

# Waypoints

Issue 1 | Spring/Summer 2007



## Spanglish

*In the Sea*



*Jubilation at anchor in Los Gatos.*

**W**henever The Admiral (my wife Kathy) and I attend a Nordic Tug rendezvous, other Tuggers love to fire questions at us about our cruising grounds, the Sea of Cortez in Mexico. Better known as "The Sea," it's an ideal place to cruise, and our tug seems right at home there. The logistics and concerns that might scare people away are really no big deal.

*See full story on page 2*

### Paris in Springtime

### Tech Tips

*Insidious Electrical Failure*

*Exhaust Maintenance*

### Nordic Notes

# Spanglish in “The Sea”

*Jubilation's* trip to her new home in The Sea started in Juneau, Alaska, and ended in San Carlos, Sonora, Mexico.

The relocation was relatively simple. All equipment was removed from the top of the pilothouse and salon roof. Dudley Yacht Transport handled trucking to Tucson, Ariz., where *Jubilation* was transferred to the Marina Seca Yacht Transport trailer for the trip into San Carlos. The whole process took about seven days. Both companies did an excellent job and there was no damage.

Ten-year cruising permits for Mexico are easily obtained. In fact, if Marina Seca trucks your boat, they do all the paperwork. One of the reasons we chose to berth in San Carlos is the ease of getting to the boat. From our home in Colorado, it is an easy

two-day drive on four-lane roads all the way. The northern portion of the Sonora state is now free, which means that it is not necessary to stop and get a car permit at the border if you are traveling no further south than the Guaymas/San Carlos area. You are required to stop to get a tourist visa, but that process usually just takes a few minutes. You must also obtain Mexican auto insurance. That can be purchased at the border or prior to leaving home over the Internet.

These days the only requirement is a free one-page departure permit from your home marina stating your general cruising plans and how many people are on board.

## BEING THERE

Food provisioning is almost a non-issue. Hermosillo, Sonora, just 80 miles up the four-lane highway from San Carlos, has Costco, Sam's Club, Super Wal-Mart and Home Depot. Guaymas, only 15 miles down the road from San Carlos, has several large supermarkets. La Paz and other ports on the Baja side have very good

grocery shopping as well. One of the best ways to provision while cruising is to visit the local open-air markets. It is not only fun, but it's also a very informative cultural experience and incredibly cheap.

Boat parts are getting easier to come by each season. There are now good boat supply stores in San Carlos on the mainland side and La Paz on the Baja. Most unavailable parts can be delivered within a couple of weeks.

To me, Mexico is much safer than walking down the street in any major U.S. city. We find the Mexican people to be very kind, helpful and gracious. We find the doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals as qualified as those at home.

## OUR MEXICO

We are currently in our seventh season in The Sea and have never regretted our decision to cruise this area. Our routine is to ready the boat in October for the cruising season and do some great dorado, marlin, sailfish and tuna fishing. After the holidays, January finds

us back in San Carlos for about three months, where we spend most of our cruising time on the Baja coast. There are hundreds of wonderful anchorages in 10-15 feet of water over a sand bottom. Once the anchor is down, the Admiral's kayak is dropped over the side and she explores the shoreline, hikes in the desert and visits any fish or vegetable vendors on the beach.

Thanks to The Sea's cruisers and the local populace, we always feel safe and welcome. In the fall of 1999 while south of La Paz, our



*Left: The Malecon Sculpture*

*Background: Sunrise at San Juanico*

*Cover: Sunrise at Marina Real, San Carlos*

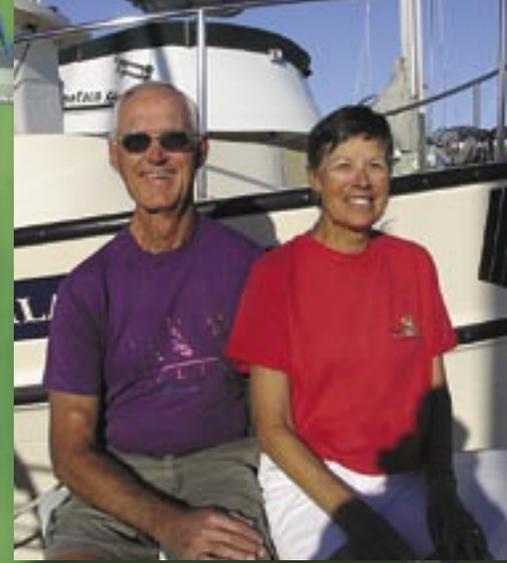


friend caught his hand in a windlass and three of his fingers were crushed and almost severed. We were in a remote anchorage about 35 miles from La Paz, and it was late in the evening. After we stabilized him, another cruiser went ashore and found some Mexican fishermen on the beach. One had an old pickup and agreed to drive our friend to La Paz for medical attention. The fisherman drove the skipper and his wife to the hospital and stayed with them most of the night until he was sure our friend was being

taken care of. An orthopedic surgeon and a plastic surgeon rebuilt the crushed bones by the next afternoon. Eight years later, you can hardly tell that his hand was ever injured. The Mexican fisherman accepted only a cerveza, some cigarettes and gasoline.

Is it necessary to be fluent in Spanish? Not at all. Most of us get by with a language known in Mexico as Spanglish. It works well for both English and Spanish-speakers. Come try our cruising grounds!

- John Walters *Jubilation* NT 37-129 

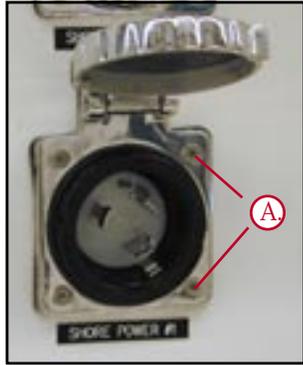


*John and Kathy Walters.*

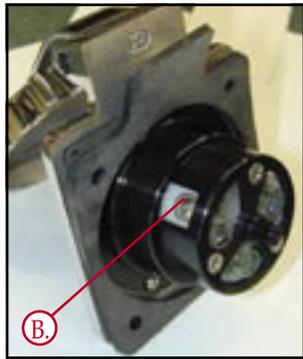


*The author with one hand on the whale and one on the camera.*

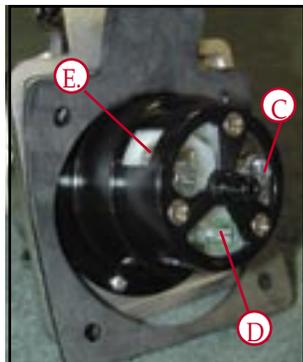
## Tech Tips *Avoiding Insidious Electrical Failure (IEF) Solution #48*



Shore Power Inlet cover open  
A. Mounting fasteners



Typical 110 volt 30 amp shore power conn. B. Clamping Screw



C. Hot Leg  
D. Ground  
E. Neutral Connection

We asked our friend at the local boatyard about the most insidious electrical problem that he sees on boats. He came back with, “You’ll never guess – the shorepower inlet!” Why? It looks shiny, businesslike and made of the finest materials. True, but something inside happens, no matter how careful we are.

When shorepower is plugged into AC power, current surges through the bayonets inside the fixture. A slight amount of heat is generated from the flow of the current when the breaker is turned on and the contacts are energized. Ultimately, the heat may burn a small pit in the metal bayonets, decreasing the area of contact slightly. The next arc has less area to dissipate the heat, and the pit may enlarge from the heat, and/or a new pit develops. It’s a growing problem. Over time, the physical shape and volume of the metal bayonets may warp, shrink or change slightly.

We’re talking physical changes so small that you’d be hard pressed to measure it, but here’s where it shows up.

Over time, the contact between the retaining screws inside the inlet fixture loosens slightly and may result in an infinitesimal gap between the wire and the bayonet terminal, causing sporadic and momentary electrical failure. This produces voltage surges or spikes to your battery charger, heaters and any electric or

electronic equipment that may be in use. Most equipment will resist damage, but not all.

Electrical equipment failures are expensive to fault-trace and repair. In the worst case scenario, the electrical arcing may get hot enough to actually burn the wire ends and insulation. If there are combustibles nearby and no one detects the heat, it could be even more serious!

The surge or spike will be intermittent at first, possibly damaging your electrical equipment, and then returning to normal – as if nothing has happened. Insidious, Treacherous, Secretive, Mean.

*See: How to Prevent Such Treachery*

You may only have to do this once and may find that the clamping screws are perfectly tight on subsequent examinations. Usually one subsequent

tightening is all that is necessary for the life of the fixture. If you can’t tighten the clamping screws at all, you can rest easy knowing your electrical equipment is getting uninterrupted power.

Congratulations on saving yourself from Insidious Electrical Failure!

Ed. Note: While not strictly related, it’s a good time to mention that through-hull valves should be shut when not in use for extended periods and “exercised” regularly.

If you have a learning experience you’d like to share, send it to [waypoints@nordictug.com](mailto:waypoints@nordictug.com). You may also like to share it with the amazing SENTOA email community. 

- Jerry Husted  
Founder

### HOW TO PREVENT SUCH TREACHERY

1. Turn off AC power at the breaker panel by turning the master breaker and dockside circuit breaker off.
2. Unplug the shore power from the boat.
3. Unscrew the four mounting screws on the outside of the fixture. When using through bolts, hold the nut from turning.
4. Pull the fixture away from the side of the boat, so you can get at the inside part.
5. Holding the fixture in your hand, turn it slightly sideways so you can see the clamping screws that hold the wires tightly in place. (Only one is visible in the picture.)
6. Tighten them up as tightly as possible. This will squeeze the wire between the clamping plates for a renewed, excellent contact.
7. Reinstall the shorepower inlet fixture to the side of the boat – and you’re done! Congratulations on saving yourself from insidious future electrical failures!
8. Inspect the shorepower cord end for discoloration on the fitting or wires indicating overheating. (This can happen when the cord is plugged in improperly or pulled sideways).

*This article (with some important additions) is reprinted from Waypoints issue 6. Despite Captain Husted’s warnings and simple procedure, IEF has still not been completely eradicated.*

## Tech Tips *Exhaust Inspection and Maintenance*

One of the most important elements of engine maintenance is often the most neglected: the exhaust system. This is a good time of the year to check the engine, genset and furnace exhausts and limit the chances of flooding, burns, potential fires and, worst of all, carbon monoxide poisoning.

There are two basic types of exhaust systems, the simple dry exhaust on most diesel furnaces, and the other more complex wet exhaust system used on most main engines and generators. Well-installed and maintained systems of both types will direct all these gases overboard. Inspect exhaust systems for any signs of gas leaks by looking for loose clamps on the hoses or pipes, loose bolts on the flanges between the turbo and riser, burn marks on hoses or carbon deposits on any pipes or joints.

Although the thought of exhaust gasses in living spaces is alarming and potentially dangerous, the most common problems are water leaks on the wet exhaust systems. They usually

occur where the rubber exhaust hoses connect to the fiberglass pipes. Most connections are double clamped for safety and sometimes get over-tightened, which can crack the wall of the fiberglass pipe. Sooner or later, the water migrates around the sealant on the joint and leaks appear. The only fix for this is to remove the damaged section and repair or replace. **WARNING:** Stories have been told of boats sinking in the harbors while their exhaust systems were being repaired. It may be wise to haul out the boat before removing exhaust components.

The next most common problem is the loss of water flow to cool the exhaust gases. This is indicated by hot spots developing on the rubber hoses. If an engine is allowed to run with the sea water valve off or if the sea water pump is weak or the plumbing or heat exchanger is partially plugged, you will soon notice black spots, weak spots or burned holes in the rubber hose just beyond the wet elbow on the engine. It is wise to check for water circulation from the exhaust or at the sea strainer. Seawater pump impellers should be inspected at least once a year and more often if you suspect damage has occurred. Keep a spare impeller on board.

The wet elbow is the injection point of the engine seawater into the hot exhaust. The life expectancy of the wet elbow is about 12 years, according to Scott Conahan at National Marine Exhaust in Marysville, Wash. He said, "Some develop leaks at seven years and some last for 15, but they all eventually

*The TYP furnace exhaust requires careful examination.*



wear out regardless of what they are made of." Salt water, electrolysis and stagnation are to blame. And if they're not enough, sulfuric acid from the diesel exhaust is. Salt water under the insulation can also damage the wet elbow.

Flexible sections in the exhaust system on long runs on main engines between the turbo and wet elbow often wear out due to vibration. They are installed for easier alignment and to absorb vibration, contraction and expansion. If they are flanged, they are easily removed and replaced via bolts or clamps. If they are welded, it's a little tougher. Most of the dry parts of the exhaust can be removed and sent to the exhaust shop.

The furnace exhaust is made of flexible steel pipe so it is easily shaped with a high spot created before exiting the boat to prevent water ingress. It may also have a condensation drain at the low point. The pipe is normally about 6' long overall and wrapped with a heavy "sock" of fiberglass. There's a clamp at each end and sometimes a muffler is added somewhere along the line. Examine all the components

along the length of the pipe and check for burn marks, tears or any signs of problems. Also watch for contact of items that shouldn't be near the hot pipe. There are cases of hoses that have sagged to the point of touching the pipe and melting. Keep items like docking lines and fenders clear from the hot exhaust exit.

Our 2007 model year boats now have high-temperature exhaust alarms to warn the crew that the water injection has slowed or stopped. In 2008, we will be installing carbon monoxide detectors and smoke alarms in every stateroom and in the main living space. CO detectors also protect you from your neighbor's gasoline engine exhaust. If you're interested in CO detection on your vessel, the 9-volt battery models can be purchased and installed for less than \$150.00 each. The high-temp alarms can be retrofitted with a sensor band secured just past the wet elbow and wired to an alarm at the helm. As an example, aqualarm.net advertises one (# 20245) for \$69.00.

Just a few "exhaustive" tips to help you have a safe boating season!



- Joe Franett, Vice-President, Operations



*NME elbow has a limited lifespan.*

## Paris in the Springtime!

Our beloved *Summer Isle*, NT 32-177, is headed for Europe! She loaded on the Dockwise transporter in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, on March 6, and we flew to Ft. Lauderdale to meet her in late March. One of the many logistical issues is knowing precisely when the boat will arrive because of docking variables, transiting the Panama Canal, etc. This summer we plan to cruise the Intracoastal Waterway, and possibly go to Florida's west coast via the Okeechobee Waterway, for eight or 10 weeks before loading on another Dockwise transporter for the trans-atlantic crossing. We will meet the boat in Toulon in the south of France and cruise the Riviera coast for a short time before heading for the mouth of the Rhone river and the Canal du Sete a Rhone, which becomes the Canal du Midi further west. In late summer, the plan is to return to the Rhone, cruise north to the Saone River and leave the boat in a marina near Dijon for the winter. Then, in the spring, on to Paris and beyond!

Alex and Joyce Ferguson  
*Summer Isle* NT 32-177



*A Dockwise transport ship under way.*



*Keleah (left) and Kianna Bliven were two of the brightest spots at last year's Sidney, BC rendezvous. They were caught enjoying the sun on their family's 26' Nordic Tug.*

## Too cute to pass by?

Bob and I knew we would love our Nordic Tug travels, though at one point, we began to wonder if we had a scarlett letter on our foreheads.

First, a USCG vessel from Indian Island, gun mounted on the back, escorted us into Hudson Point several times. A few weeks later, the red helicopter circled our boat as we were stopped, waiting for a sub to go by. This turned out to be just the start.

What came next was a stem-to-stern search at Sidney, British Columbia, Canada by the Canadian Coasties. One of their questions made no sense when, after determining we had no guns on board, they asked, "If you had guns on the boat, where would you put them?" I wish I had been quick-thinking enough to reply, "Where do you suggest?"

Later, the USCG completely surprised us by pulling up to our boat in Spieden Channel and asked to come aboard.

Apparently to law enforcement, the Nordic Tugs' endearing, stalwart and dare we say cute appearance is just a little too interesting to pass up.

It all makes good tales to tell our grandchildren!

Sienna Sowatsky, *Saginaw*, NT 32-223



*A Coast Guard boarding party.*

## Across the Bar

After sailing on San Francisco Bay for more than 30 years, Bob Lee discovered the perfect tug in Scappoose, Ore., the five-year-old red Nordic Tug 32 *Kodiak*. After a proper de-naming ceremony, the boat was renamed *Apollo*. Bob, Sam-I-Am, our Australian Cattle dog (Red Heeler) and I wanted to cruise the Northwest before bringing *Apollo* back to the Bay. Only the Columbia River Bar stood in our way.

I worried for six months about crossing the bar, so it only figures that when we finally did it, bar conditions were about as bad as imagined – yet we did it. The weather that prevented us from leaving Ilwaco, Wash., on July 5 was predicted to return for the rest of the week, so we felt that the next day was a window. Cape Disappointment, at the mouth of the Columbia River, is called “the Graveyard of the Pacific” for good reason. Currents, shoals and tides often combine to create breaking waves across the shipping channel.



Photo by Columbia River Bar Pilots.

An outbound freighter experiences what the Bar can be like.

Conditions can be particularly bad during an ebbing tide; max ebb on Wednesday was 5:15 a.m. If we waited for slack water, we would not make Neah Bay before dark – also a concern.

While we stayed docked in Ilwaco (down a little channel just behind Cape Disappointment) on July 5, listening to the wind whistling and watching rain pour down, we talked to a local charter boat captain. “We go out at max ebb,” he said. “And here’s how we do it.”

When we left the dock on July 6, the Coast Guard reported 8-foot breaking seas in the shipping channel. Boats 26-feet and under were not allowed to cross. We followed a charter boat down the channel and, as our charter captain had advised, headed south across the eastern end of the shipping lanes to Mark #12, then outside the channel into a shallow area called “the flats.” (This same area was marked with big red lines and labeled “dangerous” in our chart book.) A Coast Guard

boat, with blue lights flashing, was out there to enforce the 26-foot edict. We bounced off a couple of waves until we went far enough outside the channel to see relatively calmer water, then headed for a mark south of the shipping channel. We crossed the Columbia River Bar

## Seafood Corn Chowder

6-8 oz thick sliced bacon  
1 lg red onion, finely diced  
1/2 cup celery, finely diced  
15 oz (3 cups) frozen petite corn  
1 lb red potatoes, peeled & diced  
1/2-1 cup heavy whipping cream

1/2 to 1 lb bay scallops or halibut cheeks  
3 cups whole milk  
1/4 tsp garlic salt  
1/4 tsp white pepper  
1/4 tsp dill  
chives for garnish



*Cook the bacon until crisp. Set aside 2-3 tbsp bacon fat. Reheat the remaining fat in pressure cooker and add celery and onions. Cook until softened, about 10-12 minutes. Meanwhile or prior, puree one cup of corn with 1 cup of milk. Add corn puree to the onion and celery and add remaining milk and potatoes. Cook 4 minutes. Slowly release pressure, return the uncovered cooker to the stove on med-high heat (should be boiling), stirring constantly. Add the bacon, remaining 2 cups of corn and cream, reduce heat, stir for 5 minutes. Add chives and spices. In a large skillet, reheat the reserved bacon fat. Add scallops or halibut cheeks with salt and pepper and heat VERY BRIEFLY, about 1-1/2 minutes per side maximum. Remove the soup from heat, add scallops/halibut and serve with chives. Serves 4 as an entrée.*

a little after 6 a.m., cleared the jetty and kept going all the way out to Buoy #2, the farthest out and most southern of the shipping channel marks, before turning north and heading to Mark #1, even further out. Surely, we hoped, the rough water would smooth out. It did, but many hours later. One observation is that the ripping tide seems to affect the amplification of ocean waves much further out than expected. We had a relatively uneventful passage to Neah Bay where, for some unexplainable reason, Sam was very hungry. She wolfed down her dinner and fell asleep. It took her two days to perk up.

### Lessons Learned

We learned to get local knowledge and to talk to fishermen. We learned that *Apollo* is a sturdy, reliable little tug. We

also learned there are times to break the rules, and not only by going outside the channel. When we bounced off the first waves crossing the shipping channel, the VCR (which came with the boat) fell out of its cabinet, and the table fell over. It was a “break the rules” day for Sam, who normally sleeps under the table and is not allowed on the settee. We left the table on its side, forming a “wall” against the settee. The VCR stayed screen-side down on the settee cushion. Sam took refuge for the rest of the trip curled up on the settee in the corner next to the VCR, convinced, I think, that her people were nuts. 🐾

Pat Borison  
*Apollo* NT 32-129

## Nordic Notes -Growth Spurt

Nordic Tugs has never strived to make the *most* boats, just the *best* boats we can. As it turns out, there's quite a demand! Because Nordic Tugs now operates under Title V of the Clean Air Act, we are now able to expand our production facilities to meet that demand. In turn, we must first increase our production capability! The first step is a 50' x 150' addition to the exist-

ing main lamination shop, which will streamline parts movement. The second and bigger step, tentatively due for completion this fall, is a new 175' x 175' building which will dramatically increase production capacity for the Nordic Tug 42 and 52. The new building will be tall enough to construct a 52 with flybridge and will feature four overhead cranes. 

## 2007 Rendezvous & Boat Shows

### MAY

Northwest Rendezvous      May 31-June 3      Roche Hbr., S.J. Isl., WA

### JUNE

Trawler Fest      June 7-9      Poulsbo, WA  
Bay Harbor In-Water Show      June 15-16      Bay Harbor, MI  
Newport Spring Boat Show      June 15-17      Newport, RI  
Midwest Rendezvous      June 29-July 1      Traverse City, MI

### JULY

Northeast Rendezvous      July 25-28      Essex, CT

### AUGUST

Michigan City In-Water Show      Aug. 23-26      Michigan City, IN

### SEPTEMBER

Lido Yacht Show      Sept. 6-9      Newport Beach, CA  
Sandusky Show      Sept. 12-16      Cedar Point, OH  
Toronto In-Water Show      Sept. 13-16      Toronto, Ont.  
Newport Intl. Show      Sept. 13-16      Newport, RI  
TrawlerPort      Sept. 13-16      Newport, R.I.  
Norwalk Intl. Show      Sept. 20-23      Norwalk, CT  
Boston Intl. In-Water      Sept. 27-30      Boston, MA  
So. California Rendezvous      Sept. 29-30      Alamitos Bay, CA

## Attention Shutterbugs!

Announcing the first annual Waypoints photo contest. Send us your spring and summer cruising photos - the best photo in each category will be awarded a \$25 gift certificate to the Nordic Chandlery.

### Photo categories:

Scenic • Wildlife  
Pets on Board • Family & Friends  
"Hunkiest" Tugger

**Contest rules:** Photos should be taken between March 1 and September 15, 2007. Entries must be received by September 30, 2007, to be eligible. Photos must not have been previously published in any issue of

Waypoints or posted on the Nordic Tugs website. Print photos and digital photos accepted. Digital photos must be submitted in high resolution - minimum 4x6" at 300 ppi.

**To enter:** Send your printed photos to: Waypoints, 11367 Higgins Airport Way, Burlington, WA 98233. Photos will not be returned, so please be sure to send copies!

Electronic submissions: email to [tammia@nordictugs.com](mailto:tammia@nordictugs.com)

Please be sure to include your contact information. Winning entries will be published in the Fall/Winter 2007 issue of Waypoints.

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