



# THE TRITON

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The 90-foot Argus V smoldered for about eight hours before catching fire in the Bahamas. PHOTO COURTESY OF A RESIDENT OF THE BAHAMAS

## Another megayacht destroyed by fire

By Lucy Chabot Reed

An elusive fire consumed the M/Y Argus V in June, making her the eighth megayacht to be damaged or destroyed by flames since March.

No one was hurt in the Argus V fire, which smoldered for as long as eight hours before finally igniting, according to the yacht's cook/stew Vicki Elynn.

Fires have claimed eight megayachts this year, including the 136-foot Jante II and the 157-foot Newfoundland Explorer.

According to Argus V, a 90-foot Burger.

The megayacht had just returned from a three-week cruise around the Bahamas and had docked that midday at a private dock on Lyford Cay. As Elynn was preparing for dinner, she smelled something burning, something sweet.

She looked around but didn't

find anything. Because she thought the smell was coming from a vent, she turned the compressors off and called the captain.

"I went all over, felt the bulkheads and the floor," she said. "We were both searching everywhere and we began to see a little smokiness."

Neither Elynn nor the captain, whom she would not name, could find the source of the smell.

So Elynn served dinner. As soon as the owners were done at about 8 p.m., the captain asked them to leave so he could ensure the boat's safety.

With dinner dishes still on the table, Elynn and the captain searched the boat again and for hours, running their hands over every surface, pulling off panels and headliner, and crawling everywhere.

"I've been doing this 15 years

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## American crew shortage sparks concern, action

By Lisa H. Knapp

Ian Pelham will trek across the United States this summer on a five-city tour looking for Americans to work on yachts.

His goal: a dozen solid candidates. "If 10 retire this year, we need to pull 15 more with so many new boats," said Pelham, manager of The Crew Network, a crew agency in Ft. Lauderdale.

"Summertime is traditionally slower, so I am doing an active recruitment trip around the United States to place a bug in everyone's ear."

Pelham's plan is to promote the allure of warm-weather yachting with good compensation in non-traditional yachting areas such as the Great Lakes, where people have at least been on a boat before.

"This is the first time we're recruiting this way," he said. "If I get 12

people by the end of summer, it will be a success."

Increases in new yacht production, larger yachts requiring additional crew, and a dwindling number of licensed, qualified American crew has turned the traditional shortage into a problem.

Current global production for yachts are up 6 percent over last year and now equals the industry's all-time high, achieved in 2002, according to the 2004 Global Order Book and data compiled by *Showboats International* magazine.

With 507 yachts on order or under construction for 2004, orders are up 82 percent over the 279 yachts on order in 1998, the data show.

The U.S. Coast Guard requires U.S.-flagged boats to carry Americans or foreign nationals with green cards as crew members. Even though most

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## Yards can win captains' favor with solid work, employees

Gathered in the height of summer in Fort Lauderdale, the nine captains at *The Triton's* monthly Bridge discussion all had experience with shipyards, including several captains whose yachts were in yards at the time.

So we asked them what they thought of shipyards. As always, the captains are not identified in this story to encourage frank and open discussion. They are identified as a group on page 7.

Despite differences in experience, the captains seemed to agree on a few basic techniques when it comes to taking a yacht to a shipyard: go with

what you know, take ownership of the job, and take care of the people doing the work.

"I've heard captains say they just came out of the worst yard ever," one captain said. "If you have a bad experience in a yard, well, that's your own fault."

The best way to avoid a bad experience, they said, is to build relationships.

"If I come back and see the same guys, I'm going to feel a lot better about the yard and the work," one captain said.

"The same guys who did the job last year are going to do it this year in an hour instead of one and a half days."

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