

Latitude 38

Latitude 38

VOLUME 386 August 2009

WE GO WHERE THE WIND BLOWS

AUGUST 2009

VOLUME 386

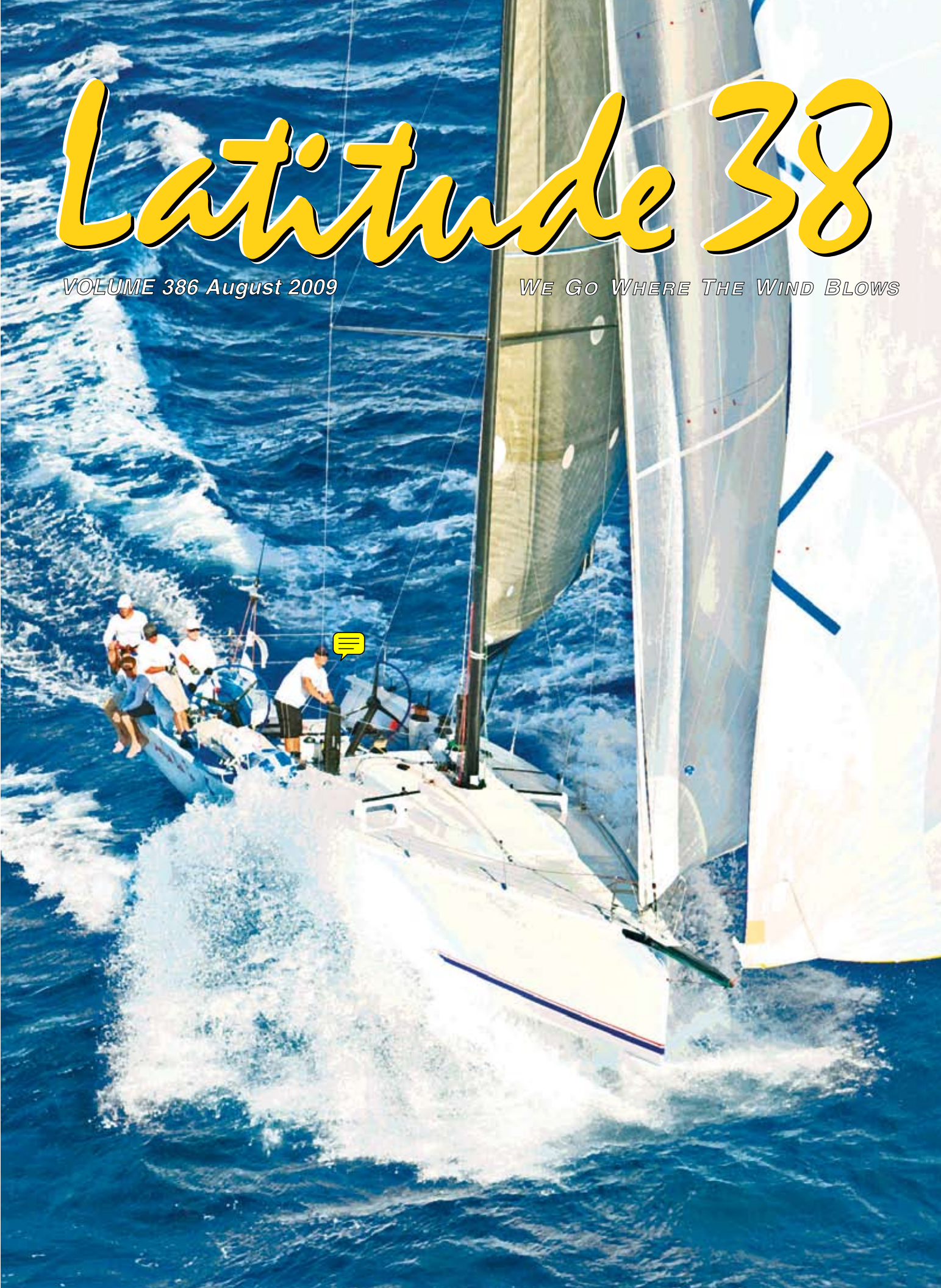




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On, Vixen!

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Vixen*

It all started when Linda Kibler decided to give her husband, Steve, a spinnaker for Christmas a few years ago. The Kiblers were restoring a classic 1904 Custom yawl, *Vixen*, and at the time the restoration was nearing completion.

Steve was certainly pleased with the thought of the new spinnaker for *Vixen* - and a new main and a new mizzen and a new self-tacking jib. So he added to Linda's sail order and, after careful measurements were taken, the boat had a new suit of Pineapple Sails.

This year *Vixen* won her division in the Master Mariners Regatta, an event sailed on San Francisco Bay that was started in the late 1800's and revived for these great old classics in the 1960's.

Vixen is unique, a real labor of love for Steve and Linda.

We feel the same about every sail we make. We invite you to come by the Pineapple Sails loft to see sails being made right here in Alameda and to meet the folks making them. Whether your boat is new, over 100 years old, or somewhere in between, we build all our sails - your sails - with the same care and expertise.

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Cover: Hoist the Broomstick! - It was a clean sweep for John Kilroy Jr.'s TP 52 *Samba Pa Ti* in this year's TransPac.

Photo: Sharon Green/www.ultimatesailing.com

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Latitude 38 welcomes editorial contributions in the form of stories, anecdotes, photographs - anything but poems, please; we gotta draw the line somewhere. Articles with the best chance at publication must 1) pertain to a West Coast or universal sailing audience, 2) be accompanied by a variety of pertinent, in-focus digital images (preferable) or color or black and white prints with identification of all boats, situations and people therein; and 3) be legible. These days, we prefer to receive both text and photos electronically, but if you send by mail, anything you want back must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. **Submissions not accompanied by an SASE will not be returned.** We also advise that you not send original photographs or negatives unless we specifically request them; copies will work just fine. Notification time varies with our workload, but generally runs four to six weeks. Please don't contact us before then by phone or mail. Send all submissions to editorial@latitude38.com, or mail to Latitude 38 editorial department, 15 Locust Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941. For more specific information, request writers' guidelines from the above address or see www.latitude38.com/writers.html.

Brokerage ■ Staff Picks



Beneteau 393 2003
Very clean, with new bottom paint, inverter, dodger, windlass, A/C and more. Motivated seller. \$139,500



Beneteau 45f5 1991
Farr designed performance cruiser. New sails, NKE system, SSB, AP, laptop nav system, dodger, more. Very good condition. \$160,000



Tartan 4400 2005
Ready to cruise, beautiful and well equipped. Health forces sale. Owner will consider trades/partial financing. \$449,000



Hunter Legend 450 1998
Big boat at a great price. Ready to cruise with generator, A/C, TV, AP, radar, GPS, inverter, more! \$179,000



Beneteau 351 1995
Maintained in perfect condition. Roomy and comfortable interior – like new. \$73,500



X-412 2001
Like new condition. Flag blue hull. Euro craft meets high performance. \$219,000

Beneteau 49, '07BYC...339,000
Beneteau First 47.7, '01SAU...228,000
Beneteau 473AMV...259,900
Beneteau 473AMV...326,500
Explorer 45, '79AMV...130,000
Beneteau 423, '04SAU...185,000
Beneteau 43, '08BYC...239,000
Tayana Vancouver 42, '79 ..AMV... *79,500
Sunnfjord 42, '81 (power)...AMV...108,000
Californian 42, '87 (power)...AMV...119,950
Cascade 41, '71AMV... *59,500
Island Packet 40, '98.....EMR...269,000
Carroll Marine 1200, '95.....RYC.....89,000
Beneteau 393, '07AMV...175,000
Wauquiez Hood 38*, '79.....AMV.....59,000
Island Packet 370, 04.....RYC...299,000
Islander Freeport 36, '78AMV.....45,000
Beneteau First 36.7, '05LAX...112,000
CS 36, '84.....EMR.....55,000
Fantasia 35, '79AMV.....74,500
J/109, '03BYC...192,900
Beneteau 331, '04BYC.....85,000
Sea Ray 340, '06 (power) ...AMV...174,500
Tiara 29, '98 (power).....AMV.....69,900

*Owner financing available

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Hunter Passage CC 42		
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Bavaria 42	2006	\$189,900
Jeanneau 42DS	2005	\$249,000
Fountaine Pajot 42	1995	\$269,000
Hunter 41	2004	\$165,000
Hunter 41	2004	\$179,000
Morgan 38	1979	\$57,500
Tayana 37	1979	\$59,000
C&C 37+	1990	\$99,000
Hunter 36	2004	\$125,000
Hunter 36	2006	\$135,000

Jeanneau 36	2008	\$159,000
Wylie 36	1978	\$57,500
Hunter 35.5	1993	\$59,000
Hunter 34	1998	\$79,000
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1978 TARTAN 30

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HUNTER 45



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PEARSON 32



1982. Very clean. \$24,500

CATALINA 34



1988, \$43,900

FORMOSA 51



1977, \$110,000

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1979, \$13,000

CATALINA 36



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Brokerage Boats

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2006 Jeanneau 45	\$319,000
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1998 Catalina 42	\$148,000
2000 Hunter 42	\$165,000
2005 Hunter 41 DS	\$187,500
2000 Jeanneau 40	\$149,000
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1991 Hunter 37	\$74,900
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1992 Solaris 36	\$99,990
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1997 Catalina 34	\$79,500
2000 Hunter 340	\$76,000
1999 Hunter 340	\$83,500
2006 Nordic Tug 32	\$237,500
1999 Hunter 310	\$44,995

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2003 Beneteau 361 - Very clean, one-owner boat with low engine hours. She has been berthed in fresh water since new. She has a very functional 2-cabin interior, excellent galley with frig & freezer, gorgeous woodwork & more. And, best of all, she's priced to sell!

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CALENDAR

Non-Race

July 30-Aug. 2 — H&S Power & Sailboat Owner Rendezvous at Catalina Island. Register at www.hsyacht.com.

Aug. 1 — Flea Market & Maritime Celebration at Galilee Harbor in Sausalito, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Info, (415) 332-8554 or www.galileeharbor.org.

Aug. 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 27 — Sail aboard SF Maritime National Historic Park's scow schooner *Alma*. Learn the Bay's history on this 3-hour voyage, leaving Hyde St. Pier at 1 p.m. \$35 adult, \$20 kids 6 & up. Info, www.nps.gov/safr.

Aug. 2-30 — Free sailing at Pier 40 every Sunday courtesy of BAADS. Info, (415) 281-0212 or www.baads.org.

Aug. 5 — Howl at the full moon on a Wednesday night.

Aug. 5-26 — Wednesday Yachting Luncheon Series at St. Francis YC, 12-2 p.m., \$13.50. Enjoy lunch and a dynamic speaker every Wednesday. All YCs' members welcome. More info under the 'Events' tab at www.stfyc.com.

Aug. 6-9 — Beneteau Owners Rendezvous at Catalina's Two Harbors. Info, www.southwesternyachts.com.

Aug. 11-Nov. 3 — Sailing Skills and Seamanship course by USCG Auxiliary at Sausalito Cruising Club on Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. \$75 fee includes textbook. Contact Margrit at (415) 324-3739 or margritkeyes@sbcglobal.net to register.

Aug. 13 — Single sailors of all skill levels are invited to the Single Sailors Association monthly meeting at Ballena Bay YC, 6:30 p.m. Info, www.singlesailors.org or (510) 233-1064.

Aug. 15 — Alameda YC Membership Drive and Open House at Fortman Marina in Alameda, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Complimentary lunch! Info, (510) 522-9080 or www.fortman.com.

Aug. 15-16 — A Century of Guarding the Golden Gate event at Angel Island, free. Info, www.angelisland.org.

Aug. 16, 30 — Cal Sailing Club's free introductory sails at Berkeley Marina, 1-4 p.m. Info, www.cal-sailing.org.

Aug. 21-23 — 22nd Annual Metal Boat Festival in Port Angeles, WA. Info, www.metalboatsociety.org.

Aug. 22 — Boating Safety course by USCG Auxiliary at Aeolian YC in Alameda, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. \$25 fee, \$10 lunch. Info, (510) 523-2586 or aeolianyc@aol.com.

Aug. 29 — 19th Annual Vallejo YC Flea Market, starting at 8 a.m. "If it's legal, sell it!" Info, (707) 643-1254.

Sept. 7 — The unofficial end of summer — Labor Day.

Sept. 9 — *Latitude 38's* Mexico-Only Crew List Party & Baja Ha-Ha Reunion at Encinal YC, 6-9 p.m. \$7 (free for registered 2009 Ha-Ha skippers and first mates). Info, (415) 383-8200 or www.latitude38.com/crewlist/Crew.html.

Sept. 11-13 — 33rd Wooden Boat Festival in Port Townsend, WA. "The Woodstock for wooden boat lovers." Info, www.woodenboat.org.

Sept. 12-20 — Northern California Fall Boat Show at Jack London Square in Oakland. Info, www.ncma.com.

Sept. 16-20 — Lake Union Boats Afloat Show in Seattle. Info, www.boatsafloatshow.com.

Sept. 15-Oct. 6 — America's Boating Class by Marin Power & Sail Squadron on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7-9 p.m. Textbook \$50. Info, (415) 924-2712.

Oct. 25 — Baja Ha-Ha 'Sweet Sixteen' Cruisers Rally starts from San Diego!

Racing

July 29-Aug. 4 — 2009 Great Pacific Longitude Race, aka 'The LongPac', a qualifier for next summer's Singlehanded TransPac. Info, www.sfbaysss.org.

July 31-Aug. 2 — Aldo Alessio Perpetual for IRC, J/120s, J/105s and any other big boat one design class that fields six boats. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.

Aug. 1 — South Bay YRA Summer #5. Contact Richard

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40' Advance, '85, Caribou**New Listing	\$159,500
40' J/120, '01, OuiB5Reduced!	\$199,000
40' J/40, '86, China Cloud	\$159,000
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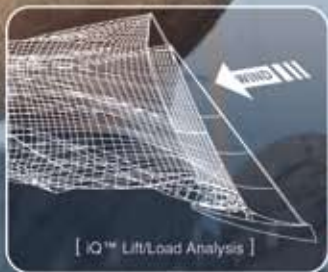
- Aug. 1-2** — Moseley Regatta. TYC, www.tyc.org.
- Aug. 3-6** — Lake Tahoe Race Week for El Toros (Nationals), Lasers, FJs, FDs, Vanguard 15s, Thistles, Windmills, etc. Tahoe YC, Darren Kramer, (530) 581-4700.
- Aug. 7-9** — Summer National Senior Games on Emeryville Flats. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.
- Aug. 8** — YRA-HDA/ODCA Fall 1. RYC, www.yra.org.
- Aug. 8** — Round the Rock, from the South Bay to Alcatraz. BVBC, www.bayviewboatclub.org.
- Aug. 8** — Ronstan Bay Challenge. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.
- Aug. 8** — HO Lind #5 & 6. TYC, www.tyc.org.
- Aug. 8** — Gracie & George Regatta, a co-ed doublehander featuring 'Gracie' on the helm. EYC, www.encinal.org.
- Aug. 8** — The return of the Bay classic Midnight Moonlight Maritime Marathon, a night run from Raccoon Strait to Carquinez Strait and back. SFYC, www.sfyc.org.
- Aug. 8-9** — J/24 & Olson 25 Nationals. BYC, www.berkeleyyc.org.
- Aug. 8-9** — 18th Annual Day on Monterey Bay Regatta to benefit Big Brothers-Big Sisters. SCYC, www.scyc.org.
- Aug. 14-16** — Laser Masters Nationals. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.
- Aug. 15** — YRA-OYRA Half Moon Bay Race. HMBYC, www.yra.org.
- Aug. 15** — Tri-Island Race around Treasure Island, Alcatraz and Red Rock. RYC, www.richmondyc.org.
- Aug. 15** — Lady and the Tramp doublehanded race on Folsom Lake. FLYC, www.flyc.org.
- Aug. 15-16** — BAYS #4/Jr. Olympic Festival at SFYC. Info, www.bayarea-youthsailing.com.
- Aug. 15-16** — El Toro Worlds on Pinecrest Lake. Info, www.eltoroyra.org.
- Aug. 16-30** — 505 NAs and SAP 505 Words. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.
- Aug. 22** — SSS Richmond/South Beach Race for single- and doublehanders. SSS, www.sfbaysss.org.
- Aug. 22-23** — YRA-HDA/ODCA Fall 2 off the Cityfront. Info, www.yra.org.
- Aug. 22-23** — 2nd Annual Sarcoma Cup fundraiser. Info, www.beatsarcoma.org or nat@beatsarcoma.org.
- Aug. 23** — Fall Series #1 (Lidos) on Fremont's Lake Elizabeth. Info, www.fremontsailingclub.org.
- Aug. 22-30** — Mercury Nat'l's. RYC, www.richmondyc.org.
- Aug. 29** — Great San Francisco Schooner Race, for schooners in Gaff and Marconi divisions. SFYC, www.sfyc.org.
- Aug. 29** — Joan Storer Regatta, TYC's women skippers' race. Info, www.tyc.org.
- Aug. 29** — PICYA Youth/CHISPA Regatta, hosted by Encinal YC. Info, www.picya.org.
- Aug. 30** — YRA-HDA/ODCA Fall 3. YRA, www.yra.org.
- Aug. 30** — YRA-WBRA (City). YRA, www.yra.org.
- Aug. 31-Sept. 4** — 18-ft Skiff International, including Ronstan Bridge to Bridge, a mad dash from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Bay Bridge for 18s, boards and kites. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.
- Sept. 4** — Windjammers Race. Pop the chute and head for Santa Cruz! SCYC, www.windjammersrace.org.
- Sept. 5** — 21st Annual Jazz Cup, a 26-mile romp from T.I. to Benicia YC. SBYC, www.southbeachyc.org.
- Sept. 5** — South Bay YRA Summer #6. Contact Richard at rjgreenawald@hotmail.com.
- Sept. 5-6** — BAYS #5 at RYC. Info, www.bayarea-youthsailing.com.
- Sept. 10-13** — 45th Rolex Big Boat Series, the highlight

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CALENDAR

of the local sailing season. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.

Sept. 12 — YRA-OYRA Northern Star. EYC, www.yra.org.

Sept. 12-13 — West Marine Fun Regatta for junior sailors. SCYC, www.scyc.org.

Sept. 14-19 — Folkboat Int'l Regatta. CYC, www.cyc.org.

Sept. 19-20 — Leukemia Cup Regatta, PHRF and one design racing to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Hosted by SFYC, featuring keynote speaker Al Gore. Info, www.leukemiacup.org/SF.

Summer Beer Can Regattas

BALLENA BAY YC — Friday Night Grillers: 8/7, 8/21, 9/4, 9/18, 10/2, 10/16, 10/30. Info, (510) 523-2292 or race@bbyc.org.

BAY VIEW BOAT CLUB — Monday Night Madness Fall: 8/3, 8/17, 8/31, 9/14, 9/21 (make-up). Peter McCool, (415) 864-4334 or bayviewracing@sbcglobal.net.

BENICIA YC — Every Thursday night through 9/24. Mike Munn, (408) 671-1484 or mmunn88@sbcglobal.net.

BERKELEY YC — Every Friday night through 9/25. Bobbi Tosse, (925) 939-9885 or bobbi_john@jfcbat.com.

CAL SAILING CLUB — Year-round Sunday morning dinghy races, intraclub only, typically in Laser Bahias and JY15s. Email Gary and Alistair at racing_chair@cal-sailing.org.

CORINTHIAN YC — Every Friday night through 9/4. Donal Botkin, (415) 497-5411 or racing@cyc.org.

COYOTE POINT YC — Every Wednesday night through 10/28. Torin Knorr, (650) 863-2570 or regatta@cpyc.com.

ENCINAL YC — Friday Night Summer Twilight Series: 8/7, 8/21, 9/11, 9/25. Matthew Dean, (510) 406-0851 or rearcommadore@encinal.org.

FOLSOM LAKE YC — Every Wednesday night through 9/16. Steve Galeria, (916) 635-3911 or www.flyc.org.

GOLDEN GATE YC — Friday nights: 8/14, 8/28. Mont McMillen, (209) 481-5158 or ggycrace@deck@aol.com.

ISLAND YC — Friday Island Nights: 8/14, 8/28, 9/18. Info, (510) 521-7442 or www.iyc.org.

LAKE TAHOE WINDJAMMERS YC — Every Wednesday night through 10/14. Mike Robinson, (530) 713-9080

LAKE WASHINGTON SC — Every Thursday night through 8/27. Roy Pitts, (530) 908-7160, rpitts@ucdavis.edu or www.lwsailing.org.

MONTEREY PENINSULA YC — Sunset Series, every Wednesday night through 9/30. Ray Ward, (831) 659-2401 or www.mpyc.org.

OAKLAND YC — Wednesday Night Sweet 16 Series, every Wednesday through 9/16. Sheldon Haynie, (510) 368-5427 or sheldonhaynie@gmail.com.

RICHMOND YC — Wednesday nights: 8/5, 8/12, 8/19, 8/26, 9/2, 9/16, 9/30. Eric Arens, ericarens@comcast.net or (510) 841-6022.

ST. FRANCIS YC — Wednesday Night Series: 8/5-8/26. Thursday Night Kiting Series through September. Friday Night Windsurfing Series through September. John Craig, (415) 563-6363 or racemgr@stfyc.com.

SANTA CRUZ YC — Wet Wednesdays, every Wednesday night during Daylight Saving Time. Larry Weaver, (831) 423-8111 or lweaver@cruzio.com.

SAUSALITO YC — Tuesday Night Summer Sunset Series: 8/11, 8/25, 9/8, 9/22. John Mount, (415) 509-8381 or race@syconline.org.

SEQUOIA YC — Every Wednesday night through 10/7. Rich Butts, (650) 576-3990 or rbutts@pacbell.net.

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TIBURON YC — Every Friday night through 8/11. Gary Proctor, (415) 827-2622 or *www.tyc.org*.

VALLEJO YC — Every Wednesday night through 9/30. Gordon Smith, (530) 622-8761 or *fleetcaptainsail@vyc.org*.

Please send your calendar items by the 10th of the month to calendar@latitude38.com. If you're totally old-school, mail them to *Latitude 38* (Attn: Calendar), 15 Locust Avenue, Mill Valley, CA, 94941 or fax them to us at (415) 383-5816. But please, no phone-ins! Calendar listings are for marine-related events that either are free or don't cost much to attend. The Calendar is not meant to support commercial enterprises.

August Weekend Tides

date/day	time/ht.	time/ht.	time/ht.	time/ht.
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
8/01Sat	0335/0.1	1058/4.4	1502/3.2	2103/6.0
8/02Sun	0420/-0.1	1139/4.6	1554/3.1	2150/6.0
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
8/08Sat	0106/5.6	0726/0.3	1420/5.2	1944/2.1
8/09Sun	0147/5.2	0755/0.7	1446/5.4	2027/1.9
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
8/15Sat	0139/0.2	0918/4.0	1257/3.3	1921/6.3
8/16Sun	0242/-0.2	1014/4.4	1412/3.2	2026/6.6
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
8/22Sat	0109/6.2	0714/0.1	1359/6.1	1944/0.9
8/23Sun	0204/5.7	0754/0.7	1436/6.2	2038/0.7
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
8/29Sat	0205/0.6	0940/4.4	1354/3.3	1941/5.6
8/30Sun	0301/0.4	1024/4.6	1453/3.1	2040/5.6

August Weekend Currents

date/day	slack	max	slack	max
	8/01Sat	0140/3.7E	0545	0902/3.0F
	1209	1507/1.3E	1727	2022/1.9F
	2255			
8/02Sun	1255	0236/3.9E	0633	0949/3.2F
	2344	1547/1.5E	1816	2110/2.2F
8/08Sat		0013/2.8F	0306	0612/4.2E
	0950	1247/3.4F	1602	1839/3.2E
	2202			
8/09Sun		0052/2.7F	0346	0650/3.9E
	1015	1318/3.2F	1628	1917/3.5E
	2243			
8/15Sat	0354	0657/2.6F	1027	1218/1.3E
	1511	1821/2.0F	2107	
8/16Sun		0043/4.3E	0459	0809/3.1F
	1131	1329/1.5E	1633	1930/2.3F
	2217			
8/22Sat		0005/4.0F	0306	0602/4.8E
	0938	1234/4.1F	1539	1827/4.4E
	2201			
8/23Sun		0055/3.9F	0401	0647/4.1E
	1018	1313/3.7F	1615	1911/4.4E
	2253			
8/29Sat	0415	0736/2.5F	1039	1334/1.0E
	1605	1855/1.6F	2129	
8/30Sun		0101/3.3E	0513	0831/2.7F
	1133	1437/1.3E	1704	1958/1.8F
	2229			

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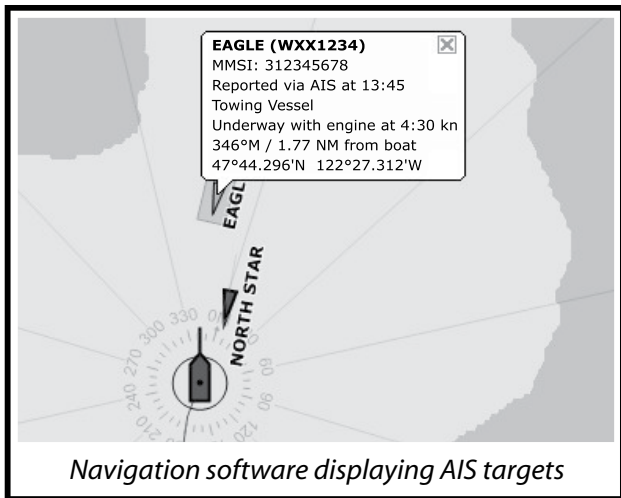
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LETTERS

NO TWINKIE DEFENSE HERE

I've been reading about the problem of unattended boats being anchored for long periods of time at Clipper Cove, and the problems they cause. I haven't read about any solutions, but I have one — based on my experience.

While anchored in a rather remote cove on the Bay, I was boarded by the Coast Guard for not having an anchor light. It's true, the cove was not a Special Anchorage, so I was required to show a light. It's also true that I hadn't displayed the required anchor ball during the day. Anyway, the Coast Guard searched my boat and I turned on my anchor light.

Little did I know that 13 months later I would receive a 13-page citation from Homeland Security. It started with saying that I was going to be fined \$6,500. It eventually was reduced to a \$100 fine and a warning. Yes, I know I had been wrong, and yes, I now always display either the ball or light as appropriate.

Clipper Cove is not classed as a Special Anchorage, which means that the anchoring balls are required during the day and anchor lights are required at night. Why isn't the Coast Guard doing its job enforcing the law there?

Hugo Landecker
Alexander, Westsail 32
San Rafael

Hugo — It's been our experience that there is a separate and unequal application of the laws on the waters of San Francisco Bay. If you've got a decent boat capable of navigation, all the laws apply to you. But if you've got a derelict that couldn't pass any navigation or environmental inspections, you're a sacred cow. We've seen the Marin County Sheriff and Coast Guard repeatedly engage in this kind of discrimination. We've asked both agencies to explain this odd behavior, but have got nothing but shuck and jive for our efforts. Of course, what is more American these days than rewarding bad behavior and punishing good behavior?

As for Homeland Security, we're naturally sympathetic to the concept, but honestly, what a farce! If anyone thinks Homeland Security can keep terrorists with backpack nukes out of the U.S., they've never cleared a boat back into the States

from Mexico. Despite all the money thrown at the notion of border security, the border is as porous as Swiss cheese.

We've often said that if taxpayers ever really knew how wildly the government wasted their money, there would be a revolution tomorrow instead of five to 10 years from now. That Homeland Security took over a



Sadly, our modern version doesn't seem to be any more effective than the original.

year to write a 13-page citation threatening you with a \$6,500 fine for your minor violation is just another perfect example of why such a revolution of the common man seems inevitable to us.

As for you, Hugo, we want to salute you for what is fast becoming the rarest of people in this country — somebody who admits that they did something wrong. You didn't blame it on society, a poor upbringing, drugs, alcohol or having eaten too many Twinkies. How refreshing.

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 Barrett Linn
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RIGGING SHOP
RIGGER
 Chris Tibbe
 6 years at Svendsen's

RIGGING SHOP
RIGGER
 Brad Clerk
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RIGGING SHOP
RIGGER
 Kalin Georgiev
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TRAVELIFT
 Juan Zavala
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 Ray Ronquillo
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 Adolfo Nuño
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LETTERS

CLIPPER COVE SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO A DAY

This afternoon I picked up the July *Latitude* at Svendsens, and was interested to see several letters regarding anchoring permits for Clipper Cove. In the response to one letter, the *Latitude* editor suggested the following plan: No permits would be required Friday through Monday and online permits would be required Tuesday through Thursday. You later wrote "We're in favor of limited permitting as outlined above. Ms. Saez is considering it — along with other proposals."

"Considering it?" Oh really. The July *Latitude* went to press in late June, but on May 5, San Francisco Supervisor Chris Daly brought a proposal to the Board that would limit unpermitted stays to 24 hours. And the Board passed it. I wonder why Mirian didn't mention this *fait accompli* to *Latitude*.

In response to your June article about Clipper Cove, I wrote Ms. Saez suggesting unpermitted stays of up to one week, but never received any response. The boating community needs to exert pressure on San Francisco to allow unpermitted stays of a longer duration, but I'm not sure of the best way to try to get that done.

Martin Thomas
Kokopelli, Sabre 34
Alameda

Martin — According to Director of Island Operations Mirian Saez, Supervisor Daly entered the policy — to limit unpermitted stays — for consideration but she says no time limit was specified and the details of the plan were not discussed. Keep in mind that TIDA proposed requiring permits for Clipper Cove to force out squatters, not to inconvenience the boating community. "This policy is meant to be helpful," Saez insists. "If it turns out to not be helpful, we'll change it as necessary."

Cynics may scoff and say we're naïve to believe a government official, but having personally met and spoken at length with Saez, we can confirm her passion for making Treasure Island — including Clipper Cove — a welcoming place for everyone to visit, not just a few cheapskates who don't want to pay slip fees. To that end, she's still encouraging Bay Area boaters to contact her at mirian.saez@sfgov.org with their suggestions for exactly how the permit process should work. "We'll be taking the comments before the Board of Supervisors sometime in September," she said, "and they'll help us put together the guidelines." And don't get your knickers in a twist if you don't hear back; she says no one has. "There were far too many to respond to each personally. But keep 'em coming!"

JUST ANOTHER BAND OF PIRATES

I'm curious to know under what legal authority the Treasure Island Development Authority has gained jurisdiction over Clipper Cove. Has the land/water officially been taken over by the City of San Francisco? And if so, is San Francisco now responsible for its clean up?

If you'll remember, last year my anchor line was cut by someone, which sent my vessel adrift. She was later taken in by the Coast Guard. Even after having been a victim of the unsavory sorts that frequented the cove, I'm strongly against yet another anchorage's being taken over by an even more insidious band of pirates.

At least Angel Island — due to the complete mismanagement of tax dollars and utter ineptitude of government — will soon fall. I'll personally accept that in trade.

Capt. Pugnacious
Your Vessel if You're Not Careful

Capt. Pug — TIDA has jurisdiction because the Navy des-



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LETTERS

ignated the organization as official caretaker of the property until the transfer to the City of San Francisco is complete. "We hope that will happen within 12-15 months," Saez noted.

In heavily populated areas, such as most of coastal California, we think it's necessary for anchorages to be managed by some kind of authority. Where that's not the case, the anchorages tend to be expropriated by the few — often a lawless few — at the expense of everyone else. Hopefully, Clipper Cove will be lightly managed by a small and efficient government agency or private company for the maximum enjoyment of all.

↑↓ ANDERTON COULD STILL HAVE A CLAIM

I hope you'll forward the following information to John Anderton, as it may help him recoup some of his loss as a result of his Cabo Rico 38 *Sanderling's* being rammed by an unlit steel motor vessel off Eleuthera. I'd like to see him continue cruising, and I hope to meet him in an anchorage some day.

It seems that insurance companies — there are some exceptions — often assert reasons to deny a claim even if the grounds for the denial might not hold water legally. Anderton apparently assumed that his insurer would deny his claim because his boat was not being "properly crewed" due to the fact that he was singlehanded. However, he was awake and on deck, and he says he waved a flashlight at the oncoming 'destroyer' to alert its crew to his presence. Therefore, the lack of other people on board did not contribute to the cause of the collision. It appears that Anderton did a great job of controlling the damage.

In jurisdictions with which I'm familiar, the lack of a connection between the exclusion or asserted reason for the denial and the cause of the loss often negates the application of the exclusion or asserted basis for the denial. If Anderton's insurer denies his claim, I hope he challenges the denial. The insurer, of course, just hopes that he'll get discouraged and forget it.

If, in fact, the law is favorable to his claim and the insurer stonewalls him and refuses to listen to reason, then he may have a bad faith claim against the insurer. Bad faith claims are how we motivate insurers not to try to cheat us.

Ed LaBarre

Currently Tucson, soon to be Sausalito

Ed — A lot would depend, of course, on where John's insurance company is based. There are lots of not-very-consumer-friendly insurance companies and countries in the Caribbean. Nonetheless, we think you offer excellent advice — if the cause of a loss has nothing to do with a particular exclusion, a boatowner should not simply assume that the claim can be denied.

↑↓ ROCKIN' & ROLLIN' IN THE ESTUARY

I have 30 years of sailing experience, but I'm new to the Oakland Estuary. I'd like to know something about allowable tug speeds and if the tugs are responsible for their wakes.

At 3:45 p.m. on June 19, the tug Z3 came into the Estuary from the northwest. I estimate that it was travelling between 12 and 14 knots, which created a substantial wake for us and our Columbia 28 to deal with.

The next morning we were sailing out the Estuary when I spotted a wall of white water that spanned the width of the Estuary inside of Buoy 8. The cause of it was the tug Z3, which I estimate to have been doing 15 to 19 knots. I started my Atomic 4 engine so we could take what I guessed to be a wave of six feet at a 45° angle, and braced for the E-ticket ride over it. Even though we were 20 yards from a docked container ship, I feared that the tug's wake would pin us against it. As



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LETTERS

it turned out, the captain of the Z3 never slowed and the bow of my boat pitched 45° in the air.

After we made it over, I could hear the wake from the other side of the tug hitting the concrete seawall on the other side of the Estuary. It sounded like an endless series of shotgun blasts. We also watched an F-31 trimaran come clean out of the water going over the tug's wake, and were very concerned for an older woman who was kayaking.

What's the rule?

Chuck Kruskamp
Harvest, Columbia 28
Marina Village

Chuck — It's not as clear cut as you might hope, but creating an excessive wake for the conditions — i.e. when there are small boats in the area — could be considered the negligent operation of a vessel under the Inland Rules of the Road. For example,



Wake up! If your wake causes damage to another boat or its crew, you might be liable for damages.

in June of '05, a guy and his cousin were fishing in a 14-ft boat on the Cumberland River when a tug towing a barge full of coal passed by. The fishing boat was swamped and one man drowned. The wife of the dead man sued the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and a district

court awarded her \$3.3 million. The award was knocked down to \$420,000 in the Sixth Circuit Court for technical reasons.

Fearing such lawsuits, most captains and tug companies try to be careful. A number of years ago there were several complaints about the way one captain drove his tug on the Estuary. The guy would flip the bird to anyone who complained about his wake. When the owner of the tug company found out, he apologized profusely in person and in print, and promised to discipline the captain.

As you may know, all ship movements in and around San Francisco Bay are closely tracked by Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) and AIS. No tug or other sizeable vessel can make a move without its identity, speed, heading and other information being broadcast to VTS and other mariners. So if you've got a serious problem with a tug wake, immediately get on the radio with the Coast Guard, which can contact VTS to see how fast the tug is going and if the wake is likely to be dangerous.

On the other hand, it's the responsibility of all who go out on the water to handle themselves and their boats with a reasonable amount of skill. We used to sail small boats in and out of the Estuary, and quickly learned how to handle even the biggest wakes. In fact, we secretly craved the biggest wakes, as they were best for little surfs when we were sailing home in the prevailing following winds.

WE'RE A LAUGHING STOCK

I'm writing with regard to John and Gilly Foy's Kong anchor swivel breaking, as reported in the May issue. I'm glad the Foy's didn't lose their boat, but I think the failure of the Kong was due to an installation error rather than a defect in the swivel itself. I hope that my letter can help other sailors avoid a similar experience.

The reason I'm saying it was an installation error is that the most highly stressed part of an anchor swivel is the pin

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between the two halves of the swivel. That pin will generally be designed to take a straight line pull. But if the swivel is connected directly to the anchor, as the Foy's was, and



DON DURANT

If you have a shackle, what's the point of the swivel?

the wind then shifts or for some other reason the direction of pull changes, unless the anchor rolls and resets, the swivel pin will be subjected to a bending load that could easily cause it to snap. This is because the swivel can only hinge in a vertical plane when it is attached directly to the anchor. The correct way to set up an anchor swivel is to put a bow shackle on the anchor and then connect the swivel to the shackle. The shackle acts like a toggle to allow the swivel to orient itself in any direction so that the swivel pin is always subjected to a straight line pull.

If you don't think that the anchor attachment would be subjected to major side loads, then take a look at my second photo. This anchor came back from a boat that was anchored at Drake's Bay a couple of months ago. If the side loading on this anchor was big enough to bend its shank like that, think what it would have done to a little swivel pin that had only a small fraction of the cross sectional area of the anchor shank. This can happen to any anchor, but lightweight fluke type anchors like the one in the photo are especially prone to digging in and not moving when the direction of pull changes.

Setting up one's ground tackle correctly is some of the cheapest insurance that a cruiser can buy. When you think of what's at stake, it's silly to skimp to save a few bucks on a shackle. This is one place where the 'weakest link' isn't just a metaphor, it's literal.

P.S. I just came back from the Summer Sailstice event on Treasure Island. *Latitude's* John Arndt did a terrific job of organizing this event, and I think that he deserves big kudos for all that he is doing for the sailing community!

Jim Hancock
School Director & General Manager, Club Nautique
Alameda
Marine Engineer / USCG 50 Ton Master
US SAILING Instructor & Instructor Trainer

Jim — We understand what you're saying, but for a couple of reasons we don't completely agree with you. If you need



DON DURANT

If a bad load can bend a shank, think what it could do to a swivel pin.

to put a bow shackle between the anchor and the swivel for a "correct installation," why waste your money on the swivel? Looking at the first photo with your letter, it's a very nice set up, but what exactly does the swivel — which readers should know isn't a Kong brand — bring to the party? In addition, some other brand swivels — such as the Ultra Swivel by Quickline — can rotate up to 30 degrees in all directions,

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thus all but eliminating the sideways bending loads that put exceptional stress on the Kong design. Finally, the Kong swivel has more parts than other brands — such as the one in your photo. The more parts, the more complications, and the more opportunities for failure.

Furthermore, if the Kong design and manufacture means the swivel is weakened by side loads and therefore needs a swivel, don't you think it's Kong's responsibility to make that point very clear to potential customers?

If somebody was going to day anchor in fair weather at Clipper Cove or in the middle of Newport Harbor, and always have their eye on the boat, we think the Kong swivel — if needed at all — might be a reasonable budget purchase. But for any kind of moderate to heavy use, and certainly for anchoring overnight or when the boat isn't going to be constantly monitored, we personally would never trust the Kong design. As you say, correct ground tackle is some of the cheapest insurance that you can buy.

Speaking of correct ground tackle, we'd be curious to know what size the anchor is in your second photo, and what boat it was being used with when it bent. Based on the size of the bar code sticker, it looks rather small. When it comes to the proper size anchor for a boat, we always thought Steve Dashew gave the best advice. "When people see the size of your anchor," he said, "they ought to laugh out loud." Our primary anchor on Profligate is a Fortress FX-125. Said to be good for boats up to 150 feet, it might be a bit of overkill, and it certainly cost more than the two smaller Fortress anchors we could have used. But we don't drag much, so we think it was worth the extra money. Besides, it's provided some people with a good laugh.

↑↓ PROPER LOGS ARE A GREAT REFERENCE

In response to *Latitude's* wondering if anybody kept a proper ship's log anymore, I kept a detailed operating log from the day I took possession of my *Quo Vadis* until the day I moved off her 3.5 years and many miles later. If I'm not mistaken, keeping such a log is a requirement of International Maritime Law, and is the captain's responsibility. Admittedly, this requirement is seldom enforced by any agency, and usually becomes an issue only in court or with an insurance company.

My ongoing recording of dates, times, places, and personnel also served as a framework and fact-checking reference when I wrote *The Years of Living Wet*, my book about my experience aboard my boat. I'll close by repeating the cover blurb: The years pass quickly.

John Huetter, former owner
Quo Vadis, Prout 37
San Francisco

Readers — You can buy John's book directly from his website at www.johnhuetter.net or Amazon.com.

↑↓ THAT DEPRESSION RATED A SOFTLY SPOKEN 'SHIT'

Just a quick note in response to your *Lectronic Latitude* article of June 22 on the tropical storms off Mexico. You stated that Depression 1-E had only 30 knot winds and was "no big deal." I'm not sure what preceded the depression into Mazatlan, but around 10:30 a.m. on June 19 we got hit by a bunch of wind and rain. The wind in Marina Mazatlan was reported to be somewhere between 60 and 70 knots.

Most everyone had been watching the weather and was expecting the storm to hit on Saturday, and with wind in only the 35-knot range. Most of us had put off taking down tarps and sun shades, and were planning to do it Friday afternoon — well before the anticipated arrival of the storm. I was down



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below reading with a large hatch open over the saloon table when it started to rain a little. No problem, it had been raining off and on for two days, so I just closed the hatch and went back to reading. A short time later the boat really started to move around in her slip, and I could hear the Shade Tree awning banging and popping more than normal. So I went up to see what was happening.

The wind was already starting to pick water up off the surface and blow it around. I could barely see across to the next dock south of us. It was about then that Chris, my wife, got back from town, and it looked as though she had swum back instead of taking the bus. Since she was already wet and I was quickly getting that way, we decided to get the shade down and secured on deck. I had the wind instruments on, and noted that the wind was blowing 42 knots while we were doing this.

The wind began to gust even more strongly, so after checking our lines we, along with a few of the remaining cruisers on Dock 6, started checking the docklines and sun covers on other boats. We needed to secure a number of covers and remove some of the canvas that we could not secure. During this time, the rain was blowing horizontally and it was like being sprayed with water from a 2.5-inch fire hose. Many dock boxes had their lids blown off, and these were flying around along with plexiglass windshields and assorted detritus from the boats. Ray of Mazatlan Yachts was struck in the face by one of the dock box lids, and suffered a laceration across the bridge of the nose. We also noticed a very definite lull followed by a drastic wind shift — almost like what you would expect in a hurricane, only over a very short time span.

By about 1 p.m., things calmed down and the rain slowed to a sprinkle. There were reports over the VHF from around the marina of wind speeds up to 70 knots, and two boats were reported to have blown off their cradles in the Singlar yard. We also noted that it looked as if a couple of boats in their slips had lost their headsails when they unfurled and flogged to death. There were reports from the condos around the marina of windows and doors being blown out, and exterior siding and roofing tiles being blown off. The marina and areas of the city were without power for a number of hours, and there were many trees uprooted and large signs blown down throughout Mazatlan.

So while the experience was stimulating and the rain cooled things down nicely, I think that this rated a little higher than a "no big deal" on the *Latitude* Wind Scale. Maybe a "Damn" or softly spoken "Shit". Just a thought.

Mike & Chris Brown
Antipodes, Wauquiez Centurion 47
Marina Mazatlan

Mike and Chris — Let us be the first to apologize for what surely must have seemed like a casual dismissing of the very strong weather you and others were hit with. But we're a little confused, because it almost seems as though we're referring to two different weather events. We say this because the official weather track doesn't show Tropical Depression I-E reaching Mazatlan until June 20th — or at least 12 hours after you report it hitting Marina Mazatlan. And the official weather report has it never exceeding 30 knots — a far cry from the much stronger stuff that you and others clearly experienced. Probably the most likely explanation is that the tracks and wind speeds provided by the weather service just aren't that accurate.

For the record, Tropical Depression I-E was the latest-arriving tropical weather in the Eastern Pacific zone in recorded history. Yet before it even blew itself out two days later, it was



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joined by Hurricane Andres with winds to 65 knots, and Tropical Storm Two with 35 knots. No matter if you have a boat in Mexico or the Caribbean, or are just going to be sailing in those areas with friends, here's hoping that this hurricane season will be as gentle as the last!

↑↓ **BILGE WATER OR BAY WATER?**

On June 6, a friend and I had occasion to motorsail by the ship *Grand Way*, which was tied up and loading scrap steel on the Oakland side of the Estuary. We observed and photographed water pouring out around the anchors both at midday and in the late evening when we returned. I was under the impression that pumping the bilges into the Bay was never allowed. Should I contact someone? I'm sure that they were pumping water to keep the boat on an even keel during loading of the scrap steel.

Jay Bietz
Pygmalion, Westsail 32
Alameda Marina

Jay — If you see a vessel illegally pumping bilge water into the Bay, you should call the Coast Guard on VHF 16, and they will either direct your call to the proper department or take the matter in their own hands. That said, we think there are two reasons to suspect that you didn't see what you thought you saw: First, the captain of the ship would have to be an idiot to risk fines and the loss of his license by pumping bilge water in an area Coast Guard vessels pass frequently. Second, if you were designing a ship, would you have the bilge pump lines exit hundreds of feet away from the bilge at the bow and way high up by the anchors? Or would you have the exits near the bilge itself?

We're pretty sure that you observed was Bay water being used to clean the anchors. You'll very often see ships — and recreational boats — pumping water out from various thru-hulls, but it's unlikely that any of it was bilge water. Even many recreational sailboats recycle sea water for things like cooling the engine and refrigeration systems and running the watermaker.

↑↓ **INNISFREE AND I HAVE BEEN SAILING SINCE '74**

I guess my Freya 39 *Innisfree*, which I purchased in '74, qualifies for the 'Over 30 Club'. Here's an outline of our history with the boat:

Shortly after purchasing *Innisfree*, my wife and I sailed her — without an engine — from San Diego to the Big Island and eventually to the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor in Honolulu. Four years later we set sail from the Ala Wai for the South Pacific, but were crippled 400 miles out by Hurricane Fico. By the grace of God and due to the integrity of the steel hull, we



COURTESY, INNISFREE

'Innisfree' is a rare steel Freya 39.

would survive to enjoy many other sails. But it did take jury rigging for us to make it back to Hilo for repairs and then back to the Ala Wai. Within a week of arriving in Honolulu, I set sail with *Innisfree* in the opposite direction, specifically to

Port Townsend, WA, and what would be our new home. For another four years or so we sailed all over the Puget Sound area and up into Canadian waters.

By the summer of '82, *Innisfree* and I were craving more

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sunshine, so we sailed to Southern California. Oxnard ended up being our homeport for what turned out to be years of California coastal cruising and one six-month trip to Mexico. I still sail *Innisfree* in these waters, often visiting Santa Cruz and Anacapa Islands, and occasionally Catalina.

Tony Raimondo
Innisfree, Freya 39
Oxnard

Readers — The Freya 39 is one of the most famous Australian yacht designs ever, by virtue of the fact that the original wooden version won three consecutive Sydney to Hobart Races. Jim Gannon subsequently built about 40 of them out of fiberglass in Petaluma, including Contrary to Ordinary, which was Latitude's boat in Mexico in the early '80s.

↑↓ I DID THE MATH

Reading the letters from boat owners who have owned their boats for more than 30 years, I decided to do the math, and discovered that I belong in the club. I've owned my O'Day 27 *Lady Ann* for 33 years. I've made a few interior and exterior modifications over the years because of wear and tear, but she's as sound as ever.

I've enjoyed doing two Ha-Ha's on other boats, and take joy in reading each issue of *Latitude*.

Bob Bauer
Lady Ann, O'Day 27
Alameda

↑↓ WE'RE VERY HAPPY WITH THE 3G CARD

I'd like to share our experience with wi-fi and data cards in Mexico. We came down with the 2008 Ha-Ha — which, by the way, was way too much fun! — and cruised as far south as Manzanillo before we headed up into the Sea. Our boat is currently on the hard in San Carlos, and we are in the States visiting for a few weeks before flying to Papeete to cruise with Dietmar and Suzanne Petutschnig aboard their Las Vegas-based Lagoon 440 *Carinthia*. Yep, life is tough!

By the way, you'll remember Dietmar and Suzanne as the ones who turned you on to the Amazon Kindle. Also parenthetically, our opportunity to cruise in French Polynesia with Dietmar and Suzanne is a result of the Ha-Ha.

But to the point: During our first months in Mexico we struggled with communication issues. Patty had cell coverage in most areas with her AT&T service, but it wasn't cheap. I had

cancelled my Verizon phone because they told me they didn't have service in Mexico. I ended up buying some Telmex phone cards, which were a pretty good value.

We both have Skype, which works well, but only if you have a very good internet connection. But we found that

if others were using Skype on the same wi-fi system, it would slow stuff (like getting email) down to no better than dial-up. Out of consideration for others, we rarely used Skype, which was frustrating.

It wasn't until we got to La Paz and purchased a 3G card from Telcel that many of our issues were solved. Thanks to the Telcel data card, anywhere there was a cell tower nearby we



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had a great internet connection. Obviously, there isn't service in the remote islands because there aren't any cell towers, but where there were towers, the connection was strong and very fast. We could do email, browse the net, download up to 3 gigs — no movies, but then we never did that anyway — and use our Skype without worrying that we were messing up the internet connection for others.

Our 3G card cost about \$150, and the service is about \$50/month. The good news is that you can pay for it on a month-to-month basis at any Telcel office. This is wonderful for people who don't spend the whole year in Mexico.

We have been very happy with the 3G card, as it has made life much nicer. It makes it easy for us to stay in touch with the kids, grandkids and our elderly parents. It's hard to imagine what it would be like to sail away and have no communication with home for months or years on end.

Sandy Smith

Faith, Morgan Out-Island 41
Portland, OR

↑↓ GREAT SIGNALS AT TWO HARBORS

I'm writing in response to your request for information from people who work from their boats about what equipment they use. I work in the IT department for *Ticketmaster.com*, and for three years now have used Verizon wireless broadband to work from my Ericson 32, berthed in San Pedro. Because my personal account is three years old, I get unlimited data on that. My work account is newer, so I'm limited to 5 GB/month. These are my only sources of internet access.

While I get good access at my berth in San Pedro, I get an even better signal at Two Harbors, Catalina. In fact, it's faster than the free wireless at the Harbor Reef restaurant. I also use a Cradlepoint (*www.cradlepoint.com*) PHS-300 personal hotspot, which accepts the Verizon USB adapter and allows me to use up to 16 USB devices at once with the service. In other words, two computers access the internet at once. A very cool feature of this device is that it can work with any service that uses a USB adapter — including most services in Mexico and Central America. And, of course, you can use any wi-fi device with it — PSP, iPod, Xbox, PS3, webcams and anything else.

I have a Mac Mini I use as TV, radio, music player and navigation computer. My iPod touch runs iNavX, which connects over the wi-fi to the Mac Mini running MacENC or GPSNavX to get a network feed of the GPS signal. It also downloads BSB charts on-the-fly over the internet from NOAA and Navtech map servers. I can play PC and Xbox360 multiplayer games over the wireless connection, but I don't have the power to run the Xbox and LCD TV when away from shorepower.

However, the Verizon service is not quite fast enough for streaming TV services such as Netflix on-demand movies. It supports lower-quality video like YouTube without a problem. I'm looking to get a wi-fi-enabled digital camera so I can upload pictures in real-time to Facebook or a photo-sharing site.

I offer the following as great reference sites:

www.3gstore.com

www.evdoinfo.com

www.evdomaps.com

www.evdoforums.com

The 3GStore sells data plans, devices and a wi-fi router as bundles. They also run the other reference sites and a forum for users.

Mike Batchelor

Valinor, Ericson 32
Cabrillo Marina, San Pedro

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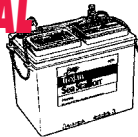
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LETTERS

Mike — Great report. Speaking of Two Harbors, we were all excited about getting our AT&T data card up and running out on Harbor Reef — our normal summer home — in order to work from Profligate. But while we got maximum bars for our iPhone, we got zip on our AT&T data card.

We couldn't figure it out, so we called AT&T technical assistance for help. After 15 minutes of listening to their endless ads for additional AT&T services that we'd never want, and without our ever being given any indication of when someone was going to answer our darn call, a not-very-knowledgeable person answered. When we asked her if the AT&T phone and data cards operate off the same antennas and therefore should bring us similar signals on both devices, she assured us they did and they would. After 10 more minutes of waiting, we were transferred to the laptop technical support, where the alleged expert had temporarily "forgotten" that Macs don't use the Windows operating system. That really inspired our confidence in AT&T. After another 10 minutes, we finally were transferred to someone who sounded as though he knew what he was talking about. "No, the antennas for data cards and phones are absolutely different, so in the same place your phone and data card might get a different quality signal." Wonderful. If we could have throttled the honcho at AT&T via our iPhone for his company's having wasted an hour of our time with misinformation, we surely would have.

When we went to Two Harbors a week later, we were informed that AT&T had been having problems out there. Sure enough, when we plugged our data card in, we got four bars on Harbor Reef — but still worse than dial-up service. We got the same four bars up at Emerald Bay. For what it's worth, Doña de Mallorca's Verizon gets full bars and quite good internet speed at both Two Harbors and Emerald Bay.

That said, in most places we've been — including the Harbor Reef restaurant at Two Harbors — the AT&T data card has been a little dynamo.

TELCEL'S 3G DATA CARD ROCKS

The accompanying photo is of the Telcel 3G internet USB data card we bought in Mexico. The only bummer is that we didn't have it the entire time we were in Mexico. We bought



The Telcel 3G data card gets great reviews.

the data card in La Paz, and were able to get great internet on our boat there and as we motored out the channel. It also worked great at Muertos, off Barilles almost down to Frailes, off Cabo San Jose, Cabo San Pucas — oops, I mean Lucas — Todos Santos, Puerto Magdalena, Turtle Bay, on the inside of Cedros Island, south of San Quintin and at Isla San Martin and Ensenada. It even worked great for several days at the Police Dock in San Diego before it was shut off for roaming.

The card cost 1,400 pesos, 430 pesos for a month in advance and 350 pesos for a deposit. Supposedly, we can bring the unit back to a Telcel office to get our deposit back, but we'll probably just sell it to some southbound cruiser.

[As of the end of June, the exchange rate was 13.6 pesos to the dollar.]

Heather Stapleton Donnell
Meerkat, Ocean 49 Catamaran
Ventura

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LETTERS

Readers — We visited Meerkat at the San Diego Police Dock before Telcel shut down their service, and saw that the Telcel data card rocked. As you'll read elsewhere this month and next, such data cards — which don't require any long service contracts in Mexico — are likely to stunt the cruiser use of wi-fi in



COURTESY MEERKAT

Jim and Heather Donnell's Ocean 49 'Meerkat' at the Police Dock.

Mexico. After all, who needs wi-fi if you can get reliable high speed internet access from the convenience of your boat at much greater distances than wi-fi, and at a reasonable price? Indeed, it's going to be interesting to see what effect data cards will have on cruiser SailMail/Winlink use in Mexico. These services would still be very valuable in areas where there are no cell phone towers, but where there are towers, data cards will often be no-brainers.

⇅ THE FILM'S AS GOOD AS THE BOOK

Have you seen *Around Cape Horn*, the 30-minute film, now on DVD, that Irving Johnson made of his 1929 voyage aboard the engineless 400-ft *Peking* sailing from Germany to Chile via Cape Horn? If you haven't, let me know, because I have an extra copy that needs a good home.

Lu Moody
Los Alamitos Bay
Long Beach

Lu — As we may have written in a recent issue, while in the port captain's office in St. Barth this winter, we stumbled across a copy of the small book Johnson wrote about that voyage. We weren't expecting much from *The Peking Battles Cape Horn*, but we were blown away by how well it was written, by what these brave/crazy sailors did, and how shockingly different the sailing life was back then. We can't recommend the book enough, as it's right up there with Joshua Slocum's great *Sailing Alone Around the World*. As for Johnson himself, the world is short a couple of billion people with his intelligence, bravery and character.

In the early 30s, Irving met a woman named Exy aboard Warwick Tompkins' famous pilot schooner *Wander Bird*, which was later berthed in Sausalito for many years. After getting married, Irving and his wife Exy did a total of seven wildly adventurous sail training circumnavigations with young men and women, and never had an incident. The Los Angeles Maritime Academy's twin 90-ft brigantines, which are used for non-profit youth sailing, are named the *Irving Johnson* and the *Exy Johnson* in honor of these two great sailing pioneers.

As for the *Peking*, she's on display at the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City. If you get a chance to visit her, imagine yourself standing atop her highest mast when the winds were blowing 75 knots and the seas were 30 feet. After all, that's what Johnson did — just to see if he could without falling off.

⇅ "I THINK THERE'S BEEN AN ERROR ON THE BILL"

Since you wrote about the costs of providing Coast Guard Search & Rescue services in the June issue, I thought you might be interested in a recent incident. After making only 150 miles in his third attempt to row from Cape Cod to France,

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LETTERS

Frenchman Charlie Girad placed a sat phone call to the Coast Guard in Boston to report that he was "cold and didn't know what to do."

So just 10 days into his voyage, he was rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard. It reportedly cost us taxpayers \$80,000 to dispatch the Coast Guard jet and helicopter to retrieve Girad from his 21-ft custom rowboat.

Colin Dewey
Turning Point, Ericson 29
Encinal YC

Colin — It would be interesting to know how much of the \$80,000 were 'hard costs' already built into the Coast Guard's budget, and how much extra this rescue might have cost.

On the one hand, we think the U.S. and other countries need to provide rescue services around the world, but perhaps those who have to be rescued from extreme adventures should either have to post a bond or be presented with at least a part of the bill for their rescue. This would include entries in extreme events such as the Vendée Globe, when the margins of error for safety are so slim that in the last running only 11 of the 30 racers finished. After all, if one of these sailors needs to be rescued from the deep Southern Ocean, why should Aussie or Kiwi taxpayers have to take a big financial hit? If somebody wants to do extreme — especially if its already been done a number of times before — shouldn't he do it on his own nickel?

PLEASE, SIR, MAY I HAVE ANOTHER?

I have an unusual request for my Nathan. After wearing his yellow Baja Ha-Ha hat non-stop for the last seven months and 7,000 nautical miles down the coast of Mexico and across the Pacific, it blew off and sank recently during a daysail on San Francisco Bay. He is more depressed about it than is normal



Bill Vaccaro models the yellow Ha-Ha hat.

for losing a hat. It's as though it was his badge of achievement or something. So I'm wondering, is there any chance you might have another yellow Ha-Ha hat hidden in the attic or stuck down behind a couch that we can buy?

Naomi Zell
Hurulu, Islander 36
Sausalito

Naomi — Unfortunately, the yellow Ha-Ha hats — new last year — went like hotcakes. The good news is that we'll have more of them by October 1, at which time you can buy another for your husband.

WE'VE HAD TWO RIPPED OFF

We've had two inflatables stolen from our private slip at Alamitos Bay, which is a very upscale part of Long Beach. I suspect it was the work of local kids from affluent families who wanted to go joyriding.

Marty Goldsmith
Sweet Bones, Eastbay 38
Alamitos Bay

MY DINGHY WAS STOLEN FROM AVALON

You asked about sailors who have gotten ripped off in California. A few years ago we had our dinghy stolen from Avalon Harbor while we were ashore. The thief took the dinghy somewhere offshore, removed the Mercury outboard, then set the dinghy adrift. It later turned up a few coves north of Avalon. I actually got more for the engine in the insurance

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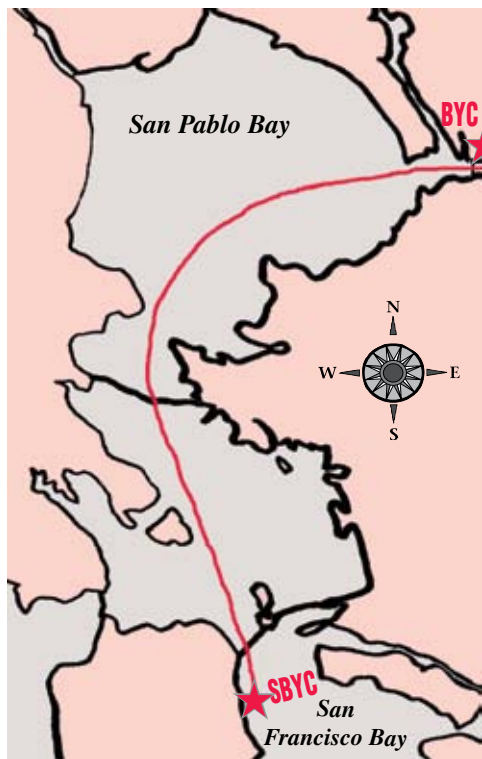
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LETTERS

settlement than I had paid for it in the first place.

Doug Thorne
Tamara Lee Ann, Celestial 48
San Francisco

Readers — For the record, we know that Thorne has taken Tamara Lee Ann to Mexico at least twice.

↑↓ THAT'S LIFE IN THE CITY

It's been a few years, but someone kicked in the hatchboards of my International Folkboat berthed at South Beach Harbor in San Francisco. They then apparently made themselves at home for a day or two, drank the beer in the cooler, and stole my waterproof ghetto blaster. The weird part of it is that my boat was way out at the end of one of the fingers, so whoever did it evidently passed loads of other boats to board, some quite derelict, before choosing mine. At least he had good taste in boats.

I ascribed the experience to City life. In the last 20 years, my house has been broken into twice, my office once, and my various cars more than a dozen times. In addition, I have had one car stolen twice, and eight bicycles — all of them locked at the time — stolen. Report the thefts to the San Francisco Police Department? I did make reports after the first bunch of thefts, but it soon became clear that the police weren't interested, so I stopped because it was extra aggravation.

I reckon San Francisco must have somehow been the patron saint of thieves.

Michael Connor (former owner)
Skol, International Folkboat
San Francisco

↑↓ "WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET SHOT?"

My boat was never boarded or ripped off in California, but I did have an incident in Massachusetts. I had a fixer-upper in the yard, and it was broken into multiple times, with thieves stealing six fenders and who knows what else. I finally discovered the two thieves one night about a month ago when I was sleeping aboard. The two teenagers had climbed aboard and were on their way down the companionway when I said, "Would you like to get shot?"

They must have left the boat head first, because they broke the ladder on the way down.

Gary Bickford
Imram, Columbia 33
Dighton, MA

↑↓ THE POOP ON TAKING PETS TO MEXICO

We're *Thee Amazing Grace*, entry #47 in this fall's Baja Ha-Ha, and we intend to take our two dogs. We only know that paperwork/documentation must be done within 30 days of our arrival in Mexico. We were hoping to find more specifics in the Ha-Ha literature, but there was nothing. Can you provide the essential information needed for bringing doggies into Mexico?

David Bloom
Thee Amazing Grace, Vector 39
Long Beach

David — As a number of folks bring their dogs to Mexico each winter, you've clearly found a gap in our printed information. If you'll please excuse the terrible pun, here is the complete poop: Mexico is known to be very dog-and cat-friendly. The most you'll be asked for are a pet health certificate issued by a vet not more than 72 hours before the animal enters Mexico

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LETTERS

and a current vaccination certificate. But you might not even be asked for those.

Not once during the previous 15 Ha-Ha's have we heard of anyone having trouble bringing their dog or cat across the border — and there have been plenty. "I don't think Mexico really cares too much," said Chris Frost, owner of Downwind Marine in San Diego. "The hardest part is getting the animal back across the border." Indeed, the U.S. is much more strict about checking documentation, so hold on to those papers for your return trip. Although not required, it's a good idea to make sure your pet has some form of ID, whether on its collar or in the form of an implanted microchip. And if you're planning to sail with Polly the Parrot or Jake the Snake, you have a lot more legwork in front of you.

For more info on sailing with your pets, check out Diana Jessie's *Cruising with Your Four-Footed Friends*, which gives practical advice for cruising with dogs and cats, and the recently released pet health manual *Where There is No Pet Doctor* by David W. LaVigne, DVM (both available on Amazon).

↑↓FIRST DOGS, NOW CATS

The accompanying photo is of our cat Suen resting after 'tailing' the main sheet. It was taken while we were sailing at 3.9 knots on a beam reach between Catalina's Emerald Bay and Marina del Rey on June 22.



LINDA IMMER

"Trim for sun, please," says Suen.

Linda Immer &
Harris Gabel
Always Lucky,
Baba 30
Marina del Rey

↑↓DOGS, CATS . . . AND NOW A BEAR!

When we returned to our home, *Bellavia*, after an extended absence abroad, we found our boat-guarding bear — perhaps a bit bored as a result of being left behind — had started reading a *Latitude* that was somehow left with him. No doubt he was making travel plans.



COURTESY BELLAVIA

Even teddy bears need inspiration.

Milton & Eva Tanner
Bellavia, Passport 40
Emery Cove

↑↓\$50,000 TO TURN A LEVER

It's nice to read the attitude in *Latitude*. In the last issue you wondered what a drawbridge operator was paid. Last month the California Department of Transportation was taking applications for drawbridge operators in Sacramento, Solano, Los Angeles and San Joaquin counties. The starting salary was listed at "\$3,051-\$3,338/month." That didn't include the benefits, of course.

Jackie Philpott
Dura Mater, Cal 20
Berkeley Marina

Jackie — So with health, paid vacations, overtime and all that, we're probably talking \$50,000/year — not counting

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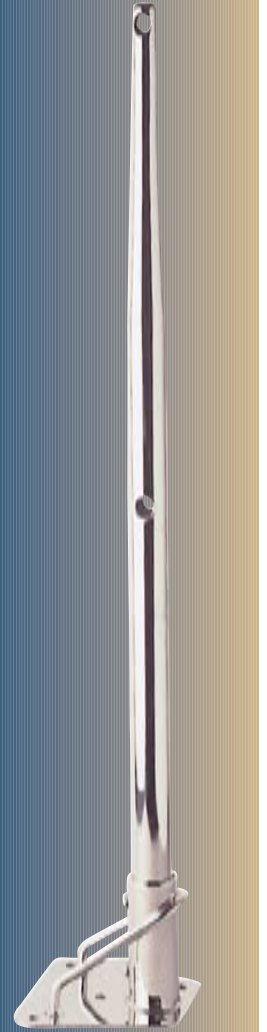
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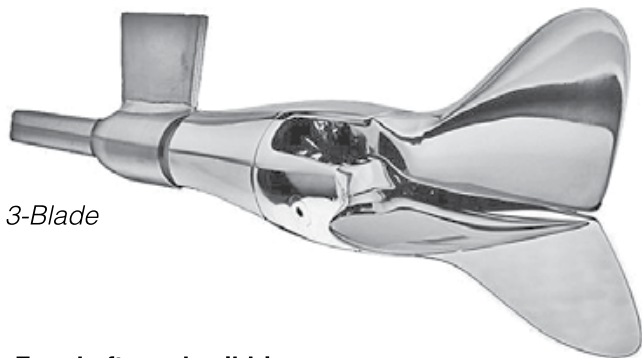
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LETTERS

money that will have to be set aside for the pension. And with government workers, the pension is often the huge thing. The Chronicle, for example, recently reported that Pete Nowicki, the 51-year-old retired fire chief of little Moraga, population 16,700, is knocking down \$241,000 a year as his pension. That's only \$660 a day, so we hope the poor guy is going to be able to make ends meet. The not-so-funny thing is that some other retired fire chiefs in Contra Costa County are getting \$50,000 a year more in pension than Nowicki.

Are we the only ones who think that all government operations — police, fire, education and courts — should be turned over to Costco?

↑↓ THE BURGEE ARRIVED!

We're excited to participate in the 'Sweet Sixteen' Ha-Ha starting in late October, so we were happy to recently receive our burgee in the mail.



LAURIE MICHEL

Laurie and Michael are ready to Ha-Ha — how about you?

Our journey will start in the second week of August, at which time we'll leave San Francisco Bay and visit family and friends as we head south. We will be hanging out at Two Harbors, Catalina, and will be displaying our burgee proudly while we wait for the Ha-Ha to

begin. Thank you to everyone at the Ha-Ha and *Latitude* for putting on the event.

Laurie & Michael Michel
Laura, Bristol 41.1
Nevada City

Laurie and Michael — Like you, we're excited, and we'll be spending much of our pre-Ha-Ha time at Two Harbors, getting accustomed to a more tranquil life.

By the way, everyone in the Ha-Ha should be thankful that we live on the West Coast, where historically it's been very easy to sail to the tropics. It's normally a much longer, harder and more challenging trip from anywhere on the Eastern Seaboard to the Caribbean.

↑↓ RECRUITING NEW FEMALE CREW FOR THE HA-HA

I've cruised Mexico for all of the last two winter seasons, but the only place my boat has been ripped off was at Stillwater Cove near Pebble Beach. My boat was one of several that were broken into and had all the liquor stolen. Stillwater Cove is also the only place where my dinghy was abused. I found it deflated and filled with sand. Fun!

The only thing that's happened to my dinghy in Mexico is that some Mexican soccer players carefully moved it a few yards down the beach at La Cruz so they could have a bigger soccer field.

I've got to get back to Mexico. The weather here in California, and all the chores, are killing me. I'm doing the Ha-Ha again this year, and am 'recruiting' new female crew.

David Addleman
Eupsychia, Cal 36
Monterey

↑↓ IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK IN THE U.S. BUT . . .

After spending 10 days doing a Baja Bash, we arrived off



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LETTERS

Pt. Loma. We hailed the officials at the Police Dock over the VHF, and they told us where to go. Our next stop was Santa Barbara Marina, where it was the same deal. Ditto for Santa Cruz and our homeport of Sierra Point Marina in Brisbane.

While having lunch on our boat at Sierra Point, we stopped to think how different it was in California from Mexico. If we'd called for a slip in a marina in Mexico, when we reached the dock, we would have met by two to four smiling linehandlers, who, as soon as we'd gotten tied up, would have connected our water hose and electricity. And maybe somebody would have offered us some food or a homemade pie, and at the very least filled us in with regard to stores, the internet, restaurants, laundry facilities and transportation. And within 10 minutes, some eager workers would have come by and, at reasonable prices, have offered to wash our boat, clean the bottom or wash our mast.

For a lot of reasons, it's sure good to be back in the old United States — but where is the warm and fuzzy feeling we're used to getting when arriving at marinas in Mexico? We guess that we'll just have to head back south this winter. You wouldn't know of a group of boats that we could hang with on the way down from San Diego to Cabo? Say toward the end of October?

Wayne 'the Mango Man' Hendryx & Carol Baggerly
Capricorn Cat, Hughes 45
Brisbane

Readers — There truly are many wonderful things about California and the United States, but as most people returning from a cruise to Mexico will tell you, while we Americans may have the most money, collectively we're not the warmest of people, nor do we rank among the happiest.

After our mother died, our dad kept saying he was going to take his van down to Mexico and do some exploring. Despite our encouragement, he never did, and as such, missed out on meeting many wonderful people and having great adventures. Our advice to those of you who are sick of the 'same-old, same-old' is to not fear the unknown.

↑↓NOT A COMPLAINT, JUST A FACT

With regard to your recent *Lectionic* and *Latitude* items about San Diego and the noise caused by airplanes, maybe you should back off the military and the noise of their jets. After all, they were there before you were.

Capt. Paul Petraitis
Espresso, CT-41 PH
Seattle, WA

Capt. — When we said that San Diego could accurately change its motto from America's Finest City to America's Noisiest City, we were stating a fact and making a joke, not complaining. We actually like the sound of the F-18s — or whatever they are — as we find them reminders of the sophisticated things modern man is capable of producing. After all, nothing in them existed even 100 years ago. Besides, you only hear them a couple of times a day. We find the sound of the commercial jet traffic, which is almost nonstop, more annoying. But as you point out, both Lindbergh Field and the North Island Naval Air Station were around first, so it's a little hard for anyone to complain.

By the way, while Profligate was hauled out in San Diego, we spent a bit of time kicking around the redeveloped downtown near Petco Park. The touristy Gas Lamp District is understandably a little cheesy, but overall, San Diego seems to have done a pretty good job. In fact, it feels a lot like the San

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LETTERS

Francisco waterfront — except that it's 20 degrees warmer and there aren't any homeless people.

↑↓ **PIRACY PROFITABLE FOR INSURANCE COMPANIES**

I read your editorial response in the June issue expressing surprise that governments of the world allow piracy, such as that which happens off Somalia, to continue. I hate to be such a cynic, but piracy will not end near Somalia because it's so profitable — for maritime insurance companies. All insurance companies now assess a surcharge for commercial shipping that transits the area. The total income to the insurers for those surcharges has been more than \$30 million in the past year. The total payouts for ransoms, cost of negotiators and so forth? Less than \$1 million. These kinds of numbers would warm an actuary's heart, wouldn't you say?

Dean Koutzoukis
Yorba Linda

Dean — We're probably even more cynical than you are, but just because there hasn't been a major claim yet doesn't mean there won't be one in the future. After all, it's entirely possible that some pirates will sometime show they 'mean business' by destroying a tanker carrying \$100 million in oil. In that case, the insurance companies would be \$70 million in the red. Risk assessment is a tricky business. Whether it's more profitable in the long run than other endeavors — such as piracy — is unclear.

↑↓ **TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO IN THE LIGHTBUCKET**

A few years ago a guy — I can't remember who — gave me a great photo that shows 'old school' sailing. It was taken during the '83 Lightship Race, when it was blowing up to 46 knots, the Bonita Bar was breaking, and the waves were really big.



COURTESY STEVE BATES

Old school sailing in the Gulf of the Farallones.

I was crew aboard a Santa Cruz 27, and we were sailing with a single reef in the main and a #4 jib. After sailing through a breaking wave at Bonita, we rounded the Lightbucket, put up a #3, and still did 16 knots with a reef in the main! We didn't wear PFDs back then, but we did wear harnesses.

I must be getting nostalgic — it does seem that much of that 'old school' sailing was done in less-than-perfect conditions and, God knows, less-than-perfect boats. It's hard to explain to younger sailors.

Steve Bates
Wind Blown Hare, Wylie Wabbit
Richmond YC

Steve — There certainly was some wild 'old school' sailing in the '70s and early '80s. We can remember when people used to race small boats — such as Cal 20s, Coronado 25s and Ranger 26s — in the Midget Ocean Racing Association's long distance races from San Francisco to San Diego and even Ensenada. Even for those who weren't on drugs — and some of the crews were — it was a mystical experience when the wind got over 30 knots and the seas started to break.

But we hope you're not disparaging the SC 27, a design

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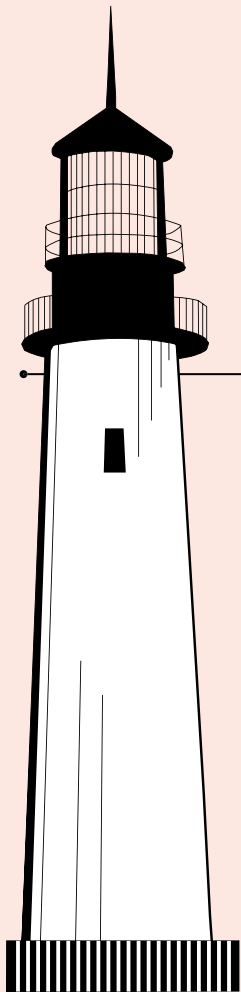


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LETTERS

that won at least one particularly windy MORA Long Distance Race, and that Norton Smith used to win the first Singlehanded TransPac.

While 'old school' sailors had a lot of balls and were fine sailors, we don't think they can touch today's top young sailors, who have benefitted from so much better knowledge, training and experience.

↑↓**AW SHUCKS!**

I seldom actually have time to read a whole issue of *Latitude* 38. But I was a bit under the weather on a recent Sunday, and started to read the May issue. I loved it! I read it cover to cover, and thought it was a great mix of information and entertainment. Thanks to you and the whole gang for a very pleasant bit of 'brain-candy'!

Deborah Atherton
Pier 39 Marina
San Francisco

Deborah — It's very hard work putting each issue together because our staff really cares and really tries hard. It's nice to know that you and others appreciate it.

↑↓**YOU SHOULD BE A PROCTOLOGIST**

I've been reading *Latitude* since the beginning. Between *Latitude* and *Vanity Fair*, it's always a long wait between issues. That said, I just wanted to compliment the *Latitude* editor's skill at retorts. No issue of *Latitude* is a real issue unless some misguided armchair powerboater pipes up about something he knows nothing about and writes to *Latitude* about it. I think these are the same voids who leave inane, mean and downright hateful messages on comments about newspaper stories and blogs they find "disquieting."

My point? The *Latitude* editor should really be a doctor. Specifically a proctologist — because no one rips them a new asshole like you do! I love reading your responses. They are right to the fuckin' point! Touché! En garde!

Peter Kissam
Marine Electronics
Newport Beach

Peter — Geez, we're just trying to be helpful, not mean.

↑↓**ROSE STILL WELCOMES CRUISERS TO NUKU HIVA**

It's been a long time since I've been in contact with *Latitude*, but I wanted to check in to let you know I am still here at



ROSE CORSER

The view from the restaurant from the new He'e Tai Inn on Nuku Hiva.

Taiohae Bay, Nuku Hiva, Marquesas Islands. There have been many changes in the bay over the years — and even in just the last few months — things such as the much greater availability of fresh food, and construction in the valley. I'll send you complete information before next year's cruisers start heading here.

As you probably remember, for 21 years I was the owner of Keikahanui Inn, and hosted a six-days-a-week happy hour for yachties during the January through August season. Nine years ago I took on partners, and the Keikahanui Inn became



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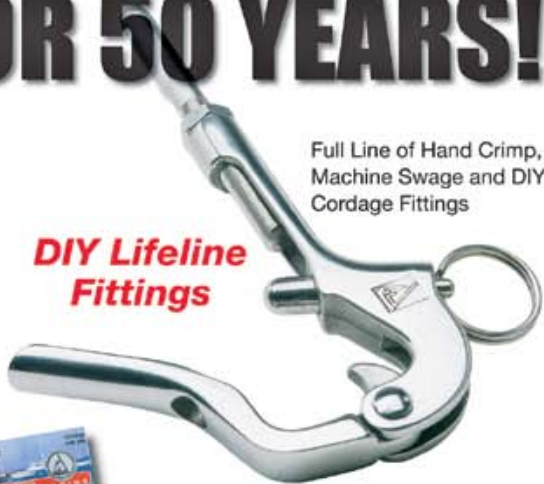
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LETTERS

the Keikahanui Nuku Hiva Pearl Lodge — one of several in a chain. Two years ago I sold my stock in the hotel. I'm now in the process of building an eight-room hotel with waterfront restaurant beside the road that continues up to the Keikahanui Inn. My new place will be called He'e Tai Inn — Marquesan for 'from the sea' — and I intend to make it the yacht club of Taiohae Bay. The restaurant, which is finished but not yet officially open, will feature cultural programs such as traditional



ROSE CORSER

Rose Corser, a long-time friend of cruisers, at her museum at Taiohae Bay.

Marquesan dancing, roast pig buffets, and so forth. These cultural activities have been missing since I stopped running the Keikahanui.

It was only by meeting some cruisers in my museum/boutique that I learned that something called the Pacific Puddle Jump, with 60 or so participants, arrived in the Marquesas this year, and that *Latitude* is a sponsor. I hope you'll keep me informed, as I'll be happy to help out in any way that I can.

By the way, I still actively handle mail for cruisers. In this age of email, it's mostly urgent packages containing parts for boats, many of which are still at sea. For anyone needing to send packages via FedEx or DHL, make sure they are addressed to Yacht Name (fill in blank), c/o Rose Corser, Taiohae, Nuku Hiva, Marquesas. Be sure to write 'Yacht Replacement Parts — Yacht in Transit' on both the package and the invoice. To clear these packages through customs, I need a copy of the captain's passport, ship's document, and the clearance by the gendarmerie on entry. Many cruising guides include the above information, but add the name Keikahanui Inn, which no longer exists. This has complicated some clearances, so use my name only.

Looking forward again to hosting the 'happy hours' with the fascinating variety of persons from all over the world. As our previous sign indicated — a place to enjoy good food and drinks, and listen to 'tall tales.'

Rose Corser, Hotel He'e Tai Inn
 Museum Boutique Enana
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marquesasrose@gmail.com or rose.corser@mail.pf

Readers — We've never met Rose, but from the late '70s on, she and her Keikahanui Inn were the friendly home away from home for yachts that had just crossed the puddle. This bond was particularly strong back in the days before the internet and email, when Nuku Hiva was effectively a very remote place, and Rose was one of the few sources of information and aid. We're sure many old-time cruisers will smile to learn that Rose is still welcoming cruisers in the Marquesas.

Like Rose, a lot of people are curious about the relation between Latitude 38 and the Pacific Puddle Jump. The way we see it, Latitude is the 'custodian' of the event for each year's new group of cruisers, who are the real 'owners'. Latitude spends quite a bit of money each year to promote the event,

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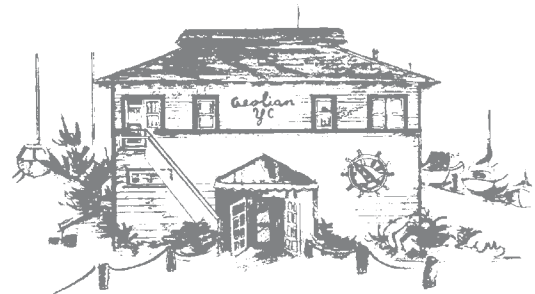
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LETTERS

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↑↓OUR BOATS HAVE HAD AN "ARK-LIKE ESSENCE" SINCE

Latitude asked about readers' experiences with the Quake of '89. I was an incorrigible workaholic in the tech industry at the time, and my rigid 'work hard, play hard' mentality translated into 60+ hours Monday through Friday, and — thank God — a little sailing on Saturday and Sundays. On October 17, I attended an all day offsite department meeting in Los Gatos. It ended much earlier than scheduled, at around 2 p.m. Nine hundred and ninety nine times out of 1,000, I would have beelined it back to the office. For some reason — perhaps it was



COURTESY KIAPA

'Kiapa', Pete and Susan's latest ark, as seen at San Simeon anchorage.

the nice weather, perhaps it was the fact that there were a number of sailors in the department — I decided to head up to the City for an afternoon sail with a couple friends. We kept our boat at South Beach Marina at the time, and after a quick stop for

some ice, beer and snacks, we were all ready to go at around 4 p.m. After untying the dock lines, we sailed north under the Bay Bridge toward the center of the Bay.

Two things happened simultaneously at 5:04 p.m., when we were 200 yards from the Ferry Building heading north-west. One, thousands upon thousands of birds, all around the horizon, took flight for no apparent reason. It was like something out of a creepy Alfred Hitchcock movie. Two, we felt a light jarring — sort of as though we'd run aground on a flat, sandy bottom.

At first, we didn't know what to make of it. But things slowly came into focus. I think the first thing we noticed was that the clock tower on the Ferry Building had been damaged. Soon, we saw smoke from fires burning along the Embarcadero, then fires on the Oakland side of the Bay, then finally big plumes of smoke coming over the hills to the west from the fires in the Marina District.

We carried a boombox with a radio for tunes. I jumped belowdecks to grab it, but in my haste managed to drop it. The batteries fell out and rolled to all corners of the boat. Rather than put it back together, I grabbed our little battery-powered portable TV instead and turned it on. All we got were 'test patterns' on all the channels. For a second, we thought it was the end of the world. The last thing we noticed was what was happening on the Bay Bridge. The traffic hadn't been moving for a few minutes, and then finally we saw a huge mass of people running westbound across the bridge toward the City. That image was just like the panic scene from a Godzilla movie.

After some time, the television came back on, and we were riveted by the news. My wife had gone to a training session in Oakland, so having heard about the collapse of parts of the upper deck of the Nimitz freeway, I had all kinds of worst case scenarios running through my mind. Our kids were in the South Bay at soccer practice, unsupervised. The initial news reports were, thankfully, much worse than the ultimate reality. We heard that all freeways were closed and that nobody could leave the City.

We returned to South Beach Harbor to wait for news and

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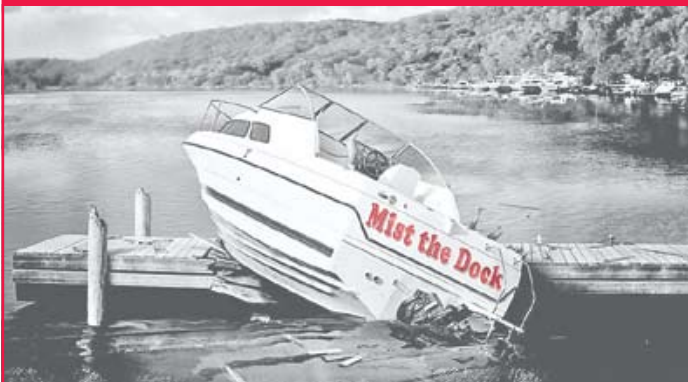
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LETTERS

phone connections. All of us aboard were incredibly concerned about our families and friends. Yet there was an almost creepy irony that, there we were, safely on a boat in the marina, with plenty of power, pretty good communications (TV, VHF, sideband, etc), and plenty of food and fresh water. If only we could beam our families on board.

Since that day, our sailboats — later a Farr 44, a Santa Cruz 52, and now our M&M 52 catmaran — have always had an Ark-like essence for me. And we'll never forget that afternoon sail.

Pete & Susan Wolcott
Route du Vent (in '89)
Currently *Kiapa*, Morrelli & Melvin 52
Kapa'a, HI

↑↓SHE WORKS HARD FOR THE MONEY

I am writing to express my eye-rolling disappointment in the Liz Clark piece — with the overly dramatic title "An SOS from Liz Clark on *Swell*" — in the May 11 edition of *Lectronic Latitude*. At first I was worried there had been an accident or that Liz was in other serious trouble. As it turns out, this was not a true SOS; Ms. Clark is simply in need of money. Who isn't in need of money these days? I completely understand that Ms. Clark needs the money to repair her boat so she may continue her sailing and surfing adventure, but considering the economic climate back here in 'Reality World', it strikes me as odd that a person capable of getting the initial funding and multiple sponsorships at the journey's onset, would now feel it's appropriate to ask for donations from the general public.

And if she has, as you wrote, "made the transition from a relatively novice sailor to a courageous and competent adventurer, never shying away from the hard work that's needed to be done," it seems to me she should consider getting a job in one of the fabulous locales she's been privileged to visit, or even back home, to earn the \$5,000 she feels she needs.

In reading some of her blog entries, I find it hard to believe that a person with the stamina and courage to sail alone to the South Pacific and the determination to conquer the surf at Teahupo'o would ask working people for money while she spends her days exploring, sailing, and surfing in exotic ports. I find this more than a little offensive, considering I work hard for my money so no one else has to foot the bill for my fun.

Perhaps the generous souls who are considering sending money to Liz Clark should instead send their contribution to Bismarck Dinius — someone who is truly in need of help!

Kathe Hashimoto
Seahound, Cal 27 T2
Sausalito

Kathe — You're not the only one who feels the way you do, but we think you're overly grouchy about it. As for your complaint that you were worried Liz had been in an accident — please, you can't seriously believe that she would call for urgent help via the online edition of a sailing magazine!

In addition, it's not as though Liz was asking for donations from the "general public." Over the last three years, she's written many interesting and well-received pieces for Latitude and other publications, and we think she rightly felt that some readers might be happy to pitch in a little to help her out. She received over \$1,400, and has expressed her sincere gratitude to all those who contributed.

What we can't figure out is if you've got something against everyone who receives money from others to go sailing — which as we mentioned last month, would include Robin Lee Graham,

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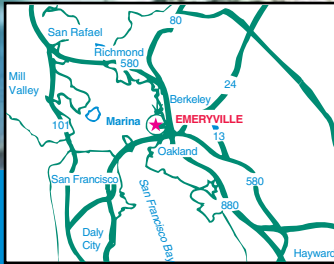
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LETTERS

Tania Aebi, Zac Sunderland, Bruce Schwab and about a million racing sailors — or if you just have a problem with Liz? And if it's the latter, is it because she's young? A woman? Or because she often appears to be having fun?

RESPONSE HIJACK ALERT! Editor LaDonna Bubak stepping in here to point out that not everyone at Latitude agrees with the boss man — and praise Ra that he's got a good sense of humor about it.

Kathe clearly respects Liz Clark's gumption, and at the very least follows her adventures online, if not in the magazine. To suggest she has "a problem" with Liz because she's "young" or "a woman" is not just silly, it's downright offensive — especially if you've ever laid eyes on Kathe (to do so, check out page 98 of this issue).

And The Wanderer's suggestion that Liz Clark's request for money in any way resembles that of a professional racer's quest for sponsorship is apples, well, and watermelons. Liz's solicitation is more like the guy at a rest stop begging for gas money. Liz, as well as the others he mentions, obviously received donations to fund their dream trips — and good on 'em! But the others — who were all out to break records, by the way — somehow secured their funding without asking me for a dime.

For the record, I think Liz is extremely courageous for following her dream and heading off into the great blue on her own. But the next time she needs a few extra bucks to continue her vacation, maybe she should just get a job.

WE'RE DEFINITELY DOING DELTA DOO DAH DEUX

Nancy and I want to give our heartfelt thanks to everyone at Latitude but especially LaDonna Bubak, Christine Weaver,



LATITUDE / LADONNA

'Iliohale' at the start of the inaugural Delta Doo Dah.

and John Arndt for organizing and running the Delta Doo Dah. The week we spent on the Delta as part of the Doo Dah was one of the best vacations we've ever had.

After sailing on the Bay for 38 years, we needed you guys to kick us in the ass to get on up the river. Now we're kicking ourselves in the ass for not having done it sooner. We're already organizing another trip up there in the fall but, if that doesn't work out, certainly next year with all of our friends who also need to be kicked in the ass to get on up the river. Doo Dah II — we're there!

Gary & Nancy Ryan
'Iliohale, Hanse 34
Greenbrae

Readers — You can get all the dirt on the Doo Dah starting on page 98. While next year's dates haven't been confirmed, it seems a foregone conclusion that Delta Doo Dah Deux is a go.

In a typical month, we receive a tremendous volume of letters. So if yours hasn't appeared, don't give up hope.

We welcome all letters that are of interest to sailors. Please include your name, your boat's name, hailing port, and, if possible, a way to contact you for clarifications.

By far the best way to send letters is to email them to richard@latitude38.com. You can also mail them to 15 Locust, Mill Valley, CA, 94941, or fax them to (415) 383-5816.

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SIGHTINGS

more america's cup drama

As any design rule in any competitive arena matures, performance gains become more a result of refinement and less a result of radical departures in concept, and that's exactly what happened over the last couple America's Cups.

But when you blow the design parameters as wide open as the impending Deed of Gift match for the 33rd America's Cup has, the question of concept suddenly becomes quite relevant. As last month's launching of Alinghi's answer — *Alinghi 5* — to the Golden Gate YC's challenge has shown, there is little consensus between the two teams as to what is more suited for the match: a trimaran — as has so far been shown to be BMW Oracle's choice — or a catamaran — as Alinghi have chosen. What they share is that they're both absolute

continued on outside column of next sightings page

the final hawks

Alonso Machain, the last of five people convicted in connection with the murders of Newport Beach-based cruisers Tom and Jackie Hawks, was quietly sentenced to 20 years in California state prison on June 15. Machain, the key witness in previous trials, pleaded guilty and struck a plea agreement with prosecutors, which the Hawks family supported.

On November 15, 2004, Tom and Jackie Hawks took Machain, Skylar Deleon and John Kennedy, posing as buyers, on a sea trial aboard their 55-ft trawler

Get along, little DOGie — 'Alinghi's Deed of Gift match multihull will make for interesting A-Cup viewing.



PHOTOS CARLO BORLENGHI / ALINGHI

killer sentenced

Well Deserved. At sea, the men subdued the Hawkses, forced them to sign financial and legal documents, tied them to an anchor and threw them overboard.

Deleon's then-wife, Jennifer Henderson, was sentenced in 2006 to life without parole for assisting in the plot. Deleon and Kennedy were both sentenced to death last year. A fifth defendant, Myron Gardner, pleaded guilty to putting Deleon in touch with Kennedy. He was sentenced to a year and is now free.

— *ladonna*

a-cup — cont'd

monsters.

Alinghi 5 turned out to be a 90-ft catamaran, the result of more than 100,000 man hours in design and build. A development of Ernesto Bertarelli's 41-ft Lake Geneva day racer *Le Black*, *Alinghi 5* sports some unusual features for a catamaran. First, the pair of diagonal beams that emanate from the area of the mast step and run to the rear crossbeam to counteract the bending loads created by the running backstays. Then there's the complex web of dolphin-strikers, cables and rods that stiffen the entire package both torsionally and longitudinally.

One feature recently caused a return visit to the New York courts over a dust-up about

continued on outside column of next page



SIGHTINGS

a-cup — cont'd

whether the boat's use of an engine to power her sailing systems violates the deed's provision that the event be sailed under the host club's rules, which — at the time of BMW Oracle's challenge — didn't include a waiver of the ISAF rules that govern such items, but have since been modified to do so. As of this writing, Alinghi's use of stored power looks as if it will be permitted. If you ask us, this is a little unfortunate. We're used to seeing advertisements from sailmakers, gear manufacturers and composite materials makers touting the use of their products by Cup teams. We don't know who built the engine or what type of fuel it uses, but can you imagine an ad from Yanmar, Mercruiser or Cummins spouting off about how their internal combus-

continued on outside column of next sightings page

mad dogs and

Two British adventurers will be departing Inuvik, in Northwest Canada, on July 24 (as this issue goes to press) bound for Pond Inlet on Baffin Bay in the Eastern Canadian Arctic. They plan to make the 1,700-mile west-east traverse of the infamous Northwest Passage in a 17.5-ft open boat. Ken Oliver, 41, and Tony Lancashire, 35, are both career Royal Marines whose avocation is boating. The boat they'll be sailing and rowing is a specially modified Norseboat 17.5, a gaff-



Looking good (clockwise from below) — Taking a dip aboard 'Naniloa'; 'Cheryl L.' rides the wave; "Reef? I don't need no stinkin' reef!"; the crew of 'Jelly Bean' have sweet smiles; the 'Irish Eyes' have it.

PHOTOS PETER LYONS / LYONSMAGING.COM

englishmen

rigged catboat built by Norseboat, Inc., of Nova Scotia. The boat has an enclosed bow, but that will be full of stores. "We can get out of the weather to sleep but not in a closed space," says Oliver. "There is room for one of us at a time to sleep in the bow of the boat under a canvas cover. When the weather precludes our sailing or rowing, if we can land safely, we will put up our tent." For more, see their website at www.arcticmariner.org.

— jr



a-cup — cont'd

tion engine won the America's Cup? That would be a little strange.

In the meantime, we'll be waiting for what will likely be one of the coolest America's Cups ever, in some of the most radical boats ever designed. And we'll also be curious to see if the big black trimaran BMW Oracle has been sailing off San Diego is the boat they end up taking to the match. There's been plenty of speculation that they have another one in progress. Only time will tell.

Max Ebb takes a closer and more edified look at the cat vs. tri question this month, starting on page 122.

—rob

sausality yacht brokers arrested

Robert 'Clay' Prescott, 65, and his wife, Teresa, 49, were arrested at the Sausalito offices of their yacht brokerage, Anchorage Brokers & Consultants (aka ABC Yachts) on July 16 and taken to the Marin County Jail. According to Deputy D.A. Linda Wong, Clay was charged with eight counts of embezzlement, three counts of writing bad checks, and two counts of embezzling from an elder or dependent adult. Teresa was charged with eight similar counts. In plain English, the Mill Valley residents have been charged with, among other things, selling boats for clients, but then not giving the clients the money due them at the end of the transaction. According to the Sausalito Police, victims claim losses estimated between \$250,000 and \$270,000. Bail was set at \$500,000 for each defendant. A deputy public defender asked that Teresa be released or at least have her bail reduced because the couple have a 17-year-old daughter. The request was denied. On July 24, she made bail but Clay was still in custody.

Authorities say they've found five victims of ABC Yachts to date, but it's unclear when the alleged criminal activity began. One Southern California customer of ABC Yachts told us that ABC sold his Sceptre 41, and the new owner, a Canadian, sent ABC Yachts a check for \$160,000 on February 25. The seller should have received a check for \$144,000 from the ABC trust account in a matter of days. Instead, the seller told us, Clay kept putting him off, promising he'd send the money shortly. On April 1, Teresa allegedly signed a check for the full amount and sent it to the seller. The much-relieved seller quickly deposited it in his checking account. On April 3 he got the bad news — the check was no good. Who knows, maybe it had only been an April Fool's Day joke.

When the seller reached Clay by phone, Prescott reportedly told him, "I'm really sorry, times are tough. We took your money." When asked where the money had gone, Prescott reportedly said, "We spent it," adding that he hoped to pay the man back over time. Indeed, on April 10, ABC sent a good check for \$5,000 to the seller. Unfortunately, that was just 3.5% of what he was supposed to receive.

On April 4, a day or so after the seller learned the first check had bounced, he called the Sausalito Police Department. "If there is one hero in this case," says the seller, "it's Sausalito Officer Sean Smagalski. Within one hour of receiving a copy of the bad check, he was in his car looking for the Prescotts. It was he who got the Marin County D.A. involved. It was he who got the Department of Boating & Waterways involved. It was he who found out there were at least four other victims, who inexplicably didn't report not getting paid for their boats. It was Officer Smagalski who put together a 700-page file on the case."

Nonetheless, it's at this point that the legal system and the state completely failed the consumer. For one thing, the state agency that regulates yacht brokers requires that a broker carry a bond worth just \$15,000 — a rather trifling sum for businesses that may hold hundreds of thousands of dollars in their trust accounts at one time, wouldn't you agree? Secondly, for a period of more than 3.5 months, neither DBW nor the Marin County D.A. did anything to close down ABC Yachts or

continued on outside column of next sightings page

SIGHTINGS

abc yachts — cont'd

warn consumers that they were under investigation. DBW told us that if a consumer called and specifically asked about ABC Yachts, they would be able to say only that a complaint had been filed. True, it's not quite as bad as the state taking three to five years to get around to investigating whether rogue nurses killed their patients, but we find such a delay to be unacceptable. Indeed, it's our understanding that there were additional victims after the Marin County D.A. and DBW had been made aware of the case.

After we heard of the allegations against the Prescotts and ABC



LATITUDE / LADONNA

The owners of ABC Yachts on Sausalito's Gate 5 Road are accused of taking clients' money.

Yachts, we at *Latitude* were put into a difficult position. The last thing we wanted was to run another ad for ABC if we believed that it might lead to other customers losing their money. But with DBW and Marin County unwilling to say anything other than that they were "investigating" the situation, and with both of them allowing the Prescotts and ABC to continue operating their business, we felt our hands were tied.

After all, without any confirmation from official agencies, we had no evidence that the seller's accusations were actually true. We believed the seller we talked to, but we had no proof. When we talked to Clay about it, he said the buyer would be paid, possibly through a payment schedule, and that it was all being taken care of. He said that if ABC was closed down, the seller would certainly never get his money. Sounds like a curious bit of extortion, doesn't it? For his part, the seller asked us to let ABC continue to run ads, saying that it was his only hope that he might see more of his money. In any event, all we felt we could do was write a *Sightings* piece about how to buy a boat, and suggest that, given the times, perhaps a trust account, separate from the broker's trust account, should be set up for boat transactions.

In June, with ABC behind in payments to *Latitude* for their ads, we pulled the plug on the company for the July issue. Clay called asking how he could get back in. We asked him to explain what had gone on. He admitted that he'd spent all the money he'd gotten for the seller's boat, and it was just plain gone. We were furious on behalf of his clients and the marine industry, and let him know it in no uncertain terms. We demanded to know what had happened to the money. When he said that it went to things like three months of house payments and business expenses, we confronted him with the fact that the numbers still didn't add up. Where the hell was the other \$100,000? Clay would only say that it was gone.

If the criminal allegations are true, the Prescotts' behavior is inexplicable to us on two counts. First, how can you just take \$145,000 or so that belongs to somebody else? We're not naïve enough to think that people don't do it. We just don't understand how they can. Second, if your business is going down the tubes, isn't it obvious that bankruptcy is a preferable option to being arrested on felony charges, and facing huge legal bills and perhaps long terms in jail? The one thing you can say about the Prescotts is that they worked their asses off for years, and continued to work as hard as they could in a very tough business environment. But you have to wonder, when they had to put on their blue jail outfits for the first time, if they realized they'd

continued on outside column of next sightings page

ala wai harbor

On June 5, just a little over a month before the first TransPac boats were slated to arrive, Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle dedicated three new floating docks at the Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor in Honolulu. For years we've been railing against the state's apparent inability to properly manage what should be a cash cow — ridiculously low-cost slips in a fantastic location — and now they've finally stepped up.

After 30 years of neglect, much of the marina's slips were either unusable, condemned or just plain gone. Lingle's 2006 promise to turn the Ala Wai into the state's "flagship recreational harbor"



gets a facelift

was met with understandable skepticism. But somehow she did it. With the replacement of G dock last year, and now B, C and D docks, 248 slips are finally back in service at a cost of about \$5.3 million. The 40 remaining condemned slips are scheduled to be replaced later this year.

Now, if the state would just increase slip fees from the ludicrously low \$5.25 per foot to current market levels — and put that money back into the maintenance and improvement of the marina — the Ala Wai could become a world-class yachting destination.

— *ladonna*

abc yachts — cont'd

made some poor choices.

Despite having done business with the Prescotts for many years, we find it very difficult to drum up much sympathy given the crimes they're accused of committing. Maybe it's because we're cold-hearted. Or maybe it's because we know that damage done by such alleged crimes tends to have a broad ripple effect. On the day we last spoke with the Southern California seller by phone, he told us that he and his wife, now suddenly out nearly \$145,000, were forced to put their home up for sale. The couple's 10- and 8-year-old daughters were distraught, unable to comprehend how they could lose their home when their parents hadn't done anything wrong. The seller's wife can't sleep at night, as the loss has put strains on both the husband and wife's small businesses. All this for something that never should have happened, either to the seller or other alleged victims — or to the Prescotts.

— *richard*



The Ala Wai Small Boat Harbor's docks looked like this (above) last July. They were replaced by new floating modular docks in time for arriving TransPac boats last month.

SIGHTINGS

sir foxy?

Neophyte entrepreneurs could learn a valuable lesson from irreverent Caribbean crooner Foxy Callwood. Ever since opening his thatch-roofed beach bar on the tiny British Virgin island of Jost Van Dyke in the late '60s, he has been on site to greet and entertain visiting sailors day after day, year after year. That dependable consistency has made his Tamarind Bar and Restaurant a must-see destination for virtually every visitor to this idyllic British territory, which has long been the most popular yacht chartering destination in the world.

From extremely humble beginnings, Foxy, now 71, and his long-suffering Australian wife, Tessa, have slowly expanded their waterside operation to include a top-rated restaurant, a micro-brewery, a boutique, and an expansive concert venue for special events — such as

continued on outside column of next sightings page

cuauhtemoc scores

Mexico may not have the most powerful military in the world, but they seem to make up for their lack of firepower with fantastic style. Having a soft spot in our hearts for tall ships, we couldn't resist the temptation to witness the arrival of the magnificent 270-ft tall ship *Cuauhtemoc* as she entered the Bay July 13 under sunny skies with festive Mexican music blasting from her loudspeakers and nearly 100 cadets straddling her yardarms. With a San Francisco fireboat ushering her in like a floating fountain,



SPREAD: STEVE LAPKIN / WWW.H2OMARK.COM; INSET: JIM CASEY

10 for style

the globetrotting barque sailed in with her full complement of 23 sails drawing on a light morning breeze.

Prior to crossing the North Pacific to make her landfall here, *Cuauhtemoc* spent the previous six months touring Asian ports in her dual mission as goodwill ambassador and Naval cadet training vessel. The voyage commemorated the trading route between Mexico and Asia, called Nao of China, that's been followed for more than 400 years.

continued in middle column of next sightings page



Spread, the 'Wicked' crew were all business in their quest for the top slot in the Trans Tahoe Regatta, while the crew of 'Pleiades' (inset) were a little more playful. Read all about the action in Race Sheet.



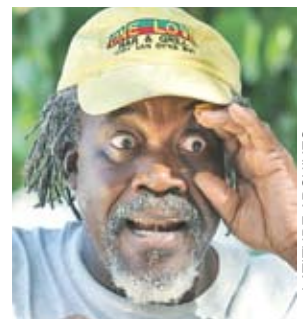
foxy — cont'd

their notorious New Year's Eve mega-parties. In recent years they've funneled a portion of their profits into the Jost Van Dyke Preservation Society, a nonprofit they helped create that's focused on preserving the island's environment and cultural history. A key project is the construction of 32-ft Tortola sloops, modeled after the hand-hewn sailing craft used by BV islanders in generations past, and built today partially by school-age kids.

Those philanthropic efforts, and Foxy's undeniable contributions to the success of BVI tourism, have earned him a completely unexpected honor. Earlier this year, he went to England to be inducted into the prestigious Order of the British Empire by none other than Queen Elizabeth II. Don't worry, we don't have to call him Sir Foxy as the MBE is a few notches below knighthood. While his contributions certainly deserve acknowledgement, the title seems a wee bit ironic, because if we know anyone who shuns formality, it's Foxy. In fact, we're reminded of one of his classic lines: "Yacht club? Yeah, I'm a member of a yacht club, the MOFYC. (My Own F_ _king Yacht Club.)"

No matter how nice the Royals were to our old friend, we're absolutely certain he didn't linger long in the British Isles. Why? Because he has to wear shoes there!

— andy



LATITUDE ARCHIVES

Foxy's bawdy ballads and politically incorrect humor have made him a legend.

high time for the ha-ha

If there is one thing we've learned in life, it's that you don't want to fight the seasons. So while we're just entering the prime time for sailing in both Northern and Southern California, it's less than three months until the days grow short and the air chilly. For those sailors not tied down by obligations, there's a one-word answer to the question of what to do with your boat at the end of October. It's called the Ha-Ha, the 750-mile cruisers' rally from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas, with R&R stops at Turtle Bay and Bahia Santa Maria.

The Ha-Ha is the gateway to a winter of cruising or commuter cruising in Mexico, where the sailing generally is easy, the air and water are warm, and the locals and other cruisers are super-friendly. With the exchange rate greater than 13-to-1, the dollar can be made to go a long way in Mexico. What about the narco gangs and swine flu? Tell someone who cruised Mexico last year that you're worried about such threats and they're likely to burst into uncontrollable laughter.

As of June 22, the Ha-Ha had received a total of 122 entries for this fall's event. We're expecting another 30 to 50 more by the September 10 deadline. It's a typical Ha-Ha fleet, meaning there are boats representing every segment of the sailing world. So far there are 23 boats under 34 feet in length, the smallest being *Little Lara*, Jay Bowden's Pacific Seacraft Dana 24 from Santa Barbara.

A total of 18 boats longer than 50 feet have signed up, the biggest being *Odysseus*, a Maxi 97 owned by two-time Ha-Ha vet William Hogarty of the Bay Area. Even the Over 50-ft Class runs the whole gamut of boats. Many are full-on cruisers, such as the CT 54s *Teal Sea* and *Chrokeva*, owned by Craig Schroeder of Long Beach and Mark Pitts of San Diego respectively. Then there are the more performance-oriented over-50-footers, including William Piper's *J/160 Pipe Dream* all the way from Miami, Jim and Diana Freeland's *Santa Cruz 52 Prufrock* from Oahu, and Bob Callaway's *MacGregor 65PH Braveheart* from Pleasant Harbor, WA.

There are 11 multihulls so far. Although Paul Marston's Corsair 31 *Sally Lightfoot* from Ventura is one of the smaller multihulls, we

continued on outside column of next sightings page

SIGHTINGS

ha-ha — cont'd.

know this veteran racer will be battling all the big boats for line honors. But forget the extremes; the overwhelming number of entries are racer/cruisers in the 36- to 47-ft range, with Catalina having made 13 of them. We haven't calculated the average age of the boats entered, but in years past it's been about 15 to 17 years. The sailboats built in Southern California and Taiwan in the '60s and '70s have proven to be very durable, so there will be some classic plastics pushing 40 years of age.

There are lots of reasons to enter the Ha-Ha. The discounts on goods and services in California and Mexico more than make up for the entry fee, which at just \$350 is unusually low for such a rally. There is the bountiful bag full of swag each boat gets. In addition, there are the benefits of the daily professional weather forecasts, the roll calls, and 'safety in numbers'. But if you ask the returnees — and there will be lots of them this year — what they like most about the Ha-Ha is the people they meet. Do one Ha-Ha and you can end up with friends and sailing opportunities to last you a lifetime.

The Ha-Ha is open to boats that were designed, built, and have been maintained for open-ocean sailing. There must be at least two crew with overnight sailing and navigation experience. And don't kid yourself — while the downwind sail to the Cape is usually a relatively easy one, you always have to be ready for whatever the Pacific might want to dish out.

For information on how to enter, and to see a current list of entries, visit www.baja-haha.com. To get on the Crew List, hit the 'Crew List' button at www.latitude38.com.

We're totally into the concept of the endless summer, so *Latitude's* 63-ft cat *Profligate* will be the mothership for the 13th year, with the publisher of *Latitude* serving as the Grand Poobah, *Latitude* Managing Editor 'Banjo' Andy Turpin serving as the Assistant Poobah, and Doña 'Don't Mess With Me' de Mallorca as the Head of Security.

God knows there's been enough gloom recently, so if you're not into whining, we hope you can join us for some hot sailing fun under the Mexican winter sun.

— richard

mob mentality

People fall off boats all the time, especially racing boats. Most are recovered quickly with little more lost than a few places in the standings. But not always. For most of the sailing demographic, MOB — 'man overboard' — is one of the most dreaded scenarios, right up there with fire or sinking. We have run many articles over the years detailing the tragic consequences of some of those incidents; occasional articles about near-miraculous rescues; and countless 'how to' articles about the best ways recover overboard crew.

We were surprised to realize recently that in all that coverage, we have given only tacit attention to the other end of the MOB pole — the person who was actually in the water. So now we want to do that, and we need your help. We're asking anyone who's ever fallen off a boat (and obviously lived to tell the tale) to write a short summary of what the experience was like. At some point in the future, we'll compile the accounts into a feature. To 'prime the pump,' so to speak, here are quickie summaries of the top three most fantastic overboard stories involving sailboats and West Coast sailors that we've come across in the last 30 years or so. (Plus the added bonus of a particularly

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cuauhtemoc

Cuauhtemoc was built in Bilbao, Spain, in 1982, the last of several sisterships, including Colombia's *Gloria*, Ecuador's *Guayas*, and Venezuela's *Simon Bolivar*. Since being commissioned, she has logged more than 400,000 sea miles visiting ports throughout the world. The gleaming white ship was named for the last Aztec emperor, who was imprisoned and

If you've got a fear of heights, the Mexican Navy is not for you. The 'Port Salute' (spread) is one of the grandest traditions among cadet training vessels. It's a test of both bravery and balance.



The Ha-Ha is a heckuva good way to lose the gloom.

— cont'd

eventually executed by the conquistador Hernán Cortes in 1525.

While berthed at San Francisco's Pier 27, the 'Class A' vessel was toured by more than 20,000 tall ship enthusiasts of all generations. She was the first international tall ship to call on the Bay in several years.

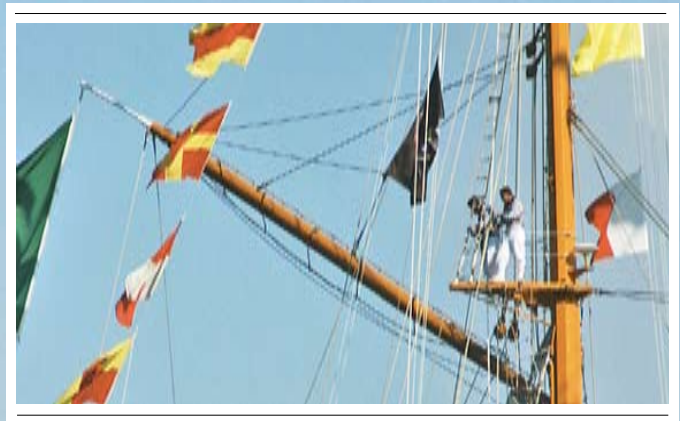
— andy

mob — cont'd

fantastic non-yacht incident.) Please note that yours doesn't have to be anywhere near this amazing to be part of our roundup.

• In the 1951 TransPac, the 73-ft cutter *L'Apache* was 800-some miles from Honolulu in 20 knots of breeze when she took a roll and crewman Ted Sierks went overboard. He was not wearing a lifejacket. The crew, led by sailing master Peggy Slater, threw two liferings over, one of which the fully-clothed Sierks grabbed. But by the time they got the sails down, started the engine and reversed course, 10 to 15

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SIGHTINGS

mob — cont'd

minutes had passed, and they couldn't find him. What ensued was perhaps the longest and most intense search in TransPac history, joined by not only a half-dozen other TransPac boats, but a B-17 out of Hickam Field and five Destroyer Escorts. Sierks was finally located just before dusk the next day, having spent 29 hours in the water.

• In the early '60s, Slater herself famously fell off her Kettenburg 38 *Valentine* in the Molokai Channel. She was singlehanded to Hawaii and had gone forward to change a headsail during a squall when the incident occurred. Though she remained attached to the boat via jacklines and a harness, she was pinned against the side of the boat by the sail and

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dinius trial

On July 17, supporters of Bismarck Dinius took a collective breath of relief when Lake County District Attorney Jon E. Hopkins announced in an open letter posted to the county's website that he would drop the ridiculous vehicular manslaughter charges against Dinius. But that breath turned into a groan of frustration as they finished reading the bizarre letter.

The letter, posted in the middle of jury



PHOTOS COURTESY MEERKAT

to continue

selection for Dinius' trial, maintains that Lynn Thornton's 2006 death was caused by "drunken sailors." Dinius happened to be sitting at the tiller of a sailboat drifting along in zephyrs on Clear Lake when it was rammed at an estimated 40-50 mph by a speedboat driven by Russell Perdock, the #2 man at the Sheriff's Office.

For reasons not adequately explained in the letter, Hopkins said he would dis-

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We were motorsailing our Ventura-based Ocean 49 catamaran 'Meerkat' into Banderas Bay when this humpback whale surfaced on our starboard side. My husband Jim had to turn the boat to stay clear of this big boy. We think he may have been trying to keep us away from a couple of mating whales, as he began herding us — we ended turning 180 degrees! He slapped his tail for about 10 minutes while we just floated there, then swam behind us and began breaching. What a show!

— heather stapleton donnell

**mob — cont'd**

unable to get back aboard. She was in the water for 11 hours before being spotted by another boat and rescued. She later commented, "I believe I'm the only person to sail to Hawaii underwater."

• In 1993, Bill Forrest was motoring across Bahia Culebra in Costa Rica. The Bay Area sailor was alone aboard his Capo 30 *California Girl*. It was a hot morning, so he stripped off his shorts and started a bucket shower to cool off. But when he leaned against the lifelines to get a second bucket, the lifeline broke and he went into the water. He could not get ahold of the slippery boat as it went by, but managed to get a hand on a trolling line he'd rigged — only to have it slip through his grasp and have the hook impale his hand. Being towed behind the boat nearly drowned him, but he managed to be the big one that got away, eventually breaking the line. Then, treading water, he watched his boat slowly motor over the horizon and disappear. He was 68 years old, naked, bleeding and 12 miles offshore. Incredibly, Forrest managed to swim to land, coming ashore on a rocky beach in the wee hours of the following morning. It took another week of working his way south along the rugged coast before he was found.

• Bonus MOB — In July 1908, in heavy going in the North Atlantic, Seaman James Wilkinson was washed off the deck of the battleship *USS Minnesota* by a huge wave. A few minutes later, another big wave deposited him — unharmed — on the deck of the *USS Vermont*.

You swimmers out there, please include as many details as you can — year, boat, boatspeed, conditions, etc. We'd also like to know what you were wearing (particularly whether you were wearing a life-jacket or not), what was going through your mind, how long it took to get rescued, and what actions the crew took to make it happen. We'd also like to know if and how the incident might have changed your life, and your sailing attitude or those of your rescuers. Address all incidents to ladonna@latitude38.com, subject line 'MOB'. We'd really like to make this a meaningful exercise, so the more responses the better. If you know someone with a good story who is too shy or computer-challenged to write themselves, either 'interview' them and send along their story, or give us their contact information and we'll call them ourselves. Photos are encouraged.

We will send *Latitude 38* T-shirts to all respondents whose stories are used in the article.

— jr

gore to speak at leukemia cup

The San Francisco Leukemia Cup Regatta is just three years old, yet it's the highest grossing event in a series of 38 Leukemia Cups that run across the country. From its inception, the San Francisco edition, hosted by San Francisco YC, has been recognized as the top earner in this series of fundraisers for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, with last September's contributions topping more than \$663,000 — \$371,000 more than the next highest grossing regatta. Of course, competition shouldn't be the primary goal when fundraising, but we are talking about racers here — and the end result is more money for a great cause.

Belvedere's Tom Perkins has been a strong supporter of the regatta, and last year brought his magnificent 289-ft *Maltese Falcon* to the Bay, as well as inviting News Corp Chairman Rupert Murdoch to be the keynote speaker at Saturday's sold-out VIP dinner. One might think that would be a hard act to follow, but Perkins has once again raised the bar by securing yet another world-class keynote speaker for this year's event: Former Vice President Al Gore.



Ex-Veep Al Gore will speak at the Leukemia Cup.

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SIGHTINGS

gore — cont'd

Since leaving political office, Gore has been outspoken on environmental issues, writing two bestsellers — *Earth in the Balance* and *An Inconvenient Truth* — and was later the subject of an Oscar-winning documentary. He also won the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize for his work. Event organizers understandably expect that his September 19 talk — to which only those who donate or raise more than \$1,000 are invited — will be a sell-out.

For more on this year's event, to be held September 19-20, go to www.leukemicup.org/sf.

— ladonna

can your schooner come out to play?

When you consider all the racing that happens on San Francisco Bay it's a real shame that in recent decades only the annual Master Mariners Regatta has featured big wooden classics. That's precisely why a handful of vintage schooner owners decided last year to stage an annual event of their own called The Great San Francisco Schooner Race.

After a very successful first run last summer, the event will be even bigger and better this year. Slated for Saturday, August 29, and sponsored by Belvedere's San Francisco YC, the three-day schedule includes a Friday night skippers' reception at the club, followed by a ship parade up Raccoon Strait at 11 a.m. Saturday, followed by a pursuit race at noon, starting off the Knox buoy. There'll be a post-race no-host barbecue on the clubhouse deck afterwards with live music. And the awards ceremony will feature both perpetual and 'keeper' trophies — plus free beer! Those schooner owners who raft up at the club overnight can look forward to a hearty 'Schooner Breakfast' Sunday morning.

A vast assortment of the region's finest classic beauties are expected to attend including *Santana*, *Brigadoon*, *Yankee*, *Ka'iulani*, *Seaward*, *Maramel*, *Aldebaran*, *Elizabeth Muir*, *Wanderer II*, *Contesa*, *Stardust*, *Goldstar*, *Regulas*, *Wanderer*, *Jakatan* and others. Start times will be based on the race committee's 'non-protestable' handicap system, with staggered starts based on ratings. (See www.sfy.c.org after August 21 for complete handicap and course details.)

It sounds like a whole lot of fun to us — and a photographer's dream. See you out there.

— andy

short sightings

POINT SAN PABLO — The funky facilities and quirky ambience of Point San Pablo Yacht Harbor may be a thing of the past if a rumored sale to Chevron goes through. The big oil company, whose refineries surround the harbor on three sides, has reportedly expressed interest in buying the harbor, which is currently home to a few dozen residents and about 200 boats, many of them abandoned. If the deal goes through, the word is that Chevron intends to level the buildings, remove the docks, clean up the 27 acres — and close it off to the public as a security measure. This from the folks who for years ran those TV spots that touted, "Do people care this much? People do." Residents of Point San Pablo Yacht Harbor have formed a nonprofit organization to purchase the harbor themselves and maintain what an *SFGate.com* piece called its 'dilapidated charm.' The City of Richmond has ponied up \$6,000 to help pay for an appraisal, and the East Bay Regional

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dinius

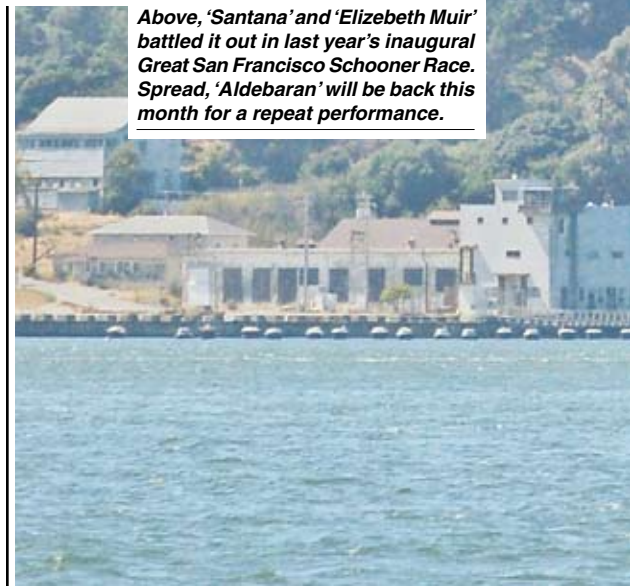
miss the manslaughter charge but continue with the prosecution of the felony BUI "causing bodily injury or death." That charge still lays the fault of Thornton's death solely at the feet of Dinius and could earn him three years in prison.

Hopkins also maintains that he can't prosecute Perdock because he can't prove how fast he was going. Really? Perdock himself has admitted to going 40 mph, and witnesses on shore put his speed higher. Beyond the admission of his speed, it seems to us that forensic scientists should have an easy time of estimating that piece of evidence.

In a hearing on July 21, Victor Haltom, Dinius' attorney, filed a motion alleging



Above, *'Santana'* and *'Elizabeth Muir'* battled it out in last year's inaugural Great San Francisco Schooner Race. *Spread*, *'Aldebaran'* will be back this month for a repeat performance.



— cont'd

prosecutorial misconduct for posting the letter online during jury selection. The judge in the case, while admonishing the D.A. for issuing the letter, did not find any misconduct on Hopkins' part. The trial is slated to begin July 28.

In the meantime, Dinius' legal bills are stacking up. You can now contribute to his defense fund through Paypal — his ID is bismarckdinius@comcast.net — or by sending checks made out to Bismarck Dinius, with "Bismarck Dinius Defense Fund" in the memo section, to Sierra Central Credit Union, Attn: Brian Foxworthy, Branch Manager, 306 N. Sunrise Ave., Roseville, CA 95661.

— ladonna

shorts — cont'd

Park District has given \$10,000 to amend the 2004 Point San Pablo Open Space Study to include preservation of the harbor. One of the claims to fame of the harbor, located a mile east of Point San Pablo (the point just past the East Brother Lighthouse), is that it was used as one of the sets for the 1955 John Wayne movie *Blood Alley*. For years, the remains of an old steamer and other vessels sunk for the movie were visible off the harbor entrance.

SAN FRANCISCO — On July 17, John Cota, the pilot of the 901-ft *Cosco Busan* that sideswiped the Bay Bridge in '07, was sentenced to 10 months in federal prison, the maximum allowed under his plea agreement. Cota, 61, pleaded guilty in March to negligently causing the discharge of 53,000 gallons of oil into the Bay and to violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act by causing the deaths of thousands of birds. Fleet Management Ltd., which owns the ship, is slated to go on trial in September on charges of negligently causing the spill and destroying evidence.

— jr & ladonna



PHOTOS LATITUDE / ANDY