

The Dream of Ocean Passages

After Tim Szabo got back from Vietnam, he flew glider airplanes in his spare time. He later decided that sailing might be a more reasonable pursuit. He took lessons, became an active sailor, and over the years gained 35,000 sea miles under his belt, many of those thanks to the World Cruising Club (WCC) rallies such as the Caribbean 1500, Atlantic Cruising Rally (ARC) Europe, and the Atlantic Cup. Although he lives in Virginia, Szabo sails his Saga 43 *Kinship* out of Solomons, rarely for long on the Chesapeake. His passion is for offshore adventure. Here's how he got into it.

How did you get involved with WCC?

I did my first of four Caribbean 1500s when Steve Black ran it, and it's since morphed into the WCC... I am an educated consumer, and I can tell you this: WCC events are well done.

Can you give us an example?

I did the ARC Europe from Tortola [to Portugal] in May 2011. Then I spent the summer on my own in Portugal and moved the boat to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to prepare for the ARC [from Gran Canaria to St. Lucia in the Caribbean]. WCC had locals to help us provision the boat, who were very helpful and efficient... Because of boat problems, I had to turn back and couldn't complete the ARC. Later, when I prepared to return on my own, it took my crew and me—neither of us spoke Spanish—*six hours* to provision the boat. It made me realize just how helpful the WCC people had been. Their expertise reduces the trepidation of ocean passages. That kind of stuff is invaluable to me.

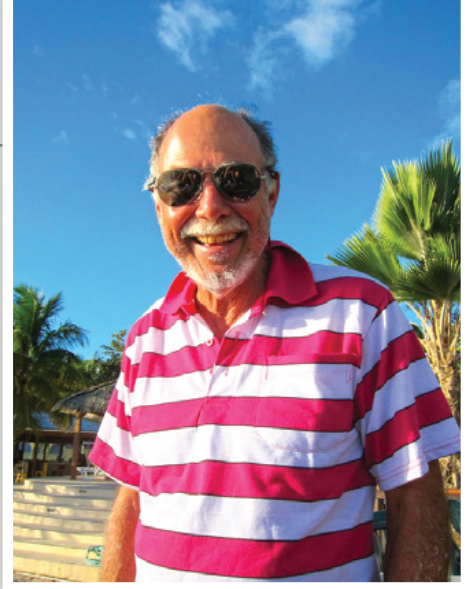
What is the benefit of traveling in the company of other boats rather than on your own?

It's kind of nice to have someone else within 50 or 60 miles. You get a lot of good information... Sailors who go to sea in small boats are a different kind of people; you all have a common dream. I've met people from Finland, Sweden, Italy, Eastern Europe, and Australia. It's a pleasure to meet them. You don't get that when you go alone.

Is there anything else you would like to add for anyone considering the WCC and its adventures?

The Caribbean 1500 Rally usually leaves after the passage of a cold front, and you have a rough day or two... same when you return. I was pleasantly surprised by how much easier, generally, it was to sail in Europe. I encourage East Coast sailors to go there. It's not that big of a deal to cross the pond. People do it all the time—even with kids!

■ Skipper of the Saga 43 *Kinship*, Tim Szabo arriving in Tortola after an Atlantic Crossing.
Photo by Maria Karlsson



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