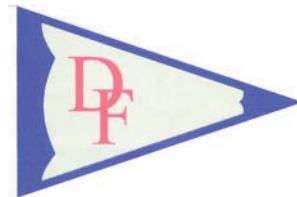


DeFever Cruisers

DeFever Enthusiasts who share a common love of their vessels and the cruising life.



Summer 2005

Volume 9, Issue 3

Two DeFever Cruisers Mexico & Belize

Bob & Alice Hooker (#222)

DF Grand Alaskan 64 BALI MOTU

Stuart, FL

Bob and Alice, and Steve and Diane Koch (#71, DF49RPH AURORA), cruised from Florida to Central America. The following was sent by the Hookers, with inserted material from the Kochs - Ed.

We are on the Hawks Channel cruising to Marathon. The wind has been blowing for the past couple of days, and it is taking Sunday off. The forecast then returns back to 20 plus for the next few days.



BALI MOTU Cruising the Bahamas

After waving goodbye to friends while departing our canal Monday noon, we anchored in Lake Worth in the evening. We had our customary dinner at the Waterway Cafe at PGA Blvd., traveling by our tender. The next morning we went out the West Palm inlet and cruised the coast to Fort Lauderdale, where we entered at Port Everglades, and then down the ICW (ditch) to Miami. We try to go outside along the coast from West Palm to Fort Lauderdale, to avoid the many bridges that need to be opened, that operate on a restricted time schedule. We request an opening with any bridge with less than 25 feet of clearance.

We anchored on the south side of Venetian Causeway, or just north of Government Cut. If anyone has taken a cruise ship out of Miami, you would have departed from Government Cut. This anchorage is unique in that it has numerous islands, including one with a park that has a sand beach, surrounded by downtown Miami and Miami Beach. From this location you can dinghy up a canal next to Collins Ave., and visit Lincoln

St. and South Beach. Unfortunately we weren't able to take in the sights, as an engine room inspection found water running into the bilge from the starboard shaft seal. We called Yacht Management Services in Fort Lauderdale, and they said that Harbourtowne Marina could pull us on Thursday. We spent Wednesday night at Georgio's Bakery and Cafe dock in Hollywood (thanks Di and Steve), and had a wonderful meal. Arrived at Harbourtowne Marina at 8:00, and waited until 4:30 to be pulled. They slipped us in after all the commitments for the day were finished. Took a motel room for the night, and Yacht Management Services worked on replacing both starboard and port seals, as well as putting two spares on each shaft, until we splashed the boat at 5:30 Friday. Went back to Georgio's for dinner and dockage, and were happy to be on our way before the weekend.



AURORA at Anchor, Useppa Island, FL

Saturday cruised back down the ditch across Key Biscayne to the park on Boca Chita Key, which was too occupied for us in the 30 mph winds. So, we anchored behind Pumpkin Key, and this morning departed the ICW side of the Keys for the Hawks Channel, through Angelfish Creek. The ride is beautiful in 10 to 15 knot winds, and seas of one to two inside the reef. We will be docking at Faro Blanco on the Oceanside this evening, looking forward to seeing our Mexican cruising partners AURORA (Steve and Di) as well as *Dennel* (Dennis and Nellie Lainey, #565), who have wintered at Faro Blanco Gulf side.

With the 20 plus winds forecasted until Thursday, it seems that will be the first chance to cross.

Received 4/21 Departing our dock at 6:30, then taking on fuel

and departing the area at 7:15, we cruised the Hawks Channel to Key West, and joined AURORA, which departed from Boca Chica Naval Base. Chuck Spriggs (#13) joined us for the crossing.

It's two o'clock Thursday afternoon, with Key West 18 miles behind us, and 330 nautical miles to Isla Mujeres. We're now in the Gulf Stream, and bucking a 1 1/2 mile current. AURORA is a few miles off our port side, doing six plus knots in the Stream, and we have throttle to 1200 rpm to match her speed--good fuel economy. We are optimistic, as we have Saturday reservations at one of the island's marinas.

Received 4/23 We are approaching Isla Mujeres, after 60 hours of continuous running from Marathon. The weather has been absolutely outstanding, with winds of 15 Thursday, dropping to less than ten on Friday and today, all on our port or starboard quarter. This gave us starting seas of four feet, and one to two on Friday and Saturday. It also gives our autopilot a workout, steering in a following sea. The sunny 80 degree days have scattered puffy clouds. The nights have full moons, setting at the first dawn of light. It was difficult to not want to be on watch as the deep rich blue waters slid under the hull.

The only item we hadn't figured on was a 2.5 knot current on the nose from Key West to near the western end of Cuba, with a boat speed of only five knots for a couple days. We have been in the Yucatan current today, limiting our speed and making it a 60 hour run. We understand that the currents north of Cuba can loop up into the Gulf of Mexico, but we experienced them running along the northern shore. We stayed 25 miles off the shore, as Cuba claims its territorial waters that distance. We were discussing cutting it closer, thinking that Castro didn't have the fuel to send boats to greet us. During the night, a radar target appeared, coming from ten miles off the shore, and I moved out an extra mile just in case we were calculating the miles wrong. Our radar was picking up the Cuban shore, but I don't speak Spanish, and why chance it.

While 50 miles from the Yucatan shore, the Mexican Navy came a-greeting, asking our intentions, and if we were fishing. They passed close by, gave us a quick look, and offered to assist if needed. We have seen a number of container ships and "Wedding Cakes" (cruise liners) at night. We had to talk with a couple of them to coordinate passing.

So fortunate to have Chuck aboard to share nightly duties, and eat my cookies. We had a few strikes on the line, but they outsmarted us, and Chuck wasn't interested in cleaning or eating FISH. Our partner ship AURORA caught four dolphins yesterday, and claimed to have had a great dinner. We shot a cow and had steak. We lost our satellite TV near the west end of Cuba, so last night was our first DVD show.

We just spotted Isla Mujeres (Tallyho) after 60 hours of seeing water, and will be docking at the Marina Pariso in an hour. We are ready with the Mexican courtesy and Q flags. The paper work will start soon.

Received 4/28/05 Arriving at Marina Pariso on Isla Mujeres Saturday at 4:00 pm local, we were greeted by dock manager José. He initiated our entrance procedure into Mexico by contacting the authorities. He also asked us to make six copies of our Crew List, copies of our passports, and ship's documentation. Late Saturday afternoon, the first two government officials were from the Department of Sanitation, who asked us if we had any infectious diseases. They would have taken a BALI

MOTU T-shirt, but we don't carry them like the sportfish boats, so we extended them \$10 for their services. Next Immigration came to the Marina office, and after shuffling paper for half an hour, and filling out their Tourist Card form (like you receive on an airplane), we gave José \$66 (\$22 a passenger) to go to the bank with the Tourist cards. The bank collects this fee and stamps the tourist card - apparently they don't trust the Immigration officials to take your money. We offered twenty dollars to the official, and twenty more to José for riding his motorbike to the bank for these services. Two of the six copies of the crew list were used. Sunday, the Health Department came for their inspection. This was to check the food aboard, as they inspected the refrigerator, where the previous Sanitation Inspection was for the personnel aboard. These two were given a \$10 bill, and a third copy of the crew list was consumed.

On Monday, Miguel, our retained agent for processing Customs, Port Captains, and Mexican boat registration papers, required the three remaining crew list copies, as well as the Zarpe form. The Zarpe document listed the boat's departure, entrance, and destination ports, and crew aboard. The charge was \$110 dollars, which included a \$25 fee for our agent. We understand that the boat's registration is for ten years. Tuesday, Miguel returned the papers with the official stamps, and we were able to take down our yellow quarantine flag.

And now for the bad news; you are to have six crew copies and Zarpe ready for every Port Captain in every port in which you stop. We have heard from other boaters that this procedure may be simplified, Mañana.

We thought we might purchase a fishing license for the Mexican waters, as the fishing is excellent. In January, a boat told us they were catching 30 sailfish a day, a few miles off shore from us. On the way to Belize, we will be in a two-knot Yucatan current, where we should be able to find our dinner. But after all the above fun, and the cost of about \$200 for a few weeks in Mexico, we decided to stow the reels until we arrived in Belize, where we understand the government will be easier.

Although officially not in the country, we took the ferry to Cancun on Sunday, where we had lunch at Señor Frogs, and walked the hotel area that we had previously spent a few weeks around. Monday, Chuck left early to find a way home, and we did government paper work and went to an Eileen Quinn concert at our marina. We heard her last in Georgetown, Exumas. She cruises, writes, and records songs of the boating life.

Tuesday night, we had happy hour aboard with Gerry and Lynn, who had just spent two years cruising the Caribbean. They met during the 1994 US invasion of Haiti, where he was an observer for the UN, affiliated with the Irish Navy, and she was an AP photographer. They shared their experiences of Belize, Rio Dulce, and Roatan with us. They invited us, with other boaters, to dinner at a local Mexican sidewalk restaurant that serves food from under a ball park stadium, within walking distance of the marina. The food was cheap and good. We and AURORA are being accepted by the sail boaters that are anchored in the harbor or docked at our marina. This small marina is more for live-aboard sailors, and we are two of four power boats here. There is a net on channel 13 that we all check in with at 8:00, and give our boat names. Emergencies, weather, arrivals and departures, and local information are provided. Nineteen came forth with their boat names this morning.

Wednesday we used a golf cart to see the entire island, includ-

DeFever Cruisers

308 Nassau St. N. Venice, FL 34285-1419 941-484-2521
 E-mail: DFCRUISERS@aol.com Website: www.defevercruisers.com
 Editor: Bob Dein

DeFever Cruisers members deserve their privacy. The Newsletter and Roster are not to be reproduced for distribution! © 2005

Membership

As of August 4., 2005, *DeFever Cruisers* has 465 members. DeFever & Grand Alaskan lengths owned are as follows:
 *34-9, *38-2, *40-22, *41-25, *42-2, *43-18, *44-68,
 *44+5-24, *45-5, *45+2-1, *46-4, *47-6, *48-25, *49-60,
 *49+6-1, *50-4, *51-2, *51+9-1, *52-6, *52+7-1,
 *52+8-2, *53-25, *53+7-1, *54-6, *56-1, *57-5, *57+11-1,
 *60-8, *60+8-1, *61-1, *63-1, *64-6, *65-2, *66-2,
 *68-3, *71-1, *72-2, 78-1.

DeFeverless - 109

Finances

Financial Statement as of 8/6/05

Balance as of 3/5/05	\$10,575.20
Revenues:	
Dues & Reprints	\$780.00
Burgees	\$504.00
CD Sales	\$110.00
Total Revenues:	\$1,394.00
Expenses:	
Printing	\$1,678.29
Postage	\$737.02
Refunds	\$00.00
Website	\$00.00
CD Expense	\$00.00
Burgee Expense	\$00.00
Supplies	\$15.53
Total Expenses:	\$2,430.84
Balance:	\$9,538.36

DFC Apparel

Jill Grandy (#140) arranged for clothing and other items embroidered with the DFC logo. To view the "catalog" (follow exactly!):

- go to www.mediasource.net
- Click on: shop your catalog
- Type in the password 'DeFever'
- Click on each selection, eg, 'wovens'
- Click on each photo for enlargement and size/price/additional embroidery info.

Items may only be purchased from the company by following the directions on the web site. ◆◆

Newsletter Volume 9, Issue 4

The next Newsletter will be published in early October. Please submit your articles via e-mail by September 10.

Thanks - Ed. ◆◆

DFC Annual Rendezvous - Captiva Island, FL

Feb. 3 - 6, 2006

Contact Owensindl@aol.com

Watch for a mailing in October that will contain all information, registration and dockage forms. ◆◆

Vendor List

This is a 'Members Only' perk, and is not accessed via the DFC Web site. To reach the on-line Vendor's List, type this address:

www.defevercruisers.com/vendor_list/

Please write or e-mail Dave Coviello (#185) with information about vendors that you have used, to be added to this list.

3810 N.E. 26th Ave. Lighthouse Point, FL 33064

Pcoviell@us.ibm.com ◆◆

DFC Burgee

To obtain a DFC burgee (designed by Alice Needle, #51), your visual symbol of membership, and a must-have for your boat, send a check or money order, made out to DeFever Cruisers, for \$20 (\$22 in US funds elsewhere) for std. size, or \$30 in US (\$33 elsewhere) for the large size, to DeFever Cruisers 308 Nassau St., N. Venice, FL 34285-1419. ◆◆

DeFever Newsletters on CD!

Joel Busse (#6) has converted all Newsletters from 1997-2004 to pdf format, and copied them to CDs.

Members with the original issued CD may upgrade by sending their CD and a check for \$5 in U.S. funds made to DeFever Cruisers. Or members may purchase the new CD by sending a check for \$20 in U.S. funds made to: DeFever Cruisers.

Send to:

Joel Busse 110 Waters Edge, Jupiter, FL 33477

Bussejm@aol.com ◆◆

Boat/U.S. Membership

DeFever Cruisers is a participating member of the Boat/US Co-operating Group Program. A DeFever Cruisers member may join Boat/U.S. or renew their Boat/US membership at the special Co-op Group rate of \$9.50, instead of the usual \$19.00 annual fee. When you join or renew, state that you are a DeFever Cruisers member and mention DFC Group Number GA84456B. For additional information, brochures or applications, contact us or your nearest Boat/US facility. ◆◆

ing diving off the south end of Isla Mujeres at a government park. In the evening, we enjoyed a Mexican-style shrimp cocktail on the beach, at the Port Captain's tender dock. Tomorrow we expect the adventure to continue by taking our tender to Isla Contoy, a bird sanctuary ten miles north of us, if the winds are light. They have been blowing over twenty knots for the past few days, and the boaters say it has been windy around the western Caribbean this winter.

Received 5/2 Short note to let you know that we continue to be docked at Isla Mujeres. The weather has been blowing over twenty for the past few days, so we have been polishing our skills at Happy Hour engagements with fellow boaters, and learning about local restaurants. A close favorite is where you can have two beef, pork, or chicken cheese tacos, beans, rice, and a fruit drink for \$3.00. Good food for half the States' prices. Our marina fees are also reasonable, and with the temperatures in the mid 80s, the living is easy.

Forty-seven race boats from St. Petersburg are planned to arrive in the anchorage today and tomorrow. The initial boat to arrive was a fifty-plus foot catamaran. They came through 30 knots in the Gulf, great sailors, but not so good at anchoring in these winds. Their anchor was sized for a twenty-footer, with no chain on the rode, probably for weight reduction. He almost wiped out the anchored fleet before getting to a dock in a covered cove. Probably will be party time when the fleet all gets here, and we will be looking for Chuck's brother arriving on the committee boat.

Received 5/05 With the winds in the twenties, and AURORA having its AC problems fixed, we took off for two days and 200 miles to the capitol of Yucatan state, Merida. Cancun and Isla Mujeres are in the state of Quintana Roo, which runs along the coastline of the Yucatan peninsula. The State of Yucatan is its inland neighboring state. Quintana Roo was a territory until becoming Mexico's 30th state in 1974.

We traveled from our boat by ferry to Cancun, then local bus to the ADO Bus Station, taking a first class bus with toilet, movie, and freezing AC to Merida. After a four-hour ride, we searched for a downtown hotel without the mildew smell. Found one that seemed clean, and in the heart of where we wanted to explore. Checked in, and departed for the Museum of Anthropology.

The ancient Mayan culture exhibits were featured as expected, but one room was devoted to the making of henequen, or sisal-type rope, in the early 1900s. The exhibit centered around one Korean-owned and managed Hacienda that was a very successful plantation for growing the agave plant, and shredding it into strands of twine prior to processing into rope and other fabrics. Since most of the descriptions were in Spanish, the technical names and processing are still unclear to me. They called the plant 'green gold' in the late 1800s, because the agave plant thrives in the warm and semiarid climate of the Yucatan. The plants have long stiff evergreen leaves that spiral out from the center, forming a rosette that resembles the top of a gigantic pineapple. Fields produced the plant for two years, and the third year they were burned to provide nutrients for the next two years of growing. Fibers taken from the leaves are used primarily to make rope. The plants were cut by machetes, taken to the processing center on the Hacienda, and fed into a machine developed by McCormick in the USA (He also developed many farm implements that my grandparents used.). The machine produced strands of yellow twine that could be woven

into rope and other materials. Large haciendas were built, and workers came from Korea and China to supply labor for these plantations. So, added to the Yucatan's Mayan culture, the Orientals played an important role in developing the area in the past hundred years. Probably, this all came to a crashing halt when synthetic ropes came into being. I saw a couple of small fields of agave plants during the bus rides. The word 'sisal' came from the port city from which the rope was shipped.

That evening we went to the city square, and danced to a large Mexican-style band playing music for the Viagra crowd. Believe we were the only foreigners in the crowd. And then to the hotel, where a little brown mouse crept out of his hole, and sat in our fluorescent light. When the bird noise across the square awoke us (Hitchcock would have been proud of them) in the morning, we didn't have power, and our toilet wouldn't flush. After breakfast in the square, we took a first class bus to Valladolid, about half the way back to Cancun. Our tour director took us for a hot walk to a cenote, the market, and to a lovely noon lunch at the El Meson del Marquez Hotel. A cenote is a natural well where the limestone ground crust has collapsed, opening a hole to underground flowing water. The Yucatan does not have any rivers or lakes above ground, they are all underneath. In a few locations, the ground has yielded and the water exposed, and the cities were built around available drinking water.

Since the next first class bus wasn't until 6:30, we took the other class bus to Cancun at 3:30. This bus stopped at small towns, let people off and on along the road, picked up school kids and gave them a ride from their school to the area they lived, and picked up vendors entering a town, and dropped them off exiting the town. The only thing they didn't pick up and drop off was the mail. The towns don't have stop signs or lights, they have speed bumps every block, sometimes for a mile. The morning hotel lack of amenities turned out to be the good news. The bad news was I had to stand in the center aisle of that bus for three hours, until we reached the outskirts of Cancun, because it was oversold. Yes, I was given a seat number when the ticket was purchased at the station. You try to move a mother, two kids and a rabbit out of your seat, in Spanish. And yes, next to my feet were chirping baby chicks, and on the other side a family sat with a baby in the arms, that just missed my arm when it vomited. And if we had taken the first class bus, we would have departed three hours later, and arrived one hour later in Cancun. Steve and the girls offered to change with me after awhile, but I never wanted to forget my stupidity, knowing there is only first class, and no other class, in a third world country. Finally getting off that bus at the Cancun station, I headed straight for a taxi to the ferry, and back to the boat.

Arriving at the boat, I found the master stateroom head didn't work. Thus, from my first morning needs to the last one at night, the toilets didn't work - a "Double-HEADER" day.

Today, Thursday, I repaired the head (duck bills), and Steve installed a rebuilt/modified AC unit, which seems to be operative. We have checked out of our marina today, ready for an early start to Isla Controy for a couple of days, as the weather forecast is good.

P.S. We and AURORA just returned from our last dinner on Isla Mujeres, and Alice now has a loose tooth, and I cracked a tooth or filling on nachos. We both spent extra effort a few months ago putting on caps, and making sure they were ready. Alas, we will try to find a dentist tomorrow.

Received 5/5 from AURORA: *Ola! Well, getting into the land and lingo, and enjoying a different cruising style than in the Bahamas. However, the Bahamas are wonderful, and we miss the islands and people there. We've been busy sightseeing locally, as well as taking buses into the big city of Merida and some "colonial" villages. It's poverty for most, with small shack-like or cement block homes, but hard workers and friendly folks, ready with smiles and patience, as we attempt broken Spanish!*

The food is fresh, yummy, and cheap, and the cervesa is cold, and cheap too! Haven't cooked much because of this, but soon that will change. Plan to depart Isla Mujeres tomorrow and anchor at a nature preserve for a couple of days, to bird watch and take tours given by the park rangers. Will return to Isla, but stay on the hook and dinghy in, rather than the marina, as we'll wait for calmer weather to head south. May be out of touch for awhile as we travel.

Received 5/6 Just a quick note to let everyone know that we were able to see a dentist today, and that Alice's tooth is having a cap made for it. Last Friday we went to Cancun with the name of two dentists, and they were at the dentist's convention. We were able to get into one office that also had an orthodontist working, and made an appointment for today. We weren't aware that it was with a root canal specialist in the same office, and when they found that the tooth already had one, we were asked to meet with a dentist that does caps or crowns. After the initial meeting with her, she said it would require about two weeks, but with the help of the orthodontist as translator, we convinced her to start preparing the tooth for the temporary today, and the lab might have the permanent one done by Friday.

We are a little 'dock sick,' as we will be here for three weeks. AURORA went to Isla Contoy for the past four days, and will return to the harbor tomorrow. She will probably depart south in a few days, ahead of us, and we will catch up when the tooth and weather permit. I was hoping to be working our way to Belize by this time, but we are stuck here for the next week.

Received 5/26/05 Prior to leaving Isla Mujeres, we officially checked out of Mexico. We were advised by other boaters, and with the blessing of our agent, to do the paper work in Isla, as there aren't any other good government facilities along the Yucatan coast prior to Belize. So we went to Miguel, our agent, and requested his services to provide us with the proper papers to leave Mexico. The next day he had our papers ready for the Capitan to sign. I counted eleven sheets of paper, with nine of them requiring signatures. One of them was the Zarpe that gave us permission to depart the Mexican waters for another country. This certificate looks almost good enough to frame, reading in Spanish that BALI MOTU is departing to its next destination, Belize. Our agency fee was \$50, for anyone keeping track of the entrance and departure costs. After signing, Miguel kept some papers, and sent us off to Immigration in downtown Isla Mujeres with the remaining lot. The immigration officer exercised a great centrifugal motion, stamping the papers with a resounding thud. He first asked if you are leaving today, and our agent had coached us to say yes, even though it may be a few days for a weather window. He filled out a form that I signed, stating that I will return abroad the temporarily imported boat which I have brought into Mexico. He then took the papers he wanted, and handed the remaining stamped papers to us. Next, it was back to our agent, who took the stamped copies, leaving us with three; Zarpe, Crew List to Belize, and the Immigration Boat

Deportation paper. There will be a quiz on entering and departing procedures for all our friends when we see you.

After leaving Isla on Sunday, we stopped at Hut Point, and then to Puerto Aventuras. Entering Puerto Aventuras Marina on a calm day was easy, but with a high easterly, it would be a little tricky, as the entrance channel is narrow as it passes through the reef. Once inside the marina, we were instructed to Med moor, picking up a mooring buoy prior to backing into your space between two other vessels in a rather confined harbor. Since there wasn't a pennant on the buoy, we had to back onto the buoy, with Alice on the swim platform attaching a rope to the buoy. As I backed in between two other boats, she walked the buoyed rope to the bow and attached it at a length that would provide the stern to be next to the cement wall. Then she ran to the stern, and threw the stern lines to dock hands that were ten feet above her, standing on the cement wall. I'm at the fly bridge helm taking hand signals from the dock attendant on how close we are getting to the wall, and when to stop backing. After getting the stern lines attached, we spent a few minutes adjusting the bow line to get the proper stern distance from the wall, so we could climb a wall ladder and get to the top of the dock. This procedure isn't for the weak hearts.

Once docked, we toured the facilities, and noticed how it had changed from seven years prior. The big difference was that they closed a third of the marina space for the Dolphin Experience, where for \$125 per person you can be in the water with the dolphins, have them kiss you, push you through the water, and do other tricks. Buses bring the tourists in from Cancun, where they get into swim gear/life jackets prior to getting into the dolphin pen. The surrounding area hasn't changed, except for new construction which vanished our favorite restaurant. Puerto Aventuras is a gated community with golf course, condos, canal homes, restaurants and shops, beautiful pool for marina and condos owners, and a beautiful five-star hotel with its pool and amenities.

After siesta, we checked into the marina office, where dock master Gerardo gave us the latest info on immigration and customs. A month ago they passed a ruling that you don't have to check in to each port as if you were arriving from a foreign port. You do need to have your Zarpe and boat documentation for the port captain, or dock master in this case. They copied the info that we are on the way to Belize. I'm not sure it followed the letter of the law for us to stop in another port, after officially clearing out at Isla Mujeres, but greenbacks do take precedence. So Gerardo said we could stay for some days. We asked him for the sailboat rate of \$18.00 a night without regards to vessel size. He said that was only for sailboats, and power boats were charged by the foot. Upon questioning, he said that when sailboats call in and are told of the price, they don't stop. So when he says eighteen dollars, they come in and fill the marina when there are open slips, and claims they use very little power (There must be a few messages here.). He decided to cut us a deal at a daily rate of \$1.00 a foot, which is the three-month rate, although it is high season for tournament fishing, and the docks are full of charter boats.

The next day AURORA rented a car and left early in the morning for Tulum, to see the ruins which we had done on previous visits. We enjoyed the beautiful pool and a lunch at one of the marina cafés, with free beer from Corona, as they were introducing a new light beer. The owner of the establishment was

a former Fort Myers, FL, cop who came down and befriended the owner a few years prior. That owner passed away, and she ended up with the restaurant. Steve and Di returned from Tulum in the afternoon, and we went to Playa de Carmen for a late afternoon walk and dinner. This is where the ferry boats leave for Cozumel, and on our last visit was a sleepy little town with a few blocks of New Orleans-type shops. This had expanded into a large-size shopping area and busy ferry port. After drinks at Señor Frogs, buying a few t-shirts and Steve's Mexican cigars, we had dinner and returned to Puerto Aventuras to prepare for earlier departure mañana.

Casted off our mooring lines and departed at 7:30 for Bahía de la Ascension, a 50 mile run down the coast. We caught a cero mackerel on the way, which we enjoyed for dinner, anchored at Culebra Cay. The next day we went out to the bay's entrance and snorkeled its reef - wonderful, clear, 85 degree water, teeming with coral reef fish. The next day we moved to another of the bay's locations, the fishing village of Punta Allen. Instead of using traps for lobsters, the fishermen create an artificial habitat out of four foot square slabs of concrete (condos). They place hundreds of them in the bay. Their co-op packs and ships over 65 tons of lobster annually. We saw old friends Joe and Marilyn on *Windspirit*, whom we first met on our initial trip to the Abacos, five years ago. After a morning reef snorkel, we went into town, and had drinks and dinner on the beach at Cuzans.

The next day we cruised down the coast 25 miles to Bahía del Espíritu Santo, without any success fishing, which we were told was excellent along the Yucatan. Entering the bay, we were greeted with Espíritu's version of the Chesapeake crab pot buoys. These were attached to the cement lobster condos. From the reef opening to a pretty anchorage behind Owen Island (Isla Chal), we had a near coronary passing through less than a half foot of water under the keel for half a mile. The charts were originally published in the 1800s, and are close within a mile or two, and the water depths are within a few meters if under ten. The only boater's guide book for this area hasn't been updated for ten years. A fairly recent publication by the office of Mexican Tourism, 'Exploring the Maya Reef,' provides the ability to more accurately find your latitude and longitude positions with respect to reef openings and land areas, although its depths are questionable. It has been of great assistance, and for anyone cruising this area, highly recommended. Another interesting note is that there aren't any tide stations along this coast, and the closest tide reference is Belize City, which references back to Miami, which references back to Boston tides. The tides average from one to one and half feet, and when we run an area with half foot or less under the keel without tide knowledge, you have a problem that could be called a shipwreck. Around these areas we have witnessed a number of shipwrecks, mostly sailboats, on the reef or shore. Since leaving Isla Mujeres where there were a few cruising power boats docked, we have only seen sailboats.

After two nights and a day of snorkeling the reef by ourselves (AURORA and us), we departed for our last destination along the coast of Mexico, Cayo Norte, on the Chinchorro Bank. Lying 18 miles offshore, Chinchorro Bank is an atoll 26 miles long and 6.5 miles wide, surrounded on all sides by a reef. Chinchorro Bank and Belize's three atolls are the only true atolls in our hemisphere. Within Chinchorro bank there are three small islands, with Cayo Norte being the northern most, and the only

practical one at which to anchor. Upon arriving, while trying to get our anchor to hold on the sandy limestone bottom, the Mexican Navy boarded our boat and requested papers. Our Zarpe, boat documentation, and passports were needed for them to fill out their paper work for boarding and inspection of the boat. We should have expected such a welcome wagon greeting, since they have a base on this "motu," and the men have nothing better to do during their two-month continuous stay on the island. It is a little daunting to have M-16-toting, non-English speaking men aboard. After proper paper work and BALI MOTU's Capitan signing the document, they asked for beer and I gave them some pop. I'm not sure what the etiquette calls for, but I never feel like giving beer to guys with M-16s. Next day we had three wonderful snorkels, and now are on the way to San Pedro, Belize, where we will proceed through the paper work again, but in English.

The Mexican Maya Reef along the Yucatan has two cruising ports, Isla Mujeres and Puerto Aventuras; the two large bays mentioned above, and all the other locations, including towns like Playa de Carmen, are located behind the reef. For a cruiser, you have the choice of the two ports, two bays, or anchor behind the reef along the 200 nautical mile Mexican coast line. Going south, you will be headed into a two knot current, unless you stay in 50'-100' water depths off from the reef. In all our anchorages, except Bahía de la Ascension, we and AURORA were the only boats. This isn't the Bahamas. We have been blessed with a wonderful weather window since leaving Isla Mujeres, with northeasterly winds from 10-15 knots, and seas less than three feet. We are looking forward to Belize, where after passing through the reef at San Pedro, we will be in more protected waters.

Received from AURORA 5/27/05 *Can hardly believe it's been one month since we departed Key West for Mexico. Have seen and done much in that time, and we are having a good time discovering new places and buddy-boating with friends, Bob and Ali on board BALI MOTU.*

We've been on the hook for the past week, finding small islands to anchor behind, and nice reefs to snorkel. Have seen lots of turtles, as this is the season for them to come to shore and lay their eggs. Also, lots of sting rays, and some spotted eagle rays. Have seen only a couple of nurse sharks, unlike the Bahamas where sharks are everywhere! Have visited some small fishing villages on the most southern part of Mexico, where life is tough, but the people are all friendly and ambitious. Recently we anchored off Cayo Norte, a small atoll where there is an even smaller Navy base of eight guys who spend two months at a time there! They boarded our vessels and did some paperwork, and were very pleasant to us. Decided to bake some brownies for them, and when we took them the goods, they responded by giving us four lobsters! Not a bad barter, think WE won! It has become very hot lately, as the winds are calm, but usually ESE at 10-15 late day. Fortunately, Hurricane Adrienne fizzled and was not a problem, but hope more don't crop up too soon.

We arrived at Belize on 5/26 at 4pm MST, and are now at the dock catching up on chores, with plans to do lots of sightseeing in the town of San Pedro, and snorkeling/diving the reefs. We were here in the late 80s on a dive trip, so wonder how much we'll remember?!

Phones have been a challenge to find, so hopefully we'll have

luck this time.

Received 6/5 We have been in Belize about a week, and are anchored five miles east of Belize City, with its night lights and tall buildings off our stern. Entering at San Pedro, the northern most break in the reef, we proceeded to the Belize Yacht Club. We had made reservations a few days earlier by satellite phone, and when we showed up at 2:30, no one came to our assistance by VHF radio, and there were no other boats at the dock. Steve spotted a light-colored area going towards the dock, and bravely hoped it was the channel in. Fortunately, it was deeper than the half foot under our keels 100 yards off the end of the dock, and we proceeded in and tied up with do-it-yourself service. After plugging into power, we went to the office and asked for Customs. At five, Customs and Immigration show up and we invited them aboard. Both we and AURORA filled out the paper work on BALI MOTU; within half an hour the job was over, and they had taken our framing-quality Mexican Zarpe. I asked to make a copy prior to them taking it, and then they showed us the Belize Zarpe, which is claimed to be the most revered in the western Caribbean. We will receive this when we depart, and surrender it checking into the next country. After the paper work and twenty US to each, we offered them beer and wine, and they had no trouble drinking three beers and half a bottle of wine until we excused them to have our dinner aboard.

During the next three days, we walked the streets of San Pedro, swam in the Yacht Club pool, and snorkeled the reef (where we were caught for not paying the \$10 per person fee for being inside the park boundary). The town is totally tourist oriented, with beach bars, 50 small hotels, and many restaurants. It has golf cart grid lock. Ambergris Cay is a small strip of land that protrudes down from Mexico. Its name comes from the grayish wax substance secreted by sperm whales, which washes on shore, and is highly prized for perfume. The town has three dirt streets, Front, Middle, and Back, and an air strip. The only way to the town is by water taxi, or air out of Belize City, thirty miles away. Today, its main attraction is the diving off from the Belize coast out as far as the Blue Hole.

With three days of winds over twenty, and waves of two feet coming over the reef at the Yacht Club, we departed for Cay Caulker, ten miles to the south. The four mile long by half mile wide island gave us relief from the wind and the waves as we anchored on the west side of the island, putting it between us and the reef. It is a miniature, laid-back San Pedro - small hotels, a couple of small grocery stores, a bakery, a hardware, and many small restaurants that are native-owned and family-operated. The hot spot for action was the Lazy Lizard, where swimming, sunbathing, and drinking started in the morning. Behind the reef was sand and grass, instead of coral as we have experienced at San Pedro and throughout Mexico. From Cay Caulker south to the Belize City area, the reefs had sand and grass, where we found a few conch with which to make fritters. From Caulker, we took the tender to the two mile long Island Chapel Cay, which is completely owned by a Kentucky family that has turned the entire Island into an 18-hole golf course with luxury villas. A villa will sleep four, and goes for \$1,500 a night. It's impressive to see miles of seawall on the west side, and a beautiful sandy beach overlooking the reef on the ocean side. The clubhouse was the finest I had ever seen. A small well-built marina was only for their private use, as they were not interested in revenue from boaters - believing that boaters and

golfers don't mix. This is the first-class golf resort that Tiger Woods rented for a week.

Next we moved BALI MOTU 15 miles south to St. Georges Cay, through Porto Stuck. This pass is appropriately named, as two sail boaters we had talked with went aground, retreated, and took a long bypass around it. I think there should be a T-shirt club for those who pass through Porto Stuck. Again anchoring in the lee at St. George, we enjoyed this small island more than any other. The only commercial establishments were two resorts, and a small aquarium that an Austrian built in his yard. No roads or stores of any kind, and the main street was a beach path that took 15 minutes to walk. The St. George Lodge is meticulously built out of mahogany, santa rosa, and zircote woods. We enjoyed a round of drinks under its 15 foot ceiling with the manager, Kim, while overlooking the ocean. At the north end of the island we met Don Smith from Tennessee (101st. Airborne Special Services), who met his Belizean-born wife at Camp Perry, Ohio. Don and his wife split half their time on the island, and half in the States. Don and his maintenance buddy, Poppy, came out to AURORA after dark, along with another boat with two natives from the next island, Drowned Cay. Two hours after dark, and well-oiled, they took off for their homes. Drowned Cay is sizeable, with bogue (channels) running through. Since we were going to it the next day, the Drowned Cay guys promised lobsters when we arrived, although the season doesn't commence until June 15.

As promised, Carl and Malcolm brought nine lobsters for the four of us on Drowned Cay, which we happily consumed that night. During the day we did the tender number of what is now called "Bob's Jungle Cruises," going around the island and through the canals, stopping along the way to snorkel and finding four conch. Returning to our boats, we watched a tug boat pull three barges close to us in the narrow channel. It dropped the barges 200 yards ahead of us along the shore. After dropping the brown sugar-loaded barges, they stopped and asked us for beers, one for each crew member (four). Sugar and special woods such as mahogany, poison, and santa rosa are exports of Belize.

So with the day time temperatures in the 90s, nights in the 80s, we are spending time in the 88 degree water, running fans and generators/AC units. It's hotter than normal, and I better stop this diatribe, so you can get it hot off the press.

Received from AURORA 6/16 *Well, it's been a challenge to find phones that work, so haven't been able to send many messages. However, we are having a great time, and are enjoying the out islands of Belize, where we found nice anchorages, small villages, friendly locals, and great snorkeling.*

Upon leaving San Pedro, we cruised to Cay Caulker, a small island with lots of quaint hotels and restaurants. Popular spot for young folks, as it's inexpensive, and laid back. From there we went to St. George's Island, where the British Army goes to play for R and R. There's a neat lodge, and an aquarium, that a local has built over 20 years, that is quite impressive.

Met some locals, who later joined us onboard for drinks and stories, and who delivered nine lobsters to us, as promised, the next day! We then anchored in the mangrove area known as Drowned Cays, where we saw manatee and dolphin, but heard there were crocodiles lurking about, so no water time there! Also, what looked to be abandoned barges were actually full of brown sugar, a major export of Belize. They store them in the

mangroves until the container ships arrive, then tow them out to offload.

Next am we were off to Turneffe Island, where we found a great spot between the mangroves to drop the hook. On the tip of the Island was a fish camp, where several guys stayed, spending the day shoring up the banks, with plans to convert the area into a restaurant and water sport stop for dive boats out of Belize City. There was also a very nice lodge accessible by boat only, with weekly guests, but nasty managers who allowed their two dogs to harass people (Plan to write an e-mail to the owners as we've heard this from other cruisers). Enjoyed some great snorkeling, and collected a few shells with Bob and Ali. Spoke with one of eight fishermen who came over from Belize City in a small sailboat that tows their dugouts, so they can handline fish, spear, and collect conch. They tie the dugouts to their waists as they look for fish, and use a small paddle to get back to the main boat. They give 10% to the boat, then the rest goes to the Collective where they're paid per pound. They may be out from 7-10 days at a time! Rough, tough way to make a livin'!

On the 7th, we departed for Lighthouse Reef, which is known for its beautiful water and dive sites. The wind picked up to 25 knots, we had 4-5' seas, and the current was against us (as usual), making for a bit of an uncomfortable ride, but it calmed upon arrival. Saw the live-aboard dive boats that we used to spend vacation time on, hoping one day we could visit these places in our own boat! And here we were! Never give up your dreams! This is the first spot to rival the waters of the Bahamas. It is so beautiful here, with gin-clear water, and plenty of conch, sand dollars, and urchins to collect. Had two great dives off the wall at Half Moon Cay, where we saw three BIG tarpon hanging amongst the silver sides and large groupers. It was fun having Bob and Ali snorkeling above us, and playing in our bubbles, as they could see us pointing out fish to them. We spent hours in the water, snorkeling to keep cool, and swimming with the sting rays. We also visited the bird rookery to see frigates and the red-footed boobies.

Hated to leave, but needed to be in Belize City, where Bob's son will join them. On the cruise we trolled lines again in hopes of landing some tuna, but only caught one bonita. Had many bites, but couldn't seem to land 'em. However, BALI MOTU has been luckier at catching, with one wahoo, two tuna, one 'cuda, and a sailfish!

Spent one night on the hook at Water Cay, ten miles from Belize City, but a storm came up, so didn't get much sleep, and we were ready to pull into the marina the next day. So, we are now at Cucumber Beach Marina, where the staff is very pleasant and helpful, and there is a restaurant, beach, and museum to enjoy. We're now preparing to do some land excursions, as we've rented a car to go to the zoo and the ruins. Supposed to drive into Guatemala to visit the ruins at Tikal, but just learned the car is not insured to cross the border, so may take a bus.

Received 6/20 Returning from the two atolls, we passed by the western edge of Turneffe reef, and decided to run the 200 foot drop off (wall) line, instead of going directly to the shipping channel for Belize City. With Billy Baits on the fishing lines, we had a couple hours of fun catching two black fin tunas, a ten pound barracuda, and a 50 pound sailfish. Blue marlin are common in these waters, but sailfish are rare. We have a great picture of the 'sail' walking on its tail 50 yards from the boat. After

that excitement, we turned toward the eastern Ship's Channel, passed English Cay, and spent the night anchored at Water Cay. That night the rainy season started for us, and each day since we have had alternating overcast and sunny skies, with thunderstorms and rain in the neighborhood.

The next morning, we waited for the sky to clear before running the ten miles to Cucumber Beach Marina, a few miles south of Belize City, and the only operating marina in Belize. Cucumber was constructed during the past four years by the family that built many of the roads. In the past few years, road building has ceased, primarily due to lack of funds because of government corruption (such as the finance minister's wife being caught with 1.5 million in a suitcase in Miami). To diversify, and to use the workers and equipment, they built this first class marina with restaurant, beach, and Cultural History Center. During an evening, Francis, the owner, came aboard, and told us they built it for the charter boats, tour boats, fishing boats, and with only eight transient slips. They have been surprised to find these slips in demand. He plans to double the size of the marina, affording many more transient slips.

In Isla Mujeres, I reported cracking a tooth when Alice's tooth broke. Dentists examined my teeth when Alice saw the first two dentists, and they proclaimed my teeth fine. However during the past three weeks my canine tooth became loose and gums sore, and upon arrival at Cucumber, I solicited a dentist. Fortunately, another transient boater took me with them to a dentist in downtown Belize City, where Dr. Adrian Heusner found that my bridge had broken, and in the past three weeks loosened the tooth to which it was attached. Adrian was in his early thirties, and trained at Marquette University for seven years. He shared the practice with his dad, and was excellent in preparing a new bridge, and accommodating to our schedule.

With the dental work, and RJ arriving a week later than planned, it created problems for going to western Belize, and the Tikal ruins in Guatemala. Steve rented a car, and as soon as my dentist appointment was completed on Wednesday, we departed for San Inagious, a small pretty town near the Guatemala border. Prior to staying at the San Ignacio Hotel for the evening, we visited the Belize Zoo, an hour drive outside of Belize City (I was lucky that they didn't keep me at the zoo.). This renowned Zoo exhibits animals in their natural settings. They took a part of the rain forest area, and fenced in the animals and birds in their habitat. Around the spider monkey's fence, they trimmed back the foliage so they couldn't swing outside, and most fences were electrified. Jaguars, pumas, tapirs, and ocelots were some of the animals, and birds such as scarlet macaws, parrots, and mottled owls were shown.

We made Tikal tour arrangements with the San Ignacio Hotel, leaving at 7:30 the next day. The four of us, along with another couple, departed with our driver in the hotel's van. Upon reaching the border ten miles to the west, we picked up our Guatemalan guide. The first ten miles in Guatemala was on a jarring, dirt road, which wasn't paved because of a change of governments five years ago. The new party stopped paving the final ten miles to the border. Two and half hours later, we arrived at the ancient Mayan ruins of Tikal. These ruins in the jungle district of Guatemala are among the more outstanding in the Mayan world. They have been excavated and restored extensively. Still, you only see a small part of what is buried, of this culture that began in 750 BC, and vanished without cause in A.D. 900. During

the later periods, temples were built that took 2,000 workers eight years to quarry the stone, and another eight to build. We climbed Temple I on the East Plaza, and Temple IV, which rises 190 feet above the underbrush. A non-OSHA approved ladder stairway, with questionable rails and steps, permits climbing to the 180 foot level, where you can peer out over the great complex and jungle, without any protective guardrails. The “Star Wars” opening scene was shot from the top of this temple. Other interesting sites are the acropolises, ball parks, causeways, and trails through the forest, observing holler and spider monkeys, along with toucan birds. After a good day of hiking and climbing, we returned to our hotel in San Ignacio, passing through the Guatemala/Belize border again.

The next morning we toured the ruins of Xunantunich, five miles from San Ignacio. To get to the ruins, a manually-operated cable ferry fords a river in which we watched woman doing their wash. Again, we climbed the great temple to dizzying heights. Needing to get back to Belize City by 4:00, to have our Immigration papers extended for thirty more days, and my dentist appointment at 5:00 on this Friday afternoon, we left western Belize, stopping at a Mennonite area, and at Belmopan, the capitol of Belize, for lunch. Belmopan is a small town fifty miles to the west of Belize City, and became the capitol after hurricane Hattie wiped out Belize City in 1961. It hasn’t become the city that was hoped for when the capitol was moved.

We arrived at the Belize City Immigration office prior to 4:00, since they closed at 4:30, and were told that we couldn’t extend, because it costs \$25 per person, and the cashier closed at 3:30. When we returned to the marina at 6:00, Immigration had just departed to check in a boat, and collected the fee at the marina. Go figure. So we kept the rental car until Monday morning to achieve the extensions. Saturday, we went to the Belize City market. The city is not a large town, and badly needs revitalization. We became quite proud that we could navigate through the alley-like streets of Belize City. It is known for more than a normal rate of crime.

We enjoyed the trip to western area of Belize, and some of the areas resembled northern Connecticut or Michigan in the summer, with green high hills and teeming agriculture. San Ignacio is a tourist town not only for Tikal visitors, but for camping, canoeing, hiking and horseback riding in the surrounding country side. We were pleased to get into the country where we met and experienced the folks. Where we are staying is very comfortable with excellent security. The people inland of Belize are very friendly, smiling, helpful, and desirous to please. We are glad we took a week to see the Belize mainland.

P.S. Steve and Diane’s tuna sushi was fantastic!

In mid-July, BALI MOTU and AURORA survived Hurricane Emily without a scratch – Ed. ◆◆

Bad Odor

Ole Pedersen (#792) asks:

We have a bad odor coming from under the bunk in the master stateroom of our 49RPH. We have cleaned and painted all accessible areas below deck, from the chain locker to the engine room bulkhead. All the hoses on the holding tank system have been replaced, and the holding tank has been pressure tested with three feet of head pressure for 30 minutes, with no leaks. For a while I noticed water collecting in the bilge between and

forward of the water tanks. This water had a foul odor and I thought it was coming from a possible saturated keel. I identified where the water came in, and plugged the hole with water resistant epoxy. I still accumulate water in the same area, but only when it is raining. Looking at the deck area, I can see several hairline cracks where water could seep in. The grey water system has not been in use for several months. Is there any place (cavity) where water can accumulate instead of draining into the bilge? I have not yet cut the front of the bathtub open to see what is underneath. Short of cutting the freshwater tanks in a thousand pieces, I am stumped. We have ordered a “Bilge Buster” from West Marine to see if that can remove the odor. If anybody has any ideas, I am thankful for any input.

Jim Child (#203) responds:

Put a bit of Clorox in the water underneath your air conditioner, in the evaporation pan.

Bill Oppold (#476) responds:

I have a 49 RPH, 1984. The bilge between the two water tanks and forward of them has been wet since the day I bought the boat. I knew the SS water tanks were leaking, but I put up with it for four yeas. Last fall I said enough, and replaced the tanks. While the space was open I inspected, cleaned, and painted the whole area under the master. Under the old tanks, there are fore and aft stringers that the tanks set on (visible when the tanks are in situ), and athwartships stringers with drain holes, so the water drains forward and into the bilge in front of the water tanks. I found that I again got water in the bilge, but only after rains. It seems that something on the deck is leaking; it runs down the inside of the hull, and slowly drains forward to the bilge in front of the water tanks, then fills both bilge areas, as there is a drain hole between them. I have just started the quest to find the leak. I will let you know if I find anything, but the process is long - make a fix, wait for rain, make another fix. If you find any source on your boat, please let me know.

Bud Orr (#237) responds:

We have a 57’ DeFever. Our bathtub/shower sump pump for the master stateroom is actually in the engine room bilge. There is no p-trap in the drain line, and I have found that if I do not keep the sump clean, or if the engine room has funny odors, we can smell them in our room. By keeping this sump cleaned out, the problem has gone away.

We have two water tanks under our bed which are empty, but will sweat if the humidity is just right. I have found that the mattress will also sweat, if we do not elevate it after cruising or when we leave the boat for extended periods. The mattress will of course start mildewing.

Water seeping in from rain is a constant challenge. We, too, cannot find the origination of the leak, but it shows up in our stateroom.

When we bought the boat, it had Galley Maid macerator toilets. In the process of replacing these with Raritan fresh water units, and replacing all the hoses, we found that there was one hose that was routed around and under the bathtub, and tie-wrapped to the bottom of the boat. There was no way to pull this hose (3 or 4”) out without cutting those tie wraps. We could only do this by cutting two small access panels out of the fiberglass bathtub. I only mention this because, upon removing the hose, boy did the odors permeate the cover of the hose. If you have any old hoses left in the bilge, this could also cause ongoing odors. ◆◆

Wally Steinhoff & Pam Brown (#298)**DF 44 Classic SANDIAL****Marquette, MI**

April 17, 2005 On January 7, 2000, the M/V SANDIAL left Marina Bay at Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Approximately 9,000 miles, 27 countries, over a hundred islands and anchorages, and 1,923 days later, she returned to Marina Bay.

We've acquired a lot of wonderful memories, weight, age, and a granddaughter in the bargain. The SANDIAL behaved consistently great, which is more than I can say for the Captain and crew.

The last leg, from Isla Mujeres, was pretty uneventful. The first ten or twelve hours of our 40 hour crossing were a little rough, but calmed down the rest of the way. We landed in the Dry Tortugas as scheduled, and spent one night there. It didn't live up to all the good things we had heard about it. From there we went to Key West, and spent a little over a week. Richard, on *Reason*, had some engine problems, so we waited to get those solved before we took off.

With a few stops along the way for rest, we arrived back in Ft. Lauderdale on April 9th. We've been cleaning and organizing the boat, to get ready for our road trip back to Marquette.

We will spend about a month on land cruising around, then back to SANDIAL to begin some repair work, some additions, and generally getting her ready for another Caribbean cruise. We plan on leaving Ft. Lauderdale around the first of November. We'll keep you posted. ◆◆

Bob & Janet Tremble (#701)**DF49RPH DOROTHY MAE****Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**

After more than a year on the hard stand completing the exterior work, we finally launched the first of March. It took several weekends to get all the bits and pieces in place – including the new stainless steel railings, sunshade frames and radar arch, navigation, overhead, and docking lights, antennas, new upholstery for the flybridge and wheel house seats, and of course the decals with the name. We thought we had the plumbing all in order, but discovered that our new hot water hose wasn't up to standard, so we replaced all the pressure hoses, and also a water pump. We had to order a sump pump for the shower drain from the States.

*DOROTHY MAE*

It was such a treat just to be in the marina, rather than dry dock, but needless to say, we were anxious to get out and do some local exploring and cruising. We had our first day out in mid-March, on my birthday. Mixed in with our continuing work, we managed several more days out, exploring the area with friends and anchoring for barbeques and swims. We had a great weekend anchored in a lovely bay with a couple of other boats from our marina, complete with an evening campfire on the beach. The water is quite shallow in some areas – especially at low tide – and in one direction from the marina there are dredged channels leading out to several islands, with long expanses of fine white sand. Going in the other direction, we can take a lovely cruise along the waterfront of the City of Abu Dhabi. Starting at a huge new seven star hotel, you go along about seven km. of waterfront parkland to the shipping harbour crammed with dhows (wooden trading boats from neighbouring countries), and a few container ships. The water is quite clear, and a gorgeous turquoise colour. Almost every time we've been out, we've seen dolphins – including one who surfed along in our bow wave for a full 15 minutes. We usually also see flying fish – they jump out of the water and run along on their tails.

*Bob & Janet on the Swim Platform*

In May we decided to bite the bullet, and have all the interior teak refinished. We spent several days removing all the electronics, doors, hardware, etc. The wood has all been stripped and sanded, and several areas with water damage replaced. They are in the refinishing stage. We are having similar difficulties as before, having to be there to keep a close eye on each stage of the work, and making sure all basic steps are taken. We're hoping to get a satisfactory job, and have it completed within the next couple of weeks. We'll still have some modifications to be done in the galley, but that will be the last big item.

It's been a long haul, and a little more than we had counted on, with having to contend with the local labour, finding material and people to do jobs, lack of skill and equipment in some areas, language barrier, climate, etc., etc. Believe it or not, it's almost too hot to get a lot of enjoyment from the boat throughout the summer. We'll take a bit of a breather, and hopefully by fall we'll be ready to get back into it and really enjoy the boat. You can go to www.groups.msn.com/BobJanetDeFeverRestoration/shoebox to see some pictures. ◆◆

Michael & Jane Ross (#641)

DF44 BLESSINGS

Manteo, NC

Hi, Everyone! After years of planning, a few hectic weeks, lots of help, and the blessings of God, our dream is coming true. Michael and I are now living aboard our motor yacht named BLESSINGS. We are both truly amazed at how everything has fallen into place for us to be able to make this change in our lifestyle. Our estate sale was a huge success, with only a few items left, which happen to be items we are still using as we prepare our home for our new tenants, who will take possession on June 1st.

Over the summer our home port will be the Manteo Town Docks on Roanoke Island. Our new e-mail address is: blessingsdf44@yahoo.com and our boat phone number is 252-207-4611. If your travels take you near the Outer Banks, we love company, and even have a guest stateroom! Manteo is a quaint little town, with lots of history and tons of things to do.

Our plan is not to have a plan, but tentatively we are scheduled to head farther south in the Fall of 2005. The winter winds on the Outer Banks have not been kind to BLESSINGS. ◆◆

Tom & Dee Little (#61)

DF49RPH KALANI

Punta Gorda, FL

Northern Abacos Cruise

In April 2005, we explored the northern Abacos, planning to stay north and west of Green Turtle Cay. We had been to the southern Abacos many times before, arriving there either from the Berry Islands, or from Eleuthra. Our limited time for this cruise, and the desirability to be there fast from Florida, made the decision easy.

WEST END, GRAND BAHAMA: We crossed over from Fort Lauderdale to West End. This was the first good crossing day in several weeks, so we were never out of sight of another cruiser. Another DeFever Cruiser crossing that same day was CHATEAU (John & Karen Siscoe, #499). We arrived early at Old Bahama Bay Marina and Resort, and had to wait in the turning basin for our turn to be given a slip. We had called on the VHF to get reservations as soon as we were in range. It took less than ten minutes to clear Customs and Immigration, whose offices are located on the basin.

A fleet arrived from Lake Worth, including DeFever Cruisers FEBRILE (John & Nancy LeFever, #529) and SEAGAYLE (Jesse & Gayle Johncox, #760). By this time, all the docks were full, and late arrivals were rafted up. As far as we could see, all arriving boats were packed in somewhere. Most boats departed at dawn, and by the time we left at 9:30, exiting was no problem.

The Indian Cay Channel is shallow (five foot minimum), and we were traveling east into the rising sun. All the navigational markers shown on charts, except one, are missing. Those boats that left at dawn must have felt their way through with bad visibility. We had good lighting, were on a rising tide, and did not feel concerned.

MANGROVE CAY: We anchored off the western side of Mangrove Cay; a short day to rest up, after the previous long crossing day. To our surprise, the tidal current was parallel to

the island, northwest-southeast, and was quite strong. We laid to the current, not the wind.

DOUBLE BREASTED CAY: The weather was forecast to deteriorate again, and we looked for shelter at Double Breasted Cay. There was a single sailboat in the tongue between Sand Cay and Double Breasted Rocks, and entry looked complicated. So, we opted to anchor in the creek. Entry is not difficult with good light and a slack tide. We passed close (25 feet) around the most southeasterly rock, and proceeded around the sand bar, up the creek past the mangroves, to the first real island. There was no less than six feet of water in the channel, and we anchored in seven feet at slack low tide between the high (20 foot) rock walls on the south, and the low (five foot) rock walls on the north. The creek is about 80 feet wide at this point. Our plow was securely set, and we set a fortress tied to a stern cleat. Our plow is on a chain rode, and is attached to a 20 foot, ½ inch diameter nylon snubber, which is attached to an eye at the water line. The Fortress is on a 5/8 inch nylon rode. The tidal current is about three knots, and there is no room to swing.

That night the wind picked up to 27 knots, and was perpendicular to the creek. By morning we were too close to the low rock walls, and reset the stern anchor. While the winds remained high, there were no waves in the creek, and the high rock wall gave some shelter. A short dinghy ride took us to Sand Cay, which we walked around in 20 minutes. The sailboat was riding roughly, as the northerly wind was causing the waves to break over the bar. The sailboat left for Grand Cay to seek shelter. We returned to KALANI to warm up, because the temperature only reached a high of 72, not pleasant beaching or swimming. The plow had dug down the channel, so we reset the Fortress.

We fished every day inside the rocks in rough weather, and out to the outlying rocks in more settled weather. Caught mostly small barracuda. One day when we returned to our anchorage, we found FEBRILE aground on the bar at the entrance. We helped SEAGAYLE and *Hasta Luego* find their way into the creek, and soon the rising tide floated FEBRILE. This group stayed for four days, until the weather quieted down, and we were alone again. We had winds 17-35 knots, and frequent rain showers, and were glad to be in a secure location.

GRAND CAY: On the first day that dawned with diminished winds, we took the dinghy to the northeast beaches of Big Grand Cay. Found much flotsam and beach freebies. This beach is 1 ½ miles long, and there is no one living there. Several ladies from the settlement on Little Grand Cay were harvesting "curbs," which are small flat mussel-like shellfish. They pried them from the rocks exposed at low tide, until they had a bucket full. They make salad similar to conch salad.

On another good day, we dinghied to Little Grand Cay. The 2004 hurricanes had caused severe damage, the most dramatic being the town's water tower, which had been hit on the side and caved in. Lunch at "Rosies" was a real treat, and the conch fritters are well recommended. Limited gas and diesel is available at "Rosies," and there are several docks available. The harbor holding is like jello. The sailboat was hauling anchor there, and they had a Volkswagen-sized blob of this muck on their anchor, which did not help hold them in place. It was too rough to explore the excellent beaches on the east side of Grand Cay. Trash disposal for this area is on the garbage cay located just north of Little Grand Cay, and west of Sea Horse Cay. The cay

is guarded by a group of large vigorous dogs that do not want you ashore. Cruisers toss the trash on the pile near the garbage scow landing.

WALKERS CAY: No one lives on Walkers Cay at this time. The Customs and Immigration office is open, and the officers commute from Little Grand Cay. The hotel and marina are closed. Some friends cleared (Customs and Immigration) there, and said that the docks were acceptable for their 28 foot boat, but that the docks were really unsafe, except for temporary dockage for clearance.

GREAT SALE CAY: After ten days, the thunderstorms quit late in the day, and the wind died at slack tide. It was time to go, and we moved on to Great Sale, where we anchored on the northwestern side just before the sun set. We stopped here on our return to Florida, and anchored in the same area in settled weather. The tidal current is northeaster-southwest and is light. In light winds, we lay to the current. Holding is good. No one was anchored in Northwest Harbor. The next morning we moved on to Allans-Pensacola Cay.

ALLANS-PENSACOLA CAY: We anchored with both anchors in the bight on the western end of the cay. The harbor was full, and boats continued to arrive until dark. Took the path across the island, to walk on the beach and admire the cruisers' decorated trees. At midnight, a squall hit with gusts up to 37 knots, and a large 80 foot sportfisherman drug past our bow, missing our anchors before gaining control. They left the harbor to take their chances at sea.

We decorated a conch shell with finger nail polish and ribbons, and returned to the beach to add KALANI's memento to the collection. Later, we moved KALANI further east into the harbor when some other boats moved out.

At 0100 the first of a night full of squalls hit, and boats drug all around us. There was no sleep, as the wind clocked around twice, and gusted to 32 knots. This anchorage has no shelter except for wind direction north to northeast. At 0320, KALANI picked up her anchors and drug ashore. We were able to power back into the harbor, dragging the anchors. We reset the Fortress, and used low power until dawn to keep off the other boats. The anchorage here is silt over hard rock, and the shelter is minimal. We won't be back, except in settled weather. The weather forecast was bad, calling for southerly winds at 17-20 knots. There is no shelter from a strong southerly wind in these waters, and we headed for Green Turtle Cay.

GREEN TURTLE CAY: We planned to anchor in White Sound, but the harbor was packed with other boats looking for shelter. We moved over to Black Sound, and there was no place to anchor there, but there was a single mooring available. It was unused because the space was tight, and very near the shore. As we approached the mooring ball and picked up the line amidships, another squall arrived with 25 knot winds and heavy rain. KALANI fell off the wind, and the mooring ball disappeared under the hull, attached to our stabilizers and propeller. We appeared to be holding beam to the wind, with moored boats five feet off bow and stern, where we stayed until the squall ended. Two sailors who were working on shore asked if we needed help, and soon arrived with snorkeling gear. They untangled our mooring line, and we finally were properly attached. Mooring fees were \$10/day, and included dinghy landings and trash disposal at the Other Shore Club. Great entertainment and food was available at night. We could hear the entertainment really

well on the boat.

It is about a half mile walk to New Plymouth, and on every trip we were offered a golf cart lift by someone passing by. We stayed four days, and enjoyed the local activities. Our deprivation of cracked conch, conch fritters, and Kalik Gold (beer) was satisfied. We were joined here by cruising friends whose home port is Key West, sister city of New Plymouth. Visits between the citizens of these two towns have made many close friends. We enjoyed being a part of the renewed friendships, and meeting so many Bahamians on this closer level. New Plymouth has good shopping. We found the fruits and vegetables as fresh as those we get at home, although much more expensive.

After four days, the weather improved and we moved to anchor in the harbor off New Plymouth. Holding is poor and there is room for plenty of boats. We set the plow in eight feet of water, on 100 feet of chain. The winds picked up overnight. In the morning the boats around us seemed to be in the same place, but the whole anchored fleet was slowly dragging towards Great Abaco Island. We drug about ½ mile. We took the dinghy to White Sound for a fine meal, and a walk around the Bluff House and the Green Turtle Club.

MANJACK CAY: The weather changed to perfect cruising conditions the first week of May. We anchored in the bay between Manjack Cay and Crab Cay. There is lots of room, and the holding is good if you look for a sandy patch. In our week at Manjack Cay, we enjoyed the varied activities available. We landed on the beautiful beach, and walked the nature park to the ocean side beach. A side trail in the park leads to an elevated platform overlooking a fresh water bog, with the expected wildlife. The temperatures warmed sufficiently that we finally got in some swimming. We went to Fiddle Cay at high tide to look for the reputed shells, and found the beach lovely, but the shells elsewhere.

Conch were hard to find, but we had two meals of that fresh delicacy. We went out to the outer reefs and caught enough margate and snapper to have each night. The diving on the reef was ok, but the waters were still too rough for snorkeling. We really enjoyed the beach around the harbor at the northeastern end of the Cay, at Manjack Rocks. DeFever Cruisers **FOURTH DAY** (Howard & Sandra Rambo, #402) and **SOMERSET EAGLE** (Jim & Joni Marquardt, #367) each spent a night here.

POWELL CAY: Anchored in the bay on the western side of Powell Cay. Plow could not get a bite in the largely grass bottom, so we set the Fortress also. Dove on the plow, and dug it in. We did not move, even when the wind gusted to 20 knots. On the beach, the northern trail starts at a picnic area ruins, and runs across the cay. It has been devastated by hurricanes, but we managed to find our way carefully. Wish we had a saw aboard to really clear this trail. It ends on a great sand dune, leading to grand bluffs overlooking a clean steep beach. On another day, we crossed the southern trail to the beach overlooking High Cay, and walked on the beach around the whole southern half of the cay. Many trees were down on the beach, and we had to wade waist-deep part of the way. We could only spend three days at this lovely cay. It was our favorite place in the Abacos.

SPANISH CAY: We dinghied over to this newly-developed cay. The marina has a seawall protecting it from the southerly winds. Water, diesel, gas, groceries, and other cruiser necessities are available here. We enjoyed a fresh bar-b-que lunch, and hiked the developed roads to the tiny beach.

We looked at the weather, and decided that we needed to take advantage of this window, and left for Mangrove Cay. As we passed Great Sale Cay, we saw and talked to DeFever Cruiser *Turtle II* (Chuck & Karen Spriggs, #13). After spending a peaceful night at Mangrove Cay, we left at dawn. About 20 miles off Florida, as we were well into our books with no other boats in sight, we heard a siren. When I looked back out of the pilothouse, there was a Homeland Security Boat, with flashing blue lights, and six well-armed black-suited men. After some pleasant questions, they determined that we were not a menace, and allowed us to continue. We anchored in Lake Worth at 1430, after a fine crossing. The next day the weather window closed for a peaceful crossing.

We cleared Customs by cell phone, but Immigration requires a personal visit. We knew that the Rivera Beach City Marina had a public dinghy dock, and as we approached the gas dock, the attendant asked if we were there to clear Immigration. Then she told us how to get to the dinghy dock, and where the Immigration office was located, a short walk away. We arrived at 1530 to find that they are open only from 0900 to 1500. We could taxi to the airport, or come back tomorrow. We came back.

The Abaco cays north of Green Turtle Cay make a wonderful cruising ground. After a short crossing across the Gulf Stream from Florida, you are there. The cays mostly lie northwest-southeast and offer good protection from the prevailing winds. Except for Grand Cays, Double Breasted Cays, and Green Turtle Cay, there is no protected anchorage in a strong southerly wind. If you like the possibilities of beautiful anchorages, this place is for you. ◆◆

Tight Shaft

Ted Wilson (#716) asks:

My starboard engine shaft is very difficult to turn. All suggestions I've had suggested a misalignment, however when disconnected, the trans turns freely, but the shaft requires a wrench to move. Should I be checking the packing, or is there a bearing I can get to inside the boat? Any suggestions where I can get the specs of any bearing assembly?

Mike Mooney (#735) responds:

Sounds like a stuffing box and / or cutlass bearings and / or bent strut and / or bent shaft. If there is no vibration, it is probably not the later. If you have traditional drip type shaft logs, make sure the stuffing is in good condition. Beyond that, I think to get a good look at the bearings you will need to haul the boat and pull the shaft. These cutlass bearings do need to be replaced periodically. There will be two or three on each shaft, one at each strut and the through-hull opening. Sizing is a three dimensional issue - inside diameter (shaft size), outside diameter (strut opening size), and length. They are readily available. If the boat is blocked properly (ie: as she would sit in the water), a laser can be shot from the rear strut up to the transmission to check for any thing bent or otherwise out of alignment. This laser leveling and alignment is not cheap, and needs to be done by someone who really knows how to do it. I don't know where you are located, but if S.E. FL, I can recommend a company that did our boat. They solved an alignment issue we had that no one else could Just bring your check book.

Bob Kovach (#691) responds:

Any shaft is going to have at least one cutlass bearing on a

strut that supports the shaft, and probably another cutlass bearing where the shaft enters the shaft tube. A dry cutlass bearing will hold a shaft pretty snug. If the boat is out of the water, hit the cutlass bearing with a garden hose. You may have a packing glad nut too tight as well. ◆◆

Ron & Charma Owens (#401)

DF44 JOURNEY TO...

Apollo Beach, FL

Dateline: Frazier's Hog Cay, Berry Islands, Bahamas.

We crossed from the US to the Bahamas on Friday, and cleared in. Saturday was a glorious cruising day - 74 nautical miles (11 hours) across the Bahama Bank, to the anchorage at the opposite end of the island from the well-known Chub Cay Marina.

Sunday morning was the planned departure for Nassau, with an incoming northern cold front chasing us in. I decided to top up the oil in the starboard engine, removed the fill cap, and leaned over to put the cap on the clear top of the sea chest.

The sea chest is like a private viewing booth, with the clear water, and the light reflected off the sandy bottom, twelve feet away. As I glanced into the chest, I noticed a strange looking lump silhouetted against the incoming light. I started to turn away, when my brain finally engaged sufficiently to inquire as to what in the world could that be? I grabbed the large lantern, shined it into the sea chest, and there, as I live and breathe, was an octopus looking back at me, trying hard to make himself the color of blue antifouling paint!!! Now this creature was not large enough to serve as hors d'oeuvres at a DeFever rear deck party, but it easily reached across the width of the sea chest, with way too much to spare. I called Charma down to reassure me that I was not hallucinating. She confirmed the discovery.



Isn't He Cute?

It could only have come off the bottom and crawled through the grate on the boat's bottom - a possibility that I had failed utterly to anticipate. With no real clear plan as to how to get him out of there, I started up the faithful Lehmans, and off toward Nassau we went. Each engine room check showed Oscar, as it was now known, huddled in the far bottom corner, hopefully regretting his choice of residence. I kept a wary eye on the temp gauges, in case he got curious about the flow into the seacocks, but he never tried, so far as I could tell. I did finally get a picture

when he moved to the top near the clear cover.

I considered several schemes for removal, but finally decided that they are intelligent creatures, and that once we got back to water where he could see the bottom, he knew how he got in there, and could find his way out. At the dock in Nassau, several other DeFever owners came over to see the “aquarium” (as the sea chest had now been dubbed), and to confirm that such an event was possible.

Sometime late Sunday afternoon, I glanced into the sea chest, and saw that our hitchhiker was nowhere to be seen. As my contribution to the “101 Tips for Cruising,” I will be adding instructions on dealing with octopi in the sea chest.

I do worry, though, that in some far flung reef bar frequented by sea creatures, sits an octopus with a dazed look in its eye, willing to tell a farfetched story to anyone who will buy him a drink.

Godspeed, Oscar. ◆◆

Ron & Cheryl Roberts (#180)

DF44+5 LAZY DAYS

Cruising Central America

May 25, 2005 Hola Amigos,

My, my, how time flies when you’re having fun. It seems like it was just a short time since we’ve written, but we were starting to receive a few pointed reminders about it being time for a travel update, so thought we’d better sit down and get started. As always, we hope all is well on the home front.

Let’s see, we were in Guatemala the last time we wrote. Well, since then we’ve been up several rivers, through lots of national parks and rain forests; we’ve seen hoards of howler and white-faced monkeys, parrots, macaws, insects, lizards, iguanas, tropical flowers ... and we’re still tickled to death every time we get to do or see any of the above again!

After leaving Guatemala, we traveled to Barillas Marina in El Salvador. This was our first experience crossing a bar and entering a river. In Marina Barillas you’re on a mooring ball up a river, nine miles inland. The entrance is quite interesting. They send a panga to meet you about nine miles outside of the river entrance, and lead you through the Limpa shoals, into the river mouth. You start about four miles offshore in 30 feet of water, and go south, before turning back north once around the shoals. Depending on the tide, it can be quite rocky as you pass through an area with 14 feet of water. Once you’re heading north again, you end up in a narrow channel between the breaking shoals and the breaking surf on the beach. Our trip in was quite benign.

In the marinas in Central America, you are in a compound setting with gates and security, and it is common to see personal guards discreetly standing watch over the rich clientele (locals, not cruisers). We were usually escorted on trips to town in a marina van, although we think they might have been guarding their vans, not the cruisers - ha! We never felt threatened or concerned while in Central America, but we did exercise good judgment at all times (i.e. we rarely ventured out after dark). One of our favorite sightings was the sign at the grocery store in El Salvador, which stated “Please check your handguns before entering” - no lie. Ron was talking with the man in charge of port security in Guatemala, and he explained that all the tight security we are seeing is a component of the US Homeland Security Act. If the Central American countries want to do busi-

ness with the US, they must guarantee the safety of their ports. It was really interesting talking with him. (In Guatemala, the Coast Guard Cutter *USS Minkie* was in port, and in Golfito, Panama, we met another Coast Guard Cutter, and a U.S. naval warship.)

We enjoyed our stay at Barillas, and days were spent around the pool, and going for walks. It was interesting “being up a river,” and it was our first experience with howler monkeys yelling from the treetops. They sound like bears roaring - they make such a loud noise. About a 15-minute walk from the marina, you can visit a local family, who has a family of monkeys living around their home. When they call “Pancho,” the head monkey and his family come for bananas. It was great having all these monkeys walking around you, and swinging through the treetops right above you.

We had “the 20 minute trip from hell” leaving Barillas marina, going out past the Limpa shoals - yikes - 14 feet of water, 5’ waves, with a 2-3 sec interval. We were being led out by a panga, with two sailboats behind us. The sailboats would come straight out of the water, then roll off the wave as the next one hit them. It was UGLY. The sailboats behind us thought we were handling it better - not sure about that, but due to the stabilizers, at least we didn’t get the side motion - just the pounding. Poor Jasmine - she finally crawled over to her cat box, got inside, and lay down! Oh well, at least the trip didn’t last long, and we were on our way.

We had planned to spend some time in the Gulf of Fonseca, but after only two days in the Gulf of Fonseca, decided to continue on to Puesta del Sol, in Nicaragua. We had wanted to visit Honduras, but had been advised not to by the port captain, because El Salvador and Honduras were “feuding” over property at the moment. We stopped at one El Salvadorian island, but the water in the Gulf was extremely muddy, so swimming was out, and one can only take so many showers in a day.

Puesta del Sol, Nicaragua, was our next stop. Puesta del Sol is a beautiful marina, also located up a river, which was entered after running a maze of range markers around shoaling reefs and breakers. This entrance was a little easier on the nerves, because with the range markers you could see the clear path, although at times you were parallel to, and about 300 feet off, the beach with breaking waves on both sides. I don’t think I’ll ever get used to it! How do they find these places??

The lovely couple who own Puesta del Sol are prior cruisers, and they live aboard their 70’ powerboat. Robert is an ex-Silicon Valley executive, who was born in Nicaragua, and Marie Laura is from Guadalajara, MX. About a 10-minute walk from the marina, they own a piece of beachfront property, which has a huge palapa on it, complete with another swimming pool. The cruisers would visit the palapa in the evening to have cocktails and watch the sunset. We were the only people on the beach as far as you could see!

While in Nicaragua, we traveled inland to the city of Granada, the oldest colonial town in Central America. We didn’t have near enough time to explore the area, which is situated on Lake Nicaragua, complete with volcanoes scattered throughout the lake. After a fun-filled three days in Granada, we returned to LAZY DAYS, and spent a pleasant day at the marina, before heading south to San Juan del Sur. We had company aboard who owned property at San Juan del Sur, and it was fun exploring the area with them. We enjoyed some great sightseeing trips

while being shown around town by their property management team!

We sat in San Juan del Sur for several days, trying to wait out high winds that were being created by the Papagayo winds. After 60 hours of 25-35 knot winds, with gusts to 42, we finally left in 30-35 knot winds, but flat seas, on our way to Costa Rica.

Our first entrance into Costa Rica was delightful Bahia Santa Elena, which is a bay almost land-locked - two miles long by one mile wide. The wind was still blowing, but the anchorage was totally flat. It took several days to get the sand/dirt off the boat from the wind dusting in San Juan del Sur!

It was nice to be in an area where the anchorages were easy again (Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua have few decent anchorages, and you have to rely on marinas.). Our next major destination was Playa Cocos, where we accomplished an easy check in into Costa Rica. Costa Rica, unlike Mexico, allows you to be in their country without checking into every port you enter, so you don't have the hassle of dealing with port officials. (This may have changed in Mexico within the past few weeks.) We spent a lovely week exploring the bays around Playa Cocos, while we waited for friends to join us.

After picking up our guests, we spent a few days around Playa Cocos showing them the sights. One of our favorite bays is Playa Panama to the north of Playa Cocos. Our guests spent two weeks traveling south with us to the Gulf of Nicoya, where we visited some wonderful islands and coves. We even anchored off a cemetery at Isla Jesusita - great scenery-ha! We were just entering the rainy season, but the islands/bays were already very green and lovely to see. Some of the bays had "resorts" housed in the bay, varying in degree of exclusiveness-not! Several of them were very nice, complete with swimming pools, and we took full advantage of the pools and the restaurant facilities. At Playa Naranjo we discovered a large family of howler monkeys about a five-minute walk from the pool. We watched as over 30 monkeys went from one tree to another, grabbing mangos along the way and taking a bite - totally unconcerned about our presence.

We had planned to have our guests depart from the Los Sueños Marina, but after discovering they had raised their rates again, and it was going to cost \$267 a night to dock, we opted to let them off in Puntarenas! At Puntarenas we were on a mooring in front of the Costa Rica Yacht Club, which has a wonderful restaurant and pool area. You have to enter Puntarenas on a high tide, as the river is quite shallow - also they send a panga to escort you in, so you don't run aground. The town of Puntarenas isn't much to write home about, but we did find a nicer touristy area before we left.

We spent the next 2 ½ weeks traveling to Golfito, Costa Rica. We visited some delightful towns and bays, one of our favorite spots being the town of Quepos. Ron was able to surf close to the boat while anchored here - shore was a short paddle away! In Quepos we visited our first national park, Manuel Antonio Park. This area is a national reserve, with lots of hiking trails through the hot, steamy jungle, lots of monkeys, deer, coati, birds, and land crabs. The plants and foliage are all breath-taking. The park borders the Pacific Ocean, so you come out of the forest from time to time, to an awesome view of islands/rocks below.

We also visited the RainMaker, which is a private park in the

rainforest. We were lucky, because we were the only people there the morning we visited. We had our own personal guide for the hike through lush tropical forests. He was wonderful, and he knew everything about everything! We saw the poison dart tree frog, lots of different lizards, even a Jesus Christ Lizard, which walks on water! The guide was nice enough to point out a scorpion hiding under a sign for us! We saw an owl butterfly - it has a big eye that makes it look just like an owl. Also, our guide picked up every lizard he could find to let us see them up close, also other crawly things. They have five suspension bridges in the rainforest, the longest being 300 feet, and 450 feet above ground. We're not sure how high we hiked, but about half the walk was uphill. There are a lot of different fungus, and stuff. We've never thought of fungus as being pretty, but they really are neat-ha! We also never gave much thought as to how leaves decompose - Cheryl has a leaf, which looks just like a piece of lace - it's really pretty, and almost decomposed. It was a great tour, and they also fixed the best lunch we're had in ages.

We checked out of Costa Rica in Golfito. Golfito is a small town, which used to be a major banana export location. After the banana plantations pulled out, the government brought in a duty-free store to help the economy. We did our part by buying all the liquor we can possible use in the foreseeable future. They really had some good bargains, most of the items being about 30% cheaper than we had been paying in the grocery stores. While in Golfito, we also had the hull polished, as it was looking a little shabby after several months at anchor.

Well, we will leave you at anchor at Isla Parida in Panama. We will continue our saga in a couple of months after exploring all Panama has to offer. Our first impression of Panama is "we love it." We had been a little disillusioned with northern Costa Rica, because the pretty white sand beaches we love were hard to find. Most of the beaches were a combination of mud/sand, and the water is not as clear as we were expecting it to be (especially in the Gulfs). This improved somewhat in southern Costa Rica, but here in Panama, we're back to the beaches we know and love!



- DeFever 60 questions

A non-member posed this question by e-mail, which prompted some insightful comments. These are opinions of members, and not official DeFever Cruisers positions. – Ed.

Happy to find a group of enthusiastic owners in an owners group. I am looking at a 1982 DeFever 60. Wonder if you can give me some general info about that model? Anything good or bad to say about it? And finally any idea of a realistic price range for an average model.

Don Sorenson (#235) responds:

We have a 1981/82 60 foot flush deck. They called it a POC a "Performance Offshore Cruiser." We have had it since 1998, so this will be our eighth year of cruising. Our cruising is mainly three to four weeks in the Pacific Northwest, from Seattle to the Inside Passage of Alaska.

The boat is ideal for us, as we have a large family and extended family who join us during the summer months. It has four staterooms. There are three forward of the engine room, with three heads. The master is separated from the rest, and is aft of the engine room. Lots of privacy.

My wife loves the galley because it has plenty of room for two or three to prepare meals. We have a full-sized refrigerator, dishwasher, garbage disposal, gas stove, gas oven, microwave, and trash compactor. She says it is better than our first apartment.

The engines are Cat 3306s, which hum along as smoothly as any I have witnessed. Mechanically, everything seems to work as advertised.

Everything was pretty much original equipment when we bought it. Since then we added a Westmar bow thruster. It is 24 volt, 12 inch dual prop. We also added Mathers electronic throttles and shifters. With the remote, I can stand on the side deck and maneuver the boat into the tightest of spots. If I have to back in, I can take the remote to the aft deck and bring her right in.

We have a Webasto hot water heating system, which is ideal for the Pacific Northwest. The boat does have old Crusairs (six) which are slowly going into disrepair. In the Pacific Northwest we don't need air conditioning, so I have not replaced them.

Ours has a 15kW cruise generator, which operates off the starboard engine, and supplies all the ac we need when enroute. At anchor, we have a 1900 amp hour battery bank, which through the inverter will supply ac for two days. We have an eight kW genset to recharge the batteries when needed. This is seldom used, as the batteries get charged if we are cruising.

The aft deck is enclosed and heated. We use it as our dining room. It will seat twelve with ease.

The boat is great handling, but rolls in beam seas. We do not have stabilizers. I would recommend them for open water cruising. The Pacific Northwest has pretty calm waters compared to a passage to the east coast.

The dinghy was originally topside. If we had some wave action while lowering or raising the dinghy topside, we had to be very careful not to have the dinghy come through the salon window. We solved that by installing SeaWise davits on the swim platform. Now it is easy.

We did replace most of the instruments and gauges, and upgraded the electronics.

The biggest complaint is the height of the deck off the water. In the Pacific Northwest, almost all docks are floating because of the tides. That means almost a five foot drop from the main deck to the dock. Not an easy thing, unless you are a teenager. We do not have a cockpit, which some have added, so when my wife and I are alone, we hope to find some helper on the dock, or she goes down the stairs, which we added, to the swim platform and can then step off onto the dock. That assumes I can get her close enough to be safe. If we cannot find help, she has become pretty proficient with one of the throwable dock lines with a big hook in it. She can grab a cleat from ten feet off the dock, and secure the stern, while I do the same from the bow, with the remote in hand. We have made some remarkable approaches and tie ups.

The boat has great visibility from the pilothouse and the fly bridge. Ours is enclosed, so even in the Pacific Northwest weather, we can use it to cruise and socialize. I do not dock from above, because I cannot see the dock from above, and cannot judge the distances.

In summary, she is a great seaworthy and comfortable cruiser. A cockpit would be a definite addition if cost is no object. If open waters were in the plans, then I would like stabilizers, as

she does roll in beam seas.

For our use she is a terrific choice. You might want to visit our web site to see some pictures and specs. <http://esperanza.home.att.net/>

Larry Seckington (#16) responds:

In general, I believe there are ten DeFever's of this size -- 60'. With so few, an average market value is not particularly meaningful. It depends on the care. Each will be unique. In the case of hull #06, I removed its faux smoke stack, and removed the teak deck on the bridge. Previous owners installed hawse pipes for big Alaska type anchors, and a wide aluminum radar arch. Those are the most obvious differences.

In the 80s, larger DF's were extensions of the DF60 hull mold. Art DeFever had a 72' for his personal yacht in San Diego. So, it is easy to see that the DF60 can be extended to include an aft cockpit if you so desire, and at least one (in CA) has one. Art's 72' has a V-Drive, making the engine room smaller, but allowing for somewhat larger cabins all together forward. Personally, I prefer split cabins, with the master cabin aft of the engine room as in the DF60. Its aft cabin is plenty big, with a king-sized bed, and has an 18' wide engine room with 6'6" headroom. Incidentally, because the engine room is in the center of the boat, our #06 DF60 has the engine exhaust coming out amidships, rather than from the stern. When running off the wind, fumes do not bother those lounging on the aft deck, and there is less noise. Moreover, being in the center of the boat, the engine room is less prone to motion when underway.

The DF60 hull is an Airex foam core between two fiberglass hull skins. The core helps insulate the boat, and results in a strong hull. Both Hatterases and DeFever's were constructed with cored hulls, as are most fiberglass mega-yachts today. Below water, the through-hulls can leak water into the core. Although the Airex core is impervious to water, voids (kerfs in the foam) will fill, unless filled during construction. How well this is done depends on the day and the crew. Anyway, if extra water is in the hull, don't fret. It is common. But know that water in the hull can increase the draft by an inch or so. Anyway, the DF60 hull is 1 1/2" thick, with an inside-skin of 3/8" woven roving, and an outer skin of 3/8" fiberglass. As you can see, the DF is over-engineered, and has three times the thickness of some hulls this size.

I know all this because our stabilizer fin hit a steel container coming off a large wave in the winter trades. The heavy container, and the 100,000 lb boat, bent the stabilizer up against the hull, causing an invisible crack in the outer skin. Invisible, that is, until the fin shaft was pulled. Both the insurance surveyor and the boatyard missed seeing the crack. I decided to beef up my hull around the stabilizers with solid glass, and while I was at it, I replaced the entire outer skin with vinyl ester -- probably unnecessary! I could have done a local repair, as many cored boat owners would elect to do, and have done. Some that I know have gone through the Panama Canal, and some around the world.

Our Caterpillars have many hours on them, and they are just plain reliable. They have pre-combustion chambers, and can run on poor fuel. At one time we burned our old engine oil when we could not properly dispose of it.

Summary: why not consider the 1982 DF60? They are a great buy. I would not be surprised if you found that the new DeFever hulls are made from the same mold as were the 1980s! I am sure

you or someone will enjoy that boat for another 25 years. The boat would make a nice charter vessel for a couple. It is great with grandchildre, or with two or more other couples aboard. We have done so for months at a time.

DESCRIPTION

1. Basics

Name: POKEY Too ex *Turnabout* ex *Fadanay*

Type: DeFever 60 Flush-deck Offshore Flybridge Cruiser

Builder: C.T.F. Marine Co., Ltd.

No. 199 Ping-Ho Road Shaou-Kang Village
Kaohsiung, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Construction: Hand-laid reinforced fiberglass

Vinyl ester resin/Airex-cored hull

hull penetrations below waterline are through solid laminate

Hull strengthened around stabilizer fins

Hull Number: ASIA60060281 (hull #06 commissioned Feb 1981)

USCG Documentation: ON #667 621

LOA: 59'3"

LWL: 54'0"

Beam: 17'8"

Draft: 5'6"

Displacement: 84,000 lb. empty tanks

Power: Twin Caterpillar 3306PC 280HP each

Cruising Speed 9.0 kts @ 1,650 RPM; Full 10 kts @ 1,900 RPM

Fuel: 2,000 gallons in four black iron tanks & two Nylon coated neoprene/nitrile bladders

Water: 750 gallons in two s/s tanks

Holding Tank: 80 gallons in two plastic tanks

2. Layout & Accommodations:

POKEY Too has a standard floor plan arranged with four staterooms and three heads on the lower level, with access to the master suite via the salon. A big engine room separates the master suite from the forward staterooms. Headroom is 6'6" throughout, and lighting is both 110v and 24v. On the deck level are weather-protected walk-around decks desirable on a serious cruising yacht. Comfortable seating is across the front of the pilothouse. Boarding is through either side gate, or the swim platform. Two anchors are stowed in hawse pipes, and are controlled by a dual anchor windlass located well inboard. The pilothouse is located in the forward portion of the deck house, and has a dinette and navigation center. The galley is separated from the pilothouse by a full length bulkhead that opens to the salon, whose twin doors open to the large covered afterdeck. The large fly bridge can be accessed from either the pilothouse or afterdeck. A second helm station, seating for eight, and a small granite table are covered. The replica smoke stack standard on this model has been removed, and its mast replaced with a radar arch, which opens up the bridge deck, which opens up the bridge for a wet bar, freezer, liferaft, deck box, and enough deck space for two tenders.

2.1. Lower level

2.1.1. Forward Cabin and Head Two stacked pilot berths with reading lights are on the port side of the cabin. A large drawer is beneath the lower bunk. A seat with storage under is at the head of the lower berth. On the starboard side are drawers for clothing and linen, and there is a small hanging locker. A shelf holds a TV and lamp. A deck hatch and four opening ports with screens and curtains provide light and air circulation. A/C con-

trols are here for its air-conditioner (There are seven reverse cycle air condition on the vessel.). There are 110v GFCI duplex receptacles. The overhead is insulated vinyl padding. One of the ship's seven air conditioners is devoted to this cabin.

Forward of this forward cabin is a door opening to a small head with a basin, with hot and cold pressure water, to starboard, and shelves for bedding or other ship stores are to port. A partitioned chain locker for two anchors is accessed from here. The locker is lighted, and has two hawse pipes for the stocks of two 140-lb. anchors. Moving aft, a door from the forward cabin leads through a passageway and by the guest head to starboard, by a staircase to the pilothouse. and then to amidships guest staterooms to port and starboard.

2.1.2. Starboard Amidships Guest Stateroom At the aft end of the forward passageway, and to the left as one descends the staircase from the pilothouse, is the door to the starboard guest cabin. A hanging locker and small desk (with color TV) and drawer are available for personal items. In addition there is considerable storage available under the bunk, and a door leads to the storage under the staircase. Teak walls are combined with lighter beige walls to brighten up the cabin. One of the seven air conditioners is devoted to this cabin. Two bronze opening ports provide natural light and fresh air.

2.1.3. Guest Head

2.1.4. A head to starboard, between the forward and port guest cabins, is fitted with a Raritan electric toilet, marble basin, shelved cabinets above and beneath, and a separate shower stall. There is a mirror, towel bars and a 110v receptacle with ground fault circuit interrupt. An opening port and a built-in exhaust blower vent stale air and circulate fresh air.

2.1.5. Port Amidships Guest Stateroom

At the foot of the forward staircase, and across the passageway, is the door to the port guest cabin with its ensuite head. This stateroom is fitted with double bed and drawers beneath, hanging locker with light, 24v and 110v receptacles, light switches, and controls for its own air conditioner. A large mirror is behind a built-in small desk with stool and drawer. A clock and barometer, color TV, intercom, and stereo speaker volume control are also located in this cabin. Two portlights, with curtains, provide light and fresh air. A large closet is available for additional clothes and spare parts. One of the ship's seven air conditioners is dedicated to this cabin. Two bronze opening ports provide light and fresh air.

A door separates the ensuite head fitted with Crown Raritan electric toilet, wash basin with cabinets below and above with 110v outlets with GFCI. Strip lighting is appreciated by all. There is a separate stall shower with curtain. An additional bronze opening port and a built-in exhaust blower vent stale air and circulate fresh air.

2.1.6. Master Stateroom & Head From the aft starboard corner of the saloon, a staircase leads down to the aft cabin. At the base of the staircase, a door to the left opens to a large full beam-width cabin. (A door to the right or forward opens into the laundry area of the engine room.) An island king-sized bed with custom mattress has two end tables with drawers and table lamps. Two large hanging lockers, and storage space under the staircase with fitted door are to starboard. To port there is a lighted vanity and bookcase with ample lockers, drawers and shelves. Overhead is insulated with vinyl padding, and secured with teak battens and strategically placed 110v and 24v read-

ing lighting lights. There are two clock and barometer sets with humidity and temperature. A Raytheon VHF radiotelephone is built into the starboard end table. And, there are five 110v electrical receptacles, two phone connectors, and a control switch to select and distribute signals from either the air TV antenna signal or cable TV to five shipboard TVs. A stereo volume control is located on the port end table. Eight bronze opening ports, with safety glass, screens and curtains, provide additional light and fresh air. Two independently controlled reverse cycle air-conditioners are dedicated to the aft cabin. Forward in the aft cabin, and to port, is an ensuite toilet. It has a Raritan Crown electric head, a separate shower enclosure with mirrored door, large Corian basin with hot and cold water, medicine cabinet, 110v outlet with GFCI, 24v outlet, large mirror and plenty of lockers, shelves, an opening port, and exhaust blower. There is 110v strip lighting.

2.2. Deck House

2.2.1. Pilothouse

Controls for the engine, navigation, computing, communications, and steering are located at the helm station. It has a center wheel, and a helm seat with intercom near at hand. A settee with adjustable table is behind. A folding chart table is built into the table. Adjacent to and below the settee are lockers and a shelf for a printer and small TV. Air conditioning controls are located on the side of the locker. Above the settee are bookshelves with removable fiddles, for cruising guides, equipment manuals, and catalogs. Below the settee is a rifle and gun drawer with lock. There are four fixed forward-facing windows, as well as windows in both wing doors, and a window aft of each door. A chart light with red lens is above, and three large chart drawers are to port. Below are the electrical panels for 220v, 110v, 24v and 12v devices and outlets. Selector switches for two generators and two 50 amp shore power cables provide power from the dock, from either generator, or by a combination thereof.

Textylene mesh sunscreens cover the forward windows, yet provide visibility. In addition, full canvas covers all pilothouse windows, without the need to remove the sunscreens. Long twist snaps preclude the need to remove the Textylene screens before installing the canvas. Strategically placed are overhead aircraft-type lights, and when underway at night, Perko combination red/white lighting. The pilothouse is conveniently accessed from: weather decks via port and starboard wing doors, the bridge aft of the starboard wing door via descending stairs, the forward cabins via the forward staircase, or the saloon and galley via the main passageway.

2.2.2. Galley & Appliances

The galley is up, and serves directly into the saloon over a wide Corian counter, with lockers above and below. The U-shaped galley to port has a s/s double sink, with garbage disposal, and ample cabinets. There is a window with mini-blinds over the sink. GE appliances include a Ceran radiant range and self-cleaning oven, over which is a Spacemaker 850 Watt microwave oven, a 27 cubic foot side-by-side refrigerator and freezer, with ice and water dispenser, and a trash compactor. Other small appliances are Black and Decker coffee maker, toaster oven, rechargeable flashlight, and can opener with knife sharpener. An air conditioning duct is located over the refrigerator. A large pantry with sink is convenient to the galley to starboard. It could be converted to a day-head. Pressure water

is provided by both 110V and 24v pumps.

2.2.3. Other Appliances

An additional chest freezer is available on the bridge for longer cruises, or when living aboard for long periods. Additionally a U-Line icemaker is available in the wet bar on the bridge, where it can be used to fill up a picnic cooler before launching the dinghy. It supplements the ice maker and cold water dispenser in the GE fridge. A 220v clothes washer/dryer is located in the engine room.

2.2.4. Saloon

A Corian counter, with bar stools, separates the galley from the saloon. An L-shaped settee with a hi-lo table is to port. The table also slides out for easy access. A swivel rocker chair is nearby. In addition two swivel rocker chairs are to starboard forward of the entertainment cabinet. The entertainment cabinet has a built-in Nakamichi Stereo CD player, and storage for disks and cassettes. A color TV and table lamp is on top. A locker under the galley counter faces into the saloon, and there is a built-in end table on the starboard. Lighting in the saloon and pilothouse is either 24v or 110v. Overhead aircraft type lights grouped for the galley counter (4) and saloon (10) are controlled by two dimmers. And, each light has its own off/low/high toggle switch. Certain ones in the passageways have red LED indicators so that they can be found in the dark. Windows have custom Hunter Douglas blinds and opaque sun shades. On the overhead teak, fishing rod holders are mounted for eight poles.



Bill & Sue Jacobs (#661)

DF49CMY DIVA

Palmetto, FL

Deere Cooling

I have recently experienced a number of problems relating to the raw water cooling system, as installed in my 2003 DeFever 49 Cockpit Motor Yacht, DIVA, hull #143. The boat is fitted with twin 150 hp John Deere engines driving ZF transmissions. I have put 550 hours of running time on the boat.

The raw water cooling water exits the engine, is then routed to the transmission, and on to the muffler. Connecting these units is a series of hoses, connectors, reducers, etc., all fastened with hose clamps (the garden store variety, I might add). Because of the angle of some of the hose joints, and the configuration of the inlets, exits, etc., there are three spots on each side where only one hose clamp can be fitted, due to the space available. These clamps hold the hose to a short piece of smooth stainless steel pipe, used as a connector.

In spite of being diligent in checking and tightening these hose clamps, they have become unreliable. In the last six months, various connections have let loose while underway. When at the helm on the bridge, the only symptom is a slightly louder exhaust note exiting the boat underway from the affected engine. It is only slightly detectable on a smooth day. I have become very attuned to this condition, and have been able to shut down the engine within seconds. The engine shows no change, as the water has already exited the jacket. The high water alarm does not sound as long as the bilge pump is doing its job.

Meanwhile, the transmission is receiving no cooling water, which, instead, is being liberally sprayed throughout the engine room, covering everything in salt water. If this condition was to

persist, and a failure was to occur in the bilge pump, the boat could be in real danger.

I have been in touch with my dealer, Atlantic Coast Yacht Sales, and they are currently working with POCTA on a solution. In the meantime, I am replacing all of these connectors with suitably-sized hose barbs, so at least there is some integrity to the connection. I will keep you posted. If your boat is so fitted, I suggest an immediate inspection.

By the way, although my boat is officially done with its warranty period, ACYS has, as always, been terrific about helping me with a solution.

This missive was passed along to DFC members who have boats powered by Deeres. Here is a response - Ed.

Andy Thornal (#634) responds:

Bill - - We on the TRUST ME II have had the same problem, with no solution - - we do check the clamps religiously, and have only had water spray once - - but that was enough -

For others who have had the problem of raw water hoses coming loose - - I have this info from a reliable source - - hope it works for you. We are going to follow these instructions on the TRUST ME II:

“Andy,

Sorry for your problem. It seemed like I was checking hose clamps almost continually when I ran boats, I would expect them to need looking over at least two or three times a year. The smooth connector pipes, if you have them, will be more secure with sealant. Here is a good fix for this, using a sealant and stronger clamps, that should give you a little peace of mind. Salt-X or Salt-Away will make short work of the cleanup, and really get the last little bits of rust-causing hidden salt. <http://www.salt-x.com/washing.htm>

Here’s a procedure from an automotive site off the web that I added to and agree with:

Drain the cooling system as necessary – save if it is not old. Remove the hose and carefully scrape the fittings clean, then apply a small amount of gasket sealer to the fittings to assure a tight seal with the hose. Apply sealer to the fitting only; this will help avoid any excess from possibly clogging the hose or a water channel in the block or heat exchanger.

Slide the clamps onto your hoses and install them, making sure that the hose ends slide over the fittings far enough to position the clamps properly. Two clamps at each connection where possible, especially the raw water connections. If you can use two clamps, face them in opposite directions.

Tighten all the clamps using a socket wrench, fill the system with coolant, and start the engine to check for cooling system leaks. Re-check the fluid level after the engine has reached normal operating temperature.

Use Permatex Tack & Seal or the equivalent (might be a handy thing to keep around anyway).

Permatex® Tack & Seal™ Gasket Sealant http://www.permatex.com/products/prodidx.asp?automotive=yes&f_call=get_item&item_no=80938

Non-hardening for easy disassembly. “Clean hands” formula won’t stain. Temperature range -65°F to 400°F (-54°C to 204°C). Resists most equipment and engine fluids including diesel fuels and synthetic oils. Suggested applications: Seals air conditioning, fuel fittings, radiator hoses, PVC fittings and cork, paper cardboard, felt and metal gaskets.

I suggest changing the clamps to a Euro Style embossed band 316 stainless steel clamp by Breeze, available at marine stores. <http://www.breezecamps.com/marinecat2.pdf> Check the clamps again after a couple days running, and snug up as needed.”



Bill & Judy Fletcher (#62)

DF44 MEANDER

Burton, WA

Follow Bill & Judy’s cruise from Vashon Island, Washington, to Alaska on their website, www.meanderings.net - Ed.

Received 4/30/05 Tonight we are anchored near Port Neville, just north of about the middle of the Johnstone Strait, on our way from Campbell River to Port Hardy. Port Hardy is the most northern stop we will make on Vancouver Island. Next we cross the Queen Charlotte Sound, and then travel up the coast of northern British Columbia, towards the southern border of southeast Alaska. The weather looks like it will cooperate so we can have a reasonably smooth crossing on Monday. Will let you know later on how it was.

As of tonight, we have traveled 299 nautical miles, and have 701 remaining to get to Skagway, Alaska. Today’s trip was 51.0 nm at an average speed of 9.2 knots. Since we only cruise at 8.2 knots, we achieved fair currents for the trip by timing our passage through Seymour Narrows up the Discovery Passage, and then on into Johnstone Strait on an ebb tide. Maximum speed today was 11.6 knots, through Seymour Narrows.

We dropped the hook here at 3:45 PM. We then dropped the crab trap, and are hoping to pull up our dinner around 7 PM. Will let you know later on how that worked out.

Received 5/3 We left Port McNeil at 5:21 AM this morning, with a forecast for a good crossing of Queen Charlotte Sound, off the north end of Vancouver Island. Our target was to get inside of Calvert Island to be protected from the open Pacific Ocean for the rest of our travels up British Columbia, via what is called the “Inside Crossing.”

The forecast was right on, and we had an uneventful crossing. Another couple that left Port McNeil the same morning, said that they had been making this trip for 20 years, and had only seen it this smooth once before. Sometimes it pays to be lucky. Of course, we did check everything that we could find to pick this day, and even convinced the other couple that they should leave on the day we were going, instead of waiting for one more day, as they had originally planned.

The stats on our day are: 97.5 nautical miles traveled; average speed 7.6 knots; maximum speed 8.8 knots; total time 10:25.

So far we’ve traveled 420.5 nm, and have 614 to go to Skagway (not counting side trips which we will take now and then). Received 5/6 First a couple of typos to correct from the May 2nd missive. It’s not the “Inside Crossing” it’s the “Inside Passage”. And the nautical miles traveled that day were 79.5, not 97.5. Also, it’s Prince Rupert, not Prince Ruppert.

We liked it so much just sitting there in Oyster Bay, swinging on the hook, that we stayed for three nights -- two full days of no travel. I was about to say: “Doing nothing,” but those of you familiar with boating know that that doesn’t happen much. The first day for me was spent exchanging the inverter that had failed, and then miraculously came back to life in Elliot Bay, Seattle, with the replacement that luckily was still aboard. It’s

a 57 pound unit, and the DC wires to it are 4/0 and 2/0, and the AC wires #4. For those without an electrical background -- those are BIG wires. My second day was spent doing more routine chores, and Judy spent her time sanding and repainting the base of the capstan winch for our anchor, as well as other routine chores.

We tried crabbing again, but this time didn't even succeed in feeding the bait to some critter(s). We did manage to wrap the trap line once around the anchor chain, and that made for a little fun when we pulled the trap up, but it sure was convenient just dropping the trap off the swim platform. Convenient, but not too worthwhile yet. We anchored way up close to the fresh-water stream that feeds into Oyster Bay, and that may limit the salinity of the water, and therefore the aquatic life. Along the way we will try to get some accurate local knowledge, and look forward to reporting some crabbing, shrimping, and fishing success in the future. So far we have had to rely on the onboard frozen meals, of which there are plenty.

Weather was absolutely gorgeous for our stay in Oyster Bay: sunny, up to 60s in the daytime, and down to the 40s at night. We have had only one rainy day since leaving Vashon Island. Can't complain about that!

Judy and I got the kayaks down, and the three of us (yes, Duffy goes on the kayaks with us -- wearing her doggy lifevest, of course) paddled up to the very end of Oyster Bay, where it is too shallow and rocky for MEANDER. Have seen only a few eagles and one heron since leaving the Strait of Georgia.

Then yesterday's travel from Oyster Bay to Shearwater was smooth and sunny for the whole trip up Fitz Hugh Sound, across Lama Passage, around Denny Island, and into the Bella Bella, New Bella Bella and Shearwater area. Stats are: 47.5 nautical miles (54.6 statute), 6:07 travel time, 7.8 knots average, and 9.0 knots maximum speed, for a total distance traveled since we left Vashon of 468.2 (yep - I know there's an extra 0.2 miles if you're following the figures closely - that's the distance the GPS figures we moved just swinging around on the hook for three nights and two days in Oyster Bay.)

When we got to Shearwater yesterday, it was near 5 PM, when the grocery store and post office close, but Judy did get some snail mail off, and bought two ice cream bars to celebrate Cinco de Mayo. Of course she also celebrated with a Margarita, and then we had a light supper, and back to MEANDER for a restful and early evening.

Today we plan to check the dinghy out, and might motor it over to the larger settlement of New Bella Bella. Or we might take the local water taxi. Lest it sound like we are in the big city here, I would point out that between Point McNeil on the north end of Vancouver Island, and Prince Rupert at the north end of British Columbia, this is the only place where we will find a proper marina. There are other small villages, but not much there in the way of boating support services. The advertised internet access here at Shearwater turns out to be slow dial-up service, only accessible during regular business hours. An aside: regular business hours here at Shearwater DOES NOT include the hour between noon and 1 PM. The lunch break is a real break. The couple that crossed from Port McNeil with us, said that they were shopping for groceries when noon arrived, and they were told to stop, leave, and come back at 1 PM to continue their shopping. They complained that the frozen foods in the shopping cart would melt and were told that their selec-

tions would be put back in the freezer for them, and they could continue at 1. No negotiation!

We might find a high speed internet connection on our trip to New Bella Bella today, and, if so, may be able to get meanderings.net updated with photos and maps, but maybe not -- in which case the first update will occur in Prince Rupert -- which we expect to get to on about Wednesday, May 11th.

Received 5/8 Anchored in 50-60', Mary Cove, Roderick Island, BC

We're basically following the cruise ship route, which we think is likely the most scenic route. We had a nice layover day in Shearwater on Denny Island. Good marina, with grocery store, laundromat, marine supplies, etc. In the grassy park along the shore is a big dead tree with a fancy, carved sign "Eagle Tree." Didn't take us long to figure out how they came up with that name. A big eagle spent a lot of time perched there every day. At first, McDuff didn't see the eagle, and we kept her on a tight leash. On Friday mid-day, Bill took McDuff for a walk, and was sitting at a bench letting Duffy sniff around. All of a sudden, Duffy charged, barking like mad. Bill hadn't seen the eagle land on a lower-than-usual branch, but Brave (or stupid) McDuff had. The leash got tightened, and stayed that way. I imagine that Duffy (West Highland White Terrier) looks like a big, juicy rabbit to an eagle.

It should take us another 3-4 days to get to Prince Rupert. I'm hoping that we'll be able to find a spot with high speed internet in Prince Rupert, so I can update the website -- otherwise, it will have to wait until we get to Ketchikan.

Received 5/10 Butedale, in its heyday, was a famous fish packing camp on Princess Royal Island, BC. The buildings are capsizing into the water, and vandals have taken much, after the owners just walked away. There is, however, a float 500' long -- very rustic -- and a caretaker, Lou Simoneau, which provide everything one would need. Lou helped us dock -- I couldn't even see the small, unusual cleats. He took Bill in his skiff over to where the best shrimping was, and later made us ice cream cones in his house. Lou's dog, Bert -- a border collie-looking dog, spent a lot of time beside MEANDER, knowing a soft touch. We gave him several Milk Bones. This morning, when we were about to leave, Lou met us over at the shrimp traps, and helped Bill pull them in -- we have not as yet installed our electric shrimp pot puller. Bill says that he's NOT going to pull them in by hand again! Pulling in 300' of line by hand --on two traps --is tiring! Yeow-za! Forty-two big prawns on our first try ever. That turns out to be just over one pound of meat. We cooked them up, and ate 3/4 of them in an oriental noodle dish for lunch. Yum! Today (Monday), we traveled 44.6 nm (51.3 statute miles), and are anchored in Lowe Inlet. Lowe Inlet is a spectacular spot with a waterfall coming in a little ways away. It is off of Grenville Channel. We are about 55 nm from Prince Rupert, and might cruise there tomorrow, or then again, maybe we'll take an easy two days to get there.

Received 5/14/05 Prince Rupert, BC. We've had quite an adventure so far, and now we get to sit still for a few days. Our next stop is Ketchikan, and to get there from here, we have to go through Dixon Entrance. Dixon Entrance can get really nasty - winds, waves, etc., so we've checked our old standby, BuoyWeather.com, and found that the next pleasant crossing day will be Tuesday. Hooray -- a cute little town, and five days to snoop around and get boat chores taken care of.

Bill asked about internet cafes when we registered at the marina, and they told him for \$10/day, he could have all the apparatus to be wirelessly attached to the internet at the boat. Didn't expect such sophistication way up here! Cool! I'm working at updating the meanderings.net - decided that Duffy should have her own page.

It is sprinkling, and I think I'm glad. Forces us to do inside chores, which are usually not as strenuous as outside ones.

There is always something to do on a boat, and when cruising, those things can't be put off. Everything must be "ship shape" all the time. We are enjoying it all -- marveling at the scenery, and meeting new people at the marinas who share interesting tales, good anchoring spots, and other handy information. Alas, Mickey (our fishing mentor), we haven't caught anything yet, but once the RV trip is over, and we're back on MEANDER, we'll be able to really meander, and then, fish -- LOOK OUT! Also -- we are tired, so these days will be used to pace ourselves, and get the necessary rest to be in good mental and physical condition -- critical for making the right decisions.

Received 5/26/05 We really enjoyed Ketchikan, even though it is a tourist mecca, and is full of cruise ships. Also, the chores seemed to grow in number, so we kept saying, "Well, let's stay one more day." After five days, we were ready to leave, but the weather in the Clarence Strait looked lousy, so -- one more day. We departed Ketchikan yesterday at 1PM, after hearing that the waves were four feet, but diminishing in the afternoon, and it would be a cloudy, rainy day. Amazing luck and planning -- we never saw seas over 18", and it was a sunny, beautiful day. We anchored east of Deer Island in a peaceful cove, after having set our shrimp pots on the way in.

Up early this AM, and went to check the traps - only 15 shrimp this time, but they WERE very tasty. Huge difference in taste and texture when one catches, cooks, and eats the shrimp in a short period of time.

We've come through the Zimovia Strait between Wrangell and Etolin Islands, and are now heading towards the Wrangell Narrows, which is a 21 mile narrow stretch between Mitkof Island and Kupreanof Island, and ends up in Petersburg. Our day will be longer than planned, because the currents were not as our charting program predicted. We'll stay a day or two in Petersburg, then take a two-day cruise to Juneau.

The day has been partly sunny and partly cloudy, and the seas and winds have been calm. Just what Judy and Duffy like.

Received 5/26/05 Snug Cove anchorage, Gambier Bay, Admiralty Island. We left Petersburg this morning after refueling. Started out a sunny day, which quickly turned to foggy. MEANDER's captain, radar, GPS, and fog horn got us through Frederick Sound-- didn't see very much, except fog! We came out of the fog just as we were exiting Frederick Sound, and turning NW into Stephens Passage.

A short time later, we saw three humpback whales cavorting. They breached and splashed, and had a "whale of a good time" for about an hour. We didn't stay with them all that time, but could look back and see them still breaching. Amazing!!

This is a beautiful and protected anchorage. There is a very small tour boat also anchored here, but almost a mile away. That boat is carrying a professional photographer, and maybe 16 people -- only 8-ish rooms -- passengers are all interested in taking photographs and learning. Sounds like a great idea.

Depending on the weather and seas, we'll try to get to a bear

viewing observatory tomorrow, Tracy Arm Friday to see glaciers, and to Juneau on Saturday.

Received 6/1 Long, hard day yesterday. Got up at 3 AM, and weighed anchor at 4, to avoid rough seas in Stephen's Passage on the way to Juneau. Didn't really avoid them -- 3-4' following seas all day -- very wallowy -- not my kind of cruising! Arrived at noon, really exhausted. Handling the boat in those conditions takes constant work, and we traded off, taking the helm every 30 - 60 minutes.

The sights along the way helped made the trip somewhat pleasant. We saw many whales, and our first icebergs! I saw two humpback whales jump (breach) entirely out of the water in tandem. Our first iceberg sighting was a surprise -- quite a ways away from Tracy Arm, where one would expect them. I saw a fishing boat along a far shore. Turned the binoculars on it, and it wasn't a boat -- 'twas an iceberg!

Today is gloriously sunny and warm. Good for boat chores, and a little bit of looking around.

We plan to leave tomorrow (Sunday) afternoon, and get part way up the Lynn Canal. That canal is well known for nasty conditions. Winds come out of the south, directly down the canal, and whip up some big waves. We could also see "williwaw winds" (adiabatic winds dropping from the hanging glaciers). We'll get up early again Monday, to see if it might be a bit calmer than it might get later. We plan to get to Skagway in the afternoon.

Once we get to Skagway, we'll leave MEANDER for two weeks (June 4-18), and pick up an RV we've rented. A friend from Baltimore is coming with us (*Alice Needle, #51 - Ed.*). We'll see Anchorage, Fairbanks, Denali, and more. From Fairbanks, we're taking a 24 hour tour -- flight to Barrow, stay at the Top of the World Hotel, where there is a Mexican restaurant, so Bill and I will continue in our quest to find the most out-of-the-way Mexican restaurants and try their food. The record holder up until now is Alice Springs, Australia, but we think Barrow will soon take the record. We can't call this trip an overnight, because there will be no "night." In Barrow the sun came up on May 10, and the next sun set will be August 2. Wonder if we can stay up all night to watch the "Midnight Sun"???

It is really amazing to actually be here after planning for such a long time. An eagle just flew past the boat. We've looked for bears, but haven't seen any yet.

When we cruised on the east coast, we tried to cruise one day, and take the next two off -- one day for boat chores, and one day to see where we were. We're 17 rest/work days behind! No wonder we're weary! We should have three days in Skagway to get ourselves slowly organized for the RV trip.

Received 6/5 Yesterday (in Juneau), Bill finished his work on the heat exchanger (for our stabilizers), and we decided to get at least half way to Skagway. The weather and sea conditions looked OK, so we took off just after 1 PM. It was SO calm at the beginning of the trip, that I suggested to Bill that we go all the way, and avoid the higher seas forecast for today. Well, it got rougher and rougher. The Lynn Canal is well known for being rough. It is narrow, and winds out of the southeast (which we had) whip up some big waves. Duffy and I took to the couch, and got up a few times to help Bill. It didn't get dark until after ten. It wasn't totally dark for the remaining trip, and we operated from the lower helm so Bill could use the radar. We tied up in Skagway at 1:45 AM, and crashed into bed. The trip was 100

nm, and just over 12 hours.

Skagway has less than 900 full time residents, but swells with workers for the huge cruise ship business. Right now, there is only one small cruise ship here. They arrive in the morning, and leave in the evening. We can see out!!

We are surrounded by mountains, and many of them still have a lot of snow on them. Beautiful!



Meander in Skagway, Alaska
Small Boat Basin - May 2005

MEANDER in Skagway

Our satellite phone and our cell phones do not work up here. The satellite phone can't "see" the satellite. We'll stop at an internet cafe every day, and will check this e-mail address as often as we can. Bill found that he can only get these winlink messages out at 9 PM.

Doubt that I'll be able to update the web page for a while. We can't hook our computers up in the cafe - have to use theirs. Maybe we'll have more luck with the library, but can't hope for much wireless activity in such a tiny town.

Received 6/9 Delta Junction, Alaska. Yeow! Are we really FAR north? Tonight the sun sets at 11:55, and tomorrow morning the sun rises at 3:27 (3 hours and 32 minutes later!!). That really makes it very hard to sleep. Right now the sun is high, and it is 8:30 - looks almost like mid-day.

The RV trip has been very interesting so far. We've learned much about the gold rush era. Stopped in Whitehorse and Dawson City, Yukon Territory, Canada. After we crossed back into Alaska on the Top of the World Highway, we had a 41 mile drive on a dirt road. Only averaged about 30 mph. Spent the night in Chicken, AK, a tiny community. We got free overnight parking, so ate in the Chicken Restaurant this morning. The story about the name of the town is that the locals had wanted to name it after a local bird, but nobody could spell (ptarmigan), and they decided that "Chicken" would do.

June 9th - Fairbanks. We toured Fairbanks yesterday and again today. Later, we'll take our flight to Barrow. On Saturday, we'll head towards Mt. McKinley and Denali National Park.

Received 6/13 Anchorage, AK. We are having a great time in the RV. Left Skagway three days ago. Spent the first night in a Walmart parking lot in Whitehorse (Yukon Territory). We're learning much about the gold rush. Spent the second night in an RV park in Dawson City-- cable TV and wireless internet! Snooped around Dawson City, had lunch, and did some grocery

shopping. Next we took off on the Top of the World highway. WAY UP without guardrails! Tooth rattling last 40-ish miles after we got back into Alaska - all dirt -- no pavement. Saw a moose along the way, but still no bears. Amazing scenery -- much above the tree line.

Composed 6/11 Greetings from Denali, at the Savage River campground 14 miles in from the park entrance. We lucked out, and got a spot because there was a cancellation just before we got to the reservation window at the park office.

We had a great, cold time at Barrow. Walked on sea ice, saw (but didn't eat) whale meat, saw a seal on the ice, saw tundra swans and other birds. All the natives, and some of the other residents, seemed happy and outgoing, but we think it is a pretty gloomy place in the winter. Of course, there is the aurora borealis.

Composed June 12th Haven't been having much luck getting these reports out on winlink, but I have rearranged my antenna out in the trees and bushes behind our RV, and will try again this evening. If it still fails, all of these will get sent from Anchorage tomorrow via regular email.

Today we took a shuttle bus in to Fish Creek, at mile 63. The driver stopped frequently, and pointed out the animals. Our score for the day was: eight grizzly bears, eleven caribou, one red fox (just walking down the road right by our stopped bus), one unidentified grey baby bird in a nest on a cliff, one dark bird with white wing tips, many ptarmigan and sea gulls, one moose, 25+ Dall sheep, and three wolves seen by the bus right beside us, but we couldn't pick them out in the bushes.

Only about 30% of park visitors get to see Mt. McKinley, since it is so often hidden in clouds. We did get to see the mountain! Neat! The four hour tour took seven hours, and was very enjoyable. No services in the park except toilets. Had to take in all our water and lunch.

Next we are trying to decide just what to do after we get to Anchorage. The total time to do all the things on our list is about ten days, and we have five left, so we will have to make some choices.



Wiper Motors

Bill Stanhouse (#509) asks:

The KNOT TO WORRY, a DF 47 POC is in need of windshield wiper motors, arms, and blades. The original arms and blades had been removed before we purchased the boat. We are hoping someone can direct us to information regarding the acquisition of the above-mentioned parts.

From Previous Newsletters:

!An Answer!

The Fall 1998 issue had an article about problems and solutions for replacement of a windshield wiper arm. Arnold Karp (#65) found a solution without the necessity of replacing a working motor. His 1988 DeFever 50 Classic has an AMSO motor with the original wiper arms. He noticed a similar pantograph model on a '58 Hatteras (Part No. 85188A) for approximately \$150. He took it to a machine shop to adapt the connection to the motor shaft at a cost of \$70 labor. The Hatteras bracket fits perfectly, using the existing DeFever bracket screw holes. The metal of the new wiper arm is of superior material than that of the original. - Ed.

Windshield wipers.

Fount McKee (#328) asks:

I have a DeFever 53, 1988, SPIRIT OF INVICTUS. We had a tornado go through the Houston Yacht Club, Dec. 30, 2002. I had a sun screen on the windshield under the wipers. The tornado took off the wind screen, along with destroying the wipers. Where can I buy replacement windshield wipers? I would appreciate any light anyone could shed on this matter."

Don Jones (#561) responds:

I own a 68 DeFever (MISS BARBARA), and have just installed new motors, arms, and wipers. The original wipers were manufactured by Doga; however I could not find any US distributor that carried the products of this Holland-based manufacturer.

After corresponding with numerous distributors, I selected Vetus (actually a manufacturer), and bought everything from them. They are not an exact replacement for the Dogas, but close enough to make a good fit. They have a very good web site, VETUS.COM

Sorry to hear about the storm and the damage it caused you. Hopefully this will help in locating replacement wipers.

Tom Beard (#132) responds:

Fount, I purchased some blades for my DF49 RPH, and for David McGuire's DF 57 POC PRINCESS from Blue Water (281-474-5100) last year. I am assuming you take the same flat blade as his and mine. They had to order them, but it only took a week. ◆◆

Mail Drop

Ned Sommer (#346) asks:

In a few months we will be between houses, and slowly going down the ICW between Solomons, MD, and Savannah, GA. Without imposing on friends or relatives, what suggestions might folks have for getting mail until we are established in the Savannah area?"

Goeff Bill (#411) responds:

We lived aboard and cruised for nearly four years, with no permanent home. During this time we used the services of St. Brendan's Isle, in Green Cove Springs, FL - 800-544-2132. They would hold all mail (or selected mail - i.e. no junk mail), and forward to us when we called. They have other services, as well, for the cruising boatperson, but we were very satisfied with the mail service. A small monthly fee and forwarding charges take care of everything.

(Several DeFever Cruisers members use this service. Probably any Green Cove Springs address in the Roster is a St. Brendan's Isle customer.- Ed.) ◆◆

Jim & Ann O'Malley (#238)

DF43 WILD GOOSE

Merritt Island, FL

Well, I want to thank the club for their input on my request for guidance for my spring break trip, March 25 to April 3. Ann and I did it, and this is how it went.

March 25, Friday. Broke our usual routine, and went to the Kountry Kitchen on Merritt Island (two miles south of the Barge Canal on State Road 3) for breakfast: two eggs, bacon, hash browns, coffee - all home cooked. Ann had the biscuits and gravy. We don't usually eat that much, but we were going to

be on the boat, and always start with a good breakfast. Got the weather reports; decided to wait for the weather to pass, and to tie up all the loose ends of home and business. Stayed in port, and worked the house issues.

March 26, Saturday. Went back to KK again, as we were going to be on the boat, and always start with a good breakfast. We went for final grocery shopping, placed all our clothes for the trip on the boat, and launched the dinghy to tow for the trip. Dinghy motor started fine at the house, but would not run at the marina, so rowed the dinghy to WILD GOOSE, tied it up, and began trouble-shooting the engine. Bad gas hose, so removed the carburetor and hose, and replaced all while the motor was on the dinghy and in the water. NO parts lost. Got the engine running fine, and then proceeded home, as the hour was late, and we would get a fresh start in the morning.



Jim & Ann in the Trusty Dink

March 27, Sunday. We went to Mc Donald's, as we had too many good breakfasts already for proper departure. Went to Subway and got their Sunday special: two foot-long subs for \$7.99 ... Ann is on vacation, too. Then we went to WILD GOOSE, and after loading/ tying the two dogs, Tater and Little Bit, to the upper deck railing, started the engines, and left Harbor Square in the Barge Canal. Departure time was approximately 10:00 AM. The wind was out of the south, so we headed north. I proceeded to set the boat for cruising: autopilot on, radar in stand-by, chart plotter active, stabilizers and synchronizer on. We had a beautiful day to cruise north. We ran at about seven knots, and passed through NASA Causeway at about 11:30 AM. We continued north, and passed through Titusville Bridge at 12:30. It never ceases to amaze me that the bridge tenders think boats have to be within 50 feet of the bridge for it to open, or they are wasting valuable automobile time. We had to wait 15 minutes for the bridge to open, as the sailboat had to be right at the bridge to go through, too.

We continued north, passing through Haulover Canal and Mosquito Lagoon, to Oak Hill. The tides were good to us, and we continued north at reduced engine speed, while still keeping seven knots due to the tide. We arrived in New Smyrna at 5:02 PM. I know this, as we just missed the 5:00 PM opening for the George Musson Bridge, and had to wait 20 minutes for the next

opening. We had called ahead for reservations at Inlet Marina at the Ponce Inlet north side. They had a space for us, and because of lack of local knowledge, I took the long way round to get to the marina: ICW to north entrance, to Ponce Inlet, and then to the marina. As we got to the north entrance, there was a boat approaching from the ICW heading south into the north Ponce Inlet entrance. Not knowing the waters, I let him go first. As luck would have it, he took my spot which had a floating dock, and forced me to tie up to the fuel dock (fixed).

We arrived at the dock vicinity at 6:20, just at dusk. The tidal range was about three feet, but the real problem was the fast-moving storm approaching. Between the current, wind, and failing light, it took me two tries to approach properly and tie up WILD GOOSE. We made it just in time, as the winds gusted over 40 knots for a period of 20 minutes. The slip fee was less than \$60 (43 foot boat), but we were part of the scenic view for the restaurant, and there was live music (very good) until 9:00 PM. We ate at the restaurant, and the food was good; if you are in the area looking for a place to grab a bite, it should be on your list. We walked the dogs, and retired for the night.

28 March, Monday. We got up at 7:00, walked the dogs, and showered at the marina. There is no breakfast served at the restaurant, so we ate on the boat. This was a forecasted windy day. They were not wrong. The winds blew from the west at a steady 25 knots, with gusts to 40 knots all day. We continued north past Daytona Beach, making seven knots (I did not want to push with the dinghy in tow). It was too chilly to ride the upper deck, so we stayed inside, and had a comfortable ride north. At about 10:00 AM we decided to press to Saint Augustine. We called the Municipal Marina for reservations, and were told they were full all week. The MTOA regatta was in town. Expanding our search in St. Augustine, we located Oyster Creek Marina, and they had a slip for WILD GOOSE on the back river of St. Augustine. We motored northward, enjoying the stabilizers and the scenery as we traveled the ditch, the west side in its natural aura and the east side with expensive homes. We passed through the Matanzas area without incident (the previous passage is another story), and proceeded to Saint Augustine.

You know how those big semi-displacement boats pass you, and give you a rock as they go by? We had one of those, and just from the way he was handling the boat, you knew he was an accident afloat. As fate would have it, he did not have his chart plotter on, nor was he watching the charts, but he cut short a dogleg and went aground on the mud with a falling tide. We motored past him as he was calling Sea Tow to come pull him off the mud. As we turned west into the back creek to Oyster Creek Marina, we saw Sea Tow heading south to assist. Within 15 minutes, we were at the marina. After the blustery ride up the ditch from Ponce, we were happy to be tied to a dock again. Oyster Creek has floating docks in very good repair. They offer a Boat US discount. The facilities were well maintained. We had a seafood dinner at the adjacent restaurant, and after two drinks and a quick walk of the dogs, retired for the night. We asked for a place to get breakfast, and were told to just go out the marina and walk one block south.

29 March, Tuesday. At Oyster Creek. We played tourist today: first we walked to Sailors Exchange - the Saint Augustine "Mecca" for used boat parts and fantastic deals, if he happens to have your right piece of marine hardware (or the other man's junk). Sinclair, the owner, and his wife, the ruler, have

a store with most any piece of marine stuff that comes off of a boat, some used, some from manufacturers end runs, and some scratch and dent. (Side note: He did have a website {sailorsexchange.com}, until he started getting weird e-mails; then someone pointed out to him that the website also spelled out "sailor sex change." They now have a new website name: sailors-exchange.com.) I bought some raw water pump impellers, and some white LED lights. We properly gawked at all the goodies, and left for WILD GOOSE. The store is only 8-10 blocks from Oyster Creek. West Marine is about ten blocks south, and a well-equipped marine supply house is just across the creek from Oyster Creek Marina.

We then decided to go to downtown Saint Augustine and tour. Ann, having been here the last four years on class tours, was a capable guide. We walked the streets and looked at all the trinket shops, yes, with the dogs in tow. We stopped at the north end of the old city to have lunch at Ann O'Malley's Pub, but could not be served on the porch with the dogs. So we had take-out, and went to the park across the street. The sandwich was good; I can recommend Ann O'Malley's Pub for sandwiches. We returned to WILD GOOSE, having a large cinnamon-butter pretzel for a mid-afternoon snack.

After our return to WILD GOOSE, I inspected the engine room, and noticed one of the raw water pumps was dripping through the shaft seal. It was a very slow drip, and I could have ignored it till we returned home, but..... not the case. I chose to disassemble the pump and make repairs, as it could not be too bad. When I took the pump apart, the shaft seal disintegrated, making a new seal mandatory for the engine to run. It was at this time I realized the spares were at HOME. I carry alternate part numbers to seal and bearing manufacturers, but Saint Augustine is not the retail capitol of the world for these items. The quest began; don't go to an Auto Zone or other auto parts dealers of the national chains and expect them to help. Based upon seal size, they only know application, and to them 'Lehman' is a real foreign word. Lewis Marine could deliver in two days, and then the marina personnel suggested the marine supply house across the creek. It's just a short dinghy ride away. The place has no advertising on the outside except 'Fuel Oil.'

That's it. Oh yes, no dinghy dock either, just shrimp boats at a nearby yard, rafted up. Soooo, short dinghy ride, and scramble over several shrimp boats in various stages of repair, into the store, and yes, they have the part, as well as 15 more. "At \$17, how many would I like???" "One, thank you... do you have the gasket for the face plate???" "No, but... we have the vegetable oil paper so that you can cut one...." Good.... With parts in hand, I proceeded back to WILD GOOSE to effect repairs. (Side note: I talked with the marine store personnel, and asked why they did not advertise their store better. The response was We are in the Saint Augustine Historic District, and the committee felt the signage would not be consistent with the Historical Society criteria, and they were stopped just after they got 'FUEL OIL' painted on the building.)

Repairs were made, and dinner was served: ham and turkey sandwiches; they were good. Remember the part about the floating dock? Yes, it is a long step down, and we were using a chair as a ladder. The side ladder I had purchased wasyep, still at home. Shortly after the pump episode, I found the ladder in the aft closet; yeah, now I can install the ladder - oops, need screws. We quickly packed the dogs, and walked to West

Marine, got there at 8:00. Though they would usually be closed, they were having a Garmin GPS presentation, and allowed us to enter and purchase the screws for installation of the ladder. Got the screws, and walked back to WILD GOOSE, stopping at a Checkers to share a large chocolate milkshake. I checked the engine room, and then we retired for the night.

March 30 Wednesday. What to do: we decided to leave Saint Augustine, and go somewhere. The choices were Jacksonville, and then Fernandina Beach, or south, with a slow return. At this time, I noticed the starboard engine seemed to run rough at cruising speed. We looked at the weather forecasts, and with Thursday looking good, but the weekend looking bad, and the engine issue, decided to make a slow return home, with a stop in Daytona Beach. We had breakfast at the home cooking place, and then walked to Sailors Exchange again for one last bargain walk-through. We got back to the marina at 10:00 AM, and proceeded to cast off to start the southern return leg. The ride through the back creek was majestic: the water calm, the sun rising, and the marsh, with the boat yards stirring with just a hint of activity. Yes, we still work full time.

The trip south was great. We sat on the upper deck, and drove WILD GOOSE using the autopilot. What a wonderful device, push-button steering; it was worth the 3k I paid for it. More on that later. We lounged the entire day, and enjoyed the scenery, as the weather was beautiful, and the waterway just perfect. We arrived in Daytona about 4:30 PM. We chose to stop at Caribbean Jacks in Daytona for the night. It is on the north side of Daytona, and suffered damage from the hurricanes. They were full, and again we were tied to the fuel dock for the night. The marina is excellent, even with the damage. It has an excellent restaurant, pool, and Caribbean atmosphere. The people were friendly. I found this out as I was walking the dogs. We ate dinner at Caribbean Jacks; Ann had a mahi, artichoke, and mushroom dish in white sauce with pasta, and I had pork medallions with black beans and rice. I was somewhat taken aback when my meal arrived, as I expected black beans and rice to be served in a bowl. Instead it was on the plate, with the pork medallions on a rice bed, with black beans sprinkled on and in the rice. The surprising thing was, you could count the number of beans on your fingers and thumbs. All-in-all the food was excellent, and I would recommend the place. After dinner, we returned to WILD GOOSE, walked the dogs, and retired for the night.

31 March, Thursday. Arose with the sun, and walked the dogs. I found there is another discount/used-part marine store just a few short blocks north of the marina. I finished walking the dogs, and had breakfast aboard WILD GOOSE; the restaurant did not serve breakfast, nor was another eatery nearby. We again were faced with the decision to stay, or continue south. With the engine concern, and the weather forecasted to be bad that night, we decided to continue south. I chose to delay departure until I had a chance to take the traditional marine store gawk-walk at the new-found marine store. I waited until 9:30 AM (the posted opening time on the door) for them to open; they were still closed at 10:00. I cut my losses and returned to WILD GOOSE for departure. The overnight fee was \$62. As we were checking out of the marina, I asked the question 'If we anchored out and dinghied in, what would the charge for the facilities be? Or is that allowed?' I was somewhat surprised when they responded the fee was \$15 per day for the use of the facilities. This is something to consider when traveling, and you do not want to

tie up at the marina, but want some luxury.

It was another beautiful day to be on the water. The wind was out of the southeast, and blowing 15 knots. We passed through the two draw bridges of Daytona Beach, and proceeded south. By noon we were passing under the George Musson Bridge at New Smyrna with the tide, heading south to Mosquito Lagoon. The transit of the lagoon is approximately 14 miles, with a channel which runs straight as an arrow for two seven-mile legs. I set up the autopilot, and put in two waypoints. We tracked for 14 miles with no changes to the autopilot - just sat back and enjoyed the view. One interesting point was about half way through the lagoon, and seven miles from civilization in any direction. Ann spotted an orange float off in the distance. As we drew closer, it became apparent it was a man with an orange jacket and floating basket, standing on the seabed. He was about 50 yards off the channel, and I hollered to him to see if he was ok. He pointed to his wrist and I shouted '2:30.' He sent back the 'ok' sign, and we proceeded on. He had lots of faith in his friend to come back and pick him up before dark.

We continued through the Haulover Canal, and then knowing the Titusville Bridge was on restricted hours, slowed down to 5.5 knots to avoid waiting at the bridge. It stays closed from 3:00 to 4:45 PM each work day. As we passed through the Titusville area, I radioed the Titusville Marina and asked what the fee was to anchor out and use the facilities. The response was there would be a charge to use the showers, else no charge. Good to know. Our speed was such that we would arrive at our home berth, Harbor Square in the Barge Canal, at twilight. Ann and I made all the preparations to just glide into our slip with the dinghy tied to the bow, and have a quick tie up and let out a big sigh. You can imagine our surprise when we got to our slip, and it was FULL. Ann, who was somewhat pumped due to the maneuvering to get the dinghy to the front of the boat, got on the cell phone, and gave the marina owner a piece of her mind, while he tried to explain to irritated Ann the guy was not supposed to be there, as he came to take on fuel in the morning from a local delivery truck. Did not matter to Ann, "Where do you want me to dock my boat?" We ultimately backed out of the marina, yes, it is a tight squeeze, repositioned the dinghy, added bumpers, and rafted up to another boat in the marina. We off-loaded what was necessary, and carried dogs and bags over two boats, and then to car and home. We finally got home at 8:00 PM, had a quick cleanup, and then crashed to bed.

April 1, Friday. We took it easy in the morning, going to WILD GOOSE at 10:00 AM. We unpacked into the dinghy, and they pulled WILD GOOSE into her usual slip. I say pulled, because I did not want to run the engines and get them hot. I wanted to see what was wrong with the starboard engine. Everything pointed to the injectors, and I decided to pull the injectors and replace them. I keep a spare set just for that reason (they came with the boat). While doing the reading on injector replacement in the Ford manual, I came upon an interesting write-up. It stated that if you had a cylinder running rough, that it might be the injector tube. Their recommendation was to pull the injector tube, and pin the end hole. If it was less than .069 inches, you should drill out the hole to .069, for a depth not to exceed 3/4 inches. It seems as you tighten the tubes over time, the hole gets constricted, and needs this action to restore it to full diameter. I removed the injector tubes, recovered the dinghy on its trailer, and went home

for the night, ready to attack the injector replacement Saturday. That night, I pinned my injector tubes, and, lo and behold, several were below the .069 inches dimension. I had a set of spare injector pipes, and just for confidence I pinned them; the hole was in excess of .069 inches. I drilled the tubes as recommended, blowing them out with compressed air to insure no metal scrap was left in the tube.

April 2, Saturday. I gathered the tools, torque wrench, extension bars, and sockets, and began the process of replacing the injectors. Everything went fine. While the book does not require removal of the rocker arm assembly, it is probably the easiest way to get at the injectors. I removed the assembly, being sure to hold the two ends as they are spring-loaded, and carefully placed the assembly down. You remove the injectors by taking off the return line bolts, removing the return line, and then removing the two bolts holding the injectors in place, reversing the process for installation. Be sure the copper washer is removed, and a new one used for the injectors. On WILD GOOSE, I again flushed the tubes, to insure no metal particles were left in the tube before reinstallation. I used my polishing pump to supply the diesel fuel at pressure to accomplish this. Maybe it is me, or that this is the second time I have replaced the injectors on the starboard engine, and it truly seems to run smoother.

Ann and I had a great trip, and really appreciate the input from the members on recommendations for travel (*this was a question that appeared in an e-update – Ed*). Yes there is hurricane damage out there, and it will take some time for the marinas to be back at full operation, but the trip was great. ◆◆

Bill & Myke Oppold (#476)

DF49RPH FOOTPRINTS

Boca Raton, FL

FOOTPRINTS left Boca Raton, FL, on May 21st to head to New England for the summer. We “ran” through FL, mostly off shore, and rested for several days in Savannah, while visiting friends. Then up to Wynnah Bay, off shore to Cape Fear, through the ‘Ditch’ to Norfolk. Spent three days getting through the Chesapeake, and jumped off from Cape May at 5 AM on June 13th. Anchored in Sandy Hook, NJ, at 8 PM that day. LONG day, but an easy cruise. Next day, up the East River at 12.7 knots, having planned the current carefully, and into Long Island Sound.

We are currently (6/15) anchored in Oyster Bay, NJ. We will be spending July and August between here and Massachusetts, and back to the Chesapeake for September and some of October. Have run into a couple of DeFevers, but no one going our way at our rate of movement. Hope to hook up with someone now that our pace is slowed, and our time is more flexible. ◆◆

Source For Light Bulbs

Leo Quinn (#101) asks:

Does anyone know a source in S.E Florida for the fluorescent light bulb in the aft head? It has Chinese writing on it.

Andy Hochman (#431) responds:

The best source of odd light bulbs is “Light Bulbs Unlimited,” Fort Lauderdale, 954-563-6667. If the bulb is anything like the ones in my boat, it is the same bulb they use in copy-

ing machines, and you might also be able to find it at a copy machine store.

George Handel (#18) responds:

If you are in south Florida you are in luck! The fluorescent tubes for the aft head lights (two tubes) on the DF 44 are available at: LIGHT BULBS UNLIMITED 872 East Oakland Park Blvd. Ft. Lauderdale, FL Phone # 954-563-6667

Gordon Moskowitz (#469) responds:

The fluorescent tubes may be Japanese. I have fluorescent fixtures in the engine room. Found that tubes are Japanese and are metric, and will not take American or English tubes. I found an outfit in West Palm Beach, “Light Bulbs Unlimited,” on Okeechobee Blvd. that ordered the bulbs for me. The bulbs are about 580 mm. (~ 24 inches, but 24 in. won’t fit) and 1100 mm. (~48 inches, but 48 in. won’t fit fixture). Light Bulbs Unlimited has several left of each size. If either of those sizes does not fit your need, Light Bulbs Unlimited may be willing to order the size you need. ◆◆

George & Jessica Smith (#623)

DF41 ROBERT E. WYNNS

Marathon, FL

Received 5/16/05 After about six weeks without the Internet while we traversed North Carolina, we made it out of The Great Dismal Swamp into Waterside Marina in Norfolk, where we were greeted by a storm with nickel-size hail last night.

The month of April was tough traveling for the ROBERT E. WYNNS, with four storms featuring winds of 60 mph or higher. Our Kohler 4kW generator continued to give us problem after problem, and we are looking into a replacement. The storm blew right in the breakwater, and we rolled from gunwale to gunwale for hours. Our little parrot, Slick, thought she was in a tree.

The cruise up the ICW has been good. The Corps of Engineers has done a good job of dredging, and we found plenty of water all the way north from Beaufort, SC. Between the storms, we anchored in pretty coves and little towns. We found a great free dock at the little town of Oriental, NC. There is a coffee house right at the end of the dock where the townspeople gather to watch the boats dock sideways to the wind. They have signs with numbers on them, and grade each skipper’s performance. Quite hilarious.

Poor Slick, our parrot, has decided to lay infertile eggs again. She has almost as many problems as our generator. Last week, she showed all the signs of imminent birth, swollen belly, acting weird, etc. However, no egg. Next morning she began throwing up, and looked very bad all day. That evening, Jessica took her in our bed, where she suddenly ran in circles under the covers, and then jammed her head against Jessica. Jessica started to cry thinking Slick had died. I lifted the covers just in time to see an egg pop out. Slick recovered more quickly than Jessica.

The next week found us docked in Elizabeth City, at the start to the Great Dismal Swamp. The docks are free, and town greeters meet you, and give each lady a rose. At 5 pm, they throw a wine and cheese party for the boaters. We went to the party, and after an hour or so I began to feel bad with a swollen belly. I sat down and passed out. Three doctors were having dinner in the restaurant, and when I came to, they were happily taking my pulse. If you have heard “life of the party,” I was the

death of the party.

Lights and sirens, and I was code three to the ER. After many tests: No Heart Attack, No Stroke, just a vaso-vagal episode. I recovered more quickly than Jessica.

Our plans remain fluid, and we will continue voyaging north until September 1st, when we will turn south.

Received 6/29/05 We have been cruising the eastern shore of the Chesapeake for the last month or so. It is quite a bit different from the western shore, with seemingly less development. There are many fine anchorages and quaint historic towns. This side of the Bay was, until recently, populated by the famous "Watermen" who made their living oystering, crabbing, and fishing. The heavy development of the western shore has led to increased pollution, and as a consequence, a decrease in the fishing industry. Though many of the traditional watermen remain, their houses are mostly on the water, and the price of real estate is moving them out.

Last weekend we spent in Fairlee Cove. The entrance is tricky with strong currents, but once in and anchored, a secure and pretty spot. When the weekend came, we were surprised to have over 200 boats come in and anchor all around us. Huge raftups of power boats; Formula seemed to be the predominate brand. Quite a party. Two active duty flight attendants who live near by came to dinner, and Jessica caught up on all the airline gossip.

Two weeks ago we had a new Phasor 5.5 kW Generator installed. We gave up on constantly fixing the old Kohler 4 kW.



A Fun Job

We are currently in Delaware City Marina, after passing through the C&D Canal, which links Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. Tomorrow we will head south about 70 miles, and visit Jessica's family in the pretty little town of Lewes, Delaware. After that it is up the Jersey coast, and on to New York, and the beautiful Hudson River.

We are all well and quite happy, enjoying our retirement and this crusin' life.

Received 7/15 Well, we at last made it to the beautiful Hudson River. We are now anchored in a lovely cove across the River from Haverstraw. We are facing a shoreline bordered by weeping willows and large conifers. There are picnic tables under the trees, and a sandy beach to land the dinghy. We will stay here a couple of more days, and then head north about a hundred miles into the NY lock system. We haven't made up our minds

whether to turn left at Waterford and do the Erie Canal, or continue north as we did last year, and head up to Lake Champlain. What choices!

After spending a couple of days, we proceeded south on the Delaware to the historic town of Lewes, and spent ten days or so visiting Jessica's family. What a good time.



ROBERT E. WYNN'S at Lewes

We left Lewes last Sunday, and went through the Cape May Canal at the southern tip of Jersey. We continued north with good weather in the Atlantic, and overnighted at anchor in Atlantic City. The next morning with the weather still holding, we made the 100 mile jump to Sandy Hook, at the entrance to NYC. We spent a couple of days anchored behind the Hook,, bought 150 gallons of diesel for \$2.19 a gallon, and passed through 'The Big Apple' in fog and rain. North of the George Washington Bridge the rain stopped, and we had the Hudson to ourselves. Saw only a couple of barges all of the 40 miles to here. Sing Sing prison is around the corner about ten miles south of us. If any of you have any friends or relatives there, we could say hi.

Our new generator is working well!!



DF41 Tank Leak

Mark Rutter (#329) asks:

I think we may have a fuel leak in our starboard fuel tank. I have noticed some fuel accumulating below that engine, and now discovered fuel coming from the area where the fuel tank is located. I have ruled out leaks from the engine and fuel filter. Right now the leak is extremely small. I am checking all fittings on the tank, but am wondering what to do if the tank has to be replaced. Does anyone have any experience getting these large tanks out of the boat? Any advice on replacement tanks?

Bob Carpenter (#454) responds:

Ours is a 34' DeFever, but the tank size wouldn't fit out of the engine hatch. The yard removed the engine, used a cutting torch to make the tanks small enough to get the old ones out, then made up smaller tanks that could be lowered into place. This took three small ones connected together.

Interestingly, the tank I saw that had been cut and removed

was perfect, except for holes in the top through which you could drop a pencil. It turned out that the engine room vent on the port side allowed sea water to enter and lay on the top of the tank, and finally ate the holes. I have corrected that by fashioning deflectors so that water is allowed to drain out, while sufficient air is allowed to enter.

Although it is difficult to see without lights and mirrors, you might want to check to see if that might be your problem, and correctable, without having to pull the tank. Of course there would only be leakage with the tanks nearly full, and with some sloppy sea conditions.

The multi-tank arrangement has worked fine for ten years.

Dick & Mary Hein (#159) respond:

We experienced a leaky tank on our DF41, THE DORCAS HARDY. We replaced the tank while we were in Puerto Rico, so we have some experience in the matter. It's not as bad as it might seem. First thing, unless money is no object is, stay out of a boatyard. I can walk you through our experience if you like.

Bob Kovach (#691) responds:

Check and see if you have any gasketed bolted steel covers. I though I had a bad bottom on my tank, because the fuel trail followed back to the bottom of the tank. Problem was a leaky gasket under the 12" round steel access plate, held on with 12 bolts on 1" centers. The fuel was leaking from the bottom of the gasket, behind the insulation on the tank, and coming out at the bottom of the tank. I pumped down the level of the fuel below the level of the tank access cover, removed the cover, and replaced the gasket.

If you have to remove the tanks, I would pump them down, dry them out, and cut them up with a sawzall. Remove them in sections. Make the new tanks, and if necessary, put in two smaller tanks that are nipped together, to get back the original capacity. You didn't mention the age of your tanks. If they are more than 20 years old, and made of iron or mild steel, they may be worn out.

In any event, get someone to look at the job - an honest mechanic; the one I had saved me the \$15,000 quoted by a local marina. Got my problem fixed for about \$500. ◆◆

Bob & Dee Dee Lenney (#590)

DF44 MOTHER GOOSE

Grass Valley, CA

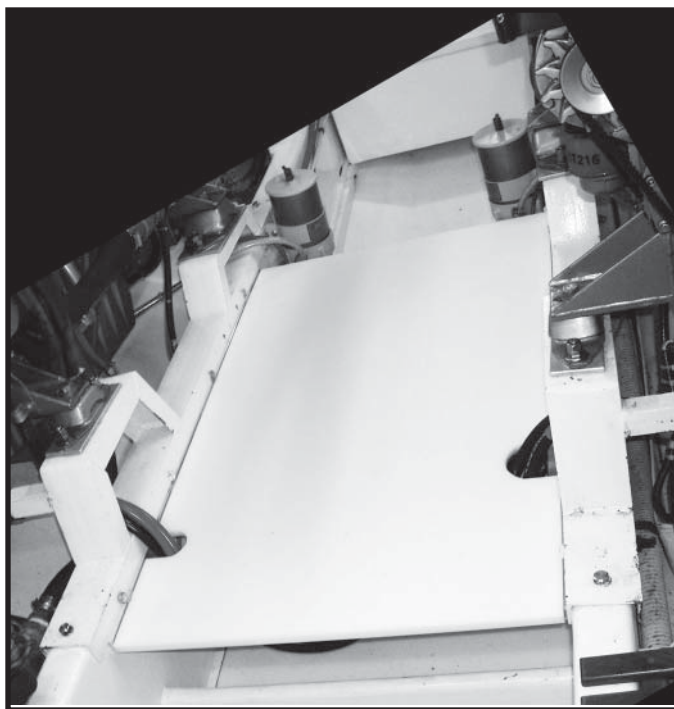
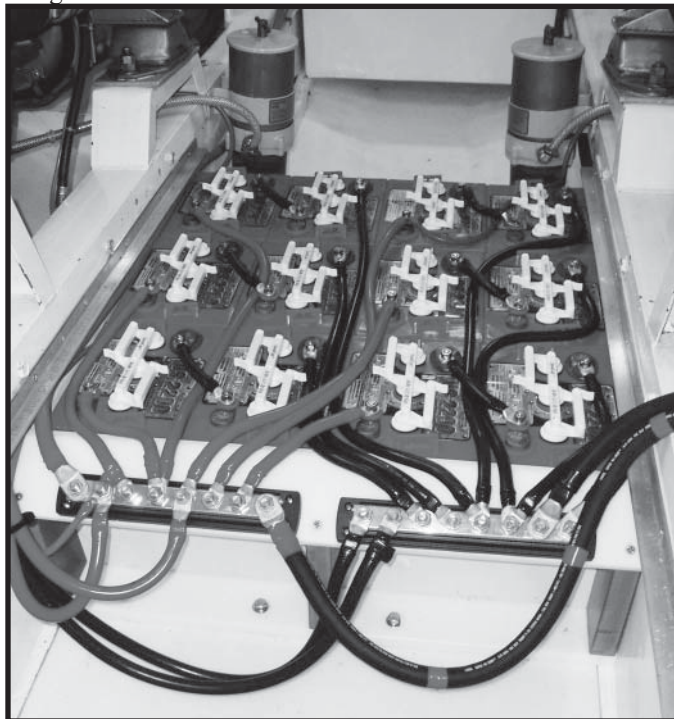
I'm about to replace my house batteries, four 8Ds and four small gels, with (12) 6v golf cart batteries. I will use these for all loads, including starting the main engines.

My 12.5kW generator will have one 8D starting battery completely separate from the house battery bank. This is for the generator only; except, it can be used to start the main engines if needed.

Other than greater capacity, one of the reasons for this project is to remove the 8D batteries from the outboard side of each engine. Trying to work there is a nightmare. The new bank will go on the floor between the two engines. This will: 1. lower the center of gravity, 2. allow easy access to the outboard side of the engines, 3. allow for easier battery maintenance, and 4. free up storage space on either side of the engines. The only negative is stepping across the new battery enclosure.

It's done, and stepping across is not a problem. See the attached pictures of the finished job.

Warning: I had to move the starboard fuel filter aft, to clear the new battery compartment. This is what I found. When the Racor filters were installed at the factory, they did not have the proper fittings. They epoxied flare X flare fittings into both sides of the filters, instead of the required O-ring type fitting. They were very difficult to remove. Remove as follows: Place the fitting in a very stout vice; have two people grab the filter and rotate until the fitting is loose. Caution: make sure the cap is on the filter and screwed down tight, because the barrel is swaged into the base.



Battery boxes on the outboard sides of the engines ARE a nightmare. I have relocated ours to the starboard aft shelf, and to port of the genset (our genset is immediately starboard of midline, mounted fore and aft). – Ed. ◆◆

Les & Lynn Cotton (#579)
DF Alaskan 46 COTTONWOOD
San Clemente, CA

The Cotton's east coast odyssey has concluded, and COTTONWOOD is being transported back to California, with Lynn aboard. - Ed.

Received from Lynn 4/16/05 (just passed through the Panama Canal) I reset the breaker, and the panel on the inverter still does not have a readout. Green lights still on, though. Battery voltage meter has readouts, but do not make sense: port reads minus 7.0 and starboard +10.0. Overhead VHF radio does not work, and portside VHF 15 does not work to call the bridge, because they said we need International 15, and we only have US 15. No wonder no one could reach me! I keep it on 16 now.

It is very calm today, overcast and humid. Going down to the lounge by the dining area to read before lunch now. I am still ok, but a little isolated while on our boat. Too hot to get much done. Air conditioning helps a little, but not much. I try to hang out on the big ship as much as I can, for company and coolness.

Arrived last night at the anchorage in Colon, on schedule. Hotter than hell, sweat dripping off nose, with no exertion. Cooler this morning, so I slept, but not much last night.

Fire drill this morning - reported to bridge as ordered. About 14 big ships in the anchorage. I was so glad when the engines shut down finally, last night. You know how I hate the noise constantly, and we are right over the port engine, so it vibrates deep and low. Side radio is fine...there is a button to switch it to International, I learned. Lights work, but haven't checked CD player.

We moved inside the breakwater today, and are awaiting the fuel barge. There are at least six more ships here today. We are still scheduled to go through the Canal tomorrow morning around 4 am your time. Maybe you can see us on the other end at Mira Flora, on the Internet.

There is now "quick" paperwork in Ensenada, only one place to go, and a bank there, too. They are trying to streamline all of Mexico's paperwork, and Ensenada is the first place to be set up that way.

I am doing ok, but wish I was home already. I am having a very hard time sleeping, and am miserable as a result. Too much noise, and if I try to stay on deck at night to be cooler, the bright lights are on...always noise, noise, noise. I probably need to break down and take a Benadryl, or wear ear plugs, but don't want to get groggy, and not hear radio if it is something important. I don't think anyone would notice if I didn't show up for meals for a few days.

There is supposed to be a party when we get to Golfito on the 16th, and we get to go swimming and go ashore, so that is something to look forward to.

Received from Les 5/1 Just a quick note to let you know we have completed our Great Loop adventure! And Lynn is home from her 'ride' on the big ship bringing our COTTONWOOD home. We are home, and searching for a slip for our boat. Our marina in Long Beach is refurbishing the slips, and have no time frame for when a slip will be available, and apparently are not allowing sub-leases. Urrg! We currently are in a temporary slip in San Diego. Anyone who hears of a 48 foot slip, it would be appreciated greatly if you let us know.

Lynn will be writing the 'Final Chapter' to our adventures shortly. Thanks for all your emails and best wishes during our extended cruise.

Received from Lynn 6/16 Well, the Cottons are digging in the yard, shopping in malls, driving hither and yon in the traffic, and gazing out to sea every chance they get. We are going to Catalina with our yacht club on the 24th, then the DF Rendezvous in July. We go down to San Diego to visit the boat every week or so, but haven't had her out of the slip since we got home. As it is, we will have to bring her to Dana Point a day before the trip across to Catalina, otherwise it is a 13 hour trip, and our guests can't be gone an extra day...seeing as how they have jobs and all. We are also taking sailing lessons with our daughter and son-in-law, since they asked us if we would like to, and the lessons are free. We haven't mentioned this to COTTONWOOD, as she may get skittish. All the jibbing and gybing has me confused. Just turn on the dammed engine, I say.

Les is doing a good job daily on the computer with his trading, and I hope he keeps it up, or I may have to WORK. We can't let that happen!

Our charts are really getting passed around. We visited the Van Gemmert's (#432) on LIONHEART last week, and they are buying all of our charts for their trip this November. ♦♦

Fred & Susan Morgan (#194)
DF44 CASHITIN
Fortson, GA

April 21, 2005 Tomorrow is the day for us to finally throw off the lines, and head away from Trinidad. It is going to be rather sad to finally leave, after so many months, but exciting to be moving on as well. We will leave Crew's Inn around noon, and anchor out until it is time to haul anchor and move on, around 3 am. Our plan is to stay well off the coast of Venezuela until we pass the trouble spots; so, hopefully, we will not be of interest to the bad guys. After today, we will not have access to the internet, so all correspondence should be sent to Sailmail, with all of the rules imposed by that server, no enclosures, forwards, etc., just nice newsy notes. Please, please, send those, as I just wait until we connect to see who has sent mail. My favorite time, "you have mail," just makes our day.

We really miss everyone, and I count the days until this boat is heading north. I am ready to be closer to the States, plus I really miss spending time in the Bahamas and Florida. Remember to write and tell me of your adventures. Speaking of adventure, it is time to catch a Maxi for the final trip to the grocery store. This is an adventure that still brings a thrill. You just haven't lived until you have ridden a Maxi Taxi in Trinidad!

Later in April My goodness it has been a long time since I sent a note, so I will attempt to catch up with all of our travels since April 28.

Let me begin with our anniversary dinner at a local restaurant in Margarita. After a slightly scary dinghy ride into the dock, we ran over a wreck under the water, but, thankfully, did no damage to the dink. We sat on the terrace overlooking the harbor, just in time to see the sunset. The downside to our romantic dinner is that Fred broke a tooth during the meal. This began our adventure with the dental community.

Juan, the dockmaster, had a list of English-speaking doctors,

dentists, and other professionals that cruisers might need. So going on Juan's recommendation, we caught a taxi to Dr. Joaquina Guerra de Martin's office for repair of the tooth. The system is a bit different, in that it is first-come first-served. Fred, the southern gentleman, held the door for a family to enter before him. That put him at the back of the queue while the dentist saw the family. After spending a lot of time looking at magazines in Spanish, Fred finally enjoyed his turn in the chair. The doctor offered three options, and Fred chose a porcelain crown. This involved another visit to make impressions, put on a temporary crown, and send off to Caracas for lab work on the finished crown. To accommodate our schedule, the doctor offered to do the prep work after lunch. So Fred and I left the office, and found our way to a restaurant. Our next visit will be Wednesday, with the final fitting on Friday. After we left the doctor's office, we discovered that three days out of the next workweek are holidays. The crown has to come from a lab on the mainland, Caracas. So who knows when this will actually happen. This delays our departure, thus we are going to forgo visiting some of the out islands at this time, and will head to Puerto La Cruz late next week.

Returning to the boat, we decided to take a weekend cruise to Isla Coche, an island a few miles off Margarita.

May 1, 2005 From what we can glean using the binoculars, we are enjoying music from a late afternoon wedding. Fred wants to dinghy in and crash the reception. I am sure we will blend in with no problems. Coche is a small island just 15 or so miles off Margarita. It was a nice cruise over, and we were able to make water. I am now working on boiling some shrimp for our dinner. After we arrived, I got another burst of energy, and took our head apart, and cleaned it from the inside out. Copper (*Fred's sister*) is right in that I will have to clean several times to rid this boat of the dust. Our stateroom looks dusty, as I have done nothing towards cleaning it! Tomorrow we plan on walking on the beach and looking for shells. These will be the first shells we have seen since arriving in the Caribbean.

With the return appointment with the dentist not until next week, we decided to just hang out here for a few days. The dinghy goes up every night, and tonight we will alarm the aft deck to alert us to any intruders. We do not expect any trouble, since there are quite a few boats in the anchorage. I sure hope we can get a tour of the island before we head to the mainland.

May 2, 2005 It is a stunning country, and s-l-o-w-l-y I am getting a bit more comfortable being here. A bit of my high school Spanish is returning; so with a bit of mime and rudimentary words, we are getting along. I am surprised at the cosmopolitan air surrounding Margarita, as opposed to the tranquil atmosphere at Coche.

Yesterday we took the dinghy out, so I could try to capture the kite boarders. The sky appears full of floating colored bubbles riding on the wind.

This morning it was very quiet and peaceful until about ten o'clock, then the boats began to arrive with the day tourists. Shortly after the hoards discharged from the ferryboats, sailboats, catamarans, local fishing boats, and other conveyances, the jet skis and other toys started, surrounding our boat with dozens of holiday revelers, zooming around much like a bunch of very angry bees! Then suddenly, as quickly as the flotilla arrived, the boats returned, and all departed by 4 o'clock. Now it is calm and peaceful once again. I do not think we will have the

live band as we did last night, serenading us for dinner.

This is the first place we have been that I think may compare to the Bahamas. I still miss the Bahamas and home...

May 4, 2005 Well, here we sit, or rather rock, in a harbor in Margarita, Venezuela. I still cannot believe we have taken this boat so far away from the comfort of home, and into a country that I am not sure welcomes us at all! It is, as with all of the islands we have visited, exotic and beautiful.

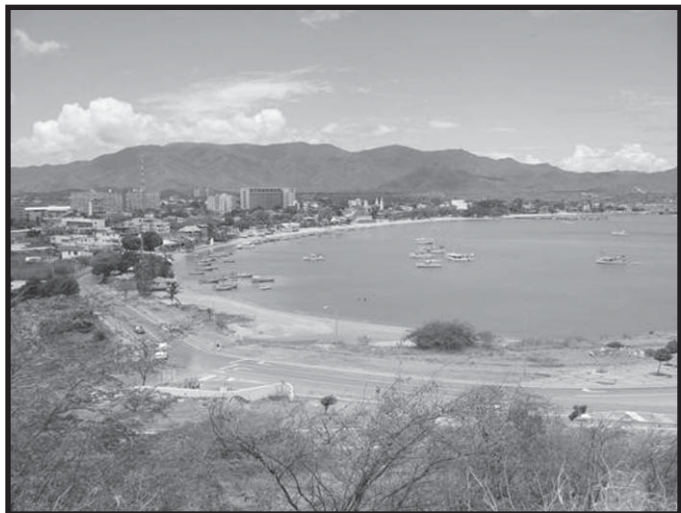
The people here are beautiful, and obviously enjoy their bodies, no matter what the shape. Even Fred has commented on how tight the women wear their clothes, with a lot of, as Copper refers to it, "camel toes." All of the local people we have met are friendly, and we have not had any adverse incidents. The caution runs high on this boat, since theft is a huge problem. So each night we hoist the dinghy to the top of the boat, and alarm the aft deck, to alert us should we have intruders. I do not know what we would do should this alarm go off, but hide behind each other. We cannot hide under the bed, that is where the fuel tank is located, and our only exit would be past the unwanted guest. I have thought of going out the aft port light, but that would put me in the water, not good either. I will just have to trust that no one will dare to come onto this well-lighted boat, when there are so many unlighted boats anchored near by.

This morning, we made another trip to the market, but were unable to complete our task, as the doctor requested Fred return at noon for his follow-up appointment. Tomorrow we will be like the three little pigs and to market, to market, we will go. That is our main entertainment for the day- going to the grocery. We are still trying to arrange a trip around this island, but so far have not been successful, maybe tomorrow, si.

Fred did a few little projects around the boat this afternoon, and I read a book, and did as little as possible.

May 5, 2005 Fred and I tried to arrange a tour across the island to Juangriego with one of Juan's English-speaking drivers, to no avail. Taking matters in our own hands, we secured a driver who had just arrived with passengers at Marina Juan. The driver does not speak a word of English, but Juan assisted us in negotiating the fare, and off we went. It was the most delightful day. Lunch was in an open-air restaurant, El Buho, overlooking the beautiful bay at Juangriego.

It seemed to us that it would be a delightful place to anchor. The proprietor spoke English, and was delightful to talk with. He told us that ten years ago the harbor had been full of cruisers, but that crime became so bad, the boats quit coming. What a sad thing for both the cruisers and the businesses. This area has a Mediterranean feeling, a place I would love to explore. Our driver, Alejandro Figueroa, was a good sport about my poor attempt to carry on a conversation and ask questions. After refusing our invitation to join us for lunch, he left, and returned in an hour to pick us up for the return trip. He had gone and secured a dictionary of Spanish to English. Using this, I finally resorted to writing him notes, and was able to ask him to stop at the village square we had passed on the trip to Juangriego. There were vendors selling flowers, and those who know me, know I cannot pass up the opportunity to bring home flowers. With lots of mime and notes, Alejandro understood my desire to stop. I purchased several stems, and we climbed back into the taxi. At that point, Alejandro indicated he wanted to take us somewhere special, and as we had no choice in the matter, off we went. Fred was a bit apprehensive when Alejandro turned



Juangriego Bay

off the main road onto a dirt track. He took us to his home! We met his wife. Fred enjoyed the animals, and Alejandro picked flowers and ferns, cashews, and a mango for me, and thoroughly enjoyed sharing his home with us, as much as we enjoyed experiencing the hospitality.

He told us he had a band, and played on Friday and Saturday nights at the El Pescador de la Marina, the restaurant where Fred and I enjoyed our anniversary dinner. The only problem is, that he did not start playing until 10:00 at night. Friday night found us sitting front and center, for an enjoyable night of dancing and music. The first number was dedicated to me, with the request that we dance! Our bottoms stayed firmly in our seats, but many other couples made their way to the floor for some Latin moves. Dance lessons are definitely on the list of to-dos!

May 8, 2005 All of the dental work happened on time, a surprise, and we could have left today. But I wanted to see the orchid exhibit, since this is the national flower of Venezuela. The display, held at Playa El Agua, is about 30 minutes from here, and what an interesting ride that turned out to be.

Several other boaters decided to join us, so we ended up in two taxis. One was of Russian vintage, and the other was a Volkswagen older than I. Fred, Nada, (a guest on a sailboat from Czechoslovakia), and I rode in the elderly Volkswagen. To record this ride, we attempted to take pictures of the car interior, or at least what was left of the interior. The sun visor would not stay up, and Fred spent the entire trip flipping it back up out of his line of vision.

It was an adventure, and we spent a lot of time in giggles. The flower show was a bit of a disappointment, and after a walk on the beach, and a stop for cool drinks, we began the journey back to the boat. Bet you guessed it, our ride quit. I did get some good pictures of Fred pushing the car, while Marco tied to pop the clutch to start it.

Finally, we all gave up, and the Russian car came to our rescue. It has been a fun and interesting week, and I will tell you more about it later, but at this moment the boat is rocking so much, it is difficult to write.

Nada speaks very little English, so our communication was interesting. We found common ground in that she works in graphics, and enjoys many of the same activities as I. It was a fun and interesting day, topped off with a sundowner with Nada and the captain (sorry, I cannot remember his name.) He was an

interesting character, and very much a loner. I think it was only to please his guest, Nada, that he came at all. He built his boat while living in Czechoslovakia, and has been cruising mostly alone for 20+ years. His take on government is definitely different from ours, but it was interesting to listen to him discuss his views and his opinion on newsworthy events.

We plan to leave for Puerto La Cruz in the morning. The trip will be broken up with another stop at Coche, followed by a long day, 56 miles, to reach Puerto La Cruz.

May 8, 2005 It was a quiet Sunday morning in Margarita when we pulled anchor, and headed off into the dawn. The ocean was glass smooth, and it seemed we were the only thing moving. Wanting to make water during the time we were underway, we kept the rpms low, and just had a slow, calm and restful cruise to Coche.

Arriving mid-afternoon, we once again anchored off the resort. There was one other trawler in the anchorage when we arrived, *Lady Astor*. I was unable to make radio contact with her until the next morning, when we found she is a single-handed cruiser from Texas. Fred and I spent the afternoon watching the kite boarders with the binoculars. The winds were high, and the feats of these young men were impressive. Some of them came off the water at least twenty feet, and landed so gently, that it was as if they had stepped off a step. Then there were the other landings, and other than the "ouch" expressed when the kite borders hit like a ton of bricks, I will not describe their attempts. Windsurfers were also out, and their skill level was impressive.

I tried to get Fred to try the kite boarding, but he reminded me, in no uncertain terms, to remember that he is S-I-X-T-Y! I think he is just chicken. When we go back, I might just have to try this myself. At least I have enough ballast, unlike Fred, that I will not become airborne easily. See there are some reasons to be "fluffy."

May 9, 2005 Once again, we got an early start on dead calm seas. In fact, it was hot, since we were going with the wind. The good part of the trip occurred with a catch of a bonita and a mahi-mahi. Fred got the tuna cleaned, and the dolphin had to wait until we were at the dock.

The mainland of Venezuela slipped into view, shrouded in a mist, very surreal.

Fred pointed out a restaurant, Kit, that is only open on weekends; we will bring the boat back here some weekend. Fred established radio contact with our friends on *Cabaret* and *Fun Ticket*. James met us at the point in his dinghy; Nancy, from *Cabaret*, came to her aft deck and waved greetings. Bill and his son, Scott, were in their dinghy, and with the assistance of everyone, CASHITIN slipped into her new home. James and Darlene came over, and James helped Fred hook up to the internet first thing. Without thinking of all of the work to be done to get CASHITIN settled to the dock: waterlines, power cord, and other duties, I, without a care in the world, accepted Darlene's offer to show me around the marina. I was off the boat in a flash, leaving Fred to do all of the work alone. My goodness, but Fred was hot when I finally sashayed back onboard. Darlene and Nancy made sure we were taken care of for the potluck dinner that Monday night, and just about every night since our arrival. Tuesday, we grilled the mahi-mahi caught on the trip over, and shared it with about 14 other cruisers. Wednesday, we

again were under the wing of Bill, Nancy, James and Darlene; we took the tender to an avenue lined with restaurants. I still do not know most of the names of the places where we have eaten, but again it is tasty and cosmopolitan in atmosphere.

Wednesday, Darlene, Doris, James, and Nancy pulled me out of water aerobics to join them on a scouting adventure. They hired a driver for the day every Wednesday, and invited me to join them, so they could show me the grocery, dentist, coffee shop, and butcher, ending up finally meeting the guys for a gyro. Fred, Bill, Scott (Bill & Nancy's son), and James came through the canals in the dinghy.

Once we got back to the boat, Fred put our dinghy into the water and took me on a tour of the canals. It is beautiful, with townhouses built right up to the canals, and painted tropical colors. I understand why Puerto La Cruz is referred as the Venice of South America. [Fred's comment: The water doesn't smell like poo (my substitute for Fred's word) here like it did in Venice.] (*Hey, not Venice, Florida!! – Ed.*) It is also going to be difficult not to add on the pounds, since everything seems to revolve around food. After a huge lunch, our friends came in the late afternoon by dinghy, and we went out for dinner. As usual, I said there was no way I could eat again, but when it came time to order, I did, and relished every bite of watercress soup and duck with mango sauce. I have no will power!

Fred and I are going to listen to a travel agent describe the places they provide tours, at 5:00 Thursday at the bar. I spent most of the day at the pool, starting at 8:00 in the morning with water aerobics. The power was out for about three or four hours, thus no AC, and Fred came up to sit around the pool, then other friends arrived. Friends were determined in including us in a rousing game of dominos. I just cannot get into this game, so always end up with the high score. However, it was nice to socialize, and I ended up with an appointment for a massage this afternoon at six. They also do Yoga classes in the late afternoons, so I will start that tomorrow. Bahia Redonda, the marina, is a lot like being at camp with cookouts, crafts, swimming, exercise, and other activities.

Friday we again went out for dinner, this time to a French open-air restaurant. The pounds are moving in, and we are going to come home very fluffy if this continues.

Monday, May 16, was a happy day for Fred. James took Fred to pick up permission for CASHITIN to take on fuel. The government allows the purchase of a thousand liters each month. With slip in hand, CASHITIN cast off, and crossed to the fuel dock. Fred's grin was so big, it looked like it hung from his ears! For twenty US dollars, 263 gallons gurgled into the fuel tanks! We could have purchased more, but it would have doubled the cost of fuel over the thousand liters allotment. CASHITIN topped off is ready to cruise! ◆◆

Spring Northwest DeFever Rendezvous Reported by Kathy and Bill Mark(#596)

This year's Spring NW DeFever Cruisers Rendezvous was held April 8th – 10th at Port Ludlow, WA, 30 miles NW of Seattle as the boat floats. Hosted by Kathy and Bill Mark (RUFY ANNE), but with much help from new members and Port Ludlow residents, Jamie and Bob Bima (# 585, INSPIRATION). The weekend was spent with some old friends and many new. It was a small Rendezvous compared to others, due to boat me-

chanical problems and injuries on the ski slopes, but fun was still had by all.

During the day Friday, all boats arrived but one, with BIG BRIVET arriving early Saturday morning. Friday evening all gathered aboard INSPIRATION for heavy hors d'oeuvres and wine tasting. Let's say there was not much wine left at the end of the evening.

Saturday morning, as some of the ladies walked to the one block town of Port Ludlow to have coffee and gift shop, other attendees gathered aboard RUFY ANNE for a seminar conducted by Russ de Ment, of West Marine, on electronic charting. This was a high-interest topic with much discussion, with everyone learning something new, no matter his or her level of knowledge. West Marine gracefully gave everyone in attendance a West Marine bag filled with trinkets and information. West Marine also donated a \$400 electronic chart software package and a folding pull crate that were given away as dinner door prizes. Everyone was in full agreement to have Russ back for future Rendezvous on other topics of interest.

Saturday afternoon was "Open Boat" tours. It is always great to see other boats, and the men always seem to get lost in the engine rooms. There were several drive-in participants in search of a DeFever, so this was a great opportunity for them to see the different boats and talk to the owners.

After touring all the boats, and finding the men, we all gathered for happy hour aboard EL CAPITAN, before attending the wonderful dinner in the Wreck Room at the Harbormaster Restaurant that Jamie Bima arranged for us. We were able to socialize and eat, while taking in the wonderful view of the marina and bay. At the completion of dinner, it was time for door prizes; the handy little folding pull crate went to Walt and Joan Vennemeyer (#400, MANATEE) and Brian and Toby Chamberlin (#790) took the \$400 electronic chart software home. Brian and Toby have bought a slip at Poulsbo Yacht Club, and now are looking for a boat to fit their slip, and now their new electronic chart software.

Before departing on Sunday, we all gathered around a bonfire to enjoy brunch, and to stay warm. To be a NW boater, you have to learn to go with our ever-changing weather. During brunch, everyone excitedly talked about our next Rendezvous in the fall, where it should be, and what activities everyone might enjoy. So stay tuned, and if we didn't see you this last spring, hopefully we will in the fall!!!

Attending, with boat: Jamie & Bob Bima (#585, DF48 INSPIRATION), Dale & Linda Bixler (#556, DF49RPH EL CAPITAN), Larry & Dorothy Dubia (#753, DF48 BIG BRIVET), Rod & Marilyn Hansen (#767, DF54 BLUE EAGLE, with guests - Gerry & Judy KarWhite), Bill & Cam Haslund (#647, DF49RPH CAMEO II), Bill & Kathy Mark (#596, DF54 RUFY ANNE), Ron & Karyl Nelson (#757, DF 45RPH VIOLET A). Walt & Joan Vennemeyer (#400, DF48 MANATEE), were guests aboard INSPIRATION, and Don Sorenson (#235, DF60 ESPERANZA), Lee & Ellen Thompson (#675, DF49RPH SeaRoamer), and Brian & Toby Chamberlin (#790, wannabes) came by car. ◆◆

Articles and photos needed for next issue. Please send by September 10! ◆◆