

The BIG U

Alaska to Maine

In a Nordhavn 40

Sprezzatura

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Trawlerfest, Baltimore

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A Short History

- Grew up in a large family in an 1903 “orange grove home” in Upland, California east of Los Angeles
- When I was 6, Mom and Dad bought a 25’ park trailer and 16’ Glaspar with a 75hp Johnson at Black Meadow Landing on Lake Havasu, California
- Spent every summer, all summer at the Lake through College



A Short History

- Bought a 1979 24' Campbell Cuddy Cabin, 454 V-8 Mercruiser 330 out-drive
- “Got Retired”
- Divorce final
- Daughter left for college
- Decided to make a change for a few years



THE BIG U in 7 Steps

1. Buy a Trawler – May 18, 2016
2. Move to Canada – November, 2016
3. Go North Young Man: Alaska - April – August, 2017
4. Get Warm, Go to Mexico – September, 2017
5. To the Panama Canal - November 2018 – March, 2019
6. Jamaica and Bahamas – May, 2019
7. ICW To Maine – June - August, 2019
- + 8. Back to the Sea of Cortez – September, 2019 – June, 2021



Step 1

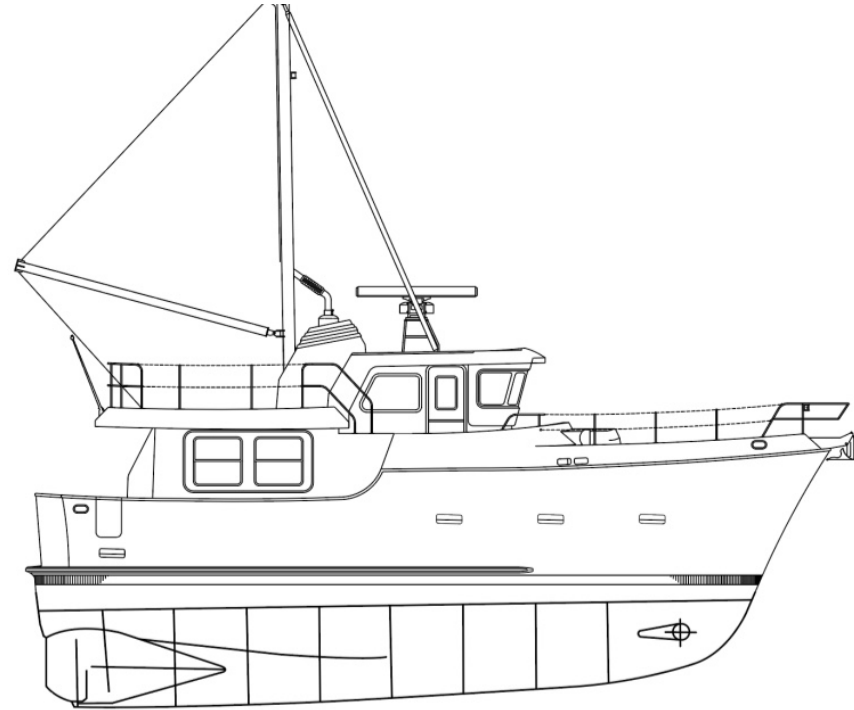
Buy a Trawler

May 2016

- Read The Trawler “Bible”
- Newport Beach In the water

boat show

- Decided Nordhavn
- Looked at N40, N43, N46, N47
- Bought 2001 N40#29 in Seattle, May 2016



Sprezzatura
Los Angeles-California

PANAMA CANAL - MARCH 2019

Step 1

Buy a Trawler

May 2016

- Get advice from experts
- Kabola diesel heater
- Captain training for insurance
- Tax avoidance
- Store boat



Step 2

Move to Canada

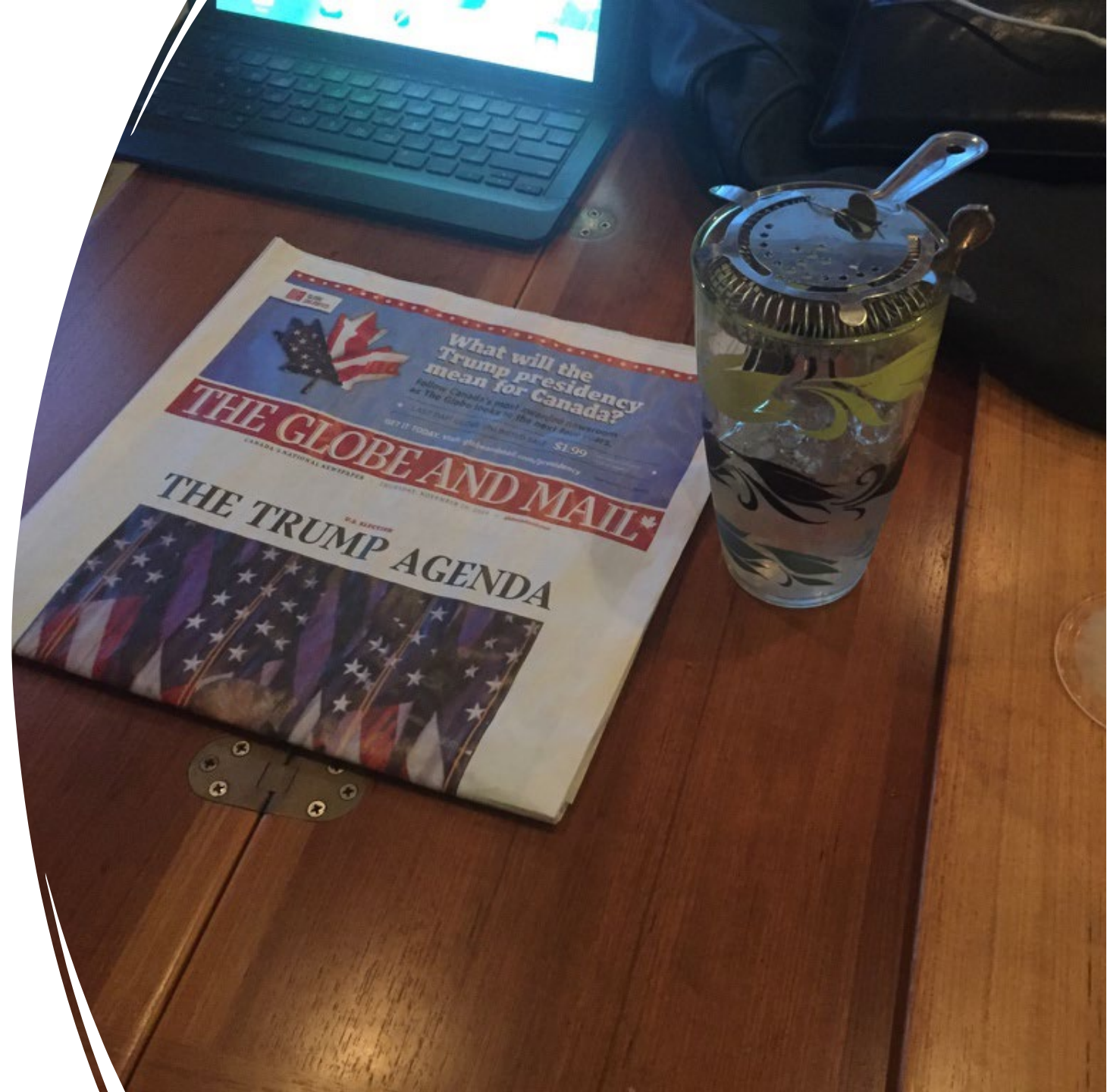
November 2016

- Tax Avoidance – Move boat to Canada
- Drove from LA to Anacortes in motorhome
- Moved aboard at Van Isle Marina, Sydney, BC, Canada



Step 2

Move to Canada



Step 2

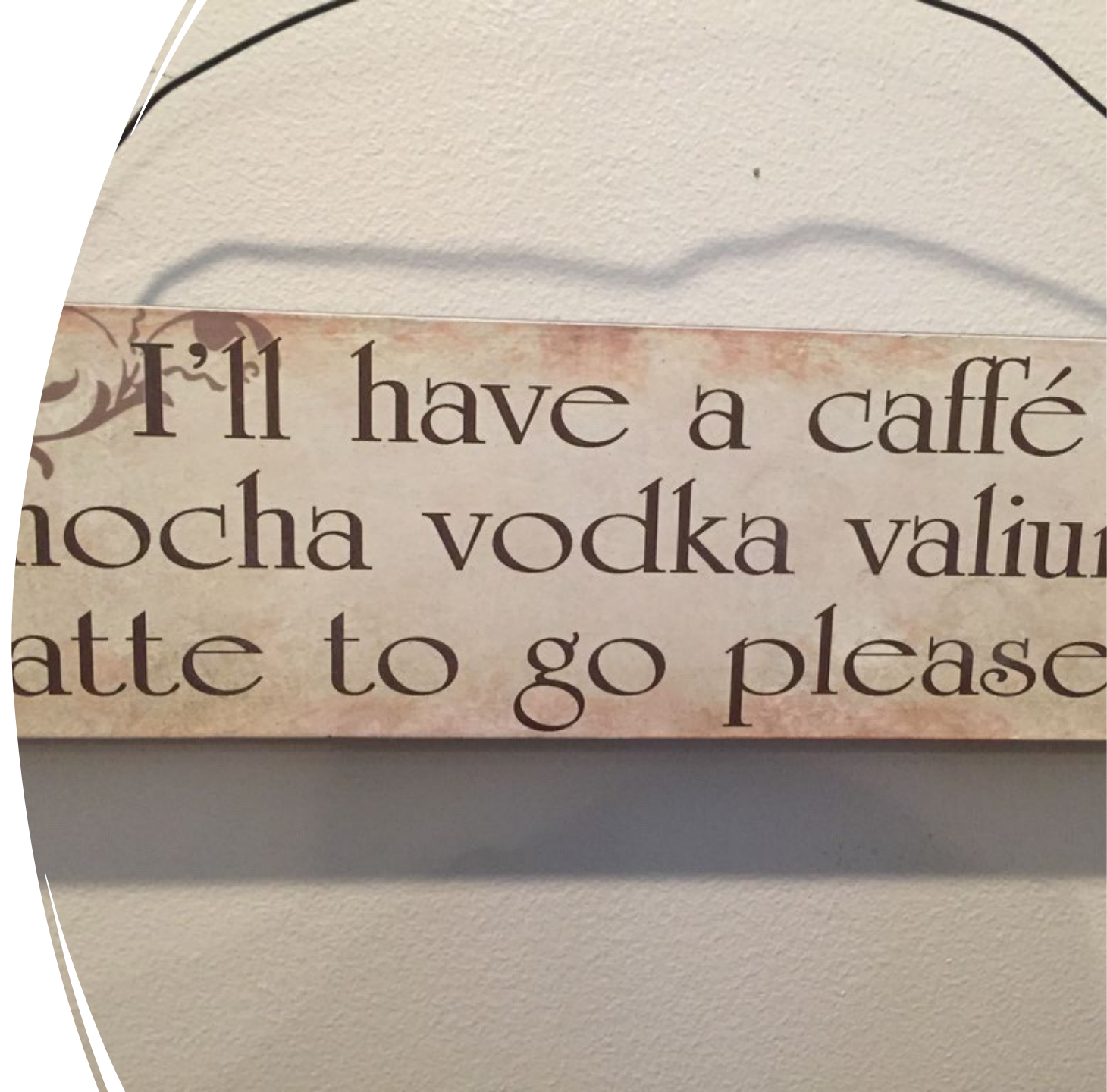
Move to Canada



Step 2

Move to Canada

- Work on boat in exotic location
- Bought spare parts
- Practice single-engine maneuvering every week



I'll have a caffè
nocha vodka valium
atte to go please

Step 2

Move Boat to Canada

- Moved the boat to Vancouver
- New electronics
- New Inverter
- New batteries
- Haul out



Step 2

Move boat to Canada

- Bottom paint
- Zincs
- Keel cooler
- Finish electronics



Step 3

Go North Young Man

April 2017

- Magazine survey circa 2008
 - Top Cruising Destinations
 - PNW
 - Alaska
 - Sea of Cortez
 - Caribbean



Step 3

Alaska

- Hired Captain Mike, \$400/day plus expenses
- 800 gallons diesel \$1.99/gal.
- “Super market sweep”
- Departed Anacortes



Step 3

Alaska

- 10 days to Ketchikan
- Docked at Doyon's Landing "Big Boat marina"



Alaska Stops

- Ketchikan
- Wrangle
- Petersburg
- Baranof Warm Springs
- Juneau
- Skagway
- Glacier Bay
- Hoonah
- Sitka
- Baranof Warm Springs
- Angoon
- Tracy Arm
- And many anchorages in between



Alaska Highlights Wilderness



Alaska Highlights Wilderness



Alaska Highlights Wildlife - Puffins



Alaska Highlights

Wildlife – Glacier Bay



Alaska
Highlights
Wildlife/Fishing
– She caught
the big halibut



Alaska Favorite Baranof Warm Springs Cove



Alaska Favorite Baranof Warm Springs Cove



Alaska Lowlights

- Weather
- Weather
- Weather
- Too much to see
- Too far to travel
- Too little time



Step 4

Go South - Get Warm

September 2017

- Back to Anacortes to fuel and get crew
- Hired “Omni Bob” for weather routing
- Head for San Diego
 - Newport, Oregon
 - Monterey, California
 - San Pedro, California
 - San Diego for month of October



Step 4

Go South - Get Warm

November 2017

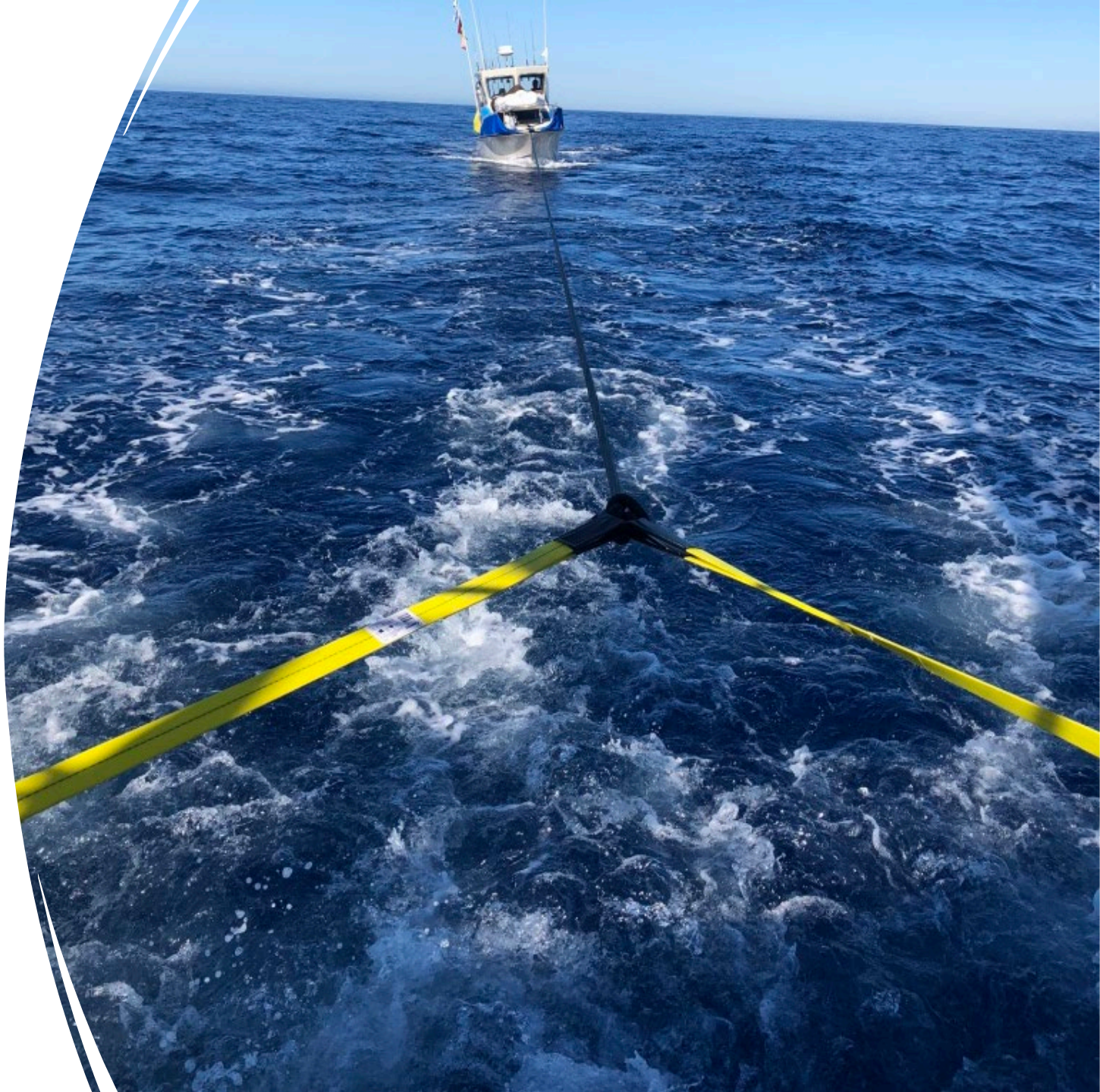
- Joined CUBAR
- Sam Landsman joined as crew
- Departed San Diego for La Paz, BCS



Step 4

Go South - Get Warm

- 110 NM from Cabo San Lucas the Brown Eyed Girl reported failure of outdrive
- Lots of radio discussion among the CUBAR fleet
- Brown Eyes Girl agrees to accept a tow
- We turn back 2 hours.
- Secure a towline at 2200
- Arrive Cabo next day 1700





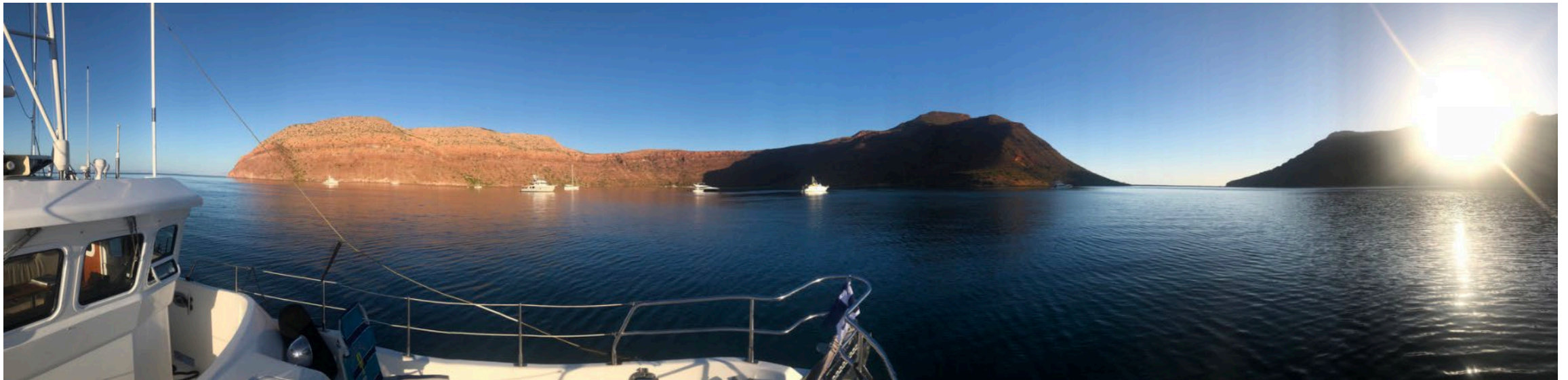
Step 4
Go South - Get Warm

Step 4 Go South - Get Warm



Step 4 Go South - Get Warm

- Cruised Sea of Cortez North to Santa Rosalia by Super Bowl Sunday
- South along Mexico Pacific coast to Barra de Navidad
- Returned to La Paz May of 2018 for hurricane season



Mexico Favorites

- Weather, weather, weather
- Warm water
- The People
- Food
- Costs
- The geography and wildlife



Mexico Favorite Locations

- The Sea of Cortez
 - Culeta Partida, La Paz
 - The Islands of Loreto
- Isla Isabella
- La Cruz
- Tenacatita near Barra de Navidad
- Zihuantanejo



Step 5

To the Panama Canal

November 2018

-
- Joined The Panama Posse in Barra de Navidad December, 2018
 - El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica – January
 - Panama – February and March
 - Panama Canal Transit – March 27, 2019



Route to Panama

- Favorites
 - Quepos, Costa Rica
 - El Salvador
 - Islands and coves of Panama coast
- Other
 - El Salvador
 - Nicaragua
 - Country Check In and Check Out
 - Mexico – 4 offices
 - Nicaragua – 4 Officers, \$120
 - Costa Rica – 3 offices, trip to airport, 2 days
 - Panama – 2 offices, trip to Panama City, 3 days



Panama Canal Transit

-
- Historically significant
 - “Path Between The Seas” David McCullough
 - Panama Posse
 - Hired an Agent, arranged lines
 - Friends and family line handlers
 - Long lake cruise



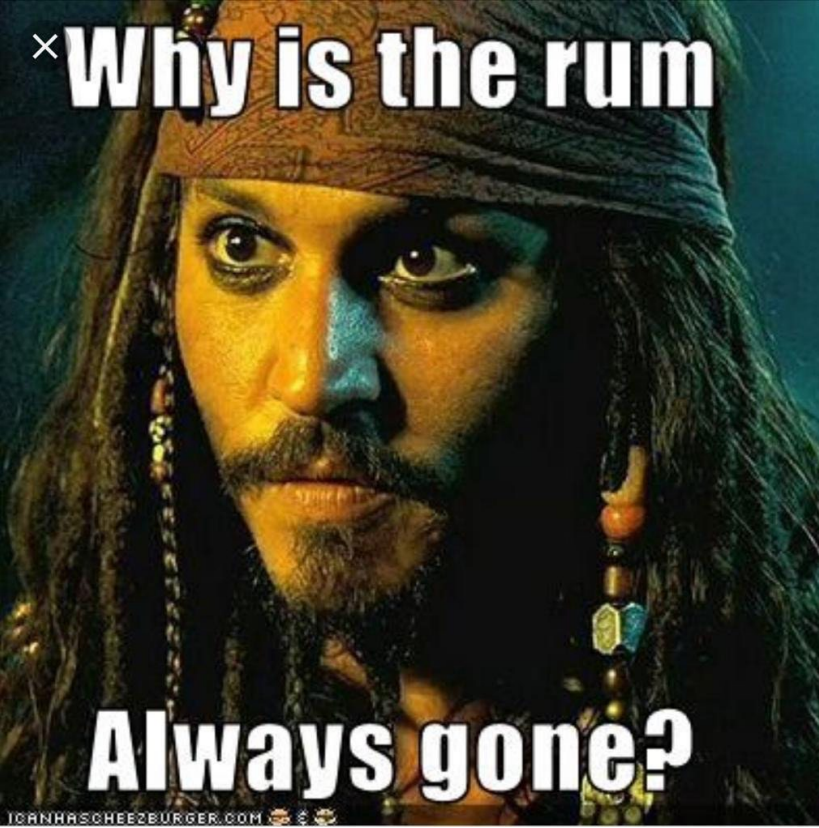
Panama Canal Transit



Step 6 Jamaica & Bahamas April 2019

- Short visit to San Blas Islands
- Decided against Southern Route
- Visit Bocas del Toro and wait for weather window
- Arrive Jamaica April 27





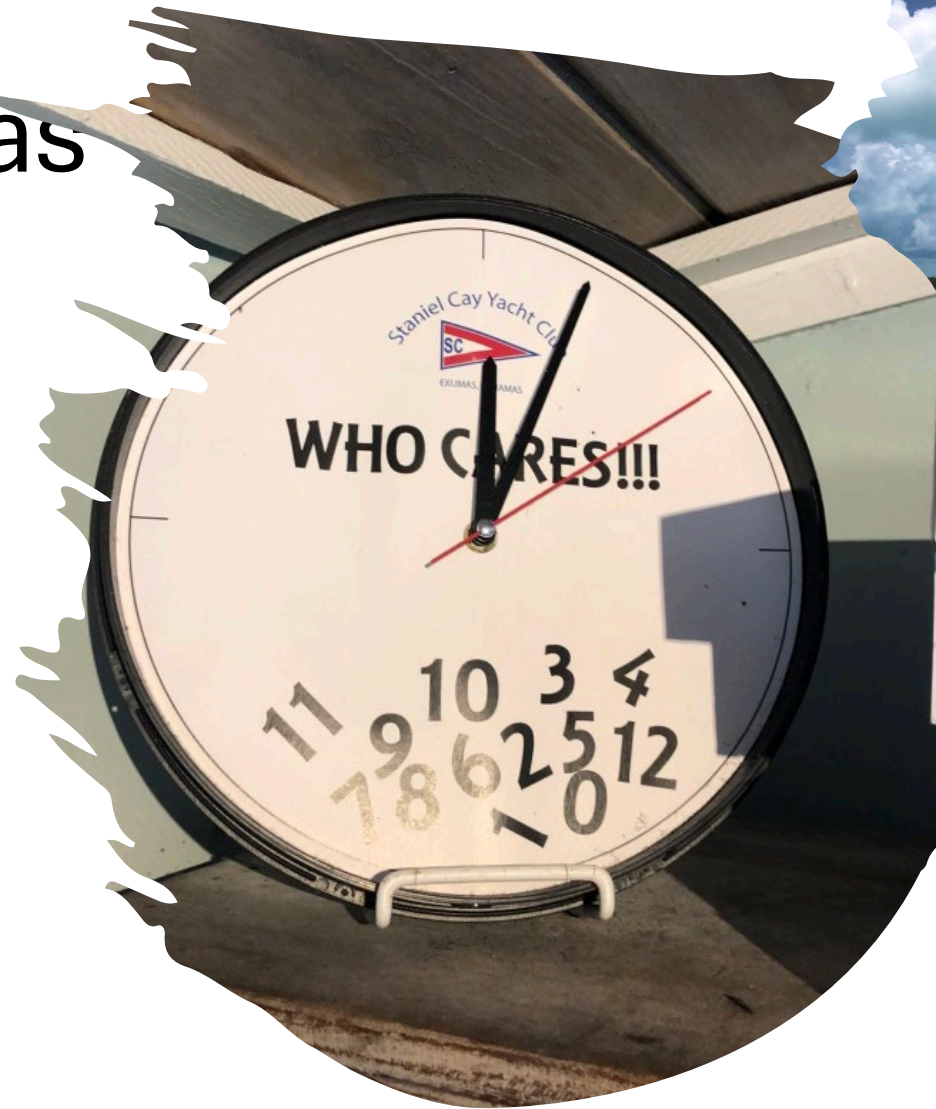
Step 6
The Bahamas
May, 2019

- Arrive Mathew Town May 2

Step 6

The Bahamas

May, 2019



Step 7

ICW to Maine

- Cruise Bahamas through June 2019
- New crew
- Transit to Cape Canaveral, Florida then start North in ICW



May

Florida – S. Carolina

- Port Canaveral, FL
- St. Simon's Island, GA
- Savannah, GA
- Beaufort, SC



June

S. Carolina – N. Carolina

- Dismal Swamp
- Beaufort, SC
- Charleston, SC
- Georgetown, SC
- Beaufort, NC
- Oriental, NC
- Elizabeth City, NC



June Norfolk – Washington D.C.

- Norfolk, VA
- Deltaville, VA
- Breton Bay, VA
- Washington, DC



July Annapolis – Rhode Island

- Annapolis
- Cape May
- Atlantic City
- New York
- Port Washington
- Mystic
- Block Island



July

Annapolis – Rhode Island

- Block Island
- Martha's Vineyard
- Nantucket Island
- Newport



August Rhode Island – Maine and the End of the Big U

- New Bedford
- Cohasset
- Rockport
- Mohegon Isle
- Camden
- Long Island
- Southwest Harbor
- Seal Harbor



Florida to Maine Highlights

- United States History – On the waterfront
 - Native People
 - Settlers
 - American Revolution
 - Civil War
- Variety
 - Geography
 - People
 - Architecture
 - Food



Florida to Maine

Not so great

-
- Maine
 - Lobster trap floats
 - Fog



THE BIG U

The Numbers

- 2 Years 4 months.
 - May 2017 to September 2019
- 10 Countries
- 15 States
- 8,950 Nautical Miles
- 5,890 Gallons of diesel fuel (1.5MPG including lots of generator use)
- 19 Different Crew Members
 - Family (4), friends (3) and strangers (12)
- 4 Times Aground
- 1 Lobster trap snagged on swim step in Maine



The Challenges

- Batteries dead in Annapolis, MD. Holiday weekend.
- Fuel manifold tank cracked 30 miles from Grand Inagua Island, Bahamas.
 - Filled bilge with diesel fuel
 - Patched tank – no welder
 - New tank fabricated in Grand Cayman
 - Lost 7 days in run to Panama Canal





Lessons Learned

- Safety
 - No guns
 - Choose your neighborhood
 - Listen to other boaters and web sites
 - Worst Case Scenario – GO TURTLE
- Safety Aboard
 - Crew training
 - Portuguese Bridge Rule



Lessons Learned

- It's an Electric Boat
 - Batteries
 - Inverter/Charger
 - External regulator
 - Solar
 - Lithium Ion

Lessons Learned

- Electronics
 - Auto pilot
 - Depth sounder
 - Radar
 - Chart plotter
 - Communications



Lessons Learned Communications

Constant improvement:

- SeriusXM
- Cell Phone booster
- Iridium Go
- PredictWind Offshore Weather
- Mexico Cell Service
- GoogleFi
- Starlink





Lessons Learned

- Anchoring is always a unique problem, a 3D puzzle
 - Get a “modern” anchor
- Navigation
 - Plan a safe route
 - Zoom-in
 - Keep your head up
 - Look around
 - **AND PAY ATTENTION!**
- Guide Books – “It’s the **GREATEST** place!” and “You could die...”



Lessons Learned

- “Red Light – Green Light” Situations
 - Tides and currents
 - The Tejuantipec
 - Bar crossings – El Salvador
- Fishing – Experience matters. But, some simple solutions exist
- Most places have tractor parts and services
- Solo passages can be managed



Lessons Learned

- Overnight passages
 - Watches
 - Settled on 6 hour shifts
 - Night Owl – Early Bird
 - Radar x 2
 - 3 miles and 12 miles
 - Food
 - Hard boiled eggs
 - Energy bars
 - Pre-made coffee
 - Rules
 - 1st Worry – Wake Me!
 - Never outside
- Solo cruising

+ Step 8

Return to The Sea of Cortez

- My favorite cruising area
- Not The Mediterranean
 - Too far away in many ways
 - Cruisers comments
 - Sell the boat, buy a boat
 - Charter in Croatia, Greece and Turkey





Aftermath: The COVID Adventure

- January 8, 2020, Ft. Lauderdale: “A VERY BAD COLD”
- January 15 , cruised to Bahamas with N68 Floating Stones
- February 15, COVID 19 Shut-downs starting to emerge
- February 20, Depart Bahamas to make a run to the Panama Canal. Manifold tank cracks. Delays...
- February 27, Stop in Grand Cayman. Crew departs for England. Delays...
- March 13, New Crew arrives from Florida. Provisioned fuel and food for “The Worst Case Scenaio”
- March 14, Departed Grand Cayman for Bocas del Toro, Panama

Aftermath: The Long Wait in Panama

- March 18, 2020, Arrive Bocas del Toro with SV EXIT
- March 19, Ordered to depart Panama by armed Navy boat in 10 minutes (Or?)
 - Allowed to stay for 14-day quarantine, anchored in front of the Navy dock. Not allowed to get off the boat (NO swimming).
- April 2, Cleared by Health Authorities. Crew leaves on a boat for Florida
- April 3, While obtaining Annual Cruising Permit, Panama announces ban on all boat (and car) movement and 24/7 Curfew. No alcohol sales.
- April 14, Allowed to leave Navy dock anchorage for fuel at Red Frog Marina
- April 15, Moved to Dolphin Cove. For 2 months. Alone.

Aftermath: The Long Wait in Panama is Over

- May 28, Worked a scheme to move from Bocas del Toro to Colon, Panama and Shelter Bay Marina
- Hauled out, shrink wrapped Sprezzatura for an indeterminate storage duration. “Plan for 1-2 years”
- Obtained a seat on a “Humanitarian Flight” through the US Embassy
- USA for 5 months
- October 12, Panama opens to foreign flights
- October 15, Flight to Panama City
- October 31, 2020 Panama Canal Transit
- September 30, 2021, Marina Puerto Escondido, Loreto, BCS, MX

WHY GO??

- Grand sense of exploration
- Stay as long as it's interesting and fun
- History
- Cruising community
- Geography, geology, wildlife, people, food
- Learning
- Scare yourself



THE BIG U

The time spent boating is not deducted from your total lifespan...



THE BIG U

Thank You
For Attending
and
Safe Cruising!

