

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

Somewhere on the Water

Our Great Loop
Amsterdam, NY

Saturday, June 14, 2025
Day 18

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

Today is a day of rest and a sick day. I have been fighting a sore throat since Tuesday, but yesterday it turned into a full-blown cold. I slept for 12 hours last night. I have lost my voice and am feeling very croggy.

Last night, after a 10-hour day of cruising and locking and not feeling well, dinner was cereal.

Mark flew the drone last night. Still not being allowed over 75', we are thinking it is because we are close to Schenectady airport (?), only a guess.

It is cold, cloudy, and damp today. So far, Mark has reactivated our Starlink subscription and has tried to fix our marriage savers. We liked having them yesterday going through the locks. It was very helpful; however, they were not completely reliable. We thought it might be the plug, but it turned out that since they work on the same frequency as our wifi network, it was going to be either one or the other. We rely on the wifi network for navigation, so Mark will have to consider options.

Amsterdam has a Walmart, Kohl's, Home Depot, and fast food restaurants about 3 miles away. Within walking distance, there are locally owned restaurants and a deli market, and a liquor store. Here at the free wall just west of lock E11, there is free 50-amp electricity.

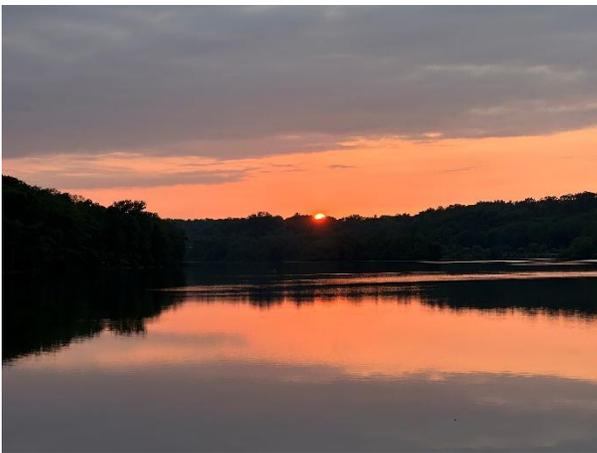
We passed Riverlink Park, which is a popular free dock space that also has a lot of amenities within walking distance; however, due to the water

levels and strong currents, their docks were in disarray, and there was no docking. I am sure once water levels are back to normal, this would be an option. There are a lot of trains that go by here, which means train whistles, but that comes with the territory.

We took a 2-mile walk around Amsterdam this afternoon. It felt good to stretch the legs. There is a restaurant, Russo's, just across the street. We saw a pizza place, the Market & Deli, and the liquor store previously mentioned. We walked up to Lock E11. This Lock also has a temporary dam, which I wrote about yesterday. (Lock E8)

Mark hooked up our Starlink. We bought the equipment at the end of our winter cruise 2023/2024. We got it on sale, and we knew we would want it for this trip. Between my work obligations, needing weather reports, downloading navigation updates, etc., it will be worth the expense.

There was an amazing sunset this evening. Dinner tonight was spaghetti and meatballs, and salad. We had a fun conversation about cordials and knight caps, and watched a YouTube video of a family that did the loop 2 years ago.



Everyone who travels to or passes through Amsterdam probably has seen this. If you have watched any YouTube videos of other loopers, they have probably mentioned it.

A red VW Beetle is perched at the top of a tall brick smokestack in an old industrial section of Amsterdam. It's an old marketing gimmick for Dudka's Garage. Roadsideamerica.com

Fun Facts:

Kirk Douglas was born Issur Danielovitch to Russian immigrant parents on December 9, 1916, in Amsterdam, NY, 28 miles northwest of Albany.

In the 19th century, the city of Amsterdam was known for carpet, textile, and pearl button manufacturing. It continued to be a center for carpet-making in the 20th century, when the Bigelow-Sanford and Mohawk Mills Carpet companies were located in Amsterdam, but these companies have since relocated to other regions. Google

Keep scrolling.....

Our Great Loop

Amsterdam free dock @ Lock E11 to Little Falls, NY

Sunday, June 15, 2025

Day 19 (10th cruising day)

Welcome! Glad to have you here!

Engines started at 7:15 am for a 7:30 am departure.

We are traveling today with a buddy boat, Next Chapter.

We met them in Waterford, NY, and traveled with them and 4 other boats most of the day through 10 locks.

Today, it is two of us leaving the lock E11 free wall in Amsterdam.

Lock E12 was our first lock of the day at 8:20 am.

It was easy peasy. Mark was lined up at a pipe, so he threaded a line around the pipe and held us through the elevation. There were no lines close enough for me to grab, so he was on his own for this one.

Lock E13 an hour later at 9:20 am was also easy peasy. I was able to hold a line back in the cockpit. Mark was lined up to a pipe, following the same procedure, looped our boat line around the pipe, and held that and shimmied it along the pipe as we elevated. It was smooth.

M/V Olivia from Chicago, IL, was in this lock with us. This boat passed us between locks E12 and E13 but was held in lock 13 until we arrived and went through the lock with us. As soon as the lock doors opened wide enough to fit through, he was out of the lock and gunning forward.

Everyone is on their own agenda, I guess. Good luck to him. I wonder if he will get far enough ahead of us that he won't get held up at the next lock. We shall see.

10:20 am - Upon arrival at Lock E14, we had to wait for M/V Olivia to lock through before we could enter with our buddy boat. There was a lot of debris at the entrance to this lock,



plus a strong current made it tricky to maneuver Valkyrie into the lock.

While we were in lock E14, we had a nice conversation with some people at the lock. They were very curious about our boat, where we were going, the Great Loop, etc. Each lock that we have encountered has public park areas that people can come and watch the boats lock through, fish, and or recreate, picnic, etc. A lot of people line up and watch, take photos, and are eager to chat if possible to the locking boats.

I am having some camera issues as we approach E15.

The GoPro in the windshield is full, and the GoPro that I use out in the cockpit needs to be charged, and I am not very familiar with the new program that I am using with the new gimbal/mic setup, so I am flustered. The lock itself went very smoothly. The scenery in between locks is much the same: trees, hills, more trees, but it is picturesque, peaceful, and enjoyable.



There are a lot of low bridges that we need to take caution when clearing. When passing under some of them, I would go up to the flybridge just to be certain we were going to clear it.

What would we have done if we couldn't fit? I don't know, because we did fit, so I did not have to find out otherwise.



We pass under more guard gates. I wrote about these the other day. There are 20 guard gates throughout the Erie Canal.

Fun Facts:

New York has the most hydroelectric plants than any other state. <https://eriecanalway.org/>

The plant at Lock C2 in the Champlain Canal in Mechanicville, is the oldest in the nation!

The lock attendants talk to each other so they know we are coming and how many boats there are. However, lock E16, the next lock, is only opening on a specific schedule, unlike the other locks we have traversed.

There was a 3rd boat with us in lock E15 (M/V Olivia is nowhere in sight). This boat, I learned, is a delivery. They sped right out of the lock, passing us, and we are only guessing it is to make the next lock in time for the scheduled opening. We asked our buddy boat to calculate an eta for lock E16 for us, since our electronics are all being used, it is too difficult for us to do.

They said to run the boats at 8.6 knots to get us there. Mark is running at 10.5 knots to give us a cushion of time. Valkyrie is sucking up fuel at 30 gallons and hour at this speed. There is ½ hour to go (4 miles) to the next lock...that is a lot of gallons of fuel. We made it in time and went through with both the delivery boat and M/V Olivia!

There is a speed limit between E16 and E17 where the repairs were made of 5 mph. (This repair is what delayed the Erie Canal from opening fully until just recently.) It was very picturesque and we enjoyed the slow cruise. E17 had a guillotine door, which was different than the other locks. It was the highest elevation we went through today, with a 40' elevation. It is the highest elevation of any lock on the Erie Canal.



(It is not the best picture; this is a freeze frame from the video.)

2:40 ish, we arrived at the marina just past E17 and pumped out, then moved down the wall to secure ourselves for the night.

3:15 pm engines off

Mark flew the drone, we did a load of laundry, and had pizza for dinner. There were eight boats here last night. 5 sailboats and 3 motorboats.

We had cocktails with Next Chapter after dinner.

Daily Summary:

Departed from Amsterdam, NY @: 7:30 am

Arrived at Little Falls Canal Harbor, NY @ 2:45 pm

Hours traveled: 7 hours 15 mins

Nautical Miles Traveled: 37.27 total for the day (388.61 total miles)

Average Speed 4.8 knots

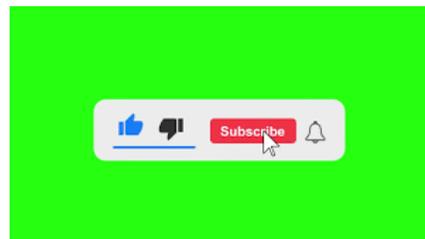
Weather: partly cloudy, mid-60s, and humid

Anchorage/mooring/marina review: The free wall at Amsterdam was a good tie-up, had free 50 amp electric. The trains were frequent and loud. Plenty of room to let the dogs run (if you are traveling with a dog, we are not)

#of locks we went through: 6 (16 total locks)

 **YouTube** https://youtu.be/XNldjFrl_iE

That is a wrap for this update!



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

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