



This unprecedented storm season and challenges from Covid-19 did not stop the Salty Dawgs from making their way to paradise in the annual Salty Dawg Caribbean Rally. Fifty boats left the cold for destinations including Antigua, the Bahamas, the US Virgin Islands, and Florida. Several boats suffered some damage in this year's big seas—everything from broken booms, to flooded engine compartments, to hand steering a thousand miles—but persevered to make safe landfall. With weather guidance from Chris Parker's Marine Weather Center and tracking from PredictWind, Shoreside Coordinators and Emergency Response teams kept in touch with the sailors and helped guide them through repairs while underway.

Clearly, the most challenging aspect of this year's rally was COVID 19 and cruisers' ability to enter into foreign countries and eventually gather for social events. Social distancing and mask wearing were the rules of the day as sailors navigated a safe approach to dealing with the risk. The pre-rally social activities normally scheduled for Hampton, VA were suspended for the year and the usual seminars in the Hampton area were handled via webinar and Salty Dawg Advisory emails. The rally organizers and shoreside staff did an amazing job making sure that the cruisers, new and seasoned, knew the protocols around pre-departure quarantining, PCR testing, and entry into the Bahamas, Antigua, Bermuda, and USVIs.

Entry was handled smoothly by the port authorities and health officers, who visited each boat before sailors were allowed ashore. Activities at arrival ports were reimagined to allow social interaction and social distancing at the same time.

Caps off to the intrepid Salty Dawgs, their crew, and their shoreside support teams!

*Hosting blue water rallies in the U.S. and Caribbean is one of our specialties. Each rally is an opportunity for sailors to cruise-in-company, with the safety, camaraderie, and passage-preparation assistance that a rally can provide. Meet new friends and re-unite with old ones. Kids and pets are welcome.*

*The SDSA unites experienced ocean sailors with developing cruisers to broaden their blue water horizons. All Salty Dawg rallies and events are led by seasoned sailors who volunteer their time and knowledge to help cruisers realize their dreams. Independent thinkers value the Salty Dawg focus on the importance of each skipper's role to make the right decisions for his or her boat and crew. To find out more go to <https://www.saltydawgsailing.org/> .*