

tem allows the user to select either the Ka band LNB required to view high-definition programs or the lower frequency Ka band LNB to receive programs in standard definition. www.intelliantech.com

Furuno's new products include the Multi-Color LCD Radar Display (compatible with 4-kW radome, and 4- and 6-kW open array antenna scanners), the FCV-295 Color LCD Sounder, and two versions of MaxSea TimeZero software for PC-based navigation.

The FCV-295 and Radar Display provide the stand-alone equipment preferred by some mariners and display information on "Fogging Free," 10.4-inch sunlight LCD screens. With 1, 2, or 3kW of sonar power the FCV-295 employs digital signal processing and automatic, depth-dependent pulse rate control. Its ability to measure the resonance frequency of the transducer and operate over a wide range of operating frequencies delivers superior fish images at all depths. www.furunousa.com

Simrad-Yachting's new 8- and 12-inch, sunlight-readable, high-resolution NSE multifunction chartplotters combine the best of both the predecessor Simrad and Northstar systems to create an exceptionally user-friendly, multi-function system with superior screen clarity and brightness.

Compatible radars include conventional magnetron HD models and the BR-24 BroadBand Solid State Radar. www.simrad-yachting.us

Free software from Maritron, the new N2KBuilder will greatly simplify the design of NMEA 2000-based networked electronic systems, presenting a pictorial display of the network and components, validating the network layout and creating a bill of materials. www.maretron.com/products/N2KBuilder.php

ACR Electronics AquaLink PLB is GPS-equipped, floats, has a built-in LED strobe and produces 6.3 watts of transmission power. The position fix is accurate to within 110 yards and the battery need not be replaced for five years. \$499. www.acr-electronics.com

— **Chuck Husick**



Dry Bag

Hang out around the water long enough and it will happen to you. A moment's carelessness on the dock or in the cockpit, and whoops, there goes the cell phone into the drink. But this doesn't have to be a disaster. Retrieve your phone then drop it and zip seal it tight into a Bheestie Bag. The bag contains powerful water absorbing beads that physically bond with the water, pulling moisture from personal electronics. \$20. www.Bheestie.com

Hooked On Aloha

Circle hooks are popular with fishermen today, but the ancient Hawaiians devised such hooks out of bone long ago. Marine wildlife artist David A. Wirth captures this timeless symbol of Hawaii in a series of bronze and stainless steel pendants. David's original pendant was carved from bone in his Maui studio then cast in bronze using the lost wax method. The pendants are finished in custom, hand-applied patinas that chemically bond to the metal and will not wear off or fade. From \$250-\$350. (951) 551-3594. www.DavidWirth.com



One Button Rescue

The latest version of the SPOT satellite GPS messenger adds a new feature called SPOT Assist for Maritime, which gives boaters the ability to summon BoatU.S. Towing Services for non-emergency assistance by pressing the "help" button on their handheld SPOT messenger or SPOT Personal Tracker.

When the "help" button is pressed, the disabled vessel's GPS position information, along with its make, length, color, home marina, owner and family contact information, is sent via satellite to the BoatU.S. 24-hour nationwide dispatch centers, alerting them to the request for urgent on-the-water towing.

The original features of SPOT, including a "SOS/911" function that notifies an emergency rescue coordination center of your GPS location, "Check-in/OK" that allows family and friends to know where you are and that you are okay, a "Track Progress" feature to send and save your boat's location and allow others to track and plot a real-time course with Google Maps, remain unchanged. Additionally, a "Custom Message" feature for secondary communications is offered with the newer SPOT Satellite GPS Messenger unit. www.findmespot.com. From \$150.



Cleaning Up A Storm

Most boats don't have a lot of storage room, so any tool that can do a variety of chores is appreciated. Powered by a 12-volt Ni-Cad battery, the Power SideKick is an all-in-one cleaning tool that can wash, vacuum, and polish/wax by simply replacing the "head" on the power module. While it's not designed to replace a professional detail job, it's a lot less costly, retailing for about \$100. Its rotating power-washing head with internal soap dispenser did a remarkably good job when we recently tested it by cleaning the winter grime off a 28-foot cruiser. The power module has plenty of handholds to allow you to twist and turn to reach tough spots, and being cordless makes it simple to use anytime. In our tests, battery life was about an hour. www.powersidekick.com

