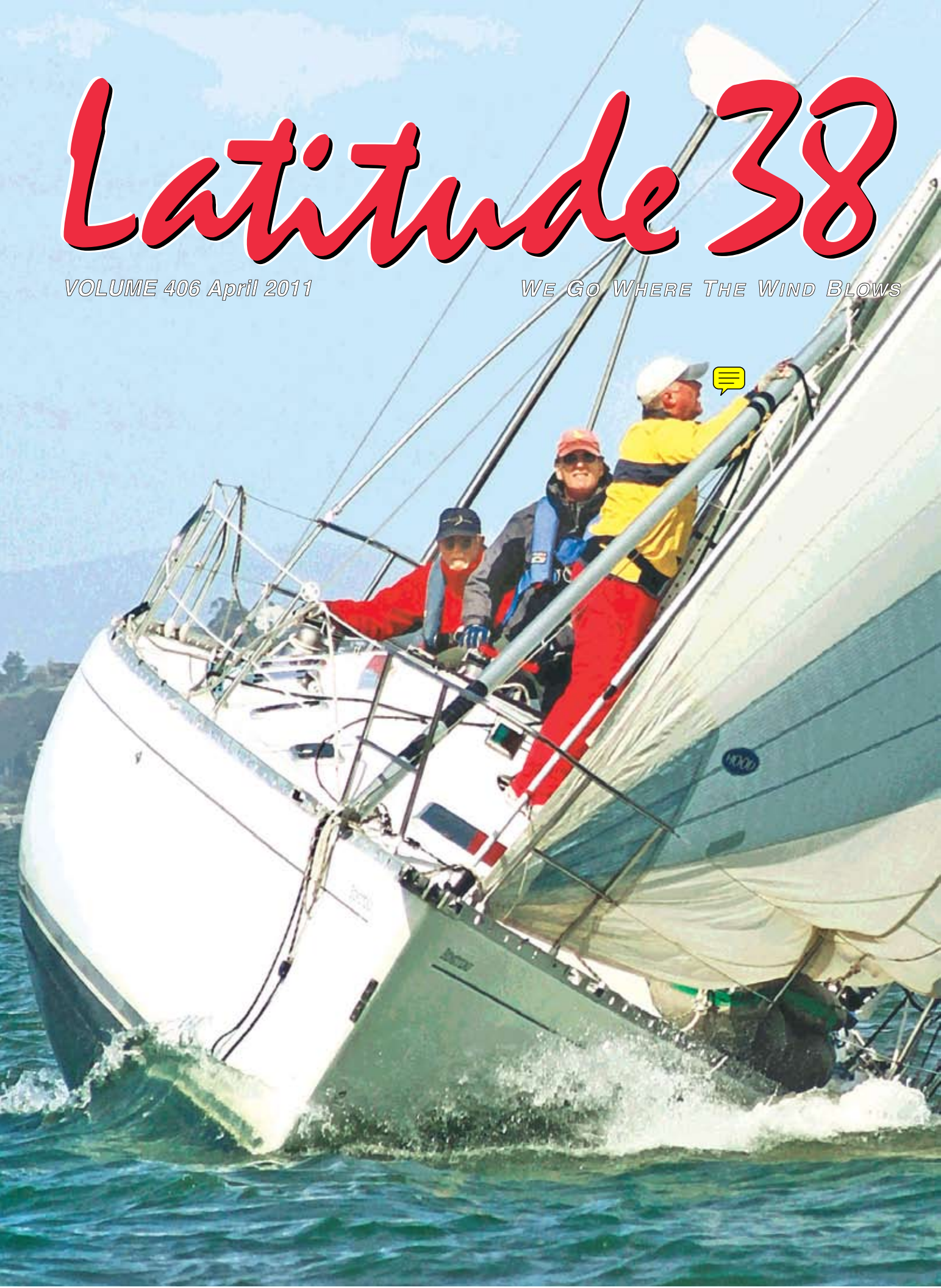


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Cover: Champagne sailing at Richmond YC's Big Daddy Regatta.

Photo: Steve Holloway/Rune Media

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

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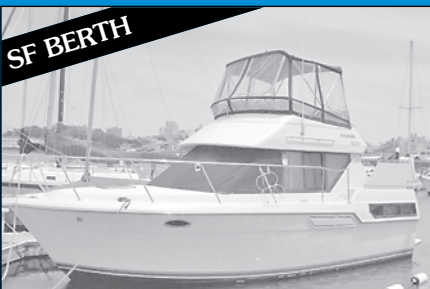
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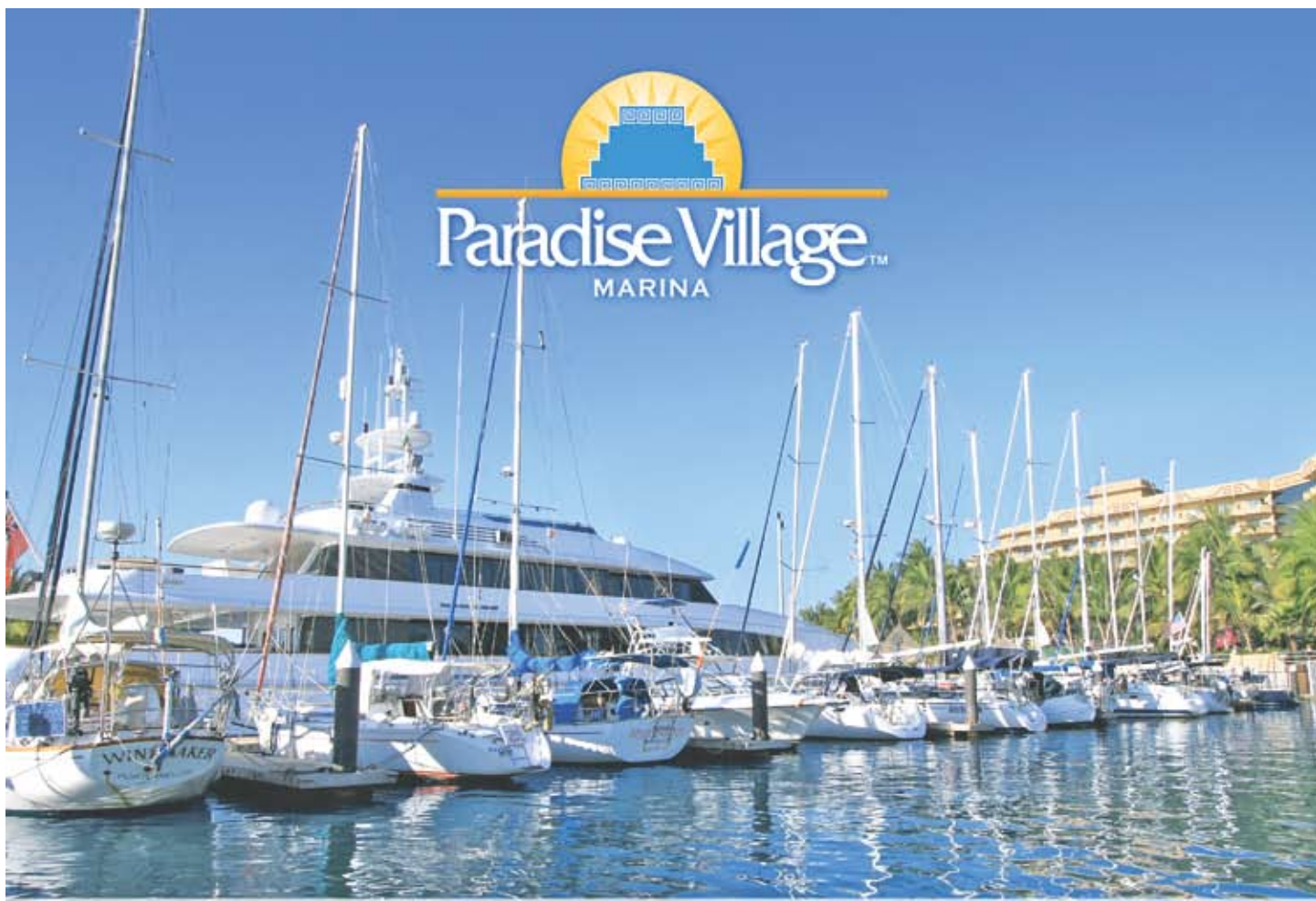
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CALENDAR

Non-Race

Apr. 1 — Don't be a fool, get your boat out on the Bay!

Apr. 2, 1981 — It Was Thirty Years Ago from the *Sightings* piece 'Guardian of the Golden Gate' by Sue Rowley:

The Point Bonita Lighthouse, guardian of the Golden Gate since 1885, is the last manned lighthouse on the California coast. That description will end on April 2, however, when the 60,000-candlepower beacon and its vital fog signal will become totally automatic.

The change will end a long and colorful segment of California's history. Originally, the lighthouse was built high on the rugged highland to make its beacon visible to mariners at great distances, but Point Bonita is one of the foggiest places in the country and the station was moved to a rocky point just above the sea and below the fog.

A year after the light was put into service, the first fog signal was devised. The noisiest device known at the time, an 8-ft, 24-lb Army siege cannon, was acquired and a retired sergeant named Maloney was charged with firing it every half hour during foggy weather. As the story goes, the fog closed in on August 8, 1856, and the sergeant dutifully fired the cannon for the first time. The fog remained for most of the next 61 days and, before he was found near exhaustion at the beginning of October, he'd fired the cannon 556 times, day and night. Maloney quit and the lighthouse went through seven more people over the next nine months.

Two years later, the cannon was replaced by a mechanical bell and, in 1977, a steam-powered fog horn was installed. The fog signal has operated an average of 1,136 hours per year over the last 83 years of record keeping, with a maximum of 2,408 hours in 1963. After its five-man crew departs, the lighthouse will be preserved by the National Recreational Area as a visitors' attraction.

Apr. 2 — Del Rey YC Open House in Marina del Rey, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Info, www.drjc.org or (310) 823-4664.

Apr. 2-3 — Corinthian YC presents its annual Women's Sailing Seminar. A terrific low-stress way to learn how to sail. Info, www.cyc.org/WSS.

Apr. 3 — Cal Sailing Club's free introductory sail at Berkeley Marina, 1-4 p.m. Info, www.cal-sailing.org.

Apr. 3 — North U. Tactics Tour, a one-day course teaching the latest in strategy, tactics and rules, continues at Anacortes (WA) YC. See www.northu.com for details.

Apr. 3-24 — Free sailing at Pier 40 every Sunday courtesy of BAADS. Info, (415) 281-0212 or www.baads.org.

Apr. 5 — Line Splicing seminar at San Jose West Marine, 6-8 p.m. Free. RSVP, (408) 246-1147.

Apr. 5-May 31 — Boating Skills & Seamanship course by USCGA at Del Rey YC in Marina del Rey on Tuesdays, 7-9:30 p.m. \$80 materials fee. Info, jonathan.smaby@gmail.com.

Apr. 6 — Ullman Sails Seminar Series continues with 'Team Building, Coaching & Management' at the Santa Ana loft, 7 p.m. \$18. Other seminars run at the same time and location; free unless noted. **5/4:** 'The Baja Ha-Ha Adventure'; **6/1:** 'World Class Yacht Designers Forum'. Info & RSVP, (714) 432-1860.

Apr. 6-27 — Wednesday Yachting Luncheon Series at St. Francis YC, 12-2 p.m., \$16.50. Enjoy lunch and a dynamic speaker every Wednesday. All YCs' members welcome. More info under the 'Events' tab at www.stfyjc.com.

Apr. 9 — Opening Day on the Delta Parade. Starts at noon in front of Pittsburg YC on the San Joaquin River. Info, www.pittsburgyc.com.

Apr. 9 — Boaters Swap Meet at Emeryville Marina, 8 a.m.-

See the Boat of the Year – Catalina 355 at Farallone Yacht Sales

The new **Catalina 355** has just been honored as the 2011 Best Mid-Sized Cruiser and 2011 Domestic Boat of the Year, joining the award-winning 445 and 375 and bringing to 11 the number of awards Catalina has received for its designs. No other sailboat manufacturer has ever achieved this distinction.

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Catalina 36, 2001.....109,000

Catalina 350 MkII, 2004.....125,663
Catalina 34, 2007.....134,500
Catalina 34, 2004.....99,950
Catalina 34, 1988.....49,400
Catalina 310, 2007.....94,500
Catalina 30, 1987.....34,500

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Beneteau Oceanis 373, 2005.....\$139,000
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C&C 38, 1979.....49,250
Hunter 36, 2004.....119,000
Hunter 340, 2002.....82,000
Hunter 34, 1984.....34,000
C&C 32, 1980.....34,000
Bristol 31.5, 1984.....42,500

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Ranger 25 Tug, 2009.....125,900

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CALENDAR

noon. No vendors fee. Info, (510) 654-3716.

Apr. 9-10 — America's Boating Course by Carquinez Sail & Power Squadron at Vallejo YC, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. \$40. Info, www.carquinez.org/public_courses.html or (707) 55-BOATS.

Apr. 9-May 14 — Boating Skills and Seamanship course by USCGA Flotilla 12-3 in Alameda, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. \$55 materials fee. Info, uscga@att.net or (510) 468-8013.

Apr. 14 — Louis Vuitton Cup PRO Peter Reggio, Oracle Racing's Tom Ehman and Olympic hopeful Genny Tulloch will speak about the America's Cup at Golden Gate YC, 7-9 p.m. Sponsored by US Sailing, \$30. RSVP, PR@ggyc.com.

Apr. 14 — Single sailors of all skill levels are invited to the Single Sailors Association monthly meeting at Ballena Bay YC, 7:30 p.m. Info, www.singlesailors.org or (510) 233-1064.

Apr. 14-17 — Strictly Sail Pacific at Jack London Square. Info, www.strictlysailpacific.com.

Apr. 15, 1800 — James Clark Ross, discoverer of the north magnetic pole and author of *Voyage of Discovery*, was born in London.

Apr. 16 — Encinal YC's Nautical Flea Market, the largest in the East Bay, 6 a.m.-1 p.m. Breakfast, lunch and beverages available. Info, (510) 522-3272 or www.encinal.org.

Apr. 16 — Emeryville Marina's 4th Annual Boaters Swap Meet, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Info, (510) 654-6437.

Apr. 16 — Berkeley Bay Festival at Berkeley Marina, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free music, sailboat rides (courtesy Cal Sailing), and more. Info, www.ci.berkeley.ca.us.

Apr. 16-17 — Silva Bay Shipyard School Launch Festival on Gabriola Island, B.C. Seminars, demos, music and more. Free. Info, www.boatschool.com.

Apr. 17 — Howl at the full moon on a Sunday night.

Apr. 20 — Manuevering in Close Quarters seminar by Club Nautique's Capt. Bryan Chavez at South San Francisco West Marine, 6-7:30 p.m. Free. Info, (650) 873-4044.

Apr. 21 — Spring Race Instructions seminar, part of Sausalito YC's Third Thursday Seminar Series, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Free and open to the public. Info, www.sausalitoyachtclub.org/calendar/whats-happening.

Apr. 21-23 — Cabo Marine Show in Cabo San Lucas. Info, www.cabomarineshow.com.

Apr. 22 — Celebrate Earth Day on the liquid part!

Apr. 23 — Marinship Day & Flea Market at Sausalito West Marine, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. BBQ gets fired up at 11 a.m. Proceeds from BBQ, booth rentals and raffle go to Spaulding Wooden Boat Center. Prizes and more! Info, (415) 332-0202.

Apr. 23 — Boaters Swap Meet at Stockton SC, 8 a.m. Fuel up at a pancake breakfast, too. Info, www.stocktonsc.org.

Apr. 23 — Martinez Marina Swap Meet, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Info, (925) 313-0942 or slips@martinez-marina.com.

Apr. 24 — Plan an Angel Island Easter Egg Hunt.

Apr. 24, 1916 — The lifeboat *James Caird*, from Ernest Shackleton's *Endurance*, set off from Elephant Island bound for 800-mile distant South Georgia Island in a desperate bid to save the rest of the crew.

Apr. 28 — Electrolysis Seminar at Spaulding Wooden Boat Center in Sausalito, 6-7:30 p.m. \$15. Info or RSVP, (415) 332-3179 or info@spauldingcenter.org.

Apr. 29-May 1 — Southern California Westsail Rendezvous at Pine Avenue Pier, Rainbow Harbor, Long Beach. Info, www.westsail.org or westsailor@earthlink.net.

Apr. 30 — Treasure Island Sailing Center Opening Day celebration, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free sailboat rides, music, games & food. \$3 for BBQ. Info, www.tisailing.org.

May 1 — Opening Day on the Bay! Don't miss the blessing of the fleet in Raccoon Strait, 10:30-noon (enter from the

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52' Santa Cruz, '99, Renegade.....	\$495,000	39' Schumacher, '96, Recidivist.....	\$99,000	33' J/100, Hull #9, '05.....	\$106,000
52' Santa Cruz, '98, Hula.....	\$449,000	38' Sabre 386, '08, Kuai.....	SOLD	33' Back Cove, '08.....	\$279,000
52' TransPac with IRC mods, '03, Braveheart*.....	\$499,000	38' Sabre 38 Mkl, '84.....	Pending	32' J/32, '02, Tango.....	SOLD
48' J/145, Hull #9, '03*.....	\$675,000	36' J/109, '03*.....	\$189,000	32' Catalina 320*.....	\$61,000
48' 1D48, '96, Chaya.....	\$125,000	36' Islander 36, '72, Absolute.....	\$45,000	30' Peterson Half Ton*.....	\$27,500
47' Valiant, '81, Sunchase.....	\$110,000	35' J/105, '92, Hull #44, Orion.....	SOLD	29' MJM 29z, '07*.....	\$269,000
44' Kernan, Wasabi.....	SOLD	35' J/105, '99, Life Is Good*.....	\$82,500	28' Alerion Express, '06*.....	\$99,000
44' J/44, '93, Halcyon Days*.....	\$285,000	35' J/105, '00, Hull #343, Nirvana.....	Reduced \$94,900	28' Alerion Express, '02*.....	\$72,500
44' Wauquiez 43 Pilot Station*.....	\$319,000	35' J/105, '00, Hull #347, Bald Eagle.....	Reduced \$99,000	28' Islander, '79*.....	\$16,900
43' J/130, '96*.....	\$209,000	35' J/105, '01, Hull #463, Trickster.....	SOLD	26' J/80, '04, Heart Attack.....	SOLD
40' J/122, '07, TKO.....	\$429,000	35' J/105, '02, Hull #520, Sea Room.....	\$94,900	26' Aquapro Raider, '02, enclosed hard top.....	SOLD
40' J/120, '04, Mad Max.....	\$229,000	35' J/35, '84, The Boss*.....	\$34,000		
40' Summit, '08, Soozal.....	\$599,000	35' J/35C, '93.....	\$89,000		

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CALENDAR

east).Info, www.picya.org.

May 14 — Boaters Swap Meet at Marina Bay Yacht Harbor in Richmond, 8 a.m.-noon. Info, (510) 236-1013.

May 14 — Opening Day on South Bay! Boat parade, blessing of the fleet, live music and fun for the whole family. Info, www.southbayopeningday.org or www.sequoiayc.org.

May 15 — Nautical Swap Meet at Elkhorn YC in Moss Landing, 7 a.m. Info, eyc@elkhornyc.com.

May 15 — Marine Swap Meet & Open House at Berkeley YC, 6 a.m.-1 p.m. Run in conjunction with Safety at Sea Day program. Info, www.berkeleyyc.org or (510) 843-9292.

Racing

Mar. 28-Apr. 3 — BVI Sailing Festival & Spring Regatta, British Virgin Islands. One of the Caribbean's best regattas, and includes a huge bareboat fleet. A great way to spend a week-long charter. Info, www.bvispringregatta.org.

Apr. 2 — SSS Corinthian Race, formerly known as the In the Bay Race. Info, www.sfbaysss.org.

Apr. 2 — Andy Byrd Memorial Race. CPYC, www.cpyc.com.

Apr. 9 — 30th Annual Doublehanded Farallones Race. BAMA, (510) 769-0309 or www.sfbama.org.

Apr. 9 — Spring Tune-Up Race, the mother of all beer can races. RYC, www.richmondyc.org.

Apr. 9 — Corinthian Challenge. CYC, www.cyc.org.

Apr. 9 — North Bay Challenge #1. VYC, www.vyc.org.

Apr. 9-10 — J/Fest. One design and PHRF racing for the J/boat faithful. StFYC, (415) 563-6363 or www.stfyc.com.

Apr. 9-10 — Resin Regatta, for Melges 24s and Etchells. SFYC, (415) 789-5647 or www.sfyf.org.

Apr. 9-10 — Camellia Cup on Folsom Lake, for centerboards, multihulls and keelboats. FLYC, www.flyc.org.

Apr. 10 — Spring Series #3. SSC. www.stocktonsc.org.

Apr. 15-17 — 64th Newport to Ensenada Race, one of the largest international yacht races. Info, www.nosa.org.

Apr. 16 — Women Skippers Regatta. SYC, www.sausalitoyachtclub.org.

Apr. 16 — Mercury Series #2. EYC. www.encinal.org.

Apr. 16 — Don Wan Regatta. TYC, race@tyc.org.

Apr. 16 — Commodore's Cup. BVBC, www.bayviewboatclub.org.

Apr. 16-17 — BYC's 39th Annual Rollo Wheeler Regatta. One design and PHRF buoy races on Saturday, pursuit race on Sunday. Bobbi, (925) 939-9885 or bobbi@jfcbat.com.

Apr. 16-17 — Big Dinghy. RYC, www.richmondyc.org.

Apr. 16-17 — Harken Opti #2. SFYC, www.sfyf.org.

Apr. 16-17 — Elvstrom Zellerbach. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.

Apr. 17 — Estuary Cup. EYC, www.encinal.org.

Apr. 17 — Spring Series #4. SSC. www.stocktonsc.org.

Apr. 17 — Baxter Judson #1. PresYC, www.presidioyachtclub.org.

Apr. 23 — YRA-OYRA Lightship 1. StFYC, www.yra.org.

Apr. 23 — Summer Series #1. SeqYC, www.sequoiayc.org.

Apr. 23 — Twin Island #1, a choose-your-direction race around Alcatraz and Angel Islands. SYC, www.sausalitoyachtclub.org.

Apr. 23 — BAMA Racetrack Day, an 'always open' course on Central Bay where any boat can submit their GPS track to compete. Info, www.sfbama.org/racing/rtindex.html.

Apr. 23 — Trans-Folsom Challenge on Folsom Lake. Info, www.flyc.org or (916) 685-4869.

Apr. 30 — Bullship Regatta, the annual running of El Toros from Sausalito to the Cityfront. Info, www.eltoroyra.org.

Apr. 30 — 27th Annual Konocti Cup, a 26-mile marathon



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Melges 32 — J.H. Peterson photo

CALENDAR

on Clear Lake. Info, www.kbsail.com.

Apr. 30 — YRA-WBRA Circle #1. RYC, www.yra.org.

Apr. 30 — Small Boat Spring. EYC, www.encinal.org.

Apr. 30 — Singlehanded #2. SeqYC, www.sequoiayc.org.

Apr. 30-May 1 — Commodore's Cup. HMBYC, www.hmbyc.org.

Apr. 30-May 1 — The 111th annual Great Vallejo Race, one of the biggest races on the Bay, which also serves as the YRA season opener. Info, (415) 771-9500 or www.yra.org.

May 1 — Spring Series #5. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

May 7 — 3-3-3 Regatta for Moore 24s. BVBC, www.moore24.org.

May 7 — YRA-WBRA City #1. GGYC, www.yra.org.

May 7 — Corinthian Challenge. CYC, www.cyc.org.

May 7 — YRA-OYRA Duxship. YRA, www.yra.org.

May 7 — Summer Series #2. SeqYC, www.sequoiayc.org.

May 7 — Doublehanded Long Distance #2. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

May 7 — Annual El Toro Flight of the Bulls at Foster City Boat Park. Info, www.eltoroyra.org.

July 4-8 — 46th L.A. to Honolulu Race, better known as the TransPac, starts. Info, www.transpacrace.com.

Summer Beer Can Regattas

BALLENA BAY YC — Friday Night Grillers: 4/8, 4/22, 5/6, 5/20, 6/3, 6/17, 7/1, 7/15, 7/29, 8/12, 8/26, 9/9. Matt Schuessler, (925) 785-2740 or race@bbyc.org.

BAY VIEW BOAT CLUB — Monday Night Madness Spring: 4/18, 5/2, 5/16, 5/30, 6/13, 6/20 (make-up). Arjan Bok, (415) 310-8592 or bayviewracing@sbcglobal.net.

BENICIA YC — Thursday nights: 4/7-7/28. Info, www.benicia-yachtclub.com.

BERKELEY YC — Every Friday night: 4/1-9/23. Paul Kamen, (510) 540-7968 or pk@well.com.

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

CORINTHIAN YC — Every Friday night: 4/8-9/2. Info, (415) 497-5411 or racing@cyc.org.

COYOTE POINT YC — Every Wednesday night: 4/6-10/26. George Suppes, (650) 921-4712 or regatta@cpyc.com.

ENCINAL YC — Friday Night Spring Twilight Series: 4/22, 5/6, 5/20, 6/10, 6/17. Chris Hanson, (510) 301-2081 or rearcommodore@encinal.org.

FOLSOM LAKE YC — Every Wednesday night: 5/4, 5/18, 5/25, 6/1, 6/8, 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 7/6, 7/20, 7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 8/31, 9/7, 9/21. Info, www.flyc.org.

GOLDEN GATE YC — Friday nights: 5/6, 5/20, 6/3, 6/17, 7/1, 7/15, 7/29, 8/12, 8/26. Leslie Iacopi, (415) 931-3980 or lestiesailor2003@yahoo.com.

ISLAND YC — Friday Night Spring Twilight: 4/15, 4/29, 5/13, 6/3, 6/17. John New, (510) 521-2980 or iycracing@yahoo.com.

LAKE TAHOE WINDJAMMERS YC — Every Wednesday night: 5/4-10/12. Steve Katzman, (530) 577-7715.

LAKE WASHINGTON SC — Every Thursday night May-August. Dan Clark, www.lwsailing.org.

LAKE YOSEMITE SA — Every Thursday night: 5/12-8/25. Tom Cooke, tcookeatty1@yahoo.com.

MONTEREY PENINSULA YC — Sunset Series, every Wednesday night through September. Ray Ward, (831) 659-2401 or www.mpyc.org.

OAKLAND YC — Wednesday Night Sweet 16 Series: 5/4-6/22 & 7/13-8/31. John, (510) 366-1476 or j_tuma@comcast.net.

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RICHMOND YC — Wednesday nights: 4/6, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4, 5/18, 5/25, 6/1, 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 7/6, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 8/31, 9/7, 9/21, 9/28. Eric Arens, (510) 841-6022 or ericarens@comcast.net.

ST. FRANCIS YC — Wednesday Night Series: 5/4, 5/18, 5/25, 6/1, 6/8, 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 8/31. Thursday Night Kiting Series: 4/7, 4/21, 5/5, 5/19, 6/2, 6/16, 6/30, 7/14, 7/28, 8/4, 8/18, 9/1, 9/15. Friday Night Windsurfing Series: 4/8, 4/22, 5/6, 5/20, 6/17, 7/1, 7/29, 8/5, 8/19, 9/2, 9/16, 9/30. Info, racemgr@stfyc.com.

SANTA CRUZ YC — Wet Wednesdays: 3/16-11/2. Greg Haws, (831) 425-0690 or greg@scyc.org.

SAUSALITO YC — Tuesday Night Spring Sunset Series: 4/26, 5/10, 5/24, 6/7, 6/21. Dave Borton, (415) 302-7084 or race@sausalitoyachtclub.org.

SEQUOIA YC — Every Wednesday night: 4/20-10/12. Steve Holmstrom, (650) 610-9501 or www.sequoiayc.org.

SHORELINE LAKE AQUATIC CENTER — Capri 14.2 racing every Thursday night during Daylight Saving Time. Info, (650) 965-7474. Laser Racing (BYOB) every Wednesday night, May-October. Roger Herbst, rogerlaser@yahoo.com or (408) 249-5053.

SOUTH BEACH YC — Friday Night Series: 4/22, 4/29, 5/6, 5/20, 6/3, 6/17, 6/24, 7/15, 7/22, 7/29, 8/5, 8/19, 8/26. Tad Sheldon, (408) 546-1240 or www.southbeachyc.org.

STOCKTON SC — Every Wednesday night: 6/1-8/24. Patrick Felten, (209) 518-6371 or regatta11@stocktonsc.org.

TAHOE YC — Wednesday Night Beer Can Series: 6/1-8/31. Dan Hauserman, (530) 581-4700 or dan@ilovetahoe.com. Monday Night Laser Series: 5/30-8/29. Rick Raduziner, (530) 583-6070 or raduziner@sbcglobal.net.

TIBURON YC — Every Friday night: 5/20-9/9. Ian Matthew, ian.matthew@comcast.net or (415) 883-6339.

VALLEJO YC — Every Wednesday night: 4/6-9/28. Gordon Smith, (530) 622-8761 or fleetcaptainsail@vyc.org.

Mexico and Beyond

Mar. 12-Apr. 30 — The 2nd Annual Cruisers Rally to El Salvador starts in Mexico and meanders 'rally style' to the Bahia del Sol Hotel in El Salvador, where owner Marco Zablah is donating \$1,800 in prizes. Info, elsalvadorrally.blogspot.com.

April 7-10 — La Paz Bay Fest. This will be the fifth year for this descendant of the (in)famous La Paz Race Week. An event for cruisers that includes races, potlucks, cruising seminars and other fun activities for the family. More info on Bay Fest 2011 can be found at www.clubcruceiros.org.

Apr. 29-May 1 — Loreto Fest and Cruisers' Music Festival. This classic Baja event, started to clean up Puerto Escondido, draws a very large crowd of cruisers and Baja land-travellers for a chili cook-off, dinghy races and other water activities, the Candeleros Classic race, and lots of participant-created music. The goals are to have fun and raise lots of money for Mexican charities in Puerto Escondido and Loreto. Visit www.hiddenpartyachtclub.com.

May 2-7 — The Sea of Cortez Sailing Week will be just after Loreto Fest and sailed from Puerto Escondido 120 miles south to La Paz, with plenty of stops and lay days along the way. Don't miss the potlucks, hiking, volleyball, snorkeling, cocktail cruises, sunshine, instant friends and, of course, some of the most fabulous sailing you will find. Entry fee of \$25 is a tax deductible donation to Fundación Ayuda Niños (Foundation for Helping Children). The number of entries is limited to ensure room for the entire fleet on the infamous cocktail cruise aboard *Profligate*. Enter by emailing Patsy on



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CALENDAR

Talion at patsyfish@gmail.com

May 2-8 — If your post-Loreto Fest plans will take you across the Sea, sign up for the 2nd Annual Lions Club Boat Rally. Starting at Puerto Escondido, this rally will head north and stop at San Juanico, Santo Domingo, Bahia Concepcion, and Punta Chivato with a fiesta at Santa Rosalia on May 6 and the final fiesta at San Carlos on May 8. The \$75 entry fee goes to the Lions Club International, who will distribute it to needy families. Info, go2sancarlos.com/events_regata2011.htm or rallyinfomexico@yahoo.com.

June 24-26 — 6th Annual Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous, hosted by *Latitude 38* and Tahiti Tourisme. This free event is focused on cross-cultural appreciation and includes a cocktail party, a sailing rally to Moorea, Polynesian music and dance performances, and cruiser participation in traditional Tahitian sports — the highlight of which is the six-person outrigger canoe races. Info, www.pacificpuddlejumps.com.

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

April Weekend Tides

date/day	time/ht. LOW	time/ht. HIGH	time/ht. LOW	time/ht. HIGH
4/02Sat	0541/0.7	1204/4.9	1736/1.2	
4/03Sun	0002/5.4	0613/0.4	1245/4.7	1806/1.5
4/09Sat	0316/5.3	1014/0.0	1800/3.9	2207/3.1
4/10Sun	0412/5.1	1116/0.1	1906/4.1	2331/3.1
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
4/16Sat	0438/-0.1	1109/5.2	1638/0.8	2311/6.3
4/17Sun	0526/-0.7	1208/5.2	1723/1.1	2349/6.5
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
4/23Sat	0343/5.4	1038/-0.4	1814/4.5	2310/2.8
4/24Sun	0446/5.0	1141/0.0	1916/4.6	
	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
4/30Sat	0446/0.4	1116/4.3	1624/1.7	2247/5.5
5/01Sun	0520/0.0	1202/4.3	1658/1.9	2313/5.6

April Weekend Currents

date/day	slack	max	slack	max
4/02Sat	0117	0407/3.8E	0749	1044/3.4F
	1346	1625/3.3E	2000	2248/3.1F
4/03Sun	0144	0438/4.0E	0823	1117/3.4F
	1427	1659/3.1E	2028	2315/2.9F
4/09Sat		0229/1.6F	0459	0849/3.7E
	1246	1548/2.4F	1930	2131/1.5E
4/10Sun	0022	0331/1.5F	0601	0947/3.6E
	1352	1655/2.5F	2033	2235/1.5E
4/16Sat	0016	0312/4.8E	0650	0948/4.3F
	1257	1537/4.1E	1902	2155/4.0F
4/17Sun	0053	0357/5.4E	0738	1038/4.6F
	1353	1626/3.9E	1945	2237/3.9F
4/23Sat	0006	0246/1.9F	0532	0852/4.0E
	1307	1619/3.0F	1939	2147/1.6E
4/24Sun	0125	0359/1.6F	0642	0955/3.4E
	1412	1731/2.8F	2039	2314/1.6E
4/30Sat	0004	0306/3.8E	0653	0955/3.3F
	1252	1527/2.7E	1854	2144/2.9F
5/01Sun	0035	0337/4.1E	0729	1030/3.4F
	1336	1601/2.7E	1926	2213/2.8F

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LETTERS

↑↓ WE ALL WANT TO PASS AS CATS

I really want a cat. Not a catamaran, because I'm a monohull person. I mean a feline. And I want to know if it's feasible to take a cat cruising with my partner and me.

You see, my old life made me puke — literally. It seemed to consist of nothing but work, obligations, traffic and mindless crap on television. My life had no soul. Not an ounce of it. I was a cog in a gear of I don't know what. The funny thing is that for the longest time, I didn't even realize it.

But I've changed. I gave up most of the trappings of the high life for a basic monohull outfitted with basic cruising gear. In exchange for sometimes pretending to enjoy pretending to be cool and hip, I've gained a connection with nature. I'm not going to lie and tell you that it's always been an easy



LATITUDE / LADONNA

We know Jay Hickman sails with his cat Maceo aboard.

transition, but the positives have outweighed the negatives, and it's becoming more that way all the time.

The one thing that's been missing in my life is the aforementioned cat. I had one when I was young, but was too busy to have any animals once I joined the rat race. But now my partner says it would be cool to have a cat — assuming that other cruisers say it's not a big problem on their boats.

I've read about all kinds of cruisers who have cruised with all kinds of dogs — even huge ones. But I haven't read about anybody cruising with a cat. I would think that cats are more adaptable to boats than dogs, but I don't know. Can I get some feedback?

Terry Lamphan
San Jose

Terry — We've never had a cat on a boat, so we'll put your question to our readers. If we're not mistaken, the biggest problem with cats is that some have a tendency to want to jump ship in foreign counties.

↑↓ THE LAST OF THE ROMANTICS

My husband Chad is a sailor through and through — and I have proof. As it was our anniversary, we recently went to dinner alone. As we sipped our wine, I reached over, took his hand and, looking into his eyes, said, "Tell me something romantic."

"You look beautiful in foul weather gear," he responded without missing a beat.

Lorie McNamee
Enter Laughing, Little Harbor 44
Portsmouth, RI

Lorie — So you fell for a smooth talker, did you?

↑↓ GIVING UP THE DREAM BECAUSE OF PIRATES

We've never taken piracy lightly, but after the incident in which four Americans were taken hostage on the Marina del Rey-based Davidson 58 *Quest*, and then killed by Somali pirates, we take it very seriously. For our family of three, piracy has changed the direction of, and our perspective on, cruising.

On February 19, we began the passage which was to take us west from Cochin, India, to Oman and the Red Sea. We

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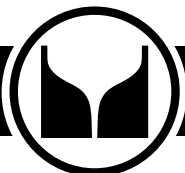


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LETTERS

knew *Quest* had just been taken by pirates, but held to our decision to go. Much forethought and planning had gone into the decision to undertake this passage. The intelligence we had stated that the pirates would attack with one skiff and six to seven pirates, usually from the port quarter. Based on this information, we purchased a shotgun, sharpened all our knives and machetes, registered our passage with the U.K. Maritime Trade Organization (UKMTO), the Maritime Security Centre—Horn of Africa (MSCHOA), and the U.S. Maritime Liaison Office (MARLO), and developed the following 'Piracy Procedures', which were posted at the navigation station.

At first sign of a small boat far from shore, the person on watch was to call all hands on deck, the engine was to be turned on, and evasive action taken by changing direction and speed, and shining the spotlight on the small boat. In addition, the headsail was to be dropped, and my wife and teenage son were to gather our weapons, which consisted of a shotgun, machete, flare gun, spear gun, and other knives. Katie was to prepare the boat for lockdown, turn on the SSB, and set the VHF DSC distress setting to piracy, and lastly, put out an information call on VHF 8 and 16.

If shots were fired or an attack seemed imminent, my son Jamie and I would stay in the cockpit, while Katie went down below. Katie would issue a *mayday* on VHF 8 and 16, and SSB 2182, 16420, & 12290. She would also activate the DSC on the VHF and the emergency alarm on the SSB.

Meanwhile, I would fire a warning shot and be prepared to ram the pirate skiff. Katie would lock down the belowdecks, control the boat from the nav station, and continue calling for help on the radio.

In addition, we put Vaseline on the toe rails and lifelines from the beam to the stern, which we found to be very effective. My son and I each wore a large knife on our belts at all times, and Katie stood ready to quickly dress as a male.

On February 23, after fighting light headwinds for four days, and having realized that we had damaged our Max Prop in Cochin, we heard the news of the deaths of our friends Scott and Jean Adam on *Quest*. We had cruised with the couple in Tonga and New Zealand. In addition, we received more intelligence that indicated the pirates were now using two skiffs, and could have as many as 19 pirates making the attack. News reports were also stating that the pirates had started to torture their hostages.

At this point, we still had the most dense area of previous pirate attacks to pass through. So I sat my wife and son



COURTESY ESPRIT

After learning of the murders aboard 'Quest', the McWilliam Family chose to turn around in the Arabian Sea rather than continue on to Oman.

down and, without offering my opinion, asked them what they thought we should do. So it was as a family that we made the difficult decision to return to Cochin. Although there were reports of pirates in our path back to India, it was not as high a risk as the area into which we'd been headed. Two days later, the sailing vessel *Ing* was hijacked in the very position where we would have been had we continued on our original course.

When we turned back, we only had 800 miles to go to Oman. But with the murder of our friends, it seemed that the

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LETTERS

pirates had now raised the bar from just the taking of hostages to death. Further, we had damaged our prop in Cochin, so our motoring speed was reduced by more than 20%, and our fuel consumption increased by a similar amount. In addition, the winds were light and the seas almost flat, giving too much advantage to the pirates and their high-speed skiffs.

Some thoughts on the past two months: We sailed 1,500 miles in the Arabian Sea, and we ended up almost right where we started. It used to be that we were very concerned about the freighters and the weather when we were at sea. Now the watch was all about looking for pirates. In the past, ship crews usually didn't keep a good watch and we had to be worried about being run down. But now the freighters keep an excellent watch, and are worried when they see us — a small boat — because we might be pirates.

We previously didn't give fishing boats a second thought — except for how to stay out of their nets. Now our first thought is to wonder if they're a mothership for pirates. For example, when we were about 180 miles off the Indian coast on our return to Cochin through the Lakshadweep Islands, near where two other pirate attacks had taken place, we noticed a ferry boat stopped at dusk. Thinking it odd, we listened to some chatter on the radio, then saw the ferry proceed south. We then spotted a large black fishing boat — mothership? — on a course that would intercept ours. We implemented our many security procedures. After about 30 minutes, we realized that the ship was not following us and therefore not a pirate. So we stood down. But Katie was scared to death!

Some of you may be wondering why we chose to come this route — as opposed to around South Africa — even though we knew about pirates. We made the decision to continue on our circumnavigation when we were in Southeast Asia, and we thoroughly enjoyed our time in Sri Lanka and India. Since that time, the pirate situation has escalated exponentially, and expanded in area from a 600-mile route that was heavily patrolled by the world's military organizations, to one that includes the entire Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden, and part of the Red Sea. It's a distance of over 2,000 miles.

Right now, we're feeling a lot of anger toward the pirates, and it's frustrating, because there isn't much we can do about it. Not only have they taken the lives of friends and held others hostage, but piracy has really taken the fun out of cruising. People used to ask, "Don't you get scared?" Even one of the captains on a freighter we talked to in the Gulf of Bengal asked us this question. Our answer has always been "No." Needless to say, that has changed, as piracy has added a very real fear factor.

We chose to give up our goal of circumnavigating with *Esprit* because of the pirates. It's a tremendous letdown for us to have to ship her from the Maldives to Turkey instead of our taking her on her own bottom. As a result, we'll end up doing all but 1,500 miles of a circumnavigation on her bottom.

Chay, Katie & Jamie McWilliam
Esprit, Kelly-Peterson 46, Ha-Ha '03 yets
Colorado

↑↓RUGERS VS. RPGS

The hijacking of Scott and Jean Adam's Marina del Rey-based Davidson 58 *Quest*, and the subsequent murder of them and their Seattle-based crew, Phyllis Macay and Bob Riggle, should be sufficient cause to finally precipitate some action against Somali piracy by the maritime powers — and principally the United States.

We met and socialized with the Adams at Vuda Point in Fiji two years ago while our boats were on the hard. They

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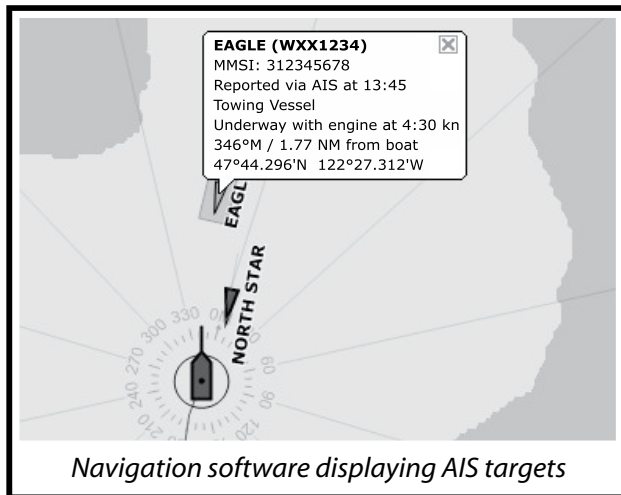
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LETTERS

were decent people who were peaceably pursuing a common dream. We did not see them again after they departed Fiji.

We believe that the U.S. Navy should take the lead in searching out and destroying pirate vessels in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. There is no doubt we have the means to locate these vessels. Once located, destroying or capturing them at sea shouldn't present much difficulty. Second, U.S. forces should take the lead in attacking and eliminating the bases from which these pirates operate. Again, in most cases these bases are known, and in many cases the leaders of the various pirate groups are known.

We don't believe that it's necessary to locate and eliminate



WEBB LOGG

Somali pirates are better armed than some small armies. Machetes and handguns can't compete.

all pirates or pirate bases to create an effective deterrent to piracy. It's just necessary to make piracy an option that even the most ignorant of the criminally-inclined wouldn't want to choose.

You do this by making it obvious that piracy will only result in disaster and/or death for the pirates and their associates.

These actions should have been taken years ago, as a small cadre of violent ignoramuses has been allowed to take merchant vessels, private yachts, and hundreds of innocent people as hostages. Merchant marine operators apparently would rather pay higher insurance premiums than take action to defend their vessels. Private yachts have been rendered 'victims in waiting' by legal barriers preventing their captains and crews from arming themselves.

Our boat is presently at Langkawi, Malaysia. We will be returning to her very soon, and will spend much of the year enjoying Southeast Asia. In January of next year, when the northeast monsoon season kicks in again, we will probably make the passage across the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, and up the Red Sea into the Med. If we had our choice, we would be armed. We've had a lifetime of experience in handling weapons and are very comfortable with them. I have no doubt that given weapons of choice, we could defend ourselves against any pirates we'd be likely to encounter. However, given the legal barriers to carrying almost any firearms on a boat, we yachties have to choose between breaking the laws of various countries or going unarmed.

But the fact is that few private vessels without arms can defend themselves against even the most incompetent pirates. So by default, military force must be used to prevent the seas from being controlled by pirates. Jean, Scott, Phyllis and Bob should be the last victims of Somali piracy.

P.S. We sailed non-stop from Humboldt Bay to the Marquesas three years ago, and therefore missed the Ha-Ha.

Bill & Janet Wickman
Airstream, Radford 46
Humboldt Bay

Bill and Janet — We think you've got some good ideas and some not-so-realistic ideas. A few years ago, a family on an armed cruising boat reported that they had driven off pirates

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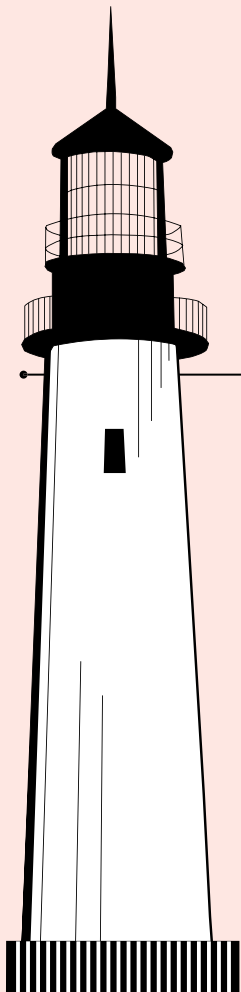
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LETTERS

in the Arabian Sea by killing one of them with a rifle as he attempted to board a nearby cruising boat. They also t-boned another pirate vessel, driving it away. But that was then and this is now, and the arms race on the Arabian Sea has escalated exponentially. Somali pirates no longer have just automatic weapons, but also things like rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs). If you were visited by pirates, it's highly likely you'd be seriously outgunned.

Similarly, we're pretty dark on the concept of "attacking and eliminating" pirate bases in Somalia. The last thing this country needs is to get involved in another land altercation in a country where there is no established order. And since there are currently 684 hostages being held, that's just too many innocent people who can be used as human shields.

Nonetheless, since the U.S. military budget is greater than that of the next 14 countries combined, we think it's time to either stop being impotent, or return the military budget to taxpayers. And we think there is a solution. The Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea should be declared a weapons-free zone, except for recognized navies. The U.S. should then take the lead in boarding every vessel they can find and searching for weapons. If any weapons are found, the vessel should immediately be sunk and the crews given mandatory five-year sentences in some desert hell-hole.

↑↓ASK NOT FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

The emotions we've experienced since learning of the senseless murder of the fellow cruisers on *Quest* and their two crew have ranged from shock to fear to anger. Although we'd never had the pleasure of meeting any of the four, we've also felt a sense of loss.

In the end, however, the question seems to be whether it's better to meet your end while in the process of living your dream, or never dare venture outside your home. I guess that is a question that each of us has to answer for ourselves based on our philosophy of life.

Our thoughts and best wishes go out to the families and friends of these four adventurers, who I am sure will be sadly missed by many.

John & Leanne Hembrow
Red Sky, Moody 54

Mt. Warren Park, Queensland, Australia

John and Leanne - We don't think the choice is quite as stark as you make it out to be. No matter where you go, from San Diego to Sydney, there is some element of risk and danger. But the amount of that risk is substantially different depending on



Four innocent lives were lost aboard 'Quest' for no apparent reason.

where you cruise. We don't think the Adams were doing anything particularly risky, as the percentage of yachts that have been hijacked there had been very low, particularly in recent years, and the number of yachties that have ended up getting killed had been much smaller still. Indeed, West Marine founder Randy Repass and the crew on his Wylie 66 Convergence had considered all of the risk factors just a few days before for that same route, and decided those risks were quite small. Of course, if there is a .1% chance of the crew of a boat

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LETTERS

*being hijacked and killed, it means that it's going to happen to someone. Tragically, we think those on *Quest* just happened to be in that very small percentage, having been in the wrong place at the wrong time.*

↑↓ OFF WITH THEIR HEADS!

As far as I'm concerned, it's really time to do something about the Somali pirates. Shipping companies should pay mercenaries to take out any and all pirates instead of just paying the ransoms.

Greg Clausen
Wisdom, Santana 30/30
Tiburon

Greg — Are you sure you want to have shipping companies hiring mercenaries to kill pirates? We think it's the job of governments rather than private armies — although our belief is waning.

↑↓ WE DON'T JUST RISK OUR LIVES

As cruisers of just two years, we already know that the cruising lifestyle comprises two elements that many times are in conflict with each other. One is independence, the other is risk. As a group, we cruisers are independent enough to go where we want, which sometimes leads to risky situations. Every cruiser has some kind of risk management plan based on the information available at the time. We are constantly assessing the weather, water depths, sea conditions and many other factors that affect us.

One factor that sometimes is overlooked is how our risk affects others not onboard. In the case of *Quest*, the risk to themselves and others was substantial. Even though there have been few incidents like this before, where the hostages are killed, one could have surmised that bad guys could be in the area they were transiting and that any rescue effort could be very risky.

If there is anything to learn from this tragedy, it may be that, as independent as we are, we may have to rely on others in overwhelming situations, and this may put them in peril.

Our sincere condolences to the families of the crew aboard *Quest*.

John & Bridget Wilson
Sailsoon, Sabre 34 MK I
Ventura

↑↓ DON'T KID YOURSELF — THIS IS WAR

As were most readers of *Latitude*, I was horrified by the news of the killing of the Adams and of their crew by Somali pirates.

What bothers me the most is the almost blasé attitude of the United States government. Is it me, a retired U.S. Navy vet, or has someone changed the definition of 'pirate'? They are the scum of the earth, and the more we 'handle them with kid gloves', the more we deserve to have to accept the results.

I say bull crap! These pirates deserve nothing better than to be publicly removed from society — forever. They shouldn't get lawyers, deals, or even the right to be heard on their horrible lives. It has long been the 'law of the sea' to deal with pirates. What they are doing is not some ride at Disneyland or harmless game, it's using the lives of innocent people to try to extort money. Any country that allows them in is also guilty of harboring criminals.

I feel that it's time to go over to Somalia and reclaim all the hostages that are being held, as well as their personal

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LETTERS

property. We don't need to even declare war, as they already have.

My hats are off to the Special Forces, although they only killed two of the pirates. If it had been me, I would've cut their arms and legs off and used their bodies as shark chum.

Steve Denney
Break Time, Yorktown 39
Pittsburg

Steve — Once again, we're afraid that going to Somalia and trying to reclaim the hostages wouldn't be quite as simple as you think, and that a lot of lives, innocent and otherwise, would be lost. We much prefer the idea that the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea be declared a 'weapons free zone', that discovered pirate vessels be used for target practice, and their crews receive mandatory long sentences — instead of taxpayer-funded lawyers and country club prisons. But we couldn't agree more that international impotence on this matter has made piracy an attractive career alternative for desperate Somalis.

↑↓ 230 SAILS AND COUNTING

Several months ago, *Latitude* wondered if anyone kept a proper log of the times they've been sailing. I bought my boat in September of '04, and have indeed kept a log of all outings. That's how I know there have been 230 of them. I record where I sail, the wind conditions, the distance travelled, the top speed, and any adventures I have. Ninety-nine percent of the time I sail by myself on the Bay, but once I did take my boat down to Half Moon Bay with a friend.

I'm retired, so my log book will provide me with good reading and fond memories when I'm no longer physically able to sail.

By the way, in January my 20-year-old Guest battery charger finally bit the dust. So I went to see Anders Johansson at Swedish Marine, one of your advertisers, who sold me a replacement. Chris, one of his employees, installed it. In the weeks that followed, there were a few issues with the charger. But each time I called Anders, he was more than happy to make every effort — including sending Chris out several more times, and once coming out himself — to make sure I was happy. I appreciate his desire to make sure his customer was completely satisfied.



LATITUDE / LADONNA

Bob Harrison has sailed 'Fortune Hunter' an impressive 230 times over the past 6½ years — that works out to about three times a month.

more than happy

to make every effort — including sending Chris out several more times, and once coming out himself — to make sure I was happy. I appreciate his desire to make sure his customer was completely satisfied.

Bob Harrison
Fortune Hunter, Hunter 30
Marina Bay, Richmond

↑↓ THE HORROR! THE HORROR!

I think it's time to alert the sailing community — and the whole Bay Area — to the plans for development of Treasure Island. I had no idea what was going on until I heard on the radio that the developer may agree to take 200 feet off what was to be a 650-ft residential tower. Horrors!

Just as San Francisco allowed the monstrosity of a tower that is near the end of the Bay Bridge to enrich a developer, cater to wealthy buyers with dramatic unencumbered views,

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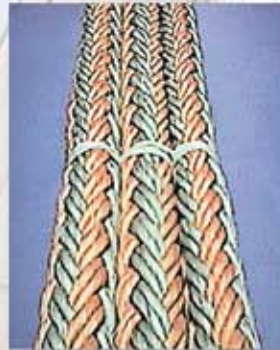
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LETTERS

and give a giant "single digit salute" to the rest of the Bay Area, now they want to duplicate it on Treasure Island. That's my view, anyway.

The development plans and an artist's depiction are at www.sftreasureisland.org/index.aspx?page=6.

Instead of a beautiful open Bay between the Cityfront and Treasure Island, the current proposal will now wall in a significant part of the approach to the Bay Bridge between build-



COURTESY TIDA

The proposed Sun Tower — an homage to the Tower of the Sun built for the 1939 World's Fair — will likely be somewhere between 450 to 650 feet tall. The Transamerica Pyramid is 853 feet tall.

ings on both sides, with a 450-ft — or worse — "single digit" to match the single digit on the other end of the bridge.

Note that the artist drew aerial views. That makes the buildings look smaller. Nothing about them will look small from the water, from the City waterfront or other approaches.

The Bay Area needs to know!!

Eliot Hudson
Gatecrasher, C&C 41
San Francisco

Eliot — While our feelings aren't particularly strong about this matter, we think a good argument can be made for turning Treasure Island into a mini Manhattan, with scores of tall towers. After all, such construction would bring much needed jobs, it would dramatically increase San Francisco's tax base, and dense urban living is said to be the least destructive to the environment. We may be wrong, but it also seems to us that the Bay Area has become way too dreary and ossified. Furthermore, we kind of like the idea of tall buildings creating a funky lee similar to the one to the east of Angel Island.

But as we said, our feelings aren't that strong about the issue.

↕ A LITTLE BIT ABOUT EVERYTHING

I always love the *Letters* section of *Latitude*, and sometimes have even been tempted to respond. This time I couldn't resist.

First, the wonderful flashlight rant. It's true, flashlights aren't very reliable. I have long since changed to the headband variety sold in mountaineering stores, as they not only work, but they also send the beam in the direction you're looking. But here's a big flash for makers of 'marine' flashlights — boats move. So why would you design a round flashlight for a boat? Square would work. Rectangular would work. Triangular would work. The only common shape that doesn't work is round. Geddit?

Secondly, I wanted to comment on the situation in Mexico. I have been 'robbed' twice in Puerto Vallarta. I was skipper of a rather large motoryacht in Marina Vallarta, and the owners had gone off to maximize profits in some Third World country,



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LETTERS

so I invited my 15-year-old son to visit me from Canada. As is the case with many males who haven't yet attained maturity, he was immediately attracted to Jet Skis. When he returned the first day, I watched him slow down to an idle as he approached the occupied section of the channel. Nevertheless, he picked up a patrol boat tail that followed him to the mother-ship. He was given a ticket for speeding.

The motoryacht was large enough that we had an agent, so the next day the agent, my son and I went to the harbormaster. We explained that my son had slowed down before coming near any boats in the channel. The Harbormaster replied that it was necessary to slow down before entering the outside channel. We replied that there were no speed signs, and my son had observed good seamanship. We got no joy, so \$500 was 'stolen'.

The next day, while coming off a wave, my son caught the handlebars of the Jet Ski under his chin. It was a small cut that required two stitches and five minutes at the clinic next to the entrance to the marina. The \$300 fee may not seem like robbery to people who have not been held for ransom by the American Medical Association for the last couple of years.

Finally, on the subject of *Latitude's* Ocean 71 *Big O*, I was hired to deliver the *Big O* from Cabo to Vancouver, B.C. in February of . . . sometime in the late '90s. It was an El Niño year, and — as some ex-pat screaming down the dock at 5 a.m. tried to point out — every harbor from Mexico to Tatoosh Island was closed due to shitty weather. But the Ocean 71 was a great boat. She was very strong but, like most boats of that era, suffered from being pretty squirrely in a following sea. I remember we had squalls from astern up in the 50-knot range. The boat had been terribly neglected, so we were pretty wet



CHRIS TULLOCH

'Ocean Light II', ex-'Big O', now plies much colder waters.

with leaky hatches and whatever, but no real fear. Okay, one deck-hand did try to swim ashore at San Francisco, but the anticipation is always worse than reality. The trick when going north to the Pacific Northwest is to do it in winter — but without a time schedule. That way you can just let the lows roll through, then pick up the southwesterlies that follow. Then duck in and wait and do it again.

Big O is now called the *Ocean Light II*, and is doing wonderful grizzly bear and 'spirit bear' adventure tours in Canada and Southeast Alaska. She's been completely refurbished and is in great condition.

Peter M. Heiberg
Scaramouche V, Palmer Johnson 49
Victoria, B.C.

Peter — You think you got 'robbed' in Puerto Vallarta? That was nothing. According to a recent article in the Los Angeles Times, the California prison guards union has rules that require California taxpayers to spend \$35 million a year for guards to watch over a mere 31 prisoners who are so ill they are often unconscious or are attached to life-sustaining equipment such as ventilators in hospitals. Despite the prisoners' having their ankles manacled to beds, union rules require that each of the near-dead be guarded by three full-time guards. Because the work is so effortless, these gigs are said to be prized by guards with the most seniority — meaning the ones with the

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LETTERS

most experience. No wonder California is considered to be the most dynamic state in the Union, with an endless string of businesses beating down the door just to get a foothold in the Golden State.

As for Big O, nothing does our heart better than to know that she's been completely restored and is doing great. We owned her for something like 11 years, mostly in the Caribbean, where she's still remembered for revelry and — why not admit it? — some good-natured debauchery. Big O was pretty rough when we bought her, got used pretty hard, and we certainly didn't have the kind of money necessary to rebuild a yacht of that size. Nonetheless, she was the best boat we've ever been on in rough weather. One night in the days before things like marine weather forecasts, we and our young kids set sail on her from Greece to Turkey when the wind came up really strong. All we had to do was drop the main and go under staysail and mizzen, and Big O left everyone feeling secure. There was another time off Cuba when a huge squall line came through with 50 knots of wind. We suppose we were lazy, because we didn't even bother to reef or strike the main. But once again, Big O handled the breeze with aplomb. God, we loved that boat.

↑↓A BONE IN HER TEETH

The March issue cover of *Latitude* is gorgeous! I'd love to know the name of the beautiful schooner. Is she, by any chance, *Contessa del Mar*?

I don't like to show my ignorance, but I guess I'm not salty enough to know what is meant by the expression "bone in her teeth," which you used to describe the schooner on the cover as having.

Mo Newman
Planet Earth

Mo — Thanks for the kind words about the cover. The schooner is the 65-ft *Juno*, which was designed and built by Gannon & Benjamin of Martha's Vineyard for one of America's most affluent families. Except for more modern sealants and adhesives — and hockey pucks! — she was built plank-on-frame, just as wooden boats were built 100 years ago. You can read more about Nat Benjamin's love for wooden boats in the May issue of *Latitude*.

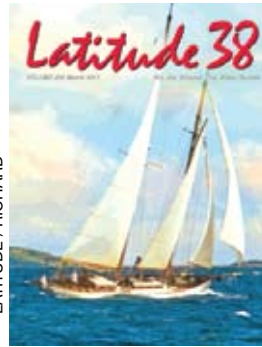
That *Juno* appears on the cover at all is something of a fluke. With the printer needing a cover the next day, we asked the staff what they had lined up for a cover. When the response was, "Nothing special," we dipped into our Caribbean photo archives and pulled out the shot of *Juno* from a few years back. Annie Bates-Winship then worked her graphic magic on the photo. We're glad you liked it.

Technically, the term 'bone in her teeth' describes when a boat is well underway and the water being driven by the bow is pushed to the sides of the boat without spraying over the bow. In more recent times, it just means a boat that's hauling ass.

↑↓IT'S AN INSTRUMENT OF SELF-DEFENSE

I feel the pain of the reader who has had so much trouble with flashlights on boats — especially with regard to those silly multi-LED compact lights. It doesn't seem to matter what model or manufacturer, they just won't keep working.

On the other hand, I unreservedly recommend the Fenix



LATITUDE / RICHARD

You'll learn more about 'Juno' in the May issue.

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LETTERS

LD01 three-level CREE LED flashlight available from Amazon. All of Fenix's stuff seems to be well-made, but this pricey — \$40 — little beast consistently delivers a whopping 85 lumens from a single AAA battery in a keychain-sized flashlight. It's sure to please.

It actually has three modes. It initially comes on at 28 lumens, which itself is surprisingly bright. Turn it off and on again quickly, and it shines at a lower nine lumens for longest battery life. Off and on again once more, and it shines at 85 lumens — a truly astounding output from such a little device. I amaze the gearheads every time I have a chance to demonstrate it.

By the way, 85 lumens almost approaches the level of an



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instrument of self-defense, as it can definitely ruin the night vision of an intruder or attacker. Sailing into Olympia at night, I use the Fenix to spot the buoys in the turning basin. My big old Mag-Lite won't light up the buoys' reflective numerals, but my

Paul swears by his 85-lumen Fenix.

little Fenix does just fine.

The flashing design is simplicity itself — a rotating lens housing screwed to a solid battery case with an o-ring seal. I've tied mine to a line with a magnet and, when trying to retrieve my cell phone at night, dipped it in six feet of Puget Sound seawater. I later realized I'd taken too much of a risk with a device I value far more than my cheapo cell phone! But the flashlight continued to work fine — though I did take the precaution of rinsing it, disassembling it, and letting it dry completely.

Paul Brogger

Mid-Life Cruises, San Juan 28
Olympia, WA

↑↓MY FAVORITE FLASHLIGHT

My favorite flashlight is an Underwater Kinetics Mini Q40, a AA-battery-powered dive light that is waterproof to 500 feet. I recently sailed to Tahiti and didn't go on deck at night without one in my pocket. It comes in incandescent and LED models.

Ken Harris
Alameda

↑↓"I SECOND THE MINI Q40 LIGHT"

Latitude recently grouched about the quality and reliability of flashlights. But I've got one I really like — the bright and indestructible Underwater Kinetics UK Mini Q40 Xenon Dive Light with Mask Strap

I use it almost every day on my sailboat, and I've never had a problem with it. I've dragged this light through desert and jungles, and it still looks almost new. Although I haven't put it to the test, it's said to be waterproof to depths of 500 feet, so it should easily handle any spray on a sailboat.

It seems that the older model I have has been discontinued, but I'm guessing that the new LED version will be as good if not better.

Adam Katz
As-Yet-Unnamed Ericson 29
Alameda

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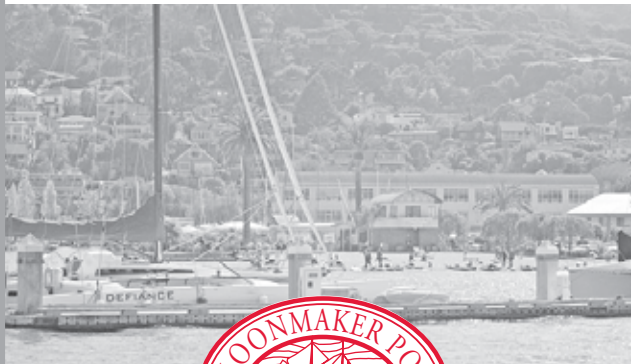


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LETTERS

Readers — Adam's recommended flashlight costs about \$25 when purchased online. And wonder of wonders, it's "proudly made in the United States."

↑↓ **OUR FLASHLIGHT HAS WORKED FOR YEARS**

We're sad to hear that some folks have bad luck with such a simple device as a flashlight. We have one flashlight that has worked perfectly for years, and it's usually the one I grab first. It was originally a headlight from a bicycle that was stolen out of the Ala Wai Marine yard in '93. Since we live aboard and cruise a small boat, we try to make every piece of equipment do double duty whenever possible — so our bike lights are usually pressed into service as flashlights. We've had good luck with it.

We just replaced the old 6-volt dry cell-powered spotlight that came with the boat in '90 with a new LED model — but only because the new one is a lot brighter and more compact. True, we have had some flashlight failures, but usually we can clean the contacts and replace the batteries to get years of life out of them.

Chuck & Laura Rose
Lealea, Albin Vega 27

Honolulu / Currently in the South Bay

Chuck and Laura — Shine on! You and your ancient lights belong in the Flashlight Hall of Fame. In this ever more disposable world, we love the fact that you've gotten so much life out of those lights.

↑↓ **\$100 WELL SPENT**

I read the complaints about flashlights in the March issue of *Latitude*. Tom, my son, gave me a rechargeable Streamlight flashlight that he used in the police department. I have had these flashlights on my schooner, *Dauntless*, for 26 years, keeping one in the cockpit during trips and having one mounted on the bulkhead next to my bunk.

The Streamlight is guaranteed for life. I had to replace the battery in one of them, and that cost me \$10. The switches and bulbs are replaced for free when you take them in. They cost \$100, but they are worry-free and shine a beam that can't be beat.

It's possible to wire the flashlight directly into your 12-volt system, but there's also a transformer that comes with it so you can recharge on 110 volts, too.

Buy the Streamlight where police equipment is sold.

P.S. Do you have any information on the beautiful schooner that appeared on the cover of the March issue of *Latitude*?

Paul Plotts

Dauntless, 71-ft Alden schooner
San Diego

Paul — As previously noted, the schooner on the cover is the 65-ft Juno that was built in the traditional manner by the Benjamin & Gannon yard of Vineyard Haven, MA.

↑↓ **"I CRITICIZE ANONYMOUSLY AND ERRONEOUSLY"**

Despite murder and mayhem south of the U.S. border, you continue to entice innocents into these areas. I presume that you saw the story about cruisers Jean Pierre Bouhard and Dan North, who allegedly were murdered by charter boat skipper Javier Martin.

Your advice is bound to catch up with you tragically sometime in the future. You would provide the best service to your readers by informing them of the risks and advising caution.

The Laughing Rose Pearl

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LETTERS

T.L.R.P. — We don't know if you've missed a lot of issues or are just lacking in reading comprehension, but we've been informing readers of the risks and advising caution all along. And that goes for the United States, too, where statistics suggest that the risks of being a victim of "murder and mayhem" are much greater in places such as Oakland, Richmond, and Stockton than they are in Mexico, Central America, and Panama. By the way, are you suggesting that we can best serve our readers by advising them not to do events such as the Delta Ditch Run to Stockton?

Perhaps you've noticed that we haven't published any letters from cruisers who, fearing for their personal safety, have returned to the United States from Mexico and Central America. We haven't published any because we haven't received a single one. So if you're suggesting that we're somehow managing the news to present a Pollyannaish portrait of cruising south of the border, you're wrong. Indeed, most cruisers tell us they feel as safe south of the border than they do in the States, if not safer.

As for your broad statement about "murder and mayhem south of the border," that's a wild generalization that suggests monumental ignorance on your part. Do you really think that the personal safety risks are as great in peaceful Puerto Vallarta at they are in the 1,500-mile-distant shooting gallery that is Juarez? Or in the shooting gallery that is Oakland? Where you are in Mexico, as where you are in the United States, determines how great the risk is to your personal safety. And to date, the Pacific Coast of Mexico has been very safe for cruisers. But as we've repeatedly said, if that changes, we'll be the first to let you know. And now we're saying that Acapulco — and the once wonderful Acapulco YC — might better be left off the itinerary. No cruisers have been hurt there, but it's the one place on the Pacific Coast where there has been a bunch of violence. In addition, if you read Changes, you can note the experience of Bill and Grace Bodle at the yacht club there.

By the way, here are some fun facts about Mexico: The economy grew at 4.5% during '10, and predictions for this year vary from 3.6% to 4.8%. And despite the narco violence, Mexico had the greatest increase — 53% — of foreign direct investment of any country in Latin America. You may not believe in Mexico, but foreign businesses with big bucks apparently do.

As for the tragic murders in Panama, you obviously missed not only February 16's 'Electronic Latitude on the subject, but also the Sightings piece in the March issue.

↑↓ THINGS CAN GO MISSING ANYWHERE

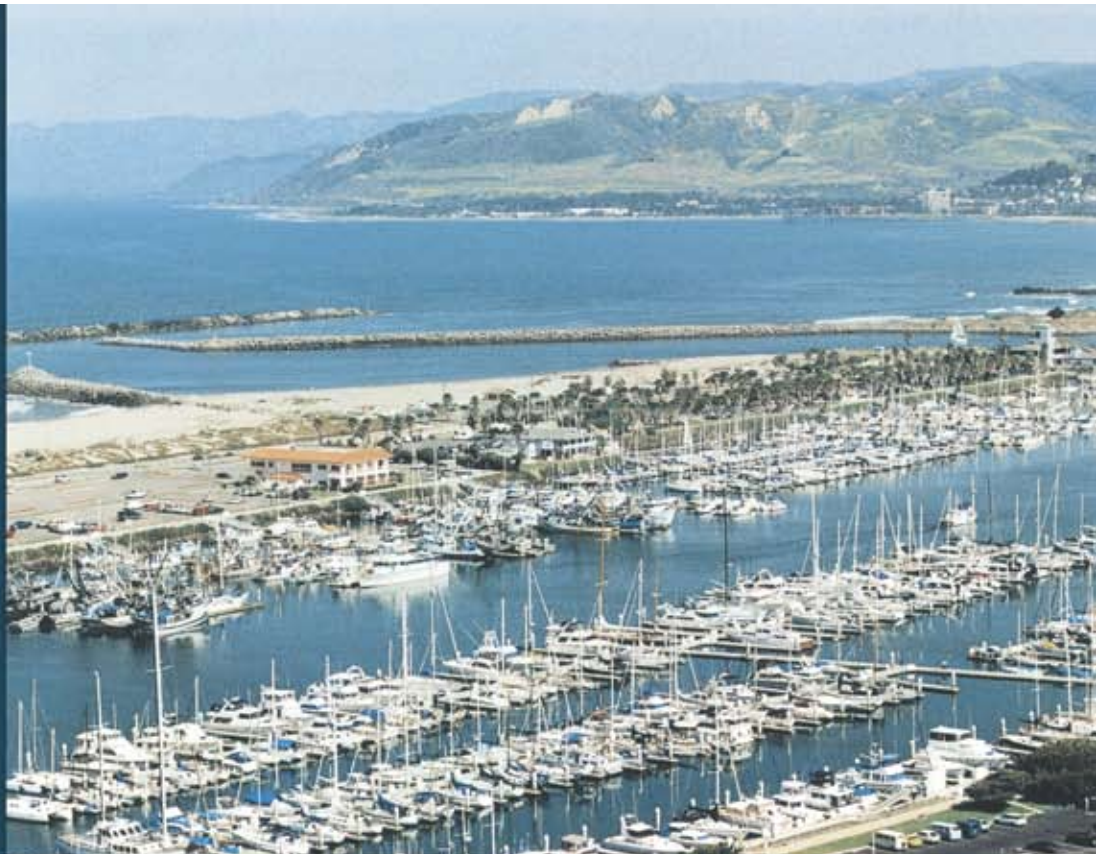
I read the letter from the ever-entertaining Mr. Kremer about his dink going missing in Mazatlan, and *Latitude's* response about how it would have made sense to enlarge the list of usual suspects to include "other cruisers."

Back in January, a couple we had the pleasure of spending time with when they were passing through Monterey last year — and who are now in Mazatlan — had someone snag their dinghy. It was a foggy night, the painter was cut — making it sound familiar. We don't know who did it and will never know why, but it's safe to assume they will never see that particular dink again.

Having said that, and having had the unique experience of sharing several months of dock time with Mr. Kremer in Monterey, I would like to remind him that while he was in Monterey, our dink was stolen from our boat here. Fortunately for us, we were victimized by a truly misguided person who then tied our dinghy to the back of his boat — at the end of our dock! So we had an exceptionally easy recovery.

To us, it was just a reminder that things go missing — no

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LETTERS

matter where you are, or sometimes even how careful you are. We love Mexico and travel there whenever possible. It never hurts to be reasonably cautious or vigilant, but that applies north of the border, too.

The Dakans
Yo, Cheoy Lee Offshore 27
Monterey

↑↓ **AFGHANISTAN IS SAFER THAN THE SEA OF CORTEZ?**

The publisher and staff at *Latitude* do an outstanding job of keeping the cruising community informed. So I'm always a bit bummed when I can't get my hands on the current edition of *Latitude*.

We keep our boat in San Carlos, Sonora, Mexico, and have never experienced any problems with the government or the drug cartels. We firmly believe that the violence in Mexico — and it certainly is a huge problem — has very little effect on cruisers. We love Mexico, the people, and the culture.

We live in Rio Rico, Arizona, about 10 miles above the Nogales border, and not too far from the U.S. Army base at Fort Huachuca. We've lived here two years, and have never seen an illegal immigrant on our property. We were told that it was a huge problem in our immediate area, but it's simply not true. The area is quiet and relatively crime-free. For example, last month the nearby U.S. city of Nogales had its first homicide in three years.

My wife and I wanted to invite combat veterans down to our boat — at our expense — to fish and dive in the Sea of Cortez. I contacted the Fort to try to arrange it, but was advised that Mexico was far too dangerous for our soldiers! And therefore the Army couldn't sanction our plan.

We were really pissed at the Army over their decision. Our brave young men and women can fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, where they are targeted for death, but a boating trip in the Sea of Cortez is too dangerous? Clearly the brass at the Fort are not informed — or have spent too much time listening to the local news media. There are hundreds and hundreds of *gringos* happily living in San Carlos who regularly commute between Mexico and the United States. Many of them are in their 80s and 90s. We simply have not had a problem in our area.

On a different subject, several years ago my wife and I cruised to Central America on our trawler, and spent about a year in Costa Rica and Panama. We had a great time and didn't experience any serious problems. We're ready to return to the area this November, but I do have one question for your staff or readers: How expensive is diesel fuel in Central America and the Caribbean? We know about the cost in Mexico, but not about other areas. Any help would be appreciated.

Tom & Judy Blandford
M/V *Imagine Me and You*
San Carlos (Sonora), Mexico

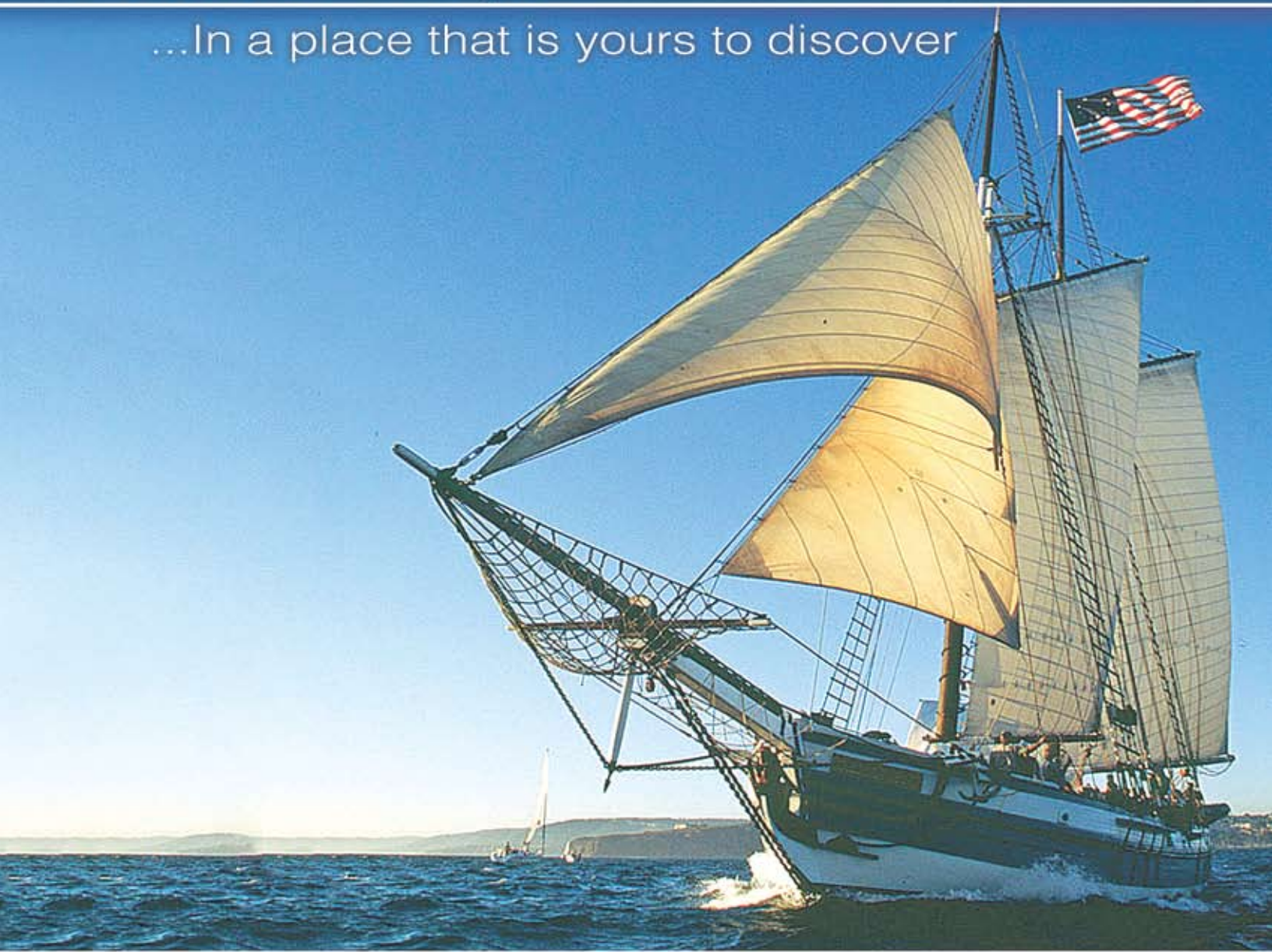
Tom and Judy — Thanks for the kind words. And be advised that all issues of Latitude are available for free online at www.latitude38.com. And man, do the photos ever pop when they are electronic as opposed to on newsprint!

That the U.S. military won't let you host combat veterans on a fishing and diving expedition in the Sea of Cortez because the military thinks it's too dangerous is yet more evidence to us that U.S. policy is set by some of the most ignorant people in the world. If they want to protect U.S. soldiers from random violence, simple logic would dictate that places like St. Louis, Detroit and Oakland — which are many times more dangerous than the Sea of Cortez — be made off-limits to combat soldiers.



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LETTERS

Is it just us, or does the United States seem to have deteriorated into an idiocracy?

By the way, we want to salute you for your extremely generous offer of hosting the combat veterans. We're not big on any of our current wars, but we certainly don't blame them on the individual soldiers.

As for the cost of fuel, it will be interesting to get reports from readers. In St. Barth, we can tell you it's about \$7.50 U.S./gallon, which is about twice what it costs in Mexico.

↑↓ WELCOME, MEMBER #2

The accompanying intrinsically humorous photo was taken



BONNY JONES

last December by Bonny Jones, my granddaughter. I thought it might make *Latitude* readers smile.

Although I'm a powerboater, having owned *Fantasea*, a 1926 Matthews 38, for the last 51 years, I've read every issue of *Latitude* from cover to cover since you started.

Bev Partridge
Fantasea, Matthews 38
Alameda

Bev — Nice photo. And even nicer is the fact that you're only the second member of our 'Over 50 Club'. Congratulations.

Plane on a stick.

↑↓ GETTING READY FOR THE HA-HA

We are contemplating joining the '11 Ha-Ha, and have studied the website. We are wondering where the fleet clears Mexican Customs and Immigration.

Miklos Endrody
Navigator, Krogen 48
Bellevue, WA

Miklos — Vessels travelling to Mexico clear in at their first port of entry. In order, heading south, the ports of entry are Ensenada, Cedros Island, Mag Bay, and Cabo. Since the fleet doesn't stop at Ensenada, Cedros, or Mag Bay, members don't have to clear in until they get to Cabo. The process is easy.

By the way, the Ha-Ha committee comes out of their annual hibernation on May 1, at which time we'll provide all the details on this fall's event.

↑↓ VIVA LAS VEGAS!

In the February issue, you mentioned St. Brendan's Isle Mail Forwarding Service of Florida, and asked for the names of other companies offering similar services.

We are planning to sell our cars and the house, then head out the Gate this summer and turn left. With that in mind, we also wanted to become 'residents' of a state that doesn't charge income tax. Our choice was Nevada.

We found a company, Mail Link Plus, that is all set up to receive mail and forward it anywhere in the world. They, too, have email notification of mail received, scanning of mail when desired, and regular or periodic shipments of your mail. Once established, you can easily handle all aspects of managing your mail and your account via email.

We enjoyed a nice overnight trip to Las Vegas, got signed up the day we arrived, and got Nevada driver's licenses at the DMV the next day. You can find all their information at www.

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LETTERS

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We agree with the editor's opinions regarding taxation and the use of taxpayer money in California, and certainly do not want to continue to pay for 'services' we won't be receiving once we leave.

Alan Bradley
 Vivacia, Caliber 40LRC
 Las Vegas, NV

Alan — Thanks for the information. We didn't realize that you could get a street address — and therefore a driver's license — with just a mail service in Nevada. But you did it, so obviously it can be done.

For the record, our beef is not with taxes per se, but with the overwhelming government waste, graft, incompetence, inefficiency, and complete and total lack of accountability. If the government worked half as hard and spent money half as carefully as well-run small businesses, we'd be happy to pay more taxes. Of course, we wouldn't have to, because the government would be awash in money. We detest being made to play on a 'team' we have no faith in.

↑↓ THE CONTROVERSY OF ROPES

Reader David Wheatley has three other ropes on his boat that he may not know about: the bolt rope on his mainsail and mizzen, and the luff rope on his jib.

Steve Taft
 Mill Valley

↑↓ THE MOST IMPORTANT ROPE OF ALL

Here are three more "ropes" found on a boat:

1) The boltrope on a sail that is fed into the groove that holds a sail to the mast and boom. It helps spread the load on the sail cloth.

2) The pull rope on the outboard motor used to start it.

3) My wife's rope — as in, "If you don't reef, I'll be at the end of my rope!"

Herb Clark
 Hotel Charlie, Catalina 25
 Chico YC

↑↓ FORGET THAT CLASSIC PLASTIC — GO WOOD

I know your La Gamelle Olson Syndicate probably doesn't want to hear about other boats, but have you thought about the old 30 Square Meter *Rumbleseat*, once owned by Bruce Schwab? She is ocean-ready in Road Town in the British Vir-



gins. In *Rumbleseat*, you would have a real classic wooden boat that was part of the team which won the 30 Square Meter Cup in the U.S. in the late '20s. Owning her would allow you to participate in the classic boat races in the Caribbean. She would be much better than 'classic plastic'. Furthermore, I believe she is longer — 39 feet — than the Olson, and only a few hundred pounds heavier.

'Diva' (ex-'Rumbleseat') has been a popular fixture in Caribbean regattas for years.

Richard Leute
 Acey Deucy, J/44
 Sausalito

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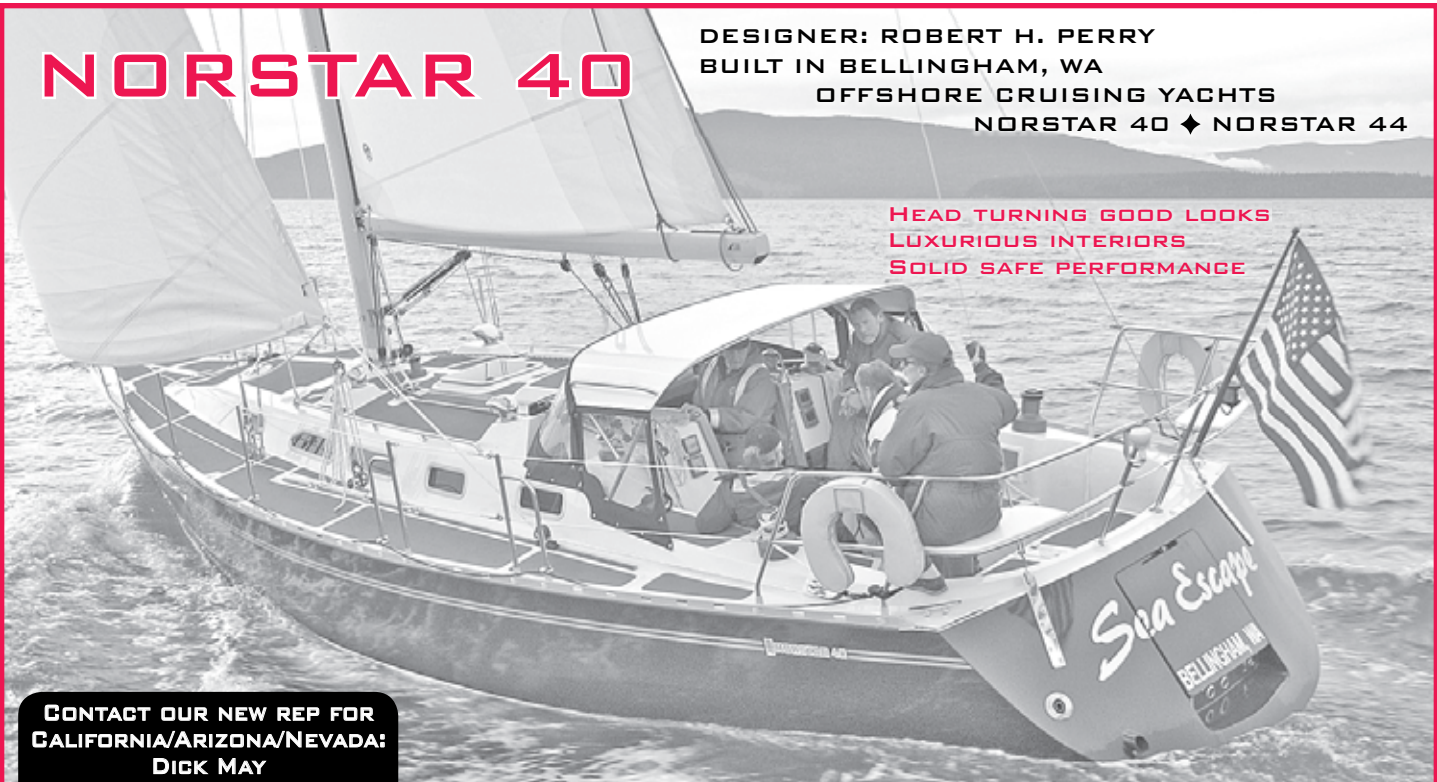
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LETTERS

Richard — "She would be much better" in what sense? While Rumbleseat, which then-future twice-singlehanded non-stop around-the-world racer Bruce Schwab, formerly of Alameda, used to great effect in the '96 Singlehanded TransPac, is a fine little yacht, she's just not for the members of our syndicate. We're all 'plastic' people, you see, who prefer actual sailing to working on boats. And while we have the highest esteem for wood boats and those who have the time and means to properly maintain them, it's just not us.

Furthermore, the syndicate's choice of boat for Zen sailing is strongly influenced by every member's admiration for the late George Olson — and indirectly the entire ultralight sailing community of Santa Cruz. The '70s and '80s in Santa Cruz were a special time and place in the history of boat design and boatbuilding, which we often think haven't been properly appreciated.

↑↓ COMMUTER CRUISING IN THE THIRD WORLD

I'm trying to get serious about cruising, but can't just cut off the income and head out. I was hoping to cruise a bit, fly back and work a bit, and so forth. But nobody told me that an American can no longer afford the Third World.

I currently keep my boat at a beautiful marina on the San Francisco Peninsula and can afford it quite comfortably. Surely, I thought, I can afford a slip somewhere in the Sea of Cortez or on the Mexican mainland. But no! Maybe Honduras or Costa Rica. No again. Dry storage? Not even that.

I don't seem to be able to make it work. Am I missing something, or has the government successfully hidden the fact that the dollar doesn't buy squat south of the border?

John Wiesendanger
 Pillar of Autumn, Hunter 40
 Redwood City

John — As we've written for years, the cost of cruising is very low in Mexico — provided you follow two basic rules: 1) You avoid marinas, and 2) You avoid tourist restaurants and bars.

We suppose it's not surprising that many sailors assume that marinas in the Third World will be as inexpensive as everything else, but they aren't. The reason is that marinas in Third World countries all had to be purpose-built for foreign visitors, often as part of higher-end resorts, and within the last 20 years.

Avoiding marinas is easy to do in Mexico, and many cruisers spend little, if any, time in a berth over the course of an entire season — if not over the course of several years. Others, however, with the rest of the cost of cruising in Mexico being so low, can afford the higher berth fees. The bottom line is that 'commuter cruising', such as you were contemplating, is extremely popular in Mexico. It's less popular in Central America and Panama because of the longer flights and more expensive air fares.

↑↓ FACTS ABOUT THE FUBAR

On page 60 of the February issue, the editor responds to support for sailors in the Ha-Ha and references two differences between the Ha-Ha and the FUBAR Odyssey powerboat rally.

First, he notes that a "lifelong delivery skipper" who has done both the Ha-Ha and the FUBAR rally states that the "FUBAR apparently has 'rescue' boats in case a member of their 'sail-less' fleet loses power or needs a tow." As a participant in both the '07 and '09 FUBAR rallies, and one who helped organize the event, I can tell you that we had medical, mechanical, and other various support personnel on the escort vessels. The purpose of the rally was to introduce less-



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Frank Gallovich

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LETTERS

experienced boaters to cruising on their powerboat with the help of very experienced boaters on escort vessels. The escort vessels had various tasks, such as an advance team to arrive at a destination to set up the events, parties, and welcome the fleet as they arrived. And a rear team that stayed with the slower members of the fleet for support in case of problems.

None of the boats needed towing or asked for it. But we did help with generators, stabilizers, watermakers and other related mechanical problems. We found that the safety inspections and pre-rally seminars paid off big with participants carrying sufficient spare parts and a basic knowledge of how to fix items that fail.

The second issue raised by the delivery skipper was that there was "not much socializing" in the FUBAR compared to



COURTESY SDYC / FUBAR

the Ha-Ha. We had plenty of social events, and they were all well-attended — but we agree that we did not want to have the party reputation of the Ha-Ha. Please take a look at the picture on the website for FUBAR Odyssey '11 at www.lbyc.org/fubar and decide for yourself if it looks like the FUBAR group in Turtle Bay were having fun at our dinghy poker run. While we did have fun, our main purpose was to help the participants safely travel 900 miles in a group.

Looks like a good time to us!

The editor's best statement is that the most important thing in both events is that people get out and enjoy their boats.

P.S. We're lifelong sailboat owners and readers of *Latitude*. In fact, Roy has done more than 100,000 miles of racing on sailboats.

Donna & Roy Wilson
 Aboard Escort vessel *Cadenza* in '07
 Aboard Escort vessel *Kachina* in '09

Donna and Roy — We thought we were pointing out differences between the two events, but if it came across as though we were slamming the FUBAR, please accept our apologies. For the record, the Long Beach YC will be hosting a kick-off reception for this fall's FUBAR on April 21, although the dates for the actual event still haven't been set. The FUBAR, which is held every two years and hosted by a different yacht club, is limited to 50 boats, and usually sells out. The entry fee is \$765. We wish all the participants a wonderful time in this fall's FUBAR.

↑↓ AND SPEAKING OF NON SEQUITURS

The March 9 *Lectronic* piece on the sudden sinking of the CNB 77 *Four Devils* reminded me of a nice email I got a month ago. Last year I wrote a book review on Amazon about *In a Class by Herself*, John Rousmaniere's book about the 73-ft yawl *Bolero* that had been built in '49. In the review, I mentioned that a newer and larger *Bolero* — I think 106 feet — was listed for sale. I wondered if she was a larger replica, as the photos of her looked very similar to the smaller version. Then last month I got a nice email from the skipper of the larger *Bolero*.

"You mention a 106-foot replica for sale in Monaco," he wrote. "I'm actually the captain of that *Bolero*, which is equally



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LETTERS

beautiful but not quite as famous! Anyway, I thought I'd just drop a line to say hello and tell you a little about 'our' *Bolero*. She's 105 feet overall, designed by German Frers, and built of aluminum in Cape Town, South Africa — my home town — in '92. She was not designed as a replica of the S&S *Bolero*, but she does certainly bear a resemblance. While by no means



DAN NERNEY

We're happy for any reason to run a photo of a boat as beautiful as 'Bolero'.

a classic yacht, her design features a heavy influence from the boats of the '50s and '60s. What I really enjoy about her is that, even when tied up stern-to in fashionable harbors around the world alongside the latest and greatest superyachts, she still stops people in their tracks and draws many compliments. We actually just finished polishing up her topsides today, and an hour ago dropped the hook in a lovely little bay on Norman Island in the British Virgin Islands. I feel very proud entering a busy anchorage or harbor at the helm of such a lovely yacht!

"The newer *Bolero* recently changed hands after 14 years with her previous owner. We have just spent several months in Spain refitting her, and are now cruising the Caribbean before heading down to South America and around the Cape of Good Hope."

Mike Kennedy
Conquest, Cal 40
Los Angeles

Mike — We're not sure why the sinking of *Four Devils* would remind you of the two *Boleros*, and we don't really see much similarity between a full-keel, split-rig wood boat and an aluminum sloop with a fin keel, but any excuse for bringing up a classic yacht from the middle of the last century is fine with us.

↑↓ A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM

Why is there no *Latitude 38* forum? I think it would be a great platform for questions and answers on your editorial material. I, for example, have a question on some of the rigging shown in your photos of the *Pirate Course*.

Barry
Planet Earth

Barry — Having monitored various sailing — and other — forums, it's our opinion that the most frequent and vocal contributors are those who know the least, and who often spout fountains of factually incorrect information. We realize that by not having a forum we may be missing some good information, but at least we're not contributing to the spread of ignorance and misinformation.

↑↓ SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA OR BUST

Since the schools in Hawaii aren't the best, my wife has decided that, for the sake of the kids' schooling, she wants to move back to California. As much as I love the Bay Area, after seven years of living on one of the smaller Hawaiian islands, I need to be somewhere warmer. So I told my wife that I'd be willing to move if we can live in a beach town — preferably with a harbor or marina — somewhere south of Point Conception.

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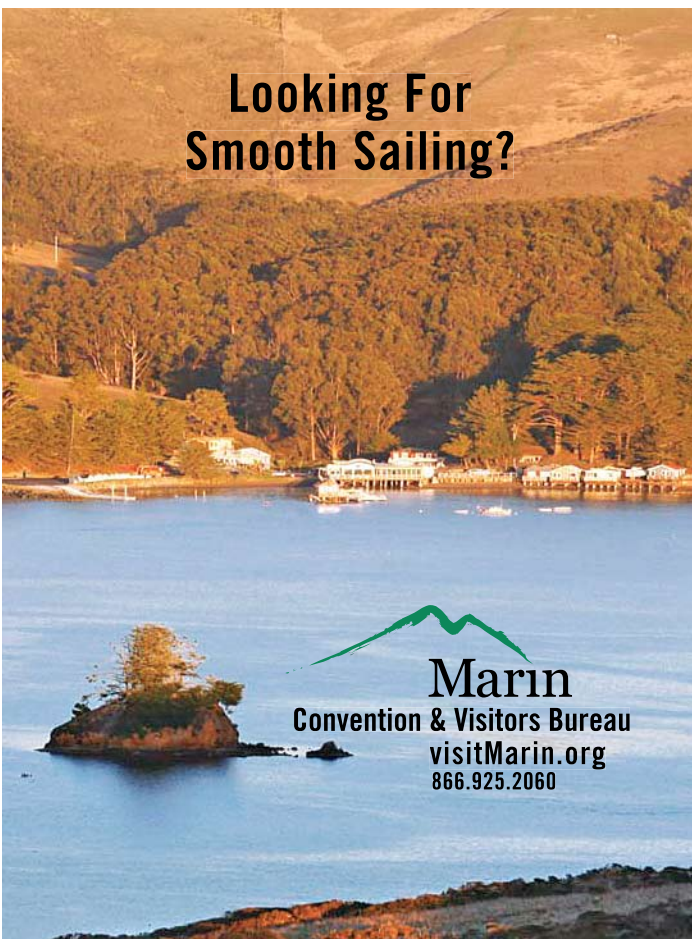
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LETTERS

Northern California, where, if you had to live between Conception and the Mexican border, would you live and why? If possible, leave my name out of this.

Anonymous

Anonymous — What an interesting question! Perhaps it's because we went to the university there, but we'd probably choose Santa Barbara because it's a very beautiful area, it's less crowded than most of coastal Southern California, and because there is both ocean and mountain nature close at hand.

There are, however, a couple of downsides. Check out



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Reduced! Slips in Santa Barbara are in high demand and fetch lots of dollars.

the accompanying poster about getting a slip in the only harbor. It seems a lot of sailors like to keep their boats there, too. Santa Barbara is also among the coldest and foggiest harbors in Southern California — but that's not saying much. After you've spent time in the

tropics, all of coastal California feels like Iceland, and the chilly marine layer is no substitute for the happy tradewind cotton balls.

As for the rest of Southern California, we're familiar with every harbor town, but we really don't know enough about the schools and surrounding areas to make knowledgeable observations. Maybe folks who live in those areas would like to speak up.

↑↓ TELL US ABOUT YOUR LIFESLING EXPERIENCES

Looking around at the boats on the docks at Paradise Village, Mexico, I saw that many of them have a Lifesling. We have one on our boat also, but it's never gotten wet. Have you heard of someone who has actually used theirs?

Don & Terri Parker
Double Play, Gemini 105
Alameda

Don and Terri — We're sure we have, but we couldn't give you any details on how the device worked out. Maybe some readers will share their experiences.

↑↓ BAJA SHIPWRECK — ALMOST

Reading about the sad loss of Paul Smulders and Julie Newton's 43-ft Laurent Giles-designed woody *Mia*, as reported in the February *Latitude*, brought back memories of a similar experience that we had along the same stretch of Baja coastline.

My wife Maggie and I were doing the Baja Bash after the '08 Ha-Ha on the Catalina 30 *Two Wishes*. We'd had a great time post-Ha-Ha in La Paz with the owner before she had to return home, at which point we were to deliver the boat back to California. I had done the Bash several times before, but never on such a small and light boat. Nonetheless, with all the usual caveats, I didn't think there would be anything we couldn't handle.

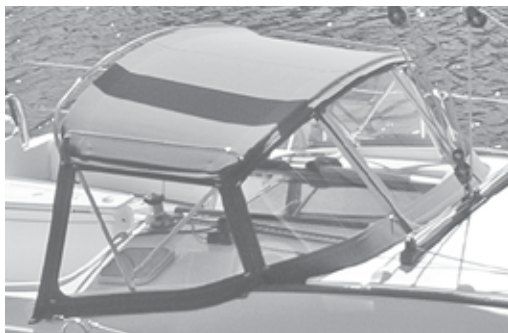
We had the best weather from Cabo to Turtle Bay. After fueling up, we motored to the north tip of Cedros to see how things looked. The forecast called for the usual five to 10 knots

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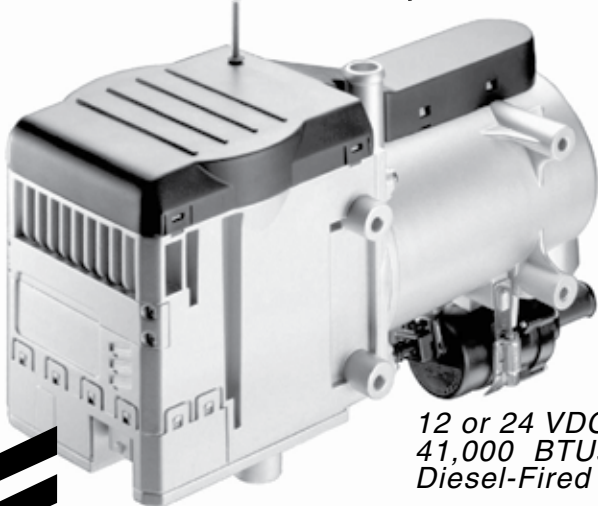
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LETTERS

in the morning, and 15 knots in the afternoon. It seemed as if it would be lumpy, but manageable, so we took off.

Two Wishes plugged along just off the wind at a five-knot average and, by 6 p.m., we were off the coast just southeast of Baja's Punta Blanca. Our cruising guide noted a small cove anchorage, but cautioned "unreliable holding — set anchor watch." We nonetheless decided to anchor for the evening, then set off at midnight for San Quintin.

The wind moderated and we slept until midnight. While getting dressed to take off, Maggie commented that the wind seemed to be increasing. By the time I got on deck, it was already gusting to over 20 knots from the northwest. We decided to hang for a while to see if conditions improved. They did not. In fact, they rapidly got worse, with 35- and then 45-knot gusts. I watched the GPS track as we slowly dragged anchor.

Fortunately, we were dragging diagonally away from the shore rather than onto the beach, so I started the engine and powered against the wind to try to help the anchor reset. After six hours of motoring, we had dragged 1,000 yards, and were getting farther out of the lee of land. Conditions did not improve and, with daylight, I could see that we were drifting toward a rocky headland that formed the west side of the cove. The windblown waves were as big as five feet and very steep. It was clear that our position was untenable for very much longer.

I had just decided to cut the anchor rode when it parted by itself and set us free. I could only just motor against the wind, managing around two knots at full RPM, so we headed for the lee of the cliffs just east of our original position. The wind held all day until 6 p.m., and we motored in the lee for 10 hours, not wanting to find out how bad things were farther out to sea.

The upshot of all that motoring was that we didn't have enough diesel in reserve to make it to Ensenada, so we had to go back to Turtle Bay to refuel! I wanted to cry, and Maggie wanted to get on a bus to San Diego. But we were safe, and could have easily lost the boat as had been the case with Paul and Julie.

So, to answer the many questions that I got about the wisdom of taking a Catalina 30 on the Ha-Ha, I can say from experience that they are tough little boats — assuming you know their limitations and can get enough fuel, water and batteries aboard. But — and it's a big but — if the going gets rough, it's not going to be pretty. For instance, *Two Wishes* leaked all the way up the Baja coast — even with the hatches and ports taped shut. Furthermore, the wheel autopilot couldn't handle the strong winds and heavy seas. On the other hand, we logged 1,800 miles in seven weeks, and the only thing that broke was the vang shackle and the only loss was the anchor. And yes, we carried a spare.

We had the pleasure of meeting Paul and Julie in San Diego just weeks after the loss of their *Mia*. She had been their home as well as their boat, so they were still pretty much in shock. We wish them good luck in putting their lives back together soon.

Graham Johnson & Maggie Castle
Carpe Diem, DownEaster 38
San Diego

Readers — Paul and Julie bought a small van and are now 'cruising' Baja while searching for their next boat. Julie reports that she finally got to drink a margarita under a palm tree.

↑↓ FIND GOOD DEALS IN THE CENTRAL VALLEY

You may remember that in the last issue I recommended

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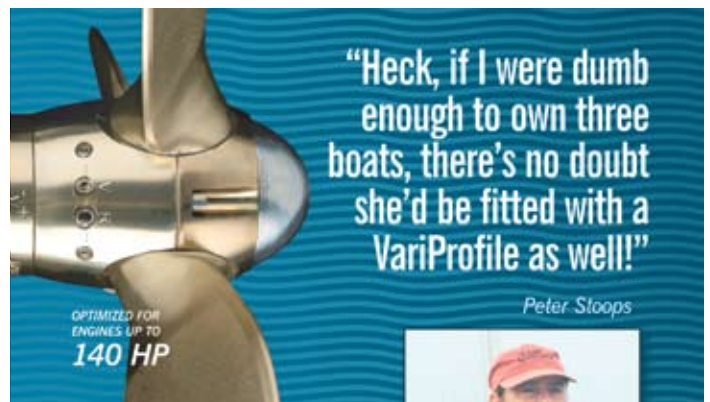
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Peter Sloops



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LETTERS

a friend's Catalina 27 that was for sale here in the Central Valley. It was a freshwater boat in great condition, and he was only asking \$4,500 because the economy has been hurt so badly here. Well, it sold.

Now 'The Brazilian' is prepping the boat for a coastal cruise to Mexico. He's a lucky guy, because he works for a cruise



COURTESY CARMELA

The Mondeaus recently finished a very intensive refit of their Cal 2-27 'Carmela'.

company, and his Catalina 27 will be his home away from home — or home away from cruise ship. He works for five months on the ship, then gets two months off.

Anyway, there are a few other great freshwater-sailed pocket cruisers here in the valley for sale

because our economy has taken such a hit.

By the way, the photo is of *Carmela*, my rebuilt Cal 2-27, which I'm hoping to take in the Singlehanded TransPac in '12.

Jean & Denise Mondeau
Carmela, Cal 2-27
Madera

Jean and Denise — It sounds like 'The Brazilian' got a good deal.

By the way, if everybody who is planning to do the '12 Singlehanded TransPac actually does it, it's going to be a record fleet.

↑↓ REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE

We left California as part of the '02 Ha-Ha fleet, and didn't return to California until April of last year. Our boat is documented, but we had registered our dinghy in California. We kept this registration paid until '07, but then let it lapse, thinking it would be no problem getting re-registered upon our return. Big mistake.

Going to the DMV to get the dinghy registered — this is something that AAA can't do for you — is not fun. Even worse, the \$39 we had to pay was more than if we'd kept the registration current for all those years. Then the registration was refused because the DMV wanted to know what state it had been registered in while we were gone from California. We tried to explain that we'd been in Mexico, every country in Central America, Ecuador, and Colombia, and had been through Panama several times, but never in a different state. This explanation was rejected. When we returned to the DMV, we were told that we really had to get a copy of the registration from the other — non-existent — state. We ultimately had to pay a penalty of \$21 to get it cleared up.

The point is not the cost, but the hassle factor. The smart move is, if you plan to return to California, keep the registration current.

Merrill Newman
Jenny Wren, Valiant 42
Santa Cruz / Ventura

Merrill — That's pretty good advice, as the DMV folks seem incapable of handling anything beyond the routine. It reminds us of the time we flew to Vegas and bought a KLR 650 motorcycle that we rode throughout the west one week at a time.



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LETTERS

Nevada gave us two weeks to register the bike in our home state of California, so when we left the bike for the first time in Albuquerque, we dutifully went to the DMV as soon as we got back to California. "We owe you a bunch of sales tax on a new motorcycle," we told the clerk with a smile, figuring the



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Motocrossing into the cockpit of 'ti Profligate' at the fuel dock in St. Martin.

bankrupt state would be happy to accept it from someone who was more than happy to pay it. Her smile turned to a frown when we told her the bike wasn't out front, but rather in New Mexico. Thanks to DMV rules, we ended up riding 10,000 miles through the West without a license plate or current registration, an adventure made all the more exciting by having to hide from every cop and highway patrolman. Between California and the tropics, we now have four small motorcycles scattered about, but we've yet to get a Motorcycle Operator's License. We've tried to sign up for literally dozens of state-approved classes that, upon graduation, give you

the license, but all of them are always booked up for months in advance. As for passing the riding test at the DMV — which, by the way, is as inapplicable and idiotic as the Coast Guard's hands-on testing, or lack of it, for the Six-Pak license needed to carry paying passengers on boats — it's beyond our skills with high-center of gravity KLR. As a result, we're an inadvertent rebel rider.

↑↓ BEST TIMES TO VISIT ST. BARTH

We're currently in Roatan, Honduras. We're heading to the East Coast for the summer and then the Caribbean next winter. We've read all about your New Year's adventures in St. Barth, so it sure seems like a good thing to target for our calendar.

Can you give us any tips with regard to anchoring and berthing there? I assume the spots on the dock/quay will be filled with monster yachts, and we typically prefer a mooring or anchor anyway. Do I need to reserve anything early?

Jim Gregory
 Morpheus, Schumacher 50
 Pt. Richmond

Jim — We did St. Barth at New Year's for something like 15 out of 20 years, and had some of the greatest times ever. But we haven't done it for the last two years, and don't plan on doing it again in the near future. There are two reasons. First, the fun-loving, riff-raffy sailors who used to give the place so much character at that time of year have been almost completely replaced by Russian, New York and other billionaires, as well as Gadhafi offspring who pay hip-hoppers \$1 million to sing for an hour at private parties. In the early '00s, it started to become all about the money during the holidays, and you know how dreary that gets. So what was once a fun buzz on the island at New Year's was replaced by a 'who can spend the most' buzz. And to give you an idea, a double magnum of Cristal champagne at Nikki Beach goes for \$20,000. No, that's not a misprint, and yes, billionaires — and even millionaires — are happy to pay that much to show everybody they can.

The second reason we no longer visit at that time of year is the Christmas Trades — it blows like stink with big seas through

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LETTERS

most of January, if not February. It's not uncommon to have weeks and weeks of winds consistently in excess of 20 knots. In fact, for two of the last three years, there was such a big north swell that all the mini-megayachts that had paid a fortune to be in the Inner Harbor were forced to leave by the port captain. There's nothing like the sound of a two-inch dockline snapping to light a fire under a mini-megayacht captain's butt.

Don't get us wrong, you can still have a great time in St. Barth at New Year's, but there is a way better time to visit. We highly recommend the period between mid-February and the end of May. The weather is not only much more conducive to pleasure cruising, but the characters start to show up and some of the locals begin to resurface.

The big events in this time period include the arrival of people like the Fabulous Johnson Band. This is a group of folks from Baltimore and various parts of the South who have been visiting the island for years, and although they've grown up to be surgeons and all sorts of other successful professionals, they still like to rock 'n roll in Le Select as if they were still in their 20s. They're fun as hell rather than super professional, which makes it like old St. Barth at its finest. Bands like theirs have an infectious spirit and attract the kind of people you want to know.

Carnival is usually in February, and you don't want to miss that — or the burning of Vaval on the Wednesday night after Fat Tuesday. No, it's not Rio or Trinidad — it's better. Thousands of costumed people from five to 75 come together to masquerade, drink, dance, smoke and party. You never see a gendarme, yet you never see a hint of trouble either. It's how things ought to be everywhere.

And since you're a veteran of races to Hawaii and Mexico, there is no way you want to miss St. Barth at the end of March and beginning of April, because that's when they have the Bucket, which is only for boats over 100 feet, followed by the Voiles, which is the French version of Antigua Sailing Week. Yeah, you can crew in both events, but you'd probably want to race Morpheus in the Voiles. When that's over, everybody sails 90 miles upwind to Antigua for the Antigua Classic Regatta, followed by Antigua Sailing Week.

The Port Captain's Office in St. Barth has the most friendly and professional staff you're going to find anywhere. You can check in on their computers or online. When we check in and say we're going to stay for two months, they say, "Fine, stop by to pay just before you leave." How casual and cool is that? There is no way you'll get a berth in the harbor at New Year's —



LATITUDE / RICHARD

The St. Jean anchorage in St. Barth — pronounced like a slurred 'San John'.

not that you'd want one. We've brought 'ti Profligate to St. Barth for a total of something like 10 months over the last five years, and we've never dreamed of Med-tying her in the harbor. Why would we want to? We can anchor in the bluest water possible just outside, where if you stay for awhile, you'll become part of a great, wildly diverse and ever-changing community.

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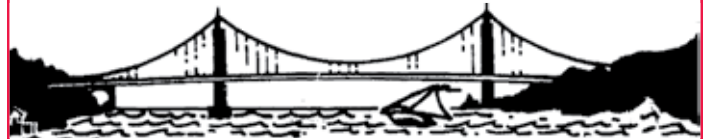
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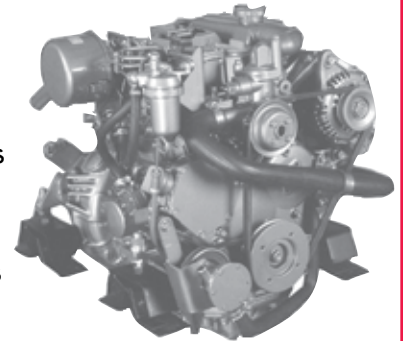


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LETTERS

port boundaries — up at Shell Beach or around the corner at Columbie — for free. But we don't think it's worth the hassle.

Two other insights. St. Barth is often hailed as being a gastronomic paradise. Baloney. Mexico has much better 'bang for the buck' restaurant food, and at a quarter or less of the price. The good news is that Marche U took over from Match as the big market on St. Barth, and you can now cook great meals on your boat for very reasonable prices. Lastly, boat labor is very expensive in this part of the world. Last year, Greg Dorland of the Tahoe-based Catana 52 Escapade was quoted \$700 to have a diver clean the bottom of his boat. So he did it himself.

St. Barth mid-February through May? There's no better place in the world for a sailor. November through the end of January? Mexico is much better.

↑↓ OUR TSUNAMI EXPERIENCE WITH PROFLIGATE

Yesterday morning, Jaime and I were listening to the morning net when we learned that, because of the tsunami caused by the earthquake in Japan, the port captains had closed all of the ports on Banderas Bay — meaning Puerto Vallarta, Nuevo Vallarta and La Cruz. Violators were subject to fines of \$4,000 to \$5,000. We later learned that the second of three days of racing for the Banderas Bay Regatta had been cancelled, and that all drinks at the Vallarta YC would be half-price.

After discussing the situation regarding *Profligate* with the publisher of *Latitude*, who was in the Caribbean, we agreed that if there was damage to a lot of boats in California, we would take the cat out into the deep waters of the Banderas Bay — even if the port was closed. The publisher would pay the fine, if necessary. But if it didn't seem as if the damage was going to be too great, we wouldn't risk the wrath of the port captain and instead leave the cat in her berth.

I had secured *Profligate* in Paradise Village Marina with the help of Harbormaster Dick Markie. In the interest of full disclosure, I let him know that the decision to stay and ride out the event at the dock might change, depending on what had happened at other West Coast ports. In fact, the decision was put off until the last minute, perhaps too long. But when I heard there might be a six-foot surge, and when I told the owner of *Profligate* that two dozen other boats had already defied the port captain's orders, we agreed that the cat should be taken into deep water just to be safe.

I believe the first boat to have defied officialdom was William Gates' Cal 3-34 *Amaranth*. She was hailed by the port captain around 10:30 a.m. Gates acknowledged that they were departing despite the captain's "closed port" declaration. When the port captain asked the vessel's name, a third party interrupted on the VHF and said, "Don't give your boat's name."

Someone else then chimed in with the rhetorical question of whether or not the port captain was aware that the safest spot to be in a tsunami was in the deepest waters of Banderas Bay. Shortly thereafter, another vessel followed the first, and soon the exodus had begun in earnest. By the time *Profligate* arrived outside the marina, there were over 100 boats, most of them sail, visible a few miles offshore. In classic Mexican fashion, the port captain then clarified that the port was "only closed to commercial vessels," and that private yachts were free to leave if they wished.

We felt the first turbulence at around 1:20 p.m., when I heard someone say the water level in the Marina Riviera Nayarit had dropped 18 inches. Surges continued all afternoon. But after transiting about six miles offshore, we cut *Profligate's* engines and let her drift. In retrospect, we should have declared the alternative Banderas Bay Regatta underway

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LETTERS

and become the new committee boat. But we were a little late for that. Most everyone was already enjoying a beautiful 80° afternoon on the water with a steady 10-knot breeze. Classic Puerto Vallarta sailing.

Those of us at sea began to get reports from those who had stayed in the marinas. The folks at the Marina Riviera Nayarit had marked the pilings, and at one point I heard the water was up 38 inches — then, minutes later, down 49 inches. Dock 11 in the marina broke off, and there were whirlpools at the entrance. Kevin Reath of *Chicken Joe* reported a difference in water level of four feet in just minutes at Marina Vallarta, and Harbormaster Markie estimated the current in the channel to be running at up to 16 knots. By this time all the marinas were closed, and would remain so for the rest of the afternoon.

As for those of us out on the bay, we barely felt anything. Our program was to motor a few miles out, cut the power, then drift toward shore — then do it again. We had little food — and no beer. I was going to get beer before we left, but the line in the store at Paradise was sooo slow, and I was too hopped up to wait. It was the same when I tried to top off my Telcel phone, but David Lezak, *Cupatillo's* new owner — she was actually named *Tomatillo* when I owned her and is now named *Cupcake* — loaded me up. But that's what he does, selling Telcel in the United States via computer. But the important thing is that we didn't feel anything out on the bay.

As it became evident that the marina situation would not stabilize before sundown, we took *Profligate* over to the anchorage at La Cruz. Everybody out in the bay on their boats turned up there since they couldn't get back into their slips. Earlier, Tom Searles, one of my crew for the regatta, had swum over from *Cupcake* to join us and help us bring *Profligate* back to her berth. So he was there to help us anchor instead. We found a huge spot pretty close in, dropped the hook in 30 feet of water, and played out about 100 feet of chain, then backed down at 1,500 RPM with both screws. With the bow lifting, I knew we were solid. The wind and sea were calm.

An Aussie named Stewart gave us a lift into the marina just after dark, and things were as calm as they had been all day. But we still couldn't enter the marina channel, so we beached the dinghy and came through a dead condo project next door.

We took a bus to Philo's, where we grabbed a pizza, and took a cab to our temporary digs at Villa Magna.

Jim Casey
ex-Tomatillo, Jeanneau 43DS
Lake Tahoe / Punta Mita

Readers — That's the story of what happened to *Profligate* during the tsunami. We received many more interesting and educational reports, which you can find in Sightings as well as starting on page 104. You can also see videos of the tsunami action in Sausalito on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/latitude38).

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

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

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

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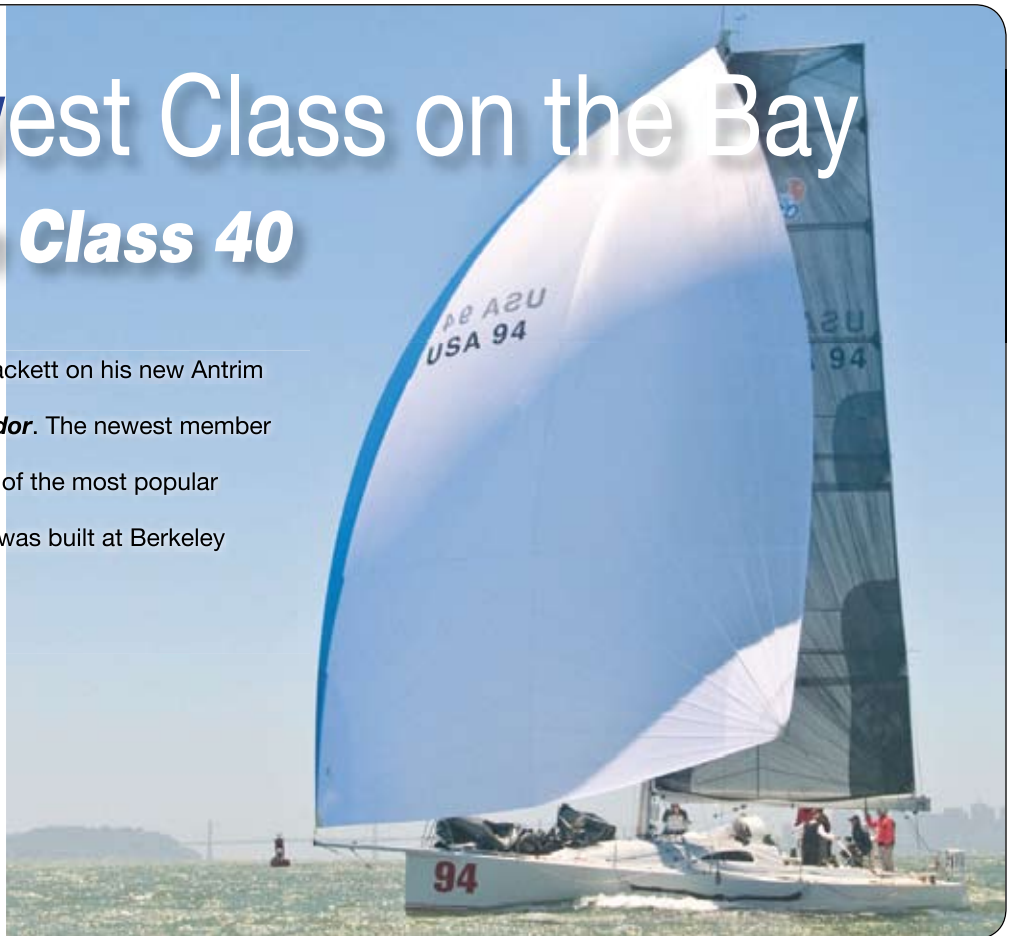
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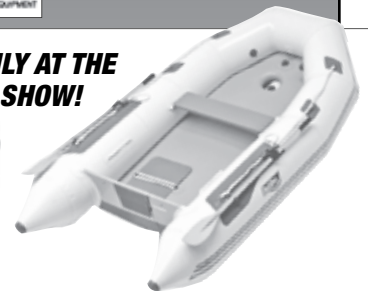


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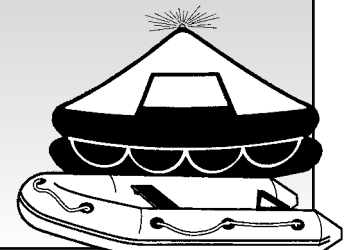
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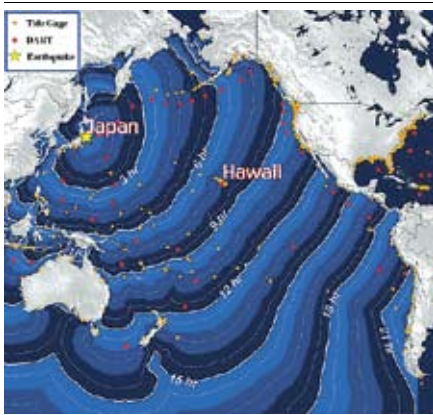
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Japanese tsunami affects California

As this issue went to press, aftershocks — more than 350 of them, and some as strong as magnitude 6.5 — from the March 11 earthquake continued to jolt Japan, where the death toll had risen to 10,668 people, and another 16,574 were still missing. The 9.0 magnitude temblor was the strongest ever to strike the island nation during the 111 years that such records have been kept, and one of the top five strongest quakes ever recorded anywhere on earth. Scientists say that it not only moved the island of Honshu nearly eight feet to the east, but that it also shifted the earth on its axis by almost four inches.



NOAA

Moving at the speed of a jetliner, the March 11 tsunami that originated in Japan crossed the Pacific in about 10 hours.

As devastating as the quake was to both human life and property, however, the series of tsunami waves it triggered undoubtedly inflicted the most damage and loss of life. In some areas, the initial wave was reported to be 77 feet high. It traveled up to six miles inland, destroying everything in its path. Fleets of large commercial fishing vessels were set adrift as if they were toys in a bathtub, as was a ship with 100 passengers aboard. Sendai Airport, north of Tokyo, was completely engulfed in water, creating a chaotic tangle of planes, vehicles and debris. Electricity was cut off at the Fukushima I nuclear power

plant, knocking out the reactor cooling systems, which triggered partial meltdowns, explosions and fires. The World Bank estimates the damage from the twin disasters could top \$235 billion.

The magnitude of the quake led to tsunami warnings throughout almost the entire Pacific Rim, with damage being reported more than 4,000 miles away from the quake's epicenter in northeast Japan. Significant surges were reported in Papua New Guinea, Peru, Chile and the Galapagos, as well as the west coast of North America. As the Japanese were starting to grasp the magnitude of destruction, Hawaiians were rushing to high ground in anticipation of the tsunami. Maui caught the brunt of the event with a 7-ft surge reported, but the damage was limited to two sunken boats, broken docks, and relatively minor boat damage.

California was also in the path of the giant tsunami, with Santa Cruz and Crescent City being hit hardest. In Santa Cruz, a number of boats were ripped from their berths and set adrift. Connan Bradley, who has a small sailboat in the back harbor reports, "My girlfriend observed all the water being sucked out of the back bay, right down to the mud — a drop of at least 15 feet. As the docks and boats dropped to the mud, several boats got pinned temporarily under sections of the docks, and a number broke free as the incoming surge lifted them."

The worst of the impact appears to have been at U dock, which was severely damaged by a standing wave that rolled through. "I was on U dock," says Scott Kelly, "and two of my neighbors are now homeless after losing their liveaboard boats." In all, 14 boats sank and more than \$26 million in damage occurred, \$4 million of that attributed to boats. The harbor was in such disarray that it remained closed for two weeks.

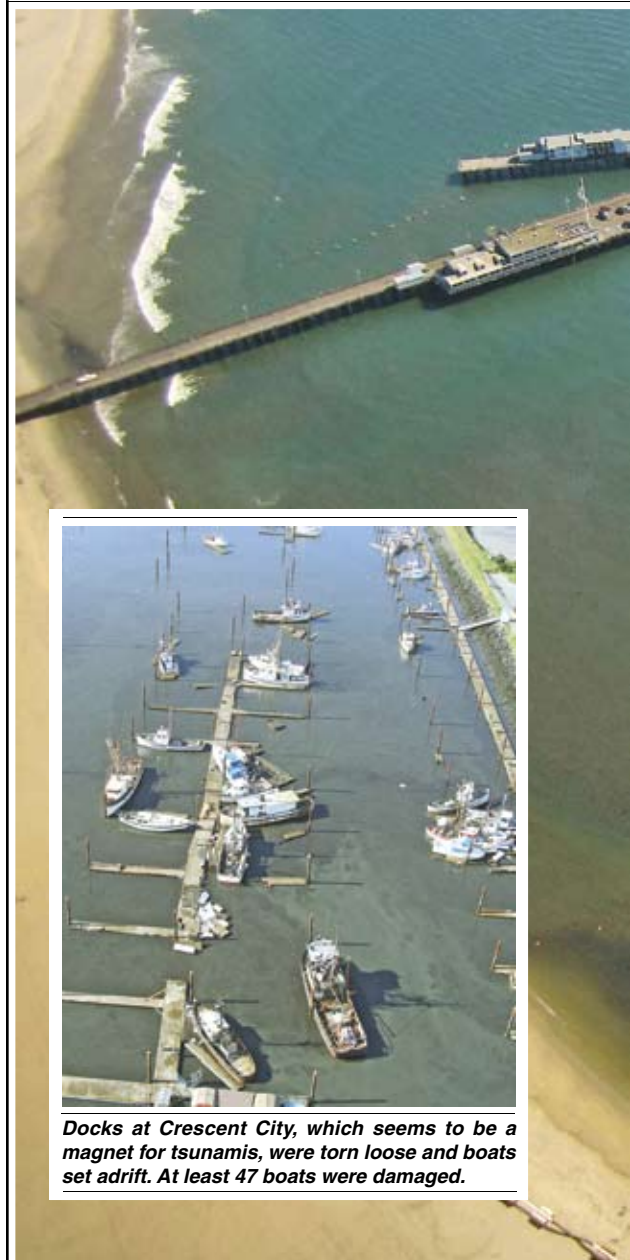
Crescent City was also hit hard, with 15 boats sunk, 47 more damaged and docks wrecked. Though the damage is estimated at around \$12 million, the 8.1-ft high surge did not breach the 20-ft breakwater that protects the rest of the city. One death was reported

continued on outside column of next sightings page

welcome to

Latitude is thrilled to welcome our latest crewmember, Mike Zwiebach. Mike is taking the place of former ad guy extraordinaire Shawn Grassman, who may have moved on to other opportunities but still finds time to hang out with his old *Latitude* buddies.

Mike is a long-time and very enthusiastic sailor who's worked in a variety of sales, advertising and marketing jobs in and out of the sailing industry. Any kind of sailing really trips his trigger, be it racing or cruising on the Bay or chartering in the Caribbean. Having owned a J/24 and Ericson 27, and having crewed on a



Docks at Crescent City, which seems to be a magnet for tsunamis, were torn loose and boats set adrift. At least 47 boats were damaged.

mike zwiebach

Kettenburg 38 for many years, Mike not only knows boats, but he's also intimately familiar with the local sailing scene.

Meet Mike at our Strictly Sail booth (#329) on April 15 during the Baja Ha-Ha & Puddle Jump Reunion Party (6 p.m.) — he'll be the guy filling up your beer cups!

— ladonna



LATITUDE / LADONNA

Our newest crew, Mike Zwiebach.

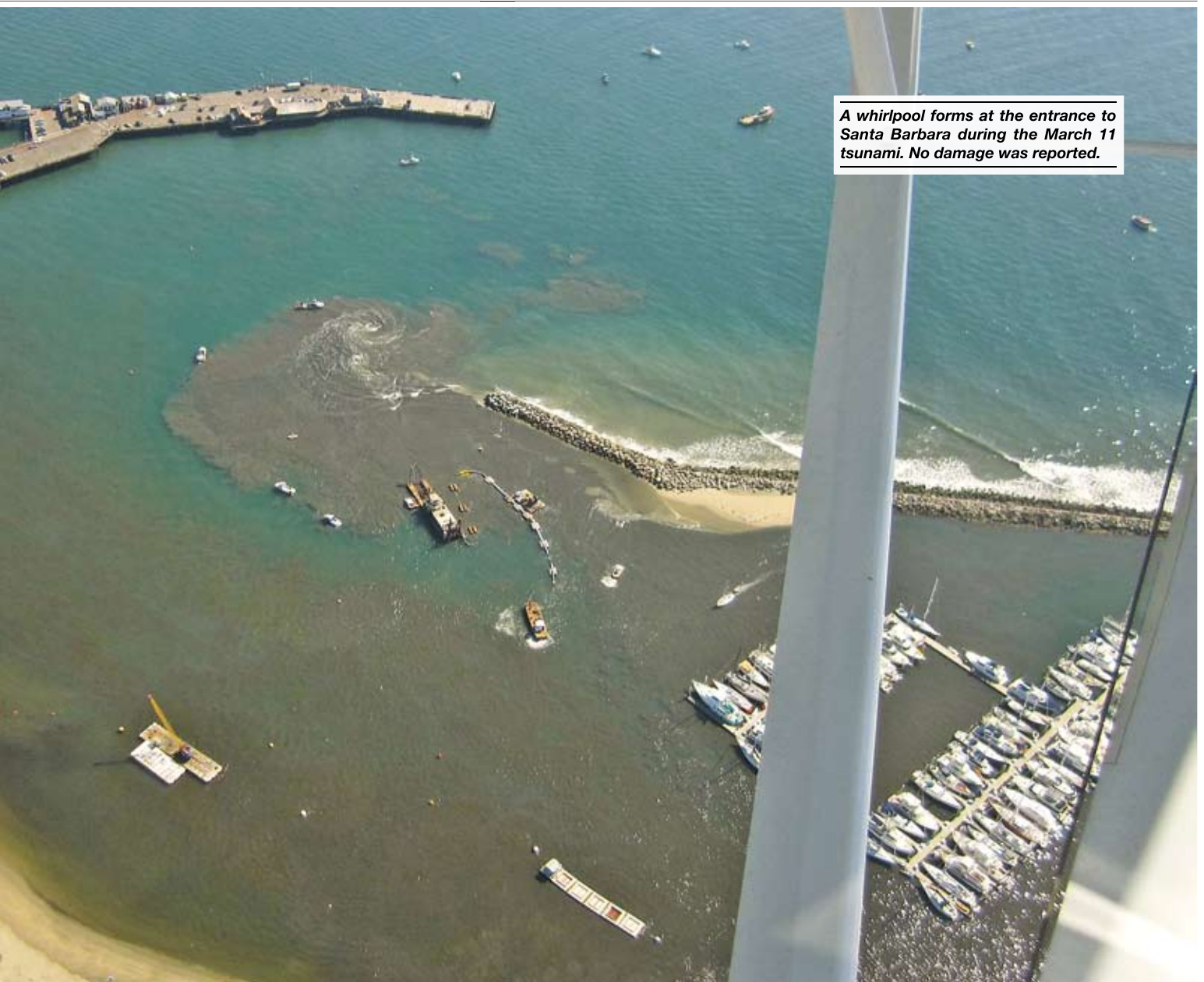
tsunami — cont'd

after three men were swept off their feet while taking photos near the mouth of the Klamath River. Two made it back to shore but one was never found.

A number of Bay Area boaters decided to take matters into their own hands by motoring out to the middle/deepest part of the Bay. Though currents of up to 17 knots hit some areas, and docklines were certainly strained, relatively little damage was reported — a handful of docks were sent adrift resulting in minor damage to some boats. More than anything, the surges were fascinating to watch as they increased in speed and intensity.

For more firsthand accounts of the tsunami from all over the Pacific, see *The 5,000-Mile Wave—Tsunami Notes* that starts on page 104. To read more about tsunamis in general, see this month's *Max Ebb*, starting on page 122.

— ladonna



A whirlpool forms at the entrance to Santa Barbara during the March 11 tsunami. No damage was reported.

SPREAD: MAX ROSENBERG / SANTA BARBARA AVIATION; INSET: USCG

SIGHTINGS

the quest for *la sirena*

After decades of hearing about his customers' adventures south of the border, Sausalito marine mechanic Tom List is finally getting a taste of the cruising life. For the last few months, he and his wife, Suzanne Statler, have been cruising the Mexican coast aboard their newly acquired steel sloop *Begone*.

As they headed toward Banderas Bay recently, Tom was excited about the prospect of running across his old buddy from the Master Mariners Association, Glenn Burch. "He'd heard that Glenn was in La Cruz," explains Suzanne. "Tom had raced his *Polaris* against Glenn's schooner *La Sirena* in San Francisco Bay for many years. What a surprise when Tom walked into Philo's Bar in La Cruz and there was Glenn at the bar!" And Tom happened to be wearing a Master Mariners' T-shirt at the time with a photo of *La Sirena* featured on it. She was a

continued on outside column of next sightings page

moore 24 sailors

When Santa Cruz Moore 24 sailor Joel Verutti passed away on February 5 after a year-long battle with brain cancer, he left behind a legacy of leadership in the class that included multiple stints as a president and fleet officer, and nearly three decades of living and breathing the design.

"Even when he wasn't on the board, he was still involved to the point where he was always sent emails asking for his input," said sailmaker and Moore national champ David Hodges. "And even after his short term memory was gone, he could still remember things about the Moore."



LATITUDE / JR; OTHERS COURTESY LA SIRENA

rally for their own

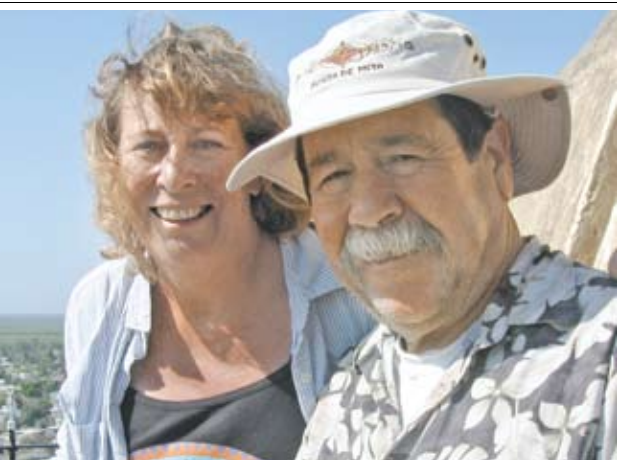
Verutti was thought to have never missed a Roadmaster event since he bought a Moore back in the early '80s, and could always be found aboard hull #55 *Mercedes*. His commitment didn't go unnoticed by the rest of the fleet, which is now rallying to help Verutti's wife Tina and daughter Josselyn — already a successful junior sailor — with the financial aftermath of Joel's illness.

Fleet members Scott Sorensen and Morgan Larson are working on putting together a web-based silent auction that

continued in middle column of next sightings page



Siren's Song — clockwise from below, after years of hearing about other sailors' adventures, Suzanne Statler and Tom List are now having some of their own; 'La Sirena' showing off in the Master Mariners Race; next time you're in San Blas, stop in at Billy Bob's and pay your respects to the last remnants of a grand old San Francisco 'lady'; isn't Fluffy cuuuute?; Tom and Glenn Burch shared stories and maybe a bottle of tequila.



la sirena — cont'd

42-ft gaff-rigged beauty designed by Howard Chapelle and launched in 1963.

The way we understand it, Glenn had taken *La Sirena* south of the border in the spring of '08, and cruised successfully for a while. But while he was in the hospital for medical issues, the boat took on sea water. The water was pumped out and the boat was stabilized, but unbeknownst to Glenn, worms had apparently entered the hull and remained inside doing their evil deeds.

By the time the problem was discovered, repairs were beyond what Glenn could manage, so he sold her. Tom and Suzanne were determined to track her down, nevertheless. Suzanne explains, "Our first night in the San Blas Marina, we met a man with his dog who revealed the end of *La Sirena's* story. He said the new owner, Lee, had tried with great commitment to revive the old boat, but alas, she was too far gone. And while most of her went to the wooden boat museum in the sky, Lee donated her transom, rudder and other pieces to a local 'museum' bar named Billy Bob's."

"We walked in the front door and there — prominently displayed — was the stern of *La Sirena*, transformed into a nice table." When Billy Bob himself arrived, Tom and Suzanne gave him an in-depth history of the historic schooner. As you might imagine, "the tequila started to flow and a great time was shared by all!" By all accounts, Billy Bob's is a worthwhile stopover when visiting San Blas, if for no other reason than to pay homage to the *La Sirena* memorabilia — and to say hi to Fluffy, the 78-year-old crocodile that lives in the back courtyard!

— andy

exceptional bravery at sea

Sailors are often prone to exaggeration when describing tragedies at sea, but you only need to view footage shot of the May 20, 2009 rescue of Dr. Jerry Morgan, then 71, to know that the wind really was blowing 60 knots and the seas really were 30 feet tall on that horrible pitch-black night in the northern Tasman Sea. The violent, frothy swells literally reached the upper decks of the container ship *Scarlett Lucy* as Morgan struggled to climb up its cargo nets to safety.

If you read our report on the incident in the July '09 issue, you'll recall that Morgan — a longtime Bay Area sailor who'd been cruising the Pacific for several years aboard his beloved *Trintella 53 Sumatra* — and Kiwi crewman Stewart McCreadie were three days out of New Caledonia bound for Brisbane when they found themselves in near-cyclone conditions. One mighty swell launched the beefy sloop off a wavetop as though she was a bathtub toy, and shortly afterwards she began taking on water — rapidly.

Thanks to Morgan's having a sat-phone, and the phone number of the Alameda Coast Guard station taped to his nav station, the Australian Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) was able to divert the 320-ft ship to the scene. It arrived when *Sumatra* was just minutes from going under. Reasoning that climbing into the liferaft would have been suicide in such conditions, McCreadie somehow rigged the outboard to the 9-ft RIB, launched it, and drove Morgan and himself to the side of the ship. But as the two men attempted to clamber up the nets, a

continued on outside column of next sightings page



Dr. Jerry Morgan stands beside the Fijian mariner who saved his life, James Fanifua.

COURTESY JERRY MORGAN

SIGHTINGS

bravery — cont'd

swell washed Morgan away into the blackness. For 45 minutes he struggled to reach the nets again, but with each attempt he became more exhausted and hypothermic. At one point he nearly gave up, but thoughts of family spurred him on.

When he did finally reach the nets he had no strength left to climb. With a life ring held under one arm, the crew attempted to lift him, but could not complete the task. Suddenly, apparently out of frustration, 26-year-old Fijian crewman James Fanifua leaped over the side — without a lifejacket or survival gear — climbed down to Jerry, locked his legs around him, and pulled him to safety.

That gesture of selfless heroism surely saved Morgan's life, and it also earned the young Fijian special recognition at the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) annual meeting in London late last November. With Morgan standing nearby, Fanifua — who'd never before worn a suit — was presented the IMO's most prestigious award, given once a year for "exceptional bravery at sea."

"We have a bond that will last for the rest of our lives," says Morgan "I owe him my life."

— andy

panama's new ditch

Being able to transit the Panama Canal, rather than traveling via the Strait of Magellan or Cape Horn, saves cargo vessels at least 8,000 miles and an untold volume of fossil fuels. But today it is estimated that a third of the world's cargo ships are too large to pass through the 97-year-old Canal. As we learned during our recent visit to The Ditch, that statistic is about to change. As you read this, a new, longer, wider set of locks is being built to augment the current parallel lock system.

As every armchair historian knows, construction of the Panama Canal was a colossal effort fraught with a wide range of setbacks, including the deaths of thousands of laborers from all over the globe. Begun by the French in 1880 and later abandoned, The Ditch was finally completed by an American-led team in 1914. But the new locks will be built in a fraction of the timespan.

The third lane's "three-step" lock system was begun just four years ago and is slated for completion in 2014 — the 100th anniversary of the original Canal's completion. This ambitious upgrade will more than double the original Canal's annual transit capacity. Currently,



The western end of the project. In the foreground is the Victoria disposal area where unusable excavated material is dumped. It will later be used to fill in swampy areas.

the maximum dimensions of ships (dubbed Panamax vessels) transiting the Canal are 965 feet long x 106 feet wide. The new lane will accommodate New Panamax vessels as big as 1,200 feet long x 160

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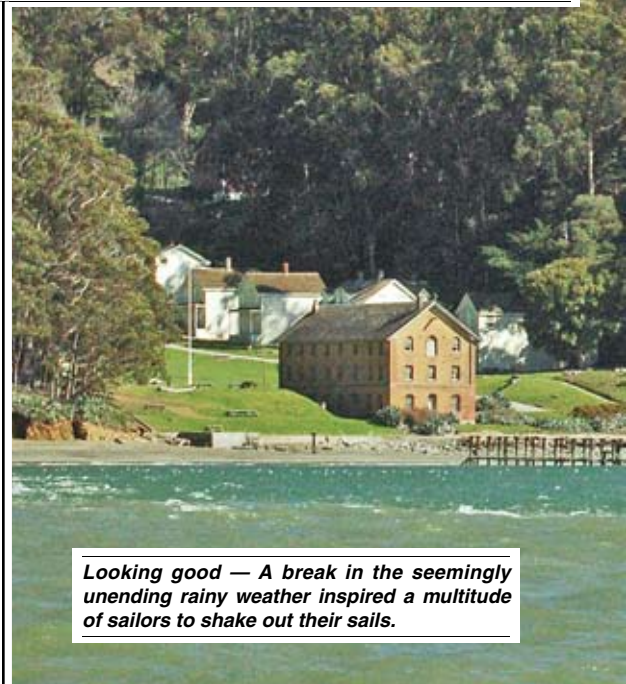
verutti

will be open to everyone, in hopes of raising enough money to help Tina and Josselyn — the illness forced the family to sell their house — not only with expenses, but to allow Josselyn to carry on sailing the boat. The details have yet to be finalized, but Larson said they hope to have it up by May 1, and leave it open until the class's end-of-year dinner.

"I was fortunate to have spent Joel's final outing with him," Larson said. "I spoke with him at length that day about his boat



Sailing is so easy an 'Ebbing Monkey' can do it.



Looking good — A break in the seemingly unending rainy weather inspired a multitude of sailors to shake out their sails.

DAVID WILSON

— cont'd

and where it would go after he signed off. His hope was that Josselyn would take over ownership. With the help of the Moore 'family,' and the fundraiser, we hope to make it possible for the Veruttis to keep sailing *Mercedes*."

Moore sailors are already supporting it, pledging donations of everything from coaching sessions from the class' successful sailors to vacation rentals. We'll keep you apprised as it develops.

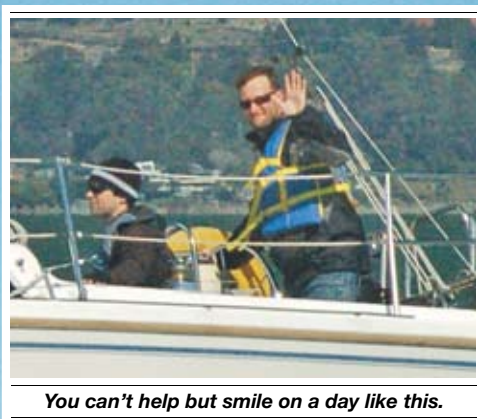
— rob

ditch — cont'd

feet wide — increases of 25% and 50% respectively. And while the current Canal uses a mind-boggling 52 million gallons of water per "lockage," water used in the new lane will be recycled via adjacent holding basins.

We don't have specific info on how the expansion will affect sailboat-ers, but we can only imagine that the expansion will have a positive impact. Currently, the Panama Canal Authority is mandated by treaty to allow small private vessels to pass through the Canal. But we'd bet that small boats are viewed as a time-wasting annoyance. With the increased capacity of the third lane, however, they'll presumably become less of a headache to Canal operators — and wait times may

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You can't help but smile on a day like this.



Creaming to weather is a pleasure.



PHOTOS: LATITUDE / ANDY

SIGHTINGS

ditch — cont'd

decrease also.

We got some fascinating insights into the massive, \$5.25 billion construction effort from former San Francisco Bay sailor and ex-cruiser David Wilson, who is currently working on the expansion project. Having cruised far and wide, he and his wife Sandra Snyder now call Panama home. "This photo (shot in January) shows the location of the new Pacific locks construction area (near Panama City)," he explains.

In addition to the new third lane, additional excavation is also being done to streamline the flow of traffic through the famous Gaillard Cut and elsewhere.

If you haven't been to Panama lately, we can tell you that its economy is booming. Thanks to Canal profits since the handoff from the U.S. in 1999, and other investments, this tiny country is said to have the third largest economy in Latin America. With 14,000 ships passing through the locks every year, paying an average fee of \$90,000

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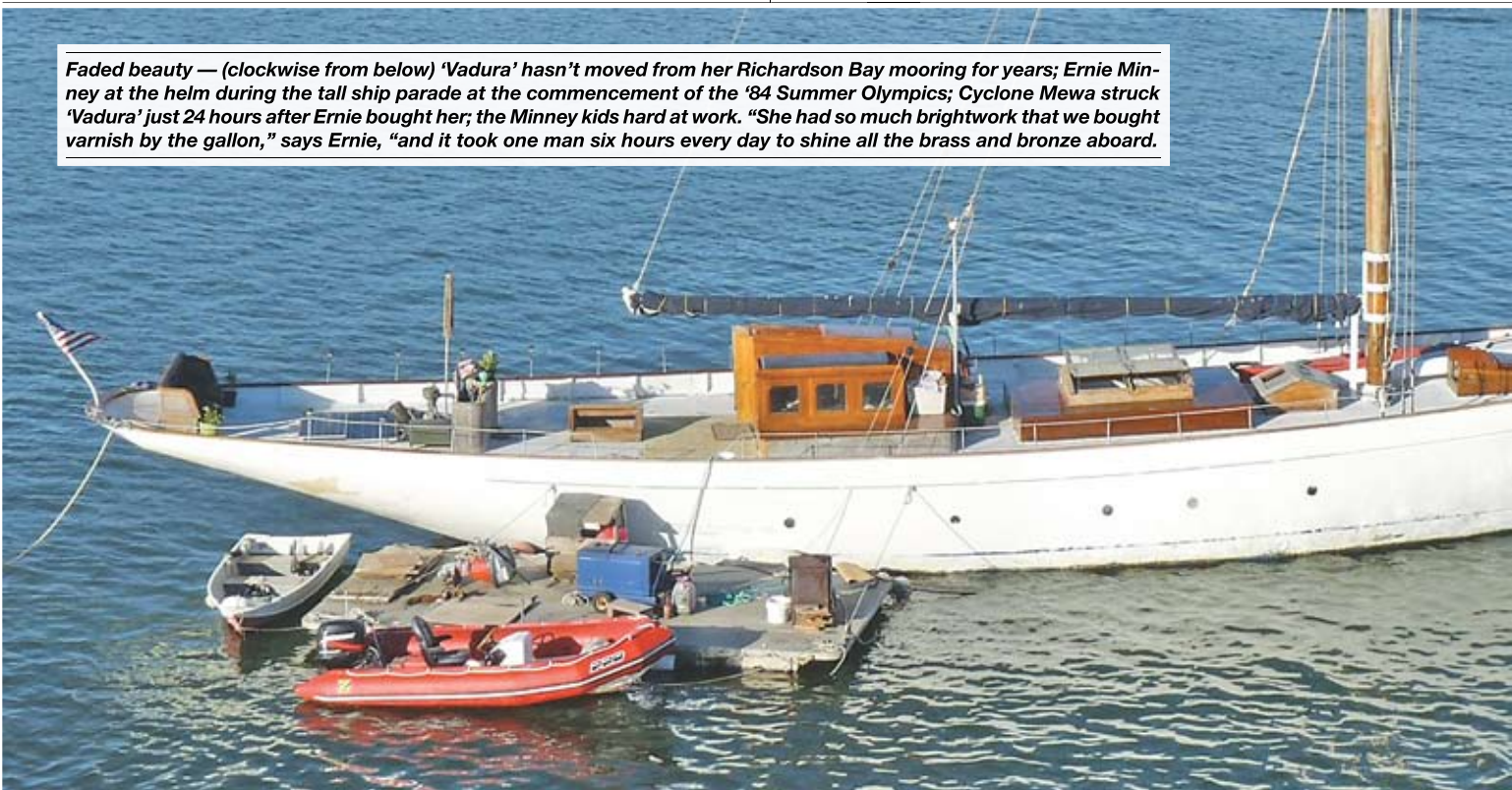
find it all

Bay Area sailors are lucky for all sorts of reasons. Not only do we have more consistent wind than almost anywhere else in the nation, but the San Francisco Bay is world-renowned as one of the most dramatically beautiful sailing venues on earth. Plus, every April our Bay hosts the biggest sail-only boat show in the West: Strictly Sail Pacific, slated for April 14-17 this year.

Our rebounding economy and the America's Cup's arrival here seem to have pumped up the enthusiasm for this year's event, as the roster of vendors and special activities has expanded substantially.



Faded beauty — (clockwise from below) 'Vadura' hasn't moved from her Richardson Bay mooring for years; Ernie Minney at the helm during the tall ship parade at the commencement of the '84 Summer Olympics; Cyclone Mewa struck 'Vadura' just 24 hours after Ernie bought her; the Minney kids hard at work. "She had so much brightwork that we bought varnish by the gallon," says Ernie, "and it took one man six hours every day to shine all the brass and bronze aboard.



SPREAD: TIM SELL; OTHERS: ERNIE MINNEY

at strictly sail

As you'll learn when you peruse the Show Planner that's bound into this edition, the wealth of products you can expect to find at the show ranges from blocks and shackles to brand new cruising yachts, and just about everything in between. And, as always, you can be sure that the staff working the booths really know their stuff. In fact, in many cases a given product's inventor will be on site and accessible to share tips and advice. And most sellers offer special boat show prices as incentives to buy on the spot.

Another strong argument for attending

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ditch — cont'd

per transit, the Canal is a veritable cash machine — and its profits will more than double once the new lane is complete. By the way, the highest toll paid thus far was a whopping \$402,000, and the lowest was 36¢ — charged in 1928 to a guy who swam it!

— andy

faded beauty

Sausalito has a rich maritime history, and the histories of some of the boats anchored in Richardson Bay are just as colorful — if they can be recalled. Far too often, a once-legendary yacht was traded one too many times and her history was left to rot along with the boat. A perfect example is the 93-ft classic woody *Vadura*, moored just off Schoonmaker Point Marina. Just how she ended up languishing away in Richardson Bay with a revolving cast of liveaboard 'caretakers' was a mystery.

Until . . .

Out of the mists of ethernet came an unsolicited note from Ernie Minney, owner of the ever-popular Minney's Yacht Surplus in Costa Mesa, sharing a small portion of the once-lovely yacht's story:

"My purchase of *Vadura*, a teak Mylne design, in March of '83 and the adventures I had as her master for the three years I owned her would more than fill this magazine. I took her off the waterfront of Papeete, where she was the status symbol of a wealthy Frenchman and was never sailed. The Frenchman had listed *Vadura* in *Showboat Magazine* for \$500,000 but he wanted me to have her because he knew I would be good to her. 'Nothing ventured, nothing gained' has always been a motto I've lived by so, over lunch in a Papeete restaurant, I offered him \$100,000 and ducked! It was all the money I had. He thought for awhile and then said, 'Give me \$100,000 now and another \$50,000 one year from now, and you can have *Vadura*.'

That's what I did, and it was one of the great adventures of my life.

"We bent on her sails and gave her wings and her freedom. But the day after my purchase, Cyclone *Rewa* hit Papeete harbor with winds in excess of 125 mph and I almost lost my prize. Several weeks later, while en route to Fatu Hiva from Rangiroa, we stumbled into the birth place of Cyclone *Veena*. We had sea room and had to torture our little ship as we sailed in the trough in an attempt to sail free from the circular tempest we found ourselves in. We were able to break out and survived Force 10-plus winds with no damage. *Veena* went west and hit Tahiti with winds of over 180 mph and is noted for being the most destructive hurricane to ever hit French Polynesia. Once out of the cyclone we visited most of the Marquesas Islands and then sailed on to Hilo and Lahaina where we changed crew and continued on to Ensenada.

"Once in Newport Beach, I kept *Vadura* on our family's mooring which, having originally been set up for the 103-ft schooner *Puritan*, was the largest in Newport Harbor. I had to have the area specially dredged as *Vadura* drew 13½ feet! The Newport Harbor Patrol was quite used to seeing me aground in various parts of our harbor. Luckily, our harbor bottom is soft sand and mud so the only damage done was to my pride as I sat stuck — sometimes for several hours — in mid channel with boats coming at me from all directions wondering why

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ERNIE MINNEY

'Vadura' working her way out of Cyclone Veena. Note the extra-high lifelines. "While setting the trysail on the eve of the storm, they saved my life," says Ernie.

SIGHTINGS

vadura — cont'd

I wasn't underway. We also owned a bayfront restaurant called Josh Slocum's, so I could work on the boat and pick up charters there. At 103 feet LOA, she sure was quite a sight when at the dock!

"During the '84 Summer Olympics in L.A., *Vadura* would leave Slocum's dock early every morning to take out spectators to watch the sailing events in Long Beach Harbor. We never charged for watching the Olympics from the deck of *Vadura* so when we returned to Slocum's, a lot of happy people crowded into the restaurant and partied into the night. She also starred as Errol Flynn's yacht *Sirocco* in the '84 CBS Movie of the Week *My Wicked, Wicked Ways*. The film crew appreciated that they were on a lovely classic yacht so they were very careful with all their cameras and gear. The few scenes she was in took more than 10 days to film. Additionally, *Vadura* competed in an Ensenada race and did lots of charters out to the Channel Islands.

"The last storm *Vadura* and I encountered was Cyclone *Divorce*. My wife had had enough adventures afloat — we'd circumnavigated aboard the 68-ft schooner *Shearwater* from '77-'80 — and she wanted a divorce. After so many miles and so many adventures, I finally lost *Vadura* . . . in a property settlement.

"From time to time, when I go to the Bay Area, I try to find *Vadura* and see if any progress has been made in her restoration. The last time I saw her was about six years ago and I wanted to cry. She was a gutted-out hulk at anchor off the Sausalito waterfront. In total shock, I saw that the decks were gone and so was the interior. What a shame because a brand new interior had been installed in New Zealand. Had the foolish owners left her alone and only maintained her, she would have given them another 50 years of service.

"Perhaps I have given you a glimpse of what a lovely yacht *Vadura* used to be. While under my stewardship, she was always a lady."

— *ladonna*

spring storm slams sausalito

The March 11 tsunami didn't come close to wreaking as much havoc on the Bay as did a southerly storm on March 19. The full force of the storm hit that Saturday evening, sending a number of anchored boats to their doom and shredding poorly secured roller furling jibs. "My anemometer maxed at just over 50 knots," wrote Jeff Berman, who had his Catalina 36 II *Perseverance* berthed at Sausalito's Schoonmaker Point Marina for the weekend.

Boats anchored just off the marina in Richardson Bay took the brunt of the storm. According to Richardson Bay Regional Agency Harbor Administrator Bill Price, 17 boats — not including dinghies and skiffs — went walkabout that night. "It's very frustrating that people who can afford to keep their boats in marinas try to save money by anchoring out," said Price. "They underestimate the damage that other, less-well-

maintained boats can cause when they drag anchor."

While most of the boats washed up either on Strawberry Point or near Blackie's Pasture, a few actually sank at their moorings. The Coast Guard and Marin Sheriff's Patrol did their best that night to round up the strays, but only a handful were saved from being grounded. Many — but not all — of the boats were in derelict condition, which means Marin County will likely foot much of the bill for the clean-up.

— *ladonna*

strictly sail

at least one day is to access the wit and wisdom of dozens of experts who will be giving free hourly seminars throughout the show on a broad range of topics — everything from galley tips to racing tactics. Speaking of which, we'll be offering a little wit and wisdom ourselves at our Baja Ha-Ha seminars (both Friday and Saturday afternoons), and our Pacific Puddle Jump seminar (Saturday afternoon).

If you're a veteran of either of those rallies — or hope to be someday — you'll



Boat littered the shores of Richardson Bay the day after a big southerly hit.



Not every victim was a derelict. This well-outfitted boat eventually lost her keel from being grounded.



TIM SELL

The Marin County Sheriff's Marine Patrol did what they could to help runaway boats.

— cont'd

want to show up at the *Latitude* booth at 6 p.m. Friday for free beer, snacks and spirited story-swapping.

The boat show offers free kids' sailing classes, free match racing lessons, and of course, free boat tours of a wide selection of brand new sailboats, some of which may make you salivate. And there's one attraction that's completely unique to the 2011 show: the actual America's Cup trophy. So don't miss the fun. We'll see you there.

— andy

shine on, *sunshine*

It's been said that the most expensive boat is a free one. My version of that happened 4½ years ago when I found a "really good deal" on a 1973 home-built 40'-ft catamaran in Mystery Bay, not far from our home in Port Townsend, Washington. A plywood-over-mahogany-frame boat, *Sunshine* has sweet lines and several seaworthy design features — 20-ft beam, high bridgedeck clearance, lots of forward buoyancy, and low cabin windage.

In order to buy the cat, I sold my pickup truck, then turned around and gave the same cash to the guy with the cat — which, to our later amazement, survived the haulout. I soon realized the true nature of my new project. With a fresh set of blades for the Sawzall, we went to

continued on outside column of next sightings page



Divers Dave Gissendaner and Tim Sell raised this little woodie that sank at her mooring during the rager.



SIGHTINGS

sunshine — cont'd

work. As it turned out, the whole front half of the bridgedeck underside had to go, as well as the fore-and-aft main-strength bulkheads, cockpit, aft decks and most of the interior. In some areas, entire cabin sides needed replacement due to leaks and rot. The midships main-strength bulkheads needed complete rebuilding. The mast step area had rotted and then been propped up with angle aluminum and huge, ugly bolts — which were exposed to the berths.

As for the mechanical parts of the boat, the old inboard engines were either completely ruined or missing, and the engine rooms were black holes of filth, rot and grease. Miles of wire of various vintages and voltages were run everywhere, often dead-ending. But the hulls, decks (previously replaced) and house were in surprisingly good shape.

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nereida

After two busy months holed up in Ushuaia, Argentina effecting repairs to her Najad 380 *Nereida* — but mostly waiting for replacement parts to arrive from Europe — Jeanne Socrates finally made her way down the Beagle Channel, leaving Argentina on March 16 bound for the Falkland Islands.

Socrates, 68, had left Victoria, B.C. on October 25 on a planned nonstop solo circumnavigation, but a knockdown on her approach to Cape Horn on January 5 dealt a crippling blow to her attempt

Sunshine on my shoulder — clockwise from here, 'Sunshine' rests at anchor in Puget Sound; then 'Cloud 9' was in sad shape when John got a 'good deal' on her; now that the refit is complete, John is all smiles; just peek into the ugliness he faced.



ALL PHOTOS JOHN HULBURD

underway

to become the oldest female nonstop solo circumnavigator. With a severely damaged windscreen/dodger and a broken boom, Socrates managed to limp into Ushuaia under her own power.

Considering the damage *Nereida* suffered in the knockdown, and the fact that replacement parts and a new boom had to be shipped from Europe to Argentina, Socrates' stay in Ushuaia seems downright short. If Socrates is one thing, it's determined.

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sunshine — cont'd

I built a frame to support a series of 40-by-20-ft tarps, and borrowed space heaters to keep the damp cold at bay. Oh, how I longed to have California weather to work in! The one thing nobody wants to mention about multihulls, especially catamarans, is that they have huge surface expanses that need to be cleaned, sanded, primed and painted. And I had to do that to every square inch of this cat. But it was wonderful to watch that ugly duckling turn back into a swan.

The new cockpit and aft decks are what transformed the cat. The cockpit went from 4-by-5 feet to 6-by-10 feet, so we can now sleep on deck and entertain friends in nice weather. I built a new binnacle for the hydraulic steering, which involved a steep learning curve in order for me to reinstall it correctly. I also added an aerodynamic davit arch to hoist the dinghy and support the solar panels.

I did everything using epoxy products. Thank you, System 3, for your good stuff that reliably worked in temperatures as low as 40 degrees — those were the kinds of temperatures that I often had to deal with working on the shores of Puget Sound in the winter.

There were a couple of interesting things that made my project go a little easier. For instance, it was my good fortune to purchase a fine Paul Luke soapstone wood stove from another fellow in the yard. It was great to hear the crackle of wood heat while working on yet another cold, grey, rainy day! And after reading in *Latitude* how composting toilets have been used successfully in production catamarans, I got mine out of storage and installed it.

I painted the cat's topsides OSHA Yellow, thus her new name of *Sunshine*. I also fitted two new Yamaha outboards in transom pods that I bolted below the cockpit. The outboards tilt up into the space beneath our feet in the cockpit. After a quick rewire and a plumb, the engines were up and running.

Thanks to a final three-month burst of working 10 hours a day, seven days a week, *Sunshine* was launched on the last day of August, 2010. The shakedown sail was 32 days up through the San Juans and Canadian Gulf Islands. It was heaven. I estimate that, so far, the trip cost about \$1,290 per day, labor excluded!

Restoring *Sunshine* cost three whole summers of my life and two girlfriends. Yes, many times I dreamed about torching the whole thing. But I learned that perseverance is my strong suit, and one must be a determined soul to get through a project such as mine. Fortunately, I work part-time and live frugally. Nonetheless, I wouldn't recommend doing what I did as a way to get out sailing on the cheap. Time is the most expensive and dearest commodity in this life, and four years is a very long time.

All along I've wished I knew the history of my cat. She was built in or near Los Angeles in '73 during the heyday of backyard multihull building. Originally named *Double Dipper*, she was renamed *Cloud Nine* during her years as a party boat out of Portland.

The former owner says he heard she'd been to Mexico, and was then abandoned for years in Sitka. One year he took her up the Columbia River as far as Idaho — and almost lost her in a forest fire that burned down to the river's edge! But that's all I know. I'd love to hear from anyone who knows who designed and/or built her, and more of her history. I've searched every book and magazine, and have never seen one like her. Even my friends who were building multihulls in California in the '70s say she's unique. If you know anything about *Sunshine*, please email me at wholebird@gmail.com.

— john hulburd



JOHN HULBURD

John's partner, Amy Relnick, navigates through a handy hatch located over the helm station.

SIGHTINGS

alaska eagle explores south georgia

Most sailors, at some point in their sailing careers, read tales of derring-do and yearn for wild adventures of their own. Scant few are fortunate enough to make those adventures a reality. But students aboard *Alaska Eagle* — Orange Coast College School of Sailing and Seamanship's 65-ft, S&S-designed, aluminum sloop — do just that when they sign up for a leg on one of the boat's many training cruises.

Alaska Eagle left Newport Beach on October 30 on an eight-month, eight-leg circumnavigation of South America. The first four legs got



PETER MOLNAR

'Alaska Eagle' makes her way through Drygalski Fjord on the southern end of the island.

the boat around Cape Horn and as far as Ushuaia, Argentina, where Pacific Palisades' Anton Kozhevnikov boarded as one of eight student sailors signed up for Leg 5 — a potentially grueling romp to South Georgia Island and up to Buenos Aires.

"It was the only leg that interested me," recalled Anton when asked why he signed up for the trip. "I wanted to get to a place that I didn't think I could get to on my own, so to do

it on such a beast of a boat was very appealing." An avid outdoorsman, Anton was very familiar with *Alaska Eagle*, having sailed a leg from Friday Harbor, Washington to the Bay two years ago.

Anton says he would classify every student on the boat as, at the very least, an intermediate sailor. "Everyone had ocean experience and great stories to tell," he noted. Those tales, in fact, are part of what made the journey such a memorable experience, and what helped bring the 11 very diverse sailors together as a crew.

Skippering Leg 5 was renowned sailing master Richard Crowe, with the school's director, Brad Avery, acting as first mate — a stellar lineup, the magnitude of which was not lost on Anton. "To do this trip with Rich and Brad on one of the best-prepared boats in the world was a chance of a lifetime," he gushed. "Everyone aboard realized that."

Prepared as they were for whatever the Southern Ocean would hand up, the entire crew was shocked by the weather they encountered on their way to South Georgia. Instead of 50-knot winds and 40-ft seas, *Alaska Eagle* ran nearly dead-downwind in 20 knots and 10-ft seas almost the entire way. "It would have been a tradewind passage if the temperatures hadn't been in the low 50s," says Anton.

The crew spent 10 awe-inspiring days exploring the island, mingling with emperor penguins, communing with fur seals, and hiking absolutely everywhere. When asked for his impression of South Georgia, Anton was so overcome with emotion he could barely form a sentence: "Desolate . . . glaciers . . . very isolated . . . beautiful . . . serene . . . breathtaking. It's raw nature down there. You really can feel that it's the kind of place that takes a long time and a real adventure to reach."

One of Anton's favorite moments was drinking whiskey at Ernest Shackleton's grave with Rich Crowe on their shared birthday, February 19. "I loved reading about Shackleton's adventures, especially in his book *South*," he said. "It was like paying homage to the man who inspired me."

The last part of the leg, from South Georgia to Buenos Aires, was a little harder on the crew, with 30 knots on the nose and pounding seas for four days, but *Alaska Eagle* took the beating like the champ that she is, and soon crossed the 40th parallel. "It warmed up 10 degrees very quickly," recalls Anton. "We all started shaving again — even Jeff Svihus, who had a big, bushy beard he hadn't shaved in years!"

continued on outside column of next sightings page

neraida

With the help of many local workers, and the generosity of passing cruisers, she managed to get *Nereida* seaworthy again in record time. "It was very frustrating being trapped for so long," she told us. "It's just great to be free to sail on again!"

Nereida arrived in Port Stanley in the Falklands on March 19 after an uneventful passage from Puerto Español. Jeanne spent a week exploring the islands and working on a few remaining issues aboard



The 200-ft 'Bayard' was wrecked in Ocean Harbour 100 years ago and is now a breeding ground for blue-eyed shags, a type of cormorant.



Jeff Svihus shaved his beard at 40°S.

— cont'd

Nereida before heading off for Cape Town, which was planned for March 29. "I was going to leave on March 28 but a deep low is forming," she said. "No point in heading straight out into strong north winds!"

Once in Cape Town, she'll have officially completed a full circuit of the globe via three of the five Great Capes — she left there last March after aborting her first nonstop solo attempt. You can follow her progress at www.svnerida.com.

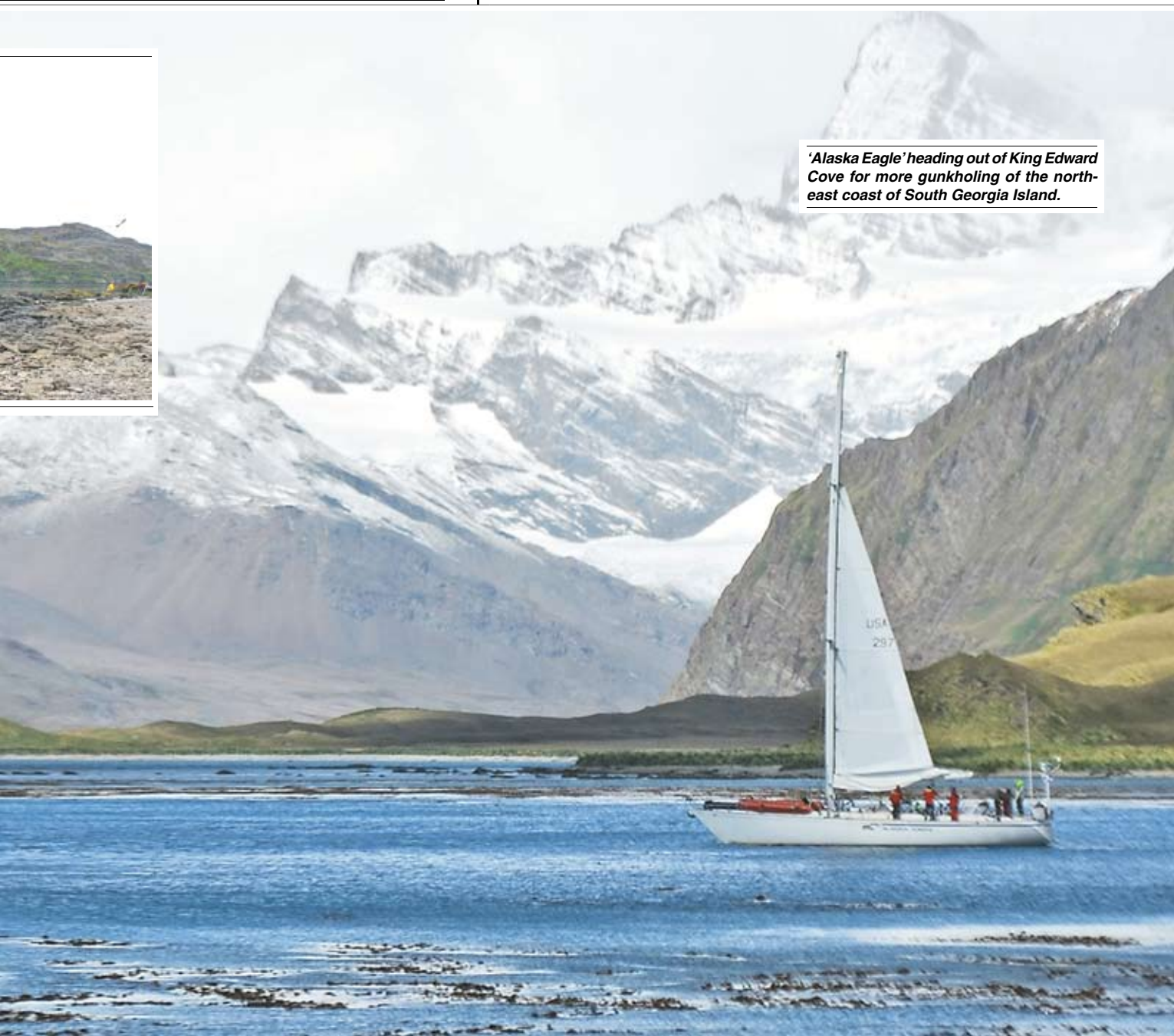
— *ladonna*

alaska eagle — cont'd

Now back home, the 39-year-old geographer dreams of preparing his Aries 32, *Horizon*, for a trip of her own, hopefully to Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest. "A trip like this prepares you for your own personal adventures," he said. "Now if my wife will just give the okay . . ."

The crew of *Alaska Eagle* had just reached Rio de Janeiro as this issue went to press, with Leg 7's departure for Antigua scheduled for April 1. From there, she'll head to Panama with an estimated arrival back home in Newport on June 15. There's little doubt that the crews' online reports — which can be found at www.occsailing.com — are inspiring more than one landbound sailor to take the leap and commit their own acts of derring-do.

— *ladonna*



'Alaska Eagle' heading out of King Edward Cove for more gunkholing of the north-east coast of South Georgia Island.