

Latitude 38

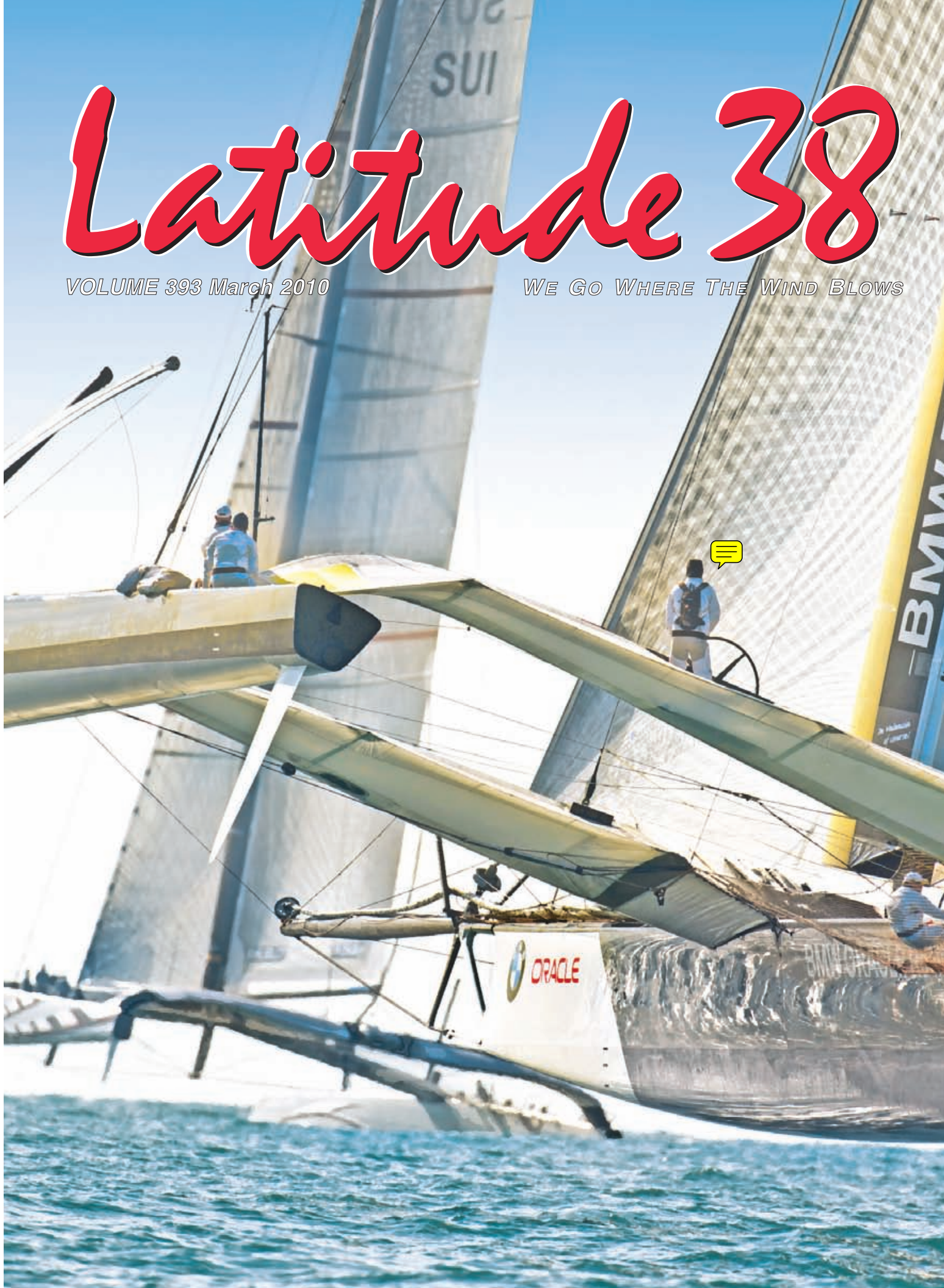
Latitude 38

VOLUME 393 March 2010

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MARCH 2010

VOLUME 393





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DIRECTORY of GRAND MARINA TENANTS	
Bay Island Yachts	6
Blue Pelican Marine.....	164
The Boat Yard at Grand Marina ...	17
Lee Sails.....	155
Pacific Crest Canvas.....	59
Pacific Yacht Imports	11
Rooster Sails	99
UK-Halsey Sailmakers.....	61



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Plastiki

PHOTO: LATITUDE 38 / ROB



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CONTENTS

subscriptions	6
calendar	8
letters	18
loose lips	76
sightings	78
america's cup 33	92
eye on the bay	100
smoke on the water	104
three bridge fiasco	108
pacific puddle jumpers	114
max ebb: words of wisdom	122
the racing sheet	126
world of chartering	132
changes in latitudes	140
classy classified	158
advertisers' index	166
brokerage	168

Cover: Playing cat and mouse – 'USA' toys with 'Alinghi 5' before pouncing in the 33rd America's Cup.

Photo: Guilain Grenier/BMW Oracle Racing

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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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Latitude 38

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CALENDAR

Non-Race

Mar. 3 — Club Nautique's Winter Wednesdays Seminar Series continues with 'Cruising the Delta' with Bill Wells at Club Nautique in Alameda, 6-8 p.m. Seminars run every other Wednesday at the same time and location, and are free unless noted. **3/17:** 'The Mystery of Tides' with Joe Brandt; **3/31:** 'A Day in the Life of a Bar Pilot' with David Weiss. Info, (510) 865-4700 or www.clubnautique.net/winter-wednesdays.

Mar. 3-31 — Wednesday Yachting Luncheon Series at St. Francis YC, 12-2 p.m., \$13.50. Enjoy lunch and a dynamic speaker every Wednesday. All YCs' members welcome. More info under the 'Events' tab at www.stfyc.com.

Mar. 3-Apr. 28 — Sailing Skills & Seamanship course by USCGA Flotilla 12-1 at Oakland YC on Weds. nights, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$55 fee. Info, (510) 601-6239 or nancy@windwave.com.

Mar. 3-June 23 — Sailing Skills & Seamanship course by USCGA Flotilla 17 at Berkeley YC on Weds. nights, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$75 fee. Info, (415) 205-0687 or FSO-PE@flotilla17.org.

Mar. 4 — Heavy Weather Sailing & Storm Tactics by John Connolly at San Carlos West Marine, 6-7 p.m. Free. Reservations, (650) 593-2070.

Mar. 5-7 — Trawler Fest boat show at Kona Kai Resort in San Diego. Check out the boats, seminars and a variety of other activities. Info & tickets, www.trawlerfest.com.

Mar. 6 — Yacht Maintenance Seminar by Michael Price at Sausalito West Marine, 1 p.m. Free. Call (415) 332-0202 for reservations.

Mar. 6 — Sail a Small Boat Day. Free rides in a variety of different small sailboats at Richmond YC, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Wear something warm and waterproof, like a wetsuit, and bring a PFD and change of clothing. Info, www.richmondyc.org.

Mar. 7 — Mariners' Sunday at St. Luke Presbyterian Church in San Rafael, 10 a.m. An ecumenical service dedicated to mariners, followed by brunch at Loch Lomond YC. Info, www.stlukepres.org. Brunch reservations, (415) 721-1578.

Mar. 7-28 — Free sailing at Pier 40 every Sunday courtesy of BAADS. Info, (415) 281-0212 or www.baads.org.

Mar. 10 — Liferaft Safety class by Sal's Inflatables, 3-5 p.m. at Golden Gate YC, just before the Crew List Party (see below). Find out what it's really like to get into a liferaft from the water — bring a wetsuit! Reservations and \$25 deposit required for this free class. Info, (510) 522-1824.

Mar. 10 — *Latitude 38* Spring Crew List Party at Golden Gate YC, 6-9 p.m. It's early in the season so you can set up your crew sooner. Coast Guard helo SAR demo starts at 6. \$5 for anyone 25 and under (with ID)! Still only \$7 for the rest of us. See www.latitude38.com for all the details.

Mar. 11 — Single sailors of all skill levels are invited to the Single Sailors Association monthly meeting at Ballena Bay YC, 7:30 p.m. Info, www.singlesailors.org or (510) 233-1064.

Mar. 11 & Apr. 8 — Fishing Seminar Series at San Carlos West Marine, 6-7 p.m. Free. Reservations, (650) 593-2070.

Mar. 11-14 — Sacramento Boat Show at Cal Expo. Info, www.svmainc.com.

Mar. 13 — Fulfilling Your Dreams: Getting Ready to Cruise seminar by Guy Stevens at San Carlos West Marine, 12-4 p.m. Reservations, (650) 593-2070.

Mar. 13 — Boaters Swap Meet at South Beach YC, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.. Info, www.southbeachyc.org.

Mar. 13-14 — West Wight Potter Rendezvous at Peninsula YC in Redwood City. Racing, rafting, dancing and a St. Paddy's dinner. Info, call Edward at (650) 771-1945.

Mar. 14 — Daylight Saving Time begins.

Mar. 15 — Singlehanded TransPac Rigging seminar by

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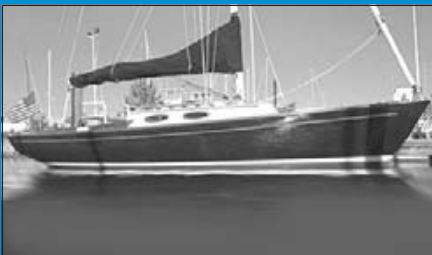
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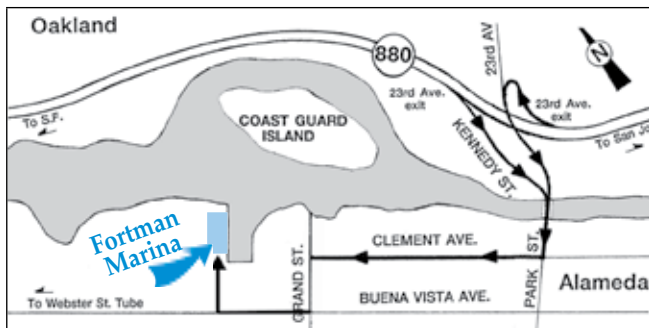
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CALENDAR

Panda Rigging at Oakland YC, 7:30-10 p.m. Socializing starts at 7 p.m. Info, www.sfbayss.org.

Mar. 17 — Go sailing on a green boat on St. Paddy's Day!

Mar. 18, 1969 — Bernard Moitessier shocked the world when he announced his withdrawal from the Golden Globe Race and his intention to continue sailing. "Please do not think I am trying to break a record," he wrote. "Record" is a very stupid word at sea. I am continuing nonstop because I am happy at sea, and perhaps because I want to save my soul."

Mar. 18 — 12-Volt Seminar by Duane Foote at San Carlos West Marine, 6-7 p.m. Free. Reservations, (650) 593-2070.

Mar. 18 — Line Splicing Class at San Jose West Marine, 6:30 p.m. Free. Reservations, (408) 246-1147.

Mar. 20 — Vernal equinox, a.k.a. the first day of spring!

Mar. 20 — Safety Seminar by Coast Guard Auxiliary at Sausalito West Marine, 11 a.m. Info, (415) 332-0202.

Mar. 25 — Partner in Command Seminar by US Power Squadron at San Carlos West Marine, 6-7:30 p.m. \$45. Reservations, (650) 593-2070.

Mar. 27 — Maritime Sketchbook with Amy Hosa at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park's Hyde Street Pier, \$100. Half of all proceeds from adult education classes go to non-profit education programs for at-risk youth. Info, www.maritime.org/adult-classes.html or (415) 292-6664.

Mar. 27-28 — Oar & Paddle Making at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park's Hyde Street Pier, \$125. Info, www.maritime.org/adult-classes.html or (415) 292-6664.

Mar. 29 — Howl at the full moon on a Monday night.

Apr. 3 — Marine Swap Meet at Alameda West Marine, 7 a.m.-2 p.m. Info, (510) 521-4865.

Apr. 3 — Finding & Maintaining the Right One by Guy Stevens at San Carlos West Marine, 12-3 p.m. Reservations, (650) 593-2070.

Apr. 10 — Opening Day on the South Bay. Boat parade, blessing of the fleet, live music and fun for the whole family. Info, www.southbayopeningday.org.

Apr. 10 — Encinal YC's Nautical Flea Market, the largest in the East Bay, 6 a.m.-1 p.m. Breakfast, lunch and beverages available. Info, (510) 522-3272 or www.encinal.org.

Apr. 10 — Emeryville Marina's 3rd Annual Boaters Swap Meet, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Info, (510) 654-6437.

Apr. 11 — Marine Swap Meet & Open House at Berkeley YC, 6 a.m. John, (510) 843-9292, manager@berkeleyyc.org or www.berkeleyyc.org.

Apr. 15-18 — Strictly Sail Pacific at Jack London Square. Back to sail-only, this year will feature used boats as well as new! Info, www.strictlysailpacific.com.

Apr. 24 — Nautical Swap Meet & Port Supply Tradeshow at Sausalito West Marine, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. BBQ gets fired up at 11 a.m. Info & space reservations, (415) 332-0202.

Apr. 24 — Boaters Swap Meet at Stockton SC, 8 a.m. Fuel up at a pancake breakfast, too. Info, www.stocktonsc.org.

Apr. 25 — Opening Day on the Bay! Info, www.picya.org.

Racing

Feb. 27-Mar. 7 — MEXORC Regatta, held in conjunction with Copa Mexico. Info, www.mexorc.com.

Mar. 4-7 — Miami Grand Prix. Premiere Racing Events, www.premiere-racing.com.

Mar. 4-7 — Heineken Regatta, St. Maarten, West Indies. One of the world's great fun regattas — and some of the wildest parties. Info, www.heinekenregatta.com.

Mar. 6 — Coyote Point YC's Jack & Jill Race. Info, (650) 347-6730, www.cpyc.com or regatta@cpyc.com.

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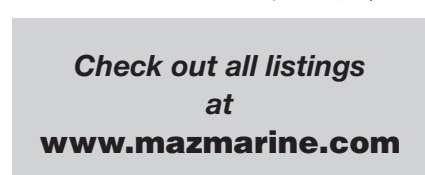
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Mar. 6 — Stockton SC Long Distance Race #1. Info, (209) 476-1381 or www.stocktonsc.org.

Mar. 6-7 — Spring Keel Regatta on the Cityfront. StFYC, (415) 563-6363 or raceoffice@stfyc.com.

Mar. 12, 1887 — The newly built 131-ft schooner *Coronet* and the 17-year-old schooner *Dauntless* set off on a New York-to-Ireland race across the Atlantic. *Coronet* beat *Dauntless* by 30 hours 14 days later.

Mar. 13 — Island YC's Doublehanded Lightship. Proceeds benefit United Cerebral Palsy. Info, www.iyc.org.

Mar. 13 — Mercury Series #1. EYC, (510) 522-3272.

Mar. 13 — Horsfal-Vincent Race. CYC, www.cyc.org.

Mar. 13-14 — Big Daddy Regatta, a don't-miss Bay Area classic. RYC (510) 237-2821 or www.richmondyc.org.

Mar. 13-14 — Spring Dinghy Invitational. StFYC, (415) 563-6363, www.stfyc.com or www.bayarea-youthsailing.com.

Mar. 14 — Spring Series #1. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

Mar. 20 — YRA-OYRA Lightship 1. StFYC, www.yra.org.

Mar. 20 — Rites of Spring, includes all-female crew division. OYC, (510) 366-1476 or www.oaklandyachtclub.com.

Mar. 20 — Stockton SC Doublehanded Long Distance Race #1. Info, www.stocktonsc.org.

Mar. 20 — Rosenblum Regatta. SFYC, www.sfyc.org.

Mar. 20-21 — Spring One Design Invitational. StFYC, (415) 563-6363 or www.stfyc.com.

Mar. 22 — Spring Series #2. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

Mar. 26-30 — Corona del Mar to Cabo Race, an 800-mile downwind dash. Balboa YC, www.balboayachtclub.com.

Mar. 27-28 — San Francisco Cup. SFYC defends against StFYC. Info, www.sfyc.org or www.stfyc.com.

Mar. 28 — YRA Midwinter Challenge Cup at TI. Info, www.yra.org.

Mar. 29-Apr. 4 — BVI Sailing Festival & Spring Regatta, British Virgin Islands. One of the Caribbean's best regattas, which includes a huge bareboat fleet. A great way to spend a week-long charter. Info, www.bvispringregatta.org.

Apr. 3 — 29th Annual Doublehanded Farallones Race. BAMA, (510) 769-0309 or www.sfbama.org.

Apr. 3 — Singlehanded #2. SeqYC, www.sequoiayc.org.

Apr. 3 — Corinthian Challenge. CYC, www.cyc.org.

Apr. 6-May 18 — Free Pelican racing at the Cityfront's Aquatic Park every Tuesday, 5:30 p.m.-sunset. Info, www.maritime.org/adult-classes.html or (415) 292-6664.

Apr. 10 — Bullship Regatta, the annual run of El Toros from Sausalito to the Cityfront. Info, www.eltoroyra.org.

Apr. 10 — Spring Tune-Up Race, the mother of all beer can races. RYC, www.richmondyc.org.

Apr. 10 — SSS Corinthian Race, formerly known as the In the Bay Race. Info, www.sfbaysss.org.

Apr. 10 — Mercury Series #2. EYC, www.encinal.org.

Apr. 10 — North Bay Challenge #1. VYC, www.vyc.org.

Apr. 10 — Don Wan Regatta, TYC. Ian Matthew, (415) 883-6339 or race@tyc.org.

Apr. 10-11 — Resin Regatta, for Melges 24s, Etchells, Express 27s, Alerion Express 28s and J/24s. SFYC, (415) 789-5647 or www.sfyc.org.

Apr. 10-11 — J/Fest, one design and PHRF racing for the J/boat faithful. StFYC, (415) 563-6363 or www.jfest.org.

Apr. 10-11 — Camellia Cup on Folsom Lake, for centerboards, multihulls and keelboats. FLYC, www.flyc.org.

Apr. 10-11 — Big Dinghy Regatta. RYC, (510) 237-2821 or www.richmondyc.org.

Apr. 11 — Spring Series #3. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

Apr. 17-18 — 38th Annual Rollo Wheeler Regatta. One design and PHRF buoy races on Saturday, pursuit race on

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56' Andrews, '94, <i>Charisma</i>	SOLD
52' Santa Cruz, '00, <i>Isis</i>	\$520,000
52' Santa Cruz, '98, <i>Hula</i>	\$575,000
52' Santa Cruz, '99, <i>Renegade</i>	\$595,000
52' TransPac with IRC mods, '03, <i>Braveheart</i>	\$499,000
48' J/145, Hull #9, '03**	\$675,000
44' J/44, '93, <i>Halcyon Days</i>	\$315,000
44' J/44, '90, <i>Phoenix</i>	SOLD
42' Beneteau First 42	Just Listed \$89,000
42' Custom Wylie "Scorpio"	Just Listed \$169,000
41' J/124, '07, <i>Fortuna</i>	\$298,000
41' Passport, '90, <i>360**</i>	\$239,000
440' J/120, '01, <i>OuiB5</i>	SOLD
40' J/40, '86, <i>China Cloud</i>	\$159,000
40' Avance, '85, <i>Caribou**</i>	\$139,500
40' X-Yachts X119**	SOLD
40' Olson, 1983, <i>Elka</i>	\$79,000

39' Carroll Marine CM 1200, '95**	\$82,500
38' True North 38 "Zest"	Just Listed \$375,000
37' X-Yachts 372 Sport, '87	SOLD
37' J/37, Hull #30, '88	SOLD
36' J/36, '83**	SOLD
36' Jenneau, '97**	\$105,000
35' J/109, '03**	\$189,000
35' J/109, '04, <i>Crazy Diamond</i>	\$185,000
35' J/105, Hull #617, '02, formerly <i>Chili Pepper**</i>	\$105,000
35' J/105, Hull #502, '02, <i>Grace O'Malley</i>	Just Listed \$115,000
35' J/105, Hull #403	SOLD
35' J/105, Hull #347, '00, <i>Bald Eagle</i>	\$109,000
35' J/105, Hull #298, '00, <i>Chilaxn</i>	\$109,000
35' J/105, '99, <i>Life Is Good**</i>	\$83,000
35' J/105, Hull #103, '95, <i>Aquavit</i>	Just Listed \$89,000
35' J/35, '84, <i>Blue Streak**</i>	\$34,900
35' J/35, '84, <i>The Boss**</i>	\$49,000
35' 1D35, '00, <i>Great Sensation</i>	\$84,900

35' 1D35, '01, <i>Yeofy</i>	\$69,900
35' Ericson 35 Mk III, '84, <i>Symmetry</i>	SOLD
34' D-Class Catamaran, <i>Rocket 88</i>	\$38,000
34' MJM 34z, '05**	\$365,000
34' J/34, '85, <i>The Zoo**</i>	\$29,900
34' Olson-Ericson, '89**	\$47,500
33' J/100 Hull #9 2005	Just Listed \$106,000
33' J/100 Hull # 160 demo	Just Listed \$149,000
33' J/100, Hull #5, '05, <i>Reddie Freddie</i>	\$114,000
32' J/32, '97 in Alaska	\$109,000
32' J/32, <i>Independence</i> , '00	\$125,000
29' Back Cove, '05, <i>Diamond Lil</i>	SOLD
29' MJM 29z, '07**	\$269,000
29' J/29, '85, <i>Masthead**</i>	SOLD
28' Alerion Express, '06**	\$105,000
27' Antrim 27, '98, <i>Luna</i>	\$29,900
22' Aquapro Raider 665, '04	SOLD

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CALENDAR

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May 1-2 — The 110th annual Great Vallejo Race, one of the biggest races on the Bay, which also serves as the YRA season opener. Info, (415) 771-9500 or www.yra.org.

June 19 — The Singlehanded Transpac from SF to Hanalei. If you've been wanting to prove your mettle, this could be your year. Info, www.sfbaysss.org.

July 5 — 16th Biennial Fun Race to Hawaii, aka the Pacific Cup. For details on the race and seminars, visit www.pacificcup.org.

Remaining Midwinter Regattas

BERKELEY YC — Chowder Races: Sundays through March. Bobbi, (925) 939-9885.

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

ENCINAL YC — Jack Frost Series: 3/27. Small Boat Winter Series: 3/27. Matthew Dean, rearcommadore@encinal.org.

FOLSOM LAKE YC — Winter Series: 3/13, 4/3. Mark Erdrich, fusion927@gmail.com.

GOLDEN GATE YC — Seaweed Soup Series: 3/6. Mont, ggycracedeck@aol.com or (209) 481-5158.

HALF MOON BAY YC — Midwinters: 3/21. Info, sailing@hmbyc.org or www.hmbyc.org.

ISLAND YC — Estuary Midwinters: 3/14. John, (510) 521-2980 or iycracing@yahoo.com.

LAKE MERRITT SC — Midwinters: 3/14. Beth, (510) 444-5292 or ebuddington@earthlink.net.

OAKLAND YC — Sunday Brunch Series: 3/7. John, (510) 522-6868 or j_tuma@comcast.net.

RICHMOND YC — Small Boat Midwinters: 3/7. Tony, amcastruccio@sbcglobal.net or (925) 426-0686.

SANTA CRUZ YC — Midwinters: 3/20. Info, (831) 425-0690.

SAUSALITO YC — Sunday Midwinters: 3/7. John Mount, race@syconline.org.

SEQUOIA YC — Winter Series: 3/13. Redwood Cup: 2/28, 3/28. Mike Garl, mikegarl@sbcglobal.net.

SOUTH BAY YRA — Midwinters: 3/20. Jocelyn Swanson, regatta@cpyc.com

SOUTH BEACH YC — Island Fever Midwinters: 3/20. Info, www.southbeachyc.org.

TIBURON YC — Midwinters: 3/13. Ian Matthew, ian.matthew@comcast.net or (415) 883-6339.

VALLEJO YC — Tiny Robbins Midwinters: 2/13, 3/7. Info, (707) 643-1254.

Mexico and Beyond

Mar. 16-20 — The 18th Annual Banderas Bay Regatta is five days of 'friendly racing for cruising boats'. The sailing conditions and the Paradise Marina venue couldn't be better. Everybody plays it safe because they're sailing their homes, and the entry is free. It's the perfect time and place to have family and friends fly down to join you in the tropics. In fact, you'd have to be nuts to miss this one. The regatta is part of the month-long Festival Náutico Vallarta. For details, visit www.banderasbayregatta.com.

Apr. 1-6 — Sea of Cortez Sailing Week is back! Sailing, hiking, volleyball, more sailing, pot lucks, snorkeling, T-shirts, more sailing, lay days, instant friends, and of course, more of the most fabulous sailing you will find. Entry fee of \$25 is a tax deductible donation to Fundación Ayuda Niños (Founda-



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CALENDAR

tion for Helping Children). We limit the number of entries to ensure room for the entire fleet on the infamous cocktail cruise aboard *Profligate*. To enter email patsyfish@gmail.com.

Apr. 8-11 — La Paz Bay Fest. This will be the fifth year for this descendant of the (in)famous La Paz Race Week. An event for cruisers that includes races, potlucks, cruising seminars and other fun activities for the family. More info on Bay Fest 2009 will soon be found at www.clubcrueros.org.

Apr. 30-May 2 — Loreto Fest and Cruisers' Music Festival. This classic Baja event, started to clean up Puerto Escondido, draws a very large crowd of cruisers and Baja land-travellers for a chili cook-off, dinghy races and other water activities, the Candeleros Classic race, and lots of participant-created music. The goals are to have fun and raise lots of money for Mexican charities in Puerto Escondido and Loreto. Visit www.hiddenpartyachtclub.com.

June 18-20 — Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous, hosted by *Latitude 38* and Tahiti Tourisme. This free event is focused on cross-cultural appreciation and includes a cocktail party, a sailing rally to Moorea, Polynesian music and dance performances, and cruiser participation in traditional Tahitian sports — the highlight of which is the six-person outrigger canoe racing. Info, www.pacificpuddlejump.com.

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

March Weekend Tides

date/day	time/ht. HIGH	time/ht. LOW	time/ht. HIGH	time/ht. LOW
3/06Sat	0312/5.9	1011/0.3	1730/4.0	2152/2.9
3/07Sun	0407/5.6	1123/0.4	1902/4.1	2315/3.1
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
3/13Sat	0354/1.9	0954/5.4	1611/0.4	2255/5.1
3/14Sun	0528/1.6	1135/5.3	1739/0.6	
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
3/20Sat	0233/5.7	0913/0.2	1622/3.9	2047/2.7
3/21Sun	0315/5.7	1010/0.1	1742/3.8	2141/3.0
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
3/27Sat	0348/1.4	0959/5.8	1612/-0.1	2301/5.7
3/28Sun	0439/0.7	1059/5.8	1654/0.1	2335/6.0

March Weekend Currents

date/day	slack	max	slack	max
3/06Sat		0207/2.1F	0501	0817/3.8E
	1235	1542/2.6F	1857	2057/1.4E
3/07Sun	0025	0312/1.8F	0603	0921/3.5E
	1347	1705/2.6F	2010	2221/1.3E
3/13Sat		0237/2.7E	0558	0852/2.9F
	1141	1443/3.9E	1829	2127/3.3F
3/14Sun	0025	0404/3.1E	0734	1027/3.1F
	1323	1616/3.9E	1959	2251/3.3F
3/20Sat		0132/2.2F	0413	0750/4.0E
	1134	1435/2.6F	1806	2022/1.9E
3/21Sun		0220/1.9F	0457	0842/3.9E
	1237	1538/2.5F	1917	2120/1.5E
	2357			
3/27Sat		0235/3.7E	0601	0855/3.6F
	1151	1451/4.7E	1832	2130/4.2F
3/28Sun	0034	0321/4.2E	0650	0947/4.1F
	1248	1541/4.6E	1914	2210/4.2F

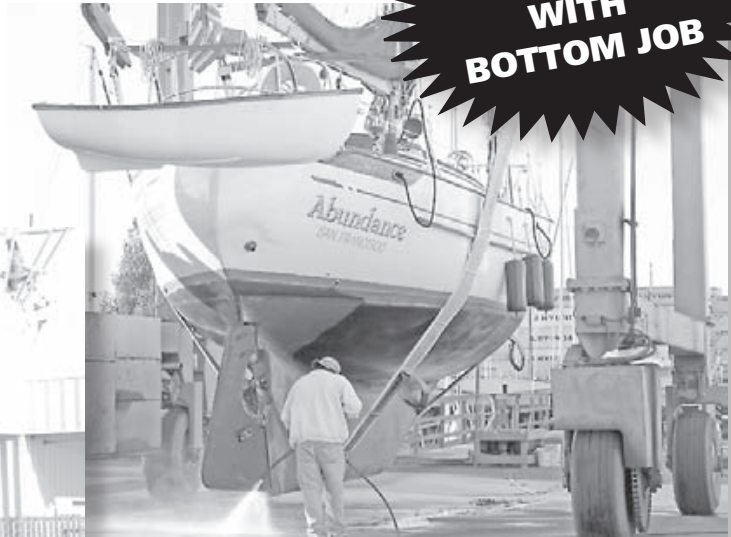
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LETTERS

↑↓ DOWN WITH THE WRCB'S DRACONIAN SCHEME

Thank you for alerting Bay Area sailors to the State Water Resources Control Board's (WRCB) proposed permit and fee ploy that would make marina operators — including the Bay's yacht clubs — liable for the quality of the water that flows into their marinas from outside sources beyond their control.

It is particularly egregious that WRCB would pursue such a draconian regulatory scheme given there is no evidence that recreational boats in marinas are causing a water quality problem. There is no legitimate factual basis justifying WRCB's imposition of permits and fees that would compel marinas to individually expend hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to conduct the proposed water quality testing and monitoring, which would then have to be reported to state agencies.

Moreover, WRCB's mandating such a major expenditure without tangible evidence of a problem caused by recreational boating and marinas is devoid of intellectual integrity, and unethical, inasmuch as it simply cannot not improve coastal water quality. Simply stated, if the water flowing through a coastal — including the Bay — marina cannot be controlled by any given marina, forcing marina operators to comply with this ineffective mandate appears to make as much sense as Mrs. Madoff's leaving the porch light on for Bernie.

The hyperbole of WRCB's proposal is further underscored by the success of the Clean Marina Program conducted by the marina industry and recreational boaters. The Clean Marina Program has enhanced, and continues to enhance, the marine environment through voluntary participation. It has proven to be the most efficient and cost-effective approach to improving water quality in marinas. This program should be the preeminent method to address the state's water quality goals for marinas.

Moreover, the inequity of this proposal is aggravated by the fact that public records unequivocally establish that local governments, not marinas or recreational boaters, have been among the worst gross polluters of the San Francisco and San Pablo bays, as well as the coastal waters adjoining them.

In '09, the Sausalito-Marín City Sanitary District's total raw spillage out of Sausalito into the Bay was 775,000 gallons. In '08, there were thousands of gallons of raw flow from Sausalito's sewers in February, and again in August. The fine for those '08 spills was \$1.6 million. Notwithstanding that fine, during the week of January 18, 2010, the Sausalito-Marín City Sanitary District dumped another 40,000 gallons of raw sewage into the Bay.

During the storms that passed through the Bay Area in January, a total of 630,000 gallons of raw sewage spewed from the cities of Albany, Oakland, Alameda, Emeryville, Berkeley and Piedmont into the Bay at 47 spots, according to the environmental watchdog group San Francisco Baykeeper. That was miniscule however, compared with the 170 million gallons of partially processed sewage discharged from three East Bay Municipal Utility District 'wet weather' overflow plants on the eastern side of the Bay.

Given the lack of need for this marina permitting and fee proposal, why is the WRCB even putting such a draconian, unwanted proposal forward? Why isn't WRCB cracking down on gross pollution by the Bay Area's governmental entities? Is it because Sacramento bureaucrats, smarting from a 15% pay cut due to furloughs or the public's three-to-one rejection of tax increases in last June's plebiscite, want 'payback' against what they perceive to be wealthy yacht owners and their clubs?

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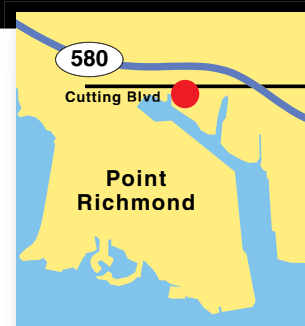
While at Stanford, Kim sailed on the college team and was named an Intercollegiate All American sailor. Since then, he's sailed Transpacs, crewed in the One Ton World Championships, navigated a 3-month passage from Hawaii to Sydney, and raced in countless competitions up and down the West Coast of the United States and Mexico, as well as the East Coast, Caribbean and Europe.

Over the years, Kim has come to know the ins-and-outs of boat building and repair like no other. He owned North Coast Yachts for 20 years, building custom sloops, fiberglass racer-cruisers, and a bunch of Wylie Wabbits. For the last twelve years, Kim was a Yard Manager at KKMI boatyard in Point Richmond, where many customers will remember

him for his honesty, integrity and the extraordinary care and attention he gave them and their boats.

If you're a member of the St. Francis Yacht Club, the Richmond Yacht Club or the Inverness Yacht Club, you've probably seen Kim on the racecourse, or advising cruisers and day-sailors how to be better sailors, improve their boat's performance, and keep their boats in great shape.

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LETTERS

superfluous WRCB proposition, but this much is certain: If this proposal is enacted, it will put a spike through the very heart of recreational sailing on San Francisco Bay, one the world's finest sailing venues.

Tim Cronin
Ruby, Pacific Seacraft Dana 24
Alameda

Tim — According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, "nonpoint source pollution" (NPS) is the leading cause of water quality problems. These pollutants have harmful effects on drinking water supplies, recreation, fisheries and wildlife."

What is NPS? The EPA explains: "Unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants, NPS comes from many diffuse sources. NPS is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground.



According to the EPA, most water pollution comes from NPS.

As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and ground waters. NPS can include excess fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides from agricultural lands and residential areas. Oil, grease and toxic chemicals from urban runoff and energy production. Sediment from improperly managed construction sites, crop and forest lands, and eroding streambanks. Salt from irrigation practices and acid drainage from abandoned mines. Bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet wastes and faulty septic systems. Atmospheric deposition and hydromodification."

So as we understand the WRCB's proposal, the downstream 'victims' of NPS, the leading cause of water pollution, will be forced to pay for the monitoring of pollution. And will no doubt be charged with ameliorating a condition they have little if anything to do with creating. We all want clean water and a clean environment. The way to do that is to go after the primary causes, not by creating ineffectual proposals that punish the wrong people and take one more step in this once-great Golden State's seemingly inevitable march toward insolvency.

The other thing we find curious is that when there is some human mistake at a sewage treatment plant that allows gazillions of gallons of untreated or partially treated sewage into our bays and oceans, the sewage district — i.e. taxpayers — gets hit with the fine. Why aren't the individuals who screwed up, and the management that supervises them, hit with fines and termination?

It reminds us of an incident we heard about in the Caribbean over the winter. The captain of a new and very expensive mega sailboat was given an excellent employment contract. Despite the fact that the weather on New Year's Eve was stormy, and the port had been cleared out for safety, the captain and the entire crew went ashore, after anchoring the boat out, to celebrate. While they were celebrating, another big yacht dragged into the new yacht, causing some damage. As the damage had happened during the captain's watch, he was promptly sacked. Shouldn't government employees be held to the same standard?

↑↓ 'POPPING THE CLUTCH' ON AN OLD SCHOONER

I'm responding to your 'creative fix' remark in the February Letters, in which you said you were surprised that no-



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body wrote in with examples of sailors' starting their diesels without battery power. Many years ago, I hitched a ride from Papeete to San Diego on the schooner *Nordlys*. Mid-Pacific, our batteries were dead and we couldn't start the propulsion diesel — which was the only way we could charge the engine batteries.

I was not in the engine compartment at the time, but understand that the following was the procedure used to solve the problem: after the overhead valves were pried down, pieces of hacksaw blades were slipped under the rocker arms, which kept the valves open and prevented compression in the cylinders. Then, when we were sailing in such a stiff breeze that the rail was down, the transmission was put into gear. The forward motion through the water spun the non-folding prop, which rotated the compression-less engine. Once the engine was turning over as fast as it ever was going to, the fuel was turned on and the hacksaw blades removed. The engine roared to life. Success on the first try!

Bob Drude
Mill Valley

↑↓ THE WANDERER'S IDEAL AMERICA'S CUP

While we are all waiting for the America's Cup races to actually take place, one national news commentator made the point that public interest in the event had been waning. That brings to mind that little has been said about it in recent issues of *Latitude*. No doubt that will change in the next few issues. Nonetheless, I will be very interested in what the publisher of *Latitude* has to say on the subject.

For myself, the last really great race was with Ted Turner at the helm. Of course, Dennis Conner put on a good show in Australia, too. In the future, I would like to see more attention paid to the meaning of the words in the original Deed of Trust.

Jim Hildinger
South Lake Tahoe

Jim — For the perspective of a true racer, the question would be more pertinent to Rob Grant, our Racing Editor. But if you want the publisher's unvarnished 'Joe Sailor' opinion, here goes:

"I've never been that taken with the match racing concept, as it often results in races that are no more exciting than a nil-nil soccer match.



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Maybe the 'big boats' could be the syndicate owner's yachts. Just kidding.

If there was to be a pinnacle international sailing event other than around-the-world or transoceanic races, I'd vote for fleet racing among three-boat national teams, with a small boat, a medium-sized boat, and a big boat. It would be held every two years. One or two of the classes would be one-design — we always thought the 'design-competition' aspect of the American's Cup was overblown and beside the point — to keep down the cost and even out the competition. There would be three inshore races, a medium distance race, and a long distance race. In other words, it would be just like the old Admiral's Cup in England, and to a lesser extent like the Pan Am Clipper Cup and Kenwood Cup off Honolulu. And the boats would have to be fast boats, not like the relative slugs of past



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America's Cups. The event would have to be held in reasonably strong wind — which would eliminate venues like San Diego and Valencia. I know my opinion will be a minority one and it would never 'sell', but I believe it would have significantly more 'winners', personalities, nuances and texture."

↑↓ "WE'RE HONORED TO BE ON THE COVER"

We are delighted to see our Hallberg-Rassy 38 *Rägeboge* on the front cover of *Latitude 38*. My son Raphael is so proud to be on the cover that he hasn't stopped talking about it and showing everyone. I wasn't even aware of it until a friend of mine emailed me with a shy, "Heinz, that's your boat on the cover of *Latitude*, isn't it?"

Again, thank you, we're very honored.

Heinz Baumann
Rägeboge, Hallberg-Rassy 38
Basilea, Switzerland

Heinz — *The pleasure was ours. Good sailing in '10!*

PETER LYONS/WWW.LYONSIMAGING.COM



If it made Raphael happy, it makes us happy.

↑↓ DAN MEMBERSHIP IS A NO-BRAINER

Having 'jumped the puddle' to the South Pacific last year, we want to offer future cruisers and others a useful tip. Before you leave for far distant shores, look up DAN, Diver's Alert Network, at www.diversalertnetwork.org. This organization provides emergency evacuation for members for any accident — it doesn't have to be a *diving* accident — or illness. So if you need to get from the boonies to someplace that can provide first-rate medical treatment for a life-threatening illness or accident, you just call one toll-free number and DAN handles all the details. The cost is ridiculously inexpensive for the basic membership. It costs \$35/year for a single, and \$55/year for a family membership. You can join online and charge it to a credit card.

People talk about 'no brainers', but in this case it really applies. DAN membership could save you tens of thousands of dollars if you should have to shoulder the expense of emergency evacuation yourself. We know of many people who have been DAN members, and who have been very glad that they were. We also know people who didn't have it, suffered an accident or illness, and were stuck with huge expenses trying to get to competent med care.

In the interest of full disclosure, we have no affiliation with DAN. We just think it's a good idea, and have been members since '03.

Philip DiNuovo & Leslie Linkkila
Carina, Mason 33
Kingston, WA / Neiafu, Tonga

Philip and Leslie — We're going to sign up right now. Back in the mid-'80s, we were doing Sea of Cortez Sailing Week on our Olson 30 when we blew a disc at Caleta Partida. The pain was excruciating, but we tried to gut it out — and probably greatly worsened our condition — by pounding on the floor of a hotel room at the Los Arcos Hotel. We did that because there was no way we could sit upright in a commercial plane to the States, and even back then the cost of a medevac flight from La Paz to L.A. was \$25,000.

Our having DAN, things eventually got so bad that friends finally dragged us to the Navy Hospital in La Paz, where we

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LETTERS

were given some really good drugs. They then used our credit card to buy six seats on an Aero Mexico commercial flight. The six seats were removed so we could fly north on a stretcher in a cordoned off area of the plane.

If anyone has firsthand experience with DAN, we'd love to hear about it. Email richard@latitude38.com.

↑↓ **THE 'OLD BIRDS' HAD BETTER WATCH OUT!**

The accompanying photos are of the two young Beashel boys sailing on the south end of Lake Macquarie, Australia. The older of the two is 18 months old, proving that they start them young Down Under. The boys are the sons of Adam and Lanee Beashel.

The boat was built by the boys' grandfather, Ken Beashel, a sailing legend in the Sydney area. Ken designed, built, and



COURTESY FLASHGIRL

With a bowsprit and a bulb keel, this is one souped-up skiff. And a toddler is sailing it!

sailed most of the skiffs found locally, and garnered numerous championships over the years. Adam, one of Ken's sons, is the guy you saw up the mast of *Team New Zealand* when they raced in the America's Cup. Colin, Ken's other son, was at the helm on a bunch of Australian America's Cup challengers, and a top skiff sailor in his own right. Colin now runs the family boat shop in Elvina Bay, Pittwater.

Ken put a bowsprit on the grandkids' little skiff because he plans to fit a different rig later, including a balloonier. Unlike the 'real' skiffs, the grandkids' skiff has a keel with a bulb.

I used to race against Ken in a variety of boats in the '60s and '70s, so I stopped to visit when I cruised down here with



COURTESY FLASHGIRL

With the new kids on the water, the 'old girls' are going to start feeling the heat.

my boat. The Beashel spread is on Lake Macquarie and its front door about 30 feet from the water's edge, which has a gently shelving beach. Their Townson 38 is moored just offshore. Pretty sweet.

Father and sons were frolicking in the water when we arrived.

The rest of the day was spent at a nearby sailing club, watching a fleet of 10-footers racing for the state championships. The 10-footers are gaff-rigged, open designs with long booms and bowsprits, and sailed by three men. It's very hard to be more water-oriented than this!

Warwick 'Commodore' Tompkins
Flashgirl, Wylie 38+
Pittwater, Australia

↑↓ **QUOTES OF THE DAY**

Sure, the British can knock you on the head as well as anyone.

No less than the Bay Area's Stan Honey came out in *Latitude* last month to say, "The French world of offshore sailing is a very closed world, and it is a huge honor to have them ask me to come along." I would expect nothing less of Honey



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Andrew Linney, www.nokaoi2.info

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LETTERS

for a quote like that to sum it all up.

Now to the quote of the day, from Loïck Peyron of France, who is a floater on *Alinghi 5*: "I have the chance to learn something every day. I love to jump from one boat to another. A year ago I was sailing around the world on my own, and here I am sharing with tremendous guys with a lot of different sailing areas, from the Volvo Race, from the Cup. For me, it is the first time that I have felt the acceleration of a small multihull, like I love to do on the Swiss lakes, like the D35 or the small really light ones. But *Alinghi 5* has the power of a big offshore multi, and the acceleration of a small multihull. It is the first time I have felt both these two feelings.

"It is quite interesting to be at the helm of a boat like this, having behind me Mr. Butterworth, and in front of me, Mr. Warwick [Fleury], and Simon [Daubney], stars I have seen in the papers for so many years. And I have to say, 'OK, guys and now we have to do that. . .' And so for me, that is quite interesting."

Despite all the whining from the TV broadcast mentality crowd, I think the current America's Cup is good for sailing.

One last quote from Honey: "Franck Cammas is an incredible athlete, but he is also a very smart engineer who thinks things through technically. He's a very, very smart guy."

I don't know what these French guys have been drinking, but I want some, because they ain't like us.

Brad Smith
Hobie 18
Santa Cruz

Brad — We don't really understand what you're getting at, particularly how Brits hitting you over the head has anything to do with the French offshore world being a very closed one. If your point is that the French are more passionate about offshore sailing than the people of any other country — including New Zealand — we'd have to agree with you. What many people may not realize is that almost all of the French sailing greats come from southern Brittany, where the sailing conditions are very difficult, and the often small and wiry French sailors are up to the challenge.

⇓SO NOW PROSTITUTION IS FINE?

In explaining the many virtues of Thailand, you mentioned that one of them is: "If you're a lonely guy, you can find an attractive young Thai 'girlfriend' in about 10 minutes on any night of the week. Even if you're 80 years old."

That might be wonderful for old, fat, unattractive men who don't care about exploiting other people's misery, but I'm sure that it's not so wonderful for the people of Thailand. I am not a puritan, nor do I believe that all relations have to be between people of a similar age. But I do believe that sex should be something for the mutual enjoyment of all parties concerned, not entered into because one person is in poverty. Then it's exploitation.

As for the age differences, there's a reason why we have statutory rape laws in the U.S. Maybe we're overly restrictive, but there is a place for them. Maybe you disagree and think that it's fine for senior men in the United States to have sex with 12- or 14-year-old girls. Or maybe you just feel that it's okay in Thailand, but not in the United States.

And please don't try to claim that you were only reporting on the facts. From the context, it was clear that you were saying this is a positive thing.

John Reimann
Y-Knot, Catalina 36
Oakland

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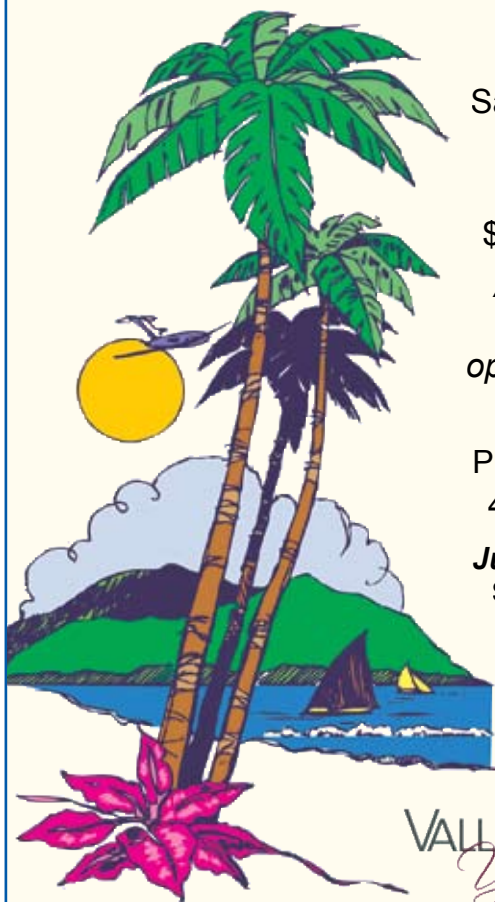
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John — Who said anything about 12-year-old girls? Since you completely missed the context, we'll give you our two-word idea of what should be done with men who prey on underage girl and boys: Death penalty. Need any more clarification?

As for sexual and other relationships between Thai women of age and Western men, we don't claim to begin to understand them, but we can assure you that they are much more nuanced and complicated than you think. Certainly some of it — heck, a whole lot of it — is slam-bam-never-see-you-again sex. But judging from the nearly nonstop shrieks of the five million or so bar girls we walked by in Thailand, nobody was holding a gun to their head and making them giggle. For all we know, many of them think their line of work is preferable to being married off against their will for money by their parents to some Thai boy or man they hate — particularly if there is some chance they can get their hooks into a Western male.

One of the things that surprised us on our recent trip to Thailand was learning that many Thai women — and apparently many Vietnamese and Malaysian women, too — prefer relationships with Western men. We're told that many Thai women often view even old and fat Western men as being more romantic, courteous, and respectful and less abusive than Thai men. Apparently the latter have a reputation for liking to spend time with other men drinking, gambling and visiting prostitutes. Google around and you'll see that we're not making this up.

The other thing that may not be obvious from Oakland is that women in other parts of the world have very different concepts of what makes a man desirable. About 20 years



LATITUDE / RICHARD

If you're a guy and think retiring in Thailand with a lovely Thai woman is a slam drunk, read up on the so-called 'ATM suicides'.

ago, we sailed Big O to Fantasy Island in Costa Rica's Gulf of Nicoya. The place was then owned by an 82-year-old retired sailor from California's Central Valley. While we were at the bar, a gorgeous 23-year old Filipino girl with an electric smile and terrific personality introduced herself as the wife of the owner. She explained that they'd met while he was traveling in the Philippines and had fallen in love. And she

was as serious as she was gorgeous. Who knows, maybe she saw a payday later on for her and her family, but she was certainly enjoying her life with her husband in Costa Rica. One last curious thing about Thailand. For all its reputation as the sex capital of the world, the Thai people avoid public displays of affection. While it's changing in Bangkok and the cosmopolitan areas, Thai couples generally don't hold hands, hug, kiss, or even air kiss. About as intimate they get is sniffing each other's necks — we're not making this up — from a distance.

↑↓ **ANDREA DORIA? WAS SHE ON AMERICAN IDOL?**

I'd like to comment on Dave Ganapoler's December letter regarding right of way. Not to pick on Dave, but I'm sure we've all heard, "Starboard!" and thought, "Huh?"

There's a good reason why the stand-on vessel should not alter course in a crossing situation, and why the give-

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LETTERS

way vessel should make "early and substantial changes" in course. Let's say you're sailing on starboard, and you decide to head up a bit to cross behind a powerboat. The conscientious powerboat operator is going to alter course a bit to port, to pass behind you, and so on, and the next thing you know you're the *Andrea Doria*.

The other possibility is being the victim of a not-so-conscientious operator, which happened to me on Lake Erie. The appropriately named *Pirate Clipper*, a 6-pack charter fishing boat, was motoring slowly on a converging course with nobody at the helm. I altered course to pass astern, and ended up sailing — at 15 knots — over some bait box contraption they were dragging, which damaged my boat. I should have made a more radical course alteration, or sounded a horn, but years of sailing among other experienced boaters — both power and sail — on San Francisco Bay lulled me into thinking that most boaters have some idea how to operate their vessels and at least some awareness of the Rules of the Road. Bad assumption.

P.S. Keep up the good work. *Latitude* is one of the ways I survive the snow.

Bill Quigley
Tatiana, Farrier 32
Alameda / Columbus, OH

Bill — Younger *Latitude* readers may not be familiar with the *Andrea Doria*, so we'll fill in the blank. The *Andrea Doria* was an elegant 700-ft luxury cruise ship that carried 1,200 passengers and 500 crew. She was owned by the Italian Line, and was the pride of post-World War II Italy before transatlan-



The former luxury liner 'Andrea Doria' went to the bottom the morning after the collision.

tic jet travel took over. The *Andrea Doria* collided with the Swedish American Line's 525-ft *Stockholm* off Nantucket Island on July 25, 1956. The *Andrea Doria* had been inbound for New York, the *Stockholm* had just left New York for Sweden. Struck on her beam, the top-heavy *Andrea Doria* immediately started to list so severely that half of her lifeboats were unusable. To make matters worse, many of the Italian crew abandoned the passengers and rushed into the lifeboats. Fortunately, only 46 people died, many of them as a result of the impact and immediate flooding. The *Andrea Doria* sank the next morning, the last of the great transatlantic ships to go to the bottom.

It's hard to believe, but despite heavy coverage in the press, no determination of the cause(s) of the accident was ever published. This was apparently a result of an out-of-court settlement between the two shipping companies.

↑↓ "IF THEY MAKE IT, YOU'LL EAT CROW"

In the February 8 *Lectronic*, you asked *Latitude* readers if we thought you were being too harsh on Jessica Watson and Abby Sunderland, the two 16-year-olds who are attempting to singlehand around the world non-stop via the Southern Ocean. I don't think *Latitude* has been too harsh, and if either or both of them make it, I'm sure you'll happily lead the celebration and eat a bit of crow.

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LETTERS

I don't know of any sailors who would have taken off — like Abby did — with so little preparation and testing, and all by a volunteer and resource-challenged shore crew. Power generation and power output is pretty easy to check, so *Latitude's* dig

in that regard was more than fair.

I don't mind that the kids, Jessica and Abby — God bless 'em and keep 'em — don't know any better. But their parents are another story.

I don't know anything about

Jess, but it seems pretty clear to me that Abby wouldn't get to Catalina without her family's active support. That said, life is all about choices and, for the moment, they have been made. Abby is underway, and it would be less than charitable to wish her and her family anything less than fair winds and a following sea.

Christopher Korody
Se Vuela, J/32
Marina del Rey

Christopher — For the record, if either or both of the girls make it around as planned — and even though Watson is half-way around, we still don't think either will — there is no way we could or would deny what they had accomplished. We'd still think it was idiotic and irresponsible on the part of their parents to have let them make the attempts.

INSULATED AND ISOLATED FROM REALITY

I think *Latitude* has been right on about Abby Sunderland. After reading the heartfelt daily posts from her brother Zac during his circumnavigation, I felt as if he was my son or brother or fellow sailor. Abby, on the other hand, seems to think of herself as a Hollywood starlet, insulated and isolated from reality. Her thing is all slick and glossy.

After Zac came home and rumors of Abby's trip started to circulate, I couldn't believe my ears. What mother/father would willingly sacrifice their 16-year-old daughter to the trials of the sea? After Zac's hair-raising trials, I cannot imagine allowing my daughter to follow in his footsteps. It's the gender thing! Not that there is difference in talent, but I would be concerned for her virtue. You know, pirates and so forth.

Personally, I don't believe Abby has been "sailing all her life." From what I can tell, the family has been without a boat for many years, and they live 30 miles inland.

Most of all, I'm concerned about Abby's boat. We all know how many repairs Zac had to have made to his boat. Nonetheless, I wish Abby the best, and will continue to follow and root for her.

Name Withheld By Request
Planet Earth

N.W.B.R. — It's a common misconception that Abby plans to "follow in Zac's footsteps." Nothing could be farther from the truth. Zac took a relatively easy route, and stopped many times for repairs. Abby, on the other hand, plans to not just sail around non-stop, but via the treacherous Southern Ocean.

COURTESY ELLA'S PINK LADY



Aussie Jessica Watson was nearing the Cape of Good Hope as this issue went to press.

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Rusty Rutherford
Regional Sales Manager



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* Compared to standard, old fashioned hard and abrasive antifouling.

** For further details see the summary provided by the National Paints and Coatings Association on the 'Boating and the Environment' section of Interlux www.yachtpaint.com

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LETTERS

This is an enormously more difficult challenge because of the much more severe weather and greater stresses on the boat's systems. Sailors like Yves Parlier have managed to effect miraculous repairs to their damaged boats on such routes, but Abby ain't no Yves.

↑↓SHE MAY NOT BE READY BUT SHE WORKS HARD

I came down on the Ha-Ha this year, and have stayed in Cabo ever since. After Abby Sunderland pulled in with electrical problems, I saw her and her parents working on the boat.

Although I'm also a bit skeptical about a 16-year-old's ability to solo circumnavigate, Robin Lee Graham sailed his Lapworth 24 *Gladiator* three-quarters of the way around the world when he was that age. And his was a much more dangerous prospect as, unlike Abby's fully-equipped Open 40 *Wild Eyes*, Graham's boat didn't have a watermaker, AIS, radar reflectors, electronics, GPS or a reliable way to communicate with land. His trip was therefore much more dangerous.

I'm am not passing judgment, but I did see Abby up the mast doing some, if not all, of the work on her boat. As she has already made her choice, we can only wish her luck and see what happens.

Tim Marsolais, Crew
Marishanna, Wylie 39
San Francisco

Tim — While Robin Lee Graham's circumnavigation was much harder because his boat and systems were much more primitive, he — like Zac Sunderland — sailed a much easier course. Around-the-world, solo, non-stop, via the Southern Ocean, is a monster challenge.

↑↓A THOUGHT ON THE TOPIC

Latitude is being too hard on Abby.

Vince Brackett
Planet Earth

↑↓ANOTHER THOUGHT

Too harsh.

Dale DeHart
Camarillo

↑↓SARCASM SUCKS!

Your points could have been made in a much better manner. I agree, 16-year-olds sailing around the world is foolish at best. But sarcasm sucks.

Daniel G. Hayes
Planet Earth

↑↓I APPRECIATED THE SARCASM

I don't believe *Latitude's* coverage of Abby and Jessica has been mean. Furthermore, I appreciated and enjoyed the unnecessary sarcasm. My disdain for Abby runs deeper than for Jessica, and time will tell if her lavishly sponsored joyride/publicity stunt will pay off as well for her as it did for her brother.

Having tried to put together a bluewater cruising boat and the finances necessary for cruising with my wife and four kids, then losing the boat — selling her at quite a loss — due to the economy, I will certainly think twice about using the products of the sponsors of Abby's boat. Not as if I would wear those shoes anyway. Marine products are expensive enough, and while I will never deny the attempt of a company to make as much money as they are able, I hate to see the profits of my boat gear purchases going to such a waste. And I know that

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LETTERS

I'm not alone in feeling this way.

And I'm sure the world will hold its breath if Abby drops her satphone while adding highlights to her hair for her blog photos, and loses contact with her folks.

Name Withheld By Request
Channel Islands

↑↓ KIDS SPURRED BY PUBLICITY SEEKING PARENTS

If anything, I think *Latitude* has given these girls — and the other kids sailing around the world — too much attention. These kids seem to be actors in spectacles developed and managed by adults and enabled by a too-eager-to-please press.

I was in elementary school when Robin Lee Graham sailed *Dove* and *Dove II* around the world. As I recall, the only coverage of the trip was an article every few years in *National Geographic*. Graham later wrote a very good book about the whole adventure. The press in those days covered only what he actually accomplished, not up-to-the-minute reports of what he planned to do, wanted to do, or thought he could do.

I thought the coverage of Zac Sunderland's circumnavigation was a bit too breathless for a kid who was met by his parents at every port with a whole support team. It left me wondering how much he did, and how much he did as he was told. What did he learn along the way? And was there a point to it other than to garner attention?

I find the whole spectacle of 'adventurers' seeking sponsorship so they can go do something fun for them — and of dubious value to anyone else — to be somewhat decadent. And in the case of kids, spurred on by publicity seeking parents, it's even worse.

It seems to me that young Jessica Watson knows what she is doing, and is doing it well. Bully for her. But this Abby girl seems only to be seeking attention. If she wanted to prove she was capable of sailing around the world, she should have started with a manageable voyage on a boat she could handle. As for running short of electrical power on the way to Cabo, she could have saved a lot of energy by waving goodbye and telling us her story after she finished her voyage. I don't think the world needs daily broadcasts.

If Abby could have proved herself with a voyage to Hawaii or Panama — or wherever — then she could have fine-tuned her boat and carried on. If she found herself too weak or too scared or too bored, she could quit and try again when she has grown up. But she can't take any of those prudent steps because her goal is to be the youngest. For that, she must seek money *now* and sail *now*, no matter if she's ready or not.

I'm much more impressed by people who take off and learn to live at sea, whether retirees or relatively young. Or like the surfer girl Liz Clark, who is often featured in *Latitude*. There is a young person who seems to be learning from life, gaining independence, and achieving various personal goals — but not waving them in front of us, asking for our money, or unduly relying on outside assistance.

I don't see the Robin Lee Graham spirit in the two girls, so even if they get around the globe at their young age, their accomplishments will seem hollow.

Jonathan Ogle
Grumpy old fart
Serendipity, Pisces 21
Piedmont

Jonathan — While Liz Clark is engaged in a very different kind of adventure than Jessica or Abby, and has often sought to avoid rather than get publicity, it must be noted that she couldn't be doing what she's been doing without a large amount of finan-

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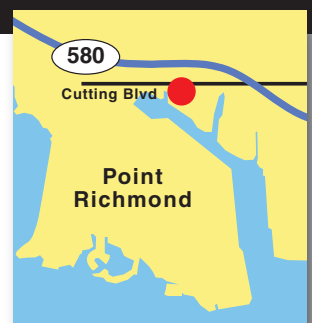
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LETTERS

cial support from her parents and others. On the other hand, Liz hasn't shied away from months and months of the lowest grunt work on her boat in the most unpleasant conditions.

↑↓ 'HARSH' DOESN'T EVEN COME CLOSE

'Harsh' is not a strong enough word! Your 'holier than thou' attitude is way over the top. In reading your magazine, I have learned to read the letters, but not the replies.

Robert Lockwood
Celebration, Gulfstar 50
Alameda

Robert — Ouch! But thank you. While we realize that there is no way we can please all our readers, it's important to get a good slam every now and then to encourage us to review our opinions and points of view.

↑↓ I LIKE THE SUBTLE HUMOR

I think your coverage of most stories is even-handed and I always like the subtle humor. So you've been doing just fine with regard to Jessica and Abby.

As I write this, Jessica is more than halfway around the world, and doing well managing her boat's systems — even after some very seriously nasty weather that caused her boat to be knocked down. She's doing it, so what else can I say, but 'Go Aussie, Go!'

As for Abby, if she — and the adults around her — had announced that she had been doing a shakedown sea trial to Cabo, that would have made sense. But we all know she only stopped in Cabo because she had to "to repair and re-vamp some systems." Specifically, she was using more amps per day than she was generating. Most experienced sailors I know would have cut back and managed, and repaired as they went, as opposed to going to mass storage and putting more stuff aboard.

A 7- to 14-day singlehanded voyage would have been a



LISA GIZARA / WWW.ABBYSUNDERLAND.ORG

Abby had just crossed the equator as the magazine was sent to the printers.

Nonetheless, I wish both girls the best of luck. I also hope they stay safe, keep their harnesses on, stay with their boats, and return safely to their families with new life skills attained only on a voyage that would test any person.

Keith MacKenzie
Vancouver B.C.

↑↓ WOULD YOU FEEL RESPONSIBLE?

My question is for those who have been and continue to be enthusiastic supporters of 16-year-olds Jessica and Abby. If either girl were to go permanently missing in the Southern

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LETTERS

Ocean, would you feel a smidgen of responsibility?

Mike Johnston, Jr.
Stockton

↑↓ SHOULD THE PARENTS BE CHARGED?

I have been writing a weekly piece about Jessica Watson's progress on her circumnavigation for *Examiner.com*. While I admire her sailing abilities and courage — and now that of Abby — I am nevertheless left with one nagging question. If either or both of these adolescent adventurers should meet with disaster, should their parents be charged by authorities with child endangerment?

Ray Pendleton
Honolulu

↑↓ LET US THINK FOR OURSELVES

Why do you have to be critical of either? Why not just report what is happening and let your readers form their own opinions? Most of them can think for themselves.

Curtis G. Smith
Planet Earth

Curtis — As arrogant as this might make us sound, most casual sailors don't have enough knowledge about the proposed trips to "think for themselves." Specifically, many people assume that Abby will be "following in Zac's footsteps." This would be like saying somebody climbing Mt. Everest is following in the footsteps of someone who climbed Mt. St. Helens and who had R&R crews every 100 yards.

Besides, we think it's our responsibility to be critical of what we believe are pointless publicity stunts that recklessly put the lives of minors at risk. If we prevent even one stage mother or father from encouraging their 14-year-old daughter to attempt to sail solo around the world for fame or glory, we'll feel our efforts have been worthwhile.

↑↓ AGED-BASED RECORDS ARE FOR THE BIRDS

Latitude hasn't been nearly as hard on Abby as the Southern Ocean will be if she gets there. Personally, I think this whole age-based record stuff is for the birds anyway. Once we get into this challenge of being the youngest or whatever, any record will be fleeting. By the time there's an eight-year-old circumnavigating solo, no one will remember who Abby Sunderland was because she's not really pushing the limits of human endeavor.

Having said this, I know the risks for the girls are real, and I wish them well. I'm just not sure I understand the point.

Andy Crawford
Hope, Cal 25
Long Beach

↑↓ DON'T FORGET ABOUT JEANNE SOCRATES

More interesting to us than Jessica Watson and Abby Sunderland is what's up with Jeanne Socrates. You've written about her and her Najad 380 *Nereida* before, but do you realize that she, at least to our understanding, is the 'most senior woman' to have done a singlehanded circumnavigation? And she's attempting another one via the Southern Ocean!

When I was 16, as Abby and Jessica are now, I could have sailed around the world with the support systems they seem to be getting — no sweat. But Socrates, well into Social Security age, that's something to get excited about.

Scott Stolnitz
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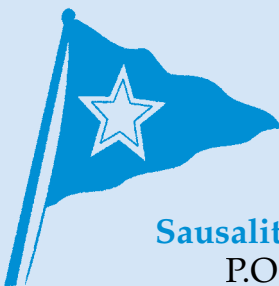
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LETTERS

Scott — You raise a good question. What would be more impressive, a heavily supported 16-year-old girl singlehandedly around the world for fame and glory or a self-funded 60-something-year-old woman doing the same thing for personal satisfaction?

In case you missed it, an autopilot control unit malfunction



Those teenage whippersnappers ain't got nothin' on Jeanne Socrates.

off southern Mexico in '08 left Socrates 60 miles short of completing a singlehanded circumnavigation — but we still consider her to have finished. Right now she's in South Africa finalizing an engine replacement so she can continue her attempt to sail solo around via the Southern Ocean. At last word, she hopes to make it to this summer's start of the Singlehanded TransPac.

Unlike the kids, Socrates, who prefers not to play up her age, does not have a big 'support team'. And for the record, she's told us that she has no way of confirming that hers would be a real record. Follow her trip at www.svneraida.com.

↑↓ WHO FORGOT TO BREAK OUT THE CALCULATOR?

Is *Latitude* being too hard on the kids? You just hit with words. What the Southern Ocean hits with is much harsher.

I am following Jessica, and she's doing well. She should make it unless she has a major breakdown or gets hit by a big storm.

Abby is another story. I'm still trying to understand who did the math with her power generating versus power consumption problem that forced her into Cabo.

Greg Clausen
Wisdom, Santana 30/30
Marin County

Greg — A major breakdown or a big storm are the two biggest challenges any voyager faces, along with physical and psychological stresses. Even though Watson has been doing great and is more than halfway around, we still think her attempt is going to be done in by some kind of mechanical failure.

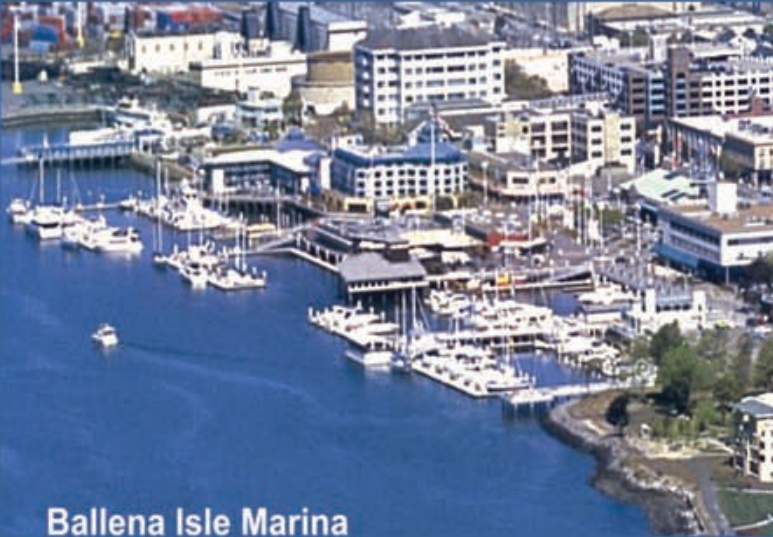
↑↓ LET'S HOPE SHE HAS EVERYTHING SHE NEEDS

When Abby starts out for the second time, let's hope she finally has everything she needs — like a spare fork and spoon. She must have knives. And spare pens or pencils. Windspeed and direction instruments. A charging system. She probably didn't have time for a windvane.

I believe the coverage from *Latitude* has been fair and polite enough. Personally, I'd love to be able fly around on an Open 40. But at this point I think Jessica's *Pink Lady* is the more capable and prepared vessel. I sincerely wish Abby the best, and Jessica has suggested that we adults shouldn't be choosing sides.

David Dodds
BoulderDash, Precision 23
Boulder, CO

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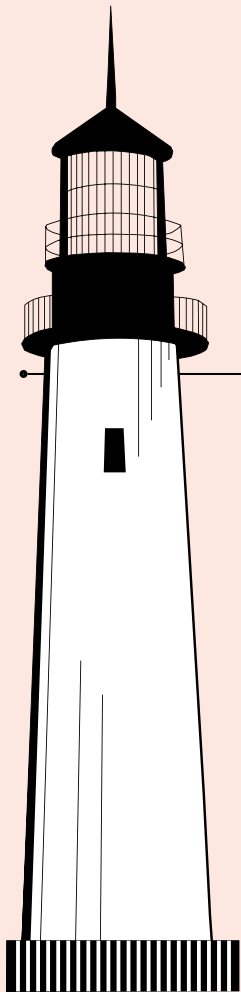
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LETTERS

↑↓ HISTORY IS FULL OF 'WHAT IF'S'

Latitude probably would have been critical of the Children's Crusade in the 12th century, when something like 30,000 children in France and Germany took it upon themselves to travel to the Holy Land and convert the Muslims to Christianity. Sure, most of the kids never made it to the Holy Land because the Med didn't part as they expected it to. And the few who set out by boat were shipwrecked off Sardinia or sold into slavery in Tunisia. But they had good intentions. And imagine how great it would have been if they succeeded.

Jonathan Ross
Pleasanton

Jonathan — Historians believe the 'children' in the so-called Children's Crusade were actually wandering poor people, and that much of the alleged facts are nonsense.

↑↓ HOLD HER TO THE STANDARDS SHE WANTS

If Abby is old enough to go to sea, she's old enough to be held to the same standards as anyone else. As the captain of her vessel, she's responsible for its safety and good order at all times — without exception. Any errors in planning, preparation or performance are, by definition, her responsibility. *Latitude* has been paying her the respect of treating her as she has asked to be treated — as a full-fledged sailor, who, before she leaves, should be "ready in all respects for sea."

Beyond that, I think that the ethics of responsible journalism would call upon *Latitude* to emphasize the need for adequate preparation for a long voyage. Let's not encourage the naïve and excessively optimistic to throw a few cans of tuna into a locker and head for the far beyond.

If Abby is "only 16," maybe she should stop in Puerto Vallarta and enjoy the summer. If she really is going around alone, she's going to grow up quickly, and will no doubt return to us a young adult. *Latitude*, as it should, is helping to start that process by holding her to adult standards from the start.

Bob Schilling
Tuckernuck, Cherubini 44
Long Beach, CA

↑↓ SHE'LL BE TREATED MUCH MORE HARSHLY SOON

Latitude hasn't treated the girls as harshly as high latitude storms will. On a voyage such as this, Abby and her shore team should be very, very hard on themselves.

Lawrence Riley
Planet Earth

↑↓ YOU'VE BEEN FAIR

Your treatment of the two sailors has been fair.

Bill Sewall
San Jose

↑↓ ANGRY AS A TAILGATER IN A JACKED-UP PICK-UP

Latitude's coverage of the kids' attempts to circumnavigate — especially Abby's — has indeed been churlish. But then *Latitude* has been getting ever-rastier for some time.

Legitimate are concerns over whether the girls are mature and experienced enough. And it's natural to hear of their ages and think of that 16-year-old girl who damn near ran you over while texting. When you consider historians' reports of numerous square-rigger captains who were 19, however, and consider how many young women are now rising above alpha males running businesses, it seems plenty plausible for a couple of teenage girls to sail the globe in modern boats equipped with the latest labor-saving and risk-reducing devices.



SOMETIMES EVOLUTION TRULY DOES BREED PERFECTION.



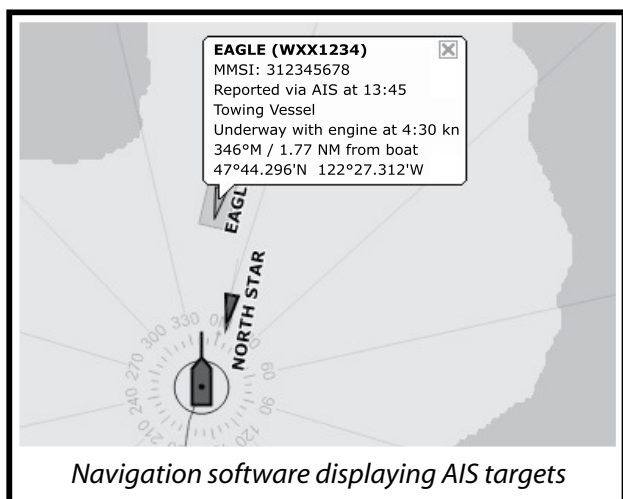
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LETTERS

It's not just coverage of the girls: When *Latitude* was young, it seemed edited by a Miata driver. It was agile, light and fun. In recent years it's sometimes seems driven by an angry tailgater in a jacked-up pick-up truck.

Brooks Townes
Weaverville, NC

Brooks — "An angry tailgater in a jacked-up pick-up truck?" You sure you got the right people? We're the ones who are deeply bothered that our government won't let us buy a VW diesel that gets 55 miles to the gallon and lasts for 300,000 miles — such as were available 30 years ago. They might not be good for angry tail-gating, but they are functional transportation, and would meet with our stated but unrealized national goals of reducing dependence on foreign oil and reducing the carbon impact on the planet.

It's true that there were square-rigger captains as young as 19. But we can't help thinking that they'd already had a lot of harsh ocean experience — maybe 10 years — before they got those positions. In any event, as we've written before, if somebody is 18 and wants to sail around the world in a bathtub, god bless, they are no longer minors and they can make their own decisions.

↑↓A WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW

Yes! You have been too harsh on Jessica and Abby.

Teresa Morey
Planet Earth

Teresa — For what it's worth, the 'Lectronic piece that sparked accusations of our being "too harsh" was written by Latitude's LaDonna Bubak. It struck the publisher as being a wee bit harsh, but we appreciated the unvarnished opinion of our female editor.

↑↓YOU SHOULD BE HARSH ON ABBY'S FATHER

I'm concerned about the kids. The one you need to be hard on is Abby's father for sending her out before she'd even done a decent shakedown cruise. He did the same thing with Zac. Check out how many times Zac broke down.

Good luck, Abby. You'll need it.

Name Withheld By Request
Planet Earth

↑↓IT'S RIDICULOUS

You are right on with your concerns. It's ridiculous for both Jessica and Abby. And more so for the parents.

Richard Tirrell
Carol Marie, Islander Bahama 30
Cabrillo Marina, San Pedro

↑↓READY TO BE GREEN WITH ENVY?

I just thought I'd make a small correction for you. Whenever you mention the 70-ft catamaran *Humu Humu*, you say that she was designed by Morrelli & Melvin. Actually, she was designed by Gino Morrelli and Rudy Choy of Hawaii.

By the way, we're cruising *Aita Pe'ape'a*, our 46-year-old 33-ft Rudy Choy-designed cat in the South Pacific. Readers can check us out at www.tristanandmindy.blogspot.com.

Tristan & Mindy Nyby
Aita Pe'ape'a, Choy 33
Los Angeles

Readers — Tristan and Mindy are correct. In the early years, we usually identified David Crowe's Nuevo Vallarta-based

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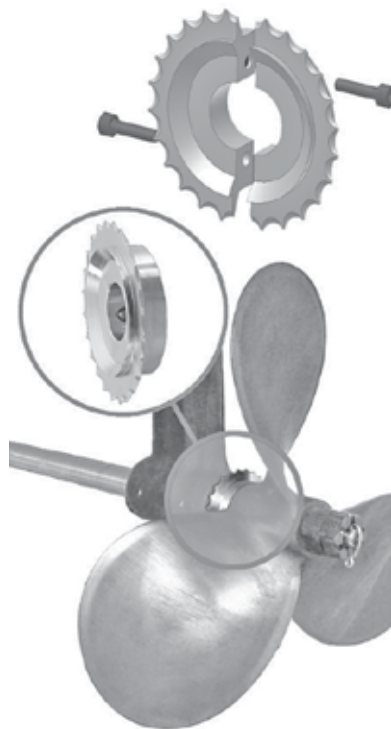
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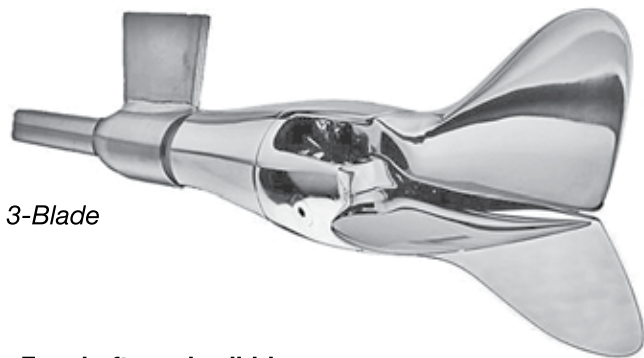
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LETTERS

Humu Humu as a Morrelli/Choy 70. But as the years went on, and the Morrelli & Melvin firm became ever more famous, Morrelli & Melvin instead of Morrelli & Choy began to slip off our tongue and keyboard. Our apologies.

As for Tristan and Mindy's invitation for readers to check out their blog, we have to advise caution. The photos of them and their boat in the South Pacific are enough to make anyone sitting at a desk in California sick with envy. And their reports, such as the one that follows, won't make you feel much better:

"It's been calm — virtually no wind and stifling hot! We've been waking up to 85-degree heat with 91% humidity. Luck-



COURTESY AITA PEAPEA

The Nyby's 33-ft cat 'Aita Pe'ape'a' may not be large or new, but it got them where they wanted to be — in the blue waters of the South Pacific.

ily, the water is still cool and refreshing. We decided to take advantage of the calm seas and head to Maninita, the southernmost anchorage in the group. It was beautiful — a clear shallow lagoon surrounded by a vibrant reef. We spent a few days on the island with our friends Noah and Vickie from Serenus, as well as Kevin and Brandie and their kids, who are transplants from Texas now living on Eueiki Island. We, of course, spent our time snorkeling and exploring, but Noah and Kevin also went spearfishing and came back with a prize — a dog tooth tuna that must have weighed at least 150 pounds. It was a tasty BBQ that evening!"

Think you can take more?

"After Maninita, we spent a few days in Kenutu and then meandered over to Port Maurelle. All were beautiful — but



COURTESY AITA PEAPEA

Mindy holds up a 'catch of the day' that is much fresher than anything she could have ever bought at Ralph's in L.A.

hot! On a particularly sweltering day, we escaped the boat for a walk, and found a trail leading us into the bush with tons of mango trees. We were overpowered by the pungent smell of rotting mangoes, which was oddly comforting, and reminded us — hey, we're in the tropics! We picked through the fruit on the ground and had a delicious snack on our walk. At the end of the trail we were greeted by two children pushing an empty wheelbarrow around. They led us into a charming village with a beautiful white sand beach." We're hoping for a more detailed report from the couple on what it's like to cruise the South Pacific aboard a small cat that's nearly 50 years old.

↑↓ DO EXTREME EVENTS HAVE TO BE DELAYED?

In a recent *'Lectronic*, you wondered whether any sporting event has been delayed as much as the 33rd America's Cup. The answer is yes! The Mavericks Surf Contest here at Pillar Point.

Alan Smith
Pillar Point



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LETTERS

Readers — Mavericks is a world-renowned big wave break a half-mile off Half Moon Bay. Every winter between November and March,



If you don't believe in coincidences, why did Mavericks and the America's Cup both go off at the same time?

a handful of the world's best surfers wait to see if the stars will align to offer the giant 50-ft breakers the spot is famous for. Some years they're disappointed. But when conditions are deemed perfect, 24 contestants are given

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↑↓ THE DANGERS OF THE DIGITAL AGE

In the story about John Connolly of Modern Sailing that was in February's *Sightings*, you referenced the quote "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches." While not the precise wording originally used, it's close enough for government work.

However, H.L. Mencken? Not remotely close. It was George Bernard Shaw.

Lee Turner
Greenbrae

Lee — What a careless error! That's what we get for only checking the first five Google search results.

↑↓ RIGHT INCIDENT, WRONG COUNTRY

Sorry I'm so late in writing, but we just arrived in Hilo from the Marquesas, and it's taken awhile for us to get through the backlog of *Latitudes*. My little correction is on a response you made to Roger Behnken in the October '09 *Letters*.

In your response, you say that a boat was attacked on the Pacific Coast of Colombia last year, and the crew "only survived because they attracted the attention of another cruising boat that happened to be near by."

First, we didn't just "happen to be near by," we were cruising together for this kind of security.

Second, the attack didn't occur in Colombia, but rather Punta Pedernales, Ecuador. We — our crew and the crew of the other boat — anchored at Punta Pedernales that evening, even though it was a terrible anchorage and almost completely unprotected, because if we'd kept going we would have arrived at our next stop, Punta Galera, Ecuador, after dark.

The attack was pretty much as *Latitude* described it — armed men boarded our friends' boat and threatened them. At one point the male member of the husband/wife crew was pinned to the cockpit settee with a gun in his mouth. This is what got the female member of the crew screaming, and it's what woke my wife, who woke me. The noise we made — including shooting off two SOLAS grade parachute flares — scared the attackers. They fled after taking a portable GPS and about \$40.

My point is that, with the exception of the coast north of Tumaco to about Cabo Corrientes, the Pacific coast of Colombia is pretty safe. At least that's how I felt when we were there. Every port we went into had a marine base, complete with Boston Whalers fully rigged with .50-caliber machine

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LETTERS

guns mounted at the bow. All the soldiers were well-trained and equipped in new uniforms with new automatic rifles. I always felt that if we were boarded, the cavalry would be there in seconds.

The attack in Ecuador caught us by surprise. We were expecting Colombia to be the problem area. I'm sure our friends felt the same way, so please help us get the correct information out about Colombia.

P.S. Please keep my name and my boat's name out of this letter. There are a few family members of the other boat who read *Latitude*, and as far as I know, still do not know about the attack. Naming us might tip them off. After some time in Hawaii, we'll be taking off to French Polynesia.

Name Withheld By Request
Hilo, Hawaii

N.W.B.R. — We can't apologize enough to you and Colombia for the error. One of the drawbacks of getting older is that sometimes we're so confident of some information — such as what had been written in *Changes about the attack* — that we don't feel we have to reread it to get the facts straight. We'll try to do better in the future.

↑↓ TELL LIZ NOT TO SWEAT IT

I just saw in the February *Changes* that the propeller tube on Liz Clark's Cal 40 *Swell* still leaks after what she and the yard in Raiatea hoped was an adequate repair. Liz need not despair, as I had the same problem with my Cal 40 and got it fixed.

For whatever galvanic reason, the bronze tube on my boat corroded severely. We first noticed the problem when a hole about 1/16" developed, with a similar-sized stream of water nearly sinking our boat after we'd been away for two weeks. Our 'fix' was to slide a section of rubber hose over the exposed section under the engine, and then secure it with multiple hose clamps. It wasn't pretty, but it was a temporary solution.

But I want to assure Liz that we were able to remove and replace the bronze propeller tube without removing the engine or the V-drive. We did this when we hauled a year later with the help of Doug Grant, a former Cal 40 owner, of Vangmaster in Southern California. It was Grant who convinced us to remove the whole tube.

The first step in getting the old tube out was to disconnect the propeller shaft from the V-drive, and remove it from the tube. Grant then concocted a 'slide hammer' from a six-ft section of stainless rod

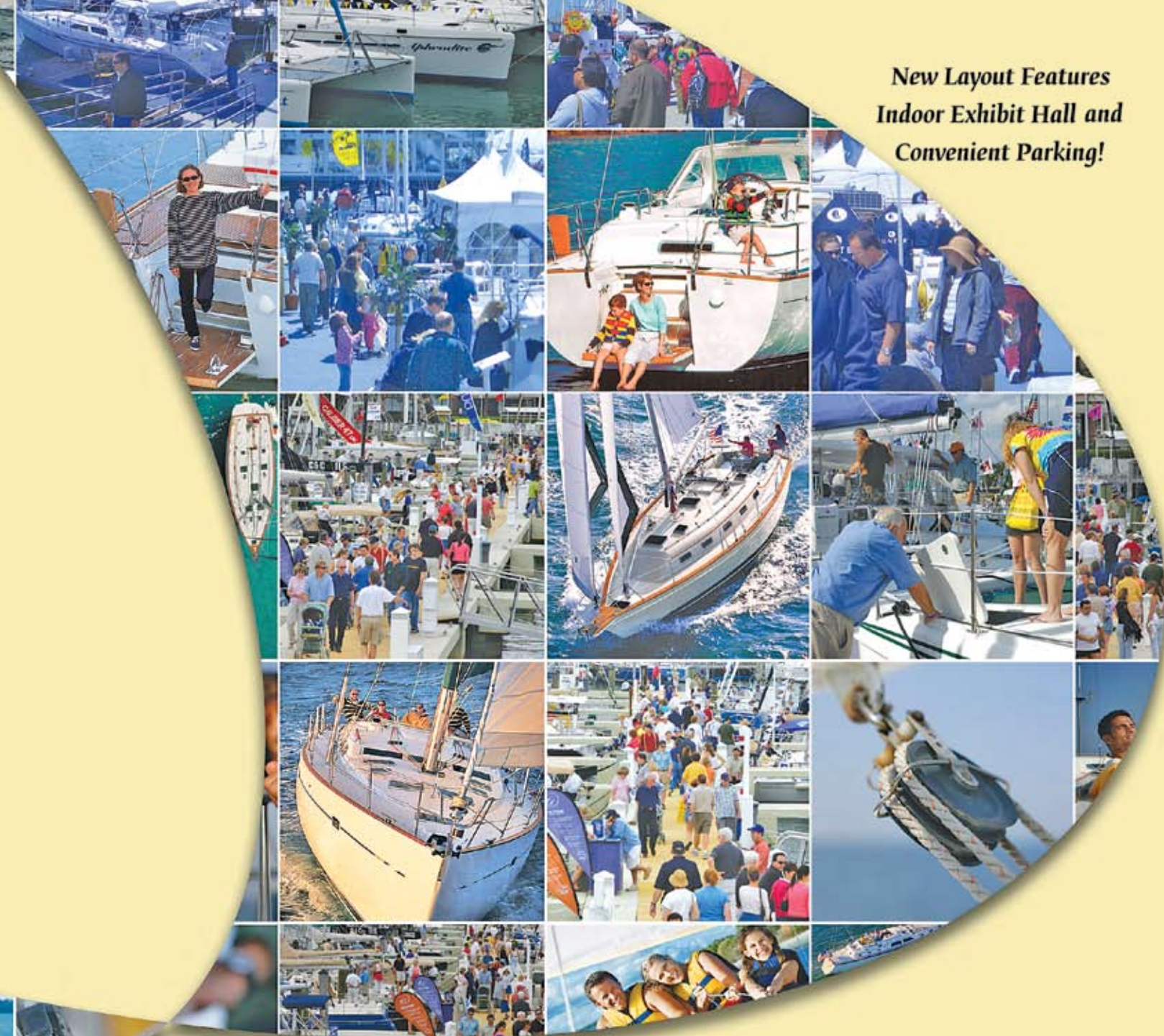


COURTESY SWELL

The bronze tube on 'Swell' needs to be 'slide hammered' out and replaced.

that was threaded on each end. After the rod was inserted into the tube, a 3/8" thick end-plate — which was the same size as the outside diameter of the tube, was fitted on the inboard end of the rod. The cap is what would ultimately slam against the tube and pull it out. A second, smaller cap, was attached to the outboard end. In order to finish making the slide hammer, Grant used a 15-lb brass weight, hex in shape for no apparent reason, and about eight inches long, as the hammer part. He bored out the center so it could slide along the half-inch rod.

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LETTERS

As for the actual hammering, we simply started sliding the brass weight along the stainless rod, until it got to the end and slammed into the stopper nuts. The effect was to smash against the inboard end of the bronze tube and begin to knock it out. When we slid the hammer hard enough, the tube would back out about 1/8" to 1/4". After we did it a bunch, the tube had come out a foot, leaving two feet still inside the keel.

At that point, the tube in my boat just wouldn't back out any more. Due to some weakness in the bronze tube, the inboard end started to mushroom. Knowing that lubrication always helps, we put some liquid soap on the part of the tube that had been exposed at the aft end, and then hammered it back into its original place. We then used a Sawzall to cut two inches off the inboard end of the tube, added some liquid soap to what was exposed, and resumed hammering. Then the tube started to move more easily. With each slam on the slide hammer, the tube would come out another half inch, until half of its three-foot length was out of the boat. The last half simply slid out.

It was a very satisfying process, especially as Dennis Choate, one of our highly regarded local boatbuilders, had suggested that we "simply" cut out the entire section of the keel and rebuild it after we replaced the tube.

The new tube, made of G-10 rather than bronze, was supplied by Doug Grant. He slid it into place with a healthy slathering of West System epoxy. It should last for a very long time.

Fin Beven
Radiant, Cal 40 #24
Long Beach

↑↓PAYING THE 'STUPID TAX'

Mike Harker's story in the January *Changes* about the successful repair on his Yanmar diesel after the failure of an anti-siphon valve brought to mind many things that I learned during my decade of cruising in Mexico.

First, as my grandfather taught me, you can learn something new every day — as long as you're not too stupid.

Second, properly looking after your boat's power plant and drive train is an important and rewarding activity if you want to cruise happily.

Then we can go on into all the reasons to run a boat's engine(s) regularly — and in gear! For instance, if a prop shaft isn't turned for a prolonged period of time, the lack of water circulation at the packing gland makes the shaft vulnerable to crevice corrosion. And shaft replacement is not cheap. It's not just the shaft that benefits from regular use, but all moving parts, such as in the transmission, the folding props, the shifts, and throttle linkages. If anything can be moved, it should be moved regularly.

Running all boat machinery, and then checking it for leaks, loose bits, proper belt tension, fluid levels, and so forth, should be routine and regular. Nobody should underestimate the importance of proper belt tension. I've seen many expensive high-output alternators cook out their bearings because a loose belt slipped enough to overheat the pulley and shaft during full-output charging.

Diesels are sturdy and reliable engines, but if you overheat them enough, it will cost you a bundle to put them back into service. This being the case, it's critical to inspect things such as impellers, water strainers, heat exchangers, hoses, thru hulls, and all the other elements that keep the coolant happily doing its job. It's not only a good habit, but it will definitely reduce the 'Stupid Tax' bill.

Of course, this tax is not limited to one's own stupidity.



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LETTERS

Harker, for example, had to pay for the stupidity of others, too. As far as I'm concerned, if a modern cruising boat like Harker's has a plumbing system so reliant on a single anti-siphon, it was poorly thought out. I can hear the voices out there saying that their boats have never had any trouble with their anti-siphon valves. But I've also heard many motorcyclists say they've never crashed (yet), and many cruisers who say they've never dumped their dinghies in the surf (yet).

I say listen to the experiences of others, for my grandfather was right when he said you can learn something new every day. And after listening, resist the urge to say, "That can't happen to me!" Look instead to the most remotely possible events, and check to see how you might reduce your vulnerability to them.

P.S. I still enjoy *Latitude* after all these years.

Tim Tunks

Formerly 'Padre Timo' of *Scallywag*, Islander 37
Marina del Rey

Tim — Boats and boat systems are like human bodies: the more you use all the parts, the better they work and the longer they last.

↑↓ FRIENDS FROM THE HA-HA AND DOO DAH RALLIES

The Super Bowl wasn't the only big event on February 7, as five couples who are veterans of the Ha-Ha and/or Doo Dah rallies crossed tacks in Roseville for an evening of telling stories and lies, and laughing out loud.

Here's the breakdown of who was there:

- Phil & Nora McCaleb, Hunter 42 *Shiraz* (Ha-Ha '05 & Doo Dah '09)
- Paul & Marilyn Butler, Tayana 48 *Renegade* (Ha-Ha '06 & Doo Dah '09)
- Randy & Nancy Rowland, Pacific Seacraft 27 *Aphrodite* (Ha-Ha '04 & '06)
- Chris & Robyn Parker, Island Packet 35 *Robyn's Nest* (Ha-Ha '06)
- Pat & Carole McIntosh, Hunter 430 *Espiritu* (Ha-Ha '06, '08 & Doo Dah '09)

The only ones with their boat still in Mexico are the Rowlands, who 'commuter cruise' out of La Paz.

The year after the Parkers sailed to Mexico, they loaded *Robyn's Nest* onto a Dockwise ship for the trip to the Pacific Northwest, where they have been sailing ever since. Last year

they made it to Alaska and back, and their boat is now in Vancouver, B.C.

Phil and Nora McCaleb made it to Panama before returning north at the end of the '08 sailing season, and are again sailing



COURTESY ESPIRITU

Our Gang — l to r, Phil & Nora McCaleb, Nancy & Randy Rowland, Robyn & Chris Parker, Paul & Marilyn Butler, and Pat & Carole McIntosh.

out of Marina Village in Alameda. They, along with Paul and Marilyn Butler, became charter members of the 'Cedros Island Yacht Club', when they and several other sailboats were stuck there for a time waiting for a break in the weather on the way north in '08. The Butlers sail out of Vallejo now.

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LETTERS

We — Pat and Carole McIntosh — brought *Espiritu* north after two seasons in Mexico. Right after we got back, we signed up on the *Latitude 38* Crew List and got berths on *Sun Baby*, a San Diego-based Lagoon 41 cat, for the '08 Ha-Ha. We now have a trawler in Alameda.

With only five boats represented, it's fantastic to realize how many other boats and people and places and special times came to mind, and the hundreds of mutual friends we have all made from the Ha-Ha and Doo Dah. We hope to see many, many more friends from these events at the *Latitude 38* Baja Ha-Ha (and Delta Doo Dah) Reunion Party on April 16 at Strictly Sail Pacific.

Pat & Carole McIntosh
Peregrine
Alameda / Sacramento

Readers — It's been said an endless number of times that the greatest thing about the Ha-Ha — and now the Doo Dah — is the friends you make.

↑↓ CREDIT TO WHOM IT'S DUE

Just before Thanksgiving, David Davids' sloop *Melody* ran aground on a reef outside the harbor at Santa Rosalia and was lost. Despite his loss, David was mortified that in *Latitude's* report, most of the credit went to the marina employees, when there was actually only one who helped. It was the lovely cruisers in the marina who formed a tireless 'fireman's line' up the cliff to remove as much as could be removed from his doomed boat. As David said, it was "like seeing the cliff lined with angels."

After an entire night of sitting in his boat while it was being smashed apart on the reef, David could not believe that the Mexican government provided four guards, with machine guns, to guard his boat.

David would like both groups to get a bit of credit in your fine magazine.

P.S. After seeing what he could salvage, David managed to buy a Balboa 26, so he's up and sailing again!

Kenny Lindsay
Topaz, 36-ft Blue Sea trawler
Santa Rosalia, Baja

↑↓ SUCH BLOWS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN

I read the February 3 *Lectronic* item about the unexpected tremendous winds that hit Banderas Bay and other parts of the mainland coast of Mexico. It was interesting because such weather is so unlikely at that time of year.

But I do remember something similar. Checking my log, I found that I was caught in Careyitos [sic] in January of '92 with two other vessels fighting similar weather. It rained so hard that there were huge waterfalls coming off the cliffs amongst all those brightly colored condos and homes. The ocean was dark brown, and the seas were six feet coming into the tiny anchorage. It flooded Rosa's little restaurant. Playa Blanca, the old Club Med, was essentially shut down. All three of us on boats were constantly in fear of ending ashore, as there was no room for much scope on the anchors — we were all on one hook — and no one wanted to get out as we all knew the open ocean would be horrendous.

When the weather abated and we were finally able to head north, we had to dodge all kinds of flotsam. The Rio Ameca in Banderas Bay had literally washed away whole villages, and much of the residue was out in the bay. We had to dodge things like refrigerators, stoves, logs, and quite an assortment of expired animals, too.

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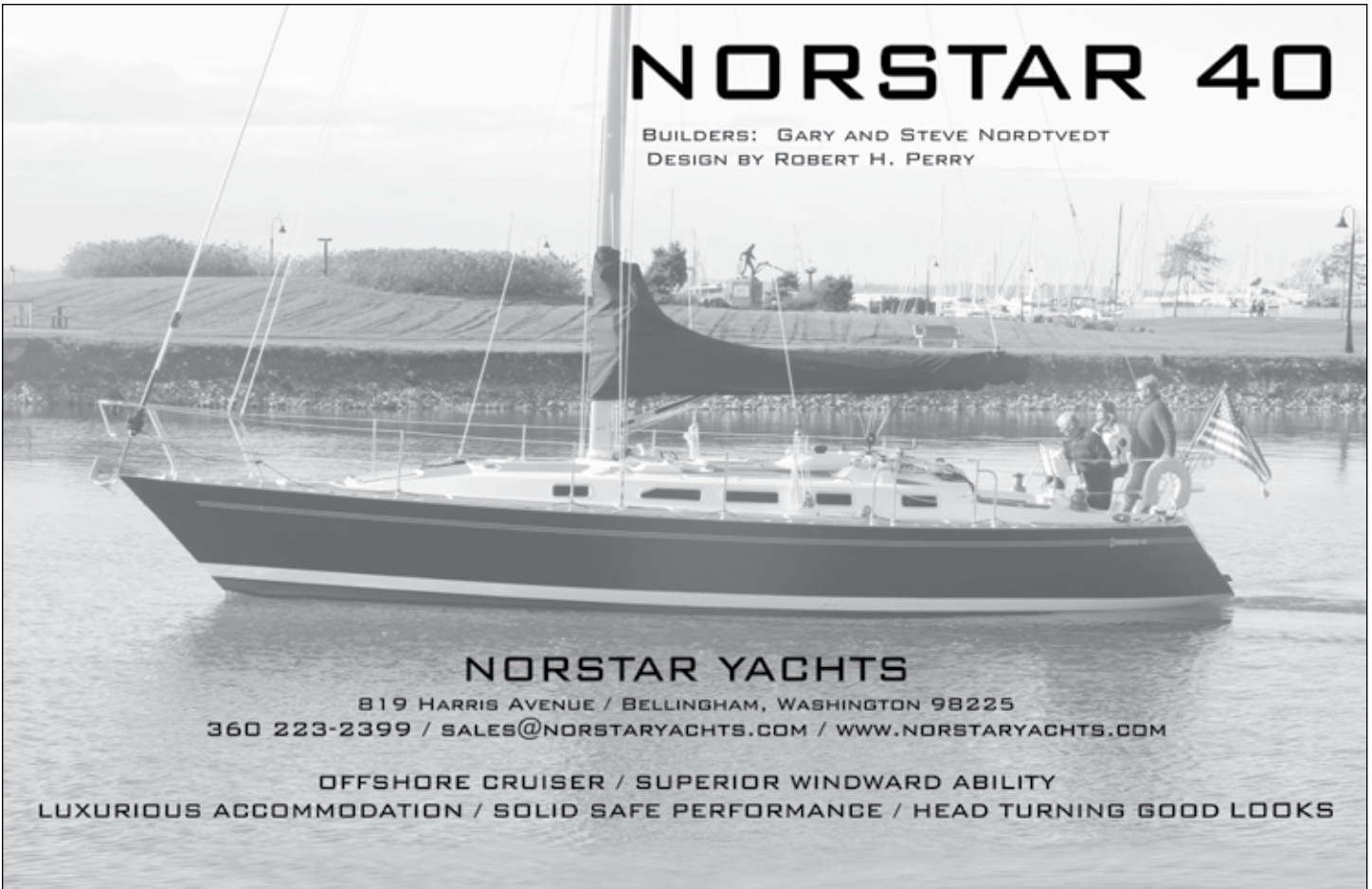
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LETTERS

The weather gurus at the time called it an 'Enhanced Banana Express.' Whatever. It was one hell of a lot of rain and wind. It also caught everyone off-guard, just like the episode in Banderas Bay.

P.S. In spite of our enjoying skiing this winter, we're looking forward to *Serendipity's* third Ha-Ha this fall.

Barritt Neal & Renee Blaul
Serendipity, Kelly-Peterson 44
San Diego

Readers — While we're sure there have been other unexpected

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blows in Mexico, the others we remember are the Cabo Storm of December '82, which left 27 boats on the beach, the non-hurricane storm that hit Cabo in October of '93 and sent houses, overpasses, dead cattle and entire golf course fairways into the Pacific, and a nasty cell that hit

the anchored fleet in Zihua sometime around '98. Anybody remember any others?

By the way, we're told that Don Anderson of Summer Passage is the only person who forecast this year's blow. A tip of the hat to him.

↑↓ ANOTHER FAN BELT SPLICING OPTION

If any of your other readers find themselves in the same predicament as Thomas Todd of the Hunter 54 *Topaz*, and need to splice a fan belt, I have a suggestion other than the butt splice, which takes some skill.

I'm talking about a simple Molly Hogan, which can be done in a few minutes. You take a piece of three-strand, and if it's soft and limp, dip it in boiling water to make it stiffer. Cut a piece three times as long as the loop or grommet you need, then unlay one strand of it, and keep it in its original form as much as possible. Cross the single strand at one-third of the length, and relay it into a three-strand rope. Whip the loop at the ends with some sail thread.

During my last two cruises to Mexico, I switched to the plastic link belts that can be assembled to any size. These may stretch initially under heavy loads, such as with a belt-driven compressor, and need a link or two removed, but they are many times superior to any other type of belt for cruising.

Ernie Copp,
Orient Star, Cheoy Lee 50
Long Beach

↑↓ GET REAL ABOUT BUFFETT AND \$100 MIL A YEAR

In the February 5 *Lectronic*, you had a caption for a photo of Liz Clark of the Santa Barbara-based Cal 40 *Swell* and Jimmy Buffett that said Buffett "knocked down a reported \$100 million a year." Get real.

Madonna may look silly with her youth obsession, but you gotta give props to the Material Girl for her ability to make millions. This year *Forbes* magazine ranked her as the top earning musician, as she reportedly made \$110 million from her Sticky & Sweet Tour and from *Hard Candy*, her 11th studio album.

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LETTERS

According to *Google*, here's the list of the Top 12 highest earning singer/musicians for the period spanning from June '08 to June '09.

1. Madonna: \$110 million
2. Celine Dion: \$100 million
3. Beyonce Knowles: \$87 million
4. Bruce Springsteen: \$70 million
5. Kenny Chesney: \$65 million
- 6-8. Rascal Flatts: \$60 million
- 6-8. Coldplay: \$60 million
- 6-8. AC/DC: \$60 million
9. Eagles: \$55 million
10. Toby Keith: \$52 million
11. Bon Jovi: \$50 million
12. Dave Matthews Band: \$45 million

You might notice that Buffett's name wasn't on the list.

Pat Moriarty
Reliant, Catalina 320
Austin, TX

Pat — The Electronic caption didn't say anything about limiting Buffett's income from music. In spite of Buffett's beach bum persona and lack of success in winning awards for his songs, he's had tremendous success with all kinds of other artistic and business endeavors. For instance, he's written three #1 bestsellers, two of them fiction, one non-fiction. Laugh all you want, but the only other six authors to have accomplished this are Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, William Styron, Irving Wallace, Dr. Seuss and Mitch Albom. That's pretty good company, and Buffett can surf better than any of them. He's also been involved in children's books and various movies and movie soundtracks.

Buffett owns or licenses the Margaritaville Cafe and Cheeseburger in Paradise restaurant chains. Before you scoff them off, the Margaritaville Cafe in Vegas alone grossed \$41 million last year, making it the second highest grossing restaurant in the U.S. Buffett also owns part of two minor league baseball teams. Working with Anheuser-Busch, Buffett produced Land Shark Lager, and the Miami Dolphins' home field was renamed Land



ED GUDENAS

Jimmy's still just a regular guy. In this photo, he stands between 86-year-old Marius, owner of *Le Select* for 60 years, and three-time ultra-cheap circumnavigator Jim Green, 'shooting the bee' at the 60th anniversary celebration of the famous bar in St. Barth.

Shark Stadium for the '09 season. How about casinos? In '07, Buffett, in partnership with Harrah's Entertainment, announced plans to build the Margaritaville Casino & Resort in Biloxi, Mississippi. Its 788 rooms are supposed to

open this year. Another Margaritaville Casino, slated for Atlantic City, has been put on hold. Buffett has also licensed Margaritaville Tequila, Margaritaville Shrimp, Margaritaville Footwear, and we're not sure what else. He's also got Margaritaville Radio and Sirius XM Radio. All this from a guy who looks like he's hardly even trying. Pretty impressive.

We got the \$100 million a year figure from Wikipedia. We

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LETTERS

have no idea if it's right or wrong. At the very least, it's unlikely that Jimmy will ever have to go back to robbing filling stations, as he lyrically did back in '75, scoring "\$15, a can of STP, a big ol' jar of cashew nuts and a Japanese TV."

↑↓ A CULTURAL CANCER

I've been a lover of sailing since I was a kid, and a reader of *Latitude 38* for almost as long. I think that if one does the former, it is beneficial to do the latter. A wealth of good sailing information, most wouldn't argue.

Sometimes I disagree with the editor's opinions. I get hot once in a while, particularly when they concern subjects other than sailing. "Stick to sailing!" I grumble into the magazine. A complaining email starts to form in my head, but fades, and isn't sent.

But I am writing, finally, in reply to your specific comments about the concept of 'snitching', after Steve Knight used the word in his letter. Well said. Your opinions regarding this cultural cancer couldn't have been more concise. That term was created by criminals to further their lives at the expense of society.

Who turned in Bernie Madoff? His kids. Ted Kaczynski? His brother. The world is a better place for it.

Dave King
Fremont

Dave — "[Snitching] is a term created by criminals to further their lives at the expense of society." We couldn't have put it more accurately or succinctly if we'd banged at the computer all year.

↑↓ IT'S NOT EASY BUT WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

I wanted to thank *Latitude* for the recent pieces on the loss of *JoJo*, and the responsibilities and limitations of the Coast Guard.

I just finished my enlistment of eight years with the Coast Guard, serving as a Boatswain's Mate at the station in Vallejo, and also aboard a 270-ft cutter out of New Hampshire.

I want to extend condolences to the Livengoods for the loss of their boat, and to thank *Latitude* for your treatment and understanding of the Coast Guard. In response to all of the letters saying that the Coast Guard should have done more in the *JoJo* case, it's easy to armchair quarterback the entire incident by suggesting that regulations should have been bypassed, and to point fingers at anyone and everyone. I realize that the limits of the Coast Guard as an organization are sometimes frustrating, both for taxpayers and for the young men and women crewing on Coast Guard boats.

I also applaud the letters that endorsed self-reliance and personal responsibility.

My wife, Amanda, and I first became sailors when I was transferred from a ship in New Hampshire to the Small Boat Station in Vallejo. Before I even found an apartment to live in, I'd bought a Hunter 25 sailboat. We kept the boat in Oyster Cove, and sailed every chance we got. We often marveled at the contrast between the traffic on 101 and the usually lonely beauty of the Bay. Since then, we've moved up to a Formosa 35, which we live on in San Rafael.

I think that my life and duties as a Coastie have been much improved by my sailing experiences. After all, wearing a uniform sometimes seems to separate an individual from reality. Occasionally at work we'd be amazed at the messes folks ended up in due to their own carelessness and lack of seamanship. That's when I'd remind my Coast Guard crew that not everyone got the training that we did, and that our

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job was to help people, which is something that almost all Coasties love to do. Every single person I served with took great pride in the moments that made a difference, when lives were saved or even just helped. It often wasn't an easy job, and it also wasn't for everyone. But being a public servant means just that, serving.

Being the forum that it is, *Latitude 38* probably receives more complaints about the Coast Guard than we do. Boardings, safety and security zones are part of the world we live in, and necessary for the safety of all out on the water. With so many jobs and responsibilities, the Coast Guard multi-tasks more efficiently than any other federal organization. I'd like to ask for readers and sailors to keep faith in the Coast Guard.

The recent tragedy in San Diego has brought out many negative responses to the Coast Guard. I grieve for both the family and their loss, but also for the coxswain and crew involved in that accident. In times like this, our servants need guidance, support and empathy, not anger or despair. The Coast Guard has changed in so many ways while I've been a part of it. It's been given a great responsibility in securing our nation's safety, but the goal of preserving life has never waned.

My wife and I are going cruising in August and I feel quite prepared with the seamanship experience the Coast Guard has given me and would like to thank *Latitude* again for continuing to inspire my dreams of sailing for life.

Christopher LaClair
Liberte, Formosa 35
San Rafael

↑↓ GOING FROM NORM GOLDIE'S FRIEND TO HIS FOE

Last year we spent almost three months in San Blas, Mexico, and became very close friends with Norm and Jan Goldie, who have lived ashore there for years. We maintained email contact with them through our summer in the Sea of Cortez, and had a happy reunion when we returned to San Blas last December 22. So we understand how some cruisers view Norm — a controversial figure in the cruising world for decades — and Jan favorably.

But within a few days of our return, Norm started acting weird. He began to say that we were helping incoming cruisers too much. He said that we should stay quiet and let him do it. Several days later, a group of five boats — all people we knew from the Sea of Cortez — approached San Blas. I had been talking to all of them via SSB, and they knew I was anchored in the San Blas estuary. As they approached, they called me one by one, and asked for advice in crossing the sand bar. I readily gave them that information. The last boat to arrive had lost the use of its engine because a rag had been sucked into the air intake, and needed help into the estuary. I immediately launched our dinghy and helped them in, using the VHF to coordinate the effort.

I wasn't aware of it at the time, but my helping the other boats made Norm very angry. While I was in town the following day showing other cruisers where the bakery was, Norm called me on the VHF. He told me that I shouldn't be trying to play 'Mayor of San Blas'. He told me that I was just a tourist and therefore shouldn't be giving advice or showing people where things were in town.

Bewildered, I said "O.K."

While I was in the bakery and not able to pick up anything on the radio, Norm hailed our boat, and my wife answered. When I got back to the boat an hour later, she was in tears. She told me that Norm had screamed and yelled at her, and

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was ranting about my giving help to the cruisers.

I called Norm to get to the bottom of it. I didn't have a chance to ask any questions because he immediately went into an angry, breathless rant about how I was trying to take over the job that five different governmental agencies had asked him to do. He told me that I was destroying the economy of San Blas, and that my talking up San Blas on my blog would lead to increased tourism and destroy the town. He said that I should just shut up and stop talking to cruisers.

Thinking that Norm had somehow gotten the wrong impression, I asked to come to his house the next day and meet with him and his wife. Much of the early discussion was odd, and covered everything from how Norm thinks the locals really hate American tourists, to how Mexico still resents the Spanish/American War, and how he thinks most cruisers are ignorant of seafaring skills and arrogant.

I wasn't sure how to handle many of these remarks, so I tried to steer the conversation back to why I'd gone from being an adopted son to an apparent deadbeat cruiser. The conversation kept going into general grievances, and how he has been helping cruisers for 44 years without pay or compensation. I kept pushing back to what it had to do with me, and why I was in trouble with Norm for offering help to my cruising friends. Apparently not knowing how to express himself, Norm kept getting angrier.

Finally Jan entered the conversation, and I think I got an honest answer. Jan told me that by my giving advice and passing along information to the cruisers, I was cutting Norm and her out of the loop. I told her that I didn't see it that way, and that I was encouraging people to talk to Norm and Jan, as they were people very knowledgeable about San Blas. She replied that by my giving out advice, Norm would then not have the chance to ask arriving cruisers for a tip or donation, and that it was belittling for someone who had only been in San Blas for four months to take the 'job' of someone who had been doing it for 44 years.

When I explained that cruisers all over the world help other cruisers in this way, both Norm and Jan got angry. They insisted that I was wrong, and that most cruisers they knew didn't help people the way I did. Then they said I was only doing it to insult Norm and to take his 'job'. Not wanting a confrontation, I told Norm that I would try not to interfere in what he obviously viewed as exclusively his job in San Blas. We parted with a handshake.

The following morning a friend came into the anchorage and called us on 22 for advice and information. During the conversation — which I knew Norm was listening to — I went out of my way to downplay my knowledge and play up Norm's. But the damage was done.

Immediately following our VHF conversation, Norm came on the hailing channel and angrily said that I should have told the people where I had gotten all of my information. During the VHF net the following morning, he started in with rants and angry personal attacks — and included lots of profanity. Later, members of the fleet said they listened in horror as several times a day Norm would get on the radio to rant about how we were backstabbers and worse. Almost daily we were warned that if we didn't leave San Blas, he'd talk to his friends at Immigration and other official offices about us. Norm told us to make sure we had our passports and visas ready to show the authorities. It was at this point that two other cruising family boats left San Blas, feeling it was not safe to stay.

It was scary having someone threaten to bring the Mexican government down on our family, so we decided we would

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follow the other two boats. But after telling our story to our local Mexican friends while saying our goodbyes, we decided to stay and fight. Not just for us, but for the other cruisers that Norm has bullied out of San Blas.

We then had meetings with the Port Captain and other government officials. They expressed their sincere apologies for Norm's behavior! They told us that they are constantly receiving complaints about Norm, but have little power to stop him. They currently are trying to force him to stop using his VHF radio, as he has no boat, and no reason to use a VHF radio. In the words of the San Blas Port Captain, because he is on land, Norm is using his VHF illegally.

After talking to locals, I think what's really been going on is that Norm makes money by getting kickbacks from the businesses he recommends. And then there's the issue of his ego and his being the big man in San Blas.

However you look at it, it's an ugly situation indeed. But I thought the Seven Seas Cruising Association needed to know about it, because Norm often legitimizes himself by mentioning that he's an official SSCA cruising station over the VHF.

Last week the cruisers got together and assembled a cruising guide and cruiser's map of San Blas. We have given them to the marina and are spreading them out through the cruising community.

Rich Boren
Third Day, Pearson 365
Port San Luis

Readers — Norm Goldie has been controversial in San Blas for decades. As we've noted many times before, he's been of major assistance to many cruisers, and has been a big help in several medical emergencies involving cruisers. On the other hand, countless cruisers have complained that he's relentlessly stuck his nose in where it wasn't wanted. And after being rejected, Goldie is well known to have become vindictive.

For as long as we can remember, Goldie has tried to give cruisers the impression that he has some kind of official standing with the Mexican government. He has none. If he tries to pull this on you, demand to see a uniform, a badge, or an official document to that effect. He has nothing.

If any cruisers want to avail themselves of Goldie's services, that's fine. If they want to give to his 'charities', that's fine, too. And if a business gives him referral fees for bringing them business, that's nothing unusual in the world of tourism.

On the other hand, if you want to discover things for yourself, or if you want to use the advice of cruising friends already in San Blas, that's your business. With confidence, tell Goldie to butt out. His threats are nothing but hot air. If he bothers you enough, report him to the nearest Department of Tourism office.

There are more cruiser comments on Norm Goldie in this month's Cruise Notes.

↑↓ SAY IT AIN'T SO

I was invited to a very pleasant gathering at Golden Gate YC last month to help celebrate the club's recent capture of the America's Cup. One of the principal topics, after the champagne toasts, was whether or not the club could host the America's Cup on the Bay.

As a San Francisco native, I naturally would love it if we could hold the 34th America's Cup match here, but consider this: Going back to the 32nd America's Cup — the last 'normal' one — the course format was a three-nautical-mile leg sailed windward/leeward, twice around. In all multi-challenger events to date, at least two separate racing areas have

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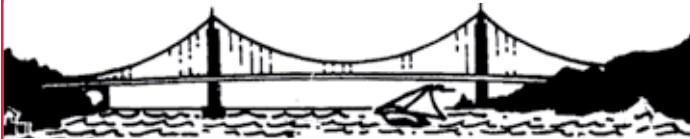
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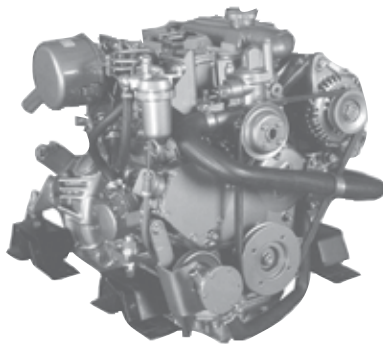


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LETTERS

been designated, one for the use of the defender(s) and one, or more, for the challengers.

There is only one part of the Bay which is both open enough and deep enough for a three-mile, or anything close to it, circle. Even the middle of the Bay is not very good, since the marks would have to be set in very deep, very tidal places, and the area is sliced to bits by shipping lanes and ferry routes.

If the practical maritime concerns aren't enough, please consider also that:

- There will be no joy from any governmental body. They may even fight the idea. San Francisco has scant need for more tourist traffic in summer, and very little appetite for an 'elitist' activity such as the America's Cup, which would require municipal resources and infrastructure.

- The San Francisco Bay Yacht Racing Association has established rights to set its courses on the Bay, too.

- It's hard to find enough real estate for a Halsey St. or Darsena-type Cup Village. If you can find it — on Treasure Island, Alameda or maybe on abandoned piers — it would be



DICK ENERSEN

There doesn't appear to be enough room on San Francisco Bay for a conventional America's Cup.

terribly expensive and hard to get the permits.

- People have floated various other ideas, such as sailing smaller boats on smaller courses, or sailing the Louis Vuitton Cup Series elsewhere, and just holding the Cup here. The first idea doesn't do justice to the Cup, and the other falls apart for myriad reasons.

I wish it were otherwise.

Dick Enersen
Sausalito

Dick — As much as we wish we could disagree with you, we think you're right on all counts. Holding the America's Cup on San Francisco Bay would require both the interest and a 'can do' attitude from local, regional and state government. Unfortunately, we don't think either exists — particularly the 'can do' attitude.

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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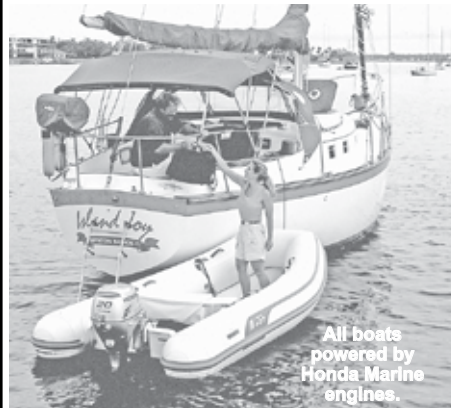
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LOOSE LIPS

Pulling the trigger on your dream boat.

We've heard lots of financial pundits theorize lately that the economy is finally beginning to rebound. That should give you a big sigh of relief. Unless, of course, you were hoping to snatch up your dream boat at a rock-bottom price. Because if consumer confidence really is on the upswing, the window for making the deal of a lifetime may come to a close sooner than you think.

Needless to say the current market for both new and used boats strongly favors buyers. Not only do many cash-strapped sailors need to liquidate their 'floating assets', but brand new boats are languishing on showroom floors. So well-equipped used cruising boats and daysailers are being offered at prices well below historic norms. And many new boat dealers have slashed their margins dramatically.

But is there any money out there to borrow? Local funding agencies tell us there's plenty of it for qualified buyers, at fixed rates in the high 6s, and adjustable-rate loans under 5%. With a solid credit rating and 15 to 20% down, you could score the deal of a lifetime.

According to Mike Bryant of Trident Funding, the question on the minds of most potential buyers seems to be when to pull the trigger and make the deal. In addition to wondering if prices and loan rates have hit the bottom, buyer hesitation often also comes from insecurity about being able to make the payments.

If your own financial situation is solid, and you don't want to miss this rare window of opportunity, here's what you'll typically need to qualify for a loan: a credit report, a personal financial statement, and your two most recent tax returns. You'll usually get an answer in a few days. If you're buying a new boat that's been fully commissioned, or a used boat that's been surveyed, you can often close a deal in 10 days or less — none of this 90-day escrow nonsense. As a bonus, you can usually write off the loan interest on boats of roughly 25 feet and up, because they legitimately qualify as second homes. Such a deal!

Far be it from us to give anyone financial advice, but don't cry on our shoulders if you wait too long, the window closes, and that dream boat slips through your fingertips.

Winging it.

For millennia, the wind has moved people from Point A to Point B, and on San Francisco Bay, we have an abundance of it for much of the year. So it seems odd that, in an area so forward-thinking and eco-friendly, we don't have any wind-powered public transportation. Wind+Wing Technologies hopes to change that.

Started by the same group of sailors that owns and operates Adventure Cat Sailing Charters, Wind+Wing has partnered with Orange County's Morrelli & Melvin Design Engineering and Harbor Wing Technologies out of Honolulu and Seattle to design a catamaran ferry that uses solid wing technology.

"Morrelli & Melvin's engineering study makes a strong argument that adding a wing sail could cause a 42% annual fuel reduction over current usage," says Jay Gardner, co-owner of Wind+Wing. "A bus gets about 300 passenger miles per gallon (PMG), BART gets 450, but our design would get 1,700."

While the concept is still in development, Gardner says they've received nothing but positive feedback from ferry operators. "After some initial skepticism, they've been very supportive," he said. "We took them out on Adventure Cat and ran their routes so they could see it was possible. They're getting excited about it."

Gardner says production of the test ferry is slated to begin next year. They hope that after testing — which will likely take most of '12 — ferry districts and their captains will feel comfortable ordering the boat. If so, we may see the first sailing ferry plying the waters of the Bay by '14. Find out more about the project at www.windwingtech.com.



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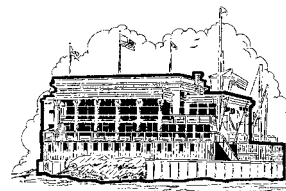
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SIGHTINGS

surviving the 'weather bomb'

"Honestly, we never, ever, ever have rain at this time of year, let alone hurricane-strength winds!" said a longtime resident of Puerto Vallarta last month after a so-called 'weather bomb' ripped through Banderas Bay on the night of February 1. Torrential rain drenched the region and winds built from 10 knots to 70+ in a matter of minutes. The 'bomb' occurred after three days of nearly continuous rain, which



LATITUDE / ANDY

With their storm-soaked clothes drying behind them, Savona and Sarah are grateful that their cruising dreams didn't come to a tragic end.

alone was a bizarre anomaly, that left vacationing snowbirds wondering if they would ever get that long-anticipated winter tan.

When the big blow arrived, Banderas Bay's principal anchorage at La Cruz became a witch's cauldron of short, steep wind waves that were confused by the clocking rotation of the advancing 'super-cell'. Roughly a third of the three dozen boats anchored out dragged, at least somewhat, while a few broke free completely.

All sorts of war stories were told the next morning, but the most remarkable was that of Sarah and Elias

Anderson, who've been cruising Mexico since last fall with daughters Kimberly, 16, and Savona, 5, aboard their Newport, OR-based Maple Leaf 42 *Stepping Stone*.

First the ketch's anchor began to drag, then her all-chain rode parted with a bang. Elias cranked up the engine, but it didn't have enough muscle to force the bow upwind against the 8-foot waves. The 28,000-lb displacement hull began sliding quickly toward the nearby shoreline. "It felt like we were aboard a Tinkertoy in the devil's bathtub," Sarah recalls. "By the time I got my daughter out of bed and into her lifejacket we were aground on a narrow strip of beach between two rock jetties, and *Stepping Stone* laid over on her side." But as she and Elias prepared their children for an emergency bailout "the wind died down momentarily and a big swell suddenly refloated us." Sarah quickly restarted the engine, Elias put the hammer down, and they roared off into the Bay where they safely circled until things calmed down.

Talk about dodging a bullet. . . The next day they even recovered their dinghy with its outboard and tank still attached. It had ripped loose during the grounding, then drifted downwind and snagged on another boat's rode.

Could this bizarre weather event be blamed on El Niño? Perhaps partly. But there's no clear consensus among weather gurus. Goes to show, the best advice for mariners remains the same: No matter what the cruising guides, pilot charts or weathermen say, always be prepared to deal with *whatever* Mother Nature throws at you.

— andy

eager, the pampered warhorse

When he got started in boat building 32 years ago, a 'classic' for Jeff Rutherford was, by definition, a wooden boat. But much the same way a Gen-Xer feels the advance of time when hearing the band Sublime played on an 'oldies' radio station, the latest project from Rutherford's Pt. Richmond boat shop reflects a shift in context.

The boat is a 1970 Camper & Nicholson 55 — hull #1 — a heavy

continued on outside column of next sightings page

'school ship'

As the 188-ft barquentine *Concordia* sailed down the South Atlantic mid-February, Captain Bill Curry warned his crew, and the 44 high school and college-age student sailors aboard, to prepare for unsettled weather. Little did he know, however, that an intense vertical downdraft would soon knock down his globetrotting steel-hulled vessel, sending her to the bottom within thirty minutes.

When the tragedy occurred, the Barbados-based three-masted tall ship was



sinks off brazil

sailing south, roughly 300 miles off the Brazilian coast, en route from Recife, Brazil, to Montevideo, Uruguay, as part of a 10-month Class Afloat educational voyage. At about 2:30 p.m. on February 17, the ship was hit by what the captain later characterized as a "microburst" — a sudden, powerful downdraft — which apparently knocked the boat onto her beam ends, where she began to flood and never regained equilibrium.

Having drilled for emergencies as part
continued in middle column of next sightings page

eager — cont'd

IOR design built in 1970 in fiberglass with a teak-overlaid plywood deck. British banker Rob Gray has a deep-seated love for the design, so when he found *Eager* — née *Acclaim*, née *Lutine* — complete with rotten decks, he bought her and shipped her to Rutherford's shop to be reborn. Rather than rebuild the wooden deck, Rutherford and his guys used it as a plug to build a new, foam-cored, vinylester and E-glass deck with a teak overlay.

Wait a second . . . what? Jeff Rutherford, the builder responsible for the complete rebuilds of Bob McNeill's 1911 Herreshoff P Class sloop *Joyant* and 1901 steamer *Cangarda*, was building in fiberglass? "There are fewer and fewer wooden boats out there these days," Rutherford said. "You don't turn down good work."

continued on outside column of next sightings page

You may associate Rutherford's Boat Shop in Point Richmond with classic wooden yacht restorations rather than fiberglass IOR designs, but their latest project is a recently-completed and stunning restoration of the 1970 Camper & Nicholson 55 'Eager', seen here sea-trialing at the end of January.



SIGHTINGS

eager — cont'd

In Gray, Rutherford had an experienced client whose stable includes a 2002-vintage all-carbon race boat and the 6-Metre *Scoundrel* — with which he placed second in the “contemporary” class at last year’s 6-Metre Worlds. Gray wanted all the ducks in a row before the project — which included a brand new interior — got underway. “Before we even started on the interior, we went shopping for the plates, glasses and stemware so we could build the cabinets to fit,” Rutherford said.

The boat launched at the end of January with a new carbon rig and a new suit of sails by Pineapple Sails. After sea trials on the Bay, some interior details were still being sorted out dockside as we went to press, but otherwise she’s out the door. “I’m not saying she’s a classic,” Rutherford concedes. “I’ll tell you one thing, though: this is the most expensive, cherried-out IOR boat out there.”

continued on outside column of next sightings page

concordia

of their onboard routine, all students and professional crew were able to evacuate safely into three large liferafts, which were lashed together as they awaited rescue. The ship’s EPIRB had been activated, but high frequency radios were rendered useless by the knockdown.

The 64 survivors drifted together for at least 40 hours before being rescued by the 662-ft merchant ship *Hokuetsu Delight* and the 688-ft tanker *Crystal Pioneer*. A later attempt to transfer the survivors to the Brazilian naval frigate *Constituição* had to be abandoned due to the rough conditions.



PHOTOS LATITUDE / LADONNA

— cont'd

All crew and students arrived in Rio de Janeiro on February 19, happy to be alive, but deeply saddened by the loss of their floating home, which has served as a school ship since '92.

"The story that is slowly emerging from our students and professional staff is of the heroic communal effort that saved all aboard," said Nigel McCarthy, president and CEO of West Island College International, which runs Class Afloat.

"That all were saved is a testament to the training, equipment and professionalism of our shipboard community."

— andy



Publicity stunt or innovation? Maybe both! — (clockwise from below) Meet the gang: (l to r) Bay Area sailing legend Peter Hogg, David de Rothschild, Jo Royle, David Thomson and Project Manager Matthew Grey. 'Plastiki' is, at best, a 6-knot downwind "drag generator," so bottom growth is of little concern, but after six months, test bottles show no hard growth, only slime. A little inspirational reading. Solar panels dot the surprisingly roomy geodesic cabin, with large rotating panels installed aft. Jo demonstrates how she'll get in bikini-shape while charging the batteries. The forward cabin (left) and galley (right) are well thought out.



eager — cont'd

Eager isn't the only project the now bi-coastal Rutherford has been working on lately. In July of '08, he signed on as the lead boatwright for the International Yacht Restoration School's restoration — actually a near-complete rebuild — of the 1885 William Townsend-designed 131-ft schooner *Coronet* at the school in Newport, Rhode Island.

"We were told there was enough oak stored in a Connecticut warehouse to rebuild the entire hull," he said. "When we sorted it, we found that half of the 25,000 board-feet had rotted, so we've had to track down more. Now we're finally getting to start building boat parts." While the delay has cost time and money, it's allowed Rutherford to get acclimated to the environment in Newport.

"I feel like a carpetbagger coming in from California," he said. "There's a huge boatbuilding scene in Newport and it's a different atmosphere; you're front and center and everyone's looking at you. In Richmond you're deep in a dark industrial corner and no one even knows you're there."

— rob

a ride on the plastic fantastic

San Francisco Bay has certainly seen its fair share of wacky boat projects (who can forget *Tin Can?*) but the one that's been making global headlines for the last year is *Plastiki*. It's the brainchild of 31-year-old David de Rothschild — extreme adventurer, dedicated environmentalist, and son of prominent banker Sir Evelyn de Rothschild. The 60-ft catamaran features 12,500 used soda bottles as flotation and has been the talk of the waterfront over the last few months as her crew test sails her on the Bay.

Any innovative and untested project is bound to get some skeptics but, if dock talk is any indicator, more than a fair share of sailors feel *Plastiki* is nuttier than most. So when *Latitude* was invited aboard for a test sail last month, we jumped at the opportunity in an effort to answer some of our readers' questions.

First off, those bottles are not just for show. "The idea was to make the bottles visible *and* functional," de Rothschild said. "Boatbuilders wanted to melt down the bottles and make the boat out of that, but it would have defeated the purpose." That purpose is to educate the world about 'upcycling' — the practice of reusing items, especially plastics, in new and different ways instead of throwing them out.

In fact, if disaster strikes during their planned multi-leg voyage to Australia, and all the bottles spill out of the boat, the crew will have more to worry about than littering the ocean. "We've built a very strong cage system that runs the entire length of the boat to hold the bottles," de Rothschild explained. "If that cage is smashing apart, it's very likely other parts of the boat are smashing apart." But to answer the question, the bottles provide so much of *Plastiki's* flotation — 68% — that, if the boat remained intact, she would most likely lie awash, thanks only to watertight compartments at deck level.

The 150 or so bottles that can be seen lining the exterior of hulls — not one of which has been lost, though gaps can be seen where none were installed — will eventually be strapped down to prevent them from washing out in heavy seas, says skipper Jo Royle.

A petite blonde, Royle is no delicate flower. She's been sailing her entire life and has put about 100,000 miles under her keel — and she's only 30. Royle skippered Pindar's Class 40 in the '07 Transat Jacques Vabre, and she's sailed as far north as Iceland and as far south as Antarctica. This is one bad-ass sailor chick!

Some wonder if the self-reinforcing polyethylene terephthalate (srPET) — which is bonded together with heat instead of glue or epoxy — might start to degrade in the sun and heat of the South Pacific. "We tested panels of srPET on a reef in Hawaii with no problems," Royle explained. "And we've run accelerated lifestyle tests on all the different parts in labs in Palo Alto."

continued on outside column of next sightings page

plastiki — cont'd

"I was a little bit skeptical at the beginning, but I'm amazed by the product," admits Royle's co-skipper, David Thomson, 34. "It's a lot stiffer than we ever thought it would be, and she seems to be holding together really well. She doesn't even creak."

Thomson, who was brought into the project a few months ago, also boasts an impressive sailing résumé, having crewed on Steve Fossett's *Playstation*, sailed in America's Cup campaigns, and circumnavigated in a Class 40 during the last Portimão Global Ocean Race.

It's no coincidence that the addition of such well-seasoned sailors to the project has slowed its progress. When we first reported on *Plastiki* in last April's issue, we noted that the team planned to be sailing over the horizon later that month. "Initial estimates were a little . . . optimistic," Royle noted diplomatically.

Since then, a number of early ideas were dropped or reworked to make the boat more sea-kindly. "Would you attempt to cross an ocean on a boat you didn't think would make it?" Royle asked during a discussion about *Plastiki's* seaworthiness. "I sure wouldn't! If we don't make it to Australia, I'll consider it a total failure."

Though no one has committed to a departure day it's clearly on the horizon. Royle said that, besides throwing some food aboard, they were ready for a 48-hour offshore shakedown cruise when the right weather window opened. And the official unveiling of the boat was at the end of last month, so don't be surprised if *Plastiki* is on her way to Australia by the time you read this. And don't be surprised if she makes it.

Learn more about the *Plastiki* Project at www.theplastiki.com.

— *ladonna*

hitchin' a ride

How do people get to crew on boats, particularly in places they don't live? During November's Banderas Bay Blast, we asked around, figuring we would give readers tips on how to get rides in places such as Southern California, Mexico, the Caribbean, the Med — anywhere in the world, really.

The classic, of course, is to know the owner. For instance, two-thirds of the crew on Arjan Bok's San Francisco-based Lidgard 43 cat *RotKat* have sailed together for years on San Francisco Bay. Tom Friel started racing with Bok in '82, almost immediately after the Dutchman moved

to San Francisco. As for crewman Craig Liberatore, he's Bok's partner in a San Francisco plumbing business. The third crewmember was Sally Martin, affectionately referred to as "the new local floozy" by her fellow crewmembers. Actually, Martin is a retired lawyer from the East Bay who represented foster children, and who has moved to Mexico with her son for a year. She knows Bok from Northern California.

There's always the bold approach to getting a crew position, such as was taken by Mary Serphos of Fairfax in Marin County. As a result of doing a bad thing, she eventually got to crew on Wayne Hendryx and Carol Baggerly's Brisbane-based Hughes 45 *Capricorn Cat*. Serphos had been putting on nutrition and wellness seminars at the Mar de Jade retreat in Chacala, when

she noticed some sailboats anchored a short distance off the beach. A good swimmer, she decided to swim toward the boats. "As I got near this catamaran, I just felt pulled to her," she said with a metaphysical gleam in her eye. "Then I saw the name *Capricorn Cat* — I'm a

continued on outside column of next sightings page

let's get this crew

We're proud to say that for many years — decades, actually — *Latitude 38's* Crew List parties have been matching skippers in need of crew with sailors in need of rides. The process is ongoing, as our now-online Crew List — which can be found at www.latitude38.com/crewlist/Crew.html — is constantly updated with new skippers and potential crew in a variety of categories, including daysailing, racing and offshore cruising.

But there's nothing quite like meeting people face-to-face to really get a sense of who they are, which is what the Spring Crew List Party is all about. This year's event will be held at Golden Gate YC on



Mary Serphos gives 'Capricorn Cat's Wayne Hendryx a little therapy.

LATITUDE / RICHARD

list party started

March 10 from 6-9 p.m., and will feature the usual slideshow, finger foods and full no-host bar. The cost for anyone under 25 is just \$5 (with ID) and is still only \$7 for the rest of us. It's the perfect cure to the hump-day blues, and is a great way to start your sailing season off right.

New this year will be a special presentation by the Bear Boat Owners Association. Though Bears — 23-ft woodies built in the early '30s — are an endangered species, the racing fleet has been enjoying a resurgence in the last year or two. "We are now officially in the WBRA schedule," says Margie Seagal, Bear aficionado and

continued in middle column of next sightings page

hitchin' — cont'd

Capricorn!" Even though nobody was aboard, Mary climbed aboard — that's the naughty part — and looked around. As luck would have it, Wayne and Carol visited the Mar de Jade resort the following day to take a yoga class. While there, they met Mary. When she asked if she might sail with them sometime, they signed her up for the Blast.

It's also common for folks to get crew positions by frequenting places where sailors hang out. In the case of Shannon Whitlow of Puerto Vallarta, it was hanging around at Philo's Music Studio and Bar in nearby La Cruz. "I mostly work on powerboats out of Vallarta, but one night I went to Philo's in La Cruz with some cruisers, and that's where I met Mark Scarretta of the Lagoon 380 *Younger Girl*. The next thing I knew, I was crewing on his boat in the Blast." How did Whitlow, who is from Kentucky, end up in Vallarta in the first place? "My husband and I came to Vallarta for a week about five years ago. He went home a week later as scheduled, but having fallen in love with the people, the

continued on outside column of next sightings page

Hmmm, could this Bear Boat be named 'Panda'? What gave it away? These classic woodies designed for sailing on the Bay are once again a WBRA class, and some skippers need crew. There's no better way to meet them than to come to the Spring Crew List Party at Golden Gate YC on March 10.





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On 2 March the Clipper fleet of stripped out 68-foot ocean racing yachts will depart Qingdao, China, on Leg 5 of the Clipper 09-10 Round the World Yacht Race

After leaving the pomp and ceremony of a stunningly colourful visit, fog and fishing boats are in store as the yachts set out into the cold conditions blown in by the depressions rolling off the Chinese coast. Snow could make a regular appearance and the tropical sailing conditions of the previous leg will soon feel like a distant memory for those on board.

The Pacific Ocean is the largest in the world and the crews will be competing over a 6,000-mile course, taking on everything Mother Nature chooses to throw at them during the marathon crossing. Keeping a competitive focus, preserving kit and looking after crew morale will be a constant challenge before attention is turned to the variable conditions as the California coast appears over the horizon.

After more than 30 days at sea, the fleet is expected to arrive in San Francisco between 1 and 5 April and will be berthed in San Francisco Marina until 11 April.

Endorsed by Governor Schwarzenegger, *California* is one of the ten internationally sponsored teams taking part and the crew of the American entry will be giving it their all to try to secure a win into their home port. Waiting on the dockside and hoping to cheer in a winning team will be Californian crew member Shana Bagley, a 41-year-old Deputy Attorney General from Walnut Creek.

Shana says, "Four years ago, I was nearly run over by a city bus in San Francisco and realized that I had been seemingly too busy working behind a desk to think about my 'Bucket List.' One item on that list was chartering a boat in the Caribbean. Never mind that I did not know how to sail.

"After taking lessons and chartering a few boats, my love of sailing took on a life of its own. The next thing I knew, I had completed a month of ocean racing and sea survival training in the UK as crew in the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race. Last August, I began the first of two epic adventures as a proud crewmember of *California*. I lived on board, at a distinct angle, for two months and over 5,000 nautical miles, and shared a confined space with 18 other people from all over the world. It was too hot or too cold and always damp, bumpy, salty, and noisy. Showers, sleep, privacy, and refrigeration were relatively unheard of.

"As with any endurance event, there were lows: having your head in the sick bucket for 12 hours, watching the spinnaker tear from foot to head, hot bunking in a damp berth that smells like feet, and being so physically and mentally exhausted that you are nearly brought to your knees.

"However, we also had extreme highs: seeing the world from the top of the mast or out the spinnaker pole, completing a headsail change in a squall at night with the ocean flushing up your trousers, finding that soul-filling groove of steering under spinnaker, seeing the deepest of deep-blue seas and the brightest of star-filled skies, and making dear friends for life.

"I do not know of any other experience that can make one can feel so insignificant and larger than life at the same time. This race has literally changed my life for the best. I have learned a lot about racing across oceans, living life on its very edge, understanding other cultures and perspectives, what is truly important, and about who I really am.

"I cannot rejoin my crew and skipper for Legs 6 and 7 soon enough. My second epic adventure awaits – as do entirely new horizons and new items for that Bucket List."



Shana Bagley arrives in Rio at the end of leg one

The Clipper Race is the only event of its kind open to people from all walks of life regardless of previous sailing experience and anyone over the age of 18 is eligible to take part. Running every two years, berths are now available on the next edition of the race and presentations are being held across the San Francisco Bay area during the Californian stopover of Clipper 09-10 for those interested in finding out more. Further details will appear in April's issue of *Latitude 38* but in the meantime more information about the race can be found at www.clipperroundtheworld.com.

SIGHTINGS

hitchin' — cont'd

weather and the big fish of Vallarta, I stayed. The stupidest thing in the world is that my friends from Kentucky think it isn't safe here!"

Meeting cruisers in anchorages is yet another way that people find crew positions on boats. There's a social magic that seems particularly strong in Tenacatita Bay, which is about 100 miles south of Banderas Bay. It was during one of the many social activities there that Richard and Sheri Crowe of the Newport Beach-based Farr 44 *Tabu* met Lowell and Mary Larsen of the Anacortes, Washington-based Bavaria 38 *True North*, and Peter Meyer and Michelle Tornai of the Vancouver-based 58-ft trawler *Incommunicado*. A couple of weeks later, the latter two couples were crewing on *Tabu* in the Blast. Based on all the laughter coming from their post-Blast dinner table, these folks, who had been strangers just weeks before, were getting on like a boat on fire.

Love also brings crew to boats. "I was buying wine and she was

continued on outside column of next sightings page

crew list party

owner of *Huck Finn* (#17). "Eight boats have indicated interest in racing, which means Bears need crew." You can learn more about Bear Boats at www.bearboats.com, but your best bet for scoring a crew spot is to show up at the party.

Another new addition this year will actually happen *before* the party. Sal Sanchez of Sal's Inflatables in Alameda, along with Barry Demak, who spent four hours in a liferaft last fall when *J World* sank off the coast of Mexico, will show participants how to inflate and enter a liferaft . . . from the water! Space is limited for the 'get wet' portion of the event, which will be held at



Hitchin' a ride — Clockwise from below, Scott Case's F/P 40 'Twins', with Alicia Contreras and skipper, revel in the beautiful Banderas Bay conditions; happy 'Tabu' crew Michelle Tornai and Mary Larsen bookend co-owner Sheri Crowe; although they're lovebirds, Leslie and Randy Hough of Port Moody, B.C., didn't sail the Blast together. 'Rotkat's Arjan Bok with Northern California crew Tom Friel, Craig Liberatore and Sally Martin. Wine seller Alicia Contreras and wine buyer Scott Case.



ALL PHOTOS LATITUDE / RICHARD

— cont'd

GGYC's docks from 3-5 p.m., so contact Sal at (510) 522-1824 to reserve a space. And don't forget a change of clothes!

But the apex of the party will be the Coast Guard helicopter rescue simulation right off GGYC in the waters of the Bay. Long-time partygoers may recall the days when the Coasties did this every year, but since 9/11, they've had other things on their minds. Due to limited daylight, the demo will start promptly at 6 p.m., so don't be late.

All this, plus the chance to win a *Latitude* t-shirt, for just \$7. You can't lose!

— ladonna



hitchin' — cont'd

selling wine," is Scott Case's succinct way of describing how he met the lovely Alicia Contreras. "Actually, I was working in a wine shop at the Vallarta Marina when Scott came in," Alicia explained, fleshing out the story. "He didn't even realize that I'm Mexican," laughs the Puerto Vallarta native, "but he asked me out. I said yes, then changed my mind, but he persisted." When we asked when all this happened, Case furrowed his brow in thought. "Five years and two months ago,"

Alicia interjected. Scott, who hasn't lived in the States since leaving Scottsdale in '04, bought the Beneteau 43 *Elysium* in Puerto Vallarta six years ago and, after a round trip to San Diego and back, he and Alicia cruised to Ecuador. There was so much to like down there — "It's warm, but not humid or rainy like in Central America, the officials aren't a problem, and it's inexpensive" — that he bought a condo. Then, after selling *Elysium* in January of '07, Case bought hull #18 of the F/P 40 catamarans. You might think you wouldn't have to wait long to take delivery of a 40-ft cat that sells for half a million, but Case and Contreras had to wait a year before they could pick up the new boat from the factory in La Rochelle, France. The two then sailed down to the Canary Islands, from where they started a 24-day passage across the Atlantic to Guadeloupe. They eventually made it to Banderas Bay for the Blast. The two aren't sure where they are headed next. "Maybe the South Pacific," says Case. "Maybe Ecuador. Or maybe both."

The internet is another common way that crew and skippers hook up. In the case of Randy and Leslie Hough, it happened in the late '90s, when Randy was sailing his Santana 22 out of the long-departed Peninsula Marina in Redwood City and Leslie lived in Canada. Their first sailing date was the South Bay's 54-mile Midnight Moonlight Marathon race. "It blew 35 knots the whole time," remembers Randy, "so it wasn't dry or comfortable aboard a little Tuna." When Randy moved to Canada to marry Leslie in '00, it was with *Befana*, a Catalina 30 that he'd already owned for five years. The couple now do 'six-and-six', spending half the year in Port Moody, Canada, and half a year in Banderas Bay, Mexico. Alas, Leslie didn't crew for Randy in the Blast. It had something to do with her still having not gotten over that first sail on the Santana 22. But she could have if she'd wanted to.

As our piece shows, there are lots of ways to get on boats. You might want to employ one of them — or others — for events such as the Banderas Bay Regatta, March 16-20; Sea of Cortez Sailing Week, April 1-6; La Paz Bay Fest, April 8-11; or Loreto Fest, April 30-May 2.

— richard

lord jim's brazilian nightmare

"I know, I know. . . why the hell did we have to sink the boat *in Brazil*?" quips Holger Kreuzhage of Sausalito, attempting to make light of a situation that is anything but humorous. As regular readers will recall, his renowned 72-ft John Alden schooner, *Lord Jim*, sank in Brazilian waters in March of '07 after hitting an uncharted rock — an experience that most sailors would probably consider to be their ultimate nightmare. But for Kreuzhage, 71, and his partner Tracy Brown, having their beloved 1936 classic — which they'd recently doublehanded around Cape Horn — sink out from under them was only the beginning of an agonizing three-year ordeal.

After refloating the double-planked schooner and completely re-building her hull from stem to stern in a small workboat yard south of Rio de Janeiro, they found themselves embroiled in a nasty legal

continued on outside column of next sightings page



'Younger Girl's Mark Scarretta and Shannon Whitlow.

lord jim — cont'd

battle with the yard's owner, Luiz Prado. He filed suit in an attempt to squeeze the Americans for hundreds of thousands of dollars over and above the haulout fees. The court eventually ruled in Kreuzhage's favor. But before he could launch the boat and sail away from this dark chapter in *Lord Jim's* already-colorful 74-year history, Prado



'Lord Jim's ensign flies upside down — an internationally recognized distress signal.

disassembled the tracks of his marine railway, thereby holding the schooner hostage, with no chance of making an exit unless her beleaguered owners paid him a \$50,000 'fee' that they'd be hard pressed to come up with. Prado has also filed an appeal which could drag on for years.

So, at this writing, the stranded schooner sits high and dry at the edge of the Reparos Naval do Mangaratiba yard, which abuts a dense jungle where blistering heat and intense humidity threaten to destroy her inch by inch. "It will not be a pretty

death," says Kreuzhage, who circumnavigated aboard *Lord Jim* three times before Tracy joined him. "There will be nothing noble about this drawn-out destruction — and that is what our enemy wants."

Kreuzhage and Brown are deeply dejected, of course, but they have not yet given up the fight. Recently, they've been encouraged by the fact that several major Brazilian media outlets have exposed the extortion attempt. Citing the fact that holding a vessel 'for ransom' is against both Brazilian and international law — especially since *Lord Jim* is a documented U.S.-flagged vessel — the embattled couple is hopeful that prominent American politicians such as Diane Feinstein, Barbara Boxer and perhaps even Hillary Clinton might take up their cause.

If you have advice or encouragement for these stranded former-Bay Area sailors, we're sure they'd be happy to hear from you. Email holger_kreuzhage@yahoo.com.

— andy

protecting the cetacean nation

Having been gravely threatened with extinction only a few decades ago, the resurgence of whale species along the West Coast and elsewhere is one of the greatest success stories of the modern conservation movement. An unfortunate consequence of that success, however, is that several species of cetaceans are now so prolific along the coast during their October-to-July migration season, that they are sometimes struck by commercial ships and recreational boats. A recent case in point was the sinking of the *J/120 J World* during October's Baja Ha-Ha Rally, after the vessel made a series of contacts with a humpback during a stint of heavy weather. (See the December '09 *Latitude*.)

In that instance there was little the crew could have done to avoid striking the 40-ft mammal. More generally, though, it's fair to say that the more we all know about the behaviors of migrating whales, the less likely we are to injure them. With that in mind, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service has asked us to help educate offshore sailors, and encourage all mariners to report strikes to authorities.

Marine Mammal Biologist Monica DeAngelis of NMFS explains, "Depending on the activity level, baleen whales (meaning filter-feeders such as humpbacks, grays and blues) breathe several times at the surface before submerging again for several minutes." She notes that these species can sometimes be identified by the size and shape of their spouts. A gray whale's spout, for example, is typically heart-shaped when viewed head-on; a humpback's is rounded and "bushy;" and a blue's is tall and columnar. "The visible spout of a whale is not actually water rising from the blowhole," she explains, "it's water vapor condensing as the respiratory gases expand in the open air." (For further info, download NOAA's informational brochure from latitude38.

continued on outside column of next sightings page

do the delta

Last summer, 30 or so Bay sailors joined in the inaugural Delta Doo Dah, a laid-back Bay-to-Delta 'rally' we dreamed up over a bottle of champagne at the company Christmas party. The idea was to get folks sailing in their own backyard, and it worked better than we'd hoped.

As summer approaches at lightspeed, we realized that it was time to announce the deets on this summer's running of the event. Conflicts with a couple of Hawaii races forced us to move the dates a month later so the Delta Doo Dah Deux will be held July 31-August 6. The entry fee is just \$49, and includes a burgee and



doo dah deux

t-shirt. Stockton Sailing Club will once again host the Doo Dah Hooplah on Friday, August 6, leaving folks the weekend to make it back to the Bay. Other stops and events will be announced on www.deltadoodah.com as they're confirmed.

Last year we limited the number of entries to 30 boats to make the fleet manageable. This year, we're increasing the fleet to 50 boats, but won't start accepting entries until *'Lectronic Latitude* is posted (usually around noon) on March 15. Better mark your calendars — last year all 30 slots were taken in three days!

— *ladonna*

cetacean nation — cont'd

com. Click "Links" then "Resources.")

As every sailor worth his salt knows, under international law someone must always be on watch aboard any vessel that's underway. And part of a watch-keeper's job should be to keep an eye out for whales, in addition to other vessels. If you are unlucky enough to hit one — or observe any marine mammal that's stranded, entangled or injured — DeAngelis and her associates ask that you report the incident as soon as possible via their toll-free hotline for marine mammals in distress: (877) SOS-WHALE (767-9425). Or hail the Coast Guard on VHF 16. Rescue attempts of entangled or injured mammals can be dangerous, so mariners are urged not to approach closer than 100 yards, unless prompted to do so by trained responders.

It's a big ocean out there. If we're careful, there should be plenty of room for all of us — and marine mammals too.

— *andy*



Spread: Now finally rebuilt, 'Lord Jim' is being "held hostage" in a Brazilian boatyard. Inset left: The railway's tracks were intentionally disabled. Insets right, top to bottom: Compared to the court battle, refloating her was easy. The harsh elements at work. When supports were maliciously removed, Kreuzhage hammered replacements right into his newly faired hull.



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY LORD JIM

SIGHTINGS

ronnie simpson — never say die

When Ronnie Simpson left San Diego on October 1, 2008, aboard his Rhodes Bounty II *La Cenicienta* bound for Hawaii, the dockside know-it-alls told him he'd never make it. After all, the 23-year-old kid had bought the boat just a few months earlier, and had never sailed a day in his life. What business did he have sailing solo to Hawaii?

As it turns out, they were right.

Just eight days and 800 miles out of San Diego, Hurricane *Norbert* — off Cabo at the time — had whipped up the seas into such a frenzy that Simpson was suffering from seasickness and exhaustion. *La Cenicienta* was doing well, but on October 8, Ronnie admitted on his blog that he may have idealized the supposed “tradewind run” to the islands: “I had no clue what I was getting myself into, setting off alone from California to Hawaii. I thought it was going to be an easy, pleasant run in a steady 15 knots of breeze.” That night, his steering failed.

“I think I hit a whale,” Simpson says now of the incident which led to his rescue by a China-bound freighter. “I was below when the boat

continued on outside column of next sightings page

clipper race on its

As we go to press, details were being finalized for the Clipper 'Round the World Race's San Francisco stopover, which will bring the nine remaining boats in the fleet to the San Francisco Marina around April 1. The boats are slated to dock adjacent to Golden Gate YC after finishing the roughly 35-day Leg 5 from Qingdao — the longest leg to date of the biennial 'round the world race sailed in identical 68-ft boats.

The Bay is the only U.S. stop for this year's race, and adding to the excitement, the Golden State's first-ever entry, *California*, will be in the pack. Six Californians have already joined the crew for various legs, and those who aren't aboard the boat for the slog across the Puddle will be on




LATITUDE / LADONNA

way to the bay

hand to welcome their teammates home.

The fleet will only be here for between six and 10 days before heading out April 11 for a downwind blast in true West Coast-style to Panama for a transit of the canal. As if it weren't gnarly enough that they have to sail upwind for 35 days to get here, the short stopover means the sailors — many of whom had little or no offshore experience before their rigorous Clipper Race training — won't have much time in the City. So make sure you get down to the Marina, adopt a Clipper racer, and show the fleet some love! You'll find more info, as well as updated arrival times in at www.clipperroundtheworld.com.

— rob



Never say die — Ronnie Simpson, 25, who has cheated death twice, will be racing to Hawaii in this summer's Singlehanded TransPac to finish what he started two years ago, and to promote a cause close to his heart: Hope for the Warriors.

simpson — cont'd

rounded up. I tried turning the wheel but nothing happened. When I checked below, I could see the worm gear turning but the rudder post didn't move. Then I saw that the rudder to my Aries windvane was trailing the boat by its safety line." It certainly does seem unlikely that both rudders would fail simultaneously.

In hindsight, Ronnie says he made some big mistakes, "But shit happens in life." This coming from a guy who, at the age of 19, was blown nearly to pieces by an RPG just 13 months into his first tour of duty as a Marine stationed in Fallujah, Iraq. He survived the explosion — barely — and spent 18 days in a medically-induced coma, two months recovering in a military hospital, and several more months getting back into the swing of civilian life in Texas.

But by the end of '07, Simpson had it all: A good job, a house, six high-end motorcycles, and a beautiful fiancée. "On December 18, my brother called from Hawaii and asked if I wanted to sail around the world," he recalls. Having never sailed before, Ronnie dismissed the idea, but Googled 'sailing' out of curiosity. "I put my house on the market five days later," he laughs. Within three months, he'd liquidated everything — including the fiancée — moved to San Diego, and bought the Bounty.

Sadly, everything he owned was aboard the uninsured *La Cenicienta*. With just \$5,000 left to his name, Simpson couldn't afford another boat, so he switched gears . . . literally. After arriving in Hong Kong, Ronnie bought a Cannondale bicycle and spent the next nine months riding 9,000 miles through 21 countries. "After 20 countries with no problems," he recalls, "my bike got stolen in London within an hour!"

He bought another bike, but instead of continuing through Western Europe as planned, he flew to the Bay Area and rode home to San Diego. "I flew back to the States with \$88 to my name," he said. "When I got to San Diego, I announced I was done with biking and that I would do the 2010 Singlehanded TransPac." It seems his desire to sail hadn't gone down with *La Cenicienta*.

Though he bought a Cal 25 two weeks after getting back and was considering doing the race aboard her, Simpson soon received an offer he couldn't refuse. Don Gray, a former Marine who had competed in the '08 Solo TransPac aboard the *Judson 30 Warriors Wish*, had heard his story and emailed him with a proposal. "He said that he would loan me his boat if I made all the rest happen," Ronnie says. "You don't meet a lot of Dons." Simpson and Gray spent the next few months prepping *Warriors Wish* in North Carolina before trucking her to Alameda, where Ronnie is completing upgrades for the race.

Warriors Wish will be the only sponsored boat in the race (to date) — and the first since '04. Though he is receiving quite a bit of donated gear, Simpson's main sponsor is the non-profit Hope for the Warriors, a charity that runs support programs for wounded veterans and their families. "The one that really touches me is one that helps families be at the bedside of their wounded veterans throughout their recovery," Simpson noted. "I couldn't have made it through if my parents hadn't been there." (Find out more at www.hopeforthewarriors.org.)

For all the naysayers Ronnie's encountered, especially after his return from Europe, he's had triple the number of supporters, but one in particular stands out. "This old guy Harry in San Diego had sailed to Hawaii and back six times on his 30-footer. When I got back and everyone was giving me shit, he said, 'Sounds to me like you learned a lot. You don't have a boat and you don't have any money, but I know you'll leave the marina before any of these guys do.'"

This time it seems Harry was right.

Follow Ronnie on his website at www.openbluehorizon.com. For more about the Singlehanded TransPac, which starts from the Bay on June 19 and ends in Kauai, go to www.sfbayyss.org. The next race seminar — which is free and open to anyone — will focus on rigging and will be held March 15 at Oakland YC. See *Calendar* for details.

— ladonna