

'Woman at the Helm' shares obsession with boating students

CLEAR LAKE SHORES (AP) — Perched on the deck of her 12-foot day boat, Pat Whitlow balanced a sailing book on her feet, juggling the tiller as she flipped the pages.

That was about 20 years ago, when Whitlow was teaching herself to sail. Through many job changes and much schooling during her 50 years, sailing has remained the one constant in Whitlow's adult life.

Now, it is her life. Whitlow, an instructor at Women at the Helm, a Clear Lake Shores-based school that specializes in teaching women to sail, lives on a 26-foot sloop harbored in nearby League City. When she's not teaching sailing, it's a safe bet that she's around a boat somewhere.

"Sailing began sort of to possess me," Whitlow said. "I read everything I could. I sailed on every boat I could sail on. I determined that that was the way I was going to make my living — on boats, in boats or in the

water. People who believe in reincarnation think I must have been a dolphin in another life," she said.

In this life, Whitlow has been many things — an actress, a college dean, a shrimper, a hospital media director and a temporary Texas-hater.

Whitlow grew up in Gary, Ind., with a penchant for shinning up trees, scaling brick walls and playing cowboys and Indians.

She became involved in summer stock productions in Chapel Hill, N.C., went on to New York to try to make her mark on Broadway but wound up traveling the country with a children's theater group.

"I was essentially very shy and acting gave me an opportunity to learn how to be with people in a way I might otherwise not have had," she said. "I got a different kind of education being with painters and poets."

Whitlow went to Japan during the

Korean War as a civilian, creating shows, setting up dances and organizing entertainment for U.S. soldiers stationed there.

"I had to learn that there so many better ways of doing things," she said. "I saw it happening. We Americans did offend a lot of people. We didn't mean to; we just didn't know any better. I came back here being a better American."

She returned to get an English and drama teaching degree from the University of Colorado and wound up at a small liberal arts school, Yampa Valley College in Steamboat Springs, Colo., where she became dean of women and taught English, humanities and drama.

"This was a time of revolution going on, and people were questioning our rather puritan ethic," Whitlow said. "It was an exciting place to be. I was constantly on my toes, reading, researching. It was the most challenging thing I have ever done."

Whitlow had learned to fly airplanes, but substituted sailing when she could no longer afford to rent planes. She bought a dinghy and began teaching herself.

"I quickly became aware that there was so much to know, and there were easier ways," she said.

She took formal sailing lessons at the University of Iowa, where she received a degree in film and television. She wanted to be a cinematographer but ended up producing films and other aids at the Craig Rehabilitation Hospital in Englewood, Colo.

At a small reservoir nearby, she honed her sailing skills.

"I'd take the boat out in the back of my VW van right after work and sail till the sun went down," she said. "I did that for a whole summer, seven days a week," she said. "I had come to the conclusion that was really the way to sail — to sail alone."

She bought a 14-foot Hobie cat

and entered her first regatta in Mexico. "I got third," she said. "I thought I was pretty terrific."

After stints with a small publishing company and ferrying boats for clients from Mexico to the United States, Whitlow came to the central Texas town of Belton in 1981.

"It was a culture shock," she said. "I was distressed by what I saw happening. I wasn't accustomed to the good 'ol boy network."

She added that she was shocked by the bigotry she saw. Texans' obsession with the oil industry also puzzled her because Texas had so many other natural resources that were being ignored, she said.

Whitlow was on the verge of leaving the state when she read James Michener's "Texas" and "Lone Star" by historian T.R. Fehrenbach.

"They truly changed my life," she said. "I began to have a new appre-

ciation of how those attitudes of 'The rest of the world be damned; Texas will prevail' were so set for generations. I guess now I'm dyed-in-the-wool Texan."

She also decided to do what she liked best — be around boats — and moved to Rockport, where she took odd jobs maintaining and varnishing boats, taught sailing and worked a shrimp boat until she lost money.

While greeting boats at a Rockport harbor, Whitlow met an instructor with Women at the Helm who lured her to Clear Lake Shores, where the business is based. She has been teaching there almost a year.

She has lived on a boat six years. "I love it," she said. "It's a very simple life. I used to have all the accoutrements — a home, two cars, furniture. Life was so complex, it seemed. I felt like I was possessed by my possessions. I feel infinitely freer this way."

New vague color terms in vogue with designers creating fashion palette

NEW YORK (AP) — There's a brave new color code in vogue, and its descriptive words can boggle the mind.

Take nectar, for example, the virtually colorless stuff that bees extract from flowers to make honey. Then, what to make of an ad for a silk shirt the color of nectar?

A color word can be hijacked from any of several contexts — as fanciful as flora and fauna or as basic as the weather and building materials.

Ad and catalog colorists, perhaps bored with words such as red, blue, yellow and green, reach for poetry and elegance to give us, instead, garnet, cornflower, saffron and loden.

Those are the easy ones. Unfortunately, they also give us cork, cadet, mist and verdant. To confuse us further, one fanciful describer's rhubarb is another's plum; this one's mint is another's sea glass; his sepia is her stucco.

They also tend to specialize in narrow fields. There are the bird watchers, eyes glued to their eggshell, teal and peacock. There are the builders, seeing nothing but hues of limestone, marble, slate, adobe and stucco.

We get a cook's tour with rhubarb, chutney and pistachio, mint and sage. Beachcombers have mediterranean, sea spray, sea glass and ocean in their minds' eyes. A continental touch comes with ecru, bisque and taupe, sienna and sepia. We are led down the gardeners' path with marigold, wisteria, willow, briar — and thorn.

Official comment is fair, inclined to be generous, to the perpetrators. "I think a color name should not mislead," says Margaret Walch, associate director of the Color Association of the United States.

The association, the nation's deposit of standard colors, maintains archives and a fabric swatch library and issues color forecasts for government and industry.

While a name should put a color in the correct category, Walch points out it can also "evoke a kind of feeling."

"It's better to say 'fog' than 'a kind of blue, light-gray,'" she said.

Walch says, "There is an appropriateness in color naming that takes into account the glamour of fashion."

In addition, she says, "The whole color thrust of the '80s has been movement from simple colors to complex."

In its forecasts, the Color Association sometimes reaches for glamorous complexity in its names, but usually with an adjective popped on to a safe anchor noun — for example: volcanic black, fridge grey, kiln blue, deco green, airy pink.

A glossary of some of the more oblique terms that have been spotted in recent fashion ads follows, placed in what an educated guess suggests is meant to be their approximate color group:

- Nectar, blush, shell, petal, mali, bubblegum: pale pinks, peach.
- Mist, eggshell, sea spray, ocean, sky, arctic: pale blues.
- Sage, willow, mint, sea glass, pistachio, palm, elm, balsam: pale greens.
- Peacock, teal, mediterranean, tropic, aqua, ocean: turquoise.
- Ecru, chino, bisque, adobe, thorn, straw, pumice: pale beiges.
- Cadet, periwinkle, flax, pacific, lapis: blues.
- Midnight, ink, lake, regal: dark blues.
- Maize, butter: yellows.
- Saffron, citron, marigold, tangelo, sun: oranges.
- Stucco, cork, chutney, toast, sepia, sienna, clay, toffee, acorn, spice: light, warm browns.
- Taupe, marble: gray-browns.
- Maple, peat, cognac, sable, nutmeg: browns.
- Ochre, sesame: yellow-browns.
- Mango, hibiscus, watermelon, quartz, jasmine, blossom: pinks.
- Verdant, loden, cypress, tuscan, rattan, aspen, moss, basil, jungle: greens.
- Teak: khaki. Limestone: pale khaki.
- Slate, graphite: dark grays.
- Birch, fog: grays.
- Wisteria: pink-mauve.
- Rhubarb, grape: purples.
- Berry, madder, ox-blood, currant, poppy, garnet: reds.

The next time you see an elegant Parisienne promenading along the boulevard in an ensemble of taupe, bisque and ecru, say a silent thanks to the wordsmiths of the fashion world.

Those same colors, you see, could just as well be called mole, soup and unwashed linen.

DAT

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fectly black and white. It is exactly parallel to home recording. If they allow home taping from VCRs, there should be a parallel to allow home recording of music."

Dr. Don E. Tomlinson, an assistant professor of journalism at Texas A&M University, disagrees.

"I think it is very likely the Supreme Court will distinguish between the Betamax case and this current situation, and agree, in some circumstances, with the copyright owners," he says.

"At some point, as technology becomes more advanced, somebody is going to have to agree with the creators."

Rosen says the issue of copyright infringement is so strong that the RIAA has threatened to sue any manufacturer who attempts to market a DAT player before the question of its legality has been decided. The lawsuit would be brought on charges of copyright infringement, she says.

Despite these threats, Nakamichi, a stereo manufacturing com-

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— Phil Bangert, Home Recording Rights Coalition

pany, has decided to release a DAT player to the public in early April.

Karen Zaterka, Nakamichi's marketing services coordinator, says the player, the DAT 1000, is capable of recording and playing back music. It can be used for both home and professional use, she says, and has a retail price of about \$10,000.

Rosen declined to say if the RIAA has planned any legal action against Nakamichi, saying only: "We've heard about the player. Nakamichi's player is a \$10,000 deck. We're a little skep-

tical that it is a typical consumer marketed product, but we are watching to see what happens."

Gene Joyce, owner of Audio Video electronics in College Station, says Nakamichi may be opening the door for other manufacturers to release DAT units to the public. However, they may wait to see if Nakamichi is sued,

RIAA's argument is a legitimate one.

"In all faith, the recording industry is getting hurt," he says. "If you buy an album and record it for a friend, then that artist doesn't get any compensation for it."

Others say the RIAA's fears of pirating are unrealistic. David

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— Dr. Don Tomlinson, attorney and Texas A&M media law professor

he says.

Bangert says although it seems DAT would benefit only home music listeners, the technology could benefit the public in ways the RIAA has not considered.

"There are a number of benefits," he says. "As far as consumer recording goes, DAT is a better cassette recorder providing a better quality recording."

"Another application not addressed by the RIAA are those available to musicians," he says. "The record industry says all musicians oppose DAT. This simply is not true."

"Musicians are awaiting DAT because, for the first time, they will be able to make CD quality recordings of their own music without going to the expense of using commercial recording studios. They will be able to send digital demo tapes to record companies or radio stations."

Bangert says computer data storage is another DAT application not considered by the RIAA. DAT has a higher data storage capacity than CD-ROM, a current method of information storage, he says.

"As a result of their holding up DAT, these other groups are being denied access to the product," Bangert says.

Despite any benefits of DAT, experts agree that pirating (illegal home recording) of recorded material is inevitable and could even become detrimental.

Tomlinson, a lawyer who teaches a media law course at A&M, says "The legal ramifications of the introduction of digital audio tape are a likely increase in pirating and a decrease in the amount of compensation to the creators (of recorded music)."

Joyce agrees, saying the

Gilbert, owner of Digital Audio Exchange in Bryan is one of them.

"The RIAA feels home recording and copyright infringement can get out of hand because DAT offers such high quality recording," he says. "I think it is a fallacy. There will always be a little of that going on. The RIAA has blown the issue out of proportion."

Because of the threat of pirating, critics of DAT say the technology could result in a loss of music. Tomlinson says musicians may be less willing to record, as a result.

"One question raised by DAT is if it would cause creators to be less interested in creating given the idea they will be less able to be compensated for their creativity," he says.

"What's the incentive for continuing to be creative if your efforts are not going to be rewarded?"

Solutions to the problems raised by DAT have drawn as much criticism as DAT itself. Proposals include playback-only DAT players which would be unable to record, an excise tax on blank digital tapes and DAT players, and placing copy protection bits on pre-recorded material that would make copying impossible.

Playback-only DAT players are the least likely solution, says Mike Vellott, assistant manager of Audio Video.

"If you do that, why have DAT at all?" he says. "The only advantage DAT has over CD is the ability to record."

Many experts agree placing an excise tax on the sale of blank digital tape and DAT players would solve the problem.

"The best solution is to charge

some kind of excise tax," Tomlinson says. "The majority of blank audio tape is purchased for the purpose of recording someone's copyrighted material."

"Charge all of us another percent or two for the purchase of that audio tape. Install a system of taxation in order to create a pool of money and figure out a formula to compensate the copyright owners."

Joyce says the largest problem with the idea of an excise tax is determining what record company gets what percentage of the tax.

Cooper says recording studios should be exempt from the tax.

"A surcharge on blank tape is a great idea because most blank tapes are used for home recording," he says. "However, a surcharge shouldn't be charged to the recording studios because they use blank tape to help create music."

Copy protection bits can be placed on any pre-recorded digital material, including CDs and DATs, and make it impossible for the recording mechanism to record the signal, according to an article in the August issue of *Musician* magazine.

"Copy protection bits could be feasible," Cooper says. "It would be advantageous to protect music in some way."

Joyce says the copy protection bits would be ineffective.

"Copy protection bits are pretty hokey," he says. "They don't work well. Anytime you put copy protection on something, someone finds a way to get around it."

Copy protection bits have adverse side effects as well, Joyce says.

"(They) make the CDs more expensive and lessen the quality," he says. "That may be the only alternative, but you would prefer not to have to do that."

Despite complications with solutions, experts agree the issue must be cleared up because copyright problems are becoming a major side effect of the technological revolution.

"We are making major advances in technology that cause the copying of electronic signals to become easier to accomplish," Tomlinson says.

"While having these new advances in technology is wonderful, somebody needs to come to grips with the downside of this technological revolution, the copyright problems. I would hate to see the world get into a mess with the issue of how to compensate creators."

New Orleans band stirs up creole blend of musical styles

NEW YORK (AP) — They're called the "heartbeat of New Orleans."

And in music circles, the Neville Brothers are known as "musician's musicians."

For more than 30 years, the Neville name has been synonymous with all the traditions of the Crescent city. Their sound is culled from a gumbo of styles — jazz, Caribbean, African, Cajun, rock, funk — resulting in music as distinctive as New Orleans itself. Charles Neville, who plays saxophone, calls it New Orleans rhythm and blues.

The brothers — Art, Aaron, Charles and Cyril — worked individually for more than two decades before they finally merged their diverse talents in 1977. After several albums and a two-year interlude, the band has just released its new album, "Yellow Moon."

The collection, including eight original songs, is perhaps their most political and personal album, one in which they express their concern for social issues.

The album's first single, "Sister Rosa," is a tribute to Rosa Parks, who became one of the catalysts for the civil rights movement in 1955 when she refused to give up her seat for a white person on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Ala. The rap-reggae number, written and performed by percussionist Cyril, reflects the al-

bum's overall theme: to educate people by increasing their awareness.

"If you don't learn from history, it tends to repeat itself because it can definitely happen again," said Art, the keyboardist.

"Look at the neo-nazis and Skinheads," added Cyril, wearing a "Stop Apartheid" button. "We want to give youth a chance to look at each other on their own terms, rather than how it was in the last generation who had a certain amount of fear and hatred pumped into them before they got a chance to look at people and decide for themselves."

"We want to convey to youth that they don't have to be superhuman or smart to make a change for the better in the world."

"My Blood," another song by Cyril, speaks about the roots of oppression, with particular mention of South Africans, Haitians and native Americans.

There's also a remake of Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come," and two Bob Dylan covers, "The Ballad of Hollis Brown" and "With God on Our Side." Although Aaron and Cyril trade off as lead vocalists on most of the album, Art gets the chance to belt out "Fire and Brimstone" with the same enthusiasm he seems to have for life in general. Charles is heard prominently on the instrumental "Healing Chant."

Grandma's knitting now done by computer

BORGER (AP) — The image of the grandmother sitting in her rocking chair with her knitting needles clacking is a little out of date.

Today's grandmother probably is sitting next to her electronic knitting machine, programming patterns onto a floppy disk that she edits on a home computer.

And she is making sweaters a lot faster that way.

Elene Chisum, Alice Hutchinson and Wanda Guinn of Borger have learned the ins and outs of electronic knitting.

Recently, they were gathering their samples and heading for a monthly meeting of fellow machine knitters in Amarillo.

"Knitters are sharing people," Chisum said.

"During the meeting each of us will generally show something we have done and then answer questions about the patterns. Most of us have the same brand of knitting machines."

Chisum, a retired teacher, is on her second knitting machine.

"You're limited only in what you can do by your ability," she said.

"The machine is amazing in what it can do, as long as you know what to tell it," she said.

She works on her home computer to make changes in knitting patterns, then stores the finished pattern on a floppy disk.

That disk is put into a disk drive

located on the knitting machine.

Some special attachments are required for some patterns, but the machine will automatically knit or purl.

"You can program it and let it do the knitting. You don't have to sit there and watch it."

"If you have a pattern you don't want centered, you have to tell the machine that. . . . A beeper goes off when it's finished."

Chisum says she began knitting by hand in high school, making scarves for soldiers during World War II, but seldom uses that method any more.

She says her friend Wanda Guinn, semi-retired from a photography business, started her venture in machine knitting with a much more ambitious project — a pants suit.

"No one told her she couldn't so she tackled it as her first project," Chisum laughed.

When Chisum started she made sleeveless sweaters with no ribbing. Now she can even make an expensive double-knit look.

Her husband Herbert showed off a sweater she made for him, gray with an unusual design.

"We've been married for 40 years plus, and that's the first one I ever made for him."

"It's the first one he's ever wanted," she said.

Other family members also appre-

ciate her work.

Her grandchildren even send her pictures or patterns of sweaters they want.

"All four of my grandchildren think Granny can do anything," she says.

Chisum has made her family members sweaters, Christmas socks and skirts.

"I'm always trying new techniques just to see if I can do them," she said.

She has even learned to make lace on the machine.

The thread for her knitting machine is by the pound, not yardage, but she says the thread goes a long way.

"The price varies, up to \$45 a pound or as low as \$6 to \$8 a pound. It's definitely cheaper than hand-knitting."

"I would never attempt to make a sweater or dress by hand knitting," she said.

"About the only hand knitting I do now is Christmas stockings."

The room where her knitting machine is located is filled with cone-shaped spools of thread in all kinds of colors and types.

"Yarn can be reclaimed," she said. "I use a steamer made of ceramic and thread the yarn through it."

"It takes all the crinks out of it. After knitting, the thread is heavily

crinkled, but the yarn is as good as new when I take it apart. The yarn is gorgeous," she said.

Chisum says she works on her machine only 30 to 45 minutes at a time.

"I wanted it for a hobby. When it becomes a business, it won't be fun."

She does knitting for other people, but says she doesn't make things for herself.

She made one of her granddaughters an intarsia sweater with a woman's head on it.

The pattern was sketched on a mylar sheet and transferred by the machine.

"You have to have the gauge just right," she said.

She keeps a notebook of her patterns, and also has computer printouts for her favorites, including a Minnie Mouse she did on a granddaughter's sweater along with a Christmas tree.

Chisum also has decorated sweat-shirts with her knitting.

One of her grandsons' favorites is a sweater with footprints going across the back and over the shoulder.

Chisum says she looks at her knitting machine and electronic tools as other people may look at any spare-time obsession.

"I think of them as my golf clubs," she says.