

## Sea Scouts Sailing for Top Honors

Sea Scouts around the country, like Michelle Duffy rigging her boat on San Francisco Bay, have been busy with regional races this spring to qualify for Sea



— Photo by Joshua Gilliland

Scouting's top sailing honors in June. Sixteen teams will compete for the Richard Schwartz BoatU.S. Sea Scout National Sailing Championship, June 20-26, at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. They'll also be racing against teams from several foreign nations for the William I. Koch International Sea Scout Cup. The two events run concurrently in the academy's 420s.

Sea Scouting is a co-ed program for both girls and boys, age 14-21. For more information about both events visit [www.seascoutcup.org](http://www.seascoutcup.org). For general information about Sea Scouting, send a message to [SeaScouts@BoatUS.com](mailto:SeaScouts@BoatUS.com).

## UN Takes on Ballast Water Issue

After treasuring water for 10 years on the issue of the aquatic nuisance species transported worldwide in ship ballast tanks, a United Nations agency is calling for international controls.

At a Feb. 13 meeting in London, the International Maritime Organization adopted an agreement designed to stop the spread of harmful aquatic animals, plants and pathogens through ballast water carried in large ships. But U.S. observers say the Global Ballast Water Convention is a cumbersome tool that will have little effect since it will take a decade or more to implement.

Cargo ships that take on ballast water in one country's waters and discharge it later in other ports have been implicated in the transfer of detrimental, non-native organisms for 20 years or more. Animals like the zebra mussel, which invaded the U.S. from the Black Sea via ballast water discharged in Great Lakes ports, can cause widespread damage to native ecosystems.

The U.S. Coast Guard and the Environmental Protection Agency have been grappling with the problem of requiring

ships to clear ballast tanks before entering U.S. waters. Economic as well as vessel safety considerations raised by international shippers have hampered control efforts. But with the IMO action, the world shipping community will be asked to sign on to a two-step remedy.

All ships would be required to use approved ballast water management techniques and keep record books if their country of registry signs the convention. But that could take as long as 15 years to fully implement on all of the world's 100,000 ocean-going vessels, according to Dennis Schornack, U.S. chairman of the International Joint Commission, which oversees the St. Lawrence River-Great Lakes Seaway with Canada.

The second provision offers more hope of a solution, say Schornack and Michigan Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R). It allows individual countries to adopt additional measures before allowing ships to enter their waters. That could be the impetus for stronger federal laws to protect U.S. waters from ballast water-borne pests.

## Spring Break Comes Early to BoatU.S.



As a special treat for BoatU.S. staffers, some of whom have never set foot on a sailing ship, longtime BoatU.S. Travel partner Star Clippers took 17 lucky crewmates on a luxury spin around the Leeward Islands of the Caribbean. Aboard the elegant four-masted, 360-foot *Star Clipper*, they docked in St. Maarten, St. Barts, St. Kitts and Antigua, enjoying first-rate service, gourmet meals, and trips ashore for snorkeling, shopping and island tours. The botanical gardens and \$1 beer in St. Kitts were a hit along with shopping in St. Barts. Stiff winds during the five-day cruise meant the guests felt the full effect of a traditional sailing ship pounding through the waves under full sail. For more on Star Clippers' many other cruises, see the back cover, or go to [BoatUS.com/travel](http://BoatUS.com/travel).

## Women's Conference Returns in June

The third annual Women's Sailing Conference sponsored by BoatU.S. and organized by the National Women's Sailing Association once again brings together women sailors, from novices



to experts, for a great learning experience June 5 at the beautiful Corinthian Yacht Club in Marblehead, MA.

The all-day series of workshops include on-the-water sessions on skills such as sail trim and racing techniques, plus land-based classes on navigation, using GPS, tying knots, diesel engines and reading weather, to name a few. The day ends with a cocktail hour, then a gala dinner featuring guest speaker Doris Colgate. Colgate is a leader in women's sailing for the boating industry, founder of NWSA and president of Offshore Sailing Schools. She also serves on the BoatU.S. National Advisory Council.

To find out more or register, go to [BoatUS.com/women](http://BoatUS.com/women) and click on Training/Seminars.

## Sea Scouts Take Top Honors

It has been an award-winning year for the national Sea Scouting program as they celebrate their new partnership with the United States Power Squadrons (USPS). In early January 2004, the USPS and the U.S. Coast Guard honored the Sea Scouts with the highly prestigious Eagle Award. The Eagle, the USPS's highest honor is for individuals and organizations that promote boating safety education for adults and children. The presentation took place at the USPS Governing Board meeting in Orlando, FL, where National Director Charles Holmes and Chief Scout Executive Roy Williams received the award on behalf of the Sea Scouts.

## Snapping Up a Ship of State

When the state of Maryland needed to save money, Gov. Robert Ehrlich proposed unloading the *Maryland Independence*, the 112-foot state yacht. The unusual 1944 Canadian-built former submarine chaser sold in short order, auctioned off after a flurry of bidding on eBay. With a starting price of \$150,000 and 19 bids over four days, the boat went to BoatU.S. member Julie Wood and her friend, both Maryland residents; their high bid of \$275,100 won the auction, keeping the stately vessel in home waters.



*Maryland Independence*

The pair beat out the high bidder in California with only minutes left, and they're very happy they did so. Avid boaters, and history and antique buffs, the pair are elated by the purchase. "We're happy to be able to keep it where it belongs," Wood said.

## Questions, We Have Questions

With the Log of *Ithaka* posted twice monthly at BoatUS.com, fans of long distance cruising or those planning for future getaways can ask anything they want of authors Bernadette and Douglas Bernon. Questions published in our last issue are answered on the Web site at [www.boatus.com/cruising/ithaka](http://www.boatus.com/cruising/ithaka). Both Bernons won awards recently from Boating Writers International for their articles on the cruising lifestyle. The next set of questions answered on the Web site are:

- **How do you handle health insurance once you leave the United States?**
- **What are some suggestions for best stops on the ICW?**
- **How easy is it to access the Internet in foreign countries?**
- **What is the best remedy for seasickness?**