

My Big Sailing Adventure, 2018. By John Myers

The purpose of the trip is to move a 43' aluminum hulled ketch from Ecuador, South America to Jacksonville, FL.

The first leg is from Ecuador to Panama City, Panama.

The trip began with a flight from Indianapolis to New Jersey, then New Jersey to Ft. Lauderdale on May 12th 2018. An overnight hotel stay with Walter Stalenhoef who is the third crew member and three connecting flights the next day, arriving in Manta, Ecuador May 13, 2018. at 7:30 PM. Outside baggage claim, Walter and I meet the owner of the boat Peter. After a brief talk he shows us to a taxi which drops him off at a hotel where he will stay the night and fly back to Brazil the next day. The Taxi takes us for a 1.5-hour drive, sometimes on dirt roads to the marina/restaurant (Amistad). There Frank meets us, and we take a water taxi to "Mundinho" at anchor in Bahi de Caraquez.

Monday, we walked the quarter mile to the grocery store and got groceries for the trip. We had too much to carry so we hired a taxi to return home. Everything in the store was in US dollars! I gave the taxi driver a \$10.00 US bill and he gave me \$8.25 in change. The eight dollars was in the form of 8 one-dollar US coins. I had not seen them in the US for several years.

We cannot leave because we sent our passports with an agent to get them stamped to leave the country and he has not returned. The government offices were a long distance away. So in the afternoon we took a taxi to Canoa. It is a beach resort community on the other side of the bay further out to the ocean. There I bought a pair of sun glasses. Frank bought a Panama hat. We walked the beach and ate supper at a nice outdoor restaurant on the beach. The beach was nearly abandoned and most of the shops were closed because even though the temperature was in the mid 80's, it is winter in Ecuador! We see lots of people in black hoodies with the hoods up and long pants! The taxi came and picked us up about 5:00 P.M. We ask the taxi driver when we got back to take us down to the end of the land and show us the damage from the April 2016 earthquake. Several large high-rise building are standing there unoccupied due to being unsafe. Also, he showed us many empty lots where buildings had been removed.

The next morning, still no passports but we are told they will be back by just after lunch. We went back to the mall where the grocery store was and ate an early lunch in the food court. We ate at a local restaurant but in the food court there was a Carl's Jr. and a KFC! All of the prices were in US dollars. In the grocery store they were selling 16" tall IRON MAN action figures for \$38.00 each!

Food Same and Different:

They have many US brands: Heinz catchup, Kellogg's cereal, Campbell soup, etc. But the packaging is different. Most liquids are in squeeze pouches. Some cereal is in cardboard boxes but often it is in a plastic bag. Also the words are in Spanish. Our passports and exit permits did not arrive from customs until 3:30 PM. The tide had already started to subside and our pilot was waiting and anxious to go. We take a boat taxi back to the boat with our pilot and left immediately. The entrance to the bay is very shallow and you must motor through big breakers. A hired pilot steers our boat and another dingy ahead of us, guides the way marking the deepest spot. Once clear of the breakers the pilot boards the dingy and we carry on. I was not happy leaving just before dark at 6:30 PM to start such a journey. That night as I stood my watch I could see the lights from shore slowly get dimmer and dimmer.

The 6-day trip was relatively uneventful. Getting my sea legs took time but I did manage to keep everything down. Stand 3-hour watches on a 3 person 24 hour rotation was new. All my previous cruising involved pulling into a marina or anchorage before dark. Moving around on the boat is very difficult. Especially this design, in the open ocean. I have sailed in lots of big waves before but not on the open ocean, the boat seems to

move much more in all 6 degrees of freedom (X,Y,Z and roll, pitch and yaw). The rollers also seemed to be random both in size, shape and period. The wind was always from the south west giving us a following sea or a very open downwind reach. Sometimes the rollers were on our beam causing us to wallow and sometimes from behind, giving us a kick in the pants. The wind tended to die down at night and pick up during the day so that by evening it was blowing 12-14. Two nights we started the engine and ran it all night. Listening to the engine at night was no worse than listening to banging rigging in a swell when the wind is light.

We saw dolphin pods several times. Sunday while on watch I saw the dolphins coming from probably half a mile away. They swam around the boat and followed for a while before moving on. Sunday night on the night watch another group approached the boat. I could not see them, but I could hear their chirps and snorts and the splash when they broke the surface and dived. I had read about the bow wave at night glowing but had not experienced it until this trip. In the ocean some form of plankton glows when it is disturbed making the bow wave glow. Interestingly it did not occur on my last watch as we entered the bay in Panama. Possibly less salty water or some feature of land eliminated the plankton. This trip marked my first experience with a "Lee Cloth".

Every bunk on this boat has one and I used mine every night except the last one when we were in the big bay. The boat was always on a port tack and I had a port bunk so my bunk was always tilted towards the middle of the boat. The lee cloth held me in. Still as the boat wallowed in the seaway, I was rocked side to side and up and down on my mattress. The first two days I slept almost 24/7 when we were not on watch. That is we almost never slept but we stayed in our bunks trying to. By about the third day I began to sleep better and was up for most of the afternoon and early evening. The first night and the last night we could see lights from the land.

The 4 nights in between there was only the moon. The first couple of nights we had to avoid fishing nets.

There was a small light on each end of the net. When they were in clusters you had to guess where the biggest openings were and hope that was a gap in the net. There were also lots of small fishing boats out at night with only one small white light in the center. As we approached Panama, the large freighter traffic increased so that we often saw 3 or 4 ships per watch as opposed to one per day. The autopilot ran continuously. The purpose of watches was to watch for traffic, watch the sails and adjust as needed. Also watch our progress and change the heading to account for drift and as we passed waypoints and changed headings to next waypoint. After each watch we logged the time, our heading, our position, and any sightings or things of interest in the log book.

Inside the 30+ mile long bay entrance to Panama City and the canal, the charts had specific lanes for in and out bound traffic like a super highway. The lanes were separated by a median. We decided to sail up the median, so it was sort of like hiking down the median of a freeway with large vehicles passing you in both directions.

The boat is a ketch so most of the trip we flew a main sail, a stay sail and the jib. The captain hates ketches and mizzen sails, so we left it under the cover. The second day we deployed a CODE ZERO sail. This is a "Bloofer" or Asymmetrical spinnaker with a built-in sock for dousing. Another reason for not setting the mizzen is that the rear cockpit has a small canopy above it to protect from the sun. If we flew the mizzen, we must take down the canopy, with temperatures in the 90.

About the boat: The boat is a 1985 Koopman's 43' aluminum ketch built in the Netherlands. The boat was built to be used in the North Sea where the temperatures are always cold and wet. The boat has a tiny center cockpit for the steersman and a regular rear cockpit. The wheel is mounted on the back wall of the small cockpit, so you are reaching behind you to steer. Thank God for the autopilot so we never have to steer. The main saloon has no ports! There are book cases behind the settees to the ceiling all around. The shelves are full of books about sailing the seven seas. There is a large 24x24 hatch in the forward part of the main cabin. The kitchen area has two 4" round opening ports and two 3x5 fixed ports. The bath room has a small 3x5 opening port. The forward V berth has no ports but one large 24x24 hatch in the ceiling. Again, boat built for the North Sea and not the tropics!

5-21-2018 We arrived at a mooring ball off the Balboa Yacht Club in Panama City, Panama on Monday morning about 9:30 A.M., after Leaving Ecuador on the evening tide the previous Tuesday afternoon. Frank rented a taxi and took the laundry to a service which washes it, He also took our passports and got us cleared through customs and picked up a few groceries. We ate lunch at the Balboa Yacht club. In the afternoon we

sat under the thatched roof of the Balboa Yacht Club and used the internet to get caught up on things. I called home and talked to Cindi. The large screen TV's are broadcasting girls boxing matches.

5-22-2018 We must motor back out to sea, where the ships are anchored and await a boat from customs which will come along side. A man from customs will measure and inspect the boat. This inspection is required for boats traversing the Panama Canal.

The boat is very slow for a 43'. Frank went overboard Tuesday afternoon after we cleared our inspection and measuring in Panama, City and scrapped the prop. There was an outgoing tide, so we went full speed in one direction against the tide and made 4.5 Km. Then with the tide we made 5.5 Km. 5 Km is the minimum speed you must be able to do to use the Canal. Thus, we are at the very minimum speed. We tried running at near red-line and it only added .4 Km. The boat bottom is very dirty, so this may be some of our problem. I know that often we are going slower than my "Y KNOT" Watkins 25 in the same wind and my boat is not a racer! As I write this Walter has attached a line from fore to aft along one side, dropping down to the water line. He is going overboard to try and see what he can clean off from the surface by just holding on to the line and floating along side. Two boats next to us have hired professional boat cleaners. Two men are over the side on one boat, one with a just a mask and the other also has an air line from a small portable air pump up on deck. They are using putty knives to scrape the bottom.

Wednesday May 23, 2018 Frank went into town and has a broken tooth pulled. He got some meds and total cost was about \$150.

5-23-18 Went ashore in morning and walked along shoreline looking at boats at anchor. Spent the afternoon at BYC surfing the internet. Returned to boat about 5:30 and watched boat traffic in and out of canal until dark.

5-24-2018 This morning we went shopping for 3 hours. First, we took a taxi to the Mercado (farmers market). It must have been over a block long. We purchased fresh vegetables. Frank prefers fresh because they last longer than the refrigerated ones in the Super Market. Next the taxi took us to a hardware store where Frank bought some S.S. screws to repair the rear entrance ladder and two paint scrapers to use to scrape the barnacles off the bottom of the boat.

The hardware store had a big flat screen TV on the wall and while I watched an advertisement came on for Go Daddy. Go Daddy is the company that hosts my website for WatkinsOwners.com Next stop was the Super Market or super Mercado. The super market was very new and modern. It was attached to the end of a new mall. Here we bought the rest of our groceries.

I purchased some shampoo and a backpack to make carrying things from the market easier.

While I was there I looked for American brand name products and this is what I found: Campbell's, Palmolive, Dove, Kotex, Huggies, Gerber, Colgate, Oral B, Sensodyne, Listerine, Delmonte, Nestle, Nature Valley, Johnson, 409, Downy, Scott, Pringles, Gold Medal. Back in the Hardware store they had the following brands: Irwin, DeWalt, Stanley, DAP paint, Clorox Bleach. Gasoline costs 75 cents per liter.

5-25-2018 After Lunch we started the engine, released our mooring lines and went up to the floating dock. We filled both water tanks then headed out to Taboga Island. We anchored off of the beach. Wow, what a cool place. It reminds me of pictures of Sicily. Houses built up on the steep slopes of the hill. Beach in front. Very Picturesque. Taboga is a resort island. Two ferries take turns making runs almost hourly all-day long between the island and Panama City. Panama City is in a rain forest and it rains every day, especially in the afternoon. Clouds cover the city almost perpetually, making it hard to see the tops of the tall buildings. But 10 miles out to sea on Taboga island, the sun is shining. So, people come by ferry to escape the clouds and rain. We went ashore, explored the town and ate supper at a restaurant. Almost missed out because we waited too long and all of the restaurants close when the last ferry leaves. Returning to the beach we found our dinghy was partially deflated. The engine kept dying as we motored back to our yacht. I was soaked from water coming over the side of the partially deflated boat. Walter and I put away the dinghy while Frank worked on the marine head. He found the reason the toilet would not pump water was a 2 inch long minnow stuck in the valve.

5-26-2018 In the morning we finished putting away all of the scuba gear and dinghy and motored back to Panama City and the Balboa Yacht Club in no wind. We make final preparations to navigate the canal.

5-28-2018 The two paid line handlers show up at dock with 4 large bumpers and 4 heavy long lines needed to keep boat centered in locks. We stow gear aboard and they return home.

Current Status: We have cleared all the requirements to transit the canal and have been assigned the date of May 28th to transit.

Trip Leg #2 Transit of the Panama Canal

5-28-2018 Our alarm awoke us at 4:15 A.M. by 4:30 we had cast off our mooring lines motored to the floating docks to pick up our two paid line handlers. From there we had to motor about 2 miles back out into the bay, where the ships awaiting entrance to the canal were moored. Our pilot was supposed to arrive by water taxi there at 5:30, but he arrived at 6:30 making it very difficult to make it to the canal locks (over 9 miles away) by 8:30 AM which was our assigned time to start the transit. We had to run the engine very hard. We were motoring into an outgoing tide that cut off 1-2 knots of speed over ground.

Fortunately, there was some kind of delay (this is the manana culture here) so we arrived before the locks opened for us to go in.

Some back-ground history is in order here. First, Frank our captain recommends the book "The Path between the Seas". The book is the history of the Panama Canal. The locks are over a 100-year-old and really show their age. On the other hand, it is amazing that they are still working. There are two parallel sets of 3 locks on each end of the canal. All locks can work in either direction (boats going up or down). Each of the old locks are 1050 feet long. Each lock raises the water level about 30 feet, for a total of 90 feet of lift from the central lake to the ocean. On the Panama City side there are 16-foot tides and on the Colon side there are 3 foot tides so the actual amount of lift varies, hour by hour. The lake may also vary in depth depending on the rainy season or not. New locks have just been built to accommodate the new Super Tanker class ships. The locks are several hundred feet away horizontally and sometimes a quarter mile away, either ahead or behind the old locks.

For our first lock we were assigned to follow into the Starboard lock, the freighter "Orient Defender" and tie up to the second tug behind him. Being tied to a tug is the easiest, safest way to transit a lock. since the Tug was against the wall, his sides received all the scraping and we just floated next to him. Once the lock filled with water and the other gate opened, they threw off the lines and we motored independently to the next lock, then tied up again to the tug. There is a space between the first two locks and the third lock of about a mile. On approaching the third lock we are told to take the Port lock, instead of following the freighter into the starboard lock.

Here we have the entire lock to ourselves. 4-line handlers, 2 on each side, throw "Monkey Balls" at us. This is a weight attached to a small line. We must catch the ball and tie the line to our lines. The handlers above us on the sides of the lock, then pull the lines up and attach them to the cleats on the top of the canal wall. We then must tighten our lines to center the boat in the middle of the lock. When they open the valves water swirls in whirlpools everywhere, so we must keep the boat lines tight as the water rises, nearly 3 feet per minute.

When the gates open, the handlers on the shore remove the line from the cleat and carry it to the same position in the next lock 1050 ft. away. The boat must try motoring ahead matching pace with the walking line handlers. If it is the final lock, they cast off your lines and you have to quick pull them on board, then motor out.

We exited the last lock on the west coast at 9:30 A.M., we have to be at the lock on the other side of Panama by 1:30 or we will not be allowed to enter and must spend the night on board at anchored in the lake.

It is nearly 29 miles distance and we have 4 hours to make it! The motor is again revved to near maximum cruising speed and we make 7.2 knots over ground! Just enough to possibly make it! The transit is sometimes in a dredged canal and sometimes across sections of the open water of a large lake with islands all around. We got the feeling during the day that our paid help (pilot and two line handlers) do not wanted us to successfully negotiate the locks in one day. If we do not make it, that would mean feeding and providing shelter, plus another days pay to the pilot and the two line handlers.

During the transit the freighter we were paired with passes us, but when we arrive at the other side of Panama, they are waiting on us with the lock doors open. They ask us to enter the lock first, ahead of the freighter. Now we are again center tied but at the front of the lock. The freighter has steel cables from all 4 corners to small "mule" engines which ride along the rails on the edge of the canal. The "mule" engines are fastened to the rails,

so the freighter cannot drag them over the side. The “mule” engines provide the cables to the freighter and use their internal winches to maintain the freighter centered in the lock.

After the last lock we motored out for a couple of miles into a large bay where boats are anchored awaiting their turn to go through the canal. A large work boat came along side and picked up our pilot. We then motored about 5 miles to Sheltered Harbor Marina, arriving at 4:00 PM. Our line handlers got their lines and fenders and carried them down the dock a few slots to the boat they were going to be assisting through the canal in the opposite direction in two days.

Sheltered Harbor Marina is nothing like the previous two marinas in Ecuador and Panama City. They looked 3rd world by comparison. Sheltered Harbor at least on surface appeared to be modern with floating docks, a restaurant, a hotel above and a pool. There is also a large area for haul out and repair of boats. The marina was built by the US government on the military base that used to be there. Now, the main street going by the marina, ends in what appears to be a dirt road leading into the jungle. Back in that jungle is the abandoned buildings of a large U.S. military base.

A similar thing occurred on the Panama City side. The Balboa Yacht Club was originally part of the military base. Around the Yacht club were blocks of empty space where buildings used to stand and fenced off areas with building in them, now too dangerous to go near. But for the most part, the base was being mowed and the weeds kept down and many of the buildings had been repurposed for other uses. Here the only buildings we can see are the Yacht Club and a few apartment buildings.

Upon arrival we all took showers and a dip in the pool. Then we ate supper in the nice restaurant overlooking the marina. I had shrimp fajita's which were very good. I think my meal cost about \$20.00. More than in most US nice restaurants! I think I have already said that although there is Panamanian money called the Balboa, the commerce at least in the Canal Zone is in US dollars.

Tomorrow we leave for the USA!

Leg #3 of Big Sailing Adventure

Colon, Panama to Jacksonville, Florida

Trip took 14 days and covered 1,459 miles all nonstop.

5-29-18, Frank and Walter went to town on a bus to get some final supplies for the trip. I stayed behind and filled the boats water tanks and walked around the marina grounds. I also took a dip in the pool. Upon their return at about 12:30 the groceries were stowed, and the boat headed for the gas dock. After 47 gallons of diesel fuel were added, we left the fuel dock and headed out at 2:30 P.M. First motoring through the break wall about 3 miles away and then motor sailing for a while. Engine was turned off and attempted to sail for a few hours, but the wind changed directions 90 degrees and then died. Ran engine all night.

5-30-18 Sometime in the afternoon the trade winds kicked in! We are doing 7 knots due north. Winds are steady 20 - gusting to 29 Knots, seas 6-8 feet rollers. Taking waves constantly over entire boat. All hatches closed except main and rear entry. Boat is a sauna! The only clothes we are wearing is bathing suit or underwear. The boat is pounding and galloping ahead, crashing into waves and shaking all over. The wind in the rigging shakes the boat. Everything is making noise, the dishes in the cabinets, food in the pantry, sails, lines, and rigging are all rattling and creaking.

5-31-18 Still pounding north in trade winds. Same condition as yesterday. At 7:30 AM a buzzer alarm sounds inside a wall panel next to the main entrance.

We check the engine compartment, rear bilge and all the instruments but cannot find the reason for the alarm. The alarm continues all day, with the heavy seas we cannot deal with disassembling the panel. We think of and check several things, but nothing proves correct to stop alarm. About dark, Frank thinks of checking the bilge where the centerboard pivot comes through. There is some water in the bilge and we can see a float switch. Frank gets a portable hand pump and we pump the water into a cooking pot. As soon as we get the bilge dry the buzzer stops buzzing! We also try to lower the centerboard, but it is stuck up. Either due to barnacles build up or we raised it too high and jammed it.

During the afternoon I am sitting on the port settee when an egg comes flying out of a hanging basket that has been bouncing around for the last two days and lands on the floor next to my feet busting and spilling it contents all over the rug. I must clean it up.

6-1-18 Still sailing north at 7 knots in winds 20-24 kn. At noon, quieting down to 18-20 kn. No waves across boat in last hour. 1:15 PM, we just caught a 3 ft Mahi Mahi! Frank and Walter fillet the fish in the rear cockpit and wash everything down with buckets of seawater. Looks like enough to make 3 big meals. Frank cooked first batch for supper. Waves and wind calming more. Wind down to 16-18 Kn. Boat doing about 6.8 Kn. Much more comfortable. Have front hatch open and getting some air. Still everything makes noise! Rattle-Rattle, clang-clang, doors, dishes, rigging, sails, everything makes noises and the ocean going by gurgles and hisses.

It is no wonder that ancient sailors thought their boat was alive!

Boat annoyances: We cannot use the bathroom sink on port tack or water comes in and overflows! Have to leave drain seacock closed. Poor design!

At 7 Knots the boat gallops and crashes ahead. At 6.5 Knot, the boat is much more comfortable.

6-2-18 Cooled down enough that I was able to wear long pants and a long sleeve shirt on the 3-6 AM watch. At 10 AM very hot and miserable again, wearing only shorts. Average mileage per day of this leg of trip is 138 nautical miles. Midafternoon, the wind dropped to 8 knots. We took reef out of main. Now flying jib, staysail, full main. Not using mizzen. Calm enough that I took first shower since May 30th. Used cockpit shower. Needed to get the salt off as I had taken some direct hit from waves while on watch! The salt on your skin and clothes makes everything damp and clammy.

We are supposed to drink the water from the holding tanks. The boat has a water maker so there is plenty of water. We have bottled water but are supposed to save it for emergency conditions. The tank water tastes awful. I tried adding Tang but I never liked it even as a kid. Walter suggested adding a little lemon extract. We have a bottle on the kitchen counter. Wow that makes the water almost drinkable! Wind died on my 9-12 midnight watch. Frank started the engine.

6-3-18 Motoring on the flattest seas I have seen on the trip so far. I was able to use the bathroom sink to brush my teeth!

When Frank came on watch at 9 AM he had us raise the mizzen. The first time on this trip. With full sails only doing about 4 Kn.

I spent entire afternoon in rear cockpit reading the book "Guns, Germs and Steel" Winds are light and seas calm, entering Cuba Straight at 6:30 PM. Motored all night at 4.2 Knots. I had 12-3 AM watch. Very calm, 3/4 moon, I saw one passing ship.

6-4-18 Still motor sailing in light winds doing 5.5 Kn. I think we have only tacked twice on this leg and both were during the first afternoon, near Colon, Panama. 783 Km completed so far on this leg. Average speed of 5.4 Knots. Motoring into light wind on our nose, doing 4.1 Kn. Frank made fish sandwiches for lunch from the Mahi Mahi he caught.

6-5-18 I thought I had seen calm before but there is barely a perceivable swell. At 9:30 AM changed course from 000 due north to 30 degrees as we turn the north eastern corner of Cuba.

6-6-18 Engine turned off at about 5:30 A.M. I am on watch 6:00 A.M. to 9 A.M.

We are in the golf stream doing 8.2 knots without galloping or pounding. Seas are relatively calm. Waves less than 1 foot. Compass heading is 85 degrees or almost due east. Some waves coming up on Port side almost straight ahead of us. At 8:00 A.M. we put up the code zero Spinnaker. We are now doing 8.2 knots with hardly a wave or a ripple. Wind speed is 6-8 Kn. Took down the code zero at 12:30 A.M. Went for a swim in the golf stream. Doing 4.5 Knots with zero wind! At 2:30 P.M. We have been out exactly 8 days. Completed 1,020 miles at average speed of 127 Nautical Miles per day or 5.31 Knots per hour. At 4:30 we rolled out the Jenney and shut off engine. We are doing 9.5 Knots under sail in flat seas.

In late afternoon we see a thunder storm approaching. First the wind died, then it changed direction almost 180 degrees to our stern. Started to rain very hard. The autopilot could not hold the course because the wind hitting the mizzen from a stern was trying to spin the boat around. Frank and Walter with great difficulty managed to strike the mizzen sail. During storm the boat speed was over 10 nautical miles per hour! After the storm there are big swells, but the wind dies and we have to start the motor again.

6-6-18 Mostly cloudy and hazy. Motoring at 6.5 Knots in flat seas. Wind at 4 Knots on starboard rear of beam. At 9:30 A.M. we are 125 nautical miles from Fort Lauderdale.

Very Hot! Another afternoon thunder storm. No rain this time but big wind and waves. Rolled up then unrolled the Jenny. Walter and I dropped and put away the mizzen sail. We folded and stored the stay sail and put it in the deck bag. We started the engine as soon as the wind died down after storm.

6-7-18 Ran engine all night. During my watch (3 A.M. to 6 A.M.) the boom fell off of the mast!. It made a terrible crash when it hit the deck which woke both Walter and Frank and they came up on deck to see what had happened. I put on my safety harness and strapped myself to safety line and Walter and I went forward to examine things. We found that nothing was broken, just the 5/8 bolt forming the boom pivot had come off. This was due to a very poor design. First the sail hooks which attach to the sail clew were welded to the top of the bolt so as the sail wiggles and pivots and works the bolt back and forth. To make matters worse, there was no hole in the bolt threads for a cotter pin and the nut was not castellated or even a nylock! Fortunately, the bolt was still attached to the sail and we found the nut and some washers on the deck at the base of the mast. We were able to drop the sail about 6 inches then put everything back together and retighten the sail.

9:30 A.M. we enter the break wall at West Palm Beach Florida. We went up river a mile or so and stopped at the first marina we came to and ask for fuel. Frank ask for 40 gallons of diesel. That is not full, just enough to get us to Jacksonville, Fl. Walter jumped off on the dock and secured the dock lines, then took the trash up to the dumpster ashore. Frank went up to the office to see if he could get Wi-Fi to call his wife. He always calls his wife using skype to save paying a phone bill for his TRAC phone.

I filled the tank with the diesel, then took apart the boom and added some washer we found after it got light and reassembled the whole thing. I did not get off the boat, so I am technically still going nonstop. Within 15 minutes everyone was back on the boat and we were heading out to sea. Just a quick note. We were flying the Dutch flag off our stern. This was a Dutch boat, sailed by 2 US and one Canadian citizen from Ecuador. To be legal we needed to call customs and be checked into the country. Since the boat was not US it needed to have a cruising permit applied for. If we then left the port and went back out into the ocean, we needed to get an exit stamp.

Thunder storms again in the afternoon during my watch 12-3 P.M. First too much wind then none. Motoring at 1:15 P.M.

6-8-18 Have not said much about cooking. I do dishes but not cook. Walter and Frank seem to love to cook. They cook something every watch. Both make tea or coffee every watch no matter how hot and miserable it is below deck, we are wearing only our skivvies, but they boil water on the propane stove for tea. Walter made vegetable soup for supper by combining two or three cans of different types of vegetables and a cup of Rahman noodles. Cloudy and cooler. I can wear a "T" shirt and shorts again! 8:00 P.M. just after sundown we are hit by a squall with no warning. Wind indicator said 43 knots! Put on harness and helped Walter put 1 reef in the main. I wanted to put two reefs in, but Walter thought we needed more sail to counter act the rolling of the boat in the big swells. We are now sailing under just the reefed main. We put out the jib just before dark to help reduce the wallowing due to the big swells the squall stirred up.

6-9-18 I rolled up the jib at 8:00 A.M., since we were motoring directly into the wind. I got off watch at 9:00 A.M. and now jib is out again. Very quiet on my watch other than listening to engine. Just after dawn, I heard dolphins beside the boat! I turned around and there were five or more swimming alongside. You can hear them snort to clear the water out of their nose before they breath in and they make a sort of chirp or whistle sound to communicate with each other.

10:30 A.M. We are out of gulf stream. down to less than 3 knots. Frank increased engine RPM's, still barely 3 knots.

Frank caught a tuna around noon. We removed all the cushions in the rear cockpit and he and Walter cleaned it in rear cockpit. The tuna was about 24" long. Frank filleted it on the cockpit seat. Walter washed everything down using buckets of salt water and a brush. Frank cooked the tuna for supper. 3:00 P.M. Thunder storms forming like the last 3 days. Sunny overhead and hot!

6-10-18 7:00 A.M. motoring up the John's river in Jacksonville, Fl. We must go 17 miles upstream to buoy #68 and the Trout river to Seafarer Marina. We arrive at marina at 9:05 A.M. We start to clean the boat and go ashore to try and use the internet to contact customs and our families. The internet is a mess and most sites will not allow us to connect because the internet is not secure. Frank tries to call several 1-800 numbers to get customs info but the numbers given him did not work, either he heard them wrong or they gave him the wrong numbers. Eventually Frank decides to rent a car. We get the car at 3:30. We go to a Home Depot and buy a

2x6x10 to use as a lee board outside of the bumpers to keep us off the pilings. We returned to the boat and installed the lee board. We then went out to eat at some sort of seafood takeout. Then off to a hotel for the night. Being at a dock instead of out in the ocean, it was too miserable to sleep on the boat.

6-11-18 We got up and went to customs by 8:15. Customs/Immigration was ready to get us cleared right away and also able to provide Frank with a cruising permit for the boat. By 9:15 we were on our way. We returned to the boat to drop off the cruising permit paperwork. We closed up the boat, emptied the refrigerator and checked for any last-minute things we had missed. Then we headed for Lake Placid where we dropped off Walter. Walter was planning to ride his new BMW motorcycle back to Goodrich, Canada. From there I drove down 64 to Bradenton. We stopped at my brother Jim's place and I turned on the A/C unit because I am going to spend the night there. Then I drove Frank home to Tropic Isles. I then returned to Jim's house and made the bed and filled 3 large jugs with water from the community well to flush the toilet (water was turned off). The Cohee's called and invited me to come over after they got home at about 9:00 P.M. I went to Wendy's for some supper then back to Tropic Isles to my house which I am renting to the Cohees'. Talked to Carroll till about midnight, then drove back to Jim's to spend the night. Spent the next day at the Tropic Isles pool. Plane home was set to leave, Wednesday evening the 13th at 5:30 PM, but due to some unexplained problem the plane did not leave until 8:30 PM. Cindi picked me up at the airport and we arrived home about 12:30 AM on Thursday the 14th of June.

BUCKET LIST ITEMS COMPLETED:

- Sailed in the South Pacific Ocean.
- Swam in the South Pacific Ocean
- Sailed across the Equator
- Traversed the Panama Canal
- Swam in the Gulf Stream
- Sailed in the Gulf Stream
- Sailed across the Tropic of Cancer
- Stood watches around the clock
- Did not see land for 10 days
- Sailed over 1,400 miles non-stop
- Watched dolphins play in the boat wake several times
- Saw the florescent plankton glow in the bow wake.
- Sailed on a Ketch.
- Sailed in the North Pacific Ocean
- Sailed from -1 degree latitude to 30 degrees latitude.
- Sailed a total of 2,205 miles.