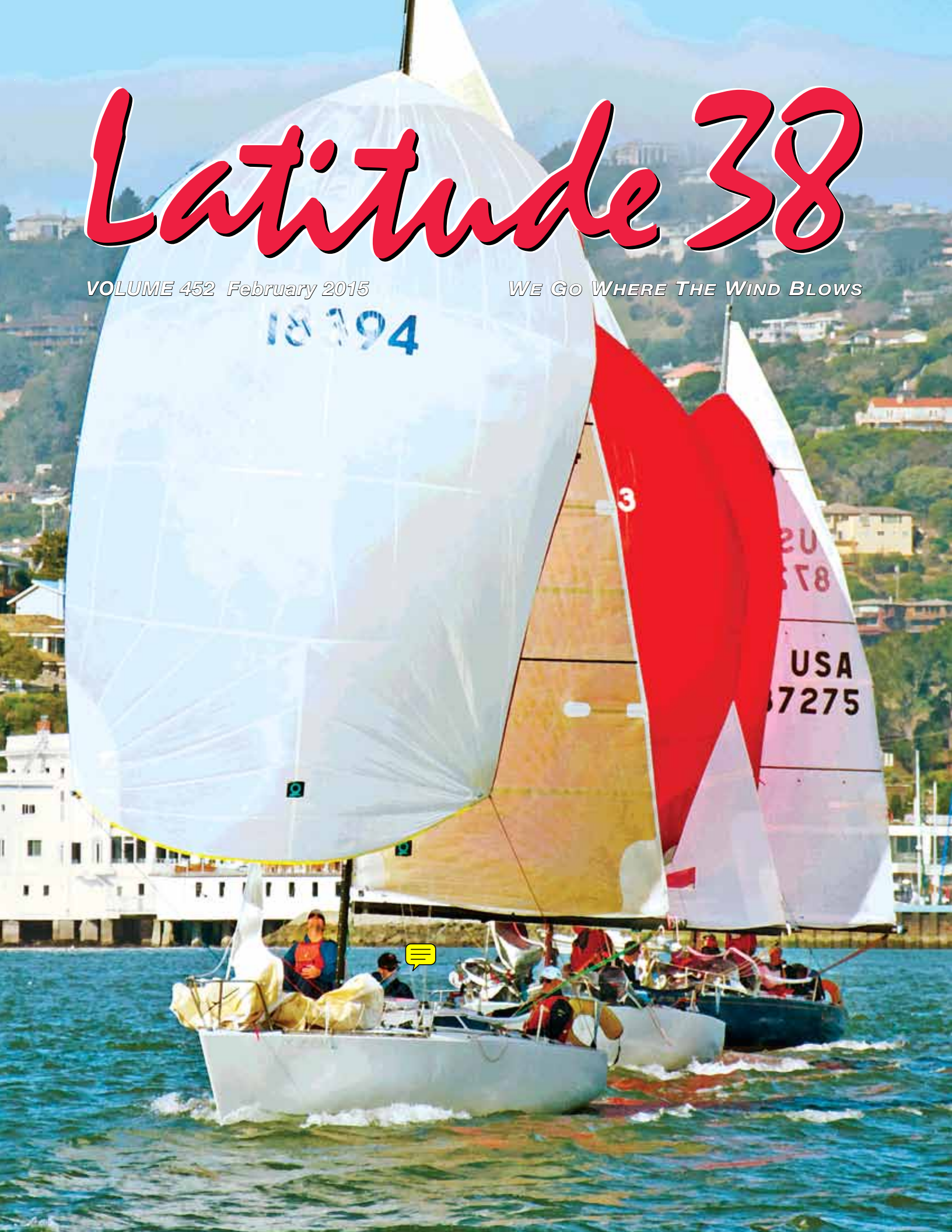


Latitude 38

VOLUME 452 February 2015

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Cover: The Express 27 start, downwind in a fresh northerly,
at the Corinthian Midwinters on January 17.

Photo by Latitude / Chris

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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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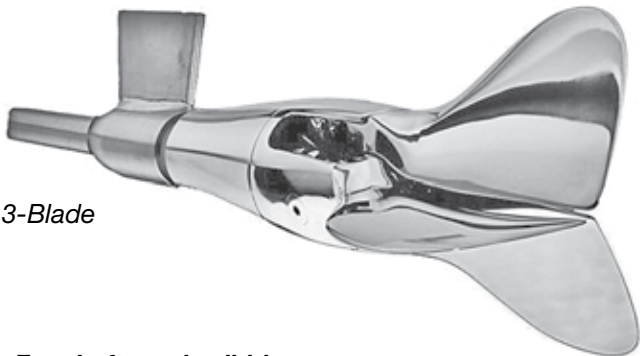
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CALENDAR

Non-Race

Jan. 30-Feb. 1 — Seattle Boat Show Indoors + Afloat, at CenturyLink Field and on South Lake Union. Info, www.seattleboatshow.com.

Jan. 30-Mar. 30 — The tall ships *Lady Washington* and *Hawaiian Chieftain* visit Ventura Harbor through 2/4; Oxnard, 2/5-16; Oakland 2/20-3/4; San Francisco, 3/5-11; Sausalito, 3/12-30. Schedule & info, www.historicalseaport.org.

Feb. 1-22 — Veterans' Sail, 10 a.m., and Keelboat Sail, 12 noon, every Sunday with BAADS at South Beach Harbor in SF. Free. Info, (415) 281-0212 or www.baads.org.

Feb. 3 — Sail under the full moon on a Tuesday night.

Feb. 4-25 — Wednesday Yachting Luncheon Series, StFYC, 12-2 p.m. Lunch and a dynamic speaker each week for about \$25. All YC members welcome. Info, www.stfyc.com.

Feb. 7 — Chantey Sing aboard *Balclutha*, Hyde Street Pier, SF, 8 p.m.-midnight. Free, but RSVP to Peter, (415) 561-7171.

Feb. 7 — Women's Sailing Convention, Bahia Corinthian YC, Corona del Mar. \$200 includes meals. Gail, (951) 677-8121, gail@scya.org or www.womenssailingconvention.com.

Feb. 7 — Fouling Control for Boats Workshop, Burton Chace Park Community Building, Marina del Rey, 8:30 a.m.-noon. Free, but RSVP to Maral, (310) 578-0961.

Feb. 11 or 12 — After the Sun Sets night racing seminar. At Del Rey YC on 2/11; Dana Point YC on 2/12; 7-8:30 p.m. Info, www.newporttoensenada.com.

Feb. 12 — Single Sailors Association monthly meeting, Ballena Bay YC in Alameda. Cocktails at 6:30 p.m.; dinner at 7 (\$6-\$9). Beginners welcome. Info, www.singlesailors.org.

Feb. 12 — Seabirds & Marine Mammals of West Coast Baja & the Gulf of California, Sausalito Club Nautique, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$10/members; \$15/non-members includes appetizers and beverages. RSVP to (415) 332-8001.

Feb. 17 & 18 — Tides on San Francisco Bay by Kame Richards, Bay Model, Sausalito, 7:00 p.m. \$15 cash only. RSVP to Jim, (707) 759-2045 or jimtantillo@comcast.net.

Feb. 21-22 — US Sailing Advanced Race Management Seminar, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. \$125. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.

Feb. 25 — Pacific Puddle Jump Seminar & Party, Vallarta YC, Paradise Village, 3-6 p.m. Drinks, snacks, presentation, and crew interviews. Info, www.pacificpuddlejumps.com.

Feb. 26-Mar. 2 — San Francisco International Ocean Film Festival, Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center. Info, www.oceanfilmfest.org.

Feb. 26 — Crew Overboard Recovery, Alameda Club Nautique, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$10/members; \$15/non-members includes appetizers and beverages. RSVP to (510) 865-4700.

Feb. 28 — Sail a Small Boat Day, Richmond YC, 8:30-4:30. Free boat rides & hot dogs. Info, www.richmondyc.org.

Feb. 28 — USCGA Boating Safety Class, Encinal YC, 10:30-3:30. \$35. Doug, (510) 295-7430 or Rob, (510) 658-7085.

Mar. 4 — Pacific Puddle Jump Seminar & Party, Balboa YC, Panama City, noon-4 p.m. See 2/25 for more info.

Mar. 5-6 — RYA Short Range Certificate VHF course, SFYC. \$120 + \$90 licensing fee. Info, www.sfyc.org/training.

Mar. 7 — Pacific Puddle Jump Seminar & Party, Shelter Bay Marina, Caribbean side of the Panama Canal, noon-4 p.m. A Tahiti rep will attend this one. See 2/25 for more info.

Mar. 7-8 or 14-15 — ISAF/US Sailing Safety at Sea Course, SFYC. \$240. Info, www.sfyc.org/training.

Mar. 11 — Latitude 38 Spring Crew List Party, GGYC in San Francisco, 6-9 p.m. \$5-\$7 cash only. Info, (415) 383-8200 or www.latitude38.com/crewlist/CrewParty/CrewParty.html.

Mar. 11 — Racing Rules of Sailing Seminar Series, Long Beach YC, 7 p.m. Info, www.lbyc.org.

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CALENDAR

Racing

Jan. 31 — Three Bridge Fiasco, a wacky singlehanded/doublehanded pursuit race. SSS, www.sfbaysss.org.

Feb. 7 — Double Up and Back. CPYC, www.cpyc.com.

Feb. 7, 21, Mar. 7 — Spring Series. FLYC, www.flyc.org.

Feb. 14, Mar. 14 — Santana 22 Team Racing in Santa Cruz. SCYC, www.scyc.org.

Feb. 14-15 — BAYS Winter Optis at EYC. Hannah, juniors@encinal.org or www.bayarea-youthsailing.com.

Feb. 21 — Londerville Cup. HMBYC, www.hmbyc.org.

Feb. 21-22 — SCYA Midwinter Regatta for everything from Sabots to sleds. Info, www.Midwinters.SCYAweb.org.

Feb. 21-22 — PCISA 4/5 Golden Bear high school regatta at TISC. PCISA, www.pcisa.hssailing.org.

Feb. 22 — Sadie Hawkins Race on the Estuary for women skippers and full crews. IYC, www.iyc.org.

Feb. 27-Mar. 1 — Half-Day Laser Clinic on Friday followed by the California Laser Masters Championship at Mission Bay YC in San Diego. Info, www.mbyc.org.

Feb. 28 — SeqYC Singlehanded/Doublehanded #1. Rick, (650) 255-5766 or www.sequoiayc.org.

Feb. 28-Mar. 1 — Team Race 101. StFYC, racing@stfyc.com or www.stfyc.com.

Feb. 28-Mar. 1 — Mission Bay YC, www.mbyc.org.

Mar. 7 — Mercury Series #1. EYC, www.encinal.org.

Mar. 7 — Long Distance #1. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

Mar. 7 — John Pitcher Memorial. CPYC, www.cpyc.com.

Mar. 7-8 — Big Daddy. RYC, www.richmondyc.org.

Mar. 7-8 — Spring Dinghy. StFYC, www.stfyc.com.

Mar. 14 — Rites of Spring for doublehanded, singlehanded and all-women crews. OYC, www.oaklandyachtclub.net.

Mar. 14 — Rosenblum Regatta. SFYC, www.sfyf.org.

Mar. 14-15 — Spring Keel/One Design. StFYC, racing@stfyc.com or www.stfyc.com.

Mar. 15 — Spring Series #1. SSC, www.stocktonsc.org.

Mar. 15 — Warm-up Race. PresYC, (415) 677-7917 or www.presidiayachtclub.org.

Mar. 20-21 — NHYC Newport to Cabo Race starts. Deadline to enter is 3/1. Info, www.nhyccaborace.com.

Midwinter Regattas

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

BENICIA YC — Frostbite Series: 2/14, 3/14. Joe, (707) 628-2914, www.benicia-yachtclub.com or race@benicia-yachtclub.com.

BERKELEY YC — Midwinters: 2/14-15; Winners Race, 3/1. Bobbi, (925) 939-9885 or www.berkeleyyc.org.

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

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

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

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

ELKHORN YC — Frostbite Series: 2/28, 3/14, 3/28, 4/11, 4/25. Info, (831) 724-3865, eyc@elkhornyc.com or www.elkhornyc.com.

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

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

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CALENDAR

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

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

MONTEREY PENINSULA YC — Perry Cup/Midwinters: 2/7. Info, www.mpyc.org or www.mercury-sail.com.

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

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

RICHMOND YC — Small Boat Midwinters: 2/1, 3/1. Optimists and El Toro Green Fleet: 1/31, 2/28. Info, www.richmondyc.org.

RICHMOND YC — Laser Sundays: 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 3/15, 3/22, 3/29. Info, <http://rycsunday.myfleet.org>.

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

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

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

SEQUOIA YC — Winter Series: 2/7, 3/14. Redwood Cup: 2/21, 3/7. Info, www.sequoiayc.org.

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

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

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

In the Tropics

Jan. 29-Feb. 1 — Superyacht Challenge Antigua. Info, www.thesuperyachtchallenge.com.

Jan. 29-Feb. 3 — Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week. Info, www.grenadasailingweek.com.

Feb. 23 — RORC Caribbean 600, with starts and finishes in Antigua. Info, www.caribbean600.rorc.org.

Mar. 3-7 — Banderas Bay Regatta, five days of friendly racing for cruisers out of Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico, in one of the world's great sailing venues. Info, www.banderasbayregatta.com.

Mar. 6-8 — 35th St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. Their motto is "Serious Fun." Info, www.heinekenregatta.com.

Mar. 11-14 — Loro Piana Caribbean Superyacht Regatta and Rendezvous at Costa Smeralda YC in Gorda Sound, BVI. Info, www.loropianasuperyachtregattaandrendezvous.com.

Mar. 16-Apr. 18 — Cruisers Rally to El Salvador. Start from wherever you are and cruise with your own group at your own pace. Arrive in Bahia del Sol by 3/16 to enjoy many weeks of activities. Info, www.elsalvadorrally.com.

Mar. 19-22 — St. Barths Bucket turns 21. Yachts from 100 to 289 feet go at it. You probably already know somebody on a boat and therefore have a decent shot at getting a ride. Info, www.bucketregattas.com/stbarths.

Mar. 27-29 — St. Thomas International Regatta, in USVI. Info, www.stthomasinternationalregatta.com.

Mar. 30-Apr. 5 — BVI Spring Regatta & Sailing Festival, with a huge bareboat fleet. Info, www.bvispringregatta.org.

Apr. 9-12 — La Paz Bay Fest for cruisers. Races, potlucks, seminars, and family activities. Info, www.clubcruceros.net.

Apr. 13-18 — Les Voiles de St. Barth. If you can sail, there's a decent chance you can get on a boat. Info, www.lesvoilesdesaintbarth.com.

Apr. 15-21 — Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. There are often opportunities to crew. Info, www.antiguaclassics.com.

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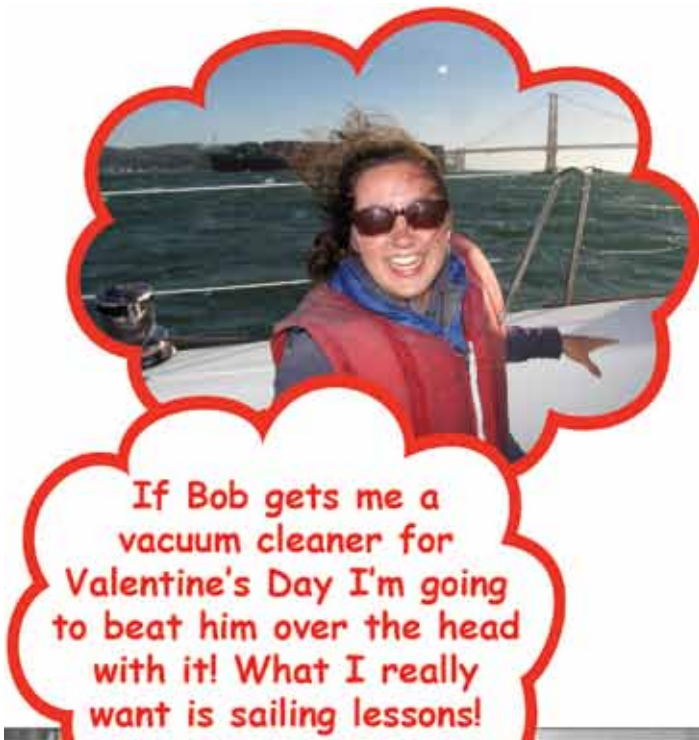
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CALENDAR

Apr. 25-May 1 — Antigua Sailing Week, featuring serious racing on a variety of courses. Info, www.sailingweek.com.

June 19-20 — Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous, hosted by *Latitude 38*, Tahiti Tourisme and other South Pacific partners, with cocktail parties, a sailing rally to Moorea, Polynesian music and dance performances, and cruiser participation in traditional Tahitian sports. Info, www.pacificpuddlejumps.com.

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



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February Weekend Tides

date/day	time/ht. LOW	time/ht. HIGH	time/ht. LOW	time/ht. HIGH
1/31 Sat	0230/2.6	0842/6.2	1538/-0.2	2239/4.9
2/01 Sun	0321/2.5	0927/6.2	1616/-0.3	2318/5.1
2/07 Sat	0146/5.2	0719/2.0	1315/5.0	1924/0.9
2/08 Sun	0216/5.3	0802/1.9	1359/4.6	1957/1.3
2/14 Sat	0038/2.9	0700/5.9	1357/0.1	2112/4.4
2/15 Sun	0142/2.7	0758/6.2	1446/-0.3	2156/4.7
2/16 Mon	0238/2.5	0853/6.5	1532/-0.7	2236/5.1
2/21 Sat	0111/6.1	0654/0.8	1318/5.9	1910/0.2
2/22 Sun	0153/6.2	0751/0.6	1417/5.3	1957/0.8
2/28 Sat	0125/2.6	0730/5.6	1427/0.2	2129/4.8
3/01 Sun	0223/2.4	0825/5.7	1512/0.2	2209/5.0

February Weekend Currents

date/day	slack	max	slack	max
1/31 Sat	0934 2326	0120/2.4E 1330/3.7E	0432 1750	0656/2.2F 2031/2.8F
2/01 Sun	1026	0212/2.5E 1416/3.8E	0527 1833	0748/2.3F 2112/3.0F
2/07 Sat	1001 2145	0003/2.6F 1224/1.7F	0257 1439	0608/2.6E 1809/3.0E
2/08 Sun	1048 2214	0038/2.4F 1312/1.5F	0316 1521	0636/2.6E 1853/2.6E
2/14 Sat	0248 1639	0531/1.5F 1910/2.2F	0731 2217	1138/3.1E
2/15 Sun	0836 2301	0050/2.0E 1234/3.5E	0349 1719	0629/1.8F 1955/2.6F
2/16 Mon	0937 2340	0136/2.3E 1324/3.9E	0443 1757	0723/2.2F 2037/3.0F
2/21 Sat	0204 1417	0511/3.8E 1735/3.7E	0856 2111	1143/2.9F
2/22 Sun	0953 2153	0004/3.3F 1238/2.7F	0241 1516	0554/3.8E 1827/3.3E
2/28 Sat	0815 2215	0010/2.1E 1228/3.1E	0325 1641	0538/1.7F 1927/2.4F
3/01 Sun	0921 2301	0105/2.4E 1319/3.3E	0427 1726	0639/1.8F 2009/2.7F

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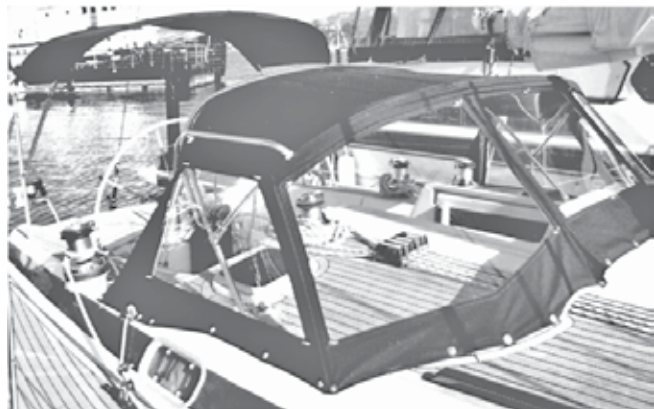


Peter Lyons photo

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LETTERS

↑↓ DOES THIS WORK ON OTHER CATS, TOO?

It's very important to be able to stop and take a breather when sailing offshore, especially when the weather is rough and the crew is tired of getting bounced around. It's also important in cases where it's necessary to stop to make repairs.



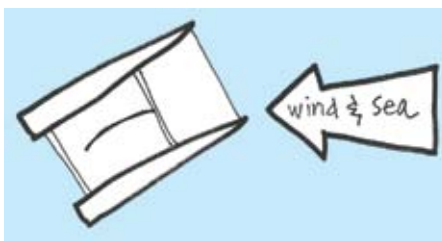
LATITUDE / RICHARD

'Sea Level', during last year's Ta-Ta, when no heaving-to was required.

My wife Kent and I have frequently hove-to on our Schionning 49 catamaran *Sea Level*. We have done this through the night in 25- to 35-knot winds. We have also done it simply to be able to enjoy a meal or watch a movie. The most wind in which we've hove-to was 38 knots, with 25- to 30-ft seas. That was in the Indian Ocean during our circumnavigation.

I have successfully used the following method to heave-to on several different catamaran designs: 1) Double reef the main; 2) Roll up the jib; 3) Center and strap in the main; 4) Center the rudders. That's it.

If you're on a starboard tack, as in the accompanying diagram, the cat should try to head up, but she will not come



JIM MILSKI

Does the Milskis' heave-to method work for all catamarans, or just 'Sea Level'?

around. If the port tack is more comfortable because of the sea state, we use one engine to drive the boat onto the other tack. It might be necessary to move the traveler a little, but probably not.

Once we discovered this method, we were much more comfortable cruising offshore without other crew. We're curious if this method works on all catamarans. Feedback from cat owners, please.
Jim & Kent Milski
Sea Level, Schionning 49
Lake City, Colorado

↑↓ A BUNCH OF FORMALITIES

I have a couple of thoughts regarding organizing and/or sponsoring the proposed San Francisco Bay Record event discussed in the *Letters* section of the December *Latitude* 38. But first, let me say I really like the idea.

I assume — and for *Latitude's* sake, hope — that you intend to run the event under the Racing Rules of Sailing. Some events that have tried to short-cut this have ended up being involved in complex liability situations, and even horrendous actual liabilities. Believe me, as I was an expert witness in one such case.

But with the RRS comes a bunch of other formalities. I know *Latitude* likes to keep things simple, but certain things are required by the RRS. You need to have an Organizing Authority that is affiliated somehow with the MNA (US Sailing). You need to have a Notice of Race that conforms to a minimum standard. You need to have a Race Committee, although it can be as large or small as you might like. It's best to have a US Sailing-certified PRO, who is automatically covered by personal liability insurance. And you need to have Sailing



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LETTERS

Instructions, again to a minimum prescribed standard.

I am all for 'let's get out there and have some fun' simplicity, but I would hate to see *Latitude* or any sponsors end up on the wrong end of a liability suit due to oversimplification.

Bartz Schneider
Expeditious, Express 37
Tiburon

Bartz — We appreciate your concern and information, and will consult with you and others on how to set up the event properly.

↑↓STRONG AS AN OX AND STUBBORN AS A BULL

Tito Rivano, 86, died in mid-December. He may not be well-known these days, but there was a time when he was a bit of a legend in Alameda's hippie-sailor crowd. That legend lived on in Tito's mind until the end. I say that in jest because Tito was always good for a laugh. And then another one.

The legend of Tito was based on his boatbuilding skills, which he shared freely among the Wylie Design Group, North Coast Yachts, and the Hulse Christmas Spars and Rigging crowd. It was Tito who coined Dave Hulse's well-known nickname of 'Squaw'.

Tito was born in Sardinia and lived his life as a seafaring man. He was strong as an ox and stubborn as a bull. He never came sailing without a pot of hot food, and he used to make sublime wine. He was a pain in the ass, too. I'll miss him.

Brian Ebert
Crew, Absolute Saidee, Wylie 33
Alameda

↑↓"I CAN BEAT DAT GUY," SAID TITO

Even though I've been on the East Coast for a few years now, I just learned from a friend that Tito Rivano passed away in December. I shared many a meal with Tito aboard his Cal on Pier 1 of the Encinal YC. Tito made some pretty good wine that he often shared with friends. He also built many boats, from rowing shells to El Toros to Wylie-designed Hawkfarm 28s.

I also remember Tito tinkering with and sailing *Hot Banana*, his old wood Zephyr, in the Oakland Estuary. In fact, I can't remember a sunny weekend on the Estuary without seeing Tito sailing the *Banana*.

Tito was liberal with his advice and help. Many years ago Tito and I were having a discussion about Jimmy Warfield, who had brought his 5.5 Meter to Alameda from Stockton for the Estuary Midwinter Series. Jimmy was nearly unbeatable with his 5.5, but I'll never forget the day Tito told me, in his heavy Italian accent, "You can't beat dat guy. I can beat dat guy. You give me a boat, you give me a crew dat must obey, and I will beat dat guy."

Tito was a salt-of-the-earth kind of guy, with a big heart. I will miss him.

Adam Sadeg
Yard Manager, Zimmerman Marine
Deltaville, Virginia

↑↓THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TWO AFRICAS

Latitude's January editorial response to a Spike Africa-themed letter begs for an explanation of how a white dude comes to have the last name of Africa.

According to an early 1980s entry in this selfsame august publication, Spike was a less-than-successful used car salesman in a Bay Area neighborhood heavily populated with African-Americans — until he legally changed his last

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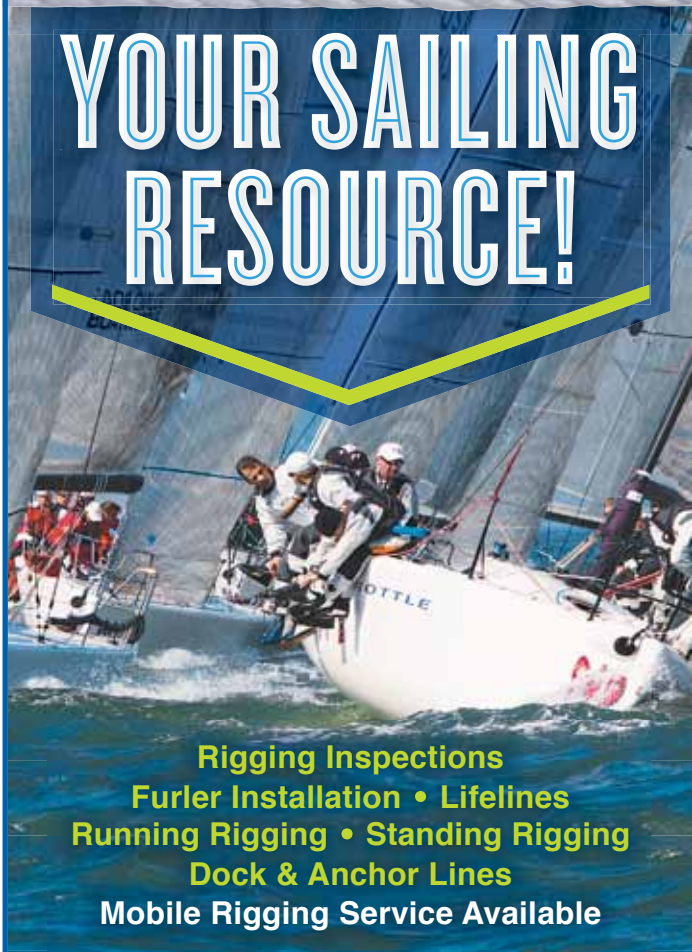
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LETTERS

name to 'Africa'. Then when he was met with skepticism upon introducing himself to prospective customers with his new name, he would whip out his driver's license as proof of his 'brotherhood'. Sales skyrocketed. With the proceeds from his now-successful car sales gambit, Africa opened San Francisco's first 'fern bar' restaurant, which he later sold for a cool million bucks — presumably with which he financed his sailing career and 'presidency' of the big pond.

Now, for your readers' enjoyment, can you reprint your circa-1980s yarn involving three Vegas hookers who retired, pooled their savings, and bought a former client's sailboat to pursue a leisurely sailing life? C'mon, you know the story.

Sam Burns
Southernaire, Catalina 309
Alameda

Sam — Entertaining letter, but you're confusing Spike Africa, who was the first President of the Pacific Ocean, and who died in 1985, with Henry Africa, creator of the 'fern bar' concept, who passed away 28 years later.

We can't remember where we got the info for the 'Henry Africa' piece we ran ages ago, or even the piece itself, but we can tell you that the person you're referring to was born Norman Jay Hobday in 1933 on a dairy farm in upstate New York. He landed in San Francisco on his way home to Buffalo from the service, but got rolled for all his money in a bar just before he was to catch a bus to the airport. He was helped out by a bartender and decided to stay in the City.

According to Hobday's version of his life, he was a driver for Lefty O'Doul and Joe DiMaggio, two baseball greats from San Francisco, when in 1969 he spotted the future Henry Africa's bar location at Broadway and Polk. In order to save money on decorating the bar, he filled it with plants. The unintended — but wildly successful — result was that young San Francisco single women found it a conducive environment in which to meet young San Francisco men in a time when sexual liberation was on the rise. Most other San Francisco bars of the time were somewhat unsavory. The 'fern bar' concept became a smash around the country.

According to Hobday, his mother loaned him the money he needed to open the bar, his fourth — on the condition he name it after an old boyfriend of hers who had been in the French Foreign Legion. We're guessing that Mama Hobday's old flame had served in Africa and had taken on the name of the continent. Sort of like Doña de Mallorca, who wasn't born with the de Mallorca last name, but was given it by the Wanderer as the result of her having lived in Mallorca for eight years. There's no law against a person's taking on or being given a more colorful last name.

When Hobday told his story to the Chronicle in 2011, a couple of years before his death, he didn't mention anything about selling cars to African Americans using Africa as a last name. That doesn't mean it didn't happen. When people get older they often want to delete parts of their history for a more shining legacy.

How does a white dude get the last name of 'Africa'? At least one 'white dude' was born with it, as you'll find in 'Spike's Story', as provided by Spike Africa's Fresh Seafood restaurant in San Diego:

"The name Spike Africa is fast becoming a part of the modern folklore of the sea. He is considered one of the last great tall ship schooner captains on the West Coast. The self-proclaimed 'President of the Pacific Ocean', Spike Africa sailed the waters from Alaska to Tahiti for most of the 20th century. An expert rigger, schooner captain, international boat racer, writer, actor,

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LETTERS

inventor, and surprisingly a master of macramé, everyone from roughneck sailors to members of high society found Spike to be a true Renaissance Man.

"Born Philip Marion Africa in 1906 on a Newark, Ohio farm, he was drawn to the ships on the Great Lakes and ran from home as a teenager to follow his dreams. In his twenties he moved to the West Coast to work in the logging camps near Portland, Oregon. His sailing career began when he shipped out on the K.V. Kruse, freighting lumber from Seattle to numerous world ports. It was on this ship that he mastered the art of sailing and eventually obtained his mate's papers for wooden sailing ships. Spike owned and captained the freight schooner Ruby, a true workhorse sailing between Seattle and Alaska.

"Wanderlust struck again as he watched the glamorous passenger ships sailing from the West Coast to Honolulu. The fantasy of Hawaii represented by exotic hula girls moved him to board the nearby cruise ship and sign on. Despite his rough appearance, he was accepted as a deckhand.

"In the short essay titled 'Monkey Fist' in Wooden Boat magazine, Spike wrote '...they sure set a nice table, so I went aboard, donned the whites, squeezed my leathery feet into cute sneakers, and headed for the pineapple country.' Upon arriving in Honolulu, he took it upon himself to help the captain anchor (sic) the ship to the dock. Using old ship parts, he fashioned a loaded monkey fist knot to tie to the anchor line for casting onto the docks. Though his time as a knot inventor was short-lived, it was not forgotten. Spike wrote '...I made a fine pitch and got a US Navy four-striper right between the eyes. He went down like a polled ox. The monkey fist was never retrieved, and I got a citation from the Navy...the only one I ever got. The loaded monkey fist was banned from the docks.'"

"Never known to shy away from confrontation, Spike joined the US Navy and became a Seabee lieutenant in World War II. As a Combat Seabee, he fought in the bloody battle of Peleliu Island, which was depicted in the HBO award-winning mini-series *The Pacific*.

"Before the war, Spike had fallen in love with Barbara Jean Dunham, better known as 'Red', and married her upon returning home. The daughter of a Seattle doctor and lawyer, her life of high society did not deter her from tying the knot with the rugged sailor. They had three children and remained married until his death.

"In 1958, Spike was first mate on the schooner *Wanderer*, owned and captained by famous actor Sterling Hayden. Hayden turned a short sailing trip into their legendary voyage to Tahiti when he defied a divorce court order and took all four of his children out of the country. Hayden and Spike's adventure was chronicled in Hayden's classic sea tale *Wanderer*.

"In the 1960s, Africa was a regular of Sausalito's famous *No Name Bar*, where he mingled with artists, musicians, beatniks and movie stars.

"In 1977, Africa's friend Bob Sloan was inspired to design and build the last great coasting schooner, *Spike Africa*. The graceful yet steady vessel has won awards and has been featured on several Hollywood films and TV shows.

"After returning to the Great Northwest, Africa settled down as harbormaster at the Seattle YC. His reputation was well known as a great captain, as well as a gentleman with clients. He continued to share his adventures and his knowledge of knotting in literary works and publications in the '70s and '80s. There is even a knot named after him which can be found on many macramé bottles.

"We suspect that Africa got his name 'Spike' from a rigging tool used on sailboats, and it fits him perfectly. He stood out among the crowd, and he was a force to be reckoned with

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



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

- ADDL USED SAIL.....**
- 1995 56' Perry Custom \$619K
 - 2005 52' TP52 \$349K
 - 1996 48' 1D48 \$99K
 - 2005 43' J/133Forgiveness \$349K
 - 2000 42' J/42 \$199K
 - 1991 42' CATALINA 42 \$91K
 - 2007 40' J/122 - Grace \$329K
 - 2001 40' Beneteau 40.7 \$129K
 - 2001 35' J/105 \$76K
 - 2000 35' J/105 \$83K
 - 1999 35' 1d35 - Relentless \$79K
 - 2007 32' Columbia 32s \$65K
 - 2004 26' J/80 \$42K
 - 2012 23' J/70 - LOADED \$53K
- ADDL USED POWER.....**
- 2009 30' Raider Rib \$81K



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



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



40' J/Boat J/124 2007
\$274k Contact: Kenyon Martin



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



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



35' J/109 2004
\$181,000 Contact: Kenyon Martin



85' Azimut 85 02/ 2012 refit
\$1,697,000 Contact: Jeff Brown



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



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



35' Chaparral 350 Signature 2005
\$124,500 Contact: Kenyon Martin



29' Grady White 290 2011
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LETTERS

when a challenge arose. Even the portrait of him in his old age illustrates his character. His white beard and lines on the facial appearance marked his long tales of oceanic adventures. He loved uncharted waters in the oceans as well as in life. Africa passed away in 1985 at the age of 78. His legend lives on here at Spike Africa's Fresh Fish Grill & Bar in San Diego, California."

We hope the above clarifies things. Vegas hookers buying an ex-client's boat? We don't remember any such thing. But our memory is no longer perfect.

↑↓ SPIKE WANTED MONEY FOR MY BOAT'S NAME

I have owned my Cal 20 Spike Africa for over 40 years. I often saw Spike in Sausalito over the years and he was indeed quite a character. One time he visited the Sausalito YC and I mentioned that I had named my boat after him. He seemed pleased — but then wanted money for my having done it! I think he was serious, although with Spike you never could tell.

Sometimes I'd see Spike walking down Bridgeway when I was driving to work, and I'd give him a honk. Even though his head was down and he couldn't see me, he always gave a wave, certain the honk was for him.

Barbara Kavanagh
 Spike Africa, Cal 20
 Sausalito

↑↓ AND THE REAL WINNERS WERE . . .

We downloaded the December 2014 issue of *Latitude 38*



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Pat and Melodie Williams were the actual winners from the Ha-Ha Kissing Contest.

with much anticipation as we were hoping to see a picture of ourselves from the Ha-Ha's From Here to Eternity Kissing Contest. It was our understanding that we won the event. At least that's what the Grand Poobah told us on the beach shortly after our 'winning kiss'. In fact, our winning required a second display of our passionate embrace in the surf.

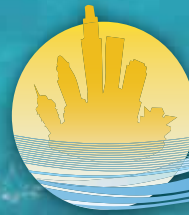
Regardless of who won that contest, we had fun doing it — and we had a great time on the Ha-Ha.

Pat & Melodie Williams
 Starshine, Outbound 44
 San Francisco

Pat and Melodie — We're delighted that you wrote in to remind us that you won, because there was such chaos at the Beach/Awards Party that we couldn't remember who'd won. Thanks to Hurricane Vance, we were delayed in arriving in Cabo, which forced a change of venue. Trust the Poobah, having to share the Mango Deck with lap dancers and competitive drinkers made it the most screwed up Ha-Ha Beach Party ever. Our apologies to all.

↑↓ SNOOP DOGG COVERS JIMMY BUFFETT?

Most of my friends dislike rap/trance music. Not me, as those beats can be great for exercising and getting amped up. But I hate the violence and misogyny espoused in so many rap lyrics. What I'm looking for are rap versions of breezy and beachy Jimmy Buffett songs. In particular, I'd like to hear a rap version of 'Boat Drinks'. True, the lyrics include a line



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LETTERS

about a shooting, but it's shooting a freezer, not another human being. Can you help?

Sally 'Cowgirl' Wrangle
East Walnut Creek

Cowgirl — We did a quick check of Google and couldn't find any rap versions of Buffett songs, but we think you're on to something.

↑↓ OFF BY ELEVEN FEET

I don't think the December 22 *Lectronic* photo you posted of a boat in a shed is the *Kamali'i* of Transpac and Larry Doheny fame. As a kid growing up in Southern California, I loved to read about boats of this type, and I recall that Phillip Rhodes designed the 75-ft ketch *Kamali'i*, which was built of wood by



LATITUDE / RICHARD

This boat undergoing restoration in a shed wasn't 'Kamali'i', but rather 'La Belle Sole'.

Wilmington Boat Works around 1958. I believe that Larry Doheny was indeed the owner, and the boat was built primarily to do the Transpac. If you check out the last entry on the list of boats built by Wilmington Boat Works

(WILBO) on the Internet, you'll find *Kamali'i*. By the way, you can also find the 55-ft schooner *Santana*, once owned by Humphrey Bogart, on the list.

John Foy
Destiny, Catalina 42
Punta Mita, Mexico

John — The rumor that the boat in the shed was Larry Doheny's famous *Kamali'i* turned out to be false, as did the suggestion that she was hauled at the Lido Shipyard. The boat is actually *La Belle Sole*, a 64-ft Rhodes-designed centerboard ketch that was built in 1956, and she's in a shed at the Newport Harbor Boatyard on Lido Island.

Here's a blurb from a website that was created about the *La Belle Sole* design:

"Rhodes designed this vessel as a fully competent, go-anywhere, do-anything yacht, in a more modest size — well under



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his 70-plus footers. She performs well under sail or power, and draws under six feet for the shallow regions of the world. She provides two couples with large, comfortable cabins with their own heads and closets.

There is separate space for crew and generous tankage. She was built in steel, with four water-tight bulkheads. The design was so successful that five sisterships were built."

If we're not mistaken, the yacht is being restored nearly from scratch by one of the most charming yacht owners we've ever met, a person who did an impeccable restoration of a much larger Rhodes design a few years ago. Since this individual has

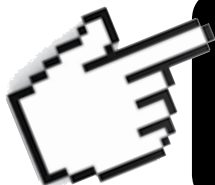
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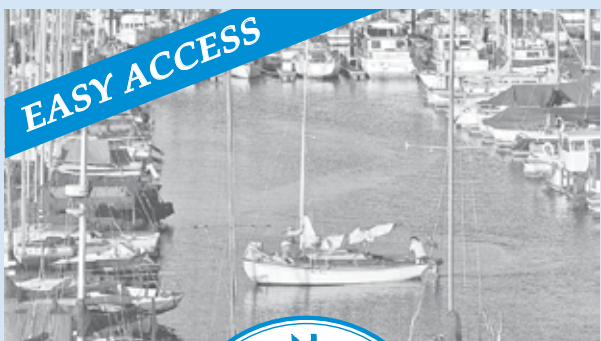
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LETTERS

not responded to our written request for comments, we're going to withhold his/her identity until it becomes public knowledge.

↑↓ "AN ACT INVOLVING DARING OR ADVENTURE"

Another great yacht that is falling apart is *Escapade*, the Rhodes /Luders-designed 72-ft centerboard ketch that's been beached at KKMI for years.

According to a blurb in *Wooden Boat* magazine's 'Save A Classic', *Escapade* was built by Luders Marine in 1938 for ocean racing and cruising, and had sailed on both coasts as well as on the Great Lakes and in Europe. She competed against other great yachts of her time, including *Ticonderoga* and *Bolero*.

Rumor has it she was being restored when the West Coast owner ran out of money. She's now on the hard and slowly falling apart.

Vickie Gilmour
Richmond YC

Vickie — *There's a great oil painting of Escapade under sail on the wall of Eddy's, our favorite restaurant in St. Barth. After a few 'ti punches, the old-timers from the recreational pot-smuggling days of the 1970s and 1980s will point to the ketch and say, "Since the statute of limitations has run out, we can tell you that she smuggled her share of pot."*

About a dozen years ago, *Escapade* was owned by Northern California lawyer Nikolai Tehin, who sailed her in a race to Mexico. On the way back to the Bay, she hit the Coast Guard mooring just off Pt. Conception, doing considerable damage to her bow. Tehin brought the boat to KKMI in Richmond for repairs. While the boat was out, work was started on replacing the decks, at which point some rot was discovered. Tehin told the yard to "make it all right." After a while the checks stopped coming. Not too long after that, Tehin was charged with, and later convicted of, spending money from the trust accounts of clients, some of them among the most vulnerable in society.

After several years, great effort, and enormous expense, KKMI was able to get title to the yacht. Initially there was



LATITUDE /RICHARD

'Finesse' is one of the lucky ones because she's owned by CF Kohler.

European interest in restoring the great yacht, but KKMI's Paul Kaplan was hoping to hold out for an American owner to restore the American-designed and -built yacht. In retrospect, the somewhat romantic notion cost KKMI dearly. At this point, Kaplan admits the best that can be hoped for is to salvage some components

of the old boat and build around them. "It would be," he told Latitude, "a really big project."

For those who didn't see the December 22 'Lectronic Latitude that broached this subject, we'll re-run it here so everybody can understand the reason Victoria mentioned *Escapade*:

"When you're talking about lucky wooden boats, *Finesse*, a 52-ft auxiliary centerboard ketch designed by S&S and built by Germany's acclaimed Abeking & Rasmussen yard, is one of them. She was built of mahogany over oak in 1958 for Cornelius Crane of the Crane Plumbing fortune, who sailed her through the South Pacific for the last 10 years of his life. So she got to see the tropical world.

We're not sure where *Finesse* spent the last 45 years, but she's currently docked at Koehler Kraft of San Diego and owned

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by CF Koehler, who is noted for loving and restoring wooden boats. Finesse is old and needs a lot of work, but if her luck holds, CF will find the time to do a complete restoration.

"Not as fortunate are Dolce Vita and Tondalayo, two once-great yachts we saw on the hard the other day at the Opequi-



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Not so lucky is 'Dolce Vita', which shows a hailing port of San Diego.

mar Boat Yard in Puerto Vallarta. We're guessing both yachts are about the same vintage as Finesse, and were similarly among the great yachts of their era. But both are in very sad shape, where the worms that once might have held the frames together dried up and died a long time ago. They are sad sights to see, but reminders that life is short and needs to be lived to the max.

"If anybody knows anything about the histories of Dolce Vita and Tondalayo, we'd love to hear about them."

↑↓ **SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO COMPLY WITH LAWS**

I have about a dozen old marine flares that are disintegrating. I contacted numerous places in Marin — Marin Resource Recovery, Marin County Sheriff's Department, and even the guys at the local firehouse — but nobody had a suggestion. Any ideas?

David Demarest
San Anselmo

David — Properly disposing of dated and/or disintegrating flares has long been a problem. Orion, a well-known manufacturer of pyrotechnic distress signals, recommends the following:

- 1) Donate expired flares to local Coast Guard Auxiliary or Power Squadron for use in training classes.
- 2) Ignite hand-held signal flares on land in a safe area, much the same as highway flares would be ignited.
- 3) Contact a local law-enforcement or fire-protection agency for their advice on proper visual distress signal disposal.
- 4) Retain the flares for backup use to expand signaling time in the event of an emergency.

Orion says you are never to do the following:

- 1) Jettison visual distress signals overboard.
- 2) Activate marine flares in a non-emergency situation on or near regulated water.
- 3) Dispose of flares in household trash.

Since all of Orion's recommended solutions are either non-solutions in California and/or the rest of the states, or are limited, we suspect that many marine flares are at risk of being disposed of illegally and/or in ways that Orion warns against. We have commonly gotten rid of old flares by setting them off in celebratory fashion at the beginning or end of regattas in foreign countries when there clearly was no emergency. Mind you, we're not recommending that anyone else do it.

↑↓ **HOW ABOUT AN APP TO PROSECUTE CORRUPTION?**

The latest bit of good gossip/rumor is that Thailand's mandatory AIS rule is being totally disregarded. Why? The maritime official who'd pushed for it was involved in a kick-back scheme to install land-based tracking stations. He's allegedly absconded with millions of baht.

By the way, there is an app you can install on iPads — as well as other mobile devices — to use the devices as AIS transponders. I can't substantiate results, but thought it would

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LETTERS

be of interest.

And Defender is now selling a stand-alone transponder with its own screen and antenna for about \$800. I would buy one if I hadn't already bought the Standard Horizon VHF/GPS AIS receiver combo. I find it to be all I really need — except when being mandated by a government to have the transponder, too.

Tom Van Dyke
En Pointe, 31-ft Searunner trimaran
Pangkor, Malaysia

Tom — As far as we're concerned, there are two kinds of terror in the world: the violent kind, with guns and other weapons, and the silent type, meaning corruption, which is perhaps even more corrosive to civilization. While corruption may be practiced more blatantly in the Third World, we believe it's as pervasive and expensive in the United States.

Readers recall that members of Congress and their staffs were the only ones to whom laws against insider trading — i.e. legalized theft — did not apply. After years of just one Republican and just one Democrat trying in vain to stop this outrage, an episode on the television show 60 Minutes so embarrassed members of Congress that they reluctantly passed legislation to prohibit the practice. But only for a short time. About a year later, Congress gutted the legislation via some addendum to unrelated legislation, allowing them to resume their thievery. A pox on the bunch of them.

You know what country is really cracking down on corruption? It's China, ever since Xi Jinping took power as president in 2012. For example, in 2013 alone, Chinese courts convicted and punished 31,000 people for embezzlement, bribery and breach of duty. The convicted people included 'tigers and flies', meaning members of the military and politburo as well as ordinary citizens.

Back to sailing. To our knowledge there is no app that turns a smart device into an AIS transponder. The closest they come are apps that allow owners to use their smart devices to mirror or control their AIS devices via Wi-Fi or Bluetooth. There are also smart device apps that allow users to get AIS information, both locally and around the world, but it's receive-only, and you need to be connected to the Internet for it to work.

There are a number of brands of transmit-and-receive AISs in the \$650 range sold at places like West Marine and Defender, but they need to be hooked up to a monitor. Stand-alone units with their own screens are in the \$800 range.

We at Latitude think AIS receive-only is an incredible safety device, while AIS transmit capability is nice but not as necessary.

↑↓ MORE LIGHTS ARE NOT ALWAYS BETTER

I had the great pleasure of crewing on the 2014 Baja Ha-Ha that, minor paperwork issues notwithstanding, was an enjoyable experience start to finish. However, there was an issue beyond the control of the organizers that I'd like to address. Many participants did not display the proper lighting configuration for motorsailing at night. A substantial number of the boats used their sidelights, their masthead light, and their tricolor light simultaneously.

While on watch and scanning the horizon, I occasionally saw a boat on my port side showing green over white over green. I wondered if this was a trawler or an improperly lit vessel motorsailing. On my starboard side there were boats showing red over white over red, the lights of a fishing vessel.

Since I knew there were close to 150 sailboats in the area, and a few of them were visible by moonlight, I assumed the

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LETTERS

lights were on the Baja Ha-Ha fleet generally going the same direction that I was. I was not lulled into complacency, however, because two recreational vessels heading out to sea on autopilot did cross in front of us during the night while we were the stand-on vessel. They were properly lit but without a lookout. That's a separate story.

In any case, boats showing their sidelights, their masthead light, and their tricolor light simultaneously are sending the wrong signal.

Dave Allocco
Summer Nights, Capri 22
Phoenix, Arizona

Dave — You are correct about the impropriety and illegality of showing sidelights and a masthead tricolor at the same time, something we have to admit we didn't understand in the first 20 or so years of our sailing. While it's the responsibility of each skipper to show the correct lights, and the Grand Poobah mentioned the matter at least once, he could have done a better job of reminding everyone in the Ha-Ha. He will strive to do better in the future.

↑↓ ESTABLISHING SAILING TRADITIONS

To answer the question posed in the December 15 'Lectronic, the folks depicted dumping buckets of water over their heads are Mary McCarthy and Dave Milligan, who were crew on Roy Neyman's Seattle-based CT-41 ketch *Mabrouka* for the last Ha-Ha. *Mabrouka* is a lovely vessel.

Craig Russell
Addiction, Newport 30 Mk III
Emeryville

Readers — Since a lot of readers may not understand what's going on in the photos, let us explain. We at Latitude believe that sailing traditions are important as they can create great and lasting memories. For centuries, people who sailed across

the equator for the first time had to participate in an initiation rite known as the Crossing the Line Ceremony to commemorate their crossing the equator by vessel for the first time. This initiation is observed by the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Marines, the Coast Guard, the Royal Navy, the Russian Navy, the Dutch Merchant Navy, the British Merchant Navy, and many recreational vessels. It's believed that such nonsense boosts morale.

Ceremonies vary widely, but almost always include an appearance by King Neptune. After suitable hazing, which often includes such things as the liberal application of shaving cream, ridiculous costumes, the consumption of raw eggs, and the like, the former pollywogs or griffins are elevated to Shellbacks or Sons of Neptune status.

Since a very small percentage of sailors will ever sail small boats across the equator, we at Latitude thought there needed to be a lesser tradition to signify a somewhat lesser nautical achievement: specifically, the first time people sailed across the Tropic of Taurus. So during the Ha-Ha a few years ago, we created the Crossing of the Tropic of Taurus Ceremony. It's quite simple. At the first suitable opportunity after crossing the Tropic of Taurus, each first-timer is to pull a bucket of tropical water



COURTESY MABROUKA

Dave Milligan appeased Neptune with a celebratory bucket.



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LETTERS

from the sea and 'baptize' him-/herself. In the accompanying photos, both Dave and Mary are seen to be doing an excellent job. They are to be commended.

What's the deal with the 'Tropic of Taurus'? We'll let the folks at astronomy website Mexican Skies explain:



COURTESY MABROUKA

"The Tropic of Cancer, an imaginary line circling the globe at 23.5 degrees north latitude, was given that name because that is where the sun is directly overhead at the moment of the summer solstice on June 22. Some 2,000 years ago, when the line was named, the sun was in the constellation Cancer on that date. Due to precession, the sun is now actually in Taurus on June 22. So far nobody has suggested the line be renamed the Tropic of Taurus."

Mexican Skies should have written that nobody has suggested the line be renamed Tropic of Taurus except for those of us at Latitude 38 and the Baja Ha-Ha. If we're going to have a 'crossing into the tropics for the

Mary 'baptized' herself with tropical water.

first time' ceremony, what could be more hip — and curiosity-inducing — than a perplexing name? Thus the dumping of the bucket of tropical water over one's head for first-timers sailing into the tropics is called the 'Crossing the Tropic of Taurus Ceremony'.

We'll be the first to admit that this 'tradition' has been slow to catch on. But we're patient. Besides, we think we can instantly goose the popularity of the tradition by offering free CTTC t-shirts to those who provide photographic proof that they complied with the baptism during next fall's Baja Ha-Ha. You can't believe what people will do for free commemorative t-shirts.

Two Fun Facts: The Tropic of Cancer (Taurus) moves a little bit each year, and the progression is marked by signs on major Mexican highways. Fun Fact Two: It's now more properly the Tropic of Sagittarius, not the Tropic of Capricorn.

↑↓ **THE TRIBE WAS PROUD OF THE 'REDSKINS' NAME**

In her January letter titled 'What's in a Boat Name, White Man?', Ms. Tepper refers to the University of Miami changing its mascot name some 20 years ago to something less insulting to our red brethren. She's confused, for the change from Redskins to Redhawks was made by zealots at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, not by the University of Miami (Hurricanes) in Florida.

Miami University officials consulted the elders of the Miami Tribe before the change was enacted. The elders universally declared that the change would be an unwelcome slight on their proud tradition in Southern Ohio, and that they considered the mascot name an honor and certainly not disrespectful. (The Tribe's forebears had greeted George Washington when he surveyed the area long before becoming our first President.)

Despite the wishes of the elders of the Miami tribe, Miami University made the change in mascot names. From that day onward, when fundraisers have called me for my annual alumni donation, I cheerfully respond that I will send a check as soon as the mascot name reverts to the original.

Dan Robson
Pelican, Dyer 40
Napa

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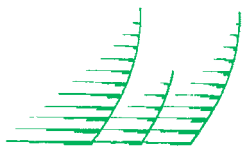
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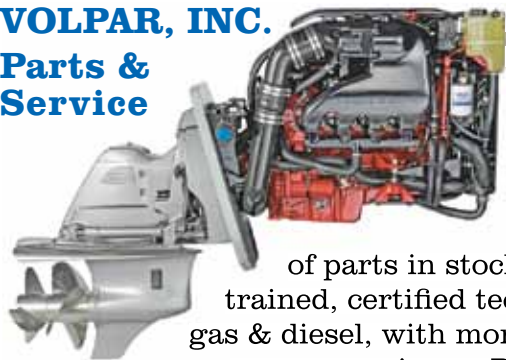
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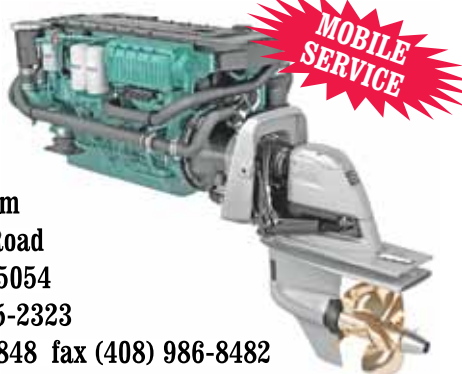
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LETTERS

↑↓ PROTESTING PROTESTS

I read the December *Racing Sheet* article about a collision and protest that occurred in a race on San Francisco Bay in November, and didn't think it was egregious — meaning the article, not the collision. Granted, I've done a lot of racing, so to my mind the fact that one party files a protest doesn't mean that the other party is guilty or admitting fault if they don't file a protest, too. I'm guessing that most racers understand that, too. I'm not sure how non-racers would interpret it.

Bill Lily
Moonshadow, Lagoon 470
Newport Beach / Mexico

Bill — We apologized for the article's not being clearer because we believe that many non-racers would get the misimpression that not filing a counter protest would be an admission of guilt.

Apparently the protest hearing was delayed numerous times because of the holidays and other reasons, and it was postponed again when, just as the hearing was to begin, a member of the committee was informed his house was in the process of being burglarized.

↑↓ SAY IT AIN'T SO!

It wasn't until late December that I got around to reading the December issue — including the letter from the gentleman who complained about the Ha-Ha. I was appalled by his complaints.

I've only done one Ha-Ha, which was on the Celestial 48 *Tamara Lee Ann* in 2012. I had to read the complainer's letter twice, as I had a hard time putting the boat in the same cruiser rally that I had enjoyed. Eventually it dawned on me that the author is a curmudgeon. By definition, curmudgeons are not happy people.

The editor's response was inspired. In fact, it's not often that I get to read something like that. Whether Capt. Curmudgeon realizes it or not, he was filleted in your pages and left to bleed out. It wasn't death by a thousand cuts, but rather 25 or so knife pricks inflicted by a very sharp knife. I may cut out the offending letter along with your response and hold it until a time when I need a long, low chuckle.

Capt. Ron Landmann
Sail/Power/Steam

Capt. Ron — We agree that the gentleman's expectations were out of line, but it did give us an opportunity to clarify Ha-Ha expectations and the culture of the event. So in that respect, we welcomed his letter. But don't worry about the Poobah as, following the Ha-Ha, he's received countless compliments about adapting to the unusual situation in last year's event

It was not our intent to 'knife' or belittle anyone, but having put in as much effort as the Poobah had in difficult circumstances, we wanted to make sure his point of view was presented forcefully.

The way you signed your status — "Sail/Power/Steam" — provides us with an opportunity for some offsetting levity. A few years ago we bought a motorcycle in St. Barth from our longtime French friend 'Big Yves' who, because he empties septic tanks, is sometimes described as "the most important person on the island." Anyway, we picked up the Spanish-built bike at the guesthouse of the La Vie En Rose villa, which is where Yves and his wife Veronique, who manages the estate, reside. So we were given the tour.

After a brief meeting with the effusive owners, who were in residence, and who despite speaking even less English than we speak French, insisted we come stay with them for a week at

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LETTERS

their estate in Aix-en-Provence, Veronique gave us the walking tour of the grounds and pool area.

When we asked what type of person pays \$40,000 a week to rent a place like that, Veronique named an actor who is famous for having played James Bond several times. "He rented the place just two hours before he and his entourage arrived. There was the actor, another guy, another guy, another guy and a little girl. They were all very nice."

"You mean to tell us that the actor who played Bond is gay?" we asked in surprise.

"I don't know for sure," Veronique replied, "but we French have a saying that translates to something like, 'He uses both sail and steam.' So you may want to be careful how you identify yourself."

THIN SOLAR PANELS AND BAD COVERAGE

Congrats on *Profligate's* giant new hardtop. I see that there isn't much space between the boom and the back of the hardtop, so I'm thinking you might have some clearance issues when/if you are going to install some solar panels. Unless, of course, you install some thin ones.

I bought two of the Solbian panels, which are about 1/16-inch thick and weigh less than 5 lbs. They are highly efficient monocrystalline panels and kick ass. We love them! The mono panels are more expensive, but we think they are worth it. We move ours around on the boat, and they are so much easier to deal with than the heavy-assed solar panels.

I got our panels from Bruce Schwab, the longtime East Bay rigger who won the 1996 Singlehanded TransPac in *Rumbleseat* before finishing the 2002-3 Around Alone and the 2004-5 Vendee Globe with his Tom Wylie-designed *OceanPlanet*. He lives in Bath, Maine now, but he's a great guy and was very helpful. He has some less-expensive polycrystalline solar panels as well.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to whine about the television coverage of the Volvo Ocean Race. The shows have been pathetic wastes of time. Some of the stuff that's been bad: 1) It's hard to understand the basic facts; 2) The coverage is disorienting; and 3) The camera work is shaky. It's hard to believe that any organization is paying money for such poor coverage.

Devan Mullin
Points Beyond, Shannon 38
Newport Beach

Readers — As long as the solar panels aren't close to the centerline on *Profligate's* hardtop, there isn't a clearance issue. We already have several solar panels on *Profligate* and intend to add more. While we can't live off-the-grid at this point in our lives, we love the concept.



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Made in the shade! 'Profligate's' new hardtop makes her like a new boat.

Unfortunately, there are many decisions to be made when deciding what kind of solar panels are needed on a cruising boat, and how many, and how to manage the power. Getting expert advice is usually a good investment.

As for the Volvo coverage, we think Stan Honey and his team for the 34th America's Cup set the bar too high for those in their wake.

ANYONE NEED PARTS FOR A ROUGHWATER 33?

It's a little late, but I want to point out a couple of errors in



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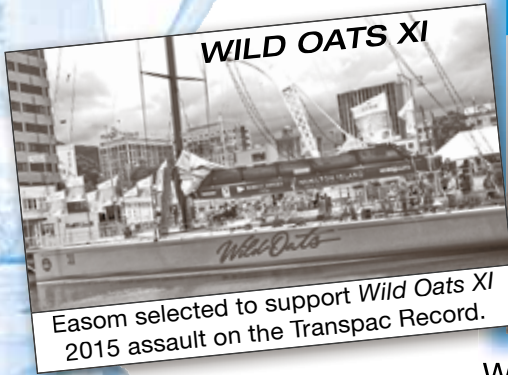
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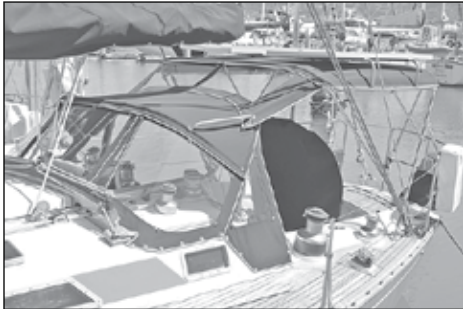


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LETTERS

your November 2014 issue, neither of which was your fault.

You have a photo in which the caption says that *Aspara* is on top of *Dorikam*, but it's actually the opposite. My lovely *Aspara* is the one on the bottom and *Dorikam* on top. This took



COURTESY VIVACIA

'Dorikam' was actually atop 'Aspara' in this image of Hurricane Odile's aftermath.

place on the Magote in La Paz during Hurricane *Odile*. It breaks my heart.

After the purchase of another boat, *Aspara* was reluctantly placed for sale. A person, who shall remain unnamed, was paid to look after *Aspara* while I crewed on another boat on a trip to Alaska. A late departure from Alaska left me fighting southerlies, and I was unable to return to La Paz in time to deal with the issue. We finally made San Francisco, and I plan to fly to La Paz from here.

I want to thank Jordan of *Sea Witch*, a great guy, for stripping *Aspara* of her valuables and saving them for me. Jordan helped many others in their time of need, too. Anyone in need of parts for a Roughwater 33, or similar boat, is welcome to contact me.

Russ Morgan
svmariposa@hotmail.com

Russ — We're sorry to hear about your loss, but think it's important that everybody understand that leaving one's boat in somebody else's charge doesn't always work out.

About 25 years ago a young Brit in Antigua told us he absolutely, positively wanted to spend the off-season in Antigua, and very much wanted the job of staying on and watching over our Ocean 71 Big O. We warned him that English Harbor became all but a ghost town after Antigua Sailing Week, and that he could look forward to six months of humidity and rain. We were told not to worry, as he dearly wanted the opportunity to get some big-boat experience on his resume. He had some decent references, too.

About three weeks later, we got a call from him. He casually mentioned that he was 150 miles east of Antigua, at which point he seemed to forget why he called us. He remembered when we reminded him of his promise to watch over our boat. He insisted that he was sorry, but "everybody" had left, it had gotten hot, and he kind of missed his ex-girlfriend back in Old Blighty.

When we asked if he thought he perhaps should have informed us of his abrupt change in plans before leaving, he told us not to worry because the good news was that he'd found another brilliant young Brit to watch over our boat. Chills ran down our spine when he told us, "You have nothing to worry about."

Sure enough, the "brilliant and reliable" friend lasted only a couple a weeks before he, too, left without bothering to inform us. This happened at the same time we had a disc problem that required surgery. The result was that Big O spent most of the hurricane season floating unattended and as vulnerable as could be in Falmouth Harbor. We were later told that nobody would go near her, fearing she was full of drugs or that there was some other reason to stay well clear of her.

Even in the cases where we've paid people to watch over *Profligate* in a marina we've had mixed results. For example, assurances that her engines would be run for at least 15 minutes each week were routinely ignored, and promises that our

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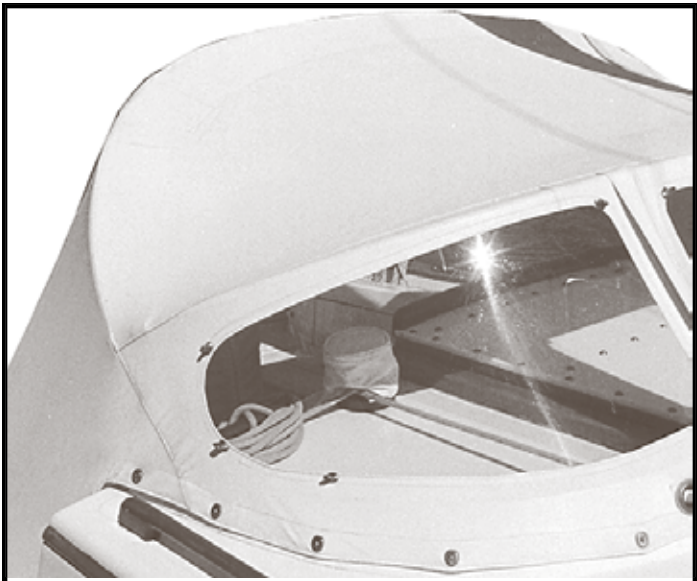
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LETTERS

boat would not be the site of parties were forgotten. Fortunately, our most serious loss was some of our faith in humanity.

This is not to say that there aren't individuals — we had one last year — who are true to their promises of being responsible. But when hiring or arranging for someone to watch over your boat in your absence, particularly if she's to be anchored out, it's good to have an independent party verify that what's been agreed to is actually being done. All too often, out of sight is out of mind.

↑↓ **LUCI IN THE SKY WITH LEDS**

For Christmas, I got one of the inflatable LED Luci lights mentioned in the January 12 *'Lectronic*. It truly is amazing, but I need two more — one for my ditch bag and another for my liferaft canister.

On the broader subject of LED lights, I think Lunasea has by far the best selection, and most are rated for 12-30 volts. I replaced all the bulbs with theirs on my old Swan 51, which is a 24-volt boat, including those pesky festoon bulbs in the old two-way (white/red) dome lights. From another source I even tracked down a tiny single-LED bulb that fit under the windvane dome.

Lunasea also carries a full range of bulbs for the running lights. Svendsen and San Diego Marine Exchange carry Lunasea bulbs at reasonable prices.

Lou Freeman
Seabird, Swan 51
San Diego

↑↓ **STILL KEEPING TABS**

Nice write-up on the Luci LED lights. Just so you know, they are also available at one of your longtime advertisers, West Marine, for \$14.99. LED lighting gets better every year, with powerful LED spotlights, multiple versions of small, powerful long lasting flashlights, halogen replacement bulbs, and so on.

I enjoy *'Lectronic*, one of the few e-newsletters I always read. I'm glad to see that the publisher is still out there having a blast sailing and writing about it.

Our Wylie 65 *Convergence* has been resting at a marina in Corfu for the winter. We cruised her in Croatia last summer and will be heading to Sicily and points beyond this summer.

Randy Repass
Convergence, Wylie 65
Santa Cruz

Readers — Randy is, of course, the founder of West Marine. We're glad to see that he and Sally-Christine are still having a blast sailing, too — and that Randy is still keeping an eye on the business.

↑↓ **LUCIS FOR NAVIGATION LIGHTS?**

After reading your recent report on the Luci LED lights, I came to the realization that they could make great running lights, as they come in red and green as well as white. It would be pretty simple to set up some sort of charging holder on deck. Have you heard of anything like this being done? Has your experience with them been good enough for that application?

John McNeill
San Francisco

John — No, no, dear God no! The Luci LED lights would be horrible for running lights. They are bulky when inflated and would blow all around, putting their only modestly strong



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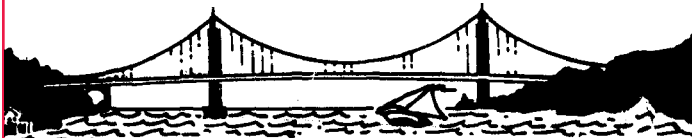
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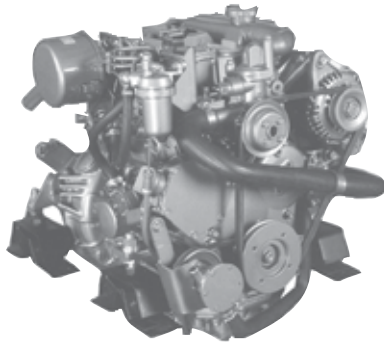
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LETTERS

handle at risk. An even bigger defect is they wouldn't show themselves in a very specific range of degrees off the bow, which is necessary to meet legal and safety requirements.

But no worries, as there are all kinds of LED lights made specifically to be running lights. The last one we bought was a lovely stainless one for our Olson 30 La Gamelle, and it only cost \$22. It had a one-mile range, making it legal for all boats under 65-ft. But it did require 12-volt power. Solar lights are not suitable for running lights as they are likely not to work after a few hours.

↑↓ BLUE JOBS, PINK JOBS, AND GOING ALOFT

Regarding 'pink vs blue' crew assignments, most of the long-distance sailing I've done has been as part of a small crew, usually three or four people in all. We didn't have the luxury of having a designated cook/swab aboard, so everyone did everything. But I will admit that when it came to serious engine/systems issues, it usually was a male who ministered to the affected item.

That said, it can be useful to be comparatively short/small. I'm about 5'5", so not only do I have standing headroom on most boats, but my weight hasn't been a major load on a halyard or for the person grinding when I needed to go aloft.

The first time I went up was a few decades ago, and it was up the 50-ft or so mast of a Swan 43 at the Berkeley Marina. I didn't go to the masthead, as I just had to retape a shroud/spreader junction. Being big-time acrophobic, I was shaking so hard that it must have felt like a Richter 5 temblor down on deck.

My most recent ascent was on an Alberg 35 in Neah Bay, Washington. I was at the masthead, about 44 feet above deck, to tighten a masthead light connection. The effect of having weight at the far end of the lever on this smallish boat required small, gradual movements to minimize rolling and heeling. But the view was great!

Tips? Start with a sufficiently long halyard tail so that the person tending it has a good amount of line to hold. Have a grinder you can trust, and communicate clearly — especially when you're negotiating your way around shrouds and spreaders. And attach tools with small stuff so you don't drop them.

Jean Ouellette
San Francisco

Jean — We may be wrong, but sense that pink and blue jobs on boats are more the rule than the exception.

↑↓ FINDING SOLITUDE AT THE TOP OF THE MAST

I don't see what the big deal is about one's gender and going up the mast, out on the pole, diving on the keel — or anything else for that matter. It's more about whether a person as crew is willing to do it.

In my 25,000+ miles of ocean racing/sailing, there were plenty of men who wanted nothing to do with strapping on the climbing harness and going aloft. With a crew of 18, most of them men, on a 68-footer, I was one of only three people, all women, who were willing to be mast monkey/kite spiker when at sea.

The highest mast I ever climbed was 100 feet, but the



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Craig Shaw's Columbia 43 'Adios' in the 2013 Baja Ha-Ha.

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LETTERS

roughest climb was aboard the Beneteau 411 *Bequia* in the 2012 Pacific Cup in 25 knots of wind and moderate seas with a series of fast-approaching squalls. I carry my own Petzl climbing harness, as I do not trust the ancient bosun's chair that is usually dug out from the dark/damp recesses of any given boat. I tie my own knots. I use a safety line. And I select who will be at the helm and who will be at the end of my halyards.

On long ocean races, going up the mast or out the pole is the only way to find some solitude!

Shana Bagley
Walnut Creek

↑↓ MARY IS A MEMBER OF THE '100-FT CLUB' TOO

We once sent Mary Compton to the top of the 105-ft-tall mast on her husband Dick's Andrews 77 *Alchemy*. She did a great job cleaning the mast with a white t-shirt.

Mark Coleman
Wainui, Cal 48
Ventura

↑↓ I DON'T WEAR A PIRATE OUTFIT WHEN GOING ALOFT

In all the sailing venues that *Latitude* has been you only know a few females that have gone aloft?!

I have been up the mast many times. If my husband was up there, he would be worried about my dropping him, and I would be calling out all the places that needed inspection and just bugging him in general. I trust him to keep me safe and he trusts me to do the work. I put up the lazy jacks, halyards, new wind indicator, antenna and so forth. We do need a new masthead light, which is going to be hard because that's at the very top of the mast.

To be fair, it is my boat and I have had the mast down twice, so I'm pretty familiar with her. And the mast isn't very tall. And no, I wasn't wearing a pirate outfit.

I also feel it's my responsibility to do the oil changes, fuel filters, and transmission oil. Why should I make him do that? When I get really frustrated with seized parts, stubborn hoses, and the like, my husband helps me and I do appreciate it. Neither one of us cleans the bottom much. We hire somebody to do it.

It did upset some Mexican boatyard guys to see me with the wrench and my husband with the vacuum cleaner. It doesn't fit with their world view.

Anyway, to each his/her own. Whatever it takes to keep boats out on the high seas.

Name Withheld By Request
Still in Mexico After the 2006 Ha-Ha

N.W.B.R. — Sailors and others doing jobs outside their traditional roles can really confuse workers in Mexico and other Third World countries. Generally speaking, you are a laborer, supervisor or owner. Supervisors and (boat)owners are not expected to do manual labor. It can be upsetting to laborers when this tradition is not adhered to.

↑↓ WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO?

I love going high! On calm days it's fun to go aloft. On windy days, when the boat is really moving, it's exhilarating. The views are great and it's great exercise, too.

I wear my Metolius climbing harness, in addition to our new and very comfortable padded bosun's chair, when going up the mast. The climbing harness makes me feel more secure, especially if I'm doing something at the top of the mast. By the way, the owners of the company that makes the Metolius harness are cruisers who did the Puddle Jump

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LETTERS

last spring.

My husband John and I are both climbers, so we're both comfortable going aloft. We hoist a 5:1 block & tackle system up the main halyard, which reduces the pull to about 25 pounds. Then we use a jumar on the haul line to stop anywhere we need to work. For a quicker way up, the person at the bottom can pull and help with the hoist. It's a good workout for the arms.

Regarding blue and pink jobs, we have blue and green designations instead. John does most of the blue (boat) jobs and I do the green (money/work) jobs. We share the pink jobs and I help with the blue jobs when I can and when it makes sense — such as contorting my body into small engine area spaces and doing electrical work where having small hands is beneficial.



JOHN MCDANIEL

Cyn doesn't mind climbing the rig or doing the odd 'blue' job.

Cyn McDaniel
Alcyone, Ericson 35 Mk3
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↑↓ "I LIKE GOING ALOFT"

I'm a woman and I go aloft on the 65-ft mast of our Swan 41. Not to boast, but I may be one of the older women who goes aloft. For a few months now, I've been able to tap into retirement funds without penalty.

I went up the mast twice last year, with my husband Rod doing the grinding. I help Rod by pulling and pushing myself up wherever I can get a hold of something. I use a Spinlock climbing harness, which I prefer over a bosun's chair.

Earlier this year we were on our way from Majuro in the Marshall Islands to Funafuti, Tuvalu when a sudden loud bang came from the forestay area. It turned out that the forestay was still intact, but the genoa was no longer connected to the halyard. After lowering the genoa, we found that the shackle connecting it to the roller furler had broken. This

was rather disappointing, since the roller furler is only two years old. If we'd been farther offshore, Rod would have had to go aloft while we were at sea. But we made our way to Funafuti under main only and with some help from the engine. Once in the anchorage we had to retrieve the upper part of the roller furler, an easy task. When I asked Rod



ELISABETH LEHMBERG

Elisabeth may be old enough to collect retirement, but that doesn't stop her from going aloft.

if I could do the job, he said, "Of course." All I needed to do was to connect a line to the furler, so we could pull it down. So, up I went. While aloft, I took some photos and enjoyed the beautiful view. Piece of cake!

My second occasion to go up the mast last year arose when we were preparing our boat for going into a pit at Vuda Marina, Viti Levu, Fiji for cyclone season. The wind instrument had to come down, so again I volunteered to be hauled up. Camera in pocket, up I went.

I really enjoy going aloft — although I confess I haven't tried

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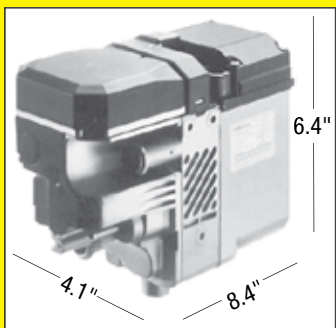
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LETTERS

it while underway when the boat is really moving around.

I've also used an ATN Mast Climber to get to the second spreader to install some lazy jacks. But since going down is as much work with the ATN as is going up, I don't use it to go to the top of the mast. As I write this, I am promising myself to do just that to get the wind instrument back up when we return to our boat in March next year.

Elisabeth Lehmborg
Proximity, Swan 41
Alameda

↑↓ DUTY CALLS

I don't know if you want secondhand stories about women who go up, but since I lost contact with the woman involved years ago, I'll tell it anyway.

Back in the 1980s I learned to sail from Charlie Kern, an older guy who owned *Valiant*, US 24, a 12 Meter that had been built for the 1970 America's Cup. Most of the sailing we did was between Los Angeles Harbor and Catalina on weekends.



DOUG FORD

Charlie enjoyed taking lots of folks sailing because the boat needed a lot of crew. And he enjoyed taking people who would be sailing for the first time. One time Patty, one of the regular crew, brought a never-been-sailing-before boyfriend along. While lowering the sails at Catalina, he lost his grip and the mainsail halyard went to the top.

Since Patty had invited the one who let the halyard go, and since she was also the lightest person aboard, we sent her up the mast. As I recall, the mast was 85 feet tall, and *Valiant* being a monohull, she was rolling in the anchorage. Patty didn't have a good time going aloft, but she got the job done.

Valiant had big winches for the headsails and there was a two-person grinder, so hoisting Patty was the easiest ever. I'm sure she weighed less than the main.

Doug Ford
ex-*Valiant* Crew

Readers — We love the stories of women who go aloft . . . and sometimes go down, too. They deserve the attention, so you can look forward to them in future issues.

↑↓ GUNBOAT IS AN AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY

There haven't been a lot of big success stories in the American sailboat building industry in the last 20 years, but I certainly think that Peter Johnstone's Gunboat International qualifies. I get regular newsletters from the company and couldn't help being impressed by information in the most recent. Among other things, it reported:

1) That both *Cruising World* and *Sailing World* named the new Gunboat 55 catamaran their Boat of the Year, and that 15 of the cats have already been sold. 2) That they have received orders for a new Gunboat 64 and Gunboat 70, both of which will also be built at Gunboat's relatively new plant at Wanchese, North Carolina. (Previous Gunboats were built in South Africa and China.) 3) That the first Gunboat G4, *Yachts and Yachting's* 2015 Performance Boat of the Year, is slated to sail in Antigua Sailing Week in late April. This is described



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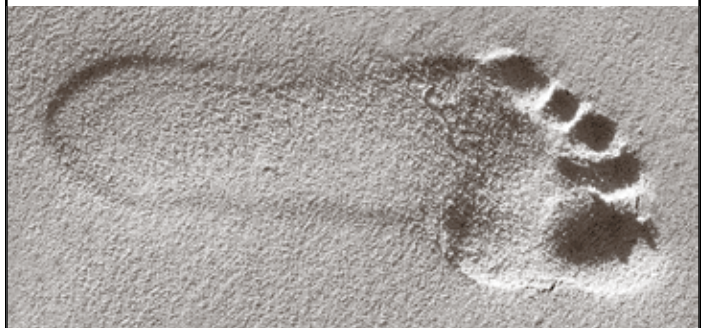
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LETTERS

as "a new multipurpose 40-ft coastal cruiser-racer." In that initial brief they didn't mention that the cat, which displaces a mere 6,000 lbs, is designed and built to foil!

I'm not pimping Gunboats and could never dream of affording one, but I love American success stories, particularly American sailing success stories, and I think this is one of them. As a monohull sailor, however, I wonder if these performance cats might be too performance-oriented for some. This concern comes from reading the following line in the latest newsletter:

"An updated salon and skyscraping Hall rig are the highlights of a major refit performed in the Gunboat 62 *Tribe* by Newport Shipyard. With her new Doyle sails, she will be a force to be reckoned with. As the older Gunboats are powered up with larger sails and taller masts to keep pace with their newer sisters, we urge caution and safety to all this Caribbean season. When racing, always keep hands on the sheets!"

"Always keep hands on the sheets." Yikes! The newsletter went on to report that up to 10 Gunboats are expected to participate in "three of the Caribbean's best events, the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, Les Voiles de St. Barth, and Antigua Sailing Week." I think it's pretty exciting in more ways than one.

Thomas Fuller
Currently Boatless and Traveling in Asia
Jackson Hole, Wyoming

Thomas — We agree that Johnstone and Gunboat deserve a big shout-out for what they've done in the last 15 years. It started when the Johnstone family, disappointed with the lack of comfort in cruising a sled in the windy winter Caribbean, prompted Dad to come up with a better solution. Unlike a lot of companies, Gunboat has continued to innovate over the years, as the new 55, and particularly the new G4, are entirely different beasts than the original 62. And yeah, we think it's really great that they are being built in the US.

And it's not as if the Gunboats are inexpensive. During a discussion of cats on Facebook with Johnstone, we asked him what the new 55s sell for. Johnstone, who was nice enough to take a moment to compliment multihull designer Chris White and say kind things about Latitude's *Profligate*, reported the base price of a 55 was \$1.9 million, and true sailaway was \$2.1 million. They'd sold 15 of them by the time the first one was launched. Very, very impressive. (By the way, anyone who wants to eavesdrop on the Facebook chatter between Johnstone and the publisher of *Latitude* is welcome to 'friend' Richard Spindler.)

As for the 'always have hands on sheets' caution, we presume it's in part a result of a near capsizing of a Gunboat 66 in last year's windy Voiles de St. Barth, the one in which Steve Schmidt's short-masted *Santa Cruz 70* hit 22+ knots under white sails alone. As evidenced by the fact that we own a big cat, we think they are safe. But performance-oriented cats, no matter the size, demand continual respect.

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

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

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



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SIGHTINGS

avalon's darkest night

The violent wind and seas that lashed Catalina Island's Avalon Harbor on December 30 may be old news now, but reminders of that horrible night's devastation remain today along the waterfront. And members of the tight-knit island community are still mourning the loss of two well-loved, longtime island residents, Tim Mitchell, 39, and Bruce Ryder, 53.

If you were taking a break from mainstream news during the holidays, you may not have heard about any of this, so we'll do our best to recap what happened — although some facts have been difficult to confirm.

Various accounts indicate that the afternoon of December 30 was a relatively pleasant winter day in the Avalon anchorage: cool, with a light breeze and somewhat sloppy sea conditions. However, mainstream weather sources were predicting 5-15 knots of wind that night from the northeast — like so-called Santa Ana conditions, but colder. This forecast was not threatening enough for the harbor authorities to turn boats away from the normally peaceful harbor. What puzzled

continued on outside column of next sightings page

french polynesia

One look at an idyllic postcard image of French Polynesia's jagged mountain tops, lush rain forests and turquoise lagoons, and almost any mariner would wish he or she could explore those waters under sail. Every year many sailors take that notion well beyond the pipedreaming stage, though. In the two months since we opened (free) registration for the 2015 Pacific Puddle Jump rally, nearly 110 boats from nine countries have signed up. (See www.pacificpuddlejump.com.)

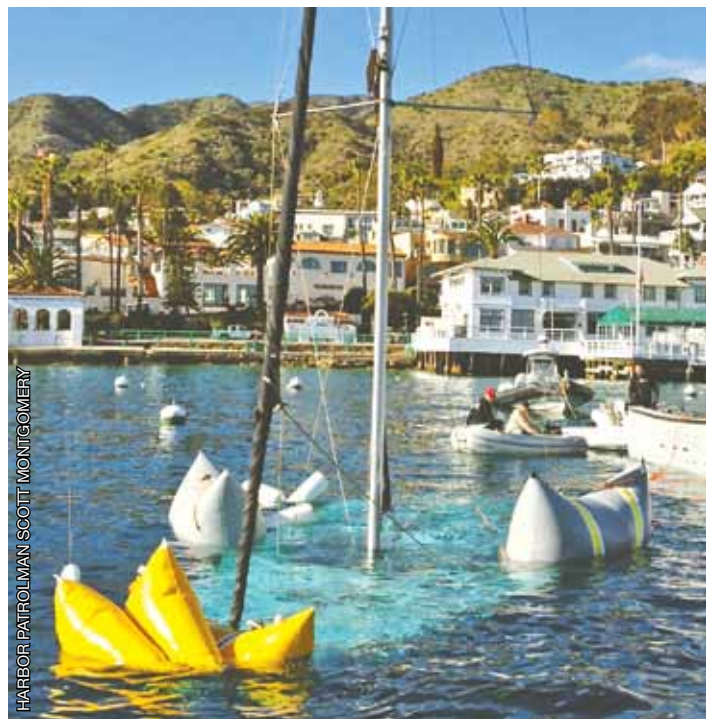
They'll be departing during the next four months from various points along the west coast of the Americas, with Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; Balboa, Panama; and the Galapagos Islands of Ecuador being the most popular jumping off points.



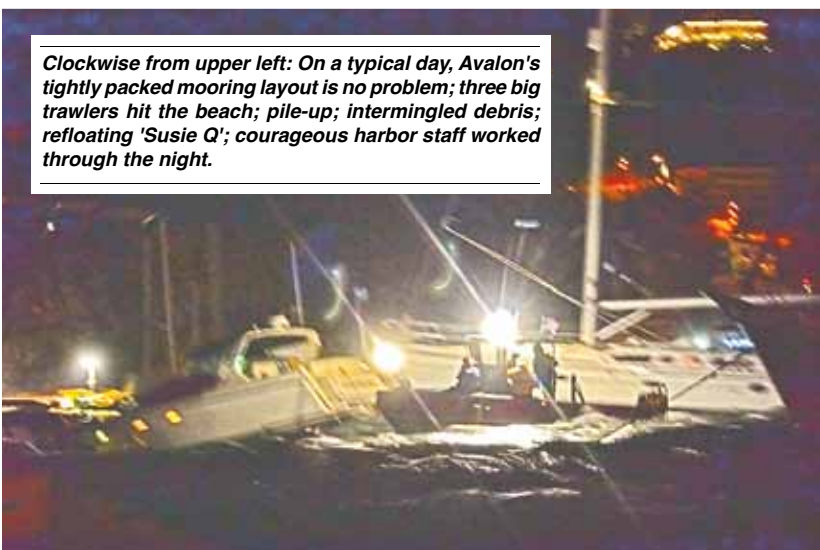
LATITUDE ARCHIVES



BILL BUSHING



HARBOR PATROLMAN SCOTT MONTGOMERY



SOURCE UNKNOWN

Clockwise from upper left: On a typical day, Avalon's tightly packed mooring layout is no problem; three big trawlers hit the beach; pile-up; intermingled debris; refloating 'Susie Q'; courageous harbor staff worked through the night.

on the mind

No matter where you leave from, though, it's a very long sail — 18-30 days for the typical cruising boats that do it each year, with no options for a pitstop along the way. Once you arrive, though, it's as though you've passed through the looking glass — to borrow a concept from Lewis Carroll. That is, you will have entered a wonderworld of exotic tropical islands, ideally suited to sailboat cruising.

At our three PPJ Sendoff Parties this month and next (dates below), we'll be sharing insights into cruising the islands as well as dealing with the local bureaucracy. One of biggest questions on the minds of westbound sailors is always "How long can we stay?" Unless you're

continued in middle column of next sightings page



HOLLY SCOTT / CHARLIE'S CHARTS

HOLLY SCOTT / CHARLIE'S CHARTS

avalon — continued

some mariners later, however, was that various apps and professional weather services had predicted a much stronger blow, while mainstream weather sources had not. "It's odd to me that if you looked at several weather forecasts, you could see it coming, but NOAA didn't," said Captain Holly Scott, co-owner of Charlie's Charts, who is a frequent visitor to the island.

The problem, as all who have spent time at Avalon know, is that its broad anchorage is completely exposed to the northeast, so when strong winds blow from the mainland, the accompanying wind waves have roughly 25 miles of fetch in which to build to destructive proportions. That's exactly what happened on the night of December 30. A couple of hours after dark the breeze increased suddenly, wind waves began to build and the mooring field became a roiling caldron of dread.

One of the most vivid eyewitness accounts came from Daniel Sipes of San Diego. After securing his wife and kids in a hotel ashore, he reportedly caught a ride out to his family's 34-ft Meridian powerboat, *Tamara*, aboard the last shore boat that dared to go out that night. "The wind was blowing maybe 20 knots and the seas in the harbor were increasing — now 4 to 5 feet and steep, arriving every five seconds or so," he wrote in a widely circulated email. Conditions in the harbor soon got worse — much worse — as Sipes caught glimpses of the drama unfolding in the darkness around him, while listening to the harbor patrol channel, VHF 12. As the wind speed and wave height increased, so did the chaos around him. "Harbor patrol, we have sick people on board and need to be evacuated," he recalled hearing. "Harbor patrol, we have elderly on board and need to get to shore." "Harbor patrol, the captain is not on board, what do we do?" "Harbor patrol, we have a person having an anxiety attack with shortness of breath. We need to be taken ashore."

As winds gusted as high as 42 knots, and short-period waves crashed against the shoreline, an untold number of selfless harbor patrol personnel and volunteers put their lives on the line that night to reattach severed mooring lines, tow drifting boats to safety, and respond to cries for help from countless frightened boaters.

One of the biggest challenges of the night was controlling the 65-ft dive boat *King Neptune*, which had broken loose and was roaring toward the shore. Courageous harbor staff attached tow lines and attempted to pull her into more sheltered waters, but at least twice their towlines broke due to the tremendous force of the pounding swells. According to firsthand accounts, Harbor Patrol Assistant Tim Mitchell — who had worked aboard *King Neptune* as a dive instructor and guide for about 10 years before joining the harbor staff last May — climbed aboard her from a patrol boat and attempted to fire up her engines. But before he could do so, the beamy 65-footer slammed ashore at Step Beach, near the Green Pleasure Pier. Witnesses say Mitchell tried to jump to safety, but didn't make it. They watched in horror as he was pinned between the boat and the rocky shore. Despite the best efforts of sheriff's deputies and Mitchell's coworkers, they were unable to rescue him.

A native of New Zealand, but longtime Catalina resident, Mitchell obtained US citizenship last year. According to Harbor Master Brian

continued on outside column of next sightings page



CITY OF AVALON HARBOR DEPT

Harbor Patrol Assistant Tim Mitchell died trying to save his friend's dive boat.



CITY OF AVALON HARBOR DEPT

Bruce Ryder didn't make it to shore when his boat went down, but his yellow lab, P.B., did.

SIGHTINGS

avalon — continued

Bray, "He held joint degrees in religious studies and sociology, and was an accomplished musician, playing multiple instruments." He had also worked as a reserve firefighter for the past five years. Perhaps the saddest fact about Mitchell was that, according to Bray, he was like a "second father" to the children of *King Neptune's* owners, Bob and Tina Kennedy.

Mitchell's body was not recovered until morning when conditions finally calmed down. Also discovered amid acres of diesel-soaked

debris, shattered boat parts, battered dinghies and skiffs was the body of Bruce Ryder, floating on the surface near the Tuna Club. His 32-ft liveaboard powerboat *Ocean Ryder II* had gone down in the storm, and bits of it were reportedly scattered along the shoreline.

According to his friends, this Southern California native

had come to Catalina roughly 20 years ago, and was well known around town. He too had worked as a dive instructor for ScubaLuv — in fact, he'd known owner Bob Kennedy since grade school. Ryder had also worked as a fisherman and boat captain, and had run a pumpout service. Most recently, though, he'd worked repairing moorings. Neither man was married, but Ryder had a constant companion: his yellow lab Pretty Boy, aka P.B.

At least five big boats were beached and/or destroyed, three of which were large trawlers that grounded against the seawall. One reportedly had its anchor windlass pulled out by the wave force. *King Neptune* was completely destroyed before first light. Out in the mooring field, the canted mast of the Hunter 40 *Susie Q* protruded from the surface. According to Sipes' report, she'd been holed after becoming entangled with a 35-ft powerboat. Thankfully, her crew was evacuated before she sank, and she was eventually refloated. Another sailboat was reportedly destroyed against the breakwater in front of the landmark Catalina Casino.

No official estimate of property damage has been released yet, but Sipes' assessment was dire: "I'd guess that 50% of the boats in the harbor had significant damage," he wrote.

Lessons learned? There are dozens of them. But the most salient have to do with weather forecasts. As Holly Scott advises: "Check several marine weather forecasts every time you leave your slip. Any mention of a northeasterly or a Santa Ana should cause alarms to go off in your head. The ocean will always win."

— andy

bay sailing — anybody can play

They say that if you can sail on San Francisco Bay you can sail anywhere, and that if you can sail a dinghy you can sail anything. The quote, "The small-boat sailor is the real sailor," is famously attributed to Jack London. Put those sayings together and you get Sail a Small Boat Day at Richmond Yacht Club. No need to worry about the rigors of sailing in the Slot, however, as this event is designed for everyone, old and young, experienced and novice, and sailing takes place in the relatively protected Richmond Riviera.

continued on outside column of next sightings page

french polynesia —

a European Union (EU) citizen, you can only get a non-renewable 90-day visa upon arrival, and that's not much time to explore an area larger than Western Europe — seriously. Foreign boats can actually stay for 18 months, but the only way for North Americans to stay longer than 90 days is to arrange a "long stay visa" with a French consulate or embassy *in advance* of setting sail. See the PPJ site for details or contact the embassy/consulate nearest your homeport. You have to jump through some bureaucratic hoops, and the approval can take up to eight weeks, but having the extra time (six months or possibly a year) is well worth a little hassle.

Speaking of hassle, once again this year the PPJ Rally Committee is working

BILL BUSHING



After driving the trawler 'Maria' ashore, the punishing waves ripped her interior apart.



ALL PHOTOS WWW.NORCALSAILING.COM

continued

with Tahitian yacht agents, who offer fleet members a flat rate package of services: clearance in and out, access to duty-free fuel, and 'expatriation bond' exemptions for crew. Without the exemption, each crew member must deposit in a local bank the *cash* equivalent of a plane ticket to his or her home town. It's refundable on the day you check out, but you may take a hit on the currency exchange.

If you're heading west this season, we'd love to buy you a drink, snap your photo and get to know a little about you. Party dates are:

- Feb 25 — Vallarta YC, Nuevo Vallarta
 - Mar 4 — Balboa YC, Panama
 - Mar 7 — Shelter Bay Marina, Panama
- Hope to see you there.

— andy

anybody can play — continued

Boat rides are offered on all manner of small craft, ranging in size from 8-ft Optis and El Toros to centerboard boats like Vanguard 15s and Snipes, skiffs like 29ers and 49ers, multihulls such as Weta trimarans and Hobie Cats, and even small keelboats, like the Wylie Wabbit, Ultimate 20 and Open 5.70, with a wide range of shapes, sizes and speeds in between. Following a recent trend, stand-up paddleboards, pedal-craft and kayaks will be available to try out too.

If you have them, you're encouraged to bring a wetsuit and life jacket (but not the inflatable kind); warm, waterproof clothing if not. A limited number of PFDs will be available to borrow. Be prepared to get wet — bring a change of clothes and leave valuable electronics at home. Kids will need a parent to sign a waiver. Sign-ups will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis, and class representatives will be on hand to answer questions about their fleets.

Sail a Small Boat Day is free to attend, and you can even get a free hot dog lunch. This year's event will be held on Saturday, February 28, from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. For more information, see www.richmondyc.org.

— chris



These kids would tell you that sailing small boats is big fun. Get out and join them at Sail a Small Boat Day.

SIGHTINGS

the west coast's biggest warhorse

One of the hottest, sexiest new West Coast boats is also the biggest. Watch out, because *Rio100* is coming to town — Newport Harbor to be exact. If you followed the Rolex Sydney Hobart race in December, you probably know that she was one of four 100-footers. Built by Bakewell-White in 2003, she had raced in that event previously in her original 98-ft configuration, variously named *Lahana*, *Konica Minolta*, and *Zana*.

Early last year, Manouch Moshayedi of Corona del Mar purchased *Lahana* in Australia and delivered her to Cookson's Yachts in New Zealand for a complete refit with the goal of creating a boat that would be suitable for and competitive in West Coast ocean racing, and which would qualify for the Transpac Barn Door trophy.

Moshayedi is the founder and former CEO and chairman of sTec, Inc., a computer data storage company with locations in Silicon Valley and Southern California. In 2013, the company was bought by Irvine-based West Digital.

When we checked in with him in January, Moshayedi explained:

continued on outside column of next sightings page

hugo boss dismasts

After leading the doublehanded Barcelona World Race for the better part of two weeks, *Hugo Boss* dismasted on January 14 in the South Atlantic Ocean, about 370 miles east of Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. The IMOCA 60 had already set a new record for the passage from Barcelona to Gibraltar in the Mediterranean and a course record to the equator.

Pre-race favorites Alex Thomson, a 40-year-old Brit, and Pepe Ribes, a 43-year-old Spaniard, estimated that they had extended their lead to about 60 miles when the rig came down in a moderate easterly and big seas.

Both sailors were on deck making a headsail change when they believe that the central pin in the headsail furling



off brazil

drum sheared, leaving the mast unsupported from the front of the boat. Thomson watched helplessly from the bow as the mast and sails fell backward. "I looked up and instinctively I knew the mast was going to fall down," he said. "It kind of hovered there for a few seconds and then fell backwards into the water. Within a couple of minutes the mast broke in two where it was hinged over the boat. Pepe did a great job with the grinder cutting it away before the mast made a hole inside the boat in the big waves we had."

Regarding the pin that broke, Thomson said, "That part has been back to the supplier in the months leading up to the race to be serviced and checked. The

continued in middle column of next sightings page



The newly-redesigned and rebuilt Bakewell-White 'Rio100' at the start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart on December 26.

CARLO BORLENGHI

warhorse — continued

"The boat used to have water ballast, and we removed the back half of the boat, which had all the water ballast, and rebuilt the boat without it and without a canting keel, to qualify for the Barn Door. So the boat has been purpose-built for the Barn Door. We are also looking to break the monohull record on a boat without the use of stored power. *Wild Oats XI* is also participating in the Transpac, but that boat has a canting keel, water ballast, DSS lifting boards and all-electric and mechanical winch systems. This boat will get to Hawaii first, but it certainly is not a monohull in a traditional sense of the word."

Brett Bakewell-White redeveloped and modernized the design of *Rio100*. A crew of 20-25 people worked on the refit seven days a week for nine months. She now sports a wider, longer stern, a longer boom and a longer bowsprit. The helm stations were moved aft, and *Rio100* is now 6-7 tons lighter than was *Lahana*. Her winches are all manual. A new engine was installed with a new lifting prop, and a new lifting keel (from 19 to 14 feet) will facilitate entry into at least some West Coast marinas.

Rio100's first race was New Zealand's 230-mile Yates Cup in November, and she won it. Her second race was the 628-mile Rolex Sydney Hobart, which started on Boxing Day, December 26, in Sydney Harbour.

"*Rio100* performed very well," said Moshayedi about the Australian race. "Our primary goals were to get off the start line cleanly and make it to Hobart in one piece. The fact that we were in contention for third place up until a couple of hours before the finish was icing on the cake. We were still very happy with our fourth-place finish just 11 minutes behind the third-place finisher, *Ragamuffin 100*, which is a canting-keel boat with water ballast and a much larger sail plan."

The crew saw 35 knots on the nose the first night, triple zeros the next morning, then 35 knots from behind, followed by triple zeros again. "The only low point was when we parked at the head of the Derwent River and waited for *Ragamuffin 100*," said Moshayedi.

Aboard for the Sydney Hobart were skipper Moshayedi, navigator Peter Isler, tactician Gavin Brady, boat captain Keith Kilpatrick, Jeff Mesaano, Mike Howard, Mike Van Dyke, Mike Pentecost, Mike Mottl, Peter Van Niekerk, Alastair Campbell, Brad Ferrand, Duncan Macleod, Nick Partridge, Steve Kemp, Julian Freeman, Tyler Wolk, Bill Jenkins, Nick Vindin, San Franciscan Joe Penrod, Sean 'Doogie' Couvreur and Morgan Gutenkunst. The latter two sailed as youth in the Bay Area.

Gutenkunst had raced with Moshayedi on his TP52 *Rio*, so when *Rio100* was ready to go, he got the call to be one of the lead bowmen.

"The Sydney Hobart has always been on my list of races to do," said Gutenkunst. "The start in Sydney Harbour with all of the boats, media, and spectators was incredible. I also really enjoyed rounding Tasman Island — the cliffs did not disappoint."

"There is so much excitement about the race in Sydney," said Moshayedi. "Everyone knew about the race. When you arrive in Hobart, there is a warm welcome from the locals. I had never seen this type of a reception around a sailboat race."

Rio100 has been pulled apart again for loading onto a ship bound from Sydney to San Pedro. The boat will live on its cradle at the Windward yard in Marina del Rey. The next race will be Newport to Cabo starting on March 21. To learn more, see www.rioracingusa.com.

— chris



'Rio100' owner Manouch Moshayedi at the helm.

BRAD DAVIES / WWW.LIVESAILDIE.COM

SIGHTINGS

is apster still afloat?

Although it's been more than a month since the 32-ft Bristol Channel cutter *Apster* was abandoned 75 miles off the Monterey County coast, many Bay Area classic boat aficionados are still hoping against hope that she will be spotted and retrieved. As you'll read below, this Lyle Hess-designed woodie has a fascinating history, having literally



US COAST GUARD

Singlehander Jeff Weaver is winched to safety aboard a Coast Guard helicopter, as 'Apster' is left to drift with sails up. Many wonder where she is now.

'risen from the ashes' years ago.

It was Christmas Day when owner Jeff Weaver called for rescue because *Apster* was taking on water, reportedly through her hawse holes and possibly elsewhere. Conditions were nasty, with 10- to 15-foot seas and 30-knot winds. But according to the Coast Guard, by the time their rescue helicopter arrived on the scene to winch Weaver to safety, he'd been able to stop or substantially slow the inflow of sea water. (Our calls to Weaver requesting comments were not returned.)

With a staysail and triple-reefed main still up, *Apster* was left to drift with prevailing northwesterly winds and southbound currents.

Although it's possible she'll show up somewhere in Southern California or Mexico — if she stays afloat — she might also turn up on some Pacific island months from now, as other abandoned vessels have done.

Meanwhile, those who know the remarkable story of *Apster's* creation are keeping their fingers crossed that this sad report will not be her final chapter. Not only was she built from a classic design drawn by a renowned, old-school naval architect, but she'd become

somewhat of a local legend long before she was launched in October 2000. Why? Because back in 1986, with her hull nearly completed, she was partially destroyed during a fire at Bob Darr's Wooden Boatbuilding School in San Rafael. Shipwright Dan Jones — who'd helped build her — bought the charred hulk from insurers and carted her to his property in Marin. After 14 years and an estimated 4,000 hours of labor, the slender beauty was finally launched with an adoring crowd looking on. The immaculately finished cutter was named *Apster* after the son of Jones' buddy Peter Strietman: Alfred Peter Strietman Jr., who was then three years old. Sadly, not long after *Apster's* completion, Jones became seriously ill and was forced to sell his little gem to Weaver to pay for medical treatments.

Is *Apster* still afloat out there somewhere? It's anybody's guess. Here at *Latitude* we too are keeping our fingers crossed.

— andy



WOODY SKORIAK

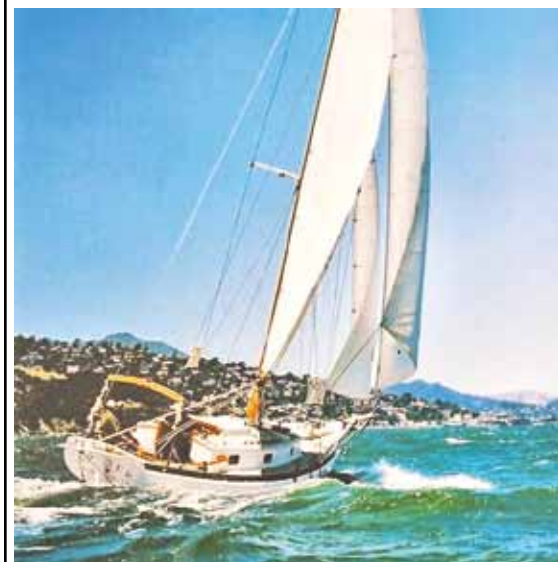
Fond memories: 'Apster's' namesake, Alfred, christened her with a bottle of champagne at her launch in 2000.

hugo boss —

material it is made from is the right kind. I think we need to get this broken piece back and looked at by a metallurgist. We are talking about a metal bar which is 22 mm in diameter. And the piece had been non-destructive tested two months prior to the race. So I am not sure that there is anything else we could have done."

They motored to Salvador de Bahia, arriving safely on January 18. "Both of us would like to come back and do it again," said Thomson.

Frenchmen Bernard Stamm and Jean



ALL PHOTOS WOODY SKORIAK EXCEPT AS NOTED

continued

Le Cam on *Cheminées Poujoulat* took over the lead in the nonstop around-the-world race, which started on New Year's Eve, with Spaniard Guillermo Altadill and José Muñoz of Chile on *Neutrogena* striving to get past them.

As we were going to press, the leaders were closing in on the Cape of Good Hope, having escaped the St. Helena High, and *Cheminées Poujoulat* was out in front of *Neutrogena* by more than 100 miles. See www.barcelonaworldrace.org for more.

— chris

sailing is a love potion

'Wiki Steve' Felton's Tacoma-based Hylas 44 *Penn Station* was the 'love boat' of the 2014 Baja Ha-Ha rally. How does love happen? Well let Darrel Anderson tell his side of the story.

"I had the most gigantic crush on Amy Beth Canonica ever since exchanging names with her aboard my best friend Steve's *Penn Station* off Tacoma during the summer of 2012. The shenanigan of the day was sending the girls up *Penn Station's* 60-ft mast to let them marvel at the breathtaking scenery of the Pacific Northwest. Amy took a little convincing when it was her turn, but we got her to agree — if we hoisted her slowly. Right. Before she could finish saying 'Ready', we had her 10 feet in the air and rising quickly. She screamed the whole way up. When we got the halyard cleated off, we shouted, 'We're

continued on outside column of next sightings page



Clockwise from upper left: Builder Dan Jones and three-year-old Alfred on launch day; the lovely cutter under sail on the Bay in 2006; a crowd of admirers witnesses the launch; looking sweet as she glides across the Bay.



LATITUDE / JR

SIGHTINGS

sailing is a love potion

going to eat, be back in a while.' You always tease the ones you love.

"As we gently let her down, I pretended to catch her in my arms — and slipped in a little pinch on her butt. 'Hey!' she said, 'I don't know you that well. Yet.'

"That was all I needed to make sure I was going to get to know her better, as she has the greatest personality — to say nothing of being stunningly beautiful. Two years later, after a lot of sailing, racing and a plethora of memorable and hilarious moments together, our friendship blossomed into a relationship. As a result, we became practically inseparable.

"While helping deliver *Penn Station* from Tacoma to San Francisco, I told Steve and the other crew, Nikki, that I was going to ask for Amy's hand in marriage. I just had to find the right occasion. It came on November 9, after we'd done the Ha-Ha and while we were anchored off Cabo San Lucas.

"With the help of newfound Ha-Ha friend Nick Caldwell, I went up the mast and in shaky letters managed to spell out: Will. You. Marry.

continued on outside column of next sightings page

smooth sailing

If you love visiting tropical sailing destinations, you may be wondering how Obama's recent push to warm relations with Cuba will affect recreational sailors. We've curious too.

The way we understand it, even now, American travelers cannot simply show up and explore the island (and its offshore islets) independently. New guidelines available for your perusal on the US Treasury Department website seem to indicate that travelers must be part of a tour that focuses on "people-to-people" encounters, and must guarantee a "full-time schedule of educational activities that will result in meaningful interaction" with Cubans.

O-o-o-kay. That's not exactly unfettered access, but it's a step in the right



LATITUDE / RICHARD

to cuba?

direction. Sounds like the new rules might open the door for some Florida YC to organize a Miami to Havana race, with a regatta after arrival that includes Cuban crews. Prizes? Easy. How about a box of *Cubano* cigars or a bottle of 12-year-old Havana Club rum?

Or perhaps a Florida-based bareboat company — The Moorings and Sunsail are both based in Clearwater — could organize an 'educational' flotilla to the island, where Cuban hosts/crew come along to offer local knowledge: i.e. avoiding unmarked reefs and discerning the differences between rhumba, salsa and Afro-Cuban jazz. In any case, the possibilities are exciting.

— andy



Left to right: The passions of Nikki, Steve, Darrel and Amy have inspired us to nickname 'Penn Station' the love boat! Let's hope the passion stays hot.

sailing is a love potion

Me. One word on each of the four spreaders. Then we convinced Amy that she had to go aloft once again.

"Having not forgotten her trip aloft two years before, Amy was hesitant. But we finally got her into the chair and began to hoist. The wakes caused by the pangas resulted in her being tossed about, and she yelled at us to let her back down. But there was no way we could let her down.

"When she got to the first set of spreaders, she read Will and You. In between cursing at us, she was giggling. But she fearlessly held on as we hoisted her to the second set of spreaders. When she saw Marry and Me, she shouted down that she loved me.

"Loving me didn't mean she would marry me, so I shouted back, 'If you ever want to come down, you'll have to give me a yes or no.'

"Yes! Si! Yes!' she shouted.

"We then quickly lowered her down. I almost put the ring on the wrong finger because I was so ecstatic that I will get to spend the rest of my life with the most brilliantly beautiful, courageously strong companion, who is always up for an adventure. The unconditional love we have for each other is something I have never experienced."

Nice story, isn't it?

But there was more, as recounted by Wiki Steve, owner of *Penn Station*.

"Nikki and I first met at Whidbey Island Race Week over two years ago. We were introduced by mutual friends because we both owned and raced San Juan 24s. Nikki and I hadn't seen each other since then, however, because of our previous relationships, and because I was preparing to leave Puget Sound on *Penn Station* for a long cruise. When I mentioned on a Facebook post that I had room for one more crew on *Penn Station*, Nikki responded. After all, we were both single. So I signed her on.

"Nikki and I really hit it off on the trip down to San Francisco with Darrel and Amy, so I asked her to stay on for the second leg to the Ha-Ha start in San Diego. She agreed, even though it meant it was just the two of us, and that she would get fired from her job back home. With no remorse we harbor-hopped down, stopping at Monterey, Morro Bay and Catalina. After a few drinks at our favorite pub in San Diego, and a tearful goodbye, Nikki caught a flight back home to the Northwest. It soon dawned on both of us that her going back north was a bad idea.

"Two days later I asked Nikki to join me for my proposed trip around the world. 'I hoped you were going to ask me,' she said. So she became my official girlfriend, and rapidly began selling or giving away her possessions. She was back aboard *Penn Station* two weeks before the start of the Ha-Ha, which we would do with my best friend Darrel and his then-just-girlfriend Amy — although we knew a proposal was in the offing.

"The Ha-Ha was all we had been hoping it would be for two years, and *Penn Station* truly was the 'love boat'. I couldn't have dreamed up a better way to leave the States to start off a world cruise. Nikki and I are currently wintering in La Paz with our new friends at The Shack, but will be sailing over to La Cruz for provisioning prior to doing the Puddle Jump in a few months."

— richard



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Darrel organized a risky proposal in 'Penn Station's rigging, but luckily for him Amy went for it.

SIGHTINGS

cyber seafloor tour of the bay

We often take a cynical view of how government agencies spend taxpayer dollars, but rarely, if ever, do we take issue with the efforts of the USGS (US Geological Survey) or NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). In fact, without the work of these agencies, the navigational info available to American mariners would be drastically reduced.

A reader steered us toward an amazing video that is a byproduct of survey work done by both agencies in collaboration with the California State University Monterey Bay. It's a virtual flyover of San Francisco

Bay — without the water — that reveals detailed contours of the seafloor, including actual rock pinnacles, sand waves and the influences of human activities. The bird's eye view takes you on a tour from the South Bay north to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, then southwest through Raccoon Strait, around the Central Bay, out the Golden Gate and back in again.

Beyond the gee-whiz factor, you can glean some

useful insights into why currents would flow faster in some places than others, as well as the best spots to anchor — and not to anchor — during Fleet Week or while doing an inside-the-Bay overnight. Our hats are off to Peter Dartnell of the USGS, who produced the four-minute video in 2009.

The easiest way to get to it is to Google "fly over the seafloor of san francisco bay" which will bring up the USGS Multimedia Gallery. We think you'll agree it's an awesome effort worthy of your tax dollars.

— andy

a high-flying cat

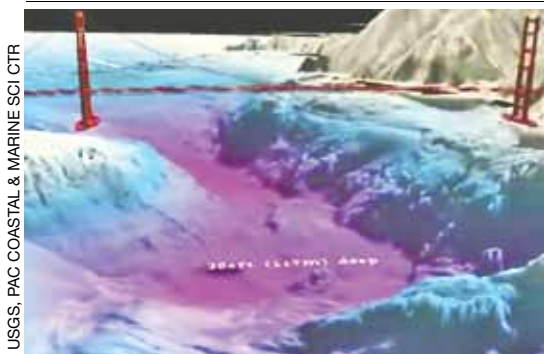
Just before we left San Diego for the start of the Ha-Ha in late October last year, we were treated to an unusual sight — a big multi-hull coming out of the water at Driscoll's Boat Yard on Shelter Island

without benefit of a Travelift. The boat was Gunboat 62 *Cucu Belle*, ex-*Safari*, which had been built in South Africa in 2002. Her 28-ft beam was too wide for the Travelift, so a heavy-duty crane was brought in for the job. That cost \$7,000.

Soon to be christened *Chim Chim* by her new Southern California owner, the big cat has seen a lot of ocean miles pass beneath her hulls. In fact, we remember sailing *Profligate* side-by-side with her from Isle Fourche to St. Barth in late 2004. For the last four years the

Morrelli & Melvin design has been cruised all over the South Pacific, as far as New Zealand and Australia.

The cat's new owner is giving her a complete refit. "We've gutted all the wiring and plumbing, removed the genset and bathtub, and will be installing all new electronics and solar powered air-conditioning,"



USGS, PAC COASTAL & MARINE SCI CTR

Ever wonder why current runs faster in some parts of the Bay than others? Check out this video for a fascinating look at the San Francisco Bay seafloor.



LATITUDE / RICHARD

Skipper Nils Erickson strikes a pose next to one of 'Chim Chim's saildrives. Changes included removing the bathtub.

construction resumes

If you know anything about the international shipping industry, you're aware that the lock size of the now-100-year-old Panama Canal has been woefully inadequate for decades, given the size of many modern ships. Panamanian leaders addressed this problem several years ago by launching an ambitious project that will add a new lane of locks alongside the originals which will accommodate ships that are more than 30% larger.

Unfortunately massive cost overruns brought the project to a halt early last year, while an intensely complicated lawsuit was litigated. A settlement was finally reached last month, awarding \$233 million to the building consortium, which includes Spanish, Italian, Belgian



LATITUDE / RICHARD

on panama's new ditch

and Panamanian contractors.

That was only half the amount being sought. Nevertheless construction will soon restart, and the project is expected to be completed by early 2016, and open for business shortly thereafter.

Cruising sailboats will probably never travel in the new lane, and how the expansion will ultimately affect them is anybody's guess.

Meanwhile, plans were announced in 2012 for a competing canal in Nicaragua, to be financed by China. But it would be three times as long as Panama's famous 'ditch', and would cost \$50 billion, only a fraction of which has been identified thus far. Industry experts are skeptical.

— andy

cat — continued

reports skipper Nils Erickson. And that's just the start. Instead of the hulls getting new paint, they will be covered in colored vinyl.

The owner plans to daysail and cruise the boat in Southern California, but he also wants to do this summer's Los Angeles to Honolulu Transpac. "Our goal is to have the boat in the water by May 15 so we can qualify for the race," says Erickson, "We're on schedule, as everything was removed by January 1, and the new work has started."

Although *Chim Chim* is in the process of becoming the lightest Gunboat ever, she'll probably not be a threat for elapsed-time multi-hull honors in the race to Honolulu.

Readers may remember that Lloyd Thornburg's Santa Fe and St. Barth-based orange Gunboat 66 *Phaedo*, an admittedly higher-tech and slightly longer boat, did 427-miles in just 24 hours in the last Transpac before being dismantled. If *Phaedo* skipper Paul Hand — who was *Chim Chim*'s skipper in the Caribbean in 2004 — can keep *Phaedo*'s mast up, it will be hard for *Chim Chim* to maintain pace. But you never know. And it should be a fast and sweet ride.

— richard



Yard workers look on as the big Gunboat 'Chim Chim' dangles in her cradle. She's been trimmed down to fighting weight in order to do battle in this summer's Transpac.