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Photo: Trig Liljestrand and Corey Lynch stretch out for the finish line in January 30’s SSS Three Bridge Fiasco on the J/90 Ragtime.

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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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**CALENDAR**

**Non-Race**


**Mar. 1, 1986** — From *Letters*, volume 105: “I have a question on the Bay Area’s efforts to support a boat to the America’s Cup down under. Is *Latitude 38* going to oversee any type of fundraiser or start a kitty to help support a boat?”

“I mention this because I have noticed several articles in *Latitude 38* and other magazines about parties of the $100-a-plate type to help raise funds. Maybe you should have a running calendar of events for readers to keep abreast of such local happenings. Maybe you could also have an optional $3 to $5 thrown in a pot at the Crew Parties.”

**Mar. 2** — Dave Perry presents Tactics in Crowds match-racing talk, SFYC. Forrest, forest@sfyc.org.

**Mar. 2-30** — Wednesday Yachting Luncheon Series, StFYC, 12-2 p.m. Lunch and a dynamic speaker each week for about $25. All YCs’ members welcome. Info, www.sfyc.com.

**Mar. 2-30** — 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.

**Mar. 2-4** — Circumnavigators Charlie & Cathy Simon present *The Adventure of a Lifetime*. Corinthian YC, Tiburon, 7 p.m. Free and open to the public, but RSVP to (415) 435-4771.

**Mar. 4** — Dave Perry presents *The Racing Rules and Their Tactical Applications*, StFYC, 6:30 p.m. $30 includes a light buffet dinner and a beer. Info/registration, www.sfyc.com.

**Mar. 5** — Sail a Small Boat Day, Richmond YC. Try out numerous types of dinghies, skiffs and small keelboats. Free; open to everyone; bring warm, waterproof clothing; free hot dog lunch. Info, www.richmondyyc.org.

**Mar. 5** — Mariners Swap Meet, Channel Islands Landing, Oxnard, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. New & used trailer boats, dinghies, marine hardware, rigging, lines & tackle, electronics, and supplies. Snacks & beverages available. 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, Apr. 2** — 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.

**Mar. 5-6** — Safety at Sea Seminar, Bainbridge High School & Aquatic Center, Bainbridge, WA. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. $185/Saturday only; $335/both days. Free optional Lifesaving session on 3/7, 9-11 a.m. Info, www.thesailingfoundation.org.

**Mar. 5-26** — 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.

**Mar. 6** — US Sailing Reach STEM Educator Course with Kurt Holland. Call of the Sea, Sausalito, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Info, http://reach.ussailing.org/courses.

**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.northnorthsails.com.
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Mar. 6 — Mariners’ Sunday, St. Luke Presbyterian Church, San Rafael, 10 a.m. Ecumenical service dedicated to mariners, with StFYC’s Sons of the Sea Chorus. Brunch available at Loch Lomond YC, come by land or by boat, but RSVP to Colleen, (415) 453-0107 or cstauss1@comcast.net.


Mar. 6-27 — 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.


Mar. 9 — Liferaft Training, Golden Gate YC, San Francisco, 3:30-5 p.m. $50. Sal’s Inflatable Services, (510) 522-1824; tickets www.eventbrite.com/e/liferaft-training-tickets-20910874990.

Mar. 9 — Latitude 38 Crew List Party, GGYC, 6-9 p.m. Snacks; no-host bar; guest experts; slide show. $7 cash only at the door ($5 for 25 & under with ID). Info, (415) 383-8200 or www.latitude38.com/crewlist/CrewParty/CrewParty.html.


Mar. 12-13 — Potter Yachter Fest & St. Patrick’s Day Party, Peninsula YC, Redwood City. Sailing for trailer-sailers on Saturday after 9 a.m.; corned beef & cabbage dinner, 6:30 p.m.; live music for dancing, 8 p.m. Breakfast & yoga on Sunday morning. RSVP to Edward, (650) 771-1945.

Mar. 13 — Go sailing to celebrate the vernal equinox.

Mar. 13 — Sail under the full moon on a Wednesday.


Mar. 16 — Racing Rules of Sailing Seminar, Bay View Boat Club, San Francisco, 7-9 p.m. Dave Dellenbaugh’s video plus Q&A. Free. John, (415) 564-4779 or johnsuper@att.net.

Mar. 17 — Boating Clean & Green Dockwalker Training Program, San Leandro YC, 7-9 p.m. Also on 3/24 at Sequoia YC, Redwood City, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; 3/26, Del Rey YC, Marina del Rey, 10 a.m.-12:45 p.m.; 4/2, OC Sailing & Events Center, Dana Point, 10 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Vivian, (415) 904-6905 or www.boatingcleanandgreen.com.

Mar. 19 — Women and the Sea: a Singers’ Circle, 1-2 p.m.; and Fiddle Music of Ireland, 3-3:45 p.m., aboard Balclutha, Hyde Street Pier, San Francisco. $10; kids 15 & under free. Info, (415) 447-5000 or www.nps.gov/safrr.

Mar. 20 — Going to celebrate the vernal equinox.

Mar. 23 — Sail under the full moon on a Wednesday.

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### CALENDAR

**Mar. 24** — A Day in the Life of a Bar Pilot by Mark Manes. Club Nautique, Alameda, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Members free; nonmembers $20, including appetizers and beverages. RSVP to (510) 865-4700.


**Mar. 26** — Alaska Airlines Pacific Offshore Academy #4, RYC, 1 p.m. Speakers include Lee Chesneau on Weather; Kame Richards, Driving; Bill Erkelens, Tactics, Watch Systems; Steve Chamberlin, Spares & Repairs. Emergency Procedures. $30 in advance; $45 week of event; $60 walk-in if available. Social event to follow. Info, www.pacifc杯.org.


**Mar. 27** — Easter.


**Mar. 30** — US Sailing STEM Educator Middle School 1 Course, Coronado YC. Becky. bnygren@coronadoyc.org or http://reach.ussailing.org/courses.


**Apr. 9** — Opening Day Parade & Blessing of the Fleet, Pittsburg YC. 11 a.m. Jan, (925) 783-0812. Followed by lunch, $7; RSVP to Lynn, (925) 200-5307.

**Apr. 9-10** — Bodega Bay Fisherman’s Festival, Westside Park. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. $10-$12. Info, www.bbyfishfest.org.


**Apr. 17** — Swap Meet & Open House, Berkeley YC. Spaces, $20; club tours. Info, (510) 843-9292 or www.berkeleyyc.org.


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### Racing


**Mar. 12** — Rites of Spring for singlehanders, doublehanders and full crews. Optional skippers’ meeting Friday 3/11, 7:30 p.m. OYC, www.oaklandyachtclub.net.


**CALENDAR**


Apr. 9 — South Bay Interclub #1. Info, www.jibeset.net.

Apr. 9 — Summer #1, SeqYC. Info, www.sequoiayc.org.


Remaining Midwinter Regattas


ELKHORN YC — Frostbite Series: 3/12, 3/26, 4/9, 4/23. Info, (831) 724-3875 or eyc@elkhornyc.org.


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


In the Tropics


CALENDAR


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.

March Weekend Tides

date/day      time/ht.      time/ht.      time/ht.      time/ht.
            LOW        HIGH        LOW        HIGH
3/05Sat     0208/2.6     0812/5.8     1452/-0.1     2157/4.8
3/06Sun     0256/2.2     0905/6.0     1534/-0.4     2231/5.2
3/12Sat     0138/6.2     0747/0.1     1534/-0.4     2231/5.2
3/13Sun     0224/6.1     0948/0.1     1637/4.7     2148/1.8
3/19Sat     0335/2.0     0937/5.5     1608/0.1     2302/5.2
3/20Sun     0423/1.7     1029/5.5     1647/0.2     2337/5.3
3/26Sat     0150/5.4     0801/0.6     1435/0.1     2302/5.2
3/27Sun     0220/5.3     0840/0.6     1522/4.2     2033/2.2

March Weekend Currents

date/day      slack      max      slack      max
            time/ht.      time/ht.      time/ht.      time/ht.
3/05Sat     0105/2.1E    0417      0644/1.7F    0851      1249/3.3E    1721      1958/2.6F    0951      1334/3.7E    1755      2036/3.0F
3/06Sun     0145/2.5E    0503      0735/2.1F
3/12Sat     0542/4.1E    0947      1241/2.7F
3/13Sun     0042/2.8F    0402      0727/4.0E
3/19Sat     0209/2.7E    0535      0750/2.1F
3/20Sun     0257/3.0E    0627      0845/2.4F
3/26Sat     0025/2.3F    0248      0620/3.2E
3/27Sun     1047      1320/2.1F    1608      1905/2.5E

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WOULD I BUY A BOAT SIGHT UNSEEN AGAIN?

I bought my J/92 Ragtime! sight unseen in 2002. The 10-year-old boat was in Massachusetts and I was in the Bay Area. I saw my purchase for the first time when the truck arrived at Nelson’s yard in Alameda.

The prior owner was an experienced sailor, so he was precise in describing the boat’s condition, and he sent me numerous detailed, close-up photographs. By the time I sent him the cashier’s check — we didn’t use an escrow — we had developed a level of mutual trust.

But at a price of just over $50,000, a cross-country purchase was still risky. So I did have the boat surveyed in Massachusetts before agreeing to the purchase. Of course, for all I knew the surveyor could have been the seller’s brother-in-law. Like the Olson 30 the Wanderer bought sight unseen, a J/92 is a fairly simple boat, so I rationalized that if there were any problems, they could be fixed. I’d never sailed a J/92 before I purchased mine, so that was risky, too. But I’d sailed many boats over the years and done my research.

In my case, the transaction and the boat worked out great. Ragtime! is now 23 years old, and I’ve owned her for the last 13 years. During that time I’ve raced her to Hawaii three times, twice singlehanded and once doublehanded. I’ve also done most of the coastal races, the OYRA, lots of Bay races, and daysailing. I couldn’t be happier with the boat, as she’s like an extension of my arms.

Would I buy a boat sight unseen again? Probably not. But it’s more likely that I would buy a sailboat sight unseen than any other major purchase. Very rarely has another sailor taken advantage of me.

Bob Johnston
Ragtime!, J/92
Richmond YC

Readers — Bob’s letter — and those that follow — are in response to the following Lectronic that appeared on January 25:

“Generally speaking, buying or attempting to buy a boat sight unseen is not something to be recommended. Just ask Dan Hayes and Rose Alderson of Gabriola Island, British Columbia. In the January 20 Lectronic we reported that the vets of the 2014 Ha-Ha, having sailed their Catalina 34 Aussie Rules across the Pacific, had sold the boat in Australia. They then agreed to buy a Catalina 400 ‘fixer-upper’ in St. Martin in the Eastern Caribbean. They had plans for many more years of cruising, including taking maybe five years to cross the Pacific again.

‘After the couple made the long flight from Australia to St. Martin with a lot of cruising gear from their old boat, red flags started flying. For example, the woman in charge of the boat refused to even let them go aboard until their check had cleared. It got even weirder.

‘The woman’s story kept changing,’ reports Rose, ‘and she kept trying to get us to deposit the money in different, impossible ways to the account of someone not listed in the sales agreement. And she never even signed the sales agreement. We finally said enough was enough. Maybe we’ll find another Catalina, maybe a boat in Croatia next year, or maybe we’ll...”
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LETTERS

restore another house first."

We at Latitude caution that there are still plenty of pirates in the Caribbean. If we were Dave and Rose, having floured all the way to the Caribbean, we'd look at other boats in St. Martin, a huge yachting center; in the British Virgin Islands, an even bigger yachting center where countless charter boats come out of service; and even down in Le Marin, Martinique, where they have lots of Euro-based boats on the block. And there's always Fort Lauderdale and the rest of Florida.

(This advice was given before we learned the couple were smarting from the 30% drop of the Canadian 'loonie' versus the currently almighty US dollar. They subsequently reported they will return home to Canada, and buy something like an Antrim 27 to race, at least until the exchange rate improves for them.)

We've bought boats sight unseen twice — and still own both the boats. The first was the Leopard 45 cat that became 'ti Proligate. But that wasn't truly sight unseen, as Leopard 45 expert Tim Schaff of the sistership Jet Stream and the folks at BVI Yacht Charters had already given her their seal of approval. The second was Olson 30 #66 that just happened to be in Richmond. She was such a bargain — about $4,000 — we didn't see how we could go wrong. And we didn't. Now named La Gamelle, she's now living on one of the best moorings in St. Barth, and we're drooling because we'll be sailing her again before you read this.

† † IMPRESSED WITH THEIR AMBITIOUS PLANS

I just read the January 20 'Lectronic article titled New Boat, New Ocean, New Adventures, about Dave Hayes and Rose Alderson of the Gabriola Bay, BC-based Catalina 34 Aussie Rules. It reminded me of a quick conversation that I had with Dave and Rose as our Catalina 34s crossed paths on the Bay in October of 2014. I was impressed with their ambitious plans and humble attitude, so took a number of photos — including the one attached.

Oliver Boyer
Majic, Catalina 34 Mk II
Sausalito

† † HE SAID SHE WOULD BE FINE SO WE BOUGHT HER

The first 11:Metre on San Francisco Bay is the one that my wife Chris and I had bought without having ever seen her. I did call Ron Holland, the boat’s designer, to ask how he thought the boat would do on the Bay. He said she would do fine, so we bought her. What do you name a boat like that? Sight Unseen, of course!

We had a great time with the boat, sailing her PHRF (Performance Handicap Rating Formula) before the one-design class was developed, and even won the PHRF Season Championship.

Paul Kaplan
KKMI, Pt. Richmond
INFO@JK3YACHTS.COM

50’ Hanse 505 2014
$329,000 Contact: Seattle

48’ J Boats J/145 2001
$579,000 Contact: San Diego

47’ Beneteau 473 2002
$204,900 Contact: Alameda

43’ J/Boats J/133 2006
$249,500 Contact: San Diego

42’ Bruckmann Zurn 42 2001
$349,900 Contact: San Diego

42’ Endeavour E42CC 1990
$120,000 Contact: San Diego

37’ Hanse 370e 2008
$187,000 Contact: Alameda

36’ Sabre Spirit 2007
$229,900 Contact: San Diego

41’ Tartan 4100 2004 carbon rig
$259,000 Contact: Alameda

41’ J/Boats J/124 2006
$239,000 Contact: Newport Beach

40’ J/Boats J/120 2001
$164,900 Contact: Newport Beach

38’ Palm Beach 38 Avalon 2002
$275,000 Contact: San Diego

36’ Sabre 386 2006
$233,900 Contact: Alameda

37’ Hanse 385 2008
$37’ Hanse 385 2008
$187,000 Contact: Alameda

36’ Sabre Spirit 2007
$229,900 Contact: San Diego

38’ Palm Beach 38 Avalon 2002
$275,000 Contact: San Diego

1995 56’ Bob Perry Custom......$395k
2002 50’ Bakewell-White.........$398k
2007 49’ Chuck Burns.............$63k
1994 46’ Nautor’s Swan MkII.....$199k
1999 40’ Sabre 402.............$120,000
1998 40’ J/120.....................$159k
1988 36’ Freedom..................$55k
2000 36’ Sabreline Exp. MkII.....$145k
2001 36 Beneteau 361..........$119,750
2007 35’ J/109.....................PENDING
1985 34’ Islander 34-2.........$45,254
2006 30’ J/92s....................$69k
1996 30’ Farr....................$58k

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LETTERS

RESURRECTED AFTER HURRICANE KATRINA

I purchased my Beneteau First 38 sight unseen after hurricane Katrina. She was in New Orleans. I flew down, prepped her for shipping, and had her trucked to Chico. She was ‘berthed’ in my orchard for a year while I made all the necessary repairs. She now lives at Brickyard Cove.

At the time, it seemed like the only way I would be able to afford an ocean-going vessel was buying the victim of a hurricane. It turned out to be a tremendous learning experience, and I truly enjoyed the repair project. What I learned most of all is that I really lucked out.

Stephen Sweet
Celebration, Beneteau First 38
Brickyard Cove, Pt. Richmond

THE PROBLEM WAS THAT I HADN’T TOLD MY WIFE

I bought a Ron Holland-designed 30-footer in Alameda from Boat Angel on eBay. I had thoughts of doing the Singlehanded TransPac, and with the boat’s Holland racing pedigree and minimal creature comforts, she seemed like a good bet.

The information provided showed a race-equipped boat with a variety of newish sails and the Atomic Four engine that supposedly ran fine. Photos suggested that she looked good both inside and out. I made a stupidly low offer of $800, figuring that the scrap value of the keel, tapered mast, and sails were worth three times as much. And I was sure I’d be outbid.

Much to my surprise, I was the highest bidder. After paying Boat Angel’s fees, taxes and registration, I was into the boat for less than $1,200. Did I mention that the boat was in Alameda and I lived in Kona, Hawaii? So I had some commuting to do.

When I flew back and saw the boat for the first time, I discovered that I’d gotten a little gem. The topsides had been repainted and were in great condition. The engine ran fine. There were lots of sails, including three spinnakers, and most were outstanding. The boat also had Dyneema halyards and sheets, oversize Barient winches, and a hydraulic backstay adjuster.

There were negatives, of course. The aluminum water and fuel tanks were shot, but they were easy to rip out. Most of the hardware on deck had been installed poorly, so there were soft spots. I got estimates for new tanks — $800 — and pulled the deck hardware to clean out the rotten core surrounding the fasteners. Pumping in thickened epoxy cured much of the springiness in the deck. When all was said and done, I had a competitive 30-ft racing boat for less than $2,000.

The big problem was that I hadn’t told my wife about it. She blew up. She was not only pissed because we already had cruising boat, but also because I was disappearing for a week at a time to play with my new toy, leaving her home alone in Hawaii to slave away at her job.

Nonetheless, I seriously looked into fitting out the boat for the Singlehanded TransPac. But that would have been way more expensive than the boat. Then the airline I was working for went bankrupt, and my free air travel between Hawaii and the mainland went tits up. Based on those factors, and the fact I couldn’t afford a divorce, I decided to sell the boat.
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I put an advertisement on craigslist for a few hundred more than the dollars I’d invested in her, and sold the boat in a week. Peace and harmony were restored with the wife, and the new owner got a great deal on a competitive sailboat.

Peter Ogilvie
’Ae’a, Pearson 35
Kona, HI

Readers — When will women accept that one sailboat is often just not enough for a real man?

⇑⇓

I BOUGHT HER WITHOUT A SURVEY OR A SEA TRIAL

When I was a young man living in the greater Los Angeles morass in the mid-1970s, I purchased a 32-ft Kettenberg PC sloop. I didn’t quite buy her sight unseen, but I did buy her — a wood boat — without a survey or a sea trial. I was interested in a small sailing vessel that I could race one design, and back then there were about 15 PCs in Los Angeles and a good 20 of them in San Diego.

The seller, Hilliard Brown, was an icon in the Southern California racing scene. He owned two PCs, and he was selling #15, which had been built after the war.

When I came down to the boat for the first time, Hilliard, who was 70 at the time, was up the mast, having pulled himself by hand. He came down and introduced himself: ‘I’m Hilliard and this is a halyard!’

I bought the boat and began a very humiliating period of racing the boat. She had no engine, two slab berths, but no head or galley.

But she was my first keelboat and a sweet vessel. I raced her both out of Marina del Rey and out of San Diego, always trying to beat Hilliard and other intrepid sailors in the fleet. In 1979 I finally gained some status, as I took second place in the Nationals in San Diego. It was a major milestone for me, having beaten so many of the Los Angeles and San Diego sailing Brahmins, and with a post-war PC. Wow!

I didn’t sea trial or survey the boat before buying her because I knew that Hilliard was passing along a boat that would be good for me and could be a winner! God bless him. Folks like him are few and far between these days.

Not to put too fine of a point on it, but those days are gone. Way gone. As are the days of getting 20+ PC’s on the starting line for a national race or even a local race. It’s a sorrow.

Rick Whiting
Hope Floats, (floating home)
Sausalito

⇑⇓

IGNORANCE WAS TRULY BLISS BUYING OUR BOAT

In response to the editor’s inquiry in ‘Lectronic, we not only bought a brand new boat sight unseen, we bought it off the plans and some pictures of a partially assembled first hull. It was being built in a yard in far away Kaohsiung, Taiwan, and sold to us by a totally unknown company at the Long Beach Boat Show in 1979.

What could possibly go wrong?

Well, in the 27 months between the purchase and the launch: 1) The company went bankrupt — and reformed. 2) The interest on the loan became usurious. 3) I got to learn all about letters of credit. 4) I traveled to Taiwan to negotiate several quality control issues with the builder. 5) I signed over the letter of credit to the builder, which was very scary as there was effectively no warranty. 6) I got to figure out how to import the boat into the United States. 7) I got to commission the boat myself.

Ignorance is truly bliss. Doing what I did has to be the
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definition of some mental illness that has not yet been noticed or codified by the health professionals.

It’s now 34 years after we launched the boat and: 1) We still have — and love — the boat. 2) We have sailed the boat in the Baja Ha-Ha and in the Sea of Cortez. 3) We have spent more money maintaining the boat than she originally cost. It’s all been worth it.

P.S. The boat is currently on the hard in Ventura while we are building boats in Xiamen, China, for an amusement park in Shanghai.

William Willcox
Faith, Scandia 34
Ventura

William — It sounds to us as though you were a brave man back then — and are still a brave man today.

As you know, the boating industry was going through an interesting phase in the mid-1970s. Boats that were dirt cheap to make in Asia were flooding the US market that had been dominated by boats built by manufacturers in Southern California. Prices in the Far East were so low that some came over on cradles made of teak. Some of the Taiwan boats from the Far East were well built, while others were ‘Taiwan Turkeys’, inferior in almost every way.

Back then all you needed to do to get into the business of selling new boats — as opposed to used boats — was print up a couple of 8x10 sheets with ripped off line drawings of a boat, take a booth at a boat show, and accept deposits.

As for the interest rates in the 1970s, people accustomed to today’s ultra low rates might be shocked to learn that people thought nothing of paying 11 to 15% on boat loans. Of course, back then money market accounts paid as much as 9%, about nine times as much as they do now. Inflation was naturally a huge problem. President Gerald Ford led the war against out-of-control inflation by wearing a button that read ‘WIN’, which stood for Whip Inflation Now. It was that kind of leadership that resulted in the newest United States aircraft carrier being named the Gerald Ford.

↑⇑ HE SAID THANKS WITH BEER, NONE WAS REQUIRED

It doesn’t matter whether assisting a fellow mariner in distress is the legal or moral obligation, as far as I’m concerned it’s just the right thing to do. Plus, you’ll never know who you’ll meet in the process.

In 1970 I was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. The post had a boat rental operation on a lake that served both the military and civilians. One day I rented a boat and came across a mariner whose boat was obviously not going anywhere under her own power. So I offered a tow, which was gratefully accepted. I towed the boat to the civilian launch ramp and helped the owner get his boat on the trailer. As I was getting ready to leave, he handed me his business card and said anytime I wanted a case of beer, I should stop by. He was the local Budweiser distributor in nearby Temple. Being a young, broke, thirsty soldier, this was like manna from heaven! Needless to say, whenever I was in Temple, I stopped by and picked up a case of beer.

Most of the time rewards for this type of activity are intrinsic, as we act out of an altruistic instinct. Or at least we should. And remembering what goes around comes around, you never know when you may be in need of assistance on the water. And every now and then there is someone who knows how to say thanks when none is required.

Harry Ysselstein
Half Moon Bay YC
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Harry — We’ve always enjoyed helping/rescuing mariners and swimmers, and have also been offered gifts. When we rescued two women, who would have never been seen again, from a flipped dinghy off St. Barth, the one woman, an artist, pleaded with us to take something from her gallery. And when we rescued the three men from a flipped trimaran during a Santa Barbara to King Harbor Race, the owner offered us the use of his catamaran in the Med. Alas, we didn’t have any room for the artwork or any time to use the cat in the Med. But like you, we had such a good time rendering assistance that we didn’t care about any reward.

That said, the matter that has been in discussion is not whether a mariner needs to help someone in distress — there is both a legal and moral obligation to do that — but whether being becalmed in the middle of the Bay in the middle of the afternoon without a functioning engine constitutes being in ‘distress’. We think there can be more than 50 shades of gray when it comes to distress.

Germany’s Mind-Boggling Boat Show

BOOT 2016, the January boat show in Dusseldorf, Germany, was mind-boggling. It’s held at Messe, which has 17 arena-size halls, making it one of the largest event/conference facilities in the world. The show is a boat porn extravaganza, far beyond anything we have in the States. There are spectacular yachts at BOOT that I’ve not only never seen before, but never even heard of, and now mortally lust for. There is more to see than any person could see in a week. I pulled two eight-hour days, and was exhausted at the end of each.

I’d guess that BOOT is the equivalent to 10 Annapolis Boat Shows, which I believe are the largest in the US. Want catamarans from eight feet and up? There’s a hall for that. Monohull sailboats? Yep, two halls for them. Canal boats? There’s a hall for them. Tenders and inflatables of all kinds? Half a hall. Superyachts? There’s a humongous hall for them. I could go on an on. There were even two halls for just marinas and destinations.

Dozens of boats get their “Welt” — or world — Introduction at BOOT, which is the reason I made the pilgrimage. There’s stuff here that won’t make it to the US for ages, if at all.

And the quality and variety of the booths, staff, and boats is unlike anything I’ve seen in the States. Much of the equipment and many of our boats are manufactured in Europe, which means the principles of most of these companies, not just the reps or country manager are at BOOT. Looking at sexy Karver blocks? The founding team was there. How about a Princess, Azimut or Sunseeker motoryachts? Yep, the CEOs were on hand. Looking at sail technology? Naturally North, Quantum and Incidences were there, but also the executives from Dimension Polyanth. It’s likely they are the folks who make the material your sails are made out of. Similarly, the carbon fiber and resin vendors were on hand. It was like peeling back the covers of the sailing industry.

Aside from being 5,500 miles away from my home in Honolulu, the show couldn’t have been more convenient. There are two excellent hotels in the Dusseldorf airport, and the 896 bus — which is free — went from the hotel door straight to the show. I stayed at the Maritime five star hotel for a ridiculously low rate because apparently nobody but yachties wants to be in Dusseldorf in January. I also found that frequent flyer miles to Dusseldorf go a long way in January, so flying Business Class helped take the edge off the long trip.

My favorite item at the show costs just $20 for a pair, and in my humble opinion, everyone with an inflatable PFD should have them. I’m referring to Spinlock’s brilliant water-activated
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Tim Dick

Readers – The answer to the obvious question of what boat Tim bought is the all new latest version of the Lagoon 42 catamaran, which was introduced atBOOT.

“This brand new version of the Lagoon 42 is two tons lighter than the previous ones,” reports Tim, “plus I’m going with a custom racing mast and sails. The boat won’t be finished until September, but we plan to go as green as possible in trying to win the November-December Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) from the Canary Islands to the Caribbean. And once we get her to California, we’re going to enter her in the Transpac for the last leg to her new home in Hawaii.”

The most recent incarnations of production catamarans have exploited almost every possible inch for maximum useable volume, giving them a bit of a boxy, wedding-cake look.

In our opinion Lagoon has taken Germany by storm. It was a ‘meat in tubular form’ moment that only Anthony Bourdain could love.

By the way, yes, I did buy a boat. That was my point in going to BOOT. P.S. One important note: The Europeans shows aren’t “wait your turn and pile aboard” — you’ll usually need to book a time to see the boat and the stands are usually rope-lined off. They’ll ask for business cards. Anything with California on it will draw some attention and often priority. “You came here from California? Really?”

Tim Dick

name yet to be chosen. Lagoon 42

Hondulu

Tim Dick’s new Lagoon 42 will be one of the first of its kind.

LED that sticks onto the PFD bladder, turning it into a giant glowing target at night. It was the surprise grand prize winner of this year’s METS (Marine Technology) Award. The Spinlock guys said they are priced so low because they wanted everyone to be able to afford them rather than have an expensive monopoly item based on their patent.

Showgoers have to eat, and the hit of the show was ‘Currywurst’, a giant bratwurst coated in curry sauce (often with sweet potato fries) that has taken Germany by storm. It was a ‘meat in tubular form’ moment that only Anthony Bourdain could love.

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Tim Dick

name yet to be chosen. Lagoon 42

Hondulu
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World of Chartering. Desolation Sound is anything but “less traveled” in the months of July and August. Instead, visitors will find the anchorages packed tight, with as many as 100 boats, most of them from the US — jammed together. With so many boats it gets pretty busy, and with their generators and outboards, it gets pretty noisy.

Although crowded, the views in the anchorages in Desolation Sound are beautiful, and the ocean and lakes are (relatively) warm at a surprising 70-73°. Indeed, compared to Desolation Sound, the anchorages further south in our Gulf Islands seem less crowded in July and August. On the other hand, our visits to Desolation Sound — and the rest of the Salish Sea — outside of July and August have indeed been blessed with quiet, uncrowded conditions.

The downside is that it’s often cooler and wetter.

After two seasons in the Sea of Cortez, we put our Sceptre 41 Pelagia on a ship home from La Paz in June 2015. Although we loved La Paz and the Sea, we missed our home waters and, because we are skiers, the mountains.

But we completely agree with most of Andy’s article. The Salish Sea is a wonderful cruising ground, with beautiful anchorages with (near) total protection, green-treed islands with snow-capped mountains in the background, and abundant wildlife, now including humpback and grey whales! Just don’t expect it to be uncrowded in the summer.

David Stapells
Pelagia, Sceptre 41
Vancouver, BC

A SIX-AND-A-HALF-YEAR BUILD

After six and a half years of building our Schionning-designed Wilderness 1100 catamaran Epic, we had her gingerly lowered into the Duwamish River south of Seattle on the morning of February 10. After so many years of work, there were some exciting moments.

Our cat’s Selden mast is due around the end of this month, then we’ll measure and order sails. I need to finish the electrical/wiring, add the solar system — not that system — and the SSB and autopilot.

We hope to meet the Wanderer and Doña de Mallorca on Profligate in San Diego this fall. We celebrated our 30th wedding anniversary just a few days after the launch. Following our wedding, my wife Sheri and I spent a couple of wonderful weeks honeymooning at the Club Med in Playa Blanca. As I recall, it was approximately 90 scary minutes in a car south of the Puerto Vallarta Airport. We had a wonderful time. If we ever finish our catamaran, we’d like to return to Playa Blanca.

Brian and Sheri Timpe
Epic, Wilderness 1100
Seattle
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Brian and Sheri — In a world falsely enamoured with the shallow pleasures of instant gratification, we congratulate you on the many years you’ve worked on your cat and the many years you’ve spent together.

When you get south, you’ll get to meet some kindred cata-maran building souls, such as Arjan Bok, who spent six years building his Ljidgard 43 Rot Kat in San Francisco, and Jim Milski, who spent three or four years building his Schionning 49 Sea Level in Vallejo.

With the exception of the Vallarta Coast and Careyes, the latter being where the Club Med was located, much of the Mexican mainland coast is petty much as it was 30 years ago. The Club Med at Playa Blanca must have shut down just a short time after you were there. After going through several different incarnations, it’s now a luxury compound owned by some obviously very wealthy guy. A year ago the adjacent condos and Bel-Aire Hotel had been demolished and were being rebuilt in high style. But as the area was just about ground zero of ferocious hurricane Patricia in October, we’re not sure what they look like today.

By the way, the winter weather in Mexico is much more salubrious than it is in Seattle, and there is no federal or international law against completing a boat south of the border. We know, because during Profligate’s first two seasons in Mexico, she effectively didn’t have a steering system and there was only one working light inside the entire boat. We still had a great time. After 19 winters in Mexico, we finally consider her to be finished. So come on down!

THE CLAIM SOUNDED UNBELIEVABLE TO US, TOO

As an avid reader of Latitude 38, I’ve come to appreciate the Letters editor’s excellent wit, style, integrity and sense of humor. But, I’m having trouble with a statement you made in response to a letter concerning Max Ebb. Specifically, I just can’t fathom anyone going 175 mph on a boat on the Bay. The Rocket Boat surely doesn’t go half that fast. I once saw a strange looking vessel that seemed to have a jet engine and jet drive, but I doubt that thing could go 175 — even on foils.

By the time the pilots of the hydroplaning boats were approaching 200 mph, the mortality rate was going up faster than the record speeds. The last I heard, the official record was something like 345 mph, but that 85% of the attempts at those speeds were fatal.

Where on the Bay could Max go that fast without crossing paths with another boat? How long would it take for the boat to get up to speed, and to then decelerate? Was the sea state calm, with very light to non existent winds and excellent visibility?

I love Latitude and always pick up two copies so I don’t have to share with my wife, but 175 mph?

Brooks Peterson
Neptune 16
Grass Valley

Brooks — We were as incredulous as you are, so we asked Max to confirm that we’d heard him right.

“The boat is Howard Arneson’s 46-ft catamaran that is powered by a gas turbine and a single 16½-inch propeller that’s only half submerged,” he replied. “The boat may have gone faster in subsequent sea trials, but Lee and I only had one day on the boat. We were testing Howard’s latest mods to the Arneson Surface Drive. Prior to 1952, 175 mph — 152 knots — would have been a world speed record.

“The boat was launched at Loch Lomand Marina in San Rafael, and the test area was in San Pablo Bay north of the
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LETTERS

Richmond Bridge. Brooks is correct in that 175 mph, that part of the bay gets real small quickly. I enjoyed the rides, but Lee said that she understood enough of the science to be totally terrified.

A video of Howard Arneson celebrating his 90th birthday by doing about 170 mph on San Pablo Bay can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8XNlDuDwAE.

⇑⇓ SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE’S WRITING ABOUT

There are few if any women besides Jill Knight who have sailed a 100-year-old gaff-rigged cutter around the world. Mostly singlehanded, too. Jill’s decades of sailing and living aboard have given her a keen sense of life on the waterfront in seamy Third World countries, where people and events are rarely what they seem.

In addition to being a fine sailor, Knight is an author. Navigating the Edge, her first sailing crime novel, was published by HarperCollins in 2002. It was set in Cape Town, St. Helena, and ended in the steamy jungles of French Guiana.

Port Dolorosa, Knight’s new novel, plays out between Brisbane, New Caledonia, and the southern Philippines, the latter being where the author lived for years in the 1980s. By the end of the first chapter there’s already been a jailbreak and sailing escape from Brisbane by Josh Faro, who has snatched his two children along the way. He and the kids are headed back to the Philippines, where he had previously managed a lucrative drug smuggling operation. Rosa Brand, Faro’s ex-wife’s sister, is forced to give up her career to chase after Josh and the two kidnapped children.

By the 1980s, the southern Philippines was a favorite with ex-pats on the run, unemployed combat vets, and sailors keen to profit from what looked like easy money in the drug trade. Sailboats could be renamed at will, and clearance papers fabricated easily with a counterfeit form and rubber stamp. When it was useful to both sides, bribery flourished, just as it always had.

Speaking as a vet of the Singlehanded TransPac and a circumnavigation, I think the eerie thing about Knight’s novel is that given the minute and vivid details, it reads more like a memoir than a novel. I recommend it.

Peter M. Brown
Taj, custom catamaran
La Cruz

⇑⇓ BOGIE LEARNED TO SAIL ON A FINGER LAKE

In the editor’s February response to a letter from Jacques Taglang, the editor told readers that actor Humphrey Bogart learned to sail on the great yacht Serenade, which was then kept in Newport Beach.

Having grown up in Rochester, New York, hometown of Maud, Humphrey’s mother, I must disagree. When Humphrey was a child, his family spent summers at Canandaigua Lake, one of the Finger Lakes south of Rochester. In his biographical book, Bogart, In Search of My Father, Stephen Humphrey Bogart references his father’s childhood and says, “...they usually spent their summer vacations upstate at Camp Canandaigua, the place where Bogie learned to sail.”
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We who have sailed on Canandaigua Lake, and still have family there, would like to maintain this tenuous and vicarious link to fame. Please don’t take it away!

David Allocco  
Summer Nights, Capri 22  
Phoenix, AZ

David — All right, you can keep the link. Let’s just say that Serenade is the yacht on which Bogart learned to sail on the ocean.

†‡ SWIMMING WITH DOLPHINS

John Rogers’ piece and photos on swimming with dolphins in the wild at Tenacatita Bay cracked me up. I anchored in the same place after doing the inaugural Baja Ha-Ha in 1994. A dolphin would come by like clockwork every day and scratch his back and dorsal fin on my anchor chain. It would actually move the boat around a bit. I wonder if John was swimming with the same dolphin I did?

I had initially thought the dolphin was a pilot whale, as it seemed quite large for a dolphin. Speaking of which, on another trip down Baja some pilot whales cruised by when we had fishing gear out. Thinking that they were smart cetaceans and all, we figured they would not have a problem avoiding the hooks. Wrong! They snagged one and, of course, broke the line. Maybe they aren’t so smart.

Dave Fiorito  
Irie, Beneteau 393  
Novato

Dolphins are said to be one of the smartest creatures in nature — and they’re undoubtedly among the most playful.

Dave — Depending on the type of dolphin, they can live from 25 to 50 years. So while it’s unlikely, we suppose you could have swum with the same one that John did.

†‡ SWIMMING WITH DOLPHINS FOR HER 10TH

We were cruising aboard Makai, our Leopard 47 catamaran, off Isle de Saintes near Guadeloupe on February 6, 2013, and it just happened to be our daughter Genny’s 10th birthday. The kids — Roy, Genny, and Marie — were doing their usual stuff, which was playing with Savannah and Shane from Orion and going back and forth between the boats. Then the dolphins showed up and the party got started. The kids all raced around collecting their snorkel gear, and were even joined by the 12-year-old girl from the French boat next to us. For about an hour the kids chased a mother and baby dolphin around the anchorage.

The dolphins would go to the bottom and poke around in the weeds, then zoom up between the kids and give everyone a thrill. One of the kids was close enough to touch, but the dolphins usually stayed at least five feet away. They entertained us with rolls, jumps, and tail slaps.

“Some kids get clowns for their birthday,” said Mary from Restless Heart. “Genny and her friends got to swim with the dolphins.”

Eric Mears  
Makai, Leopard 47  
Newport Beach
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I WILL NEVER FORGET THE TOTAL ELATION I FELT

I had the incredibly fortunate opportunity to swim with wild dolphins in the BVI in 2008. My husband John and I were anchored in Great Harbour, Peter Island, between charters. Sarah Monro, a fellow charter chef, was on a boat anchored next to us, and noticed there were dolphins swimming by our boat. She and I immediately jumped in with our masks and snorkels, and right in front of us were a mom and playful calf.

The calf was rubbing his little back up and down our anchor chain. We tried to keep a respectful distance, but the current kept pushing us closer to the calf. His mom didn’t seem to mind in the least. At one point the calf started playing with a small coconut floating by, and using his nose tossed it to Sarah. She tossed it back to him, and this went on for several minutes — until mom decided junior needed to eat something. Sarah and I chased after the pair as fast as we could, but they were quickly gone.

I will never forget total elation I felt as we watched them swim for deeper water, the sunlight creating beautiful patterns on their backs. In the wild is the only place to swim with dolphins.

Lynn Ringseis
Novato

DOLPHINS MORE STIMULATING THAN A PORNO MOVIE

In 2005 my then girlfriend and I were sailing out of Marsh Harbor in the Bahamas. While moving along slowly with no particular place to go, I spotted a pod of dolphins playing about 100 feet off the port hull. I stopped the boat, grabbed my fins and mask, and told the girlfriend to watch the boat and me.

For over an hour I swam with what appeared to be a group of about 12 that was feeding off the bottom. As time went on, they accepted me. They got so comfortable with me being in the water that they stared mating right in front of me for about twenty minutes! I felt like a dolphin voyeur, but did learn several new positions.

I was so enthralled watching the dolphins that I had drifted so far from the cat that my girlfriend had to launch the dinghy to rescue me from my adventure. I guess I don’t have to tell you what happened to my girlfriend when I got back to the boat. I think my dolphin story trumps the back scratching story.

Glenn Kotara
Maxicat, Robertson/Caine 47
Bend, Oregon

BEING TAKEN FOR A RIDE

I worked in Salalah, Oman, from 1974 to 1986. We used to go to the beach club in Muscat with our two young boys. Wild dolphins would come into the bay and let the kids hang onto their dorsal fins as they took them for a ride. It was incredible that the dolphins loved it as much as the kids.

John Edwards
Tsunamita, Hunter 356
Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico

DOLPHINS LIKE TO PLAY

While cruising off Maui aboard Bob van Blaricom’s Sea Bear in 1990, we swam with dolphins in a cove on the west coast that is a ‘protected sea’. The dolphins circled the yacht, almost inviting us to play with them.

When we got into the water, they dashed up toward us, and then stayed about an arm’s length away. After about 20 minutes they started to head out to sea. But when we spanked
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LETTERS

the surface of the water with our hands, they returned and played for another 20 minutes. It was so unexpected that afterwards we wondered if it had been a dream.

John Sanford
ex-Karios, Aloha 34
Tiburon

THE SECRET IS TO WAVE YOUR ARMS LIKE AN IDIOT

Dolphins are such curious, intelligent creatures, they will often come to check out anything unusual. The key to keeping their interest is to wave your arms like an idiot or maybe spin around. Otherwise they’ll find you to be a boring, wannabe sea creature — especially if you have this silly human need to swim toward them to pet them.

Carliane Johnson
Kynntana, Freedom 38
Alameda

TOO SMART TO TAKE THE HOOK

I’ve swam with dolphins — spinners — many times in Hawaii. Swimming with dolphins is big business in the 50th state these days. Dolphins are way too smart to bite a lure. Compare the size of a dolphin brain and a fish brain and you’ll get the idea.

Here at Kona, dolphins will take a tuna being used as a live bait, and eat it right down to the head — where the hook is bridled — leaving the rest.

Jay Lambert
Kona, HI

ANOTHER INCREDIBLE CRUISING EXPERIENCE

On several occasions during our 20+ years of cruising, we have had the opportunity to swim with dolphins — and whale sharks — in the wild. The time that comes to mind was when we were on charter with a couple that were wanting to catch some fish. Sailing about four miles off the lee side of Grenada, I saw what I thought was a school of tuna ‘finning’ about a half mile further west. When we got on site, it was obvious that they weren’t tuna but a huge pod of dolphin. Probably thousands. It was nearly dead calm and very clear. We quickly donned snorkel gear and what we saw in the water was amazing!

Normally when you see a pod of dolphin, you think pretty much two dimensionally. But when we entered the water, we saw a three dimensional pod that seemed to go as deep as it was wide. What we saw on the surface was just ‘the tip of the iceberg’. I can only equate it to a large freeway interchange where there are multiple layers of cars are going in different directions.

The other amazing thing was the incredible sound of the dolphins communicating. It was like being in a huge crowd at a public event, with everyone talking at once. It was loud.

The dolphins didn’t pay too much attention to us — unless we dove under and relaxed at depth for a few seconds. Then they would come over in groups of two or three and to say ‘hello’. It was just another of those incredible experiences you have when you go cruising. Needless to say, our charter guests were thrilled.

Fred and Jane Read
Merry Dolphin, Kelly-Peterson 44
Washington, DC

HE GOT AWAY WITH IT ON THE EAST COAST — JUST

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LETTERS

Coast Seaway on Australia’s east coast, not on the west coast as you reported in an editorial response last month.

The Seaway’s bar is renowned as a dangerous bar in any kind of surf or heavy swell conditions. Boats needing to get into the seaway should head north and, if the bar at Jumpinpin is also too dangerous to cross, take refuge in Moreton Bay tucked in behind South Stradbroke Island.

Sultanate, the catamaran that famously surfed down the wave at the Seaway, was exceptionally lucky not to have broached. Had that happened, it would have been a disaster video. The owner was roundly criticised by the more cautious, whilst also being lauded by the foolhardy in the Australian sailing community. The best anyone can say about that episode is that he got away with it. Just.

Mark Walker
Kempsey, New South Wales
Australia

Mark — As they’d say at Noosa Head, we ‘came a gutser’ in placing Southport Seaway on the wrong coast. Having been there a few years ago, there was no excuse for such a mistake.

THE ARGUMENT FOR GENUINE YANMAR PARTS

I saw the February 3 ’Lectronic item about the Wanderer thinking he had an oil leak in his Yanmar diesel when it was actually rubber coming off a belt.

After 12 months of frustration with belts on my Yanmar engine, I learned that Yanmar belts have a steeper ‘V’ shape than most others. If you don’t use the Yanmar belt, the belt glaze, burn and then break. And it will happen over and over, often at the most inconvenient times. I learned that you have to buy factory belts to be safe and keep genuine Yanmar spares.

Tim Dick
Honolulu, HI

A QUESTION REGARDING TAXES ON BOATS

I have a question regarding the legality of reducing the amount of sales/use tax owed upon the purchase of a boat. Take a boat you’re thinking of buying for $150,000. You buy it and you can pay California the sales/use tax on the whole amount. But, when you go to insure it, quite often the insurance company wants a breakdown of the purchase price, such as: a) hull and machinery; b) electronics; c) personal property. Some even have items called “furniture”.

So if the value of the electronics is $12,000 and personal property is $3,000, then the hull and machinery is only $135,000. Can a buyer request separate sales agreements for (a, b, and c) and simply submit “a” as the purchase price of the boat, thereby saving the sales/use tax on $15,000 worth of stuff that may be old and of reduced value? As you know, the electronic device you buy today for $1,000 isn’t worth more than a few hundred a few days later. Why pay sales/use tax on it when someone has already paid sales tax on it previously? Or am I missing something here?

Please withhold my name as I also live in fear of the California taxing agencies, and don’t want them opening up a case on me.

Mark — As they’d say at Noosa Head, we ‘came a gutser’ in placing Southport Seaway on the wrong coast. Having been there a few years ago, there was no excuse for such a mistake.
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LETTERS

Name Withheld by Request
Nevada

NWBR — The ‘why pay tax on something when it has already been paid once’ argument is a non-starter. After all, that logic would not just apply to the boat’s electronics and ‘furniture’, but the hull and machinery too. It’s the same argument that is made for the abolition of capital gains and estate taxes, but that’s not going to happen either.

We’re not experts on taxes, so you should confer with a professional for an authoritative answer, but we think we know what it’s going to be.

‡‡ THANK YOU JIM

I’d like to thank Latitude for the great January tribute article on Jim Kilroy, the pioneering maxi sailor.

After returning to the States in the early 1950s from a trip to Korea — with all expenses having been paid by the Marine Corps — I was discharged and moved to Balboa Island. That’s where I first met Jim, who had just purchased the beautiful 50-ft yawl Taso and changed her name to Kialoa.

When Jim learned that I knew how to sail, he invited me to join him on several sails in Southern California, as well as the 1957 Transpac. Chuck Ullman won that year with the revolutionary Legend, but Kialoa had a great race and I think we took third in class.

Jim asked me to deliver the boat back to Newport Beach, which I did. We sailed all the way, which is why it took us 28 days. But it was a nice and easy trip. Jim asked me to work for him, but that’s when Louis Benoist, the new owner of the 99-ft Morning Star, which had the Transpac record for several years, came on the scene. Benoist wanted me to take the the big ketch back to Annapolis, where he had graduated, so away I went.

Jim Kilroy is the true gentleman of yachting. He took good care of the crew and was truly concerned about their safety and well-being. From all of us in the world of sailing, we thank you Jim.

Roby Bessent
Ex-Hoot Mon, Cal 37
Long Beach

Roby — Since a lot of sailors are familiar with Jim Kilroy and his Kialoas I through V, with III being the all-time favorite, we’re going to take this opportunity to stroll down the Morning Star memory lane.

As we’re sure you know, Roby, the 98-footer was built as a schooner in Genoa, Italy in 1928. It was oil man Richard Rheem — as in the Rheem Perpetual Trophy in the St. Francis Big Boat Series — who brought her to the States in 1946 and had her re-rigged as a ketch. Morning Star would go on to win the Transpac five times between 1949 and 1957.

After Benoist owned her for a few years, she was sold to Fuller Callaway III, who sailed her to honors in the Tahiti Race. Then he made the fateful decision of wanting to enter her in the Transatlantic Race. In June of 1963, while sailing her across the Caribbean on the way to the Rhode Island start with a crew of just four, Morning Star
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LETTERS

struck a reef 150 miles off the coast of Nicaragua. Although two of the crew were thrown overboard, they managed to get back aboard. All five crew were eventually rescued, but Morning Star was a total loss.

After a brief rest, Callaway flew to New York to join Sumner Huey’s 57-ft Ondine for the Transatlantic Race, which Huey won. Long owned various Ondines, of course, and competed against Jim Kilroy and his various Kialoas over the years. The maxi racing world has always been a small one.

† † NAMED FOR THE THOMAS A. SHORT CO.
There was an error in the tribute article to Jim Kilroy, and I’d like to set the record straight regarding the first boat that he owned. The Tasco Kilroy owned was correctly named Tasco, not Tasco II. She was built by Lester Stone for Thomas A. Short. The name came from the Thomas A. Short Co., which Tom owned. She was launched in 1947.

Tasco II was also built in the 1960s by Stone. She was a sloop-rigged Rhodes design that was later sold to Aldo Alessio. He named her Mistress II.

Although I’m 87, I’m still racing. I have model EC 12s and a one-meter-long ‘Soling’.

Bud Cassidy
Fort Myers, FL

† † ANOTHER LETTER FROM ROBY
I hope the following will help Ben Jones who wrote in last month asking for more information about the Lapworth 36s, one of which he recently purchased.

The Lapworth 36 was designed by C. William (Bill) Lapworth and built in Costa Mesa by Chapman & Kalayjian. In fact, the building in which they were built in still exists. The Lapworth 36s were wood, and only three could be built at a time. The hull planking was 1/2-inch by approximately 1 1/2-inch, one side being concave with the other being convex. This made it easy to saturate with Resorcinol glue and place one plank on top of the other. Then long bronze anchor fast nails were driven through the plank into the one below. After the hull was complete, it was rolled over and the frames and bulkheads installed.

I can’t remember how many were built, but they were well received. A few were ordered by members of the Acapulco YC, and I remember two were ordered with tinted ports and windows. One owner even wanted his delivered with dishes, silverware and playing cards!

When Carl Chapman finished one of the boats for Mexico, he moved to Mexico. Rollie Kalajian was a real engineer, and later founded Yacht Specialties, which designed and built the pedestals, sheaves and quadrants for steering systems.

Roby Bessent
Ex-Hoot Mon, Cal 37
Long Beach

Roby — Great info. thanks. It’s really taxing our memory banks, but does anybody remember the crew of a Lapworth 36 driving the boat, spinnaker up, right through the surf and onto the beach just north of Bahia Santa Maria one night? It was about 50 years ago in one of the races to Mexico.

† † GREAT YEARS WITH THE LAPWORTH 36
Thought I would add a little to the history of Lapworth 36s. I owned Fleur de Mer, hull #39, in the early 1970s. She was one of two built with teak decks. The other was Leda II, #71, which I believe the James family still brings out for the Master Mariners Regatta.
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SPECIALISTS

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We raced Lapworth 36s as a one design in those days, and recall we had 12 or more on the Bay. We sailed out of St. Francis YC, and spent summers with the kids up at Tinsley Island. Those were great years.

Karl Eckhardt
Boston Whaler 21
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Karl — We’re almost certain that Leda II is the Lapworth 36 that used to race with a crew of topless women in the early 1980s. Given all the years that have passed, we understand that none of them are copping to it. But you’re right, those were great years. On the other hand, if you’re still sailing, these are great years, too.

⇑⇓

CHARTERS IN THE SAN BLAS ISLANDS

The fact that the Lagoon 41 catamaran went on a reef at the San Blas Islands in early January, as reported in ‘Lectronic Latitude, really got my attention, as my wife Carole and I are going to spend three weeks in Panama. And one week of it will be on a cat in the San Blas Islands.

Based on our research, there are three main ways to charter in the San Blas: 1) Bareboat. 2) Boat with captain and cook — who might be one and the same. And 3) Share space with others on a crewed boat.

One of the ‘shared space’ deals is a one-way trip to or from Cartagena, Colombia. Depending on how much time you or your group wants to take, such a trip can be from three to six days or more. But just as in Mexico, things don’t always go as planned.

The trip from Cartagena includes an overnight, after which you spend some time in the San Blas Islands. That part of the sail is probably similar to the second leg or third leg of the Baja Ha-Ha.

Before we signed up for our trip, we read the charter write-ups of these trips, the descriptions of the accommodations on the boats, and the comments from those who have done the trips. After checking them out, we decided we were probably a bit past our prime for that kind of sailing and fun. They tend to be more like sailing youth hostels than typical charters. It sounds like this may have been the type of charter trip that had the accident, but we don’t know for sure.

We’re taking a four-day sail on a shared and crewed cat that will only spend time in the islands — no overnights close to the reefs. We’ll get to have some sailing/swimming-time on the beach, drink some rum, eat lots of seafood — and it will be a lot warmer than if we stayed home in Sacramento. In addition, Carole won’t have to cook and I won’t have to do dishes or boat chores, which is nice. When that part of the trip is over, we’ll head up to the Bocas del Toro region for more days of kicking back. We’ll be back in plenty of time for the boat show in Richmond in April.

Oh, one more thing. Carole says it’s time for yet another sailboat. This one has to be trailerable so we can spend time on the Bay and in the Delta, go up to the Columbia River to see the grandkids, hit the San Juan Islands, and maybe even the Sea of Cortez. It will either be our 15th or 16th boat.

Pat and Carole — For as long as we can remember, private boats have been doing 180-mile unregulated charters from Cartagena, Colombia to the San Blas Islands. Many of the passengers are backpackers, as it’s much less expensive than
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As you are probably aware, the northeast wind that blows along the Caribbean coast of Colombia is one of the strongest and most consistent in the world of cruising. Fortunately, it mostly blows itself out once you get as far west as Cartagena, and is often not too strong in the 180 miles between Cartagena and the San Blas Islands. Indeed, it can be quite light and there might even be a back eddy to the south of the rhumbline.

Approaching the San Blas Islands, which are low reef islands, from the east is no place for mistakes. There are only a few decent openings, and if you’re not spot on with your navigation, your boat will soon be history. For once on the reef, there will be no getting off.

About 20 years ago we came down on these islands aboard our Ocean 71 Big O. It was pouring rain with lightning all about. As we recall, we didn’t have GPS, so it was spooky stuff. Fortunately, the skies cleared just before dark, allowing our captain Antonio, who had been there many times before, to pick his way between islands. Not that there were any navigation markers to help.

About 10 years later we again came down on the San Blas, this time with our 63-ft cat Profligate. Having a GPS or two made it so much easier, but there was still no room for sloppy navigation.

Once behind the reef, you are protected from the often huge swells of the Caribbean Sea. There is good sailing to be enjoyed in certain places, while other parts of the San Blas are littered with reefs.

The San Blas Islands are truly spectacular, with lots of sea life, and water as clear as in a bottle of fine vodka. More than a few cruisers spend a year or more at a time in the San Blas, and we can see why. Mind you, don’t be expecting internet, television, stores, restaurants, bright lights or any conveniences. But if anyone is up for the simple and natural life, it’s the place to be.

By the way, the Kuna women wore rings through their noses decades before it was cool, and many still smoke pipes like your granddaddy might have done.

WE’LL STAY OUT UNTIL WE CAN’T LIFT THE ANCHOR

We left San Diego in 1998 aboard our Gemini 35 cat Speck, transited the Canal in March of 2000, and have been continuing to explore the Caribbean ever since. In Lectronic you asked for stories about fires on boats. Here’s ours:

A powerboat caught fire next to Speck while we were tied up at the Panama Canal YC. Thankfully, a couple of fellow boaters released her lines and moved her away from the flames.
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LETTERS

just as the firefighters were arriving. We were so lucky.

We normally didn’t stay at marinas, but had left Speck in the one when we flew home to San Diego for a visit with family. Since that close call, we do everything we can to stay out of marinas — and for more than just the fear of fires.

But we had a cruising friend of ours who wasn’t so lucky with a boat fire in Costa Rica in 1999. He was ashore with his daughter and called his other daughter to come pick them up with the dinghy. The daughter had been deep-frying fish and forgot to turn off the propane stove. When they got back to the boat, she — the boat — was going up in flames.

After transiting the Canal, we continued to wander the ‘wild west’ of the Caribbean for a few years, then in 2003 spent two months along the north coast of Cuba. Oh my, we’ve had so many big adventures on our small but well-equipped sailboat! We’ve only spent a little, but have enjoyed life a lot while living on our cat in exotic locations. Because our needs and thus expenses are so small, we have also managed to save enough for a few land-based travels to Asia, too.

While in Singapore to visit my daughter, we were invited to participate in the Neptune Regatta from Singapore to Indonesia. When we crossed the equator, we were immediately initiated as polliwogs! In 2012 we had a different kind of sailing adventure — a six-month trip up the East Coast via the ICW. We spent three months anchored in the Washington Channel, living like locals.

Between and after those adventures, we’ve managed to hang out in the Exumas and other remote islands of the Bahamas almost every year. We had a near sinking off the northwest corner of the Abacos in 2009, but my husband Irwin, a calm, confident man, found the big problem and solved it. So we lived to tell about it.

We dive and snorkel, deep sea fish, wander the villages, and explore the clear waters of the out-islands of the Bahamas. We can tell you about almost every nook and cranny in that group. The Bahamas is still a beautiful, peaceful place to wander, with few hassles or fears.

We stayed at Georgetown in the Exumas from early July until mid-November of 2015. We really enjoyed having the place to ourselves after the hordes of winter cruisers had returned to the US and Canada. There was, of course, the matter of Hurricane Joaquin and its 100-mph winds, but we rode it out safely with five anchors set in a protected lagoon. The eye passed 40 miles to the east of us and devastated Long Island.

Irwin and I are now 70, but we’re still going strong, and are the envy of our land-based families and friends. We plan to return to Cuba now that it is sorta legal, and then head back to Central America. We’ll stay out here wandering on Speck until we can’t lift the anchors or see the navigation markers.

Judy and Irwin White

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A FEW POINTERS IN A CALAMITY

In my capacity as a marine surveyor, I have attended many vessels over the years when a fire has caused partial or total loss, fortunately never with loss of life. If you should happen to be in this calamity here are a few pointers:

1) Switch off the main supply on the 12 or 24-volt system using the main battery switches.
2) If the vessel is plugged into shorepower, disconnect this from the dock.
3) Close the valves on the propane supply.
4) Do not open the hatches, as this will allow more oxygen

[LETTERS]
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– Rick Egan, I36, San Francisco Bay

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– Rick Egan, I36, San Francisco Bay

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in to feed the fire.
5) Try to fight the fire if you can, break the ports only if you can spray water in.
6) If the fire is out of control and the boat is tied to the dock, try to untie her so she can be towed or drift downwind to prevent the fire from spreading to other vessels, but make sure it won’t drift into another dock.

But never put your life at risk fighting a fire. After all, a boat is only property that can be replaced.

More than 25 years ago in Sausalito I attended a Yorktown 38 on behalf of the insurance company. The owner of the boat was in his 90s and had just completed a circumnavigation. But he was aboard in Schoonmaker Yacht Harbor when a propane explosion blew the deck off the hull. As the mast was keel stepped, the deck got blasted up the mast, shearing off the boom at the gooseneck. When this occurred, the tension of the rig allowed the hull to collapse inboard. When the deck came back down due to gravity, it sat perfectly on top of the stanchions — some three feet above the original hull to deck joint! The vessel was in a double slip, and it was possible to walk around the vessel and see the contents of all the outboard lockers.

The had been down below when the explosion occurred. He told me he was "deaf" before this happened, and it had really knocked him for six. We had to resort to shouting and a pencil and paper for him to get his point across. He marveled at his luck and then said, "Jeez, I’ve been looking for that box of spare parts since I left American Samoa!" And there it was, visible from the dock amongst all his worldly goods.

That guy got off lucky, as the propane explosion didn’t result in a fire. But propane is very dangerous and can be the major cause of problems if not correctly managed.

Michael P. Wilson
Marine Engineer/Recognized Marine Surveyor
Tortue, S&S 44
Mazatlan, Mexico

Michael — Our memory must be failing us because as we recall the famous incident, it took place at Basin 3 in Clipper Yacht Harbor on either a Spencer 42 or Cascade 42. And while the deck had indeed been blown off the hull, when we looked at it, it was only three inches, not three feet, off the hull. The true miracle was that despite the tremendous force of the explosion, the owner, who had been aboard, wasn’t seriously injured.

⇑⇓

A BLOW TORCH LICKING AT THE CURTAIN

The fire on my boat was the result of a unlit burner leaking in the alcohol stove. The fuel collected in the drip pan at bottom of the stove, ignited, and overheated the pressurized fuel tank. As I turned off the burner that was in use, the over-pressure valve on the filler cap released, and sent a jet of fuel vapor straight up! Ignited by the flames in the drip pan, it became a blow torch licking at the curtains. A quick-thinking friend grabbed a small CO2 extinguisher he had brought along unasked, and put out the fire. The only damage was the scorched curtains. I rebuilt the burners and didn’t have another problem with the stove. I have also kept a least a mid-sized CO2 extinguisher aboard since, in addition other required extinguishers.

Jim Nash
Nalu, Cal 2-30
Kaneohe Yacht Club, HI

⇑⇓

THEN THINGS REALLY GOT OUT OF HAND
I was aboard a Carter 39, a hot race boat at the time, for
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the Manzanillo Race in about 1976 when the stove in the galley caught fire. Somebody had over-primed the stove, which resulted in flames burning a hole in the hose to the pressure tank. Then things started to really get out of hand.

You know how tired you can get during a long offshore race? I was asleep on the settee when it happened, and I was so exhausted that I didn’t even get up. “They’ll tell me if it’s time to abandon ship,” I thought to myself, and went back to sleep. Fortunately, a dry chemical extinguisher put the fire out. We were at about the latitude of Cabo at the time, but 200 miles offshore, and a big fire could have been a disaster.

The same owner had previous lost his Ericson 39 to a fiberglass fire caused by a poorly insulated water-lift exhaust tank. That boat burned to the waterline and the crew was rescued by a Fish & Game boat. They had just finished a Whitney Series San Nicholas Race in Southern California and would have been in big trouble if the fire had started by San Nick. That was was in about 1975.

No fires on my boats.

Mike Kennedy Sr.
ex-Audacious, Choate 40
Los Angeles

Mike — We’d almost forgotten that alcohol stoves using pressurized tanks had been a standard option on Islander 36s and other boats in the 1970s. While alcohol doesn’t explode and can be put out by water, priming the stoves caused many flare-ups and some people were badly burned. Modern alcohol stoves don’t use pressurized tanks, eliminating many of the safety hazards, but alcohol doesn’t burn very hot and isn’t a very efficient fuel.

CNG was/is another option in some areas, particularly Southern California. We remember the great Lowell North telling us he had CNG on one of his boats because he’d seen too many propane explosions on boats. CNG can explode, but it’s lighter than air, so it’s not as risky as propane. The problems with CNG are that it was hard to come by except in Southern California and impossible to find in Mexico, it’s not an efficient fuel, and the tank is under 10 times as much pressure as are propane tanks.

Propane is by far the most popular choice for cruising boat stoves. It’s also by far the most explosive. Be certain that every part of your propane stove system is in perfect condition. A few years back we were at Two Harbors, Catalina, and a guy using a canister propane stove had a problem. His little powerboat, the closest to the dinghy dock, soon became an inferno. It was one of three fires — two on boats — at Two Harbors that day.

WHY FAMILIES SHOULD DO THE BAJA HA-HA

I thought I would share the story of my family’s inspiration to do the Baja Ha-Ha again in 2015.

As Romi and Miya are now a sophomore and senior, respectively, in high school, this decision acknowledged the work they
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would have to do to stay up with school. The big difference between 2008 and 2015 is that I would no longer be homeschooling them.

As for our Santa Cruz 50 Bay Wolf, preparing her was simplified by our previous Ha-Ha experience and nine-month cruise. She didn’t need a lot of work.

So why is the Ha-Ha such a great family event? Let’s see, there is sharing night watches during which time we got to see the moon rise, the planets, and the Milky Way more vividly than ever before. The trick-or-treating among the boats in the fleet in Turtle Bay was as fun as it had been seven years before. The kids’ party on Profitegate and on her floating islands was a blast. The great fishing, which saw us catch two mahi mahi, three tuna — including one about 60 pounds — and a marlin. Seeing a pilot whale and dolphin pods. The great volleyball games on the beach. Dancing with my teenage daughters at Squid Roe during the Ha-Ha party. (There is no other venue in which they would have danced with mom.)

But above all, there is nothing like living in close quarters with your family to really reconnect! And the Ha-Ha was ideal for that.

By the way, Miya and Romi thought that a two-week hiatus from high school was not insurmountable. They front-loaded some schoolwork, did homework on the lay days, and read on days when the sailing was mellow. Their teachers were almost universally supportive. When a freshman in 2012, Miya had taken a month off from school to do the Ha-Ha with her dad, and had no problems keeping up with school.

One of the conditions of our doing the Ha-Ha was that Miya complete an early application for the US Coast Guard Academy before we left. What an incentive! We recently learned that Miya has now been admitted to the Coast Guard Academy.

Sachi Itagaki
Bay Wolf, Santa Cruz 50
San Francisco

Readers — After the last Ha-Ha, we sent a letter asking participants for reviews of the event. We were swamped with them, and have only had room to publish a few. But because we believe in the Ha-Ha so much, we plan to publish one a month until the start of the 23rd annual Ha-Ha, which will be on October 31.

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

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

By far the best way to send letters is to email them to richard@latitude38.com. You can also mail them to 15 Locust, Mill Valley, CA, 94941, or fax them to (415) 383-5816.
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For longer than we can remember, Latitude 38’s spring Crew List Parties have been a much-loved tradition among Bay Area sailors. Unlike our September Crew List shindig, which focuses on cruising south of the border, our March 9 gathering at San Francisco’s Golden Gate Yacht Club (6 to 9 p.m.) functions as sort of a catchall, in that it attracts sailors with a wide variety of interests — including serious in-the-Bay and offshore racing, casual daysailing, chartering and international cruising. Its parallel goals are to help sailors of both vast and minimal experience find rides, while helping skippers find appropriate crew for their needs. As the title implies, this festive evening is designed to expand on initial contacts made via the free online Crew List database found at www.latitude38.com.

Although a boatload of Latitude staffers will attend, we generally don’t get directly involved with crew/captain matchmaking. But we’re happy to share some tips for success — probably the most important of which is to have clear expectations:

• Skippers looking for race crew should give a realistic rundown of the time commitment they expect from potential crew for practice, prep and actual races.
• Skippers looking for crew for far-flung cruising should be clear about what duties potential crew will be expected to tackle, and what expenses they’ll be expected to chip in on.
• Potential crew should not be afraid to be honest about their experience or lack thereof — many skippers would rather train a newbie than take on a know-it-all who’s going to critique every decision the skipper makes.
• Crew — especially females — should make it crystal clear from the get-go if they are absolutely not interested in a potential romantic relationship.
• All attendees should bear in mind that in a whirlwind meet-and-greet cocktail party like this, it’s very difficult for either skippers or crew to later remember everyone they chatted with. So we suggest bringing along a stack of single-sheet sailing resumes, complete with your contact info, what you’re aiming for, and, ideally, a photo.

With that we’ll say “Cheers! And best of luck in finding an ideal situation.”

—andy

hawaii race anticipation builds

In December’s Sightings, we wrote that this July’s Pacific Cup race from San Francisco to Kaneohe, Oahu, is full. Indeed, 80 boats are signed up, and another dozen are wait-listed, the most recent of which (at press time) was Greg Nelsen’s doublehanded Azzura 310 Outsider. The entries range from Moore 24s to 70-ft sleds.

Meanwhile, 28 hardy solo sailors, including three women, have entered the Singlehanded TransPac, which will sail to Kauai’s Hanalei Bay the same month. The smallest boats are three diminutive (21-ft) Mini Transats sailed by Europeans. The biggest is Michael Jefferson’s Garcia Passoa 47 Mouton Noir, a veteran of multiple editions. Three Cal 40 skippers will enjoy competing against one another. We look forward to profiling them all in upcoming issues.

The Hawaii-bound sailors are continuing to prep their vessels and

strictly sail pacific

If you’ve sailed much in California, chances are that you’ve been aboard a boat that came off the drawing board of Gary Mull.

Mull designed the Santana 22 and 27, the Ranger 23 and the rest of the Ranger line, the Newport 30, Kaliks, Freedoms, the Moore 30, the Orion 50 and the Independence. He co-designed the Capri 22, of which nearly 1,000 were sold. Custom designs included Sorcery, Improbable, St. Francis V, VI and VII, two International 6-Meters, and the 12-Meter USA.

Jim Antrim, Jim Donovan, Ron Holland, and the late Carl Schumacher all worked for Mull. Influential, prolific and innovative, Mull died in 1994 at age 55.

continued on outside column of next sightings page
to honor gary mull

To celebrate his life’s work, Strictly Sail Pacific will feature a tent displaying Mull photos, graphics, articles and memorabilia. The show will host panel discussions about Mull and his work at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 9. Naval architect Jim Antrim and boatbuilder Hank Easom are among Gary’s colleagues who plan to be on hand.

On the same day, a variety of Mull-designed boats will be open for viewing, and a celebrity/charity regatta will be held in Capri 22s beginning at 3 p.m., with a social hour to follow. Donations will benefit youth sailing programs.

The regatta only has 24 spots available for the passage. To facilitate the latter, both events offer seminars. Cross-training is encouraged, and even the Hawaii-curious are welcome to attend.

The Singlehanded TransPac seminars are free and held at Oakland YC in Alameda on Wednesday nights. The next one will be March 9’s Communications at Sea. The Singlehanded Sailing Society has organized a cruise-in to Encinal YC (also in Alameda) for SHTP boats on April 16-17, where everyone will be able check out how the competitors have set up their boats. See www.sfbaysss.org.

Coming up on the Pac Cup calendar are a Safety at Sea Seminar in Kaneohe on March 6 and an Alaska Airlines Pacific Cup Offshore Academy at Richmond YC on the afternoon of March 26. The cost is $30 in advance, $45 the week of, and $60 at the door — they really, really want you to register ahead of time — space is limited in RYC’s temporary fabric clubhouse. The PCOA will be preceded at 10 a.m. by a free SailMail/Grib seminar. See www.pacificcup.org.

— chris

hawaii races — continued

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— chris

The Farrier 25C ‘Mojo’, crewed by Chris Harvey and Bob Hyde, was among the 326 single- and doublehanded boats that competed in the Three Bridge Fiasco pursuit race on January 30. See Racing Sheet, page 90, for our report and additional photos.
Although cargo vessels from far-flung nations still arrive daily at Bay Area ports, relatively few foreign-flagged sailboats make landfall here these days, other than Canadian cruisers heading for Mexico. The same was true 28 years ago, when Jacek Rajck, skipper of the 45-ft Polish sailboat *Stormil* radioed the Coast Guard from four miles outside the Golden Gate requesting permission to enter the Bay. Much to his disappointment, the request was promptly denied.

It was October 1988, one year before the Berlin Wall was torn down, the astounding event that triggered the complete dissolution of the Soviet Union two years later. What was this Soviet Bloc sailboat doing so far from her homeport in central Poland? Working as a sail-training vessel affiliated with a Polish university, *Stormil’s* captain had accepted

strictly sail

able, so we recommend signing up early at www.strictlysailpacific.com. (The website will also post updates about celebrity skippers and panel members.)

But you won't find sailors mulling over Mull at Jack London Square — Strictly Sail Pacific is moving from Oakland to Richmond. The exhibitors’ booths will be set up in the historic Craneway Pavilion (the old Ford assembly plant), and boats in the water will be docked in the spacious and deep-draft Marina Bay Yacht Harbor. Don’t be deterred by the Rich-

continued on outside column of next sightings page
— continued

an open offer from the Australian government to sail Down Under and participate in the First Fleet Reenactment procession through Sydney Harbour, in commemoration of the arrival of the country’s first prisoners-turned-settlers in 1788. It was an epic event, with nine splendid foreign-flagged tall ships stealing the spotlight.

Afterward, Rajck and a replacement crew of five students — who had just flown in — faced an extremely daunting, upwind voyage to Hawaii: 5,000 miles against prevailing swells, currents and headwinds. Stormil’s infrequently-traveled eastbound route took her from Brisbane to Fiji, Tonga, American Samoa, the Cook Island and Kiribati before finally crossing to Honolulu.

We were reminded of this crazy tale last month when Leszek Swiatek, a member of that stoic crew, dropped by our offices to say hello. Although the trip was a lifetime ago, he still remembers vividly the details of Stormil’s arrival at Honolulu. They tied off at one of the first open docks they saw in front of a swank yacht club — probably the Hawaii or Waikiki YC — and the crew promptly went inside to ask where they might find a berth. When the club members in the bar found out who these strangers were and where they’d come from, they insisted that Stormil stay out front for free, and offered drinks on the house. We can only imagine the revelry that ensued.

But a few hours later Captain Rajck appeared, looking somber. (He’d remained behind on the boat.) Outside, the crew saw that their little sailboat was now dwarfed by a huge Coast Guard cutter lying alongside it. Rajck had been told in no uncertain terms that because Stormil was a Soviet vessel, by government mandate she could not berth in this US port. The entire crew already had US visas and were free to visit, but the boat’s status was a big problem. Two crew opted to stay in Hawaii, and leave Leszek, the captain and two others to make the crossing to California.

Before setting sail for San Francisco the next morning, Rajck had time to call US Customs in San Francisco. Personnel there approved the boat’s arrival, but insisted on recording a specific arrival date. Rajck figured even if the crossing was very slow going, they could make it in 29 days, and that October date was so noted.

The 2,100-mile crossing was anything but slow though. “We had wonderful sailing conditions most of the way,” recalls Leszek. So wonderful, in fact, that they arrived nine days ahead of schedule. But instead of being able to tie up somewhere, find hot showers and “have a party,” they were told they would have to anchor three miles offshore and wait another nine days before passing beneath the Golden Gate.

With no other choice, they anchored somewhere in the notoriously unpleasant waters over the Potato Patch. When they lost their first anchor, the Coast Guard loaned them a replacement. (We suspect the Coasties were somewhat sympathetic to the plight of these obviously nonthreatening sailors.)

It wasn’t long before curious fishermen started coming by to find out why on earth this well-worn sailboat was anchored in such an inhospitable spot. Word of the sailors’ plight spread quickly throughout the marine community, and before long newspaper, radio and TV
SIGHTINGS

stormil — continued

reporters picked up the story. Local merchants sent out food and beer via fishing boats and motoryachts, at least one of which invited the detainees over for showers. And on one occasion, Leszek recalls with a smile, someone sent out a special San Francisco ‘cigarette’.

After five days, the buzz about the student-sailors’ plight reached the State Department, where the decision was eventually made to let Stormil into the Bay. The weary crew got a heroes’ welcome when they pulled into Pier 39, where Polish vodka-fueled celebrations began that lasted for days. The marina waived the slip fees and the nearby Holiday Inn gave the weary Poles free rooms. Later, Nelson’s Marine gave Stormil a free bottom job, Oakland YC offered a free slip, and Encinal YC gave the crew meals and drinks and helped facilitate free phone calls to Poland — aided by Pac Bell employees who took up an office collection!

On that memorable night when they first stepped ashore, Leszek was seen beaming with joy on the TV news. In his broken English he said, “I have forgotten all bad situation. We are happy now!” — andy

it can happen to the best of sailors

Late last month when an unusual WSW swell developed suddenly, Barry and Connie Ruff’s Vancouver-based Wylie 39 sloop Rage dragged onto the beach just outside Marina Riviera Nayarit, in Mexico’s Banderas Bay, while no one was aboard. Landing on the rocks in front of one of the best surf breaks in Banderas Bay, Rage was badly holed on her port side, which made her impossible to refloat or repair.

"Every set that rolled through sent more big jagged chunks of hull floating up between us," recalled Tamiko Willie, one of many sailors who rushed to the scene to help. “The entire cruising community and panergeros came together and helped ferry everything we could off the boat.” But as the tide rose, the prospect of saving Rage grew ever more hopeless. It’s important to stress that Rage was anchored on all-chain rode, not light line, as some early reports suggested.

Barry, a native of Britain, built her from a bare hull, and during the past 30 years he’s cruised and raced her extensively, including several Hawaii races. “The boat was a ‘10’ in every way regarding attention to detail,” said Mazatlan marine surveyor Michael Wildon, “as Barry — with too many ocean miles to count — knows what it takes to make a vessel fast, simple and easy to sail.”

Sadly, the battered hull eventually had to be cut up and hauled away. When the initial reports came out, some mistakenly assumed that this boat was Steve Rander’s well-known race boat of the same name, which is also a Wylie design. Rander’s, however, is a 70-footer. We extend our sympathies to Barry and Connie, and hope they get back out on the water soon. — richard & andy

big fun on plastic classics

“I’m just so enthusiastic about our little corner of the sailing world and how it reaches across the generations to inspire new and old sailors alike,” writes Steve Cossman, commodore of the Alberg Design Fleet of San Francisco. He describes himself and his buddies as “vintage guys sailing vintage boats.” The way Steve tells it, they

'schooner season'

Although there’s never a bad time of year to sail a schooner in California, spring will bring a cluster of opportunities for crews and aficionados alike.

On April 2, Silver Gate YC in San Diego will host the America’s Schooner Cup. This regatta is a fundraiser for the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society.

"Last year we had 14 schooners, from 35 to 150 feet, from California and the Pacific Northwest," said Brad Brown of the Cup committee. "We expect the same
number of schooners this year. Spectators can watch the start and finish off Shelter Island. We have two additional opportunities to view the race from the water: from the Californian, the official state tall ship — a 145-ft schooner — and from the Bill of Rights, a 136-ft replica of a 19th-century coastal schooner.” Call (619) 234-9153 for tickets on Californian or (619) 500-2419 for tickets on Bill of Rights. No registration is neces-

although some still believe you have to be ultra-rich and own a Bristol yacht to enjoy sailing, these ADFSF members would argue otherwise.
plastic classics — continued

“Our idea is that many of these boats are of the same vintage, sail similarly, require much the same type of work, and therefore are probably owned by much the same type of people. We are looking to share our experiences both on and off the water.”

Group members meet every Thursday for a sail, rotating helm time on one another’s boats. “It’s fun,” says Steve. “We each get a feel for someone else’s boat while the owner gets to do things he’s not able to do when he has non-sailors aboard. So on any given Thursday, look out on the Bay for a lone Triton with some crazy old guys headed somewhere or maybe nowhere. They’ll have lunch, enjoy the scenery in one of the greatest sailing spots of the world with hardly another boat in sight — and, there’s always a wee toast to another great day of sailing once the boat is put to bed.”

For more info on this fun-loving group of sailors, check out the website: www.albergsailboats.org.

— andy

schooner season

Schooners are a common sight in San Diego Bay, surrounded by other small boats. Star Clippers, a worldwide cruise ship company featuring tall ships, has stepped up as a sponsor this year. For more info, see www.americasschoonercup.com.

Woody-philes in San Francisco will want to mark their calendars for May 28, the date of the Master Mariners Regatta, when old friends will renew fierce rivalries. Fans can watch the start in front of St. Francis YC during the noon hour. Once the sailors have completed their

A favorite image from the 2014 America’s Schooner Cup: The stunningly beautiful ‘Curlew’ blasts around the course off San Diego. If you can’t catch a ride on one of these beauties during upcoming San Diego or San Francisco Bay events, try to at least get out and spectate.
-- continued

grand tour of San Francisco Bay, they'll settle in at the Encinal YC in Alameda for a post-race raft-up, party and awards. Numerous local businesses and organizations, including Latitude 38, provide important sponsorship. Check out www.mastermariners.org.

On June 11, San Francisco YC in Belvedere will host the Great San Francisco Schooner Race. Details will be forthcoming at www.sfyc.org.

Then, as spring rolls into summer, the Master Mariners will pack the docks of the Corinthian YC in Tiburon on June 26 for their annual Wooden Boat Show.

-- chris

15th zihua fest sets a record

We're proud to say that Latitude 38 played a role in starting Zihuatanejo SailFest in 2002. But back then we never could have dreamed that this fledgling cruiser gathering would evolve into the most successful sailor-supported charity event in all of Mexico. Since the beginning, the focus of fundraising efforts has been to support the education of local underprivileged kids.

As Z-Fest celebrated its 15th anniversary last week, the efforts of cruisers, plus a dedicated group of expat volunteers, local merchants and service groups, raised a record $1,410,295 pesos ($77,000 USD), augmented by a Rotary Club grant of $795,000 pesos ($43,000 USD) to Por Los Niños de Zihuatanejo, SailFest's registered Mexican charity.

As longtime organizer Lorenzo Mailbut explains, "The weeklong festivities included a welcome dance party, sailing events, concerts, a gala dinner, school visits, chili cook-off and street fair, and auctions and raffles, with gifts and services donated by more than 200 local businesses."

"Perhaps first among our cruising heroes this year is the Patricia Belle, a 66-ft home-built schooner," says Lorenzo. "They welcomed aboard 75 paying guests for the three sailing events, and then invited a large group of Mexican kids and parents to go sailing for free on Sunday. During the festival's three sailing events, 343 guests rode along — also a record — having made donations to the cause.

"Since 2002," explains the longtime expat-in-residence, "the SailFest partnership has built more than 90 classrooms, bathrooms, kitchens and playgrounds at underprivileged schools in low-income communities, and has awarded hundreds of academic and English-language scholarships."

In the planning stages this year is one of Por Los Niños' most ambitious projects to date: construction of a new vocational high school that will serve 105 at-risk local teenagers.

Repeat attendees to Z-Fest such as the Patricia Belle crew and dedicated part- or full-time expats such as Lorenzo take great pride in the life-changing efforts they've made, while having a good time in the process. Lorenzo's SailFest motto: "Building a brighter future while having almost too much fun."

-- andy
sail (lots) of small boats

"Come on and take a free ride," sang the Edgar Winter Group in 1973. Hey, that’s just what Richmond YC is saying! On Saturday, March 5, adults and kids alike can take free rides on any number of varied small craft, ranging from El Toros and Optis to skiffs and beach cats to keelboats such as the Santana 22, Ultimate 20 and Wylie Wabbit. About 35 small craft will be on hand, including that favorite toy of 21st century watermen and women, the stand-up paddleboard. It’s all part of Sail a Small Boat Day, a long-running RYC tradition.

Volunteers will help visitors get on boats from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. They recommend bringing a wetsuit if you have one or waterproof clothes, plus some warm dry things to change into — be prepared to get wet! Bring your own PFD if you have one (not the inflatable type); some extras will be available to borrow.

Why a small boat? They’re cheaper and easier to store, maintain and transport, plus they’ll hone your sailing skills. The list of boats available to sample includes El Toros, Optimists, Lasers, Etchells, Vanguard 15s, Mercurys, 505s and more.

Not only are the boat rides free, but the hot dogs are too! For more info, see www.richmondyc.org.

— chris

the whitbread’s most unlikely victors

It’s human nature to root for the underdog in almost any sports competition. But when an unknown team of Mexican sailors signed up for the inaugural Whitbread Round the World Race in 1973, the odds of their winning were such a long shot that we doubt any bookmaker would have taken a bet on them. That ’73-’74 race, of course, was the precursor to every fully crewed around-the-world race since, and is now named the Volvo Ocean Race.

The fact that Mexican businessman Ramon Carlin and his crew — only a few of whom had bona fide offshore racing experience — won that first Whitbread remains one of the greatest upsets in the annals of sailboat racing. Needless to say, the story of how they did it is a fascinating tale. So we were thrilled to learn that The Weekend Sailor, a new film about Ramon’s miracle by Bernardo Arsuaga, will debut March 11 at the San Francisco International Ocean Film Festival. For details see: www.oceanfilmfest.org.

We are reminded by the film’s trailer that Carlin didn’t even own a boat when he and his son Enrique first pondered the idea of entering the race — Enrique had read about it while studying in Europe. They eventually purchased a brand-new S&S-designed Swan 65 that was christened Sayula II to compete against a formidable fleet of 16 other yachts skippered by seasoned offshore racers such as Brit Chay Blithe and French superstar Eric Tabarly.

Long before GPS, no-go ice boundaries, and other elements that make offshore racing today at least reasonably safe, back in ’73 around-the-world racing was among the most ‘extreme sports’ going — especially during the long stretches in the unforgiving Southern Ocean. Three men were swept overboard and died during the first Whitbread, and Sayula II suffered a dramatic mid-ocean knockdown

sailing alone through

As reported earlier, we’ve been tracking the progress of two determined singlehanders who are currently sailing in different parts of the Southern Ocean in pursuit of achieving great personal accomplishments, while setting records: Aboard Inspired Insanity, Donna Lange hopes to become the first American woman to circle the globe nonstop, via the Five Great Capes, and aboard Sailors Run, Jeff Hartjoy hopes to become the oldest American to perform a similar feat — he’s now 69.

Donna is currently on approach to rounding her final cape — the most
unforgiving waters

ominous one: Cape Horn. Having been knocked down by brutal weather, her satellite comms system is nonfunctional, but she is still characteristically upbeat. For her, the finish line is Rhode Island (www.donnalange.com).

Jeff is currently on approach to Tasmania, with two capes to pass before heading north to his starting point in Ecuador (www.sailorsrun.com). In recent weeks he battled sustained winds of 50 knots with gusts to 65 that forced him to run under bare poles. We wish them both safety and success.

— andy

unlikely victors — continued

that easily could have been disastrous.

At the same time, the first Whitbread marked the end of an era when offshore racing yachts had comfortable bunks, crew were regularly served hot meals, and it wasn’t uncommon for them to have a glass of wine — or perhaps a shot of tequila — when they came off watch. (In addition to recruiting his son and nephews, Carlin brought along his wife Paquita.)

We haven’t seen the film yet, but with Whitbread vet (and Duran Duran lead singer) Simon Le Bon narrating, plus cameos by Sir Chay, Franck Cammas, Torben Grael and many of the original crew — including West Coast ‘hired guns’ Keith Lorence and Ray Conrady — we can hardly wait to check it out. If you miss the premiere, look for The Weekend Sailor to be screened in ‘art house’ theaters soon, and/or available via streaming services.

— andy

While rounding Cape Horn, Ramon strikes a pose with Dutchman Tjerk Romke de Vries. Inset: At times, Sayula II had a wild ride through the Southern Ocean.
winds and challenging
wind-against-current conditions that
kept competitors ashore one day and
provided no shortage of drama, carnage
and thrilling competition on the rest.

The first day of racing, Monday, January
18, featured northeast winds that ex-
ceded 20 knots and bumpy water with
4-ft waves rolling through the course
areas.

Accustomed to powering through
strong San Francisco Bay winds, most
Bay Area crews were disappointed to sit
ashore on Tuesday the 19th. The day
was distinctly untropical, as the howling
wind (up to 30 knots) was cold enough to
prompt locals and tourists alike to put
on hats and coats.

The sailors fared better on Wednes-
day, in a perfect 15- to 18-knot north-
easterly. Organizers were able to fire off
three more races on all courses Thursday
in solid 10- to 14-knot breeze.

The final day, Friday, blew in with
lightning, thunder and torrential rain.
Organizers debated if the conditions were
safe to proceed with two races to finish
the J/70s, Melges 24s and C&C 30s, and
one race for all other classes.

With several titles at stake but bad
weather threatening, this was not an
easy call. Forecaster George Carras from
Commander’s Weather described the
moist tropical conditions in the atmo-
sphere as “juicy and unstable,” with a
chance for more cells. But, with nothing
actually on the radar, the fleets headed
out for one more day of battle.

Outside the harbor in the southerly,
the forecast 8-15 knots turned out to be
more serious than a few OCS calls.

The most dominant team of the entire
regatta was Peter Wagner of Atherton
and crew on Skeleton Key, which had the
nine-boat J/111 fleet’s number all week
to record an incredible seven bullets out
of nine races with a pair of seconds as
the only blemishes on their otherwise
perfect picket fence of a scorecard.

Wagner took delivery of his J/111 less
than a year ago, and this was only the
fifth regatta for his team. Sailing in his
first Key West Race Week, he was over
the moon and full of praise for both the
race organizers and his talented crew. “I
really enjoyed my first Key West. We had
great conditions and it was a very well-
run event. We’re just really fortunate that
we managed to sail consistently, and we
had a lot of fun doing it.” Wagner praised
his tactician, North Sails San Francisco’s
Seadon Wijsen. “We got off the line well
and Seadon did a great job of managing
tings tactically on the course.”

On the first day of racing, January
18, ’City of Key West Day’, Skeleton Key
won Boat of the Day. By week’s end, the
J/111 crew had earned a total score of
11.0 — handily surpassing the nearest
competition, the Cleveland-based Space-
Action in the J/111 fleet at Key West, with the Chicago-based 'Wooten' on port tack and 'Skeleton Key' on starboard.

**STORM KEY WEST AND CUBA**

**USA 77 Courageous**, a J/88 owned and skippered by Gary Panierello of San Francisco, raced one-design alongside seven sisterships. The fleet was able to compete on only three days due to the stormy weather. *Courageous* ended the regatta in eighth place.

Peter Krueger’s J/125 *Double Trouble* competed in IRC 2 against four other boats. After opening the regatta with a victory, the *Double Trouble* crew had their hands full in their division and placed third. One of the Bay Area’s most formidable big-boat programs, *DT* didn’t have an answer for Andrew and Linda Weiss’ New York-based Sydney 43 *Christopher Dragon* after that initial race success. After the first race, *Christopher Dragon* led around every mark to claim eight straight bullets and walk away with the win.

Skipper Julian Mann, tactician Pete McCormick, and the crew of *Andiamo*, a San Francisco-based C&C 30, vied with ten other boats. *Andiamo* could only manage a 10th-place finish, while Peter Cunningham’s Cayman Islands-flagged Powerplay wound up in seventh with Bay Area Olympic veteran Hartwell Kilroy’s SFYC-based Melges 20 *WildMan*. “Erik is meticulous in planning, preparation and rigging,” explained Magnussen.

“Next up was bow, and there was only one person for this: Cody Schlub. He did Transpac with me on the J/125 *Timeshaver*. He does not talk a lot, and this would be vital given the rest of the guys I planned on asking, who maybe talk a little more than normal. Enter the Long Beach match-racing boys, Dustin Durant and Benjamin Wheatley, our trimming team and entertainment when not racing. These dudes work hard, sail hard, keep their heads down, and are assets to any boat. Off the boat we laugh and joke to the point that it hurts. Dave Millet rounded out the crew and added some quiet stability. We also dragged along Brent Ruhne to cruise around in a RIB and be our coach. This proved vital during our practice days, as he was able to help us dial in the rig tune and get up to speed with the other guys.

Erik and I were looking through the crew lists before the event and were in awe of some of the names. It seemed like every boat had used their two Category 3 (professional sailor) allowances wisely, and that was a bit intimidating.

“We hoisted our version-two Ullman sails literally in Key West three days before the start of the event. Our first impression was ‘nice-looking sails… let’s figure out this rig and make them fast.’ Brent Ruhne helped us from off the boat, and, between Erik and myself on the

**I** consider myself one of the truly lucky sailors from this area to have participated,” said Keith Magnussen of Ullman Sails Newport Beach.

“Ed Feo approached me a year ago to put a team together for *Loco*, and I was honored to help organize a crew. First off I hit up Erik Shampain. Shampain has been killing it on the Melges 20 circuit — recently winning the Miami Winter Series with young Liam Blaine Pedlow on the crew, further illustrating the staggering level of competition in what has become one of the hottest new fleets on the water.

Edwin Feo’s Long Beach-based C&C 30 *Loco*, which was loaded with top SoCal talent, was well sailed in the 11-boat fleet.

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boat, we eventually got it right. Having a coach on the water is so valuable, and the three days we spent practicing before the event really paid off.

“Playing the regatta a bit slow, but we were still figuring ourselves out. We ended up second on the third race of day one, missing out on first by a boatlength. Our mistake in that race came when the wind increased on the final leg and we did not shift gears well enough. These boats are demanding, and if you are not constantly working then you will suffer. We missed out on an adjustment and it cost us.

“We improved each day to become one of the most consistently sailed boats on the course. We had our moments with an over-early and a foul at a weather mark, but we recovered from those mistakes well and stayed positive, which is always important in a long regatta.”

The mark roundings were tight, which served to make the racing even more fun. “We had a couple of incidents, but people did their circles and the racing was fair.”

Going into the final day Loco was tied for third but losing the tie-breaker. The Long Beach team had to beat Bob Moran’s Annapolis-based Bobsled. “Friday was a fun day on the water, with huge swell at two-second intervals from the shallow water and leftover storms,” reports Magnusen. “Wind was around 17 to 25 knots, and when the squall came through it left some wreckage. We had a great start, and then realized we were over early. We cleared ourselves and bailed out to the right side of the course. Boatspeed again was key, and a nice right shift saw us pass Bobsled, which went left/middle. The run was epic, with everyone in the back of the bus and Dustin trimming with orders like, ‘Up a quarter.’

“The second weather-mark rounding had the Sledgers right behind us. This is where the crew work ruled! As we hoisted our spinnaker and took off, I glanced back to see them shrimp their kite. It looked like they ran it over. We ended up crashing hard at the finish — don’t try to jibe when you’re not going full speed! We finished the race and looked back to see two boats going wing-on-wing with their jibs.

“Third place with that kind of competition exceeded our expectations. We had come all the way from Long Beach YC, and to represent the West Coast well was more than we could ask for.”

For complete results plus photos and video, see www.keywestraceweek.com.

After Key West Race Week came to a close, some boats packed up and moved on while others, including Double Trouble and Perseverance, prepared for what was billed as the first-ever fully legal sailboat...
race to the communist Republic of Cuba, the Conch Republic Cup/Key West Cuba Race Week.

The Conch Republic, in case you’re not familiar with the moniker, refers to the Florida Keys. Following a US Border Patrol roadblock and checkpoint in 1982 on the highway into and out of the Keys, US 1, Key West seceded from the Union, declared war on the US, immediately surrendered, and applied for foreign aid. The only weapon wielded by the Conchs during their one-minute war was a stale loaf of Cuban bread.

The first two races in what would become the Conch Republic Cup were sailed from Key West to Varadero, Cuba, in 1997 and 1998, after which Club Nautico Internacional Hemingway de La Havana’s commodore, Jose Escrich, proposed a four-race series. A big chill in relations between the two countries during Bush Junior’s administration put the kibosh on the ‘cultural exchange through sport’.

Run for the first time since 2003, this year’s Conch Republic Cup attracted 56 entries for a quick romp to Cuba and back, with buoy racing and a coastal-passage race in between.

The regatta began with a weather delay as a low-pressure system built in the Gulf Stream. The 90-mile race to Varadero, Cuba, finally started at 5 p.m. on Friday, January 29, and a pleasant crossing ensued in 12-17 knots of easterly breeze and a 6-ft swell.

"The race from Key West to Varadero was very pleasant, and crossing the Gulf stream was not bad,” said the aforementioned Seadon Wijsen, now calling tactics on the J/111 Perseverance. “It was very cool to see the glow of Key West on one horizon and the glow of Havana on the opposite horizon.”

Double Trouble held off the hard-charging C&C 30 Bobsled to claim line honors in the race to Cuba, though Bobsled corrected out on top in PHRF B and overall.

An evening bash followed on Saturday. The long slog to the racing area on Sunday gave everyone a chance to recover before the start in view of the beach.

DT once again took line honors in the buoy race, though it was Perseverance that corrected out for the class win. The day’s racing was again followed by festivities at Marina Gaviota.

“Communication was poor due to the lack of cell service and wifi,” observed Wijsen. “The buoy racing portion was cut short with one race in Varadero and one race in Havana. The sailing we did have was excellent, with warm conditions and flat water.”

Monday’s Cuba Coastal Challenge from Varadero to Marina Hemingway in Havana began with an hour and 45-minute delay. But a steady 8-12 knot breeze through the afternoon and evening carried the fleet west in some close-quarters dueling, with a view of the Cuban coastline. At Marina Hemingway, the finishers were greeted with clear skies and a Jet Ski guide down the entrance channel to the customs dock.

The comparatively small Bobsled continued to prove her merit in the passage race — she caned the fleet to win boat-for-boat and overall.

The Double Trouble crew made the most of their Cuban holiday, taking a
relaxed approach to the Varadero-to-Havana race. "We were still sailing the boat well, but at some point everyone had a cigar or rum in their hands," said bowman James 'the Hippie' Clappier. "We wanted to have fun and take a break from our usual seriousness of racing, so we all switched positions and mixed it up."

A lay day followed, in which the hard-working crews and race committee had the chance to see Havana, with bus tours and vintage-convertible taxi rides through the city. At Tuesday evening's reception, USCG Lieutenant Commander Cromwell, representing the newly-reopened US Embassy, and Commodore Escrich joined the visiting sailors.

Another advancing weather front threatened to close out Marina Hemingway. Organizers, anxious to make sure all the boats could reach Florida safely, moved up the fourth and fifth races of the series on Wednesday. A majority of the fleet, including Double Trouble, chose not to participate and instead spent another day exploring Cuba before ripping back to Key West on their own accord.

Wijisen said that the Perseverance team elected to tour the countryside and fly home.

"Cuba is a beautiful place with a lot of potential, and it was a cool opportunity to see it right now during its major transition with normalizing US relations. It will be interesting to come back later in life and see how it has changed," said the 26-year-old Clappier.

For more, see www.conchrepubliccup.com.

The Conch Republic Cup was quickly followed by the Coral Reef Yacht Club's inaugural Miami to Havana Race, which 46 boats started on February 10 (see www.havanarace.org).

It took a bunch of sailors to show the way, but now that the Obamas have seen how delightful a jaunt to Cuba can be, they'll follow in the wake of the trailblazing yacht racers for a March visit to the Caribbean's forbidden island.

— ronnie simpson, martha blanchfield & latitude/chris
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BUILDING NEMO

In January, the Latitude 38 editorial dungeon received an enthusiastic call from Ron Moore, who was eager to show us the latest boat he was building. "I am completely consumed by the project," he said.

You may recognize the name — Ron Moore is the builder of the George Olson-designed Moore 24, one of the most successful keelboats to ever grace West Coast waters.

"It's a wider layup than a stock 27," said Terry Alsberg. "It's got more glass in it. And we thought we would slice down the shear about 6 inches to reduce windage and weight aloft, and make a flush-deck boat that's just a pure race boat. So we built a custom deck for it. And we put in some stringers that went fore and aft to support the cockpit.

"In 1988, after we got the project to a certain stage, the Boatworks went belly-up, and this sat on Moore's Reef, where I had learned how to build boats working for Ron. He had a storage yard there with various ferrocement monstrosities and orphan trimarans that were hard on the hard. I was bankrupt and eventually couldn't pay the rent, so Ron repo'd it and sold it. It ended up in Stockton. And then Rob Grant got hold of it." Grant was the racing editor at Latitude 38 at the time.

"Rob calls me up and says, 'I hear you had something to do with this boat I bought; I just wanted to know how I should finish it off.' I said, 'You don't want to build it. You want me to build it.' So I sweet-talked him into selling it to me for what he paid for it: $2,500 including a rusty old trailer.

"I picked it up and was trying to figure out where I could get it built. Bill Riedel runs Stretch Surfboards in Santa Cruz. He used to work for me, and he was back over on Tower Place where my company used to be. They took the deck off and tore out a bunch of the interior." But Riedel didn't have time to work on it because the surfboard shop is so busy.

"I ran into Ron and Martha one afternoon and I said, 'Hey, you still building boats?' and Ron said yeah, and I said, 'You want to build one?' He said, 'Yeah, I'd love to do that.' So I rolled it on over here." Work on Nemo began in earnest last April.

Ron finished removing the rest of the bad interior. Some water had gotten into the hull so he drilled some holes in it and got the water out. "The hull is tip-top now," he said. "We're pretty confident that the hull is uber sound," agreed Terry. The deck had a few flaws in it too, which Ron repaired.

"We changed our concept about how the interior was to be done," said Terry. "I started thinking that this thing's basically a big girder — my background is architecture and structural engineering. You have two skins you hold apart with some verticals, so I thought how about if we just break the hull up lengthwise. It should be hella stiff.""The carbon bulkheads are about four feet apart. They must weigh something, but when you pick up a slice of the material, it feels weightless.

"This is going to make the whole thing into one big box girder that's very stiff on the ends. Boats get a torsion load because you've got a rig pulling one direction, a keel pulling the other direction, and the rudder pulling in another direction. By locking bulkheads athwartships all up and down, we take out those torsional forces. It should be hella stiff.""The carbon bulkheads are about four feet apart. They must weigh something, but when you pick up a slice of the material, it feels weightless.

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TERRY ALSBERG'S DREAM BOAT

Ron and Terry hope to launch the boat in April. She'll mostly be a Wednesday-night hot rod. “Wednesday night racing's real big here in Santa Cruz. There's

An interior view from before the deck went on. The carbon-fiber bulkheads are nearly weightless, so lightening holes would be overkill.

"I am completely consumed by the project."

The Express 27 has a very seakindly shape. If you look at the transom, it's got what's called dead rise. It's got a little bit of a V there. When these things are going really fast, it's when they're on a close reach, and you're heeled about 10-15 degrees. When this shape is heeled it's flat, so it's for planing on a shy reach. This is designed to be a really well-behaved boat in big seas and big wind.” It will be set up for doublehanding.

in it. It's going to be a taller rig than the Express 27 but still 9/10ths fractional because I like the way that bends. When Carl and I designed the 27 we jokingly said that we designed it to the Barient 10 rule. The Barient size 10 winch was just big enough to handle the fore-triangle of the Moore 24, which, if memory serves, is 121 square feet. An Express 27 has the exact same square footage in the fore-triangle as a Moore, but because it's a bigger boat, we put a bigger main on it.

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no committee boat, no entry fees, no trophies. One boat decides to be the rabbit for the start of the race, and they call out a course. If you think you beat the boat next to you then you’re the hero, but nobody gives you a trophy for it. We all meet back at the yacht club and lie about how we did.”

Ron said that *Nemo* will probably beat Olson 30s. "It will probably kill everybody going to weather."

“When Rob Grant sold me the boat for what he paid for it he made me promise to do the Delta Ditch together,” said Terry. "And I might do the Trans-Tahoe."

Terry figures *Nemo* will set him back about five times what a good used Express 27 would have cost.

“I told Terry, it’s called boat love. There’s just nothing you can do about it. Don’tcha think when you put it in the water and you sail it with your wife.” Ron inquired of Terry, "you’re gonna forget about the money and just start thinking life’s too short, you might as well do something you like?”

This graphic of Nemo’s gray color scheme also shows her deep, modern rudder and her elegant 108-lb. keel with the 700-lb. bulb.

“I invented Warmboard, a radiant floor heating system,” said Terry. "Thank God for that or I couldn't afford this whole thing. I came to Santa Cruz in ’77 with the idea that I was going to build a boat for myself. I figured I should work for a boat builder and learn how to do it rather than hack it up like an amateur. I worked for Ron for three years, then I started Alsberg Brothers Boatworks. I built 268 boats and don't have one now. I figured, I came here to build a boat for myself, I should have one. That was a dream for 40 years. Originally I wanted a cruising boat. Then I started understanding ULDBs and got into racing boats. Of all the boats I built, the 27 is my absolute favorite. It's just the most fun to sail."

"When I first came here it was right in the heyday of sailing. The yacht club was full of people. There'd be 100 boats out on the water on racing weekends. Bill Lee, Ron Moore, George Olson, John Josephs with Wilderness boats, Alsberg Brothers, and Larry Tuttle — there were six of us in this huge boat-building scene. The fastest boats were being built here in little Santa Cruz. And now Ron's building this boat here. It's a nice cherry on top of the sundae."

"I just got a call," said Ron. "A guy wants a new Moore 24..."

Right over a cyclone fence from Moore Sailboats on Grove Street in Watsonville is Dave Wahle’s boatyard, home of Wyliecat Yachts, where another new boat, the partially-built prototype Wyliecat 40, awaits a buyer or investor. We’ll have more on that design in a future issue of *Latitude 38*. — chris

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FAVORITE DESTINATIONS

When you get out on the water with no particular agenda, do you tend to fall into the same old patterns? You know, like beating up to the Golden Gate Bridge, running down the Cityfront, and perhaps doing a lap around Angel Island. We'll admit that by most standards this daysail game plan would be hard to beat. But since we're strong advocates of creative boat use, we'd like to remind you that the Bay Area, while ideally laid out for daysailing, also offers all sorts of options for lunch-stop anchoring, overnighting, weekending and gunkholing — some of which you may not know about.

So climb aboard and let us take you on a thought-provoking spin around the Bay and beyond. Along the way we'll do our best to inspire you to use your boat — or one that you have access to — in more creative ways than just doing a leisurely spin around the Central Bay, or racing around the buoys.

Taking a Break for a Change of Pace

We realize that once you get all the sails up and drawing well on a nice breeze, it's hard to talk yourself into dousing them again just to make a lunch stop. But doing so can add a whole other dynamic to the overall experience, especially if you've got new inductees to the sport of sailing aboard. We'd guess they would probably enjoy a little mid-cruise tranquility to balance out the trip, rather than spending three or four straight hours blasting along with spray flying and the rail buried. And they'll enjoy the pit stop even more if the place you choose for a respite is lush and beautiful.

Prime Pit Stops of the Central Bay

The following are some suggestions from readers, as well as from our own experiences.

"For a lunch hook, we have enjoyed either the east side of Angel Island in the `wind hole', or Paradise Cove, which lies a little north of Raccoon Strait," says Candy Morganson. By wind hole, we assume she means that in typical spring and summer conditions, most of Angel Island's eastern shore is in the lee of the island. It can be downwind snotty on the Cityfront with winds in the high 20s, while on the backside of Angel Island it's calm as a lake and warm enough to strip down to shorts and a T-shirt.

You do need to stay clear of the Quarry Point ferry docks back there, but otherwise most of the backside is fine for a midday lunch or siesta stop. (Needless to say, check your charts to familiarize yourself with bottom contours.)

Toward the north end of the island is China Cove, adjacent to the historic North Garrison immigration station. It's a cozy little spot for lunch, but be sure you drop your hook clear of the underground cables. (Signs alert you to their location.)

Of course, every Bay sailor knows about Angel Island's Ayala Cove, on the northwest side of the island. Its day-use guest slips and overnight moorings make it one of the most popular stopover choices in the Bay at any time of year.

Even in midsummer, on a weekday at Ayala Cove you can sometimes have the whole anchorage to yourself.
Jeffrey Mount urges sailors who are looking for a change of pace to check out Coyote Creek inlet. "It's as far south as you can go in the Bay," says Jeffrey. "It has the best-bird watching anywhere and complete solitude. It's tricky for deep-draft boats, but otherwise easy to explore out of Westpoint Harbor in Redwood City, the best new-ish marina in the South Bay."

We have to admit, that's a new one to us, so we'll have to check it out for ourselves one of these days.

Back on Marin County's eastern coastline, about an hour's sail north of Paradise Cove, is one of Latitude reader Mark Wheeles' favorite spots: China Camp State Park, a quiet corner of lower San Pablo Bay where you'll feel as though you're a million miles from the Cityfront. Its significance as a former Chinese-American shrimp-fishing village not only earned it state-park status, but it's also on the National Register of Historic Places.

Near-shore waters are shallow, so you need to anchor out a ways and, of course, if you want to explore ashore you'll need a dinghy, kayak or paddleboard. But it's certainly worth the effort. Poking around the late-1800s waterfront buildings will transport you to a bygone era when many different types of Bay Area fisheries were prolific. In addition to the waterside village, there are picnic tables and barbecues on a grassy knoll overlooking the anchorage, and miles of hiking trails wind through the adjacent hills.

Overnighting On the Hook
If your shoreside exploring inspires you to linger overnight, China Camp is a fine place to do so, as it's a long fetch from the shipping channel, and therefore less rolly from ferry and ship wakes than the backside of Angel Island and elsewhere. But even here you'll need to anchor carefully, as the direction that your boat lies will reverse with the current every six hours or so, unless the wind is very strong — which it rarely is back there.

"Paradise Cove is good for an overnight too," advises Candy. "But it can be a bit rolly until the ferry boats quit for the day, and tide changes can be disconcerting in the middle of the night. It can sound like surf as the current swooshes by your boat. Holding tends to be good in gooey mud."

By contrast, in Ayala Cove big wakes and changes in current are practically a non-issue, as the protocol there is to moor bow-and-stern between neighboring mooring balls.

Although it lies right along the Cityfront, San Francisco's Aquatic Park is one of the Bay's most overlooked anchorages. It's true that motorboats are not allowed, but small-boat sailors make an annual pilgrimage to China Camp, one of the most historically fascinating spots along the shoreline.
allowed, probably due to the superhuman swimmers whose clubs are based there. But most sailors don’t realize that a sailboat can use its engine when anchoring and getting underway. You can also beach a dinghy there — but be sure to lock it — in order to explore the festive atmosphere of Fisherman’s Wharf, Pier 39 or Ghirardelli Square. (You do need to arrange a permit in advance from the harbormaster: 415-859-6807.)

It’s easy to let your guard down and wind up in the mud.

Guest Docks Make it Easy
San Francisco Bay’s typically rowdy conditions produce sailors that are often regarded as being more competent all-around mariners than those from less-windy homeports. That said, though, because most Bay sailors are marina-based, many are almost completely unfamiliar with anchoring. If that sounds like you, no worries. There are plenty of options in the Central Bay and beyond for overnighting dockside with enticing amenities ashore.

Among the most obvious choices are: Oakland’s Jack London Square, which offers shopping, restaurants and live music venues; San Francisco’s South Beach Marina, where you can stage a cockpit tailgate party in advance of taking in a Giants game next door at AT&T Park; Pier 39, with its arcades, restaurants and aquarium; as well as Sausalito’s Schoonmaker Marina, which is walking distance from the heart of the downtown strip, which bustles with restaurants, art galleries, tourist shops, and, of course, the No Name Bar. All these marinas maintain transient guest slips.

Berkeley Marina is another one to consider, especially when one of your favorite bands is performing up the hill at Cal Berkeley’s Greek Theater. A public bus or taxi will get you there and back.

Rivers Ripe for Exploring
"In your coming article on 'where to go,'" asks Marc Johnstone, "can you please describe in detail how to get to Napa and Petaluma without running aground?"

"We’ve never actually had that problem, but we always try to stay on the outside of river bends where the deepest water tends to flow, and keep an eagle eye on both our GPS track and the rivers’ nav aids. Truth is, though, meandering up either of these lazy rivers is so calming that it would be easy to let your guard down and wind up in the mud.

The best advice, however, is probably to plan your trip carefully with the tides and currents. Depending on where you start from, you may have to leave the Central Bay on an ebb, in order to arrive at the river mouth on a flood — which, of course, provides higher water. Of the two, the Napa is probably a wee bit trickier, so Google Napa Valley Marina and check out their blow-by-blow instructions.

Even more important than keeping mud off your keel, though — as reader Tim Dick will confirm — is keeping your masthead from whacking a bridge. (Heights are always marked on charts, of course.) "A key criterion when replacing my First 42s7 was that the new boat had to be able to pass beneath the bridges over our three great rivers: the Sacramento, Napa and Petaluma. The ruling (MHHW) air draft is 70 feet in each case, which seems like it’s not a coincidence.

"The idea of not being able to dawdle slowly up the Petaluma River on a lazy Saturday — the closest we’ll get to the salubrious French canals — is too awful to contemplate. Likewise being able to..."
IN THE CENTRAL BAY & BEYOND

Strait from our home base at Sausalito Yacht Club. The cruise through San Pablo Bay is filled with fascinating history that remains vibrant today.

“I recommend you take the time to read up on the history of the sites in Tiburon and points north, as it makes the trip more interesting. Entering the Petaluma River (actually, River and estuary) through the rotating railroad bridge near Highway 37 reminds us of entering the locks on a canal trip through France. Sailing upriver past farms and vineyards adds to that sense.

“Once in downtown Petaluma, there is a lot to see and do. Restaurants (Central Market is our favorite), antique stores, shops, theaters, live music, hiking trails and then just hanging out at the dock. The dock facilities are good and Petaluma Yacht Club is at the top of the gangway, and worth a visit.

Mast height is limited to 70 feet to get under one of the bridges and at low tides the water can be thin, so a little planning is needed. Certainly this is worth a two- or three-day visit, which we do every year.”

Larry Moraes agrees: “Our favorite Bay Area destination has to be the Petaluma Turning Basin in downtown Petaluma.

“The trip begins with a cruise up through Raccoon

On the way up the Petaluma River you’ll pass Gilardi’s Lakeville Marina, a tranquil spot with a splendid sunny climate.

bask in the ‘pretend Caribbean’ of the Delta and Tinsley Island just has to be available. And how can one live without being able to cruise right into Napa wine country to hit a concert at the Uptown Theater? Just ask yourself, why are you really owning that boat?”

As Tim alludes, the Bay Area’s rivers offer a whole new world of possibilities for sailors who’ve been stuck doing laps around the Central Bay.

You could explore the meandering waterways of the Delta for weeks and not see it all. But it kinda sounds like fun, doesn’t it?

The Bay Area’s rivers offer a whole new world of possibilities.

You can’t beat a day on the water in the Central Bay. Benicia Marina is a very friendly place, where you can often find guest dockage.

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“The trip begins with a cruise up through Raccoon...”

You could explore the meandering waterways of the Delta for weeks and not see it all. But it kinda sounds like fun, doesn’t it? In recent years downtown Napa got a modern facelift. The new guest dock is great, but overnighting is not allowed.
FAVORITE DESTINATIONS

www.cityofpetaluma.net and call 707-778-4303 in advance to arrange a bridge opening time.)

The city of Napa was also laid out along a river, of course, but until recent redevelopment you wouldn’t say the river was actually the focal point of the downtown layout. These days, there is a nice guest dock right in the city center that sailboats can get to if their draft is moderate. But sadly, overnighting is not allowed.

So after docking there and exploring downtown, the best options are to head back downriver and overnight at the Napa Valley YC (advance arrangements required: 707-252-3342), or to the friendly Napa Valley Marina, which is literally surrounded by vineyards, and usually has side-tie space available (707-252-8011).

As much fun as you can have on those two North Bay rivers, however, they are minor trickles compared to the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers of the California Delta. As we’ve seen by the enthusiastic participation in our annual Delta Doo Dah rallies, hundreds of Northern California sailors absolutely love poking around in the seemingly endless Delta waterways.

Not far from the Carquinez Bridge, where the mighty Sacramento enters San Pablo Bay, lies Benicia, a favorite stopover for avid sailor Goose Gossman: “Benicia is overlooked, uncrowded, and friendly. Winds are mellow in the Carquinez Strait in fall, winter and spring. ‘I was on the water yesterday, testing my Potter mini-motorsailer ReGale’s new bilge-keel foils, and saw Joe Miller in his dink giving a standing welcome to some cruise-ins from Vallejo. Meanwhile, Chuck on Warwhoop was spinnaker sailing solo towards Mt. Diablo’s rendition of Hawaii, and a pretty young lady was paddling her ‘one-blue-eye-and-one-brown-eye’ pup around the marina.

‘We walked dog-friendly First Street where my wife and I had a piece of the best carrot cake ever at a new bakery/cafe called Dinah’s, just a couple of blocks from the marina. ‘And, best of all, the fog rarely makes it past the Carquinez Bridge.”

Noble Brown reports, ‘The Vallejo YC visited the Stockton YC, which is primarily a powerboat club. It’s a beautiful club, the people were very gracious, and they...
came out and took photos, as if they had never seen ten sailboats at their club before. I would recommend that other sailors check it out for themselves."

"As for the Delta," says Candy Morganson, "Three River Reach used to be nice until the 'aquarium' weed and hyacinth started taking over. Since we haven't been up the river for a few years, I can't say how bad it is now."

"I liked the Outrigger on Threemile Slough," suggests Paul Dixon. "You pull up, take a shower, wash your clothes, have dinner and a couple of drinks, then crash on your boat! New owners Dennis and Heidi are increasing the hours, and bartender Lisa is super-nice. They didn't even charge me, since I wasn't using power."

"I went up last year between jobs in June, and it was easy since my (Redwood City-berthed) 1947 Folkboat Stella was at Fred Andersen's dock in Richmond. I rode the tidal current up to Bethel Island, and was doing 12 knots over the ground at Benicia."

With the suggestions from readers and the experiences of Latitude staffers we could probably write a book about the waters of San Francisco Bay and the Delta — and, of course, it would have to include the time we smacked the company ketch, Big O, into a Carquinez Bridge tower after getting caught in a powerful eddy.

Better yet, though, we'd prefer that you go out and create your own memories — happy, pain-free memories — while exploring Bay Area rivers, gunkholes and rarely used anchorages. And when you have a particularly memorable experience, we invite you to drop us a line and tell us all about it.

— andy
"Not again!" I groaned. "Why, oh why does it always have to be on my dock?"

The offending object was a perfect specimen of dog poop. It had happened before. I had complained to the Harbor-master, but there were several liveaboard dogs on the dock, and without positive evidence linking the calling card to the dog who left it, marina management was powerless to take action.

I uncoiled a few turns of hose, turned on the faucet, and began to wash the offending material back into the Bay when a shrill female voice caught me all standing.

"Max!" the voice shouted. "What are you doing? Stop!"

It was Lee Helm, graduate student in naval architecture and a known tree-hugger. Instantly a long train of thought flashed through my consciousness. Sure, I guess if I were a good citizen I should walk all the way up to the marina park, find a doggy poop bag dispenser that wasn't empty, bring a bag all the way back down to my boat, collect the poop, and walk all the way back to the trash bins to get rid of the thing and then all the way back to my boat. But it wasn't my dog, and it wasn't my dog's poop. Furthermore, as various so-called boating advocacy lobbying groups used to insist back in the day when they were fighting hard against laws prohibiting overboard discharge, it's a tiny bit of pollution compared to industrial and municipal sources, and a tiny bit of pollution compared to other biological sources like sea lions, birds and fish. It is "to diaper a seagull," as one particularly memorable editorial in a long-gone sailing magazine summed it up.

All this in the fraction of a second between hearing Lee Helm's voice demanding I stop, and the stream of water knocking most of the dog poop into the harbor.

It was all gone and the dock was clean again by the time Lee had run down the gangway and reached my berth.

"Gosh, Lee," I started to explain, feigning involuntary carelessness, "since this isn't from my dog, it didn't even occur to me that I should have disposed of it properly. It's annoying enough just finding it here next to my boat."

"No, Max, that's, like, not the point," said Lee, catching her breath. "You need to save a sample. Then the marina can figure out who done it."

"Really?" I said. "They can do that?"

"For sure," Lee informed me. "I just read this in the new regulations for liveaboards: If you have a dog, you have to submit a saliva sample to the marina office. They send the samples of all the dogs to a commercial DNA lab, where the results stay on file. Then, when you find something like you found just now, you send in a sample and they match it to one of the known dogs."

"I didn't think the marina had the budget for that kind of thing," I said.

"It's not expensive," Lee informed me. "There are a few competing companies that offer the service — and they have great names: There's PooPrints, there's Mr Dog Poop, and there's DogPile ID. That last one is run by the U.C. Davis Veterinary Genetics Lab. It's really intended for condo complexes and residential associations where they have some control over most of the dogs in the nabe. But, like, with a marina, with all the docks behind gates, it's a finite set. We know exactly which dogs are suspect."

"How do I buy in?" I asked. "It would be worth a lot not to find this stuff on my dock every so often."

"No cost to the berth, at least not directly," said Lee. "The marina pays about $30 or $35 for each dog that it adds to the DNA database. They make this a requirement of being a liveaboard with a dog. It's just a saliva swipe, easy to do. Then, when there's an offending pile, you ask the marina office for a sample bag, put in a small amount of poop, and they send it off to the lab. Cost of the DNA match is between $50 and $150, depending on which vendor they use."

"The dog's human was one of the more congenial liveaboards on our dock."

"And once the offending dog is nailed," I added hopefully, "the owner is evicted from the harbor?"

"Possibly," said Lee.

"On the other hand," I said after thinking it through for a second, "I imagine the first positive match and a warning usually puts an end to the problem, since denial won't work anymore."

Meanwhile, a large black lab was pulling its human, whom I recognized as one of my liveaboard dock neighbors, rapidly down the dock in our direction. "Suspect number one?" Lee whispered.

"Could be," I said as the dog abruptly stopped at my dock finger, ran right over to the spot that I had just cleared of the deposit, and gave the dock surface a very careful sniff.

"You think that dog knows something that we don't?" I asked the owner, trying not to sound too accusing. After all, the dog's human was one of the more congenial liveaboards on our dock, a good neighbor and a frequent volunteer at the yacht club.

"Fido hasn't been off the boat all morning," she answered, pulling the dog back to the main walkway by its leash. "But that nose doesn't miss a trick, so something interesting was there recently."

"Yup," I confirmed. "Third time this month. A real steamer..."

"We have an Astroturf pad on the foredeck," explained the liveaboard, "so even in a potty emergency, the poop is pretty much under control. I do have my suspicions about who the offender might be, though."
EVERY DOG HAS ITS DNA

“How did you get your dog to start using the Astroturf?” asked another one of my dock neighbors who stopped by to pet Fido and join the conversation. He was not a liveaboard, but he told us that he had a dog, and that he had to harbor-hop up and down the coast because the dog absolutely refused to use any of the onboard facilities, regardless of incentives or punishments.

“He once held it for 19 hours going up the coast from Morro Bay to Monterey,” he said. “But he’s a smart dog, and now he just refuses to eat or drink on the boat.”

“What’s the secret?” I asked. “The smell,” suggested the woman with the black lab. “You have to get another dog to pee on the pad first, because they like to go where another dog has gone before. That’s a difficult enough assignment, actually, but there’s a lot of good advice on the Web about how to do this.”

“I’ll try almost anything,” he replied. “I can’t sail off to the South Seas until my dog learns to do it on board. And I can’t sail in very strong wind either, because when the boat leans over, my dog starts skidding around on his claws. So we end up using the motor a lot.”

“When the skipper is nervous, the dog is nervous,” observed the black lab’s human after the would-be ocean voyager was out of range. “When a dog relaxes, the pads on its paws are very good at nonskid.”

“No, it’s not that,” said Lee. “It’s where Paul Sperry got the idea for the non-skid herringbone pattern in the original Topsider boat shoe?” I asked. “Back in 1920-something?”

“Fact check!” exclaimed Lee, pulling out her phone. “Hey, it’s true!” Lee announced with some surprise, after only a few seconds of Internet browsing. “Except it was 1935, not in the 20s. According to the Sperry website, that is.”

The dog owner bent down and extended her hand, which the black lab took as an invitation to shake hands. This gave her a chance to examine her dog’s paw pads in detail.

“I don’t really see a Topside sole,” she said. “But it does have little ridges.”

“Wikipedia confirms it too,” Lee added after a few more taps on her phone. “And Sperry’s dog was a cocker spaniel named Prince.”

“Well, then, thank you Prince,” I said as I looked down at my Topsider moc-casins.

After thousands of years of selective breeding, some dogs actually like ‘messing about in boats’. “How did you get your dog to start using the Astroturf?” asked another one of my dock neighbors who stopped by to pet Fido and join the conversation. He was not a liveaboard, but he told us that he had a dog, and that he had to harbor-hop up and down the coast because the dog absolutely refused to use any of the onboard facilities, regardless of incentives or punishments.

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“Well, then, thank you Prince,” I said as I looked down at my Topsider moc-casins.

“Sailing is way safer offshore, with nothing to hit and a lot less stuff to hit you.”

“I still had the hose in my hands, so I gave the dock a few extra high-pressure squirts to try to wash away the smell, hoping to make my dock less attractive to another dog for more of the same.

“I wonder what else they can tell you from a dog’s DNA,” I thought out loud. “I imagine they can send you a nice pie chart sorting out which breeds your mutt is made of, sort of a dog version of 23andMe.”

“39andMe,” corrected Lee. Dogs have 39 chromosome pairs. Humans only have 23.

“That’s why they have so much more common sense than we do,” I suggested. “It explains why they have to be selectively bred for thousands of years, just to get them to like sailing.”

— max ebb
**Record Three Bridge Fiasco**

There’s no question that the Single-handed Sailing Society’s Three Bridge Fiasco is the most popular yacht race in the West, if not on the entire continent. The real mystery remains: How can such a fiasco be so popular? Consider everything it has going against it: It’s in January. Only one or two people are allowed on each boat. The winter currents on San Francisco Bay often overpower the breezes. Unless there’s a big storm of course. The starting area is a mishmash crowd of 300+ boats ranging in size from 19 to 65 feet, with one, two or three hulls. The pursuit format starts don’t occur at orderly five-minute intervals; rather boats start at seemingly random times in random directions. Is that boat in your way racing, or can you politely request that they clear the line? Who knows.) The marks are defined in the Sailing Instructions, but not the order or direction of rounding.

Bill Erkelen's (hanging out on the trap) and Keith Stahnke filled in and were given a boot to wear and told not to sail. "Keith Stahnke filled in and sailed very well! Keith is a good sailor who knows San Francisco Bay better than most and was very fun to sail with," said Erkelen.

"The overall plan was to choose a direction that kept us moving. Starting midfleet with plenty of bigger boats behind puts a demand on avoiding any prolonged transitions.

"The wind looked light but solid going up toward the Golden Gate Bridge, so we started off in that direction. We went out to the best ebb after the start, then took a fat layline into shore to get around Blackaller. We then looked down toward Gate Bridge, Red Rock just south of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, and Yerba Buena/Treasure Island at the Bay Bridge — but not necessarily in that order!

With the race date, January 30, falling near a half moon, the currents were less overpowering than is often the case. But, after a couple of rainy months, the ebb was more persistent than predicted. Breeze at the start came and went repeatedly, favoring some and frustrating others. A vast wind hole stretched from the Richmond Bridge south past Southampton Shoal, trapping many a competitor. Red Rock was nicknamed 'Red Lot.' "Oh, I see: 'Red' means stop," quipped one Moore 24 sailor. Then a lively westerly, in the teens, came up on the Cityfront in the afternoon.

The Wylie Wabbit Jack, which had started at 9:49, returned to GGYC first, at 2:09. The last finisher, the Catalina 30 Bay Wind, made it around with almost an hour to spare before the 7 p.m. deadline.

*Jack’s Bill Erkelenens had a last-minute change of sailing partner. His wife Melinda broke her foot a few days before the race and was given a boot to wear and told not to sail. "Keith Stahnke filled in and sailed very well! Keith is a good sailor who knows San Francisco Bay better than most and was very fun to sail with," said Erkelen.

"The overall plan was to choose a direction that kept us moving. Starting midfleet with plenty of bigger boats behind puts a demand on avoiding any prolonged transitions.

"The wind looked light but solid going up toward the Golden Gate Bridge, so we started off in that direction. We went out to the best ebb after the start, then took a fat layline into shore to get around Blackaller. We then looked down toward Fort Mason and it still looked light, so we went toward Red Rock."

They sailed low under spinnaker to keep their options open to go through Raccoon Strait, the north side of Angel Island, or past Point Blunt, the south side. "We started seeing building breeze in Richardson Bay, so we went pole forward and up toward the new wind. It filled, and we jib-reached into and through the Strait." They stayed low along the shore of Angel Island before cutting across to the Marin side and drifting through the brief wind shadow of Tiburon’s final point. A jib fetch to Red Rock followed.

The last of the boats ahead sailed high above the layline, getting lee-bowed by the ebb. We sailed low to reach the cone of Red Rock and then sailed up once in the cone. The boats ahead that sailed high needed to go bow-down to reach the Rock, and the ebb pushed them down behind us. We got a lucky puff to get around Red Rock and had a light-air kite reach with ebb behind us to the Slot. We stayed in the channel for max ebb. The boats behind that went high got stuck under Point Blunt, and the boats that sailed low had to wait a long time for the filling wind from the southwest." Jack found only a small hole behind Yerba Buena Island, then beat up to the cone of Alcatraz, across to San Francisco’s Gashouse Cove, then on to the finish.

Sailing with Melinda, Bill had previ—
ously won this race in 2005 with the Hobie 33 Enzo, in 2007 with the Moore 24 Tortuga, and in 2008 with the Mumma 30 The Word. “My father, Bill Erkelens Sr., won overall in 1999 with Mark Rudiger as crew on E-2, a C-Class cat; and in 2003 with Rudiger on Freedom, a D-cat.”

Coming in at 2:21 was the first single-hander. Jonathan ‘Bird’ Livingston on the Wylie 39 Punk Dolphin. Punk also went clockwise starting with Blackaller. “No rocket science: The Bird observed where the wind was blowing so we followed,” writes Livingston. “The Punk kicked out the jams and sniffed out the shifts. The Punk then gutted me into a peel to the half-ounce chute after Red Rock when the pressure faded, and that kept us in the game.

“The post-race cold beer numbed my sore-assed body — another Three Bridge — another three ibuprofen and another three days of recovery!”

Bill Erkelens summed it up: ‘I love the race and look forward to next year’s!” See Bill Erkelens summed it up: “I love the three days of recovery!”

www.sfbaysss.org
Berkeley YC Midwinters

Oh my goodness, what a beautiful weekend! On Saturday, February 13, we started on time, the buoys all stayed where we put them, there was sunshine, and the water was flat and sparkly. The flood kept potential over-earlies at bay and the wind was about 5-8 knots from the WSW — where it belongs, by the way. All 51 boats that started finished. Elapsed times ranged from one hour 17+ minutes to just under two hours. And it was warm. What more could anyone want?

OK, so the world isn’t perfect. At our appointed hour on Sunday, there wasn’t enough wind to start the 35 boats that came out, so the ‘cat-in-the-hat’ was deployed. There was sunshine and a tiny hint of wind from a northerly direction. All the weather prognosticators were essentially in agreement — the wind would come from the north.

Sure enough, in about 30 minutes enough of this breeze filled in and the sequence was started. And then, 10 minutes later — all stopped. The second division (the Express 27s) started drifting backward and the next division wasn’t going to be able to start, so — bang, bang — we stopped the agony. Then, in another half hour a new little breeze arrived and we got the remaining five divisions away, choosing a short course because of the flukiness. Naturally, the wind picked up, there was a huge left shift in the direction, and the elapsed times shrank to less than an hour of racing. Reminding us, yet again: Never bet against a westerly!

Special thanks to those boats that showered the Race Committee with yummy treats: Dura Mater, Critical Mass, Hang 20 and Hoot.

Valentine’s Day weekend concluded the 2015-2016 BYC Midwinters. Congratulations to the 39 trophy winners! Your next date with destiny is February 28. That day’s Trophy Winners Race will be followed by the trophy presentation at BYC.

— bobbi tosse
Andy Macfie, 8; 3) Baleineau, Olson 34, Charlie Brochard, 17. (10 boats)

**DIVISION C** — 1) **Phantom**, J/24, John Guilford, 5 points; 2) **Shark on Bluegrass**, Olson 25, Tom Nemeth, 8; 3) **Stink Eye**, Laser 28, Christine Weaver/Jonathan Gutoff, 16. (10 boats)

**DIVISION D** — 1) **Ypso**, Cal 2-27, Tim Stapleton, 5 points; 2) **Achates**, Newport 30, Robert Schock, 10; 3) **Mad Max**, Santana 22, Megan Dwyer, 11. (6 boats)

**EXPRESS 27** — 1) **Motorcycle Irene**, Will Paxton, 4 points; 2) **Wile E. Coyote**, Dan Pruzan, 14; 3) **Eagle**, Ross Groelz, 18. (18 boats)

**CAL 20** — 1) **Can O’Whoopass**, Richard vonEhrenkrook, 7 points; 2) **Raccoon**, Jim Snow, 8; 3) **Green Dragon**, Marcus Choy, 14. (8 boats)

**BYC SUNDAY MIDWINTERS (3r, 0t)**

DIVISION 1 — 1) **Hoot**, 5 points; 2) **Ragtime**, J/90, Trig Liljestrand, 6; 3) **Yankee Air Pirate**, Olson 30, Donald Newman, 9. (5 boats)

DIVISION 2 — 1) **Frog Lips**, J/24, Richard Stockdale, 4 points; 2) **Towirralional**, Moore 24, Anthony Chargin, 6; 3) **Evil Octopus**, J/24, Jasper Van Vliet, 9. (6 boats)

DIVISION 3 — 1) **Two-Step**, Santana 20, Mark Werder, 6 points; 2) **Mad Max**, 7; 3) **Raven**, Santana 22, John Hopkins, 7. (4 boats)

EXPRESS 27 — 1) **Motorcycle Irene**, 3 points; 2) **Dianne**, Steven Katzman, 6; 3) **Salty Hotel**, John Kearney, 12. (6 boats)

**DOUBLEHANDED** — 1) **Sparrowhawk**, Moore 24, Bill Gutoff/Scott Cyphers, 6 points; 2) **Wild1**, Flying Tiger 10, John Lymborg/Hen Williams/Cian Walsh, 6; 3) **Fugu**, Wilderness 30, Chris Case/Chris Hughes, 9. (8 boats)

**SINGLEHANDED 1** — 1) **Ragtime**, J/90, Bob Johnston, 3 points; 2) **Grace**, Beneteau First 300 Spirit, Jindrich Dokonal, 11; 3) **JouJou**, Capo 30, Thomas Boussie, 14. (8 boats)

**SINGLEHANDED 2** — 1) **Critical Mass**, Mancebo 24, John Dukat, 3 points; 2) **Rock On**, Olson 25, Tom Cavers, 6; 3) **Dura Mater**, Cal 2-27, Jackie Philpott, 12. (5 boats)

Full results at www.berkeleyyc.org

**Tiburon’s Mott Midwinters**

Races one and two of Tiburon YC’s Bob and Ester Mott Midwinter Series were held on a delightfully warm Saturday, February 6, under mostly sunny skies and light wind conditions. Volunteer race committee Rob Hutchinson served up a four-leg, 3.4-mile course that, combined with the mild north breeze, provided for an exciting downwind start.

Lon Woodrum’s Olson 25 Lion was the first boat around all three course marks, and went on to win the race by almost 20 minutes on corrected time. Ian Matthews’s C&C 29-1, Siento el Viento, overcame a late start to claim second.

Race two was held under the lessening breeze of the afternoon, and the RC wisely sent the fleet on Course 1 reverse, a shorter 2.3-mile windward-leeward course. Mariellen Stern’s custom 26-ft wooden sloop Cinnamon Girl got out ahead of the fleet on a good start, but again Lion pulled away on the beat to the windward ISO mark and never looked back, earning line honors and a corrected-time win in race two. Siento el Viento was again the second boat across the finish line, but this time it was just nine seconds on corrected time.

The third and final race of the series will be held on Saturday, March 5. Race registration is open to non-members. The single-race entry fee is only $15, and registration is available online at www.jibeset.net.

— cam tuttle
THE RACING SHEET

Perry Cup Finale

What a break in the weather on February 6! The sunny sky was warming, the breeze was 5-8 knots, and Monterey Bay was relatively smooth. Eight Mercurys sailed a double-sausage course finishing downwind in each of the four races. The wind gradually shifted from the north to the west during the day.

Race one had those going on the port tack off the line picking up a nice shift that put them ahead. Doug Baird and Tim Cordrey led the way on both laps.

In race two, Randy Smith and Debbie Newton were hot and stayed on starboard off the line to pick up the changing wind direction. Those who followed them did well.

In race three, Pax Davis and Dave Morris followed Jack and Patti McAleer around the first lap. Rather than going left they stayed in the middle and picked up some wind. Davis won a tight one over the McAleers.

In race four, Mark and Liz Chandler were paying attention to a fleet of FJs that had their own northwest wind. While the rest of the fleet went off the starting line on the starboard tack, the Chandlers went on port tack, picking up the northwest wind. They won by a lot. Baird won the day and the Perry Cup Series.

— pax davis

At the 65th Corinthian Midwinters, the Aotea Team Trophy for the best yacht club team comprised of three entries in three different divisions went to the SFYC team of (left to right) Nick Gibbens’ ‘Shenanigans’ (Express 27), Hank Easom’s ‘Yucca’ (PHRF 3), and Glenn Isaacson’s ‘Q’ (Non-Spinnaker 1).

— mike reed

Doublehanded Farallones in March

The Doublehanded Farallones Race will kick off the Bay Area’s 2016 ocean racing season on March 26. Note that this one does not follow the NorCal ORC requirements and a skippers’ meeting on March 23. Sign up by March 21 to avoid a late fee. See www.sfbama.org.

— latitude/chris

Regattapros Winter One Design (rr, 2r)

J/120 — 1) Chance, Barry Lewis, 5 points; 2) Mr. Magoo, Steve Madeira, 11; 3) Kookaburra, Tom Gremmen, 13, (5 boats)

J/105 — 1) Wonder, Tom Kennelly, 9 points; 2) Godot, Phillip Laby, 10; 3) Roxanne, Charles James, 16; 4) Ultimatum, Peter Collin, Baldwin Miller, 33; 5) Perseverance, Steve & Gregg Kent, 35, (24 boats)

MEGLES 24 — 1) Looper, Duane Yoslov, 6 points; 2) Personal Puff, Dan Hauserman, 10; 3) M1, Ian Collignon, 17, (8 boats)

J/70 — 1) Prime Number, Peter Cameron, 8 points; 2) Rampage, Thomas Thayer, 15; 3) Christine Robin, Tracy Usher, 15, (12 boats)

MOORE 24 — 1) Moorigami, John Siegal, 6 points; 2) Moorietician, Peter Schoen, 11; 3) Twoirrational, Anthony Chargin, 12, (9 boats)

J/24 — 1) Snowjob, Brian Goeprich, 5 points; 2) Froglips, Richard Stockdale, 11; 3) Evil Octopus, Jasper Van Vliet, 12, (6 boats)

Full results at www.jbessel.net

CYC MIDWINTERS (4r, 0t)

IOD — 1) Bolero, Richard & Mark Pearce, 6 points; 2) One Hundred, Paul Zupan, 9; 3) Ariel, Robert Vellingher, 18, (4 boats)

PHRF 1 (<19) — 1) Wicked Sister, 1-rar 36, Richard Courciier, 9 points; 2) California Condor, George, 12; 3) Wind Speed, J/30, Tony Castruccio, 20, (6 boats)

J/105 — 1) Roxanne, Charles James, 5 points; 2) Russian Roulette, Sergey Lubarsky, 10; 3) 007, Justin Hersh, 14, (5 boats)

EXPRESS 37 — 1) Golden Moon, Kame Richards, 4 points; 2) Bullet, Laurence Baskin, 11; 3) Escapade, Nick Schmidt, 16, (5 boats)

EXPRESS 27 — 1) Shenanigans, Nick Gibbens, 6 points; 2) Tequila Mockingbird, Matt Krogstad, 13; 3) Ergo, Chris Gage, 19, (12 boats)

CAL 20 — 1) Raccoon, Jim Snow, 16 points; 2) Just/Em, Ted Goldbeck, 18 3) Can O’Whoopass, Richard von Ehrenkrook, 19, (9 boats)

NON-SPINNAKER 1 — 1) Q, Schumacher 40, Glenn Issacson, 4 points; 2) Sea Ghost, Beneteau First 42, Ron Roberts, 18; 3) Harp, Catalina 38, Mike Mannix, 18, (12 boats)

NON-SPINNAKER 2 — 1) Knarrly Boo, Knarr, Jason Holloway, 15 points; 2) Big Shot, Santana 22, Cameron McCluskey, 22, 6; 3) Zingara, Islander 36, Steve & Jocelyn Swanson, 22, (10 boats)

MULTIHULL — 1) Adrenaline, D-Class cat, Bill Erkelens, 10 points; 2) Wingit, F-27, Amy Wells, 12; 3) SmartRecruiters, Extreme 40, Jerome Ternynck, 14, (3 boats)

Full results at www.cyc.org

THE BOX SCORES

Antrim Class 40, Buzz Blacklett, 12; 3) Racer X, Farr 36, Gary Redelberger, 12, (10 boats)

PHRF 2 (19-89) — 1) Peregrine, J/120, David Halliwill, 5 points; 2) Double Digit, J/111, Gorkem Ozcelebi, 14; 3) Aeolus, J/111, Rob Theis, 18, (15 boats)

PHRF 3 (70-111) — 1) Yucca, 8-Meter, Hank Easom, 7 points; 2) Pain Killer, J/80, Tim Hussell, 9; 3) Another Girl, Alerion Express 38, Cinde Lou Delmas, 14, (16 boats)

PHRF 4 (112-141) — 1) Arcadia, Mull 27, Goddie Nash, 5 points; 2) Magic, Etchells, Laurence Pulgram, 12; 3) Ah!, Santana 35, Andy Newell, 17, (6 boats)

PHRF 5 (>141) — 1) Siento el Viento, C&C 29, Ian Matthew, 11 points; 2) Luna Sea, Islander 36, Dan Knox, 16; 3) Mojo, Ranger 33, Paul Weismann, 20, (7 boats)

SPORTBOAT — 1) Kuai, Melges 24, Daniel Thielman, 10 points; 2) Insolent Minx, Melges 24, Zhenya Krushishkin-Stapanoff, 13; 3) CentoMiglia, Hyung 1ger 10, Mark Kennedy/Heart Prisco, 16, (13 boats)

SF BAY 30 — 1) Heart of Gold, Olson 911S, Joan Byrne, 8 points; 2) Wahoo, Capo 30, Walter
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March, 2016 • Latitude 38 • Page 95
With reports this month on Why Worldwide Chartering Is Trending Upward, an update on the possibilities for Chartering in Cuba, and Charter Notes.

**Yacht Chartering: One of Sailing’s Healthiest Segments**

The publishing group Bonnier Corp., which produces both *Sailing World* and *Cruising World* magazines, recently released an annual report on the current state of the sailing industry called The Sailing Market 2016. Interestingly, one of the most upwardly-trending segments of the entire industry is bareboat chartering. Specifically, the chartering industry can boast its fifth straight year of growth.

The report doesn’t speculate on why the chartering market is so healthy compared to other market sectors — such as boat manufacturing and new boat sales — but we’ve got a few thoughts on the subject. It’s probably safe to say that a vast majority of people who are introduced to sailing are thrilled by it, and would love to take part in some aspect of the sport often if time and money allowed. But with the long hours that many jobs demand these days, and the ever-more-frenetic schedules of kids, many new inductees to sailing are reluctant to buy a boat of their own, for fear they won’t be able to use it often enough to rationalize the expense. And, of course, neither boats nor slips are getting less expensive, not to mention the cost of maintenance, repairs and much-needed upgrades.

But even the most dedicated workaholics need a vacation once in a while, and if they’re even casually into sailing, a bareboat charter makes a whole lot of sense. Sailing vacations are not only active and exhilarating for kids and parents alike, but while raising our own kids we found that charter trips were one of the few times when every family member could honestly say that they were thoroughly enjoying the experience. As a consequence, such adventures are rare opportunities for building lasting memories and family bonding — without your kids even realizing that they are being ‘held captive’ in a relatively small space.

As years go by, and your kids’ lives become more complex and demanding, happy memories from those family charter trips will probably become more precious to parents and kids alike.

So as much as we love the idea of buying a brand-new boat from one of our boat broker buddies — then equipping it with all the latest goodies offered by marine suppliers — we realize that’s not in the cards for everyone. But that’s no reason that you can’t get out on the water for a week or more when vacation time rolls around.

Finally, as you undoubtedly know, you don’t have to fly halfway around the world to enjoy an invigorating — if not life-changing — sailing getaway. If the cost of long-range airfare is a deal-breaker for you, remember that the splendid cruising grounds of the Pacific Northwest are only a short, affordable flight away, and the Channel Islands are accessible from a variety of Southern California charter bases that are less than a half-day’s drive from the Bay Area.

— Andy

**Do You Hear Cuba Calling?**

At the risk of tiptoeing into politics, we have to say that it’s always seemed a bit silly to us that for more than 50 years Americans have been officially restricted from traveling to Cuba, one of our closest neighbors — especially since Canadians, Europeans and the citizens of dozens of other nations can travel there freely.

But if you keep up on national news, you know that big changes are occurring in US-Cuban relations. Following the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two longtime adversaries last summer, a stunning agreement was announced last month that allows direct commercial flights to Cuba from US gateways. Then two weeks later the White House announced that President Obama would be paying a visit to the once-feared socialist republic late this month — the first such presidential visit since Calvin Coolidge traveled to Havana 88 years ago!

As you read this, the five largest American airlines are scrambling to secure routes to Havana, as well as to the island nation’s nine other international airports — including Cienfuegos, where bareboat bases are located. We’re talking 20 scheduled round-trips to Havana daily, and 10 flights daily to each of the satellite airports.

Does this mean we can all pack our seabags and jet off tomorrow to sail the...
unspoiled waters of Cuba? Well, no. Not exactly. Although flight schedules will soon be firmed up, there are still some pesky, government restrictions you have to deal with. The US Department of the Treasury still maintains that the purpose of your visit must fall into one of 10 specific categories that include pursuit of journalistic, religious, educational and humanitarian activities. Sadly, endeavors such as sailing, snorkeling, dancing to spicy salsa music, and swilling rich Havana Club rum are not on the list. The truth is, though, that enterprising sailors have been fudging the rules in order to sail in Cuban waters for decades. For the US government, the key restrictions have to do with the embargo against “trading with the enemy.” That is, as an American citizen you may not engage in any form of commerce with Cuba — at least for now. How did sailors get around this? Typically, they would fly in from somewhere like Mexico or Jamaica and upon arrival ask the Cuban customs agent not to stamp a visa into their US passports. (We've never heard of that request being denied.) In the context of bareboat chartering, the easiest way to obey the letter of the law has been to simply invite along a friend with a Canadian, European or other non-US passport, and have him or her handle all financial transactions. Silly, right?

We'd be willing to bet that the “trading with the enemy” nonsense will be out the window soon. But in any case, if the idea of sailing these unspoiled waters intrigues you, we'd urge you to pay a visit soon, before — we hate to say this — the rampant influences of American commercialism ruin Cuba's unique, 'old-Caribbean' charm.
WORLD

are reportedly well maintained. And be aware also that crewed ‘cabin charters’ — where you share a boat with others — are also offered by at least one company.

For an in-depth look at what you’ll experience on an expedition to Cuba, we’d suggest you delve into Latitude 38’s electronic archives and read: Forbidden Island in our July 2003 issue, and a two-installment World of Chartering report in the June and July 2010 issues (all at www.latitude38.com).

In the meantime, we’ll share some insights gleaned from those articles and conversations with Cuba chartering veterans:

• We’ve been told time and again that most Cubans love Americans and American culture; it’s just that our governments haven’t been able to get along. So you’ll probably find that the folks you meet in town and out on the water are not only friendly, but intensely curious about life in the US.

• As much as Cubans are curious about our culture, not many of them speak English, so having at least one crewmember who speaks Spanish well would be a wise addition to your crew.

• One American pastime that Cubans are completely enamored with, of course, is baseball. One friend of ours took in a game and absolutely loved it — Cubans are passionate about many things in life, but they’re over-the-top about baseball.

• While we’re on the subject of national passions, as you probably know, Cuba’s unique style of music is a national treasure that has always been a point of pride among its citizens. Similarly, red-hot salsa dancing is also a national passion. So save some energy to check out the music and dance venues in the towns you visit — and especially in Havana.

• We’re not sure if this is still true, but in the past visitors have been restricted from bringing in most types of electronic gear. So if you’re in the habit of bringing along such things as a handheld GPS, a VHF and an iPad for navigation, you’d best check with your charter company about current regulations.

• Needless to say, you should expect your movements and activities to be monitored much more closely than they would be in other Caribbean chartering venues. You may be asked to submit a proposed itinerary, and you’ll probably have to check in with officials whenever you get to a new town or village. Although this sounds like a hassle, think of it as an opportunity for cultural exchange. Everyone we know who’s sailed in Cuba was less than thrilled about these check-ins, but most said that the officials they...
Biologists tell us that Cuba’s fisheries are the most prolific in the Caribbean due to careful management. Some even consented to posing for photos and accepting a beer or other ‘cultural exchange’ gift.

- All purchases must be made with one of the two national currencies: the Cuban peso or CUP (referred to as “moneda nacional” in Spanish) or the CUC, known as the convertible peso. Unless things have changed radically lately, you cannot spend US dollars anywhere, and it’s nearly impossible, to change them. So travelers are advised to bring euros instead. (This info may change soon, what with the thaw in US-Cuba relations.)
- Sailors we’ve talked to tell us that navigational hazards are pretty well marked, and unlike some Caribbean sailing venues, in Cuba they follow the “red, right, returning” convention. Be aware, however, that some areas are quite shallow, so you’ll need to practice proper watchkeeping, just as you would anywhere else.
- We’re told that bareboat companies do offer provisions, but resupplying in local markets can be challenging, especially regarding meat products. However, it’s very common for fishermen to offer freshly caught lobster or fish when you see them out on the water.

Hopefully this overview will pique your curiosity enough to take the plunge and give chartering in Cuba a try. And if you do go, we’d love to receive a charter report detailing the highlights of your trip, plus feedback on the charter firm you used.

— andy

Charter Notes

We’ve boxed ourselves into a corner this month, leaving little space for Charter Notes, but we do want to remind you of two things:

First, as you turn the page of your calendar to March, consider that the prime summer chartering season is only three months away. So there’s no time like the present to firm up your plans for a summer sailing getaway. Where to? The so-called Salish Sea of the Pacific Northwest is always a winner, Maine and Chesapeake Bay are well-worth considering, and although it will officially be hurricane season in the Eastern Carib, odds are you’ll have a terrific time there, with smaller crowds than in winter.

Second, we’ll remind all legit charter operators that next month we’ll publish our annual comprehensive list of all Greater Bay Area charter boats (sail only). So send your info soon. (See examples under Chartering at www.latitude38.com.)

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With reports this month from Totem, with the ‘facts on a year of cruising’; from Escapade, with tips for first-timers heading for the Med; from Beach House on Isla Providencia and the San Blas Islands; from Ocean Echo on the passage to Hawaii and life in the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor; from Iolani on completing half a Pacific Loop; and Cruise Notes.

Totem — Stevens 47
Jamie and Behan Gifford and Kids
Cruising Facts From 2015
(Pacific Northwest)

Ten years ago my husband Jamie and I wanted to live minimally and shed things that we didn’t really need. We wanted to live close to nature, sourcing power through the sun and wind, and raise our children — Niall, Mairéin and Siobhán — in tune with the environment. So we took off cruising in August 2008 and have been at it ever since.

To give you an idea of what we — including this girl who grew up sailing with her dad on San Francisco Bay — have been up to, here are the ‘facts’ for our year 2015, during which time we crossed the Indian Ocean and entered the Atlantic:

**Summary Log**
Distance Traveled: 7,988 miles
Days at Anchor: 249
Days Docked: 59
Days Moored: 20
Nights on Passage: 37

**Sailing**
Our best 24-Hour Run: 239 miles, between Durban and Simon’s Town (with an Agulhas Current assist!)
Best Sailing: The west coast of Madagascar. Unparalleled.
Worst Sailing: Everywhere between Malaysia and the Maldives (equatorial calms and the season of no wind).

The Gifford family in Mexico shortly after they started cruising in 2008. That was seven years and something like 34,000 miles ago.

**Geographical**
Countries Visited: Ten in all: Thailand, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, the Chagos, the Seychelles, Comoros, Madagascar, South Africa and Lesotho.
Harbors and Anchorages Visited: 70
Islands Visited: 52
Deepest Anchorage: 130 ft., at Gaadhoo Island, Hadhdhumatheke Atoll in the Maldives. As per Murphy’s Law, we anchored as the light was fading and a squall was arriving.
Shallowest Anchorage: 12 ft., at Mutsumudu on Anjouan Island in Comoros
Times We Floated the Anchor Chain to Protect the Coral: Three
Most Beautiful Anchorage: Tough call, but Anse Lazio at the north end of Praslin Island in the Seychelles is stunning.

**Cultural**
Most Startling Ethnic/Religious Hatred: Malaysia
Least Ethnic/Religious Strife: the proudly diverse Seychelles
Countries Most Marred by Trash Pollution: five-way tie among Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Comoros.

**Consumables**
Gas: 104 gallons for the outboard and generator
Propane 92 lbs.
Diesel: 489 gallons, mostly used between Malaysia and the Maldives as there was too little wind
Cheese: 84 lbs.

**Crittas**
Whales: We saw humpbacks (Madagascar), sperm (north of Sumatra), and pilot whales (South Africa).
Greatest Heart Rate Accelerator: Getting mock-charged by an African elephant, who herded us a quarter mile down the road in reverse at dusk.

**Best Unmentionable Story**
Pipistrelle on the Reef in Chagos. It was a drama of rescue, repair, camaraderie, lousy seamanship, another rescue, delusion, lies and unfathomably bad behavior. What a story! Wait for the book.

Mostly we’re all grateful for another year living this crazy life afloat, and all the wonder it brings.
— behan 01/15/2016

Readers — Behan is a regular contributor to SAIL and 48° North. She and her family maintain an extremely informative and professional blog at www.sailingtotem.com based on having sailed 34,079 miles as a family.

Escapade — Catana 52
Greg Dorland and Debbie Macrorie
First-Timer’s Guide to the Med (Squaw Valley)

With the value of the dollar having soared against the euro from February 2014 to February 2015, and having since held relatively steady at 1.08 dollars to the euro, there hasn’t been a less expensive time to cruise the Med in many years. As veterans of sailing across the Atlantic, and partway across the Med last year, we offer this first-timer’s guide.

Getting to the Med can be half the fun, and as long as the appropriate weather season is observed, it can be a relatively pleasant sail that results in a great feeling of accomplishment. Boats generally
Regarding weather patterns have become less reliable. Nonetheless, we still try to minimize risk of major storms by voyaging in the 'best season' and by not having to meet artificial schedules. Friends and crew come to the boat, not the other way around. That's very important.

On day two after leaving St. Martin for the Azores our Spectra genoa ripped, leaving us with just the small Solent jib and the huge Code Zero for the front of our boat, and thus a large hole in our sail inventory. By day six it was time to turn toward the Azores, as everyone on the boat had had quite enough of bouncing around 24 hours a day. We caught a day of no wind, so we motored, using precious fuel in an effort to get back up to the receding wind.

Another five days of chasing the light winds brought us to calm waters and just outside our fuel range to reach the Azores. Some patience and a little more light wind got us to the eerie flat calm of the Azores High, at which point we had to motor the last 300 miles to landfall.

So much of the pleasure of cruising under sail is in the great people you meet. During the crossing we stayed in contact with three wonderful Portuguese guys on the very first Catana catamaran ever built. They gave us a rousing welcome as 15 days out of St. Martin, we rounded the point at Flores Island and sailed into the anchorage.

Flores was a little quiet for our crew, so we sailed over to Horta, where seemingly all the crews crossing the Atlantic stop for R&R. A few days in port were enough to get everyone back on the boat for the next leg, a 6½-day half-sail, half-motor to Portugal's beautiful Algarve region. It's the most southwestern point of Europe and the closest to the Azores.

It was quite windy as we neared the Strait of Gibraltar, but the wind immediately shut off once we were inside the Med. We were left with a long motorboat ride to Valencia. All in all, it was about a monthlong trip, including stopovers, from the Caribbean to inside the Med. It could easily turn into two months if anyone was hell-bent on sailing the entire way — as some are.

For example, we hailed a French-owned 35-footer on the way to the Azores. The skipper told us they had already been out 30 days just from the Bahamas! The crew had enough provisions for 60 days, as they planned to "save money" by sailing the entire way.

The Atlantic crossing was long and — to me, at least — boring at times. With the autopilot on there really isn’t much to do other than stand watch. We had a crew of five, so I floated and didn’t have to stand a normal watch. The crew still had three hours on followed by nine.

**About to spend their second season cruising the Med, Greg and Debbie are living out a lifelong dream. It’s not always easy, but it’s worth it.**

---

**Why take a month to sail to the Med? First of all you have the adventure of it. Second, you have the incredibly deep culture of Portugal, Spain, France and Italy. Third, you have destination ‘carrots’ such as, clockwise from lower right, Puerto Soller, Mallorca; Portoferraio, Elba; and Portovenere, Italy.**

leave the Caribbean starting the first of May. In our case we left at the end of May, as one of our crew got tied up at work for an extra two weeks. By then the normally consistent tradewinds had backed off, so we waited another week in order to conserve our fuel for the Azores High. It would turn out to be a prescient move.

The trip across the Atlantic — while being subject to the vagaries of the weather — also depends on the boat you have and your cruising philosophy. A few of the boats that left in early May were caught in an unusual late-season storm south of the Azores, and a number of the crews had to be evacuated by the US and Portuguese navies — who happened to be doing joint exercises in the area. Tragically, a young French girl from one of the boats died of hypothermia.

I think this storm pointed out that many of yesterday’s assumptions regarding weather patterns have become less reliable. Nonetheless, we still try to minimize risk of major storms by voyaging in the ‘best season’ and by not having to meet artificial schedules. Friends and crew come to the boat, not the other way around. That’s very important.

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**Why take a month to sail to the Med? First of all you have the adventure of it. Second, you have the incredibly deep culture of Portugal, Spain, France and Italy. Third, you have destination ‘carrots’ such as, clockwise from lower right, Puerto Soller, Mallorca; Portoferraio, Elba; and Portovenere, Italy.**


hours off.

Needless to say, meals become a focal point of the days. My wife Debbie, a fabulous cook who owned a very popular restaurant in Tahoe for decades, cooked multi-course dinners when the boat wasn’t bouncing around too much. When the going got rough, she pulled something hearty out of the crockpot.

What did we do with so much time on our hands? Pablo, our 21-year-old Spanish student, must have watched all 50 movies we have onboard. Debbie and I each read Tolstoy’s epic *War & Peace*. Lance and Robbie, our other two crew, duked it out for hours on end playing cards. All in all it was a very benign passage, which is not to say it would be next time or for anybody else.

**Staying in Contact / Weather Forecasts.** Once in the Med, we had to figure out the easiest way to get consistent weather forecasts that we could understand, and how to communicate with our friends and each other. Our ‘unlocked’ iPhones took care of both problems. We have had pretty good coverage within a few miles of the coast everywhere we have traveled in the Western Mediterranean. The drawback is in having to get a new SIM card and telephone plan in each country.

If you have a bank account in a European country, you can get a telephone plan that withdraws payments directly from your account. If not, you have to pay higher fees and recharge your phone once a month. To get a bank account, you need proof of residency. While we have a long-term — one year — tourist visa for France requiring a French address, we haven’t been back to Paris (our French address) to set up the account.

So, we are currently using an Italian SIM card that gives us SMS, Internet access and local phone calls. It doesn’t give us foreign calls, but it’s not a problem because we use Internet access to Skype.

Although we use the Internet access every day, we only spend about 35 euros a month on it.

We’re not sure, but Internet access might become more problematic as we enter the Eastern Med this summer.

**Languages are an issue.** Brush up on your college Spanish, French or Italian, as it will really help. Having said that, most everyone in Western Europe speaks English, and nearly everyone is quite helpful. But you are in their country, so in my opinion they are doing us a favor by trying to converse in our language. It has worked out very well for me to thank people for speaking English, and to ask them if I may speak to them in my language. This has been particularly helpful when talking on the telephone.

The only problem is that people are now trying to be so helpful speaking English that you tend to assume they speak English like a native. Not so. There’s a huge difference when talking about different kinds of salami, cheese and wine, and discussing technical problems with your boat.

I find the translation program apps on my phone to be very helpful, but limited. The translations are largely verbatim and come across as disjointed and odd. But they are often all I have had. (I speak very limited French, and Debbie and I are currently taking beginning Italian lessons four times a week.)

When dealing with boat matters, I like to communicate by email, copy the English version of the email into the language translator, translate, and then copy the translation onto the bottom of the email so it arrives in both languages (sort of). Be patient and expect some issues with miscommunication.

I’ll have more next month.

— greg 01/21/2016

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**Beach House — Switch 51**

Scott Stolnitz and Nikki Woodrow

*Isla Providencia/San Blas Islands*

(Marina del Rey)

As we approached Isla Providencia — which belongs to Colombia even though it’s 150 miles off the east coast of the much closer Nicaragua — we were hailed by ‘Mr. Bush’ on channel 16. He is the local agent who handles small craft and is quite famous in the cruising community. He also gives a whole new meaning to ADD.

There are a lot of people with the last name of ‘Bush’ in town, and they are the descendants of former slaves, Spaniards, Puritans, pirates and privateers. Before he became ‘respectable’, even the famous buccaneer Captain Morgan sought refuge here from the various navies that were chasing him. Many things on Isla Providencia and much smaller Isla Catalina are named or nicknamed after Morgan. For example, a split in one of the small mountains is officially known as Split Hill, but is locally referred to as Morgan’s Arse.

We eventually anchored at a lovely, well-protected, shallow spot off Santa Catalina Island, which is connected by a relatively new footbridge to the much larger Isla Providencia. Providencia/ Catalina get an average of 200 cruising boats a year. We were the third of 2016.

For the most part, the people here speak an English-based Creole similar to Belize Kriol or Jamaican Patois, which
means they can talk to each other without your understanding them. Many of the older folks speak ‘The King’s English’, but the younger kids are more likely to speak Spanish.

Providencia has a population of about 6,000, a lot of them young kids. Authorities say that over 800 of the island’s young men — a shockingly high percentage — have been killed, imprisoned or are missing because of involvement in drug smuggling.

We have been having more than the usual beginning-of-the-season teething issues with Beach House, and have been a bit overwhelmed by it. Currently our generator is out, one watermaker is out, and our port engine has two broken bracket bolts. This means our normally triply redundant battery charging system is down to just a single way to charge the batteries.

The engines are still burning a bit of oil, with the starboard worse than the port. The starboard fuel tank has ‘bug’, but fortunately is getting cleaner at the expense of many fuel filters. The new fuel-polishing system wasn’t initially plumbed properly and hadn’t been doing its job, but is now working. We have a few electronic gremlins and a water system gremlin, too, but other than that, everything more or less works fine or will be repaired in Panama before we take off across the Pacific for Australia again.

We rented an ATV and went around the three- by six-mile Providence. With all our stops it still only took about two hours. The diving here is apparently excellent, and the Colombian mainlanders use this as a tropical vacation getaway. Some of the reefs are lovely, and you can motor around the island in plenty of water — inside the reef, which is a real plus. The main town of Isabel can be walked in about 10 minutes. A supply ship comes from the sister Island of San Andreas 40 miles to the SSW. With 40,000 people, San Andreas is much bigger and more commercial.

A great — and huge! — guy named Manfred has been our host here. He helped us get 100 gallons of diesel and a mechanic to sort out our dinghy’s electrical issues. A fisherman by trade, Manfred says water and medical care are the only two big problems on the island, which he says, ‘is otherwise paradise’.

They actually do have enough water; it’s getting it to the residents’ homes that is the problem. They also have a hospital and an X-ray machine, but don’t have any experienced doctors who know how to use the equipment. So when a girl broke her arm the other day, she had to wait overnight to be flown to San Andreas to see a trained doctor.

Webster Archibald is Manfred’s full Christian name, and he’s a descendant of either escaped slaves from Africa or slaves of the pirates who were left here to guard the island. It’s possible that ‘Archibald’ was his great-great-great grandfather’s owner. He’s not sure, but it’s quite fascinating.

Manfred got involved in politics and became a council member to get the 150-meter footbridge built between Catalina and Providencia, as well as some other community projects. Once he’d accomplished his goals, he quit the council saying that all the local politicians were corrupt. What else is new?

Nikki and Scott, taking a break from getting ‘Beach House’ ready for another trip across the South Pacific.
Manfred is charming, entrepreneurial, muscular and hunky-handsome. He's married to a gal from Nicaragua, but still turns the heads of all the young women. He also runs a 'round the island' tour boat, which seems to be packed with young girls. Go figure.

No matter how timed our departure, our trip to Isla Porvenir in the San Blas Islands of Panama was going to take two days and two nights. The first six hours were a bit too hard on the wind, but the wind backed and we sailed pretty much the rest of the way. Crossing the path to the Panama Canal, we figured we’d see a lot of ships, but we didn’t.

The first thing we learned is that there is no way to get cash in the primitive San Blas Islands. As a result, we couldn’t check in with customs and immigration at the airfield. Panama is quite pricey, as it costs us $365 for two people, the boat, and the small Guna Yala Council fee. Given our water shortage due to both watermakers having gone out of service, our stay in the San Blas will be shorter than we’d like. Many cruisers spend weeks, months — and sometimes years — in this 40-by 15-mile area sprinkled with 365 small islands.

The 50,000 or so Guna Yala (or Kuna Yala) who live in the San Blas are an anachronism in the modern world. They are one of the few peoples of Central America who staunchly refused Christianity. The Guna Yalas' religious beliefs include village shamans, and they are known for being very superstitious.

There are three male chiefs of various geographical areas, and one big chief for the entire people. Nonetheless, it’s a matriarchal society, with home life ruled by the women. Only a few speak Spanish or English, and they have a very unusual language of their own. A swastika, which is actually an ancient symbol, is prominent in their flag.

The Kunas’ grandparents fought against the Panamanian government, and the San Blas were declared an independent autonomous region in 1925. The people seem to have a high natural resistance to diseases such as malaria and yellow fever, which killed tens of thousands of Westerners, and they are known for living long lives.

It’s an absolute must to buy some mola cloth from the Guna Yala. Two of the most famous mola artists are Lisa, a transvestite, and Venancio, who is a “master mola maker”. We didn’t meet Lisa, but transvestites are not unusual among the Guna Yala. In many cultures — Tonga and French Polynesia come to mind — if there are too many male children, one is chosen to help in traditional female roles. There is no stigma to sexual orientation in these islands.

The Islands of the San Blas are very much like the Tuamotus of the South Pacific in that everything here is owned by someone. This includes all the land and the ocean surrounding the islands, as well as the fish, the lobster, the conch and even the coconuts. So we technically needed permission to go ashore, but we actually saw few people on shore of whom we could ask permission. Only the Kuna Yala are allowed onshore after 6 p.m., because they are strongly against intermarriage and other foreign influences on their culture.

We wish we could have stayed longer, but we were getting low on water and knew we had boat projects to work on before crossing the Pacific again, so we took off to Portobello and the Panama Canal before we really wanted to.

— scott and nikki 01/09/16

Ocean Echo — Hallberg-Rassy 45
Hellmuth Starnitzky
The Ala Wai Yacht Harbor
(Alameda)

[Editor’s Note: While the following information may be a little dated, we don’t frequently get reports on Hawaii, and we don’t think things have changed much, so we’re publishing it anyway.]

In May 2014, three friends and I completed a 3,118-mile crossing from Puerto Vallarta to Honolulu in 23 days. The sailing was pretty dismal the first week as we had to use the engine at low revs to get from longitude 105W to longitude 120W before we found reliable wind. Once the wind kicked in, it first blew from the NNW, then slowly clocked around the farther west we sailed. By the time we approached the Hawaiian Archipelago, it was out of the ESE and generally blowing at 20 to 28 knots true. Squalls were numerous west of 130W, and they brought gusty winds and rain. Once they passed, they had sucked all the wind out of the area for awhile.

Other than a spell of strong wind and very large seas, the passage was rather uneventful, as nobody got seasick or hurt, and nothing of consequence broke on the boat. We mostly sailed under a double-headsail configuration, with stay-sail to leeward and the genoa poled out to windward. It worked well. My Hydrovane wind-steering gear worked superbly, even in the following winds and large swells, keeping the boat at an apparent wind angle of about 160 degrees. It was really quite remarkable, and a boon for the crew and autopilot.

We did have a period of winds to 36 knots and seas to 20+ feet, brought on by a squash zone between the North Pacific High and a low to the northeast.

A potential problem with the boom

Once the Kuna Yala women bring their molas to your boat, they will wait forever until you buy their work. They have incredible tenacity.
traveling on non-US passports and were slated to fly out at noon.

It was very important that we’d gotten a zarpe, which is the clearance document from Mexico. I thought I’d read that US authorities do not care about foreign exit permits, which is obviously wrong. [Editor’s note: We’ve checked back into the United States at San Diego something like 30 times over the years with our boats, and have never gotten or needed a zarpe from Mexico. Hawaii is different.]

I remember Latitude 38’s lamentations years ago about the difficulty in getting a slip at the Ala Wai Harbor, and getting a slip still is not easy. The waiting list for permanent tenants is long, and the possibilities for temporary moorage are limited. After I’d filled out an application, a physical boat inspection of my boat was conducted at the loading dock to establish that my boat was in compliance with USCG safety regulations and in seaworthy condition. Part of this process is to physically establish the overall length of the boat with a tape measure, then go through the items the USCG prescribes for vessels of her size. After passing the at-the-dock test, a boat is then required to motor out of the harbor to the no. 1 buoy in the entrance channel to demonstrate engine functionality. The assistant harbormaster explained these measures to be necessary to ensure that boats are able to leave port under their own power in case of a tsunami warning.

Once those things were done, I could take possession of a slip on a renewable 15-day temporary permit that was good up to 120 days a year. The Ala Wai has three types of transient slips: what appear to be rather new floating docks in the middle of the basin; older fixed concrete docks along the cityfront; and moorage where the boat is tied to a stern buoy at the breakwater, requiring exit vang attachment was our only boat problem, and resulted in our diverting from our original destination of Hilo on the Big Island to Honolulu. We figured there was a better chance to get repairs in the big city.

Our passage from Puerto Vallarta took longer than we’d anticipated — we only averaged 135 miles a day — and by the time we entered Ala Wai Harbor we had almost no food left. But no one had gone hungry, so the amount of provisions was just about right. We did catch three modest-size fish — one ahi and two mahi-mahi — which provided a welcome change to the menu. We saw no vessels during the last 20 days of the passage.

We arrived at the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor on a Sunday afternoon, so the harbor office was closed. I had been in touch with the port captain’s office by SSB e-mail to arrange for berthing, but was told that slips are handled on a first-come, first-served basis upon arrival — after our filling out an application form and having the boat inspected. Since the docks at Hawaii YC were packed with cruising boats rafted three-deep, and with no slip readily available, we docked across the way at the Waikiki YC. We found a temporary home there for a few days, by which time arrangements were made with the port captain for a temporary slip. The folks at Waikiki YC were most accommodating and gracious in allowing us to use their fine club facilities.

We checked in with Immigration, Customs and Agriculture the first thing the day after we arrived, which was a Monday. The process was easy and efficient, from the first call to let authorities know we had come from another country, to completion of the paperwork and the inspection by the woman from Agriculture. All the officers were professional, polite and quick, which was good, because two of my crew were
and entry via the bow. While no floating dock slip was available, I considered myself lucky to at least have been assigned a fixed concrete dock side-tie, as entry/exit via the bow is not possible on my boat — except by acrobats.

Water comes with the very reasonable slip fee of $22.80 /day for my boat, which including the davits measured in at 50 ft. A security deposit of $75 for dock key and shower card needed to be paid in cash and was refunded by check. The concrete pier where Ocean Echo was berthed was 45 ft. long and three ft. wide — and led to a public street immediately beyond the gate.

Security consisted of an old-fashioned padlock. I was glad I carried a fender board to protect my fenders from the rather rough surface of the concrete and its vertical wooden ‘fenders’, some of which have nail heads and bolt nuts protruding.

Bathrooms from my side of the harbor were a 10-15-minute walk — hardly convenient. Trash could be deposited at the loading-dock dumpster 300 yards or so away, which wasn’t convenient either. There was Wi-Fi. Fortunately, I have a Wi-Fi booster installed on top of the aft radar mast and was able to purchase Internet access from a public service provider.

Electricity, however, has to be arranged directly with the city’s power company, which entails establishing an account (pre-payment on credit card not possible), a physical mailing address for the bills (port captain’s office), and a $20-$35 hookup fee (depending if one wants same-day hookup or can wait for a day or two). The process via phone was quick and easy, although having to do so at all was a hassle.

We stayed at the Ala Wai until June, at which time we set sail for Sitka, Alaska. — hellmuth 10/15/2015

After 3,000 miles of open ocean, the majestic and verdant peaks of the Marquesas are a welcome sight. Even if the anchorages are rolly.

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Iolani — Hughes 48 Yawl
Barry and Sylvia Stewart Stompe
Half-Looped
(Sausalito)

With Latitude’s old friends Barry and Sylvia having completed half of their North Pacific Loop — Mexico, French Polynesia, Hawaii, the Pacific Northwest, and back to Sausalito — we thought we’d pitch a few questions their way. In addition to being very successful racers with their Islander 36 and Hughes 48, they virtually rebuilt the entire boat.

1) Assuming just the two of you did the crossing and trip to Hawaii, are you comfortable with long passages, such as the upcoming one to Alaska?

“We are comfortable doublehandling the passages. We do three-hour rotations from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., and fatigue has not been a problem. Daytime is more casual, but either one of us is always on deck or just ducking below if need be. We did the Nuku Hiva-to-Hilo passage from December 27 to January 13 and only had one bad squall. It blew 45 to 55 knots, so it was lucky we had been sailing with just the jib and jigger. We also had two days of 24-30-knot sustained trades. In the midst of those conditions, we questioned our sanity. But when conditions get nice again, or we make landfall, we love it again. Our 22-day passage from Mexico to the Marquesas was great — except for a couple of days of unpleasant seas near the end. We are hoping Kauai to Vancouver in late May or June is as good a passage.”

2) How often, if ever, did the two of you fly a chute?

“On the way from Mexico, just a couple times, and only during the day. We tried it for a few hours on the way from French Polynesia to Hilo, but gave up as it was fluky and lumpy. With just two crew, who may need to get some chores done or take a nap, it’s not always a top priority to fly a chute. But if the seas are orderly with a long swell, and wind is 10-16 knots, we love to fly the chute.

For example, we had a great six-hour sail between the Marquesas and Tuamotus during which time we flew both the asymmetrical and mizzen staysail. We did the same thing during a 25-mile run inside the atoll at Makemo. We cherished both of those times. When we’ve raced during our cruise — such as at the Banderas Bay Blast — we do fly the spinnaker.”

3) There aren’t that many ketches out cruising any more. What did you like about the rig and not like about the rig?

“You know why they call them ketches? Because they’re always trying to catch up! That’s why we have a yawl. We love our yawl because there are so many possible sail plans. Sparkman & Stephens, who designed our boat, primarily did sloops and yawls, but not many ketches.

One downside of a yawl is the extra expense for rigging and sails. A second is that there isn’t much room for the ‘Jungle Gym’ aft. You know: dinghy davits, solar panels, engine hoist, windvane, radar, surfboard holder, antenna array, fishing rod holders with cleaning station, wind generators, and all the other gadgets that slow a sailboat down. Although we did put some of that stuff on Iolani’s mizzen mast. Sylvia’s answer, which follows, is better.”

“We love our yawl rig because the jib and jigger combination is great, not only
Whitehawk told us the hair-raising tale from 10 years ago of having his chain wrap during a 50-knot blow at Fakarava, and having to release his anchor and chain after the stainless bow roller was destroyed! He then had to transit the lagoon in those conditions to find protection 30 miles away. Yikes!

5) How difficult was it to get/find Internet in the Marquesas/Tuamotus/Tahiti?

"There is barely any fast Internet, even in Tahiti! Almost all islands and atolls have slow Internet, but not all anchorages. You need to be in town, and you get used to the slower speeds. You do much less Internet surfing. We mostly used Wi-Fi from cafes — such as the dockside Snack on Nuku Hiva — because it’s so social an experience. There are pay-for-time cards available from the post office or other providers, so you just need to be in range of antennas."

6) What is your dinghy/outboard combination? Is it adequate?

We have a 10-ft inflatable with an inflatable floor, and the 8-hp outboard gets two of us on a plane. We have planed with three adults and free-diving equipment. We like to roll up and stow the dinghy and motor for passages. I’ve been out cruising two times, and each time I bought a 10-ft inflatable with an 8-hp outboard. The first time I paid $850. Mostly recently we paid $1,000. Each time the dinghy and motor were in almost-new condition. Thank you, Latitude 38 Classy Classifieds.

7) What do they not have in Polynesia that you should have brought more of from US/Mexico?

"Alcohol! Booze is very expensive in the islands, as they tax it heavily to dissuade locals from drinking. Specialty foods, snacks, and nuts are all expensive, if available. For example, a bag of coconut is $1 at the dock, but you can only buy a whole bag."

4) Anchoring in French Polynesia can be difficult because of the deep water. Any tips or learning experiences? And have other boats had a lot of trouble?

"We had some anxieties about the anchoring in deep water, but it really wasn’t a problem. There were only a couple of times when we had to anchor in 80 to 100 ft. with a mud bottom. After that, anchoring in 45 ft. is no problem! A good windlass is key. If you have all chain and it’s 3/8", you can’t control lowering it by hand. You have to have a windlass.

"Anchoring among coral heads was a much greater issue than anchoring in deep water. The folks on Soggy Paws taught us to pick up pearl farm floats that had washed ashore and use them to buoy our chain above the 'bommies'. We dove on our chain often, and especially before pulling the hook to see if our chain had wrapped around coral. We didn’t hear of any boats that had anchoring issues this year."

"However, John on
Doritos for $14! So bring your favorite munchies. Food staples are reasonably priced; even produce, which is not cheap, is mostly comparable to prices at farmers’ markets in California. Boat parts, hoses and fasteners are metric, so bring them if you don’t want to substitute sizes. Other than that, we were able to get what we wanted."

8) What was your favorite stop in each of the following: 1) The Marquesas; 2) The Tuamotus, and 3) The Society Islands?

"Daniels Bay (actually called Hakatea) was our favorite in the Marquesas for the magnificence of the setting and the nice locals. Fakarava was our favorite in the Tuamotus, because the free drift diving in the south pass with the sharks was a high point in our lives. Huahine was our favorite in the Societies because it has so many good anchorages, it is mellow with friendly locals and a nice town, and has archaeological sites and superb walking, snorkeling and surfing. Huahine has everything!"

9) Did you have just snorkel gear or scuba gear, too? Happy with decision?

We love to free dive. So we use a mask, snorkel (simple is better, so not the ball in cage with multi turbo flush ports), fins, shorty wetsuit, and weights. We have scuba, but save the air tank for emergencies."

10) Any piece of gear that surprised you, for being more valuable than you expected?

"A plastic two-inch putty knife for cleaning the prop and bottom. More than once we were mortified to find barnacles covering everything.”

11) Is there any piece of gear that you didn’t have, but wish you had?

"Next time we’ll have a bimini. Iolani is one of the few boats that didn’t have one. We have resorted to using an umbrella for sun relief while on passages.”

12) What’s your favorite food from French Polynesia?

"The excellent fresh fish, which can be purchased direct from the fishermen for $5/kilo! Tuna prepared as poisson cru (raw fish) with coconut cream costs $8-$15 on shore. The best cooked dish was tuna with a vanilla cream sauce at Chez Tara, a nice restaurant at Avea Bay on the southwest side of Huahine. It was just $17 for the entree, and it was amazing! The traditionally cooked pig is great, but the side dishes can be heavy with lots of starchy stuff and not much fresh green veggies or salad. All in all, the prepared food in French Polynesia is no more expensive than here in Hawaii, and some things are even cheaper.”

— latitude/rs 02/03/2016

Cruise Notes:

A law was passed in 2007 requiring for the first time that US citizens traveling to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda have a passport. As a result, 18 million passports were issued in the US in that year alone, and a total of 49 million passports are issued every three years. Adult passports are only good for 10 years, which means that 49 million passports are going to expire in the next three years. As a result, officials expect a flood of requests to get passports renewed. It costs $110 to renew a passport and it can be done by mail. First-time passports cost $135, and the applicant has to show up at a designated post office, court or other agency. Children’s passports are good for just five years. Please remember, many countries will not accept your passport unless it is valid for six more months. So don’t miss out on a great foreign sailing adventure because you don’t have a current passport.

It was just a few months ago that Howard and Lynn Bradbrooke of the Vancouver, B.C.-based Sabre 452 Swift Current reported that having completed a five-year loop of North America — ending with their boat being trucked from Milwaukee to Vancouver — they were done with long-distance cruising. They said they would stick to cruising in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. Maybe Thomas Wolfe was right when he wrote the novel You Can’t Go Home Again, because the former lawyer and his wife seem to be having a change of heart. Looking at a map of their five-year trip, they write, “On the one hand it looks like a very long way to travel on a slow-moving sailboat. On the other hand, we are thinking that maybe we should start over again.” Memories of the sun-drenched tropics can do that to folks living in a dark and damp Pacific Northwest winter.

John and Geri Conser of Newport Beach report they will join Eric and Tamara Barto on the latter’s Aikane 56 catamaran Sea Child for “the trip of a lifetime”. In early February they were slated to join Sea Child in Phuket, Thailand for passages to the Maldives, the Red Sea, Port Sudan, the Suez Canal, and Corfu, Greece.

John Conser designed and built Warrior 29 and Conser 47 catamarans in Southern California. Geri has been a marine photographer for many years. The Bartos are from Maui, where they own Paragon Sailing Charters, a successful sailing/snorkeling company. Having owned Sea Child for six years, they’ve been breaking their circumnavigation into two to three months of cruising followed by two to three months back working on Maui. They started their trip in Trinidad, and have so far sailed throughout the Caribbean, through the Panama Canal, across the Pacific, and...
IN LATITUDES

are those specifically approved by the government. We think all Americans, particularly students, should be required to visit Cuba.

After enduring the notorious strong winds along the southeast coast of South Africa for months, Mike and Deanna Ruel of the Maryland-based Manta 42 R Sea Kat hauled their boat at Cape Town in anticipation of a long sail across the much more mellow South Atlantic.

"The cost of a haulout here in Cape Town is about the same as it is in the States," Mike told Latitude, "but the labor is about 40% less."

What's on the couple's 'to-do' list? "We've got a saildrive leak to repair and our bottom paint is 30 months old. In addition, we're getting new rigging, new sails, a new mast track, new batten cars, a new StackPack for the main, curtains with Strataglass, and maybe a new AC/heater. We're also getting a new damper for the port engine, having had to replace the one on the starboard engine."

That's a lot of work, but keep in mind the Ruels have sailed many thousands of ocean miles, many of them hard ocean miles, in just the last few years.

The Ruels report that rough weather isn't the only danger around Cape Town. "We are deeply saddened to learn of the loss of two members of the Royal Cape YC, who perished early this morning when their sailboat ran aground in a fog, breaking the vessel into pieces."

As if anybody needed a reminder how rough the ocean can be off South Africa, and why so many people wish they could still safely go around the world via the Red Sea and the Med, in mid-January Sunsail Yachts received notification that one of their Leopard 44 cats had been spotted overturned 40 miles off the coast of Cape Agulhas. It was four days short of a year since her South African crew of personally still consider it fairly risky. We wish the best for the crew of Sea Child.

Northern California's Jeff Zarwell was in Cuba recently to run the Conch Republic Cup, which included racing from Florida to Cuba, off Cuba, and from Cuba back to Florida. While in Cuba, Jeff ran into a Cuban problem. There was no Wi-Fi, so the only Internet access was via the government computers in hotels. These computers would not allow him to get weather reports from the usual Internet sites or post the race results. Ah, life on the prison island some refer to as the 'Workers' Paradise', where the only human activities allowed

The Latitude Wayback Machine takes you to the 2009 Banderas Bay Regatta in celebration of March's 23rd edition. Top row, left to right: Lisa and Wayne Zittel are still sailing strong. Heather and David split up, as they'd said they would. David bought the SC50 'X' in Malaysia, married a Filipino woman, and is refitting 'X' in Monterey. Jim and Kent Milski sailed around the world on their cat 'Sea Level' and are back in La Cruz. Laura Willerton succumbed to cancer, but Louis Kruk is cruising in the Caribbean with 'Cirque'. Middle row: Kim and David are cruising their Catana 42 'Maluhia' in the South Pacific. David Crowe traded his 70-ft cat 'Humu-Humu' for a ranch. Jim, with wife Jamie, passed of cancer. Bob Smith keeps cruising the Sea of Cortez, while Patsy Verhoeven keeps doing every Ha-Ha and Ta-Ta, and this spring will cross to French Polynesia, Hawaii, then back for another Ha-Ha. Bottom row: Cruiser racing conditions on Banderas Bay are spectacular.

to Phuket.

As we recall, Aikane was the first or second in what was to be a line of catamarans built in Trinidad for Catana. That idea never panned out, but Sea Child looks great.

Using the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea to get to the Med used to be the preferred way to go around the world until about 2000, when Somali pirates started hijacking private yachts as well as ships. Cruisers gave up the Red Sea route entirely for going around South Africa in 2011 after four West Coast sailors on the yacht Quest were kidnapped and then murdered by Somali pirates. Although the Somali piracy has been almost eliminated, concerns about trouble at other places from Aden to the northern end of the Red Sea have almost eliminated private yacht traffic. A few boats are again taking that route, but we

With a new bottom, 'R Sea Kat' was ready to continue on from Cape Town. After 200 miles, Mike and Deanna can expect an easy passage.
Anthony Murray, Reginald Robertson, and 20-year-old Jaryd Payne had last been heard from on what was to be a 6,000-mile delivery of the new cat from South Africa to a charter program in Thailand.

The families of the deceased men are furious on two counts: First, when the families hadn’t heard from the men in several days after the start of the voyage, the company told them they were “over-reacting” because the boat had encountered “a little bit of bad weather” — not mentioning they might have been in the path of the 100-knot winds of cyclone Bansi. Secondly, it took four days for the company to inform the family that the hull had finally been found.

There is more. In October of last year, the 52-ft catamaran Lama Lo, type unknown, was hit by a whale 50 miles off the coast of South Africa. After taking on water in one hull, the then unbalanced cat flipped in strong winds and heavy seas. The older Frenchman who owned the boat and his younger South African crew grabbed the EPIRB and got into one of the boat’s two dinghies, thinking a dinghy would be safer than the life raft in the rough sea conditions. They were quickly separated from the overturned cat — and her life raft. The dinghy eventually flipped, causing them to lose most of their supplies. The dinghy later flipped again, this time landing right-side up! Thanks to their EPIRB, the duo were rescued by a French ship 12 hours later. As you can see from the photo in the upper left, the cat, like the Sunsail cat, did not sink. That is not to say either was necessarily habitable.

At this point, we’d like to proclaim that Windyty, which creates worldwide animated weather maps for free, is one of the greatest educational and safety tools ever created for sailors. For example, we were trying to think how anybody in their right mind would want to try to deliver a cat from Cape Town to Thailand, given that it’s challenging enough to sail from Thailand to Cape Town. Thanks to Windyty, we could see that in January, it’s not that bad at all, as long as you can make it a little north and into the following winds across the top of Madagascar and into the westerly trades of the lower latitudes. The huge challenge, of course, is making the first 500 or so miles upwind into the following winds.

But that’s just one example of how Windyty makes worldwide, regional and
local wind patterns understandable through animated graphics. Want to understand Northers blowing down the Sea of Cortez — and sometimes jumping across Baja near La Paz to the Pacific? It’s there. Want to understand the sequence of wind coming through the Gulf of Tehuantepec from the Gulf of Mexico? Bingo. Want to understand why sailing east from Cartagena is so difficult? No problem. Want to get a decent understanding of the wind patterns anywhere in the world? Windyty is the tool. Simply brilliant!

Intrepid — but perhaps somewhat incompetent — American sailors Bob Weise and Steve Shapiro, both 71, left Norway last July aboard the 40-ft, 18-ton Nora hoping to sail to Maine. Things have not gone well. So far they’ve only made it to Hayle, Cornwall, England. What’s worse, they’ve had to be rescued nine times in seven months. To date they’ve been rescued in Norway, Denmark, Scotland, Ireland and England. It’s unclear if they’ve made it by a country without having to be rescued.

The most recent January incident was particularly troubling. According to the local harbormaster, “They either didn’t understand or couldn’t properly [secure the boat in advance of a severe drop in tide] because the yacht fell over when the tide went out.” Not only was neither man aboard when the boat went onto her side, but they’d left a candle burning inside the boat! The candle started a fire, which apparently took three hours to put out.

Shapiro described himself as a “screenwriter and author originally from California,” while Weise is a former helicopter pilot for the US Army. Shapiro downplayed the damage, saying the fire was limited to some clothes. Yet the tipped-over Nora and fire precipitated a response from firefighters, two rescue boats and an ambulance. Brits started to grouse, as a typical rescue response in England costs about $22,000. The local harbormaster said he was concerned about not only the mens’ safety, but that of those who might have to rescue them yet another time.

This is not the first time an older American sailor has created inordinate problems for rescue services in Britain and on the Continent. It’s been something like 10 years now so we can’t remember the details, but an elderly yet game sailor from Northern California be...
In mid-January, many news outlets were gleefully taking potshots at Paul Allen, Microsoft co-founder, after the anchor chain of his 303-ft motoryacht Tatoosh reportedly damaged 14,000 sq ft of coral in the Cayman Islands. Before the sniggering had stopped, Vulcan, Inc., Allen’s company, responded as follows:

“Vulcan Inc. and Paul G. Allen have a long history of responsible exploration and a commitment to ocean conservation. On January 14, 2016, Tatoosh was moored in a position explicitly directed by the local Port Authority. When her crew was alerted by a diver that her anchor chain may have impacted coral in the area, the crew promptly, and on their own accord, relocated their position to ensure the reef was protected.”

Frankly, we tend to believe Allen’s side of the story, and suspect that all radio transmissions to and from the ship were recorded so that he could prove it. Tatoosh is the smaller of Allen’s motoryachts. He also owns the 415-ft Octopus.

Allen has loaned Octopus, which is equipped with a submarine and ROV, for a variety of rescue and research operations. These include assisting in a hunt for an American pilot and two officers whose plane disappeared off Palau; loaning his yacht to scientists to study the coelacanth, a “living fossil” that was once believed to be extinct; and loaning his ship to the Royal Navy in their attempt to retrieve the ship’s bell from HMS Hood.

“We were at Lagoonies when the big fire broke out at the closest dock to leeward of us,” report 2014 Ha-Ha vets Dave Hayes and Rose Alderson, formerly of the Gabriola Island-based Catalina 34 Aussie Rules. “The three boats went up in quick succession. Some brave folks, who got much closer than most would have dared, untied the next boat in line and pulled her away. This created a firebreak, allowing the firemen to keep the flames from spreading further. Thankfully the fire started on the end of the dock and the wind was blowing away, or many more boats would have been destroyed.”

Once fiberglass boats start burning, it’s extremely difficult to put them out. Getting them away from other boats becomes the main goal.

In mid-January, many news outlets were gleefully taking potshots at Paul Allen, Microsoft co-founder, after the anchor chain of his 303-ft motoryacht Tatoosh reportedly damaged 14,000 sq ft of coral in the Cayman Islands. Before the sniggering had stopped, Vulcan, Inc.

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which sank with 1,400 crew in 9,000 ft. of water in the Denmark Strait during World War II. The bell was located but not recovered because of bad weather. Three years later, Octopus’s ROV recovered the bell, which is now on display at the National Museum of the Royal Navy. An Allen-led research team also announced that it had found the Japanese battleship Musashi in the Sibuyan Sea off the coast of the Philippines. Musashi and its sister ship Yamato were the largest and most heavily-armed battleships in naval history. Neither survived the war.

The bottom line is that it’s not right to hate people because they are beautiful or because they are rich. Being beautiful and rich, however, is unacceptable, isn’t it?

Errata: Last month we reported that private yachts can get a permit to visit the Marietas Islands, home to Playa de Amor, and stay overnight up to four times a month. That’s incorrect in the sense that the park closes at 6 p.m. In January there was an incident when as many as three boats were on moorings that failed in the deep waters of Yelapa cove on Banderas Bay. Fortunately, there was no damage.

“My catamaran was the first to break free,” reported Brian Charette of the Jackson Hole-based Cat2Fold catamaran. “I was awakened by someone yelling ‘Ahoy!’ In a daze, I thought the boat near me was drifting toward the beach. In reality, my boat and I were being blown out to sea with a 150-ft line, and an inadequate mooring weight hung from my bows. I ultimately dropped the mooring in about 500 ft. of water. The bottom is very steep and deep at Yelapa.

“Then I grabbed the only other mooring that I could see. It also soon became dislodged from the sea floor. I dropped it, then another one, one we very close to the beach, I hooked onto it, and stayed put for the rest of the night.”

From Dominica, to Niue, to the Caribbean, to the Pacific Northwest, to Europe — we can’t recall how many times we’ve had to report on boats being lost because they tied on to mooring balls skippers assumed were safe or had been assured were safe. Be skeptical and careful! This is especially true in Mexico and in Yelapa, where we believe some locals rent out moorings made for pangas to owners of cruising boats.

How inexpensively can you cruise Mexico? Here’s a hint. Brian Charette reports he recently spent $5 for eight grapefruit, three avocados, one cantaloupe. His is a bit of an unusual guy. ‘Cat2Fold’ is a bit of an unusual Hughes catamaran design. And this is a very unusual downwind sail plan.
loupe, one papaya, one mango, and a bunch of hot peppers. It proves once again that Whole Foods really isn’t the low-cost leader.

If you think Brian is exaggerating, Victoria Bradford of the San Francisco-based Cal 43 **Conviva**, who did the 2011 Ha-Ha and the 2012 Puddle Jump, reports that she still has the receipt showing that she paid only about $100 for about 200 pounds of fruits and veggies just before they Puddled Jumped. The couple are now in Southeast Asia.

What about the cost of meds? We paid $10 for one hundred 100mg tablets of Metropiolol, a common blood pressure medicine. That’s a 200-day supply for us. Friends told us it’s even less expensive at the Wal-Mart in Puerto Vallarta.

Like father like daughter. In La Cruz we bumped into Bob Stanic of the San Pedro-based Cal 46 **Aerie**, who was with his lovely 24-year-old daughter Kali. She works for a big environmental company in Washington, D.C., so she was delighted to get away from the frigid capital to join her dad for two weeks in Mexico. Dad and daughter started in La Paz, and had a wild ride down to Isla Isabella in winds from aft to 35 knots.

"Kali did great!” said her proud father. "And so did my Cal 46."

Readers may remember that Bob did the 2015 Ha-Ha with his charming stepdaughter Erin Grayson. It turns out that in early February Erin was just about to depart Cabrillo Beach aboard her Catalina 30 **Fairy Tale** to sail down the west coast of Baja. She was possibly going to buddyboat part of the way with Holly Scott aboard the latter’s Cal 40 **Mahalo**. Erin expects to have two novice male sailors as crew. Stepdad Bob says Erin is a fine sailor who honed her cruising skills by doing a circumnavigation of all the Channel Islands but San Miguel last summer. "She got into some heavy wind on the west end of Isla San Jose, which was good experience."

It’s amazing how ignorant people can be about Mexico. Even Mexicans. We were recently on the phone with a T-Mobile tech in Houston, and when we told him we were calling from Puerto Vallarta, he repeatedly warned us how dangerous it was. "I'm a Mexican," he said, "I can tell you that everybody is getting decapitated or otherwise killed." We tried to explain that as in the United States, certain areas are dangerous but many are extremely safe. But he wasn’t believing us.

Speaking of T-Mobile, we’ve had tremendous success getting unlimited free data in the Puerto Vallarta region as part of our T-Mobile non-contract plan. And unlike the unlimited free data T-Mobile gives you in Europe, it’s mostly 3G and thus pretty darn fast.

A month ago we were surprised to receive a letter from Laura Golden, who had sailed across the Atlantic with us on our Ocean 71 **Big O** 20 long years ago. Hadn’t heard from her since then. If we thought that was a long time ago, we just got a note from Virg Erwin, who reminded us that we’d met once before.

"You stopped by the Sausalito Cruising Club to offer me some advice the day before my wife, one year-old and I set sail for the Marquesas with our Westsail 32," wrote Erwin. "Don’t worry," you told me, "you’re not sailing off the edge of the world. You find other sailors willing to help you anytime you need it."

"That was so comforting," he continued, "and it was true."

It was also 39 years ago! Where did all the time go?

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25 TO 28 FEET


**27-FT 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 sailor. See website for more information! www.patrickandvallerie.com. Contact Reconnaisant@kolasinski-law.com or (209) 535-3104.


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32 TO 35 FEET

31-FT CAL 31 SLOOP, 1978. Banderas Bay, MX. $17,000. Well maintained. For sale near Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Diesel engine, jib furling, propane stove/oven, fridge, windlass, tiller, autopilot, solar panels, VHFI, GPS, windvane. New bottom paint and zincs (Oct 2015), West Marine raft with electric trolling motor. This has a larger than usual interior for a 31 footer and is actively sailed now. From US call: 011-52-1-322-171-3485 or contact j.hindmann@sbccglobal.net.

33-FT CUSTOM STONE SLOOP, 1958. 39,000/o. Little Packet, has a unique cockpit with a built-in dodger for warmth on SF Bay. She has always been well maintained including restastered hull, renewed keel bolts, varnished spars and trim. Same owner since 1971. Sailed as far as La Paz. Has a very comfortable interior. For more information, contact (510) 654-7704 or dckwr8@gmail.com.

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35-FT HINCKLEY PILOT, 1969. Sausalito Yacht Harbor. $120,000. Classic Sparkman & Stephens sloop, captain/owner-maintained, easy to singlehand, large sail inventory, excellent condition. Transferable slip close to boardwalk, with parking pass. US-documented for charter. E Dock, slip #25. For information contact tfomk50@gmail.com.

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32-FT PEARSON 323, 1982. Berkeley Marina. $14,500. Excellent condition, Removable inner forestay, four headsails, navsat, autopilot, solar panel, genoa furling. Monitor windvane also available. For more info contact (510) 592-0650 or email at donaldesnyder1@gmail.com or call (541) 890-4168.

34-FT HUNTER 356, 2002. Marina Bay, Richmond. $64,000. 2002 Cruising World’s Boat of the Year in class. Too many extras to list. Contact Ken for more info: (323) 347-2349 or cordoro@wcc.net.
32-FT SCHUMACHER SYNERGY 1000, 1999. Sausalito, $57,000/obo. Carbon spars, rebuilt engine. Race ready, asym or pole w/4 jibs, 3 asyms, 3 spin, 4 jibs, 2 mains. EPIRB and most OYRA gear. Call (415) 518-3394 or (415) 990-9779 or contact: mwradcliffe@gmail.com.


36 TO 39 FEET


38-FT MORGAN 382, 1978. Brisbane Marina. $39,800. Skylark is both sea kindly and comfortable underway and owners lived aboard for 11 years. She has a large well-protected cockpit and is rigged for doublehandling. Original Yanmar 3QM has just 500 hours. Second owners have lovingly cared for her the last 25 years, but are leaving the area. An excellent Bay and offshore boat. For a full equipment list and photos contact (650) 722-4546 or bh.hackel@gmail.com.


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38-FT INGRID, 1979. Bellingham, WA. $49,000. Well maintained Bluewater Ingrid ketch can take you safely across the Pacific. Isuzu 54hp repower in 1999, new Staa mainsail, Dickinson Pacific stove, custom mattress. For more information, contact (360) 770-4525 or (360) 856-9016 or debranddoug@gmail.com.


40 TO 50 FEET

48-FT MAYFLOWER KETCH, 1985. Puerta Vallarta MX. $109,000. Sleek and graceful Mayflower ketch. Properly equipped for a crew of two, bluewater cruiser carries and flies up to five sails. Designed by George Stadel II, the Oriana has proven performance, good construction, and attention to detail. Ample captain’s cabin, attractive, roomy salon, and fully-equipped galley, the boat is a comfortable liveboard in any of the world’s ports. Powered by the dependable Perkins 92M, under power the craft cruises comfortably at 7.5 knots. Equipment includes roller furling on all masts, self-tailing winches, 300-ft. chain anchor rode, three study anchors, watermaker, and more. More information at www.theoriana.com. Contact (480) 447-7316 or info@theoriana.com.


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40-Ft. Schumacher Custom, 1991. Australia. $138,000/obo. Numerous podium finishes from Bermuda to SF Bay to PacCup. Strip planked/GP composite by Mark Lindsay, Dry wt 13,300. Solid boat that loves any condition, any direction. Hall spars, Rod, Carbon P-Pole, race and cruising sails good to excellent. PHRF 72. Presently in cruise mode; dinghy, Honda 9.9, Spectra, DuoGen, IC-M802, Lewmar windlass, three sets ground tackle, Viking rudders, etc., easily removable for race mode. Please contact jkcoggan@gmail.com.


44-Ft. F&C, 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 and teak deck overlay. Centerboard shoul draft 5’1” go to weather board-down 7’6”. Interior finished in South American hardwoods, 2 staterooms, 2 heads, sleeps 6. Only a few hrs on rebuilt Perkins 4-110, large sail inventory, upgraded electrical system, newer upholstery, stainless dorades, full dodger, much more. May consider partial trade for fiberglass mid-30s sailboat. Call (805) 235-4046 or tackorjibe@gmail.com.
47-FT GULFSTAR SAILMASTER, 1979. Richmond. $115,000. Price reduced! Ha-Ha veteran! If your dream is to go cruising or live aboard on the Bay, this well equipped and well maintained cruising sloop is ready to sail. Please take your time reviewing the extensive details on the website. I’m sure it’ll become clear that this listing offers tremendous value when considering both the bones of the vessel as well as the many accessories desirable for the boating lifestyle. More info on website: www.swish.com. Contact (559) 269-6930 or (925) 461-1822 or captwish@gmail.com.

45-FT KANTER ATLANTIC, 1983. Trinidad. $59,900. Reduced price! This turnkey, go-anywhere yacht is a proven circumnavigator. Excellent sailing performance, maneuverable, and strong. Fully loaded with an extensive inventory of cruising gear. Meticulously maintained/updated. More info on website: http://thissideyacht.com. Please contact (408) 431-4333 or (360) 431-3723 or tsusailboat@gmail.com.


43-FT BENETEAU 423, 1987. South Beach, SF. $109,950/obo. Great live-aboard and passage maker! Three-stateroom layout, central heat and air, large quality refrigeration, heavy cockpit and swim scoop with handheld shower! Great for living, entertaining and loaded for comfortable passage including all new sat. weather, moving maps, auto-pilot, radar and 2 new Garmin 15” touch screen navigation systems. All new hatch and port windows, rigging and more! Website with pictures: www.sloopveronese.com. Contact (415) 637-6878 or (707) 781-7145 or slooperveronese@hotmail.com.


44-FT J/133, 2006. Marina del Rey, CA. $199,900. Excellent condition and fully loaded for racing and cruising. Sleeps 8, 2 heads, full electronics with 4 GPS screens, radar, electric main housing winch, Yanmar diesel 54hp, sat phone. Full racing suite of UK sails, and comfort amenities for long-range cruising. Please contact for detailed description. She has completed races while primarily used as a fast, fun family boat for cruising and great times together. For more information contact joesimpkins@iacarguy.com or (310) 570-3182.


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. Set of world charts. 75hp Volvo diesel. Contact maspragg@aol.com or (415) 726-3322.

44-FT RP44, 1992. Harbor West, San Diego. $89,000. Built in 1992 by McCo-naghy this Reichel Pugh is ORC-certified and has a PHRF rating of 38. Comfortable accommodation and above all precision-built quality by global leaders in carbon. New sails: Sobstad Pentex mainsail, triradial 155% headsail, BX15 (60%)/BX10 (40%) Stealth film black Aramid laminates from Dimension-Polyant and X-HP 165% asymmetrical spinnaker. 75 oz. and racing Harken roller furling. Please contact Curtis.w.collins@gmail.com or (808) 286-5202.

44-FT CATALINA MORGAN, 2007. Oak Harbor, WA. $260,950. A real deck salon, light and airy with a settee you can sit at and enjoy the outdoors. Both forward and aft cabins have queen berths with head and showers. Just-serviced 75hp Yanmar with 870 hrs. Newer batteries and 2 heads, full electronics with 4 GPS screens, radar, electric main housing winch, Yanmar diesel 54hp, sat phone. Full racing suite of UK sails, and comfort amenities for long-range cruising. Please contact for detailed description. She has completed races while primarily used as a fast, fun family boat for cruising and great times together. For more information contact joesimpkins@iacarguy.com or (310) 570-3182.

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38-FT NAUTIGAL, 1938. Point Richmond. $20,000. Myron Spaulding of San Francisco designed, built. Historically significant. Fir on oak classic. Sails like a witch. Varished teak, Good sails, spinaker, gear. 26-year owner; ask me anything at cjeffstokes@msn.com or (925) 787-6741.


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ALASKA/CANADA CRUISING, 2016. Cape Horn/Northwest Passage veteran seeks select crew for 2 legs - 3 to 4 weeks each. Exploratory cruising in Alaska/Canada abord a 44-ft schooner. Leg I: July/August. Prince Rupert through Inside Passage. Leg II: August/September, Prince Rupert, Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlottes - permit), Desolation Sound, San Juan Islands to Seattle. Must have some experience, share costs, participate fully. Call for details: (505) 466-6326 or (276) 312-0436 or cfays@earthlink.net.

SAILING THE SALISH SEA. Looking for a ready crew. S.V. Kestrel, my well-found Tayana 37, is undergoing pre-departure checks in Sausalito. I’m doing a quick coastal passage to Port Angeles, WA, in mid-April, then on to further cruising adventures in the Salish Sea and British Columbia from May through August. Easygoing skipper. We’ll share cruising food and fuel. Join for all or part. Some coastal passage crew expenses covered OOE. For more information contact Hoy Pitts at svestre37@gmail.com.

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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 481** (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' KELLSALL 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

36' STEPHENS HOUSEBOAT, 1966  Immaculate and spacious custom yacht. Lying in a potentially live-aboard slip.  $259,000

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

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

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

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

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.  $89,000

34' CATALINA, 2003  Very clean low time example shows Bristol inside and out with new self-tacking Bay Blaster and Max Prop, potentially transferable Sausalito YH slip.  $87,500

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.  $74,500

45' FUJI KETCH 1977  Well priced John Alden-designed classic, great layout below.  $59,000

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

41' ISLANDER FREEPORT, 1978  Only three owners since new. Very clean inside and out with all new electronics. Potentially transferable Sausalito YH slip.  $44,900

35' ERICSON, 1987  Final iteration of this Bruce King-designed classic. Updated electronics, engine serviced and bottom painted, lying potentially transferable downtown Sausalito slip.  $39,000

30' HUNTER LEGEND, 1990  Very clean boat! New sails, rigging and interior.  $29,000

20' PACIFIC SEACRAFT FICKA, 1985  Updated stem to stern. Ready to sail!  $27,000
CRUISE NOW!

175' LIGHTHOUSE TENDER, "FIR" Designated National Historic Landmark by U.S. Department of the Interior. STEEL, twin diesel-powered small ship, fully operational and in great condition. Beautiful, comfortable interior, great accommodations and more. Asking $199,500


38' PANDA by To Shing (generally considered the best s/y-built in Asia) in beautiful condition. Beautiful cruiser with good performance, just hauled & ready to go! Strubly built, seaworthy, insulated, heat, full galley w/ range, stove, sink, refrigerator, ice maker, microwave, 2 heads w/ showers. $49,750.

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Bottom Painting

Don't wait until it's too late!