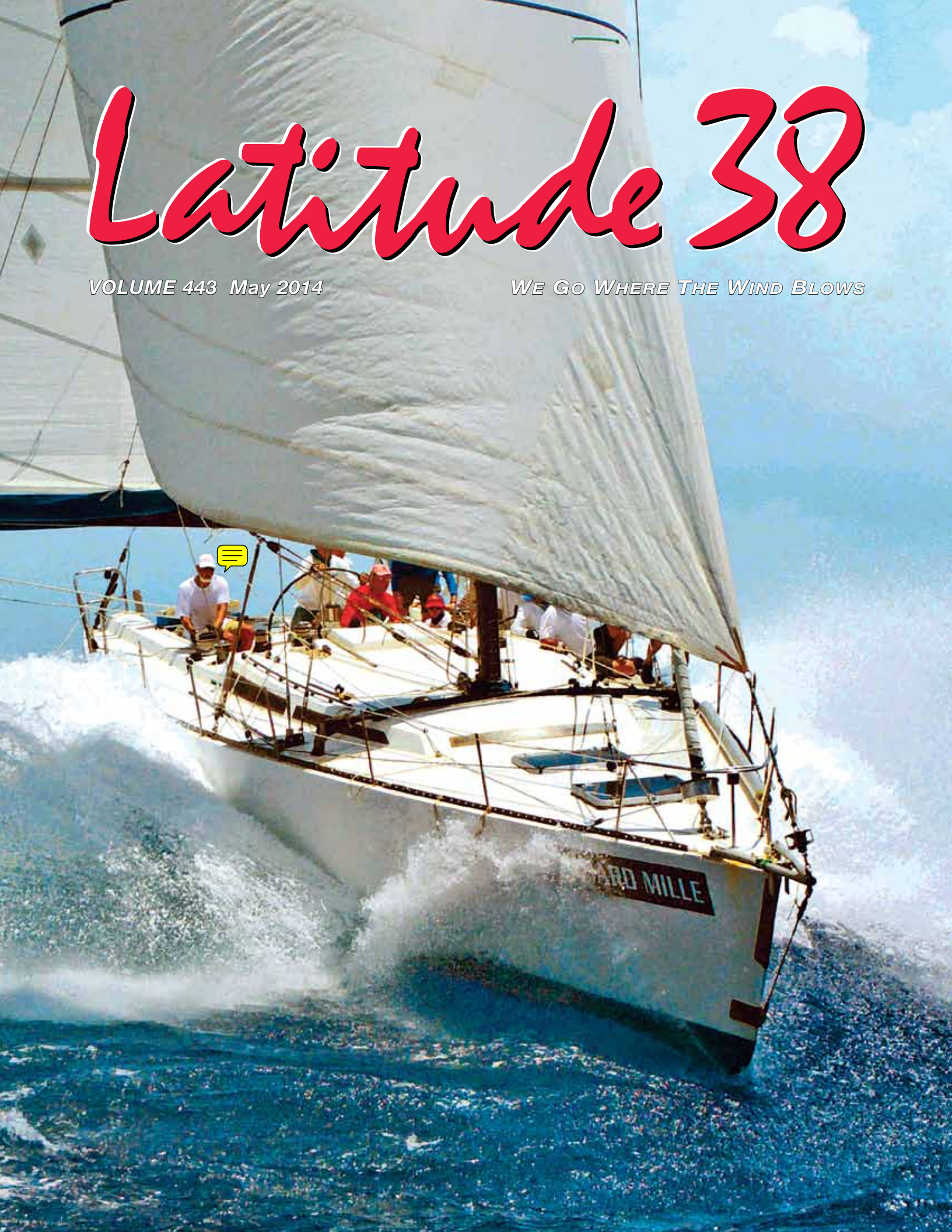


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VOLUME 443 May 2014

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Blue Pelican Marine	140
Boat Yard at Grand Marina, The...	28
Marchal Sailmakers	109
MarineLube	99
New Era Yachts.....	144
Pacific Crest Canvas.....	32
Pacific Yacht Imports	20
Alameda Canvas and Coverings	
Alameda Marine Metal Fabrication	
UK Sailmakers	

Staying Power

PHOTO JAY AILWORTH



*Sojourn**

Bruce and Bridget Eastman sailed their Alberg 35, *Sojourn*, to Mexico, starting in 2013 with the ever-popular Baja Ha-Ha, and they have cruised to a lot of harbors since: Manzanillo, La Cruz in Banderas Bay, Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, and up and down the Sea of Cortez.

While washing the salt off of their sails in La Cruz de Huanacastle Marina, a fellow Pineapple Sails customer stopped by for a chat and suggested they send a photo of their boat flying their 10-year-old Pineapple Sails to Kame Richards, Pineapple's owner and sail designer.

A "sojourn" is a temporary stay. And the Eastmans have enjoyed staying in exciting places as they cruise their Alberg. Their Pineapple sails have served them well, with real staying power, built to last and perform.

Not many things in today's world are built to last, but Bruce and Bridget's 1963 Alberg 35 and their suit of Pineapple Sails, built in 2003, prove it can be done.

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CONTENTS

subscriptions	6
calendar	10
letters	22
sightings	70
youth access to sailing	84
mexorc 2014	88
webb chiles sets sail	94
st. barth bucket	96
ppj profiles, pt. II	100
max ebb: posh flight	106
the racing sheet	110
world of chartering	114
changes in latitudes	118
classy classifieds	132
brokerage	142
advertisers' index	143

Cover: Former Northern Californian Steve Schmidt's *Hotel California, Too*, the only cruising version of a Santa Cruz 70 ever built, takes a dive into the warm blue waters of the Caribbean during the just-completed Voiles de St. Barth. She hit an all-time best of 22 knots, which isn't bad for a 70 with a mast 15-ft shorter than normal and flying just a Dacron main and 135% reacher.

Photo: Latitude 38 / Richard

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

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CALENDAR

Non-Race

May 2-4 — South Bay Opening Day at the Port of Redwood City. Saturday's activities include the blessing of the fleet and decorated boat parade, followed by awards for the parade. Meals on all three days at various South Bay yacht clubs. Info, www.southbayopeningday.org.

May 3 — Opening Day on Merced's Lake Yosemite. LYSA, www.lakeyosemitesailing.org.

May 3 — Marine Swap Meet at Martinez Marina, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Browse, buy or sell - it's free. Info, (925) 313-0942.

May 3 — Nautical Swapmeet, Owl Harbor Marina, 9 a.m.-noon. Free space and free entry. Part of the Delta Loop Fest. Space reservations, (916) 777-6055 or info@owlharbor.com.

May 3 — Chantey Sing aboard *Balclutha* at Hyde Street Pier in San Francisco, 8 p.m.-midnight. Dress warmly; bring a mug for hot cider served from the ship's galley. Free. Reservations required, (415) 561-7171.

May 3 — Cinco de Mayo Party/Open House at Encinal YC, 3-5 p.m. Info, (510) 522-3272 or www.encinal.org.

May 3-31 — Boating Skills & Seamanship classes presented by USCG Auxiliary Flotilla #12-3 at St. Edward School in Newark, held on four Saturdays. \$60 includes book. Additional family members half price. Bruce, (510) 468-8013 or ronoffline-0407@yahoo.com.

May 4-25 — Veterans Go Sailing, every Sunday, 10 a.m.; followed by Sunday Sail, noon, at Pier 40 in SF, courtesy of BAADS. Free. Info, (415) 281-0212 or www.baads.org.

May 5, 12, 19 — San Diego's South Bay Sea Scouts meet at Chula Vista Marina aboard the schooner *Bill of Rights* on Mondays at 6 p.m. Sea Scouts is a program of the Boy Scouts of America for guys and gals ages 13-20. Nate, (717) 654-3797 or n8kraft@gmail.com.

May 7-28 — 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.stfyc.com.

May 8, June 12 — Are you a single boatowner needing crew? The Single Sailors Association has crew to help sail your boat. Monthly meeting at Ballena Bay YC in Alameda, 6:30 p.m. Info, www.singlesailors.org or (510) 239-7245.

May 9 — Delta Doo Dah Kickoff Party at Berkeley YC, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Door prizes, guest speakers, no-host bar and buffet dinner (cash only). Meet fellow Doo-ers and form mini-flotillas! Chris, (415) 383-8200 x103 or www.deltadoodah.com.

May 9 — Open House at Encinal YC, 6-8 p.m. Info, (510) 522-3272 or www.encinal.org.

May 11 — Take Mom for a sail on Mother's Day.

May 13 — 'Adventures with Orcas in the North Pacific', a presentation by Erich Hoyt at the Bay Theater, Aquarium of the Bay, at Pier 39 in SF. Reception at 5:30, program at 6:30. \$10. Info, www.bay.org/aquarium-of-the-bay or (415) 623-5300.

May 14 — Go for a sail under the full moon on a Wednesday, a popular night for beer can races (see pages 16-18).

May 17 — US Sailing Race Management Seminar, led by Jeff Zarwell at Monterey Peninsula YC. Info, www.mpyc.org.

May 17 — Nautical Swap Meet, Marina Bay Yacht Harbor in Richmond, 8 a.m.-noon. Vendor spaces available. Info, (510) 236-1013 or info@mbyachtharbor.com.

May 17 — Art, Wine and Jazz at Encinal YC. Info, (510) 522-3272 or www.encinal.org.

May 17-18 — Women's Sailing Seminar, Corinthian YC, Tiburon. Info, (415) 435-4771 or www.cyc.org.

May 18 — Safety at Sea Seminar at Encinal YC. US Sailing-certified to satisfy the education requirements for a U.S.



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May 18, June 15 — Open House/Introductory Sail at Cal Sailing Club in Berkeley, 1-4 p.m. Info, www.cal-sailing.org.

May 20, 1984 — Marvin Creamer, 68, sailed into National Park, NJ, aboard his 35-ft cutter, *Global Star*, completing a solo circumnavigation with no navigation equipment. As reported in *Sightings*, "We're not talking about fancy gizmos like Loran, SatNav and Omega. We're talking about without a compass, a sextant, and a knotmeter." The retired professor's intention was to prove that it was possible to navigate around the world using just the stars and wave patterns to sense direction, and bubbles passing the hull to judge speed.

May 31 — Open House at Encinal YC, 1-4 p.m. Info, (510) 522-3272 or www.encinal.org.

May 31 - June 1 — Singlehanded TransPac Cruise-In to Richmond YC for show and tell. Info, www.sfbaysss.org/shtp.

June 7 — Join the crew of *Gilligan's Island* for the Educational Tall Ship and Call of the Sea annual fundraiser at the Marine Educational Campus, Bay Model, Sausalito, 6-10 p.m. Info, (800) 401-7835 or www.callofthesea.org.

June 7 — The National Women's Sailing Association's annual Women's Sailing Conference, Corinthian YC in Marblehead, MA. Info, www.womensailing.org.

June 9-11 — Paddle to the Sea sailing legs from Stockton to Berkeley, with overnight stops at Brannan Island and Benicia. Benefits the Tuolumne River Trust's work in river education, watershed restoration, and Rim Fire recovery. \$30/day registration plus \$100 minimum fundraising. Info, www.paddletothesea.org.

June 11 — Final Singlehanded TransPac race seminar 'Weather/Race Strategy', including discussion of the pre-race weather GRIBs. Oakland YC, 7:30 p.m. Free and open to the public. Info, www.sfbaysss.org.

June 14 — Aqueous Parade for the Bay, for swimmers, rowers, sailors, kayakers and SUPs, from Aquatic Park to AT&T Park, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. After Party follows. A benefit for Baykeepers; registration fee \$100-\$200, plus fundraising. Info, www.baykeeper.org/bayparade.

June 14-15 — MarinaFest, Channel Islands Harbor. Free admission. Info, (805) 984-3366 or www.cih-marinafest.com.

June 15 — Take Dad for a sail on Father's Day.

Racing

May 3 — Spring #1 on the Cityfront. YRA, www.yra.org.

May 3 — Round the Rocks. SSS, www.sfbaysss.org.

May 3 — Small Boat Races #2. EYC, www.encinal.org.

May 3 — Small Keelboat Series #1. SFYC, www.sfyf.org.

May 3 — Frank Ballentine Race. CPYC, www.cpyc.com.

May 3 — Long Distance #2. SCC, www.stocktonsc.org.

May 3 — Shields Racing Clinic. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.

May 3, 10, 31 — Etchells Fleet Races. Fleet 12, www.sfetchells.org.

May 3, 18 & June 1 — Club races #3, #4 & #5. Gold Country YC, www.nccn.net/~gcyf.

May 3-4 — 40th Elvstrom Zellerbach and Laser District Championship. StFYC, www.stfyf.org.

May 3-4 — Commodore's Cup. Cal 20s & C15s on Saturday; Lasers & Optis on Sunday. HMBYC, www.hmbyc.org.

May 3-4 — Multihull Kick-Off. SCYC, www.scyc.org.

May 3-4 — PCCSC Team Race Championship at Stanford. Info, www.pccscracing.org.

May 4 — Spring Series #5. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

May 4 — Spring #5 & #6 PHRF. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.

May 4 & June 1 — Spring Series #1 & #2 on Fremont's Lake Elizabeth. FSC, www.fremontsailingclub.org.



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*Contact us for a complete list of T101 race results.



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CALENDAR

- May 10** — One Design #2. LWSC, www.lwsailing.org.
May 10 — Monterey Laser Fleet Championship. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.
May 10 — KBSC Series #2 on Clear Lake. Info, www.kbsail.com.
May 10 — Mercury Series #3. EYC, www.encinal.org.
May 10 — WBRA #2 on the OC. YRA, www.yra.org.
May 10 — OYRA #2 Duxship. YRA, www.yra.org.
May 10 — Flight of the Bulls for El Toros in Foster City. Info, www.eltoroyra.org.
May 10 — Interclub Series #2. EYC, www.jibeset.net.
May 10 — Gromeeke Round the Island. Los Gatos YC, www.losgatosyc.com.
May 10 — North Bay Series #2. VYC, www.vyc.org.
May 10 — Team Race Scrimmage. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.
May 10 & June 14 — Santana 22 Team Racing in Santa Cruz. SCYC, www.scyc.org.
May 17 — Singlehanded Farallones Race, a gateway drug to the Singlehanded TransPac. SSS, www.sfbaysss.org.
May 17 — Women Skippers Regatta. "No man's hand shall touch the helm." SYC, www.sausalitoyachtclub.com.
May 17 — Cal Cup #2. BYC, www.berkeleyyc.org.
May 17 — Summer #2. SeqYC, www.sequoiayc.org.
May 17 — Otter Cup, a 23.8-mile race from Moss Landing to Monterey and back. Elkhorn YC, www.elkhornyc.com.
May 17 — One Design Keelboats. SCYC, www.scyc.org.
May 17 — Behrens Regatta. TYC, www.tyc.org.
May 17 — Lady & the Tramp. FLYC, www.flyc.org.
May 17-18 — Elite Keel Regatta. SFYC, (415) 789-5647 or www.sfyyc.org.
May 17-18 — Phyllis Kleinman Swiftsure Regatta. StFYC, (415) 655-7756 or www.stfyc.com.
May 17-18 — PICYA Chispa Series & Youth Regatta. SeqYC, www.sequoiayc.org.
May 17-18 — BAYS #1 at PYSF in Redwood City. Info, www.bayarea-youthsailing.com.
May 17-18 — Spring Regatta, LYSA. Jerry, (559) 776-9429 or www.lakeyosemite.com.
May 17-18 — Balboa YC 66 (Fun) Series, with random-leg races and reverse-order starts, in Corona del Mar, Newport Beach. Info, www.balboayachtclub.com.
May 18 — Fremont Relays for El Toros on Lake Elizabeth. FSC, www.fremontsailingclub.org.
May 18 — Spring Series #6. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.
May 18 — Baxter/Judson Regatta race #2. PresYC, www.presidiyachtclub.org.
May 18 — Spring #5 & #6 One Design. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.
May 18 — Regatta for Hope. PHRF, Catalina 42, other one designs, ORCA, and cruiser/novice classes are invited to race in this benefit for City of Hope, hosted by Del Rey and Santa Monica Windjammers YCs. Norm, (424) 222-9206 or www.dryc.org.
May 23-24 — SFYC/MPYC Spinnaker Cup from SF Bay to Monterey. Info, (415) 789-5647 or www.sfyyc.org.
May 24 — Master Mariners Regatta, with a noon start on the SF Cityfront, a finish at Treasure Island, and an epic raft-up at Encinal YC. MMBA, www.mastermariners.org.
May 24 — Monster Race, Konocti Bay to Lakeport. KBSC, www.kbsail.com.
May 24-25 — 50th annual Whiskeytown Memorial Regatta. John Super, (415) 564-4779 or www.whiskeytownsailing.org.
May 24-25 — Memorial Day Regatta in Long Beach, with bay, ocean, and kiteboard courses. ABYC, www.abyc.org.
May 25 — SCORE Keelboat Regatta. SCYC, www.scyc.org.
May 30-June 1 — Woodies Invitational for Bear, Bird, Folkboat, IOD, and Knarr classes. StFYC, (415) 655-7756 or



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35' J/105 2001
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Contact: Alan Weaver



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CALENDAR

www.stfyc.com.

May 31 — Small Boat Series #3. EYC, www.encinal.org.

May 31 — Delta Ditch Run from Richmond to Stockton for PHRF and BAMA boats. RYC/SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

May 31 — Championship #2. CYC, www.cyc.org.

May 31 — YRA Spring #2, run by SYC. Info, www.yra.org.

May 31 — Small Keelboat #2. SFYC, www.sfyc.org.

May 31 — Shields Racing Day. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.

May 31 — LYSA Jack & Jill Race. Jerry, (559) 776-9429 or www.lakeyosemite sailing.org.

June 7-8 — Go for the Gold Regatta on Scotts Flat Lake near Nevada City. Gold Country YC, www.nccn.net/~gcy.

June 11-15 — EYC's Coastal Cup goes to Marina del Rey this year. John, jhemiu@yahoo.com or www.encinal.org.

June 12-15 — Laser North American Championship and US Sailing Singlehanded Championship in Long Beach. ABYC, www.abyc.org.

June 14-16 — Clear Lake Regatta and El Toro National Championship. KBSC, www.kbsail.com.

June 27-29 — Ullman Sails Long Beach Race Week, including the Catalina 37 National Championship, Farr 40 West Coast Championship, J/24 Western Regional Championship, Viper 640 Pacific Coast Championship, and J/Boats Southern California High Point Series. Info, www.lbrw.org.

June 28 — The Singlehanded TransPac departs San Francisco Bay for Hanalei Bay. Info, www.sfbaysss.org.

July 6-12 — The Pacific Cup departs San Francisco Bay for Kaneohe Bay. Info, www.pacificcup.org.

Summer Beer Can Series

BALLENA BAY YC — Friday Night Grillers: 5/2, 5/16, 5/30, 7/18, 8/1, 8/15, 8/29, 9/5, 9/19. Info, (510) 865-2511, race@bbyc.org or www.bbyc.org.

BAY VIEW BC — Monday Night Madness. Spring: 5/12, 5/26, 6/9, 6/23 (make-up). Arjan, (415) 310-8592 or www.bayviewboatclub.org.

BENICIA YACHT CLUB — Every Thursday night through 9/25. Joe, (707) 628-2914 or www.benicia yachtclub.com.

BERKELEY YC — Every Friday night through 9/26. Info, www.berkeleyyc.com.

CAL SAILING CLUB — Year-round Sunday morning dinghy races, typically in Laser Bahias and JY15s. Thursday evening JY15 races, weather and tides permitting, April-October. Must be a club member. Info, www.cal-sailing.org.

CORINTHIAN YC — Every Friday night through 8/29. Jim, (415) 847-2460, race@cyc.org or www.cyc.org.

COYOTE POINT YC — Every Wednesday night through 10/8. Info, (650) 347-6730, regatta@cpyc.com or www.cpyc.com.

ENCINAL YC — Friday night Spring Twilight Series on the Estuary: 5/2, 5/16, 6/6. Darrell, (510) 502-8110 or www.encinal.org.

FOLSOM LAKE YC — Wednesday nights through 8/27. Friday Night Summer Sunset Series: 5/16, 6/13, 7/18, 8/8. Info, www.flyc.org.

GOLDEN GATE YC — Friday nights: 5/2, 5/16, 5/30, 6/13, 6/27, 7/11, 7/25, 8/8, 8/22. Gary Salvo, (916) 215-4566 or www.ggyc.com.

ISLAND YC — Island Nights, Fridays on the Estuary: 5/9, 5/30, 6/13. John, (510) 521-2980, iycracing@yahoo.com or www.iyc.org.

KONOCTI BAY SC — Every Friday night: 6/6-8/29. OSIRs (Old Salts in Retirement) every Wednesday at noon. Brad, www.kbsail.com.

LAKE TAHOE WINDJAMMERS YC — Wednesday nights: 5/21-10/1. Steve, (530) 577-7715, ltwyc2@aol.com or

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CALENDAR

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LAKE WASHINGTON SC — Every Thursday night: May-August. Info, www.lwsailing.org.

LAKE YOSEMITE SA — Every Thursday night: May-August. Jerry, (559) 776-9429 or www.lakeyosemitesailing.org.

MONTEREY PENINSULA YC — Sunset Series. Every Wednesday night through 10/1; Summer Solstice Fiasco Race: 6/18. Victoria Model Yacht Series: every Friday night through 10/3. Juli, www.mpyc.org.

OAKLAND YC — Sweet 16 Spring Series. Every Wednesday night through 6/18. Jim Hild, (510) 277-4676, oyracecom@gmail.com or www.oaklandyachtclub.net.

RICHMOND YC — Wednesday nights: 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, 5/28, 6/4, 6/18, 6/25, 7/2, 7/9, 7/16, 7/23, 7/30, 8/6, 8/13, 8/20, 8/27, 9/3, 9/17, 9/24. Eric Arens, (510) 841-6022 or www.richmondyc.org.

ST. FRANCIS YC — Windsurfing Series, Friday nights: 5/2, 5/16, 5/30, 6/13, 6/27, 7/11, 7/25, 8/8, 9/5, 9/19. Kiteboarding Series, Thursday nights: 5/8, 5/22, 6/5, 6/19, 7/3, 7/10, 7/31, 8/14, 8/28, 9/4, 9/18. Wednesday Night Series: 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, 5/28, 6/4, 6/11, 6/18, 6/25, 8/6, 8/20, 8/27. Robbie Dean, (415) 563-6363, rdean@stfyc.com or www.stfyc.com.

SANTA CRUZ YC — Every Wednesday night through 10/29. Laser Friday Nights: 5/16, 6/20, 7/18, 8/15. Info, (831) 425-0690, scyc@scyc.org or www.scyc.org.

SAUSALITO YC — Tuesday night Spring Sunset Series: 5/13, 5/27, 6/10, 6/24. Nick, race@sausalitoyachtclub.org or www.sausalitoyachtclub.org.

SEQUOIA YC — Wednesday nights through 10/8. Hannig Cup: 8/27. Rick, (650) 255-5766 or www.sequoiayc.org.

SHORELINE LAKE AQUATIC CENTER — Lasers in Mountain View, every Wednesday night through 9/24. Roger, (408) 691-0214 or www.laser.org.

SOUTH BEACH YC — Friday Night Series: 5/2, 5/16, 5/30, 6/6, 6/20, 6/27, 7/18, 7/25, 8/1, 8/15, 8/22. Gerard, (415) 495-2295 or www.southbeachyc.org.

STOCKTON SC — Every Wednesday night: 6/4-8/27. Tom, (209) 604-1300 or www.stocktonsc.org.

TAHOE YC — Laser Series, every Monday night: 5/26-8/25. Rick, (530) 583-6070. Beer Can Series, every Wednesday night: 5/28-8/27. Dan, (530) 581-4700 or www.tahoeyc.com.

TIBURON YC — Every Friday night. Spring: 5/23-6/27. Jim, race@tyc.org or www.tyc.org.

TREASURE ISLAND SAILING CENTER — Svendsen's Thursday Night Series for Vanguard 15s and Lasers through 9/7. Tuesday Night Team Racing for V15s through 9/9. V15s, www.vanguard15.org; Lasers, www.tilaserfleet.org.

VALLEJO YC — Every Wednesday night through 9/24. Dave, (925) 580-1499 or www.vyc.org.

In the Tropics

Apr. 26-May 2 — Antigua Sailing Week is the granddaddy of all great sailing weeks in the tropics. Like us, she's become mellow with age. Info, www.sailingweek.com.

May 2-4 — Loreto Fest, organized by Hidden Port YC. This classic Baja event, started to clean up Puerto Escondido, draws a very large crowd of cruisers and land-travelers for lots of activities on and off the water. The goals are to have fun and raise lots of money for local Mexican charities. Info, www.hiddenportyachtclub.com.

May 7-12 — Tahiti Pearl Regatta. An interisland regatta where local sailors race and party with cruisers and bare-boaters. Courses are run around the Raiatea-Tahaa lagoon,

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CALENDAR

to Bora Bora, and back. Nightly parties, Polynesian music and dancing. Info, www.tahitipearlregatta.org.pf.

June 28-30 — Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous, hosted by *Latitude 38* and Tahiti Tourisme. Celebrate your successful arrival in French Polynesia and enjoy long-established Polynesian cultural traditions in music, dance, sport and cuisine. Info, www.pacificpuddlejumps.com.

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

May Weekend Tides

date/day	time/ht.	time/ht.	time/ht.	time/ht.
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
5/03Sat	0218/5.3	0906/-0.4	1635/4.4	2122/2.7
5/04Sun	0302/5.0	0954/-0.1	1730/4.3	2228/2.8
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
5/10Sat	0325/1.1	0929/4.0	1501/1.3	2142/5.3
5/11Sun	0403/0.6	1026/4.2	1541/1.5	2214/5.6
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
5/17Sat	0125/6.1	0806/-1.4	1526/4.7	2006/2.5
5/18Sun	0214/5.9	0856/-1.2	1620/4.8	2109/2.5
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
5/24Sat	0305/0.4	0924/4.3	1438/1.1	2124/6.1
5/25Sun	0357/-0.1	1030/4.4	1529/1.4	2205/6.2
5/26Mon	0443/-0.5	1129/4.5	1617/1.7	2243/6.2
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
5/31Sat	0108/5.6	0757/-0.7	1523/4.6	2003/2.7
6/01Sun	0147/5.4	0836/-0.5	1605/4.6	2054/2.8

May Weekend Currents

date/day	slack	max	slack	max
5/03Sat		0124/2.1F	0410	0728/4.1E
	1131	1430/3.0F	1801	2006/1.9E
	2335			
5/04Sun		0213/1.8F	0456	0816/3.7E
	1224	1525/2.7F	1855	2058/1.7E
5/10Sat		0141/3.2E	0538	0829/2.6F
	1122	1355/2.8E	1734	2030/2.9F
	2330			
5/11Sun		0223/3.7E	0618	0911/3.0F
	1213	1442/2.9E	1813	2105/3.0F
5/17Sat		0025/2.9F	0308	0637/5.4E
	1024	1327/4.1F	1701	1915/2.7E
	2219			
5/18Sun		0115/2.7F	0357	0727/5.1E
	1116	1420/3.8F	1755	2009/2.5E
	2321			
5/24Sat		0124/3.9E	0514	0815/3.2F
	1106	1344/2.9E	1711	2012/3.4F
	2306			
5/25Sun		0216/4.4E	0605	0910/3.7F
	1207	1442/2.8E	1800	2058/3.4F
	2349			
5/26Mon		0301/4.8E	0652	0958/4.0F
	1301	1532/2.8E	1847	2140/3.3F
5/31Sat		0016/2.5F	0303	0619/4.7E
	1018	1319/3.5F	1645	1854/2.2E
	2214			
6/01Sun		0057/2.2F	0342	0701/4.3E
	1059	1359/3.2F	1729	1938/2.1E
	2302			

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LETTERS

↑↓ THE STRIKE KNOCKED THE DOORS OFF THE HINGES

I was hired to be captain of the *Five Stars* yacht on the morning of March 31 for a short memorial. On the way back to Sausalito, two heavy rain squalls ripped through with 40-



STEPHANIE TEEL

knot winds. The 75-ft motoryacht actually heeled to starboard.

I was kind of getting a kick out of the wild weather — then all of a sudden there was a blinding white

Capt. Teel believes that 'Five Stars' took a direct lightning hit on San Francisco Bay.

flash in the wheelhouse and thunder that sounded as though a bomb went off! The strike shook the yacht so violently that it knocked the interior cabinet doors off their hinges!

When we got back to the dock and secured the boat, my



COURTESY STEPHANIE TEEL

crew and I went around and saw evidence that we'd actually been hit by lightning: the starboard quarter of the teak transom platform had been burned, and pieces of charred fiberglass and wood were scattered around the deck. The daughter of the deceased said her mother had always made a grand entrance. I guess she went out the same way.

In all my years of sailing and working in the Bay, I never heard of a boat or anything being directly struck by lightning.

Capt. Stephanie Teel.

In the future, we may have to look into static wicks, such as are used on airplanes. The Bay Bridge was also hit by a cluster of lightning!

Captain Stephanie Teel

Five Stars

Schoonmaker Marina, Sausalito

Capt. Teel — While boats get hit by lightning all the time in the summer in Mexico, Central America, and the Southeast United States, it also happens on San Francisco Bay. Just not very often, thank goodness.

↑↓ THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Not to be a stick-in-the-mud, but there should be an eleventh commandment added to the Ten Commandments of Beer Can Racing. That commandment should read: Thou shalt have a designated driver for after the race or at the yacht club.

I'm not a priss as, having been a sailor and surfer since I was 13, I used to think that salt water and alcohol went hand-in-hand. But nobody needs a 'barging' or 'pitchpole' after fun on the water or in the club.

I'm currently boatless, but I still try to surf at least three times a week.

Keith Dekker

Los Osos

Keith — We'll drink to that — but only because we're driving a computer and not a boat or vehicle.

↑↓ THE ANSWER IS EVERYTHING

Prior to doing our circumnavigation, we cruised the Pacific Northwest. It remains one of our favorite cruising grounds.

We left San Francisco on June 28, after waiting a couple



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LETTERS

of weeks for a weather window. We managed to make it to Port Angeles on July 3. We motored most of the way, but we did manage to fly a spinnaker rounding Cape Mendocino — only to have it torn to shreds after a couple of hours. We knew we were farther north when they had to wait to start the Port Angeles Fourth of July fireworks until 10:30 p.m.



LATITUDE / ANDY

The Pacific Northwest isn't just isolated anchorages and small towns.

because it wasn't dark enough before then.

We spent the next three months on the inside and outside of Vancouver Island, and thoroughly enjoyed the people and the environment. I know it can be a battle going up the coast from San Francisco, but we thought the rewards

were definitely worth it.

Our introduction to Canada was using a telephone at the end of the dock to call up Customs and give them our pertinent details. After getting these, they told us to have a wonderful stay.

Barkley Sound, which is also called the Emerald Sea, and Hot Springs Cove, should be on every cruiser's Bucket List.

By the way, two of us agree that the best part of Robert Redford's *All is Lost* movie was the dialogue.

Jim & Kent Milski
Sea Level, Schionning 49
On the Move, Planet Earth

Readers — We received many responses to our 'What is So Great About Cruising in the Pacific Northwest?' question, but simply didn't have room this month for more than a few. More next month.

↑ FEW PLACES CAN MATCH THE PNW FOR CRUISING

I'll tell you what I liked about the Pacific Northwest. I lived — and sailed — in San Francisco for about 14 years, and kept my boat in Alameda, even after moving to Seattle (via Ohio and New Jersey).

Imagine the summertime climate of the Delta, with lots of open water. And lots of islands. And 68 state parks. Yes, it rains a lot in Seattle, but one of the best-kept secrets is that the rain stops in late June or early July and doesn't start again until September. In fact, all summer is kind of like those amazing weekends in September/October on the Bay: sunny, cloudless, light winds, temps in the high 70s to 80s, but with hundreds of beaches, harbors, parks, and coastal towns to explore. And you can fish for steelhead or drop a trap and haul in Dungeness crab.

From Seattle, you can day-cruise to Kingston, find a slip — even with a trimaran — with no hassle, and walk into town for an ice cream cone or a sweet crêpe. For longer cruises, you can go to a place like Roche Harbor in the San Juans, where marina tenants can use the pool — nice if the water is chilly. Or sail to Canada — it takes about two hours from most mainland jumping-off points — and sample the cider and enjoy the company of the friendliest of Canadians.

I cruised on my boat for a month in the Bahamas. If I were a lot wealthier, I'd return every year. But for people living in the Bay Area with sub-Ellison lifestyles, you can't beat \$89 each way to Seattle. For racing, you cannot do better

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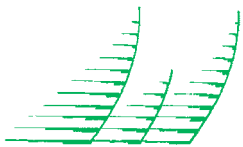
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LETTERS

than the San Francisco Bay. For cruising, few places in the world, can match the Pacific Northwest.

Bill Quigley
Tatiana, Farrier 32
Seattle, WA

↑↓ PLAN CAREFULLY OR YOU'LL GO BACKWARD

Patty and I sailed from Hawaii to the Pacific Northwest in June 1989 and spent about two months cruising the San Juan and Gulf Islands with Canadian friends — who actually sailed out to meet us off Cape Flattery at midnight at the end of our 17-day passage. We made it as far north as Octopus Island, which is above 50 degrees north.

The Pacific Northwest is certainly different from the South Pacific, but quite wonderful. It seemed as though we were sailing in the Sierra, but at sea level. As for the currents, you'd better plan your passage carefully or you'll end up going backward.

Bill Meanley
Dolphin, Pacific Seacraft 37
San Diego

↑↓ A PNW THUMBNAIL REVIEW

Here's my thumbnail review of the Pacific Northwest.

The San Juan Islands: There are lots of navigational deci-



LADONNA BUBAK

sions as there are big tides, and great public islands with mooring buoys and hiking trails. The wind is light during the summer months, so don't expect to sail all the time. Good towns and marinas. Many delightful coves and anchorages.

Close to Victoria. The Gulf Islands are along the east side of Vancouver Island. They are like the San Juans, but a bit wilder and less visited, and have fewer good moorages. But interesting towns.

The West Coast of Vancouver Island is for the adventurous only! This is serious sailing in prevailing northerlies with summer fog. But it's great, with wild inlets and coves.

Desolation Sound and north offers unlimited exploring in a lightly populated area. Huge tides. Some warm swimming waters, and bears on the beach. Lots of motoring.

Steve Bunnell
Sputnik, Moore 24
Seattle

↑↓ MINIMIZING THE NEED FOR 'GOOD LUCK'

I'm writing from the not-quite-frozen flatlands of the Midwest, and saw the brief piece about me in an April *Lectronic*.

I appreciate the wishes that I have "good luck," and know that chance plays a part in all voyages but, as in all other aspects of life, I try to prepare both the boat and myself so that we do not need 'good luck' to succeed. The only thing that could make us fail is extremely bad luck.

I'll be heading back to my Moore 24 in California soon. I'll be taking the train because I want to feel the distance across the land. You can't do that on a plane.

Before I set sail around the world on the Moore, I have a few things to do, including fitting the gudgeons for an emergency rudder and provisioning. But I'll be away before



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LETTERS

long. I'll keep you posted.

Webb Chiles
Gannet, Moore 24
Illinois

Readers — Chiles has famously circumnavigated five times



LATITUDE/RICHARD

Webb Chiles believes less in luck and more in preparation.

under sail already, including with an 18-ft open boat. This time he plans to sail to Hilo, nonstop to French Polynesia, then nonstop to New Zealand. After that, he'll decide whether to sail the rest of the way around the world, via Cape Horn, with his little ultralight. If he makes a sixth circum-

navigation, it will match the number of times he's been married. It's interesting to compare the approach of Chiles to that of Rimas Meleshyus, another sailor attempting to circumnavigate with a 24-footer. (See our interview with Webb on page 94.)

↑↓ ALL THE VOICES IN YOUR HEAD

In the Wanderer's March 17 *Lectronic* report from St. Barth, he wrote, "This year our musical ritual has been starting the morning with a couple of 'Glorias'. We start with Vivaldi's powerful *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, and then we follow it up with Van



LATITUDE/RICHARD

Dawn in the Caribbean is a special event that calls for special music.

Morrison's rockin' *G-L-O-R-I-A*. We suppose that's going from the sacred to the profane, but it's an invigorating musical trip." Noting that his knowledge of classical music is slim, the Wanderer asked for some help in picking "additional classical selections that might be appropriate for soft, pink-clouded mornings in the tropics." I don't have any classical music selections for the Wanderer, but he should definitely add Laura Branigan's *Gloria* to his 'Gloria' playlist. I've always liked the song — although I have found it almost impossible to dance to.

Eric Artman
Corinthian YC

Eric — Excellent suggestion! Branigan's is now the third of the 'Glorias' we play each morning. She had some pipes. Her signature song *Gloria* stayed on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 for 36 weeks, at the time a record for a female artist. As someone who writes, we not only appreciate how Branigan belted the song out in her husky alto, but also the lyrics which, because they are snarky, are in direct opposition to the decidedly upbeat music:

If everybody wants you, why isn't anybody callin'?

You don't have to answer

Leave them hangin' on the line, oh-oh-oh, calling Gloria

Gloria (Gloria), I think they got your number (Gloria)

I think they got the alias (Gloria) that you've been living under (Gloria)

But you really don't remember, was it something that they said?



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LETTERS

All the voices in your head calling, Gloria?" Branigan died from an undiagnosed cerebral aneurysm in 2004 at age aged 47. A pity.

↑↓STICK THAT IN YOUR HORN

You want classical? Try Mozart's horn concertos.

Mike Mellon
Santa Cruz

Mike — Thanks to you, we have. We're loving Mozart's Horn Concerto No. 4 in E Flat.

↑↓PASSING INTO THE SUNSET WITH NO REGRETS

I enjoyed your description of listening to Vivaldi's *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* in the morning, as well as Van Morrison's *Gloria*. You asked for sundowner music.

For what it's worth, it has been my practice on all of my recent passages to listen to *Ode to Joy* at dawn, and Samuel Barber's *Agnus Dei* (adagio for strings) at sunset. Find a good chorale version — it is sublime for sunset at sea.

I like to believe that the music makes me born again to each new day and its wonder, and allows me to pass into the darkness with the sun at sunset with no regrets.

Tim Palmatier
Shoofly, Barnett 41
Sausalito

↑↓TAKE THAT, JOHN, PAUL, GEORGE AND RINGO!

Pachelbel's very restful and beautiful *Canon in D* has always been a favorite. *Wikipedia* says Pachelbel's *Canon* was sampled frequently by pop groups in the 1990s for commercial hits such as the Pet Shop Boys cover of *Go West*, Coolio's *C U When U Get There* and Green Day's *Basket Case*.

Lorianna Kastrop
Goose, Catalina 30
South Beach Harbor, San Francisco

Lorianna — Thanks to your recommendation — and that of many other readers — Canon in D is now in heavy rotation on our cat.

We suppose it shouldn't be a surprise that pop groups sample the heck out of classical music. Consider Procol Harum's Whiter Shade of Pale, an anthem of 1967 that has been the most played song in public in the U.K. in the last 75 years. A Whiter Shade's haunting instrumental melody comes from several Bach pieces, most notably Air on G String, which other readers have recommended, and which we're also enjoying.

↑↓WATER MUSIC FOR ON-THE-WATER MUSIC

Try Handel's *Water Music* (of course). When Tim and Karen Stapleton left for Mexico aboard their Islander 36 *Misfit* in the 1980s, I gave them the cassette of *Water Music*. When Tim got back a year or two later, he said had been their favorite tape.

Water Music has an interesting history, as it was the result of Handel's ride down the Thames on the Royal Barge. He tried to compose music that would sound like the rise and fall of the tidal Thames. If you listen, I think you'll agree that he succeeded.

Handel's rousing *Music for the Royal Fireworks* is another great way to start the day. Mozart's *Jupiter* symphony will also get you going.

John Skoriak
Sausalito

John — Got them all. Lovin' them all.

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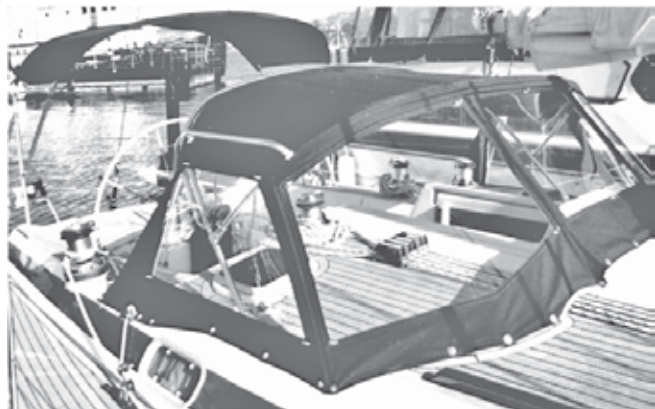
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LETTERS

↑↓ WHAT A PILE OF SCHENGEN!

After reading the April 14 *Lectronic* about U.S. citizens having to leave Schengen Area countries for at least 90 days in every 180 days — making it difficult if not impossible to cruise the Med, as all the European countries bordering the Med are Schengen Area — I had to look to make sure you weren't publishing it on April 1. How silly does it get?



WIKIPEDIA.ORG
The new regulations would make cruising the Med extremely challenging. In yellow are Schengen Area members, and in pink, those that are legally bound to join.

Jimmie Zinn
Dry Martini, Morgan 38
Richmond YC

Jimmie — We didn't believe it either when we first heard of it because it sounded so ridiculous. After all, what very large collection of countries, many with economies in recession, wouldn't want to make it easy for relatively affluent visitors to spend money, hire their workers, and generally contribute to their GDPs? We know that's the philosophy of the anti-gentrification crowd in Oakland, but at least most Eurocrats have recognized the folly of that thinking and are scrambling to review and modify the relevant parts of the treaty.

↑↓ BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

I was pondering on the Schengen Area issue and wonder if a visit to Gibraltar would satisfy the requirement of non-Schengen Area individuals having to leave Schengen Area countries for at least 90 out of 180 days?

Marc Bodian
Averi, Bristol 35
Boulder, CO

Marc — Gibraltar is under British jurisdiction, and is not in the Schengen Area, which makes it seem as though it might be a loophole country. But how many cruisers would want to spend three months in a country that's only 2.3 square miles — or about 1/20th the size of San Francisco? Morocco, just eight miles across the Straits of Gibraltar, and absolutely a non-Schengen Area country, would seem like a much more attractive option. But remember, unless you're already in southwest Spain, it's a long way from Schengen Area countries to either Gibraltar or Morocco.

↑↓ TAKE A HOLIDAY IN TURKEY

If you look at the European cruising problem, you'll note that Turkey is not included in the Schengen Area. And for a good reason. Half of Turkey currently lives in Germany. They emigrated after World War II as guest workers, and never left. As a result, guest workers from outside the Schengen Area, not just Turkey, have become a huge economic drain on those countries that provide free medical care and other social-support programs. Thus the 90-day visa limitation on Schengen Area countries is not much different from visa limitations on non-Schengen Area visitors to French Polynesia.

But there may be ways around it. Do a little research on your ancestry and you may discover that you're eligible for citizenship in an EU/Schengen Area country. Once you jump through the hoops, and they range from simple to substantial, you're golden.

Nick Salvador

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LETTERS

No Strings Attached, Baltic 37
Richmond

Nick — Turkey is always near or at the top of the list of countries for cruisers to go to when one's 90-day visa runs out in the Schengen Area. Most cruisers love Turkey. But depending on where in the Med you are at the time your 90 days run out, it might not be convenient at all.

"Half of Turkey lives in Germany." You're a little off there, as there are 75 million Turks in Turkey and only three to four million Turks — including those who haven't become German citizens — in Germany.

The Schengen Area isn't like French Polynesia at all. French Polynesia is very small, isolated, heavily subsidized by France, and has a population of just 275,000, and everything but coconuts and fish needs to be imported. The Schengen Area currently consists of 28 mostly self-sufficient countries, most of them contiguous and covering a massive area, and has a population of 400 million. It's also close to being the same as the European Union, which has the largest economy — bigger than those of the U.S. and China — in the world. We can see how it would make sense for French Polynesia to limit the length of visits by cruisers, but not for Schengen Area countries. Apparently Eurocrats agree with us, which is why the treaty may be modified in 2015.

↑↓ I WANT MY TV!

A reader asked about getting television on his sailboat. There are several popular satellite television systems on the market for that purpose. Since 1997 I've had a SeaTel gyro-stabilized dish — about \$6,500 installed — coupled with a Dish Network VIP211 receiver, and it's worked great. From Mexico to the Panama Canal, and throughout the Caribbean, you sign up with Dish Network, Puerto Rico, and change out the LNB in the receiver. That costs about \$100.

In the seven years I've had the system, we've had reliable TV to check local weather reports in 10-ft seas. There have only been a few places — the deeper fjords of Alaska — where we couldn't receive a signal.

Speaking of Alaska, it's a long way from the tropics, but the scenery is beyond spectacular. Yes, it's cool to downright cold, but you forget it pretty quickly because your jaw tends to drop closer to the cockpit sole as you round each bend going north. I strongly suggest that readers charter a boat in Canada and explore at least from the Gulf Islands to Princess Louisa Inlet — where you have to carefully time your arrival to avoid running the rapids. I could wax on for hours, but you have to see it to believe it!

Dick Drechsler
Last Resort, Catalina 470
Las Vegas

↑↓ ONBOARD TELEVISION HAS BECOME LIKE GPS

I used to have DirecTV at my dock, but when KVH came out with an antenna with a footprint of just 12 inches, I bought one. It's the same footprint as for my radar dome. The system doesn't use that much power, as it only takes 5 amps for the TV, DVR, and dish controller. The cost for DirecTV for North American service is an additional \$5 a month on an existing account. I'm sure most cruisers could find a friend and add the new service to an existing account.

I consider satellite television to be an emergency service in the event of a quake or other disaster — as do all of us who aren't out cruising.

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LETTERS

chor is part of the fun. I found that the KVH/DirecTV system works where the new digital television does not — such as at Angel Island's Ayala Cove, Paradise Cove, and Clipper Cove, all of which are behind a hill. Being able to rent Pay Per View programming is nice, too.



'Perseverance's DirecTV antenna.

The installation pretty much consisted of adding a stainless support for the antenna at the back of my boat. This cost \$1,500. The KVH system was \$1,500 after the rebate.

Onboard television has sort of become like GPS for us. We could live without it, but it's just too much fun to go without.

Jeff Berman
Perseverance, Catalina 36
Alameda

↑↓ DECORATIVE DOMES

We have funded the last few years of part-time cruising — and our daughter's college education — as a professional yacht captain and chef, respectively. We ran a Westport 112 to Alaska in the summers for a family from Seattle. Want television on your boat? All you need is money to buy a satellite dome and a subscription to DirecTV. The quality is excellent and the signal is rarely affected — although a dome might look a little funny on a small cruising boat.

Unfortunately, we are currently working in Florida, but we're soon to return to the land of tranquility and cheap tacos.

Rob & Linda Jones
Cat'n About, Gemini 3000
La Paz

Rob and Linda — According to the KVH website, they now have a 12.5-inch antenna "perfect for coastal cruising or sailboats," with coverage in "North America and Europe." That's a small footprint, but we presume there must be some trade-offs for having such a small antenna — or everybody would have them.

By the way, megayachts often have two or four giant domes on their masts, but oftentimes one of them has nothing in it. The second or fourth is to 'balance' the look of the yacht.

↑↓ THE TAXMAN REACHES ACROSS THE PACIFIC

After paying last year's "unsecured property tax" on our boat, I submitted a letter to the Orange County Tax Assessor, asking to have my two boats — well, *Cherokee Rose* and her California-registered dinghy — removed from their tax roster. I included proof of her departure from Orange County. So I was surprised to get another tax bill this year, and called their office to see why. It turns out that you need to prove that your vessel has been out of Orange County for the year after you leave. Failing to do this, or failing to pay the tax bill on time, will result in a lien against your boat.

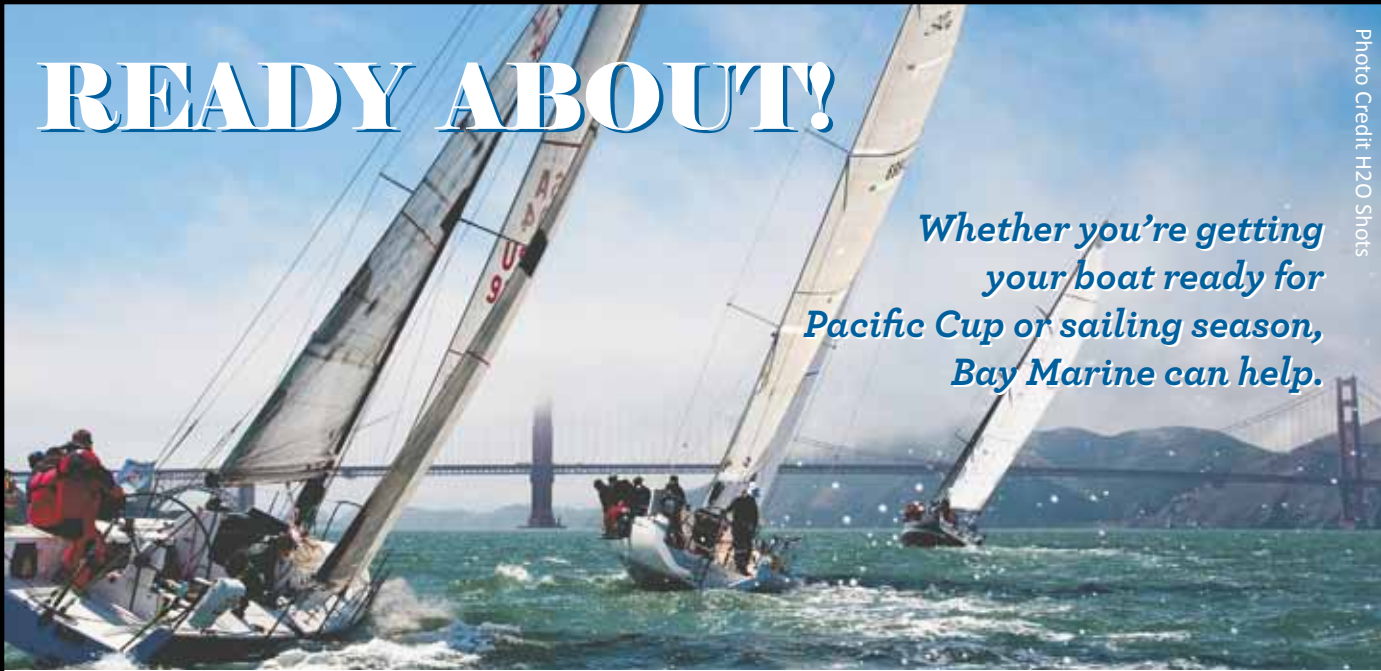
So keep all of those receipts for marinas, fuel, haulouts/repairs, port fees and such. I have all of these, so I sure hope I don't hear from the taxman next year. Stay tuned.

Michael Moyer
Cherokee Rose, Alajuela 48
Newport Beach / Currently in the Marshall Islands

Michael — It's borderline government harassment such as this that encourages many California-based cruisers to establish residency in other states, such as Florida, before taking off.

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LETTERS

↑↓AN ELECTRIC FUEL PUMP IS EVEN BETTER

I should add one thing to Tony Deluca's April issue suggestion of using a squeeze bulb to prime a diesel engine when necessary. If the fuel level is below the fuel pump on the engine, a vacuum can be drawn from lifting the fuel, causing the bulb to collapse. This would block the fuel and cause the engine to die. By the time you got the floorboards up, the bulb would have expanded, concealing the cause of the problem. This happened to me 41 years ago, so I installed a 12-volt fuel pump in the line for priming and transferring fuel. Since then I've had no problems.

A second comment. One of the causes of engine overheating is that sometimes air will collect and remain at a high point in the raw water intake, resulting in a restricted flow of cooling water. A bleeder valve should be installed at any high point in the line.

Ernie Copp
Orient Star, Cheoy Lee Offshore 50
Long Beach

↑↓DIPPING INTO THE BUCKET

We are part of a high-end hospitality/culinary service, and we want to explore the possibility of serving the clientele at the St. Barth Bucket in 2015. We would appreciate any information regarding the race, island, accommodations, villas and so forth.

Renee Randolph & chef John Myers
Aquatic Culture, San Rafael

Renee and John — The Bucket is a very high-end event that is served by a number of well-established yacht concierge and hospitality services, most of which are based out of St. Barth and Newport, Rhode Island. It's a niche market where most providers have known and dealt with their clients for years. Indeed, many times the businesses have been started by wives of captains. So in addition to having a built-in clientele, they know many of the other captains and boat owners. Also, they are good friends with many of the owners of restaurants, villas, and other providers on the tiny island. In our opinion, it would be difficult for a West Coast outfit to break in, particularly if you weren't fluent in French and didn't have an intimate knowledge of the island's very limited resources and the very subjective needs of superyacht owners.

You can find out everything about the Bucket online, starting with the Bucket website at www.bucketregattas.com/stbarths.

↑↓IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME

I read the April 4 'Lectronic piece about a man 'casting' for a reality television show based on cruising and starting with the Baja Ha-Ha. I'm not surprised, as it was only a matter of time before something like that was proposed.

I completely agree with *Latitude's* opinion, which is that cruising and reality television should not cross paths, so I was surprised that there might be filming during the Ha-Ha.

Latitude is savvy enough to know that reality television has nothing to do with reality. I know plenty of people who have worked on such shows and, generally speaking, the shows are scripted, set up, or manipulated, or the drama is created in post-production. They don't have much in common with what really happens. When it comes to sailing — and television — most of the world is a bit clueless and will believe whatever they are shown.

I know that filming a reality television show would bring a lot of publicity to the Ha-Ha, but you might think about how

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LETTERS

it would change the event for those not participating in the show. Cameras following people around change our experience of life. You've seen it at all kinds of events, where recording the scene becomes more important than living it. Sure, we all like photos and the occasional video, but that's different from a whole show.

I hope you'll give some thought to whether you'll let a professional crew use the Ha-Ha this way. It won't stem the tide of reality television, but at least it won't ruin the Ha-Ha experience for the other participants.

We're still in Thailand and still working on the boat. I wouldn't recommend doing a major refit here, but more on that when we're finished, hopefully in June.

Bruce Balan
Migration, Cross 45
Thailand

Bruce — We appreciate your concerns, but aren't too worried. In the first place, we suspect the concept is still 'in development', as they say in Hollyweird, which means the chances of its actually happening are slim. We don't think television people have any idea of how difficult it would be to video such a show, and how expensive it would be to do it even half-assed. For starters, the space on small boats is confined even without the addition of a cameraman.

As you can imagine, this is about the 100th time we've heard somebody saying they were going to do a reality television show having something to do with boats. There is a reality show about crews working on megayachts, featuring a guy who had done the Ha-Ha, but it can't compete with the Real Housewife Hookers of Reno, or whatever is hot these days.

Anyway, we'll see how things go before we get too concerned. If it turns out the project actually gets funded, we'll set up guidelines — right after we get a facelift and new teeth, sign up for acting lessons, and get an agent.

↑↓ **THEY MAKE IT SEEM LIKE LESS OF A CHALLENGE**

I sent the following letter to Mark Fife, who proposes to do a reality television show on cruising:

In my humble opinion, we already have an ever-increasing number of people who, because of their inexperience with the basics of seamanship, put others in danger because they need rescuing. As I'm sure you're aware, a few years ago a racing crew on the West Coast hit an island because they'd been on autopilot using GPS input and not maintaining a proper watch. They all died. I think these developments are due to overly dependent reliance on electronic navigation, global communication capabilities for *mayday* calls, and ready access to current weather forecasts at sea — all of which make cruising seem to be a less formidable challenge.

For example, all onboard electronics could be fried by a single strike of lightning. If you didn't know celestial navigation, and didn't have a sextant and paper navigation charts on board, you'd be screwed. As a result, I don't think the public at large should be seduced into thinking that cruising is like a walk in the park, and thus decide to try it for themselves just because they might have enough money for a boat.

By the way, new boat designs are not nearly as seaworthy as the more traditional designs, because design considerations have moved away from safety and toward more space for amenities and comfort.

If your television series emphasized the bad and the ugly more than the good, you'd be doing a service to the non-sailing members of the public. It would test their resolve to pursue the lifestyle. However, what are the chances that you end up



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LETTERS

filming a boat during extreme weather and other life-or-death emergencies — unless you stay with a boat that's attempting a circumnavigation for the first time?

Ronald Swirsky
 Sacramento

Roland — You say you worry about people not familiar with seamanship putting others in danger because they need help, and you cite the case of the boat that hit one of the Coronado Islands during the Ensenada Race, killing all aboard. That incident doesn't support your argument at all, as those who died were all experienced sailors, and the skipper had previously won his division in a previous Ensenada Race. Nor would the Low Speed Chase tragedy at the Farallones support your argument. While we can't be sure in the case of the Ensenada Race boat, it would appear both of those tragedies were caused by experienced — not inexperienced — crews not being vigilant enough.

You claim that "you're screwed" if you suddenly lose your electronic navigation. That's ridiculous. You might have trouble if you were caught in the fog in the reefy areas around Nantucket or at night in the Tuamotus, but on the West Coast and Mexico your safety shouldn't be compromised at all. After all, everyone should know that deep water and safety are to the west. Even if lightning made a direct hit on your compass, you know where west is because that's where the sun sets. Land, and potential danger, is to the east, where the sun comes up. And who doesn't know how to find north? The first time we raced to Mexico we relied entirely on dead reckoning, even when working the eastern shore of Baja on the way to La Paz.

You know when you're really screwed? When you're trying to navigate with sextant and it's cloudy or foggy, and has been for days.

New boats not as seaworthy as older ones? Perhaps in the case of some extreme sportboats, but not in general, at least in our opinion. Newer boats benefit from better design and construction techniques, and better materials. After all, an unnecessarily heavy boat built with inch-thick fiberglass hulls is actually less safe than one with a half-inch-thick hull if all that's needed is a half-inch.

It seems to us that the only way to become a safe and competent cruiser is by doing it. Sailing isn't and never will be for everyone, but we know many smart people who have gone from zero to considerable offshore competency in a matter of months.

↑↓ **GLAD TO HEAR HE MADE IT BACK SAFELY**

Having heard about John Hards fleeing from Nuevo Vallarta with his sailboat because Mexican authorities wanted to seize his boat as a result of a Mexican bureaucrat screwing up the expiration date on his Temporary Import Permit, we're delighted to learn that he and his cat made it safely to San Diego. If there is something we could do to help him, we'd like to, so please send him our email address.

As for ourselves, we can't wait for the end of October to start Baja Ha-Ha XX

Mike & Kimber Hamilton
 Freebird, Jeanneau 43
 San Diego

Readers — There is more about Hards' situation and escape back to the United States elsewhere in this issue.

↑↓ **FREE AT LAST! OUR EMBARGO STORY**

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doing some spring cleaning, our captain Rod and crew sailed our Dashew 64 FPB motoryacht *Avatar* 70 miles south to Ensenada for a bottom job. That project went well, and in a few days *Avatar* was ready to return to San Diego to prepare for our next cruising adventure. That's when things literally went south.

On November 26, AGACE, a Mexican federal taxation agency equivalent to our IRS, raided eight marinas across Mexico, including Marina Coral, where *Avatar* was at the time. The inspectors were accompanied by three truckloads of heavily armed Marines. They seized 47 boats in our marina, *Avatar* included, and a total of 338 across Mexico. They placed them under 'precautionary embargo' while they supposedly investigated whether the boats had the appropriate documentation to be in Mexico, and whether the claimed owners were the real owners. All that's required are the normal boat documents and a \$50 Temporary Import Permit that is good for 10 years.

Avatar's 'problem' was that the AGACE inspectors could not find her HIN (hull identification number). Please take a look at the accompanying photo, and you'll see that *Avatar's* HIN number was engraved in the hull, right where it's supposed to



CAROL PARKER

'Avatar's HIN was exactly where it was supposed to be.'

be on the transom. We also had our boat documentation number — correct size and location — engraved in the inside of the boat.

Not only could the inspectors not find the HIN number, they didn't bother to ask to be shown it. *Avatar's* captain was present and available to show it to them. Marina Coral management and attorneys spent months hustling between Ensenada,

Tijuana, and Mexico City trying to sort out our situation, but to no avail. Their own businesses were also suffering from the negative publicity.

On our behalf, I started contacting Arizona's senators, the U.S. Consulate in Tijuana, our insurance company, and attorneys on both sides of the border.

Meanwhile, our cruising plans came to a grinding halt. Not only would we not enjoy an idyllic February trip down the coast of Baja this year, visiting the gray whales en route to Panama, now we never will. Because of what became a four-month nightmare, we will never consider cruising — or spend any money — in Mexico again.

In February, word started trickling in that some boats were being "liberated." But somehow *Avatar* and the other embargoed boats in Ensenada wound up at the bottom of the list, and remained embargoed. We were told AGACE was simply following a "procedure." A better description might be called 'saving face'.

Finally, almost four months to the day after our boat was impounded, we received documents affirming that we: 1) Had entered Mexico legally. 2) Had been in Mexico legally the whole time. And, 3) Were the legitimate owners of our own boat! The release document, releasing not only *Avatar*, but almost all the other boats still impounded in Ensenada, is more than 100 pages long. We're on page 95!

Our original cruising plans for 2014 were to head to the East Coast from San Diego via the Canal. My husband Mike and I planned a spring/summer of leisurely cruising up the Intracoastal Waterway from Florida to the Chesapeake, with



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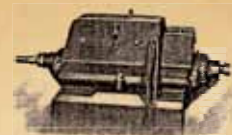
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LETTERS

opportunities to entertain the grandkids onboard, now that *Avatar* was no longer thousands of miles away in the South Pacific.

Our having lost four months to the blundering of the Mexican government, the entire schedule was thrown into disarray, as it would now force us to head south at the onset of hurricane season. We are still reconsidering our options, but for now it looks as if the Pacific Northwest is in our sights for this summer's cruising, and any trips to the East Coast are delayed by at least a year.

To be fair, this entire unpleasant episode could have been worse. At least our crew was allowed to stay aboard *Avatar* and maintain her, and they were free to come and go. Our worst fear — that our boat would be permanently forfeited to the Mexican government — turned out to be unfounded. We did, however, spend many sleepless nights during the first few months worrying about the possibility. And we didn't have to pay any money to the Mexican government. There were no fines, levies, or hands extended for bribes. The attorneys we consulted declined to charge a fee, both saying they were doing the other a favor.

Lastly, Ensenada is a reasonably pleasant place to spend the winter months, as our Rod compared his detention there to being 'locked in a golden cage'.

Carol Parker
Avatar, Dashew 64
Tucson, Arizona

Readers — For us, there are two big takeaways from Carol's letter: First, the tunnel-visioned SAT/AGACE bureaucrats, and those higher up in government who oversee them, have no clue how destructive it's been to Mexico to impound foreign-owned boats for up to four months in order to confirm that they were in the country legally, and that those named on the boat document were indeed the owners.

Second, the fact is that nobody in the Mexican government was looking for money. "We didn't have to pay any money to the Mexican government," wrote Parker. "There were no fines, levies, or hands extended for bribes." Latitude's Profligate was similarly impounded for several months and, as was the case with the Parkers, there was never a suggestion of any bogus fines or hands out for bribes. As such, the allegations that the whole business was a PRI-inspired scam to get money from foreigners carries little weight.

It's true that a few boats were fined, but in all the cases we're aware of, it's been because a boatowner's TIP was out of date or because some Mexican bureaucrat made some kind of mistake on the paperwork. AGACE/SAT didn't create fines out of thin air.

↑↓IT WASN'T A REAL BULLET YOU DODGED

While out at Isla Espiritu Santo, one of the great islands not 25 miles from La Paz, we got a text from someone at Marina Cortez, the marina that we'd been staying in. They informed us that "inspections" were going to take place the following day. We were very happy not to have had our sailboat in her berth at the time the inspectors arrived because, although our documents were all in order when we sailed to Mexico in the fall, our Coast Guard document had expired on January 31. And we had forgotten to bring the new one down with us on our last trip.

Please let readers know that Mexico's 'inspections' are not necessarily over, and to be aware of any expiring documents. I feel we may have dodged a bullet, so to speak.

P.S. Please withhold our boat name out of concern that

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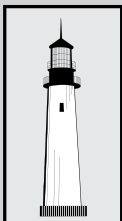
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LETTERS

she will be inspected.

Susan
La Paz

Susan — You're obviously concerned about 'inspections'/'audits' as conducted by AGACE last November. Given what has transpired, we don't blame you for being a little jumpy. But since AGACE hasn't done an 'audit' of boats since November, we doubt that's what happened. So we contacted Marina Cortez Harbormaster J. Eduardo Corona Arballo to get the story:

"Our marina had a check-up from API (Integrated Port Administration), one of the government authorities that regulate all marina concessions in La Paz. It was not a check-up by AGACE, a sub-agency of SAT (the Mexican IRS), the one that caused foreign boatowners so much trouble.

"I don't believe AGACE is conducting any more 'audits', thanks in part to pressure from Mexico's Tourism Department and the Mexican Marina Owners Association. In any event, we are prepared for any visit AGACE might pay us at any time. Since their foolish operation started, marina owners have been in touch with the owners of marinas that were visited by AGACE to find out how they were treated, what documents were wanted, and unusual situations and special requests — all so we and our clients could be prepared. In some cases I have sent my clients to get new TIPS so all the information — such as engine serial numbers — is up to date. In addition, we have print-outs of HINs on a piece of paper or tape. I have all those prints on file.

"While our check-up with the API went fine, they are entitled to do additional ones whenever they wish. But their job is checking installations of things in our marina to make sure we comply with conditions of our permits and concessions, not the paperwork of boats."

One of the things that gives Latitude a measure of confidence in taking our boat south to Mexico again in the fall is the fact that the marinas have been through this before, and have communicated with each other to find out everything possible that AGACE might want. They are as prepared as they can be, because they all know how much money the fiasco has cost them.

⚡WE'RE NOT AFRAID

I just read March 26 *Latitude* about people unsure about cruising Mexico this upcoming season, and wanted to let you know that we are Bashing our Catalina 42 *Flibbertigibbet* back to Discovery Bay from Mexico. Why? To have her in California in anticipation of doing the Baja Ha-Ha XXI. We've even talked some of our friends into sailing their boats in the Ha-Ha! See you in October.

Jim & Betty Adams
Flibbertigibbet, Catalina 42
Discovery Bay

Jim and Betty — While we can't guarantee that the Mexican government won't make more blunders in the future, we doubt it. Which is why we'll be heading south again in the fall after we bring *Profligate* up from Puerto Vallarta.

We think the key to avoiding problems will be to have all the possible paperwork onboard, with copies in the marina offices, and make sure every number and spelling on every document is correct. The problem is Mexico doesn't make it clear what documents they want, as at times officials want to see documents that aren't even required, such as marina-created *Arribos*. Plus, Mexican agencies have a history of losing docu-

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ments emailed to them. Prior to the start of the Ha-Ha, we will be providing everyone with what we believe is a definitive list of required documents as well as those that are merely suggested by marina owners.

↑↓ CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC

My husband Josh and I did our first Baja Ha-Ha in October, and we absolutely loved it! We've been looking for a cruising sailboat for a couple of years, and after our great Ha-Ha experience the stars aligned and we are now under contract to buy a Voyager 500 catamaran. It's so exciting!

We need to sail the cat out of Florida. As we live in San Diego, we hoped to berth her in Ensenada until October, then start our cruising life with the 2014 Ha-Ha. Yet we are very concerned about the impounding issues in Mexico. What are your thoughts on the safety of keeping our boat in Ensenada, and more importantly, on being able to take her out of Mexico when we want to?

The information you've provided on what has happened in Mexico has been amazing, and we are grateful for it.

We will need to leave Florida ASAP if we are to go to Ensenada. If we don't make a window to get up there, we will leave our cat back east and cruise the eastern seaboard this summer.

Suzee & Josh Lippitt
San Diego

Suzee and Josh — Congratulations on what is likely to be your new cat, and thank you for the kind words.

Our gut feeling is that Mexico realizes that the AGACE audits were a monumental blunder, but refuses to apologize for it because they don't want to lose face. In this regard, they are like the United States government — and all other governments. But given the tremendously self-destructive fiasco, we're cautiously confident they won't do it again, at least in such a screwed-up way.

As we've said before, it's incumbent upon the Mexican government to clarify the rules and regulations, and reassure owners of foreign boats that there will be no problems if they follow those rules. They have not done a good job of this to date.

↑↓ SLIPPING THROUGH THE CRACKS

Before we left on our last cruise, which started with the 2011 Ha-Ha, I built a very cool 18-ft carbon and fiberglass sportboat. Think Viper, Open 5.70, J/70, etc. It was a pretty straightforward build, which got me to thinking that it would be a great project for high school kids. They could spend a year building the boat with their mates, then race against the other boats in the spring.

Students would learn composites fabrication, woodworking, hydro and aeronautical engineering, sailing, fundraising and business management, social media, teambuilding and community spirit — and have a great time doing it.

This project would ideally involve approximately 10 students, and require no more than one school year to complete. The build takes approximately 800 man hours. It would also require the support of one faculty/staff point person from each campus to coordinate and oversee the project on site. Each school could decide if they wanted to offer this as a regular class or an after-school project. The project would also require an indoor shop space of no less than 20 x 30 feet and a collection of basic hand and power tools.

The boats can be built for under \$10,000. I spent \$6,000 using some second-hand components, such as rig and sails.

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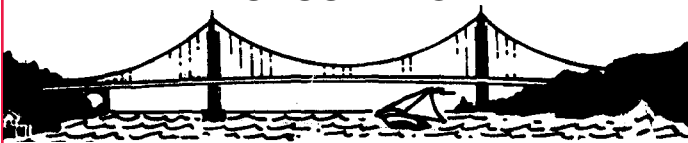
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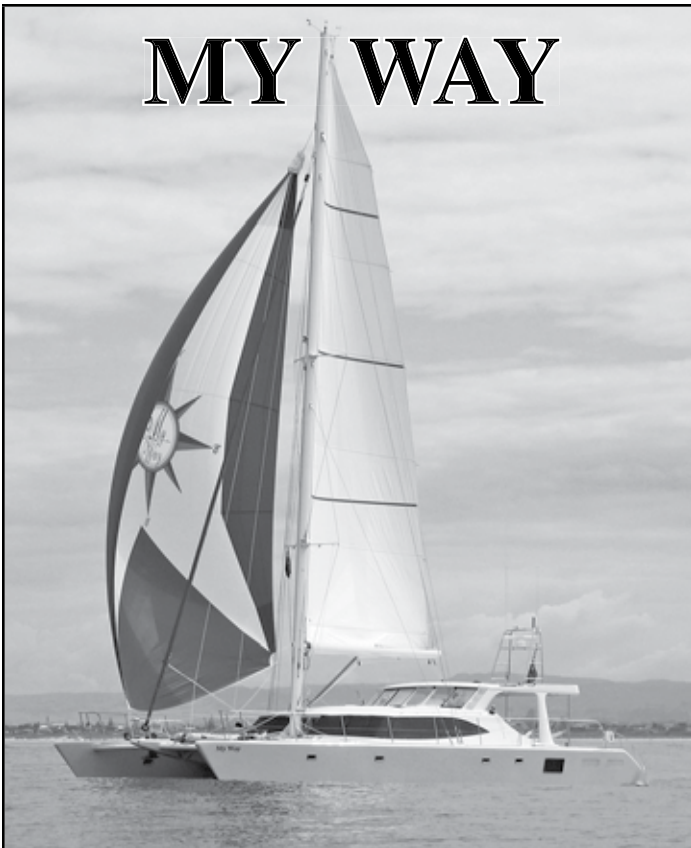
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LETTERS

Each student should be prepared to raise or contribute \$100/month. Keep in mind that at the end of the project, the team has a finished race boat that can be sold/auctioned off to reimburse contributions or used to fund the next year's build.



BEN DOOLITTLE

Ben spent \$6,000 building his little sportboat.

Depending on the quality of the build, the finished race boat would be a modern design that should be marketable.

Over the course of the build, I would be available to assist not only with design and build questions, but also to teach the students how to sail. I think the greatest potential benefit is for the 'slip between the cracks' student who is likely not college-tracked, but also not raising any red flags with poor performance or behavior issues. This student can acquire some very valuable real-life skills that can carry him/her into the workforce after high school.

I'm trying to do this in my home area of Sacramento, but thought I would throw it out there to see if anyone in the Bay Area has any interest in getting this project going in a school near them.

I can be reached at bendoolittle@hotmail.com.

Ben Doolittle
Sacramento

Ben — We apologize for being somewhat facetious, but you might try the Sausalito Marin City School District, which the San Francisco Chronicle reports spends \$30,000 per year per student — or about three to four times the average in California. The student scores are still dismal, demonstrating once again that throwing money at educational problems is rarely a solution. The person to talk to would be Steve Van Zant, who as superintendent of the one-school, 150-student school district, gets paid \$165,000 plus benefits a year. And that's for working just three days a week. Is this a great country or what?

↑↓ THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE?

I just read the April issue letter about "the annoying buzz" of the author's Monitor timer — timers such as have been a part of the annual Baja Ha-Ha swag for years. The comment made me laugh out loud!

When we got a new Monitor windvane for *Catch The Wind* in 2006 — to replace the one Sam finished installing at sea during the 1980 Singlehanded TransPac — we got one of those little timers as a complimentary gift. While we were cruising around in the Sea of Cortez a few years ago, we used that timer to remind us to check the refrigerator temp, to time cooking food, and to do so many other things. The timer had a magnet, so it conveniently stuck on the side of the radar.

We returned to the Bay Area in October 2009, and moved into our Antioch home in January 2010. When we did, Sam bought a fancy new timer for the house. But it never worked correctly. Just a few months ago, I tossed that timer in my grandson's gadget drawer. On our next trip to the boat, I grabbed the Monitor timer off the radar, brought it home, changed the battery — and found that it still works great!

We sold the Monitor windvane last year because we don't need it sailing around the Delta, but we've kept the Monitor timer.

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LETTERS

Susie Wilson Crabtree
Catch The Wind, Cal 39
 Pittsburg

↑↓WANT TO CREW ON THE HA-HA

I've been planning on doing some sailing for the last couple of years, but didn't have the chance. Having just graduated from college, I finally have the freedom to commit. As such, I can't explain how eager I am to make this fall's Baja Ha-Ha my first voyage. All I need is a berth on a boat. I'm an athletic, outgoing, enthusiastic guy of 24.

I'm writing to ask for the best way to land a berth on a boat, as I have very little sailing experience. Could you share your wisdom? Where can I make the best contacts, and what training or certification is required?

Mitch Kautza
 Colorado Springs, CO

Mitch — While you don't need any certification or specific training to crew on the Ha-Ha, the first thing we'd suggest for your safety and sailing pleasure is some basic sailing experience. We suggest a two-pronged approach to that end. The first is to get in some small-boat experience — an 8-ft El Toro in protected waters would be perfect — where you're the skipper.

LATITUDE / RICHARD



There's no better way to learn the basics of sailing than by doing, and small boats talk back to you more clearly than big ones. If you find yourself anywhere near Oakland's Lake Merritt, they have small boats you can rent inexpensively. There are similar programs near most bodies of water.

You should also get experience on larger boats. Check out the 'Looking For Crew' section in Latitude and on our online Crew List. Ideally you could find somebody who is looking for weekday evening Beer Can crew, as 'nothing too serious' racing will make you a better sailor faster than anything.

The three best ways to get a berth on the Ha-Ha are: 1) Attend the Ha-Ha Crew List Party at Encinal YC on September 10; 2) Sign up for the Ha-Ha Crew List at www.latitude38.com; And 3) take out a Classy Classified to announce your interest and availability.

Good luck!

↑↓HATERS GONNA HATE

Please, please tell the Tom Coulombes of the world — he told you to "Stop ass-kissing Mexico. I bet you're the only ones with an impounded boat who keeps saying how great that shithole country is right now." — to stay home, where they belong. Coulombe should count the letters sent to you by cruisers who are positive about Mexico — and pretty much every other country — versus the negative. Of course, he'd probably just say that *Latitude* only prints the positive.

Mac and I are fine and 9/10ths retired. We are so happy to have our son Neil doing all the important work at Marina de La Paz, and doing it well.

Mary Shroyer
 Marina de La Paz

Mary — We don't know how Mexico haters come to grips with the fact that so many cruisers — and others — love Mexico, and thus in many cases stay for years longer than they'd

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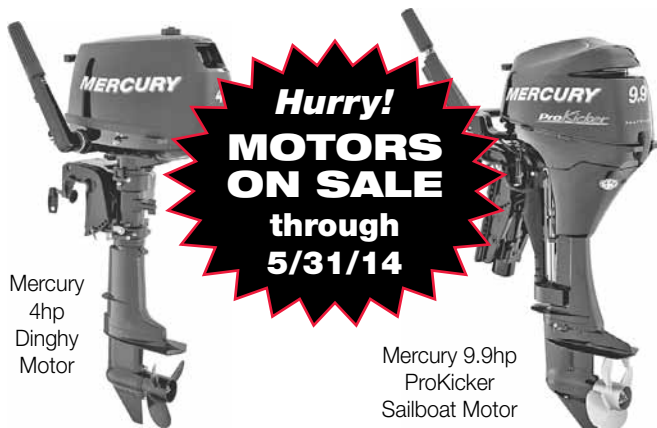
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LETTERS

anticipated. As the AGACE fiasco demonstrated, Mexico isn't perfect, but it's still the most popular country with U.S. emigrants. Here are the top five: 1) Mexico, 510,000; 2) Canada, 310,000; 3) Puerto Rico, 210,000; 4) United Kingdom, 190,000; 5) Germany, 120,000.

'Emigrants' are not to be confused with the number of American citizens living in Mexico at any given time. Nobody seems to know for sure, but the general estimates are between 600,000 and 1,000,000.

↑↓ PREPARING OUR CHILDREN TO BE ADAPTERS

Latitude asked readers for opinions on whether parents, such as Eric and Charlotte Kaufman of the Hans Christian 36 *Rebel Heart*, should go bluewater cruising with children



The Riley family circumnavigated in 'Beau Soleil' after circumnavigating in a Columbia 24.

as young as the couple's one- and three-year-old daughters. Many years ago my wife Karen and I circumnavigated on an engineless Columbia 24, and in the process our son Falcon was born in Malta. Mind you, this was after his pregnant mother and I fought the strong headwinds of the Red

Sea.

We left Malta after just 10 days, as it was getting cold. We cruised the Med, the Atlantic and the Caribbean, and then transited the Canal when Falcon was 14 months old. We continued on to Hawaii, where we sold the boat, bought a bigger boat, and did another circumnavigation with our still-young son.

Did we do something bad? Were we irresponsible? I don't think so. We and hundreds like us sail(ed) around the world's oceans without calling out for any help. Cruisers do it while home-schooling their children, and while teaching their children personal responsibility — a lesson seldom learned by their shore-born brethren. Growing up cruising gives kids a chance to grow exponentially more than in the structured environments on land.

The truth is that parents who raise kids on boats are not the irresponsible ones; the irresponsible parents are those who raise their kids on land. You farm your children off to inadequate schools, you let them waste their childhood playing video games, and you teach them that good enough is a job well done. Those who sail with their children think differently. We're preparing our children for a new and different world. To be survivors, yes, but more importantly, to be adapters.

If anyone is interested in what became of Falcon, they can buy *The Education of Falcon* on Amazon. It might open their eyes.

Mike Riley
Beau Soleil, Dickerson 41
Coronado / Whangarei

Readers — We'll have more on the Riley family in the June issue. They have been cruising nonstop for decades on about \$500 a month. "I don't know how most cruisers spend so much

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LETTERS

money," says Mike.

↑↓ CRUISING IS A WONDERFUL EDUCATION

I think raising one's family on a boat is one of the best educations children can be given. They grow up 'color blind', they learn how different cultures live, and most likely their



The Kaufman family — Eric, Charlotte, Cora, 3, and Lyra, 1 — were rescued from their boat during the Puddle Jump.

home-study courses provide them with a better education than they would receive in most public schools. Many of the cruising children I've met along the way don't even realize their lives are uniquely different from those of most children. I wish I could have been raised aboard a boat

traveling the world!

I wish little Lyra a speedy recovery, and I hope the Kaufman family is able to acquire another boat and resume their journey soon.

Shelly B.
Long Beach

Readers — It should be noted that we asked for responses to the Kaufman situation before we reported on another boat, the Open 50 Anasazi Girl, having trouble with young children aboard. The parents, James Burwick and Somira Sao, were sailing from New Zealand and attempting to round Cape Horn with three children — Tormetina, 5, Raivo, 3, and baby Pearl, 1 — aboard. Their boat was dismantled when she was too far out for an air rescue. They were picked up by a Chilean Navy ship, in what was described as a very difficult rescue. Unlike the U.S. Coast Guard, the Chilean Navy towed Anasazi Girl to port. We have a feeling that some of the sailors who support what the Kaufmans were doing would not have supported what Burwick and Sao were trying to do.

↑↓ TALK ABOUT IRRESPONSIBLE PARENTING

I've been reading that some of the critics of the Kaufman family have suggested that taking an infant offshore is so reckless that their children should be taken away from them. Good idea! And that they should pay for their rescue. Every penny of it!

Then there was a piece on National Public Radio this morning reporting how increasing numbers of educated middle-class people in places such as Marin County are not having their children vaccinated for such potentially fatal diseases as measles and whooping cough. In fact, some preschools in Marin have vaccination rates of less than 50%. The parents risk not only the lives of their own children, but the lives of all the other children in the school and in the neighborhood. At least the Kaufmans were only risking their own children.

But given the low vaccination rates, isn't it clearly reckless to raise children in places like Marin County? In fact, it's been pointed out that the risk of your children's catching a serious disease avoidable by vaccination is inversely proportional to the distance to the nearest Whole Foods. Certainly children should be removed from any family reckless enough to live within 10 miles of a Whole Foods or a Trader Joe's.

As for the economics of it all, when a measles or whooping cough epidemic occurs — and they are occurring with

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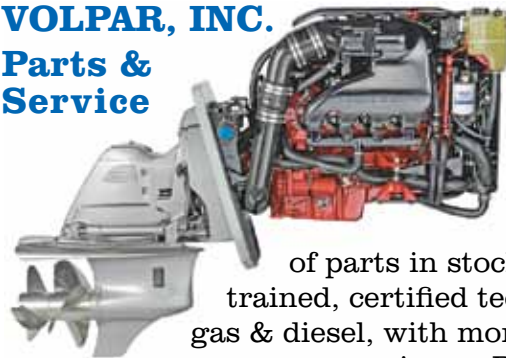
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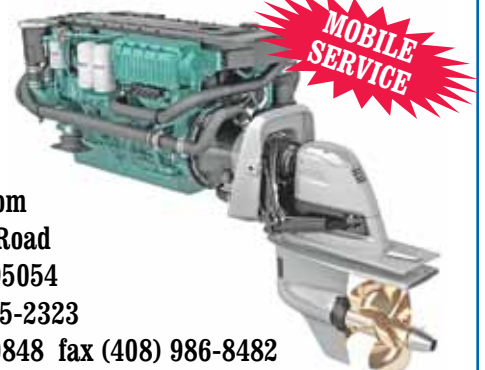
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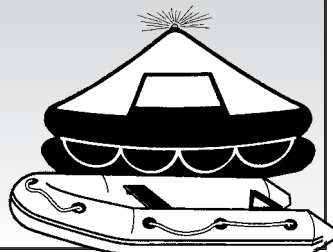
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LETTERS

increasing frequency — the cost to the public health system is about \$10,000 per child. Certainly this cost should be passed directly to those who do not vaccinate.

I have sailed the same offshore waters as the Kaufmans aboard my 35-ft cutter. Tradewind sailing is not particularly dangerous in itself, but you have to seriously face the fact that it may well take you three weeks to get to medical care. I personally would not take small children on such a voyage, but I defend the rights of parents to make these decisions for their families.

Alan Westhagen
Norwegian Steam, Jason 34
Seattle, WA

Alan — We'd like to know where you came up with data supporting anti-vaccination rates being so high near Whole Foods stores. We don't necessarily doubt it, but we suspect it's another one of those phony 'facts', such as Superbowl Sunday being the day with the greatest number of cases of domestic violence.

It's a little off the subject, but in case anybody has been getting on the anti-vax train along with the likes of self-styled celebrity medical experts Jenny McCarthy, former MTV bimbo and Playmate of the Year, and Kristin Cavallari Cutler, reality television star and wife of a Chicago Bears quarterback, they should check out Penn & Teller's vaccine episode of Bullshit! It's a hilarious but educational depiction of the risk to your child and society of going anti-vax.

↑↓DON'T WASTE OXYGEN TRYING TO EXPLAIN

Embarking on the trip of a lifetime aboard a properly equipped boat with a well-prepared crew — which I understand was the case with the Kaufmans and *Rebel Heart* — is hardly more hazardous than raising a child in Chicago, Detroit, or Washington, D.C. And let's not even talk about the more than 40,000 people that die on our nation's streets and highways in automobiles. I hope the Kaufmans can get another boat, throw off the lines, and take their children on the trip that they will be telling their grandchildren about. They cannot expect those who don't have a dream to understand, so they shouldn't waste the oxygen trying.

Howard L. Ward
Notre Reve, Island Packet 40
Chandler, AZ

↑↓MAKE 'EM PAY

Although we've now lived on a motor yacht for 15 years, we were originally sailors, so we understand how compelling it can be to make a boat your home. However, we think it was completely irresponsible of the Kaufmans to take their young daughters on this trip, especially on a sailboat of that size. If you need an ambulance while on land, you will most definitely be charged, so they should have to pay at least a portion of the excessive cost of their rescue.

Julie & Chris James
Alameda

↑↓KEEPING OUR KIDS SAFE FROM REPUBLICANS

I've known half a dozen families over the past 40 years who have taken long voyages or lived on the water, my family being one of them. This is the first time I've heard of a rescue at sea of one of them. The families have always benefited from the experience.

As a single dad living on a boat with my two sons, I've found that my harshest critics have been childless women



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burdened with unrealistic notions of child rearing. If the nay-sayers want to keep children safe from harm, the best advice I can give them is to give up the automobile, lock themselves in a room, cover their heads, and pray that there will be no intruders, fires, earthquakes, tsunamis or Republicans in office.

Michael Childs
Sparrow, 30-ft Seychelles gaff ketch
Wilmington

IT'S SHAMEFUL

After first reading about the Kaufmans' plight on CNN, I was floored by the vitriol being thrown at these poor people — and not just in the comments to CNN and other media outlets, but also to their own blog and Facebook page.

As former cruisers aboard our *Tayana 42 Compañia* in the 2001 Ha-Ha, my husband and I met many wonderful cruising families with children of all ages, including very small ones. Most all of these kids seemed very well-adjusted, happy, and having the time of their lives. Furthermore, many of them seemed to have very well-developed social skills for their age, and were unusually at ease around adults.

Is a one-year-old too young to be taken on a Pacific passage? Perhaps, but I'm sure little Lyra isn't the first. The Kaufmans had a well-found boat and seemed no worse-prepared than any of the other cruising families we met, many of whom made successful crossings of their own. As an experienced sailor, I'm reserving judgment. I only wish the hundreds of trolls out there, who don't know a sheet from a sail, would stop hiding behind the anonymity of the Internet to hurl insults, foul language, and ill-informed opinions — things they would never say to someone in person. It's shameful.

Susan Pazera
ex-Compañia, *Tayana Vancouver 42*
San Francisco

A DIFFERING OPINION

I cannot believe that the Kaufmans say they are proud of their choice to put their child in danger — and cost the American taxpayer thousands of dollars. They should be made to pay restitution. And Eric's captain's license should be revoked. I say this as one who has circumnavigated.

Ed Hart
Hooligan, *Cascade 29*
San Diego

THE RISKS ARE GREAT AND SO ARE THE REWARDS

I take issue with one part of *Latitude's* report on the Kaufmans. You wrote, "Eric, a former U.S. Navy corpsman who holds a U.S. Coast Guard Master's License, called rescue authorities on his sat phone — luckily he and Charlotte had the foresight to bring one along." Luck had nothing to do with it. The end of the sentence should have read " — Eric and Charlotte had the foresight to equip their boat with a sat phone in case of an emergency."

My wife Linda and I have cruised tens of thousands of bluewater miles in a *Hans Christian* slightly smaller than *Rebel Heart*, and we support the Kaufmans' choice to go offshore with their children. Everything parents do with or for their children has risks. There are also benefits. The risk of taking children offshore is great, but so are the rewards for the children and parents.

John & Linda Gratton
Nakia, *Hans Christian 33*
Redwood City / Hawaii

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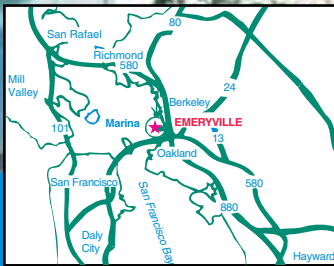
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↑↓ RESCUE IS A SERVICE OUR SOCIETY PROVIDES

Sailors come in all types and ages. If a boat and crew are well prepared, an offshore voyage may not be everyone's choice, but the choice should be everyone's. This includes families with small children. If expensive rescues become necessary, it would be like insurance, as each of us pays into the pool by paying taxes. Some never need to use the resources, but by paying into the pool, they can access the services if needed. A similar example is the money being spent looking for the missing jetliner. The bottom line is the Kaufmans were apparently well-prepared, but their child got sick and needed medical care. It is a service that our society provides. Anything less would be unacceptable.

Scotty Correa-Mickel
 Rosa Nautica, Catalina 400
 Santa Cruz

↑↓ APPLAUDING THE KAUFMANS

The backbone of our society has been watered down to such a degree that it seems anyone wishing to live their lives outside a routine 8-to-5 existence is looked on as living irresponsibly. That's wrong. And I have no patience with those who have no cruising experience passing judgment on this family.

I think the best environment for a new family is the challenge and camaraderie of long-distance cruising. The results are strong family bonds and independent, well-adjusted, self-confident children. I applaud the efforts of the Kaufmans to get out there and do something with their lives, including doing so with their new baby.

Ted Lavino
 KG6LZP

↑↓ SAILORS ARE NOT A BURDEN TO SOCIETY

Most of the sailors being rescued by the Coast Guard or our Navy are American citizens, and they are generally not the type of people who are burdens to society. They're not in the justice system. They're not in jail. They're not on welfare or disability. They obviously didn't choose the situation that causes them to need being rescued. As people go, they probably have not burdened the public treasury to any extent. So if they run afoul of bad luck, I say rescue them. It's not as if we had to build a ship and send it after them. How much money is wasted on fake rescues in the name of training?

Greg Gibson
 Landlubber
 Grass Valley

↑↓ NO MONEY WAS WASTED IN THIS RESCUE

There was no extra cost incurred by the Kaufmans' rescue mission. This kind of operation, no matter how elaborate from a civilian's point of view, is within ANG 129th's core competency. This is simply a training exercise to them, and we taxpayers have already paid for it, whether it's a mock or a real rescue operation.

As to parenting, at the end of a day it's the parents' decision whether they want to raise the next generation with the help of video game consoles or in the sun and surf. I for one applaud what I believe was their correct decision.

Robert Tseng
 Planet Earth

↑↓ LET'S TALK ABOUT THE COST OF THE RESCUE

If we can afford to spend trillions in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, then I say we can spend a few million here

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LETTERS

at home rescuing our own citizens in need. Either that or we should get the heck out of all the other countries in the world and send them bills for services rendered.

Dave Barten
 Ikani, Gecco 39
 Point Loma

Readers — For the record, there are over 160,000 U.S. troops stationed in 150 countries around the world. Of these, 50,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan, and over 40,000 in Germany. Oddly enough, these numbers are both significantly higher than the 33,000 in Afghanistan, where that war drags on for the 12th year, the longest in U.S. history. We'll let everyone decide for themselves where money is being foolishly spent.

↑↓ **BRAVO TO THE KAUFMANS AND THEIR RESCUERS**

Bravo to the Kaufmans and the entire rescue team group of sailors, jumpers, pilots/air crew, and the Navy personnel. All are wonderfully brave! And the kids — I don't know too many young folks who haven't wished their parents weren't more adventurous.

As for the costs, the United States seems to be ready to rescue anyone and everyone else on this planet, at whatever costs. Why not our own?

George Higbie
 Petaluma

↑↓ **LEAVE THEM ALONE, ALREADY**

Having sailed offshore for three years with three children, albeit young teens, I absolutely support families' taking children sailing. Yes, there are risks, but the benefits far outweigh the risks. Young families who are well-prepared and qualified should not hesitate.

My prayers and good wishes go out to the Kaufman family for their baby's complete recovery, and my condolences on losing their boat. I also support the efforts of the Navy in assisting the Kaufmans. We probably would not have heard this much about the rescue (and who is to pay for it) if it had been some big, expensive yacht in trouble during a race. The Kaufmans have suffered enough; have some compassion and leave them alone.

Josie Glenn Hyde
 Morro Bay

↑↓ **ROGUE WAVES ARE ALL OVER THE PLACE**

The funniest comment was by one of the anchors at *The Today Show*, who said bluewater cruising was dangerous "because you could be capsized by a rogue wave at any time." This only demonstrates how people should keep their mouths shut when they don't know what they are talking about.

Cruising can definitely be a family experience, but it may be better to wait until the children can appreciate and understand it. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that anyone can get sick at sea or have a crisis, and this should not deter families from such amazing adventures.

As far as the cost of the rescue, speaking as one who completed a Pacific Puddle Jump last year, they weren't doing anything particularly dangerous. And as Americans, we all pay taxes to have access to these services. I have no problems with providing the assistance without charge to the family.

Andrew Rosen
 Murar's Dream, Beneteau 46
 Marina del Rey



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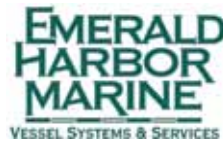
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LETTERS

↑↓ THE HEART OF THE MATTER

The essence of the issue is determining what the risk/reward bright line is, and who should be allowed to make it. Is that something we let the government do? Certainly when it comes to letting kids suffer in a hot car (no risk/reward ratio there), or feeding your adolescent hard alcohol or illegal drugs, most would agree those are actions of a parent who should be held accountable by authorities.

When parents let their adolescents play football, as mine did, or sail a small boat alone two miles across Hull Bay without supervision at age 10, as mine did, who judges whether attendant and obvious risks are outweighed by the benefits?

It is a thorny question and people have highly subjective opinions. I'm not smart enough to have the answer, but that's for the philosophers, not the lay people. I work very hard to avoid placing blame on any parent for creating risk for their child if there's any chance they are, at the same time, trying to prepare them for this very difficult challenge ahead of them called life.

Rich Jepsen
CEO, OCSC Sailing
Survivor of childhood

Readers — If anybody cares how Latitude sees it, here goes: We have no doubt that the Kaufmans aren't stupid and love their daughters very much. That being the case, we don't have a problem with what they did. Indeed, if there were such a thing as a Parental Irresponsibility/Stupidity Index, what they did wouldn't even register compared to what tens of thousands of parents in the United States do or don't do with their kids every day. In fact, you have to wonder what percentage of adults should even be allowed to have children. As for the cost, rescue officials have repeatedly explained that it's already been built into their rescue and training budgets.

The publisher's daughter learned to walk in Cabo San Lucas at age 11 months during a weeklong visit to her dad's Freya 39. When she was four and her brother two, we began taking them on one-week boat trips around the Sea of Cortez, and nine months later started taking them on annual three-week winter sailing vacations to the Caribbean. We're not sure our daughter remembers being on a boat when she was just 11 months, but it was great being together as a family. We do know the kids well remember the longer boat vacations in Mexico, and starting when they were almost five and almost three, in the Caribbean. All we have to do is drag out the photos, and the memories and laughter start flowing nearly 30 years later. It was adventurous stuff, so not all of it was idyllic.

Actually, the worst incident of all these sailing adventures occurred when they were flying home from the Caribbean on an American Airlines 767 that hit an air pocket west of Miami, resulting in numerous serious injuries and the plane's having to return to Miami. As they were flying with their aunt and uncle, who were several rows away, it scared the daylights out of them, and has had lasting effects.

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

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

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

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Bill and Conni on SV Wings, their Passport 40, in Nuku Hiva, Marquesas, after completing the Pacific Puddle Jump in April 2013. Bill writes: "Don't leave home without one!"



Wayne on SV Dante, his Harmony 42, in Suva, Fiji. Hydrovane mounted off-center to preserve the swim platform.



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'Big Bang for the Buck' Charterboat in the BVIs?

When it comes to four double-cabin, heads ensuite, 45-ft catamarans in gorgeous protected waters of the British Virgins, you can't beat the Leopard 45 *'ti Profligate*, owned by the publisher of *Latitude*. That's her in the clear waters of Gorda Sound near Saba Rock. Call the great folks at BVI Yacht Charters – (888) 615-4006 – for reservations, and tell them Richard sent you.

SIGHTINGS

hawaii race updates

This 2014 races to Hawaii — the Singlehanded TransPac and the Pacific Cup — will both begin early this summer from inside San Francisco Bay.

This year marks the 19th running of the biennial Singlehanded TransPac race from San Francisco to Kauai's Hanalei Bay, a rhumbline distance of 2,120nm. Twenty intrepid skippers will compete in a greatly varied fleet, ranging from Peter Heiberg's Palmer Johnson 49 *Scaramouche V* to Brian Cline's Dana 24 *Maris*. Leading up to the June 26 start, there will be several more pre-race seminars that are well worth attending, on topics ranging from weather to medical issues. (See: <http://sfbaysss.org/shtp/seminars>). The start will be off Tiburon's Corinthian YC. We encourage you show up and cheer on these daring, self-sufficient sailors.

On July 6, just ten days after the Singlehanded TransPac starts, the first of several 17th Pacific Cup starts will take place off the Cityfront. (The last divisions will start no later than July 12). The entry list for the so-called "fun race to Hawaii," which ends at Kaneohe on the island of Oahu, is practically bursting at the seams with 70 boats

continued on outside column of next sightings page

sign-ups begin for

A mere six months from now the dreams of hundreds of adventurous sailors will finally be realized. How so? Because the definitive starting date of the 21st Baja Ha-Ha cruisers' rally — October 27 — will force them to finally quit procrastinating, throw off their docklines, and put their dreams in motion.

Now that the much-publicized impoundment fiasco has fizzled, the Mexican government is taking steps to streamline the paperwork process (see *Good News from Mexico* later in this section). And the folks at Mexico Tourism are eager to put that public relations nightmare behind them and once again start welcoming mariners to the wonderful cruising grounds of Baja, the Sea of Cortez and the Mexican mainland.



STEVE CHAMBERLIN / PACIFIC CUP

baja ha-ha 21

The original schedule of the Ha-Ha proved to be an excellent balance of off-shore sailing and tranquil rest stops in well-protected anchorages, so we've never had a reason to change it.

As always, the fun will begin with an elaborate costume kickoff party, Sunday, October 26 at San Diego's West Marina Shelter Island superstore. While mingling, munching on tacos, sipping a beer, or stutting your stuff in the costume contest, you're bound to make some new friends — although you may not recognize them when they're out of costume the next time you see them.

The next morning the fleet will parade out of San Diego Harbor while TV crews, print and radio journalists, and digna-

continued in middle column of next sightings page



"Hey! What's that graffiti on my bow?" Relax, it's only a mock-up of the decals that 'Latitude 38' division boats will carry in this summer's Pacific Cup to Kaneohe, Oahu.

hawaii — continued

entered — the maximum allowed.

Since its inception, *Latitude 38* has always been a big supporter of the Pacific Cup. But this year the magazine will play a special role. After some gentle prodding from the good folks at the Pacific Cup YC, we agreed to sponsor a *Latitude 38* division for the first time ever. We expect there will be other specially named divisions too, which should add to the fun.

Regardless of which division they end up in, all PacCup racers (and other sailors too) should be aware of US Sailing's Safety at Sea Seminar at Encinal YC May 18. Read about it and other upcoming PCYC events at pacificcup.org.

Look for our solo TranPac preview in next month's issue and our Pacific Cup preview in July.

— ROSS



RON DILLEHAY

Seen here coming back from the Lightship, newly up-graded 'Invisible Hand' will compete in the Pac Cup.

guardian angels to the rescue

Imagine being scared out of your wits while in mid-ocean because your gravely ill infant daughter won't respond to the only medicines you have on board, then having to endure the heartache of abandoning your sinking boat — your family's home for eight years — with virtually all of your possessions aboard. The ordeal that Eric and Charlotte Kaufman went through early last month was truly tragic. But for them, what may have been even more painful was that their plight became a hot topic among gossips, bloggers and media talking heads even before their rescue vessel, the 453-ft frigate *USS Vandegrift*, reached its San Diego homeport.

From the input we received, the sailing community seemed almost unanimous in the contention that taking young kids offshore, like the Kaufmans' one- and three-year-old daughters Lyra and Cora, is *not* irresponsible, as they were experienced sailors and their boat was well prepared. But some cable news commentators, newspaper columnists, mean-spirited bloggers and even a few members of the Kaufmans' extended family leaned heavily in the opposite di-



US NAVY

The Kaufmans arrive at Coronado Island with shattered cruising dreams, but two healthy daughters.

rection, damning these young parents for "selfishly" pursuing their own dreams while risking their children's safety — in addition to risking the lives of their rescuers.

The sting of such condemnation and the gut-wrenching pain of their shattered dreams put Eric, 35, and Charlotte, 34, in a reclusive mindset after returning to their San Diego homeport. As Eric put it, they would wait until their story to become "yesterday's news" before clarifying the details of the circumstances that led up to their activating their EPIRB, and effectively calling in the cavalry. To date, that

continued on outside column of next sightings page

rebel heart — continued

still hasn't happened.

Unless you were on another planet the first week of April, you undoubtedly learned through various media outlets that roughly two weeks after departing for French Polynesia from La Cruz, Mexico aboard their Hans Christian 36 *Rebel Heart*, one-year-old Lyra came down with a rash all over her tiny body and a fever that would not

respond to the antibiotics carried on board. That much is undisputed, but the Kaufmans say that many other 'facts' that were reported were partially or wholly inaccurate. It was widely reported that *Rebel Heart* lost steerage and charging capabilities, and began taking on water when the engine was started. Again, the Kaufmans have yet to clarify these issues.

What is crystal clear, however, is how unquestionably heroic their multi-agency rescue effort was.

After a Coast Guard search and rescue (SAR) coordination center received the mayday April 3, a team of Air National Guard personnel from the Moffett Field-based 129th Air Rescue Wing were dispatched to the scene, roughly 900 miles from Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Upon arrival that night, four highly trained Pararescuemen (aka PJs) pushed an inflatable boat and various supply containers out the cargo bay of their MC-130P Combat Shadow aircraft, then parachuted into the drink behind them.

Once on board, the PJs — whose advanced medical and combat training was originally designed for rescuing downed pilots behind enemy lines — were able to stabilize Lyra's condition. But they would spend three days crammed onto the stout double-ender before the *Vandegrift*, which had been diverted from other offshore operations, arrived to take them and the Kaufmans aboard. The trip back to San Diego took four more days.

Shortly after arriving, Eric sent out this tweet: "The men and women of the *Vandegrift* are heroes, and words cannot express my appreciation to the 129, the best of the best." In addition, he and Charlotte invited their supporters to consider donating to the nonprofit That Others May Live Foundation, which benefits the families of rescue personnel who are killed or wounded in the line of duty.

Many critics lambasted the Kaufmans for the cost of the rescue operation to taxpayers — and the San Diego *Union Tribune* went so far as to declare a price tag of \$663,000 (loosely based on operational costs of the various assets involved). But a number of military spokespersons said the *Vandegrift* was already operating in Pacific waters, and the other agencies' crews would have been conducting practice operations anyway. Also, this real-life emergency gave the various teams valuable real-life experience. Lt. Col. Thomas Keegan was quoted as saying, "You can't make exercises like this up." We tend to agree with the Kaufmans' defenders. Does a homeowner anticipate an invoice from the fire department after they put out a house fire?

In any case, we were greatly relieved when the Kaufmans made it safely back to *terra firma*, and we hope they are someday able to rekindle their cruising dreams. Had it not been for the men — dubbed Guardian Angels — of the 129th RQW and their support resources, the outcome might have been different. To date, these Angels have saved the lives of more than 1,000 people on land and sea.

— andy

baja ha-ha 21

taries cheer us on. Then, just outside the harbor, the 11-day cruise to Cabo will begin at 11 a.m. — just about the time the breeze typically kicks in.

After two or three days of glorious downwind sailing fleet members will start trickling into lovably funky Turtle Bay (a 360-mile run). After two days of rest, hiking, swimming, playing baseball with the locals and a beach party, we'll set off for remote Bahia Santa Maria (240 miles) on the outer peninsula of Mag Bay.

A couple of days of R&R there — in-



THE REBEL HEART.COM

The Kaufmans in happier times, at the Marina Riviera Nayarit in La Cruz the day after Lyra's first birthday.



ALL PHOTOS 129TH AIR RESCUE WING EXCEPT AS NOTED

— continued

cluding a rock 'n' roll beach party — and we'll set off toward Cabo (180 miles), where our final beach party and awards ceremony are held — not to mention taking over the dance floor at Squid Roe.

As its name implies, the Ha-Ha is a whole lot of fun, but it is *not* a booze cruise or a magnet for irresponsible people. The basic rule is: Don't sign up if you wouldn't be prepared to go on your own.

Read all about it at www.baja-haha.com. Online signups begin May 1.

— andy

run for the border

When your boat is in danger in a foreign country and all else fails, the best solution may be to make a run for the border. At least that's what 16-year Mexico cruiser John Hards decided. As reported in *'Lectronic Latitude*, Hards, 75, had obtained a standard 10-year Temporary Import Permit for his Beneteau 36 *Pelican* in 2009. But the clerk who prepared it at the military bank, Banjercito, made a typo on the end date: 2010, instead of 2019. While the mistake should have been obvious — a 10-year permit good for only one year? — inspectors from AGACE, a sub-agency of Mexico's IRS, didn't see it that way and demanded that Hards pay a fine of roughly \$7,000. In addition, during his attempts to resolve the issue, he was eventually told that his boat had become Mexican Federal property (although it was never

continued on outside column of next sightings page



Far left, top to bottom: PJs prep for jumping, jettison equipment, and parachute into the sea. Center inset and upper right: 'Rebel Heart' is spotted by crew of the MC-130P. Below, right: Lyra hangs out with her Guardian Angel. Below, center: Rescuers from the 'Vandegriff' arrive for the transfer.

THE REBEL HEART.COM

SIGHTINGS

run for the border — continued

actually seized).

What follows are excerpts from Hards' account of his singlehand flight to the freedom on American soil.

"I asked the Nuevo Vallarta port captain, 'Do I need a form to go to Opequimar for a short service trip?' Of course I knew the answer (no) and promptly set a course to Los Cabos.

"The trip took two weeks and two days with little rest. Stop one was scheduled at Los Cabos to fuel, but required a second night waiting for a stronger person with 3/4-inch-drive socket tools to replace three of Pelican's 16 keel bolts and to locate a diesel fuel leak near the injector pump. Also, the navigation computer failed, so I moved to a backup rig with an old G48 from the ditch bag.

"Stop two was not scheduled at Mag Bay, but the pounding around the Cape actually broke the bow navigation lamp, jammed the main halyards at the masthead, and caused the bilge pump to fail. I rewired the float switch and plumbed the shower sump pump as a backup

continued on outside column of next sightings page

how much do

How much do professional yacht racers get paid? It's a question weekend sailors often ask, but is rarely answered.

However, a recent Associated Press item gives us some insights into the question. It states that Oracle Team USA America's Cup 34 team member Dirk de Ridder is on the verge of being suspended by the International Sailing Federation from ISAF-sanctioned events for five years.

It's been reported that "not only is de Ridder banned from the 2017 America's Cup, he'll be unable to accept a \$500,000 contract to sail in the Volvo (around the world) Ocean Race, which starts later this year. De Ridder, 41, who is Dutch, was



LATITUDE / ROSS

pro racers earn?

found guilty of having illegally modified OTUSA's AC45s. He can still appeal the decision via a review board or the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

We don't have any problem with crew for a Volvo getting paid half a mil. After all, it's an extreme event, takes lots of skill, and is far more dangerous than the majority of sailors, let alone non-sailors, appreciate.

What do helmsmen get paid for driving in the St. Francis Big Boat Series? What do crew get paid for the TransPac? Certainly it varies depending on the sailors and the owners and the event, but we really don't have a clue.

— richard



A bevy of Bird boats flocked together for spring maintenance recently at Pt. Richmond's KKMI boatyard. Few fleets have more dedicated owners, as maintaining these classics is truly a labor of love.

run for the border — continued

bilge pump. After a night anchoring, Jorge and his crew topped me to 100 gallons while I carefully pried off the running lights' red/green cover and replaced the bulb. Just as I was strapping on the damaged assembly with plastic ties, I heard talk on channel 16 about the 'police', and shortly after a panga arrived looking for equipment like marine batteries and foul weather gear. I was slow to catch on, but finally the sole occupant stated that he was the sheriff. He accepted a small flashlight and stated that he was 'returning to San Carlos.' I left promptly.

"Stop three was at San Juanico; not planned but the navigation program locked up, so I made the stop to repair it, and also to reload the main fuel tank, eat, and rest before pushing on in the morning. In mid-afternoon a large but open boat with BCS State markings pulled alongside, but they were not inclined to get too close. I was dry behind my dodger, while they were wet. I indicated that I was on the way to Abreojos, and after a circle of *Pelican* they moved off toward shore some four miles to the east.

"That contact soon faded from memory as my new 'mercury free' bilge pump switch failed. I had a repaired mercury switch to replace it, but it wouldn't be a quick job in the pounding seas. Abreojos was planned but bypassed. That is, the very dark anchorage was empty except for one boat with no lights. I circled around and waved a large flashlight as if looking to anchor but without radar (which was really running, of course) and the other boat stayed dark until I headed right at it from about 1/2 mile off. This worked, and they lit me up revealing a large boat with a cabin visible in the back light. I faked a second 'run' on the boat while filling up the main tank from the spout cans in the calm waters. They remained 1/2 mile off at all times and I concluded that they were simply waiting for me to anchor. Instead, I throttled up and hugged the coast around the point, but behind the little islands and rocky breaks.

"I heard some bad language on channel 16, and later something I was not able to translate. But it had the 'tone' of 'Oh well, not worth the effort.' Finally, just before heading out to sea, *Pelican* was really lit up by a large searchlight for just a few seconds.

"Turtle Bay was next. I arrived in the daylight for a change, and a wave of an empty fuel can produced Enrique, with fuel (100 gals), a case of oil (my engine was still losing two quarts a day), a box of beer and a bag of fruit. After a good night's sleep it was on to the North, but offshore of Cedros. I was late to arrive at San Carlos but the morning was calm enough to transfer fuel from the big-mouthed bottles to the spout-mouth cans, pump oil out of the engine bilge, and make a hot meal. I spent a second full night to sleep, then went inshore of the Sacramento Reef, but bypassed Punta Baja in favor of San Quintin. The predicted 8- to 11-foot seas were well spaced, so there was little pounding and the winds inshore were much lighter.

"I arrived at San Quintin in the dark, but the 3-mile-by-3-mile bay is hard to miss, even with my depthsounder not working. I felt safe on a Saturday night. I ate and filled up the boat's 110-liter fuel tank for the final leg that would start the next morning.

"I passed Ensenada very early on Monday morning and arrived at the San Diego Customs dock late in the afternoon on Monday with no additional problems.

"Will I ever return to Mexico? No, Mexico is over for me after many years. Seems that there is a greater problem building in Mexico. It looks like the 'new' PRI (political party) may be more problematic than the 'old' PRI. The residence fees have made a big jump from about \$100/year to \$300/year and may suggest a return to peso revaluation as in 1994 or so. That is, when each \$1,000 of investment in Mexican banks, etc. was reduced to \$1.00 over several months! At my age I prefer other challenges."

Here's an ironic footnote to this story: After Tere Grossman, Presi-

continued on outside column of next sightings page

SIGHTINGS

run for the border — continued

dent of the Mexican Marina Owners Association, was alerted to Hards' plight, she asked the association's lawyer to investigate. A trip to the tax bureau's office revealed that after all the fear, worry and drama, "their records show that *Pelican's* TIP is good until 2019, so his boat should have been released without a fine... As *Pelican* did have a valid permit all along, they probably will close the file. But what a mess!"

Indeed, and the worst problem may be that the whole impoundment fiasco has caused incalculable damage to Mexico's image as a welcoming destination for mariners. That's a shame, because we still think Mexico is one of the world's most wonderful cruising grounds.

— andy

san francisco pit stop

Clipper Race Round the World sailors recently descended upon South Beach YC as they finished Race 10 from Qingdao, China. It was exciting to finally meet some of the crewmembers we've interviewed in months past and to hear anecdotally from others what they had to say about their recent crossing.

Derry~Londonderry~Doire's arrival was arguably the most dramatic. Press, supporters and local medical emergency personnel crammed the docks to catch a glimpse of Andrew Taylor. You may recall he was washed overboard in the North Pacific on March 31 and spent a harrowing 90 minutes adrift in the tumultuous sea while his crewmates searched frantically for him.

He escaped from the North Pacific's grasp a lot closer to death than we were initially told. What was truly frightening was that after



ABNER KINGMAN

Above and right: When it came time for the Clipper fleet to begin their race to Panama late last month, San Francisco Bay offered up the sort of rowdy conditions that it's known for worldwide.

Andrew fell into the ocean, his life vest failed to deploy. It was a full ten minutes before he was able to manually fill it with air. What's more, when he was pulled from the ocean, his hypothermic condition reportedly had him literally minutes away from death.

Another example of how challenging life can be aboard these boats is when a sail is damaged it must be repaired on site — there are no extras. The white sails are so thick you literally need a drill to penetrate them rather than a sewing machine. In some cases when spinnakers were blown up in a race, it took up to two weeks to repair them, with one person sewing them per shift.

If the twelve crews can avoid these and other potential pitfalls, their greatest fears during the current leg to Panama may be body odor and their limited menu choices.

— ross

vintage message

While perusing the British *Guardian* last month we came across a fascinating item about a German fisherman who pulled a brown beer bottle out of the Baltic Sea near Kiel, only to discover that it had a message in it scrawled on a very old post card. It was not a call for help, as is often depicted in movieshe note simply requested the finder return it to the writer's home address in Berlin.

Once in the hands of researchers at Hamburg's International Maritime Museum, the bottle's origin was eventually traced. Turns out it was chucked into the Baltic 101 years ago — apparently a record, for those who keep track of such things, especially since the bottle was completely intact.

Through handwriting analysis, ac-



ABNER KINGMAN

in a bottle

cessing old residency records, and other means, researchers determined that the note was penned by Richard Platz, a baker's son, then 20, who threw the bottle in the Baltic while on a hike with a nature appreciation group in 1913. Amazing.

A Berlin-based genealogical researcher determined that Platz had died in 1946, but he was able to track down his 62-year-old granddaughter Angela Erdmann, who lives in Berlin. Although she never knew her grandfather, she was understandably shocked. "It was almost unbelievable," she said.

We've found all sorts of odd stuff floating in the sea, but never a bottle with a note in it. How about you? If so, email your story to editorial@latitude38.com.

— andy

small boat, big heart

Rimas Meleshyus is not your typical bluewater voyager. In fact, some people think he must be crazy because he is absolutely determined to singlehand around the world in a San Juan 24 daysailer named *Pier Pressure*. As ill-advised as that may sound, we've got to hand it to Meleshyus — who arrived under the Golden Gate last month from Hawaii. In a world full of bullshitters, he backs up his grand plans with action.

Having departed Hilo, Hawaii on February 8, the Russian-born American citizen slowly plodded across the Pacific to the Bay — a voyage of at least 2,200 miles — with only the most rudimentary equipment and virtually no creature comforts. The passage took 56 days, but that wasn't Rimas' longest nonstop trip since beginning his odyssey in 2011. On his previous trip he was offshore for 84 days, finally making landfall in Hawaii sailing under a tiny jib after jury-rigging three broken shrouds.

What could possibly motivate such seemingly masochistic adventures? In a word, freedom. Having grown up in the repressive climate of the Soviet Union, he claims that he always wanted to get out and

continued on outside column of next sightings page



SIGHTINGS

small boat — continued

experience the wider world. In 1988 he made his move, taking political asylum, somewhat ironically, in the Iranian Embassy in Moscow. After eventually fleeing to the West, he bounced around to New York and St. Thomas, then somehow ended up as a Japanese tour guide in Guam — he speaks seven languages. It may have been during his seven-year stint in San Francisco (after Guam) that he became enamored with sailing, although he didn't begin his self-training until buying a previous San Juan 24 in Alaska.

With no sponsorship and very little money, Rimas has been helped along the way by the serendipitous generosity of strangers such as Bay sailor Jean Mondeau, who is currently rerigging *Pier Pressure* for free in addition to facilitating other upgrades. Amazingly, Jean met Rimas 22 years ago while stationed in Guam with the US military.

Like others who've helped Rimas along the way, Jean and his helpers don't mean to encourage the stoic Russian in his seemingly impossible plan, but since there is no talking him out of it, they are

continued on outside column of next sightings page

reggae 'pon da ocean'

The Second SoCal Ta-Ta — aka Reggae 'Pon da Ocean — a Ha-Ha style cruiser rally from Santa Barbara to Catalina, is on. The dates are Sunday, September 7, through Saturday, September 13. Online signups will begin May 15 at noon at www.socaltata.com. Cost: \$200 per boat.

As with the first Ta-Ta, the interim stops will be Santa Cruz Island for two nights, Paradise Cove, and Redondo Beach.

The event will be open to boats 27 feet and longer — unless special dispensation is given — that were designed, built, and have been maintained for open-ocean sailing. We've sailed all the legs of this event many times — the longest is about 30



LATTITUDE / RICHARD

— it's on!

miles — and it's usually light-to-moderate winds in reaching or running conditions. While we've rarely encountered headwinds, winds over 25 knots or seas over 10 feet on the course, all skippers have to be prepared for such possibilities.

All entries will have to carry the appropriate safety gear, and be capable of motoring at a minimum of five knots. Since the shipping lanes will be crossed several times, all boats must be equipped with a functioning radar or AIS, and all must be equipped with a radar reflector. All entries will need to demonstrate proof of liability insurance. Look for updates here and on *Lectronic Latitude*.

— richard



Above: There are plenty of reasons to do the Ta-Ta, including reinventing yourself as a bona fide rasta sailor. Spread: During Ta-Ta numero uno the blue Contour 34 tri 'Orange' smokes past Pt. Dume.

small boat — continued

at least trying to give him a fighting chance at survival. If Rimas ultimately fails to complete his lap around the planet, at least he'll know that he did so exercising his cherished right of personal freedom.

Now moored in Sausalito's Richardson Bay anchorage, the solo adventurer is taking the advice of Jean and other new friends, and upgrading his onboard systems and safety gear with whatever he can afford, or is offered by well-wishers. Despite his seemingly poor odds of success, Rimas' unflappable resolve and dedication to the notion of freedom is quietly winning him supporters. "I know Rimas personally," writes Shawn Munger of Olympia, WA. He is quite settled in his dream; little outward fear, a man of deep composure, and very intelligent — I mean, seven languages?

We'll keep you posted on his progress. In the meantime, if you want to learn more about him, check out his Facebook page, where you'll notice his boat always flies a large American flag — symbolic of the freedom his US citizenship gives him. Donations to the cause (via Facebook) would be welcomed.

— andy



Captain Rimas

a gal named charlie

Vallejo's Cal Maritime is renowned for offering the best education for a commercial maritime career on the West Coast. The campus is also home to one of the West's top collegiate racing programs, largely thanks to longtime Sailing Director Susan 'Charlie' Arms.

Think offshore collegiate sailing and the first names that come to mind are probably the US Naval Academy at Annapolis, the US Coast Guard Academy and even the US Merchant Marine Academy. But under Charlie's leadership Cal Maritime has been steadily building a force of race-winning sailors.

Her dedication was recognized in 2011 when she was named California Educator of the Year by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. She also is the recipient of US Sailing's Mary Luray Award for Outstanding and Unselfish Contributions to further public access to sailing, Yachtswoman of the Year from the San Diego Association of Yacht Clubs, and the Yachtswoman Excellence Award from the Southern California Yacht Racing Union.

In 2005 Charlie was part of the four-woman Transpac team racing on Sally Honey's *Illusion* that placed second in the 14-boat Cal 40 fleet.

Under Charlie's coaching, the Cal Maritime Offshore Sailing Team of nearly 30 young women and men has landed significant titles, including winning the Shields Trophy seven times at the ICSA National Championships, and an unprecedented four consecutive wins in the Harbor Cup invitational in Los Angeles.

In October, the Cal Maritime crew, dubbed the Keelhaulers, competed in the prestigious Kennedy Cup Regatta. Aboard US Naval Academy 44-foot sloops, 10 teams saw three days of intense competition that resulted in a three-way tie between Cal Maritime, Navy and Michigan. In the end, Cal Maritime won the tiebreaker and earned the honor to be Team US at the 2014 Student Yachting World Cup (SYWoC) in France.

This is the second time in four years that the Keelhaulers have achieved this recognition. Coach Parker Mitchell is leading efforts, having only been with Cal Maritime for two years. Says Charlie, "The 2014 SYWoC will return to La Rochelle and use Grand Surprise 30 boats — the same vessels that were used in 2010 competition. Coach Parker has secured a Farr 30, similar to a Grand Surprise, on which

continued on outside column of next sightings page

charlie — continued

to practice."

Cal Maritime students compete in both offshore and dinghy categories. The dinghy team practices two to three afternoons per week, while the offshore team trains one weekday afternoon and on weekends aboard *Recidivist*, a Schumacher 39, and *Cal Maritime*, a J/105. Both boats have seen action in San Francisco's Rolex Big Boat Series. Adds Charlie, "Our strength in offshore racing starts with

our students having a sailing background, good coaching and providing them with the equipment needed to perform. Our school is small and there's a strong sense of community. That culture is the same on the team; they are a close-knit group."

Commenting about the dinghy crew, Charlie reveals it is tougher to recruit dinghy sailors — top candidates are more interested in sailing back East where highly competitive regattas are held every weekend. Another Cal Maritime goal is to build a women's team. One challenge: "We face a dearth of women within our student body."

On campus, Charlie manages the Cal Maritime recreational boating programs which includes sailing, power boating and kayaking classes for cadets and faculty, and she oversees an extensive community recreation program on boat handling, sail trim and starting techniques, plus boat safety. In advance of the America's Cup in San Francisco, she provided powerboat training to the cadre of volunteer course marshals.

Beyond education and training, her race acumen is highly valued. Most recently invited to serve as chief judge for the Farr 40 Midwinners, Charlie worked with fellow judge Liz Baylis on the water. She has served as an umpire for match race events, including the past seven years at the Congressional Cup in Long Beach. "I got into umpiring to become a better racer. I have worked beside top international umpires — it's the next best thing to being on the racing boat." She adds, "It takes a thorough knowledge of the rules, and understanding of tactics and ability to anticipate the racers' next moves. Not to mention being able to handle a small powerboat to place yourself in the right spot to make the call."

Charlie was born in Newport, RI, into a Navy family. She received her bachelor's degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies from CSU Long Beach, and a master's degree in recreation, parks and tourism from San Francisco State University. She holds a Coast Guard Masters license. She is a US Sailing small boat instructor trainer, keelboat instructor trainer, powerboat master instructor trainer and Level 2 performance sailing instructor. Charlie volunteers as US Sailing's Education Division chair, training committee vice chair, and is a regional training coordinator for Northern California.

Needless to say, Charlie Arms is a tremendous asset to the Bay Area sailing community.

— martha blanchfield

good news from mexico

When you turn the page you'll see a copy of Mexico's latest Temporary Import Permit form for boats, sent to us by Tere Grossman, President of the Mexican Marina Owners Association. We like the new forms, as they would seem to address a lot of problems inherent in the older ones, problems that got boats impounded that never should have been impounded.

"Banjercito has started to use the new form, which now has the name of the boat and other small changes," wrote Grossman. "I am going to insist that Banjercito, which issues the Temporary Import

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one man's perspective

People often ask me why I sail my cruising boat *Mongo* engineless. There are a lot of practical reasons that I could give them: less cost, lower weight, more storage, lack of costly maintenance and repairs, independence from fossil fuels, not blowing oneself up. The list is long and I can ramble. But at the end of the day, sailing a boat engineless — for those that are comfortable doing so — makes sailing more fun. Sketchy sometimes, but fun.

Every time that you leave the slip, you know that for better or worse you are truly going on an adventure. Anything can happen and the only thing that can ensure a safe and successful voyage is reliance on your own sailing abilities and knowledge of seamanship. As a result, every voyage becomes that much more meaningful, with a true sense of accomplishment at

COURTESY CAL MARITIME



Charlie Arms



BRONNY DANIELS / JOY SAILING.COM

on engineless cruising

each destination safely reached.

On the Cal 2-27 *Mongo*, removing the broken Yanmar 2GM diesel and functional 8-horse Honda outboard that came with the boat netted \$1,650 on Craigslist, while removing more than 500 pounds. Considering that I bought *Mongo* for 4 grand, it meant that I was into the boat for practically nothing, it weighed much less than a stock version, and could carry an entire quiver of surfboards under the cockpit. Hauling out, removing the fixed 3-bladed prop, and then glassing over the hole did wonders for *Mongo's* sailing abilities, as did the diet which allowed her to stay near her design weight, even when fully loaded. And the cash saved helped me re-fit and untie the docklines sooner.

Setting sail from San Francisco in Sep-

continued in middle column of next sightings page

mexico — continued

Permits, also issue decals showing the year of expiration, similar to how it's done in the United States." Grossman is influential enough in Mexican government that there is a good chance they'll agree to her suggestion.

Here's what we like about the latest form, compared to the form for the 20-Year Import Permit we got 17 years ago: 1) Unlike the still-good 20-Year Permit form, this one looks like an official document. AGACE officials impounded a number of boats because they didn't know what to make of the unofficial-looking 20-Year TIPs. 2) The new form includes spaces for the boat's document number and for her hull identification number — assuming she has the latter. AGACE agents often mistook one for the other, again leading to boats being impounded for no reason. 3) The new form has a bar code, which presumably will allow Mexican officials to check on the status and validity of the TIP in hours instead of literally months.

We were so taken with the new form that we wrote Grossman and told her that we thought we'd replace our old TIP with a new one, even though our current one is still good for several more years. "No, you don't have to do that," she replied. But we might do it anyway.

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RICARDO PINTO

Above: Being a respected judge has its advantages — like being called on to umpire the America's Cup.

mexico — continued

Especially if we get a decal to go with it. Just to remind everyone, TIPs only cost about \$50. In the world of cruising, that's dirt cheap.

Something else that might make foreign boat owners more confident about going to Mexico is a letter to appear in the May issue by Carol Parker of the San Diego-based Dashew 64 motor yacht *Avatar*. Parker and her husband are understandably very unhappy with Mexico, because SAT impounded their boat for four months after — as you'll read — the AGACE agents couldn't find the boat's HIN number even though it was right where it was supposed to be. They

didn't even ask the captain, who was right there with them, where it was.

Parker says that the impounding ruined their cruising plans, which included visiting their grandkids on the East Coast, and that they'll never take their boat to, or spend money in, Mexico ever again. But she did make one very interesting point: She said that she and her husband didn't have to pay any fines, levies, fees

or anything like that, nor did anyone ever put their hand out or suggest that a bribe would help. This lends credence to our belief that this entire nonsense wasn't a case of the PRI party getting in power and trying to extract money from Americans in any way they could, but suggests it was merely a case of a well-meaning bureaucracy coming up with and executing a really, really stupid plan, with agents who didn't know what they were doing.

Further complicating the problem was the fact that when a 'file' is opened up on a boat in Mexico, it has to be 'closed' via some complicated and time-consuming process. That's the 'procedure', and in Mexico, procedures have to be followed. The files just can't be thrown out the window.

There are two other things that also give us confidence. First, all the harbormasters of the marinas that got 'raided' have become very tight friends with harbormasters at marinas that didn't get raided, and have thus shared information about what AGACE seemed to want and need. So as you'll read in another May issue letter, Mexican harbormasters now feel much better prepared for any future visits by AGACE. Similarly, AGACE agents clearly had no idea what they were doing in the first raids, to the extent that they even had to be given diagrams showing where the bow of a boat was. Because of all the problems and terrible publicity, the AGACE administrators and agents have gotten an education. Because of 'procedures,' they weren't able to resolve a lot of boat problems in days instead of months, but we doubt they are going to make those same mistakes in the future.

The bottom line for us at *Latitude* is that we now feel more confident than we have since the AGACE raids in late November in Americans' ability to bring their boats to Mexico and, assuming they have all the necessary documents, not have any problems. Just like the good old days of pre-November.

— richard

matt rutherford's latest mission

Two years ago Annapolis-based sailor Matt Rutherford, then 31, made headlines when he successfully completed the first-ever singlehanded circumnavigation of the Americas. Late last month, after mastering a few last-minute technical challenges, he and his partner, Nicole Trenholm, set sail from Oakland on a new mission:

continued on outside column of next sightings page

perspective

tember, *Mongo* cruised down to San Diego before jumping off to Hawaii in March. After romping across the Alenuihaha Channel from Hawaii to Maui, *Mongo* dismasted off a lee shore just after leaving Kahului Harbor. When a lower shroud failed, the mast buckled in two and came crashing down to leeward. It was the first time that *Mongo* and I had needed an engine in the previous 3,000 miles. Fortunately, I was able to set an anchor in 50 feet of water with 18 knots of onshore breeze, and 9 to 11 feet of surf pounding behind me. Securing the rig to the boat, I was towed back into port an hour later by the Coast Guard, unfortunately losing the rig overboard in the process and having to cut it away to avoid hull damage.

I'm currently undergoing an ultra-low-budget guerrilla-style re-rig while moored out in Maui. But *Mongo* will ride again and continue on her journey to Australia,

COURTESY MEXICAN GOVERNMENT



A sample of a new TIP receipt. The bar code which should make tracing transactions easier.

On the morning before their departure, Matt and Nicole broke away from their last-minute preparations to strike a pose aboard their brand new Schock Harbor 29 'Sakura'.



MIKE SCHECK / SCANMAR

— continued

likely still engineless. With a mast found in a field, a boom from the heavens, a used mainsail from Minney's and a marine metal fabricator who has taught me the meaning of *aloha*, Maui has provided and *Mongo's* dismasting on a lee shore will likely have a very happy ending.

But at the end of the day, it's a somber reminder to me, and likely to others, that when bad things happen, they often happen at very inopportune times. Murphy was a sailor. A dismasting at sea? No problem, I've got a lot of Spectra, tools and broken spars lying around to at least get me to a downwind port. But on a lee shore with onshore trades and pumping surf? Then, even those of us who take pride in being self-sufficient have to call for help.

Anyone who has sailed offshore knows that the sea can be a humbling and dangerous place. Be careful out there.

— ronnie simpson

rutherford — continued

sailing nonstop to Fukuoka, Japan.

Ironically, in addition to Rutherford's physical endurance and mental toughness, one of the things that made his around-the-Americas effort possible in a vintage 27-ft Albin Vega fiberglass sloop was the fact that Arctic ice had diminished so radically in the Northwest Passage during the summer of 2011 that virtually every vessel that attempted that fabled transit got through.

His lap around the Americas made Rutherford acutely aware of the current threats to ocean ecosystems. As he said recently, "The ocean is a vast and wild place, but unfortunately it's not pristine. Human impacts can be seen even thousands of miles from shore."

During the 7,000-mile passage to Japan Rutherford and Trenholm, who is a NOAA researcher, will drag a high-speed trawl net from their brand-new, customized Schock Harbor 29 sailboat *Sakura* in order to sample the distribution of plastic in previously unexplored areas of the North Pacific Gyre. Captured debris will be catalogued along the way, and will be analyzed — after their arrival approximately 80 days from now — by both American and Japanese scientists.

We hope to bring you more on this ambitious project here and in the pages of *Latitude 38*. In the meantime, you can follow his transponder track at the nonprofit Ocean Research Project's website.

— andy

