sea and had given up, after I'd finished consoling myself around the Cays and come back, while we were sailing away and I pointed at the island in a threatening way and mumbled I'll be back for you, little friend, did I have to suffer hearing our French captain say, "Oh, zis island? Zis is where zey feelmed Johnny Depp castaway wiz ze rum." And he said it oh-so-casually, because he's been there before and he'll be there again next week. Spoiled.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines are the earthen distillation of dreams.

They also happen to be a vastly fun sail, and an excellent place for those without their own yachts to charter a cruise. There are a few companies to choose from. We chose TradeWinds because my family had chartered a yacht with them last summer to dance among the British Virgins, and we'd had an unforgettable time. TradeWinds also chose us, as it were, when there happened to be that last-minute cabin available.

For us the island of St. Vincent was mostly a thoroughfare to get to the Grenadines. I'd researched the volcano, the waterfalls, the beaches. I knew that St. Vincent held the capital, Kingstown, and was by far the most populated island of the group. This generally isn't my style. In the end, I was spared from the possibility of regretting what I didn't see on St. Vincent by Bequia, the island that leaves no room for regret on any count.

Our yachting journey began in Bequia, which is also where it ended a week later. The island demands to be more than just a home base. Its distinct personality, precious people and vibrant beauty were apparently distilled from the most potent dreams of all, and are in a class all their own.

Most of the Grenadines are sparsely inhabited — the Tobago Cays have a population of 0 souls. These are the kinds of islands that lend themselves to exploration, isolation.

Travel literature (especially glossy magazines) usually don't provide treasure maps to find true seclusion because it's assumed that the average reader is lazy. The rich are often catered to, not the adventurous. But true seclusion is the reward of a challenging search, and ought to be.

My top SVG treasure hunts:

Hope Bay, Bequia: tough hills and lack of signs plague the passage to this inspiring beach — maybe that's how my girlfriend and I were able to bodysurf and relax under the palms for four straight hours alone on a Sunday (unless you count the company of the bovine family that lives beyond the seagrapes but comes out to play on the beach occasionally).

Macaroni Bay, Mustique: enjoy the manicured splendor of this island playground for the obscenely rich while you speed through it on your way to Macaroni. There are no signs — you'll have to get there by following the pointing fingers of locals, and listening to them say things like, "Turn right at de t'ird bamboo fence."

Left: Our TradeWinds cat in the Tobago Cays. These are the kinds of islands that lend themselves to exploration, isolation

Below: Fun is free. Enjoying the manicured splendor of Mustique on our way to Macaroni Bay



Saltwhistle Bay, Mayreau: on this two-square-mile island, a one-minute walk under the heavily coconutted palms of the thin isthmus will take you from popular Saltwhistle Bay to the long, quiet beach adjacent, which is more rugged.

When I walked on these beaches it felt as if I were the first human to set foot on earth — as if my heels punching into the soft sand were producing the only prints that had ever been. If I were in a movie at that moment, that's what was going on behind the scenes.

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LA ROUTE DES TEPUYS 2006

First Edition of Martinique to Venezuela Rally a Success

by Stéphane Legendre

Introduction

When the idea of creating this new event came to me, I tried to remember what I had feared the first time I sailed to Venezuela 17 years ago. In those days, Los Roques had no *posadas* or supermarkets, but there were lobsters and huge conchs everywhere. Stories of acts of piracy and physical assaults on cruisers anchored along the Venezuelan coast were on everyone's lips. And, today, 17 years later, the same stories — some true and some pure imagination — are still going around on SSB and VHF and in cockpits and the numerous bars of the Caribbean.

To say that certain parts of Venezuela are not dangerous would be a lie, and to say that all attacked sailors were simply unlucky would also be a lie, but if one follows some rules he "should" encounter no problems.

Those rules are simple:

1) Avoid known danger zones (such as the Paria peninsula, because of its use by drug smugglers).

2) Never, ever anchor alone in an isolated place. (Despite this well-known advice, this year in Laguna Grande I saw one sailing boat anchored alone, behind an island, for days.)

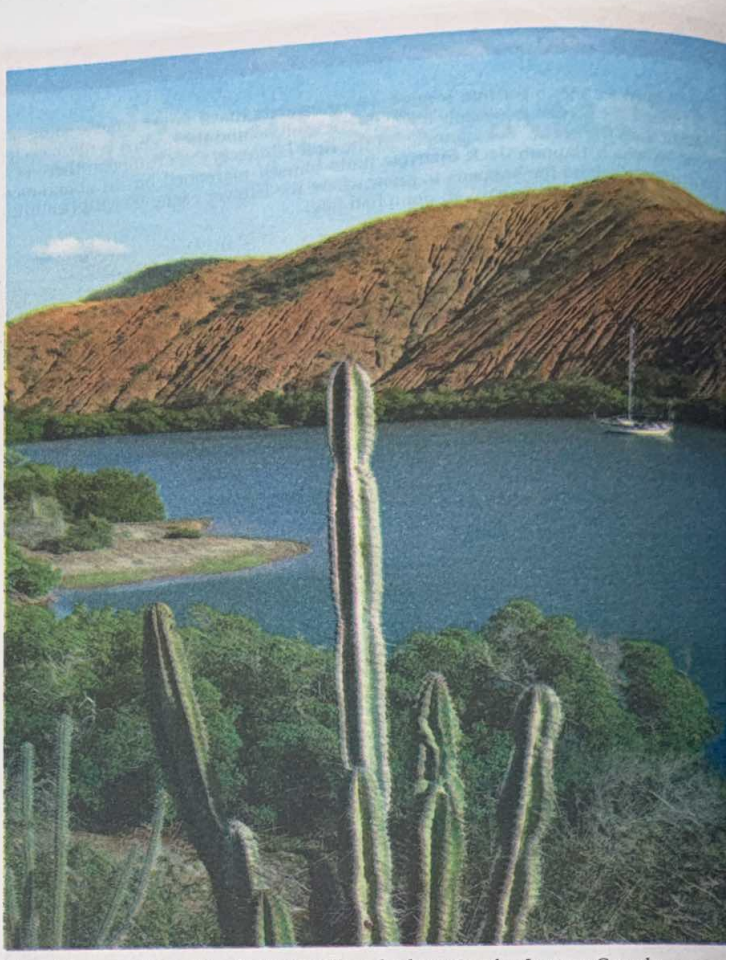
3) Respect the fishermen who are working hard for their living. If they ask you to move because you are anchored in a spot where they normally throw their nets, do it! Realize they have families to feed and no other way to do so, and that in their eyes you are a wealthy person, "doing nothing" all day.

4) Do not forget that most of the time assaults are not perpetuated by fishermen but by delinquents from large underprivileged populated areas of Margarita, Puerto la Cruz, Caracas, etcetera. They look for easy items to sell and know little about boats. Fishermen themselves are sometimes also victims of those robberies, losing outboard engines, gasoline and whatever else is negotiable.

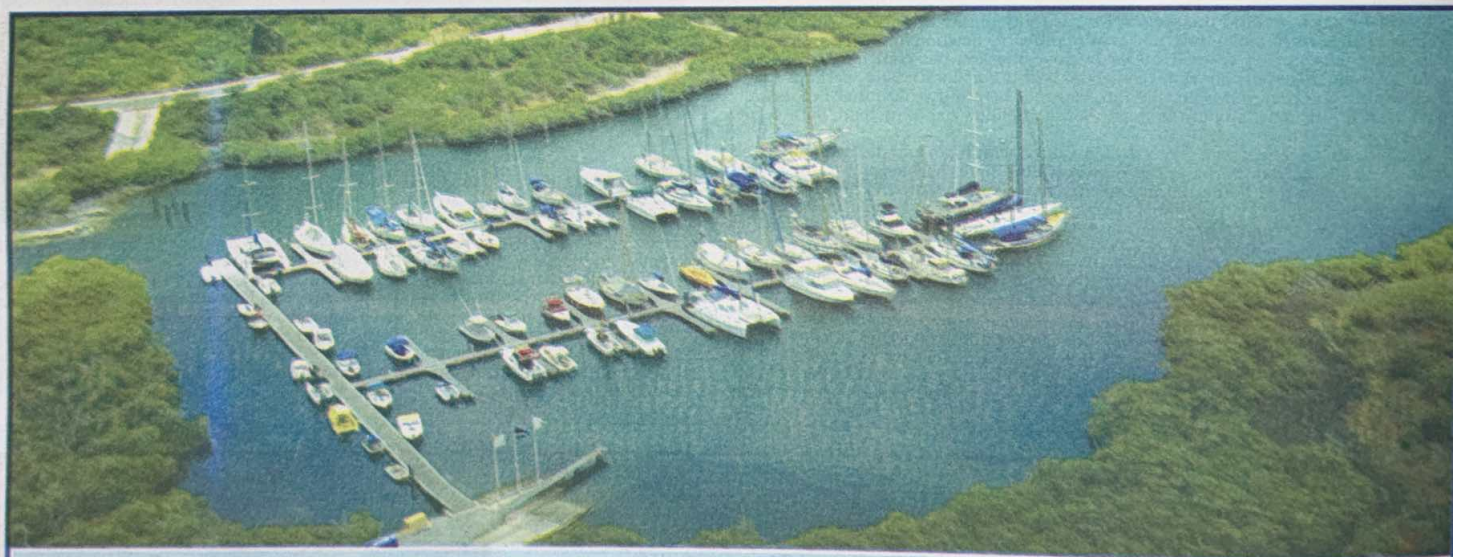
5) Do not have an aggressive attitude towards the locals. I am ashamed, sometimes, of being part of the sailing community when I hear some words and see some attitudes which show total disrespect.

6) The question of firearms on board is, of course, an issue each one has to answer for himself. Most of the boats I have met this year have flare pistols, some of which (the metal ones) are very powerful weapons at short range.

—*Continued on next page*



Except for one other sailing boat, we ralliers had spectacular Laguna Grande all to ourselves



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—Continued from previous page

And, as this is a safety item, no questions are normally asked by the authorities. A flare gun is often enough to scare off assailants.

7) Last but not least, follow the recommendations of good sailing guides.



And to conclude this rather pessimistic introduction, I just would like to add that Venezuela is not just a parking space for your boat during hurricane season, it is also a beautiful country inland and its offshore islands have a lot to offer. So enjoy!

The 2006 Route

For this first edition of the Route des Tepuys yacht rally, a group of five sailing boats left Martinique on the 21st of June, after a wonderful welcome at Le Marin Marina and three evenings of entertainment. We headed directly for Prickly Bay, Grenada (160nm) where we stayed for two nights. Here we also received a memorable welcome, this time from Grenada's Board of Tourism and MAYAG (the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada). For some rally participants, "De Big Fish" bar's welcome reception will never be forgotten!

Late on the evening of our third day in Prickly Bay, we left Grenada heading for Los Testigos (85 nm), the first archipelago on our route to mainland Venezuela. An uneventful journey and an early sunny arrival at those beautiful islands made people realize they had changed worlds overnight. We were finished with the crowded anchorages of the Lesser Antilles — just a few boats anchored in front of fishermen's villages and wilderness all around. Excursions led us to romp on sand dunes ashore and snorkel over gorgonian fields alive with exotic fishes.

Three days of this natural wonderland and then we were off to the Gulf of Cariaco where we anchored off Medregal Village, a tiny resort situated on the northern shore of the gulf. It's a peaceful place with swimming pool, bar, restaurant, rooms to let and soon, owner Jean Marc hopes, a haul-out for both mono- and multi-hulls. Cariaco market on Saturday morning was the group's first contact with Venezuelan mainland life, providing fresh produce, fish and meat at Venezuelan prices in Bolivars, and always helpful people.

A daytime visit at the Guacharo Cave was quite an experience. The guacharo is a nocturnal bird which comes out at sunset in search of food. We walked through the mile-deep cave under overhanging birds until we reached the Cueva del Silencio — the "Cave of Silence" — where indigenous Indians once thought their ancestors' souls rested forever.

Our entry formalities were accomplished at Cumana, and it took longer than normal, due to the soccer World Cup. No stamps on our papers until the game was over?!? Welcome to Venezuela!

After a farewell evening party at Medregal Village, we set sail for another new destination: Laguna Grande, with its spectacular scenery, was our next stop. Here we bought delicious fresh seafood from the local fishermen and cooked ourselves a feast while enjoying the serenity and colours of this marvellous place. We were the only boats there, except for one other sailing boat.

Back to civilization at Cumana: MacDonald's, shops, restaurants and six cinemas (with movies in Spanish) next to the marina. We received a warm welcome from the State of Sucre authorities and people from Fondoturismo, the tourism department, who invited us all to a party that night.

Mochima's majestic entrance and beautiful landscapes awaited us next, and ultimately we arrived at our final destination, Puerto La Cruz. All the boats were moored at PMO marina's dock, where Paola helped in every way she could — especially when we had to face new laws concerning fuel delivery to foreign boats. The law existed, but apparently no one at the ministry offices knew what paperwork was required or what procedure we ought to follow to get the much-needed fuel. Nevertheless, we managed to get our supply. I shall not tell you how... everything is possible in Venezuela.

Our rally participants were then ready, with the boats safe in harbour, to explore inland Venezuela or fly back to Europe for a visit. For the lucky ones, a sail to La Tortuga, Los Roques or Las Aves followed.

Left: Our rally participants were then ready, with the boats safe in harbour, to explore inland Venezuela; pictured is Canaima

Below: Sunset at peaceful Medregal Village



The goal I had set for the first Route des Tepuys yacht rally I believe was fulfilled: getting people to enjoy a rally from the Eastern Caribbean to Venezuela, providing a safe environment and beautiful places to visit, and giving them the desire to explore more of this country that I have really grown to love since my first visit 17 years ago.

I hope to welcome more boats from all nationalities next year and to share my passion for this area of the world.

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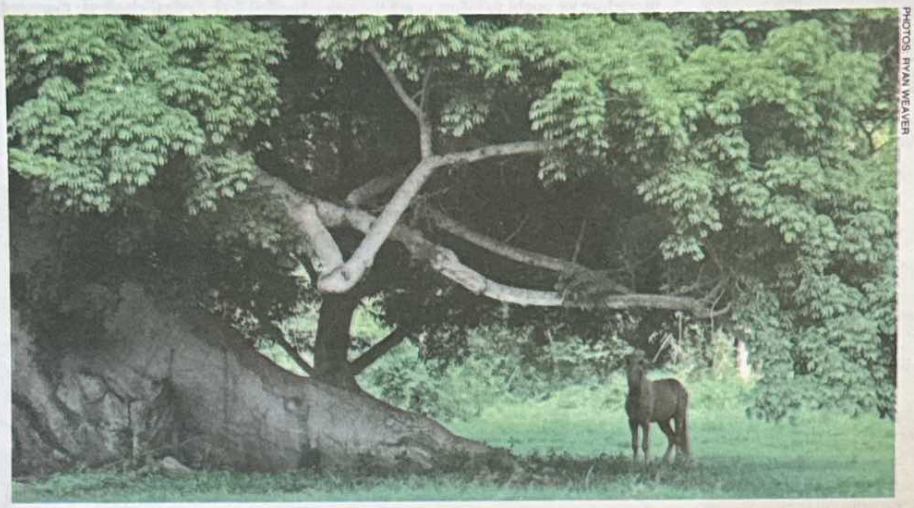
VIEQUES

A few miles off the coast of Puerto Rico lies the island with the hottest potential Caribbean lovers have seen in a long time. It is Vieques.

It was probably a florist of an author who first referred to Vieques, her little sister Culebra, and their scattered cays as the Spanish Virgin Islands. Because it seems pretty clear that the islands lost a great deal of innocence when the US Navy acquired vast portions of them early in WWII and proceeded to spray them with bullets and pock them with bombs.

For the islanders of Culebra, it was in 1975 that President Gerald Ford signed an order to end the Navy's use of the island as a weapons range. When placed back into the hands of her islanders, Culebra soared. She was beautiful, and her unsurpassed Flamenco Beach still makes Top Ten Beaches in the World lists and is featured on travel shows regularly. But for almost 30 years her residents would be unable to ignore the flashes of light and quakes that came regularly from across the short expanse of sea: Vieques was still being bombed.

The relationship between the people of Vieques and the Navy started out poor and never got better. Like most native islanders, Viequenses were proud of their home, and although they consider themselves Puerto Ricans, they also consider themselves distinct based on being residents of Vieques.



PHOTOS: RYAN WEAVER

The ceiba tree of Vieques is an ancient landmark. A wild horse nibbles grass in its shade

During the war, the Navy relocated locals and appropriated the east and west ends of the island (two-thirds), but wanted it all. An effort in 1947 to uproot and relocate the entire population to St. Croix failed, although many migrated anyway. The Navy tried it again in 1961. Then Governor of Puerto Rico, Luis Muños Martin, sent a letter to President Kennedy outlining the dangers he saw in such action.

"There are about 8,000 people in Vieques," Muños wrote. "They and their ancestors have lived there for many generations. Their roots have grown around family, neighbors, schools, churches, houses, land and jobs. The project involves forcible uprooting of these people—even removal of the bodies from the cemeteries because, we are told, the people of Vieques will not be allowed to return to visit the graves."

"We know of no truly comparable action in American history," Muños went on. "I believe it is the kind of thing which arouses instinctive disapproval."

Nowhere was this instinct for disapproval greater than in the local community. The people didn't like seeing their homeland being trained upon, and they didn't like the influx of prostitution and alcohol that came with the men. Local women were treated poorly, which sparked brawls. To kick off what was to become two decades of especially high tension, in 1953 a local elderly man was kicked and beaten to death (and another elderly man severely injured) by four Marines and four sailors who wanted to buy more alcohol than the old man would give. The islanders united, called for the Navy to leave; nothing happened. Two sailors were court-martialed and acquitted.

The irreversible turning of the tide came when a military jet doing exercises accidentally bombed and instantly killed Vieques native David Sanes in March 1999. Propelled into the international spotlight, the people once again demanded that the Navy start pack-

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RISING

by Ryan Weaver

ing its bags. Much of the Navy's dirty laundry was dragged into the spotlight, which included the use of napalm and depleted uranium on the island. Here was an inhabited island officially under the protection of the United States whose remaining locals, sandwiched between military zones, must have long since wondered: With protection like this, who needs enemies?

The fact remained that the Navy had to practice somewhere in order to properly defend the nation, and Vieques was not referred to as their "crown jewel" training site for nothing. Only after long protests (which involved camping in the bomb zone and many White House proposals rejected) was Vieques *finally* returned to her people on May 1, 2003, after 60 years of occupation.

The time for Vieques is now. The island is coming back to life. Some of the best beaches have been liberated for public use. The jungle creeps over its scars. The grass grows tall atop the abandoned bunkers on the west end. The island is reclaiming itself.

The economy, which was always poor and sometimes worse than the US economy during the Great Depression, is starting to enjoy the rise of tourism. This, too, is a creeping gain. When my girlfriend and I took the ferry to Vieques from Fajardo, on the Puerto Rican mainland (two tickets cost us US$4), we found ourselves in a swarm of locals. The only people who weren't from Vieques were one other couple and ourselves.

There hasn't been a better time to explore Vieques in three generations. Off the charming town of Esperanza, boaters find an excellent anchorage in the calm between town and Cayo Afuera, a little cay shaped like a dewdrop. The Navy left behind well-maintained roads that are perfect for rental cars and even better for mopeds. To ride a moped in Vieques is to set a higher bar for a moment of travel perfection. Speeding over the hills, through the jungle, into military ghost grounds, onto vast beaches, and almost all of this without seeing another soul, is exhilarating.

Then there's Mosquito Bay, world-famous for its bioluminescence. There are only four other bays in the world that feature the bioluminescent phenomenon year-round, and of those Mosquito boasts the greatest concentration of dinoflaggelates. These single-celled creatures glow when agitated, which makes human movement in a bay full of them akin to magic.

There are many tours nightly in the bay, but the best is given by Abe's Snorkeling and Biobay Tours. Unlike the larger groups herded onto boats and taken out either by electric or harmful gasoline engines (the pollution kills the glow), Abe takes a small group out in kayaks. Every paddle is a splash of light. In the middle of the bay, Abe delivers a small educational spiel and then encourages you to swim. To play. To spit streams of salty light from your mouth. To hold your hand in the air and watch particles of light drip from it.

Abe's grandfather was one of those relocated to St. Croix long ago, and his family has seen it all. He doesn't mind talking about it; he related his stories to us among much laughter and a few beers while on his break in town.

Vieques has the highest density of "friendly" per capita that I've known. Ask a local anything — directions, advice, history, or just to chat. They're eager to talk about their island now that it's theirs again. They're also loose with a smile, and why not? There's a lot to be happy about.

That goes for visitors too.



Vieques' north side from the air. Today, planes drop tourists, not bombs



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Adios Venezuela, Heading West

by Steve Jost

There have been some interesting new adventures this year; some good, some bad. In addition to our usual yearly boat projects we made a land trip to Argentina in February and later sailed to the western Caribbean via Bonaire, Curaçao, Colombia, the San Blas Islands, ending up in Panama for the summer months.

We were embroiled in two major repair/maintenance projects in Venezuela last October, overhauling the engine and removing our 20-year-old teak decks. Upon our return to the boat after being away, we were surprised to learn that the engine had been overhauled as planned — but had not been replaced in the boat! It seemed that our mechanic had accepted a position on a large yacht on the East Coast. Well, after two and a half weeks we located an available mechanic, installed the engine, launched the boat and were ready for the next adventure.

After six years in the tropics, our teak decks looked pretty sad so we decided to remove the teak strips and replace them by painting the decks and cabin with a light-colored non-skid. Definitely, cooler, cleaner and much cheaper. We found a great Venezuelan contractor to do the job, but since all of the boatyards were full we had to complete the job in the water, which included moving the boat to several locations. Not a fun project when you are living aboard. Our crew did a great job and *Viva* looks better than new.



STEVE JOST

Removing our 20-year-old teak decks and replacing them with non-skid. We found a great Venezuelan contractor to do the job

The next bit of bad news came when we discovered that the newly-overhauled engine wasn't running properly. Low oil pressure and loss of power were the two major problems. The good news was that Robert, our original mechanic, was returning to Puerto la Cruz and vowed to correct the problem without charge. Of course this meant having to raise the engine again after we had just varnished the entire interior! Needless to say, Pam was not a happy camper.

At this point we decided to let Robert do his thing, get off the boat and take our planned trip to Argentina while he was "sorting things out".

Argentina Interlude

Argentina, where do we start? First of all, the country is immense and it would take months to see it all. We opted for an initial stay in Buenos Aires and then a week in the Patagonia lake district at the foot of the Andes. Buenos Aires is one of the most vibrant and entertaining cities we have visited in many years. Great food and local wine, lots of culture, an exciting night life and more tango than you could ever imagine — and best of all, incredibly cheap!

We were lucky to have some good recommendations from other cruisers and also some great referrals from an Argentine couple on our dock. One of our favorite hangouts was the Café Tortoni, a grand old European-style cafe built in the 1800s. For less than US$10 you can have two glasses of wine and a light snack in elegant surroundings. They also have two different tango shows in the evening. Needless to say, we made numerous stops there. We were hustled at all the hotels to attend one of the larger stage tango/dinner shows, very expensive (US$75 per person) and more like Las Vegas productions, but we always opted for the small tango cafés which were much more intimate.

Another one of our favorite haunts was Puerto Madeiro, the old port, where the old brick docks have been renovated into restaurants, offices and loft apartments. It is also the site of a first-class marina and yacht club.

After our boating lifestyle, it was hard getting used to dinner at 9:00PM but it didn't take us long to adapt. We just slept a little later in the morning.

After a week in Buenos Aires we flew to Bariloche in the lake district of Patagonia. Located in the foothills of the Andes, it is about 1,500 miles from Buenos Aires and is reminiscent of the Swiss Alps. We rented a car for a day for a leisurely drive around the lakes, which included a stop for a cable car ride to a beautiful lookout in the Nahuel Huapi National Park. In addition to all the hiking trails there was a revolving restaurant on the summit where you could drink a glass of wine while the entire panorama slowly turned around you. My idea of a nature hike!

From there we took a bus to Angostura, another delightful little lakeside town, and then on to San Martin del Andes. San Martin is a ski resort on a lake and the whole town looks like an Alpine village with wooden buildings surrounded by rose gardens. Great area for hiking, sightseeing and eating. We spent one day on a local boat excursion down the lake for a nice hike and lunch.

For the 1,500-mile return trip to Buenos Aires, we opted for one of the super "cama" or sleeper buses with fold-down seats, hot meals and wine! A very comfortable alternative to flying.

Upon our return to Buenos Aires, one of the highlights was a trip to an *estancia*, one of several old cattle ranches that have been restored and made into guest hotels. We took a bus to the little town of San Antonia de Areco (sort of like the Wild West) and got a cab from the bus stop to a little hotel, small, clean and US$17 per night! San Antonia is an old colonial town with several good restaurants and numerous leather and silver artisans' workshops. The next day we took a cab to La Bamba Estancia, and spent the day horseback riding, swimming and eating a fabulous barbecue lunch with more of that great Argentinean wine.

Meanwhile Back at the Yard

When we returned to Puerto la Cruz, Robert had our engine problems solved and it was time to be heading west. Unfortunately, over the past year the security situation in Venezuela has deteriorated at all of the nearby coastal islands and anchorages we used to enjoy. We feel very fortunate to have seen the best of that country over the past six years with its pristine coastal anchorages and offshore islands, in addition to exploring the inland beauty of Mérida, Angel Falls, Colonia Tovar and other scenic spots.

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

In the past we have had some quality work performed and have met some wonderful locals who were not only helpful, but became friends as well. And it will be hard to forget paying eight cents a gallon for diesel fuel, nine dollars for a liter of good scotch, and three dollars for a case of beer. But the time had finally come to say "Adios, Venezuela"!

After leaving Puerto la Cruz we had hoped to spend about three weeks at the Venezuelan outer islands of Tortuga, Los Roques and Las Aves, but unfortunately we continued to be plagued by maintenance problems. At Isla Tortuga we had a minor electrical fire which was really scary. It turned out that the mechanic forgot to re-attach the main battery ground wire to the engine. Not much damage but it could have been a lot worse. On our second day at Islas Los Roques we lost the engine fresh-water pump. Without a spare, we had to cut the trip short and sail directly to Bonaire for a replacement. Bummer!



We feel very fortunate to have seen the best of Venezuela over the past six years, with its pristine anchorages like Cieneguita

Bonaire and Curaçao

Bonaire, which is part of the Netherlands Antilles, has always been a good stopover for the east- or west-bound cruiser. The primary attraction is the clear water, which makes it a diving and snorkeling paradise. Once again, we were faced with more bad luck. The day after our arrival, a couple of teenage kids swam out to *Viva* while we were ashore and proceeded to rifle through our belongings. Most of the items they took were small but in the process, all of my Nikon digital SLR cameras and lenses ended up overboard. Apparently, there has been a rash of robberies, mostly directed at visiting dive tourists, but it now appears that cruising sailors might be the new target. There were witnesses and the identities of the kids were known, but under Dutch law there is no recourse against minors except for a slap on the wrist. We spent several days at the local police department but it soon became clear that there would be no compensation or closure. Needless to say, no photos of Bonaire!

After a 12-day wait, our engine pump finally arrived and it was on to Curaçao. The main anchorage is at Spanish Water on the east end of the island, which is a bit inconvenient for clearing Customs and Immigration since it is about an hour bus ride away. However, we rented a car for a day to do some provisioning and sightseeing, which also solved the clearance problems. We then moved down to the west end of the island to wait for a weather window for the dreaded 400-mile passage to Cartagena, Colombia.

Colombia's Coast and Cartagena

We always remember the thrashing we had in 2000 when we were traveling in the other direction. May and October are supposed to be the optimum months for this passage and for once we hit the perfect timing and were rewarded with a delightfully smooth downwind sail. Contrary to many experts' advice, we once again opted for the coastal route, which allowed for several overnight stops at some interesting scenic anchorages. In contrast to the Venezuelan coast we never felt threatened by security problems and it is a shame that the insurance companies charge an extra premium for yachts to visit Colombia. There are obviously some serious threats with all of the drug trafficking in the interior, but these activities are seldom encountered by cruising yachts and the Colombian Navy and Coast Guard keep a highly visible profile.

After a pleasant five-day trip we arrived unscathed in Cartagena. Cartagena is truly a jewel of a city, rich in history and well worth the stop on anyone's itinerary. The old walled city and surrounding fortresses have been under constant rebuilding and renovation for several years and the area is loaded with wonderful colonial architecture, museums, galleries, old churches and restaurants for every taste.

There is shopping for every price range and since Colombia is the emerald capital of the world, there are bargains galore. A walking tour of the city provides great photo opportunities and we were happy to see that little has changed since our last visit six years ago, with the exception of some great new restaurants.

Most cruising yachts anchor in the inner harbor or take a berth at Club Náutico or Club de Pesca. Since friends were arriving for a two-week stay, we opted for Club de Pesca, which is a very upscale marina on the site of an old fortification and a two-dollar cab ride from the old walled downtown or Centro. At Club de Pesca we had the pleasure of meeting Lee Miles, a transplanted American and emerald broker. Lee and his wife Pachi were delightful hosts with a wealth of knowledge on Cartagena and Colombia in general.

Panama Passage

After a pleasant three weeks it was off to the San Blas Islands of Panama, home of the Kuna Indians, which still remains one of the most pristine and scenic areas of the Caribbean. The 200-mile passage was a calm motorsail, in contrast to our boom-breaking trip six years ago, and we spent a leisurely three weeks amongst the Kunas. (If you refer to Travelogue Nine on my website, www.stevejostphotography.com, in July 2000 we pretty well described the area and its people. I am now able to include a few photos.) Other than a few new outboards on the canoes, cell phones in their pockets and a little less traditional attire on the women, life has also remained the same in that area.

It was then on to Linton, a tranquil little bay, for some final provisioning and a chance to catch up with some old cruising friends before heading to Bocas del Toro, where we planned to leave *Viva* for the summer. Since time was getting short, we opted for a non-stop 157-mile passage from Linton to Bocas del Toro, versus a more leisurely coastal trip with stops in Portobello, Colon, Rio Chagres, etcetera. Big mistake.

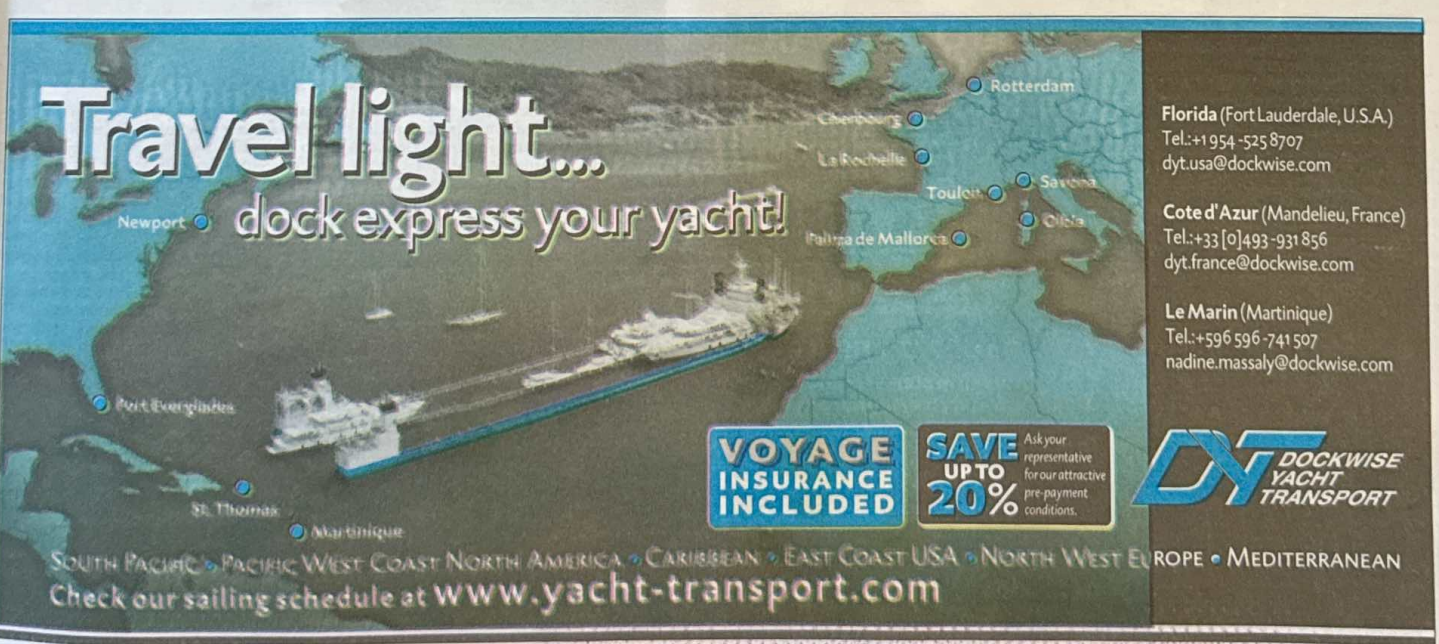
As usual, the weather gurus all called for clear weather, light winds and calm seas. The first 30 or 40 miles were great with sunny skies, eight- to ten-foot following seas and light winds off the starboard bow. Pretty neat — surfing to weather!

Then the wind picked up to about 20 knots with two knots of current on the nose until those nice following rollers turned into a seagoing washboard. About 2:00 AM the lightning and rain squalls started and for the next four hours we were surrounded by one squall after another. We have never experienced or seen so much lightning and thunder — sort of like sailing through an artillery barrage without the shrapnel. During all this, we hit one of those floating trees you always see washed up on the beaches, but it must have been a glancing blow because we were still floating.

To add to the excitement, we had a small container ship pass our transom less than a mile away. What is so exciting about that, you ask? Try no running lights or range lights! I was only able to see him because of all the lightning flashes. Because of the lightning we had the radar and all the electronics unplugged, but I did try calling him on the VHF. Since there was no answer, I figure they must have been all asleep, struck by lightning, running drugs or all of the above. After tiptoeing around in the dark, trying to avoid any metal contact, the squalls finally passed, dawn arrived and it was then time to make our first fuel transfer. Not so easy schlepping the fuel jugs back from the bow in those conditions. At least we didn't run out!

The winds died a bit and the next eight hours were spent motoring into those nasty seas against a two-knot current. We arrived at the Bocas harbor entrance about 3:00PM. After 31 hours, we still managed to average over five knots. Think we will try the coastal route next time!

We really enjoyed Bocas del Toro, what little we've seen, and hope to spend a little time exploring the area when we return.



In This Caribbean Boat Business, It's the People — and the Cats!

by Roger Webb

I first met Phillipe when he came to look at my forward beam, which had been dancing on the bow of my catamaran, *Cover Shot*, like porpoises riding a swell. Phillipe Richard is one of the principals in Aikane & Catamaran Village, in the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago. As we talked I became increasingly interested in how a Frenchman came to be living and running a catamaran repair facility in Trinidad.



ROGER WEBB

Phillipe had been happily (he thought) living his life in France. He had his own business doing interior house remodeling and, when not involved in that, would take on projects designing and refurbishing yacht interiors. One evening he gets a phone call and a voice starts talking to him about some catamaran business in a place called Chaguaramas, Trinidad. The business, the person says, needs a designer for the interior of a new custom 56-foot catamaran, and also someone to supervise the construction of the interior. At first Phillipe thinks certainly the person talking has a wrong number, until it is explained to him how it was he got the call. Turns out the supplier of Phillipe's veneers in France is the brother of Fredrick Lagache, who partnered with Stephen Krymer to launch Aikane. During a conversation with his brother, Frederick mentioned that Aikane was struggling with interior design and production. It was suggested that Frederick contact Phillipe.

There was something that happened in that conversation, for Phillipe knew he was going to Trinidad. In three months he finished up all his business in France and flew off to a new destiny. His life was to change in ways he never could have envisioned, in a country he had never before heard of.

From 1998 to late '99 Aikane struggled to be a success. Plagued by rising costs and a mounting recession, Aikane was only able to sell one boat. Just as Vietnam undid the United States, the 56-foot cat put Aikane under. Toward the end of 2000 the company was staring through the window called bankruptcy, and early in 2001 Aikane closed its doors. Sixty employees found themselves with no company to work for.

During the course of building the new boat, owners of other cats would come to Aikane to inquire about repairs and refurbishing. Busy with production, Aikane was only able to take on a few projects, with satisfied owners the result. As the owners of Aikane were packing their bags, Phillipe was mentally organizing the restructuring of Aikane into a premier catamaran repair and refurbishing company. Phillipe saw the possibility of a whole new direction, and in August 2001 Aikane reopened as a catamaran repair facility called Catamaran Village.

Phillipe sees Catamaran Village as a competitor in an international market, and to be successful in that market the company needs to operate with the precision of a Swiss watch. "Four-million-dollar cats don't want excuses. And we intend to offer none. When we give a haul-out date and time, they better be there because we will. When we tell a customer when he can take possession of his repaired vessel, it will be ready when promised. Our goal is to always to be working toward precision, and our employees know that we are on our way up. It is the only direction we travel," Phillipe said.

Any business knows that it is only limited by the quality of its employees and Aikane focuses on recruiting the best. Jimmy Ramdass is the floor supervisor and has been with Aikane since its inception. When Aikane closed, Phillipe told Jimmy to forget Aikane and move on. That idea didn't last and when the new vision began to manifest itself, Phillipe was on the phone asking Jimmy to come back. He did, and today manages the repair technicians who on an average have been with the company three years. "There is a pull with the guys who work here." Jimmy says, "The love of boat-building — nothing else keeps me here." Marcus, who has been with Aikane for three years, echoed Jimmy when he said, "I love what I am doing, and this is a good company to work for."

Phillippe, at left, holds a meeting with his employees each morning. 'Without them, I am nothing'

A yard full of cats, cats and only cats



Phillipe believes that it is important to take an interest in the well-being of the people who work for him and he has a clear understanding of what it takes for success. "Without them, I am nothing." He went on to say, "We take care of our people. We don't want vagrants working for us. We want our employees to be able to feed their families, have a car and a home, and have time to spend with family." To ensure there is time for family, Catamaran Village commences work at 7:00AM and ends the day at 4:00PM. No working on the weekends. "Our staff knows there is no overtime and what needs to be done, gets done during our normal business hours." Phillipe told me this philosophy also eliminates what he called "the oil field mentality" where employees stall getting work done during normal hours in order to make overtime wages.

From August 2001 till now, Catamaran Village has had over a hundred cats out and in for repair, with 30 boats turned over this year alone. Currently cats to 36 metric tons (roughly to 80 feet) can be hauled for repair. When I was there, there was a 76-foot cat in the yard named *Akasha*. Phillipe's goal is to design and build a trailer capable of hauling up to 70 metric tons (roughly 125 feet) within the next year. The new trailer will establish Catamaran Village as the only company in the Southern Caribbean capable of hauling that size cat.

To ensure that quality and schedules are maintained, an employees' meeting is held each morning to discuss any issues left over from the previous day and to outline the day's work. Jimmy talks with the technicians about the day's projects, establishing priorities. It seemed that everyone I spoke with at Catamaran Village understood the value of working as a team to obtain optimum customer satisfaction. Also that maintaining focus on the objectives is critical. "You have to be on the ball in order to see it go your way," Jimmy said as he checked the work being done on a Privilege.

Vision drives Phillipe, the possibility of what can be. The vision is supported by excellent communication and people skills, and technical excellence. Phillipe is leading his team into a future that is clear and bright. Like dancers on the ballroom floor, Aikane is moving in a syncopated rhythm. Undoubtedly owners who bring their catamarans to Catamaran Village will be glad they have chosen to join in the dance.



PRODUCT POSTINGS

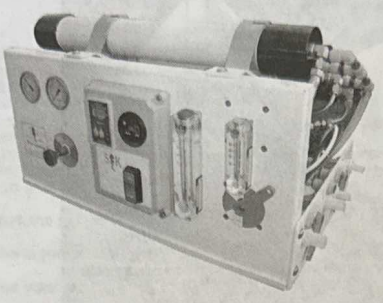
3-Mile LED Masthead Lamps
Suitable for power-driven vessels up to 20 metres in length, including sailing yachts under power, the new Hella marine NaviLED PRO 3 Nautical Mile LED Masthead lamps are power saving and ultra-reliable. Their advanced LED optic technology meets the international three nautical mile visibility requirements with less than 2.5 watts of power consumption.
With LED technology, there are no breakable filaments, so NaviLED PRO lamps are extremely strong, impact-resistant and completely maintenance free. Market-leading Multivolt electronics inside each lamp provide consistent illumination on input voltages from nine to 33 volts DC, even under conditions of extreme voltage fluctuation. Hella marine Multivolt circuitry also provides reverse polarity, spike and over-voltage



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Self-Righting, Extreme Holding Anchors
Following the successful introduction two years ago of the XYZ Self Righting Anchor, a new Extreme model — in galvanised or stainless steel — is now available from XYZ. Each anchor weighs only 6kg, but its extreme holding power in sand or mud will exceed up to 500 percent the holding power of existing anchors of similar weight according to The American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) tests. The ultra-short shank has negligible penetration resistance while being extremely strong.
The XYZ Extreme anchor sets at ultra short (1:2) scope and according to the manufacturers is capable of reaching enormous depth in sand and mud where it obtains constant upright orientation through 360 degrees of rode rotation. It will not break out, even when overpowered. Recommended for use in boats up to 48 feet in length.
For more information visit www.bestmarineimports.com/XYZAnchor.html .

Easy-to-Install Watermaker
The SC 600 Compact Watermaker from SK Watermakers is a self-contained unit that is easy to install. Just mount it in a solid location, attach low pressure hoses and connect the power. The units run quietly and without vibration.



Each SK Watermakers unit is constructed of high-quality stainless steel components. A 316L stainless steel pump, an energy-saving motor, non-corrosive low pressure fittings and color-coded nylon tubing are just some of the features upon which boat owners can rely. The SC 600 Compact can put out 72 to 95 liters of water per hour.
For more information contact tom@skwatermakers.net or visit www.skwatermakers.net.

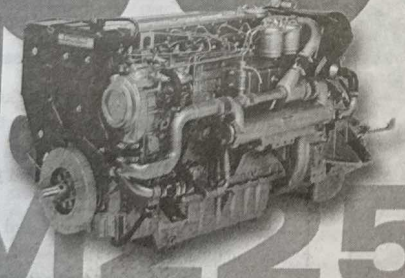
Centek Exhaust Systems Get Lloyds' Approval
Following a thorough evaluation by Lloyds Register's senior surveyor, all of Centek Industries' primary muffler products, tubing and its Gen-Kleen system have received the LR Type Approval Certificate. Centek also holds American Bureau of Shipping Type Certification, UL Approval, and its wet marine exhaust systems exceed ABYC Guidelines P-1. Centek is the only company to achieve all of these distinctions. Gen-Kleen processes diesel generator exhaust to discharge clean water overboard. Centek manufactures a wide variety of engine and generator exhaust systems for boats ranging from 5 to 2,500 horsepower. More than half of the exhaust applications require customized designs, and the company is committed to meeting customer needs by offering this unique service.
For more information visit: www.centekindustries.com.

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Joystick Sailing is an innovative new system bringing the benefits of Superyacht sail control to new and existing yachts from 35 to 55 feet.
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For more information visit www.strawberrymarketing.com.

New NAVTEX
McMurdo's NAV-7, a new generation GMDSS NAVTEX receiver, is simple to operate. Up-to-date information is delivered in bright colour-delineated text on a six-inch screen, making the extra-large font size clearer to read than ever before. Simultaneous tri-channel monitoring means that a single list of NAVTEX messages can be viewed together — the 518 KHz English language service, 490KHz national language and the 4209.5KHz long-range services.
The large daylight viewable four-colour LCD screen is easy to read in all light conditions, with its adjustable back-lit feature. Coloured headings clearly identify message category types and message content such as shipping movements and weather forecasts, which are quick and easy to identify. The powerful automatic sorting feature allows a message to be viewed on screen and sorted by channel, station ID, message category or age. An index message listing page allows for quick searching and direct access to full message text. McMurdo NAV-7 supports interface connection to Integrated Navigation System (INS) or electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS) and the connection of a printer. Antenna options include a two band active antenna optimised to provide high-quality reception of all recognized NAVTEX channels.
For more information contact markday@mcmurdo.co.uk.

Night Vision Systems with Radar Integration
Just when the marine industry thought the 5000 and 6000 multiple sensor vision systems were at their best, Night Vision Technologies (NVTi) introduces new scientific advancements. Now each state-of-the-art system is equipped with superior radar integration and object tracking. With these enhancements, NVTi continues to provide exceptional safety, security and navigation capabilities perfect for shipping, commercial and pleasure vessels. The recently-developed radar integration program connects the camera to the radar software system. When the radar detects an object, be it a floating container or another vessel, the cameras will automatically track to that location. Locking onto the object, the cameras will follow it until the craft passes by safely. Instead of trying to guess what the little blip on the radar screen is, the cameras immediately display an image.
The 5000 and 6000 systems also provide improved fields of sight with the thermal imager. They are 36° on model 5000/6000, 23° on the 5100/6100, and 9° on the 5200/6200 model. Also available on the series are an ultra-low lux camera, light-intensified imager and a high-resolution 312x zoom color camera. A Cat-5 Cable can provide control from distances up to 1,220m; users can also view and control the cameras from any location through optional remote internet access.
For more information visit www.nvti-usa.com.

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M225Ti

M65 M85T M92 M115T M135 M225Ti M265Ti M300Ti

Perkins SABRE MARINE POWER

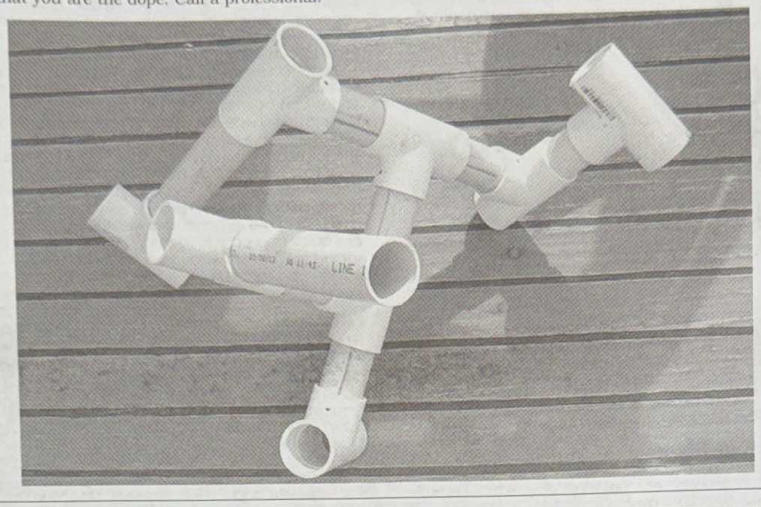
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OB Servant's Plumbing Tips for Boatowners

Get a bunch of PVC pipe, some T connectors and some "dope" to stick them all together. Stick them all together. Realize that you are the dope. Call a professional.



Top Ten Similarities Between Hurricane Season and Christmas

10) Decorating the house (okay, boarding up windows).
9) Dragging out boxes of stuff that hasn't been used since last season.
8) Last-minute shopping in crowded stores.
7) Regular TV shows being pre-empted for "specials".
6) Family coming to stay with you.
5) Family and friends from out of state calling.
4) Buying food you don't normally buy, and in large quantities.
3) Taking days off from work.
2) Having candles.
And, the number one reason Hurricane Season is like Christmas:
1) At some point, you're probably going to have a tree in your house!

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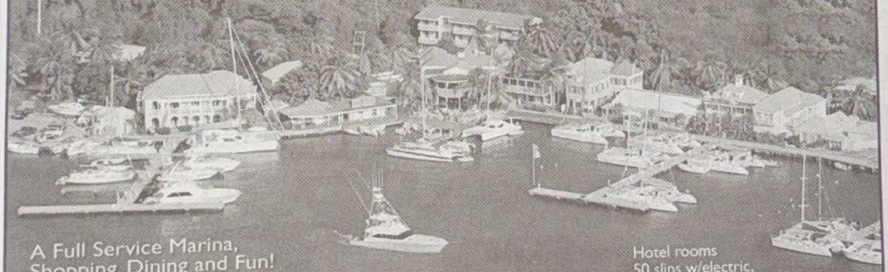
YOU MIGHT BE A CRUISER IF...

by Marjorie Mowry

(with apologies to Jeff Foxworthy of 'You Might Be A Redneck' fame)

- Your primary source of entertainment is eavesdropping on the radio.
- It now costs more to launder your clothes than it did to buy them.
- Your etiquette stops at flags.
- The boat is christened, but the kids aren't.
- Your current home is smaller than your former walk-in closet.
- Leaks come in two flavors. And you taste-test them every day.
- You used to recycle bottles and toss used Zip-loc bags. Now it's the other way around.
- It's not impolite to describe your friends as "weak but readable".
- You sneak around landlubbers' homes compulsively switching off the lights.
- A year's supply of duct tape seems like an appropriate wedding gift.

• Admiral Marine Management
• Arawak
• Beautiful Touch Salon
• Blue Parrot Cafe
• Blue Water Divers
• BVI Apparel
• Caribbean Jewellers
• Culture Classic
• Day Sails
• First Caribbean ATM
• Harbour Market
• Hucksters
• Ice Cream Store
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Nautical Jargon for Idiots

by Julia Bartlett

Amidships When you find yourself surrounded by boats, particularly when anchoring
Anchor Device used for making archaeological discoveries on the sea bed, especially pottery and tile shards embedded in mud
Anchor Light Device used for discharging batteries overnight
Berth The result of inadequate family planning aggravated by excessive rum
Boom The noise made by jet planes over secluded anchorages
Bottom Paint The result of not listening to, "I told you the paint was wet"
Bumper Used for extra rebound when bumping off other boats; nautical version of the fender if you're North American and vice versa if you're English
Chart A sort of map that tells you that no matter what the log says, you are not moving towards your destination
Clew It's what the captain is giving you when he/she is jumping up and down and gesticulating on the bow
Companion Way When you do it with someone, rather than on your own



Dead Reckoning When the captain counts the number of people whom she/he has managed to get up before 6AM
Deviation Visiting any other store apart from a supermarket or ships' chandlers
Dismasted When one's spar is no longer erect
Estimated Position Where you know you are not but would be if it weren't for the wind, current, waves and baggy mainsail
First Mate In mixed crews, this is usually an order
Freeboard What you give cockroaches, but not always friends
Head Way Less dangerous than going over the side way
Heave Used to lighten the vessel, particularly early in the voyage or during rough weather
Jibe A crew manoeuvre used when the captain has barked once too often
Keel When you see this you know that you are over-canvassed
Landlubber Anyone who has sailed fewer miles than you
Latitude Extra water allowance given attractive guest crew
Mizzen Anything that can't be found
Plough Anchor Device used in underwater agriculture for demolishing reefs that are in the way
Port An important, but often invisible, ingredient used by happy chefs
Ram Docking manoeuvre
Sheet Piece of bed linen tied or pinned to the rigging to provide shade in the tropics
Shroud Something to do with a ship's wake; sounds a bit dismal and covers up mysteries
Starboard Astronavigation aid
Swell A great wave; the Queen is good at this
Under Way Nautical version of the subway

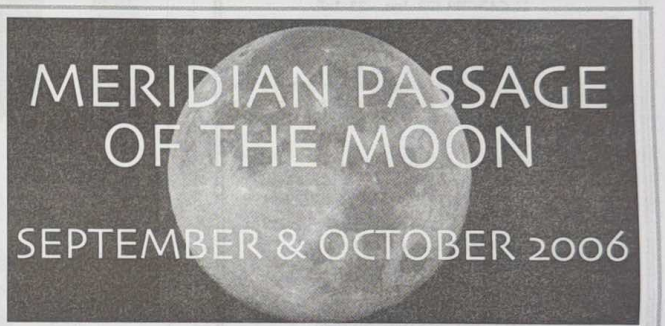
PICK UP!

Ahoy, *Compass* Readers! When in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela, pick up your free monthly copy of the *Caribbean Compass* at any of these locations (advertisers in this issue appear in **bold**):



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Bahia Redonda: 3 Locations:
Mini Market
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TBS Services
Mare Mares Marina
PMO Marina (Formerly CMO)
Puerto La Cruz Marina
Xanadu Marine

You can also pick up your copy of *Compass* on the Venezuelan mainland at **Navimca**, in Cumana, and in Margarita at **Vemasca**.



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

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

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

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

September						**October**		
DATE	TIME					DATE	TIME	
1	1827		21	1114	(new)	1	1911	
2	1925		22	1152		2	2008	
3	2025		23	1231		3	2102	
4	2125		24	1311		4	2155	
5	2223		25	1353		5	2246	
6	2318		26	1438		6	2338	
7	0000	(full)	27	1526		7	0000	(full)
8	0011		28	1618		8	0031	
9	0102		29	1715		9	0126	
10	0154		30	1813		10	0223	
11	0246					11	0323	
12	0341					12	0423	
13	0437					13	0520	
14	0535					14	0615	
15	0633					15	0705	
16	0708					16	0750	
17	0858					17	0846	
18	0908					18	0913	
19	0952					19	0952	
20	1034					20	1031	
						21	1110	(new)
						22	1152	
						23	1236	
						24	1324	
						25	1415	
						26	1510	
						27	1607	
						28	1704	
						29	1759	
						30	1853	
						31	1944	

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE IN *CARIBBEAN COMPASS!*



SEPTEMBER 2006

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)
Not only your energy will be in the doldrums during the first week, but your ability to express yourself will be right there with it. Your creativity will be on the rocks in the following week and you're singlehanding it all the way. Forget about plans — this will be moment-to-moment.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)
You're still having problems getting your business or finances to head in the direction you want. At least you can still laugh about it. This aspect will continue for some time, so your renowned patience will be what sails you through.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)
This will be a time of rough seas and surly crew. Expect the unexpected. Double check details and follow up on crew projects, as the potential for accidents is high.

♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Things will pick up for you this month and you can use this aspect to clear the decks and get things done.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)
Business dealings should be agreeable, even if the rest of your life is drifting away. Prepare the ship for potential bad weather in the next couple of months. Hurricane season is still on.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)
As the saying goes, "The devil's in the details." Love and creativity go hand-in-hand at this time — perhaps you'll fall in love with an artist.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)
You'll be inspired and full of energy this month. Use this to get things underway before distraction sails in at the end of the month in the form of a love interest.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)
The rough seas of your love life will smooth out after the first week. You can still lie back and enjoy yourself this month, but don't let things slide as life is going to pick up next month and be really demanding in November.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)
As love becomes a beat to windward, your business dealings continue as before with the problems of the last couple of months. Opposition will come from the females in your life.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)
This should be a pleasant and comforting time, with smooth seas and gentle winds.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)
The "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" may be softened somewhat by a new potential love in your life. Don't get too carried away, as it could easily be temporary.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)
You may meet some high winds and heavy seas in your love life after the 6th. Arguing will come to nothing; the more you struggle the more you choke yourself.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS
2) ROUND
3) ROUTE
4) ROD
5) ROAR
7) RUT
8) RUBBER
10) RUMMAGE
11) RUNNER
13) RAYS
14) ROT
16) ROUGH
18) RULE
19) ROUT
22) ROTATION
23) ROUTER
25) READ
26) RINGS

DOWN
1) RUDDER
2) RARE
3) RUTTER
4) RUB
6) RUM
8) RUN
9) RED
10) ROYAL
12) ROUTINE
14) RAMBADE
15) RAT
17) ROUNDING
18) ROW
20) RIDERS
21) RUNDLE
22) ROVE
23) ROUST
24) ROVER

Island Poets

Drifting and Dreaming

Warm water surrounds me, azure blue, deep, aquamarine
Head back and arms out, I'm floating on my dream.
Silent waters, soft as silk, are traveling the bay
Drifting and dreaming comes easy... easy to get carried away

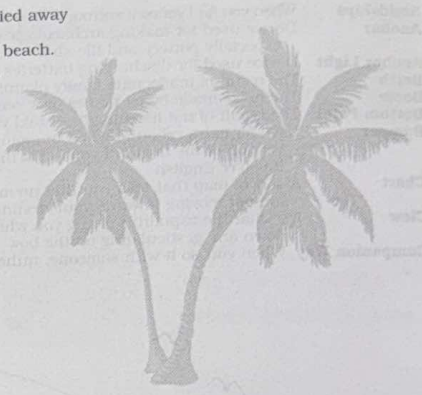
A wave comes up and pushes me, pushes me to the beach.
Dry sand moves and shifts... shifts beneath my feet,
Colors have changed to yellow and white.
Flowers move to reach the light

A solitary sweet sweet bird perched upon a tree,
Sings a song at morning, calling out to me.
Time is moving quickly, days are passing by.
I turn away and off it goes... it has its wings to fly

My head tilted back, and my eyes closed,
Now I am the one who's flying home.
The plane engines whisper, but they can be heard.
Softly saying "sweet sweet bird, sweet sweet bird"

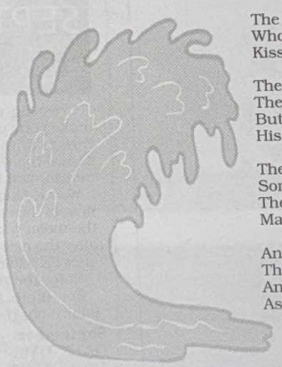
I'm dreaming, dreaming that I'm flying.
Flying as I'm dreaming.
I'm dreaming... I'm being carried away.

— Ginger Lynn



UNTITLED

The foam out there on the open blue says it's gonna be a bad day.



The angry wind slaps at the sail,
Who is mightier?
Kiss my ass it replies, and so they go.

The captain's seat is now awash, splash!
The plastic orange that covers his cap.
But he wipes those eyes, focuses on the sea.
His bread, his life, his destiny.

There's many a tale a sailor can tell.
Some really good, some not so well.
There are many things the wood can say.
Many, many, many things — but not today.

And so the sail fought with the wind,
The boat with the sea,
And the captain with the boat,
As a team!

— Kedisha Compton

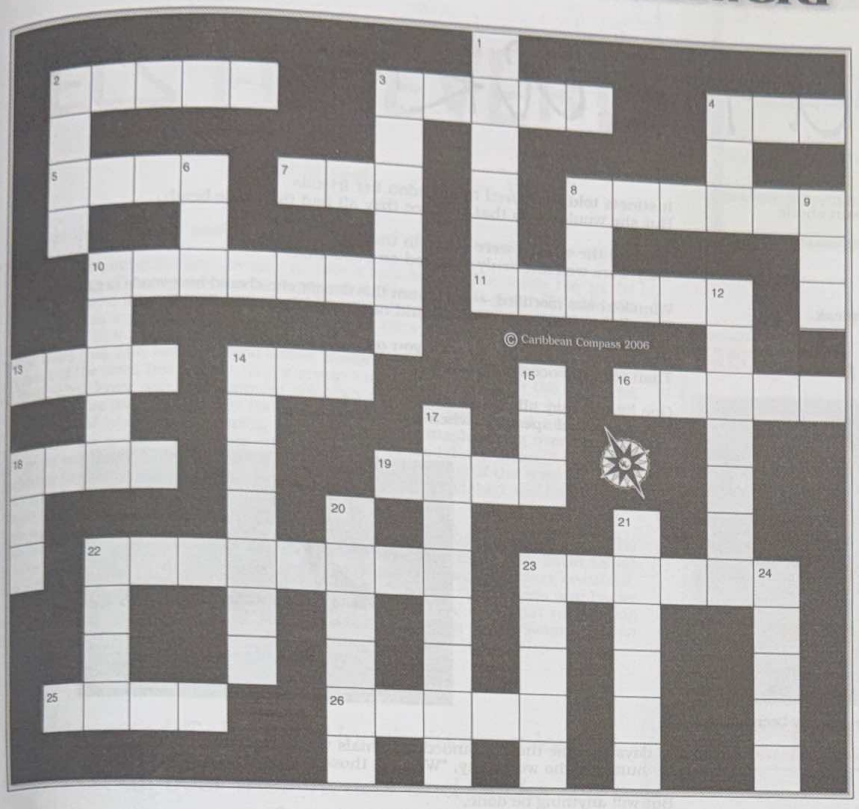
Perfection — Almost

The tropical sun bronzes his back
as he swiftly varnishes cockpit and rails,
flowing it on so thin and fine
with nary a brush stroke or touch-up showing.

At last his mistress gleams with splendor
as he washes his brush and admires his work
until he spies on the stern rail's fresh varnish
the tiny paw prints of the ship's little cat.

— Jeannie Kuich

Compass Cruising Crossword



'Nautical Alphabet: R' Part 3

ACROSS

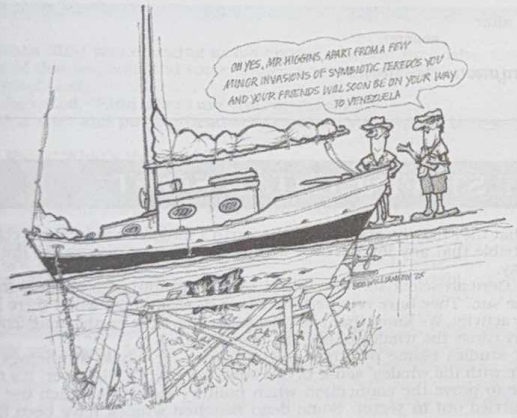
2) ____ up; come into the wind
3) Path
4) Type of standing rigging
5) Storm wind sound
7) Old term for sound of breakers
8) Snubber material
10) Customs search
11) Nickname for type of backstay
13) These can be manta or ultraviolet
14) What men and ships do in port
16) High, as in seas
18) Popular brand of marine pumps
19) Clean out seams
22) Revolution
23) Use this to 19 Across
25) Study, as charts
26) What a ship's bell does

DOWN

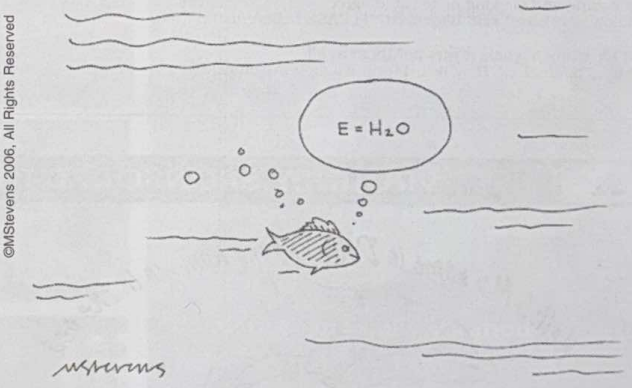
1) This steers the boat
2) Unusual
3) Outline chart for ship's track
4) Type of rail or strake
6) Grog
8) What sailboats do downwind
9) Port color
10) Sail above topgallant
12) Ship's system
14) Platform across galley's prow
15) What leaves a sinking ship
17) Passing a racing mark
18) Propel with oars
20) Timbers from keelson to orlop beams
21) Part of capstan
22) Threaded a rope through a block
23) ____about; longshoreman
24) Freebooter

— *Solution on page 36*

bobtoon



Mick Stevens



parlumps marooned



DON'T LEAVE PORT WITHOUT IT
CARIBBEAN COMPASS

DO YOU HEAR?

Winnifred the whale was having loads of fun,
She was listening, listening, while the waves splashed and the sun shone.

Yes! There it was! Oh how *brill*,
A whole school of delicious krill!

To her friends around her, she began to speak.
A whale's dialogue is made up of lots of whistles and many a squeak.

"Hurry!" she said, "There's food over there —
Willace, Waddy, Walter, Wendy, Winston, do you hear?"

But suddenly a very high piercing sound shot the sea —
eeeeeEEEEEEEEEE!!

With all speed the whales bounded upwards,
The glimmering surface they shot towards.

Lingering halfway to check that all were safe,
Winnifred then ascended with all haste.

Waddy whistled, "What was that sound?"
"I don't know," answered Wendy. "But my head is starting to pound...."

"Yes," agreed Willow.
"OoooowwwwW!"

Soon all the pod were experiencing pain,
But not Winnifred, who to the surface more slowly came.

Slowly, the whales had been drifting and swimming,
Winnifred then heard a sound ahead, towards which they had unconsciously been finning.

She squeaked, "Do you hear that?"
"Hear what?"

"The sand bank ahead —
If we run into that we are all dead."

"What?" clicked Walter. "I can hear it to my right."
Because, if you remember, whales sense things with sound waves and not sight.

Squeaking and clicking none could agree,
"I know it's there," said Winnifred, "PLEASE believe me!"

But for many a whale it was not there at all.
"Ahhh, I'm stuck..." They heard front whale Winston call.

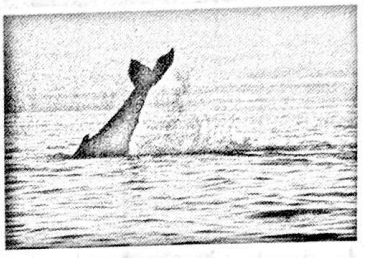
Instincts told Winnifred to abandon her friends
But she wouldn't do that — since they all had the whale bends.

Soon all the whales were stuck in the sand,
They were well and truly beached on solid land.

Winnifred was mortified — away from this danger she should have made her friends steer.
But all they said was, "You should not have followed us here!"

She replied, "I'd rather be with you on sand and stone,
Than rove the oceans all alone."

One by one they all closed their eyes.
It is a very sad spectacle when a whale dies.



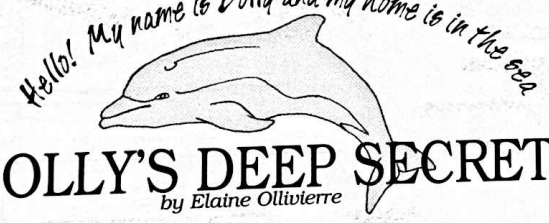
In days to come these stranded mammals would be found.
By humans who would say, "We wish those few great fish were still around!"

But will anything be done,
About the sonar exercises that many navies run?

Because that is a reason,
For many mystery sea mammal strandings,

Season
after
season.

— Anonymous Teenager



DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

When a whale or dolphin is found on a beach, we say that it is stranded, whether it is dead or alive. Rescue efforts are often made to move live animals back to the sea but this is very difficult, especially because they are very heavy. Beached whales may die because the weight of the internal organs is no longer buoyed up by the sea water so they cannot function properly.

What kills whales and dolphins at sea? There are several natural causes, of course: old age and illness, for example. However, the number of dead animals found has increased over the last decade. This may be because of new fishing methods which use huge nets. The whales and dolphins become trapped in the nets and can't get to the surface to breathe so they drown. When they try to escape, the strands of net cut into their skin leaving visible wounds, so when they float up on a beach, these can be easily seen.

Scientists believe that only about ten percent of dead whales and dolphins wash up on the beach, so you can imagine how any are actually killed.

Why do live whales and dolphins end up on a beach — sometimes one, sometimes a whole bunch? Something seems to go wrong with their ability to navigate — what could have happened?

No one is absolutely certain about how whales find their way around the oceans. We know they use sound to communicate and for echo-location and we think that they may be able to use the earth's magnetic field like a compass. So it's probable that any interference with these abilities may cause the whales to go astray.

Some German scientists have linked whale strandings to changes in radiation from the sun. They have reported increases in strandings when there are surges in solar activity. We know that solar flares do affect the earth's magnetic field and this may cause the whales to become disorientated.

Other studies blame powerful marine sonar for whale strandings as it can interfere with the whales' sense of direction and depth. However, it's not always possible to prove the connection when military exercises which use sonar are often carried out in secret. Some dead beached whales have been found with tissue damage just as if they had experienced the "bends" like a diver who surfaces too quickly, so it seems as though sonar may cause whales to get decompression sickness.

But is sonar the only troublesome noise in the sea? Find out next month.

Word Puzzle

Unscramble the following words from the passage and place in the spaces provided. The last letter of one answer is the first letter of the next.

1. SHALEW — — — — — —
2. DINNGARTS — — — — — — — — —
3. MANGER — — — — — —
4. STEN — — — —
5. ORANS — — — — —
6. ATINODAIR — — — — — — — — —
7. TRALUNA — — — — — — —
8. EVIL — — — —
9. HOCE — — — —
10. CANOE — — — — —

— Solution on page 21

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2006 ©

EELS FOREVER!

by Lee Kessell

"How dare they call me a snake," grumbled the eel as it slid back into a crevice under the rocks.

Elrid the Goldspotted Eel had decided to take a look around the sandy bay in the middle of the day. This was an unusual thing to do because eels generally hide out in the daytime and forage around for food at night. Elrid had just ventured out on to the sand when a group of children had jumped off a boat and begun splashing around and making a lot of noise.

"What is all that fuss about?" Elrid asked himself. The bay he lived in was pretty quiet most of the time, but today's happy group was a special treat for the kids. The next thing Elrid knew was that tsunami splashes were thundering over his head; it was the fathers as they flopped into the water. One little boy had a mask and snorkel and after a lot of trouble and gasping for air he had the mask sitting over his eyes and nose and the snorkel was in his mouth. The boy peered down through the clear, glass green water and Elrid wriggled along the sand to get out of the way.

Suddenly there was a horrible commotion. The little boy splashed and kicked with all his might, waving his arms and screaming:

"Daddy, daddy, there's a snake down there!"

This was all too much for Elrid. He beat a hasty retreat. Of course Elrid was no snake. For a start there aren't any water snakes in the Caribbean Sea. Elrid would not have hurt anyone. He was a very gentle creature and he was also very beautiful. Goldspotted Eels are a lovely ivory colour, patterned all over their heads and backs with bright golden spots fuzzily outlined in black. They have a fin that runs along the spine and under the tail that is so fine that you can't even see it. Swimmers can consider themselves very lucky if they ever see such a lovely sea creature.

Goldspotted Eels are a lovely ivory colour, patterned all over their heads and backs with bright golden spots fuzzily outlined in black

The next day when Elrid was snoozing in his crevice amongst the rocks, waiting for the sun to set so that he could find some dinner, a pretty damselfish came rushing around in a great panic.

"Elrid, Elrid!" she called. "Elrid where are you, we need you!"

Elrid woke with a start and put his head very cautiously out of the narrow hole he was in.

"I'm here Miss Maisy! What's the trouble?"

Miss Maisy swam up to Elrid and panted in his face: "It's Ben. A strange octopus stole up to our giant anemone, you know the one where we both live under her tentacles, and quick as a flash, carried him away. He hasn't eaten Ben yet but he has him in his den waiting for dinner time."

"Oh dear, another interruption. I don't know what's happening to this bay," grumbled Elrid. "All right, show me where Ben is and I'll do my best to save him."

Miss Maisy, her pretty ebony colour faded to a sickly grey with fright, swam off along the edge of the reef followed by Elrid on top of the sand. She stopped and Elrid stopped beneath her.

"The den of the octopus is over there," she whispered, "under that big rock covered with the pink and orange feather worms. But I don't know how you can save Ben because the octopus has him trapped and no one can get anywhere near him."

"We'll see about that!" Elrid was angry that poor little Ben had been snatched from under the very nose of the protective anemone. And little Ben wasn't one of those crabs with claws that could snap off an eel's tail. No, little Ben had smooth, blunt tipped claws that were only good for holding his food while he ate it. Elrid would show that stranger who was boss around here!

Without more ado, Elrid dipped his head into the sand and began burrowing his way across to the octopus den. This was easy for Elrid, the Goldspotted Eel, because that is what they do. They burrow under the sand and can travel about very comfortably and invisibly like that. Elrid also had a fantastic sense of smell and direction and so he knew the moment he was under the den. Very slowly, Elrid nosed up through the sand and there, crouched into a small, frightened bundle was Ben. Elrid pushed the rest of his head up through the sand and looked about. The octopus was large and menacing but its eyes were looking out through the hole in the rocks, making sure that no one could come and steal Ben away.

"Don't make a sound," Elrid whispered into Ben's ear. "I'm going to take you home. When I burrow back down into the sand, grab my tail and hang on!"

With that, Elrid disappeared back down the tunnel he had made in the sand and Ben grabbed the end of the eel's tail. Ben hung on, keeping his legs close together, so making himself as streamlined as possible and WHOOSH! Suddenly Ben was speeding down the tunnel in the sand and it was all rather exciting. Before long, Ben's journey was over and he found himself back home under the waving tentacles of his friend the giant anemone and there was Miss Maisy dancing around with joy.

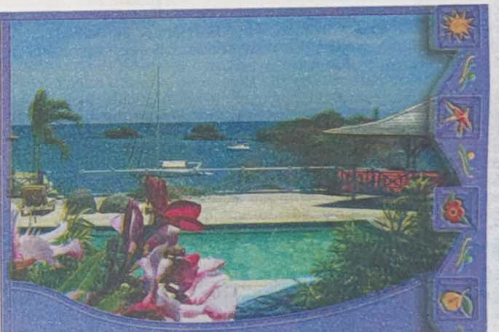
Back at the den, the pirate octopus looked about for his dinner, but there was no little crab to be seen, it had disappeared as if by magic! The octopus thought the bay was enchanted, so he jetted out as fast as he could to find a safer home.

As the sun began to set into the sea, all the fish and creatures of the bay gathered about to thank Elrid for saving the life of their friend. All together they looked at Elrid and shouted: "Bravo Elrid! We love Elrid! EELS FOREVER!"

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THE CRUISING KITTY

by Rosie Burr



Now I'm not talking about the ever-depleting financial kitty that is constantly being dipped into to support this lifestyle, but of the furry four-legged kind that has now become a permanent member of crew on our yacht *Alianna*, a 23-year-old Corbin 39, which has been our home for the last two years while cruising the Caribbean. Last hurricane season we stayed in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela, and like many places it has its fair share of stray cats and dogs — to say the least. The particular marina we were staying in often found itself the new home for various dumped kittens.

Having both had cats back home, we had talked about the possibility of having a ship's cat but had never actually done anything about it as we were not sure we wanted the responsibility. Then, one morning, there was an announcement on the VHF net saying that there was another little kitten that needed a new home. Before I knew what happened, I'd picked up the mike, hailed the boat making the announcement and was off down the pontoon to check the kitten out. My partner's words rang in my ears: "If it isn't well, we can't do it — we have enough problems looking after ourselves!" But as I climbed aboard the foster boat I could see a healthy calico furball jumping about the place. "This is Ali," Reggie, my now friend off *Liberty*, told me. Well that was it, it was obviously meant to be; Ali was now ship's cat on *Alianna* and I took her straight away to her new home.



She was the cutest little kitty, following us round the boat in constant need of our company and falling asleep across our chests at night. She'd spend hours bouncing round the boat chasing feet. My hands were in tatters and my toes in constant fear of their lives until I learnt to clip her toenails. I have heard of owners de-clawing their cats but I didn't want to do that, and she rarely scratches on anything she shouldn't, especially after having a nice piece of old three-core wound up the kingpin to stretch those little paws of hers.

The first few months we had her we stayed in the marina, as we were doing work on the boat and it was still hurricane season. But Ali was not allowed off. At first this was easy; she could barely see over the capping rail. But as the months wore on, it became harder and harder to keep her on board. She is inquisitive by nature and only knows the boundaries of the boat while at sea. Ashore, the world is her oyster and it is a constant battle to keep her on board when there are so many other exciting places to explore — i.e. your neighbor's boat with companionway open and that night's dinner defrosting! In Venezuela it's not so important to keep her on board as she is allowed ashore, but other countries are different. We are still deciding on whether to visit countries that enforce strict quarantine laws or fees for boat pets, and this will influence where we go next. Although we are trying to adopt "the cat doesn't rule our life" attitude, she certainly affects it. Luckily, marinas are not a big part of our lives.

Venezuela is very reasonable for vet's fees, so she has had all her shots and been given a clean bill of health. I have had the "talking to" by my boyfriend about "when she starts to cost too much" and "if anything should happen at sea", and I accept that we are on a budget and have our limitations, but we can also do the best we can to keep her safe and healthy. We have stocked up on catfood where we have found it cheaply and mix cat litter with sand to make it last longer. We make all her toys out of long bits of string with a cork and bell tied to one end and she goes crazy for feathers and flies, the latter being an issue when you have a sticky fly strip up that she decides to attach herself to. It's not an easy job to peel a cat away from a fly strip or the fly strip from a cat! (Girls, think waxing.) But we managed somehow, with only my big toe being injured.

Sailing was tricky. Firstly, she wasn't the ship's cat we thought she would be and was seasick on her first couple of times out. But she soon found her sea legs and now all she dislikes is the sound of the engine. Secondly, although I'm sure she would be fine, it is we humans who are nervous when she roams around deck when it is anything but calm. We love our little kitty and don't want to lose her. So during the day she stays in a harness which is attached to the cockpit, or she can roam freely inside the boat, but an eye is always kept on her. Unfortunately she can't be left unattended in her harness as she is like the great Houdini and able to escape when you turn your back. (And yes — it does make the harness slightly pointless, but she only escapes when we leave her alone.) If it's rough she is either put in her box, where she feels safe, or shut in the forecabin which she is happy with, too, as the engine noise is blocked out. During night sails she stays in her box and is let out for 15 minutes when we change watch. She likes to stay close to us at all times, which has led to us cuddling the cat box in our already snug sea berth!

We have heard many stories of cats falling overboard, or of people throwing their cats overboard periodically to warn them away from the water's edge (usually asking another friendly cruiser to do this so drenched kitty does not hold a grudge against you). So from an early age we have tried to train Ali to climb up a knotted rope, which she manages easily, so if she does go overboard, particularly at anchor, we can drop the rope over and she can scramble up. It must have been the excitement of Christmas Eve that made her once skid too far while racing up and down the bimini and go flying overboard while we were at anchor. The knotted rope was not to hand, but she was swimming well and making her way to the dinghy. My boyfriend kept his eye on her while I jumped in and pulled her out of the water. I think that we were more in shock then she was. We also keep a long-handled fishing net in the event she falls over at sea.

But all these hurdles and battles are small compared to the company, fun and entertainment that she provides. She's my companion when my boyfriend's head is buried in a book of engine parts. She's fun, and when things get a bit tense, you can't help but smile when she comes bouncing along doing something daft. She fills all our spare time (not that we have much with constant repairs/overhauling, but she likes to help with these, too). She shortens the long dark nights, and keeps us amused. They say pets are very good for stress levels — well, I'm sure that is true. We love her dearly and she is a most valued member of the crew!





TO PET... OR NOT TO PET?
Part One: Toilet Training

by Julia Bartlett

I loved Dylan, that's why I found his bad breath, body odor and farting under the dinner table bearable. And he had redeeming qualities. He loved me even if I slept with another male, although he tore my knickers to shreds in protest. He wasn't usually violent; I'm sure killing Zippy Rabbit was an accident. And we had things in common: we liked to socialize in the same places — "real ale pubs" — and we kept the same hours — we went home when they kicked us out. All the same, he did cramp my style and when he died I vowed I wouldn't get emotionally involved with another dog again.

The trouble is that owning a pet is a bit like child bearing: after a while one forgets the traumas. I was faithful to Dylan's memory for seven years before I succumbed again. This time it wasn't entirely my fault. My partner at the time, Barry, was as spineless as I was. When I tell you that Scuppers was a blonde female you'll get my drift. There was another factor to take into account this time though: we lived on a small sailboat. I would like to be able to put my hand on my heart and tell you that we thought through all the difficulties and problems a canine addition to our family would entail, but we didn't. Our decision to adopt was purely the response to some sort of emotional need.

There is an old saying that goes something like this: adopt a dog in haste and repent at leisure. There's a lot of truth in these old sayings. If you, too, spend a lot of time on a boat and are likely to be tempted into petting, you may learn a little from our experiences.

Scuppers' first voyage was a delivery trip from Fort Lauderdale to Sint Maarten. We decided that the best all-weather head for her was a regular head, or the shower tray lined with newspaper to be precise. Anticipating that a certain amount of persuasion might be necessary to acclimatize her to the idea, since we had spent several weeks persuading her that relieving herself indoors was not allowed, we armed ourselves with various bottles of smelly stuff which dogs are supposed to understand. Scuppers played dumb. Thirty-six hours after leaving Fort Lauderdale we arrived in Nassau and she hadn't done even a dribble. The remarkable thing is that when I took her ashore she still had to find just the right spot before she "went".

A new strategy was needed. Before we left Nassau, Barry sent me on a mission to collect some of Scuppers' pee to use as a primer. I gathered a small audience of locals while doing this. They didn't ask any questions; in fact, now I think about, it they didn't come that close. They stood on the other side of the street and just stared at this strange woman shoving a saucer under her dog's rear end every time it squatted. Scuppers was not enthralled at having her territory-marking sabotaged and the process took some time. It reminded me of the time I had to sit up all night to get a urine sample from a pregnant mare who would stop mid-stream as soon as I got the bucket near her.

Our next stop was Rum Cay, 36 hours later, still without a dribble. We were beginning to think that perhaps Scuppers wasn't suited to a life afloat. She was eating and drinking plenty, but nothing was coming out the other end while we were underway. It was becoming increasingly likely that she might burst. You can imagine the sort of mess that would make and we were on a brand new, straight-out-of-the-box boat that wasn't ours.

There was a little marina on Rum Cay and it had a very civilized bar, so we asked if it was okay to take Scuppers in with us. "Fine," they said, "we've got four dogs ourselves." After stretching our legs and giving the dog a chance to pee herself dry, we headed for a well-deserved cold beer. I hadn't got the order out of my mouth when had the awful feeling that something was wrong. I looked down at our new pooch and there she was squatting over a stream right in front of the bar. Barry quickly hustled her out of the bar and back onto the boat while I mopped up.

> *The barking dog attracted attention to my activities. Some children started to follow me to see what I was going to do next*

The next morning before leaving I took Scuppers for a good walk to get her as empty as possible. Somehow she managed to get herself covered in burrs. While I was brushing these out I must have pulled her fur because she turned round and bit me. I'm not talking about a quick snap. She sat and looked at me with her teeth in my finger and a "don't do that again" expression on her face. I was so stunned I knelt there for a moment before removing her teeth by opening her mouth with my other hand. No dog had ever dared bite me before.

Scuppers and I stopped speaking for a while, which made life difficult for Barry. Conversations went something like this.

"Barry, will you tell Scuppers her supper is ready?"

"Scuppers, Julia says that your supper is ready."

"Julia, Scuppers says she'd like to have another try in the head."

We reached Luperon, in the Dominican Republic, with virgin newspaper. One of the great things about the Dominican Republic is the beer, which is cheap and good. After a few El Presidente Grandes I had a "buena idea". What we needed to sprinkle on the newspaper wasn't Scuppers' pee, it was *another* dog's pee. This was a slightly more difficult mission than collecting our own brand. I wandered down Calle Duarte, the main street, with a clean tin in one hand, looking for a dog to follow that seemed likely to pee.

I don't know why, but when I spotted one with its leg up and sidled up to it, arm outstretched, it dropped its leg and ran off barking. This attracted attention to my activities. Some children started to follow me to see what I was going to do next. The next animal I cornered wasn't so submissive and snarled at me. The children were getting the hang of the game and started rounding up dogs, all of which refused to pee. In the end, much to the disappointment of the kids, I had to settle for a rag dabbed in a dribble down a wall.

Scuppers liked Luperon: there was a good social life for any mutt worthy of the name. She had her first up-close-and-sniff encounters with pigs, ducks and calves in the main street there — it's not nearly so interesting these days. She also met a lot of her own kind, some of whom had extras — like mange, ticks and fleas. It was time for her to have a bath. This caused our second confrontation. She was all soapy and I was starting to rinse her (with water that I had taken the chill off) when she did it again. She bit me. This time I wasn't stunned. With an automatic reflex I slapped her across the head. After looking at me with indignation for a split second, she started to yelp as though she was being beaten within an inch of her life. Heads popped up from the cockpits all around us to see who was beating their dog. Luckily, we left a few hours later.

On the way to Boqueron, Puerto Rico, IT happened. A spot of urine the size of a dime, but a definite spot. All past indiscretions (and bites) were forgotten and we petted Scuppers as though she had come up on the lottery for us. After Boqueron she managed two reasonable puddles on board before we reached Sint Maarten. Perhaps she would make a sailor after all, we thought.

Scuppers had a mind of her own when it came to things that were important to her, like where she was going to pee and poop. If we were within sight of land, she wouldn't "go" on the boat. Barry would moan and groan as he donned slickers and battled with surf, wind and rain to get her ashore, but she usually got her own way. She played the guilt factor. "I didn't ask to be marooned out here, bobbing up and down with you grumpy pair," her attitude said. "I could have been adopted by people with a stinkpot, air conditioning and an ice maker." If she didn't get ashore she would sit with her back to us on the bow, but fawn all over any luckless sailor we had invited aboard for a beer. They would, of course reciprocate.

"See," she would leer, "I could have taken my pick, so if you two don't watch out I'll jump ship."

Scuppers turned out to be an excellent, if demanding, shipmate. She wasn't the sort of dog that thinks her owners can do no wrong — and that was a part of the fun: she had a mind of her own.

We probably get the dogs we deserve, so do be careful.

*Next month: Com**pet**ability.*

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Trouble in Paradise? We Can Help

by Roger Webb

Crime! Dinghy thefts, maxi-taxi holdups, muggings, thefts from boats, and kidnappings were the talk of Chaguaramas when I returned to Trinidad after being Stateside for two months. It was sounding as if crime, to which the yachting community had seemingly been immune, had finally started to infiltrate Chaguaramas.

The morning net was buzzing with talk of problems, opinions of what to do and the perspective that authorities were non-responsive. A cruisers' meeting had been held with over a hundred in attendance. It was a divided group, with the reactive on one side and the reasonable on the other. Talk was heard of taking violent action, but fortunately calmer voices prevailed. A dinghy watch would be established, using volunteers to provide surveillance of the anchorage, and a working group to evaluate long-term solutions was formed.

The working group compiled a report by asking for people with experiences with crime here to come forward. I did the same through announcements on the net. The group received minimal response, and the only contact I generated was one call.

In a quick review of the 30-page report compiled by the working committee, I noticed that only four pages dealt with crime here in Chaguaramas. It shows 31 incidents. There are four that appear verifiable.

I can add three more, which have occurred over the last several years. Two involve personal friends with whom I have conversed: crews on the schooner *Satori* and on *Blue Bird*. The other is me.

I have been a "victim" of Trinidad crime. I have had cash taken off the boat, binoculars stolen (as it turned out, by a security guard), and a dinghy stolen right before I left for the States. And in all cases I was a 'partner in crime', as the saying goes. My personal experience and the personal experiences of friends who have been touched by illegal activity seem to give me license to take a look at what is fact and what is fiction, and what can be realistically done to be proactive when it comes to keeping safe in Trinidad, or for that matter, anywhere.

One of the issues that muddy the waters is gossip and misinformation. Rumors travel like a fire in the bush during dry season here. *Satori* was reported on the radio as having been boarded by three men armed with small-caliber weapons. The "report" went on to say the crew successfully repelled the attackers with clubs and knives. What actually happened was an attempt to steal *Satori's* dinghy, unsuccessful because it was double-cabled. This resulted in a verbal battle, with the leader pointing his hand toward Scotty and Don as if he had a gun and yelling, "Give me money or I'm going to kill you". *Satori* was never boarded, nor did anything physical occur.

Woody and Michelle on the big cat were kidnapped when they gave a ride to people they did not know. The subject of conversation was "yachties were kidnapped". By their own admission they made a gross error.

In my case, I presented myself as a target of opportunity. When I returned to *Cover Shot* after an evening out, I had the thought sail through my mind to pull the dinghy up. My logical mind kicked in with, "Naw... I am going to use it first thing in the morning, and this is a safe area." Morning greeted me with no dinghy attached to the boat. Meanwhile, inside the Trinidad & Tobago Yacht Club, members were dealing with break-ins to Trini vessels berthed there. A member was heard to say of the crime wave, "It has finally come home to us."

On the 17th of August the ante was raised when a yacht was boarded in the Chaguaramas anchorage by three men armed with handguns and a machete after coming alongside the vessel under the pretense of needing water, according to a story in *Newsday*, a Trinidad daily. (See sidebar on next page.)

Even though it is not part of their purpose, YSATT (Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago) chose to become actively involved. Cruisers have flooded the office with concerns and complaints, both real and perceived, as if YSATT was the law enforcement agency for the area. When approached about an incident, the office staff asks if it has been reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. The response is usually "No", with excuses ranging from "It's too much trouble" to "It won't do any good" to "I don't want to make myself a further target." "When a yachtie would tell me they had a problem, I would check with the police. They would have no report," I was told by YSATT. "We hear about it before the police ever do."

YSATT has been in contact with the Carenage Police and the Coast Guard to explore what can be done. At the Carenage Police Station a YSATT representative found a substantial difference in the number of yacht-related crimes that had been reported to the police, compared to what had been reported to YSATT.

Maybe some crimes don't get reported because we know full well that we are experiencing the bitter fruit of seeds that we planted. I believe that if we honestly looked at each situation, we would see that often behavior was done that created, promoted or allowed the violation.

Scotty and Don of *Satori* went to the Carenage station and reported their incident. I reported my theft also. Four others also took positive action, including Woody and Michelle, who told me later that the perpetrators had been apprehended. Officers were investigating on site the same morning the thefts at TTYC were discovered. Yes, it is time consuming to do the reporting, and maybe the criminals will not be caught. But I believe that the authorities need to know the level of the problem and what the problem is. It would seem to me that without reports, the police could take the view that the foreigners are overreacting to perceptions rather than reacting to reality.

Then there is the issue of priorities. The Carenage area is one of the "hot spots" of crime in Trinidad. Local mothers are burying their eighteen-year-old sons while we deal with having our dinghy stolen (did we defer pulling it up on the davits because it was "too much trouble"?) or being ripped off by that sexy stranger we brought back to the boat from a night-club. Yachties have allegedly been mugged in Chaguaramas when walking home at night, presumably in a rather inebriated state. So it is logical that the police would focus on priorities based on type and frequency of events. "I believe the Carenage Police are doing the best they can with the resources they have," a YSATT representative told me.

The realties of the Caribbean are far removed from the illusions promoted by the US sailing magazines and island tourism boards. The division between super wealth and extreme poverty is as wide as the Grand Canyon. With animosity already born under local conditions, it is not surprising to me that we become a very visible target, sitting in posh marinas or anchored out and complaining about locals using their home waters.



ROGER WEBB

Neighborhood Watch type surveillance of the Chaguaramas anchorage will be provided by volunteers

It is unlikely there will be any sudden calming of the waters in which we have chosen to put ourselves, so being proactive by taking more responsibility for our safety and security may be the best approach. "How can we blame the authorities for lack of action, if we don't take action ourselves?" commented Frank on *Carisea*.

Involvement and common sense could well be the key to enhanced well-being. Simple surveillance and awareness are major deterrents. The Neighborhood Watch concept works because neighborhoods involve themselves in their own security. The cruising community in Chaguaramas has done exactly that.

—Continued on next page



Yacht Owner's Guide To Marine Insurance

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by Guy Matthews

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—Continued from previous page

They have taken a proactive approach to addressing the problems which are apparently escalating in numbers and aggressiveness.

Threats to yachting visitors' safety throughout the Caribbean seem to be on the rise, with many governments seemingly unwilling or unable to cope. Unfortunately that leaves it up to the captains and crews of yachts to protect themselves with a common-sense approach to safety and security.

Your New Worst Friends

A sailboat had just been launched from a Chaguaramas boatyard, and was lying at anchor a short distance away. It was 3:00AM and three of the crew were in the cockpit celebrating the arrival of a friend who had just flown in. Two women and a teen-aged boy were below asleep. A grey metal dinghy, approximately 12 feet long with an eight-horsepower outboard approached and the three males on board asked if they could "lime" (hang out) for a while and have a few drinks.

After some drinks, they started to pull away, then suddenly returned to the yacht and came aboard with weapons drawn. Two had handguns, and one carried a cutlass. They began demanding US dollars, threatening the men by placing the guns against their heads. "We are not American. We don't have US!" the yachtsmen told the assailants. The men with the handguns continued to demand US cash until they finally decided to ransack the boat. One stayed in the cockpit while the other two went below, woke the women and the boy, and proceeded to take anything that appeared of value. Then the three cruisers on deck were brought below and locked into the cabin. The yacht's dinghy was slashed and the assailants motored away.

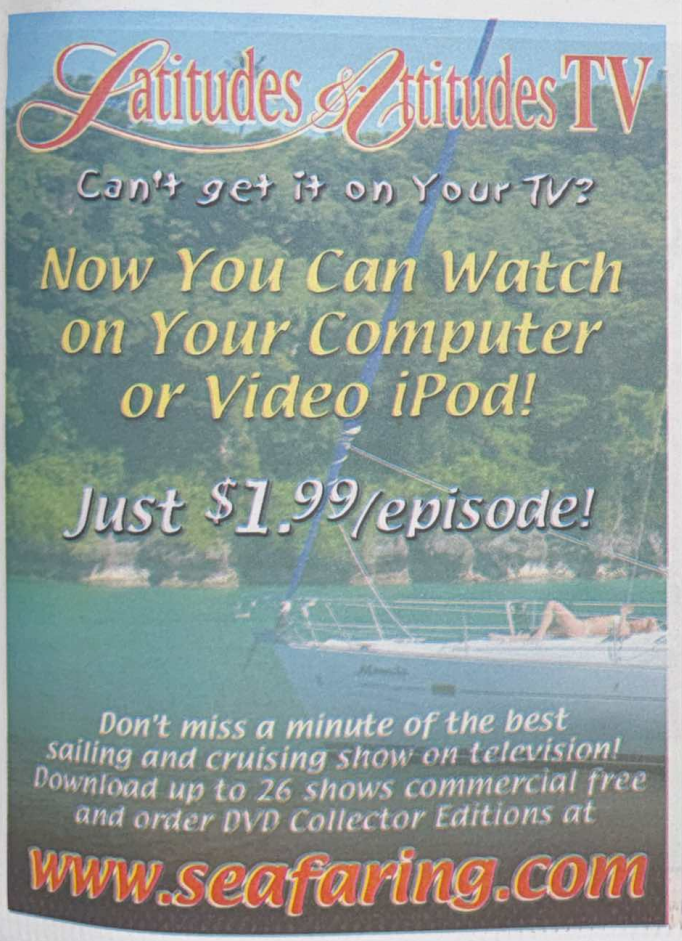
The crew called for and received help from other cruisers in the anchorage. The police and Coast Guard were notified, and the victims went to the YSATT office as soon as it opened. Later in the morning a YSATT representative drove the crew to the Carenage Police Station where a report was filed.

Two police officers accompanied the group back to the vessel where an investigation ensued. "(This) is more serious than the report at the station would indicate." was observed by one of the officers. They told the crew a fingerprinting team would return. The response seemed to be prompt and professional. "They (they police) really stepped up to the plate on this one," the YSATT representative commented.

The cruisers and Peakes have been very supportive, with both providing accommodations for the crew until the police could take fingerprints aboard the yacht. Peakes has also provided free phone service so the victims could cancel credit cards.

Perhaps it was not the most prudent thing to invite someone you don't know to party with you, but it is also the responsibility of a host country to protect the tourists it encourages to visit. In my mind, the people doing these crimes against yachties are not too bright, either, so it leaves me wondering what it will take to make the Caribbean once again a fun and safe place to cruise.

Editor's note: YSATT has prepared a useful flyer containing safety and security tips for cruising visitors in Trinidad. Collect a copy at the YSATT office on arrival, or contact ysatt@trinidad.net.



The Great Escapist Cruiser's Reading List

by Ralph Trout

Despite shortwave and satellite radio, MP3/CD/DVD players, wireless Internet with downloadable everything, and the eternal infernal television, a few of us sailing folk still enjoy a good book. That is, really *reading* one and not just listening to the audio-taped version, although those are great company on night passages.

Reading is truly a great escape for the great escapist cruiser and it's surprising how fast we consume books, magazines and newspapers. The latter two are harder to acquire the farther south you travel in the Caribbean. Magazines of a cruising nature tend to be hoarded until the info or the pages are deemed useless. A five-year old *Newsweek* or *Time* is devoured to see if things happened as predicted. Many island newspapers are instruments of a political party and devoid of much actual news. (Trinidad is an exception, with three or four thick, daily, news-oriented papers with color comics on Sunday — all for less than a quarter US.) A current *New York*



Times, *Washington Post* or *Miami Herald* usually prices itself out of the ordinary boatie's purse.

I prefer short stories, or novels broken into definite sections, so I can put them down. The Sherlock Holmes collection by Conan Doyle and the Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy are favorites I can reread almost yearly. While hooked in a tranquil, palm-lined bay you can almost hear sabers clash under the snap of the sails in the enjoyable, quick read of Forrester's *Hornblower* series. Although personally not a big fan of the wordy Patrick O'Brian sea sagas, I'm certain some of his followers finish the set and begin again.

How many modern novels are imitations of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* or Jules Verne's *Mysterious Island*? Survival stories are big sellers, especially when they are personal and true like Steve Callahan's *Adrift*. Richard Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* and most of Herman Melville's works were based on real experiences and provide a glimpse of what shipping out meant over a century ago. *Moby-Dick* is based on the tragedy of the whale ship *Essex*, detailed *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathanial Philbrick.

Set in the frigid north, Jack London's adventure tales make excellent tropical beach brain fodder. We've all met, but hopefully haven't sailed with, a villainous Wolf Larsen from London's classic *Sea Wolf*. Michener's works are informative and enjoyable, but he always tells me more details than I need or want to know. *Caribbean*, the story of settling the islands, is not an exception. Making basic fun of outsiders trying to adapt to island life is humorously depicted in Herman Wouk's *Don't Stop the Carnival*. It is a must-read satire on the Old Royal Mail Inn of Hassel Island in Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas. Paul Theroux's *Mosquito Coast* is a more poignant rendition of settling in the tropics.

Even without the heart-pounding movie soundtrack, Peter Benchley's *Jaws* is nice reading. *The Deep*, about tourist divers finding a sunken treasure, and *The Island*, about modern descendants of pirates, are also fun reading from Benchley.

Making a reader laugh through print is a rare art. The grin, chuckle or guffaw can be due to setting, action or characters. Carl Hiassen is one of the best at combining all three. Enjoying *Stormy Weather*, Hiassen's tale of the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, forced me to his other novels. If you still listen to *Changes in Latitudes* then you'll probably enjoy Jimmy Buffett's *Tales from Margaritaville*.

To be on the sea, either cruising or working, we all made a definite decision. The 1950s film actor Sterling Hayden outlined his reasons in *Wanderer*. Hayden decided to just walk away from big movie money, a divorce, disobey a court order, and sail off to the South Seas with his four children.

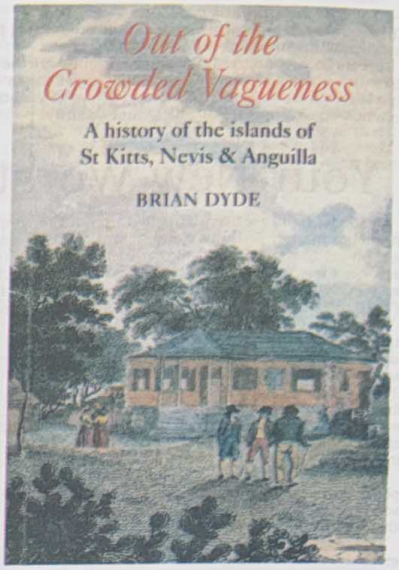
An absolute must-read is *Sailing Around the World Alone* by Joshua Slocum. The best copies also contain *The Voyage of the Liberdade*. Slocum was the first to sincerely say, "been there done that", and the required T-shirts didn't yet exist. No movie has been made of it yet, but Robert Redford would be great as the aging, displaced Joshua.

For long cruises during the early Nineties, I would prepare "care packages" containing videotaped copies of television shows and movies and a few paperbacks. Whenever I knew I would be at a specific island, I'd call a friend and have him send me one. I quit the practice when Grenada Customs confiscated a box of tapes because they thought "The X-files" had to be X-rated. The present bookstore prices of paperbacks almost prohibit buying new. However, Internet sites sell used books cheap — sometimes for one cent US plus shipping within the continental US. Go figure how they do it, and how much it is gonna cost to get a box of books to where you are hooked.

That's where visiting friends and relatives come in handy. When they ask, "What should we bring?" just say, "Books".

BOOK REVIEW BY NICOLA REDWAY

Illuminating the Leewards



Out of the Crowded Vagueness: A History of the Islands of St. Kitts, Nevis & Anguilla, *by Brian Dyde. Published by Macmillan Caribbean. © 2005. Soft cover, 328 pages, B&W photos. ISBN 0-333-97598-7.*

The Leeward Islands of St. Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla were claimed and settled as individual British possessions in the first half of the 17th century. St. Kitts (then known as Saint Christopher) has the distinction of being the first Caribbean island to be settled by the British, with its founding colony started in 1623 by Thomas (later Sir Thomas) Warner. Nevis followed shortly afterwards in 1628 with a spill-over from St. Kitts, while tiny Anguilla's first colony was started in 1650 as a refuge for the poor and dispossessed of both St. Kitts and Nevis.

The close proximity of Nevis to St. Kitts and the dependence of Anguilla on both meant that all three islands inevitably shared much common history — but rivalry and resentment were never far from the surface. Their complex relationship was eventually formalized in the 19th century: Anguilla was made a ward of St. Kitts in 1825, and Nevis was finally united with St. Kitts and Anguilla under a single administration in 1882.

Out of the Crowded Vagueness recounts the history of these three islands from their first occupation right up to the events of 1980 which brought about Anguilla's resumption of the status of a British Dependent Territory, and which three years later led to independence for a fragile federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

The early histories of the larger British sugar-producing islands of Barbados, Antigua and Jamaica are relatively well supported by contemporary accounts and records. When it comes, however, to the smaller Leeward islands of Montserrat, St. Kitts, Nevis, and particularly far-flung Anguilla, (which according to a 1683 comment was still *"fit for little but goats"*), there is a real paucity of early documentation. For this reason alone, Dyde's comprehensive and well-researched book makes fascinating reading as he attempts to recreate a picture of those early times and then guides us through the vicissitudes of colonialism and the effects of its indelible legacy, to the present day.

The author makes extensive use of quotes to bring his story to life, drawing the reader into quite another world from the Caribbean of today. Writing of St. Kitts in 1654, a Swedish engineer noted:

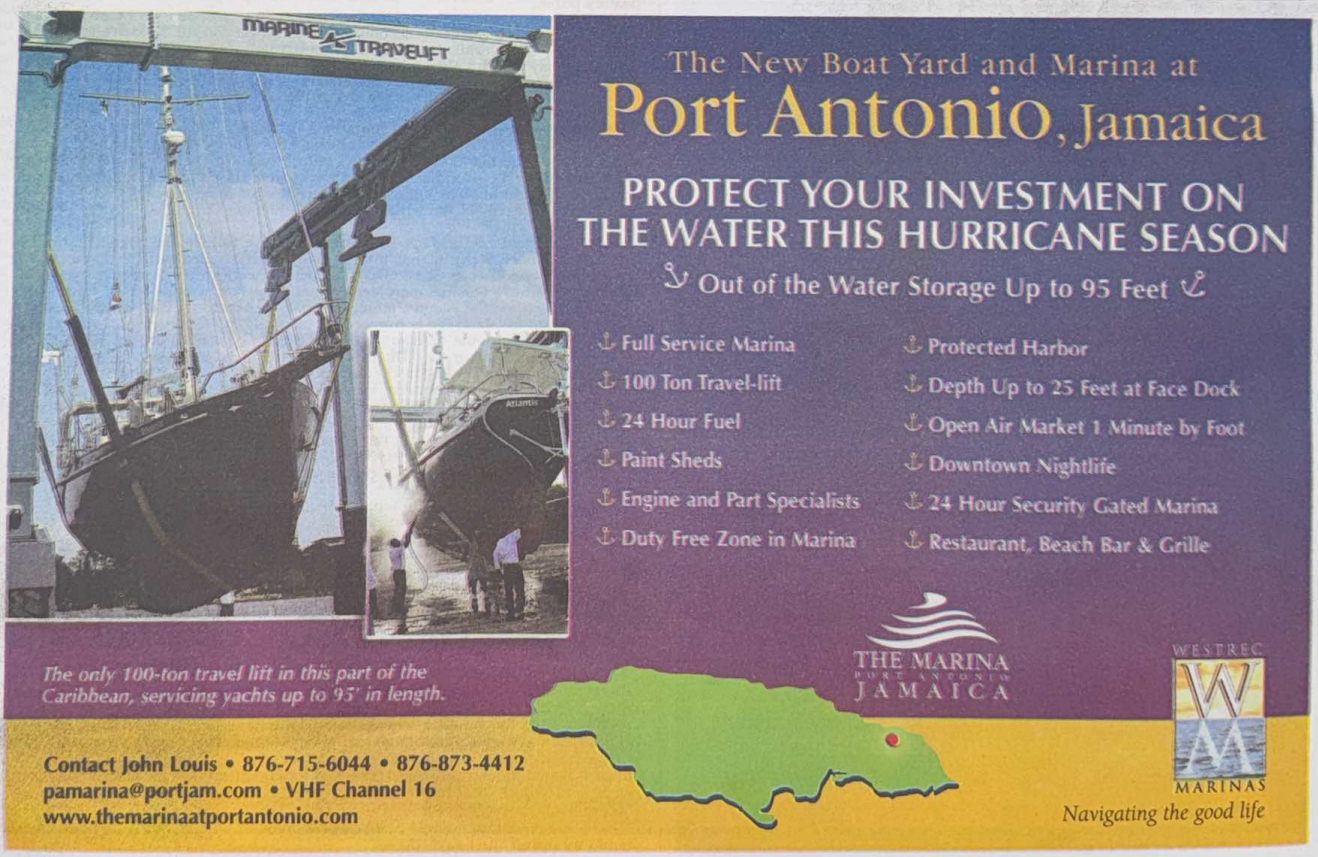
"This is a very fertile island, there grow oranges, lemons, sweet oranges, potatoes, bananas, sugar, tobacco, nutmegs, walnuts, chestnuts, grapes, red blue white and brown, pepper, ginger and innumerable quantity of all kinds of rare and valuable fruit. Ginger lay there in the fields in large heaps... on the ground all over, the fields were covered with oranges, lemons, pepper and all other kinds of fruit which had fallen from the trees, like hail..."

But as we quickly learn, life in the Leewards in the mid-17th century was in fact far removed both from the bountiful idyll recounted above and from that being experienced in the distant, rapidly flourishing British colony of Barbados. The Leewards had problems and challenges that Barbados and its early inhabitants never had to face, and the most significant of these was conflict. The British area of St. Kitts changed hands with the French no less than seven times between 1623 and 1713, with repeated devastation to the fledgling settlements and plantations the inevitable result.

Add into this same time frame terrifying hurricanes and volcanic eruptions and you have a picture of a very grim struggle indeed for all involved. Exile or flight between the islands led to displacement and destitution, and for those who remained — rich, poor, free or enslaved — famine, drought, war, oppression and natural disasters should surely have brought the population to their knees. And for many it did. Yet by the end of the 17th century, St. Kitts had already overtaken the much larger and more populous Barbados as a sugar producer, and as Dyde proudly announces: *"By the third quarter of the eighteenth century St. Kitts was the richest colony in the British Empire."* (He does not add that this empire was ultimately built on greed, slavery, oppression and cronyism, but one assumes that this rider is implicit.)

Resistance and harassment by indigenous Caribs was another issue that early Barbadian settlers never had to face, but this was an ever-present aspect of early life in the Leewards. Although Dyde pays lip service to the Carib point of view and dutifully records their early massacre by the British in 1626, he is at pains to point out that this event ...

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"...over the years has been inflated into a hideous massacre of several thousand Caribs. Although undoubtedly a terrible and tragic event, it is most unlikely that it involved a blood bath of anything approaching this magnitude." I'm not quite sure why the author felt it necessary to offer us this revision — slaughter is still slaughter whatever the numbers — but it was one of several instances in the book where his viewpoint made me feel either uneasy or just plain irritated.

Dyde is clearly more at home describing military or naval events than providing profound socio-historical insights. These latter are not in themselves pre-requisites of any historical account, but there is also a dogmatism to the author's style which I found infuriating. Referring to the Amerindians he states: *"How, why and when the first people arrived in the northern islands are questions that cannot be answered".* Twelve pages later, of the handful of French tobacco growers who were already on St. Kitts when Warner arrived, Dyde writes: *"Who these were, or how and when they arrived, are questions that can never be answered".*

I lost track of how many times he tells the reader "We have no way of knowing..." or "Almost nothing is known..." or "We will never know..." If we don't know, why fill out the text writing about it? And surely the immense appeal of history is that our knowledge and understanding keeps expanding all the time as new facts or theories come to light. To say "we will never know" is not only presumptuous; it also closes the door abruptly on the possibility — or even the dream — of greater knowledge and enlightenment. I much prefer the approach of Richard S. Dunn, who in the section on the early years of the Leeward Islands in his excellent *Sugar and Slaves* writes: *"Someone may discover a trunkful of papers revealing that the Leeward planters shared fully in the Barbados sugar bonanza of the 1640s and 1650s. It is more likely, however, that the early Leeward colonists will remain forever obscure — for the best of reasons, because they were obscure men at the time."*

Now that's my kind of writing! Dyde's history-telling is much more "this is how it was..." than "imagine being there...", and perhaps this is what I missed in the narrative — a sense of passion, respect and curiosity for the subject. Call it love, if you like. But despite early misgivings, I soldiered on and ended up devouring this book. I would readily recommend it (along with Dunn's *Sugar and Slaves*) to anyone who has even the slightest interest in West Indian history. It's detailed, informative and illuminating, and its lengthy bibliography made me want to immediately rush off to the Anguilla public library, which according to Dyde, houses "... undoubtedly the finest and probably the most extensive, collection of books, maps and documents about the English-speaking West Indies anywhere outside North America and Europe."

Post Script. If you are wondering about the "Crowded Vagueness" of the title, it is taken from C.L.R. James, writing in 1966 about the legendary West Indian cricketer Rohan Kanhai:

A great West Indies cricketer in his play should embody some essence of that crowded vagueness which passes for the history of the West Indies. If, like Kanhai, he is one of the most remarkable and individual of contemporary batsmen, then that should not make him less but more West Indian. You see what you are looking for, and in Kanhai's batting what I have found is a unique pointer of the West Indian quest for identity, for ways of expressing our potential bursting at every seam.

Wonderful stuff.

This book is available at selected bookstores or from www.macmillan-caribbean.com.

Caribbean Folklore Short Story Competition

Dr. Kumar Mahabir, Chairman of Chakra Publishing House in Trinidad, invites interested individuals to submit short stories for a competition on South Asian/East Indian spirits as seen in Caribbean folklore. These figures include Saphin [Snake Woman], Raakas [Demonic Baby], Dee Baba [Protector of the Land], Chu-rile [Ghost of Pregnant Suicide Woman] and Jinn [Fire Spirit]. Contestants must do some field research and then write imaginative stories based on personal encounters with these folklore figures. The style and language must be suitable for a mixed audience and entries must be entirely the original work of the author.

The prize for first place is TT$1,000, second place is TT$600 and third place is TT$400. All winners' stories will be published in an illustrated book on Caribbean Indian Folklore. The competition is open to anyone in any part of the world, and there is no fee for participation.

Authors can submit any number of entries but only one entry can be submitted on a theme.

Authors must include the name of the folklore figure in the subject line of their story.

Stories must be typed in double-space.

The competition is open to manuscripts of not more than 3,000 words and must be in Standard English.

The contest ends on September 22nd, 2006.

Contest entries will be judged by a panel on the basis of research, creativity, authenticity interest and style. Decisions of this panel will be final. Prize winners will be notified once judging is complete.

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Contributors can e-mail their submissions to dmahabir@gmail.com or post them to Chakra Publishing House, 10 Swami Avenue, Don Miguel Road, San Juan, Trinidad & Tobago.



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Whatcha Gonna Do With All That....

GOAT?

by Mary Heckrotte

As his taxi van whizzed around curvy Grenadian roads, Darius pointed out the window to critters grazing the roadside. "See dem? Dey's goats," he informed the wide-eyed gringos in the back seats. "Dem got dey tails up. Sheeps got dey tails down." Looking in his rear-view mirror, Darius grinned at us, then repeated, "Goats' tails up. Sheeps' tails down." We were much saddened when later we learned that Darius has taken that ultimate taxi ride to another dimension, no longer carting cruisers here and yon, teaching us about island life, sharing his own joy in island living. But Darius taught us to watch out for "tready" mangoes (the kind with strings — threads — that catch between your teeth) and he taught us how to tell a sheep from a goat and how to make a fine goat curry.

Until then, we had never thought one way or another about eating goat meat, though goat cheese had long been a favorite. But we'd seen packages of goat meat at markets up and down the island chain, and so we decided to give it a try. Surprise: goat meat is actually quite tasty, a fine source of protein, reasonably priced, and readily available. When we mentioned to some cruising friends from Texas that we had indeed eaten goat meat, they laughed. Why, they had been barbecuing goat since they were babies! They even attended the Brady/McCulloch County World Championship Goat Cook-Off. And European cruisers we met also thought we had been rather culturally deprived having only just "discovered" this new cuisine. Ah, the advantages of cruising! We might have stayed in North Carolina the rest of our lives and only had barbecued pig!

But maybe not. In North Carolina, like many other areas of the US, an ever-increasing population of Latin immigrants has brought along food preferences, including their taste for goat. The Chinese, too, have long enjoyed goat. In fact, using the Chinese calendar, every twelfth year is the "Year of the Goat." You might not have noticed back in 2003, but you can be prepared for 2015.

The best — i.e. the most tender, juicy, lean, and tasty — goat meat comes from a very young (four to eight weeks old) milk-fed goat called, in Spanish, a *cabrito*. A slightly older and larger goat, a *chevron*, is also very good. This guy is six to nine months old and weighs from 48 to 60 pounds. Goats older than this tend to be tough and can harbor a distinctive unpleasant taste which is likely where goat meat got a bad reputation. Just make sure you are buying meat from a young goat, and you will be delighted with the many ways you can prepare a tasty meal.

Most of the goat you will find in the market will be chevron. To purchase a cabrito, you may have to talk to a farmer — or the butcher may know where you can buy one. There doesn't seem to be a standard for butchering goats so generally they are cut in the same way as lamb. For the most part, the large pieces of goat are roasted or grilled while the smaller pieces are stewed or braised. Smaller pieces are also ground and can then be used in many recipes calling for ground beef or pork, though the taste will not be the same. In many cultures, particularly the Caribbean, Middle Eastern and Latin, the whole animal will be put to use, including all the organs. Special birthdays, weddings, and certain holidays are traditional celebrations where a cabrito is slaughtered and prepared. Be sure to take advantage if you are lucky enough to get an invitation.

Goat meat has the same caloric value as chicken and almost a hundred fewer calories per serving than beef. Interestingly, goats tend to deposit their fat internally before they deposit it externally so that when the goat is slaughtered, the fat is removed along with the rest of the innards. The bad news is that the thin coating of saturated fat found on muscles has slightly higher cholesterol content than the fat of either chicken or beef. Fortunately, this is easily removed. The meat is not "marbled" as is beef. Thus goat meat is a very healthy choice.

If the meat is fresh, remove the market wrapping as soon as you get home. Re-wrap the meat and store it in the coldest part of your refrigerator for up to three days. If you need to keep it longer, store it in the freezer, though most boat freezers are not cold enough to keep the meat for more than a week. If the meat can be frozen immediately and stored at 0°F, it will keep up to nine months.

Because goat meat has such a low fat content, it tends to dry out rapidly and toughen if not cooked properly (another reason goat may have a bad reputation). Cooking with lots of moisture and with low heat will keep the meat tender and juicy. The best, most tender cuts of goat meat are the ribs, legs, shoulders, loin roast, and breast. The riblets and shanks are tougher and are best when stewed over low heat for a long time. Cooking the meat, especially the less tender cuts, in a sauce and/or first soaking it in a marinade will help with retaining moisture. (An easy marinade can be made by mixing a can of beer with about 1/4 Cup of lemon juice. Pour over meat and chill one to five hours.) To be safe, cook all ground goat meat to 160°F or until the juices are clear with no trace of pink. Steaks, chops, and roasts can be eaten at 145°F (medium rare) or cooked to the well done stage at 170°F.

The most common preparations for goat in the Caribbean are curried, barbecued, stewed or made into the delicious but oddly named soup, Goat Water. Of course each island has its own special techniques and combinations of ingredients. In some little roadside stands you might find a spicy stew called Mannish Water, made from a goat's head (and maybe a few other parts, too) along with garlic, onions, chayote (christophene), green bananas, hot peppers, and a little white rum. This stew is sometimes also called Power Water as it is said to be an aphrodisiac. Could be! As always, some of the best recipes for local foods will come from the ladies at the market, from the cooks in local restaurants — or from your taxi driver. It is a treat, with pen and paper in hand, to ask, "How do you cook this?" You'll not only learn a new way to prepare a local dish but you'll most likely make a new friend. Enjoy both!

Grenadian Curried Goat

2 Tablespoons olive oil
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 Scotch Bonnet or other hot pepper, seeded, minced
2 stalks celery, chopped
4 green onions, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 Tablespoons Caribbean-style curry powder
1 Tablespoon coarsely ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 pounds goat meat, trimmed of fat and cut into half-inch pieces
4 Cups water
2 Cups coconut milk
2 Cups water
1 Cup raw white rice
6 whole cloves
Mango chutney (optional)

In a large skillet or Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium heat. Add tomatoes, hot pepper, celery, onions, garlic, curry powder, black pepper and salt. Mix well. Add the goat meat and 4 Cups water. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for about 1 hour or until tender, adding more water if needed. Stir in coconut milk and heat through for a few minutes.

When meat has cooked for half an hour, in a separate pot, bring 2 Cups water to boil then add rice and cloves. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 20 minutes. Turn off heat and let sit till goat has finished cooking. Remove cloves from rice and discard. Serve goat with curry sauce over rice with mango chutney on the side. Makes four to six servings.

Jamaican Curried Goat

Juice of 1 lemon
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tablespoon fresh thyme, minced
2 Tablespoons Caribbean-style curry powder
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 Scotch Bonnet or other hot pepper, seeded, minced
2 pounds goat meat with bones, trimmed of fat and cut in 2-inch chunks
2 Tablespoons olive oil
2 Cups water

In a large plastic container with lid, mix together the lemon juice, onion, garlic, thyme, curry powder, black pepper, salt, and hot pepper. Add goat meat and stir to coat pieces well. Cover and chill for at least 2 hours, but even better overnight.

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In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat the olive oil and quickly brown the meat, stirring to brown all sides. Add water and lower heat to simmer for 1 hour. Taste and adjust spices as desired. Continue to simmer for half hour more, adding more water if needed. Good served with white rice cooked in coconut milk. Makes six to eight servings.

Goat and Vegetable Casserole

1 1/2 Cup carrots, thinly sliced
1 Cup water
1 can lima beans with juice
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 1/2 pounds ground goat meat
1 small onion, chopped
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
2 large tomatoes, cut into 3 slices each
2 Tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

In a saucepan over medium heat, cook carrots in boiling water for 15 minutes or until tender. Add lima beans and juice and return to boil. Remove from heat and set aside. In the meantime, heat olive oil in a skillet and brown goat meat and onions until onions are tender. Pour off any drippings. Add soup and carrots with limas and their cooking liquid, salt, and thyme. Mix well and pour into a 2-quart casserole sprayed with non-stick. Layer tomatoes slices on top and sprinkle with Parmesan. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 35 to 40 minutes. Makes four to six servings.

Goat Stuffed Green Peppers

4 large green bell peppers
Boiling water
2 Tablespoons olive oil
1/2 pound ground goat meat
1 small onion, minced
1 small stalk celery, minced
1 Cup hot cooked rice
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Core peppers and remove seeds and membranes. Immerse peppers for 3 minutes in boiling water. Remove with a slotted spoon and invert on paper towels to drain. Set aside. Put olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add goat meat, onions, and celery and stir-fry to brown lightly. Remove from heat and add rice, eggs, salt, paprika, and Worcestershire sauce. Divide mixture into four parts and fill each green pepper. Place in an 8-inch-square pan sprayed with non-stick. Bake in a preheated 375°F over for 15 minutes. Makes four servings.

Goat Enchilada Casserole

2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 pounds ground goat meat
2 Scotch Bonnet or other hot peppers, seeded, minced
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 can enchilada sauce, mild or hot according to taste
12 corn tortillas, 6-inch diameter, cut into inch-wide strips
8 ounces Monterey Jack and/or mild cheddar cheese, shredded

In a large skillet, heat oil over moderate heat. Add onion and goat. Stir-fry until goat is lightly browned and onions are tender. Stir in peppers, soups, and enchilada sauce. Heat through then remove from heat. In a large casserole dish sprayed with non-stick, layer half of tortilla strips on bottom. Pour on half of meat mixture then sprinkle with half of cheese. Repeat with another layer of tortilla strips, meat mixture, then cheese. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes at 350°F. Makes four servings.

Goat and Cornbread Squares

1 pound ground goat meat
1 Tablespoon cornstarch
1 small onion, grated
1 to 2 teaspoons chili powder
1 garlic clove, minced
1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes with juice
1 to 2 Scotch Bonnet or other hot peppers, seeded, minced
3/4 Cup plain flour
3/4 Cup cornmeal
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 eggs, beaten
1 can (8.5 ounces) cream-style corn
1/2 Cup milk
3 Tablespoons cooking oil
1 Cup cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese, shredded

In a large skillet over medium heat, stir-fry goat meat until lightly browned. Stir in cornstarch, onion, chili powder, garlic, tomatoes with juice, and hot peppers. Cook over medium heat, stirring often, until bubbly and thickened. Lower heat and simmer for 2 minutes more.

In a medium-size mixing bowl, stir together flour, cornmeal, and baking powder. In a small bowl, mix together eggs, corn, milk, and oil. Stir egg mixture into cornmeal mixture. Add cheese and stir just until moistened. Spread half of cornbread batter into a 2-quart casserole dish. Spoon on meat mixture then pour remaining batter on top. Bake at 375°F for 30 minutes or until top of cornbread is golden brown. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Cut into squares. Makes 6 servings.

Caribbean Goat Gumbo

3 Tablespoons plain flour
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 1/2 pounds goat meat, trimmed of fat and cut into 1-inch cubes
2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 large bell pepper, chopped
3 large tomatoes, chopped
1 bay leaf
2 Cups water
3 chicken bouillon cubes
10 to 12 pods okra, cut in half-inch rounds
One-half teaspoon Marie Sharp's or other hot sauce

In a medium bowl, combine flour, thyme, salt and pepper. Roll meat cubes in flour until well coated. Dust off excess flour and drop cubes into hot oil in heavy skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Quickly brown meat on all sides. Remove meat, reserving drippings in skillet.

Set meat aside. Add onion and bell pepper to skillet. Stir-fry until tender. Return meat to skillet and add tomatoes, bay leaf, water, bouillon cubes, okra, and hot sauce. Bring to boil then lower heat and simmer, covered, for one and one-half hours or until meat is tender. Remove bay leaf and serve over hot cooked rice.

Grilled Goat Chops

4 goat chops, cut 1 inch thick
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 can (8-ounces) crushed pineapple with juice
1 Tablespoon prepared mustard
1/4 Cup fresh lemon or lime juice
1/2 Cup jalapeño jelly or apricot jam

Sprinkle both sides of chops with salt, pepper, and cinnamon. In a small saucepan over medium heat, combine pineapple, mustard, lemon or lime juice, and jelly or jam. Bring to boil, stirring constantly until jelly has melted. Remove from heat. Broil or grill chops 4 inches from heat source for 8 to 10 minutes on each side. Use a pastry brush to coat chops generously with sauce during last 5 minutes of cooking time. Makes 4 servings.

Caribbean Barbecued Goat

1 Cup ketchup
1 Cup prepared mustard
3/4 Cup red wine vinegar
2 Tablespoons lemon juice
2 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1/2 Cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
2 teaspoons coarsely ground black pepper
1 teaspoon chili powder
2 cloves garlic, crushed
4 pounds of goat leg, steaks, roast, or chops

This sauce is best made in advance — even a whole week in advance is good, as "the longer it sits, the better it gits!" Put all ingredients except goat meat in a quart jar with a tight-fitting lid and shake well.

To prepare goat, put meat in a large bowl with a tight-fitting lid and pour sauce over, turning meat to coat thoroughly. Chill at least 4 hours or overnight.

Remove goat from bowl and place over low heat on grill. Grill 30 minutes to 1 hour, depending on thickness of meat and desired doneness (145°F for medium-rare, 160°F for medium, and 170°F for well-done.) Baste with remaining sauce each time the meat is turned.

Caribbean Goat Kebabs

The above recipe also makes great kabobs. Make the sauce as described. Cut goat meat into 1-inch cubes before marinating. Once marinated, thread cubes onto skewers with chunks of any combination of zucchini, onion, tomato, green pepper, pineapple or fresh mushrooms. Baste meat and vegetables with extra sauce and grill over low heat until tender.

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PROSPERO'S PANTRY BY FENELLA

Mix & Match

Here are a couple of recipes that use mainly ingredients you can have handy in your larder. Both can be varied in one way or another and prepared reasonably quickly when friends unexpectedly sail into the anchorage, or the call goes out, "Pot luck on the beach today!"

Cheese & Crab Pie

1 packet cheese sauce mix (I use Coleman's). If you are making a larger quantity you could use Campbell's tinned cheese soup diluted with 1 tin of water or milk, but don't forget to increase the amount of fish or meat.

1/2 pack of crab sticks. Instead of the crab you can use a small tin of salmon or tuna or cooked chicken or cooked flaked fish.

Some frozen mixed vegetables, cooked, or you could use leftover cooked broccoli or similar.

Potatoes cooked, mashed with butter, milk and a teaspoon of paprika (optional). The amount of potatoes used is your choice, but there needs to be enough to spread over the ingredients in an ovenproof dish.

Grated Parmesan cheese

Make the packet cheese sauce using a little more milk than stated on the packet so it is not too thick when it cools.

Chop up the crab sticks, or if you are using one of the other choices prepare it appropriately.

Add the cooked vegetables to the cheese sauce along with your crab sticks and mix together.

Spoon into an ovenproof dish. Cover with the mashed potatoes and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

If you have made this recipe in one fell swoop the ingredients should still be good and hot and will only need putting under the grill/broiler to brown the top. Otherwise heat it in the oven till the top is brown.

It should serve about 4 people.

Dump Cake

My captain and I try not to eat puddings (desserts to our Yankee friends) too often, but there are the occasions when you are at friends for dinner and it would be rude to say no. Well, that's my excuse! Here is a delicious one we had at friends recently. It came via my friend Dawn who helps me at the Island Water World book swap/coffee morning in Grenada and who has kindly given me the recipe. This cobbler-type treat is far more appealing than its name!

1 large (20-ounce) tin crushed pineapple; do not drain it

1 large tin cherry pie filling or any other pie filling. Remove 2 Tablespoons of the juice or it will be too sweet, unless you like it very sweet

1 box yellow cake mix (Duncan Hines is a good make). Or you could use French vanilla or chocolate flavour, for example, as long as it goes with your pie filling

1 Cup chopped pecans or walnuts

1/4 pound butter, sliced

Grease a 13" x 9" baking dish. (Now here's where the cake gets its name.)

Dump undrained pineapple into greased baking dish and spread it out evenly.

Dump the pie filling onto the pineapple and spread evenly.

Dump the dry cake mix onto the pie filling and spread evenly, making sure there are no large lumps.

Sprinkle the pecans or walnuts over the cake mix. Put slices of butter over the top.

Pop in the oven and cook for 1 hour at 350°F (180°C).

This is delicious served with cream or ice cream. Those few more calories won't make that much difference!

Aunt Tillie's 'Whatever' Rice Salad

2 Cups cooked rice, cooled
DRESSING
1/4 Cup fresh orange juice
1/4 Cup olive oil
1/8 Cup fresh lemon juice
PROTEIN
8 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
VEGGIES
15 cherry tomatoes, halved
1 cucumber, diced
1/2 Cup sliced green onions
HERBS
1/4 Cup chopped fresh mint

This is based on a recipe that first appeared in *Bon Appétit* magazine. Please don't overcook the rice; you want the grains to stay separate. Rice, which stores well and is readily available, forms a sort of blank canvas for creativity with other flavors and textures. Here's a chance to express yourself (and maybe use what's hiding in those galley lockers)!

Whisk dressing ingredients in a small bowl to blend. Add veggies and mint to rice in a large bowl. Add dressing and toss to blend. If not serving immediately, cover and refrigerate. Bring to room temperature and toss before serving.

Variations:

Use brown rice and/or wild rice instead of, or in combination with the white rice. Basmati? Why not?

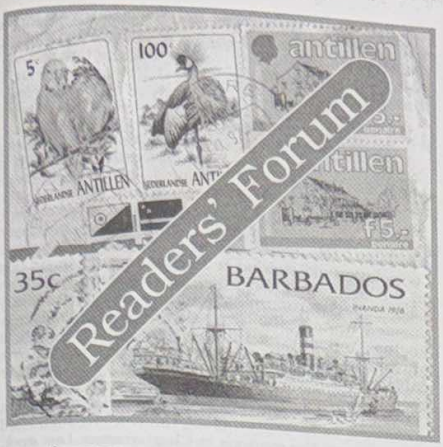
Instead of the orange dressing, use your favorite home-made vinaigrette, or bottled dressing, or mayonnaise thinned with a bit of lime juice or red wine vinegar.

Substitute cubes of cooked chicken, ham or fish (well-drained canned tuna or salmon is fine) for the feta cheese. Chopped hard-boiled eggs are good, too. Or use cooked red or black beans (again, canned is fine, just drain the beans well and rinse before adding to rice). Remember, rice plus beans equals a complete protein.

For the veggie component, just about anything goes. Grated carrot, shredded cabbage, sliced or diced green peppers, cubed avocado, chopped celery, sliced pitted olives....

Same goes for the herbs. And if you don't have fresh parsley, cilantro or basil, be creative with a pinch of dried herbs. Dill, maybe?

Serves two to four, as main or side dish and depending on appetites!



Dear *Compass*,

I have just read a letter in the June edition of the *Compass* by Tom Lane, criticizing the "newbies" in the Caribbean, while supporting the "Old Boy" network. (I met this cruiser once. In case he cannot recall that encounter, I am the person who was walking around the marina with a Howler monkey on my shoulder.)

I would hope, for obvious reasons, that his navigational expertise is far superior than his comprehension of the English language. As for myself and others being "newbies" in the Caribbean, that's absurd. I live here permanently, as do other correspondents, and we probably have more experience of this area and miles under our keels than Mr. Lane can ever contemplate.

As for my criticism of "Cap'n Flint", I will continue to do so if I have valid points to make. I know who this person is, as do others, and I cannot recall anyone asking "who is this old fool?". Obviously Mr. Lane missed or ignored a previous letter I wrote in which I quoted the title of a song, "Oh, glory days". What are readers supposed to do, kneel down five times a day facing the northeast and worship some Guinness-swigging "old fool"? I don't think so; times are changing. There is a new generation of cruisers around, and the sooner the boring old farts of the Golden Oldies Cruising Club appreciate that the better.

I did not say that it took six people to scale a mast, nor did I mention the word progress. I reduced the number of persons required to one. For me, that means self-dependency and efficiency. As for Mr. Lane's claim that I and others are imposing our will on our new world, he need look no further than the Commodore of the GOCC and also to his government, which perpetuates death, destruction, and hatred around the globe in the name of democracy.

I never use phrases such as first world, third world, or new world, and I would never use such a derogatory term as "poor natives". That's an insult to numerous countries and their citizens. I try to help and advise the locals as best I can, and other cruisers do the same. The ex-pats that I know have respect and compassion for their hosts, their cultures and heritage, and do not impose on anyone.

It is all about self-gratification to some cruisers, and to hell with the "poor natives" as you so eloquently put it. Mr. Lane's comments on health and safety do not warrant a response; as previously stated he appears to be in a time warp.

The last two paragraphs of his letter are irrational. "Global cooling" does not exist and I can bear witness to that fact from my own humble experiences. The Aral Sea was once the fourth largest inland body of water in the world; today it resembles a duck pond. In Europe, the summer of '03 killed thousands of people due to excessive temperatures. There were catastrophic forest fires in Portugal, Greece and North America, and there is the continual humanitarian disaster that we see in parts of Africa and Asia caused by drought and famine. As I was writing this, I turned on the TV and there it was, a real-time (July 16th) BBC documentary on global warming. The participants were eminent scientists, climatologists, members of Greenpeace and National Geographic. All agreed that the planet is warming and shunned away from the word cooling. The scientific term today is dimming. Now you may think that warming and dimming are total opposites, well, recall your science lessons. Dimming is the "catalyst" that enables warming to gain momentum. The long and short of their findings is this, if greenhouse gas emissions are not radically reduced, the earth's temperature will increase by five degrees in the next 50 years. If the present emission rates continue unabated, the Earth's temperature will increase by ten degrees by the end of the century with catastrophic consequences. Civilization will cease to exist as we know it today. Incidentally the southern hemisphere has far less pollutants than the northern, which emphasizes the point that industrial nations need to get their acts together.

So there you have some facts from 40 years of research, compared to Mr. Lane's 19. Why doesn't he petition his congressman and government (the major polluter) to sign up to the Kyoto Agreement? If he still wishes to believe his theory, which he says is "a lot nicer", I suggest he trade his sailboat in for an ice-breaker. As for myself, I will believe world-wide data compiled by top boffins, and I am on the lookout for a secondhand Ark, then I will wait for the inevitable. Or perhaps certain governments will come to their senses and start caring about the environment instead of their ongoing political preservation. The citizens of the Caribbean islands need not worry about their countries being turned into clones of Miami; they should be more concerned about moving to higher ground. If the status quo persists, the sea level will rise — substantially. Unfortunately that provides Mr. Lane and some of his countrymen with an advantage. They will have a greater sea area to potter about on while writing factoid letters, and an enlarged hunting ground in which to massacre even more lobsters. An enlarged habitat, however, may be to the crustaceans' advantage.

A final advisory: Mr. Lane, I suggest that you check before you talk and start to comprehend what is happening to the planet.

Phew, it's hot! Where's the grog?

Peter Phillips
Venezuela

Dear *Compass*,

I've been reading *Compass* for a long time and have read many letters in praise of, or in derogation of, "Cap'n Flint". I've also read many articles by the same gentleman, some of which I've agreed with and some of which I haven't. Whatever. We all have to chart our own course. The sad fact is that, whether you like him or not, we're all going to miss him when he's gone, and his name and memory, unlike most of his detractors, will live on. So keep it up, Cap'n. If nothing else, you provoke discussion, and that's always a good thing.

Bill Kuypers
S/Y Foreigner

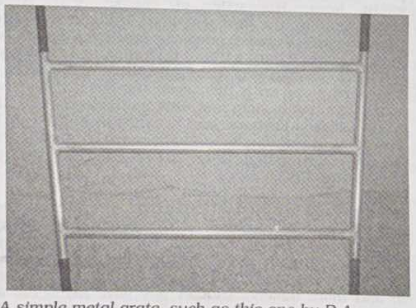
Dear *Compass*,

There were some disturbing reports in the June *Compass* of violent attacks on cruisers and charterers. I begin to wonder if it is time to quit. I wish that reports of these incidents would state how the attackers gained entry into the boat. Was it through an open companionway? An open hatch? We have a grille made of stainless rod the size of the lower washboard and lock ourselves in at night with that and the upper washboard in place. We lose some airflow but gain peace of mind. However we keep the hatch above our bunk open. If we could not do that it really would be time to quit.

Sue Simons
Bermuda

PS An unforeseen bonus of using the grille is that the boat is very much cooler when we come back in the middle of the day.

Dear *Compass*,



A simple metal grate, such as this one by D.A. Sampson (see 'Prevent Boardings with a Great Companionway Grate', Compass *April 2005), can be secured in the companionway in place of 'washboards'*

This is regarding Hutch's letter in the August issue of *Compass*, in response to my articles on hurricane preparations.

Hutch Ol' Chap:

I don't ever remember calling anyone criminally irresponsible. I *do* remember using a "certain phrase" that brought responses from readers well past the Christmas holidays and, unfortunately, ended up being a case of the signal squelched by the noise.

You mention surviving three tropical storms and a Category 1 hurricane, and excellently sum up that "anchoring for a storm threat (which I do when necessary) takes serious equipment, good seamanship, and (as with the other strategies for dealing with storms) serious preparation." (Let me repeat the key word there, folks: *serious*.)

You also mention the threat to boats at anchor or in the mangroves of "many boats (including local fleets) [which] simply do not have the gear or skill to anchor for a storm, much less a hurricane",

—Continued on next page

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1989	36' Super 10 Steel Sloop	US$ 27,000
1988	37' Moody 376 CC (Excellent Condition!!)	US$ 130,000
2003	37' Najad Sloop	US$ 340,000
1978	39' Atlantic 40	US$ 70,000
2001	40' Sun Odyssey 40	US$ 130,000
1998	41' Whitney Caribe 41	US$ 75,000
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1992	45' Fortuna	US$ 150,000
1981	45' Explorer	US$ 142,000
1991	50' Celestial Pilothouse	US$ 268,333
1987	51' Beneteau Idylle 15.5	US$ 160,000
1995	53' Super Maramu	US$ 385,000
1973	56' Visch Motor Yacht	US$ 150,000
1936	90' Astilleros Sibril (Wooden Classic)	US$ 82,500
2004	108' Steel Mega Yacht	US$ 3,400,000
MULTIHULLS		
1993	36.5' Dean Catamaran	US$ 110,000
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—Continued from previous page

...and that should be one of every skipper's criteria for picking a hurricane hole, or what part of a hole, to hide away from under-prepared, temporarily halted projectiles — Street's "bareboat bombs".

Kudos also for mentioning the perils of multihulls flying in wind speeds that one might encounter. The USVI, and to a lesser extent the BVI, have been spared the plague of lightweight cats and tris, and I didn't think to mention it.

The strongest possible endorsement to "if you don't properly secure and your boat comes down on someone else, may you rot in hell". I would add "after spending at least ten years in Admiralty court".

We agree that if you're making a move, to do it "three, four or more days in advance", and if staying "find shelter with plenty of time to set up", all of which suggests, Gentle Reader, that the sooner you start the better... and "if you are doing what you should, you will seriously set up for many more storms than you get hit by". We all run the risk of burning out from doing too many hurricane drills, of repeatedly disrupting our lives, of fearing looking foolish and over-reactive or just plain paranoid. But read Admiral Nimitz's quote, and just do it. Every drill makes the real thing that much easier to deal with. That's why we practice, isn't it?

Remember, one day Chicken Little will be right.

Hutch, you wrote: "Glidden assumes vessels not capable of dealing with storm conditions and crews utterly helpless in winds over 75 knots in harbors." Well, not exactly. First, one has to be conservative in advice publicly offered, especially bearing in mind that there are a lot of sailors around who have never seen a REAL hurricane — as we in the Virgins hadn't before Marilyn, and Grenadians before Ivan, etcetera. Secondly, there's a curve here. Can work be done at 75 knots? Er, maybe. Can work be done at 125 knots? Not bloody likely. So where's the cut-off point? It is for each skipper to decide, depending on the crew's physical ability and seamanship skills, and the boat's design and equipment, all of which can vary widely and wildly. "Don't believe anyone who tells you that one solution fits all when dealing with weather threats on the water."

And last, we certainly agree, "don't believe that the forecast, hopeful or not, will be right."

So there's a bit of a dialogue, folks; let's hear it echoed in every sailors' bar and marina from Georgetown to Panama.

Brad Glidden
Yankee
St. Thomas

Hello *Compass*,

A bit of news from Union Island. Recently we had the first exploratory meeting of the island's new Tourist Association.

It was all brought about by an incident that happened not long ago. A man had a stroke while on his yacht here. His wife, of course, was upset. Unfortunately, the first people on the scene, offering their services, were the ones who smelled a dollar. Two guys hopped aboard without invitation and "took control". The woman was feeling helpless at the time, so she went along with this, even though she had two other yachties to help her. One guy helped bring the boat to Clifton harbour, and because he had a car, he drove her to the hospital and afterwards to the airport. She and her husband then flew to Barbados, and on back to the US.

About two weeks later she returned with a friend, to take the boat to Trinidad. On arrival here she was confronted by this same guy, who presented her with a bill for US$1,000 for his help!

She had already paid him EC$150, which is what she had at the time. This was not enough for him, and to add more misery, another guy gave her a bill for three weeks on the mooring where they had tied her boat up. This upset her and she refused to pay.

She then had daily visits by guys in runabouts enquiring if and when she was going to pay. This further upset her, and she said she was going to write to newspapers and cruising clubs, to tell all and sundry not to come to Union Island as the people here are robbers and unlikeable.

A certain local gentleman who wields some influence around here was eventually contacted, and he became involved. He contacted the police, who told the guy asking for a thousand US to back off. They also found that the man demanding the mooring fee did not even own the mooring. The owner of the mooring then donated the mooring free of charge, and told the woman she could use the mooring as long as she wanted to.

All this was done in order to clear the good name of the majority of Union Island residents, and to show the woman that everybody is not like those selfish individuals who tried to charge big bucks for what should have been acts of human kindness.

The conclusion to all this is that many citizens decided it was time to put an end to this type of behaviour, so we have formed an association to straighten out the message to tourists and to help them during their stay here. We hope to create an environment where visitors can easily get assistance when required, and we hope to cut down on the thievery and harassment of tourists before we find them all going elsewhere. Wish us luck.

Please sign me,
Tourism Supporter
Union Island

Dear *Compass* Readers,

On Monday morning, July 24, a group of over a hundred cruisers met at The Bight restaurant in Trinidad to consider their options to fight a crime spree in Chaguaramas that has escalated from dinghy theft to breaking and entering boats, and finally armed robbery.

Although comprehensive numbers do not seem available, an inspection of YSATT (Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago) records shows that in the last half of May 2006, five dinghies were stolen from boats and marinas, and one attempted robbery was foiled. As of this writing in July, five dinghies or engines and two generators were stolen from boats at anchor and in marinas, even though the dinghies were cabled and/or lifted out of the water. Two boats have been broken into, robbed and vandalized.

Two weeks ago, one cruiser was robbed at gunpoint at about 5PM as he walked along the Western Main Road that connects the marinas in Chaguaramas. Last week, four cruisers were robbed at gunpoint at 10AM when two men entered a maxi taxi near Tropical Marine. Their principal target seems to have been one cruiser who had left a nearby ATM with an obvious pocket of cash. None of the Trinis on the maxi was robbed.

At the meeting, organized by Andy Pell on *Tixi Livi*, one person with security industry background reported that the best deterrent to these crimes was to catch some of the responsible parties. He recommended that cruisers take responsibility for their belongings and keep everything under lock and key. There were suggestions from the participants for a shared all-night dinghy patrol, a week-long boycott of the local marine businesses who seem to be doing little to protect their customers, and letters to various organizations outlining cruisers' concerns.

Particularly notable were the revelations of Bernard Bouygues, General Manager of Caribbean Yacht Works, who appeared to be the only representative of a local marine business present. He told of having his own boat broken into and one of his own dinghies stolen, and of the lack of assistance he received from either the local Coast Guard or the police. He offered one of his dinghies to the group to use for a patrol. His experience with the authorities was echoed by one participant, who had had his dinghy stolen and reported that the police were more interested in his age and weight than the details of his dinghy.

The meeting ended with a small group volunteering to pull the suggestions into a plan and come up with additional recommendations. Before the day was over, a night-time boat watch had been organized and implemented in the anchorage at Chaguaramas.

Anyone venturing into Trinidad waters should hoist and chain their dinghies and take appropriate cautions against being boarded and robbed, and robbery while traveling on land.

Carter Crawford
S/V Liberty

PS Since I wrote the letter above, the crime wave in Trinidad continues. Perhaps due to the all-night boat watch instituted in Chaguaramas Bay, much of the crime has shifted to land. Two dinghies have been stolen from marinas and two other attempts have been foiled. Sadly, the day after the suspect in one robbery had been apprehended, the dinghy owners found their dog dead, floating in the bay. Maybe just a coincidence? Two boats have been broken into and robbed at one of the largest marinas and there was a kidnapping at gunpoint of a local Trini at a popular cruiser restaurant at a Chaguaramas boatyard. Back on the water, two boats have been boarded by men armed with guns. One robbery attempt was fought off by the crew but the second, early on August 17, was successful. *(Editor's note: See related story on page 42.)* The local marine businesses are talking about a plan to protect the cruising population, but as of this writing (August 17th) no action has been taken or plan offered.

Dear *Compass*,

This letter is being written in response to the increasing crime rate in the Chaguaramas area of Trinidad. All publications regularly receive letters and articles regarding cruising the Caribbean islands and the many wonderful vistas available. However, the negatives are becoming more and more onerous and things seem to be, as one cruiser just mentioned on the Chaguaramas Bay morning radio net, "a desperate state". Quoting again, another cruiser mentioned that Trinidad is "getting to be a bad place to be".

In fact, this morning's boater's net reported that a Norwegian sailboat was boarded last evening by three armed men and robbed of most items of value. Fortunately, in this instance, no one was hurt. However, it appears it's only a matter of time before more serious crimes are perpetrated upon cruisers. The country of Trinidad & Tobago has had about one murder per day thus far during 2006, and we sincerely hope that no cruisers join that terrible total.

—Continued on next page

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There have been so many dinghy thefts, armed robberies, and boat boardings, all involving cruisers, that two night watches have been instituted by volunteers using floodlights, dinghies, VHF radios, horns, and the like. The harbor is large and it's difficult to maintain coverage, but it is felt that governmental agencies in Trinidad have been ineffectual or uninterested. Land-based police authorities state that their jurisdiction ends at the water's edge, yet the Trinidadian Coast Guard has been slow to respond or at worst, totally non-responsive. Marina owners have been slow to accomplish anything to improve security in and around the Chaguaramas area, despite having a marina-funded organization.

This letter is being sent to boating publications and others, in the hope that cruisers and charter-boaters may become better informed and active in working to help suppress crime in all areas in which we travel, particularly those south of the "hurricane box" of 12 degrees north, or even 10 degrees, 50 minutes, in the instance of our insurance carrier. Embassies, local governments, marinas, chandleries, and all local businesses, need to do more to assure that cruisers feel safe, or we will "vote with our keels", meaning visiting and spending our money in other, safer countries.

Respectfully,
Roland and Kathleen O'Brien
S/V M'Lady Kathleen

Dear *Compass*,

We brought our boat from Trinidad to Venezuela four years ago. We make Maremares Marina in Puerto La Cruz our home base.

When we planned to leave Trinidad, we were told not to go to Venezuela — that it was dangerous. However, nothing has changed in the four years that we have been here. The marinas are secure.

Here at Maremares you are treated as if you've booked a hotel room: just plug in your boat and you get telephone, electricity and internet on board. Ashore, there is a one-million-gallon swimming pool with wave machine, tennis courts, spa and gym, and a golf course next door. There is a large mall just outside the marina entrance and just across the street there are many restaurants.

Bahia Redonda marina also has a nice pool and restaurant, and many services are located there.

You can dinghy from any of the marinas to a big shopping center with grocery store, bowling alleys, movie theaters and much more. There are many tours you can take of the interior of Venezuela: to Angel Falls; to see the condors in Merida in the Andes; to the Grand Savannah for hiking trips or horseback riding trips. It is a beautiful country and a good jumping-off place to fly to other South American countries, such as Peru or Argentina.

Yes, there is crime. You have to be careful in the anchorages close to the mainland and should probably anchor there with other boats, but if you go to Tortuga, Los Roques or Las Aves there is virtually no crime.

As in any big city, in Puerto La Cruz you shouldn't wear shiny jewelry or flaunt your wealth and should watch where you go. It is safe to shop or go to the farmers' market and restaurants, just be aware of your surroundings. Many taxi drivers speak English and will be happy to show you around and advise you where to go and where not to go. Once you are familiar with the area, there are buses to get you around.

Puerto La Cruz is a great place to get boat work done. The people are fun-loving and friendly. Even when you can't speak the language they try to help you, and usually you get a laugh from trying Spanish and them trying English. We have made many Venezuelan friends, and all the people that we have met have treated us nicely and tried to be helpful.

The sad thing is all the rumors that are on the single-sideband radio that go all around the world and are keeping people from coming down and enjoying this country and its people.

So while it's true that there is crime, this is still the best place to be in the Caribbean, and without a doubt the best weather we have ever had!

Jenny Gaither
Three Keys

Dear *Compass* Readers,

We have just concluded the annual Carriacou Children's Educational Fundraising activities held during Carriacou Regatta. It was a rousing success. Thanks to everyone who was there and participated, and thanks to all of you who were not there but participated by your contributions prior to Regatta.

And thank you to the *Compass* for publishing our many announcements for Carriacou Regatta fundraising activities, and also to Jonathan Fisher at Island Water World in St. George's for the numerous announcements about the regatta that he made on the local Grenada VHF Net.

John and Melodye Pompa
Second Millennium

Dear *Compass*,

We are enclosing a check for a year's subscription. We picked up a copy of *Compass* while recently chartering in the Grenadines out of Grenada.

We enjoyed our cruise — the "off" season was fine with us — and furthered our anchoring and sailing skills with no screw-ups (just a little tension on our part). We gained confidence with a very good boat, a Bavaria 42 from Horizon Yacht Charters in True Blue Bay, and in anchoring with a lot of chain. Carriacou, Union Island, Mayreau, Canouan and especially the Tobago Cays were beautiful. On Mayreau, Curtis taxied us from Saltwhistle Bay to the village for provisioning and shared beautiful overlooks and views of his island. Union Island and Clifton Harbor were also very nice and the people friendly.

Horizon Yacht Charter is what brought us down there and beyond the BVI. They were great.

We hope to come back.

Elaine and Tom Roberts
Virginia, USA

Hello *Compass* Readers,

We are Paul and Yvonne from Holland and since February this year we have lived in Juangriego, Isla Margarita, Venezuela. We operate a backpacker's hotel, Hotel Patrick, only 20 meters from the sea.

A few months ago a couple of sailors passed through and raved to us about how secure they felt here in Juangriego. Margarita is an island outside the hurricane zone where one might provision, dine and get just about any work done, but most cruisers visit only Porlamar, and we wondered why. So we started listening, and decided that if we wanted to get more sailors anchoring in this bay, then there were a few things we would have to organize, such as fresh water, fuel, a clearing agent, a dinghy dock, wireless internet, security, water taxi, laundry service, and maybe bus trips to the biggest supermarkets and malls on the island.

So, we started working. We already have a VHF radio, and we've arranged water supplies and expanded ours so that visiting sailors can take a freshwater shower here at our hotel. Laundry service is available and when there are enough guests we can also arrange bus tours. Of course those were the easiest things.

You guys need a dinghy dock! So we invited the assistant mayor to Hotel Patrick and explained to him what we had in mind. He thought it was good idea — a floating dock in the centre of town! Of course he has to talk with the rest of the staff, but the first vote is in. We didn't stop there. We spoke with the mayor's representative and he assured us that fuel will soon be available to yachts at the Guardia Nacional dock. He also told us that a clearing agent will be permanently based at the office of the Guardia. Last problem: security. We explained to them the cruisers' needs, and in light of the presence of the Guardia base here in Juangriego we thought that it might be a good idea to ask them to patrol the bay and our planned dock at night. They agreed, and so once our plan goes through the major's office, we hope to have as safe and convenient an anchorage as any in the Caribbean.

We are installing a wireless internet system in the next few weeks. Until then, we have a broadband internet connection in the bar free of charge to our clients! As for our bar, we wanted a spot that would become a second home to anyone who visits us. You can play pool, darts, chess, cards or just sit in the TV corner and watch a DVD — and of course you can also sit at the bar, with a happy hour every night and occasional live music. If family and friends come, you can book a room here at Hotel Patrick and move right in to that second home!

So if you are in Juangriego, stop in and say hello — the first round is on us.

Paul and Yvonne
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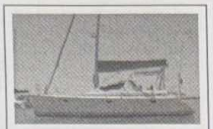
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Letter of the Month

Dear Cruising Community,

We are a retired Canadian couple in our mid-50s, sailing on a "classic plastic" production boat. We started cruising in October 2004 from Florida, through Cuba, Haiti, the south shore of the Dominican Republic, and then across to the Virgins. In the past two years we have been up and down the Lesser Antilles chain three times. Our boat is presently hauled in Grenada. The following are some notes and impressions of our Caribbean travels so far.

• American Presidential threats to foreign boats going to Cuba undermine maritime law (as well as international conventions), belittle the US Coast Guard who have neither the desire to patrol those waters nor the budget for it, and make American cruisers the target of others' frustrations.

• Cuba was the best experience of my life. In 73 days there, not once did we lock the boat, not once were we ripped off.

• Haiti was uneventful.

• Twenty minutes after docking in Santo Domingo we were ripped off for US$40 for "tie up" fees. Those fees do not exist. (What a contrast to Cuba!)

• Even though everyone slags Cuba for their *entrada* and *salida* formalities, we were frustrated in Puerto Rico with authorities demanding check-ins at every port. We were boarded at night by Immigration authorities with machine guns. "Routine check" is what they called it.

• BVI has an attitude. If they really do not want us to visit, just advertise it and I'll gladly by-pass it. Rudeness is a conscious behaviour.

We do not feel safe. The number one reason is not the crime, or the threat of crime, it's that there is no visible program, no assurance by governments, no policy in place in respect to cruisers' safety

• Dutch St. Maarten (like some other islands) likes to charge for services in US dollars. In Canada we do not charge Germans in Euros or Japanese in Yen. Each country has a currency; they should have faith in it and use it.

• All government charges for entry are bogus. Where in the Caribbean (except the French islands) do we see a decent public dinghy dock, organized garbage disposal, or any other basic needs of the cruiser? The money the governments take in as yacht entry fees is "general expense" — and I've seen the homes that government ministers live in. Grenada is the worst: pick up guests, spend several thousand dollars in the country, then sail for a few days to the Tobago Cays and your "annual" cruising permit is void.

• The attitude of locals towards cruisers is a little more unfavourable over last year. No one even considers not using the "F word" in the presence of women or children. At Cumberland Bay, St. Vincent, we stern tied and gladly paid for the help. Within ten minutes a fisherman came out and swore at my wife and me for anchoring near his fishing boat. The "F word" was very understandable. At the very outset I politely informed him that we would move over by the use of the stern line, but that was ignored. He managed to get his boat underway without any problems. We picked up and left for Wallilabou.

• Dishonesty seems to be the norm. In Wallilabou we bought a fish, were made to pay for it up front, then instead of cleaning it as promised, the vendor rowed ashore and gave the job to another. By the time I got the fish, the original person had gone, and the cleaning guy wanted EC$10. Not only that, because we were too trusting, we lent them a good knife which somehow we never got back. The fish ended up costing us $150.

Last year in Chateaubelair, St. Vincent, the boat boys recommended by a popular cruising guide never returned after taking EC$50 for a shopping run. They needed the money up front, they said, for such a large order.

In Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, we paid a "boat boy" to watch our dinghy. Half the rode went missing, as did a jerry-type water can, a nav light out of the locker, and some reef walkers — and I was still made to pay EC$10.

We were hit up three times this year by Immigration officers in full uniform, asking for donations to their church. Totally inappropriate.

• Speeding boats in congested harbours is routine (St. Maarten, Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia, Bequia, Grenada, etcetera). It seems only the boat boys in the Tobago Cays still have some respect for the possibility of swimmers lurking behind boats.

• Noise! Can three or more restaurants or bars legally blast their speakers into the bay until 3AM? Admiralty Bay, Bequia; Tyrrell Bay, Carriacou; Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, and a few others are the worst. Then the locals can't figure out why all the cruisers are angry in the morning and won't buy Simon's fresh bread, or Papa's fish or Gregory's papaya.

• Lately, security issues dominate our thoughts. Last year, someone you know knew someone that had a security issue. This year, every second cruiser you meet has their own story to tell — and all too often, you do, too. We were boarded in Bequia. I happened to wake, went on deck to check for swinging boats because there was no wind, and scared him (or them) off. We lost a cockpit cushion. Our dinghy was ransacked in Jolly Harbour, Antigua, and several expensive masks and snorkels were gone. We were gone four minutes.

We have travelled the world in all types of conditions. We have been targeted, but those have been rare instances where we have let our guard down. The Caribbean is different. We are on our own boats, and do not feel safe. The number one reason is not the crime, or the threat of crime, it's that there is no visible program, no assurance by governments, no policy in place in respect to cruisers' safety. In Dominica, Martin and the boat boys patrol the anchorage at night — where is the government? Can't they afford to spend a few bucks on an official harbour patrol? I do not see myself being protected by any Caribbean country's government while cruising.

Don't the governments realize the economic impact that we bring? For example, this year alone we had three sets of guests fly into Grenada for two-week holidays each. My estimate is that each couple spent approximately $3,000 during their stay. I also paid about $5,000 for storage and work on my boat there. We can easily spend our money elsewhere.

Right now we are in Canada. Why am I supposed to come back to the Caribbean? We will make next year our last — year three out of a proposed five-year adventure. And we will not cruise, but rather move the boat to Florida to have it transported back home.

Klaus Nenn
S/Y Bellamar

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29' Hunter Marine, 2 cab/1 head Pocket cruiser!	'95	$ 34K	46' Hunter 460, 3 cab/2 head 40K Price drop!	'00	$149K
31' Westerly Pentland CC, 2 cab/1 head	'76	$ 20K	46' Hunter 466, 3 cab/2 head, Fully turn-key!	'02	$250K
32' Allied Seawind II – recent refit!	'76	$ 49K	46' Morgan 461 CC 3 cab/2 head New awlgrip	'82	$ 99K
32' Beneteau 322, 2 cab/1 head aft ckpt	'99	$ 59K	51' Beneteau Idylle Frers, 3 cab Well maintained!	'86	$219K
35' Hallberg-Rassy, 2 cab/1 head Turn key!	'79	$ 79K	52' Jeanneau Su Ody, 3 cab/3 head Loaded!	'03	$550K
36' Hunter Vision 36, 2 cab 1 owner since new!	'92	$ 69K			
36' Beneteau M362, 2 cab /1 head	'00	$ 79K			
36' Tiburon, 1 cab/1 head Solid cruiser!	'76	$ 59K	MULTIHULLS		
37' CSY 37 Cutter, 2 cab/2 head	'78	$ 45K	42' Fount Pajot Venezia Catamaran 4 cab	'99	$229K
38' Hunter 380, 3 cab/1 head	'99	$ 89K	43' Voyage Norseman 430, 4 cab Well equipped!	'96	$265K
38' Bavaria Ocean, 2 cab/1 head never chartered!	'98	$169K	43' Fountaine Pajot Belize, owners version	'03	$399K
40' Beneteau M405, 3 cab/2 head, new eng.	'95	$ 89K	44' Voyage 440, 4 cab/4 head In excellent shape	'02	$375K
40' Beneteau 40.7, 2 cab/1 head, Immaculate!	'01	$179K	45' Prout Catamarans, 2 cab Never chartered!	'95	$280K
40' Beneteau CC, 2 cab/2 head, Motivated!	'97	$ 95K	46' Fountaine Pajot Bahia 4 cab/4 head Reduced!	'01	$375K
41' Beneteau 413, 3 cab /2 head	'00	$119K	52' Catspecs& Nzmultihull, performance racer!	'01	$450K
42' Catalina 42 3 cab/2 head Excellent shape!	'04	$249K	55' Outremer 55 Standard, 3 cab/2 head Loaded!	'03	$645K
42' Beneteau 42 CC 2 cab/2 head Reduced!	'03	$179K			
42' Rex-Marin Aphrodite CC 2 cab/2 head	'88	$119K			
42' Endeavour 42 2 cab/2 head Reduced!	'86	$ 99K	POWER		
42' Hunter 42, 2 cab/ 2 head Excellent condition!	'93	$135K	27' Eastern 27 Down East, 1 cab	'06	$ 99K
43' C&C Landfall, Try $75K, Motivated!	'82	$ 85K	35' Marlin 350 Sportfisherman, New electronics	'02	$125K
44' Moody CC, 2 cab/1 head, Great value!	'95	$175K	35' Maxum SCR 3500, 2 cab/1 head	'01	$129K
44' Beneteau 445, 3 cab/ 2 head Well maintained!	'93	$109K	42' Hershine 42, Motor yacht 4 cab/4 head	'89	$110K
44' CSY 44 2 cab/2 head, Reduced – Motivated!	'77	$ 85K	42' Nova Marine Trawler, Sundeck trawler	'98	$249K
44' Nordic Cutter 2 cab/1 head Refit 2000!	'86	$149K	47' Atlantic 47, Flybridge motor yacht, Upgrades!	'83	$209K
44' C&C 44 2 cab/1 head Loaded!	'88	$145K	48' Horizon 48 Motor Yacht, 3 cab/3 head	'00	$310K
45' Bombay Explorer, 2 cab/2 head World cruiser!	'78	$ 75K	50' Hatteras Sportfisherman, 3 cab/2 head	'81	$295K

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CALENDAR



PHOTO: CASIMIR HOFMANN

SEPTEMBER

4	Labor Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
6	Bonaire Day. Public holiday in Bonaire; boat races
7	FULL MOON
16	National Heroes Day. Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis
19	Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis
24	Republic Day. Public holiday in Trinidad
TBA	Virgin of the Valley Festival, Venezuela
TBA	24th Annual International Blue Marlin Tournament, Havana, Cuba. CNIH



OCTOBER

2	Thanksgiving Day. Public holiday in St. Lucia
6	FULL MOON
8 - 14	39th Bonaire International Sailing Regatta. www.infobonaire.com
9	Columbus Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
10	War of 1868 Anniversary. Public holiday in Cuba
13	Ladies' Laser Open, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
14 - 15	Laser Team Racing Championship, Antigua. AYC
16	USVI Hurricane Thanksgiving Day (Public holiday in USVI only if no hurricanes occurred).
21	Antillean Day. Public holiday in Netherlands Antilles
21	St. Ursula's Day. Public holiday in BVI
22	Divali. Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago
25	Thanksgiving Day. Public holiday in Grenada; boat races
27	Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines
27 - 29	9th Foxy's Cat Fight multihull regatta, Jost Van Dyke. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), Tortola, tel (284) 496-8685, fax (284) 495-4184, mvh@surfbvi.com, www.weyc.net
30	Independence Day. Public holiday in Antigua

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of Compass went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation. If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed free in our calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com, or fax (784) 457-3410.

WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Long Live the Dust!

by Betty Karl

"Dust blown off the Sahara and Sahel can interfere with the birth process of hurricanes," said Jason Dunion, director of the NOAA Hurricane Research Division 2006 Hurricane Field Program in Miami. "Occasionally," he added, "great elevated plumes of hot dusty air interact with African waves as they move across the Atlantic. When the extremely dry air within the dust layer is ingested by a wave disturbance, it evaporates the deep clouds and thus limits the potential of a wave to develop into a storm."

— usinfo.state.gov

The first time I experienced African dust was in Grand Turk. We were anchored into the swell with a bow and stern anchor, facing south. After some pretty stiff winds, I noticed all the lines, halyards, bimini (even the underside) were all covered with reddish-brown dust — enough to make everything look furry. It was also embedded in the standing rigging, making it look rusty. Little did I know how important that dust would become to my life in the Caribbean.

In the years since then, I've sometimes missed the clear, sunny blue sky that would make picture-postcard weather. The photos I'd take often had a washed-out sky that made them less interesting. I was missing the deep blue sky that I had been getting in my photos in Florida. Of course, I noticed that when it was hazy, there was less danger of getting burned by the sun, a great benefit for someone who kept forgetting the sunscreen.

My discovery years later that African dust (also known as Sahara dust) contained powdered camel dung was a shock. At first, I thought it was just a joke, but the more I heard about it, the more I knew it had to be true. Okay, so we're breathing a bit of camel dung... I think it's organic, though... at least I'm hoping it is. I figure it's a small trade-off for the dryer, less tropically turbulent weather we'd be getting without this dung-laden air.

This season, I was sitting in St. Thomas waiting for the perfect weather to sail south out of what I consider the danger zone. For some reason, the weather was unseasonably windy for over a month. It was July and I was getting nervous about being so far north that late in the season. I'd listen to each weather forecast to try to find a break long enough to head south on a straight shot. Magical phrases like

Okay, so we're breathing a bit of camel dung... I think it's organic, though

"wind shear", "clouds of dry African dust" and "lowered water temperatures" made me more hopeful that I'd get south before something bad developed. The tropical waves seemed to keep coming one right after another, with no break in between. Their intensity was kept calmer by the above conditions.

In mid-July, I finally got a weather window and had a few days of decent sailing, although the winds were lighter than I needed, a complete opposite from when I went north in February. On watch, I'd compare the two trips through the same waters. In February, clear nights made the stars seem so brilliant and close that it was breathtaking. Coming south, the haze made them seem as if they were at half wattage. Disappointing, but I was glad for the haze that made it safer to travel since it kept the tropical waves from developing into something more ferocious.

Now that I'm in Venezuela, I feel that I'm safe from developing storms and if they should come closer, I'm only a day away from being safely tucked away. I know that the dust/camel dung will blow off and storms will develop in the coming months and I'll sit by the radio listening to weather reports as if my life depends on them — and it does. For now, I'm glad the storms seem to be starting later this year than usual.

To all our camel friends over there in Africa — thank you, and keep up the good work. We appreciate your efforts in making our weather safer and calmer for as long as it lasts.

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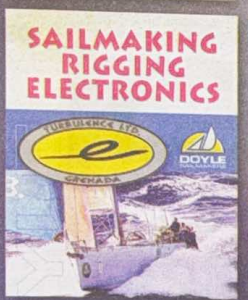
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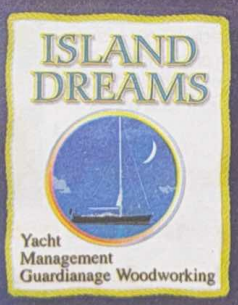
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