

The Watchhorn

November 2007

Holiday Harbor/Cabrillo Marina

Another boating season is ending, and thought it might be an appropriate time to review why we bought this floating money reef in the first place. We know now it wasn't to maximize sea time, ask anyone one who walks the Cabrillo Promenade snaking its entire perimeter. No, it's not the sea time that led us to our proud steed. But if not the need for lengthy visits to the deep blue, or our search for Neptune, what was the reason we robbed our piggy-bank from its green burden?

There is even substantial evidence that when we do cut the docklines, we have also added additional risk to our lives. Take flotsam for example. There is danger floating everywhere out there, just read the boating magazines and boating related newspapers attempting to terrify us over sea garbage. Recently I was considering many items waiting to eat our bow that are not even mentioned in these articles designed to elevate floating garbage to a status of weapons of mass destruction risk. What about Whale Poop? You say it sinks, but Whales don't, and continue to float long after they're through spouting. Can you imagine the size, density, (and smell) of such a navigational hazard? Can you imagine the headlines if this became your demise: *"Whale Dung Done Did Him In?"* Scary stuff...scary big stuff.

I think the answer as to why we choose to park more than head-out is evident. I believe it's a love affair with an inanimate object that seduced us. Twisted yes, but legal. It's a relationship which began before the check was written, and a relationship which is not always monogamous. We even get to name it, give it a gender, and are encouraged to touch and buff as often as we desire. We even believe she speaks to us at times, and what's the problem with that?

Dock Holiday

Real News

- I know it is not your intention to begin ignoring your vessel, but many of you will as Winter Frost prepares for his visit. Much is written regarding precautions one should take in moth-balling a boat for winter, but we usually restrict ours to only those items which promote vessel sinking or fiberglass bonfires on a regular basis. Our list is compiled based on what we have seen happen in the real water-world, and will unfortunately, but most likely, happen again this winter as well.
 - (1) Close all thru-hull valves (other than cockpit drains).
 - (2) Bleed all propane lines into the boat to the stove or heater, and shut off all valves.
 - (3) Shut down all electric power not necessary for the safety of the vessel. Unplug 110 power if possible (largest cause of boat fires). You won't need the charger if the batteries are disconnected, and the bilge pump won't be needed if the stuffing box isn't producing a stream. If it is, clamp it down, and fix it when you get the chance.
 - (4) Check all docklines and spring lines at point of chafe, ie cleats, chocks, and other points of wear.
 - (5) Secure all hatches and ports that would allow rain water to enter.
 - (6) As for engine stuff, that's up to you.
- In closing, don't be cheap about dockpower cords. If it was not purchased at a marine supply store, don't use it. You've not only endangered your vessel, but those vessels around you as well. If it needs replacing, **DO IT!** It's the cost of a good dinner for two.