

**Follow along with us as we cruise onboard our  
56' Ocean Yacht.**

# *Somewhere on the Water*


February 21, 2022 – Leaving Portsmouth, VA  
Day 76 of our trip.

Alarm went off at 6:30 a.m.  
There is frost on Valkyrie this morning. 34  
degrees as we leave the Ocean Yacht  
Marina at 7:00 a.m.

As we say goodbye to the Ocean Yacht  
Marina, our home for 27 days during this trip,  
we pull out into the Elizabeth River towards  
the James River and for a short while the  
Chesapeake Bay. Today we are going to the  
Atlantic Ocean!

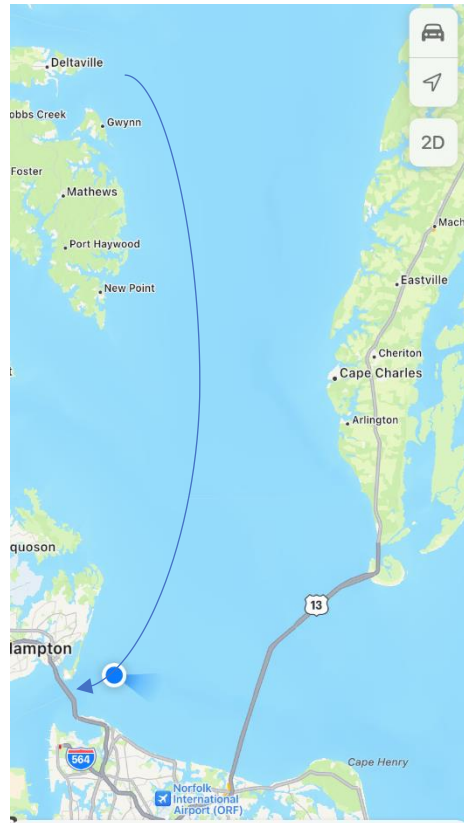


Mark would like to save days and money on our return trip north so we are going to venture out into the big deep blue. Our destination is Chincoteague Island, VA.

Leaving today we will go into the Atlantic this way: 



Headed into Portsmouth we came from Deltaville into the James River this way: 



It was a cloudy day when we entered the James & Elizabeth Rivers cruising south. I took videos of the Navy Ships and Shipping Port. Here are the links:

<https://youtu.be/gb8ybZ-7hoQ>

[https://youtu.be/d\\_eXnu-NzWA](https://youtu.be/d_eXnu-NzWA)

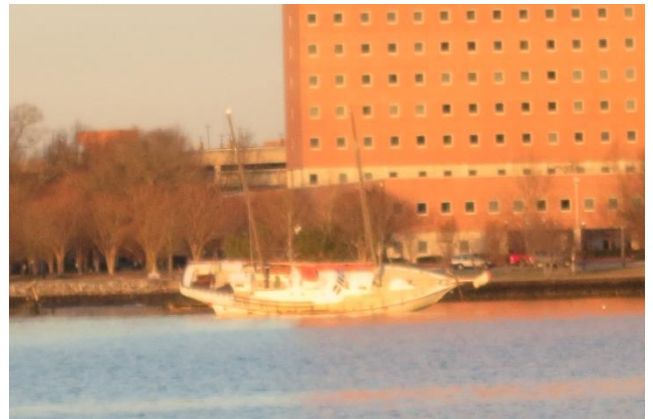
<https://youtu.be/oGdv2giFrAw>

This was the first time traveling to this area for me. I was so overwhelmed and amazed at what I was seeing. Equally so leaving this morning as the sun is rising on our starboard side and the moon is still high overhead on our port side.



We pulled out into the river and this ship was coming up through traveling north.

This sailboat that I mentioned back in January is still in the same place. It is a shame. Hopefully, it is not an abandoned vessel for someone else to deal with.



Navy Ship 189 looks to be taking on fuel and is running its engines as evidenced by the black smoke coming from its stack.

We are riding some wake from the *TBC Prestige* that just overtook us a few minutes ago. This is the same vessel that was in the Elizabeth River that is in the previous picture. The ship contacted Mark via the VHF radio and



said *"We are slowly gaining and will probably be looking to overtake you around the Navy Base on our way out. Requesting to overtake on your portside if you can stay toward the greens, would that be ok?"*

Mark replied, *"Understood, you will pass us on our port side. We will stay toward the green markers. Enjoy your day and safe travels."*

A similar ship was also behind us and took us over shortly after but with no communication. We were both well out of the way from each other.

The second ship did not leave as big of a wake for us to roll in which made me a bit happier. <https://youtu.be/7dKTYj1wpl4>

This is the *Belmoira*.



Mark thinks both are Bulk Carriers. There is a huge **NO Smoking** plastered on this *Belmorja* so it is probably carrying something flammable.

Once we leave Newport News Channel we enter and pass through the Chesapeake Channel. We pass the Thimble Shoals Lighthouse here as we cruise toward the Atlantic.



This lighthouse is the third lighthouse here on this spot and has been privately owned since 2004. It is a sparkplug lighthouse. A sparkplug lighthouse is a type of lighthouse that sits on a concrete or metal caisson. A caisson lighthouse which is also referred to as a sparkplug lighthouse usually has living quarters and is typically made of cast iron although not exclusively. A sparkplug lighthouse can also be known as a bug light.

We are getting moved about in the wash/wake of another ship that just passed by. A little excitement to get the senses jump-started.

There are a lot of ships here in this area. I can see as many as 12 entering and exiting the harbor.





<https://youtu.be/8zFk5TkQbtk>  
<https://youtu.be/CwyxFbS1jAY>

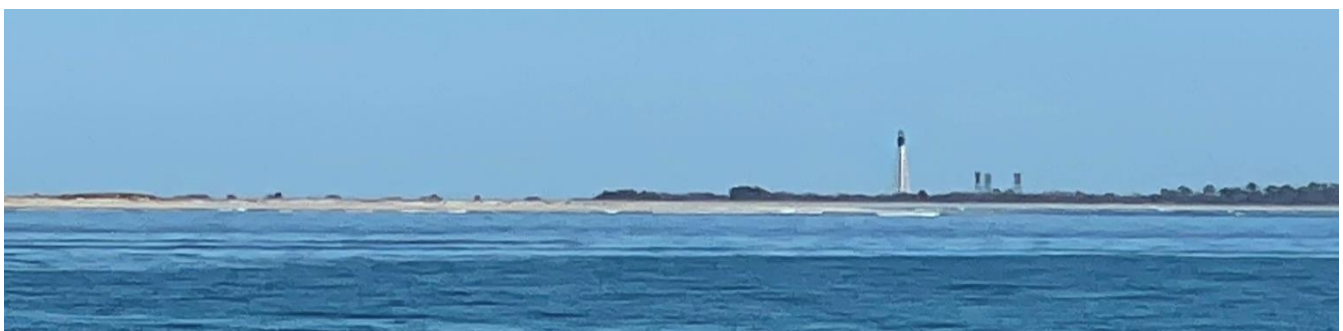
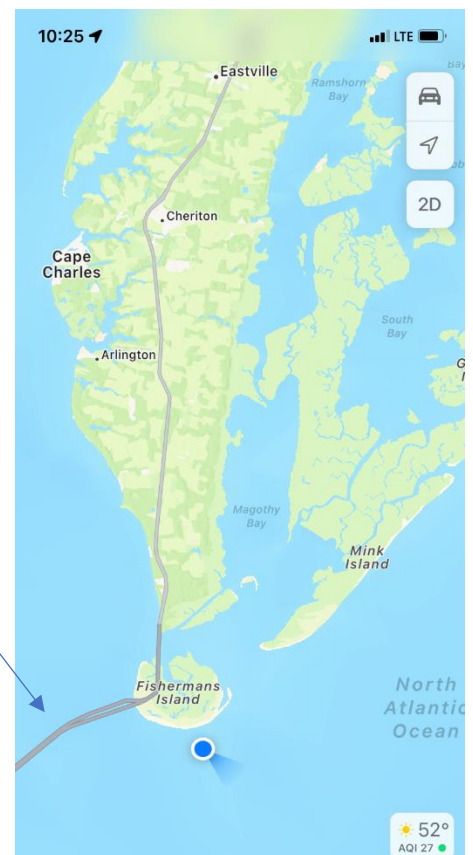
These two video links are from when we rented a car and traveled north to Vermont for Christmas. We drove the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel.

Now, today we are crossing over the tunnel!!  
Woohoo! So exciting!

<https://youtu.be/WfSnJyKg9O4>

By 10:25 a.m. we are in the Atlantic and we are passing by Fishermans Island and I can see the Cape Charles Lighthouse.

The lighthouse is on Smith Island. It was officially removed from service in 2019 and is the tallest lighthouse in Virginia and the second tallest in the US. It stands 191ft.



I am on the flybridge – happy to be up here. It is warm and the ocean is calm. I was a bit nervous about coming out into the ocean today. We have been in the ICW almost this entire trip. This is a big change for us. We will be on the ocean all day until about 5 p.m. The many weather apps that Mark uses predicted a good day to be cruising and so here we are!

We had some trouble with the radar this morning but with a nudge and a reset, we were back in business in about 10 minutes.



We are avoiding a restricted area that supposedly has unexploded bombs in the area so we are a few miles offshore with gentle 2foot swells. The water is a beautiful shade of green.

Along Virginia's eastern coastline are 14 barrier Islands that are mostly wilderness and designated protected wetlands primarily owned by the Nature Conservancy and state and federal government. Many are open to hiking, fishing, swimming, and other low-impact activities and most are only accessible by boat.

I am on pins and needles hoping to see something great today. A whale, a turtle, dolphin? Every time I see something shiny it turns out to be a bird. Birds are fine, but as you know I have seen and talked about birds a lot so something new would be great.

<https://youtu.be/TnzlgaBlqdo>

<https://youtu.be/Y6hySngTrhM>

Okie Dokie...not everything can go smoothly, I guess.

Mark got a call from one of the town employees, someone who Mark has made contact previously. He said that if he had a boat that drew 4 feet of water then he would not go into the harbor. He then suggested going to the waterfront park. Guess when we are arriving at the harbor....dead low tide.

Plan B takes us 2.2 more miles further inland and more north to the town's Waterfront Park. It has a deeper water tie-up than the harbor does.

We will be near Wallops Flight Facility. This is where the rocket took off from this past Saturday. Its mission is to deliver supplies to the International Space Station. The spacecraft landed, for more correct terminology:

The spacecraft was captured at 4:44 a.m. by NASA astronauts Raja Chari and Kayal Barron. The spacecraft was carrying 8,300 pounds of research, hardware & science experiments....Tweet by NASA Wallops



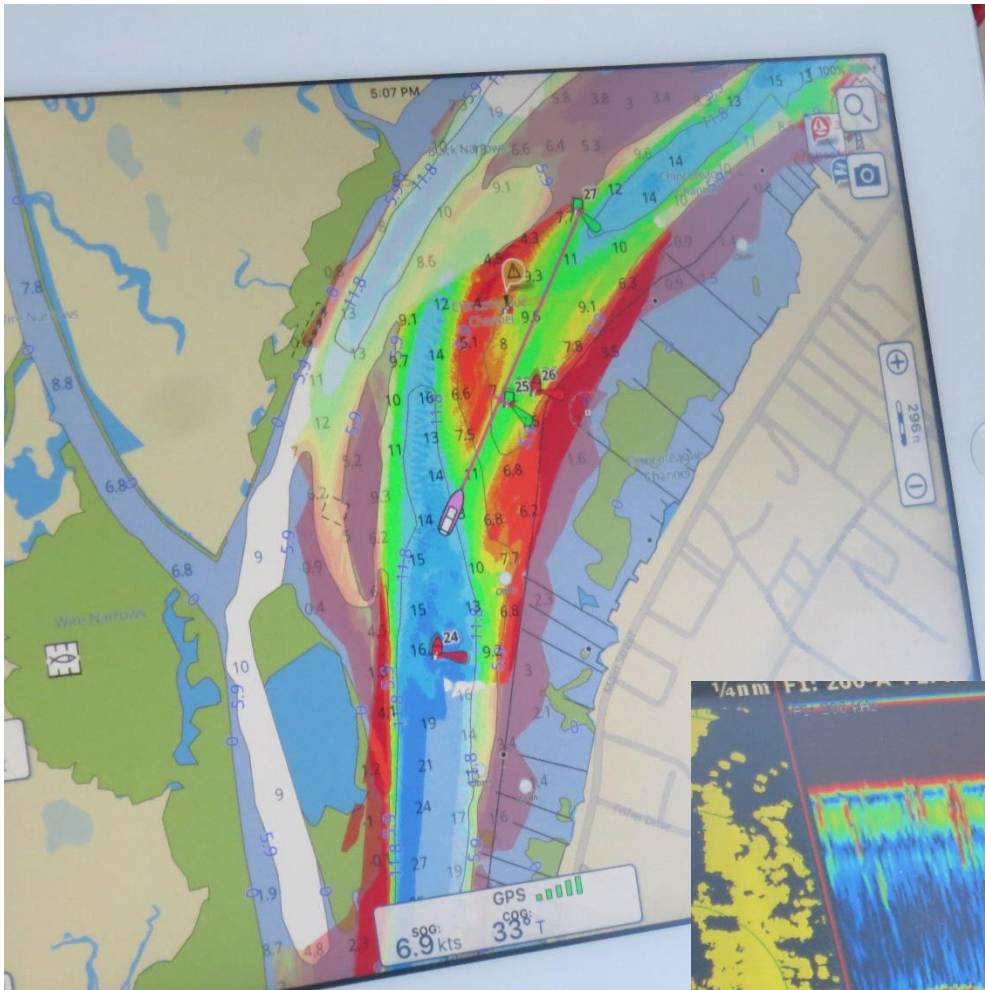
4:15 p.m. We are not the only ones coming into the channel towards Chincoteague, Va. For the first time since we left Norfolk, VA there is another boat in sight and it is entering the same channel. We are getting pushed around a little bit now that Mark has turned Valkyrie in towards shore. Otherwise, we have had smooth seas with hardly any notice of the 2 foot swells. The sun has warmed the temperature up to 66 outside and 69 degrees inside the salon.





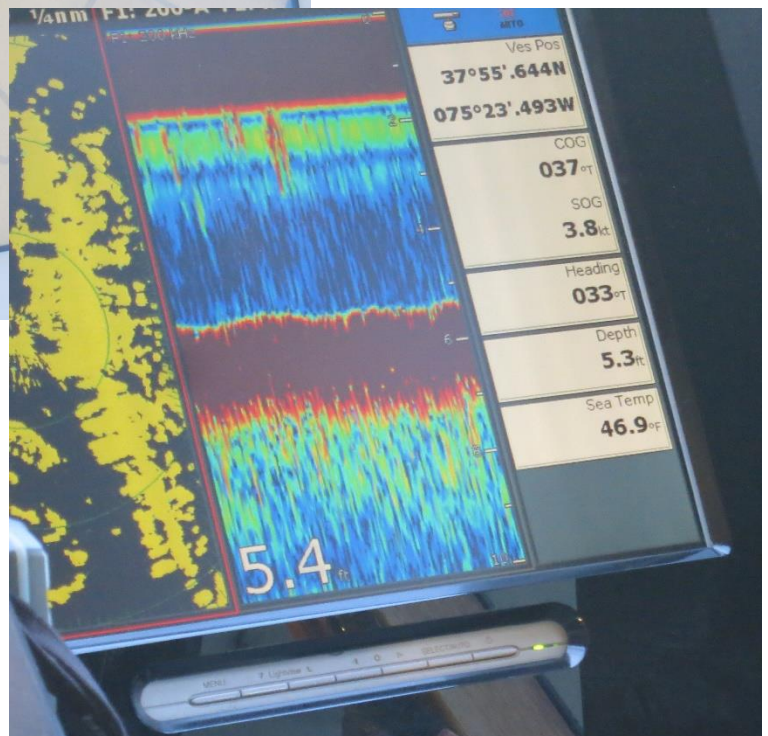
We are coming into Chincoteague Inlet and off to the right is the tip of an Island that is National Wildlife Refuge. I swear I see a vehicle out there driving on the beach. Now I see a second vehicle. So at least I am not crazy.

Mark's got crazy shallow water and horrible marker's so that is not a good sign....



A few low water alarms just to keep Mark on his toes 😊

Navionics and Aquamaps were different. For the first time, each app read different information.



Navionics supplies a predetermined route. Once the destination is entered, the app provides the route to follow.

Aquamaps takes the survey data and shows where the deep water is.

The Aquamaps' deepwater tended to follow the US Coast Guard navigation markers. Anytime in this situation, you follow navigation markers or, in this case, the local boat that knows the area!

5:40 p.m. We are tied up – but with an unusual problem..

We cannot reach the pier..it is too far away. We cannot step off the boat.



Look how far away we are! I don't have a gangplank!

Haleigh made salad and a pasta dish with sausage & onions. We had a fabulous sunset. I can never tire of writing about our beautiful sunsets. So blessed.

We watched a couple of episodes of *Law & Order, Special Victims Unit*, woke Mark up from his sofa nap, and headed to bed!