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NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2017

Best wishes to all our friends and supporters for the New Year.



Since our last Newsletter (June 2016) we have successfully completed the RYA Dinghy & Keelboat Instructor course which ran for 10 days in August. I am pleased to say that all 6 of our students gained their formal qualifications as dinghy & keelboat sailing instructors. We see this as the first rung on the ladder to eventually becoming suitable qualified for a career in the yachting industry.

Whilst some may stay in dinghy sailing, it is our aim to now move others up the ladder to gain further qualifications on yachts. They need to learn navigation, passage planning, boat maintenance, life aboard etc.etc – none of this is possible in a dinghy!

So, Thanks to the generosity of many of the yachts who attended the Charter Show in December, and again, the Miley Foundation (who donated towards the swimming pool project in 2016) – we now have a yacht. She is a Contessa 28 – built 1981 and has been well maintained by her previous owner, for 28 years. She was purchased in the UK and we are also grateful to Peters & May who shipped her to Tortola free of charge.



This summer we hope to run another Instructor Course with 8 – 12 students, mostly school leavers. We are looking for sponsorship to fund the course which costs approx: U\$12,000 to stage (we have to pay for two Coach/Assessors to fly from UK, their fees for 10 days; accommodation and subsistence, and a sizeable fee to the RYA).

Our 'Endless Pool' is working well and – Thanks to a group of eight volunteers – we are now giving free 'Water Confidence' lessons on Saturdays. This is proving to be very popular and we have a long waiting list of children wanting to join, and then, we hope, start sailing. We would love to have more volunteers – no special skills needed – except being able to swim. It would involve being at the Academy for approx: 2 hours on a Saturday, once a month. We could also start 'after school' sessions on weekdays from 3.30 – 5.30 if we had enough volunteers.



In our last Newsletter, we mentioned that some of our dinghies, particularly the Laser Picos, were suffering from cracking around the mast gate due to faulty construction. We are very fortunate to have secured funding to replace 10 of these. We will be changing our fleet to RS Boats and expect them to arrive around the end of March.

Our 'Sailability' programme for disabled children and adults of Antigua is operating 5 mornings each week - Thanks to Bob Bailey and his team. Again, the programme is free of charge to the participants, so we are always seeking support.

The second annual 'Sailability Sponsored Walk' will take place on the Sunday 19th March. (Flyer to follow) It was a great success last April when we had the Prime Minister Gaston Browne, Minister of Sport Chet Greene, Minister of Social Transformation Samantha Marshall etc. and the Governor General Sir Rodney Williams (our patron) walking with us. There were approx: 130 people, mostly with disabilities, attending. This year's event will be similar but with added attractions e.g. a Family Fun day and evening entertainment. There will be clowns, face painting, bouncy castle, BBQ and Bar. Pan Band, a Marching Band, a DJ and the very popular '1761' live group will play in the evening. Please come & support us.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

11th/12th February - Valentines Junior Regatta – Al Porto, Jolly Harbour. Optimist & Taz classes for sailors up to 17 years. See JHYC.com for info.

Friday 17th February – The 4th Annual 'Cappa Cup' Regatta & party – at the Academy, English Harbour. Team dinghy racing from 2pm, followed by live music, BBQ & Bar.

Fair winds,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Jordan'.

Elizabeth Jordan, President.