



SAUVIE ISLAND YACHT CLUB NEWSLETTER

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

www.siy.org

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Commodore's Comments

Hello Everyone, I guess the virus is here for a while. We will be conducting our meetings virtually for the foreseeable future. For cruises I suggest we operate on a case by case basis where we keep it unofficial and if members choose to cruise to a given destination social distancing and face masks would apply. If certain members are at risk they should consider not making the cruises. I know this may not make many members happy but it is in keeping with the Governor's mandate. I have signed us up for the boat show which takes place January 13th-17th. The aisles will be wider and the booths smaller. We will follow up later with a sign up list for volunteers. We will be getting out new ID cards as soon as possible. Hang in there everyone.

Dave Mery



Please send all future newsletter content to Barbara Johnston at:

cellolaw@gmail.com

Member Meetings.

September 4, 2020	September 3, 2020.
October 2, 2020	October 1, 2020
November 6, 2020	November 5, 2020
December 2020 Christmas Party	December 2020
January 8, 2021	January 7, 2021
February 5, 2021	February 4, 2021
March 5, 2021	March 4, 2021
April 2, 2021	April 1, 2021
May 7, 2021 Annual Meeting	May 6, 2021
June 4, 2021 Annual Picnic	June 3, 2021

Board Meetings**Cruise Weekends**

October 23-25, 2020	Halloween
E. Gov't Island: Bartlett	
November 20-22, 2020	Hadley's Landing
December 27-29, 2020	Coon Island, E. Dock
February 12-14, 2021	Valentine Cruise
Coon Island	
March 20-21, 2021	Anchoring Cruise TBA
April 16-18, 2021	Navigation Cruise River Place
May 14-16, 2021	Annual Race/Drift Sand Island

Caught By A Crab Pot Buoy



On September 7th Sue and I were heading south from Neah Bay. The weather forecast was for winds E15-25, G30, and poor visibility from wildfire smoke. We figured by staying in close to shore that we would avoid any significant sea state. But 'the best made plans' failed us. As we rounded the sea rocks just south of La Push, we found staying close to shore put us in the wave troughs. And at steady 25 knot winds we were seeing 4-5' seas just three miles offshore. So we bore off to keep the waves on our stern port quarter. As we continued, the coast was getting further away, the seas were building to as much as 10-12', and only a boat length apart. The forecast had predicted diminishing winds in the late afternoon. When we started to see the winds die to E15-18 near Cape Elizabeth, we cheated our way back towards shore which was 15-20 miles away by this time. Westport/Grays Harbor was now our destination. But we figured it would be after midnight before we arrived.

The smoke reduced the night-time visibility by minimizing the full moon to an eerie red-orange. Being offshore only two miles, we could watch our progress by the passing lights on shore. The wind had died, and we were motoring, when we snagged a crab pot buoy! Only five miles from Westport, we were stopped dead in our tracks. We turned the engine off. Turning on our spreader lights, we checked to see if we could see the crab pot line, to free ourselves. The waves were 4-5', the sea temperature was 55F. We had no choice, but to call the US Coast Guard on VHF 22A, requesting assistance. About 01:00 a 47' Lifeboat, arrived on site. Realizing a tow was not an option as long as we were caught tied to the crab pot, they requested I deploy our anchor (200' 3/8" chain and 66 lb Bruce, in 95' of water, 2:1 scope, no swells, just wind waves 4-5'). Then they came along side so that Sue and I could jump aboard, making the hard decision to leave 'Julia Max' as salvage. We didn't have much choice under the conditions.

Once in Westport, the Coast Guard helped us find a local motel, and at 0400 we were trying to get a fitful sleep. The next two days were one constant prayer! We contacted family and friends and marine specialists for advice. We kept in touch with the Coast Guard numerous times letting them know our progress. They announced a pan-pan hazard to navigation with the 'Julia Max' GPS location. We were fearful of looters seeking out the boat. The goals were to get a diver, a dive boat, and a tow into Westport Marina. Sounding simple, it was anything but! One of the towing companies had a contact who had grown up in Westport. Through his Westport friends and his persuasive and helpful manner, he arranged for a crab boat and a diver (willing to dive the boat in the 4-5' chop).

Once freed from the line and crab pot, we hoped at best to motor into the dock. If unable to motor, we hoped to sail in close to the dock. And if unable to reach the dock, we would minimize the time and distance for a tow. Sharing this plan with the Coast Guard, they offered to give us a tow if we were not able to reach the dock.

At 0600 I met the crab boat and diver, and headed to free "Julia Max". The sea state had calmed down, but the heavy smoke made it difficult to see her only a half mile away. She looked good. And we quickly noticed the crab

pot line had frayed and broke. The diver spent only 8 minutes in the water to cut the plasticized line and buoy free from our prop and shaft. I started the engine, but when engaging the transmission, nothing happened in forward or reverse. Checking for water leakage in shaft alley, I was relieved that there was none. But I also realized that the shaft had moved aft by 3". So I radioed the Coast Guard, shared my situation, and asked for a tow. The Coast Guard reminded me about my thought to sail into Westport. Oh yeah. So in variable winds of E7-15 kts, I deployed my main, mizzen, and genoa. At times I was doing 4 knots SOG, but mostly 2.5-1.5 knots SOG. The CG Lifeboat came out, and ghosted along behind me at 200 yards, grading me I'm sure on the efficiency (or inefficiency) of my sailing and tacking. Well, as luck would have it, the wind died while I was entering between the jetties. So the Lifeboat came along side and asked if I would like a tow. Yes!!!! The 'Coasties' were young, disciplined, capable and spirited in their help!

What we learned at the dock was that the shaft had pulled out of the transmission coupling, placing the propeller back against the rudder. Although the shaft was not at risk of falling out, it was not going to propel us to Portland unless the shaft could be moved back into the transmission coupler and tightened down.

We devised a way of leading a long line from a mid-ship dock cleat, around the butt of the propeller, to the opposite mid-ship chock, back to a turn block, and up to our largest jib sheet winch. As we winched the line in, the diver tapped the shaft to ease the friction, and hopefully allow the shaft to ease back in. The tension on the line was extreme, but the shaft eased back in to the transmission coupler by two inches, enough so that we could tighten the coupler and set screw down on the shaft. Putting the transmission in gear while tied up at the dock, we successfully ran it at 1600 rpm for 5 minutes without any water leaks! We determined that we would not put the transmission in reverse.

In total we spent a week arranging help to bring 'Julia Max' to the dock, and prepare her for the trip forward. After thanking everyone, paying them for their services, returning our rental car, and saying our goodbyes, we headed for a smoky, three-day return of 150 miles across the Columbia River Bar, and up to Portland, and Schooner Creek Boat Works for repairs.

--George and Sue Stonecliffe

sv Julia Max, 45' Peterson Ketch





Sarah Laidlaw and Rob Martin are sailing around the world on the 38-foot cruiser Mapache, seen here before departure at the Port of Ilwaco, Washington.

Randi Whipple

Safest place may be at sea say Portlanders Sarah Laidlaw and Racer Rob Martin who have cast off on global circumnavigation.

They were featured on NPR

<https://www.nwnewsnetwork.org/.../safest-place-may-be-sea...?>

Follow their adventures at:

<https://leakylittleboatcom.com/>

There is probably no better place to social distance than on a small boat in the ocean. But you do have to go into port occasionally, provided it's not closed. The risks and unknowns created by the

ongoing pandemic have put off some people's plans to sail around the world right now. But not for one Portland couple.

Sarah Laidlaw and Rob Martin cast off from Ilwaco, Washington, and crossed the Columbia River bar into the Pacific Ocean in early September on [a round-the-world sailing trip](#). They estimate the circumnavigation will take them three to five years. Martin, 44, was laid off early in the pandemic from a business internet sales job. Laidlaw, 39, left her job as a public defender in Portland.

"Both of us had had this idea in the back of our heads for I don't know how long -- I guess my parents told me since I was eight years old -- but never thinking it would really come to fruition," Laidlaw said in an interview from the Humboldt Yacht Club during a stopover in Eureka, California.

"Our goal was to go to places where not a lot of other people go and to see the things that not a lot of other people see," added Martin.

Laidlaw and Martin began seriously planning the circumnavigation before the coronavirus capsized everyday life. The pandemic did not stop them from setting out.

"We did have some hesitation. You know, what do we do? Do we keep going or do we put this on hold?" Laidlaw acknowledged. "There is a lot of advice out there from people who have done similar trips and they always say, 'Don't wait. Just go. If you wait there is going to be something else that stops you from going.'"

"Maybe it's safer out here than it is on land with the fires and the ash and everything happening with COVID," Martin reasoned.

Martin and Laidlaw are voyaging aboard a 38-foot Hans Christian cutter named *Mapache*, which is Spanish for raccoon. These mariners modernized the electronics on their single-masted cruiser and added an autopilot, a solar panel system and a saltwater desalinator before departure.

As September turned to October, the pair was sailing down the northern California coast towards Mexico. Laidlaw expects they will have to quarantine on their boat at anchor for two weeks once they arrive in Mexican waters.

After that the plan is to hopscotch to Ecuador, then strike out across the wide Pacific. Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Africa, Brazil and the Panama Canal are some likely stops on the itinerary later.

There is [a constantly changing list of countries](#) where Americans are currently unwelcome or subject to long quarantines because of the uncontrolled COVID-19 spread here at home. Laidlaw said she and her husband are confident they will find workarounds.

"The sailing community is a tight knit one the more that we get to know it," Laidlaw said. "There is the ability to plan ahead and not just cross the ocean with our fingers crossed and hope that the first island lets us in."

"Traveling in a boat is inherently a lot more quarantined than somebody who could be in the United States and six hours later be walking off of a plane into another country," Martin said.

If the pandemic gets worse, not better, Martin says the good ship *Mapache* is stocked and equipped for the couple to be self-sufficient at sea for more than three months.



The round the world sailors took shelter from storm winds in Yaquina Bay near Newport, Oregon, where thick wildfire smoke subsequently made navigation difficult in mid-September.

Credit Sarah Laidlaw

The voyage got tossed its first curveball just days after casting off from Ilwaco when the crew sailed right into the massive cloud of smoke from Oregon and California's mid-September

wildfires. Not only did this make navigation difficult, Laidlaw said [the smoke appeared to disorient seabirds](#).

A storm petrel actually crashed into the back of Laidlaw's head off of the southern Oregon coast. Laidlaw said she and her husband eventually cared for and released a total of four petrels who took refuge on the sailboat -- decidedly uncharacteristic behavior for the species.

Martin served four years in the Navy right out of high school, but neither he nor Laidlaw consider themselves experienced ocean sailors. Martin said they purposely chose the *Mapache* as the right vessel for this epic voyage because of its stability and sturdiness.

"It's the exact opposite of a racing boat," Martin said, after describing the floating home as basically, "an on-the-water tank that can withstand heavy storms."

Martin guessed that the pandemic has deterred some sailors from launching circumnavigation attempts this year. He said this nautical fraternity skews toward retirees who run higher risk of serious illness if infected by the novel coronavirus since they tend to be older. However, the Portland couple are by no means the only recreational cruisers venturing the oceans this season.

A British Columbia man embarked on a solo circumnavigation from Victoria just one day after Martin and Laidlaw set out from the Columbia River in early September. Unfortunately, 70-year-old Glenn Wakefield's voyage was cut short when he suffered a massive stroke on September 16 while sailing approximately 500 miles west of San Francisco.

Wakefield's wife MaryLou said her husband was able to transmit a message to his family that he needed help before losing consciousness. A medevac helicopter brought the solo sailor to a Bay Area hospital in critical condition. MaryLou Wakefield set up [a crowdfunding webpage](#) to raise money to cover the extraordinary medical bills.

The round the world circuit is about to get busier with the imminent starting gun for the [Vendée Globe yacht race](#). The 2020 edition of the once every four years race is on schedule to begin on November 8. Competitors in the "Holy Grail for solo sailors" race nonstop without assistance around the globe via the three capes (Good Hope, Leeuwin and Horn), starting and ending in France. Around 33 skippers are entered in this year's Vendée Globe.

Laidlaw and Martin intend to voyage at a decidedly slower pace than the ocean racers. The couple hopes to find local nonprofits in various ports where they can linger to volunteer.

"We want to do more than just visit the tourist spots and drink at the tourist bars," Laidlaw said.

The pair also plans to pick up odd jobs here and there to earn money to keep their frugal voyage going.