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TIME-TESTED DESIGNS

PAGE 52

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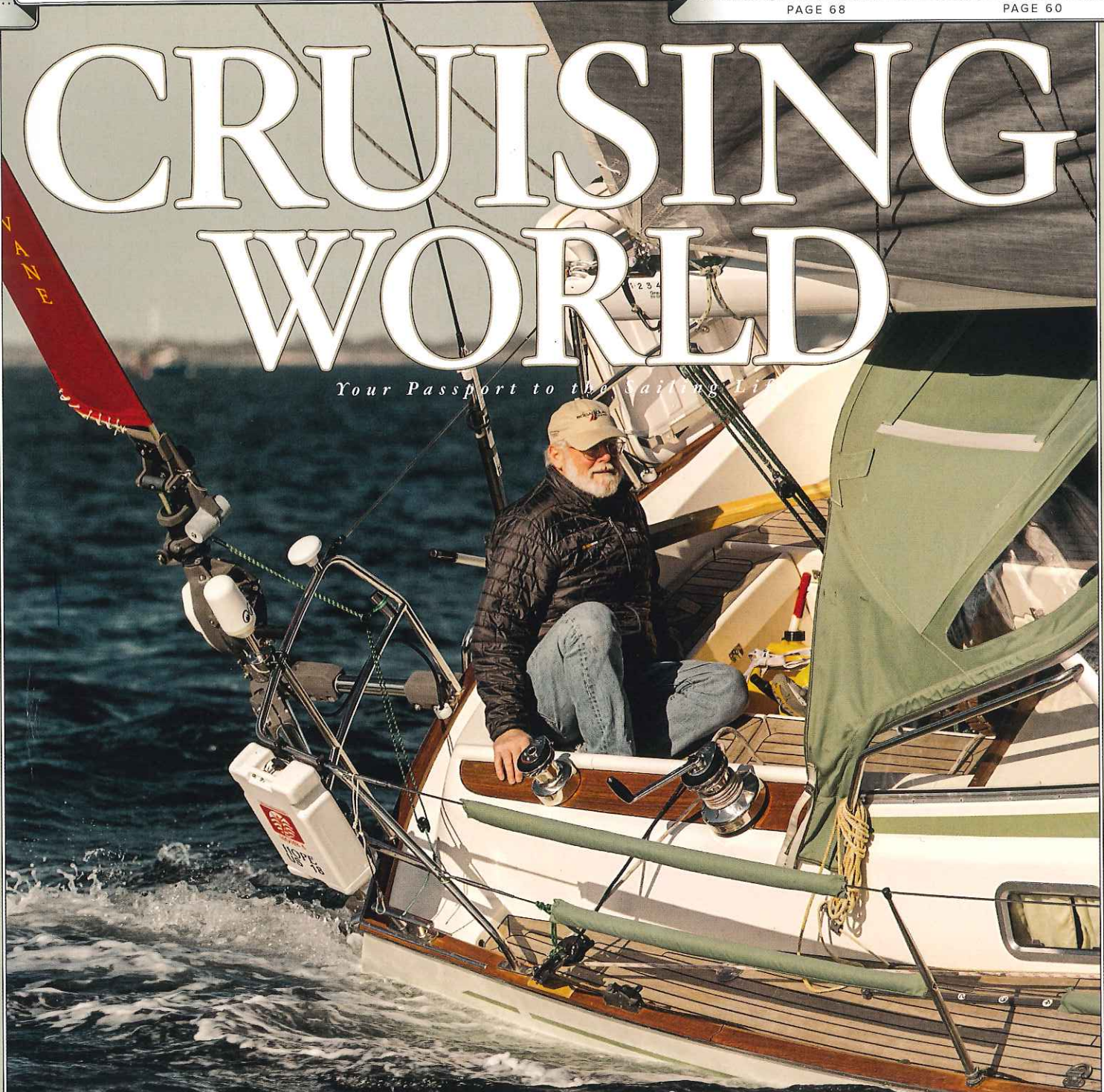
GREEN WAKES

PAGE 68

PAGE 60

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PASSAGE
Notes

St. Martin Is Back

Need a sailing vacation? Try St. Martin! The Moorings and Sunsail recently opened a new base at Marina Fort-Louis. "Nothing could have prepared us for the devastation that September's hurricanes brought to St. Martin, but we couldn't be more thrilled to invite charterers back to one of our most popular destinations, and from a brand-new base location in a world-class marina," says Josie Tucci, vice president of sales and marketing. cruisingworld.com/1804stmartin

Where Is Webb?

Intrepid small-boat circumnavigator Webb Chiles has had a change of plans on his latest attempt to circle the globe. "There are those who will say that I am through. They may be right. I am 76 years old. I should have been through long, long ago. Everyone else is. But I am not everyone else, and I am not yet used up. I have more to do, and it is my firm intention to complete this circumnavigation, time and chance permitting."

To learn more about Webb and his voyages, visit his website (inthepresentsea.com).

into an anchorage.

We slept soundly, but regretted our decision when morning dawned without a breath of wind and with thick, damp fog. We weighed anchor around 0700 and puttered out of the cove and then west to cross Shelikof Strait, feeling a bit glum. Very slowly, though, the fog began to lift and we could see the hills of Kodiak Island on the beam. Astern, we caught a glimpse of the Canadian yacht that shared our anchorage. She seemed to be coming along on our course.

Then we saw the orcas. The first ones we spotted were spouting to the south of us but coming our way, so we throttled back and waited, zoom lens at the ready. One of the whales in particular had a huge fin, the patriarch of the pod. Dall's porpoises were cavorting around them, their quick splashes and rushing speed a contrast to the more stately orcas. While that group approached, we sighted another to the northeast, apparently on a converging course. In all, there must have been more than a dozen, probably more like 15 whales!

Soon, the Canadian yacht had caught up to us and was also watching the show, drifting along in the calm. The orca pod swam between our two boats, unperturbed by our presence. From a photography point of view, it was one of the best coincidences of our time in Alaska: a pod of one of the most iconic cetacean species, surfacing right in front of a yacht built to sail the kind of waters where such animals live.

The wind piped up an hour later, and we were off across the strait on a tearing beam reach. It turned out that we were all bound for the same anchorage, so Seth and I were able to meet Ken and Carol on board *Voyageur*. They had left their Ontario home some years ago and sailed a big Atlantic loop before transiting the Panama Canal and sailing north to Alaska via Hawaii and British Columbia. Seth and I have sailed some of the same waters on our circumnavigation and subsequent Alaskan voyages, but none of us had ever seen a better show of whales.

—Ellen Massey Leonard

BETTER DITCH KIT

I was interested to read the thorough article "What's In Your Ditch Bag?" (December 2017). I was very fortunate to have circumnavigated in our 39-foot sloop *Kandarik* with my husband, son and daughter. Seven years of living aboard, crossing several oceans, visiting fabulous foreign countries and keeping up with all the products that make our boat efficient and safe has given me some personal knowledge of what to have in a ditch bag. Although your list of essential items was very complete, there is one addition I'd make due to the introduction of new technology. Some of the most difficult products to keep up to date are the necessary flares to alert others of a possible distress situation. The time-honored flares that we carried around the world expired and needed replacing, and sometimes we were not able to acquire new ones in time.



The Weems & Plath SOS Distress Light meets U.S. Coast Guard requirements for night visual distress signals.

Now, there is a new option: electronic flares. I have replaced pyrotechnic flares with the SOS Distress Light sold by Weems & Plath. I now carry three of these electronic flares aboard *Kandarik*: one on deck, ready to quickly deploy; one in my tender at all times should I need assistance when in my dinghy; and one in my ditch bag. The beauty is they never expire, don't go out when they hit the water, last many hours and save me the time and money needed to replace expiring pyrotechnics!

—Pam Wall, via email

MARINE ELECTRONICS 2018 CORRECTIONS

In the print edition of the 2018 Marine Electronics annual, distributed with the March issue of *Cruising World*, the prices of three products were listed incorrectly. The correct prices are: Page 19, Mazu SkyMate M2500: \$995; Simrad RS20 VHF Radio: \$279; Page 76, JL Audio MediaMaster MM100S-BE: \$549.99. The 2018 Marine Electronics annual is available online at cruisingworld.com/2018-marine-electronics-guide