



Volume 06, Issue 01

February, 2006

North American Invitational 2006

The North American Cruiser Association, Gig Harbor Yacht Club, and International Power Boat Association/South are pleased to host the North American Invitational 2006 predicted log championship, which will be held September 6-9, 2006, in the beautiful waters of South Puget Sound.

Gig Harbor, Washington, is located approximately five miles northwest of Tacoma on the Olympic Peninsula. The town of Gig Harbor is a small, former fishing village located on the shores of a small bay that offered protection to Captain Vancouver during his survey of the Puget Sound area. Weather in September is

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usually very pleasant, with highs in the high 70's to low 80's and overnight lows in the 50's. For contestants arriving by air, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) is the preferred airport. From the airport, rental cars are available, as well as shuttle vans to Gig Harbor. The headquarters hotel is about 1-1/2 miles from the harbor and yacht club facility, so transportation during the stay in Gig Harbor is recommended.

The initial registration and boat drawing will be held on Wednesday evening, September 6th, with time trials on Thursday and the contest on Saturday. Friday will be a free day to sightsee or to fine-tune the currents and race course information. The awards banquet will be held Saturday night, followed by a NACA board meeting on Sunday morning.

During the contestants' stay in Gig Harbor, there are numerous sightseeing and tourist-related activities to fill their free time, including the construction of the new Narrows Bridge, Tacoma Glass Museum, Boeing Air Museum, and others. Information on these activities and attractions will be included in the contestant information packets to be distributed in July.

International Power Boat Association promises an interesting and challenging race course that will include at least one trip through the famous Tacoma Narrows, where currents are usually about 5-6 knots at maximum flood or ebb, and around some of the smaller scenic islands of South Puget Sound.

Race Master, Jerry Downer, is busy forming committees and defining responsi-

(*Continued on page 6*)



North American Cruiser Association

For help or information, visit our web site at http://www.predictedlog.org

It provides a resource for boaters looking for information, to learn more about predicted logging or NACA, or to find a member organization near them.

Feel free to call any of us with your thoughts and ideas!

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NACA Objectives

The objective of the North American Cruiser Association is to promote the sport of Predicted Log Contests in North America. Pursuant to this objective, NACA will:

- 1. Publish and distribute a periodic newsletter known as the *Cruiser Log*, which shall contain news and information pertaining to the sport.
- 2. Schedule and coordinate an annual "North American Invitational" (NAI) Predicted Log Contest.
- 3. Sanction contests of member associations that are to be scored for NACA points.
- 4. Maintain and publish scoring and standings of Predicted Log contestants participating in NACA sanctioned contests.
- 5. Provide perpetual and suitable keeper trophies and other awards for winners of such North American Predicted Log series and events as may be established by NACA.
- 6. Establish "Recommended Contest Rules" for NACA sanctioned Predicted Log Contests.
- 7. Generally be responsive to the needs and requirements of member associations and of the sport of Predicted Log Contests.
- 8. Support boating and Corinthian yachting in general.

Cruiser Log Publication Deadlines

Submit by: January 15

January 15 March 15 May 15 July 15 September 15 November 15 For publication in: February April June August October December

If you miss a deadline, your article will be published in a future issue. Welcome, 2006! I trust that everyone enjoyed the holidays and all the fun and family that makes them special.

Well, January is here, so I guess it is time for me and the rest of the NACA board to get to work on the year 2006.

Membership renewals will be in the mail soon. Please fill out the long form of the membership questionnaire, since it contains information which is not requested on the shorter form. E-mail addresses seem to be the most volatile piece of personal information, so please check your personal data in the 2005 NACA roster and note any errors on the questionnaire.

A NACA director (to be announced) will be contacting each regional organization to obtain a list of this year's officers and directors. We are also starting our drive for advertising material for the 2006 year book. Lisa Gaston and I will be looking for your business cards and art work.

I have a fresh supply of American made heavy nylon NACA flags and pocket patches (bullions). Start this year with fresh set of colors.

Let's have a great year of racing with new members and more contests.

Bob Ehlers Commodore/Acting Executive Secretary

Future NAI Events (tentative)

- 2006 Puget Sound, Washington
- 2007 San Diego, California
- 2008 Detroit, Michigan
- 2009 Newport, Rhode Island
- 2010 San Francisco, California

Association News

SCCA - Bud and Elaine Lloyd will load their boat, *Diamond Girl*, onto a Dockwise ship in Ensenada, Mexico. They will meet *Diamond Girl* in Florida, where they plan to begin their cruise up the Intercoastal waterways for as long as it is fun.

NAI 2004 defending champion Pete Healy was recovering from major surgery and was not able to compete in NAI 2005.

After Hurricane Wilma, is John Willister still planning to move to Florida?

SDCA - Although David Weimer was the only SDCA entry to the elusive 500 Club in 2005, Garry Adalian started off the 2006 NACA racing season

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Attention: Association Scorers

Please send your contest scores to Chief Scorer Craig Ryan as soon after a race as possible, so he can compile NACA standings for publication in the next issue of *Cruiser Log*. Please note his new email address. Send to:

> Craig Ryan 2820 Boa Vista Drive Costa Mesa, CA 92626-3549 714.434.3941 E-mail: his@craigandjan.com

Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not. - Aldous Huxley

Review of Coastal Explorer by David Weimer

Noting that Rose Point Navigation Systems is now a sponsor for North American Cruiser Association (NACA), I recently purchased, at the 20% NACA member discount, a copy of their Coastal Explorer software for use in planning future cruiser navigation contests. This article is a review of my experiences with the software, using it exclusively for planning navigation contests.

Coastal Explorer is a charting software program that is very easy to like. Installation is easy, the instruction manual is well written, and my initial setup went smoothly.

My installation of Coastal Explorer is on an IBM ThinkPad notebook computer, which runs Windows XP Professional. Installed memory is 256K. I also have Nobeltec and MapTech navigation software installed on the computer, along with a collection of BSB charts. The software may behave differently, depending upon your computer configuration.

A commendable installation feature is software that will search your hard drive for charts already installed and add these charts to your available list of charts. The software comes with digital charts, excerpts from the Coast Pilot, and a Coastal Explorer version of tide and current predictions.

I prefer raster charts over vector charts for cruiser navigation planning because of the additional landbased features and the chart display of buoys and other navigational aids. Thus, my comments will be mostly in the context of using raster charts. The software located all my MapTech and ChartKit raster charts and placed them in the list of available charts without any effort on my part.

Marks, routes, and waypoints created by another navigation program can also be imported into Coastal Explorer with ease. I imported approximately 35 marks from my Nobeltec program without any difficulty and with apparent accuracy.

After installation and without problems, the selected charts loaded together with adjoining charts available for quilting. I liked the way the chart scrolled using the cursor and how the zoom feature worked using the center "wheel" on my mouse. The screen controls are similar to those in Nobeltec software and were intuitive to use.

One quirk was found in zooming out on my selected chart. At a point where some of the details are getting difficult to read, a larger area quilted chart takes over, washing out the details of the selected chart. Discussions with Rose Point provided a solution to this problem by accessing a "charts here" menu and disabling the adjoining quilted charts. This quirk is a minor one, encountered only when a large section of a route (five nautical miles or greater) is displayed for an overview or for printing.

Speaking of printing, the full chart printouts, both color and black and white printouts, are the best I've ever seen in any navigational software package. The detail is fine, quilting is superb, and the color is true.

Plotting a route is much the same as in the other navigational software programs, with waypoints added at a click of the mouse. The capability to join routes, add waypoints, and move waypoints is easily accomplished. Coastal Explorer has three methods for joining legs at waypoints: the traditional straight line between waypoints, a smooth transition from the first course heading to the second, or a predicted log curve that doesn't begin until the waypoint is reached. The transition curves are based on vessel properties that users select in terms of turning radius, both port and starboard.

(Continued on page 6)

I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure. – Clarence Darrow

Excerpt From the Instruction Manual of Coastal Explorer

Chart Compatibility

Coastal Explorer utilizes various formats of charts from several manufacturers. Each type of chart has its own advantages and disadvantages, and many of these are subject to your individual tastes.

Raster Charts

Raster charts are simply digital pictures of paper charts that also contain the information necessary to convert between locations in the picture and a latitude and longitude. Most raster charts also contain other information, such as when the last update was made and the units of depths.

Some people prefer raster charts over the newer vector charts because they seem more familiar they are just copies of paper charts, after all. As you'll see later, though, vector charts have some major advantages over raster charts and will soon be the world-wide standard chart format.

Two major formats of raster charts are available: the so-called MapTech/BSB format and the SoftChart NOS/GEO format. Both formats have a lot in common but are different in the details. In both cases, a chart is made up of two or more files. One of these files is relatively small and has a file type of .BSB or .GEO. The other file (or files) contain the image of the chart and can be very large. These files have a type of .KAP or .NOS. Some charts, especially small-craft charts from MapTech, will have more than one image file; one for each page, panel, or inset from the original chart.

Nautical Data International, Inc. (NDI) is the official distributor for Canadian raster charts, which are sold under the brand name of Digital Ocean. These charts are in the same format as MapTech's and work fine in Coastal Explorer.

Coastal Explorer is fully compatible with the new BSB Version 4 format charts. The older PCX format and RML format charts are also compatible.

Photo Charts

Photo charts are a variation of raster charts. They are still a static picture, but, rather than being a picture of a chart, they are photographs of an area. Photo charts are especially handy for checking out shallow areas, as they clearly indicate the locations of shoals and channels.

Photo charts are usually derived from the Digital Orthographic Quadrangle (DOQ) photos created by the USGS. The originals are available in various forms on the Internet, and Coastal Explorer can use the GeoTIFF format. The USGS does not offer the DOQs for download, but many states have universities that do.

MapTech's Navigation Photos and SoftChart's PhotoNavigator charts, which are derived from the USGS DOQs, are also supported.

Vector Charts

Rather than storing the entire chart as a single image like a raster chart, vector charts are made up of many separate objects, such as coastlines, bays, land areas, buoys, and depths. Some of the advantages of this method include:

- The display of individual types of objects can be controlled, which allows you to control clutter on the screen
- The units of displayed measurements can be controlled
- The database of object descriptions uses much less storage space than an equivalent raster chart
- There is a greater amount of information stored in the database. Computer software can take advantage of this for advanced features, such as route safety checking

There are really only three disadvantages to vector charts:

Review of Coastal Explorer by David Weimer (*Continued from page 4*)

While the predicted log course transition is typical of our piloting maneuvers, the program doesn't have the ability to change boat speed during these turns. For planning purposes where our boat speed is affected, most of us will opt for two waypoints tangent to the mark and will calculate our own tur ning times between these waypoints. Boat speed can be set for each individual leg, if necessary.

Route properties can be easily displayed and printed, using convenient menus accessed by clicking the mouse on the route.

My experience in printing the route details uncovered a couple of early software glitches. I'm sure Rose Point will fix these in forthcoming versions. Printing route details also prints a copy of the chart at the top of the page. Detail of the chart is too coarse to be useful. It would be nice to just print out the route details on a single sheet for analysis.

Printing route details also doesn't print all the information shown on the screen. Missing in the printed version are cumulative total distances and ETA calculations based on starting times. Like other software programs, route details that are printed do include the mark identification, bearing in true and magnetic, distance, speed, turn angle, and waypoint latitude/longitude coordinates.

One can also export or copy the route details to another software program or another computer. This could be useful in setting up a race calculation spreadsheet. I exported route details to an MS Excel spreadsheet, and all the details translated. The downside was, however, that the spreadsheet then had to be formatted for each column.

Time is exported in numerical seconds, distance is shown to six decimal places, and latitude/longitude is exported in decimal degrees. The user must spend some time at cell formatting in order to translate these and other columns into useable information. The embedded help function is well done, with the philosophy that the instruction book provides only an overview of the product (but sufficient for most users, I might add), while the details are provided as part of the help menu. You get much more than just an electronic version of the hard copy manual. Furthermore, my experience in contact with Gregg Baker, the Rose Point Product Support Engineer, has been very good. He has answered all of my questions to my satisfaction.

In addition to the planning mode, the software also has a feature-rich cruise mode for navigation in real time.

Overall, considering the software is new, I was quite pleased with the program and would recommend it to any predicted log contestant who is interested in upgrading their current software.

David Weimer San Diego Cruiser Association

North American Invitational 2006 (Continued from page 1)

bilities to make this a memorable experience for all contestants and their teams. Questions or concerns about this event can be directed to Jerry at his email: norwester45@hotmail.com.

Jerry Downer I nternational Power Boat Association

NEW COMPETITORS

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From the Manual of Coastal Explorer (Continued from page 5)

- Coverage of vector charts is not as complete as raster charts (yet)
- Many vector charts do not have as much detail as their paper counterparts
- The resulting display does not look as fimiliar as a paper chart

Vector charts are available in many different formats, including various types from C-MAP and Navionics, Passport from Nobeltec, and many others. Coastal Explorer does not support any of these proprietary formats.

The only non-proprietary vector chart format is called S-57, or ENC (short for Electronic Navigation Chart), and is the standard format used by just about every hydrographic office in the world for official government charts. S-57 ENCs are the only vector chart format approved for use as paper chart replacements on SOLAS (Safety Of Life At Sea) class vessels, such as cargo and cruise ships.

One of the most surprising features of S-57 ENCs is that NOAA and the United States Army Corps of Engineers have decided to give them away for free! They are busy converting their paper charts into this format and are making them available on the Internet at the addresses listed below. At the time of this writing, over 300 ENCs are available from NOAA and about 40, from the USACE.

Canadian ENCs may be purchased from Nautical Data International, Inc. under the brand names of Digital Ocean Recreational Vector or Digital Ocean Professional. Many other countries make ENCs available through their hydrographic office or its distributor.

ENCs are made up of one or more files, usually stored in a folder that contains just files related to one chart. The most important file has a type of .000, which contains the chart database. Other files with the same name but different numeric file types (such as .001, .002, .003, etc.) may be in the chart's folder and contain updates to the database. Any number of other files, usually text or TIFF images, may be in the folder and contain extra information or pictures that are referenced by the database.

S-57 refers to the world-wide standard format of a vector chart database. Another world-wide standard, called S-52, refers to the graphical way to present that database to a user. S-52 determines colors, line-styles, fill-patterns, text placement, and all of the other details that go into drawing a chart database on a computer screen. Coastal Explorer has complete support for S-57 ENCs drawn according to the S-52 specification.

Coastal Explorer includes vector charts for most of the United States. These charts are proprietary to Coastal Explorer but are made from the Digital Nautical Charts (DNC®), produced by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). The Coastal Explorer charts look and work much like the ENC but are a completely different format of chart, and you will notice some differences. Since the NOAA ENC is the official electronic chart of the United States, they will usually appear on top of a Coastal Explorer chart when you have the same chart in both formats.

Topographic Maps

Topographic maps are not suitable for navigation but are very handy for hiking around that island near which you just anchored! Coastal Explorer can use the topographic maps that are included in most MapTech ChartKits, as well as the original USGS DRG files, which are found in the GeoTIFF.

NACA BLAZER BULLIONS

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NACA has replenished its supply of blazer badges and added staff commodore badges, with three embroidered silver stars, to its inventory Really good looking! Only \$25 (includes shipping and handling) Call Bob Ehlers 619-222-9446

A Farewell to Gene Grant

Gene was a Senior Scientist with Hughes Research Labs, and, being a boater and predicted log racer, he applied his knowledge of physics to developing various useful formulas for use in logging. In 1985, a Grant's Corner article was in each Cruiser Log, in which he elaborated on his various theories. Perhaps some of the old-timers in our sport will recall some of his articles. Some of the formulae he developed were the dog-leg correction, oscillating hearing error correction, speed-weight sensitivity correction, correction due to windage, shallow water affect on speed, precise turn time correction, and many others. He was always ready and willing to run an analysis on boat data for anyone who asked.

Gene was staff commodore of California Yacht Club and Southern California Cruiser Association and an early recipient of the Gandelman Trophy. The seminars he led got me interested in predicted logging, and for that I am ever grateful. He will certainly be missed.

Tom Collins Southern California Cruiser Association

Eugene Fredrick Grant, retired aerospace engineer and long-time Pacific Palisades resident, died of heart failure at the age of 88 on November 27, 2005, after a long and fruitful life that touched many, many people.

Gene was born and raised in Baker, Oregon, and attended Oregon State University, where he received his BS and MS in Engineering. While at Oregon State, Gene met his future wife, Evelyn Dully. Gene and Evelyn married, moved to the East Coast, and started a family. Gene worked as an electronics engineer at Westinghouse Corporation, Air Force Cambridge Research Center, Sperry Gyroscope Company, W.L. Maxson Company, and National Company. His best-known work during this period involved the development of radar systems and precision atomic clocks.

In 1962, the family, including son Chuck and daughter Robin, moved to Pacific Palisades, and Gene began employment at Hughes Aircraft Corporation. At Hughes, Gene rose to the position of Chief Scientist and continued as a consultant there after his retirement. He is named on eleven patents and was known for his problem solving, his originality of thought, his insatiable curiosity, and his charming wit.

Gene's principal hobby was boating, which he be-

gan by building a 21' power boat (*Kilobucks*) and then by cruising with family to northeast islands and harbors on weekends and vacations. As the family grew, Gene and Evelyn purchased *Argo*, a 1932, 32' Elko Marine cabin cruiser, and equipped it with a self-built autopilot. *Argo* was trucked to California when the family moved and was event ually traded in for *Circe*, a 1948, 41' Stevens power boat.

Gene was active in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and also joined California Yacht Club, where he became commodore. He participated in the boating sport of predicted log racing and won national championships. Gene "dropped the hook" in virtually every anchorage between Ensenada, Mexico, and Santa Barbara, California, on his many cruises out of Marina del Rey.

In addition to boating, Gene played the piano (he modified an upright into an electronic piano in the late 50's) and was a practiced metal worker (his home workshop included a lathe and milling machine).

Evelyn died in 1978. In 1980, Gene met and became a life partner with Ann Johnson. Together, they cruised extensively, both on *Circe* and also on chartered boat trips up the Nile River, the Maine

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St. Petersburg Yacht Club has to be one of the most outstanding yachting facilities in the world. Parking garage, two restaurants, swimming pool, marina, huge meeting facilities - wow!

Wednesday night's boat drawing was a piratethemed cocktail party with the usual drawing of boats and pairing of observers and scrutinizers. NECA member Lon Compton's boat, *Last Call*, was in the contest, and NECA contestant Chuck Rubin was definitely interested, but it was not to be. Haluk Akol drew Lon's boat, and Chuck drew the 34-foot Sea Ray, *Sea Skimmer*, owned by congenial Jake Jakiel.

Chuck's crew, Joe LeBlanc and I, were on board Thursday morning at 0800 to begin the time trials, to be conducted in the middle of Tampa Bay. The weather was overcast, with occasional rain showers.

The measured miles consisted of three fixed structures defining two legs (each one mile) but at right angles. After finding the marks, the crew set about making three runs at each of five rpm settings. After a few runs, the courses were well defined, and the taking of data became humdrum...until the very last run.

As we approached the mark, we saw the very large pleasure boat, *King Conch*, bearing down on us to starboard. Its bearing angle remained constant. Our helmsman was advised to steer off before it was too late. Still, the bearing remained the same, and our helmsman kept his course. When we were inside 100 yards distant, it was obvious we were going to be in front of the other boat. Some say that we cleared by a boat length, and others say we missed by ten feet. Still, we finished the run and had a nice speed curve for our efforts. Later, *King Conch*'s contestant, Tom Collins, remarked how our helmsman must have had nerves of steel.

Thursday night was Casino Night in the condominium overlooking Tampa Bay from the twentyeighth floor - a breathtaking view. No gambling winnings were reported by the NECA crew, but we had a very nice dinner with Lon Compton and the Rhinersons. Ron and Paula Rhinerson invited us aboard their boat, *Sunny Side Up*, for cocktails on Friday.

Saturday morning dawned bright, but there were forecasts of showers and, perhaps, a thunderstorm or two. Chuck's selection of an 8.48 knot running speed put us in the middle of the starting pack and about five minutes behind Tom Collins' boat. At least we wouldn't get lost.

There were five blind points with differing degrees of difficulty to find, the first being the most difficult. After turning at this blind point (perfectly, we thought), our confidence increased. The remainder of the 39.5 nautical mile course seemed pretty straightforward, but at some points, the currents seemed different from predicted. We wanted to "play the throttles" but didn't.

About two-thirds through the course, southwest of the skyway bridge, the rain started and grew very heavy. We learned that we were without windshield wipers. Joe and I had to open observation slits by raising the canvas slightly above the windshield. We continued speed, and, after thirty minutes or so, the rain ceased.

The final legs from the bridge to the finish line were uneventful, save the drama of twelve boats

(Continued on page 11)

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Encourage a friend to join the North American Cruiser Association...*Today!*

Membership in NACA keeps everyone who is interested in Predicted Log Contests well informed about the sport throughout North America. Competitors from thirteen member Associations compete for National Trophies simply by competing in their local contests. The champion from each organization competes in the North American Invitational, hosted by a different organization each year.

Your dues entitle you to receive *Cruiser Log* (the NACA newsletter), the Annual Yearbook that lists all NACA members and their addresses, along with information about the member organizations, and the NACA Handbook that details the national rules for Predicted Log Contests as well as the perpetual trophies.

To join the North American Cruiser Association or renew your membership, complete this membership form and mail it with your check to:

Bob Ehlers Acting Executive Secretary

1135 Alexandria Drive San Diego, CA 92107		
Name		
Mailing Address		
City State	e Zip Code	
Spouse Name		
Home Telephone		
Office Telephone		
Yacht Club or Other Boating Organi	zations	
Please include your check payable to: NORTH	AMERICAN CRUISER ASSOCIATION	
ANNUAL DUES:	\$10.00	
CONTRIBUTION:	\$	
TOTAL ENCLOSED:	\$	

*Your contributions enable us to maintain the perpetual trophies and provide other services to our Member Associations.

A Farewell to Gene Grant (Continued from page 8)

coast, and to the Galapagos Islands. They also traveled by car throughout the western United States, particularly eastern Oregon logging communities, guided always by a GPS device, for which Gene was an early design contributor.

Gene was active in the Pacific Palisades community affiliates of AARP and the Democratic Party and also volunteered his time tutoring math students at Palisades Charter High School for several years.

Gene never abandoned his interest in engineering, and he applied for a nanotechnology systems patent this year with his son. In addition, Gene participated on an advisory board to the Dean of Engineering at his alma mater, Oregon State University, where he has been inducted into their Engineering Hall of Fame. He was a lifelong advocate of the study of advanced mathematics by engineers.

Those of you who knew him will remember these Gene-isms, for which one needed to be always prepared with an answer: What's your thought for today? How have you been wasting your time? What humor do you have to report?

Gene is survived by daughter Robin; son, Chuck; two grandchildren, Adam Grant and Sarah Chance; two great grandchildren, Sophie Chance and Greta Grant; daughter-in-law, Julie Grant; and an extended family of the children of Ann Johnson and their families.

A private service was planned for mid-December.

Did You Know? Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history: Spades – King David Hearts – Charlemagne Clubs – Alexander, the Great Diamonds – Julius Caesar NAI 2005 According to Carl Johnson (Continued from page 9)

closing on the mark. *Sea Skimmer* was about a minute and a half early. Pretty good after four and a half hours running.

Saturday night's peel-off was attended by Chuck's wife Irene, his son Greg, and daughter-in-law Cheryl. After the first leg was peeled off, Chuck was in firm hold of 9th place. But his positioning in succeeding legs of 3rd, 5th, 5th, and 2nd earned him third overall.

Joe LeBlanc was given the keeper Gandleman trophy, which was not available last year and thus was honored a second time for his outstanding contribution to the sport of predicted log racing.

Carl Johnson New England Cruiser Association

Association News (Continued from page 3)

with a score of 0.4163. Is this a sign of things to come in the new year?

NECA - Larry Marks and Bob Fiorentino have put together a magnificent summer cruise north to the Maine coast. Guaranteed to use minimal fuel, the cruise will visit quiet harbors and busy ports.

Baldness: The Fringe Benefits

- There is never any hassle with dress codes, flaky dandruff, or trying to get that fullbodied look.
- 2. You save countless hours and dollars at hair salons.
- 3. You can use your head as a reflector when lost at sea.

-David E. Beswick, from Bald Men Always Come Out On Top



The Newsletter of North American Cruiser Association

Bob Ehlers, Acting Executive Secretary 1135 Alexandria Drive San Diego, CA 92107



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