Yachting memories of Sept. 11

By Capt. Terry Ingels
aboard M/Y Golf Coast

We arrived at Chelsea Piers the evening of Sept. 10, a rainy, stormy night. The morning of Sept. 11 was bright and clear. We were washing the boat when we heard the first plane hit. It sounded like thunder. Suddenly people were shouting and pointing and we saw the tower on fire.

We wondered how a pilot could make such a grave error. It’s funny what goes through your mind. We even speculated that a movie was being made and it only looked like it was burning. I guess that’s how far your imagination can go when you can’t believe what you are seeing. In the back of our minds, we knew it could be deliberate.

We were watching when the second plane hit. We could not see the plane coming from our position, but we saw the explosion and we no longer had any doubts about it being deliberate. I don’t recall ever feeling that we were in danger, but I do remember wondering where the next one would strike.

Sept. 18 was the day we were permitted to leave and, looking back, we are grateful to have spent that very special week in New York. Chelsea Piers became a triage. In front of the buildings were dozens of ambulances from everywhere, no two alike. Mountains of donated supplies were piled all around. The ice rink was designated as a temporary morgue and closed to skaters for several days. We stood and watched the skaters the evening they returned. A temporary morgue had been unnecessary; there had been no bodies. Things would never be the same, but they were slowly beginning to move back to normal.

Though my partner, Capt. Carl Moughan, and I suffered no personal losses as a result of the attacks, there were still many occasions that would move me to tears.

The event itself and the week that followed were too horrible and beautiful to comprehend. More people turned out to help than could be used. Many had traveled to offer their services and when they could help in no other way, they set up posts along the roads with signs that said “We Love You” and cheered the emergency workers, even advising the foreign-flagged vessels that they need pilots to transit the waters.

Random acts of kindness were everywhere to behold, like the offer of a mask from a police officer the day the inner harbor with its charming port towns and marinas.

Enjoyed it, that is, until the yacht got a $4,324 bill in July for harbor pilots Annan said she didn’t need. “They didn’t even care if a pilot was really on board, just as long as we paid,” she said. “They said it was because of security, but not one time have I been boarded by the Coast Guard. And the pilot, when he boarded us, he didn’t look around or ask us any questions.”

Several megayachts have been surprised this summer with a radio call from the pilots associations in Delaware, Maryland, New York and even Georgia’s Savannah River, all advising the foreign-flagged vessels that they need pilots to transit the waters.

Capt. Les Annan got the call as he was driving the 118-foot M/Y Portofino from Ambrose Light to the dock at Chelsea Piers in New York. Portofino flies the St. Vincent flag; in New York, foreign-flagged vessels over 100 feet need a pilot. He said, “You need a pilot, but if you don’t want one, that’s OK,” Annan said. The pilot then asked for the yacht’s fax number and sent a bill for $770.62 – one way.

“It’s all 9-11 fallout and bureaucracy,” Annan said. “Even the pilot insinuated it was a waste of his time.”

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Sept. 11 fallout
Annan is partly right, at least in New York. Since Sept. 11, 2001, the long-time regulation requiring vessels of 100 feet or greater to take a pilot has been revisited for yachts, said Bob Pouch, executive director of the Board of Commissioners of the Pilots of the State of New York.

See PILOT FEES, page A19

In shipyards, captains choose what’s familiar

With many boats preparing to enter a shipyard this month and next for annual maintenance, we decided to ask our Bridge captains how they choose a yard.

We took the September Bridge luncheon on the road and collected three captains in Newport. (Although seven captains had RSVP’d as late as 10 that morning, four had last-minute matters with their yachts that kept them away. That’s Newport in summer.)

As always, comments are not attributed to anyone in particular to encourage frank and open discussion. The attending captains are identified in a photograph on page A20.

The captains assembled had a range of experience from fairly new to more than 20 years in. Their first suggestion when it comes to yards was to “stay away as long as you can.”

When they do have to go, they noted that their first consideration is the owner’s preference, but “quite often they will default to the captain,” one captain said.

So is it better to go where the captain has been before or where the boat has been before? “I took over a boat in January and we went to the same yard because they knew the boat,” one captain said. “It was fine.”

Myriad issues play into selecting a yard, they agreed, including a captain’s experience, the boat’s experience and word-of-mouth recommendations from word-of-mouth recommendations from the owner’s preference, but “quite often they will default to the captain,” one captain said.

See THE BRIDGE, page A20

Pilot fees hit megayachts cruising U.S. East Coast

By Lucy Chabot Reed

Capt. Krystal Rankin has taken Lady A, a 110-foot tri-deck with a Cayman Islands flag, through the Chesapeake Bay dozens of times over the years. The owner lives in Philadelphia and enjoys cruising the inner harbor with its charming port towns and marinas.

Enjoyed it, that is, until the yacht got a $4,324 bill in July for harbor pilots Annan said she didn’t need. “They didn’t even care if a pilot was really on board, just as long as we paid,” she said. “They said it was because of security, but not one time have I been boarded by the Coast Guard. And the pilot, when he boarded us, he didn’t look around or ask us any questions.”

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Cici van der Watt of M/Y Queen of Diamonds buys handmade woolen items in a market in Chile. Read part 2 of the yacht's journey.

PHOTO/IAN VAN DER WATT

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Captain revels in technology after 6-month refit

Welcome to this edition of Latitude Adjustments. I hope all has been well. Now to report on what I have had the pleasure of hearing from some of you over the summer.

Capt. David Hare, who recently took command of the private 90-foot Delta expedition-style M/Y Thunder, is underway from Halifax to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia with the owners and crew of four.

Thunder has a busy schedule after this trip: to the Newport and Ft. Lauderdale boat shows, then to St. Barts for Thanksgiving with a stop in Puerto Rico, back to St. Barts again, on to Saba for some diving and then to the Dominican Republic.

David says the ship is equipped as fine as any megayacht afloat. She recently finished a six-month refit at Newport’s Hinkley yard. With a bridge that has three NEC flat-screens with black box technology, a 96-mile Furuno radar and Admiral Nobeltec software, David says he can drive with zero visibility.

Next, we have an update from Capt. Jeff Hoerr, who recently took command of the new 130-foot Westport M/Y Vita Bella, which has a 26-foot beam and a draft of 6½ feet. Engines are MTU 12V4000 at 2,735 hp each. Jeff says she will cruise at 20 knots comfortably and top out near 28.

The yacht recently was christened with a nice bottle of Dom on her anchor. Jeff’s crew of five has just joined him; they will be off to Vancouver Island for some salmon fishing.

Here is someone from whom I haven’t heard in awhile, some good acquaintances of mine, Charlie and Linda Johnson. They were interested in receiving some extra Triton newspapers for their traveling in Canada this summer. Charlie says he knows all the hot spots up that way.

They have been on the West Coast of the United States for about two years with M/Y Piano Bar, which is a 157-foot, Italian-built yacht designed by Arthur Delfever. Piano Bar runs with a crew of nine; Charlie is captain, Linda chief stewardess and purser.

We have another new addition to the yachting industry: Charlotte Lynn Sanford, born to proud parents Wes and Kelly Sanford on April 12. Wes captained the 95-foot Hargrave M/Y Hatteras. They were on Miss Lillie for two years – Herb as captain and Tanya as first mate – cruising the eastern seaboard and the Bahamas.

They’ve been in St. Petersburg, Fla., running a high-speed ferry service with six vessels. Herb is finishing celestial classes at MPT, and Tanya will finish massage therapy school in a few weeks. Congratulations are in order again.

Fair winds and following seas to all.

Send news of your promotion, change of yachts or career, or personal accomplishments to Kristy Fox at kristy@the-triton.com.

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South Africans need visa to enter, work in Sint Maarten

By Carol M. Bareuther

South African yacht crew will need visas this winter to enter and work in the Netherlands Antilles, including Sint Maarten.

Actually, citizens of 87 countries now need a visa to visit the Dutch islands, but South Africa has the most yacht crew. Crew members from the United States, Europe, Australia and New Zealand still only need a passport. (For a complete list of countries impacted, visit www.the-triton.com.)

The visa rule was effective Jan. 1, 2005, but not actively enforced last season. This is expected to change this winter. The islands of Sint Maarten, Bonaire, Curacao, Saba and Sint Eustatius are part of the Netherlands Antilles.

The new rules have already impacted one charter yacht. First Mate Andy Pauw, a South African on M/Y Harmony, said he’ll end his yachting career soon, in part to avoid the paperwork problems associated with working in the Caribbean this winter.

“I am leaving the industry at the end of the [summer] season and part of my decision was based on the visa situation,” he said. “Dealing with all the hassles and paperwork is not worth the effort.”

The new requirement has not been well publicized in the yachting community and several calls to government authorities were not returned.

Yet there is much to learn from Harmony’s experience. In early February, her crew “heard through the grapevine” that South African nationals needed a visa to enter Dutch Sint Maarten. Pauw said. Once at immigration, though, there was no formal memo or forthcoming directives from officials, they said.

The new requirement has not been well publicized in the yachting community and several calls to government authorities were not returned.

However, when the captain inquired directly, he was told that the several South African members of his crew must obtain a visa from a Netherlands Antilles consulate within 30 days.

The closest of these offices is in Guadeloupe, about 150 miles away.

Thirty days later, the captain said he learned that there had been a temporary suspension of the visa act to allow crews to enter Sint Maarten to complete the season. They completed the season and left in April, still without any formal notice from the government that the visa rule was in effect.

“The way I understand it is that we need a Netherlands Antilles visa or a seaman’s book to enter Sint Maarten now,” Pauw said.

Taking up a work placement is a valid condition to enter the Netherlands Antilles, according to the government’s Web site. Visas are issued for stays of three months or less. To stay longer, a special visa called an authorization for temporary stay (MVV) is required.

The first step for a South African crew member to avoid immigration problems seems to be obtaining a visa before departing from South Africa. For those in or near Sint Maarten, it may be best to contact the Dutch Consulate in Guadeloupe. Calls to that agency also went unanswered.

Contact Carol Bareuther through editorial@the-triton.com.

SOURCES

● Dutch Consulates in South Africa
  Cape Town, www.dutch-consulate.co.za
  Durban Consul: Mr. Ch.G.J. Beekman, P.O. Box 51171, Musgrave Road 4062
  Tel: (031) 2020461; Fax: (031) 2015043
  netherlands.consul.durban@worldonline.co.za

● Maseru, Lesotho Consul: Ms T.E.M. van Mastrigt, Lancers Inn, Private Bag A216, Maseru
  Tel: (0926622) 312 114; Fax: (0926622) 310 223; Cell: 082 334 4606
  lancers-inn@ilesotho.com

● Mbabane, Swaziland Consul: Mr F.G.J.D. Oostergetel, P.O. Box 1622, Mbabane
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● Sint Maarten Immigration. Contact through the central Police Department operator at +599 542-2222, or by contacting the Simpson Bay Lagoon Authority: +(599) 545-3183.
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Two megayachts run aground in Mediterranean in August

Two luxury megayachts hit reefs in the Mediterranean Sea on Aug. 9, one sinking and the other suffering serious damage.

M/Y Land’s End ran aground on the St. Joseph reef in the Gulf of Sagone on the east side of Corsica, about a mile offshore. Press reports indicate the yacht had a full compliment of 12 charter guests and 13 crew. There were no injuries. The 162-foot yacht sank three days later.

In a separate incident, the 100-foot Azimut Mr Z ran aground in Croatia, according to Boats Yacht Marinas magazine. The magazine credited a radio report received by the Croatian Search & Rescue center that the yacht drove ashore at high speed near the lighthouse on the island of Greben at about 0410 hours. The yacht was badly damaged, and the five people on board sustained minor injuries.

Attention returned to Land’s End two days later when her captain, Christopher Jones, was arrested and charged with “endangering life by imprudence and negligence and causing pollution with hydrocarbons by imprudence and negligence,” according to the magazine.

That same day, the 400-ton yacht shifted in a swell and sank. Water depth there is between 15 and 65 feet. Boats Yacht Marinas indicated the yacht had just made an overnight passage from Cannes. Shortly after the grounding, the yacht sank by the bows, but the stern remained on the reef. Several government vessels stood by to monitor environmental damage. The yacht is believed to have been carrying about 70 tons of diesel.

Joe Russell, chairman of the Professional Yachtsmen’s Association’s executive council issued a statement soon after the incidents.

“We urge all members and non-members alike to exercise extreme caution, to adhere strictly to the regulations for safe navigation, and to abide by the ship’s standing orders and operational procedures.

“These sad events should only strengthen the resolve of all of us in the yachting community that safety remains of paramount importance.”

For photos and more details about the grounding of Land’s End, including some flag and insurance-related matters regarding the number of people on board and safety regulations, visit www.bymnews.com.

– Staff report
Tender hits, kills woman swimming off Sardinia

By Lucy Chabot Reed

A mother of three was killed in Cala di Volpe in Sardinia, hit by the tender of a yacht, while she was swimming from one boat to another.

According to the Times of London, Alexandra Ciardi, 48, a fund manager who lived in Chelsea, West London, suffered fatal head injuries after she was hit by a propeller as she swam to join her husband on Aug. 10.

The 26-foot tender was driven by the owner of M/Y Tanit, according to press reports. The Guardian newspaper noted that police officials have seized the vessel and questioned the owner, Giovanni Mahler, and "his Turkish mariner assistant, Suleiman Slavtak" in a homicide investigation. No charges had been filed as of press time.

A yacht captain known to The Triton but who asked not to be identified was on charter in the area at the time. He and the mate pulled Ms. Ciardi from the water and revived her temporarily as they got her ashore where paramedics took over. She died as the medical helicopter landed, he said.

"It would be nice to try and remind people how dangerous it is to swim in a busy anchorage, and also how dangerous it is to drive dinghies quickly through a busy anchorage," he said.

Rolly painter dies suddenly

It is with deep sadness that we at Rolly Marine report the loss of one of the "good guys." Gary George, president and owner of Paramount Yacht Refinishing, died suddenly on Aug. 3 from a brain aneurism.

Gary founded his company at Rolly Marine and was loved by all who knew him. He never said "no" to anyone and was always there to help with a smile. His company will continue his legacy of one of the finest yacht refinishers in this industry under the direction of his wife, Susan George, and managed by brother-in-law, Ravi Ramsakar.

We will all miss him dearly. His untimely death was a shock to his co-workers, competitors and his customers. At his funeral service, people came from New Zealand, New York, Newport, England, California and the Caribbean. And it was no surprise that they traveled from all over the world to attend, say their goodbyes and to honor him. His enthusiasm and love of life was infectious.

For those of us lucky enough to share a small portion of his life comes also the tremendous sense of loss with his passing. He leaves behind his wife, Susan, and their three sons: Brandon, Daniel and Darren. He was 35.

– Greg Poulos, general manager, and all of Gary’s friends at Rolly Marine
Young couple charged with killing yacht owners

A former child actor and his wife were ordered in August to stand trial for the murder of a California couple who, prosecutors say, were tied to the anchor of their 55-foot yacht Well Deserved and thrown overboard alive.

Orange County Superior Court Judge John Conley ordered 26-year-old Skylar Deleon, who once starred in the “Power Rangers” TV series, and his wife, 24-year-old Jennifer Henderson Deleon, to stand trial for the murders after a two-day preliminary hearing in Santa Ana, south of Los Angeles, according to the Los Angeles Times.

“It’s haunting to think these nice, loving people were trying to hold their breaths as they sank to the bottom of the ocean,” Deputy District Attorney Matt Murphy said at the hearing. “This is as cold-blooded as it gets.”

Prosecutors say Deleon came up with the plot after spotting the yacht for sale in a boating magazine last November and meeting owners Thomas Hawks, 57, and his 47-year-old wife, Jackie.

The couple were killed Nov. 15. A police detective testified during the hearing that Deleon and his wife posed as interested buyers and convinced the Hawkses to take the yacht on a test run, the paper reported.

Miles off the coast of Newport Beach, prosecutors say, Thomas and Jackie Hawks were attacked with a stun gun, handcuffed and gagged with duct tape. After signing over power of attorney to one assailant, they were tied to the boat’s 66-pound anchor and thrown overboard.

The couple were reported missing by relatives and police were led to the Deleons, who produced a bill of sale for the yacht and the power of attorney. Authorities believe the bill of sale was falsified.

The Joneses are big boaters

Nationally acclaimed writer and trends guru Jonathan Pontell – who identified and named “Generation Jones” as the large lost generation between the Baby Boomers and Generation X – will be the keynote speaker at the annual International Marina & Boatyard Conference in January.

This newly defined age group constitutes 40 percent to 50 percent of all consumers of marina products and services, he said. Born between 1954 and 1965, Jonesers are now 39-50 years old and demonstrate a distinctive set of consumer behaviors and attitudes.

“Jonesers are 26 percent of all U.S. adults, but make up a much larger percentage of the marina market; it is unusual for an industry’s market to be so dominated by one generation,” Jonathan said.

“While this makes it crucial for those in the marina industry to really understand this particular age group, it also provides a huge opportunity for this industry to inexpensively, but very effectively, target market this key age segment.”

The 2006 International Marina & Boatyard Conference will be held at the Renaissance Orlando Resort at SeaWorld. For more information, visit www.marinaassociation.org. For more information on Pontell, visit www.jonathanpontell.com.

Pelorus gets bad fuel, makes news

The 377-foot Pelorus received a tank of contaminated diesel in Malta, but thanks to onboard monitoring devices, no damage was caused to the engines.

Simon Borg Cordona, the Maltese agent for Pelorus, said the fuel contained an excessive amount of water, according to The Times of London. A warning system on board detected the problem while she was still docked at Malta’s Manoel Island Marina and shut down the generators. He said no damage was caused to the engine.

“These things happen all the time; unfortunately, it’s a common problem,” the newspaper quoted him as saying. “In this case, the yacht in question is world-renowned.”

The tank had to be drained and fresh fuel supplied the following day. According to the paper, Pelorus runs with a crew of 40.
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The concrete floating docks at Ft. Pierce City Marina stood strong through 28 hours of thrashing by Hurricane Frances last September before a boat finally broke loose and started the domino effect of pilings laying down and docks coming off.

But now that it’s time to rebuild, marina General Manager Dean Kubitschek is not automatically signing up for concrete floating docks again. He and coastal engineers are analyzing site-specific construction materials including wood, concrete, steel, aluminum, and new pilings after the $1.7 million clean-up.

Marinas with floating concrete docks damaged in last year’s hurricanes aren’t rushing to replace them with concrete again. An informal survey of damaged Florida marinas show several are considering new floating docks constructed of wood, aluminum and composite materials instead of concrete.

“A driving requirement after a storm is saving money,” said Dick Czlapinski, a coastal engineer with Stuart-based Tetra Tech EC. Concrete is more expensive than wood or plastic, he said.

One new dock material to watch is the new high-density polyethylene, said Czlapinski, who has been working with Kubitschek on Ft. Pierce Marina’s rebuild. HDPE is a floating system with real potential in its low cost – about 30 percent less than other systems – and high performance, he said.

“It has good strength due to the high density and avoids the maintenance problems of concrete and corrosion issues with aluminum,” he said. “The strong, thick wall pipe is also used for sewer pipes, easy to build and work with, and has solid joints.”

After last year’s brutal hurricane season, Czlapinski said he sees marinas moving to more flexible dock systems, such as aluminum, timber or composite materials, as does Robert Fortin, president of Radisson Design Canada, a dock manufacturer in Quebec.

“The rigidity of concrete is not good in wave action,” Fortin said. “It cracks.”

Aluminum, on the other hand, flexes in wave action, but it is more expensive than concrete.

After Hurricane Ivan last year, Pensacola Shipyard and Marina replaced its cracked concrete floating docks with wood planks over galvanized steel frames, he said.

The concrete docks cracked at Everglades Marina, too. The marina had wood, concrete and aluminum docks. After the hurricane, the aluminum docks had the least damage and were easiest to repair, said John Sprague, a managing partner of Everglades Adventures in Pahokee, Fla., operators of the marina.

The marina lost 3,000 linear feet of concrete docks during Hurricane Frances, said Sprague, who noted that aluminum is a better choice for his marina on Lake Okeechobee.

Despite the damages the 2004 hurricanes inflicted on concrete docks, they are the best docks to stand up in the conditions as engineered for a facility, said Steve Ryder, manager of project development at Bellingham Marine, one of the world’s largest manufacturers of concrete docks. Based in Bellingham, Wash., the company has been in business for 50 years, having built thousands of docks and marinas in existence today.

“Concrete floating dock systems are a stiff system to walk on and are demanded,” said Jack Cox, director of waterfront development for Retec, an environmental engineering consulting firm in Bellingham, Wash.

The broom-like finish of concrete provides a less slippery surface than other docks, and it doesn’t discolor, engineer Czlapinski noted. It is also best for salt water, he said. Chips and breaks are easily repairable.

But Newport Shipyard will replace its concrete floating dock with floating wood next year, said Eli Dana, dockmaster of the Rhode Island marina. The south floating concrete dock ripped apart with one boat tied to it in a November storm with 60-65 mph winds, he said. Their two wood floating docks were fine.

“The wood floating docks are seemingly better,” said Charlie Dana.

See DOCKS, page A13
Crew don’t mind dock material, as long as it floats

DOCKS, from page A12

president of Newport Shipyard.

Some megayacht crew don’t have a preference for wood versus concrete, as long as the dock floats.

While Mate Greg Paterson of M/Y Time for Us said the floating concrete docks at Bahia Mar Yachting Center are perfectly made for his yacht’s height, he said he likes the floating wood docks at Newport Shipyard just as well.

“Newport’s floating wood docks are a little lower than Bahia’s Mar’s concrete, but it’s a no-brainer to reset your fenders,” he said. “At the end of the day, you lock off your lines and that’s how it stays with floating docks. You don’t have to keep rechecking the lines, once they’re tight.”

Bahia Mar combined three types of docks in its multi-million-dollar makeover in 2003, providing custom pedestals with louvered lighting in addition to extra long finger piers, said Kevin Quirk, vice president of marina operations for The Blackstone Group, owners of Bahia Mar as well as Pier 66 and Boca Raton Resort and Marina.

“We used concrete docks, as it was the best marina we could make at the time,” Quirk said of Bahia Mar’s renovation. He was Bahia Mar’s marina manager at the time.

NOW Quirk is a decision maker in Pier 66’s marina renovation. He said he is open to every dock option, including concrete and wood, fixed and floating.

But why is Quirk researching the whole dock story all over again if concrete floating docks are the industry’s unofficial gold standard?

“Because there is something better than Bahia Mar’s docks,” he said. “We’re improving it and making it better. But I can’t tell you what it is, yet.”

Bahia Mar Yachting Center spent a year before the 2003 boat show upgrading its docks to concrete floating docks, but its former marina manager says there’s something better out there now.

Docks are designed to withstand minor storms, not monster ones with big weight loads and boats tied to them. All docks disappear in such conditions, Czlapinski said, but for different reasons.

“We need stronger systems to resist those conditions,” he said.

Contact freelance writer Lisa H. Knapp at lisa@the-triton.com.
Burger Boat Company changes with the times

By Lisa H. Knapp

Jim Ruffolo remembers the day he committed to resurrecting Wisconsin-based Burger Boat Company, then bankrupt in spring of 1992.

Ruffolo and his partner, David Ross, met with the mayor of the city and a representative from the Former Burger Workers (FBWs), a group of employees who worked at Burger when it shut its doors with a $13 million bankruptcy. While skeptical, they remained united, hoping one day to build Burger boats together again.

"The meeting was at some senior citizens hall in Manitowoc," Ruffolo recalled. "When David and I asked who would help us build boats, 165 FBWs gave us a standing ovation. It gave me a chill up my spine."

The workers pledged to come back to the company with passion for their old jobs in an interim period.

"So David and I looked at each other and said we’d do it, too," he said.

Ruffolo is now the company’s executive vice president and co-owner with Ross, now president. They took over in February 1993.

And so goes the revival of Burger, a company that’s survived for centuries due to its marketplace adaptability and generations of loyalty from its highly skilled craftsmen. Today, the new regime of Ruffolo and Ross has positioned Burger to become a world-class business building world-class megayachts.

With seven yachts on order at an average length of 124 feet, Burger is considered the 13th largest custom builder overall, according to World’s 2005 Global Order Book.

Burger is building the largest vessel in its history, M/Y Time for Us, a 154-foot tri-deck designed by Vripack due for launch in 2006. The company’s sole 2005 launch is M/Y Tenacity, a 116-foot raised pilothouse completed in June.

The company has 320 employees, up from 175 in 2004. Burger’s human capital laid the groundwork to invest in the latest technologies to improve efficiency.

A $5 million state-of-the-art manufacturing complex was completed in September 2004, adding 48,000 square feet of fabrication space. The expansion of the facility will continue with Burger having 150,000 square feet of manufacturing systems and designers under one roof for 2007.

A new computer-controlled router and machining center for the joiner shop provides leading edge millwork efficiencies and capabilities that show in Tenacity’s homely wood detail. Burger carpenters carved the exotic African makore wood with raised paneling and crown molding throughout.

Megayacht crews have noticed the attention to detail and appreciate Burger’s efforts to make better boats. For example, Burger uses stainless steel tubing and swagelok fittings for hydraulics and fuel as standard in its engine rooms.

"The tubing won’t leak, it lasts forever," said Tenacity Capt. Tim Silva.

Capt. Chris Young, who oversees construction of M/Y Time for Us, likes the fuel efficient Caterpillar 3508 engines, which burn 80 gallons an hour at 14 knots.

"You can run 100 percent hard 100 percent of the time in this boat," Young said.

Time for Us will have a 5,000 mile range at 12 knots and the full displacement hull is expected to be comfortable in the heaviest of seas. There will be no green water over the bow in 16-foot seas, Young said of the efficient hull.

Four big Burgers are to be delivered in 2007, including the 143-foot fantail cruiser M/Y Sycara, built in a classic 1920s style, and M/Y Sea Owl, another tri-deck. Sycara and Sea Owl will be the first yachts built in the United States with alustar, a new, high-strength, highly corrosive-resistant material used by the Royal Heisman Yard in Germany, Ross said.

Ross attributes part of the success Burger is experiencing to Henry Chriss, a business consultant Burger hired a few years ago to examine its people and manufacturing processes and help it compete globally as a world-class builder.

Chriss insists that being a world-class builder isn’t a fluffy term. His charge was to make Burger emulated in its industry in the way Coca-Cola and Nike are regarded in their respective industries. Burger is about two years away from reaching that goal, he said.

See BURGER, page A15
Burger focuses on building a better company

BURGER, from page A14

“The best people in the world, with the best processes in the world, are building the best boats in the world,” Chriss said. “That’s how Burger will become a world-class manufacturer of yachts 35-50 meters.”

Chriss has brought Burger from “good to great,” said Katie Ross, Burger’s director of marketing and David Ross’s wife. “We’re a 12-year overnight success,” she said.

The builders of that success, however, have been working for generations to get Burger to this point. About a quarter of the company’s workforce has been on the job more than 10 years, and at least a dozen father-son teams keep the tradition alive.

Part of life at Burger is the leadership training program called Burger University that enables employees to develop as well as mentor other employees. This training isn’t an option, Ruffolo said. It’s a method for sustained self-improvement.

One employee who’s advanced through Burger U. is Gene Gauthier, manager of the joinery department. A 28-year veteran, Gauthier was one of those former Burger Workers whose dedication helped rebuild a company.

“There are so many different personalities involved, from design to final touches. We’re working together, one big team, to build this very unique product,” Gauthier said.

Gauthier helped develop the joiner curriculum and is one of the company’s 30 senior mentors, Ruffolo said. As a mentor, he helps all the carpenters, but he helps his son, Reed, a little bit more.

“He feels a little bit more comfortable asking me questions, I guess.”

There are literally generations of workers who have built boats at Burger, said Wendy Lutzke, the museum educator for the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. Burger and its employees have been recognized worldwide for quality construction and seaworthiness.

“Finding good, skilled labor is difficult,” he said. “The attitude and skills of the workers is one of tremendous pride. Encouraging nepotism is unusual at many companies but works well at Burger.”

Capt. James Cameron of M/Y Top Times, launched in 2003, said the woodworking on his yacht is second to none. The craftsmanship of its African mahogany is on par with the best Dutch and German yards, he said.

“There are fit and finish craftsmen with skills and traits handed down from generation to generation,” Cameron said. “They are very knowledgeable, and the warranty guys are fair and helpful, working to see that your problem is resolved. I’ve nothing but good to say about that.”

Cameron said he has more confidence in Top Times than any other boat he’s run. It burns 40 gallons an hour and is Burger’s first full-displacement hull.

Cameron was part of the building process and had considerable input as the end-user. He likes the design of the windows. The console is lower for a better view of the wheelhouse. Little details that the crew thinks about, like the placement of fixtures, outlets and folding areas, were adjusted for their convenience.

“We really care about what we do here building these unique and beautiful vessels,” Gauthier said.

Contact freelance writer Lisa H. Knapp at lisa@the-triton.com.

Tying the knot – Burger style

By Lisa H. Knapp

It was love at first sight when Chef Adam Mulroney met his now-fiancée Heather Davis on M/Y Monte Carlo.

“There was something unusual about her,” Mulroney said. “An unusual person in an unusual place.”

So he wooed her as only a world-class megayacht chef could. He put love notes under her food. But she never noticed them. Then he put rose petals on her plate. She still didn’t get it.

So he took matters into his own hands with “a more direct approach.”

It is a story that Mulroney, a South African, will likely tell throughout his life to the family he builds with Davis, an American from Orlando. Davis has a master’s degree in French and was a tutor on Monte Carlo when she met Mulroney last summer.

Since then, Davis has undergone a career change and crews as the stewardess in the stew/chef team with Mulroney on M/Y Tenacity, the new 116-foot Burger launched this summer. They shouldn’t have a problem scheduling time off together.

“I loved my job, but I’m glad to have met on Tenacity,” Tim Silva said. “Bigger bunks, full size for Adam and Heather, too.”

Burger reconfigured the crew quarters for Tenacity to accommodate the married couples.

“We got rid of the crew lounge for the married couples. It’s lonely running by yourself.”

The all-couple crew of Tenacity from left, Chef Adam Mulroney, Stew Heather Davis, Mate Gillian Silva, Capt. Tim Silva.

Montefino. She is now co-captain and mate on Tenacity.

“I’ve nothing but good to say your problem is resolved. It’s all about who your warranty guys are fair and helpful, working to see that your problem is resolved. I’ve nothing but good to say about that.”

Burger reconfigured the crew quarters for Tenacity to accommodate the married couples.

“We got rid of the crew lounge for the married couples. It’s lonely running by yourself.”

The owners have been married 47 years and like the dynamics of the all-couples crew.

“It makes a difference to be able to enjoy beautiful places with a special person,” Mulroney said.

Contact freelance writer Lisa H. Knapp at lisa@the-triton.com.

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Contact freelance writer Lisa H. Knapp at lisa@the-triton.com.
Denison takes over for Denison

Denison Yacht Sales announced in August that Bob Denison is the company’s new broker of record. He replaces his father, Christopher “Kit” Denison, who will focus on Marine Realty Inc., which he founded to concentrate on the acquisitions, sales and consulting of marinas.

Bob Denison, 28, represents three generations of Denisons in the yachting industry. His grandparents, Frank and Gertrude Denison, founded Broward Marine in the 1940s. He is also the nephew of Ken and Skip Denison.

Bradford Yacht Sales sold

Miami-based Merrill-Stevens Dry Dock Co. acquired the brokerage firm of Bradford Yacht Sales in August.

Bradford, once part of the shipyard group but independent more than 40 years, had 13 licensed brokers and a long-time administrative staff that Whit Kirtland, president of Merrill Stevens Yacht Sales, called “phenomenal.”

The acquisition is expected to increase Merrill-Stevens brokerage revenue by $12 million to $15 million a year, more than doubling what Kirtland and veteran broker Bob Zarchen have been bringing in, he said.

Buying the company also gives Merrill-Stevens eight coveted slips in the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show and six slips in the Miami Boat Show, he said.

Merrill-Stevens Yacht Sales has relocated to Ft. Lauderdale in new offices in the Causeway Corporate Center off Southeast 17th Street.

– Lucy Chabot Reed

Broward hires new VP

After a six-and-a-half-year hiatus, David Wiest has returned to Broward Marine as vice president of sales and marketing where he will not only oversee the marketing and sales of Broward’s yachts, but also manage its full-service brokerage operation.


Regs4yachts hires new CEO

UK-based Regs4yachts, a regulatory and compliance support company for large yachts, has appointed Nick Gladwell as chief executive officer. Gladwell begins in his new role Sept. 1.

Gladwell was director of safety and survey at the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry (CISR). Before that, he was a principal surveyor with the MCA.

During his seven years with the CISR, Gladwell became an expert in building and operating yachts to MCA code. Contact him at nick.gladwell@consultancy4.org.

Grateful Palate sold

Aaron and Amanda Heady bought the international foods market The Grateful Palate this summer.

Neither yachties nor restaurateurs, the Headys say they are “foodies” as well as successful entrepreneurs.

“We’ve been faithful customers for five or six years and the opportunity came to us to buy it,” Aaron Heady said of the store on Southeast 17th Street in Ft. Lauderdale.

The couple has no plans to change the store, just improve it. It will begin to carry fresh seafood and vegetables as well as fresh exotic items such as wasabi root and truffles. And beginning this fall, Aaron Heady said he plans to open for dinner at least on weekends, and to continue with the chef’s night on Wednesdays.

– Lucy Chabot Reed
Two boats, two crews, one family at sea

By Lisa H. Knapp

Capt. Hamish de Frenne Chilvers tried to restrain Boomer, an enthusiastic, tail-wagging member of his crew, to pose for a photo on the 122-foot motoryacht he runs.

But Boomer, a black lab, had other ideas. As he tried to snuggle up close, he knocked the captain's morning cup of coffee all over the aft deck. Then he got right to work, cleaning it up.

"Good boy, Boomer," several crew members said. "Lick it all up so there's less to clean."

Boomer isn't the only dog aboard this yacht. There's Mac, a 14-year-old Springer spaniel, too. In fact, most things about this boat and this captain deviate from the norm.

The yacht is a Breaux Bay craft, a commercial hull designed as a private yacht launched in 1979. It has always been a private yacht and sleeps 18.

Tied alongside it at Newport Shipyard in late July was S/Y Bandit, a 45-foot Swan competing in the Rolex Swan American Regatta. de Frenne Chilvers pulls double duty and is captain of the racing sailboat too.

He petted Boomer as he expressed his disappointment at not sailing well the day before, but said he had higher hopes of doing better as the crew jumped from the yacht to the sailboat and back, readying themselves for another day of racing.

"The two boats are always together for regattas," he said. "We have about 50 days of racing this year, and the racing crew sleeps and eats on the motoryacht."

It's for convenience and camaraderie's sake.

"The crew is one, big happy family," de Frenne Chilvers said.

One ship follows the other from regatta to regatta, from Newport to Antigua. de Frenne Chilvers moves one yacht to the next port, flies back, and then brings the other across. The motoryacht is run by a crew of four to five with de Frenne Chilvers and Ben "Nipper" Allen working on both.

Bandit picked up several semi-professional and amateur sailors for a crew of 11 to 13 to race the Rolex Swan in Newport. Though it didn't place, Bandit won its class division at Block Island Race Week presented by Rolex in June.

de Frenne Chilvers has the utmost respect for the owner, his friend, with whom he has worked for four years. Bandit is their third sailboat together. The owner had a serious motorcycle accident three years ago, breaking a leg, his back, and losing an arm.

But he still sails.

"He is recovering and building his strength, and helps out wherever he can," de Frenne Chilvers said. "He's an amazing, awesome boss."

The owner, who asked not to be named, said he drives the sailboat while his wife runs the pit in races.

"Some people don't like being with their crew," he said. "But I consider the crew my family; we like to hang together."

"How we place is secondary to running a good race, but hopefully goes hand-in-hand with having a good time."

de Frenne Chilvers agreed.

"When it becomes a job, I'd quit," he said. "I started for fun, to get into it. I'm not sure I can or want to get out."

Next regatta: Larchmont NOOD, New York.

Contact freelance writer Lisa H. Knapp at lisa@the-triton.com.
Women to race rowboat across Atlantic Ocean

By Lisa H. Knapp

Sarah Kessans and Emily Kohl are thrill seekers. They’re into adventure racing on kayaks and bikes. They climb mountains and surf oceans. “Anything to get our adrenaline pumping,” Kessans said.

Once, they entered and completed The Glass City Marathon – a 26.2-mile foot race – without any practice, just because they were up for the challenge.

Now the women face their biggest challenge yet: A 2,000-mile trip in a rowboat from the Canary Islands to Antigua in the Woodvale Events Atlantic Rowing Race 2005.

Even for the adventuresome, this is a daunting task. More people have climbed Mt. Everest than have rowed an ocean.

But Kessans and Kohl say they are prepared. They rowed together for three years on Purdue University’s crew team. And they’re out to beat the women’s record of 50 days, 7 hours. Their strategy: one will row while one rests, switching every two hours.

Forty rowboats will compete against them, with a mother ship hovering nearby. But Kessans and Kohl must be completely self-sufficient. There is no motor, sail or outside assistance available, just pure sport powered by four oars and the will to succeed.

Kessans and Kohl are the only Americans in the British-sponsored race and are also the second youngest team in the race. If they are successful, they will be the youngest women’s team to cross an ocean.

What would motivate two women to take on such a task?
They are driven, a new set of brave American women, breaking boundaries to inspire others to new aspirations. “If we touch one person, one kid, to achieve their dream, it’s worth it for us,” Kohl said.

Their 12-hour practice sessions in South Florida’s summer heat are grueling. The boat is loaded with 700 pounds of sand to mimmck the 1,600-pound weight of the rowboat stocked for their race. They’re bringing a stove and 75 days of provisions. Their plumbing consists of two buckets: one for cooking, one for the bathroom.

They have taken courses at Maritime Professional Training including radio operations and astronavigation. A satellite phone, beeper, computer, two hand-held GPS units and one fixed GPS will guide their journey. If all else fails, a sextant and stars will have to suffice.

Both women have a passion for rowing but their ultimate inspiration is Bill Butler, their mentor, famed for a real-life survival at sea documented in his novel, “66 Days Adrift.” “Bill has an unfailing attitude with so many setbacks,” Kessans said. “He keeps going and doesn’t look back. He is the true definition of an explorer.”

Butler warned the women they will emerge from their trans-Atlantic experience as new people. “Fifty days at sea in a small craft propelled by mostly their energy will remain with them as a truly epic adventure,” Butler said.

After the race, Kessans will enter graduate school for genetic engineering and Kohl will coach crew at Michigan State University. As for their next adventure, they will re-team in 2008 to race across the Indian Ocean from Western Australia to the Marquesas.

And, who knows, they may pop up in a triathlon on their next day of rest.

Raising $200,000 to cover training, living expenses, transportation, the rowboat and supplies has proven to be one of the women’s biggest challenges. The race starts Nov. 27, and they are only halfway to their budget goal.

They are accepting donations from individuals, sponsorships from corporations, and in-kind donations of equipment for things such as iPods, water makers and sunscreen. Information about sponsorships and tax-deductible donations is available at www.americanfirerowing.com, where they will also post their progress through the race. Or e-mail them at skessans@purdue.edu or kohltrain12@yahoo.com.

Contact freelance writer Lisa H. Knapp at lisa@the-triton.com.

Sarah Kessans, top, and Emily Kohl, front, have been rowing around South Florida in preparation.

PHOTO/DEAN LAUTERMILCH

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PILOT FEES, from page A1

"It had come up in conversations to review the policy on yachts in the post-9-11 environment," he said. "All of us in the system have a great deal of respect for the captains of these yachts. They’re sitting on a lot of fuel."

Pouch said the key element pushing enforcement of the regulations on yachts is the sense in the security environment that megayachts are at a high risk for terrorism. The act of having a pilot onboard as a yacht enters or leaves New York’s waters minimizes the likelihood of someone using it as a missile in a terrorist attack.

“Some of our board members are marine insurance people and deal in the world of liability and negligence,” he said. “A vessel that deliberately fails to take a pilot and commits a crime of some sort, or if the vessel had a casualty or an oil spill, the insurance company could deny the liability and offer no coverage. The stakes have been raised somewhat, and that’s why you see more compliance in a post-9-11 era.”

Many yacht captains never have had to pay for a pilot in the United States.

“In my career, 20 years, this is the only time,” said Annan, who has paid for pilots in Harbor Island going over Devil’s Backbone, in Cannes and going through the Panama Canal.

While New York requires a pilot on yachts over 100 feet, Delaware and Maryland require pilots on foreign-flagged vessels over 100 tons. And although those rules have been in place since the mid-20th century, they had been enforced only on commercial vessels until a few years ago.

“It’s just something that came up,” said Michael Linton, president of the Pilots Association for the Bay and River Delaware, when asked why the rule was now being applied to yachts.

“Someone said why are all these things floating out there without a pilot? Do we like it? No. But we have to enforce the law.”

When asked if the pilots association, a non-government group, had been given a directive from some government authority to begin putting pilots on yachts, Linton said:

“I can’t comment on that.”

“They think these yachts drive around with money in the bilge, but they’re going to kill the golden goose,” he said. “If they made it over 500 tons, I could see that. That’s a pretty big boat. But it’s anything over 100 tons. That’s everybody.”

Contact Editor Lucy Chabot Reed at lucy@the-triton.com.
Attendees of The Triton’s September Bridge luncheon were, from left, Andrew Law of M/Y La Dolce Vita, Dawn Ward of M/Y IBEX and Gui Garvia of M/Y Sovereign. Lunch was held in the library of the Seaman’s Church Institute in Newport.

PHOTO/LUCY REED

It’s still center of repair world, but Lauderdale not only choice

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other mariners they trust.

“‘There’s also the matter of availability,’ one captain noted. ‘You usually have to make plans six months in advance. If you don’t, and you use the same yard, they might make room for you.’”

The captains acknowledged that Ft. Lauderdale was still the center of service in the world, but that alone is not enough to bring them to South Florida.

“‘What Ft. Lauderdale has is it’s the center of everything,’ a captain said. ‘Everything you need is right there.’

Still, the captains noted good experiences they have had other places.

“‘Up in Palm Beach, at Rybovich Spencer, they’ve really cleaned the place up,’ one captain said.

“And Bennett Brothers, another added. ‘They were excellent with American-trained, proper tradesmen.’

“My complaint about Ft. Lauderdale is people get off boats or come off the street and they can get a job.”

One captain noted a refit experience in Caines, Australia, was “great.”

“It was fast and reasonably priced,” this captain said. “You can’t haul them off there but we did a huge amount of work in six weeks,” including a complete new galley and crew quarters.

When approaching the owner with a list of work that needs to be done, these captains suggested putting it in writing and prioritizing it.

“Let him know ‘This is what must be done for safety,’ and give him the estimated cost and time,” one captain said. “If you hand it to him, it’s much easier than just talking to him about it.”

“The owner wants the boat to be peaceful,” another captain said. “‘They don’t want to talk business on the boat. E-mail it to him.’

This captain e-mails a majority of boat operation matters to the owner, including crew salaries and negotiations.

When estimating the cost, the captains agreed to add a line of about 25 percent for unexpected projects.

“You always get a curveball when you are in dry dock,” one captain said. “I feel confident that I can estimate a job, then I’m wrong.”

For a haul out, get a written estimate to show the boss, they agreed. “A quote is better,” one said.

It’s better to give a high estimate and come in under than to tell the owner it will be less and come back over budget, they agreed. And if work or dollars have to be cut, ask the owner to choose based on the priorities the captain has supplied: safety items stay, cosmetic items are trimmed.

If the owner chooses to eliminate more-important safety items in favor of more-enjoyable cosmetic items, several captains said they would resist.

“We work really hard to get the licenses we have,” one captain said. “The business we are in, it’s real easy to make a mistake. If something is not working for me, I always try to put my license in front. I’ll tell him I’m going ashore for a while. It shows that you have a goal, a plan, and they will back off and go with your plan.”

How do you choose a yard? Be a part of this discussion and send comments to Editor Lucy Chabot Reed at lucy@the-triton.com. If you are a yacht captain and in Ft. Lauderdale the beginning of the month, contact us for an invitation to The Bridge. Space is limited to eight.
Broward Marine launched M/Y Soulmate, the last of Broward’s 20-foot-beam series introduced in the 1980s by Frank Denison, former owner of the yard.

The 106-foot yacht will become Broward’s corporate yacht with Capt. Tom Miller, above, at the helm.

The 20-foot beam series was one of the most popular yachts ever built by Broward Marine, which has been building yachts since 1948.

Real estate developer Tom Lewis bought the company in March and has introduced three new lines for production, including a 120-foot raised pilot house with a 24-foot beam, a 135-foot tri-deck with a 26½-foot beam and a 160-foot tri-deck with a 28-foot beam.

Lewis read the “Old Sailor’s Prayer” at a christening ceremony on Aug. 24: Wherever you may sail, may the skies be clear, may the winds be fair, may the seas be calm, may the tides always be with you. God bless all who sail on Soulmate.

PHOTO/DAVID REED

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