

Latitude 38

# Latitude 38

VOLUME 438 December 2013

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DECEMBER 2013

VOLUME 438



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 Pacific Crest Canvas..... 20  
 Pacific Yacht Imports ..... 25  
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# National News (the good kind)

★  
Happy  
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We'll be closed from  
Sat., Dec. 21, through  
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Mike Mannix bought *Harp*, his Catalina 38, brand new, in 1984. Mike has won his share of races over the years, and this year *Harp* won the Catalina 38 Nationals, held here on San Francisco Bay this past July.

Mike has taken good care of his boat and in 1996 began replacing his sail inventory with sails from Pineapple Sails. *Harp* has been 'Powered by Pineapples' ever since.

If you are as fond of your boat as Mike is of his, then you'll want to take care, too. And great sails are a big part of that care. We can help — with the quality of sails and service you want for your boat. Give us a call.



PHOTO MARIAH'S EYES PHOTOGRAPHY

*Harp*\*

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## CONTENTS

subscriptions	6
calendar	10
letters	18
sightings	66
baja ha-ha recap	80
2014 sailing resolutions	92
cruising tips, pt. II	96
season champs, pt. II	100
max ebb: dockside academy	104
the racing sheet	108
world of chartering	114
changes in latitudes	118
classy classifieds	132
advertisers' index	141
brokerage	141

Cover: One of the unexpected pleasures of sailing down the Baja coast in the Baja Ha-Ha Rally is the occasional spectacular sunset, like this one.

Photo: Latitude/Andy

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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](mailto: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](http://www.latitude38.com/writers.html).

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OCEANIS 473	2005	\$251,500
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OCEANIS 423 3-cabin	2004	\$175,000
FIRST 40.7	2001	\$149,000
OCEANIS 40	2009	\$197,000
OCEANIS 393	2003	\$128,900
OCEANIS 34	2009	\$145,000
OCEANIS 323	2007	\$79,500
FIRST 25	2013	\$89,000

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HUNTER 54	1982	\$75,000
ISLAND PACKET 485	2006	\$579,000
CATALINA 470	2005	\$299,000
HUNTER 466	2004	\$249,000
SABRE 452	2002	\$405,000
HUNTER 45DS	2011	\$212,000
JEANNEAU 45	2007	\$250,000

CATALINA 42	2004	\$175,000
ISLANDER 41	1999	\$67,000
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HUNTER 356	2002	\$89,500
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We have a marine-oriented business/yacht club in California which will distribute copies of *Latitude 38*. (Please fill out your name and address and mail it to the address below. Distribution will be supplied upon approval.)

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		35' J/105 '02 "Oh Mama".....	\$114,900
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## CALENDAR

### Non-Race

**Dec. 1** — Subasta Auction at Marina de La Paz, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. This fundraiser for needy kids in La Paz is hosted by Fundación Ayuda Niños La Paz (FANLAP) and sponsored by Club Cruceros. Info, [www.FanlapSubasta.com](http://www.FanlapSubasta.com).

**Dec. 1-20** — Christmas Boat Decorating Contest at Marina Mazatlan. Any boats with decorations are automatically entered. Prizes awarded Christmas Eve. Contact Jaime Ruiz at Marina Mazatlan, [jaimeruiz@marina-mazatlan](mailto:jaimeruiz@marina-mazatlan).

**Dec. 1-29** — Free sailing at Pier 40 every Sunday courtesy of BAADS. Info, (415) 281-0212 or [www.baads.org](http://www.baads.org).

**Dec. 4-18** — Wednesday Yachting Luncheon Series at St. Francis YC, 12-2 p.m. Enjoy lunch and a dynamic speaker each Wednesday for about \$25. All YCs' members welcome. More info under 'Events' tab at [www.stfy.com](http://www.stfy.com).

**Dec. 5** — Angel Lights Countdown Benefit, a fundraiser for the Angel Island Conservancy. Info, [www.angelisland.org/angellights](http://www.angelisland.org/angellights).

**Dec. 7** — 37th Annual Lighted Yacht Parade on the Oakland/Alameda Estuary. Starts at 5:30 p.m. This year's theme is 'Global Holidays'. Presented by Encinal YC, Oakland YC and Marina Village Yacht Harbor. Find out more and enter your boat at [www.lightedyachtparade.com](http://www.lightedyachtparade.com).

**Dec. 7** — Vallejo YC Harbor Lighted Boat Parade. Info, [www.vyc.org](http://www.vyc.org) or (707) 643-1254.

**Dec. 7** — Stockton SC Lighted Boat Parade. Info, [www.stocktonsc.org](http://www.stocktonsc.org).

**Dec. 7** — Santa Cruz YC Lighted Boat Parade in the south harbor, 5:30 p.m. Info, [www.scyc.org](http://www.scyc.org).

**Dec. 7** — Petaluma YC Lighted Boat Parade, 6 p.m. Info, [www.petalumayachtclub.com](http://www.petalumayachtclub.com).

**Dec. 8** — Monterey Peninsula YC Lighted Boat Parade, 5:30 p.m. Info, [www.mpyc.org](http://www.mpyc.org).

**Dec. 11** — Singlehanded TransPac race seminar #3: Rigging & Sails at Oakland YC, 7:30 p.m. All seminars are free and open to the public. For more about the race or future seminars, email [transpac@sfbaysss.org](mailto:transpac@sfbaysss.org).

**Dec. 12** — Sailing Stories From Abroad presentation by Modern Sailing's John Connolly at Presidio Sports Basement in San Francisco, 6-7 p.m. RSVP to [aj@modernsailing.com](mailto:aj@modernsailing.com).

**Dec. 13** — Shop our online chandlery for the perfect gift for your favorite sailor. Go to [www.latitude38.com](http://www.latitude38.com) and be sure to order by today for delivery in time for Christmas.

**Dec. 13** — St. Francis YC Lighted Boat Parade, from Pier 39 to Ft. Mason, 6 p.m. Info, [www.stfy.com](http://www.stfy.com).

**Dec. 14** — Holiday celebrations at Hyde St. Pier with live music, activities and a visit from the Big Guy himself, 3-4:45 p.m. Kids under 16 free, adults \$5. Tour historic vessels from 6-9 p.m. Free, RSVP required. Info, (415) 447-5000.

**Dec. 14** — Sausalito YC Lighted Boat Parade along the waterfront, 6 p.m. Info, [www.sausalitoyachtclub.org](http://www.sausalitoyachtclub.org).

**Dec. 17** — Sail under the full moon on a Tuesday night.

**Dec. 21** — Summer Sailstice for those in the Southern Hemisphere. It's still six months away for the rest of us.

**December, 1983** — It Was Thirty Years Ago from the *Latitude 38 Interview with Lin & Larry Pardey*:

On the basis of their magazine articles, books and slide presentations, Lin and Larry Pardey are one of the better known cruising couples in the world today. Somewhat ironically, they've only been on one cruise — but it lasted 11 years.

By their own admission, the Pardeys are 'intense' cruisers. They built their last two boats themselves, using traditional wood construction. Neither boat was equipped with an engine or even the most basic electrical system. The Pardeys like

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Catalina 400, 2001.....	<b>SOLD!</b>
Catalina 380, 1997.....	92,900
Catalina 36 MkII, 2001.....	<b>SOLD!</b>
Catalina 34 MkII, 2007.....	<b>SOLD!</b>
Catalina 309, 2009.....	<b>SOLD!</b>
Catalina 30, 1988.....	28,000
Catalina 30, 1979.....	13,950
Catalina 28 MkII, 1997.....	<b>SOLD!</b>

Catalina 250, 2005.....	<b>REDUCED!</b> 19,900
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Norseman 447, 1984.....	<b>REDUCED!</b> 169,000
Beneteau 36.7, 2010.....	133,500
Ericson 32, 1970.....	<b>REDUCED!</b> 26,900
<b>New Ranger Tugs (base price)</b>	
Ranger 31 Sedan Tug, 2014....	<b>JUST ARRIVED!</b> 269,937
Ranger 31 Flybridge, 2014..	<b>NEW MODEL YEAR!</b> 279,937
Ranger 29 Tug, 2014.....	<b>NEW MODEL YEAR!</b> 229,937
Ranger 27 Tug, 2014.....	<b>JUST ARRIVED!</b>
Ranger 25 Tug, 2014.....	<b>JUST ARRIVED!</b>

**Preowned Ranger Tugs**

Ranger 29 Tug, 2011, fully loaded.....	239,900
Ranger 29 Tug, 2011.....	224,000
Ranger 25 Tug, 2010.....	105,000
Ranger 25 Tug, 2009, includes trailer.....	105,000
Ranger 21 Tug, 2009.....	<b>NEW LISTING!</b> 44,000
Ranger 21 Tug, 2008.....	39,000

**Preowned Power Yachts**

Stephens 70 Classic Motor Yacht, 1966.....	1,100,000
Ocean Alexander 44, 1991.....	<b>REDUCED!</b> 139,000



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## CALENDAR

their boats small and simple. Lin — and Larry in particular — do not have a merely casual interest in sailboat design and construction; when not sailing or building boats, they spend a lot of time examining and thinking about them.

The Pardeys' first boat as a married couple was the 24-ft *Serrafyn*, in which they took their 11-year cruise. Their latest boat is the 30-ft *Taleisin*, which was launched on October 29 in Newport Beach. Both are full-keel Lyle Hess designs. Neither boat would be to everyone's fancy, but they suit the Pardeys' philosophy of cruising just fine.

With the completion and launching of *Taleisin*, 44-year-old Larry and 39-year-old Lin are back home on the water again, eager to resume cruising.

**38:** Give us the general idea behind your new boat. Did you want to have a little more room or what?

**Lin:** It was an excuse. We really didn't need another boat, but Larry was dying to have a project again, to build something big. We'd been to 40 or 50 of the best boatyards in the world and Larry wanted to use some of the techniques that he'd learned.

**Larry:** We didn't have to come back after three years to build a new boat to keep the creative thing going, because we had the writing. A lot of guys *have* to come back and build the 'perfect boat'. Usually they build a boat too big for their wallet and can't afford it. I see guys who are carpenters like myself, average wage earners, who build 40-ft boats. And then they don't go sailing anymore. A mainsail costs \$1,000 or some damn thing. Everything else is proportionally as expensive.

So while they've got the base money for the boat that size, they can't buy the stuff they need for it. They just don't have it and end up screwing themselves by building such a big boat.

**38:** Are you willing to divulge what you have in the new boat?

**Lin:** Far too much.

**Larry:** \$38,000.

**Lin:** \$10,000 of that we didn't have to spend, if we'd been trying to save money. But we found we had the extra money and made some expensive choices. Like upholstery, bird's eye maple doors, and stuff like that.

**38:** We must say the boat looks like a jewel. Very, very impressive.

**Jan. 1** — Clear away last night's cobwebs with a daysail.

**Jan. 1** — 'Round the Island circumnavigation of Alameda. Starts at Island YC, then on to Aeolian and Ballena Bay YCs, finishing at Encinal YC. Info, [IslandYCEvents@yahoo.com](mailto:IslandYCEvents@yahoo.com).

**Jan. 8-12** — 54th Annual Portland Boat Show at the Expo Center. Info, [www.otshows.com](http://www.otshows.com).

**Jan. 11** — Auction of remaining vessels at Nelson Marine in Alameda, 1 p.m. Previews 1/9-11. Info, [www.michaans.com](http://www.michaans.com).

**Jan. 14-Feb. 2** — Seattle Boat Show Indoors + Afloat at CenturyLink Field & South Lake Union. The largest boat show on the West Coast. Info, [www.seattleboatshow.com](http://www.seattleboatshow.com).

**Jan. 23-26** — San Diego Sunroad Boat Show at Sunroad Resort Marina on the east end of Harbor Island. Info, [www.bigbayboatshow.com](http://www.bigbayboatshow.com).

**Jan. 23-26** — Progressive Insurance San Francisco Boat show at AT&T Park and McCovey Cove. Check out this inaugural event featuring an in-the-water show and dozens of exhibits. Info, [www.SFBoatShow.com](http://www.SFBoatShow.com).

**Jan. 26** — Pacific Offshore Academy prep seminar #3 at Richmond YC, 8 a.m. Perfect for anyone planning to sail to Hawaii, especially in the Pacific Cup. Free for Pac Cup skippers, \$18 for others. Pre-registration strongly advised! Info, [www.pacificcup.org](http://www.pacificcup.org).

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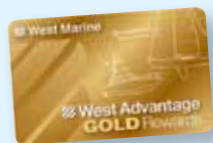


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## CALENDAR

### Racing

**Dec. 7** — Perry Cup/Midwinters. MPYC, [www.mpyc.org](http://www.mpyc.org).

**Dec. 13-17** — Banderas Bay Blast & Pirates for Pupils Spinnaker Run. Includes three days of fun cruiser-only racing, free berthing at Marina Riviera Nayarit and Paradise Marina, and the annual opening of the Punta Mita Yacht & Surf Club. Info, [www.vallartayachtclub.org](http://www.vallartayachtclub.org).

**Dec. 14** — Fall Series #5. SSC, [www.stocktonsc.org](http://www.stocktonsc.org).

**Dec. 22, 29** — Aquatic Center Winter Racing Club at Mountain View's Shoreline Lake, 2-4 p.m. All small boat sailors welcome every Sunday through March 16 to sail six races in Capri 14.2s. Info, [www.ShorelineLake.com](http://www.ShorelineLake.com).

**Dec. 29** — Christmas Race. MPYC, [www.mpyc.org](http://www.mpyc.org).

**Jan. 1** — Master Mariners New Year's Day Race and Chili Potluck at Pt. San Pablo YC in Pt. Richmond. Info, (415) 364-1656 or [www.mastermariners.org](http://www.mastermariners.org).

**Jan. 19-24** — 27th Annual Key West Race Week by Quantum. Info, [www.premiere-racing.com](http://www.premiere-racing.com).

**Jan. 25** — Three Bridge Fiasco, one of the oddest and most entertaining races ever invented, and the first SSS event of the season. Info, [www.sfbaysss.org](http://www.sfbaysss.org).

### Midwinter Regattas

**BAY VIEW BC** — Midwinter Madness: 12/4, 1/11, 2/8, 3/8. Info, [tmahoney22@gmail.com](mailto:tmahoney22@gmail.com) or (408) 210-0517.

**BERKELEY YC** — Midwinters: 12/14-15, 1/11-12, 2/8-9. Bobbi, (925) 939-9885 or [bobbi@jfcba.com](mailto:bobbi@jfcba.com).

**BERKELEY YC** — Chowder Races: Sundays through March except when it conflicts with above. Patrick, (415) 328-2819 or [psman99@hotmail.com](mailto:psman99@hotmail.com).

**CAL SAILING CLUB** — Year-round Sunday morning dinghy races, intraclub only, typically in Laser Bahias and JY15s. Info, [racing\\_chair@cal-sailing.org](mailto:racing_chair@cal-sailing.org).

**CORINTHIAN YC** — Midwinters: 1/18-19, 2/15-16. Kim, [racing@cyo.org](mailto:racing@cyo.org).

**ENCINAL YC** — Jack Frost Series: 1/18, 2/15, 3/15. Info, [rearcommadore@encinal.org](mailto:rearcommadore@encinal.org).

**GOLDEN GATE YC** — Manuel Fagundes Seaweed Soup Series: 12/7, 1/4, 2/1, 3/1. Info, (916) 215-4566 or [raceoffice@ggyc.com](mailto:raceoffice@ggyc.com).

**ISLAND YC** — Estuary Midwinters: 12/8, 1/12, 2/9, 3/9. John, (510) 521-2980 or [iycracing@yahoo.com](mailto:iycracing@yahoo.com).

**OAKLAND YC** — Sunday Brunch Series: 1/5, 1/19, 2/2, 2/16, 3/2. Jim, [urrailmeat@yahoo.com](mailto:urrailmeat@yahoo.com).

**REGATTAPRO** — Winter One Design & IRC: 12/14, 1/11, 2/8. Jeff, (415) 595-8364 or [jzarwell@regattapro.com](mailto:jzarwell@regattapro.com).

**RICHMOND YC** — Small Boat Midwinters: 12/8, 1/5, 2/2, 3/2. Opti Midwinters: 12/7, 2/1, 3/1. Info, [RaceChair@richmondyc.org](mailto:RaceChair@richmondyc.org). Laser Sundays: 12/15, 12/22, 1/12, 1/19, 1/26, 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/16, 3/23. Info, [rycsunday.myfleet.org](http://rycsunday.myfleet.org).

**SANTA CRUZ YC** — Midwinters: 12/21, 1/18, remaining TBA. Info, (831) 425-0690 or [www.scyc.org](http://www.scyc.org).

**SANTA ROSA YC** — Winter Series: 12/21, 1/18, 2/15. Info, [www.santarosasailingclub.org](http://www.santarosasailingclub.org).

**SAUSALITO YC** — Sunday Midwinters: 12/1, 1/5, 2/2, 3/2. Dave Borton, (415) 302-7084 or [race@sausalito yachtclub.org](mailto:race@sausalito yachtclub.org).

**SEQUOIA YC** — Winter Series: 12/7, 1/4, 2/8, 3/15. Redwood Cup: 11/23, 12/21, 1/18, 2/22, 3/29. Info, [www.sequoiayc.com](http://www.sequoiayc.com).

**SOUTH BEACH YC** — Island Fever Midwinters: 12/14, 1/18, 2/15, 3/15. Info, [www.southbeachyc.org](http://www.southbeachyc.org).



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## CALENDAR

**TIBURON YC** — Midwinters: 1/11, 2/8, 3/8. Rob, [race@tyc.org](mailto:race@tyc.org).

**VALLEJO YC** — Tiny Robbins Midwinters: 12/7, 1/25, 2/22, 3/22. Info, [www.vyc.org](http://www.vyc.org) or (707) 643-1254.

Please send your calendar items by the 10th of the month to [calendar@latitude38.com](mailto: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.

### December Weekend Tides

date/day	time/ht.		time/ht.	
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
11/30Sat	0215/2.1	0844/6.3	1525/-0.5	2221/4.6
12/01Sun	0301/2.3	0924/6.6	1608/-1.0	2313/4.8
12/07Sat	0323/5.4	0834/2.5	1429/5.6	2057/-0.4
12/08Sun	0415/5.5	0952/2.2	1538/5.0	2153/0.2
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
12/14Sat	0233/2.4	0855/6.3	1550/-0.4	2250/4.7
12/15Sun	0320/2.6	0932/6.3	1627/-0.6	2335/4.8
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
12/21Sat	0237/4.9	0734/2.9	1311/5.2	1950/0.1
12/22Sun	0312/4.9	0827/2.8	1356/4.8	2027/0.5
12/24Tue	0428/5.2	1032/2.4	1555/4.0	2154/1.3
12/25Wed	0508/5.4	1136/1.9	1716/3.7	2246/1.7
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
12/28Sat	0043/2.4	0723/6.2	1418/0.0	2119/4.2
12/29Sun	0141/2.6	0810/6.6	1505/-0.6	2214/4.5
12/31Tue	0330/2.6	0948/7.1	1636/-1.5	2348/5.1

### December Weekend Currents

date/day	slack		max	
	slack	max	slack	max
11/30Sat	1031 2357	0121/2.6E 1344/4.8E	0436 1741	0735/3.0F 2038/3.6F
12/01Sun	1112	0213/2.6E 1431/5.3E	0522 1826	0820/3.1F 2125/4.0F
12/07Sat	1055 2327	0137/4.1F 1336/2.6F	0504 1626	0725/2.8E 1935/4.5E
12/08Sun	1207	0233/3.8F 1444/2.5F	0555 1736	0824/3.0E 2034/3.8E
12/14Sat	1038	0147/2.1E 1356/4.5E	0455 1756	0751/2.8F 2105/3.6F
12/15Sun	0009 1119	0233/2.0E 1436/4.6E	0542 1838	0833/2.7F 2148/3.7F
12/21Sat	0955 2224	0048/3.2F 1235/1.9F	0417 1516	0630/2.2E 1836/3.8E
12/22Sun	1049 2302	0127/3.0F 1324/1.8F	0456 1605	0715/2.3E 1922/3.5E
12/24Tue	1250	0252/2.8F 1518/1.7F	0616 1810	0854/2.8E 2103/2.7E
12/25Wed	0026 1351	0339/2.7F 1622/1.9F	0658 1923	0946/3.1E 2159/2.4E
12/28Sat	0306 1631	0612/2.7F 1925/3.2F	0911 2244	1226/4.5E
12/29Sun	0958 2340	0054/2.3E 1317/5.1E	0401 1719	0704/2.9F 2018/3.7F
12/31Tue	0032 1136	0243/2.6E 1458/5.8E	0547 1855	0845/3.3F 2157/4.4F



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## LETTERS

### ↑↓ ONLY TIME WILL TELL

I see the San Francisco Marina Small Craft Harbor is actively soliciting new tenants. It was long rumored that there was a 17-year waiting list, at least until the City changed the rules to be the most boater-unfriendly, unreasonable and expensive — \$16/foot/month — marina in the Bay Area. Maybe the waiting list will be a lot shorter now.

In the interest of full disclosure, I think they should talk about the following marina 'features':

- You cannot sublease or 'lend' the berth, even for a short time.
- You can only register one boat to a berth. So if you own a sailboat and a motorboat, for example, and want to change from one to the other, you have to take out a new 'license' each time.
- Only one vessel is allowed in the berth. Dinghies aren't allowed, even if they fit.
- Your license is only good for one year. It has to be renewed each year.
- When you sell your boat, you lose the berth — unless you pay an extraordinarily high transfer fee to the City. The fee is \$365/foot, so that's \$14,600 for a 40-ft berth.
- There is just one public bathroom and it's far away from many berths.
- There are no carts.
- There is very limited parking.
- Due to many activities on the Marina Green, there is often limited or no access on many weekend mornings.

I'm afraid they will not fill the harbor unless the rules and conditions are modified to be more user-friendly.

Name Withheld by Request  
San Francisco

*N.W.B.R. — It seems to us that you are combining three somewhat separate issues.*

*First, there is the matter of the new transfer fee. For as long as we can remember, folks with boats in the most popular marinas on the coast — such as San Francisco and Santa Barbara — have been able to demand premiums when selling their*



**New rules are a tough blow to tenants who paid premiums for their boats.**

*boats if the prized slip could go with boat. For example, a High Winds 40 that might have a market value of \$60,000 in marinas with less-than-full occupancy might command \$100,000 or more*

*if she came with a slip in San Francisco or Santa Barbara. Buyers were usually willing to pay this premium because, based on history, they could be pretty confident that not only would they be able to charge a premium for the boat when they sold her with a slip, the premium would likely go up over time. Alas, various government agencies that control the slips and moorings from San Francisco to Newport Beach finally decided that private individuals have been profiting more from the public berths/moorings than they had a right to, and that the government should get a cut. In addition, they realized that such profiteering from berth/mooring rights discouraged the turnover of slips, denying new people access to the water. We find it hard to argue with the government agencies.*

*San Francisco, Monterey and Santa Barbara are among those places that have instituted one form or another of transfer*



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3M-09033	3M™ Clean & Shine Wax	15 oz.	\$20.26	\$14.18
3M-09061	3M™ Scotchgard™ Marine Liquid Wax	500 mL	\$26.31	\$18.42
3M-09062	3M™ Scotchgard™ Marine Liquid Wax	1 Liter	\$47.60	\$33.32

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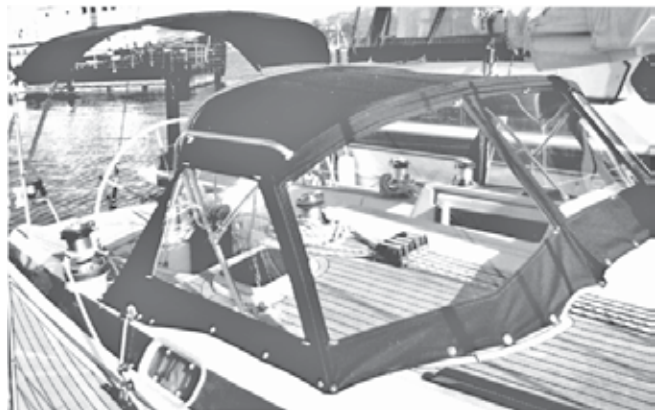
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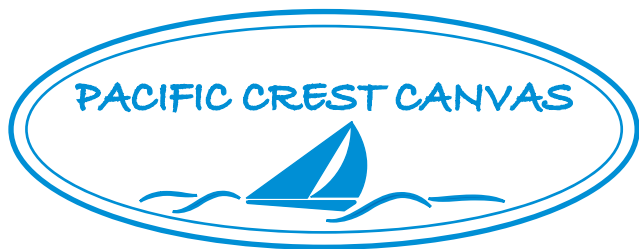
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## LETTERS

*fee. The two things we can say with certainty are that there never was going to be a perfect solution to what had become a genuine problem, and that those who paid a full premium for a slip in recent years are really getting the short end of the financial stick. They probably lost half of the premium they paid. You have our sympathy if you are one of them.*

*The second issue is the rules. Based on our experience, the more desirable a marina, the easier it is for the operator to be more rigid about the rules, which tends to make life easier for them. While the rules for the S.F. Small Craft Marina are certainly not as lenient or user-friendly as those at half-filled or family-owned marinas in more remote locations, only one rule you cited strikes us as being unusually draconian. We're referring to the one that requires that berthholders get a new 'license' for their boat each year. Our guess is that this was put in so the City will have a means by which to get rid of problem berthers.*

*The third issue is the lack of parking and facilities, and the difficulty in getting access when there are events going on at the Marina Green. Welcome to San Francisco 2013! The City is one of the most desirable and overcrowded urban areas in the States, fueled by the astonishing tech and social media boom. There is naturally great demand for public spaces and public facilities — many people are living in closets or 15 to a house. Small wonder public facilities are being overwhelmed. You again have our sympathy, as we also wish San Francisco were stuck in a 1967 time warp.*

*As to whether the marina will fill, and if the City has set the prices too high and made the rules too rigid, only time will tell. Our suspicion is that in a city where countless people are willing to pay \$2,000 to live in a closet, there will be plenty of people willing to pay \$640 for a 40-ft slip, or half that with a partner. After all, in the wildly overcrowded and congested Bay Area, it seems like a reasonable price to pay to be able to have a convenient sanctuary from the hordes, one where you can so quickly and easily keep your 'escape vehicle' to what are certainly the finest sailing waters in the world. Nor is it going to hurt that the new berths are a long overdue, tremendous improvement on the old ones.*

### ↑↓ HOW WAS SAN FRANCISCO BAY DIFFERENT IN 1969?

I had the pleasure of meeting *Latitude's* Andy 'Mr. Puddle Jump' Turpin at this year's Puddle Jump Rally from Papeete to Moorea, in which we finished third. He kindly labeled us "the quick Aussie tri" in the August *Latitude*. I would like to comment on a couple of topics from the October issue.

First, careening. The accompanying photo shows *Triton*, our previous trimaran, which was built in Australia, in the foreground, with the tri *Highlight*, owned by Kiwi John Glennie of *119 Days Adrift* fame. Both our boats were Piver Lodestars,



TONY SPOONER

and both of us were waiting for the tide to go out so we could scrape and repaint our bottoms. Here's the surprise: we had put the two tris on the beach at Angel Island. It was 1969, so nobody gave us any trouble. In fact, we attracted a pretty friendly crowd. If we did that today, we'd probably be taken straight to jail. I hope the statute of limitations has expired.

**Try careening on Angel Island today and be sure you bring cash for bail.**

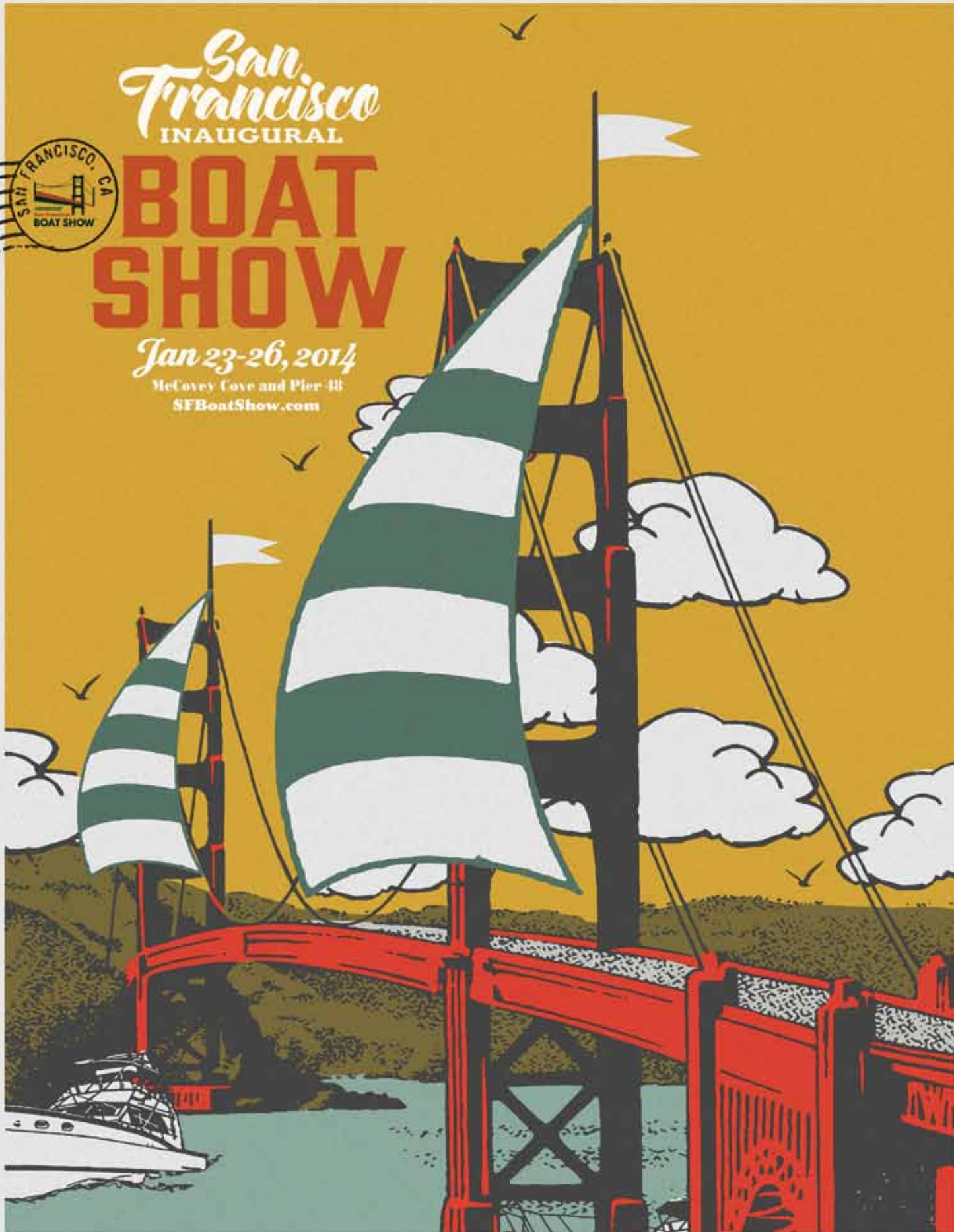
During my first Pacific cruise from 1967-73, we careened

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## LETTERS

our Piver Lodestar trimaran in many places — New Zealand, the Marquesas, Hawaii, Angel Island, Mexico and Costa Rica. Bottom paint was only \$11/gallon in Costa Rica, so we did it every six months. We couldn't careen her in Tahiti because there is no significant difference in the tides.

We are, of course, so much more environmentally aware that we wouldn't do that sort of thing anymore. Besides, the four-foot deep rudder on my current tri won't let me beach her, so I have to use huge and expensive Travelifts.

Second topic: Tax assessors. I had a very similar experience to that of Mike of *Valinor*, but with the Orange County Assessor. I left Newport Beach with my family in June 2012 to do an open-ended cruise across the Pacific. The tax bill arrived while we were in Panama. I Skyped the assessor's office, and they insisted on all the marina receipts and so forth to show proof that we'd been gone. *Latitude* is correct about people in assessor's offices having no concept of cruising, as they think we spend every night in a marina. Anyway, we had to pay the bill pending our sorting it out when we got back.

We paid the bill and sent all the paperwork, which did remove us from the county rolls. But on our return, I found that I had to deal with a different office, the tax collectors. The tax collector insisted that since I was the owner of the boat as of January 1, 2012, I was liable for the tax year July 2012 to June 2013 — even though I was out of the county and the country by June 2012. I went up the chain of command and got the same answer every time: "The law says, the law says." It was like listening to your parents say, "Because I said so." What happens if you sell your boat on January 2? Are you still on the hook for the taxes up to July of the following year? If I had not paid, the bill would have increased a whopping 40% in three months. Short of an act of the legislature, I think I am out the money.

Tony Spooner  
*Macha*, Haskins 39 Trimaran  
 Formerly of Newport Beach

*Tony — Wonderful historical photo of the trimarans on the beach at Angel Island. You're right, if you pulled a stunt like that today, you'd be in deep poop.*

*As for the business with the assessor's offices and tax collectors, you now know why so many cruisers establish legal residence outside California before they take off cruising.*

### DEFYING DOCTOR'S ORDERS

On August 6 of this year, my doctor solemnly explained to me that I had Stage 4 renal cancer. My immediate response was to inform her that she needed to do whatever she needed to do to me right away, because I was going to be starting the 20th Annual Baja Ha-Ha as part of my annual migration to Mexico on October 28.

"You don't understand," she responded.

"No, doctor," I replied, "you don't understand." One month later I was on the table for a slice and dice, which resulted in the removal of my left kidney and a tumor that we refer to as my "eight-lb Ugly Baby."

Two months later, I was participating — as I had told my doctor — in the Ha-Ha.

*Latitude 38* and the Baja Ha-Ha have been as important



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## LETTERS

an ingredient as Jimmy Buffett's music in the creation of the dream that gave direction to my wanderlust. The Baja Ha-Ha is an opportunity for me to see people that I care about and love deeply, many of whom I only get to see once a year.

The adage about 'the difference between an ordeal and adventure' may be old and a little tired, but it's true. I'm viewing my cancer with a tremendously positive attitude. For me it's easy, as I have my amazing Debbie in my life, and I have more people that I love and care about than is fair. Plus, I live on my boat in a slice of paradise, and I just completed my fourth Ha-Ha. Most of all, I'm positive that the chemo pills I am now taking will finish off the remaining cancer, allowing me to participate in many future Ha-Ha's.

How impressed was my doctor with my enthusiasm for sailing back to Mexico, my relentlessly positive attitude while in the hospital, and my quick recovery? She plans to visit us down here on Banderas Bay.

Glenn Twitchell  
*Beach Access, Lagoon 380*  
Newport Beach / Mexico

### ↑↓ THE SOUTH PACIFIC WITH PETS

We are currently in Panama with our two dogs, contemplating the next leg of our cruise. We would dearly love to do a South Pacific tour, but are struggling with how to get it done with dogs on board.

The comment in the November 6 *'Lectronic*, "Currently in American Samoa after having visited Hawaii, Palmyra and Fanning Island, Vicky is preparing to set sail for Tonga, Fiji, and hopefully New Zealand," gives us great hope. But I was wondering if Vicky Plett would consider sharing her experience in clearing in with pets.

P.S. Not only am I a longtime *Latitude 38* reader and an admirer of the Grand Poobah, but I sent this message from my kayak.

Lauri Hamilton  
*Ashika, Fuji 45*  
Panama City, Panama

### ↑↓ BRINGING BOOTSIE

We brought Bootsie, our cat, into New Zealand on November 1, 2011, and have been in New Zealand off and on ever since. While we don't take Bootsie back to the States with us — it's way too much for her to deal with airlines and for us to deal with the expenses — we do take her in to and out of New Zealand.

We went to Vanuatu and New Caledonia last season, and coming back here to New Zealand was not too big a problem. Bootsie had to go into quarantine for 10 days. This is a problem if you arrive at Opuia, as most boats do, as it will cost you big bucks to have your pet transported to the nearest quarantine facility. The first time we entered New Zealand was at Marsden Cove, and it cost us \$500 just to have our cat transported. But since then we have been based out of Gulf Harbour Marina in Whangaparaoa, and officials pick up Bootsie for around \$110.

As Vicky already will have been to Hawaii, I don't think there will be a problem, as she already had to have the Titer rabies tests and all of the shots necessary for Hawaii, just as she would for New Zealand. Just get the paperwork done way before necessary. Our only problem was that the paperwork had to be on New Zealand forms, and it *must* be stamped by a state health department official. For us, that meant Arizona.

If Vicki wants to contact me, I would be more than glad to



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## LETTERS

talk to her. We are planning to head back to Hawaii, possibly in August 2014, and will need all the requirements for Bootsie to get there.

Paulie Grover  
Storm Haven, Nordhavn 46  
Arizona / Currently in Auckland, NZ

### ↑↓ IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE, BUT IT IS EXPENSIVE

Suzanne has been dealing with the hoops necessary to legally get our dog Vienna in to and out of countries in the South Pacific. She'd be happy to explain each country's rules to Vicky, but to summarize:

- 1) Pets need to be chipped.
- 2) All shots and vaccination records need to be up to date,



*It wasn't cheap to take Vienna cruising, but Dietmar and Suzanne say it was worth it.*

and you need to carry proof of them with you. Each country will have a different list of requirements.

3) You will have to quarantine the pet. It might be on your boat or it might have to be at an official — and expensive — facility. It varies from country to country, but if you're going to New Zealand, Australia or New Caledonia, understand that you'll need to bring a wad of cash with you. That's because your pet will be required to be examined by a MAF-authorized vet and submit to several blood tests.

To give an example, when we arrived in New Zealand in 2009, Vienna had to be quarantined for 36 days. The total cost was \$7,500 U.S.

When we sailed back to Fiji in 2011, Vienna had to be quarantined for eight days. The cost was \$600 U.S.

When we sailed back to New Zealand in 2011, Vienna was once again quarantined, this time for 10 days. The cost was \$3,500.

When we sailed to New Caledonia this year, Vienna was quarantined for 10 days, which cost \$400, plus \$500 in lab and vet fees.

When we returned to New Caledonia after six months in Vanuatu, we had to pay another \$400 for quarantine, plus the lab and vet fees.

So yes, you can bring your pet with you when you cruise the South Pacific — as long as you bring lots of money and have lots of time for paperwork. As far as Suzanne and I are concerned, watching Vienna bark at whales, dolphins and frigate birds has been well worth it.

Dietmar Petutschnig, Suzanne Dubose & Vienna  
Carinthia, Lagoon 440  
Las Vegas / South Pacific

### ↑↓ THIS IS HOW RUMORS GET STARTED

I just got back from New Zealand on business, and can report that it's not a cat-friendly country. In fact, a bill was introduced in Parliament to eradicate all cats from the country, cats being a non-indigenous land predator with a penchant for killing birds.

Marty Czarnecki  
Kokiri, Cavalier 39  
Treasure Island

*Marty — According to former Latitude Racing Editor Sutter*



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## LETTERS

*Schumacher, who now lives in New Zealand, a well-known social commentator has pushed for a policy that bans the replacement of pet cats when they die — not their eradication — but it didn't get anywhere near Parliament.*

### ↑↓ THE RULES AREN'T DESIGNED TO PISS OFF VISITORS

I think *Latitude* already has the best page of information when it comes to the requirements for bringing cats and dogs to New Zealand. We don't have rabies — or many other nasties — in our country and we want to keep it that way. I have personally witnessed a few visitors moaning about some regulations, which is not an attitude that fosters a friendly response from locals. These regulations are not designed to piss off visitors, but are rather part of a day-to-day battle to maintain New Zealand's environmental and economic standing. The same thinking exists with weapons. We don't believe guns are a particularly good idea, so please don't bring 'em to New Zealand. And if you do turn up with your 'self-defense' arsenal, you will need to surrender it until you leave.

Perhaps the best advice for travelers would be, if you think that your destination will not meet your personal requirements, stay at home.

Dean Wallis  
Auckland, New Zealand

### ↑↓ NEW CALIFORNIA BOAT REGISTRATION FEE

Has *Latitude 38* done any research on the new \$16 fee that has been added to the boat and dinghy registration renewal we pay to the Department of Motor Vehicles? The fee is supposedly to prevent the spread of quagga and zebra mussels, via boats, from California lakes and reservoirs to other California lakes and reservoirs. The mussels can only live in fresh water.

The information accompanying the DMV billing says vessels that are used "exclusively in marine waters" are exempt



LATITUDE / LADONNA

**Planning to go to the Delta? You'll need to pay extra for your quagga mussel fee.**

from the fee. But nowhere in the information provided with the registration is there a definition of 'marine waters'. I read the actual statute, which is Harbors & Navigation Code Section 675, and "marine waters" isn't defined there either.

So I called the Department of Boating & Waterways and asked for a citation of what "marine waters" means. I was told that the DBW defines it as salt water, including San Francisco Bay and as far upriver as Suisun Bay. But they couldn't tell me where to find the definition.

In federal law, "marine waters" is defined in different places as any navigable waters, or those subject to tidal influence, which could extend above Stockton and Sacramento.

Assuming you pay the \$16 fee per boat — I'm being assessed for my Catalina 27 and my two dinghies — you are issued a sticker to apply next to the boat's registration sticker. I assume that anyone who decided to not pay the fee and get a sticker would likely get stopped in the Delta. If I don't pay the fee, and go farther upriver than, say, Pittsburg, am I at risk of being fined \$1,000?

If "marine waters" means salt water, I have tasted the water as far upriver as False River, and it definitely has a slight salinity taste there. It also bothers me that DBW has provided this rather loose definition with no written citation that can

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## LETTERS

be relied upon.

I did some more checking and found that the extra fee is new this year, as the enabling bill only passed the legislature and was signed by Governor Brown in September. I also learned that these pests have only been found in freshwater lakes, and only one reservoir in Northern California has ever had them, and this was back in 2008. However, there does exist a response plan to an invasion in the Bay and Delta.

What I find especially interesting is there is talk in the press releases of "closing the body of water to all boating" to prevent the mussels from being introduced to "other reservoirs in the state." It seems as though the government doesn't know the difference between the Bay, a river and a reservoir! And how would they close the Bay and Delta waters? Since the mussels don't live in salt water, why does the government need to worry about an invasion of the Bay? Whoever wrote the response plan doesn't seem to know what they are doing!

Peter Hine  
Enigma II, Catalina 27  
Richmond

*Peter — As we understand it, there hasn't been a significant quagga/zebra infestation in Northern California, but the fear is that there could be a devastating one in Northern California's lakes and reservoirs — and inland waters, such as the Sacramento River. We say places such as the Sacramento River because there are places in the upper river where the salinity is not high enough to be lethal to the pests. The average ocean salinity is about 35 parts per million, while experts say 10 to 12 ppm are lethal to the mussels. It's unclear to us where the 'boundary' should be in the Delta.*

*So which boats have to pay the fees and which are exempt? We contacted the DMV for a definitive answer on who exactly is exempt from the new fee. The woman who answered when we called the special press phone number absolutely assured us we would hear back from someone at the DMV by the end of the day. We're shocked, but we never heard from them.*

### ↑↓ WHAT RETIRED MALE SAILORS TALK ABOUT

Visualize the Ericson 34 *Great Escape* and the CS30 *Unanimous* berthed transom-to-transom at the visitor's dock in the Petaluma Turning Basin. The two boats and seven sailors from Palo Alto had made their way safely up the Petaluma River from San Pablo Bay the prior afternoon, cruising past the raised D Street Bridge by 5 p.m.

The next day, after a seven-mile hike up Sugarloaf Ridge and back, and after showers and changing into clean clothes, Capt. Tom opened up the bar for happy hour in the cockpit of his 34-footer. Brie and Gouda, spinach dip and scoopers, crackers and salted almonds all complemented the IPAs, pinot grigio and pinot noir.

It was a pleasantly cool October evening, and the sun was setting as we imbibed and entered into the important discussions that retired guys have while they are off together on an adventure. Capt. Steve had studied the tide tables and charts, and determined that the optimal time for us to depart the next morning would be 7 a.m.

After we purchased and stowed breakfast provisions, Tom asked about coffee. "Couldn't we get it from the Starbucks on Petaluma Boulevard?"

"Is it open that early?" asked Leon.

"Yeah, I washed up in the Starbie's restroom a couple of times and checked their hours — open at 6 a.m.," chimed in Leon.

"Outstanding! While Jerry and I are returning the rental



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## LETTERS

cars, a couple of you guys could get the coffee," said Stew. "Think one of those cardboard carafes would be enough?" wondered Leon.

Jerry pulled out his iPhone and did a search on Starbucks and said, "They call the big containers 'Travelers', and you get 96 ounces for \$18."

"But would just one be enough?" asked Steve.

At this time all minds lapsed into the division calculation algorithm.

"That would be about 13 ounces each, right?" said Fred.

"That's like two six-ounce cups each," said Jerry, "plenty for breakfast."

But it's a long ride down the river and into the Bay," said Leon. "That's \$28 worth of coffee. I have a good Thermos that must hold six cups. What if we filled that also?"

"Yeah, Tom's boat with four aboard could take the carafe, and Steve's with three aboard could have the Thermos," said Stew.

All minds started recalculating again.

"Whoa, that would be six cups for three to share on Steve's boat and 16 cups for the four on Tom's boat," said Steve.

"Well," said Tom, "when we get out on the river we could come alongside and pass part of the carafe over to you guys,"

"Or all of us could have an early morning cup from the carafe right before we cast off," said Leon. "Then Tom's boat keeps what's left in the carafe and Steve's boat has the full Thermos."

"That would work," said Steve, who agreed to go to Starbucks with Fred.

Thus ended the most important group discussion on our weekend sailing adventure to Petaluma.

Stew Plock  
Palo Alto

*Stew — While considering retirement about five years ago, we asked a gentleman how well he liked it and if he found meaningful things to do with his time. He said he loved retirement and found plenty of things to do. For example, he explained that he'd spent the previous day getting the oil changed on his car. We were stunned, because if we go more than 24 hours without doing what we consider to be meaningful work, we have a hard time justifying being alive. As a result of this man's comments, we were terrified into working for another five years. No offense, but having now read your group's comment about coffee, we're good for at least another 10 years of hard work.*

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

I came across an interesting quote in the book *Portable Curmudgeon*, which was edited by Jon Winokur. On page 164, the curmudgeon Paul Fussell is quoted as saying: ". . . the upper class never allows itself to be uncomfortable — except on a yacht."

Denny Kavanagh  
Sausalito

*Denny — That's pretty funny, but we don't think it's very accurate. While the upper class certainly produces its share of lazy derelicts, it also seems to punch above its weight with men and women who are in search of extreme adventure.*

### THE 'OLD DAYS' IN SAUSALITO

I lived in Sausalito in 1954 and 1955. During that time we kids used to fish off a pier in the downtown area. Moored offshore of downtown was a beautiful schooner. I can't remember for certain, but I always thought her name was *Ramona*.





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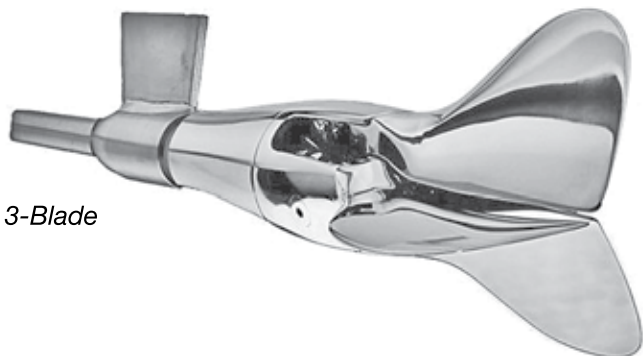
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## LETTERS

Guess what? While doing some research for another boat I sailed on in the mid-'60s — the yawl *Jada*, which by the way was built in Stockton in 1938 — I came across a schooner by the name of *Ramona* in the book about the history of the TransPac. A *Ramona* participated in the 1955 TransPac Race and was skippered by her owner, William A. Pomeroy of the St. Francis YC. According to the TransPac records, *Ramona* was 109 feet in length and had a fireplace. Anybody know what happened to her?

By the way, I attended Central Elementary School in Sausalito, and played Little League Baseball for the Sausalito Fireflies. Maybe there are some old chums of mine in the *Latitude* readership.

Keith Fullenwider  
Sanguine, Tartan 3800  
San Pedro

*Keith — We haven't a clue what became of Ramona. What we want to know is if you're old enough to remember when they had cattle drives down Bridgeway. The late sailmaker Pete Sutter used to tell us about them.*

### ↑↓ ANOTHER VERSION OF THE EVENTS AT CHUUK

I'm writing in response to the first *Changes in Latitudes* in the October issue of *Latitude*, the one written by Bob Bohn of the Pacific Northwest-based Amel 52 ketch *C'est La Vie*. Bohn wrote that his boat had been seized and allowed to be destroyed by officials at Chuuk [Truk Lagoon] in Chuuk State of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Since we are contemplating a stop at Chuuk in the next six months, I was alarmed by Bohn's report, as he recounted a horror story of getting thrown in jail, the police letting his boat go on the reef, and people looting her while he had to stand by and watch. So I have done quite a bit of asking around trying to determine the circumstances and background of this incident.

The source of most of my information is American Bill Stinnett, the owner of the Truk Stop Hotel and Dive Shop. He's lived and worked in Chuuk since 1979, and was the two-time director of public safety in Chuuk, a former Investigator for the Micronesian Bureau of Investigation, and U.S. federal special agent based in Chuuk for about seven years.

Stinnett says the Bohn situation was a tightwalk for him. "I was trying to help this American while at the same time respecting the work that the National Police were doing."

I was particularly interested in exactly how Bohn's boat got on the reef. Bohn's version implied that she had been left in the care of the police, who then let it go on the reef.

Stinnett says that *C'est La Vie* left on the same weekend

she arrived. And that prior to his departure, Stinnett told Bohn and his lady friend the same thing he tells other visitors, which is that if something didn't make any sense to them, they should feel free to come and talk to him.

The next time Stinnett heard from Bohn was when Bohn called him from jail.

They talked, and Stinnett says Bohn told him that he and his lady friend had gone "sightseeing" in the lagoon and had run up on a reef. Bohn also reported being very unhappy because

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MATT DOWSE



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## LETTERS

he couldn't raise anyone on the radio to help him, and that he was stuck on this reef for three days before help arrived. According to Bohn's account via Stinnett, it wasn't really help that arrived, but the police, and they arrested him and his lady friend.

Stinnett says that he got the feeling that the FSM national and state authorities felt Bohn was trying to leave without having completely cleared in, and that he had certainly not cleared out. There is a \$10 per day fee for anchoring within the lagoon that might have been unpaid, and that might have been an issue, too.

Stinnett says that he went down to the police station as soon as Bohn called, and he spoke with both Bohn and the head of the National Police based in Chuuk. Stinnett says he'd hired the officer when he ran Public Safety in Chuuk from 2005-2007, and that Stinnett considered him to be as "sharp, honest, and professional as any officer in Micronesia." When Stinnett left Public Safety, the officer also left, and took the job with the National Police Force. The two remain friends and have respect for one another.

Stinnett suspects that Bohn may have clashed with the customs and culture of Chuuk. When he emailed me, he said that people and families own the reefs in Chuuk. When there is a funeral or some major event, these families can put the reef off limits for swimming, fishing, and boating. Violations can result in fines of thousands of dollars or the loss of one's boat.

Stinnett says that the family that owns the reef Bohn grounded on believed that he had damaged their reef, which impacted their fishing and livelihood. Bohn spoke with Stinnett about this, and says Bohn made a trip out to his boat with a sack of rice to offer to the family. They apparently didn't accept it.

Stinnett says that he considered helping Bohn pull the boat free himself, but his Chuukese wife said that the owners of the reef could claim Stinnett's boat if he tried to help.

Stinnett says that the Chuukese people are wonderful and, if treated fairly and with respect, will give you the shirts off their backs. On the other hand, he had been responsible for several visitors being removed from the country for being "culturally insensitive."

I haven't been to Chuuk and wasn't there, so I can't say whose account is correct. It's possible that Bill Stinnett is distorting the facts to protect his tourism interests in Chuuk, but I don't think so. It is possible that the full truth is somewhere in between. But from the information I have, I think it's unlikely that Bohn's version, as published in *Latitude*, is gospel. But each person has to decide for him-/herself.

We're going to stop in Chuuk early next year, and we'll let everyone know how our visit turns out.

Dave & Sherry McCampbell  
Soggy Paws, CSY 44  
Currently in the Marshall Islands

*Dave and Sherry — What we found most interesting is Stinnett's admission that the allegedly "wonderful people of Chuuk" feel that they may be entitled to someone's quarter-of-a million-dollar boat if she goes aground on their reef. And that if anyone tries to assist the stranded mariners, they may lose their boat, too. One can excuse this as a "cultural thing," but only if you have 'CHUMP' tattooed on your forehead.*

*There are certainly many unknowns in this story. Among them, why Stinnett didn't explain the reasons Bohn was arrested multiple times. While we're not taking either side in this incident, we can't think of any possible justification for Bohn's uninsured boat's being lost. At the very least, Chuuk authorities*

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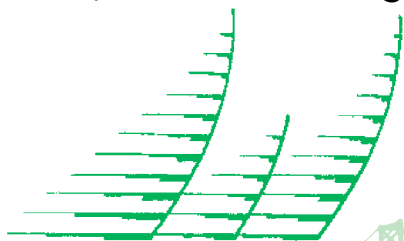
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*- Chris Vandervert  
Catalina 30*

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**LETTERS**

should have made a legitimate effort to help him save his boat. After that was done, they could have looked into whether he had properly cleared in and out, and whether he owed a \$10 anchoring fee.

**↑↓DON'T UNPLUG A HOT SHOREPOWER CORD**

I read the November 13 *Lectronic* piece about the boat fire on the Beneteau First 44.7 *Foggy* caused by a shorepower connection.

There is another shorepower cord problem, which is caused by not turning off the power at the dockbox before unplugging the shorepower cord, or not turning off the power at all. If you unplug with power on, there will be a spark that contributes to corrosion of the plug, which leads to increased resistance, which may eventually result in a fire. And if you unplug from the boat and leave the switch on at the dockbox, the poor soul who trips over your hot 30-amp plug and falls into the Bay with the cord will be electrocuted. It's a pretty simple concept, but most sailors don't get it.

So please, turn off the electricity at the switch before you unplug. And never leave a hot wire on the dock.

Bruce Adornato  
*Pelagic Magic*, True North 38  
South Beach

**↑↓IT WAS THE MARINA'S FAULT**

A couple of years ago, I had a brand-new shorepower cord for my boat, new receptacle for the 110-volt power, and 12-volt wiring professionally installed on my boat as part of an extensive rebuild. During the winter, when I was running two 15-amp heaters, the cord burned at the plug end. I had to buy a new cord and a new 110-volt, 30-amp receptacle to replace the very same brand-new components.

What went wrong? My electrician maintains that the problem was low voltage supplied by the ancient electrical infrastructure in the marina. He said the marina refused to admit to the problem, but that it was most likely the cause.

Tom Van Dyke  
*En Pointe*, Searunner 31  
Santa Cruz / Currently in Fiji

**↑↓WHEN ARE 30 AMPS NOT 30 AMPS?**

Thirty-amp shorepower cords are rated for 30 amps — but only for a short time. Their continuous rating is 80% of

30, or 24 amps. This is mostly an issue in the winter months when heaters are most frequently used on boats.

The SmartPlug is definitely a better choice when it comes time to replace your cord. In fact, many Canadian insurance companies give a 10% first-year discount when a SmartPlug is installed on a boat. That's often enough of a discount to pay for the SmartPlug.

Brian Stannard  
*Mi Tiempo*, CS27  
Victoria B.C.



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Brian — *The SmartPlug seems like a great product to us. It was one of four products to win West Marine's Innovation*

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## LETTERS

*of the Year Award in 2011, and really does seem superior to regular shorepower cords and plugs. Google for details.*

### ↑↓CHECK THE BACK OF YOUR INLETS

My last two boats both had burned or melted shorepower inlets. The shorepower cords themselves were fine and the inlets looked fine from the outside, but on the inside of the boat, where the boat's wiring connects to the inlet, one or more terminals were burned. This is likely the result of corrosion or a loose screw terminal. It was only a matter of time before it got hot enough to start a fire. Please have your readers check the backside of their inlets, too.

Paul Goyke  
Cariad, Caliber 38  
Alameda

### ↑↓GIVE FORECASTERS A BREAK

I suggest that you take the opportunity to spend a little time with a National Weather Service forecaster, particularly at the National Hurricane Center in Miami. It might improve your perspective on the complexities of forecasting. It might also improve your attitude about government employees.

Larry Smith  
Harmonia, Leopard 43  
Sacramento

*Larry — You're missing the point entirely. Neither we nor anybody else has been questioning the difficulty — actually impossibility — of long-range hurricane forecasting. What everybody is saying is that until long-range hurricane forecasting can be accomplished with any sort of accuracy, perhaps the National Weather Service should follow the example of the Canadian Weather Service and refrain from making such forecasts. Why? Because consistently being wrong tends to make you look incompetent. If the National Hurricane Center insists on making long-range hurricane forecasts, we believe they should boldly preface them with a proviso such as, "To the best of our very limited abilities at this time, we think the following is something that might happen."*

*As the Grand Poobah, we pay lots of attention to late-season tropical storm development in the Eastern Pacific, and therefore have an inkling of the complexities of forecasting tropical storms — even after they have formed. If you look at five different computer models of any given storm, they often vary tremendously. And it wouldn't be unusual for all of them to be off the mark. We're not disrespecting anybody's skills or efforts; there are just too many variables to deal with.*

*We also know that it's difficult, if not impossible, to make much sense of hurricanes from historical data. A few years back we did a piece on all the hurricanes that have hit St. Martin in the last 150 years. The most striking thing was the lack of any kind of logical pattern. For instance, while St. Martin has taken a direct hurricane hit an average of once every 6.5 years, it has also gone as long as 12 years without being hit by even a much more common tropical storm. In 2000, everyone was freaking out in St. Martin because they'd had six hurricanes in seven years. Yet there wasn't even a tropical storm for the next 10 years.*

*We don't have a bad attitude about government employees, as we personally know many government employees — including members of our extended family and crew on Profligate — who are extremely hard-working, competent and caring. Our problem is with the system, because we also know that thanks to a one-party system in California where that party is all but owned by government employee unions, even the most*





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## LETTERS

*incompetent and uncaring, if not downright criminal, people can find a comfortable career with lavish pay and benefits, and often a spectacularly generous early retirement. If you're not aware of this, you need to pay a little more attention to the news, and what a fraud it is if anyone claims that California has a balanced budget. Mind you, it's not that much skin off our butts, but such extravagant and reckless vote-buying is already taking a terrible toll on cities and communities, and it's going to be devastating to future generations. Before anybody accuses us of being a Republican, we believe their motives are equally unaltruistic.*

### ↑↓ **SHORT-TERM FORECASTS AREN'T GREAT EITHER**

People have complaints with the long-range forecasting of hurricanes. How about the 'short-range' forecasts for regular weather in the San Francisco Bay Area? Take yesterday, for instance. If anyone looked at the National Weather Service's forecast in the morning, they sure would have been surprised by the 30-knot winds off Alcatraz. There have been other big weather surprises this year.

Pat Broderick  
Nancy, Wylicat 30  
Santa Rosa

Pat — *The best that meteorologists can provide are weather predications, not weather guarantees. We're confident that our forecasters do the best they can with data and tools that are currently available to them. Asking them to be 100% accurate — or anything even close to it — is simply asking for the impossible.*

### ↑↓ **FORECASTS ARE AS REAL AS GLOBAL WARMING**

The National Hurricane Center's poor record in forecasting the number of tropical storms and hurricanes each year should get classified right along with the claims of 'global warming'. Our weather forecasters can't predict what the weather will be like in a couple of days, to say nothing of coming hurricanes or global warming. Cap and trade is just a joke based on computer projections — the same computers that predict daily weather, but with just a few more 'projections' dialed in.

Curt Simpson  
Palm Desert

Curt — *We're skeptical by nature, and the while there have been some recent setbacks in the climate change narrative — what's with the 62% increase in Arctic ice over last year? — we're willing to give the benefit of the doubt to the overwhelming majority of scientists who believe in climate change. But having staked so much of its reputation on it, the scientific community had better be right. We should know in 30 years or so.*

### ↑↓ **SAILBOATS ARE NOT AN EASY SELL THESE DAYS**


Do you have an overall professional opinion of the yacht sales business? Good, fair, or poor, and what are the influencing factors?

My 1983 Nauticat 44 has been on the market with a local broker since June. While she's been getting a lot of attention, nobody has made an offer, not even with deep discounts. Is there a soft market now due to the economy, or has there been bad marketing on my part? Any advice?

Bill Kelly  
Saoirse, Nauticat 44  
Sacramento Delta

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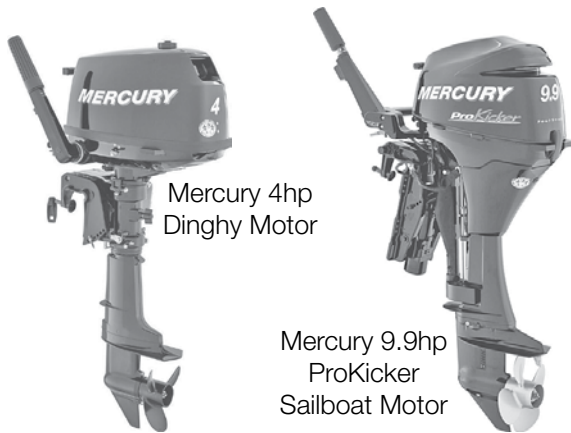


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# LETTERS

Bill — There are a couple of things working against boat sellers and in favor of boat buyers. First, the mid '70s to the mid '80s were prime time for Baby Boomers to buy boats. These



WEBB LOGG

**A clean boat will sell much more quickly than a dirty, neglected one.**

days more of them are buying retirement homes and sitting on couches rather than sitting in cockpits. It's a pity, but it's reality. Second, unlike cars, fiberglass sailboats last almost indefinitely. So while the number of sailboat buyers has been continuing to shrink, the number of sailboats available

has continued to grow. That's not a supply/demand equation that works out well for boat sellers, but again, it's reality.

There are, however, things you can do that will give you an advantage over most other boat sellers. Specifically, make sure that your boat has 'curb appeal' and shows well. Too many boatowners, particularly with boats that are decades old, go for a last sail, put the boat away wet, then call up a broker to list the boat, expecting her to sell quickly. This isn't going happen often in a very competitive seller's market, even with a steep discount in asking price.

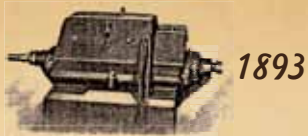
At the very least, make sure your boat is cleaner than she's ever been before you put her on the market. Particularly the heads. If your boat is dirty or messy, you are going to immediately disgust the female half of any potential boat-buying couple, and in most non-racing boat purchases, the female rules — or at least has absolute veto power. Indeed, since your boat isn't a racing boat, you'd be wise to play to the female. Bring a female friend in for an honest assessment on how to make your boat more attractive to a woman. You don't have to follow up on all the suggestions, but you should listen carefully and not skimp on the colorful pillows. Got a great photo or two of your boat, or perhaps a Jim DeWitt painting of her? Don't hide them, as anything that makes your boat stand out helps.

Guys care about mechanical stuff and factual information. Make sure all the sails and sail systems are in good repair. Make sure your engine runs well and the engine room is orderly. Make sure that all the systems on your boat work. Nobody is going to be interested in buying somebody else's boat problems — at least not if there isn't a tremendous discount. If you have the most recent survey available, as well as maintenance records, it's going to make you look more caring and responsible than others. That's a good thing.

The last thing we'd suggest is that you try to find a sistership for sale and do a little comparative shopping of your own. See how your boat stacks up, then pretend you're a buyer and see which boat you'd pick. Now that it's winter, boat buyers are few and far between, but it gives you a few months to really prepare to market your boat. Good luck.

## ↑↓ BEING THRIFTY IS NOT A CRIME

About 10 years ago I wrote a letter to *Latitude* about the 'contest' to see who could spend the least money cruising. Sort of like the 1950s game show *Name That Tune*. And here we are, 10 years later, with the same stuff. You mention that the late Mike Harker ate Costco canned chicken and had just a cup of coffee each morning. Wow, that sounds like fun! Go to a foreign country and all you can say you've experienced of the culinary culture is a cup of coffee. I think Harker won



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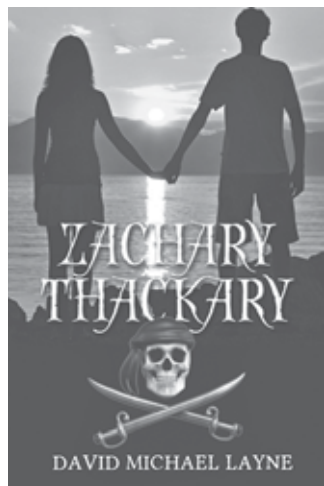
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## LETTERS

the prize. I can't imagine a letter from someone in the next month saying they undercut that.

(Mr.) Leslie D. Waters  
San Jose

Leslie — It's not "the same old stuff." We wrote about Harker in 2003 because he'd just singlehanded to Europe and then sailed to French Polynesia with crew. We wrote about him in more recent years because he'd done a circumnavigation and continued to cruise in the Caribbean.

Apparently you don't understand people like Harker. He was not poor. He bought a new Hunter 34 in 2000 to learn to sail and to do the Ha-Ha. He later bought a new Hunter 406 to sail to Europe and then the South Pacific. After that he bought a new Hunter 49 to do his circumnavigation. Harker also owned a beachfront triplex on Santa Monica Bay and, until it



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Mike Harker loved to people-watch but preferred eating canned chicken on the boat.

burned, a cabin in the mountains where he kept several beautifully restored motorcycles. Everything he owned was first-class and well maintained. Harker was never interested in buying stuff for the sake of buying stuff, and we admired him for that.

Mike's thing was people-watching. He

was always the quiet guy who listened to people go on and on about their minor sailing exploits. Only after people got to know him for a month or so would Mike let on that he'd sailed around the world singlehanded — despite a horrible hang-gliding accident that had left him bedridden for a decade and forever unable to stand upright without having to touch something.

Mike loved to get a cup of coffee and observe people for long periods of time. That's what people do in Europe. Heck, in Capri they darn near set up grandstands so people can nurse a sundowner while watching everybody strut by in their fine Italian threads. Mike would go to the same coffee bars or restaurants over and over again, and become friends with the waiters and owners. He was more interested in them than the high-rolling vacationers. Despite his ultra-unassuming way and physical limitations, Mike somehow managed to attract some very lovely women to sail with him. And they often came back for additional legs.

As for his preference for Costco canned chicken when he could easily have afforded more refined fare, that will forever remain a mystery to us — although we don't have much use for pretentious tourist restaurants either.

Want an even more extreme example of a sailor living well within his means? When one of the richest men in the world — worth many billions — wanted a boat, he built a modest 44-footer himself. When he wanted to buy a professionally made cat, he bought the smallest in the manufacturer's line. Not everybody thinks bigger or more expensive is necessarily better.

It seems to us that you think the more money a cruiser spends, the more integrated he/she becomes in whatever culture he/she is visiting. We think you have it backward. Money is often a barrier, especially when visiting Third World places, to really getting to know or become part of a community.

From time to time we've written about Glenn Tieman of Southern California. He spent 10 years cruising a homebuilt 26-ft catamaran from California to Asia. During the first five years,



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# LETTERS

he told us he lived on about \$1 a day. During the second five years, he lived on about \$3 a day. Tieman's goal was to completely integrate himself into remote communities for months at



BILL BARKER

**Glenn Tieman sailed to Asia in his first homebuilt cat. Who knows where he is now?**

a time, and he did to a much greater degree than most cruisers. Because of the near insistence of family and friends, Tieman returned to Southern California after 10 years to teach school. Dissatisfied after a few years, he built a 38-ft replica of an ancient Polynesian cat for \$14,000 and took off again. We expect he's now part of a community on some island we've never heard of.

If you read Latitude regularly, you know that a few years ago Steve and Charlotte Baker were sitting in the hot tub behind their home in Santa Rosa when they came to the realization that they were spending a lot of money on a not-particularly-satisfying lifestyle. So they bought a humble Catalina 27, pointedly christened her Willful Simplicity, did the Ha-Ha, and subsequently became an integral part of the small and modest Mexican community at Evaristo in the Sea of Cortez. Before long they'd been adopted and became the godparents of several local kids. We don't know how much money they are living on, but since there aren't any real stores or restaurants near Evaristo, it can't be much. The Bakers have been at Evaristo for a while now, so they must like it. In fact, we just heard they finished building living quarters for a teacher.

And surely you've read our reports on Jack van Ommen of the Gig Harbor, Washington-based Nadja 29 Fleetwood.



JACK VAN OMMEN

**Jack van Ommen sailed 'Fleetwood' all over the world.**

After a severe business reversal at age 60, all van Ommen had to his name was a kit-built 29-footer he'd sailed in a Singlehanded TransPac decades before and a limited ability to pay his rent. Despite monthly Social Security income of just \$1,700, in the last seven years or so he has cruised to 43 countries in all parts of the world, while putting about \$1,000 a month in the bank. If you think he's not living a more interesting and locally integrated life than

95% of the rest of the people in the world, you haven't been reading his blogs.

(Editor's note: See Sightings for the story of van Ommen's loss of Fleetwood near Ibiza last month.)

There are countless people happily cruising for less than the various poverty levels in the United States. That's not to say that we could do it, but we have utmost admiration and respect for those who can and do. We suspect that's also true for the people in the places these cruisers visit. After all, it's easier for Third World people to relate to a cruiser living on \$1,000 a month than those struggling to get by on \$10,000 a month.

### ↑↓ THE POOBAH'S THOUGHTS ON THE SPOT SATPHONE

In a recent issue you said that the folks at Spot had given you a new Spot Global Phone to test. What do you think of it for people cruising to Mexico? How does it compare with



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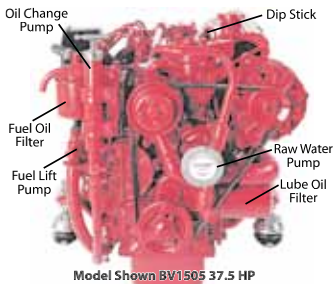
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# LETTERS

the Iridium satphone?

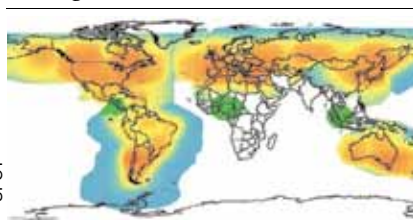
Eric Alderson  
Melanie, Catalina 42  
Seattle

Eric — Based on our experience, the Iridium wins hands down over the somewhat misnamed Spot Global Phone.

We attempted to use the Spot phone — it retails for about \$500 — on many occasions during the Ha-Ha. The sound quality was always excellent on the caller's end, but receivers reported choppy clarity — and that was, of course, when it worked. The problem was that it often didn't work. Calls either wouldn't go through or were dropped. Sometimes we'd have four bars, then we'd have none, then four bars again. And reliability wasn't just an issue at sea, as we repeatedly couldn't get the Spot phone to work while in the marina in Cabo San Lucas.

Our Iridium phone — which retails for about \$1,050 — was much more reliable. And when you have medical or mechanical emergencies — as we did on this year's Ha-Ha — reliability trumps price. This was our first year with a second-generation Iridium phone — which has actually been around for years — and the sound quality was easily superior to the original Iridium phones. You can get a used version of the original Iridium for about \$100 — from us, among others — but we wouldn't recommend it.

The Spot Global Phone and Iridium use different technology. Iridium has 66 active satellites, plus spares, that cover the globe and provide service around the world. Spot says that its phone is 'global', but that's not supported by a map claiming to show their area of coverage. What's more, and what's disturbing, is that we don't believe the coverage map is accurate.



SPOT

**Don't take the Spot Global Phone's coverage map too seriously.**

Back when Globalstar phones used the same technology, they provided virtually the same coverage map, and it definitely was not accurate. We tried and tried and tried to use the Globalstar phone across the top of South America and other places where they claimed to have coverage, but the phone never worked.

Spot says its phone is powered by 'satellite technology', but it's different from that of Iridium. Spot uses Globalstar's 48 low-orbit satellites in a 'bent pipe' system. When you make a call, it goes up to a satellite, down to a ground station, then travels by landline to the number you're calling. Globalstar claims their system is superior to that of Iridium, but we haven't found it to be the case.

The Globalstar system that Spot uses also has a black mark in our minds. A number of years ago, Globalstar was a Ha-Ha sponsor. While the Globalstar calls were often dropped on the Ha-Ha, if we kept at it, we could usually get a call or calls through to Commander's Weather to get the daily weather report for the fleet. Before the start of one Ha-Ha, we made a call to confirm that the system would work in Mexico. It didn't. When we called Globalstar, they explained that the satellite they needed to provide service for the coast of Mexico was out of service. They had made no attempt to inform their users of the lack of service. Their irresponsibility would have meant we'd be leading the Ha-Ha without an easy way to contact Commander's Weather. Fortunately, there was an Iridium retailer open on Sunday, the day before the start of the Ha-Ha.

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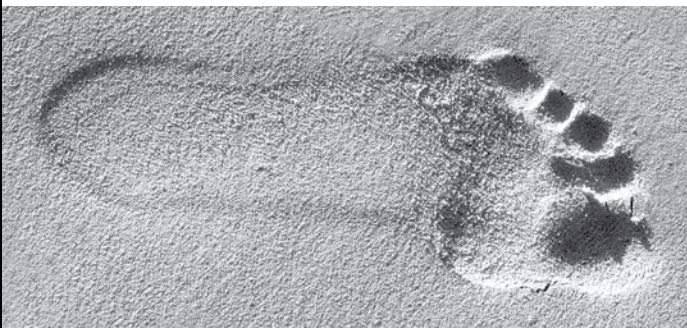


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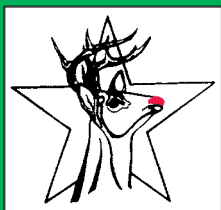
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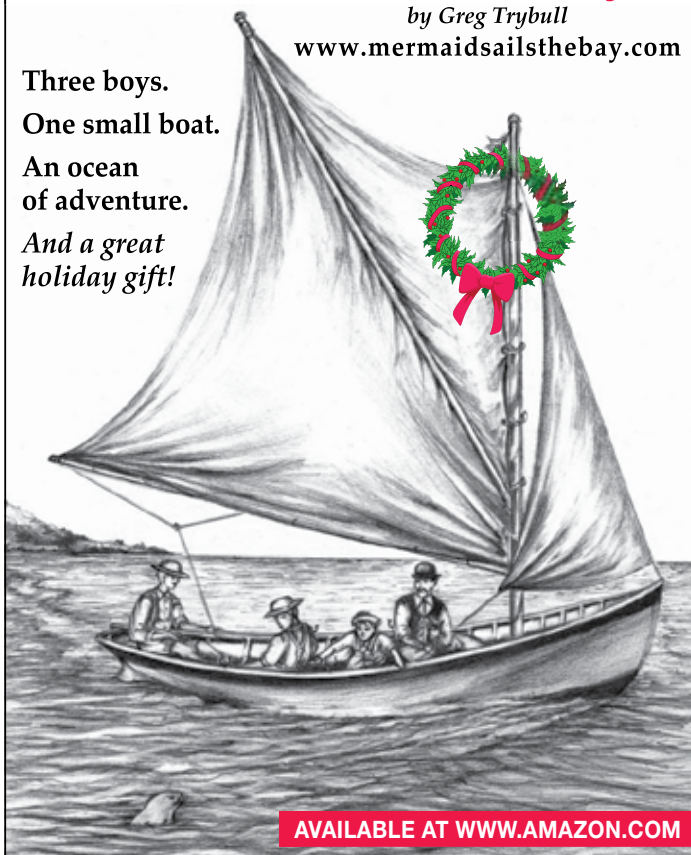
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## LETTERS

The one other knock we've got against the Spot is that the screen is too dark and hard to read. Iridium's screen is bright with big letters and numbers.

The Spot is less expensive and may be adequate for a sailor's non-emergency needs in Mexico. But if you want reliability, a readable screen, and a phone that will work everywhere you can cruise, our recommendation would be the Iridium. You can also download GRIB files for about 80 cents each from an Iridium.

While we're not big fans of the Spot Global Phone, we are very big fans of the Spot Messenger, which we think offers mariners a great safety, tracking and messaging device. But once again, the area of coverage has limitations for cruisers, and we're not sure how accurate it is.

### ↑↓ **BETTER 44 YEARS LATE THAN NEVER**

With regard to Max Ebb's recent article on latitude and longitude, and radio etiquette, I think a young Coastie can be forgiven for not knowing where Hospital Cove is. He or she may never have heard the name.

For years I had wondered about the location of Hospital Cove on Angel Island. No one I spoke to seemed to know for sure where it was. It was listed on page 10 of my tide book under locations for current differences from the Golden Gate, but didn't appear on the chart.



LATITUDE / LADONNA

After some modest research, I discovered that the name of this cove had, in 1969, officially been changed to Ayala Cove, after the Spanish naval officer and explorer. In 2011, I informed NOAA's National Ocean Service, the federal

### **Where in the world is Hospital Cove?**

agency that is responsible for tidal data, of the change. Notwithstanding the government's reputation for red tape and dawdling, within a day or two they had updated their online database to reflect the correct name.

However, the tide books we commonly use are printed by private companies, not the government, and I was unaware that they do not automatically download the new data from the NOS. So when the 2012 books came out, the old name was still there. I alerted the publisher, San Francisco's Tidebook Company, and lo and behold, the 2013 volume finally displayed the correct name, 44 years late.

Tony Johnson  
Whisper, Catalina 22  
San Francisco

### ↑↓ **CRUISING SAFELY BUT ON A BUDGET**

We are now preparing our new-to-us Dehler 41 for the 2014 Ha-Ha. Just like everyone else, we're on a budget. Our boat has the very minimal standard wind/speed/depth nav pods, a VHF radio, a VHF handheld radio, a Garmin 76C handheld GPS, a Davis sextant and paper charts. I am also computer-savvy.

New equipment is expensive, fun, cool, and 'safe'. But our bank account can better handle used, reliable and proven, along with a few new items such as an EPIRB. Research online and talking to marine equipment suppliers yields the entire spectrum of opinion of what's needed. I think it would be interesting to read what Max Ebb and Lee Helm have to say about the topic. They will both agree on safety being

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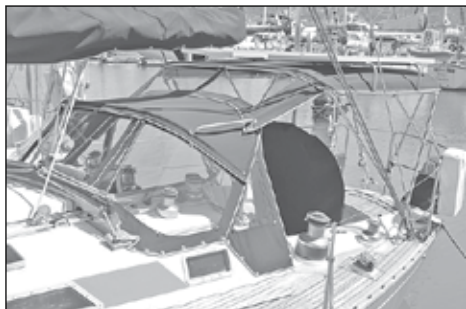
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## LETTERS

paramount, but are likely to differ on what should be new versus what can be picked up lightly used.

I always enjoy reading my *Latitude* cover to cover. And while I work in a technical field, I don't always see things Lee's way.

Dave Johnson

*Flying Squirrel*, 1975 Balboa 26  
*Flying Squirrel II*, 1998 Dehler 41DS

Dave — If you don't mind, the *Wanderer*/Publisher, who founded the *Ha-Ha* and has done 19 of the 20, will field your question, as we've had more experience doing *Ha-Ha*'s and cruising foreign waters than Max or Lee.

1) An EPIRB. We would have no hesitation buying a used one, as it's easy to test them to see if a unit is working. Some of the newer ones do have additional features, such as GPS,



What kind of movie would 'All Is Lost' have been if the sailor'd had an EPIRB?

which would make it slightly easier for you to be found. We would never let our kids sail offshore on a boat that didn't have an EPIRB.

2) A satphone, which would be either be an Iridium or a Spot Global phone. A satphone is important because, unlike an EPIRB, it allows two-

way communication to describe the nature of an emergency, in addition to being useful for regular communication and getting weather and email. As you'll read in Sightings, we think there are several excellent reasons — reliability being number one — to chose the Iridium over the Spot. We see no problem buying used satellite phones, although the newer generation Iridium M115s have superior sound quality to the original ones. There is also a water-resistant version of the Iridium phone in case you plan to have to get into a liferaft. Iridium satphones can be rented from any number of places for the duration of the *Ha-Ha*. We would not let our kids go offshore without an Iridium satphone.

3) A product that sort of fits in between the EPIRB and the satphone is the Spot Messenger, which allows: 1) friends to follow your almost-constantly updated track; 2) friends to follow your position and track on a constantly updated position; and 3) you to send a distress message to the Coast Guard. The Spot Messenger is the poor sailor's version of an EPIRB/satphone for those not going to the South Pacific, where it doesn't work.

Some sailors go offshore with none of the above, most go with at least one, and lots go with all three for redundancy. EPIRBs are a one-time cost of between \$500 to \$1,000 for the fancy models. Older model Iridium satphones can be bought for \$200, or the latest model for \$1,050. Air time is less expensive in bulk, but the minimum is \$150 for 75 minutes, so it's not cheap. The Spot Messenger is \$150 with an annual \$100-150 service plan.

As we said, we'd buy any of these items used as long as they checked out and obviously weren't abused.

4) If you'd be going cruising for more than one season, we'd also recommend an SSB radio with SailMail. The SSB is necessary for listening to the various radio nets, which are the lifelines when crossing the Pacific. See this month's Changes from Pacific Highway to see why SSBs are considered necessary by most cruisers. Unlike with satphones, everybody is allowed to listen in on SSB, which makes for greater safety and fun. And with the addition of SailMail, you can communicate in relatively short

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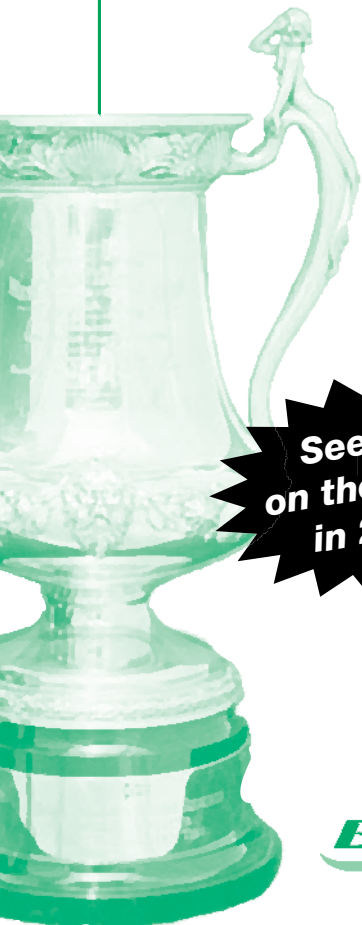
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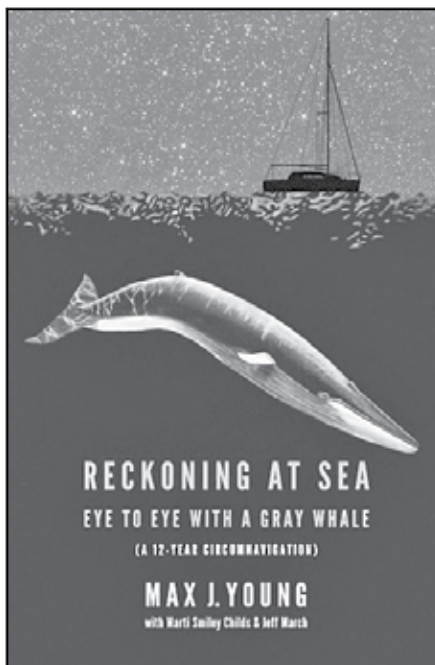
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## LETTERS

messages with friends at home, and you can download GRIB files for weather. By the time you get the entire package going, it's probably going to run \$3,000. We consider SSBs to be very nice, but not essential, except for those crossing the Pacific.

5) Navigation: No matter if we're in the Caribbean or the Pacific, we navigate with the Navionics programs on our iPhone or iPad. You do not need to have internet access for this great navigation combo to work. Considering the number of charts you get with each Navionics package, they are bargains.

6) Radar is wonderful for navigation and in fog, and we think all Northern California boats should have one. But if you're patient and careful, you don't have to spend the \$2,500 to \$3,500, especially if you get an AIS. Most boats have both radar and at least receive-only AIS. We wouldn't let our kids go offshore without at least radar, although once south of Bahia Santa Maria and when the Ha-Ha is over, you don't really need it.

7) Communication: When in Mexico you'll want to get a modem from TelCel. This will give you internet access pretty much anywhere you can get cell phone coverage. If you're spending a season in Mexico, you'll almost certainly want a cheapie Mexican cell phone or — see this month's Changes — an old iPhone

If anyone is going cruising on a really low budget, please remember that when we started publishing Latitude, cruisers sailed all over the world before the following were even invented: reliable EPIRBs, satphones, sat messengers, SailMail, reliable SSB radio, GRIB files, reliable radar, AIS, modems or cell phones. Some will argue that while cruising wasn't as safe back then, it was a heck of a lot more adventurous.

We hope that covers it. We welcome comments or differing opinions from experienced cruisers.

### ↑↓AN UPDATE ON 'TI PROFLIGATE

My having read your musings about the Caribbean in the June issue, a longstanding question of mine has come to the fore. As I recall, several years ago the publisher bought a used Leopard 45 catamaran that had been in service for The Moorings, then placed her in a yacht management program with BVI Yacht Charters of Tortola. Given your extended high-season usage of the vessel, how does your balance sheet look on an annual basis? Is there still sufficient charter income to make ends meet, or do you have to put something in the kitty yourself?

Andrew J Ritchie  
 East Coast

Andrew — Keeping in mind that we bought our cat outright and therefore don't have a mortgage, we have been able to use the boat extensively in high season without having to put any more money into her, or having to pay for berthing or insurance. Mind you, the boat has constantly been updated: new sails, new bimini, new StackPak, new tramp, new dinghy and outboard, excellent engine maintenance and so forth. Plus, she's a simple boat, which Anthony, who is in charge of maintenance at BVI Yacht Charters, says really helps. We do virtually no work on the boat. When we pick her up, everything is working. When we return the cat three months later, we usually have a small list of things that need to be taken care of. If a tropical storm approaches — as has happened several times during our ownership — BVI Yacht Charters takes care of everything. Most times we don't even hear about it until after the fact.

One thing that works in our favor is that 'ti Profligate, being simple and older, is about the biggest 'bang for the buck' 8-person, 45-ft bareboat cat in the BVIs. So she stays very busy. Contrary to what a lot of people assume, our experience has



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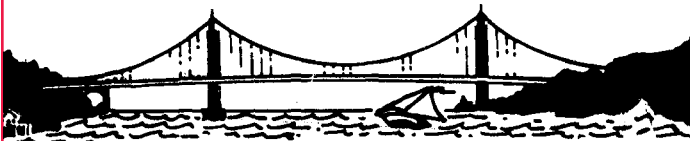
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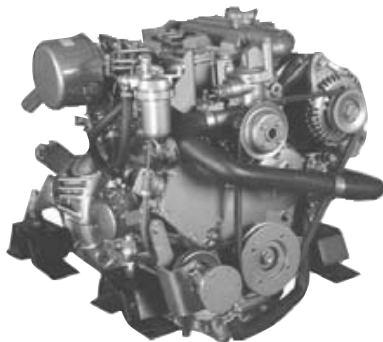
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## LETTERS

been that a simple, well-cared for charter boat ends up in much better condition than most seldom-used private boats. Nelson knew what he was talking about when he said, "Men and ships rot in port." But remember the 'well-cared for' qualifier.

We haven't had any experience with other yacht management companies, but as far as we're concerned, BVI Yacht Charters has done us right in keeping our cat in very good condition. It hasn't been cheap, but the cost has been worth it. The best indication of our overall satisfaction is that we intended to keep the boat for just three years, but are now about to start our seventh year. We're not guaranteeing a yacht managed by some company in the Caribbean is a good idea for anybody else, but it's worked great for us.

One of the main reasons we went with BVI Yacht Charters is that their program allowed us to use our boat as much as we wanted, when we wanted — including the high season. This was unlike The Moorings and Sunsail programs, which only allowed a max of two weeks' use in high season. That just wasn't going to work for us. However, we've been told that starting this year, The Moorings has a new program for people who want to use their boats for as long as they want in the high season. Mind you, you'd be buying a new boat, they aren't cheap, and you'd be losing a ton of charter income. That said, we were also told that there were buyers waiting in line to buy new cats for the slots in The Moorings program. Furthermore, all the Moorings 46 cats that were timed out of the program after five years were snapped up like hotcakes.

### ↑↓WHO SHOULD GET OVER WHAT

I don't know why others worry about why we refer to ourselves as 'Americans'. In 1776, or thereabouts, this nation became the United States of America. That is our official name. There are no other countries that carry that distinction. The Estados Unidos de Mexico is the closest one to that. Canada is just Canada. None of the other countries in North America, Central America or South America use 'America' in their name.

I don't know for sure, but I believe there might be a little jealousy involved when people from other countries say they are 'Americans', too. All I do know is that we have always used the term 'American' to denote our people. Like it or don't like it. Get over it and don't let your sails luff. There are more important things to concern yourself about.

J.R. Smith  
Manhattan, KS

J.R. — "Get over it," you say? That's the kind of self-centered attitude that rankles all the Americans who don't live in the United States. All you know? Why don't you ask people who live elsewhere in the Americas what they 'know'? And if you don't know why people "worry" about what we call ourselves, why should you worry what they call themselves?

By the way, next year's J/24 North Americans aren't being held in the United States. They're being held out of Paradise Marina in Mexico.

### ↑↓NEW COLUMBIA 50 OWNERS' WEBSITE

I wanted to let *Latitude* readers know there's a new website just for Columbia 50s. While it's far from complete, it's at least now 'up for comment'. The address is [columbia50.weebly.com](http://columbia50.weebly.com).

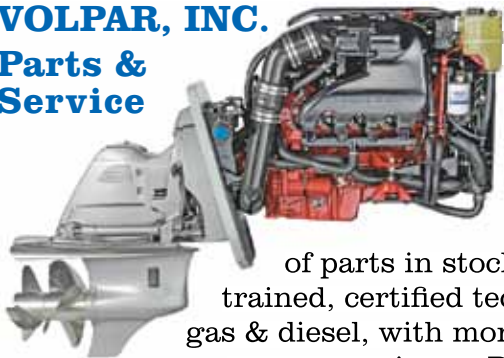
P.S. Thanks for all the great reading over the years.

Kevin Reilly  
Skylark, Columbia 50  
Coronado

Readers — Ah, the Columbia 50s, with the famous 'blister top' common to all the Bill Tripp-designed Columbias of the

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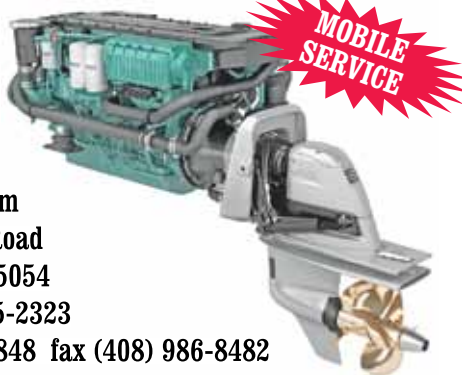
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Linda Dashew's *Intermezzo*, which they sailed around the world before coming up with their Deerfoot line of boats.

The Columbia 50s were available as sloops, yawls and schooners, although we never saw any of the schooners. The only yawl we ever saw was *Simoon*, originally owned by actor John Hall, who raced her successfully in the 1967 *TransPac*. The next owner sailed her to Tahiti, then abandoned her in front of the Tahiti YC for four years. It was then that our friends 'Broken Bottles' Bob and Gayle Jensen of Ukiah, along with three others, bought *Simoon*. When they got to Tahiti, the new owners had to hack two feet of coral off the bottom. Despite never having sailed offshore before, the partners headed north to Hawaii with a French navigator who didn't speak much English. He wasn't that good a navigator either — they had to let him dinghy ashore at some island in the Tuamotus to find out which one it was.

When the boat got back to San Francisco, the Jensens bought out the partners and, unable to sell her, decided to take her cruising. Bob and Gayle ultimately would make five long trips into the Pacific with *Simoon*, covering over 100,000 miles in 15 years. This was in the days before GPS and its precursor *SatNav*, and Gayle did all the navigation.

### ↑↓ **BABY, ONE MORE TIME**

Did you guys catch the report in *Market Watch* that ships in



WEBB LOGG

the Indian Ocean and approaches to the Red Sea have been using Britney Spears music to scare off Somalia pirates?

Tom Van Dyke  
*En Pointe*, Searunner 31  
San Francisco

**What's not to like about a little Brit-Brit?**

Tom — We didn't catch the report, but we're not sure if that's such good strategy. Correct us if we're wrong, but we thought most terrorists had secret carnal lust for young blond American temptresses such as Britney, particularly when they are half naked and slither through lyrics such as: "I'm a slave for you. I cannot hold it. I cannot control it. I'm a slave for you." We think those lyrics are music to the ears of terrorists.

### ↑↓ **LOOKING FOR INFO ON THE MACGREGOR 36 CAT**

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## LETTERS

lots of sail area and a very small cabin. Is there any information on how these boats are for bluewater sailing or coastal cruising? Or what could be done to make them safer for ocean passages? I saw a picture of one sailing at a heel of about 45 degrees.

Chris Cunningham  
Lake Tahoe

Chris — We're not experts on the MacGregor 36s, which were built in the late '70s and early '80s, but do have some conflicting information on them. On the positive side, Bob Smith of the Victoria, B.C.-based custom 45-ft carbon cat Pantera tells us he did the long 1979 Tradewinds Race in the Caribbean on one, and he thought the MacGregor was just fine. We were a bit astonished, as it's rough-water sailing in the Caribbean, and the '79 Tradewinds Regatta was no light-air affair. Smith is a superb long-distance multihull sailor and multihull boat-builder, so we respect his opinion.



WEBB LOGG

On the other side of the coin, a MacGregor 36 was doing very well in one of the Doublehanded Farallones races in the 1980s, but came apart while surfing just a few miles west of the Golden Gate Bridge. As we recall, one of the two crew was killed.

**MacGregor 36s have done some ocean sailing.**

The MacGregor 36s are 35.5 feet long, 18 feet wide, and displace a mere 3,000 lbs. According to the company brochure, they reach at 24 knots and sail close-hauled at 18 knots, although we'd like to see the latter with our own eyes. They can be disassembled for trailering on a normal trailer. There is a MacGregor 36, complete with mooring, advertised for \$19,000 in Newport Beach. She looks as if she might need a lot of work, and her being nearly 35 years old, the entire rig and all metal fittings would need close examination.

The MacGregor 36s were not designed as offshore cruisers, but we would be surprised if someone hasn't sailed one from California to French Polynesia. Lord knows any number of French sailors would do it at the drop of a chapeau. Maybe some readers with MacGregor 36 experience would like to share their thoughts. Email them to richard@latitude38.com.

By the way, any cat being sailed at a 45-degree angle is either being sailed very poorly or is in great danger of going over. Just ask Emirates Team New Zealand.

### ↑↓ ALL IS NOT LOST

I saw the report Editor LaDonna Bubak wrote for the November 4 *Lectronic Latitude* saying she'd wait for the DVD of Robert Redford's sailing film *All Is Lost* based on reviews from sailors. I think she should go see it. I know a lot of sailors who enjoyed it.

Okay, so he didn't have an EPIRB, jacklines or a PFD, but whatever. I don't need to prove how smart I am by pointing out all the film's errors. I was actually grabbing my friend's arm because of the challenges our hero found himself in. I enjoyed the film and recommend it.

Dave Dobbs  
Tenacious, Lafitte 44  
Bay Area

### ↑↓ WHAT WOULD A KARDASHIAN DO?

I saw the movie *All Is Lost* and thought the comments by

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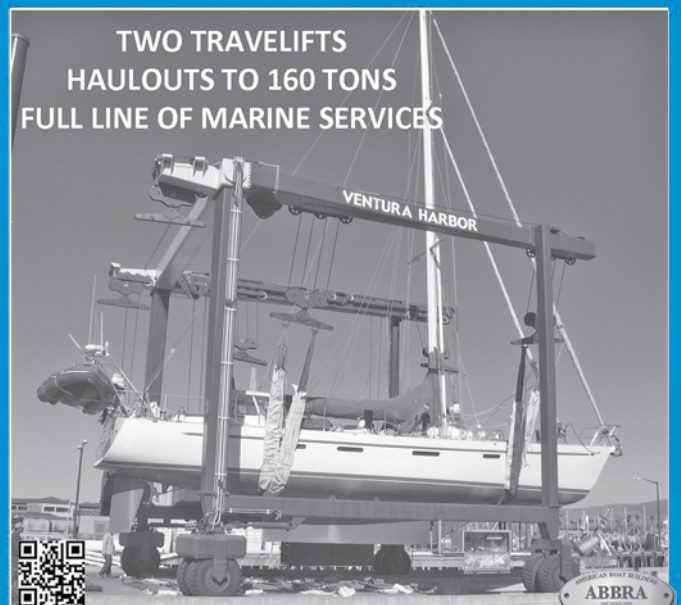
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## LETTERS

your reviewers were overly harsh, and some incorrect. Granted there were some inaccuracies, but I think a score of about 80% isn't bad compared to how other Hollywood movies portray sailing.

To correct the reviewers in the *'Lectronic* piece: The liferaft

ALL IS LOST



**Focus on the story, not the sailing errors.**

was a modern Win-slow, not some WWII relic; he had flares, but used them up; he started a fire in a pan when he ran out of flares as a way to signal to a boat but it got out of control; he had water in the raft but it got contaminated; there's no date set so it could have been before EPIRBs were easily available; and why have a PFD when you are solo?

People should jump on mistakes less and concentrate more on what a good job the movie does in portraying sailors. He shows how a typical sailor can handle things when confronted with one problem after another and figures out a way to address them without panicking. What would a Kardashian do in the same situation?

Steve Haas  
Tesa, Catalina 42  
San Jose

### ↑↓GOOD IN SPITE OF DISTRACTING MISTAKES

I thought it was a very good, suspenseful movie, and Redford was outstanding. But I was distracted by several scenes where the boat was 'sailing' along nicely with the headsail furled and main flaked on the boom; a storm scene that showed a folded sail sitting nicely on the deck; and Redford spending the night sleeping in a liferaft *tethered to the sinking boat!*

Despite these and other technical flaws, I recommend the movie to any waterman. My wife, who is not a sailor, loved it. The problem is, she didn't want me going to sea ever again! It took quite the song and dance about my equipment, skills and so on to settle her down.

Jim Swartwout  
Skipjack, Catalina 350  
Redondo Beach

### ↑↓"OUR EXPECTATIONS WERE LOW...AND UNMET"

We'd been looking forward to seeing *All Is Lost* but didn't have high expectations because of Hollywood's weak history in portraying sailing. Beyond the sailing inaccuracies — he cut away his mast with a single swipe of his knife! — the story and 'action' were also disappointing. But the absolute worst part was that they sank three Cal 39s during filming!

Mike Robinson  
New Bern, NC

*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](mailto: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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## transat jacques vabre drama

This year's Transat Jacques Vabre — a 5,450-mile professional doublehanded transAtlantic race from Le Havre, France to Itajal, Brazil — has been full of suspense and drama from start to finish. There were weather delays, a class leader capsized, another one dismantled, and rudder failures were almost commonplace during the first week. Along with the doom and gloom, we've also been treated to some fantastic racing as top-notch ocean sailors pushed themselves, and their boats, to the limit.

The transAtlantic MOD 70 match race we were looking forward to never quite materialized, but it was a thriller nonetheless. Sébastien Josse's *Edmond de Rothschild* extended out to a small lead after Cape Finisterre and held off Sydney Gavignet's *Oman Air-Musandam* all the way to the finish. The Omani boat attacked at the doldrums and cut into *Rothschild's* lead, but in the end came up just over five hours short. *Edmond de Rothschild* blazed across the course in just 11d, 5h, 3m at an average speed of just over 20 knots.

The 10-boat IMOCA fleet was classic Transat Jacques Vabre the entire way across. Pre-race favorite *MACIF* jumped out to an early lead before pulling into Portugal for a quick pit stop. In her wake, the rest of the 'famous five' (*MACIF*, *PRB*, *Safran*, *Cheminées*

*Poujoulat* and *Maitre Coq*) each took a turn leading the fleet. By the time the Open 60s hit the northeast trades, the race had become a two-boat match race between *MACIF* and *PRB*.

When the sailors on *PRB* took their turn at a quick pit stop to replace a rudder in the Cape Verde Islands, *MACIF* reclaimed her ranking atop the fleet. *PRB* came charging back to catch and briefly pass *MACIF* in the doldrums, setting the table for an epic match race to the finish. *MACIF* struck back, sailing aggressively and pushing to a 20-mile lead before the top two-thirds of her rig came crashing down 150 miles off the Brazilian coast, handing the lead to *PRB*. As this issue went to press, *PRB* was 300 miles from the finish and looked poised to win the IMOCA fleet, while *Safran* and *Maitre Coq* engaged in their own match race for second place.

After a rough start and resultant weather stop in Roscoff, Portugal, the TJV's biggest fleet — the Class 40s — have had a long and arduous Atlantic crossing filled with technical stops, challenging weather scenarios and the unrelenting pressure of a huge fleet of racing boats. Pre-race favorite *GDF SUEZ*, skippered by Sebastian Rogues, has persevered to lead since the start, fending off repeated challenges from Jorg Reichers' *Mare* and Spanish upstart *Tales Santander 2014*. At last word, *GDF SUEZ* maintained a 100-mile lead over her two main rivals with some 1,700 miles to the finish.

It's not surprising that the Multi 50 class saw the most dramatic failures of the race. First it was *Maitre Jacques*, challenging for the lead at the time, damaging the structure of the boat and then ripping off the front of the starboard ama. The boys nursed the wounded tri into port just as *Arkema-Région Aquitaine* capsized. The brand-new boat was slowly towed to Madeira where she was righted. With two of the fleet's four 'fast' boats MIA, the Multi 50 class turned into a two-tri race. *FenêtréA-Cardinal* jumped out to an early lead over defending TJV champ *Actual* in the North Atlantic before *Actual* came fighting back at the doldrums. *Cardinal* re-claimed the lead with *Actual* close behind, setting up a jibing duel down the coast of Brazil. *Actual* jibed early toward Itajal in a last-ditch effort to overcome her rival, but encountered light winds and lost to her rival.

Get the final results at [www.transat-jacques-vabre.com](http://www.transat-jacques-vabre.com).

— ronnie simpson

COURTESY MACIF



The 'MACIF' crew saved their boom to set up a jury rig.

## local marine worker

Well-known East Bay woodworker Kyle Miller was found dead on November 21 inside his 1989 Mercedes, which was partially submerged off the Sugar Dock facility on the south side of Richmond's Santa Fe Channel.

After entering the gated facility at an unknown hour, the car apparently struck a concrete piling that was laid horizontally along the edge of the wharf, causing the piling to topple into the channel, with the Mercedes evidently following it into shoaling waist-deep water. When the



'Arkema' was towed to port and righted after capsizing and dismantling. Her crew were uninjured in the incident.



The Transat Jacques Vabre, from France to Brazil, is chock-full of world-class ocean sailors.

## dies at sugar dock

upside-down vehicle eventually was lifted out, Miller's body was found lying against the headliner — not restrained by a seat belt. The windows were all rolled up.

For the past seven years, Miller lived aboard his Chris Craft motor cruiser at the Sugar Dock, where he occasionally acted as caretaker when the facility's owners, Bill and Grace Bodle, were out of town. Among other Bay Area employers, Miller had worked for designer Tom Wylie and naval architect Andy Davis. He had a

continued in middle column of next sightings page

## jack van ommen loses *fleetwood*

We're sorry to report that, on November 16, Jack van Ommen, one of the most inspiring sailors we've ever met and written about, lost his Naja 30 *Fleetwood* in a rocky cove near the Spanish island of Ibiza after a three-night battle with stormy weather. The good news is that the vigorous 76-year-old from Gig Harbor, WA was able to scramble up the rocks to safety, and even managed to carry his passport, wallet and laptop.

The indirect cause of the loss of the *Fleetwood* was getting a late start from Holland for the Canary Islands and Cartagena, Colombia, because van Ommen had been doing extensive renovations. When he tried to sail to the Canaries via the Atlantic in October, the winter storms had already started, making that impossible. So he decided to take

continued on outside column of next sightings page



SPREAD OLIVIER BLANCHET / DPPI; INSET COURTESY ARKEMA

# SIGHTINGS

## *fleetwood* — cont'd

*Fleetwood* back down to the Med via the rivers and canals of France.

Once he got to the south of France, van Ommen was trapped for days by November storms. And make no mistake, the Med can be a wicked place when the winter storms blow. He finally took off, thinking he could make one of the Balearics before the next storm hit. Unfortunately, the weather turned much worse before he could reach port.

"*Fleetwood* is flotsam," he wrote. "I shipwrecked at 4 a.m. on Tago Mago, a very small island near Ibiza. I have little energy left to tell the story. In short, I was lying ahull for the third night in stormy conditions when the wind direction changed while I slept. I had no battery power left to start the engine, and no battery power for the radio to call for help. Several attempts to sail into anchorages failed.

continued on outside column of next sightings page

## **sugar dock**

keen interest in music, and reportedly rehearsed with a group of friends regularly. Miller is said to have been in his mid-40s.

Bill Bodle was the first to notice the vehicle, at about 8:15 a.m. that morning. He immediately called 911, which resulted in a huge response: as many as 10 Richmond police squad cars, five fire department vehicles, and eventually a large Coast Guard vessel, whose rapid approach to the scene generated such a large wake that it unfortunately dislodged the wreck from the shallows,



*This photo of the wreck of 'Fleetwood', which van Ommen built from a kit to do the Singlehanded TransPac many years ago, is one of the most dramatic we've ever seen. Thousands of pieces of a once-globe-circling boat, now held together by just the tide and current. So weird and so sad.*

MARIA DE LOS ANGELES PEÑA MILLA

## — cont'd

and allowed it to slip into deeper water, partially beneath a berthed sailboat. After some jurisdictional wrangling among the various agencies, a robot was deployed to assess the situation, followed by a fire department-affiliated diver. A large crane eventually pulled the wreck onto the wharf.

According to various media reports, police do not suspect foul play or suicide. However, it's yet unknown if factors other than driver error contributed to the tragic accident.

— andy



The tiny cove on the tiny island near Ibiza where 'Fleetwood' foundered.

Jack (far right) found help ashore from locals.

COURTESY JACK VAN OMMEN

## fleetwood — cont'd

After getting wrecked, I managed to climb up the rocks. The people in a home on the island have received me, but they were only able to give me ladies' clothes to wear."

The thing that made van Ommen so special in our mind is that he did so much with so little. Although he was once affluent, sudden business reversals in 2000 left him with little more than the *Naja 30* he'd built, which had been sitting on a trailer for 10 years. He spent two years fixing her up, then trailered her down to Alameda where, in 2005 at age 68, he set sail for the Marquesas. His voyage ended almost before it started, as rough weather had him asking for help from Coast Guard Monterey.



WEBB LOGG

Not far from the small cove in which 'Fleetwood' was bashed to bits are sheer cliffs that Jack could not have climbed.

He eventually set sail for the South Pacific from Santa Barbara, with nothing more than the provisions on his boat, a few hundred dollars, and the promise of \$1,450 from Social Security each month. After the first five years, van Ommen had singlehanded 35,000 miles, visited 30 countries and, in the early years at least, had managed to put a lot of each month's Social Security check in the bank.

We can't remember all the places he's sailed, but one of the more unusual was Haiphong, Vietnam. He later completed a circumnavigation via South Africa — except for the Caribbean Sea and back up to Santa Barbara. But the Caribbean, and later Europe — particularly Holland — beckoned.

In a most unusual trip, he decided to 'circumnavigate' Europe, using various rivers and canals to get over the continental divide to the Danube, which he eventually rode down to the Black Sea and Istanbul. He later travelled to the mouth of the Rhone River in France, and made his way back to his beloved Amsterdam.

Having already sailed to more than 45 countries, van Ommen's most recent goal was to sail to Cartagena, where he would base *Fleetwood* while spending several years exploring South America by land. Maybe he'll just have to fly there now. A deeply religious man, van Ommen says that he's already excited about what God has in store for him next.

In any event, Jack, *Latitude* salutes you for all that you've done, and for proving that you can lead an extremely rich and adventurous life on very little money.

— richard

## good 'nuf for government?

Just before 2 p.m. on September 13, the 2,704-ton Washington State Ferry *Hyak*, with a passenger capacity of 2,017, rammed the Fisher PH 25 *Tasya* from behind shortly after departing Lopez Terminal in the San Juan Islands. The little sailboat was holed and sank, but fortunately the lone 68-year-old man aboard and his dog were rescued by another boat.

As is appropriate, an investigating committee was formed. They concluded that the *Hyak* had had adequate time, equipment capability and 'sea room' to avoid the collision, and that weather, visibility, tides and currents were not factors, nor were there any mechanical problems. The Board of Inquiry determined that the root cause of the

continued on outside column of next sightings page

# SIGHTINGS

## government — cont'd

incident was human error.

"Specifically, Captain [Patricia] Whaley's lack of situational awareness in combination with the Second Mate Hervey's inexperience at the helm of the *Hyak* resulted in an *in-extremis* situation. Captain Whaley lost situational awareness because she was overly reliant on radar observation and failed to monitor vessels on her intended route. In accordance with good marine practice, Captain Whaley did not use all available means to ascertain the accurate location of the *Tasya*



WEBB LOGG

**'Tasya' was rammed by a Washington State Ferry and sank as she was being towed to a boatyard.**

and take necessary actions to avoid collision prior to being in an *in-extremis* situation.

"The Captain, when in the *in-extremis* condition, gained situational awareness and took mitigative actions in an attempt to avoid a collision with the *Tasya*. Her actions included issuing a non-specific port rudder command that subsequently Second Mate Hervey incorrectly ap-

plied with a starboard rudder. Upon recognition of the incorrect action taken by Second Mate Hervey, Whaley took the helm from the Second Mate Hervey, putting the Engine Order Telegraph to full astern." But by then it was too late.

Is it just us or does this sound like a *Three Stooges* short? The captain of a 2,000-person ferry doesn't monitor other vessels in her path. When she finally realizes there is an imminent collision, she gives a "non-specific" order for the port rudder. Upon hearing the order, the Second Mate applies the unclear order to the wrong rudder. Where do they find these people?

Who is the third Stooge? We nominate the highfalutin Board of Inquiry. In the conclusion of the report, they wrote, "In accordance with good marine practice, Captain Whaley did not use all available means to ascertain the accurate location of the *Tasya* and take necessary actions to avoid collision prior to being in an *in-extremis* situation." Are these folks numbskulls or is English their second language? In the world of corinthian sailors, at least, "good marine practice" *does* mean using all available means to ascertain the location of other vessels.

Did the Board of Inquiry recommend that the captain or mate responsible for the debacle be fired? Of course not. After all, Washington State Ferries are part of a heavily subsidized government monopoly, which means there are no consequences for employee mistakes or incompetence. The board recommended things like refresher courses and the always-popular reviewing of procedures. We don't know about the rest of you, but we wish we lived in a world where merit and competence counted for something.

— richard

## it's enough to make you scream

We ran a photo of a frustrated Jane Roy of the Portland-based Columbia 43 *Adios* in the November 15 *Lectronic Latitude*, and asked readers to guess why she was so frustrated. We hinted that it might have something to do with the Spot Global Phone in her hand. In the photo in the next photo spread, you see that she's smiling . . . and not coincidentally holding an Iridium sat phone. Anyway, the following are some of the better responses that we received:

continued on outside column of next sightings page

## life on the water:

Sausalito legend Ron MacAnnan is the subject of a new short film, part of Don Zimmer's planned series titled *Life on the Water*. Ron's amazing life story — from sailing in multiple TransPacs to moving the Horizons restaurant to its current location — is told by Ron himself.

He is also the owner of the 1929 M Class yacht *Pursuit*, which sits front and center at Sausalito Yacht Harbor. Ron, 88, works on *Pursuit* nearly every day



**Tim Sell was thrilled to join Ron MacAnnan (with 'Freda B' skipper Paul Dines at the helm) for a daysail aboard 'Pursuit' last month.**

**ron macannan**

even though, according to the film, he's "slowing down." But he has so many admirers and friends that he rarely has trouble enlisting the 12-20 people it takes to sail the stunning yacht, which goes out often.

The film is available for purchase at [floatingrecords.com/life-on-the-water](http://floatingrecords.com/life-on-the-water) for \$22. Of course, it doesn't hurt our feelings one bit that such a legend is wearing a *Latitude* hat during his interview!

— *ladonna*

**scream — cont'd**

- "Her mom just informed her that she's stopping payments on the checks and that dad wants the boat back." Jay Bauer

- "She just found out that the Doobie Brothers broke up." J.R. Smith

- "She's got a useless Globalstar sat phone. We've got one. The first \$150 takes it." Barry Foster. (*Jane is actually holding a Spot Global Phone, which uses the old Globalstar system and thus has the same shortcomings for offshore sailors. BTW, \$150 is a lot of money for a paperweight.*)

- "If nothing has improved in four years, Jane is frustrated because the connection time for an Iridium sat phone ranges from less than one

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TIM SELL / WWW.SAUSALITODIVING.COM

# SIGHTINGS

## scream — cont'd

second to a world record of about 45 seconds. When my wife returned from Hawaii a few years ago, I rented a handheld phone for her and the crew. When she called, the conversations would go like this: Call 1: 'Hi. We're eight hun—' Call 2: 'H—' Call 3: 'Hi. We're eight hundred miles west of Portland, and the weath—" Jim Vickers (*Jane is actually holding a Spot Global Phone. We've had very good luck with our Iridium, especially since we got the second-generation phone. What about the rest of you?*)

- "Jane is frustrated because she can't get a call through on her Globalstar satphone. Next time she needs to use an Iridium, which is

continued on outside column of next sightings page

## registration opens for

Given the legendary beauty of French Polynesia's five archipelagos, its not surprising that the notion of cruising there is high on many sailors' bucket lists.

Every year several hundred sailors aboard a wide variety of boats make the 3,000-mile crossing to those fabled isles from the West Coast of the Americas. And many do so as members of *Latitude's* Pacific Puddle Jump rally.

Unlike the recently completed Baja



PHOTOS LATITUDE / RICHARD



## pacific puddle jump

Ha-Ha, the PPJ is a 'rally' in only the loosest terms: There's no committee boat, there are no mandatory roll calls, and its members leave from a variety of West Coast ports anytime between February and June.

After signing up, however, 'jumpers' are invited to attend one of *Latitude's* annual sendoff parties in Puerto Vallarta and Panama (dates TBA), where they'll be

continued in middle column of next sightings page



**Jane and Spot** — See Jane use the Spot Global Phone. See Jane scream. Inset: See Jane use the Iridium satphone. See Jane smile.

## scream — cont'd

a true satphone." Curt Brownlow, GS12, CWO3 (Comms) USCG Ret, District 17 Juneau, Alaska, Information Technology Specialist, C-LAN ISSO for CGD17 (*Actually, she's holding a Spot Globalstar phone, the successor to the 'bent pipe' technology. But we get your point.*)

- "She's frustrated because it's a PITA to figure out exactly how to dial a number with that thing." Chip Donnelly (*It's hard to dial with the Spot Global Phone because the screen is dark and the letters and numbers are small. It's actually not hard to make a call. You hit '+', then '1', then dial the area code and number. The Ha-Ha's Grand Poobah learned how to do it in just three years.*)

- "Jane is frustrated because she has to leave tropical Mexico and return to the cold and dreary Pacific Northwest. She just finished a satphone call to her folks back home, who informed her that it was raining and the temps were in the low 40s." Bill Crowley (*As soon as we got to Puerto Vallarta, it was grey as grey could be, and we had a night and morning of heavy rain from a weather depression. But it was warm rain and the future looks warm and dry.*)

- "She's frustrated because she dropped the phone in one of those giant margaritas at the Mango Bar." Steve Taylor

- "Jane just learned about her \$3,000 phone bill — like the one I got in 1996." Carl Mischka (*Must have been a lot of 'butt calls'. Prepaid time reduces the likelihood of ultra-excessive bills.*)

And in our opinion, the two best responses:

- "She's frustrated because she can't log on to *healthcare.gov*." Edward Hart (*Funny and topical, but Jane is Canadian, so all she needs to do is not leave Canada for more than six months a year and she has free health care.*)

- "Jane just found out she was using her satphone and not *Profligate's*." Moontide (*Very funny.*)

For our more detailed opinions on the Spot Global Phone versus the Iridium sat phone for offshore sailors, see this month's *Letters*.

— richard

## socrates to receive blue water medal

During her brief stop in the Bay last month, Jeanne Socrates received the good news that the Cruising Club of America will be awarding her the prestigious Blue Water Medal for her nonstop solo circumnavigation. Socrates left Victoria, BC, on October 22 aboard her Najad 380 *Nereida* and returned on July 8, making her the first woman to solo circumnavigate nonstop from the West Coast of North America, as well as (unofficially) the oldest woman to accomplish the feat.

The deed of gift for the award, which was first given in 1923, stipulates that it be awarded annually "for a most meritorious example of seamanship, the recipient to be selected from among the amateurs of all nations." Most meritorious indeed!

Jeanne will be presented with the coveted medal at the CCA's annual awards dinner on March 7 at the New York YC. In the meantime, she can be found picking her way down the West Coast to Mexico, where she plans to cruise in company with friends, even occasionally bringing guests aboard from time to time. Though she's not planning any more assaults on world sailing records, she'll continue blogging at [www.svnereida.com](http://www.svnereida.com).



**Jeanne Socrates got the news while she was visiting San Francisco Bay.**

LATITUDE / LADONNA

— ladonna

## express sailor rescued on bay

It's more a matter of preparation that Wolfgang Stehr is alive today and less a matter of luck — not that luck didn't play a part in the drama that unfold on San Francisco Bay on November 16. What started out as a terrific singlehanded daysail aboard his Express 27 *Summer Palace* turned into a potential tragedy.

"It was a perfect day," recalls Stehr. Fifteen-knot winds offered the perfect opportunity for the experienced racer to set the chute on star-

board tack, but when he went to jibe onto port tack, he wasn't able to complete the maneuver. "After tripping the pole, I couldn't connect the port spinnaker sheet in time and the boat went out of control."

Stehr decided to douse the now thrashing spinnaker into the cockpit on the leeward side, but as he started pulling it down, the halyard somehow got jammed. Holding onto the majority of the spinnaker, he jibed the boat onto port in hopes of he could move a little farther forward to get a better angle from which to get the chute down. Unfortunately, as he moved forward, the boat jibed back onto starboard and the boom knocked him overboard.

Though he wasn't tethered in, Stehr was wearing an inflatable PFD, plus he was still holding onto the bulk of the spinnaker. "I tried to get back

**A combination of preparation and luck helped Wolfgang Stehr survive his own solo overboard incident.**

on the boat but it was moving too fast," he says. *Summer Palace's* two to three knots of boat speed was too great for him to gain enough traction to climb aboard. On top of that, as he was going over, something in his knee gave out. "At least I put it in cold water right away," he laughs.

But his situation was no laughing matter. He was holding onto the lifelines being dragged by his boat and unable to get back aboard, not even from the transom. It was grueling, even for someone who'd just competed in an Olympic triathlon earlier in the year. "After about 10-15 minutes of trying to get aboard, I started getting cold and exhausted," he says. As a physician, he knew he was starting to suffer from hypothermia so he pulled out the handheld VHF from his foulie pocket and called a *mayday*. "It was really hard to do one-handed while trying to hang onto the boat."

Little did he know that the Larkspur ferry *Sonoma* had seen his boat in distress and came alongside to offer assistance. The crew quickly lowered a ladder from the ferry's hull and Stehr had a decision to make. "It was a hard thing to do, but the hypothermia had gained over the fear of losing my boat," he recalls. "As I saw that ladder come down, I was ready to let the boat go." He was pulled to safety by the *Sonoma's* crew as hundreds of people lined the deck taking photos (see the November 20 *Lectronic* for video).

Stehr was taken to St. Francis Hospital and treated for mild hypothermia. He says that, while he can walk, the ACL in his left knee is torn and might need surgery.

In retrospect, Stehr says he'd do a few things differently. "It happened so fast and was so unexpected," he says, "that I think it's important to think about what could go wrong before it does, and to have a plan or three already in mind. In this case, I set the spinnaker in conditions at the upper limit of my skills, after not having singlehanded the kite for six months. I got too focused on dousing it, and didn't take the time to properly assess the situation and weigh my options, such as letting the sail flog or cutting it down."

continued on outside column of next sightings page

ppj

interviewed for profiles in the magazine. They also may attend the annual three-day Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous (July 4-6), and each boat's detailed safety info will be held in a master database that is made available to Search & Rescue agencies if emergencies occur.

But the factor that boosts the PPJ roster to over 200 boats each year is that registrants are eligible to participate in a specially priced package offered by

MISSY STEHR WOOD



**— cont'd**

a Tahitian yacht agency, which gives them clearance in and out, duty-free fuel beginning in the Marquesas (\$2/gal savings) and exemptions from having to pay the dreaded repatriation bonds for every member of the crew. (Otherwise the value of a plane ticket home must be held in a bank in cash until departure.)

Learn more about the rally at [www.pacificpuddlejumps.com](http://www.pacificpuddlejumps.com),

— andy

**rescue — cont'd**

Stehr credits the Safety at Sea course he'd attended at San Francisco YC the weekend before for teaching him new survival skills, such as staying with the boat, hooking his elbow around the lifeline instead of trying to hold on with wet and cold fingers, keeping a waterproof handheld VHF in his pocket and learning how to swim with an inflated PFD (on your back). He also was dressed appropriately for the conditions and wearing his PFD with leg straps.

But there are plenty of things he plans to do differently in the future. "Carry waterproof emergency contact info on your body because the wet cell phone in your pocket will be useless and your memory will

continued on outside column of next sightings page

***'Strega' lost two crew overboard during a November midwinter race when the windward lifeline broke. Both held on and were quickly hauled back aboard.***



# SIGHTINGS

## rescue — cont'd

deceive you if you're suffering from hypothermia. While you're at it, keep important stuff — your ID, Vessel Assist/insurance card, cash, a car key — in a Ziploc in a coat pocket, and leave your wallet and other stuff at home."

Stehr also advises everyone to keep a towel and a set of dry clothes aboard at all times. "If I'd been able to get back on the boat, I would have been too wet, cold and exhausted to do anything but call for help." A quick-release ladder on the transom would have helped him climb aboard, even with an injured knee.

continued on outside column of next sightings page

## a sailor and

Singing sea shanties at the top of his lungs, John Lennon seemed oblivious to the danger that lay before him as he steered the *Megan Jaye* through raging 20-ft waves and gale-force winds en route from Newport, RI to St. George's, Bermuda. Having just realized a lifelong dream to learn how to sail, Lennon likely never imagined it would come to this. It was 1980, just months before his life



**The From Here to Eternity Kissing Contest is a much-loved tradition at the annual Baja Ha-Ha beach party in Cabo San Lucas. The idea is to imitate the passionate embrace between Burt Lancaster and Deborah Kerr that helped to make the film 'From Here to Eternity' an enduring favorite.**

**Unfortunately that famous black and white flick was made in 1953, so most contest participants have never actually seen it. But as you'll see here, they use their imaginations.**

**In the film, Lancaster and Kerr embrace and lock lips on a Hawaiian beach just above the shore break, where foamy wavelets barely splash across them. The classic mistake that uninitiated smoochers make is this: The guy will lift his lover in his arms, stroll out into chest-deep water and plop her into the surf where she's lucky if she doesn't swallow a gallon of sea water. Needless to say, the whole exercise can be pretty hilarious.**

**This year's winners were Wayne Hendryx and Carol Baggerly of the Brisbane-based Hughes 42 'Capricorn Cat' — seen at far right warming up for their amorous plunge. You'll find a complete recap of this year's rally on page 80.**

— andy

## a walrus

would tragically end, and Lennon was happier than ever.

It isn't too far-fetched to assume that Lennon fans the world over have heard about his voyage to Bermuda and the creative and fun-filled days he spent with his son, Sean. It's also where he wrote *Double Fantasy* after a five-year hiatus from both recording and the public eye.

continued in middle column of next sightings page

## rescue — cont'd

"But most importantly, people need to ask for and accept help early, because things can go bad very quickly," he adds. "Nurse Abby Day, a passenger on the *Sonoma*, convinced me of that."

In the meantime, Stehr wants to extend his profound thanks to Captain David Noble and his crew aboard the *Sonoma*, Medic 87 from SFFD and Coast Guard personnel who worked with Vessel Assist to safely tow *Summer Palace* to Treasure Island Marina. But for all their help, if Stehr hadn't been as prepared as he was for the possibility of going overboard, this story might have had a very different ending.

— *ladonna*



## announcing the pac cup village

Bay Area racers know about Richmond YC's great regatta parties — think Great Pumpkin and Big Daddy. So how about a party that starts before the race and lasts a whole week?

RYC's latest social-racing calendar addition is the Pacific Cup Village for participants in the 2014 Pacific Cup Race to Hawaii. It will be



LATITUDE ARCHIVES

*The parties won't be just on the tropical end of the course.*

the first time the Pac Cup will have structured social activities, other than the pre-race seminars and skipper's meeting, on this side of the starting line.

"We want to put some fun and relaxation into the often-frantic rush to accomplish last-minute preparation for the race, as well as to provide logistical services to the competitors, especially those from out of town, in concentration," says RYC's Tim Knowles.

Pacific Cup YC and RYC organizers obviously know their market. Boats on the already 70-strong race entry list hail from Australia, Fiji, the Pacific Northwest and Southern California, and will come from all over the Pacific to join Bay Area competitors.

Village festivities and facilities are planned for the week before the first start, as boats arrive

and competitors complete final preparations for the sequenced division starts beginning July 6.

The RYC marina will accommodate berthing and dry storage for as many out-of-area boats as possible provided they are no more than 55 feet long and draw no more than 10 feet. Space is on a first-come, first-served basis. On land, RYC is providing its permanent facilities, plus a large tent for competitors, friends and family to take a break from boat prep or check out race sponsors like Alaska Airlines and Sonnen BMW. The large tent will accommodate support services and a concierge table staffed by RYC volunteers, and will supplement the club's entertainment facilities at night.

RYC volunteers are organizing continental breakfasts, and lunch will be provided most days by the RYC galley or food trucks. Evening food, be it dinner or heavy appetizers, will be offered at most, if not all, of the evening events.

Entertainment will range from a relatively quiet opening evening with music and RYC's legendary appetizers, to evening talks on topics like last-minute prep, weather and strategy, or steering at night under spinnaker.

And since beer can races are such a part of the yacht club's pedigree, Knowles hopes that some Pac Cup entrants will join the Big Bad-Ass beer can race and traditional RYC post-race fun.

There will also be a July 4 BBQ and annual firing of expired flares (and San Francisco fireworks viewing, fog permitting), perhaps another evening of dance music, and the traditional Pac Cup Skippers' Meeting and Bon Voyage party with appetizers, Tahitian music and Tahitian dancers.

Race sponsors are coming to the party, too, which means that competitors who stop by the Village are the real winners. For example, Alaska Airlines will raffle four round-trip tickets to anywhere Alaska flies, while Sonnen BMW is providing vehicles for shuttle rides and a Ride and Drive event. Sonnen is also providing BMW Sport shirts for the skippers.

Knowing where to find marine supplies, services and even provisions can be an issue for out-of-town participants, so the club is partnering with marine businesses so racers can place orders from the Village, which suppliers will fill and deliver the next morning. Marine services like electronics, rigging, sails and so on, are also being coordinated so racers have prompt responses to calls for help.

continued on outside column of next sightings page

## lennon

But for sailors who don't know every gritty detail about Lennon's life, this might have the ring of the unexpected. John Lennon the sailor?

Lennon and a small crew set sail to Bermuda in idyllic conditions, only to face gale-force winds. Each of the crew, save for Captain Halsted and Lennon, succumbed to seasickness, forcing Halsted to take the helm for 48 hours straight. He eventually taught Lennon to helm the 43-foot Hinckley in the incredible seas.



**— cont'd**

Halsted recounts coming up for his shift to find Lennon singing songs. After six tumultuous days at sea, the crew arrived in Bermuda with only minor damage to the boat and Lennon knowing that he'd accomplished his lifelong dream of learning to sail.

A new app has been released detailing the lyrics he wrote and the pictures he drew during part of the cruise. Find it at [www.lennonbermudatapes.com](http://www.lennonbermudatapes.com).

— ross

**pac cup — cont'd**

There's even a mobile app to provide instant information about RYC services and events, local services, marine services and suppliers, sponsors, and direct access to parts of the Pacific Cup website. This will be rolled out in June. (A similar app will be created for the Kaneohe YC logistics.)

"Kaneohe YC does an outstanding job of entertaining folks at the finish when the work is done," Knowles says. "We want the Village to provide this end of the race with some of the same entertainment and fun during the work, and also supply as many logistical aids as we can."

If this is the final incentive you need to sign up for the 2014 Pac Cup, it's not too late. But there are just a couple spaces left as of this writing, so act fast! Complete entry info is at [www.pacificcup.org](http://www.pacificcup.org).



Happy

Holidays

from the crew at

Latitude 38