

## Fleming's Lifetime Achievement Award



Tony Fleming accepts his Lifetime Achievement award from Editor-in-Chief Jonathan Cooper (far left), and Geoff Leech (far right), PassageMaker's publisher and TrawlerFest organizer.

### NAVIGATING THE RED TAPE

AIM Marine Group's First Cuba Rally Meets With Success

U.S. citizens can legally take their boats to Cuba—finally! If one of the 12 exceptions to the embargo applies, you may exercise that exception on your own boat for up to two weeks at a time with a minimum of paperwork or explanation. In April we brought the first American boats to Havana under our new “Rallies to Cuba: Learn the Lingo” program.

But we could not, and did not go as tourists. That would have been a violation of the current interpretation of federal regulations surrounding our 54-year-old embargo against the island nation.

As the name suggests, the basic educational component of the Rallies program was teaching conversational/nautical Spanish, which was taught over 10 mornings in partnership with the Hemingway International Yacht Club. Many of the afternoons included organized lunches and cultural or historical sightseeing.

In case you are wondering, *sightseeing is not tourism*. Neither is listening to live music, visiting a museum or watching a dance troupe. U.S. Cuba policy has been so distorted by politics that it has affected common definitions. U.S. bureaucrats were only able, as far as I can tell, to come up with a single example that distinguishes between tourism (illegal) and

*Visiting Cojimar, a small fishing village just east of Havana.*

TrawlerFest and *PassageMaker* magazine were proud to present Tony Fleming with a lifetime achievement award, recognizing his indelible contribution to the world of power cruising over the past 30 years. Fleming accepted an engraved brass clock from Weems & Plath in front of family and TrawlerFest VIPs in Anacortes, Washington.

Starting a new business at 50 years of age, Tony built what would become one of the most successful lines of luxury yachts in history, whose graceful lines were perhaps only exceeded by their abilities as proven passagemakers. Nothing is more symbolic of these seagoing capabilities than Tony's own Fleming 65, *Venture*. Profiled often in these pages—and in the pages of other magazines—*Venture* has logged over 55,000 nautical miles (while her sistership, *Venture II*, has accrued over 10,000 nautical miles). Next up for Fleming is a return trip to the Pacific Ocean, and a bar-crossing at the famed Columbia River delta.

While accepting his award at an honorary dinner, Tony was quick to point out that he's never built a boat himself, deflecting much of the praise to the hundreds of dedicated craftsmen at Fleming's Taiwanese yard, and to his long-time captain and friend, Chris Conklin. Congratulations to Tony, his family, and to all of the people who have had a hand in constructing Fleming's legacy.—*JC*



Magen Gildea; Peter Swanson

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**Left:** Several of the rally boats resting at Marina Hemingway. **Right:** With a focus on learning Spanish, the trip included hours in the classroom.

educational “people-to-people” travel (legal). That lone example was the beach. If you sit on a beach drinking a cocktail, you are easily spotted as a tourist.

So our goal was to teach participants a little cruising Spanish, expose them the culture and let them interact with ordinary Cubans, all the while avoiding any accumulation of sand in their knickers. Whatever we did seemed to work, or at least for Bob Bush, who came over with his wife Maureen on a Neptunus 70 named *Turangelila*.

“Just want to start off by saying that I just had the best trip of my lifetime. As you know, I have been to many places, including Japan, China, Argentina, and most Western European countries...None of those prior, fabulous vacations can top the experience that you, personally, enabled for me and my wife.

“First, you made it available. Next, you had excellent trusted contacts that we could depend upon for information, help, and camaraderie. Our teacher Isabel was excellent, intuitive, and willing to listen to our Spanish language needs. You, also listened to our wants and desires and was very accommodating with schedule changes... We also had incredible flexibility to do things outside the group in order to explore Cuba on our own and totally observe the real Cuban culture and meet the people.

“I will be telling my friends and associates many stories about this trip *siempre* (forever). I can never forget it.”

(A *Neptunus* is a swoopy motoryacht, in case you were wondering, but the Bushes are now having a Marlow 70 built.)

Unlike most organized boating events, the Cuba Rallies are almost designed to bring together an eclectic mix of people in that they are non-denominational brand-wise and “propulsion agnostic.” Other participants came in a Viking 72 motoryacht, a Nordhavn 55, a Roughwater 42 trawler and a Pearson 42 sailboat. One couple, now considering the purchase of a trawler, flew in from California and participated in the program while staying at a local Bed & Bath.

In fact, Rally participants were not encouraged to cross over from the Florida Keys together. Clearing through Cuban Customs

& Immigration can take a couple hours per boat, so jam would be created at the Customs dock if, say, five boats were to arrive at the same time (which is unlikely in the extreme anyway, because of the different sizes and types involved). Weather permitting, our owners were encouraged to arrive on the same day.

Between the time that we recruited our fleet and our April departure date, an extraordinary historical event happened. President Obama visited Havana and met with Cuban leader Raul Castro. The visit came with a surprise for us.

When we were planning the Rallies, U.S. interpretation of the embargo required that people in educational exchanges such as ours be part of a group such as ours. Just days before Obama’s visit, the Treasury Department office in charge of Cuba policy announced that U.S. citizens could now visit Cuba on people-to-people missions without a group. This was great news—news some of us had been waiting for since 1992.

Now if you had a big enough boat, you could just go to Cuba (there is a single form that must be filed with the Coast Guard in advance) and do what cruisers do whenever they visit foreign countries as long as they did no beaches. Requiring that legal travelers go as a group gave the government at least the possibility of enforcing its rules. Without that requirement, the whole system is now on-your-honor and most likely unenforceable.

Great news, but a trifle inconvenient, given that the AIM Marine Group had just sold a bunch of boat owners on the legal necessity of belonging to a group. Hearing the news from Washington, several boats dropped out, but most did not. Sixteen people stayed with us, saying they believed the program had inherent value outside the artificial framework of regulations. Our customers convinced us to keep the Rallies going.

So we are continuing with a second installment in October. Rallies to Cuba is designed to familiarize cruisers with Cuba’s geography, language and culture. Its goal is to prep participants for a return trip during which they would move from port to

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anchorage to port with the confidence and skills to converse with local officials over the VHF (including distress calls) and to engage in commerce with the nation's growing cadre of small-business people.

Interested? Write to Peter Swanson: [pswanson@aimmedia.com](mailto:pswanson@aimmedia.com)

### BLACK SWAN ANNOUNCES 72-FOOT LONG RANGE CRUISER

Black Swan Yachts has announced the design for a contemporary, long-range passage maker, capable of cruising 5,000 miles at 9 knots (3,500 miles at 10 knots, with a max speed projected to exceed 13). The Black Swan 72 sports a relatively narrow beam, an all-aluminum structural build containing three watertight bulkheads, and a double-hull bottom formed by integral tanks. She will also feature 2.5kW of standard solar power in 8 panels, and a premium, semi-custom yacht fit-out on the interior.

Based on a shared philosophy with Steve Dashew's iconic FPB trawlers, Black Swan's new design is a collaboration between another low displacement-to-length ratio naval architect, Nigel Irens, as well as long-time FPB vets, Todd Rickard and Mark Fritzer. ("Path of Least Resistance," July/August 2015)

Black Swan will differentiate herself from FPB in a few ways. First, the design adds significantly to its freeboard, allowing for increased interior volume and a hydraulically accessed garage capable of stowing a 13-foot tender. This increase in freeboard also enhances reserve stability in beam seas. Although the yacht requires active stabilization to damp roll, her low-profile superstructure and low center of gravity add to her self-righting capabilities in the event of a knock down. No surprise then that the Black Swan 72 will carry a CE Category A Offshore rating.—*JC*

Visit: [www.blackswanyachts.com](http://www.blackswanyachts.com)



LOA: 72' 2"  
LWL: 72' 2"  
BEAM: 17' 5"  
DRAFT: 3' 2"  
POWER: 150hp Yanmar (x2)

CRUISE: 9 kn  
RANGE: 5,000 nm  
FUEL: 2,509 gallons  
WATER: 1,057 gallons

### BERING YACHTS LAUNCHES 80-FOOT EXPEDITION YACHT

Dressed in dark gray steel and displacing over 470,000 pounds, Bering Yachts' *Veda* splashed this past week.

Checking in at 82 feet LOA, *Veda* is the latest B80 to be launched by the steel-yacht builder and is the flagship model of the company's Expedition Class of trawlers.



*Veda* is the latest 80-footer to be launched by Bering Yachts. In spite of her rugged exterior, she coddles her crew and passengers in luxury.

Powered by a pair of 350-horsepower Cummins QSM-11 engines, she is capable of both impressive range and speed for a trawler of her size. With the throttles wide open, *Veda* can achieve a top cruise of 12 knots and, at the typical 9-knot cruise, has a range of 6,000 nautical miles.

Despite the masculine exterior, the B80 offers owners a high-class interior, which features rich, Makore wood accented with marble and granite stonework, all housed in a spacious 25-foot, 8-inch beam. She can comfortably accommodate eight guests in her four staterooms, each equipped with an en-suite head.

"Spacious, elegant, and practical," said Deniza Avamil, Bering's Marketing Manager, in a company press release. "The Bering 80 is a true expedition yacht, featuring the quality finishes and luxury of a superyacht."—*MF*

To learn more about the B80 and Bering's line of expedition trawlers, visit: [www.beringyachts.com](http://www.beringyachts.com)

### T-MOBILE LOOKS TO FILL AT&T'S 2G VOID FOR GOST SYSTEMS

Staring down the barrel of AT&T's impending 2G phase-out over the next eight months, boat owners whose yachts are equipped with GOST Phantom, Insight HD, and NT-Evolution 2.0 systems were left in an unsure spot. All three systems rely on AT&T's global 2G network in order to send voice and text alerts to boat owners.

Much to the relief of owners, Global Ocean Security Technologies (GOST) announced in mid-May that they have partnered with T-Mobile and will provide current and future owners a 2G module with all units and T-Mobile SIM Cards with all units shipped within the United States.

"Eighty percent of security transmission devices use 2G; thus we have to educate our customers about the future of this technology," said Jay Keenan, president and CEO of GOST. "[Our Company] is dedicated to providing the highest quality products and the greatest level of service possible. This includes finding alternatives when there are technology changes and insuring those alternatives are easy to install, cost-effective, and potentially more functional than what is being replaced."

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To convert data plans, current owners can visit [www.gostglobal.com/tmobile](http://www.gostglobal.com/tmobile), select the AT&T replacement service, and a new T-Mobile SIM Card will be sent to them. The switch requires no annual contract for current GOST customers and the company reports that they have negotiated extremely low rates for the 2G (GSM/GPRS) replacement service, as well as for 4G LTE data

service used by GOST Watch HD or Insight HD surveillance cameras for video streaming.

GOST anticipates 2G networks will remain a dominant GSM frequency band for many years to come, both globally and domestically.

It is worth noting that the switch to T-Mobile is not entirely mandatory. Those that wish to remain with their current provider may contact AT&T to convert their 2G plan to the AT&T Wireless Home Phone Device. The drawback is that users will only be able to receive voice calls from their Phantom Security system as the text alerts rely solely on the 2G network, and the system will only function on AT&T's U.S. network.

"Our customers trust us to safeguard their property, and communication is the foundation of this trust," Keenan said. "We want our clients to be confident with their security systems and we are committed to assisting them in avoiding any potential interruption of service before it happens." —MF

For more information on GOST's solutions to AT&T's 2G shutdown, visit: [www.gostglobal.com/2gsunset](http://www.gostglobal.com/2gsunset) ■