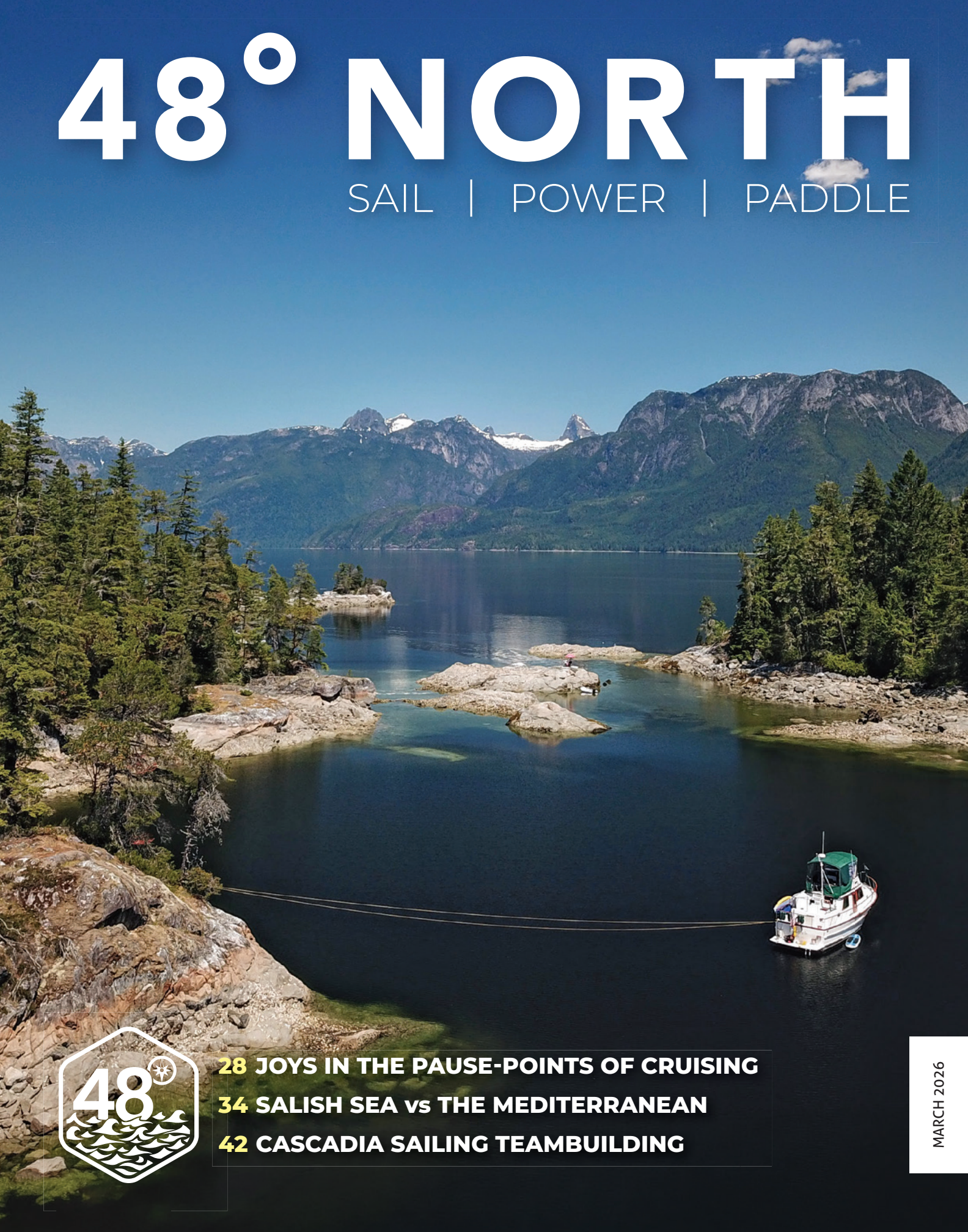
48° NORTH

SAIL | POWER | PADDLE



MARCH 2026

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Hanse | Dehler | Moody | TARTAN YACHTS | KCS Excess

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Hanse 418 | Seattle, WA

Moody 41DS | Anacortes, WA

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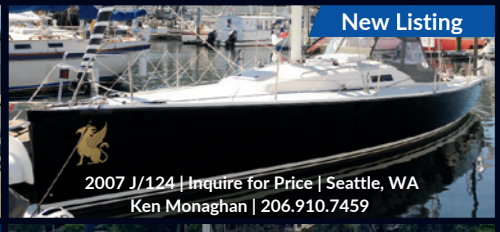
Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

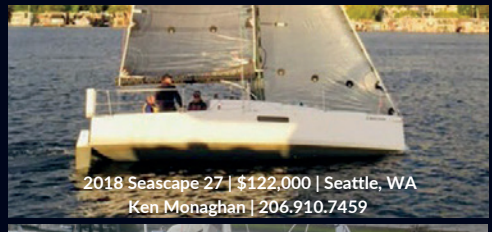
2014 Beneteau Oceanis 55 | $465,000 | Seattle, WA
Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

2018 Beneteau Sense 57 | $549,500 | Anacortes, WA
Greg Farah | 360.603.0809

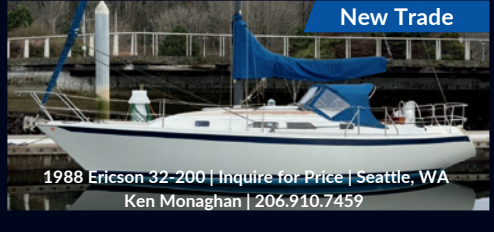
2004 Beneteau 393 | $129,000 | Anacortes, WA
Jeff Gleckler | 360.202.2290



2007 J/124 | Inquire for Price | Seattle, WA
Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459



2018 Seascape 27 | $122,000 | Seattle, WA
Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459



1988 Ericson 32-200 | Inquire for Price | Seattle, WA
Ken Monaghan | 206.910.7459

2006 Beneteau 393/403 | $119,000 | Anacortes, WA
Greg Farah | 360.603.0809

2001 Corsair F28 CC | $54,900 | Seattle, WA
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MARCH 2026

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RACING

ON THE COVER: Verena Kellner and Mike Castle's 36-foot Monk Trawler *Limerick* lies happily stern-tied in Desolation Sound's Prideaux Haven. Their skills (including this anchoring technique) honed in the Pacific Northwest served them well on a recent multi-month cruise of the Mediterranean (page 34). Photo by Verena Kellner.

Background photo courtesy of Andy Cross.

6 Editor

IT'S BOATING REENTRY SEASON AGAIN... HOORAY!

Hats off to those of you who get off the dock in the winter, and double kudos if you do so frequently. Year-round boating is part of the magic and magnetism of waterborne adventures in the Pacific Northwest. Still, for many—I'd venture for most—springtime dawns with a measure of reintroduction to boat life.

For all my years as a card-carrying sail bum, there were only a few when my A-game on the boat didn't relax into at least a little winter hibernation. The path back from an extended boating break is neither long nor laborious. In fact, I imagine lots of you barely pay it any mind. It's been a recurring theme in my experience, though, for whatever reason—pride, ego, self-flaggelation.

Some years back, I wrote something similar about this seasonal restart. It's funny how a couple of trips around the sun and one more child (twice as many!) can adjust the lens of perspective. My time on the water has evolved into intermittent fits and starts regardless of season, where it was previously much more regular. After a recent wonderful-yet-enlightening sail, I'm inspired to reopen the discussion of springtime re-entry. I got out for my first true wind-driven jaunt in a while—shorthanded with people I'd never sailed with on an unfamiliar boat. It was incredibly fun and so rewarding, but it also showed me that my 'sea legs' had atrophied a bit... again.

I was on the water with world-renowned sailor Jonathan McKee and skipper of a past *48° North* Top 25 #1 Boat, Erik Kristen. We were aboard Jonathan's custom Bieker Riptide 44, *Dark Star,* working on a video about a refit to the boat's jib lead system. (Please check out the video via the QR code below!) Conditions were as perfect as winter on Puget Sound gets, we had no stakes other than the footage we were trying to capture, and we all had a great time. Easy peasy, kind-of. Here are a handful of my latest personal spring shakedown takeaways.

Expect change, and try to stay ahead of it. There's bound to be unpredictable elements on any first sail with a different boat and crew, and there was definitely some of that on this brief and sunny excursion on *Dark Star*. Still, some of my more hamfisted misadventures were "autopilot" attempts at processes honed on a different boat. Regardless of the vessel or the circumstance, keeping a weather eye out for complacency or unconsidered routine will help you catch things before they get unduly challenging.

Use your head, and be careful with your body. After putting *Dark Star* through its upwind paces, we hoisted the massive kite without incident. Then, I found myself on the pointy end clumsily wrestling the jib as it came down. Admittedly, I don't spend a lot of time on the bow of any boat, but as I made slow and awkward work of the jib douse, I also stepped on part of the sail—slipping and going concerningly off-balance for a moment. I recovered, devoid of grace, feeling sheepish and relieved I didn't wind up in the drink in 10 knots and flat water. I could have improved lots of these actions, but I would have stuck the landing better if I'd simply been sailing more. That awareness is useful in the early season—prepare to be under-practiced. Take your time, review your processes, and stay on the boat.

Go easy on yourself. 99.5% of us go sailing for the sheer joy of it, even (*especially!*) in elite company. Ramping up for a new season is exciting whether or not it involves a bit of rusty flailing. Real skills and hard-won experience always catch up, and fast; and soon we'll be having so much fun that these tune-up ruminations may be stowed once more. Until next spring.

VIDEO

I'll see you on the water,

Joe

Joe Cline
Managing Editor,
48° North

48° North

Volume XLV, Number 8, March 2026

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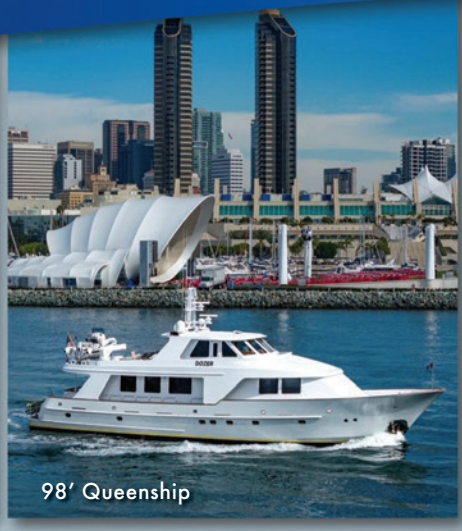
48° North encourages letters, photographs, manuscripts, burgees, and bribes. Emailed manuscripts and high quality digital images are best!

Elliott Bay Yacht Sales


50′ S&S Classic *"Pemaquid"*


98′ Queenship


56′ Sundeer


42′ Sabre


46′ Beneteau


32′ Ribcraft


44′ Hinckley Talaria *"Rose"*

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46′ Beneteau 46.1 ′22	$495,000
44′ Worldcruiser Schooner ′79	$99,500
42′ J/42 ′98	$129,000
41′ Sweden Yachts ′81	$69,500
40′ J Boats J/120 ′96	$120,000
40′ Catalina ′95	$99,500
39′ Fast Passage ′80	$98,500
38′ Beneteau Oceanis ′20	$209,000
36′ J Boats J/112e ′21	$349,000
36′ C&C 110 ′04	$99,000
36′ Hunter ′05	$78,500

Powerboats

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46′ Meridian 459 ′07	$289,000
44′ Hinckley Talaria ′01	$525,000
42′ Sabre Salon Express ′16	$675,000
42′ Grand Banks ′90	$199,000
42′ Grand Banks ′85	$115,000
40 Tollycraft ′74	$110,000
38′ True North ′02	$179,000
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News from Northwest Maritime

48° North has been published by the nonprofit Northwest Maritime since 2018. We are continually amazed and inspired by the important work of our colleagues and organization, and dedicate this page to sharing more about these activities with you.

RACE TO ALASKA 2026 ALREADY MAKING SERIOUS WAVES

Photo by Joe Cline

R2AK PODCAST: SMASH SUBSCRIBE LIKE IT'S 40,000 BC

Some thoughts from the Race Boss about the popular podcast:

Long before phones, comments sections, or anyone got mad about a halftime show, Race to Alaska's caveman origins were born—a couple poorly-prepared Homo erectus maniacs chasing the same mammoth. No rules. No help. Just a pointy stick and a very large dinner on the line. The first one to get there eats. Second place ends up with an empty steak knife and malnutrition. No prize for effort. No participation trophy. Just hunger, cold, and the knowledge that Ugg was faster and probably a better person.

Later that night, someone with fewer hunting skills but stronger branding instincts smeared it all over a cave wall with mud and blood: Mammoth, spear, glory.

Everybody else slapped up a handprint. "Like and Subscribe."

Social media isn't new. We've collectively been chasing social clout since we figured out how to not die in the winter. Favorite human pastime: Watching other people do wild things while you chew on snacks and feel things.

THE RACE TO ALASKA PODCAST is for the caveman in all of us. The latest chapter in humanity's favorite genre: "Get a load of these maniacs."

It's 2026, and the next crop of R2AK racers is prepping to launch themselves into 750 miles of bad weather and watery doom. Some will make it to Ketchikan. Some will end up broken, beached, or emotionally undone by a bag of wet trail mix.

But you? Every week, you can suffer through a new episode that features interviews with R2AK '26 contenders, race insights, and the eternal debates: Is this even a race? What does 'support' mean? Why no class prizes?

Hear about the boats, the people, the plans, and how many bear hides the clan is packing for the trip. Learn what they're paddling, pedaling, sailing, or zip-tying together in hopes of survival and bragging rights.

Hosted by a rotating cast of past racers and whoever else wasn't busy, doesn't use big words, and knows the sharp end of a microphone.

Tune in. Your cave-brain still wants to know who gets the mammoth.

» **www.r2ak.com/r2ak-podcast**

2026 R2AK: THE BIGGEST EVER

For the first time, we hit the fleet-size limit and slammed the door on new applications. The official metric was something like "maximum capacity." The internal metric was closer to "oh sh*t."

Sorry, hopefuls—2028 is looking like your year.

Why the surge?

Take a look around. The world currently runs on hot takes, cold takes, and whatever just trended five minutes ago. Everyone's yelling. Everyone's right. Reality is negotiable.

R2AK answers to something older—cold water, tide tables, and physics.

In a world that feels increasingly abstract, this race remains stubbornly literal.

- Race Boss

» **www.r2ak.com**

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NIGHT OF GOLD, PORT TOWNSEND YACHT CLUB EVENT ON MARCH 28

On March 28, the Port Townsend Yacht Club (PTYC) will host Night of Gold—a fundraiser for the PTYC Fund for Marine Trades and Sciences. The evening's presentation will weave the story of the Ship of Gold, which is a blend of historical tragedy, extraordinary marine science innovation, and the discovery of gold from the Gold Rush.

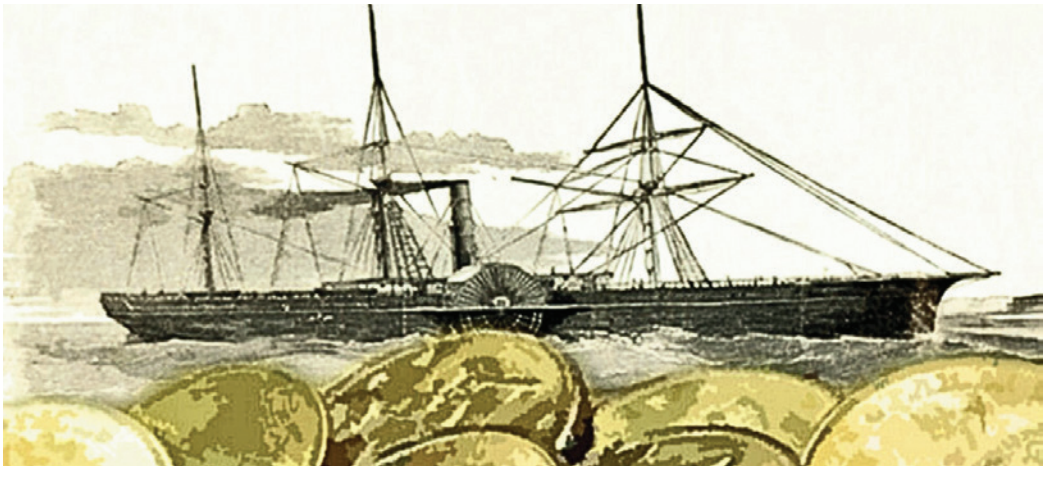
In 1857, the SS *Central America* was destroyed by a hurricane 200 miles off the Carolina coast. This was one of the ships taking gold from the San Francisco mint to New York. The *Central America* carried 600 passengers and sank 8,000 feet to the bottom of the ocean; more than 400 lives and 21 tons of gold were lost.

In 1985, an extraordinary marine science engineer, Tommy Thompson, invented the technology to work the deep ocean floor, which had never successfully been done before. He assembled a group of investors, Columbus-America Discovery Group, and raised almost $20 million to fund a massive treasure hunting expedition to find the sunken SS *Central America* and its store of gold.

Night of Gold's presenter, Alan Scott, was the sonar expert aboard the Columbus-America Discovery ship. In 1988, he was navigating the ship with its tethered undersea vehicle along a track line that he had set up based on loran fixes from a 1986 sonar survey. At 3:10 p.m. on September 11, they found the ship and work began to retrieve its treasure. The story continues with a twist of intrigue—Thompson disappeared, the investors haven't reaped the rewards from their initial investment, and some of the gold has vanished.

Join fellow Pacific Northwest boaters and adventurers to hear this incredible whole story and support a good cause while you're at it! The event will be held at Northwest Maritime Center, with appetizers and wine at 6:30 p.m., followed by the presentation from 7:00 to 9:00. Tickets are $35 each or $250 for a table of eight.

» **www.ptyc.net**



Alan Scott

FISHERIES SUPPLY SPRING SWAP MEET SET FOR APRIL 25

When spring arrives, so does the always-popular Fisheries Supply Swap Meet. The highly anticipated Spring Swap Meet is back on Saturday, April 25, 2026 from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m.

New this year: Fisheries will be selling a huge amount of new warehouse inventory never before offered at the Swap Meet. Come and get it!

Also, dive into a sea of boat parts, equipment, last season's clothing—all at unbeatable prices. Don't miss out on the best boating bargains of the year.

It's a maritime flea market, full of boating goods, old parts, new parts, outboards, buoys, dock line, coolers, heaters, chain, clothing, and so much more. Die-hard bargain boaters have been known to arrive the night before to stake out a good parking spot, although sellers are not allowed to use the lower tier of the upper parking lot (closest to the store entrance).

Get there early for the best deals and to connect with fellow enthusiasts. Located at Fisheries Supply, 1900 N. Northlake Way, Seattle. See you there!

» **www.fisheriessupply.com/swap-meet**

low tides » *News & Events*

CELEBRATING WHIDBEY ISLAND'S MARITIME HERITAGE: SCHOONER *SUVA* LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES


Photo by Jim Douglas.

The National Park Service recently approved the nomination of the schooner *Suva* for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. *Suva* is a 100-year-old pilothouse schooner homeported in Coupeville, Washington. Through its leadership in this effort, the Whidbey Island Maritime Heritage Foundation (WIMHF) is helping ensure that *Suva* remains a valued community resource while honoring and preserving local maritime heritage. With a strong emphasis on local history and regional resources, the nomination contributes to a broader initiative to celebrate, preserve, and share Washington State's maritime heritage with residents and visitors alike.

Having sailed the waters of the Salish Sea for the past century, *Suva* holds historical significance on two fronts. First, she was designed by acclaimed Seattle naval architect Leslie Edward "Ted" Geary, one of the Pacific Northwest's most influential yacht designers of the early 1900s, and was built in Hong Kong using old-growth Burmese teak. Second, *Suva* was commissioned by yachtsman Frank J. Pratt, Jr., a resident of Ebey's Prairie whose family played a significant role in acquiring and preserving much of the land and structures that later became Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.

To complete the nomination, WIMHF leveraged funding from the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area Grant Program and contracted with Holly Taylor, Principal of Past Forward NW Cultural Services, to conduct the necessary historical research and prepare the comprehensive documentation required for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Maritime Washington Grant Program is generously supported by funding from the National Park Service and administered by the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area. In its first year, the program awarded more than $240,000 in grants to local maritime heritage organizations. Designated by Congress in 2019, the Maritime Washington National Heritage Area encompasses more than 3,000 miles of Washington State's saltwater shoreline and supports coastal communities in preserving and interpreting their water-based histories and resources.

WIMHF uses the schooner *Suva* to promote maritime heritage and educate the public about local history and culture through public passenger sails, private charters, and dockside tours. The Foundation also partners with the Island County Historical Museum, which featured a special exhibit on *Suva* in conjunction with her centennial celebration this past year. In further support of WIMHF's educational mission, a variety of youth organizations participate in educational sails aboard *Suva*, including local and regional schools, Scout groups, YMCA camps, and Boys & Girls Clubs.

Suva is currently in winter moorage; weekly ticketed public cruises will resume in April, departing from the Coupeville Wharf.

» **www.schoonersuva.org | www.whidbeyislandmaritimeheritagefoundation.org**

low tides » *In The Biz*

ULLMAN SAILS PACIFIC NORTHWEST ANNOUNCES WILLIAM ALLEN AS NEW LOFT MANAGER AND SAIL CONSULTANT

William Allen joined Ullman Sails Pacific Northwest in January 2026. William grew up a cowboy with the desert sands of Arizona under his feet. Soon after college and moving to the tropics of Kauai, Hawaii, he found his passion for sailing and sailboats. Learning the ways of the ocean has opened his eyes to the beauty that many often overlook. Since those eye-opening early experiences, he has weathered hurricanes, tsunamis, and countless small craft advisories. Any sailor knows that the beauty of the sea can also be scary.

William has owned many different sailboats from 40-foot catamarans and 50-foot schooners to 8-foot dinghies and skiffs. Each has taught him over and over that boating requires knowledge. He has acquired more of this knowledge as a professional sailboat rigger and sailmaker, while skippering and crewing aboard many different boats throughout Puget Sound and the Inside Passage. He looks forward to maintaining this spirit of continuous learning while serving the Pacific Northwest sailing community; working with everyone to allow the sport of sailing to grow!

William is a Race to Alaska finisher and avid sailor. He will be serving all of Puget Sound and lower British Columbia.

» **www.ullmansails.com/lofts/pacific-northwest**

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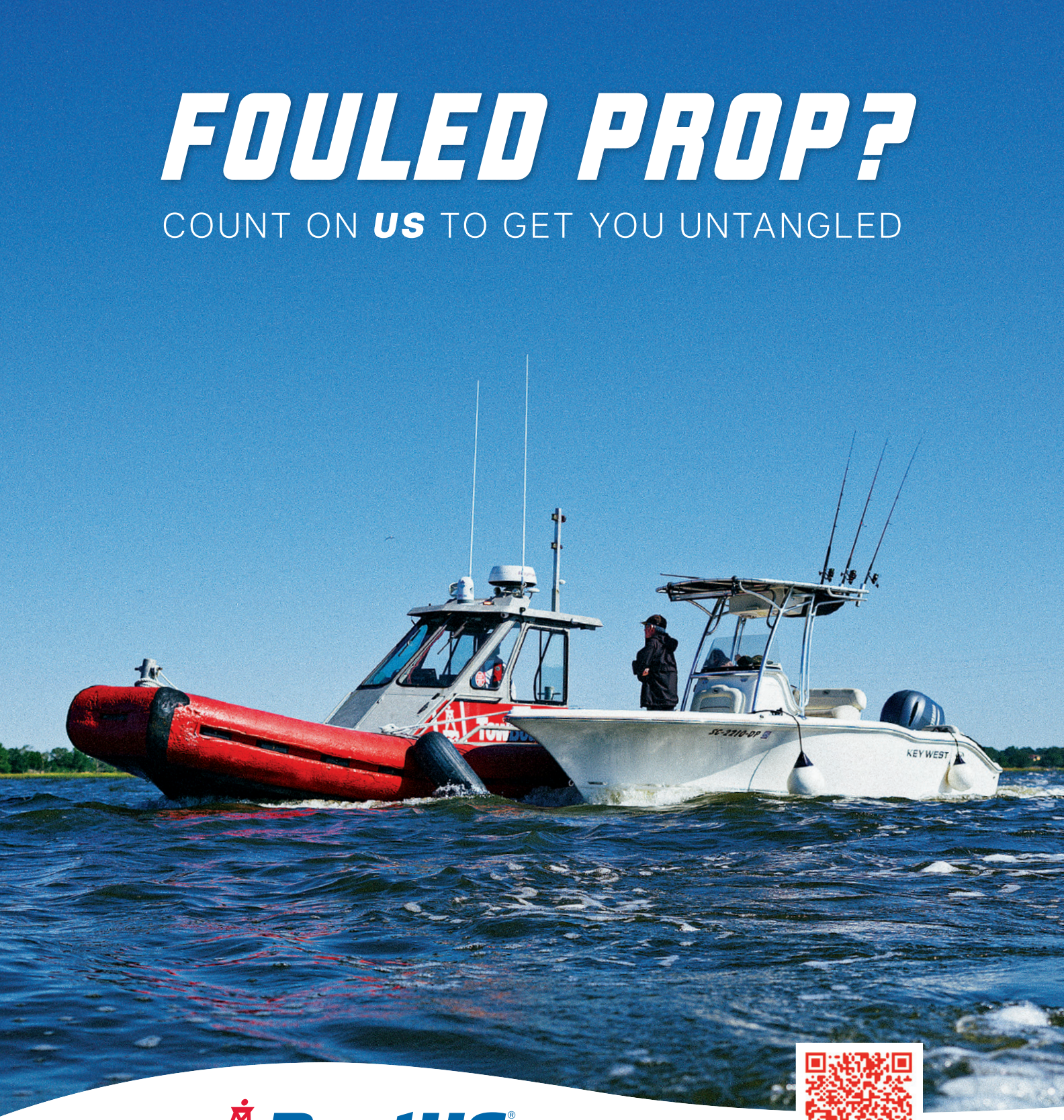

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16 LETTERS

Response to "Necessary or Nice: Cruising with a Code Zero"

Hi Joe and *48° North* crew,

There's room for different opinions and priorities in sailing, but I'm writing to disagree with perspectives shared in December's Necessary or Nice article about Code Zeros. The authors' views seem misaligned with most sailors I'm aware of—cruisers and racers, near and far, clients and friends.

My opinions don't exist in a vacuum. I've been a sailmaker for 38 years, have done 13 trans-Pacific races, I own the Baja Ha-Ha that introduces many to offshore sailing, and I have enjoyed dozens of ocean cruises—to Mexico, to Hawaii, Madeira and Canary Islands—as well as extensive cruising in the Salish Sea. Through it all, I have thousands of miles with a Code Zero, and also have helped countless people with Code Zeros that we have produced (including the one in the article made for the previous owner of their boat). Unlike almost all sails, a cruising Code Zero is a *much better* sail than a racing Code Zero. Racing Code Zeros have to meet certain measurement requirements; whereas for the cruiser, we can just make the best sail.

One of my main contentions is a false premise. Their article frames a choice between a genoa and Code Zero. Yet in my experience, far more sailors choose between a *Code Zero and a spinnaker.* A Code Zero is not a replacement for a genoa, but rather a safer, easier, more versatile alternative to a spinnaker.

Compared to a spinnaker, the Code Zero is safer and much stronger and more durable than standard or even heavyweight spinnaker material (the authors' statement that the laminates used in Code Zeros are easily overstressed in building breeze is simply not accurate—you would be hard-pressed to have the sail fail before the crew or boat decided it was too much).

Furling Code Zeros on a torsion line have many safeguards for cruisers over spinnakers and poled-out genoas.

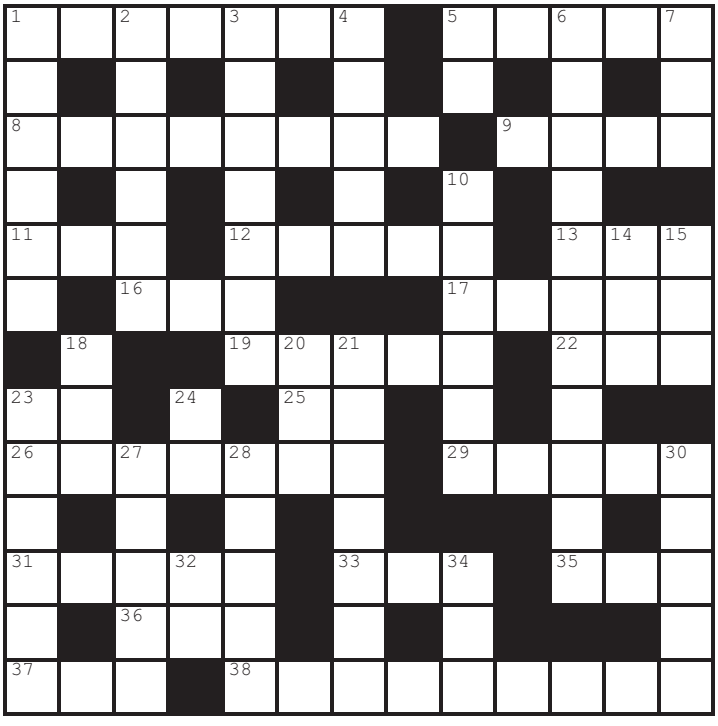
- They do not easily wrap around the forestay or hour-glass.
- They can be up and furled at the dock or moorage. Left up for days, ready for easy, fast deployment when conditions arise.
- You can deploy and furl without leaving the cockpit.
- They are steadier and can be cleated with the autopilot on.
- I can completely rig a Code Zero faster than I could set up a pole to "wing-out" a genoa; and if the Code Zero is already hoisted and furled, it's substantially faster to begin using.
- No pole allows an unobstructed path to the bow. This is important shorthanded or at night.

About 25% of the boats on the last Baja Ha-Ha had Code Zeros as their only downwind sail. All had a great trip down the coast, much faster than if they only had a genoa.

When crossing large bodies of water, speed and versatility equal options. It's wise cruising practice to make your passage as short as possible to limit exposure to adverse weather and other ocean challenges. Having good downwind performance can make your passage faster, safer, and more enjoyable.

Chuck Skewes
Owner, Ullman Sails Pacific Northwest and San Diego

18 CROSSWORD *AND* TRIVIA



ACROSS

1 Release a vessel from its mooring, 2 words
5 Makeshift "boats" when all else fails
8 Relating to ships or sailing
9 Floating marker in the sea
11 Everything
12 Pacific, e.g.
13 Pipe fitting shape
16 Baton Rouge college letters
17 A fitting on which ropes are fastened
19 Splash about
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25 Currently fashionable
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36 Wood used in boat building
37 Distress signal
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1 Sail material
2 Sudden strong wind, often with rain
3 Threatening, as dark skies
4 Hull
5 Nurse, abbr.
6 Stormy conditions, 2 words
7 Overhead expanse
10 Heavy ship-securing device
14 Go on and on
15 Capt.'s prediction, abbr.
18 Before, prefix
20 Illuminated
21 Winning, 3 words
23 Sideways movements of a vessel due to wind or current
24 Puget Sound's state, abbr.
27 Stabilizer systems on a boat, abbr.
28 Assignments
30 Carry along
32 Hollywood's home, abbr.
34 Thanks, for short

» See solution on page 51

DID YOU KNOW?

by Bryan Henry

Ninety Mile Beach on the North Island of New Zealand is actually only about 60 miles long.

The islands of Mauritius lie on the Mascarene Archipelago, once a land bridge linking Asia and Africa.

The world's tallest mountain is Hawaii's Mauna Kea, not Mt. Everest. This volcanic peak rises more than 32,000 feet above the floor of the Pacific—10 percent higher than its Himalayan rival.

Tasmania, during the last glaciation period about 18,000 years ago, when sea levels were about 300 feet lower, was joined to the mainland.

A volcanic archipelago, Fiji comprises more than 330 islands, but only 110 are permanently inhabited.

The word atoll, for a ring-shaped coral island and reef enclosing a lagoon, comes from atolu, a native word for the Maldive Islands in the Indian Ocean.

To take or swallow something "hook, line and sinker" is to be gullible, but it originated as a fisherman's term for a fish so hungry that it practically hooked itself, that is, it took the whole rigging, hook, line and sinker.

For centuries before starboard and port were used to indicate the right and left sides of a boat, facing the bow, the term starboard and larboard were used. Larboard was supplanted by port because of the similarity of sounds in starboard and larboard, which was thought to be the cause of serious collisions.

Fore and aft, meaning front and back, or everywhere, as in "The children hung to the Santa Claus fore and aft as he dispersed candies," first appeared in the first half of the 1600s as a nautical term meaning the bow, or front, and the stern, or back, of a vessel.

Many naval and seafaring terms originate in Holland and the Scandinavian countries. The word dock comes from the Middle Dutch docke.

To make leeway, meaning to struggle out of a difficult position, especially by recovering lost time, and dating to the early 19th century, originally was a nautical term dating from the mid 17th century for the drift of a ship toward the side downwind of its course.

The word kelp was originally a term for the residue resulting from burning brown seaweeds, which was used in soap-making.

low tides » *Products News*

» OFFSHORE STREAM 6 LIFERAFT

If you're planning on doing any coastal or offshore voyaging, a liferaft is a worthwhile investment in safety. Superior Lifesaving Equipment's Offshore Stream is an ideal offshore liferaft, suitable for any recreational cruiser. The Offshore Stream provides an industry leading 4 feet of floor space per passenger. Coupled with an insulated floor and high-vis canopy, the Offshore Stream provides the balance and security needed when venturing offshore. An automatic inflatable ramp, internal boarding ladder and automatically-deployed oversized ballast system ease embarkation for passengers. Multiple viewing ports, SOLAS-grade reflective tape, automatic canopy strobe light, and offshore equipment pack make this an excellent option for the bluewater boater. The Offshore Stream is available in 4, 6, and 8 passenger capacity, and is offered in a fiberglass container or vinyl soft pack.

Price: Starting at $1,885 » www.superiorlifesaving.com

» DOCK BUDDIE

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Price: $59-$79 » www.dockbuddie.com

» UNCHARTED SUPPLY CO FIRST AID PRO

Not your average first aid kit, the First Aid Pro is intentionally designed to handle emergencies when the unexpected happens, because having the right gear can make all the difference in these critical moments. Perfect for all types of boaters, the First Aid Pro is loaded with professional-grade supplies trusted by first responders and outdoor experts alike, and is housed in a compact, ultra-durable, and water-resistant case. Its all-purpose use covers cuts, sprains, burns, bleeding, and more—designed to help you respond to both minor injuries and serious emergencies. And the included Slishman Pressure Wrap functions as a compression bandage, splint support, or tourniquet in emergencies—giving you multiple life-saving tools in a single item. The First Aid Pro is built to thrive in marine environments and should be an essential part of your boat's equipment list.

Price: $79 » www.unchartedsupplycompany.com

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COMING HOME

by **Dennis Bottemiller**

Whatever marvels to the north drew these cruisers, when they make it back to Blake Island on the return trip, they feel they're in home waters.

At this time of year, I start to think about the one big trip we'll do for the summer and where we might go. I'm not much of a planner, but the dark months always lead me to dwell on the long sunny days on the water to come. These thoughts that pass for trip planning bubble up during idle moments or when I'm doing some mindless task like pulling blackberry vines out of my garden. Such pleasant visions of new adventures on our boat keep my mind from the stab wound in my neck where the vine swung around and got me after I cut it.

Enjoying coffee in the quiet darkness of January pre-dawn with Tim Tim the salty old sailor dog keeping my feet warm and twitching with his own dreams of summery times (I imagine), I happily lean-in to this rumination that is both rosily reflective and forward-looking. It occurs to me how sweet the feelings of coming home from that summer trip are. Not the actual *arrival* at home but the *way* home, just before the end of the trip.

Our cruise to the Gulf Islands of British Columbia aboard our C-Dory 22 Cruiser, *Sea Lab*, last summer was eventful and full of marvel at new places and experiences. Boating in new waters (or even anticipating doing so) carries with it the giddiness of discovery as well as the danger of the unknown around every bend. We love the feelings that come with such fresh explorations but, after a couple of weeks, we tire a bit and have thoughts of home and the comfort of our day-to-day routines of retired life. With each day's travel south from wherever our turnaround point was, the homeward-bound sentiment intensifies as the distance from home gets smaller, and memories flood in on a tide of friendly familiarity in every island, cove, and vista.

This 'going home' feeling is precisely why I don't like to trailer the boat north to a launch point that gets us closer to our destination but would require a haul-out and drive when we get back to our starting point. I just don't want to go home on the freeway; I prefer to savor a slower return trip. Maybe it hearkens back to finally turning around for home on each of my two cruises on the aircraft

The Sea Lab *crew had wonderful adventures in the Gulf Islands, but began the special homeward bound portion of the journey after a visit to Pirates Cove.*

carrier in the Western Pacific. These were long voyages, with discovery in spades and all manner of distractingly hard work keeping our minds off being away from home; but oh the feeling when it was announced we were heading east. The anticipation as we drew ever-nearer was something I can never forget.

Back in the Salish Sea last summer, we decided it was time to mosey south after visiting Pirates Cove on BC's DeCourcy Island. There were still many places to enjoy before we made it to our local waters, and we took advantage of new pathways in getting there.

Whatever wondrous reaches of the north draw us in during our summertime cruise, getting to Blake Island on the return trip is always when we sense we're pretty well home. We have been going there since our canoe days when we would launch from Manchester Beach, paddle across to the amazing camping spots, and set-up for a weekend of campfires and beachcombing for agates. Our kids grew up there. It's an extraordinary place that just feels right to us.

When we stopped at Blake Island at the end of our cruise in 2025, the days of early September were growing shorter. It was quiet—a good time to sit on the beach looking back at the city bustle of Seattle, reminiscing about all the times we've had on that cruise, and on that island through the decades. On this visit we had plenty of time, so we stayed two nights soaking in the beauty, collecting the delicious late-summer huckleberries, and kind of missing the old Argosy boats that would bring scores of noisily enthusiastic tourists and the following occasion to relish the quiet when they left.

The author's best-ever Blake Island agate.

We never tire of hiking on the island, whether we're doing the low tide walk all the way around on the beach or the inland trails that crisscross the park. One of the days on our recent visit, luck was with me and I found my best-ever Blake agate on the north beach.

As it always does, the time came to go south through Colvos Passage. Even though we could easily make it home to Fair Harbor from Blake, we like to pad the end of our trips with a little recovery time before diving back into "regular" life—we swore off getting home late the night before we had to go to work the next morning. Just because we don't have to go to work any longer, old habits die hard; so we still make sure we have that time at the end of the trip, we just use it differently. I've shifted that gear right out of the gearbox, so to speak.

Crossing through Dalco Passage we turn the corner around Point Defiance and the big bridges across the Narrows come into view. I love the Narrows transit and its sense of a grand entrance to the South Sound as we cross under the bridge. Now that our home port is in Case Inlet, the bridge is a very real landmark on our return.

After refueling at Narrows Marina, we head northwest up Hale Passage along Fox Island, taking a slow detour through Wollochet Bay all the way to Artondale to look at the fancy homes and all the ski boats on private docks. Continuing on, we pass tiny Tanglewood Island where we once anchored our sailboat *Moondance* in the middle of a slalom ski course—something we learned moments after we were set for the night when a ski boat zoomed out from one of the private docks and asked us to move because we were smack-dab in the middle of their fun. We had wondered what the little floating orange ball buoys meant! Sure enough, at 7 a.m. the next morning they were racing through the course throwing a big arch of water from a single ski. It was a good show with our morning coffee.

Around the north end of Fox Island, we cross Carr Inlet to another of our favorite spots, Penrose Point State Park, where the water gets real shallow on the way in toward the dock. We were always nervous going in with the sailboat but in *Sea Lab,* it doesn't bother us a bit. There's only one boat on the dock and the couple aboard are the friendly people we met at Blake Island on our way north at the beginning of the trip.

We drop the kayaks in the water and head up the bay for some high tide exploration, we had not paddled up that creek in many years and it is quite an interesting bay. Oddly, there is a small graveyard of tugboats that is photogenic in a melancholy way. There is also some very good beach walking here, and the minus-tide the next morning had exposed the long sand spit that extends northeast from the point. It's another good agate beach, but not so lucky for me this time. As we walk and talk about leaving, we elect to slow-motor along the shore all the way around the Key Peninsula.

There is, of course, tons to see and right away in Pitt Passage the way is interesting—shallow and rocky... with current. There was a lot of seabird and harbor seal activity as we cruised through the channel, longing to beach the boat and hike around McNeil Island. It looks so untouched and wild on most of it. For the uninitiated, the only way you can go ashore on McNeil is to check into the penitentiary, so I guess we don't want to go there afterall.

Past Filucy Bay and around Devil's Head we go, following the 75-foot bottom contour on the Lowrance. Madrone cliffs soar from the water's edge, trunks orange against the blue of sky, and the whole scene repeats itself on the glass of calm water.

There's a tension between wanting to get home and not wanting the trip to be over. It's a tension that I like to prolong for some reason, like being almost awake at the end of a pleasant dream. Maybe it's the same reason I like sad songs.

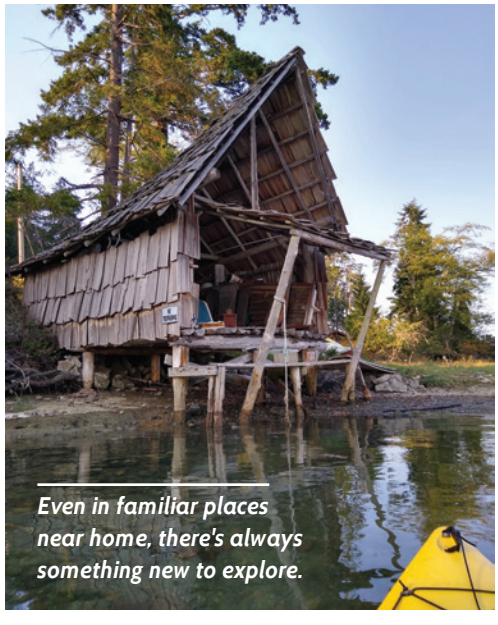
We drift and motor up the shore of Key Peninsula past Taylor Bay then Joemma Beach State Park, where we've made many memories in all five of the boats we have owned. As we pass, there is not a single boat on the water and all is quiet.

More floating north, then we enter the shallow passage inside Herron Island and cross paths with the little ferry shuttling island residents home. Just beyond lies Dutchers Cove, a shallow little bay our friends alerted us to as a place to drop anchor and swim in the summer. They say it's warm enough, I'm skeptical. Just a little farther north we reach Vaughn Bay where we turn straight west for the short crossing of Case Inlet and we're actually home.

As we tie up in our slip at Fair Harbor I realize the sweet feeling of being home and the comfort of where we are and think, "Maybe this is why we leave in the first place." What a privilege it is to have such a nice place to come home to. And to think, in just a few months we get to do it all again.

Dennis, Tekla, *and* ***Tim Tim*** *the sailor dog recently changed their home cruising waters from Tacoma to Case Inlet.*

The picturesque and melancholy tugboat graveyard in Mayo Cove near Penrose Point State Park.



Even in familiar places near home, there's always something new to explore.

THE ART OF A GOOD *ENGINE* BREAK-IN

by **Meredith Anderson**

Meredith breaking in her newly rebuilt diesel (properly!).

After a lot of hard work, money, and diligence, you finally have a new or freshly rebuilt engine installed in your boat. Congratulations! Speaking from personal experience, it feels *so good* to have an engine that starts easily and runs well, especially when travelling outside of your home turf.

Now that the engine swap is over with, how do you get off on the right foot with maintenance and operation practices that will help avoid having to pull it again after only a few years? You may recall from past articles that I see too many low-hour engines in my shop with copious amounts of blowby, hard starting issues, and other problems. Many of these complications are related to an improper break-in procedure. Such trouble starts early and can be attributed, in part, to incomplete or outright incorrect information from some in the industry. I want to set the record straight and share my advice—based on my training and experience—so your engine can last as long as possible!

An all-too-common phrase I hear with new engines is, "You don't need to break-in your engine because it's already done at the factory." False. This is so far from true, and it guarantees you will have consistent compression problems from the beginning. Having worked for an engine manufacturer, it is true that we would put the new and rebuilt engines on the dyno for initial testing (a dynamometer or "dyno" is a diagnostic tool with the ability to measure an engine's power and performance under simulated conditions). However, this testing was nowhere near enough to properly seat piston rings against the cylinder wall. The break-in procedure is the responsibility of the new owner and is typically around 100 hours (according to most manufacturers).

The first 100 hours are the most critical for an engine that is new or freshly rebuilt. A lot happens between Hour 1 and Hour 100 that can affect the performance for the lifetime of the engine, and neglecting these procedures will ensure more premature wear-and-tear than normal. During the engine break-in period, there will be some excess metal-to-metal wear as new parts seat against one another. And while that is normal, we don't want that process to harm components over the long run. Here are some steps to take to ensure that your engine is broken-in properly.

1: CHANGE THE OIL EARLY AND OFTEN.

After the very first start and run, as new parts are seating, there will be some metal in the oil. This is normal, but you want to get this metal out as soon as possible to prevent scratching or damage to precise surfaces.

Whenever I rebuild an engine or install a new engine for a customer, after taking it out on its first run under load, we change the oil and sometimes it's fairly dirty after a single use, which is good. That means that the detergents in the oil have done their job to capture any debris. We want that to be flushed out by changing the oil.

While you can use a break-in specific oil, it typically is not required as most modern oils will do the job just fine; break-in oil is typically used at the manufacturer for the very first start on the dyno. After the first hour and first oil change, I typically advise people run the engine for 5 or 10 more hours before another oil change. During this period, the owner is instructed to vary RPM ranges and avoid excessive idling at all costs. After that, doing one more oil change prior to the 100 hour mark is a smart idea. After the initial 100 hours, then it is generally safe to adhere to the manufacturer's specifications for regular oil change intervals.

2: AVOID IDLING OR LOW SPEED OPERATION AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

During the first 100 hours or so, most manufacturers advise running the engine harder under load while varying RPMs periodically during cruising. While I don't encourage you to run full speed through a marina, get out of your slip, clear any obstacles, and then get the engine up to speed as quickly as you can and keep it up there. It is good practice to continue this type of use for the remainder of the engine's life, as running the engine within its designed range is good for keeping its internals clean and clear of soot and carbon.

A lot of boatowners are afraid to run their new engines "hard" for fear of damaging them. While doing the initial seatrial, it is *required* to run the engine up to 100% under load for a short period to verify the vessel is propped correctly and that the engine is sized correctly. Failure of a yard or mechanic to do this will void any warranty if there is a failure, so make sure the engine is able to utilize all of its operating range without problems before leaving the yard.

3: VARY YOUR RPMS WHILE CRUISING.

Yanmar, Kubota, Cummins, Beta, and many others encourage you to run your engine at varying RPMs during the first 100 hours, typically calling for changes in speed every hour or two. Mix it up, you don't have to change speed much, just change it 100 RPM or so. If you are going to run it at 100%, avoid running at this speed for more than 5 or 10 minutes, but any other speeds are safe except idling (limit any excess idling, since this does the most damage). Check your temps, oil pressures, etc., with a mechanic during the initial hour to verify the install was correct and all systems are happy.

IT REALLY IS *THAT* CRUCIAL!

Breaking-in your engine is one of the most important things you can do to ensure good performance and longevity. While an engine that wasn't broken-in will still run, it will quickly develop cylinder glazing and stuck pistons rings, which will harm compression numbers, limit performance, prematurely damage parts and cause the engine to run rather uneconomically for the remainder of its life.

I see many engines with fewer than 400 hours on my workbench for a rebuild because owners were too afraid to break them in properly. Your engine will perform for thousands of hours without issue if you follow these tips. Now get out there and enjoy your new engine.

A bore-scope look inside a healthy cylinder with more than 30,000 hours of use. Note the light, even crosshatch wear pattern.

Unlike the image above, this is the damage metal in the oil can do after just 100 hours of improper break-in.

Low hours engines should avoid shop time if they are broken-in well!

***Meredith Anderson** is the owner of Madame Diesel, LLC, where she operates a mobile mechanic service and teaches hands-on marine diesel classes to groups and in private classes aboard clients' own vessels.*

GO, STOP... *GO!*

CONNECTIONS AND REWARDS DURING THE PAUSE-POINTS OF CRUISING

by **Andy Cross**

The San Juan and Gulf islands. Alaska. Mexico. Colombia. Curaçao. The British Virgin Islands. Sint Maarten. There's a single-line that connects all of these places throughout our family's cruising odyssey. They're all locales where we've spent a significant amount of time rather than hopping through and waving goodbye, and the reasons for doing so vary. Now, we look back and appreciate the value, challenge, and connection that—planned or not—each of these places has brought about for us.

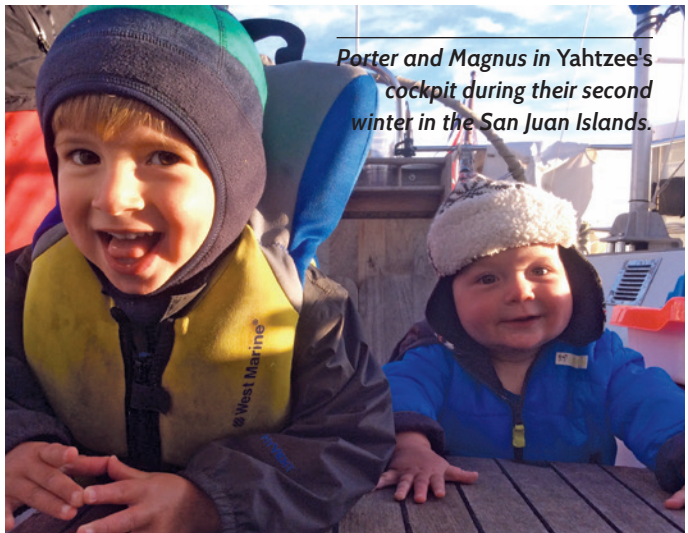
In 2014, when our family set off from D-Dock at Seattle's Shilshole Bay Marina and started cruising on our Grand Soleil 39, *Yahtzee*, we had an inkling of a plan, but no real way of knowing how long we would be out or exactly where we would go. What we've learned throughout our travels from the Pacific Northwest to our current location in Sint Maarten, Dutch West Indies, is that you have to be able to adjust on the fly, hit pause, and accept change for things like boat problems, variation of seasons, personal issues, travel off the boat, financial reasons, and even the unexpectedness of a global pandemic. It doesn't matter if your intended cruise is one, two, or three years, or open-ended, at some point, challenges and major decisions will come your way.

Cruising may seem synonymous with near constant travel, but our years underway have been punctuated by a number of relatively long stops. Whether or not we saw them coming, they have all been truly special parts of our journey. Here's how our family has navigated some of the major life choices, ordeals, adventures, and escapades along the way, and what finding those deeper connections have meant to us.

Yahtzee *sails into the San Juans after leaving their permanent slip behind.*

At anchor in Bellingham a couple months before Magnus joined the crew.

Porter ready to help while leaving Anacortes to head out into the islands.



Porter and Magnus in Yahtzee's *cockpit during their second winter in the San Juan Islands.*

GAINING EXPERIENCE

It was early September when we cut our docklines to head out cruising, with a vague plan to head up to the San Juan Islands, Anacortes, and Bellingham area to cruise for the winter. Our firstborn son, Porter, was just over a year old and my wife, Jill, was pregnant with our second, who was due at the end of December. We set off with a "let's get out there and see what happens" mentality and the attitude that, if we needed to stop or if something wasn't working for us, we'd reassess and move forward accordingly. We weren't going to force it.

At this point we'd already lived aboard *Yahtzee* for two years and had taken every opportunity we could to daysail, race, and embark on short cruises from the South Sound to the San Juan Islands. Also, Jill and I had sailing and cruising experience in other parts of the world, so we had a good idea of what we were getting ourselves into. That said, we knew we needed to take it slow at first in order to gain experience as a young cruising family traveling full-time through groups of islands that we'd only been to once before for ten days.

Our second son, Magnus, joined us in Bellingham on December 27, 2014 and we were soon back out into the islands where we cut our teeth cruising through the winter while getting a simultaneous crash-course in parenting a newborn and a toddler. Looking back on it now, it seemed like a somewhat audacious plan that may have set us up for failure. But we took it slow, didn't move very far or very fast, and settled in to learn the rhythms of life together. We bonded as a family, but also with the natural beauty of the islands and the people who accepted and helped us. We spent many months cruising waters where some boaters might think they

Jill and Magnus walk over a glaciel outpouring in Glacier Bay National Park.

Yahtzee *tucked into her slip in Seward, Alaska.*

Porter, Jill, and Magnus are bundled up for an offseason cruise near Seward.

only "need" a few days, and we didn't shy away from returning to favorite spots many times or staying for long stretches in seemingly unremarkable locales. And we loved it.

It was a learning experience that would set the stage for a cruising philosophy that we still live by over a decade later: Move at a pace that suits us and our needs, be open to change, don't set a rigid or unrealistic schedule, take adversity as it comes.

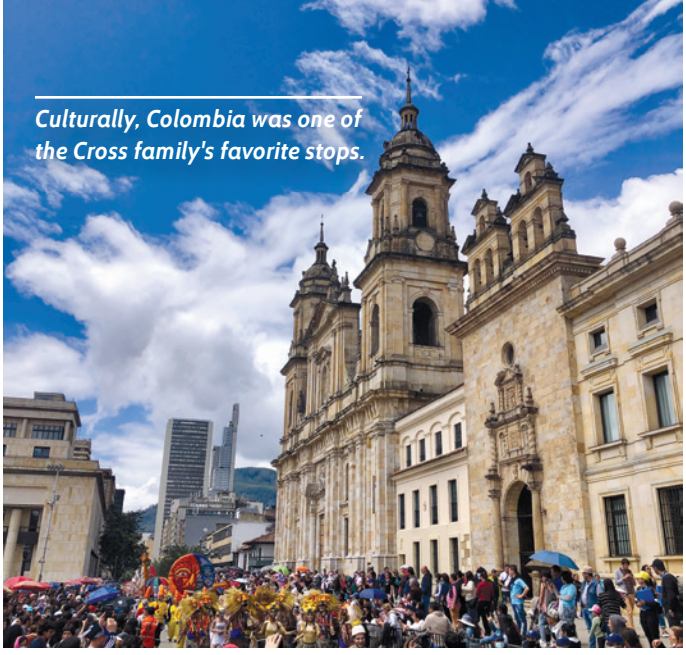
FILLING THE KITTY

After spending two winters in the San Juan and Gulf islands, and summers cruising north into Desolation Sound and around Vancouver Island, we were ready to head toward Alaska. In late April 2017, we sailed across the border and into Ketchikan and spent several glorious months cruising Southeast Alaska. In July we wanted to see more and pushed onward to Kodiak Island, the Kenai Peninsula, and Prince William Sound.

By August we were captivated by what we had experienced of Alaska, Jill's home state, and thought that we might stay longer and that she could find a job. During the years prior, I had worked remotely to keep us going, and by this point we firmly knew that long-term cruising was ahead of us. To help make going farther more attainable and to add some necessary upgrades to *Yahtzee*, Jill accepted a job in Seward, we got a slip in the harbor, and settled into a new routine. Also, after taking a few years off to raise our boys, she was looking forward to working again, even for a short time.

Seward turned out to be everything we'd wanted and more. We completed much of the work that we'd planned to do on the boat, made many sailing and non-sailing friends in the process, and lived in a stunningly beautiful place. It was a great community to plug into, and also offered local cruising opportunities that kept our skills sharp and heightened our sense of wanting to continue the sailing lifestyle. For avowed full-time cruisers, a nearly two-year stop with a permanent slip might seem like an eternity. But in reflecting on it today, it doesn't seem like we necessarily stopped cruising in Seward, we just had a different cruising approach that was preparing us to go farther.

In May 2019, it was with many bittersweet goodbyes that we shoved off once again and headed for Southeast Alaska,



Culturally, Colombia was one of the Cross family's favorite stops.

Magnus takes a llama ride in Colombia.

California, Mexico, and beyond. Fortunately, in doing so, we were accompanied by a buddy boat with kids who we are still wonderful friends with today—proof that cruising truly makes fast and lasting relationships that can transcend time and place.

SEASONAL REALITIES AND TRAVEL

In the high latitudes of Alaska, winter was the time to sit. When we got to the tropics, hurricane season became the pause-point. Some cruisers hunker down on their boats for hurricane season, but not many. Our insurance won't cover *Yahtzee* if it is in the water and damaged during a named storm, so every year we've found safe places to stash her.

For the first three seasons, our hurricane haulouts were in Mexico and, in each instance, we connected with fellow cruisers who were going through the same motions, and with the helpful staffs at boatyards and marinas. After passing through the Panama Canal, we've added Colombia, Curaçao, the British Virgin Islands, and Sint Maarten to that list, and each has been rewarding in their own ways.

With the boat safely put away, we learned very quickly that there's a world around us to explore. Twice in Chiapas, Mexico, we rented a car and explored the mountains and ancient ruins of the southern part of the country and the border area with Guatemala. We did so with two other buddy boats and the travel together, while not always easy, was ultimately fun and rewarding for all the parents and kids. The stories from those inland excursions still get told and laughed at around bonfires and at beach bars. Priceless memories.

In Colombia, we took time away from the boat to experience the country more intimately than just hopping along the coast. We lived in an apartment in Cartagena for a month while new interior cushions were being made for *Yahtzee*, and then spent six weeks living in the vibrant and fascinating city of Medellín. Taking time away from the boat and having these cultural encounters was illuminating for our entire family. We began to see the recurring theme that the rewarding experiences this life affords aren't purely dependent on us moving the boat from place to place uber frequently. And when it was time to get back to *Yahtzee* and set out cruising again, we were as eager as ever.

Along with exploring other countries, taking a pause for hurricane seasons has allowed us to stay connected with our family back in the United States. Each summer we take some time to travel back to see parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, cousins, and friends. Part of the reason we chose to cruise the Caribbean is so we can be relatively close in order to maintain and nourish those important relationships. After

Porter rides the waves in the British Virgin Islands.

all, they've been our biggest cheerleaders in living the cruising life.

HANDLING THE UNFORESEEN

While some stops are planned, others definitely are not. When the Covid pandemic hit in 2020 and everything came to a screeching halt, we were initially caught in a state of deep uncertainty. That March, we were in Mazatlán, Mexico, at a government-run marina to top up on provisions and do laundry. Suddenly, everything was closing down around us and we feared that if the marina and harbor were shut down, we'd be stuck. So, we quickened our pace and had a decision to make: Where do we go from here?

Talking to several cruisers on different parts of the Pacific Coast who were also scrambling in the face of changing rules, regulations, and lockdowns, we decided to join two buddy boats who also had kids, one of whom we'd cruised with previously in the Pacific Northwest. The three of us decided to hunker down in a section of coast south of Banderas Bay called Bahía Chamela—an area roughly 8 miles by 5 miles—somewhere we had visited previously and hoped would work for a potentially lengthy stay.

At that point, we'd been consistently on the move since leaving Seward, rarely staying in one place for long. We gambled that sparsely-populated Chamela would be a suitable place for a cruising quarantine home, and hit the brakes to wait out whatever happened with the pandemic. Not moving very far and living at anchor, our life slowed considerably. Week after week, month after month, we fell into simple routines: cooking, baking, reading, writing, playing games, surfing, fishing, swimming, and helping the boys with their schoolwork.

The abrupt three-plus-month pause in such a remote place was an unexpected change, but sailing fewer miles allowed us to gain a new perspective on cruising. We bonded with our buddy boats (nearly the only people we were allowed to see), explored uninhabited islands, and met a sweet local couple who helped us all get food and fuel. Certainly, it wasn't what we planned, but we made the best of it and remember it fondly.

Another unforeseen challenge in cruising is boat problems. Ours came in the form of a transmission failure, which prompted a lengthy stay in Curaçao and ultimately left us with fouled fuel tanks and engine trouble in the British Virgin Islands. This time, though, we weren't at the mercy of government rules and regulations; it was with getting parts, finding mechanics, and then actually having the work done. Frustration mounted in both instances as time wore on and marina moorage bills piled up.

Yet, there was once again a silver lining. We made friends and settled into two welcoming Caribbean islands that we now count as places we would gladly return to anytime. Best of all, our boys made buddies quickly, and it was comforting to hear a knock on our hull and then watch them scramble off the boat with a soccer ball or fishing rods in hand, only to return when the marina lights turned on. Such experiences wouldn't have happened for them had we been on the move, which is a reminder that no matter what adversity we're going through, there's usually something positive that we can sail away with.

Île Fourchue, near St. Barths, is a local cruising favorite close to Sint Maarten.

Pulling Yahtzee's engine out in the British Virgin Islands.

LIFE STILL HAPPENS

Along with the unforeseen, we've also come to adapt to the times when we know we need to pause for work obligations or for personal reasons. Jill and I both work remotely and there are instances when one of us needs to be gone for up to two or three weeks at a time. These stops are scheduled, but the trick is finding the right place for those on the boat to be that is cost effective and safe. Last year, Jill flew back to Alaska to work for three weeks, and the boys and I holed up in Antigua in one of our favorite anchorages. There were plenty of things to do nearby to keep us busy and, though we missed having her, we had a great time exploring ashore.

Our latest pause has been on the medical side. Along the way, we've received dental care in nearly every country we've visited, which has mostly been routine. But it's been no secret to us that, at some point both boys would need orthodontic care and braces. Since you can't just stop to have preliminary work done and then leave, we needed to find an orthodontist that would work with us and our lifestyle. In doing so, we had consultations on the French and Dutch side of Saint Martin/Sint Maarten and in Antigua. We liked the Dutch-side orthodontist best and found that Sint Maarten is an ideal place for us to live at anchor while also being able to cruise locally around the island, and to other nearby islands like St. Barth and Anguilla.

It's a best of both worlds solution and there are silver linings to this stop as well. The boys are receiving excellent and affordable care, we've all made friends, and they are thriving on the Sint Maarten Yacht Club racing team—loving practices, their coaches and teammates, and the many regattas that happen here. This isn't a forever stop, but we said from the beginning that if any of us need to pause for something like this, there is no question that we would do it. From here, who knows where the winds of change will take us.

DO YOUR THING

For new cruisers out there or for those who are planning on taking the leap, my best advice is to do it your way. Yes, you can and should read and learn from stories in books, sailing magazines, and online, and be inspired by countless YouTubers, but don't get so far into the weeds that you think it absolutely has to be done a certain way. It doesn't. Do it your way. Cut those dock lines with the assurance that the way you envision your cruising adventure will evolve and even be derailed by a broad array of choices and circumstances.

As long as you're staying safe, having fun, and following your dream of getting out there, nobody actually cares what boat you're on, how many miles you sail, or how many places you drop your anchor. There is no one in charge of issuing or revoking your "cruiser card". Stay true to yourself and make it work however you can. When you do that, the best parts of cruising will reveal themselves and the rewards will be long lasting. See you out here!

***Andy Cross** is the editor of* 48° North. *After years cruising the Pacific Northwest and Alaska with his family aboard their Grand Soleil 39,* Yahtzee, *they sailed south and are currently in the islands of the Eastern Caribbean.*

Porter and Magnus are part of a vibrant sailing team at the Sint Maarten Yacht Club.

Porter climbs up toward the mast before a night passage in Central America.

The Yahtzee crew in Nicaragua in 2021.

SALISH SEA VS *MEDITERRANEAN*

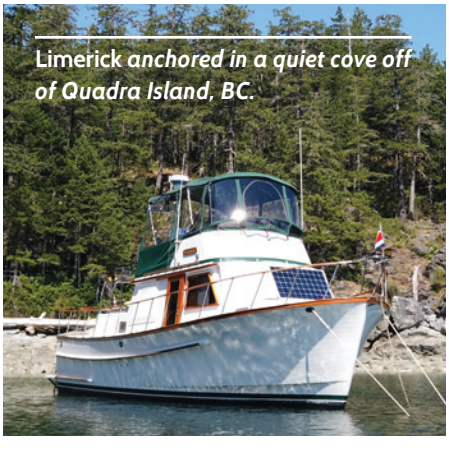
THE CONTRASTS IN CRUISING THESE TWO BEAUTIFUL REGIONS

by **Verena Kellner**

We recently spent six months cruising from Spain to France, Italy, Greece, and Turkey, and back to Greece. On this incredible Mediterranean adventure, we often found ourselves comparing the experience and our surroundings to our home cruising grounds in the Pacific Northwest.

We were aboard a power catamaran for this trip, which was the perfect platform for the Mediterranean. Our exploration of the Salish Sea, from Puget Sound to the northern end of Vancouver Island, over eight years, was aboard our 1980 Monk 36 trawler, *Limerick*—also a fairly perfect boat for cruising this area.

The Pacific Northwest has always offered a unique blend of beauty and logistical challenge, but we've never appreciated our home waters so much as when we saw how foundational they were to voyaging around the Mediterranean. While the scenery changes, the core skills required to cruise the Med are remarkably similar to those honed in the Salish Sea. Here are our observations on the parallels and divergences of these two magnificent cruising regions.



Limerick *anchored in a quiet cove off of Quadra Island, BC.*

Limerick *rests at anchor in the Harmony Islands.*

The couple's power cat anchored in the blue waters of Turkey.

SCENERY

The rugged wilderness of the Salish Sea is hard to beat. With its dense evergreen forests and snow-capped mountains, the coastline has a much different scale than the Mediterranean. It feels like true wilderness.

In contrast, the visual interest in the Med is oftentimes tied to something man-made. Ancient stone structures, terraced hillsides that have been tended for centuries, and coastal villages built into the rock—all surrounded by crystal-clear water.

SHORESIDE

Once you are north of Puget Sound, and especially north of Nanaimo, there are few facilities on shore. This makes the Salish Sea a cruising ground where self-sufficiency is prized and often required. You need to be your own mechanic and chef, as reprovisioning and repairs can be challenging. If there isn't a trail nearby, getting out in the kayak or dinghy is the best way to explore the shoreline. Though even in the most remote areas, there can be signs of human presence—sometimes you find an overhanging tree with a rope swing, or ancient petroglyphs and settlements of the Indigenous peoples who have lived along these coasts since time immemorial.

No matter where you are in the Mediterranean, thousands of years of civilization will be on display. While the Med definitely has secluded, natural anchorages, many more offer cultural and social experiences. One of our favorite memories was hiking to the ruins of an ancient city with Greek tombs and cisterns—it wasn't a tourist destination, just an unmanaged piece of history where we were the only people around. In the Cyclades Islands, we discovered small, family-run tavernas offering Greek hospitality and fresh-caught seafood. Often, moorings are provided for overnight stays, with the only cost being your patronage. The bill was typically in the 30-dollar range, including wine. On the water and ashore, you are never far from something that connects you to Europe's long history—whether it's miles-long handcrafted stone walls or ancient breakwaters still protecting the local fishing fleet.

ANCHORING & DOCKING

The Salish Sea was the perfect training ground for the Mediterranean. In many ways, a shore-tie is just the wilderness version of a Med-moor. Both require backing toward shore while dropping anchor and securing the stern to keep the boat from swinging. Whether you're tying to an ancient quay in Greece, a busy marina in France or Italy, or a ring in a quiet British Columbia cove, the mechanics are the same. The only real difference is whether you're stepping onto a concrete pier or paddling over to barnacle-covered rocks. The coast of Turkey is actually quite similar to the Salish Sea, with a steep and deep tree-covered shoreline, so we shore-tied quite frequently there.

In the Med, we were able to really hone our anchoring skills. The water is so clear that you can see exactly how the anchor behaves once it's dropped. Unlike the dark depths of the Salish Sea, where you rely entirely on the feel of the chain, the Med gives you the visual confirmation of seeing the anchor bury itself in the sand and the chain pay out along the bottom.

TRANSPORTATION

Unless you want to spend all your time at a marina, a dinghy is nonnegotiable in both cruising regions. We use it for shopping, fishing, and reaching our favorite trails in the Salish Sea, some of which lead to freshwater swimming lakes. We also love complementing our dinghy with a kayak or paddleboard, which makes

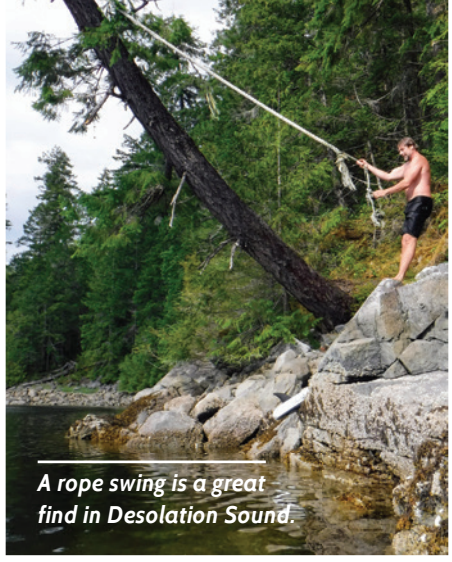
The author's partner, Mike, cleans mussels with his dad on Limerick's *swim step.*

Fresh salmon is always a treat in the Salish Sea.

shore-tying much easier and is a more immersive way to explore the shoreline.

In Greece, we spent hours exploring limestone grottos. These sea caves are only accessible with a small boat. Once inside, the sunlight reflects off the sandy bottom, giving the water a blue glow.

Regardless of the location, a stern anchor is essential to keep the dinghy from chafing against a rocky beach or concrete quay—another stern tie setup, but with the boat reversed. A bungee anchor line is especially useful; it keeps the dinghy safely offshore but allows you to pull it back to the beach at almost any stage of the tide. For more details, see our article in the March 2022 issue of *48° North* about setting up your dinghy for cruising success.



A rope swing is a great find in Desolation Sound.

SWIMMING & DIVING

We visited the Mediterranean during winter and spring, and the water was fairly cold. Mike swam nearly every day, but I needed a very sunny day to get in. Mid-to-late summer is the best time to visit if you want warm water.

Surprisingly, in spite of the Salish Sea's predominantly cold water, some fjords can reach over 70°F (21°C) in the summer at the top layer. Best of all, Vancouver Island blocks the clouds, leaving that part of the Salish Sea with plenty of sunshine.

Mike freedives frequently, mostly to check the anchor and explore the anchorage, but we haven't done any scuba in either location. Since we were in the Med in winter and early spring, a 2-3 mm wetsuit was needed, but in the Salish Sea, you need a 5 mm suit and a high tolerance for the cold. While you can find warm surface water temperatures in certain fjords, you'll encounter a thermocline just a few feet down that drops the temperature by 20 degrees instantly.

WILDLIFE

We didn't see much underwater wildlife in the Med. As with the scenery above the water, the most interesting finds are usually human artifacts, such as shipwrecks. We spotted a few small groupers among the rocks and speared some invasive lionfish in Turkey.

The Salish Sea, by contrast, has amazing wildlife, from orcas, octopus, and osprey to seals, sea lions, and salmon. Given the right timing, the fishing is outstanding, and oysters, mussels, and clams can be picked right off the rocks from your kayak. Since we like fishing while in the water, we enjoy diving for crab and shellfish in this part of the world. Keep a close eye on the charts; many of the best anchorages are inside Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs), which have strict bans on spearfishing.

When it comes to large sea life, the Mediterranean experience is a bit more subtle. Though we had a magical moment with a huge pod of dolphins and hundreds of sea turtles floating past as we crossed from Italy to Greece, the sea itself can feel rather devoid of wildlife. Our most exciting "wildlife" encounters were actually on land. Sheep and goats freely roam the hillsides; their jingling bells like distant windchimes.

SEAS

In the Mediterranean, swells have room to build over a thousand miles from Gibraltar, which can generate dangerous, steep, short seas. While the Salish Sea doesn't have as much fetch, seas can build rapidly when the wind blows, especially against the tide, making for a very wet ride. The straits of Juan de Fuca or Georgia can provide some local context for the Mediterranean's short chop—when it's rough, it's nasty. Thankfully, in both locations, seas settle quickly after a big blow, and mariners can make many miles on perfectly flat waters.

WIND

Wind has pinned us to the dock in Nanaimo for days while waiting to cross the Strait of Georgia. Once you get into the fjords around Desolation Sound, there's very little wind, and you can usually find a quiet place to anchor and get a good night's rest even when it's blowing in the strait.

Conversely, anchoring in the Mediterranean requires constant weather monitoring. Winds can shift

Diving wrecks in Greece was a highlight.

Dolphins play in front of the boat in the Ionian Sea.

These cruisers found a power catamaran to be the perfect platform for cruising the Mediterranean. Here, it's a typical Med-moor setup with lines run to a quay.

Blue Grotto is a must-see when cruising in Greece.

unexpectedly, bending around islands and capes, turning a seemingly calm anchorage into a long, sleepless night. It's no surprise the Mediterranean has the highest concentration of specifically-named local winds in the world. In both locations, it often seemed like either too much wind or not enough wind for a sailboat.

We mostly used PredictWind for weather routing. It was really helpful for visualizing how the wind changes throughout the passage. The only drawback is that you cannot set the comfort level to less than 2.5-meter waves. For the Med, our preferred comfort threshold is one meter or less.

TIDES

The Mediterranean Sea has only about a foot of tidal change, so it's not much of a factor. The Salish Sea, on the other hand, has an average tidal range of eight to twelve feet, and even more as you go farther north. Changing depths must be considered when anchoring, and narrow passes must be timed with great accuracy to avoid the strongest currents, which can exceed 12 knots in places. One book we found helpful in tackling the timing of the passes was "Local Knowledge" by Kevin Monahan.

LOGS

We made several overnight passages in the Med after carefully picking our weather windows. Cruising at night is never really easy, but fewer risks are hiding in those waters than at home. In the Salish Sea, we would never attempt to be underway in the dark due to the deadheads and logs that could end a trip very badly. One of our friends learned this lesson the hard way—he got a log jammed in his prop during the maiden voyage of his brand-new boat, causing severe damage. It's particularly challenging after King Tides or heavy rains, but the logs are a part of life and an ever-present concern in the Pacific Northwest.

CRUISING GUIDES

In the Med, we primarily used the Navily app to find marinas and anchorages. Users can post photos and descriptions of anchorages, and partner marinas can provide quotes instantly. Navily isn't as widely used in the United States and Canada, but there are many alternative options. We mostly use the Salish Sea Pilot, an interactive, digital cruising guide in PDF format with beautiful chartlets of all anchorages, including where to shore-tie or drop the hook.

THE VERDICT

If you are preparing for the cruising life, the Salish Sea is the ultimate training ground. It will teach you how to become self-sufficient, manage tidal currents, handle limited shore support, and anchor like a pro, all while sheltered from the open ocean. The Salish Sea provides the invaluable lessons you need to sail the world.

While the Salish Sea builds your technical foundation, the Mediterranean hones those skills through constant weather vigilance and high-precision maneuvering. You'll learn to anticipate how local winds bend around ancient headlands and master the finesse of dropping anchor in crystal-clear water with inches to spare between your neighbors.

If we could only return to one, where would we go? Between the rugged coast of the Salish Sea and the historic landscapes of the Mediterranean, we find it impossible to choose—one feeds the soul with awe-inspiring wilderness, while the other enriches it with thousands of years of human story. We'll simply let the wind and tide decide, trading one spectacular horizon for another. 48°

Verena Kellner *and* ***Mike Castle*** *are professional captains and hydrographers who map the seafloor when they aren't cruising or delivering boats. Verena's offshore experience started early, sailing from Germany to San Diego at age 15. Together, they spent two years sailing the Sea of Cortez, and have been navigating the Salish Sea on various boats since 2008—including eight years aboard their trawler,* Limerick. *They document their adventures at* **PacificSailors.com**.

TEAM *TIPS UP* RETURNS TO R2AK

by **Joe Cline**

Photo by Taylor Bayly.

THE DYNAMIC DUO THAT COMPLETED RACE TO ALASKA ON A HOBIE 16 IS BACK FOR 2026 WITH ANOTHER HULL AND A NEW TEAMMATE

I'd rank John Ped and Kaila Pfrang's successful R2AK on a Hobie 16 catamaran high among the epic race's most impressive feats. Just arriving in Ketchikan leaves them in a class of one (no one else has made it on a Hobie 16), but the WAY they did it—smoothly (relatively), quickly, adeptly, positively... I'm a fan. And I guess the good feelings go both ways: I captioned my cover shot of them on the August 2024 issue of 48° North *with a description of the pair as "scrappy and well sailed," which John told me is "one of the kindest compliments we've ever gotten." They're back for R2AK 2026 on a Diam 24 trimaran, and they've added Kaila's dad Chris to the crew. I recently got to interview them for the R2AK Podcast.*

Tell us about your decision to come back and do R2AK again?

John: Kaila and I finished the last R2AK in about 9 days. The last two days were really a joy, and we stepped off the boat knowing we wanted to do it again. We didn't know necessarily what it was going to look like, or who was going to be on the team; and we were lucky to have the three of us come together and the right boat present itself. Really, we just had such an incredible time and a great adventure in the last race.

John and Kaila, you're a sailing power couple. Why screw that up by adding a third person to the boat?

Kaila: It comes down to sailing through the night. I hadn't expected to do much of that and was pretty nervous about sailing through the night on our first R2AK. After Bella Bella, we ended up having the opportunity to essentially go straight through. It was so magical and so fun, and really not what I would have thought. So by adding a third, it means we may get to sail straight through and experience the race in a whole different way.

I do want to ask you about the plan to sail all the way through but first, Chris, how are you feeling about joining these skilled multihull maniacs?

Chris: Well, a little intimidated. They've set a really high bar, but I'm really happy that I'm able to join them and be part of the team. It's already been so much fun planning this out, trying equipment, putting things together, splitting up duties, and everybody's taken on particular aspects of preparation they feel they could contribute to most. All of that together makes this a real adventure and also a real challenge, and something to really look forward to.

Was there anything about John and Kaila's 2024 R2AK that specifically made you want to join the team?

Chris: Definitely. I was at the start in Port Townsend helping

It's still hard to believe Kaila and John made it safely to Ketchikan on this boat. And fast!

them out with the boat and putting the last things together. Then, I was in Victoria taking apart a pedal drive in the middle of the night and putting that back together, and being part of the cheerleading team. At that point, a part of me was saying, "Hey, I want to do this."

John and Kaila, remind me about your sailing backgrounds?

Kaila: My sailing background is primarily high school and college sailing. My dad and I sailed 505s together for a while, so I think that's kind of what got me into more high-performance sailing. We sail Vipers all together. And then up into the Diam, basically adding a hull every year for the past three years of my life.

John: My background's similar, definitely focused on dinghies. I grew up in catamarans, high school sailing, college sailing, some skiff sailing. And I was super fortunate in high school to join a Transpac campaign. I did two Transpacs with a team and got to see behind the scenes all the work that goes into putting together a program like that. That got me some offshore experience.

How about your sailing history, Chris?

Chris: I don't want to say too much, I might not be able to join the team any longer if I tell them how little I actually know. But I've really gotten into sailing since Kaila started, and developed ever since. I became a sailing instructor and have been doing junior sailing with kids throughout the school years for Kaila and her siblings.

You guys say that the origin of your team is a bar in Germany between karaoke songs. The really important question is: What were your song choices?

Kaila: I believe my sister and I sang "Dancing Queen." It was definitely a Mamma Mia song.

John: I was there to cheer on Kaila and her sister; and to talk Race to Alaska plans with her dad. I showed him pictures of the Diam 24 that I wanted us to buy.

Speaking of the Diam 24, share a bit about the arc to landing on that boat. What made it the choice for you for R2AK 2026?

John: We were initially looking at boats more similar to the Hobie 16—like F18s—and Kaila and I doing another doublehanded attempt. But we really couldn't piece together being doublehanded and being able to sail through the night. So we started expanding the scope and landed on boats that were big enough for three. We looked at taking the Viper, which is a 22-foot keelboat that's really more geared towards inshore buoy racing.

Then we stumbled upon the Diam 24 while we were doing a test sail of an F18 in San Francisco. We saw this boat—it looked powerful, well-built—and as we started researching, it turns out it comes from a really reputable designer and builder in France. These boats have been raced on a professional circuit there, so they're well-proven and get pushed super hard. We liked a lot of its features: it was compact, easy to push with a pedal drive, but also had a lot of power. It's super stable, has full-length amas and twin rudders, and really robust construction. So we felt like it was a good balance of fun and sporty, cost-effective, and also safe and stable.

I've picked up noise from some internet opinionistas—not necessarily reliable sources—about the Diam 24's narrow entries and concerns about buoyancy in seas, like the boat specializes more in flat water. Has that been something you've noticed in training, or do you have other information that suggests sailing it in seas is going to be just fine?

Chris: John and I doublehanded the boat in pretty big seas—4 to 5 feet? The boat handled really well upwind. We had to throttle it back a little bit because it wanted to go faster and faster and, given the sea state, we wanted to keep the boat safe. Downwind was similar—we had to throttle it, but it was sailable and maneuverable and responded well. With the sail choices we've made and the reefs we've added, I think the boat will be able to perform in almost all but the most extreme conditions. We're really happy with the setup, how it handled, and how easy it was to sail in those conditions.

Kaila: I'd add that coming from monohulls and then the Hobie 16—which is a very tippy boat—especially around Cape Caution where every wave we were jumping forward to keep the boat down, I've been very impressed with how the Diam 24 handles. It feels shockingly stable. In big puffs, we're able to turn that into speed instead of flying over quickly.

Chris: One of the things that really surprised me early on, coming from monohulls, sailing the Diam 24 in flat water—we're sailing along and then see the actual speed of the boat and we could barely believe it. We're going 16, 17 knots, and

Team Tips Up's new whip, a Diam 24.

Kaila, John, and Chris training on their new boat.

it felt like going fast in a 420. It was so stable and impressive how slow you felt, even though you were going really fast for a sailboat.

In what ways does the boat decision influence your planning?

John: The biggest thing is weight management. We're tracking every ounce we bring. Any weight we add is a detriment to performance. We're focused on keeping weight down and systems simple, but not skimping where we need to make the boat survivable, fast under the pedal drive, and warm enough when sleeping.

Kaila: I want to say we only have about 140 pounds for everything—food, gear, water, sleep system, pedal drive—all of that within the boat's limits.

Can you dig into what round-the-clock sailing will look like on the 24?

Kaila: We'll be more strict on a shift schedule. Last time, John and I were roughly on shifts, but if we were both tired, we'd dock and sleep. When we sailed through the night, one person would take the bulk of it, then switch near sunrise. This time, a bit more structure.

We're being a lot more particular about our nutrition—that was a big lesson learned—we didn't eat enough last time, and that hurt the first half of the race. Eating is your job and we will know the exact calories we need to eat in a day. Sailing's your job too, but eating has to come first if you want to perform.

There are other things too, like making sure at least one person is sleeping the whole time, and building systems so you can steer from the pedal drive position.

John: Having a third person opens up a lot of options. We'll emphasize staying ahead of what's coming—temperature drops, wind increases—making sure we're layered properly and have the right sail plan before changes happen.

Say more about your sleep system.

Kaila: On the Hobie, it was simple—closed-cell foam pad, blow-up mattress, emergency-blanket-style bivy, sleeping bag. Underway, it was a drysuit and full gear in the bivy sack. Not warm enough for high performance. I'm excited about this year.

Chris: I've been operating a sewing machine in my garage. We sewed a hammock that installs in the center hull, off the bottom, because water comes through the middle when you take waves. Then a mat, blow-up pad, and likely a double bivy—a bivy inside a bivy. I tried it in my living room and overheated in five minutes, so that's a good sign. If necessary, we can move a person to the high side, but we're hoping to sleep mostly in the center.

Speaking of systems, I understand there's some team turmoil about how you'll be pooing on the boat?

John: It's a sore subject. I'll be standing on the transom of the center hull and making gifts to Mother Nature during calm times (always 3+ miles from shore and in compliance with regulations), like we did on the Hobie. Others might have heavier plans.

Kaila: That is similarly my vote—keep the system simple by not bringing one.

Chris: I was the instigator of the bucket idea. In calm conditions, direct deposit off the transom works. In rough conditions, stepping over the tiller and holding on gets tricky. So I'm in the design process for a carbon fiber sh*t bucket. We'll see if it comes along.

What section of the course are you most looking forward to revisiting?

John: I'm excited for another crack at the Gulf Islands. Last year we decided to go past Active Pass and then missed a tide gate at Porlier and had to stop for a few hours. We've done a lot of analysis of tide gates and required speeds, so I'm hoping to get that right this year.

Kaila: I'm really looking forward to Banks Island just southwest of Prince Rupert. That's where we first saw orcas. The geography is amazing—you feel in the middle of nowhere and then mountains pop out of the water. And I'm excited, and a little nervous, about Cape Caution. Last time, we took this awkward straight-across approach from the tip of Vancouver Island and ended up hitting Cape Caution when it was windiest and the waves were the biggest. Hoping to approach it more confidently and better prepared this time.

Chris: I'm curious about the tide gates—whether pedaling against current is ever an option.

A three-strikes policy was part of your team video from 2024. What are the details and will the policy be in effect for the upcoming race?

Kaila: It was a big part of our first race. Three strikes—someone too cold, something breaks, weather shifts—and we'd stop and reassess. That day in the video, the pedal drive master link broke, the main halyard snapped, and it rained. We decided to stop before Johnstone Strait and fix things properly. We'll likely take a similar approach—monitor the boat, the weather, ourselves.

What good or bad advice would you give first-time R2AKers?

Kaila: We based some tide gates on how much current we thought we could handle instead of just waiting for slack. That was pretty fun. The good part of that advice is to know your boat—what speeds and handling you're capable of—and don't just blindly follow the typical advice of always waiting for slack tide.

John: I don't know if it's good or bad advice, but race hard. Sail hard and push. We've learned a lot by pushing hard.

Why do you adventure race, and why should others?

Chris: For the challenge. Seeing if you're able to do it, knowing you may not be. You prepare and find out if you're prepared enough. That's what makes it fun, what makes the adventure.

Kaila: I enjoy embracing The Suck. You learn a lot about yourself and the environment. It expands who you are. And it changes how you understand the world. John and I hiked the Appalachian Trail traditionally—backpacks, 20 miles per day for a few months—then later ran the Long Trail supported by family. Same mountains, completely different experience. Adventure racing gives you that different lens.

John: I'm aligned with that. It's a privilege to see these waters and lands this way. Going fast, you see things differently. And building the whole program—the team dynamics, everything before Port Townsend—that's most of the race. It's a super fun process, and there are so many ways to do it. 48°

Great sailors with even better attitudes. With a faster boat and a more ambitious plan, the sky is the limit for Team Tips Up in 2026.

Photo by Amy Arntson.

***Joe Cline** has been Managing Editor of* 48° North *since 2014.*

CASCADIA SAILING

TAKING THE TEAM TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Photo by Thomas Hawker.

by **AnaLucia Clarkson**

Think about the people you've sailed with for years—thousands and thousands of miles. You know what makes them tick. You know their strengths, their weaknesses, and how they act when they're frustrated, nervous, or upset. More importantly, you know how to help them get out of that funk.

I've sailed with people who talk more and more as they get frustrated. Others go completely silent. Some yell. And some you would never know are frustrated until they admit it after the race. Each of these situations requires a different approach from a teammate. Over time, you learn what to do to help each person return to their best competitive self.

But what happens when you don't have years or thousands of miles to gather that knowledge?

Our Cascadia Sailing Team has to do exactly that: become a cohesive team in a short period of time. We are a group of 11 women from the Pacific Northwest who have joined forces to train and compete at the New York Yacht Club Women's International Championship in September. Led by Chris Wolfe, Joy Dahlgren, and Jen Glass, our team was selected as one of 20 teams out of 48 applicants to compete in the inaugural championship.

I had my eyes on this event from the moment it was announced—women's sailing on a global stage, the opportunity to compete against the best women sailors in the world, and the chance for young girls to see what's possible in a sport still largely dominated by men. I am incredibly honored and excited to be part of this team.

Once selected, the countdown began: we have 15 months to finalize our lineup, build trust, strengthen teamwork, learn a new boat, and prepare to compete at our highest level.

Luckily for our team, Jen Glass, our tactician, brings a career background steeped in team building. During our most recent training block, she led a team-building session on Friday night before our weekend of sailing.

We had already sailed together a handful of times. That gave us a baseline level of comfort and understanding. But Jen wanted us to go deeper. We gathered in the conference room at North Sails Victoria after a delicious team dinner. In front of each of us was a sheet of paper filled with prompts and blanks. A Mad Lib!

We spent a few minutes filling it out, identifying our own responses to prompts including how we react to difficulty and what our respective "superpowers" are. And then we paired off with teammates—roles we closely interact with, and people we didn't know as well—rotating through three "speed-date" conversations.

Each of us shared our Mad Lib and talked through our answers. What struck me most was how much their answers made sense, even though I had only sailed with these teammates a few times. I could think back to moments when their superpower had helped our team, or when I had noticed they were frustrated or withdrawn.

The exercise gave us space not only to get to know one another better, but to build trust and better understand our team dynamic.

As jib trimmer, I was paired with our offside jib/kite trimmer, our main trimmer, and our bow person. These are all roles that I work with closely and rely on constantly on the boat, but happen to be teammates I hadn't spent much one-on-one time with yet. Understanding how they show up when they're stressed or frustrated, and what I can do to help, was both eye-opening and incredibly valuable.

There were plenty of laughs, especially during the "what I

do that might be annoying" section. It was a moment of self-reflection. Even if you're actively working on improving certain behaviors, there's something powerful about acknowledging them openly—and knowing your teammates understand you.

When we regrouped as a full team, two key takeaways stood out. First, many of us tend to shut down or get quiet when we're upset, stressed, disappointed, or annoyed, but each person wants support in a slightly different way. Some want direct feedback. Some want space. Some want reassurance.

Second, each person's superpower truly was just that, a *superpower*. Maybe it's why they were chosen for their role. Maybe it's why they thrive in it. But hearing people articulate what they bring to the boat, and recognizing how much that strengthens the team, was powerful.

The impact was evident immediately in the practice that followed. People seemed more confident in their strengths, more aware of those around them, and noticeably more cohesive as a group.

Jen's superpower—pushing people to be their best—showed up as she encouraged teammates to step into new roles. Chris's focus showed up when we practiced the same starting maneuver twenty times in a row, refining details each time. Adaptability showed up after a messy spinnaker set when, instead of frustration taking over, someone offered, "No worries! The line got stuck on that one. Let's talk through how to prevent that in the debrief." Calmness surfaced in high-pressure moments. Awareness was on display when someone noticed a teammate getting quiet and offered the kind of encouragement that person had said helps them most.

As for me, I'm loud. I always have been.

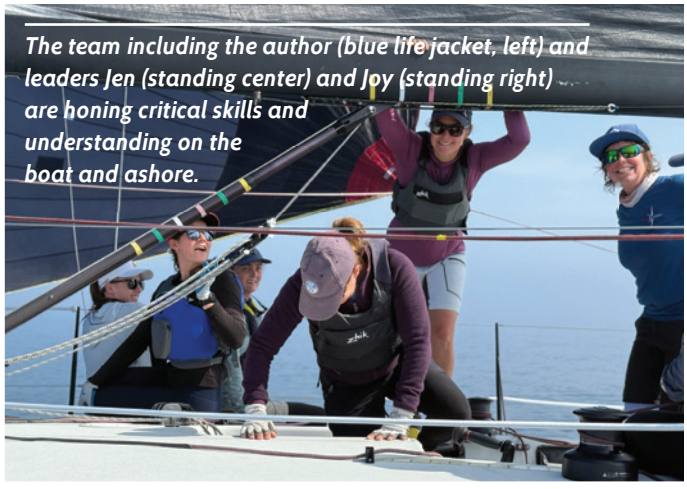
"Everyone needs to work on their volume, except maybe Ana," Chris said good-naturedly during one of our first practices.

On our long drive home from Victoria, fellow teammate and vastly experienced corinthian sailor, Jaimie Mack, and I talked about how often people, especially women, label something about themselves as a weakness or an annoyance while those around them may see it as a superpower. "Bossy" was a word I heard more than once growing up. Luckily, I come from a long line of loud, confident women (and men who support loud, confident women) so I've always tried to see my voice as a strength.

I also recognize that strengths can become overwhelming if not balanced. I've worked hard, and continue to work, on creating space for others, because my instinct is to raise my hand first and fill the silence. What this activity with our Cascadia team gave me was clarity: I can lean into my superpower, while trusting that my teammates will call me out if I'm taking up too much airspace. That mutual understanding creates accountability without tension.

This activity encouraged each of us to take ownership of our strengths, which is something we're not often asked, or allowed, to do. It created comfort, trust, and a deeper respect for one another. It moved us meaningfully closer to our goals.

With 11 people onboard, cohesion isn't optional, it's essential. Whether you're working side-by-side every set or simply climbing over each other during a full-on downwind, understanding one another matters.



The team including the author (blue life jacket, left) and leaders Jen (standing center) and Joy (standing right) are honing critical skills and understanding on the boat and ashore.

Even if you don't run a formal team-building session like this with your crew, I challenge every sailor reading this to reflect: How do your teammates act when they're frustrated? Do you know how to help them get out of their funk? And most importantly—what are their superpowers? And how can you lean into those strengths more intentionally?

Because building a team isn't just about time sailed together. It's about understanding, trust, and choosing to show up for one another—on and off the water. For our Cascadia team, that foundation of trust and teamwork is what allows us to chase big goals with confidence.

AnaLucia Clarkson *grew up sailing in Seattle, which is still her home port. She is an accomplished dinghy and keelboat racer with multiple finishes in the top 10 at World Championship regattas.*

48° North *is thrilled and honored to be sharing stories from Cascadia Sailing Team over the coming months.*

To learn more about Team Cascadia, visit **cascadiasailing.org.** *The team is actively fundraising to support their campaign, and they are incredibly grateful to those who have already contributed. As you read about in this article, coaching and time together (which requires travel for much of the team) are some of the most valuable parts of their preparation; and they're also some of the team's biggest recurring expenses. Support from the Pacific Northwest sailing community makes the team's activities possible, and is very meaningful to every member of the team.*

The Cascadia Sailing team-building session.

WINDY WINTER SHAW

by **Stephanie Campbell**

Rippin' with the big kite up.

It was a damp day, but not as wet as the sailors were warned it would be!

The yearly trek into the San Juan Islands for Orcas Island Yacht Club's Shaw Island Winter Classic was complete with all the wind and the joyful early season chaos we needed, and only half the rain we were warned about. Sailed on Saturday, February 7, this North Sound institution was wet and wild in the best way, delivering on its promise of fun and enduring navigational intrigue during the circumnavigation of Shaw Island.

A small but intrepid group of racers set off up Cayou Channel on Super Bowl Saturday morning. The fleet didn't set any attendance records, but had ample diversity—from a custom schooner to a Martin 242, racing boats and cruisers from a range of design eras—and was a great representation of the island's sailing community.

The predominantly southeasterly breeze was on, and we all put up the small sails. A few crews, including our group on my Santa Cruz 27, *Wild Rumpus,* put in reefs. We had already crossed Rosario Strait that morning, so we knew what we were in for! There were some unruly puffs, but also a lot of light spots. It's the islands, afterall.

After cracking off in Upright Channel, we decided that we were a bit too upright and shook the reef. Big boats like the Burns schooner *Sir Isaac* and the J/120 *Time Bandit* had launched around the corner and were out of sight.

At some point along the way, it seemed light enough to rig up the larger spinnaker instead of the chicken kite; and the wind had clocked back far enough to hoist one. Boats ahead were still flying jibs, but we were pretty sure that it was time. Hoist! Up ahead, a couple boats joined and their kites went up, too.

I have to say, we were maybe a bit rusty from the winter break, but there were plenty of surfs and cheers on board. We ultimately chickened out on jibing, and made the safe choice—douse and rehoist. After another good run, we decided that God might be preparing to take down the kite, so we did it ourselves before anything went haywire. After all our messing around, we ended up right next to the boats who flew jibs the whole time; but we had fun anyway.

The last turn into Wasp Pass is always an adventure. We were neck and neck with the crew of Martin 242 *Treachery* for most of it and, in one stinger puff, we auto-tacked so hard that I filled my boots... while driving! *Treachery* wisely avoided us and took the other side of a little island after that, and went on to get us on corrected time, taking the last podium spot about a minute ahead of us. Topping the podium were *Sir Issac* in first and *Time Bandit* second. Each of them completed the trip in under two hours.

Wild Rumpus finished the race just over the two hour mark—probably the fastest I've done it. The race wrapped up so early that, after a quick dockside celebration, we put the sails back up and headed home to Anacortes. That meant that we sadly missed the famous awards dinner. Thank you to Orcas Island Yacht Club for another great year!

Full results at **www.oiyc.org/Sailing/oiyc_club_racing_results.php**

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TOLIVA SHOAL

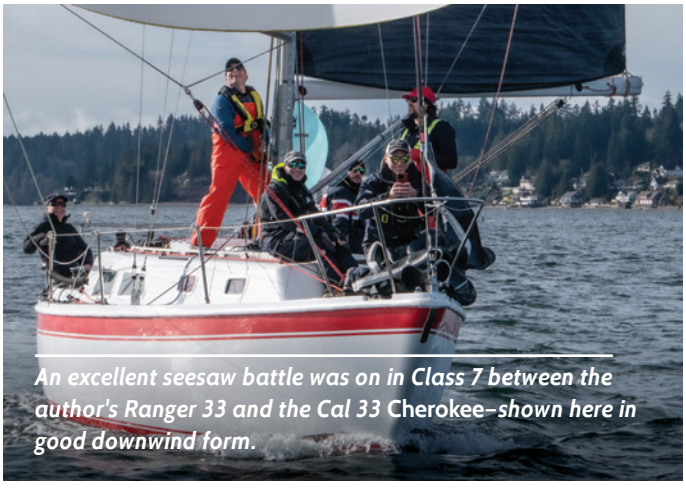
by **Derek DeCouteau**

The 55th annual Toliva Shoal Race was held on Valentine's Day 2026, attracting sailors who love winter racing with the passion of Cupid's arrow. This third race of the four Southern Sound Series events is jointly sponsored by Olympia Yacht Club (OYC) and the South Sound Sailing Society (SSSS).

I visited with the *Equus* crew for Friday's pre-race dinner; owners Dean and Shelli Conti are long-time Southern Sound Series participants from Des Moines and Three Tree Point Yacht Club. They told me they treat it like a cruising weekend that happens to have a race in the middle.

Sailors must really love this stuff if their home ports are far from the start line. Olympia, of course, is located at the southern terminus of Puget Sound and can be a long commute, especially in a winter southerly. The delivery is too much to ask for some, while others prioritize staying in the good graces of a shoreside sweetie for Valentine's. However, those who made the effort this year found wind and temperatures so pleasantly mild that everyone could have brought their Valentine sailing.

Race day morning started with breakfast to warm and nourish the racers before heading to the line. In combination with the excellent dinner the night before, the event lived up to its reputation as the best South Sound race party. Thanks to volunteers, and specifically SSSS Commodore Robert Hargreaves and OYC Race Chair Marvin Young for orchestrating all the details. Bill and Vickie Shelton, Principal Race Officers, coordinated on the water support.



An excellent seesaw battle was on in Class 7 between the author's Ranger 33 and the Cal 33 Cherokee*–shown here in good downwind form.*

The full 38-mile course brings racers north out of Budd Inlet, through Dana Passage, and around Johnson Point, where the outbound course heads south of Anderson Island by way of government mark #3 on Nisqually Delta before the rounding at the Toliva Shoal buoy. The return trip stays north of Anderson Island, and then retraces steps back to the start. That is, when conditions allow the full course.

The cruising and commodore classes got the traditional 30-minute head start in the race, with spinnakers flying gloriously on Cal 40 *White Squall* and C&C 37 *Xocomil*, both Tacoma competitors heading north with the Olympics in full view.

The forecast had been for light and variable winds around 5 knots. However, we were pleasantly surprised to see 7-10 knots off the starting line. Heading north out of Budd Inlet, our Ranger 33 *Aurora* sailed in Class 7, starting side-by-side with Peter Stewart's Cal 33 *Cherokee*; we matched boat speed up to Dofflemyer Point. The course through Dana Passage skirts a very picturesque side of Harstine Island and Boston Harbor. While we were enjoying the view, *Cherokee* made a move and passed us down the narrow channel, extending their lead beyond Johnson Point. Luckily for us, the back side of Johnson Point became a restart for most of the fleet as the wind was converging from three different directions, as noted by the skipper of Antrim 27 *Anarchy*, Ian Bestwick, who was one of the first boats to escape the restart. *Aurora's* crew kept the boat moving efficiently, with the wind spotters selecting our path to the Nisqually Delta.

Aurora sailed with six total crew for this race. A pretty diverse group of experience levels, including Dave Branch at age 78 who has had decades of experience in the one-design Finn and Star classes, and longtime Star crew Jonathan Turvey who is teaching his son Jackson how to sail and race. Also aboard

Toliva Shoal continues on page 48.

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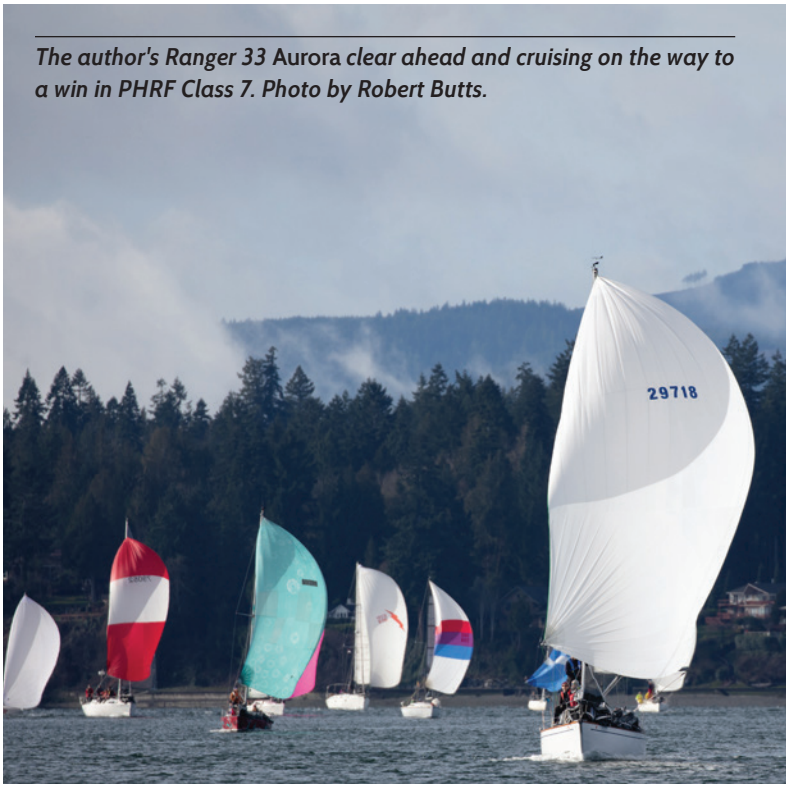

The author's Ranger 33 Aurora *clear ahead and cruising on the way to a win in PHRF Class 7. Photo by Robert Butts.*

J/35 Grace E *sailed well and took home top honors in PHRF Overall and Class 3.*

were experienced Tacoma PHRF sailor Mike, and our mountain climber Luke who is new to racing but is learning fast in the Olympia Star class—he can tie any type of knot that we need.

Finding pressure was key as we passed *Cherokee* and continued a seesaw battle, only to have them and a group of boats choose the shore lane that returned them to the front as we all made our way to the turning mark near the Nisqually Delta.

At the Nisqually turning mark, our rounding turned into a close reach heading for Lyle Point, the southeast tip of Anderson Island. Racing in a nice pack of Class 3 boats and a freshening northerly breeze that was filling across the Sound, we were still chasing down *Cherokee*. *Aurora* seems to enjoy this point of sail, or maybe just wanted to run with the big dogs.

After Lyle Point, we trimmed to weather as the fleet started choosing sides of the Sound. Going up the east side tends to pay off early with the flood still in play, and our group was seeing gains by using Ketron Island as a current blocker. Rumor has it that one Seattle boat went up the east side of Ketron Island to avoid the flood. To date, I'm not aware that it has ever paid, but it would be good to know for future reference. During this leg, the Race Committee announced that the race would be shortened at the Toliva Shoal Buoy. It was a relief for all the crews that knew it would be a long evening sailing back against the ebb tide, but now the race was on to the finish!

As the tide changed to the ebb, the fleet spread out farther across the course. The *Aurora* crew kept working hard to find stronger breeze and work the shifts up the west side of Ketron Island, making some nice gains on *Cherokee*. Once we reached the north end of Ketron Island, we noted a fresher breeze to the north and decided to split with our fleet and tack out to the northwest. It was a risky move, but proved to be a good one once we had the layline in sight and we managed to tack and cross *Cherokee* for a class win. As it often is, it was another great battle between our boats, and it is an honor to come out on top.

After the shortened course finish, many boats from Seattle or other ports north headed straight home. That included *Cherokee*, so most of their crew joined us for the motor back to Olympia.

Shortened though it was, it was a lovely day on the water and involved some terrific sailing upwind, downwind, and reaching. The first boat to finish was Flying Tiger 10, *Tigger,* winning the Governor's Trophy and ORC. First Overall PHRF and the Class 3 win went to J/35 *Grace E*. Other class winners were *Anarchy*, Aerodyne 38 *Kahuna*, and Beneteau 35s5 *Les Chevaux Blancs.* And congrats to all the cruising and Commodore's class boats as well.

The final Southern Sound Series race is the Islands Race hosted by CYC Tacoma on March 14. See you there!

Full results can be found at **ssseries.org**

Photos by ***Jonathan Turvey****, unless otherwise noted.*

Antrim 27 Anarchy *escaped the restart early and stood atop the Class 5 podium at the end of the day.*

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Amel (Mango) 52 • 1978 • $239,000

Outbound 44 • 2000 • $329,000

PRICE REDUCED

J Boats J/120 • 1998 • $139,000

C&C 110 36 • 2005 • $119,000

Perry 61 • 1997 • $485,000

65	Swan 651	1983	$370,000	43	Dudley Dix	2004	$339,000
57	Beneteau	2003	$345,000	42	Jeanneau 410	2022	$395,000
55	Waterline	2003	$549,000	42	Ocean Alexander	1989	$99,500
50	Farr	1985	$99,000	40	Liberty	1987	$150,000
49	Burns Schooner	2007	$175,000	37	Hallberg-Rassy372	2016	$399,000
48	Sprague Custom	2006	$495,000	36	Catalina 36	1993	$43,000
48	Saga	2003	$249,000	35	Saga	2002	$99,000
47	McKinna	1999	Inquire	34	Nauticat	1984	$79,900
46	Outbound	2007	$375,000	31	Sydney	2002	$64,000
44	J Boats J/44	1990	$99,000	31	Ranger Tug	2013	$229,000
44	Nordic	1983	$115,000				

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50' Amel 50 '20..... $1,100,000

48' Beneteau 48 '17..... $389,000

47' Beneteau 473 '06 ..... $189,000

45' Custom Cheoy Lee '62..... $299,000

45' Hunter 45 DS '08 ..... $199,000

44' Hunter 44 DS '07 ..... $159,900

42' Sabre 426 '06..... $289,900

41' Beneteau 41 '14..... $209,900

40' Beneteau Oceanis 40.1 '22...$389,000

40' Beneteau Oceanis 40.1 '22...$389,000

38' Beneteau Oceanis 38.1 '22... $269,000

37' Island Packet 37 '97 ..... $187,000

37' Beneteau Oceanis 37 '17 ... $174,950

34' Benetau Oceanis 34.1 '23... $249,900

30' Beneteau Oceanis 30.1 '23... $189,950

30' Beneteau Oceanis 30.1 '24...$210,000

26' X Shore Eelex 8000 '24 ..... $199,900

21' X Shore 1 - Open '24..... $109,900

21' X Shore 1 - Top '24..... $129,900

68' Nordhaven 68 '11 ..... $2,798,000

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Hunter 33.5 '92	$39,500	Catalina 36 '89	$46,900	Seascape 18 '16	$39,000
Beneteau 343 '07	$89,900	C&C 37/40+ '89	$64,950	Beneteau First 27 '23	SOLD
Hunter 356 '02	$69,900	Aphrodite 101 '78	$25,900	Beneteau 48 '16	SOLD
		Beneteau First 25S '14	$49,990	Nonsuch Ultra 30 '89	Sale Pending

Beneteau 393 '06	Sale Pending
Beneteau First 30 '26	Sale Pending
Beneteau Oceanis 34.1 '26	Sale Pending
Beneteau First 44 '26	Sale Pending

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2025 Jeanneau 440 #78982: $579,868

CLEARANCE SALE! SAVE $179,595

NEW 2024 Lagoon 42 #835: $748,612

In Stock & Sale Priced! SAVE $52,656

2025 Jeanneau 380 #78981: $399,890

ARRIVES APRIL! SAVE $20,000

All New! West Coast Debut!
2026 Jeanneau 415 #79978: $499,893

In Stock & Sale Priced! SAVE $64,580

2026 Jeanneau 410 #79196: $479,867

In Stock & Sale Priced! SAVE $49,697

2025 Jeanneau 350 #78984: $299,953

CLEARANCE SALE! SAVE $38,000

NEW 2024 LaMare Modern 11 #442: $349,866

ARRIVES JULY! SAVE $50,000

All New! West Coast Debut!
2027 Jeanneau 455 #80160: $687,292

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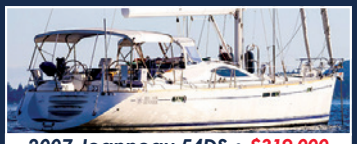
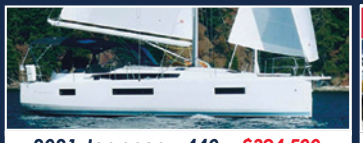


2007 Jeanneau 54DS • $319,000

2022 Bali 4.6 Catamaran • $1,098,000

Reduced

2015 Beneteau 45 • $289,500



2021 Jeanneau 440 • $394,500

Reduced

2013 Jeanneau 44DS • $260,000

1983 Nauticat 43 PH • $189,000

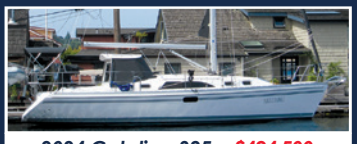
Reduced

2004 Cabo Rico 42PH • $317,000

2021 Jeanneau 410p • $389,000

New Listing

2009 Hunter 38 • $129,950



2024 Catalina 385 • $494,500

Reduced

2013 Jeanneau 379 • $169,000

Reduced

2022 Jeanneau 349 • $199,500

LISTINGS WANTED! • WE GET RESULTS!
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50'	Beneteau 50 '97		$129,950
44'	Jeanneau Sun Magic 44 '90		$97,500
43'	Elan 434 '07		Sale Pending
42'	Catalina 42 '90	Reduced	$79,000
42'	Cascade 42 '87	Reduced	$39,900
42'	Jeanneau 42DS '11		SOLD
40'	Jeanneau 409 '14		SOLD
39'	Farr 395 "Ace" '01		Sale Pending
39'	Jeanneau 39i '08		SOLD
37'	Dehler 372 '85		$59,900
36'	J/111 '11		SOLD
35'	Catalina 355 '24		Sale Pending
35'	Island Packet 35 '94		SOLD
35'	Catalina 350 '04		SOLD
35'	Jeanneau 349 '16 & '17		2 x Sale Pending
34'	True North 34 OE '24		Clearance..$631,581
28'	XO DFNDR 9 '24		Clearance..$393,784

Dan Krier

Dean Iwata

Bryan Rhodes

Todd Heckel

Don Smith

Jon Knowles