

The Shoreline

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Holiday Harbor-Wilmington

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Hello all,

Well, Christmas is behind us and now we look forward to a new year. Every year so many of us embrace New Years resolutions. Often, we promise ourselves such things as weight loss, exercise regiment, reduction in alcohol consumption, spending less, paying off bills, etc., the list goes on and on. Personally, I gave up long ago with great expectations and promises I knew I would not be able to keep. All my New Years resolutions are kept reasonable and simple. It seems life is much happier when less complicated.

Speaking of a simple life, free of complications, I'd like to share a story with you...

Ten years ago I was sailing the Atlantic Ocean north of Anegata Island and in need of provisions. We were aware that the entrance to the main harbor was on the south side of the island and that it was surrounded by a very long and treacherous reef. Also, the proper time to make entrance/egress was precisely 1200 noon when the sun was directly overhead. This allows for greater visibility. Incidentally, I once struck a reef while on a 50 footer....scary. Given all these facts, we decided to sail west to Jost Van Dyke Island. We sailed to a small harbor called Whites Cove. After deploying bow and stern anchors, securing the boat, we drove our dinghy toward a few buildings lining the beach. We noticed that one place in particular was a beach bar and restaurant. The name of which was written in large letters "SYDNEYS, BAR OF PEACE AND LOVE"... we decided that's where we're going.

We beached our dinghy and walked straight to the bar – what else would guys do? There we met the owner Tommy Ellis, a 65 year-old gentleman. He poured the group a cocktail and engaged us in conversation. He was originally from Oregon where for sometime he was employed as an investment banker. He said the money was good, but then identified a laundry list of stresses he confronted daily. Tommy said one day he realized his life was too complicated and missing something. He purchased a Transpac 49 and started sailing the Pacific Northwest. Soon thereafter, he decided to quit his job and sail south. He sailed to South America through the Panama Canal, then headed East ending on Jost Van Dyke Island. He fell in love with the place and has been there ever since. The bar and restaurant is open daily whether he is there or not. We asked if he had people helping him run then place, he said no. He explained that he ran the place on the honor system. He provided us with a price list for beer, hard drinks, and food from the refrigerator, which we prepared ourselves. Soon thereafter, he left. We stayed, keeping track of what we owed. At the end of the night we placed what we owed in a glass jar with a tip and left. On our way out, we passed by the area where he spent nights. We called out that we were leaving, but never saw him again. The guys talked for some time about keeping life free of complications. So there you have it, when considering New Years resolutions....Keep it simple.

In closing, I'm reminded of Benjamin Franklin, who said "Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well armed lamb contesting the vote."

Have a great New Year.

Until next time.

Jerry, Marina Manager

