



The Nor'Sea27 Owners NewsLine

The Newsletter of Inspired Nor'Sea 27 boat owners.

Issue # 21

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Nor'Sea FEST 2000

Hi Folks,

The Nor'Sea Fest 2000 will be at the Oakland Yacht Club the afternoon and evening of Saturday April 29, 2000. In the afternoon there will be a boat crawl of the resident and sail-in Nor'Sea's. Check out other peoples boats and generally hang out. About 1800 we will move up to the Regatta Room for drinks and a short meeting to plan Nor'Sea cruises for this summer. If you have a favorite place let us know. After the meeting, we will go upstairs for dinner and more talk. A very informal get together.

For sail-in people, the OYC offers slips free for the first night and \$10 per night thereafter. People sailing in for the whole week of the boat show are welcome. For the weekend we may have to raft up some boats in order to fit everyone in. About a week before the party please RSVP to me if you are still planning to sail in.

Dinner will be from the normal OYC menu. Most dinners are about \$15; less for soup and salad.

Think about good locations for cruises.

If there are any questions about the get together or any suggestions for cruises please let me know.

Pass the word to Nor'Sea owners that might not know about the Fest.

GaryC

WINGS Please e-mail me at: garycampbell@hotmail.com

ONLY if you can not e-mail,

call me at (510) 814-1920

Lyle Hess RENDEZVOUS 2000!

Get ready everyone, it's time to be thinking of another sail-in/drive-in (fly-in?)tribute to Mr. Lyle Hess. This year our rendezvous will be on San Francisco Bay! Plan to take part this summer the weekend of July 21-23.

While we are still working on the final venue (we have a choice of several marinas and will choose the best one shortly), the location will be San Francisco Bay.

Please check my website periodically for updates on the event or drop me an e-mail. I have already heard that there are several boats (BCCs) planning to sail up from Southern California. Trailer sailors should plan to participate as well. How often do you get the opportunity to sail the Bay in GOOD company?

See you in July...

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BEEN THERE, DONE THAT! Owners Report

A Nor'Sea goes to Cuba Clyde & Loretta Final Part

Pedro's family really did "adopt" us. He met us at the dock in PE when we arrived and took us straight to Dora's his mother- in- law. Dora owns a Cuban style bed and breakfast. One house, two bedrooms (with air conditioners), two tables, and a bar. However, she has had guests from all over the world. They write their comments on the walls. It saves paper. Sandpiper is one of their latest entries. There are comments from all over Europe, South America, Mexico, Canada and even a few others from the US. Dora's daughter, Sandra, speaks a little English, so we spent quite a bit of time with her. Dora speaks very little English and Pedro almost none. It's truly amazing how well we got along with just sign language and a dictionary.

Sandra offered to make us two lobster dinners for only \$16.00. Because of our cash situation, we gracefully declined. When we explained our finances, she and her husband, Lenny, invited us to their house for lobster dinner, at no charge. Needless to say, it was a great dinner. Lobster, rice and beans, and plantains. Oddly, though, they wouldn't actually eat with us. They stood around and talked to us while we ate. I guess this is relatively common in Cuba. But it was definitely weird for us.

Over the next several days, we were constantly entertained by someone in the family. Loretta made a comment about

Tuni's (Sandra's sister) fingernails. Next thing we know, she's painting Loretta's nails. Not just a normal paint job, though. Kind of a Cuban-French job. After she painted the nail, red, of course, she would wipe off the very tip and paint that part white. We have pictures. Loretta said she felt like a hooker. But, again, when in Rome.....

One day we were supposed to eat lunch at Pedro's house. The Cuban homes were pretty much the same basic design. They pour a rough concrete foundation, maybe 60-800 square feet. The outside walls are usually wood, but sometimes concrete blocks. The roof is either woven thatch or tin. No glass or screens in the windows, only heavy wooden shutters. Inside, you enter into the living room. Almost everybody has a TV. Most of them are black and white and either Russian or Czech built. Furniture is very sparse. Maybe a couple of chairs and an old sofa. The next room is the dining room, which was simply a table and a few mismatched chairs. Some houses have the kitchen next. This is also a small room, with a sink, an old stove and oven, very old refrigerator, and some cabinets. Most homes have a crock-pot, where they always have rice or beans cooking, and a pressure cooker (saves the costly fuel). Some homes, Pedro's being one, has the kitchen separate from the main house. But, it was still small by our standards. Opposite the living and dining rooms are two bedrooms. No door, just a piece of cloth hanging down. The bathroom consists of a toilet, sink, and shower. Or sometimes just a shower stall, with no plumbing, just a bucket. Every home needed painting. Yards are mostly dirt, which is good because they don't lawn mowers and the chickens and pigs would just destroy the grass anyway. By the way, the chickens, not the pigs, generally had free reign of the house. Cleaning was relatively quick. Toss a bucket of water on the floor and with a squeegee-type mop; push the water out the door. No Mr. Clean or Mop 'n Glo.

As poor as these people are though, they still take a lot of pride in their homes. Their photos, paintings, and knickknacks mean very much to them. They always took the time to show and explain everything to us. And their homes are all clean. People are sweeping and dusting daily. As a matter of fact, even the towns themselves are cleaner than most of ours.

It was definitely like going back in time, though. There are hundreds of old, restored 50's cars still being driven. People still sit on their porches. They would talk to us as we walked by. Parents would sit and watch their kids play in the yard. Cuba is much more family oriented and "neighborly" than we tend to be.

Not to be political, but if it wasn't for our embargo keeping so many of life's little necessities and pleasures from them, I think they would be quite happy. Not that they're not happy, but they do without so many things that we take for granted. Just as we were adopted by Pedro's family, we also adopted them. We had bags of clothing to give away. We had given quite a lot to the fishermen, but we still had many nice dresses and lots of kid's clothes. Back in the States, when people found out we were going to Cuba, they would give us clothes to pass out. We also bought an entire bay of kid's clothes for \$1. Our church in Marathon gave us a ton of food. To make life easier, we just gave everything to Sandra and had her distribute it to her family and friends. The Cuban people are very good at sharing, instead of hoarding. It was like a giant Christmas party. Everyone got something. Little things, like peanut butter or thread or fishhooks or soap or toilet paper (especially if it doesn't feel like sandpaper), would make somebody light up. It was very nice, but also very sad. We don't have the right to hurt these people like that. It's not like Castro's exporting communism anymore. The worse thing, though, is the medicine. They have no aspirin, anti-biotics, cough medicine, etc. We met little kids with rashes and no medicine to put on them. Luckily, we had a bottle of Calamine lotion. We left most of our medicine in Cuba.

Back to lunch at Pedro's house. We got there about ten and were served a strong, pungent cup of Cuban coffee. We would call it espresso. It was our first cup of Cuban coffee and it was quite good. Pedro took us outside and showed us lunch. He pointed into a 55-gallon barrel that contained a couple of dozen land crabs. Unlike the local lobsters, these crabs had huge, strong claws. So, getting them out of the barrel was no easy job. Luckily, Pedro did it. We would have starved to death waiting for me to stick my hand in that barrel. Pedro killed one for Loretta to hold. She was less than thrilled! He then stuck a long knife in its claw and had Loretta take a picture of the three of

us (him, me, and crab with knife). He was quite proud. And it made a cute picture. While we were playing, his wife was starting the fire. We cooked these crabs in a huge pot on an open fire in the back yard. As Pedro broke the crabs apart, he would toss the remains to the pigs. (He pointed to the black one that is to be our Christmas dinner, if we return.) Very little goes to waste in Cuba. Before tossing the heads though, Pedro would scrape what they called "Manteca", or grease, out of the crab. It looked like brain juice to me. Pretty disgusting! This was the base for the crab sauce. As gross as it sounds, it was very tasty. But I sure wouldn't try this at home. We all had a wonderful lunch. Crab, rice and pinto beans (which we had given them) and some kind of potato-like tuber. Even getting the tuber was an experience. Pedro asked me if I wanted to go for a bike ride. He gave me his wife's bike and we headed out for the country. After a couple of near crashes (the brakes had almost no rubber left), we arrived at his friend's farm. The farmer was a very old gentleman who had fought in the revolution, and the woman was his daughter, I think. The farmer had plenty of tubers, still in ground, but no hoe. So, Pedro rode off to borrow a hoe from the neighbor. This was typical of Cuba. Meanwhile, I handed them some of the hard candies I always carried with me. Men, women, old, young, they all loved candy. I asked the daughter about the condition of the bikes. Her bike, along with both of Pedro's, had completely bald tires. She said that there are no tubes or tires in Cuba. She had even gone into Havana to buy some, but the stores were out. They seemed to be available for the tourist bikes though, because they all had good tires. When Pedro returned, we went out to the field and dug up a bunch of tubers. Later. The farmer came to Pedro's and invited Loretta and I to his house for dinner if we return to Cuba. We now have half a dozen dinner invitations.

Even though we were still full from lunch, Pedro and his wife started preparing yet another meal. When we tried to leave, Pedro said we were "loco". Despite our limited Spanish, we understood that word. He offered us a bed if we wanted to take a nap. Instead, we prepared ourselves to eat again. Keep in mind, that we had either been cooking or eating for almost seven hours now. This time, we were served a Cuban delicacy called jutia. It wasn't in the dictionary. The wife said it was "pollo" (chicken) and Pedro said it tasted like "puerco" (pig). We still didn't know what it was. I made sure that it wasn't "pigeon" (pigeon) or cat or dog. They really do eat pigeons, though. When I explained to him that we don't eat pigeons in the US, he nonchalantly answered that Americans don't have to. Good point. Anyway, we figured jutia was some kind of duck. Dark meat, somewhat gamy, small ribs. We both ate just a little, but it was pretty good. It was a month before we discovered that being served jutia is quite an honor. First, it is a true Cuban delicacy, and second, it is illegal to kill them. Also, a Cuban friend told us that if we gave him two jutia, he would make us the best dinner we had ever eaten. Unfortunately, jutia is basically a fruit rat!!! I seriously doubt it will catch on in the US.

One of the reasons we wanted to visit PE was that it was the closest village to Vinales, an historic town in the mountains. Sandra found us a local taxi, but he still wanted \$25 for the day. From Havana, it was \$100. We were now down to about \$30 cash. The only other alternative was the local bus, which unfortunately only left at 6 am. However, it was only one peso, or five cents. Now, that was within our budget. So, the morning of our departure, we awoke Sandra (by her insistence), and she walked us to the bus stop. We were the first stop and Sandra literally pushed us into the bus and sat us next to a friend of hers. Before we left the bus was packed, with standing room only. Vinales was 25 miles away, about an hour trip by bus. That includes the dozen or so stops we still had to make. Many more people got on, but almost nobody left. It wasn't as bad as some of the Mexican busses, but it was damn close. At least there weren't any animals on board. Unless you count the fleas that were attracted to Loretta. But, there were only a few of them. Anyway, after jutia, what are a few fleas? Luckily for me, I decided to stand up front, near the driver and so I blended in with the other Cubans. Loretta was not so lucky. Being the only blond on the bus, she felt like a fish in a bowl. Everybody just stared at her. Then she decided to take a picture of the crowd. Instantly, everyone beamed a giant smile. Despite the crowd, the trip was quite nice. Everyone was polite and made room for more and more people. Nobody panicked when the steel bar holding up the rear view mirror fell. That may have been because the [passenger side windshield panel was already missing. The 4 x 5 foot opening definitely kept the bus cooler and it gave the passengers a way to hand their luggage to me before they tried to cram their way onto the bus. The only real drawback was that I couldn't look straightforward without getting pelted by

the occasional bug. It reminded me of riding my motorcycle without glasses. After the mirror and the support bar fell, I imagined the driver's side windshield caving in and wondering if CNN would cover the accident. "Two American cruisers killed in fiery bus crash in Cuban mountains." Luckily, the windshield held and the driver never had to back up. We did get boarded by the police and stopped by a roadblock. But the price was right!

Vinares was cooler than the coast. Don't know the elevation, but would guess 1000-1500 feet. It was an old colonial town, built back in the days of the old sugar plantations. Many of the old homes and buildings are still in use. One of the French hotel companies has converted the main plantation house, Los Jazmines, into a beautiful resort. It sits high on the mountain, overlooking both the valley and the town. After walking through town, we walked up another hill to a different resort, also owned by the French company. The view was also quite spectacular. The US hotel companies must be pissed as hell since they can't do any business in Cuba. Meanwhile, the European and Canadian hotels are securing the best locations. There's going to be a buying frenzy when Cuba opens. Back in Vinares, Loretta took a great picture of three boys fishing in a creek with cane poles (reminded her of growing up in Florida, with about the same results). We wandered through town some more, a "pizza" there cost 5 pesos (25 cents), we were given a couple of mangos (for lighting a lady's cigarette), toured the local Catholic church, etc. This church was quite run-down, but still very interesting. And it was actually being used. PE didn't even have a church.

Anyway, by mid-afternoon, we were both tired. Instead of waiting for the bus, we chose to take a taxi. For \$12, he drove us up to the Hotel Los Jazmines, then to the Cavernes de la Indios, where we toured the caverns, then back to PE. The caverns were quite spectacular. Large stalactites and stalagmites. At the end of the trail, we climbed into a small motorboat and were given a ride through another part of the cave. It was like Disneyland. I kept expecting a pirate to lurch out or for us to drop down a water slide. Nothing that exciting, but it was very pretty—and cool. Our boat exited at the other end of the cave, where our taxi driver was waiting for us. We then had a very relaxing and scenic drive home. The next day we had to leave to return to Cayo Levisa. It was very sad to say good-bye to our Cuban family. Hopefully, we'll be back for Christmas. We spent a few leisurely days in Cayo Levisa and again had to leave good friends. We tried to get the Guarda to let us clear out at Cayo Levisa, but they were adamant that we had to return to Marina Hemingway, which was over 60 miles east, northeast of us. Unfortunately, the wind was also coming from the northeast, quite unusual for July. Normally, it's from the east or southeast. By this time, we were really low on money and our visas were about to expire. Finally, the weather forecast was for the wind to return to the southeast, so we planned to do an overnigher to get to Hemingway the following morning. On our way out of the channel, Loretta wanted to stop and swim one more time in the beautiful turquoise water. So, we anchored, swam, and ate lunch. We cleared the sea buoy at about 1 pm. The wind was still from the northeast, about 10 knots. But we had faith that it would clock around to the east or southeast. Wrong! We tacked, and tacked, and tacked, and tacked some more. At 7 pm, according to the GPS, after six hours, we had not even gone nine miles! At this rate, it would take us almost two days to reach Hemingway. Even with a northeaster, we could be in Key West in a day. Let's see, we could beat the hell out of ourselves to get to Hemingway, and then still have to get to the US; or we could just continue on our northern tack and be home tomorrow. Guess what we did?!

Unfortunately, even though the decision was a no-brainer, the trip itself beat the crap out of us. We double reefed the main, had the headsail almost completely reefed, and pounded in 10-12 foot confused seas for over 16 hours! The wind was from the northeast, the direction of Key West, of course, at about 20-25 knots. Waves were smacking the boat so hard we thought we were sitting inside a drum. Many, many waves went completely over the boat. Loretta was down below, feeling pretty sick, and I was harnessed in the cockpit, keeping an eye out for other ships. Thank God for our dodger. I would set the alarm for 20 minutes and try to get some sleep. I got quite good at knowing which waves were going to drench the cockpit. There was a certain smacking sound that accompanied the larger waves. When I heard that sound, I would sit up quickly. The wave would hit the dodger, slide off the side, and come pouring into the cockpit. I would wait a few seconds and lay back down. About that time, Loretta would yell to make sure I hadn't been washed overboard. Then we'd both go back to sleep, until either the next wave or the

alarm went off. If it were the alarm, I would sit up and scan the horizon, while ducking waves and spray. If I didn't see any other ships, I would reset the alarm and go back to sleep. If I saw a ship, I would go below and radio them. Often, large ships don't answer, but I think, since it was so ugly out, every one responded. It was comforting to talk to another ship out there. Of course, they all thought we were crazy to be out there in our diminutive sailboat. They were being tossed pretty well in their huge ships, so they couldn't imagine what we must be going through. In all honesty though, we were never scared, just rattled around a little. It was very wet and a little cold, but the system worked quite well. Another comforting factor was that, even in the storm, all the ships had already seen Sandpiper on their radar.

Also, we thanked God for "Monica: our windvane, who steered the entire 100+ miles. By the next morning, we were still 50 miles from Key West, and southwest of it, but only 27 miles southeast from the Dry Tortugas. Let's see, 50 more miles of getting the crap beat out of us, to arrive at a town we weren't crazy about anyway, or 27 miles on an easy reach to a place we loved. Don't you wish all our choices in life were this easy?! By mid-afternoon, we were securely and calmly anchored in the lee of Fort Jefferson. A couple of days later most of our gear was dry, and we were already missing Cuba.

One other sidebar. While we were in the worst part of the Gulf Stream, we were listening to the Coast Guard on channel 16. It seems like a powerboat was having trouble off Miami. All we could hear was the CG pilot, but that was enough. The story was that there were 5 or 6 men on what was originally a sailboat, then a large fishing boat, then a 27-foot sport fisher. The only man capable of talking didn't know what kind of boat, where they were, or which way they were heading. Some how he figured out how to use the radio. It appeared that the other men were drinking (duh) and got in a fight. Something about broken liquor bottles, everyone unconscious, bleeding, etc. The skipper was bleeding very badly and barely breathing. The CG kept asking questions and repeating the answer, so we could follow the entire situation. He continued talking in a very calm voice and reassuring the other man that everything would be fine. The man kept asking for a helicopter and the CG would tell him that it was too dangerous to launch a helicopter and to try to retrieve a bunch of unconscious (and drunk) men. The CG finally diverted a cutter, which took about an hour to arrive on the scene. Meanwhile, the pilot kept in radio contact and circling the boat. This mini-drama lasted a couple of hours. It was great for us, except when the CG said it was too dangerous for a helicopter to be out in this weather. Other than that, it took our minds off our situation. After all the flack that the CG has taken, it was really nice to see/hear them in action. They were very good and very professional. On the really positive side, Sandpiper got her best workout ever, and did just great! Much better than we did. We now have much more faith in her, and in ourselves, to handle rough seas. We remind ourselves of the saying, "That which doesn't kill you, makes you stronger."

Meanwhile, back in the Dry Tortugas. We met some really wonderful people there. Barney and Lita (Ericson 32, Erik the Red), who would entertain us with their singing. One song, "Don't you pee in my dinghy", could be a Jimmy Buffet classic (sorry Barney). It's hilarious. Penny and Richard (40 catamaran, Penelope) and Ann and Phil (also 40 catamaran, Pur-r-r fection) made our return to the US much more enjoyable. We also met a commercial fisherman and his family (Damas, Pat, and their 8 year old daughter, Kelly) on their fishing boat. Kelly informed us immediately that the other fishermen were not invited because this was a "family" vacation. She, like most boat kids, was great. They gave us a fish called permit that was absolutely delicious. We grilled half and blackened half; it's better blackened. After several days of snorkeling and cleaning, and eating/drinking and cleaning, we decided it was time to head home. I had promised Loretta I'd have her home by August. Actually, it was originally supposed to be June, then July, but August for sure. Anyway, we still hadn't cleared customs.

Instead of heading back for Key West, we decided to go straight to Naples. Of course, the wind decided to leave Naples that same day. So, once again, we're heading northeast in a northeaster. But after the trip from Cuba, this was nothing. Three to Five foot seas, 10-15 knot winds; heck we almost didn't put on our harnesses!! The irony was though, that the whole time we were sailing south, southeast in Florida to get to the Keys, we were heading into

the wind. I kept telling Loretta how great the trip home would be heading north with an east, southeast wind. Now, we're still heading into the wind. But, isn't that cruising? No wind, too much wind, or wind on the nose.

In Naples, we met another boat, Que Linda, with Doug and Linda. We spent a couple of fun days with them. We also met up with our fisher friends from the Tortugas. We ended up at their house one night and had a really great time. They invited a Cuban friend who hadn't been home in 37 years. He almost cried when he saw our Cuba pictures. He remembered how beautiful Havana was before the revolution. But what he really enjoyed was our Cuban rum. What made this group special was that they were basically power boaters. It's nice knowing that we can both get along and even have fun together. Our friends on Mojito were also power boaters.

We cleared customs in Naples with a ten-minute phone call. Unfortunately, we had to trash our limes and the onion given us by the guarda in Cayo Levisa. Something about Med fly. I sure wouldn't want to be responsible for wiping out the entire Florida citrus industry. So we really did throw them away. But, damn, those limes were good!!

After Naples, we quickly (at about 4 knots), hopped up the coast of Florida of Gulfport, near Tampa. The only excitement was at Ft. Myers Beach, where a Morgan 33 dragged down on us during a storm. We were later told that a tornado must have come through. Several boats dragged, but nobody was on the Morgan. Loretta did a great job of keeping the boat from beating the crap out of us while I jumped on board the Morgan and let out more scope. Another boat came over and helped us get the Morgan's rode off our rode so we could move. We were not impressed with this anchorage. Gulfport was quite nice though. We met up with some friends who also have a Nor'Sea 27, Steve and Jennifer. Steve is the rigger who bought my boat trailer in partial exchange for re-rigging my boat. After spending a few days with them, we decided to leave Sandpiper there and rent a car to get back to Tallahassee. True to my word, I got Loretta home on July 30.

Ed Note: Once we read this we wanted to know more about getting back into the US. So we contacted Clyde and asked for details of clearing customs. He sent us back the two following notes.....

Clearing in

Unfortunately, we had to leave Cuba during a rare summer northeaster. We originally aimed for Key West, but due to the wind, we changed to the Dry Tortugas. Since we couldn't clear in there, we proceeded to Naples.

Naples, for such a wealthy town, really caters to sailors. We were given a free mooring buoy for up to two weeks. There's a nice dinghy dock, \$1 showers, laundry, ice, and many restaurants and boating services within walking distance. Anyway, I asked the harbormistress for the phone number of Customs. She actually dialed the local number and handed me the phone.

I explained to Customs that I was just returning from Cuba and needed to clear in. He asked me why I was in Naples. When I explained the northeasters, he just laughed. He asked me about Sandpiper; length, registration number, etc. Also, how long I was in Cuba, where I departed from, crew info, did I spend any money, did I bring any cigars or rum back. Then he asked me some general questions about Cuba itself and how I liked it. Finally, he asked me if I brought back any produce. When I told him I had some limes, he got very serious. Customs has found med flies on limes. He told me to go back to the boat, wrap them in two plastic bags, and throw them in the garbage. He added that I was to do this immediately. If my girlfriend asked to have one more drink, I was to say no. (They must have done this before because that's exactly what she asked. But, being good little sailors, we did as instructed, and even tossed the onions I had forgotten.) He then gave me a number in case I was stopped by the Coast Guard. Clearing in was painless, quite easy, and only took about ten minutes.

However, I've been told that's it's not so easy in Key West and that some boats returning from Cuba have been

hassled. Sometimes I think it's just luck, but sometimes I think it's attitude. I should be heading back to the US in a few weeks, so I may be able to update these procedures.

By the way, I also asked him about getting a Customs Sticker. He said that since my boat is under 30 feet, it's not necessary. I'd have to call anyway.

Ed: Shortly after the previous e-mail I got a second note from Clyde regarding clearing in.....

Hi Guys-

Update on clearing in procedures.

I called the toll-free number for Customs (800 432-1216) and after a couple of tries, actually talked to a person. He asked a few questions, such as; name, name of boat, registration, location, last port. When I said Cuba, I was told that I would have to call Key West and clear in with them. He gave me his badge number and the appropriate phone numbers. He was very nice, but couldn't clear me.

Next call was to Agriculture (305 296-2915). Very quick and easy. Did I bring any fruits or vegetables? This time, no. He gave me his name and thanked me for calling.

Third call was to Customs (305 296-5411). Again, very nice, but after a couple of questions, I was told to physically appear in Key West (301 Simonton). And bring all my boat documents, Cuban paperwork, and passport.

Final call was to Immigration (305 296-2233). Pretty much the same. Show up asap and bring passport. Luckily, they're upstairs from Customs.

When I showed up the next day, Immigration took about five minutes but Customs was more difficult. Had to give her my passport and registration and complete a form. The form was easy except for the last question, where I had to explain why I went to Cuba, how long I stayed, how I was able to stay there without spending any money. She wanted receipts showing that I had purchased mass quantities of food before departing. Supposedly, Customs could contact me anytime within the next couple of years to document my claims. Ironically, I had just cleaned Sandpiper the previous day and had discarded the receipts. But, since they were on a credit card, I suppose I could document that I spent \$700 on food and supplies before departing. Personally, I think this was just a little intimidation. But, next time I'll bring the receipts. Isn't this like being guilty until proven innocent? The implication was that Customs didn't have to prove that I spent money, I have to prove that I didn't.

Luckily, before leaving Marina Darcena, I received a letter from them that I was "fully hosted", which means they covered all my costs.

Overall, clearing in wasn't difficult. They're just doing their jobs. And at least I didn't have to sail all the way to Key West.

On another note though, as I discussed with a couple of the officials, they're only checking us relatively honest cruisers. If I had smuggled rum, cigars, or Cuban people, they would have been long gone before I ever called, if I called at all. They both agreed and gracefully added that they didn't write the law. Anyway, if crossing the Gulf Stream was as easy as clearing in, Cuba would be packed with US boats. Hope this helps. People can feel free to contact me for more info.

Thanks..clyde

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!
Owners Report

Freya's Frolicking Adventures
By Doug & Jennifer
on S/V Freya

WESTWARD HO
TAHITI TO BORA BORA

Iaoranan (greetings in Tahitian)

Papeete, Tahiti is like any other big city and Freya stayed tied to the quay for 18 days so we could get our city fix. Well the fresh water hose that allowed us to have unlimited running water was great too.

Doug's father, Larry, along with his wife, Sig, and their daughter, Kristi, went out of their way to visit us and spend a few days in Papeete. They even brought us tons of goodies from the states (USA). Ah, to read labels in English. Following directions on a package of soup is much easier when you don't have to look up every fourth word in the dictionary. (Not that I follow directions anyway) Of course the best part of the visit was getting that "family fix" and catching up on family news. We also drove around the island and saw the Arahoho Blow Hole, Gauguin Museum, and a great view of Tahiti and Tahiti Iti from Taravao Plateau at the Vaiufaufa View Point.

Another highlight of Papeete was going to Mc Donalds with the kids from s/v Cross. I know it sounds crazy, but it was delightful to hear them squealing with joy at seeing something familiar in a foreign place. Doug insisted on accompanying them and he was right, that it would be a great experience, worth the 4 dollar milkshake.

Papeete was a meeting place. A place where all our friends caught up to each other. I learned to play Ultamate (A team Frisbee game). As a group we hiked to Fauteiau Falls. The walk itself was up switch backs and through dense, lush, green foliage. (All your favorite house plants in jungle form). After 2 hours of hiking we spied the 250 meter high waterfall, through the trees and vines. This however was not our goal. We were headed toward the ancient stone wall and down the steep, root inlaid, trail that lead to the deep, clear, swimming holes above the falls. We were delighted to see not only the pools but steep rock slides leading into the water. The first slide was steep and went into a pool that was set back into a rock wall, giving it a cave like appearance. The second slide was less steep, yet longer and the currents caused the slider to flip when jetting into the water. Much more fun for the spectators than the slider. This second pool lead to the waterfall and a view of the valley. We had a great hike with great people and the thrill of sliding down natural slides that have been the source of enjoyment for hundreds of years.

Not all of our days were spent frolicking around. Tahiti is an expensive place and we were lucky to find some work. We spent a few days repairing sails for a couple of boats. Even better, Doug has found a creative outlet that he can accomplish within the confines of our small boat. Using oyster shell, he cuts a shape, polishes it and suspends a black pearl in the shell. The result is elegant and striking. People just walked up to me, complimented my jewelry and then commissioned Doug to make a piece for them, using one of their own black pearls.

One of the "must dos" in Polynesia is to watch professional Tahitian dance. We were fortunate to be in Tahiti during the annual competition. Often you only hear about the women's dancing, well the men's dancing was just as sensual and energetic. There really is no way to describe it, except for WOW!!!! Most of the dancing is done in large groups, and then a spotlight show of just one woman, then one man, then a couple. The couples dance was, ummm, ah, lets just say it was almost x rated. So all this said about Tahiti, we were ready for some quieter moments. We easily made the day sail over to Moorea, Papeete's play ground.

As we motored through the pass at Moorea we spied Jamala and Cross at anchor. So we promptly motored over and set our hook close by in only 10 feet. We then jumped into the crystal clear, warm, water. Soon, Endless summer, Rainbow Warrior, and Ustupu showed up and we spent several carefree days, swimming, playing, and snorkeling. If we were not in the water we were hiking into the hills or playing Ultimate.

On Friday night we all headed over to the Bali Hi for the Happy Hour, Tahitian Dance show, and then dancing for all. When the techno-pop played we all danced and when the Polynesian music played we stepped back and watched the locals take over the dance floor. The dancing ended early but we were not ready to quit, so we all dingied over to Endless Summer. With more drinks, a full moon, midnight approaching, and crystal clear water, we decided skinning dipping was better than dancing. We even swam over to 3 more boats to encourage everyone in a moonlight swim. We were so rowdy that another person came over and wanted to join on the fun. Our record of the evening was 15 naked bodies jumping into the sea, in unison. The night didn't end until the sun came up and by then we all needed a morning of rest, and an afternoon of Ultimate. Oh yea, we had so much fun that we did it again 4 nights later.

I would have to say that Moorea was one of the hardest places to leave. The combination of great anchorage, swimming (naked or clothed) and wonderful people, made it a favorite spot. We also knew that we would not see some of these friends for a long time, if at all. It is the sad part of cruising, saying goodbye.

With heavy hearts, we hoisted the anchor and sailed off for Raiatea. A good overnight sail brought us to the pass in the early afternoon. Although the pass was easy to navigate, we had been having engine problems. We were afraid the fuel line would clog and the motor die as we moved through the hole in the reef. Our faithful little Yanmar managed to keep putting away and we were quite relieved to put the anchor down. Our problem was from dirty fuel clogging the fuel line. Doug attempted to pump out the fuel and clean it but our pump was not big enough for the job. Fortunately we were close to the Raiatea Carriage, a haul out yard. In the morning we would go see if they could help us.

Doug nosed Freya's bow over the cement wall and I jumped off, armed with my French dictionary and a big smile. As it turned out, the carriage had no fuel polisher, but Dominique, the manager loaned us a hand crank pump, hose, barrel for the fuel, and let us tie up to the cement wall. We spent the day pumping and filtering fuel, as well as cleaning the fuel tank, and adding anti-fungi chemicals to our clean fuel. What a nightmare but thanks to Dominique and the Raiatea Carriage, we were on our way the following morning.

For some reason we were jinxed in this part of the world. As we motored across the lagoon, bound for the pass out of the reef, and on to Bora Bora, we for the first time, went aground, hard aground. Bump, bump, bump, and stop. Luckily we hit sand and not coral. Forgetting that there is only a 1 foot tide, (and not 25 feet, like in Alaska), we were frantic to get off. I climbed out on the boom as we swung it away from the boat. Barely clad in my bikini and pareu, I was hanging on and trying to tilt the boat. Doug yelled, "get back in here, you're not fat enough". This is probably the first and last time I will be criticized for not being fat. After reconsidering our situation, Doug swam our stern anchor out and we kedged ourselves off the strip of sand. No damage, just a bit of paint missing. From then on we had a great day sail to the famous island of Bora Bora.

Bora Bora is truly a beautiful island. It is fringed in coral reef and has many layers of blues within the lagoon. Just inside the pass we found an anchorage in 18 feet of clear water. It is here that we again caught up with Jamala and met the couple on s/v Denizen. We all exchanged great craft ideas and the guys spent hours going over the dremel and tool catalogs.

We explored the reefs and beach combed on Motu Piti Aau. We motored around the lagoon, through coral reefs and inner reefs, watching colorful fish, bat rays and sharks. We snorkeled on a coral garden where the fish come swarming

around you as you jumped into the water. We fed them cookies and were fascinated to see them eat right out our hands. I swam by a mass of green coral and I noticed the giant head of a moray eel poking out of his hole. His green head with tiny white dots, camouflaged him well.

That night, Jamala and Freya splurged and had a North American cookout with BBQ hamburgers and hotdogs. A taste of home. Later, the wind picked up and I had a sleepless night at anchor. We moved the next day and soon prepared to leave French Polynesia and sail further west.

Checking out of the country was easy. Maria and I shopped for all the inexpensive, subsidized items we could find and then tried to locate fresh water. Bora Bora was the only place where water was difficult to find. We finally asked the Paul Gauguin Cruise Ship if they could give us water. Not only did they fill our jerry jugs with great tasting water, they took our trash too! Now both Jamala, and Freya were ready to explore new lands of the South Pacific.

stay tuned for westward ho part II, Rarotonga and Niue.

NOR'SEA SHORT LOGS

Ed Note: This is a new section listing items we received during the last few months. If you are out and Cruising, send us your "Short Log"

Received Sun, 23 Jan 2000 07:50:37 -0800

Hey Mon, Yesterday we motor/sailed from Chub Cay to Naussa with the wind of 12-15 on our nose. There were large swells for the 35 m trip. It was a good day, so many boats were going to Naussa. Chub Cay had two restaurants and a little store. Naussa has at least 5 LARGE cruise ships at the docks.

Gale is washing the salt off the boat. Today we will look for groceries and beer. It's 70 degrees and sunny. We will be waiting for a muffler from West Marine so we will be here a couple days.

We hope all is well.

Nancy & Gale

Received Thu, 13 Jan 2000 05:23:55 -0800

we are safe at Chub cay after a fairly good trip across the stream. It was a little bit lumpy. we anchored on the banks Monday night and sailed into Chub cay on Tues. We have arrived.

Nancy & Gale

Received Sun, 02 Jan 2000 00:51:53 PST

Hello!

Freya is safely moored in Whangarei, New Zealand. For those of you who have not heard our big news, we are about 16 weeks pregnant. Doug always said we could have a baby once we reached New Zealand. I thought he was joking, because I surly wasn't ready for that. Well, somewhere in the Marquesas Islands that time clock thing hit me like a disease that I couldn't shake. After a good long look at myself, and asking myself and Doug all kinds of questions, and knowing that I couldn't possibly think of every thing, I looked myself in the mirror and asked, are you ready to be a mother?

Doug, in some ways is more ready than me for parenthood. We are like little kids, we are so excited. We will have the baby in New Zealand, with the help of a midwife. We will travel, via plane, to California for a few months and then return to NZ in Feb. Then we will prepare for a sail to Fiji and beyond.

We hope all is well with you and though are adventures will be of a different nature we will continue to send updates.

cheers,
Jennifer, Doug, and The Little Kiwi

Received Fri, 11 Feb 2000 08:16:32 -0800

Greetings to all, we are doing fine anchored near Staniel Cay almost midway down the Exuma chain. Yesterday the winds were 30 and our anchorage was open to the wind. The wind was supposed to go north, where we were protected. It was pretty lumpy. -but the sun shines!

Today we hope to dinghy to shore to get rid of our trash and explore.

There are three stores here.

Hope all is well with you all.

Nancy & Gale

Received Mon, 14 Feb 2000 12:32:20 -0800

I'm back in FL. Had one of those easy but difficult Gulf Stream crossings. The wind was light, the waves small, but they were very confused. So they came at me from all different directions. Which means I bounced a lot. But it was still an easy 18 hour crossing. Of course, the first thing I'm doing is sitting at the best burger place in Marathon. I haven't had one in two months.

Probably going to take off again though. I have a friend I met in Cuba who wants me to sail with him to Trinidad. I'll meet him somewhere in the Bahamas. I'll leave my boat in FL, at my aunts. Should be back by the end of April. I'll try to get you updated asap. Hope all is well...clyde

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE or WANTED

I am looking for a three axle trailer for my Nor'Sea. Would look at anything in the western US or Canada.

From: jbond@nidlink.com
Jeff Bond
Kaholina #16

I have one complete Yanmar 2QM15, (taken apart). ALL parts, including control panel, wire harness, spare parts, and manuals. Asking \$2000.00 for all, FOB Redwood City. Call Greg for info – (650)261-1391 or e-mail: g-j-delezynski@worldnet.att.net

Greg & Jill
S/V Guenevere #80

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