

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

Somewhere on the Water

Update Winter Cruise 2023-2024

Day 73 – Sunday, February 11, 2024 – Free Dock at Great Bridge Battlefield Museum Dock, Chesapeake, VA

We woke to rain and fog today. The water level is high and there is a lot of debris floating. Mark is hard at work reviewing all the weather apps and possible cruising scenarios for us so that we can leave Chesapeake tomorrow. Super Bowl schenanigans are on tap for today. After meal prepping & storing the provisions bought yesterday, it was time to tune in to all the Super Bowl hype on TV, eat snacks and have cocktails.



About Last Night:

We were not quiet last night. We played our music loud but no worries this dock is not near a residential area. The museum had a function last night although none of the participants paid any attention to us or the music. They did not even look in our general direction. We are at the furthest end of the dock as far away from the museum as we could be.

Dinner was hot roast beef sandwiches and salad.

Today's Super Bowl Sunday menu:

- Shrimp
- Onion rings

- Chicken wings
- Salmon & Veggies
- Chips & salsa

The reality of our day is not as exciting as you might think.

We watched the pre-games shows on CBS, we snacked on shrimp and chips with salsa. Dinner was salmon and broccoli. Yum. Other than that we did not overeat, nor did we end up having any drinks. We decided we had enough to drink the night before. Rooting for the 49ers was fun although as most know the Kansas City Chiefs won for the 2nd year in a row. The commercials were entertaining. Mark and I laughed at several. The State Farm ad w/Arnold Swartzeneger, the Door Dash commercial with Jennifer Aniston, and the Dunkin Donuts one were some of our favorites. Usher danced and sang his heart out at halftime. Including the pre-game performances we thought everyone was great and we enjoyed it all.

Day 74 – Monday, February 12, 2024 – Great Bridge Battlefield Museum Free Dock, Chesapeake, VA

Another cloudy rainy day. We were hoping to cruise north today to Norfolk, VA. The forecast is for high winds and rain Tuesday so we need to get somewhere today or just stay put until Wednesday. The goal is to get in a good position to leave for Chincoteague on Thursday which is a long day of cruising the Atlantic.

Mark had called several marinas in Norfolk and surrounding areas. Many had availability but the rates were high. One marina offered a mooring but that did not sound like an appealing option with the expected bad weather. Mark decided to call the Chesapeake Park Ranger and ask permission to stay here. There is a 48-hour docking rule here and we have already stayed 48 hours. If not granted, we could move to the free dock on the north side of the Great Bridge on the west side of the canal.

The morning passed quickly. Mark paced the salon and was disappointed the weather was keeping us from cruising. He strives to make sure that the decisions he makes are the best ones based on researching all options but mostly the safety of the boat and us are the priorities. Time is on our side, thankfully. As a captain, he puts a lot of pressure on himself. Winter travel is hard, Winter cruising is harder. Mother Nature is going to do what she wants and we have to work around her. Once again, it appears that we will be stuck in Chesapeake, VA for several unwanted days.

Little bit of trivia:

How many people nationwide called out of work for Super Sick Monday? Is that what I heard it was called? Haha. I work a few steps away from my bed so no need for me to call out. Anticipated 16 million people were expected to call out sick today according to Google.

As the afternoon progressed, and we had finally been cleared to stay at the dock for a few more days, it was getting chilly in the boat so Mark started the generator so we could have some heat. It had dropped down to 63 inside the salon, heat and a cup of hot tea were in order

This free dock is patrolled, either in person by a park ranger or by camera. The town knows if you have stayed over your 48 hours. Boaters have mentioned on different media that they have gotten summons in the mail for overstaying. What occurs after receiving one I do not know.

Mark watched TV the rest of the afternoon while I worked. We watched *Fargo* on Hulu in the evening. We have become very casual with our dinners. We sit on the sofa rather than at the table. I do not think it matters but maybe watching TV while dining limits the amount of conversation we would otherwise have if at the table with no distractions but since we are together every day, all day, we have plenty of conversation. When we return to Massachusetts and he goes back to work I am sure we will resume our dinners at the table. This evening I made asparagus and a sausage & orzo skillet meal. Mark said it was too good which means it is probably not healthy so I should not make it again. It does have heavy cream in it so maybe he is right. 🤔 😊

Day 75 – Tuesday, February 13, 2024 – Great Bridge Battlefield Museum
Free Dock, Chesapeake, VA

You guessed it. We are here, again, still. I don't even know what to say. The weather. It has prevented us from cruising north. The winds are 34 mph gusting up to 42 mph today. Even in this protected area, we are getting pushed around by its force. It is not raining so that is a good thing.

The Great Bridge has signaled openings almost every hour today but there are no boats. Today there are 2 cars parked in the designated Bridge Operator parking lot so we guess that someone might be in training today.

The wind is blowing from the North and pushing the water south out towards the North River. Any tide here in this area is a wind-driven tide.

We took a walk back to Kroger. Stocked up on Ginger Ale. We should have done this Saturday when we were there but someone said he had enough but then realized he did not. 34 minutes and 1.4 miles later we knocked that chore right out the door!

In the last couple of days, there has been some dredging equipment passing by us. The only dredging project that I have read about in this area is the Dismal Swamp. I documented that in the Day 51-53 blog if you are interested.

What is dredging?

Dredging is excavation carried out underwater or partially underwater, in shallow waters or ocean waters. It keeps waterways and ports navigable, and assists coastal protection, land reclamation and coastal redevelopment, by gathering up bottom sediments and transporting it elsewhere. Google.

The plan for tomorrow is to cruise north. Finally, the weather has opened up a window for us to get a couple of good days to make it to Chincoteague. We love Chincoteague and are looking forward to returning.

Stay
tuned

 **YouTube** <https://youtu.be/i9tRHuhOoUs>

Time is unrenwable and tomorrow is never promised so do it before you can't.

Day 72 – Saturday, February 10, 2024 – Anchorage in Currituck Sound, NC to Chesapeake, VA

4:30 am – random wake up, can not fall back to sleep

6:30 am – random hunters shooting their guns at flying animals

8:30 am – phone rings

9:00 am – generator starts

I guess I will get out of bed now! Lol.

2:05 pm – tied to the free dock at the Chesapeake Great Bridge, VA

Headed north to Chesapeake, VA. Say it isn't so! I am not happy about returning however we need fuel and Atlantic Yacht Basin has cheap fuel and fresh water. We will take on fuel, rinse Valkyrie down, dock at the free dock across the canal at the Great Bridge Museum & Visitor Center so that we can do a grocery run to Kroger. Stay or not to stay the night here, that is the question. We want to be somewhere we can watch the Super Bowl on Sunday. We know we can if we stay. Either go to Woody's Bar that is next to the museum or watch it on the boat using AYB WIFI.

10:00 am – yank the anchor and try to time our first of 2 bridge openings.

10:10 am – the anchor had a good set and was pretty dirty when it came up. We dragged it for a little bit to clean it off. Mark thought it might be one of the hardest sets we have had so far. We do like our anchor.

1:45 pm – we have taken on 297.9 gallons of fuel @ \$1,162.05 = \$3.90 per gallon. The price here at AYB is \$3.95 per gallon of diesel fuel. There is a 5 cent discount for boat us members and/or 200 gallon purchase or more.

The dock master is a super friendly guy. He follows along our YouTube videos. He asked why we were back since the last video I put out was of us leaving AYB to travel south. "Out of time" Mark answers. We have got to get back north for work. He chatted a little bit about the videos and I appreciate that he said he is following our channel.

Mark is rinsing down Valkyrie with fresh water. We have a full fresh water tank so no need to take on water here.

It is sunny and 64 degrees. The cruise here was nice. We met a few boats going south, went through the 2 swing bridges with no drama, the second bridge master had the bridge open for us as he saw us approaching. How nice was that!! There was some debris in the water between the Centerville Turnpike Swing Bridge and the Atlantic Yacht Basin (AYB) one particularly large log, but otherwise small in size.

I am making a grocery list and had a nice conversation with my sister during the cruise. Watching the jets fly today was fun. They were loud! Touch & go drills. There was a jet skier out today that had fun jumping our wake.

Day 71 – Friday, February 9, 2024 – Anchorage off Roanoke Island, NC in the Croatan Sound to

7:00 am – started generator

Relaxing morning with coffee and the news

8:55 am – started the engines

9:11 am – anchor up and away we go

Cloudy and 45 degrees with wind gusting to 10 mph.

1:38 pm – anchor is set, where the North Landing River meets the Currituck Sound. We are just shy of the Currituck-Knotts Island Ferry Lane.

9 knots average speed thanks to the current burning 8 gallons per hour.

We are cruising to the Albemarle Sound today. The Albemarle Sound can get nasty with high winds. Hopefully enduring the winds and waves yesterday set us up with good weather conditions for the Albemarle Sound today.

The anchor came up dirty so Mark dragged it for a little while to clean it off.

Mark did not do very many engine room checks yesterday. I am sure he knew I would not be comfortable at the helm station while we were hitting those waves. This morning he took his first break at 10:45 am. There is no sun shining down on us today. The salon has already dropped to 63 degrees. That calls for a cup of hot tea.

Two exciting things happened this morning around 11:15 am. One of course is more exciting than the other. First, we met a boat on the ICW. They were travelling south. Second, we saw a bald eagle. When you cruise this time of the year, seeing any other personal craft (other than hunters) it is exciting, trust me.

We saw a second bald eagle. Met another sail boat that was going South and we got passed by a couple local hunters near Coinjock that looked to be headed to the boat ramp.

Mark started the generator right away after setting the anchor. It is 64 degrees in the salon. We would like it to be a little warmer than that.

This trip Mark has had trouble with the synchronizer. There is a clutch, or slip adjustment and the problem that we had was that the slave engine would rev up and down as it tried to synch with the master engine. At first he tried loosing the clutch but that only resulted in the slave engine not even trying to catch up. Now he has been increasing the clutch tension and now is coming through the revving again but as he increases the clutch tension it is getting better. This is one of the tasks he does while he does an engine room check/break. It has never worked great, the synchronizer the entire time we have owned Valkyrie. He says (with a giggle) that he is going to either make it better, or break it. When the engines are not synchronized he has to change the throttles to manually match the engines RPM's. Both engines need to be working the same. If they don't one of them is working harder and could potentially wear out faster than the other.

Back to yesterday; Mark does his due diligence to check all the weather apps available to him to make the best decisions he can. Pamlico Sound has had the worst predicted wind and wave predictions that he has ever experienced. There is no buoy data in Pamlico Sound, NOAA weather radio did not work (at the time) and PredictWind was judging wave height

similar to off shore. Wind predictions were fine but wave predictions were completely unreliable. Even he was surprised at the wave conditions we encountered yesterday.

Day 70 – Thursday, February 8, 2024 – NPS Dock, Ocracoke, NC

The winds have died down to 14 mph out of the north, northeast. It is sunny and 34 degrees.

The ferries left on time this morning. Mark is anxious to leave Ocracoke. He is bored. We have explored what we can on foot and bike leaving only a few “places of interest” unseen. You can come to Ocracoke and enjoy the area without a car. There are numerous golf cart rentals available as well as bike rentals during tourist season. There is at least one golf cart rental open in the off-season. We opted not to rent a cart. You cannot go to the 2 – ORV desintated beaches without a permit and proper vehicle. You cannot use a golf cart to get to the Hatteras ferry at the northern end of the island. You could bike the 12-miles one way if you wanted. The NPS Pony Pen is 7 miles one way which you cannot take a golf cart to either and we chose not bike out to that. There are no ubers, lyft or taxi's on the island this time of the year. There is a tram that runs in-season has 8 stops, none of them include a beach or the hatteras ferry or pony pen. These all require a car.

Mark filled the water tank and then rinsed off the boat. There is a salty film from the highwinds the last several days.

9:50 am – engines start

10:07 am – left the dock

4:54 pm – engines off. At anchor west of Roanoke Island, NC

6hrs 47 mins of cruising

8 knots average speed.

45 degrees with 8 mph winds at anchor.

1:30 pm is about the time I noticed the wind dying down and the waves were not so overwhelming. It was an uncomfortable morning to say the least. Valkrie did a great job however I did feel her leave my feet behind on one or two occasions on some of the bigger hits. The boat shuttered

and the dishes vibrated and thankfully they are all polastic or maybe we would have had a casualty.

The closer we got to Roanoke Island the calmer things got. We were too far from shore to see anything. I watched a movie on YouTube inbetween phone calls.

Now that it is 5:00 pm and the anchor is set, it is time to start the generator and think about dinner. The problem with that is the generator is not sucking in any water...ugh. Mark will have to figure that out while he is in a 100 degree engine room.

Day 69 – Wednesday, February 7, 2024 – NPS Dock, Ocracoke, NC

Another windy day which is exactly why we are still here. Both ferries are docked again today.

The winds have subsided, a little. Down to 26 mph. The ferries did their mid-afternoon runs.

We biked to the ABC store this afternoon to stock up on rum and then went next door to Jason's. The one and only restaurant open on the island. Mark had the fried oysters which came with the choice of 2 sides. Mark chose brussel sprouts and coleslaw. He enjoyed his meal, it was all very good. I had the pulled pork sandwich which came with coleslaw and chips. But first, a small order of hush puppies to share. That was my favorite part of my meal, the hushpuppies. The pulled pork was ok but a little dry. After cutting my sandwich in $\frac{1}{2}$, I ate $\frac{1}{2}$ on the roll (which was not that fresh) and the other $\frac{1}{2}$ no roll. It was nice to be out, support a local business and not have to cook or clean up. If we were to ever go back, I would not order the pulled pork again.

Biking back in the dark was adventurous. There were not a lot of streetlamps and we were in black coats. The residents here are obviously very used to having bikers on the roads but in the future we should wear something reflective. The small bike reflectors are probably not sufficient.

Our hopes are that the winds will die down so we can leave in the morning. Mark has several plans in mind for anchorages so if we decide to leave we have options to ditch out of the sound if the waves are too much.

Day 68 – Tuesday, February 6, 2024 – NPS Dock, Ocracoke, NC

Last night we watched *Fargo* on Hulu. Dinner was a Freshetta brand pizza that I cooked in the oven. The night before that was steak with zucchini and salad.

Winds 34 mph with gusts at 40 mph from the North, Northeast.

We are sitting tight at the dock here in Ocracoke. The winds are kicking up some hefty waves in Pimlico Sound. The wind and waves were enough to stop ferry service today.

I am filling my days with the usual, work, typing and video editing. We are low on fresh water so Mark hooked us up with live water since the water here on the docks is on. I will catch up on laundry and a little bit of cleaning. Mark is watching movies. He streams Netflix through his phone onto the TV.

On occasion we get some entertainment watching two pelicans just outside our windows. They hang out most of the day and we see them diving for food. It must be good fishing because we have also seen someone come here to the docks with their fishing pole. Actually, we haven't seen him catch anything so maybe it isn't such a great place to fish.

The wind "storm" is predicted to cause flooding. The warning is 2'-3' above normal storm surge. At 4:30 pm Mark has already noticed a difference in the water level. Valkyrie has already risen and he will have to keep an eye on the lines. We are tied to a fixed dock so that makes a difference in tying off.

Day 67 – Monday, February 5, 2024 –National Park Service Dock, Ocracok, NC

Monday is a work day. It is cloudy, windy and about 34 degrees this morning.

Day 66 – Sunday, February 4, 2024

Last night we had ourselves a dance party onboard after leftover veggies & rice dinner. It is nice not to have neighbors so you can crank up the tunes whenever you want.

Today we had a slow morning, Mark did his laundry, I texted with our daughter, Haleigh and then we went out for a bike ride to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. We walked the beach, saw a pod of dolphin and a couple of whales. The whales were further off shore. The dophin were riding the waves and swimming close to shore.

3.9 miles on the bike

1.25 mile walking

We stopped at the US Navy jumpers memorial & the historic store
The plan was to stop at the Island's only grocery store; the Variety Store and get a view groceries. Since we had to carry them on our bikes we just got the bare necessities; milk, fresh veggies, and ginger ale. The ABC store was closed so we will plan a trip there as the week progresses.

Day 65 – Saturday, February 3, 2024

Exploring today on our bikes. It is windy, 54 degrees but feels more like 30's in the wind. When we were out of the wind it was a beautiful winter day.

We stopped at the Ferry terminal and got a map and talked with the attendant. She informed us there is only one restaurant open this time of year. Jason's. We found a place called Zillie's that is open. They are a gourmet store that you can purchase their wine, beer, soda etc., and their gourmet snacks and food items and they help you set up your own smorasboard of eats while sitting on the porch or fireside.

Stopped at the islands Variety store which is a combo grocery store, hardware store and in the same building the ABC store.

The Pirate Shop was open. A large 2-story souvenir shop that had household decorative items tshirts, towels, every kindof knick knack and chotchkey you could imagine.

We stopped at the lighthouse and we walked the nature trail. After that we biked over to the reading trail and eventually ending up back on valkyrie 2 ½ hours later at 1:30 pm. Cocktails on the mezzanine while the sun is still shining.

Walking 2 miles
Biking 2.76 miles

3 bottles of ginger ale
2 bottles of rum in our inventory. Ocracoke has an ABC store so we are in luck.

We had cocktails on the mezzanine with a chip & salsa snack.

Last night we had a Zataran's Jumboliah rice dinner, and finished the last season of Suits.

Day 64 – Friday, February 2, 2024

7:40 am – hauled anchor and departed

7:15 am – generator on & engines shortly after

40 degrees with winds expected to increase as the day goes on

1:25 pm – docked & engines off

53 degrees and partly cloudy

The anchor chain came up clean however the anchor itself had a lot of sand stuck to it so Mark dragged the anchor for a bit before hoisting it all the way up.

A straight and wide open Pimloco Sound is ahead of us today. We cruised far enough off shore that there was nothing to look at except the 3 – 4 foot waves that kept the windshield satly all morning. The wind kicked up as predicted and so did the waves in the sound. We definitely had several 6 foot waves today that had water bottles toppling over a few times.

Strangely enough we had a puddle of water at the foot of the stairs leading to the master cabin and on the floor of the mid cabin. We have no explanation.

We met a ferry in the channel as we were entering Ocracoke, the Silver Lake. Ocracoke is an island and you can not drive to it. There are ferries that run from different points throughout the year. As we were docking a second ferry was loading vehicles in preparation for dearting, the Cedar Island Ferry.

We tied to the National Parks dock which is just to the left as you enter the harbor. Smack dab next to the ferry which lets out a loud blast to warn of their leaving the dock. Yes, it did scare me. It is a portside tie-up to this dock which is unusual. All the lines had to be moved as well as the bumpers. The portside power cord was a tangled mess so both Mark and I had to team up to get that straightened out. Literally.

Once we got the power cord plugged in, Mark was able to rinse Valkyrie off. Next on the agenda, wifi.

This National Parks Marina is \$77 per day for our size boat. When you arrive here at this dock, there is a small office building where you get directions to check in. You have to check in daily regardless of the number of nights you want to stay. Download the app. Sign up as guest, scan the code on the flyer that is hanging on the building and then make a payment.

Explanation!! The water on the mid cabin floor is water that was coming in over the bow and seeping in and working itself around somehow to the floor. Well, for me, it sounds like we should not have watched the *Insidious* movies and perhaps we have mysteriously brought something in from the other side...lol

The pump for the front heat system is not coming on even though the thermostat is calling for heat.

Coincidentally we were just yanking on the shorepower cord which is in the same area as the wires for the heat system are.

Day 63 – Thursday, February 1, 2024 – Manteo, NC to anchorage

We are getting ready to leave Manteo this morning. Mark is in the engine room. Amongst other things, he is tightening some loose nuts & bolts. Inconveniently enough, one nut got dropped in an unretrievable spot which led to a walk to the local hardware store.

In prep for leaving the water tank is getting filled, electric cord put away, set up ipads with navigation apps & course plotted, lines & bumpers pulled in. Empty trash, cabinets and doors get secured, salon blinds open. Typically I would put our plants on the floor however, we are not going far today so I am hoping the ride will be smooth enough not to have to. I will keep an eye out.

11:16 am – left the dock

49 degrees with a full sun and no clouds

This was a very shallow water way coming in and out of this channel so Mark will have his eye on the depth

Mark saw a dolphin just after passing under the Washington Baum Bridge. I did not.

1:05 pm – anchor is set

We are nestled in between two small islands with the Marc Basnight Bridge in the distance. This bridge connects the outerbanks islands of Bodie and Hatteras.

7 knots with 13 mph winds from the north

The anchor alarm has gone off a couple of times this afternoon. That can be excused away by our swing. The winds and current changed so we are a little out of our preset circle but we are not dragging.

It has been nice enough to sit on the fly bridge this afternoon. Lots of conversation and a relaxing afternoon.

Day 62 – Wednesday, January 31, 2024 – Manteo Waterfront Marina, Manteo, NC

Mark is starting a project early this morning. He is taking the shower doors off the master shower. Apparently there is a leak. I haven't seen a leak from the shower in a long time. He has had to resilicone where the sliding door meets its edge but typically as long as the door is latched there is no leak. Since our boat is in a constant state of movement, even the slightest, in addition to listing to one side when the fuel and water tanks are full the sliding glass shower doors need to stay latched. If the shower door is not latched then even the slightest gap will cause water to escape and puddle on the floor.

Mark's second project for the day was to revisit the master sump pump. While vacuuming the sump pumps and bilges the other day he noticed that this sump pump was not working as well as it should. He tinkered with it the other day but today he decided to take another look. Success. The sump pump is working as it should now, but unfortunately that means he has to drag the shop vac back out and vacuum the bilge again.

After 2-days of watching season 6 of *How to Get Away with Murder* I am finally done with the series. I started watching it with Haleigh this Fall. She finished the series a while ago and like a good girl did not leak any

spoilers. Mark and I have been watching *Suits*. Seasons 1-8 were on Netflix but season 9 is on Amazon Prime. We are just a few episodes away from finishing.

Day 61 - Tuesday, January 30, 2024

It is a brighter, less windy day today but we are back in the 40's like yesterday. Mark is vacuuming the sump pumps today. Not a fun job.

What is a sump pump?

It is used to pump gray water out of the boat when the shower or sink is near or below the water line.

We have 2. One in our aft cabin and one in the mid-cabin. The sump pump on the mid-cabin is for both showers & sinks for the forward & mid-cabin heads.

Why is the bathroom on a boat called a head?

"Head" in a nautical sense referring to the bow or fore part of a ship dates to 1485. The ship's toilet was typically placed at the head of the ship near the base of the bowsprit, where splashing water served to naturally clean the toilet area.

Why is a kitchen on a boat called a galley?

The practice of calling a ship's kitchen a galley comes from the fact that there was a stove with baffles in it called a gallery furnace in many ships. It was there for the purpose of heating the interior of the ship originally. People very quickly figured out you could cook on the surface of it.

Mark also vacuumed all the bilges and hvac intake screens.

He also vacuumed the lazaret area. That is in the cockpit, our storage area that houses the fule polishing system, raw water washdown pump, access to the back of the fuel tank, a pair of batteries and the stern thruster, trim tab pump.

As far as storage; we store scuba gear, cleaning supplies, drinking water hoses.

Day 60 – Monday, January 29, 2024

It's a Monday which means a work day for me. Mark has a few things on his to-do list for today. One thing that was not on his list but turned out to be a good thing and one of those "can of worms" things. My bedside flashlight batteries needed to be changed. It turned out the batteries corroded and I needed to replace the flashlight. Well, would you have guessed that there is a container labeled flashlights within a storage bucket of mark's that is stored in the "hole" in the front cabin. It is filled with 20 or so flashlights. Guess who decides to to check each and everyone and replace all the batteries. Several of the lights had corroded batteries and many are not waterproof so Mark decided to toss out the the ones that are not. We replaced all the flashlights in each of the staterooms. These flashlights are 'emergency' flashlights that should be checked regularly just like everyother emergency kit onboard. Almost and 1 ½ hours later can closed!

Today is cold and cloudy with a north wind. We were feeling a little spoiled with the 60 degrees we have been experiencing since we arrived in Manteo. We'd like that weather to come back!

I took a walk today. I was gone about an hour. I did not track my mileage. I ended up on the same road we biked on our way back from Fort Roanoke and then walked the boardwalk on Ice Plant Iceland.

Day 59 – Sunday, January 28, 2024

The one morning I expected to wake up to clouds and fog I woke to sunshine and 60 degrees. Every other morning we have woken to fog. This morning there were chores to be done; laundry, grocery shopping, etc.

About last night:

After dinner onboard (Southwestern Chicken Alfredo) we walked to Poor Richards. There was a band, Bill & His Friends playing. They played a lot of Rolling Stones, The Grateful Dead and a few of their own originals. Poor Richards is a small pub, easily crowded with customers but for a Saturday night we are not sure there was anywhere else to go out downtown past the 9'oclock hour. We tried the Lost Colony Pub but it was closed.

Mark put on *The Hill* on Netflix this morning. I went to the Piggly Wiggly grocery store that is about ½ mile away. This is a very small store. No deli, no seafood counter and an incredibly small produce section. I was thrilled that it was close enough to walk to but the prices and the size were frustrating. My goal was to stock up on produce and with the limited selection and lack of freshness was disappointing. Since I went a lone and did not bring our wagon I only bought what I could carry.

After having an 1 ½ hour long telephone call with my mom, Mark and I watched football, did laundry and had a few white russians. Dinner was basically non-existent because the drinks were so filling.

The fog rolled in around 3:30pm and left little visability out into the harbor but for the most part it was sunny and in the 60's today. Winter weather we can appreciate after the cold spell while in Chesapeake, VA.

Manteo has not disappointed. We have been able to walk, bike ride or uber anywhere we want to go. There was a t-shirt store across the street from us that had great deals. (don't tell the girls, but I bought them a souvenir today 😊)

Day 58 – Saturday, January 27, 2024

Last night we biked to Stripers for cocktails and appetizers. There was live music until 9 pm. A solo acoustic guitarist.

This morning we biked to the island just across the bay from us. Walked the boardwalk around the perimeter of the island. The museum was closed

as well as access to the boat Elizabeth II. We decided to ditch the bikes and continued walking around downtown Manteo.

1 hour 35 minutes

2.3 miles

It is cool and windy today but a great day to be out and about.

Downtown Manteo is small. The waterfront is has a boardwalk that you can follow around the shoreline.

Day 57 – Friday, January 26, 2024

We are in Manteo, NC. We arrived yesterday morning after a short cruise from an anchorage in Buzzard Bay.

Shortly after arriving we went to the NC Aquarium and after dinner onboard we went to Poor Richard's for a couple of cocktails and as our Uber driver put it...To see the colorful locals. He was not wrong. As soon as we sat down we were approached by a very talkative, friendly guy that moved here 9-months ago. He plays acoustic guitar, grew up in Kentucky, the same town as Loreeta Lynn. He and his friends shared a bit about themselves and the island. Mark and I are looking forward to taking the bikes out and exploring today. 3-miles north is Fort Raleigh National Historic Site.

While having coffee this morning Mark spied an otter. We both watched the otter swim and feed and at one point I saw a 2nd otter. They disappeared on the shoreline of the island across the bay from us, Shallowbag Bay. Ice Plant Island which is connected by a short bridge will be another area that we will explore in addition to downtown Manteo.

Mark went looking for a barber this morning.

Upon his return he tackled a project. He installed a valve to the wetbar sink so that when it was time to change the water filter he did not have to drain the boat's entire water system.

Bike ride to the Fort

3.7 miles at 7.5 mph to Fort Roanoke on our Bikes one way

We walked about a mile while visiting.

We left at 11:30 am and were back on board at 1:45 pm

Day 56 – Thursday, January 25, 2024

7:00 am – started generator

8:05 am – engines started & pulled anchor

9:32 am – Arrived & tied to dock 22 at Maneto, NC Municipal Marina

1 hour - Cruising

55 degrees and cloudy

Slow, very slow speeds this morning due to fog and shallow water

It is a foggy morning. It is foggy enough that we cannot see the shoreline. Mark is not nervous about cruising in the fog. He trusts his instruments and himself.

Our hope is to get a dock at the municipal marina in Manteo, NC. We have heard great things about Manteo and we would like to make our way to the NC Aquarium.

The water in this portion of the Pamlico Sound is extremely shallow. Mark has seen as little as 4' of water depth. We are crouching along at a slow speed. The water cannot get any shallower or we will run aground.

The stern thruster quit working again. We have wifi, electricity and water.

We took an uber to the NC Aquarium, Roanoke Island. It is less than 4-miles oneway but I did not want to bike it.

The

Day 55 – Wednesday, January 24, 2024 – Anchorage to

7:00 am – generator

8:10 am – Engines started

11:15 am – anchor set & Engines off

3 hrs 5 mins cruising

3 mph winds, cloudy at 48 degrees

9 knots at 1 gallon per mile.

About last night

It was quiet. So quiet. No wind, no squeaky lines, no anchor alarm, no boats cruising by us, no people, no one no where. Is that tranquil or spooky? You can decide. For us, it meant a good night sleep.

We had Mediterranean Chicken for dinner. Mark had a nice nap on the couch while I watched tv before we went to bed at 9:30 pm.

Nice cruise this morning. The water was calm and besides the 3 boats we saw this morning upon our departure we are solo out here.

Shortly after anchoring we lowered the tender and went to shore to visit the Wright Brothers Memorial. Once we found a dock to tie the tender up we walked through a townhouse development that neighbored the memorial. It is a very impressive Memorial on top of what at the time of their flight was a sand dune. There are replicas of their living quarters and hangar. The first in flight launch rail & dolly (the runway) is in place with 4 markers indicating the 4 successful controlled flights.

From high upon the memorial's hill we could see Valkyrie. The visitor center details the Wright Brother's challenges and successes along their convicted goal to achieve controlled flight. There is an exact replica of the plane inside the visitor center. It is a great place to visit. Wear your walking shoes because once you are on the grounds, it is at least a mile to walk and visit each site within the park.

Once we returned to the tender we had walked 4-miles.

Now, let me tell you that getting the tender to the dock and back out of the inlet was sketchy. The 1-foot tide was out and we were in brown silted water that made seeing the bottom which was less than a foot under us impossible. The tender propellers kicked up some black muck and Mark had to use our emergency paddle to get us the last 2-feet to the dock itself. We tied the tender off and then realized that the dock had a locked gate. If we left, how would we get back in? This dock, rather secluded from the nearest townhouse allowed us to break a few twigs

and stuff them into the handle so it would not lock behind us. Mark assured me he could climb over the 9' door frame, no problem. Thankfully the twiggs did their job and kept Mark from having to show off his superman powers. The totally great thing that we saw on our way back to the dock that I did not see before; a sign that warned us of venomous snakes in the area! As I have said before, life with Mark is always an adventure.

Day 54 – Tuesday, January 23, 2024 – Chesapeake, VA – to anchorage North River & Albemarle Sound in Camden Bay, NC

Cold morning. It was 52 in the salon this morning when Mark got up to start the generator.

About last night

Last night we were docked at the free dock at the Great Bridge Museum & Visitor Center. No facilities are available here.

We were able to use wifi from the Atlantic Yacht Basin across the canal so I was able to watch Netflix. Mark napped while I watched *How to get away with murder*.

The ice did not melt off until late in the afternoon, too late for us to leave so this morning we are going to make a second attempt to leave Chesapeake, VA and cruise south. There is a thin layer of ice this morning. The weather is expected to warm to 50 but it is very cloudy so patiently we wait.

There is a boat in the lock south bound that will make the 9 am bridge opening so depending on what that boat is and what that boat does we may jump behind it and let them be our icebreakers.

9:47 am – Engines started

10:00 am - Depart

3:00 pm - engines off

5 Hours of cruising

36 degrees when we left Chesapeake; 50 degrees at 3:00 pm
10.5 knots average speed with minimal winds and no current
2 bridges – centerville turnpike swing bridge
& the north landing swing bridge

The next two are fixed bridges so no time constraints

Mark is running the engines hard today because....

We are in North Carolina!

We passed Coinjock Marina, known by the boating world as the must-stop for their prime rib.

2:00 pm – a cup of hot cocoa to warm the soul and the addition of a hat and fleece, as it is down to 58 degrees in the salon.

The vibration of the boat while cruising at this speed has caused one or two – otherwise stable tiems- to shimmie themselves onto the floor. Nothing broke.

3:00 pm and the anchor has been set. We are where the North River meets the Albemarle Sound (Camden Bay) in North Carolina. Mark is checking the transmission oil level. That has to be done while the engines are running and warm.

Mark started the generator right away to get things warmed up in here.

Tomorrows plan is 4 hours to Buzzard Bay, Bodie Island. Take the tender to go see the Wright Brother Memorial.

Thursday's plan

Day 53 – Monday, January 22, 2024

Ice on the water this morning. We will delay our departure until the ice melts. We just invested a lot of money into the bottom of Valkyrie and we don't want ice chipping away at her.

We also do not want to leave without discussing and paying our bill here at the Atlantic Yacht Basin.

While we are waiting for the sun to melt the thin layer of ice on the AICW Mark noticed Friday when we docked after being put back in the water that the stern thruster did not work. There are 4 sets of spring loaded brushes that send a electricity to the to the armature and they get corroded and stuck from time to time.

Coming upon noon and the ice isn't melting. We moved across the canal and tied up to the free dock for the night.

Shortly after securing Valkyrie to the dock Mark and I took a 2.5 mile walk through the marsh trails.

Dinner was burgers on the grill and salad.

Day 52 – Sunday, January 21, 2024

Sunny, cold morning. Teens overnight and 30 degrees today.

Mark turned the water maker on this morning. We did laundry all day yesterday using up most of the water in the tank. It will take about 4 hours to fill the water tank.

I am focused on getting everyone caught up on video's and daily blog posts. The plan is to travel south tomorrow. We had discussed many different destination options and with the cold weather sticking around the Chesapeake Bay area we decided to go further south. The dismal swamp was also considered, however it is closed right now so that was taken off the table for us.

Mark watched a movie, and then football. I typed and edited and got everyone caught up to January!! Woo Hoo.

Aquamaps and Navionics got updates in preparation for tomorrow. There are rumors that there is a large stump that has been nicknamed the Yacht Basin Stump because many who have hit it have come to the yacht basin for repairs.

Mark is feeling a little paranoid about hitting it since we just had all that work done. The water is down a few feet, which Mark thinks is wind driven since we have had substantial winds out of the North for days. He thinks it has pushed the water down and out into the North Landing River.

He also updated Bobs 423.

We are planning to cruise from Chesapeake VA and anchoring in the North River, just shy of Albemarle Sound.

Buzzard Bay is the next stop, near Bodie Island and hoping to get to the Wright Brother's Monument.

Day 51 – Saturday, January 20, 2024

Cold today. Overnight in the teens and today's high is 32 with the wind blowing from the north coming right in through the salon door.

Chore day today. Well, maybe half day of chores.

I vacuumed the flybridge all the state rooms and the salon and galley.

Mark cleaned the sea strainers for each of the engines, both of the hvac pumps and the watermaker. He also replaced the watermaker filters.

This afternoon we watched some YouTube and had lunch.

Mark watched a movie; we had fried pickles as a snack and then for dinner we had a sausage stirfry.

NFL football is on tap for tonight's entertainment.

Day 50 – Friday, January 19, 2024

Rainy, 39 degrees

We are 50 days in to our winter vacation cruise.

10 days cruised

_____ miles gone

14 days Holiday trip back to New England

8 days holding out for weather in Chincoteague

14 days holding out for haul out in Chesapeake

4 days on the hard for repairs and maintenance

Shed doors opened at 7:48 am

Valkryie was back in the water by 8:15 am

We went to the fuel dock and took on 345 gallons of diesel @

\$3.90/gallon. \$1,346 total after Boat US .5 cent discount per gallon.

Atlantic Yacht Basin also discounts 5cents per gallon after 200 gallons. (It is an either or discount, not to be combined)

Mark washed the portside of the boat the cockpit and swim platform.

10:45 am – mechanic arrived to finish up the last of our repairs

Day 49 – Thursday, January 18, 2024

About last night:

We had bbq chicken with zucchini and salad while watching *Austin Powers Goldmember* on the projector. We sat on the bow sofa using the shed door as our screen.

Line cutter has arrived and is being installed and we are now just waiting for the stabilizer busings which can be installed while we are floating. So possibly back in the water tomorrow.

Mark checked out the bonding system and looks great except he found one broken wire in the bilge in the engine room.

The bonding system is:

Other than that, he watched a movie while I worked.

Sweetpotato enchiladas for dinner.

Day 48 - Wednesday, January 17, 2024 – Heated shed at Atlantic Yacht Basin, Chesapeake, VA

The workers started arriving at 7:30 am.

It is a little hard to have a morning routine, any routine when you have workers coming and going all day. Everyone of them are polite, curious, and cognizant of the idea that I am working onboard and that Mark and I are living onboard while *Valkyrie* is on the hard. The fact that the shed is heated is a saving grace. Other than the shed keeping us warm, we are relying on one space heater. Today we woke to 20 degree outside temps. We are holding strong at 65 degrees inside the salon without turning the space heater on. It is still early at 10:30 am as I write this so we will see how the day goes.

Mark fixed the rollers on salon slider door. It is pretty hard to open now. If needed he will have to replace the new door rollers with the old ones. I want the ability to open the door one-handed and right now I cannot do

that with this "fix." Our side galley doors are definitely not one-handed open. Unfortunately these two doors are not able to come off like the salon door so that fix is not easy but Mark took a crack at the galley side (portside) door.

We had to spend some time today working on our computer storage. We use Microsoft One Drive and we are almost at capacity. I deleted several duplicate files and several files from our last cruise in 2021/2022. The photo files have been something that has needed maintenance for a long time. I take too many photos with many that are duplicated that can be deleted. It is such a daunting task that I am just not up for it with so many other priorities.

The new nuts are in and installed for the propellers. It is 2 pm. The guys break at 10 am, 2 pm with lunch at 12 noon. I took a quick video update of their work.

I spent the afternoon working and per usual, editing video and typing. Mark did not work much this afternoon on the boat so we had a lot of conversations about what has happened so far and what might be. The weather is not looking good for this weekend so even though we are on target to be back in the water Friday we may not want to leave because anchoring could be dangerous in the winds and cold. We have limited options; Coinjock or stay here.

The workers leave at 4. They started cutting the lights around 3:50.

Day 47 – Tuesday, January 16, 2024 – Chesapeake, VA

This morning started with the workers arriving around 8:00 a.m. They chipped and scrapped and tapped their way through the morning.

4 hours later Valkyrie looked amazing. The barnacles and growth have disappeared, and the props removed. Mark has been down there helping while I am inside Valkyrie working, editing video and journal updates. I have electricity, wifi, heat but no water. We have to use the bathhouse for showers and toilets. Not the cleanest bathhouse around but I found some bleach and dumped it down the toilet so at least that was a bit cleaner. Yes, I agree with what you are thinking; if it is that bad say something. I should but I probably won't.

2:00 pm and I took a break to stretch and get some fresh air. Little did I know it was raining. I have no windows to the outside. The bottom of Valkyrie is getting painted and the fumes had not reached the inside of Valkyrie until Mark opened the door and left it open long enough to carry the old props in. Over powering. I asked Mark if he should be wearing a mask like the workers are. Well, yeah, probably...as we walk out the door without one. I am running a fan to circulate the air inside the salon to help with the smell. If it gets too much I can go to the lounge.

3:16 pm I got an update from Mark.

Parts needed to be ordered. A pair of bushings, 2-intake screens, line cutter (spurs), new propeller nuts (one fell apart when they were putting them back on), We are now expecting to go back into the water on Friday. I was expecting to be out of the water one maybe two nights but now we are at four nights. It was brought up by one worker that the shafts could use some work but Mark said no. Next time.

Day 46 - Monday, January 15, 2024 – Chesapeake, VA

Martin Luther King Day. Yes, I am working. I have my phone on but am anticipating a quiet day. The marina workers are here and working. Mark spoke with James, Marina Manager this morning. James said he did not haul us out last week because of the winds. This week cold temperatures are in the forecast. That is not an issue with the painting we want done or

the the other fixes, but it is for our comfort. We can get plugged into electricity while on the hard but we would not have water or heat. It could be cold enough to freeze our water pipes if we are hauled with overnight temps at 24 or lower.

Another thing to consider is when do we depart. Assuming the work gets done today and tomorrow and back in the water say even Wednesday, do we leave and then anchor out and deal with the overnight cold, pay to stay at maybe CoinJock? We want to head South toward Manteo, NC and eventually Ocracoke, NC. The outerbanks. Stay there for a few days and explore. Ocracoke is predicted to be warmer than here which is nice but warm enough for us to stay at anchor?

All things to consider.

Ok, well just as soon as I finished typing all that crap about getting hauled and worrying about the weather and freezing pipes, James called Mark.

We are getting hauled out this afternoon, the travel lift will move Valkyrie inside the shed and we will stay on the hard inside there until they are done and the paint is dry. The shed is heated!!! We will have electricity!!! No water. That is ok. We can use the bathhouse for toilets and showers. Boat got pulled.

Videod the haul out as best we could.

Spring/Summer 2022

We sucked up a tire going into our slip at West Island. The portside stationary cutter ring broke and was missing so Mark replaced it.

Spring/Summer 2023

During the spring underwater inspection, Mark noticed the shaft-mounted rotary cutter portion of that same portside spur loosened up on the shaft and was slipping around the shaft when it should have been fixed to the shaft, not slipping so Mark tightened it.

Fall 2023

During an underwater inspection, Mark found that the entire shaft-mounted rotary cutter was spinning on the starboard shaft so Mark removed it and ordered a new entire cutter assembly. He was going to put it on himself but the weather changed and the water temps dropped so he did not install the new starboard side cutter assembly.

Present Day

Valkyrie is sitting on the hard, in a big-ass garage and while we were inspecting the bottom of her Mark noticed that the portside shaft-mounted rotary cutter that he had tightened last Fall is broke. So now he has to order another new one and that means we have two line cutters.

The entire cutter assembly has 3 main components: A cutter assembly, a holding block, stationary cutter.

Is your brain fried yet? Mine is, this is so confusing. To keep it simple, Mark is replacing both the starboard and portside line cutters whose brand name is Spurs'.

Day 45 – Sunday, January 14, 2024 – Chesapeake, VA

It is a sunny, windy day here. We are resting today after a super fun, long night. We got to sleep about 4 a.m. this morning and did not get out of bed until 10:30-11:00 a.m.

Mark did one load of laundry and I did one load of laundry and showered.

Now that there is more confidence in making water we were not very conservative with this last tank. I am showering onboard because the marina's shower room is not clean. I realize that the water is the culprit to the rust stains but that is not why the bathroom is not clean and I am so happy to not have to continue to use it.

The marina laundry room is clean and the machines as I have mentioned are a bargain at \$1.00 per load but for today we decided to just do laundry onboard since we were going to make water today anyway.

We watched FailArmy Best of the Year on YouTube. Super funny!

Sunday's 1:00 p.m. NFL game got postponed due to weather.

The weather up and down the coast in New England has been crazy. Super high tides and winds are causing significant flooding. The Sanewich Marina which is the last marina we stayed at prior to departing for our cruise flooded, the road and sidewalks.

I went through the grocery list and recipes that I have on my spread sheet and created this weeks menu.

There have been a couple of boats go by. One boat came by around 1:30 p.m. and headed to the fuel dock and then was waiting for the 2 o'clock bridge opening. When the bridge opened a sail boat came through headed south but the power boat that had been waiting on this side never went through the bridge and then sat there for an hour and went through the 3 o'clock bridge. Mark and I wished we were privy to the conversation that happened on that boat as to why they did not go through the open 2 o'clock bridge. An answer we will never get.

Day 44 – Saturday, January 13, 2024 – Chesapeake, VA

It is Saturday and we are still stuck in Chesapeake, VA. On one hand it is a blessing that we have access to electricity and protected from the highwinds. But on the other hand, we have been waiting for a long time to get our boat hauled and worked on. There is not a lot to do in the area, we've biked, walked, shopped the local stores, this is getting ridiculous. I am getting impatient.

What would I be doing if we were not on a boat in Chesapeake, VA? I have no idea but the highlight of my weekend should not be walking to the store to go grocery shopping.

Day 43 – Friday, January 12, 2024 – Chesapeake, VA

I have been hearing planes all day. But with the clouds we couldn't really see any. The clouds started clearing around 3:30 and Mark can now see the fighter jets. He mostly can not see them but can at least identify the noise. We are thinking they are running touch and go drills.

We had 2 flemings come into the marina today. One with a hailing port of newport ri and one with fl. Mark and I dream of owning a fleming and cruising alaska.

I walked to kroger (again) to get dinner.

Appetizer: boursin garlic cheese on french bread

Dinner: salmon burgers with green beans and salad

Dessert: I bought chocolate chip cookies but the salmon burgers were very thick and filling I am not sure we will get to the cookies. I only ate ½ my burger.

Day 42 – Thursday, January 11, 2024

Sunny morning. The wind has died down. It is cool in the 30's but expected to warm into the high 40's.

I did laundry this morning. 9 am I went to put the first 2 loads in. The laundry here at Atlantic Yacht Basin Marina is \$1.00 per load. Last time we did laundry we brought the wets back to dry here onboard but decided that was just not worth it. The \$1.00 dryer works great in more than ½ the time it takes onboard. By noon, I had 3-loads done and folded.

Mark spied a pelican on the canal this morning. It flew away after a boat departed the docks. We have not see pelicans here before.

There have been 2 boats in the basin on the travel lift this morning.

Still waiting for our turn. What we don't want to happen is for Friday to be our haul out and then get stuck on the hard for the weekend. We are

anxious to get moving and continue with our cruising. As I am sure you, our followers are as well.

Mark started the Marvel series Echo yesterday and is continuing with that this morning. I am working inbetween trips to the laundromat.

We have a leak in our water tank. There was a repair done when we bought the boat. Mark has repaired it twice since then. The leak is at the very top of the tank. It doesn't give us an issue unless the tank is overfilled. When making water Mark overfilled the tank, so now its an issue.

The crack goes between 2 fittings. He fill around one fitting and then followed the crack as far as he could. The leak was reduced but was still enough that he had to clean around the second fitting and cake sikaflex 291 on it. This silicone adhesive does adhere to plastic well.

Bordeum does funny things for Mark. If he is not on his ipad researching something (usually smoething to buy) he is watching tv (which there is usually never anything good on during the day) or he finds things to do, putter is a good way to describe it. So in addition to the water tank repair, he decided to wash the front bow window. The bow window has three panes. One over the the gally. The inside of this window pane has collected a lot of grease and grime for cooking. Tackling that was on my list to do but today he did it. Yay for me and yay for the window. It looks much better after 3 applications of 2-different cleaners.

I left the boat around 2:30 for a walk and then a trip to the Kroger store. 2.5 hours later I am back. I walked the trails across the street which is just over 2 miles, then I stopped at the Hallmark store on my way to Kroger. I walked just about every aisle of Kroger. I am not familiar with the layout and so I decided to just walk the aisles.

I bought shrimp for an appetizer, cod and asperagus for dinner and for a treat I bought cookies for dessert.

Day 41 Wednesday january 10

Sunny & windy this morning. We are still waiting for word that it is our turn to get hauled out here at the marina.

About Last night:

The winds gusted upto 54 mph. We had massive downpours. The electricity went off 3-times. More than a flicker, but lasting no longer than a minute or so. After the third time we just left the main electric breaker off and ran on battery so not to have a power surge on our electronics.

Mark is thinking we have been through 7 – hurricane strength wind storms since moving onboard Valkyrie.

Dinner was left over chili. We watched a few episodes of Suits and were in bed by 10:30 pm.

This morning we have a lot of leaves, pineneedles and small debris from the storm. One of our boat neighbors must have lost a tender because there is a popped tender across the channel. Mark was sure he saw it on the bow of the sail boat in front of us.

Day 40 - Tuesday January 9, 2024

Rain today. Dark and dreary morning. Still waiting for the word from the marina when we are getting hauled out. Possibly tomorrow, Wednesday. Boat life isn't always glamorous. Most days we aren't doing anything different onboard Valkyrie than what you are doing in your homes. Cleanig, laundry, work. Today Mark is making water. Not sure how we are going to make out with this. The water here in the canal is mostly fresh however it is brown. With little tide or current to circulate the water and we are in a wooded area so runoff of dirt, leaves, branches etc. basically rot in the water causing it to look brown. Mark ordered several filters so we are going to give it a shot.

The water maker has been running all day. Mark is doing laundry at the marina facility. It is about 2pm and we heard a loud roll of thunder so he just ran out to get that last of his laundry because he said the shit is about to hit the fan with a storm coming in.

We have two new boat neighbors since yesterday. One of them is traveling north and missed the bridge opening by 5 minutes. Unfortunately for him the bridge is going to stay closed until the winds die down. There is a free dock across the channel at the museum but for whatever reason he chose to tie up here.

Dinner is leftover chili

We had a snack around 2 pm of artichoke & spinach dip from Walmart with crackers and pita bread. So yummy.

Mark made an Amazon wishlist for Valkyrie. If any of our supporters would like to look at that and place an order we would be much appreciated. Not only are we thinking about this winter's cruising on this wish list. It also contains items we will need when we do the loop.

Monday January 8, 2024

Mark worked on the salon thermostat

Got a work order for Valkyrie

Went for a bike ride

5.34 miles

1hr30 mins

246 calories

3.5 mph

1.02 avg heart rate

Antifreeze leak that he has been chasing for most of this trip. Today he thinks he found it. The radiator cap. Antifreeze like water expands when it gets hot and the radiator cap is set to pop open at 7lbs of pressure. The problem is when the antifreeze is expanding it is leaking past the seal on the radiator cap.

Day 38 - Sunday January 7, 2024

A beautiful day. Mid 50's here in Chesapeake, VA

Mark took the newly purchased bikes out of their bags and went for a ride.

4.62 miles

1 hour

4.5 mph avg

403 calories

1.35 avg heart rate

I took a walk through the marina's grounds and boat sheds. I also crossed the road over to the walking trails at the museum.

Today is Sunday so that means football. Today is the last game for the New England Patriots. Playing the Jets at home. It is snowing at Gillet.

I prepped a salad for lunch and chili for dinner. Football snack will be fried zucchini that we will cook in our new airfryer.

Day 37 – January 6, 2024

It's a rainy day here. A good day to take it easy, right?

Well for me it is. After sleeping late, a cup of tea, some news I did a few light chores and then took a couple of hours for some self care.

How to get away with Murder on Netflix and a self manacure and pedicure.

Mark on the other hand – he has been busy with engine room stuff. An oil & filter change on the main engines, followed by fixing the spot light by installing a new control panel.

Carrying a lot of heavy items; emptying the car from our trip and 3-5 gallon pails of oil plus many other things, Mark's back is sore. Ice, dinner and a few episodes of Fargo on Hulu rounded out our Saturday evening.

Day 36 -January 5, 2024 Atlantic Yacht Basin

It is Friday. Getting right back into boat life after a 2-week Christmas Vacation trip to Vermont and Massachusetts.

Today's goals are to provision, post office, unpack and organize the many supply packages that Mark had delivered to our daughter's house that we brought back with us, plus the supplies that were delivered to the marina store here at Atlantic Yacht Basin.

Supplies included; oil, filters,

We need to find out what day the boat is getting hauled and make arragments for a hotel if they are keeping the boat out overnight.

Car wash

Post office

Walmart

Gas

Vacuum car

Return vehicle

Day 22 – 35

December 22 – January 4, 2024

We were on a Christmas Vacation!

Day 17 & 18 – Chesapeake, VA Fee Dock next to Great Bridge.

Weather! Wind and rain. Mark soaped up the boat in hopes the rain would rinse it off. It did not start raining until much later than predicted so lets hope it worked out in our favor after having the soap on the boat for a couple of hours. There was a light rain throughout the day, however the downpours did not come until late afternoon and lasted throughout the night.

We watched the Patriots lose, again. They looked good for the 1st half but that 2nd half was disappointing.

We had snacks throughout the game and I made a sausage with orzo for dinner in the skillet. Yummy!

I worked on day 6 & 7 videos. Unfortunately I overwrote day 6 video with day 7 soooooooo, all those hours (we are talking 4 or more) wasted because now I have to redo day 6. Ugh!!! I am already so far behind!

We woke up day 18, December 18, 2023 to sunshine and warm temperatures. It is Monday, so I am working. Mark's plan is to take us to our final destination before Christmas break this morning, tie off and paint the portside window frames.

We moved the boat from the free dock to Atlantic Yacht Basin where we will be for a couple of weeks. We went through the Great Bridge at their 11 am opening. Had a shitshow of a tie up on our port side. Lines were thrown and landed in the water, they weren't getting tide to the pilings the way Mark asked the dock hand all the while were were fighting the wind. Eventually we got one line on the stern and one on the bow enough for the dockhand to walk off and then our new neighbor came out to help. Eventually, after creating excitement that did not need to be created, we got tied off.

Mark painted the portside windows, which is why we did a port side tie. This afternoon around 2:30 – 2:45 pm Mark spun the boat. Again, with the wind blowing little bit in our favor but mostly not. Once again our kind neighbor came out and helped with the lines. Of course, I had to throw the longer of the two stern lines, which I haven't had to do in forever and because of all the rain we had yesterday were very heavy so basically what I am saying is, that was a disaster. The line went in the water and of course Mark was controlling the boat from the cockpit station and is like: "You can wait, I can get the boat closer..." well why did you tell me to throw it?!!! So I had to pull the line, now even wetter and throw it again. Then, walking to the bow, Mark had me throw the longer of the two lines. This time, not hitting the water thankfully.

I hate not being able to do something when I know it needs to be done, and done right. Given the fact that Mark never asks me to do anything means I am out of practice when he does want my help. Plus I have a pinched nerve in my neck which has caused me a lot of pain in my right arm and have not been able to lift heavy things, and right before we left for this cruise I threw out my lower back so that also adds to the frustration of not being able to do anything helpful.

By 3 pm we were successfully tied to the dock and have power. I just heard the horn for the 3pm bridge which means we should be seeing a boat come along shortly since I have no sight of one on this side, the south side of the bridge

Mark is arranging a West Marine delivery of oil and other items. Valkyrie gets an oil change every 100 hours. Right now she is 10 miles over.

Dinner: Cheeseburgers and roasted vegetables & potatoes

Day 19 - December 19, 2023 – Atlantic Yacht Basin, Chesapeake, VA

Mark received a portion of his West Marine order. With that he can cross off a couple of things on his list. One of those things is change the diesel fuel filters. There is a small corner just outside our back door that needed some caulking. It should help with the draft coming in through the windows.

He also covered the tender and the flybridge seating. I wrapped the decorative pillows and our towels in shrink wrap bags. Something I should have done in the Fall. There is a new crack on the isin glass that needed to be repaired. Mark filled two wholes the hatch cover to the flybridge. These aren't new holes, they are from a past repair that were just left ignored. Got gas for the tender

Work in the engine room that got done:

- Changed fuel filters on the generator and both main engines
- Oil change on the generator
- Changed the oil and cleaned the filter strainers on both transmissions
- Topped the house bank batteries with distilled water

Mark and I will be doing laundry before leaving Friday. There is a laundry room here so we will use their facilities so we can conserve our fresh water.

What did I do today?

I dusted and swiffered the floor. Doesn't that sound exciting?!
I worked.

Took a walk over to the store. There are several stores, restaurants and such in the area. Walking distance to Rite Aid, Krogers, Dollar Store, Chilis, Panera Bread to name a few.

Day 20 – December 20, 2023 – Atlantic Yacht Basin

Mark did his laundry yesterday. Today I will do mine, plus the boat laundry; sheets, towels, etc.

The laundry is \$1.00 (quarters) per load. We can use our own dryer. It is the fresh water we are trying to save. Electric for the dryer is not the issue.

About last night:

Dinner was leftovers. Trying to empty the refrigerator. Thankfully we will have the boat plugged to electric while we are gone but if we lose power for any reason, I don't want to risk losing food to spoilage. Chances are we won't. Since we are next to a Kroger provisioning the boat when we return won't be a problem. I can use our wagon to cart the groceries the ½ mile distance.

We watched the Christmas shows that were on one of the statoins along with the Great Christmas Light Fight.

Our boat neighbors here at the marina just left this morning. They have been here for two months with mechanical difficulties. Waiting on parts, etc. Family of 5 with dog and cat.

In hindsight it would have been easier to just use the marina's laundry dryer. It is 4:40 pm and I am still waiting for laundry to dry in our dryer. Our dryer does not like to be overstuff so I cannot put 2 loads of wet clothes in at one time. The dryer takes over an hour for each load, so I am never going to get to bed at this rate and our sheets still need to be dried. Ugh.

Mark went through his camera bag and we showed me some of the accessories for the GoPro. I am hoping that I can use this second drone for outside footage. He put the camera in a weather proof case and has a sturdy clip that can go onto our railings. Next cruising day I will give it a try.

I decided to play around with Canva today. This is where I create my YouTube thumbnails. It is a designers dream. There are a ton of templates and it is very user friendly for business presentations, social media posts, invitations, the list goes on and on.

I also had multiple days of photos and videos to download off my camera and phone. Most of the time my computer and I get along, but there are days we do not. Today is one of those days. The frustration is associated with this very task. I don't know why the computer doesn't just do what I am asking it to, but like a stubborn child, it is going to do what it wants and then bad words come out of my mouth!

Day 21 – December 21, 2023 – Atlantic Yacht Basin

Getting ready to leave. I have to pack and go to the store for some car ride essentials, translation = junk food and a few more stocking stuffers to help Santa out. Packing up presents, work stuff (yes I will be working while traveling), and clothes. What to wear? Between deciding what to wear everyday and deciding what's for dinner every night – these two questions consume way too much of my time.

Mark is working on fixing the spot light. He thinks it is working however he may need to replace the flybridge control panel. It is hard to work on a spot light during the daylight. He will tackle it again when it is dark.

I went shopping and got food for the ride, dinner for tonight and there was a shop in the plaza that I stopped in and bought 2-tops for myself which someone is going to wrap and give me for christmas.

In preparation for leaving; Mark ordered a Lyft to the rental car and has made a list of all the things he is going to shut off on the boat.
The water heaters, water pump, all the non-essentials, stove, outlets.

Essentials that are always on even when on battery

Forward state room outlets

Salon outlets

Master head outlet

Galley outlets

Refrigerator

How do we know that they are essentials? Because there is blue tape next to them. The previous owner added this blue tape. Mark is certain it is because our carbon monoxide detectors are on these circuits.

Day 16 – December 16, 2023 – Hampton, VA to Chesapeake, VA

Departure time: 12:40 pm ish

Arrival time:

Total hours cruised:

Average speed: 6 knots against current in James River

Weather: low 50's today light wind and mostly sunny with scattered clouds

About last night:

After dinner; sloppy joes with broccoli on the side, Mark was unsuccessful finding any local TV that would come in over the antennas. We turned on the music, cleaned the galley and decided to have ourselves a dance party. We had no close boat neighbors so we cranked the stereo and had ourselves a blast playing some of our favorite (now considered oldies) songs. Hampton, VA did not know what they were getting when Valkyrie came to town. LOL.

This morning we lowered the tender and went to town! We were able to dock at the Old point Comfort Marina dingy dock which was a short walk to Fort Monroe. We were told it would be a \$10 fee but they did not end up charging us.

Day 15 – December 15, 2023 – Chincoteague Island, VA to Hampton, VA

Departure time: 6:45 am

Arrival time: 4:20 pm

Total hours cruised: 9 hours 35 minutes

Average speed: 8 knots

Weather: 39 at 6:30 am by 10 it warmed to 45 topping out at 51 toay
Sunny with 1-3 foot waves Winds 10 mph with 14 mph gusts

We hung out in Chincoteague for a while waiting for the winds to dye down so we could get back out here. Another weather event is coming

Sunday so the captain has planned to get us through the Elizabeth River safe and sound at dock in Chesapeake, VA by Saturday night.

6:30 am – alarm went off and Mark had the generator running by 6:39 and the engines shortly after. He untied us from the marina dock and we were in the Chincoteague Channel by the time I got out of bed and upstairs by 7:10 am. We are anticipating a 9-hour day cruising along the Virginia shoreline towards Norfolk. The plan right now is to anchor in Hampton, VA near Fort Monroe across the harbor from Norfolk, VA.

Once we get closer to the area we will have to come into the Chesapeake Bay, under the Lucius J Kellam Jr Bridge-Tunnel, which by the way is so cool. If you ever have the chance to drive oh it/through it, you should. We did two years ago. You can find the videos on YouTube.

<https://youtu.be/8zFk5TkQbtK>

<https://youtu.be/CwyxFbS1jAY>

Of course I had to take two videos. One for northbound and one for southbound!

Once we have passed by the Bridge-Tunnel we will head for the James River and we will bang a right and anchor for the night.

11:00 am – time for another turn at the helm.

We saw dolphin. I got freaked and told Mark to slow the boat down that there was something out there but he asked why? It was 3 dolphin and you can head straight for them, they'll move, and/or start swimming with the boat. This pod did not swim with us. It did get my heart racing because it happened while I was at the helm. Mark was in the salon so there really was no reason for me to get nervous, but I was, but also excited.

1:00 pm – I took the helm again for a little while. I had a bowl of cereal for lunch. I don't normally eat lunch but somedays you just need a little something in themiddle of the day.

We are crusing by Smith Island, VA

Smith Island is one of the Virginia Barrier Islands located adjacent to the southern end of the Eastern Shore of Virginia in Northampton County near Cape Charles. The island bears the name of Captain John Smith the explorer who visited it in 1608

Situated at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, Smith Island is easily recognized by the Cape Charles Lighthouse on its southern end – not to be confused with the Smith Point Lighthouse on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay. Cape Charles Light is the third lighthouse (built 1895) on Smith Island and, standing at 191 feet tall, it is the tallest lighthouse in Virginia and the second tallest in the country.

I got interrupted to go see more dolphin! There was a pod of dolphin off the starboard side. They were feeding and had no interest in us but was exciting just the same.

The sun helped keep us nice and warm today. It is 65 in the salon.

Mark saw some pelicans fly across the bow around 1:50 pm. We are coming up to the bridge-tunnel and are about 2 hours away from our anchorage. It has been a sunny, calm day on the ocean. I am blessed and grateful for our guardian angels and all those that keep us safe during our travels.

164 gallons of diesel fuel left in our 500 gallons tank.

4:20 pm engines off, anchor set

52 degrees in Hampton, VA with a sunset at 4:49pm

Dinner: sloppy joes & veggies

What an amazing day on the water. These are the days you hope for, less fighting the current at 6 – 7 knots, however, the seas were calm, the sun was beaming into the salon and kept us warm, and Valkyrie is running great! Thank you to all of you for joining us on our adventure.

Day 8 – December 8, 2023 – Chincoteague Island, VA

Boat chore day!

About last night:

Walked

Propane tank

Washing windows

Working & cleaning & reviewing meal plan

Planning the next few days here on Chincoteague island; what to do what to see...maybe a movie at the theater across the street tomorrow night.

Day 9 – December 9, 2023 – Chincoteague Island, VA

About last night:

So much fun!!! Last night we went to the Ropewalk Restaurant. We planned to be there during happy hours. What we (not so quickly) learned that a popular type of drink here is Crushes. They come in many different flavors, is vodka based and if you want you can also order it "skinny." We also learned, what a "rail" drink is. Right off the bat we had a decent guess. Rail drinks are the same as "well drinks."

I ordered a Crush at the Ropewalk. It was tasty but too sweet for me to have more than one.

Happy hour included ½ priced chicken wings and ½ priced fried pickles. Now how on earth could I turn down a chance to have a fried pickle? I couldn't! And...the wings came with several flavor choices, one being OldBay. So yes! Of course, give us an order of those! Super delicious.

What else does this happy hour include you ask???

\$1.00 oysters. Mark had a dozen. Me – no as far as I am concerned he had 12 snotty boogers for dinner. We had a big laugh over my picking on him about it.

Like just about everyone these days I had to take a photo of this plate of boogers and when I did the lady across the bar photobombed me! It was adorable. An instant conversation starter we began talking. Turns out that she was herself, her husband & stepdad to her 20-something son.

They had just moved to the area 2 months and 9 days ago from Florida where he retired as a National Park Service.

Another we spoke to has lived here his entire life. He seemed to take an interest in our story of living and cruising onboard the boat. At the time Mark and I were ready to try somewhere else he suggested Don's. The bar is upstairs. Off we went. If we had walked into Don's we would never have known there was a bar upstairs. The hostess was quick to greet us and when we asked she happily pointed us in the right direction. Off-season, on a Friday night we had no trouble finding two empty stools at the bar. It took no time at all for us to spark a conversation with the woman next to us. She was an off-duty manager here at the restaurant. She was a delight! Educated us on the area, positive, challenges of a seasonal tourist area, housing; all very similar to what Cape Cod and surrounding areas are facing.

Tonight is the night of our boat friend, Melissa's annual Christmas party. We were bummed we could not attend. Not bummed to be back in Massachusetts after enjoying a 52 degree day here in Chincoteague Island, but super bummed because we are missing a fun time with friends. It is a good feeling when you know you are being thought. Receiving a photo text of a bucket of nips that was at the party, we reciprocated with ordering a shot of our new favorite – peanut butter whiskey, taking a photo toasting them. FaceTime time!!! Our friends FaceTimed us during the party and we were so excited! We could NOT hear anything that anyone was saying during. Nor could they hear anything we were saying! We were blowing kisses, waving and laughing our way through it right in the middle of the bar. We did eventually move away from our seats to a hallway realizing we were probably disrupting everyone's time. What a cheer me up moment! Love you all, thanks for that!!

There was a soloist at Don's. Sang a lot of Jimmy Buffet, John Denver and favorite of everyone's everywhere, Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline." The bar parishioners (about 30 of us all together) sang it out loud.

A couple more shots and a delicious order of crab balls, we called it an evening. We were home and in bed by 11 pm.

Day 10 – December 10 2023 – chincoteague

Lazy Sunday morning.

Watched the news and caught up on some YouTube episodes of some people we follow that are doing the Great Loop. The Great Loop is exactly why we bought Valkyrie. This major bucket list item of Mark's is on schedule for Spring 2025.

Laundry

Afternoon snacks and cocktails; chicken wings & veggies

Day 5 daily journal write up and video editing

About last night:

Dinner on board: Pork roast, broccoli and baked potato.

Movie at the historic landmark theater on main st. The Man Who Invented Christmas. It was only \$7 pp plus we shared a bucket of popcorn so a total of \$24 for two. This movie was released in 2017 and Mark and I were surprised we have never heard of it. We both enjoyed this movie and recommend it. It is about Charles Dickens creating the story A Christmas Carol.

As we were walking out of the theater I stopped to take a picture of Mitsty's foot prints. While doing that this gentleman started chatting with us and asking us what we have seen since we have been here. Once we revealed we don't have a car he gave us his business card and told us to call him if we wanted a ride anywhere or if there was something we wanted to see he'd take us. David, who was one of many that helped restore this movie theater.

While we were at Don's have drinks the other night we were informed that Josh, the bartender was going to be playing guitar tonight so we went back to Don's. Josh was accompanied by a violinist and they sounded amazing. Putting his own edgy twist on the songs he sang everything from the Grateful Dead, Simple Minds, John Melloncamp, BonJovi and more. Not too loud, but just loud enough to get people up and dancing. 4 people were celebrating their birthdays last night which added to the fun energy of the evening. Dawn, who we also met the other night who is a managing bartender was bartending last night. She suggested a Christmas Margarita. Yum. It was so good. Just sweet enough, not overbearing and refreshing. The unique thing that Don's prides themselves on is that all the juice in their drinks is fresh squeezed, right there in front of you. In the summer the bar could easily use up 20lbs of oranges on any given day. That is a lot of oranges.

Last call was 10:30ish. We walked back to the boat by 11 pm. Attempted to stay up for SNL, but that didn't happen.

The storm that brought rain around 11 am got pretty wild last night at 11pm. It is just coincidental that the winds would pick up and gust and push us on and off the docks for a couple of hours. We should have remembered to bring in our American Flag because unfortunately that was whipping in the wind causing the most noise out of everything else. Who knew a flag could be that loud. 15-45 mph wind gust range.

Day 11 – December 11, 2023 – Chincoteague Island, VA

This morning the sun is out! The winds are still gusty. SE 20 mph winds with 31 mph gusts. Mark had a short night sleep due to the storm but that hasn't stopped him from having a productive morning.

Aqua maps need updating as well as Navionics which seems to be a frequent thing

Downloaded Bob 423 tracks for the Intracoastal to cover from Norfolk VA to Wilmington NC.

Charging the drone batteries and the handheld radio batteries and he is reaching whether or not we should be considering purchasing bikes or electric (standon) scooters for the boat.

Here on the island we have no car rental offices, no uber and the bike rental establishments are closed for the season. We could rent pony scooters here but I said no.

We were told that if you want to live on an island you have to accept island life. Especially on the off season. We are happy to embrace island life and walk where we need to go and there is no FOMO if we don't get to a few attractions here on the island that are most likely closed anyway.

Mark also has added the membership fee to the America's Great Loop Association to next year's Christmas list.

It is Monday, so work for me, plus I am still Christmas shopping and working on video editing and catching up on typing our daily journals.

We went to the t-shirt shop across the street and the grocery store. We only needed a few things. Passed on the vinegar at over \$5 per gallon. Got my Dukes Mayonaise (my favorite) at a good price; chips to go with a recipe that we will have this week and cooking spray which I though was pricey. I know that inflation has affected us all but I am sure this island has high prices due to location so inflation on top of that must make it difficult for many to afford groceries. We did buy & donate a premade grocery bag for the local food shelter.

Day 12 – December 12, 2023 – Chincoteague Island, VA

What a gorgeous day. A little breezy but not enough to stop me from a 3.4 mile walk along main st and then over to the Veterans Memorial Park.

Vetrean's Memorial Park is open to the public. It has an amazing playground for kids, basket ball court, ramps for kayakers, and thankfully open public restrooms. The view of the Asateague Island Lighthouse.

Along the way I saw the ponies out grazing at the Carnival barns. I passed by a couple of cemtreies. One caught my eye and I wondered into it a little bit. Most all the headstones dated to 1860's.

during the 17th century, the Island was used for livestock grazing. By 1800, families had settled on the Island fulltime. These settlers learned the importance of our natural resources; oysters, clams, crabs, and fish. A seafood industry developed with trade to New York and Philadelphia.

Wallops Island is next to Chincotegue Island and today, like many other days there are several, at one point I counted 5 planes circling around. And circling, and circling, for hours.

What are they doing?

First off, if you Google Wallops Island this is what you could find:

NASA's Wallops Flight Facility provides agile, low-cost flight and launch range services to meet government and commercial sector needs for accessing flight regimes worldwide from the Earth's surface to the moon and beyond.

Wallops provides many different suborbital platforms for science and technology research.

- Sounding Rockets
- Scientific Balloons
- Airborne Science
- SmallSat Support
- Launch Range
- Commercial Resupply Missions

To put it in easier terms:

Tucked away on Virginia's Eastern Shore, NASA's **Wallops** Flight Facility plays an incredibly important role in our understanding of earth and space science.

Now for the planes that are circling around:

Thanks to delawareonline.com

The Navy signed a \$1.9 million annual contract with NASA to begin aircraft carrier landing practices at Wallops. The program will have pilots landing on and taking off from Wallops runways equipped with lights and graphics to resemble the decks of carriers.

There will be 20,000 touch-and-go exercises per year at Wallops with the E-2 and C-2 aircraft, the only non-jet airplanes that land on carriers, officials said.

Mark took advantage of this beautiful day in a different way.

He painted the starboard salon windows with black paint to cover the caulking that was not UV resistant and was leaving black streaks down the boat when it got wet and if you touched it it would rub off on you. Mostly to give Valkyrie's aging window frames a beauty touch up. Portside will have to come later.

It has been 8-days since we have filled out water tank. We are at a new record. We have been as efficient as we can with our water usage. The 150-gallons needs to supply us with our drinking, cleaning, cooking and everything else water. It has been 10-days since we have done laundry. Don't worry we stocked up on those unmentionables before we left 😊

We are here in Chincoteague for a couple of more days so the discussion had to happen; how are we going to stretch out our water? I do have disposable plates & forks we could use for meals; I could buy drinking water. We are every other day showers; so where else could we

conserve? There isn't. It is possible that the town's marina has their water on and we could cruise to them and fill up on water and stay a night there before leaving for Norfolk. If we can't get water, we will have to make it stretch until Friday. We can make water on 9 hours to Norfolk. We are planning to anchor in Norfolk so we have to fill this water tank somehow.

Work is slow this week. I started working on Volume 4 of our Back Story for the website. I am also working on day 6 of our journey and I did a much needed load of laundry.

We reviewed our onboard fire safety and decided a second fire extinguisher is needed in our closet. We had one in the liquor cabinet which isn't necessary because we have one hanging on the wall next to it.

Dinner was leftover mexican casserole. After an 1.5 hour conversation with our youngest, we watched Santa Claus is Coming to Town then went to bed.

Day 13 – December 13, 2023 – Chincoteague Island, VA

Mark spotted a bald eagle this morning.

Since we are getting so low on water Mark has made arrangements with the harbor master Vernan to go to the marina. Vernan will run a hose from the office. Then we can overnight at one of the floating docks overnight. We will depart for Norfolk, VA Friday.

Mark is going to fly the drone today. This will be the first time on this trip. He is also going to paint the front windows with the same black paint he used yesterday on the salon window frames.

I went for another walk today. 3.8 miles. I found the oldest house on the Island and passed by the high school.

Date night and dinner out. We went back to RopeWalk. It was happy hour until 6 pm. We took full advantage of ½ priced Crushes. We tried a

few different flavors from the last time we went. The Whipsiicle was my favorite. I also tried the Key Lime. Mark had the Orange, the peach and

We both got burgers. Two different kinds and split them. Crab dip on a burger...who knew?! It was tasty for sure with a side of waffle fries. We brought a lot home in a doggy bag. We also had an order of the wings, Old Bay flavored. I think that is why Mark wanted to go back to RopeWalk, was for those Old Bay flavored wings.

Day 14 – December 14, 2023 – Robert Reeds Park to the town marina, Chincoteague.

We departed around 9:30 am this morning to move to the town marina where we will try to run a water hose from the office building to Valkyrie. We are just about out of fresh water. Yikes.

The Chincoteague Channel, which I mistakenly called a river a few times is not necessarily narrow but when you consider the water depths and what we need to navigate it is narrow. We have to move at high tide through here.

Tomorrow we will leave the Chincoteague Channel and travel through the Chincoteague Outlet into the Atlantic Ocean, into the Chesapeake Channel and the southern portion of the Chesapeake Bay, under the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel eventually into the James River to the Elizabeth River to Norwalk, VA.

57 minutes 2.83 miles or maybe longer because Mark didn't turn his watch onto workout mode until we had already walked a while. Either way, it was an adventurous walk and I was happy to have the company after walking alone the last couple of days.

Dinner was steak tips, greenbeans and sweetpotato. Yum! I don't normally cook steak because I am afraid I will turn it into rubber, but these steak tips were good. So I am tooting my own horn here and saying yum!

Mark met one of the boater here at the marina. From Derry, NH they are taking their first ever trip on their boat to Florida. Sean and his wife, whom also works onboard, hit something, doesn't know what, but something happened and now he has a sheered propellor shaft. He has been held up here on Chincoteague Island for 2-weeks. Tomorrow he is headed to Cape Charles to get the boat fixed. It is not far from where we are going.

Mark prepped a line for tomorrow night's anchorage. Because there are a lot of reports of people hitting an underground cable where we are docking; Mark prepped a special line so he can pull the anchor up backwards to avoid the possibility of dragging a cable when pulling up the anchor. It is called a....

Stay
tuned

Day 7 – December 7, 2023 – Cape May, NJ to Chincoteague, VA

Departure time: 6:15 am

Arrival time: 3:00 pm

Total hours cruised: 8 hrs 45 mins.

Average speed: 9.5 knots

Weather: Partly cloudy 38

It was 38 degrees this morning. The anchorage was quiet and secure. A fishing vessel waked us about 5 am. Mark was up before his 6am alarm, generator and engines by 6:15 am and shortly after he raised the anchor and took off out of Cape May.

We are getting tossed around a little bit this morning NW winds 12 mph gusting 19 mph. Slightly less than yesterday.

About last night:

With all the swells & waves that have cause all this rolling & pitching we have been doing it is obvious how all the stuff we have in the salon an bedrooms are doing, but what about the stuff up above us? The Flybridge. The tender We had leftovers for dinner that we reheated in the microwave. Had great funny conversation at dinner with Family Feud on the tv in the background. Most importantly; we faceted with our oldest, Jordan. It was her 23rd birthday. The girl who made us parents spent her day in training for her new job. Three days in and it is going great. The first step in what she hopes is a long career in Marine Science. Lets put that degree to good use girl. We are so proud of her. Haleigh, our second and youngest child is working hard at 2 (or maybe 3) jobs. She is a hard worker and likes what she does. She is renting a house on her own and is doing all the adulting things at 20 that I could never have done. She also makes us very proud. What makes Mark and I proud parents is that both

our girls are proud of themselves and are happy with their lives. We have been empty nesters since October 1 and it is nice to know that Mark and I still have fun, even when it is just the two of us.

What has me so sappy this morning? Back to cruising....

7:30 am – we are taking some good sized waves on the beam as we cross the mouth of the Delaware River. The wind carries those waves all along the river out into the bay which creates some chop for us.

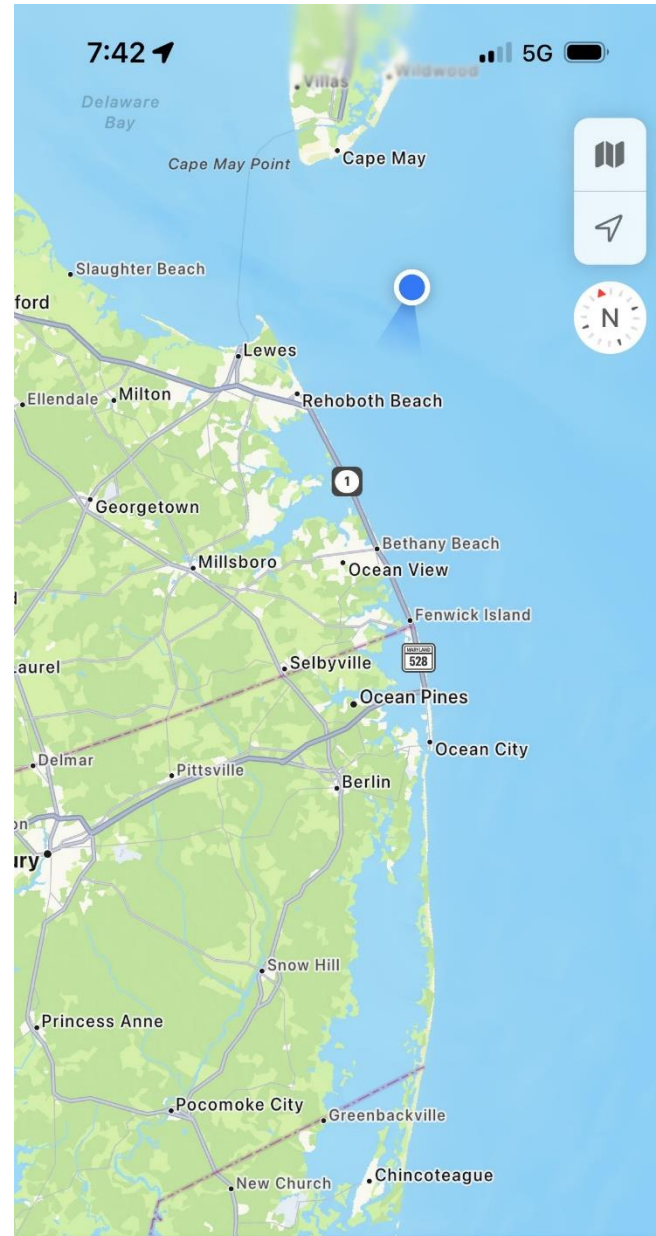
There are shipping lanes that lead up into the Delaware River. There are a few container ships in our sights and a car carrier.

The green running light did not come on this morning. Once we arrive at Chincoteague Mark will fix that.

hasn't moved, thank goodness. The grill is good because that is secure in a stand that is bolted to the boat, but how about the large cooler and the propane tank?

Not to the Captain:

- Fix the running lights
- Check out the top deck and make sure we still have a cooler & propane tank.
- The spot light still doesn't work



9:12 am – things have really calmed down a lot since we are now outside the mouth of the river. We are just outside Bethany Beach and I can see

Ocean City, MD in front of us. We will only be "in" Maryland for a short time today.

ETA to Chincoteague is 3:00 pm

10:47 am Mark saw a whale. It looked to be feeding. I did not.

While cruising along Assateague Island and we spot ponies (horses) on the beach. That was way cool!

Mark turned the generator on around 1pm. Time coming from the west is cold.

There is a small starboard transmission oil leak that Mark has been chasing ever since we got Valkyrie. It isn't serious but it drips on a spinning fan which makes it fly everywhere. It needs a cleaning from time to time.

The trip into Chincoteague is intense. There isn't a lot of room for error. We arrived at Robert Reeds Park just at 3:00pm as predicted. With a little bit of shuffling around we got the power cord stretched to its max and have electricity. Mark is putting the final lines around the pilings. We are at a fixed pier with a 2-3foot tide that he has to accommodate for.

It is sunny, and windy and a balmy 46 degrees.
Time winds are southwest at 15 mph here on Chincoteague Island.

The plan is to stay here for a few days. We have been cruising for 7 days. It is time for a rest. Plus, we are expecting bad weather on Sunday.

Since we are going to be here for a few days, I put our plants back in their rightful homes and gave them some much needed attention. They have been ignored for the last seven days. We have had a couple of these plants for twenty years. Can't lose them now.

Day 6 – December 6, 2023 - Point Pleasant Beach, NJ to Cape May, NJ

Departure time: 6:30 am

Arrival time: 3:30 pm

Total hours cruised: 9 hours

Average speed: 9 knots with following seas

Weather: Cloudy, partly sunny, cold @ 34 degrees, winds 18 mph winds

About last night:

Dinner rice w/kalbeisa

Dumpster run

Wine by candlelight and tv

Up and out of bed before the sunrise. Generator started 6:15 am, engines running, untied from the dock and headed into the Atlantic Ocean by 6:30 am.

We have following seas this morning that are rolling us. Mark is running Valkyrie at about 10 knots to match the speed of the waves. It's about 8:15 am and we have about an hour more of this rolling before we can turn inland a little bit more which should give us a smoother ride.

Crusing along the Jersey shore this morning with partly cloudy skies, we have great visibility. There are a lot of fisherman fishing from the shore and a few boats scattered here and there. We have seen a lot of birds "working" and we were on a close lookout for whales.

We are 8 ½ hours into our otherwise uneventful day when the weather started to turn. We can see rain in the direction we are headed. We have some seaspray hitting the windows. Mark turned on the running lights on and our radar because when you are running between sunset and sunrise you have to have them on, plus in periods of reduced visibility, which is our case now.

Once we set anchor, I continued to work, edit Dec. 4 video, which I had already spent hours on. It took us 3 hours to cruise against the current in the East River coming into NYC from the Long Island Sound. That is a lot of hours with video.



Mark had some work to do at his computer and needed to plan out tomorrow's cruise.

The generator is running providing us with heat and charging batteries. Tonight's dinner will be left overs which will be reheated in the microwave. I know, not very fancy and I know a lot of people don't like leftovers, but we do and after a long day I don't feel like cooking. So there, hahaha.

Mark checked the main engine oil levels; checked the freshwater tank for leaks, there is a very slight leak which he won't do anything about right now.

We are anchored just outside the channel right next to the US Coast Guard Training Center.

Little bit of trivia:

United States Coast Guard Training Center Cape May is the home of the Coast Guard enlisted corps and is the Coast Guard's only enlisted accession point and recruit training center,

Day 5 – December 5, 2023 - Jersey City, NJ to Point Pleasant, NJ

Departure time: 7:00 am

Arrival time: 12:16 pm

Total hours cruised: 5 hrs 16 mins

Average speed: 8.5 knots

Weather: Sunny and 38 degrees

6:30 am alarm

7:00 am engines started, electric pulled the anchor and off we go!

This morning was a beautiful morning to be in Jersey City at the edge of Manhattan with the Statue of Liberty in our view. The sunrise was gorgeous.

Note to Captain:

Spot light still doesnot work

About last night:

We went to bed lastnight expecting cold temperatures overnight down to 32 degrees. With extra blankets on hand we hit the hay around 9 pm. We woke this mornig to 60 degrees in our cabin. My opinion is that 60 degrees is great sleepaing temps. No extra blankets needed. The anchor was set, it was quiet so we felt very secure where we were.

Upper New York Harbor is full of life this morning as we take off towards the Atlantic Ocean. Several ferries, and container ships, some at anchor and some underway, plus the view istself made this moring a very exciting morning to be no the water.

We followed the channel out through the Narrows into Lower New York Harobr into the Atlantic passing under the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge which connects Staten Island and Brooklyn.

We also saw:

Fort Wadsworth
Swinburne & Hoffman Islands
Westbank Lighthouse
Conney Island
Fort Hancock

I drove the boat for about 20 minutes this morning while still in Lower New York Harbor and brought us into the Atlantic turning us along the Jersey Shore. Once 9:00 am came so did the alarm to start working.

10:00 am The plan today was to go to Captain Bill's, Point Pleasant, NJ get fuel, and dock there for a night or two depending on the weather. Captain Bill's does not have electricity for us. We were also going to get fuel. Mark is now calling around to find options. Anticipated arrival to Captain Bill's is 11:30 am so he has an hour and a half to figure it out.

Two years ago we stopped here for fuel. The price was \$3.51 for diesel. Today's Price: \$4.31

Barnegat was the area where Mark was making calls to marinas for overnight, possibly two nights, and fuel. The prices there were very high and the inlet itself can be very treacherous.

Little bit of trivia:

Barnegat Inlet is one of the most dangerous inlets on the East Coast from a navigation standpoint. According to the Army Corps of Engineers.

Plan A it is. Captain Bill's at Point Pleasant, NJ

12:16 pm. We are at Captain Bill's. Got fuel and then had to tie up to our slip for the night. It took a lot of fancy line work but we are in. Fighting the wind to get into a tight spot plus we are port side tie up here as every other time we are starboard tie up. We are expecting a 4-foot tide. We are at a fixed dock so lines need to be adjusted for that.

Mark checked the gear fluid before he shut the engines off.

The inside temperature is 57. There is no electricity here so the generator will be turned on for heat and cooking, same as if we were at anchor.

The water is on at this marina so we are going to fill the fresh water tank. We did just make water but it is always better to take advantage of the ability to fill up anytime you can.

This is a busy area. There are fishing vessels everywhere, small, large, and everything in between. Several do not look like they are equipped with heat. These fishermen are crazily dedicated.

Fuel: 277.494 Gallons diesel
\$4.31/gallon
\$-27.75 boat us discount (10%)
\$1252.25 total fuel cost

Dock: \$1.50/foot for the night = \$84.

After getting fuel, Mark runs the electric fuel polisher which is a filtration system that is on a five hour cycle. It filters the 500 gallons of fuel that is in our tank twice in that five hours. Then he drains a sample to check for water and or contamination. Today there was none! Yay.

We have two hydrolic systems. One system is for throttles and shifting. The other one is for steering. Both have a reservoir and maintain a airhead pressure. Our steering airhead pressure was getting a bit low but the fluid level is still acceptable so he topped off the airhead pressure.

2:30 pm. We have been here two hours and have taken full advantage of this marina's (limited) services. Water tank is full, boat is rinse AND since we can hardly ever clean the port side because we are usually a starboard side tie up Mark shamied and wiped down as much as he could reach!! Wow! Mark had to update the Navionics app and he is downloading a bunch of new maps and I am working on some videos, and he is downloading some files on his computer to his onedrive so the Wifi is being put to good use as well.

The sun just peeked out from behind the clouds, I do hope it stays out for a bit! Right now it is 62 in the salon.

Mark's tentative plan for tomorrow: Cape May, NJ which is an 85 mile run. That would be a sunrise to sunset day if we go faster than our average. We would be anchoring here. We have anchored here before. If we need to, we can shorten the day and stop at Atlantic City, NJ

4:30 pm Started the generator! It is 60 degrees in the salon, its time! There have been a plethora of boats coming into the bay, and surprisingly enough we saw a paddleboarder! That's some crazy dedication.

Day 4 – December 4, 2023 - Norwalk, CT to Jersey City, NJ Anchorage

Departure time: 7:00 am

Arrival time: 1:30 pm

Total hours cruised: 6.5

Average speed: 7 knots against the current

4 knots in the East River against the current

Weather: Partly cloudy, 48 degrees

west winds at 10 mph with 17 mph gust

6:30 am alarm

7:00 am engines started, electric disconnected and lines in

We are cruising from Norwalk, CT towards NYC today in the Long Island Sound into the East River.

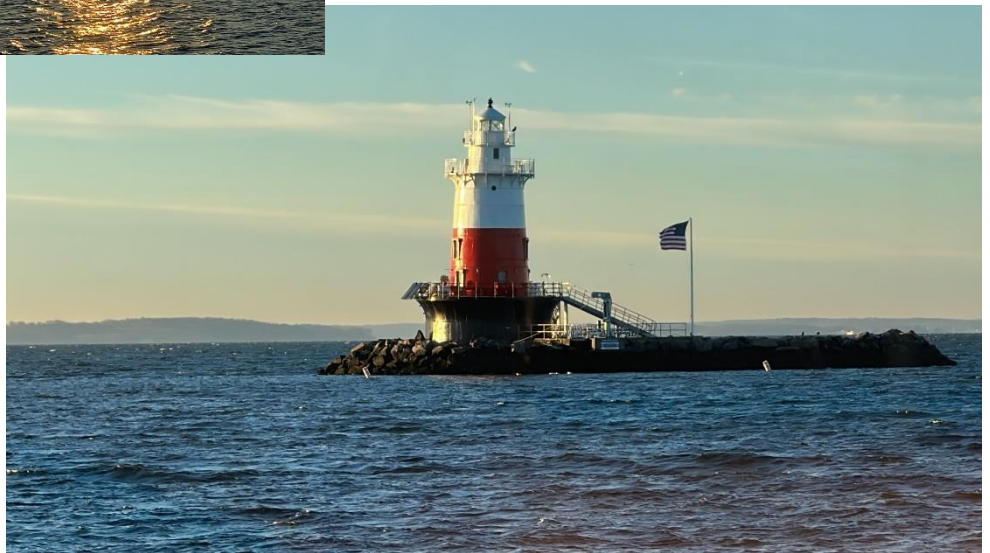
Being that today is a Monday, I have to work. I will be taking video & photos inbetween work calls and do my best to provide good photoage and summary.

Norwalk's seashore is beautiful. Large, gorgeous homes, lighthouses, and several tiny inhabited islands. We saw a couple of crew boats. One was nice enough to wait for us to pass but the other decided to cross in front of our bow. I am not sure if they were rowing or skulling. I believe there is a difference.

We had a beautiful sunrise. We haven't see the sun in 2 days so we were happy to see it this morning.



One of the lighthouses we saw this morning is the Green Ledge Light.



Little bit of trivia:

Recently the Green Ledge

Light received a 2-million dollar renovation and is now open for tours. It is one of 33 sparkplug lighthouses still in existence in the United States and remains an active aid to navigation.

We also saw what Mark thinks is a clamming boat on our way out of Norwalk Harbor.



Around 10:00 am I started taking video. We were entering into the East River arriving at NYC. One of the first things that I saw was Hart Island.

Little bit of trivia:

Hart Island serves as the City's public cemetery and is the final resting place of over one million individuals. The city still conducts about 1,100 burials every year on Hart Island, adding to the million bodies already buried on this 131-acre strip in Long Island Sound off the coast of the Bronx. But in the coming months, the dead will share the island with nature classes and guided tours.

Some of the points of interest we saw:

- US Merchant Marine Academy
- SUNY Maritime College
- La Guardia Airport
- Rikers Island
- North Brother Island and South Brother Island

Little bit of trivia:

No one has lived on North Brother Island since 1963. For almost a century, the island served a particular purpose. It was purchased by the city in the 1880s in order to build a hospital for patients suffering from diseases like typhus, tuberculosis, and smallpox.

- Roosevelt Island & The Roosevelt Island Aerial Tram

Little bit of trivia:

Roosevelt Tram is the oldest urban commuter tramway in the U.S.

- Brooklyn Bridge

Little bit of trivia:

Opened on May 24, 1883, the Brooklyn Bridge was the first fixed crossing of the East River.

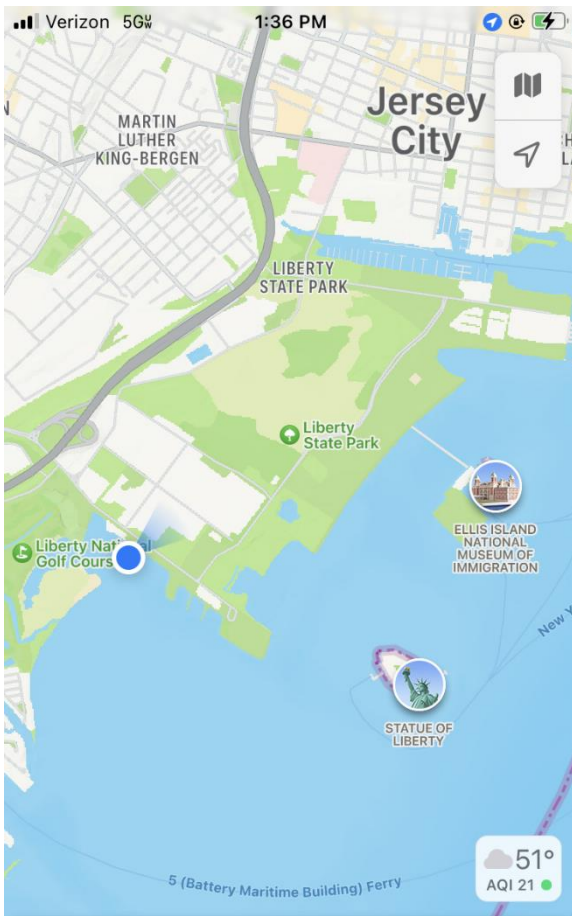
- United Nations
- Empire State Building
- Governors Island

Little bit of trivia:

Governors Island was one of the longest continually operated military bases in the country, operated for two centuries, by the U.S. Army and later the U.S. Coast Guard until its closure in 1996.

- Statue of Liberty & Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration

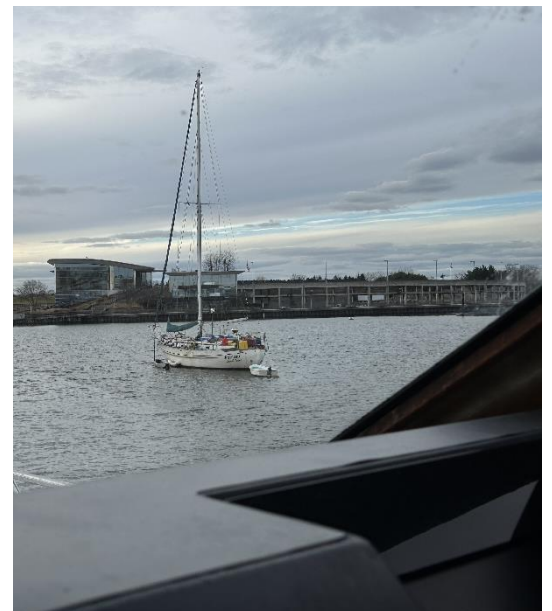




After we anchored, I caught up with work calls, Mark made arrangements with Captain Bill's Marina for tomorrow night's dockage and fuel. In addition, Mark spent some time in the engine room to top off liquids and double-check for leaks, etc. We seem to be going through our freshwater fast. That is not good. Maybe we are using more than we think or maybe there is a leak in the tank. We have had two (or more maybe) patches to that tank. The bilge counter went off but Mark thinks that it is probably from when we get jostled around the meter also gets jostled and sets it off.

There are 4 sailboats at this same anchorage. 2 on moorings and 2 at anchor. One of the sailboat occupants popped his head out upon our arrival as Mark was getting the anchor ready to be dropped and said he thought we were too close. What??? Does this guy even know how anchoring works? By the time we set our 60 feet worth of chain, we won't be anywhere near him.

What do you think? Are we too close?



We are expecting very cold temperatures tonight. 38 degrees. When we run the generator we will have heat. Typically we do not run the generator while we are sleeping, maybe tonight Mark will have to get up in the middle of the night and run it for a little while.

Update Winter Cruise 2023-2024

Day 3 – December 2, 2023 –Thames River, New London, CT to Norwalk, CT

Departure time: 7:00 am

Arrival time: 2:30 pm

Total hours cruised: 7.5 hours

Average speed: 9 knots with following seas

Weather was rainy, cloudy, cold with sustained winds at 22 mph

About Last night:

Coits Cove was a good anchorage spot. There was plenty of room, the water was calm and there was stuff to look at outside the windows. If it wasn't a foggy night. However, we were next to the city pier where the ferry terminal is. From what I can tell, this time of the year, there is the Cross Sound Ferry that transports passengers and vehicles from New London to Orient Point, Long Island. A 160-foot catamaran passenger ferry to Block Island, and the Viking Fleet from New London to Montauk, NY, (twice per week). There is a metro train stop near the city pier.

Do you know what trains and boats have in common?

Loud horns. Horns that they have to blow for the safety of everyone around them. During rush hour there are a lot of people movers blowing their loud whistles. So for this reason, this anchorage is good, not great.

6:30 am the alarm went off. Mark started the generator, started the engines, made his coffee, pulled the anchor all before I got out of bed at

7:00 am. Today we are hoping to make it to Norwalk, CT to a marina. We are anticipating bad weather the next couple of days and we want to be warm and safe.



Little bit of trivia:

This is the Coast Guard Barque Eagle. It returned here to New London, CT after a 4-month deployment. 16,000 nautical miles traveling to the Azores, Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden as part of their annual training cruise.

We have easterly winds today which is causing larger waves to push us as we cruise west. It is raining so the visibility is not great but the salt from yesterday is getting rinsed off by Mother Nature so we appreciate that.

My goal today; edit video from yesterday, work on the summer updates, and try to upload them when we get wifi;

Today we are trying something we have never done before. Make water while underway.

9:40 am – I learned that if it wasn't stored properly yesterday it definitely is now! Yesterday we were hitting the waves head-on, today we are getting pushed which means we are doing a lot of side-to-side pitching & rolling.

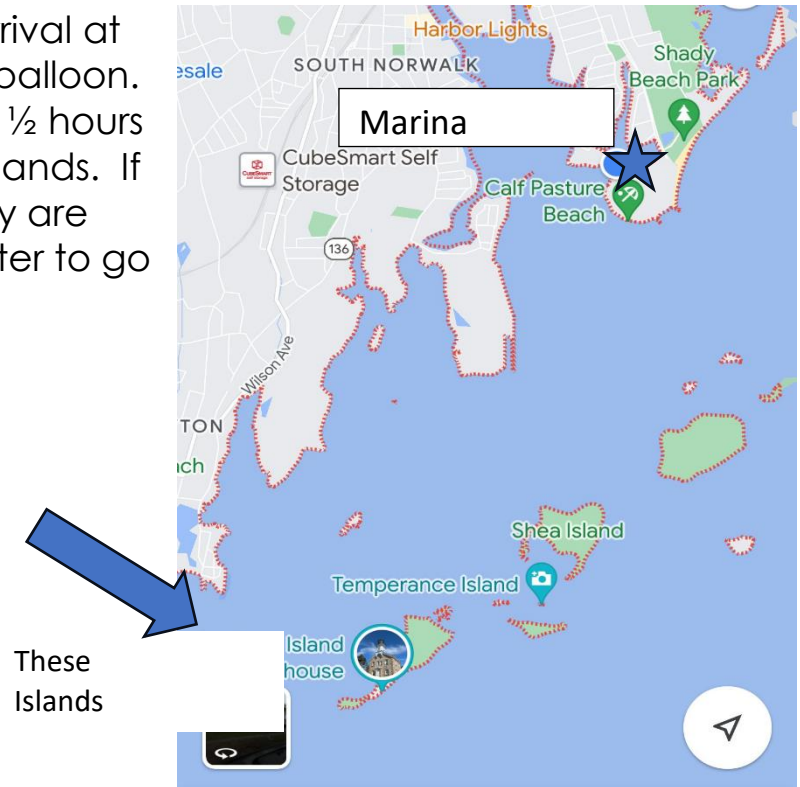


Plant down! (The plants are on the floor on a rag towel but still, one toppled over and left a pile of dirt)

Coffee table slid across the floor! (Anyone who has been on board knows this is a heavy table, so rather remarkable that it moved)

Thank goodness the kitchen cart that is on wheels is bungy corded! We got some huge rollers pitching us! Weeee!

I am looking forward to our 2:30 pm arrival at the marina but Mark just deflated my balloon. As a safety precaution, he may add 1 ½ hours to our trip today to go around some islands. If the waves we have been riding all day are breaking at the inlet then it will be better to go around



1:30 pm: It has gotten down to 59 degrees inside the salon. Mark offered to turn the generator on so we could turn the heat on but since we only have about an hour (hopefully) left I can stick it out. I got blankets.

3:00 pm. We arrived and docked at the Norwalk Cove Marina, Norwalk, CT. (Yay, no detour around the islands)
It is 48 degrees and raining. Mark maneuvered us into slip 6W, tied us off, and plugged us into the electric. Heat is running, a cocktail is poured and he just decided to inform me that the bilge counter went off today 7 times. He is now in the front stateroom, in the hole as we call it to check things out. We also have a bilge that is accessed under the front bed so he will look into that one as well.

The theory for the bilge counter going off: rain, seaspray on the boat, normal leaks during the rain plus the rudder packing; because it is not supposed to be 100% watertight and they did get a workout today.

4:00 pm. Now that Mark has sat down for the first time today he will start planning the next few days. Checking the weather apps, determining multiple options of where to go plus backup plans if the first plan doesn't pan out for any reason.

The plan might be to leave early tomorrow morning towards NYC. We will have a favorable current early in the morning and by the time we get to Hell Gate, NYC there shouldn't be too much of a current, although we have done Hell Gate in a strong current before. We will try to anchor on the NJ side of NYC harbor on the west side of the Statue of Liberty

How did we spend our Sunday evening at Norwalk Cove Marina?

- ✓ Dinner – meatloaf, quinoa, carrots
- ✓ Laundry - \$1.50 per load
- ✓ Dumpster run
- ✓ Dropped a 2-liter bottle of soda on my toes.

Things in the cupboard got jostled around a bit and even though I was trying to be careful opening the door, out it came with full fury and landed on 3 of my toes on my left foot then it bounced down the stairs and landed with a thud on the floor in the mid-cabin.

I am so happy it did not explode.

- ✓ Watched the Patriots lose, again.
- ✓ Watched The Santa Clause (slept through 😊)



Time is unrenowable and tomorrow is never promised so do it before you can't!

Day 2

– December 2, 2023 – Onset, MA to Thames River, New London, CT

Departure time: 7:00 am

Arrival time: 5:30 pm

Total hours cruised: 10.5 hours

Average speed: 7.5 knots against current

About Last night:

Last night Mark ran the generator for a couple of hours to recharge batteries, run the heat, heat the hot water tanks, and provide power for me to cook dinner. We watched tv by candlelight and was in bed by 10 pm. Valkyrie can get 'over-the-air' via antenna tv. We had a few channels to choose from which is actually pretty amazing.

6:30 am the alarm went off, Mark was up, started the generator, started the engines, made his coffee, pulled the anchor all before I got out of

bed at 7:15 am. There was no mud on the anchor which was great because then there was no need to use the anchor wash down.

Trying to keep the use of the outside water spigots to a minimum so that nothing freezes and breaks.

The temperature in the boat this morning before turning on the heat was about 54. We both stayed plenty warm sleeping last night and with the heat on the salon was 71 by the time I made my tea around 7:30 am.

8:15 am (ish) Mark hailed this tug to ensure it was indeed stationary as we wanted to pass in front of it. After receiving the all-clear we passed across its bow. The tug is not at anchor but the barge is. This barge will be coming in and out of New Bedford transporting the wind-turbine blades that have been stored in New Bedford's port. All part of the construction of the wind farm in Vineyard Sound.

By 8:45 am we have West Island, our summer home off our starboard side with a view of WI Beach and its historic tower

Little bit of trivia:



Located on the southern tip of West Island, the 48-foot tower overlooks the beach and all of Buzzards Bay. Construction of the tower was announced in 1888, and the Army occupied the site during World War Two. The tower is identified as a Fire Control structure and was part of a Fire Control and Coastal Defense Artillery network that extended throughout the Eastern Seaboard of the United States.

<https://millicentlibrary.org/world-war-ii-lookout-tower/>

9:30 am we are hitting 4-foot waves with an occasional 6-footer. So far everything seems to be secured safely. Passing by New Bedford.

10:20 am We are passing Gooseberry Island part of Westport, MA
We need our sea legs today. Mark is hoping that once we get into Block Island Sound we may smooth out.

We have had two water bottle casualties plus Merry Christmas Blocks. The weather prediction was 10-15 mph winds and 2-4 foot waves but at 11:30 am the winds were 23 mph gusting 28mph with waves 4-8 feet with large swells.

Little bit of trivia:

Just past Horseneck Beach in Westport is Gooseberry Island. There is a 1/2-mile trail out to the tip of the island. There are two observation towers. They were built in World War II to help spot German U-boats in Buzzards Bay. These two towers mirror the West Island tower.

Gooseberry Island dates back to 1602 from accounts of Bartholomew Gosnold's adventures, exploring, mapping, and naming Cape Cod, the Elizabeth Islands, and Cuttyhunk which can be seen from the beach on Gooseberry Island. There used to be 81 buildings on this island but several hurricanes over the years caused severe damage to them and by 1956 the State of MA took over the 73 acres, and removed any building remains. www.newbedfordguide.com

Although we do think we must be one of the last boats leaving the north heading south we have seen two pleasure boaters (fishing) and as we traverse Rhode Island Sound passing by Newport Harbor we see a car carrier, another ship in the cloudy distance and Mark has targeted a couple more boats. It is nice to know that we are not alone.

As we motor by Point Judith, RI, Mark spies a windsurfer!!

Point Judith is on the west side of the entrance to Narragansett Bay, RI as well as the north side of the eastern entrance to Block Island Sound.

You can find information on the lighthouse at:
www.newenglandlighthouses.net

Close call with F/V Shelby Ann! We were on a collision course until Mark radioed over to the F/V to find out his intent; cross our bow or our stern. Turns out they intended to let us cross in front of them but that was a little too close for my comfort. Mark never panics so all is good.

New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island have a triangle border just at the tip of Fisher Island on the port side and Stonington, CT in view out the starboard side which we crossed around 3:30 pm as we entered the Fishers Sound.

I did take a nap but woke in time to see Latimer Reef Lighthouse. This lighthouse is in New York, it is a sparkplug lighthouse on Latimer's Reef. It was constructed in 1804 and became automated in 1974.

At the mouth of the Thames River, New London, CT we will motor by the New London Ledge Lighthouse. Built in 1909 and was automated in 1987. Anchoring in the Thames River is the anticipated plan for tonight.

I love lighthouses and am thrilled that we get to see so many along the way. Most lighthouses have fantastic historic significance and contributions that you can read about here:
www.newenglandlighthouses.net

North Dumpling Island houses North Dumpling Lighthouse. This was barely visible to us today due to the clouds and approaching sunset. Since this Island (one of many small islands) off Fishers Island is in New York you would not be able to find info on the above New England Lighthouse sight but if interested you can find information on
www.lighthousefriends.com

Dropping anchor at 5:30 pm

The first anchorage did not pan out. It had several buoy markers in the exact spot where we were going to drop anchor. After several minutes of evaluating and seeing that there wasn't much room for error, we left for anchorage spot #2, up the Thames River. We are in Coits Cove near New London's city pier and the United States Coast Guard.

The original anchorage was in a small cove between Avery Point and Pine Island just across from the Pine Island Marina, Groton, CT

Note to Captain Mark:

- The spotlight doesn't work
- The Aquamaps app is not consistently accurate
- Great job with the stamina to cruise 10.5 hours and anchor us in a strange new area in the dark

Dinner was delicious. Creamy ranch chicken with green beans made in the skillet

Mark found 'over-the-air' TV channels so a little TV and early to bed for another long day tomorrow cruising to Norwalk, CT



Stay
Tuned

Time is unrenewable and tomorrow is never promised so do it before you can't!

Day 1 - December 1, 2023 – Sandwich Marina, Sandwich MA to Onset Bay, Onset MA.

Welcome onboard Valkyrie! This winter is our second Winter Cruise that takes us from Cape Cod South towards Virginia. Thank you for following along. You can get the lowdown on all of our preparations on the website: <https://alongsidecreations.com/>

What else can you find on our website?

- ✓ Our backstory (still in progress but worth reading what is there)
- ✓ Winter 2021-2022 cruise blog
- ✓ A little taste of what it is like to live onboard a 56' Ocean Yacht
- ✓ Links to our Facebook page; Instagram and Youtube channel

Here is what to expect in this



- We leave December 1, 2023

And we are off...cruising the Cape Cod Canal East towards Buzzards Bay. Mark timed us leaving this afternoon so we could ride the current.

Our original plan was to anchor in Buzzards Bay overnight. We diverted into Onset Bay and anchored in this protected harbor right near Wickets Island.

Leaving the Cape Cod Canal into Buzzards Bay with Southeast winds can create an unsavory mess of waves. Tomorrow, although it will still be windy and wavy, it should be significantly less first thing in the morning. The alarms are set for an early wakeup with about a 9-hour day of cruising ahead of us.

Little bit of trivia:

Is Onset considered Cape Cod?

And Why is it Called the Gateway to Cape Cod? Onset is technically a CDP or Census Designated Place within the town of Wareham MA. Folks here refer to Onset as a village, not to be confused with Onset Village which is a section of Onset.

Wickets Island is owned by Buzzards Bay Coalition. It is a 4.4-acre island accessible by low draft boat, kayak, paddle boards, etc.

In preparation for their new training ship arrival anticipated in January 2024, Massachusetts Maritime Academy is upgrading its pier. We could see the construction project in full swing as we cruised by. We also saw the dredging ship that has been on the east end of the canal for about a month dredging and then transferring the sand to Sandwich's Town Neck Beach as part of a huge conservation project to save the sand-starved beach. With a little googling, you can find a ton of articles about the dredging, the construction on the beach, and the new boardwalk construction.

We arrived in Onset and had our anchor set by 2:10 pm.
Cruising time for today: 1 hour 20 minutes (approximately)
I filled my afternoon with work and of course, typing this summary of our day. Dinner will be simple; burgers and a salad.

Thanks again for joining us on our adventure. Feel free to share the links with friends and family. We welcome all followers onboard Valkyrie.

Tomorrow the current plan is to get to Thames River, CT for another night at anchor.

FYI:

1. While we are cruising we may not be able to upload the updates every day. Wifi will be limited.
2. It takes a long time, possibly hours to edit a video so it may not be available on YouTube the same day as I upload an update
In the past, I used to hold off on uploading the daily blog until I had time to produce the videos so that I could share the links. This time I may not delay the daily journal just for videos. You may just have to hit that subscribe and bell button on YouTube so you will get a notification of when a new video is available. I will see how that goes as we continue along.

3. I will post daily on Facebook. (It is my preferred between Facebook and Instagram). The posts will be short so it will benefit you to read the daily blog to get all the details and inside scoop on our travels. The Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/CynthiaWalkerCorbett/>

Stay
tuned

Time is unrenewable and tomorrow is never promised so do it before you can't!