



Aviva

Dawg Tales

Number 5 : Nov 2015 - Jan 2016



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Words from the Helm

First off we have to congratulate the intrepid sailors of the Fall Rally. With El Nino effects, we had unusually challenging weather this year. But, all boats are safe - we are thankful for that. And of course we have to thank Chris Parker for the long hours he had to put in this year, with the fleet spread out, late season tropical weather systems to dodge, and a lot of head winds. And, not to be forgotten, we have to thank Tatja and all the volunteers on shore, on the water, and in the islands who helped on preparations, the offshore passage, and the continuing activities in the islands. Now we can all enjoy our time in paradise, whether that is in the Caribbean or the Bahamas.



This is very exciting time for the Salty Dawg organization. Over the next couple of months we will be rolling out some wonderful changes. Stay tuned!

And if you are planning to head to the US east coast for the summer, don't forget our Spring Rally. We will have several activities in North Sound and Nanny Cay prior to departure. May 15th is our scheduled date for departure. Send an email to info@saltydawgrally.org to get your name on the list for the Spring Rally. Further details on the Spring rally will be posted soon on the website - so check back in a couple weeks for more details.

We look forward to seeing you around the islands!
Linda, Bill and Zoe s/v Sapphire

The Fall 2015 Rally Arrives in the BVI

by Hank George, s/v *Flash*



By late November the majority of the 78 vessels and over 300 sailors in the Fall 2015 Salty Dawg fleet had arrived at their destinations of BVI or Bahamas. With the unusual weather pattern this year offering limited windows for departure, several boats left around November 1st, a few cast off shortly after, most of the rest of the fleet departed around November 11th, and the final two boats left November 28th - a very broad window. The early boats had some windward work and a sporty crossing of the Gulf Stream, as Chris Parker warned them they would. Other vessels chose to wait for more favorable conditions, and departed later with mostly

downwind sailing. And, the last boats found almost no wind, and a lot of motoring.

The 2015 Fall Rally was another successful and fun event by the Salty Dawg Rally, with wide acclaim from those who participated. The Fall Salty Dawg Rally was once again by far the largest rally from the east coast of the US, clearly the choice of blue water sailors. Kudos to all of you that made the passage this year. It is a major accomplishment!

The Arrival Dinner at the Bitter End Yacht Club, Virgin Gorda was held November 22nd, with a lively array of 90 sailors who participated in the Rally. At the Dinner, the entire fleet was congratulated for their fine seamanship and accomplishment of a passage that can be challenging at this time of year. This year's El Nino effects led to high pressure systems passing further south than normal, with east winds as far north as 26 degrees, and large areas of high pressure with low wind.



Additionally, the energy from these systems led to stalled low pressure troughs just north of the Caribbean that at times had tropical characteristics. These challenges had Chris Parker working long hours for the Salty Dawg fleet, supporting the AM weather Nets, the PM special Salty Dawg Net, and the special Salty Dawg daily email weather updates. Chris's expertise was on full display as he guided vessels around weather systems, and prepared them for the strong squalls that popped up north of the tropics from time to time, and even continued for the entire month of November.

Awards were presented to *True Love IV* for their efforts in assisting *Aviva* to free their prop from fishing net material snagged hundreds of miles offshore, and to *Growltiger* for their determined efforts to secure a damaged rig after a rig fitting failure (which failed despite a professional inspection prior to departure). Unable to sail after the failure, they motored much of the trip to get well east of a tropical weather feature, and then successfully executed a mid-ocean fuel transfer from a freighter to be able to motor the rest of the way to the BVI.

A 'Thank You' skit focused on acknowledging Bill & Linda Knowles for their extensive efforts on behalf of the Rally and the entire fleet. Bill and Linda were delayed due to fuel issues and couldn't be at the Arrival Dinner but arrived safely in the BVI on December 9th. After the skit the sailors on hand all rose to give Bill & Linda a well-deserved extended applause as a thank you for their amazing efforts - the chorus and applause lasting for many minutes.

While also not in attendance at the Salty Dawg Arrival Dinner, Chris Parker received extensive applause from all the sailors - his hard work and sage advice proved he is at the top of his game.

After the fleet's arrival in the BVI, the fun continued with extensive camaraderie, a morning Salty Dawg Rally North Sound VHF Net, shared happy hours, day excursions to points of interest or a group lunch at a scenic stop, Thanksgiving Eve at The Fat Virgin Café, pot-luck Thanksgiving on the beach, SDR-only yoga at the BEYC each morning, and of course the Arrival Party.





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On December 10th 90 Dawgs rendezvoused for a shoreside party in Tortola at the Bamboushay Café, with world renowned Foxy entertaining, a West Indian BBQ dinner and dancing to a live band. The strong bonds formed from the Rally and these social events lead to numerous impromptu gatherings throughout the Virgins, the Caribbean and even into the Pacific. Safety, fun, camaraderie, and seamanship - all hallmarks of the Salty Dawg Rally.

Over 470 boats and more than 1,880 sailors have now participated in the Salty Dawg rallies since the nonprofit organization was founded. Thanks to all of the volunteers, participants and members that have made the 2015 Rally a tremendous success, and to our over 40 sponsors that have donated time, products, services and funds.

Rally, Rally

(Passage from Trinidad to the BVI)

By Bill Woodruff, s/v *Kalunamoo*



We participated in two Salty Dawg Rallies from Hampton VA to the BVI aboard our 47' ketch, *Kalunamoo*. The first was the infamous 2013 rally that saw very rough weather the first couple of days out of Hampton. The second one, 2014, was much milder with light head winds and a challenge to our fuel management skills. We would not have missed either! We not only learned a lot, even after previous voyages to Bermuda and the Bahamas, but we met some terrific cruisers that shared the dream and lifestyle of full time cruising.

After two rallies to the BVI, we wanted to explore the rest of the Eastern Caribbean. So after spending time in the BVI and USVI's (with a Christmas visit back north) *Kalunamoo* took us south through the leeward and windward islands. We enjoyed the islands so much that the thought of going back north by boat for the summer was not appealing. We decided to proceed to Trinidad to sit out the hurricane season and take the opportunity to get some serious boat work done.

We spent the summer in Trinidad, with a few trips back north to see family and grandkids. The boat work took all summer, and we were back in the water by the end of October. Where to go? Well, we knew the 2015 Salty Dawg Rally was preparing to get underway from Hampton so we decided to go north to the BVI to meet them. We had many friends coming down with the "Dawgs" again this year and wanted to enjoy their tales of the passage, the comradery of these cruisers and the chance to meet new friends. Our other Salty Dawg friends, Judy and Phil on *Rum Runner*, kept their boat in Grenada for the summer and were also planning to go north to meet the rally.



Well two boats make a rally! so *Kalunamoo* leaving from Trinidad and *Rum Runner* departing from Grenada on the same day, became the southern Salty Dawgs's heading north to the BVI.

Of course, the 500 miles from Trinidad to North Sound is a bit easier than the 1300 miles from Hampton but the goal is the same! The easterly trades are a reliable wind source for the voyage north and the general north flowing current also helps. We also had the option of stopping along the way....maybe to eat lobster in Bequia; enjoy fresh baguettes and cheese in St. Martin; pick up supplies in Antigua or St. Martin and experience oo-la-la shopping in St. Barts. Well you get the idea. Of all those, the only one we did was a stop off in Bequia to avoid some mild squalls in the BVI. *Rum Runner* made no stops and completed the passage in three days. Our trip took us a few days more, but we did enjoy the lobsters in Bequia.



Welcome to Bequia

We arrived at the Bitter End Yacht Club a few days after the first boats arrived from Hampton. It was great to see old and new cruising friends arriving in North Sound. By now it was known that the Dawg "fleet" was spread out and arriving in the BVI many days apart. No fear, they will arrive and find the BVI welcoming and the Salty Dawgs ready to party! The Salty Dawg Morning Net of VHF was up and running (yours truly) and social

Lieutenant Level

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- Hydrovane International Marine Inc.
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Go to the Salty Dawg Website for sponsor contact information. Please use our sponsors, and let them know you are a Salty Dawg.

<http://saltydawgrally.org/sponsors/>

Signs of Dawgs Everywhere



Look for the SDR sticker on the phone booth at Leverick.



Crawl Pub, BEYC

activities were underway -- happy hours ashore or onboard, Yoga every morning, lunch at Hog Heaven and of course, the Arrival Party. And so another great rally comes to an end. But does it really end?

It became apparent that the friendships and fun that we had with the Dawgs could be extended to more than one rally. The *Kalunamoo* and *Rum Runner* Rally came from the opposite direction of other Dawgs and demonstrated that no matter where one starts, all can arrive at the same place and enjoy the friendships the rally provides. We look forward to future Salty Dawg happenings!



Finding Salty Dawgs in North Sound

Cuba is Calling (A Salty Dawg Makes Lemonade)

By Bob Osborn, *s/v Pandora*



Marina Hemingway

As I write this it's mid-January, and Brenda and I are aboard *Pandora*, our *Aerodyne 47*, in Ft Lauderdale, waiting for a weather window to cross to the Bahamas. Just a few short months ago I was in Hampton VA, as a newly minted Salty Dawg, planning to make a run to the BVI, for a winter of island cruising. However, once underway a number of "technical issues" came up and I diverted to Beaufort, NC. By the time we got things sorted out, my crew had run out of time (you know the drill) so I had to come up with a "plan B" on where to cruise for the winter season.

After some deliberation, I decided to run *Pandora* to Florida, and then on to the Bahamas for the winter. Then I thought, what about Cuba as Brenda and I have wanted to cruise there for some time. While relations between our two countries have warmed a bit, getting approval to go on a private boat is still fairly complex.

Americans can visit Cuba, but it has to be for one or more of 12 State Department approved reasons ([See blog post for those reasons](#)), and doing so on your own boat still requires formal approval, including an export permit for the boat, a [SNAP-R](#). This form is quite lengthy and the same form you would use if you wanted to export, say, a shipload of grain to Cuba. I wrote about this process at some length in this [post on my blog](#).



Until recently, any U.S. flagged vessel wishing desiring to visit Cuba was required to visit directly from the U.S. without stopping in another country along the way. That's a problem for anyone who wishes to cruise Cuba's south coast on the way back from the eastern Caribbean. The south shore is much more protected than the north coast, and has many wonderful reefs and keys to explore. Our plan is to cruise south through the Bahamas, pass between Haiti and Cuba via the Windward Passage and then cruise the south coast from east to west, with the prevailing easterlies. Then we will travel around the western end of Cuba, up to Havana and return to the U.S. and Miami.

When submitting an application with the Commerce Department, you must be specific about your plans. The folks within Commerce will help you navigate any complexities of the process. There is no fee for the SNAP-R application, and you should expect it to take about 30 days to work through the system. My approval also noted that I'd need a Waiver from OFAC for the 180 day waiting period to return *Pandora* to US waters. I was informed by OFAC that while statute 515.207(a) discusses the 180 day period, 515.560 states that 515.207 does not apply if you have an approved license for your vessel.

Additionally, you will have to get approval from the USCG by submitting form CG3300 and a copy of your approved license. Have these regulations, your Department of Commerce license, and USCG documents on hand in case you are asked for supporting documentation when you return to the US.

While the Cuban government is happy to have you visit, there are plenty of rules that must be followed. For example, there are some foods that are absolutely not allowed into the country such as chicken--fresh or frozen. No eggs either. As far as most consumer products are concerned, you'll want to bring just about everything that you might need as most consumer goods are very hard to



Beans Stage at Leverick

More Fall Rally 2015 Participants



Altera



Crew of Albireo



Pratique



Whirly Girl's Crew

come by, especially milk products and oddly, toilet paper. And, as a US citizen, if you are planning to visit longer than one month, you should know that the Cuban authorities will only approve a visa that's good for one month, and it won't be extended. You must clear out of Cuba, visit another country and come back at least 24 hours later. A good option is to sail to the Cayman Islands, an overnight sail south from the midpoint of the south coast, and return to clear in again.

Travel along the Cuban coast is tightly controlled and you must clear in as well as out of every port you visit. Anchoring or entering a marina is only allowed with permission from the Guarda Frontera, the Cuban Coast Guard.



Havana Malecon

There are a number of informative guides for cruising Cuba. Frank Virgintino has a wonderful series of free cruising guides for the Caribbean including Cuba. They are available at www.freecruisingguides.com. Cheryl Barr has published *The Cruising Guide to Cuba*. This is the first of a planned two volume set and covers the NW and SW portions of the coast. Volume two is due to be published in the first half of 2016. There are also excellent and newly updated paper and electronic charts from [NV Charts in Germany](http://NVCharts.inGermany). They can be purchased from a number of sources as well as through their US office in Annapolis (410-630-4333). Waterway Guides has just

published a new guide to the north coast of Cuba as well. Beware of any source of information you use in planning your trip, as the rules are changing quickly.

One way or the other, Cuba is now accessible to U.S. citizens and if you are willing to make an effort, you can certainly find a way to go. A recent article in Sail Magazine suggested that in the first year all restrictions for travel are lifted, between 40,000 and 60,000 boats will make the short run from the US, so now is clearly the time to go if you want to see Cuba as the "time capsule" that it has been for the last 50 years.

While *Pandora* didn't make it to the BVI this winter, I hope we have taken our bitter fruit and made some lemonade by visiting the "other", Caribbean, and making our dream come true in visiting what is known by some as the "forbidden paradise".

You can follow our travels at www.sailpandora.com as we make our way south in the coming months.

Oh yeah, I already have part of my crew for the 2016 Salty Dawg Rally in place. So hopefully we'll make our way to the BVI with all of the Salty Dawgs next Fall.



Author Bob Osborn and wife Brenda

Lady Visits the South Pacific (Passage - Panama to the Galapagos)

by Charlie & Jenny McNamara, s/v *Lady*



Lady In Las Perlas

"You could argue that this passage started November 11, 2014, when we departed Curacao, or when we transited the Panama Canal February, 2015, but since I'm the Captain, I choose March 1, 2015, the day we departed Panama, bound for New Zealand with stops along the way." - (Charlie)

Our first leg of this passage would be from Panama City to the Galapagos Islands. Although only 845 nautical miles, this leg might prove to be the most difficult from a sailing standpoint.

The best strategy is to wait for strong trade winds in the Caribbean that spill over Panama. These winds come from the north and usually extend 200 to 300 miles south of Panama. At the same time, you usually have wind from the south

blowing up the west coast of South America. Just before reaching the equator these winds turn and blow from the south-east and become the trade winds that will carry us to French Polynesia, Tonga and Fiji. At one of the island nations, we will turn to the south and set sail for New Zealand.



Montana Sky

So, we look for strong north winds to push us south from Panama until we reach the beginning of the South Pacific trade winds. However, at the area these two major weather features meet, where the northern hemisphere meets the southern hemisphere, there is the ITCZ, the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone, also called the Doldrums. It slides north and south. Sometimes, no wind or storms. Other times, heavy rain or no rain.

There are many weather sources. The most beautiful one in my opinion is [earth.nullschool](http://earth.nullschool.net) (Ed.: a large scale view of wind fields). Also, passageweather.com gives a good picture and projects forward a week, although after three days, weather forecasts are questionable.



Crew of Rascal

There had not been a good weather window for a voyage from Panama to the Galapagos in over three weeks. I begin to see signs that one may be about to open. On February 27th, 2015, we upped anchor and sailed about 40 miles from Panama City to Las Perlas, a group of islands south of Panama, and part of Panama. On Sunday, March 1, 2015 (Day 1) we motored around the north end of the Perlas, saving 20 miles, and checked in with the Pan Pacific Cruisers' Net (SSB 8143, USB 0400 Zulu, 0900 local) and listened to Jacarand's weather forecast. With a 20-25 knot wind blowing from north to south and an out-going tide, *Lady* was doing over 8 knots speed over ground. The wind continues to build throughout the night. We reduce sail and continue to maintain 7 - 8 knots speed, heading between 215 and 230 magnetic,



Club Carp



Day 2 - We find wind remains good and to my surprise, increases during the night, with *Lady* making over 8 knots - current is helping.

Day 3 - Wind dies about 1310, and start the engine. This is the ITCZ - today located about 03 degrees 36 minutes N lat. Squalls all around us. Several big ones in sight at all times. Fortunately, no lightning or strong winds. Saw several shore birds now lost at sea. Wind fills from south-east. Engine off after 1800 hours. Sailing in 7-10 knot wind on a beam reach. *Lady* likes this point of sail; doing 5-7 knots SOG.

Day 4 - Wind steady, day and night between 8-10 knots apparent. Since breaking through the ITCZ yesterday morning, it has been an easy, delightful sail. "We have had two fishing lines out during daylight since the second day, with no bites. Like golf, I'm glad I

don't have to make a living doing it." - (Charlie)

Day 5 - Wind died, started motor and motor-sailed, strong current from the south at about 1.6 kts that sets us 20 degrees. At 1805 saw pod of whales pass close by. That night, "Jenny had 0300 to 0700 watch and woke me up at 0621 to announce we had crossed the equator and entered the Southern Hemisphere. Going on deck and seeing no line I went back to sleep." - (Charlie)

Day 6 - Reduce sail so as to not arrive before daylight. Estimate we motored 25.25 hours total and burned 20 US gals diesel since Panama. Since we carry 120 gals on and below deck, fuel is not a problem. Seas are moderate for open ocean; one foot waves and three foot long period swells. At 0410 coming in to the bay off San Cristobal from the south, we discovered that our GPS position did not match our plotted paper chart position relative to land. (Ed.: Always wise not to trust electronic or paper charts away from US or Europe, since they are often based on surveys from the 1800's. Islands can be east or west a mile or more from location shown on charts. Use radar to double check.)

At 0910 Panama time, 0810 local time, after 5 days 23 hours and 5 minutes, we dropped anchor off San Cristobal in the Galapagos. We traveled, as the GPS flies, 842 nm, although chasing the wind probably added 100 miles to that. We still have 6,550 nm to go to New Zealand.

(Ed.: Jenny and Charlie aboard *Lady* sailed with the Salty Dawg Rally in 2012 and 2013. *Lady* is now in New Zealand. Sail On, *Lady* and Crew!)



Charlie and Jenny with *Lady* in New Zealand



Roger on Reboot



Crew of Comocean

Advice from the Crew of *Lady* - "When crossing the path of ships at sea, with radar and AIS we time our approach to avoid crossing the ship's bow. This is a personal policy. There are just so many things that can go wrong. Big ships traveling at 15 to 30 knots cannot stop and have great difficulty turning. Additionally, most don't have visibility in front less than a mile because of the containers stacked on deck. Our running lights are coast-guard approved and certified to be visible at 2 miles (in perfect weather). At 30 knots closing speed, that's 4 minutes. Big deal. AIS is a godsend. Don't leave home without one."



Antares

Photo Album



Sargasso Weed Infestation Research

(Salty Dawgs Can Help)

by Joan Conover s/v Growltiger



Two Variants of Caribbean Sargasso

Scientist for the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, has a posting website with instructions for volunteers to use to post valuable information.

<http://gcrl.usm.edu/sargassum/sargassum.observation.form.php>

This is the start of an attempt to get to Dr. Franks the critical data needed for Sargassum research. Without inputs there cannot be good progression of his efforts. He is welcoming input from sailors, so we hope Salty Dawg can add to the scientific effort. Already Salty Dawg and SSCA vessels have contributed to the effort, including *Villomee*, *Flash*, *Growltiger*, *Sapphire*, and *Shiwara*.

Cruisers can collect and post data such as Lat/Long and description of the weed matt, e.g., stream or horizon to horizon weed on the surface. Photos are also important as GCRS tries to develop ways of satellite surveillance for an "early warning system," and find the causing agents for this explosive weed growth. In time, with enough data on large clusters, boaters could use the resulting "weed" image to plan for passages--away from the leading edges of this weed.

For the collection process, the site offers images to identify the two major types found as pelagic(floating) weed. There is a response from the scientists for each data login, and if cruisers can collect photographs of the weed in the water matching the lat/long, it would be of great benefit as well - using the above noted website to post observations.

Besides the Sargasso that has been in the Atlantic for centuries or more, there is a suspicion a foreign variant has been introduced and may be causing this proliferation problem. So there is another program at GCRL to discover if a NEW variant (different DNA type) has created these problems, and dried samples from sailors are useful for this research.

I tested drying a sample, packaging it, and providing it to Jim Franks. I took a string of weed, about 4 inches length, placed it between to paper towels, pressed it in a book for two weeks until dried out, packed the dried sample sandwiched between two square pieces of cardboard(Styrofoam, in one case) and sent to him at the GCRL. This has been successful twice, and he has gotten samples for research, testing. The mailing address for Dr. Franks is shown at the bottom of the page from the above link.

We now need a sample from a thick weed matt offshore. It would be great to obtain a clean offshore sample of thick weed patch dried and sent to Dr. Franks. The program needs to know if one, two, three or more types of weed are involved, and if so, which type is the main 'culprit.'

It's hoped Salty Dawg vessels, as they are on passage, can assist in this CITIZEN SCIENCE endeavor, both the observation data that can be posted on the above website, or mailing in dried samples with lat/lon taken from particularly large weed matts.

Sargasso Weed in the North Atlantic is becoming a problem for both boats and the countries facing the Atlantic, both Americas, Europe and Africa. Some vessels have even gotten stuck in five feet thick or more of this weed matt. During 2011, massive quantities of pelagic sargassum occurred throughout the Caribbean, impacting aquatic resources, fisheries, shorelines, waterways, and tourism. A similar event occurred in 2014 and continued into 2015. This is not believed to be due the normal cyclical variation in quantity from year to year.

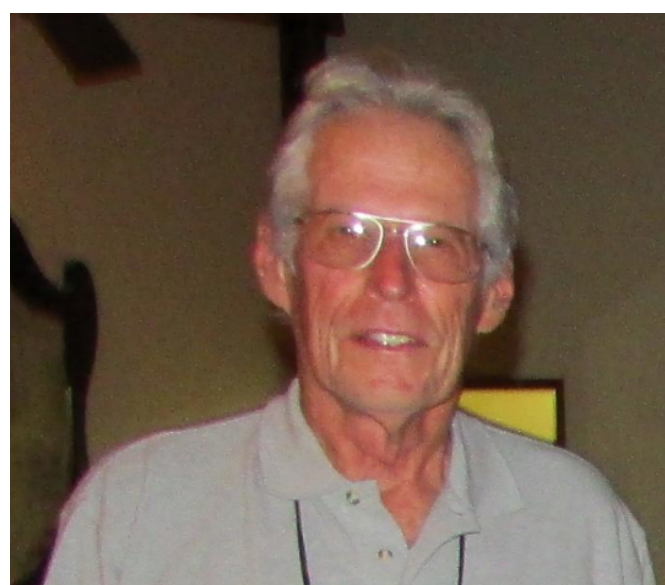
In response to this issue, or infestation of Sargassum, Jim Franks, Senior Research



Thick Matt

Special Announcements

Rick Palm Elected to the Salty Dawg Board of Directors



With great pleasure the Salty Dawg Board of Directors elected Rick Palm (s/v *Archer*) to join the Board.

It is an exciting time for the Salty Dawg organization. Rick's world sailing experience, enthusiasm, and management skills will be of great benefit to the organization and to all sailors who participate in the broad range of Salty Dawg activities.

Rick joins Bill Knowles, Linda Knowles, George Day, Hank George, Patrick O'Donnell and Ron Marchman as Directors of the Salty Dawg organization.

Salty Dawgs Kelly & Linda Tie the Knot

While they may have thought no one had noticed, actually roving Dawg Tales' reporters uncovered a special wedding ceremony. After sharing their lives together for several years, Salty Dawgs Kelly Brown and Linda Strachan (s/v *Silhouette*) tied the knot, exchanged vows and are now man and wife.

Congratulations on making that big passage to a lifetime commitment - enjoy the voyage. Cheers, from all your Salty Dawg friends.



Ask the Experts



Satellite Communications - Getting it Installed on your Boat

by Matt Haase, Ocens; matt@ocens.com



Take your cruising to the next level by leveraging the power of modern satellite communications networks. Satellite communications for your boat most often refers to a satellite telephone. The phone can be used for verbal communications as well as WiFi. It is an important tool to stay connected, it is useful in case of an offshore emergency and many sailors use the WiFi capability to receive weather reports from various sources. Once the decision is made to acquire a system, you will have the choice of several communications packages. Iridium and Global Star are two popular brands and are both offered by OCENS. After purchase, the phone will require the purchase of minutes in order to talk or download. The next decision is (a) to have the phone as a standalone device or (b) install and use an external antenna and docking station. The docking station and antenna will require an installation. A "do-it-yourselfer" can confidently take on this job him or herself or at least understand the process before hiring a marine electrician to perform the installation.

Line of sight. This is the most important concept to understand with satellite communications. All satellite communications networks have at least one common fundamental: the satellite phone has to have a direct line of sight with the satellites. The satellite RF signal will not travel through dense objects (such as a bulkhead, ceiling, wall, etc.), so this means that to use your satellite phone, you must either be outside or have a remotely located external antenna in place. The former is pretty self-explanatory, so I will address the latter by outlining the necessary components for this type of installation.

- **External Antenna.** Using your satellite phone inside while maintaining line of sight with the satellites is as simple as installing an externally mounted antenna. Both Iridium and Globalstar have orbiting satellite constellations, so the antenna should be positioned in a location that will offer it the most panoramic exposure to the sky. The antennas are passive, so they have no moving parts, rather, they are designed to cover a broad look angle in all directions for maximum satellite visibility. Antenna height is not important in and of itself unless it is for the purpose





of getting it above a potential obstacle, such as a bulkhead. Also, you generally want to keep the antenna at least two meters away from any other RF antennas, particularly radar. A satellite antenna can be mounted on the mast, however, a rail mount is also very common.

- **Antenna cable.** For an external antenna to work, you must run the correct type of antenna cable from the antenna to the phone or docking station. With Iridium, it is typically single cable run while Globalstar always requires two cables traveling from the antenna to the phone's docking station. The overall length of the cable determines the cable stock required in order to remain within the dB loss spec for the satellite signal. A qualified satellite equipment provider will supply you with the correct cable and connector combination for your system once you have determined the necessary cable length. And keep in mind - the shorter the cable run the better!
- **Docking Station.** In the case of Iridium, when using a remote antenna, you have the option of using the basic antenna adapter that comes with the phone, or the much preferred option of using a docking station. There are several docking station models available for Iridium phones, but they all commonly provide the four basic functions: a secure place to dock the phone, power supplied to the phone keeping it charged, antenna cable connection to the phone, and a data port interface. With Globalstar, there is one docking station model available and it comes as a package that includes the antenna and antenna cable. Most docking stations require a 9-32VDC power source and are typically hardwired to your boat's DC power supply. The overall advantage of a docking station, besides the inherent purpose of using it with an external antenna, is that you have a clean, streamlined, and durable installation, yet within seconds you can deploy your phone from the dock for general use off of the boat or in an emergency situation.
- **WiFi.** A wireless data connection from the satellite phone to a computer, tablet, or smartphone can be achieved by adding a simple, but specialized wireless access point. The Sidekick, by OCENS, is specifically designed to interface with satellite phones. It is an optional item for use with computers, but necessary for smartphones and tablets. The Sidekick is "plug-and-play" and compatible with all satellite phone models, so to install it, you simply connect it to the USB port on the phone or docking station. For power, the Sidekick requires a standard 5VDC USB power source via its micro USB port.

OCENS is a Salty Dawg Rally sponsor. They provide satellite communications, weather, and email solutions to the marine and other industries. Please contact OCENS with any questions or concerns related to satellite communications applications.



Insurance and Cuba

by Morgan Wells; Jack Martin & Associates Insurance, Morgan.Wells@jackmartin.com



Cuba

Cuba is still an exclusion by all American insurance companies, but this status may change in the coming months. Presently, American insurance companies cannot do business in or have bank accounts in Cuba. In addition, for yacht insurance providers, Cuba is a challenge due to a significant lack of modern infrastructure and claims resources such as communications, surveyors and marina repair facilities with proper services for yachts.

I am having regular correspondence with American yacht underwriters but there is no rush to insure yachts in Cuba. A US yacht underwriter recently wrote to me, "Conversations are ongoing, but we have not made any changes to our exclusion of Cuba at this time. We recognize that boat owners are able to obtain the proper permits, however there are still the challenges of what would happen in the event of a claim. There are limited facilities, the inability to trade in US dollars, etc." Another US yacht underwriter writes, "Although the US is allowing trips to Cuba for certain reasons, the economic sanctions have not been lifted, so as an US company it is illegal for us to pay any Cuban salvor, surveyor, repair yard, etc. for losses to the insured yacht. For P&I (Protection & Indemnity / Legal Liability coverage), we would not be able to pay a Cuban attorney to defend the insured for liability claims within their jurisdiction (also I don't believe a US attorney can legally represent us in Cuba), and we would not be able to pay any awards to Cuban nationals if the boat owner were found liable."

There is still a lot that needs to be sorted out with regard to Cuba and US insurance regulations.

However, it is possible for us to obtain annual insurance policies that include the waters of Cuba from non-American companies such as various underwriters at Lloyds of London and other UK/London based insurance companies. London underwriters may request full details of the trip to Cuba, including anticipated dates. Also, if there are any US persons on board the vessel then OFAC



(part of US Treasury) approval will be required and some underwriters may require notice of this prior to the commencement of the trip.

For those of you insured by American insurance companies and who may be willing to be uninsured while in the waters of Cuba, it is highly recommended that you notify your insurance agent/company of your plans. Do not assume that coverage is ONLY void while in the coastal waters of Cuba. And there may well be changes in the insurance market regarding Cuba in the near future!

It is important that when in Cuba you must plan to be very self-sufficient. For a Soundings Trade Only article on visiting Cuba please see: <http://www.tradeonlytoday.com/2015/10/nmma-warns-cuba-cruisers-to-manage-expectations/#.VhvsfWAZgJY.mailto>

Planning Your Cruising Sail Inventory

by Dave Flynn of Quantum Sails



You've been knocking around local waters, but the lure of open water and longer passages has finally gotten to you. If you bought the boat used, it might have the right sails if it has been sailed offshore before, but there is also a good chance that age and miles have taken their toll.

Most new boats come with stock sails these days, unless they are in the upper end of the price range. Unfortunately, these inventories are usually minimalist in terms of type and quality. Rarely do original equipment sails incorporate the construction details and features desirable for more serious sailing. When home is near, a sail failure or not having the right sail for the

conditions is no big deal. Out of sight of land, sails really are the engine. It is a sad truth that the sail inventory on many cruising boats is well down on the list of priorities. There are so many more glamorous areas to spend money on.

Is your sail inventory ready to go? What sails will you need? Are special materials or construction details needed? If you need sails, do fancier new materials make sense for cruising? Can I just cruise with a single large, headsail, and furl as needed to reef? What is the advantage of having a solent/yankee? How about storm sails and deep reefs? Are your hardware and sail handling systems up to the task?

If you think you know the answers to these questions, you might be surprised. Read Dave 's full article carefully. It is too long to print here in Dawg Tales, but it is well worth your time to review this. <http://saltydawgrally.org/advice-from-experts/#SAILS>



Cruising and Diving - the Perfect Combination

by Seale George, s/v Flash



If you've spent any time at all in the Caribbean and enjoyed the snorkeling in these beautiful waters, perhaps the thought of scuba diving has crossed your mind. Well, it's become easier than ever before.

You can just give it a test drive by enrolling in a *Resort Dive* course. Introductory Scuba is a three hour "learn to dive" class with a shallow water dive which introduces the novice diver (min age 12) to the fascination of underwater exploration. Such a course gives you an introduction to the how it feels to be completely underwater and on scuba breathing gear. A great way to find out if you want to pursue the sport further and also



Yoga at BEYC





a way to find out if you have claustrophobia or ear issues. Instructors are with you every moment. No certification is given and all future dives must be accompanied by an instructor.

If you think you just "wanna dive in" go ahead and take on the PADI Open Water Certification Course. A certain level of comfort in the water is required at the outset, but most anyone can float and dog paddle their way to course pre-qualification. The four day course includes some classroom work, some in-the-water work, and yes, even a little bit of homework. Your scuba instructors will be sure that you are safe, comfortable and have the proper knowledge base to be a PADI "open water diver". At successful course completion, you will be given a certificate that enables you to go anywhere in the world and rent scuba tanks or get air refills. At this point, you are a DIVER and the undersea world is open to you to explore and become one with the fish and coral.



A slightly different take on the Open Water Diver Course is to do the bookwork/classroom work on your own and contact the dive shop to do pool work and 4 open water dives. Check with Blue Water Divers to get the details.



Seale in Bonaire

I have personally found that the combination of sailing in the Caribbean and diving its waters is the perfect combination to enjoy all that it has to offer, above and below the surface. As you become more comfortable with the sport, you can pursue higher level courses such as Nitrox Certification, Rescue Diver or Master Diver, or you could add underwater photography to your list of hobby.

If you want to look into this further, please contact Blue Water Divers at Nanny Cay or Sopers Hole. They are sponsors and supporters of the Salty Dawg Rally and will extend a discount to you at their Nanny Cay operation. bwdbvi@surfbvi.com

Dawg Tales welcomes your input!

This edition was compiled and edited by Hank & Seale George.
Many thanks to those who contributed articles and photos.

Have a neat picture from your cruising? A great anchorage? A story about a special adventure? A cool article in your blog? Share it with your fellow Dawgs. Send to newsletter@saltydawgrally.org .



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