The Water Island Scoop

Published Every Now and Then

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"Away out here they got a name for rain and wind and fire. The rain is Tess, the fire's Jo and they call the wind Maria."

Summertime and the Living is . . .

Unlike in the Alan Jay Lerner production "Paint Your Wagon", in the Caribbean when the wind has a name it is NOT a good thing. And from Arlene to Delta there were way too many wind names to think about.

With the end of the Caribbean summer, gone is that airlessness at noon that sucks the breath right out of your chest and the humidity which turns your body into a gusher of sweat.

Who cares about troughs forming off the African Coast?! The lashing winds and rain from distant hurricanes are history. So are the lightning storms that knocked out the power, leaving us to dine by lantern light on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

Some 38 inches of rain fell from May through October, making it a jungle out there.

But even with the sudden squalls accompanied by sheets of rain, and the threat of hurricanes, there was still plenty of sunshine, and Honeymoon Beach was Sherwood Forest to a merry band: Cassandra Bitterwolf, Austin (Bill and Jeanette Coleman's grandson), young Arthur La Franchise, Brandon Carvalho, Michael Dooley, Anthony and Austin Pippen. Too young to rob from the rich and give to the poor, babies Vera Marie Colon and Ayla La Franchise just got bigger and stronger while Amanda Carvalho got blonder.

Many Water Islanders spent the summer here, and life continued in its sweet rhythms, perhaps only to a slower beat. Mark and Beckie Pippen kept Pirate's Ridge open every day. Heidi Erwig still nourished us on the week-ends, Jim and Marion Wilkinson's minicart fed everyone rain or shine, Jan Allanach's crew beat back the ever-growing brush. And Steve Rampino's plucky Rover still plowed its route back and forth to the big city.

Tom and Barbara Archibald became working stiffs and joined other Water Islanders on the early and late ferries. But not everyone agreed that the summer was slow. Better not to bring that up with Jane Wherren, executive director of the local American Red Cross.

There were summertime visitors, like the Shaffers, the Ike Northup/Beth McConnell family, and Linda Daley.

Some people like Barbara Camadeca, moved off-island but still can't stay away on weekends. Barbara says her heart belongs to Water Island and she just considers her situation now as a case of reverse commuting. Others like Karen McDowell came here to live.

By Halloween the summer was over. The heavy rains stopped, the trade winds blew again, and the population of the island doubled almost overnight with returning Water Islanders.

Halloween

Pirate's Ridge hosted its first Halloween Party, on the Friday night prior to Halloween, and the place was teeming with unsavory types. Some characters looked strangely familiar, like Greg and Diane Stolmar dressed as the Munsters, while others were completely hidden by their costumes, like Ginger Bagley as a red dragon.

Stuart Butler was a rambunctious emcee who managed to goof off and keep things rolling at the same time. David Dunakey handled the bar on the new balcony, completed just moments before the party began. The pizza kept coming while Pirates, like Doug Ackley, swash-buckled. Wenches, real and wannabes, twirled around with flashing eyes. Heidi came as a hobo, Terry Pearsall as a Flower Child, Cassandra Bitterwolf as a beautiful butterfly, and Arthur La Franchise as an airy sumo wrestler. Over 100 people attended, all in costume (even if only as nudists in disguise).

At the beach on Halloween night, the children gathered for a party. They were serenaded by Roaring 20, an a cappella group from Princeton University brought to the islands by Alex Randall. The singers then escorted the kids on their trick or treating rounds and then back to the beach for a showing of "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown," and some scary flicks.

Fourteen white buoys, like teeth in the jaws of a you-know-what, now mark the limits of the swim area at Honeymoon Beach. They seemed to spring up overnight, but behind the scenes many people worked hard to get them in place. Chuck Gidley, Wally Henshaw, Tom McCoy, Jim Wilkinson, and Barry Wherren all played a big part. The final cost, paid by WICA, for the buoys, including the installation, was $6000. We were spared the shipping charges from Florida by the generosity of Quality Foods who contributed the freight from Miami to St Thomas, while John Foster Real Estate and Chuck Gidley covered the delivery cost to Water Island. Many thanks to all!

Water Islanders continue to demonstrate their grasp of leading edge technologies of the 21st century. Movies outdoors, what a concept! Thanks to the ingenuity of Jim and Marion Wilkinson, we can now enjoy movies under the stars. Every Monday we gather at the beach as the last light of day streaks the sky. Some moviegoers sit in plastic chairs, others in their carts or trucks, in front of a big screen attached to the palms.

As it gets dark, messages flash on screen counting down 'til show time, with the happy news that candy and popcorn are good for us. Luckily, candy and popcorn (and other good things) are close at hand on the minicart, and we don't have to step on other people's feet to get them.

This event is brought to Water Island by impresarios Jim and Marion Wilkinson and Heidi Erwig, who kicked off with a movie Water Islanders could relate to, "Captain Ron," and followed up with "50 First Dates," "Million Dollar Baby," "Six Days, Seven Nights" and "Meet the Fockers."

The Scoop has heard of plans for a special showing of the movie "Jaws". On that night the screen will be turned around and the audience will watch from beach chairs IN THE WATER!

Not to worry though, WISAR, with its "new" Ambulance, will be on hand just a few yards away on the beach.

Telephone Numbers

Keep these telephone numbers handy:

WISAR emergency
cell phone: (340) **642-5660**
(Get a fridge magnet from a WISAR member)

Fire House: (340) **774-2271**

Hide and Seek

West Indies Style

Under West Indies rules the "It" (the seeker) is any named tropical storm. On June 1st each year "It" declares "Ready or Not, Here I Come", wherein everyone tries to find a safe place to hide to avoid getting tagged.

Reports from those in hiding:

At the beginning of our New England cruise in Growler, we were joined in Newport by Wally Henshaw and Peggy Bennett for a fun dinner. Rob Kehler, photographer, is out of sight behind the camera.

We are now in Martha's Vineyard, heading for Nantucket and finally Maine.

Tony & Mary Marshall

Bob and Mercy Blosser spent the summer in their motor home at Lake Powell, Utah.

Richard and Charlotte McFarland joined them for a two week visit. On a side trip to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, Richard used the opportunity to provide a visual demonstration of why on his farm in Ohio he utilizes no-till farming. Richard may know about land erosion prevention, but I can tell you for a fact that he has a lot to learn about catching fish. Unfortunately all the supporting photographs were unexplainably lost in the mail.

Robert & Mercy Blosser

"Ollie, Ollie, oxen free!"

With the hurricane season nearing an end all of those weary souls who ran away to hide are slowly returning to Paradise. Helene Sudek came back. Sue and Steve Bubb were here for a few days. Rob Kehler arrived to help his mother, Elsie Kehler, and Arthur Watres settle in.

Genevieve Alexander and Douglas Barnes got here and you'll want to ask Genevieve about her new workout regime. She is looking Great!

David and Lynn Clouse came back for a few days.

Joe and Joanne Howell have come to visit for awhile.

Lucy Gidley, Peggy Bennett and Wally Henshaw, Pat and Eddy Cheesborough, and Jackie and John Coleman have returned.

Mary Lynn and Lee Tucker are on island now.

Nick Marzilli and Lynn Fiorenzano are also visiting. Tony and Mary Marshall should be back soon too. We just check the incoming ferries each day to welcome folks back.

Honeymoon Beach Clean-Up

On Saturday morning November 26, we had a great turn out for a much needed beach cleanup. People came bearing rakes, clippers, shovels and removed lots of fallen palm fronds, trimmed trees and raked the sand. Through the efforts of volunteers, who so generously give of their time, we are able to keep the beach beautiful for all to enjoy.

After 3 years of heading up the Beach and Beautification Committee, Linda Gidley will be passing the baton to Jane Wherren, who has agreed to take over for 2006.

Thanks to Linda!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WICA Update

Over the past three months the Commissioner of Public Works has visited the island several times. The most recent trip was with a Daily News reporter, who eventually wrote an article on the unchanged Water Island. Commissioner Phillips told me and the reporter that Public Works will fix the roads in a proper manner, will get the ferry dock rebuilt, and will address the abandoned cars/car parts pile. He also said that he understood that Water Islanders wanted a cemetery on island. I told him we have no interest in a cemetery here.

We also visited with VI Senator At-Large Craig Barshinger and briefed him on our issues. Sen. Barshinger agreed to hold a Town Meeting on Water Island if WICA would set it up. The Town Meeting is set up for 11AM, on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at Honeymoon Beach. We will give the Senator a tour of the island and then bring him to Honeymoon Beach. A PowerPoint series of briefings will be presented covering WICA Summary, WISAR, Roads, Ferry Dock, Abandoned Cars, Solid Waste Transfer Site, Land Use, Honeymoon Beach, Fire Protection, WI in VI Budgets, WI Administrator, etc. Questions to Sen. Barshinger will follow these briefings. We hope that his visit, and the interest of Commissioner Phillips, will result in improvements to the WI infrastructure.

The Executive Committee continues to try to work with the VI Departments to get attention on Water Island. This coordination is normally a long term process and patience is needed.

Thanks, Chuck

Guest Opinions

What's on your mind?

We welcome letters, guest opinions and guest cartoons. We reserve the right to edit letters for brevity, clarity, libel and propriety. We do not guarantee the accuracy, reliability or completeness of any information provided in the Guest Opinions section.

We can't wait to see you all in February!!!

Mom and dad and Lee are coming here tomorrow afternoon, from Evansville, for Thanksgiving. Then they are flying south next Tuesday with Tom.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas. We'll be thinking about you all in the warm, warm sun and water!!!

Jane Lee

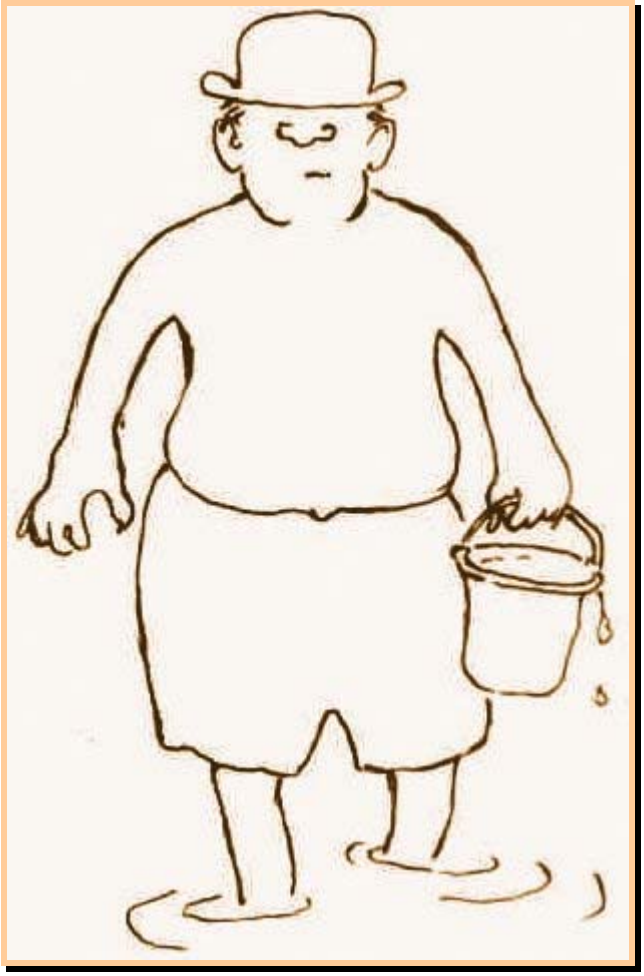
Hi Mercy,

I wanted to let everyone know that my daughter Lauren and her husband Jeremy had a daughter on November 15th. They named her Gabrielle Rigby; she weighed 7lbs 2oz and was 19 1/2" long. She has strawberry blonde hair. She is the great granddaughter of the late Bennie and Peggy Bubb, great niece to Steve and Sue Bubb, and second cousin to Eric and Megan Bubb.

Also, just letting you know that Robin and I are now the extremely proud owners of a piece of property just behind Tom and Anoushka McCoy. We plan on building within the next year. We hope to come down some time this winter.

Fondly,

Margie Bubb Greenlee



Water Islands' first fire chief comes to the rescue.
(Courtesy W.I. archive.)

For over half a century the community on Water Island has demonstrated a deep interest in fire protection. Residents have responded with warm enthusiasm to the 11/18/05 *Daily News* report that the still unoccupied building, built to serve as a fire station, is soon to be furnished with a flag pole to fly the United States and Virgin Islands flags. Already hooked into the electrical grid, the building will serve as a venue, a rallying place for the V.I. Governments' rejuvenation of the islands infrastructure. It is anticipated that the scheduled improvements will trigger a real estate bubble which will serve as a model for our sister islands, St Thomas, St John and St Croix.

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