

THE BIG U

Alaska to Maine

Unplanned Adventure
On the
Nordhavn 40

Sprezzatura

Eric Bescooby



A Short History

- Grew up in a large family in an 1903 “orange grove” home in Upland, California
- 1960 Mom and Dad bought a 25’ park trailer and 16’ boat at Black Meadow Landing on Lake Havasu



A Short History

16' Glaspar 75HP
Johnson



A Short History

18' Glaspar 100HP
Evinrude



A Short History

- 19' SeaFlite Buick V-6 OMC Outdrive
- Also bought a 14' Hobie Cat in 1969 and learned to sail



A Short History

- 1973 21' Spectra, 455 Olds V8 with V-Drive, \$10,500
- Sold it in 2016 for \$14,000



A Short History

- Worked Summers at Lake Havasu
- University of California Davis, Mechanical Engineering
 - Manufacturing Management
- Arizona State University, MBA
- Got married
- National Steel and Shipbuilding, San Diego
- Maquiladora, Tijuana
- CEO, Manufacturing and Distribution Companies



A Short History

- Married 30 years
- 2 Sons and 1 Daughter
- Raced Hobie Cats for 15 years
- Power Squadron classes
- Dolphin Book of the Month Club, sailing books



A Short History

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



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

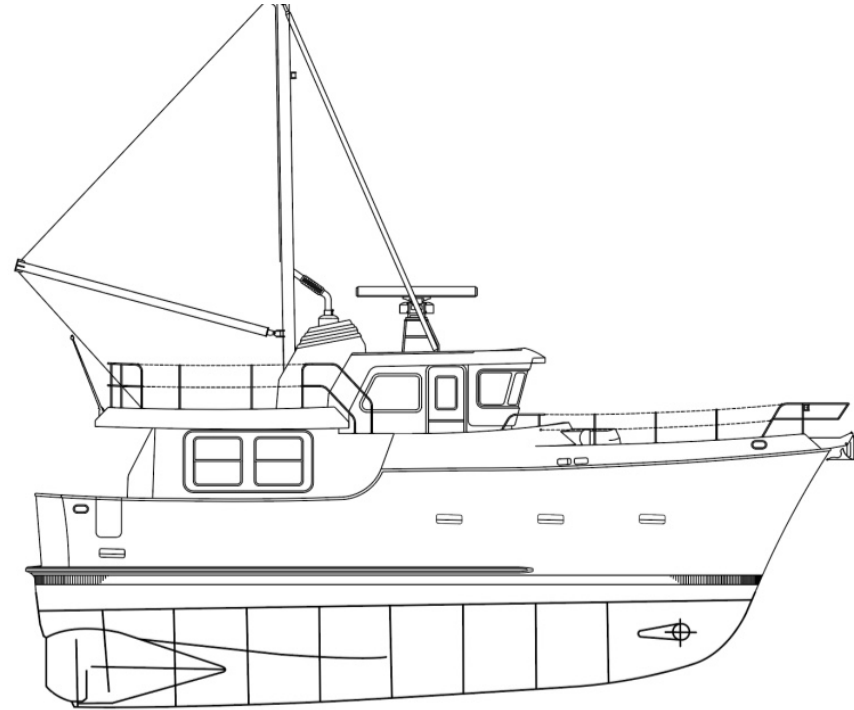


Step 1

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

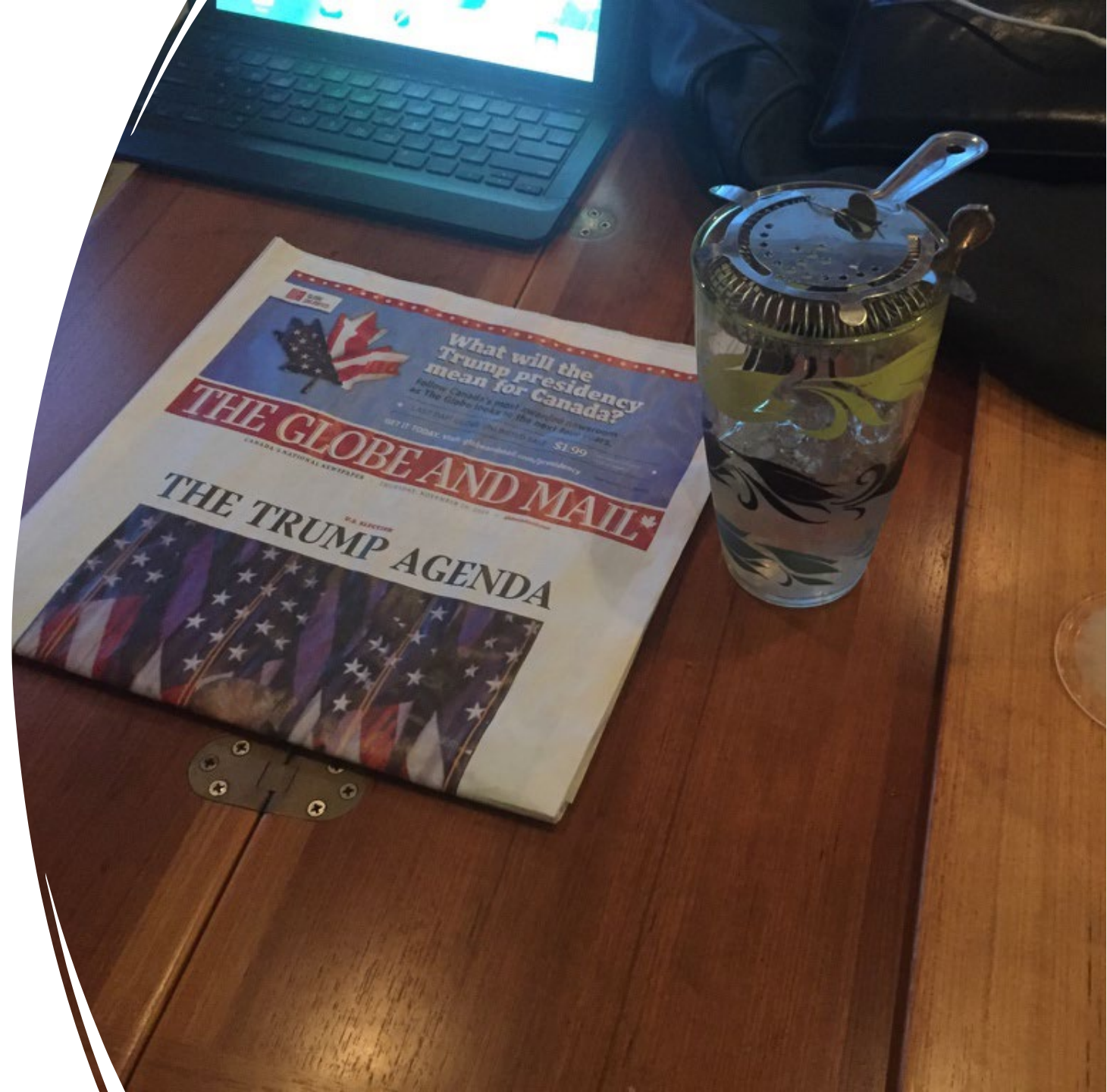
November 2016

- 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

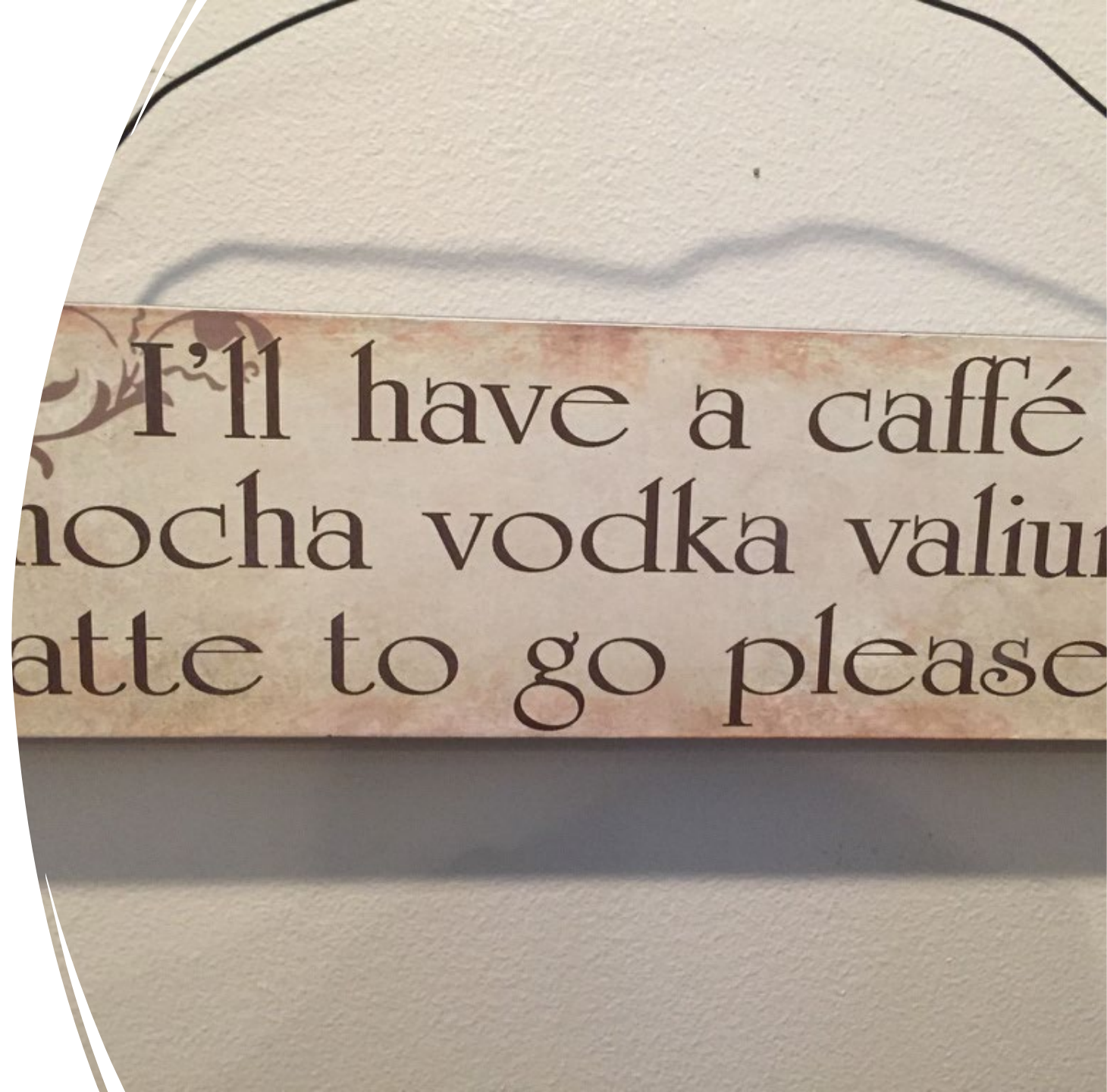
Move to Canada



Step 2

Move to Canada

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



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

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



Step 3

Alaska

- Cap Sante Marina
- 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"
- Seaplane tour
- R2AK



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 Wilderness



Alaska Highlights Wildlife - Puffins



Alaska Highlights

Wildlife – Glacier Bay



Alaska Highlights

Wildlife – Juvenile Bald Eagles



Alaska Highlights Wildlife – Baby Brown Bear



Alaska
Highlights
Wildlife – 11
Humpback's
Bubble Feeding



Alaska
Highlights
Wildlife/Fishing
– She caught
the big halibut



Alaska Favorite Baranof Warm Springs Cove



Alaska Favorite Baranof Warm Springs Cove



Alaska
Favorite
Baranof Warm
Springs Cove



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

- Canada brought sunshine
- 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

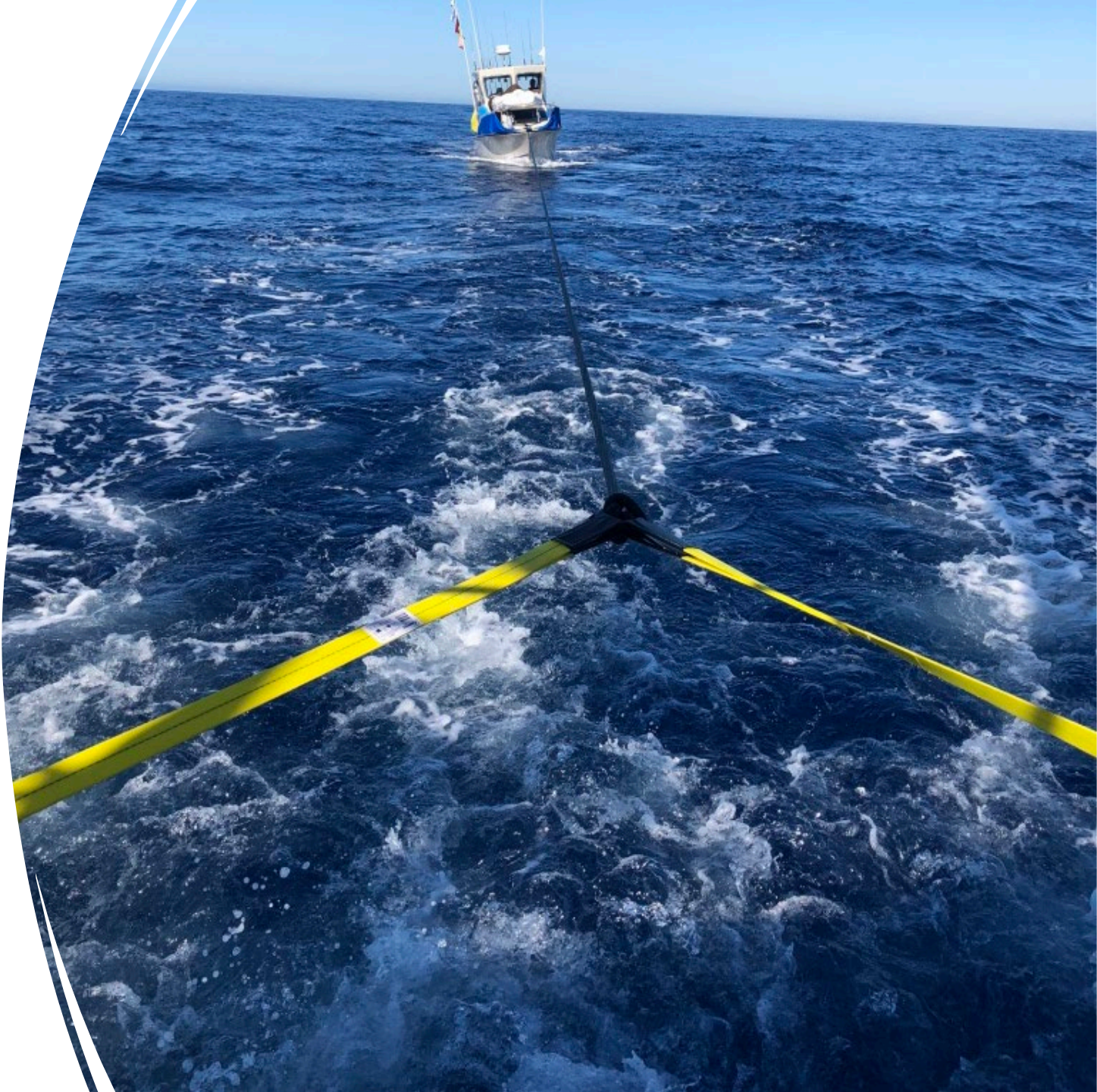
- Joined CUBAR
- Sam Landsman joined as crew
- Departed San Diego for La Paz, BCS



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





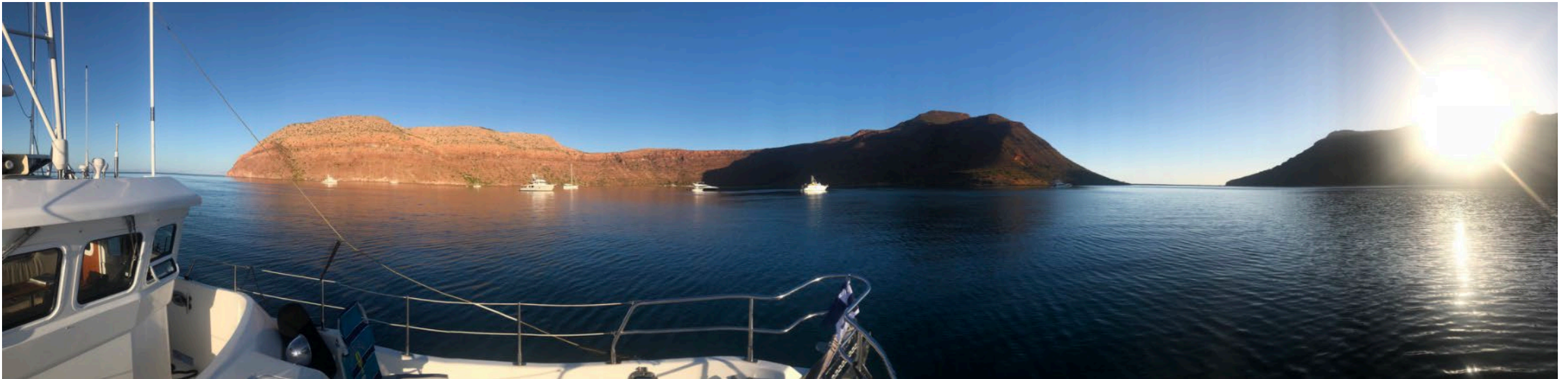
Step 4
Go South - Get Warm

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

- Hurricane scare in Mazatlán
- Joined The Panama Posse in Barra de Navidad December, 2018.
- New crew
- 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



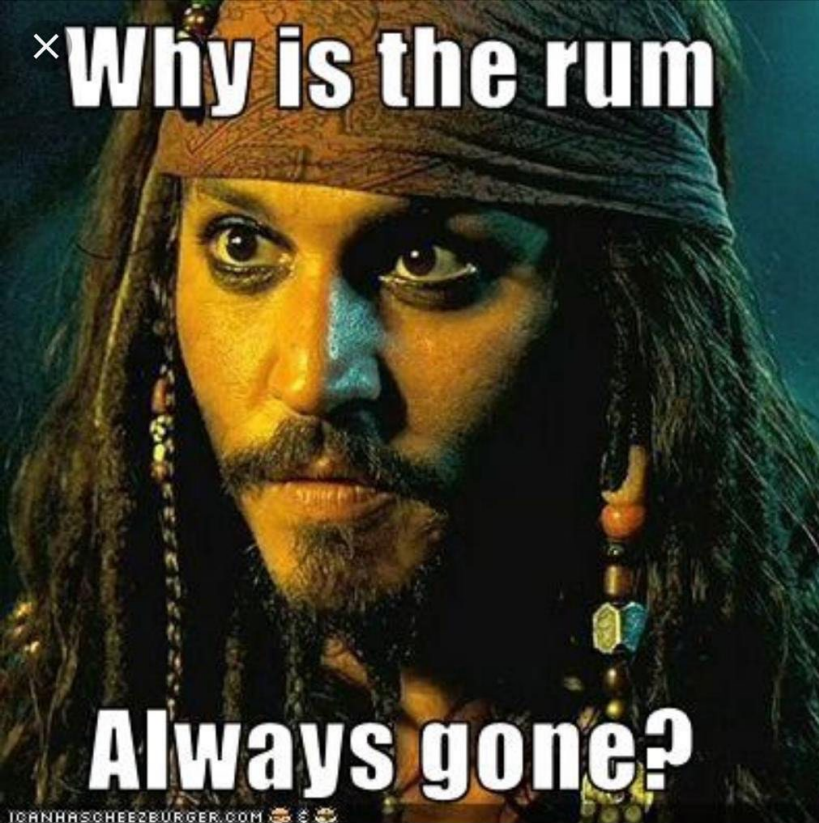
Panama Canal Transit



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
- New crew
- Arrive Jamaica April 27





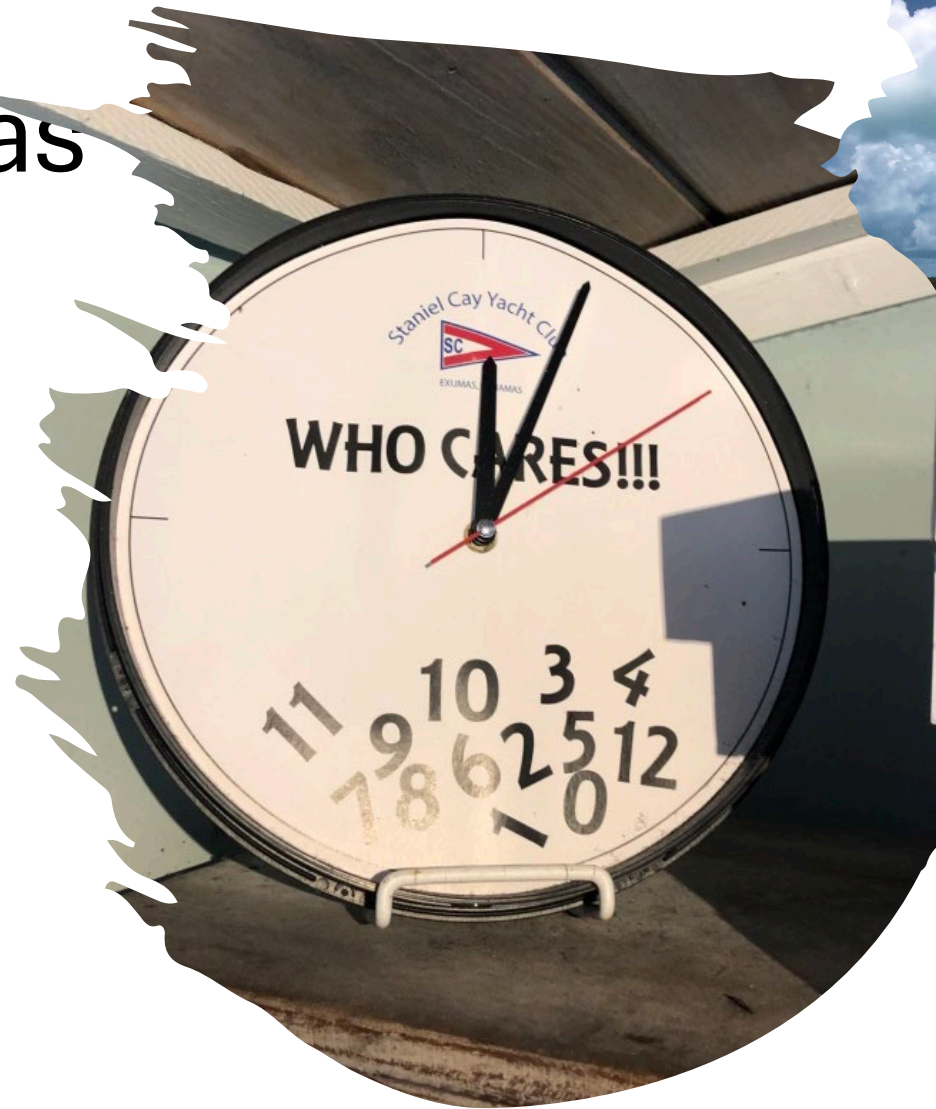
Step 6
The Bahamas
May, 2019

- 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



Step 7 ICW to Maine

- Joined N68 Floating Stones in Savannah



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, MD
- Cape May, NJ
- Atlantic City, NJ
- New York, NY
- Port Washington, NY
- Mystic, CT
- Block Island, RI



July

Annapolis – Rhode Island

- Mystic, CT
- Block Island, RI
- Martha's Vineyard, MA
- Nantucket Island, MA
- Newport, RI



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

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



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 Time 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
 - Yes dog
 - 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

- SiriusXM
- 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
 - Night Owl – Early Bird
 - Radar
 - 3 miles – 12 miles
 - Food
 - Hard boiled eggs
 - Energy bars
 - Pre-made coffee
 - Rules
 - 1st Worry – Wake Me!
 - Never outside
- Solo

+ 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, FL: “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 Dolphin Cove 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
- History
- Cruising community
- Geography, geology, wildlife, people, food
- Learning
- Scare yourself



THE BIG U

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



THE BIG U

Thank You
For
Attending!

