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Cover: Andrew Hura and Josh Butler on the Wylie 24 Run Wild topped the Doublehanded Sportboat division in the 2015 Three Bridge Fiasco. We’ll report on the 2016 edition in our March issue.

Photo: Erik Simonson/www.pressure-drop.us

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

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---

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BENETEAU OCEANIS 49</td>
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<tr>
<td>BENETEAU OCEANIS 34</td>
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**SELECT BROKERAGE**

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<td>BENETEAU 321</td>
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<td>FIRST 36.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIRST 25</td>
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**SAIL BROKERAGE**

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<tr>
<td>HUNTER 380</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<td>OLSON 34</td>
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**POWER BROKERAGE**

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<tr>
<td>OFFSHORE 58 PH</td>
<td>1995</td>
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<td>CAMARGUE 48</td>
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<td>GRAN TURISMO GT44</td>
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<td>REGAL 3880</td>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>BAYLINER 3988</td>
<td>2001</td>
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<td>SEA RAY 340 EXPRESS</td>
<td>2006</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARRACUDA 9</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$132,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Latitude 38

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**CALENDAR**

**Non-Race**


**Feb. 1** — Marine Career Fair at the Seattle Boat Show, 9-11 a.m. Marine businesses are seeking 75+ full-time permanent and seasonal employees. Free admission to the show for attendees. Info, [www.seattleboatshow.com/job-fair.html](http://www.seattleboatshow.com/job-fair.html).

**Feb. 1-Mar. 9** — The tall ships *Lady Washington* and *Hawaiian Chieftain* are in Ventura through 2/8 and visit Oakland 2/10-15; Oakland, 2/20-29; then Antioch, 3/2-9. Info, (800) 200-5239 or [www.historicalseaort.org](http://www.historicalseaort.org).

**Feb. 3-24** — Wednesday Yachting Luncheon Series, SFYC, 12-2 p.m. Lunch and a dynamic speaker each week for about $25. All YCs’ members welcome. Info, [www.sfyc.com](http://www.sfyc.com).

**Feb. 3-24** — San Diego’s South Bay Sea Scouts meet aboard the schooner *Bill of Rights* at Chula Vista Marina on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Sea Scouts is for guys & gals ages 13-20. John, (619) 852-7811 or mossfish@gmail.com.

**Feb. 4** — Captain Gregory Stump, commander of USCG Sector San Francisco, presents Coast Guard Strategic Themes. Corinthian YC, Tiburon. 7 p.m. Free and open to the public, but RSVP to (415) 435-4771.

**Feb. 6** — US Sailing Certified Race Officer course, Encinal YC, Alameda, with instructor Bill Gage. $40. Info, commodore@encinal.org or [www.usa sailing.org](http://www.usa sailing.org).


**Feb. 6, Mar. 5** — Chantey Sing aboard the ferryboat *Eureka*, Hyde Street Pier, San Francisco. 8 p.m.-midnight. Dress warmly and bring a mug for hot cider. Free, but RSVP to Peter. (415) 561-7171.

**Feb. 6-27** — Sailing in Access Dinghies, 10 a.m., every Saturday with BAADS at South Beach Harbor in San Francisco. Free. Info, (415) 281-0212 or [www.baads.org](http://www.baads.org).


**Feb. 7-28** — Veterans’ Sail, 10 a.m., and Keelboat Sail, noon, every Sunday with BAADS at South Beach Harbor in San Francisco. Free. Info, (415) 281-0212 or [www.baads.org](http://www.baads.org).

**Feb. 9-May 3** — USCG Auxiliary presents Sailing Skills and Seamanship classroom course, USCG Station Golden Gate, Sausalito, Tuesdays, 7:00-9:30 p.m. $95/course + $25/book. Charles, clauss@auxgoldengate.org or (707) 321-6094.

**Feb. 10** — Singlehanded TransPac Seminar: The Return Trip, Oakland YC Regatta Room, 7:30 p.m. Everyone welcome; free. SSS, [www.sfbaysss.org](http://www.sfbaysss.org).

**Feb. 10, 11** — Tide Currents on San Francisco Bay by Kame Richards, Bay Model, Sausalito, 7 p.m. $15, cash only. By reservation only, jimtantillo@comcast.net or (707) 759-2045.

**Feb. 11** — Adam Ratner of the Marine Mammal Center presents Behind the Bark: Saving Seals & Sea Lions. Club Nautique, Sausalito, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Members free; non-members $20, including appetizers and beverages. RSVP required to (415) 332-8001.

**Feb. 11** — Single Sailors Association monthly meeting, Ballena Bay YC, Alameda. Social hour, 6:30 p.m.: dinner, 7 p.m.: meeting, 7:30. Info, [www.singlesailors.org](http://www.singlesailors.org).

**Feb. 13** — Medical Seminar. Richmond YC, 1-5 p.m. Presented by Kent Benedict, MD; Mary Lovely, RN; and Denny Emory, EMT. $30. Info, [www.pacificcup.org](http://www.pacificcup.org).
**New Catalina Yachts at Our Docks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45' Catalina 445</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>AT OUR DOCKS NOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38' Catalina 385</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>AT OUR DOCKS NOW</td>
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**Pre-Owned Catalina Yachts at Our Docks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47' Catalina 470 Tall Rig</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>299,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>42' Catalina 42 MkII</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>NEW LISTING 177,500</td>
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<td>37.7' Catalina 375</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>NEW LISTING 179,900</td>
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<td>36' Catalina 36</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>NEW LISTING 42,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>36' Catalina 36</td>
<td>1989</td>
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<tr>
<td>36' Catalina 36</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>91,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>34' Catalina 34</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>NEW LISTING SOLD</td>
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**Pro-Owned Sailing Yachts**

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<tr>
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<td>Grand Soleil 50</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>REDUCED 260,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dufour/GibSea 43</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>REDUCED 129,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;C CUSTOM, 1973</td>
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<td>225,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;C, 1988</td>
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<td>109,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>C&amp;C, 1978</td>
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<td>40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cal 35, 1981</td>
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<td>38,700</td>
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<td>Cantieri Baglietto International 5.5, 1955</td>
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**New Ranger Tugs (base price)**

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<th>Price</th>
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<td>31' New Ranger Flybridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>31' Ranger Tug Sedan</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>269,937</td>
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<tr>
<td>29' Ranger Tug</td>
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<td>COMING SOON</td>
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<tr>
<td>27' Ranger Tug</td>
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**Pre-Owned Ranger Tugs**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranger 29 Classic</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>NEW LISTING 164,500</td>
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<td>21' Ranger Tug Classic</td>
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**New Powercats**

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<td>27' Glacier Bay 2780</td>
<td>2014</td>
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**Pre-Owned Power Yachts**

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<tr>
<td>Stephens 70 Classic Motor Yacht</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>1,100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephens, 1930</td>
<td></td>
<td>125,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Craft 36 Corsair</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>225,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protector Targa</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>159,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquascan Dinghy, 25hp Yanmar/float dock</td>
<td></td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Feb. 14 — Take your sweetie sailing on Valentine’s Day.
Feb. 15 — Presidents Day. Go for a sail on a Monday.
Feb. 21 — Knot Tying Demonstration and Seminar, Almar Marina, Marina del Rey. 11 a.m. Info, (310) 822-0316.
Feb. 22 — Full moon on a Monday.
Feb. 25 — Line Splicing by Ryan Nelson of Rogue Rigging. Club Nautique, Alameda, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Members free; non-members $20, including appetizers and beverages. RSVP required to (510) 865-4700.
Feb. 27 — Chanteys: The African American and Caribbean Connection, aboard Balclutha, Hyde Street Pier, San Francisco, 3-3:45 p.m. $10; kids 15 & under free. Info, (415) 447-5000 or www.nps.gov/safr.
Feb. 27 — Marine corrosion, wood burning & shock hazard seminar by Malcolm Morgan, Spaulding Marine Center. Sausalito, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. $50 donation includes lunch. Info, (415) 332-3721 or www.spa uldingcenter.org.
Feb. 27 — North U Trim Seminar with instructor Bill Gladstone, Berkeley YC, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. $60-$139 includes lunch. Fran, (203) 245-0727 or www.northu.northsails.com.
Feb. 28 — North U Trim Seminar with instructor Andrew Kerr, Seattle YC; or with Bill Gladstone, Kitsilano YC, Vancouver, BC. See above for details & contact.
Mar. 5 — Mariners Swap Meet, Channel Islands Landing, Oxnard, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Info, (805) 985-6269.
Mar. 5, 7-9 — Celestial Navigation, SFYC. Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 5:30-9:30 p.m. Info, www.sfyc.org.
Mar. 5-6 — Safety at Sea Seminar, Bainbridge High School & Aquatic Center, Bainbridge, WA. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. $185/Saturday; $335/both days. Info, www.thesailingfoundation.org.
Mar. 6 — North U Trim Seminar with Steve LeMay, North Sails San Diego, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. $60-$139 includes lunch. Fran, (203) 245-0727 or www.northu.northsails.com.
Mar. 9 — Line Splicing by Ryan Nelson of Rogue Rigging, Club Nautique. Alameda, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Info, (510) 865-2541 or tayana@mindspring.com.
CALENDAR

or www.latitude38.com/creulist/CrewParty/CrewParty.html


Mar. 10 — Salty Dog Cook-Off Competition. Club Nautique, Sausalito, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Members free; non-members $20, including appetizers and beverages. RSVP to (415) 332-8001.

Mar. 11-12 or Mar. 13-14 — ISAF Safety at Sea Seminar, SFYC, Belvedere. 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. $240. Info, www.sfyc.org.

Mar. 13 — Daylight Saving Time begins.

Mar. 13 — North U Trim Seminar with Andrew Kerr, Long Beach YC, 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. $65-$144 includes light breakfast & lunch. Fran, (203) 245-0727, www.northu.northsails.com.

Racing


Midwinter Regattas


KONOCI BAY SAILING CLUB — OSIRs (Old Salts in Retirement) every Wednesday at noon. Info. www.kbsail.com.


OAKLAND YC — Sunday Brunch Series: 2/7, 2/21, 3/6, 3/20. Jim. (510) 277-4676, oycracecom@gmail.com or www.oaklandyachtclub.net.


SAN FRANCISCO MODEL YC — Victoria one-design radio-controlled races every Wednesday afternoon year-round at Spreckels Lake in Golden Gate Park. Info. www.sfmyc.org.


TIBURON YC — Midwinters: 2/6, 3/5. Info. race@tyc.org or www.tyc.org.


In the Tropics


Feb. 10-14 — Inaugural Miami to Havana Race, with a Coastal Race along the Malecón on Sunday. Info. (386) 437-9400 or www.havanarace.org.


Mar. 25-27 — St. Thomas International Regatta in USVI.
### Calendar


**Mar. 31-Apr. 3** — La Paz Bay Fest for cruisers. Club Cruceros de La Paz, www.clubcruceiros.net.


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

#### February Weekend Tides

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#### February Weekend Currents

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LETTERS

HE’D SEEN MY FLIPPED TRI, BUT DIDN’T BOTHER TO SEE IF ANYONE NEEDED HELP

Reading the editor’s response to Jane Pitts’ letter about a boat not willing to give them a tow back to their marina brings up a sea story that happened to me many years ago. It started in 1972 when at the ripe old age of 22 I built Cloud, a 31-ft Kismet trimaran. Even though she didn’t have an engine, I learned to sail along the British Columbia coast. In September 1974 I set sail for Hawaii, learning celestial navigation — the only kind back then — on the way. Oh, those free and easy hippie days of yore!

Immigration officials only gave me, a Canadian, six months to stay in the Islands. Nonetheless, I managed to eke out a two-year stay before I was kicked out. I spent most of that time playing with dolphins in Kealakekua Bay before it became a marine sanctuary, not realizing at the time how rare it was to be swimming alone with marine mammals.

Using contributions from a small crew to pay my way, I then sailed Cloud to the South Pacific via the Line and Cook Islands. I especially remember loving cruising Tonga at a time when there were only a handful of cruisers in Neiafu, Vava’u. Threading through the reefs of the Ha’apai Group with a man in the spreaders brings back fond memories as well.

In November 1976 I soloed to New Zealand from Suva, Fiji, and had a very slow trip because of light headwinds. After 15 days I’d finally made it to within 100 miles of Opua in New Zealand’s Bay of Islands. Unfortunately, I was then hit by a major storm. Cross swells created a 60- to 70-ft rogue wave that capsized the Cloud. I had the same sensation as gliding up in an elevator at high speed — but then going over the falls to crash-land upside down.

The storm continued to blow for a couple more days while I rearranged the furniture in my capsized tri. I did not have a liferaft, so there was no option there. (Apparently, folks on other boats bailed to their liferafts and died, even though their boats were later recovered.) As a result, I became one of the first sailors to survive a capsize.

I spent 17 days in survival mode. I actually got quite a bit of sleep, as my forward berth, upside down, cleared the level of water inside the boat by a couple of inches. I was finally rescued by a San Diego-based purse seiner on its first season fishing for skipjack in Kiwi waters. Actually, I was first spotted by their helicopter.

The day before my rescue I was totally ignored by a small, rusty tramp steamer that, as it drew closer, looked as though it might ram me. I blew an air horn until it was empty, and even banged pots together, as the steamer passed just a couple of hundred yards away. I apparently was not ‘in peril’?

Ten years later, back on my home island of Salt Spring, British Columbia, I was fitting out Companion One, a Piver 36. It was to be delivered for my father in Kingston, Ontario, via Panama, Jamaica, the Bahamas, the Intracoastal Waterway and the Erie Barge Canal. We were hauled out at a small marina when the owner of the marina introduced me to a sailor he thought might be simpatico, as we had both sailed the South Seas.

In talking with the fellow, we narrowed it down that we had been there at exactly the same time. You can just imagine

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When ‘Profligate’ came across this flipped trimaran in a King Harbor Race a few years ago, we didn’t hesitate dropping the chute and rescuing the three crew.

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LETTERS

my surprise as I came to realize from his story that he had also passed by my capsized tri! He said he’d seen my boat, decided it was abandoned, and carried on. He didn’t even bother to check in case someone needed help! I apparently wasn’t keeping a very good watch, even though I did see four other deep-sea ships’ sterns as they disappointingly failed to see my flares.

Looking back on it now, it would appear to be a blessing that neither the steamer nor the sailor on Salt Spring rescued me, since things worked out so well otherwise. The San Diego vessel that picked me up gave me a job as crew, so I earned enough funds to fly home. And I don’t know if that sailor who passed without stopping was before or after I had the great privilege of spending an entire day in the company of a majestic blue whale that dwarfed my boat. She expressed such empathy for my fate that we ‘connected’ at a deep level I hadn’t experienced before and not since. I would gladly spend another 17 days on a capsized trimaran to have anything near that experience again. It was truly life-changing.

So the mystery of these sea stories is that sometimes you can’t really know what’s best.

Thanks for letting me bend your ear for a while. Thanks also for so many great years of providing such a fantastic platform for sailors to share their stories. I’ve been a fan of Latitude since that fall in 1986 when I sailed my dad’s tri into Latitude Richardson Bay and discovered your treasure. While there I also got to save a boat that broke loose from its mooring at the Sausalito YC before it hit the beach over by Tiburon.

Gary Gagné
Ho’omaluhia, 32-ft Marples Coastal Racer
Salt Spring Island, BC

Gary — Thanks for the kind words, but it’s great sailors such as you, and the great sea stories such as yours, that have made Latitude what it is.

↑↓ "THE KEY IS TO HAVE THE RIGHT CLOTHING..."

I want to weigh in on the ‘tow/won’t tow’ issue raised in the January issue by Jane Pitts. I have never refused to tow anyone while on various boats over the years, but I have no sympathy for the writer hoping to be towed.

I raced an Etchells on the Bay for about 10 years. As you know, this 30-ft boat doesn’t even have a motor, so to participate in regattas she regularly needed to be sailed between Richmond, Berkeley, San Francisco and Marin. It required planning, awareness and thoughtfulness about currents and the wind. For when you don’t have a motor, you need to have a game plan to get from Point A to Point B.

Being becalmed at Southampton Shoal, as the author of last month’s letter had been, is just something that occasionally happens. But as Latitude pointed out, it’s not an emergency that requires outside intervention. It would never even have occurred to me to request a tow in my Etchells — except for the one time I needed to get the hull back from St. Francis to Richmond YC after the rig broke in half during a race. The key is to have the right clothing, some food and water, and the attitude that ‘we’ll get there when we get there’. It’s not someone else’s responsibility to keep another boat’s voyage...
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- **'08 Sydney 465** $540,000
- **'09 Santa Cruz 37** $249,000
- **'14 C&C Yachts 30** $59,900
- **'09 Santa Cruz 37** $249,000
- **'04 Santa Cruz 53** $479,000
- **'98 Sydney 41** $154,900
- **'84 C&C 37** $59,900
- **'94 J/Boats J/105** $149,900
- **'93 Freedom 35** $79,235
- **'89 C&C 37 Plus** $72,900

## NEW C&C Yachts 30

- **'97 J/Boats J/160** $499,000
- **'84 Miller 44** $99,897
- **'08 Multi-hull 70** $1,600,000
- **'05 Vicem 58** $1,175,000
- **'05 J/Boats J/133** $279,000
- **'05 J/Boats J/105** $79,900
- **'08 Is. Packet 465** $540,000
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- **'35 J/Boats J/105** $65,000
- **'35 J/Boats J/105** $64,500
- **'89 J/Boats J/88** $149,900
- **'94 J/Boats J/130** $149,900
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- **'05 Vicem 58** $1,175,000
- **'08 Is. Packet 465** $540,000
- **'98 Sydney 41** $154,900
- **'05 J/Boats J/133** $279,000
- **'01 J/Boats J/105** $79,900
- **'80 Miller 44** $99,897
- **'84 C&C 37** $59,900
- **'09 Santa Cruz 37** $249,000
- **'05 J/Boats J/133** $279,000
- **'89 C&C 37 Plus** $72,900

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LETTERS

Marc — Most of the people who sail on San Francisco Bay are just out to enjoy a pleasant time with their family and/or friends. Their boats have normally reliable propulsion systems, so they develop a belief that they can get back to the dock pretty much at an appointed time, meaning they can schedule other things for after sailing. So in the rare case when their engine doesn’t start, it can really mess up the rest of their day — as well as the day of everyone else on the boat. For example, you think the 16-year-old daughter who is missing a date with her first boyfriend because the battery won’t start on the family boat is ever going to go sailing with Mom and Dad again?

We think most mariners have found themselves in semi-helpless situations or know they probably will in the future, so most are more than happy to give a tow of a reasonable length. Sailors helping other sailors in need has long been the hallmark of the sport, and is particularly true in the world of cruising.

You also need to remember that an Etchells, similar to our Olson 30, is a lightweight high-performance boat. Their advantage over almost all other boats is most evident in very light wind. When we got our Olson 30 to the Caribbean, we gave the engine away. So your Etchells was not a typical boat.

And by the way, how many times have we seen groups of high-performance sportboats being towed en masse from the big yacht clubs to and from the Olympic Circle, which, it turns out, isn’t far from Southampton Shoal?

We’re all for self-sufficiency, but we think you’re being a little hardcore about this. Maybe try an empathy supplement with meals.

Marc Fountain
Point Richmond

Readers — Serenade is a distinctive sloop that was built for Jascha Heifetz, sometimes heralded as the greatest violinist of all time. He kept the boat in Newport Beach, and she was the boat on which Humphrey Bogart learned to sail. Serenade would later be owned by, among others, Jacques Cousteau and Zsa Zsa Gabor. If any Latitude readers have any information about Serenade, or know where I can find more information, I would appreciate being contacted at jacques.taglang@free.fr.

Jacques Taglang
Yachting Historian

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Get ready for winter sailing – WINTER DISCOUNTS NOW IN EFFECT
William Cannell Boatbuilding of Camden, Maine, did an extensive yearlong restoration of *Serenade* in 2000 that included “removing her deck and all of her interior, and replacing all her frames. The restoration included a new laid and sheered and caulked solid teak deck, new stem, new stern stem, complete refastening, new frames, new deck houses and new hatches, a considerable amount of new hull plankin, new systems including a new engine and related systems, new mast step and bronze mast partners, and a considerable amount of repair and restoration to her lovely butternut paneled interior.” Whew.

The William Cannell company provided an interesting insight into *Serenade*’s designer. “Nick Potter became known as the ‘Herreshoff of the West Coast’. He is not as well known as some designers of the golden era of classic boats, but his pedigree was inferior to none. Potter grew up as a boyhood friend of L. Francis Herreshoff and later worked in the design office of L. Francis’ legendary father, Nat Herreshoff. Potter eventually worked alongside his childhood chum, L. Francis, in the Starling Burgess office in Boston during the period of some of Burgess’ most important designs. Eventually Potter settled in Newport Beach and supervised the construction of many of his designs at the nearby Wilmington Boatworks. Potter always maintained his ties to the East Coast and remained active in New York YC affairs, including sitting on the America’s Cup defender selection committee.

“Potter’s lovely double-enders were works of art. But in those days the most activity in American yachting was centered in the East around the New York YC, the Eastern YC on Boston’s North Shore, and Long Island Sound’s Seawanhaka Corinthian YC. California was just too remote in that era to earn Potter and the excellent craftsmanship of Wilbo (Wilmington Boat Works) the recognition they merited. Sadly, Potter left instructions to the executor of his estate that all his drawings be destroyed after his death. Fortunately, *Serenade* was still so intact that we didn’t need drawings, and were able to retain her original Herreshoff windlass and binnacle.”

**MORE MERLIN MEMORIES**

We had one pitch-black night with big wind and heavy squalls during the middle of the 1987 Transpac aboard Merlin. For a two-hour period the wind averaged nearly 30 knots — and peaked at 37 knots. Naturally we were carrying the biggest spinnaker. It was pretty scary, so we worked hard to keep the boat on her feet and the spinnaker from collapsing. We knew that if the chute collapsed, it would likely explode when it refilled. We teetered on the knife edge of disaster a couple of times, but we never rounded up or down, and the kite never collapsed.

Donn Campion, Merlin’s owner at the time, was aboard for the race. After things had settled down the next day, he told me the story about his service as a dentist during the Vietnam War. During the day, the Army would helicopter his medical team into remote villages to treat the local population. The team was guarded by helicopters full of armed soldiers, but they always flew out at night because that’s when the Viet Cong came. One day there was a screw-up, and the helicopters left without Donn, forcing him to spend the night alone in a remote Vietnamese village.

“It was the most terrifying experience of my life.” he told me. “Until last night.”

There was always a chat session on the VHF among the fleet prior to the morning’s roll call. The morning after the big blow the members of the fleet bantered about the problems of the night before. First one boat, then another, and eventually what sounded like the rest of the 17-boat sled fleet admitted...
that they had experienced conditions similar to ours and had changed down to chicken chutes. All of these boats had their eye on the first-to-finish trophy, and none of them would have changed down to a smaller spinnaker unless they felt they absolutely had to. We figured they either broached and couldn’t get back on their feet without taking their spinnakers down or their spinnakers exploded. Once the kite’s down in those conditions, the logical move is to put up the chicken chute. You lose a lot of time during a broach and recovery, and then end up going slower with the smaller spinnaker. Our assumptions seemed to be confirmed during the morning roll call, when we were pleased to learn that we had gained 25 miles on the rest of the sled fleet since the previous day.

Despite being 87 miles behind the leaders during roll call on Day Three, Merlin went on to take line honors. Good times!

Bill Leary
Moku pe’a, Beneteau Oceanis 351
Kaneohe Bay, HI

BILL LEE WAS A CLASS ACT
I did the 1977 Transpac, the one in which the brand new Merlin smashed the Transpac record by nearly a day, finishing in 8 days, 11 hours. But I was aboard Milt Smith’s 45-ft sloop Mako. It was a pretty rough 12-day trip for us, as we blew five spinnakers. But at least we weren’t one of the five boats that were dismasted.

When we finished, Merlin’s Bill Lee came out to cheer for us and all the other finishers. That was class.

Gregg Corbitt
Temecula, CA

Readers — Bill always did his part to make sure the Transpac was as colorful and as popular an event as could be. It was reported that 25,000 people showed up for Merlin’s record-breaking finish, and Bill was all about in his wizard outfit. There were big parties for every finisher, with plenty of food and garbage cans full of mai tais. Oftentimes three or four different parties were raging in the wee hours of the morning, featuring the crews and friends of crews on boats that had just finished. Alas, Hawaii’s fascination with the Transpac has dwindled to almost nil since then.

WE DIDN’T GET THE SPINNAKER WET OR KILL OURSELVES
In 1980 Scott Lamson and I set out to charter Merlin so we could sail in the Doublehanded Farallones Race. While Bill Lee was quite receptive to the idea, his insurance company wasn’t as enthusiastic. After a series of negotiations, the insurance company agreed to provide coverage with the following provisions: 1) We’d agree to pay a higher deductible and premium. 2) The insurance company wanted their appointed marine surveyor to write up a ‘crew competency report’. 3) For us to provide the insurance company with a plan that demonstrated we’d not go out or kill ourselves!

Thankfully the insurance company’s surveyor was Jim
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Jessie, someone who knew of our abilities and provided the necessary report. We then wrote up a detailed plan on how we’d try not to get killed. This included several weeks of sailing Merlin on a daily basis, practicing our boat-handling and man-overboard procedures. We purposely avoided discussing flying a spinnaker in our plan, as we made the decision there was no point in practicing, as whatever conditions we would have on race day would dictate whether we’d fly a chute or not. We figured if the wind was light during the race, we’d fly a chute. If it was windy, we wouldn’t. Most important, we decided that if the breeze came up while we were carrying a spinnaker, we’d hold on as long as we could, praying the wind would lighten up. If it didn’t, we’d take our chances — and likely have to buy Bill a new spinnaker.

On the day of the race Scott showed up wearing a helmet. It was pretty funny, although James Spithill would follow suit some 30 years later. We started the race with a full main and 110% jib and short-tacked up the Marin County shore on our way out to the Farallones. By the time we cleared the Headlands, we had worked up quite a sweat. But then we got lucky, as we were able to lay the islands in a breeze that never blew more than 15 knots. Once around the islands, we set the spinnaker as though we had a full crew aboard. It was actually simple. We carried the spinnaker to the Golden Gate Bridge, jibed, and headed for the finish line. Simple again! We dropped the spinnaker without even getting the sail wet. All in all, a frigging miracle! We were first to finish, first in class, and first overall on corrected time. Not a bad day on the water. And we hadn’t killed ourselves.

While it was quite a challenge and very rewarding to double-hand Merlin around the Farallones, the best part of the charter was actually having the opportunity to take our family and friends out sailing on what was then the fastest boat around. We’d go screaming across the Bay, spray flying, and people were hooting and hollering. Everyone had a blast — even my mom. The accompanying photo shows her driving the boat… or at least she thinks she is. The guy sitting to leeward on the starboard side actually had the wheel.

Ahhh, what great memories! Who knows, maybe it’s time to charter Merlin again. I can’t wait to see her sailing the Bay once more.

Paul Kaplan
KKMI, Point Richmond
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LETTERS

WHAT WERE YOU TWO SKIPPERS THINKING?

When I saw the December issue Sightings photo of Bill Lilly and Judy Lang’s Newport Beach-based Lagoon 47 Moontide flying over the wave while departing Bahia del Sol, El Salvador, it reminded me of another photo of a cat flying over a wave. If I’m not mistaken, it was a photo of Profligate, with the Wanderer at the helm, leaving some Southern California harbor.

What were you two skippers thinking?

Brian Short
Pasadena

Brian — We assume you’re talking about the photos that Oceanside harbor patrolman Jonathan Hoover took of Profligate as we took her out of that harbor for Catalina a few years back. It’s true, there is a similarity in the two cats heading out. But unlike Moontide, which reportedly took water over the cabintop, Profligate didn’t even get her decks wet.

If we’re not mistaken, what Bill Lilly was “thinking” is he could make it safely over the bar because the Hotel del Sol bar pilot told him he could. By the time Bill realized that the wave was going to break on them, it was too late to turn around.

In our case with Profligate, we simply thought that we could make it out safely. We’ve surfed most of our life, so we have a pretty good understanding of waves and sets. We also hovered in the deep water of the harbor for about 15 minutes to get a sense of the situation and make a final decision as to whether we’d leave. Another factor is that Profligate can motor pretty quickly. That said, if anybody else had thought of doing it on their boat, we would have tried to dissuade them.

The cool thing about the incident is that when we got to the bar Two Harbors later that day, some San Diego television station was showing video of us going out on their 6 O’Clock News.

However, there are even better videos of boats crossing bars. The first is the one of the 40-ft catamaran Sultanate surfing down a wave and into a harbor off the west coast of Australia. It can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETir8OEdDrc. An even better one is of a Cal 39 that was taking some folks out of the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor on the way to spread the ashes of a loved one when a huge set came through. It can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ml5wBgV7IMs. Although the skipper had displayed poor judgment going out, he handled the situation superbly, keeping the boat pointed directly into the very large but already broken waves.

There are other videos that show what happens when a boat...
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gets hit broadside by a breaking wave. It’s ugly. Don’t ever let that happen to you.

⇑⇓

BAJA BASH BY LAND

Tom Carr’s otherwise excellent and accurate report titled ‘A Baja Bash on Land’ contains a statement with which I disagree. He gives the distance between Guerrero Negro and El Rosario as 165 miles. According to my AAA map, the distance given is actually 224 miles. The accuracy of this number has been verified by experience on two trips in recent years.

It is a number that concerns me because I have dragged my travel trailer along that stretch of highway using my Jeep Liberty, a car notable for having ‘short legs’. Anyone who attempts this distance with such a car should be aware that there is a Pemex station 23 miles north of Guerrero Negro in the village of Jesus Maria.

The beauty of this little-realized tidbit is that the actual distance between Jesus Maria and El Rosario is only 201 miles, a distance my thirsty Jeep can usually cover with one tankful. In fact, I count on it, slowing for headwinds when necessary. So far it has not been necessary to buy the high-priced stuff of questionable quality from the vendors at the Bahia de Los Angeles Junction, nor the ones in Cataviña, all of whom sell from large drums set in the beds of pickup trucks.

Don Neilson
No Boat but a Longtime Reader
San Diego

⇑⇓

THE BEST WAY IS TO TAKE THE MAINLAND ROUTE

Thank you for publishing Tom Carr’s January issue letter on trailering a boat along the Baja Peninsula. I’ve been wondering about that drive since I have twice trailered my boat from the Bay Area to Puerto Vallarta on the mainland route. Carr’s letter confirmed my understanding that the best way to trailer a boat to Cabo is to take the mainland route to Los Mochis, then take the car ferry to La Paz. The truck route border crossing at Nogales, Arizona, is easy with a trailer, and the mainland toll highway is excellent, with only one rough patch around Navolato.

The recent incident with the Australian surfers is troubling, of course, but seems as though it was very unusual. Any insights on this?

Neal Holmlund
Make Me Smile. Express 27
Orinda

Neal — In February 1985, long before the then-12-year-old, 1,063-mile Carretera Transpeninsular Benito Juarez from Tijuana to Cabo San Lucas was improved, we singlehandedly trailered the Cal 25 Absquatchalato from Berkeley to Loreto. We made it in 33 hours, having slept at San Diego and Guerrero Negro. Short on time, we plopped the boat into the water at Puerto Escondido, slept aboard her that night, and had some Mexican friends hand-step the mast the next morning. Then we hightailed it back north with the trailer.

Despite being stopped in Ensenada just before dawn for exceeding the speed limit, not wearing a seat belt, and driving on the wrong side of the road, we made it back to Tiburon in 29 hours. It would have taken longer had the officer in Ensenada — “You have broken all the rules, señor,” he told us — not agreed to take $20 we gave him and promised to pay our fines for us when the court opened the next day.

What we did might not have been very safe, what with all the big potholes on the shoulderless highway and our willingness to drive at night when the cattle liked to warm themselves on

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LETTERS
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the pavement. But we were relatively young, and it was alternately beautiful and terrifying, so we had about as mystical an experience as we could this side of India. We only had one CD, so every time we hear a cut from Graceland we relive the experience.

Our point is that if we could trailer our boat on that road before it was greatly improved, and when Baja was much more primitive and 'foreign', it can’t be that hard now. Furthermore, in the four years prior to our trailering trip, friends had twice towed our Olson 30s back from Cabo on that highway.

We’ve also driven a Honda Element, sans trailer and boat, the 983 miles of mainland highway from Nogales to Puerto Vallarta. The road was much better than the one down the Baja Peninsula had been decades before — except if we’d been towing a boat on the windy last stretch from Tepic to Vallarta. In fact, most of the mainland road was better than most of the main highways in California.

That said, if we wanted to trailer an Express 27 down to Cabo, we’d do it all on the Transpeninsular Highway, as we think it’s a more magical experience than going by the mainland route, and there is less chance of issues with bandidos. We’re not saying that the mainland road is that dangerous — except in the Sinaloa region at night. As you surely know, Culiacán, Sinaloa’s biggest city, is the center of the huge Sinaloa drug-cartel region, and was home to El Chapo, who was recently recaptured at nearby Los Mochis.

We’re not sure what you mean by the “rough patch” of Navolato, but you’re wrong if you think “the incident” involving the two Australian surfers was “very unusual.” To recount, Navolato is where on November 21 the bodies of 33-year-old Aussie surfers Dean Lucas and Adam Coleman were found in their burned-out van. They had come over from La Paz on the car ferry earlier that night, arrived at Topolobampo terminal at 10:30 p.m., and made it about 100 miles south on Highway 200, the main north/south road. Novolato is just off the toll road, and apparently the surfers were identified as targets when they stopped to buy a map.

At some point five Mexicans, described as low-level drug dealers who had been robbing southbound cars, illuminated the flashing lights on their own van and forced the surfers’ van off the side of the road. According to confessions of the three bandidos who have been caught, Coleman resisted by striking one of the thieves, all of whom had been wearing policía and policía federales uniforms, at which point he was shot and killed. Since they’d shot him, they ‘had’ to kill Lucas, too. After the murders, the van was driven to an isolated road and set on fire. Terrible, terrible stuff.

Prior to driving the Element down to Puerto Vallarta, we had repeatedly been warned not to drive anywhere in the Culiacán region — also known as The Cemetery — after dark. Navolato is about six miles on the other side of the toll road from Culiacán. We made Culiacán about dark and hurried our asses to the best downtown hotel we could find. We got a luxurious room for just $100, perhaps because it was Christmas Eve and the hotel was empty. But to be honest, we didn’t breathe deeply until we made it to Mazatlán the next day. The deal in the Culiacán region is that anybody who isn’t known is assumed to be the enemy, be it from another cartel or drug agents. Life is very cheap, so in that area people shoot first and ask ques-
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By the way, Navolato is only about 10 miles from the new marina at Altata. Some cruisers have visited there and had a good time. The area is too sketchy for us to recommend.

If we wanted to get an Express 27 to Cabo, we’d drive it all the way down the Transpeninsular Highway. Actually, that’s not true. Assuming it was winter or spring, we’d trailer the boat to Bahia de los Angeles, about halfway down Baja, and put her into the water there. Or maybe farther down to Puerto Escondido. In either case, we’d put the boat in the water and have an absolute blast sailing her a couple of hundred miles downwind to Cabo. Having twice cruised an Olson 30 in the Sea of Cortez, we can tell you that an Express 27 would be a fabulous minimalist cruising boat for the Sea of Cortez. And if you could leave the boat in Cabo or environs until summer, you could return to her in early summer and have a spinnaker run back up to your trailer in Puerto Escondido or Bahia de los Angeles.

Of course, the very best thing of all would be to enter your Express in the Ha-Ha.

⇑⇓

WILL THE INCIDENT BANKRUPT OYSTER MARINE?

Have you been following the story of Polonia Star III, the relatively new Russian-owned Oyster 90 that lost her keel off Spain last July? She quickly turned turtle. Fortunately, no lives were lost, as the crew were picked up by a fishing boat several hours later.

Based on news reports, it sounds as if Oyster Marine downsized the number of workers and in the process got rid of critical quality control, engineering, and lay-up workers, and ended up with chambones doing hack work in the building of the yacht. It was probably total managerial incompetence and lack of integrity.

Imagine, for example, as they did, adding a ton of ballast in the bow to compensate for the extra weight of a garage structure in the stern. From the photos, the hull skin on that boat also looks way too thin, so that any breakdown from repeated mast and rigging stress would cause fatigue and eventual hull failure.

How sad that the famous Oyster company turned out a total piece of garbage in that boat. I predict they will go bankrupt from this incident.

Carlos Valencia
Felicia, Bristol 29.9
Channel Islands Harbor

Carlos — We have been following the story. The keel falling off one’s boat is probably close to a monohull sailor’s ultimate nightmare. It’s not common, but neither is it unknown. According to the ISAF, there have been 72 recorded cases of keels falling off boats since 1984, with 24 lives being lost. In some cases, the boats were extreme racing boats, but in other cases they were popular production boats of which hundreds had been made.

Among the more famous keel-loss incidents are the Juan K 100 Rambler in the Fastnet Race; Simon Le Bon’s Holland 80
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Drum, also in the Fastnet; Charley, the San Francisco-based Holland 67 sled on her way back from Hawaii; the N/M 67 Pandemonium on her way back from Hawaii; Martella of Finland in the Whitbread Race; and the San Francisco-based J/80 Heatwave coming back from the Farallones. Fortunately, and perhaps miraculously, no lives were lost in any of those incidents.

But there have been terrible tragedies as a result of keel losses. Six lives were lost when the Sun Fast 42 Moquini dropped her keel off South Africa. And more recently, four lives were lost after Cheeki Raffiki, a highly regarded Beneteau 40.7, lost her keel sailing across the Atlantic.

In the cases where the boats have been found or recovered, there have been a variety of causes for the failures. There have been design, construction, maintenance and repair issues. But a number were repaired and are still sailing, namely Rambler 100, which is now Perpetual Loyal.

Polonia Star III lost her keel last July 3 while sailing off Spain in 18 knots of wind while carrying a modest amount of sail. Italian skipper Alessio Cannoni, who had sailed the boat 10,000 ocean miles, said it was only seven minutes between the time the crew heard a strong vibration from the keel area until he had “water cooling my balls while I stood at the chart table.”

Oddly enough, the heavy, overturned boat, minus her keel, was still floating a day later some 20 miles from where her keel had fallen off. She later sank and was then recovered.

Oyster said that they had used industry standard Classification Society rules for the design of the vessel, and that the design calculations had been analyzed and confirmed by independent experts in composite construction. But obviously there was a failure of some sort. The incident continues to be under investigation. Personally, we’d be hesitant to identify a cause based on just photographs.

Does that mean sailors shouldn’t buy an Oyster? We don’t think so. Let’s put the brand in perspective. Oyster was established in 1973 by Richard Matthews, and in 1978 began to have great success with the deck salon concept that became their trademark. Through the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, Oyster was extremely successful in marketing hundreds of well-regarded, large, luxurious cruising boats. Oyster was so successful that in 2008 Matthews, a hardcore racer and avid cruiser, was bought out for a rumored $75 million by Balmoral Capital. In 2012, the company was purchased by HTP Investments. Matthews now has a company called Gunfleet that sells a line of boats similar to Oysters.

Sometimes products change for the worse after the founder is gone, and particularly when taken over by a management company. We don’t know if this was true after Matthews sold the company. It’s also noteworthy that it is the first such keel failure in the 42-year history of the company.

Oyster is such a strong luxury brand that they, like Swan, put on various Oyster Regattas in Europe and the Caribbean. They also did an Oyster Around the World Rally a few years ago. We interviewed a British couple who went around in their Oyster, and they had nothing but rave reviews for their boat, the support by Oyster, and the quality of the Oyster employees in the support team. Despite reportedly losing half a million

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**LETTERS**

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dollars on that first event. Oyster is planning a second around-the-world rally for 2017-2019, a 27-month event that will be 12 months longer than the original version.

We’ll have an updated report when the Polonia Star III investigation is concluded. Until then, we’d remind monohull owners that keels and keel bolts, like the rest of the boat, need monitoring.

⇑⇓

CONTACTING SYLVAIN BARIELLE

I’m looking for a contact with Sylvain Barielle, an old friend of mine. By chance do you or any of your readers have it?

Isabelle Autissier

FRANCE

Readers — We found Sylvain’s Twitter address, but when we tried to pass it along to Isabelle her email address didn’t work. Merde! A sailmaker, Sylvain can be reached through the UK Sails loft in Alameda, at (510) 523-3966 or sanfrancisco@uksailmakers.com.

Frankly, we were chuffed that Isabelle would even ask us, as she’s one of the original women sailing greats. Born and raised in Brittany, she got a degree in nautical engineering, which she basically used to help fishermen. But then she welded together her own 30-ft boat and sailed her singlehanded across the Atlantic. When she returned to France, she decided to try racing. Starting in 1987, she finished very near the top of Mini Transats and Figaros.

In 1991, she entered the BOC solo around-the-world race, the first woman to do so, with Ecureuil Poitou-Charentes 2. Despite being dismasted, she would finish seventh.

In the spring of 1994, Isabelle and a crew sailed Ecureuil Poitou-Charentes 2 from New York around Cape Horn to San Francisco in just 62 days, crushing the old record by two weeks.

Later that year she beat the other 18 boats in the Charles-ton-to-Cape Town leg of the Around Alone by 5.5 days! But she later lost her 83-ft mast. She fabricated a jury rig, but was hit by a monumental wave that rolled the boat 360°. She spent four days in a liferaft not far from Antarctica before being rescued.

Isabelle would be disqualified from the 1996 Vendée Globe around-the-world race for needing assistance to repair a broken rudder. But she would finish the course.

Her fourth solo trip around the world was her most famous — but once again known for misfortune. Her new ride, PRB, flipped in the far reaches of the Southern Ocean. Competitor Giovanni Soldini of Italy battled terrible conditions for 20 hours to reach PRB’s coordinates, and miraculously found the overturned boat despite very limited visibility. Twice he passed PRB and yelled for Autissier, but there was no sign of her. Desperate, Soldini threw a hammer, striking the hull with a thud. A moment later Isabelle crawled out the escape hatch of the overturned boat. She had been sleeping.

That was the end of hardcore racing for Isabelle. “This has been my crazy job for 10 years. I had 10 wonderful years doing this, maybe the best years of my life—great adventures, great friends, great feelings. But now it’s time to do something else.”

Soft-spoken and never seeking the limelight, thoughtful Isabelle gave a TED Talk in which she shared some of what
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she has learned about life from living, and having wild experiences, on the ocean. She spoke of the importance of observing, understanding, and adapting to what nature gives, rather than trying to overpower the forces of the natural world. We recommend checking it out.

⇑⇑ EPIC BRAWLS IN BARS

In 1956, Jake Crane, my father-in-law, sailed the 41-ft cutter Ly-Kou from Saigon to Annapolis with a couple of Frenchmen. One of them was schoolteacher Simone Moncharmont, who wrote two books in French about the adventure. Their favorite spots were the Nicobar Islands of Southeast Asia, where they were received by the queen, and later Gibraltar and the Grenadines, where they ended up in epic brawls in bars.

Ly-Kou may have been owned by a fellow named Tom Chapham in the 1980s. Besides that small hint, I have no idea what became of that gorgeous teak boat. The only thing I have from her is the sextant in a wooden box.

If anybody knows more about Ly-Kou or where she might be now, I’d love to hear from them. I can be reached at bernardi.eeb.ucsc.edu.

Giacomo Bernardi
Professor, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
University of California Santa Cruz

Giacomo — We’re not sure if you realize it, but very few people cruised in the 1950s, so the voyage of the Ly-Kou was extremely unusual. For example, Eric and Susan Hiscock did the first of their three circumnavigations from 1952 to 1955. The world, and particularly the world of cruising, was not only so different back then, it hardly existed.

We did a little research and discovered that Ky-Lou stopped 91 times on the way from Saigon to Miami, and on July 11, 1958, pulled into Chicago YC. It was noted that her skipper, Patrick Ellam, then 38, had sailed a 20-ft boat across the Atlantic five years before.

What became of the Ly-Kou? We don’t know for sure, but if she’s like almost all other boats of her era, she probably fell into disuse and disrepair, and is no longer with us. Wood boats were never intended to last. It’s a pity; we’d like to have seen her.

⇑⇓ LET’S DO THE SOCAL TA-TA AGAIN

I’m wondering if another SoCal Ta-Ta is planned for 2016. It looks as though it’s a really great rally, so if it’s a go again this year, I hope to have my boat and crew ready.

Steve Reeder
Desperado, Cheoy Lee Offshore 47
Ventura

Steve — Yeah, what the heck, let’s do it again. The dates will be September 10-17. We’ll have the same course — Santa Barbara to Santa Cruz Island for two nights; Channel Islands Harbor for one night; Paradise Cove for one night; and one night at Two Harbors, Catalina.

As previously, the fleet will be limited to 50 boats because of space limitations in Santa Barbara. Ta-Ta entries will be able to reserve space in the har-
I spent over three years chasing submarines around Cape Hatteras aboard an American warship, the USS Beale. That destroyer was 376 feet long and had a beam of only 39 feet, yet to me she was a thing of beauty. She took everything the Cape could throw at her, including a couple of 60° rolls. 

White Pearl brings a new meaning to "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." 

P.S. Thank you for a great publication. It is a magazine from which beautiful dreams are made.

Ken Dietsch
Bend, OR

I don’t know if this will help Ben Jones in his search for information on Lapworth 36s, but the actor Buddy Ebsen owned one with a turquoise hull named Turquoise. This was before Ebsen designed and built his cat Polynesian Concepts.

Bud Desenberg owned a blue-hulled one that my dad sailed on. She did an L.A. to Tahiti Race in the early 1960s. Kim Desenberg, a longtime figure in Northern California sailing, is Bud’s son.

Both of the above-mentioned Lapworth 36s sailed out of the Balboa YC in Newport Beach. As I recall, they had enough Lapworth 36s for a fleet.

Gary Jackson
Sonrisa
See us at these upcoming boat shows:
Seattle, January 29 - February 6
Miami International, February 11-15
Palm Beach Boat Show, March 17-20
Strictly Sail - Richmond CA, April 7-10
San Francisco, April 28 - May 1
LETTERS

↑↓ THERE MUST BE A MIDDLE GROUND

As a resident of Alameda since the ‘80s and former owner of a sailing school that spent the first two years of its life in Alameda Marina, I have reviewed your article and Mr. Poland’s op-ed piece in the Contra Costa Times, as well as some of the replies to his article on that website.

Demonizing dry storage tenants as ‘not from Alameda’ is quite perverse. There are only, to my count, two places in the entire Central Bay Area where boats can be dry-stored and hoisted into the water affordably. All of those boats are small and would suffer damage to their function if forced to re-locate to a wet slip somewhere. And, good luck trying to get permits for another dry-storage yard elsewhere. Mr. Poland talks about being unable to make the current plan financially sustainable — what about the investments of the boaters whose boats’ values will be decimated if they can’t find a place to properly and safely hoist into and out of the water?

Claiming that the Alameda Marina doesn’t provide water-front access is false on its front. It’s mostly an open area. And, by the way, the odds on there being true access to the water rather than just a view of the water from a narrow sidewalk in front of private homes are quite low.

We need developers to continue to keep Alameda up with the times. I don’t resent his making as much money from his investments as possible. And, he bought this property with full intention to do what he’s got planned. However, to describe it as ‘the only way to preserve the operation of the marina’ is a canard. He will build, sell the parcels and leave wealthier for it. He should call a spade a spade. I understand rhetoric to be just that — an attempt to phrase persuasively. However, as my philosophy professor put it, “There’s a very thin line between rhetoric and deceit.”

There is a ton of unused or underdeveloped waterfront in Alameda. Places that need ‘improvement’ much more than does Alameda Marina as it is described: “demolition and/or replacement and/or comprehensive rehabilitation of existing improvements on the property and for construction of a new, higher-value project.”

I think there must be a middle ground between no upgrades and improvements and 400 housing units plus a couple of low-profile businesses. If Mr. Poland is serious about hearing from the sailing community, then, let’s start talking about compromise. There are many Alamedans who would represent the interests of sailors and boaters well while being responsive to hard financial data that helps clarify for the public rather than ‘sell’ the public on his plans. That has yet to happen from my perspective.

Rich Jepsen
Alameda

↑↓ "YOU’RE BLOCKING OUR SLIP!"

After a great time at the Sausalito Lighted Boat Parade, we ducked in to drop off some passengers. Before we were even near the pier, another boat came up behind us and we heard a loud bellow, “You’re blocking our slip!” We then abandoned that ‘touch and go’ landing and moved on, only to have them repeat the warning. Finally, after running out of room to maneuver, we just ignored them, dropped our passengers, and left.

So did they pull into any of the slips that we were near? No. They took off for the far end of the marina. I’m not sure what was going on, but they came across as arrogant, bullying, pushy and downright rude. My personal suspicion is

“When a man comes to like a sea life, he is not fit to live on land.”
— Dr. Samuel Johnson

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that someone was a little too full of themselves or had a few to drink.
Try to be polite and courteous out there, people. A minute’s patience, a friendly word or a wave, and most things sort themselves out. Belated Merry Christmas, and Happy Channukah, New Year, Kwanzaa, and whatever else does it for you!

Bob and Gale Schulke
Planet Earth

Bob and Gale — We’re sorry to say that the picture you paint isn’t very clear to us, so we don’t have any idea what happened. Generally speaking, patience and courtesy do go a long way, especially on unusual occasions such as Lighted Boat Parades. On the other hand, some people — and we’re not suggesting that you’re part of this group — think they are entitled to park in someone else’s slip for 15 to 20 minutes during which time extended goodbyes are exchanged by all 30 people on the boat.

We’re all for polite and courteous.

⇑⇓

THE RV IN UTAH OR THE CANAL BOAT IN FRANCE?

We previously talked about our experiences with canal boats. We’d bought one from LeBoat in Narbonne and traveled all over France with it. Unfortunately, our partner forced us to sell, so we are now looking for another boat.

We’d like to buy in one of the northern countries, such as Belgium or the Netherlands, and are interested in your thoughts on how to shop up there. Did you find your boat from a broker or just walking the docks? And any wise words for buying outside France? Lastly, where is your boat now? Have you spent any winters on your canal boat?

Joe and Mary Thornton
Seattle, WA

Joe and Mary — The only reason we write a little about canal boats in a sailing magazine like Latitude 38 is that given the exchange rate with a euro, they are now a very viable economic option for ‘six and sixers’ doing something other than spending their summers driving an RV around the West. As you learned, Europe is fabulous, and enjoying it on your boat/home is convenient and economical.

We’ve actually bought two canal boats; a smaller one two years ago in Volendam, a Sausalito-like place just north of Amsterdam, and a 42-footer last summer in Terherne, Friesland, about 100 miles north of Amsterdam. Based on what we’ve seen and heard, we would always buy a boat in the Netherlands. The Dutch build great boats and they do a much better job of taking care of them than do the French. It’s just a fact. The service people we encountered in the Netherlands were much more professional, too. We were told that we could sell our Dutch-built boats for a 20% premium in France. And many French people come to the Netherlands to buy boats.

We found our boats through a combination of looking through the Internet and the free magazines distributed at marinas, and by walking the docks. But unlike in California, where all marinas are on the coast and pretty big, they are all over the place in France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Many marinas in the Netherlands don’t allow boats for sale to be berthed in them, so these boats have to go to special marinas where all the boats are for sale. It makes it like a used car lot, which is very helpful for boat buyers comparing boats. There is a similar marina at St. Jean de Losne, the center of canal boating in France, but we were not at all impressed with the quality of the boats for sale there compared with those in the
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Netherlands. It also helps that just about every Dutch person speaks English as well as most Americans.

Marjani, the 31-footer we bought in Volendam but never used, is currently in a marina in Terherne and for sale directly from us for $20,000. She’s a great little canal cruiser with an excellent single diesel. After we bought the larger boat, we found that many people prefer the smaller canal boats for their lower price, less maintenance and simplicity. Because there are so many inexpensive marinas — $10/night — with all the amenities, you don’t need a larger boat with all the bells and whistles. Boats like Marjani are ideal for retirees on a budget.

Because Doña and the Wanderer are still working full-time, we bought the larger boat, a 42-ft Valkkruiser, for about $90,000. Like Marjani, Majestic Dalat is steel. We quickly found that she’s 12 feet longer than most slips and is truly larger than most couples need. But it was very important to us to get a boat that has two engines and a bow thruster, because if one engine craps out and takes a long time to repair, we’d lose our entire season. With just one engine and a thruster, we have all we need to cruise all we want.

Majestic Dalat is currently located at Port Ilon, about 40 miles as the crew flies from Paris and two days via the Seine. We can’t wait to get back to her in early May, which is somewhat early in the season and sometimes a little cool. After six months in the tropics, it’s a nice change for us, particularly knowing the heat will come in June and July. We hope to spend at least another three weeks in Paris, then continue on through the Loire Valley and Burgundy, and then perhaps rocket down the fast and untamed Rhine River back to the Netherlands. We really liked the Netherlands and hear that Belgium is terrific, too. We’re saving the Canal du Midi and the South for a couple of summers from now.

We have not done any ‘winter stay-overs’ on the canal boats. Not to sound like complete asses, but we’ve worked our asses off — and continue to do so — to be able to enjoy four garden spots of the world three months a year. And while a number of people spend the winter on their boats in the Canal du Midi in the South of France, we think it’s better to be on a boat in Mexico or the Caribbean at that time of year.

↑⇑ IT WASN’T SEXUAL, BUT HOW COULD WE FORGET?

I know it’s been 20 years, but I hope Richard, the publisher, will remember me. We met at Las Palmas in the Canary Islands when I was looking for a ride across the Atlantic to the Caribbean. It was a day after the start of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, which Richard had missed because of a Latitude deadline, and almost all the boats were gone. So I was beginning to lose hope.

I was asking every boat that was leaving for a berth, but had no luck. Then I asked Richard. We talked for about five minutes, and he said I could come. A few minutes later he came back and said he wasn’t so sure after all, but to check back in the morning when they were going to leave. I did and he told me to hop on.

As Richard knows, that was the start of an absolutely amazing Atlantic crossing with eight
crew on his Ocean 71 Big O. I think he published a photo of me in the magazine. I saw him again at Race Week in Antigua the following year, and when he waved, I jumped off the boat I was on to swim over to Big O.

I got together with a sailor that I met shortly after that crossing, got married within the year (for a green card for him), and unexpectedly moved back to New York City. I spent 10 years there, got divorced, headed south, and for the last 10 years have been running a company for the guy whose boat I got off right before I got onto Big O. I quit recently and am going to spend next year in Central America, traveling — hopefully sailing — and leading a couple of yoga retreats/trainings. Richard will remember that I got everyone doing yoga on that crossing. No plan after that.

I’ve been out of sailing for quite a few years now, but am going to get back into it again to cruise. I just started looking for my first ride and saw that Latitude was still there, so I had to say hello. I hope our paths will cross again. Peace.

Laura Golden
Central America

Laura — We remember you very fondly as a great part of the terrific nine-person Big O transatlantic team. We’d been on deadline, so we’d arrived in the Canaries a day after the start of the ARC, exhausted by having to make awful connections in New York and Madrid. When we got to the boat, Captain Jim Drake had put together a crew of seven. There was his girlfriend Annette, who had been along for the whole California-to-Turkey and back across the Med warm-up; Big Bill from Australia; the gal from Australia whose name we can no longer remember; a gal named Sue; and the two young novice sailors from Amsterdam. The only ones we’d seen before were Jim and Annette.

We recall staggering around Las Palmas with jet lag for a few hours, then met you on the dock about nightfall. After we talked and you sounded normal, we said you could be on the crew. Why not? When we broke the news to the rest of the crew, they — at least the women — were horrified. “Where will she sleep?” they demanded.

“Well, she can sleep in the aft cabin with me,” we sputtered, unable to imagine how finding a spot for a ninth person could be a problem on a 71-ft boat. This didn’t go over so well with Annette, who was best friends with our long-time on-off, on-off, ad nauseam girlfriend and future wife the Wanderette, who had left the boat just before we arrived.

“On the sole, on the sole, she can sleep on the sole in the aft cabin,” we clarified. “not in the double bunk with us.”

Given the crew’s objections, we had to tell you we couldn’t give you a final decision until just before we left the next morning. We didn’t think it was fair that you should be discriminated against because you were young, female and cute, so when morning came we just told you to hop on, and you — with all your possessions with you — did just that. The rest, of course, is Big O history.

There are three things we remember about you on that great trip. The first is when we were overtaking that German boat about halfway across, and you ran up to the bow wearing nothing but your panties to wave to them. We think that’s the photo we ran of you. The second is the time we crossed paths with a ship whose captain was speaking in French. Much to the shock of everybody on the crew, you walked over to the radio, picked up the mic, and started jabbering away in French. If we remember correctly, you’d taught school in Belgium for awhile. We were impressed. Lastly, there was the afternoon about two days out of St. Lucia when the trades had gone light and the Caribbean sun was beating down. The whole crew was lying
LETTERS

around the deck in silence, pretty much wilted. You had your headphones on, and all of a sudden you shattered the quiet by accompanying Pat Benatar on Heartbreaker at the top of your lungs. Once again we were all impressed.

There’s that famous Mark Twain quote about how 20 years from now you won’t regret the things that you did, but rather the things that you didn’t do. Well, we didn’t do anything, and not only made that audacious trip from California to Turkey and back to the Caribbean with Big O, we signed you on as crew at the spur of the moment. And Twain was right, because we really would have regretted it had we not done any of it. By the way dear readers, it was entirely platonic.

⇑⇓

PLEASE, CAN’T WE HAVE POSITION #4?

Waaaaaaw! We want a good Baja Ha-Ha sign-up position, too. I, Michael, have been reading Latitude since the 1980s, and it’s finally our turn to participate.

In late 2013, Allison Lehman of Yachtfinders helped my wife Lisa and me buy Footloose, a Catana 471 in Tacoma, Washington. We did some cruising with her in the San Juans, although not enough, and then spent the winter of 2014 in Astoria. We’ve sold the house, gotten rid of all the stuff, and are now living aboard — legally — at Ballena Bay Marina in Alameda.

Lisa has to do just a little more work before she gets to pack it in. I’m retired, which means I get to work on the to-do list. It’s 90 items long as of today. But we’ve got some big things done. Jason at Argo did our standing rigging, while Bill Colombo at Doyle Sails is building us a new set of Hydra-Net white sails.

We plan to start our cruise in June, with some time in the Delta. Then we’ll head to Tomales Bay, where I sailed for decades. Then south to Catalina, where we’ve never been before. Then, the long-awaited Ha-Ha.

After a year in the Sea of Cortez, we hope we will have decided whether to turn right or left at the Canal. And just like Jonathan and Rebecca Mote of the Corona del Mar-based Jeanneau 42DS Serendipity — who were promised slot #3 by the Grand Poobah — we plan to keep on going until we don’t want to go any farther.

So please, please, please, can’t we have position #4?

Michael and Lisa Britt
Footloose, Catana 471
Ballena Bay

Michael and Lisa — Oh boy, we’ve really stepped in it, haven’t we? Yes, we will promise you position #4. But that’s the end of it — everybody else has to wait to sign up on the official entry day early in May.

⇑⇓

IT’S NO CONTEST BETWEEN EAST COAST AND WEST COAST SAILING

The editor’s response to why he didn’t/doesn’t start an East Coast version of Latitude got me to thinking about East Coast sailing versus West Coast sailing.

I grew up on Chesapeake Bay and sailed there between the ages of 8 and 25. I also was a qualified Naval Officer of the Deck for Formation Steaming (OODF) for the years I was in the Navy, based in Little Creek, Virginia. So I have conned everything from an 8-ft dinghy to a 510-ft LSD on those waters.

And on the West Coast, I’ve had my Islander 28 WindWalker based out of Santa Cruz for more than 30 years, sailing Monterey Bay and coastal waters. In my opinion, the following are the differences between East Coast and West Coast sailing:

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1) Things don’t go ‘bump in the night’ as often on the West Coast. Back East they have these things called sand bars. They shift almost every winter, and many of them aren’t marked. In addition, the sailing waters of the East Coast are generally much more shallow than on the West Coast. For example, once I’m clear of a harbor on Monterey Bay, I’m pretty much home free in terms of depth. But I do have to watch out for the kelp.

2) On the West Coast you can pretty much pick your sailing conditions, as the wind is almost always out of the northwest. Want a quiet sail? Go out at 9 a.m. and come back at noon. Want a spirited sail? Go out at 1 p.m. and come back at 5 p.m. The wind direction and speed on the East Coast, on the other hand, are highly variable and unpredictable.

3) I like ice in my cocktail glass as opposed to my boat’s sinking in ice in her slip. On the East Coast, people have to use a bubbler to keep ice away from the hull.

4) I like my water in the water, not in the air. So when it comes to the East Coast’s 90° of heat and 90% humidity in the summer, fergeddaboutit!

5) During the summer on Chesapeake Bay they have mosquitoes that are big enough to fly off with small dogs.

6) When it gets hot and humid on the East Coast and you want to swim, you have to remember that there are ‘stinging nettles’ that will keep you out of the water. All right, we have great white sharks on the West Coast, so it’s a tie.

Throw in the longer sailing season, more wildlife — see the attached photos of whales taken from my boat when she was just 300 yards off the harbor mouth at Santa Cruz — and it’s no contest.

Van Tunstall
WindWalker, Islander 28
Aptos

Van — While all your points are valid, we think it’s more of a comparison between Chesapeake Bay sailing and California sailing. For example, the Pacific Northwest doesn’t have the reliable northwesterlies and the season is pretty short up there, too. And while the Northeast has a ridiculously short sailing season, it does have reliable afternoon winds, and it also has many great cruising destinations that California cruisers would die for. Then too, there is some fine sailing to be enjoyed in Florida during all but the hottest summer months.

The other big advantage that California cruisers have over East Coast cruisers is that it’s only half the distance to the tropics, and much easier to get there. And the cost of cruising in Mexico is a fraction of what it is in the Eastern Caribbean.

Van Tunstall
WindWalker, Islander 28
Aptos

In a typical month, we receive a tremendous volume of letters. So if yours hasn’t appeared, don’t give up hope. We welcome all letters that are of interest to sailors. Please include your name, your boat’s name, hailing port and, if possible, a way to contact you for clarifications.

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

One of the most unusual boats ever built on the West Coast came into the Latitude spotlight recently, as the 36-ft proa Jzerro — which was cold-molded with wood and epoxy — is a double-ender in the most literal sense of the word, as she is perfectly symmetrical. That is, her two bows (ends) are identical, and she has two rudders, either of which will drop into place when needed. Her single ama, which is always employed to windward of the main hull, carries a changeable quantity of water ballast.

Last month, we caught up with Finn by phone while he was preparing for a nonstop solo run from L.A. to the Panama Canal. His game plan is to deliver Jzerro to New Orleans, where — assuming he still thinks she is the right tool for the job — he’ll make modifications that include upgrading the ama and installing a taller carbon rig in order to carry bigger spinnakers. He intends to set sail from the Big Apple late next fall. If computer models are correct — and Lady Luck is riding shotgun — Finn could make it around in 60-70 days. We can’t wait to follow along via Jzerro’s transponder track.

To learn more about the campaign, see www.2Oceans1Rock.org.

— Andy

puddle jump parties in

Almost as predictable as the swallows returning to San Juan Capistrano each spring, there’s long been an annual westward migration of cruisers who set sail for French Polynesia from various West Coast anchorages — a crossing we call the Pacific Puddle Jump.

The roster of entries for this loosely organized rally is near 100 and growing, with boats from at least a dozen countries. (See www.pacificpuddlejump.com.)

As in years past, Latitude 38 will host PPJ Sendoff Parties in both Mexico and Panama, where each crew will be interviewed and photographed for their 15
mexico and panama

minutes of fame in these pages:
• February 29, 3-6 p.m. — Vallarta YC at Nuevo Vallarta’s Paradise Village
• March 6, 2-5 p.m. — Shelter Bay Marina, Panama
• March 7, 2-5 p.m. — Wyndham Hotel, Balboa (Albrook), Panama

In June, we and our Tahitian partners will again host the three-day Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendez-Vous (June 24-26), a celebration of the fleet’s arrival that introduces cruisers to Polynesian traditions in music, dance, sport and cuisine. Stay tuned for PPJ updates.

— andy

a marquesan epiphany

When cruising sailors find themselves getting stressed out from trying to stick to a planned itinerary, the best solution may simply be to change the plan. That’s what Eric and Leslie Rigney have done at least twice since setting sail from their Marina del Rey homeport.

The first time was in the fall of 2014 when they were scrambling to complete preparations on their 1987 Tayana 42 Kandu in order to participate in that year’s Baja Ha-Ha rally with their adolescent sons Bryce, then 13, and Trent, then 11. “The stress of trying to achieve that goal prevents me from sleeping,” Eric wrote to the Rally Committee in his dropout note. They’d actually signed up and dropped out the previous year also due to a misunderstanding over Eric’s retirement status. But they did attend the 2013 Costume Kickoff Party in full pirate garb, and collected their swag bag full of Ha-Ha logowear.

The family finally began their cruising adventures in February 2015,
epiphany — continued

sailing first to Mexico, then eventually to the Galapagos Islands and on to the Marquesas. Eric was wearing his bright-yellow 2013 Ha-Ha shirt when Sausalito-based cruisers Sylvia and Barry Stompe of the Hughes 48 Iolani bumped into him on the dock at Nuku Hiva’s Taiohae Bay last month. “Before the family’s arrival,” explains Sylvia, “They’d been beset by difficulties — poor weather, the adjustments to living aboard, breakdowns — and thus had not been having a great time. But after arriving in the Marquesas, they had an epiphany. Rather than rush onwards with their planned five-year circumnavigation, they decided to spend a whole season here. As a result, of course, they’re having a much more in-depth experience than most cruisers we’ve met.” And as you can see by the photo on the left, they’re now all smiles.

Sylvia explains, “The family has recently obtained certificates of...
epiphany — continued

resident status in Taiohae Bay, the administrative capital of the Marquesas. The boys are attending the local secondary school; Eric [a former motion picture exec.] is involved with a vocational training program, helping entrepreneurs present their ideas, and culinary students learn their trade. He is also organizing an outrigger racing team to travel to Southern California. Leslie, a musician and opera singer by trade, is teaching English to locals for free, working with the local music club and school music program, and she sings in church. Volunteering is fun for them, and has been a great way to make friends and integrate into the community.

As we learned by digging out the family’s entry materials from the 2013 Ha-Ha, this unplanned stint in the remote Marquesas archipelago is a case of coming full circle for Eric. He and his three younger brothers were raised by their Uncle Bill (Kohut), a mechanical engineer who, Eric recalls, “taught us self-sufficiency, and how to repair and maintain just about anything mechanical or otherwise. He set strong examples in the areas of education, making your own opportunities, dreaming outside the box, the power of small steps leading to big achievements, service to others, and avoiding materialism at all cost.”

The ultimate example of Uncle Bill’s rugged individualism was when he enlisted Eric, then 14, to help him build a 32-ft ferrocement Colin Archer-style cutter, which they sailed to Hawaii and back, followed a few years later by a more ambitious cruise to French Polynesia, where they lived among the islanders for 18 months.

After completing college, Eric took a break from grad school at California State University at Northridge to captain the same boat, Getel, back to the islands again, where he researched his master’s thesis on the effects of television on remote islanders.

With such a background, we can’t imagine why the Rigneys would ever have thought they could stick to a predetermined game plan. But we certainly look forward to hearing from them as they slowly make their way around the planet.

— andy

super 12s to debut in 2017

About a year ago, when ex-America’s Cup employee Tom Ehman introduced his pipe dream of staging a 12-Meter racing renaissance on San Francisco Bay — in reaction to the astronomical costs of foiling-era A-Cup campaigning — the idea drew a mixed reaction. But today, momentum is building, with several nations showing strong interest, a summer 2017 race date announced, and last month the first renderings released for this sexy new one-design class.

Farr Yacht Design embraced the challenge of drawing an elegant-looking sloop reminiscent of the classic 12-Meters (used in Cup competition prior to 1987) above the waterline, yet with ultra-modern...
super 12s — continued

As reported earlier, the new event, dubbed the San Francisco Racing Challenge, would take place annually here on the Bay, and would be focused on match racing among teams that would have strict crew nationality requirements — including participation of female sailors, as well as crew under 30 and over 65. Only a bare minimum of modern electronic gadgetry would be allowed.

Because boats would be identical (apart from sail inventories), boat construction cost would be $2- to $3 million — ‘affordable’, at least by recent A-Cup standards — and would be used for a decade or more of racing. According to Ehman, the strongest interest thus far has been from an Italian team, with additional interest by teams from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Thailand, and Spain, in addition to three US teams.

The first event’s date? July 21, 2017 — shortly after the conclusion of America’s Cup 35. Skeptics be warned. This is one pipe dream that might actually come to fruition.

— andy

solo sailors in lonely waters

As we’ve been reporting here and in ‘Lectronic Latitude, in recent weeks the massive trimarans IDEC Sport and Spindrift 2 roared around the world through the high latitudes of the Southern Ocean, attempting to set a new Trophée Jules Verne record. Neither did so, but along the way their crews kept armchair supporters in many nations updated through blog posts, press releases and uploaded onboard photography. (See page 60 for a recap.) Meanwhile, far from the glare of international media spotlights, two solitary sailors have also been circling the globe on different routes without the fanfare that accompanies heavily sponsored campaigns.

In 2007 US Virgin Islands-based Donna Lange completed a two-stop solo circumnavigation via the Great Capes aboard her spartan Southern Cross 28 Inspired Insanity — one of only a few women ever to sail that route alone. Then last July 31 this grandmother of 11 set sail from Rhode Island aboard the same boat, determined to complete another lap around the planet, this time nonstop. If she does it, she will become the first American woman to hold that distinction.

As we go to press, Donna is sailing in very lonely waters: along latitude 43°S, roughly halfway between New Zealand and Cape Horn, the last of the Great Capes that she has yet to round before driving north to complete the loop at Rhode Island.

Meanwhile, longtime bluewater cruiser Jeff Hartjoy of Washington state is roughly 1,000 miles northeast of Cape Horn in his battle-
SIGHTINGS

**for merlin**

phosis. Only the hull is original. “The third owner redid the house and put all new hardware on it,” said Lee. “We’re on the fourth mast, the fourth engine, third keel, and second deck and cockpit.”

Lee removed the machinery for the canting keel. “We’re not going to do the canting keel again.” Lee has a couple of leads on a fixed keel, and one possibility is to remodel the existing keel. “It’s a 12-ft draft and we don’t want any more than 10 and a half. It’s too deep for lots of places and it just turns into inconve-

**lonely waters — continued**

tested Baba 40 ketch **Sailors Run**, heading for South Africa. Having started his trip last Halloween from Bahia Caraquez, Ecuador, the 69-year-old retiree got the trickiest cape out of the way early, but many substantial challenges still lie ahead. If he is successful, Jeff will be the oldest American to circumnavigate alone nonstop.

Needless to say, to complete such an arduous rounding — even at six knots — you need to be a jack of all trades as well as an extremely competent mariner. Thus far, both Donna and Jeff have faced all sorts of fix-it challenges, from torn sails to computer problems. On January 9 **Inspired Insanity** took a knockdown that broke her boom. “It was a critical point,” wrote Donna in an insightful blog posting (www.sailblogs.com/member/sailtwicearound), “as now the entire second half of the trip would cater to sailing a vessel with a
broken boom. “With the mast intact, she ran her main loose-footed while devising a step-by-step plan to splint the boom using whatever materials she had on board.

Half a world away, Jeff has had plenty of problems of his own; especially trying to hold his genoa together. He’s reported sewing it back together so many times that by now it must look like a patchwork quilt. “Wow, 82 day totally alone;” he wrote late last month, “not another soul to lay eyes upon. This all seems pretty strange. I’m definitely a prisoner of this voyage, and thank God it is by my own doing.” (Get email reports via: sailorsrun01@yahoo.com)

As this issue hits the streets February 1, Donna will have been at sea for 185 days, with less than 10,000 miles to go. Jeff will have been at sea for 92 days, with half the distance yet to conquer. We wish them both the very best of luck.

— andy

The boat has a bowsprit now, and swept-back spreaders. “It was done in ’97 before they were sweeping ‘em back as far — it’s only half-sweep. The current poles are 100 pounds and 28-ft long — way too big. “In the original cockpit, the wheel was clear up where the traveler is. The cockpit itself was much smaller. The deckhouse was three inches lower and stopped before the mast. There’s nothing wrong with this one functionally, but it’s really ugly.”

Lee’s ambition is to race Merlin in the 2017 Transpac. “We went with eight crew
SIGHTINGS

**hang 20 with lori & moni**

“When we heard that *Great White* might be for sale it sparked something in us and made us realize that we wanted to take the next step and become boat owners,” said Bay Area sailor Lori Tewksbury. She had doublehanded an Express 27 years ago and always loved the boat — and doublehanding. Her friend Moni Blum has been racing on a fully-crewed Express 27 for the past few years and also loves the boat.

“We’ve always enjoyed sailing together and realized that owning a boat together would make it affordable for both of us,” explained Tewksbury.

In September, they talked to *Great White’s* owners, Rachel Fogel and JP Sirey, during Jazz Cup and Rolex Big Boat Series. With the Express, Fogel and Sirey had taken second place in Doublehanded 2 in the 2010 Pacific Cup.

“It took a little while, but we finalized the deal over breakfast at All’s Fare the Sunday of Great Pumpkin, October 25,” said Lori. She and Moni plan to race fully crewed inside the Bay — hopefully with all women — and doublehanded on the ocean, and will share driving and foredeck between the two of them (both normally do bow on other boats). “We’re working on a paint job to match the new name of the boat, *Hang 20* — which comes from us both being foredeck.” And yes, they’ll have a proper renaming ceremony.

Neither sailor has owned a boat before. Lori Tewksbury, who’s 48, has extensive experience crewing on other people’s boats. “I started as foredeck with Bill Chapman on the Catalina 27 *Latin Lass*, have experience doublehanding the Express 27 offshore with Rachel, crewed ocean racing on *Petard* (Farr 36) and *Ahi* (Santana 35), then *Sea Star* (Cal 39).” On the Bay, her experience — usually on the bow — includes many years with *Ahi*, ‘little’ *Bodacious* (a 40-it Farr one-ton), *Bodacious*+ (ID48), *Stewball* (Express 37) and *Sea Star*, and also years racing aboard the Merit 25 *Bewitched* on the Oakland Estuary. Last year the Martinez resident joined the Moore 24 *Hasta Nunca* for beer can races in Vallejo. “I learned to sail at Cal Sailing Club on dinghies and try to get out on a trapeze whenever I can,” she added.

Moni Blum, age 33, lives in Berkeley but comes from Germany, where she started sailing originally. Like her new boat partner, she developed her skills at Cal Sailing Club in Berkeley. “Straight from the beginning of my racing keelboats I was put on the foredeck and never left it,” said Blum. “My first was on an Express 27, *Hurricane*, and this is also the reason why I fell in love with the Expresses. Over the last years I have crewed in Bay races on many different boats, but my two main boats were the Cal 39 *Sea Star* (Bay and offshore) and the Express 27 *Current Affair* (on the Bay).”

In January, the duo sailed doublehanded in the 11-boat full-crew Express 27 division of the Corinthian Midwinters, and were signed up for January 30’s SSS Three Bridge Fiasco. We wish them the best of luck.

— chris

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**continued**

in ’77, and they were all 25-35 years old. Some of us are older now! So it may take more.” He’ll also do Wednesday night races in Santa Cruz. Regarding the 2016 Pacific Cup, Lee confirmed, “It’s available for charter. Nobody has raised their hand yet.”

Lee said that when he took delivery, “It hadn’t been used for three years. The last season they sailed it was 2012.” The previous owner, Jerome Sullivan, was 82 when he bought her. “He had five great seasons on the Great Lakes, and then it was just a little much.”

— chris

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Moni Blum delivers her new-to-her Express 27 from Richmond to the start of a Berkeley Chowder Race.
El Niño Ate

Anyone who’s spent a real winter on the water there can tell you that San Francisco’s South Bay can fetch up some nasty wave action in stormy weather. We haven’t had a ‘real’ winter in a few years, but this season’s El Niño-driven march of fronts has changed all that.

In the churned-up sea state, the temporary docks that were intended for use in McCovey Cove for the Progressive San Francisco Boat Show on January 15-18 would have resembled bucking broncos more than safe walkways.

So, the organizers at the National Marine Manufacturer Association made the tough decision to postpone the third edition of the City’s boat show. They

Receding Ice Reveals Lost Ships

If you’re always looking for ‘silver linings’, you’ll be interested in recent discoveries made by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientists thanks to diminishing sea ice in the Arctic.

Early last month the agency announced discovery of the remains of two sail-powered whaling ships that, along with 31 others, became trapped by pack ice in September 1871 — 144 years ago — in Arctic latitudes off Alaska’s northwest coast. All 33 ships had to be abandoned, leaving 1,200 crewmen stranded in the icy wasteland ashore.

Fitting maxi-trimarans Spindrift 2 (ex-Banque Populaire V) and IDEC Sport (ex-Groupama 3, Lending Club 2, etc.) against the 45-day circumnavigation record set by Banque Populaire V in 2011-12, the de-facto 2015-16 Trophée Jules Verne ‘race’ was a thriller from start to finish. After crossing the startline between France’s Ushant Island and Cornwall’s Lizard Light just two hours apart on November 22, IDEC Sport and Spindrift 2 raced down the Atlantic on an almost ideal weather window, completing just one jibe to reach the equator. Both were well ahead of the record pace until being slowed by a storm front off the Brazilian coast. Once past the Cape of Good Hope and into the Indian Ocean, Francis Joyon’s IDEC Sport dove south and reeled off an incredible five-and-a-half-day run — the 105-ft VPLP trimaran’s speed almost never dropped below 35 knots, allowing her to set a new Indian Ocean crossing record.

Regaining 800 miles on Banque Pop V’s reference time and closing to within striking distance of her larger rival, IDEC Sport stalked Dona Bertarelli and Yann Guichard’s 130-ft Spindrift 2 as the two boats sailed within sight of each other for a time while crossing the Pacific. Living up to its name, the Pacific Ocean slowed both trimarans with light air off New Zealand and lingering high pressure in the middle, plus short, choppy seas on the approach to Cape Horn. Despite these adverse conditions, Spindrift 2 still managed to cross the Pacific quickly enough to maintain a lead over the reference time at Cape Horn, with IDEC Sport less than a day behind and just three and a half hours off the record-breaking pace.

With both Spindrift 2 and IDEC Sport still in the hunt some three-quarters of the way around the globe, both crews pushed as hard as they could up the Atlantic. In the end, their fate was sealed by the gods, who sided with ‘their own’ and protected Loïck Peyron and Sam Davies, who stalked the de-facto 2015-16 Trophée Jules Verne ‘race’ within less than a day behind and just three and a half hours off the record-breaking pace.

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the boat show

worked through the night of January 7 to break the news and confirm alternate dates, April 28-May 1. “El Niño is wreaking havoc on the Bay Area, and, as a result, is forcing us to change our plans for the San Francisco Boat Show,” wrote NMMA’s vice president, Dave Geoffroy, at the time.

Then, on January 25, NMMA announced that there would, after all, be no show this year. “After speaking with many exhibitors over the past couple weeks, and running into significant challenges that a last-minute move requires, we have decided to cancel this year’s show,” said Geoffroy.

— chris

lost ships — continued

Within a few weeks the entire fleet had broken up and sunk to the bottom. Incredibly though, all of the shipwrecked crewmen were eventually rescued by seven additional whaling ships that had been operating nearby — but in order to do so, those vessels had to jettison their hard-earned cargo of whale oil, as well as other supplies.

According to the NOAA report, “With less ice in the Arctic as a result of climate change, archaeologists now have more access to potential shipwreck sites than ever before... Using state-of-the-art sonar and sensing technology, the NOAA team was able to plot the ‘magnetic signature’ of the two wrecks, including the outline of their flattened hulls. The wreck site also revealed anchors, fasteners, ballast and brick-lined pots used to render whale blubber into oil.”

But as fascinating as it was to close this chapter of maritime history, researchers are naturally wary of long-term effects of diminishing sea ice and melting permafrost — a climatic wild card if ever there was one.

— andy
Longtime cruisers Linda Edeiken and Chuck Houlihan of the San Diego-based Allied 39 Jacaranda are respectful travelers who love to emmerge themselves in the cultures they visit. As a new fleet of Pacific Paddle Jumpers prepares to cross to French Polynesia, we'll share the couple’s insightful report from their visit last summer.

The remote Marquesas Islands — Te Henua Enana ("Land of Men") as they are called by the islanders — are at the edge of a new world for Chuck and me: the South Pacific, with its storybook allure and resemblance to paradise. We are awed by the magical landscapes and exotic culture, and intoxicated by the colors and fragrances that bombard our senses, but it is the people who have seduced us most of all. The proud Marquesans laugh so easily; they are always ready with a smile and wear tiare (gardenia) flowers in their hair. These distinctive people, who almost vanished from the face of the earth not so very long ago, eagerly welcome you and take you home with them, all the while generously showering you with gifts of tropical fruits.

Since the 1800s, when Captain Cook’s journals were widely read, Polynesia has served as the definition of paradise for many outsiders. Its 117 islands are contained within an area of the South Pacific Ocean that is larger than Western Europe. Certainly, the most well-known of its five archipelagos is the Society Islands, with Tahiti, Moorea and Bora Bora at its heart. To the northeast lies the isolated Marquesas archipelago. Says a website, "Happily, the islands are not flooded by tourists — this place is very remote and the beauty of Marquesas is not much known in the world." Out of 12 islands, six are inhabited: three southern islands — Hiva Oa, Tahuita and Fatu Hiva, and three northern islands — Ua Pou, Ua Huka and Nuku Hiva (where the administrative capital of Taiohae is located).

The Marquesan allure of romance has remained strong in the Western imagination, initiated by the literary celebrity of Herman Melville’s Typee — until the 20th century, he was better known for this book than for Moby Dick — and reinforced by other such notables as Robert Louis Stevenson, Jack London, Thor Heyerdahl and Jacques Brel. But perhaps the South Pacific’s most renowned devotee was Paul Gauguin, who escaped from France to search for a "simple, savage life" and captured it in his art for all the world to see. He found it in Tahiti and then the Marquesas, where he died in 1903 on the island of Hiva Oa. We made the pilgrimage to visit his grave in the Atuona cemetery, near the grave of French singer Brel, and also visited Gauguin’s museum and an exhibition dedicated to Brel.

Although a Spaniard stumbled upon the Marquesas in 1595, the remote archipelago wasn’t visited again until 1774 by Captain Cook. The French tinkered with them a bit early on as did American Captain Joseph Ingraham who tried to claim the islands in the name of an uninterested US. Finally, in 1848, they were claimed by France, which supports them today as a French overseas territory. The Marquesas archipelago flies three flags: French, Polynesian and Marquesan. French and Tahitian are the official languages of French Polynesia, but the revived Marquesan language is also spoken here.

Of the two types of island landforms found in French Polynesia — low-lying coral atolls and high, craggy, lush volcanic mountains, the Marquesas are characterized by the latter, and are geographically reminiscent of Hawaii. Imagine a crumpled piece of paper in the shape of a green pyramid: from the main peak of formidable cliffs, rock pillars and spires dotted with tall waterfalls, radiate lush canyons and valleys that slope toward the sea, and terminate in rocky outcroppings, boulder shores, or white- or black-sand beaches.

Once upon a time in the days before Western contact, each isolated valley, separated by nearly impassable, knife-like ridges, was occupied by its own settlement and chief. They were a strong and proud people who adhered to a resilient Polynesian culture and belief system that included a strict hierarchical society, intertribal warfare, tattoos, ritualistic cannibalism, tiki symbolism, and polytheistic worship, as well as expert carvers, dancers, drummers and musicians.

Discovery by the Western world was devastating, and contact with navigators, trade ships, whalers and missionaries nearly brought about the total demise of the people themselves, as well as their culture. Foreign diseases and epidemics decimated their numbers. The population was estimated to be 80,000 at the time of European arrival, shrinking to 15,000 in 1848, and then to a mere 2,000 by 1926. Today, there are only 9,000 Marquesans.

Marquesan culture and traditional ways largely disappeared through colonization and Catholic conversion, which was almost complete by 1860. Their ancient societal foundations crumbled, oral traditions were lost, and the archipelago became a largely vanished world. What little survived was transformed. Even now, many valleys remain empty where great communities once lived — archaeological remains are found everywhere.

**Contact with navigators, trade ships, whalers and missionaries nearly brought about the total demise of the people.**
The Marquesas Islands

Today, traditional art forms such as tattooing and some aspects of culture are experiencing a strong renaissance. Ironically enough, it is the journals and documentation of some early western visitors that form the basis of reconstruction. Archaeological sites are being excavated and restored, major inter-island cultural festivals are held, and traditional dance, music and handicrafts are showcased. The fine decorative arts traditions of Marquesan ancestors are finally getting their due. The first museum exhibition took place in 2005 — only 11 years ago — at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

For four centuries these islands have served as a preserve of explorers, adventurers and artists. Arrived on June 10 after our three-week voyage from the Ecuador’s Galapagos Islands, we were thrilled to take our place among the collection of dreamers who have made the effort to see the Marquesas Islands for themselves firsthand.

The following are notes from some of the islands we visited.

Tahua Island — This is the smallest inhabited island, with a population of 671. There are no tourists here. It has a stormy history of first Polynesian contact with Europeans in 1595.

Hanamoenoa Bay — Making landfall on Tahua Island, in picture-perfect Hanamoenoa Bay, was a smart decision guided by Chuck’s memory from a previous trip in 1991. We chose to hang here and rest, catch up on our sleep, clean the bottom of sludge and barnacles, swim, beach-walk, visit with cruiser friends, and just recuperate. This is a beautiful bay with turquoise water and a palm-fringed white-sand beach backed by green mountains. Best of all, it is flat — a treasure here, as the Marquesas have a well-deserved reputation for rolly, uncomfortable anchorages. Manta rays glide around the boats, dolphins come to feed, and wild horses and goats dot the hillsides. Hanamoenoa became one of our favorite anchorages, and we returned several times within the first months.

When we went ashore we met Steven, who we realized later is an atypically typical Marquesan. A handsome young man of 33, he is tall with bronzed skin, long dark hair and a beautiful smile, looking rather like an unpretentious Johnny Depp/Jack Sparrow sans make-up and toppery. Steven is a modern-day Robinson Crusoe who is cultivating his ancestral property, existing hand-to-mouth off the land and sea.

Although he had a house across the Bordelais Channel on Hiva Oa, he claims he swam across the channel to settle on the beach where he grew up with his grandfather rather than stay in Atuona as his parents wished. His shelter is a small shack at the edge of the beach, surrounded by his garden of coconut palms, pamplemousse (grapefruit), oranges, limes and bananas. We often saw him fishing at night with a light. Inland, all the islands are teeming with wild pigs and goats, free for the taking and hunting. This is done daily, with the help of a handful of skinny dogs. ‘Rustic’ is too elegant a word for Steven’s lifestyle.

Steven is a gentle and soft-spoken soul who gave us our first lesson in Marquesan values of respect for nature and love of self-sufficiency and independence. He was the first, but not the last, to rail against Tahiti saying, “If you are in Papeete and you have no money, you will not eat. Here in the Marquesas you can always eat. But we only take what we need and nothing more.” Steven enjoys befriending those cruisers who come ashore and who are considerate not to enter his garden or pick his fruit without permission; however, he has nothing but disdain for trespassers. He often takes cruisers fishing — he knows which fish have the ciguatera toxin and which are safe to eat — and invites them to have dinner, cooking goat, pork or octopus in coconut milk, which he rasps from the fresh coconut meat himself. In return, cruisers often support him in innumerable ways — giving him food, water or supplies; charging his phone; transporting him to the next bay — whatever they can do to help.

On a sunny afternoon that suddenly turned gray with characteristic tropical fickleness, Steven and I sat on the beach together in a robust but ephemeral downpour, exchanging stories of our love of the sea. Steven had brought out a half coconut shell filled with sweet, grated coconut meat for us to snack on. He told me about the bay: “Lots of dolphins come in here and push the fish to the rocks,” he said motioning to the north shore. “Then they fish until they are full and go, leaving the mothers behind with their babies so they can teach them how to do it. Manta rays swim over the reef,” he continued, pointing to a spot beyond where Jacaranda was anchored. “Some cruisers chase the dolphins and manta rays in their dinghies, and come and kill sea animals only for their shells, not for food,” he said, shaking his head sadly. I spoke of whale nurseries and riding the giant manta rays of Socorro Island, of shark-finning, octopus hunting with bleach, and the overfishing I had witnessed elsewhere. Steven spoke of his 'Jacaranda', makes landfall after a three-week crossing from the Galapagos Islands.
CRUISING IN THE 'LAND OF MEN' —

grandfather. I spoke of my sons. Then he got up, went into his garden, and returned with three cowrie shells as a gift and a flowering sprig of basil for me to wear behind my ear (any fragrant flower will do). When I asked him if I could take his picture, he declined, gently touching my head and then my heart, and told me to remember him that way.

Our admiration and friendship deepened with each subsequent visit to Hanamoenoa Bay. Steven joined us for lunch one afternoon on Jacaranda and we joked that all he needed now was a good pirogue (outrigger canoe) and a pretty woman (vahine po'otu) or a pretty pirogue and a good woman. He laughed and said his grandfather was building him a canoe.

Other wonderful memories of Hanamoenoa Bay included: swimming for hours with manta rays, joined by the girls from the sailboat Muneera, an evening on Space and Orion, two catar-mans rafted up together, both owned by the same intrepid and crazy young Australian named Jeff and his French girlfriend, and crewed by a changing international gang of six to eight youth. We shared fresh sashimi with them and had a look at the goat that was going to be the guest of honor at an imminent beach barbecue.

Hapitoni — Two days after our initial stop in Hanamoenoa we got sidetracked by the enticement of a church festival in the small nearby village of Hapitoni, and joined an exodus of a dozen sailboats to relocate five miles down-island to Hana Tefau, so we could attend the celebration. This beautiful anchorage is at the base of a high, steep cliff wall that has several small waterfalls trickling down it. A large pod of dolphins was feeding in the bay among the group of sailboats. Steven had told us it was a dolphin nursery.

If Steven was our first introduction to the Marquesan persona, Hapitoni was our first exposure to Marquesan society. We took the dinghy to the wharf where several young boys hung out to help us with our line, yelling "KaOha!" in greeting. Chuck was delighted to see that since he was last here in 1991 the town had built a protective riprap breakwater, which made our landing easy, and no longer made it a necessity to anchor the dinghy and swim ashore. Colorful outrigger canoes called kokus were pulled up on shore.

This was a picturesque village with the unique feature of Queen Vaekehu's 'royal road' paralleling the seaboard, overhung by an arbor of large, gnarled, century-old tamanu trees. We walked down this distinctive 19th-century dirt road past houses with woven palm-frond fences, an ancient religious site (me 'ae), copra-drying sheds, community artisans space and a cemetery, then finally reached a small church and adjacent school in the center of an open, grassy field, the epicenter of activity on this Saturday.

Spirited teams of men and women played pétanque, a French game of lawn bowling similar to bocce. Elsewhere, young children were engaged in 'fishing' for prizes, similar to our familiar carnival games. Perched along steps leading up to the field were a dozen women with boxes of flowers in their laps, weaving traditional garlands called het to wear on their heads at the evening's dance and at the next morning's church service. The sweet fragrance of the fi'are, a gardenia that is the national flower of the Marquesas, can knock you off your feet. We ogled a display of carvings of wood, bone, swordfish bills and shells by the famously expert Hapitoni artisans.

We people-watched, captivated by our observations — and frustrated by the communication gap we suddenly found ourselves in. We felt like fish out of water not knowing French. So many wonderful new people and things we were seeing with no way to actively participate, get adequate explanations, or carry on conversations! Envious of our French cruising friends who helped us with translations, we relied on them and contented ourselves with quietly taking it all in. Eventually, we began to pick up a few Marquesan words and phrases here and there.

At 6 o'clock, a free dinner was served to all in attendance (roughly 300 people). It was a delicious plate of pork and lentil stew over rice with a piece of buttered bread and a sweet finger banana for dessert. The evening performance of religious dramas enacting Bible stories commenced an hour later, incorporating a modest sampling of Marquesan dance, music and song.

One thing that really delighted us was watching the Marquesans with their babies and toddlers. The phrase "it takes a village to raise a child" could have been coined here. The little ones are so loved and shared by everyone. They are picked up, held and kissed, played with and cooed at. There was one adorable little girl in particular who was with a different woman each time we saw her, and we never did figure out who her mother was, although we kept asking.

In church the next morning, small children were handed up and over from one pew to the next, passed from one person to another, until they made
Catana 42 Maluhia for eight days due to autopilot malfunction, they were a bit weary, but in great spirits! We had a fun combination birthday/happy land-fall dinner on Jacaranda complete with crowns and ‘hand-steering awards’ that I made out of aluminum foil.

Two days later Kim and David joined us to take Jacaranda down-island for the day to the main village of Vaitahu, known for its beautiful Catholic church and great carvings. Very significantly, Vaitahu is where Europeans first arrived in the South Pacific. In 1595 the Spanish navigator, Álvaro de Mendaña, made a most murderous entrance, shooting inhabitants on sight. Captain Cook arrived 200 years later in 1774, but was shunned. Admiral Abel Dupetit-Thouars took possession for France here in 1842 despite strong resistance.

Less than an hour after leaving Hanamoenoa, we entered the large open bay and anchored next to the Aranui, a working supply ship that serves as a delivery lifeline between Tahiti and the Marquesas. Built as a cargo ship in the front, it doubles as a cruise ship in the back with cabins, decks and a swimming pool. It accommodates 200 passengers and offers tourists an iconic 8- to 14-day cruise to the islands that is supposed to be one of the world’s best adventure cruises.

The Aranui’s appearance at each Marquesan Island is a major event and the whole village/town mobilizes around it. Cars queue up to meet it at the dock for offloaded goods, or small boats ferry out to pick up goods and deliver copra or fruit. Artisan markets are brimming with articles for sale, traditional dances are performed, and special meals are offered. We used to run away when the cruise ships came to Mexican towns, in order to avoid the crass commercialization and hordes of tourists. But here in the Marquesas, it is the best time to see a sleepy town show its stuff.

By the time we walked around to see the village, the tourists had returned to the Aranui, the artisans had packed up their wares and departed, and the town

Wanna build some upper-body strength? Try paddling every day of your life.

Areas were untenable, so we decided to try the rocky shore in the southern part of the bay. Chuck skillfully maneuvered the dinghy as Kim and I disembarked on the rocks and scooted higher to safety. David got out of the dinghy next, but the timing was bad, and he almost got swept away by some big swells, suffering some scrapes and barely recovering his hat and backpack. The only choice for Chuck now was to anchor the dinghy 30 meters beyond the breaking waves and swim over to us. What a gnarly landing!

We all scrambled over the rocks to reach the shore, watching the dinghy over our shoulders as it lifted and fell with the incoming swells, but it seemed secure enough.

By the time we walked around to see the village, the tourists had returned to the Aranui, the artisans had packed up their wares and departed, and the town

A young dancer watches the moves of a competing troupe, as she waits to perform.
was deserted and still.

We explored the waterfront, entered the beautiful church to see the wood carvings and stained-glass windows, and climbed the hill from the creek to reach a famous artisan’s house and workshop.

Teiki Barsinas is considered one of the best bone and shell carvers in the Marquesas. His work is in the British Museum, a French museum, and several other impressive collections around the world. A big, shy man with large hands, Teiki led us into his small, dark and cluttered studio. We all had to duck down as we entered the dark recesses of the shed that led to his work area. His worktable faced an open window that let some natural light into the dark space. It was filled with an array of materials and tools, bones were piled high in one corner, and animal skulls hung from the ceiling. Mother-of-pearl shells lay in a heap in another corner. There were also whale teeth, helmet shells and swordfish bills. Under a lamp and next to a Dremel tool, some carving rasps, and files lay some intricately carved pendants and tikis. He modestly showed us his work:

available items he had completed that were for sale, a few things in progress, an extensive looseleaf notebook filled with previously purchased works, letters of customer appreciation, and business cards from various museum curators. He was justly proud.

David and I each picked out a favorite bone pendant and asked Teiki if he would trade for some cash and some large tagua nuts which I had brought from Ecuador. This was a new material he was interested in and he showed us some recent carvings he had done in tagua that had been obtained from other cruisers. The exchange happily made, we left the cramped semi-darkness and emerged into his sunny open yard. Teiki summoned his 12-year-old twin daughters, “Thelma and Louise” (as he called them, with a broad smile), to help him pick some fruit for us. Adorned with our new treasures around our necks, David and I posed for photos with Teiki before we all shared a juicy pamplemousse, followed by an orange and a new type of mango. We left with armfuls of fruit and a lot of pleasure from meeting such a talented master and his wonderful family.

— Linda Edeiken

Readers — We’ll have to end here, but we encourage you to read more of Linda’s insightful reporting on the Marquesas and elsewhere by visiting the couple’s blogsite: www.jacarandajourney.com (Select Passage Notes in the main menu.)

— Ed.
26' HUNTER 260, '00 $25,000
Bobcat. She is a perfect blend of spacious interior accommodations, easy-to-handle sailing and wonderful family or group entertainment.

NEW LISTING

29' J-BOATS J/29, '82 $12,500
Mac's. If you are looking for an economical racer to get involved in the action or a 2-hour day sailer, this J/29 could be the answer.

NEW LISTING

29' CAL 2-29, '75 $15,900
At Ease looks like she's been loved. Entering the companionway and stepping down inside provides instant verification of your initial reaction.

NEW LISTING

30' ENDEAVOUR CAT, '92 $44,500
Roberta. She is a perfect blend of spacious interior accommodations, easy-to-handle sailing and wonderful family or group entertainment.

NEW LISTING

34' OLSON, '89 $7,500
Coracle has been owned since 1997 by the current owners and has been out sailing in the San Diego area at least 3-days a week ever since.

NEW LISTING

38' C&C LANDFALL, '80 $19,900
Muse. The Landfall 38 is regarded as one of the best all-around sailboats ever manufactured. Without a doubt a comfortable cruiser/racer.

NEW LISTING

38' ALERION EXPRESS, '06 $288,000
Rocinante. The Alerion Express 38 is undoubtedly one of the most attractive vessels on the water to date.

NEW LISTING

38' HANS CHRISTIAN MK II, '79 $86,500
Sail the seas in Pililani, a classic cutter-rigged cruiser. She has had a number of modernizing projects done to her in the last few years.

NEW LISTING

33' NEWPORT 33, '86 $27,000
Busqueda. This Gary Mull designed race/cruiser is a great sailing boat with comfortable interior for the whole family, easy to handle.

NEW LISTING

30' ALLIED CHANCE 30-30, '72 $14,900

NEW LISTING

30' VALIANT CE PULLMAN, '96 $249,000
Fellowship is a great boat at a great price where virtually everything "BIG" has been replaced, an incredible offshore boat that is ready to "go NOW".

NEW LISTING

31' CAL 2-31, '75 $16,000
Bang. She is a perfect blend of spacious interior accommodations, easy-to-handle sailing and wonderful family or group entertainment.

NEW LISTING

42' VALIANT CF PULLMAN, '96 $249,000
Fellowship is a great boat at a great price where virtually everything "BIG" has been replaced, an incredible offshore boat that is ready to "go NOW".

NEW LISTING

41' BENETEAU OCEANIS 411, '98 $129,000
Sea Freny is an exceptionally well kept and maintained opportunity to own the Beneteau 411 you have wanted. Enjoy coastal cruising.

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THE EVOLUTION OF MIDWINTERS

It's not really a 'Circle' anymore, but the racing venue west of Berkeley Marina, known as the 'Olympic Circle' or 'Berkeley Circle' serves up windy-tomakin' conditions in the Slot for serious summer racing and casual beer cans. During the winter, the Slot goes into hibernation, the conditions are (usually) pretty mild, and Berkeley Yacht Club and RegattaPRO run winter races there.

"The original design of the Circle centered on XOC," explains BYC's Bob Gray. "One mile due north was A; one mile east of X was C; one mile south of X was E; one mile west of X was G. B, D, F and H were at 45° off the preceding letter's line. Each letter was set one mile from X. The original metal ball buoys were anchored in place with really heavy railroad wheels and big chains. The metal balls had to be removed when power boats kept running into them and we were told to get 'soft' buoys."

The vast, shallow shelf of the Circle has silted in. AOC and HOC's locations are now too shallow for keelboats to navigate.

The circular mark arrangement was used in the 1960 Rome Olympics. Picking the mark that was most directly into the wind as the first mark made the start upwind. Triangle courses were popular in those days; now windward/leewards are de rigueur.

Over the past few years, BYC has transitioned to using inflatable drop-marks. This was made possible by 2011's acquisition of a 19-ft runabout, which was christened the Bobbi Tosse in honor of the longtime race chair of that name.

"I'm guessing it had something to do with the fact that, for many, many years, I kept urging anyone who asked that we not acquire such a boat," said the human Bobbi Tosse. "I worried that we wouldn't have the money and people to properly maintain it. Until last year, we only used it to set missing marks. Since the Circle marks have been disappearing regularly, this kept the launch quite busy. This season becomes only the second year we've played with drop-marks only. I confess to being royally spoiled by the ease of working with a mark-set boat."

On the morning of January 10, the Bobbi Tosse refused to start. "After dilly-dallying trying unsuccessfully to get the darn thing started, we stacked the three blown-up marks on Windance and went off to set the course and ourselves," recounts Tosse. Windance is the Gulfstar 41 used for race committee. "As the appointed hour of the first gun neared and we still had ourselves, our start-finish line buoy, and L to set, we announced the problem on the VHIF, along with the..."
pending postponement. Will Paxton on Motorcycle Irene immediately offered to set L. A sight I won't soon forget is the Express 27, with main and spinnaker up, sailing away, bright yellow buoy in tow. How else would one know which direction was truly downwind?"

The center cockpit Gulfstar is a live-aboard owned by Tom Tazelaar. "We've been lucky to have Tom think that powering from Fortman Marina in Alameda, hanging out at the club dock during the regatta, having 10 or 12 people tromp all over the boat during the racing, and then powering back to Alameda in the dark and cold is a fun thing to do," said Tosse. The Gulfstar makes a great race committee boat, heavy and stable. The anchor holds well, and she carries a lot of people. "If you have to go out in a big chop, it's a good boat to be on," said Bob Gray.

Metropolitan Yacht Club of Oakland started the Midwinter Series in 1957. In 1982, MYCO's Kirt Brooks told Bob Gray that he needed him for race committee. Gray replied: "But I'm racing." Brooks countered: "I've looked at the race results, and you're in no danger of winning."

MYCO partnered with Berkeley YC in 1984. "Bobbi came into the fold with that move," said Gray. "We ran protest hearings just about every race day. Protest committees were generally me, Paul Kamen and Sam Goldstein. We used to get four to five protests every weekend."

Now they are relatively rare. "Everyone's older," said Gray. "Not enough protestor, added Kamen, who started hearing protests in the '70s.

"BYC already had a monthly winter Chowder Race when we went in with MYCO on the Metropolitan Midwinters," said Paul Kamen. "So the Chowders were downgraded to a beer-can-style weekly race, aimed at the entry-level racer. They continue as a weekly Sunday afternoon event running all winter, a nice complement to the Friday Night Races, which run every Friday evening all summer long. There's no entry fee for either Chowder Races or Friday Night Races, and BYC is pretty informal about having a PHRF certificate — till you start winning, that is!"

MYCO was located at Jack London Square. "It was a large facility with the marina directly in front with nice (for that...

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A pair of Open 5.70s return from the windward mark in the Berkeley Midwinters on Saturday, January 9. RegattaPRO's Winter One Design race can be seen sprawled out in the background.

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The southernly died, but the Olson 30 Hoot was so fast they finished before the course could be shortened. Division A got the full course, the course for the Cal 20 class was shortened to one lap, and everyone else was told to finish at the second leeward mark rounding. A zephyr wafted in from the north, turning the windward mark into a leeward mark and vice versa. Intermittent rain squalls blew through, but none did too much drenching or blustering. "Only two of the original 48 starters opted to retire," reports Tosse.

At the instigation of members of the Singlehanded Sailing Society, Sunday's series is unique in offering shorthanded divisions for the second year in a row.

On January 9 and 10, BYC gave all the divisions Course 1, an 8-mile, twice-around windward/leeward. "There was light rain and an agreeable 10-12 knots from the south at the start," said Tosse of Saturday's race, "and quite a few holes for the racers to suffer through."

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BYC's Midwinters aren't the only winter series in the neighborhood. RegattaPRO's Winter One Design sails in the deeper water west of the Circle on the second Saturday of the month. In 2002 Mary Coleman of the Farr 40 fleet
contacted Jeff Zarwell to manage a winter series. "The purpose was training to keep crews and skippers sharp through the 'off-season' by trying to provide racing as true to summer racing as winter conditions would allow," recalls Zarwell.

"For the second season we added the J/120 fleet, the only one-design fleet with a handicap even close to the Farrs. It was a good thing we added the 120s — only four Farrs participated that second season, as the sell-off had begun.

"By season three the Farrs were down to three boats, the 120s were holding at seven, and I added the J/105s, which made a big jump in the numbers."

By 2005 the Farr 40 class had fallen apart in Northern California, perhaps having fallen victim to checkbook wars. Zarwell added the Beneteau First 40.7s, Express 27s, and Melges 24s. "That allowed me to charter a real signal boat along with two support boats.

"In 2008 or so I met Jay Hickman while we both worked at West Marine. Jay was interested in learning mark set. To say he was a prodigy is an understatement. Jay was an absolute natural. The next year Jay became the first professional mark set operator on the Bay." I had been operating out of Sausalito YC, and SYC's Tim Prouty had volunteered a few times. In 2009 Tim suggested SYC sponsor the event by providing their signal and support boats as well as trained volunteers. I can't tell you what a relief that was." The series continues to focus on keeping one-design fleets tuned up for spring racing. "To that end I think the program has been hugely successful."

January 9's edition of Winter One Design turned out better than the forecast had predicted, the breeze on the Berkeley Circle having filled slowly from the southeast at 5-9 knots. Racing got underway after only a 30-minute postponement. All classes completed a two-lap course for the first race, but then the wind started to fade and the RC elected for a one-lap course for race 2. "For the smaller boats this wasn't quite short enough, and the breeze shut off completely, with most of the Melges 24s and J/70s within boatlengths of the finish line," reports the RC's Forrest Gay. "Many boats in those fleets and in the J/24 class did not make the 10-minute finish window behind their first finisher. A total glass-off at the end made for some true midwinter racing on the Bay."


— latitude/chris
"Do I have to put on my sea boots just to walk across the parking lot?" I complained. The depth of the puddle surrounding my car exceeded the freeboard of my shoes. Now my socks were wet. Yes, I usually carry spares in the car — but I've had too many evenings at the yacht club with cold damp feet: hence the foot doctor's orders: "Always change to dry socks after sailing." But I had used the spares I keep in the car last weekend and had neglected to re-stock.

The yacht club parking lot, like most yacht club parking lots, is on landfill that has been sinking and shifting for the last 40 years, so of course it does not drain properly. Combine a heavy rain with an extra-high tide, and there wasn't enough grade to persuade the water to flow anywhere. In fact, it was hard to tell just where the parking lot ended and the harbor began.

I squished my way across the puddles, walked into the club, stowed the umbrella, and went directly to the fireplace.

It turned out that I was not the only one drying off wet feet at the fire. Lee Helm and her all-female, all-student crew were there too, having sailed to our harbor. Meanwhile my own foredeck crew, "won't get California out of the drought." Lee asserted. "If they won't give us a race in 20 knots of wind and a little rain, it's going to become hard to complete a midwinter series."

"Actually, Lee," I suggested, "I think you're secretly happy to sit by the fireplace today. Now that the race is officially canceled, it's easy to say that you'd much rather be out there getting slammed."

"Come on," she whined, "like, why did they have to cancel the race?"

"Maybe the fact that it's a miserable, wet, stormy day had something to do with it?" I suggested.

"Totally superficial details," she answered. "But it's not that windy — just, like, small craft warnings, same as any summer afternoon. No gale warnings or anything."

"The race committee are wimps," declared another young woman who was part of Lee's crew. "We really wanted to race!"

"There are lots of weekends to choose from, all winter," I explained. "Personally, in the winter I like to race only on the days when it's warm and sunny, and that's the RC's philosophy too. We get enough of the cold and wet stuff in the summer. So I think canceling today's race was the right move."

"But you're used to the drought years, and now we're in for a lot more rainy weekends," Lee asserted. "If they won't give us a race in 20 knots of wind and a little rain, it's going to become hard to complete a midwinter series."

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"Never heard of it," I said.

"Oh, you will!" she said. "It was only first identified and named in '97, so it's not a household thing like El Niño just yet. But it's the big kahuna of Pacific climate cycles."

"How is it different from El Niño?" I asked as I finished peeling off my wet socks so I could hang them over the top of the screen in front of the fireplace.

"The key word is 'decadal'. That means it takes decades to cycle from warm to cold and back again. El Niño is a short-term thing by comparison, typically lasting only six to 18 months."

"Even a strong El Niño, added another one of Lee's crew, "won't get California out of the drought."

"But the PDO," continued the other woman, who turned out to be an oceanography postdoc, "can take 10 or 20 years to cycle on and off. So we could see a whole decade or even two decades of wet winters after a PDO regime shift."

"Is this what NOAA is forecasting?" asked my foredeck guy. "Are we on the cusp of a change?"

"No," she announced, and held up the phone to show me what was on the screen. "El Niño is mostly an equatorial thing, with most of the temperature oscillations in the tropics, and currents taking some warm water north. But, like,
wind at three knots. Six hours later, before you’ve even gone 20 miles, the earth has turned 90 degrees to the east, and what you thought was going straight is now headed 90 degrees offshore! And, like, actually you are trying to go straight, but the coast has turned away from you.”

“This means that surface water is always being pushed away from the coast, at least while the north winds are blowing,” said the oceanographer. “And with surface water pushed away from the coast by north wind, the cold water from down deep is always coming up to replace it. That cold water along the coast is part of what makes our summer sea breeze so powerful.”

“And that causes sea levels to rise?” I asked skeptically.

“No, that causes sea level to drop,” said Lee. “And, like, all that wind stress pushing water away from the coast is like tipping the ocean basin away from California. It’s why we’re a few years behind the Atlantic in terms of sea level rise.”

“Now reverse this wind direction,” said the oceanographer. “As in a stormy winter with a lot of strong southerlies blowing. The south or southeasterly storm winds push water north, but the earth turns to put the coast right in front of the moving water, and the momentum energy from the collision makes the water try to pile up on shore. So the average sea level is a little higher. This is borne out by data. There were spikes in mean sea level height during the big El Niño events of 1982-83 and 1997-98.”

Lee found another great picture somewhere on the Web, showing the temperature along part of the California coast on a typical summer day.

“Blue is cold and red is warm,” she explained. “See the result of our north wind pushing surface water away from the coast. And, like, imagine this reversed during a stormy El Niño winter.”

“But El Niño is just the little brother,” added the oceanographer. “Big brother Pacific Decadal Oscillation is what might end the drought. Or might not. As I said, the data is too chaotic for good forecasting. Although, one research paper analyzed tree rings and coral growth patterns from 1840 to 1990, and after some careful manipulation of the data was able to extract a Fourier analysis that yielded three main frequencies of oscillation: 80 years, 23 years and 20 years. Add them all together, throw in a lot of noise, and you can imagine how hard it is to come up with a prediction.”

“What does the recent history of these oscillations look like?” asked my foredeck crew.

“There’s evidence of only two full PDO cycles in the last century,” she said. “A PDO regime that was cool-in-the-tropics, hot-in-the-northwest-Pacific ran from 1890 to 1924, then warm-in-tropics from ’25 to ’46, then cool again from ’47 to ’76. It was warm-in-tropics from 1977 to 2000, and it’s been cold-in-the-tropics since then, accounting for the 15-year drought in the Southwest. The jury seems to be out on where we’re going next.”

“Does it interact with El Niño?” I asked. “From that PDO temperature map, it seems that the warm equatorial waters are just like an El Niño.”

“Probably does,” answered the oceanographer. “And a strong El Niño might be a kind of trigger for a PDO reversal from cool to warm. Or it might not be. But they both have the effect of giving us rainy winters. Really it’s the North Pacific High that drives all of this. When the high is strong, storm tracks are diverted north. California is dry, the 500 millibar chart shows the stable meridional flow pattern, trade winds are strong, and warm surface water in the tropics is pushed...
west to Southeast Asia. That’s the PDO negative phase, with warmer than average surface water in the northwest Pacific and cooler than average in the eastern tropical Pacific. If the high weakens, the trade winds drop, allowing the warm tropical water to build up in the east. That’s El Niño. If big brother PDO shows up, then the northwest Pacific cools, and the blocking high doesn’t form as often, we have more upper-level zonal flow, so more rain gets to California, the trade winds don’t build, the warmer surface water stays on the east side of the ocean, and the pattern persists. If that happens, then the drought could be over.

“That’s what I’m predicting!” asserted Lee. “And, like, unless the race committees get some better foulies, we can expect to see a lot more winter races cancelled for the next couple of decades.”

“The data is unclear,” cautioned the oceanographer. “See for yourself. Monthly PDO temperatures starting at year 1900 are on a University of Washington website. These are corrected for overall global warming, so you can see the monthly, yearly, and decade-by-decade oscillations, right up to last month. Try to make sense out of that data set.”

I turned my socks around to expose the other side to the radiant heat from the fireplace logs.

“Let’s go sailing,” suggested Lee’s other crew, as a gust of wind and rain rattled the sliding glass door between the yacht club bar and the storm outside. “We have to get the boat back to the hoist anyway.”

“Good idea,” said Lee. “And, like, we’ll do some spinnaker practice too. Max, want to come out with us?”

My foredeck guy and I looked at each other, and shook our heads.

“Have fun out there,” he said.

— max ebb

**RESOURCES**
- U. of Washington PDO website (with link to data set, 1900 through 2015) [http://research.jisao.washington.edu/pdo/](http://research.jisao.washington.edu/pdo/)
- Online textbook, Introduction to Tropical Meteorology, PDO chapter [http://tinyurl.com/z16bjxz](http://tinyurl.com/z16bjxz)
- NOAA’s take on the PDO [http://tinyurl.com/zoafq9](http://tinyurl.com/zoafq9)
- Podcast of a lecture at JPL by climatologist William Patzert (78 minutes) [http://tinyurl.com/jcfpeb5](http://tinyurl.com/jcfpeb5)
THE CALENDAR IS TICKING DOWN TO THE START OF THE 2016 PACIFIC CUP

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13  NEW! Medical Seminar (RYC)
March
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26  Alaska Airlines Pacific Offshore Academy #4 (RYC)
26  FREE SailMail/Grib Seminar (RYC)
May
14/15  Safety at Sea at Encinal YC: US Sailing (Sat)/ ISAF (Sun)

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THE RACING

This month we venture to race venues near and far, starting with far: Australia’s boat-busting Rolex Sydney Hobart Race. Closer to the San Francisco Bay Area Latitude 38 World Headquarters, we check in on the Corinthian Midwinters, Oakland YC Sunday Brunch Series and Sequoia YC Winter Series, and profile the Ultimate 20 fleet champions. With race notes we split town again.

Rolex Sydney Hobart Race

The latest edition in Australia’s legendary Rolex Sydney Hobart Race will go down as one for the ages. From broken boats and dreams to thrilling racing, harrowing stories of repairs made at sea, and finally the sweet taste of success, the 71st race on Boxing Day had it all.

The tone was set in Sydney Harbour, before the race even started, when the starting boat Aussie Legend began taking on water, forcing the dignitaries on board to transfer vessels. As soon as a backup boat started the race under horn instead of the traditional cannon, the battle began in earnest.

Perennial line-honors winner Robert Oatley’s 100-ft Wild Oats XI looked to have the fleet covered as the supermaxis at the head of the fleet short-tacked toward the Sydney Heads. Anthony Bell’s Juan K 100 Perpetual Loyal torched Oats over on a port-starboard encounter, however, and stole the lead at the first turning mark. After turning the corner, Jim and Kristy Clark’s VPLP 100 Comanche, with the Bay Area’s Stan Honey navigating, lit the afterburners and took off down the New South Wales coast in an awe-inspiring display of raw power reminiscent of the 2014 start. Propelled by a brisk northeasterly wind and the fading northerly, south-setting current directly opposing the strong southerly breeze, and a near-instantaneous transition, the fleet began to sustain damage in rapid, wholesale fashion. Wild Oats XI retired after destroying their mainsail, Perpetual Loyal retired with rudder damage, and the American supermaxi Comanche announced their intent to retire with rudder, daggerboard and steering damage. In one fell swoop, the top contenders had all been knocked out and George David’s American Juan K-designed 88-ft maxi Rambler 88 assumed the lead, with Syd Fischer’s Raganuffin 100 in second.

In another shocking twist, Comanche’s American skipper, Ken Read, announced a change of heart on board the supermaxi — they would effect repairs and in fact not retire. “We decided to punch on through,” the determined Read said at the time. “We think we can get to Hobart safely... I don’t care if we limp over the line. We are going to finish this damned race.” Kenny, Kristy and the boys made good on their word and finished the race in grand style, claiming a dramatic and popular line-honors victory in Hobart, Tasmania. Raganuffin 100’s crew clawed their way back up to Rambler 88, just barely beating them over the line.

By the time the dust settled, the race had seen the highest attrition rate of 108 entries reaching the finish line, further underscoring how challenging the conditions were. Paul Clitheroe’s TP52 Balance claimed overall honors on handicap while the French entry of Gery Trentesaux’s jPK 10.80 Courrier Leon claimed second overall — not a surprise to anyone who saw the same team prevail in the summer’s Rolex Fastnet. For complete results and much more, see www.rolexsydneyhobart.com.

A week and a half after the celebrations ended in Hobart, the entire Australian yachting community was saddened to learn that Bob Oatley — owner of Wild Oats XI — had passed away from a long illness at the age of 87. The businessman, wine magnate, yachtsman and philanthropist was loved Down Under and abroad, and was a major supporter of Australian yachting. As such, the Oatley family has indicated that they will continue to campaign his beloved supermaxi in his honor.

— Ronnie Simpson

Corinthian YC Midwinters

A postponement on the first day of the 65th Corinthian Midwinters lasted 35 minutes, after which the 11 starts went off in orderly five-minute intervals. Saturday, January 16, started with adequate breeze that softened while
battled the course at Yellow Bluff in hopes of al-

The race committee shortened the course at Yellow Bluff in hopes of al-

Rain fell in the morning and evening, but mostly held off during the actual racing. Free beer, a buffet dinner, an oldies dance band, and daily trophies (coffee mugs) topped off the day.

Sunday promised to be breezier. Even the water looked brisk. The wind came out of the south and stayed puffy.

The race committee used the same courses, but switched from 5 to 1 earlier in the sequence. A general recall of the PHRF 2 division resulted in a brief postponement.

"The wind went up over 20 knots at times on the first leg, and our boatspeed suffered as we labored under the 150% jib, but it turned out to be the correct sail for most of the leg and the reaching to come," reports O’Callaghan. At Blackaller, the J/120 crew set an A-2 kite. "We held on for the tight reach down the Cityfront with the rail loaded, heading to Blossom Rock in southerly puffs, struggling at times to carry the big spinnaker." Peregrine battled the Swan 53 Blue around the course. "Our crew executed a picture-perfect jibe-set at Yellow Bluff and finished about 45 seconds behind Blue, but minutes ahead on corrected time."

"All the Cals racing showed good boatspeed and strong starts," said Snow, whose Raccoon tops that division’s standings. "The separating factor was being quick to get a clean alley on port, staying on the right side of the course, and then hitting the shifts while approaching Yellow Bluff on starboard.

Since the ebb turned to flood and built to a game-changing current.

The fastest eight divisions were given Course 5, a 12-mile Bay tour. From the Knox-area start it was a beat to Blackaller in the southwesterly, then a spinnaker reach to Blossom Rock south of Alcatraz, a run to YRA 8 east of Angel Island’s Point Blunt, and a reach to Yellow Bluff off south Sausalito. The intention was to then finish the race back at the start line. The wind had other ideas. It fluttered out short of YRA 8, and the fleet compressed, converging on the red can in slow motion, carried by momentum, with little ability to maneuver and no brakes. Crews hailing "No overlap!" did so futilely, and everyone just did their best to round in pinwheel fashion with as little contact as possible. Protests might have been contemplated but, apparently, none were filed.

"Boats were rail-to-rail jibing through the rounding," reports Michael O’Callaghan, helmsman of the J/120 Peregrine in PHRF 2. "Reaching up to Yellow Bluff, the boats to the south had clearer air and pulled away quickly."

The race committee shortened the course at Yellow Bluff in hopes of allowing the most boats possible to finish before the cutoff time of 4:30.

The wind freshened again, carrying the fleet to the next parking lot, tantalizingly close to Yellow Bluff. As the boats drifted from the vicinity of Angel Island, past the ripping flood at Harding Rock buoy, toward the Marin shore, a giant (620-ft) car carrier quietly entered the Bay, destined for Richmond by way of Harding Rock. The pilot coolly guided the behemoth through the underpowered sailboats, and no horns sounded.

"We were well behind much of our competition up until the last quarter of the racecourse," said O’Callaghan. "The wind got lighter and boats to the south lost what little breeze there was. The Express 37 Golden Moon, Peregrine, and a few others carried a light and very private band of wind to Yellow Bluff." Peregrine won PHRF 2.

Alas, about a third of the boats on Course 5 were unable to finish in time. The smaller boats given Course 1 almost all made it. That 8-mile course stays in the Knox area, resembling a summer beer can race course.

"When a fleet feel blessed that we were not on Course 5," said Jim Snow, fleet captain for the local Cal 20s. "My heart goes out to all who endured bobbing, bumping and slatting around Blossom Rock and YRA 8. With a building flood and dying breeze I’m sure stress limits were tested!"

For more racing news, subscribe to ‘Lectronic Latitude online at www.latitude38.com

January’s racing stories included:

Quantum Key West Race Week
Super 12-Meters • Trophée Jules Verne
Richmond Sailor in Thai RC Regatta
Two Gates Pursuit Race
BYC, SeqYC & CYC Midwinters
RegattaPRO Winter One Design
Eight Bells for Wild Oats Patron
MMBA New Year’s Day Race
Round St. Barths Race
Plus previews of the SSS Three Bridge Fiasco, Pacific Cup events, midwinter racing, and more!
After a postponement to clear the line and the hint of a breeze, the race was back in sequence. The spotty wind slowly built, allowing all racers to finish shortened courses.

The second race on January 17 had a much different feel, under threat of rain, and we did see some sporadic sprinkles. But 18 boatloads of hearty racers jumped into a downwind start, with those in the spinnaker fleets popping their colors right at the line. The courses were challenging, and the wind held for full-course racing by all.

The day finished up at the clubhouse in Alameda with the customary banter, libations, prizes and noshing. It’s not too late to join the fun; entry forms are available at OYC and online at www.oaklandyachtclub.net under the racing tab.

— debby ratto

The first boat to turn the corner took the win both days.” The fleet’s new website is up at www.sfbaycal20.com.

Once again the rain mostly held off until the end. However, at least a couple of spinnakers did not survive the day.

The Corinthian Midwinters conclude on February 20-21, with the Saturday race doing double-duty as the Rob Moore Memorial Regatta, aka ‘Robgatta’. See www.cyc.org.

— latitude/chris

Oakland YC’s Sunday Brunch Series on the Estuary is off to the races! Expanded to a seven-race series for 2016, remaining races are scheduled for 2/7, 2/21, 3/6 and 3/20. Race #1 on January 3 found us with little to no wind at the start and an ebb, which for some was the helping hand they needed to cross the start line. After a postponement to clear the line and the hint of a breeze, the race was back in sequence. The spotty wind slowly built, allowing all racers to finish shortened courses.

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On the South Bay, Winter #3 went off on January 9, a cloudy Saturday with widely variable wind forecasts and a 2-knot ebb. SeqYC’s power boat fleet stepped up to provide a committee boat. Dave Bagby’s Island Gypsy 36 Calypso set a line that kept the pre-start maneuvering away from the ebb and those unyielding daymarks. With wind out of the south, 10 boats had a clean downwind start and immediately headed into deep water, popped their kites, and rode the ebb out to B just south of the San Mateo Bridge. The fleet then headed for the shallows to get current relief on the long beat to S, followed by a shorter run to the finish at Y. The southerly never clocked around, staying light, yielding flat water.

Light wind and a strong current made on-course decision-making critical, so the racing was intense and tight — the top five boats were separated by only 6.5 minutes of corrected time. Just 2 minutes of corrected time separated the top three boats. Stan Phillips’ Farr 30,
Frequent Flyer took top honors. Jenny Thompson’s J/30 Friction Loss took second. Head Rush, the Antrim 27 skippered by Anja Bog that had two bullets in the two previous Winter Series races, had to tack to cross the finish line and got nipped for third by Red Boat, the Open 5.70 skippered by Charlie Watt. Alex Huang on the J/29 L2O took the fifth spot only 6.5 minutes (corrected time) after the lead boat.

The race committee enjoyed the wait between the start and the finish, finding Calypso a pretty comfy way to support winter racing.

— cathy moyer & kathy conte

Ultimate 20 Fleet Champions
David Krausz, Craig Watson and Liz Ellison found the hot spot with their first year as owners of Salsa, winning the 2015 Ultimate 20 season of 12 events, which included Richmond YC’s Big Daddy and Great Pumpkin and Tiburon YC’s H.O. Lind Series. It was a season that almost didn’t happen when Salsa lost her mast in June’s Delta Ditch Run, but the fleet spare was put to good use, allowing the team to win the H.O. Lind Series at three very windy events while the new carbon mast was on order.

“We’ve got a great one-design boat and a competitive PHRF racer,” said Salsa’s David Krausz. “I am going to toot our own horn and highlight that our Ultimate 20 beat out 95 PHRF boats in the Jazz Cup. This isn’t the first time a U20 has come out on top in a big PHRF race against newer boats with top sailors.”

The Pacific Coast Championship was held at RYC during Fleet Week in October, with 13 boats from Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, Nevada and California.

“We consistently get great competition in our fleet and will need to up our skills when the Nationals come to the Bay this year,” said Krausz.

The season trophy is named in honor of Matt Boroughf, who lost his battle with cancer in August. Matt was a member of RYC and sailed in most all local and regional Ultimate 20 events before selling Salsa to her new owners.

“We are pleased to win this trophy to honor Matt and his legacy to the fleet,” concluded Krausz.

Salsa had the low-point score of 38.

Ultimate 20s competed throughout the season, with seven sailing the minimum number of races to qualify for the season.

2) Uagain, David Woodside, 48 points; 3) Uhoo!, Mike Josselyn, 51. (7 boats)

— mike josselyn

Race Notes
At 25 entries, July’s Vic-Maui Race is full and a waitlist is forming. Roy Pat Disney’s Marina del Rey-based Pyewacket raced in the Pacific Cup in 2014, but the Andrews 70 will return to the Canadian
race this summer. In the 1996 Victoria's Secret model, Pyewacket set a race record and won line honors and their division on corrected time. See www.vicmaui.org.

We wouldn't normally cover a World Sailing youth regatta hosted abroad, but the brouhaha over discrimination against the Israeli team by the host county, Malaysia, can't pass without notice. A statement from World Sailing (ex-ISAF) said that two sailors from the Israel Yachting Association (aka Israel Sailing Association) were unable to compete at the 2015 Youth World Championships, held in Langkawi on December 29-January 3, due to the conditions imposed by the Malaysian authorities. The ISA chose not to send two young windsurfers and their coach to the championship in the Muslim country after they were told that the kids would not be able to compete under their flag or display Israeli emblems on their gear, and that their national anthem would not be played. Plus, the Israelis had not yet been granted visas within 24 hours of their scheduled departure. According to the Jerusalem Post, the ISA is concerned that its team members will be unable to compete at the 2016 Youth World Championships in Oman in December or the World Cup final in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in October. Like Malaysia, Oman and the UAE do not have diplomatic relations with Israel. Perhaps sailing could be a good place to start.

— latitude/chris

Hundreds of dead fish have joined the garbage and pollution already contaminating Rio's Guanabara Bay, the site of sailing in the 2016 Olympics. Officials in Rio de Janeiro have admitted that they will not meet their clean-up goals in time for the Games, which will start on August 5.

In happier Olympic news, US Sailing Team Sperry has released its roster of sailors who have qualified. West Coast team members include Paris Henken, Coronado, CA, and Helena Scutt, Kirkland, WA, 49erFX; Caleb Paine, San Diego, Finn; Chris Barnard, Newport Beach, Laser; and 470 sailor Briana Provancha of San Diego, crewing for 2015 US Sailing Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year Annie Haeger. In Paralympic classes, former Marinite Dee Smith, 2.4mR; and Ryan Porteous of San Diego, with crew Maureen McKinnon, SKUD-18, have made the team. We hope they all have cast-iron constitutions.

— latitude/chris

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This Is No Time to Procrastinate: ‘Great Value’ Rules the Day

If you find it much easier to procrastinate than to take action, you’re not alone. Millions and millions of people procrastinate about all sorts of things every day; things as loathsome as doing their taxes as well as things as potentially pleasurable as taking a yacht vacation at some exotic hideaway.

Yes, seasoned procrastinators can always find reasons to put off just about anything — even things they’ve been dreaming about doing for years like corralling a bunch of sailing buddies and chartering a bareboat someplace where the winds blow sweet and steady, the beaches are sandy and clean, and the top priorities in life have nothing to do with email, Internet searches, blathering politicians or freeway driving.

We don’t mean to sound preachy — Lord knows we procrastinate too. But this month we’ve chosen to harp on procrastination as it relates to chartering because we think we’ve got some pretty good arguments for you to get off your duff and, if you’ll excuse the overused expression, just do it.

The most important issue is that now’s a great time to get exceptional ‘value’ in the charter market. After enduring the long and painful recession, those of us who have good old American greenbacks to spend are suddenly killin’ it in many currency exchanges. As you’ve undoubtedly heard, the dollar has risen from being battered and bruised by many international currencies to being one of the top dogs again.

Due to financial woes in the eurozone, the dollar is so strong throughout Europe that even a trip to Paris is relatively affordable. Likewise, chartering anywhere in Europe — from Scandinavia to Brittany to Italy to Greece — has rarely if ever been a better value in our lifetimes.

By extension, the dollar is also stronger than in years past in Tahiti, as the French Polynesian franc is tied to the euro. Closer to home, the American dollar has gained so much ground on its Canadian cousin that it’s almost embarrassing — 1.43 Canadian = 1 USD today, compared to 1 to 1 not long ago. This makes excursions to the spectacular Gulf Islands or Desolation Sound even more inviting than usual. In Mexico also the dollar is much, much stronger than it’s been in recent memory — 18 pesos to a dollar, compared to 12 to 1 a couple of years ago. (By the way, you may have heard that The Moorings has pulled out of La Paz, but Dream Yachts has stepped into that market as the one and only bareboat operator in the Sea of Cortez.)

In addition to the strong dollar giving you good value in foreign markets, there’s an added bonus that most of us never would have anticipated a few years ago: The current oil glut has made air fares cheaper in most markets. There’s no telling how long this will last, of course. But for the time being, lower air pricing should be a great motivator to quit making excuses, set a date, and go have some quality fun in the sun.

Life is short. Windows of opportunity don’t stay open forever. So take our advice and book that long-anticipated charter now. We’ll bet that you’ll thank us if you do.

— andy
drove down the road to the panadería. What a delicious lunch! It was perfect with a Medalla, the local Puerto Rican beer.

We heard there was salsa dancing at El San Juan, so, of course, we had to check it out. We soon owned that dance floor.

The 35-mile drive from San Juan to Fajardo takes about 50 minutes. We’d rented a car from Thrifty upon arrival at San Juan Airport, because we knew that company has an office right at the Puerto del Rey Marina in Fajardo, so we were able to do a one-way rental, and drop the car off there.

Puerto del Rey Marina is said to be the largest in the Caribbean, and it does seem immense. You are transported to your boat by a guy driving an electric golf cart, with a trailer behind for your gear.

Chateau du Mer was new, and had electric everything: electric winches, electric heads, air conditioning, electric halyards, an aft windlass, bow thrusters, you name it. One can get used to these modern conveniences. I originally said I did not need air conditioning, but by the end of the trip, it was on constantly!

We shoved off at about 2:30 p.m. and sailed directly to the large island of Vieques (about 15 miles). This is the only place where we paid for an overnight mooring ball ($25). They were free and plentiful everywhere else we sailed throughout the rest of the trip.

A top priority for Brian and Lis was doing the “Bio Bay” tour, so we decided to tick it off first. It’s a bioluminescent bay that is accessible only through a tour group. After an expensive dinner at El Quenepo, we took the van to this bay, and ventured out onto the bays in kayaks. The luminescence was beautiful. One highlight was when we heard Steve yell, “Donna, what the f--k! They had tipped over their kayak, and even lost their paddle.

We cruised the next day to Culebrita, a small island north of Culebra. There is a lovely bay and beach there, with very cool “baths” that have tidal inflow. And there’s also good snorkeling. On our walk to the lighthouse we had to dodge numerous goats.

Culebra itself is lovely. We cruised there several days, and snorkeled every day, sometimes three times a day. The reefs all look healthy there, with nice coral and lots of colorful fish, as well as turtles.

One of our favorite watering holes and lunch spots at Culebra was The Dinghy Dock — a restaurant catering to yachts who are anchored in the inner harbor. A resident group of big tarpon swim right next to the dock. We also liked Mamacita’s, which is in the channel connecting the large bay called Ensenada Honda with the ferry dock and bay to the southwest. Zaco’s Tacos are also really good.

Flamenco Beach is supposed to be one of the most beautiful in the Caribbean. We picked up a mooring ball just northwest of Bahia Tamarindo, and took a hike across the island. After about 20 minutes of walking, we emerged on the other side only to see a sign that said, “Danger, unexploded ordnance, no trespassing!” Years ago, these islands had been used for target practice, as the Roosevelt Roads Naval Base is not far away on the southeast corner of Puerto Rico. Luckily we encountered no explosions.

Ironically, at Flamenco Beach a lot of debris had blown up on the sand, and it was crowded with tourists. We liked our smaller beach on the other side much better.

Spread: Compared to most Eastern Caribbean anchorages, Culebra is practically deserted.

Insets, L to R: The intrepid crew, ready for a trip ashore; Yumi in Vieques; a centuries-old battlement guards Old San Juan.

Cap’n Art Hartinger dinghies through the Culebra Channel. He’s probably done more charters than any other ‘Latitude’ reader.
better.

All in all, though, the Spanish Virgins are really wonderful, and Sail Caribe did a great job. We have to give a shout out to our amigo Iggy, who gave us a very professional checkout.

— Art Hartinger
Pied-a-Mer, Beneteau First 310
South Beach Harbor, S.F.

Art — Thanks for your report. We’ll bet most readers didn’t even know bareboats were available out of Puerto Rico.

It’s worth noting that by making special arrangements in advance — and paying an additional fee — you can do a one-directional cruise from St. Thomas to Fajardo, thus eliminating virtually all upwind sailing.

Charter Notes
As we pencil in dates on our new 2016 calendar, we’re reminded that the Strictly Sail Pacific boat show takes place April 7-10 — the largest all-sail show in the West.

If you’re a devotee of charter vacationing, the show is a great opportunity to get some one-on-one counseling from bona fide industry experts, as several international firms are normally represented, as well as Pacific Northwest charter outfits and Bay Area sailing clubs (which also rent out boats for both daysailing and overnighting).

We’ll also remind you that in our April issue every year we run comprehensive listings on every legitimate bareboat and crewed sailing charter operation in the Greater Bay Area — including Monterey Bay and Lake Tahoe — timed to complement ideas and info gleaned at Strictly Sail.

Whether you’re a frequent or potential charterer, you’ll want to check out these listings and make some mental notes, because you never know when a special occasion might arise when you’ll want to throw a sailing party on a large-capacity vessel — i.e. for weddings, birthdays, ball game excursions, office parties, or simply to get out on the water with a gang of old friends.

If you have a boat that you’re putting into charter, be sure to send a few photos, and the following info to editorial@latitude38.com:

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Chesapeake — Outbound 46
Jim Fair and Linda Powers
Across the Indian Ocean
(Berkeley)

When we departed Berkeley on February 9, 2009, to start our circumnavigation, we knew that crossing the Indian Ocean would likely be one of our more difficult passages. When it came time for us to cross it in July 2015, we’d heard plenty of stories about the confused seas, the wave trains running in multiple directions — usually S and SE with 13-foot waves — and winds in excess of 30 knots.

There are three options for crossing the Indian Ocean. The shortest, most traditional route is west from Phuket, Thailand, across the northern Indian Ocean up to and through the Red Sea and Suez Canal. Unfortunately, piracy has made this option too risky in recent years. The second option is to head west through Sri Lanka and then south through the Chagos Archipelago, Rodrigues, Mauritius, and Reunion to South Africa. Most boats taking this route depart December-January. The third option is to head east back through Malaysia and part of Indonesia in order to start the Indian Ocean crossing by going through the Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra.

Each option has its drawbacks. We chose the third, the main drawback being to have our way nearly 1,000 miles down the Strait of Malacca to reach the Sunda Strait. That passage was bedeviled by mostly very light wind, and was littered with boat traffic, much of it poorly lit at night.

We provisioned and refueled in Puteri, about halfway down the Malacca Strait, which left us with 500 miles to Sunda Strait. We thought we’d never get out of SE Asia! We eventually cleared the Strait, saw a hazy Krakatoa, site of one of the most destructive volcanic eruptions ever, and cheered that we were finally in the Indian Ocean. We were relieved to finally be away from all the shipping traffic, heat and humidity.

It took us four days to sail 600 miles to Cocos Keeling, the first of several island stops when going across the Indian Ocean. The southeast trades made it a quick trip, and we logged some of our fastest days ever — 191 miles in 24 hours was our best. The seas were typically 10 to 15 feet, which made things lumpy, but overall the sailing was fine.

On August 24 we left for 1,999-mile-distant Rodrigues. It took us 12.5 days. The sailing was a mixed bag — gentle downwind sailing, then squalls and erratic winds to 35 knots and 12-ft seas.

On September 29, we took off for 348-mile-distant Mauritius. We had a terrific downwind sail and arrived at Port Louis after just 49 hours.

Bob Walden flew in to help us sail the rest of the way to South Africa. We left on November 9 for an easy 132-mile overnight passage to Port Ouest. Reunion. “So far so good,” is what we were thinking at the time.

On Friday, November 13 we left for Richards Bay, South Africa. This was the most difficult part of the crossing, as we had to cross the Agulhas Current, which is a changing whirlpool of 3-5 knots of current. It took us 11 days to go 1,272 miles. We saw some light winds and did some motoring the first few days. Our speed over ground was 7+ knots. Then the seas got bigger and then the wind died altogether.

We started to get favorable current, but it also got chilly, so we had to pull our foulies out. We finally got blessed with a 3+ knot current in our favor, kicking our speed over ground to above 10 knots. At the time we were about 80 miles south of Madagascar, and we recorded a new 24-hour record — 196 miles.

Then the trades died and we got wind from every direction. We were constantly reefing, unreefing, gybing and tacking. We slowed down to avoid weather in front of us, but still had rain, lightning and wind to 52 knots. We finally hove to for a day in light wind and sloppy seas. When we started moving again, we did more than eight knots over the bottom, despite carrying a triple-reefed main and a small jib. We arrived at Richards Bay, South Africa at 2 a.m. on November 24.

Here’s what we learned: The Indian Ocean seas can be large and confused with gale-force winds — but it’s not always that way. On the final leg, from Reunion to South Africa, you can be guaranteed one or more high-wind fronts passing through. The front will start with light winds, but can blow at more than...
started that voyage from Vallarta in the middle of April. It took us 23 days to cover the 3,200 miles. It's longer than most people think because they don't realize how far east P.V. is — due south of Denver. Our trip was earmarked by the lack of wind, particularly for the first 10 days or so. We even resorted to motoring slowly to conserve our limited fuel.

I had a crew of three, which worked out well, as everyone got sufficient rest and time to themselves. After crossing shipping routes from/to the Panama Canal, we saw no other vessels — visually or electronically — for 20 days.

A layover of almost two months at Honolulu's Ala Wai Harbor — more on that next month — drew to an end in July when, with a crew of four, Ocean Echo left for Sitka, Alaska. It was only 150 miles shorter from Honolulu to Sitka than from P.V. to Honolulu. Our passage to Alaska took 22 days.

The weather during the two passages was manageable, with winds topping out at 36 knots true, and waves at an estimated 25 feet. We engaged the services of Commander's Weather for the leg to Sitka, and found their findings mostly in line with our own weather expectations based on the GRIB files.

Heading south on the Inside Passage, with its many neighboring waterways, was interesting. Unfortunately, when my wife and I were there in the July – September time period of 2014, it was often cold and rainy. And when there was wind, it was usually on the nose. Nevertheless, our visits to Glacier Bay National Park — with its glaciers, killer whales, bears, moose, bald eagles and other stunningly beautiful wildlife — made up for many inconveniences. After Glacier Bay National Park, we visited Juneau, Petersburg, and at the season's end, Wrangell, where Ocean Echo spent the winter of 2014-2015.

I had no takers on my invitations

As seen here, Hellmuth started his two-year North Pacific Loop by doing the 2013 Baja Ha-Ha with his wife Angelika and crew.
to join me for the voyage south from Wrangell in 2015. Nor was my wife interested in returning to the cool and often rainy Alaskan weather. So I ended up doing four months of singlehanding. Fortunately, I had sailed my boat singlehanded many times before in the Bay and adjacent waters, so it wasn’t a problem.

I started the 2015 season on May 1, and slowly made my way south, in and out of the Inside Passage. I visited Ketchikan and many small settlements as I crisscrossed Southeast Alaska. I eventually reached Prince Rupert, BC, where I checked into Canada. I then continued south through the myriad waterways among the islands of British Columbia. When I got to Port Hardy, I was joined by a friend for exploring Desolation Sound and the Powell River area.

Singlehanding once again, I arrived in Vancouver shortly thereafter, where a great-nephew and his girlfriend from Germany joined me for the trip to Victoria, BC, via the Gulf Islands. After Victoria and Orcas, San Juan and Lopez Islands, we reached Port Angeles, Washington, where a full crew joined me for the trip down to San Francisco Bay.

The 990-mile journey to Alameda, via Neha Bay, went as expected. Initially we had great northerly winds, which allowed us to quickly eat up the miles. But the wind came out of the south with an approaching low pressure system, so we pulled into Eureka for shelter and fuel. Resuming our trip south, we had up to 40 knots of wind from the north before making our next and final stop at Drakes Bay.

My cruise was fantastic to plan and execute, and it was an eye-opening and extremely satisfying experience of maybe my lifetime. But hopefully it was only a teaser of things to come.

— hellmuth 10/15/2015

**Aussie Rules — Catalina 34**
**Dave Hayes and Rose Alderson**

**The Chapter After the Pacific (Gabriola Island, British Columbia)**

After seven years of planning, and an extensive house renovation, we sold our fixer-upper to finance our cruising dreams. The first part of our dream was ambitious — sail our humble, not-really-mean-for-cruising Catalina 34 from British Columbia to Australia. Though some sailors may have thought we were nuts going with a boat that wasn’t designed to cross oceans, only one said, “You’re going where?! In that?” to our faces. He was likely just voicing what others thought but kept to themselves.

We did, however, add a bunch of new gear, including oversized standing rigging, 420 watts of solar panels, an SSB radio, radar, a B&G chart plotter, and Hydrovane self-steering.

Dave and I were concerned that our 34-footer was too small. But as we learned over the course of the trip to Australia, about 80% of the time we were fine with the boat’s size. After all, Catalina makes roomy boats. We entertained often, having four, six and even 10 people over for sundowners and even full-blown dinners. *Aussie Rules*’ cockpit is huge, bigger than the ones on some much larger boats.

Other than perhaps three days of nasty weather, we were perfectly confident in our boat’s abilities. As it turned out, we often reached destinations faster than our boat’s abilities. As it turned out, we often reached destinations faster than friends on buddy boats because our boat was lighter, and because we’re racers at heart, we liked to tweak the sails.

We sailed down the West Coast quickly in order to make the start of the 2014 Baja Ha-Ha. We found the rally to be a lot of fun, with an emphasis on safety, fun social events, and some lighthearted competition. Nonetheless, we were glad to win our division. We also took part in the Puddles and the Powell River area.

One of the last stops in the two-year voyage was at Hope Island in Puget Sound. This photo shows a rare cloudless day.
system that would have left us bobbing for days. We made it to the Marquesas — an incredibly scenic landfall of lush greenery after huge blue skies and endless seas — in 28 days. Friends had a much more difficult passage. First, the skipper tore muscles in his back and had to be flat on his back for six days. During this time the boat was hit by a 50-knot squall, with the crew unprepared to deal with it, resulting in their boom breaking in two places. Thanks to our DeLorme InReach’s communications device, we kept in touch and encouraged them to join us in a lovely bay on Tahuata. When they got there, Dave, with the help of cordless tools and the support of many, fixed the boom by cutting off the jagged end. He relocated all the attachment points along the bottom of the boom, making it almost as good as new. The only downside was they had to have a permanent reef in their in-mast furling system.

The loud cheers that went up from the many fellow cruisers around us as the boom was reattached reflected the community spirit of cruisers we have experienced all across the Pacific. If you need help, we’ll be there; and if we can’t help, we’ll stay close and cheer you on. The compensation is always the same — food, friendship and a few beverages. In this case, it was a 1.75l bottle of tequila. But hey, extraordinary circumstances call for extraordinary celebrations. This fun-loving, supportive cruising community watched out for one another, helped one another, and celebrated time and again, sourcing parts, tools, skills — and most importantly a willingness to join in. Hip hip, hooray! Our friends sailed all the way to Bundaberg, Australia with the jury rig, going just a bit slower than their normal top speed.

Alas, our trip across the Pacific went much too fast, as we only had a week or two to explore areas where we could easily have lost ourselves for many weeks. French Polynesia in particular wasspectacular and unique, specifically the differences between the three island groups of the Marquesas, Tuamotus and the Societies. I feel as though we missed the most in the Tuamotus; there are so many atolls that it’s really hard to see more than a few, especially as we only got a three-month visa, the most common duration the French give out. It would be very easy to spend years exploring these extremely remote islands and atolls. Numerous other islands had to be skipped completely or visited only briefly.

We have had a wonderful trip across the Pacific, arriving in Bundaberg on November 10, just shy of nine months after departing from Puerto Vallarta, and just 15 months after leaving Canada. Our plan had always been to sell our boat once we got to Australia. Many Aussies told us that Catalina is well-respected in Oz as a solid, well-built boat. We were also told the market has gone a bit flat, but the smaller boat market was still doing all right.

As we landed in Bundaberg, which was a pleasant and painless process, we were immediately greeted by a friend we had made in Mexico. It turned out that his brother was looking for a boat in the Aussie Rules size, and we had to think on our feet to come up with a selling price. As we had bought the boat for a bargain — Life tends to be more interesting when you get your food fresh from the source rather than from a supermarket. Fruit de mer — yum! —

IN LATITUDES

A few of the many adventures of Dave and Rose in their Pacific crossing. Clockwise from lower right: The big cruiser get-together in Moorea; fresh fish for lunch and dinner; the clear blue waters of the South Pacific; Rose, suited up for anything; the couple at Musket Cove Resort in Fiji.
El Gato — Catana 47
Anne Gardner and Eric Witte

More Thoughts on the Med
(Pt. Loma, San Diego)

[In last month’s issue, Annie and Eric recounted buying their catamaran in Europe — and suddenly deciding to spend a summer cruising the Med before crossing the Atlantic to the Caribbean. The following are some of their thoughts and observations.]

Where are the Yanks? “We never saw any American boats during our summer in the Med. If an American flag flew from a boat, it was a small boat, and it was owned by Turks who had registered the boat in Delaware to get tax breaks.”

New priorities: “We watch the weather religiously, as Mother Nature now rules our lives. Right now she is gentle. Predict Wind and Navionics apps have become our best friends. When we don’t have phone service/Internet for these apps, we keep our eyes open and our fingers crossed. Iridium satellite service will come into play eventually, but for now Europe and T Mobile are our sources for info.”

Not everyone is courteous: “We returned to our boat at one place in Greece to find she was banging against the sea wall, protected only by her fenders. El Gato’s anchor had been pulled free by a boat that had left. There was very little damage, but it was a scramble to get the anchor reset. Eric ‘MacGyver’ hung it from the bow of our dinghy El Raton, backed up, and let her go. The funny thing is, when we pulled up the anchor to reset it, there was a boat hook stuck to the chain. So now we have a spare boat hook, courtesy of the folks who jerked our anchor free.”

We’ve made mistakes, too! “Villefranche, just east of Nice, is said to be the biggest natural harbor in the world and was once home to the US Sixth Fleet. It’s in a very beautiful setting, too, but it’s a very deep-water anchorage. Late in the afternoon we went for a hike in the hills above Villefranche, and when we looked down to see El Gato, she wasn’t where we’d left her. Huh?! And just two days before in Antibes we’d bought a “better” anchor and more chain. The sandals came off and we flew down the hill, backpacks bouncing on our backs, rushing to our dinghy to get to El Gato before something bad happened. We were so lucky, as she’d drifted between two large yachts rather than into either one of them. The only good thing that came of it is that Eric was impressed to discover how quickly I can run.”

Satisfied Catana owners. “The wind topped out at 42 knots as we sailed past Sikinos, Greece. We were grateful that we had two reefs in the main and the small Solent up. The wind increases near the islands, and this time it blasted down on us. We were never overpowered going downwind, and our cat is so stable that the guests were comfy and happy. We feel really good about having bought our Catana 472.”

How good was it? “Our Greek friends told us the best places to go in Sikinos, and after anchoring we found the bus to the top of the hill for dinner at the Manalis Winery. Owner George greeted us at the door of the restaurant run by his daughter. It was as good an experience as it gets. Not just the wonderful wines, but the location, the food, the

— rose 12/20/2015

The biggest shock Dave and Rose will experience in the Caribbean is how close boats have to anchor next to one another in St. Martin.
IN LATITUDES

though it is a gift."

"Maybe topless, but bottomless?" Arriving at one marina at 4 a.m. meant having to anchor outside the marina entrance until the office opened up. We woke up off a beautiful deserted beach, but by 10 a.m. the beach was packed with naked people. Like most Americans, Eric and I are a little shy when it comes to public nudity, but people are naked everywhere on beaches in the Med. I can sort of see topless, but bottomless? I later walked into a beach restaurant topless, not realizing I was the only one. Oops. I’m still learning the ‘rules’.

Speaking of rules. "Shortly before crossing the Atlantic as part of the ARC+ fleet, we joined some other participants on our dock and got into a conversation about ‘rules’. Hostess Tina from England said she, like me, hates rules. But she still had three:

Rule One: Don’t drink her effing rum. Rule Two: Don’t make her scared. Rule Three: Don’t hurt her boat. I think these are good rules.

I used one rule throughout the summer: No one is allowed to leave the boat unless she is docked or at anchor, and they’ve told someone they are leaving. After going to some ARC first aid classes, I added another rule. No one is allowed to get hurt, as I learned that blood — even fish blood — makes me queasy. We have a complete medical kit and know some first aid from the seminars, but I don’t want to have to use any of the stuff or knowledge."

What a way to go! "As we slowly traveled along the South of France looking for a new spot to anchor, we looked up and gasped — we suddenly realized that the Med is even more beautiful than we ever imagined. Add to that history surrounding almost every place and building, and we were in constant awe. Traveling by ambience, the decor — and the price was crazy inexpensive! We watched the sunset reflect off the water, and while later waiting for the bus, watched the Pleiades meteor shower in the company of Turks and Greeks from other boats."

Having a theme is good. "We hosted a dinner party for Luis and Teresa, the Argentinians anchored on the boat behind us. In the spirit of Eat Sail Love — our cruising theme — I decided to make moussaka. While I was buying the ingredients and waiting for the butcher, a restaurant owner came in and helped me shop for the items. Even the Greek ladies thought my creation was delicious — although maybe they were just being polite. By the way, nowhere have we met more people who were as gracious, hospitable and giving as in Greece. We wish we could bottle their spirit and spread it across the world."

Understanding vegetarians. "When I asked the butcher in Amorgos if he had lamb, he went into the freezer and brought out a whole skinned lamb — eyeballs included — on a hook. He pointed while asking which part I wanted, then he took the cleaver and hacked off a leg. Eating that leg was the closest I’ve come to truly owning what it means to eat meat. I can relate to vegetarians much better now. But I’ll still eat meat — the lamb was delicious — and octopus, thank you very much!"

Getting philosophical. "Eric had to go back to the States, leaving me alone on the boat in Greece. It didn’t suck, but I missed my man fiercely, as this was the first time we’d been apart since we started this journey months ago. We knew that at some point we’d have to fly home individually for something unscheduled, which in this case was a death of a gem of a relative of Eric’s. With his death came the realization that our generation is next. Nooooooo! On that note, we will live each day as a gift."

boat is the bee’s knees. No worries about hotel reservations, rental cars and such, and as long as the weather cooperates, we peacefully enjoyed each location with its new things to discover.”

Sardinia is expensive. “At Phi Beach, beautiful Claudia greeted us at the dock with a big white book hoping to persuade us to buy into the roped off VIP area. We gently skirted her invitation by saying we would drink at the bar instead. Our four mojitos cost 60 euros. But they were delicious.”

The favorite? “Everyone asks us which was our favorite island. When they do, Eric and I look at each other and smile. In fact, we could sit, smile, and not say a word as the memories of our time in the Med flood through our minds. Picking a favorite island would be rude, so we come up with examples of our many favorites.

Milos was awesome for the pirate caves and the Greeks we met. Bonifacio on Corsica took our breath away as we entered the narrow channel carved between cliffs and below the castle. Sar- dinia had great windsurfing, fish, and a friend waiting for us. Stromboli had a volcano that erupted every 15 minutes. We loved drinking wine on the back porch of a vineyard owner’s home on Lipari. Ithaca was great because that’s the setting for Homer’s Odyssey.

Those are about 1/10 of the places we visited in the five months we spent cruising the Med. There was no favorite because they were all our favorites. Each island had its own character, whether it was Spanish, French, Italian or Greek. One thing I learned early on was to buy and enjoy what the island was famous for. The grocery stores were telling. Just walk down the aisles and see what items they had whole rows of. The hard part was then figuring out which of any particular item was the best.”

Not enough time. “Why the rush-rush when we are supposedly ‘cruising’?

While Eric and Annie had no favorite islands, stunning Bonifacio on the island of Corsica took their breath away.

When you only have five months to see the Med, it’s not nearly enough. Some people spend their whole lives cruising the Med, and we can see why. Each country has its own style, flavors, customs and landscapes. It was really hard for us to leave the Med, but rest assured that some day, with or without El Gato, we shall return.”

— Annie 12/15/2015

Readers — Annie and Eric are now cruising the Eastern Caribbean. Her blog is terrific, and you can follow it at tradewindadventures.wordpress.com. It’s also the way to contact the couple if you want to do a charter with them.

Geja — Islander 36

Andrew Vik

Eighth Summer Cruise In the Med
(San Francisco)

[This is Part Two of Andrew Vik’s report on his eighth annual cruise in the Med. Part One appeared last month.]

It was great to get in two solid weeks of cruising along Montenegro’s short coastline. While Croatia is inundated by tourists, by both land and sea, you can still get that off-the-beaten-path feeling in Montenegro. The marinas are never full and we had all three anchorages to ourselves. Berths with water and electricity cost between 30 and 50 euros per night, about 20% less than in Croatia.

Unlike our checkout procedure in Croatia, sailing out of the EU and into Montenegro couldn’t have been smoother. But that’s probably because our port of entry was the overly posh Porto Montenegro. Some rich Canadian guy has turned an old naval shipyard into the Adriatic Sea’s most luxurious marina, positioning it as a hot spot for megayachts.

Upon arrival at the customs dock, I was whisked away by a pretty young marina employee in a golf cart to visit the onsite customs and police offices. I was even given a cold beverage. I was afraid that I was unknowingly going to have to pay a fortune for the hand-holding, but it was free. It sure made the 64-euro overnight charge seem far more reasonable. Overall, though, the place sticks out like a sore thumb in an otherwise poor country.

As you sail south in Montenegro beyond the Budva Riviera, things became less ‘refined’, leading us to make a number of Borat references. There was more trash in the sea, and the water somehow lost the clarity for which the Adriatic is known. But, hey, ‘refined’ can be boring.

Yet if it had been up to my two buddies, a Swede and a Dane, we’d have spent their entire two-week stay in Budva, a very refined holiday destination. It’s indeed a special place where the most fashionable local girls, along with tourists from Serbia, Ukraine and Russia, party the summer nights away. Their culture favors high heels and short dresses, so the nightly supermodel parade was just insane.

What’s a typical party night like for the Geja gang? Being Scandinavian-blooded, we follow the Nordic protocol of pre-partying on board. Not that drinks in the Balkan countries cost anywhere near what they do up north – a mojito will only set you back up to seven euros; beers two to three euros. The pre-party is just a fun component of the night to sit
fully lassoed the bollard. With line and chain snug, I stepped ashore from my secure vessel and checked us into Croatia. I was lectured upon departure, but did avoid the fee I would have had to pay the previous time.

From Cavtat it’s just an hour to Dubrovnik, one of Europe’s most badass walled medieval towns. The marina is a 30-minute bus ride from the old town, and costs 100 euros during weekends — "just 70 euros" the rest of the time — so we just dropped the hook next to the old town port. It’s a crappy anchorage where Geja rolls in even the calmest weather, but the location can’t be beat. And there is no anchoring fee at Dubrovnik, a surprise in a country infamous for anchoring fees.

In all, I logged 600 miles this summer and was underway 37 out of the 48 days. I averaged 16 miles on my days underway. As for those fickle Mediterranean winds, we were only able to sail about 35% of the distance this summer, a new low. This figure had been as high as 59% in one previous summer, but it’s usually in the 40s.

Of Geja’s 30 different overnight stops, 13 were new to me. That’s the luxury of sailing in Croatia — you simply can’t run out of new places to explore, what with the countless islands and protected harbors. Even after eight summers. That said, I’ve covered all of the highlights of both shores of the Adriatic at least twice by now, from Venice in the north down to Montenegro. Part of me misses the excitement of discovering new places, while another appreciates the minimal planning required to share some awesome cruising grounds with good friends. I have a great setup with a boatyard just a stone’s throw from the airport in Split, Croatia. The English-speaking mechanics are intimately familiar with Geja by now, and there’s always with your buddies and get your drink — usually vodka-based — on. At around 11 p.m. we’ll paddle and/or walk to a nearby hot spot, and possibly hit a nightclub later. If new friends are curious enough to check out the boat, the Scandinavian concept of an after-party concept applies as well. In between nights such as those, I like to schedule what I call ‘detox-stops’ — remote anchorages with no shoreside party temptations. A long, peaceful night of sleep can be an elusive treat during a Geja voyage.

Checking back into Croatia from the south involves another stop in Cavtat. Oddly, the customs quay was empty, and several boats were just circling around when we arrived. Apparently the computers were down so nobody could check in. Nor were the awaiting boats allowed to even tie up. Eventually the computers were fixed and it became our turn to Med-moor to the quay. Given the time, I’d come up with a plan to avoid the ridiculous 13-euro line-handling charge. Since you’re not allowed to step off a boat that isn’t securely tied at Cavtat, it would seem you would have to pay for a line-handler. But I positioned a crewmember at the stern with a pre-looped line. With my other crew up front paying out the anchor chain, I backed toward the quay. Ignoring the line-handler on the shore, my stern crew success-
Cruise Notes:

"The outboard thieves of Mazatlan are alive and well," reports Jamie Sibley of the San Diego-based Cheoy Lee 36 ketch Flying Cloud. "In early January we had our Yamaha 8-hp taken in the middle of the night while at the Old Harbor at the south end of town. The thieves were brazen enough to board our boat and gather up the outboard gas tank as well. It's sad that there seems to be no stopping these guys, as it makes cruisers not want to visit Mazatlan."

The Old Harbor-Stone Island area of Mazatlan did have a number of outboard thefts a few years ago, so it's unfortunate that it seems to be starting up again. Mazatlan is well worth visiting, so it might be better to get a berth at one of the marinas at the north end of town where there is better security.

If you have something valuable stolen from your boat while cruising in Mexico, we'd love to hear about it so we can warn others about potential 'hot spots'.

"After meeting up with the Wanderer in La Cruz, we had a good trip around the San Diego-based Cheoy Lee 36 ketch Flying Cloud. "In early January we had our Yamaha 8-hp taken in the middle of the night while at the Old Harbor at the south end of town. The thieves were brazen enough to board our boat and gather up the outboard gas tank as well. It's sad that there seems to be no stopping these guys, as it makes cruisers not want to visit Mazatlan."

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"After meeting up with the Wanderer in La Cruz, we had a good trip around..."
to finish my circumnavigation, but rather because Nikki and I have decided to sail across the Pacific to Australia again. It’s going to be quite a season.”

What’s the best alternative to a sat-phone? Mike and Deanna Ruel of the East Coast-based Manta 42 R Sea Kat — who finally won a seemingly endless battle against relentless strong winds to get down the east coast of South Africa and around the Cape of Good Hope — are big believers in the DeLorme InReach two-way text messaging device. On the other hand, Eric Witte and Annie Gardner of the Pt. Loma-based Catana 472 El Gato are big believers in the Iridium Go! “Our service plan for $125/month includes unlimited texting and emails, no matter where in the world we are. We used our phones and iPads and their app, and it was easy once we practiced.”

Both the DeLorme and Iridium Go! are powered by Iridium, which means they should work anywhere in the world. Although we think nothing beats a sat-phone in an emergency, both devices are good alternatives — and/or backups — to satphones.

Doesn’t Debbie Rogers look smashing in the photo below that shows her practicing yoga on her and her husband John’s San Diego-based Deerfoot 62 Moonshadow? Naturally her bright blue top complements her blonde hair and is a vibrant contrast to the green background, but what really makes her look so smashing is that she radiates health and vitality. It’s almost hard to believe that she’s been happily married to John for 43 years, and is also a grandmother several times over. Those of us hoping we can look half as great as Debbie through some ‘30-seconds-a-day, every-third-day’ routine are going to be disappointed, as she reports that it takes time and effort.

Three shots from cruiser favorite, Tenacatita Bay, Mexico. The lower photo shows the dinghy raft-up beginning to form for the ‘Mayor’s Friday night gathering. Above left; When ‘Moonshadow’ came north three years ago, the ‘Jungle Ride’ was open. Right; Now cruisers are clearing it again.

Riviera Nayarit Splash/Blast/Pirates for Pupils Spinnaker Run for Charity. which is supported by Riviera Nayarit Tourism, Paradise Marina, Marina Riviera Nayarit, Latitude 38, the Punta Mita Yacht & Surf Club and P.V. Sails. The beneficiaries of the three-day event are the very young students of the Punta Mita area. Top finishers of 21 boats in the Ha-Ha-style racing was Fred Roswold and Judy Jensen’s now-La Cruz-based Peterson 43 Wings. Having sailed their boat around the world for 18 years, they’ve got her dialed in.

“Since June I’ve had my catamaran up the Rio Dulce River in Guatemala, where I’ve had extensive work done on her,” reports Scott Stolnitz of the Marina del Rey-based Switch 51 Beach House. “We later spent New Year’s Eve with Peter and Laurie on their sistership Zia. While up the Rio Dulce I felt like we were in the bottom of a toilet bowl. I don’t mean to suggest that it’s a bad place, but rather it is the bottom of the world in terms of getting out of there, as you’ve run out of downwind options and have to head east and upwind into the trades. It took a guy named Columbus and the crew of his galleon three months to finally get far enough east, which is why he named the last point Punta Gracias Adios.

“Anyway, my companion Nikki Woodrow and I will soon depart for either the Bay of Islands or Isla Providence, then the San Blas Islands and the Panama Canal. We need to transit the Canal, not so I can head up to California Riviera Nayarit Splash/Blast/Pirates for Pupils Spinnaker Run for Charity. which is supported by Riviera Nayarit Tourism, Paradise Marina, Marina Riviera Nayarit, Latitude 38, the Punta Mita Yacht & Surf Club and P.V. Sails. The beneficiaries of the three-day event are the very young students of the Punta Mita area. Top finishers of 21 boats in the Ha-Ha-style racing was Fred Roswold and Judy Jensen’s now-La Cruz-based Peterson 43 Wings. Having sailed their boat around the world for 18 years, they’ve got her dialed in.

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"I do my routine the first thing in the morning almost every day we’re at anchor,” says Debbie. “I usually put on some mellow flute music to set the mood. It takes about an hour to finish the routine, but when I’m done, I’m limber and ready to start the day. If we’re in a marina, I usually hear about a local yoga class and join in.”

It’s easier to do yoga, stretching and other exercise on bigger boats, of course, but many cruisers manage on smaller boats. If you have a daily or just frequent exercise routine for when you’re on your boat, we’d love to hear about it.

The little big man! That’s the thought that came to our mind when we saw the photo at right of two-year-old Taj Lauducci of the Sausalito-based Stevens 40 Shawnigan. Skateboarding Taj is a wild one, so it’s fortunate for parents Christian and Josie that they have the help of two offspring — Nina, 12 and Ellamae, 7 — as well as pickup crew Emma (last name unknown).

Great Misexpectations. “We are in Mazatlan and met the skipper of a boat that had started the last Ha-Ha, but had to bail in Ensenada because of electrical problems,” write multiple Ha-Ha vets Marina and Myron Eisenzimmer of the San Anselmo-based Swan 44 Mykonos. “The skipper said they were disappointed when they got to Turtle Bay because they found the village to be “so dirty”. What was he expecting, a miniature San Diego?”

Since Baja is almost all desert, it’s to be expected that the village of Turtle Bay, which has no paved roads, will be as dusty as all the other villages on Baja. However, it’s also true that there is an unfortunate garbage problem in Turtle Bay, as is the case in too much of Mexico. The garbage situation has actually improved greatly in the tourist areas over the last 10 years, but there is still work to be done. That said, we should all remember that it was common practice to throw garbage out of cars in the US as late as in the 1960s.

"Judy and I are in Panama City, Panama, getting ready to transit the Canal,” reports Bill ‘Cover Boy’ Lilly of the Newport Beach-based Lagoon 47 Moontide. “It looks as though I will have an (almost) all-female crew. The rumor down here is that the issue with the Kuna Indians on the beautiful San Blas Islands on the Caribbean side of Panama has been resolved. Even though the Kuna Yala — San Blas Islands — are supposed to be pretty much autonomous in the way Indian reservations are in the States, the Panamanian government reportedly put a stop to Kuna plans to charge between...”
$1,500 and $4,000 a month (!) in fees to anchor in the San Blas.

"In any event, after the San Blas we will probably head north toward Belize, the Yucatan, hopefully Cuba, Key West, and get north of Florida by hurricane season. If we don’t, our insurance doubles. We’re thinking about taking Moontide up the Potomac River to Washington, D.C. to do the ‘Capitol thing’ with a couple of my grandkids this summer, then head to the Eastern Caribbean in the fall. I figure I need to do New Year’s at Foxy’s in the British Virgins at least once in my life."

Because of the webcams at the Panama Canal, many of Bill and Judy’s friends were able to watch them pass through the Mirafl ores Locks on January 19. It’s always fun to watch friends pass through the locks, and you adjust the webcam angle over the Internet.

Thanks to Michael and Robin Stout of the Redondo Beach-based Aleutian 51 Mermaid, we have the latest information on the situation in the San Blas Islands.

"We were in the San Blas Islands more than a month before anybody ever came by to collect any fees from us, and they were $20/month per person, and $20/month for the boat. It’s true that the Guna Congresso, which is the Kuna Yala ruling body, was going to charge outrageous fees, but decided against it. The Kuna have been friendly and welcoming to us so far, and the San Blas are beautiful and fun. By the way, here’s our daily routine: do a boat chore in the morning; go for a swim, island or dinghy adventure; lunch; then snorkel. Sometimes we even go for a sail. It’s not a bad way to spend our days. We might even stay here for a year."

Actually, it’s not uncommon for cruisers to spend a year or more in the San Blas Islands, which have frequently been described as looking ‘more like the South Pacific than the South Pacific.’

Thanks to publicity given it by numerous self-appointed experts, Playa del Amor, aka Hidden Beach, became an Internet sensation for the absurd title of ‘the world’s best remote beach’. Located just four miles from Punta Mita at the Marieta Islands near the mouth of Banderas Bay, it’s also ridiculously been called ‘the Galapagos of Mexico’. The result is that the place we and other cruisers had to ourselves just a few years ago is now overwhelmed with tourists brought out in all manner of charter boats from Puerto Vallarta, Nuevo Val-

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larta and Punta MIta.

Hidden Beach truly is cool because it’s inside a crater and you have to swim through a tunnel to get into it. In fact, you can’t get in when the tide is really high or the surf is big because you bang your head on the top of the tunnel. But while the surrounding area is home to some tropical fish, rays and whales, it’s not on the order of the Galapagos — or most places in the Caribbean. But that hasn’t stopped the hordes. According to one official of the nature preserve, 4,000 people a day visit the beach during the high season, and 2,000 during the low season. And you thought Yosemite was being loved to death.

So many charterboat passengers want to get ashore that they sometimes have to wait as much as 90 minutes for their turn. While waiting, no music may be played and no alcoholic beverages may be consumed on the boats. And when you swim to the beach, you have to wear a bracelet that shows you’ve paid a fee, and an orange PFD. How can you free dive while wearing a PFD? You can’t — which is the point. If this sounds heavy-handed, it is, but given the number of visitors it almost has to be. And if owners of private yachts. After getting a permit in downtown Puerto Vallarta, you can anchor overnight at the Marietas up to four times a month. But don’t wait too long, because plans are already being formulated to begin restricting access to islands on certain weekends if not weeks, simply to keep it from being overwhelmed.

The other somewhat discouraging news is that some organization, believed to be Vallarta Adventures, has placed a very large dolphin pen outside the anchorage at Punta MIta. We can only assume that tourists will be brought out to the pen in high-capacity boats so tourists can swim with the captive dolphins. Currently Vallarta Adventures has a swim-with-dolphins program in Nuevo Vallarta. Vallarta Adventures activities are very popular and highly-rated, we’d just prefer that they, as well as everyone else, stay out of the trapped-mammals business.

**UPDATE:** After three days and a major uproar from locals, the pen and mooring balls have now been removed.

We have to admit that we swam with dolphins in a pen during a Big O cruise...
of Cuba about 20 years ago. It was a traumatic experience, but one we nonetheless have misgivings about.

Good friends Barry and Sylvia Stompe of the Sausalito-based Hughes 48 ketch *Iolani* report they’ve completed a 16-day doublehanded passage from French Polynesia to Hilo, Hawaii. The couple love delicious and nutritious food, so they’ve been enjoying the produce market at Hilo.

"Hilo has a lovely veggie market every day, with Thai and Hawaiian farmers selling great fruit and veggies," reports Sylvia. "So after more than two weeks at sea, we’ve been eating well. However, the fish prices are quite a shock after French Polynesia, where we paid $2.50/pound for yellowfin tuna fresh off the boat. We’re thinking the only fish we’ll eat is that which we catch ourselves on our way up to Hawaii. We landed two dorado, which was nice. We also hooked a massive yellowfin, but after Barry played it for two hours, the fish got off. I’m not sure how we would have been able to land it, much less eat it all, so perhaps it’s for the best that he got away."

We’ll have a detailed report on the *Iolani*’s adventures in next month’s *Changes*.

A heart attack on the boat in the marina at 4:30 a.m.? The Wanderer had been having a dream — he thinks it was a dream — in which he was having a difficult time breathing. When fully awake, he wasn’t sure if he was having trouble breathing or not, although he wasn’t having any other obvious heart issue symptoms. But at age 67, and having recently lost his dear, dear friend Philo Hayward to a heart problem, he decided not to take any chances. He popped a couple of children’s aspirin, took a bit of Xanax, and told Dolia they were going to 30-minute distant San Javier Hospital in Nuevo Vallarta just to err on the side of precaution.

They arrived at the immaculately clean San Javier Hospital at 5:30 a.m., and the Wanderer was immediately tended to by several staff members, one of whom quickly hooked him up to a machine to check his blood pressure and pulse. Moments later he was taken to see a doctor, who immediately gained the Wanderer’s confidence. Already this was the antithesis of too many US hospital experiences.

After going over the Wanderer’s pretty clean medical history, he was taken to a modern and absolutely clean room with a bed where he was given an EKG by a combination of three very kind nurses.
They let the still sleepy Doña, who didn’t seem very concerned, crash in the bed next to him. A few moments later the doctor went over the Wanderer’s EKG — no problems — and discussed how to deal with the fact that both his blood pressure and blood sugar were a little elevated. The Wanderer knows how to fix that: go on a plant-based diet and cut out the crap food. He’d done it before, lost 40 pounds (way too much) in four months, and saw his blood-pressure and blood-sugar numbers plummet.

As far as the Wanderer is concerned, his was the Ritz Carlton of hospital experiences. He didn’t see another patient in the whole place. It got even better when he was handed a bill for 2,700 pesos for everything — about $162. What would such a visit have cost in the United States?

Naturally not all hospitals in Mexico are as good as San Javier, but there is usually at least one very good one in most larger tourist cities. Several others have shared their hospital experiences in Mexico:

“Tamiko and Eli and I have been to the IMSS hospital in Mezcales twice now,” writes Steve Willie of the La Cruz-based Vagabond 47 Landfall. “The public IMSS hospitals are for the masses and not as scrupulously clean as San Javier, but the one in Mezcales was as clean as most hospitals we’ve seen in the States. And an emergency room visit only costs $30. The longest we had to wait to see a doctor was 15 minutes, and as far as we’re concerned, the care was beyond excellent.”

“When Mike had back surgery at the San Javier Hospital in Guadalajara, it was the best hospital experience ever,” reports Shelley Rothery Ward of the La Paz-based Peterson 44 Avatar. “I was given clean sheets every day and told to sleep on the couch in the room for the week.”

The bottom line? Stay healthy. But if you need medical care, don’t fear treatment in Mexico, especially if you’re on a budget. And when in doubt, get a second opinion.

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25 TO 28 FEET

CATALINA 27, 1979. Oakland Yacht Club, Alameda. $8,500. Very cute, recently (beautifully) redone Catalina 27, with 6hp outboard, 95% + 110% jibs, fresh bottom paint and brightwork. Great Bay sailer. See website for more information! www.patrickandvallerie.com. Contact Reconnaisseant@kolaisinski-law.com or (209) 535-3104.

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27-FT CATALINA, 1977. Berkeley Marina. $6,000. Windhorse. Sailed on Bay last 12 years. Well kept up. Illness forces sale. Full-batten main, spinnaker, spare headsails, 9hp evinrude. Dinette model. Contact info@carpenterdesign.com or (541) 885-5450.


29 TO 31 FEET

30-FT CAPE DORY, 1982. Marina San Carlos, CA. $25,000. Upgraded rigging, gel batteries, full-batten main, Furlux, wheel, Lewmar ST30s, dodger, Autohelm, CGH, propane stove, solar panel, dinghy, EPIRB and more. Documented, custom wheel, Lewmar ST30s, dodger, Autohelm, gel batteries, full-batten main, spinnaker, spare headsails, 9hp evinrude. Dinette model. Contact info@carpenterdesign.com or (541) 885-5450.

30-FT CATALINA, 1983. Alameda. $18,000. Very clean, iconic Bay sailer, low hrs Universal diesel, roller furling. 2 reefers, 3-burner stove, flat screen with DVD player. Achilles dinghy with 6hp 4-stroke motor. Email for more photos bdcutshall01@gmail.com or call (530) 210-4045.

30-FT IRWIN, 1975. Alameda. $9,500. Universal diesel MD-208, 270 hrs. 3 jibs, 2 spinnakers and main. Same owner since 12/77. Sailed on Bay and Delta. For more information: (510) 236-5394.

30-FT WYLCIECAT, 2004. Richmond. $48,000. 50% equity interest (1/2 expenses), 100% fun. Hull 16, Yanmar, Haymarine instruments, new washboard '08. New bottom 2014. Shorthander’s dream. Well maintained and cared for. Contact tracysslotattude@gmail.com.

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30-FT CATALINA 300, 1986. Built in East Hampton MA. Ko’olina Harbor, Honolulu, HI. $50,000. 9 GT, length 33-ft. beam, 10.2; depth, 7.9. Fiberglass. Diesel 33hp. New sails, Ham & VHF radio, radar. Info at (808) 281-7852 or (808) 205-1884 or milekav@msn.com.


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35-FT HUNTER 356, 2002. Marina Bay, Richmond. $54,000. 2002 Cruising World's Boat of the Year in class. Too many extras to list. Contact Ken for more info: (325) 347-2349 or cordero@wvc.org. 36 TO 39 FEET

36-FT PEARSON TRI-CABIN SLOOP, 1983. Alameda. $37,500. Beautiful classic boat, teak interior, Yanmar 3 GM runs well, interior forced-air cabin heater, hot/cold pressure water, 12V/24V refrigerator/freezer. Robertson autopilot, Gianini canvas dodger. Contact pbm23@hotmail.com or (510) 386-4434.

37-FT TAYANA PILOTHOUSE, 1961. San Diego. $79,000. A proven offshore cruiser. New bottom paint, 56 Yanmar diesel, 93 gal fuel cap, 45 gal water, 2 mainsails, jib, genoa, staysail w/ roller furling, Monitor winvane, radar, solar and wind, SS6, 7 2-sp self-tailing winches, 2-sp manual windlass, autopilot, starter battery and two house banks only 2 yrs old. Dinghy outboard, fishing and scuba gear. This boat is loaded with lots more gear. Fuel tanks are full and she is eager to go! For more information contact quietpriority@yahoo.com.


37-FT PACIFIC SEACRAFT, 1989. Marina Bay, Richmond. $118,000. A gorgeous boat with tons of recent upgrades - standing rigging, electronics & diesel. Self-tending jib makes her easy to sail. Current owner has sailed her easy to sail. Current owner has sailed her since 1971 as far as Baja. She has always been well maintained. For more info contact dickw8@gmail.com or (510) 654-7704 or (510) 604-7704.

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40 TO 50 FEET


41-FT CT, 1976. Vallejo. $52,000/obo. Veteran cruiser. Owned by the same owner since 1976. It has many cruising extras. Sails, anchors, and ground tackle. World charts. 75hp Volvo diesel. Contact maspragg@aol.com or (415) 726-3322.

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42-FT BENETEAU 423, 2005. San Pedro, CA. $179,900. Two cabins, deep keel, classic rig. This Mexico veteran is completely outfitted and ready to go cruising. For info visit our website: http://finisterraspecifications.blogspot.com. Contact (949) 491-3521 or (949) 500-4364 or yatdesign@aol.com.

50-FT WHITING (NZ), 1981. Opua, NZ. $185,000 (U.S.). U.S. documented vessel, bonded/imported to French Polynesia and New Zealand, allowed indefinite stays in all 3 countries. Solidly built in California for serious offshore sailing, this is a proven fast, powerful, and functional vessel conceived for efficient, safe offshore passages. The cold-molded, triple-planked wood hull complements interior cedar and mahogany beam laminations and fine yacht craftsmanship throughout. The open, well-ventilated layout is ideal for the tropics, and comfortably sleeps 7-8. Extensively cruised throughout the Pacific, with a major refit in 2008, she is in superb condition, fully equipped, and ready to cruise again. Electronics and inventory list available on request, or download detailed PDF at website: www.shanachie.org. Email: kazoo@shanachie.org.


43-FT BENETEAU 423, 1987. South Beach, SF. $109,950/obo. Reduced price! Professionally maintained and constantly upgraded. Loaded for comfortable passage including large double reeve/freeze, air conditioning and new electronics. All new hatch and port windows, bottom paint and more in 2014! Great 3 stateroom/3 head layout, gorgeous galley, with Bose speakers in and out! Website w/photos: http://tinyurl.com/k88b5b6. Contact beneteauforsale@gmail.com or (510) 253-5883.

40-FT LYLE HESS CUTTER TOOLING. $1. Price drastically reduced! Help save this piece of art Lyle Hess English Channel Cutter 40 tooling for sale. This is the big sister to the Bristol Channel Cutter 28. This is Lyle’s biggest fiberglass boat and is big for its length. This is hull tooling only. All data to build. Call Stan at (714) 501-9602.


46-FT CAL, 1974. Rio Dulce, $75,000. Custom interior, dodger, turling mainsail, new rigging, spinnaker, davits, Furuno radar, plotter, autopilot, solar panels, generator, watermaker, VacuFlush, bow thruster, refrigeration, windlass. 11.5-ft. RHIB dinghy, epoxy bottom, 8hp Perkins. Contact (949) 548-1050 or bobonparadise@hotmail.com.


44-FT F&G, 1979. Morro Bay, CA. $110,000 possible partial trade. One of the most gorgeous sailing yachts ever built. Designed and built by German Frers, sistership to the late Roy Disney’s famous Shamrock, possibly the only example of this fast and beautiful, go-anywhere, blue-water cruiser on the West Coast. Strong fiberglass hull and deck with teak deck overlay. Centerboard shold draft 5’1”: go to water board-down 7’6”. Interior finished in South American hardwoods, 2 staterooms, 2 heads, sleeps 6. Only a few hrs on rebuilt Perkins 4-108, large sail inventory, upgraded electrical system, new upholstery, stainless dorades, full dodger, much more. May consider partial trade for fiberglass mid-30s sailboat. Call (805) 235-4046 or tackerjibe@gmail.com.


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40-Ft Catalina, 1996. San Carlos, Sonora. MX. $120,000/obo. New Beta Marine engine. New full batten mainsail with reef and Dutchman flaking. New standing rigging. Twin pedestal steering wheels with compasses. Fore and aft cabins. 2 heads; roomy galley; beautiful salon with table that converts to additional sleeping quarters. Loaded with "extras" such as watermaker, new navigation system, sea water cooling for reefer, etc. Includes dinghy with 2 motors, Honda generator, extra goodies/spare parts. Info at (650) 773-6327 or jerfyfsaia@aol.com.


47-Ft Vagabond, 1984. San Diego. $150,000. This Vagabond's latest upgrades: all new tankage, fuel, water, holding. Many previous upgrades. Over $250,000 invested in purchase and upgrades over 12 years. If interested contact Len at lwilshisford@hotmail.com or (310) 357-9673.


41-Ft Newport, 1984. Upgraded to "beautiful." A gold mine of spares. Rod rigging, diesel, radar, GPS, autopilot. Complete with dinghy and excellent outboard. Lightly used in fresh water berth. Contact chardonnaymoon@att.net or (916) 217-6908.

47-Ft Olympic Adventure Ketch, 1978. Marina Riviera Nayarit, La Cruz, Mexico. $120,000. Ted Brewer design, large center cockpit, 2 staterooms, 2 heads, beautiful teak interior, great headroom, equipped for cruising. Dodger, lots of storage, Onan generator, AIS, radar, VHF, autopilot, windlass, EPIRB, refrigeration. 6-person life raft, many sails including asymmetrical, Avon inflatable dinghy, Niss-san 8hp, extensive ground tackle, much more. More information at (322) 889-2694 or rls6415@gmail.com.

35-Ft Beneteau Catamaran, 1966. Ensenada, Mexico. $60,000/obo. Boat has two 17hp Yanmar diesel engines, two 20-gallon water tanks, two 20-gallon diesel tanks, two double berths and furling genoa sails. Call (928) 301-2189 or (928) 899-0401 or edboothy10@yahoo.com.

42-Ft Fontaine Pajot. 1995. Bocas del Toro, Panama. $180,000. Well equipped catamaran ready for world cruising. Please contact us for additional pictures and a complete equipment list. Email@sailsouthernbelle.com or (504) 655-6673.


33-Ft Partnership Seawind 1000, 2003. San Diego. $5,000. Seriously loaded with new gear. Complete photos, specs on website. Mexico if partners desire. Will also consider outright sale. Also setting up catamaran partnership in Key West, FL. More info and photos at http://catamaranpartners.com. Contact Don@catamaranpartners.com or (605) 646-3111.

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SHARE A DORY ON TOMALES BAY. I want to share a rare and pristine 16-ft Herreshoff “Carpenter” dory berthed at Nick’s Cove on Tomales Bay. Immaculate condition, new paint and varnish stem to stern inside and out this year by acclaimed boatwright Jeremy Fisher-Smith at Marshall. New sails, top-of-the-line cover, 3hp motor that fits into well, all safety accessories. A statement piece, thing of beauty ready to enjoy and savor berthed at a private dock in one of the most beautiful settings in the world. Please contact bw@bayscrossings.com.

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38-FT STEPHERNS BROS, 1940. Farallon Clipper. Marina del Rey. $47,500. Hull No. 3, Fade Away. Ready to race or cruise. Just out of the yard; no structural issues. Low-hour BMW D35. Autopilot, refrig, more, including historical documents. A beautiful boat and a noble cause. Info: (310) 804-4837 or rcalvinmiller@calmar.org.

32-FT SCANDIC BALTIC, 1989. $38,700. 200hp turbo diesel, 850 hrs, bow thruster, recent major service, turnkey, unique design, Norwegian built, reliable, economical, used regularly, new hardtop, canvas, upholstery. Photos on SF Craigslist. Contact stuart@stchartersboat.com or (707) 799-1927.

VOLVO PENTA 2003T. Bay Area. $2,000. Running Volvo 2003T with transmissions V-drive. Rebuilt turbo and injectors. With panel. Fresh-water cooled. Contact Bill at info@Spauldingcenter.org or (415) 640-2469.

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25-FT ERICSON, 1979. San Francisco. $29,000. Motusailer in good condition in fabulous 40-ft berth at SF Marina, near the St. Francis Yacht Club. Slip could be available for 30-ft to 38-ft boats in the SOUTH BEACH HARBOR BERTHS. Call 773-0322 or kipsheeline@gmail.com.

25-FT EDDIE, 1970. $46,000. With an updated galley, near the Golden Gate Bridge. Offers a unique view of San Francisco. Quite a boat. For more information contact jvandyke100@yahoo.com or (650) 520-4607. With parking at Pier 39 parking garage. Please contact Rich or Bob by phone or email: office@spinnakersailing.com or (650) 363-1390. More information at www.spinnakersailing.com.

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<td>46' PH CUTTER, ’84 $109,000</td>
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<td>28' BRISTOL CHANNEL CUTTER</td>
<td>$74,000</td>
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**New Era Yachts**

2021 Alaska Packer Pl., Grand Marina, Alameda, CA 94501
sales@newerayachts.com • newerayachts@sbcglobal.net
(510) 523-5988 • www.newerayachts.com
Operating under the marquee of Nautor’s Swan USA West, KKMI is one of most successful agents for Nautor Swan. For nearly 40 years Nautor Swan has built the world’s finest sailing yachts. Long noted for uncompromising quality, integrity of construction, and elegance of design, Nautor Swan remains in a league with few rivals.

Swan 461 (2006) Lohengrin is a low use, single-owner boat set up for easy short handed sailing. Berthing is made simple with a retractable bow thruster. Carbon fiber mast, no running backstays needed. Twin steering wheels, large comfortable cockpit with electric winches. Located in Sausalito, asking $595,000.

Swan 60 (2014) First time on the market, Thor is modern and easy to sail. She has a high-volume interior with pickled teak, a large cockpit and push button controls. Carbon mast, carbon rigging and carbon sails - she is the ultimate sailing machine. Located in San Francisco, asking EUR 3,250,000.
46' KELSALL CATAMARAN, 2008
Easy to handle long-distance cruiser, Bristol in and out. Twin Volvo diesels, Northern Lights genset, full electronics, lying in Sausalito YH. $324,000
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60' STEPHENS HOUSEBOAT, 1966
Immaculate and spacious custom yacht. Lying in a potentially live-aboard slip. $299,000
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47' VALIANT CUTTER, 1982/2012
Never cruised, but over $250,000 spent over the last three years getting her READY! Repowered, rewired, rerigged, new electronics, etc. $199,000
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44' DEFEVER TRAWLER, 1991
Updated electronics, low time on machinery. Potentially transferable Sausalito YH slip. $189,000
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NEW LISTING

41' SCEPTRE, 1987
Substantially built cruiser with inside steering station, Leisure Furl in-boom main, Yanmar diesel. Priced WAY below market. Call for details. $149,000
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25' RANGER TUG R-25, 2012
Late model Ranger Tug that shows practically as new. All amenities of a 40-foot trawler in a 29-foot boat — that’s TRAILERABLE! $129,000
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36' HUNTER, 2009
Low-time beauty that shows AS-NEW, inside and out. Plus competitively priced and lying in potentially transferable Sausalito YH slip. $124,500
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34' CATALINA, 2003
Very clean low time example shows bristol inside ad out with new self-tacking Bay Blaster and Max Prop, potentially transferable Sausalito YH slip. $87,500
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41' ISLANDER FREEPORT, 1978
One of the best all-around cruising designs at anywhere near $100k. One of the cleanest we’ve seen in quite some time. Potentially transferable slip. $79,500
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35' MAXI 105, 1983
High quality Swedish-built yacht with a 3/4 aft cockpit configuration. In excellent condition, she shows much newer than her actual age. $49,000
See at: www.marottayachts.com

41' KIRIE FEELING SLOOP, 1996
Spacious accommodations with a cabin skylight and great sailing in typical SF conditions. Starfinder is a great example of a great design. $99,000
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45' FUJI KETCH, 1977
Well priced John Alden-designed classic, great layout below. $59,000
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35' ERIson, 1987
Final iteration of this Bruce King-designed classic. Updated electronics, engine serviced and bottom painted, lying potentially transferable downtown Sausalito slip. $47,000
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Only three owners since new. Very clean inside and out with all new electronics. Potentially transferable Sausalito YH slip. $44,900
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See at: www.marottayachts.com

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