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On-line

COMPASS

MARCH 2014 NO. 222

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

SAILING INTO SANTA MARTA

— Story on page 22

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ALBERTO MARRINO



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Editor.....Sally Erdle
sally@caribbeancompass.com

Assistant Editor.....Elaine Ollivierre
jsprat@vincysurf.com

Advertising & Distribution.....Tom Hopman
tom@caribbeancompass.com

Art, Design & Production.....Wilfred Dederer
wdf@caribbeancompass.com

Accounting.....Shelleye Craig
shelleye@caribbeancompass.com

Compass Agents by Island:

Antigua: Ad Sales & Distribution - Lucy Tulloch
Tel: (268) 720-6868, lucy@thelucy.com

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

Colombia: Distribution - Marina Santa Marta
www.lgy-marinasantamarta.com/en

Curaçao: Distribution - Budget Marine Curaçao
curacao@budgetmarine.com Tel: (599) 462 77 33

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

Grenada:

Ad Sales & Distribution - Karen Maaroufi
Cell: (473) 457-2151 Office: (473) 444-3222
compassgrenada@gmail.com

Martinique: Ad Sales & Distribution - Isabelle Prado
Tel: (0596) 596 68 69 71 Mob: + 596 696 74 77 01
isabelle.prado@wanadoo.fr

Panama: Distribution - Shelter Bay Marina
www.shelterbaymarina.com

Puerto Rico: Distribution - Sunbay Marina, Fajardo
Olga Diaz de Perez, Tel: (787) 863 0313 Fax: (787) 863 5282
sunbaymarina@aol.com

St. Lucia: Ad Sales & Distribution - Maurice Moffat
Tel: (758) 452 0147 Cell: (758) 720-8432
mauricemoffat@hotmail.com

St. Maarten/St. Barths/Guadeloupe:
Ad Sales & Distribution - Stéphanie Legendre
Mob: + 590 690 765 422
steflegendre@wanadoo.fr

St. Vincent & the Grenadines:
Ad Sales - Shelleye Craig
shelleye@caribbeancompass.com Tel: (784) 457-3409
Distribution - Doc Leslie Tel: (784) 529-0970

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

Venezuela: Ad Sales - Patty Tomasik
Tel: (58-281) 265-3844 Tel/Fax: (58-281) 265-2448
xanadumarine@hotmail.com

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On the cover: Scenes of Santa Marta, Colombia as captured by Alberto Mariño, Jordi Font Bayó and George of Lahaina Roads. At lower right, Mayor Carlos Eduardo Caicedo, Deputy Minister of Tourism Sandra Howard Taylor and marina owner Manuel Dávila Abondano welcome race winners to the city



Compass covers the Caribbean! From Cuba to Trinidad, from Panama to Barbuda, we've got the news and views that sailors can use. We're the Caribbean's monthly look at sea and shore.

'We discovered the Compass when we first went cruising in the late '90s. By the time we both finished reading an issue, it was a patchwork of holes, as we'd clipped multiple articles, news bits, and ads for reference. Congratulations on giving us great info and entertainment.'

—Ann Vanderhoof and Steve Manley
www.spicenecklace.com

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Info & Updates

Exclusion Zone in Maho Bay, St. Maarten

The area west of the Princess Juliana International Airport in St. Maarten, known as Maho Bay, is frequently passed closely by large yachts going to or coming from French St. Martin, Anguilla, or the BVI. From time to time, vessels have stayed to watch planes land or take off. The height of their masts and superstructures has become a concern for airline traffic.



In order to increase the distance that all marine traffic passes in front of Maho Bay, yellow buoys with lights will be installed marking an exclusion zone between the buoys and the shore. All marine traffic must stay west and south of these buoys.

Anchoring at Hummingbird, St. Lucia

Chris Doyle reports: Yachts can again anchor off the Hummingbird Restaurant, near Soufriere, St. Lucia, and tie to the shore from 1800 to 0600 hours. This used to be

the most popular anchorage in the area and it is great news for those who would like to eat ashore. The Hummingbird security will keep an eye on your boat and dinghy while you are in the restaurant.

This is a fishing priority area, part of the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), so if at 0600 the fishermen ask you to leave because they want to cast a seine, you must, and please do it promptly. It was complaints about non-cooperation with the fishermen's requests that got yachts banned in the first place. While they do not fish every day, and often not on weekends, do not leave your boat here during the day as it may need to be moved at any time.

If you have any questions, call the head SMMA ranger, Peter Butcher, on (758) 718-1196.

New Coast Guard Base in St. Croix

The US Coast Guard formally opened its new facility on the East End of St. Croix on January 24th. The two-storey, 5,000-square-foot leased property in Estate Solitude contains the resident inspection office and the boat forces detachment, including two new 29-foot Response Boat Small II generation boats.

—Continued on next page



Congresswoman Donna Christensen at the inauguration of new US Coast Guard facilities in Christiansted, St. Croix. At far right is Capt. Drew W. Pearson



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USVI St. Croix

Wilson's Cruzan Canvas
Christiansted



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The property includes a boat maintenance shop, an armory, storage space and parking. The boat forces are a detachment of the US Coast Guard Boat Station in San Juan. Their mission is search and rescue, fisheries enforcement, homeland security and law enforcement including drug and migrant interdiction. The unit also educates the public on safe boating and escorts cruise ships and certain commercial cargo vessels entering and departing St. Croix.

Congresswoman Donna Christensen says, "The increased boat safety, search and rescue operations and ability to interdict contraband on its way to St. Croix is important to us, but what is also important is the increased visibility of the Coast Guard in the community." Captain Drew W. Pearson, Commander of U.S. Coast Guard Sector San Juan, says, "This new location reduces Coast Guard response times to Search and Rescue and Law Enforcement cases and expands our ability to execute other Coast Guard missions in the area as we continue our collective efforts to protect the safety and security of citizens in St. Croix and the US Virgin Islands."

Montserrat Joins Caribbean Marine Association

Montserrat, represented by the Montserrat Yacht Club, has joined the Caribbean Marine Association (CMA). Commodore of the Montserrat Yacht Club, Dwain Loveth, has, for some time, taken an active part in OECs meetings working to promote yachting throughout the Eastern Caribbean.

Montserrat's yachting industry suffered a massive blow when the volcano erupted nearly 20 years ago and has struggled to recover, not helped by the recent recession. With ambitious plans to expand Montserrat's yachting tourism, based around Little Bay and Carr's Bay, Montserrat is set to become another player in the expanding Caribbean marine industry. Montserrat offers a unique experience to yachting visitors, now that tours are permitted into the Exclusion Zone and on an island where the pace of life is leisurely even by Caribbean standards.

The CMA is continuing to work to expand its membership throughout the Caribbean and is still in discussion with several other islands that may be joining in the near future.

The CMA takes this opportunity to thank Jean-Claude Garric from French Customs who is returning to France after 20 years in the Caribbean. Jean-Claude is a good friend to the CMA and was a driving force behind many of the unifying projects within the region. He will be much missed. The CMA wishes him well in his new post in Toulouse, France.

Eight Bells

• DAVE NOFS

Kathleen Johnson and Arleen Webster report: It is with both sadness and tremendous respect for Dave Nofs of the Endeavour 40 FIA that we advise of his passing, after a valiant struggle with Parkinson's disease, on January 21st at the age of 70.

Dave, a retired firefighter, and his wife, Judi, had been in the Caribbean on FIA for approximately 23 years and have friends cruising throughout the world. The couple sailed from the Bahamas to the Eastern Caribbean islands in the early 1990s. They spent many years in Trinidad, Venezuela, Colombia, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. They spent a large portion of time in Trinidad, where they interacted with the local people as well as providing assistance to cruisers. They very recently spent the final years of their cruising life in Cartagena, Colombia.

Condolences may be sent to Judi at Carroll.darlener@gmail.com.



THOMAS HORNMAN

• ANDY WATTS
Well-known Barbadian sailmaker Andrew "Andy" Watts, former Managing Director of Doyle Offshore Sails, Barbados, died suddenly on February 5th, reportedly of a brain hemorrhage. A long-time stalwart of the regional yachting industry and the Bajan sailing scene, he will be missed.

Cruisers Help Assist Flood Victims...

Many thanks to the cruisers,

bareboaters, charter crews and their guests who supported the benefit concert under the Almond Tree in Bequia held on January 11th by the community action group Rise Up Bequia. Dillon Ollivierre reports that the newly formed non-profit group, comprised of Bequia natives from various communities, has done its part to ensure that students



affected by the Christmas Eve 2013 floods in St. Vincent are now better equipped in school, having provided folders, graph paper, exercise books, pens, pencils, rulers, geometry sets, pencil cases, erasers and sharpeners for more than 130 students.

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The group journeyed to St. Vincent on February 12th and, with the aid of the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Red Cross, was able to visit and distribute these supplies to students of the Troumaca Primary, Fitz Hughes Primary, Spring Village Methodist Primary, Chateaubelair Methodist Primary, West Wood Methodist Primary, Petit Bordel Secondary and Troumaca Secondary schools.

For more information visit Rise Up Bequia's Facebook page.

... and Schoolchildren in Mayreau

Kudos also to Dawn and Laurie Corbett of *S/V Cat Tales* for their donation of ECS425 (nearly US\$160) worth of school supplies to the Mayreau Government School in the Grenadines, and to Chris and Duff Walter of *S/V Sudiki* for delivering them.

Cruisers' Site-ings

- Two sailing- and island-related publishing companies now have websites. See www.sailrockpublishing.com and www.caribbeebooks.com.
- Wade and Diane Alarie of *S/V Joana* have sent a document summarizing their recent experiences in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela to www.noonsite.com.
- The Caribbean Safety and Security Net details "an unprecedented number of (crime) reports from concerned cruisers in St Martin" at www.safetyandsecuritynet.com/multiple-crimes-against-cruisers-in-st-martin.

Students Suggest Maritime S&R App

In a recent contest held by the telecommunications regulators in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (NTRC), students were challenged to invent new telecommunications systems that would provide services to the public. Among the many creative innovations elicited by the competition was the suggestion by a team from the Bequia Seventh Day Adventist Secondary School that could be of benefit to their seafaring community — a search-and-rescue app for cellular phones. While many fishermen and other boaters don't have VHF radios or other emergency communication equipment aboard, almost everyone these days has a cell phone. The app would make an emergency distress call to the Coast Guard, and include Google maps and emergency contact numbers, and, for moral support while awaiting rescue, a family call key and even a special Facebook session.

Although this idea didn't make the finals in the nationwide competition that was held from October 18th, 2013 to January 31st, 2014, we applaud young people for thinking of new ways to save lives on the water.

Update on DPNR Action in St. John, USVI

As we reported in the July 2012 issue of *Compass*, "Boaters in Coral Bay, St. John, USVI were taken aback by the heavy-handed actions of USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) officers, who reportedly cut mooring lines, demanded pedestrians show identification, and were less than professional in their handling of firearms during a boating regulations enforcement 'sweep' ... DPNR Enforcement Director Roberto Tapia said that his officers were involved in a week-long initiative in Coral Bay to rid the area of illegal moorings and to enforce the law on "many" unregistered vessels in that area."

The Coral Bay boating community was outraged. Photos of gun-toting officers were taken and a barrage of phone complaints were made, including calls to the Virgin Islands Governor, DPNR Commissioner Alicia Barnes, Enforcement Director

Roberto Tapia, and Senator at large, Craig Barshinger. Senator Barshinger met with the boaters and promised that their complaints would be heard at a public hearing. Around 200 boaters attended the hearing, reporting the alleged illegal actions of the DPNR Enforcement Team, in particular, Roberto Tapia.

An internal investigation by the Department of Justice was launched. The DPNR Enforcement Team was not seen in the bay after the investigation started and no further "registration checks" occurred. Six months later, a statement released by the Commissioner, Alicia Barnes, said she regretted the actions of her officers and stated that the department was reprimanded but it was found that the officers were within their authority and their actions were not illegal.

Six months after the statement was released, in May 2013, DPNR Director of Enforcement Roberto Tapia was arrested exiting the St. Thomas passenger ferry



while carrying eight kilos of cocaine. It turned out that he had been under an FBI investigation (a separate investigation from the one he was under by the Department of Justice for the incident) for nearly seven years. Tapia, age 55, pleaded guilty on September 24th last year to racketeering, which encompassed the sale and transport of more than 100 kilos of cocaine from the Virgin Islands to a buyer in Puerto Rico, and to possession of a firearm in furtherance of drug trafficking. In entering his plea of guilty to racketeering before District Court Judge Curtis Gomez, Tapia admitted to extensive cocaine trafficking activities over a substantial period of time and utilizing his position with and assets of DPNR to facilitate those activities. Tapia faces a maximum penalty of life in prison.

Not That Paria!

The item which appeared in January's Info & Updates under the heading "Oh No, Not Paria Again", may have given the impression that the piracy incident took place in Trinidad waters because of the proximity of Paria Peninsula to Trinidad. In fact, the notorious Paria Peninsula is the easternmost tip of Venezuela and the incident took place some 15 miles to the west of the tip of this peninsula, well along the northern coast of Venezuela and about five miles offshore. We hope this explanation clears up any misunderstandings.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome new advertisers Hotwire Enterprises of Florida, on page 11 and Marigourmet of St. Lucia in the Market Place section. Good to have you with us!

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Return of the KISS!

Libbie Ellis reports: John Gambill and I spent nearly four years cruising in the Caribbean aboard *S/V Hotwire*, our steel Bruce Roberts 36. Our early energy needs were very basic. The longer we were out, the more comforts and conveniences we added. By the time we sailed home, we were using lots of electrical gadgets, keeping the batteries charged with a KISS High Output wind generator and a solar panel. Returning to the US in late 1998 as SV Hotwire Enterprises LLC, the US distributor and warranty repair station for the KISS, we used our education backgrounds and cruising experience to help other cruisers put together wind and solar systems that make life easier and more comfortable, sticking to the KISS principal: Keep It Simple, Sailor! We know we're doing something right because so many of our customers have become good friends and our best referral sources!



BRENDA MEIER

Three KISSes in a row!

Just over a year ago, we purchased KISS Energy Systems from Doug Billings in Trinidad and moved the business to the Tampa Bay area of Florida. Tragically, before Doug flew up to train us in manufacturing and share his list of parts suppliers, he fell down his companionway and died. We've spent the past year "reinventing the wheel" and have kept all the best qualities of the original KISS but made improvements in looks and performance.

The US-made stator is wound tighter for less resistance, the US-made rotors are much more accurately machined, the rectifier is upgraded from 30A to 50A, and the thermal sensors and magnets are selected for higher operating temperatures, all for increased output, especially in higher wind speeds. The housings are now made with special resins and other materials that allow for higher operating temperatures, which increases the wind speed at which it will go into freewheel, the most common complaint about the original KISS. A newly designed yaw bearing at the base of the housing improves wind tracking and ease of installation. The blades are stronger, smoother, and have wear-protection on the leading edge. They come factory balanced and can be replaced individually. And a long-requested nose cone is included for cosmetic reasons.

We finally have a product that will please any captain and crew! R&D is continuing for future improvements, all to be reverse-compatible with the original model. For a complete package, you'll want the KISS (US\$1,495), a charge controller and diversion load. Contact us for your options. KISS is back in business with great customer service and a great product!

For more information see ad on page 11.

Free Cruising Guides' New Rep in Puerto Rico

Free Cruising Guides is pleased to announce the appointment of Luis Duprey as its exclusive sales representative for Puerto Rico. Mr. Duprey is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico, fluent in Spanish, English and Italian. He also holds US Coast Guard Captain's and Master's (100 tons) licenses.

A downloadable directory of vendors that cater to cruising boats in the Caribbean or en route to the Caribbean is in the final stages of preparation at Free Cruising Guides. Searchable alphabetically by country and by industry, it will be available next month, free at www.FreeCruisingGuides.com.

FreeCruisingGuides.com publishes guides for cruising sailors in both e-book and free downloadable formats as well as other free products for cruisers.

For more information see ad on page 33.

Next Destination? Choose Curaçao & Curaçao Marine

In Curaçao the immigration rules have been changed favorably as of mid-2013: visiting yacht owners can now apply for a 180 days visa per calendar year.



Applicants should demonstrate evidence of ownership of their yacht. The vessel should measure at least ten metres (33 feet) at the waterline.

—Continued on next page

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A reminder of the beneficial custom changes as of 2011: Curaçao Marine has bonded warehouse status, meaning that yachts can be stored without a time limit when uninhabited.

Both of the above changes in the law make Curaçao Marine a very interesting destination for long-term cruisers as well as for sailors wanting to be in a secure and safe area during the hurricane season.

At Curaçao Marine, indefinite long-term wet and dry storage is possible owing to their facilities and their bonded warehouse status. With their new 60-ton Roadberg trailer, yachts up to 80 feet can be hauled out and stored on their secure boatyard. For more information see ad on page 19.

Parts & Power on Generator Noise

"What? I can't hear you — the generator's running!"

Parts & Power, one of the oldest power generating companies in the Caribbean, is addressing the issue of diesel generator noise in an informative multi-part series of posts on their blog.

Want to know more? Visit <http://partsandpower.wordpress.com>.

Water for Boats in Dominica

Portsmouth Area Yacht Security (PAYS) advises yacht visitors to Prince Rupert Bay that water is now available direct to boats at two locations.

At the Cabrits cruise ship dock during normal workday hours, boats may fill up for only EC\$15 (US\$6).

The PAYS organization has installed a tap and hose on a mooring ball near the Blue Bay Restaurant, suitable for tank filling and for boat wash down, all for EC\$50 and available when high winds make the Cabrits dock untenable. Please ask your PAYS marine greeter for details.

PAYS is an association of yacht service providers dedicated to providing, in the Prince Rupert Area, a safe and enjoyable location for cruisers and charterers. Their members include government trained and licensed marine and land tour guides, taxi drivers, restaurant owners, and others. Their group cooperation has resulted in overnight anchorage patrols, regular group barbecues, and other activities.

For more information visit the Portsmouth Area Yacht Security on Facebook.

A New Way to Experience Carriacou

The island of Carriacou now has a tourist service operator that covers all aspects of this little, unspoiled, Grenadine gem. Carriacou offers the authentic Caribbean vibe and Isle of Reefs Tours lets small groups experience what life on Carriacou is all about. Isle of Reefs Tours started offering their activities from January 2014.

Carriacou has a lot to offer, both on land and on the water. Isle of Reefs Tours aims to show tourists all aspects of the island and offers a broad range of activities, which includes island tours, guided hikes, offshore camping, boat trips and ecological sustainability trips. "We are unique in offering such a broad range and also unique in offering what is considered the future in leisure and tourist services, all at a very high quality," Allison Caton explains. "Tourism should be heading for quality rather than quantity."

"During my years working for the Grenada Board of Tourism, I experienced several instances in which the tourists were disappointed with the services they received from an unreliable boat captain or tour guide. Reliability in the industry is very important and Isle of Reefs Tours has its own captain and two guides available for the activities to ensure this reliability".

Carriacou's natural beauty is still unspoiled. Isle of Reefs Tours is planning to keep it that way and even aims to enlarge its natural beauty by offering a Carbon Offset Tour. For more information visit www.isleofreeftours.com.

Off the Grid in Dominica

Dominica is a nature-lover's paradise and Manicou River is the kind of accommodation this unique island deserves. Open-fronted cottages surrounded by trees offer ocean views and close proximity to a great variety of wildlife including hummingbirds, parrots, falcons and fireflies.

Completely off-grid with state-of-the art solar power and rainwater harvesting, Manicou River is the only accommodation on the island operating entirely on renewable energy.

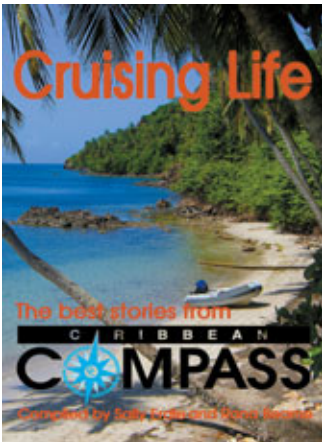
For more information visit www.manicouriver.com.

New Restaurant in Carriacou

JB Bocquet (former owner of Lazy Turtle) welcomes guests to Carriacou's newest dining experience. Located on the Esplanade in Hillsborough, Moringa Restaurant and Crêperie features Caribbean cuisine with a French twist. Plus, it's a place where you'll find lionfish on the menu! Open for lunch and dinner every day except Tuesdays.

Call 443-8300 for reservations or visit www.moringacarriacou.com.

Story from Compass Collection Among Most Read



The story "It Ain't Over... (Till the Fat Lady Sinks)" by Ruth Chesman, which is included in the e-book *Cruising Life: The Best Stories from Caribbean Compass*, was one of the five most read posts of 2013 on the popular sailing blog "Women and Cruising" (www.womenandcruising.com). Ruth's compelling story, voted number three among the top five favorites, recounts falling overboard between Martinique and Dominica, and watching her husband sail away.

For more information on the e-book *Cruising Life: The Best Stories from the Caribbean Compass* see ad on page 33.

Caribbean Boat Show This Month

The third annual Caribbean International Boat Show will take place from March 21st through 23rd at Puerto Del Rey Marina, Puerto Rico.

The show features the latest in powerboats, sailboats, yachts, dive and travel, engines, marine electronics and fishing, plus the best in nautical gifts, services and apparel. This three-day

event will be the once-a-year chance to compare makes and models, and gear up with the latest accessories.

For more information visit www.cibspr.com.



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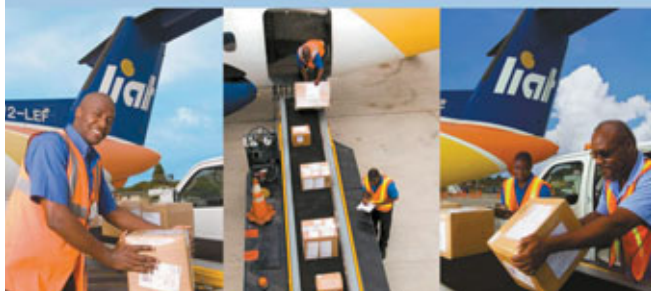
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CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Yacht Carbon Offset Partnership

For the fifth year running, the Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting counteracted its "carbon footprint" through Yacht Carbon Offset's specialist service. As in previous years, the event's December 2013 offset covered onshore electricity, flights by the organizers, and fuel for the shuttle service. The service paralleled that offered to prominent and eco-conscious charter clients to eliminate the carbon footprint of the yacht's fuel. Yachts were invited to separately carbon offset their fuel during the event.

For more information visit www.yachtcarbonoffset.com.

UVI Researchers Implicate Virus in Coral Plague

The Virgin Islands are known as a hot spot for marine tourism. Unfortunately, say researchers at the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), the territory is also a hotspot for coral disease. They have turned their attention to a specific threat to the territory's coral reefs, known as white plague, which is one of the more prevalent diseases killing coral here.



M. BRANDT

Recent investigations of the causes of severe coral diseases in Virgin Islands waters, led by Dr. Marilyn Brandt of UVI's Center for Marine and Environmental Studies, have identified viruses as a potential coral pathogen. Collaborating with Dr. Brandt on the study were Dr. Tyler Smith of UVI, Dr. Rebecca Vega-Thurber of Oregon State University and Oregon State Ph.D. graduate student Nitzan Soffer.

UVI's Center for Marine and Environmental Studies was established in 1999. It is a research and outreach arm of UVI's Marine Science Program.

"The research suggests that white plague disease is associated with and may be caused by viruses," Dr. Brandt said. "This is the first study of its kind that has identified viruses as a potential coral pathogen." The research also showed the disease was triggered by contact of living coral tissue with sand and sediment after Hurricane Earl in 2010.

That, hopefully, is a step toward achieving Dr. Brandt's overall goal, which is "to try to understand the disease so that we can better manage it or even prevent it." She first encountered white plague on a dive trip to the Cayman Islands in 1999. "It's been a topic of my primary research since my undergrad days," she said. "It was devastating to watch your favorite dive site just being destroyed because of this disease that we didn't know anything about."

White plague disease is known to affect more than 30 species of coral and was responsible for killing large amounts of coral after a warming event hit the territory in 2005, according to Dr. Brandt. In the 1990s, the disease was originally thought to be associated with a bacterial pathogen, but Dr. Brandt says, "Conflicting results from more recent studies, like ours, suggest that the causal agent may be more complex than originally thought."

Brandt's study, detailed in the scientific journal PLOS ONE, noted that "colony fragmentation and contact with sediment played primary roles in the initial appearance of disease, but that the disease was capable of spreading among colonies, which suggests secondary transmission is possible through some other, unidentified mechanism."

"Understanding what is occurring on a small scale in a location like Brewer's Bay (where the study was conducted) has high relevance for researchers throughout the Caribbean," Dr. Smith said. In addition to his UVI research, he serves as research coordinator for the VI's Territorial Coral Reef Monitoring Program, which was established by the Department of Planning and Natural Resources and funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program.

Dr. Brandt thinks Virgin Islanders should be as concerned as she is about the plight of coral. "Corals provide the habitat. They are the ecosystem engineers for all the coral reefs, which produce the things we like — like fish and conch and lobster. If the corals die and crumble away you don't have that," she said.

Journal entries based on Dr. Brandt's study are available at www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0057164.

St. Martin's SnorkelFest 2014

More than 150 people of all ages arrived on Pinel Island on Saturday for a special day of fun and discovery at SnorkelFest 2014. The free, public event was created for both residents and tourists by the Les Fruits de Mer Association, and was the first of four Wildlife Discovery Events the Association will host in 2014.

AGNES ETCHOVHEN



"We're absolutely thrilled that so many people came out to try snorkeling and discover the incredible underwater world of St. Martin at our first annual SnorkelFest," said Les Fruits de Mer President Jenn Yerkes.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

Over 70 people enjoyed free guided snorkeling tours and instruction from PADI instructors on the Réserve Naturelle's special underwater trail, thanks to ECOSNORKELING. For some, it was their first-ever peek below the surface.

Event-goers got the scoop on undersea life from a marine biologist, a local teacher, and other experts on marine flora and fauna at the festival's Marine Life Discovery Station, hosted by Mark Yokoyama, Les Fruits de Mer co-founder and author of *The Incomplete Guide to the Wildlife of St. Martin*.

Visitors to the station learned about the underwater life and habitats found on the Pinel snorkeling trail, the relationship of the reef ecosystem to terrestrial, mangrove, and coastal ecosystems, and the habitat protection and the scientific research that happens in the Réserve Naturelle from displays, signs, and exhibits created by Yokoyama and the Réserve Naturelle.

SnorkelFest attendees also explored the sea from above, with free Stand-Up Paddle Board and transparent kayak activities offered by Caribbean Paddling. Kids of all ages participated in ocean-inspired art activities, including creative activity pages developed for SnorkelFest by a local artist and coloring sheets featuring local wildlife of the sea and coast.

Visitors also had a unique opportunity to learn about local flora and St. Martin's special coastal environment on the Guided Coastal Walk. The Walks were led by environmental engineer Béatrice Galdi, who represents the Conservatoire du Littoral, an institution responsible for protecting coastal spaces, in both St. Martin and St. Barths.

For more information visit <http://ass.lesfruitsdemer.org>.

Bringing a Bird Back from the Brink

The Black-Capped Petrel is an endangered seabird that has only been found nesting in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. They return at night to their nests found high in the mountains, which makes it a challenge to find them. Fortunately, technology has lent a helping hand in the search for the last refuges of this species. For the third year, Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) will be leading field research with Grupo Jaragua and Société Audubon Haiti, in partnership with American Bird Conservancy and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, using radar to locate the elusive petrel, thanks to support from the Disney Conservation Fund.

JOSHUA ROSE



As part of this effort, an activity book showcasing the petrel will be given out to children who live near nesting areas and mobile presentations will be provided so villagers can learn more about this neighbor, locally referred to as the Diablotin; the petrel's call is said to sound like the devil as it flies overhead at night.

A film crew will also be joining the team to create a feature-length documentary about the similar needs of both the people and the petrels that live nearby.

All these activities contribute to the Conservation Action Plan, which was just updated by the Black-capped Petrel Working Group, of which EPIC is a member. With so many groups working together, there is clear hope of bringing the petrel back from the brink of extinction.

For more information visit www.epicislands.org.

Grenadines Network of MPAs Receive Grants

Six marine parks have received support through Sustainable Grenadines Inc (SusGren) as part of the second phase of its project entitled Strengthening Reef Management in the Grenada Bank.

These Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) include three in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Tobago Cays Marine Park, Mustique Marine Conservation Area and South Coast Marine Conservation Area), and three in Grenada (Sandy Island Oyster Bed, Molinere-Beausejour and Woburn-Clarke's Court Marine Protected Areas).

The Grenadines Network of MPAs was established during the first network meeting two years ago, seeking to promote collaboration between marine protected areas, related agencies and communities. Its objective is to promote effective management and to share experiences in the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources.

The first phase of the project demonstrated that an effectively functioning network of MPAs holds great potential to help address both direct and indirect threats to coral reefs and associated coastal ecosystems.

The next phase of the project will focus on enforcement, harmonization of monitoring and evaluation activities, and enhanced outreach and collaboration with communities. The participating MPAs will receive tailored assistance to help support activities in these areas.

The economy and health of the coastal communities of the Grenada Bank depend directly on marine and coastal ecosystems and the biodiversity these systems support. It is also very important for supporting livelihoods for communities of the Grenadine islands of Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines that depend on them.

Both phases of the projects have been funded by the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) through the Sustainable Grenadines Inc. (SusGren).

SusGren is a Grenadines NGO that focuses on the conservation of the coastal and marine environment and sustainable livelihoods for the people of the Grenadines, achieved through capacity building and increased awareness of the environment for non-governmental organizations and community groups.

For more information visit [SusGren's Facebook page](#).

Free Sandwatch Training Videos Online

Sandwatch is a program in which children, youth and adults work together to scientifically monitor and critically evaluate the problems facing their beach environments. They then design and implement practical activities and projects to address particular issues, enhance their beach environment and build resilience to climate change. The Sandwatch approach is called MAST: Monitoring, Analysing, Sharing information, and Taking action.

Sandwatch videos show step-by-step the different methods used in Sandwatch to monitor beaches. The first video gives an overview of Sandwatch, while the following videos display specific methods. For example, there are two videos showing methods for finding out whether a beach is eroding or accreting over time: one shows how to measure the beach width and the second shows how to measure a beach profile or transect. Other videos illustrate different aspects of beach monitoring, for example, water quality, beach debris and how to design a questionnaire to find out beach users' likes and dislikes about a beach site.

The Sandwatch training videos are now available free, in English and Spanish, at youtube.com/sandwatchvideosENG (English videos), youtube.com/sandwatchvideo-ESP (Spanish videos). The time to get involved in Sandwatch and take action to protect your beaches is now.

For more information visit www.sandwatch.org.



Regatta News

Monster Project Sets New Round Barbados Record
Sue Pelling reports: The Mount Gay team aboard the British VO70 *Monster Project* set a new absolute



PETER MARSHALL

record in the January 21st Mount Gay Round Barbados Race, with a time of four hours, 42 minutes and 28 seconds, knocking 21 minutes off the previous record established in 2012 by *Idea* — John Wilson's Reichel Pugh 78. *Idea*, however, broke the CSA record for corrected time.

Monster Project, with Loic Blanken on the helm and Fabrice Cornic on tactics, sailed a smart, mistake-free race in ideal conditions. Formerly *Kosatka*, the Russian entry for the 2009 Volvo Ocean Race, *Monster Project* was Mount Gay's charter boat for this event. As *Monster Project* sailed into port, Andy Budgen, owner and crew boss, said, "We are particularly happy to be winning the skipper's weight in rum!"

Father and son duo from the UK Nick and Adam Munday — who won their trip to the Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series courtesy of the Barbados Tourist Authority London Office, for their overall win of the Royal Southern Yacht Club Summer Series championship of champions event in 2013 in their J/97 — were onboard too. Adam commented, "To break the record is fantastic and to have the opportunity to share the team's glory on a boat like this, are what dreams are made of, and we won't forget the experience in a hurry."

With winds reaching 25 knots on some parts of the course, and big rolling seas, the conditions for this 60-mile clockwise sprint around the island couldn't have been better. The 36 entries ranged from a local windsurfer to the Dutch brigantine *Tres Hombres*.

The staggered start format with slowest boats setting off first (from 0730) and fastest boats last (1140) worked well, and the wind in the early part of the race remained fairly stable. However, a rainsquall that swept through the fleet late morning was an advantage to some of the bigger boats that had just started. Interestingly the wind also made a fairly atypical shift round to the south rather than the forecast shift to the north, which made the eastern side of the island an entire beat.

The first recorded race round Barbados was in 1936 when five trading schooners took up the challenge. *Sea Fox*, under Captain Lou Kenedy, was the overall winner with a time of ten hours 20 minutes. The original race was based upon bragging rights for the fastest trading schooner. In an era where prices for cargo arriving ahead of rival ships commanded a massive premium, this was a lucrative race for captains. The consolation prize of a barrel of Mount Gay Rum for the slowest yacht was discontinued several years later following the discovery that some competitors purposely stalled and remained out at sea for days to ensure they won the prize.

In 2012 the Mount Gay Round Barbados Race expanded to incorporate the Two Restaurants Race, with racing taking place over two days. The idea proved such a success that it was decided to expand the event further in 2014, in line with most other Caribbean regattas, and run a series of coastal, round-the-buoy races including the Two Restaurants Race and The Mount Gay Round Barbados Race. The 300-mile Ocean Race from Barbados to Antigua started on January 24th.

For more information visit <http://mountgayroundbarbadosrace.com>.

13th Club Náutico de San Juan International Regatta
Carol Bareuther reports: Gusts over 20 knots and roll-

ing seas created challenging conditions for nearly a hundred sailors from five islands who competed in the 13th Club Náutico de San Juan International Regatta (CNSJIR), held January 31st through February 2nd, out of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The CNSJIR Race Committee launched 13 races for the six classes that sailed both on and outside San Juan Bay. "We are very happy with the success of this year's regatta," explains Luis Fabre, chairman of the CNSJIR organizing committee. "We wondered a few years ago how the addition of the bigger boats would fit in with the dinghies, but it has worked well by giving us a good diversity of classes."

In the seven boat CSA Spinnaker class, including three Melges 32s, Puerto Rico's Jonathan Lipuscek's J/105 *Dark Star* won with five firsts in six races.

Tactician Rafi Martinez says, "Our strategy was to focus on good boat handling, make few errors, and on the downwind — when the Melges plane — to maximize the waves and puffs to our advantage."

The Melges 32s weren't far behind. Puerto Rico's Luis Juarbe, on SOCA, finished second while fellow islander, Jaime Torres, driving *Smile and Wave*, was third.

The second keelboat class, a fleet of seven IC24s, saw Puerto Rico's Fraitto Lugo's *Orion* take the lead and hold it until the end, scoring eight firsts in 13 races. "It was close racing as the younger sailors are very good," says Lugo. "We are in the selection process to see what J/24 team will represent Puerto Rico in the Central American-Caribbean Games in November in Mexico," he adds. "The IC24 is excellent for practice for the J/24 because the CAC Games format calls for a jib and four crew."

Puerto Rico's Marco Teixidor driving his IC24, *Cachondo*, finished second, with Puerto Rico's Carlos Sierra aboard *Fuakata* in third.

The dinghy classes have long been the foundation of CNSJIR. True to past years, the largest class was the Optimist Advanced with 13 boats. Antigua's Daniel Smit, who finished first in this regatta last year in the Optimist Green Fleet, won the overall this year as well as the 11 to 12 year old Blue Fleet. "We've been practicing in heavy winds back home in Antigua these last few weeks. That really helped a lot in this regatta," Smit says.



CAROL BEE

Anguilla's Huekeemi Hughes won the 13- to 15-year-old Optimist Red Fleet, while Puerto Rico's José Mendez scored a win in the age ten and under Optimist White Fleet. This year's Optimist Green fleet leader was Puerto Rico's Marc Thys.

In the Laser fleets, Puerto Rico's Agustín Lazaro-Lugo won the eight-boat Laser Radial class with six first place finishes in 12 races. "Last year I finished second in this regatta," says the 17-year-old Lazaro-Lugo. "I learned a lot a month ago sailing at the Orange Bowl Regatta in Florida, especially how to get good starts and hold my lead." Lazaro-Lugo is attempting to qualify to represent Puerto Rico in the Laser Radial class at the ISAF Youth Sailing World Championships, which will be held in Tavira, Portugal, July 12th through 19th.

Second place Laser Radial finisher, Rhône Finalay, will be representing St. Maarten in the ISAF Youth Sailing World Championships.

Rounding out third in this class was Puerto Rico's Pedro Fernandez Gamboa. Puerto Rico's Ricardo Valenzuela led the Laser 4.7 class. The 14th CNSJIR will be held February 6th through 8th, 2015.

Full results are available at www.nauticodesanjuan.com.

ON THE HORIZON...

South Grenada Regatta for Fun
The 6th Annual South Grenada Regatta will be serving up lots of fun, great racing action and loads of entertainment from March 5th through 9th. A Dinghy Concert Kickoff on March 5th is a fun-filled and free "floating" concert that's unique to Grenada and not to be missed. Other activities going on at Le Phare Bleu

Marina over regatta weekend include junior sailing, powerboat tours, a Pirate's Trail for the kids, nightly musical entertainment and parties; there's lots going on for racers and non-racers. Grenadians and visitors alike. A free regatta shuttle to Le Phare Bleu is available from pick-up points around town.

South Grenada Regatta races under CSA rules in spinnaker, non-spinnaker, catamaran, fun, and J/24 classes. Three out of four fleet race courses are NEW this year, and all of them take place along Grenada's south coast.

This year's Match Races which will take place on March 8th on Rush 10 catamarans.

For more information visit <http://southgrenadaregatta.com>.

St. Maarten Regatta: Racing, Partying and Safety

The 34th Annual St. Maarten Heineken Regatta will take place March 6th through 9th. This annual competition that has become a one-of-a-kind sailing event with exciting entertainment, musical performances and parties that have attracted thousands of



sailors and enthusiasts to the island over the years. The actual competition consists of round-the-buoys contests and point-to-point destination races.

An international fleet of more than a hundred boats — from flash one-design racers like the Melges 24s to Lord Irvine Laidlaw's state-of-the-art Grand Prix 52-footer, *Highland Fling XII* — have already registered for this year's regatta. These boats will be joined by a growing roster of slick, quick catamarans, including a quartet of luxury dual-purpose Gunboats that have already filed their online entrance forms, and Nils Erickson's always dangerous Formula 40, *Soma*.

For over three decades, the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta has showcased the top boats and sailing, and has become equally famous for its world-class slate of parties and musical entertainment in the Caribbean. To conduct the annual St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, it takes countless volunteers and numerous dedicated local organizations. At the top of the list are several organizations that play prominent roles in keeping all the sailors and party goers safe and secure, both at sea and ashore: Coast Guard St. Maarten, Red Cross St. Maarten, and the St. Maarten Sea Rescue Foundation, with posts on both the French and Dutch sides of the island, respectively. The Coast Guard cutter *Poema* patrols regularly with assistance from a fleet of smaller vessels, and ashore Red Cross St. Maarten has ten people at each party venue. Back on the racecourse, other "guardian angels" — the patrol boats from the St. Maarten Sea Rescue Foundation (www.searescue.sx) — are always close at hand should incidents arise.

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

Veuve Clicquot for Voiles de Saint-Barth

From April 14th to 19th, Saint Barthélemy will host the fifth edition of the Voiles de Saint-Barth. More than 70 boats and 1,000 sailors are expected for the event.

—Continued on next page



TIM WRIGHT / PHOTOFEST.COM

—Continued from previous page

Historical partners are also joined this year by Veuve Clicquot, the champagne of world renown.

Founded in 1772, Veuve Clicquot is internationally recognized for its exceptional quality and sophistication. Aymeric Sancerre, head of international communications, explains, "One of the main features of the communication strategy of our company is the link to lifestyle. We carefully choose our partners based on their elegance, and the quality and refinement of what they offer... the Voiles de Saint-Barth suits these criteria perfectly. We intend to show everyone what we call the Twist Clicquot, in other words that little bit of craziness in this lifestyle that we wish to celebrate in St. Barth alongside the world's greatest sailors."

Among them will be George David aboard his Maxi, *Rambler*, who has already announced his return. *Selene*, Wendy Schmidt's Swan 80, will be there also, as will *Ocean Phoenix*, the Spanish Hymphreys 77 skippered by Juan Luis Serra LaLaurie.

Great Expectations for Bequia Easter Regatta 2014

The Bequia Sailing Club is delighted to announce that long-time Bequia Easter Regatta sponsors the St. Vincent Brewery will be returning as Gold Sponsors of this year's event, scheduled for April 17th through 21st, with their hugely popular Hairoun beer.

Hairoun joins loyal regatta sponsors Mount Gay Rum, United Insurance, Mountain Top Water and the SVG



WILFRED DEGENER

Tourism Authority, together with the Frangipani Hotel and the Bequia Beach Hotel in offering generous support to Bequia's internationally renowned regatta.

Following on from their record breaking 53-yacht entry in 2013, the organizers are anticipating another strong turnout for their 33rd edition. "Everyone in the cruising community knows what a tremendous feel-good factor there is during Bequia Easter Regatta," says Bequia Sailing Club spokesperson Nicola Redway, "so even though Easter is late this year, Bequia is still the only place to be if you are looking for the best fun you ever had at a small island regatta!"

Although much increased in size and status, for 33 years the Bequia Easter Regatta has never lost its unique small island appeal. The sight of at least 30 locally built sprit-rigged double-ender boats competing with legendary skill on the same waters as 50 or so yachts of all shapes and sizes, has no equal.

Bequia's specially designed series of six races for the J/24 Class, including The United Insurance J/24 three-Race Challenge on Easter Saturday, and the award of the J/24 Southern Caribbean Champion Trophy to the Bequia's overall J/24 winner ensures that this is the one event that is able to attract J/24s from every nation in the region.

And with superbly run yacht races for Racing, (spinnaker), Cruising I (CSA-rated, non-spinnaker) and Cruising II (liveboards and non-CSA rated competitors) adding to the two One Design Classes (J/24s and the "Surprise" boats from Martinique), it's a given that both the Bequia Sailing Club and the region's cruising and racing community are eagerly looking forward to yet another highly competitive event for 2014, complete with that unique Bequia hospitality for which the regatta — and the island itself — is famous.

For more information see ad on this page.

Spirits Coming to Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta

The 27th Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta will take place from the 17th through the 22nd of April. Registration and inspections will be held on the 15th and 16th. Sponsorship for the event remains strong, with Panerai, Mount Gay Rum, EFG, S. Pellegrino, Portland Yacht Services, Maine on the Rocks, OnDeck, Lunenberg Shipyard Alliance, Antigua Yacht Club Marina, as well as local supporters returning.

To be eligible for the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, all entries should have a full keel, be of moderate to heavy displacement, built of wood or steel, and be of traditional rig and appearance. Old craft restored using modern materials such as epoxy or glass sheathing, or new craft built along the lines of an old design, are acceptable. Vessels built of ferro-cement may be accepted if they have a gaff or traditional schooner rig. Fibreglass yachts must have a long keel with a keel-hung rudder and be a descendant of a wooden hull design. Yachts not fitting into the above categories may apply in writing with documents, photographs or drawings to support their request for entry in the Spirit of Tradition Class.

Some of the yachts that have already submitted registration forms for the 2014 regatta are the 130-foot J Class *Rainbow*, the 53-foot S&S yawl *Dorada*, the 60-foot schooner *Mistress*, the 36-foot *Ruffian*, and the Spirit Yachts *Dido*, *Spirit Of Callisto*, *Free Spirit*, *Chloe Racing Spirit*, *Happy Forever*, *Flight of Ufford*, and *Nazgul of Fordell*.

The 2014 Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta programme is now available at <http://antiguaclassics.com>. For more information see ad on page 15.

Yachting World Round Antigua Race

A huge variety of racing and cruising yachts are expected for the 52-nautical-mile Yachting World Round Antigua Race on April 26th. With Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta concluding only a few days before the Yachting World Round Antigua Race, the

race will provide an ideal way for many classics to complete their Caribbean racing season. All yachts are welcome and encouraged to enter this exciting one-day race. The race will also provide an excellent day of practice for boats preparing to compete in Antigua Sailing Week.

Yachting World is once again proud to be the sponsor of the Round Antigua Race and encourages yachtsmen to take on the challenge of breaking the existing Round Antigua Race elapsed time record, currently held by Sir Peter Harrison's Farr-designed 115-foot *Sojana*, which completed the race in four hours, 37 minutes and 43 seconds in 2009.

The magnificent 94-foot Frers *Bristolian* will be a favourite for line honours this year, although two high performance 52-foot race boats will provide a two-pronged threat. Robert Date's Australian team on *Scarlet Runner* and the Spanish TP52 *Balearia* are both capable of finishing first.

The elapsed time winner of the Yachting World Round Antigua Race will be awarded the Yachting World Trophy after the race at the awards presentation to be held in conjunction with the Antigua Sailing Week Welcome Party. Prizes will also be awarded to the overall corrected time winner and to winners of first through third places in each class.

The Yachting World Round Antigua Race is a stand-alone event on the Saturday between Antigua Classic Regatta and Antigua Sailing Week — April 26th, 2014.

For the Notice of Race and to enter visit www.sailingweek.com.

Round Guadeloupe and Dominica Regatta

The Round Guadeloupe and Dominica Regatta, to be held May 7th through 10th, is a multi-Island event not to be missed! The first leg, from Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe to Marie Galante, is on May 7th.

The next day, all race from Marie Galante to Portsmouth, Dominica. A Customs officer will be present on site at Fort Shirley in Cabrits National Park, and immediately upon arrival, the skippers will be transported to the Customs office (the Customs forms will be available for skippers at regatta registration, to fill out in advance). A dinner and concert will take place at the fort that evening. If accommodations are required, the fort is fully equipped for the lodging of 44 persons with comfortable bunk beds in two dormitories with 16 beds each and two dormitories with four beds each, and there are up-to-date toilets and showers.

A race in the waters off Portsmouth will be held on the 9th. On the 10th, the course takes participants to Les Saintes, and on the 11th, the fleet sails back to Pointe-à-Pitre. All are welcome to enter this truly international sailing event.

For more information contact organisation@triskellcup.com.

Barbados May Regatta

The Barbados May Regatta will be held May 15th through 18th. Hosted by the Barbados Yacht Club, and organized by the Barbados Sailing Association, this regatta features great coastal and bay racing in several classes. Longtime sponsors the Barbados Yacht Club, Mount Gay Rum, and Banks Breweries are ready to show local sailors and travelers alike great times on and off the water! Racing will take place on the Friday and Sunday, with a "sort of layday" on the Saturday. The sailors can plan to attend the Top Gear event that day on land at Bushy Park, or stay on the sea and participate in a fun race. What more can one ask for — racing fun on both land and sea!

For more information and online registration visit www.sailbarbados.com.

Bequia Easter Regatta 2014

17 - 21 April



NOTICE OF RACE & YACHT PRE-REGISTRATION:
www.begos.com/easterregatta
 Tel: (784) 457-3649
bsc@vincysurf.com



YACHT RACES

• Racing, 'Surprise', Cruising I & II Classes

Fri 18 April: Friendship Bay Races
 Sat 19 April: Around Bequia Races
 Sun 20 April, Layday: Hairoun S/H Around Bequia Race
 Mon 21 April: Admiralty Bay Triangles Races

• J/24 Class


Fri 18 April: Admiralty/Southside Race
 Sat 19 April: United Insurance 3-Race Challenge
 Mon 21 April: J/24 Races

LOCAL DOUBLE-ENDER RACES

Sat/Sun 19/20 April: 1st and 2nd Hairoun Challenges
 Mon 21 April: Mount Gay Challenge

LAY DAY SUNDAY FAMILY FUN

Sandcastle Competition & All Day Family Layday
 @ Bequia Beach Hotel, Friendship Beach



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CHRISTMAS CARIBBEAN RALLY

A NEW RALLY IS BORN

by Louay Habib

Sailing across an ocean is nearly every sailor's dream. For those who have done it, the personal rewards of self-confidence and self-esteem can be life changing. Many of the sailors in the inaugural Christmas Caribbean Rally were making the trip for the first time. Casting off into the unknown can be overwhelming. However, by making the crossing as part of a well-run event, that trepidation is reduced by the notion that steps have been taken to ensure a safe and fun crossing.

It is estimated that over 2,000 yachts cross the Atlantic each year, but not every trip is a good one. Unsuitable yachts and ill-prepared crew are avoidable and hundreds of yachts prefer to leave Europe heading for the Caribbean in organized rallies, which insist on a standard of boat, and in which other participants close by can offer assistance if required. In essence, crossing the Atlantic in an organized flotilla has its advantages but some feel it can "homogenize" the experience.

By far the biggest exodus, at the end of the European summer, is the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC). For the last three decades the popularity of the ARC has grown. In November 2013, some 250 yachts crossed the Atlantic, leaving Gran Canaria bound for St. Lucia, as part of the ARC.

The Christmas Caribbean Rally is the brainchild of John Simpson, ably assisted by Mikaela Meik. Both have crossed the Atlantic with the ARC in the past but decided to offer something very different.

The Christmas Caribbean Rally is scheduled to run during school and traditional festive holiday time. Many of the participants were families or working couples and, for them, the timing of the rally was a big factor in their entry. Mikaela played the part of Santa on departure and each boat was given presents, Christmas decorations, even a miniature Christmas tree!

The first Christmas Caribbean Rally left Marina Rubicon, Lanzarote on the 15th of December, bound for Jolly Harbour, Antigua.

Lanzarote has just as many direct flights as Gran Canaria, the main island of the Canaries. Marina Rubicon has excellent boat maintenance facilities and just a few miles up the coast, the capital Aricife has an 820-ton travel lift, the only one for thousands of miles. Marina Rubicon is serviced by good value, large, well-stocked supermarkets and there is a wide range of bars and restaurants suitable for any budget. Situated in Playa Blanca, it is a proper holiday resort and the staff and visitors have a very friendly attitude, especially at One Bar, which was recently voted the top sailor's bar by *Scuttlebutt Sailing News* readers.

The route is a few hundred miles longer than the ARC. However, all seven of the yachts completed the crossing in less than three weeks. One of the advantages of leaving in mid-December is that the tradewinds are better established. All of the boats made good time and sailed virtually the whole way.



Husband and wife Alan and Terry Ryall (above) made the crossing alone on *Seminole Wind*. Alan summed up what it was like to finally reach Antigua:

"First a little dark smudge at the base of a cloud then a harder line, then an island. Not just any old island, but the one we have been aiming for the last couple of weeks. Today has been one of far lighter winds than forecast but by constant tweaking of sails we are only an hour or so behind plan and I can almost taste that rum punch as we step ashore. Now is not the right time for reflection — if only because the sails need tweaking again. Tomorrow when we awake after no night watches or squalls in the early hours, that will be the time to reflect. But I do know I will miss that sun rising on an empty sea. A whole ocean that for two and half weeks was ours. In the whole trip we have seen six ships (including the tanker that came close to running us down last night). There have been no calls on the radio, no symbols on the AIS, and just the solitude of the sea and the companionship of two people who are not simply married, but best friends. Thanks to all of you who have been watching out for our position and blogs. I guess the real world awaits, but then again — maybe this is the real world."

After a long voyage, Jolly Harbour, Antigua is a peaceful, secure and well-maintained marina. It also offers reasonable rates for moorings and accommodation, especially handy for visitors who fly in to greet the participants. Antigua has direct flights to Europe and the USA. Jolly Harbour has an excellent supermarket, boat maintenance facilities and restaurants.

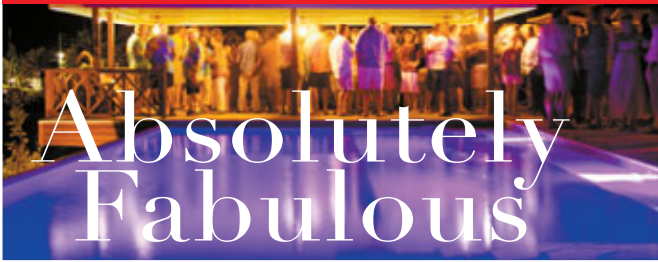
A big cost saving for Christmas Caribbean Rally participants is complementary berthing at Marina Rubicon (five days), Jolly Harbour (seven days) heavily discounted moorings at Port Louis Marina, Grenada, and up to 50 percent off berthing fees for longer stays in the Canaries and the Caribbean.

The rally organizes useful seminars in London, months before departure, with advice from experts in a myriad of subjects: cooking at sea, weather routing, safety at sea and much more. In the week before departure the rally team organized numerous activities, including a practical life raft demonstration with the Lanzarote Coastguard.

The first Christmas Caribbean Rally had about 40 people taking part, making it an intimate event. John and Mikaela are accomplished musicians, and jam sessions were a big part of the social atmosphere and that formed a bond of friendship amongst the participants, which added to the magical adventure of crossing an ocean.

Five yachts have already signed up for the 2014 Christmas Caribbean Rally. For more information visit www.sailingrallies.com.

THE SUPERYACHT CHALLENGE ANTIGUA



by Louay Habib

The fourth edition of The Superyacht Challenge Antigua, held January 30th through February 2nd, attracted eight magnificent yachts ranging from 90 to 182 feet in length. It is the first superyacht event of the new year and is now established as a highly desirable event.

Hosted by The Admiral's Inn, Nelson's Dockyard, the regatta is a private event designed for the pure enjoyment of the competitors. The fleet of superyachts was a mixture of regular superyacht racers and debutants for the circuit. A range of courses set off the south coast of Antigua were complemented by spectacular conditions and the challenge produced one of the closest finishes ever in the history of superyacht racing. Ashore, the owners, crew and guests enjoyed fabulous parties, all hosted in Nelson's Dockyard.

"The Superyacht Challenge Antigua was created solely to provide an event that was about celebrating superyacht racing and a relaxed party atmosphere ashore," commented Stan Pearson, one of the founders of the event. "At the request of superyacht owners, we have no sponsorship or commercial endorsements. For example, we needed new racing marks and we had plenty of offers from companies willing to pay for them in return for branding but the owners decided to pay for the marks themselves. Without sponsors we can just concentrate on delivering great racing and organizing fun parties, without any commercial restraints."

A gala champagne reception was held at the newly restored Gunpowder House with its fabulous infinity pool, and every evening there was another party to savour. The racing was as spectacular as the parties. Four races were held over three days in up to three metres of Caribbean swell and 25 knots of breeze — the racing was absolutely fantastic. The 2014 Superyacht Challenge Antigua was an amazing spectacle of superyachts at their best: fully powered up and blasting through perfect Caribbean sailing conditions.



Top: The newly restored Gunpowder House

Above: Crew of the overall winner, Marama

Left: Glorious Gloria



The first day of racing provided the windiest conditions and several yachts ripped sails in gusts of up to 30 knots. With boats of this size, the sail areas are enormous. The 112-foot sloop *Unfurlled* had it all on when their spinnaker shredded, but the crew made a tremendous recovery of the sail and finished third after time correction.

That evening, superyacht chefs and crew had a Cook Off on the small beach next to the superyacht dock in Nelson's Dockyard. The competitors eagerly savoured an amazing array of succulent food on eight sensationally designed gourmet tables. Stand-up tables were laid along the dock next to the yachts. Superior cuisine, great company — it was absolutely fabulous.

Day Two and the breeze was still up in the high teens, gusting over 20 knots. Two shorter, tighter races tested the boat-handling skills. The 182-foot schooner *Adela* won the first race but lost a man overboard in the second. The Swan 90 *Freja* went to assist and was later awarded the Seamanship Prize for their efforts. The rescued sailor was bruised and shaken but suffered no serious effects from the incident. The debutant 126-foot schooner *Gloria* won the third race of the regatta, much to the delight of the owner and crew. The night's entertainment was a beach barbecue and the much-heralded Loud Shirt Competition, which the *Timoneer* crew won by a landslide, well led by boat captain Phil Wade, sporting a wig and clown's trousers!

With just one race on the final day, the top three places were very much undecided. *Unfurlled* had a cracking start, nailing the pin end of the line with just one second to spare; the German Frers sloop sailed a near-perfect race but after time correction lost out to *Adela* by just two seconds. Significantly, if *Unfurlled* had beaten *Adela*, the 112-foot sloop would have tied for an overall victory for the regatta. However, the overall winner of the fourth edition of the Superyacht Challenge Antigua was the consistent 102-foot ketch *Marama* by a single point from *Unfurlled*.

The Prizegiving Ceremony was a light-hearted affair set on the lawn at the Copper and Lumber Store in Nelson's Dockyard. There is no silver trophy for the winner of The Superyacht Challenge Antigua: a barrel of rum is the only award for the winner. The exceptionally close racing was a sure sign that the competitors take the racing extremely seriously, but the sailors leave that competitive edge on the race course and enjoy each other's company at social gatherings that are full of smiles, fun and laughter.

The fifth edition of The Superyacht Antigua is scheduled to take place on the last weekend of January 2015.

For more information visit www.thesuperyachtchallenge.com.

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Image by Lucy Tulloch

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GRENADA YACHT RACING — BACK ON THE MAP!

by Ruth Lund

After months of heavy wind and rain, the weather gods favoured Grenada Sailing Week (GSW), January 30th through February 4th, with brilliant sunshine, brisk 15- to 20-knot breezes and relatively calm seas. Add to this some high-octane entertainment and a friendly Grenadian welcome and you have the recipe for a rip-roaring, successful regatta.

In Racing Class, Mark Chapman's fast RP37, *Dingo*, dominated, particularly at the beginning. The modified Hobie 33, *Category 5*, experienced sail delamination and had a sheave box rip out of the mast, but with locally based skipper Richard Syzjan in the rigging and sailmaking business, quick repairs and a crisp new sail allowed the boat to come back strongly in the last three races to take second place overall. Bernard Evan-Wong's Mumm 36, *High Tension*, was third.

In a fiercely contested Cruising 1 Class, the winner was decided in the last race with Peter Morris's Frers 43, *Jaguar*, taking top Class honours as well as Best Performing Yacht of the regatta. His position was seriously challenged by spirited teams on Bluewater Sailing's Beneteau Oceanis 461, *Chao Lay*, skippered by Alex Johnstone, and Scott Watson's Jeanneau 51, *Boxer* — a tie breaker placed them second and third respectively.

In Cruising 2 Class, Jason Fletcher's Grenada Marine

team on the Albin Stratus 36 *Apero* sailed consistently well, but had to take second place to Robbie Yearwood's J/24, *Island Water World Die Hard*, which frequently beat bigger boats across the line and took a well-deserved victory. Third was Mike Bingley's Beneteau 38, *Tuleichean II*.

In the newly introduced Classic Class, the 1930-launched Alfred Mylne cutter, *The Blue Peter*, skippered by Mathew Barker, was first, increasing his lead on second placed *Desiderata*, an Alden ketch skippered by Stuart Armstrong, on the upwind legs. The regularly campaigned Petite Martinique sloop *Savvy*, skippered by Danny Donelan, was third. Longer reaching courses were specially included to allow these graceful beauties to stretch their wings without too much tacking (which I know from personal experience on *Desiderata* is no easy task with lots of big sails and a long keel).

In Fun Class, Christian Nelias' Baltic 42, *Tropical*, was unbeatable, with bullets for all her races, followed by the Moorings 41.3 *Kea*, skippered by David Empson, second and the Gibsea 43 *Luzula*, skippered by Armando Guillarte, third.

Despite some close encounters on the Cruising 2 start line, and a near T-bone between *Dingo* and *Category 5*, there were few protests and these were resolved without going to jury. Unfortunately the mast on the J/125 *Eagles' Wings* broke on the last day. One of the mark boats was there almost immediately to offer assistance, but the *Eagles' Wings* crew was able to control the situation in a seamanlike manner without help and no serious personal injury was involved.

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ALL PHOTOS: DERIK PICKELL

Left: GSW 2014 employed an America's Cup start flag system

Main photo: Cruising 1 Class winner and Best Performing Yacht, Jaguar





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For this 2014 edition, the GSW Board took the bold step of holding the regatta at three different host venues, with the intention of showcasing Grenada's excellent marine facilities and stunning coastline. While logistically challenging for organizers and racers on the more than 30 participating boats, this was also very rewarding, with a surprising number of competitors being introduced to new facets of Grenada for the first time. Each venue had its own special ambience, creating the variety promised in the GSW 2014 tag line: "Spice It Up in Grenada!"

Grenada's flagship Camper & Nicholson's Port Louis Marina with its sophisticated megayacht facility in the historic port of St. George's was an ideal start point for the skippers' briefing and welcome party, with pan band and DJ setting the tempo. Friday's Mount Gay Rum Race Day in flat water off Grand Anse eased sailors into racing mode, leaving them with lots of energy for the ever-popular Red Cap Party at Port Louis's Victory Bar and Restaurant that night.

Saturday's Sea Hawk Paints Race Day started off in Grand Anse, and then took the boats around Point Salines up to Le Phare Bleu Marina with its Boutique Hotel set in a tropical garden. On this stretch, stronger current, harder wind and deeper water dotted with shoals and reefs created interesting challenges for racers, not to mention mark layers. However sailors are a resilient lot and most arrived at the pirate party suitably toggled out. Singers in sexy pirate costumes spiced up traditional sea shanties with typical Caribbean passion and energy and from then on the dancing never stopped.

On the Sunday's Lay Day, Hobie Cat Match Racing organized by the Petite Calivigny Yacht Club gave crew who would be skippers, and perhaps skippers who were tired of dealing with crew, a chance to show their individual skills. Using the



Left: The Blue Peter *shone in GSW's newly introduced Classic Class*

ALL PHOTOS: BEREKPICKEL

same disappearing-start-flag system used by the America's Cup (we think for the first time in the Caribbean) the rounds of racing got increasingly tight with John Holmberg finally beating one of Grenada's match racing champions, Mike Bingley. Later, a Dinghy Concert out on the water, the brainchild of Le Phare Bleu Marina's owner, Dieter Burkhalter, provided a unique Grenadian musical experience.

On the Monday it was back down to Prickly Bay for the final two days of south coast racing. Having separate start and finish boats ensured that as classes finished they could start their next race without having to hang around. Sailors loved the laid-back outdoor atmosphere at the Tiki Bar, and Prickly Bay Marina went all out with their entertainment. Steel pan, reggae 'n' rock and roll bands, Fire Dancers, Tivoli Drummers and spectacular fireworks made for a truly grand finale.

Title sponsor Island Water World provided strong support, putting funding and effort into the event. In addition to sponsors already mentioned, Mount Cinnamon, Turbulence, Doyle Caribbean, 10 Saints Beer, Dream Yacht Charter, Bluewater

Sailing, Grenada Marine, L'Anse Aux Epines Cottages, Palm Tree Marine, Island Dreams Yacht Management, Flying Fish Ventures, X-Marine and many more service providers and prize sponsors contributed. All the trophies and some of the prizes were manufactured in Grenada.



Above: Bloody Mary and Done Talkin' get acquainted in Cruising 2

shone in GSW's newly introduced Classic Class

Below: John Holmberg won the Lay Day's Hobie Cat Match Racing



The Grenada Tourism Authority was also a major sponsor. The Hon. Alexandra Otway-Noel, Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation & Culture, who found the time to attend the awards evening, despite the fact that in the same week Grenada celebrated its 40th year of Independence, expressed it well when she said, "This regatta is public-private partnership perfection. While you are having fun you are also making a significant contribution to the Grenada economy — please have more fun!"

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



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Visit Your Favorite Anchorage —
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by Frank Virgintino

You wait patiently anchored in Simpson Bay for the bridge to open or perhaps you go around to Marigot Bay and come into the lagoon through the back door. Hopefully the anchorage at Simpson Bay was not too roly during the night and you managed a good night's sleep. (If you choose to go in through the French side, you get to anchor in Marigot/Nettle Bay where it is almost always calm and the water is much cleaner. The entrance through the bridge at that side leads to a channel that can take six feet of draft).

There is always some anxiety going through the bridges. Will I get into the line easily? Will the current push me going through and bounce me off the bridge with all the spectators watching from above? Will there be room for me to anchor in the inner harbor?

Once inside, you head for your favorite anchorage or marina and settle in.

Most cruisers will tell you that there are three major attractions in St. Maarten. For the skipper, there are repair facilities and marine supply stores so well stocked that you can spend days in them wandering around. Then there is shopping in Phillipsburg; an abundance of stores that can keep those who love to shop entertained for days on end. And then are the restaurants on both the Dutch and the French sides of the island. However, those on the French side, well you know — *oo-la-la!*

St. Maarten/St. Martin has a split personality. One side is thoroughly Dutch, busy and industrious. The other side is French, and who could define that *je ne sais quoi* quality beyond saying that it is so very French? If you have a Walter Mitty imagination, while you sip your Pernod or rosé, you might even see Claudette Colbert walk by. (She was born in France but died at the age of 93 in Speightstown, Barbados. It is said that she loved to visit the waterfront at Marigot.)

—Continued on next page



A visit to St. Maarten often involves a mad round of boat repairs, maintenance and searches for parts and supplies. When did you last stroll through Phillipsburg and take in sights such as the stately symmetry of the Courthouse in its setting of palms?



12°31'01.50"N | 70°02'15.00"W



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As with so many good things in life, we begin to take a favorite place for granted and allow our past experiences to define our current ones. I guess that if you want to see St. Maarten for the very first time, that is one of the first things you can do: daydream. After all, this is a magic island with two personalities and one that is also a duty-free zone. If that does not get you dreaming, nothing will.

To really see something as if for the first time, it is necessary to become conscious. To do that you must remove from your mindset all of what has been filed away. That is not easily done. TE Lawrence, whom many know as Lawrence of Arabia, has some advice on how to approach it:

"All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity; but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible."

I was doing exactly what he said when I was day-dreaming of Claudette Colbert walking by focusing on whatever female forms resembled hers, before my wife poked me and said, "I know what you are up to!"

It seems to me that many who sail the Lesser Antilles are in a rush to get down south. Perhaps they have friends waiting in Grenada. Rushing never supports the art of cruising and a great deal gets overlooked as a result. There is no question that you can get some parts in St. Maarten or some broken gear repaired, and do so easily. Also, there is no question that one can shop until they drop in Phillipsburg. And of course walk along the waterside boardwalk in Marigot. If, however, you want to see St. Maarten for the very first time, there is so much more to this very sophisticated island that you can see and do. You simply need to take your time. Give yourself two weeks for the short course or apply for residency and take the long course!

Many cruisers overlook the bay at the northwest corner of the island, Grand Case, which in itself can be a very reasonable anchorage if there is no northerly component in the wind. The town is considered by many to be the culinary capital of the Caribbean. The restaurants are wonderful and I have never had a bad meal there. You can also stroll along the Boulevard de Grand Case. Do it with the one you love or with the one that you want to love and you will find it intoxicating, especially on a full moon night. If you do nothing else while you are there, do this, as it is a definite antidote to the stresses of modern day life. Do it on a Tuesday between January and the end of March and you get Harmony Nights as an added extra: the street filled with street vendors and the sound of music.

Loterie Farm is located at the foot of Pic Paradis, the highest point on St. Maarten

(424 metres). Ask most cruisers what it is and they have no idea. The facility, which was formerly a sugar plantation, has become what can be best described as an eco-retreat. Nature trails, zip lining, great gardens and flora and even food facilities make this a big attraction. Children are welcome.

It is also easy to overlook Marigot, the capital of the French side of the island, other than to see the restaurants and the stores. There is much more to Marigot than that, if you have a desire to invest the time. The market in Marigot takes place on the waterfront beneath Fort Saint Louis, in front of the West Indies Mall.

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The abundance of stores in Phillipsburg can keep those who love to shop entertained for days on end — there's more here than 'deck jewelry'

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There are arts and crafts, spices and other delights. The best day to attend is Saturday: the tempo is higher. Fresh fish is delivered to the market early in the morning; if you are a fish lover, do not sleep late.

Fort Louis is also in Marigot and is not your run-of-the-mill fort attraction. The climb up the steps can raise the question, is it worth it? However, once at the top, the view is 360 degrees of panorama and well worth it. If you are there when the sun is setting with your significant other, oo-la-la again!

From the Fort, as you walk towards the sea, you will see the Catholic Church. Alongside the church and up the hill is the Museum of the Arawak, not the biggest museum or the best, but enough to give you some background about St. Maarten that you can use to justify the cost of cruising. A stone's throw away is Perrinon Street, where you can locate the old prison, now closed and no longer in use.

If you like sculpture, in this case large sculpture, Marigot has the "market woman" stone statue that commemorates black female market vendors. Tributes to black females in the Caribbean are not easy to come by and this one is worth your notice.

Other sculptures are the border obelisks. There are two of them; the main one is located at Mount Concordia between Cole Bay and Marigot. It is dated 1648 and marks the non-policed border between the two countries. It also commemorates their



Above: There are macaws at the zoo; who knew?

Left: The historic French Fort Louis overlooking Marigot provides memorable views

commitment to free trade between the Dutch and French sides of the island. How the border was established is a matter of legend but a very interesting one, which I will leave you to research for yourself. If all countries established their borders this way, it would be a much better world.

The northeastern part of the island is the location of a very large nature reserve, both wet and dry. It will take years and perhaps generations to develop the reserve, owing to its size and complexity. It is well worth your time to investigate this rugged area filled with flora and numerous types of wildlife.

There is also the St. Maarten Museum located on Front Street 7 in Phillipsburg, the capital of the Dutch side. The museum is so modest-looking that most people walk right on by. The artifacts located here cover more than two millennia and spending some time here would be very much worth it. If you're thinking of a dusty room with a few broken pieces of furniture, think again, as this museum gets consistently high tourist ratings.

All of St. Maarten, regardless of which flag is flying, has much to explore beyond what is discussed in this article, from butterfly farms to pony trekking. Invest the time to see St. Maarten for the very first time.

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

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Where to find Sea Hawk near you



Willing to Head West?

by Alexandra Trachsel

Maybe you have had enough of overcrowded anchorages or appallingly skippered boats dragging their anchor on your bow at sweet midnight. Are you willing to head west? Avoid Venezuela. Some say it is still safe, but last year's cold-blooded murder of yet another cruising aficionado has confirmed my gut feeling that the country is a welcoming place for individuals with suicidal tendencies.



Anchorage at Cartagena

Go to Bonaire, where anchoring is strictly prohibited, pick up a mooring buoy, and enjoy a peaceful and relaxing night dive straight off the transom of your boat. Mr. and Mrs. Tarpon will swim between your legs while stalking fish in the beam of your dive light. If you kite surf, Bonaire will give you, in the south of the island, one of the best spots in the Caribbean. Do not expect green and lush scenery here. Instead, Bonaire will give you a taste of desert weather. Stop on the pier near the Customs and Immigration office, and enjoy a Tekibon (Bonaire tequila) while admiring your boat in the sunset. Bonaire also has underground water caves that host bats and other critters not as cuddly. Buy as many carrots as you can in the donkey sanctuary; the donkeys will give you a funny chase you will remember for a long time! The only downside of the island is the US\$10 per day mooring fee that cannot, as yet, be cut down for long-term stay.

I cannot say anything about Curaçao, because we gave the island a miss upon the recommendation of a fellow Dutch cruising couple: we were told Curaçao was "way too Dutch" for them!

Aruba is as dry and windy as Bonaire, but not as nice. But if you are looking for a theft-free and hurricane-safe shipyard (such as Varadero Caribe), and easy flying to the USA or Europe, you might want to make landing in Aruba. The shipyard is a work in progress, but the people there are nice and willing to help, and it is located five minutes away from your plane, with zero traffic jams. At the gate, you will be greeted by many iguanas. Don't forget to bring them apples and bananas, and do not fear: they are little gluttons, but have no teeth! With a bit of luck, your boat will be parked stern to the airport runway fence, and you will have your very own St. Maarten runway beach bar in your cockpit. (Skydivers beware: the addictive smell of avgas is constant here!)

When you decide to leave Aruba in your wake, watch your weather window carefully, because Cabo Vela is not only a cape, its average depth is quite shallow. Better to stay at the bar than leave in gale force conditions and arrive in Colombia with two sails and a dinghy blown away!

Do not miss Cabo Vela anchorage, especially if you kite surf. It is very windy here, but no big deal: the bay is huge, wide open, shallow, and empty except for fishing nets left overnight by the local Indians. In three days at anchor here, we saw no one except for a few curious but harmless fishermen cruising by, one derelict boat and a few kites. On the third day, the coast guard (Armada Nacional) came to ask us what we were doing in Cabo Vela. We said we were sleeping; they laughed. Quick, routine control: no trouble.

In one of the five bays of Tayrona National Park, just north of Santa Marta, and in Punta Hermosa (Puerto Veler), where you find a marina again, we were alone at anchor, with nobody bothering us. Tayrona Park has serious williwaw winds at night, which is not the case of Punta Hermosa, where the anchoring is shallow, the holding ground good and kite surfing is a must.

Santa Marta has a good and rather new marina, for decent prices (although you should not expect to find marine-grade parts or have any boatwork done), unlike Cartagena, where you either pay through your nose in the exclusive Muelle Turístico (where you do not dock without pre-approved arrangements) or the snobbish Club de Pesca, or you experience a not-so-convenient bumpy Floridian-type of slip in Club Náutico (not so great for canoe-sterned boats). At Club Náutico — the only safe place to dock the dinghy — the weekly fee will be 58,000 Colombian pesos (US\$30) for water and garbage service. In all cases, everybody will float here in the same dirty, nasty, murky waters, collecting a poo-colored waterline and an impressive number of barnacles.

Boating or not, if one is fond of pretty things, Old Cartagena, in its splendid Spanish colonial style, and even though already damaged by mass tourism, is definitely worth seeing — like all main cities, especially by night. If you are a pizza aficionado, do not miss La Diva, in the old town: you will not get a better one, even in Naples, Italy! Also worth going to is the Sofitel restaurant, bar and courtyard named "1621", after the year of creation of the convent it occupies. (You will find the remnants of Mother Superior in the bar's cellar!)

We installed our new Hydrovane in Pesquera Santa Clara, the mangrove backstreet's industrial and floating boat graveyard. I have to admit that the neighborhood is a tad rundown, but it is about the only sort-of-quiet place (in terms of traffic and water displacement) where one can drill holes in the hull near the waterline without sinking the boat.

If you are planning to have any work done that involves cleaning with acetone, do not forget to bring it with you, as this volatile substance is nowhere to be found in Colombia, for obvious reasons. Rather finish your work in the Eastern Caribbean or Aruba, because supplies are limited in choice in Colombia, and prices rather high. However, you will find very good gelcoat, stainless and wood work in Cartagena.

Coming into the northern bay entrance of Cartagena, do not forget to aim for the middle buoys, to avoid running aground on the submerged "city" walls. Inside the bay, watch for container and cruise ships — the traffic there is constant.

Only use registered agents to clear the boat in and out of the country. The process is here unfortunately not as cheap, quick and easy as Martinique and Guadeloupe, but Customs will give you a year and Immigration three months without any problem.

Fair winds, blue skies!

Alexandra Trachsel of the *Tayana 37 S/V Blue Wind* is a licensed (200 tons) Yacht Captain and Dilemaster.



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*There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune...*

— William Shakespeare

The local media attention and official welcome given to last month's finish of a transatlantic yacht race at Santa Marta, Colombia was a potent sign that this country — the fourth-largest economy in South America, with 1,584 miles (2,549 kilometres) of Caribbean seacoast — is positioning itself to be a player in regional yachting tourism. Colombia's Deputy Minister of Tourism, Sandra Howard Taylor, hails from Providencia. She tells *Compass* readers, "I'm from a Caribbean island. I love the sea, sailing, boating and diving, and I want to share Colombia's waters with visitors who share these passions." Meanwhile cruisers are finding this historic Caribbean seaside town, equipped with a modern marina and an abundance of attractions, a worthy new destination.

The Gran Prix del Atlantico is a yacht race that has run from Spain to the Caribbean every other year since 1995. Previous finishes were in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Havana, Cuba; Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic (twice); and Le Marin, Martinique (twice). This year's arrivals, crossing the finish line in late January and early February after a January 4th start from the Canary Islands, were welcomed at Colombia's two-year-old Marina Santa Marta.

Marina Santa Marta was officially opened in December 2011 with just two of its 256 slips occupied. Last month more than a third of the slips were filled and so far the marina has reported occupancy of up to 70 percent.

Gran Prix del Atlantico 2014

For the few but hardy participants in Gran Prix del Atlantico 2014, arrival was especially sweet after a challenging 3,600-mile non-stop ocean passage. They experienced atypical conditions that ranged from gales to calms, and northwest to southeast winds. The largest Gran Prix fleet to date was 42 boats in 2001, but this year organizers blamed bad weather for preventing many from getting to the starting line at

Lanzarote, Canary Islands. An optimistic pre-registration list of 35 was ultimately whittled down to a fleet of seven boats that made the scheduled start. A few others started late. Ten days after the official start, one boat sank after hitting an unidentified object, and the crew was rescued by a vessel bound for Antigua. The only "gate" on the race course was the channel between St. Lucia and Martinique, and other competitors ended their race on those islands to deal with repairs or medical problems.

Ultimately, only four "Gran Prix" boats reached Santa Marta. Yet the event was prestigious enough — its honorary president is King Juan Carlos I of Spain — to garner media attention and raise public awareness. A celebration was held in which the winning skipper, Enrique Curt, was given "the keys to the city", an indication of Santa Marta's appreciation of the inherent importance of international sailing events.

Line honors in the eighth "Gran Prix" went to the Spanish Hanse 461 *The Best Skipper*. Captain Enrique Curt says that in mid-Atlantic, winds were so high that *The Best Skipper* (named for two of the Curt publishing company's magazines) spent a day under bare poles, moving at seven knots. Those winds were from the northwest, so they backtracked until conditions improved. Nevertheless, they made the non-stop passage between Marina Rubicon and Marina Santa Marta in 24 days, four hours, 20 minutes and 45 seconds. Enrique says the key factor in his fast passage was that "We are racers. Most of the others are family boats. Our intent was speed. The six crew are strong young men who have been sailing since childhood." He adds that although his crew was "stupendous", he did the cooking: "Young people can eat, but they don't know how to cook!" Enrique has competed in the French single-handed Solitaire du Figaro "when I was younger", and this was his ninth transatlantic.

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The Gran Prix del Atlantico was a family affair for Captain Curt: his son, also named Enrique, is the event's organizer.

The captain plans to enjoy Colombia until April, then sail direct to the Dominican Republic, from there to the Virgin Islands, and then home to Spain.

Marina Santa Marta

Marina Santa Marta is very much the brainchild of native son Manuel Dávila Abondano, executive president of a Colombian group of companies producing organ-

in Santa Marta. This breeze deserves special mention. It is something all Santa Marta is proud of, and indeed it creates a refreshing climate. The bay of Santa Marta is at approximately 11°14'48"N, 74°13'00, facing west. The tradewinds, on their way there, pass over the dry Guajira Peninsula and then the snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountains, the world's highest coastal range. (Sailing 15 to 20 kilometres off this tropical coast in the early morning, you can often see the snow-capped peaks of Colón and Simón Bolívar.) By the time the breeze arrives (often strongly) it has been purged of salt and humidity. Mildew and rust are rare here.



At left, Colombian Coast Guard boats escort a Gran Prix del Atlantico racer past El Morro island into Santa Marta Bay. At right, cruisers Ineke and Mike of Conari leave their boat in the marina to explore inland

ic sugar and palm oil. Being in a location out of the hurricane belt and convenient as a staging point for boats heading for the Panama Canal were no doubt factors in his decision to create an international-standard marina in his home town, but Manuel says, "Really, I just love boats." Although his family owns the commercial port, there were formerly no facilities at Santa Marta for recreational vessels. First inspired by the marina at Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic, Manuel proceeded to study marinas worldwide during his business travels and then worked closely with professionals to design this marina. When the banks wouldn't provide a loan ("At that time, they didn't know what a marina was"), he found investors, got planning permission ("They never thought I'd really do it") and built the marina right in front of his parents' shoreside house.

The marina is a consumer-driven work in progress — clients are asked what they would like to see added. (Cruisers are even providing advice on making the clearance forms easier to understand.) Safety being a primary concern, two slips were assigned to the Coast Guard, and two Coast Guard runabouts are permanently based there. A fuel dock with gas and diesel is a recent addition, and a haulout facility with 60-ton travelift is currently under construction, as are spaces for ancillary services such as engine, sail and fiberglass repair. A chandlery is also in the works.

English long-time cruiser Mike Davies on Conari says that the marina is "brilliant. It's not only an oasis in a very rough stretch of ocean, but the rates are competitive, it's really yachtie-friendly, and it's a good base for visiting Cartagena or exploring the surrounding countryside — or even all of South America."

Mike's wife, Ineke, adds that owing to the constant breeze there are no mosquitoes

Downsides are occasional noisy parties at night ("but it's happy noise") and the fact that the water in the marina — in fact, in the whole city — is currently not potable, reportedly owing to problems at the filtration plant. Hopefully this will soon be resolved. Clearing in is currently expensive, as yachts are required to use an agent, but as this is being written, the marina is waiting for permission to act as a clearance agent so their clients won't have to pay the US\$100 agent's fee.

It is possible to anchor in the wide bay, outside the shipping lanes, but fierce winds can spring up. One cruiser said, "We had 37 knots one night, and although it made the boat heel over we were glad we were in a slip so we wouldn't drag" — she recommends not leaving anchored boats unattended.

Destination Santa Marta

More than one cruiser has described Santa Marta as "a complete surprise". Founded as a seaport for the Spanish treasure fleets in 1525, Santa Marta lays claim to being the oldest city in South America. But soon, the harbor of Cartagena, being more easily defensible than Santa Marta's broad bay, became the major colonial port. Today, Santa Marta is better known as a laid-back seaside holiday town with a historic quarter and the usual modern amenities, plus a whiff of Colombia's magical realism. Unlike the more famous — and more touristy and gentrified — Cartagena, this city of 500,000 is very much itself.

A few steps from the marina is a waterfront avenue whose broad sidewalk provides spots for snack vendors, a stop for the colorful chiva buses, and al fresco seating for a variety of restaurants.

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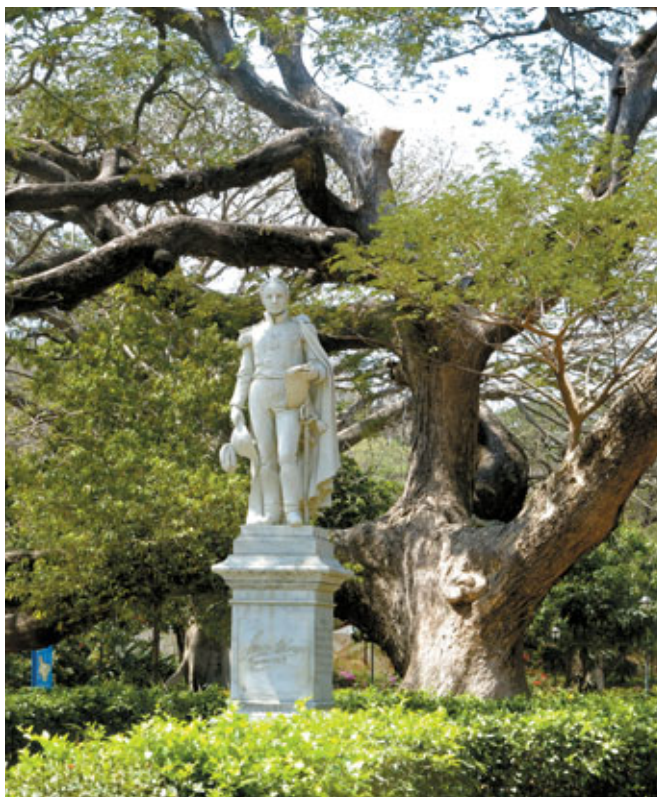
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Spreading inland is a grid of narrow streets lined with Spanish colonial buildings and 18th century townhouses, where you'll find cafés and shops, cathedrals and handicraft vendors, parks and plazas. Between their recently renovated sisters (now chic restaurants and tiny boutique hotels), faded old buildings yearn for restoration. A few years ago El Parque de Novios (Sweethearts' Park), in the city center, was a seedy no-go area. Now clean, well lit and home to several good bistros, it is a popular place to gather in the evening for a drink, a meal or just a stroll.

Sundays are quiet, but the rest of the week Santa Marta is vibrant. Yes, there is poverty and you'll see *gaminos*, or homeless boys, but there is also lively commerce and an attitude of optimistic progress.

In the local *Caribe Explora* magazine, editor Lucas Echeverri Roblado writes: "Santa Marta experienced an explosion of investment in 2013 and it's only starting," involving both Colombians and foreigners, and giving the city an international air. "The marina is one of the important focal points that increases the strength of the city, and where visitors are welcomed."

Cruisers in Santa Marta report that beer is cheap (the equivalent of US\$1 at a sidewalk bar), and the supply of meat, fruit and vegetables is good. Seafood and beef



Top: Chiva buses are a fun way to get around — a ride often turns into a party
 Above: The oldest church in Santa Marta, San Jerónimo de Mamatoco, was built in 1787
 Left: A statue at Quinta de San Pedro Alejandrino of South America's venerated Liberator, Simón Bolívar, who died there

are first rate. Restaurant prices are similar to those in the Eastern Caribbean. The city should be famous for its fresh fruit smoothies alone. (Colombian coffee? Say no more.) If you haven't developed a taste for the sweetish local bread, try the French bakery, Canoa, on Calle 18. Cruisers advise stocking up on staples in Aruba, and topping up on fresh groceries in Santa Marta.

Medical care, including dentistry, is good and inexpensive, and some doctors will make "boat calls" at the marina.

British cruiser John on the Rival 38 *Kika*, bound for New Zealand, says, "I've been here five or six days so far, and couldn't have had a nicer time. If you can't find something at the marina, the people in town go out of their way to help you," noting that once he was virtually led by the hand from the wrong place to the right one. He adds, "It's early days as a cruising destination, but you can find the necessary services, such as machine shops. Santa Marta was a huge surprise. I couldn't be happier that we stopped — it was a bonus to the whole trip."

French cruiser Lionel says he first visited Santa Marta in 1992 while riding around South America by motorbike, returned by boat in 1996 to anchor in the bay, and now he and Yamilé, aboard *Rebelle*, are ensconced in the marina. "I've been traveling for 30 years, and this is the best place I've seen in my life. It's a place I love; the most important thing is the mindset of the people. In all my travels I've never met more friendly, open and attentive people."

Don't expect many people to speak English, but grab your copy of *Spanish for Cruisers*, try a few words, and people will be happy to help.

Surrounding Santa Marta

"Within a very compact radius around Santa Marta there is a wide portfolio of activities and places to visit without repetition," says local nautical tourism specialist Carlos Socarrás. "There is history, culture, and a rich natural environment ranging from dry coastal areas to deep jungle to snow-topped mountains."

On the outskirts of town, visit Quinta de San Pedro Alejandrino, the former sugar and rum producing slave estate where Simón Bolívar died in 1830. You'll gain insight not only into a vanished lifestyle, but also appreciate the reverence in which South Americans hold the Liberator who freed what are now the countries of Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru from the Spanish Empire.

You can get to the funky diver/backpacker scene at Taganga and back to Santa Marta the same day. Trips to stay a night or two in the hip mountain village of Minca, or at Aracataca — the birthplace of Gabriel García Márquez and the supposed setting for *One Hundred Years of Solitude* — can be done by bus or collective taxi.

To get to Ciudad Perdida, the Lost City, however, means a three- or four-day hike in and a three-day hike out for the very fit, or enough pesos for a helicopter ride. Some 650 years before the better-known settlement at Machu Picchu, another ancient city was built, perched on 169 terraces carved into a steep, remote Sierra Nevada mountainside. The site, believed to have been abandoned during the Spanish conquest, was rediscovered in 1972. The wooden structures are long gone, but the intriguing stone terraces remain.

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Many cruisers at Marina Santa Marta mention that one of their prime reasons to visit Colombia was to see the famous walled city of Old Cartagena, a UNESCO World Heritage Site — but they didn't want to take their boats there. Facilities in Cartagena for visiting yachts are limited, the harbor fosters bottom growth and ferry wakes can be a problem for anchored yachts.

Régine, circumnavigating with Bernard on the Ovni 43 *Freevol*, says, "We left the boat at Santa Marta because we wanted to see Cartagena with peace of mind." Mike Davies notes that the bus from Santa Marta is only US\$21 and the trip, although four hours or so, is "door to door".

There are anchorages with sandy beaches near Santa Marta at Taganga and at Bahía Concha, Gairaca, Neaguange and Cinta within Tayrona National Park. These could be good stops en route to Santa Marta from the ABCs, but it might be hard work to get back to them heading north and eastward, unless you catch a sporadic south wind in the summer. Cruisers say that if your zarpe says "Cartagena" you will likely be allowed to stop in these places for a short period with the Q flag up, but if your zarpe says "Santa Marta" you should proceed directly there.

The Safety Question

German cruiser Mickaela on *Meri Tuuli*, circumnavigating with her husband, Ulf, echoed the experience of many when recounting her first Skype home after arrival: "You're in Colombia? Are you safe?" Her answer was, "Yes, and we're safe and happy."

Thanks to improved security throughout the country, Colombia went from receiving 600,000 tourists in 2000 to nearly 1.7 million in 2012. Reports of crimes against yachts in Colombian waters in recent years have been few, mainly citing dinghy and/or outboard theft, or attempted theft, from Cartagena and its nearby Islas Rosarios. Normal precautions should be taken.

Colombian Coast Guard Lt. Commander Jesús González tells *Compass* readers that "Colombia is a maritime country and the government is looking at the development of all maritime sectors, including shipping, fishing and yachting. Our coast guard vessels are working for security, communications for safety, search and rescue, and the protection of all boats in Colombian waters."

Riding the Rising Tide

While cruisers are spreading the news about Santa Marta by word of mouth, Colombians in the private and public sectors have been working to develop nautical tourism, and international boating interests are taking note. Nineteen US companies and the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) will host a USA Pavilion at the second annual Cartagena International Boat Show this month, from March 22nd through 24th. US industry leaders visited Colombia last July to explore potential opportunities in the increasingly attractive market. From the February 2014 edition of *Soundings Trade Only* magazine: "We believe there are significant opportunities to be had by US companies there," says Julie Balzano, director of export development for the NMMA. "By setting up shop early they can build success and become the recognized brand in the industry. During our trip we noted that the Spaniards, French, Canadians and other European brands are already beginning to solidify their key relationships in this emerging industry."

According to Colombia's Minister of Trade, Industry, and Tourism, Santiago Rojas, nautical tourism has become an engine for tourism development in the country. The government has embarked on a program of 22 nautical tourism projects, including development of marinas and other recreational boating facilities along the country's Caribbean and Pacific coasts over the coming 15 years, which is expected to generate more than 13,500 jobs.

Colombia has also been proactive in producing a free cruising guide (see footnote) of the country's entire Caribbean and Pacific coastlines, which includes excellent charts from the Colombian Hydrographic Service, plus waypoints, a service directory, and general information provided by various sources including cruiser Constance Elson of *S/V Tashtego*.

For Santa Marta as a burgeoning sailing destination, the finish line of the Gran Prix del Atlantico could be just the starting gun.

The cruising guide to Colombia is available free at www.cioh.org.co/files/Doc/Guia_Nautica_Turistica_de_Colombia_optimized.pdf. Chart updates are available at www.cioh.org.co "Avisos a los navegantes". (There's rumored to be a version in English but we could only find the Spanish one, although charts are of course the same.)

For more information on the Gran Prix del Atlantico visit www.granprixdelatlantico.com.

For more information on IGY Marina Santa Marta see ad on page 5.

Many thanks to Manuel and the Davila family for your gracious hospitality; to Mauricio for everything; to Diana I and Diana II, Jonathan, and the rest of the staff at Marina Santa Marta for making my visit so enjoyable; to Stewart for safe landings; and to all the cruisers and officials who generously gave their time to talk. Kudos to La Casa del Farol in Santa Marta and Anandá in Cartagena. And finally, special thanks to Mike and Ineke on Conari for fixing my shoe.



Above, top to bottom: Nets and fishing boats at Taganga; ancient terraces at Ciudad Perdida; the historic quarter of Cartagena; and Tayrona National Park

Top right: Cartagena's plazas are social hubs; Right: Lt. Commander Jesús González and his men welcome a Gran Prix sailor to Santa Marta



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Back Porch Landfall

by Tor Pinney

Some social icebreakers are universal: a smile, children, a friendly dog... and music. Live music bridges language and cultural gaps anywhere in the world. This is especially apparent when the performer has arrived aboard a sailboat. Cruisers are often either a curiosity to locals in developing countries or, if it's a popular destination, then just another yachtie. But play them a tune, sing them a song, and attitudes relax; blank stares are replaced by smiles. All at once you're a fellow human being, a welcome guest, and a grassroots diplomat.

I'm a rock band refugee who long ago traded the stage for the deck of a sailboat. I can still play and sing, but my repertoire these days is a lot more laid back, an



Clockwise from above: Rush hour at Bocas Town; the local lubricant; new friends share the universal language of music



acoustic mix that naturally includes plenty of island songs. Over the years I've entertained people — just for the fun of it — in many a foreign port, and been entertained in return. It adds another dimension to the visit, a special connection. My arrival in Bocas del Toro on the northwest coast of Panama was an especially happy example of this.

Bocas del Toro is a friendly, easygoing yet lively community sprawled across an archipelago of small islands. The cultural hub, Bocas Town, where I was clearing in, has the weathered-wood feel of a frontier town, with a broad main street used more by pedestrians and fat-tired bicycles than automobiles. Still, it's a pretty good place to re-provision, with well-stocked, family-owned grocery and hardware stores, one-man vegetable stands, two excellent bakeries and a beer warehouse. What more could one ask for?

In the midst of it all a city park provides an informal social center for the locals, a cheerful blend of small-town Panamanians, Chinese immigrants, multi-national cruising sailors, gringo surfers, stoic Ngobe Indians, bilingual West Indians, 20-something backpackers, aging Anglo expats and some backwater characters straight out of a Jimmy Buffet ballad. Just walking around was fun, but then I stumbled into something even better.

It was a back porch jam session, a couple of old timers on a bench playing guitars and singing traditional songs behind a waterfront shed that turned out to be a water taxi depot. A dozen locals, mostly *panga* drivers, were hanging around listening and chatting; one fellow dozed in a corner. I leaned against a post for a while toe-tapping to the Latino rhythms. Someone gestured to an empty chair, smiling and nodding at me, so I sat. The music flowed. A young man pulled out a small accordion and joined in; another added percussion by slapping on a barrel. Voices joined in on choruses or just laughed and hooted when the lyrics turned bawdy.

Then somebody handed me a guitar and I started playing along. They finished the song and, having noticed that I knew a few chords, invited me to play something for them. Sure, why not? I cut loose with the old Belafonte standard "Matilda", followed by an upbeat sailing song I'd written, and finished with the perennial calypso favorite, "Zombie Jamboree", the men encouraging me all the while with cold Balboa beers, occasional harmonies and crisp Latino guitar riffs. Water taxi skippers on the adjacent dock, who probably didn't understand a word of what I was singing, tapped their feet to the rhythms and smiled a lot. Aye, a good time was had by all!

By the time I tore myself away and headed back to my boat I'd made a whole slew of new friends and I thought, "What a sweet welcome to a new landfall!" This, after all, is part of what I cruise for, the connection I so appreciate. Next time I visit the water taxi shack I'll bring my own guitar and a couple of six-packs of Balboa for the boys in the band.

Lifelong cruising sailor Tor Pinney (www.tor.cc) has logged about 150,000 nautical miles under sail, but way before that he played in a string of rock-n-roll bands including the group Steam. Sports fans still chant the chorus from their hit record, "Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye" at ball games today. Tor's authoritative book, Ready for Sea! - How to Outfit the Modern Cruising Sailboat (Sheridan House), is available in nautical bookstores and online. Tor is presently revisiting the Caribbean aboard his 42-foot ketch, Silverheels.

Leaving the Eastern Caribbean for the US East Coast

Spring will soon be in the air and some sailors are already planning a trip away from the Eastern Caribbean: heading to North America or Europe, or heading west or south within the Caribbean.

The first thing that should be done is to purchase the Imray Iolairre passage chart 100. It is a gnomonic projection, where a great circle course is shown as a straight line. It covers the whole North Atlantic and the Caribbean.

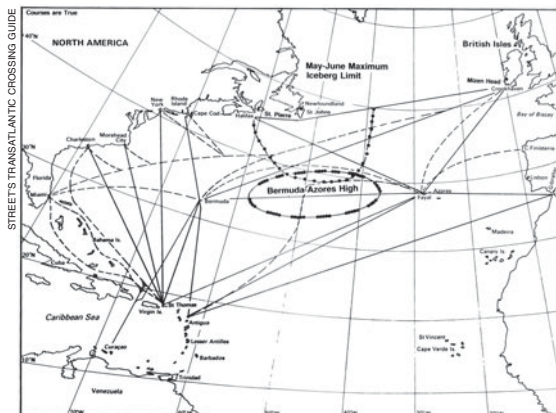
On the front of the chart are shown all the normal great circle courses that are likely to be sailed by a yacht, with the distance to be sailed. On the back there are weather and wave-height charts for the entire year, except for the months of January, February and March, months when yachts should not be sailing in the North Atlantic. The weather charts show wind direction, frequency and strength, and the percentage of calms plus gale frequency. Regarding gale frequency, a word of warning: gales mean Force 8 (40 knots) or more, sometimes much more. Winter gales are usually stronger than summer gales. April gales are most likely more severe than May gales.

The weather charts show areas and frequency of wave heights of 12 feet or over. Again, the chart does not show how much over 12 feet can be expected. It must also be remembered that if the waves are running 12 feet, occasionally they will get in sync and waves of 24 feet will arrive.

A study of the weather charts has led really experienced offshore sailors to say, "Anyone heading north or northeast from the Eastern Caribbean before the end of the first week in May is playing Russian roulette with three bullets in the cylinder." This is also my conclusion, based on 70 years of reading about disasters, being told of disasters first hand and hearing many second-hand reports, backed up by 12 transatlantics (seven on the engineless *Iolairre*) plus almost 40 trips between the Eastern Caribbean and the US East Coast or the reverse.

Some boats will be heading northwest for the Morehead City/Beaufort entrance to the ICW, a good route north for boats that draw seven feet or less and have an "air draft" of less than 64 feet. There are two options on this route.

The first is to make for St. Martin to stock up, then head northwest passing north of Puerto Rico; the Navidad, Silver and Mouchoir Banks; and the northern edge of the Bahamas, until the Gulf Stream is reached. Then ride the Stream north to the Morehead City/Beaufort entrance. With luck you will carry the tradewinds all the way to the Gulf Stream. Then, again with luck, you will pick up the southwesterlies. For the first thousand miles you will have a two-thirds to one-knot favorable current. When you reach the Gulf Stream, the current will boot you along the way at two to three knots. This will usually compensate for the extra distance, 250 or 300 extra miles sailed compared to the rhumb-line route.



It's too soon to sail from the Eastern Caribbean to the US East Coast, but it's never too soon to start thinking about which 'exit strategies' will work best for you

Alternatively, the shorter route is a direct rhumb-line route, 1,200 miles from St. Thomas to Morehead City, but this route leads through an area of light and variable winds.

When riding the Gulf Stream north, keep track of the weather. If a cold front with northwest or north wind moves across the States, once it gets off shore it balls up and becomes a strong northeaster blowing against the Stream. This can produce horrific conditions in the Stream, with 25 or more knots blowing against a northeasterly Gulf Stream running two to three knots. If a cold front approaches, duck into Charleston and wait it out before continuing.

If heading for the entrance to the Chesapeake, lay a course to a waypoint 70 miles east of the entrance to the Chesapeake. Head for this waypoint, and then turn west and enter the Chesapeake. This route keeps you well clear of Cape Hatteras, the graveyard of many ships over the last four centuries. It is said the only proper way to pass Cape Hatteras is 70 miles to the west, or 20 miles to the east!

Boats heading farther north to the New York or Newport area can head from the Eastern Caribbean to Bermuda, course north, 900 miles. Conditions on this route vary drastically. Ideally, you leave Antigua, St. Martin or St. Thomas, head north on a fast beam reach for the first 500 or 600 miles, and then run into a hundred miles of light airs. Eventually the southwest fills in and takes you on to Bermuda.

This does not always happen, however. In 1980 so many boats were heading to Bermuda after Antigua Sailing Week that a race was organized among about 15 boats. They left Antigua with a booming tradewind — which died at the end of 24 hours. There was no wind from there to Bermuda! All abandoned the race and motorsailed until their fuel ran out. Hot racing boats (with very frustrated crews on board) were taking 11 and 12 days to do the 900 miles.

In 1985, *Iolairre* had a normal passage north to Bermuda until, on the fifth day out, sailing nicely with everything hoisted, I saw a big black cloud moving in from the west. We shortened down before it hit and then spent the next 36 hours under double-reefed main and staysail.

The sail northward from Bermuda can be an easy trip, sped along by the prevailing southwest wind, but it is very important before leaving Bermuda to ascertain the southeast meander of the Gulf Stream. When racing from New England to Bermuda, the navigators who find it, and keep the boat in it, are among the top finishers. However if you run into the southeast meander when heading northwest, it stops you dead in your tracks.

Again, as previously noted, keep track of the weather and do not get caught in the Gulf Stream by a cold front that swings from north to northeast. If necessary head south, back toward Bermuda, get out of the Stream and wait for the front to pass.

Occasionally a boat will head due north from Bermuda, sail 720 miles to Halifax, and then cruise the Nova Scotia coast eastwards to Bras d'Or Lakes (fresh water, no fog). They then exit the north end of the lakes and sail to the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon to stock up on inexpensive beer, wine and booze. French cheeses and reputedly the best French bread in North America. Then 40 miles on to Port Fortune, Newfoundland, to top off fuel, water and stores and do a crew change if necessary. (Port Fortune has daily bus service to Newfoundland's capital, St. John's.) Then off to Ireland, 1,720 miles, or stay and enjoy an unusual summer cruising ground.

Next month: Leaving the Eastern Caribbean bound for Europe.



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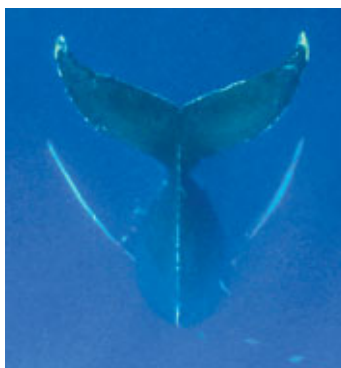
A 45-TON MALE SINGING THE BLUES

by Nathalie Ward

"Whistling" or singing humpback whales were known by and formed the subject of tales for the old time open-boat Bequia whalers. As early as 1910, Bequia whalers described "dem bulls whistling; you can hear it from the centerboard box". But biologists largely discounted the notion that whales communicated in this fashion, since the anatomists had shown that none of the whales possessed vocal chords and it was therefore wrongly assumed that they were mute.

The Song of the Humpback Whale

The earliest recordings of humpback singing were made by accident. In the 1950s,



ANDREW STEINSON

A whale in the singing posture, with head down at an angle of about 45 degrees

Frank Watlington, while manning an early underwater submarine listening station off Bermuda, recorded long underwater moans and high-pitched chirps and squeaks. Today, we know that these grunts, rumbles, squeals and eerie sounds are made by the male humpback whale, which produces the longest, most complex sequences of any whale or possibly any animal. The word "song" is used to describe the pattern of regular and predictable sounds made by this species. These songs are strikingly similar to human musical "traditions", with melodies and notes that are very similar in tone to man-made music.

The Song Structure

To dive more deeply into the nebulous realms of humpback whale song, researchers have learned that the song is a series of sounds that typically last ten to 15 minutes and is repeated over and over again. Humpback whale song is identifiable because of its intricate pattern or structure. Songs are composed of multiple sound types, called, for example, ascending cry, moan, and purr. The sounds range from high-pitched whistles to very low booming sounds. When the units (these sound types) come together to form a pattern, these units form a phrase that is repeated for several minutes. Phrases repeated become a theme, and themes (often four to six) sung in a particular order (in a continuous loop) compose an entire song.

The song has a predictable melodic tone and the notes are repeated over and over again, like a chorus. Recordings in the Windward Islands have been made of the humpback singing in various pitches — in solos, duets, trios, and even choruses of dozens of interweaving voices lasting from six to 30 minutes.

A THEME

1	2	3	4	1
aaabaaab	ccccccccc	efef	gghghh	aaabaaab

Individual letters represent different sounds, or units. A group of units, for example ggh, is a phrase

Singing Rules

If the song has four themes the whale will sing Themes 1-2-3-4, usually surface to breathe, then dive again and begin Theme 1 again. A song session can last for hours — in some cases more than 24 hours of continuous singing. Singers are always male and are usually alone. Singers will sing for hours until joined by another male or moving off to join other singers. To date there has been no record of a female singing.

Although the songs of individuals may vary somewhat, all the singers in a given population, such as in the West Indies, follow the same pattern of theme composition and progression, which is different from that which is sung elsewhere, such as Hawaii. Like a regional dialect, in any one area and time, all the whales produce the same sound sequences or sing the same song. However, the song changes progressively within a season, with some parts deleted and new ones added. Remarkably, all singers somehow keep up with these changes. How this happens — whether it occurs by cultural transmission or involves some element of innate pattern — remains one of the larger mysteries about this fascinating whale. What drives the change is unknown, but most observers assume that sexual selection plays a key role.

How Do They Sing?

Although baleen whales (like the humpback whale) lack vocal cords, they do have a larynx that appears to play a role in sound production. The process, however, cannot be completely comparable to humans, because whales do not have to exhale in order to produce sound. It is likely that they recycle air around their cranial sinuses to help create the sounds, but again researchers are currently unclear how.

Why Do They Sing?

The function of the song has attracted much speculation, but no definitive answer. Most researchers believe that the song is a breeding advertisement; in this, humpbacks are no different from the males of other species ranging from frogs to birds. It has been proposed that songs serve as a sexual display (a means of communicating male fitness to females or as a status signal to other males); or a means of orientation (such as a male spacing mechanism on the breeding grounds or a migratory beacon); and/or a physiological mechanism or acoustic cue (to stimulate and synchronize estrus in females).

Where Do They Sing?

In the Atlantic Ocean region, singing occurs primarily, but not exclusively, in the humpbacks' breeding range throughout the Caribbean in winter. But singing has been recorded during migration; and in 1982, singing was recorded on the feeding grounds in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in the Gulf of Maine. The inclusion of feeding grounds into the dynamic pattern of humpback whale song sharing helps shed new light on overall patterns of song learning and transmission from one breeding group to another. Through a better understanding of how and where these dynamic compositions radiate across the Ocean, we can begin to understand humpback whale population connectivity and one of the best examples of non-human, large-scale learning demonstrated throughout the Northern Hemisphere.

LOGGERHEAD



TURTLE RESCUED

by Marina Fastigi

We had not seen or heard of one here in years, in fact, the last Loggerhead turtle we rescued in Carriacou was eight years ago. So when we got the message that fishermen had one at L'Esterre beach, we immediately called environmental photographer and friend Davon Baker to join the KIDO team to document this rare occasion.

The female Loggerhead turtle, classified as an endangered species by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), had been accidentally caught in a fishnet set off Petite Martinique and had been kept inside a speedboat overnight by Jody, a former Marine Protected Area warden.

This creature needed a safe release and, to put an end to her ordeal, we agreed on a purchase price (the only way we can rescue turtles, because turtle hunting is still legal in Grenada), and then we proceeded to carefully lift the 120-pound turtle from the boat to shore. Davon kept on shooting photos while the KIDO team (Dario and I) measured and tagged her front flippers with official ID numbers.

She was the 328th turtle KIDO has rescued in and around Carriacou to date.

An animal rescue event often becomes an occasion to make new friends and when Sylvie and John, a couple from the UK on sabbatical in Carriacou, offered to help, we all, turtle and crew, boarded our aging Land Rover to drive to a more protected and suitable location for the release. Our new friend Sylvie even offered a financial contribution towards the purchase of the animal and later revealed that, when they had seen us handling the turtle off the boat, they had no intention to be a part of anything with us because they were concerned that the commotion was about killing off the poor creature! When we had explained what the KIDO rescue was about they were relieved: that day was going to be a great day!

On secluded Lauriston beach, near mangroves and a shallow reef inside the



Sylvie, John and Davon observe as the redeemed Loggerhead makes her way back to the sea

Sandy Island MPA borders, we found the right spot. Along this stretch of coast the Loggerhead may have a chance to recover some needed strength before taking off for deeper pastures.

Then came the beautiful part: on the beach, Lady Loggerhead was wetted with some sea water; the distinctive

patterns on her brown carapace shone again as she laboriously dug her flippers in the sandy slope toward the ocean.

One could tell the pleasant shock Lady Turtle experienced when sea foam and a wave surge washed over her; she paused, took a deeper breath and plowed on until she disappeared in her rightful home.

We then erased her tracks in the sand leaving no signs for poachers to try searching for a nesting turtle or a turtle floating around. I could not help noticing that all taking part in the release were exhilarated and smiling, from deep within — a healing smile of sorts.

We know that sea turtles are in danger of extinction because they are still caught by nets, either on purpose or by accident, and that turtle eggs are still poached or sold as an aphrodisiac, a myth hard to kill!

Seventy percent of the Caribbean nations have already banned sea turtle hunting, conscious of the important role these magnificent creatures play in the marine ecosystem: the most relevant for human fisheries being that turtles effectively prey on jellyfish, and jellyfish prey on fish eggs and larval fish, such as yellowfin tuna — therefore fewer turtles in the sea means fewer fish in the sea.

Grenada still has a law that allows the hunting of sea turtles (except the leatherback) for eight months per year, the longest hunting season in the world. The Grenada Fund for Conservation, YWF-Kido Foundation and Ocean Spirits are about to present a petition to the Government of Grenada asking for a moratorium on sea turtle hunting. You may help this cause by signing at www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/228/115/847/.

Please remember that sea turtles killed in Grenadian waters may belong to other Caribbean nesting grounds and may frequent Marine Protected Areas of different nations (our international tagging program demonstrates this fact). Sea turtles can migrate thousands of miles between their nesting grounds and their feeding grounds, therefore, in order to effectively preserve them, we also need to approve and implement conservation laws at the regional level.

Marina Fastigi is the founder director of YWF KIDO Foundation.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

MARCH & APRIL 2014

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

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

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

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

March 2014		21	0331	10	2043
DATE	TIME	22	0425	11	2147
1	1216	23	0522	12	2211
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3	1402	25	0716	14	2344
4	1453	26	0812	15	0000 (full moon)
5	1544	27	0908	16	0034
6	1634	28	1002	17	0126
7	1724	29	1056	18	0220
8	1814	30	1147	19	0317
9	1902	31	1239	20	0414
10	1949			21	0511
11	2035			22	0608
12	2120			23	0702
13	2205			24	0755
14	2249			25	0847
15	2333			26	0938
16	0000 (full moon)			27	1029
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April 2014		1 <th>1331</th> <th>22 <th>0608</th> </th>	1331	22 <th>0608</th>	0608
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14	2249	3	1514	25	0847
15	2333	4	1605	26	0938
16	0000 (full moon)	5	1654	27	1029
17	0017	6	1743	28	1120
18	0103	7	1826	29	1211
19	0150	8	1915	30	1302
20	0239	9	1959		

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MARCH 2014

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)

The doldrums you feel in the first week will be swept away by the return of the fresh breeze of fun in the second. Your enthusiasm for work will be in irons, though, so use your position on board to delegate the chores.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)

Romance will be ebbing and business is still in irons, so find an artistic project on board to fill the time and make positive use of your energies.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)

What starts out as a minor flirtation could become a full-fledged romance by month's end. Communications may be garbled, especially in the creative area of your life, but those aspects will take a new tack in a few weeks.

♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)

Concentrate on your creative course for the first three weeks and it will have a positive effect on boat business. Even though your energies are at low tide your sense of humor will sail you through choppy seas.

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)

Rough seas in your love life could splash through the porthole into your financial matters. Fair winds in ingenuity will be useful in sailing past these negative aspects.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)

Fluky winds in creativity may be frustrating and communication problems with crew could arise. Your attention to detail will help, with some humor, to ease the mainsheet and help things on board return to an even keel.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)

Use what inventive drive you have to complete projects aboard. Though your sense of humor may be in deep stowage, keep your heart and mind open so love can sail in.

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)

Spend your fair-wind energies on boat business affairs this month. Your creative mind, verbal gifts and sense of humor will contribute to the cruising kitty.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)

Constantly shifting winds in new ideas may prove frustrating and possible arguments with crew or cruising pals will not help your mood. Divert yourself with a walk ashore or solo sail to fresh horizons and let new experiences lighten your outlook on life.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

While romance sails away over the horizon, your ability to laugh will be the compass that keeps you on course.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

L'amour, l'amour, toujours l'amour! Enjoy it while it lasts — it will be good for your sailing spirit.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

Your creative gifts and verbal skills are under full sail, so set them on a profitable course. These and your sense of humor will have positive payoffs on the course you have chosen.

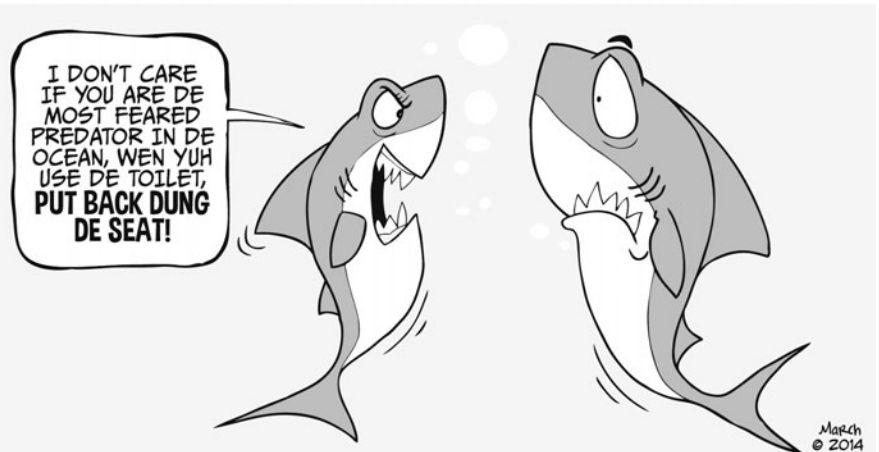


Hardly awake, I rise and shiver,
The breaking morning's promise quivers,
I look out on the quiet bay
That calmly waits for the new day.
Serene and silver, tranquil, still,
I shed the dregs of slumber till
Aware, I witness the revealing
Of the first light's splendor peeling
Away the darkness, till the scene
Slowly transforms and dim sands gleam
Trading their silver now for gold,
As blushing sunrise now unfolds
The awesome colors with a glow
That takes my breath away, and so
As God creates this new day's story,
My spirit revels in the glory.

The daybreak's trembling sunlight glimmers.
Till Sandy Island's long beach shimmers
More distant islets seem to be
Suspended between earth and sea.
The sailboats anchored in the bay
Unmoving now, await the day.
The beauty permeates my soul
And if perhaps I could control
My destiny, then this would be
My Heaven for all eternity.

— Nan Hatch

SeaWeed



KEN DYER

March
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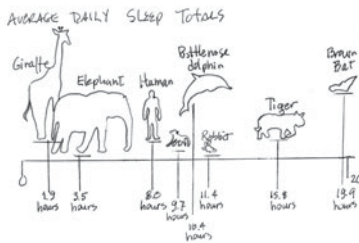
How Do Whales Sleep Without Drowning?

Salty is a humpback whale that loves to jam and sing. Every the winter he swims throughout the Caribbean Sea. He doesn't need a passport because he's an international citizen! How does he sleep in the sea?

Can you imagine sleeping underwater? While asleep, you would have to remain conscious of holding your breath underwater and remain conscious of your need to surface when your oxygen supply ran out. This is what whales do.

So, how can they sleep and not drown? We humans are involuntary breathers, meaning we breathe without thinking about it and have a "breathing reflex" that kicks into gear when we're sleeping or are knocked unconscious. But whales and dolphins must keep part of the brain alert to trigger each breath.

Unlike humans, whales and dolphins are voluntary breathers, meaning they think about every breath they take. A whale breathes through the *blowholes* on top of its head, so it needs to come up to the water surface to breathe. But that means the whale needs to be awake to breathe. Observations of bottlenose dolphins in aquariums and of whales and dolphins in the wild show two basic methods of sleeping: they either rest quietly in the water, vertically or horizontally, or sleep while swimming slowly next to another animal.



- CATNAPPING:** A new meaning to the expression "half asleep". The way a cetacean sleeps is surprising. Quite unlike us, whales "sleep" by resting one half of their brain at a time. For example, while sleeping, the humpback whale shuts down only half of its brain along with the opposite eye. The other half of the brain stays awake at a low level of alertness. This attentive side is used to watch for predators, obstacles and other animals. It also signals when to rise to the surface for a breath of air. Studies show that after a period of time, the animal will reverse this process, resting the active side of the brain and awakening the rested half. Because of this *unihemispheric* sleep, marine mammals don't sleep for a solid eight hours a night, the way we do.
- UNDERTOW:** The advantages to a "slip stream". When marine mammals sleep and swim at the same time, they are in a state similar to napping. Young whales and dolphins actually rest, eat and sleep while their mother swims, towing them along in her *slipstream* — a placement called *echelon swimming*.
- Being born underwater can cause problems for newborn whales and dolphin calves. It is the touch of air on the skin that triggers that first, crucial breath. Studies of bottlenose dolphins show that the mother will also sleep on the move. In fact, she cannot stop swimming for the first several weeks of a newborn's life. If she does for any length of time, the calf will begin to sink; it is not born with enough body fat or blubber to float easily.
- WHERE'S THE SLUMBER PARTY?** ZZZZZZZZZZZZ
The locations where *cetaceans* (whales, dolphins and porpoises) sleep differ among species. Some rest at the surface, some are constantly swimming, and some even rest below the water surface. Humpbacks may rest at the surface for half an hour at a time. These whales take slow breaths that are less frequent than a whale that's active. They are so relatively motionless on the surface that we refer to this behavior as "logging", because they look like giant logs floating on the water.
- Whale sleep is complex and still being studied. One interesting finding, or lack thereof, is that whales do not appear to have REM (rapid eye movement) sleep that is characteristic of humans. This is the stage in which most of our dreaming occurs. As a result of limited observations of whales in the wild, scientists theorize that whales only sleep for short periods at a time.
- SLEEP ADAPTIONS**
Marine mammals have unique *adaptions* that help them attain sufficient sleep. Foremost, marine mammals can hold their breath longer than other types of mam-

mals can. And they can take in more air with each breath, as their lungs are proportionately larger than those in humans. In addition, their red blood cells also carry more oxygen. And when diving, marine mammals' blood travels only to the parts of the body that need oxygen — the heart, the brain and the swimming muscles. Digestion and any other processes have to wait.

Finally, these animals have a higher tolerance for carbon dioxide (CO₂). Their brains do not trigger a breathing response until the levels of CO₂ are much higher than what a human can tolerate. Cetaceans reduce the number of breaths they take during rest periods; a dolphin might average eight to 12 breaths a minute when fairly active, only to have their breathing rate drop to three to seven breaths per minute while resting. These mechanisms, part of the marine mammal diving response, are adaptations to living in a marine environment and help during the process of sleeping.

Most mammal species need significantly more sleep when they're young, although baby orcas and baby bottlenose dolphins appear to not sleep at all during the first few months of life. Like whales and dolphins, there are also examples of animals that can disrupt their normal sleeping patterns for certain special events, such as migratory birds which can survive with significantly less sleep during migratory seasons without building up any sleep debt. Some have been shown to take extremely brief power naps of just a few seconds, sometimes using *unihemispheric sleep* to remain semi-alert to their surroundings.

How Do Whales Sleep? — Puzzle

After you finish finding all the words (up, down, across), see if you can find the hidden message of how whales sleep!

Puzzle solution on page 41.

Do Whales Sleep?

U S N I H E G M C I S P H E R
I C R Z M N Z E S E N I R A M
E P Y O I T T R L E B A J V J
Q F P G T A L M I T Y Y T P F
F C G I C A Y N P Z R T Z U I
K O Y E D T D H S A I I N Z P
L V A H C D R E T D Y U T E X
U N K J A P L N R T E F P N D
S B Y X W O U D E P D G F F X
F S Y G H L A D A P T I O N S
S Q H W O X T Q M G L C U K J
C L O V C O N S C I O U S Q R
L L E N N P H R O J L S X E A
B S G E I Z O R J I L N R C H
U W U Q P P E A T X E J A Q S

- ADAPTIONS
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'It's Amazing What You Can Get Used To'

Grand Ambition: An Extraordinary Yacht; the people who built it and the millionaire who can't really afford it, by G. Bruce Knecht. Simon & Schuster © 2013. 256 pages Available in hard cover or as e-book: ISBN-10: 1416576002, ISBN-13: 978-1416576006.

Superyachts used to be exceedingly rare in the Caribbean. Aristotle Onassis had a huge yacht, as did the Queen of England. From time to time, a grand apparition that belonged to a Middle East oil sheik would appear for a few days and that was about it. Now, superyachts are common in many of our anchorages and a fixture during the winter months in St. Martin, St. Barths, and Antigua. As they proliferated it became clear that these monsters were not the upper end of some kind of a normal yachting curve, but constituted a yachting class of their own, one that had little to do with yachting as we have known it most of our lives. For the Caribbean cruiser, *Grand Ambition* provides a tantalizing yet unvarnished glimpse into this world that is beside us, yet so alien.

Bruce Knecht follows the building of *Lady Linda* from its inception to its completion, some three years behind schedule. He delves not only into the lives of its owners, the Von Allmens, but also into the lives of some of the workers and craftsmen at Trinity Yachts in Gulfport, Mississippi, where the boat was built. In doing so, he paints a picture of today's changing world. One of the more obvious changes since my youth is that, especially in the US, the rich are immensely richer, which is great if everyone else is along for the ride; however, at the same time, many skilled workers are falling from a comfortable middle class to a struggling one. When I was young, Europeans thought of the US as the place to go to make a lot of money. So it came as a shock to realize that building *Lady Linda* in the US was competitive because, compared with Europe, the cost of labor was lower.

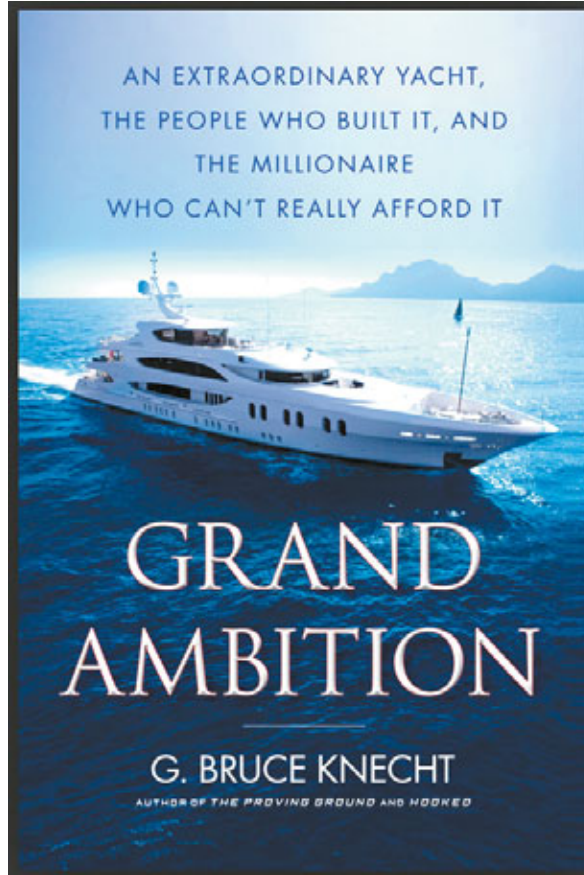
I knew I would enjoy this book when, early on, the reader is whisked away to Monaco, where Jill Bobrow, then editor of *Show-Boats International* magazine, was about to hand out awards. (Jill has had many adventures in the Caribbean and is well loved by those who knew her here in the 1970s.) The Von Allmens were there in Monaco also, on another yacht they owned, the 197-foot *Linda Lou*, for which they were to receive an award for interior design.

Showing off is a big part of superyachting, and the tastes of some owners are more bizarre than we would imagine. For example, onboard *Christina*, "Onassis did much of his entertaining in what became known as 'Ari's bar', an intimate space in which the bar stools were upholstered with whale foreskin, a detail Onassis rarely failed to share with his guests." Size is important when we are showing off, even in the earlier days: "The Saudis accounted for the mightiest fleet. During the late 1970s, Adnan Khashoggi, a Saudi arms dealer who was sometimes said to be the world's richest man, built *Nabila*, a 281-footer that was featured in the 1983 James Bond film "Never Say Never Again". Five decks high, it had three elevators, a cinema, a billiard room, and more than 250 telephones."

Superyachts became much more popular in the 21st century, the show-off element if anything gaining momentum. "While *Octopus* became America's largest yacht when it was launched in 2003, another high-tech multi-billionaire, Larry Ellison, had already taken steps to ensure that its reign would be brief. When *Octopus's* construction was past the point where it could be altered, Ellison instructed Lürssen, which was building both yachts, to stretch the length of his *Rising Sun* from 393 to 452 feet. Launched in late 2004, it had more than 85,000 square feet of living area and carried more than a dozen smaller boats, including a jeep-bearing landing craft." Ellison admitted that his creation was a great indulgence. "It's absolutely excessive," he told *Vanity Fair* magazine. "No question about it. But it's amazing what you can get used to."

The Russian oligarchs also had developed a taste for yachting. One of these is Andrey Melnichenko, 36 years old and owner of A, which is often seen in the Caribbean. "Even by sky-is-the-limit superyacht standards, it is a jaw-dropper: 390 feet long, it cost more than \$300 million to build, has 23,000 square feet of living space, and burns through 690 gallons of diesel an hour." "A's garage is a vast compartment that opens out to both sides of the hull. The space is large enough to house two 30-foot tenders, which can be launched by a pair of telescoping cranes. When both tenders are removed, the space was designed to become something else: a discotheque. A disco with a difference: the ceiling, made of glass, also serves as the floor of a large swimming pool, making it possible for those on the dance floor to watch swimmers overhead." Roman Abramovich, who has a home in St. Barths, is perhaps the best-known Russian yachting oligarch: "...the forty-one-year-old owner of Britain's Chelsea football club was the runaway leader of the oligarch-yachtsmen. He owned three monster yachts, the biggest of which, the 377-foot-long *Pelorus*, was originally built for a Saudi prince.

—Continued on next page



Street's Caribbean Cruising Guides



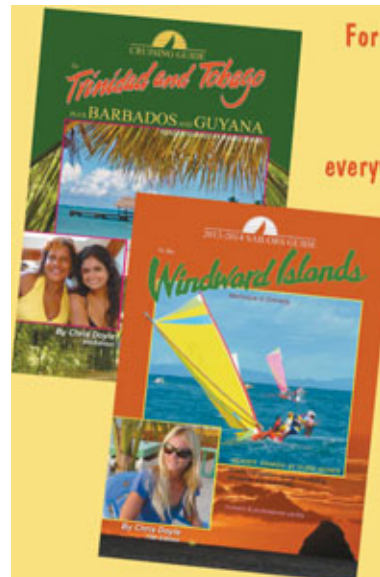
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—Continued from previous page

A was 13 feet longer than *Pelorus*, but Abramovich had already taken steps to reclaim his title by commissioning a much larger yacht, one that would carry a submarine and be protected by, among other things, a sophisticated missile-detection system. At 536 feet, it would have a crew of more than fifty and displace *Dubai* as the world's largest yacht. Fittingly, it would be called *Eclipse*."

When the building of *Lady Linda* begins, everything is looking good. Demand for superyachts is high and the two superyachts that Doug and Linda Van Allmen own are worth way more than they paid for them. Doug is determined to build in the US to show that the results can be as good as the best from Europe. As building proceeds, the recent worldwide recession hits and everything goes to hell. The demand for big yachts falls, and even Van Allmen's prospects are not as rosy

this gives the book the right amount of tension to keep you wanting to turn the pages.

Irony is not lost on Bruce Knecht, especially when it comes to the attitudes of the yacht- and yard-owners who all seem to decry both Obama and the illegal immigration problem — at the same time as some of these illegals, hired by a subcontractor, are doing the dirtiest and most dangerous work in fairing the hull, often without adequate safety gear.

It is surprising in this very white Republican world to meet Evan Marshall, the designer, a man who would look very at home in the Caribbean. "Evan Marshall, one of the world's most sought-after yacht designers, was in his London office in the fall of 2006, hunched over a door-sized desk that was covered with schematic drawings of *Lady Linda*. While his iPod shuffled through a collection of more than five thousand songs, a mix of soul, jazz, and rock from the 1960s to the present, he rarely lifted his head. When he did, it was only to look at his laptop, which held electronic versions of the same plans, together with engineering specifications. Marshall's appearance was not what most people would expect of a yacht designer. A powerfully built black man with a shaved head, he looked like an African-American Mr. Clean." Evan's father was a sociology professor at Columbia University and owned a 32-foot cabin cruiser. Evan became enamored by yachts, studied yacht design, worked for Sparkman & Stephens, moved to the UK when the big yacht action went there, and eventually opened his own office, which has been hugely successful.

This book is not talking about the one percent in superyachting, but rather an even more rarified world than that. To build a boat clearly in this class, one must be able to blow at least \$20 million dollars on what is essentially a show-off second home (*Lady Linda* cost about \$40 million). When Doug finally takes delivery of *Lady Linda*, his finances having rebounded, and throws a party, he is not especially excited. "It was, he said, his feelings about yachting that had changed. 'The magic has worn off a bit; we have been to so many places already,' he said. 'I still like looking at the water and the service you get on board, but there's a bit of 'been there, done that'."

This book will not make you feel envious of either the megayachts or the luxury lifestyle, but it will give you a rare glimpse into what they are all about.



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It's reported that air-conditioning and heating panels are built into the overhead above *Lady Linda*'s main outdoor dining area, so diners will be comfortable regardless of the weather. It's amazing what you can get used to!

as they were, especially after he is persuaded by a man called Rothstein to invest a hundred million in what turns out to be a Ponzi scheme. Rothstein flees to Monaco and sends a note that starts: "Sorry for letting you all down." Things do not look much better for Trinity Yachts, which has no new yacht orders and is heading into a financial crunch; it seems to be touch and go as to whether they will complete the project. All

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The Sky in March and Early April 2014

by Jim Ulrik

In Case You Missed It

On January 1st, 2014 an asteroid six to nine feet (two to three metres) in size was discovered. Within 21 hours it had entered the Earth's atmosphere on its way to make impact.

A potential impact zone was 0.3° south of Grenada. So if you happened to be looking in the Southern night sky or were on a passage between Grenada and Trinidad on January 1st, 2014 around 0002 hours* and saw the asteroid streaking through the sky, you were lucky. Based on the asteroid's physical size, a huge fireball would have been created as it entered the atmosphere. The strength was compared to 500 tons of TNT. Similar sized asteroids have also broken into more than 600 meteorites when entering the atmosphere. From sensors monitored by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the main impact was estimated to be 11.7°N 40.0°W.

It may seem like old news, but any look into the night sky is a look at light or events that could have happened within seconds or originated millions of years ago.

Saturday March 1st - New Moon

Because of the New Moon there will be better viewing of faint objects in the night sky. The first few days of March will be the last chance to view the Andromeda Galaxy for a few months. After March 8th, the Andromeda galaxy will be below the horizon at night through the middle of May. In May, Andromeda will return and become visible in the Eastern sky for a short time before sunrise. Talk about old news, the light arriving from Andromeda took 2.5 million years to get to Earth. At that distance Andromeda appears as a dim fuzzy disk when you see it with the naked eye or through binoculars. If Andromeda were brighter we would see it in the night sky six times the width of the Moon. It is one of the farthest objects you can see with your naked eyes.

The Andromeda Galaxy is on a collision course with the Milky Way. Take a look at the Andromeda Galaxy tonight and when you view it again in May, it will be 100 to 125 million miles (160,934,400 to 201,168,000 Km) closer to Earth.

Sunday March 16th - Full Moon Musings

The actual Full Moon occurs at 1309 hours when it is located below the horizon on the "other side" of the planet. We won't get to see the Moon until it rises at 1823.

In Roman times the calendar was based on the lunar cycle. The Ides were determined by the full moon. On the earliest calendar, the Ides of March would have been the first full moon of the New Year and the deadline for settling debts. Well, the calendar was ten and a quarter days too short. The Roman politicians were supposed to add days to make up the difference. They did that portion of their job when they felt like it, which wasn't often. (They must have been on a cruise in the Med. Roman taxes at work.) Consequently, the calendar didn't last. The day of the Ides, however, was enthusiastically celebrated among the common people with picnics, drinking, and revelry.

A "Full Moon" quote from Peyton Manning after being questioned about mooning his teammates in front of a female trainer: "I'd rather put it behind me".

It is St. Patrick's Day on March 17th. That does sound better than Maewyn Succat's Day, his given name. The Irish name for this month's Full Moon is the Moon of Winds. *Slainte!* And cheers to Montserrat "the Other Emerald Isle".

Tuesday March 18th - Moon, Mars and Spica

There will be a conjunction between Mars, Spica and the Moon in the constellation of Virgo. If you can stay up past cruisers' midnight, look about seven degrees above the horizon and below Mars you may find Saturn trailing behind. Saturn will be visible above the horizon around 2330 hours.

Thursday and Friday, March 20th and 21st - Vernal Equinox and a Saturn Rise Above the Moon

Winter turns to Spring, and with that thoughts turn to... a Saturn rise? On the 20th, Saturn will be obscured by the Moon, both rising around 2245. Moving on to the 21st, Saturn will begin to rise from the Dark Side of the Moon. Fortunately the Moon will be 81.7 percent illuminated and Saturn will begin to emerge above the shadowed edge of the Moon at 0017. It will be in full view at 0045. If the weather is clear you should be able to see the Saturn rise without binoculars. Both will be located in the constellation Libra. (Somewhere an artist should be creating a rendition of this phenomenon for NASA. I couldn't find a royalty-free view for posting!)



Above: Looking west, the Andromeda Galaxy in proximity to Cassiopeia. The red objects are the Heart and Soul Nebulas.

Below: Coming over from the Dark Side



Saturday March 22nd - (51) Nemausa

There will be 47 known near-Earth objects from March 1st through April 12th. One of these known asteroids, named (51) Nemausa, has a diameter of 103 miles (166km) and will be viewable in the Caribbean and Mexico on March 22nd. Start looking for the asteroid halfway between Jupiter, which is in Gemini, and Betelgeuse in Orion. The asteroid will obscure the viewing of some stars over the south coast of the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, the US and British Virgin Islands, and St. Martin.

Thursday March 27th - Moon and Venus Rendezvous

A crescent Moon and Venus will pass within three and a half degrees of each other at 0404 hours in the constellation of Aquarius. Mercury will follow in fourth place. You can't see it, but Neptune is in third between Venus and Mercury.

—Continued on next page



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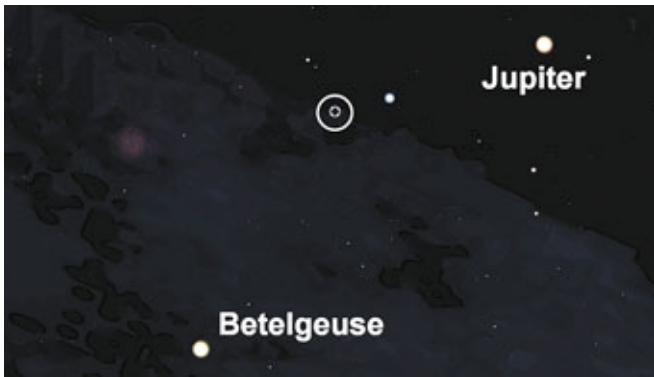


FIGURE 3

Above: Asteroid (51) Nemausa located in circle at 2321 to 2336 hours
Below: Moon, Venus and Mercury

Right: Eclipse

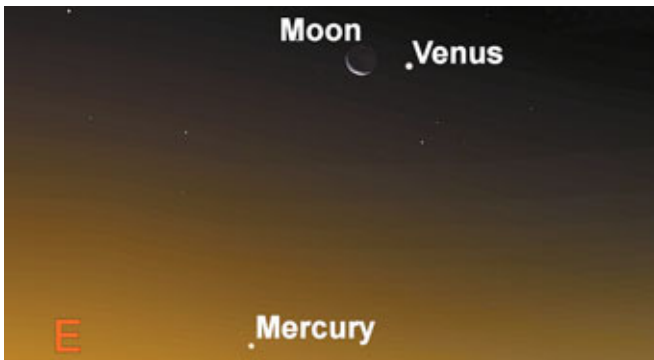


FIGURE 4

—Continued from previous page

Sunday March 30th — Black Moon

February was missing a New Moon, so March gets its second, called the Black Moon. Sleep well, as there won't be any moonlight shining through the porthole in your eyes tonight.

Tuesday April 1st — Close Approach

Asteroid 2009FD, sized at 426 feet (130 metres), will make another close pass to Earth. It will not be as close as the pass was in 2009. The next close approach to Earth occurs on October 29th, 2015. Mars will be the next target with a close approach occurring on May 6th, 2017.



FIGURE 5

Tuesday April 8th — Mars

Contrary to all the internet posts, Mars will not be as big as the Moon tonight. However, it will be at its closest approach to Earth and fully illuminated.

Tuesday April 15th — Eclipse of the Full Moon


The eclipse will begin at 1255 hours. The Full Moon is at 0343 and the maximum eclipse occurs three minutes later, at 0346. The Moon will be below the horizon before the end of the eclipse. The total phase lasts for an hour and 18 minutes. The partial phase lasts more than five hours. You will fall asleep before this eclipse is over. It's going to be a long one, folks!

You may have noticed that this month's The Caribbean Sky includes the first two weeks of April. Thank you to the reader who suggested this. Going forward, we'll print sky happenings from mid-month to mid-month to better correspond with the Caribbean Compass distribution dates throughout the region.

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

Jim Ulrik is a photographer and cruiser currently based in Grenada.

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BY ROSS MAVIS

Tide's Table Biscuits for Boaters

The aroma of freshly baked biscuits wafting from the galley will set even the most critical taste buds salivating sensuously. This easy yet elegant addition to any meal can be used to sop up savory sauces at lunch or dinner, or act as a simple conveyance for melted butter and your favorite sweet breakfast spread.

Interestingly enough, if you are into biscuits here in this part of the world you are not enjoying the same thing they enjoy in Great Britain. I recall my Mum talking about "Ritz biscuits" when the box clearly calls them Ritz Crackers. In Britain, biscuits mean thin, wafer-like crackers, or cookies. Here in the Americas, the term usually refers to small quick breads made with either baking soda or baking powder. Aboard our boat, we get around the controversy by calling them scones.



An e-mail from a reader recently said she would dearly love to duplicate her mother's baking powder biscuits. Her problem is that the recipe was too inexact: calling for a handful of this, a pinch of that and a shake of something else. Many recipes handed down are that way and consistent results are difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Although most biscuit recipes call for regular milk as the liquid ingredient, I maintain that you can't beat sour milk or buttermilk

for superior results. Buttermilk has the added bonus of reducing fat content for those concerned about this aspect. (Yes. Believe it or not, buttermilk has less butterfat content than skimmed milk. If you don't believe me, do a comparison check at your store's dairy case.) My secret ingredient for great biscuits is buttermilk!

The other secret to making good biscuits is to handle them like you handle the one you love: gently. Kneading should be kept to a minimum to ensure a light, fluffy end result. Some recipes omit sugar but a small amount can improve or enhance flavour. Lighter biscuits can also be obtained when using part butter and part shortening, rather than all butter or shortening. Some recipes call for an egg included in the mix and others call for it only to be brushed on the biscuit's exterior before baking.

Here are two biscuit recipes that I encourage you to try. Discover the one you like best or that most closely resembles the biscuits of your past.

If you do not have an oven on board to provide the 425°F baking temperature, these biscuits can be baked in a barbecue. Make them on board, using your barbecue, or head to the beach to bake in a pre-heated reflector oven next to a good hot fire. This unique cooking method and the aroma of freshly baked biscuits will bring a crowd of admirers in no time. Just be sure to keep sand out of the finished buttered and jammed product.

TIP: These versatile recipes can also be used as dumplings on soups and stews, or to top hot fruit desserts. A bit of sugar should be added if used with desserts.

Baking Powder Biscuits

- 2 Cups all purpose flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 Cup cold butter, cubed
- 1 Cup buttermilk
- 1/4 Cup flour for rolling the dough
- 1 egg, lightly beaten, or cream

Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C). In a mixing bowl, combine dry ingredients and mix well. Cut butter into flour mixture using a pastry blender or two knives until mixture is a rough crumble. Add the buttermilk and stir to form a soft, stiff dough.

Flour a board and knead the dough lightly, only until it holds together well. Press dough into a half-inch thickness and cut biscuits out using a floured two-inch cutter (a small water glass will work). Lightly re-work leftover dough and continue cutting biscuits.

Poke holes in top of biscuits using a fork, then brush tops with beaten egg or cream, and bake on a lightly greased baking sheet for 12 to 15 minutes until nicely browned.

Serve hot with your favorite soup or stew, or at breakfast with butter and jam. They will freeze, stored in a zip lock bag. Just defrost by placing the bag in a sunny spot. Great when unexpected guests arrive.

Drop Biscuits

- This biscuit is great for first-time biscuit makers, as it does not require kneading.
- 1 3/4 Cup sifted all-purpose flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 Cup shortening
- 1 Cup buttermilk

Preheat oven to 450°F (233°C). In a large mixing bowl, combine dry ingredients and cut in shortening until mixture becomes a coarse meal in texture. Stir in buttermilk and mix with a fork into a thick batter. Drop by the tablespoonful onto a greased baking sheet, leaving about 1 inch apart. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes.

Variations

To provide variety to a basic biscuit recipe try the following additions:
Cheese Biscuits - Add 2/3 Cup of grated cheese to dry ingredients
Raisin Scones - add 1/4 Cup raisins
Herb Biscuits - Chop two Tablespoons of fresh herbs (such as parsley, dill, thyme or rosemary) and add to the dry ingredients. Dried herbs work as well; just lessen the amount.

Chef Ross can be reached at ross.mavis@gmail.com.

Aphrodisiacs in Caribbean Foods



by Shirley Hall

duction of male hormones, as well as potassium, which helps to regulate the female thyroid gland — not sexy per se, but you'll look and feel pretty good.

I grow celery and, believe it or not, this is also high in two essential nutrients necessary for great sex, androsterone and adrostenol, which act as a sexual attractant when eaten.

Three more supposed aphrodisiacs are a bit off the wall, but again are Trini favorites. Pumpkin seeds are good for your system because they contain a lot of zinc. The water from coconuts is high in vitamin C and has electrolytes. It is also a metabolism booster that increases blood flow. As Harry Belafonte sang, "Coconut water is good for your daughter..." And of course there is the famous sea moss tonic.

But the king of all sexual stimulants is *bois bandé*, the bark or wood of a local tree. It can be difficult to find because the trees have obviously been depleted in frenzied attacks. Since the advent of Europeans carousing the Caribbean and chasing local women, there have been rumors of a mountain brew of a tree bark, *bois bandé*, botanically *Roupala montana*, or Iron Wood. One side effect is that prostate cancer is extremely rare among the men who drink this herbal tea. I wonder who did the research?

My husband first encountered *bois bandé* by listening to a buddy who had heard The Mighty Sparrow sing its virtues ("Nothing keeps a woman happier than a man charged with *bois bandé*!"). As one of their cohorts was getting married, he and his friends decided it would be appropriate for the wedding-night festivities. Walking into the market in Castries, St. Lucia, they searched out the herbal section, which was then on the second floor. As he asked one vendor, she shouted, "*Man wants bois bandé!*" Embarrassed, he nevertheless procured the bark and got the instructions to make it work the best:

Get a bottle of clear over-proof rum. Cut the *bois bandé* into slivers until they fit down the neck. Put in as much *bois bandé* as you can without eliminating too much rum. Then add some almonds, cloves, cardamom, and cinnamon. (See photo.)

When the clear rum turns rusty-colored, it is ready. Drink a double shot three hours before bedtime and get ready for the sheets to rumble. Beware: it tastes horrible — or so I am told. It is reputed that you can hurt yourself seriously with an overdose.

Bois bandé comes in several shapes and colors depending on the island. Grenada has its version of *bois bandé*, botanically *g. Parinari campestris*. Some use the bark; here in Trinidad we use the wood. The spices all add something to the kick and flavor. Dominica makes a rum purported to contain *bois bandé*, but the amount would be so slight that the effect of the alcohol would be the main cause of *amor*.

Sex has been big business since the beginning of time. Aphrodisiacs followed close behind. They are as popular as ever today, but be careful: too much can hurt or worse, embarrass.

Cinnamon Pumpkin Seeds
2 Cups fresh pumpkin seeds
2 Tablespoons butter
2 Tablespoons brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon (freshly ground if possible)

Rinse pumpkin seeds and allow to dry. Spread seeds on a baking sheet and put in an oven at 300°F for about an hour. Carefully scrape the seeds into a suitable mixing bowl and add butter, sugar and cinnamon. Mix well, spread again on the baking sheet and return to a 350°F oven for ten to 15 minutes until golden brown. Might be an exciting snack!

Shirley Hall is the author of The New Caribbean Home Garden Handbook.



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Grenada's Workboat Regatta
Visiting the Virgins
The Still Blissful San Blas

... and much more!



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MISSING WALTER
Dear Compass,
 We try to keep in touch with what's happening in our former cruising islands and were saddened to read in the January 2014 issue of *CC* that our good friend Walton "Walter" Budd passed away recently. We have many fond memories of him. Every time we visited Mayreau or the Tobago Cays we would see his pink-highlighted boat and he would come over to say hello and have a friendly chat. Of course we would always ask him to bring us those freshly baked French baguettes and groceries from Union Island across the channel.
 His smiling face and helpful ways will be surely missed by those visiting the Grenadines.
Tito and Roberto Figueroa
Florida

READY TO BITE
Dear Compass,
 In response to Ellen Birrell's letter "Are Guns the Answer?" in January's *Compass*: Guns are one answer. There are three basic options to reduce the probability of being killed, injured, and/or robbed by armed pirates in Venezuelan waters. The first and most effective is, don't go there. However that option is not always viable for people who live there, run charter-boats or are delivery crews, nor is it convenient for boats wanting to go from Trinidad or the Grenadines to the ABCs and the western Caribbean.
 For the latter, a second option is to visit only areas considered relatively safe, being mostly out of reach of pirates in *piñeros* and where attacks have not been reported in the past — namely La Tortuga, Los Roques and Las Aves. Stay out to sea well north of Los Testigos and Margarita.
 To sail anywhere else in Venezuela unarmed is like walking naked in Sin City on a Saturday night. It is not enough just to have a gun; you need a plan to repel attacks just as you should have plans for fire, man overboard, etcetera. Everyone on board should be trained in the handling and firing of the weapons and conversant with the plan.
 The object is to stop the pirates boarding, because once they are on board it is too late. This means:

- Don't advertise your leaving times and routes.
- Keep well offshore, ten miles or more.
- Keep all lights off at night; only turn them on while big ships are close if you don't have AIS.
- Don't anchor for the night except in marinas.
- Keep a permanent 24-hour on-deck watch.
- Fly a Venezuelan flag (this says "I am armed to the teeth and ready to bite").
- If a piñero comes near (100 metres) wave it off and show your gun(s); if it keeps coming fire over their heads; if they continue to come start firing at them and weave the boat around at full speed to make it difficult for them to board. Put out a Mayday, activate DSC, EPIRBs and other PLDs.

- Wooden piñeros and some GRP ones use plastic 60-litre drums for gasoline. A flare might not harm a person, but putting one near the gas drum and outboard motor will surely distract them.

I would say the best guns to have are automatic 12-gauge shotguns (very effective at short range) and/or 9mm or larger calibre pistols (lethal and easy to hide). Remember, pirates are looking for easy targets and need to get control quickly; firm resistance can dissuade them. A cruising yacht makes a much better defensive position than an open piñero. As far as I know there has not been a case of a boat that was armed and alert being successfully attacked while underway, including the large fleet of Venezuelan pleasure yachts which carry an arsenal that the crews are ready to use.

When Ken Peters on *Chill* was killed in the Isla Borracha incident in 2008 (see www.noonsite.com/Members/sue/R2008-11-10-2), if his friend Steve, an ex-navy man, had not had a gun close at hand to fire back immediately both couples would probably be dead. If Steve had thrown the attackers a warning shot instead of a water bottle maybe Ken would still be alive.
 I hope you are never in such a situation, but imagine if you were — would you rather meekly submit and wait to be killed and/or raped, or fight back and if you lose at least take some of them with you?
Cris Robinson
Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela

Hi Cris,
 While I respect your advice (hey, you're in Venezuela; I'm not), we know people who were boarded by Venezuelan pirates, used the "sit still and be quiet" tactic, and although robbed, were left unharmed. Some folks just don't want to get into a firefight. I totally agree with you, though, that until things there change radically, the easiest way to avoid armed pirates in Venezuelan waters is: don't go there.
Sally

IN DANGER OF OVER-REACTING
Dear Compass,
 Whilst the bludgeoning to death of yachtsman Roger Pratt aboard his anchored sailboat *Magnetic Attraction* [see "Yachtsman Killed in Vieux Fort" in Info & Updates in the January issue of *Compass*] is no longer headline news in the international press, it remains at the forefront of the minds of all of us who sail in the Caribbean.
 Four St. Lucia nationals have been arrested and charged with his murder and presumably, if found guilty, will be appropriately sentenced.
 Following so soon after the vicious attack on Christina Curtin aboard *S/V Rainbow* whilst anchored off Frigate Rock, Union Island, the cruising community is even more mindful of their personal security arrangements.

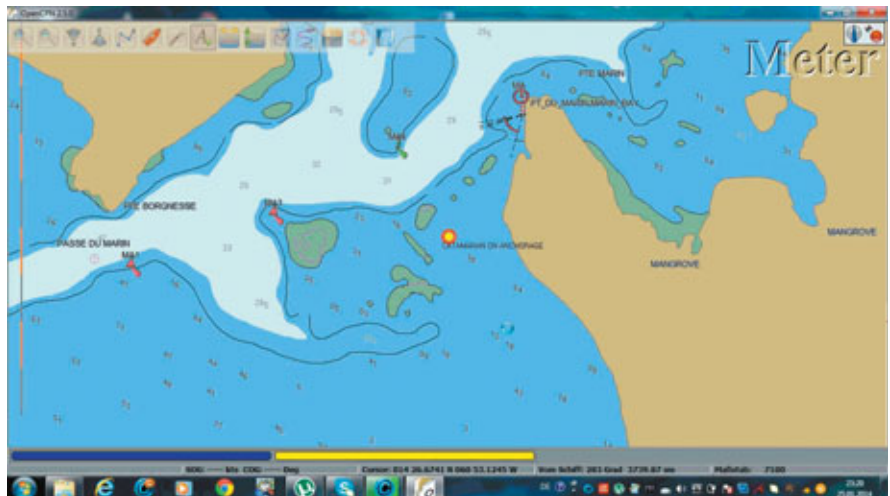
But just how far do we go? I know some crews lock themselves below each night when at anchor, which is something I'd be very loathe to do. Some carry firearms; should we all? I don't think so! Or do we quit the West Indies altogether?
 Although revolted by these atrocities, I believe we may be in danger of over-reacting to them. When taken into context with the number of yachts cruising around the West Indies, these horrendous attacks still remain isolated incidents with a relatively low probability of occurrence for any particular one of us.
 So although we should remain vigilant and take whatever counter-measures we each consider appropriate, we must also remember that the vast majority of the local people are friendly and welcoming, and are just as horrified by recent events as we are.

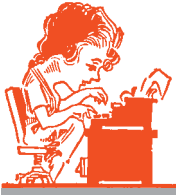
Dick McClary
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www.sailboat-cruising.com

UNBELIEVABLE
Dear Compass,
 I'd like to address the mess about anchor lights at nighttime in Caribbean bays!
 On several occasions I have counted the yachts by daylight and as well the yachts at night with anchor lights on.

—Continued on page 45

In the entrance to Le Marin in Martinique, at the marked position, a catamaran was anchored. His anchor light was a blinking red lamp — a real danger!





Letter of the Month

Dear Compass,

I am a 50-year-old Brazilian woman who graduated in Communications and Public Relations studies. I worked in the communications industry at marinas in Brazil. My father competed in many sailing races and I always liked boats and had big dreams of making long-haul sailings.

In 2007, I lived in a town on the northern coast of São Paulo in Brazil where I worked as a business consultant for the government and enjoyed surfing. Via the internet, I submitted my curriculum vitae to various sites to work as crew on yachts. I received some calls, but my lack of experience and lack of crew qualifications did not give me great opportunities.

One day a couple of Spanish sailors who were in Brazil with a broken autopilot responded to my ad and offered that I help them take their boat to Trinidad & Tobago. I accepted. The trip was 13 days underway from Brazil to Trinidad. I did shifts at the helm every two or four hours. It was a very stressful and tiring passage.

My inexperience and naivety brought me many problems. First, before leaving Brazil, I signed a formal contract with the captain of the boat that took me from Brazil to Trinidad, but I did not check to ensure that he had his own papers in order. To my surprise, the Spanish captain had an expired passport and Immigration in Trinidad gave us 48 hours to leave the island. His boat had many other problems other than the autopilot, which included a water intake. I realized that we had made a dangerous trip.

*'The captain told me that
if I did not have sex with him,
I would not get any food'*

While in Chaguaramas, I was offered another job. But first, I went back to the boat that I arrived on, as that captain was obligated to give me an airline ticket back to my country. When I returned to the first boat, no one was on board; the captain and another crewmember had gone to the supermarket. While waiting, the Dutch captain of a neighbouring boat asked if I was in trouble and invited me over to talk. So I went to talk with him, seeing that we Brazilians make friends easily.

I honestly did not see it, but the Dutch captain already had bad intentions. He took advantage of my naivety and offered me a job as a sailor. I explained that I had little experience, but he told me that it was not a problem and that he would teach me all that needed to be done. Unfortunately, my English was not good and I struggled to understand him, but I stated I wanted honest work with a contract and payment.

When the Spanish captain from the first boat arrived, the Dutch captain spoke to him in English. The Spanish captain translated the conversation for me, but somehow came up with various excuses so as not to give me my airline ticket to Brazil. But at this point, I was happy, believing that I had gotten another job as a sailor.

The next day, we all went to Immigration to explain that I would be signing off the Spanish boat and signing on as crew on the Dutch boat. Immigration would only allow me to sign on as crew if the boat was leaving immediately. Under the circumstances, they requested that I leave the country and re-enter and then sign on to the Dutch boat as crew. Immigration forced the Spanish captain to pay my expenses to leave the country so I could return to crew on the Dutch boat.

The two captains reached an agreement. The Spanish captain would pay for my airline ticket and for hotel, food and other expenses while I waited for my return flight to Trinidad. We went to the office of the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT) at the Crews Inn Marina, where I met Gina Carvalho, who explained to the Spanish captain how and where to register the contract.

After the contract was done and reviewed by Immigration and the airline ticket purchased I went to Venezuela. While there I met the man who is now my current husband and great love, a seasoned navigator, who has spent 30 years at sea. He is also Spanish.

I was in Venezuela for ten days waiting to return to Trinidad to work with the Dutch captain. When I returned to Trinidad, on the first day, the Dutch captain told me that the contract was a lie and that he wanted sex with me. This revolted and upset me so much. I told him of my new boyfriend in Venezuela and that I was not interested. The Dutch captain and I had a long discussion. By this time, it was night so I had no choice but to sleep on the boat. I locked my cabin door and the Dutch captain tried to force the door open. The next morning, not having eaten anything for many hours, I asked him to give me something to eat and a discussion ensued. I tried to explain to him that I would only do honest and gainful work. He told me that if I did not have sex with him, I would not get any food. He even threatened me physically.

I was completely broke and did not know anyone in Trinidad. Very frightened, I sought the help of Gina at YSATT who was very helpful and was extremely caring and gentle. Gina sought a translator to understand my story and to see how she could help me. With the help from a Venezuelan as a translator, I explained everything that happened.

Amazing! Immediately Gina contacted Immigration and called my boyfriend in Venezuela, who at the time I had just met, to see if he would pay my airfare out of Trinidad. Gina got me a hotel room for the night, food, a taxi to the airport and cash for the departure tax, and took me down to Immigration and explained the situation. The lady Immigration officer, who was extremely understanding, organized everything for my immediate departure and also discovered that the Dutch captain had never signed me on to the boat as crew. Gina took her car and with other friends, went to retrieve my suitcase from the Dutch boat — she would not let me go alone to collect it.

I received support and care in the safe hands of Gina and the entire staff of YSATT. Thanks to people like Gina and Catherine from the YSATT office, YSATT's president Jane Peake, and Jesse James of Members Only Taxi, today I am very happy. I have a beautiful life, married to my love from Venezuela and currently working as a holistic therapist.

I am very grateful to know such a wonderful woman as Gina Carvalho. Sometimes I wonder what would have become of me without help from Gina. She became a great friend and to this day, we still communicate via e-mail. Gina taught me the power of human solidarity.

I learned afterward that Trinidad & Tobago Immigration forbade the Dutch captain to ever return to the country after his departure. It seems that he had a history of luring women to his boat. I, apparently, was not the first woman that this happened to nor do I believe I was the last. This story could have had a very different ending but I had the courage to stand up and seek help.

**Thanks Gina and crew, you were truly amazing to me!
Fatima Caiuby**

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CALENDAR

MARCH

- 1 Royalist Regatta, Barbados. Barbados Sailing Association (BSA), sailbarbados@gmail.com, www.sailbarbados.com
- 2 Carnival Sailing Regatta, Saint Barth Yacht Club, sbyc@wanadoo.fr, http://stbarthyachtclub.com
- 3 Public holiday in Anguilla (James Ronald Webster Day celebrated)
- 2-5 Tobago Festival of Winds (kite boarding, wind surfing, paddle boarding)
- 2-9 Curaçao Youth Championship, Curaçao, http://ysco.org
- 3 Public holiday in BVI (H. Lavity Stoutt's Birthday)
- 3-4 Carnival Monday and Tuesday in most Dutch and French islands, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Dominica, Carriacou, Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela, and other places
- 4 Budget Marine Match Racing Cup, St. Maarten. www.heinekenregatta.com
- 5 Public holiday in many places (Ash Wednesday)
- 5-9 6th Annual South Grenada Regatta. www.southgrenadaregatta.com
- 6 Gill Commodore's Cup, St. Maarten. www.heinekenregatta.com
- 6-9 34th St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. www.heinekenregatta.com
- 7-10 Annual Dark & Stormy Regatta, Anegada, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), tel (284) 496-8685, martin@sailsistership.com
- 8 International Women's Day
- 8-9 Antigua Annual Laser Open. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel (268) 460-1799, ayc@yachtclub.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
- 8-12 Caribbean Arts & Crafts Festival, Tortola, BVI. dreadeye@surfbvi.com
- 8-17 St. Patrick's Festival, Montserrat. www.visitmontserrat.com
- 10 Public holiday in BVI (Commonwealth Day)
- 10 Public holiday in Belize (Benefactors Day celebrated)
- 12-16 Caribbean Fine Art Fair, Barbados. www.cafafair.com
- 14 Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (National Heroes' Day)
- 16 FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Pinney's Beach, Nevis
- 17 Public holiday in Montserrat (St. Patrick's Day); St. Patrick's Day Festival, Grenada
- 17 Public holiday in Guyana and Suriname (Phagwah)
- 19-22 Caribbean Superyacht Rendezvous, Virgin Gorda. www.loropianasuperyachtregattaandrendezvous.com
- 20 Vernal Equinox
- 20-23 Puerto Rico Jazz Fest. http://rheinekenjazz.com
- 21-23 Caribbean International Boat Show, Puerto del Rey, Puerto Rico. www.cibspr.com
- 22-24 Cartagena International Boat Show, Colombia www.easyfairs.com/events_216/cartagena-boat-show
- 23 Powerade Regatta, St. Maarten. St. Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC), tel (599) 544-2075, info@smyc.com, www.smyc.com
- 27-30 St. Barths Bucket Regatta. www.bucketregattas.com/stbarths
- 28-30 St. Thomas International Regatta, USVI. www.rolexcupregatta.com
- 30 Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Spiritual Baptist "Shouter" Liberation Day)
- 31-6 April BVI Spring Regatta & Sailing Festival, Tortola. www.bvispringregatta.org

APRIL

- 2-6 Curaçao International Film Festival. www1.curaçaoiffr.com
- 7-12 Oyster Regatta, Antigua. www.oystermarine.com/events
- 7-13 Puerto Rico International Film Festival, Rincón, Puerto Rico. www.rinconfilm.com
- 10-11 Trinidad to Grenada Race for Girl Pat Trophy, Grenada Yacht Club (GYC), tel (473) 440-6826, gyc@spiceisle.com, www.grenadayachtclub.com
- 10-13 Annual BVI Yacht Brokerage Showcase, Virgin Gorda. Bitter End Yacht Club (BEYC), tel (312) 506-6205, binfo@beyc.com, www.beyc.com
- 12-13 Girl Pat Race Series in Grenada. GYC
- 14-19 5th Annual Les Voiles de Saint-Barth. www.lesvoilesdesaintbarth.com
- 15 FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Pinney's Beach, Nevis
- 17-21 Bequia Easter Regatta. **See ad on page 13**
- 17-22 Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. **See ad on page 15**
- 18 Public holiday in many places (Good Friday)
- 18-20 Spanish Town Fisherman Jamboree & Wahoo Fishing Tournament, Virgin Gorda. www.bvitourism.com
- 18-21 Gouyave Easter Regatta, Grenada. gougouyave.gd/events10/annual-events
- 19 Public holiday in Venezuela (Signing of the Act of Venezuelan Independence)
- 19 Virgin Queen Pursuit Race, Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, sailing@royalbvicyc.org, www.royalbvicyc.org
- 19-21 Virgin Gorda Easter Festival. www.bvitourism.com
- 19-22 Tobago Jazz Experience. www.tobagojazzexperience.com
- 21 Public holiday in many places (Easter Monday)
- 22 International Earth Day
- 25 Guadeloupe to Antigua Race. www.sailingweek.com
- 25-30 St. Barth Film Festival. www.stbarthff.org
- 26 Yachting World Round Antigua Race. www.sailingweek.com
- 26-2 May 47th Annual Antigua Sailing Week. www.sailingweek.com
- 27 Public holiday in Dutch islands (Netherlands King's Birthday)
- 28 Public holiday in Barbados (National Heroes' Day)
- 30-11 May 24th St. Lucia Jazz Festival. www.stluciajazz.org
- TBA Virgin Queen Pizza Pursuit Race, BVI. RBVIYC

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

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

WHAT'S ON MY MIND...

What Drives Cruisers Crazy!

by Laurie Corbett

I am aware that, for the most part, the editor would rather not publish negative material, and that the patrons would rather not read it. However, I hope this compilation might be informative, entertaining, and may even open a little wider the window into our own psyches.

I came up with this idea when, during a visit to another sailor's cockpit, something came up that sent my host over the edge to that dark side we all have. (It wasn't me spilling red wine, although I did.) After he regained his composure, we stumbled into a discussion about how many of us experience anger that sometimes borders on the irrational in regard to certain situations cruisers encounter. My memory of the discussion is rather fuzzy, as it was well after sundown and the related rituals. Still, the idea intrigued me and I've attempted an exploration of it. I have asked my small circle of friends to tell me what really bugs them while cruising



KRISTIN HUNTER

in the Caribbean, besides their Volvos and Yanmars and other boat parts that refuse to cooperate with their plans. I was surprised by some, although not by most. Here are some of the most popular:

- Other boaters anchoring on top of you, or not really knowing how to anchor, or planning to arrive after dark, or immediately abandoning their boat after anchoring, or putting a stern anchor out in a crowded anchorage. Although anchoring is number one on the "what bugs you" list (after cantankerous boat equipment), it is too obvious, and is an article all by itself, for another day. I also believe we have all made our mistakes here and many of us are still at it.
- Local yacht service people, or "boat boys", who ding the side of your boat, then say "No problem!" We are never sure if they mean, "Don't worry about the damage to my runabout" or "No problem; that ding isn't going to sink you..." or "Hey, it just isn't my problem". In any case they're right; and from their perspective, they can't see how important it might be to us, who seem to have it made. It may be time for us to get into the habit of placing our fenders out on each side of our cockpits on the way into each anchorage.
- Sailors, right beside us, who put their mainsail up while still at anchor in a crowded anchorage. (The sailor who shared this one got hit hard by a powered-up boat at anchor.) Even when this is done properly, in an uncrowded anchorage, with winds reasonably light, their traveler loose, lots of mainsheet let out so that the main can't power up, AND with their engine(s) running with someone at the controls for any emergency, it can still be unnerving when your boat is a potential target. Often, however, this complete list of safety requirements is ignored, and their mainsail is powered up, the boat ranging back and forth to wrench at their windlass just feet from other boats, and, worse yet, they may be charterers who don't own the boat to have much stake in the situation. Even the most experienced sailor can still have the traveler fouled or the mainsheet caught on something, and have to fight the boat back under control. Frankly, if I ran a charter business, I'd outlaw the practice for the boats under my control, professional skipper or not.
- Dinghies at a crowded dock with the motors up and sharp propellers exposed. I assume this is done out of habit or to increase the life of their outboard anodes. To the next guy, coming into the dock in an inflatable, the price of which always surprises, this seems rather malicious. Me? I try to remember the teachings of the Buddha, as I trespass into the other dinghy and smile through kind thoughts, as I return their propeller to the water. Other dinghy dock etiquette, including short painters causing congestion and poor efforts at retying other's painters after extricating their own, also came up.
- Giving way at sea. My own "angry situation" is when, on port tack and facing a potential head-on collision, I make a large, obvious correction, downwind and away from my destination, and the other boat changes direction to head right at my course again. No wonder firearms are discouraged down here!
- Possibly what is happening is that the other sailor, hand steering with no other reference than our boat on the horizon, thinks he's maintaining his course, but is maintaining it only in reference to our boat. Regardless, there is nothing for us to do but keep turning our wheel or tiller to starboard. Belize, here we come.
- Anchor lights. Many people are outraged by the way anchored or moored boats are lit, or not lit, at night. I've heard strong arguments on the issue even on local morning networks, and have instigated some cockpit debates as to which is worse: having no light on at night versus having a strobe or flashing light to show your boat's location. No consensus on that — either makes most salts angry.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

We have been in Prince Rupert Bay, Dominica when a boat behind us carried a super-bright flashing masthead light that was eerily similar to the light on the tower near Rollo Point; and we have been in Admiralty Bay to see a boat with a bright nightlight flashing not totally unlike the light at the edge of the Devil's Table reef. I'd say that this is more evil than an unlit boat in an anchorage because if someone runs hard into the unlit boat, at least the unlit boat is part of the wreckage, and shares in the bad karma. Not so, the poor person who is misguided by a flashing NON-aid to navigation, and finds himself on a reef.

Some cruisers are lighting their boats with flashers specifically meant to pin to lifejackets. Isn't this a little dastardly? If these flashing lights are regularly used to delineate hazards on the water to avoid, we must pity the poor abandoned swimmer in the lifejacket, hoping against hope that his/her flashing light might be his/her salvation. It is kinder to believe that these cruisers have not thought of this.

- People who fish in marine parks. The rules in some of these areas are either confusing or simply un-enforced, from some observations. When you are asked by fishermen with nets to move your boat in a marine protected area, it is easy to be confused. At least, in the Tobago Cays, the rangers are openly asking for assistance to apprehend anyone, local or transient, who harm the coral, fish, or wildlife. That is clarity.

- Sailors who turn their radios off. Some find the radios annoying, some can't sleep with the "Appelle a Tous" girl calling out all night from Fort de France. Still, turning the radio off violates the agreement: "I'll be there for you if you'll be there for me"; and if you don't have your radio on, I can't tell you that your boat is dragging fast into the reef. Like the fellow who brought this one up, I've chased thieves off my boat and found no one else listening when I tell the anchorage that they might expect company. As more bays in the Caribbean set up morning nets on VHF68, maybe more of us will be willing to monitor this channel 24/7. There appears to be very little chatter on it after dark, and still a security issue might be dealt with.

KRISTIN HUNTER



- Emergency flares on New Year's Eve. This came from an "admiral" who had to get out of bed and fill buckets of water as these dangerous projectiles landed around her boat. The nut in question was shooting from his boat into the wind over top of the other boats at anchor. Imagine dripping, glowing, phosphorus falling into your sailbag. Happy New Year! We ought to encourage these people to consider giving their old flares to the local fishermen. The complainant made it clear that her preference was to have the triggers pulled with the barrels well braced in the revelers' fundaments.

- Noisy wind generators in crowded anchorages, and noisy, smelly portable generators. I'm a little surprised that wind generators are not given a little more acceptance as a "green" source of energy, especially in comparison to the portable generators. Still, the portable generators are just a way to solve a problem and a little tolerance might be justified. With further discussion we learned that the complainant's primary objection is to the noise (and smell of the generator) being an irritant during sundowners. Is nothing sacred? He made me feel a little guilty about my own windmill, but hey! — it is making ice, a very useful item during sundowners, so mine will be running.

- Sailors and their guests peeing off the back of the boat. Well, the Admiral don't cotton to that kinda stuff on *Cat Tales*, but boy, the things we see. We become rather insensitive to it after a while. Still, I was shocked last January, when a middle-aged lady squatted on the lowest step of a giant catamaran that had anchored almost on top of us. It wasn't that she was only 40 feet away and was happy to be our breakfast entertainment, or that she seemed otherwise quite the proper lady. I knew that the boat had four toilets, and she didn't seem pressed for time. Well, you seldom successfully fight cultural differences, and often this is the issue.

- Jet skis in Rodney Bay. Many sailors say they avoid or cut short their visits to this otherwise delightful destination because of the noise, waves, fear of collision, and unsafe swimming waters. *Cat Tales* arrives in the Bay with a feeling of coming home — and soon leaves with relief. Many tourists enjoy renting these machines and using our homes as traffic cones, weaving in and out, barely missing each other, and being amazedly gratified to pay for an activity that requires absolutely no talent or responsibility. Truth is, this is a competing activity that also brings the island money, and we may just have to accept that. Certainly, we ought to do more to thank those other island jurisdictions where this activity is not allowed.

I think it is okay for us cruising visitors to have some issues in the Caribbean. Maybe this life is so great that our sensitivity to issues increases, or maybe we all need the full gamut of emotions to be healthy, and we'll always have some negative passion. Even with the sunsets, the easy life, the perfect friends and our constant study of philosophy here, it still may be necessary for us to feel strongly about something. Or maybe these are real issues. They are real to those who suggested them. When somebody says "Oh, don't get me started!" — then don't get them started. I'm sure they'll be fine company otherwise.

Article by Laurie Corbett, S/V Cat Tales.

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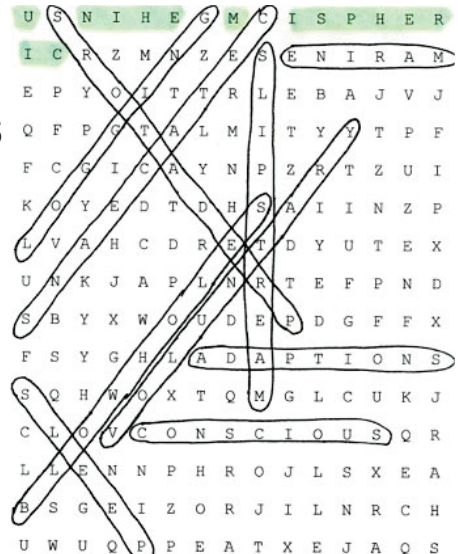
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continued on next page →

—Continued from page 38 ...**Reader's Forum**
Those showing anchor lights are less than 50 percent. Think about it.

We all know the variety of anchor lights, ranging from illuminated masts, to flashing Christmas trees, to cheap Chinese LED garden-lamps with a range less than 1/8 mile. The worst I ever saw was in the entrance to Le Marin, Martinique (see picture on page 38). On the marked position (red/yellow), a catamaran was on anchor. His anchor light was a red lamp blinking every two seconds. I wonder what happened with this brainless skipper! He is a real danger, at this position as well any place else.

Peter Saula
S/Y PESA20

HE LOST HIS FREEDOM

Dear Compass,

We have a friend who lost his freedom. Eric Sommer was confronted in May 2012 by a local man coming aboard his sailing vessel off Pigeon Island, St. Lucia. They had a verbal, non-violent confrontation. Eric managed to impress his aggressor, who decided to dive overboard to get back to the beach by swimming. Unfortunately this man drowned. Eric was taken in by the police for questioning on the 12th of May 2012. Since that day he is imprisoned in St. Lucia, waiting for the process: the act of accusation is still not delivered in spite of the intervention of the French Consulate and counsel engaged by his father, who is very worried about how long his son can stand these conditions. In October the court fixed the date for the accusation on January 23rd, 2014. This date was cancelled.

Fortunately Eric has a strong character. He sailed around the world as a single-handed sailor on his 30-metre ketch, *Protinus*. *Protinus* was moored in Rodney Bay, Pigeon Island, until November 2013, when friends were asked by Eric, his father and the French Consul to bring the boat to his home harbor in Bequia.

We feel upset and revolted. After staying quiet for months, according to the advice of Eric's lawyer we now want his story to be known. We hope there will be justice for Eric Sommer. We have just created a petition: www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Kenny_Anthony_Prime_Minister_of_Saint_Lucia_West_Indies_Free_Eric_Sommer_1/?eyVUNg.

Irmtrud Degaudenzi-Bongartz and Pascal Degaudenzi
voiliertournesol@gmail.com

Dear Compass Readers,

In the interest of context, we must mention that "the word on the beach" in St. Lucia is that this incident was possibly not a random boarding for the purpose of robbery, but rather might have been the tragic result of a love triangle, something (we hope) that doesn't happen to the average cruiser. And of course nobody will ever hear the drowned man's (Lucas François') side of the story. Regardless, Eric, a French national, has been in jail awaiting trial for nearly two years, and other cruisers should be aware that the wheels of justice grind slowly. Even in a case where your boat is boarded, if the death or injury of a boarder ensues and you are implicated, you may well be charged and your jail stay in the islands while awaiting trial could be a painfully long one. (Being a foreign national with a boat, you'd likely be considered a flight risk, and not get bail.) We hope that Eric's day in court comes soon.
CC

MY LITTLE INSPIRATION

Dear Compass,

This is my little inspiration about sailing. Here are some good things about sailing, from the viewpoint of a very positive woman sailor who has been sailing for many years, has circumnavigated the globe twice, and has been sailing up and down the Caribbean islands many times.

To me the best thing about sailing is that you are traveling in your own house with all your things. In a few hours' sailing you are in a new country — in your own home!

When you are sailing you can dress yourself in a bathing suit, or with some comfortable shorts and T-shirts, or a pareo wrap, or stay in your undies — and always barefoot.

You don't need a special date to make a party; you invite your neighbors and cheer the sunset.

Almost all the time your neighboring sailors easily become part of your family. If you have any problem with your neighbor, you just raise your anchor and move to another spot.

You meet great people from all over the world, and friendships start very easily. You learn amazing things and acculturate yourself by learning new languages and new gastronomy.

You have a lot of time to develop artistic skills that you never know that you had before sailing.

You can be lazy or busy, and nobody is going to bother you about it.

You discover the whole world with your own eyes, and you will be able to take thousands of pictures.

Sailing is a way to be in touch with the universe. You have the opportunity to appreciate the true beauty of the stars, the full moon, the sunrise, and the sunsets.

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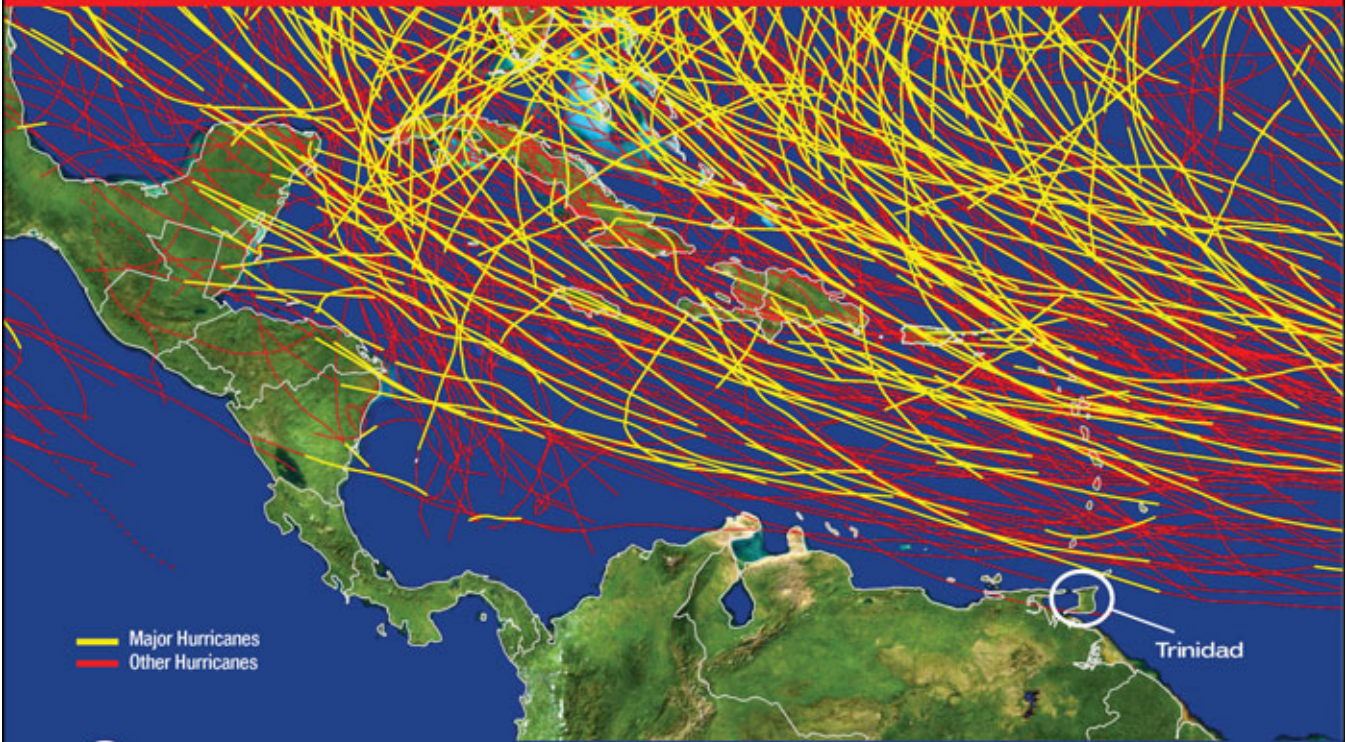
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MP = Market Place pages 42 to 45
C/W = Caribbean-wide

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