

Nor'Sea27 Owners' Newsline

#4 September 1996

"Courage is the door to experience. Experience is the body of thought.", anonymous. Starting out on any cruise does take a bit of courage whether it is a short overnighter, or the beginning of the cruise of your lifelong dream.

One weekend in August, I had invited two ladies to spend a couple days sailing and exploring southern Lake Michigan and several nearby harbors with me, sans Gale. I often take the tiller of NO NEWS and captain the ship, but Gale is usually on board.

The wind was right for a sail south to Hammond, Indiana. After a delicious dinner at Phil Schmidts and a quick check of the new gambling casino boat, we returned to the slip and "No News" just in time to feel the wind gust from the Northeast. The strong NE winds built up 3 - 5' waves during the night. We started for our home marina about noon, with the wind about 15 - 18 on the nose, and dropping.

After a slow sail home (with a reef in the main, Dean) I started motoring into the channel. The engine slowed, resumed speed, then slowed again and died. (Gale and I had purposely run our fuel tank down low, in order to determine the exact capacity of the tank.) I assumed we were out of fuel, so we maneuvered into the harbor, with the steady wind at our stern, through the boats on the moorings and finally to our mooring.

I had instructed the crew that they would have just one chance to pick up the mooring line and drop the eye onto the mooring cleat! Thank goodness, they did it.

Its a different experience when you are the one in charge and have to make the significant decisions. But its a great feeling of satisfaction when your goal is accomplished.

I'll let Gale give you "the rest of the story" in his Diesel Digest column.

Report #1

A report from Ed and Ellen Zacko #44 ENTR'ACTE, as they returned home from their annual Bahamas summer cruise on August 22nd, says that there was "only one hurricane, (Ed. SO FAR), this season, Bertha, and that was day #1 as we entered the Bahamas. It was by design. We knew she was on the way and decided that, if we were going to die, it would be better to die there than in Florida. Anyway, no problems. We went as far south as Staniel Cay Exuma and then on back to Grand Bahama. Quite a hike really, but worth the trip. The spearfishing was great (no sharks this year), and we even tried line fishing for a change. It has it's own element of excitement. We met a lot of great folks, as usual. We also met another Nor'Sea owner. He had just purchased the boat in the Dominican Republic and went down there to sail it home! What a great way to begin ownership."

Ed and Ellen have produced a great video about building ENTR'ACTE from a bare hull and their sailing adventure across to Europe. See the ad in this issue.

Ed also says that he will be happy to furnish detailed instructions for all kinds of operations: Engine removal/installation, Fuel tank removal/ installation, Plans for the fuel tank/coating with WEST(a complicated affair), Rigging diagrams, Mast raising kit, Crawl thru between main and aft cabin, etc. Please contact the editor with your requests.

Report #2

Another report arrived from Steve and Jennifer Smith #33 JENNY LEE, describing their journey in 1992 from San Francisco to Florida, via the Panama Canal. "The purchase of the Garmin GPS was, without a doubt the wisest thing we did in preparation for the trip. There are things we would add to and change on the boat before we set out on another cruise. Such as solar panels and a wind generator. Because we had refrigeration we found that we could not sit at anchor for more than a few days without draining the batteries. A radar would also be on my list of desired items, both for use at harbor entrances and for tracking squalls.

On May 9th, 1993, we reached the southernmost point of our voyage, 7 degrees 10 minutes north and 80 degrees 53.5 min west off Punta Mariata, Panama. The canal traffic began to be noticeable in this area. Our transit through the Panama Canal was truly one of the highlights and milestones of the trip. I was a little anxious about whether we had enough cleats and if they were big enough but as it turned out there was really no problem. We arrived at the Balboa Yacht Club at 09:00 on the 13th of May and picked up a mooring as there is no anchoring allowed.

All together the cost of the Canal transit was about \$230, but by the time we paid for the mooring, the fee to join the Yacht Club, which was mandatory, the visas, the taxi fares, and all the other little costs which I can't remember, we had gone through a lot of money.

One way we did save money was in the area of the line-handlers, who were recruited from the local Peace Corps office. There were three people available and looking forward to making the trip through the Canal. The required number of line-handlers on each boat is four and the captain doesn't count so we needed all three.

We got underway around 07:00 on the 17th after the launch brought out our advisor, "Rocky" who was very good at his job and was very friendly. An advisor is a pilot in training and are used on the yachts. The big ships are required to have a real pilot on board and sometimes two.

Because the "JENNY LEE" is so small they decided that we would just raft up to the other larger boats. When the men on the side of the lock threw the heaving-line down to us, we just had to pass it to the larger boat in the center of the raft-up. We passed through the first three locks and were in Gatun Lake just after noon.

The transit authorities try to get boats through the Canal in one day if possible. We motored as fast as our 8 hp Yanmar would go, but we arrived at the other end of the lake about a half hour too late. We anchored near the locks in sixty feet of water and went swimming in fresh water for the first time since the Delta.

The next morning we were glad when we saw that "Rocky" was assigned to us again. He got there around 11:00 and waited for our instructions. We were rafted to a large powerboat from Sacramento for the next two locks down to the Atlantic. Locking down was uneventful except when the captain of the powerboat, with us still tied to him, took off at almost ten knots out of the last lock. There was not damage though and we were soon untied from them and proceeded the rest of the way to Panama Canal Yacht Club in Colon. We said good-bye to Rocky and the pilot boat picked him up in the anchorage. We tied up at the dock at the Yacht Club and sent our three helpers off in a cab. We had made it to the Atlantic where the tides were only a couple of feet as opposed to almost fifteen feet on the Pacific side."

Their story continues until they eventually enter Tampa Bay on June 24th, 1993 at 13:00 EST. Currently they are living in Gulfport, Florida with JENNY LEE tied at their dock.

Steve has his own business, STEVE SMITH, Mobile Rigging Service and Jennifer is with Johnson Sails in St.

Petersburg, Florida.

Ed. NS - My own inquiry concerns the replacement of the original cushions and coverings. Are there certain brands, or qualities of foam that I should look for? Our originals have 4" foam on the top (a head rest) and at the forward edge of the bottom cushions. The rest of the foam is 3", I believe. Should I try to duplicate this? What fabrics have you used successfully to cover the foam?

- Gelcoat Blisters -

When I purchased my Nor'Sea #78, in 1988, it had extensive gelcoat blisters and a whole section of missing gelcoat near the prop. I used the West System and worked out all the damage following their instructions. I have since 1988 hauled my boat for bottom paint four times, there has been no recurrence of the blistering, great joy. Seymour Shapiro - VISITOR #78

The next Newslines will have more discussion of gelcoat blisters. If you have a blister story to tell, please send it to the editor.

- Porthole screens -

I used a hot glue gun, simply glued the screening to the outside of my bronze fittings, cut away the overlap. Looks OK, works fine, is cheap and the glue can be removed easily whenever I want to. Seymour Shapiro, VISITOR, #78

Also see Ed & Ellen Zacko's screen solution.

Diesel Digest - by Gale Saint

We need to talk fuel. To continue Nancy's saga from the front page, we were not out of fuel, but assumed so at the time. Our dipstick showed 4.5" in the bottom of the fuel tank. I suspected our "pick-up" tube was not that high. Assuming the remaining fuel was less clean than we like, we pumped out about 2 gallons, leaving 1.5" on our measuring stick, a 1/4" dowel that we marked in inches. We then poured in 5 gal of #1 diesel (more about that below).

We have an electric fuel pump (Dupree) just above the tank and upstream from the Racor filter/water separator (10 micron filter). Finding no fuel flowing after the pump ran 30 seconds, we removed the 18 year old pump. On disassembly, we found a badly clogged bronze screen. After cleaning and replacing, it worked fine.

The electric fuel pump is necessary to pressurize the system through the big Racor and then to the final filter (2 micron) on the engine. The built-on finger operated fuel feed attached to the engine block can't do it.

Things we learned from the experience:

1. When an engine dies from lack of fuel and resulting air in the lines, it does so suddenly with no warning sound.
2. When it dies from clogged filters (or fuel pump screen) it does so slowly and often revs the rpm's back up a time or two before slowly starving to death.
3. I need to get a backup for this electric fuel pump. (any suggestions)
4. There are two grades of diesel available in the US.

#1 is similar to kerosene which has a flash point greater than 100EF (38EC) with a minimum cetane number of 40. Thus it fires better (particularly in cold weather) but being more refined, has less lubricity which causes more wear. Yanmar approves adding FPPF brand "Lubricity". Directions on the container assume #2 fuel, so #1 takes a little more.

#2 is the common diesel with lower volatility and higher density than #1. The flash point is greater than 125EF (52EC) with a minimum cetane number of 40. Cetane is a number somewhat similar to octane in gasoline.

5. We put in #1 fuel instead of #2 because pink #2 (non taxed) was the only #2 available. Now we find that the enforcement of enormous fines for having pink in your tank has been suspended by Congress for 16 months. BOAT/US reports in the September 1996 magazine, that attached to the bill which included an increase in the minimum wage, Congress and the President approved the diesel fuel tax suspension.

Beth Lewis (#19, aft cabin) sends along several upgrades:

On PROPER MOTION, one of the first things John did was fasten shut the front-opening icebox, to keep the chilled air from migrating to the cabin sole. I was not too thrilled to negotiate the icebox from the top.

We spent many a day holding up the cutting board icebox lid with one hand while rooting for the elusive item that had worked its way to the bottom of the box.

John solved the problem, by installing an eye strap in the overhead where the lid would strike if pivoted on the short, outboard edge. Another eyestrapped went on the inboard short edge of the lid. A bungee cord (10" overall, including bungee and two hooks) fastens the lid in the up-tilted position. When not in use, the bungee hooks out of the way on the porthole.

My arms haven't gotten any longer, but my temper sure has.

Beth also writes:

Nifty Nightstands - Nightstands are handy things, that's why we have them shoreside! Aboard, there's the problem of what to do with the little items we like to keep near the bed. On PROPER MOTION, #19, aft cabin, we solved the problem with binocular boxes (closed bottom type!). On the flat surface to either side of the aft porthole in the aft cabin, John mounted two boxes. They're perfect to hold a book, reading glasses, sleep mask, and all the other paraphernalia it's handy to have near the bunk.

John's going to put another one in on his side to hold his 2-meter radio and cell phone.

Teak Treatment - Michael Hulett, #155, aft cabin, Chesapeake Bay, writes "I use 100% pure Tung Oil (about \$15 quart - good for 3 or 4 applications) which lasts a year, at least to my satisfaction. Also, I blush to report, that I clean the teak first with a pressure washer. I realize this probably erodes the wood fibers, but, oh, does it ever save my back!.

Editor, NS. When NO NEWS, #76 arrived in Tacoma from Homer Alaska, the teak was a depressing sight. The varnish was about 1/3 on and the rest, including a full teak shear stripe, had varnish flaking off, or black with dirt and mold. I spent most of 1992, stripping, cleaning and sanding the teak.

To get the peeling varnish off, I had great success with the heat gun and scraper or just scraping after the teak was

wet from rain or washing. Next, I used several products depending on the status of the teak, from TSP, to Teak Wonder, to Teka A & B (strongest). The sanding was done with a small electric palm sander. Our choice for final treatment was the Sikkens Cetol Marine finish. It has lasted since the original 3 coats, with either some annual touch up of worn areas, or a full coat or 2 some winters. The finish has a slight orange tone, which is the UV inhibitor, I'm told.

The book, *Brightwork*, by Rebecca Wittman, is a beautiful book with some very good ideas from a professional finisher. It makes great winter reading by the fire.