

Sails Like a Ton of Bricks



Photo by Seven Seas Sailing School

Sea Scouts in Buffalo, NY, created a 'brick' sailboat which they claim is not a lead sled.

Leave it to those industrious Sea Scouts to take on a project that would get them recognized by the Ripley's Believe It or Not museum in Niagara Falls, NY. To reap this honor, the Buffalo, NY, chapter of the Sea Scouts created a 25-foot "brick" sailboat, drawing stares and disbelief at the Seven Seas Sailing School on the city's waterfront where the sloop sailed all last summer. In September, their creation was honored in public ceremonies as Ripley's declared it "the world's first and only brick boat."

"We get some mighty strange looks when we're out on the water," said Tobius Boehm, a Scout leader. "It's often because other boats can't believe we're such a fast boat, let alone not sinking."

The unusual project started several years ago when the young sailors held a discussion of all the materials used to build boats over the centuries — wood, metal, fiberglass and cement — said leader Bill Zimmermann. When one scout remarked that no boat had ever been built out of brick, the idea took hold. A local company manufactures a product called FlexiBrick and applied it to a boat's hull. It sure looks like the real thing.

(Kids, don't try this at home! Your parents will not be pleased if you try spackling their boat's hull.)

The Sea Scouts are always looking for adult volunteers for this Boy Scouts of America Venturing program. E-mail SeaScouts@BoatUS.com if you're interested. BoatU.S. is a sponsor of the Sea Scout program.

California Convention

One of the most educational and fun events of the year for women boaters is set for Feb. 5 when the 16th annual Women's Sailing Convention gets underway at the Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club in Corona del Mar, CA. BoatU.S. is the primary sponsor of the event, put on by the Southern California Yachting Association.

Unique among boating events, the convention's multi-workshop format includes sessions on docking, overboard procedures, GPS, weather, sail trim, going up the mast (ah!), diesels for dummies, offshore cruising, varnishing, AC/DC power, basic first aid and more. US Sailing President Janet Baxter is the guest speaker for dinner. The daylong event also includes continental breakfast, lunch, plus souvenirs and handouts.

The event often sells out so register early by going to BoatUS.com/women/seminars or go to www.scya.org; phone is 714-730-1797.

Extra Event: A women's-only flotilla cruise Feb. 6-12 to Catalina Island departs San Diego in Beneteau 407s, 411s and 461s. Sponsored by National Women's Sailing Association and priced at \$1,200, it includes all provisioning. See BoatUS.com/women for sign-up information. ■

Fresh Take on Cruising

For novices or experienced sailors who want to step up to a mid-sized cruising boat, Steve and Doris Colgate have published a new "fast-track" guide to everything you need to know about cruising but were afraid to ask. *Fast Track to Cruising: How To Go From Novice to Cruise-Ready in Seven Days* is just out from McGraw-Hill and covers all the basics but covers sailing and cruising in one fell swoop.

Having taught over 100,000 adults to sail during 40 years of running Offshore Sailing School, the Colgates capture their proven class methods in the 288-page paperback guide. Doris Colgate is a member of the BoatU.S. National Advisory Council.

Halloween Trick Played By Masked Bandit

"I was almost out of the Ft. Lauderdale harbor at the helm of my Carver Riviera when I heard a 'bang.' I looked around and saw nothing, hadn't left any hatches open. I was confronted with the stare of my stowaway. He was on the bow, looking right at me through the windshield!"

BoatU.S. member Edward Zuckerman reversed course to head to shore and offload his unauthorized passenger, a raccoon stowaway. Having read the last issue of *BoatU.S. Magazine*, he affirms the fact that raccoons really *do* like boats.



Photo by Ed Zuckerman

Fish Tagging Scales New Heights

Rhode Island charter boat captain Al Anderson, who has probably tagged more saltwater fish for research than any other recreational angler, has his own brand of fish story to tell. Says Al, "I've recaptured striped bass that I had caught, tagged and released only 24 hours before — in the same rip, on the same tide and on the same lure."

That's evidence, he says, that some fish are not too stressed by their close encounters with anglers to resume feeding soon after tagging. But Capt. Al did himself one better by relaying the story of two anglers fishing with him off Block Island, RI, who caught and tagged the same bluefin tuna, twice — within 20 minutes!



California women get hands-on practice.