

Headlines

June 9, 2011

Discovering *Eden*, finding paradise

By Jeff Merrill



A couple of years ago I listed a beautiful Nordhavn 47 for sale down in San Diego, called **Convexity**. The owner was a client of my good friend and colleague, Don Kohlmann (who runs our Nordhavn NW operations), and after using his new 47 in Seattle he got a job transfer to the east



coast and decided to bring his boat around through the Canal. They made it south to San Diego and after a couple of months of figuring logistics and rearranging plans they ultimately decided that it would be better to sell **Convexity** and leave it in southern California.

Don asked me to co-list the boat and so I drove to San Diego to get acquainted, take photos and make notes for the write up. **Convexity** is a two stateroom, flybridge, stack and davit arrangement – probably our most popular configuration and she was priced right so I knew that we could find a buyer. But it is about a 100 mile drive from my home for me to show her so I coordinated with our Dana Point mooring manager, Sarah Copper and a couple weeks later a slip opened up closer to home base and I made plans to move **Convexity** up from San Diego.



Adam Block was one of my top prospects for **Convexity** and I sent him the write up and a raft of photos and he was very intrigued. In fact when I told him I was going to bring **Convexity** from San Diego to Dana Point and asked if he would like to crew he gladly accepted and flew down with his fiancé, Eve. I went down by train and we met in San Diego one evening for dinner, then lightly provisioned necessities and made the boat ready for a morning departure. We all slept aboard and started the coffee at sun up to meander from Pier 32 (deep in the San Diego harbor) and out through the Bay into the Pacific. It's about a 70 mile run up the coast and we had a relatively smooth time once we bounced through the choppy swells off Point Loma and turned north. There is something very convincing about being actually underway on a Nordhavn – it's not necessarily a deal breaker if, as a serious Nordhavn shopper, you don't get the opportunity to go for a one-day offshore adventure, but I highly recommend it. We made the most of our trip and Adam was sold.



Due to work and other timing constraints Adam and Eve (did you catch that the first time?)



knew they wanted to own **Convexity**, but weren't quite ready to formally sign up. Adam is involved in commercial real estate and proposed a lease with option to buy arrangement. We discussed it with our legal expert, Cris Wenthur (www.wenthurlawgroup.com) and drafted a lease agreement to present to the owners of **Convexity**. After a couple of back and forths a



deal was struck (complicated by insurance, financing, legal and a myriad other issues too involved too detail) and soon Adam and Eve came down to Dana Point to sail **Convexity** up to their Bay area slip. For the couple, the trip up the coast was rougher than the risk of ownership – which was mitigated somewhat by the plan to ease into ownership. If things didn't quite work out the lease could be terminated and **Convexity** would reset back to her original owner.



For the better part of a year Adam and Eve settled into **Convexity** and went over her systems, updated her nav/com electronics and started getting real serious about winding down their real world jobs so that they could take off on the dream adventure they had been preparing for, a South Pacific expedition. They got married, consolidated homes

and started selling what they didn't need and shopping for those things they'd need to fulfill their cruising goals.



As 2010 wound down their plans firmed up for an April 2011 trans-Pacific crossing in a loose convoy with the Nordhavn 55 **SKIE** owned by Peter and Margaret Sheppard of Australia (who shipped their 44 to North America after circumnavigating Australia). The lease was finalized into a purchase agreement with a closing before heading across the US border to Cabo San Lucas in Mexico and **Convexity** needed to start working south to rendezvous with **SKIE**.



In early March, my son 13 year old son Jonn and I flew up to Oakland on a Thursday afternoon to help deliver **Convexity** south. The entire crew enjoyed a wonderful dinner with Adam's parents,

Stephen and Dale and then worked out an intricate weave of cars loaded with gear and supplies juggled between homes and boat to complete final preparations for our departure. Eve brought along her 15 year old cat, Giuseppe, but Adam had to leave his beloved dog Hobbes ashore with Stephen and Dale.



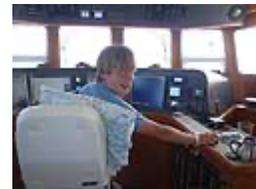
Convexity looked like a storage unit – the saloon and staterooms were filled with boxes, cartons and clear plastic tubs loaded with all of the spares and essentials for an extended trip. The weather window looked good and after a long morning Adam and I finished stowing all of the

gear while Jonn and Eve did a final grocery shopping trip.

At noon on Friday we left home base in Emeryville (East Bay near Oakland) and set sail towards the Golden Gate. It was a sunny day, no wind and not much traffic. As we approached the Gate we had some unusual vibrations –what is this, cavitation? Adam went to the engine room and everything looked good, but the transmission was showing temperature readings in the 300 degree range, way too hot. We started the wing engine, put the main in neutral and turned back, heading for



KKMI a great service yard in Richmond where **Convexity** had spent two months getting ready for this trip. With good cell coverage I called the Nordhavn lifeline – Bob Senter from ADE Lugger/Northern Lights, aka “Lugger Bob”. Bob picked up on this Friday afternoon and we ran through scenarios of what could be causing this. We were bummed that our trip was being detoured, but somewhat relieved that our issue had popped up before we had ventured out to sea and while it was still light (things always seem more exaggerated at night). Bob agreed with our retreat and two hours later (running on the wing and then gradually “testing” some load on the main once the transmission cooled to a normal 190 degree temperature) we pulled into the docks at KKMI where two service techs, Roberto and Michael grabbed our lines and came aboard to inspect the engine room (3pm on a Friday afternoon, I’m sure they were thinking *weekend is almost here...*) and now we had arrived with an urgent request to see if they could identify anything amiss. On our retreat we were able to run at 1800 rpm on the main with all temperature values normal, the transmission had miraculously cured itself and yet we knew we’d all feel more confident if we had some professional mechanics look things over. Well, they couldn’t find anything and so we decided that since our run back to the dock on the main didn’t replicate the high transmission temperatures, maybe we had snagged something that had come loose...so we regrouped and set sail again.



It was just after sunset when we powered under the Golden Gate, hopeful that our surprises were over and that we could settle into a groove as the night enveloped us. This was a significant moment for Adam and Eve because, barring anything unforeseen, they will not



likely see the Golden Gate for a long time as they travel the Pacific, so we took some photos and appreciated not only the landmark spanning the entrance, but the book mark in their personal travel log. Departing with an ebb tide we had reasonable speed through the channel buoys and had some bucking bronco swells that helped



identify loose provisions and gear that needed to be better secured. Giuseppe had a rough go of it and Eve got a bit green, but after about an hour of slugging out (and lowering our speed to smooth out the ride) we finally turned south and worked our way towards Half Moon Bay.

Pizza for dinner – Jonn was in heaven and we slowly got our groove going as the glowing

lights of San Francisco faded into individual shore sparkles and we plodded southbound in the night. The transmission temperature was checked every watch and it had settled in to the 190 degree range so we were comfortable and confident as the rotating watches brought us into morning.



Every boat I have ever crewed on reveals secrets of her masters – an interesting tidbit into the human psyche (and in this case two great food revelations to nourish our souls). Jonn discovered Eve's stash of green apple Jelly Bellys and I found that Junior Mints are a great taste treat to



pop in your mouth when starting a watch. Adam felt that the steering was a bit soft so he quickly diagnosed that we had lost some of the hydraulic fluid in the reservoir and topped it off. Running most of the time at an average of 1700 rpm and 7 knots through the water about 20 miles off shore and in very pleasant sea and wind conditions. We traded off on 3-hour shifts (Jonn with me) and worked our way through the day and night – just eating (cheeseburgers for second night's dinner – big smiles from Jonn), talking, sleeping and making steady progress down the coast.



We got around Point Conception on our second morning and realized we would be in Santa Barbara about noon. Using the internet we found Jonn and I could take a train home mid-afternoon so we pulled into port and enjoyed seeing several other Nordhavns and found ourselves in the



middle of Santa Barbara Yacht Club's Opening Day parade. It was about a 48 hour trip from dock to dock covering just over 300 miles (including the detour to KKMI) and a great opportunity to get some night watches in and do a two day non-stop. A good practice run to get ready for a longer trip south bound to Cabo and then westward across the Pacific.



A week or so later I met up with Adam and Eve in San Diego for some final training tips, some procedural paperwork to rechristen 4740 as *Eden* and an informal goodbye send off as they prepared to head south to regroup in Mexico before setting out to cross the Pacific. I look forward to seeing the emails and post cards as they continue their adventures and thank them (and Guisepe) for a wonderful trip down

the coast.

Author's Note. Eden crosses Pacific and lands in the Marquesas June 7, 2011

I wanted to wait to publish this story when I knew that the difficult Pacific Crossing was completed. The goal all along was to go to Mexico, hook up with *SKIE* and "buddy boat" to the Marquesas, but delays, schedules and weather windows didn't match up for the two



Nordhavns and **SKIE** completed her trip across the puddle in April. ([see Distance Pennant note:](#)) **Eden** took off in early May with just Adam and Eve, but turned back when Eve became ill and they realized that a long Pacific crossing with a crew of two could be very trying if one of them was out of commission. They were able to get a third, an experienced Nordhavn ocean crosser who had done the Nordhavn Atlantic Rally back in 2004 and the second attempt I got daily Inmarsat waypoints which resulted in a June 7th email that stated simply,



“And we have arrived!”

Well done Eden, you did it and paradise surrounds you. I’m sure you are eager for fresh vegetable and fruit and if I may, I suggest you stick with pineapple (avoid other kinds of apples). I conclude with a photo of a sailboat transom that was moored directly behind **Eden** in the Bay area – an inspiring name whose reflection became a dream come true. Congratulations Adam and Eve!



Jeff Merrill is a sales broker for Nordhavn based in California. Jeff has been involved in the building and reselling of several Nordhavn 47s and has extensive offshore experience aboard this marvelous design including a harrowing 4 day trip from Portland, OR to Dana Point, CA in gale force winds (a story that was not written up) and other more pleasant trips like his times aboard Eden. Please email Jeff if you would like to know more about the Nordhavn 47 - jeff.merrill@nordhavn.com.