

THE HORNPIPE

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Commodore's Comments

The end of season club meeting is next Monday night, November 19, at the Hawthorn Center located at 6175 Sunny Spring in Columbia. The festivities begin at 7:30 pm. Members are asked to bring hors d'oeuvres and desserts. Our capable social chairpersons, Cynthia and Duncan MacDonald, will see that liquid refreshment is available.

As announced previously in two broadside emails, which I sent out to all members, we will be honored at the meeting with the presence of Lee Tawney. Lee is the director of the National Sailing Hall of Fame in Annapolis and of Maryland's hosting of the Volvo ocean racing fleet in its Baltimore/Annapolis stopover. I suspect that he is and has been involved in other projects promoting sailing in our area as well. We are indeed fortunate that Lee has agreed to join us!

As a footnote to the comment about my broadside emails to all members, I invite anyone who did not receive them within the past two weeks to contact me (baltiben@comcast.net) with his/her correct email address.

Boats are coming out of the water all over the bay now. *Nik of Time* is still afloat and in

commission until her November 29 scheduled haul out. I am keeping my fingers crossed for some unusually balmy weather over the Thanksgiving weekend, something that is far from unheard of. If necessary, I am prepared to keep the galley stove at work heating soup so that crew can stand up to any chill with warm hands and stomachs.

I have heard rumors that Jan and Hank Zerhusen are headed south again for the season aboard Octavia. [See below.] Hopefully this is just the beginning of a long list of members with the same ambition. My envy doesn't stand in the way of my wish of fair winds and calm seas for all those who are so fortunate.

The boat formerly tied up in the slip next to *Nik of Time* at White Rocks Marina headed south last month with two recent retirees aboard and no plans to return in the foreseeable future. They subscribe to Winlink 2000 (<http://www.winlink.org/aprs/aprs.htm>), a website that tracks and maps their location on a real time basis. Please forgive me if, as my daughter believes is often the case, I am the last person on the earth to discover this, but this website is really great for those of us who are left behind in the wake of long-distance cruisers. In addition to mapping current location, this site also appears to report heading, speed over ground and wind speed of each

subscribing boat, although I cannot be certain of this since my friends seem to have been at anchor every time I checked in on them. (Retirement is sounding better and better!)

Anyway, although I have no idea of the pricing of this service, I urge all southbound members to subscribe and publicize their boats' identifying call signs so that those of us wintering in the north can keep track of those lucky enough to be wintering in warm climates. For that matter, why couldn't those who are Florida bound on I-95, rather than the ICW, also stay in touch in this manner?

Lee Benedict

A Delmarva Circumnavigation Adventure

Friday, August 31, 2007

Jesse arrived home from work at about 7:30 p.m., because, as predicted, the last day at work before vacation is always crazy. He quickly packed his bag, loaded the car, and we were off to Hammock Island for a long-overdue vacation after a rather difficult year. Fortunately we had been preparing for this trip for a while, so *Agapé* was fully stocked, and we only had to load clothing, food, and, of course, computers.

As we finished organizing and icing the boat, Erika brought recent romantic interest, Cameron, to the marina for us to meet him. Cameron is a real southern boy, and it took Ilyse a while to adjust to the "yes, ma'am," and "yes, sir," replies. Jesse just said his mama raised him well. After attempting to expose Cameron to picking Maryland crabs and an embarrassing attempt to find Cheshire Crab, which is no longer in existence, we ended up dining (if you can call it that) at the Double-T Diner in Glen Burnie. At least they are open 24 hours, since it was after 11:00 p.m. when we arrived. It was nice visiting with Erika and Cameron. We hit the sack about 1:00 a.m.

Saturday, September 1, 2007

What a shock when our alarm went off at 6:00 a.m., but we wanted to get an early start to

make Dun Cove that night and join up with the CCSC raft-up that Cynthia and Duncan MacDonald were hosting. We took our last land showers for a while, had a quick bowl of cereal for breakfast, blew up the dinghy, and pulled out of our slip about 8:10 a.m.

As we got out of the fairway, Ilyse turned around and noticed a problem with the dinghy inflation. The port side had deflated a substantial amount, so we tied up at the pump out, used the Zerhusen's slip to pull out the dinghy, and listened for air leaks. Since we didn't hear any air seeping out, we pumped the dinghy once again, dropped it in the water, and off we went about 8:40 a.m., not realizing that we had left our dinghy air pump on the pier. Fortunately, it would not be needed, and it would be waiting for us upon our return, having been tied to a piling by *Liberty's* owner.

The wind was coming from the north at 15-20 knots, and as we rounded the last mark coming out of the Bodkin, we hoisted the sails, cranked up the new marine stereo, turned south, and enjoyed a Nantucket sleigh ride off the waves for a couple of hours. We made the bay bridge in just under two hours, but by the time we got under the bridge, the wind had died down some. We were, however, able to continue sailing the remainder of the day, until we dropped the sails just before reaching Knapp Narrows. We motored through the narrows. That was the first time we were in Knapp Narrows when the wind was actually blowing pretty well. We reminisced about our prior visits to and through there.

Jesse's expert navigation got us to Dun Cove very easily at about 3:15 p.m. Our depth sounder said we had 2.5 feet of water below our keel, but we were stuck in the mud. At least we got running aground over with in the beginning of our journey. We were easily hauled off by a nice motor boater who was fishing there and who kindly came over to offer a hand. We tied to the raft-up — which included the MacDonalds, Zerhusens, Bakers, Grotzes, and the Callises — and we enjoyed cocktail hour with everyone on the MacDonald's boat, *Heather II*. We broke away from the raft-up at about 7:30 p.m., anchoring in Dun Cove.

Traditionally we stay up in the cockpit, stargazing and dozing a little until about 1:00-2:00

a.m., but not this night. Jesse remarked how we had turned into all those other boaters we talk about who retire early, because we were down for the count by 9:00 p.m.

We were sharply awakened when the phone ran at midnight when Will called and left a message wishing us a *bon voyage*. Cell phone service in Dun Cove was limited.

Sunday, September 2, 2007

After a good night's sleep, we got off the hook at about 8:30 a.m. The weather was beautiful. But there was no wind, so we motored to Solomons and arrived at Solomon's Yachting Center to fuel, water, and ice at about 1:30 p.m.

Ilyse wanted to take Jesse to lunch at CD Café, but there was no space to tie up. Since the wind had started to blow, we agreed to keep on keepin' on and make our way farther south, because it was still early in the day. As we pulled into the Patuxent, we hoisted the sails and sailed out into the bay. The winds were coming from the south, and we traversed the width of the bay a couple of times, making minor progress south.

Upon arriving back on the Western Shore about 2-3 miles south of the southern shore of the Patuxent, we had to make a decision: Go back to Solomons, and anchor for the night, or keep going? Jesse said he wasn't going back to Solomons, so off we went. The winds were strong, and *Agapé* was flying at about six knots. Ilyse stated that, after all, that was why we were there, so we kept traversing the bay.

The half moon rose above the land of the Eastern Shore, and it was so large just above the horizon that we felt as if we could reach out and touch it. The sky was lit up by the brightest stars, and we could see the Milky Way. We continued sailing until about 3:00 in the morning, when we finally arrived at Point Lookout, set the anchor, and fell into bed absolutely exhausted at about 3:45 a.m.

Monday, September 3, 2007

We were awakened by a phone call from Erika at about 9:00 a.m. informing us that Cameron's train home was canceled due to a

derailment in Virginia that had blocked the tracks. No problem though, since he was able to get a flight to Raleigh.

We took it easy that morning and had a substantial brunch, since we hadn't eaten in almost 24 hours.

At about 1:00 p.m. Jesse pulled up the anchor, and off we were once again with good strong winds from the south. We were more successful making south than we had been the night before, and continued traversing the Chesapeake.

At around 5:00 or 6:00 p.m., we decided to make shorter tacks, so if we had to pull in somewhere, we would be close to the shore and it wouldn't take us two or more hours to reach an anchorage for the night. We tacked southeast for 30 minutes and then back until the water dropped. Then we repeated that pattern until we arrived at the north shore of Windmill Point, where we anchored at about 10:00 p.m. in a small protected area. We had a bite of dinner, relaxed for a little while, and then crawled in for the night.

Tuesday, September 4, 2007

We were kind of lazy bums that morning, after some really spectacular sailing the last couple of days and nights. We woke up about 9:00 a.m. and relaxed until about noon, when we got off the hook. Originally we were hoping to make Norfolk that day, but since we got such a late start, we decided to go as close as we could get to Norfolk, anchor, and then go in the following morning.

As we headed out of the creek, Ilyse managed to run us aground, even though she was honoring the markers. There was a sudden hard bump as she hit the mud traveling at about four knots. We got off the mud very easily by backing up. Jesse checked the keel bolts and all seemed fine. We motored all day, since there was no wind. The water was glassy.

At about 4:00 p.m. Ilyse got on the phone with our insurance agent, confirming that our insurance covered us if we left the bay and went up the Atlantic, when she screamed out, "There are dolphins off of our stern!" They appeared to be gray bottle-nosed dolphins, and we watched them for a short while.

At about 9:00 p.m. we anchored in Hampton Flats between the Norfolk bridge-tunnel and the Fort Monroe Army post. Not the most romantic spot we've ever anchored, but it was quiet except for the bridge traffic on both sides of us — no other boats. We grilled burgers, had a relaxing dinner, and both proceeded to fall asleep in the cockpit until about midnight, when we retired for the evening.

Wednesday, September 5, 2007

We intended to be at the fuel dock on the Hampton River by 7:00 a.m., but the best laid plans of mice and men often go astray. We lifted the anchor at about 8:00 a.m. and were at Bluewater Marina at about 9:00 a.m. We got gas; much-needed water, as our tank was dry; and ice, then off we were for Little Creek in Norfolk.

After rounding a red day marker and heading for another, Ilyse was in the saloon when she heard the bottom of *Agapé* rub on the rocks. Jesse turned off to starboard, and we were fine; but we agreed that we wanted to have the boat pulled and inspected prior to entering the ocean.

We arrived in Little Creek at about 11:00 a.m., and Jim DesRoches, a yacht broker we had met six years earlier, had made arrangements for us to tie up at Bay Marine Inc. It took us a while to identify which piers were Bay Marine's, so after tying up on one pier down on Little Creek, we called Bay Marine. They directed us to some old, rickety, wooden piers and said we could take any empty slip.

We went bow-first into slip number 51 and walked to the office, where they seemed tentative as to whether or not they could help us.

We needed to have a load test performed on the batteries, since battery #2 seemed to be draining too quickly, and we wanted to have the boat hauled to inspect the bottom. The marina was closing within the month, because they were being forced to sell to developers who were planning to build condos on the property, so they were lightly staffed.

We talked with Jimmy, who was in a wheel chair, and he said they would be able to haul the boat after a scheduled 1:00 p.m. launching. In the meantime, we called Jim and his fiancée, Jessie, and they both came to meet us and help us get things

rolling. They basically spent the rest of the day helping us get our batteries tested, buying new batteries, and having the boat hauled and inspected in the sling. Jim was apparently responsible for a lot of the marina's business, and he had a lot of influence with the owner.

Ilyse went off with Jessie, who showed her the location of some local motels, in case we chose not to sleep on the boat, and took her to the Enterprise office to pick up a rental car. Jim stayed with Jesse. They inspected the boat as she was pulled; made arrangements to get a battery load tester from Jim's friend; and tested battery #1, which tested low before the load tester stopped functioning. They couldn't test battery #2.

We decided just to put new batteries on the boat, so Jim and Jessie took us to see Captain Mike at his marine supply store. Captain Mike hates West Marine, so he offers marine supplies at a 20% discount. He has a very eclectic store, with new and used marine supplies, many of which he sells on consignment. We traded in the old batteries for a couple of new ones and drove back to *Agapé*. It was nearing 4:30 p.m. as Jim and Jesse motored *Agapé* back into her slip for the night.

Jim and Jessie were so helpful; one would have thought that they were our best friends. They were going to Greenie's, a local bar on the beach that evening and asked us to join them for dinner. Wednesday evening is steamed shrimp night at Greenie's.

Jim and Jessie went off for drinks as we took much-needed showers and cleaned up. We met them and their friends Dan and Doreen at Greenie's at about 6:00 p.m., and we all had drinks, sandwiches, and steamed shrimp on the deck. It was a beautiful evening, and the winds were brisk.

After dinner we took a trip to Best Buy in Virginia Beach to buy Ilyse yet another digital camera, because Ilyse seems to have a problem hanging onto cameras around vacation time. We also picked up a few supplies at a Food Lion; and Jim and Jessie picked up us at the rental car office, took us for ice, and brought us back to the boat.

Jesse fixed a malfunctioning running light and got us hooked up to shore power while Ilyse attempted to do laundry, unsuccessfully, at the

marina. It was a long, but productive, day. We set the alarm for 7:00 a.m. and fell into bed.

Thursday, September 6, 2007

We got up at 7:00 a.m., and checked the weather report, which had tropical storm Gabrielle hanging out in the Atlantic off the North Carolina coast. We knew that that day and the next day were our window of opportunity to head out to sea and make Ocean City safely. We took land showers and pulled out of the slip by 9:00 a.m. We hoisted sails at about 10:00 a.m. before going out through the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and motor sailing for about another hour or so before we shut off the engine and went under full sail.

The winds were perfect and in our favor out of the southeast. We sailed between five and seven knots the entire day. By about 4:00 p.m. we decided to each take one-hour shifts at the wheel, trying to rest between shifts before nightfall. We had dinner about 7:00 p.m., saw a beautiful sunset, and continued with one-hour shifts throughout the night.

The witching hour really started to set in about 11:00 p.m., when the sea was totally black and we sailed totally by feel and the use of our instruments. Jesse marked our location on the charts every hour, and once again his marine navigation skills kept us right on course and where he expected us to be along the way.

Friday, September 7, 2007

At about 1:00 a.m., Jesse took a radio call from the NOAA research ship *Albatross*, whose bridge crew had been engaged in some debate concerning the pattern of our navigational lights. They wished us well and went on their way.

Ilyse was resting as Jesse saw the crescent moon rise in the east at about 3:00 a.m. during a two-hour shift. He was beginning to tire easily, and Ilyse took the wheel for more than an hour, watching the Ocean City inlet light in the distance.

By about 4:30 a.m., we were both fully awake, and we changed course. Ilyse released the preventer, Jesse winched in the main, and, with Ilyse at the wheel, we gently jibed, changing course

for our entrance to Ocean City. As we got to the second red flasher just outside of the inlet, we pointed into the wind, pulled in the jib, and dropped the main. The deck was wet from dew and the ocean was choppy as Ilyse assisted the mainsail.

We motored into the inlet as it was just starting to get light and began looking for a place to anchor or tie up in order to get some rest. We explored the Ocean City side first, finding nothing but mud and shallow waters, so Ilyse called the phone number, posted right at the inlet, of a marina that turned out not to have deep water slips. But that marina directed us to the Sunset Marina in West Ocean City. The transient slip rental fee there was \$2.25 per foot. We were one of two sailboats out of hundreds of charter fishing boats located at a beautiful, posh, subtropical marina with wonderful facilities, including a bar overlooking the water, the Sunset Grille, wonderful showers, and a laundry room.

We pulled into a 50-foot slip, tied up, settled up with the office for a couple of nights, had ice delivered to the boat, and collapsed into our bunk at about 10:00 a.m.

As the temperature warmed, we woke up about noon, attended to boat maintenance, made reservations at a motel for a couple of nights in Ocean City, took showers, and did the laundry. While the wash was going, we had a couple of drinks and some appetizers at the bar, since we hadn't eaten all day, and listened to a good band that played from a houseboat on the water that was tied up directly in front of the bar area.

We took a taxi to the Quality Inn on 17th Street and the Boardwalk (kind of old and seedy, but clean) at about 8:00 p.m., thinking we would go out for a nice dinner. But we settled for some canned soda and tea and fell into bed absolutely exhausted at about 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 8, 2007

We woke up about 6:30 a.m. feeling pretty rested, but dozed in and out until about 11:00 a.m., when we finally got up, showered, and headed off to Layton's Family Restaurant for a substantial breakfast. We were starving.

After breakfast, Jesse needed to do some work on his computer in the hotel room, so Ilyse took the bus to 65th Street for a manicure and pedicure. She returned to the hotel and plopped down on the balcony overlooking the ocean as Jesse finished his work. We walked the boardwalk, stopping in several shops along the way; bought some sunglasses, and had a custom sweatshirt designed for each of us.

Ilyse had always been petrified of the large Ferris wheel at the amusement park at the foot of the Boardwalk, but figured that if she could make an ocean passage, she could ride the Ferris wheel too; and so we did just that. At the age of 53, she felt it was about time she overcame some of her fears.

We had a relaxing dinner at Harrison's Harbor Watch at the very end of the inlet overlooking the water, and then walked off a few calories returning to our room, where we spent some time watching the weather to determine what Gabrielle was going to do. We decided that the next day would be the best day for us to head out into the ocean once again and work our way north.

Sunday, September 9, 2007

Our alarm rang at 7:00 a.m., and we showered and left via cab for the boat at about 8:15 a.m. We settled up at the office, iced and watered the boat, and tried to get out of our slip, unsuccessfully. There was a pretty good cross wind, and when we attempted to back out of the slip, the stern veered to port, and the bow pulpit wrapped around a piling. We managed to bring the stern of the boat back around, and Jesse bounced the bow up and down from the pier, releasing it from the piling. At that point, we called the marina office for some help, and they sent two really nice guys who helped us get out of the slip. We topped off the fuel tank and headed out.

The waves at the inlet must have been 6-7 feet and extremely close together. We fought our exit, and Ilyse said that if the water was going to be like that, we were turning around and waiting for a calmer day. But once we passed the breakwater, the water was very manageable, with 3-4 foot swells, and we headed north.

As we made our way north, we tried guessing which street we were at in Ocean City by identifying the condominium buildings with which we were so familiar from earlier vacations there.

Our good friends Paula and Bobby have a condo at Sea Colony in Bethany, and, about an hour prior to our sail-by, we called and asked them to keep a lookout for us. As we approached their building, Bobby called on the cell phone. We inched our way towards the beach, taking photos of their condo from the water and of their yellow umbrella on the beach as they took pictures of *Agapé*. Then we headed out to sea a little bit and made our way farther up the coast to Cape Henlopen, where we pulled in and anchored in front of Lewes Beach.

Ilyse began cooking dinner in the cockpit, and Jesse went below to do some work for the office. Ilyse sighted a few dolphins about 20 yards off the port side of the boat, and we watched them frolic for a while, surfacing and jumping out of the water. It was quite warm and humid, and the water was like glass, without a breeze, so we both fell asleep in the cockpit. Jesse went below at about 12:30 a.m., as the cockpit and cushions were becoming wet and sticky, and fell asleep on a settee in the main cabin. Ilyse went below at about 5:30 a.m.

Monday, September 10, 2007

We got up at about 9:00 a.m., went for a swim, showered, ate breakfast, and went into Roosevelt Inlet to stock up on ice and water. The folks at the marina were just like Andy from Mayberry, and we enjoyed talking with them. One of the gentlemen, Fred Chapman, who was probably in his 80's, offered to take Ilyse to the store for some bread and fruit.

That was the only place we have ever seen little buildings right on the water, not large enough to live in, but just big enough to sit in and enjoy the view. They were like grown-up size doll houses, and were air conditioned with patio furniture, ceiling fans, etc.

We headed out into the Delaware Bay and motored for quite a while. The Delaware Bay is kind of tricky because there are many shoals and the

tides run quite strongly in and out of the bay. We hoisted the sails sometime in the middle of the afternoon as we neared the shipping channel. We traversed the shipping channel for a while, once taking about a 6-foot wake from a large ship, before we headed for a cove, where we hoped to be in protected water at Fortescue, New Jersey. Unfortunately, the area was not so protected as Jesse would have liked. In fact, it was not protected at all from the weather, which was coming out of the northwest. About 1:00 a.m. or so, a thunderstorm came through, and as the NOAA weather station always says, wind and waves may be higher in thunderstorms, and, boy, were they. Anchoring can be a little bit deceiving in the Delaware Bay, because the current is so strong. We found ourselves in front of the anchor instead of the anchor in front of us. After we reset the anchor, the winds picked up fiercely, and they were enough to keep *Agapé* pointed into the wind. This time the anchor held well. It was so rough and rocky that Ilyse dozed on cushions on the floor of the main cabin; while Jesse rested on the starboard side settee, holding on to prevent himself from falling to the floor. It was a rough night.

Tuesday, September 11, 2007

We rose at about 9:00 a.m., showered, ate a light breakfast, and listened to the weather. It was still quite rough, and Ilyse voted for staying anchored where we were for the day, but was vetoed by Jesse, who said he didn't plan on it taking him two days to get up the Delaware Bay.

Getting off the hook was a bit tricky as it was dug in quite well. Ilyse assumed her anchor hoisting position at the wheel while Jesse worked the anchor on the bow. Finally, after about 15 minutes, *Agapé* freed the anchor, pulling it at about 2.5 knots. Off we were against the current, not making much progress at all. We hoisted the sails hoping to motor sail and improve our speed. The wind was quite strong and the waves were probably 4-5 feet. The dinghy was flying like a kite and doing flips behind the boat but managed to right itself each time. It was definitely the most difficult sailing we had ever done. After fighting it for about two-and-a-half hours, Jesse decided to turn around

and go back to where we had anchored the previous night.

As we neared our spot, Jesse pointed the boat into the wind and Ilyse began dropping the main, then going up on the foredeck and assisting the main sail down. There was some serious mast hugging going on there. A couple of times she made the mistake of looking down at the water and seeing the rather large waves. It was a sloppy drop of the sail, but at least it was down. As Ilyse carefully made her way back to the cockpit, she announced how scary that was to Jesse.

As we arrived at our previous anchorage, Jesse suggested that, rather than anchoring off of Fortescue once again, we move farther south around a point of land to try and gain some protection from the weather coming from the northwest. We motored around the point and dropped the anchor when the water depth wouldn't allow us to go any farther. Initially the waves did seem to be somewhat smaller. By that time it was about 6:00 p.m., and we prepared the boat for the night by securing the halyards and attaching the tarp in case of rain.

Conditions were somewhat favorable, so Ilyse took out our Fold 'n Go propane camp stove and prepared tacos for dinner. We were exhausted, since we hadn't gotten much sleep the night before, and crawled into the V-berth at about 9:00 p.m. By that time, *Agapé* was already rockin' and rollin', as the weather had shifted around from the northwest to the west, and we were no longer being protected by the land. We snuggled up, and we each lay there silently for a while.

Originally the forehatch was cracked to allow some air in, but we had to shut it because the waves were splashing over the bow. Every couple of hours we got up to check the GPS for anchor drift, but we seemed to be holding.

At around 11:00 p.m., Ilyse asked Jesse if he was nervous and he replied that, in fact, he was a bit nervous. The next obvious question was, "Are we in any danger?" and Jesse replied, "Not at the moment," which inferred to Ilyse that he wasn't totally confident that danger was out of the realm of possibility. As Jesse is not one to scare easily, Ilyse's mind went into turbo charge.

We had anchored at low tide with about three feet of water below our keel and as the tide came in and the winds picked up, the water depth raised to about eight feet below our keel. We were each individually thinking about what would happen to the boat when low tide returned, as *Agapé* seemed to be pitching up and down about seven or eight feet as she took some of the worst waves. Ilyse finally became verbal about her concerns, and Jesse informed her that he had been concerned about that for the last couple of hours, and said we weren't going to do anything now, but would wait to see if conditions improved as the tide got lower.

We first noticed that the anchor had begun to drag at around 2:00 a.m., so we got dressed, carefully removed the tarp, and noticed that the sky was clear and rain no longer seemed to be a threat.

Jesse assessed the situation. There didn't seem to be any immediate danger, since we were dragging southeast into slightly deeper water with lots of open water ahead of us. With the boat still pitching violently, Jesse decided not to pull up the anchor, as there seemed no point to taking the risk to do work on the foredeck. We decided to stay in the cockpit for the rest of the night, monitor the anchor drag, and hope that conditions would improve.

Jesse set another mark on the GPS, and we watched as the boat continued to drag away from it at approximately one knot.

At around 3:30 a.m. the anchor caught once more, and we were fixed in six-and-a-half feet of water below our keel and with about two hours to go until low tide. We were still hoping that the weather would ease by low tide so we could get started and make our way up the Delaware Bay with the current in our favor. When the tide changed at 5:30 a.m., however, the waves and wind seemed to be as fierce as ever, and we decided to wait it out some more.

Wednesday, September 12, 2007

After sleeping on and off in the cockpit, we finally noticed that the wind and waves had diminished somewhat by about 10:00 a.m. We decided to go and make some progress up the

Delaware Bay. We motored for a while, and by noontime conditions had improved greatly.

We kept close to the shipping channel in the middle of the bay and started to think about where we could find a gas dock, as we knew we would need to refuel sometime during the day. As we worked our way northward, Jesse called for assistance on the radio on a number of occasions to see if anyone could tell us where we could find a gas dock in the vicinity, but we received no responses.

Finally Ilyse suggested that we call the TowBoat/U.S. number to see if they could point us in the right direction. We did, and the dispatcher got the local TowBoat/U.S. captain on the line, who told us that we would find a gas dock up the Cohansey River, still about three hours away.

We continued motoring and reached the mouth of the Cohansey at about 4:30 in the afternoon, and saw absolutely no sign of civilization, except for the two large markers at the mouth of the river. The TowBoat/U.S. captain had told us that the marina was at least one-and-a-half miles up the river, but as we worked our way up the winding river, we discovered that it was more like three miles.

Finally we arrived at an enclave of small marinas and attempted to tie up at a gas dock at around 5:30 p.m. We had some difficulty in the cross current, and a fellow with an Australian accent came down the pier to help us tie up, as he had heard Ilyse say, "I can't hold onto the boat hook ... I'm going to drop it in the water!" Which she did. Fortunately the other end of the hook remained lodged on the large cleat on the floating pier. Jesse made another approach to the pier, and the Australian gentleman was there to help us out. We asked him about the possibility of getting fuel, and he said that he would go get Monroe, who lived on his boat and who would most certainly open up the fuel pumps for us.

While waiting for Monroe, Ilyse pointed out the flying saucer parked in the parking lot up the hill. It looked pretty decrepit. Monroe, a large African-American gentleman, arrived and helped us get fueled up. When we asked about the possibility of buying some ice and possibly a chart to get us up the last leg of the Delaware to the C&D canal, he

happily opened up the marina store and took care of everything we needed. Ilyse asked him when the Martians had arrived, and he said about two years ago. Apparently the saucer-looking unit was built as a modular home quite a number of years ago.

We got the boat iced and watered up. We hosed off the accumulation of salt on the decks and took our first showers in two days. We topped off the water tanks once again, after our showers, and cast off from the fuel dock.

Our original intention had been to motor back to the mouth of the Cohansey and anchor, but since it was dark by then and the narrow river had no lights or markers, we just went a short way from the marina and dropped the hook in a slightly wider section of the river. We were thrilled to be anchored in calm water.

It was erev Rosh Ha Shanah, and Ilyse prepared Chun King Chicken Chow Mein. We said the motzi over rye bread and Ilyse chanted the shehechanayu (a prayer which is recited the first time one does something). It was the first time in her 53 years that she wasn't home with family or friends for the holiday. We relaxed and reminisced about our adventures.

Thursday, September 13, 2007

After a quiet, restful night, we rose at about 9:00 a.m., showered, and Ilyse actually cooked a breakfast of grilled cheese sandwiches, fruit cup, bottled Starbuck's coffee, and juice.

We pulled up the anchor at about 11:00 a.m. and began our three-mile trip winding around the Cohansey to the Delaware Bay. We motored all day, getting closer and closer to the Salem Nuclear Power Plant. After we passed the nuclear plant, with its huge cooling tower (similar to the famous images of Three Mile Island), we passed close by a replica 17th century square-rigged sailing ship lying at anchor. We passed by as close as we could, but couldn't make out the name on the transom, as she was flying an enormous American Flag that blocked the name.

We entered the C&D canal at about 5:30 p.m. and made our way to Chesapeake City, where we decided to stop for dinner. We pulled into a slip at the Chesapeake Inn and Marina and enjoyed a

relaxing dinner at the Dock Bar, where a fair band named "Dow Jones and the Averages," played some rock and roll.

At about 9:30 p.m. we pulled out of Chesapeake City, as Jesse was bound and determined to return *Agapé* to her home waters. We motored until about midnight, when we dropped the hook in the Bohemia River at the north end of the Chesapeake Bay.

Friday, September 14, 2007

Once again we took our time in the morning, enjoying the scenery on the Bohemia River. At about 11:00 a.m. we pulled up the anchor and motored across the river to a marina to ice, water, change oil, and fuel up. Then we headed out into the bay and raised the sails, continuing to sail the rest of the day.

Ilyse had wanted to go up the Sassafras River, but we were sailing for the first time in days, and the winds were favorable, so we continued under sail past the mouth of the river. We discussed where we would anchor for the evening, and the two most likely possibilities were Fairlee Creek and Rock Hall. It looked like rain might be coming in, and we agreed that we wanted to anchor before the rain started, so we pulled into Fairlee Creek, put up our ragged tarp to keep rain from coming in the main companionway, and took it easy.

We began discussing whether we should go home Saturday or Sunday, as neither of us wanted to go home at all. Sailing away had been a repeated topic of conversation the last two days. We were definitely in a state of denial, and we didn't want to return to work. We dream about living aboard, but we do have to pinch ourselves once in a while to wake ourselves up and become realistic about how we still do need to work to support this expensive hobby of ours.

Saturday, September 15, 2007

A howling wind woke us up at about 8:00 a.m. Jesse looked out and commented that there were white caps inside Fairlee Creek, which is completely protected on all sides. The winds were blowing at about 20 knots and gusting to 30. Jesse

checked the GPS, and we had swung around several times, but *Agapé's* anchor was holding firmly. As we looked out, everyone was on deck checking their anchors as well. We most certainly weren't heading out at that point, so we crawled back into the V-berth and dozed through most of the morning.

At about 11:00 a.m., we got up and discussed the game plan for the final day or so of our vacation. We both knew that it would be prudent to return home that day and take a day to get organized before returning to work, but we were not eager to return home. Ilyse suggested that we be responsibly irresponsible by sailing back to Hammock Island that day, tying up at the pump-out, packing up the dinghy, loading the car, heading off to a Laundromat and doing the laundry, and returning to the boat. Then we could anchor out off of her home port so we could get one last day of sailing in, as the weather looked good for the remainder of the weekend. That probably qualified us as die-hard sailors, after having spent the past 15 days aboard.

Ilyse fixed cereal and sausage for brunch, and we pulled up the anchor about 2:00 p.m., after setting a reef in the mainsail. Off we motored until we were in the lee of the land from Poole's Island, where we pointed into the wind and Ilyse noticed that the main halyard had wrapped outside of the spreader. Ilyse took the wheel while Jesse went on the foredeck to release the halyard. He released the shackle from the main and freed the halyard from around the outside of the spreader, and within seconds it was wrapped outside the spreader once again. After reciting some four letter words, he tried one more time and Ilyse pulled in the halyard and clutched it to hold.

We hoisted the reefed main, laid off of the wind, and pulled out the jib about 60%. We were on a beam reach and were maintaining speeds in the high sixes and low sevens. Ilyse said *Agapé* was like a horse that runs faster when you turn her toward the barn. We were back at the dolphin at Bodkin Creek in record time at about 4:45 p.m., but we had to tack and make another approach in order to make the next marks. Finally we were in the Bodkin, and the waters were once again calm.

We pulled in the jib and turned on the engine, which promptly died when Jesse put it into

gear. We made two more attempts with the engine, but the problem repeated itself. Symptoms indicated that we had something wrapped around the prop shaft so Jesse continued sailing on the main attempting to sail to the pump-out pier at Hammock Island. After carefully maneuvering and making two unsuccessful tries, we dropped the main, dropped the anchor, and Jesse went over the side with mask and snorkel to see if we had a crab pot or line wrapped around prop shaft. That would have been the simple solution, but the prop shaft didn't have anything wrapped around it. Bill Durr and two other slip holders were on the pier, watching and waiting to help us. Jesse climbed back on the boat, quickly dried off and got dressed, as the air temperature was quite chilly, and we tried to start the boat one more time and put her into gear. Bingo — no problem.

We tied up at the pump out, brought up the dinghy, unloaded the boat, showered, and went off to find a Laundromat. One would think it wouldn't be that hard to find one in Glen Burnie — WRONG! We found one that was closing as we arrived, but they directed us to another on Crain Highway that was open until 11:00 p.m.

After completing three loads of laundry, we headed out to find somewhere to grab a quick bite for dinner. When we returned to the boat, it was after midnight, chilly, and windy, so we decided to remain tied up at the pier for the night, rather than motoring out into the creek to anchor. The voyage was over, and we had one day of day sailing left before returning home to the real world.

Ilyse and Jesse Delanoy

Just a Quick Catch-Up on Our Lives

Hi everyone. We left the boat in Maryland on October 3 and had a good trip out West. We had short visits in Hanover, Pennsylvania, with Jen, Logan, and Madalyn (and dinner with Marty and Sandy); Chicago with Lynn and Steve; and Estes Park, Colorado, with Dave. We stayed in three very nice B&B's, particularly in Estes Park, where we saw elk, a fox, and raccoons right outside our door, and where we missed a black bear by five minutes!

We are now in southern Arizona, living in the RV and volunteering at the same park where we were last year. We are about 70 miles south of Tucson and 10 miles from the Mexican border. If you look at a map, we are located in Patagonia Lake State Park between Patagonia and Nogales. We will be here until mid-December.

We are here earlier this year than last, and we've already noticed the differences. They had a good monsoon season this year, and the area is much greener. The weather is wonderful — 80's during the day and 50's at night.

The grasshoppers are amazing. I have never seen so many! When we hike, we look at the ground, and they are hopping all over the place!!

The bad part of this time of year is that the rattlesnakes are still out. There was a four-footer very near our RV on Friday night! Also, this is a big birding area, but there aren't a lot of birds here yet; although we did see a great white egret the other day. It looked like a great blue heron, but was all white.

So we are keeping busy hiking, working in the visitor's center, being tourists, etc. They made me honorary social director. I can't imagine why! I will try to take more pictures and update the website when I get a chance. In the meantime, keep in touch and have a great winter.

Love, Adrian and Tom

Notes from Octavia - Friday, 11/2/07

We are alive and well. Yesterday we left Beaufort, North Carolina, after a very pleasant two-day stay at the Town Docks Marina. Beaufort is a "destination" place, much like Oxford and St. Michaels, with waterfront marinas, lots of restaurants, shops, a library, a maritime museum, and old residential areas. Today we are hunkered down in Mile Hammock Bay — at anchor with 30 knots of wind blowing, but with a mild temperature. We have out 100 feet of chain and two nylon snubbers; one snubber is slack, to back-up the primary one in case it fails. This anchorage is a small harbor just off the ICW in the middle of the Marine's Camp Lejeune. The rule is: "Do not go ashore."

This is the second time on this trip that we have been hiding out from very strong northerly winds; a week ago we spent four days at anchor in the South River, just across the Neuse River from Oriental. The chop in the Neuse River was so bad that we did not care to cross over to a slip in Oriental.

We started this year's trip, by departing Hammock Island Marina October 7. By the time we reached Portsmouth, Virginia, (ICW mile 0), we had been cruising southward in the Chesapeake Bay for 14 days, traveling 200 nautical miles. Favorite places visited: Oxford, Solomons, Reedville, Onancock, Urbana, Deltaville, and Yorktown.

At Oxford, we had lunch at the Robert Morris Inn (the only place open on an off-season Tuesday) and found the local library, where we had a visit with the volunteer librarian. The library is in a small house-sized building, and is not affiliated with any other library system. It is operated and financed completely by town volunteers. There is an IBM electric typewriter and an old fashioned card file. There are no computers — NONE — because the volunteers threatened to quit if they had to deal with them.

George Alberts, take note: We experienced the kind of Potomac River crossing you had but were not smart enough to turn back. We had strong northerly winds, against the tide, with four-foot quartering seas. We had up the wrong sail, the main. The quartering seas would yaw the boat, causing it to try to round up into the wind. On one of these pushes I could not hold the wheel, and we did round up into the wind. After dropping the main in very rough, bouncing conditions, we pulled out a bit of the genny and finally got into the wind shadow of Smith Point.

The CCSC cruise last summer to Yorktown was the inspiration for us to return to revisit Jamestown and to visit Williamsburg, using the very nice, free shuttle buses. We arrived on October 18, unaware it was the day before the 226th anniversary of the British surrender at Yorktown in 1781. So the next day we stayed at Yorktown to join in the annual festivities: a parade with military units; military and high-school bands; fife and drum units; a formal memorial ceremony at the Victory Monument, with guest speakers, including a French

Embassy diplomat; and a three-mile guided walk of the battlefield. It was a very moving experience, commemorating Cornwallis' surrender to Washington and the virtual end of the Revolutionary War.

Lunch was served by ladies in colonial dress in the yard next to the town church — Brunswick stew, ham and biscuits, and pecan pie. The day's affair is well worth a car (or boat) trip next year.

The 126-foot *Virginia*, a replica pilot schooner, was on hand at the marina docks and open for tours. The crew was very excited about having beaten the *Pride of Baltimore* in this year's "Great Schooner Race".

After Yorktown, we anchored overnight at Portsmouth, and then stopped for a day of grocery shopping at Greatbridge, Virginia. Our next two-day visit was at Bellhaven, North Carolina, then,

after the four-day, bad-weather delay at South River, on to Beaufort, North Carolina.

Our next planned layover/visit down the ICW will be at Southport, North Carolina, a picturesque town like Beaufort.

Weather permitting, we hope to go out into the ocean from Southport, at the Cape Fear River, and then sail for a day or two south to Charleston or Port Royal Sound, South Carolina. If good weather prevails, we could make a two- to three-day ocean passage all the way to the St Johns River, Florida, (284 nautical miles from Cape Fear).

Temperatures this year have been mild compared to the very cold temperatures we experienced last year.

Florida, here we come.

Jan and Hank Zerhusen