



Dirty secrets beneath Snug Cove: just some of the garbage divers found in the marina at Shakedown!

Spring cleaning and Easter on the horizon...



Chocolate eggs and funny hats coming to a marina near you – hope to see many of you in Ladysmith as we missed Shakedown. Now mandatory masks and vaccine cards are a thing of the past, but I, for one, will be keeping my mask close by. So while life and spring are signalling renewal, tough confusing times are still with us (“don’t mention the war”). This, too, shall pass, they say but it can’t happen soon enough.

We’ve all been that person – the one who just **has** to have that special part, or the engine fixed, or the sail mended ... “right away”. Last time it was our cooler not cooling – the day we intended to leave to take part in the Broughton cruise. **Staff Captain Doug** brings us a presentation by **Rod Baker** who knows everything about urgently needed repairs and the people who demand them! (Guilty as charged.)

At the time of writing *Naida* has gone south to Barra de Navidad and back up north again, to the Baja. And we finally have the answer to life, the universe and everything from another offshore cruiser – cookies for thought.

Fleet Captain Robert updates us about plans for Easter and everything else and also tells us how to safely dispose of our out-of-date flares. Mark your calendars for Sailpast and reserve your space at the marina so you’re not disappointed. **Dar** reports on a successful Shakedown with photos provided by **Lorraine**.

John D. found accounts of the Easter Cruise to Pirates and a memorable Sailpast dating to 1985 – the good old days. Lots to read when you aren’t spring cleaning the boat!

Suzanne Walker, Editor *S/V White Wolf*

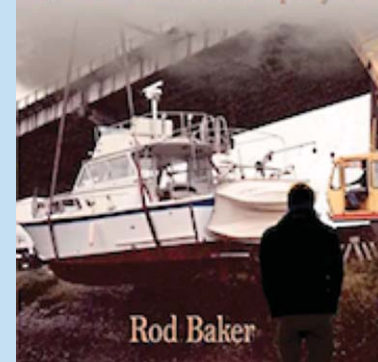


APRIL 11TH

Rod Baker

**I Need My Yacht
by Friday!**

True tales from the boat repair yard.



**Would you buy a boat
repair business not
knowing anything about
boats?**

Rod did!

See Staff Captain's Report p.4

GULF SAILOR

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Commodore: Pat Costa
Sparkle Plenty

Vice Com: Cathie West
Serenity

Fleet Captain: Robert Sinkus
Reality

Staff Captain: Doug MacLeod
Willpower

Exec. Officer: Martin Pengelly
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Tango

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Beautiful Day

Past Com: Christie Stangroom
Christie Cove

Hon. Editor: Suzanne Walker
White Wolf
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Commodore's Message

Our first in-person/hybrid meeting at the Maritime Museum was held March 14th. It was so enjoyable to welcome our members both in person and via computer links. Of course, this event didn't just happen on its own. **Andreas and Doug** were on scene early to address technical set-up issues for our inaugural hybrid event. I must admit it was different speaking to an audience in front and behind. The Maritime Museum has made some changes in the past two COVID years resulting in our name tags and coffee supplies not being accessible. **Chris and Cathy** were not phased, however, and provided refreshing sparkling water, as a replacement.

A special mention and thanks to **John and Karen Laing** for making the trip from Vancouver Island. It was fitting that we had a member presenting for our first evening back. John's comprehensive talk on 'Rounding the Horn' highlighted the challenges of navigating these perilous waters. The review and explanations on latitude and longitude determination over the millennia, makes us appreciate all the modern technologies we have at our fingertips.



Pat Costa, Commodore,
S/V Sparkle Plenty

Winners of your favourite photos of 2021 will be announced at our April 11th Maritime Museum meeting – I hope everyone got a chance to vote. Our first cruise of 2022, Shakedown, was held at Snug Cove and while it initially appeared we had angered the weather gods, some sun did finally appear Sunday. GYC members gathered in a private area at Doc Morgan's and the general consensus was of a most enjoyable evening with good food.

Thanks to **Robert, Dar, Chris, and Jane** for putting this event together. Our Easter Cruise is being hosted by our Vancouver Island contingent at Clam Bay and Ladysmith. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the Maritime Museum or on the water!

Shakedown Cruise March, 2022

This Shakedown Cruise was our first cruise of the year and our first Shakedown Cruise in two years. We had an amazing turnout of 16 boats:

Boqueron (Laura and Don), *Christie Cove* (Chris and Ragnar), *Contender* (George), *Feliner* (Barry and his guest, Dan), *Forever Young* (Phill and Nancy), *Kailani* (Jane and Martin), *Lady Dane* (Ted and Dee), *Moondance* (Liz and Klaus), *Reality* (Robert), *SawLeeAh* (Dar and Rod), *Sassy* (Cecilia and Harry), *Somerset* (Lorraine and George), *Sparkle Plenty* (Pat and Roy), *Tantramar* (John and Terry), *Willpower* (Mariette and Doug), *Zelda* (David and Kerry)

We met at Snug Cove as usual but it was a different cruise from the past without the Summerhouse: no potluck, no pancake breakfast and no boat building. Nevertheless, we all managed to have a good time.



Dar Farrell,
S/V SawLeeAh

Most of the boats arrived Friday and Barry on *Feliner* invited everyone to his boat for happy hour.



All photos many thanks to Lorraine de la Morandière. Appies in Feliner's huge cockpit: Left to right: David, Dar, Chris, Klaus, Liz, Mariette, Doug. Middle: Chris, Jane, John, Martin, George P. Right: Martin, Harry, George P., Doug, Terry, Roy.

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*And down below in Feliner's cabin: Left: Rod, Martin, George B., Nancy, Phill, Jane.
Middle: Lorraine, Rod, Harry, Cecilia. Right: Robert and Barry.*

I'm not sure what the men did on Saturday morning but I do know that the women went shopping. In the afternoon, one group went for a hike and another for a walk.

Shakedown coincided with a dive cleanup at USSC marina. Shore crew helped gather the debris brought up from the bottom of the cove.



Late Saturday afternoon, before meeting at Doc Martins, we met for another happy hour on Barry's boat. A huge thank you, Barry, for being so generous with your space.



*Dinner at Doc Morgans! Above: Doug, David, Barry, Kerry, Mariette.
Below: Terry, Rod, Liz, Klaus, Dar, John.*

*Above: Dee and Ted. Right: Jane, Cecilia, Harry, Martin.
Below: Roy, Nancy, Robert.*



Robert arranged for us to have dinner on Saturday evening at Doc Martins. There were 30 of us and we had our own room so it was a good chance for all to meet, share ideas and sailing plans and enjoy a good meal.



Meet-up in the parking lot! Left: David, Kerry, George P., Barry, Dan, Robert. Middle: Robert, Phill, Nancy, Liz, Klaus. Right: Everybody! We were lucky the hotdog stand was not in operation so we could avail ourselves of their tables for our coffee morning.

We tried to run the 50/50 draw (proceeds go to Disabled Sailors) but no one had any cash with them! If you're reading this you are reminded to have some cash in your pockets if you would like to carry on the tradition at Easter in Ladysmith.

Sunday we met in the parking lot! Yes, that's correct. Chris found the perfect spot to meet in the parking lot and set out an assortment of muffins. We were fortunate with the weather. We had periods of rain but it didn't deter us from having a good time.

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Staff Captain's Report

Thank you, John Laing, for a well researched and engaging presentation on rounding the horn. The talk has already encouraged other GYC members to sign up for a similar tour next January.

Next Meeting April 11th

At the April 11 general meeting we'll be entertained by **Rod Baker**, local author, and former owner of a North Shore boat repair business. Copies of his book will be available for purchase and signing.

Finding himself unemployed with a mortgage and a family of four Rod Baker followed a friend's advice and borrowed money to buy an Aluminum boat repair business. Knowing nothing about boating or business he was forced to learn quickly but eventually built a successful company. On **April 11**, Rod will entertain us with stories from his twenty years in the boat repair business.

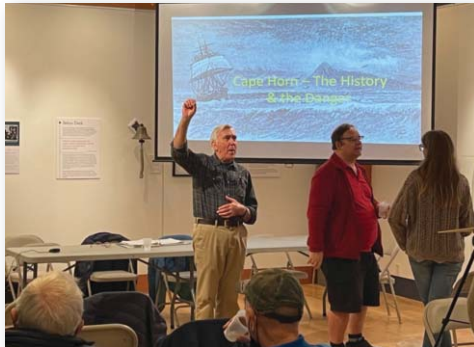
COVID restrictions have been lifted for indoor gatherings and proof of vaccination is not required so masking is now left to personal discretion. Many of our members feel the need for caution and will continue to wear masks.

A **Hybrid Meeting** will once again be available via Zoom for members who live outside of the Lower Mainland.

A link will be sent out by email.



Doug MacLeod,
Staff Captain,
S/V Willpower



Staff Captain Doug calling meeting to order at our first hybrid meeting. John and Andreas wrestling with technology. Cathie and Chris pouring out the Bubl .

But wait! There's more... a Sailors' Swap Meet on April 11th as well!

It's time to clean out lockers, basements, and garages of all that gear you haven't used for the last few seasons. Anything that is no longer valuable to you but may be of use to another sailor is welcome. Gear, charts, sailing guides, electrical equipment, even tools can be displayed on tables we'll set up in the museum foyer **before the April 11 meeting**.

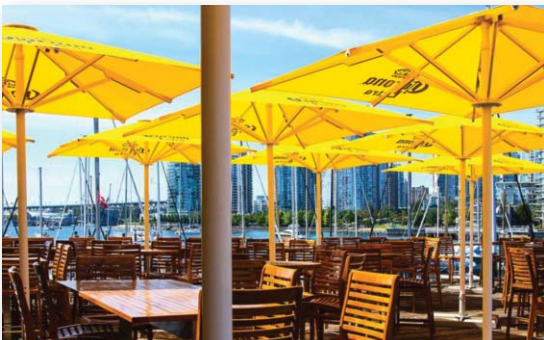
The emphasis will be on free stuff to be given away but if you have something to sell bring it along. The transaction will be worked out between seller and buyer.

If you bring it and no one wants it, please take it home with you.

See you at the swap!

On the Horizon

May 9 We're back at Mahony's in False Creek for another GYC **pub night**.



June 13 **Grant Lawrence**, local award-winning author and broadcast personality will be telling stories of Desolation Sound and reading from his soon to be released book, *Return to Solitude*. The book will be available for purchase and signing.



GULF SAILOR

Fleet Captain's Report



Next cruise:
Easter – see overleaf
for details.

We had a great start to the cruising season with a huge turnout for the second cruise on the schedule. It looks like this is the year to get back out to enjoy those many cruises with friends you have been missing ☺

Shakedown

Dar did a great job with Chris's and Jane's help wrangling 16 boats and 28 sailors at Shakedown. *Feliner* was host boat for appies in her cabin and enclosed cockpit on both Friday and Saturday night – thanks to all our volunteers who helped make it happen. This year, we had a separate area downstairs at Doc Morgan's, all to ourselves, and a number of people stayed after dinner to socialize until the restaurant closed for the night. The food was great, and many people said they preferred it to the Summerhouse. Look for Dar's report in this issue.



Robert Sinkus,
Fleet Captain,
S/V Reality

Easter is being hosted by the Laing's, with a lot of support from the Shuh's and from Glen: they had an organizational meeting on the island weeks ago planning it. See details overleaf and lookout for Glen's announcement with details. Please remember to advise Ron and Eleanor ahead of time if you are heading to Clam Bay on Friday night. The tide is high, so there is good access to their waterfront area the whole day.

Contact John L. if you want to help with anything, although I understand the islanders have got everything in hand. On that note, I know that many of you have been very involved with particular cruise activities for years, so if you'd like to continue helping out, please let the designated host for that cruise know.

Spectacular Spring Cruise (the week after Ladysmith) and the **Radical Reciprocal Route** (the week following Thetis) are being self-led. You will have time to connect amongst yourselves to decide your itineraries if you haven't already.

Sailpast (April 30-May1) – saluting takes place in Caulfeild Cove, then boats sail to Snug – is being hosted by our Commodore Pat Costa. We are still deciding on whether to book the Summerhouse or not.

Victoria Day Cruise to Telegraph Harbour Marina (May 21-23): Ron and Eleanor have volunteered to host a get together in Clam Bay on the Friday. See details overleaf. This year, the famous GYC Boat Building Contest will be in the covered pavilion.

June Cruise to Bedwell Bay, Indian Arm: Don and Laura Mcleod are considering hosting.

John Dixon is already beginning to plan his **July Cruise** departing north from Smuggler Cove on the Canada Day July long weekend through the sunny and warm Discovery Islands and Desolation Sound, ending at the Filberg Festival in Comox on the August long weekend. Please contact John if you might be interested in attending part or all of this more casual cruise. This year, it will have shorter day sails, sometimes staying an extra night in favourite anchorages.

Live Location on WhatsApp

You may have seen a "zoomable" map show up on WhatsApp with members' locations showing in real time. Using a feature called **Live Location** is a great way to show your location to the group. Andreas has updated the WhatsApp guide on our website, and will be sending it out to each of us again shortly. Check out page 12 for Android, and page 18 for iPhone. This makes it easier for us to sail together virtually, when, say crossing the Strait, or just wanting others to know when we are arriving.

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Fleet Captain's Report



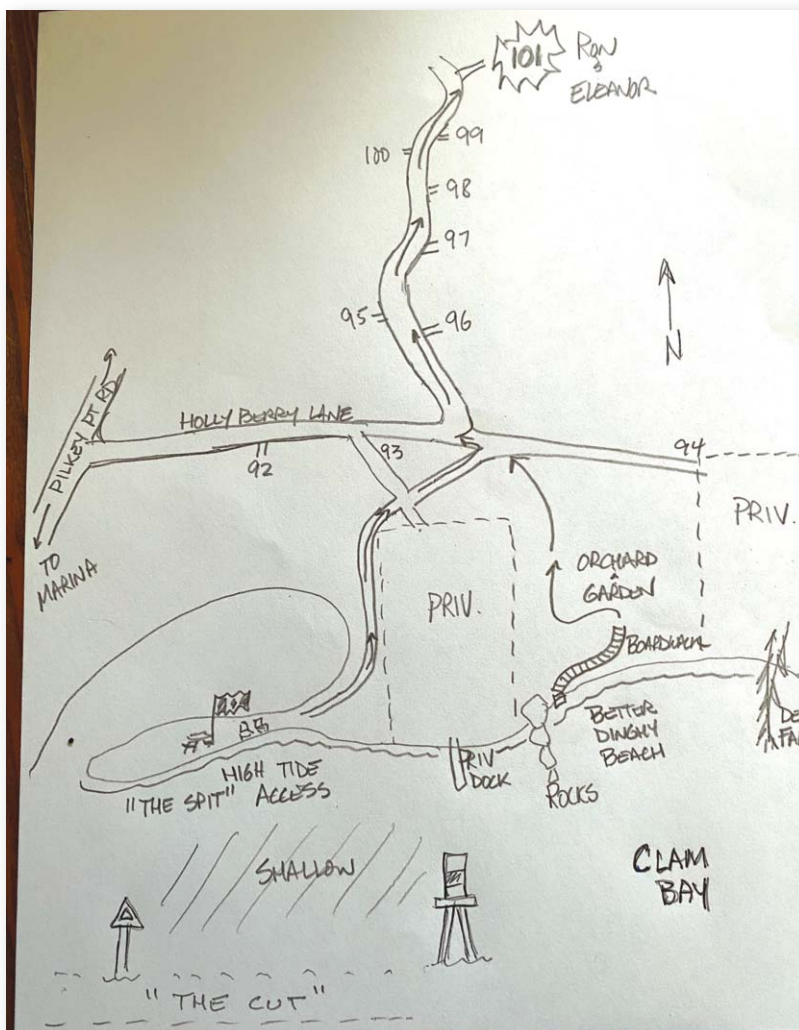
John and Karen Laing, Bruce and Adele Shuh and Glen Mitchell met to nail down an itinerary and order of events for the upcoming Easter Cruise. Contact John Laing with any questions or to volunteer.



Robert Sinkus,
Fleet Captain,
S/V Reality

Good Friday

- Sail to Clam Bay for Happy Hour hosted by Ron and Eleanor on the spit, or at the house (weather dependent). Please advise the Vandergaag's if you are planning on attending Friday night so they can plan for the number of people. See Ron's map for directions.
- Porlier Pass Slack at 1040 and 1640 local time.
- Gabriola Pass Slack at 1033 and 1619 local time.



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Fleet Captain's Report

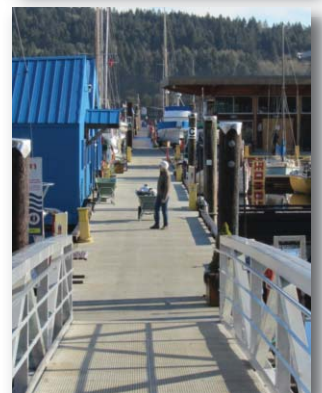
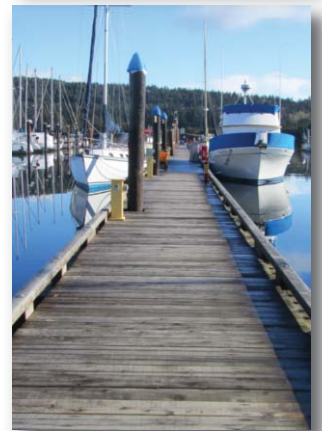


Saturday:
Clam Bay and on to Ladysmith Maritime Society

**Saturday**

- **Sail to Ladysmith Maritime Society Dock.** (Make sure you have a reservation.)
- **Drop off** your favourite bottle of **wine** with Adele. This is for the wine tasting contest later. **Please do not wait** until 1630 to drop off your bottle. Adele will be busy at that time.
- If you wish to **browse the Ladysmith shops** now is the time to do so, as many of the best places close on Sunday.
- **1630 - Wine Tasting on the Dock.** We are going green this year and not using plastic glasses. You need to **bring your own glass** along with an appetizer. The bottles will have been disguised earlier and you will need to answer questions about each sample. Yes, there will be a prize, kindly donated by the Laing's.

- After the Wine Tasting Contest, **dinner at the pub** is suggested. Let Karen or Adele know early, so they can make a reservation.

**Sunday**

- **Morning Easter Egg Hunt.** Collect the plastic eggs and you can exchange them for a cold Beer, Cider or Pop at the BBQ.
- **1230 - BBQ – Hotdogs and Chips** at the dock. After pigging out on hotdogs, you can wander the town or rest and get ready for the...
- **1730 - Potluck Dinner** – Bring your delicious creations to the tables setup on the dock.

Monday

- **Special Treat** of Ladysmith cinnamon buns before you depart.
- **Porlier Pass Slack** at 1226 and 1901 local time.
- **Gabriola Pass Slack** at 1223 and 1842 local time.

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From The Archives

John Dixon found this account of an Easter Cruise in 1985. The author headed to Princess Cove before motoring up to Pirates the next day. Some will remember times spent there as 'the good old days', but remember: most of us had smaller boats – many without heating!

EASTER CRUISE 1985 - Roy Appleford - 'Kaloni'

After three days of rain, Friday morning certainly was a nice change. A leisurely motor up English Bay watching the start of the Southern Straits Race and then we set sail just off the Pt. Grey bellbuoy heading for Porlier Pass. With the brisk west wind gusting up to 25 kts. apparent, we tucked a reef in the main and had a very comfortable crossing, even with our dirty bottom, then motored down to Princess Cove to rendezvous with 'Prime Time'.

Saturday we awoke to beautiful sunshine with a gentle breeze from the northwest. After checking the tides we realized that a quick motor up to Pirates was in order or we would have trouble getting in. We slowly edged in through the entrance with the sounder registering one foot less than our draft, so I suppose I won't have to clean the bottom of the keel.

At noon everyone assembled on shore and set the little

people off to find the chocolate eggs and then the bigger guys to find the Labatt's liquid eggs. Our Fleet Captain had built a nice fire on the rocks and everyone sat around and cooked wieners on sticks. A very sociable way to have lunch. I suggest we do this more often, it really gets people together. Most of the fourteen boats and one guest that attended stayed for a peaceful night in Pirates Cove.

Sunday was yet another beautiful morning as we headed out through Gabriola Pass to cross the Gulf. With 4 kts. of wind from the northwest, it was a perfect day to try out the new cruising spinnaker for the first time. The wind lasted about half way across, some boats heading home to Vancouver, but for us lucky ones, a nice evening on a boom in Center Bay and then home on Monday.

All in all, the best Easter Cruise for a long time – a pity more of the Club didn't make it.

Flotilla Cruise following Canada Day

I am proposing a flotilla cruise following our rendezvous at Smuggler Cove on the Canada Day weekend.

At this time, I have no firm plans but suggest we explore Desolation Sound, the Discovery Islands and any other places in the area that appeal. The intention is to conclude the cruise in Comox on the BC Day weekend (July 30 to August 1) as this puts us at the GYC rendezvous, Filberg Festival and Comox Nautical Days taking place there.

The basic plan is to head northwest after Smuggler Cove towards Desolation Sound. After some time in the area, I would like to transit the Yuculta, Gillard and Dent Rapids then stop in Shoal Bay for a night or two. If we are fortunate, Mark may offer up a pizza dinner and there is the spectacular hike to the gold mine. From here there are many interesting opportunities such as heading towards Discovery Passage then finding our way to Thurston Bay or Cameleon Harbour, transiting the Okisollo Rapids and visiting the Octopus Islands. Another proposal is to visit Yorke Island (sight of an abandoned second world war military facility). After this, and time allowing, additional days in Desolation Sound may be a good thing before heading to Comox.

On this cruise I would like to spend a few days in some of the anchorages and allow enough time to enjoy, hike and explore. Everyone is welcome to join all or part of this proposed flotilla cruise and I am totally open to suggestions regarding possible destinations, routing, stop-overs and timing. Updates and location of the fleet will be communicated on WhatsApp.



John Dixon,
S/V Tantramar



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Fleet Captains Report continued from p.6

Sailpast Cruise News

Don't miss the official start of the 2022 Cruising Season

This is a reminder of what will be happening on April 30th – more details will follow closer to the event. If you wish to stay the night, however, please reserve your moorage now.

Call 604-947-0707 and remember to tell them you are part of the GYC.

On the morning of Sailpast boats should assemble at approximately 10:30 AM at a point close to, but SE of, Caulfeild Cove in West Vancouver. The Commodore, aboard *Sparkle Plenty* will be anchored in the vicinity and will be flying the very large GYC burgee. At 11:00 the Fleet Captain, on *Reality*, will radio the beginning of the procession: all participants make sure to **monitor channel 69**. As members sail past the Commodore, they should luff their jib or dip their ensign to give the appropriate salute.

We will then proceed to Snug Cove, Bowen Island for further celebrations.

If you are not attending the sailpast, please send your regrets to the Commodore by email

From The Archives

SAILPAST WEEKEND 1985 - Jack McQueen - 'Namu'

Saturday, 4th of May, was just about perfect for our annual waterbourne date with the Club Commodore. Although the sky was overcast, there was no rain and the winds were pleasantly light for the occasion. At the Caulfeild Cove rendezvous more and more boats were arriving until a grand total of 43 proud ships were lined up and headed into the Sailpast. On board "Prime Time" for the salute were Commodore Bob Mohs and First Mate Marcia, along with Tony Swain who, as a founding member and first commodore, was marking the 20th anniversary of the Gulf Yacht Club. This was one of the best turnouts in recent years and a pleasure to see. Perhaps we can get the missing few out next year.

Following the Sailpast, 25 boats headed for West Bay Where Marcia and Bob held a fine "Happy Hour" for a full turnout on the log boom. Entertainment was provided by Sheila Appleford who performed that old favorite the "Ballet de Logboom" with the exciting finale that calls for dancing backwards with one foot on a log and the other not. A drenching experience.

That night was lovely and so quiet. I expect most GYC members slept well right up to the 7:15 morning call announced by a friendly logging tug. The work crew were most polite and explained that as they were about to remove a large number of rafts from our boom we would be expected to find some other parking spot for the next hour when we would be welcome to return and tie up once more.

By noon "Lively Lady" and "Namu" ("Waikato") were the only GYC boats left in West Bay and they took off just after lunch. We had more light winds until just south of the entrance to Snug Cove on Bowen Island when we found an hour or so of 10-15 mph winds.

The last event to finish off a great weekend occurred just as we entered False Creek. Dorothy was at the wheel, I was forward on deck tidying up, the creek was busy with traffic when Dorothy called to say the engine had become very quiet and, in fact, seemed quite dead. Now we both know that with the diesel fuel gauge on our 40 gallon tank reading half full we certainly couldn't be out of fuel. However, the needle hadn't moved for a long time and restarting the engine just to have it fizzle out again didn't sound like a surplus of fuel. At any rate, we were able to quickly unfurl some foresail and made use of the light westerly wind to a point where a friend from the next moorage spot to ours came along and provided a tow home. Such an inglorious ending for the first weekend in our latest floating joy.

Yes, we were out of fuel and I should have detected the faulty gauge earlier. I couldn't help but think how timely was the March Gulf Sailor article by Don McLeod on running out of fuel ("A lesson well learned"). However, this was the first time ever for us to have this happen, we did learn another lesson and we really did enjoy our sailing/motoring/towing Sailpast weekend.

GULF SAILOR

The Ginger Snap Misery Quotient

As everyone knows, the answer to the “Great Question” of “Life, the Universe and Everything” is “forty-two”...or is it? The captain and crew of *Steel Sapphire*, presently heading to the Azores from Cape Town, believe the answer might, instead, be found in the Ginger Snap Misery Quotient.

Steel Sapphire log: Jan 29 2022

Cape Town to Luderitz, Namibia – Day 2



Steel Sapphire en route from South Africa to the Azores.

One of the greatest joys to be found in passage making is the opportunity to stare at the ocean for hours on end, contemplating some of the bigger issues in life.

There's no guarantee that you'll find the answers you're seeking, of course, but give yourself enough time, and a sufficiently boundless horizon, and it's reasonable to expect some degree of insight to follow in due course.

I was privileged yesterday to find two such answers, and I feel bound to share them with you here, so that you might benefit from my gain, without sharing any of the pain that the journey to enlightenment always incurs.

The first is an answer to the question uppermost on so many people's minds in these days of political turmoil, planet-scourging disease and pervasive trolls on social media.

“Exactly how do I quantify the degree of existential misery I'm feeling today?”

Teams of researchers, psychologists and indeed the general public in Scotland (due to a countrywide predisposition toward misery) have spent lifetimes searching for this answer, but have always come up empty handed. It seems there's a lack of a universal scale by which my personal misery can be compared with yours, to better enable at least one of us to make the claim that we truly are the more miserable person.

And the answer, it seems, is to be found in a packet of Ginger Snap biscuits. Or more accurately not found.

Day 2 of our passage saw the winds and seas continue to build during the day, so that we had 35 knot gusts and 4m seas by mid

afternoon. As night fell, though, the wind and seas abated a little, and continued to lessen as the night wore on. As we settled into the rhythm of passage life, sleep became easier to come by – exhaustion will do that for you, it turns out.

And as I drank my morning coffee today and stared out to sea, a thought occurred. Excitedly I rummaged through the “stripey baskets” as we so pithily refer to the two striped baskets that live in the cockpit to accommodate all the small detritus that we like to keep near to hand (seasickness pills, short lengths of rope, sun screen etc). It's also the place where the night watch biscuits live.

And as I surveyed the crumbs and a surprisingly full packet of ginger nuts, I realised that I'd consumed just 4, and by the looks of things Jen a similar number, in the last 24 hours.

Here was my eureka moment. There is a direct correlation between the number of ginger snaps a person consumes in 24 hours and the degree of personal misery they're feeling.

Now, boring “so-called scientists” might feel that my moment of insight was insufficient for such sweeping conclusions to be drawn, and would no doubt insist that I finish my paper with the ubiquitous (or should that be “you-biscuit-us”) disclaimer that “more research is needed”.

But in keeping with the times, I don't feel any such compunction towards accuracy or balance. You read it here on my blog on the internet, people, so it must be true.

Don't believe me?

Are you feeling miserable right now? I'm going to go out on a limb here and say No, you're not. And do you have a ginger snap in your hand as you're reading this? Again, I'm going to suggest that you most certainly do not. And there you have it folks, unimpeachable logic, and an earth shattering conclusion, found in the intersection between staring out to sea and closely inspecting the contents of stripey baskets.

A second, even bigger insight, we discovered yesterday came about through the absolute inverse of this process – namely, by NOT staring out to sea, when we most certainly should have been.

It came out of nowhere.

As Jen and I sat in the cockpit chatting, at around 5pm, I suddenly saw a 75-foot fishing boat go past us at 5 or 10 knots, less than 100m away. It was already passing us when I saw it over Jen's shoulder, level with the cockpit. It did not have its AIS on, so it wasn't showing on our plotter. But we most certainly should have been scanning the horizon and have seen it a long time earlier.

Ginger Snap Misery continued on p.11

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The best defence I can muster is that we were over 100 miles offshore, and hadn't seen another vessel in 2 days (which is also why we were saving power by not having our radar on), but that's a terrible excuse, and I know it.

I have no idea if the other vessel saw us, but I'd have to assume not – he would surely have given us a much wider berth if he'd been aware of us, especially as it was windy and there were huge seas at the time.

We looked at each other in shock, and wordless admonition. And immediately started scanning the horizon like Captain Birdseye on speed, as if we could make up for our near miss by our subsequent efforts.

Duly chastened, we have spent the entirety of our subsequent watches staring at the ocean, so one upside is you can expect many more earth-shattering insights in forthcoming blogs.

But I can tell you this without any requirement for further research. There are not enough packets of ginger snaps in the world that would have sufficed for the degree of misery we'd have been feeling if we'd impaled ourselves into the side of a fishing boat.

Passage Statistics, as at 7am, Sun 30th January:

Time Elapsed: 45.5 hours
Distance Covered: 334 nm
Average Speed: 7.3 knots
Distance in the last 24 hours: 173 nm
Distance to Go: 171 nm

Breakfast: "Upbringing Toast" - ie Sandwich Spread (Pete) and Vegemite (Jen)

Lunch: Ham/Avocado/Salad Wrap

Dinner: Jen's famous Chilli Con Carne and mashed potato

Number of Ginger Snaps consumed by Pete and Jen: A lot less than the day before. Happy days!

Number of times we each exclaimed "Jesus H Christ" as the fishing boat receded into the distance: 53

(Steel Sapphire is currently on Day 20 sailing from Cape Town to the Azores, with 1,289 nm to go as at their last post. Ed.).



Robert Sinkus,
Fleet Captain,
S/V Reality

Safety Equipment and Flare Disposal Days

CPS-ECP is partnering with Transport Canada and CIL Dealers to educate the public about safety equipment, its care and maintenance and how to use and dispose of flares.

Have Your Flares Expired?

If your flares have a manufacture date of 2018 or earlier they have or will expire this year. You can't light them, throw them in the water or in your household garbage to dispose of them. Disposing of expired

flares has been an ongoing dilemma for boaters across the country so to help boaters dispose of expired flares in a safe

and environmentally responsible manner CPS-ECP and selected CIL Dealers are hosting **Safety Equipment Education and Flare Disposal Days**.

Learn about required safety equipment and you bring your outdated marine flares to be properly disposed of, **free of charge**.

The following list of locations will host safety equipment days and accept expired flares on the dates noted below.

April 30

Inlet Marine

4-850 Barnet Hwy, Port Moody, BC V3H 1V6
Port Moody Power and Sail Squadron

Cabela's

6902 North, Island Hwy N,
Nanaimo, BC V9V 1P6
Nanaimo Power and Sail Squadron

Steveston Marine and Hardware

19700 Langley Bypass #201,
Langley, BC V3A 7B1
Langley Power and Sail Squadron

Trotac Marine

370 Gorge Rd E, Victoria, BC V8T 2W2
Victoria Power and Sail Squadron

May 14

Steveston Marine and Hardware

8331 River Rd Richmond BC V6X 1Y1
Fraser Power and Sail Squadron

Steveston Marine and Hardware

1667 W 5th Ave, Vancouver, BC V6J 1N5
Vancouver Power and Sail Squadron

May 21

Lakes Marine Supply

5968 Trans Canada Hwy Duncan, BC, V9L 6C8
Cowichan Power and Sail Squadron

May 28

Bitter End Boat Exchange

1044 Seamount Way, Gibsons, BC V0N 1V7
Sunshine Coast Power and Sail Squadron

GULF SAILOR

Naida's trip south and back up north again.

We have a lot of catching up to do: Ken and Anne head south as far as Barra and then north again to collect their long-awaited temporary resident cards before finally able to leave Banderas Bay, head north to Mazatlan, cross over to the Baja to meet a friend and enjoy scuba diving in Bahia Los Frailes.

You can follow them on their adventure here:

<https://forecast.predictwind.com/tracking/display/Naida>

And here are the next lot of posts on their journey:

Yelapa: Wed Feb 23 2022

This was our second day trip while hanging out in Paradise Village Marina. The first had been an afternoon sail in the bay with Ken's sister Wendy the week prior. The wind is pretty reliable in Banderas Bay - calm in the morning, 15 knots in the afternoon and calm in the evening. The whales also hang out in the bay so we had a nice afternoon sail and we were rewarded with whales doing flipper slaps off in the distance.

Our trip to Yelapa was further and required a whole day to allow time for a bit of exploring and lunch. We left after breakfast and motored the 15 nautical miles. Yelapa is a small village on the south shore of Banderas Bay built on the side of the mountain with no road access. The land of Yelapa was deeded to the local Mexican people in 1541 by the King of Spain and all the property in the village is communally owned. The town relies on tourism for it's livelihood with many beach resorts with palapa eateries, and houses and apartments in the village for rent. There are passenger ferries and the usual floating catamaran tour boats that bring tourists in and out. As we approached the bay we were greeted by Ricardo in his panga who us invited to tie up to his mooring buoy. He took us in to the Village dock from which we did the short (15 min) walk to the waterfall. The roads were narrow, made of cobble

stone set in cement and lined with vendors selling the usual tourist wares. The closely built multilayered houses and shops were colorfully painted and decorated with plants and murals.



Testing the Margaritas – again.

was knee deep and then we climbed the 3 foot high soft sand bank on the other side. We had a relaxing lunch of ceviche, fish tacos and margaritas in the shade of the palapa with the cool onshore breeze blowing. An idyllic setting. While enjoying lunch we noted the pie lady resting in her hammock on the other side of the restaurant. Yelapa is known for its pies sold by women who walk up and down the beach with containers. Before leaving we purchased three pieces (chocolate, coconut and pecan) to bring back to Nuevo Vallarta.

The wind was surprisingly light for the sail back but we persevered most of the way, arriving in the marina before 6pm and back at the condo in time for dinner. Our dinners rarely included dessert and despite having fresh pie we didn't actually eat the pie for a couple days. Mexican pie crusts are not going to win any awards but

the coconut and pecan fillings were good. My Aunt was pretty sure the chocolate pie was just a pudding mix. They were all well enjoyed though. Why they sell pie on the beach in Yelapa will remain a mystery to us. ☀

Getting back to Cruising: Fri Feb 25 2022

Friday Feb 25th was the day everyone at the condo in Nuevo Vallarta was departing – Wendy and partner Ken had an early morning flight, Ruth left just before noon for the airport and we left shortly thereafter. We'd provisioned the boat with perishables the day before and had made arrangements for our two packages – the replacement rudder for our Hydrovane and our new foresail – to be held for us once they arrived. We had hoped they would have arrived while we were in NV but things always move slower than one would like.

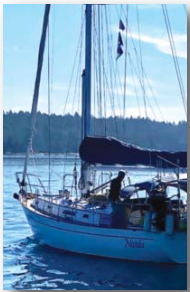
One thing we noted when we stayed at the condo on the 7th floor facing the ocean was the loudness of the surf breaking on the beach. This is not surprising as

Naida continued on p.13



After a visit to the falls we made our way back down and walked along the winding road that parallels the beach behind the waterfront properties. It was interesting noting the construction and different shops along the road. In an isolated town supplies are costly to bring in so wood and other materials are stockpiled and recycled. Our ultimate destination was Ricardo's beachfront palapa to have a bite to eat before our return sail home. There was a small river that had to be forded to get to the palapa. The water

GULF SAILOR



Naida continued from p.12

Banderas Bay is on the Pacific and wide open to the west. We could hear it clearly at night lying in bed. It's unusual to hear such loud surf when in an anchorage since we usually choose a bay that is protected, and when you do hear the surf, the boat and one's berth aboard, usually has a gentle rocking. In the condo we could hear crashing surf while our bed was on Terra firma – a real luxury.

We really shouldn't have left Nuevo Vallarta in the early afternoon when the winds out of the west come up. It would have been better to get an early start out the following morning, but we were keen to get out cruising and planned the 100 nm passage to Tenacatita as an overnight. It was 9pm by the time we rounded the southern point of Cabo Corrientes, and the crashing through the swell left both of us feeling nauseous. It was likely the worst passage for Anne in all of our cruising so far. Stugeron should have been taken earlier, given we hadn't really been on the water in over a month. We persevered and managed our shift rotation, Ken did the food preparation and we arrived tired but in one piece the following morning in Tenacatita. ☀

☀ Tenacatita: Tue Mar 1 2022

This large sheltered bay is such a popular spot with cruisers that it has its own FB group and a regular morning VHF net that cruisers tune in and receive weather updates, exchange information and connect to share resources like taking a taxi into the nearby village. Tenacatita even has a regular bocci hour: 2:30 on the beach followed by a happy hour sharing

stories while enjoying refreshments at the beach palapa. We enjoyed getting connected with the local community of cruisers, some had already been there a month and some have been cruising for 20+ years. When we mentioned that we were here for the first time, having come down the Baja coast this year, everyone was keen to share their wisdom and knowledge about this part of the coast and also the Sea of Cortez which we will explore later this spring. We chuckled at being

considered youngsters and we were overwhelmed and grateful for the shared wisdom. One point on which we were enlightened was that independent filtration of fuel in Mexico, although necessary 15 years ago, is no longer necessary. The fuel from established gas stations meets standards although buying fuel from Enrique in Tortuga Bay may still require separate filtration.



Tour of Raicilla craft production.

We explored the 2 nm long mangrove and went to a native run distillery where Pancho shared with us the process of distilling Raicilla – a tequila made from agave Azul. We also sampled both the amber distilled in oak barrels and crystal

raicilla distilled in stainless vats. The amber was the more flavourful. Pancho explained the costs of producing an agave liquor and the mark-up that occurs going through the distribution system. When buying direct from an indigenous distillery they are able to sell their raicilla without the sizeable tax on spirits or the distributor mark-up so we bought a bottle of their amber raicilla that is now next to the bottle of Passport scotch in *Naida's* liquor cabinet. We have no idea if the Passport scotch is any good but we know the raicilla is. ☀

☀ Reconnecting with Vortice: Fri Mar 4 2022

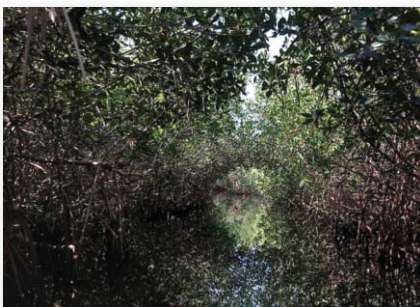
We left Tenacatita after 3 days as we had an opportunity to meet up with *Vortice* in Cuastecomate, a bay midway between Tenacatita and Barra de Navidad. If you've forgotten, *Vortice* is one of the boats we bungee boated down



with and we last saw them in November in Los Frailes on the Baja. On our way from Tenacatita we got to watch the dolphins play in our bow wave, always a special moment.



Vortice was working their way north from having spent a week in Barra. We were still heading south to spend some time in Barra so meeting in the middle was perfect. Cuastecomate is often skipped by cruisers but is a lovely small bay with a beautiful beach and the usual assortment of hotels and *Naida continued on p.14*

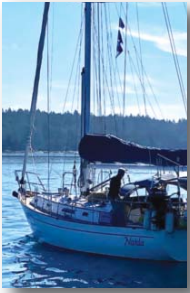


Enclosed mangrove tunnel



Note dinghy wheel (1 of 2) which can be flipped down for beach landings.

GULF SAILOR



Naida continued from p.13

restaurant palapas. Musical entertainment occurred during the day and one hotel seemed to put on a musical theatre show in the evenings, starting promptly at 9pm. One night I'm sure they were doing Aladdin in Spanish. Of course, with the warm climate everything is open air so we got to enjoy listening to the show from our boat. (!)

There is good snorkeling along the rocky shore and even some corral. We enjoyed two mornings of snorkeling with Cory and Lori even though visibility wasn't great. We tried out the underwater camera but the limited visibility meant that we had to be close to the fish to get good pictures but we usually scared the fish away with our attempts to dive down closer.

We had several great evenings of happy-hours and/or dinner while getting caught up on happenings and plans. We may have solved a few world problems in there somewhere too but no one took notes...sorry.

It was time for us to head to Barra and check out the French baker while Vortice was heading north to Tenacatita. ☀

Barra de Navidad: Tue Mar 8 2022

We enjoyed four days anchored in the lagoon in Barra. Being anchored means having to dinghy or take the water taxi in to shore, but the lagoon has a nice breeze that blows and keeps us cool whereas we haven't always found marinas as cool. By



We anchored in the lagoon where the French Baker Jean-Charles came by with croissants every morning.

now we've got our shading with movable Phifertex panels, cockpit window covers, covers for opening hatches and cooling fans all worked out and we manage to stay pretty cool, albeit in Mexico in winter;-) One of the other plusses of being at anchor is the ready access to swimming if additional cooling is required. Fortunately that wasn't required in the lagoon since it's shallow depth of 6-8 feet together with a muddy bottom makes for murky water that's not that inviting for a swim. As we arrived in the lagoon, we noted fellow

cruisers on the deck of their boat so we pulled up to get info on the VHF net channel and time for Barra. It turned out that they

were cruisers we'd last shared appies with in Ensenada in October. We quickly exchanged info on future cruising plans as well.

With the VHF net channel and time we were able to get connected the following morning with weather, tides, events and happenings. It turns out Barra has an active music scene with several bands playing in the different venues for the coming week.

Ken has also been listening to the Amigo (maritime) and Sonrisa (ham) nets on the SSB radio in the morning which provide exchange of information and weather with boaters further afield - essentially from the north of the Sea of Cortez south to Chiapas on the border with Guatemala. In this way we are still connected and can share information with boaters we've met along the way.

We explored the town of Barra, went to a recommended fish taco eatery (AR Tacos just before the Thrifty ice cream shop) and shopped for fresh produce at the local tienda.

Most of the tourist in Barra de Navidad were gringos like ourselves, although more Mexican families took advantage of swimming at the beach just inside the point next to the water taxi dock, and eating their picnic at the nearby beach palapas. There were just a few swimmers on the



Barra beach palapas.



We hiked to the top of the hill for a panoramic view of the ocean and lagoon.

other way to get some cardio workout. We started at 10am although a few hours earlier would

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have been cooler, but we would have missed the French baker who comes by the anchorage around 9am. It was a two hour return trip and a good fraction of it was shaded by trees and brush on the hill.

On returning to the boat we passed by the marina to look for *Due West* with Kirk and Heidi, another Passport 40 who are friends

of fellow GYC members Suzanne and Miles. We caught them just as they were preparing to head off to an appointment. We quickly chatted and exchanged boat cards with the hope of meeting up along the coast later. We headed back to the boat to shower and enjoy some lunch and a relaxing afternoon snoozing and reading.



We walked the Venice-like canals and shopped at the local tienda.

Purchasing a few croissants from the French baker was necessary for our trip up the coast the following day. The baker, a Frenchman Jean-Charles, took over the business a year ago and despite the covid restrictions has managed to survive financially. The previous owner had the business for 8 years and started the floating delivery service to the marina and anchorage every morning except Wednesdays. He announces on the VHF net channel when he's in each location and cruisers flag him down. It's quite the luxury to have fresh bread and pastries delivered boat side!

The entrance and exit to the Barra Lagoon is a bit tricky and not all the charts agree. Fortunately one guide book has published a set of way points that lead all the way from the bay, through the breakwater, past the town, past the marina, past the fuel dock, and down the one long navigable channel into the lagoon. They also provide four way points that delineate an area in the lagoon with at least 8 foot depth suitable for anchoring. (There is very little tide range.) They, and every message we have heard, emphasize the need to go to the end of the channel before turning into the anchorage. Many boats wander out of the channel or try to take a shortcut and run aground in the soft mud. We cautiously entered at a slow 2 to 3 knots so we wouldn't get stuck if we did run aground. Entering went fine.

We wanted an early start for our trip back north which meant we would leave before light. This should be fine as we were going to follow the waypoints again anyway. We just had to dodge the other anchored boats in the dark. Sure enough one boat was anchored near the end of the channel and I cut the corner in front of him to enter the navigable channel and

watched the depth sounder go from 8 feet to 3 feet as the boat came to a stop. We had only been crawling so I threw it hard into reverse and watched the depth sounder while trying to determine if we were coming off. I was pretty sure we weren't! I put it back in neutral and walked to the bow where Anne was rinsing the mud off the anchor to give her the bad news. She looked around and said "We're moving relative to those boats". Sure enough as I walked back to the cockpit I could tell we had drifted free. Phew. The depth sounder was back to 8 feet and this time I made sure I got right to the waypoint before turning into the channel. I really didn't want to be that guy sitting on the sandbar when the sun came up. ☀

Working Our Way North: Fri Mar 12 2022

Two factors influenced our timing for working our way north. First we were awaiting arrival of a few items – new foresail, hydrovane replacement rudder, and Mexican 4-year temporary visas – that would need to be picked up from various locales in Banderas Bay. By March 7th we'd received word that all items were ready for pick up. The second overriding factor is that we have to be in Bahia Los Frailes on the Baja peninsula by Sunday March 27th as our friend Jeannette is meeting us there to do some scuba diving at Cabo Pulmo. She's renting a car and will stay aboard with us. The dive operators Blue Passion Baja will pick up and drop off at the boat by panga and take us diving in the morning. We can take the dinghy ashore in the afternoon and on our non-diving days and explore on foot or by car.

We moved north in two steps when a weather window was available first to Bahia Chamela and then up to La Cruz. The winds along this stretch of coast are still predominantly northerly, so a weather window consists of little wind from the north and if we're lucky some wind from the south. We weren't lucky and so it was all motoring. We had a 4 day layover in Chamela Bay and explored the town of Perula which is less touristy than Barra and spent some time on two mornings cleaning the hull using our scuba and snorkeling gear. It was hard work but nice to have it done for the rest of the passage north.

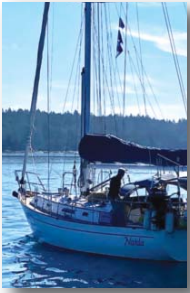


Perula is 90km from Puerto Vallarta.

We arrived in La Cruz de Huanacastle (wanacoxlay) mid-afternoon on Sunday March 13th after an overnight passage and anchored. When we stayed in La Cruz over the Christmas holidays we had been in the marina, but this time we thought we'd anchor. You pay a daily fee of 80 pesos to use the dinghy dock and then have access to the town and ground transportation. The only tricky aspect to the anchorage are the

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GULF SAILOR



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strong onshore thermal winds that can blow upwards of 20 kts from 1-5pm which can make for a rocky on/off loading to/from the dinghy. Basically one works around it by timing errands.

We got an early morning start on Monday to pick up items. The visas were the first item of business since they would involve the longest wait – government offices don't need to be user friendly. After more than an hour wait we were told that although the cards were ready they wouldn't arrive in the Nuevo Vallarta office until Thursday. Disappointing, but consistent with expectations We carried on to the Paradise Village Marina where our rudder was waiting for us. It was fun walking down the main road of Nuevo Vallarta as we'd last done more than a month ago. After that we made our way to the custom broker in Puerto Vallarta where our new foresail was waiting for us. We're traveling by taxi between points at a cost of CND\$10-12, so not too pricey and very convenient for handling these large items.

Monday afternoon, we also checked-in with the Port Captain in La Cruz, dropped off our laundry at the lavanderia and our scuba tank to be filled at the dive shop in town for pickup Wednesday morning.

Tuesday was spent on the boat – we got the new foresail on in the morning before the winds picked up. In the early afternoon there was some excitement in the anchorage as one of the larger fish boats broke free of its mooring. One cruiser noticed it early and got on the VHF to alert the boats in the anchorage. Several dinghies, including Ken, went to assist with deflecting it around one or two of the other boats it was in danger of hitting. The local fishing cooperativo was alerted by someone listening to the VHF net and sent out one of their power boats to take the boat under tow into the marina.

The winds in the anchorage peaked to 25 kts that afternoon and everyone was reminded to put out a good scope. We were comfortable with the 6:1 scope we had out, and our Open CPN anchor alarm set. One sailboat with no one aboard slowly dragged anchor but they were fortunately off to the side and not endangering any other boats. There was discussion on the net of how to reach the owner and we gathered this was not an uncommon occurrence for this vessel. Given the strong winds it was a good day to have spent onboard.

Earlier when we were out on deck setting up the foresail we met Jo from *Boomerang* who was rowing her dinghy around the anchorage for exercise. She and her husband are from Idaho and brought their boat down from the Pacific NW in 2018. She spoke highly of cruising the Sea of Cortez and the remote and geologically interesting anchorages. She recommended the Bruce Berger book *Almost an Island*. We weren't able to find an e-copy of that book but have found a collection

of his essays *Desert Harvest* - a delightful reflection on his life in and around the desert.

Wednesday was another errand day with an early morning visit to the fish market, followed by laundry pickup. After depositing items back at the boat, we headed back in for a trip to the Mega to provision for the next couple of weeks. We used the bus going in and took a cab back with a brief stop at the dive shop to pick up our filled tank. It was a very full dinghy going to the boat and tricky unloading as there was considerable chop on the water by the early afternoon. After some lunch, it then took a good several hours to vacuum pack meat and fish for the freezer, stow items in the pantry and organize produce in labeled bins in the fridge.

Thursday morning met with success at the immigration office obtaining our visa cards!!

On our way back we stopped in at the Port Captain to check out, and Friday morning we'll make the most of the settled conditions to make the 10 nm trip to Punta de Mita. After our last attempt to tack out of the bay we decided we'd save ourselves the aggravation of fighting the waves and adverse current by going before the wind picks up. ☀️

Mazatlan and Crossing the Sea of Cortez:

Wed Mar 23 2022

We wanted to be at anchor where we had good connectivity Friday afternoon as we had the opportunity to attend our daughter, Elise's, Master of Public Policy project defense on Managing Textile Waste. Elise had done a good job on preparing and the defense went well. We both enjoyed learning about the public policy process and several of the subject matter experts whom Elise had consulted were present to ask questions and add to Elise's responses.

We got our usual early start at 6am Saturday morning for the 160 nm trip to Mazatlan and with NW winds we motored and had some wind assist with the main. Enroute we had heard on our Iridium-Go from our buddy boat *Vortice* that they were at Isla Isabela and we considered stopping there for a day. At

Naida continued on p.17

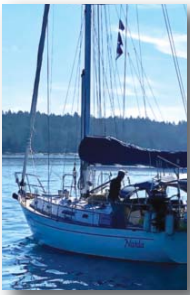


Celebrating the long awaited visa cards with some bubbly and BLTs for lunch. The bubbly was a gift from a fellow cruiser whom Ken had helped troubleshoot their watermaker.



The anchorage at Punta de Mita at sunset.

GULF SAILOR



Naida continued from p.16

about 8pm when we were within 5 nm of the island we spoke with Cory on the VHF and *Vortice* was thinking about leaving that night to start their trek north and across the Sea of Cortez as they had family who would be joining them in La Paz at the end of March and Cory was concerned about missing the weather window for getting north and across. At this time of year, the northers that blow in the Sea of Cortez start to abate, but this year they have continued to be quite strong, limiting the opportunities to move north. On learning that *Vortice* were moving on we quickly decided to stick with our original plan and keep going to Mazatlan as the seas and wind allowed good northward progress. At 1300h we anchored at Isla Piedra outside Mazatlan harbour and went ashore at the rickety Club Nautico dinghy dock, where you can leave your dinghy for 70 pesos.

There was one other boat at anchor at Isla Piedra: *Hanoah* with Roger and Ev aboard who hailed us on the radio after seeing our Canadian flag.

Despite being on an American boat, Ev is French and had lived in Vancouver and Nelson BC for a number of years and wanted to connect. The next day, Ev went ashore to spend a few days in Mazatlan, and we invited Roger over in the afternoon for appies and drinks. They had arrived in Banderas Bay a week or so earlier after completing a 26 day, 2200 nm passage from Costa Rica. *Hanoah* is a 39ft Amel ketch which Roger has owned for about 10 years and on which he completed a solo circumnavigation from 2015-2017. Roger and Ev had spent the last several years during the pandemic in the San Blas islands in the Caribbean and were considering heading to either Patagonia or the South Pacific, but with the uncertainty of borders, decided to explore the pacific coast of Mexico.

The trip north from Costa Rica was a route straight out of Jimmy Cornell's book, where one heads west sufficiently offshore to be out of reach of the strong papagayo and tehuatepec winds and then turns north. They sailed and steered the whole passage on their hydrovane wind pilot so we have hope we'll get competent at setting ours up.

We asked Roger to contrast short coastal hops versus the long offshore passages, and he said there was no comparison. Their 26 day passage was easy whereas the coastal hop to Mazatlan had been exhausting. Timing departure and arrival with light often forces one to have to motor, and winds and waves make the northward transit challenging. It was interesting chatting with Roger as he thought a crew of two for long passages was just right. More food for thought for next year's travel plans.

We left Mazatlan late in the evening March 21st, with the intent of catching some of the north winds for crossing the Sea of Cortez (SOC). The weather modeling indicated it would be an

upwind sail but we would be able to point high enough to make Los Frailes on the west side. It wouldn't be the beautiful fast beam reach we had when doing the reverse course in early December and would take 2 overnights in order to ensure a daylight arrival. The seas along the Mazatlan coast were so choppy that it took us 2 hours to make 6-7 nm headway north before we could turn and head west across the SOC. In the end in order to point high enough to make Los Frailes we ended up motor sailing almost all the way. In the fall we'd had such a brutal upwind slog into heavy seas getting to Los Frailes from Cabo San Lucas that we were reluctant to give up any northing just to have to make it up again on the Baja coast. In hindsight we should have waited another day for the winds and seas to calm as it was a wet and tedious trip across. The 150 nm crossing in December took us 25 hours, this time it was 38 hours until arriving in Bahia Los Frailes at 11:30 in the morning March 23rd. We compared notes with *Vortice* who had continued further north on the mainland coast before heading west to Bahia Los Muertos about 50 nm north of us and they had a similar experience with their crossing. We'll chalk that up to experience and one of these days we'll know what we're doing.

We'll stay in Bahia Los Frailes for the next week as we have a Vancouver friend coming to do some scuba diving with us at Cabo Pulmo. ☀

Scuba Diving in Cabo Pulmo: Sat Apr 2 2022

We planned this trip earlier in January and Jeannette booked her holidays for a week off to come scuba diving with us. Jeannette is an

experienced diver who has dived in Indonesia and in the Atlantic off the coast of Mexico. Her diving trips are usually based on a dive boat or at a resort where they go out for the day. This was her first time staying on a sailboat. Not only that but she had a three hour drive from San José del Cabo to Bahia Los Frailes, the last 15 km on a rut-ridden dirt road. She persevered and was relieved to see us waving at her as she approached the campground parking.

Her arrival by car was just the first part. We hadn't explained to Jeannette that there wasn't a dock in the bay and that we had to launch our dinghy off the beach. *Naida continued on p.18*

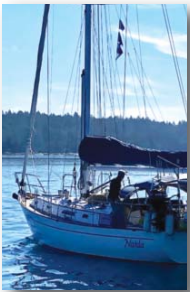


View from the top of Cerro Frailes.



Intrepid trekkers who hiked up the day before Jeannette's arrival.

GULF SAILOR



Naida continued from p.17

At the car, she changed into shorts and her beach sandals in preparation for the dinghy launch. Jeannette had packed light but with her dive gear and three of us the dinghy looked small. Ken had planned ahead and brought a tarp to wrap all the gear in. And a good thing he had as between the surf and a weighed down dinghy we took on a bit of water when launching! We got ourselves to the boat and everyone had a warm shower and changed into dry clothes before settling down to piña colladas and fish tacos for dinner.

Jeannette used the forward cabin with half the berth for her clothes and the other for sleeping. In this way she could have privacy and we used the aft cabin. All the scuba gear stayed in the cockpit ready for our Monday morning dive. Manuela from Blue Baja Passion was our guide and we'd arranged to be picked up from the boat – saving time and energy and avoiding the dinghy beach landing and launch, followed by an 8km dirt road drive. We'd planned three mornings of diving altogether with Manuela and she kept our gear between days to rinse and dry avoiding the logistics of doing that on our boat. That was super helpful!

After warm showers, lunch, and naps we headed to the beach in the dinghy to then drive over to Cabo Pulmo. There we found a quaint little village pretty well exclusively catering to scuba and snorkeling tourists. Others had recommended some places to eat so we started out with a beer beside the beach at the aptly named Tacos & Beer. They had a local beer called Cabo Pulmo Tiburon Toro that turned out to be a delicious dark beer. We asked if they sold the beer too and they let us buy their last three to take home with us. After a nice dinner at the Coral Reef we headed back to the dinghy on the beach. By now it was very dark and there was a surf coming in. Some German campers nearby where we left the dinghy came over with bright flashlights to help us observe the surf as we launched the dinghy but it was still a bit of a fiasco getting going. The beach is steep to so by the time the dinghy is in deep enough for the motor we are in the water up to top of our thighs. Oh well, there's lots of warm water on Naida to rinse ourselves and our clothes.

We had three excellent days of diving Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, taking Wednesday off as it was too windy and which provided a welcomed day for rest. Jeannette had not done any diving in a few years so she appreciated the easier diving with us beginners.

The water was a little cold – 19C at the bottom and 21C at the top – so we layered our 3/2 mm wetsuits with our 2/2 mm shorties and Manuela provided hoods for the last two days which made it quite comfortable. In the three days we dove at four different reefs, a shipwreck, and a shallow dive swimming with the sea lions. We used our new underwater camera to take

some photos which you can see at the following link.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/24rLpc1daSy4QiYT8>

With our Sea of Cortez marine animals field guide we were able to identify much of the sealife we saw (Mexican hogfish – male and female, schools of yellowtail surgeon fish, golden snapper and the iridescent striped indigo wrasse, solitary moorish idols, giant damsel fish - adult and juvenile, spotted box fish, azure and bumped parrot fish.) Some of these marine animals are masters of camouflage and it took Manuela's accustomed eyes to spot them for us.

The multi-coloured coral, gorgonians and sea fans also made for interesting viewing.

The forecast for Wednesday was for winds of 20-25 knots which would limit our options for diving so we were just as happy to take a day off. Jeannette had a rental car and we were keen to see further inland so, confident in our anchor, we set off in the morning to explore. After 15 km of the washboard dirt road

we were all irrationally thrilled to get to the paved road! We headed north enjoying the scenery and discussed if we would go to La Paz or cross the peninsula to Todos Santos. In the end we did neither as we realized both would be long drives that would likely result in us driving back in the dark. We'd rather sail in the dark than drive these roads in the dark. We stopped in Los Barriles, wandered a bit, checked out the beachfront of one resort, then found a place for lunch. Next on the agenda was some provisioning at the supermercado.

Jeannette wandered around finding items reminiscent of the 1970s – Shasta Rootbeer anybody? On the way back we stopped in at Cabo Pulmo and hit Tacos & Beer on the beach to enjoy another of those delicious Cabo Pulmo dark beers but sadly they had not replenished the stock. They informed us the nearest ones were in La Paz! Darn, we squandered our chance. ☀



Coral and gorgonian.



Female Mexican hogfish.

