



Photo Contest Winner

John Schnellback & Shannon Breeze

Beyond the Stars stretching her legs in Maple Bay during one of the club races. We were very fortunate to purchase David and Marianne Scotts' dream boat. We plan to cruise the Pacific Northwest extensively in her. Last summer we did a 6 week circumnavigation of Vancouver Island. This May we are off again cruising Down to Seattle then up to Haida Gwaii, returning to Maple bay in October.

Photo credit: John Van Den Hengel



Currents

May 2021

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Protecting Your Vessel from Stray Current Corrosion

<https://currents.bluewatercruising.org/articles/protecting-your-vessel-from-stray-current-corrosion/>



If you are in a saltwater marina and have shore power on your boat to charge your batteries, then this Hotwire is for you. To protect against the damaging effects of galvanic corrosion between your boat, your neighbor's boat, and the marina, you require some method of "isolating" your boat. There are two choices: a galvanic isolator or an isolation transformer; so, what is the difference?

Galvanic isolators are inexpensive and straightforward to install but could fail, thus requiring regular checking. Isolation transformers are far more expensive and very heavy, but rarely fail. Let's take a look at both.

Galvanic Isolator

The most common method is to install a galvanic isolator to the shore power safety ground (e.g., green wire). This will block all low voltage DC current from flowing in the shore power safety ground wire. It breaks the corrosion current path and isolates your boat, preventing some sources of corrosion, while keeping the safety grounding connected. The device will block up to 1.2 VDC potential between shore power ground and boat/ ground. In the past, these units would have to be tested manually so you could never be certain that they were working. A while back, the American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC) stipulated that galvanic isolators include a monitor.

It is important to use "fail-safe" galvanic isolators. Older galvanic isolators and non-fail-safe isolators typically disconnect the AC ground when they fail, again removing the AC safety protection. Losing an AC safety ground is a very serious safety concern to boaters and should always be avoided. A fail-safe galvanic isolator is slightly more expensive but comes with the assurance that if something goes wrong with the isolator, it is designed to always maintain the grounding connection. A failed isolator will no longer protect against corrosion, but will keep the critical AC fail-safe intact. We recommend the Promariner Prosafe, available in 30 or 50 amp models.

Isolation Transformer

Typically, isolation transformers are common with production boats that have a lot of underwater metals to protect, and the builder can afford both the weight, space and the cost of the unit. There is no downside to an isolation transformer besides weight, space, and cost. Specific isolation transformers can raise the shore voltage to deal with voltage drop and can be used to adapt the vessel's internal power system voltage to a higher or lower shore power supply.

However, when it comes to corrosion, isolation transformers block all DC voltage differences and also address reverse polarity issues. They are also made of significant amounts of iron and copper, both of which are not light materials. A typical 120V/30A transformer can weigh almost 100 pounds, while a typical 240V/50A unit almost 300 pounds. Recent changes to ABYC E-11 AC and *DC Electrical Systems for Boats* now permit the use of high-frequency transformers, allowing manufacturers to build smaller and lighter transformers for pleasure craft. In the future, we will see lightweight, low-cost power conversion systems coming to market that comply with all the safety requirements of the existing heavy and expensive isolation transformers. A popular brand among boat builders is Charles Industries.

Galvanic isolators only protect up to 1.2 VDC, and there are possibilities it could be higher, which will allow corrosion to take place even though you have a galvanic isolator properly installed. They don't always survive breaker trips, and active monitors are required to meet ABYC standards. Isolation transformers block all DC voltage, preventing stray current corrosion and reverse shore power polarity,

If your boat is in saltwater, you must have some kind of protection for your onboard electrical and electronic systems; at the very least, install a fail-safe galvanic isolator on your AC shore power system.

About The Author

Jeff Cote

Pacific Yacht Systems -

Jeff Cote is a systems design engineer and owner of Pacific Yacht Systems, a full service shop delivering marine electrical and navigation solutions for recreational boats. Visit their website and blog for info and articles on marine electrical systems, projects and more: www.pysystems.ca.

Vancouver Island Cruising Experience (VICE) 2021

<https://currents.bluewatercruising.org/articles/vancouver-island-cruising-experience-vice-2021/>



There is no preparation for going offshore quite like being offshore. You can do this by joining VICE 2021 (Vancouver Island Cruising Experience).

About VICE

Each year a number of BCA vessels from all three chapters get together online to plan a multi-day offshore trip, this year planned for **early August** (most likely around August 11). They wait for a weather window on the West Coast of Vancouver Island before sailing out to sea. The idea is to leave in reasonable weather that is similar to what you will be experiencing on your offshore voyage. The boats head out into the Pacific for two or three days, sailing towards a selected GPS destination before turning back. This shakedown cruise will give you a chance to test your boats and yourselves – cooking, eating, sleeping, using offshore systems, communicating and keeping watch at sea – the skills you will need when you leave on your real voyage. VICE also gives you the opportunity to practice manoeuvres like heaving to and deploying a drogue or storm anchor – best practiced before Mother Nature puts you to the

test!

Boats that participate in VICE are often looking for crew. This is a golden opportunity for boatless dreamers to experience life on board prior to buying and equipping a boat.

If you are interested (no commitment necessary), please e-mail Ken Buckley through the [BCA website](#) (do not text message, please):

- Click on Member Search
- Type Ken Buckley in the criteria box, and search
- Select Ken Buckley then click on the e-mail address

Ken will help you get in touch with the VICE 2021 fleet so that you can join in the planning. The occurrence of VICE 2021 will be dependent on the status of Provincial Health Orders.

Past VICES

To read stories about previous VICE trips, read the articles in the following past issues of *Currents*, accessible from the [BCA website](#) under Resources – [Currents Magazine](#) (*you must be a BCA member to read these past issues*). These stories are sure to make you want to participate!

- December 2007
- December 2008
- December 2009
- November 2010
- October 2011
- October 2012

About The Author

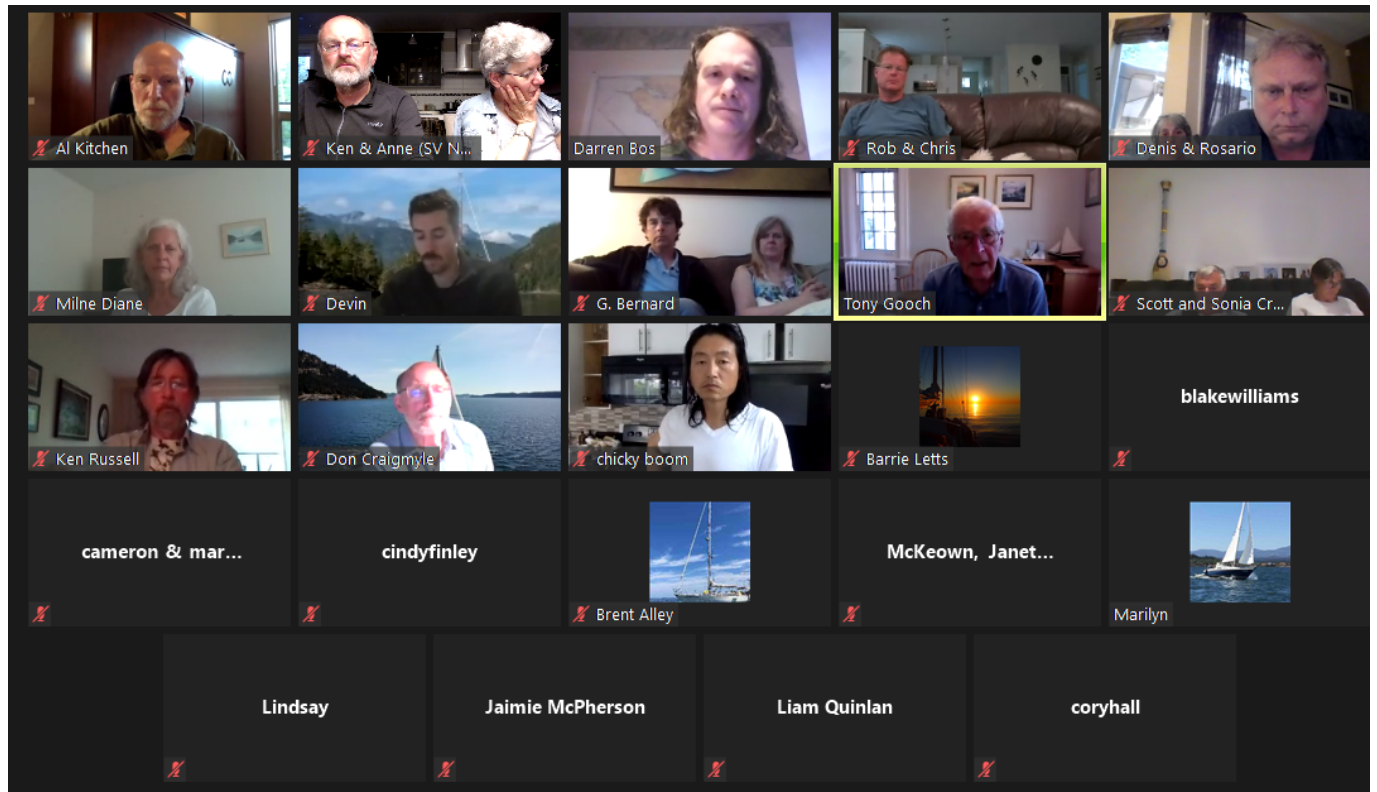
Anne Trudel and Ken Buckley

NAIDA - Passport 40 Sloop

Anne and Ken lead the organising committee for the Ocean Cruising Adventure Series.

Vancouver Fleet Report - May 2021

<https://currents.bluewatercruising.org/news/vancouver-fleet-report-may-2021/>



The last meeting of the Vancouver Fleet of 2021 was held via Zoom on May 25.

At this stage there appear to be three or four boats thinking about a VICE session for this year. Their plans are to meet in Ucluelet on August 11. Further information and a chance to join them should be available soon on the BCA website. You could also contact Ken Buckley at buckleyker@shaw.ca

The offshore packages committee is assembling leavers' packages for 2021. If you are planning on leaving this year and haven't registered for packages already contact Cameron at vanfleet@bluewatercruising.org.

Show and Tell included an airtight caulking tube and a dummy load for testing a SSB radio.

Boat preparation

Everything possible for ease of sailing and safety

- Mainsail reefing
- Slab reefing is the best
- Reefing winch
- Boom vang
- Roller reefing
- Inner staysail





The fleet program for the evening was a presentation on Preparing for Heavy Weather by Tony Gooch.

Plans have been made for a Fleet 2022 weather group. The first meeting of the Vancouver Fleet of 2022 will be on **September 28, 2021, starting at 1900h**. Mark your calendars and enjoy the summer!

About The Author

Cameron and Marianne McLean, Vancouver Fleet Coordinators

Mayknot - Seabird 37

Cam and Marianne McLean have been BCA members since 1987, cruised offshore, and have served as the Vancouver Fleet Coordinators for many years.

BC Marine Parks Report

<https://currents.bluewatercruising.org/news/bc-marine-parks-report/>



BC Parks has been receiving complaints of boats over 11 meters (36 feet) using the docks in Marine Parks. Larger boats may be able to use the mooring buoys or may be able to anchor subject to availability and restrictions in each park.

There is limited information available for boaters on the BC Parks website. They are currently reviewing the website with input from the public.

Barrie Letts, one of the BCA representatives on the Council of BC Yacht Clubs, has volunteered to be a part of the public advisory group. Any BCA members with suggestions for improvements to the BC Parks website are encouraged to contact [Barrie](#) by email. Anyone interested in getting directly involved in the review process should contact: [Kevin Ehman](#).

About The Author

Barrie Letts

Passat - Tradewind 34 (custom Noon Ocean 34, same design as True North 34)

VI Virtual Club Night - A Circumnavigation of Vancouver Island

<https://currents.bluewatercruising.org/events/vi-virtual-club-night-a-circumnavigation-of-vancouver-island/>



Join us as we explore the coast of Vancouver Island with BCA members Rhonda and Marilyn. This presentation will take you on a three month adventure of discovery. Rhonda and Marilyn set off from Vancouver in June 2020 to discover—well, they weren't sure. Would Haida Gwaii open up by the time they got to the north of Vancouver Island, could they cross into Alaska? What would be open during those uncertain months of a pandemic?

Join them as they make their way north through the “known” of Desolation and the Broughtons, find points north still closed, take a deep breath, and head around into the “unknown” (for them) of the outside coast of Vancouver Island.

Their adventure, for the most part, uncovered not only the isolated beauty of the west coast but also surprising points of tension. How did they navigate the unknowns? Join us on May 18 for what promises to be a beautiful and exciting adventure!

Rhonda and Marilyn live on their respective vessels at Spruce Harbour Marina, where they met.

Rhonda moved aboard a cruiser in 1999 and transitioned to sailing in 2016 when she purchased a 34' Panda, *Theodora*. This was a first step in her retirement project of learning to sail. Her sailing has been local around the Georgia Strait with an exceptional highlight of crewing for friends from Puerto Vallarta to Tahiti in 2018. The Covid pandemic forced Rhonda to cancel plans in April to crew again from New Zealand back to Vancouver, leaving her free to head out locally without a clear idea of what might open

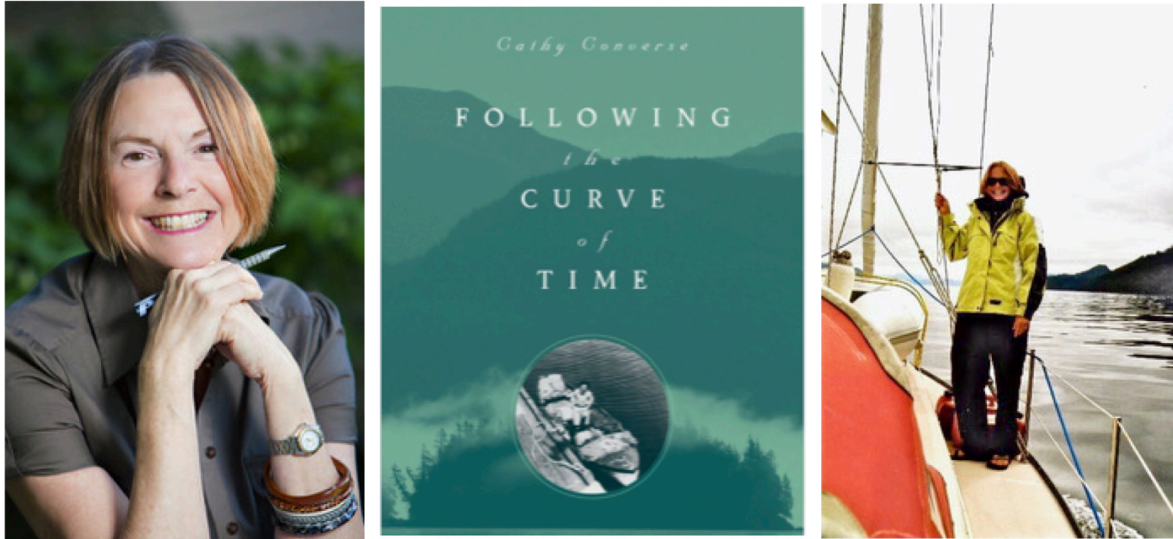
as the summer progressed.

Marilyn took on living aboard with her husband, Ian, in 1996, when she was starting a business in Vancouver. At the time they had been living in their Yellowpoint home, which they'd built. Both loved the liveaboard life and sold their home to make a full-time commitment to life on the water. They enjoyed sailing the coast for several years and moved into Spruce Harbour in 2006. Ian died in 2012 of ALS. Marilyn loved to live aboard and remained on the water at Spruce Harbour. Sailing has been local, however she is keen to gain offshore experience and dreams of sailing to Europe and exploring water ways.

This will be a Virtual Club Night, on the Zoom platform. All BCA members will receive an invitation with links to the Zoom meeting and login details. If you are not a member (or if you did not receive the email) and would like to attend please email the [VI Communications Watchkeeper](#) for details.

Vancouver Virtual Club Night - Following the Curve of Time

<https://currents.bluewatercruising.org/events/vancouver-virtual-club-night-following-the-curve-of-time/>



Explore the West Coast with Cathy Converse as she cruises to the same beautiful islands and inlets that Capi Blanchet travelled to more than a half-century ago, standing at the helm of a small boat named *Caprice*. Blanchet embarked on this adventure with her children, visiting Indigenous villages, watching grizzly bears in Knight Inlet and experiencing people and places up and down the coast. While this story, as recounted in *The Curve of Time*, is well known, Capi herself remained an enigma. In *Following the Curve of Time*, Converse introduces readers to previously unrevealed sides of the notoriously private woman who lived an amazing and daring life.

[Cathy Converse](#) is an award-winning bestselling author. She has been writing for over thirty years and has written and co-authored six books . Her fourth book, *Following the Curve of Time: The Untold Story of Capi Blanchet*, was honoured as one of the top five books chosen for the BC Book Prize Bill Duthie Booksellers' Choice Award.

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Cathy was raised in the sunshine of California and Hawaii but has spent her adult years living along the craggy, windswept shores of British Columbia. Using the ocean as her anchor, she spent much of her time surfing, white-water kayaking, canoeing, and sailing the coastline from Panama to Alaska.

This will be a Virtual Club Night, on the Zoom platform. An invitation with links to the Zoom meeting and

login details has been sent to all BCA members. If you are not a member (or if you did not receive the email) and would like to attend please email [Heather Marshall](#) for details.

About The Author

Heather Marshall

Mischief - Catalina 27

Bluewater BCA member Heather Marshall first fell in love with sailing as a teenager. She sailed to the Mediterranean and back aboard a Bavaria 38 sloop, 'Sea Otter of Canada', with her former husband. Heather single-hands 'Mischief' to destinations in the Salish Sea.

Currents Bluewater Cruising

The Bluewater Cruising Association

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