



SAUVIE ISLAND YACHT CLUB NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 2524, Portland, OR 97208-2524

Vol. 317 February 2011

SIYC OFFICERS '09-'10

Commodore
Garry Weber

Vice Commodore
George Stonecliffe

Secretary
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Database Editor
Susan Gierga

Cruising Coordinator
Open
Contact George Stonecliffe for more information.

Newsletter
Susan Gierga

Refreshments
Sue Stonecliffe

Website
Jeff Gerritsen

General Meeting

Friday, March 4th 2011

(First Friday of each Month)

7:30 Business Meeting

8:00 Program

This Month:

Preparing Your Small Diesel engine for Blue Water Cruising to be presented by Independent Marine Repair's Richard Churchill and Clint Ziemer. They will talk about your engine's condition, timing, tuning, compression test, oil chemical testing, fuel polishing, fuel filter system, use of fuel biocide, spare parts to carry and other considerations.

Cruise Weekend

March is our annual anchoring cruise. Like many years before, Nick and Gail Wigen, aboard Ursa Minor, will host the event. Join us Saturday, March 12th and 13th at Swan Island Lagoon

Theme: Reggae Nights - think
Tropical! Call Garry Weber for info .
See Map Below

Commodore's Comments

Hi Everyone

We are trying to reduce the number of printed newsletters sent out each month. It costs the club to have them printed and sent out. That means less money for more important things. If any members could do without the printed copy and just receive the electronic one it would help everyone. You can always just print it out yourself. Please call or email me if this is possible or you absolutely need to receive the printed copy.

The weather is getting warmer so don't forget to plan on coming to the next cruise, they are always fun !

Thanks Garry

Important Announcement

Looking for crew for passage from La Paz, Mexico to Hawaii. Departing mid-April, 2011.

Craig and Barbara Johnston aboard Sequoia, their Outbound 44 are looking for crew.

Here's the deal: We are looking for a non-smoking single person or a couple willing to crew for the approximately three week passage. Our ideal candidate(s) will have blue water sailing experience and a friendly, non-confrontational character. We provide a berth, meals; you provide transportation for yourself at both ends; no money changes hands. Our approach to cruising is to optimize comfort and safety and have an experience enjoyable for all. We do need references, and will do phone interviews. We're glad to provide references in return. Compatibility is probably more important than sailing experience. Sequoia is a 2001 Outbound 44, hull #5, well equipped for passage making. We have taken her across the South Pacific and are currently on the west coast of Mexico. You can learn about our background and experiences at www.svsequoia.com, and about our current season at www.sailblogs.com/member/svsequoia. Contact Craig & Barbara at cellolaw@gmail.com.

Minutes of the Board Meeting

SIYC February 2011 Board Meeting- cancelled this month. The Commodore was sailing in the Sea of Cortez and the Treasurer/Secretary had a death in the family.

Minutes of the General Meeting

SIYC General Meeting

February 4, 2011

The meeting started with the guest speaker Corey Wadley, a Surferman (he drives the boat) with the Coast Guard out of Cape Disappointment. He had his wife Jessica and son Steven with him. Cory spoke to us about "Crossing the Columbia Bar". Determining factors are weather, tides, restrictions and time of day. The Coast Guard's main hope is to keep all boaters safe. He gave us website addresses to look at buoys, bar cameras, national weather service and storm surf. (Corey was going to forward the addresses to George Stonecliffe and then George will forward them to club members)

The Columbia River has "mixed tides"- 2 highs and 2 lows every day at varying heights. Tides are larger or smaller depending on the phase of the moon.

Slack tide is your best bet for crossing the bar. The main problem that boats have when all the other times are correct for crossing is with engine fuel. The bouncing and rocking around has a tendency to stir up the gunk in the fuel tank and cause the engine to stall. This is not a good thing!

I thought the Coast Guard would come to help but they will only help if there is a serious health issue on the boat. They will call a tow service but don't offer help for mechanical problems. Who knew? The law requires that commercial salvage must be called.

Bar restrictions are made according to boat size and based in part by what is required to be on board of different boats according to length. Bar conditions are updated every 3 hours or as bar and weather conditions change. The updates are done from sunrise to sunset based on sight. If the bar is restricted at sunset, it will stay the same until daylight.

When is the best time to cross? Corey advised us to cross during the daylight hours, on a flood tide and when the bar is not restricted to a vessel of your size. He also suggested that we carry plenty of

chain and have the anchor ready to drop in case of emergency. "Sailboats are not made to be towed". Do you have a plan if you need to tow your boat in rough water? Where would you attach a tow? After a break, Commodore Garry Weber started the general meeting. We welcomed guests Barbara Skipworth and Bryce Kent. The treasurer reported \$3429 and we collected \$35 from the raffle. The program next month will be former SIYC club member and Commodore Fred Bates. He will be talking about **small diesel engine repair** and perhaps some precautions to take before crossing the bar.

The Valentine's Cruise is to Coon Island on 2/12 and 13. Red and white foods will be requested to add to the Valentine theme. Peter and Susan Gierga are hosting.

CRYA-no report.

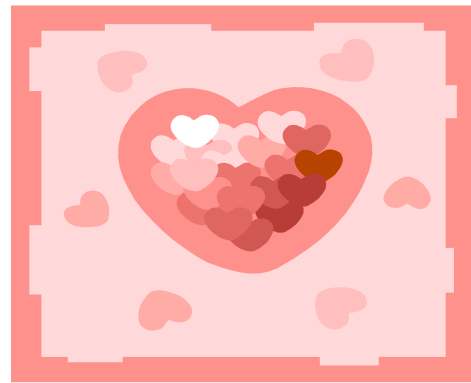
Nominations-Commodore Garry Weber is working on the nominations for next year's officers. No volunteers from the group gathered.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Mallowney, SIYC Secretary



Mel and Bev Benedict 2/10/87
Mike and Gail Cannady 2/18
Pat and Susan Canniff 2/17/90

"Love is what makes two people sit in the middle of a bench when there is plenty of room at both ends"



Please continue to send letters, articles, educational opportunities, recipes, ideas for programs, and other information our Newsletter Editor Susan Gierga at susanmgierga@hotmail.com Or if your contact information has changed let our Database Coordinator know; again, Susan Gierga - susanmgierga@hotmail.com.

**SIYC Clothing & Accessories
For 2009/10**

- Short-sleeved collared sport shirt--\$20.00
Adult - K420 Ladies cut - L420
- Long sleeved-----\$28.00
Adult - K320
- Sweatshirts
 - Pullover, hooded-----\$24.00
Adult - PC90H
 - Crew neck-----\$17.00
Adult - PC90
 - Zip front, hooded-----\$32.00
Adult - -F258
- Fleece Jackets
 - Zip front-----\$40.00
Adult - JP77
Ladies cut - LP77 (no green)
- Fleece Vests-----\$30.00
Adult - JP79 Ladies cut - LP79
- Wind Shirt (v-neck nylon) \$24.00
Adult - JP72

Zip Front Nylon Jacket\$30.00
Adult - JP70
Anorak ¼ zip pullover, hooded-----\$32.00

*** All items come in green and navy except where noted.

*** A check made out to SIYC need to accompany orders.

Mail checks to: Sarah Daugherty
10207 SE 92nd Ave
Portland OR 97086

Note: sizes beyond L will be \$1.50 more.

Happy Birthday!

*Jim Mask 2/18
Richard Sandefur 2/27
Sue Stonecliffe 2/15
Janet Williams 2/12*

*"And in the end, it's not the years in your life
that count. It's the life in your years."
Abraham Lincoln*

CLUB RAFFLE

SIYC will be having a raffle each month starting in February. We have suggested that members bring items to raffle with a goal of giving some special gift to Sauvie Island School. We will gather the funds until the May meeting and then decide how the funds should be used. We make a donation to the school each year for the use of the room, but, maybe this year we could do something additional. It seems that schools can always use help and our special gift could show our

appreciation for the inexpensive gathering place we have enjoyed for so many years.

Please bring an item to add to the raffle. Some ideas are as follows:

Seasonal items-October-Halloween decorations or pumpkin

Fresh baked items-a batch of cookies, a pie, a batch of brownies

Clothing items-new or slightly worn-SIYC items, something to wear for the season

Something for the galley-a cookbook, a can of sardines, Spam

Something useful any time- Batteries, scotch tape, band-aids

A bottle of wine (maybe you like white wine and you have some red wine that you could re-gift)

Boat items- slightly used dishware if you replaced a set, placemats.

**Welcome!
Welcome!**

Welcome!



New members: Devin and Rowan Madix.

2010-2011 CALENDAR

GENERAL MEETINGS		BOARD MEETINGS		CRUISES	
February 4	Sauvie Island School	February 1	TBD	February 12-13	Valentine's Cruise Coon Island
March 4	Sauvie Island School	March 1	TBD	March 12-13	Anchoring Cruise
April 1	Sauvie Island School	March 29	TBD	April 16-17	Navigation Cruise
May 6	Sauvie Island School	May 3	TBD	May 14-15	Race/Drift Cruise Sand Island
June 4	Annual Picnic	At Annual Picnic	TBD		

ATTENTION ALL SIYC MEMBERS!

If you have information regarding any of our cruising boats, updates on locations, etc., PLEASE let me know! We can only keep this section current if we have the information!

Crusier Liaison: Susan Gierga susanmgierga@hotmail.com 541-480-4675

SIYC CRUISING BOATS – Locations out of the United States

Boat Name	Owners' Name	Location
Adagio	Jeff & Jane Woodward	West coast of Mexico
Ahwahnee	Tom & Kathy Edwards	Bahia del Sol, El Salvador
Glaoch Ne Mara	Rick Brady	Mazatlan, Mexico
Kailani	David & Christy Dykkestén	Bocas del Toro, Panama
Moonshadow	Richard Sandefur & Anita Melbo	Malta
Perpetua	Pat & Susan Canniff	Mazatlan, Mexico
Rolling Thunder	Bruce, Jan & Max Payne	Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
Sea Tern	Herman & Nancy Ford	For Sale...
Sequoia	Craig & Barbara Johnston	Mexico
Starbounc	Earl & Donna Davis	Hawaii
Wild Rover	Mike & Gail Cannady	South Carolina...

Cruising Websites/contact info:

Adagio: <http://www.svadagio.net>

Ahwahnee:
www.sailblogs.com/member/voyage_continued

Albion: www.teleport.com/~forsberg/log1.htm

Moonshadow blog: <http://voyagemoonshadow.blogspot.com/>

Perpetua blog: http://www.sailblogs.com/member/our_journeys/

Perpetua Pictures: http://imageevent.com/our_journeys/

Kailani: kailaniatsea@yahoo.com

Sequoia: k7cej@winlink.org

ATTENTION ALL CRUISERS:

Your letters are the highlight of our newsletter!!!... We really want to hear from you... Where you are... adventures... recipes... photos... cruising tips... gossip... well, you get the idea. ☺

Received from Barbara and Craig Johnston

Apparently there is some consternation out there about what happened after our hot water tank failed. Not wanting to leave anyone hanging, I'll overcome the cruisers' sloth, and give you an update about that and many other things.

We had gone into Paradise Village Marina after the hot water tank failure, and at that point, we had no water system at all. With some help from Home Depot, a taxi driver, a cruiser friend, and a nameless, cavernous, dark, high-dusty-shelved *ferreteria* (hardware store), Craig was able to effect enough repairs to get the water system operational again, with cold water only. The hot water tank awaits the transplant of a new heater element and new thermostat, both of which are coming in about two weeks, with a visit from Craig's cousin, Gail. The water heater was built by Isotherm, a Swedish company, according to the owner's manual. But the internet disclosed that it was now owned by an Italian company, with parts available from a distributor in Maine. Et cetera. The internet, via the "banda ancha" (cell modem), is a real boon for cruisers!

We spent about a week in Paradise Village, enjoying long hot showers ashore, and dodging time share salesmen. We took a jungle cruise up the lagoon with our friends Dot and Mark of *Pua'ena*. Our guide, Jesús ("call me Chewy"), was able to take us through 1-2 feet of water, beneath low branches, to where the crocodiles lurk. We found a few small ones sunning themselves. They could have been plastic, they were so still. But there was something about the eyes... He took us up into a bird sanctuary, where there were thousands of birds, including some we could identify, and some we could not. There were a few blue herons, seemingly the same ones we have in Oregon. Coming back from the lagoon, we cruised through an area of high-end homes (minimum price, three million dollars, Jesús assured us).

Once we'd had our fill of hot showers and resupply trips to WalMart and Costco, we decided to head south. The hot water situation was not so difficult. We'll use more propane heating water for dishes. We have the sun shower (solar heated hot water) for al fresco showers on the swim step. The trick is to remember to take the shower while the water is still hot from the sun. There's a fine line where the water is still pleasantly warm, and yet it's starting to get dark enough that you won't offend the people on the boat anchored nearby in direct view of the swim step. Wait any longer, and the water's too cold.

We're now in Tenacatita Bay. The trip south has been very pleasant. We took off from Punta de Mita, at the north end of Banderas Bay (west of Puerto Vallarta). The first day we made it to Ipala, a very small anchorage, and a bit rolly from the ocean swells that wrap around the corner of the point. The next day, we reached Chamela Bay, where we anchored among ten or fifteen cruising sailboats, off a long, golden sand beach. The town ashore (Pérula) is modest, with a few tourist hotels, but mostly small dwellings and *abarrotes* (small grocery shops) and other small businesses. There was a *llantera* (tire store) with a few used tires and rims set out for sale, and an open-air workbench. There was a *farmacia*, a church, a few modest restaurants, and little else. We ate lunch at a beach *palapa*, and conversed with a pair of cruisers who left their boat in Raiatea, French Polynesia, and have come back via rental car to commune with their old friends/fellow cruisers who stayed in Mexico. A single-hander came along and told of his plans to finish refurbishing his boat (which he sailed here from the East Coast) and selling it. Like most single-handers, he seemed more than a little bit odd.

The next day, we motored about two miles to Isla Pasavera, one of the islands that helps to protect Chamela Bay from ocean swells. It had been our hope to anchor overnight, but the anchorage was too rolly. We did dinghy ashore to the cobblestone beach, and attempted to find a way up the island. But the terrain was extremely steep and covered with cactus or brambly bushes. (And neither of us is as capable of scrambling as we used to be!) The cacti (some variant of Saguaro cactus) seemed to have a bird (usually a booby) perched on every upright arm. These were not the blue-footed boobies of Isla Isabela, but instead their feet are a much more ordinary reddish brown. They fly around, saying "Ow...ow...ow..." and occasionally they end their string of "ow"s with an insane "hahahahaha." Craig says I'm unduly anthropomorphizing these idiot birds.

We returned to the north end of Chamela Bay for the night. We made the acquaintance of Kerry and Michelle on *Kailani*, and invited them over for drinks, snacks and conversation. We found out (to our and their astonishment) that they are good friends with Craig's cousin, Andy, from Kauai, where they all live. What a small world!

The next day we set off for Tenacatita Bay, where we are now. We're continuing our efforts to get to know other cruisers, and last night we were invited aboard *Southern Cross*, out of Portland. Mark and Vicki are from Philomath (near Corvallis), and Mark teaches at Oregon State (Online! Via the Banda Ancha!) What interesting people!

The socializing with other cruisers, and the onshore exploration, particularly contact with other cultures, is the essence of cruising. In that sense, we're really just getting into it! People have asked us, what is the difference between cruising in Mexico and cruising in the South Pacific. The nature of the cruising community is one difference. Probably less than half of those in the South Pacific are from the US or Canada. Here, it's probably 90 percent or greater. So the cruising community here is less diverse. Adding to that is that so many of the South Pacific anchorages do not have onshore tourist presence. Accordingly, the cruisers just naturally socialize more with each other. Of course the other differences relate to the environment. In the South Pacific, the water is warmer and clearer, the winds are stronger, and most of the anchorages are more protected.

Tomorrow is Craig's birthday. Perhaps I'll bake a cake, or perhaps we'll go ashore and find a nice restaurant. We have reports that the beach palapa here serves nice food. There's also a humongous hotel ashore, and perhaps they have a nice restaurant...

Best wishes to all our friends and family.

Craig & Barbara Johnston
S/V Sequoia

January 29, Barra de Navidad lagoon (19°11.56'N, 104°40.44'W)

Dear friends and family:

We finally pried ourselves loose from beautiful Bahía Tenacatita after nearly a week among the 15-20 cruising boats anchored in the sheltered north end. The bay is about 3 miles long, book-ended by some impressively jagged rocks at each headland. Near our anchorage was a tidal river connecting to a small lake, so we motored up it in the dinghy --"jungle cruise"! As we proceeded up it, the channel between the mangroves got narrower and narrower, until we were hand-paddling to avoid the branches just under the surface in a section only as wide as the boat. Memories of *The African Queen* surfaced. The local *pangueros* (boatmen) cut the mangroves back so they can keep up the tourist trade—if they didn't, the mangroves would completely close off the channel. We saw many birds, but no *cocodrilos* or iguanas.

Yesterday we experienced a new kind of cruiser get-together. Led by the "mayor" of Tenacatita (a long-term cruiser who claims he was actually elected a few seasons back) we all dinghied to a quiet spot, tied to one anchored dinghy and shared food and stories. Mark from *Southern Cross* got up and sang, a capella, his own variation on Paul Simon's *There must be 50 ways to leave your lover*, which he had creatively turned into *There must be 50 waypoints to enter Barra*. I will explain why this is so clever in a bit.

While in Tenacatita we swam off the boat nearly every day, also managing to scrape off the 5" of weed from the waterline. Other activities included practicing dinghy landings in the small surf at the beach (we were 2 for 4 on dry departures) and visiting the small village of La Manzanilla at the other end of the bay. A charming, if tourist filled, village, we were able to buy fresh fruit and vegetables there and have a nice dinner on the beach. The only negative memory was losing our small camera there on the last visit. It must be a sign of aging—we seem to lose things now more often than we break them.

Almost every day in Tenacatita we were graced by two large pacific bottlenose dolphins cruising through the anchorage, often within a few feet of the anchored boats. And for the last two days, we have seen what Craig thinks is the surest sign of being in the tropics—flying fish. These are the small ones that fly like arrows for 30 or 40 feet when chased by predators. We couldn't find clear enough water for snorkeling but the boat was surrounded by trout-sized baitfish every morning.

So after making inquiries about the camera and putting the word out, we left Tenacatita for the short 16 mile trip around the corner to the lagoon of Barra de Navidad. It turns out the channel into the lagoon is only partially buoyed, at the most about 12 feet deep, and follows a winding course into the anchorage area, which is 6-9 feet deep at low tide. We had downloaded many waypoints from S/V Kavenga (www.kavenga.com) and amazingly they were accurate at describing the edges of the channel and anchorage. Hence the song title referred to earlier.

The outer bay at Barra is surrounded by a beach full of modest tourist facilities, including many empty concrete condo attempts. Melanque, at the north end, is famous for having St. Patrick as its patron saint and two weeks of fiesta around St. Pat's day. Barra is at the south end between the bay and the lagoon. But what we had driven home immediately was that the bay and lagoon form a WIND TUNNEL. As we approached the narrow channel, the light westerly became a gusty 22-26 knot blow. We idled through the many anchored boats, making 4.5 knots downwind and having to really rev up the engine to come back upwind.

We picked our spot and dropped our trusty spade anchor in about 9' of water (*Sequoia* draws 6.5'). After letting out 100' of chain, the anchor failed to set and it was obvious we were dragging. As we approached another boat, we motored back up to recover the anchor and try again. Up it came with gobs of greasy mud and fouled with an old fishnet. Now here is where experience has taught us a lesson: we had been warned that boats drag all the time at Barra, and we could easily remember difficulties anchoring in Fiji in a similar bottom. So Craig dug into the bilge for our massive Fortress FX-85 (bigger and of a different design than our normal anchor) while Barbara motored around the anchorage avoiding the other boats. After getting the Fortress out—some assembly required—and dragging it up to the foredeck (it is almost 5' tall and weights nearly 50 lbs.), Craig detached the chain from the normal anchor and fastened it to the beast. Our first attempt left us too close to another boat, but after a tip over the radio from a sympathetic soul, we put it down in a different spot and set it hard. As I write this, we have about 1.5' of water under the keel.

They say that the only anchor that is too big is one you can't shift on the deck. It is great to have a big storm anchor, and experience has shown that mud may require a different type of hook, but it is a fire-drill to deploy it. Speaking of mud, the foredeck, spade anchor and the anchor buoy retrieved from the first abortive attempt were covered in mud and it took almost a half hour with the wash deck hose to clean it all up. But we are hooked-up, washed up, and Barbara just pulled a loaf of rich cracked-wheat bread from the oven. So we will enjoy another great evening in paradise...just as long as none of the southern California cruisers with their tiny little anchors drag down on us!

Best wishes to all --

Craig & Barbara Johnston
S/V Sequoia



February 4, 2011

Just back from Colima

We decided to do a brief road trip away from the boat. First, this involved trusting our anchor, and the winds, and our systems, and the neighboring anchored boats, enough to actually leave her for a few days in the lagoon at Barra de Navidad. Because we had come in at such a windy time, we had used our storm anchor – the Fortress FX-85. So we are well dug into the mud. A couple of neighboring boats offered to keep an eye on her, so we decided to see a bit of Mexico away from the coast.

We left on Wednesday (February 2), taking the ETN bus (first class, quite luxurious, plenty of room) from downtown Barra to the bus terminal in Colima. The hotel we chose (Lonely Planet's first choice) turned out to be somewhat of a disappointment, but it was adequate. The main goal of the trip was to see the twin volcanoes that are the feature of Colima's skyline. We tried first for one of the Lonely Planet-recommended guides, but they both seem to be out of business. The owner of the hotel recommended someone else, and we decided to give it a try. The volcano tours looked either too wussy or too energetic for us – the easiest tour seemed to involve no walking at all; the next level up involved rappelling down a cliff – we picked another tour altogether. But before I leave the subject of the volcanoes altogether, I should say that the Fire Volcano is currently the most active in Mexico, with regular venting of steam, occasional lava flows, and that sort of thing. The volcano alongside it ("Snow Volcano") is dormant, and the most strenuous tours climb to its summit, at more than 14,000 feet, to look down on the summit of the Fire Volcano. Somewhat more than we are prepared for...

The tour we chose instead was to the "Reserva de la Biosfera Sierra de Manantlan" an undeveloped area with a diverse variety of habitats. Our guide took us to a village at the very top of the mountain range (about 9000 feet high), where we picked up the local Presidente de Turismo, Lilo. Apparently the deal is, the commercial tours are allowed to go there if they use a local guide as well. Lilo was new to the job, and he didn't know the path, so our guide, Jupiter, showed him the way. Nevertheless, Lilo was able to tell us about life in the heights, and some of the different plants we were seeing. He picked and gave us clusters of berries called "La Tila" which he said make a relaxing tea. I asked him whether the Indian have used the acorns from the oak trees for food (as

did the Indians in California). He said, no, but they make a tea out of them; first roasting them, and then peeling them, and finally grinding the peeled nut, and brewing with the resulting meal.

We saw many different kinds of trees – some that we recognized and some we didn't. There were pines with very long needles but relatively small cones, cypress, cedar and oak. One tree, the copal, had peeling bark (like Oregon's madrona trees), and Jupiter told us that they are sometimes called "tourist trees" (they peel). A tree called "Primavera" (spring) was covered with yellow blossoms. One of the most spectacular plants we saw was a pink bromeliad which grew in great numbers on the branches of large trees.

We hiked downhill (sometimes steeply downhill) for 2-3 miles to an overlook, where there is a view out for 20-30 miles. The lookout was constructed of milled-on-the-spot oak boards. (Jupiter told us that the whole area of the biosphere reserve was originally a huge clear-cut logging operation instituted by a 19th century German entrepreneur. Everything there now is second growth, and no logging is allowed. An exception is made for the residents of the village and for minimal infrastructure such as the overlook platform.) Below the overlook platform was a hidden cave entrance, which I elected not to do. Craig took pictures, so I know what it looks like!

We took a different route up the hill, which was a bit easier. At one point we diverted to a nursery where the locals are nurturing native plants and herbs. Alongside the nursery was a truck from the National University. Three scientists had set up a trapping and tagging operation for hummingbirds. These are the same hummingbirds we see in Oregon – they spend the winter in Mexico. As we watched, one scientist finished putting a band on the leg of a calliope hummingbird, fed it some sugar water, and then released it. (Who knew they made bands small enough to go on the leg of a hummingbird!?) She told us that they use several methods to trap the birds – one of which is using the ubiquitous hummingbird feeders which so many Oregonians put out in the summer. The birds are used to going to the feeders as a food source! The young woman who was tagging hummingbirds told us that one of the other scientists working there was the most renowned hummingbird expert in the world.

After the hike, we stopped for a picnic lunch in a second growth cedar grove. Under the forest canopy, there were picnic tables (again, milled on the spot, probably using the chain-saw mill we had seen not too far from the hummingbird scientists), and big old cedar stumps. The stumps were reminiscent of the ones we have in Oregon forests. After lunch we drove down the mountain, visited a swimming spot (not too tempting, as the weather was not very hot and the water was cold). We said good-bye to Jupiter, then spent the evening exploring Colima.

Like other Mexican cities, the tourist authorities want you to think that their city is different – that it has features not to be found elsewhere. For Colima, it is true to some extent – or maybe we just haven't seen other cities like this. On Wednesday evening when we arrived, we walked to the Plaza de Libertad (the central square) and found a Oaxacan restaurant ("Ah que Nanishe") which was really quite good. They had three sorts of mole (chocolate based chile sauce), and lots of other delicious looking things we didn't get to try. After dinner, we spent time in the plaza next to the Cathedral where there were two different groups putting on the same pastorela (nativity play) on opposite sides of the fountain. It took us a long time to figure out what was going on. There was lots of marching around, lots of songs which were chanted by some and sung by others – in a variety of different keys. Some of the characters were in masks, and some of the men, dressed as kings, had veils across their faces and carried swords. In each group there were 8 individuals dressed in what looked like – for all the world – Three Musketeer costumes, but in pastel colors. One group had a devil, and both had angels. The people in pastel colors held staffs with noisemakers and plastic flowers, and they hit the bases on the ground rhythmically to the music/chant.

After awhile a baby Jesus appeared – one for each group. Then it became obvious that part of what was going on was adoration of the baby Jesus. A helpful onlooker explained to us that the people in the Three Musketeer costumes represented shepherds. She also explained that this celebration is done 40 days after Christmas, and represents the ending of the period when all the babies were put into hiding to avoid Herod's edict that all babies

(potential Messiahs) be killed. She was less clear about all the sword play and simulated violence, which seemed to be a convenient – and even sanctioned -- outlet for some of the young teenagers' pent-up energy. The woman seemed to say (and once again we reached the limits of my fluency in Spanish) that this is a celebration unique to Colima.

After our biosphere tour, we returned to the Plaza de la Libertad, and the event of the evening was a concert by the State Band at the bandstand/gazebo. They were quite good, and as they concluded the concert with pop melodies from the 30's, 40's and 50's, a number of the listeners got up and danced.

Like other Mexican cities, a major feature for the young people seems to be driving around the streets endlessly in the evening, accompanied by police cars flashing their blue lights. There seems to be no point to the police display, except perhaps to say "we're here, we're watching you..." When the police have an actual emergency, they turn on the sirens, which we heard a number of times, particularly in the middle of the night, and particularly under our hotel window. When we had checked in to the hotel, the owner took great glee in telling us that hers was a family hotel, whereas the one next door was for transvestites, the one beyond that for gays, and the one beyond that charged by the hour. So perhaps the police were more interested in that street, although we found everyone to be pleasant, polite, and not the least bit offensive or threatening.

We finished our time in Colima this morning with visits to the Palacio de Gobierno, where we saw some fabulous murals depicting Mexican and Colima history (with emphasis on the brief tenure of Miguel Hidalgo as a parish priest). In the Palacio de Gobierno there is a small museum with pre-Columbian ceramic pieces, and across the corner of the plaza there is the regional history museum with more of the same. The pre-Columbian artwork is stunning. The ceramic pots were done by very talented and skilled artists. They also made lots of ceramic dogs which were found in burial sites. Apparently the people believed that the deceased person needed a dog to guide them to the other side. Although we didn't see the original in either of these museums, the most striking dogs to be seen in all the gift shops were a pair of dancing dogs. My mother had one of these reproductions. Jupiter explained to us that the dogs aren't actually dancing; they are fighting. One of the dogs has lines on his back – he represents the older generation, which may win because of knowledge and experience. The other dog has no lines, and he represents the younger generation, which may win because of strength and quickness. The older dog is whispering into the ear of the younger dog, passing knowledge from one generation to the next. According to Jupiter, although everyone calls them dancing dogs ("perros danzantes") they are properly called The Fight of the Generations.

We returned to the boat this afternoon; found everything in order. As the water taxi was bringing us into the lagoon, a sailboat was trying to enter, and was stuck in the mud. Dinghies from a number of sailboats went out to help him get off the mud bank. Strong winds this afternoon means he had a difficult time anchoring as well.

We're glad to be back on the boat, and look forward to sleeping in our own bed. But we sure had a good time in Colima, and hope to do another road trip soon!

Best wishes to all –

Craig & Barbara Johnston

**Received from Tom and Kathy Edwards aboard
Ahwahnee**

We were thrilled to receive the Blue Water Cruisers Award at the annual picnic and have placed the certificate in our Ahwahnee Log onboard. We are out here because of our association with SIYC. The encouragement from members, local cruises and programs kept us focused on our goal. Thanks to all of you.

Tom and Kathy Edwards

Ahwahnee

Currently in Golfo de Nicoya, Costa Rica



December 3, 2010

Ahwahnee's Continuing Voyage:

El Salvador -- On October 5 we returned to the boat at Bahia del Sol and began preparing for haulout and departure. The boat was hauled at Island Marine during the morning high tide at 0400 on October 9 to facilitate access to the pool at the travel lift. This facility is rustic but serviceable and the local guys who work for the owners (Murray and Colette) did a great job sanding and applying the bottom paint .

We ordered 5 gallons of Corrotech Paint in May at a cost of \$275/gallon locally, delivered to the yard. The haul out and work came to a total of \$400, plus the cost of the paint. Obviously the paint was the expensive part but the cost included the duty fees to bring it into El Salvador and the shipping of hazardous material. With that said we couldn't have purchased the paint in the States and brought it in any cheaper, and it would have had to come via ground transport. Also, the paint we purchased has 10 percent TBT and 50 percent copper based anti-fouling which can't be purchased in the U.S. The boat was launched during the afternoon high tide on October 10, and Ahwahnee once again had her dignity restored after hanging in the slings for about 24 hours with her bottom exposed.

Ahwahnee was left for the summer on a mooring at Island Marine for \$5/day. After the haulout, work continued as we restarted all of the systems shutdown during our absence. On October 15 we left the mooring and motored the mile down the Bahia to the marina at the hotel. Boats that came in as part of the rally last spring are charged 50 cents/foot/day at the marina. (We also paid \$14/week for use of the resort facilities - internet, pool, and 30 percent off of meals and drinks at the bar and restaurant, and discounted room rates at the hotel when on a mooring ball).

On November 15 Ahwahnee departed Bahia del Sol in company with Joyeux (Rob and Sue from Seattle), Sunday (Gil and Lexi from San Diego) and Xta-Sea, a charter boat with Hungarian crew. There is a bar crossing to get in or out of Bahia del Sol and the resort provides a pilot (Rajelio) to make the crossing a bit less daunting.

As we departed bar conditions appeared to be benign at the time and everyone lined up to follow one another out. As with any bar crossing, however, conditions can change rapidly as the tide moves from high slack to the beginning of the ebb. This day was no exception and as we followed the multi-hulls (Sunday and Xta-Sea) out we were suddenly looking at a building wave that began to break off our port side. I steered Ahwahnee forward and perpendicular to the wave and we broke over the top clear of the breaking curl to port. At this point we got "A LOT OF AIR" as we came off of this 12 footer into the trough behind it with a crash at the bottom. This was followed closely by another steep wave that wasn't breaking, but again we got air off of the top. Not bad for a 30-year old girl, but we were to find out about 24 hours later that we had cracked the starboard water tank coming

off of the first wave. Because, I had the valves for both port and starboard tanks open, the cross flow between tanks nearly cost us 2/3 of our water supply into the bilge and over the side.

Our friends on Joyeux were following close behind and got a pretty good ride as well. After we were across the bar and things had settled down some Rajelio came along side on his jet ski to make sure everything was okay, and to let us know that the sneaker waves that got us were totally unexpected since things to that point were "tranquilo". The crew on Xta-Sea called us on the radio to tell us they got some great pictures of us that they would send via e-mail.

The next stop for Joyeux and Ahwahnee would be anchoring in the hook behind Punta Amapala in the Golfo de Fonseca about 12 hours later. Sunday was going on the Puesta del Sol, Nicaragua in search of the perfect surfing wave, and Xta-Sea was on the way north to Huatulco, Mexico, and then to Puerto Villarta to pick up their next charter escorting a swimmer attempting to cross the Pacific to Hawaii.

After a quiet night at Punta Amapala, we got underway mid-morning for our run to Isla Meanguera, El Salvador in the Golfo de Fonseca dodging the many pangas and their nets and Kathy using her limited Spanish as we had to ask a couple which way to pass. We had officially checked out of El Salvador in Bahia del Sol, but there is no check in or out at Isla Meanguera so it was just a stop along the way. Arriving at the Isla we followed directions from Sarana's cruising guide and anchored in the bay just south of La Joya de Golfo Hotel.

A couple of days later we went ashore at the hotel and made reservations for dinner that evening. Before dinner, however, the hotel owner's stepson, Arturo, gave a guided walking tour of the small town just north of the hotel. We complimented Arturo on his excellent English and he told us he was actually from L.A. and had just finished high school there. His parents run the hotel and he is spending several months helping out before, hopefully, going onto the police academy in L.A.

Our next surprise was meeting Richard the owner of the hotel and finding out that he was from Shawnee Mission, west of Kansas City, Missouri while I grew up in Independence east of Kansas City. It is truly a small world. Arturo's mother had left El Salvador and gone to the States during the civil war years prior to 1992. About 5 years ago they bought the hotel and moved their collective families there. This is a must stop for anyone traveling through and the restaurant is great.

On November 20 Joyeux and Ahwahnee weighed anchor, crossed the Golfo to the northeast and navigated the channel into San Lorenzo, Honduras. This is a well marked shipping channel all the way to Puerto Henecan. The channel into San Lorenzo branches to the north about ¼ mile before the piers at the port. We followed the channel around and anchored in front of the restaurants La Playa and Polamar in the upper part of the estuary. As we entered the channel in front of the restaurants we were greeted by Verner the owner of La Playa blowing his conch shell and waving. Before the anchors were set several pangas were along side telling us about everything on the water front. Verner had called Migracion to see if they were open to check us in and was told they were closed that day (Saturday) and would not be open until Monday.

Monday the Jefe at Migracion was not in the office and his assistant could not check us in because the Jefe had the stamp. We were told to come back manana when the Jefe would be there to stamp our passports and check us in. We were able to check in the Puertario after a short cab ride to Henecan so all was not lost.

On Sunday we walked through part of town and had dinner at La Playa. Verner stopped by our table and visited as we ate a good German meal and consumed excellent German beer. Verner is a German ex-patriot who has been in Honduras for the past 33 years managing estuary shrimp processing until buying La Playa several years ago.

After dinner at La Playa we walked next door and met Armando the owner of the Polamar Restaurant and visited with him, his brother and father. Armando's place seems to be headquarters for cruisers. An SIYC cruising burgee now proudly hangs in the Polamar in San Lorenzo, Honduras.

During our week long stay in San Lorenzo, we explored town and did some grocery shopping. However, we mostly hung out along the water front and listened to the music coming from the restaurants located there until the wee hours. Our checkout was punctuated by a slight delay at Migracion because the Jefe was not there the first time with the stamp.

Our trip the Puertario was even more interesting. When we checked in we found the officials to be helpful and efficient. Check out was different to say the least. The Port Captain was on duty and it was obvious that he was in charge and controlling the situation. He first took us up stairs to pay our fee of 35 limperes (about \$14 U.S.). Along the way we encountered a young gal who he indiscreetly groped in the stairwell. If that wasn't enough, upon our return to his office for the remainder of the paperwork and Zarpe we caught him with the same girl in the back room. He made a display of looking for something on the floor as she escaped past us and then proceeded with the paperwork. Yes sports fans, sexual harassment in the work place is alive and well in Honduras.

Our last day in San Lorenzo was spent at the small airfield on the edge of town. This air strip has the distinction of being the first airfield in Honduras and the location of a visit by Charles Lindberg after he became famous by crossing the Atlantic. This was supposed be the scene of a small air show and we had hoped to get a ride to take some pictures of our boats at anchor. The weather was not cooperating so except for a crop duster there were no air planes in the sky that day.

Leaving San Lorenzo on the morning high tide November 28 we made our way back down the shipping channel and sailed across the Golfo for a last night at Isla Meanguera. After dinner at the hotel and a waffle brunch the next day, we got underway early in morning of November 30 and motor sailed out of the Golfo de Fonseca and down the coast to Puesta del Sol, Nicaragua. Tomorrow we are leaving for some inland travel in Nicaragua and will write more about that later.

Now it is pool time. We are the only guests at the resort and have it all to ourselves.

Sail on, Tom and Kathy Edwards S/V Ahwahnee

January 24, 2011 S/V Ahwahnee -- The Voyage Continues

Nicaragua -- When last we wrote we were in Puesta del Sol, Nicaragua and leaving the boat for some inland travel. The marina and resort at Puesta del Sol is a secure place to leave the boat. A couple of days after our arrival, we made arrangements for a van to take the crews of Ahwahnee and Joyeux (our buddy boat from Seattle) into the colonial city of Leon, Nicaragua where we spent a few days at a nice hotel near the center of town. We enjoyed watching the preparations for Christmas, and took a tour of the ruins of Leon Viejo (the site of the old city impacted by ancient volcanic eruptions).

Following three days in Leon ,we hired another tour van to take us to the old city of Granada. Granada is a beautiful colonial city on the edge of Lake Nicaragua. While there we stayed in a great bed and breakfast - Casa Silas, the home of a Canadian ex-pat and his dog Silas. We had free run of the house including the small pool, great breakfast every morning and Rob gave us tips on travel in and around Granada. In Granada we visited a local museum at the old Cathedral , the present Cathedral and in general walked around visiting shops, restaurants, and bars just because that's the kind of thing we do. While enjoying some wine and beer at a sidewalk café near the plaza, we were approached by a tour guide asking if we would like to take a boat tour of Lake Nicaragua. We had priced this out and decided it was beyond our budget. However, this guy had a boat and already had a tour setup with a small family from one of the hotels near the lake. He just needed to fill the boat to make it worth his while so he offered to take us for the equivalent of \$5.00 per person and would provide transportation from the café to the boat at no charge. It was a deal we couldn't refuse and turned out to be a pretty good deal even though the level of the lake remains high from the recent rainy season.

Because many of the islands were still experiencing some flooding, we were not able to go ashore at as many locations as advertised, but the trip was great and the islands were beautiful.

At the end of our stay in Granada, we took the tour van back to Leon where we met up with the van and driver who brought us from Puesta del Sol. He drove us directly back to Puesta including all of the groceries we had bought at the super market in Leon.

A couple of days later we were re-supplied, refueled, filled with fresh water and checked out of Nicaragua (done at the resort) and ready to depart for Costa Rica. The forecast for Papagayo winds along the Nicaraguan coast looked good for the following week and it was time to make our break. We left in late afternoon and started down the coast for a two-night trip. However, by mid-afternoon the next day the crews of Ahwahnee and

Joyeaux decided to go into the small bay at El Astillara, Nicaragua for the night as we had to go too slow in order to enter Santa Elena at first light. Early the next morning we resumed our trek and moved on toward San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua and Bahia Santa Elena, Costa Rica. Passing San Juan del Sur requires that you get in close to the coast to minimize the effects of the winds funneled out of the bay and reduce the fetch and associated seas as much as possible. The Papagayos are winds initiated by high to low pressure gradients between the Atlantic side and Pacific side of Central America. Winds generated by this pressure gradient are funneled through the mountain passes of Central America and spill onto the Pacific Coast as STRONG offshore winds. Coastal Cruisers are wise to avoid the impact of these winds if at all possible. Here and elsewhere this type of wind pattern is also known as gap wind.

Costa Rica -- The winds behaved on this day as we passed San Juan del Sur and we sailed into Bahia Santa Elena, Costa Rica with a light breeze pushing us along. Entering the bahia we were entertained by whales playing near the entrance and one in the middle of the bay. All three of them treated us to a show of their tail flukes within a thirty-minute period as they sounded. The next day our calm windless conditions evolved into calms punctuated by gusts growing from near nothing to well over 30-35 knots and then back to nothing until the next gust funneled through. This is normal activity here even if it is a bit unnerving when you are trying to get a peaceful night's sleep. We stayed here a couple of days and took advantage of some of the hiking trails and a trek to a local waterfall swimming hole before moving on to our next stop at Bahia Huevos.

As we departed from the National Park of Bahia Santa Elena to travel to Bahia Huevos farther along the Costa Rican coast we were faced with rounding Cabo Santa Elena and passing several groups of islands where gap winds could be severe. The general rule regarding gap winds in this area is "if the wind is up when you are leaving Bahia Santa Elena go back to the bahia and wait because they aren't going to get any better around the cape". How true this is!! Rounding Cabo Santa Elena the winds piped up to a steady 30+ knots with the associated seas pushing us along. This wasn't too bad until we had to change course for Bahia Huevos putting the winds and seas on our beam for a couple of hours. Things improved as we approached the coast near Bahia Huevos and the winds subsided to nearly nothing. We were treated to a display of jumping rays and entered Bahia Huevos in calm conditions which remained for most of our short stay here.

The crews of Ahwahnee and Joyeux pooled resourced and celebrated Christmas with dinner and movie aboard Ahwahnee. The winds returned Christmas night but nothing close to our experiences in Santa Elena.

On December 27 we weighed anchor and sailed the 6 - 7 nautical miles to Playas de Coco where we would check into Costa Rica and spend New Years. The check-in here was a day long adventure starting with the Capitan de Puerto, Migracion, El Banco, and Aduana. While we were checking in with the Port Captain, an Agriculture Inspector happened by and suddenly we were looking at an onboard inspection. He normally inspects boats at the new marina in the adjacent Bahia and aircraft arriving at the airport. We indicated we were at anchor and the inspection process would include launching the dingy through the surf, motoring to the boat, inspecting and returning to make a surf landing on the beach. I don't really think he truly understood all that was involved because he didn't have shorts sandals or anything for the beach. He rolled up his dress slacks, removed his loafers and socks for the trip and walked from the Port Captains office to dingy on the beach. Because the dingy was small for three of us, I waited at the office while Rob on Joyeux made the trek to the boats for inspection. Kathy indicates the inspection was cursory at best for the nearly \$52 US it cost. The good news is that the inspector went to Migracion and the Banco with us and then gave us a ride to Aduana near the airport for our check in there. Computer problems at the bank and at Aduana complicated things and greatly extended our time required. By the time we returned to the boat adult beverages were in order to calm the savage beasts.

Christmas week in Latin America is a crazy time. Its party, Party, PARTY and Playas de Coco is PARTY CENTRAL during this time. In fact the main street leading the beach area is blocked off early in the day on New Years Eve and not opened until well into New Years Day. Again on New Years the crews of Ahwahnee and Joyeux gathered aboard Ahwahnee for dinner, a movie and to watch the fire works displays happening all over town. Onboard a boat well off the beach was about the only safe place to be.

One of the highlights of our time in Playas de Coco was the arrival of a Canadian boat with a crew of six including the owners. They had been forced offshore by the Papagayo winds while trying to get into San Juan del Sur and checkout of Nicaragua. Instead they sailed all the way to Coco before they were able to get in. That meant they were entering Costa Rica without officially checking out of Nicaragua. This may not seem to be a big problem but their Costa Rican checkin involved lawyers, affidavits, and many other legal terms. Also they

were trying to do all of this while official offices and banks were being closed for the holidays. In short it took several days to complete the process and we complained after only one day. During their first day with the Port Captain, the crew of Ahwahnee noticed the Canadian boat was dragging anchor and threatening to leave the bay in heavy afternoon wind gusts. The crews of Ahwahnee and Joyeux responded and boarded the boat to assist in the re-anchoring process. The fun had begun.

We tried calling the crew on the radio which ultimately got their attention at the Port Captain's office and they eventually arrived via dingy. In the interim, however, we were trying to start the engine (no key), figure out the windlass operation (bad deck switches), and determine what anchoring configuration they were using (your guess is as good as mine). Finally the owners and part of the crew arrived and proceeded to go through the anchoring process. The rescue crew was relieved.

Several days later during afternoon wind gusts, we had a repeat performance as again our northern neighbor's boat attempted to leave the bay. The crews of Ahwahnee and Joyeux again boarded the escaping craft and went through the drill. This time there was a key in the ignition, we knew how to operate the windlass without deck switches, but we still had to figure out the anchor configuration. In short, we had to dig into the anchor locker and attach additional line to the chain so we could add more scope to make the anchor hold. Our first assist was good for a round of drinks in town. However, because we were not able to contact the crew during the second event they bought a bottle of wine for the both of the rescuers involved.

This sparks a brief discussion of anchors and anchoring that might be of interest to those of you planning to venture away from the confines of the marina or security of a dock anytime in the future. Now I know that anchors and anchoring is like discussing politics, religion, or what is the best fishing pole so I will understand if you disagree or decide to pooh pooh the whole thing. I will, however, continue out of the goodness of my heart for whatever it is worth. The plight of our northern neighbor could have been eliminated if only they had opted for a larger anchor to secure a boat of their size (49 feet). On Ahwahnee we have a 60lb CQR (plow) anchor as our primary, a 44lb Bruce (claw) as our secondary, a 30lb Danforth (fluke) for stern anchoring. Each of these anchors is backed with 200 feet of 5/16" high tensile strength chain, and 200 feet of 3/4" three strand nylon rode. The chain can be shackled together if a chain rode longer than 200 feet is needed. Thus far the only time this has been necessary was on our trek to Alaska after leaving Portland in 2004. With this combination of anchors and rode we have been able to meet all of our anchoring challenges and (knock on teak) have never dragged anchor in prevailing conditions once it was properly set. In my opinion using a larger than called for anchor and setting it by laying out the anchor rode while backing down on it rather than dropping it in a pile and then taking your chances of it holding by the sheer mass of the anchor and pile of chain on the bottom is the key to our success.

After leaving Playas de Coco we continued along the Costa Rican coast and stopped for overnight at a couple of places we wouldn't recommend due to difficulty in entering and general discomfort with the swell conditions. Bahia Ballena is an exception with a beautiful bay, easy surf landing, and small town with some supplies available (and Kathy adds the best jalapeno poppers we've ever had). From there we moved to Isla San Lucas the site of a former maximum security prison. This was another beautiful anchorage with several wrecks on the bottom to explore by dingy or dive on. Currently we are in Puntarenas tied to a mooring buoy at the Costa Rica Yacht Club. We have wi-fi, pool, restaurant, fuel dock, water, and most everything available for boat repair (i.e., boat yard). This used to be a big commercial port but they are now trying to convert to tourism. They are several years away in this transition. Even though the facilities here have a lot to offer, the mooring field, heavy tide run, shallow conditions at the yacht club and the entrance channel make it less than desirable as a fun place to come unless you need to work on your boat.

That's all for now. We will leave Puntarenas on Thursday and proceed toward Panama. Unfortunately, we will part company with Joyeux, our buddy boat, as they hauled their boat for new paint and a few other repairs. They will also take time for some inland travel that our schedule doesn't allow Ahwahnee to participate in at this time. We will see you and Joyeux again over the horizon sometime in the future.

Sail on, S/V AHWAHNEE,
Kathy and Tom

Location of the Anchoring Cruise March 12th and 13th. Call for more information: 503 789-8135

