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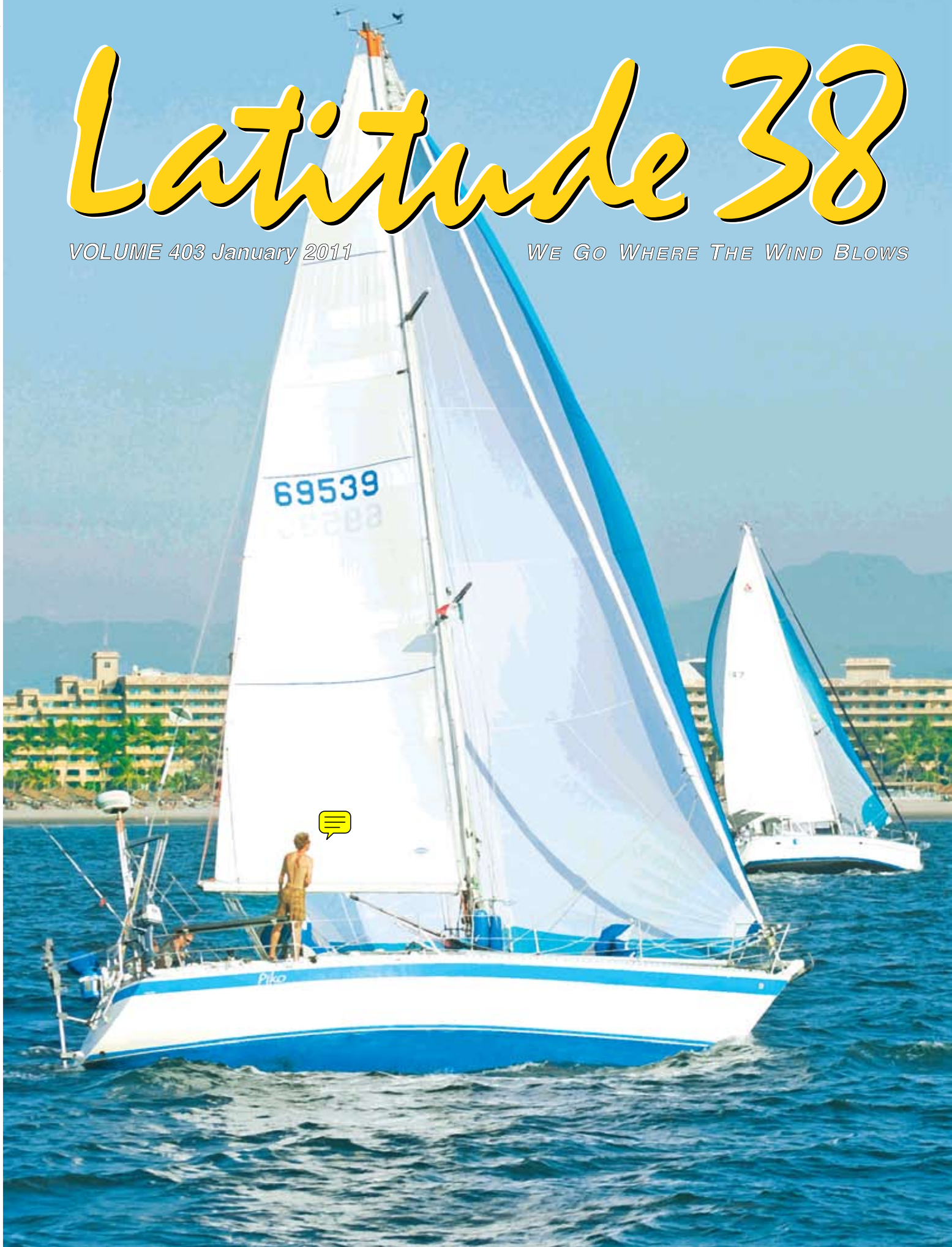
Latitude 38

VOLUME 403 January 2011

WE GO WHERE THE WIND BLOWS

JANUARY 2011

VOLUME 403



BANDERAS BAY

If a picture is really worth a thousand words, we have a 21,000-word article for you about early December's Banderas Bay Blast. It was a humble three-days of 'nothing serious' cruiser racing, with the third race doubling as the Pirates for



Anna, from the Canary Islands, cocks her hip to accept her yacht club initiation.

Pupils Spinnaker Run for Charity. The purpose of the event, which is put on by the Punta Mita Yacht & Surf Club and the Vallarta YC, is to keep cruisers using their boats while raising a couple of thousand dollars for worthy local charities. So the 'winners' were everyone who participated.

When it comes to pleasure sailing/racing, there are few places in the world that can compare with Banderas Bay. The air is so warm that the only clothing you *have* to wear is a hat, and the water is so warm you don't need to wear a suit — let alone a wetsuit. Did we mention that it's always flatwater sailing, and the 15-mile by 15-mile bay

is surrounded by jungle-covered green mountains that rise to as much as 5,000 feet? And don't even get us started on how sweet the people are, and how you can get an excellent dinner for \$10 and a decent one for \$5.

The wind, of course, is the most important thing when it comes to sailing. Banderas Bay doesn't get the honking breezes of San Francisco in the summer or the Caribbean in the winter, but it offers a nice mix of light air in the morning and early afternoon, and the mid-teens or more in the later afternoon. And when you're pleasure racing aboard what, in many cases, are floating homes, there's nothing wrong with sub-honking. Dusk to dawn is usually calm. How convenient!

And once your sailing day on BB is over, you can end up at any number of great places from the jungle bay of Yelapa to Old Town Puerto Vallarta. In the case of the Blast, the first 'race' ended at La Cruz, where the Marina Riviera Nayarith hosted the fleet for a free night's mooring and the use of their Sky Bar. Later the participants strolled into town for

From bottom, left to right: 'Cap Cat'. 'Miss Teak'. Pirates and pupils mingle. 'Di's Dream' on the tightest of reaches. Next row up, George atomizes his balloon. Jeff and Deborah of 'Cap Cat'. Gilly and John of 'Destiny'. Ken Sears of 'Blue'. Pupils. Laura and Louis of 'Cirque' discuss tactics. Karen, formerly of Alameda, used the softest parts of her body to try to catch her balloon. Spread; 'Seren dipity' at Punta Mita. Right; 'Blue'. Photos by Jay Ailworth and Latitude. More on next page.





killer 80-cent street tacos and music at ex-cruiser Philo's Music Studio. The second race ended at Punta Mita, where the fleet gathered for dinner at the Yacht & Surf Club's nomadic headquarters. The only bummer is that there wasn't any surf this time at the 'Mexican Malibu', which is an easy paddle from the anchored boats. The final race, the Pirates for Pupils, took the fleet on a 12-mile spinnaker run to Paradise Village Marina, where the fleet was treated to two days of free berthing as well as the use of Vallarta YC's pool, hot-tub and facilities.



MARILY REILLY

This year's fleet wasn't as big as last year's. It might have been because we didn't push the event or because all the Ha-Ha folks who went to La Paz sort of got pinned down by a couple of early season Northerners. The important thing is that everyone had a great time, and that nearly \$3,000 was raised to buy education materials for the kids.

— latitude 38



BANDERAS BAY BLAST



Clockwise from left: 'Sunamita'. Most of the Blast crew gathered at the Marina Riviera Nayarit Sky Bar for the traditional Waterballoon Drop. Dustin Houseknecht learned that Commodore Ginger, the fifth female Yacht & Surf Club Commodore in a row, took her initiation paddling job very seriously. Chip and Katie of 'Miss Teak'. Francesca and Frederica, seen here bookending Washboard Leon and his alter egos at Philo's, came all the way from Lake Como, Italy, to save turtles and do the Blast. 'Serendipity' and 'Profligate' on the Pirates for Pupils Spinnaker Run. Sonja waits for the falling of her water balloon. Beth of S.F., like all the young sailors, welcomed her Y&SC initiation.

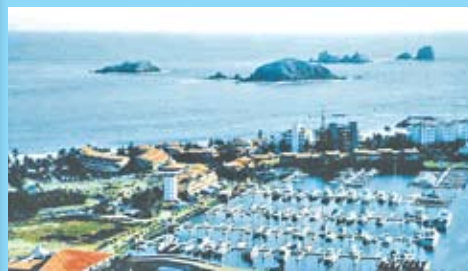
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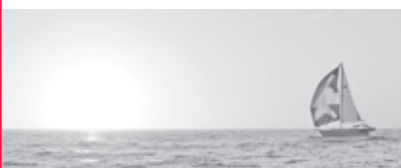
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CAPE HORN & BEYOND —

The ad in *Latitude's Classy Classifieds* read: "LADY CREW ADVENTURE. Cruise Patagonia, Antarctic, South Africa, Atlantic Islands to Scandinavia. Depart southern Chile late September. . . . Mature age and experience, others considered, expenses covered, airfare negotiable."

When longtime *Latitude* devotee



As if waving to friends back home, Catherine poses for a snapshot at Punta Arenas, which lies on the Strait of Magellan at latitude 53° S.

Catherine Baker read those words in the August 2008 issue, she immediately thought, "Mature and experienced? That's me." Serendipitously, she'd just lost her job, but had plenty of money in the bank, and she was more than ready for a blue water adventure.

After a very long conversation via Skype with the ad's author, John Williams, Catherine, then 61, was convinced that John, who was 71, would probably be an amiable shipmate, and she was confident that he was a very competent sailor. Trained as a physicist, he'd made a pile of money in the aerospace industry years ago, retired in his 40s, and had been cruising off and on since the '70s. With 125,000 sea miles under his belt, John was partway through his third circumnavigation. He'd built *Faraway* — a 38-ft Garden ketch — of wood and sheathed her in fiberglass.

Catherine, who grew up in Newport Beach, had always spent time around boats, and had acquired an insatiable sense of wanderlust at age 11 when she and her family steamed around the world aboard a series of cruise ships. Although the bulk of this San Francisco Bay sailor's offshore sailing experience had been in the mid-'80s when she did a nine-month stint of South Pacific cruising, she felt that she knew what she was getting into and was up to the challenges

that would inevitably lie ahead.

So, in November, 2008 Catherine flew down to Santiago, Chile, and hopped a bus to Puerto Montt, where the vast maze of Patagonian channels begins. The plan was for her to crew for John for six months, however far that took her. But she and John got along well and she ended up staying aboard *Faraway* for 14 months, traveling around Cape Horn, out to the Falklands and South Georgia Island, across to South Africa, and all the way up the Atlantic to the Canary Islands. After experiencing all that, we weren't surprised to hear Catherine say, "That trip definitely changed my life. I got addicted to being out on the water." In fact, she's now trying to find work in the commercial maritime industry.

Accommodations aboard *Faraway*, weren't quite like the luxurious liners she'd circled the globe on as a kid. The relatively small interior was made smaller still by the storage of all sorts of spare parts and equipment, an abundance of food, and a wealth of books. Although the boat was decades old, John had equipped her with the requisite modern nav and communications gear. There was an ample galley, but no shower. Catherine had no complaints though. After all, this was going to be an adventure. She found John to be a true gentleman, who'd lived a fascinating, if irregular life. His home base, when not cruising, was on a small island near Sitka, in southeast Alaska.

After thoroughly provisioning, the newly acquainted shipmates headed south into the primeval wonderland of the Chilean fiords — a 1,000-mile tangle of channels and inlets that extends to the very bottom of South America. Due to the arrival of strong winds called williwaws nearly every afternoon, they would typically drop anchor, then run stern lines to trees or rocks ashore. "It sounds incredible, but almost every time we'd start the engine and begin motoring into an anchorage, pods of dolphins would suddenly appear. Then once we'd shut down the engine they'd quickly disappear."

After finally arriving at the Strait of Magellan, they worked their way down to Puerto Williams, the southernmost port in Patagonia, where they met and swapped tales with salty seafarers from all over the world at the famous *Micalvi* Yacht Club bar — housed aboard a half-sunken hulk.

Cape Horn, Catherine explains, is actually one of a cluster of small, jagged

islets that lie just south of the island of Tierra del Fuego. John steered *Faraway* between them, and at one point couldn't resist entering a narrow opening, "probably only about 20 feet wide," that led to a well-protected grotto with waterfalls streaming down from craggy peaks above. "It was incredibly dramatic," recalls Catherine, "like being in Yosemite Valley, only covered with water."

The 400-mile trip from the Cape Horn

"We were suddenly surrounded by dolphins that were literally glowing with phosphorescence."

area to the Falklands took about 10 days, and was at times pretty rough going. "By the time you get down that far south, though, (latitude 56° S) you're pretty used to rough seas," she explains.

As *Faraway* entered Port Stanley, her crew found themselves surrounded by a pod of at least 15 30-foot sei whales. "They were so close to the boat we could have stepped out onto them!" Catherine

Below: Under typically cloudy skies, *'Faraway'* works her way through Southern Patagonia. The 22-ton boat wasn't fancy, but she was solid. **Near right:** John surveys the wreckage of whaling ships at Grytviken. **Far right:** World cruisers tied up alongside the *'Micalvi'* Yacht Club.



ALL PHOTOS CATHERINE BAKER

A CREW LIST ODYSSEY

recalls.

"It's sooo British in the Falklands — it almost feels like you're in England. There are few trees throughout the rolling countryside, but the people there were very friendly." As she and John were reeling from the high price of a shower at the local Seaman's Hall, a local man befriended them and insisted that they come with him to his humble home for showers and dinner.

"Before leaving the Falklands, John had to work hard to get a permit to go to South Georgia Island," recalls Catherine, "because we'd been told you don't want to arrive there without one."

During the two-week, 900-mile crossing they saw only one other vessel, the 64-ft steel schooner *Golden Fleece*, which does charter trips in those lonely latitudes.

When they arrived at the abandoned whaling station called Grytviken, the island's best anchorage and only populated area, they were greeted by Miss Emma, a proper English bureaucrat who

insisted, "You must rinse your boots in bleach water before coming ashore." In contrast to the island's heyday as a whaling center a half century ago, today its creatures

are staunchly protected. South Georgia is said to have one of the greatest concentrations of wildlife on earth, including six species of penguins, literally millions of seabirds, half the world's population of southern elephant seals, as well as more than two million southern fur seals, which, ironically, were once hunted to near extinction there.

With its towering, snow-capped peaks descending into deep blue bays, Catherine remembers the island was "incredibly beautiful," even though most of it is off-limits to visitors. There's a fascinating museum which is well worth a look. But for the cruisers and expedition ship passengers who call here, the top attraction is always Sir Ernest Shackleton's grave site. Six years after he arrived here in a whaleboat on a desperate mission to rescue his shipwrecked Antarctic expedition crew, he



Few humans have crossed the mountains of South Georgia Island — except, of course, Sir Ernest Shackleton during his epic journey.

running across the 30-ft Giles cutter *Wanderer III*, whose current owners are continuing the globetrotting traditions of her original owners, author/explorers Eric and Susan Hiscock.

"Ice pancakes were all over the surface by the time we left South Georgia," recalls Catherine. From there, it was a long, hard 4,000-mile trip to South Africa that took them 51 days. Along the way, they saw plenty of nasty weather, but the low point for Catherine was when they were smacked by a rogue wave that slammed her against the mizzen mast and soaked her to the skin. "That totally pissed me off," she says with a smile. At another point they heard a *mayday* from a sailboat in peril and were able to relay the call to Brazilian rescuers.

On *Faraway's* nighttime approach to the mainland, the weary passage-makers had a thrill: "We were suddenly surrounded by dolphins that were literally



returned in 1922 en route to another Antarctic survey project. Sadly, though, he died of a heart attack aboard his ship, *Quest*, in a nearby cove. For Catherine, another highlight was

glowing with phosphorescence. It was just so unbelievable; they were so bright as they dove beneath our bow and circled around us."

From previous visits, John knew that Hout Bay, with its easy access to shore, nearby shops and hospitable yacht club, was much more cruiser-friendly than Cape Town.



CAPE HORN & BEYOND

After spending so long in rugged, far-flung places, it was nice to be in a place where they could resupply — and get off the boat for a while. John and Catherine did a bit of inland touring, before continuing north up the Atlantic.

The final 5,500 miles of Catherine's *Crew List* odyssey took her all the way up the South Atlantic, and across the equator to the Canaries, with stops en route at both St. Helena and Ascension — both solitary islands lying more than 1,000 miles offshore. A highlight of her stay at St. Helena was the hospitality of the British population of Jamestown — especially the gregarious proprietress of the Consulate Hotel, who offered Catherine and John a hot bath whenever they came ashore — and did their laundry for free!

Catherine loved it there — and not just because of those hot baths. "The town is like a beautiful little village in the English countryside. The weather is



A view of St. Helena's picturesque capital, Jamestown, from atop Jacob's Ladder — a must-do hike up an 800-step walkway.

nice, there's a big public pool near the wharf, quaint markets, and crystal-clear water in the bay."

Ascension, 800 miles north, also provided a welcomed rest stop, but was less interesting, as it is now mostly dedicated to telecom transmission infrastructure. The next stop, at the Portuguese Cape Verde Islands, was even less inspir-

ing though. "It seems to be the armpit of the region," recalls Catherine, but interesting nonetheless.

When *Faraway* finally made landfall at the Canary Islands in January, 2010, Catherine reluctantly decided it was probably time for her to get back to the real world. She'd had one heck of an adventure, though, having sailed some 12,000 miles with stops at 9 countries. Along the way her seafarer's mettle had been severely tested. But she met many fascinating people and saw many wondrous sights, including ancient glaciers, cascading waterfalls, historic landfalls, herds of fur seals, pods of whales and dolphin, vast colonies of penguins, giant manta rays, and the elusive green flash — all because she responded to a free *Classy Classified*. Goes to show, you never know where an open mind coupled with an open itinerary might take you.

— **latitude/andy**

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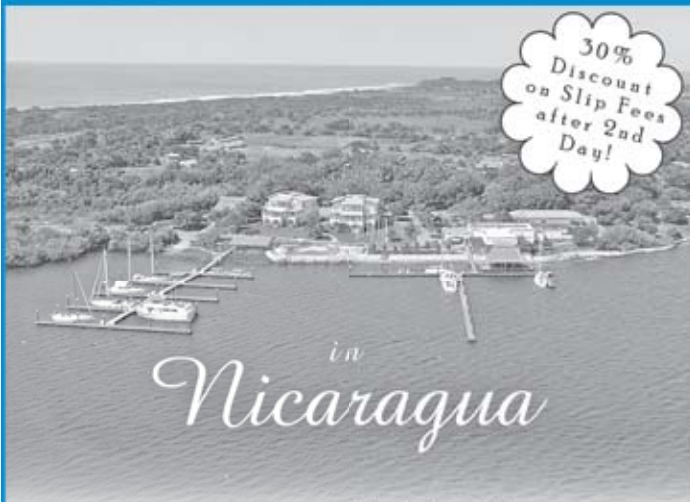
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2010 — THE YEAR

LATITUDE / LADONNA



If it hadn't been for the quick response by firefighters, this Sausalito marina fire in February could have been a lot worse.

LATITUDE / RICHARD



The 394-ft megayacht 'A', owned by Russian billionaire Andrey Melnichenko, was first spotted in St. Barth, then in Sausalito later in the year.

AGNIESZKA CABAN



Natasza Caban, 32, had a tough time battling all sorts of physical ailments during her solo circumnavigation.

LATITUDE / RICHARD



It's wasn't just the chili that was hot at the Vallarta YC's Chili Cook-Off, a fundraiser for local charities.

2010 saw the America's Cup brought home by kajillionaire Larry Ellison and his BMW Oracle Racing team.



LATITUDE / LADONNA



'Plastiki', the controversial 60-ft cat made from soda bottles, left the Bay bound for Oz.

Every year has its ups and downs, and last year was no exception. From the loss of several West Coast sailors to the rescue of complete strangers, the year was a roller coaster ride of emotion. Here's a quick recap of the biggest *Latitude* news from 2010. **January** may have been the beginning of the new year, but that month's issue heralded many ends: Wayne Meretsky lost his well-traveled S&S 47 *Moonduster* during a cyclone in Fiji; beloved sailing supporter Roy Disney succumbed to stomach cancer; Polish stunner Natasza Caban finished her 2.5-year solo circumnavigation when she sailed into Honolulu; the Catalina 36 *JoJo* was totalled after she went up on the beach at Stillwater Cove; and Bruce Balan and Alene Rice celebrated the end of their single lives by getting hitched at the South Pacific's remote Minerva Reef. News in the **February** issue was more varied, starting with prestigious awards being given to deserving sailors, including the Bay's own Sophie and Maurice Conti, who rescued the crew of a sunken ketch. A riveting interview with Stan Honey followed. We then reported on the thriving catamaran-building industry in Vietnam; profiled John Connolly, the well-heeled owner of a local sailing school; and recounted the cruising tales of twenty-something twins Chad and Bret van Roden. We continued with reports from the always-wild Key West Race Week, the Rolex Sydney Hobart, Bay Area Midwinters, and news that *Cork*, the Irish entry in the Clipper 'Round the World Race, had been lost off Indonesia. Liz Clark rounded out the issue with the news that the very long and expensive haul-out in French Polynesia to fix a nagging keel leak ended with *Swell* leaking worse than ever. To add insult to injury, she also had rats!

IN REVIEW



BRUCE BALAN

Alene (above) and Bruce Balan shared tips on cruising French Polynesia.



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Jaime, Mera and Aeron Conger cruise with their parents, Dean and Toast, on the family's Seattle-based Lagoon 380 'Don Quixote'.



COURTESY SWELL

Liz Clark got her 'surf on' with Sir Jimmy at Bora Bora.



GILLES MARTIN-RAGET / BMW ORACLE RACING



ROLEX / KURT ARRIGO

The Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race was a small-boat affair.



NERIA BREWERTON

Wayne Meretsky rode out Tropical Cyclone Mick only to lose his beloved 'Moonduster' on the beach.

March was dominated by BMW Oracle's win in the 33rd America's Cup. Larry Ellison handily whipped Ernesto Bertarelli in the courtroom *and* on the course in what became the battle of the behemoths — the 90-ft x 90-ft tri *USA* and the 90-ft by 80-ft cat *Alinghi 5*. The fantastical brainchild of environmentalist David de Rothschild, *Plastiki*, made a quite a splash after her launch in the Bay. Made from 12,500 old soda bottles and hi-tech srPET, the 60-ft eco-cat focused the world's attention on ocean pollution. We reported on Holger Kreuzhage's Brazilian nightmare — his 72-ft Alden schooner, *Lord Jim*, was being held hostage by a Brazilian boatyard owner. As of this writing, it still is! A marina fire, the Three Bridge Fiasco recap, and profiles of Pacific Puddle Jumpers rounded out the issue. **The annual boat show issue, April**, was jam-packed with good stuff. Franck Cammas' *Groupama 3*, with Stan Honey at the nav station, smashed the Jules Verne record by circumnavigating in 48d, 7h, 44m, 52s! The Potter Yachters — a club for pocket cruisers — found their feet in the South Bay mud, thus spawning an illustrious career in the pages of *Latitude*. *Plastiki* left the Bay, bound for Australia. Mirian Saez, director of Treasure Island Development Authority, cleaned up Clipper Cove by kicking out the miscreants, raising the wrecks, and instituting new rules to keep the anchorage accessible for everyone. We profiled dozens of programs dedicated to getting today's kids out sailing. We also recapped the Big Daddy Regatta, which was big fun, as always, and some Mexico racing. Northern California's *Akela* broke the Vallarta Race record, so we just had to fly down to cover the subsequent Mexorc festivities. Tough job, but someone's got to do it.

2010 — THE YEAR



AP PHOTO / ROB GRIFFITH

Aussie teen Jessica Watson became a national hero.



ROGER DAVIS

'Roger Davis' and his swashbuckling gang of law breakers enjoyed their charter in Cuba.



LATITUDE / LADONNA

Seattleite Adrian Johnson sailed his Olson 30 'Idefix' to victory in the Singlehanded TransPac.



COURTESY WANDERLUST 3

Mike Harker survived an attack at anchor in St. Martin.



DAVE KEANE

The Delta Ditch Run gave Lauren Goche a smack upside the head — with a full beer can!



SCOTT JOHNSON

Felix Knauth, 80, was one of three sailing fatalities in May.



May kicked off with a tutorial about downloading the e-book version of *Latitude* onto the just-released iPad, then moved on to the unbelievable story of a sail training course gone bad — Boguslaw 'Bob' Norwid-Niepokoj and his paying crewmembers aboard 48-ft *Columbia* limped into a Chilean port six weeks overdue. No one was injured, but everyone was pretty pissed at 'Bogus Bob'. Abby Sunderland's bid to solo circumnavigate nonstop was cut short when she was forced to make a pit stop in Cape Town, while Gary Ramos shared his plans to finish his solo circumnavigation of the Arctic Ocean — he was later denied permission from Russia to transit their waters. The Clipper Round the World Race stopped in the Bay for the first time, with *California* trailing the pack after a mid-ocean dismasting. We also featured the bravery of the pararescuemen who evacuated an injured crewman from *Wind Child* in the middle of the Pacific. The issue wrapped up with a report on Greg Dorland's recent visit to off-limits Cuba. **We** were saddened to report in the **June** issue that four California sailors had been lost in May, the last three on one day: Felix Knauth fell off his Santana 22 *Rose* near Pt. Conception; Jeff and Beth Easterling were washed off their Ranger 33 *Barcarolle* on the 'South Channel' near Ocean Beach; and Tom Kirschbaum was ripped from the harness attached to his International Folkboat *Feral* off Marina del Rey. Jessica Watson became the youngest nonstop solo circumnavigator, at the age of 16, in her pink S&S 34 *Ella's Pink Lady*, while a crew of 'pink ladies' turned heads at Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta aboard the 37-ft Carriacou sloop *Pink Lady*. Gar Duke and Nicole Friend rounded everything out with a nail-biting account of traversing the pirate-infested Gulf of Aden.



ANDREW VIK

Andrew Vik spent another summer frequenting clubs in the Med while cruising his Islander 36 'Geja'. They may not have won the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, but the crew of 'Pink Lady' got lots of attention.



COURTESY ARCTIC WANDERER

Gary Ramos was ultimately denied permission by Russia to traverse their Arctic waters.



LATITUDE / ROB

After limping into the Bay with no mast, 'California' did her name-sake proud when she left on the eighth leg of the Clipper Round the World Race.



JANET HEIN



COURTESY CAPRICORN CAT

Jim Milski gets up close and personal with a stingray in Moorea.



COURTESY AUSTRALIAN SEARCH & RESCUE

Abby Sunderland's record bid was cut short in the Southern Ocean.



THOR TEMME

Is it real or is it Photoshop? Ethan 'Enzo' Smith's enormous pargo caused quite a stir among readers and staff, but the proof was irrefutable. The fish was real!

The **July** issue was filled with news of record-seeker Abby Sunderland's dismasting in the Southern Ocean. The Newport Beach 16-year-old was uninjured, and she was ultimately rescued, but her winter departure from Cape Town — her entire voyage, in fact — generated an abundance of controversy. *Ocean Watch* completed its 13-month expedition circumnavigating North and South America, which included a stop in the Bay. We reported on the ouster of Lake County District Attorney Jon E. Hopkins, the man who prosecuted sailor Bismarck Dinius for the '06 boating death of Lynn Thornton, and put out a call for a sailing host family for German exchange student Viviane Farke (see *Sightings* for an update on Vivi's story). The Grand Dame of the Bay, the 125-year-old *Freda*, got her 'whiskey plank' in a ceremony at Spaulding Wooden Boat Center, and is well on her way to a complete restoration. More wooden boats got ink thanks to the Master Mariners race, Puddle Jumpers were welcomed in style at the Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous, and Andrew Vik kept everyone titillated with photos from his European Vacation. **August** saw reports of Mike Harker's brutal beating aboard his Hunter 49 *Wanderlust 3* in St. Martin; the Westsail 32 *Tar Baby's* dismasting and subsequent abandonment near Niue; *Plastiki's* successful arrival in Australia; the completion of Alessandro di Benedetto's nonstop solo circumnavigation aboard *Findomestic*, a 21-ft Mini TransAt; and the rescue of the crew of Kristy Lugert's PDQ 32 cat *Catalyst* off Fort Bragg. We also had full reports on the Pacific Cup and the Singlehanded TransPac races, both of which suffered from unusual weather that made for some long and uncomfortable rides for the racers.

2010 — THE YEAR

DANIEL FORSTER / ROLEX



'Vincitore' and 'Wasabi' crossed tacks in the 46th Annual Rolex Big Boat Series.

LATITUDE / ANDY



The Baja Ha-Ha 17 was one for the record books with 196 entries.

LATITUDE / LADONNA



Don Gray (left) loaned his Jutson 30, 'Warriors Wish' to Ronnie Simpson for the Single-handed TransPac and didn't even complain when it returned to the Bay without a keel.

KENT MILSKI



Jim Milski rescued three men from an overturned panga.

WEBB LOGG



After 388 days in the hands of Somali pirates, British cruisers Paul and Rachel Chandler were released by their captors.

LATITUDE / ANDY



Dozens of Ha-Ha'ers came to the aid of singlehander Mark Cholewinski when his Downeast 38 'Tachyon' ran up on the beach near Santa Maria.



In September, we recapped the 3,000-mile Pacific Puddle Jump, which included 217 boats from 19 countries, as well as the Delta Doo Dah Deux, a 50-boat run from the Bay to the Delta that ended up being even more fun than last year's inaugural event. Embattled 14-year-old Laura Dekker finally left the Netherlands in her bid to become the youngest solo circumnavigator. We reported on Giles Finlayson's long recovery after a near-fatal encounter with a Malaysian *panga* while riding in his dinghy, and detailed Don and Anne Taber's five-year circumnavigation aboard their Marples 44 tri *Redwood Coast II*. And while boats didn't have the best of luck that month, their crews turned out to be very lucky: Canadian Jon Innes was plucked from his Catalina 27 *Amica* off Ft. Bragg after losing his rudder, and Kelly Wright and Glen McConchie were rescued after their Atlantic 57 *Anna* was capsized near Niue — none were injured. But the most amazing story was that of Ronnie Simpson and Ed McCoy, who sailed the borrowed Jutson 30 *Warriors Wish* 760 miles *without a keel!* We celebrated our 400th issue in **October** and entertained our readers with rompin', stompin' reports on the Great San Francisco Schooner Race, as well as the always unpredictable Rolex Big Boat Series. The crew of several cruising boats that were passing through the Bay were profiled, and longtime cruiser David Wegman revealed 10 tips for cruising on the cheap. The overturned cat *Catalyst* was righted and returned to the Bay, while an editor's husband battled suspected ciguatera poisoning from a dorado. Finally, we opined on the joys of showering outdoors on boats, and published photographic evidence that it can be quite an exciting experience.



ALEX PEARCE

'Latitude' is read all over the world, even by our armed forces stationed in Afghanistan.



LATTITUDE / LADONNA

The 2nd Annual Delta Doo Dah soggy Bay sailors out of the gloom and into the sun.



DAVE KEANE

JV Gilmour really 'flipped out' at the StFYC 18-ft Skiff Regatta.

Conditions for the Melges 32 Worlds were much better than for the previous week's Big Boat Series.



ERIK SIMONSON / WWW.H2OSHOTS.COM



RON POWELL

'Ker-Tidou' blew up in Turtle Bay. The owner sustained burns, but survived.



LATTITUDE / ROB

Fear the Beard! The Giants brought out sailors to McCovey Cove, and inspired a multitude of costumes.

The **November** issue kicked off with letters from cruisers sharing the more bizarre things they've eaten in their travels, then moved on to letters of shock at Norm Goldie's rant against *Latitude*, and finally a letter expressing disappointment that yacht brokers Clay and Teresa Prescott served just 3.5 months of their 8-month sentence for embezzling money from clients. The Leukemia Cup didn't disappoint, though — it raised nearly \$700,000 for research. Jim and Kent Milski on their 48-ft catamaran *Sea Level* helped save the lives of three men after their *panga* flipped near Vanuatu. Jeanne Socrates, 68, set off on her own nonstop solo circumnavigation attempt, and Kristen Sierra and Ned Kohlhauff got hitched at San Diego's Downwind Marine. Finally, we shared Rhian Salmon and Andy Whittaker's riveting tale of surviving February's Chilean earthquake and subsequent tsunamis. **December's** eye-catching cover girl Lindsay exemplified the attitude of the 17th Baja Ha-Ha — fun in the sun! Once again, the annual rally from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas broke all previous records by registering 196 boats. The morning after the fleet arrived in Bahia Santa Maria, dozens of Ha-Ha'ers went to the aid of singlehander Mark Cholewinski when his Vallejo-based Downeast 38 *Tachyon* ran up on the beach just north of where everyone was anchored. We also profiled the youngest boatowners to ever join the Ha-Ha: Garrett Jolly, 18, and Ruth Overting, 19. Sadly, in the wake of the Ha-Ha fleet, one of the cruising boats profiled in the October issue, *Ker-Tidou*, exploded in Turtle Bay. Of course there was much, much more, so if you missed any of these stories, you can download entire issues from www.latitude38.com.

EYE ON THE BAY

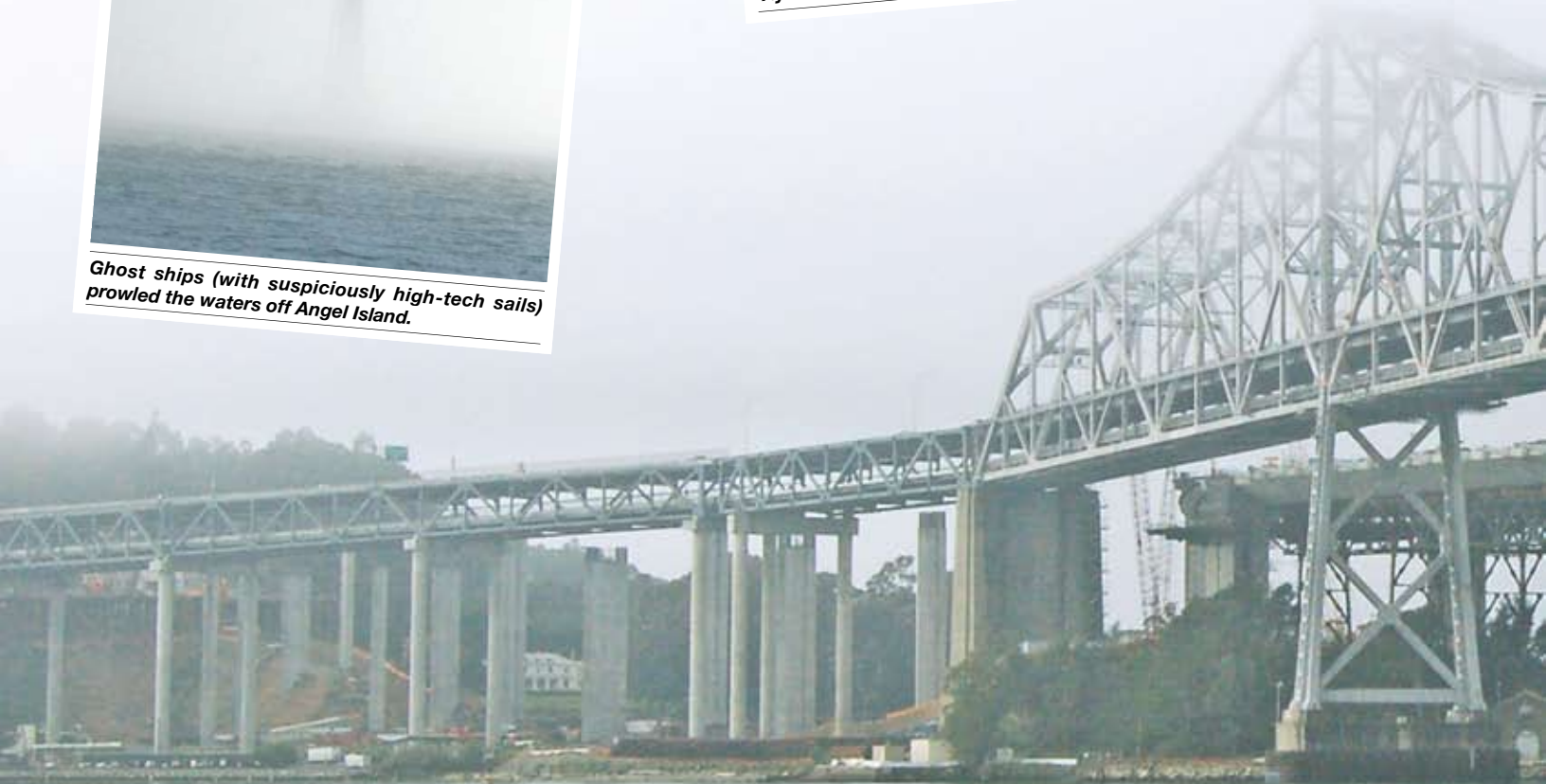


Ghost ships (with suspiciously high-tech sails) prowled the waters off Angel Island.

ALL PHOTOS LATITUDE / LADONNA



'Ay Caliente!' sails out of Raccoon Strait and into the void.



San Francisco Bay is known for its fog — in summer or early fall. December typically treats Bay sailors to rain or sun, sometimes on the same day. So imagine everyone's surprise upon finding the Cool Whip topping on their sailing dessert the weekend of December 11-12.

The predicted "patchy fog" turned quite dense and stuck around much of the Bay for most of the weekend, blessing only a handful of lucky spots with sun. For racers on the Central Bay that Sat-

urday, visibility wasn't a problem, but boats crossing the ship channel toward Raccoon Strait sailed smack into a wall of pea soup. Conditions like that make foghorns hard to hear over your thumping heartbeat.

It can also make navigating a challenge if you're not equipped with all the electronic gadgets. We heard rumors that a Bertram 28 matching the description of *Latitude's* photoboot, *Island Fever* — which is decidedly low-tech

when it comes to electronics — overshot her mark of Raccoon Strait, taking her crew nearly to California City before they could see enough of the terrain to realize their mistake. What an ugly rumor!

The rest of December was, for the most part, dominated by rain, rain and more rain, leaving that one occasionally sunny weekend as the bright spot of the month. Kudos to all the Bay sailors who took advantage of what they could get.

— **latitude 38/ladonna**

— REDUCED VISIBILITY



The cheerful spirit of 'Kelly's crew couldn't be dampened by a little fog.

'Chaika' slipped under the Bay Bridge, skirting the whipped cream piled up on Yerba Buena.



EYE ON THE BAY



— REDUCED VISIBILITY



Fog didn't keep these sailors in port. Top row: The crew of 'Serenity' challenged themselves to MOB practice in reduced visibility; where monsters lurk; 'C C' stuck to the Central Bay; scenes like this make it all worthwhile. Middle row: 'Adagio' sought the solace of the sun; the skipper of 'Low Rider' kept Buster Brown on look-out; "Is that Angel Island? Nope!"; the Estuary cleared after morning fog. Bottom row: Captain Morgan rides again aboard 'Sea Angel'; it's no wonder so many people view sailing on San Francisco Bay as a mystical experience; 'Emerald Gate' coasts along off Angel Island's Camp Reynolds.



SIGN UP FOR THE 2011 RACING SEASON



Welcome to YRA Racing, the best racing value on the Bay!

Thank you for participating in the YRA! We offer a choice for racing both on the Bay and on the local ocean!
SERIES INFORMATION

The YRA PC Series

- The 3 marquee YRA Regattas: The Great Vallejo Race, the YRA 2nd Half Opener, and the YRA Season Closer. Each weekend features 2 days of racing and a party at the host club Saturday night.
- Each weekend is a stand-alone regatta. Division Champions will be named for each Regatta.
- There are 6 Divisions available for each Regatta: PHRF, Sportboat, One-Design, Double/Singlehanded, Non-Spinnaker & Multihull. Divisions may be split into multiple fleets to ensure tight racing.

The YRA Spring/Summer Series

- In the Bay racing for boats with a current NCPHRF rating certificate (HDA) or for One-Design classes (ODCA).
- The series consists of 6 races- the Spring 1, 2, & 3 and the Summer 1, 2, & 3.
- HDA Divisions are determined by grouping similarly rated boats.
- YRA Spring/Summer Series Racers are invited to race in the Crewed Lightship 1 race for an additional \$5.00. Additional OYRA equipment requirements must be met. See http://www.yra.org/OYRA/ocean_safety.html.
- One-Design starts are available for any fleet that signs up for the ODCA season, or, gets at least 5 boats to sign up for a single race day. If you are not sure if your One-Design fleet is a current ODCA fleet, or would like to sign your fleet up for ODCA, please contact the YRA office at (415) 771-9500 or info@yra.org.

OYRA (Offshore Yacht Racing Association)

- In 2011, there are 9 ocean races ranging from 25 to 60+ nautical miles as well as a "Daylight Series" consisting of 4 races that start at 1030 hrs and finish by 2100 hrs. The Daylight Series races include both Lightship races, the One-Way to Half Moon Bay race & the Southern Cross.
- OYRA racers are invited to race in the Vallejo race for an additional \$5.00
- Racers will race in one of the following 5 divisions, determined by their boat's rating or D/L ratio, unless choosing to race in the Short Handed division:
 - PHRO 1a – NCPHRF of 0 or less
 - PHRO 1 - D/W ratio Less than 100
 - PHRO 2 - D/W ratio 100 to 199
 - PHRO 3 – D/W ratio 200 & Over
 - SHS – Shorthanded division, Specifically Requested, open to doublehanded or singlehanded boats only.

WBRA (Wooden Boat Racing Association)

- The WBRA participates in the US Sailing Golden Anchor program which makes WBRA racers eligible for a discounted US Sailing Membership. US Sailing memberships through the WBRA Golden Anchor program must be purchased online here: <http://www1.ussailing.org/membership/MPP/Default.aspx?ycid=112274N>
- Bay racing for one of the following 4 fleets:
 - Bird Boats
 - Bear Boats
 - Folkboats
 - IODs
 - Knarrs

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **YRA Sailing Instructions are available on the YRA website at www.yra.org.** Sailing instructions are normally posted approximately 2 weeks prior to each race. If you do not have access to the internet and need to have your race instructions mailed to you, please contact the YRA office at (415) 771-9500 or info@yra.org
- Entries for a series, or individual regatta, must be received by 5 pm the Monday before the race or a \$35 late fee will be applied. No entries will be accepted after 5 pm the Wednesday before a race.
- **A YRA sailing membership and a membership in a YRA member yacht club is required to register a boat for any YRA series.** A YRA membership is required to race in any individual YRA Race, but one time racers do not need to belong to a member club.
- The YRA Offers a discount on all race fees to US Sailing Members. YRA Racers are eligible for a discount on US Sailing Memberships through the Golden Anchor Program. US Sailing Memberships can be purchased online at <http://www1.ussailing.org/membership/MPP/Default.aspx?ycid=101132Z>.
- Sailors entering the OYRA Season, or any individual OYRA Race, must submit a signed OYRA Boat/Crew Information and Statement of Compliance Sheet before each ocean Race. See http://www.yra.org/OYRA/ocean_safety.html for more information. **Please note that to race in an OYRA Race a 406 EPIRB or 406 PLB is required.**
- Please fill out your entry form completely, sign, date and return it to the YRA office along with your payment. If you need additional assistance completing this form, please contact the YRA office.
- You can save time and postage by signing up online! Visit www.yra.org for more information!



Yacht Racing Association of San Francisco Bay - 2011 Entry Form

1070 Marina Village Prky, Suite 202-G
Alameda, CA 94501
Phone: 415.771.9500
Fax: 415.276.2378
email: info@yra.org

Name: _____ Boat Name: _____ Sail Number: _____
 Street: _____ Boat Model: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____ Manufacturer: _____ Yr Built: _____
 Evening Phone: _____ Daytime Phone: _____ Designer: _____ Yr. Designed: _____
 Email Address: _____ U.S. Sailing #: _____ YRA Member #: _____
 Yacht Club Affiliation: _____ Marina: _____ Berth/Slip #: _____

Membership Fees:	YRA Membership:	Required for YRA Racing	\$45	\$ _____
NCPHRF Fees:	Renewal of 2010 Certificate:		\$30 for YRA Members/\$40 for NON-YRA Members	\$ _____
	New Certificate/Renewal of 2009 or prior Cert.:		\$45 for YRA Members/\$55 for NON YRA Members	\$ _____

Season Racing Fees:	US Sailing Members	Non US Sailing Members	Fleet
YRA PC Series -3 weekend regattas: Vallejo, 2nd Half Opener, Season Closer	\$150	\$165	\$ _____
YRA Spring/Summer + PC Series (HDA/ODCA, Includes PC races)	\$180	\$195	\$ _____
YRA Spring/Summer Series only (HDA/ODCA, no PC Series)	\$150	\$165	\$ _____
Offshore Yacht Racing Association (OYRA) Full Season *	\$195	\$210	\$ _____
OYRA Daylight Series- 4 ocean races- both Lightships, Half Moon Bay, SoCross *	\$150	\$165	\$ _____
Wooden Boat Racing Association (WBRA) Season	\$150	\$165	\$ _____

Single Race Fees:	US Sailing Members	Non US Sailing Members	Fleet
YRA Spring/Summer Series racers entering Lightship 1 *	\$5	\$10	\$ _____
OYRA season racers entering Vallejo	\$5	\$10	\$ _____
Party Circuit racers entering the Summer Sailstice	\$5	\$10	\$ _____
Vallejo Race Only	\$75	\$80	\$ _____
2nd Half Opener Only	\$75	\$80	\$ _____
Season Closer Only	\$75	\$80	\$ _____
All other YRA Races (write in race name): _____	\$50	\$55	\$ _____

Late Fee: **No entries are accepted after 5pm the Wednesday before the race**
 Any entry Rec'd after 5pm the Mon before the race \$35 \$ _____

*** Participants in an ocean race or ocean series must submit a signed OYRA Boat/Crew Information and Statement of Compliance Sheet before each ocean Race. See http://www.yra.org/OYRA/ocean_safety.html** **TOTAL** _____

In consideration of being admitted to sailing membership in the Yacht Racing Association of San Francisco Bay (YRA), I agree to abide by "The Racing Rules of Sailing" and the Sailing Instructions of the YRA and the regatta sponsors. I warrant that I will maintain compliance with the YRA Minimum Equipment requirements. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I hereby waive any rights I may have to sue the YRA with respect to personal injury or property damage suffered by myself or my crew as a result of our participation in the YRA and hereby release the YRA and it's race organizers from any liability for such injury or damage.. I further warrant that I have not relied upon any of the above entities or individuals in preparing my yacht for racing.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Make check payable to YRA. To pay by MasterCard or Visa please provide card info below, including billing street address and zip code

Card Number: _____ Exp Date: _____ CVV # _____ Name on Card: _____
 Card Holder's Signature: _____ Billing Address: _____

Office use only
 C.C. Check Number _____ Amount PD _____ DATE Received in office _____



SEASON CHAMPIONS, PART III

It's time for part three of our Season Champions article, where we profile winners from the Singlehanded Sailing Society (SSS), Bay Area Multihull Association (BAMA), Wooden Boat Racing Association (WBRA) and some of the top dinghy classes and a couple one designs that didn't make it in part II.

While the US economy may or may not be in a slow recovery — depending on who you ask — there is no doubt that the organizations you see here have never flagged in their commitment to the sport. The SSS keeps going from strength to strength with its well-run schedule of shorthanded races like the Three Bridge Fiasco, which has drawn record-breaking fleets for the last few years. Appealing to those who appreciate the challenge of sailing by themselves or maybe one other person, the Society's events have grown so popular that being a volunteer official for the organization is more like a full-time job.

BAMA has been holding pretty steady over the years, and with a schedule that now includes practice days and clinics, the level in the fleet has risen tremendously, as evidenced by the fact that eleven boats won races on the season schedule, and they ranged from exotic custom flyers to — admittedly quick — production boats.

Run under the auspices of YRA, the WBRA is still hanging in there, bringing out large numbers of golden oldies like the Knarr, Folkboat, IOD, Bird and Bear fleets for its weekend events.

We also catch up with the Express 27s, which under the leadership of Peggy Lidster turned out 25 boats for the Delta Ditch Run, and 22 for the Three Bridge Fiasco. The Wabbits had a good year, putting on one of the largest nationals ever on the Cityfront. Finally, we take a look at some of the Bay's bigger dinghy classes like the El Toros and the Lasers, both of which always draw a crowd for their events.

You may notice that some of the usual suspects are missing from this month's edition. We will be putting those together — along with some results for other classes that didn't make it in — in February's Racing Sheet. Our apologies in advance to those division winners who neither appear here nor make it into next month's overflow reports. We've based our choices largely on the number of total races sailed within the divisions.

We hope you enjoy meeting these ardent racers as much as we have!

— **latitude**/rg



ALL PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: ERIK SIMONSON/WWW.H2OSHOTS.COM EXCEPT WHERE NOTED



SERGEI ZAVARIN/WWW.ULTIMATEYACHTSHOTS.SMUGMUG.COM



— ONE DESIGN, BAMA, SSS, WBRA & DINGHIES



Clockwise from top-left — BAMA Cup winner 'Papillon' blazes back from the Farallones during the association's signature race; the Knarrs get a picture-perfect day on the Cityfront at the IKC; the SSS Corinthian Race was a barn burner, a perfect challenge for people who prefer the sailing challenge to the 'getting crew challenge'; Lasers out en masse; the Wylie Wabbits keep things close at their nationals in October.



SEASON CHAMPIONS, PART III

Knarr Fifty-Fifty



Jon Perkins St. Francis YC

Jon Perkins took his second straight season championship in the Bay's ultra-competitive Knarr fleet, and he doubled it up by winning the International Knarr Championship hosted by St. Francis YC in August. With that win — his third — Perkins became the second-winningest skipper of the event in the history of the class, and the second to win it at all three of its host countries.

"Six years ago, we were in a similar situation, but we were tied with my brother going into the last race and he ended up winning," Perkins said. "We're really psyched to have pulled it off this year at home."

Perkins and the dynamic sibling duo of Tom and Melissa Purdy have been sailing together for the last six years, while their fourth, Larry Swift was new to the boat this year. Main trimmer Melissa — a Whitbread veteran — and bowguy Tom — an accomplished dinghy and big boat sailor — certainly punch above their weight. They don't pack the pounds like many of the brawny Knarr sailors, and as a result, Perkins' team usually sails at a lighter weight than the rest of boats on any given day. He said the conditions and their boat draw at the IKC — they tended to get wood boats on heavier air days — favored that.

"There are big differences between the wood and glass boats," Perkins said. "But even with our weight disadvantage, in a wood boat we do just fine in the breeze because they twist more."

2) **Knarmageddon**, Tom Dobroth/Mike Peterson; 3) **Three Boys and a Girl**, Chris Perkins/Hans Baldauf. (29 boats)

Express 27 El Raton



Ray Lotto St. Francis YC

"El Raton" may mean "the mouse" in Spanish, but there's nothing Mickey Mouse about Ray Lotto's Express 27 program. The St. Francis YC Staff Commodore notched his second season win in the class this year with a core group that included fellow Express owner Steve Carroll and Patrick Lewis — winners of Doublehanded 2 in this year's Pac Cup — plus Jordan Paxhia and Noe Goodman. Together, they toughed out a season that came down to the last race of the year.

"It's a very quiet boat," Lotto, a real estate developer, said. "Our full intention is to have a good time. We don't have any yellers or screamers on the boat; we leave our egos on the dock and our goal is to have fun sailing. I think the whole Express fleet really does enjoy that part of sailing."

Another aspect he said he enjoys is the variety in the 43-race season.

"The boats are great for the Bay and the ocean," Lotto said. "The nice thing about the fleet is that it mixes the buoy and ocean sailing together."

Express 27 owners are nothing if not loyal to their boats, so it came as little surprise to us that Lotto has been campaigning *El Raton* since '85. But where'd the boat's name come from?

Lotto was posted to a diesel submarine named *Raton* in the Navy in the late 50s. The sub's logo was a dangerous-looking mouse riding a torpedo: the "Radin Raton." Twenty-five years later Lotto tweaked the name to *El Raton* for his Express, and kept the logo for his crew gear.

2) **Witchy Woman**, Tom Jenkins; 3) **Wile E Coyote**, Dan Pruzan. (39 boats)

Wylie Wabbit Weckless



Tim Russell San Francisco YC

You probably recognize Tim Russell from last year's Season Champs; this is his second Wabbit Season Championship in a row. Russell came to the boat four years ago after deciding he'd had enough with the Laser sailing he was doing concurrently with the J/105 sailing he had been doing — quite successfully — until this last year.

"I used to race my Laser quite a bit, and I was looking for another boat that has the same appeal, but where you get to share the misery with some other people on the boat," he said, laughing. "I love the boat. It's just a great boat to sail. You still have the physical, dinghy aspect of it. I like the fact that it goes downwind like a dinghy but upwind like a big boat."

The dual nature of the boat also extends to the events it gets invited to.

"What else can you sail, where you get invited to all the keelboat regattas and get to do all the dinghy races at Richmond YC too?" Russell said.

Russell, a Novato-based wealth manager, was joined this year by his trapeze artist and former J/105 crew John Claude and Scott Parker when they took the class's national title at St. Francis YC in October.

They did it despite breaking their rudder during the last race of the second day of the three-day event. After borrowing a rudder from an idle boat and modifying it slightly to fit their boat, the trio made the first race of the final day with 15 minutes to spare.

2) **Mr. McGregor**, Kim Desenberg/John Groen; 3) **Bad Hare Day**, Erik Menzel. (16 boats)

— ONE DESIGN, BAMA, SSS, WBRA & DINGHIES

SSS Singlehanded *Mirage* Black Soo



Ben Mewes
Richmond YC/SSS/Island YC

When asked what he chalked up his win to, Ben Mewes, like so many other successful skippers, said, "it was thanks to the flawless crew work of course!"

All joking aside, Mewes won a tight battle with George Lythcott and his Express 27 *Taz!!* that saw only .011 points separate the pair going into the season-ending Vallejo 1-2.

"We've been duking it out all year," Mewes said. "It started with George beating me in the Three Bridge Fiasco and it's been rock 'em, sock 'em ever since."

Mewes has owned the 42-year-old Van de Stadt-designed Black Soo *Mirage*, built by San Rafael Boatworks, since the late 80s, and said the boat played an important role.

"She's so easy to sail," he said. "The chines are just so helpful, you point the boat somewhere and it keeps going so you can do whatever else you need to do. If you count *Starbuck* (a sistership previously owned by Doublehanded winner Greg Nelsen) the Black Soo has won more singlehanded season titles than any other design, so all you other boats can eat your hearts out!"

This was the retired contractor's second Singlehanded win, in an SSS career that stretches back as long as he's owned the boat. His first was three years ago.

"It only took me 20 years to figure it out," he said, laughing, adding that more than anything, "it's always fun to sail against a bunch of really good guys."

2) *Taz!!*, Express 27, George Lythcott; 3) *Cassiopeia*, Islander 36, Kit Wiegman. (119 boats)

SSS Doublehanded *Outsider* Azzura 310



Greg Nelsen
SSS

Greg Nelsen has an enviable track record in the SSS. The Oakland-based project manager has won six singlehanded season titles and this year added a second doublehanded title to his resume, which also includes wins in the '00 Singlehanded TransPac and the '01 LongPac. His *Azzura 310 Outsider* — a Bay Area-designed-and-built boat — has proven to be a capable shorthanded racer.

"After a brutal singlehanded season last year [which he won], I was ready for a break," Nelsen said. "The *Azzura* isn't the most singlehanded-friendly boat; the loads are fairly big, the cockpit is huge and as a result the winches are really far apart."

For most people, taking it easy wouldn't involve a division win, but for Nelsen and crew Andrew Hura (at left above) a consistent scoreline that included no letter-score throwouts put them into the top spot.

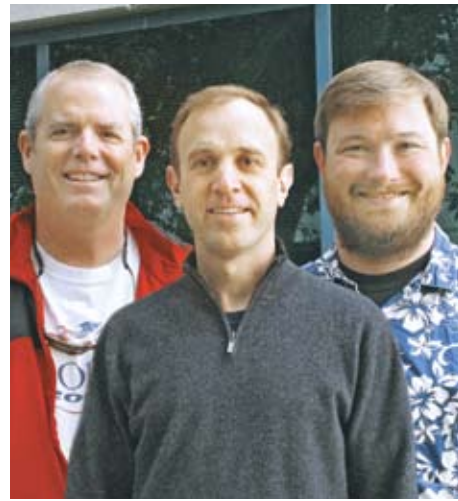
"The competition level was very close," Nelsen said. "It was the only season where we never won an overall for any of the races."

This year, Nelsen said he'll be stepping back as conflicts with his other programs, including Kevin Flanigan's Fox 44 *Ocelot*, and Frank Sloomman's brand new J/111 *Invisible Hand*, won't allow him to do the whole season. But shorthanded sailing has been on his mind since he worked on Bruce Schwab's *Ocean Planet*.

"It's always been a long-term goal to get on the IMOCA circuit," Nelsen said. "I don't want to do it skimping, living out of my backpack and selling my house. I don't feel like being a full-time beggar."

2) *Arcadia*, Mod. Santana 27, Gordie Nash; 3) *Flight Risk*, T650, Ben Landon. (276 boats)

BAMA *Papillon* Corsair F-27



Drew Scott
BAMA

While some of the season winners have been working at their result for decades, BAMA Cup winner Drew Scott has only owned his F-27 *Papillon* since '05. Previously a life-long dinghy sailor, Scott found what he was looking for in a big boat when he discovered multihulls upon moving to the Bay in '03.

"I grew up in Chicago sailing dinghies all the way through college," he said. "While I was still in Chicago I started crewing in keelboats and missed the immediate responsiveness that a dinghy gives you. When we moved out here, I couldn't convince my wife that it would be a good idea to put on drysuits to sail around the Bay in our 470. This boat allows me to go out and get everything powered up for racing, or de-power and cruise with my family."

Come race days, Scott is joined by Catalina 34 owner Bruce Tomlinson (above, left) and Santana 22 owner Andrew Hartman (above, right) and he pointed to their presence as a major factor in their win.

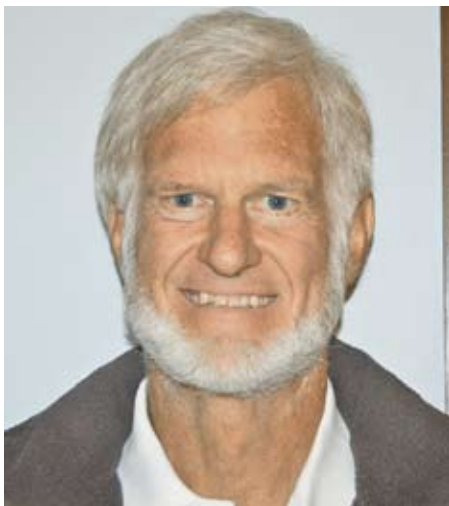
"The two of them signed on with me last year and we've sailed a bunch of races and practices together, and that's what really changed for me this season," he said. "They've really helped me be able to get my head out of the boat."

Scott also acknowledged the help of his Schoonmaker Marina neighbor Gordie Nash, who helped them with boat repairs, rigging and advice. Nash, in turn, called Scott, "a quick study."

2) *Peregrine Falcon*, F-27, Bill Gardner; 3) *Wingit*, F-27, Amy & Ray Wells. (42 boats)

SEASON CHAMPIONS, PART III

El Toro Sr.



Gordie Nash

Richmond YC/California YC

Highlighting Gordie Nash for winning the El Toro Sr. season championship belies what an amazing all-around year the Sausalito-based boatbuilder had. That's because in addition to his Toro win, he also took top honors in the highly competitive Party Circuit K, guided Pat Broderick's Wyliecat 30 *Nancy* to a division win in this year's Pac Cup as the boat's navigator, and was runner-up in the SSS Doublehanded series.

"I don't know that I'll ever have another year as good as this one," he said.

Nash has had a lot of good years during his racing career, which started at the age of five-and-a-half at Richmond YC in — you guessed it — an El Toro.

"I always kept a wooden one, but in '90 I went to fiberglass and started building them myself," he said. "I've built about 26 since."

Blowing out his elbows precipitated the switch back to El Toros in '90 after years of Contender sailing, and Nash has been a stalwart in the class ever since, something he attributes to the decorum of the sailors.

"The Toro is more of a gentleman's class," he said. "There are a few out for blood, but they usually end up in the back of the fleet. It's definitely not a bumper car fleet. We had an infraction one time, and it was resolved by nine guys sitting around a table with a pitcher of beer in the middle. Each person said what they thought, and then one guy stood up and said, 'I'll resign.' There were no rule books and no yelling, just a good discussion."

2) John Pacholski; 3) Art Lange. (67 boats)

El Toro Jr.



Mike Pacholski

Santa Cruz YC

Mike Pacholski wrapped up what might have been his final season in El Toros in grand style. The Los Altos-based junior sailor went into the final event of the season within a point of his closest competition for the second year in a row. And for the second year in a row, he came out on top.

"It was pretty awesome," he said. "The weather was feeling really good to me."

Pacholski said that he and his main rival, Haydon Stapleton, didn't worry too much about each other.

"We weren't really match racing, which was surprising," he said. "It was probably because we were both nervous for this one, and had no idea what to expect at the beginning of the day."

All that changed the following day.

"We were pretty even, but not together, the first day, and nobody was really near us," he said. "The second day we were match racing and both pretty far ahead of the fleet. We passed each other around very mark, I think."

Pacholski turns 14 next month, and with his El Toro days coming to an end, he and Stapleton are joining forces to jump into a 29er.

"They're pretty cool boats," he said. "They're really fast and more interesting than the FJs and 420s, which I tried . . . for about two weeks."

Pacholski said he doesn't have any idea where his sailing is going yet.

"We're just going to go out and try to do as many 29er races as we can to get our names out there," he said.

2) Haydon Stapleton; 3) Robbie Englehart. (18 boats)

Laser



Tracy Usher

St.FYC/Monterey Peninsula YC

Time in the boat never hurts one's chances of winning a season championship. Tracy Usher has been sailing Lasers since '74, so it shouldn't come as any surprise that he won this year's Svendsen's Laser Northern California Grand Prix.

While he took a break for awhile to sail at UC Irvine — where he was an All-American — in he's been racing in the class in a hard core way since '96.

Usher, who's based in Montara and is a physicist in one of the experimental groups at the Stanford Linear Accelerator, has put up some top results in that time.

"I try and sail as much as I can," Usher said, explaining that in addition to some calisthenics work every morning, bike riding comes in as a close second to his main conditioning effort: sailing a Laser. "There's an Australian named Michael Blackburn who basically got his PhD in kinesiology as it relates to Laser sailing, and he said the best way to train for Laser Sailing is to sail Lasers, and that the next best thing is to ride a bike. I tend to agree."

Usher and his wife Christy, an accomplished Laser Radial Sailor, often travel to the "away" regattas in the Grand Prix together.

"It makes it a lot more fun," he said. "She's pretty competitive and at the end of the day we can compare notes."

Beyond the sailing, Usher is the president of the North American Laser Class and was instrumental in bringing the Laser Masters and Laser 4.7 Worlds to the Bay later this year.



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MAX EBB

If there is one place where I can reasonably expect the discussion to have nothing to do with sailing, it's at the dentist's. My dentist knows nothing about sailing. He rowed on a crew team in college, but hasn't been near the water since. The dental hygienist has a boyfriend with a fish boat of some sort, but she generally steers clear of it. That leaves the weather, city politics and the latest movies for chair-side small talk. Although, lately I'd been finding recent issues of *Latitude 38* in the waiting room, mixed in among the golf magazines.

Considering the distinctly lubberly atmosphere of this office, it was a surprise to hear my dentist ask "What do you think of the America's Cup races coming to San Francisco?" He was not talking to me, however. The dentist was out in the hallway by the appointments desk, and I'd just sat down in the chair for a routine cleaning by the hygienist. The door to the treatment room was still open, and I was overhearing.

"Way cool, on one level."

It was unmistakably Lee Helm's voice. I had no idea that we both used the same dentist, although, that probably explained the *Latitudes*.

"But like, it's not a done deal. And I gotta say, as much fun as it would be to have the A-Cup circus here on the Bay, it would be, like, a terrible thing for local sailing."

"Lee, what are you talking about?" I interrupted, loud enough for them to hear me in the hallway after squirming around in attempt to face the door behind me. "Having the America's Cup here on the Bay would be the best thing that could possibly happen to local sailing."

"Yo, Max!" she hailed from the hallway, maneuvering so she could see me. "Cool that we use the same dentist."

"Yes, I've been coming to this office, for, oh, about 30 years. That must be you who leaves *Latitude* in the waiting room."

"I don't know what you're talking about," she lied.

"Why would the America's Cup be a bad thing?" asked our dentist. "I've been reading that it would get the old piers fixed up, and bring in huge amounts of tourist money."

"All speculative," insisted Lee. "And Larry totally gets to own the piers for something like 66 years after the city pays up front to make them usable. And really, honestly, truthfully, hardly anyone cares about watching a sailboat race except us sailors."

"But in France . . ."

"But this ain't France," she countered.

"The dweeb on the street can't name a single famous sailor."

"Open wide, please," ordered the hygienist after she finished attaching the bib around my neck and filling the rinse-out cup.

"Still, it will be a great event for the sailors, no?" said our dentist.

"Yes, but," answered Lee, "think of it this way: Suppose you played softball with your buds every Friday night at the local sandlot ball field. And then they decided to have the World Series in your sandlot. And all the play-offs too. Sure, you get to watch the games, maybe even for free, but as a competitor you're out of luck for the season. You're turned into a spectator instead of a player."

I'd heard Lee make this argument before, and I wanted to respond to it. The Bay is bigger than a sandlot, and there would still be plenty of room in the race schedule for the local fleets to do their

thing. Maybe not always on the Central Bay courses, and maybe not always on weekends, but the Bay is big enough to share.

"Open wider please," said the hygienist as she went in with a miniature version of an excavating machine.

"You won't be able to get a sailmaker or boatyard to give you the time of day," Lee continued, "with a dozen challenge syndicates all gobbling up every available marine service resource. Sure, the syndicates sort of bring some of their own infrastructure with them, but then there's all the paparazzi and all of their boats."

I waved my hand in the air and shook my head: the boats will have wing sails this time. Her argument about sailmakers being booked solid by Cup syndicates was obsolete.

"Does that hurt?" asked the hygienist.



CARMEN HIDALGO / ACM

I shook my head no, and she kept digging.

"Well, I imagine it would still be a very good thing for those marine service businesses," suggested the dentist, "to have all that money pouring in from outside. Big yachts coming here to watch the America's Cup races can't be a bad thing."

"Boom-bust cycles are never good in the long run," said Lee. "The Cup won't stay here forever. And if it's, like, a fair fight, the odds are against it staying here even beyond this one match. Then we have a lot of new infrastructure with no cash flow to support it, and the industry goes back into the doldrums with even more excess capacity than it has now."

"Rinse," said the hygienist.

"But the natural amphitheater of the Bay!" I said as turned my head around as far as it would go, before even washing the dredging spoils out of my mouth.

Love it or hate it, the America's Cup competition really pushes the envelope in technological innovation. A replica of the original 'America' just can't compete with the miracle of carbon fiber.



"The spectating from shore will be fantastic."

"Yeah, that's what they keep telling us, but geez, think it through. The course will have to take up the whole Central Bay because the boats are so fast, and if you watch from any one spot, even if you have primo digs right on the City-

running on a short timeline. It's like they get all the exposure of being in the finals with no eliminations to mess around with."

There must have been another sailor in the waiting room, because I heard a few sentence fragments coming from that end of the hallway. Something

Find the full text of the Deed of Gift at http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Deed_of_Gift and the AC 72 Class Rules at www.americascup.com/official-documents

front, you'll be lucky if one of the boats happens to tack within half a mile of you. The really awesome spectating is all about onboard cameras and blimp shots. Me, unless I get on an official judges' boat, I'll take the big screen HD video feed on the net over any fixed vantage point on the beach. Heck, even on the VIP spectator boats they'll be watching it on TV."

"Well, by 2013 I expect you to be one of the crew," said the dentist.

"I wish," said Lee. "But the race might happen earlier than that."

The voices were getting dimmer as they walked down the hall, away from my open door, and I strained over the sound of the dental machinery to hear how Lee was going to explain that last conjecture.

"San Francisco will come to its senses and the race will go to that city in Italy. Big disappointment, even though I'll secretly breathe a big sigh of relief. But like, Italy is just two European dominos away from total economic collapse. The Italians will default on their deal, the Challenger of Record will withdraw, and guess what happens then?"

I could tell where this was going, but there was too much hardware in my mouth to respond.

"Rogue challenge!" she cried joyously, probably throwing her hands up in the air in ecstasy. "Deed of Gift boats! The A-Cup races in '88 and '10 were the best ones ever, at least for us propeller-heads. Why? Because they were the only real and true Deed of Gift races since 1903. Maybe *Alinghi* will be back, maybe the Aussies or Kiwis, maybe the Brits. One of them will be astute enough to predict the collapse of the current challenge of record, and they won't be able to resist the prospect of a one-on-one Cup race

about "no one could possibly" and "10 months notice" and "insurmountable technology lead."

"For sure. No one could build a boat better than the Oracle monster in just six months, and that's all the Deed of Gift gives them, if there are no lawsuits. But you gotta read the whole thing. The course has to be 'ocean courses, free from headlands,' and if the timing is right, they'll be out off Point Bonita in the spring. And the first race has to, like, have a 20-mile windward leg, which could put the windward mark right in the potato patch. Oracle will practically have to start over from scratch, just like the challenger."

I didn't catch the other side of the conversation, but the sailor in the waiting room must have expressed the widely held belief that the races in '88 and '10 were low points, not high points, in the history of the Cup.

"Low points mainly from the sponsors' point of view," said Lee. "But like, one of the best parts of the '10 races was that the sponsors were taken totally off guard by the timing, and we ended up with almost commercial-free coverage over the net. Plus the boats, both of them, were the most interesting sailing machines ever built. It was the first time I ever stayed up all night to watch a sports event, and I did it twice."

Iwaved frantically at the hygienist. "Am I hurting you?" she asked.

"Nee oo rin," I said, even though I didn't really need to rinse just then. Fortunately the little rinse cup was empty, and the tiny little spigot that fills it up at a ridiculously slow rate gave me time to respond.

"What about the AC 72 class, Lee?" I shouted into the hallway. "Those boats will be more practical than the Deed of

MAX EBB

Gift monsters, and almost as fast, and the racing will be very close. And no engines allowed for sail trim! I think we're on exactly the right track, especially with a more-or-less independent RC this time around. I'd hate to see it all go back to legal catfighting."

"There's still room for some mutual agreements on basic things like engine power, even with a rogue challenge." Lee assured me. "That's, like, the only thing that came out wrong in '10, and I think a judge with more sailing background would have ruled that sailboats are not supposed to trim or hoist sails or foils with engine power, despite the issue being omitted from the Deed for obvious reasons having mostly to do with the fact that it was written in 1887."

The unseen sailor in the waiting room must have responded with another comment that was negative about rogue challenges and the Deed of Gift.

"It really shouldn't be called a rogue challenge," Lee explained, "if it's exactly in accordance with the Deed of Gift. I'm totally a strict constructionist on this one. Our Founding Father, George

Schuyler, knew what would make a good match. The A-Cup is a contest to see who can build the fastest boat. It's not about the sports heroes."

This reminded me of a lecture at my yacht club by some America's Cup muckety-muck a couple of months ago.

"Boom-bust cycles are never good in the long run," said Lee.

His claim was that we need to emphasize the high-profile personalities, the sports heroes of sailing, if we expect to get more of the public at large to pay attention to sailboat racing.

The hygienist could tell I was bursting to say something to the people in the hall, so she reluctantly shut off the excavator and removed it from my mouth for a few seconds.

"But every sport needs its heroes," I shouted.

"If it ever gets to be about the stars instead of the sailing," Lee responded as she walked back towards the door to the treatment room, "then we non-pro participants are out of luck. Even now, the sponsors would rather have us sitting in front of our TVs watching the pros and the beer commercials instead of out on the Bay doing it ourselves."

"Tell you what, Lee," I said. "I dare you to stay away from the Cityfront when it's Coutts vs. Cayard sailing AC 72 wing sail cats in the finals."

"Is that a double-dog dare?" she asked menacingly.

"Yes," I said with confidence, not having any idea what a 'double-dog dare' might be. She'll probably make it up as she goes along.

"You're on!"

"I might want to watch with you, Lee," said the dentist as he walked down the hall to see his next patient in a different room.

Then the hygienist closed the door to the hallway.

"Open wide."

— max ebb



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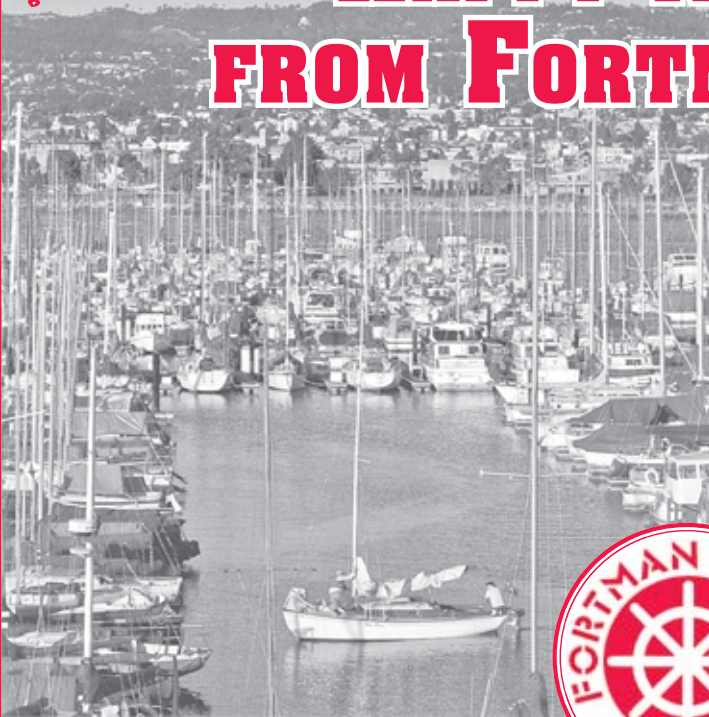
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THE RACING

December was a pretty lean month for racing compared to the rest of the year, but there is still news to report! First, we take a quick look at the **Oracle RC 44 Cup Miami**. Then, it's on to the **US Disabled Sailing Championship** where a Bay Area team put up an encouraging result. Next we recap some **midwinters** action before attending a **birthday party** for one of Northern California's most successful boats. If that's not enough for you, tune in next month, when things start to pick up again.

RC 44s Invade Miami

Among all his America's Cup negotiations, Larry Ellison and his *BMW Oracle Racing* crew wrapped up the '10 RC 44 Season Championship with a second-place finish in the fleet racing portion of the Oracle RC 44 Cup Miami December 9-12, the first time the boats have visited the US. Coupled with the team's sixth in the match racing portion of the regatta, *BMW Oracle Racing* placed fourth overall in the Miami regatta. This equated to a 2-point victory over *Artemis Racing* — one of the confirmed America's Cup challengers — for the season championship.

"We were up and down," Ellison said. "We've had good regattas and sometimes things didn't go so well, but overall the team did a great job sailing. We came first in fleet racing and first overall. We had a rough match racing regatta here in Miami, but the fleet was good enough and we're happy with the result."

Ellison and crew, including tactician and class founder Russell Coutts, finished 3-4-3 on the final day, but had to pull a few rabbits out of their collective hat. They started one race OCS and found themselves constantly battling back on a day with shifty breeze. They gained a few places in the last half of the runs that kept their score low enough for the championship.

"We do better when it's breezy," said Ellison. "There are more opportunities to pass downwind. I've got a lot of experience sailing on San Francisco Bay and we love the breeze."

While Ellison got the spoils for the sea—*Frank Sloopman's* new *J/111 'Invisible Hand'* on the Bay, *J/Boats* already has 50 deposits for the *J/111*.

son championship, Vincenzo Onorato's AC 34 Challenger of Record *Mascalzone Latino* won the Oracle RC 44 Cup Miami title.

Mascalzone Latino showed great improvement at this regatta after rejoining the class in July. The Italian crew placed third in both the match and fleet racing for the overall victory with the low score of six points.

"Winning this event has special meaning for me because the past three years have been difficult for me in my life and in sailing," said Onorato, a six-time world champion in classes including the Farr 30 and Farr 40.

"Russell asked us to come back to the class and we couldn't be happier with this result," Onorato said. "We've worked hard to regain our form and we will do our best in the future to perform in this class."

Yet a third winner was William "Doug" Douglass aboard the RC 44 world champion *17. Douglass*, sailing with Australian James Spithill as tactician, won the fleet racing portion of the Oracle RC 44 Cup Miami with the low score of 39 points.

"The class seems extremely well organized," Douglass said. "It was good; we had a lot of fun out there. Today was a little windy and we saw how the boats could get wicked up and go."

The '11 RC 44 season championship begins in March in San Diego, and will mark the first of hopefully many times the boats make an appearance on the West Coast.

BAADS Team Alpha Heads to Florida

Sailing as *Team Alpha*, South Beach YC and BAADS members John Wallace, Jim Thweatt, and Eric Roberts represented their clubs in Florida at the US Disabled Sailing Championship and America's Disabled/Open Regatta, hosted by St. Petersburg YC December 3-5.

The trio wound up 8th in the 10-boat Sonar division which included many of the world's best disabled Sonar teams. All boats except *Team Alpha* were crewed by past Paralympians and world



NICO MARTINEZ/RC 44 CLASS

champions. *Team Alpha* managed to grab two fourth place finishes from this high-octane crowd, leading the pack around the track for the first 4 of 5 legs of the first race on the final day of racing. But they got aced out of the bullet after choosing the wrong side of the course on the final upwind leg to the finish. Top race honors went to the incredibly tidy and two-time World Champion British team, with second place going to US Sailing Team AlphaGraphics member and Beijing Paralympian Rick Doerr. Norway, with the youngest team, ended up third.

One competitor's bosun and friend of Thweatt described *Team Alpha's* performance in the regatta as having "both moments of brilliance and idiocy."

Another competitor nicknamed *Team Alpha* "The Jamaican Sailing Team" after looking at the condition of their 20-year-old boat, *Alpha* — and perhaps her crew — when they got the s#@* beat out of them in the 20-plus knot winds.

The big take-away is that *Team Alpha* was the third place American team with



ERIK SIMONSON/WWW.H2OSHOTS.COM



After several years based solely in Europe, the RC 44s descended on Miami in early December. If Russell Coutts' latest brainchild, the AC 72, is as successful as the RC 44s, we're in for a great Cup.

an all-disabled crew. *Team Alpha* also finished the regatta ahead of the two top contenders for the third spot on the 2011 US Disabled Sailing Team.

Three Sonar teams will be selected to be on the US team following the Rolex Miami Olympic Classes Regatta January 23-29.

Current US Team members and team coach Betsy Allison encouraged *Team Alpha* to make a run for that third spot at the Miami OCRs in January. Because of work and school commitments, *Team Alpha* may need to hold off a serious run at US team status until '13-'14, but will begin to advance the ball toward that goal immediately.

Anyone wanting to support *Team Alpha* in their bid for US Team status — donation of airline miles, equipment, hosting of fundraisers, etc — or anyone wishing to participate in Paralympic-level racing may

contact Wallace, Thweatt and Roberts at TeamAlpha@clearwire.com. The team will also be setting up a blog for anyone interested in following their progress, and will share that link in future SBYC/BAADS/*Team Alpha* communications once it's live. If you do decide to help out, you'll be joining a group that includes key *Team Alpha* sponsors: Treasure Island Sailing Center; Sea Scouts Ship 30, West Sacramento; River City Physical Therapy, Sacramento; A. Walker and J. Fossum, and Prospect Properties.

Midwinters Notebook

Midwinters series are in full swing. The weekend of December 4-5 marked the second installment of the Golden Gate YC's Manuel Fagundes Seaweed Soup Series. Although the day's showers largely stayed away, it was one of the least conditions-friendly days this year. The light air, combined

with a ripping ebb, meant that in every division except for the big boats, as many as 2/3 of its entrants did not finish. Three divisions — the Folkboats, Knarrs and Catalina 34s — had their race abandoned altogether. On Sunday it was the little guys' turn over at Richmond YC for the first Small Boat Midwinters. While they too had light air, they got a torrential downpour to boot.

RegattaPRO/Sausalito YC — The weather experts gave us a forecast of west winds at 5-10 kts for December 11's racing, with partly cloudy skies. Upon arrival, we saw pretty much nothing but mid-level fog and 5-8 kts of wind out of the NNW swinging from 305 to 320, tending to hover right around 310. Fortunately the breeze held throughout the day, but the fog dropped around 2 p.m. and made finding the finish line a challenge for some.

The J/105 *Roxanne* actually began sailing backwards at one point, frustrated with their upwind performance only to find a huge clump of the oh-so-scarce, endangered eel grass. Once it was removed, their speed improved greatly, but the damage was already done. The J/120, J/105, Melges 24 and Antrim 27 fleets sailed two four-mile courses, while the Moore 24 and J/24 fleets sailed two 3.2 mile courses.

Style points went to Steve Madeira's J/120 *Mr. Magoo*, sporting a candy cane boom and sprit, and a red kite — borrowed from Timo Bruck's *Twist* — to go with their green hull. Everyone on board wore Santa caps, and there were stockings for each crewmember hanging off the pushpit.

— jeff zarwell

'Team Alpha', USA 255, drag races off the starting line with two other American boats skippered by Bert Foster 'Captain Hook' (757) and Beijing Paralympian Rick Doerr (674).



THE RACING

LATITUDE/LADONNA



LATITUDE/LADONNA



LATITUDE/LADONNA



RICH HUDNUT JR.



LATITUDE/LADONNA



Midwinters Madness, clockwise from top-left — 'Twilight Zone' chases 'Chesapeake' into a mark at the Berkeley YC mids; "Don't go in there!"; the afterguard aboard Timo Bruck's J/120 'Twist' enjoying the day, weather be damned; vying for the highest-rated boat honors, a Tuna and a Cal 20 work downwind; 'Wasabi' makes a perfect frame for the City; you don't need a pure racing boat to enjoy midwinters racing; 'E.T.' powers upwind at the RegattaPRO/Sausalito YC Winter One Design Series; 'Lively' looking just that; Steve Madeira's Mr. Mago got into the Christmas spirit with stockings for each crewmember, a candy cane boom and red kite borrowed from 'Twist'; 'Dayenu' punching a hole in the fog; a pair of Express 27s duel downwind; the Ranger 23 'Crazy Horse' looking alive.

Berkeley YC Mids — So, where was the "mostly sunny?" For the weekend of December 11-12, the weather prognosticators got the amount of wind about right (not a lot), the directions sorta right (westnorthwest-ish) but they flunked on the "mostly sunny" part. Also, the mention of "fog until 10 a.m." was a bit shy of reality.

On Saturday, 60 boats in eight divi-

sions started on time. Off to GOC, they went on a windward/leeward eight-mile course. At 2:24 p.m., the Bilafer family's Henderson 30 *Family Hour* finished first. At that instant, the fog swooped down onto the water, and for the next hour and 20 minutes, during which 45 more boats finished, we could not actually see the finish buoy. Most of the racers, in making their determination of which end

of the line was favored, concluded correctly that the end that had the committee boat people with the giggles, whistles and guns was the end to aim for. We did have one entrant radio in that he was at the finish buoy "now!" This was a good thing because we couldn't see him at all. Some



RICH HUDNUT JR.



LATTITUDE/LADONNA



LATTITUDE/LADONNA



KEVIN WILKINSON



LATTITUDE/LADONNA



LATTITUDE/LADONNA

boats overstood the line and seemed to rely primarily on our boisterous, noisy, committee to locate us. Ten boats either got lost, or figured that they wouldn't make the 5 p.m. cut-off and radioed in their retirement. In the end, all 60 boats were accounted for.

Sunday, of course, was different. It was still missing the "mostly sunny", but instead there was no wind to begin with. After a 55-minute postponement, we were able to get rolling. The wind was

much more robust than Saturday, so we selected a 9.4-mile course. We figured we could shorten if necessary. The fog actually dissipated and there was a bit of sun. The wind maintained its robustness and all 27 entries finished well before the deadline.

— *bobbi tosse*

Octavia Celebrates A Milestone

How many people have a birthday party for their sailboat? My guess, probably not that many. How about a 30th birthday to celebrate a multi-decade winning spree which includes a Pac Cup win,

a blistering Coastal Cup record time that stood for almost 10 years, and a Delta Ditch Run monohull record still stands to this day? The Kett family, and crew, both new and old, of the Santa Cruz-based SC 50 *Octavia* did just that December 11. The Wizard, Bill Lee, showed up for the dock-side festivities highlighted by countless sea stories, and a very nicely appointed hardcover book dedicated to the 30-year race-winning history. A birthday banner hung on the boom, and a celebratory flag flew from the forestay.

Octavia, as the name suggests, is hull number eight of the SC 50s. It was or-

THE RACING

dered by the Kett family back in the late '70s and delivered in '80. Current owner Shepard Kett recalled what Lee had told Kett's father Stewart upon delivery 30 years ago.

"When Bill gave it to Stewart, he said that he was just letting him take care of it for a while," Kett said. "Bill felt like it was his baby. We are the last of the original owners of the SC 50s."

In true Santa Cruz fashion, the boat was crewed by many well-known Santa Cruz sailors over the years, and you can imagine the tales. Kett recalled a few of his favorites, which included many coastal, offshore, and Bay races:

"The '97 Coastal Cup we won overall and set the record, which stood for almost 10 years before a 70-foot sled broke it," he said. "The '00 Pac Cup, which we won overall was probably the highlight."

Of course the 'ULDB Revolution' of this era is best known for spawning some very fast downwind sleds, and one of the best known downwind wins for *Octavia* is the

record that still stands to this day, the Delta Ditch Run.

"The year that we won the Ditch it was howling, and with the flat water you could feel the whole boat lift up out of the water," Kett said. "It was dead flat . . . I mean dead flat, with huge breeze. Occasionally we would feel it skip off of the mud. There's one section where you have to sail between a narrow channel of buoys, and tripping the pole under some of those bridges with concrete pillars on either side, it had to be a perfect trip . . . 25 feet away there's a levee with giant rocks. Yeah it was really fun!"

In mellow times Kett described *Octavia* as a, "...big old Cadillac with power steering. It's just so comfortable and smooth. In big winds it becomes a Ferrari and only the best drivers can handle it in a big breeze. Even so, it's just a really good all-around boat. Crossing to Hawaii, it's just a really nice size to spend a week



on."

Mike Evans, a long time Santa Cruz sailor who has been racing on *Octavia* since '87, has over 10,000 ocean miles

THE BOX SCORES

The Bay's midwinter series are off to a roaring start, so without further ado, we get right to the results. Our style guide for midwinters results is right here in front of you. If you take the time to type them out in the format you see here, they are guaranteed to get into the magazine, as it just makes life that much easier for us when our results gnome decides to play hooky. We need the boat name, type of boat (for handicap divisions) and the skipper's name. When you've gotten all that info together, just send it on to the Racing Editor at rob@latitude38.com. Thanks!

SAUSALITO YACHT CLUB MIDWINTERS (12/5 1r. 0t)

DIVISION A (SPINNAKER) — 1) **JR**, Moore 24, Richard Korman; 2) **Gammon**, Tartan 10, Jeff Hunter; 3) **Trasher**, Merit 25, Harriet Lehman. (11 boats)

DIVISION C (NON-SPINNAKER PHRF < 143) — 1) **Q**, Schumacher 40, Glenn Isaacson; 2) **Basic Instinct**, Elliot 1050, Jan Borjeson; 3) **Willow**, Centurion 40s, Robert Braid. (6 boats)

DIVISION D (NON-SPINNAKER PHRF 143 - 232) — 1) **La Mer**, Newport 30, Randy Grenier; 2) **Homus**, Ericson 27, Josh Dvorson; 3) **Willin**, Catalina 30, Mark Tishler. (5 boats)

DIVISION E (NON SPINNAKER PHRF >232) — 1) **Tackful**, Santana 22, Frank Lawler; 2) **Kelly Shawn**, Santana 22, Leah Pepe; 3) **Inshallah**, Santana 22, Shirley Bates. (3 boats)

Complete results at: www.sausalitoyachtclub.org

REGATTAPRO/SSAUSALITO YC WINTER ONE DESIGN SERIES STANDINGS (4r. 0t)

J/120 — 1) **Grace Dances**, Richard Swanson, 7 points; 2) **Mr. Magoo**, Steve Madeira, 13; 3) **Jol-**

ly Mon, Chris Chamberlin, 13. (7 boats)

ANTRIM 27 — 1) **Always Friday**, John Liebenberg, 7 points; 2) **Arch Angel**, Bryce Griffith, 8; 3) **Abracadabra**, Ian Chamberlain, 12. (5 boats)

MELGES 24 — 1) **Personal Puff**, Dan Hauserman, 8 points; 2) **Smokin'**, Kevin Clark, 9; 3) **Wilco**, Doug Wilhelm, 14. (10 boats)

J/105 — 1) **Arbitrage**, Bruce Stone, 9 points; 2) **Roxanne**, Charles James, 17; 3) **Wianno**, Edward Walker, 18. (12 boats)

MOORE 24 — 1) **Moorigami**, John Siegel, 4 points; 2) **Banditos**, John Kernot, 10; 3) **Blue Ball**, Simon Winer, 12. (7 boats)

J/24 — 1) **Snowjob**, Brian Goepfrich, 6 points; 2) **On Belay**, Don Taylor, 8; 3) **Downtown Uproar**, Darren Cumming, 14. (7 boats)

Complete results at: www.regattapro.com

GOLDEN GATE YC MANUEL FAGUNDES SEAWEEED SOUP SERIES (12/4 1r. 0t)

PHRF 1 — 1) **Double Trouble**, J/125, Andy Costello; 2) **War Pony**, Farr 36, Mark Howe; 3) **California Condor**, Antrim Class 40, Buzz Blackett. (12 boats)

PHRF 2 — 1) **Eight Ball**, Mumm 30, Scott Eason; 2) **Hawkeye**, IMX 38, Frank Morrow; 3) **Q**, Schumacher 40, Glenn Isaacson (14 boats)

PHRF 3 — 1) **Uno**, Wyliecat 30, Steve Wonner; 2) **Arcadia**, Modernized Santana 27, Gordie Nash; 3) **Harp**, Catalina 38, Mike Mannix. (11 boats)

CATALINA 34 — ABN. (9 boats)
PHRF 4 — 1) **La Paloma**, IOD, James Hennefer; 2) **Torrid**, Aphrodite 101, Larry Westland. (7 boats, 2 finishers)

KNARR — ABN. (6 boats)

FOLKBOAT — ABN. (8 boats)

LARGER MULTIS — No finishers. (1 boat)

Complete results at: www.ggyc.org

BERKELEY YC MIDWINTERS SATURDAY SERIES

STANDINGS (2r. 0t)

DIVISION A — 1) **Family Hour-TNG**, Henderson 30, Bilafer family, 2 points; 2) **Jeannette**, Frers 40, Henry King, 5; 3) **Stewball**, Express 37, Bob Harford, 5. (8 boats)

DIVISION B — 1) **Hoot**, Olson 30, Andrew Macfie, 2 points; 2) **Mintaka 4**, Farr 38, Gerry Brown, 5; 3) **Flexi Flyer**, Soverel 33, Mitchell Wells, 6. (8 boats)

DIVISION C — 1) **Shameless**, Custom Schumacher 30, G. Ellison/H. Macartney, 4 points; 2) **For Pete's Sake**, Ultimate 24, Peter Cook, 4; 3) **Baleineau**, Olson 34, Charles Brochard, 5. (6 boats)

EXPRESS 27 — 1) **Motorcycle Irene**, Will Paxton, 3 points; 2) **El Raton**, Ray Lotto, 5; 3) **Eagle**, Ross Groelz, 7. (18 boats)

DIVISION D — 1) **Joycity**, 1/4 Ton, Patrick Kohlman, 3 points; 2) **Phantom**, J/24, John Guliford, 4; 3) **Boogie Woogie**, Ranger 33, 8. (7 boats)

DIVISION E — 1) **Lelo Too**, Tartan 30, Emile Carles, 2 points; 2) **Achates**, Newport 30, Robert Schock, 5; 3) **Starkite**, Catalina 30, Laurie Miller, 7. (4 boats)

DIVISION F — 1) **Dumbo**, Catalina 22, David Torrisi, 2 points; 2) **Crazy Horse**, Ranger 23, Nicholas Ancel, 9; 3) **Latin Lass**, Catalina 27, Bill Chapman, 10. (6 boats)

CAL 20 — 1) **Can O' Whoopass**, Richard vonEhrenkrook, 2 points; 2) **Fjording**, Tina Lundh, 4; 3) **Rambler**, Michael Farrell, 9. (3 boats)

Complete results at: www.berkeleyyc.org

BERKELEY YC MIDWINTERS SUNDAY SERIES STANDINGS (2r. 0t)

MULTIHULL — 1) **Emma**, Bill Roberts, 2 points. (1 boat)

DIVISION 1 (<85) — 1) **Sweet Okole**, Modified



LATTITUDEUR

They don't call it a fiasco for nothing. The Three Bridge Fiasco starts January 29. Get signed up early!

on her and currently works the bow. With three Pac Cups, a Mexico race, and countless other races under his harness,

Mike describes the Ditch Run where they beat the record as, "... one of the most intense races ever. Nobody ate or drank

for the entire race. We got to Stockton and there was a sense of relief. It was really intense. We were so close to wiping-out and putting that thing on the hard so many times, it was brutal. We had two bowmen for that race, and we had to keep swapping them out."

Project manager Jay Crum worked for Bill Lee during the late '70 and early '80s and actually helped build *Octavia*. Crum crewed on her in the Del Rey to PV and the TransPac in '81, where he describes this finish, "We finished overlapped with *Secret Love* in the middle of the night and the committee in the hotel room didn't see us finish because we were behind the other boat. So we had to go through a protest the next day to get reinstated."

Happy birthday *Octavia*! May there be many more years of radical offshore downwind racing! There's talk of another Hawaii race, but we'll have to wait and see.

I want to wrap-up with a vignette from Dave Wahle who worked at The Coop

Farr 36, Dean Treadway, 2 points; 2) **Warp Speed**, C&C 115, Jeff Smith, 5; 2) **Abordage**, Melges 24, Erwan Le Gall, 8. (4 boats)

DIVISION 2 (87-120) — 1) **Hoot**, Olson 30, Andrew Macfie, 3 points; 2) **For Pete's Sake**, Ultimate 24, Peter Cook; 3) **Flexi Flyer**, Soverel 33, Mitchell Wells, 5. (5 boats)

EXPRESS 27 — 1) **Great White**, Rachel Fogel, 4 points; 2) **Wetsu**, Phil Krasner, 5; 3) **Dianne**, Steve Katzman, 7. (5 boats)

DIVISION 3 (123-168) — 1) **Two Irrational**, Moore 24, Anthony Chargin, 5 points; 2) **Chesapeake**, Merit 25, Jim Fair, 6; 3) **Frogflips**, J/24, Richard Stockdale, 6. (5 boats)

DIVISION 4 (>170) — 1) **Antares**, IS 30-2, Larry Telford, 2 points; 2) **Latin Lass**, Catalina 27, Bill Chapman, 5; 3) **Zingaro**, Santana 22, Jennifer McKenna, 6. (4 boats)

Complete results at: www.berkeleyyc.org

SEQUOIA YC WINTER SERIES #2 (12/11, 1r, 0t)

NON-SPINNAKER — 1) **Head Rush**, Antrim 27, Charlie Watt; 2) **Sweet Pea**, Islander 30, Tim Peterson; 3) **Smokin J**, J/29, Stan Phillips. (15 boats)

Complete results at: www.sequoiayc.org

ISLAND YC ISLAND DAYS #2 (12/12, 1r, 0t)

SPINAKER 1 — 1) **Double Trouble**, Moore 24, Kevin Durant; 2) **Invisible Hand**, J/111, Frank Slooman; 3) **Ragtime!**, J/92, Bob Johnston. (7 boats)

168 RATERS — 1) **Phantom**, J/24, John Guilford; 2) **Bandido**, Merit 25, George Gurrola; 3) **Bewitched**, Merit 25, Laraine Salmon. (3 boats)

SPINNAKER 2 — 1) **Lelo 2**, Tartan 30, Emile Carles; 2) **Razzmatazz**, Santana 525, Bill King; 3) **Spitfire**, Santana 22, Tom McIntyre. (10 boats)

NON-SPINNAKER — 1) **Magic**, Mercury, John Hansen; 2) **Galatea**, Aphrodite 101, Ken Viaggi; 3) **Scrimshaw**, Alerion 28, Maichael Maurier. (7

boats)

COLUMBIA 5.5 — 1) **Seabiscuit**, Peter Szaz; 2) **Tenacious**, Group SCS; 3) **Wings**, Mike Jackson. (3 boats)

Complete results at: www.iyc.org

SOUTH BEACH YC ISLAND FEVER SERIES STANDINGS (2r, 0t)

SPINAKER PHRF ≤ 126 — 1) **Wasabi**, Kernan 44, Dale Williams, 3 points; 2) **Lazy Lightning**, Tartan 10, Tim McDonald, 6; 3) **Wild One**, FT 10, John LyMBERG, 9. (11 boats)

SPINNAKER PHRF 127+ — 1) **Double Play**, Yankee 30, RDK partners, 3 points; 2) **Luna Sea**, Islander 36, Dan Knox, 5; 3) **Smooth**, Santana 525, Mark Feinholz, 5. (5 boats)

SPINNAKER CATALINA 30 — 1) **Huge**, Woodruff/Keen, 3; 2) **Adventure**, Jack McDermott, 3; 3) **Goose**, Mike Kastrop, 5. (6 boats)

NON-SPINNAKER — 1) **007**, J/105, Bruce Blackie, 2 points; 2) **Unanimous**, CS 30, Steve Eitrem, 6; 3) **Seaview**, C&C 115, Peter Hamm, 6. (6 boats)

Complete results at: www.iyc.org

RICHMOND YC SMALL BOAT MIDWINTERS #1 (12/5)

EI TORO SR. (5r/0t) — 1) **Michael Quinn**, 18 points; 2) **Skip Shapiro**, 18; 3) **Will Paxton**, 19. (15 boats)

EL TORO JR. (4r/0t) — 1) **Neil Marcellini**, 12 points; 2) **Nicholas Lenz**, 13; 3) **Robbie Englehart**, 15. (16 boats)

OPTIMIST CHAMPS (3r/0t) — 1) **Lawson Willard**, 10 points; 2) **William McMullen**, 11; 3) **Teddy Hayden**, 13. (13 boats)

OPTIMIST GREEN (3r/0t) — 1) **Sumner Strumph**, 10 points; 2) **TJ Mahoney**, 11; 3) **Jack Landon**, 12. (80 boats)

SNIPE (3r/0t) — 1) **Doug Howson**, 4 points; 2) **Michael Andrews**, 5; 3) **Vince Casalaina**, 9. (5

boats)

BYTE (3r/0t) — 1) **Laurie Davis**, 4 points; 2) **Michele Logan**, 5; 3) **Elmar Groom**, 9. (3 boats)

WYLIE WABBIT (2r/0t) — 1) **Weckless**, Tim Russell, 2 points; 2) **Marceline Therrien**, 4; 3) **Kim Desenberg**, 8. (5 boats)

ULTIMATE 20 (2r/0t) — 1) **Michael Eisenberg**, 4 points; 2) **Ben Anderson**, 4; 3) **Tom Burden**, 4. (8 boats)

29er (2r/0t) — 1) **Mackenzie Cook/ John Marlett**, 2 points; 2) **John Canepa**, 5; 3) **Mike Pacholski/Haydon Stapleton**, 5. (3 boats)

LASER (2r/0t) — 1) **Simon Bell**, 7; 2) **Christine Neville**, 8; 3) **Hendrik Bruhns**, 9. (11 boats)

LASER RADIAL (2r/0t) — 1) **Dominique Bertrand**, 9 points; 2) **Michael Hooton**, 10; 3) **Kyle Larsen**, 11. (7 boats)

BREAKWATER OPEN CLASS (2r/0t) — 1) **Ron Tostensen**, Antrim Wing Dinghy, 5 points; 2) **Steve Lowry**, Daysailer, 8; 3) **Steve Cameron**, Antrim Wing Dinghy. (8 boats)

THISTLE (2r/0t) — 1) **Ronald Smith**, 3 points; 2) **Michael Gillum**, 5; 3) **Brian Bauman**, 7. (5 boats)

LIGHTNING (2r/0t) — 1) **Wayne Clough**, 4 points; 2) **Michael Molina**, 5. (2 boats)

FLYING DUTCHMAN (2r/0t) — 1) **Zhenya Kirueshkin-Stepanoff**, 2 points; 2) **Buzz Ballenger**, 5; 3) **Mike Meszaros**, 6. (3 boats)

WETA (2r/0t) — 1) **Gordon Lyon**, 2 points; 2) **Marc Simmel**, 4. (2 boats)

SOUTHAMPTON OPEN CLASS (2r/0t) — 1) **Pieter Versavel**, Musto Skiff, 3 points; 2) **Del Olson**, IC, 4; 3) **Christopher O'Leary**, 505, 5. (3 boats)

MULTIHULL (2r/0t) — 1) **Bruce Edwards**, 505 {sic}, 3 points; 2) **Ryan Schofield**, Hobie 18, 7; 3) **Michael Spitz**, Hobie Miracle 20, 8. (6 boats)

Complete results at: www.richmondyc.org

THE RACING

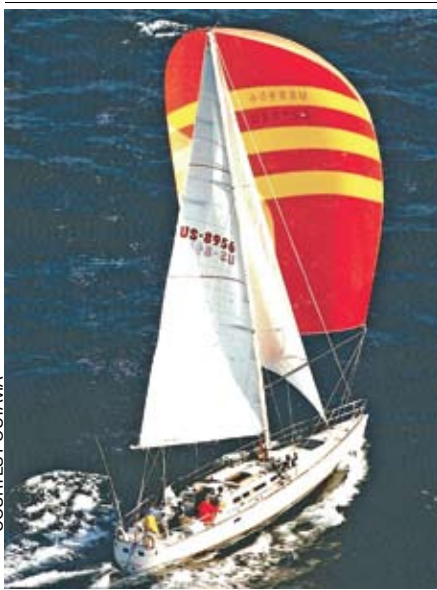
for years and probably poured the keel for *Octavia*. This will give you a glimpse into the world of Bill Lee Yachts back in the day when *Octavia* was built. It was a point in time that I don't think could ever happen again; a time when the stars were aligned just right so that a bunch of really smart, creative and motivated friends could get together and produce some pretty incredible boats that have obviously stood the test of time.

— *Jeremy Leonard*

Get Checked Out on Race Management with US Sailing

US Sailing and the Encinal Yacht Club are sponsoring a Club Race Officer seminar designed for sailors who have some race committee experience on January 15.

The event will be held in the club's Regatta Room on the ground floor from 07:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and will be lead by Bill Gage —US Sailing's Area G Race Officer and a certified National Race Officer who has taught numerous seminars and workshops. He will be assisted by US Sailing board member and St. Francis YC



COURTESY OCTAVIA

The Kett Family's SC 50 'Octavia' has racked up some miles and results in the last 30 years.

Racing Manager John Craig.

The seminar will cover a wide range of topics related to running races including:

race committee objectives, responsibilities, jobs and equipment, sailing instructions, setting the course, the starting system, starting penalties, before the start, during the race, finishing and scoring.

You'll need your own copy of the RRS 2009-2012, and it's recommended that you answer the "study questions" available on the US Sailing website to prepare for the seminar.

The optional Club Race Officer ("CRO") certification test will be given at the conclusion of the seminar. In order to be certified as a US Sailing CRO, you must attend a complete seminar and pass this test. In addition, to be certified as a CRO, you're required to have a current copy of the US Sailing Race Management Handbook and meet the program's other experience-based criteria.

Seminar registration using the US Sailing on-line registration system is encouraged at http://www.ussailing.org/racemgt/Race_Officer_Prog/seminars.asp. For further info, contact Larry Westland, at 510-459-5566 or lwestland@tricommercial.com.

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Border Run
April 9-10, 2011
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May 29-30, 2011
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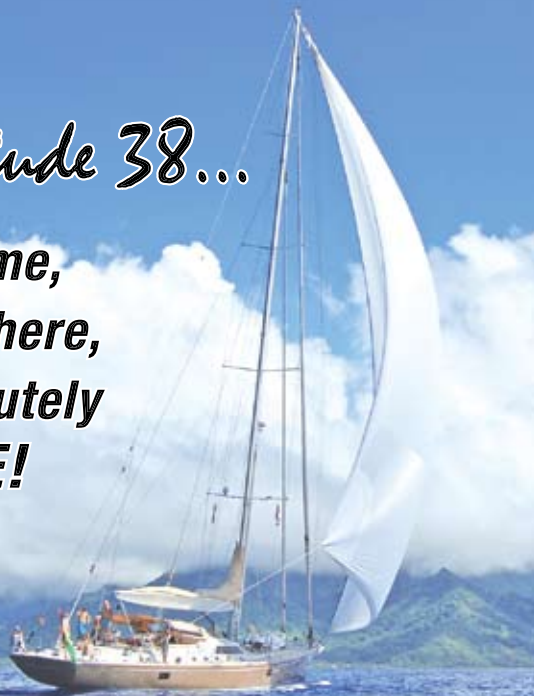
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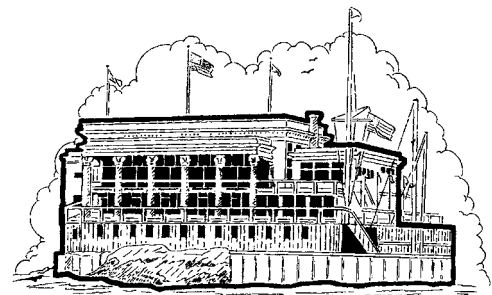
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We bring you a special report this month on **Summer Chartering in the Greater Puget Sound region**, with tips and firsthand insights from a variety of *Latitude* readers.

Readers' Share Their Insights on Pacific Northwest Chartering

If La Niña delivers as many wet, dreary days as anticipated, we're in for a very soggy winter — which is a good reason to start pipedreaming about sunny summer getaways. In fact, right now is the ideal time to plan a sailing vacation to the West Coast's most spectacularly beautiful sailing grounds, the Greater Puget Sound region — or as some call it, the Salish Sea.

Why plan now? Primarily to lock in your top choice of boat for your ideal dates. Because the region isn't considered to be a year-round chartering destination, fleet sizes are substantially smaller than in popular tropical areas such as the BVI or St. Maarten. And the fact that this region gets many repeat customers — including Europeans who consider both the U.S. and Canada to be bargains these days — makes it even more important to book well in advance if you want a good selection of boats and available dates. The season runs from May to September, with the hottest — and most popular — months being July and August.

If you haven't yet sailed these Northwest waterways, trust us, you will be greatly impressed. The area abounds with wildlife — both above and below

Believe it or not it's often warm enough to sail in a swimsuit during summers in the Northwest — or even go topless.

the surface — and the deep green hue of seemingly endless forests has an undeniably calming affect that could settle the nerves of even the most stressed-out workaholic.

Both the American San Juan Islands and the Canadian Gulf Islands have dozens of well-protected anchorages — many equipped with overnight mooring balls — and the distances between them are usually short. Although you do need to be attentive to swift currents and wide tidal ranges, navigation in these waters is relatively easy; charts are spot-on and aids to navigation are abundant. You'll find ample infrastructure ashore for shopping, dining, 'pubbing' and re-provisioning, but you can also easily escape to secluded anchorages with little or no human development.

Throughout the region winds tend to be light (under 10 to 15 knots) and the protected waters are what a San Francisco Bay sailor would probably call dead flat. And due to the region's northerly latitudes, days are extremely long, giving you four or five more hours of daylight than in the tropics. In mid-summer, for example, it doesn't get dark until around 9 p.m.

Charter companies are peppered throughout the region, offering late-model monohulls and a few multihulls. If you have ample experience, most companies will allow you to take a boat farther afield to the primeval fiords of Desolation Sound or up into spectacularly beautiful Princess Louisa Inlet on the Canadian mainland.

It's true that the water temps here are much cooler than in, say, the Eastern Caribbean, but some bays get to a swimmable 70°, and there are dozens and dozens of freshwater lakes within



INSET LANI SCHROEDER

easy walking distance of popular anchorages.

As you might have guessed, we love sailing these waters, and we revisit them whenever we can. But we certainly don't consider ourselves to be experts on the subject. That's why we solicited tips and insights from *Latitude* readers to share with you. In the following pages you'll read excerpts from their comments. So we invite you to grab a pencil and a notepad and learn from their collective experiences:

"Sailing in the Pacific Northwest is the biggest treat as far as West Coast sailing destinations go. We may not have that long a season, but the scenery is unforgettably breathtaking. Not only do we have the South Sound assortment of islands and gunkholes, but we are gifted with having the San Juan Islands along with the Canadian Gulf Islands. Nature didn't scrimp on providing us with a wide variety of mammals, other animals or birds to entertain us.

"We often run across orcas and our seasonal gray whales, and then there are Dall's porpoises and otters scattered around the Salish Sea year round. In the skies we have bald eagles and os-



COURTESY LANI SCHROEDER

OF CHARTERING



DAN & LINDA NEWLAND

Spread: Majestic, snow-capped Mt. Baker towers above the mainland, in stark contrast to warm sunny days enjoyed at places like Sucia Island, seen here. Inset: You can find swimmable lakes close to many anchorages.

preys diving for dinner every evening in most locales.

"With the Olympic mountain range to the west and the Cascades to the east and islands throughout the area, there's never a moment to not be awestruck."

— gary peterson

"Most American sailors start with the San Juan Islands (which are in U.S. waters) and therefore don't require customs clearance procedures. However, the Canadian Gulf Islands and the close location of Victoria, B.C. soon have American sailors moving back and forth to enjoy the gorgeous scenery and the many fabulous Canadian Marine Parks, which are generally only accessible by boat. But the most magnificent areas are farther north along the Sunshine Coast, Desolation Sound and the Discovery Passage areas of British Columbia.

"The *Dreamspeaker Cruising Guides* by Anne & Laurence Yeadoon-Jones are

just fabulous for the sailing beginner. They assist in float planning and give critical information about places to see and where to anchor or berth. However, the key element of sailing in the area is having a keen understanding of the tides, which can rise and fall as much as 16 feet. One joker suggests that there are over 1000 islands at low tides and fewer than 500 at high tides.

"The fjord-like passages in the Toba Wilderness, Desolation Sound and

Princess Louisa Inlet are breathtakingly beautiful and moving in their masterial wondrousness. Many charterers come from Europe due to the absolute beauty of the area."

— jerry r. crowley

"I sailed in the San Juans in 2006 as a participant in the liveaboard Learn-n-Cruise summer program put on by San Juan Sailing. The week-long cruise, which offers ASA certification, operates out of San Juan Sailing's Bellingham, Washington charter base. On our voyage we had students and an instructor aboard a late model Beneteau Oceanis 361, which was our well-provisioned charter boat for the event.

"We all stepped off the boat at the end of the week with great memories of the beauty of the San Juans and the friendly people we met — and got ASA certifications to boot. I just can't say enough good things about it all.

"Sailing in the San Juan Islands is a special treat and provides great opportunities to practice navigation skills. The scenery is magnificent and the trees practically meet the sea, there are a zillion places to anchor at a multitude of islands, reasonable charter boats are available, and the weather can be warm and comfortable in the summer.

"Sailing in the summer, however, means moderate to light winds (think opposite of what we're used to on San Francisco Bay), and you do have to watch the currents a bit. But with some

Ganges Harbor on Saltspring Island is a wonderful place to shot, dine and poke around while sailing the Gulf Islands.



JAY LAMBERT

WORLD

planning you can easily have a great time on a sailboat — as long as it's also equipped with a reliable engine to use when the wind drops.

"Unlike California, Washington State has many well-maintained saltwater marine parks that are only accessible by water. Anchoring in some of these serene locations is often a matter of dropping the hook, then taking the dinghy to shore to tie a stern line to a tree. In other cases, the State provides mooring facilities and full-service marinas are available.

"Some of our favorite places during our journey were Friday Harbor, Inati Bay, Rosario Resort (where young "dock assistants" help you tie up before you head off to the hot tub), Stuart Island, and Sucia Island. If you have the time, there are plenty of places to explore. I'd love to do it again."

— john harold

"The Strait of Georgia can have good breezes but it's open water and quite large. If you have lots of time and don't mind either waiting for good weather or



sailing/motoring while out in the exposed cockpit, then a sailboat will be fine.

"We usually charter near the end of the chartering season as it is cheaper and less crowded. You do run the risk of colder weather and an occasional front passing through, but if you're hunkered down in a snug anchorage, it adds to

the experience.

"We really like the Northwest for boating because it is so different from the Hawaiian waters where we live and normally sail. It's generally flat water in the Northwest, the passages are quick with many choices of anchorages, marinas and towns — and perhaps most important of all, our wives will go with us!"

— jay lambert

"About 80 miles north of Vancouver, Canada's Desolation Sound has everything from towering mountain ranges whose steep wooded slopes angle sharply into the water, to anchorages about as far from civilization as you can get without crossing an ocean. Located on the east side of Vancouver Island, this body of water is in the shadow of a mountain range on the island that blocks a lot of the weather coming in off the ocean. As a result, more often than not you're boating in sunshine while to the north or south there may be cloudy skies.

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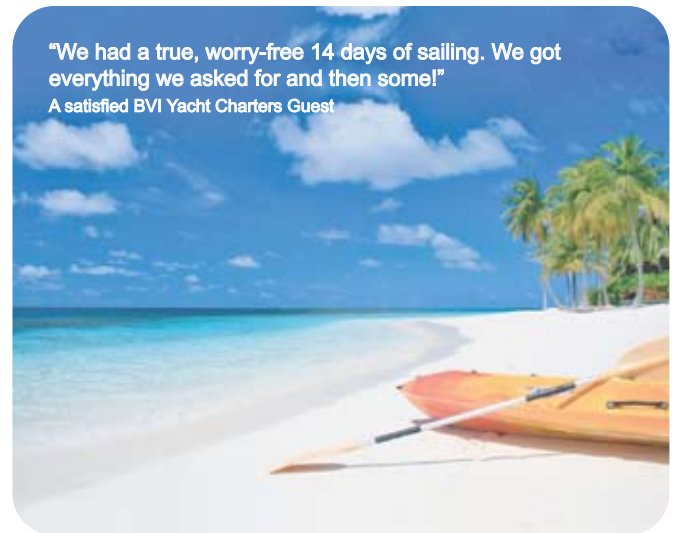
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OF CHARTERING

"By the way, the topless shot I sent in was taken while transiting between anchorages. The temperature was 82° with 15 knots of wind, and all the powerboats gave way! We waved back to say 'Thank you.' It doesn't get any better than that."

— *lani schroeder*

"Under the watchful eye of Mt. Baker, you'll enjoy armadas of patrolling Canadian geese, otter pups learning from attentive parents, seals galore, raccoon families foraging along rocky shores, bald eagles by the half dozen swooping on the thermals, and placid deer along the shoreline. On their red stilt legs, oystercatchers search for lunch under the rocks. Drop the crab pots and maybe, if you're lucky, the commercial pirates will not have removed all of the legal males."

— *peter simpson*

"I like docks, shore power, restaurants and seeing the local sights, so my partner Jill and I did the marina

concept. How was it? In a word, perfect. We got up late, read the paper over lattes and usually had a 1- to 3-hour transit to the next destination. So the underway target was about noon-ish. Nice. Who wouldn't like this? And our method worked. We 'did' Friday Harbor, Roche Harbor, Deer Harbor, Rosario and back to Anacortes.

"Canada is a foreign country. Yes, it is true, and you can tell the difference — it is all good. We consistently met the most wonderful people one could imagine. If you add this factor to the other things the area has to offer, it may well be unmatched on this small planet."

— *dave stromquist*



GARY PETERSON

With a little bit of luck, you'll sight a pod of orcas cavorting in the current. Needless to say, though, you should never crowd them.

"My husband Dan and I moved up to Port Townsend from Alameda in 2006 and we finally did some sailing in the San Juans last summer.

"The weather can be very changeable, even from one hour to the next.

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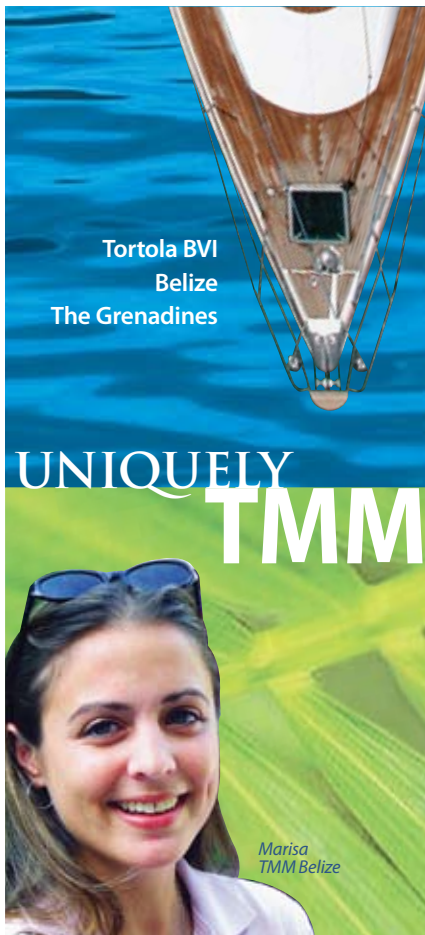


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WORLD

The saying up here is 'If you don't like the weather, wait ten minutes.'

"Currents can kill your fun fast as well, but if you're savvy about reading tide and current charts, you should be fine. There are some channels that shouldn't be navigated at anything other than slack current. Some of the currents can run up to 6+ knots in a narrow opening and take a boat along for the ride without much helm control — it's one way to get up close and personal to the rocks.

"Three mandatory books to have on board are: a thorough tide and current guide like *Captain Jack's* or *Ports and Passages* (broader coverage than *Capt. Jack's*), the currents for the San Juan Islands and surrounding areas, and a *Current Atlas for the Juan de Fuca Straits to Strait of Georgia* which also has annual updates called *Washburne's Tables*.

"Paper charts to keep in the cockpit are invaluable as a tool to back up the chartplotter. We wouldn't be without both as the charts are good for more



LANI SCHROEDER

As this shot shows, Chatterbox Falls is fed by a system of vertical cascades. Look closely and you can see boats anchored close by.

open sailing and the chartplotter is excellent in tight quarters. (Many charter boats have chartplotters up here.)

"There are a great number of Washington State Marine Parks in the San Juans. You can pay as you go, as many of the parks are coves or inlets on islands and sometimes the whole island is a state park so you can either anchor out (no charge) or pick up a mooring, dinghy ashore and then walk on trails, camp or barbecue. Our favorite is uninhabited Jones Island. It's a small harbor but very popular and less than an hour away from Friday Harbor.

"Mooring is very popular, as using them eliminates the need to deal with messy anchors. But they are a rare commodity in the high season of July and August, which are also the warmest and driest months.

"For visiting Friday Harbor during the high season, our suggestion is to call ahead with plenty of lead time to reserve a slip. They are happy to reserve

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OF CHARTERING

at the city-owned marina. The clean hot-water showers, bathrooms and close proximity to town make it an ideal stop for reprovisioning, eating out or taking in a movie. It's well worth going there for a night. In the morning, the bakery boat comes down the fairways and sells coffee and bakery goods straight to the boaters who meet it as it turns into an empty slip, or by just hanging over their transom.

"Most anchorages are fairly deep close to shore as these rocky islands have deep water around them. By anchoring bow out, and tying off to shore, you can get very close to shore for dinghy purposes. There's usually enough gravel or sand to pull up on, especially at Sucia Island. Some of the state marine parks have short piers with a designated area for dinghy tie-ups. If you're really lucky, you may get to tie your boat up at a pier, but those side-ties are very limited in number.

"Usually the wind comes from the west or southwest in the summer, but it can come in from any direction. So

it pays to listen to the VHF weather channels that are broadcast from both Canada and the U.S. They're very good at updating wind direction and strength. So before nightfall, listen. Complacency may result in having to reset in the middle of the night or in dragging anchor into another boat or rocky shore.

"One of the main draws in the summer is finding the orca population. They can be anywhere, but usually hang out on the west side of San Juan Island around Lime Point. Just listen to your VHF while the whale watch boats talk to one another each morning. There are several pods, and several times dur-



LATITUDE / ANDY

As a counterpoint to idling in secluded anchorages, we suggest a stop at the charming port city of Victoria, the capital of B.C.

ing the summer they all get together in what's called a "superpod" and play rather than eat. That's the best time to get an eye-ful.

"Look for crabbers' flagged buoys on the surface to find the best spots to

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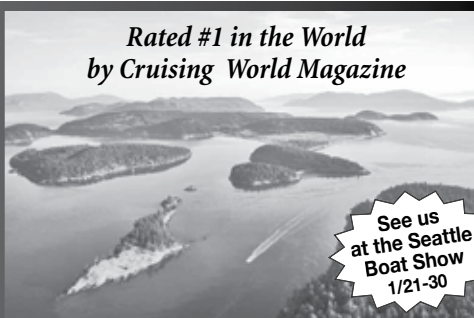
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WORLD

drop your traps. A lot of charter boats carry them. It only takes a few hours to catch dinner. There are Dungeness and rock crab — which are smaller, but just as tasty.

"On Orcas Island and San Juan Island (Friday Harbor) you can catch a shuttle in the summer up until Labor Day to take a tour of the island, or be dropped off at places. It's a cheap alternative to renting a car and allows you to really see the interior of two of the largest islands.

"There are some other hidey holes that locals use and some anchorages that are way too shallow when the tides go out. You might see powerboats in them, but not keelboats. It's best to read your charts carefully and keep an eye out for the predicted direction of the night wind so you are in a lee anchorage, as some spots are protected from the west and southwest, but may not be protected from the north."

— linda newland

"Sucia Island is not to be missed. Grab a mooring ball in Fossil Bay if



COURTESY LANI SCHROEDER

As Lani demonstrates, in the quiet backwaters of the Desolation Sound area water temperatures reach a swimmable 70° or higher.

there's room. Then take the hike over to Echo Bay."

— elizabeth baggs & alan bradley

We thank all these contributors for their candid advice — all of it worth

heeding. One subject that was touched on only lightly, however, is crossing between international boundaries. It's relatively easy to do — especially going *into* Canada, where you simply step into a special phone booth, scan your passport and answer a few questions by phone. Coming back into the U.S. is a bit more formal, as you need to speak to actual immigration agents. And remember, these days *every crewmember must have a passport*, even if he or she is only six months old.

That said, we think a two-nation charter is a splendid idea. No matter which direction you're traveling, you'll find the clearance process to be one of the fastest and most efficient you've ever experienced.

Wherever we charter, we tend to design a cruising itinerary that gives us a balance of developed and undeveloped anchorages. That is, a town with a little nightlife, dining and shopping one day and a tranquil, out-of-the-way respite the next. If you like our thinking, then including the Canadian waters in your

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OF CHARTERING

itinerary is a wise idea. Not only are the Canadian Gulf Islands much less crowded than the San Juans during the peak summer months, but including them simply gives you more variety.

And we highly recommend taking the time to visit Victoria, at the southern end of Vancouver Island, which is the capital of British Columbia. It is exceedingly clean, well-planned and charming, with all sorts of interesting shops, galleries, pubs and restaurants. Plus, there's a fabulous museum that is supported by National Geographic, and is a stone's throw from the harbor. Inside it is an IMAX theater.

Here are two options for visiting Victoria: If you have ample time, plan your trip down Haro Strait with a strong ebb tide, so you don't spend an entire day getting there. And if possible, plan to arrive late in the morning, as that's when most boats pull out from the guest docks that lie directly in front of the iconic Empress Hotel — and adjacent to the Parliament building. From there, the whole town is walkable, and you'll

be in the center of the action. It's first come, first served, however. No reservations. Several other nearby marinas could suffice as Plan B.

If you're short on time, consider visiting the sensational Butchart Gardens, which lie well north of the city, then access Victoria from there by bus — they go until late at night. There's room for 4 to 6 boats in the anchorage on the back side of the Gardens. And here too, arriving at about 10 a.m. may get you a spot. In a pinch you could conceivably check out the expansive gardens in the morning, hop a bus to town, and return that evening in time to see the nightly light show. Even for non-gardeners like us, it's a fascinating place.

Whichever portion of this incredible



PETER SIMPSON

If spectacular scenery, easy sailing and friendly towns aren't enough reason to sail the Northwest, how about an abundance of crab!

region you're lucky enough to explore under sail, we're sure you'll be thrilled by it. Whether sailing with your lover or your whole extended family, there are attractions to please all. In fact, we can't wait to get back there ourselves.

— latitude/andy

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CHANGES

With reports this month from **Interlude** on leaving Spain; from **Sarah Miller** on a young woman's crew experience; from **Capricorn Cat** on a slow trip, with stops, down the coast of Baja; from **Jake**, on spending the summer in the Sea of Cortez; and a hefty portion of **Cruise Notes**.

Interlude — Deerfoot 74 Kurt and Katie Braun A Leisurely Cruise Around (Alameda)

We grew up in California, went to public schools, graduated from UC Berkeley, got married, worked for 20 years child-free, and are now retired. We started sailing around the world in the '02 Ha-Ha, and by the time you read this should be crossing the Atlantic toward the Caribbean. Here are some excerpts from our log about our last days in Spain.

After a fun time on Spain's party island of Ibiza, we took off for Gibraltar in late September. On our second night out, we almost got run over by the *Disney Magic* cruise ship. Kurt called them to say we were wing-on-wing and thus had limited maneuverability. They made the grand gesture of a one-degree change in course. We joked that they wanted to get close enough to illuminate our boat so their guests could take photos. Sure enough, that's exactly what they did.

We arrived at Gibraltar in calm weather motoring against as much as two knots of current and having to dodge copious ship traffic. The only place to anchor was actually just across the border in Spain at the town of La Linea. We found plenty of room in what appeared to be an all-weather anchorage behind the breakwater. La Linea is a working class town with some old buildings and

Although infested by Barbary Macaques — inset right — the Rock of Gibraltar is one of the geographic icons of the Western world.

shops, and is trying to attract cruise ship tourists from across the border. The Mercadona supermarket north of the town center had the best prices we've seen in the Med, with large quantities and a good selection.

We later took *Interlude* to the fuel wharf in Gib, where we took on 1,100 liters of diesel at \$3.75/gallon. After re-anchoring off La Linea, we rode the dinghy back to Gib and visited some friends in Ocean Village/Marina Bay. We were allowed to visit within the marina compound, but not to go into town. To properly cross the border from Spain to Gib requires walking thru a checkpoint — and across the airport runway!

We planned to remain in the La Linea/Gib area for a few more days, but the Guardia Civil came by and told every boat in the anchorage to leave. They said it was not possible to anchor off La Linea, and that we should go into either Puerto Deportivo or Ocean Village/Marina Bay in Gib. Either marina would have charged us about \$75/night. When we asked where we could anchor, we were told to call Algezeras Trafico, which told us to contact Algezeras Pilot Station, which told us to contact our agent to contact the authorities for an anchorage position. In other words, act as though we were a ship. There is no longer an authorized yacht anchorage in the entire Gib/Algezeras area, so cruisers must berth in a marina. This is becoming typical of all ports in Spain. Knowing we weren't that welcome, we set off out the strait on the 70-mile run up to Cadiz.

The eight-mile wide Strait of Gibraltar separates Europe from Africa, and connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Atlantic Ocean. Due to evaporation, the Med has a constant influx of water.

Tides in the Atlantic and wind direction and strength dictate the strength and direction of the surface and subsurface currents. With over four knots of current and 30 knots of wind some 300 days a year at Tarifa, these effects must be taken into account when transiting the Strait.

Our ride out the Med was smooth, with 1-2 knots of favorable countercurrent

INTERLUDE



Gib, Kurt and Katie.



while we hugged the coast and stayed just inside the easily visible current line. As we rounded Tarifa, the NE wind piped up from 5 to 25 knots — and then died again as we approached Cape Trafalgar. The wind got up to 25 knots again from the north as we approached Cadiz.

Cadiz is an historic old Spanish town with interesting architecture, museums and churches. Columbus sailed from here on his second and fourth voyages to the New World, and in the 18th century Cadiz grew to become Spain's richest city. We also enjoyed Puerto de Santa Maria, but did not support the impressive bull fighting arena.

One of our reasons for going to Cadiz was to obtain outward clearance from Spain. This is reportedly hard to get in the Canary Islands, and the ports in the Caribbean all require some sort of paperwork showing you're not a dirtbag and have properly cleared out of the last country you were in. After a lot of time and effort, and a good deal of luck, we finally managed to overcome the bureau-

GIBRALTAR TOURISM



IN LATITUDES



JAY AILWORTH

The Whale Report. It's December, so yes, those sailing on Mexico's Banderas Bay need to be on the lookout to avoid babies such as these.

crats to get our passports stamped and obtain the paperwork needed to clear out of Spain to the future satisfaction of some official on the island where we'll make landfall in the Caribbean.

As we write this, we are bound for Lanzarote in the Canary islands and have about 400 miles to go. The sailing has been great, with 12-18 knots on the beam, and the wind now going farther aft. We are heading offshore to catch stronger winds, and will be poling out a headsail soon for a downwind ride to the Canaries.

Our motto continues to be, 'To Go Boldly Until We Are No More'.

— kurt and katie 11-15-10

**Knotta Afreighter Nothin'
Sarah Miller
Zihua To Panama
(Boston)**

When I first wrote to *Latitude* last

year, I mentioned that I was a young female from the East Coast looking for adventure on the sea. I got my wish on the second leg of my trip from Puerto Vallarta to the Panama Canal.

I was lucky to be crewing for Michael Foley aboard his Portland-based Bene-teau 41 *Shannon*, as he was respectful, inspiring — and a boatload of fun! Although there were already five of us on the boat, he welcomed five more for the 140-mile trip from Zihua to Acapulco. Of the 10, seven of us were still in our 20s. We arrived in Acapulco on the Saturday night of MTV's Spring Break in Acapulco, so you can just imagine what a night of dancing that turned out to be.

Just five of us continued on to 270-mile-distant Huatulco: Capt Mike of Clarity Central; Adam Hoffman, 21, from Minnesota; Reuben, 22, a mandolin-playing stowaway from Santa Barbara; Ron, 62, an ex-Silicon Valley executive from Sacramento, whom Mike

met on the plane to Puerto Vallarta and invited to come along. I was the fifth crewmember.

There wasn't any wind, so we had to motor non-stop. When we reached the potentially dangerous Gulf of Tehuantepec, there was a 5-day weather window. After being concerned about the crossing for months, Mike told the crew, "Crazy George says we should just go for it, so let's go!" And we did, setting sail straight across the Gulf on the 905-mile leg to El Salvador. The problem turned out to be too much heat and not enough wind. The air, water and humidity were all over either 93 degrees or percent. As a result, I couldn't find a 'happy place' on the boat. The only thing that brought relief was taking a cooling dip in the miles-deep, crystal clear water.

Then, while we were 30 miles off the coast of Guatemala, a huge humpback whale breached 400 feet off our port beam — and kept doing it while closing on us. At less than 100 feet, she breached for the fourth time — and stared down at us with one seemingly angry eye. We tried to motor away while gathering the ditch bag and EPIRB. The whale breached three more times before finally slowing to a floating position, during which time she slapped the water with her tail for another five minutes. Yikes, that had been close!

The shallow bar crossing at El Salvador's Boca Cordoncillo made for another white-knuckle moment. "Mike," I asked, "why does the depthsounder say we're in one foot of water while we're going over

The Santa Cruz-based catamaran 'Rapsallion' shows why crossing the bar at Boca Cordoncillo can be a white-knuckler.



One of the beautiful bays at Huatulco in southern Mexico.



COURTESY EL SALVADOR RALLY

CHANGES

waves?"

"Sarah," he replied tersely, "this is not a teaching moment, all right?"

We made it in fine, of course, as did three other boats headed up the estuary for Bahia del Sol as part of the 1st Annual El Salvador Rally. Being young guys, Adam and Reuben hadn't wanted to wait for slack tide outside the bar, so they had taken the kayaks in to a beach-front cabana for some drinks. Thank goodness nobody made a fuss about their entering the country illegally.

For the next five weeks, it was just Ron and I on *Shannon* at Bahia del Sol, as Mike returned to the States for work, and Adam and Reuben hopped on a powerboat owned by a guy Reuben knew from Vermont. I got to see first-hand what a wonderful rally Bill Yeargan and Jean Strain of the Honolulu-based *Irwin 37 Mita Kuuluu* had put together. There was lots of socializing around the pool, dinners out, a BBQ fund-raiser for a local school, and weekly tours to La Herradura by dinghy for fresh food.

Among those who 'rocked the bar' as part of the rally were Vicky Platt on her Seattle-based *Hans Christian 38 Inspiration at Sea*; Tom and Kathy Edwards of the Portland-based *Pearson 424 Awahnee*; Rob and Susan Jackson of the North Bend, WA-based *Hood 38 Joyeux*; Ahmed and Jitka Agrama of the Los Angeles-based *Tradewinds 55 Om*; Dennis Gade of the San Francisco-based *Islander Freeport 36 Dolce Vita*; Eric and Valerie Wagoner on the Seattle-based *Cooper 37 Mystic Pacific* (enroute back *Sarah*, in the blue bikini, hanging with *El Salvador's* young elite. This was after visiting with the happy but poor kids in the village.

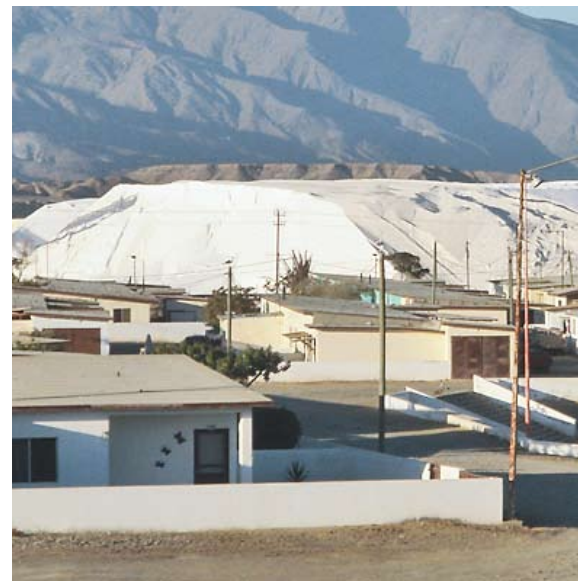
to France); Tim and Tracy Sowell with their boys, Alex, 4, and Sean, 2, on the England-based *Morgan 46 Gijima*; and many others. There were over \$7,000 worth of prizes for all the participants, and I expect it will be an even bigger and better event this year.

When you travel to Third World countries such as El Salvador, you get some perspective on your life. For example, we visited the island across the river that is home to a village of 300 people who live without electricity, and who get around by dugout canoe. Their homes were made of sticks, and we rarely saw any items from the First World. Coca-Cola was sold in plastic bags with an ice cube and a straw for 25 cents. The modest school was especially touching. Although the 30 kids only had a deflated soccer ball to kick around, they seemed very happy. My visit to that village made me realize how fortunate I've been to have grown up in the circumstances that I did. Now when I start to open my mouth to complain, I remind myself of how little those kids have, yet how happy they are. I'm hoping to think of some way to make their lives a little better.

For contrast, and as a result of a chance meeting, I spent some time tromping around the country with the daughter of the vice president and her friends. As you might expect, all of them were children of El Salvador's leaders and prominent business families. Hanging out with a bunch of a Third World country's richest of the rich, after visiting the poorest of the poor, was, to say the least, illuminating.

For another adventure, I took a two-hour bus trip to San Salvador. There I was able to buy a DeWalt buffer and a 3M buffing pad at an Ace Hardware store that looked like any of countless ones in the States. When I got back to *Shannon*, I took layers of junk off the hull, which hadn't been waxed in six years. So when we departed El Salvador a few days later, *Shannon* looked like a million bucks.

Prior to our leaving El Salvador, officials told us that we had to pay a new tax of \$100/person that was being levied on all visitors. In fact, we were told that the boat wouldn't get her *zarpe* to leave until we paid up. This is clearly not something that will encourage tourism, so the owner of Bahia del Sol held a televised news conference to



denounce the plan. We ended up paying the stiff fee, but the new law was being hotly contested when we left in April.

[To be continued next month.]

— sarah 12/04/10

Capricorn Cat — Hughes 45 Wayne Hendryx, Carol Baggerly Stopping Along the Coast of Baja (Brisbane)

We love doing the Baja Ha-Ha, but because of a combination of family obligations and not getting our settee seating reconfigured in time, we sailed down the coast of Baja about two weeks after the Ha-Ha fleet. The bad news is that, unlike the Ha-Ha fleet, we had so little wind that we were only able to sail about 10% of the time. We've been making passages up and down the coast of Baja for 35 years, and it was the first time we weren't able to sail most of the way.

The good news is that we had the time to stop at some interesting places, and meet some of the most kind and helpful

SARAH MILLER



School girls from the village across the river.

COURTESY SARAH MILLER



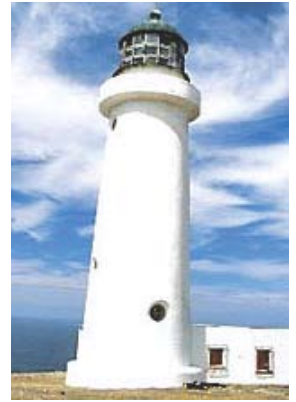
IN LATITUDES



PHOTOS COURTESY CAP CAT

season, when all the hookah divers from the cooperative come over to dive for the rich bounty, most of which ends up in the stomachs of the Japanese.

Interested in the fishery, we motored 25 miles to Cedros Village on the southwest part of Catalina-sized Isla Cedros. Most of the thousands of participants in the Ha-Ha who have sailed right past Cedros probably have no idea that Cedros Village has a population of about 4,000 and flights



The San Benito Light.

three times a week from Ensenada, plus two main industries. The biggest industry is Exportadora de Sal, which is a salt company owned 60% by a Mexican company and 40% by Japan's Mitsubishi. It seems odd, but the salt is brought over to the island on barges from Guerrero Negro, then processed and stockpiled in mounds the size of a couple of city blocks, and finally shipped to Kure Island, Japan. With 500 employees, the salt company is the largest employer on the island. They provide housing for their employees and their families and schooling from kindergarten to high school, and have two company stores.

The other main industry is the fish cannery, which has modern offices on the main street in town. When we visited, the receptionist directed us to Eduardo Aguilar Martinez, who was born on Cedros, and who speaks English better than we speak Spanish. He quickly

A can of abalone, which normally would have been destined for Japan, is cut open in sanitary conditions for Wayne and Carol to sample.



Clockwise from lower right. Carol in the hyperbaric chamber with Wayne looking on. Eduardo, who has saved many lives, at the chamber controls. The stained-glass window at the church on Cedros features scenes from the salt plant. The huge salt piles. 'Cap Cat' performs when she has wind.

Mexican people. You people in the States who believe all the misleading reports in the media and think all of Mexico is as dangerous as Oakland or the Bayview in San Francisco have no idea what you're missing!

Our first stop was Ensenada, where we bought diesel for \$5/gal U.S. — ouch! We also paid \$95 a night for a slip at Marina Coral, where Liliana and her staff made us feel very welcome. Since Ensenada is only about 60 miles south of San Diego, many cruisers don't stop there on their way south. Nonetheless, it's a great stop at the end of a Bash. Marina Coral has indoor and outdoor pools and hot-tubs, where waiters are happy to serve you pitchers of margaritas and delicious snacks; great restrooms and showers; and a cool bar and a fine restaurant. It's the perfect place for you and your crew to reflect on the great

times you had in Mexico while planning your return, and to celebrate your having completed the challenge of the Bash. It's also a good sanctuary to prepare yourself for re-entry — take a deep breath! — into the ultra-fast-paced life in the United States.

Our second stop — after endless motoring — was West San Benito Island, a remote and lightly-populated island a little less than halfway down the Baja Peninsula and about 12 miles to the west of much larger Isla Cedros. West Benito was quiet, as the only inhabitants are the fishermen who come over from the 45-mile distant mainland for periods of work. It was also lobster season, which isn't as busy as abalone



CARINA

CHANGES

became our very, very good friend. In fact, he would shed tears when we left two days later.

Eduardo explained that there is a six-month lobster season and a six-month abalone season, and that everything gets processed in their USDA-inspected and approved facility. He noted that a soup can-sized can of their abalone retails for \$30. Other seafood they send to Japan includes sea cucumbers, which many Asians believe is an aphrodisiac; top shell snails, which are similar to conch; and sea snails. The abalone shells are all sold to Korea, but nobody knows what they do with them. The cannery also processes and freezes lobster, cooked lobster, and many kinds of fish. Most of this is then transported in the co-op's large, clean vessels to Turtle Bay, then trucked to Ensenada for final shipment to Japan. The cannery and co-op employ about 300 people, plus the divers and fishermen.

Gathering seafood has always been one of the most dangerous occupations in the United States, and it's the same in Mexico. That's why Cedros is equipped with a hyperbaric chamber, which is used to treat divers suffering from the bends. Eduardo has been the sole operator of the device for the 21 years that it's been there, and even gave us a tour of the inside. He estimates that he's treated between 1,000 and 1,500 divers! In the early years, when divers were less

'Cap Cat' anchored in the little harbor at Cedros Village. A unnoticed shift in the wind later put her against the southern breakwater.

'Cap Cat' anchored in the little harbor at Cedros Village. A unnoticed shift in the wind later put her against the southern breakwater.

educated about the health limitations on diving, many needed treatment. Divers are more knowledgeable these days, so Eduardo now has to treat only one a month.

After Eduardo visited us for coffee the next day, he took us on a driving tour of the island's high points with his four-wheel drive Ford Explorer. When we visited the cannery, we had to wear hair-nets and rubber boots, but we got the grand tour. They even opened a \$30 can of abalone for us. I didn't mention it to our hosts, but canned abalone tastes little bland compared to the fresh stuff.

After spending the better part of two days taking us around the island, Eduardo joined us for lunch on *Cap Cat* while I did my pre-departure inspection. But what was this?! The bolt holding the alternator in place was broken. Eduardo rushed us to two hardware stores before they closed in search of a 3" x 3/8" metric bolt, but they couldn't help us.

Our prospects were getting as dim as the daylight when Eduardo drove us up a series of steep hills to the local junkyard. It was a one-dog, one-lightbulb, 300-wreck operation staffed by three men. After we showed them the broken bolt, one man disappeared into the dark for about 15 minutes. He returned with some car parts, and after wrenching on them for a few minutes, came up with just the bolt we needed! It was yet another Mexican miracle. What's more, he had two spares for us.

It turned out to be a dark, windy, and because of an unusual east wind, bumpy night inside the small harbor where we were anchored. Then, at about 9 p.m., there was a loud bang all along the port side of *Cap Cat*. We raced on deck to discover that our cat was banging against the leeward breakwater! Without our realizing it, there had been a 90-degree windshift in the 25-knot gusts, our anchor dragged, and in what must have been a matter of just a minute or two, we'd dragged down on the breakwater. Miraculously, neither the rudder or saildrive nearest the breakwater had been damaged.

I told Carol, whose eyes were bulging, to raise the anchor. When she got it up, she saw that there was a piece of rock between the shank and one fluke of the anchor, and that the hook was covered in seaweed. No wonder the anchor had



dragged — even though it was 20% larger than the one we used in prior years. I immediately fired up the engines, then lowered the dinghy and jumped into it. Using the dinghy's bow, I pushed the port transom away from the breakwater for all the Yamaha 15 was worth. Once the boat was at a 45-degree angle to the breakwater, I had Carol put the port engine in reverse at full throttle. I knew it meant the bow would be scraping against the breakwater, but we had no choice.

But we were lucky, lucky, lucky, as *Cap Cat* miraculously suffered nothing more than some scratches to the hull and two small gouges below the waterline. I filled the latter with Splashzone underwater epoxy. All in all, it was an inexpensive lesson. After all these years of cruising, we've finally gotten around to being very good using the anchor watch applications on our various GPS units.

The lesson I learned at Cedros is that whenever there's a big windshift, it's possible for the anchor to break free. So in

CAP CAT



The folks at the cannery weren't interested in buying the bug-eyed rock fish Wayne had caught.

CAP CAT





ALL PHOTOS COURTESY CAP CAT

the Puddle Jump this spring, but were unable to complete all the necessary projects, such as painting the hulls, elevating the davits, and so forth. So we won't be crossing the Pacific until the spring of '12. That means we'll be forced to spend our fourth winter season in good ol' Mexico. It's a tough life!

— wayne 12/15/10

**Jake — Hunter Legend 45
Jake and Sharon Howard
Sea of Cortez Guide
(Seattle / Mexico)**

Jake, a retired wholesale mortgage broker, and Sharon, a retired teacher, have been living on a series of sailboats for a long time. Long as in 27 years. They started on a U.S. 305, which was a Garden-designed, Bayliner-built 30-footer. They later moved up to a cutter-rigged Hunter 37, then in '89 they bought a new Hunter Legend 40, which they still own and cruise today.

"We've been happy with our Hunters," says Jake. "During the most recent haul-out of our 20-year old boat, we found no blisters, and the original Yanmar diesel continues to run just fine."

Living aboard isn't always easy, even in temperate climates such as San Francisco Bay. But Seattle? "It's true that when you live aboard up there you have to deal with winter, rain, and occasional snow," admits Jake. "But Seattle is a great area. We even took an annual winter cruise — although one year we found ourselves in a blizzard."

But the decades of rain and cold ultimately took their toll, for when the couple entered the '07 Ha-Ha, they had three goals: "To always have fun. To always be warm. And to always be dry." In other words, to be somewhere where the weather is the opposite of that of Seattle. They've found what they've wanted

When it comes to spending summers in the Sea, Jake and Sharon are of one mind — it's fantastic. This will be their fourth in the Sea.



Counterclockwise from lower right. Wayne and Carol, in the center, became part of the surf crew. Forget going to Jeffery's Bay in South Africa, San Juanico perfection is closer at hand. Christian Buhl's bay cruiser. Wayne and Carol at the helm of a failed whale-themed panga bar.

the future, I will, at the minimum, fire up both engines and back down until I'm sure the anchor is well-set for the new wind direction. The horrible sight of *Cap Cat's* port beam pinned hard against the rocks by the wind, and visions of her being ground to bits, will be all the motivation that I'll need. Thank God there hadn't been time for a fetch to build from the new wind direction, or there might have been much more damage.

We continued on to Turtle Bay, where we were sobered by the sight of the still floating bows of the *Privilege 49* catamaran that had burned to almost nothing following two propane explosions in November. Once again we paid \$5/gal for diesel.

Part way down the 'Middle Reach' of Baja, we stopped at San Juanico to visit with former San Franciscan and former crewmember Christian Buhl, who has

taken up residence and surfing there. We're not experts, but San Juanico has to be one of the best longboard surfing spots anywhere, as the waves peel off perfectly for almost a mile. Buhl had plenty of surfboards, so we all went out — and even got up. After a great visit with our good friend, we motored most of the way to Cabo, where we again paid \$5/gal for diesel. Is there a pattern here?

Even though there hadn't been much wind and we weren't able to be part of the Ha-Ha fun, we still had a great trip. We caught some tuna, traded some beer and cookies for two yellowtail, then eight lobster, then a 25-lb calico sea bass. They were all delicious.

We'd been hoping to do



LATITUDE/RICHARD

CHANGES

in Mexico, where they've spent the last three winters on the mainland, and the last three summers in the Sea of Cortez. And they are going to follow the same program again this year.

Since the desert-like Sea of Cortez is the antithesis of green and cold Seattle, and since so few cruisers spend more than one summer there, we decided to pick Jake's brain about the area for cruisers who might be thinking about spending the upcoming summer there.



"Some people say that the Sea of Cortez is unbearably hot in the summer, but Sharon and I really like it," says Jake. "In fact, we're constantly trying to convince other cruisers that if they stay the whole summer, they won't turn into dehydrated prunes by July. Quite a few cruisers stay through July, but only the hardcore folks stay through the hottest months of August and September. In our first two years in the Sea, about 25 to 30 boats spent the entire summer in the Sea. But last summer there were more like 45 in the Bahia de Los Angeles area, which is where most hardcore cruisers migrate for August and September. Perhaps part of the reason for the increased numbers is that we and some of the other cruisers have really been talking the area up for the summer."

Every cruiser in Mexico has heard the stories of how brutal the summer heat can be in the Sea. Jake claims that it's simply not that bad. "By May and June, the daytime temperatures will have gotten into the upper 80s, while the humidity is about 40% — which is much lower than on the mainland. From August to the middle of September, most cruisers

Some say the summer heat in the Sea makes people act a little silly, but the photos above and below don't support that claim, do they?



COURTESY JAKE

are in the Bahia de Los Angeles area to stay clear of hurricanes, and the temps are about 95 to 100 during the day, and 80 to 82 at night. The saving grace is that there's almost always a 10-knot breeze, and you can always cool off by jumping into the 85-degree water."

Many cruisers are surprised to learn how late in the year it is before the water in the Sea of Cortez warms up for comfortable swimming. "A few people start getting in the water during Loreto Fest, which is late April or early May, but it's still cool. The water doesn't get up to 80 degrees until about the end of June or the beginning of July — although it can be warmer in shallow places such as Conception Bay. We've seen the water temp reach 90 degrees there."

What's the very best time in the Sea of Cortez? "Sharon and I think it's October, when the heat has broken but the water is still plenty warm. If there's been much rain, the desert will have greened up nicely, too."

When it comes to hurricanes, Jake feels they aren't really a threat in the Sea of Cortez until the middle of August, by which time most cruisers have migrated north to Bahia de Los Angeles — which is 470 miles north of Cabo and only 250 miles south of the latitude of San Diego. "If you're in the BLA area, you're always going to have 7 to 10 days' warning of a tropical storm or hurricane. Almost all of them fizzle long before they get as far north as BLA. And even if one did come that far up, it would have to take a reverse 'S' course up the Pacific side, work its way northeast along the tall mountains, then curve back to the west at BLA to hit Puerto Don Juan, the preferred hurricane hole."

Jake sees a summer in the Sea of Cortez as something best being broken down into three areas or segments. The first is getting over to the Baja Peninsula from the mainland, which he and Sharon like to do about the third week in April. "We'll do the Loreto Fest and stay in the 140-mile-long La Paz to Loreto region until about the third week in June.

"The second segment is the 150-mile stretch from Loreto to Santa Rosalia, which we cover from the third week in June until the middle of August. We never miss the Fourth of July Party in Conception Bay put on by Geary, who does the weather on the Sonrisa Net. He's got a *palapa* at El Burro Cove, and the cove was just big enough to hold the



31 boats that showed up last year. He provides the hot dogs, everybody else brings a plate, and we all have a great time.

"The third segment is from the middle of August, at which time we cover the 150 miles more up to Bahia de Los Angeles, where we stay until about the second week in October. There's also the option of making a crossing to Guaymas-San Carlos, another great area. It's only about 85 miles from Santa Rosalia, as the Sea is pretty narrow that far north. When the temps begin to drop again in the second week of October, we gradually make our way south again. We like to get back to the mainland by early November, because it can get really cold in the Sea. In the middle of November of last year, for instance, it got down to 49 degrees at both Mulege and San Carlos — way too cold for us!"

Some of the attractions of the Sea include unspoiled nature and fabulous anchorages. "Within 20 miles of BLA, there have to be 20 to 30 really nice

IN LATITUDES



LATITUDE/RICHARD

Beautiful Agua Verde, which has several coves and is located just south of Puerto Escondido, is a Sea of Cortez signature anchorage.

anchorage. None of them are very far from Puerto Don Juan. Last summer I was more or less the entertainment director, so we had full moon parties in both August and September. We'd spend most of the day in the water, then have a potluck thing at night. The kids loved the full moon parties. Since all the boats were already in the same general area, it was easy for everyone to gather."

Jake says that while the majority of the boats that summer over in the Sea are crewed by couples, there were several 'kid boats', and four or five singlehanders. "We're almost like a big family, as we all started meeting each other months before and several hundred miles to the south at events like the Loreto Fest."

Of almost as great a weather concern as hurricanes to cruisers who summer in the Sea are *chubascos* and *elephantas*. To Howard's way of thinking, a *chubasco* is a wind, oftentimes accompanied by

lightning and less often by rain, that comes over with the thunderstorms from the mainland. "They usually come at night and don't last more than 90 minutes. Southbound Net Weather forecaster Don Anderson is good at forecasting them, and says they can bring winds of up to 60 knots. We, however, have never seen a gust over 36 knots. If a *chubasco* isn't accompanied by lightning or rain, some of us have taken to calling them *chubacos*. In any event, they are a phenomenon that mostly occurs between the end of June and the first week of September."

Elephantas are entirely different, as they are the hot west winds that rush down out of the tall mountains of the Baja peninsula. "They are much harder to predict than *chubascos*, and can blow for four to five hours. *Elephantas* are more likely to strike certain areas, such as where there are gaps or low spots in the mountains. As a result,

it can be blowing 30 knots in one place, yet be blowing less than 10 knots just a few miles away. Because the *elephantas* always come out of the mountains, it's best to avoid west-facing anchorages.

It would seem like a giant pain to take down all of a boat's awnings and sunshades each night, but that's exactly what Jake and Sharon do from late July to early September. "It means that if we get a wind event, which we do about every two weeks, we don't have to get up in the middle of the night and wrestle everything down before it gets damaged."

Since products and services become more rare north of La Paz, Jack was kind enough to run down what is available and where in the Sea.

"When it comes to provisioning, you can get what you need in each area, but the selection is more extensive the farther south you are. La Paz, of course, is the best place to provision, as it's a big city and they have everything. Loreto and Santa Rosalia don't have as much stuff or variety, but they aren't bad. Once up in the BLA area, there are four *tiendas* in the village, and you may have to hit all four to find everything you need. But they've got fruits and veggies and meats and poultry. When cruisers in the BLA area want more variety, they'll pay for gas in order to join someone who is making the two-hour drive to Guerrero Negro. The city on the Pacific Coast has bigger grocery stores, a couple of banks, a lot more restaurants, and even a hospital."

Jake and Sharon aren't big on fishing, but cruisers who are can reliably augment their food supply with a variety of fish. The usual favorites are sierra and dorado. Cruisers still do quite a bit of clamming at Conception Bay — and other secret spots.

What does Sharon, a happily retired teacher, think of spending the summers in the Sea of Cortez? This photo tells all.



CHANGES

Jake advises that diesel and gas can be purchased at La Paz, Loreto, Puerto Escondido, Santa Rosalia — and via jerry jugs at BLA.



Onboard internet access is intermittent, at best, north of La Paz.

“Getting fuel at BLA is quite a cruiser social event. There are two Pemex stations in the village, although only one of them has diesel. But there’s a guy with a powerboat in BLA who gets on the radio and announces when he’s going to make a fuel run with his truck. Every-

body shows up at Guillermo’s with their jerry jugs, and hops in his truck for the ride to the Pemex station. The Mexicans think it’s about the funniest thing they’ve ever seen.”

Those with Mexican cell phones or TelCel computer modems can get decent coverage in populated areas; there aren’t any populated areas north of Santa Rosalia, so the coverage is very limited. There are two internet cafes in BLA. Most boats have Sailmail and/or Winlink for communication.

For those who need money, there are ATM machines in La Paz, Loreto, Santa Rosalia, San Carlos — and San Felipe, 150 miles northwest of BLA in the tide and current-challenged northern Sea. By the way, it’s illegal for Mexican stores to take more than one \$100 bill per customer. This is true even at places like Costco in Puerto Vallarta. Similarly, when buying something with a \$20 bill, you’re not supposed to get more than \$2 back in change. It’s all about trying to limit the repatriation of narco money.

Buying diesel in Bahía de Los Angeles is a little complicated, so it becomes a major social event — much to the amusement of the locals.

Jake and Sharon recommend XM-Sirius radio for keeping up with the news and for entertainment. Jake notes that while the two companies have combined, they still don’t use the same satellites. Sirius is said to offer better coverage than XM in Mexico.

Many cruisers in the Sea listen to the Amigo and/or Sonrisa Nets in the morning, and the Southbound Net at night. Jake is a net controller on both the Sonrisa and Southbound nets.

If someone needs to leave their boat for a period of time, the best places are La Paz, Puerto Escondido, Santa Rosalia — or across the Sea at San Carlos-Guaymas. “The Singlar Marina at Santa Rosalia has an interesting program,” says Jake, “where you can buy a month’s worth of marina time, but not have to use it all at once. For example, if you leave for a week, it’s not counted against you, and you can use it some other month. For us, it came out to be about \$17 a night, which isn’t bad. They have a great and helpful staff, too.” Jake recommends against people leaving unattended boats on the hook for long.

Boats can be stored on the hard at any number of locations in La Paz and across the Sea at San Carlos-Guaymas. The Singlar haulout and storage facility in Puerto Escondido has become a big hit, and was filled to capacity last summer. Jake hauled *Jake* there for a bottom job, and was pleased with the price and the work. The Singlar facilities at Puerto Escondido and Santa Rosalia both have swimming pools, which are much appreciated in the summer.

[Part II will be published in the February issue.]

— latitude/rs

Cruise Notes:

As we reported in *Lectronic Latitude*, 55-year-old Canadian cruiser Milan Egrmajer was shot and killed on the evening of December 3 aboard his Ericson 35 **Adena** while she lay to her anchor at remote Laguna Diamante on the north coast of Honduras. The veteran of two years of cruising the Caribbean had been sailing from Guatemala’s Rio Dulce to the Bay Islands to Panama with his 24-year-old daughter Myda, when they elected to anchor in the isolated cove to take refuge from rough weather. Myda reports that four unsavory men in a *panga* had come



around and asked for a screwdriver, then a knife, allegedly to fix their engine. Her father was at least somewhat suspicious, for when he brought out the knife, he secretly brought out a flare gun, too. Myda says there was some fumbling as the knife was transferred, so her father reached over toward the men in the *panga* to help. Apparently one of the men took the motion as a threat, and fired four bullets into the retired engineer’s chest. Myda, who initially didn’t think her father had been fatally wounded, grabbed the flare gun and shouted at the men. They retreated. Myda was rescued 17 hours later by Australian cruisers and taken to Belize. Her father’s body was later recovered.

A little more than a week before, French couple Jean-Louis and Cathy, last names unknown, had their catamaran **Maroïne** boarded in the middle of the night at nearby Puerto Escondido, Honduras, by six men armed with guns and machetes. The couple, who speak some Spanish, tried to keep the attackers calm, and let them steal their dinghy and motor, computers, camera, telephone and other valuables.

It’s rare, but not unknown, for cruis-



IN LATITUDES

LATTITUDE/RICHARD



You're 100 miles offshore, it's hot, there's not enough wind for the chute, and you're young and looking for a little afternoon excitement. If you're Dustin Houseknecht of Florida, and you're halfway between Cabo and Punta Mita, why not go for a back flip off the daggerboard?

ers to be murdered on their boats in Central America. The most recent incident before Milan's occurred in August of '08, when 62-year-old Daniel Dryden of the Anchorage-based Southern Cross 39 **Sunday's Child** was killed while his boat was anchored alone in the Rio Dulce. According to Dryden's wife Nancy, who was on the boat with him, Dryden resisted the four men who came out in a *panga*. It's not clear if he resisted to try to protect her, or if he was primarily trying to protect their possessions.

By the time you read this, Christmas and New Year's will have passed, but the cruising season got off to a festive start all over Mexico with **Thanksgiving** get-togethers. Up in **Guaymas**, the crew of the B.C.-based **Ceilydh** explained that, despite the challenge of obtaining turkey and ham, they shared in a huge potluck feast at Marina Guaymas with 50 other sailors. Unlike some long-anticipated cruiser events, this one was essentially spontaneous, with the effort spearheaded by Phil Perkins of the San Diego-based **Mannasea** and Sharon of

Castaway. In addition to inviting all cruisers, they also invited the entire staff at Fonatur's Marina Guaymas. "As cruisers, we clearly have a lot to be thankful for," say Diane Selkirk and Evan Gatehouse of **Ceilydh**.

To the southwest in La Paz, Patsy Verhoeven of the Portland-based Gulfstar 50 **Talion** reports they had a dockside gathering at her Marina de La Paz home base. Folks from **Eros**, **Yellowstar**, **Sorceress**, **Adios**, **Star**, **Aunt Sur**, and **Maria** showed up to share all they had to be thankful for. "The great food, music and stories were topped off by a fabulous sunset," says Patsy.

At Punta Mita on the northwest tip of Banderas Bay, John and Gilly Foy of the Alameda and La Cruz-based Catalina 42 **Destiny** had 23 cruisers over to their condo for dinner, 14 of whom had done the '07 Ha-Ha. We don't want to jump to any wild conclusions, but it seems to suggest those folks feel pretty

safe in Mexico.

As for **Mazatlan**, the big deal wasn't Thanksgiving, but rather the **Sixth Annual Tuna BBQ & Free Beer Fest** on December 4. "Held at Marina Mazatlan, it was the doing of Rick Cummings of **Cape Star**, who hosted 160 new, old, hungry, and thirsty sailors," reports Mike Latta of the Mazatlan-based Falmouth cutter **Narwhal**. "Cummings BBQ'd 150 lbs. of delicious marinated tuna and dealt out cold Pacificos as if they were playing cards, while the cruisers brought a wide array of dishes."



Fluids for the BBQ'd tuna.

"We have to agree that a shower of any kind is a special event while cruising," writes Emmy Newbould, who has been cruising with hubby Eric Willbur aboard their Brickyard Cove-based Dutchman 37 **Nataraja** since April '09. They are currently in New Zealand. "Our boat only holds 40 gallons of water in her tanks, plus we carry four jerry cans. We don't have a watermaker, so fresh water is precious to us. The shampoo, soap and sponge have a special place in the cockpit so as to be at hand when the squalls come. But the real treat is a bath — and pure decadence is a bubble bath. Some of our favorite bath spots are: Comptrollers Bay in Nuka Hiva — the river has a wonderful spot where you can sit, relax and enjoy Jacuzzi-like jet action; Warm Springs Bay on Baranof Island in Southeast Alaska — you can either hike up to the natural hot springs and enjoy them while a massive waterfall tumbles down behind you, or you can enjoy a proper bath in the bath house on the wharf, where you will find tub-sized cattle water troughs plumbed

Emmy Newbould of 'Nataraja' samples the champagne and bubble bath experience at Palmira, and finds it sufficiently decadent.



NATARAJA

CHANGES

with the hot springs water; and Smoke House Bay on Great Barrier Island in New Zealand — a very special spot with not one, but two bathtubs with showers. One is sitting above the beach, the other is inside the bath house and is plumbed with hot water that is heated by the fire in the wood-burning stove. But my number one all-time favorite spot is the bath tub on Palmyra Atoll. This one sits on the beach backed by the lush jungle. Pure, pure decadence is a bubble bath on the beach while sipping champagne!”

As was reported last month, single-hander Mike Rafferty’s San Diego-based Freeport 36 **Aquila** sank 80 miles to the west of Noumea, New Caledonia, on November 12. He sent us a full report of the incident, but subsequently asked us not to publish it because of potential legal ramifications. So we’ll stick to what is considered to be common knowledge.

Rafferty, a Ha-Ha vet who had started the Puddle Jump on April 4 from Puerto Vallarta, cruised throughout the islands of the South Pacific, and then on November 12, set sail for Australia at the same time as a number of other cruising



AQUILA

Here you see four hose-clamps around 'Aquila's prop shaft and stuffing box. Rafferty told cruisers there was only one left when she sank.

boats. All were hoping to take advantage of a weather window to reach Brisbane or other Australian ports. According to Kirk McGeorge of the St. Thomas, USVI-based Hylas 47 **Gallivanter**, who had

helped Rafferty cast off from Noumea, the singlehander put out a *mayday* at about 8:30 p.m. Several boats, including **Gallivanter**, rushed toward Rafferty’s last reported position. Fortunately, Claude and Normande Gosselin’s French-Canadian sloop **Azzar** arrived in just 30 minutes. **Aquila** slipped below the waves as Rafferty was being transferred to the other boat. **Azzar** would take him the rest of the way to Australia.

Rafferty told many cruisers that he first became aware there was a problem when he heard floating floorboards banging around in the salon. He turned on the main bilge pump, but it didn’t work. He turned on the secondary pump, but it couldn’t keep up with the inflow of water. He then put his head underwater to reach the prop shaft and stuffing box, and found that only one of the four hose clamps was still in place! Having shut all the thru hulls, he’s convinced that’s where all the water was coming in.

What makes the loss of **Aquila** controversial is that less than a month before, Rafferty had had his boat hauled at Bao-

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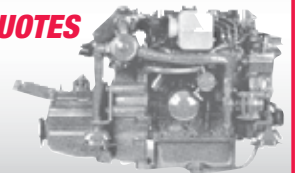


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bab Marine at Pt. Vuda, Fiji, where her shaft was pulled and other work done on that area of the boat. In fact, *Aquila* had to be hauled a second time because she was taking on so much water. Was the sinking in any way related to the work the boatyard had done or not done a month before? We'll never know.

One thing we do know from decades of covering sailing, is that if you've had work done on your prop shaft — or any other part of your boat — it's a good idea to keep an eye on it for awhile. In the recesses of our memory, we can recall that **Dick Mitchell**, an ex-fighter pilot and pioneering Northern California singlehander, was doing a Singlehanded Farallones Race aboard his Pearson 36 — the name of which we can't remember — when she started taking on water fast. Mitchell confirmed that there weren't thru hull problems, but just before stepping into his liferaft, remembered that he'd just had work done on the stuffing box / prop shaft. Rushing to that area, he discovered that, sure enough, that's where the water was pouring in. He was

able to stem the flow, pump the water out, and make it back to the boatyard safely.

As for the above-mentioned *Gallivanter*, McGeorge writes, "Greetings from Bundaberg! We arrived three days ago, and are now comfortably anchored 10 miles up the river within sight of what may be the biggest rum distillery in the Southern Hemisphere. Catherine is ecstatic about being back in her homeland, and Australian officials have granted us a year — extendable up to three years — without our needing to import *Gallivanter!*"

Armed with muscular Australian dollars, **those darn Aussies** keep buying California boats! While having breakfast at Sayulita, Mexico in early December,



Goche, at left, had nothing but good things to say about 'Isis'. On her first sail, Leslie Nordella didn't know how good she had it.

we bumped into former crew Lauren Goche of Santa Cruz, Portland, Sayulita, "and in the summer, commercial fishing boats that spend a month or more at a time 1,100 miles off the coast of Oregon." She told us she was crewing for delivery skipper Robin Jeffers, taking the Santa Cruz 52 *Isis* that used to belong to

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CHANGES

Brendan Busch of La Honda — to Costa Rica, where she would be put on a ship for delivery to her new owner in, yes, Australia! We hate to see *Isis* go, as she is a vet of the '04 and '07 Ha-Ha's, as well as a Sea of Cortez Sailing Week. But talk about good luck, Leslie Nordella, Goche's Portland friend, was lucky enough for her first sail ever to be a long downwind passage on an SC 52.

As you may remember, there were at least two boats from California in the last Ha-Ha that had been purchased by Aussie owners. There were Patrick Bloomer's Farrier 44 cat **Tiger**, heading to Western Australia, and Jack and Leanne Hembrow's Moody 54 **Red Sky**, heading to Brisbane. But wait, as they say on television, that's not all! As went to press, we heard that Scott Case, formerly of Arizona, has sold his La Cruz-based Fountain-Pajot 40 catamaran **Twins** to an Aussie. It's a little surprising to us, as during last year's Pirates for Pupils Regatta, Case told us he'd had to wait a full year to take delivery of the cat at the factory in France.

It turns out that trimarans *can* sink — if one of the amas gets torn off



LATITUDE/NICK

Scott Case at the helm of the Fountain-Pajot 40 'Twins' during last year's Banderas Bay Blast. Apparently, she too has been sold to Oz.

in stormy conditions. Canadians John Davidson, 65, and Jud Baker, 47, used their EPIRB to barely cheat death off the coast of Central America early in December during what was to be a voyage

from Costa Rica to Nicaragua. Davidson's 42-ft tri **Trinity** — type, builder, and age unknown — sank in rough weather just five miles off the coast of Costa Rica after an ama was torn off and the mast came down. According to an interview with Davidson's son, the pair had just enough time to grab an EPIRB and scramble into the boat's 8-ft inflatable dinghy before *Trinity* went under. They immediately began paddling toward shore, but heavy conditions blew the hard-to-row inflatable farther offshore. It flipped once, but they were able to right it.

"The two spent three days drifting farther out to sea, with no food, water or shelter from the elements. They began to wonder if the EPIRB was even working. Fortunately, it was. After receiving the EPIRB signal, the Coast Guard arranged to have a Navy P-3 Orion fly over the area, but it was too dark and the dinghy couldn't be spotted. It took two more days of searching before a Coast Guard C-130 finally pinpointed the signal. The plane's crew reported that they could see two people in the dinghy, but neither was moving. On the second pass, the now-

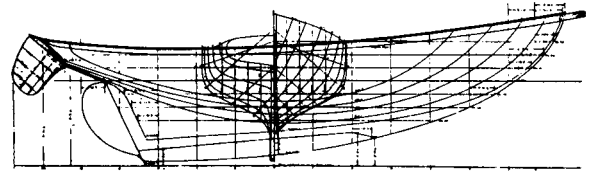
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delirious castaways realized the noise they heard was a plane, and started waving their paddles. The 695-ft car carrier **Sunbelt Spirit**, one of the largest ever built, had already changed course toward the area, and arrived about 30 minutes after the dinghy was spotted. The ship's crew helped Davidson and Baker aboard, where they were treated for dehydration, sunburn, and severely blistered hands from countless hours of rowing. Baker was able to fly home almost immediately because he'd been able to grab his passport, while Davidson was stuck waiting for a replacement. Nonetheless, we suspect it will be an unusually memorable holiday season for both of them and their families. EPIRBs — they do save lives.

A 'well done' to George Backhus and Merima Jaferi of the Sausalito and Auckland-based Deerfoot 2-62 **Moonshadow** for their fine performance in December's Atlantic Rally for Cruisers from the Canary Islands to St. Lucia.

"After over 2,700 miles, we could see the glow of lights to the south from Barbados," remembers Backhus. "We

gybed onto starboard and decided to go to white sails as the wind and sea were building as we approached the Lesser Antilles chain. By late morning we had gusts up to 35 knots and the seas were tossing us about like dice in a cup. "Land Ho!" was just before 11 a.m.

"The long reach up the coast of St. Lucia in rough seas seemed like the longest stretch of the passage for us. Having made landfall, we just couldn't wait to get to the finish line. As we rounded Pigeon Island into Rodney Bay on the leeward side of the island, the seas calmed, but we were hard on 20+ knot winds. *Moonshadow* heeled right over as we sheeted the sails in and bore down on the finish line. We finally crossed after 18 days, 3 hours and 51 minutes. It wasn't a fast passage



After more than two weeks of sailing off the wind, 'Moonshadow' jams to weather to make the ARC finish line off St. Lucia.

because of unusually light winds, but we were later told that we were the 19th of some 235 boats to finish. We arrived at our berth in the Rodney Bay Marina to the sound of a steel drum band, big welcomes and piña colodas, along with a basket of fresh fruit and a bottle of St. Lucian rum."

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CHANGES

reputation for being such an ecologically progressive country? Maybe it's not deserved. Check out the photo of the mob of men, women and children **raiding turtle nests** for eggs — right in front of the turtles. How rude! And how foolishly shortsighted.

It's not as if the problem is limited to Costa Rica. There have been tremendous turtle conservation successes in **Mexico**, including those based out of Nuevo Vallarta. But not everyone is with the program. According to one woman who doesn't want her identity revealed, "While walking on the beach in Nuevo Vallarta this morning, I witnessed two municipal police officers, with a backpack, searching for turtle nests to collect the eggs. This is a felony, as not even the police are allowed to touch the eggs. I went to the turtle conservation camp to report the incident, but nobody was there. So I called the police station to report this felony, and the woman on the other end of the line simply could not stop laughing."

"The week after I left Peru — which I found to be one of the most wonderful



PETER NEWTON

Scrambled turtle eggs for breakfast? There seemed to be a festive atmosphere as eggs were gathered on this Costa Rican beach.

countries in the world — I was reminded that this wonderful cruising life isn't all wine and roses," reports Pamela Bendell of the Port Hardy, B.C.-based Kristen

46 **Precious Metal.** "After many tears of farewell with friends, yacht club staff, water taxi drivers, and local merchants, *Precious Metal* set sail from Lima at noon November 17. Six weeks of maintenance and installation of new equipment had her ship-shape and ready — or so I thought — to begin her next season of the Galapagos, Central America, Mexico, and the South Pacific.

"Things started to go south just four hours into the passage, when I noticed that my newly re-built alternator (\$\$) wasn't charging the batteries. Returning to Lima was a distant option because clearing in and out again would be expensive and time-consuming. So we began to shut things down: the watermaker, most of the refrigeration, the lights, the music, the radar and running lights unless necessary, and the biggest sacrifice of all, the autopilot. It soon became clear that we had to abandon our plans for the Galapagos and put into port. After many satphone calls and relays, I was able to arrange a 'forced entry' into Ecuador, whereby I could bypass nor-

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mal entrance formalities. This sounded appealing, but in corrupt developing countries, it comes with a cost.

"As we approached Puerto Lucia, Ecuador, we were still in positive spirits despite the fact that the Heart Interface battery monitor indicated minus 411 amp hours! But our dock, mechanic and ship's agent were all waiting. Things progressed nicely, as all the amenities came alive as soon as we were plugged into shorepower. The mechanic quickly discovered that the alternator had just come off its mount. Overhanging all of these positives was my pending meeting with officials to process my entry into Ecuador. Soon five men in uniform — Port Captain, Immigration, Customs, Health Inspector, and my agent — presented themselves. They sat around the salon table while all but Mr. Immigration drank all our Coke. He drank our scotch. Everything was going well as the piles of documents were thrown in front of me for signature. Suddenly, the Mr. Immigration/Scotch discovered that my passport hadn't gotten a departure stamp from the

Galapagos seven months before. Mind you, I'd already cleared into and out of Peru, so he was obviously just looking for a bribe. During two hours of ridiculous conversation, Mr. Immigration/Scotch threatened to make me go all the way to Guayaquil to meet other Immigration officials. I finally asked for immediate exit papers from Ecuador. The result was that I was basically allowed to stay, but not legally, so my name didn't appear on the crew list and I wasn't allowed to leave the marina. They finally relented when I told them I had no food, and said I could take a taxi to and from the store — but I couldn't walk! Barry, one of my crew, jokingly gave me a piggy-back ride to the theatre so I wouldn't be breaking the rules. As the officials departed, they asked for — a bottle of scotch. I gave



"Let's have a drink to celebrate corruption," suggests Mr. Immigration/Scotch. Corruption is the world's most devastating crime.

them a bottle of pisco. As soon as they got to their car, they began drinking it. I hope it gave them all headaches the next day. It's such a shame that the wonderful Ecuadorian people are represented by these horrible men with so much power."

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20-FT LASER SB3, 2008. Will Deliver, West Coast. \$27,500. Nearly new Laser SB3, but not a new boat price. Sailed 6 times since purchased 18 months ago. All gear and trailer in like-new condition. Will deliver to your door, West Coast. Contact cguildner@peoplesbank-wa.com or (360) 319-5419.

24-FT MELGES, ALAMEDA BOATYARD. \$20,000. Hull #14. Race ready. Full boat covers. Contact Frank. (512) 750-5735 or cabosportsfrank@yahoo.com.



22-FT SANTANA, 1970. Alameda Marina. Best Offer. Boat name *Atuna Matata* with trailer. Comes with Pineapple class jib with battens, Pineapple main, UK Matrix spinnaker, hull# 515. (510) 206-5976 or williamking0425@sbcglobal.net.

24 FEET & UNDER

20-FT PACIFIC SEACRAFT FLICKA. 1992. San Carlos, MX. \$28,900. *Dulcinea*. Go small, Go NOW! Fully loaded, sea-worthy pocket-cruiser. Factory upgrades: teak decks, single-hander's package, enclosed head. Ullman tanbark sails. Ready to take you anywhere. Must sell! <http://picasaweb.google.com/sirena/jh/Dulcinea02?authkey=Gv1sRgCLWk1t-B3fXvCA#>. randy.ramirez@sbcglobal.com.

19-FT COMPAC, 1983. Pittsburg, CA. \$2,450/obo. Holiday with *Bula Matari*, a well-equipped ComPac 19 by Hutchins! Shoal draft keel, Evinrude 6hp outboard, 5 sails, trailer with two new tires. Very clean and sail ready! (925) 432-0699 or (925) 437-3495.

25 TO 28 FEET



28-FT PEARSON, 1976. Berkeley. \$11,500/obo. Great Bay boat. Complete refit since 2007. New: jib, furling system, fresh water head, rigging, lifelines, thru hulls, refrigeration. 2005 mainsail, GPS, depth. Bottom job 2009. Pictures online. www.firststampa.com/IBEX. Contact (415) 205-0687 or (707) 363-3196 or dktalton@comcast.net.

28-FT SANTANA, 1976. Berkeley Marina. \$7,000. Volvo diesel, Martec prop, large sail inventory. Prime, upwind O dock slip. Well rigged for effective, easy sailing. 12 and 110 volt electrical systems, with Balmar charging, mounted VHF. Harken traveler and furler with 95 & 130 jibs. New asymmetrical spinnaker, clean teak interior, roomy headroom, enclosed head. October 2010 haulout, bottom cleaned and painted. Solid boat for Bay sailing. sylviaagrahamdvm@hotmail.com or (510) 812-4150.

27-FT PACIFIC SEACRAFT ORION. 1979. Alameda, CA. \$42,500. *Aphrodite* gave us great memories and adventures in Mexico. Great condition and cruise ready. Cutter rig, Yanmar diesel, CapeHorn windvane, asymmetrical spinnaker, propane s/o, dodger, more... Surveyed July 2010. (530) 392-5651 or (530) 885-3232.



27-FT NOR'SEA, 1980. Moss Landing, CA. \$16,000. Tough little blue water cruiser, safe, easy to handle junk rig, many offshore mods, Fiji vet, aft cabin. Check link for pictures and detailed info. www.kabai.com/seablossom. (408) 218-9604 or Kabai@yahoo.com.

25-FT MANCEBO, 1975. Fort Mason. \$4,995. 25-ft cat ketch custom designed and built by Dave Mancebo for cruising. See article at website: http://s418.photo-bucket.com/albums/pp264/nwsail/Boat_s/?action=view¤t=catKetch1.jpg. Call or email Eric at ejamison@ucsd.edu or (707) 477-1140.



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29 TO 31 FEET



30-FT YANKEE, 1972. Moss Landing. \$4,000. Custom mast, Sailomat vane, 8-ft Avon, Atomic 4, 110%, 135%, storm jib, and North main. She's a basic boat needing interior and exterior cosmetic attention. www.tweakoz.com/eggy/wordpress/?page_id=24. (831) 239-5123 or diego.link.eggy@gmail.com.



30-FT SANTANA 3030PC, 1982. Ventura. \$27,000. Race or cruise. 2-cyl Yanmar 267hrs. New headliner/cabin sole/electrical panels. New rod rigging. Harken traveler/genoa leads. Harken roller furler, dodger, H/C pressure shower, CNG stove/oven. Full sail inventory. Too much to list. (805) 581-9220 or dncclaws@aol.com.



30-FT OLSON, 1978. South Lake Tahoe. \$12,000/obo. *Wraith* is loaded, 20+ sails, racing/cruising, rebuilt trailer, GPS, VHF, beam of destiny, jock strap, double spreaders, rod rigging, Nissan 3.5hp, new V-berth cushions. 2009 fleet champion. (530) 416-6100 or wilsonrs@charter.net.



30-FT J/92, 1993. Las Vegas, NV. \$46,000. *Norhi* (former *Pappy & Me*) won the 2010 Boat of the Year for the Nevada Yacht Club in the spinnaker division. Complete listing and 2009 survey available upon request. iflosom@avsdigital.com or (702) 285-9735.

ISLANDER 30 MK II, 1971. Moss Landing Harbor District. \$7,500. 4-cyl gas inboard (Palmer P60). Fiberglass hull w/ teak trim. 3-burner alcohol stove/oven, BBQ. Depth/fishfinder, CB and VHF radio. Recent work: Sept '09 hauled out, tuned up, oil change, new head, replaced through hulls and zincs. Sails include spinnaker, 2 storm jibs, 100% & 130% genoa. Mahogany interior. 5 lifejackets, lots of extras. Sleeps 4 comfortably. Good solid boat. Ready to sail. Take over slip. (831) 915-6783 or (831) 659-1921 or drbradcase@sbcglobal.net.



31-FT PEARSON SLOOP, 1978. Brisbane. \$18,500. Hull #6/65, dry, fast, very good condition, 2008 inspection, Volvo Penta MD13 23hp, new prop (2009), rigging led to cockpit, Hansen (2010), main + 100% jib, Hogan (2007), 130% genoa, Hogan (2010). Contact Tom. (408) 316-3744.

30-FT OLSON, 1980. SF Bay Area. \$9,500. Special reduced winter price! Great buy! Olson 30, race-optimized, winning boat. Has not been sailed since 2005. Faired, clean. All exterior wood surfaces replaced with carbon fiber or Delrin. Ports and stock compass mounts closed-in with fiberglass. Near-new deck gear: Lewmar toe rail track and car system, Harken adjustable jib leads, Harken traveler, Harken 3:1/6:1 mainsheet system, Harken winches, new deck gelcoat and non-skid ('98). Spar: Ballenger single spreader spar with near-new standing rod rigging. Tuff Luff headfoil. Stock boom/pole. Sails: #1 Velocity Mylar/Kevlar, #2 Dacron, #3 Velocity Mylar/Kevlar, spinnaker - Velocity 5 nylon. Interior: original. Trailer: good single axle, F-rated tires. Misc: all original gear included in boxes (w/orig coolers). www.olsonbackground.com. olson30.org/OlsonBackground/Original_Olson_30_sales_brochure.html. (408) 712-1020 or mtown@att.net.

32 TO 35 FEET

34-FT SAN JUAN, 1984. \$30,000. Price Reduced for Quick Sale. Fast, comfortable blue water cruiser, excellent condition. 6' headroom, galley, sleeps six, rod rigging. Roller furling headsail, 150% genoa, main, working jib. 3GMD Yanmar, Achilles dinghy, large bimini. Original owner. (510) 420-8956 or nino@access-print.com.



35-FT YOUNG SUN CUTTER, 1981. San Carlos, Mexico. \$74,800. Bluewater cruiser, located in San Carlos, Mexico, ready to sail the world, full cruise equipped, more information on our website: <http://youngsun.squarespace.com/specs>. Or email mohrmonte@gmail.com. (970) 259-5102.



35-FT HINCKLEY PILOT, 1963. Sausalito. \$55,000. Sparkman & Stephens design, 1963. Rebuilt Perkins 4-108, full batten main, radar, chart plotter, autopilot, well maintained. Sweet boat to sail, especially upwind. Estate sale. Contact (415) 720-5477, (415) 339-0100 or billbysfbay@gmail.com.

35-FT TRIDENT WARRIOR, 1973. Moss Landing. \$39,000. 35-ft blue water cruiser ready for the South Pacific. Less than 100 hours on rebuilt Yanmar 30hp inboard. New 9-ft dinghy and 4hp Mercury. Unique center cockpit with 3 cabins. Extras! Headroom! See more at <http://tridentwarriorboat.webs.com>. Email rjwestbay@yahoo.com.



33-FT HOBIE, 1984. Alameda. \$15,900. Fixed keel model. New in 2010: Tiller, hatchboard, GPS, VHF, gel battery, charger, new Mercury 9.9 outboard. 10 bags of sails, Dacron and Mylar mainsails, two 120%, #2, #3, self-tacking jib on furler, storm jib, wind seeker, 1/2oz spinnaker. Spinnaker pole, whisker pole. To be competitive, you'll need new sails and ropes, and the price reflects this. Interior is open and clean and light. Priced for quick sale. See more at <http://picasaweb.google.com/nelsonyachts/Hobie33SailboatForSaleInAlamedaFastAndFun?feat=directlink#>. Email davidkory@gmail.com.



32-FT VALIANT, 1979. San Francisco. \$36,000 / Price reduced. Proven blue-water cruiser, roller furling jib, 3-cylinder Universal diesel, windvane, radar, autopilot, SSB and VHF radios, anchor winch and all-chain rode. 6' 2" headroom, hot water, shower, propane stove w/ oven. 6-man liferaft. (415) 601-5666 or kenkelton@gmail.com.

32.6-FT PEARSON VANGUARD, 1965. Berkeley. \$7,500. Steal for 1/2 price. Electric windlass, mast steps, very strong, well-built cruising sloop. Easy to sail. Injury forces sale. Don't wait. Contact Stan. (510) 978-2793.



34-FT J/105, 1994. SF Marina. \$75,000. Hull #83. Pre-scrimp boat is for sale. Lightly used. Minimum class weight, wheel package, excellent condition. Located SF Bay. (650) 380-1583.

32-FT SABRE, 1985. Sausalito Yacht Harbor. \$49,500. 2009 refit: propane stove/oven, running rigging, all hoses, GPS, VHF, stereo, batteries, salon cushions, new jib, canvas dodger, engine heat exchanger. Westerbeke 21hp diesel. Avon 9-ft dinghy. (415) 272-5056.



35-FT BENETEAU 343, 2006. Marina Bay Yacht Harbor, Richmond. \$118,000/ obo. Pristine condition, professionally maintained. Raymarine E-80 chartplotter, radar, autopilot, wind, depth, knotmeter. Lewmar electric windlass, furling jib, StackPack main, microwave, AM/FM radio with 10-CD player. (707) 545-6542 or roy@rnjlaw.com.



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34-FT C&C, 1980. La Paz, Baja Mexico. \$38,000. Just sailed 1500 miles from SF for Ha-Ha 2010, then to La Paz. \$28,000 of new cruising gear, all electronics, new Yanmar 3GM30F since 2009. Boat is sea-proven and ready for cruising. See details, photos at website: <http://sites.google.com/site/svlegacyforsale>. (831) 726-3192, (831) 345-9384 or LK@wisdomseminars.org.



34-FT J/105, 1992. Sausalito Yacht Harbor. \$70,000/obo. Hull #42. *Jose Cuervo* has new mast, furler, foil, pole rig and turnbuckles. Keel and rudder faired. Minimum class wt. Big Boat winner, light and fast. (415) 218-6312 or mbm@4ibp.com.

34-FT CORONADO, 1970. Antioch. \$17,000. Easy singlehander: roller-furling jib, Dutchman mainsail. Autohelm, Garmin GPS, 2 VHF's. Hauled and painted 2010. New head and dodger, low hours on rebuilt A-4. Propane stove and cabin heater. 2 anchors w/chain and rode. (510) 676-4444.



COLUMBIA 34 MKII, 1973. SF Bay. \$22,000/obo cash or trade. Documented. Extensive cruise history and equipped to the teeth for cruising. Redundant systems, tons of tools/spare parts. 7' headroom. Refrigeration. Pressure water. Propane stove. Great cruiser, great liveaboard (liveaboard friendly marina with marina approval). All new AC shorepower system with expansion capacity. Yanmar 3GM30 diesel runs beautifully. Utilitarian, cruiser's sail inventory. I intended to cruise her, but now sadly selling due to illness. boat4sale@sapphirefire.net or (415) 692-1330.

36 TO 39 FEET



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37-FT CREALOCK CUTTER, 1980. Monterey. \$45,000. Ballenger tabernacled mast. New Yanmar w/saildrive, radar, GPS, easy access to all systems, 70gal diesel, 3 watertight bulkheads. Not in yacht condition, needs finish work. Great little sailing ship. Price firm. Email ddatpbio@gmail.com.

36-FT ALLIED PRINCESS, 1977. Petaluma, CA. \$40,000. Well cared for cruising ketch. Recent refit includes new sails, running and standing rigging, electronics, hull LP paint. Perkins diesel w/500 hrs. www.flickr.com/photos/54536845@N08/. (707) 364-0801 or rkhurt@comcast.net.



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40 TO 50 FEET

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41-FT MORGAN CLASSIC MODEL. 1991. San Carlos, Mexico. \$98,000. Primo condition. Equipped and ready to cruise. Center cockpit, great liveaboard, must see to appreciate roominess. Recent survey. See blog for equipment list and current photos at <http://sailboatvagari.blogspot.com>. (520) 825-7551 or stanstreb@gmail.com.



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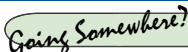
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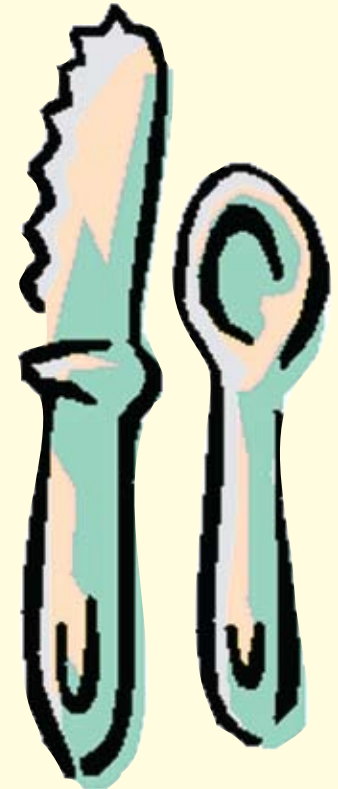
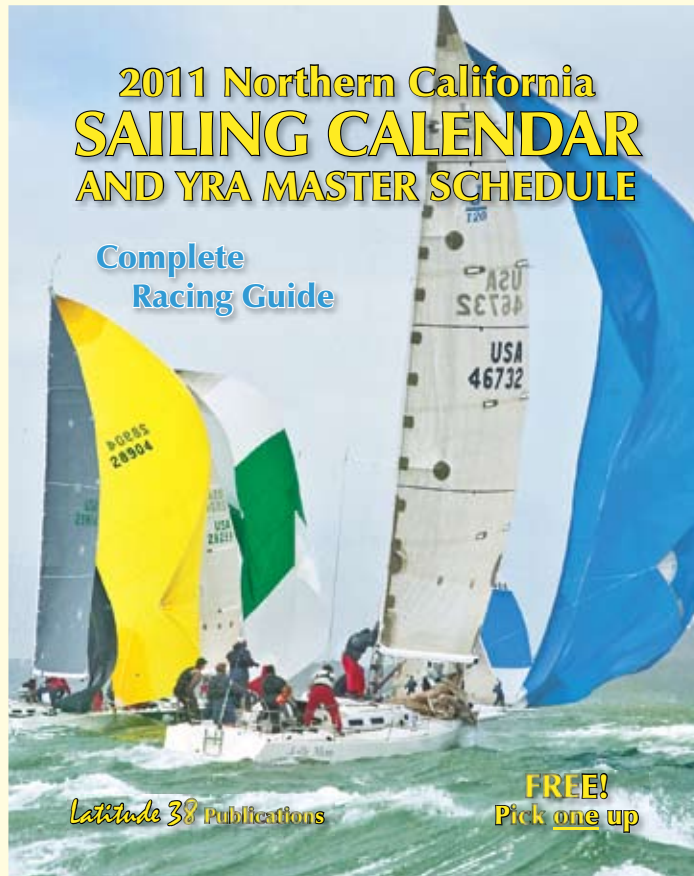


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ADVERTISERS' INDEX

AB Marine..... 54	Blue Water Yacht Insurance.. 50	Doyle Sails 29	Helmut's Marine Service..... 154	Marina de la Paz 148
Almar Marinas..... 59	Bluewater Network..... 155	e Marine Systems 149	Heritage Marine Insurance... 62	Marina El Cid 144
Alpenglow Marine Lights ... 157	Boat Electric..... 62	Easom Rigging..... 113	Heritage Yacht Sales..... 161	Marina Ixtapa..... 90
Anacortes Yacht Charters... 131	Boat Fest - Marina Village... 41	El Salvador Rally 35	Hogin Sails..... 32	Marina Puesta Del Sol 95
Aqua Marine 70	Boat Yard at Grand Marina, The..... 25	Emery Cove Yacht Harbor.... 67	Hood Sails..... 31	Marina Riviera Nayarit..... 52
AVI Nautica 130	Boatload Provisions 91	Emeryville Marina 133	Hotwire Enterprises..... 147	Marina Village..... 45
Bacon Sails & Marine Supplies..... 73	Bottom Sidlers..... 154	Equipment Parts Sales..... 144	Hydrovane..... 68	Marine Engine Company ... 144
Bay Island Yachts 6	Brisbane Marina 61	Essex Credit Corp..... 18	John Beery Yachts 47	Marine Outboard Company..... 148
Bay Marine Boatworks...8, 9, 43	BVI Yacht Charters..... 128	Extturn / RS Jones..... 61	Kissinger Canvas..... 67	Mariner's General Insurance..... 91
Bay Marine Diesel 146	City Yachts..... 11, 160	Farallone Yacht Sales.... 12, 13	KKMI - Brokerage..... 161	Maritime Institute..... 113
Bayside Canvas 64	Coast Marine..... 65	Flex-O-Fold Propellers 48	KKMI - Full Service Boatyard..... 164	Marotta Yachts..... 162
Bellhaven Yacht Sales & Charters 131	Conch Charters..... 129	Flying Cloud Yachts 159	Landing School, The 70	Martyr Anodes..... 117
Berkeley Marina..... 51	Corinthian Yacht Club..... 125	Fortman Marina..... 117	Lee Sails 155	Mathiesen Marine 155
Berkeley Marine Center 33	Cover Craft..... 73	Gentry's Kona Marina 147	List Marine Enterprises 72	Mazatlan Marine Center/ La Paz Yachts 15
Beta Marine Engines..... 71	Cruise RO Water..... 91	Gianola Canvas Products.... 60	Loch Lomond Marina..... 94	McDermot Costa Insurance .. 68
Bismarck Dinius - Farmer's Insurance..... 65	Cruising Yachts 7	Golden State Diesel Marine 157	Lunasea Lighting 69	McGinnis Insurance..... 66
Blue Pelican 154	CYOA Yacht Charters..... 128	Grand Marina 2	Mack Sails..... 67	Michael Wiest Yacht Sales . 160
	DeWitt Studio 116	Hansen Rigging 71	Makela Boatworks..... 146	
	Diesel Fuel Filtering 146	Harken 44	Marina Bay Yacht Harbor 55	

Continued on next page...

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ADVERTISERS' INDEX – cont'd

Milltech Marine Inc..... 42	Oyster Point Marina 95	Sail Warehouse, The 157	The Multihull Company 159	Wedlock, Ramsay & Whiting Marine Surveyors 131
Minney's Yacht Surplus 149	Pacific Crest Canvas 63	Sailrite Kits 24	TMM Yacht Charters 129	West Marine 26, 28, 30, 58
Modern Sailing School & Club 27	Pacific Rigging 10	Sal's Inflatable Services 63	Trident Funding 4	Westwind Precision Details... 39
Napa Valley Marina Yachts 160	Pacific Yacht Imports 20	San Francisco Boat Works ... 95	Twin Rivers Marine Insurance 34	Whale Point Marine Supply 40
Nickle Atlantic/Froli Sleep Systems 148	Pantaenius America, Inc. ... 149	San Juan Sailing 130	Ullman Sails 124	White, Chris Designs 148
Norpac Yachts 163	Paradise Village 49	Santa Cruz Yachts 21	Vallejo Marina 117	Yacht Racing Association 106, 107
North Beach Marine Canvas 39	Passage Yachts 5	Scan Marine Equipment 63	Ventura Harbor Boatyard 69	Yachtfinders/Windseekers ... 10
North Direct Sails 113	Pier 39 Marina 69	Scanmar International 36	Vessel Electric 149	
North Sails 154	Pineapple Sails 3	Schoonmaker Point Marina .. 56	Weatherguy.com 146	
North Sails - San Francisco.. 37	Pittsburg Marina 73	Seashine 64		
North U 125	Punta Mita Beachfront Condos 132	Seatech 155		
Opequimar Marine Center 147	Quantum Pacific 19	South Beach Harbor 38		
Orange Coast College 53	Quickline 71	South Beach Riggers 39		
Outboard Motor Shop 60	Raiatea Carenage Services 145	Starbuck Canvas 10		
Owl Harbor Marina 65	Richardson Bay Marina 72	Stem to Stern 22		
Oyster Cove Marina 14	Rodgers & Assoc 131	Strictly Sail Pacific 57		
	Rooster Sails 61	Svendsen's Boat Works 23		
	Sail California 16, 17	Svendsen's Marine 46		
		Swedish Marine 66		

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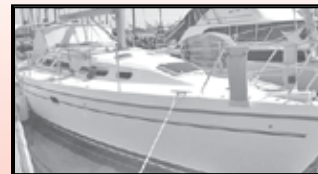
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*If you own a yacht and it needs attention, KKMI is the place to go. Thanks KKMI for the great service.
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Happy New Year

The entire Team at KKMI would like to wish the racers, cruisers, day sailors and commercial fishermen a happy and healthy 2011!

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