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“Pineapple Sails helped in more ways than just building us fast sails.” There is also Pineapple Sails’ “…service to the sailing community and promoting the sport.” Shameless placed first in division on both days of this year’s Vallejo Race. And George and Harry and Pineapple Sails are proud of it!

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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 electronic submissions to editorial@latitude38.com, and all snail mail submissions to Latitude 38 editorial department, 15 Lomust Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941. For more specific information, request writers’ guidelines from the above address or see www.latitude38.com/writers.htm.
Four-stateroom version, great for the cruising family. $190,000.

51' JEANNEAU, 1994
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37' ENDEAVOUR, 1977
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43' BELIZE, 2004 ................ $130,000
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**Tuesday Turnbuckles**

**TALK ABOUT EFFICIENT:** Every time I have a 'work weekend' aboard our boat I can't believe how long it takes to get things done. No matter how well organized I am . . . there's always something that comes up. Either it's something additional I need or I end up 'improvising' because I don't have the best tool for the job! By Sunday afternoon I will have made several trips to the marine hardware store . . . sometimes several different stores! If you've ever worked on your boat, you know what I'm talking about. What's ironic . . . it's inefficiencies like this which inspired the creation of KKMI. This boat yard is simply the most efficient marine repair facility I've ever seen. KKMI has even studied 'time & motion'. I guess it's this very model of efficiency that has led Northern California's most reputable marine electronics company to open a new location at KKMI. It sounds pretty smart to me. Now the most efficient repair center will offer a super efficient marine electronics store. I was going to schedule another 'work weekend' . . . but now I'm taking my boat to KKMI. After all . . . 'I'd rather be sailing' plus save time and money.

★

**SLOOP DE JOUR:** Launching a new sailing yacht is always an exciting time and for most of us . . . not an everyday occurrence. When the sloop happens to be 130-ft long, we're now talking about something incredible. Over the past two years Ken Keefe of KKMI has been a key member in the team who developed and built Janice of Wyoming, a stunning design by Dubois Naval Architects. Constructed and launched at Alloy Yachts in New Zealand . . . she has just completed her sailing trials last month and is now ready for extensive world cruising. To learn more visit www.alloyyachts.com and click on 'Latest News'. WOW . . . how cool!

★

**SPEAKING OF LATEST NEWS:** The yacht brokerage at KKMI has been very busy. The past month has seen the sale of a variety of yachts. Now they don't have enough quality listings to satisfy their customers' needs. If you are thinking of selling your boat you should give Graham Macmillan a call. He will meet you aboard your boat, prepare a detailed analysis of how to market your vessel, and then implement a program that will get your yacht sold in the least amount of time. He can also find ways for you to save money while you are waiting for your boat to be sold. If you're thinking of selling your boat . . . you owe it to yourself to give Graham a call.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catalina 34</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalina 34</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>75,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catalina 320</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>115,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catalina 320</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>89,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catalina 30</td>
<td>1988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden Wave</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>122,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenger 40</td>
<td>1972</td>
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### PREOWNED SAILING YACHTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irwin 37 ketch</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>69,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santana 35</td>
<td>1981</td>
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<td>Beneteau 345</td>
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<td>Hunter 34</td>
<td>1998</td>
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<td>Hunter 326</td>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>Hunter 29.5</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>41,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>S2 30CC</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>35,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mollycat 17</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>17,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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- New Ocean Alexander
- Ocean Alexander 58
- Kha Shing CMY 52, 1984
- Bayliner 2859, 1994

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Page 22 • Latitude 38 • June, 2005
Santa Cruz 52 (1993). This beautiful fast cruiser looks like new. Stunning red topsides, carbon rig, electric main halyard, watermaker, great sails. Best around only $490,000!

Farr 40 Pendragon. Incredible inventory, immaculate condition and impeccably prepared for you to take her to the starting line. Located in Marina del Rey.

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<tr>
<th>Length</th>
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<tr>
<td>8'6&quot;</td>
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<td>10'2&quot;</td>
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IT’S HA-HA TIME!

Well, actually not quite. But it is time to start making your plans for this year’s 12th annual Baja Ha-Ha Rally, which begins this year on Monday, October 31.

As we often explain in these pages, the Ha-Ha is a 750-mile cruisers’ rally from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas, with stops along the way at Turtle Bay and Bahia Santa Maria.

Prospective entrants should be clear that this offshore sailing event definitely is not a hand-holding service for those incapable of making this trip on their own. However, it is a fabulous opportunity to get acquainted with hundreds of like-minded cruisers as you ‘cruise-in-company’ along the Baja coast. The two stops en route to Cabo give even the slowest boats a chance to catch up, and allow everyone to rest and recreate.

At this writing, nearly 70 prospective entrants have already requested entry packets. To get yours, send a 9x12, self-addressed envelope – no return postage necessary – with a check for $18 (for postage and handling) to: Baja Ha-Ha, Inc., 21 Apollo Road, Tiburon, CA 94920.

Application packets will go out the first week in June, complete with special offers from the sponsors listed in this ad. The event entry fee is $299.

What are you waiting for? Is this your year to Ha-Ha? Check out our Web site at WWW.BAJA-HAHA.COM for more details!
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**May 29** — Brisbane Marina’s Annual Nautical Flea Market and BBQ, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lien sale auction at 1 p.m. (viewing at noon). Info, (650) 583-8975.

**May 30** — Observe Memorial Day.


**June 5** — Swap Meet at Minney’s Yacht Surplus in Newport Beach. Info, (949) 548-4192.


**June 11** — Ballena Isle Marina Annual Swap Meet. Details, (510) 523-5528.

**June 11-12** — 6th Annual Catnip Cup, a no-host overnight to Vallejo for multihulls. Info, gf@sracorp.com.

**June 12** — BAADS (Bay Area Association of Disabled Sailors) general meeting, 11 a.m. at South Beach YC. Details, www.baads.org.

**June 15, 22, 29 & July 6** — “Boat Smart,” four evenings of boating safety classes at Tamalpais High School (Mill Valley), 7-9 p.m. $30 charge for textbook. Info and reservations, Marin Power & Sail Squadron, (415) 884-0776.

**June 18** — First Annual Open House at six Alameda yacht clubs, celebrating Summer Sailing. Make the rounds at Encinal YC, Island YC, Oakland YC, Aeon YC, Ballena Bay YC, and Alameda YC between 2-6 p.m.

**June 18** — Open House at OCSC in Berkeley, 4-7 p.m., free. Info, (510) 843-4200.


**June 18-19** — Nelson Yachts Open House (Alameda), 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free demo sails on Hunter trailerables. Ruth Scott, (510) 337-2870.

**June 19** — Fathers’ Day — take the old man sailing!

**June 21** — Full moon on a Tuesday night.

**June 25** — Alameda YC’s Marine Swap Meet and Open House at Fortman Marina, starting at 7 a.m. Info, www.alamedayachtclub.org and/or John, (707) 712-2987.


**July 4** — Celebrate Independence Day.

**July 15-20** — Nippon Maru II, a 361-foot, four-masted barque, will be offering daily tours at Pier 30/32. Info, (415) 447-9822 or www.sailsanfrancisco.org.

**Racing**

**May 27** — Spinnaker Cup, leaving Knox Buoy at 11 a.m. and arriving in Monterey by midnight, hopefully. SFYC, (415) 789-5647 or MPYC, (831) 333-9603.


**May 28-29** — Memorial Day Regatta for J/120s, J/105s, Melges 24s, and J/24s. SFYC, (415) 563-6363.


**May 28-30** — 62nd Swiftsure Race, the big one for North-
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www.southbeachharbor.com

June 3-5 — MadCap Regatta, a three-on-three J/105 team race between SFYC (skippers Chris Perkins, Phil Perkins, and Shawn Bennett) and NYYC. Info, (415) 563-6363.

June 4 — SSS In-the-Bay. Jeff Berman, (415) 302-0101.

June 4-5 — 24th Go for the Gold Regatta on pretty Scotts Flat Lake (Nevada City). Gold Country YC, (530) 273-9517.

June 6-9, 1985 — It Was Twenty Years Ago Today, from a Racing Sheet article called "Long Beach Race Week":

Bay Area yachts fared well at the June 6-9 Long Beach Race Week, winning two classes out of six and placing third in another. Fifty-nine entries, ranging in size from the Peterson 55 Checkmate to the Davidson 34 Pendragon, took part in the four-race event. Heavy fog added an element of adventure to the first day's racing, although clear visibility was restored for the remainder of the series.

Wall Street Duck, the 38-footer designed by Alameda's Carl Schumacher, dominated the small boat class. Duck took three firsts and a second to outdistance Mike Busch's Nelson/Marek 36 Crackerjack from San Diego. Carl had been trying to get the Duck to this series for three years, but TransPac preparations in 1983 and damages from hitting a rock in 1984 foiled those attempts. Owner Jim Robinson turned the boat over to Carl and several of his friends, who collectively put the money together to make the trip. Living out of a motor home and sleeping on the boat, the Duck group, which included Steve Jeppesen, Jim Walton, Rob Moore, Scott Owens, Billy Brandt, Hartwell Jordan, Dennis Grujich and Jim Batean, made the effort well worth their while.

Also victorious was the N/M 41 Clockwork, owned by Lee Otterson and Ray Pingree of the San Francisco YC. Using a new medium weight #1 genoa, the orange sloop was able to break away at the start with good speed. They got lost three times in the fog during the first race, but overcame that with three bullets in the rest of the series. The last race win was reduced to a second later, though. Clockwork had been over early, but couldn't hear the radio announcement to that effect because they didn't have channel 72 on their VHF. Skipper Pingree argued successfully that since the race committee had been late in sending him the race instructions (which noted the use of channel 72), he didn't have enough time to install the proper equipment. A 30-second penalty was applied to Clockwork's time, dropping her behind the N/M 41 Free Enterprise in the race but still ahead on overall points.


June 11 — 15th Annual Delta Ditch Run, a delightful 67.5-mile tour of the Delta. Don 'Lance’ Jesberg isn't racing this year due to family commitments, so it's someone else's turn to win! RYC, (510) 237-2821.


June 17, 1995 — Ten Years After, from a Racing Sheet article titled "Catalina Race": Metropolitan YC's Catalina Race was reborn and basically died again on June 17, when only six boats responded to the starting guns off Baker Beach. After a two year hiatus, and after repositioning the race so that it no longer conflicts with Encinal YC's popular Santa Barbara Race, hopes were high for a comeback this year. No one expected anything like 127 boats, which was the all-time high in 1988, but the six boat turnout was way below the anticipated 20-30 entries.

But if this really was the end of this once-great race, it went...
The most significant factor in the durability of your cruising sail is the quality of the sailcloth. It’s why North Cloth designs and manufactures its own premium NorDac™ and NorLam™ cruising fabrics to outperform and outlast any other sailcloth in their category. It’s one more reason why more cruising sailors rely on North than any other sailmaker in the world.
out with a bang: Sayonara. Larry Ellison’s new 78-foot Farr ILC maxi, smashed the course record, finishing the 360-mile course in 34 hours, 30 minutes and 53 seconds. They lowered the old record of 35 hours, 20 minutes and 40 seconds, set by the Farr 68 Winterhawk in 1989 by about 40 minutes. In moderate winds that peaked at 30 knots, Sayonara stayed fairly close to shore, arriving at Point Conception the next morning. Because of the early time of day, navigator Stan Honey elected to take the boat down the south side of the Santa Barbara Channel, leaving Anacapa to starboard.

“We crossed the line around 8:30 on Sunday night, and motored straight back to Marina del Rey,” explained crewmember David Thomson. “Sayonara is a ‘dry’ boat, as we don’t believe in drinking out there, and Larry (Ellison) doesn’t drink at all. But somehow a few bottles of champagne materialized from down below, and we toasted the new boat and our first record. We also celebrated my 50th birthday, which was literally that day. What a great way to remember it!”

Sayonara’s crew was met by stretch limos in Marina del Rey, and then whisked back to the Bay Area in a company airplane. They were home before the next boat finished, setting a ‘round-trip record’ that may stand forever!

The radical Elliott Marine, a 52-foot Kiwi custom schooner that looks like a cross between a Melgi and a BOC boat (see Sightsings), pulled in just before dawn on Monday morning. Their elapsed time was 42:47:49. Like the Farr maxi, Elliott Marine did a button hook around the committee boat and headed for Long Beach. “It was an easy trip, and we had lots of laughs,” claimed crewmember Alan Weaver. “The boat handles like a dream — the faster it goes the more stable it gets!” Elliott Marine was sailed by two Americans (Mike Taylor was the other), two non-English-speaking Japanese (“They loved to fold sails and coil lines!” said Alan), and five Kiwis, including owner Tom McCall and his son Andrew.

Only two other boats finished behind the two TransPac-bound maxis: Lee Garami’s yellow Hobie 33 My Rubber Ducky arrived Monday evening to post a time of 55:55:37, followed by Rick Gio’s Freya 39 Gypsy Warrior after 60:22:10 on the course. On corrected time (applying PHRF ratings not adjusted for downwind sailing), the fleet sorted out as follows: Sayonara, Gypsy Warrior, Rubber Ducky and Elliott Marine.

The race ended with a bang, literally, for the other two boats: both Team Growty, Rick Johnson’s Martin 242 from Arizona, and Coquelicot, race organizer Bob Gray’s Ranger 33, were dismasted south of Point Conception. Both boats were towed in to Santa Barbara by Navy vessels. With one-third of the fleet dismasted — surely another record — and the two big boats gone before anyone else arrived, the awards ceremony in Avalon must have been a pretty lonely affair!

June 18 — Coastal Cup, a 277-mile sprint to Santa Barbara, EYC. (510) 522-3272.
June 18 — South Bay YRA Summer Series #3, hosted by BVBC. Info, http://sbyra.home.comcast.net.
June 18-19 — Spring One Design Regatta for Santana 22s, Moore 24s, Melges 24s, SC 27s, and Olson 30s. SCYC. (831) 425-0690.
June 18-19 — USODA (Optimist) PCCs. SFYC Youth Office. (415) 435-9525.

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LAKETAHOWEINDJAMMERSYC—EveryWednesday

LAKEYOSEMITE—EverySunday night through
9/1. Jim Stealy, (209) 383-6149, or ozone@zim.com.

MONTEREYPENINSULAYC—SunsetSeries, every
Wednesday night through 9/28. Ron, (831) 626-9169.

OAKLANDYC—Sweet16MidweekSeries, Wednesday

RICHMONDCYC—WednesdayNights: 6/1, 6/15, 7/6,

ST.FRANCISYC—FolkboatWednesdayNights: 6/1, 6/8,

SANTA CRUZYC—WetWednesdays throughout Daylight
Savings Time. Larry, (831) 423-8111, lweaver@cruzio.com.

SAUSALITOCYC—TuesdayNights. SpringSunsetSeries:
6/7, 6/21, George, (415) 999-9358.

SEQUOIAYC—Every Wednesday night through 10/28.
Charlie Watt, (650) 361-9472.

SIERRAPOINTYC—Every Tuesday night through 8/30.
Larry Walters, (650) 361-9341.

SOUTH BEACHYC—FridayNights: 6/3, 6/17, 6/24,
7/15, 7/22, 7/29, 8/5, etc. Sherry Nash, (650) 302-1187.

STOCKTONSC—Every Wednesday night: 6/1-8/24. Jim
Hachman, (209) 474-6659.

TAHOECYC—Wednesday nights: 6/1-8/31, and Laser Se-

TIBURONYC—FridayNights: 6/3, 6/10, 6/17, 7/8, 7/22,
7/29, 8/2, 8/9, 8/26. Lesa, (415) 332-4014.

TREASURE ISLAND SC—Thursday Night Vanguard 15

VALLEJOYC—Every Wednesday night through 9/28.
Gary Ciccerello, (707) 643-1254.

Please send your calendar items by the 10th of the month
to Latitude 38 (Attn: Calendar), 15 Locust Avenue, Mill Valley,
CA, 94941. Better yet, fax them to us at (415) 383-5816 or
e-mail them to rob@latitude38.com. 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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June Weekend Currents

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Page 40 • Latitude 38 • June, 2005
Rascal**
J/105, 2001

Sequoyah*
Fine-a-lee*
Bifrost II**
Rascal
Wind Shear*
Mad Max*
La Aventura*
Jezebel**
Cia Bella*

Raptor
Windwalker
Bonnie Lassie
Zingara
J/35

$119,000

$105,000

$89,000

$49,000

$185,000

$275,000

$55,000

$46,000

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Windwalker
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SAN DIEGO

NEWPORT BEACH

ALAMEDA

SAIL California

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HELP WITH BOAT PARTNERSHIPS

I'm writing in response to Jim Rasmussen's request for help on a boat partnership. There is — or has been — a publication for that subject titled Yachtsman's Legal Guide To Co-Ownership. It was written by Dexter and Paula Odin, and published in 1981 by John de Graff, Inc., Clinton Corners, New York 12514. The publication goes into great detail about how and why to draw up a legal document for a partnership. I found this little gem a little late — after a partnership I had been in fell apart.

H. Bernard Quante
Ta Mana
Sausalito

BOAT PARTNERSHIPS 101

There was a letter in the May edition from a Jim Rasmussen requesting information on setting up a boat partnership. You might want to refer him to the March/April 2005 edition of Wooden Boat, for on page 46 there is an article titled Boat Partnerships 101.

P.S. I don’t know how you keep up the enthusiasm, but Latitude sure is fun to read!

Jim Hildinger
South Lake Tahoe

HELP WITH HIGH SPEED WIRELESS AT PUNTA MITA

I read the 'Lectronic item about Latitude and SailMail perhaps working together to set up high speed Internet access for anchored boats at Punta Mita — and perhaps other anchorages in Mexico. What a great idea! I'll cheerfully sign up to help pay for the equipment needed for such wireless hotspots on the water. I'll go a step further and offer my son-in-law's expert services in advising just what equipment should be used — he built eBay's entire website structure!

Bob Wilson
Bobcat, Crowther 38
Brisbane, California / Melbourne, Australia

Bob — Our next step is figuring out how much the provider in Mexico would charge for an indeterminate number of users.

For the record, at this point we're still at the pre-cruising-season exploratory stage, and haven't even asked SailMail for a technology commitment. But Stan Honey and Jim Corenman of not-for-profit SailMail are good friends, and there might even be some good synergy, because if at some point there were enough hotspots at Mexican anchorages, it might take some of the load off SailMail stations, whose capacity can be better utilized for boats offshore.
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**LETTERS**

† †  CAN I GET A BERTH TO NEW ZEALAND?

I’m about to graduate from Georgia Tech in Atlanta, and once I get out of school I hope to crew on some boats. I’ve found a job in New Zealand, and would like to find a berth on a boat sailing there this summer. Will there be many boats leaving in late May for the South Pacific? Do you think I’d have a chance getting on a boat that would take me to New Zealand?

Brian Newhouse
Atlanta, Georgia

Brian — For both safety and pleasure, recreational boats have to follow the seasons. There won’t be many boats leaving California for the South Pacific in late May because, in addition to it being rather late in the season, it would mean crossing a major hurricane zone right at the start of hurricane season. If you want to sail from North America to French Polynesia, the place to be is Mexico in February or March, when a young guy with a college degree has an excellent chance of finding a berth.

Another thing to keep in mind is that hardly any of the boats sailing across the Pacific will reach New Zealand before early November. Why? Because it’s winter in the southern hemisphere from May to October and, compared to the South Pacific, the weather is dreadful.

If you don’t have to be in New Zealand for your job until November, you could fly to French Polynesia, Tonga, or Fiji right now, and probably get a berth for the rest of the way to New Zealand later in the year. Papeete is the best place to find a berth because there is always a lot of crew-shuffling there.

† † I’M ASKING YOU TO RISK YOUR LIFE

Blair Grinols made a very provocative statement in the interview with him in the May issue: “. . . if you just constantly clean your oil rather than change it, it will last just about forever. I learned that — and the fact that oil has better lubricity after a bit of use — at an oil seminar years ago.”

I have always believed these things but haven’t seen them in print until now. Grinols is risking his life(!) by saying such stuff, and now I’m asking you to risk your life(!) by following up with some investigative reporting. What seminar did he attend? Who sponsored it? Was he present himself? Who do we contact to prove his statements? This is big stuff.

Jim Hildinger
South Lake Tahoe

Jim — No kidding we risked our lives by publishing that stuff! Ever since the May issue came out, we’ve been followed by guys wearing sunglasses, black hats, and black coveralls with ‘Big Oil’ embroidered on the back. And when we got to our office this morning, there were a couple of bullets on our desk with our names scratched in them. They were resting in a puddle of oil. We’re too scared to do any investigative reporting.

Blair says he attended the seminar decades ago and can’t remember who put it on. But it was presented by some guy from the automotive industry in Detroit. We bet he’s dead now(!), don’t you? We don’t have any proof that what Blair says is true, but you might be interested in the following letters.

† † BLAIR GRINOLS IS WRONG ABOUT THE OIL FILTERS

In the May interview, Blair Grinols said he got “the last of the toilet paper oil filters.” But that’s not true. Check out the following site for a list of current manufacturers at www.wefilterit.com.

† †
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LETTERS

P.S. Reading Latitude is one of the highlights of my month.
Mike Costello
Huntington Beach

↑↑↑I GOT 986,000 MILES WITH A TOILET PAPER FILTER
The ‘toilet paper filter’ for gas and diesel engines that Blair Grinols referred to is currently marketed as the Frantz Filter. And Blair is right, it’s the best filter in the world for gas and diesel engines. I know, because while using them I got 985,000 miles on my six-cylinder Mercedes between 1973 and 1994.
Skip Hess
Java Moon, Yankee Clipper 41
San Diego

↑↑↑THE ROLLS ARE FOR MY OIL, NOT MY HEAD
I have been using a ‘toilet paper filter’ for my fuel and oil for years. They work really well. And it’s easy to get rid of the old filters — just take them to the beach and light them up!
Daryl Yeakle
Q, Willard 30
San Francisco

↑↑↑THE MECHANICS OF GETTING A SLIP ARE A JOKE
Just a little response to the commentary in ‘Lectronic regarding slip prices here in Santa Barbara. I guess I agree with the point of view that it seems strange that people are making money dealing in property which is state-owned. I have a 40-ft slip here occupied by my Beneteau First 40.7. My slip is purported to be worth upwards of $60,000 at this point.
But let me ask another question: Does it seem rational that I should be paying taxes — called possessory interest taxes — on the water that my boat sits in? And is it rational that the city, who administers our slips, should collect a transfer fee — which is just being raised from $125 per foot to $150 per foot — to add a new owner to the slip lease? And that

Santa Barbara Harbor, where the views are as lovely as the rights to the berths are expensive. Say, is that David Crosby’s schooner ‘Maya’?

includes adding any relative — other than my wife — to the slip lease.
To carry it a little further afield, how is it that a mooring
“Remedy,” winner of the MORC Int’ls, shows our dominance in boats under 30’. We rule in PHRF and among today’s production racers and cruisers. The Farr 52 Chernikeeff shows the power of UK Ultra technology.

“Cheyenne” (ex “PlayStation”) used Halsey in shattering records all over. And the 140’ Frers “Rebecca” proves our expertise is scalable to megayachts.

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in Avalon can be sold for $200,000 or more, when the harbor is owned by the city? I don't think Santa Barbara slip owners have a corner on the absurdity of the situations created by the present shortage of certain-sized slips in certain locations.

You mention the waiting list for slips in our harbor. That waiting list is and for many years has been: 1) A joke to all who understand the mechanics of obtaining a slip for a boat in Santa Barbara, and 2) Populated mostly by either fools or people who are speculating on obtaining a slip for free and thereby getting a quick profit.

So to answer the question of whether or not it's right for someone to make a bunch of money off land owned by taxpayers, I would have to say probably not — but to rectify the situation equitably would require that we correct all the stupid rules set down by our governments. And you and I both know that's not going to happen.

P.S. I've been a fan of Latitude for too many years — and we enjoy seeing Profligate tied up at one of our million-dollar slips occasionally.

Max Lynn
Tranquility, Beneteau 40.7
Santa Barbara

Max — There's not a point in your letter we disagree with — including the one that nothing is going to be rectified.

Thanks for the kind words. We enjoy tying up at Santa Barbara's million-dollar slips from time to time — and we'll be doing so again in early August just before the start of the race to King Harbor.

EXPENSIVE RIGHTS TO SLIPS IN SANTA BARBARA
I read the report in the April 19 'Lectronic that somebody was asking $1 million for the rights to an 80-ft slip in Santa Barbara Municipal Harbor, and that another person was asking $200,000 for a 50-ft slip. Obviously, the demand for such slips in Santa Barbara is much greater than the supply.

I don't have a problem with people making money off of public property — as long as that was the intended purpose of the contractual agreement. After all, people and companies pay for the right to operate businesses on public land all the time.

That said, I think the idea of berth-holders being able to make large sums of money by selling the right to their slip is outrageous — because that was never an intended part of the agreement. The people were paying for a place to keep a boat, not investing in 'berth futures'.

Such an arrangement also leads to bad consequences, for as time goes on, only rich people will have slips. And as long as the berths keep going up in value, people who don't even want to use their boats anymore will hold on to them for the investment value of the slip — thereby denying others access to the ocean.

I think the problem is symptomatic of the fact that berth rates in Santa Barbara Harbor are too low, because they obviously aren't reflecting market value. By not having slip rates at market value, the taxpayers who paid for the marina are getting cheated out of revenue, while the berthholders who didn't have to pay for the facility reap windfall profits.

For what it's worth, I've never tried to get a slip in Santa Barbara.

Eric Artman
Cozy Lee, 36’ trawler
Tiburon

Eric — It's a thorny issue because good arguments can...
ALL
PLAY

NO
WORK

Painting & Repairs
• LPU/Awlgrip
• Bottoms
• Fiberglass
• Epoxy
• Gelcoat
• Blisters
• Engine

Special Services
• Rerigging
• Mast step / destep
• Custom woodwork
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• Commissioning

Equipment Installation
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• Autopilots
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5 hp Short $1,200

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“I wanna give it away but my wife won’t let me.”
Pete Van Inwegen, Owner/Manager

June, 2005 • Latitude 38 • Page 49
also be made for the other side. For example, if you had a boat in Santa Barbara Harbor and wanted to sell, and the slip couldn't go with the boat, it would be difficult to sell her. After all, how many Santa Barbara residents would want to buy a boat when the closest they could keep her would be 30 miles away? The idea of charging whatever the market would bear for slips isn't such a good idea either, because that also would result in only the rich being able to afford a slip. There's also the problem of people who have already paid a surcharge of thousands of dollars for their boats in order to get the rights to the slip. If the rules were suddenly changed on them, they'd suddenly experience a 'negative windfall'.

It seems as though there ought to be some kind of middle road — although we don't know what that would be.

†‡ SLIPHOLDERS SHOULDN'T MAKE HUGE PROFITS

I'm writing in response to the report in 'Lectronic that some slipholders at Santa Barbara's taxpayer-built and maintained harbor are asking as much as hundreds of thousands of dollars for rights to the largest slips.

The problem with these marinas — and I include the Ala Wai in Honolulu and San Francisco's Gas House Cove among them — is that they have slip rates well below market. As a result, inactive boaters leave rusting and slowly sinking boats in slips for years without using them. Taxpayers literally give up revenue — meaning improved and/or properly maintained facilities — for an individual's profit. Perversely, every individual in the marina will be happy to see rates stay low and the facilities not expand — or even contract, as at the Ala Wai — as it means the value of their 'investment' is surely increasing.

But when the value of 'squatting' on a slip outweighs the value of sailing a boat, then the purpose of the marina has changed from public support of a healthy activity and ocean access, to public support of private individuals making large profits from 'squatting' on taxpayer property. That's not right.

I have a simple proposal to solve the problem. Slip fees must increase over time, but slipholders will be protected from large increases by limiting them to the rate of inflation for each year. But when a boat is sold and the slip is transferred to the new owner, the slip fee would be adjusted to market rate — which is likely to be higher than the inflation-adjusted rate. This would be effective, because the higher the ongoing cost of a slip, the lower the value of the right to transfer the slip. Some residual profit would still likely result, but not a lot of windfall profits.

August Zajonc
California

August — It's an interesting proposal, but we're not sure the differential between inflation-adjusted rates and market rates would be enough to have an effect. And then there's the inequity of one person paying X dollars for a 40-ft berth while another person has to pay X+10% for an identical berth.

We went to school at Berkeley, so our proposal is even more radical: Based on the assumption that the purpose of various governments owning marinas is to provide area residents with reasonably priced water access, how about making the berth rates inversely proportional to how often a boat is used and how many people are taken out? A median minimum usage would be established — say 12 times a year. The people who use their boats that often would pay the base rate. Those who used their boats more often, and who took more people out, would get a proportional discount off the base. But those
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who hardly ever — or never — used their boats would pay a proportionately higher fee. The formula for discounts and surcharges would be such that it averaged out, thus assuring the marina the income necessary to properly run the facility. The beauty of such a plan is that it would: 1) reward those who actually used their slips for water access; 2) penalize those whose ‘squatting’ on a slip denies other people water access; and 3) provide a strong financial incentive for those who don’t use their boats to store them in backwaters or on the hard until they start using them again.

One downside of the plan is that it would violate everything we believe in about individual rights!

⇑⇓

LONG LINES AND LONG HOURS IN MEXICO

Thank you for all the information you’ve been posting about Mexican check-ins. We traveled in the Sea of Cortez last year as well as several years ago, and remember the long lines, the long waits, and the long hours we had to spend whenever we travelled to a new port. We’re going to be heading south again soon, and the reported change is great news! We thank Tere Grossman, of course, but we also thank Latitude.

Michael & Normandie Fischer
Northern California

Michael and Normandie — Gracias. The old clearing system really was horrible, wasn’t it? It made you feel as though you were being punished over and over again for visiting Mexico.

⇑⇓

STILL HAVE TO CLEAR IN AT ISLA MUJERES

We just left the Florida Keys and arrived in Isla Mujeres, Mexico. Just prior to us leaving Key West, it was announced over the Northwest Caribbean Net that you folks at Latitude had announced that domestic clearing procedures had been done away with in Mexico, and it was only necessary to clear into the country when you arrived and clear out just before you left.

However, here in Isla Mujeres on the Caribbean side, we’re told that this will not be the case for a couple of months, and that we must still follow the old procedures. As of today, the port captain will only allow clearing in and clearing out through an agent. So, regardless of what was said in Mexico City, the port captains still seem to be making their own rules.

So far it has cost us a total of $140 for the Port Captain, Customs, Immigration and, we assume, the agent’s fee. Other cruisers have told us that agents have charged them up to $200 for just their services!

Nonetheless, thanks for all your efforts in getting the changes in parts of Mexico. We’re sure they’ll apply to everyone, everywhere at some point in the future. Perhaps it will happen by the time we reach the Pacific Coast of Mexico. Right now we are heading for Belize, Guatemala and Panama. We hope to be in Southern California this time next year.

Chuck Baier & Susan Landry
Sea Trek, Mariner 40
Norfolk, Virginia

Chuck and Susan — You folks cleared in at Isla Mujeres just after the Reglamento 69 was issued and before all the port captains knew exactly what was expected of them. But there was a meeting in Mexico City on April 25 & 26 of all the important parties. During that meeting, Jose Lozano, the Executive Director of the Merchant Marine, reiterated that the directive had taken effect on April 19. He said that if any port captains were not complying, he wanted to be notified. If anyone has
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By the way, domestic clearing hasn’t been completely eliminated. You no longer have to visit Immigration or Aduana when going to a new domestic port, but the port captain has to be “informed” of your arrival and your departure. In many places this is being done at a marina office or even over the VHF, but in other places port captains are still requiring mariners to inform them in person. We doubt the latter is going to last. With port captains’ offices no longer getting money from cruiser clearing fees, we don’t think they’re going to want to have anything to do with us.

⇑⇓

A DARK CONSEQUENCE OF THE NEW PROCESS?

My fear is that since the port captains won’t be able to get their mordida from the old clearing procedures, they will now try to get it by instituting boat inspections, assessing fines for minor violations, and so forth. The mordida these folks were getting from each boat having to clear at every port captain’s district was more than they made from their jobs. That’s why the cruisers down in Mexico are telling me they are worried that new fees, fines, and worse will be imposed to replace the lost ‘income’.

Here’s an example. A cruiser friend of mine was stopped for speeding in a car. He paid the mordida the officer wanted — $20 — and was able to walk away. Had he not done that, his driver’s license would have been held until he saw the judge the next day. And after waiting to see the judge for six long hours, he would pay a $3 fine and be on his way. But wouldn’t you pay the mordida, too?

Unfortunately, I suspect that some maritime version of this will likely start soon. As least that’s what I’m hearing from folks south of the border.

Scott Stolnitz
Beach House, Switch 51
Marina del Rey

Scott — Ouch! If you were more familiar with the situation in Mexico, you would have realized that you just falsely accused all the port captains of being crooks. If you’re headed to Mexico, you might want to temporarily change the name of your boat.

Here’s the deal. The approximately $20 fee for clearing in a port and another $20 to clear out of a port is the normal amount and is the same everywhere. In order to have checks and balances over the money paid at port captain’s offices, many years ago the Mexican government changed the rules so these fees were paid to a bank, not a port captain. This was part of the clearing aggravation, for you not only had to go to the port captain, you had to go to a bank to pay the fee, then back to the port captain to show him a receipt to prove that you’d paid the fee at the bank. More recently, some port captains were able to accept credit cards. But the bottom line is that they never saw the money, so it clearly wasn’t a case of mordida.

So when it comes to the loss of current and future clearing fees, it’s not the port captains, but the Mexican government, that’s losing out. But the government is willing to do it in the belief that such a policy will attract more mariners, and will ultimately generate more revenue than did the clearing fees.

Where some cruisers suspected that there might have been mordida involved was when port captains required cruisers to hire ship’s agents to do the paperwork. With some ship’s agents charging as much as $75 per boat for clearing in and out, who is to say for sure that half of it didn’t get back to the port captain as some form of gratuity? We’re not saying that was the case.
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but we are saying it was widely suspected. It was one reason that boat owners were so angry in the few places where they weren't allowed to do the clearing themselves.

Since there wasn't any mordida before — or perhaps just rarely in conjunction with ship's agents — we don't expect port captains or other officials to start putting 'the bite' on cruisers now. To date we've heard no evidence of any such thing. Indeed, we and several marina owners in Mexico believe that in a very short time the port captains aren't going to want to be bothered with cruisers at all. They'll want marinas to keep log books of who comes and goes, and be done with it.

↑⇑ WE WOULD HAVE SPENT LITTLE TIME IN MEXICO

We wish to thank President Fox and the other officials who were responsible for the clearing rules being changed in Mexico. I cruised Mexico several years ago, and was put off by the necessity to check in and out of each port. We're getting ready to start a circumnavigation, and were going to spend as little time as possible cruising Mexico due to the burdensome rules. Now that they have changed, we are going to join the Baja-Ha-Ha, then cruise in Mexico for several months before moving on to the South Pacific. Again, thanks to everyone who helped with the change.

Bill Lilly & Linda Laffey
Moontide, Lagoon 470

↑⇑ OUR GOAL WAS TO AVOID PORT CAPTAINS

Many thanks and congratulations for your great work on getting the clearance procedures changed in Mexico! When we came up the coast from Panama in 2003, we stopped at many strategic anchorages and towns along the Mexican coast, our goal being to avoid as many port captains as possible. In the course of the 2,000 miles, we managed to only have to clear in and out of Zihuatanejo — and we're very proud of it!

It would be great if you could spread the sad truth about the Galapagos Islands.

Peter Hartmann
Ahaluna
Blaine, Washington

Peter — What "sad truth" about the Galapagos are you referring to? That it so rapidly populated that there are some unsavory areas, where anything and everything can be bought — including drugs and sex with males and females of all ages? As true as that may be, we prefer to emphasize the really great stuff, of which there is a lot. By the way, did you hear they just had a pretty good volcanic eruption there?

↑⇑ A SYSTEM INTENDED FOR COMMERCIAL VESSELS

I want to thank Mrs. Tere Grossman so very much for all her efforts on behalf of the boaters here in Mexico. In particular, the streamlining of the check-in and check-out procedures, which were intended for commercial shipping. The change should benefit Mexico, as many cruisers avoided ports with port captains because of this cumbersome procedure. Because of the change, I believe that many more boaters will now be inclined to visit Mexico and stay longer.

Garth Jones
Inclination
Mexico

↑⇑ THE TRIUMPH OF HOPE OVER EXPERIENCE

For someone who exercises extreme skepticism at every letter written to Latitude, you seem to be throwing all your critical abilities overboard when reporting on the possible abolition of the old clearing system in Mexico. Could this not
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be another case of the triumph of hope over experience? Because if you think about it, there must be at least 5,000 Mexicans employed at the many ports throughout the country engaged in this clearing work. And there must be hundreds more assigned to filing the mountain of paper officials collect each year. Then there would be more employed at state and federal levels for the same purpose. This, of course, would require thousands and thousands of square feet of office space. Then there are computers, vehicles, file cabinets and copy machines by the hundreds.

If the government indeed gets rid of check-ins and check-outs at each port as we’ve known them, it might be short-lived when it becomes apparent what they’ve done to the lives of thousands of bureaucrats and others. I can imagine a real tsunami gathering and lashing back at the officials who put in this new policy.

So I recommend keeping the champagne on ice for a few months or more. If things have changed and stayed changed by then, it would be time to celebrate.

Taj
San Jose

Taj — We weren’t as skeptical as in the past because a reglamento (directive) had indeed been issued, and stated that the change had gone into effect that day. Previously, it was all just talk about legislation everybody hoped would work its way through Congress, but which was always blocked by special interest groups. So this time it was different.

And in the month since the directive was issued, virtually everything seems to have changed. Mariners report being able to check into new ports with the greatest of ease, the folks at Immigration and Aduana offices are telling them they don’t have to visit their offices anymore, and the Executive Director of the merchant marine has asked to be notified if any port captains aren’t abiding by the new directive.

What the new policy represents is a triumph of what is good for all of Mexico as opposed to archaic rules that profited just a few. The more altruistic and intelligent people in government are well aware of this, which is why Fox issued the directive.

While it’s true that the special interests who profited from the old system can’t be happy, we think the new policy will stick. Nonetheless, we think it would be prudent for everyone to take a minute and write an email that says something to the effect of: “Thank you for being a part of changing the clearing regulations for recreational boats in Mexico, as it will encourage me to visit Mexico with my boat, and/or stay longer than I otherwise would have. In addition, I expect that I’ll spend as much if not more money than before, and will have more friends come down to join me.” Something like that, but in your own words. Keep it very short.

We suggest you send your short and sweet message to ammt1@prodigy.net.mx, which is the email address of the Mexican Marina Owners Association. Tere Grossman, a member of that group, will then forward all of your email messages to Mexico’s Secretary of Communications, the Secretary of Tourism, the President and the Secretary of the Treasury. Hopefully that will ‘seal the deal’ for the rest of cruising history in Mexico.

⇑⇓

WAAHOOO! CLEARING IS NOW FREE AND EASY!

I couldn’t believe my eyes when I read that the clearing procedures have been completely changed in Mexico!!! Latitude and Tere Grossman should be proud of yourselves. Waahoo!! The trickle down effect of eliminating the paperwork means more leisure time to spend cruising the cities, sightseeing, and
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Joe Moore
Tattoo
Oceanside

Joe — We at Latitude would love to be able to take credit for the change, but in all honesty, we have no way of knowing how much — if at all — our efforts helped. Our guess is that Tere Grossman and the Mexican Marina Owner’s Association played the major role, and we provided helpful support. We really don’t care, as we’re just so delighted the change has been made.

⇑⇓

WE’LL PROBABLY STAY IN MEXICO ANOTHER YEAR

We’re currently anchored off of Loreto, catching up on emails and phone calls after we spent two weeks coming up from La Paz. We have to say the attitude is much more relaxed down here now that the new simple and easy clearing procedures are in place. When we left La Paz, the port captain still required a normal check-out, but that was to change in the next few days.

We stayed in Puerto Escondido last night, and simply had to notify the local harbormaster that we would be leaving. As we were going to leave before office hours the next morning, he simply wished us a good trip.

Our plans for when we return to our boat in San Carlos next fall will probably change because of the change in rules. We most likely will stay in Mexico another year rather than head to the Pacific, as it’s now so much easier to get around to see the places we had bypassed because of difficult check-in procedures.

We want to thank Latitude and everyone else who helped on this issue. Cruising Mexico will certainly be easier and cheaper than before.

Steve & Susan Tolle
Last Resort, Tayana 37
Loreto / Seattle

Steve and Susan — Thanks for the kind words. We recently spoke to Mary Shroyer of Marina de La Paz, and she confirms that things have indeed changed in La Paz since you left. She reports that when people arrive or depart from her marina, she merely notes the information in the marina’s logbook — for free — and that’s all there is to it! No visit to the port captain, no visit to immigration, no visit to the bank.

⇑⇓

CONGRATULATIONS ON A JOB WELL DONE

I’m sure there were many people and organizations involved in lifting the yoke of the old clearing regulations in Mexico off the neck of cruisers, but I think Latitude deserves a large share of the credit. Congratulations on a job well done and on showing the power of an activist press.

Mac McDougal
Babalu
Tuna Pete’s Harbor

Mac — We did bust our butts on that issue for many years, but assume ours was just a supporting role. But no matter, we’re as thrilled as had we been leading the charge.

⇑⇓

WHY DIDN’T THEY DO IT LAST YEAR?

At the risk of sounding like a whiner, oh man, why couldn’t Mexico have changed the clearing procedures last year when we were down there?! Although I’m the one who said that

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clearing in and out was "just another Mexican experience that added to the adventure," it didn't really, at least after the first couple of times.

On the other hand, I have to wonder if you're sure they've been changed. After all, we've heard again and again that the Mexican government was going to eliminate 'domestic clearing', only to find out it never really happened. In fact, I still don't believe it. I just hope that all the people who have interpreted this to mean that you only need to check into the country once, and out once when leaving, don't end up losing their boats because they misinterpreted the new directive. I would certainly advise caution, especially to all the new cruisers headed south.

Karen Whittaker Crowe
Pearson 422, Sogno d'Oro
Alameda

Karen — Read this month's Changes and you'll see that cruisers in Mexico have been checking into new Mexican ports either via marinas or by VHF with no problem. Some have gone to Immigration and Aduana offices to get the confirmation that they no longer have to check in there and that their 10-Year Temporary Import Permits are still good.

Yes, there were a lot of false starts with getting rid of the old clearing procedures, but they were caused by special interest groups thwarting the legislation in Congress. President Fox finally got fed up with it and issued a Reglamento or directive — which didn't require congressional approval — to get around Congress.

NOTHING TO DO WITH BITING WOMEN'S FANNIES?

Your explanation of the boat name Tabooma is really far out. It makes for a good story, but it wasn't what the Columbia 26 Tabooma was named for. She was, in fact, owned and named by the late great Wayne Bartlett of the Richmond YC. I don't know the exact dates he owned her, but I think it was in the '70s and '80s. Wayne and I both worked for Merrill Lynch; he in San Francisco and me in Los Angeles.

'Tabooma' does stand for 'take a bite out of my ass' all right, but it's an old acronym used by the wire operators when all stock and bond orders were handled by wire. That's where Wayne got the name.

As far as Tabooma having Bora Bora for a hailing port, I think it was just Wayne's twisted mind that came up with that. As far as I know, the boat was never in Bora Bora — in fact, it was never much out of the Bay Area.

I don't know when Wayne sold the boat, but I know that he was transferred to New York in the '90s and retired from there. He finally made his way back to the West Coast, and passed away about 10 years ago. He might have sold the boat before moving to New York or it might have been part of his estate.

Wayne was a character in the true sense of the word, and did love his boat. I hope this information helps out Mr. Schujman, Tabooma's new owner.

Pete Addison
ex-owner of Windbreaker
San Pedro

Readers — Everybody loves knowing about the history of their boat — and even boats they no longer own. For example, we just got a long letter from Peter Prowant telling us that his family used to own the Ocean 71 Oceanaire, which we later bought and renamed Big O. Although we haven't owned her since '97, his report still made for fascinating reading. And
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then just last week Doña de Mallorca was in St. Barth for a wedding and had dinner with Bruno Greaux, the longtime harbormaster. He told her that he remembered when our ketch was one of the biggest boats tied up in Gustavia. Times have changed, of course. Now she’d have to be more than twice as long to achieve that status.

GOOD WEATHER SITES FOR FREE
I suggest everyone add the following to their list of useful weather websites: http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/. Then they should try 'Weather Planner - Experimental'. By fiddling with it, readers should be able to obtain some very localized — lat-long — hour-by-hour forecasts for wind direction, wind speed, and so forth.

I think that the 'weatherbuoy.com' — which you at Latitude recommended — is a great site. Weather junkie that I am, I'll probably still subscribe. At $30 a year, it’s cheap enough. But hey, the dot-gov site is free, and might be all that some folks need.

Leslie and I still sail in Southern California as well as Northern California, and have blocked out the August 13 weekend in Two Harbors, Catalina, when the Ha-Ha folks will be putting on a Ha-Ha preview.

Ron Sherwin
Carmel

Ron — The basic stuff at weatherbuoy.com is free. For example, we spent a lot of the winter on the hook at Punta Mita stalking surf. Each morning we'd go up to the Internet cafe and check out weatherbuoy for the surf and weather forecast. It was reasonably accurate — and it was free.

IS MY BOAT SUITABLE FOR THE HA-HA?
I'm the owner of a 1995 Catalina 30 MKIII, and have been dreaming of sailing south to join the Baja Ha-Ha. I've had lots of experience sailing from Puget Sound north to Desolation Sound on the Catalina 30 as well as on a Catalina 25 and a Catalina 27. I'm wondering if it's insane for me to think that a Catalina 30 would be safe for the trip down to the Ha-Ha start and later for whatever the Sea of Cortez might throw at me?

I've looked through the results of past Ha-Ha's and noted that some older Catalina 30s have participated, but none of them from the Seattle area. Is my boat up to making the trip down? Would I need to make upgrades? I just don't want to be a Baby Boomer who has to face retirement in a motorhome watching the boats go by.

Dave Elmore
Port Orchard, Washington

Dave — In order for us to answer that question intelligently, we'd have to know how skillful a sailor you are, what condition your boat is in, and what kind of weather you'd encounter. If we can operate on the assumption that you're an experienced offshore sailor, that your boat is in good condition, and that you don't get hit by severe weather, we think your chances of making it are good. But if your boat isn't in good shape and/or you get caught in 45-knot winds for a day or two — which is possible between Washington and Pt. Conception — you might find yourself in trouble. As for the Sea of Cortez — and, in fact, all of Mexico — a Catalina 30 would be a fine boat — as long as you can avoid the worst of the Northers that blow down the Sea in the winter and you don't do a Baja Bash in wicked conditions.

By the way, neither Latitude nor the Baja Ha-Ha give
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specific recommendations as to what skippers and boats are suitable for the Ha-Ha. If anyone has the least bit of doubt, they are required to get a trip survey from a recognized marine surveyor.

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE'S WIFE IS MY ROLE MODEL

I just returned from my boat in Baja once again. Boy, I wish I was retired and could stay down there all the time.

You may remember that the Grand Poobah awarded me a Viking helmet at the end of the 2004 Baja Ha-Ha for being "the toughest woman skipper." I never whined, did I? I accepted the helmet with pride, and wondered how you guessed that Hagar The Horrible's wife has been my role model.

Anyway, I have been scratching my head — which isn't easy to do with the helmet on — ever since, trying to figure out where to put this darn thing on our 32-ft boat. In fact, I nearly chucked it overboard a couple of times, but was stopped each time by my sailing buddy Anh.

But I finally found the perfect place for it — as you can probably see from the accompanying photograph. Can you guess why? If not, here's a clue — if the helmet isn't as effective as I hope it will be, I may have to move to Mexico permanently and start a fertilizer business!

Jeannette Heulin
Con Te Partiro, Bristol 32
San Francisco Bay / Baja, Mexico

HOW CAN I CONTACT HIM?

In December of last year, Dick Boden of Calamity wrote you a letter about buying a PDQ 32 in Florida and having it shipped to Mexico. I'd like to do the exact same thing, and would like to contact Mr. Boden to ask about his experiences with his PDQ and the shipping process. Could you relay this request to him?

Howard Torf
Possible PDG 32 Buyer

Howard — We can't possibly honor all the requests we get to put people in contact with other people, plus, it's against our policy to give out such information.
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LETTERS

For this reason, we have established a new category in our Classy Classifieds so people can contact others easily and inexpensively. The category is called “Trying to Locate.” You can post an ad of up to 20 words for just $10. Keep it short. Just say who you’re looking for and how they can contact you. You can mail it in with a check or money order or go to our website, www.latitude38.com, and into the Classified section where you can post it safely with a credit card. Classified deadline is always the 18th of the month at 5 pm.

INTERNATIONAL CALLS FOR TWO-CENTS A MINUTE

We’ve been down here cruising in Banderas Bay, and have a money-saving tip plus a caution.

First, in order to save money on international calls, we’ve been using SKYPE — skype.com — as our method of calling. SKYPE is freeware. If you call from a computer with SKYPE to a computer with SKYPE, it costs absolutely nothing. But if you have SKYPE on your computer and the other computer doesn’t, it costs a whopping two cents a minute to anywhere in the world. Let’s see, that’s $1.20 an hour — which is what I call dirt cheap. We’ve had incredibly good reception — as opposed to just good to excellent reception — even when the Internet shows low.

The only thing you need to buy to get set up is a $25 headset with a microphone. I suggest getting an even better quality one for about $10 more, then setting up your audio and speaker correctly in Windows, and leaving SKYPE as is. Windows defaults should normally work fine.

Now for the caution. There has been a general recall on all Elliot liferafts made up until and including September 2004. The pressure valve may corrode and become faulty, particularly in tropical climates. We have a six-man Elliot liferaft that we’ve been told we’ll have to haul off to Mazatlan — or maybe even back to the States for a recall repair. This seems like a rather expensive ‘repair’ for the consumer, so we’re going to apply a bit more pressure on the manufacturer to see what comes of it. In any event, we’d hate to have our $6,000 marvel fail when our lives depended on it.

Lisa Parker
Solar Planet, Beneteau 50
San Francisco

Lisa — While there have recently been some relatively economical ways of phoning home from Mexico, nothing touches the two-cents-a-minute rate. Imagine, if we get the high speed Internet working out in anchorages such as Punta Mita and La Cruz, possibly for free, you could call home from your boat and talk all day long. Then again, would that really be a good thing?

It’s ironic that with the approach of nearly free international phone calls, other phone service seems to be getting so much more expensive. For example, rates for calling home from the ubiquitous pay phones in tourist areas of Mexico are outrageous. But we’re not even sure if those rip-offs top some phone rip-offs in the States. While at a pay phone at Seattle’s Pike’s Place Fish Market last month, we got a quote on a pay phone for a call to our office in Mill Valley, CA. They told us — and we’re not making this up — $13.90 for the first minute!

THE FISH THAT DIDN’T GET AWAY

I read with interest Rick Strand’s fish story — catching a big dorado in shallow water by herding it ashore — published in the March issue. It brought back memories of the Sea of Cortez Sailing Week back in 1986. As Latitude mentioned in their response to Strand’s fish story, the same thing had
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BAY AREA PRE-CRUISED (SAIL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sailing Length</th>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>30’</td>
<td>HUNTER 30</td>
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<td>32’</td>
<td>HUNTER 326</td>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>32’</td>
<td>HUNTER 320 – A Steal!</td>
<td>2001</td>
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<td>32’</td>
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<td>2003</td>
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<td>HUNTER 420</td>
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<tr>
<td>42’</td>
<td>CATALINA 42 Mk II</td>
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BAY AREA PRE-CRUISED (POWER)

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<td>SILVERTON 34C</td>
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<tr>
<td>39’</td>
<td>MAINSHIP 390</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Just reduced $196,700</td>
<td>$196,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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happened at that Sailing Week. I know it did, because those involved with herding the fish were myself and the fine crew of my Vagabond 47 Muddy Water. The crewmembers included Linda Waterman, who was the Wet T-shirt Queen of that week, Russ Bruns and Brenda Eiler, the latter two being winners of the Sand Dragon building contest.

I looked into my old photo album and found the Latitude article on that Sailing Week, but didn’t find any photos of the fish. But as I remember, it was 18 pounds and very delicious. One of the other participants in that week claimed that fish who beach themselves have to be ill — and offered to kindly take care of it for us. Nice try!

We went on to sail Muddy Water from Mexico to the Marquesas, Tonga and New Zealand. Naturally, we have lots of stories to tell — but one of the best is about the fish that didn’t get away.

Malcolm Brown
Ben Lomond

Malcolm — Things sure have changed over the years, haven’t they? If we remember correctly, nobody had GPS back then.
And as for the politically incorrect behavior at Sea of Cortez Sailing Week, we’re sure that you’ll remember that the Wet T-Shirt contest had about 25 entries — and that didn’t even include the 30 or so men eager to wiggle their buttocks in the Men’s Wet Buns Contest.

NO, WE DON’T
You don’t keep logs?! That’s not very seamanlike, is it?
And as for ‘seat of the pants sailing’ with two GPS units and radar — how is that ‘seat of the pants’?

Duncan Babbage
England

Duncan — When we started sailing up and down the coast in the ’70s, there was no electronic navigation, so keeping a log made sense. It also made sense in the days of Loran, which wasn’t always so accurate, and SatNav, which had long gaps between positions and wasn’t very reliable. But with multiple GPS units accurately recording one’s track, in normal circumstances we don’t see the need for keeping a log. If you do, could you please explain why? It’s true that we require our crew to keep a log, but that’s primarily to keep them occupied and help them stay awake at night.

Despite having two GPS units and radar, we indeed consider ourselves to be ‘seat of pants’ sailors — because the GPS units we use are so old they have relatively small b&w screens and because we don’t spend all our time fiddling with the knobs on the radar. When we sail our boat, we sail it, rather than monitor a bunch of controls like a video game. For an American,
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we think that’s pretty ‘seat of the pants’.

↑↑THE ABILITY TO SAIL MADE THE MOVE PALATABLE

There’s a sailing treasure in Oakland, as the city runs a sailing program on Lake Merritt. You can rent a Capri that accommodates six people for just $12/hour. What’s more, a nice young man will rig it for you, patiently help everyone aboard, and cast you off. Because it’s a keel boat, it would be virtually impossible to flip. A canoe paddle is provided for pushing off if you run aground.

The afternoon wind on Lake Merritt is reliable, and it shifts enough to keep things interesting. The views of the city from the lake are terrific, and it’s fun to sail near the shore and interact with the joggers. You’re also certain to see plenty of ducks, cormorants and Canadian geese, as well as many other more exotic species.

While the lake is great for young sailors, it’s terrific for older sailors, too, because there are numerous retirement homes around the lake. In fact, based on my father’s experience, I can recommend Piedmont Gardens and Lakeside Park, which specializes in Alzheimer’s care.

For many years Joe Marshall, my Dad, loved sailing and racing his Ariel on San Francisco Bay. When the time approached to move from his home into a retirement home, he was full of dread, as almost everyone in that position is. Realizing that he could still sail on Lake Merritt made the move much more palatable.

Dan Marshall
Northern California

↑↑I NEED PRE- AND POST-BITE RELIEF

We’ve just flown home after a year of cruising from San Francisco to Cartagena, Colombia. We will return to our boat, which is now at Panamarena in Panama, to continue the adventure. However, much of paradise was lost on me, as bites from no-see-ums and mosquitoes kept me itchy day and night. When I return, I would like to have a less itchy experience. Perhaps some readers who are savvy in repelling the beasts, as well as itch relief, could share their wisdom.

The best itch relief I have found is ammonia followed by Ben Gay. Until I find a solution, you can call me sleepless in San Blas.

Carol Wellins
Felicia 777, Esprit 37
San Francisco

Carol — No matter if you mean sleepless in San Blas, Mexico, which is the mosquito capital of the universe, or sleepless in the San Blas Islands of Panama, where we’ve never had a problem, we recommend the old standby of Avon’s Skin So Soft or products with DEET (30 to 100%). But we’ve never really had a problem ourselves, so perhaps other readers have better suggestions.
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LETTERS

\$\$\$ EACH ROUTE HAS PROS AND CONS

We appreciate your critical comments on our Exploring the Pacific Coast guidebook. Please let us explain.

You are correct about our having poor scales on our ‘decorative’ chapter maps. As a user of mercator projection maps and charts for over 50 years, I always measure distance with dividers, using the latitude tick marks, and the latitude tick marks on our chapter maps appear to be fine. But using a single distance scale for such maps doesn’t work well on this projection. So in the new edition — to be released next fall — we will correct what was apparently sloppiness and use of an improper scale bar on page 76.

The Proven Cruising Routes© are uniquely selected GPS waypoints that Réanne and I choose as meeting our safe navigation criteria. These routes, composed of our GPS waypoints, are based upon our own actual experience in sailing from 60ºN to 56ºS. (See Cape Horn: One Man’s Dream, One Woman’s Nightmare ISBN 0-938665-83-9 for an example of our 160,000-miles of cruising experience.)

If you had read the page following the Bluewater Route, you would have found details on two other very popular routes, closer inshore, that we also recommend. One is the Express Route, preferred by many delivery skippers, which has the advantage of avoiding thousands of crab pots (the craptot-free tow zones). The other, which Réanne and I prefer, is the Inshore Route that allows our slow Baidarka to play the backeddies, to ‘keep one foot on the beach’ all the way north or south, and to be anchored by afternoon every day. Each of these three routes has advantages and disadvantages, which we discuss throughout the book.

Let me assure you that the Bluewater Route remains a favorite of short-handed sailors and singlehanders who prefer to run 24 hours per day. And it is certainly the preferred route running downwind, either north or southbound, when time and simplicity are important. The Bluewater Route is more forgiving for inexperienced watch-standers or single-handers, and/or on boats that are not highly electronic.

Réanne and I would like to hear from Latitude 38 readers about any other discrepancies so we can correct them, as well as any kudos, of course. Bon voyage.

Don Douglass
FineEdge Productions LLC
Anacortes, Washington

Don — We’re sorry, but we think it would be irresponsible of us not to call you on the purported popularity of the so-called Bluewater Route. You say it’s a favorite of shorthanded and singlehanded sailors who prefer to run 24 hours a day. If that’s true, name five. Frankly, we don’t think you can, because it would often be a stupid route.

Here’s one reason. As we write this response on May 16 at 10 p.m., it’s blowing a nasty 20 to 29 knots with 10 to 15-foot seas outside the Channel Islands on the so-called Bluewater Route. While it’s blowing a pleasant 7 to 11 knots with 3- to 5-foot swells inside the Channel Islands on what we’d call the Common Sense Route. And as you surely must know, there will often be a similar disparity in weather conditions for the next six months. So when you claim the Bluewater Route is faster, more simple, and easier for inexperienced watchstanders, you’re dead wrong on every count. In fact, it would normally be harder, slower, and more dangerous than the Common Sense Route.

Indeed, the whole ‘Proven Cruising Route’ business seems like a gimmick to sell books to sailors who don’t really know what they are doing — and a potentially dangerous gimmick
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76' NZL 14, 1991 ........................................ SOLD
65' SWAN, 1976 ........................................ SOLD
47' GULFSTAR, 1979 .................................. $142,500
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40' OLSON, 1983 ...................................... $89,500
38' BENETEAU, 1999 .................................. $144,900
38' CATALINA, 1984 .................................. $64,900
38' SABRE, 1984 ........................................ SOLD
34' BENETEAU FIRST 36.7, 2002 ...................... SOLD
35' FANTASIA, 1979 .................................. $48,000
34' CATALINA, 1986 .................................. $49,900
32' CELESTIAL, 1990 ................................. $39,900
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45' BENETEAU
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80' SAN LORENZO, 1993/2003 ...................... $2,450,000
74' CUSTOM STEEL TRAWLER, 1989 .......... $329,000
61' HATTERAS, 1981 .................................. $559,000
57' TOLLYCRAFT, 1992 .............................. SOLD
53' HERSHINE, 2000 .................................. $499,000
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49' HYUNDAI, 1988 ................................... $225,000
48' DEFEVER, 1991 ................................... $279,000
47' PONDEROSA, 1986 .............................. $169,000
45' C&L PILOTHOUSE, 1979 ....................... $199,900
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42' JEFFERSON, 1987 ................................. SOLD
42' SEA RAY, 1990 .................................... $178,000
42' GRAND BANKS, 1988 ............................ $279,500
42' GRAND BANKS, 1973 ............................ $175,000
40' BELL KHA SHING, 1982 ......................... $117,000
40' HERSHINE, 1982 .................................. $126,700
38' HERITAGE, 1980 .................................. $129,000
37' HERSHINE, 1982 ................................ SOLD
37' HERSHINE, 1979 .................................. $87,500
36' GRAND BANKS, 1990 ............................ $204,000
35' SILVERTON 352, 1997 ............................ $99,000
34' CHB, 1980 ......................................... $55,500
33' SEA RAY, 1992 .................................... $59,000
32' BAYLINER, 1984 .................................. $49,700
31' LIDWY SEA HORSE, 1981 ....................... $34,900
31' BERTRAM, 1976 .................................. $79,500
30' WILLARD, 1972 .................................. $49,000
27' SHAMROCK, 2005 ............................... $111,500
24' SHAMROCK, 2005 ................................ $67,134
22' GRADY WHITE, 1993 ......................... $29,950
22' SHAMROCK, 2005 ................................ $60,115
22' PACIFIC 22 CUSTOM SPORT .................. NEW
17' BOSTON WHALER, 2003 ....................... SOLD

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42' CABO RICO
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at that. For, given all your sailing experience, surely you know that, given any particularly strong weather conditions, some sailing angles are much better than others. If it’s blowing 25 knots with 15-ft seas from aft, it would certainly be safer to sail on a broad reach rather than DDW because there would be less chance of an uncontrolled gybe that would knock your block off or cause severe damage to the rig. And the broad reach would be faster. But there are plenty times when your ‘proven’ route would dictate that a boat sail on just such an unsafe and slow course.

Further, a sailor would have to have an I.Q. lower than the water temperature off Point Conception to be unable to create his/her own route between San Diego and San Francisco. And naturally such a route would continually be subject to change due to changes in the weather. You say there are three routes up or down the coast. We say there are a million of them, and if you have any brains, you pick the best one based on the weather conditions, not a bunch of waypoints published in a book.

And what’s this major emphasis about crab pots? They may be a considerable problem off the coast of Oregon and Washington, but Profligate goes up and down the California coast like a yo-yo every year, and crab pots have never been a problem. On the last trip, only two were spotted in 400 miles along the Common Sense Route.

We think there’s a lot of helpful information in your cruising guide, but unless you ditch that Proven Cruising Route nonsense in the next edition, we’d be hard-pressed to recommend it.

I FELT THEY WERE A POOR VALUE

I read with interest the ‘Lectronic piece about Exploring the Pacific Coast, San Diego to Seattle, by Don Douglass and Reanne Hemingway-Douglass. After reading their book, Cape Horn, One Man’s Dream, One Woman’s Nightmare, I was surprised to find cruising guides written by them. In the book she whined and bitched so much about sailing that I didn’t think she’d ever step foot on a boat again.

They’ve also written a guide to our area, meaning the British Columbian coast, but it costs $60. I checked their guides out while I was in the store, but feel they are a poor value. I’d be interested to know what other people think.

Chuck Oliver
Vancouver, British Columbia

Chuck — We’ve seen worse cruising guides than Exploring the North Coast of British Columbia, and as it’s nearly 600 pages, they certainly put in some effort. However, they’ve got some stiff competition for Waggoner’s Cruising Guide covers the entire Northwest from Puget Sound to Prince Rupert, has lots of color photos instead of just black & white, and has helpful ads from local businesses in each area. The deciding point might be that it sells for one-third the price. But everyone should decide for themselves.

By the way, when we were up your way last month, we were reminded of how beautiful the area is. Vancouver is a lovely city. We were impressed with how clean it was and how nice the people were compared to San Francisco.

AN INTERPRETIVE ACTIVITY . . . WITH A CANNON

It is with some interest that I have read the recent spate of letters regarding the docking and mooring policies at Angel Island. Although the level of enforcement present in Ayala Cove may strike some as excessive, most of your readers are probably not aware that Angel Island is subject to interim
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tent raids by a most virulent band of pirates. And I do mean the cutlass and cannon variety.

To clarify, the California Department of Parks and Recreation operates Angel Island State Park, including the Ayala Cove docks and mooring field. Your humble correspondent, however, has the honor to belong to the Angel Island Association, a nonprofit organization that assists the park by raising funds and performing interpretive activities that provide the visitor with a better understanding of the island’s natural and cultural history. Some of us who volunteer with the Angel Island Association are also boaters and avid readers of *Latitude*. Among the many ongoing events performed by the AIA are weekend cannon-firing demonstrations that are held at the former military post of Camp Reynolds on the west side of the island. We also turn out our cannon from time to time in order to repel the assaults of the pirate vessel *Royaliste*. For those of you fortunate enough not to have encountered this fearsome craft, the *Royaliste* is a 65-ft gaff-rigged square-topsail ketch which is armed to the teeth and crewed by the blood-thirstiest gang of buccaneers it has ever been my displeasure to encounter. On numerous occasions the dread *Royaliste* has exchanged volleys of artillery and small-arms fire with our heroic garrison on Angel Island.

Obviously, such a spectacle is not something one sees every day, and the Angel Island Association would like to invite your readers to view our next engagement, which shall be held on the weekend of June 11 & 12. This event will be a full-fledged mock Civil War battle with infantry reinforcements, exploding pyrotechnics, and activities for children. Details about this and all our other events may be found on the Angel Island Association’s web site at [www.angelisland.org](http://www.angelisland.org).

After one has witnessed just how much havoc and mayhem the brigands aboard the *Royaliste* can cause, it becomes clear why security has been stepped up on the island!

Chris Burgin
Angel Island Cannoner & Crew
*Shadowside, Allied Mistress MKIII
Coyote Point*

↑↑↑A FULLY-OPERATIONAL SEAGOING MEMORIAL

On the off chance that you might sometimes feature a stink-pot — in this case a very big one — I’d like to tell you about the *Lane Victory*, a World War II cargo ship that is based out of San Pedro. She’s owned by an all-volunteer group of mostly seniors, who restored her and continue to maintain and operate her.

World War II ended 60 years ago, which is when *Lane Victory* was built. She was one of more than 530 Victory cargo ships built late in the war to replace the hundreds of merchant marine ships that had been lost to enemy attacks. These ships were designed to become the backbone of the postwar Ameri-
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can merchant marine fleet. *Lane Victory* hauled munitions in the South Pacific at the close of World War II. During the Korean War, she ferried troops and evacuated 7,000 civilians as the Communists advanced on Inchon. She was called for duty a third time in Vietnam, and then was laid up in 1969.

The *Lane*, deeded to the United States merchant marine veterans of World War II in 1989 by then President Reagan, was towed to San Pedro Harbor where restoration began. An all-volunteer group of dedicated seniors, made up of former merchant marine, naval armed guard, and others restored the ship. She is a designated Historical Landmark.

Today the *Lane* is a fully operational seagoing memorial to all civilian merchant marine and naval armed guard lost at sea in time of war. The ship is supported by six summer day-cruises off Catalina Island each year. The day-cruises begin early, with a continental breakfast and departure at 9 a.m. as we head down the main channel at San Pedro and out to sea. The ship’s crew and interested passengers can watch the U.S. Navy Sea Cadet Honor Guard participate in a memorial service to remember a merchant marine ship and crew lost at sea in World War II. During the passage to Catalina, everyone is invited to take a tour of the engine room, visit the wheelhouse, and ‘man the big guns’. There are two great museums to enjoy. The main museum is dedicated to nautical memorabilia of the merchant marine, with many large models of the merchant ships of that period. The centerpiece of the second museum is the triple-expansion engine from the movie *Sand Pebbles*. Guests get to watch it in operation.

The *Lane Victory* has been featured in many movies and on television, including *Titanic, The Thin Red Line, Outbreak*, *Jag* and *X-Files*, to name but a few.

A great catered buffet lunch is served set against the magnificent backdrop of Catalina Island. Plenty of seating and shaded areas are available, and live music of the World War II era is played throughout the day.

Turning away from the island, the ship is ‘attacked’ — weather permitting — by ‘enemy’ aircraft. During this time a general alarm is sounded and the naval armed guard man their guns. When enemy planes are spotted by a sharp-eyed passenger, their response to the attack begins. Despite the response of the big guns, the situation is perilous — until American planes come to the rescue by attacking the enemy planes. When the aerial attack is over, the planes form up and fly the length of the ship. At this point everyone should have their cameras ready.

Finally, as we approach the harbor, Stearman aircraft make several fly-bys, and as we return to the dock the passengers...
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Columbia 50, 1966 ............ 69,900
Peterson 46 ................. Inquire
Roberts 44, 1981 ............ 79,000
Gulfstar 43, 1975 ............ 79,900
Ohlson 41, 1967 ............ 42,000
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Well balanced racer/cruiser. Equipped with radar arch, wind generator and more. Has just returned from Mexico and is ready to go. $49,500

GULFSTAR 43, 1975
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enjoy a fireboat water display courtesy of the Los Angeles fireboat.

Anyone interested in joining one of these trips should visit www.lanevictory.org or call (310) 519-9545.

Jan Michaels, Volunteer  
SS Lane Victory

Jan — While sailing from Two Harbors to Newport Beach one sunny Sunday last summer, we happened to cross paths with the Lane Victory as she began to head home from Catalina. A few minutes later the aerial attack began. It was a terrific show. We wish we had known about these trips a couple of years ago before our father passed away. A World War II Navy vet from the Pacific, he would have loved it.

SCANDINAVIA IS NOT APPROVED IN THE U.S.

While shopping around for insurance quotes, we were offered coverage at what seemed to be a very good price by a California broker representing Scandinavia Insurance. It sounded a little too good to be true, so we got a second opinion from another agent. This is what he wrote us:

“I am familiar with Scandinavia Insurance, which is a relatively new ‘insurance company’ based in Russia. I’m not sure why they adopted the ‘Scandinavian’ guise, but perhaps it’s because the insurance business in Russia is largely unregulated. Scandinavia is not rated by any of the major financial rating organizations — A.M. Best, Standard & Poors, Moody, Fitch, and so forth — nor, as far as I can determine, have they got any reinsurance support. They certainly don’t in the London and other major European markets. They may well have the financial strength to pay some claims, and indeed have the goodwill to do so, but as far as I am aware, none of their ‘assets’ are held in G7 countries, so effectively they are ‘judgement proof’. This means that the people they insure will have to rely on Scandinavia’s desire to pay claims as opposed to normal legal obligations to do so.

“For our part, we would not place business with them, as we will only work with well-known, well-rated, well-established insurers with the highest reputation. Unlike the people we represent, Scandinavia is not approved anywhere in the United States, the United Kingdom, or the European Community.

“It is the Insured’s decision if he/she wants to take a risk on security to make a small savings in premiums, but we would always recommend that they only place their business with rated insurers. I hope this advice proves helpful.”

Just Another Cruiser Trying To Be Helpful  
Planet Earth

Readers — Every time we talk to people who have had to file a claim with an insurance company, they all seem to have the same regret — they wish they had read the policy more carefully before they bought the coverage. We don’t know if it would be wise or unwise to be covered by Scandinavia, but we do know that everybody should read any policy carefully so they understand exactly what it is they are buying and who they are buying it from. ‘Let the buyer beware’ is true of insurance more than most things because the amounts can be so high.

Having said that, sometimes insurance really does work like it’s supposed to. A couple of months ago, we were rear-ended on the 405 in Los Angeles while driving one of Mr. Hertz’s cars. The impact sent us slamming into the car in front of us. All three cars suffered about $2,500 in damages. We all had insurance and we were supposed to, and traded our information. About a month later, a representative from the company insureing the

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San Francisco
guy who started the collision called to report all three cars had been taken care of, and he wanted to make sure we hadn’t suffered any lasting injury. All we were suffering from was shock that the system had worked like it was supposed to.

AN IMMUTABLE AND UNCHANGING LAW OF THE SEA

When it comes to whether crew are responsible for costly mistakes on boats, I believe there is a well-established protocol — at least in the case of winch handles dropped overboard. In such cases, the crewmember has a responsibility to replace the winch handle with one of equal or better quality at the earliest opportunity, then present it to the owner as soon as possible. I believe it’s the 3,646,125th Law of the Sea, which all good sailors accept as immutable and unchanging. However, I could not find it in a search through Google.

In the case of other mishaps, no matter if of greater or lesser magnitude, I agree with Latitude that the owner is responsible.

Rob Murray
Flat Out, Ericson 39
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Rob — Your letter just made us realize that we’re sexist. If somebody dropped a winch handle off our boat, we wouldn’t expect them to replace it. However, if a male crewmember dropped one over and replaced it, we’d say, “Thanks, that’s cool.” But if a woman replaced it — as Suzie Barnes once did — we’d be so embarrassed. Disgusting, isn’t it? We’re going to sign up for some insensitivity training.

DAYS OF REASONABLE CANAL TRANSITS ARE OVER

We just completed our southbound transit of the Panama Canal aboard our Hallberg-Rassy 46 Indeed, and found the Canal’s new way of handling sailboats to be quite different from what it used to be and what the cruising guides say. Not only was it different, it was much more expensive.

We used ship’s agent Tina McBride to do our paperwork, and we think she did a great job. However, the new fees really jack the cost up. The ‘new thing’ is that sailboat transits now start around 5 or 6 p.m., and even sometimes later at night. Your mandatory Advisor then takes you as far as Gatun Lake, where you moor to a big mooring buoy for the night, and he goes home. Actually, just three sailboats go through on a normal day, and they are all rafted to the same buoy.

The next morning you get a new Advisor to complete the transit. So far, this is all fine if you just had to pay the normal $600 transit fee and the $850 ‘buffer’, which is to be deposited if you don’t cause any delays or damages.

What’s not fine is the new charges that we were hit with:

- Delay fee for taking two days to do the transit — $440
- Mooring fee for rusty buoy at Gatun Lake — $100
- Launch fees for Advisors — $320.

So the reported $600 transit fee suddenly adds up to a whole lot more, particularly when you add in the $500 for the ship’s agent, and the various other charges such as the cruising permit, visas, and such.

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Then there is the wait for a transit slot, which this season was anywhere from 10 to 19 days, with 15 days being the average. Of course, you don’t have to wait for 15 days in lovely Colon, for you can request that your transit be supervised by a Pilot rather than a mere Advisor. If you do this, you can pick almost any day to transit, and you might be able to complete the transit in one day rather than two. The only hitch is that there is a $2,250 fee for taking a Pilot rather than an Advisor.
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New England Ropes
Clearly the days of transiting the Canal for $500 are gone for good! Although we’re from San Diego, our boat has never been there. We took delivery of her at the Hallberg-Rassy yard in Sweden, then sailed her across the Atlantic in the 2003 ARC, then around the Caribbean, up to Bermuda, and as far north as Newport, Rhode Island. Then we headed down to New York City, Annapolis, Hampton, Virginia, did the Caribbean 1500 to the British Virgins, then sailed to Panama. We are now in the Galapagos and will be headed to the Marquesas in a few days.

Giorgio Cagliero
Hallberg-Rassy 46, Indeed
San Diego

Giorgio — We don’t doubt that you were smacked with those charges, but based on what other people are reporting, they haven’t experienced any increase in Canal fees.

WE DON’T THINK THERE’S BEEN A PRICE INCREASE

Like Latitude, I read Indeed’s report on increases in Panama Canal fees with surprise. We transited in early March, and the fees were still the $600. And someone I know went through just three weeks ago and didn’t pay any more than we did.

As for it taking 15 days to get a transit date, that’s the time the Canal Authority often quotes. However, most cruisers who hang around get bumped up to an earlier slot. For example, the boat we went through only had to wait about a week.

As you can guess, this means we didn’t take our own boat through the Canal. We’ve left her down in the tropics, but will be going to British Columbia this summer anyway. In fact, we’re joining a 38-ft monohull in Sitka on July 4th to slowly sail south to Oregon. We’re looking forward to it!

Richard Woods
Woods Designs Sailing Catamarans
Plymouth, United Kingdom
Jetti Matzke, Oakland

THE TOTAL COST OF OUR TRANSIT WAS $800

I just read the item in 'Lectronic about Indeed having to pay much more money for their Canal transit. That doesn’t jibe with the experience we had transiting with our 42-ft cat Hapai or Cheyanne, the boat I linehandled for.

Yes, we did start at 4 p.m., and yes, we had to spend the night on a mooring on Gatun Lake. But we were not charged an overnight fee because the scheduling had been done by the Canal Authority. Nor were we charged for the mooring or a pilot pickup fee, and for the same reason. By the way, we thought it was a plus to spend the night on the lake. The lake was...
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calm, it got us out of Colon, and it was fun to hear the howler monkeys and parrots in the morning.

We had to wait 14 days for our transit. *Cheyanne* — a Wylie 34 from Sausalito — had to wait 11 days.

When it comes to getting the paperwork done, we would highly recommend Rudy, a fast-moving taxi-driver. He got us through the procedures for $50, got us our tire fenders at $3 each, and the four lines at $15 per line.

So the total cost of our transit was $800. Jim on *Cheyanne* managed to get his tires for free, so his cost was a bit lower.

When you think of the Canal, you think of the locks, of course. But for me, the highlight was the pristine beauty of Gatun Lake. I enjoyed both of the transits we did, and both went smoothly. A Panama Canal transit is nothing to be feared.

Tom Conerly
Hapai, Venezia 42 cat
Santa Cruz

††WHY NOT A SUBMERSIBLE BARGE IN THE CANAL?
I just read Giorgio Cagliero’s report in *Lectronic* about the astronomical fees for transiting the Panama Canal aboard *Indeed*. With costs so high, I wonder if anyone has considered setting up a floating drydock that could be towed through the Canal by tug. What I’m envisioning is a submersible barge where you simply power in, divers install jackstands, and the barge is then floated. Boats could actually be rafted up for a while with the barge submerged until enough boats are present to make the transit worthwhile. This shouldn’t take too terribly long — almost certainly less time than the 10-19 days mentioned in that letter to *Lectronic*.

Dave Benjamin
Island Planet Sails
Portland, Oregon

Dave — We’ve long said that the Panama Canal is too major an asset to be used to get boats under 50 feet from one side of the Canal to the other. It’s like using a missile to do a job that requires nothing more than a BB gun.

But we think the same would be true of your plan to use a submersible barge to transport boats from the Pacific to the Caribbean and vice versa. Such barges are very expensive and the labor would also be very high.

The thing to realize is that all but a mile or two of a Canal transit consists of motoring across a lake that’s 84 feet above sea level. So the real problem is just getting the boats around the locks and up or down 84 feet. This could be best accomplished using a hydraulic trailer — such as is used to truck boats from San Carlos, Mexico, to Tucson, and at many boatyards. Such trailers are much less expensive than a barge, and using them would require only a couple of workers.

It never made a lot of sense to use the Canal for small boat transits. But with the development of hydraulic trailers to lift out and transport boats, and with the growing congestion and lack of advisors in the Canal, it’s a no-brainer. Such an operation could be up and running in a couple of months.

By the way, you can see from the previous letters than the astronomical fees charged to *Indeed* were apparently an oddity.

††HE GAVE ME A REPLACEMENT FREE OF CHARGE
I want people to know how thankful I am for Don Melcher of HF Radio on Board in Alameda. We’ve had nothing but trouble with our ICOM 502 VHF. The command mike in the cockpit hasn’t worked from day one. We had it fixed — I won’t
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go into how unhappy I was with ICOM, which initially refused to honor the warranty — before leaving on last year's Ha-Ha. But it broke again in Mexico. Not confident about getting it fixed, I figured I'd have to buy another radio in Mexico — not the best place to buy marine gear.

Then I unexpectedly had to return to San Francisco for two days, but couldn't bring the radio with me. Don didn't care. He offered to replace the radio free of charge. He said he'd deal with ICOM directly, and I didn't even have to give him the bad radio until I returned in a couple of months. Needless to say, this was beyond the call of duty, but it made me a very, very happy customer.

By the way, the material Don puts together for SSB purchasers is wonderful. It's so good, that by using it I was able to help people get their radios and email up and running!

Audrey Schnell
OZ, Talisman 37
Port Townsend, WA

I HAD TO EXPLAIN TO U.S. CUSTOMS WHAT TO DO

The life of foreign boats in the United States is not easy. We had our Talofa in San Francisco Bay from '78 to '89 when we lived in Oakland. Since my wife and I are foreign nationals (and permanent residents), we could not document the boat, so she was registered in the state of California. However, according to U.S. Customs regulations, the nationality of a boat is not determined by its flag, but by the nationality of its owners. Therefore our boat — although flying the U.S. flag — was considered a foreign boat. This meant that we had to clear-in at San Francisco when we arrived.

Clearing-in meant not only a trip to the Customs office, but it also meant that the Customs office took away our boat's documents — meaning our California registration — with the understanding that the documents would be released upon departure! The regulations specified that the boat can move freely within the area of the specific Customs office. This means that we could have sailed to Half Moon Bay or Monterey without any problems, but if we sailed down the coast we had to clear out of San Francisco, clear in to Santa Barbara, clear out of Santa Barbara, and so on for Los Angeles and San Diego.

It's true — as someone suggested — that sometimes the Customs officers themselves were unaware of the legal requirements. As a matter of fact, I always had a copy of the law with me when I cleared in so that I could explain to the customs officer what they were supposed to do.

When we arrived in Hawaii on our return from the South Pacific, we cleared in at Hilo, and then we cleared out and back in at Oahu. However, we were going to leave from Kauai for the States, and Kauai was part of the Oahu Customs Office. So we sailed to Kauai, and then we had to have our boat documents mailed from the Oahu Customs Office to a Kauai office so we could get them before our departure!

U.S. citizens should not be too fast to criticize other countries about boat clearing regulations.

Cesare Galtieri
Oakland

Cesare — Before we stop criticizing the old policy in Mexico, please tell us, did the U.S. folks charge you as much as $110 every time you checked in and out of a port? Did you also have to go to a bank before and after visiting the port captain? As with just about everything, we don't think the U.S. is perfect — but it's still better than most countries.
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June, 2005  •  Latitude 38  •  Page 91
HE SAILED A CORONADO 25 TO THE NORTHWEST

A recent letter inquired about information for cruising north from San Francisco. I recommend Cruising The Northwest Coast. From the Golden Gate to Port Angeles by George Benson. This recently published 144-page book is an aid to near-shore cruising along the Northwest coast, and is available for $20 from George Benson, 16700 Highway 96, Klamath River, CA 96050. The author can also be contacted at gbdesign22@att.net.

George is a good writer and an excellent sailor. After looking for a larger boat to replace his Coronado 25 Teal, he finally just decided to add two feet to his current boat — and did a beautiful job. Teal is the boat that he sailed north to Puget Sound, and his email accounts of that voyage convinced me to order his book — even though I have no intention of sailing that far north.

Chuck Graser

Chuck — We call such boat-stretching ‘Pyzeling’ — after Mike Pyzel, who stretched the Cal 28 he sailed from Santa Barbara to the Santa Cruz Islands several hundred times to a 30-footer. We’d never do anything like that, but admire folks who can. We’ll have to give that guide a look.

BARBED WIRE SHOULD DO THE TRICK

A diver in Monterey — who also has problems with sea lions climbing on boats — told me once he laid barbed wire on the decks of an old tug. The sea lions couldn’t quite get comfortable, so they’d move on to smoother pastures. Carpet tack strips might also work.

Brad Belleville

Sea lions are harmless, but can become annoying.

Brad — We’ll keep those tips in mind for when we return to Newport later in the summer.

A LINE PARTING WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE END

I was aboard Altura when the 83-ft Windward ended up on the beach at Yelapa, Mexico, those many years ago. We had three anchors — Windward’s, Sea Drift’s and also one that Eight Bells had lost — to work with for that final attempt to pull her off. The heaviest line, which was like 1.5 inches in diameter, led through the anchor hawse on the bow back to the mainsheet winch, which was a Herreshoff the size of a samovar, in the cockpit. I was to do the grinding. The other two lines came through bow chocks to two of the four foredeck winches. Each of these lines went from winch to winch to a tailer, so there were six guys on the foredeck. In addition, there were four of us in the cockpit, and six to eight Mexicans with buckets down below ready to bail.

We worked Windward off the beach and into the surf until she was standing up and bouncing on her keel with the rise and fall of each wave. Then one of the smaller lines parted.
I want to charter or cruise the world…

Heading off to cruise the world in your own boat or chartering a bareboat is an unfamiliar vacation location requires that you are a competent skipper. Developing confident and competent sailors is the reason we offer the American Sailing Association (ASA) sailing program. The ASA program is unique in its focus on boat safety, cruising, skipper skills, and seamanship.

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- You will learn to sail systems as well as sailing. Knowing the basics of engines, electrical, and transmissions systems could mean the difference between an enjoyable vacation and a nightmare.
- You will learn sailing from instructors who charter bareboats, have done ocean passages, and some who have circumnavigated the globe.

Being a member of our Sailing Club…

- You will get exposure to many different types of boats, engines, and systems. As you move from one boat model to the next and sail different each boat in the ever changing weather of the San Francisco Bay, you gain confidence and knowledge.
- You will have opportunities to join the club on local trips "out the Gate" for a taste of coastal and bareboat sailing.
- You can also join us on our group bareboat charters throughout the world. This gives you a taste of sailing in foreign waters and the security of learning the ins and outs of chartering with experienced sailors.
- We extend to you our discount with major charter companies when you charter through us.

I want freedom just to sail…

We want to make it easy for you to enjoy sailing! We realize that it is a large commitment to own a boat. Boat ownership competes with other activities in your life. And let’s face it, when the weekend comes around you don’t want to spend your time protecting the teak, polishing the hull, or replacing leaky engine seals. You want to enjoy time of the water with your family and friends.

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Congratulations to Glenn Eige from Fairfax on winning the Basic Keelboat class from our drawing!
We are often swamped with 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) 383-3816.

That was the beginning of the end, as two of the other lines quickly parted, too. Windward slewed around, and the 10-ft seas put her right back on the beach. At that point the garboard was so open that it would have been impossible to get her to a boatyard even if we could get her off again. In retrospect, the lines parted for the same reason that the anchor chains did.

By the way, I’m delighted and surprised to hear Bob Dickson is alive and kicking.

Joe Miller
Cyberspace

I enjoyed April’s Ten Tips For New Boat Owners. It’s been a long time since we christened April Dancer for the first time, but reading your Tip #1 about using champagne prompted me to offer an alternative suggestion.

When Tessa and I took delivery of our Fairweather Mariner 39 April Dancer, we were concerned, not only about broken glass, but about the BCDC bitching about fish, SUI. So instead of breaking the bottle on the bow, we stood on the foredeck, popped the cork of a bottle of bubbly plonk, and sprinkled a few drops on the deck. Then we drank a toast to all three of us and, slightly inebriated, took the bottle and glasses below for a giggly cuddle. In fact, because we needed regular practice to hone our skills, we have continued the tradition every time we’re on board together. After 15 years, we’re definitely getting better at it.

Incidentally, unless the product actually comes from France, it’s not good to refer to bubbly-plonk as champagne. Otherwise the French get their knickers in a twist, and a twist-knickered Frenchman is not a pretty sight.

Lyn Reynolds
San Jose

Lyn — We know the distinction between champagne and sparkling white wine, but as long as it does its job — give pleasure — we don’t think Pierre should be so uptight about it. In fact, his time would be better spent trying to figure out how France’s socialistic tendencies can possibly survive the onslaught of the Chinese and Indians in the new global economy.

John — It was reader E.J. Koford, not us, who reported on the tunnel from Tiburon to Angel Island — give us a break! Maybe you should do some minor checking before publishing fantasies such as that.

John Meyer
Point Richmond

A PUBLISHING FANTASY

After all the stuff about Alcatraz being a floating island, you run a letter in the May issue about a tunnel to Angel Island — give us a break! Maybe you should do some minor checking before publishing fantasies such as that.

John Meyer
Point Richmond

We are often swamped with 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) 383-3816.
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Eight bells.
We are sad to report the passing of Leon Kenneth ‘Ken’ Shaff, Jr., who died on May 18.

Ken was a man of many talents and interests, and unbounded good cheer and generosity. He was a car restorer, entrepreneur, Korean War veteran, writer, publisher, husband and father. He is probably best known to Bay Area sailors for founding Bay and Delta Yachtsman in 1968 and running the magazine until 1995.

Much is made these days of ‘media rivalry.’ When Latitude published our first issue in 1977, it was definitely in the shadow of the well-established and popular Yachtsman. But Ken was always gracious, friendly and helpful to us new kids on the block. He was a class act all the way.

Ken also sailed, served or consulted on many marine projects and, while president of the Northern California Marine Association (NCMA), put on the first-ever boat show at the Moscone Center.

Ken leaves behind Jeri, his wife of 54 years, five daughters, and eight grandchildren.

During his illness, Ken wrote the following:
“I have been very fortunate to have lived the most interesting and terrific life. Anyone who knows me could never be sad for me. I’ve worked and played, traveled, sailed and raced. I’ve built and realized more than a few dreams and have no regrets. Not many have been so lucky as I to have worked at something they loved. I’ve taught the things I know which have brought me joy. My family are my treasures, as are my friends. Hold me in your hearts, dear ones, as that is where I have always held you.” — Ken

The family invites friends to celebrate Ken’s life at Fantasy Junction (1145 Park Avenue, Emeryville) on Saturday, June 11, from 10 a.m. to noon. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that any donations in Ken’s memory be sent to: Hospice of Contra Costa, 3470 Burkirk Ave., Pleasant Hill, CA 94523, (925) 887-5678.

Cal 40 raft-up.
A raft-up at Encinal YC is planned for June 4. Boats should try to arrive by noon. The plan is to side-tie bow-out at the main dock. Dinner is at 6:30. All Cal 40s are invited to attend. Contact Rod Pimentel at Rodney.Pimentel@CH2M.com to RSVP or for more information.

Sailmaker merger.
UK and Halsey-Lidgard sailmakers officially became UK-Halsey last month. The merger unites 51 lofts and service centers in 20 countries, and two very experienced staffs. We’re not positive, but we think that ups the new enterprise to third largest in the world behind industry leaders North and Doyle. Both UK and Halsey-Lidgard have been players in the international arena for years. (The sails on Steve Fossett’s
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125-ft record holding catamaran Cheyenne [ex-PlayStation] were Halsey-Lidgard’s; UK is heavily involved in PHRF and club racing among production and semi-custom racer cruisers in North America and through the Grand Prix levels in Europe.)

Charles ‘Butch’ Ulmer will remain president of the new company, with Andy Halsey assuming the role of Technical Director. The new website of UK-Halsey is www.ukhalsey.com.

Busy Patrol.
The Coast Guard Cutter Boutwell returned to the Bay last month after an eventful 90-day Eastern Pacific patrol. Highlights included seizing almost 18,000 pounds of cocaine off two ships (one 300 miles west of Mexico, one off the Galapagos) and chancing upon a Mexican national who had been adrift on his disabled fishing boat for 23 days. Found 150 miles west of the Galapagos, he was treated and returned home.

The cutter Munro, a sistership to Boutwell that is also normally homeported in Alameda, was also busy keeping law and order on the high seas. Among other duties, in March she helped take control of a hijacked fishing boat in the Gulf of Aden in North Africa.

Both Boutwell and Munro are 378-foot high endurance cutters. Their primary missions are counter-narcotics enforcement, alien migration interdiction, and search and rescue.

Singing the blues.
You’ve all heard it: the ocean looks blue because it reflects the color of the sky. But why then do oceans and lakes sometimes remain blue even when the sky is gray? The precise explanation is that water itself is slightly blue (check out the water cooler sometime), and the more of it you look through, the deeper the blue.

Fact meets fiction.
You may have read about this in either a scientific journal, an old Ray Bradbury novel, or both. But yes, it is possible and maybe even practical for spacecraft to travel through space powered by huge ‘sails’ that capture solar winds — which are actually streams of charged photons. As far as we know, no existing spacecraft use this technology yet, but NASA has invested about $30 million to date in exploring future applications of it. Scientists are optimistic that solar sails could power missions “around the buoys” (to the sun and inner planets) and even beyond our solar system within a decade. ATC Space Systems in Ohio is on the forefront of the technology, and is presently testing sails in a vacuum chamber. The fabric, which resembles Mylar, is a spinoff of technology used to develop spacecraft paint. When deployed, the sails could actually be trimmed to slow down or speed up a spacecraft. Acceleration would be slow, but with no drag to contend with in the vacuum of space, top speeds could reach tens of thousands of miles an hour.

Did you know . . .
That swordfish, tuna and some big sharks have a special system that warms the blood supply to their eyes? The purpose of the ‘heating blanket’ effect was unclear until recently when Australian scientists heated up the dissected eyes of 10 swordfish, then tested their retinal response to flashes of light at various temperatures. The verdict: When broadbills warm their eyes (18 to 27 degrees Fahrenheit above the surrounding water), they can discern movement up to 10 times faster, helping the fish see and catch dinner.
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the loss of fast forward

After running the story of the grounding of Dan Benjamin’s Aerodyne 38 Fast Forward on Point Bonita last month (on the homeward leg of the April 16 Singlehanded Farallones Race), we received a number of inquiries as to the details of the unusual loss. Dan was understandably reluctant to talk about it until he had settled with the insurance company. That was wrapped up last month and, as promised, Dan was kind enough to submit the following detailed account . . .

“Well, this isn’t working either,” I concluded after shutting off the engine. A quick look at how fast California was approaching and I knew it was time to call mayday. I had run out of options and open water. The uninviting and treacherous rocky coast of Point Bonita was converging with me at close to 8 knots. Fast Forward was being pulled on her side by a spinnaker that had me pinned over and unable to steer.

I had entered Fast Forward in the Singlehanded Sailing Society’s Farallones Race. The course takes you under the Golden Gate Bridge and out onto the Pacific Ocean approximately 28 nautical miles to Southeast Farallon Island and back.

After rounding the island, I reached to windward of the direct course back to the Golden Gate Bridge, favoring a more conservative approach rather than my usual ‘keep the hammer down’ philosophy. I left the reef in the mainsail, roller furled the jib, and set the smaller asymmetric spinnaker. The boat was making 7.5 to 10 knots. The wind strength was approximately 14 to 16 knots. Reaching along easily, the boat was fully under control. I was having such a good time I called my wife, Carol, to report my progress.

Shortly after hanging up, I bore off on a wave, the boat accelerated, and I overran the spinnaker. It twirled and wrapped around the headstay and furled jib. With the boat on autopilot, I spent about 30 minutes attempting to unwrap the spinnaker, which was tightly wrapped in two places: at the top, above the headstay to the top of the mast where the halyard exits the mast; and at the bottom around the headstay just out of arm’s reach. Between these wraps, the sail remained full and drawing. Even after releasing the halyards, I was unable to lower the spinnaker or jib. The tack of the sail was at the end of the extended bow pole so I retracted the pole, untied the sail, and tried to unwrap the bottom of the spinnaker. The clew was caught up inside the wrap, so releasing the spinnaker sheets had no effect on the trim of the sail.

I’d been here before, and I knew I couldn’t unwrap the spinnaker until I got back into the sheltered waters of the Bay. At that point, the boat was under control and still on course, so I decided to return to driving.

As I approached the entrance channel buoys, suddenly the stern of the boat was lifted by a passing wave and thrown to starboard. This caused the boat to heel excessively and I lost steering control. %&#@!!! Just what I needed — a roundup! The boat went over onto her starboard rail. And just stayed there. The wind was now up around 16 to 19 knots, and the spinnaker was holding the boat over and dragging it sideways.

I tried waiting for the right moment, then tugging the steering wheel, hoping the rudder would bite and I could get the boat to come upright. Nothing happened. After several more failed attempts, I knew I had to try something else. I already had a reef in the main, so I pulled in a second reef, and tried again to ‘steer’ the boat upright. Again nothing. I pulled the main down and tried again. The boat remained in its heeled position, drifting to leeward and slightly forward at about 4-5 knots. I was still between the channel buoys and passing east of them.

What next? I duct-taped a rigging knife to the end of a boat pole and went forward to try to cut through the spinnaker sheet and the lower part of the sail. Moving around the boat to the bow was difficult. It was heeled over so far that I had to hang from a fitting on the side of the boat pointing toward the sky and hope my lifeline tether held me when

continued on outside column of next sightings page
while those of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean aren’t quite as good. The resolution for the rest of the world seems pretty lousy right now. In any event, these aerial views can be accessed by going to maps.google.com, then clicking on ‘satellite’.

We presume that most people have seen this by now, but it’s truly astounding. With a couple of clicks of a mouse, in just a few seconds, you can zoom from a

---

I dropped to the lifeline below, just kissing the water near the bow pulpit. Waves occasionally swirled around the bow and dragged at my boots and legs. Once there, I was frustrated to discover I couldn’t cut through either the high-tech synthetic sheet or the nearly new 1.5-oz sail cloth.

Then it hit me — I hadn’t tried the engine yet! The engine started, but the boat was heeled over so far that the folding propeller wouldn’t bite. I ran the engine until I observed no cooling water was coming out of the exhaust, probably also due to the excessive heel of the boat.

I was pretty much out of options at this point. I had been working over an hour and issued my mayday call to the Coast Guard at 1655.
They responded immediately and took my information, including the 
GPS position. They told me that a rescue vessel would be on its way. I 
responded that I would continue to deal with my situation.

Struggling along the high side to the bow, I deployed my Fortress 
anchor with 40 feet of 3/8-inch chain and 150 feet of 5/8-inch nylon 
rode. The depth sounder indicated approximately 56 feet. I was still 
west of the North Bonita Channel. The anchor streamed out to wind-
ward and behind me with no effect at stopping the boat.

When the Coast Guard vessel arrived at 1710, I pointed out the 
anchor line on my windward side. They stayed well clear and instructed 
me to cut it. I asked if they could pull either my stern or bow into the 
wind. They responded that they would not. I went below and got an-
other knife and proceeded back to the bow. As I held the knife to the 
line, I called one more time on my handheld radio — should I cut the

view of all of North America to where you 
can pick out your home. From the North 
America start, all you have to do is type 
in "15 Locust, Mill Valley, California, 
USA", and you’ll instantly be able to make 
out the Latitude 38 office. It’s a mind-
bender. It’s not in real time, but that’s 
probably only a matter of, excuse the pun, 
time. The miraculous thing about it is that 
you can move around so quickly using 
your cursor. Even zoomed in fairly close, 
you can scroll your way right up the coast.

While these satellite views are very 
helpful, we think Kramer is right, they are 
certainly no substitute for charts. Well, it

Sad end to a good boat — the last mortal re-
 mains of 'Fast Forward' get hoisted onto a 
flatbed truck.
depends on what kind of charts we're talking about. For example, this Google feature is a terrific way to double-check the accuracy of some charts in cruising guides. For example, pull out all your cruising guides to Mexico, go to the page with the San Juanico chartlet, and compare it to the satellite image from Google. You'll quickly see that some cruising guides really mean it when they say their charts shouldn't be used for navigation.

We also got a kick out of looking at the satellite views of Ha-Ha stops at Turtle Bay, Bahia Santa Maria, and Cabo. The

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Lighthouse. The first look down was stunning. The boat lay on her port side in the tight cove, directly beneath the pathway and bridge to the lighthouse. Sheer rock walls and the ocean waves lapping at the keel bulb meant we couldn’t get down to her. The boat appeared to be mostly intact except for the missing rudder and a small hole in the port gunwale at the cockpit area. Even the mast seemed undamaged. I held out hope that maybe we could still wait for a high tide and pull Fast Forward off the rocks.

We discussed recovery methods. It would be hazardous from the water — if the hidden rocks, breaking waves and surge weren’t bad enough, there was a forecast for more bad weather. Terry thought the safest approach would be from the air. Discussion of helicopter payload capacities and availability — and of cutting her up into small pieces — began. In the end, Terry concluded the boat would be a total loss, if she wasn’t already, by the time a recovery could be performed. Carol and I couldn’t take that in; surely we’d just float her off the rocks and, with a little repair, have her ready for the new race season. But it was Sunday, and nothing more was going to happen until the insurance overview of the entrances to the former two were particularly helpful. The surprising thing is that this satellite feature is so fast. In a matter of 10 minutes, we ‘stopped’ at every significant anchorage in all of Mexico, from Ensenada to Cabo. Then, in less than a minute, we visited our old haunts at St. Barth, Antigua and the Panama Canal. After that, we zipped up to New York City, Newport and Block Island. We were disappointed in Europe, however, as the resolution is still poor.

Well, until tomorrow.

One can only imagine how this will be improved in the next few years. It would not surprise us in the least, for example, to learn that a couple of years from now, you’d be able to zoom in on your boat in the middle of the ocean.
The one caution is that the aerial views seem to cast a cold analytical ‘eye’ on these spots. They are much more warm and inviting from lower down. But check it out — it’s free — and you’ll love it.

The resolution on Google’s new satellite photo site is incredible. Spread, La Paz. Above, Pier 39 — you can even see the seals!

The insurance company was available on Monday.

The insurance company assigned a claims representative who called a local surveyor, Dana Teicheira, to act as their representative. Dana met us at the lighthouse the next morning. The boat had now gone further up on the rocks and was against the bottom of the rock bluff.

The mast was bent about three feet. The aft port corner of the boat was impaled on a large rock and further damage was visible. It was evident that it wouldn’t be long before the ocean would simply break the boat up into big red splinters and scatter the remains up and down the coast of California.

With that thought in mind, we, Dana, the insurance company and the Park Service wanted Fast Forward removed as soon as possible. With time and the tides working against us, we set up the recovery for the next weekend. Unfortunately, Parker Diving was pre-scheduled for salvage work on the north coast. Ultimately, Global Inshore out of Rio Vista would perform the removal. Kevin Pehle suggested a large-capacity helicopter to lift the boat out in one piece.

The following Saturday, the recovery crew went in by rubber inflatable boat to stabilize the rigging. They cut the mast off above deck level and secured it and the boom on top of the boat using our Anderson winches and miles of high-strength lines. Lifting slings were test fitted and runners left in place for the next day. As they made their way off the beach, it became clear why recovery by water was to be avoided. With the tide coming in rapidly and waves building, their rubber boat was nearly flipped over several times. On shore, the crew reported gaping holes and general destruction along the port side.

Sunday morning, April 24, the Skycrane helicopter, hired by Global Inshore from a southern California company, arrived over the park and waited for the recovery crew to rig the lifting slings around the hull. When ready, the helicopter lifted off and only 10 minutes later appeared over the bluffs with a forlorn boat hanging beneath it. At one point, the fog and clouds hung so low that the helicopter was invisible, and for a few moments the boat seemed to be floating through the sky on her own.

When the helicopter brought the boat to the landing area, we saw the full extent of the beating she had taken. The entire port side was ripped open from the stern to the chain plates. Gusty winds forced the helicopter to quickly lay the boat over on her side and depart. The entire helicopter saga was over in minutes.

For the first time since jumping into the ocean I could actually touch my boat again. The damage was overwhelming. A large can opener and a sledgehammer couldn’t have done more damage. I crawled inside the boat and started to recover personal belongings. The navigation station on the damaged side was broken apart. I could stand on the ground where the station had once been. Bulkheads had pulled free from the hull. By contrast, there was little damage to the starboard side, and most of the equipment was still in place. The sea had done its surgical job of plucking objects out of the boat with each in and out rush of the waves. We filled the family vehicle with stuff. What do you do with all of this aftermath? The engine, winches, instruments, remains of sails, and fixed equipment all remained behind with the hulk.

Global Inshore returned on Monday with a mobile crane, a truck and a crew from Lee Boat Hauling. The haulers spent half a day loading Fast Forward onto the trailer. It wasn’t until the keel fin was cut in two that I finally absorbed that the boat was really gone. The insur-
SIGHTINGS

fast forward — cont’d

Irving and Electra Johnson fired the imaginations of countless young people with their stories of travel and adventure aboard their famous brigantine, Yankee. One was Leland Parsons, whose dream to build his own boat and sail around the world was born in 1957 when, at age 17, he saw Yankee sail into Gloucester Harbor. It took awhile longer than he planned, but Parsons, now 65, realized that dream early last month with the launch of the 65-ft LOA schooner Frank Edmund in Mission Bay, San Diego.

The design for the Frank Edmund was inspired by the gaff-rigged schooners still fishing out of Gloucester when Leland was growing up. Wanting a boat big enough to have all the comforts of home — and big enough to take along his wife Cecily and his ever-growing family — Leland decided a schooner around 50 feet would fit the bill. When he was in his 30s, he carved a half-hull model with the hull shape he wanted and spent a couple of years visiting various boatyards and boatbuilders to find someone to draw the plans. When Leland met William Davidson he knew he’d found the right guy. Davidson had no formal training as a naval architect, but Leland actually considered that a plus: “He was self-taught like me.” Davidson’s plans produced a boat 54 feet on deck and 65 feet overall. She’s got a beam of 16 feet and displaces 56,000 pounds. A 75-hp Ford Lehman engine provides auxiliary power. The sail plan provides for a 54-ft mainmast and 47-ft foremast, which together carry about 2,400 square feet of sail.

Originally thinking he would build the boat using the traditional plank-on-frame method, Leland changed his mind when he observed some commercial fishing boats being built using cold molded construction. He decided that was how he would build his, too. Having worked

long time coming —
launch of the frank edmund

That Saturday afternoon, after the recovery crew had rigged the boat for lifting and we had all left the park, my wife suggested that we go look at boats, sort of a ‘back in the saddle’ approach. So we spent the afternoon walking the docks. None measured up to Fast Forward, but I know there’s one out there whose helm will feel right to my hand.

— dan benjamin

Above, Leland and Cecily Parsons. Spread, after 29 years, ‘Frank Edmund’ finally splashes down.

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continued on outside column of next sightings page
**frank edmund — cont’d**

In boatyards as a teenager, Leland knew a boat of Frank Edmund’s size typically took a professional crew eight or nine months to build. “I figured doing it mostly alone, it would take about five years,” he recalls.

Construction began in 1976. Leland set up shop in his backyard in Poway, about 20 miles north of San Diego, and started on two identical yachts. (The second hull was for friends Michael and Norma Oliver. The deal was that the Olivers would provide the materials and the Parsons would supply the labor. The Olivers later sold their hull, and it now sits in another backyard in Alabama.) Building progressed quickly at first. Both hulls were conti-

**info on seminole**

If they ever start canonizing those saintly folks who rescue and restore classic yachts, our nomination for the first conclave is Elizabeth Meyer. Among the many derelicts she’s brought back to splendid life is the magnificent J Class yacht *Endeavour*. Meyer sold that 130-footer a few years ago, but continues ‘missionary’ work on lost and forgotten boats. She emailed recently to say that temptation came calling again a few years ago...
frank edmund — cont’d

pleted and turned upright in a little over a year. After that, Leland admits that large chunks of time went by without significant progress.

“There has to be a balance between dream and family,” Leland notes. The balance wasn’t always easy to find — in addition to his full-time construction business, Leland and Cecily raised eight children.

“Blend the dream and the family,” Cecily advised. Eventually, as they got older, the five girls and three boys all took part in the building of the boat. Two neighborhood kids, Bob and Don Mancini, also spent many hours in the Parsons’ backyard helping any way they could. Under Leland’s tutelage they became professional carpenters themselves and still work in the construction business today. “Go out and bang your head on the boat awhile” became a family mantra when someone was having a bad day.

As the five-year estimate came and went, Leland realized the project was going to take longer, much longer. By then, the boat was something of a neighborhood landmark and Leland had become ‘Noah’ to the neighborhood kids.

A windfall from a business partnership in 1989 had Leland hopeful he could have the boat professionally finished. He even moved it to a San Diego boatyard. When the deal fell through, the Parsons moved the boat back to the backyard. To add insult to injury, $5,000 worth of equipment was stolen off the boat while it was in the boatyard. Cecily recalls this as the most difficult time of the project.

Leland persevered. And last month, his persistence paid off. To the cheers of his now-grown children and many neighbors, the Frank

continued on outside column of next sightings page

semiole — cont’d

when friends told her about a rundown 1916 George Lawley gaff yawl that was being auctioned off in Oceanside. Sight unseen, she put a bid in and won the boat — for $1! Trucked to Steve White’s Brooklin, Maine, boatyard, Seminole recently emerged from a two-year restoration and was relaunched on May 28.

"Now I want more information on her history," writes Meyer.

Seminole’s dimensions are: LOA — 60’, LOD — 46’ 4”, LWL — 33’, Beam — 13’. Draft — 4’ 10” (board up). She is a gaff yawl with a bowsprit and boomkin, and has no topmasts. Her known owners are: Julian Harris (1916-1920, Detroit), Elisha Cooper (1921-1927, Essex and Lyme, Connecticut), T. Dwight Partridge (1928-1934, Los Angeles), Arthur Westmark (1935-1942, Los Angeles) — large gap, and then — Timothy Rhodes (1983?-1996, Oceanside), and Elizabeth Meyer (1996-present, Newport, RI).

If you can fill in any gaps in Seminole’s history, including former owners, voyages and so on, email them to mjw@jclass.com.
frank edmund — cont’d

Edmund was finally lowered into the water in Mission Bay on Monday, May 2. Named after Cecily’s father, Frank Edmund Garretson (who, at 87, was also on hand for the launching), the boat was recently appraised at just under $3 million. The Parsons found that they probably have about $300,000 invested in the project. Well, not counting labor. Leland hopes to sail the Frank Edmund for the first time this month. Then it’s sea trials over the next several months and — if all goes as planned — heading south in late October. Next year, Leland would like to sail the boat into his old hometown of Gloucester just like Yankee did all those years ago. “We’ll sail up the river at high tide and tie right up to the dock behind the house,” he says.

Sometime after that, the Parsons will set off on a five-year cruise around the world.

For more on the Frank Edmund, including the possibility of going along for part of the trip, go to www.schoonervoyage.com.

america’s cup entries close

The next America’s Cup is now two years away and counting. And the final deadline for entering occurred on April 19. Despite naysayers who predicted few syndicates would emerge to challenge the two deep-pocketed powerhouses, Alinghi and BMW Oracle, there are now 11 teams from 8 countries officially vying for sailing’s oldest prize. That’s pretty average — up from 9 teams from 6 countries in the 2003 series (in New Zealand), par with the 11 syndicates from 7 nations in 2000 (also New Zealand), and also up from the 7 teams from 5 countries in 1995 (San Diego — where there were also three American teams in a Defender series).

The 11 teams for ’07 are notable in several respects, perhaps the foremost of which is that Dennis Conner is not among them. As far as we can recall, this may be the first America’s Cup in which Conner, who will turn 63 this year, has not participated in since 1974. Also not among them, the Sausalito Challenge. The fledgling local effort — which made news last year by putting a title sponsorship package up for auction on eBay — was able to find lots of supporters, but not the crucial title sponsor.

Secondly, AC 32 will be noted for first-ever entries from the countries of Germany, China and South Africa. And in a bit of role reversal, there are three Italian teams this time, but — for the first time in a long, long time — only one U.S. entry.

Thirdly, there will be a lot of familiar faces when the Cup wars start up next year with the Louis Vuitton Challenger Trials. Here’s a look at each of the syndicates in the order in which they entered, some of the ‘usual suspects’ — with particular note of Bay Area personnel — who will be sailing with them, and the pertinent website, if there is one yet.

BMW Oracle (USA) — Even at this early stage, it would be hard to argue that Larry Ellison’s powerhouse BMW Oracle team has the best chance of any team to bring the Auld Mug back to American shores — and San Francisco shores, at that. BMW Oracle’s yacht club of record is our very own Golden Gate YC. Formed
in 2000, this syndicate showed very strongly in New Zealand in 2003, beaten only in the Challenger finals by Alinghi, which went on to wrest the Cup from Team New Zealand. Chris Dickson, who has skippered Ellison’s big boats for more than a decade, is back as team leader. Also aboard will be Gavin Brady and the Bay Area’s John Kostecki. ([www.bmworacleracing.com](http://www.bmworacleracing.com))

**Team Shosholoza (South Africa)** — Sounding a bit more like a Sesame Street character, the South African Challenge will be all business when it comes to sailing off Valencia. Founded by Salvatore Sarno, chairman of a Durban-based shipping company, the team is proudly culling sailing talent from its local waters. These include helmsman Ian Ainslie and skipper Geoff Meek, both of whom have compiled enviable records in the international sailing arena. On May 20, Team Shosholoza (the name comes from a South African work song and means ‘go forward’) became the first syndicate to launch and sail one of the new ‘Version 5’ IACC yachts. ([www.sachallenge.com](http://www.sachallenge.com))

**Emirates Team New Zealand (New Zealand)** — After the devastating and embarassing loss of the America’s Cup in 2003 in their home waters, the New Zealand team is back with a whole new pool of talent led by Grant Dalton, who is to Kiwi sailing what George Patton was to the American 3rd Army. Skipper Dean Barker is back, no longer the moody youngster who crumbled in the ‘03 defense. Barker has been upstaging even his old mentor and nemesis Russell Coutts in recent events like the Congressional Cup. In short, there seems to be enough black magic left that ETNZ may have a shot at bringing the auld mug down under — again. ([www.emiratesteamnz.com](http://www.emiratesteamnz.com))

**Luna Rossa Challenge (Italy)** — Skipper Fernando de Angelis, mercurial syndicate head Patrizio Bertelli and the classy silver-and-red boats of the Prada fashion empire are back for their third straight Cup challenge. And that in itself is worth pondering. In 2000, you may recall that this team won the Challenger competition, only to be shut down by Team New Zealand five-zip. Last time, they didn’t even make the finals. But with the addition of former Aussie skipper James Spithill and American wunderkind Charlie McKee to the afterguard, and some battle-tempered experience in their corner, and the fact that they were the first team to set up their base in Valencia, the third time may indeed prove charming for this team. ([www.lunarossachallenge.com](http://www.lunarossachallenge.com))

**K-Challenge (France)** — The K-Challenge was launched before the last America’s Cup with a grand plan to study that event and acquire some good boats before committing to this Cup. That they have done, including securing Team New Zealand’s winning boats, intellectual property and technology from their triumphant 2000 campaign. They have also secured the talents of seasoned America’s Cup skipper and Olympic gold medalist Thierry Peponnet as primary helmsman, and the Bay Area’s Dawn Riley as General Manager. Dawn remains the only woman ever to have run an America’s Cup campaign (America True in 1995),...
the *witch*

building techniques, Ken notes that the fir planking was aged for 20 years before it was used in her construction.

As with any old boat, *Volunteer* (launched as *Zoe H.*, after the first owner’s wife) has had many owners and many adventures over the course of her 70 years. She has participated in four TransPac races starting in 1936, winning Class B in 1939. She also served as a Coastal Patrol boat during the war, sailing back and forth off Catalina looking for enemy subs. But perhaps her most intriguing role was that of ghost ship...

That tale begins in the ’70s when her then-owner, an airline pilot, was sailing her to Panama on the first stage of a planned around-the-world cruise. He made it as far as El Salvador, where he ran the boat aground on a sandbar. As the story goes, she was eventually washed over the bar into deeper water, but was so damaged that the pilot just abandoned her. For years it was thought she had sunk, but eventually word made it back to the States that a local official in El Salvador had salvaged the boat, patched her up and renamed her *Tradicion*. One of the more rabid *Volunteer* fans flew down and

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america’s cup — cont’d

and the only woman to have sailed on a winning America’s Cup team (*America‘1* in 1992). ([www.k-challenge.com](http://www.k-challenge.com))

**Victory Challenge (Sweden)** — This is the second campaign by Hugo Stenbeck’s *Victory Challenge*, and Sweden’s fifth attempt at bringing the Cup to Scandinavia. About two-thirds of the ’03 team will be back, including skipper Magnus Holmberg, and the team has kept their skills and development sharp by refining their two ’03 boats. One of those, SWE 63, has been rebuilt to Version 5 specs and was due to arrive in Valencia last month. The team will also build two new Version 5 boats, designed by German Frers, before 2007.

**Desafio Espanol (Spain)** — 2007 marks the fourth time Spain has competed in the Cup wars (the only one they sat out since 1992 was the last one), and like a good cabernet from the Iberian peninsula, they seem to get better with age at every appearance. This time around, *Desafio Espanol* is already sailing boats obtained from Seattle’s 2003 OneWorld campaign, and *America True*’s 2000 boat, and their new boats will be designed by the San Diego firm of Reichel and Pugh, who have been on a winning roll for about a decade now. (In a bit of early controversy, the Bay Area’s Phil Kaiko was disallowed from being on the design team.) Homecourt advantage — the Valencia site is right in the Spanish Sailing Federation’s backyard — can’t hurt, either.

**Mascalzone Latino Capitalia Team (Italy)** — This is the second appearance of Italian shipping magnate Vicenzo Onorato’s team, which scored high on the likeability factor in the last Cup races, but at the bottom of the barrel performance-wise. Well, they aren’t the newbies anymore. Partnering with Capitalia, Italy’s fourth largest banking group, they have acquired trial horses USA 66 and 77 from Dennis Conner’s 2003 Stars & Stripes team, and talented Kiwi Hamish Pepper to supplement the almost-all-Italian crew. Harry Dunning, senior designer for

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*Above, Ken Lundie. Spread, ‘Volunteer’ sails into the Bay for the second time — in 66 years.*
Season of the Witch — Rick Hastie aboard the beautifully-restored ‘Black Witch.’
confirmed the ‘ghost ship’ was indeed Volunteer. It took him two years to convince the guy to sell, and three more years before he could leave the country because officials thought he was trying to use her to run guns.

Within days of her arrival back in Marina Del Rey, a scout from Universal Studios spotted the ragged-looking boat and felt she’d be ideal as a ‘prop’ in a new TV series about a big city coroner. For the next seven years, Volunteer was home base for Jack Klugman’s character in the weekly Quincy series. But that’s another story.

Lundie, a 30-year veteran of the San Francisco Fire Department, acquired the boat 11 months ago and keeps her in Pillar Point. He’s been a big fan and spectator of the Master Mariners Regatta for years and is really looking forward to finally taking part. Although he admits he’s a novice sailor, he’s looking to the boat’s captain, veteran shipwright Tim McDonald, to assemble a crew and teach him the ropes. Also on board for the regatta will be Kimberly Clark. The remaining crew spots had not been filled at this writing.

This is actually Volunteer’s second trip to San Francisco Bay, by the way. She was here 66 years ago for the start of that 1939 TransPac — the race in which she won her class. It was the only TransPac that ever started from San Francisco Bay, moved here from Los Angeles as part of the 1939 World’s Fair festivities.

The other great local wooden boat news is that Rick Hastie’s Black Witch is back in the water after an extensive year-and-a-half rebuild that has the boat looking probably better than she did when she was launched — also at Wilmington Boat Works in San Pedro — in 1949. A partial list of ‘to do’s completed on the 32-ft Ralph Winslow gaff sloop include the sistering of 38 frames; all new deck beams, subdeck and teak deck; new bulwarks, cockpit combings and caprails; new planking from the waterline up; a new rudder — and even a brand new engine!

Rick is a devout wooden boat guy. He’s appeared in these pages a number of times starting almost 20 years ago when he found the never-completed Bear Boat Calafia in a warehouse and finished her off. His next boat was the lovely 50-ft Nunes Brothers ketch Martin Eden, which also went through an extensive rebuild. But Black Witch may be his prettiest project so far.

Shipwright Dan Jones gets most of the credit for the extensive rebuild work on the boat, says Hastie. Ross Sommer did the appointment of Danish skipper Jesper Bank, an Olympic Gold medalist and previous America’s Cup skipper (with the 2003 Swedish team) should shortcut some of the growing pains. (www.united-internet-germany.de)

China Team (China) — The entry of a team from China is another first in the 154-year history of the America’s Cup. Something of a last-minute deal, Chinese venture capitalist Chaoyong Wang apparently bought cash-strapped French syndicate Le Defi lock, stock and barrel. Much of the experienced team — which had boats in the last two challenger series — goes along with the deal, giving China Team a jump-start both on and off the water. The team, under their flashy new yellow-and-red livery, was due to be sailing in Valencia at the end of last month. (www.china-team.org)
ocean in crisis — cont’d

challenges — and, we hope, find lasting solutions.

Last month, at an enlightening gathering hosted by West Marine founder Randy Repass and his wife Sally-Christine Rogers, we learned that there are proactive things that all of us can do to become part of the solution, rather than part of the problem. For example, guest speaker Sam Farr, a California 17th District Congressman, encourages all concerned citizens to actively support his cause: Farr has vowed to reintroduce this year the ‘Oceans-21’ legislation which he, as a member of the House Oceans Caucus, coauthored last year. Based on the recommendations of both the Pew Commission and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy reports, the proposed legislation’s goal is to ‘force government to rethink how it approaches oceans.’ Incorporating newly acquired ocean data, ”Oceans-21 establishes new national standards, implements ecosystem-based management, improves coordination among federal agencies regarding actions affecting the ocean, and promotes increased conservation, education, exploration, and research efforts.” However, as Farr soberly points out, ”Congress will not pass any significant oceans legislation without a groundswell of public opinion.” Thus, he implores each of us to become ocean advocates by encouraging our congressional representatives to support oceans legisla-

volunteer and

the replanking, and several other members of the tight-knit Sausalito wooden boatbuilding community, notably Harold Sommer and Peter Strieitman, also contributed work and ideas. Rick put in plenty of his own sweat equity, too, spending every weekend for the last year and a half — and more than a few weekday afternoons — working on the boat.

Black Witch splashed down the last week in April and Rick’s finishing her off in the water. He’d originally hoped to have her ready for this year’s Master Mariners Regatta — where she has been active since.

tale of a

Surely you all heard or saw on TV the story of two teenagers who miraculously survived six days on a small sailboat with
**witch — cont’d**

1965 and has won her class numerous times — but, well, you know how this boatbuilding stuff goes. The rig should be back in the boat (the mast is one of the few remaining original pieces) by the time you read this. Rick still needs to rebuild the interior. Once she’s all together, probably toward the end of the summer, he plans to take her down to Myron Spaulding’s old shop — which is now the Spaulding Center for Wooden Boats (partially funded by the Master Mariners Foundation) — for a ceremonial, ‘official’ relaunch.

**ocean in crisis — cont’d**

Oceana, an international conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the world’s oceans, is being actively supported by Repass and Rogers, who applaud its highly effective approaches to achieving positive change. At last month’s gathering, key members of the organization discussed recent victories, such as successfully pressuring major cruise lines to install advanced wastewater treatment facilities and, through their lobbying efforts, achieving a prohibition of bottom trawling in vast areas of Alaska where unique species of cold water corals thrive. Two of the diverse campaigns that Oceana is currently conducting are: efforts to save endangered loggerhead sea turtles by pressuring longliners to adopt new turtle-friendly hooks, and efforts to force outdated, mercury-polluting chemical plants to upgrade to cleaner technologies. Repass and Rogers strongly encourage you to learn more about this worthwhile organization (see [www.oceana.org](http://www.oceana.org)).

Perhaps the simplest grassroots action that all of us can take to aid our ailing ocean ecosystems is to pick up a free wallet-sized *MiniGuide to Ocean Friendly Seafood* at any West Marine store (due to arrive by mid-June). With this guide, you’ll quickly learn which varieties of seafood are fished or farmed by sustainable means, and which come to your table at a high environmental cost. Fear not, there are still plenty of eco-friendly choices for dinner, such as Alaska Salmon, Pacific Sole, shrimp farmed in the U.S., as well as Dungeness, King and Stone Crabs. Seafood to avoid due to habitat-destructive catching methods, environmentally unfriendly farming methods or a variety of other negative impacts include Atlantic Cod, Chilean Seabass (aka Patagonian Toothfish), Orange Roughy, farmed Atlantic Salmon and most imported shrimp.

To ask active sailors, such as *Latitude* readers, to be good stewards of the ocean environment would appear to be preaching to the choir. But we’d bet that even those of us who consider ourselves to be dyed-in-the-wool conservationists have a lot to learn about the fragility of the ocean realm, both locally and internationally. So why not accept the challenge to become better informed? As a group which derives great pleasure from the oceans, we sailors owe it to Mother Nature to help her heal her wounds.

**battle of the elders**

Two Japanese sailors at least tacitly known to Bay Area sailors are currently engaged in a ‘non race’ to become the oldest person to sail singlehandedly around the world, nonstop.

The first, and locally better known, is Kenichi Horie. Horie first came to note when, in 1962 at age 23, he became the first Japanese to solo-sail from Japan to San Francisco. (His crude 19-ft Mermaid is still on display at the Maritime Museum.) He has since made perhaps a half-dozen more Pacific passages, both east and west, aboard a series of oddball boats including in a 9-ft sailboat (SF-Japan, 1989), a boat powered by a bicycle frame attached to a propeller (Hawaii-Okinawa, 1992), and a catamaran whose hulls were made of beer kegs welded together (SF-Japan, 1999). Horie has also circumnavigated once, west-east, and has also circumnavigated North and South America. Now, at age 65, he is intent on becoming the oldest person to sail nonstop around the world.

So is countryman Minoru Saito. Although Saito never enjoyed the celebrity status of Horie, who is a sailing legend in Japan, Saito-San is well-known in solo ocean-racing circles. In the ‘90s, he completed three consecutive BOC/Around Alone Races (solo round-the-world with stops) aboard the 50-ft Australian designed and built *Shuten Dohji II*, and was well known among competitors for his cheery attitude and perseverance. At 65, he was also the oldest competitor in the 1998-1999

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*continued on outside column of next sightings page*
elders — cont’d

race. Although he did not sail in the last Around Alone (2002-2003), he sponsored a trophy for the Class II winner. And you’ve got to love a guy who names his boat Shuten-Dohji — “drunkard’s son.”

Both Horie and Saito departed Japan last October. Horie on the 1st and Saito on the 16th. Horie is sailing a new 43-ft aluminum cutter named Suntory Mermaid, after both his original craft and his long-time sponsor. (Suntory, best known as Japan’s largest brewery, is also involved in pharmaceuticals, restaurants and resort development.) The boat, designed by Japanese designer Ichiro Yokoyama — who drew the lines for at least one other of Horie’s boats, as well as for the Japanese America’s Cup boats — was purpose-built for this trip. Among Horie’s continuing themes is the importance of recycling, so her sails and other ‘plastic’ parts are made of recycled plastic bottles. Horie’s website is www.suntory-mermaid.com/english/mermaido.html.

Saito is as always sailing his faithful old Joe Adams-designed 50-footer, renamed Challenge 7 for this passage. The name signifies both his seventh decade — he turns 71 this year — and his seventh circumnavigation (he sailed solo from Japan to each of the round-the-world race starts in Newport, Rhode Island, then sailed home eastward, effectively completing three additional circumnavigations.) You can follow his efforts at www.canal-ut.com/~Challenge-7/english/, or at the Tokyo Sail and Power Squadron website, www.tspsjapan.org/Minoru_Saito.html.

At this writing, Horie and Saito were sailing only a few hundred miles apart past Tasmania on the homestretch back to Japan. Both sailors have endured storms, minor injuries and gear problems. Neither Horie nor Saito are playing up the rivalry of their concurrent efforts. In fact, we couldn’t find any mention either of them had made about the other at all. But in the end, it may work out to be a win-win situation for both of them. If Horie finishes first, he will be the oldest nonstop circumnavigator . . . until Saito comes in. If it’s the other way around, Horie is a class act all the way and will certainly honor his elder countryman.

all aboard for ha-ha 12

Is the Baja Ha-Ha — the 750-mile cruiser’s rally from San Diego to Cabo with stops at Turtle Bay and Bahia Santa Maria — on your sailing schedule this fall? If so, now is a good time to send in for your entry packet.

“We at the Ha-Ha have been following the wonderful changes in the clearing procedures in Mexico,” reports Ha-Ha Honcho Lauren Spindler, “and believe they are going to make for the most pleasurable winter ever of cruising south of the border. And the changes seem to be having a positive effect on Ha-Ha entries. In the three weeks since announcing the event, we’ve gotten 82.5 requests — one arrived torn in half — for entry packets. That’s quite a few.”

The Ha-Ha — which runs from October 31 to November 11 this year
— cont’d

For wear. In numerous interviews with everyone from Good Morning America to CNN, they recounted their tale of gargling salt water, eating 'jelly balls' (a type of small jellyfish), licking drizzle off the deck, going for short swims to cool off and praying for rescue — all, of course, in the obligatory 'shark infested' waters. We were frustrated that no one asked the most obvious question: Why didn’t they just sail continued middle of next sightings page

— ha-ha — cont’d

— is open to folks with boats 27 feet or longer that have been designed, built, and maintained for offshore sailing. The Ha-Ha welcomes monohulls, multihulls, and even motoryachts. There must be at least two people aboard each boat who have had overnight offshore experience. While there is a roll call and professional weather reports every morning, potential entries must understand that the Ha-Ha is not an offshore hand-holding service. Entry is only open to self-sufficient skippers and crew who otherwise would have sailed from San Diego to Cabo on their own.

“The weather along the Baja coast is generally relatively benign during continued on outside column of next sightings page
**SIGHTINGS**

**ha-ha — cont’d**

the Ha-Ha," says Ms. Spindler, "but we at the Ha-Ha want everybody to understand that they are potentially exposing themselves to the full fury of the Pacific Ocean. If anyone is looking for a genuine sailing adventure and is also willing to accept full responsibility for all the inherent risks, they may want to considering joining the Ha-Ha. For those who need a controlled environment and don’t wish to be self-sufficient, the Ha-Ha recommends ‘adventures’ on a cruise ship.”

Interested folks can get their Ha-Ha entry packs by sending a check for $18, along with a 9x12-inch self-addressed envelope, to Baja Ha-Ha, Inc., 21 Apollo Road, Tiburon, CA 94920. The packets will be sent out the first week in June. The event itself costs $299 — a small fraction of the cost of similar events — but entries get all kinds of swag and discounts from the likes of North Sails, the official sailmaker of the Ha-

**fateful trip**

back to shore?

It finally came out several days later that Josh and Troy didn’t have a sail. They were going fishing, so they left the rig for their JY/15 ashore and took just one paddle. At the time, small craft warnings were flying, and the breeze and current quickly swept them out to sea. The boys lost the fishing poles and the single paddle didn’t do much. They tried to swim the boat back to shore once, but that didn’t work, either. And so began the ordeal.

After the rescue, the tears of joy and the interviews, the finger pointing at the...
Coast Guard began. They were accused of ending their search (after 48 hours) too quickly, and for not looking farther north than they did. While these claims have some merit (apparently computer models indicated a more probable southerly drift), personally we think the majority of fingerpointing should be squarely at parents who would allow their unsupervised children to go out in questionable conditions with no lifejackets, no water, no food and no way to call for help — and not even be able to tell the Coast Guard where they launched from.

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Ha.

One good reason to get your paid entry in early is that the folks at Marina Cabo San Lucas traditionally save all their open berths for the Ha-Ha fleet, and then assign them based on the order folks have signed up for the Ha-Ha. So if you want to be pretty sure to get a berth in Cabo, you’ll want to be among the first 25 to sign up, not the last 25.

While the Ha-Ha was founded and initially run by Latitude 38, for years now the event has been owned by a separate company with no overlapping ownership. In fact, Latitude pays a fee to the Ha-Ha for media rights. Nonetheless, the Wanderer, Banjo Andy, and Dona de Mallorca — who all happen to work at Latitude — will again be back to serve as the volunteer Grand Poobah, Assistant Poobah, and Chief of Security, respectively. "We wouldn’t miss a Ha-Ha for anything!” they shout in unison.
The 105th running of this classic event was blessed this year with wind the whole way to Vallejo on Saturday. As usual, around the Richmond Bridge, the breeze did lighten up. But for once, it never died completely. Boats ghosted around construction barges (a few hooking keels or rudders on mooring cables) and past the refinery docks. Some hugged the shore so closely for current relief from the 4-knot ebb that they were practically scraping paint off the docked tankers. Once boats passed the Brothers and entered San Pablo Bay, the sun broke through the haze and the breeze picked up for the stretch run to Vallejo.

First across the line again this year was Bill Erkelens, Sr.’s D-Class catamaran Adrenaline, which finished at 2:43 p.m. after a bit more than two hours on the course. The first monohull in was Robert Youngjohns’ DK-46 Zephyra, which finished about 15 minutes later for an elapsed time of 3:51:16. Of special note, the largest one-design fleet were the Islander 36s, which put an amazing 18

Two hundred thirty-four boats answered starting guns near the Berkeley Circle the morning of Saturday, April 30, for the annual 21.5-mile run to Vallejo. But that was just the start of the fun in what’s become a Bay Area sailing tradition. That evening, there was a terrific dinner, a fantastic party and a fabulous video — followed as (almost) always by a Sunday race back to the main Bay. For sailors, the Vallejo Race weekend marks the end of a long winter and the official start of the summer sailing season.
boats on the course, 'out-fleeting' even the J/105s. Also notable, this year's Vallejo results did not count in HDA or one design fleets, which allowed the race committee to break the fleet up into an event-high 18 divisions.

The band Mumbo Gumbo supplied music for the party Saturday night. But the dancing couldn't begin until the big-screen TV in the main room got turned off. In another 'first' this year, VYC hired a professional video service (T2 Productions, www.t2p.tv) which filmed the race and delivered an edited version, complete with narration, by the time the party started Saturday afternoon. "It was very well received," says VYC race chairman Todd Mehserle. "We had several plasma screens set up around the club, but actually had to turn the one in the main dining room off so people would get off the dance floor!"

Sunday, May 1, dawned windless and for a while it looked like there might be a repeat of last year, when the Sunday half of the race had to be cancelled due to no wind. Happily, a light breeze finally got going, and by the last start, all boats were sailing in sparkling sunshine and 10-15 knots for the 14.5-mile beat back to the finish line near the Richmond Bridge.

The big picture from this year's Vallejo Race? Same as it ever was — good sailing, a great party, warm weather and friendly people. It's the best way we can imagine to kick off a new season of sailboat racing. See you out there!
Vallejo action (clockwise from here) — Express 37 fleet grazes tankers off Richmond; bookin’ north on ‘Checkout’; nylon wrestling aboard ‘Bandwidth’; ‘Astra’ in the groove; (left center), ‘Crazy Jane’ passes ‘Sirius Voyager’; ‘Zephyra’ and ‘Cipango’ led the big-boat fleet; Kristen Lane steers ‘Brick House’ to a J/105 Division win on Saturday. All photos latitude/jr.
DIV. I (<0) — 1) City Lights, SC 52, Tom Sanborn, 4 points; 2) Cipango, Andrews 56, Bob & Rob Barton, 7; (6 boats)  
DIV. II (3-57) — 1) Astra, Farr 40, Mary Coleman, 4 points; 2) El Ocaso, J/120, Rick Wessler, 5; 3) Magic, Tripp 40, John Rizzi, 10; 4) White Fang, Beneteau 40.7, Mark Howe, 12. (13 boats)  
DIV. III (60-75) — 1) Beneteau 40.7, Mark Howe, 12. (13 boats)  
DIV. IV (78-99) — 1) Two Scoops, Express 34, Chris Longaker, 4 points; 2) Mintaka 4, Farr 38, Gerry Brown, 5; 3) Express Lane, Express 34, Paul Tomita, 8; 4) Razzberries, Olson 34, Bruce & Lina Nesbit, 8; (11 boats)  
DIV. V (102-120) — 1) Dance Away, Santana 35, Doug Storkovich, 5 points; 2) Baleineau, Olson 34, Charlie Brochard, 5; 3) Tutto Bene, Beneteau 38a, Jack Vetter/Carly Hegle, 8; 4) High Strung, Custom Rodgers 31, Michael Kirman, 9; 5) Uno, WylieCat 30, Steve Wonner, 12. (18 boats)  
DIV. VI (123-144) — 1) Silkye, WylieCat 30, Steve Seail/John Skinner, 2 points; 2) Shenanigans, C&C 36, David Florio, 4; 3) Truant, Swan 38, Bob/Lowe, 7. (8 boats)  
DIV. VII (147-165) — 1) El Gavilan, Hawkfarm, Jocelyn Nash, 2 points; 2) Kelika, Hunter 33.5, Mike Weaver, 5; 3) Mer Tranquillo, Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 34.2, Larry Moraes, 7. (12 boats)  
DIV. VIII (168-198) — 1) TMC Racing, J/24, Michael Whitfield, 5 points; 2) Chesapeake, Merit 25, Jim Fair, 5; 3) Antares, Islander 30 Mk. II, Larry Telford, 8; 4) Sunda, Custom Seaboom 35, Bob Rogers, 10; 5) Skipper's Gift, J/24, David Guinther, 11. (17 boats)  
DIV. IX (>200) — 1) Boddacious, Farr One Ton, John Clausen/Bobbi Tosse, 3 points; 2) Mistral, Beneteau 36.7, Ed Durbin, 6; 3) Serendipity II, Beneteau 36.7, Tom Bruce, 8; 4) Sky High, J/35, John West, 9. (16 boats)  
DIV. X (201-220) — 1) Magic, Tripp 40, John Rizzi, 10; 4) Tom Cat, Barry Stompe, 8; 4) Windwalker, Rich Schoenhair/Greg Gilliom, 8; 5) Absolute, Steve Schneider, 9. (18 boats)  
DIV. XI (221-240) — 1) Adventure 3, Pat & Will Benedict, 3 points; 2) Brick House, Kristen Lane, 4; 3) Donkey Jack, Scott Sellers/Eric Ryan, 8; 4) Lulu, Don Wieneke, 10. (16 boats)  
DIV. XII (241-260) — 1) Hot Betty, John Scarborough/Dave Clawson, 3 points. (3 boats)  
DIV. XIII (261-280) — 1) Fast Freight, Bob Harford, 3 points; 2) Harry, Dick Aronoff, 5. (6 boats)  
DIV. XIV (281-300) — 1) Starkite, Laurie Miller, 3 points; 2) Goose, Michael Kastrop, 3; 3) Outrageous, Paul Caturegli, 7. (6 boats)  
SF-30 FOOTERS — 1) Shameless, Capo 30 mod., George Ellison, 2 points; 2) Abba-Zaba, Tartan Ten, Charles Pick, 5. (6 boats)  
MULTIHULL — 1) Adrenaline, D-Cat, Bill Erkelens, Sr., 3 points; 2) Rocket 88, D-Cat, Brendan Busch, 6; 3) Beowulf V, D-Cat, Susan & Alan O'Driscoll, 6. (7 boats)  
ANTRIM 27 — 1) Max, Bryan Wade, 4 points; 2) Always Friday, John Liebenberg, 4. (4 boats)  
EXPRESSION 37 — 1) Elan, Bill Rees, 2 points; 2) Golden Moon, K. Richards/B. Bridge, 6. (5 boats)  
ISLANDER 36 — 1) Midnight Sun, Peter Szasz, 3 points; 2) Pilot, James Robinson, 6; 3) Tom Cat, Barry Stompe, 8; 4) Windwalker, Rich Schoenhair/Greg Gilliom, 8; 5) Absolute, Steve Schneider, 9. (18 boats)  
J/105 — 1) Advantage 3, Pat & Will Benedict, 3 points; 2) Brick House, Kristen Lane, 4; 3) Donkey Jack, Scott Sellers/Eric Ryan, 8; 4) Lulu, Don Wieneke, 10. (16 boats)  
OLSON 30 — 1) Hot Betty, John Scarborough/Dave Clawson, 3 points. (3 boats)  
NEWPORT 30 — 1) Fast Freight, Bob Harford, 3 points; 2) Harry, Dick Aronoff, 5. (6 boats)  
CATALINA 30 — 1) Starkite, Laurie Miller, 3 points; 2) Goose, Michael Kastrop, 3; 3) Outrageous, Paul Caturegli, 7. (6 boats)  

For official results (YRA scores Saturday and Sunday separately), see www.yra.org.

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When Joe Vittoria of the East Coast had the mast stepped on Mirabella V in England in 2003, the 247-ft sloop became the largest private sailboat in the world — by far. And when Tom Perkins of Belvedere launches his three-masted schooner Maltese Falcon in Istanbul this fall, the 286-foot will become the largest private sailing yacht in the world.

It was our good fortune — and that of a few others — to be able to join these two gentlemen for lunch last month a few hours before Vittoria gave a presentation of his boat at the Corinthian YC. Also on hand was the celebrated naval architect Ron Holland of Ireland, who earned many of his sailing chops in Northern California and by designing boats for San Francisco Bay clients. In addition to having designed Mirabella V, Holland also designed Fелиcity West, which at 215 feet is another member of the exclusive 200+ foot sailboat club.

Although there were a couple of exceptions, such as the 212-ft schooner Adix, for many years the approximately 130-ft J Class boats were considered to be the standard of ultra-large sailing yachts. These were supplanted by a series of ketches in the 150-ft range from Perini Navi, and some sloops and ketches in the same size range from the likes of Royal Huisman. But thanks to the likes of Vittoria and Perkins — as well as Jim "Netscap"e Clark — mega sailing yachts have reached an entirely new realm.

(While Clark’s recently-launched schooner Athena will, at 295 feet, remain the world’s longest private sailing yacht, Perkins’ Maltese Falcon will have nearly 20 feet more waterline, displace 10% more, and therefore actually be significantly larger.)

We don’t think we’d finished our salad before it became clear that Vittoria and Perkins are similar in several interesting ways.

Both men have engineering backgrounds. Vittoria didn’t directly use that knowledge in his career, as he advanced up the Avis ladder to become president. He eventually bought the company in a leveraged buyout, ran it for 10 years, then sold it. He claims he now knows just enough engineering “to be able to ask questions.”

Perkins put his scientific knowledge to work to create the first low-cost lasers. He then came to Silicon Valley in the early ’70s and pioneered the concept of venture capital by co-founding the legendary Kleiner-Perkins. Over the years — and to this day — he’s closely associated with some of the great names in technology.

Except for gaps at the height of their working careers, both men continued to sail actively. Vittoria, together with the man who founded Nautor’s Swan, built three Farr-designed sloops in the 130-ft range in Thailand. Although the plan to have elephants pull them into the water for the launching didn’t work out, just about everything else about the boats did. He still owns and charters Mirabella and Mirabella III, while what was to be Mirabella IV sold before launch to become an early Philanderer.

There never was a Mirabella IV because — and we love this — Vittoria doesn’t like the way IV looks!

Perkins has owned two Perini Navi ketches in the 150-ft range. He has also raced extensively aboard his 138-ft Herreshoff schooner Mariette — mostly in the Med, but also in the Caribbean and across the Atlantic. That spectacularly restored 1916 yacht is now actively for sale.

Although both men have celebrated their 70th birthdays, they continue to share a passion for sailing. Both have a strong dislike of mega motoryachts, which are being popped out at a rate of 25 for every mega sailing yacht. They consider the motoryachts boring fuel hogs. “What do you do on a powerboat when going from Point A to Point B?” Vittoria wonders.

One of the main goals Vittoria and Perkins share for their boats is being able to have all the comfort and luxury of a mega motoryacht on a sailing yacht.

Although Mirabella was built for chartering, and Maltese Falcon might be available for selected charters, neither Vittoria or Perkins like chartering themselves. The idea of paying a bunch of money to use a boat for a short time and then never seeing it again is alien to them. There’s just no passion in chartering.

While having a lot of money is a prerequisite for building the world’s largest sailing yachts, it’s far from being enough. There are years of hard work involved, too. Vittoria labored on design concepts — starting at 190 feet — for two years before taking them to Ron Holland for further development. By the time Vosper Thornycroft completed construction, he’d spent seven years of his life on the project.

Perkins bought the steel hull of an unfinished boat, tore out what superstructure there was, and is in the process of creating a unique yacht that will almost certainly have the most stunning interior of any afloat. The latter has been the work of nearly the entire Ken Freivokh design team in London for several years. Before his boat is completed, Perkins figures four million hours will have been spent designing and building her. Many of them will have been his.

Although both Vittoria and Perkins have loved the design and building process, it hasn’t been without monumental challenges and obstacles. For instance, Mirabella has a 150-ton lifting keel with a 25-ton bulb at the bottom of the 33-ft fin. Far into the design and building process, the M.C.A. informed him that the structure housing the keel would have to be strong enough to withstand the loads if the boat was...
knocked down 90 degrees and the keel was fully extended. That would be unlikely to ever happen, as the sheet winches are designed to release if the boat heels more than 20 degrees, but it was required nonetheless.

Because both yachts will be over 500 tons, they also had to prove that the crew could survive inside the pilothouse for one hour even if it were engulfed in flames. And well into the building process, the M.C.A. insisted that Vittoria had to add 60 tons of fireproofing. Both yachts are limited to carrying just 12 passengers — although bodyguards and newborns can sometimes not be counted as passengers. If Vittoria or Perkins wanted to take more than 12, they’d have to equip their yachts with those orange lifeboat pods that look like giant versions of Ronald McDonald’s shoe — and make other expensive changes.

One of the major challenges for Perkins was building the three freestanding carbon fiber masts, which will rise 192 feet off the water. Nothing like them had ever been built before, and Fabio Perini, the Italian builder, wasn’t that eager to be a pioneer. So Perkins had to take on the project himself. It started with buying 25 tons of carbon fiber thread in Asia. Then he had to convince U.S. Customs that there wasn’t a security risk in sending material used in B-1 bombers to an Islamic country. Finally, he had to sending material used in B-1 bombers to an Islamic country. Finally, he had to

**WITH JOE, TOM, AND RON**

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As if building the world’s largest ‘vanilla’ sailboat wouldn’t have been hard enough, Vittoria and Perkins decided to build yachts with unique sails and sail plans.

Although a 247-ft Mirabella almost screams out for a split rig, Vittoria loves sloops, so even as she grew from 190 to 247 feet, she was always going to be a sloop. The carbon fiber mast ended up weighing 31 tons and being a staggering 290 feet tall! Mirabella is said to be the only vessel of any kind that can’t fit under any bridge in the world! Her mast is 70 feet taller than the roadway of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Mirabella has a marconi rig, which have been around for ages, of course.

But the nearly football field-size of the main meant tremendous handling problems. So sailmaker Robbie Doyle had to create a main that can be separated into seven sections — something that had never been done before. Even so, it still takes two cranes to remove the sail from the 90-foot long boom.

Both the rig and sail plan on Maltese Falcon are entirely new. They call for 16 modern square sails — which can be set and rolled up sort of like windowshades — on three masts. It’s a concept the Germans developed for commercial shipping, but never actually tried. The only working version is on a five-foot model of Maltese Falcon, and Perkins obviously hopes the concept will translate successfully on a much larger scale. One hopes his incredible faith in technology will be rewarded.

The risks for both boat projects have been huge, from Mirabella’s biggest ever composite hull to Maltese Falcon’s unproven sail plan. In addition, almost all of the gear for both yachts has had to be custom made. After all, you can’t just go down to West Marine and pick up a block the diameter of a dinner plate that has a breaking strength of 100 tons. And can you imagine the stretch there would be in a 600-foot halyard made of normal hi-tech line? A entirely new product had to be developed for Mirabella.

In order to step Mirabella’s mast, Vittoria had to hire the biggest crane in Europe. Then they had to wait several days for the wind to calm down, because the crane can’t be operated in more than 13 knots of wind. It was a day-long job stepping the mast, for even once it was sitting on the step, the headstay and baby stay had to be moved forward and attached. Did we mention that the roller furling units at the bottom of those stays weigh 3.5 tons and 3 tons respectively? So they couldn’t just be manhandled. As for the pin that secures the headstay to the stem, it alone weighs 60 pounds.

Part of the way into stepping the mast, Vittoria asked the crane operator what would happen if the wind suddenly started blowing more than 13 knots. “We’d have no choice but to drop your mast into the river,” he responded. That would have set the project back at least a year or two. With Vittoria hoping to take in millions each year in charter revenue, such a delay would have been a big hit.

While most guys past 70 are lying on lounge chairs or putting around with putters, Vittoria and Perkins are making crucial decisions and surmounting never-ending challenges on a continual basis. Vittoria, for instance, got some of the worst news imaginable last summer, when he was informed that Mirabella had dragged anchor and was stranded on the rocks at Beaulieu-sur-Mer, France.

The world’s largest sailboat on the rocks was, of course, front page news all over Europe. Sensing a chance to delight in the misfortune of the rich, the press moved in for the kill. But according to a sympathetic Perkins, Vittoria gave them one of the best responses he’d ever
OUR LUNCH

heard. For when a reporter asked Vittoria how he felt that his boat went aground while the crew was dining, he gave the following retort:

“My crew doesn’t dine, they eat!” Perkins got a tremendous laugh recounting the story, and congratulated Vittoria.

Like many sailors, we were shocked that Vittoria didn’t immediately sack Aussie captain Johnno Johnston. “He’s a good captain,” was all that Vittoria would say by way of explanation. When a member of the Corinthian audience asked about the mishap, Vittoria surprised almost everyone by saying that he considered himself to be as much to blame as anyone. “Our procedures weren’t as good as they could have been, and we’ve made changes to the boat so the propulsion systems can be started more quickly. It was unfortunate that it happened, but Mirabella is a better yacht for the experience.”

Talk about having broad shoulders for responsibility and looking on the positive side of things!

While you might expect someone in Vittoria’s position to be something of a bully, nothing could be further from the truth. Friends who know him from back East warned us in advance that he would be very pleasant and personable — and he was. It’s also clear that he doesn’t always insist on getting his way. After many months of work, the Holland design team came up with four models showing very different design concepts. The Vittoria clan — which includes Luciana, his wife of 43 years, four children and 10 grandchildren — gathered around to express opinions. “Nobody could agree on which was the best,” laughed Vittoria. “This is the one Mrs. Vittoria liked,” he said while showing a slide. After a pause, he added, “It’s the one we built. It wasn’t my favorite, but it’s the one we built.”

Luciana, who supervises charter bookings for all the Mirabellas, also had a different take than Joe on the interior design. She didn’t want to have a necessarily nautical look for the staterooms, and since that was her bailiwick, she got her way. Joe says that while he was skeptical in the beginning, he’s come to love his wife’s interior design work.

Vittoria’s ability to accept compromises in certain areas — and learn to love them — comes across not as a weakness, but as a strength.

Vittoria gave the Corinthian audience a thumbnail sketch of the financial realities of the charter business. “You pay for your boat out of your pocket. Consider that money gone. Then if you do about 20 charters a year, you break even. When you ultimately sell the boat, you might get a little back.”

Vittoria said it costs about $4 million a year to run the boat, which based on a basic rule-of-thumb would suggest that Mirabella V cost about $50 million. She now charters out for $250,000 a week, not including expenses. She’s fully booked for the summer, thank you, with one individual taking an entire month! But if you hurry, you might still be able to get a week on her this winter in the Caribbean. You’d look great anchored off St. Barth, Vittoria’s favorite. Contact www.mirabellacharters.com for details.

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AL & BETH LIGGETT

Last Christmas was one that Latitude contributors Tom Morkin and Liz Tosoni will never forget. Unfortunately most of their memories are sad ones.

Aboard their Spencer 51 Feel Free, they spent the holiday season at Langkawi, Malaysia, just 400 miles from the epicenter of the disastrous Sumatra earthquake and its resulting tsunami. Lying at anchor, Feel Free was unharmed, while two nearby marinas were all but destroyed, and loss of life along the neighboring coastlines, of course, was horrific.

One of the only pleasant memories of those nightmarish days was getting to know two-time circumnavigators Al and Beth Liggett, who are now based in Southeast Asia. Tom and Liz filed the following report.

Former Californians Al and Beth Liggett started cruising in 1966 and, despite having more than 145,000 miles under their keel, show no signs of slowing down. As we were getting to know them several months ago, they were readying their double-ended 42-ft cutter Sunflower for an upcoming 1,700 mile voyage to the virtually uninhabited Chagos Archipelago where they planned to spend five months.

Al and Beth and their bright yellow sloop are well known by yachtsies around the world, not only because of their extensive voyaging, but also due to their prolific writings on sailing matters. After 20 years of reading about their adventures, in various articles, it was a delight to have them aboard Feel Free to hear firsthand how they have managed to do so well, for so long, what so many of us only dream of doing.

In telling their tale, they took us back to more than 40 years ago, when they first met at Newport Beach. Beth was a Newport native, while Al was originally from Ohio. "We met at a party in Newport in the early '60s," recalls Beth, "and after the usual small talk, Al said 'How would you like to go sailing?' So, our first date was a daysail in his 20-ft sloop." No doubt there was serious chemistry between them, because they were soon talking about the idea of going cruising together. "Before we knew it, we found ourselves a boat, got married, took four months to get the boat ready and we were off." That was in November of 1966.

Of course, the process of finding a suitable cruising boat back then wasn't easy — before there were hordes of 'production boats' built for offshore sailing.

They searched all up and down the west coast, as far north as Vancouver, but couldn't find anything suitable, so they eventually went to the east coast. Finally, in Annapolis, they found Bacchus, a 40-ft wooden ketch constructed of 2-by-6s with 7-foot draft. She had a full keel, of course, and heavy displacement. Her hull was hard-chinned, and was vertically planked between the chines. "We ripped the inside out and completely renovated the interior," explained Beth.

With nearly 150,000 sea miles behind them, Al and Beth have long been revered within the international sailing community. With nearly 150,000 sea miles behind them, Al and Beth have long been revered within the international sailing community.

They'd found Bacchus a little ho-hum, and ultimately decided to have one built. "A friend sent us a design profile that she'd found in a sailing magazine of a Valiant 40," says Al, "and a whole barrage of correspondence with Robert Perry followed. We got a custom design from him.

After substantially fattening up their cruising kitty, they searched for a boat with a particular set of criteria. They had no luck finding such a boat, however, so they sold Bacchus, by trade, they made most of their money for that first trip by importing Volkswagen station wagons, as dealers hadn't started importing them yet.

Upon their return to California they sold Bacchus. But they knew that they were going to miss the cruising lifestyle, so they made a new plan. "In 1970," recalls Al, "we set up a five-year plan: We bought two fourplexes as an investment, Beth got her old job back at the same elementary school and I picked up work here and there. In 1972 I landed a job as a land surveyor in Guam and Beth got a teaching job there, so Guam became our base. As a side line, we opened a Laundromat with 60 washers and 28 dryers, as well as a sail repair business and a drafting service. We were busy but basically boatless for six years."

After substantially fattening up their cruising kitty, they searched for a boat with a particular set of criteria. They had no luck finding such a boat, however, so they ultimately decided to have one built. "A friend sent us a design profile that she'd found in a sailing magazine of a Valiant 40," says Al, "and a whole barrage of correspondence with Robert Perry followed. We got a custom design from him.

"Before we knew it, we found ourselves a boat, got married, took four months to get the boat ready and we were off."
and wrote a contract for two boats."

Al redesigned the deck, cabin top and cockpit and drafted the interior. Then they selected a builder in Taiwan.

In June of 1976 they picked up Sunflower in Taiwan and, after a "slow and painful trip" due to encountering a tropical depression, they arrived in Guam, which had just experienced a terrible typhoon.

"The crazy thing is that we had previously lived in Guam for five years without experiencing one single typhoon!" says Beth. In December of that same year, they set sail for Palau, the Philippines, Japan and then returned to Guam in '77. From there they went to the Solomons to help the islanders there celebrate their independence, then on to New Guinea, Indonesia, Singapore, Borneo, the Philippines, and Hong Kong for the 1980 China Sea Race. After visiting Japan, they set out across the North Pacific for Vancouver, Canada, a 4,600-mile voyage that took them 34 days.

"It was cloudy, foggy and basically uneventful," recalls Al. "We actually had better weather than the boats that followed the great circle route and headed north via the Aleutians.

By that time they were well into their second circumnavigation, this time, eastabout. From Vancouver they cruised up to Alaska, then down to Lake Union, Washington.

Before continuing on around, they took a respite from cruising by accepting a job to deliver a Cal 246 from Cypress (in the Eastern Med) to California — a voyage of 10,000 miles which took them four months.

Afterwards, they resumed their circumnavigation, sailing down to Mexico, through the Panama Canal and up the east coast to Newport, RI, in time to watch Dennis Conner lose the America's Cup to the Aussies.

"It was then that we noticed our bank account looked overused," says Beth, "so we sailed down to Florida to fatten the kitty. I worked at Charlie's Locker and Al went back to surveying for two and a half years. Then we were off to Europe."

For the next three years, they became 'commuter cruisers', leaving Sunflower in Holland for two six-month periods and in Tunisia for another six-month period, while they returned to their jobs in Florida. From Tunisia they sailed east to Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, where they spent two winters.

Compared to their first circumnavigation, this second eastabout cruise was much more drawn out. But then, Al and Beth weren't really focused on circumnavigating, they had simply embraced a lifestyle of open-ended voyaging.

"In fact, it wasn’t until we reached Cypress in 1990 that we realized that if we crossed the Indian Ocean, we’d have another circumnavigation under our belts," Beth recalls. "So, after the Gulf War ended in February, 1991, we figured it was safe to go, and we set off for the Red Sea. Egypt was fantastic, but Aden to Kenya was a miserable trip against the wind and current, as it was too late in the season (April-May). But we had a super time in Kenya for four months." From there, they went to Sri Lanka, then Langkawi, Malaysia, and finally to Singapore in March of 1992, where the second circumnavigation was officially completed.

We asked them to compare the two routes: "Both were easy," says Al. "We don’t really recommend one over the other. If you are in a hurry, westabout is better. Going eastabout, we had almost no trade wind sailing. We sailed well, but not with consistent trade winds, and it was more weather dependent. On our eastabout route, we were never south of..."
Looking back, they count Alaska, Chagos, Turkey and now, Langkawi, among their favorite spots.

At the other end of the spectrum, Labuan, an island off the coast of Borneo, comes to mind. "It was dirty, and the people were aggressive — they grabbed you and asked for money. There was an obvious smuggling operation going on. Not a pleasant place."

After completing their last circuit, they went back to work in Guam for five years. "During our first four months there we experienced five typhoons!" recalls Beth. "We left in 1997 and sailed to Yap, the Philippines, then spent five months in Hong Kong. Then it was back to the Philippines, Borneo, Singapore, and finally to Langkawi, which became our base in 1998."

This duty-free island, lying just off the coast of northern Malaysia, near the Thai border, seems to perfectly suit the Liggett’s lifestyle. From there, they’ve sailed to both the Chagos Archipelago and the Andaman Islands twice, and have also extensively explored the east coast of Malaysia.

Some of the other pluses of basing at Langkawi are: "Friends, good anchorages, lots of variety of places to go, friendly locals, a small population, and easy access to cheap flights around Asia and back to the U.S."

The Liggetts are often asked to comment on or write about what it costs them annually to cruise. "We spend it all," says Beth with a laugh. "Seriously, there are too many variables: boat size, number of trips home, location, insurance both for boat and body etc., etc., to answer the question meaningfully. It re-

"You become more alert and alive when you are facing new challenges, such as night approaches and dealing with foul weather."

Looking back over their four decades of cruising, Al pointed out how dramatically cruising has changed over the years. "Today most cruisers are older and more affluent, they sail on bigger boats and have less spirit of adventure. Fewer people have a multiple of skills — and they are less inclined to fix their own boat problems. The equipment aboard, of course, has totally changed. Today you also see more 'clump cruising' or 'lotilla sailing'; more radio scheds; and lots more marinas, with cruisers going from marina to marina."

Although the Liggetts are probably a bit nostalgic for the simplicity of the good old days, they have adopted some high tech developments. "We use GPS, cell phones, computers — we had our first one in '89. But we don't use C Map, as it takes too much electricity, and we have no safe place to put the computer when under way. We feel it also lacks the reliability of paper charts. We love our electric windlass and roller furler, although that's hardly new technology. We didn’t have them on our last boat but wouldn't be without them now. You might be surprised to hear that we don't have an electric water pump, and therefore we have no shower, but we do have refrigeration."

For the past 15 years, they’ve also used an autopilot — primarily a Wilhann brand, built in Seattle, as it is "sturdy and very strong." Al’s advice about self-steering to folks just starting out is, "Buy a good autopilot, have a backup, and leave the vane at home."

And what’s their favorite piece of boat gear? Al says, "Beth!" And Beth says, "Al!"

Cleaned up and ready to go ashore, Beth and Al strike a pose in Panama (circa 1970), after completing their first circumnavigation.
Since 1976, the Liggetts' Robert Perry-designed sloop has served them well. Friends are often shocked to learn she's nearly 30 years old. It can accomplish it. It's the many small achievements along the way.

To that Al adds, "You become more alert and alive when you are facing new challenges, such as night approaches and dealing with foul weather. You face a wider variety of challenges than you would in suburbia!"

Looking back over their long cruising career, Beth says the scariest experience for her was "being boarded in the Andaman Islands by the military and watching guns being pointed at Al."

For Al it was "a 60-hour storm between New Zealand and Fiji when the seas were so big that we entertained ourselves by watching the barometer needle rise as we rose with the crests of the waves, then drop as we descended into the wave troughs. The wind was so strong that it created mini-low-pressure systems in the troughs where the wind didn’t penetrate."

Before we said good-bye to Al and Beth, we asked them if they had any words of wisdom for those who'd like to follow in their footsteps?

"Don't be too enthralled by all the technological paraphernalia available," cautioned Al. "A lot of cruisers we meet are actually encumbered by all the high tech advances. You don't have to have all the things."

During our own years of cruising, we've met many wonderful people, but we count the Liggetts as two of the most impressive. Their ongoing adventures are truly inspiring.

— tom morkin & liz tosoni
Break out the party hats, noisemakers, and champagne — the TransPac turns 100 years old in July! The 2,225-mile bluewater classic, scheduled to start July 11, 15 and 17, has had its ups and downs since its humble origins as a 3-boat race from L.A. to Honolulu in 1906 (Lurline, an 86-foot schooner, won in 12 days, 9 hours). The high, in terms of participation, came in 1979, with 80 boats making the passage. However, by ’99 and ’01, the TransPac attracted just 33 boats each time, and the great race appeared to be circling the drain. Happily, that downward spiral was reversed in ’03, when a large and eclectic 57-boat fleet showed up.

The remarkable comeback continues next month, with 72 boats currently entered in the 43rd sprint to Diamond Head. Fourteen Bay Area boats — the most we can ever remember — are entered in the Centennial TransPac, including five Cal 40s, three doublehandlers, and two hot TP-52s. The cutoff date for entries isn’t until June 3 and, with several more boats apparently still in the wings, everyone’s fingers are crossed for a record-breaking fleet. Hopes are also high for a record-breaking run, and with the max286 twins Pyewacket and Morning Glory entered, odds are that the course record of 7:11:41, set by the ‘old’ R/P 72 Pyewacket in 1999, will be significantly lowered.

This month, to get the Summer of TransPac Love rolling, we’ll introduce our 14 lucky local entries. Without further ado, here they are, in alphabetical order:

**Azure**, Cal 40, Rodney Pimentel, Encinal YC — Alameda resident Rodney Pimentel bought Azure (ex-Firebird, hull #72) in Portland last September specifically to fulfill his dream of participating in the 100th-anniversary race. "We hit 16 knots under white sails alone coming down the coast," said Rodney, a civil engineer. "I’m really impressed with this boat."

Since then, Rodney and his crew — old friends Ted Floyd, John Hemiup, and Matthew Dean — have spent every spare moment going through the boat to make her safe and fast. The ‘Four Amigos’ were rewarded with a bullet in their debut, the Lightship Race, and will sail the Spinnaker Cup and Coastal Cup as further tune-ups for the TransPac. This is the first TransPac for everyone on the crew, though all are experienced ocean sailors.

Rodney, who was raised in Alameda and grew up sailing on the Bay, got his taste for ocean sailing when he and his wife Jane took two years off and cruised to Mexico and the South Pacific in their first Azure, a Jeanneau 36. Cal 30s seem to be a theme in Rodney’s life — he went to Cal, owns a Cal 28 called Osituki (his family purchased it new in ‘62), and now has his blue Cal 40. "This year’s TransPac will be awesome with 14 Cal 40s," he claimed. "Finishing it will be a lifetime achievement; actually winning would be priceless."

**Barking Spider 3**, MacGregor 65, David Kory, Tradewinds SC — "I’m completely sold on the TransPac," enthused David Kory after winning Aloha-B and taking second overall in the Aloha Division in ’03 in his Catalina 38 Barking Spider. Kory’s back again this year in a much bigger boat, the 1987 MacGregor 65 Barking Spider 3 (ex-Fast Company). The new Spider will sail with just six crew, and, like last time, the coed gang was selected from Pt. Richmond’s Tradewinds Sailing Club, which Kory no longer owns, but is still involved with.

Marianne Wheeler is a TSC instructor who has circumnavigated on her Cal 40, and the others — Emily Dean, Steve Felte, Niels Frommann, and Joe Rivera — are all students or members. "For us, it’s part promotion, part ‘experience of a lifetime’, and all fun," said Kory, who will also navigate. "Our primary goal is to finish, although we hope to be competitive, too. It’ll be a lot harder this time, as we’ll sail in a regular racing division, not Aloha, so we’ll be up against much more professional and more experienced teams."

BS-3 entered February’s Puerto Vallarta Race as a tune-up, but her new carbon main suffered a "design failure," forcing them out of the race just after crossing the border into Mexico. A 35-to-45-knot southerly gale provided a quick and exciting ride back to the Bay Area, after which the crew flew to PV — the
first racers to arrive! 'Everyone has spent time on this boat going up and down the coast, so we're not total rookies like two years ago," explained Kory. "We've scheduled local practices, and will use the delivery to Long Beach as the final tune-up.'

After the TransPac, Kory and a different group will put Spider into cruise mode and sail to Juneau, Alaska. "We'll spend two months exploring Glacier Bay, the Inside Passage to Vancouver, the San Juan Islands, and then down to San Francisco,' he said. "We're going to put the 'racer/cruiser' moniker to the test!"

California Girl. Cal 40, Don & Betty Lessley, Richmond YC — This will be Cal Gal's fourth trip to Hawaii, following a DNF in the slow 2000 Pac Cup due to a blown-up main, a sixth in the '03 TransPac (out of 10 Cal 40s), and a bullet in Division B in last year's Pac Cup. The Lessleys, now both enjoying retirement in Novato, previously did two Pac Cups on their Cal 9.2 Freewind, so they're old hands at sailing to Hawaii.

For this trip, they'll be joined again by son Timm, an engineer based in Portland, his wife Vicky, and a fifth person to be announced soon. Their mascot, a stuffed monkey known as 'Big Al' (aka Apus Foredeckus), will also be making another appearance. "Alfred is our secret weapon," claimed Don. The boat (ex-Scaramouche, ex-Wind Wraith, hull #94), which the Lessleys bought in Muskegon, MI, in 1997, was extensively upgraded prior to the '03 race and is presently champing at the bit, ready to go again.

"This year's TransPac seems like a celebration of age," noted Don. "Our boat is 38 years old, and the four of us have a combined age of 240 years. Maybe we can pull in a youngster, say a 50-year-old, as our fifth crew to pull the average age down. But the boat and crew are young at heart, and are looking forward to playing with a great fleet of similarly crewed Cal 40s."

Camille, Stewart 42. Jim Read, Inverness YC — Jim Read, a retired IBM test engineer from Inverness, and his wife Annie will be racing Camille in the doublehanded division. Well, triplehanded if you count 'Sweetie Pie', their Havanese dog, who will be joining the Reads on their first crossing and subsequent cruise home by way of Alaska.

"We're complete greenhorns, but you have to start somewhere," admitted Read cheerfully. "We're taking a low-key approach to the race — we'll fly the kite at sunset and pole out a jib."

"We're mainly using the TransPac as a way to pry ourselves away from shore, a deadline to finish up working on the boat and start cruising."

Camille, built in 1968 in New Zealand out of coldmolded kauri wood, has raced to Hawaii before and..."in an earlier life, done several Sydney-Hobarts. The Reads have owned her for eight years, sailing out of San Rafael. "Camille is a true bluewater boat," said Read. "It's time to get her back out on the ocean."

Charmed Life. Catalina 470, Pat Garland, Encinal YC — Pat Garland, owner of Farallone Yacht Sales in Alameda, is sailing her 2000 Catalina 470 Charmed Life double-handed in the Aloha Division with Diane Murray, a Modesto hygienist and OCSC sailing instructor. They're the first all-woman doublehanded duo in the history of the race. Both women have Coast Guard licenses and have delivered boats up and down the West Coast. "Diane has also done some Pac Cups and returns, and is more experienced than I am," allowed Pat.

Garfield grew up in Hawaii, and her late father participated in the TransPac in the early 50s. "I've wanted to do a crossing for as long as I can remember," she said, "and doing it doublehanded will make it more of a challenge. We're not hardcore racers — we're just hoping for a respectable finish and to have a great experience. Unlike the people who are sawing the handles off their toothbrushes, we're going in comfort — I think we'll bring a case of wine, and we'll probably take down the kite at sunset and pole out a jib."

Charmed Life will certainly be one of the most luxurious boats in the race and, with most of the controls led aft for shorthanding, it should be relatively safe and easy to sail. "It's really a great ocean boat," claims Pat, who liked the Catalina 470 design so much, she bought the whole yacht brokerage soon after buying the boat from them five years ago. Pat and Diane will do the Spinnaker Cup as
a training mission before cruising down the coast for the start. They'll sail the boat back from Hawaii, too, but probably

with one or two other crew.

"We're a pair of old gals, AARP-age," laughed Pat. "Our goal is to have a great summer, and to be able to say 'we did it!'"

Cipango, Andrews 56, Bob & Rob Barton, Golden Gate YC — Cipango (pronounced 'sigh-PANG-go') is a 1992 modified Andrews 56 owned by Bob (father) and Rob (son) Barton of Santa Rosa. The duo work together at the industrial safety equipment business they own, and have shared the cost and management of running Cipango since moving up from the Beneteau 42 Enchante four years ago. They've put together a group of talented local amateur sailors for the TransPac, valuing, in order, "positive attitude, talent, and the ability to contribute."

Experienced Santa Cruz sailor Bob Stege will be the navigator, working closely with the elder Barton. The rest of the crew consists of Gilles Combrission, Tom Faraola (who will bring the boat back), Kevin Moon, Mike Neylan, Johnny Thompson, Kevin Wasbauer and Stuart Wright (who, fortuitously, is an executive chef in real life). The primary drivers will be Rob, Stu, Tom, and Kevin. The group has been practicing in the OYRA races this spring, and is currently leading the new 50-footer class.

A pedestal grinder was installed for the upcoming race, and an all-new inventory of Quantum sails has been added, including a code zero, oversized asymmetrical kites, and a carbon penalty pole. New electronics and high-tech, lightweight running rigging have also been purchased. "Our work parties have been very well attended by our dedicated crew," said Rob. "We've spent countless hours stripping the boat, tweaking things, and doing tedious tasks like rebedding jib tracks. We wouldn't be in the hunt without the efforts of the entire team."

This will be the first TransPac for both Bartons, though they have been sailing for years. They'll be trying out their new A-sails in the upcoming Spinny Cup as their final practice session before the main event. "We can't wait for the start," enthused Rob. "We think we're ready."

Dasher, SC 50 modified, Roger Groh, Waikiki YC — Dasher (ex-American Flag, ex-Sundowner) was built by Bill Lee in 1986 for singlehander Hal Roth, who took the boat in two BOC Around the World Races. Unlike conventional SC 50s, Dasher is built like a proverbial brick outhouse, with a thicker hull, watertight compartments in the bow and stern, a permanent hard dodger, and a retractable bowsprit instead of spinnaker poles. The boat also has the option of water ballast, though it won't be employed until the delivery home.

Groh, the CEO of a San Francisco investment company and the current chairman of the San Francisco YRA, bought the boat three years ago and entered the doublehanded division of the '03 TransPac. That ambitious plan was scrapped when Dasher's rudder broke in the Coastal Cup a few weeks prior to the start. "We've got some unfinished business, obviously," said Groh. "We'll be there this time — since it's the 100th anniversary race, we wouldn't miss it for anything!"

Groh, who lives and sails out of Sausalito, has lined up Ray Minehan (owner of the SC 50 Emily Carr), Seth Clark, Will Lowe, Jeff Christie, and 'crew whip' Emily Bullis thus far. He's currently in the process of selecting one or two more crew. The Spinnaker Cup and the Coastal Cup are both on Dasher's schedule.

"The quality of the boats and crews in the race is staggering," claimed Groh. "All of us on Dasher feel it’s a privilege just to participate in the TransPac. If the sea gods are willing and if we sail a fundamentally sound race, we should be competitive."

Far Far, Cal 40, Don Grind, no YC — Don Grind, a computer company owner, splits his time between residences in Placerville and Naples, Florida. He learned to sail on Chesapeake Bay, and used to campaign the J/24 Impulse on San Francisco Bay. Don bought the former Redhead, hull #17, more or less as it hit the dock in Richmond upon returning from the '03 TransPac. He renamed it Far Far (Swedish for "father’s father") and has been on a two-year binge of upgrading the 41-year-old boat at Nelsons and Brickyard Cove.

The biggest upgrade was replacing the corroded mast with a new Ballenger one, installed by Alameda rigger Glenn Hansen. "We faired the bottom and did all the standard class upgrades, including the Schumacher rudder," said Don. "We've been practically living down here lately in order to get ready."

The core crew — son Steve Grind from Fort Collins, CO, and cousin-by-marriage Randy McCormick — Mike Neylan, Johnny Thompson, Kevin Wasbauer and Stuart Wright (how fortuitously, is an executive chef in real life). The primary drivers will be Rob, Stu, Tom, and Kevin. The group has been practicing in the OYRA races this spring, and is currently leading the new 50-footer class.

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The core crew — son Steve Grind from Fort Collins, CO, and cousin-by-marriage Randy McCormick —
from Naples, FL — have been flying in on weekends, becoming "intimately familiar" with Oakland Airport. Two more crew will be announced soon.

"We'll use the Coastal Cup as more of a delivery than a race," claimed Grind. "Our goal in the TransPac is to be safe, sail hard, and have fun. It's been a lifelong dream of mine to do the TransPac, and it will be thrilling for us just to be part of this great race!"

**Illusion.** Cal 40, Sally Lindsay Honey, St. Francis YC/South Beach YC — The immaculately maintained *Illusion*, hull #57, crushed the 10-boat Cal 40 fleet in 2003, beating the next boat by an impressive 17 hours. This year promises to be a bit harder for skipper Sally Lindsay Honey, as the Cal 40 fleet is bigger (14 boats, tying the all-time Cal 40 turnout in 1967!) and more competitive. Not only that, husband Stan will be otherwise engaged, navigating *Pyewacket* in that boat's last hurrah under Roy Disney.

Sally, who will navigate *Illusion*, will be sailing with an all-star, all-woman crew — watch captains Liz Baylis and Melinda Erkelens, and Susan 'Charlie' Arms. This is the lightest Cal 40 crew physically, but they'll push hard, making sail changes and jibing whenever necessary. Charlie, the sailing coach at Cal Maritime, is the only one who hasn’t done a race to Hawaii, but she has raced extensively and crossed both the Pacific and Atlantic on deliveries. The rest of the crew have each done a handful of TransPacs and Pac Cups in their own boats, often shorthanded and with great results — Sally and Stan won the Pac Cup doublehanded and overall with *Illusion* in ’96, Melinda and husband Bill did the same with their Dogpatch 26 *Moonshine* in ’94, and Liz has two class wins (2000 and 2002) in the Pac Cup sailing her Antrim 27 *ET*

grrl power — ‘Illusion’ skipper Sally Lindsay Honey and her talented all-female crew hope to repeat as Cal 40 class winners.

with husband Todd Hedin and Jim Antrim. "Illusion is pretty much set from the last TransPac," said Sally, who owns the Spinnaker Shop in Palo Alto. "There's not a lot to do — just add food and one new spinnaker. We'll do the Coastal Cup as a warm-up, and then go to Hawaii. This will be the sixth all-woman TransPac effort, following *Concubine* (’79), *Antara* (’93 & ’95), *Baywolf* (’97) and Linda Newland’s *Pegasus* (’97).

Given the track record of the boat and crew, we think *Illusion* is the boat to be beat in the Cal 40 fleet. Sally, ever modest, isn't so sure: "Fin Bevin's *Radiant* and Jim Eddy's *Collisto* have been racing in SoCal for many, many years. They both know their boats really well, and will be tough. We're hoping our light crew weight will be our 'secret weapon'."

**Pegasus 52.** Farr TP-52, Philippe Kahn, Waikiki YC — Philippe Kahn didn't respond to our emails, once again preferring to play his cards close to his vest. However, we caught up with project manager Eric Arndt, formerly of *Samba Pa Ti*, who is overseeing the building of Kahn's new Farr-designed TP-52 *Pegasus* at the Goetz yard in Bristol, Ri. "If *Esmeralda* is Version 1 and *Atalanta* is Version 2, *Pegasus* is Version 3, and we're working on Version 4."

Pensive power — Philippe Kahn's new Farr-designed TP-52 'Pegasus' should be rolling out of Eric Goetz’s shop any day now.
Version 2, then Pegasus is Version 5," commented Arndt. "The only things these boats have in common is that they came out of the same mold. Our boat looks like a skiff where Ata looks like an offshore boat. We worked hard on all the systems to reduce weight and friction, and to keep things simple."

The Goetz staff, along with Arndt, Chris Gillum, Kyle Gunderson, and Bob Wylie (from Esmo), is working virtually around the clock to get the boat launched and measured at the Hinckley yard on May 31, and then trucked to Anderson's in Sausalito on June 7. Pegasus — which some say may be the most expensive TP-52 to date — should begin practicing and training on the Bay around June 17. "We’re on time and actually under our projected budget," claimed Arndt, who heads to England in early June to manage the construction of the Disney Volvo 70 Black Pearl at Green Marine.

Kahn, who has won the past two Barn Door with his R/P 77 Pegasus, will sail with son Shark (his fourth crossing) and, as always, the best team that money can buy. According to Arndt, the list presently includes Gunderson, Wylie, navigator Peter Tams, Jeff Madrigali, Freddy Loof, Justin ‘Juggy’ Clougher, Shania Twain, Pamela Anderson, and Paris Hilton. Pegasus should come flying out of the blocks, excelling in the early reaching part of the race — just as Esmo did in the Pineapple Cup — and then holding even, or maybe even extending, in the dead running at the end. Unless Kahn has also indicated he’ll sail the new boat in the second Waikiki Offshore Championship in early August.

To learn more about Pegasus Racing, visit www.pegasus.com. There’s still no news about the new TP-52 on the site, but that could change any day.

Rosebud. R/P TP-52, Roger Sturgeon, Hyannis YC — Built by Westerly Marine and launched in 2002, Rosebud has enjoyed tremendous success on both coasts the last three years. But by TP-52 standards, the Bud is getting a little long in the tooth, which is why owner Roger Sturgeon pulled the plug on taking her to the Med. The boat — which won the ‘04 Bermuda Race overall, as well as to build or buy next, though it apparently won’t be another TP-52.

Sailing with Sturgeon on what could be Rosebud’s final race will be Aussie navigator Tom Addis, Kevin Miller, Jack Halterman, Malcolm Park, John Hayes, Jeff Brock, Chris Cantrick, Keats Keeley, and Jono Swain. The experienced gang should do well in the race, and with its narrow waterline and low wetted surface, the boat should fly when the wind goes aft. Like Alta Vita in ‘03, we suspect that Rosebud is being optimized for the bottom end of the TP-52 box, going for the overall corrected time win rather than first-to-finish honors among the TP-52’s.

Sensation. 1D-35, Gary Fanger, Golden Gate YC — Grand Prix Sailing Academy’s varsity team of owner Gary Fanger (USA), Rod Hageboils (AUS), Mario Yovkov (BUL), Nedko Vassilev (BUL), and Carlos Badell (ARG) warmed up for the TransPac by winning Division D and placing fourth overall in last summer’s Pacific Cup. The international team had some great stories after that race, such as when Mario was attacked by a “giant squid” one night, and learned a lot about optimum wind angles and sail combinations for different conditions.

This year, the GPSA squad — minus Nedko, who is preparing the boat but can’t make the trip due to 470 conflicts — is back for a full-on TransPac effort. "We’re looking around for a fifth person at the moment,” said Rod, the boat skipper and project manager. This is a serious effort: their stated goal is to win the race overall on corrected time. Given planning conditions and some luck, they should have a shot at it.

Sensation, the most offshore-oriented of GPSA’s four 1D-35s, will be sailing light, making use of a watermaker, freeze-dried food, and a strict Volvo-style limit on personal gear (each crew is given a small sea bag, and is limited to what they can squeeze into it). They’ve ordered some new sails to fill in gaps that existed in their sail inventory, and now have a full arsenal of asymmetrical and symmetrical kites.

Everyone aboard will steer, trim, and generally multi-task, with Baddell and Fanger handling the navigation. Sensation won’t be a particularly comfortable...
ride, but these guys know exactly what they’re in for. "Our sistership Tabasco will push us hard," figures Rod. "We’ll try to rest up in the middle of the race in order to get through the windy stuff at the end. We can’t wait for this next adventure!"

Follow Sensation’s progress at www.sailorstocrew.com, where the team will post various reports before, during and after the race.

Serena. Thompson 1150, David Kuettel, Corinthian YC — Longtime friends David Kuettel, a Corte Madera olive wholesaler, and Dave Van Houten, a Sebastopol general contractor, met while cruising different boats in Tahiti 28 years ago. Though neither of 'The Daves' has done a TransPac before, they’re both experienced sailors — previously they co-owned the Whiting quarter tonner Magic Bus, and both have sailed on Kuettel’s previous boats, the Moore 24 Andale and the J/33 Alize. They could be a wildcard in the doublehanded division with Kuettel’s hot new custom Thompson 38-footer Serena.

The beautiful high-tech, carbon boat was built by Jim Betts in Tahoe and launched somewhat behind schedule last November. The boat flies downwind, employing an articulating prod, which can be pulled back 15 degrees, and gigantic masthead asymmetrical kites. It’s also surprisingly stiff and quick upwind. "We’re hoping for 12-15 knots of breeze, where we can break loose sooner than the rest of our fleet," said Van Houten. The duo considers the veteran 1D-35 Tuo Guys on the Edge the odds-on favorite among the seven or eight doublehanded entries, with the Hobie 33 Soap Opera also a probable contender.

Kuettel has been working the bugs out of Serena by racing in the ocean this spring with a full crew. They’ve had a few setbacks, such as breaking off the prod in the crewed Lightsip Race, and have also had to replace the headstay and instrument wand. "It’s been a little overwhelming at times, but we’re back on track," claimed Kuettel. "We’re rookies, and just want to have fun and arrive in one piece," he claims. "The Daves’ will go home after the TransPac to ‘work out the financial hole we’ve dug,’ and return in late August to sail Serena home with one other crew.

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**BAY AREA TRANSPAC ENTRIES**

**Shaman**, Cal 40, Steve Waterloo, Encinal YC — Steve Waterloo bought **Shaman**, hull #66, two years ago. “Up until then, I had the good sense just to crew on other people’s boats,” laughed Waterloo, who owns a printing pre-press company in San Francisco. “But I loved the classic styling of the Cal 40, and its versatility as a racer and a family cruiser.”

With help from rigger Scott Easom, Waterloo has extensively upgraded **Shaman**, lightening and fairing the hull, putting in a new engine, adding a carbon pole and 3DL sails, and more. “You almost have to do all this stuff to be competitive in this fleet now,” he claimed. He’ll be sailing the TransPac with Paul Sinz, Mike Bacon, Steve ‘Action’ Jackson, and Annapolis transplant Jim Graham — the same team that took a class win in the nuclear Coastal Cup last year.

“All of us will drive, some better than others,” confessed Steve, who has done lots of coastal races, but never raced to Hawaii. “We haven’t decided who will navigate yet — we’re going to ‘rochambeau’ for it! Hopefully, we can figure out which way to go! I actually have no idea how we’ll do, but suspect we’re somewhere in the middle of the class in terms of our intensity and sailing ability. We’re looking to have some fun; if we do well, that would just be icing on the cake.”

There’s obviously a lot more going on with each of these TransPac programs, but that’s all the info we can cram into our allotted pages. Come July, we’ll be eagerly following the daily progress of our 14 intrepid Bay Area entries at www.transpacificyachtclub.org — and, if you made it to the end of this article, we suspect you’ll be watching the race unfold, too.

Next month, we’ll cook up our traditional ‘full’ TransPac Preview, complete with half-baked, just-for-grins predictions about class winners. The actual coverage of the race will probably have to be spread between our August and September issues, as the timing of the race conflicts directly with our monthly deadline — but we’ll cross that bridge when we come to it.

Six weeks ’til showtime. Let the games begin!

— latitude / rkm

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Spring has sprung — finally! After a long, wet winter, the Bay Area is drying out now, enjoying the delicious — and too brief — weather window before the summer winds and fog crank up. Tell-tale signs of spring are everywhere — the days are longer thanks to Daylight Savings Time, the waterfalls and wildflowers on Mt. Tam are in their full glory, the beer can racing and baseball seasons have begun, weekend traffic is grid-locked, and . . . well, you get the idea. For sailors, the best thing about spring is the chance to start exercising their boats more frequently again — and one of the first 'cruises' many boatowners take in April and May is to their local boatyard.

As is our springtime custom, we hopped in the car last month and did a quick circumnavigation of the Bay Area boatyards, compiling another completely random photo essay of 'everyday' people doing 'everyday' boat chores. As usual, we selected our 'victims' spontaneously, simply walking up to the first friendly-looking faces we saw, introducing ourselves and our mission. Not surprisingly, everyone we approached was happy to put down their tools for a few minutes and chat with us about their projects. To a person, the boatowners were delightful and interesting.

As you can see from the following eight vignettes, we uncovered a real slice of life this year — a new boat owner, a one design class champion, a boat reluctantly for sale, a boat getting ready for the TransPac, a wooden boat restoration, and so on. If we did the same tour a week later, the subjects would no doubt be completely different — literally, like the famed Life magazine picture essays, this was 'A Day in the Life' at the Bay Area boatyards.

We enjoyed meeting everyone we profiled this year, and hope you enjoy reading about them, too. Who knows, maybe we’ll bump into you on the boatyard tour next year.

— latitude / rkm

Blue Skies. Rawson 30 — Sausalito attorney Curt Hagen was spending the weekend working on his 1978 Rawson 30 in Anderson’s Boat Yard. “I’ve had this boat about a year — it’s the second Rawson 30 I’ve owned,” he explained. “They’re pretty bomb-proof! I singlehanded my first one, called Islander, to Hawaii and back about 12 years ago. Unlike the Baja Ha-Ha crowd, I much prefer Hawaii over Mexico.”

Hagen, who berths Blue Skies in downtown Sausalito, started sailing in his late teens while stationed in Okinawa with the Navy. “At first, it was just a way to get out to the reefs to go diving,” said Hagen, “but then I got hooked.” He’s owned many boats over the years, both power and sail, and even built several large ones, including a steel Roberts 34 (Patience) and a wooden Buchler 38 (Solitude). "From experience, I can say small boats are better," he laughed.

Hagen, a cheerful and obviously self-reliant guy who prefers solo cruising (“I can’t handle being cooped up with anyone for several weeks at a time!”), was busy screwing new steps on his aluminum mast, hoping to beat the impending rain. “I'm just hauled out for the weekend, doing a quick bottom job, repainting the boot stripe, replacing some thruhulls, checking the rig and putting in some new halyards, and some other little things,” he shrugged. “None of this takes that long if you know what you’re doing, and I’ve done it all before a bunch of times.”

Hagen looks forward to the "simplicity" of long ocean passages again someday — "reading books, sleeping, and watching stars while the windvane steers." But on Monday, he’ll be back at work ("Did you know that 'condominium' is Latin for 'lawsuit'?"), saving up to pay for his dream.
La Barca. Hartog 48 — Ron Abelseth’s green Jan Hartog-designed 48-foot ketch has been on the hard at Nelson’s Marine this winter, mostly so he can apply a new “overkill” barrier coat. “San Rafael, where the boat has been berthed, is a ‘hot’ harbor, and electrolysis was starting to eat at the hull,” said Abelseth, a boatbuilder, master woodworker, and jack-of-all-trades. “I’ve put on five layers of epoxy and xynole polyester cloth, which I’m in the process of sanding down today. Unlike fiberglass, the stuff doesn’t itch!”

La Barca was built on Tomales Bay by Ron’s school friend Alan Gregg in 1980. Abelseth had always admired the boat, and when it came on the market five years ago, he and boat partner Roger Whitman bought her. A former commercial fisherman and Mexico veteran, Abelseth has seen a lot of seas and knew he wanted a full-keel, any-weather cruiser. “I like its rugged, work-boat look on the outside,” said Ron, who previously restored Crowley #14, a 63-foot 1908 tugboat. “Eventually, I’ll trick out the interior with lots of wood and varnish. Right now, it’s a work in progress.”

Abelseth grew up in Inverness, and looks forward to eventually living aboard La Barca on Tomales Bay. These days, he lives and works deep in the mountains of the Stanislaus National Forest. He designs and builds interesting little “adult playhouses” he calls ‘Hobbitats’, 9-by-11-foot custom cabins (the largest legally allowed up there without permits), out of cedar burl and other exotic woods, which are then trailed into the woods for off-the-grid living. “They have soul, like little boats,” claimed Ron.

Next summer, or the one after, Abelseth will start some “serious cruising,” taking La Barca north first, exploring Puget Sound and the Inside Passage to Alaska. With a diesel heater and wood stove — not to mention amenities like a 30-inch TV, a huge library of DVDs, and an electronic piano — La Barca should be comfortable in any weather.

Cat’s Paw. Catalina 27 — “I’ve had incredibly positive interactions with the marine industry so far,” claimed Jeff Trigg (left), who just bought his first boat, a 1981 Catalina 27, last month. “I really enjoyed Tradewinds Sailing School, where I took sailing lessons, and had a great experience buying the boat through the brokers at Farallone Yachts. The people and service at KKMI have been wonderful, too.”

Trigg, who will remove the old name and Tweety Bird logo from the transom and rename the boat Cat’s Paw, took his boat to KKMI for a quick bottom job, including thruhull replacements, and a rig overhaul. He was waxing the topsides and chatting with KKMI co-owner Paul Kaplan (right) when we wandered by. “I’m always interested in how and why smaller boat owners pick our yard,” said Kaplan. “Contrary to what you might think, we’re not just about big boats.”

Trigg, a technician at Lawrence Berkeley Lab, and his wife Shireen, a Chevron employee, will daysail their new boat out of Richmond. “We’ll hopefully get in a few short overnight trips this summer, too,” said Trigg, who was quick to admit that Shireen, who grew up sailing on scenic Lake Champlain, is the sailor in the family. “All my time on the water was just motoring around with the Coast Guard!”

Jeff and Shireen are naturally quite excited about their Catalina 27, which spent the first two decades of its life in fresh water up in Sacramento and still looks almost new. “We looked at other designs, including Ericson 27s, but went with this because they’re such a known quantity,” explained Trigg. “About 6,600 Catalina 27s were built between 1971 and 1991, making it probably the biggest production run ever by an American boatbuilder. Unlike most older designs, the Catalina 27s still have an active class which is supported by a website and the factory.”
**Independence.** 66-foot custom Thornycroft — Mike Buschbacher, a San Rafael boatwright and general contractor, had his gigantic vintage wooden ketch hauled out at Richmond's Bay Marine Boatworks for 10-12 days for an insurance survey (the boat is currently listed with ABC Yachts in Sausalito) and routine maintenance, such as a bottom job and fixing some minor dry rot at the waterline. "I'm conflicted about selling her," admitted Buschbacher, who bought the 66-ton boat in 1999 and took two years off work to restore it. "I originally bought Independence with the idea of doing 'doctors without borders'-type charters in the South Pacific, but that hasn't worked out."

The boat's history could fill a feature article. Designed and built by famed British naval architect Sir John Isaac Thornycroft at his Hampton on Thames Yard in 1923, it has been through eight or nine owners and lived in England, Ireland, Holland, and Belgium before going to San Diego in 1981. In 1985, Independence was purchased by Glenn Simmons and Mary Richardson, who brought her to the Bay Area. Mike has owned the boat six years now, sailing out of the Sausalito slip that Wanderbird formerly occupied.

"I prefer ocean sailing, and my girlfriend and I often go out to the Farallones and Point Reyes, usually fishing for salmon along the way," he said. "The farthest we got was a five-week cruise to the Channel Islands two years ago. The boat was built for the North Sea and can go anywhere and take anything."

Buschbacher, who learned to sail in Michigan, has owned 12 boats now, including a 49-foot junk-style scow schooner (Aurelia) which he built himself. His considerable boatbuilding skills are evident in Independence, particularly in the beautifully restored interior. "The boat blooms when you work on her," claimed Mike. "It's all worth the effort."

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**Camille.** Stewart 42 — We found Camille, a sweet-looking custom 1968 racer/cruiser we haven't seen for years, in a back corner at Svendsen’s. Owner Jim Read (right) was doing odd projects inside the boat, while ubiquitous local measurer Dick Horn (left) was on the pavement below taking measurements with his 'magic wand'. Camille, we learned, was getting an Americap rating in order to race in July's 100th anniversary TransPac.

Read, a retired test IBM test engineer, and his wife Annie will sail Camille doublehanded in the upcoming race (see page 135). "We're not really racers," Jim quickly admitted. "We're using the TransPac as a springboard to get cruising. We bought the boat eight years ago, and have been working on it more than sailing. This summer, we'll finally get some ROI on the project!"

The Reads live in western Marin County and keep Camille, a coldmolded boat which began life in New Zealand, in San Rafael. They started sailing in the '80s, working up from a Banshee to a Victory to a Ranger 26, which they cruised up and down the coast. "It's been an interesting process getting ready for our first ocean crossing," said Jim. "It's been a real battle, actually. I could write a book about it!"

Horn, one of only two measurers in California (SoCal's Frank Whilton is the other), is busier than ever. "I've probably measured 20 local IRC boats and 20 Americap boats (for TransPac) since last summer," said Dick, a former high school math and wood shop teacher. "I'm supposed to be retired now, yet I'm working harder than ever before! Someday, I'll get back to sailing my own boat (Aftermath, a custom Schumacher 28)."

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Torea. Tahiti Ketch — Fairfax resident Jamie White, a longtime shiprigger at the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, has worked and sailed on many tall ships, including the Hawaiian Chieflain, the Californian, Lady Washington, and the Bounty. He met his wife Carolyn, a legal assistant and ceramic artist, on the latter in 1986. We caught up with them at the funky San Rafael Yacht Harbor, where they are restoring their John Hanna-designed, 30-foot wooden Tahiti Ketch Torea (“bird of the sea” in Tahitian).

“Between 2,000 and 2,500 of these boats were built, often in backyards,” claimed Jamie, who has started a Yahoo users forum for fellow Tahiti Ketch owners. “Did you know that more circumnavigations have been done in these boats than any other design? They’re classics, but they’re really slow — a Westsail 32 will kick its butt! They say no one’s ever drowned on a Tahiti Ketch, but some people have starved to death on them.”

Jim Cotton, who lives in Napa now, built Torea in the late ’50s while stationed at the Subic Bay Navy base in the Philippines. Cotton sailed the boat three-quarters of the way around the world, eventually living on her in Hawaii for 17 years. The Whites bought Torea in Richmond two and a half years ago, and got in touch with Cotton (through Latitude, no less) to learn the fascinating history of the boat. They’ve been working on her ever since, with the goal of “sailing down to New Zealand to visit friends” in a few years.

They’ve employed three talented young guys from North Bay Boatworks, an offshoot of the Arques traditional boatbuilding school, to replace all the frames (white oak) and at least eight planks (Douglas fir above the waterline; teak below). Jamie, naturally, has redone the rig and sails himself. The Whites will do their own caulking and painting, and will have the boat back in its Loch Lomond berth by July. They’ll rebuild the interior in the water.

Dulcinia. Ericson 38 — Tim Fitzmaurice, president of a Oakland construction company which specializes in nonprofit housing, was literally wearing his Baja Ha-Ha hat when we met him at Alameda’s Mariner Boat Yard. It turns out he participated in the 2000 rally as crew on Chanticleer, a Vahlant 40, and also did the 2003 Ha-Ha on Diva, a Pacific Seacraft 37. “Both times were really fun,” he claimed. “I’d like to take my own boat in the Ha-Ha one of these days.”

Fitzmaurice has owned Dulcinia, his well-kept ’86 Ericson 38, since 1998. Unfortunately, the boat has been in the yard since September, drying out as part of a blister job. “We’ll be back in the water in a few weeks now, complete with seven layers of Interlux 2000 barrier coat, six new thruhulls, and more,” said Tim. “I can’t wait to get out sailing again!”

Dulcinia, which was rigged by Scott Easom, is set up for shorthanded sailing. Fitzmaurice enjoys daysailing out of his Emery Cove slip, generally either alone (“It’s my therapy — cheaper than a shrink, and way more fun!”) or with his wife Nancy. They also get up to the Delta — Potato Slough, in particular — at least once a year, a Fitzmaurice family tradition since 1959. They also enjoy chartering boats in faraway places, including Sweden, Mexico, the Caribbean, and the San Juan Islands.

“I grew up sailing the Bay on a Hurricane. My family owned an Alberg 35 and, for 16 years, a Cal 3-34 called Intrepid Fox,” said Tim. “I went to high school in Oakland one year behind the Grand Poobah, though I didn’t know him at the time. My friends and I used to skip school, buy beer at the Chinese grocery store, and sail over to Angel Island for the day — basically, what we’re still doing today!”
**TMC Racing**. J/24 — Orinda management consultant and occasional OCSC instructor Michael Whitfield (right) was working on his boat in the shed at Berkeley Marine Center, getting ready to head up to Seattle on May 18-22 for the 2005 J/24 Nationals. Regular crew Lester Igo — who, along with Lou Anna Koehler, Scott Ryerson, and Eamon O’Byrne, will make the trek north with Whitfield — was lending a hand when we dropped by.

Whitfield has raced J/24s since 1985, but has only owned TMC Racing, 1992 hull #4906, for about a year. “It’s a good boat,” said Whitfield, who keeps the boat on a trailer in front of OCSC (it goes in and out on Berkeley Marine’s travelift) and sails for Cal SC. “Previous owners Vince Brun won the Nationals three times with it, and Ken Kaan, from Kaneohe Bay, sailed it to fifth in the Worlds.”

After finishing mid-fleet at the ’04 Nationals in Vancouver, Whitfield’s boyhood town, he is hoping to move up dramatically in the projected 50-boat fleet this time. “We’ve spent the time fairing the keel and upgrading our sails and gear, and Andrew Kerr has been coaching us since October,” said Whitfield. “We’ve really sharpened our focus, and it’s starting to show in our race results.”

The ubiquitous TMC Racing has been almost untouchable this season, taking a second in the Spring Keel Invitational to Running With Scissors, and firsts in the Big Daddy, Wheeler, J/Fest, and Vallejo. They’re leading the J/24 season standings so far, “putting time in the boat and having fun.” A particular highlight was being the first boat to finish the Vallejo Race on Sunday. “It was mind-boggling to look back at all those boats right behind us!” claimed Whitfield.

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In the realm of yacht racing, few events can rival the visual grandeur of the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. Since its inception in 1987, this annual gathering of vintage yachts — and those inspired by vintage designs — has served as a meeting place for sailors of many nations whose hearts swell at the sight of gleaming varnish, straining tops'ls and hulls crafted with the elegant lines of decades past.

Sadly, we weren’t lucky enough to attend that eye-popping spectacle last month (April 14-19). But after perusing Caribbean-based photographer Tim Wright’s stunning images of it, we couldn’t resist bringing you this small sampling of the museum-quality yachts in attendance.

With a record 59 boats competing this year in 11 classes, the fleet, as always, was extremely diverse. The three-masted staysail schooner *Fleurtje* was the largest at 176 feet on deck, while the 26-ft cutter *Cora* was the smallest. From nearly-new multi-million-dollar yachts which had come to race in the ‘Spirit of Tradition’ class (classic looks, but modern underbody), to time-honored antique workboats built in the late 1800s, the fleet spanned 117 years of yacht and ship design. The brain trust responsible for creating this remarkable field of entries is a veritable who’s who of legendary yacht designers: Nat and L. Francis Herreshoff, William Fife, Colin Archer, John Alden, Arthur Robb, Olin Stevens, Philip Rhodes and others.

Although a gentlemanly spirit of courtesy and fair play is said to distinguish this regatta from many others, competition during the three days of racing is definitely always spirited. Owners who bring their boats thousands of miles across the Atlantic or down from New England undoubtedly enjoy rubbing shoulders with like-minded aficionados, but as veteran crewman will confirm, each owner’s fundamental purpose is to race hellbent-for-leather under the sparkling Caribbean sun, regardless of how beat up his flawless varnishwork becomes or how much his garboards begin to weep.

Winds were lighter than normal this year, averaging around 13 to 14 knots, instead of the 20 to 25 which is more typical in these waters. The upside, though, was that every boat could race with all her rags flying — tops'ls, stay-sails, the whole works.

According to the ‘godfather of Antigua yacht racing’ Jol Byerly, the most excit-
AN EYEFUL OF ELEGANCE
of similar size: Ranger, a 2003 J Class replica and Windrose, a 2002 schooner that can point remarkably high. "It was an absolute joy to watch them go," said Jol with a chuckle. As the three of them roared through the light chop off Antigua's south coast like a trio of express trains, smaller boats were wise to keep clear.

Members of the Antigua YC, who put on this annual affair, in addition to the now-massive Antigua Sailing Week, do their best to make all entries welcome, doling out a variety of special prizes in addition to awards for top scorers in the 11 classes. Most of the big winners were household names in these latitudes, such as the stunningly beautiful 94-ft William Fife ketch Sumurun, which was launched in 1914, the gorgeous 112-ft schooner Aschanti IV (1954), one of the founding yachts of this event, which returned after a long absence, and, of course, Velsheda, by most estimations, this year's shining star. A 'young upstart' by comparison, the two-year-old 65-ft schooner Juno was extremely well raced, becoming the overall winner. (See www.antiguaclassics.com for complete results.)

Those who are up on their Caribbean racing history know that the world-famous Antigua Sailing Week was originally founded by charter yacht crews as a celebration of the end of the annual winter season. Back then, of course, most of the premier charter yachts were glinting wooden beauties, such as Lord Jim, then owned by Byerly and now based in Sausalito. As the years went by and ASW grew, the woodies were gradually out-gunned by modern, light displacement racing yachts, and were relegated to the sidelines.

Eventually, though, the Classic Yacht Regatta took shape, and it's been gaining momentum ever since. Old-timers like Jol will tell you that even today, this event inspires a great deal of heartfelt camaraderie which is reminiscent of the early days of Antigua Sailing Week.

In addition to three days of racing, the event also included a stationary concourse d' élégance, where boats were judged in their berths or at anchor based on the quality with which they have been maintained.

Below: No, it's not exactly one design racing: The 60-ft 'Marguerite T', built in 1893, charges ahead with the 42-ft S&S 'Cimarron' (1969) and the 58-ft Alden 'Charm III' (1928) to leeward. Clockwise from center: For spectators, some of the most fun was watching the big boys — 72-year-old Velsheda leads two contemporarily-built yachts, Windrose and Ranger, while smaller craft, like the 60-ft 'Marguerite T', strain to stay clear; the perfectly-set sailplan of the 112-ft 'Aschanti IV' is enough to make a sailmaker's eyes tear up; it takes more than one bowman to get things done aboard the 136-ft 'Ranger'.

ALL PHOTOS TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM
Many boats also participated in a boat parade, deep into the narrow backwaters of historic Nelson’s Dockyard, where they somehow managed to turn around and squeak back out again. Ah, and, of course, there was a party or two where libations of rum flowed freely. Hey, this is the Caribbean we’re talking about.

If viewing these photos makes you yearn to participate yourself next year, we’ve got several suggestions: 1) Buy Antiguan Carlo Falcone’s 1938 Alfred Mlyne ketch ‘Mariella’ is the definition of classical elegance. yourself a classic yacht, put a zillion hours of work and a truckload of money into her, then sail her down to the sunny Carib. 2) Go to the regatta website next winter, www.antiguaclasses.com, and sign up on the crew list. Or 3) simply book an air ticket and a hotel room — way ahead of time — and plan to enjoy the magic of it all from a spectator boat or from the cliffs above Falmouth Harbor. Who knows, if you hang out at the Antigua YC bar long enough and make enough friends, you might even get offered a ride. Hmmm. . . come to think of it, perhaps we’ll see you down there.

— latitude\/aet

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If you’re planning on doing the Baja Ha-Ha and cruising Mexico this fall, we’ve got some tips and advice for you based on our experience. We — Bruce and Bobbie McPherson of the Sausalito-based Island Packet 40 Music — had a fairly typical itinerary for a first-year cruiser. We departed San Francisco on September 3 and cruised down the coast to San Diego for the Ha-Ha, which started in late October. We later sailed as far south as Zihuatanejo on mainland Mexico, and are now back up in Paradise Marina near Puerto Vallarta for hurricane season. Next winter we’ll be heading further south.

**Tip One: Get Those ‘Last-Minute’ Projects Done Now.**

Even though we thought we had plenty of time, we experienced delays caused by bad service providers, bad suppliers, and even bad equipment. For example, a company was slated to have our bimini completed by early June. We didn’t get it until August because the first provider let us down and we had to use somebody else. In another example, we had to return our watermaker to the factory for repairs. We didn’t get it back until the last minute — but we’re happy to report that it’s worked flawlessly ever since. Our departure was actually delayed three days because the solar panel supplier couldn’t deliver, forcing us to find another supplier. Shit really does happen when you’re trying to get your boat ready.

**Tip Two: Know What You And Your Crew Can Handle**

The two of us have been sailing our 40-footer pretty much by ourselves since we acquired her in 1996. She’s a fairly heavy, conservative boat designed for cruising, and is therefore pretty easy for just the two of us to handle on shorter passages. We made it from San Francisco Bay to San Diego with only one rough patch, that being rounding Pt. Sur in 25 knots of wind and fog as thick as pea soup.

But for the Ha-Ha — which has passages of 360 miles, 240 miles, and 180 miles in close succession — we decided to have crew. We also had crew for the 300-mile passage to Puerto Vallarta right after the Ha-Ha. We really enjoyed having crew along for these passages, particularly the ones with multiple nights at sea, as it made them easier and a lot more fun. Fatigue can really cut into one’s cruising enjoyment.

However, since reaching Puerto Vallarta in early November, it’s just been the two of us. It hasn’t been hard because, between PV and Zihua, you can pretty much daysail. We nonetheless did make a couple of overnights, and they were among our more memorable sails. The sea can be very beautiful at night.

**Tip Three: Take Your Time Getting To San Diego For The Start Of The Ha-Ha**

We spent almost six weeks getting from Sausalito to San Diego — and had a great time doing it. For one thing, we didn’t have to rush, which might have forced us to battle bad weather like some of the other boats. We could sit and wait for good conditions before rounding the major points. It also gave us the opportunity to see parts of the California coast we hadn’t expected to see.

For example, we spent two weeks in Catalina which, after the high season, has low rates for moorings if you pay by the week. In early October we spent a relaxing week recovering from our voyage down the coast — until our solitude was interrupted by the 15th Annual Buccaneer Days, where people dress up like pirates or wenches and have a wild and crazy time.

We spent the next week at Avalon where we met a bunch of other folks who were getting ready to do the Ha-Ha, and held the first (unofficial) party of Ha-Ha XI. We subsequently spent a lot of time with these people and, although we’re now spread out from Seattle to Tahiti, we’re still good friends.

In addition, we suggest that you allot at least one week of time — and a lot of money — to be in San Diego right before the start of the Ha-Ha. You can’t believe the stuff Downwind Marine and ‘the biggest West Marine in the world’ have in stock that you never thought you’d need. (By the way, how come they have McDonald’s, K-Mart, and other big-box stores in
Tip Four: Don’t Worry About Having To Provision Your Boat For The Season While in San Diego

The reason you don’t have to worry is that this isn’t your dad’s Mexico. We frequently visited Mexico in the ’80s and ’90s, and frankly couldn’t believe how it had changed by 2004. Most notable was how much more prosperous it is. All the major towns now have at least one Costco or K-Mart-type store with just about everything that you could need. The only two things we never were able to find were good dark chocolate and Bisquick.

However, don’t limit yourself to shopping in the modern big-box stores, as you’ll find the best fruit, veggies and seafood in the traditional mercados — where it’s a lot more fun to shop anyway.

Tip Five: Some Convenience Items Aren’t Necessary, But Are Extremely Desirable

It goes without saying that a good dinghy and reliable outboard are essential — but don’t forget the dinghy wheels. You don’t need the wheels when cruising the California coast, the South Pacific, the Caribbean, or the Med, but in Mexico, where you’ll be doing lots of surf-landings, they are all but essential. Without them, you’ll have to drag 250 pounds 30 or 40 feet up or down a beach each time you want to use the dinghy, wrecking the bottom of the dinghy — and your back — in the process.

An SSB radio is also extremely desirable because it allows you to participate in the various SSB cruiser nets, and it also allows you to keep up with the weather when on the move. A couple of years ago there were letters in Latitude about some cruisers obsessing about the weather in Mexico, which isn’t necessary because it’s usually pretty nice. Nonetheless, when you up-anchor to start a passage, it’s nice to know if any atypical weather is expected.

A watermaker is another extremely desirable, but not essential, piece of gear. Yes, they are expensive, and the older ones require quite a bit of maintenance. Remember, though, you’re not really paying for the water, but rather the convenience of not having to jerry jug water out to the boat. Watermakers provide a lot of comfort, as there isn’t anything much better in the heat of Mexico than a cool freshwater shower.

It’s also very important to keep your boat cool, which at the minimum means a cover over the cockpit. But the more boat you can cover, the more comfortable you’ll be. A couple of wind-scoops or breeze-boosters are also great, as they keep the air moving through the boat on hot days when there is hardly any wind at all.

Lastly, a very efficient battery-charging system is also a godsend. For if you can avoid having to run your engine while at anchor, it makes your cruising just that much more enjoyable. We have enough solar panels to provide for about half of our electrical needs. We wish we had room for more, because we like to run the engine as little as possible.

Tip Six: The Fishing Scene

There are a lot of fish in Mexico, but it’s not always easy to catch them. It’s true, we had really good luck fishing down the coast of Baja, and always had fresh tuna or mahi mahi. South of Cabo we’ve caught fewer fish, but those that we did catch were bigger.
ADVICE TO THE HA-HA CLASS OF 2005

When you hook a fish on a drag line, we recommend that you let it drag for awhile so it becomes exhausted. Every time we’ve hooked a fish over 25 pounds and tried to land it while it still had a lot of fight, it eventually got away.

We started out fishing in Mexico with a rod and reel that I’d used in the Bay Area for salmon fishing. That’s not good enough for Mexico. Between Banderas Bay and Tenacatita Bay, a big fish took my lure — and as far as I know is still swimming with it — plus a couple of hundred yards of line trailing behind. So we’ve upgraded our fishing gear.

Tip Seven: Slow Down!

We think we’re finally getting the hang of this, but it’s taken awhile. We left Sausalito three days after I retired, so in the first six months of cruising I didn’t get much time to stop and relax. One of the problems was that I’d made it my goal to spend Christmas in Zihua, so we kind of rushed to get down there. After a two-day run to end the long rush that had started in San Francisco, we stopped in Zihua for nearly two months. We finally began to relax. On the return trip up to Tenacatita, we took two weeks rather than two days, which is the correct way to do it.

Tip Eight: Yes, Just Do It!

Mexico is a great place, just like everybody says. So if you can go now, just do it!
The Baja Ha-Ha is a great way to get introduced to cruising, as you’ll be making the trip with lots of new friends. It’s just easier and more fun to do things for the first time with lots of friends. And the Ha-Ha organizers are to be commended for making this introduction to cruising possible for so many of us.

Tip Nine: Ignore The Myths

Before we sailed to Mexico, we’d gotten lots of advice and information from many different sources. A lot of it was good — some even useful. But we also got what we’ve come to call ‘The Three Myths Of Mexico’:

The first myth is that cruisers should take plenty of Spam because it can be traded everywhere for lobster! Maybe that was true a few years ago, and maybe it would be true if yours was the only boat in a bay, but we never found any takers. So if anybody needs any Spam, just call us.

The second myth is that crocodiles only swim in fresh water. If that’s true, ask the folks anchored off La Ropa Beach in Zihua what that big thing was that was swimming around them.

The last myth is that you need to bring lots of quarters for the laundromats. We don’t know where this myth started, but it’s just that, a myth.

See you out there!

— bruce & bobbie mcpherson

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Sequels that capture the magic of the original are tough things to pull off. Just ask George Lucas. But even Mr. Star Wars would be impressed by the potential of a sailing event that got underway off New York Harbor on May 17, 2005.

22: The Rolex Transatlantic Challenge. It has big, beautiful boats. It traces perhaps the most famous route and record in all of sailing — eastward across the Atlantic from Sandy Hook, New Jersey, to the fabled Lizard at the southern tip of England. And it celebrates the 100th anniversary of a seminal event widely regarded as the first formal ocean race for private yachts, the 1905 Kaiser Cup.

Step back with us for a moment to those thrilling days of yesteryear when Kaiser Wilhelm II, Emperor of Germany, ponied up the money to stage a race across the Atlantic which he hoped would showcase the 116-ft German schooner Hamburg.

Eleven giant yachts from the U.S., Britain and Germany answered the starting gun off the Sandy Hook lighthouse on May 17, 1905, for the 3,000-mile marathon to England. Among the entries was the 185-ft, three-masted schooner Atlantic, with owner Winston Marshall and six guests aboard. In those days, owners and their guests didn’t participate in the sailing of the yacht. They were there to enjoy the sights and sounds of the trip, while a professional crew did the actual sailing. Marshall had hired the best rockstar crew he could find, and put them under the command of three-time America’s Cup-winning skipper Charlie Barr.

How the Hamburg finished is lost to the ages. How the Atlantic finished is the stuff of legend.

The first few days were light, but when the going got tough, Barr got going, pushing his crew and the two-year-old steel-hulled schooner harder. So focused was he on the task at hand that when the terrified owner came topside in one of the worst gales and ordered him to heave-to, Barr replied, “Sir, you hired me to win this race, and that’s what I’m trying to do.” The owner and his guests retreated to their cabins and prayed for them to win. But it was not broken until 1980, when Eric Tabarly’s trimaran Paul Ricard lopped two days off Atlantic’s time. It would be another 17 years (1997) before a monohull, Ludde Bingvall’s 80-ft sloop Nicorette would better Atlantic’s monohull mark. The present outright record is 4 days, 17 hours, set by Steve Fossett’s 125-ft catamaran Looper in 2001.

Now for a few differences. Atlantic’s hull and masts were built of steel. She had a fixed, full-run keel and displaced 303 tons. The 10 working sails she normally flew off her three masts — a total of more than 18,000 square feet — were made of Egyptian cotton. Mari-Cha’s hull is build of Nomex honeycomb, and her masts are carbon fiber. Her sails — five in normal reaching mode totalling about 10,000 square feet — are all North 3DLs, which are made over a mold and hold their shape immeasurably better than cotton. She has water ballast, a canting keel with a 10-ton bulb at the end and huge overhangs fore and aft that make her a whopping 45 feet longer overall than Atlantic’s.

As this issue was being put together, the fleet of 20 large yachts assembling in New York was about as diverse as can be imagined. They ranged in age from the spectacular 94-ft ketch Sumurun, launched 91 years ago (in 1914), to the squeaky-new 100-ft super-maxi sloop Maximus, which was launched barely 91 days ago (in February). In size, they range from a brand new Volvo 70 sloop (minimum size allowed to enter) to — get this — a 230-ft modern clipper ship with square-rigged sails on all three masts!

In terms of all-out speed and the prospect of a new Atlantic record, the boats to watch are Maximus and Bob Miller’s Mari-Cha IV, which is back to try to lower her own standing record.

For sheer dramatic effect, however, even a drag race between super maxis will likely pale in comparison to the spectacle of a clipper ship boiling along before 25 knots of breeze with 30,000 square feet of squaresails straining.

Another comparison worth noting, also for dramatic effect, is that between state-of-the-art boats in 1905 and 2005 — Atlantic and Mari-Cha. First a few similarities: both are schooners; the mast heights of Atlantic (132-136 feet) and Mari-Cha (both 140 feet) are within a few feet of each other; and Mari-Cha’s 132-ft waterline is only six feet shorter than Atlantic’s — although the latter’s huge overhangs fore and aft make her a whopping 45 feet longer overall than Mari-Cha.

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## ROLEX TRANSATLANTIC CHALLENGE ENTRIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>boat</th>
<th>length</th>
<th>rig</th>
<th>launched</th>
<th>owner/skipper/charterer</th>
<th>comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stad Amsterdam</td>
<td>230 ft</td>
<td>clipper</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Storm Trysail Club</td>
<td>First clipper built in 130 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiara</td>
<td>178 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Jonathan Leitersdorf</td>
<td>First private sailing yacht in the world capable of landing a helicopter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windrose of Amsterdam</td>
<td>151 ft</td>
<td>schooner</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Chris Gongriep</td>
<td>Won the only previous modern edition of this race (1997); holds the record for fastest Atlantic crossing by a two-masted schooner Pittman also owns the 90-ft super maxi Genuine Risk; Whirlaway is his 'cruising boat'</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whirlaway</td>
<td>140 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Randall Pittman</td>
<td>Current trans-Atlantic and 24-hour monohull record holder</td>
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<td>Mari Cha IV</td>
<td>140 ft</td>
<td>schooner</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Bob Miller</td>
<td>Current trans-Atlantic and 24-hour monohull record holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sariyah</td>
<td>131 ft</td>
<td>ketch</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Cortright Wetherill, Jr.</td>
<td>Although she sports traditional lines, 'Sariyah' was designed with an eye toward speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whisper</td>
<td>116 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>John &quot;Hap&quot; Fauth</td>
<td>Perhaps the ultimate expression of 'racer-cruiser', 'Whisper' is as fast as she is elegant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sojana</td>
<td>115 ft</td>
<td>ketch</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Peter Harrison</td>
<td>Modeled after Whitbread ketches, this Farr-designed sloop combines a powerful hull and sailplan with a spectacular 'gentleman's interior'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anemos</td>
<td>112 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Stephan Frank</td>
<td>Nautor Swan's current flagship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximus</td>
<td>100 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Charles St. Clair Brown and Bill Buckley</td>
<td>World's largest super-maxi sloop and the newest boat in this race (launched 2/05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leopard</td>
<td>98 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Mike Slade</td>
<td>Has been smashing records all over Europe since launch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumurun</td>
<td>94 ft</td>
<td>ketch</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>A. Robert Towbin</td>
<td>Oldest boat in race; won class in 1997 transatlantic race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordwind</td>
<td>88 ft</td>
<td>ketch</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Hans Albrecht</td>
<td>Built in 1938 for German high command, seized as a war prize after WWII; set record in '39 Fastnet Race that stood for 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrera</td>
<td>81 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Joe Dockery</td>
<td>Formerly Neville Crichton's Shockwave and Hasso Plattner's Moming Glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariella</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
<td>yawl</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Carlo Falcon</td>
<td>Most ocean miles of any participant, including a circumnavigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seleni</td>
<td>80 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Colin McGill</td>
<td>Retif in 2003, this Swan 80 is the epitome of speed and comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Phoenix</td>
<td>77 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Jose Aguinaga</td>
<td>Designed as a cruiser, the R/P-designed Ocean Phoenix has won a number of awards for her racing prowess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palawan</td>
<td>75 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Joe Hoopes</td>
<td>A popular charter boat when she's not winning races</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telefonica Movistar</td>
<td>70 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Bouwe Bekking</td>
<td>The Spanish entry in the 2005 Volvo Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay Calm</td>
<td>70 ft</td>
<td>sloop</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Clarke Murphy</td>
<td>A charter boat most of the time, 'Stay Calm' has been stripped for racing and sports a new suit of 3DL sails for the Rolex race</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The New York Yacht Club and Royal Yacht Squadron are co-hosting the event, which features something for everyone involved — there are divisions and trophies for Grand Prix, Performance Cruising and 'Spirit of Tradition' classes. Race day started with a parade of sail through New York harbor. The race began at 2 p.m. off Sandy Hook, New York.
Jersey, the traditional ‘mark’ where sailing ships took their times and dropped off or picked up their pilots.

Upon arrival at the finish, the yachts will all proceed to Cowes where post-race festivities are planned to coincide with another historic celebration — the 200th anniversary of England’s victory in the battle of Trafalgar.

And they’re not through yet! Some of the Rolex Trans-Atlantic Challenge fleet will then take part in a race around the Isle of Wight on the same course as another little fleet race 150-some years ago that came to be called the America’s Cup.

While the Rolex Transatlantic Challenge is primarily a celebration of grand yachts and tradition, as mentioned, there is always the possibility of new records. Perhaps the sweetest plum on that tree is the racing record across the Atlantic which still belongs to Charlie Barr and the Atlantic crew. All of the modern marks, including the current records held by Mari-Cha and PlayStation, were single-boat attempts choreographed by professional weather routers who told the boats when to go and where to position themselves at each stage of the crossing. The only weather routing the Atlantic crew had was a barometer and Barr’s ability to read clouds and waves. Even then, he didn’t have the luxury of picking his weather window — he had to go when the rest of the fleet went. And so will Mari-Cha, Maximus and the rest — all once again in pursuit of perhaps the most coveted record in sailboat racing history.

The finish of the Rolex Challenge unfortunately fell between our deadlines. To see how they did, log onto the official website at www.transatlanticchallenge.org, or check Lectronic Latitude at www.latitude38.com.

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- Catalina 30 135% Furling Genoa $1,185
- Catalina 30 Cruising Spinnaker $1,045

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I'd take the train to work every day, if only I could. The problem is that the parking lot fills up by 7:15, and there are no more spaces available until the late lot opens at 10. So I'm usually in one of those cars fighting it out on the bridge.

But Saturdays are different. Parking is no problem, and I like the train because it's quiet and smooth, and I can actually get some work done between my station and downtown. That is, if I don't run into anyone I know. On a trip into town last weekend I had staked out space in a 'booth' of four empty seats, and had barely opened up my laptop and turned on the cellphone when a big yellow seabag landed on the opposite seat, followed by the familiar figure of Lee Helm. I moved some of my office equipment so that she could take the seat next to me.

"I mean, like, don't tell me they make you go in to the salt mine on Saturday, Max. That's like, despicable!"

"It's the usual crisis," I sighed. "But there's no way out. Looks like you're going sailing — but I can't think of any marinas that you can get to by heavy rail."

"Boat's picking me up at St. Francis," she said. "I get off downtown, transfer to the 30 Stockton, and take it to the end of the line. It's a totally awesome trip through Chinatown on Saturday morning."

"If it gets you there," I said.

"Meanwhile, I have just enough time to load my tidebook."

"Load your tidebook?" I questioned. "How heavy is your edition? I use this little one from my sailmaker."

I happened to have a tidebook in my jacket pocket, so I pulled it out to show her.

"Same one we all use," she said. "But like, it's nowhere near ready to use in a race til I load in the data for the day. I thought it had all the data already in it," I said.

"Au contraire," she said. "Allow me to demonstrate how this works."

She pulled out her own tidebook, essentially the same publication although hers had a bright yellow cover with a different sailmaker's logo. She also pulled out a felt tip marking pen.

"First turn to page 36," she instructed.

"Okay, but this is June," I said as I noticed that page 36 was for last January.

"Now put a big diagonal slash mark across each of the next 12 pages."

"Huh?"

"This is important, Max. These pages are for the current at Carquinez Strait, and like, if you don't cross them all out you might use them by mistake for the central Bay."

"Okay, makes sense," I said as I followed her instructions.

"Now we underline the data for today, Lee continued. "Don't worry about blocking out the line below if you're using a marking pen."

"What if you're also racing tomorrow?" I asked.

"New book. You need, like, a new tidebook every day, the way I do it." I underlined the line of data for today.

"Now find the last time of maximum current before the start — in this case it's at 7:41 in the morning, a 4.0 knot ebb. Flip to the little current charts in back — find the one that says 'Maximum Ebb at Golden Gate' — and write in 7:41 right next to Yerba Buena Island in the inset area."

"Should I also write in 4.0 knots?" I asked.

"Nope, gotta turn to the 'Factors for Correcting Speeds' table that's on the page before the current charts, page 48 in my book."

"What? No official 24-hour military-style time?"

I underlined the line of data for today.

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"Nope, gotta turn to the 'Factors for Correcting Speeds' table that's on the page before the current charts, page 48 in my book."

The page numbering was a little different in my edition, but I found the table easily enough.

"Look under 'Maximum Ebb.' The predicted speed of 4.0 is between 3.9 and
4.2, so the table says to use a correction factor of 0.9."

"No problem," I said. "I've done this a million times."

"For sure, but like, the thing here is to take the trouble to write it in the right place in the tidebook so you can get to the info quickly during a race. Flip back to the chart and write in 'times 0.9' under the 7:41."

"Okay, got it. Now we do the next three hours?"

"Right. The page for "One Hour After" gets 8:41 x 0.9 written in, and so on to 10:41 x 0.9 on the 'Three Hours After' page."

"Usually I leave all these details to my tactician," I said.

"But like, does your tactician actually do this? It's a pain to figure it out during the race. Now we need time of slack water," Lee said as she directed me back to the data page.

We discovered that slack on that day was a full four hours after max, at 11:43.

Lee had me write "slack at 11:43" along the top margin of the "Three Hours After" page.

"Like, you see why I do this?" she said. "The tidebook charts assume the nominal timing of the tide cycle, so if the duration of the ebb is longer, like today, you should really stretch out the times a little for a better fit. But that's for computers, this is the hand-powered version."

Next she asked me to find the page for "Two Hours Before Maximum Flood" and write the same note, "slack at 11:43," in the top margin there too.

"Now we go back for the flood data," she said, reading off 14:47 at 2.9 knots, but changing the time to 2:47.

"What, no official 24-hour military-style time?" I asked.

"Why make trouble?" she answered. "We're used to the 12-hour clock, so like, there's no reason to introduce extra possibility for error by making people translate from their watches to the tide book version."

She handed me a plot that looked like tide height over the last couple of ebbs and floods.

"This is from http://tidesonline.nos.noaa.gov/geographic.html," she said. "Check this out — from the PORTS website."

"Done!" Lee announced when the book was fully marked up. "Now this book is ready to use."

"But can you really trust those numbers?" I asked. "Sometimes the tidebook is notoriously inaccurate."

"It's actually pretty darn good, if you compare it to measured data," she said. "From the PORTS website, this is what we got."

Step 2: Underline the line of data for the day of the race.

4.2, so the table says to use a correction factor of 0.9.

"No problem," I said. "I've done this a million times."

"For sure, but like, the thing here is to take the trouble to write it in the right place in the tidebook so you can get to the info quickly during a race. Flip back to the chart and write in 'times 0.9' under the 7:41."

"Okay, got it. Now we do the next three hours?"

"Right. The page for "One Hour After" gets 8:41 x 0.9 written in, and so on to 10:41 x 0.9 on the 'Three Hours After' page."

"Usually I leave all these details to my tactician," I said.

"But like, does your tactician actually do this? It's a pain to figure it out during the race. Now we need time of slack water," Lee said as she directed me back to the data page.

We discovered that slack on that day was a full four hours after max, at 11:43.

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"This is from http://tidesonline.nos.noaa.gov/geographic.html," she said. "Check this out — from the PORTS website."
explained. "It's a record of the actual for-
real measured tide, and you can compare
it to the predicted tide to see if everything
is on schedule. The fuzzy trace is the
measured one, and the smooth line is the
prediction. And like, you can see that the
tides are running a little high and have been
turning a few minutes later than predicted."

"You do all this before every race?" I asked.

"For sure, Max. I mean, don't you?"
I decided not to answer that ques-
tion.

One more bit of info that's very use-
ful," she added, "is a set of wind field
charts from the day before. Here, I got
these from http://sfports.wr.usgs.gov/
cgi-bin/wind/windbin.cgi

She handed me a set of printouts
depicting the Bay covered with arrows
representing the wind speed and direc-
tion, one chart for each half hour during
the time period of her race.

"It's, like, yesterday's news, but the
wind pattern repeats often enough for
this to be worth bringing along."

"I've seen this web page," I said. "In
fact, we're trying to get one of the meteo-
rologists who runs it to be a speaker at
our yacht club dinner meetings."

"Like, I wish they would schedule
these things during the week, when there
are no races," she complained.

But the activists sitting across from
us seemed to be more interested in
talking about sailing than politics, and
within minutes Lee was passing out
flyers promoting her university sailing
club, her favorite sailboard shop, and
my own yacht club's beer can races—all
while explaining that drop-in crew
usually have no trouble finding boats to
race on.

"What do we need to bring?" they asked.

Lee made the usual suggestions about
good foul weather gear bottoms and
boots.

"Don't worry about the foul weather
gear jacket," she advised. "It's like, too
cramped to wear with a lifejacket anyway,
in a light rain shell over a sweater is
just as good."

"Should we have our own lifejackets?"
they asked.

"Boats will have them," I advised. "But
the loaners might not be as comfortable
as what you would buy for yourself."

"Get a cheap one at a big box store," added Lee. "The cheapo models are
lighter and more comfortable."

"Are they safe?"

"They all have to have the same
amount of buoyancy," I said, "and meet
other minimum standards to be Coast
Guard approved."

"Buy the kind made for fishing," said
Lee. "Those are the ones with lots of
pockets. Like, you'll need a pocket for a
tidebook, like this one."

She held up her newly marked-up
tidebook, and slipped it into one of the
many pockets on her PFD.

"Also a pocket for the GPS, the VHF,
the protest flag, the sailing instructions,
the course sheet, a flag chart, and maybe
even a small pair of 'tactical binoculars'
if you're really into it. Make sure the PFD
has buckles instead of a zipper. They're
more adjustable, and you can, like, loop
the safety lanyards of the expensive giz-
mos through the buckles or straps."

"Lee, don't you weigh yourself down
with all that hardware?" I said.

"Hey, anything that turns deadweight
into live ballast is a speed-enhancer," she said. "Like, I can't legally wear extra
weight, but I can strap on the Batman
Utility Belt if everything has a pur-
pose."

By the time Lee finished demonstrat-
ing how she suits up for a race, she
was wearing the lifejacket and half
the contents of the bag. Suddenly she
noticed that the train had stopped at her
transfer point.

"Yikes! Gotta run. Sorry you have
to work on Saturday, Max. Remember,
no-one ever died wishing they had spent
more time at the office."

The two women bound for the political
event got off at the next stop. "Liberté,
Égalité, Saturday," they shouted as they
disappeared into the crowd.

— max ebb
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NEW TENANTS SPECIAL!
Lease a 32’ or 40’ slip for 3 months and get the 4th month FREE!
With reports this month on the smallish Elite Keel Regatta; the SFYC-hosted Mayfest Regatta for J/105s; a slow Ensenada Race; a trio of other SoCal regattas; a quick look at the Annapolis NOOD; the fast DuxShip Race; and the usual jumble of box scores and race notes at the end.

Elite Keel Regatta

Just 32 boats in four classes — a small turnout compared to several years ago — participated in San Francisco YC’s Elite Keel Regatta on May 14-15. The five-race event was sailed between the Berkeley Circle and Southampton Shoals, with fairly windy conditions on Saturday (17-20 knots, gusting to 25), followed by a more moderate day (12-15 knots) on Sunday.

Brendan Busch, a Microsoft executive in charge of product design for PowerPoint, topped the 11-boat Express 27 fleet with his Attack From Mars, edging out Josh Grass’s Moxie by a point. Busch — who also campaigns the Express 37 Bullet and the D-cat Rocket 88 — was joined by fellow Martians Heather Harrington, Chris Michini, and James Hawkes, with Ergo owner Chris Cage making a cameo as their fifth crewmember.

Attack From Mars, named after Busch’s favorite pinball machine, is now running first in the 24-race Express 27 season championship.

Mill Valley mortgage broker Jason Freskos sailed his Lazy Lightning to victory in the Alerion Express 28 class, topping fellow SFYC member Kirk Smith’s Dream on the tiebreaker. Crewing on Lightning were brother Stephen Freskos (both days), Jim Taylor (Saturday), and Chris Seton (Sunday). Dream is currently leading the AE-28 season standings after three of seven regattas, with Lazy Lightning close behind.

Lake Tahoe sailor Brian Goepfriech dominated the 10-boat J/24 contingent with his trusty Snow Job, sailing with Steve Pickel (San Diego), Elton Cassels (Gardnerville, NV), Phill Mai (Berkeley) and Mai’s friend ‘Tim’, who filled in at the last minute. Goepfriech, the yard manager at Tahoe Keys Marina, commutes down to the Bay to sail, keeping his boat in Pt. Richmond during the winter. “My job gets pretty hectic in the summer, so it’s hard to do the whole J/24 season,” he said. “But I enjoy checking in with the fleet when I can. I grew up in Tiburon, and enjoy sailing in current and big winds. We just try to sail fast, and not do anything stupid!”

Irishman Nigel Donnelly, who sails Shriek Express out of the Treasure Island SC, won the 6-boat Melges 24 class by a point over Matt McQueen’s Caliente, largely by sailing the windy third race on Saturday when the rest of the Melgi bailed out early. “It’s our first sailing trophy in eight years — maybe the floodgates will open now,” joked Donnelly, who was joined for the weekend by Dave Peckham, Greg Wimmer, Catherine King, Phil Hyndman, Janie Miklaunus, and Andrea Toth.

Donnelly, who works in IT for a major bank, also got an unexpected assist from the hoist at St. Francis YC, which, like much of the Marina District on Saturday morning, lacked power. That stranded Seadon Wijsten and his #525 crew on the beach that day, earning them three undeserved DNS’s. Wijsten posted two easy bullets on Sunday, and managed to salvage third overall for the weekend.

ALERION EXPRESS 28 — 1) Lazy Lightning, Jason Freskos, 6 points; 2) Dream, Kirk Smith, 6; 3) Arabella, Harry Allen, 17. (7 boats)


MELGES 24 — 1) Shriek Express, Nigel Donnelly, 12 points; 2) Caliente, Matt McQueen, 13; 3) #525, Seadon Wijsten, 23. (6 boats)

J/24 — 1) Snow Job, Brian Goepfreich, 6 points; 2) Running With Scissors, C. Press/J. Yares, 13; 3) Take Five, S. Taylor/W. Horn, 19; 4) Rail to Rail,
kept the fleet together on the first lap of each race — too close together, as it turned out, at the first leeward mark rounding on Saturday. In one of the more epic J/105 crashes in recent memory, Gary Kneeland’s Orion uncharacteristically rear-ended Anna Laura, locking the boats together and starting a chain reaction involving collisions with Nantucket Sleighride (which was granted redress), Hazardous Waste, and at least one other boat at the port gate. Breaking free from Anna Laura, Orion then spun around and T-boned Bandwidth as it approached the starboard gate, which in turn was forced into Breeze. Ouch!

“Orion and Anna Laura were like a gigantic magnetic force sucking in all boats within 200 yards,” marvelled race manager John Craig. “Eight or nine boats ended up all knotted up in a ball, and there was nothing anyone could do about it.”

As the wind came, up more collisions and carnage occurred — at least a third of the fleet swapped a little paint that day, and half a dozen or so kites were shredded. The protest committee — Dennis George, Pete McCormick, and Peter Szasz — was kept busy until about 8 p.m., reminiscent of the ‘old days’ in the J/105 fleet. Sunday’s racing was much more civilized, though the light-air first race — which the ebb made into something more like a river-rafting tour — took three general recalls, and finally the T and ‘Z’ flags, to get going.

“The ebb really made things interesting this weekend,” said Perkins. “We tried to sail conservatively, staying away from the pack, even if it took us into unfavorable current for awhile. Boats in groups tend to slow each other down, so we’re always looking for the least densely-populated place on the course. It’s safer that way, too!”

This was the fourth event on the 2005 J/105 season schedule. With two firsts (Mayfest, Spring One Design) and two seconds (J/Fest, Ocean Race) — and no finish worse than a 4th — Good Timin’ already appears untouchable in its quest for an unprecedented fifth consecutive fleet championship.

J/105 Mayfest Regatta

To no one’s surprise, Chris Perkins and his veteran Good Timin’ team ran away with the St. Francis YC-hosted Mayfest Regatta on May 14-15. Sailing with brother Phil Perkins (jib trim), John Collins (bow), Darren Ward (spinnaker trim), Aimee LeRoy (pit), and alternating main trimmers Eric Gray (Saturday) and Pete Scott (Sunday), Perkins made it look easy with a consistent 1,3,4,4,1 record.

Thirty-two boats sailed in three increasingly windy races on Saturday, which were followed by a social gathering that night, and two easier races on Sunday. A strong ebb and relatively short Cityfront courses (1.5-mile legs) kept the fleet together on the first lap or two and made for some entertaining action — reminiscent of the ‘old days’ in the J/105 fleet. Sunday’s racing was much more civilized, though the light-air first race — which the ebb made into something more like a river-rafting tour — took three general recalls, and finally the T and ‘Z’ flags, to get going.

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Ensenada Race

The 58th Lexus Newport to Ensenada Race, held on April 22, was slow and uneventful for the 470-boat fleet. Winds peaked at around 10 knots, rewarding boats that took the outside route (longer distance, better wind) this year.

Pyewacket, Roy Disney’s for-sale maxZ86, was first to finish the 125-mile course with an elapsed time of 16 hours, 24 minutes — almost six hours off the record pace they set in 2003 with the old Pyewacket. The second boat to finish, Doug Baker’s Andrews 80 Magnitude 80, pulled in 20 minutes later, followed quickly by the new DenCho 70 Peligroso and the Dubois 90 Genuine Risk. The slippery blue Peligroso, co-owned by Mike Campbell and Dale Williams, won the race easily overall on corrected time, topping runner-up Pendragon IV by 34

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minutes.

"This was just our second race, and it was a big win for us," said Williams, who debuted the new boat in March’s Cabo Race. "We stayed outside, and never really stopped moving. It was fun, too — we brought lots of friends, had a gourmet dinner with ice cream sundaes for dessert, smoked cigars, went through a case of wine, and watched movies down below. It wasn’t exactly a hardship cruise!” Among Peligroso’s 16-man crew were tactician Kevin Miller, Dale’s brother Greg, Ray Lotto, Sam Heck, Scott Dickson, Craig Fletcher, Chris Raab, and Bob Boyce.

The top multihull, both on elapsed and corrected time, was Cat Attack, a nimble Reynolds 33 catamaran owned, sailed and designed by Randy Reynolds of Huntington Beach. Reynolds finished sixth overall after 17 hours, 52 minutes, never remotely threatening the 6:46:40 multihull record set by Steve Fossett’s Stars & Stripes. Reynolds also handily topped four other Reynolds 33s, three of which were loaned to prominent sailors — Johnny Lovell, Pete Melvin, and Howie Hamlin — for the race.

At least five Bay Area boats made the trek to SoCal, and two came home with trophies — Mark Jones’s Andrews TP-52 Flash was third in the Maxi class and R.B. Ward’s Dogpatch 26 Moonshine was second in PHRF I. Jones, sailing in his first Ensenada Race, was joined by Will Paxton, Dick Watts, Tom Thayer, Campbell Rivers, J.V. Gilmour, Jon Shinn, and

The other San Francisco boats didn’t fare quite as well — Jim Gregory’s Schumacher 50 Morpheus finished middle-class in PHRF A, Jonathan Bloom’s WyllieCat 30 LottaTude was deep in PHRF I, and Paul Kaplan’s 55-ft ‘turboed’ schooner Santana DNFed in order to get StFYC Commodore Doug Holm back in time for the club’s Opening Day festivities.

MAXI — 1) Peligroso, DenCho 70, CampbellWilliams; 2) Pendragon IV, Davidson 52, John McLau-erin; 3) Flash, Andrews TP-52, Mark Jones; 4) Taxi Dancer, R/P 68, Paul & Laura Sharp; 5) Mongoose, SC 70, Dennis Conner. (14 boats)


2) Screamin O, Olson 40, Hokanson/Fitzmaurice; 3) #56336, Beneteau 44.7, Tom Herrington. (17 boats)

PHRF D — 1) Martela, X-38, Viggo Torbensen; 2) Super Gnat, Beneteau 40.7, Cliff Thompson; 3) French Toast, Beneteau 40.7, Doran/Wright. (28 boats)


PHRF F — 1) Blue Star, Olson 30, Larry Spencer; 2) XS, Mull 30, Thawley/Queen; 3) Southern Comfort, Olson 30, Cole Price. (28 boats)


PHRF H — 1) Rush Street, J/29, Larry Leavell; 2) Foggy Notion, Catalina 38, Tom Kennedy; 3) Aries, ‘San30G’, Dennis Godfim. (23 boats)

PHRF I — 1) Sea Maiden, Ericson 35-2, Carolyn & Sandra Sherman; 2) Moonshine, Dogpatch 26, R.B. Ward; 3) PussyCat, Peterson 34, John Szalay. (27 boats)


PHRF K — 1) Torea, S&S ketch, Jones/Kennedy; 2) ElTigre, Cal 2-30, Kari Keidser; 3) Superstrings, J/24, Douglas Hoford. (16 boats)

PHRF L — 1) Encore, Catalina 27, Dick Holmes; 2) Sojourn, Catalina 30, Cleve Hardaker; 3) Valkyrie, Cal 25, Don Albrecht. (8 boats)

SPRIT A — 1) J-Hawk, J/105, David Brown; 2) Doctor No, J120, Jed Olenick; 3) Belly Dancer, J/105, Art McMillian. (25 boats)

SPRIT B — 1) Avet, J80, Curt Johnson; 2) Wildcat, Cheeta 30, John Staff; 3) Fast Twitch, Henderson 30, Evan Rasmussen. (6 boats)
Three SoCal Regattas
San Diego YC pulled out all the stops on April 29-May 1, hosting the for-charity Leukemia Cup on Friday evening, followed by the main show, the Yachting Cup on the weekend.

Thanks to the efforts of regatta chair Karen Yingling and 60 or so volunteers, the Leukemia Cup netted an unprecedented $92,000 — a fine way to start the long week. Kudos to Randall Pittman, Dale Pyre, and the SDYC juniors for raising the lion’s share of the money.

The Yachting Cup, the second of four stops on the new Ullman Inshore Championship Series, was held on three different circles — a new venue for big boats to the west of Point Loma (near where the America’s Cup used to be held), and the ‘near’ and ‘far’ courses outside the Zuniga Jetty on the Coronado Roads. Splendid weather (sunny and a 12-14 knot northwesterly) prevailed for three races on Saturday and two on Sunday. “It was a better than usual regatta, mainly due to the weather and the great new course for big boats,” claimed race manager Jeff Johnson. “However, attendance was a little down, though we had plenty of out-of-towners. Of the 54 PHRF boats, only 12 were from San Diego! Next year, we hope to get more support from our local fleet.”

Two weekends later, on May 14-15, San Diego YC recaptured the prestigious Lipton Cup over 10 other SoCal yacht clubs at a 5-race, no-throutout J/105 regatta hosted by defending champ Balboa YC. Skipper Bill Hardesty, a 30-year-old pro sailor who has been on fire this year, dominated the fleet with a stellar 4,1,1,2,2 record — no mean feat in winds that topped out at 6 knots. Helping Hardesty return the Lipton Cup to SDYC after a two-year absence were the well-practiced team of Kyle Clark, Betty Sherman, Brian Janney, Kelly McKeown, Maria Stout, and Erik Shampain.

Next up on the SoCal circuit are the final two legs of the Ullman Series, Cal Race Week (June 4-5) and Ullman Sails Long Beach Race Week (June 24-26).
PHRF — 1) Hot Rum, CF-33, Albert Castillion, 6 points; 2) Blur, B-25, Aaron & Dixon Hall, 12; 3) Rush Street, J/29, Larry Leveille, 18. (8 boats)
PHRF III — 1) Defiance, B-32, Scott Taylor, 6 points; 2) Wildcat, Cheetah 30, John Staff, 13. (6 boats)
Full results — www.sdyc.org

LIPTON CUP (Balboa YC; May 14-15; 5 races):

Annapolis NOOD
Sailing World's Land's End NOOD (National Offshore One Design) regattas are alive and well, as evidenced by the 274-boat, 17-class Annapolis NOOD Regatta...
Annapolis, cont’d — ‘Q’ crew Dee Smith, John Bonds, and Dee’s wife Jocelyn; the Farr 40 ‘Crocodile Rock’ (46999) now lives in Annapolis and partakes in the huge Wednesday night beer can series; Gary Jobson won the competitive Etchells fleet; ‘Annie’, Jobson’s Etchells, in action (hey, nice bow number!); and the friendly Annapolis YC. All photos ‘Latitude’/rob unless otherwise noted.

Annapolis oral surgeon Neil Sullivan’s Melges 24 M-Fatic, with Morgan Reeser driving, won the 38-boat Melges 24 class with an emphatic 2,1,3,6,2,2,1 record. The regatta doubled as the Melges 24 National Championship, which Sullivan previously won in Charleston, SC, in 2000. Topping off a memorable weekend, M-Fatic was named Overall Boat of the Regatta, earning Sullivan a week at Sunsail’s Club Colonna resort in Antigua this January.

on April 29-May 1. This was the third regatta (after St. Pete and San Diego) on the NOOD’s annual 9-city tour, and it’s traditionally the biggest or second-biggest regatta on the schedule. The seven-race series was hosted by Annapolis YC, which somehow organized four different race circles to accommodate the crowd. The Chesapeake Bay weather wasn’t quite as accommodating, featuring cold, rainy conditions and light shifty winds the first two days before concluding with a postcard-perfect day on Sunday.

Annapolis oral surgeon Neil Sullivan’s
Boston attorney and two-time Farr 40 world champion Jim Richardson also came up with a big win in the 17-boat Mumm 30 class, dominating that class with his new Barking Mad in its debut. We had the pleasure of sailing on Jim Swartz’s Mumm 30 Q again, and thus had a ringside seat to watch Richardson, tactician Terry Hutchinson, trimmer Morgan Trubovich, and the rest of this well-oiled team sail away from the fleet. After the regatta, Barking Mad (aka, ‘Mini-Me’ for its dark blue paint job and similar graphics as the Farr 40) was shipped to France for the upcoming Mumm 30 Worlds.

No victory was more popular than that of local hero Gary Jobson, who won the 22-boat Etchells fleet in convincing fashion, sailing Annie with co-owner Gary Gilbert and Jud Smith. “It’s great to be back,” said Jobson, who has waged a courageous and so far successful battle against leukemia over the last year. Despite the lousy weather, we enjoyed everything about this well-run regatta (no one asked us, but we still think it’s a shame that Sailing World took San Francisco off the NOOD dance card). We also loved Annapolis, a hardcore sailing town, which, like San Francisco, lies at the righteous latitude of 38 degrees north. Founded in 1649, the place oozes history and yachting tradition, and is top-heavy with great bars (which, unfortunately, still allow smoking) and restaurants. Annapolis is truly a ‘capital’ place — it’s the capital of Maryland, it was briefly the sixth capital of the U.S., and it can back up its claim as the ‘sailing capital of America’.

Next month, the NOOD tour continues at Detroit (June 3-5), Chicago (June 17-19), and Toronto (June 24-26). Top finishers at Annapolis follow:

**BENETEAU 36.7 — Abino, Wes Siegner, Chevy Chase.** (10 boats)

C&C 99 — Tam, Bob Wilson, Whitby, ONT. (7 boats)

J/35 — Aunt Jean, James Sagerholm, Annapolis. (8 boats)

J/105 — Jester, Hugh Bethell, Baltimore. (30 boats)

ETCHELLS — Annie, Gary Jobson, Annapolis. (22 boats)

MUMM 30 — Barking Mad, Jim Richardson, Boston. (17 boats)

J/30 — Bebop, Bob Rutsch, Chevy Chase. (14 boats)

ALBERG 30 — Infinity, Charles Currier, Annapolis. (7 boats)

J/29 — Rhumb Punch, John Edwards, California, MD. (7 boats)

S27.9 — Rooster Tail, David Flechsig, Port Charlotte, FL. (16 boats)

CATALINA 27 — Catawampus, James Urban, Annapolis. (10 boats)

TRIPP 26 — Highlander, Tim Dickson, Alexandria, VA. (8 boats)

J/80 — Rumor, John Storck, Huntington, NY. (6 boats)

CAL 25 — Harlequin, Leo Surla, Washington, DC. (9 boats)

Brrrrrrrrr! — Vanguard 15s, Lasers, and Melges 24s sailing on scenic Lake Tahoe during the Ski/Sail Regatta. See ‘Box Scores’ for results.

**Auspicious start — Jim Coggan’s green Schumacher 44 ‘Auspice’ leads the PHRO-I fleet off the starting line in the DuxShip Race.**

MELGES 24 (Nationals) — M-Fatic, Neil Sullivan, Annapolis. (38 boats)

J/24 — Meltemi, Datch/Hobsen, Annapolis. (21 boats)

J/22 — #1502, Peter McChesney, Annapolis. (35 boats)

Full results — www.sailingworld.com

DuxShip Race

The SSS-hosted DuxShip Race, the third OYRA race of the season, attracted a relatively healthy 38-boat fleet on Saturday, May 14. The 31.8-mile course involved a beat up to Duxbury Reef Buoy (off Bolinas), a starboard-tack reach to the Lightship, and a run back in. With a big ebb boost on the way out, fairly flat seas, and wind in the low 20s, it was a quick and easy race.

Cipango, Rob and Bob Barton’s Andrews 56, was first back after 3 hours, 51 minutes on the course. The Bartons, who were using the race as part of their TransPac training, topped a pair of SC 50s, Emily Carr and Surfer Girl, by sev-
eral minutes on corrected time. “It was a beautiful day in the ocean,” said Rob Barton. “Where was the rest of the 50-footer class?”

Stan Glaros’ Davidson 50 Great Fun won the 5-boat IOR Warhorse division by a scant 2 seconds over the Peterson 43 Samiko, taking overall corrected time honors as well. Among the Fun crew that day was fellow Warhorse skipper Keith Brown, whose Peterson 46 Aleta is sidelined after tweaking their rig in the windy Northern Star Race. “It cracked 18 inches up from the deck while we were spinnaker reaching, but fortunately didn’t fall down,” said Brown. “We’ll be back in a few months, possibly with a carbon rig.”

Other class winners included Green Buffalo, Jim Quanci’s newly restored Cal 40, and Anthony Basso’s reactivated Mancebo 31 Bloom County. It’s nice to see these once-familiar boats back in the winners’ circle.

PHRO 1A (<0) — 1) Cipango, Andrews 56, The Bartons. (3 boats)

PHRO 1 — 1) Dayenu, J/120, Don Payan/Dennis Jermaine; 2) Summer Moon, Synergy 1000.

Box Scores

So many races, so little time. Here are brief reports on a dozen regattas which occurred last month:

KONOCTI CUP (KBSC; Clear Lake; Apr. 23):

FULL CUP — 1) UFO, Ultimate 20, Trent Watkins; 2) Cloud Nine, Ultimate 20, Jim Carlson; 3) No Name, Ultimate 20, Bill Andrew; 4) Whitey, Santana 23, Phil Lovett. (9 boats)

HALF CUP — 1) MoJo, Santana 20, John Todd; 2) Sante, Capri 26, Jim Westman; 3) Way Cool, Capri 26, Tom Davies; 4) Lucky, Balboa 26, Ray Proftt; 5) Pic, Catalina 26, Bill Pickering. (11 boats)

SKISAIL NATIONALS (Lake Tahoe; Apr. 22-23):

L A S E R — 1) Steve Fleckenstein (1 in sailing; 1 in skiing), 2 points; 2) Martin Harman (2.3), 5; 3) Roger Lancaster (9.2), 11; 4) Matt Clark (3.8), 11; 5) Dan Hauserman (7.4), 11. (11 boats)

VANGUARD 15 — 1) Matthew Sessions/Avery Patton (2 in sailing; 2 in skiing), 4 points; 2) Ken & Doug Turnbull (5.1), 6; 3) Holt Condon/AJ Crane (3.3), 6; 4) Shawn & Debbie Bennett (1.6), 7; 5) Sally Madsen/Adam Rothschild (6.5), 17-24 boats)

MELGES 24 — 1) Team Eriksson — Stan & Mia Eriksson, Eric Claussen, Ross & Shane Collins (1 in sailing; 1 in skiing), 2 points. (2 boats)

ELVSTROM REGATTA (SFYC; Apr. 30-May 1):

29er — 1) Alex Bernal/Ted White, 9 points; 2) John Heineken/Matt Noble, 13; 3) Marcus Bernal/Johnny Goldsberry 20; 4) Cameron Biehl/Dan Malpas, 30; 5) Jen Morgan/Campbell Rivers, 31; 6) Alain Huggler/Mathew Thorslund, 38; 7) Max Fraser/Joe Crumb, 57. (16 boats; 8 races)

FINN — 1) Darrell Peck, 8 points; 2) Henry Sprague, 12. (5 boats; 7 races)

LASER — 1) Peter Phelan, 16 points; 2) Tracy Usher, 16; 3) Brodie Cobb, 17; 4) Sean Kelly, 21; 5) Andrew Tuthill, 36; 6) David Lapier, 40; 7) Tom Burden, 55. (17 boats; 8 races)

LASER RADIAL — 1) Roger Herbut, 8 points; 2) Jim Christopher, 14; 3) Rogan Kriedt, 17. (8 boats; 7 races)

FORMULA — 1) Seth Besse, 6 points; 2) Steve Sylvester, 11; 3) Mike Percey, 16; 4) Ben Barber, 26. (13 boats; 7 races)

FULL results — www.stfyc.org

ALAMEDA INTERCLUB #2 (AYC; May 7):

SPINNAKER I (<173) — 1) Uno, WylieCat 30, Steve Wonner; 2) Phantom Mist, Beneteau 40.7, Gary Massari. (6 boats)

FAT 30s — 1) Spindrifter, Tartan 30, Paul Skabo; 2) Thumbs Up, Cal 29, Ivan Orge. (5 boats)

CATALINA 34 — 1) Motley, Chris Owen; 2) Crew’s Nest, Ray Irvine. (6 boats)

MELGES 24 SPRING OPEN (SCYC; May 7-8):

1) #525, Seadon Wijzen, 6 points; 2) Sofa King Fast, Dennis Bassano, 18; 3) Rough, Matt McQueen,

HOMECOMING REGATTA (EYC; May 14; 5 races):
1) Doug Baird/Jim Taylor, 15 points; 2) Pax Davis/Aaron Lee, 18; 3) Alex & Kathryn Mountjoy, 22; 4) Bill & Kathryn Worden, 23; 5) Jim & Samantha Bradley, 26. (11 Mercureys; www.merc583.addr.com/sail/)

SBYRA #2 (OPYC; May 14):
SPINNAKER — 1) Summer-time, Int. Folkboat, Luther Izmarian; 2) Mer Linda, Catalina 30, Mark Hale; 3) Heathcliff, Catalina 27, Ed Hoff. (6 boats)
NON-SPINNAKER — 1) Spirit, Hunter Legend 37, Wayne Weathers; 2) Dolphin, Cal 2-30, Robert Young; 3) Miss Kate, Catalina 27, Mike Satterlund. (6 boats)
Full results — http://sbyra.home.comcast.net/

MALLORY CUP (High School Nationals; Port Angeles, WA; May 13-15):
1) Point Loma, 97 points; 2) Newport Harbor, 156; 3) Severn, 185; 4) Martin County, 188; 5) Marin

MOORE 24 PCCs (SCYC; May 14-15; 6 races):
1) Adios, Scott Walecka/Ian Klitzka, 11 points; 2) Dalton Bergan/Zack Maxam, 10 points; 2) Morgan Larson/Pete Spaulding, 16; 3) Ty Reed/B. Gulari, 22; 4) Michael Karas/Anthony Boscolo, 25. (9 boats; www.scyc.org)

34th FLIGHT OF THE BULLS (Fremont SC; 5/7):
1) Fred Paxton; 2) Gordie Nash; 3) Art Lange; 4) John Pacholski; 5) Chris Straub; 6) Bruce Bradfute; 7) Paul Tara; 8) Dave Vickland. (15 El Toros; 11 miles; “thanks to Admiral John Frazier for providing rescue craft”)

COLLEGIATE RANKINGS (as of May 12):


(24 boats; www.scyc.org)

Winning crew — Ian Klitza (driver), Scott Walecka (owner/middle), Dave Hodges (trim/tactics), Lisa LaFaive (foredeck).

Race Notes
Santa Barbara surfing safari: Encinal YC’s 14th Coastal Cup — 277 generally quick downwind miles to Santa Barbara YC — will leave from the StFYC starting line at noon on June 18. With a month to go, just 17 boats are signed up: Beeom (R/P 70), Flash (TP-52), Great Fun (Davidson 50), Tivoli (Benedetteau 42), Wind Dancer (Catalina 42), Mad Dog (Schock 40), Inspired Environments (Beneteau 40.7), Shaman and Azure (Cal 40s), Xpression (C&C 110), La Diana (Contessa 35), Stray Cat Blues (J135), defending champion Sleeping Dragon (Hobie 33), Special Edition (Wilderness 30), Irish Lady (Catalina 30), Friction Loss (J130), and Attack From Mars (Express 27). Entries will be accepted until June 15, but the last day to get the requisite NorCal PHRF certificate is June 13. Race officials are projecting about 35 entries — see www.encinal.org for details.

Road warriors: Tom Coates enjoyed his 51st birthday in Bermuda in late April, clobbering the 6-boat J105 division at the 2005 Bermuda International Invitational Race Week with Masquerade. Helping Coates celebrate with straight bullets were Chris Perkins, Mark Chandler, Steve Marsh, Will Sharron and Tim Scherer and their families. . . Marin Catholic High School came in a commendable fifth at the Mallory Cup, the U.S. High School National Championship, in Port Angeles, WA, in mid-May. Leading the San Francisco YC-based team to its best showing ever was ‘A’ skipper Myles Guttenkunst, with alternating crew Delaney Lynch and

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30th Annual

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Danny Cayard. **Sean Kelly** was the ‘B’ skipper, sailing with Kristen Rittenhouse. With only Lynch graduating this year, Marin Catholic should do even better next year. See *Box Scores* for results.

Slip slidin’ away: Bay View BC’s second and perhaps final **South Bay Match Race Challenge**, a ‘beer can’ match racing series scheduled for May 7, was canceled due to lack of interest. “Exactly zero boats signed up,” said disappointed organizer John Super. . .

Encinal YC’s **Commodore’s Challenge** happened, just barely, on the same date. Three clubs sent their commodores to the three-race PHRF series for boats rating 150-168, which was won by Bill Wright of Berkeley YC in the Merit 25 Loose Lips. Wright sailed with Lips owner Phill Mai, Mark Salmon, Brent Botta, and Falk Meissner. Second went to Steve Reinhard (*One Moore*, Moore 24, EYC) and third to Bob Doscher (*Positivibration*, Wavelength 24, StkSC).

Grand finale: The 2005 Caribbean racing circuit wheezed to a conclusion with the **38th Antigua Sailing Week** on April 24-29. A total of 183 boats from 27 countries — a smaller-than-usual turnout — competed in light winds in an abbreviated 4-or-5 race series. The big winner, once again, was Tom Hill’s hot R/P 77 **Titan XII**, which won the Big Boat class and also took home the coveted Lord Nelson Trophy for best overall. Titan also won the inaugural 44-mile Round Island Race and the 2005 Caribbean BBS trophy. Other winners in the racing classes were **Storm** (R/P 44), **Enzyme** (Henderson 35), **Murka** (Swan 48), and **Tarka** (Beneteau 40.7). Edgar Cato’s chartered Swan 56 **Hissar** (aka Lolita) won the Swan Caribbean Challenge, topping 22 other Swans. Full results can be found at [www.sailingweek.com](http://www.sailingweek.com).

Excuses, excuses: We went to press early this month in order to hit the docks just before Memorial Day Weekend. Accordingly, there’s no racing coverage of the **Stone Cup**, the **First Team Real Estate Invitational Regatta** in Newport Beach, or anything else from the weekend of May 21-22. Surf to [www.stfyc.com](http://www.stfyc.com) to see who won the new 14-boat IRC division at the Stoner (there could be huge demand for 70-year-old wooden 8-Meters after this one!), and [www.nhyc.org](http://www.nhyc.org) to see who did well down there. Other websites of possible interest after the holiday weekend include [www.sfyc.org](http://www.sfyc.org) (**Spinnaker Cup**), [www.mastermariners.org](http://www.mastermariners.org) (**Master Mariners Race**), and [www.stfyc.com](http://www.stfyc.com) (**Memorial Day Regatta**).
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WORLD

With reports this month on the reasons why An American Expat Fell in Love with Tonga, an updated look at the charter offerings of the Schooner Zodiac, plus miscellaneous Charter Notes.

A Bareboating Primer On the Friendly Kingdom of Tonga

It's often recommended that newcomers to Caribbean bareboat chartering first sail in the protected waters of the British Virgin Islands, where winds are moderate, sea conditions are mild and the distances between anchorages are short. For similar reasons, Tonga would be a wise choice as a 'first destination' in the South Pacific.

Historians tell us that this vast cluster of coral-formed atolls, laid out along a subterranean ridge, were first settled by Polynesian explorers who came here from Fiji about 3,000 years ago. It wasn't until 1643 that the first European, Abel Tasman, landed here, staying just long enough to replenish his supplies of food and water. More than a century later, Captain Cook visited the Tongan islands on three successive voyages, each time receiving a warm welcome, which led him to dub them “The Friendly Islands.”

Today, tourism promoters capitalize on that expression, but by all accounts it's still a fitting moniker, as the Tongan people, by their nature, seem to be genuinely warm and welcoming to outsiders.

Officially titled the Kingdom of Tonga, this is the last remaining Polynesian monarchy, and it's the only Pacific nation never to have been brought under foreign rule. In the late 1800s, King George Tupou I — who'd been converted to Christianity by Methodist missionaries — made sweeping changes which abolished forced labor, reformed land ownership and established a constitutional government which remains today.

Cruising sailors sometimes explore the entire island chain — which is spread out across 400 miles of ocean — but most chartering takes place in the northern Vava'u region, which is ideally suited to that purpose. Comprised of dozens of thickly forested islands, many of which are completely uninhabited, there are more than 40 protected anchorages which offer good holding. Many of them are suitable for overnighting, and all lie within a day's sail of the capital city, Neiafu.

Since we don't pretend to be experts on sailing in the waters of Vava'u, we enlisted the input of expat-in-residence Hollie Marsden. She arrived in 2001 as crew aboard a superyacht, quickly "fell in love with the place," and jumped ship. These days this former commodities trader runs a Neiafu charter outfit called Sailing Safaris, as well as a popular sailors' haunt called the Mermaid Bar and Grill — which, incidently, is home of the Vava'u YC. After learning the lay of the land, Hollie wrote up an insightful mini cruising guide, which we'll excerpt here:

"Situated on Pangaimotu island, Neiafu is the only real town in Vava'u, and is the only place with banks, fresh provisions, water, fuel and other facilities. Some of the other small towns do have a store, and there are various restaurants, resorts and Tongan feast nights scattered amongst the islands."

"Vava'u is blessed with a year-round near-perfect climate to compliment its blue lagoons, white coral beaches and lush green plantations," says Hollie.

Although many would call Tonga a year-round sailing destination, the prime season is between July and November, when moderate Southwest Trade Winds prevail. This window of time conveniently coincides with the local whale-watching season. Predictable as clockwork, a group of humpbacks comes to Vava'u annually to mate and give birth. While sighting them isn't guaranteed, it is a very common occurrence. Sometimes, in fact, they'll even dive beneath your keel.

Summer air temperatures average in the high 70s, while ‘winter’ temps (December to April) can get up into the high 80s, with accompanying higher humidity. Cyclones are also a threat during that period.

In addition to Vava'u's popularity for sailing and whale watching, this island cluster is also renowned for scuba diving, snorkeling, kayaking and game fishing — one of the deepest trenches in the Pacific Basin lies nearby, supplying a continuous upwelling of nutrients to big pelagic fish.

Despite its touristic potential, however, Vava'u — thankfully — is only minimally developed. In the villages that you'll visit during your explorations under sail, you'll find that many islanders still live in the centuries-old Polynesian lifestyle centered around fishing and
As in the BVI, the islands of Vava’u are close together, but there’s dramatically less traffic in Tonga. Here, ‘Melinda’ skirts a fringing reef.

Hollie offers these thoughts on Tongan customs: “The Kingdom of Tonga is unique in many ways, and its people’s strong sense of tradition is part of the great appeal of these islands. We feel strongly that while we are here, we must support and respect the customs of these people, thus encouraging Vava’u to remain special for many years to come.

Please follow these simple guidelines: Christianity is represented by many different religions in Tonga, and Sunday remains a religious holiday. Tongans do not swim, fish or work on Sundays.

If anchored near a village, please keep noise levels down to a minimum.

‘Public dress code is conservative in town and in the villages. T-shirts and long shorts are acceptable. When entering a village on a Sunday, women should have their shoulders covered and preferably a knee-length skirt on. Men need to wear long trousers.

Some of the uninhabited islands have small plantations in the bush that are cared for by neighboring villagers.

Do not take fruit or vegetables from here without permission from the landowner. All villages have a head man or town officer. If you have any queries relating to the village or islands ask to speak to him.

“The people of Tonga have a great sense of fun and they love to laugh — at us, their friends, family etc. — so don’t be offended. Sharing a laugh is a good way to ‘break the ice’, so don’t be afraid to share a laugh with them!”

All good advice! Respect for Tongan culture goes hand in hand with respect for the splendid, but fragile, underwater world here.

Hollie advises: “It is very important that visitors to Vava’u do as much as possible to protect these pristine waters and the environment both above and below the sea. Please follow these simple rules:

*Coral takes many years to grow, and is part of the balance of the marine ecosystem. Please always try to anchor in sand and avoid swinging into coral heads.

*Do not take any live shells or coral. When you are snorkeling, watch your fins on the coral and do not touch or break pieces off. There are giant clam reserves located in some parts of the island group, but as a reminder, take care not to anchor or swim in their vicinity.

*Please do not throw trash in the water. If you have spent an enjoyable day on an island, ensure that all that remains are your footprints! Please carry your rubbish with you and dispose of it when you return to your charter base.

“We enjoy the unique opportunity in Vava’u of being able to be very close, and even swim with, the native humpback whales in their natural environment. If
you are lucky enough to come across these whales while cruising, please be sure to seek the advice of a whale-watching operator (such as Sailing Safaris on channel 68) before you attempt to approach the whales. By approaching the whales in the right way, we enhance everyone’s enjoyment and preserve the opportunity of being closer to them.” (Sailing Safaris invites visitors to stop by and pick up a copy of their whale-watching guidelines or consider joining one of their licensed local operators on a whale-watching daytrip.)

In addition to the Sailing Safaris fleet (www.sailingsafaris.com), the largest fleet of charter boats in Vava’u is operated by The Moorings (aka Moorings Tonga) — which offers two calibers of boats, the older of which are marketed under the name Foot Loose. (See www.moorings.com.) Also, former Sausalito sailor Christy Butterfield has established a local charter operation in Neiafu called Melinda Sea Adventures (www.sailtonga.com), offering the 44-ft crewed charter yacht Melinda — at very reasonable rates, we’re told — as well as two small bareboats. Although Tonga is essentially worlds away from our modern urban existence, through the magic of the Internet an abundance of travel info is at your fingertips. In addition to the above, see also the website of the Tonga Visitor’s Bureau: www.tongaholiday.com. (Although Americans do not need visas in advance, there is an office of the Tonga Consul General at 360 Post St, Suite 604, in San Francisco. See www.tongaconsul.org.)

The following are some highlights gleaned from Moorings Tonga’s cruising notes.

One of the must-see attractions of a Vava’u charter is a visit to Swallow’s Cave, located on beautiful Kapa Island. Accessed by dinghy, it is inhabited by hundreds of small birds. It’s a bit more work to visit the area’s other famous cavern. You have to dive down and swim...
beneath a ledge to access Mariner’s Cave on Niuapapu, which fills with fog as the waves come and go. According to legend, an English castaway named Will Mariner supposedly concealed a beautiful young girl within the cave so that her family wouldn’t prevent him from marrying her. According to David Stanley, author of the excellent *South Pacific Handbook*, because both of these caves face west, the best time for taking those perfect postcard shots is in the afternoon.

Hunga Island has a huge lagoon, formed by the crater of an extinct volcano, which is reached through a 200-foot-wide pass. Once inside, you’ll find a traditional Tongan village and the Ika Lahi fishing Resort.

Some of the best snorkeling in the region is said to be found on Mananita, an island surrounded by reefs. Once inside there you’ll have access to its powder-fine beaches. After a short walk inland, you’ll reach an idyllic natural temple within broad-leafed puko trees.

Once anchored in the calm lagoon of Renutu, you’ll have access to a fine beach and excellent diving. On its ocean side, are a series of caves and blowholes.

Needless to say, there’s much to see and do within Vava’u’s cruising grounds. At the very least, a sailing vacation there promises to yield memorable days of sun-kissed sailing and rich cultural experiences.

— latitude/aet

**Schooner Zodiac — A Lovingly Restored Classic from a Bygone Era**

It’s no wonder that the 127-ft (LOD) schooner *Zodiac* has been mentioned often in the pages of *Latitude*. After all, this magazine is, of course, based in San Francisco Bay, the great schooner’s former homeport when she plied Bay waters as a bar pilot schooner under the name *California*. 
WORLD

Designed by William Hand, Jr., as an ocean racing yacht for the Johnson and Johnson pharmaceutical family, she was built in East Boothbay, Maine, and launched in 1924. Six years later, during the gloomy years of the Great Depression, she was purchased by our local Bar Pilot’s Association to usher visiting ships through the shallows on the approach to the Golden Gate. After 41 years of service, she was retired in 1972, the last of a long line of pilot schooners in service within U.S. waters. Just imagine, as recently as three decades ago, arriving vessels were greeted by this beauty, rather than a homely motorlaunch.

In the late ’70s, the Vessel Zodiac Corporation was established to operate and maintain this vintage thoroughbred. A dedicated crew of shipwrights and hundreds of volunteers eventually restored her to her former, yacht-like glory. In the early ’80s, she not only took her original name back, but also won a niche on the National Register of Historic Places.

During the years since, she’s become a familiar sight along the waterways of the Pacific Northwest, introducing the time-honored techniques of marline-seamanship to ‘paying crew’ of all ages, most of whom jumped at the chance to take a turn at the schooner’s massive wheel and join in the camaraderie of pulling lines together to control her gaff-rigged sailplan.

Based at Bellingham, on the Washington coast just south of the Canadian border, Zodiac’s booking office, Starsail Cruises, has expanded the scope of the old girl’s charter offerings recently. In addition to the daysails and scheduled sailings (booked ‘by the berth’) which have long been the core of her business, Zodiac is now also available for private charters, customized to fit whatever itinerary or style of service that custom-

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ers desire. In fact, one romantic couple recently chartered the vessel — which normally sleeps 24 overnight guests — all for themselves. The old grand schooner’s traditional ‘open’ interior layout, has recently been modified, by the way, so that she now offers two private double cabins, in addition to curtained individual berths.

Although Zodiac is an American-flagged vessel, she frequently sails in Canadian waters. Over Labor Day weekend, for example, she’ll be cruising down to B.C.’s lovely capital, Victoria, at the southern tip of Vancouver Island. Another notable cruise on her summer calendar is a 12-day trip in mid-September north to the sensationally beautiful fiords of Desolation Sound. At this writing, berths are still available on both trips.

Other highlights of Zodiac’s offerings include lighthouse tour cruises, where a special itinerary allows guests to visit several of the region’s historic lights, enjoying prearranged tours by the lightkeepers. Kayaking trips are another variation on the Northwest charter theme — there’s no shortage of storage space on these decks.

An active member of the American Sail Training Association, Zodiac will be participating in a variety of tall ship events this summer in conjunction with the Tall Ships Challenge festivities which grace the West Coast every three years. We’re told that she’s already heavily booked, but who knows, cancellations...
Soper’s Hole, at the west end of Tortola, has been a sailor’s haunt since the days of the buccaneers, but these days the food’s better.

For more info on Zodiac’s summer schedule, call (877) 831-7427 toll free, and check out www.schoonerzodiac.com and www.starsailcruises.com.

— latitude/aet

Charter Notes
Here’s a novel marketing idea that seems to have been a ‘win-win’ for all concerned. Earlier this year, Sunsail announced a contest open to its past clients. Two sets of winners, a family of four and a pair of couples, would get to star in a documentary about the joys of chartering in the British Virgin Islands — to be filmed on location, of course. And co-starring with them would be sailing legend Gary Jobson. The process apparently proved to be great fun — and the resulting film, to be titled simply Sailing the Caribbean, will, no doubt become an effective marketing tool.

The call for entries drew 160 applicants, each of whom supplied a two-minute video of themselves as an ‘audition’.

“As you can imagine,” said Sunsail USA’s General Manager, Peter Cook, “some of the entrants were very entertaining and imaginative. It took hours of deliberation before we selected our family and group of four adults.”

In the ‘family’ division, the winners were Richard and Janna Flanders of Colorado Springs, Colorado who sailed in the BVI just last year. This time, however, they brought their kids, Kyle, 13, and Allison, 10. The second team of winners — the Morrisons and the Riglers — latitude/aet
of Nazareth, PA. — have sailed together in the BVI twice before, but haven’t tired of it yet. As group leader Greg Morrison puts it, “…the BVIs are the perfect place for a sailing charter.”

In addition to being a world-class sailor, Jobson, of course, is no stranger to the world of filmmaking, having been ESPN’s sailing commentator since 1985, and having been involved in a number of previous sailing documentaries, not the least of which involved expeditions to Antarctica and the Arctic.

At this writing, the film, which was slated to be shot in late April, is probably in the editing stage, and DVD copies are expected to be released next fall. If you’d like a copy, email your request to themovie@sunsail.com.

Although we’d love to see Sunsail’s film ourselves, no one has to convince us that there’s plenty of fun to be had while on a Caribbean bareboat charter — or that it’s an appropriate vacation option for families. In fact, while reading about the Colorado couple’s prize trip with their adolescent kids, we couldn’t help but slip into daydreams about chartering in the BVI and elsewhere with our kids when they were young.

Even though we couldn’t actually ‘afford’ a few of those trips, we always rationalized that the window of time available to create those unique memories, while our kids were still innocent, wide-eyed and impressionable, was extremely short. It seemed to us that sharing adventures together which are so far outside of the realm of normal daily living, somehow cemented our family bonds in ways that would have been much more difficult to achieve at home.

In any case, we’d encourage you to avoid procrastinating, and introduce your kids to the pleasures of chartering long before they become surly teenagers, bent on cultivating an attitude! We think you’ll thank us later if you do.

And for the those of you who don’t have young kids to think about, we’d like to use these final lines to scream, “Hey! What are you waiting for?” In case you hadn’t noticed, summer is upon us, so if you haven’t locked in your plans for a summer sailing vacation yet, you’d better get on it.

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CHANGES

With reports this month from Viva on years of cruising in the Caribbean; from Adagio on building a cat in New Zealand; from Pura Vida on carrying weapons while cruising; from BINGO Tambien! on a replacement Catalina 42; from Content on Ecuador, from Flashgirl on finally heading to the South Pacific; from Secret O’Life on Mazatlan and the simple new clearing procedures; from Delphinus on trying to save a doomed yacht on a reef in the Caribbean; and enough Cruise Notes to fill a lazarette.

Viva — Grand Soleil 39
Steve & Pam Jost
5.5 Years Cruising The Caribbean (Antigua, West Indies)

We just received the latest Latitude here in the Caribbean, and were sorry to have missed the Ha-Ha Reunion at Strictly Sail in Oakland last month. We did the second Ha-Ha in '95 — in fact you borrowed some of my photographs to illustrate your article. We did the fourth Ha-Ha in '97, and got the ‘real’ first place. But then we lost our transmission at Bahia de los Muertos a little to the north of Cabo, and ended up having to sail Viva back to San Diego. It took 30 days and introduced us to all the garden spots along the Baja coast.

Then in October of '99, we left California for a couple of years of cruising. Five-and-a-half years later, we’re still here in the Eastern Caribbean, having done several trips up and down the island chain. Being an old diehard racer, I still enjoy jumping aboard boats for some of the local races. We even raced Viva to a first place in the inaugural Bahia Redonda Classico Regatta in Venezuela last year. But needless to say, I’m not allowed to race our ‘home’ very often. Here’s an example of why:

During this April’s Classic Regatta in Antigua, I skippered a friend’s little 38-ft ketch. And unfortunately, our boat was involved in the only mishap of the entire great series. We were overtaken by a 55-ft schooner on the last race, hit on the starboard quarter, and lost the mizzen mast at the first weather mark. The collision cracked the bowsprit, mainmast, and caused considerable other damage. It took two protest meetings — which we won — and a trip to an attorney to get the DSQ’d boat impounded. Fortunately, this opened the door to a survey, appraisal, and subsequent settlement with their insurance company. But it was a pretty nasty introduction to yacht racing for the owner!

But I’ve done other great racing down here. In fact, I sailed aboard Doug Baker’s original Long Beach-based Magnitude during the 2001 Antigua Sailing Week — along with Latitude’s Racing Editor. I thought you might enjoy the photo of my wife and me aboard the 130-ft J Class yacht Ranger while at the Antigua YC during the Classic Regatta last month. I ended up sailing aboard her as guest photographer for the Tuesday match race against Velsheda. Since the original Ranger and I were ‘launched’ about the same time, it was quite a thrill being aboard her during the race. Even with my old legs, I was given the run of the boat — as long as I promised not to fall overboard!

For further photos of our cruising adventures, visit our website at www.stevejostphotography.com.

By the way, we always enjoy the latest Latitude — even though my copies are somewhat dated and dog-eared by the time they reach me.

— steve 05/09/05

Adagio — M&M 52 Cat
Steve & Dorothy Darden
Building The Cat
(Ex-Tiburon / New Zealand)

Although they’ve been gone for more than 10 years now — first supervising the construction of their 52-ft catamaran Adagio in New Zealand, and subsequently cruising her from Tasmania to Alaska — some Bay Area sailors may still remember Steve and Dorothy Darden. The couple, now 62 and 63, lived in Tiburon from ’80 to ’93, and raced their Santana 35 Racoon Straights, and later their Beneteau 405 Adagio.

Had a boat-seller not been so hard-nosed about his price, they would have spent the ’80s cruising Europe rather than living in Northern California. “We’d been residing in Virginia and sailing out of Annapolis,” Steve remembers, “but in ’79 we decided that we wanted to buy a boat and cruise Europe. After an intensive year-long search on both coasts and some of the Caribbean, we decided that a vintage 55-ft aluminum centerboarder that had started life as one of Ted Hood’s famous Robons was the only boat that fit our requirements. We made an offer, but it was rejected.”

Having not seen another boat they wanted, and not wanting to overpay, they said the heck with cruising to Europe and pursued another longtime dream — to live in Marin County. So they bought a Tiburon home that overlooked the Caprice restaurant and the Bay, with The City and the Golden Gate in the background.

A serial entrepreneur who has started successful businesses in everything from high tech to aspects of gas and oil...
IN LATITUDES

Yard in Mamaroneck, New York. After a wild launch with a six-story crane late one Friday, they began to campaign the boat in Long Island Sound. It wasn’t easy, as it required a 10-hour drive on Friday, racing on Saturday and Sunday, then a 10-hour drive back home to get to work on Monday.

“\"We were young and crazy,\" laughs Dorothy. \"But we would have won the Half-Ton Nationals if the tiller extension hadn’t broken — which caused a broach, which caused the mast to come tumbling down into the cockpit next to Steve. We still finished that race even though we only had a stump of a mast left.\"

When the couple was first married, they tried other activities such as golf and tennis, but neither brought them as much pleasure together as sailing. “People always ask us how we can work so well together,” says Steve. “\"And I tell them it’s because we’ve sailed so much together — and vice versa. If you learn to accommodate one another under stress, it’s great training. And over the years it’s just gotten better.\"

“I take great pleasure in our teamwork,” says Dorothy. “I know what we’re both going to do, and I trust him completely, no matter what problem needs to be solved. And I know he trusts me completely to do my job.”

While they were living and working in Tiburon during the ‘80s, the couple’s vacations consisted almost entirely of charter vacations. They did the Caribbean three times, Turkey twice, as well as the Pacific Northwest and Yugoslavia.

“We did a charter in the Leewards in ’90 aboard a Privilege 39 just to see what cats were like,” remembers Steve. “We picked the boat up in Guadeloupe, and had Dorothy’s 75-year-old mother and her sister along for the whole trip. I remember being anchored off Saba one night, when the people on the monohulls around us were rocking and rolling so badly they couldn’t sleep or eat — and we were just so comfortable. That made a big impression on us. And since we’ve been cruising, we’ve come to appreciate that, even when cruising, you spend 90% of your time at anchor or in a marina rather than underway. That means it’s very nice to have a boat that doesn’t roll at anchor and that has a large and comfortable living space.”

“But we still weren’t sold on cats because we were still concerned about the possibility they might flip,” says Dorothy.

Although the Dardens prefer the high latitudes to the tropics, they were all smiles off Bora Bora on their way from New Zealand to Alaska.
"Another significant charter was aboard a trawler we took to Canada’s Desolation Sound," says Steve, "because it rained a lot and there wasn’t any wind. That taught us the importance of being able to handle the boat from a place protected from the weather, and the importance of being able to motor without a tremendous amount of noise in the living area."

Having retired once again, in ’92 the couple took a list of their boat requirements to naval architect Carl Schumacher of Alameda, who specialized in monohulls such as the Express 37 and Jim and Sue Corenman’s Schumacher 52 Heart of Gold — which the Dardens had spent a week aboard in Fiji. Schumacher told them that while he could design them a monohull, their requirements really called for a catamaran.

Schumacher soothed some of their concerns about cats by saying all his family’s sailing charters were aboard cats. Then he posed a question to the Dardens: "If worse came to worse, which would you prefer, a monohull right side up on the bottom, or a cat that was upside down on the surface?" The Dardens decided that the latter sounded preferable. Schumacher said that he’d love to design them a cat, but typical of the class act he was, he said they’d be better off going with Morelli & Melvin of Newport Beach, who are experienced experts with cruising cats.

The Dardens did go with Gino and Pete — and loved the experience. But they kept Schumacher on as a consultant. "Much of what you see here," says Steve, gesturing about the main salon, "is Carl’s gestalt."

Not one to leave anything to chance, Steve spent countless hours doing CAD work on the design and systems. Furthermore, he and Dorothy mocked up the cat’s entire main salon — a huge structure — in their Tiburon home using boxes and artist’s foam.

Armed with a design, they shopped builders in the U.S. and New Zealand. At the time, the Kiwis had a huge advantage, as the New Zealand dollar was just 55% of the U.S. dollar. Plus, Kiwi labor rates were just two-thirds of those in the States. This was important, because 42,000 man-hours would ultimately be invested in Adagio before she was completed. By the way, this was three times as many man-hours as quoted by New England Boatworks.

Having talked to Cookson, Ian Franklin, and Ian Legge in New Zealand, the Dardens went with Legge, the only one willing to offer them a fixed price. This was a good thing, because the cat would take a surprisingly long 3.5 years to build. A full year was spent on the male molds alone. It helped that Legge had multihull experience. He and his wife had done a nine-year circumnavigation on a trimaran, and were in the process of building a Givens 50 catamaran for themselves. However, a French couple came along and bought her out from under them.

Legge was an attractive builder to the Dardens because he, like his father, is a master shipwright. For instance, when there was a trouble with the complex wood canoe stern of an ex-Auckland ferry, Legge was one of the few guys who had the talent to repair it elegantly.

The only downside about Legge is that he wasn’t into hi-tech, as he was used to building his cats with strip-planked cedar and glass skins. That wouldn’t do for Steve, who insisted on an engineered design using Core-cell with e-glass skins to create a composite structure. The Dardens brought Legge into the modern era of boatbuilding.

Wanting to be on hand for all the boatbuilding fun, Steve and Dorothy flew to
New Zealand in '93 with 67 boat drawings, then settled at Russell in the Bay of Islands near the boatyard for the duration. Not content with just watching their boat being built, they bought a house, became Kiwi citizens, travelled the country extensively, and learned how to sportfish. In his spare time, Steve worked on boat systems, mocking up the anchoring apparatus in the backyard and installing the watermaker on the side of the garage for testing.

In her spare time, the adventurous Dorothy took the free training at St. John's Ambulance Society — and became a volunteer ambulance driver! Or, as they say in New Zealand, an 'ambo volly'. It turns out that 90% of the Kiwi ambulance drivers are volunteers.

Besides each other, the Dardens have three interests — sailing, travelling, and their home. Since Adagio was to be an inherent part of all three, they demanded nothing but the finest. For example, when pieces of the boat were being laminated, an aerospace monitoring program was employed for quality control. All the cloth, hardner and resin for each job was weighed, and then the waste was weighed, all to determine the exact weight as they went along. And records were kept of everything.

Fortunately, Legge was into it. "One morning we came to the yard and saw the crew carrying a really giant vacuum-bagged beam to the rubbish," remembers Steve. "When I asked Alan what was wrong, he said they'd checked a coupon for the filler, and it hadn't been mixed right, so they were throwing it away. A naval architect told me that most yards would have just painted over the mistake."

No wonder the boat took so long to complete. She was finally launched in 2000.

"She just jelled," says Dorothy. "She's perfect for our needs," says Steve.

The planning and wait seem to have been worth it, as Adagio came out spectacular. The couple are particularly proud that she passes the 'pantyhose test'. You can wipe a pair of pantyhose on any surface in the boat — including the most remote and hidden areas — and they will never be snagged. The finish is that perfect.

Because Adagio is the couple's full-time home, they insisted on her being equipped with all the modern conveniences — 'mod-con's in Kiwi-speak — found in a home. Naturally, she's got air-conditioning and heating, a washer and a dryer, a dishwasher and dryer, an electric stove, two microwave ovens, a gelato-maker, electric toilets that use fresh water, a drier on all the lights, mattress warmers, a cinema-size computer screen — everything that you can imagine.

"It's my favorite home ever," says Dorothy, "because we designed her exactly the way we wanted her, and because she was built so well. She's the culmination of all the ideas we collected over the years, and all our work with the builder to have them implemented. She gets us where we want to go safely and quickly, she's easy for the two of us to handle, she's very light inside, and she's easy to maintain. And I'm delighted with the 360° vista from the main salon-galley. We just love Adagio!"

There was no skimping on the sailing equipment either. She has inside and outside helm stations, two 47-hp engines, two autopilots, two windlasses, roller furling headsails, an in-boom furling main, power winches — and you can even operate her with a joystick from four locations around the boat!

Not everything works right off on a complicated boat, of course. One of the bigger problems was the Rite Reef furling main. To solve the problems they were having reefing and furling it, Steve had something fabricated that looks just like a boom vang — but actually helps lift the boom just the right amount for furling the sail in any given wind condition. He calls it a 'hydraulic spring', and it utilizes compressed nitrogen and hydraulics.

The one bit of boatbuilding that wasn't perfect was the M&M-designed 12-ft catamaran dinghy. The relatively new building technique didn't come out just right, so she's a little heavier than they'd hoped. Nonetheless, she's powered by a 25-hp outboard and easily does 30 knots even when loaded down with scuba gear. She also handles seas well. "It's an expedition dinghy," says Steve.

Steve had a crane mounted on the arch in back, so the dinghy can be launched or retrieved easily without having to remove the outboard.

Having launched the boat in New Zealand, the Dardens sailed around New Zealand a bit, over to New Caledonia, back, then settled at Russell in the Bay of Islands for the duration. And they sailed south to Australia, then over to New Zealand again, to Hobart — then south around the tip of South America, to the Galapagos, and back north to the Panama Canal. Steve even flew his Cessna around the Horn by himself.

"Like we said, we got everything we wanted," says Dorothy. "Because we designed her exactly the way we wanted her, and because she was built so well. She's the culmination of all the ideas we collected over the years, and all our work with the builder to have them implemented. She gets us where we want to go safely and quickly, she's easy for the two of us to handle, she's very light inside, and she's easy to maintain. And I'm delighted with the 360° vista from the main salon-galley. We just love Adagio!"

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With the control lines led to one spot in the cockpit, and with the use of electric winches, Steve finds ‘Adagio’ easy to shorthand.
down the East Coast of Australia, and to Tasmania — which blew them away. They stayed in 'Tazy' for 15 months, at which point a local told them, "If you don't leave soon, you'll never get out." They did the East Coast of Australia again — "a cruiser's dream" — then sailed back to Tasmania. In 2003, they sailed from Tazy to Nelson, New Zealand, then back up to the Bay of Islands for warranty work at the yard. Last summer, they continued on to Tahiti, Hawaii, Sitka, and then headed down the Inside Passage. After a winter at Bainbridge Island, they are now headed back up to Alaska. If it seems as though they don't spend much time in the tropics, they don't. Steve doesn't care for the humidity.

And what about Europe? If everything goes well, Adagio will finally be cruising the Med next summer.

— latitude 05/05/05

Pura Vida — Tayana 37
Glenn Richardson
Carrying Firearms Is A Hassle (Deltaville, Virginia)

Thank you for sending our email address to Rod and Becky Nowlin of the Mahdi, who along with Gandalf had been involved in that shoot-out with pirates in the Gulf of Aden that you reported on last month. I'd tried to contact the couple, but only had their old email address. I'd met Rod and Becky at Sebana Cove Marina in Malaysia, where they nursed me through the malaria I'd contracted in Indonesia.

We had a similar experience to Rod and Becky about 250 miles east of Socrata when approaching the Gulf of Aden in February of 2001 aboard my Tayana 37 Pura Vida. We were chased by a boatload of fishermen looking for an opportunity to rob us. Fortunately, we were able to outmaneuver them. They were faster, but we could turn quicker and avoid them. Like Mahdi, we were armed and had the shotgun racked and loaded in the cockpit. We never showed it to our pursuers, however, because we didn't want to needlessly escalate the situation. Strangely enough, Rod and I had compared our shotguns in Malaysia, and had debated carrying arms on board when transiting areas prone to pirate attacks.

I have no idea how many pirate attacks there were on yachts in the Red Sea/Gulf of Aden area last season because we're out of the loop, so to speak. We completed our circumnavigation in early 2003, and are now working on the cruising kitty here in Virginia. However, it does appear that the number of attacks is increasing once again after the huff experienced during the lead-up to the second Gulf War. During the 2000-2001 time frame, there was a heavy military presence in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and I think this discouraged piracy to some degree. Apparently, this is no longer the case, since the military presence has been diverted closer to Iraq. What really disturbs me, however, is that based on Rod's story, the pirates are now shooting at people first, then robbing them. In the past, they usually just robbed them.

I also think that the apparent increase in piracy, coupled with the use of firearms by pirates, will definitely discourage cruisers from heading up the Red Sea next season. When we were in Thailand waiting to cross the Indian Ocean during more tranquil times — December of 2000 — our big debate was whether to head north through the Red Sea or south to South Africa. If you head north, you have the possibility of meeting bad people. If you head south, you know with absolute certainty that you will cross the Agulhas current, which is nasty, and expose yourself to the possibility of getting hit by a southwesterly gale heading to or along the coast of South Africa. We ultimately decided on the northern route because we wanted to see Egypt and Europe, and we didn't want to deal with the Agulhas current. We also thought the possibility of a pirate attack was fairly remote. Now you know why I'm not an odds-maker or bookie. Our luck did hold out, however, since we encountered a fairly slow and poorly maneuverable boat full of pirates off Socrata.

If I had to do it again, I would probably go to South Africa because I've never been there.

heard it’s a great place, and have liked every South African I’ve ever met. If I ever went the Red Sea route again, I would never go solo like we did the first time. Based on Rod’s experience, I think I would travel with a minimum of four or five boats, and sail directly down the middle of the Gulf of Aden to Djibouti or Eritrea. I know guns on boats is a hot-button issue, but I would also feel more comfortable with a few of the boats being armed with firearms and people who know how to use them.

Carrying firearms is an absolute hassle while cruising, and I would not carry them in most areas of the world — such as the Caribbean, where there are mainly sneak-thieves that take stuff off your decks at night. (Ever hear of ‘Greasy Man’ during your travels there?) However, if people are shooting at you first in an attempt to maim or kill you in order to get to your property, well, that’s a different scenario altogether. Indeed, the only place in the world where I feel a gun is necessary is in the Gulf of Aden, and even then I wouldn’t recommend carrying one unless you were prepared to use it like Rod did.

By the way, Latitude is a great magazine. I’ve been reading it for years and can tell you they were always cherished
in every port we visited throughout the world.

— glenn 05/10/05

BINGO Tambien — Catalina 42
Bear & Lynn Myers
Our Replacement Catalina 42
(Long Beach)

A little more than a year after we lost our original Catalina 42 BINGO Again! at Punta Perula, Mexico, we’re back on the water with a new-to-us Catalina 42 we’ve christened BINGO Tambien! She was built in 1989, and is hull #111, which was 110 lower than our original Catalina 42. We took what insurance money we got from our last boat and opted for an older fixer-upper in order to get what we wanted.

We found this ‘project boat’ in Kemah, Texas, which is on Galveston Bay. It’s been quite an experience getting her to the condition we wanted, but in the process we’ve learned a lot. Except for the hull, we’ve rebuilt most of her from the keel up — including the mast, rigging, heads, and so forth. It’s hard to believe, but the exterior wood had never seen varnish or sealer. And we had to toss the sails, dodger, and bimini away and start over.

The grand total of loose boat gear onboard was one winch handle. We are the fourth owners. The last owner lived aboard her for five years, during which time he put a total of 15 hours on the diesel. We will never have all the stuff on this Catalina 42 that we did on our last one, but some of that stuff we just didn’t use. And other stuff we’ll just have to do without.

Where do we go from here? For now, we’ll do some sailing and racing out of Long Beach, where we have a slip. Bear still suffers from some anxiety while on the water, but it’s gradually decreasing. When it’s just the two of us, the anxiety is greater, as the Catalina 42 can be a handful if something goes wrong. But having said that, we’ve made two round-trips to Ensenada and have enjoyed both.

Our goal is to have the boat ready for the Ha-Ha in late October if we decide to go this year. If that’s the case, we’d continue down to Puerto Vallarta to visit our friends and be cruisers again for a while. Meanwhile, we are busy with church, Kiwanis, family, the

Long Beach YC, and just enjoying our home. We think that God brought us home for a purpose, and that purpose seems to expand day by day.

During the last month we were nearly overwhelmed getting our ‘new old’ boat ready for her first race. But it was worth it. We entered the Newport to Ensenada Race and took first in class, beating the second place boat by 23 minutes. The two of us were awarded a big trophy, and Lexus, the race sponsor, presented us each with beautiful insulated vests. So we’ve had a great start with this boat.

— bear & lynn 05/07/05

Delphinus — Mayotte 47 Cat
Randy Sparks, Crew
The Loss Of Surus
(San Andreas, Colombia)

On the morning of March 4, Bruce Swegler, the skipper of the Portland-based Delphinus, and I, noticed a boat with her sails up but not moving near the entrance to the harbor at Isla San Andreas, Colombia. We wondered about her, but went about our business because there hadn’t been any calls on VHF 16. But while in town a short time later, we got a call from the Bogota, Colombia-based Vagabundo, telling us that a boat was on the reef that needed help. So we rushed back to Delphinus to change into shorts and grab our snorkeling gear.

We arrived on the scene to find Surus 2, a Jeanneau 12.5 monohull from France, listing about 30 degrees and getting her hull slammed against the reef by every wave. The Colombian Coast Guard was standing by, but couldn’t get close enough to help because of the reef. But they did call a tow boat and offered the use of lots of 5/8-inch line.

Thanks to fellow cruiser Louise of Vagabundo and her dinghy, we could get right next to Surus — although the outboard prop got beat up pretty bad during

This isn’t ‘Surus’, but it is another wreck in the Caribbean — of which there are far too many. Please be very careful out there.
the course of the day. The water was only inches deep around the stricken boat, and she was teetering between two big coral heads. I went into the water with my mask, snorkel, and fins to take to look around, and was joined by Louise. Bruce was going to have to deal with the dinghy all day.

We found that the boat was holed on the starboard side, the rudder was smashed and delaminating, and that the prop and shaft were bent sideways. There was a lot of debris inside the boat, and I could see the keel coming through the cabin sole with each wave that broke on the hull. When I removed the flooring, I could see that the stringers and ribs were broken around the keel joint — the boat’s back was broken. Louise and I both concluded the boat was a complete loss, despite having been on the reef for only a few hours. Since nobody else was around, we put the sails away and straightened out the rigging on deck.

Finally, the boat’s owner, a Frenchman named Rafael, showed up with a couple of locals and their launch. Then a tug arrived. Rafael was understandably frantic, and maybe a bit of shock, because he still believed he could save his boat. At least we got him to accept the fact that they shouldn’t try to pull the boat over the rest of the reef into deep water, but rather into shallow water. It was hard to explain because of the language barrier, but we finally got the message across.

While the tug was being repositioned, we attached a four-point harness to Surus, and got the line out to the tug — a much more difficult job than it might seem. The problem was that the coral was very jagged and the line tended to hang up. As soon as the tug started pulling, the line snapped. So we added a second line. Then both lines broke without the boat budging. By this time it was late, so we took a couple of boatloads of gear to shore and called it a day.

San Andreas is a very small island in the southwest Caribbean that, although much closer to Nicaragua, belongs to Colombia.

A couple of hours later at the Club Nautico, we got the full story from Raphael. He’s a singlehander who had been out for four years. He’d been making the 500-mile passage from Cartagena, Colombia, to San Andreas. It had taken him three days and nights at sea, and he was exhausted. The day before, his engine had gone out, so when he got close, he repeatedly radioed for assistance. Obviously, his radio wasn’t working, because we’d been monitoring 16 day and night and hadn’t heard anything. So finally Raphael decided to try to sail into the harbor.

As usual, it was a string of mishaps that developed into the catastrophe. Raphael said he’d been watching his Navtec electronic navigation continually, and it indicated that he was inside the entrance by about 250 yards. But obviously he wasn’t. Having not had a functioning engine or radio, and having been so tired, it’s easy to say in hindsight that he should have anchored off until help arrived.

The next day, we removed all we could from the boat until the 85-ft tug showed up. This time the tow line was two inches in diameter. We set up a four-point harness, anchoring the ends to the two bow cleats and the mid-cabin cleats. By noon the tug had succeeded in dragging Surus off the reef — but not before breaking the mast at the step, ripping the starboard side of the hull, and practically breaking the keel off the bottom of the boat. The towboat then hauled the broken remains of the once-proud vessel over to the seawall near the container port.

Raphael was still confident that he could save his uninsured boat. It was late, so we called it a day once again.

In the process of lifting the boat out of the water and putting her on a truck the next day, the keel separated from the hull — and landed on the concrete with a loud thud. It was then that Raphael realized the boat was beyond help. He salvaged as much as he could, and that was it.

We don’t think we or anyone else could have done a better job of trying to save his boat. Nonetheless, it was hard to see the effect the loss had on Raphael, who was four years into a proposed circumnavigation.

— randy 04/10/05

Readers — We know mistakes happen and to err is human, but we can’t remember another three or four-month period in which so many boats have been lost. Please be careful out there. And if you’re alone or doublehanding, watch out for fatigue, as it’s a factor in many mishaps.

Flashgirl — Wylie 39+ 'Commodore' & Nancy Tompkins Finally Taking Off Cruising? (Mill Valley)

After many false starts, Warwick ‘Commodore’ Tompkins — with his wife Nancy — is leaving Marin after 50 years to cruise the South Pacific. At least that was the plan when we went out to Yellow Bluff to photograph the two of them — see the accompanying photo — departing on May 6.

We weren’t surprised when he and Nancy were back in Marin five days later, for all along he’d been slated to return briefly to introduce renowned naval architect Ron Holland, who had travelled all the way from Ireland to give a presentation on the 247-ft maga-sloop Mirabella V at the Corinthian YC.

But then some uncertainty began to arise. Commodore told us he’d received a message from a gentleman sailing from Tahiti to Hawaii, who wanted his boat delivered back to California. Deliveries
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such as that have been Commodore’s stock in trade since — well, since long before we started this magazine 28 years ago. And if Commodore were delayed by the delivery, it would make the South Pacific trip problematic, as it would then be hurricane season between California and French Polynesia. He and Nancy, despite having a boat loaded with food and other supplies, might have to wait until next season.

"If you’re stuck here for the summer, you might as well just hang around and wait for the start of the Ha-Ha in the fall," somebody in our office suggested. Commodore, who had one heart attack years ago, looked as though he were about to have another. But he quickly recovered. "Right," he said with a wry smile.

For those not familiar with Commodore, he’s done it all in sailing — except, oddly enough, been a commodore. He acquired the nickname when he was a baby aboard the Wanderbird, his parent’s former Elbe River pilot schooner that had been built in Germany in the late 1800s. The way the story goes, his mother opened a drawer to reveal her son to a visitor, who exclaimed, "And this must be the commodore!" The nickname has stuck for more than 70 years.

Commodore is an old-school sailor, having crossed the Atlantic something like six times by the time he was four years old. There’s great footage of him as a youngster using the decks of Wanderbird as a playground during a stormy rounding of Cape Horn in the documentary 50 South To 50 South. And he used to win bets by climbing hand-over-hand up shrouds to the top of tall masts. He’s raced Six Meters for the St. Francis, ran a crewed charterboat in the Caribbean, driven maxi’s in the Pan Am Clipper Cup, and delivered boats all over the world. He also enraged a lot of people by declaring the revered Cal 40 to be a “crummy boat”.

Having sailed with most of the great sailors of the last 50 years, more recently he’s dedicated himself to two big projects. The first was a long dissertation — after delivering our catamaran Profligate from Puerto Vallarta to San Diego — describing in great detail what is philosophically and physically wrong with our boat. It’s a document we treasure as being ‘pure Commodore’. His second big project was building the hi-tech Flashgirl from a hull and deck in Sonoma over a period of seven years. Although he’s raced her to Hawaii, he’s never really cruised his ultimate cruiser. But it would be a shame if he didn’t do it pretty soon.

— latitude 05/09/05

Content — CT 41
Mike & Kathleen Raymond
Harry Arthur, Crew
(Santa Barbara)

I, crewman Harry Arthur, am sitting here at the nav station of the Content, listening to the water rushing by the hull. We’re not underway, but are lying to a mooring in Bahia Caraquez, Ecuador, where the tide is ebbing strongly. The speed of the water is augmented by the flow of the Rio Chome, which was flooded by recent rains. Debris — in the form of logs, islands of river hyacinth, and mats of grass — rushes by on either side of our hull. There are about 30 other cruising boats here, all but one of them sailboats. Most are American or Canadian, but I can also see German, Swedish, Swiss and Danish flags flying from nearby backstays.

We left the Flamingo anchorage at the southern end of the Panama Canal in the last week in March, and spent a few days in the Perlas Islands, where we scrubbed the bottom, stowed the skiff on deck, and generally made ready for the passage to Ecuador. When we deemed the time was right, we upped anchor and headed south. We had light winds on the nose

Some of the 22 new moorings ready to be set by the Puerto Amistad Marina in Bahia Caraquez, Ecuador. Cruisers love the place.
most of the way, so the diesel got a few hours on it during our five-day passage. We encountered a few squalls in the ITCZ, but that was the extent of our 'weather'. Mostly the autopilot did its job while we humans supervised. It was a pretty easy trip, which was good, as Mike was recovering from a recently broken wrist.

We crossed 'the line' on April 1 at 80 90.30W. Despite the fact that it was 4 a.m., we shared a toast with King Neptune, and asked for good sea conditions in his Southern Domain. He, in turn, welcomed us as 'shellbacks'.

We made our Ecuadorian landfall at Punta Pasada, and anchored in its lee off a coast that looked remarkably like my home cruising grounds — the Santa Barbara coast. It had the same striated cliffs and low, scrub vegetation. The only difference was that after dark there wasn’t a light to be seen. At dawn the next day, we ran 15 miles down the coast to Bahía de Caraquez to enter the harbor on top of the flood. The entrance is heavily silted, and a pilot is required to navigate the twisting channel to the anchorage. We picked up a mooring maintained by Puerto Amistad, a gringo operation that is being built by Tripp Martin and Maya, his Ecuadorian wife. The clubhouse is coming along nicely, and the newly installed hot showers are a blessing.

A restaurant and bar is also in the works for Puerto Amistad, but for now the couple does a happy hour for the cruisers with beer, wine, and rum drinks. Maya makes pupus that are delicious, but different every night. It’s a fun gathering place for the fleet, and lots of information is exchanged. Puerto Amistad also offers fuel services for a minimal fee, and they’ll see that your laundry gets done, too.

We spent a few days in 'Bahia' — as it’s called locally — to see how the mornings held and get a feel for security before heading inland for sightseeing. Satisfied the boat was secure, we took the all-day bus ride up to Quito in the Andes, where political unrest was already beginning to make itself felt. We only stayed in the capital for a couple of days, so we missed the riots that came soon after the elections.

From Quito we went north to Otavalo, then south through the Andes to Baños and Rio Bamba, enjoying some very exciting bus rides through the mountains! We returned to the coast at Guayaquil via Guaranda and Salinas. We really enjoyed the Andes, and Guayaquil, with a modern malecon, was a pleasant surprise. Returning to Bahia after two weeks, we found out it had been raining almost constantly since we left!

The rain was unusual for this time of year, but the fleet weathered it fine, with everybody topping off their water tanks from catchment. We are currently waiting for our cruising permit for the Galapagos. These documents are issued by the Ministry of Defense, and right now they are in the middle of all the political intrigue you may have been seeing on television.

We will keep you posted — but right now it’s happy hour at Puerto Amistad.

— harry 05/10/05

Cruise Notes:

"In your blurb on Vancouver in the May 6 'Lectronic, you forgot to mention that in less than a day’s sail in almost any direction from Vancouver lies some of the finest cruising grounds in the world," writes Katrina Archer of the False Creek, Vancouver-based Ganache. "I’m speaking of Canada’s Gulf Islands, Washington’s San Juans, not to mention Howe Sound, the Sunshine Coast and Desolation Sound. The West Coast of Vancouver Island is a great destination for those with more time on their hands. Yes, Vancouver is spectacular, but so is the nearby cruising!"

You have our apologies. Until we get some great shots of the cruising grounds, you’ll have to settle for a sprinkling of the accompanying shots we took of Vancouver, Victoria, and the islands.

"We’re now in Mazatlan, having returned from two years of cruising Central America, the Bahamas, and the Caribbean," report Duye and Nan Englehardt of the Moss Landing-based Catalina 400 The Great Escape. "We arrived the day after 'Lectronic posted the report that Mexico had greatly reduced the requirements for domestic clearing. Antonio Cevallas, Harbormaster at Marina Mazatlan, got on the net the same day to announce that there would no longer be any fees charged by the port captain’s office. But how things were to work out was still unclear. Our paperwork in the marina office was gathered up and held for several days awaiting clarification from Mexico City.

"Two days later," the couple continue, "the local ship’s agent stopped by our boat, papers in hand, to advise us that he needed our permission to ‘process’ our check-in. He also informed us that, while there was no longer a port captain’s fee, he had reduced his fees to 200 pesos — about $20 each way — for checking in and checking out. We weren’t leaving for a couple of days, so we decided to wait it out. A few days later, word came from the marina office that they would be keeping a log of the comings and goings of boats, and that no fees or paperwork would be required. That meant there was no need for us to go to the port captain, no need to go to Immigration, and no need to pay an agent $40. How long this will last is anyone’s guess. We hear that different ports are handling things differently. We are headed to San Carlos and the end of
IN LATITUDES

The Pacific Northwest shots of the month.
Spread; The False Creek Anchorage. Inset; Looking toward shore at the Vancouver YC.

our sailing adventure with this boat — but have hopes there's another Baja Ha-Ha down the road for us!"

It doesn't surprise us that the agent tried to squeeze a last $40 out of you, for it looks like their gravy train may soon dry up. It's been almost a month since you wrote, and things really seem to have stabilized in Mexico. Part of this is because there was a big meeting in Mexico City in late April of Tourism; the Merchant Marine — which controls port captains; and members of the Marina Owners Association of Mexico. At that meeting, Jose Lozano, Executive Director of the Merchant Marine, made it clear what the new rules were, and that they indeed had taken effect on April 19. Lozano also told Tere Grossman, president of the Mexican Marina Owners Association, that he wants to be notified if any port captains aren't in compliance with the new rules. So if anyone has a problem with a port captain, email richard@latitude38.com, and we'll see that the complaint gets passed along to the right person. Make sure you note the time, date, port captain district, and other pertinent facts.

So let's review the current clearing procedures. When you clear into your first Mexican port of entry — most likely either Ensenada, or for Ha-Ha boats, Cabo San Lucas — you will need to clear in with the port captain to get your cruising papers, you'll have to go to Immigration to get your visa, and you'll have to go to Aduana to get your Ten-Year Temporary Import Permit. "Do not lose any of these documents," cautions Mary Shroyer of Marina de La Paz, "as they are as important as your passport." At your last port of entry in Mexico, you'll have to visit all these offices again.

What's new — and really fantastic — is that once you're in Mexico, you can go from one port captain's jurisdiction to another port captain's jurisdiction without having to do anything but 'inform' the port captain of your arrival and departure. If a port captain wants, he can require that you visit his office to 'inform' him. Pete Boyce of the Sabre 40 Edelweiss III reports that, on a trip from Zihua to Nuevo Vallarta between May 2-13, he was required to clear with the port captain at Barra de Navidad and Nuevo Vallarta. He paid the 'paperman' $20 to do it for him in Barra, while he did it himself in five minutes at Nuevo Vallarta. In neither place was there any fee by the port captain.

However, at most places we've polled — San Carlos, Mazatlan, La Paz, and Loreto — the port captains don't seem to want to be bothered. And why would they, since their office isn't getting paid for the work. So they are allowing marinas to keep logbooks of arriving and departing boats for them, and that constitutes 'informing' the port captain. Usually marinas allow tenants to sign in or out for free, but assess a small fee for anchor-outs. In some places cruisers believe they have checked out with port captains over the radio — although nobody seems to be sure if the port captain understood that's what they were trying to do.

The bottom line is cruisers are now saving about $40 every time they clear in and out of a domestic port over last year — and may be saving as much as $110 when a ship's agent was required! When we suggested to Mary Shroyer that the new rules were the greatest thing ever to happen to cruising in Mexico, she disagreed with us. "The most important was the creating of the Ten-Year Temporary Import Permit, which was done about 10 years ago. Before that, it was illegal for foreigners to leave their boats in Mexico for more than six months, and owners couldn't legally leave the country without taking their boat with them. But these new clearing regulations are the second best thing to happen, and are really wonderful." As usual, Mary was right.

"Having cruised extensively in Mexico three times as crew on friends' boats, I am now preparing my own boat — which I bought in Mexico and sailed to the Bay Area — for an extended cruise in Mexico," writes Jamie Rosman of the Alameda-based Tardis. "As such, I've been closely following the status of the domestic clearing procedures in Mexico. Based on my experience, the old procedures — which"
CHANGES

were time-consuming, costly, and difficult — were the most disappointing part of the cruising experience. In fact, because of the old system, my wife and I have had serious discussions about limiting our time in Mexico to one year instead of two or three years before continuing on to the South Pacific. But based on what I’ve read in Latitude and  "Lectronic, we may stay in Mexico longer. I am very happy to hear about this extremely positive development.

Part of the reason the change has come about is that many in Mexico realize how important tourism is to that country’s financial health. In fact, there’s a new slogan — "Tourism Is Everybody’s Responsibility". In the marine realm, the government is still trying to figure out how to go about refunding some of the taxes foreign boats currently have to pay for diesel, all to encourage more boats to come to Mexico. Hmmm, we’re beginning to think there might be a lot of boats in Mexico this winter.

On May 19, the National Hurricane Center announced that Adrian — on the Pacific Coast down by the Guatemalan border — had been upgraded to a Category 1 hurricane. It sure was early for a hurricane in the Eastern Pacific, as the official season doesn’t start until June 1. And rather than heading northwest and out to sea, Adrian headed northeast — directly toward land.

Eric, last name unknown, of Chickadee, boat type unknown, reported on the hurricane situation from nearby: "As I write this email, Adrian is pummeling El Salvador with sustained winds over 120 kph [about 75 mph]. I’m in Managua, Nicaragua, trying to get a bus up to El Salvador to check on my boat. Unfortunately, there is a state of emergency, so the buses aren’t running in El Salvador. Thus I can only pray that my boat’s anchor holds. I wasn’t expecting a hurricane to hit while I took a week off to visit my wife Rosio and the kids in San Juan Del Sur, therefore my storm anchor is stowed in the bilge and useless. But there’s no point in my worrying."

As for the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf Coasts, U.S. forecasters are predicting up to 15 tropical storms, seven to nine of them hurricanes, three to five of which would be major ones over 100 knots. The average season features 9.6 tropical storms, but in eight of the last 10 years that average has been exceeded. Last
season was the most unusual, as Florida got hit by **Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne**, which caused a total of $45 billion in damage and which were directly responsible for 57 deaths.

"You may remember from last month's edition that we and **Gandalf** had traded shots with pirates in the Gulf of Aden," write Rod and Becky Nowlin of the Clinton, Washington-based 45-ft steel cutter **Mahdi**. "Well, we recently learned that about two weeks ago the crew of a commercial ship was taken hostage in the same area. The Marines put together a strike team to rescue them — but before they could, the shipping company paid the ransom. Talk about adding insult to injury! With the pirates having been rewarded for their hostage-taking, we can anticipate more of the same in the future. What we'd rather see is military vessels starting to escort yachts going through the Gulf of Aden. Scream like hell at your congressional representatives, and maybe someone will get off their backside and do something! Incidentally, our year started off quite exciting, too, as we were anchored at Nai Harn, Phuket, Thailand, on Boxing Day when the tsunami hit."

Speaking of that **tsunami** that killed an estimated 300,000 people nearly six months ago, did you know that about 25% of all the emergency aid materials sent from around the world are still sitting on the docks? Some suggest it would have been better to have sent cash. Are we too cynical in believing 90% of the cash would have wound up in the pockets of corrupt officials and petty tyrants? It's hard to know how to help effectively.

"We came through the Panama Canal on April 25 and had an excellent transit," report Joe Brandt and Jacque Martin of the Alameda-based Wauquiez 47 **Marna Lynn**, currently located at the Bocas del Toro, Panama. "Our transit started at 8:15 a.m. with the arrival of our advisor from Balboa. It ended when we exited the last lock at Gatun at 6 p.m. the same day. We had no additional charges beyond our $600 transit fee. We used Enrique Plummer, the moderately priced ship's agent, for our paperwork because we had some special time issues. But we know of other cruisers who did the paperwork themselves without a problem. But we're glad we used Enrique, as he did some extras for us — such as arranging for a..."
slip at the Panama Canal YC. In fact, he was there to greet us when we finished our transit."

The last we heard, Enrique Plummer was charging about $200 — or about 40% of what the high-priced agents are charging. We think Plummer is very pleasant and capable, and so far has an excellent reputation among cruisers. For basic transits, we still like the taxi drivers, who help skippers around for about $50.

"I finally bought a catamaran of my own, a one-off Lock Crowther 38 I’ve christened Bobcat in Melbourne, Australia," reports Bob Wilson of Brisbane, California. "At present, I’m getting ready for a cruising/diving season on the Great Barrier Reef. Later, I’ll cruise up through the Gilberts, Marshalls, Carolines and Marianas, before getting back to California in about three years. That’s assuming I don’t meet another blonde. One of these days I’ll write about my experience of flying to Oz and buying and cruising a cruising cat."

J.R. and Lupe Dipp, of Guadalajara and Nuevo Vallarta, report that they’ve left Florida aboard their new-to-them Catana 47 cat Moon & Stars and are headed to Cancun, Mexico. "I love our catamaran," says Lupe, "she’s the perfect size for J.R. and me, and we’ve given her a super paint job."

"We just had a wonderful four-day stop at Raoul Island, which is about 400 miles northeast of Auckland, and part of the Kermadec Islands Nature Reserve," writes Bill Hanlon of the Friday Harbor, Washington-based schooner Seaanhaka. "The swimming, surfing, diving, hiking, and sailing were all good. But it’s also the site of the biggest feral cat and rat eradication program in the world. Some $1 million has been spent over several years in attempt to eliminate the cats and rats, which have forced much of the native bird population to move to smaller offshore islands. Five of Raoul’s 35 bird species are unique to the island. But we’ve now moved on and are presently about 100 miles south of Minerva Reef — in the midst of doing the ‘South Pacific Three-Step’. The Three-Step is a great way to do a passage out of New Zealand heading for the South Pacific."

Most Latitude readers are aware that there’s a major feral pig eradication program underway at Santa Cruz Island in Southern California. Special ‘eradicators’ from New Zealand have been brought up to do the job. The rumor that PETA man-
aged to cancel the proposed free Fourth of July all-you-can-eat Feral Pig BBQ at the island’s Prisoners Harbor anchorage is apparently not true. In fact, there never was even going to be such a BBQ. So what exactly are they doing with all those free-range pork ribs anyway?

The April Latitude announced the First International Mazatlan Regatta, which turned out to be terrific fun for the entire sailing fleet here. Duey of The Great Escape crewed for Tony Evans on his Red Sky, and her rusty red sails were splashed all over the local papers for days. The division winners included Celtic Dancer of Ireland, Salty Feet of Mexico, and Red Sky of Canada. There were two great parties, music well into the night, and participation by sailors from six countries. The Marina Mazatlan staff and local cruisers put in a lot of work organizing the event, and we expect it to be even better next year.

“I’m helping my good friend Riley bring his Alajuela 38 Alouette de Mer from La Paz to Ventura,” writes Bruce Balan of the Southern California and former-Palo Alto-based Cross 46 trimaran Migracion. “We’re hunkered down in Turtle Bay right now, as the weather has really ramped up and is supposed to stay that way for a few days. But let me tell you about the fuel situation here. Gordo’s son, who owns the fuel dock on the pier, asked that I spread the word that they do have fuel, and that the illegal fuel barge is no longer allowed to operate. So we fueled up on May 8 by bringing the fuel jugs to the pier by dinghy. They filled them, and then lowered them back down to our dink by rope. Benjamin, the nice and brawny guy who works the dock, can lower a 63-liter jug down by himself without belaying it! We paid about US$2.65/gallon for diesel. The fuel dock is definitely doing good business today, as seven 50-ft plus powerboats have come through. Of course, you can still back down to the pier if you don’t want to jerry jug it, but it can be hard with a sailboat. Although Alouette won her class in the 2000 Banderas Bay Regatta, she doesn’t back down well. As for myself, I’ve changed my cruising plans. Instead of heading back to Mexico again with my boat right away, I’ll be coming

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north to San Francisco and the Delta for the summer. Then I’ll head south to Mexico in the fall.

Despite having 40% fewer boats than at last year’s Loreto Fest at Puerto Escondido, Baja, the Hidden Port YC organizers were thrilled with the attendance. As you might remember, several months after last year’s 140-boat turnout, Singlar, the Mexican company that got the contract from Fonatur to run Puerto Escondido, suddenly instituted very high fees for mooring or anchoring in the popular anchorage. The fees were so high that cruisers fled in droves, and it looked as though there might not be a Loreto Fest at all this year. But according to Jim Wilkins of the Wasilla, Alaska-based Beneteau 351 Priority, Commodore Ralph from Ataja managed to convince Fonatur/Singlar to reduce the fees to something fairly reasonable — like the current one peso/foot/day rate. It was low enough to bring a reasonably large contingent back to the Loreto Fest.

According to Jerry and Kathy McGraw of the Newport Beach-based Peterson 44 Po Oino Roa, things were more than satisfactory at Escondido. “Clearing in was easy. All we had to do was call Arturo in the Singlar office, who rents out the moorings and is a representative of the port captain, and we were checked in! For those who want to anchor or be on a mooring inside Puerto Escondido, the fee is about $4/day for a 40-ft boat. If you anchor outside the harbor at the Waiting Room or the small area by the dinghy dock, you pay API — the port authority — about $1 a day. Water was included with the mooring, but I’m not sure if that’s also true for the Waiting Room. The guy from the API office can arrange for fuel, and they sell ice, phone cards, and they have a phone. There are now two stores within walking distance. One is about .75 of a mile away at the site of the rebuilding Tripui RV park, while the other is about 1.5 miles away. Both do laundry and have the basics — including some fresh food. From what we could tell, everybody was reasonably happy with the fee structure for anchoring and mooring in Puerto Escondido. The cost of a taxi to Loreto was 600 pesos for a round trip — which seems less than I remember from before. We took six in a van, so it came to less than $20 a couple. The weather has been beautiful here, with the air temps in the mid-80s and the water 73 degrees. Today we leave
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for Agua Verde for a few days."

Getting back to this year’s Loreto Fest, Wilkins reports that, “It started with the traditional water and beach clean-up, which was the activity that created the event. Then there were shore games such as horseshoes, Over-The-Line baseball, and cards, plus workshops on weather forecasting and other topics. There were dinghy races, a kayak/dinghy parade, and a small regatta for the sailboats. But as always, the big focus of Loreto Fest was on the music. Every night was amateur night, with musicians from the fleet providing the entertainment. All the while, the yacht club sold beer, pop, and hot dogs for about $1 each.” It wasn’t the greatest Loreto Fest ever, but all things considered, it was a darn good one. And wait until next year!”

“My brand new Shuttleworth 70 catamaran My Way is finally 99% completed,” reports Don Engle of Lafayette, “as there are really only odds and ends to sort out. She looks great. We hope to finish everything tomorrow and shove off from Auckland for the Great Barrier Island. The day after that, we’ll sail to the Bay of Islands, wait until a current tropical storm pushes through, then head off on the 1,200-mile passage to Fiji.”

When we pulled into Avalon about a month ago, it was dark, and we couldn’t really see the face of the guy who came out on the harbor patrol boat. But when he said, “Hey, the new edition of my Boat, Dive & Fish Catalina Island is out,” we knew it had to be author Bruce Wicklund. His is an excellent little book, with great maps, a list and location of all the many wrecks, diagrams of all the harbors, coves, and dive sites, descriptions of all the sea life, fishing and diving information — it goes on and on. It’s a very nice little package, so we suggest that you don’t visit Catalina without one! You can buy it at marine stores all over Southern California. By the way, Brian owns the beautifully restored 41-ft Bounty II Black Dolphin, sistership to the sloop that Latitude was founded on.

LATITUDE/ANNIE

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"We're still out here cheating death on a daily basis," report Steven and Roma Swenson, and youngsters Leif and Gage of the Seattle-based Hallberg-Rassy 46 Trinity. "We survived the Tehuantepec, and we're now at Barillas Marina in El Salvador, contemplating points farther south. We thought we'd ask you if you had any information or opinions on cruising along the coast of Nicaragua and Costa Rica during the months of June to August. We're particularly concerned about the likelihood of lightning storms. Is it necessary to head further south or stay further north during the summer?"

We don't consider ourselves to be lightning experts, but it's our understanding that Nicaragua and Costa Rica get hit the most, and get plenty of rain. Going back north isn't a good option, unless you go all the way to the Sea of Cortez, because of the threat of hurricanes. If you don't mind a little jaunt, these days many cruisers are heading down to Bahia Caraquez, Ecuador, where the sun supposedly shines a lot, the people are great, and the cost of living is low.

Anybody with firsthand knowledge have better advice?

We finally got some more details about the loss of Brit Malcolm Steer's 45-ft ferrocement yawl Anna of Brighton," report Randy and Lourae Renoffel of the San Francisco-based Beneteau 50 Pizzaz. It's the story of one of the most mishap-filled passages that we remember. In fact, their troubles began before they even started:

"Malcolm and two crew left St. Lucia in the Eastern Caribbean on the approximately 1,200-mile downwind trip to Colon, Panama. Just prior to leaving St. Lucia, they had to replace the dinghy and outboard because they were stolen. Shortly after taking off, the two crew got sick. Then the headsail blew out. The main tore also, but they were able to repair it. When the generator quit, they used the engine to charge the batteries. But about halfway into the trip, the wind died and the prop shaft broke — so now they had neither propulsion nor a way to charge their batteries. After calling for assistance, they were surprised to get a response from a Russian ship. The Russian engineer rigged a towline to Anna's mast, then proceeded to tow them at 16 knots — a little more than the ferro-cement boat's theoretical hull speed. "We have a schedule to keep," the Russians explained. With damage to the bowsprit..."
and the mast-step caused by the high-speed tow, Malcolm finally cut the tow line. But by then the movement had already damaged their VHF antenna.

“We were anchored on Pizzaz in the San Blas Islands,” the couple continue, “when Anna came to a stop about three miles outside of the East Holandes Cays. They were just sitting there in a dead calm on the morning of April 24, so Randy took the dinghy to see if they needed help. He offered to tow them to the famous Swimming Pool anchorage. Have you ever tried to push a 25-ton boat with a 15-hp dinghy tied to the quarter? It took Randy nearly four hours to move Anna the three miles to the anchorage. After several days of attempting repairs and getting suggestions — “why don’t you mount your 5 hp outboard on the swim platform?” — from cruisers, they were semi-ready to go again. With the wind finally back up again on April 30, they took off on the 80-mile passage to Colon. As soon as they left, the wind died.

“Anna checked in with the Panama Connection Net on May 1, and reported she was in light winds 60 miles from the Canal. A day later, she still had 25 miles to go. We didn’t hear from her the next day, so we put out a ‘watch’ on her. It wasn’t until we got to an internet cafe that we learned Anna had been lost — we don’t know how — on the breakwater leading to the staging area for the Canal. Malcolm says he’s headed back to Great Britain — to buy another boat. But since the exchange-rate is so favorable, he might also look in the U.S.”

As for the Kenoffels, “We’ve been out cruising for 11.5 years now, and don’t have any plans to move ashore in the foreseeable future. We love the cruising life.” You might remember that they had both been in high-stress jobs just before taking off. In fact, Randy had a heart attack right after quitting work and just before setting sail. Here’s the couple’s Tip of The Month:

“Most surfers out here know about Mr. Zog’s Sex Wax that you don’t know? Maybe that it has uses for things other than surfboards. Read on.

What do the Kenoffels know about Mr. Zog’s Sex Wax that you don’t know? Maybe that it has uses for things other than surfboards. Read on.
then squeak. A little Sex Wax along the edges does a fine job of keeping the boards quiet.”

We’re late in announcing this, but about six weeks ago we got the following report from Dobie Dolphin in Tenacatita Bay:

“The 37-ft sailboat Quest On, owned by Californian Dominic Regas and his wife, went on the beach yesterday morning at Tenacatita Bay. The couple had been snorkeling by one of the outer rocks in the bay when the wind suddenly came up strong from the south. A local panganero called to the couple to ask if it was their sailboat, but by the time they got to her she was already on the beach. The locals, along with some other cruisers, worked all day yesterday trying to pull her off, but didn’t have any luck. At low tide she was just sitting there, but at high tide she slammed from one side to the other. But there doesn’t seem to be any structural damage so far except to the rudder and prop shaft. I know the young couple, who were headed to Costa Rica, do have insurance, because they called their agent from my home in nearby Rebalsito.”

Dobie emailed us later to report the boat had been pulled off and towed to Manzanillo. “The port captain in Barra de Navidad was useless, but the port captain in Manzanillo was extremely helpful. He came to the scene right away to check the situation, then gave the owner a list of salvage companies. Dominic had to wire half of the 80,000 peso fee to the salvage company’s bank account, but they did get the boat off and to Manzanillo. By the way, the port captain in Manzanillo is Enrique Casarrubias Garcia, and cruisers in Mexico can reach him at 01-314-332-3470.”

Funny, isn’t it, that the port captain who is only a few miles from the scene of the incident doesn’t do anything, but the port captain a couple of hours away rushes to the scene to see what can be done.

In early May, Scott Duncan and Pamela Habek, who are both legally blind, set sail from Paradise Village, Mexico, on the 2,800-mile passage to Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas aboard their San Francisco-based Valiant 32 Tournesol. The short-term goal of these Ha-Ha vets is to make it to Sydney by December. According to their spokespeople, "upon completion of that phase of their circumnavigation, Scott and Pamela will be the first visually-impaired sailors to successfully have crossed an ocean on their own." The couple are seeking to spread the message of independence to disabled children and adults — as well as to the great non-disabled population. You can follow Scott and Pamela’s progress by visiting www.blindsailing.com. And you can email them at sea at: wcw4901@sailmail.com. They are very eager to get mail.

If you’re looking for a swift cruising cat, Peter Johnstone has glowing reports on Cream, his new South African-built M&M-designed Gunboat 48. "We were plodding along at 10 knots upwind when the first gust hit. In seconds the GPS was showing 14.5 knots — upwind!"

On the downside, we’re not sure how many buyers there are for cruising cats that easily lift one hull and sell for over $1 million. But we’re sure there are some.
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BIG ANNOUNCEMENT

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MERIT 25, 1984. Reduced $6,900. Freshwater until 11/04. Racing rigged, all sails in excellent condition. Trailer, 50 hp 4-stroke Mercury Big Foot, roller furling, enclosed head, low hours, $19,000. Pictures and more info: <www.02mac.com>

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BENETEAU 40.7, 2002. White Dove. Don’t let the name fool you. This is a serious race boat, a Big Boat winner and competitive PHRF/AMERICA/IRC racing boat. Commissioned at KKMI under management of Scott Eason, rigger and professional racer. Ockam instruments, upgraded carbon rudder with shaft fiddle bearings, template faired bottom and blades sanded to 600. Updated winches, rigging, traveler and hydraulic backstay. Carbon pole. North cruising Spectra sails, North 3Dls and Doyle D-4 Kevlar sails. 4 spinnakers, 3 mains, three 142 genoa, 2 blades, one 155 genoa. Tuff Luff headstay, separate headstay with Harden furlex for cruising. Berthed at San Francisco Marina. Absolutely turnkey condition. $179,000. Mike (650) 619-6936 or mikegarl@comcast.net.


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38’ SABRE, 1980
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37’ RAPHO, 1976
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32’ TARTAN, 1978
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31’ HUNTER 310, 1999
The 310 is a member of Hunter’s newest generation: cockpit arches are standard, the cockpit well is virtually circular, the rig is fractional, the hull is rounded with lots of freeboard and beam, the sheer is straight, and windows proliferate in astounding profusion. $59,000

36’ ISLANDER FREEPORT, 1978
Another Robert Perry-designed classic, and the rare B plan interior with the Pullman berth to boot! This is a solidly-built boat with a functional layout that in many ways was ahead of her time. $47,000

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48’ G&G, 1973
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30’ ISLANDER FREERCUTTER, 1975
Another Robert Perry-designed classic, and the rare B plan interior with the Pullman berth to boot! This is a solidly-built boat with a functional layout that in many ways was ahead of her time. $47,000

31’ Hunter 310, 1999
The 310 is a member of Hunter’s newest generation: cockpit arches are standard, the cockpit well is virtually circular, the rig is fractional, the hull is rounded with lots of freeboard and beam, the sheer is straight, and windows proliferate in astounding profusion. $59,000

35’ SISTERSHIP
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