



Cruiser with Mom Cindy Lefmann  
of *True North*

## I-36 Furry Photos Contest

*Prizes will be Awarded at the 2006 Fall Meeting*

For those of us who enjoy the company of our dogs, cats, birds, or any other family pet while enjoying our boats, it's time to pay tribute and celebrate our nautical furry /feathered friends. If you would like to make us laugh with a funny shot of a four legged sailing crew member, or pay a loving tribute to a cherished pet, just send us your photos. Prizes will be awarded at the 2006 fall meeting for the most notable photos. Send pictures taken on a boat, in the water, at the dock, or anywhere that demonstrates the big part they play in your sailing experience. For those of you who may not have your very own furry sailing photos to submit, enter any nautical related animal pictures in the contest. A highly esteemed panel of judges will include children and adults from the Islander 36 Association membership. There are no particular photo categories, the sky's the limit, so use your imagination, get the camera out, and have some fun. Oh yeah, just one last thing, be sure to put a lanyard on that camera!

Photos will be posted to a Furry Photos page on the I-36 web site. Please include: (1) Furry's Name (2) Owner (3) Boat Name (4) Home Port:/Sailing Waters

Submit photos by e-mail to [vanmells@ix.netcom.com](mailto:vanmells@ix.netcom.com), or snail mail them to: Rick Van Mell, I-36 Webmaster, 1629 Begen Avenue, Mountain View, CA 94040

### Inside This Issue

- 1 I-36 Furry Photos Contest
- 1 Baja Ha-Ha for the First Time
- 2 Commodore's Corner
- 3 Islander 36 Engine of Growth
- 4 106th Annual Vallejo Race
- 5 Racing Notes
- 6 Cruising Kids Corner
- 7 Cruising Notes
- 8 Islander 36 Spring Meeting
- 9 Nautical Notes
- 10 I-36ers in the Baha Ha-Ha XII
- 11 Baja Ha-Ha continued

## Baja Ha-Ha for the First Time

*by Tim Shea*

Aaah, the infamous Baja HA HA. The event that to me is the Holy Grail of sailing events, was now available for me to participate in. There was a crew position available on *Sensei*, a veteran Norseman 447 ocean cruiser, now owned by past I-36 owners **Chris Mellor & Kelley Montana**, along with daughter **Claire**.

I had been dreaming of participating in this event since it first started in the early 90's. As a matter of fact, the Baja HAHA was one of the reasons I decided to step away from power boating and get into sailing in 1997 and it was the inspiration, after realizing how much I loved sailing, to purchase our 1982 I-36 *Windago*, later renamed *Lean Times*. After seeing this beautiful vessel, I felt she could be the boat to take me down the coast to the Baja HAHA event. At that time I was newly married and **Rhonda** & I had visions of participating in the Baja HAHA, then continuing on for unknown adventures. But life had other ideas in mind for us; the dream of taking my own vessel would not happen any time soon. So with much anticipation and excitement I flew down to San Diego and met up with the Mellors and my friend **Smokey Stover** who was also crewing in this event.

After a great send off party and last minute provisioning, we started one of the most festive race events I've ever been involved with. The thrill of sailing offshore is addictive. It is amazing how free one feels casting off and heading out to the open ocean. The senses seem to come alive as you take in the beauty and splendor of the sea. You feel so dependent on the vessel which you are sailing, yet so liberated. I remember the first day out as we sailed away from land. It is interesting how people who have only been together for a matter of hours can work together as a team to establish a course and determine the best way to position ourselves for the next 3 nights at sea. Having a provisioner like **Kelly Montana** on board makes all the difference in feeling comfortable on a yacht. She had thought of just about everything when it came to food and drink. **Chris & Kelley** did a great job of planning for this adventure

Please see *Baja Ha-Ha for the First Time* on page 11



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www.Islander36.org

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## Commodore's Corner

From Tim Shea, Commodore

AHOY!!

Hopefully by now you have been able to wash off the winter moss, polish the stainless and touch up the bright work in anticipation of Summer Sailing! Here in the San Francisco Bay area, I was convinced that the world had shifted and we had landed in the beautiful, although sometimes wet, Pacific Northwest. We had many days of continuous rain, which was helpful in locating leaks onboard *Lean Times*, but slowed down other annual maintenance tasks. I am scrambling to get everything ready for a busy cruising season and I find the wonderful Maintenance/Systems menu on our website a valuable resource and time saver. I suggest you check it out even if you don't have any projects planned, as you just may find something else to work on once you've read through some of the interesting projects.

We kicked off another sailing season on March 25<sup>th</sup> with the Spring Meeting at the SFYC. Although the weather was once again (third year in a row I believe) a little wet and unpredictable, we had another great turnout. Several new members have joined the association and were in attendance. I want to again welcome all of you who have discovered the great joy of I-36 ownership and the fantastic group of people who make this association so wonderful. Along those lines, Vice Commodore **Art Fowler** is truly a gifted writer and he has an article in this month's newsletter which highlights the passion and commitment of those who give so much of their time to make this one

of the best associations in sailing. Great job Art!

For you racers out there, it looks like the competition on the line just keeps getting better! Race Chair **Joseph Krensavage** has put together a challenging race schedule for this season and there are a few new members participating in this year's event. I hope that all of you who want to race or crew get together and have some fun out there and show others what these yachts can do.

As with any group, we are always looking for ways to bring joy and value to our membership. In this month's newsletter, check out the article by **Maureen Drotleff** of *Woden*. She came up with a great contest for those of us who like our furry friends to share in the sailing experience. I encourage your participation in this fun contest and also welcome any suggestions of how we can continue to generate involvement in our fleet.

In closing, I hope to see many of you this season out enjoying sailing with family and friends and I look forward to catching up with you at our upcoming events.

Fair Winds,

*Tim Shea*  
Commodore  
*Lean Times*

# Islander 36 Engine of Growth

Powered by Fleet Building Energy

by Art Fowler

The Islander 36 has experienced resurgence in popularity due in part to its adaptability between a comfortable, affordable coastal cruiser and a practical club or fleet racer. In light of this renewed interest, the Islander 36 Association has experienced an amazing increase in size and activity. The energy required to power this engine of growth is significant and can only be partly supplied by the attraction to this versatile boat. The remainder of the energy comes from the collective efforts of the members as they contribute their time and talents in a manner that has been expanding the organization and building the fleet.

The US Sailing organization web page discusses “two basic things that must be in place in order for one—design sailing to grow”: a solid foundation and good “spark plugs.” Although their discussion centers around racing activity, the need for “good spark plugs” can be applied to other aspects of the organization as well. Fortunately in our I-36 Association we have numerous examples of members contributing in such a way that would meet that characterization.

Often we tend to think of our members participating as either cruisers or racers. Although some do both, there is another area of participation where the contributions by various members have been tremendous. I’m speaking of our members that have donated their time in the performance of administrative functions which are vital to the organization. For years **Barbara Henderson** did an incredible job as newsletter editor. Barb’s position is now filled by the energetic and resourceful duo of **Sylvia Stewart** and **Kathryn Munn Hodgkins**. For years **Sandy Van Mell** has enthusiastically collected copious door prizes from the local maritime retailers for the annual fall meeting. This past year **Betsy Fowler** assumed that responsibility. **Linda McClellan** has taken on the membership chair and a relatively new member, **Jean Jeffries**, has assumed responsibility for the secretarial duties. For over 10 years, **Harry Farrell** handled the financial chores before moving on to Commodore and being superseded by **Ron Damson**. **Rick Van Mell**, our web master, has developed the web site that is, without a doubt, the finest in the entire recreational boating world. These are just a few of the key

members that have provided us with the “solid foundation” that U.S. Sailing webpage talks about. Limitations of space and time prohibit the mention of all the other members that have made administrative contributions in one form or another, but it in no way diminishes the value of their efforts and the appreciation we all have for their work.

For the third year in a row, the Islander fleet held its popular and productive sail trim clinic on April 22. I want to stress the fact that the bulk of the “training package” supplied at the seminar was not bought and paid for from some outside source, but provided through the knowledge, skill, and experience of our very own members. True, we did have a presentation by Jocelyn Nash, which was wonderfully informative, and in keeping with our past practice of including a local professional sail maker. But it did not diminish the contributions from our own members who so generously gave of their time to educate others on the finer points of racing an Islander 36.

Please see Islander 36 Engine of Growth on page 9

## How About Those Helpful I-36 members!



At the Encinal cruise, Art Fowler Along with several other cruisers helped Bill and Jim Higdon clean up the wintertime buildup of grime on *Blockbuster*. Here’s what Art had to say about the community spirit of our association.

“Just this cruise, Charles Hodgkins came to my boat and spent 30 minutes or more helping me with my electronics. Last month Smokey fixed my water pump, before that the gas tank. Last cruise Noble Brown repaired my inoperative jib halyard winch, introducing himself as he started work! Harry Farrell helped me install a new lift pump on the engine. Brian Jacobs has helped me do several things. And finally, Rick Van Mell has helped me with so many things I don’t know where to begin to start to list them all. I know there have been more people helping me with various other tasks as well, but those mentioned above come quickly to mind. So that was more than just a favor for Bill and Jim. It was also my way of saying thanks to every body that has helped out not only me but other I-36 owners as well. I can just see it now, *Come cruise with the Islander 36 Association. We might even wash your boat for you.*”

Art Fowler works on *Blockbuster’s* grime with his power washer

# The 106<sup>th</sup> Annual Vallejo Race

Hosted since 1900 by the Vallejo Yacht Club

Yet another successful start to the YRA racing season! Saturday was a noon start for the Islander 36 fleet. There were 10 boats on the line with about 12 knots of breeze and a good ebb tide. Luckily the wind held steady all day and there was sun but not too much. *Nantucket* brilliantly port tacked the start and took the early lead. It was a competitive start and close race for the Islanders; they are much less spread out than in years past. Could this be due to the sail clinic? The mentoring spirit mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter continued with past season champ **Jim Robinson** crewing on *Zenith*. The fleet mostly sailed within hailing



Parade of Islanders in Vallejo

distance, giving plenty of opportunity for tactics and trading positions. Saturday afternoon at the club, everyone seemed to spread out. This roving reporter found few people to interview that night, but heard reports of some *Mustang* and *Pacific High* crew members happily dancing away. Sunday morning saw crews relaxing in cockpits, enjoying the sunshine before heading out to start. After a short delay the race committee started the sequence not long after 10am. Heading home, we had light air sailing but no serious wind holes. *Zenith*, *Diana*, *Windwalker*, *Absolute* and *Tomcat* traded the lead several times as we tacked out of the channel and into San Pablo Bay. *Tomcat* took 2 firsts in the regatta. *Absolute* got a third and second. *Diana* got a second and fourth. Also placing well was *Cassiopeia*, an Islander 36 racing HDA. She placed second on Saturday to an Express 27, in a large fleet of competitive boats. We hear owner **Kit Wiegman** is preparing *Cassiopeia* for the Pacific Cup, and hope to hear more about that. For full listing of race results and more fun pictures of the event, go to [www.Islander36.org](http://www.Islander36.org).

## Sail Trim Clinic at Golden Gate Yacht Club, April 8, 2006



*Pacific High* racing off Fort Mason

It was mostly overcast with a light breeze, filling in to a 15 knot westerly.

The Islanders shared the City Front with a college dinghy regatta racing in front of Fort Mason. The classroom portion of the clinic focused on sails and trim. Presentations were given by: **Jocelyn Nash** of *Quantum Sails*, **Rich Shoenhair** of *Windwalker*, and **Barry Stompe** of *Tom Cat*. On the water after a few practice starts, the fleet raced to Blackhaller and back with *Kapai* crossing the line first.

Six boats participated:

- ~ *Kapai* with skipper **Rick Egan**, 7 crew and mentor **Chris Boone**
- ~ *Freedom Won* with skipper **John Melton**, 7 crew and mentor **Jocelyn Nash**:
- ~ *Pacific High* with skipper **Harry Farrell**, 9 crew and mentor **Barry Stompe**
- ~ *Amante* with skipper **Frank Mayo**, 7 crew and mentor **Rich Shoenhair**
- ~ *Tenacious* with skipper **Kris Youngberg**, 7 crew and mentor **Lou Zevanov** of *Diana*:
- ~ *Luna Sea* with skipper **Dan Knox**, 6 crew and mentor **Don Schumacher** of *Blue Streak*.

Support staff were: **Gary and Pat Salvo** of *Ophira*: **Rick** and **Sandy Van Mell** of *Vanishing Animal*

# Racing Notes

From Joseph Krensavage, Racing Chair

Greetings, Racers!

The 2006 race season will be a great one with a format designed to provide a competitive 16-race Season's Championship series with a mix of distance and course racing. You can commit to only 13 races on 9 days and win the Season's Championship. The season also includes 2 after-race social events and our usual Nationals Regatta in early October. Who will be the season champion this year?"

Come on out and Race with Us!

*Joseph Krensavage*



Racing Chair Joseph Krensavage and finacee Cate Cavanaugh



Mustang at the Saturday start of the Vallejo race



Diana crew and Barry Stompe trade war stories in Vallejo

## Attention racers!

At our Fall meeting the following rule change was decided:

*"10. For I-36 One-Design Class racing, and only in incidents involving only I-36 yachts (unless similarly modified by the Sailing Instructions for other events), modify the Racing Rules of Sailing, Rule 44.2 from a Two Turns Penalty to a One Turn Penalty. The modified rule is:*

*"For infractions outside the two length zone, after getting well clear of other boats as soon after the incident as possible, a boat takes a One Turn Penalty by promptly making one turn including one tack and one gybe. When a boat takes the penalty at or near the finishing line, she shall sail completely to the course side of the line before finishing."*

This is posted on our web site, under Constitution and Bylaws. It's a good idea to visit the site and review the rules.

### 2006 Islander 36 Racing Calendar

June 10	City Front - 2 races
June 24	South Bay - Alameda Side -2 races
Aug 5	Olympic circle - 2 races
Aug 19	South Bay - BVBC Side -2 races
Sept 9	Knox - Season Closer -HDA Islands Tour- 2 races (party Corinthian YC!)
Sept 10	So. Hampton - Season Closer -2 races
Oct ?-?	Islander 36 Nationals - 2 days

# Cruising Kids Corner

## Cruising from the Perspective of a 9 Year Old

Excerpts from Claire Mellor's blog



Claire Mellor in mast ballet

When my mom and I stood watch, we saw brilliant bioluminescens from the dolphin's tale. It was cold when we took watch. It was hard for me to stay awake. I heard beautiful rushing of the waves. It sounded like leaves rustling in the wind. When we were in Cabo San Lucas we took are first snorkeling trip. We saw lots of sea urchins, eels, coral, coral fish, rays, pipe fish. It was like I was in a touchable aquarium. When I drive the dinghy I feel like I want to race the fastest fish in the sea. Isla Isabella was the most fantastic bird seeing and hiking Island that I could ever see. We saw lots of Magnificent Frigate birds, and blue, yellow and green footed boobies. I saw some very cute little boobie baby birds in their nests. When I'm on the boobie island, I hear lots of hissing whistles from the birds.

Mexico is a dirty and dusty place, but lots of good food to eat. I get to try out new kinds of foods. Spanish is a hard language to learn because we speak English. I would definitely come back to San Blas, Mexico and go on the jungle tour and swim at the spring. My favorite place so far is Paradise Village in Nuevo Vallarta. I like it because my friends are there. I can sneak into the pools a lot because the owners of the hotel don't care. The pools have slippery water slides. The hardest part about living on the boat is leaving my home friends, but at least I have sailing friends.

The future plans are that we are going to the South Pacific. I want to go because my dad has told me all these facts about the South Pacific that makes me want to go, but that means I have to leave my friends for another year.

~ ~ To read more of Claire's adventures, go to: [www.mellorsatsea.blogharbor.com](http://www.mellorsatsea.blogharbor.com). Claire's parents are also writing daily, sharing their adventures and reflections, having completed crossing the Pacific Ocean. Her Dad, Chris, had this to say, "Claire has become proficient at plotting our daily position and our friends' positions. It is good for her to see the distances involved so she doesn't ask innocently, 'Daddy is it a long way?' 'Well, not compared to the distance to the moon!'"

### Cruising Kids in San Francisco Bay

A fine time was had by Islander 36 cruising kids on the lawn at Encinal Yacht Club in April. From the left; Amanda Stover, her daughter Sarah, Laurie Stover with Rees and Paige Kent, the Bushes' grandniece Sarah Dorsey, and the Salvos' granddaughter Skyler.



# Coming Soon!

May 27-29

Memorial Day ~ Petaluma

The Petaluma Turning Basin is our destination with a special invitation from Don Roberts, the Petaluma YC Vice Commodore, and his wife Gloria, to partake in the PYC activities planned for that weekend. Their theme this year is Pirates. So dig out your bandanas, eye patches and earrings from last year, and if the PYC wants Pirates, we'll give them the best! Co-cruise chairs-Gary and Pat Salvo

June 17-18

Father's Day ~ San Leandro

We're heading to the south bay to San Leandro and the Spinnaker YC. The SYC has graciously opened up their club and galley for our BBQ/potluck use on this Father's Day weekend. A western theme is on tap. Western attire is appropriate and encouraged! Laurie will have plenty of activities to keep our young cowboys and cowgirls busy. Conveniently located within walking distance are the Monarch Golf Club and the San Leandro Marina Park, which offers low impact walking trails, an exercise course and excellent bird watching opportunities.

By the way, the SYC welcomes all 4-legged members and the park is dog friendly as well.

July 1-4

Independence Day ~ Vallejo & Napa

We begin this holiday weekend with the Saturday arrival and one night stay at the Vallejo YC. Sunday morning we cast off and head up the Napa River to the home of our commodore, Tim Shea and his family. There will be plenty of time for wine tasting, visiting downtown, fishing, swimming or just relaxing. Bring a tasty dish to the Luau BBQ and potluck which will be held on the patio of the Shea's beautiful waterfront home.

## Cruising Notes

From Smokey and Laurie Stover, Chairpersons

### Clip and Save 2006 Islander 36 Cruising Schedule

May 27-29	Memorial Day ~ Petaluma River turning basin
June 17-18	Father's Day ~ Spinnaker Yacht Club, San Leandro
July 1-4	Independence Day ~ Vallejo Yacht Club, Vallejo (7/1) <i>Chateau Shea, (7/2-4)</i>
August 12-13	Point San Pablo Yacht Club, Richmond Red Oak Victory Ship Tour/Breakfast
Sept 2-4	Labor Day ~ Half Moon Bay offshore cruise
Oct 14-15	Marin Yacht Club, San Rafael Creek
Nov 11-12	Fall Meeting ~ Awards dinner and gala event, Oakland Yacht Club, Alameda

Check the Islander 36 web site's **Upcoming Events** at [www.Islander36.org](http://www.Islander36.org) a few weeks prior to each cruise date for details, further information, and sign ups.



The Pied Piper leads 2005 Rendezvous participants back to the dock

### 2nd Canadian All Islander Rendezvous at Telegraph Harbour Marina on Thetis Island, B.C. Friday July 7 - Sunday July 9, 2006

Every Islander on Puget Sound and the Gulf Islands of Canada's fabled Inside Passage will want to mark their calendars for this event! Bert & Carey Vermeer are organizing this great opportunity to cruise in, meet new friends and swap stories and knowledge about the great islander boats - yes, that's all sizes and shapes of Islanders.

For sign up and reservation information, go to [www.Islander36.org/thetis06details.html](http://www.Islander36.org/thetis06details.html).

# Islander 36 Spring Meeting

*Saturday, March 25, 2006 ~ San Francisco Yacht Club*

On a blustery Saturday afternoon, 56 hardy I-36 sailors representing 36 boats braved the elements to attend the Spring meeting of the Association. Read all about the weekend and see lots more pictures on the web site at [www.Islander36.org](http://www.Islander36.org). Clockwise from top left: 1) proud fleet flying I-36 burgees; 2) Gary, Harry, Barb, Don & Smokey aboard *Ophira*; 3) SFYC, a friendly host; 4) yummy lunch as usual; 5) Dan Knox makes it in; 6) Laurie Stover and Karen Damsen handle checkin.



## Meeting Minutes

*Submitted by Jean Jeffries, Secretary*

Commodore **Tim Shea** began the spring meeting with a warm welcome to all and quickly jumped in to the meeting business. First off was the membership report from **Linda McClellan**- 217 members currently. Linda also researched the age distribution of the I-36 boats among our members- with a high of 33 built in 1978 to the fewest of 3 built in 1985. Treasurer **Ron Damsen** reported a healthy state of finances as dues are paid at this time of year and expenses are low. Ron mentioned the annual cycle of membership will dip at the end of April when members who have not paid their dues after a third reminder will be dropped. **Kathryn Munn** reported about the newsletter and suggested that in order to minimize costs, we may survey the membership about the option of having the newsletter exclusively on-line in the future. **Rick Van Mell** reported that the switch of our web site to InMotion Web Hosting seems to be working well; that we had 1.75 million hits in the last year and encouraged all to "keep those pictures and stories coming". **Laurie Stover** enthusiastically listed the upcoming cruise locations and encouraged all to attend. Commodore Shea stood in for race captain **Joseph Krensavage** to encourage our racers to get out and make the races, including the May 6 & 7th Vallejo race. **Rick Van Mell** reminded the group of the sail trim clinic scheduled for April 8th.

After business was reported Tim introduced San Francisco Bar Pilot **Kip Carlson** who shared his 19 years of experience as a pilot. A 28 minute video was shown documenting the remarkable and technical job of piloting the 8500 vessels on the SF bay each year. Kip donated a copy of the video in VHS and DVD version for any members to view at their leisure.



# Nautical Notes

from Skipper Wall

## LASSIE

Once again, hang in with me. This is another mayonnaise story;

In itself, Lassie, is not a nautical term, but the name of this famous collie has a maritime connection. The first battleship (British) to be torpedoed by a German sub was the *Formidable*, sunk off Portland Bill in the English Channel in 1915. A few hours after the sinking, a body of a seaman was found washed ashore in Lyme Bay. It was carried to West Bay and layed on the floor of the Pilot Boat Inn and out of decency covered with a tarpaulin. However, the dog of the Inn owner kept pulling aside the tarp and licking the face of the dead seaman. Despite every discouragement, the dog persisted until the Inn owner had to see for himself. Well, the owner found that the seaman was not dead, as the dog knew all along. The seaman was revived and that should have ended the story right here. But, the incident inspired the famous film featuring the collie who won the hearts of millions of children the world over (me included) for her bravery, loyalty and intelligence. The whole point of this anecdote is the dog was named after the survivor of the *HMS Formidable*, John Lassie!

## ANCHOR:

From the Anglo-saxon word "ancor", a very early loan word from the Latin "ancora" and the only nautical word from Latin that has been adopted by the Teutonic languages. As used colloquially, "She keeps me firmly anchored in reality whenever I start dreaming about the future". "Or a new boat or gear", (my comment).

*Continued from Islander 36 Engine of Growth on page 3*

Standing in for our Race Captain, **Joseph Krensavage**, who was unable to attend due to professional obligations, was **Rick Van Mell**. One could not ask for a seminar leader with a more broad and experienced background, as Rick has sailed extensively on the East coast, North Atlantic, Great Lakes, and the West Coast. Four additional I-36 veteran members sailed aboard participating boats and they were **Rich Schoenhair**, **Barry Stompe**, **Don Schumacher**, and **Lou Zevanov**.

Don, whose boat, *Bluestreak*, was featured on last month's web page in one of the prettiest pictures of an Islander 36 under THE bridge, has been racing his boat for well over twenty years. He is a past Commodore of the Association, and has continuously supported the organization and has been a staunch promoter of the principles and policies which have kept us on track. Ironically, and I speak from experience, one of the great mentors present, is also a great student of the science of sailing. I'm referring to Lou Zevanov, who is relentless in his pursuit of fresh facts and new knowledge, but certainly well grounded and solidly based with an impressive and extensive sailing background of his own.

In addition to Jocelyn Nash's classroom remarks, were presentations from Barry Stompe and Rich Schoenhair. They both mentored in the afternoon practical training as well, but added valuably to the academic aspect by sharing the keen knowledge that they have acquired as evidenced by the lengthy sailing resumes they each possess. Adding further experience to the mentoring staff, was Chris Boome. Although not an Islander owner, he has raced extensively with our current Season Champion, Peter Szasz, and has generously given of his time.

The Sail Trim Clinic is a great example of individuals from within the organization that are the "spark plugs" making significant contributions to power this engine of growth.

The members I've mentioned reflect involvement in some of our more recent activities. But to speak of involvement, to speak of recent activities, or to speak of contribution is to speak of the extraordinary fleet building efforts of our current Cruise Captains, **Smokey** and **Laurie Stover**. Through their hard work, they have expanded and improved the cruising program to where it now offers some activities for young people. No longer do members need to find alternate plans for the kids while they escape to the boat. They have adopted themes, added activities, found new destinations, promoted and provided informative notices, actively monitored the response results, and issued timely reminders for us more forgetful members. If the rest of us are spark plugs, then Smokey and Laurie are the Saturn rocket by comparison. A special thank you to them for ALL they have done.

## Encinal Cruise

### April 29-30 Highlights

- Toddlers, Dogs, Teamwork
- Kids games
- Exercises on the lawn
- Boat projects
- Boat potlucks
- Fabulous Saturday lunch and Sunday buffet breakfast by EYC
- Svendsons Night shopping spree
- Sunday Opening Day on the Bay

For complete story by **Rick Van Mell** and lots of great pictures go to the Islander 36 web site.



John Melton from *Freedom Won* bags some deals at Svendsons

# I-36 members in the Baja Ha-Ha XII

by Smokey Stover



*Sensei* under sail with Smokey on crew

Not everyone who receives this newsletter knows about the monthly magazine "Latitude 38" that is published here in the SF Bay Area or of the "Baja Ha-Ha" event. Annually for the past 12 years Latitude 38 has organized this boat race/rally from San Diego, CA to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, 750 miles of sailing in 12 days with two rest/party stops along the way. Islander 36 sailboats have participated throughout those years, but never the representation of I-36 members that was seen this last year! There were 132 boats of just about every type from 29' to 97' carrying 530 skippers and crew and kids. Among them were a 36' Freeport and two Gurney design boats, the I-36 *Rocinante* (owner **Dan Martone**) and the I-36 *Lorelei* (owner **Ken Wilson**).

My story begins with the story of our friends and I-36 Association members **Chris** and **Kelly Mellor**, and their 10 year old daughter **Claire** who were the owners the I-36 *Spindrift*. They decided to change their lives by going cruising, with a plan to head for the South Pacific over the next two years, via the Baja

Ha-Ha XII. Their I-36 was not equipped for this journey, so they reluctantly traded for a Norseman 447 they named *Sensei*, pulled up their lines at the docks in Richmond, CA and sailed under the San Francisco Golden Gate Bridge in September 2005. I-36 Association Commodore **Tim Shea** of the I-36 *Lean Times* and I, of the I-36 Freeport *Evanescence*, joined *Sensei* in San Diego for the 750 mile journey. We met up with I-36 Association members **Barry** and **Sylvia Stompe** of the I-36 *Tom Cat* at the Halloween Kick-off Party. They were there as crew aboard the infamous mother ship *Profligate*. Also enjoying last year's Ha-Ha

were Past I-36 Commodore **Mike Dickson** of the I-36 *Nimbus* and I-36 member **Mark Wyatt** of the I-36 *Axolotl*, who flew to LaPaz Mexico and sailed as crew aboard *Lorelei* across the Sea of Cortez. (Editors note: Also enjoying last years HaHa were **Joe** and **Sandi Vanni**, I-36 association members and owners of the 1974 Islander 36

*Zephyrus*, berthed in Ventura, CA. They sailed as crew on a friend's boat)

I have written "I-36 members" quite a few times now in connection with this great rally. It adds up to ELEVEN people that were represented in the Baja Ha-Ha XII from the one design Islander 36 Association. That might not be worthy of the Guinness Book, but just has to be some kind of record!

This leads me to a proclamation made by **Noble Brown** of the I-36 *Mai Pen Rai*, who has experienced the Baja Ha-Ha rally three times in the past and now has plans to complete this trip for the fourth time on the next Baja Ha-Ha XIII. He has proven to me to be very knowledgeable in off shore sailing and in the preparation of an I-36 for such an adventure. He suggested the possibility of a skipper's meeting for anyone contemplating entering their boat in the Baja Ha-Ha XIII event this year and any Baja Ha-Ha veterans who would like to come and share their knowledge. That sounds like a great opportunity to get information about: preparation, sailing from SF to SoCal and beyond, and alternatives for the return from Mexico.

**Baja Ha-Ha XIII anyone ???**



Ken Wilson of *Lorelei* looking the part in his pirate hat

*Continued from Baja Ha-Ha for the  
First Time on page 1*

and it helped ease everyone into a mood that was serene and committed to making this a team journey. Our first night found us sailing out to open sea in fair winds.

The idea was to go several miles off shore, hit a line and tack back towards land. After spending some time dialing in our heading, we had a strong sail out about 80 miles. After nightfall, it was agreed that we had made our mark and it was time to tack. We executed the tack perfectly and confidently headed on our new course. It is an amazing and sometimes odd feeling to sail through the night. I felt like I was driving a fast car without headlights and trusting that I wouldn't hit something or leave the road, sailing into pitch darkness and solely trusting your instincts, GPS and Radar. I came to love those instruments as they provided guidance and took away the uncertainty of night sailing.

After three days at sea, we headed for our first stop at Turtle Bay, a night approach. We checked our coordinates and, being the brave sailors we are, followed other boats into Turtle Bay. What a sight! As we left the darkness of the open sea, we were treated to a magnificent sight of what looked like thousands of twinkling lights anchored in the darkness. We checked out the anchorage and found a comfortable spot to drop anchor. After everything was secured, we welcomed an almost full night of sleep after three days of four hours on, four hours off shifts.

The next morning, pangas zoomed around the anchored boats offering to take trash, bring beer or whatever you needed, for a price. This is a big money making event for this remote village. After getting organized, we headed off in the dingy to a rusted out fuel dock which gave us access to the town. We spent two days exploring the town, enjoying the locals and hiking the hills ( which gave a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside ). Then it was time to weigh anchor and head off to Bahia Santa Maria, our next stop, two days away. After a rousing sendoff by the Mother Ship, Profligate, we headed back out to open ocean and resumed the sailing routine of four hour shifts. It was on this trip that I really gained an appreciation for Night Sailing. It is eerie at times, and beautiful at others. I was lucky to share moments that seemed to be once in a lifetime events with my watch mates.

One night we observed what had to have been space junk rocket across the skies and explode in a flash of orange. Other nights, the boat would be surrounded by a greenish glow which appeared to emanate from deep within the ocean. We enjoyed a spectacular visit one night as a pair of dolphins rocketed towards the starboard aft section of Sensei. These two creatures looked like torpedoes headed right



Dolphins in the Sea of Cortez swimming in the night sky

for us, only to turn at the last moment and head towards the bow where they swam and played as the phosphorescence shot off their bodies like fireworks. Being at sea truly makes you appreciate nature. One morning the deck was littered with small squid, a silvery color with the bluest eyes I had ever seen. They were dead, which was sad, but I was more intrigued by how these small creatures were able to launch themselves out of the ocean and onto a fast moving sailboat. These are sights that you don't encounter in the Bay Area. We again arrived at our destination, Bahia Santa Maria, in darkness. This time it was early morning and we had to contend with some fog and other boats. Sensei's radar and GPS helped get us anchored safely. When the sun came up, I was amazed at how green the surrounding hills were, not the brown usually associated with Baja California. It appeared that we were in the South Pacific given the topography. After anchoring, we all relaxed in our own way. I decided to stay on the boat, enjoy some music and read a book. Others decided to go explore the area. Claire, at 10 years old, was always ready to catch up with new friends she had made along the way. I was encouraged by the number of kids out cruising. I hope to be able to do that with my own son, Ian, one of these days.

The next day, we all headed out to the annual beach party put on by locals who travel great distances to put on this event. Once again I chose to hike up one of the tall peaks and take in the incredible view of the ocean on one side and the vast desert and river system on the other side. Bahia Santa Maria is truly a special place. We all agreed that we could hang out in this spot for awhile. On the final day, Profligate held a rum party that was quite an event. Just about every participant in the Baja HAHA had their dingy rafted alongside Profligate, maneuvering into place to be able to get a hat and a sip of rum. Sylvia and Barry Stompe were running most of the show and while you could see that they were working hard, you knew they were having a great time and they did a fabulous job keeping things moving and the crowd pleased.

After hanging in Bahia Santa Maria for two days, it was time for the final leg of the trip down to Cabo San Lucas. We headed out in the morning with the fleet. By the way, this event is very well run. I was impressed with the professionalism (yet fun) way that roll calls, morning net and other events were orchestrated. It really gave one a sense of community. I digress... we headed out for our last 2 days and one night of sailing. That night, approaching Cabo, it was interesting how the fleet, once so scattered, now converged on a target together. All through the night, in between watching out for cruise ships, we had constant site of mast and running lights around us. This was a far cry from the solace experienced on the other legs of the journey. As day broke, we enjoyed a wonderful sail towards Cabo. We rounded Lands End in the afternoon and headed for the anchorage. After finding a spot near hotel row, we anchored in for our final landing as a crew. It was a time for celebration and a time for, in a way, disappointment that the adventure was soon to be over. My crew mate Smokey Stover was heading out that day as his wife, Laurie was there waiting for him. My family was not due until the next day, so I spent one more night on board *Sensei*, which helped ease me back into reality.

That night, the Latitude 38 gang put together a party at a place called Squid Row. I don't recommend that you visit there unless you like to dance! What a great way to work out your body after days at sea with little movement. After I had danced myself out, I was able to grab a Panga and get a ride back to *Sensei* where I finished out my first ever Baja HAHA, the trip of a life time. I truly recommend to those that can make the trip, make it! For me, the experience was a wonderful journey due to two factors: a solid, well prepared boat and a very competent, enjoyable crew. I know that if given the chance, I will do it all over again. My dream is to take *Lean Times* on the Baja HAHA journey. Wouldn't it be great to be sailing South with other I-36's.

Maybe someday.

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