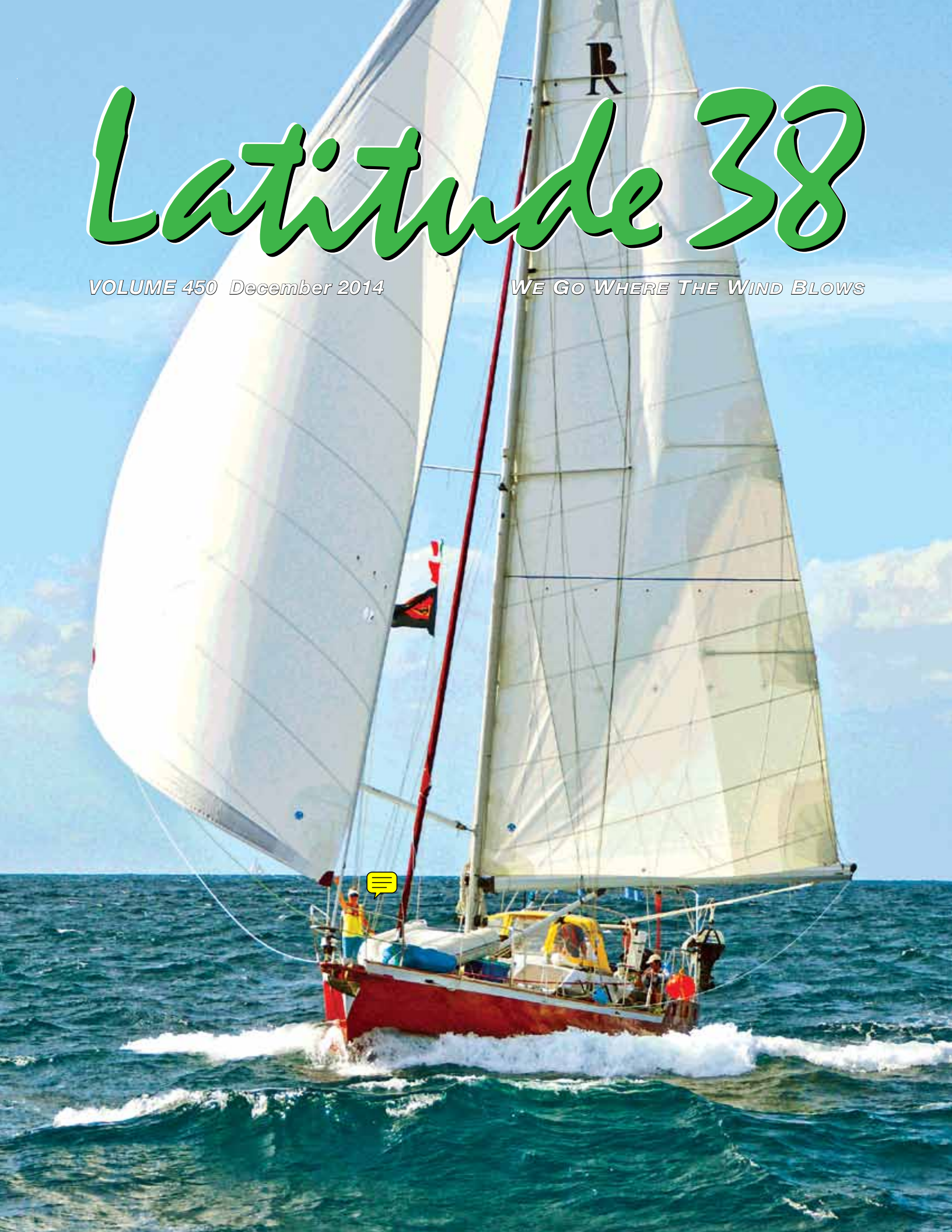


Latitude 38

VOLUME 450 December 2014

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PHOTO JEFF KIRK



*Rainbow**

Rainbow, a Crowther cruising catamaran, has taken owner Cliff Shaw from San Francisco to Hawaii and back three times, to Cabo San Lucas and back in the 2010 Baja Ha-Ha, and to the Farallones and other coastal destinations, racking up over 18,000 nautical miles on her 2006 Pineapple Sails.

In 2012, *Rainbow* won the Multihull Division of the Singlehanded Transpac, then was sailed solo again to cruise the Hawaiian Islands in 2014.

In the 16 years Cliff has owned her, multihulls have shifted from lesser known to front page news, cruising and racing. *Rainbow* has proved a good cruiser and racer, swift and comfortable, for singlehanded sailing and with full crew. Her Pineapple sails have proved both durable and competitive.

Rainbow is being readied now for another long distance cruise with some upgrades and new gear, but she'll use the same 8-year-old Pineapple sails. Sails that are still going strong.

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CONTENTS

subscriptions	6
calendar	8
letters	16
sightings	56
baja ha-ha recap	68
season champs, pt. II	80
reed interview	84
max ebb: sailing ted talks	90
the racing sheet	94
world of chartering	100
changes in latitudes	104
classy classifieds	120
brokerage	126
advertisers' index	127

Cover:

During the second leg of last month's Baja Ha-Ha rally, sailing conditions were excellent off the mid-Baja coast. Seen here, the Vancouver, BC-based Roberts V495 *Dream Catcher* surfs the swells en route to Bahia Santa Maria.

Photo by Lynn Ringseis

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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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Non-Race

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Dec 3-8 — The 112-ft tall ship *Lady Washington* visits Morro Bay. Walk-on tours, \$3 donation; adventure sails, \$43. Schedule and info, www.historicalseaport.org.

Dec. 3-17 — San Diego's South Bay Sea Scouts meet at Chula Vista Marina aboard the schooner *Bill of Rights* on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Sea Scouts is a Boy Scouts of America program for guys and gals ages 13-20. John, (619) 852-7811 or mossfish@gmail.com.

Dec. 3-17 — 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.

Dec. 6 — Sail under the full moon on a Saturday night.

Dec. 6 — Lighted Yacht Parade on the Oakland/Alameda Estuary, 5:30 p.m., benefitting the Oakland Firefighters' Random Acts of Kindness and the Alameda County Food Bank. 'Light Up the Night' is this year's theme. Sponsored by EYC & OYC. Info, www.lightedyachtparade.com.

Dec. 6 — Lighted Boat Parade in Santa Cruz, 5:30 p.m. SCYC, www.scyc.org.

Dec. 6 — Lighted Boat Parade in Stockton, 5 p.m. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

Dec. 6, Jan. 3

— Chantey Sing aboard *Balclutha* at Hyde Street Pier in SF, 8 p.m.-midnight. Dress warmly and bring your own mug. Free, but RSVP to Peter, (415) 561-7171.

Dec. 7 — Lighted Boat Parade on Monterey Bay, 5:30 p.m. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.

Dec. 7-28 — Veterans' Sail, 10 a.m., and Sunday Keelboat Sail, 12 noon, every Sunday with BAADS at South Beach Harbor, SF. Free. Info, (415) 281-0212 or www.baads.org.

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Dec. 12 — Decorated Boat Parade on the San Francisco Cityfront, 6 p.m. StFYC, (415) 563-6363 or www.stfyc.com.

Dec. 13 — Lighted Boat Parade in Petaluma, from the ma-

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38' CT, 1982 **NEW LISTING** 60,000
36' Beneteau 36.1, 1999 **NEW LISTING** 84,500
36' Pearson 36-2, 1986 **NEW LISTING** 59,500
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CALENDAR

rina to the Petaluma River turning basin. 6 p.m. Info, www.visitpetaluma.com.

Dec. 13 — Sausalito Lighted Boat Parade, 5 p.m. SYC, (415) 332-7400 or www.sausalitoyachtclub.org.

Dec. 13 — San Rafael Lighted Boat Parade, with more than 100 decorated yachts, starting at 6 p.m. Info, (415) 526-7577 or www.lightedboatparade.org.

Dec. 13 — Old Time Maritime Christmas, Hyde Street Pier, San Francisco, 6-9 p.m. A Costumed Living History event. Admission to the Pier is free; vessel admission is \$5, free for kids 15 & under. Info, (415) 447-5000 or www.nps.gov/safri.

Dec. 14 — West Coast Multihulls Bay Regatta & Parade of Lights Party, Sunroad Marina, San Diego, 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Pursuit race & raft-up for multihulls, poolside BBQ & model boat racing, followed by parade viewing. Mike, (619) 517-5630 or www.westcoastmultihulls.com.

Dec. 14, 20-21, 27-28, Jan. 3-4, 10-11 — Three-hour Battle Sails aboard *Lady Washington* and *Hawaiian Chieftain* in Long Beach or San Pedro, featuring booming cannons, close-quarters maneuvers, and a taste of 18th century maritime life aboard tall ships. \$43-\$63. Schedule and tickets, www.historicalseaport.org.

Dec. 20 — Laser Clinic, King Harbor Youth Foundation, Redondo Beach, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. \$40. Info, www.khyf.org/laser-clinics.html.

Dec. 1984 — From the Letter titled 'No Luck Yet' back in the pre-Internet dark ages, with some advice that still holds true:

I'd appreciate it if you could be more explicit on how to make a new connection in Baja this winter. There's got to be a better way than flying down to Loreto or La Paz and standing on the dock with my harness and canvas hat in hand, and a silly look on my face.

I'm on your Crew List, attended the Party, but no luck yet.
S.H.

Sunnyvale

S.H. — This is as explicit as we can get: If it were us, and we were a reasonably good sailor who got along with most people, we indeed would fly down to either La Paz or Cabo (not Loreto), get an inexpensive hotel room, and try to make a connection. It's a nothing risked, nothing gained proposition. There are popular VHF nets in both La Paz and Cabo to get your request for a berth out to the fleet, and there are bulletin boards. Certainly it's a risk, but the available berths — and there usually are quite a few — go to the pretty young women and those who are Johnny-on-the-spot. Since you can't be a pretty young woman, be the next best thing. And what's the worst that can happen to you? You'll spend a couple of days in Cabo or La Paz, both fine towns.

If you want to be a little more conservative in your approach, you can try further through the Classy Classifieds.

Jan. 7-11 — Portland Boat Show at the Portland Expo Center. Info, www.otshows.com.

Jan. 14 — Racing Rules of Sailing Seminar Series, Long Beach YC, 7 p.m. This one covers the startline, upwind leg, and windward mark rounding. Info, www.lbyc.org.

Jan. 22-25 — Progressive San Francisco Boat Show, Pier 48 & McCovey Cove. Info, www.sfboatshow.com.

Jan. 22-25 — San Diego Sunroad Marina Boat Show. Info, www.bigbayboatshow.com.

Jan. 23-Feb. 1 — Seattle Boat Show Indoors + Afloat, at CenturyLink Field and on South Lake Union. Info, www.seattleboatshow.com.



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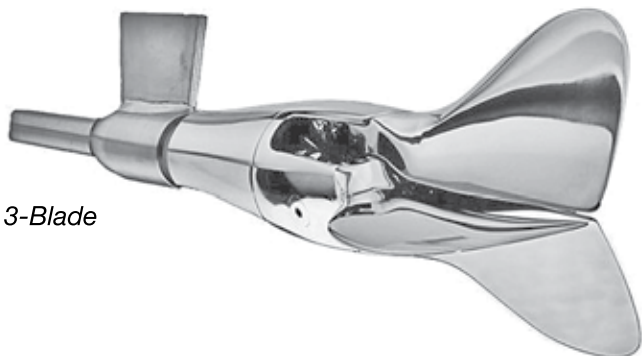
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Racing

Dec. 6 — Fall Series Races. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

Dec. 6-7 — Opti Winter Series. StFYC, (415) 563-6363 or www.stfyc.com.

Dec. 13 — Santana 22 Team Racing in Santa Cruz. SCYC, www.scyc.org.

Dec. 13 — Chowder Cup. ElkYC, www.elkhornyc.com.

Dec. 14 — West Coast Multihulls Bay Regatta, San Diego. Pursuit race for multihulls. See Non-Race for more info.

Dec. 16-18 — Banderas Bay Blast & Pirates for Pupils. Three days of fun racing for cruisers intended to welcome new cruisers to Banderas Bay. The Pirates for Pupils downwind run helps local schools. Dressing like a pirate is highly recommended! Info, www.vallartayachtclub.org.

Dec. 28 — Christmas Race. MPYC, www.mpyc.org.

Jan. 1 — Brrrr Rabbit. CPYC, (650) 347-6730 or www.cpyc.com.

Jan. 18-23 — Quantum Key West Race Week, an international midwinter classic. Info, www.premiere-racing.com.

Jan. 31 — Three Bridge Fiasco. This aptly-named pursuit race, the most popular on the Bay, is the first SSS event of the season. Info, www.sfbaysss.org.

Midwinter Regattas

BAY VIEW BC — Midwinter Madness: 12/13, 1/10, 2/14, 3/14. Terry, (408) 210-0517 or www.bayviewboatclub.org.

BERKELEY YC — Midwinters: 12/13-14, 1/10-11, 2/14-15. Bobbi, (925) 939-9885 or www.berkeleyyc.org.

BERKELEY YC — Chowder Races: Sundays through the end of March except when it conflicts with above. Paul, (510) 540-7968 or www.berkeleyyc.org.

CAL SAILING CLUB — Year-round Sunday morning dinghy races, conditions permitting, intraclub only, typically in Laser Bahias and JY15s. Info, www.cal-sailing.org.

CORINTHIAN YC — Midwinters: 1/17-18, 2/21-22. Info, (415) 435-4771 or www.cyc.org.

COYOTE POINT YC — Winter Beercans: 1/11, 1/15, 2/8, 2/22, 3/8, 3/22. Info, (650) 347-6730 or www.cpyc.com.

ENCINAL YC — Jack Frost Series: 1/10, 2/21, 3/14. Info, (510) 522-3272 or www.encinal.org.

GOLDEN GATE YC — Manuel Fagundes Seaweed Soup Series: 12/6, 1/3, 2/7, 3/7. Info, (415) 346-2628 or www.ggyc.com.

ISLAND YC — Island Days on the Estuary: 12/14, 1/11, 2/8, 3/8. John, (510) 521-2980 or www.iyc.org.

LAKE MERRITT SAILING CLUB — Midwinters: 12/13, 1/11, 2/14, 3/8; this year at Oakland's Jack London Aquatic Center on the Estuary instead of on the lake, due to construction. Mark, (925) 245-0287.

MONTEREY PENINSULA YC — Perry Cup/Midwinters: 12/6, 1/3, 2/7. Info, www.mpyc.org.

OAKLAND YC — Sunday Brunch Series: 1/4, 1/18, 2/1, 2/15, 3/1. Info, www.oaklandyachtclub.net.

REGATTAPRO — Winter One Design: 12/13, 1/10, 2/7. Jeff, (415) 595-8364 or www.regattapro.com.

RICHMOND YC — Small Boat Midwinters: 12/7, 1/4, 2/1, 3/1. Optis & El Toro Green Fleet: 12/6, 1/31, 2/28. Info, www.richmondyc.org.

RICHMOND YC — Laser Sundays: 12/14, 12/21, 1/11, 1/18, 1/25, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29. Info, <http://rycsunday.myfleet.org>.

SANTA CRUZ YC — Midwinters: 12/20, 1/17, 2/21, 3/21. Info, (831) 425-0690 or www.scyc.org.

SANTA ROSA SC — Spring Lake Winter Series: 12/20, 1/24, 2/21, 3/21. Info, www.santarosasailingclub.org.

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CALENDAR

SAUSALITO YC — Sunday Midwinters: 12/7, 1/4, 2/1, 3/1. Info, www.sausalitoyachtclub.org or race@sausalitoyachtclub.org.

SEQUOIA YC — Winter Series: 12/13, 1/3, 2/7, 3/14. Redwood Cup pursuit race series: 12/20, 1/10, 2/21, 3/7. Info, www.sequoiayc.org.

SOUTH BEACH YC — Island Fever Midwinters: 12/20, 1/17, 2/21, 3/21. Janelle, (650) 303-8236 or www.southbeachyc.org.

TIBURON YC — Midwinters: 1/10, 2/7, 3/7. Info, race@tyc.org or www.tyc.org.

VALLEJO YC — Tiny Robbins Midwinters: 12/6, 1/3, 2/7, 3/7. Info, (707) 643-1254 or www.vyc.org.

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

December Weekend Tides

date/day	time/ht. LOW	time/ht. HIGH	time/ht. LOW	time/ht. HIGH
12/06Sat	0426/2.4	1036/6.5	1722/-1.0	
		LOW	HIGH	LOW
12/07Sun	0036/5.0	0512/2.6	1115/6.3	1801/-0.9
12/13Sat	0451/5.0	1047/2.5	1556/4.1	2215/1.2
12/14Sun	0532/5.2	1152/2.2	1711/3.8	2306/1.5
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
12/20Sat	0313/2.6	0931/6.5	1618/-0.8	2328/4.7
12/21Sun	0358/2.6	1013/6.7	1658/-1.1	
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
12/24Wed	0138/5.3	0626/2.5	1234/6.4	1909/-1.0
12/25Thu	0223/5.4	0725/2.4	1328/6.0	1956/-0.7
12/27Sat	0358/5.8	0945/1.9	1539/4.8	2140/0.4
12/28Sun	0448/5.9	1102/1.5	1700/4.4	2238/1.0
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
12/31Wed	0042/2.0	0722/6.4	1418/0.0	2106/4.4

December Weekend Currents

date/day	slack	max	slack	max
12/06Sat	0117	0334/2.5E	0649	0937/3.0F
	1227	1541/5.1E	1942	2248/4.0F
12/07Sun	0204	0418/2.4E	0735	1020/2.8F
	1309	1624/5.0E	2025	2330/3.9F
12/13Sat	0003	0307/2.7F	0631	0856/2.4E
	1259	1522/1.6F	1811	2102/2.8E
12/14Sun	0050	0354/2.6F	0714	0948/2.6E
	1359	1627/1.7F	1919	2156/2.5E
12/20Sat	0013	0223/2.3E	0532	0829/2.9F
	1120	1439/5.1E	1838	2137/3.8F
12/21Sun	0101	0311/2.5E	0617	0913/3.0F
	1202	1524/5.4E	1920	2220/4.1F
12/24Wed	0320	0536/2.9E	0847	1139/2.9F
	1426	1747/5.2E	2136	
12/25Thu		0038/4.1F	0407	0627/3.0E
	0947	1235/2.8F	1523	1839/4.8E
	2225			
12/27Sat		0220/3.7F	0542	0817/3.3E
	1204	1442/2.6F	1739	2030/3.6E
12/28Sun	0011	0315/3.5F	0632	0916/3.6E
	1314	1556/2.6F	1854	2131/3.1E
12/31Wed	0307	0607/3.0F	0903	1217/4.4E
	1620	1926/3.4F	2226	

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'01 J Boats J/42 \$239,000



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'02 Custom 50 \$449,000



'07 J Boats J/124 \$229,000



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'05 J Boats J/133 \$299,000



'12 Beneteau F. 40 \$179,000



'90 Hunter Legend 40 \$60,000



'04 J Boats J/109 \$169,900



'02 J Boats J/105 \$89,000

- 43' J Boats J/133 '05 \$299,000
- 43' J Boats J/133 '06 \$350,000
- 41' J Boats J/124 '06 \$220,000
- 40' J Boats J/120 '00 \$169,500
- 38' McConaghy '12 PENDING
- 36' J Boats J/36 '82 \$45,000
- 35' J Boats J/35 '93 \$44,900
- 35' J Boats J/105 '92 \$65,000
- 35' J Boats J/105 '01 \$78,000



'03 Open 50 \$195,000



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LETTERS

↑↓WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GOOD GUYS?

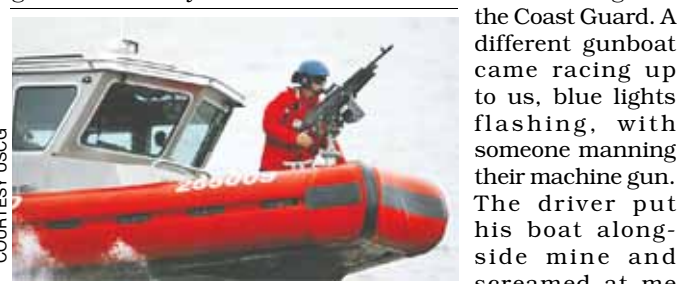
I have long thought of the Coast Guard as the 'Good Guys', who protect and rescue mariners. But recent events have made me wonder whose side they are on.

During the most recent Fleet Week, the Navy docked a destroyer next to the Pier 39 Marina. The vessel protruded some 50 feet past the end of the pier, and about that far from the entrance to the harbor. Despite this close proximity, they attempted to establish a 500-yard buffer zone, and two Coast Guard gunboats were determined to maintain it.

After my normally jovial dock neighbor, who was quite shaken, asked if I'd ever looked down the barrel of a Coast Guard machine gun, and after watching the Coast Guard hassle every boat that went by, I decided that I wouldn't go sailing until the Fleet Week weekend was over.

Unfortunately, the destroyer and Coast Guard gunboats were still there when I took some friends sailing on Monday afternoon. My guests convinced me to 'run the gauntlet', so I did. Sure enough, the Coasties approached as we headed out. They seemed friendly enough, so I told them where we were going, hoping they would remember us when we returned. We had no such luck.

Upon our return, I tacked out from Pier 27, pointed in the general direction of Richmond, a course which would have given the destroyer a wide berth. But that wasn't enough for



COURTESY USCG

the Coast Guard. A different gunboat came racing up to us, blue lights flashing, with someone manning their machine gun. The driver put his boat alongside mine and screamed at me to "head straight out." I explained

Having an automatic weapon pointed at you during a daysail is unnerving.

to him that I was returning to my berth at Pier 39, there was strong wind and a nasty ebb, we weren't wearing foul weather gear, and he was putting my boat and crew in peril. He remained alongside until I was well past Pier 39, and only then allowed me to tack. The only consolation I got was watching his crew get tossed about as they, like us, were beam to the heavy chop.

I could understand getting run off if I sailed too close to a Navy ship docked at a base, but they came and docked next to a marina, and then claimed a buffer that extended well past the entrance.

Had these been Navy gunboats, I could almost accept it, but I thought the Coasties were looking out for us. Their overly aggressive and threatening manner has left a bad taste in my mouth.

On a lighter note, thanks for the great cover, which I assume is Liz Clark of the Cal 40 Swell. Her stories are some of the most enjoyable to ever to grace the pages of *Latitude 38*, and she is an inspiration. I look forward to her first book.

Tim Donnelly
Chewink, Golden Gate sloop
Pier 39

Tim — We understand and sympathize completely with the frustration you feel. But you have to put yourselves in the shoes of the Coast Guard brass and the crews on the Coast Guard



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boats. Homeland Security, which now runs the Coast Guard, has established rules for buffer zones around naval vessels and has charged the Coast Guard with enforcing the rules. The Coast Guard honchos have passed these orders down to the crews of the boats on the water. If you were any one of these people along the chain of command and took the initiative of being cavalier about the enforcement of buffer zones, at the very least you'd be up for disobeying orders, and at the very worst — as unlikely as it might be — your laxity might contribute to a successful terrorist attack on a Navy vessel. It's sort of like all of us having to put up with the aggravation of having to go through TSA if we want to fly — an unpleasant facet of modern life. The Coasties aren't the bad guys in this scheme, they are merely following orders. Your beef is with Homeland Security.

↑↓ SET A COURSE FOR A SAN FRANCISCO BAY RECORD

I read the November 14 *'Lectronic* in which *Latitude* suggested that Northern California sailing could be livened up with an event similar to the Mt. Gay Around Jamestown Record competition on Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay. For those who missed the story in *'Lectronic*, here's a summary of that competition:

1) It's 18 miles around Conanicut Island, which is in the middle of Narragansett Bay. 2) Record attempts can be made



COURTESY ARGO

The GC32 'Argo' made it around Conanicut Island in under an hour.

at any time on any day between Memorial Day and Labor Day. 3) A Challenger's starting time must be identified at 5 p.m. the day before a record attempt. 4) Boats may attempt records in one of three classes: Keelboat, All

Sailing Craft Under 32 feet, and Multihulls. 4) Skippers who establish new records win their weight in Mt. Gay Rum. 5) Entry fees are \$50 to \$100, depending on the boat size.

Latitude asked for the best course for such a record on San Francisco Bay. My suggestion would be the Golden Gate YC, Red Rock, Treasure Island, and back to the Golden Gate YC.

Chris Boome
Burlingame



GOOGLE EARTH

The proposed course for the 'Latitude 38 San Francisco Bay Record' is about 21 miles.

Chris — Let's consider what your proposed 'San Francisco Bay Record' course would likely entail: Brisk downwind sailing right after the start. Check. Having to deal with lighter and more fickle winds in the lee of Angel Island and the Tiburon Peninsula all they way to Red Rock. Check. A likely screaming reach across the bottom of the Bay to Treasure Island. Check. Having to negotiate the difficult lee of Yerba Buena. Check. And finally, a beat up the Cityfront to the Golden Gate YC finish line. Check.

It's essentially the Three-Bridge Fiasco course, which is a great one. But a proposed San Francisco Bay Record course



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65' J/Boats J/65 2006
\$1,499,000 Contact: Jeff Brown



53' J/Boats J/160 1997
\$619,000 Contact: Rick Boyce



50' HANSE 505 2014
\$549,000 Contact: Jack Lennox



49' C Burns Schooner 2007
\$635k Contact: Alan Weaver



42' Bruckman/Zurn 2006
\$389k Contact: Kenyon Martin



41' Island Packet SP Cruiser 2007
\$417,500 Contact: Alan Weaver



40' J/Boat J/124 2007
\$279k Contact: Kenyon Martin



38' SABRE 386 2005
\$239,900 Contact: Jack Lennox



38' SABRE 386 2004
\$259,000 Contact: Alan Weaver



36' J/111 2010
\$275,000 Contact: Jeff Brown



38' True North 38 2003
\$219,500 Contact: Kenyon Martin



36' Doral Boca Grande 2005
\$118,000 Contact: Alan Weaver



30' Raider 9m RIB w/ 300Hp 2009
Contact: Jack Lennox

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 - 2006 43' J/133 -Tango \$324K
 - 2005 43' J/133 Forgiveness \$349K
 - 2000 42' J/42 \$199K
 - 1997 42' CATALINA 42MkII \$99K
 - 1991 42' CATALINA 42 \$91K
 - 2008 41' X YACHTS X41 \$275K
 - 2007 40' J/122 - Grace \$329K
 - 1994 40' J/120 - Fee Event \$175K
 - 2004 35' J/109 - Duster II \$181K
 - 2001 35' J/105 - Hibiscus \$75K
 - 2001 35' J/105 - Hey Viento \$76K
 - 2000 35' J/105 - Kestrel \$83K
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LETTERS

would be far more challenging than the Fiasco, as picking the right day and time to start in order to get the best winds and best current would be of utmost importance. The Fiasco allows everyone to pick which way they want to go around the course. We're not sure if that option should be included in any San Francisco Bay Record attempt.

↑↓ HOW ABOUT THE THREE BRIDGE FIASCO COURSE?

I think part of the answer for a course for a proposed San Francisco Bay Record is already steeped in San Francisco Bay sailing tradition — the 21-mile Three Bridge Fiasco course. That event is held in the light airs of winter, however, and limited to singlehanders and doublehanders. A summertime version could be sailed by crewed boats in a single direction, which would be easier on the race committee. How about a name like the Three Bridge Loop? No matter what it was called, I think it would be great fun.

Tim Dick
Sausalito / Honolulu

Tim — Great minds seem to be thinking alike with regard to a course.

We're going to contact Mt. Gay and see if they'd be interested in sponsoring a Northern California version of the Around Jamestown. If they wouldn't be, we've got a hunch one of the Napa Valley Wineries might be interested. In the interim, and until something better comes along, we're going to call it the Latitude 38 San Francisco Bay Record. Based on the following letter, we're pretty sure we can get local marine industry companies to sponsor each of the three — and possibly more — divisions.

A race committee? We like to keep things simple, and thus wonder why record attempts couldn't be overseen by a single individual in front of the Golden Gate or St. Francis YC, along with the requirement of every boat that attempts a record having to document their attempt with a tracking and timing device such as a GPS or Spot Messenger.

We're going to mull the concept over for the next month or two, but meanwhile are welcoming suggestions on how to make it the best event possible. But we see no reason that we won't be holding the first Latitude 38 San Francisco Bay Record in the summer of 2015.

↑↓ KKMI WOULD LIKE TO BE A SPONSOR

I love Latitude's suggestion of creating an event similar to the Mt. Gay Around Jamestown Record. What a great idea!

KKMI would not only like to become a sponsor for the event, but would be happy to provide the trophies. I'm sure we can come up with some pretty cool stuff. For the Great Schooner Race, we took the original cockpit from the schooner *Santana* and turned it into a unique trophy. I'm sure we can do the same for the proposed event, maybe using some carbon parts that we extracted from *USA 76* when we refit the America's Cup yacht to carry passengers.

Please let me know how we can become more involved with this terrific idea.

Paul Kaplan
KKMI
Pt. Richmond

Paul — Thanks for your encouragement, and we'll be in touch.

↑↓ PEOPLE CAN'T SPEAK THEIR MINDS FREELY

There was another meeting of the Richardson Bay Regional Agency on October 30 to discuss the exploding number of



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LETTERS

anchored-out boats on Richardson Bay. Ben Berto, clerk of the RBRA, presented the following as facts:

- The number of anchored-out boats has jumped from 98 in 2006 to 205 in last year's count.
- Of the 205 anchored-out vessels, only 95 of them — less than 50% — were properly registered or documented.
- As of April, 66 of the boats were two years out of registration or not registered at all. If I understood Berto correctly, under state law this means that these 66 boats are subject to being impounded.
- The RBRA has a \$450,000 grant to salvage vessels in the anchorage.

Kate Sears, who is both on the board of the RBRA and a Marin County supervisor, later reported that the RBRA had disposed of "about 300 boats" since 2010. Three hundred!

I'm sympathetic to those who are struggling and/or prefer to live an alternative lifestyle, but it seems to me that the above numbers tell the tale of elected officials and local government(s) failing to do their jobs.

Please do not publish my name. People who think something needs to be done about the exploding number of anchor-outs, and crime in the area, can't speak their minds freely.

Anonymous By Necessity
The Sausalito Waterfront

↑↓ WE HAD NO FAVORITE MEMORIES OF THE HA-HA

The captain and crew of the Chicago-based *Island Packet* 45 *Dreamtime* would like to offer the following comments regarding our experiences on the just-completed Baja Ha-Ha.

First, we found the matter of our registration for this event less than professional. While we recognize it was in part due to the fact that we left from Ensenada instead of San Diego, our waivers were delivered by hand to the organizers. The fact that there was no definitive recognition of our participation for the second and third legs — even after my personal approach to the Grand Poobah in Turtle Bay — was disappointing. My feeling is that the issue of liability had a life of its own best reflected in the Poobah's concern that everyone was accounted for in Cabo at the final signing off.

Moving on, and not to be churlish, we had great difficulty coming up with any favorite memories. Fortunately, we had no breakages or bad luck. We didn't do much fishing. On the matter of offshore impressions, I would suggest that this experience was anything but an offshore experience, starting with the almost complete lack of wind. And I think the second leg would have been as windless as the first and third legs had it not been for Hurricane *Vance*. Our ongoing journey to Mazatlan confirmed the above — zero wind. While a number of days were spent at sea, I have to say that these were probably some of the most boring passages I have been on.

Cabo San Lucas as an ultimate destination was a complete bust. I have great difficulty believing that a rally involving 100+ boats organized as an annual event cannot do better than Cabo. The fact that the marina has the gall to charge \$75 per boat for the privilege of rafting up in the marina is downright outrageous. This in combination with a second-rate anchorage should compel the Ha-Ha organizers to find another endpoint for the event.

I recognize the fact that those of us starting in Ensenada missed the festivities at the start in San Diego, but the organizers should attend to the finish of the event in a similar fashion. The sight of the finish of the sportfishing event on Friday night contrasted rather sharply with the sight of rally boats rafted six abreast in the marina, with the rest rolling in the anchorage enjoying yet another beach party as a finale.

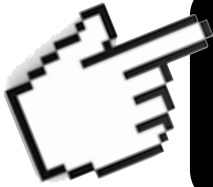
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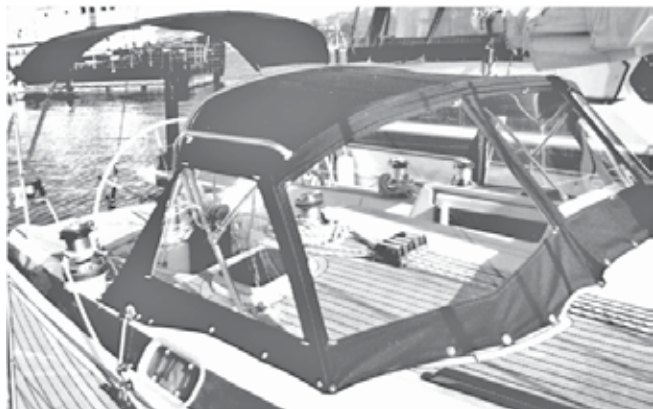
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LETTERS

I think that the rally should come up with something besides beach parties paid for by participants. I thought the Turtle Bay function was a case in point. We must have waited for at least an hour to help ourselves to food that we brought to the event. Taking this event as an example, the organizers might have given more thought to the availability of chairs and shade, and generally been more proactive as hosts. The sight of event organizers taking shots of straight liquor did not leave me with the feeling that I was foremost in their minds.

That said, I must say the Poobah showed incredible patience assisting people in the formalities of going to Mexico, all the way down to how to behave when in Mexico. Incredible energy was spent nursing people through this process to the point that it seemed central to the marketing of this event. Again, given the fact that we did not need assistance in getting into Mexico, and did not leave from San Diego, it's hard to see what we got for the \$350 other than a backpack and a flag. We can only assume that the budget was spent in San Diego.

Obviously the Ha-Ha has been a successful event, and no doubt some will continue to see it as a success in its present form. But on *Dreamtime*, we suggest that the time is right to do some reflection on the role of the committee, particularly when the event is underway and with regard to the destination of Cabo.

Philip McManus
Dreamtime, Island Packet 45
Chicago

Philip — Thank you for your letter, as it gives us an opportunity to explain a lot of things that we perhaps mistakenly assumed were obvious to all of this year's Ha-Ha participants.

What your group on Dreamtime got for your \$375 entry fee — forget all the swag, food and beer — was the opportunity to have the time of your life along the Baja coast with over 500 fellow sailors. If you and your crew didn't take advantage of it and were bored, we suggest that you look into the mirror for the source of your dissatisfaction.

Let's see, there was light air sailing, heavy air sailing, spectacular scenery, sunny days, starry nights, a fabulous full moon, dolphins, whales, great fishing, islands, a world class baseball game, a great party on the bluff at spectacular Bahia Santa Maria, a rock 'n roll band, surfing, boogie-boarding, hundreds of sailors to trade war stories with, great beach walks, terrific locals, daily weather reports and roll calls, endless advice on anything and everything, fleet bios, an epic dance fest at Squid Roe, a great Here to Eternity Kissing Contest in the surf, sailing in company with scores of other boats, and so much else. And you were bored?! We don't mean to sound churlish either, but you and your crew might check with your physicians to see if you might be candidates for enthusiasm transplants. We're reminded of when we used to do charters in the Caribbean and we'd get an occasional guest who would plop himself in the cockpit and issue us a challenge: "Make me happy."

The concept behind the Ha-Ha has always been a simple, low-cost event for fun-loving, adventurous, self-sufficient sailors. As we always made clear, it most definitely is not an offshore babysitting service, nor is it a concierge program for people wanting to be coddled. We don't guarantee happiness on the Ha-Ha, we guarantee the opportunity to have a fantastic time.

Let's put the \$375 entry fee for a two-week event in perspective. The entry fee for the Newport to Ensenada Race is \$225, and that's only two days and 125 miles. And we're pretty sure you don't get anywhere near as much swag or food and drink. The entry fee for next year's FUBAR, which is basically a powerboat version of the Ha-Ha, is \$925, far more than double the

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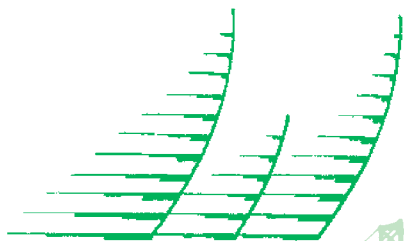
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LETTERS

Ha-Ha entry fee. As a value proposition, we'll put the Ha-Ha up against any other sailing event. The one thing we're sure of is that you've never put on a two-week event for more than 500 people in a foreign country, let alone one as complicated as Mexico, because you obviously don't have an iota of a clue of how much time, effort, and expense is involved.

While we welcome your comments, we can assure you that your overall feelings about this year's Ha-Ha are greatly at odds with those of almost everyone else we've talked to — including those of a member of the New York YC. He congratulated us for having an event "as well organized as the New York YC's Summer Cruise." He, of course, knows that they are two entirely different kinds of events for different groups of people, but nonetheless recognized the Poobah's efforts. The threat of Hurricane Vance, plus the two-day delay it caused, created many organizational challenges. Nonetheless, we can't remember a Ha-Ha in which so many participants complimented the Poobah on the way he handled things, and/or vowed to return with their own boats in the future.

Your registration wasn't professionally handled? The only reason the Ha-Ha even allows people to start from Ensenada is to accommodate sailors who, for one reason or another, wouldn't otherwise be able to do the Ha-Ha. Surely you understand there is no way that we could staff a second start in Ensenada for just seven or eight boats. By the way, you are the first Ensenada starter in the history of the Ha-Ha who has complained. Most have thanked us for being accommodating.

No definitive recognition of your participation? Are you kidding!? Did you guys not have a radio, not know how to operate it, or what? Most Ha-Ha boats communicated their positions at least nine times during the event, either directly or via relay. Our roll call sheet shows you responded to our requests for your position just three times, the least of anyone, and never while at sea. How could we recognize you if you were non-responsive? As we reiterated at the Skipper's Meeting, the primary headache for the Poobah is skippers who either don't check in during roll call or don't let two or more other boats know that they've dropped out or whatever. Not hearing from you — and we called your boat name at least three times during every daily roll call — was one of the nagging worries for the Poobah throughout the event.



LATITUDE / ANDY

With hundreds of hungry sailors, it could take a while to get your food.

Part of the mission of the Ha-Ha is to introduce cruisers to certain cruising concepts, such as cruiser potlucks. The idea behind the Turtle Bay potluck is Potluck 101, to educate new cruisers on the basics — such as that you need to bring more food than you're going to eat, you need to bring your own plates and utensils, and that you don't pile your plate higher than Mt. Everest before everyone else has gotten a chance to eat something.

More tables and chairs would have been nice, of course, because much of the normal beach had been washed away this year. We've tried to get additional chairs and tables every year, but you may have noticed there is no party rental store in tiny Turtle Bay, as the village is not accustomed to groups of more than 50, let alone 500+. Furthermore, you apparently don't understand how things work in rural Mexico, as certain people have 'rights' to certain events, and they've only got so many chairs and tables, and they just don't borrow from competitors. But if you don't want to be self-sufficient and want to do another



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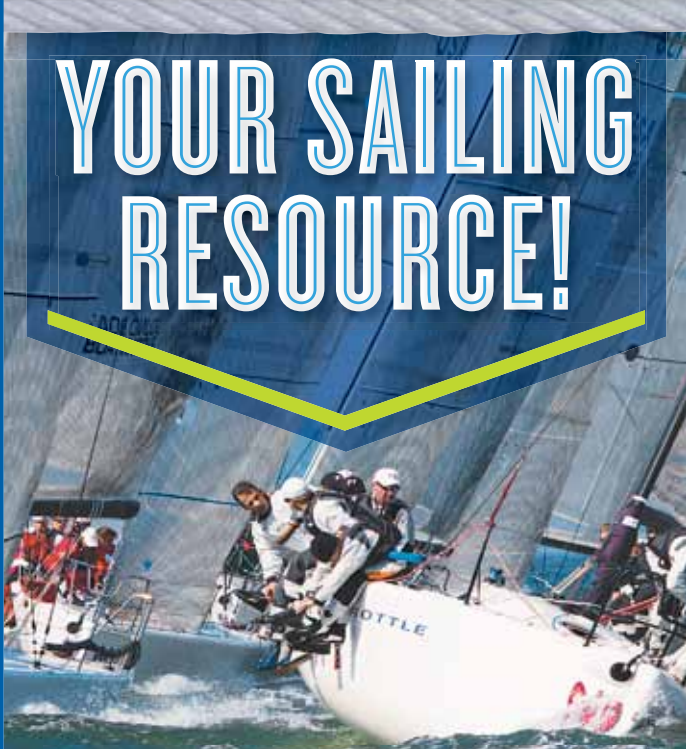
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LETTERS

Ha-Ha, and are willing to pay an additional \$575 as folks in the FUBAR do, we'll find someone to make sure you get a table, chair, and shade, and will guarantee you a VIP spot at the front of the potluck line.

Yeah, the food line at Turtle Bay was too long. One reason is that we had to wait for people to bring their food in. In addition, no matter how many times we and the 'Food Police' encouraged people not to dally by inspecting all 130 dishes because hundreds of other people were also waiting their chance, it was mostly in vain. But this year's long line was on us. Next year we're going to have three or four lines with one-third or one-quarter of the selections in each line.

Event organizers taking straight shots of liquor? Oh boy, are you reading that one wrong. The Poobah was interrupted by a participant who repeatedly insisted he join him in a drink of cinnamon whiskey at the Turtle Bay beach party. The Poobah hates whiskey! But after refusing emphatic offers twice, the Poobah decided the best way to move on was to drink the shot and be done with it. Neither the Poobah — nor the Assistant Poobah, nor the Chief of Security — are shot drinkers or even moderate drinkers. Anyone on the Profligate crew will tell you that the Poobah's drink order for crew dinners is likely as not to be mineral water. Reading, not booze, is the Poobah's vice.

As you presumably did research for the Ha-Ha, you surely must have learned that the coast of Baja is well known for light wind from aft — which is why we always encourage people to bring at least one gennaker or spinnaker. Yet there you were in the 'white sails only' division. No wonder you didn't get any sailing in on the first and third legs, while a number of other boats did. And are we to understand that you are holding the Ha-Ha responsible for the lack of wind on legs one and three — as well as the post-Ha-Ha crossing to Mazatlan?

For the record, the wind on leg two — and wasn't that some thrilling sailing? — was primarily due to a front coming through, not Hurricane Vance.

Alternatives to Cabo as a final destination? We'd certainly love to hear your suggestions, because in the 60 years of long-distance sailing events to Mexico, organizers have found only six possible destinations — Cabo, La Paz, Mazatlan, Puerto Vallarta, Las Hadas and Acapulco. We don't suppose we have to go down the long list of reasons that none besides Cabo would be suitable for the Ha-Ha, but we'll start with the fact that most boats have crews, and few crews can afford to take more than two weeks off work, which precludes any other destinations. And until you've sailed into a November Norther, don't even think of La Paz or Mazatlan as possibilities.

Cabo has its pluses and its minuses, among the pluses being two of the most beautiful beaches in the world — and no, we're not talking about the one the boats anchored off. By the way, the anchorage was mostly unusually calm this year. If you thought it was roly, lord help you when you get to the mainland. We always recommend that people anchor out, because the warm water is perfect for swimming, the views are superb, and you don't get gassed by the sportfishing boats every morning as you do in the marina.

But if people wanted to get into the marina, we busted our asses to try to accommodate all of them. If you have a problem with the marina rates, we suggest you take it up with the marina management rather than the Ha-Ha, as we have nothing to do with the rates and don't get kickbacks. And maybe you didn't hear, but Hurricane Odile came through Cabo two months before with winds of 120 knots, knocking out 35% of the marina's slips. Not that most marinas in Mexico keep 135 empty slips for boats that will stay just a night or two.

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CLEAN MARINA

LETTERS

is that the beach party/awards ceremony, which had to be combined because of losing two days to Vance, was a complete disaster. Normally the Ha-Ha gets the best site on the beach for the beach party, away from all the raunchy stuff that everyone unfortunately was exposed to this year. But we were a day late and our normal site was booked for a wedding.

We guess there is no way for you to have known except by looking at the schedule, but in addition to a beach party, the Ha-Ha normally also has a three-hour awards ceremony by the marina office, with a good sound system and often appearances by the mayor and other dignitaries. There is unlimited beer and sodas for everyone, every participant gets recognized, and there is lots of humor and prizes. It's easily the equivalent of the kick-off party in San Diego.

With Cabo having so few post-hurricane tourists, the Poobah and the management of Mango Deck thought we could perhaps share their facility and have things work out reasonably well for a combined beach party/awards ceremony. Alas, we both underestimated the appeal of drinking contests and lap dances, and the awards ceremony part of the beach party was an unmitigated fiasco. The decision to try to hold the awards ceremony on the beach was a blunder on the Poobah's part. We suppose we could beat ourselves up about it, but what would be the point?

The Poobah has managed 20 Ha-Ha's and supervised the start and the finish of the only other one. Because of all the uncertainty with Mexican paperwork, the loss of two days caused by the threat of Hurricane Vance, and several other potentially significant problems that were out of the Poobah's control and not on anybody else's radar, this was far and away the most difficult Ha-Ha to manage ever. You're entitled to your opinion, but knowing what we know, and given the circumstances the Poobah had to deal with, we're confident that he did about as good a job as could have been done. The Poobah's purpose in life is to try to help as many people as possible to have a little fun. His head is held up high.

But we thank you again for your letter, as we think it will clarify the nature of the Ha-Ha for a lot of prospective participants. The Ha-Ha is for adventurous, fun-loving, self-sufficient, roll-with-the-punches sailors only. It is definitely not for those looking for guaranteed weather conditions, American-style beach party facilities, guaranteed marina slips, and an otherwise pre-digested experience. The Ha-Ha is cruising, and when you cruise, you get the pleasant and sometimes you get the less-than-pleasant. If the Ha-Ha is not what somebody is looking for, we beg you, don't sign up. And don't worry about hurting our feelings, as we'd prefer to have a great time with 25 boats full of fun-loving, adventurous sailors rather than a huge fleet peppered with people inclined to whine over minor inconveniences beyond anyone's control.

↑↓ ENGINEERS LOVE TO SCREW WITH US

I empathize with your frustration over your replacement masthead light's having different screw holes and a different electrical connection, even though made as the replacement by the same manufacturer. It's the engineers. They love to screw with us. LOL.

I replaced the old Whale foot pump in my galley. Same exact pump, different hole pattern! Aaarrggghhh!

Frank Nitte
Windsong, Islander Freeport 36
Balboa YC, Panama

↑↓ SQUARE PEGS DON'T GO INTO ROUND HOLES

My condolences on the anchor light's going out on *Profligate's* Lunasea LED masthead light, and the problems you've

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LETTERS

had with trying to fit their replacement light in the old holes. I have been through three of those Lunasea masthead lights. The



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Replacing entire fixtures — rather than just a bulb — wouldn't be so bad if companies would keep the same mounting and connection schemes.

first two didn't work at all, but Lunasea replaced them at no charge. The third one doesn't work as a nav light, but so far it's been a great anchor light, and while we're in the Sea of Cortez I don't really need a masthead nav light. I think Lunasea finally decided they had to re-engineer them. And they did send me one of the new ones as well. I'm not going to try to install

that one as long as light number three is still a good anchor light.

Lunasea told me the reason for their new electrical connection was to save the weight of a fourth wire, because that's what the carbon-mast racing crowd was looking for. Hmmm, could be.

Alan Bradley
Vivacia, Caliber 40LRC
La Paz, BCS, Mexico

Alan — We've used a lot of Lunasea products, and this is the first one that has failed. That said, the fact that there is an entirely different electrical connection, and that the screw holes are different, is not user-friendly at all. It took professional riggers a full day's worth of work to replace that single light.

⇕ OTHER COMPANIES USE THE SAME TRICK

While we have not recently come across replacement parts that don't fit in the hole patterns and with the electrical connections of the originals, it's always a battle trying to find the right parts for Jabsco manual heads, as you need to know the handle color and when the unit was made.

We recently tried to rebuild a Lewmar 43ST winch, only to find that two of the parts that we needed were no longer made, nor could Lewmar provide working drawings so we could have the parts machined. Lewmar advised us to find another winch, take it apart, and measure the parts. They also recommended a new replacement winch, but failed to mention that the mounting bolt pattern was very different. We didn't discover this until the client had purchased it and brought it to Mexico.

Ever try to find an adapter for standard NPT or metric oil-pressure and water-temperature sending units for Yanmar engines? Yanmar uses a special metric thread only found in Japan, so you can't simply use a VDO or Sierra sender and gauge. We finally found an aftermarket adapter from a tractor dealer on the Internet.

Then there is Raymarine's practice of introducing yet another communication protocol — which is not backward compatible. SeaTalk, SeaTalk2, SeaTalkHS, SeaTalkNG (almost compatible with NMEA 2000), and now Raynet. Add to that the inability of many of the new chartplotters to send and receive NMEA 0183 without the purchase of a converter box — some not even sold by Raymarine — and you get a another frustrating situation.

We recently installed a Standard Horizon Matrix GX-2150 with AIS, and purchased an NMEA 0183-to-SeaTalkNG adapter so we could hook it up to a new Raymarine A78. We

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LETTERS

found that the converter sold by Raymarine was only good for one-way, and only one channel of NMEA 0183, which allowed us to send a GPS signal from the chartplotter to the radio, but did not allow the AIS NMEA 0183 signal to be sent to the chartplotter. This requires a separate converter, and Raymarine referred us to a third-party source for the converter.

Oh yes, I almost forgot. Village Marine Tech watermakers now use a 19-inch pressure vessel, so the standard off-the-shelf 21-inch membrane won't fit. They conveniently sell the 19-inch, but at a premium. If you have an old unit with the standard 21-inch membrane, they will sell you a 19-inch membrane and give you a 2-inch spacer. The 19-inch membrane is not available on the aftermarket.

Dennis Ross
Ross Marine Services and Consulting
Two Can Play, Endeavour 43
La Paz, BCS, Mexico

↑↓ LED LIGHTS ARE AMAZING, BUT . . .

While I was supposed to be working, I caught the Wanderer's gripe in *'Lectronic Latitude'* about the same brand replacement LED masthead light's not fitting the old screw pattern or electrical connection. I used to work at West Marine in Long Beach, and heard similar complaints all the time. I think it was either Perko or Marincos that was notorious for changing base fittings.

As for LED life and intensity, I suggest you Google 'LED Lumen Depreciation' when you get a sec. LEDs are amazing, as they don't draw much juice, they last a long time, etc, etc — but early on they lose their initial intensity. After that, they cook right along for years. As with all computer chips, heat is the enemy. I suspect the lifespan reports in the marketing literature are based on controlled lab conditions. Living up on a masthead in Baja probably isn't the best environment for the long life of an LED.

LED lumen depreciation would make a good subject for a future Max Ebb column. Lee Helm could then explain why the LED running light on her kayak isn't as bright as it used to be.

Stefan Svlich
Alexandria, Virginia

↑↓ THE PROBLEM IS TOO MANY VOLTS, NOT TOO FEW

Hubby Dave, who's an electrical engineer, says the reason LED light strips go dim is not that they aren't getting enough voltage, but because they are getting too much voltage. The older LED light strips were not regulated, so when a battery was charging at 14 volts, they were getting too much voltage, which is what wore them out before the advertised 30,000 hours. The newer LED light strips have regulators and thus should last longer.

Melissa DeLong
Apsaras, Hunter Passage 450
Woodinville, Washington

Melissa — Interesting explanation. At this point we'd guess we've lost about 20% of the strips' intensity. If they stay at this level, they are still plenty bright.

↑↓ THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO LED LIGHTS

Like your LEDs, I'm getting 'dimmer' with age, too. But unlike your LEDs, I was never too bright to begin with. Here is my conjecture: With single-color LEDs — red, green, blue, and such — the LED 'chip' itself emits the visible light. The color you get is set by the chemistry of the chip. The light



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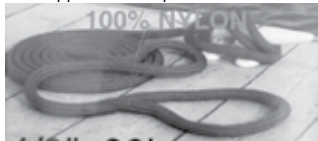
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LETTERS

output stays pretty much constant until the chip up and dies sometime in the distant future.

White LEDs work more like fluorescent tubes in that they generates UV light internally. Those short-wavelength photons strike the phosphor coating inside the tube, which raises the energy level of those phosphors, and when they 'drop back' to normal level, a longer-wavelength photon is emitted from the phosphor atoms. Each phosphor — it's a blend — radiates its own color. The blend includes phosphors that radiate different colors, and your eye blends them together to make white. Different blendings of phosphors give different tints of white

Still awake? 'White' LEDs start with a blue LED and have a drop of blended phosphor coating over the top. The blue light excites the phosphor blend — same as a fluorescent tube — and you get some flavor of white light depending, again, on the blend used.

The biggest enemy of these LEDs is temperature. An LED is a tiny device. Those strip LEDs don't let the heat go away from the tiny chip very well, so naturally the temperature at the chip rises. Phosphor output diminishes with a 'Time-Times-Temperature' characteristic, so if the temperature goes up, the output goes down more rapidly. Did you ever notice a burn-in on a CRT computer monitor? Same thing, as the burnt areas had an electron beam landing on them — adding heat — more than the surrounding areas, so they faded more quickly. The biggest problem for LED replacement-lamp designers is getting the heat out of there so the chip stays cooler.

I'm guessing the original ratings for the chips in LED strips were derived from chips that had proper cooling. Being embedded in plastic impairs the cooling. Look at the replacement bulbs for household use, they are mostly aluminum heatsink.

It could be that using a stabilized voltage source at 12 volts — instead of running the LEDs off the house battery and charging system, which can reach over 14 volts — would prolong the life of the LEDs. There are 'DC to DC' converters available to accomplish this.

Sophisticated LED lamp assemblies also use a regulated circuit to hold the current through the lamp constant. The strips use 'passive regulation', which is a resistor in series with the LEDs (usually one resistor for each group of three LEDs) so if input voltage rises the current will rise, too. Three white — blue, really — LEDs will have a total voltage drop of about 10.5 volts. If the series resistor is set to operate at maximum rated current at 12 volts, and the voltage goes up to 13.5 volts, the current will pretty much double, exceeding the design limits and reducing the life of the LEDs. I have mounted my LED strips inside aluminum channels, for both physical protection and improved heat dissipation. We'll see if they still work in ten years.

Thanks for all the publisher and *Latitude* staff do — a consistently great sailing magazine with great content. All that and the Ha-Ha, too! Next year might be my year, as I retire to my fishing shack on the Columbia River the first of the year so I can work on my boat.

Mark Sutton
 Portland, Oregon

↑↓BEST COVER EVER

I was hoping to do this year's Ha-Ha, but had to drop out when the opportunity arose for a long-postponed hip replacement surgery. The operation was a great success, and I'm eager to get back on the water. My sweet bride went the extra mile on her way to visit me at the hospital in Vallejo, stopping at

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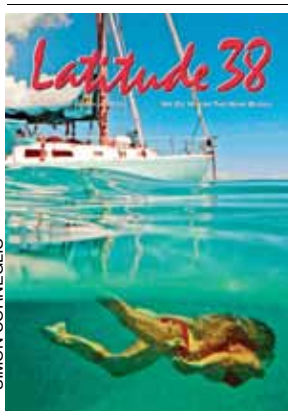
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LETTERS



SIMON CORNEGILIO

Napa Valley RV & Marine to pick up the latest copy of my favorite magazine. She and I both agreed that the cover photo was awesome — one of *Latitude's* best ever.

Bill Crowley
Clarsa, Ventura 23
Napa

Bill — Sailboatophiles recognized the boat as a Cal 40 and deduced that the photo was likely of Liz Clark of the Santa Barbara-based Swell. How right they were.

We received a lot of compliments on this cover featuring Liz Clark and her Cal 40 'Swell'. We like the photo for a variety of reasons. It's unusual to get above- and below-water perspectives at the same time. The photo is divided into harmonically pleasing thirds, with numerous shades of blue and green. One of the highlights of the photo is a fit female form seen swimming along the bottom. You can't lose with something like that. The photograph was taken by Simon Corneglio. Nice shot!

↑↓ HOW TO VOICE YOUR OPINION TO NATGEO

I've done a couple of Ha-Ha's and had great fun. But I'm writing in regard to your November 17 'Lectronic, in which you asked whether *National Geographic* should be encouraging people to vote for one of their 10 candidates to be 'Adventurer of the Year'. I absolutely agree with *Latitude* that they should simply list 10 of the more adventurous people rather than have people vote on who is 'the most adventurous', which is completely subjective.

But did I miss something? How do we communicate our feelings about this to *National Geographic*? Is there an email address or something?

Buck Hoelscher
Pacific Crystal, Cape George 36 Cutter
Pleasure Point, Santa Cruz

Buck — You can express your opinion, as we already have, to ngsforum@nationalgeographic.com. Since we forgot, you might ask National Geographic how they prevent ballot stuffing.

By the way, we haven't been to Pleasure Point in years, but used to surf all the breaks from Sewer Mouth to The Hook on a 10-ft board built by future ultralight-displacement boat pioneer George Olson. Geez, that water was cold in the winter.

↑↓ 20 KNOTS DURING THE DAY AND 15 AT NIGHT

I'm hoping to do an Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) in a year or two on a catamaran of my own, so I've been following some of the blogs — including that of the *Outremer 64 Malisi*. Their most recent posting reminded me of something the *Wanderer* wrote last month about not wanting to do more than 20 knots during the day with *Profligate*, or more than 15 knots at night. Here's the report, with my having cleaned up some of the broken English:

"November 13. We are lead boat heading for the ARC+ stop at the Cape Verde Islands, but are not doing as well on handicap. One reason is that we've been two days without a spinnaker, and have thus been slowed down. We feel like a lame duck.

"How did we lose the spinnaker? Well, we pushed our luck the night after the start of the ARC+. The tradewinds, increased by passing between the Canary Islands, blew at up to 29 knots. We were dashing down the Atlantic swells with a full main and the spinnaker. We were hearing all kinds of sounds that

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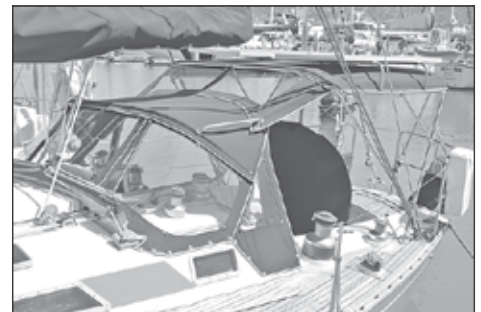
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LETTERS

start being made when the boat gets going fast. When *Malisi* hit more than 20 knots on the speedo, the singing got louder. It was beautiful like a humming choir, but threatening, too.

"With the singing coming and going, one's attention gets stirred up and it makes it hard to sleep. The sounds makes you feel awake all of a sudden and your body gets ready to respond — even if 22 knots is not that fast. I could do it on my bicycle. To calm myself, I would think about cycling downhill through the countryside with the wind at my back on a nice summer day.

"Shortly after I finally managed to fall asleep, there was a knocking at my cabin door by Matt, my mate. 'We've been called on deck,' he said.

"Is it urgent or do I have enough time to dress in peace?' I responded.

"I think it's urgent.'

"When I got on deck there was an uproar. Somebody had gotten the spinnaker wrapped around the furled genoa and couldn't get it undone. There didn't seem to be any way to get the chute unwrapped, and even if we could, it would be a nightmare getting the huge spinnaker dropped in such high winds. What it meant is that we couldn't stop the boat even if we wanted to. Sort of like being on a runaway carriage where the horses have taken off in a mad panic. All you can do is hope the horses will get tired before the carriage gets torn apart.

"I tried to stay calm, as I always try to do on yachts, but it was really difficult with the chute looking like an hourglass. The crew was standing on the foredeck pointing their flashlights at the wrapped spinnaker, wondering how much flapping it could take before it was torn apart. Meanwhile, the big cat, being driven by the autopilot, was running down the waves and whitewater was spraying up through the forward netting.

"It took us what seemed like ages to come up with a plan. We wrapped a line around as much of the bottom part of the hour-glassed sail as we could, trying to prevent it from repeatedly being filled. After we did that, six of us managed to get the bottom of the spinnaker rotated around the furled headstay to get the wrap out, allowing us to lower the halyard. Whew!

"When dawn broke, we were only 50 miles from the African coast. It would have been an ideal place to make a stop, but we gybed so the Cape Verde Archipelago, our first stop, was 700 miles dead ahead.

"The next day we were once again sailing down the Atlantic swells. Sometimes it felt as though we were riding a sled like when we were kids. You know that special moment when you let go of the ground and the sled takes off down the hill? Surfing downwind at high speed feels a lot like that, as the gravity pulls you down and the boat gets a speed assist from the push of the wind and waves. But on the ocean, the 'hills' you slide down never stop.

"On Monday evening, the wind came up to about 29 knots again, and once again we got caught with the spinnaker up. This time I was on watch. Then there was a gust and we heard what sounded like a knife cutting through silk. It was the spinnaker tearing in half. Half of the chute was fluttering from the top of the mast while the other half was dragging in the water with the sheets. With our biggest sail in shreds, it was a dark moment for our ambitions to win the rally."

The piece was written by Rainer Holtorff, who is helping deliver the boat across the Atlantic to the Caribbean, where he will be the boat's captain for the winter.

Does the Wanderer/Poobah have any thoughts based on his experience?

Jason Witrow
Annapolis, Maryland



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LETTERS

Jason — To give readers some background, the Outremer line of catamarans is among the fastest and most seaworthy of those built by the French. However, they are not typical in that they have shockingly small — for their length — saloons and interiors.

The one thing all veteran catamaran sailors will tell you is that you do not want to get caught with too much sail up. Besides, once the wind gets up above 18 knots, more power is about the last thing any catamaran needs.

The way to deal with a wrapped chute is to gybe and recreate the situation on the other gybe that caused the wrap in the first place. Once you get a reverse vortex going by sailing really deep — it's a very fine line between that and gybing again — it's often possible to get even the most badly wrapped chute undone, almost as if by magic. Oftentimes the bigger problem is pulling off a successful gybe in nearly 30 knots of wind — where the force is four times as much as in 15 knots of wind. Naturally it's harder to do this at night. If you practice unwrapping a spinnaker during the day in moderate winds, you can get pretty good at it.

Or, if you have a crewmember like Fin Bevin on Profligate during the Ha-Ha, you make an anti-wrap device out of a few hanks and a series of lines that prevents the chute from blowing inside the headstay and wrapping.

We fully identify with Holtorff getting tense when Malisi was creaming along at over 20 knots, as it's hard to believe that such a big box-shaped sailing vessel should be going so fast. Not that we've had any failures on Profligate as a result of doing it. But even if it's smooth, you mentally and physically brace yourself for possible problems.

The thing that puzzles us is Holtorff's statement that it's a "nightmare" to drop a chute on a cat in a lot of wind. We haven't found that to be the case at all. The combination of a big ease on the foreguy and grinding in on the sheet will flatten the chute and dramatically depower it. If you then lower the main traveler as far as possible and ease the main way out, the chute will be completely blanketed. This makes it easy to drop the chute on the tennis court-sized foredeck of a cat.

In our view, when the wind comes up on a cat, the real trick is not dropping the chute but rather reducing the size of the mainsail. Many, many catamaran skippers have told us they go to single- or even double-reefed mains at night on the ocean where the weather is unsettled or there are squalls. We've hardly ever reefed Profligate, but decided to give this approach a try on the windy second leg of this year's Ha-Ha. We are converts, as Profligate still had no trouble hitting 20 knots in about 18 to 20 knots of wind, and even with a big first reef, the main was still large enough to completely blanket the spinnaker when we decided to drop it.

It's been our experience that it's easy to drop the chute on cats but hard to reduce the size of the main when sailing off the wind. With monohulls, it's harder to drop the chute because it's more difficult to blanket it with the main, and the foredeck is so much smaller than on cats. Reefing the main isn't such a critical issue on a monohull — if you're greatly overpowered, you might get knocked down, but you won't get flipped as you might on a cat. We remember once carrying a full main on our Ocean 71 Big O off Cuba in 49 knots of wind. We ran off with it a bit and it wasn't a problem. If we ever get caught with a full main up on Profligate in 49 knots of wind, we may not flip or be dismayed, but we will need a new pair of shorts.

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I was not a participant in the Baja Ha-Ha, but I read your articles about the documents needed for entry into Mexico



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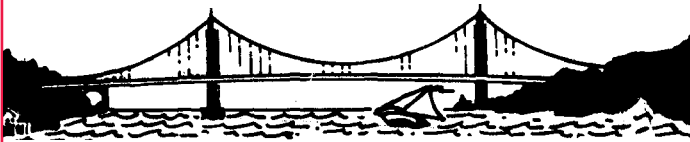
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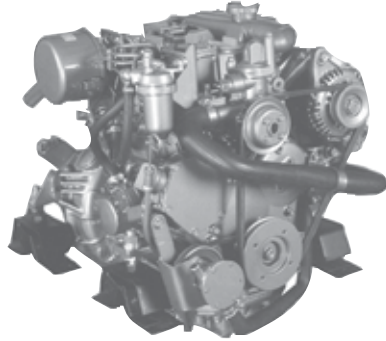
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LETTERS

by boat. I have not visited Mexico by boat since 2000, but I wonder if you can clarify something. In the past, I don't recall having to complete the submission of an electronic Crew List as suggested by the Mexico government website at bit.ly/MXCrewList.

From my reading of your article on Mexican paperwork, I think what you are saying is that an advance electronic Crew List is only needed if you plan to stop along the coast before clearing in at a port of entry such as Cabo San Lucas. I'm planning to shoot straight down to Cabo and clear in there. Am I correct that I do not need to file an electronic list of passengers?

I would never hold anything you say against you if you turn out to be wrong, as I understand how complicated these rules can be and how they are constantly in flux. That said, what is your understanding of this question?

Jordan Bigel
Queen Jane, Shannon 50
Marina del Rey

Jordan — The things that drive us nuts about rules and regulations for arriving in Mexico by boat are as follows: 1) There is no single source where the requirements are clearly stated. 2) You can't be sure that anyone, including the various officials, knows the law. 3) The rules and regulations are often changed without any warning. And, 4) you never know what paperwork any given official is going to think is important.

Thanks to the Mexican IRS's irrational impounding of 338 foreign-owned boats last November, most folks headed south in the Ha-Ha were a little freaked about getting all their paperwork precisely correct. This, of course, was impossible, as the websites often didn't work, in many cases wouldn't accept the requested information, and often made little or no sense at all. As a result, quite a few Ha-Ha people just said 'screw it', and headed south as everyone used to — without a TIP (Temporary Import Permit), without a Crew List, and without electronically submitting a Crew List in advance. Based on everything we've heard since, having paperwork with errors didn't create any major problems, nor did not having any paperwork at all. It was like the old days in Cabo.

Where things got a little hinky is when skippers, for whatever reason, didn't check into Mexico until after Cabo San Lucas. Several such boats arrived in La Paz, where immigration officials said they knew nothing about the prepaid temporary nautical visas that had been obtained online and supposedly could be turned in for regular visas at no extra cost. After Immigration in La Paz called Immigration in Mexico City, all was well. At least one other boat showed up at Mazatlan and tried to clear in with Immigration using the pre-paid temporary visas for mariners. "The officials did not honor our pre-paid tourist visa receipt," they wrote, "and said they didn't know what we were talking about. They chewed us out and made us spend \$22 each to get regular tourist visas." Once again, no big deal. To be fair, since almost nobody goes past Cabo without checking into Mexico, we doubt officials in Mexico City had alerted La Paz or Mazatlan Immigration to the existence of the temporary nautical visas. To additionally be fair, the Mazatlan port captain was said to be extremely pleasant.

Things got hinky for another boat that didn't check in until Puerto Vallarta. We'll let them tell about it in the next letter. The bottom line was that no matter if you showed up in Cabo with a lot of paperwork, screwed up as it might be, or no paperwork at all, neither the Port Captain nor Immigration got bent out of shape. It was like the old days.

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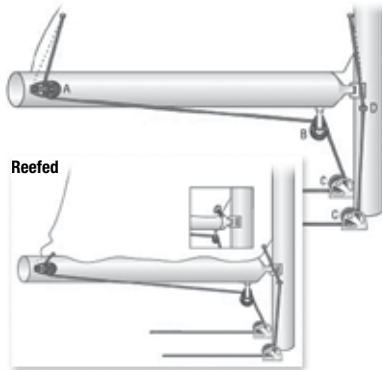
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LETTERS

inspections. Profligate got inspected at the dock in Cabo, where we were told that we couldn't have any fruit or meat — although it wasn't clear if it mattered if the meat was sealed in plastic bags. The friendly inspectors took no meat, but they did take a bunch of fruit, but not the grapes. Someone later came back to confiscate the grapes, but completely overlooked a conspicuous net full of oranges and lemons. Many boats were not inspected by Agriculture at all.

Officials in La Paz have always had a thing about health inspections/certificates, and over the years have often required cruisers clearing out of Mexico to pay for expensive health inspections for their crew and/or their boats. This is why you never want to clear out of Mexico from La Paz. Shelley Ward, commodore of the Club Cruceros de La Paz, reports that when Ha-Ha boats got to La Paz, they had to go through some kind of health inspection. "The new inspection supposedly had something to do with Ebola," writes Ward, "which seems kind of silly." No kidding. But once again, it wasn't a big deal.

We want to emphasize that we haven't heard of any major paperwork problems, which is our long way of saying check in at Cabo without an advance electronic warning and you probably won't have any problems.

↑↓ THE RULES JUST CHANGED A COUPLE OF HOURS AGO

When we got to La Cruz, we got fuel, then checked into our slip at the marina, and then we walked over to the port captain. He said we needed to check into Mexico at Nuevo Vallarta's Port Captain's office, or the one in Puerto Vallarta, and said we had to take our boat and all our crew with us. When we got to Nuevo Vallarta, the port captain said no, we had to go to Puerto Vallarta, and hail the port captain on 16 to get instructions on where to tie up to get our paperwork done. We couldn't raise the port captain on VHF — ! — so we tied up to the 15-ft-high concrete commercial dock, next to a 500-ft-long, 20-story cruise ship.

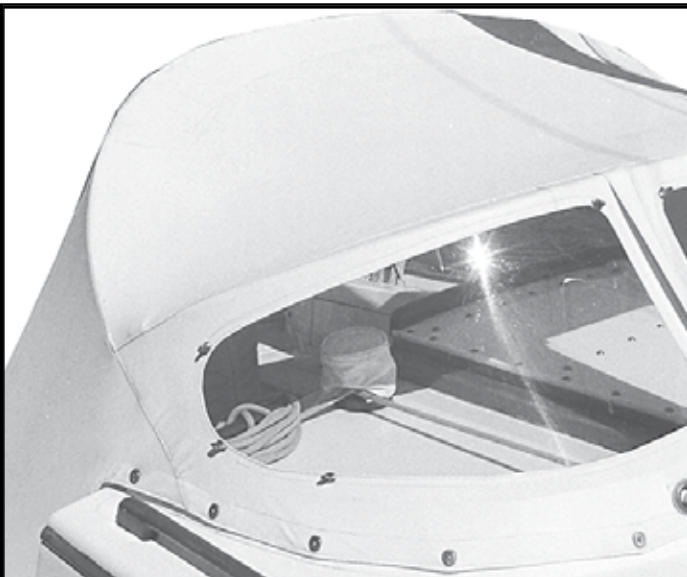
The official at the P.V. Port Captain's office said the rules had changed at 3 p.m. that day, and thus he had to get authority from his boss before he could do anything for us. He also thought we should first go to API and pay for tying to the commercial dock. Eventually we were asked to move from our spot on that dock to allow a local tour boat to disembark her passengers, and had to motor around the turning basin waiting for the authorities to arrive and inspect our boat.

Finally, three of the four necessary officials arrived, and we returned to the dock. They climbed aboard and efficiently handled our paperwork in about 20 minutes. Immigration never showed up.

The next day Immigration emailed us asking for our Crew List. We replied with the same Microsoft Excel spreadsheet we'd supplied online in San Diego. When they received it, they replied, "Okay, come to the office, we're open until 1600." When we got there at 1300, the office was closed, but after some 'splainin, we got in and all was good — until they discovered our receipts were for a clearance at Cabo. They had to get approval from Guadalajara on that one. This eventually came, and now we're all legal. And we know we're in Mexico.

Anonymous
California

Readers — Once again, this is a case of a boat from California checking in somewhere long past the common ports of entry of Ensenada or Cabo. Had they checked into Mexico at either of those places, they wouldn't have had any problem instead of just a minor one.



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LETTERS

↑↓ THE FICKLE FINGER OF FATE

I'm from New Jersey and hardly a prude when it comes to language or sharing my feelings. However, I'm becoming distressed by the public display of bad language, poor taste, and rude behavior that is so common these days. On the other hand, I say that 'anything goes' in private.

Perhaps my attitude is colored by my wife's reaction while outside the home when she witnesses questionable behavior.



LATITUDE/ANDY

It was all part of their costume for the Ha-Ha Kickoff Party. "We're from New Zealand, but we're posing as Aussies!"

She has advanced early-onset Alzheimer's, and I've been her full-time care-taker for over five years. She reacts very negatively to rude public actions, and I'm surprised that a publication such as *Latitude* would feel the need to publish the photo of a couple 'giving the finger' on a family website. Where do we draw the line?

By the way, I read *Latitude 38* and *Lectronic Latitude* for information

in advance of buying a liveaboard boat after my wife passes. Then I'll be cruising until my scrotum reaches my ankles. Told you I'm from Jersey! I promise to behave in public (only) when I join the group to Cabo in a few years.

Bill Baker
New Jersey

Bill — The couple flipping the bird in the photo weren't doing it in public, they were doing it in costume, and in character, during the Ha-Ha Halloween Kick-Off Party. In real life, he wouldn't be going around with a mustache on his chin, and we bet she wouldn't have that cigarette in her mouth. Halloween is the time when people get to indulge in their naughty alter egos, from being pirates — who were usually bloodthirsty characters — to women of suspect virtue. Therapists tell us there are times when it's healthy to be silly. One of the times is the Ha-Ha Kick-Off Party; another is the group dancing party at Squid Roe in Cabo.

Until your what reaches your ankles? If this wasn't such a stellar example of hypocrisy and way too much information (WTMI), it's where we would have drawn the line. Public decency demands that both males and females of a certain age wear Speedos to keep their private body parts from escaping the confines of looser swimwear.

By the way, our mother was also a victim of early-onset Alzheimer's. Like you, our father was a saint in caring for her for many years. You have our respect. We wish you the very best when your time comes to go cruising, for you surely deserve it.

↑↓ IN ADVANCE OF VANCE

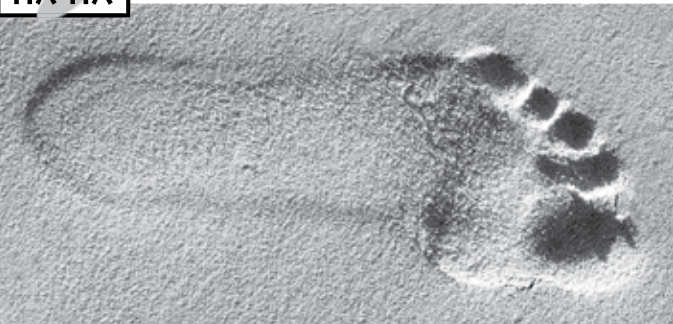
In case you haven't seen this, I've attached a NOAA plot of the path of Hurricane Vance created this morning, Sunday, November 1 at 7 a.m. From the looks of things, Cabo could get hit really badly just as the Baja Ha-Ha fleet is arriving. As I'm sure you're aware, being on the eastern side of a hurricane in the northern hemisphere exposes one to the highest wind speed — and that's what it looks like will happen based on this projection.

Mark Novak
Betty Jane, Hans Christian 43 Ketch
Santa Cruz

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LETTERS

Readers — The Grand Poobah received several well-intended email weather warnings such as the one above shortly after the end of the first leg of this year's Baja Ha-Ha, with Hurricane



Hurricane Vance caused the first-ever postponement of a Ha-Ha leg.

Vance vaguely threatening southern Baja. Some readers may be interested in the Poobah's line of reasoning as he adapted to the weather threat.

As one might expect, the Poobah had been monitoring the weather carefully all during the first leg. Thanks to a decent AT&T data connection at Turtle Bay, he awoke several times in the middle of each night to get the Vance

updates from the National Hurricane Center, which tends to be sluggish to forecast storms, and from Passage Weather, which tends to forecast storms farther in advance. The Poobah also consulted with Commander's Weather, the weather forecast provider for the Ha-Ha, several times a day, and because of the unusual situation, several other professional weather routers.

For the Poobah, Vance was an annoying storm for two reasons: First, he took forever to get his act together, and second, it was very unlikely he would hit southern Baja at all. But with tropical storms and hurricanes, 'very unlikely' is not an adequate safety margin.

The second leg of the Ha-Ha was slated to leave for 240-mile distant Bahia Santa Maria on Saturday, November 1. At that time the National Hurricane Center was giving Bahia Santa Maria, which is 175 miles north of Cabo, a zero chance of being affected by Vance. However, the extreme edge of the National Hurricane Center's much more conservative '1-2-3 Rule for Mariners' did just barely include Bahia Santa Maria.

When Oliver from Commander's Weather advised, "I don't believe it's safe to go south," that was it. The Poobah announced that, for the first time ever, the Ha-Ha fleet had to hold up because of a weather threat. Oliver's advice was later confirmed by Rich Shema of www.weatherguy.com.

On Sunday, November 2, the weather picture wasn't much clearer. Bahia Santa Maria was still in the ultra-conservative 'Mariner's 1-2-3 Zone' for Vance, and there were forecasts of wind to 30 knots from a northeast front with possible gusts to 35 knots on the way to Bahia Santa Maria.

The Poobah presented all the weather information to the fleet, then polled each skipper on his/her thoughts. A little less than one-third of the fleet were in favor of continuing on, while about two-thirds said they preferred to wait — even though this would put the event behind schedule and jeopardize reservations many of the crews had to fly home from Cabo. But hey, you can't sail toward a tropical storm threat just to keep a party schedule. The Ha-Ha was thus postponed for a second day, despite the fact it meant the Poobah had to call the beach party hosts for Bahia Santa Maria and call off that event, and that the schedule would also be thrown off in Cabo.

After the Poobah announced there would be a delay, Harry Hazzard of the Beneteau 51 Distant Drum, who has done more Ha-Ha's than anyone but the Poobah, Assistant Poobah and Ha-Ha Chief of Security, announced that he was going to continue south and wanted to know if anybody else wanted to join him. Although there would be a lot of flip-flopping of plans, about 40 boats decided they would go south on that day in what became known as the 'Braveheart' group.

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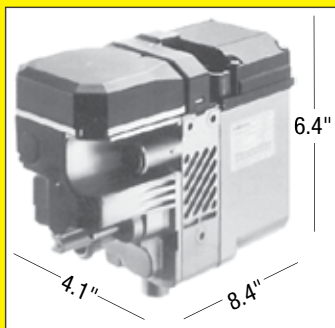
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LETTERS

The Poobah had to make it clear to each skipper who continued on that they were dropping out of the Ha-Ha, but could immediately be reinstated when the Ha-Ha fleet caught up with them, hopefully in Bahia Santa Maria. At this point, several of the Braveheart fleet said they were going to Mag Bay, a little farther south of Bahia Santa Maria, as it would provide better protection in the event they were hit by tropical storm force winds. As it turned out, only one boat went to Mag Bay, and ended up lonesome.

By Monday, November 3, members of the Ha-Ha were restless to move on, despite the fact that Bahia Santa Maria was still included in the 'Mariners 1-2-3 Zone'. Having monitored various weather sources through the night on his iPhone, the Poobah noticed that there was no threat of even the edges of tropical storm winds from Vance getting north of Bahia Santa Maria. After confirming this with two independent weather routers, the course of action became clear — start the second leg immediately and, depending on what Vance did, hold the fleet up in one of several anchorages well north of Bahia Santa Maria. So the Ha-Ha fleet set out in a mild northwesterly, which, right about sundown, abruptly switched to the northeast and would blow in the low to mid-20s for about 24 hours — exactly as was forecast. It was perhaps the most consistently windy leg in any Ha-Ha to date, and provided for spirited sailing.

By the next morning, Vance had, as everybody had forecast, moved to the east and begun to fizzle. This meant everyone could continue on to Bahia Santa Maria without any concern.

Thanks to Bob Hoyt of Mag Bay Outfitters in Lopez Mateo, the Poobah was able to revive the beach party at Bahia Santa Maria, one of the highlights of many Ha-Ha's, although the stay at the beautiful bay had to be cut short by one day.

As it turned out, Vance never really threatened Cabo, and pissed out as a rapidly fading tropical storm halfway between Cabo and Puerto Vallarta, about 140 miles to the southeast of Cabo. The closest Vance ever came to the Ha-Ha fleet was about 375 miles, at which time it was already rapidly heading in the opposite direction and rapidly falling apart. So despite Vance, it's still true that no hurricane or tropical storm has ever crossed the Ha-Ha path. Nonetheless, the Poobah is hoping for a somewhat cooler Eastern Pacific next year to end threats of tropical storms a little earlier.

Perhaps the most significant thing is how good weather forecasting has become. Had it been just 10 to 15 years ago, the information on which to base decisions wouldn't have been available or as good.

↑↓ DIFFICULTY IN CONTACTING SATPHONE SUBSCRIBERS

I first want to thank *Latitude* for including my 'Who Is Responsible For Satphone Continuity' letter in the November issue. I am happy to assist in bringing this information to light, and hopefully assist users in their understanding of how the current satellite phone systems operate and what things to look out for. We've had many conversations with boatowners at the last few boat shows regarding all of this, and know that this is a hot topic in light of the *Rebel Heart* incident that kicked off all the publicity.

In response to my November letter, the *Latitude* editor replied as follows: "Everybody knows that satphones are frequently relied upon in life-and-death situations, and that 99% of the end users can't remember the expiration date of their plan — let alone the very fine details of whatever plan their particular retailer talked them into. So we think it's incumbent upon the vendor who sells the time to alert the end user a month in advance of the expiration of their plan and/or when 90% of their usage is up. If AT&T can do it by MTS

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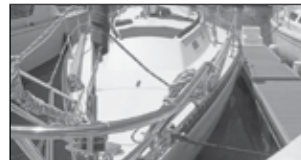
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LETTERS

and email with their cellphone service, why can't satellite time providers do the same? Besides, isn't it in the best interest of the vendor to do this? It gives them the opportunity to sell more time and keep from losing a customer to a competitor."

I agree that most satellite phone users do not keep very close tabs on the status of their accounts. In the case of Iridium prepaid plans — the primary airtime plan being faulted in this discussion for mariners' being unable to use their phones because time ran out or expired — keep the following in mind:

1) Each time you make a voice call, you get a voice prompt with your current balance and expiration date before the call is completed.

2) Prepaid plans do not require monthly billings that might keep the user up-to-date.

3) Prepaid plans do not autorenew unless specifically requested by the end user, where an agreement must be in place between the customer and the vendor. Keep in mind that the dealer is responsible for the airtime. If they were to auto-reload a customer's account without the customer's fully agreeing to it, the customer could refuse to pay. Because these are prepaid minutes, the minutes cannot be retracted, so the dealer would be left on the hook.

Also keep in mind that satellite phone users are typically remote. This means that in most cases they are not getting regular email, phone calls or physical mail. Nor, in many cases, do they want to. So getting in touch with them can be rather difficult. Thus it is not quite fair to put all of this burden on the airtime vendor, but as you can see, it is important to pick your vendor carefully.

As an airtime vendor, we at OCENS truly understand why customers have satellite phones. And we understand the nature of how and where these devices are typically used. This knowledge is evident in all the products and services we both design and offer. Our goal is to help customers to get the most out of their equipment and service, so we make every effort to alert the customer as to the status of their accounts — even prepaid accounts. We send out a number of notices when their balances get low or expiration dates get near. We send alerts via the email address provided by the customer, and then again via SMS directly to the phones. We want to not only keep our customers, but also keep them safe and happy.

Jeff Thomassen
OCENS

Des Moines, Washington

Jeff — If you use email and SMS alerts to customers to alert them that their plan — even if it's a prepaid plan — is about to expire, we think you're doing everything that you legally and ethically should be obligated to do. We think that what you're doing should be an industry-wide requirement.

When Profligate crewman Fin Bevin does the Ha-Ha, he always brings his Iridium/OCENS combo to produce GRIB files on the computer screen. It's one of several great ways to get weather when far offshore.

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

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

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

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SIGHTINGS

dig out your bermuda shorts

If the rumor mill is correct, the 35th America's Cup will be held in Bermuda, not San Diego. Here's the background: On November 5 AC 35 organizers announced that Bermuda would host an AC World Series event for foiling AC45s in October, 2015. Racing will take place on the Great Sound, with team bases and a public race village located on the waterfront in the capital, Hamilton.

That news triggered speculation that Bermuda had won out over San Diego as the location of the AC 35 challenger series and finals

in 2017. It had been announced months earlier that all AC 35 challengers, plus the defender, Oracle Team USA, would be invited to host an ACWS regatta in their home waters — but Bermuda is not a challenger.

Then, on November 20, the America's Cup Event Authority sent an invitation to the media for a press conference on December 2 in New York City, where the choice of

venue between San Diego and Bermuda would be announced.

Less than a day went by before "a person with knowledge of the situation" tipped off the Associated Press that the "tax haven" of Bermuda had been picked over San Diego. Not surprisingly, as soon as AP published the story, it was propagated through sailing blogs, forums and social media sites. However, it remains to be seen how reliable the source is.

If you haven't been following the AC buzz, the 2017 events will be raced in AC62 foiling cats with eight-person crews. As with the run-up to AC 34, next year's AC World Series will serve as a sort of practice event for the hosts, and will include fleet racing.

— chris

embodying the spirit of adventure

The esteemed National Geographic Society has, for the last 10 years, selected candidates for the title of Adventurer of the Year. Candidates are chosen based on "his or her remarkable achievement in exploration, adventure sports, conservation and humanitarianism." According to the Society, this year's honorees "embody the spirit of adventure in diverse ways — an exploratory surfer seeking the world's most remote waves; paragliders pushing the boundaries of their sport; an activist challenging the status quo; filmmakers using art to drive conservation; blind kayakers redefining what's possible; and five other feats."

The "exploratory surfer" who was selected as a candidate is none other than Liz Clark of the Santa Barbara-based Cal 40 *Swell*. We met Liz, now 34, nine years ago just before she took off for Mexico, Central America, the Galapagos, the Society Islands and Kiribati. During the last five or six years she's been mostly sailing singlehanded and often surfing alone in French Polynesia. During the early years of her adventure Liz frequently contributed to *Latitude 38*, and we have a report from her in this month's *Changes*.

While we personally think it's crass and contrary to the very spirit of adventure, the Society encourages readers and interested people to vote — maybe even stuff the ballot box — for the person they think "most embodies the spirit of adventure." It seems to us that you either have the spirit of adventure or you don't, and the spirit of anything is

continued on outside column of next sightings page

what's your

Due to lighter winds, wetter weather and colder temperatures, most West Coast sailors spend much less time on the water during winter than in spring, summer or fall. But that doesn't mean they stop puttering around with their boats.

Winter is a great time to install new gadgetry, sort out rarely visited lockers, and do all sorts of interior upgrades. In addition, some savvy sailors also wait for an appropriate weather window and do a quick haulout. True, temperatures are



BERMUDA TOURISM / ACEA

Rumor has it that Bermuda will be the venue for AC 35 in two years. It is certainly photogenic, but does it have sufficient infrastructure?



For the past decade, surfer and solo sailor Liz Clark has lived a dreamy lifestyle, exploring the South Pacific in search of great surf breaks and new adventures.

SIMON CORNELIO

winter project?

cooler and days are shorter, but some yards give deep discounts on winter haulout fees, rather than see their yard space sit idle.

If you've got an interesting winter project planned — either in your garage, your backyard or in a boatyard — we'd like to hear about it. Email andy@latitude38.com, and if possible, send us a selection of photos also.

Happy puttering!

— andy

liz — continued

something that can't — and shouldn't — be ranked, let alone voted on. What next, the general public being asked to vote for the Buddhist they think best exemplifies the spirit of Zen?

Our objections notwithstanding, the voting ends on January 31, 2015. You can read about all 10 of the candidates by Googling 'National Geographic Adventurers of the Year.' While we hope you vote for our friend Liz for her sake, we also hope you encourage the Society to rethink this contest of 'adventurousness.' In our opinion it would be far better to simply recognize all 10 as being among the more noteworthy adventurers of the year. Thoughts? (Email: richard@latitude38.com)

— richard



SIGHTINGS

volvo update: cape town to abu dhabi

As this issue goes to press, the Volvo Ocean Race's second leg from Cape Town to Abu Dhabi should be nearing its completion. The thrilling first leg and first stopover set an early tone for the race. Racing 6,487 miles from Alicante, Spain, to Cape Town, South Africa, the seven boats entered in this 12th edition of the VOR (formerly the Whitbread Round the World Race) have sailed into a new era with the introduction of one-design boats — that is the big news of the race so far.

After nearly a month at sea, *Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing*, skippered by double-Olympic medalist Ian Walker beat the Franco-Chinese *Team Dongfeng* to the finish line by just 12 minutes to secure the Leg One victory, while simultaneously offering a compelling answer to the pre-race speculation about whether the switch to one-design Volvo 65s was going to be a good thing. With port-starboard crossings well out

continued on outside column of next sightings page

san francisco boat

With the San Francisco Giants on winter break, McCovey Cove will have plenty of room for the second annual Progressive San Francisco Boat Show on January 22-25. Boats on the water will be displayed in the Cove, while land-based exhibits will be located at Pier 48, with plenty of parking nearby.

New boats for sale will include Bene-teaus, Catalinas, Hanses, Sabres, Jean-neaus, J/Boats and Seawind catamarans. A selection of used brokerage boats will be available too.

In addition to booths offering marine products and services, Fred's Shed In-

INSET DAVID RAMOS / VOLVO OCEAN RACE



SPREAD GILLES MARTIN-RAGET / TEAM ALVIMEDICA



show at mccovey cove

teractive Learning Center will provide live demos of hands-on boat projects for do-it-yourselfers, where show-goers can learn how to maintain, repair or upgrade their boats or motors. Sessions are free with the cost of admission to the show.

Besides a full slate of hourly seminars on dry land, the show will also feature Discover Boating's Hands-On Skills Training on-the-water workshops for power, sail and catamarans. A 'Try It Cove' will offer demos of stand-up paddle boards and other small paddle craft.

For info, see www.sfboatshow.com.

— chris



Spread: Skipped by Charlie Enright, the American entry 'Alvimedica' blasts through an ocean swell. **Inset:** The Swedish all-woman team 'SCA', led by Brit Sam Davies, crosses tacks with the Danish entry 'Team Vestas Wind', skippered by Aussie Chris Nicholson.

volvo — continued

to sea, *Team Vestas* luffing *MAPFRE* midway through the leg, and a four-boat battle for victory up until the last 1,000 miles, this edition of the Volvo Ocean Race is quickly becoming the closest and most exciting in race history.

The women on *Team SCA* fired a warning shot across the bows of their competitors when navigator Libby Greenhalgh made a gutsy call to break from the fleet and tack north in the Strait of Gibraltar. Staying in pressure and avoiding adverse current, *SCA* immediately broke

out to a 21-mile lead and was the first boat to enter the Atlantic. The lead was short-lived as was the breeze, however, with the fleet quickly re-compressing. Weak trades offshore and an unformed Azores High prevented the fleet from sailing west into the trades, which created an inshore-grand-prix-style jibing duel right down the Moroccan coast. Finally



MATT KNIGHTON / ABU DHABI OCEAN RACING

A crewman earns his pay aboard 'Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing'. Needless to say, the nine-month around-the-world race will be a wet and wild adventure for every crew.

jibing offshore and toward the Cape Verde Islands, there was a critical tactical moment when deciding where to pass the Cape Verdes. *Abu Dhabi* was one of the four teams that stayed north of the Cape Verdes, and in doing so set themselves up for a westerly crossing of the doldrums.

In theory, crossing the doldrums farther west will provide better breeze, while staying east offers a shorter course to sail. For both *Abu Dhabi* and *Brunel*, with 6-time race vet Bouwe Bekking at the helm, their westerly doldrums crossing paid big dividends, and the pair came out of the doldrums with a healthy 90-mile lead. Several teams temporarily tried different moves in dealing with the South Atlantic's St. Helena High, but in the end it became clear that the only way to deal with it was to simply go around it. Cutting the corner or trying to hook into small lows proved to be a bad call on multiple occasions, causing several teams to lose ground. Despite breaking and replacing a rudder in the North Atlantic and losing a critical padeye necessary when furling spinnakers, *Dongfeng* managed to get south and again regain ground on the leaders in the Southern Ocean.

Once again within sight of their competitors, *Abu Dhabi*, the team of VOR rookies onboard *Dongfeng* kept the hammer down and challenged Ian Walker and his team of seasoned VOR professionals all the way to Cape Town. Making things even more impressive is that *Dongfeng* is sailing with a handful of Chinese sailors on board whose training has brought them up to VOR caliber in less than two years.

Brunel finished third, just a few hours behind *Abu Dhabi* and *Dongfeng*, with *Vestas*, *Alvimedica*, *SCA* and *MAPFRE* all coming in over the next two days. The young Americans on *Alvimedica* sailed a very smart and respectable leg to finish fifth. Although often lacking slightly in boat speed during Leg One, *Alvimedica* should be battling for the podium soon. (In fact they are winning Leg Two as we go to press.)

The big story of this first leg, however, is that the talent-loaded *MAPFRE* trailed the fleet consistently to come in last on the first leg. Things were so bad that two-time Vendée Globe winner and *MAPFRE* watch captain Michel Desjoyeaux, alongside navigator Nicolas Lunven,

continued on outside column of next sightings page

SIGHTINGS

volvo — continued

got the flick and will be replaced before Leg Two.

Learn more about the event and follow the transponder tracks at: www.volvoceanrace.com/en/home.html. There's also a VOR app that can be downloaded for free.

— ronnie simpson

this time she'll go nonstop

Remember Donna Lange? On March 29, 2007, this Oregon-raised, U.S. Virgin Islands-based sailor made nautical history with the completion of a solo circumnavigation, westabout with stops, via the great capes aboard her Southern Cross 28 *Inspired Insanity*. In seven months she intends to set off again, but this time she hopes

to do a *nonstop* lap around the planet. If successful, she won't be the first West Coast woman to do so. That honor went to Vancouver, BC-based single-hander Jeanne Socrates, who finished the trip last year aboard her Najad 380 *Nereida*. But Lange could be the first American woman to complete the circuit nonstop.

In the months before her summer 2015 departure, Lange hopes to raise money not only for her



DONNA LANGE

Next year solo circumnavigator Donna Lange hopes to begin another lap around the planet, this time nonstop. Will she bring the guitar? Oh yeah.

voyage, but to publish a book about her previous travels and release an album of her latest original songs. Yes, Donna is quite an interesting character. A mother of four with 11 grandchildren, she is a nurse by profession, holds a 100-ton Master's License, is a published author, and plays guitar, uke, harmonica and even the steel pan. (Learn more about this remarkable sailor at: www.donnalange.com.)

For us, quoting stats on singlehandlers often feels like stepping into a minefield, but as far as we know, Pat Henry was the first West Coast woman to solo circumnavigate with stops (1997 in the Southern Cross 31 named *Southern Cross*, via Panama), followed the next year by Karen Thorndike, who did it aboard the Rival 36 *Amelia*, via the great capes. For more on West Coast circumnavigators see our master list at www.latitude38.com (under "Circumnavigators").

Among all female solo circumnavigators, the incredible Ellen MacArthur still holds the fastest time by a female in a monohull: 94d, 4h, 25m, set in the 2001 Vendée Globe. Four years later, she broke the existing overall solo record aboard the massive 75-ft trimaran *B&Q/Castorama*, averaging 15.9 knots! Her time: 71d, 14h, 18m. Needless to say, Ellen didn't have a lot of time for leisure pastimes such as plucking the guitar or writing songs on that trip. In fact, she claims she never got more than 20 minutes' sleep at any one time the whole way around.

— andy

small boat legend goes big

If you're a fan of small boat voyaging, you undoubtedly know the name Serge Testa. Twenty-seven years ago this former Bay Area sailor set a world record that remains unbroken today for circumnavigating in a 12-ft boat. Yes, 12, no typo. Today, however, he and his wife Robin are going big.

Now living in Australia, in April 2013 they became enamored with

continued on outside column of next sightings page

where is brooks

Over the past few years there's been a lot of talk about keeping kids interested in sailing once they 'age out' of junior programs. The following is one of the success stories.

Brooks Reed of Santa Cruz was featured in *Latitude 38* as El Toro Junior Season Champion in 2002, when he was 14, and a member of Santa Cruz and Richmond Yacht Clubs. He received RYC's John Kostecki Award for Junior Sailor of the Year in 2003. "Brooks is one of my favorite students," said John Amen, one



ALL PHOTOS SERGE & ROBIN TESTA

reed now?

of his sailing instructors at the time. Apparently both the dedicated-sailor and the good-student roles have stuck with Brooks over the past 12 years.

Since we last heard from him, he won Bronze in the Sears Cup sailing with Jesse Wedler and Matt Noble (now a reserve crewmember in the Volvo Ocean Race for Team Alvimedica) and Brooks also won the Orange Bowl in the 29er in 2003. As a member of the MIT sailing team, he won the Schell Trophy (a Northeast regional

continued in middle column of next sightings page

going big — continued

the idea of building a 49-ft aluminum Cybercat designed by Tim Mumby, and by now they are roughly 3/4 of the way through the massive do-it-yourself project. They bought plans from Mumby, rented a spot in a Queensland boatyard, bought five tons of aluminum, and went to work.

Big, fast, sturdy and safe, the sleek cat would appear to be the polar opposite of *Acrohc Australis* (the 12-footer). "One of the things we liked about the Mumby design is the beautiful curve in the hull," explains Robin. "Using recycled materials, Serge built a bender. Many, many bends and many, many welds later, hull #1 was done and turned right-side-up using a homemade crane and gantry, also built from recycled materials. Then, he did everything again for hull #2. Once

continued on outside column of next sightings page



SIGHTINGS

going big — continued

the second hull was complete and turned right-side-up, it was time to build the bridge deck and the forward beam joining the two hulls."

Next, Serge welded in bulkheads, frames and stringers, installed two new Yanmar 39hp engines with saildrives, and added deck beams and outside plating. Fuel tanks have been built in, windows are framed in, and the hatches are built. "The pile of aluminum plates has shrunk to almost nothing," says Robin. Among this design's somewhat unusual features is a small forward cockpit in addition to a stern cockpit. That one is "roomy and sheltered, and the salon and galley are on the same level."

The couple is visiting California this month, but they'll soon be back in Queensland to finish the exhaustive project. What's the game plan once she's finished? "We'll probably sail her for a while — not sure where yet — and then sell her," says Robin. Their bucket list is apparently long and varied, and not all of it involves sailing. "We are both now in our sixth decade, so we have to get cracking!" We wish them the best of luck with all that.

By the way, Serge's book, *500 Days, Around the World in a Twelve Foot Yacht*, is still available in both print and electronic editions via Paradise Cay Publications or Amazon.

— andy

brooks reed

fall championship) in 2006. During his career at MIT, he's also been skipper of the All New England sailing team, as



Brooks Reed

well as an Academic All American. Brooks says the East Coast collegiate sailing programs are rigorous, and he continues to improve due to the competition and the camaraderie there.

He added the F18 catamaran to his lengthy sailing résumé in 2011, winning the 2013 Canadian Nationals. He ranked fourth in the F18 in 2012 and '13.

He spent the past summer sailing a foiling International Moth out of the MIT sailing pavilion on the Charles River in Cambridge, MA. The MIT sailing program

MIT SAILING



FIN BEVEN

— continued

tries to promote technology in their sailing program, and Brooks believes that the Moth will help attract prospective students.

"Brooks is working his tail off finishing his thesis," wrote his proud dad, Steve, in November. "He's trying to steal a few more Moth days before the ice takes over the waterfront (they have *serious* winters there)."

Brooks is receiving his PhD in Ocean Engineering at MIT. He'll 'defend' his doctoral thesis this month. The title? "Controller Design for Underwater Vehicle Systems with Communication Constraints," which has to do with finding ways for small, autonomous submarines to communicate and navigate. Sounds like something we'll need Lee Helm to explain.

— chris



The annual 'From Here to Eternity' kissing contest is always the highlight of the Baja Ha-Ha beach party in Cabo San Lucas. We weren't able to identify these participants, but we sure admire their spirit. We'll give them an A for effort.

30 years of ultimate sailing

If a photo is worth a thousand words, over the last 30+ years Santa Barbara sailing photographer Sharon Green has generated the equivalent of half a billion words. Last year she and her assistants managed to whittle the number down to "a lot" for inclusion in her just-released 224-page coffee table book titled *30 Years of Ultimate Sailing*. Among the boats featured are those of West Coast sailing legends Jim Kilroy, Roy Disney and Philippe Kahn, as well as the magnificent cats of the 34th America's Cup.

An additional attractive feature of the book is a series of brief recollections of personal 'Ultimate Sailing Moments' by the likes of Northern Californians Paul Cayard, Stan Honey, John Bertrand and Philippe Kahn, and Southern Californians Annie Gardner, John Kilroy and Jimmy Spithill. Our favorite, however, is by the always-humble Buddy Melges, who came out of Zenda, Wisconsin, to take on 105 other skippers in the epic 1976 Star Worlds on San Francisco Bay. With the 20 knots of wind and big chop on the Bay, Buddy and crew reached the first mark of the first race an astonishing two full minutes ahead of sailing immortals Dennis Conner, Lowell North, Tom Blackaller and Bill Buchan. Melges went on to win the Star Worlds, and, back in those days, it was huge.

When you photograph yacht racing as much as Green has, sometimes you just happen to be in the right place at the exact right time. The 1991 Maxi Worlds in Newport, Rhode Island, for example, when Green caught the Italian-owned maxi *Longobarda* at the moment of dismasting, a split second when the 'Flying' Doctor Victorio of Italy, who had been standing back by a runner, was catapulted some five feet into the air. That photo is on pages 70-71. The good doctor didn't get hurt — or even wet — for as can be seen in Green's inset photo, he was snapped back aboard the boat, face first.

Green's photos are sort of like children to her in that she doesn't have a favorite. "But I have to admit that I love the photos of the colorful spinnakers and blooper of the boats in the 1970s and 1980s St. Francis

Big Boat Series. When I present my program at boat shows around the world, I contrast those colorful days with, for example, the 2014 Big Boat Series, where everybody has a boring white spinnaker and there isn't, of course, a blooper in sight."

Are there any audience favorites? "They like the photos when there is lots of wind and boats are getting hit by high-impact waves. There is a photo of *America One* during the America's Cup in New Zealand that is very popular. It's on page 216. Another favorite is Roy Disney's 94-ft *Pyewacket* coming down the Molokai Channel, which is on pages 168-169."

What's Green's favorite race to photograph? "The Transpac! But it

continued on outside column of next sightings page



Sharon Green surrounded by her art.



We don't know the boat name, but we'd bet everyone who was aboard during this dismasting remembers it vividly.

ULTIMATE SAILING

SHARON GREEN / ULTIMATE SAILING

ultimate sailing — continued

can be very frustrating for me as the best boats often finish at night. One year Stan Honey was navigating the 100-ft *Alfa Romeo*, and before the start I asked him when they were going to finish. For a 2,200-mile race, he gave me a very specific finish time, like 1:59 a.m. A few days later, I get a call from Jimmy Pugh, who told me they were going to finish at 4 in the afternoon — daylight! So I rushed down to the Santa Barbara Airport and rallied the troops in Honolulu. I also emailed Honey to confirm the finish time. I got really bummed out, because Stan told me their ETA was still 1:59 a.m. Jimmy had apparently gotten confused between local and Greenwich time. So we had to stand down. But you know when *Alfa Romeo* finished? At 1:59:30 a.m. How could Stan have only been 30 seconds off on such a long race?"

One might not think that being a sailing photographer is a particularly dangerous occupation, but Sharon can tell you differently. Once she was aboard a single-engine photo boat at the weather mark of a big Farr 40 regatta on a windy day off Miami. The engine died just as the fleet of intense racers arrived. It was even worse one year when she was following *Insatiable* on the reaching leg during a windy Big Boat Series. "The wake flipped the Boston Whaler I was on, pitching me and all my camera equipment into the water. Fortunately, most of my exposed film was in Ziploc bags."

The most dangerous, however, are the helicopters. "I've been in a lot of helicopters when some alarm went off or there was a funny noise. The scariest was one day when an alarm went off when we were way offshore of San Diego. We had to make an emergency landing. But it's the helicopter pilots of Miami who really scare me, as most are relatively inexperienced, and they always seem about to fly into the second spreader of some boat."

Not that great photographs can't be taken with almost any decent camera, but Sharon Green uses Canon equipment.

— richard

a book for every sailor's stocking

Call us old fashioned, but we like books. We don't mean the latest Kindle download — we mean real books. You know, the musty things stacked on shelves in your grandparents' house? While electronic reading is quick, and we do our fair share of it, there's nothing like kicking back with a good book. It's more personal, we feel more engaged with the author, we actually like holding it and turning the pages, and reading a book just seems more — 'legitimate', for lack of a better word — than reading it on some screen. Like jumping into the water with a mask and fins rather than watching a GoPro video of snorkeling on YouTube.

And hey, in a real book the batteries never go dead! Books make excellent gifts, even for techie-sick teenagers who can't engage with anything but smartphones — and even if they don't know it yet. Some of the most meaningful gifts we've ever received (or given) were books — even if *we* didn't know it at the time. So while you can download pretty much any book instantly and more cheaply than buying one, if you're looking for something special for the sailor in your life this holiday season, we suggest the real thing. And please write something nice in the front of it with the date and your name.

The crop of books we selected for review this year is not as eclectic as in the past. With a few exceptions, they are primarily memoirs — personal voyages of discovery, each unique, each uplifting, and each a celebration of the human spirit. What better time of the year to bestow such subject matter than now? Good Christmas and Merry Reading!

The Little Blue Book of Sailing Wisdom (Edited by Stephen Brennan, \$16.95) — Besides being a sport and pastime enjoyed around

continued on outside column of next sightings page

filmmaker focuses on

Filmmaker Oleg Harenar says he's always been fascinated by Sausalito's colorful waterfront community. So much so, in fact, that he considered making a film about all aspects of waterfront life there. But he soon realized that such a subject would be too overwhelming, so instead he decided to film a series of video documentaries called *Life on the Water* that spotlight worthy waterfront characters.

The first, which was shown last month at the Corinthian YC, profiles 89-year-old Ron MacAnnan, longtime owner of the 82-ft M-boat *Pursuit*, which he's maintained



ALL PHOTOS SHARON GREEN / ULTIMATE SAILING

If you think sail handling is complicated now, you should have been sailing in the era of bloopers. Sharon Green's new book showcases key moments during 30 years of sailing history.

'life on the water'

almost singlehandedly for decades.

Sometimes irascible, yet much-loved and respectful, MacAnnan explains his waste-not-want-not philosophy, shares sailing tales, and gives insights into the colossal effort he's made to keep his nautical thoroughbred in great shape. And the sailing shots are thrilling.

Next up are profiles of Hank Eason of *Yucca*, and the late Howard Sommer, former owner and restorer of the prized Bay Area schooner *Wander Bird*. Check out the series at www.lifeonthewater.us.

— andy

sailing books — continued

the world, sailing is one of literature's most popular metaphors for life. It will take about five minutes flipping through this nifty little book to see why. Stephen Brennan has brought together hundreds of sailing-related 'oms' — axioms, idioms and wisdoms — from such far-flung sources as Shakespeare, Hemingway, Churchill, Conrad and Homer. The quotes, grouped into chapters such as 'Seamen and Women,' 'Storm and Calm', 'Weather Eye' and 'The Philosophic Sailor' are inspirational, sobering, perceptive, witty and inspiring. Of particular note are all the weather-related sayings of old. We've all heard 'Red sky at morning...' before. But Brennan has dug up nearly 40 more, all simple rhymes to foretell what's to come: "Rainbow to windward, foul falls the day. Rainbow to leeward, rain runs away." Our biggest chuckle was from Winston Churchill, speaking to the

continued on outside column of next sightings page



SIGHTINGS

sailing books — continued

Board of Admiralty in 1939: "Traditions of the Royal Navy? I'll give you traditions of the Royal Navy — rum, buggery and the lash."

Lee Shore Blues (Peter Heiberg, \$19.99) — One of the perks of sailing journalism is getting to meet new and interesting people. One of these was Peter Heiberg, who regular readers may remember competed in both the 2012 and 2014 Singlehanded TransPac races from San Francisco to Kauai. One of the lowlights of sailing journalism is that the time constraints of the job don't allow us to get to know new people all that well. So we were at once surprised, delighted and a bit awed by Peter's book, *Lee Shore Blues*, when it arrived on our doorstep. In a nutshell, we felt as if this guy we'd shared a few laughs with turned out to be the lead singer in some legendary rock band. Heiberg writes - and writes well — of a rollicking lifetime at sea; of boats, women and good times; and of taking his lumps as he (seemingly often) learned things the hard way. His engaging style is reminiscent of several popular cruising writers of the past 25 years

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hawaii race planning

A lot of planning goes into preparing an entry for a race to Hawaii. Pacific Cup Yacht Club wants everyone to have plenty of time to get ready for the next Pacific Cup, so they've already announced the date of the first starts: Monday, July 11, 2016. Starts are generally spread out over a few days, with the fastest divisions departing San Francisco Bay last.

Also in the spirit of preparedness, PCYC has announced the dates of seminars in 2015 that will help educate sailors anticipating the ocean crossing. Encinal YC in Alameda will host a Safety at Sea Seminar on Sunday, May 17, and Richmond YC will host Pacific Offshore Academy Seminars on June 13 and October



Happy Holidays
from Latitude 38

has already begun

17, both Saturdays.

Gary Troxel steps into the role of PCYC Commodore for this cycle, Buzz Blackett is Vice Commodore, and Melinda Erkelens is Rear Commodore. All are veterans of multiple Pac Cups.

Go to www.pacificcup.org/2016 to sign up for Pac Cup news.

Entries are already open for the 2015 Transpacific Yacht Race from Los Angeles to Honolulu, with starts on July 13-18. See www.transpacrace.com.

The Singlehanded Sailing Society is considering June 18 or 25, 2016, for the start of the next Singlehanded TransPac from Tiburon to Hanalei Bay, Kauai.

— chris

sailing books — continued

— just with an 'R' rating.

Victura — The Kennedys, a Sailboat and the Sea (James W. Graham, \$29.95) - Of the zillion or so books written about the Kennedy clan, *Victura* is our new favorite. (Disclaimer: we haven't read all zillion.) But it's hard not to be biased when its main focus is the role sailing played in their lives. John F. Kennedy and his siblings grew up sailing on Nantucket Sound. In the '30s, Jack and older brother Joe Jr. won a number of local and collegiate championships sailing Star Boats.

But most of their sailing, racing and character-building was done aboard a 25-ft Wianno Senior gaff sloop that Jack named *Victura* — Latin for 'about to conquer'. The boat (Seniors are an indigenous design for Nantucket, sort of like Bird Boats are for the Bay) was ordered new by the family in 1932, when Jack was just 15. He returned to sail her many times over the years, even as president. A favorite story in this gem of a book is a blowy race when Jack and Joe were on different boats. On *Victura*, Jack and crew had to replace a broken



So many cool books. Buy them for gifts or read them yourself.

tiller just before the start, and found themselves dead last on the first weather leg. By the final leg, they had worked their way up to second, hard on Joe's heels. A gust hit the frontrunners and when the boats got back on their feet, Jack looked up to see his gaff had snapped in half. Most sailors might have seen it as misfortune and retired. Jack saw it as an 'instant reef' and pressed on, overtaking and passing his overcanvassed brother's boat at the finish by half a boatlength.

Mermaid Sails the Bay (Greg Trybull, \$19) — What do you get when you cross *Stand By Me* — without the dead body — and *Summer of '42* — without the sex? Both those works came to mind as we adventured with the main characters in this novel: three brothers growing up on the Belvedere Lagoon in 1908. Their father is captain of the scow schooner *Alma*, and the boys are co-captains of a Whitehall skiff named *Mermaid*. During the course of one summer, they cross tacks with all manner of sail and power vessels — including Roosevelt's Great White Fleet — explore islands and other landbound attractions, and interact with an ever-changing cast of real and imagined waterfront characters. Author Trybull grew up sailing the Bay and Delta aboard his father's Seafarer 29, and his local knowledge shows. And he has obviously done painstaking due diligence to recreate the Bay and environs as they were back then, with references to, among other things, the drawbridge at Belvedere, Lyford's Tower, and even Drake's Plaque. A fun read, particularly for younger readers.

Winging It — *Oracle Team USA's Incredible Comeback to Win the America's Cup* (Diane Swintal, R. Steven Tsuchya and Robert Kamins, \$24) — The Red Sox at the '04 World Series, 1980's Miracle on Ice at the Olympics, 1969's Amazin' Mets — take your pick of sports' greatest come-from-behind stories. Then add Oracle Team USA's still unbelievable eight-straight-race rebound from the brink of defeat to win the 2013 America's Cup over Emirates Team New Zealand. This book delves into and answers many of the questions on everyone's mind about how they did it, from the development of a completely new, next-generation sailing platform (according to one designer, the main function of an AC72 hull was "board delivery device") to building — and rebuilding — them, to the steep learning curve of sailing them. And the biggie — how Oracle, obviously outclassed in the early going, managed to become the superior boat in the end.

— jr

Look for more reviews next month.



LYNN RINGSEIS