



That's a Miserable Sound

Sunday, July 16th – Dead asleep my alarm sounds off at 5:30am. I turn to Julie and say “that’s a miserable sound”. Being the most amazing wife she is, she gets out of bed with me to make some coffee and get the boat ready to pull anchor.

5:50am the anchor comes up and Julie slowly makes her way out of the sleeping harbor. We turn north again cruising at 8 knots while the kids sleep below. We have a long day of travel. Our destination today is Reid Harbor on Stewart Island. Its one of the most northern San Juan islands and sits just south of the Canada border.

Just past the Clinton Ferry on Whidbey Island I see a huge whale tail come out of the water. Unfortunately it vanished never to resurface in our presence.

After a 10-hour run we finally arrived in Reid Harbor traveling 91.5nm. We anchored close to shore in a beautiful spot. We needed to get off the boat and get some exercise so we dropped the dinghy and went to shore for a hike. The kids ran like wild animals, so hard in fact that Ava said she was having a panic attack because her heart was beating so fast and she couldn't breath. After a lot of good exercise we had dinner then set a crab pot for an overnight soak. We took the

dinghy out to the south side of Stewart Island for a little fishing and watched an amazing sunset from the water with not another boat in sight.

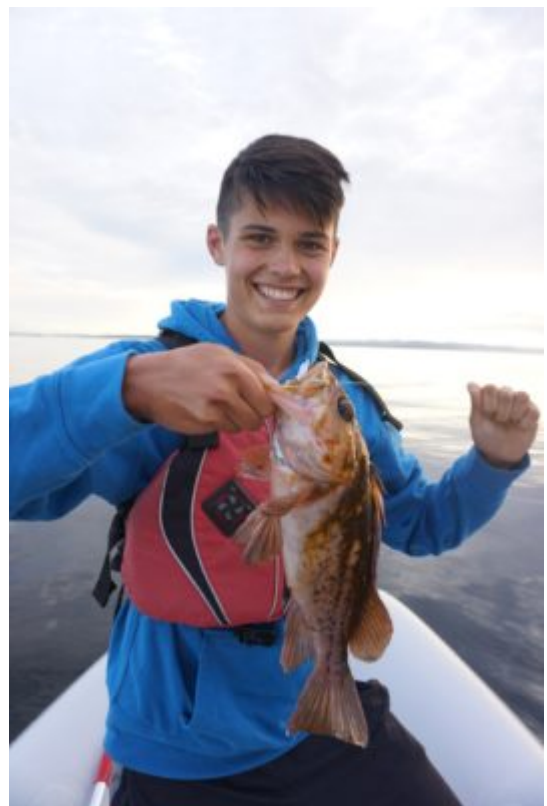


Pulling anchor in the early morning





Ava in hang loose mode



Skylars first fish of the trip





Kids are a little stir crazy!



View from our hike



Is it Worth it?

We've been prepping for weeks now but when it gets down to a couple days before you leave on a 6 week boat trip why is it

always a scramble! Running around like crazy gathering all the necessary items, making food and meal plans, making sure the boat is ready, and all the things you have to do to leave your house and business for that length of time has left us exhausted. Is it worth it? Hmmm.... I think so.

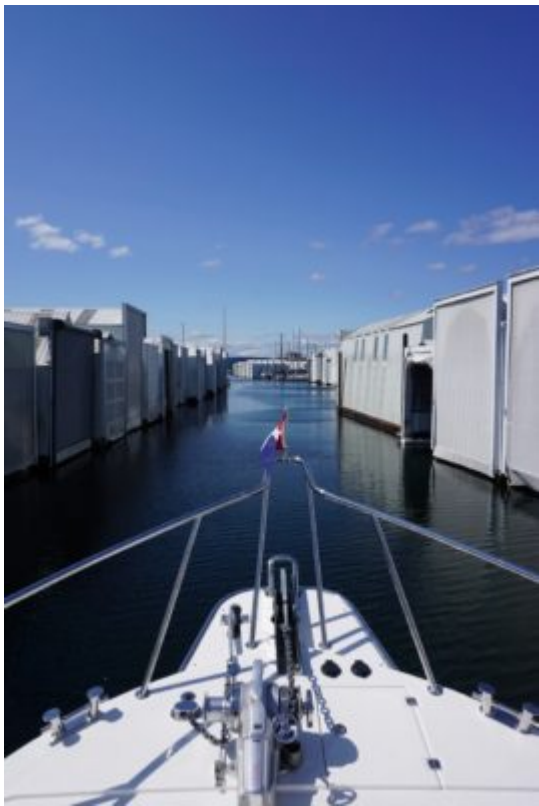
On Saturday July 15th at 3:35pm we cast the lines off. At that moment you realize it's all worth it! We were off, anything you forgot bring or do doesn't matter now, there's no going back. It's a great feeling; your whole world becomes your family and the boat.

With the late departure from Tacoma we couldn't get too far today and we still had to get fuel. We stopped at the Des Moines fuel dock and took on 270 gallons of diesel. Cruising at a swift 8 knots we turned north headed for Blakely Harbor on Bainbridge Island. Blakely Hbr is a beautiful anchorage with views of the Seattle skyline over Elliot Bay.

Only 22nm from home, we anchored in a sea of other boats and watched the sun go down. The family hung out on the boat talking about our destination tomorrow. We decided we needed to make it to the northern San Juan Islands. Reluctantly, I agreed to a 5:30am departure that would get us to Stewart Island by 3pm.



A celebration shot to kick off the cruise



Leaving the yacht club





Our view from Blakely Harbor



“Just a Little Farther”

On Tuesday Aug 30th – After 3 nights in Seattle, we decided to head over to Blake Island for a little more nature before going home. All of Blake Island is a state park and full of nature so close to home. Deer roam the island, and raccoons are everywhere. We got tied up at the dock in an extremely tight spot but all went well.

We decided to go for a hike around the island. Julie, not feeling the greatest, reluctantly agreed to go. I didn't know exactly how far it was all the way around the island but I thought it was a fairly quick hike so we started the journey.

I soon realized it was going to be a longer trek than originally thought but I pushed on saying nothing. After about 45 minutes I started hearing complaints from the back of the line, “I agreed to go on a SHORT hike, are we almost there” Julie said. Julie had a cold the last few days and was getting very tired. I decided to use my phone and Google maps to see how far we still needed to go. Oh boy, not good, we were only almost $\frac{1}{2}$ way around the island! Again, I decided to keep this info to myself and Skylar. Skylar said “Dad that's not good, mom doesn't feel well”. Against my better judgment we both kept quiet, only saying “we are getting there, lets

keep going". No use in turning back now I thought, we are almost $\frac{1}{2}$ way around, in retrospect a bad decision.

We arrived at a nice little beach where we all relaxed for a few minutes before taking off again down the trail. Julie started getting really tired and her anger toward my decision started flowing. I was forced to reveal my decisions and break the silence. We had at least another 2 miles to go and suddenly Julie got really angry! Skylar thought it was all really funny but it was not a good situation for me. After a little breakdown, I gave a pep talk and we pushed on with steam coming out of Julie's ears.

We finally made it back to the boat after almost a 5-mile hike. Julie crashed in silence and I just kept my mouth shut.

Some friends of ours called and decided to come up to Blake for the night. We all had a great time talking boats and hanging out on the dock.

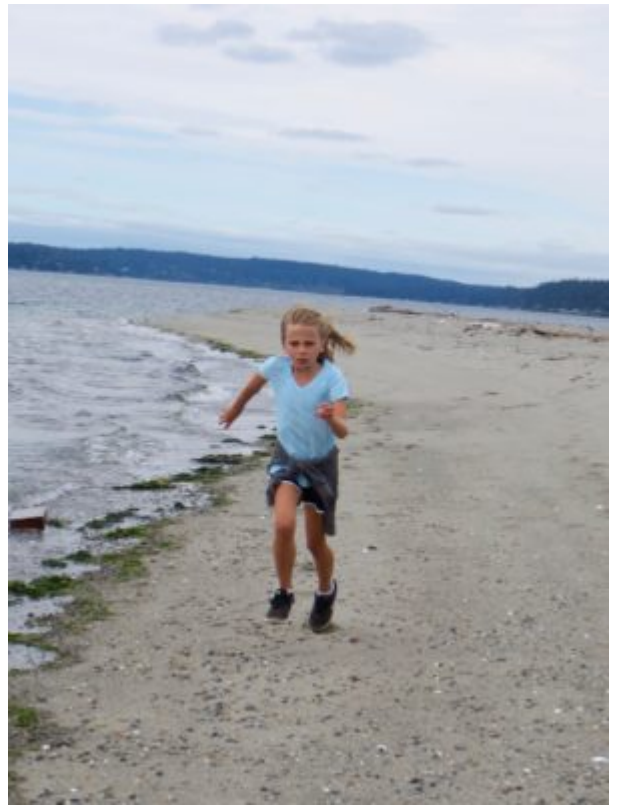
After 2 nights at Blake Island we fired up the engine for the last time for the short 2-hour cruise back home to Tacoma. No one wanted to go home. We all just pictured ourselves turning back north for more adventures. There's nothing quite like spending that much time on a boat with your wife and kids. Its challenging at times but its amazing how much closer you become. The kids gain so much experience in self reliance. On the water, bad decisions and lack of attention have higher consequences and that teaches them (and me) a lot about life. I am so thankful for this time and experience with my family and love that they feel the same way.

On September 1st 2016, after 35 days out, we arrived back to our boathouse in Tacoma.



Leaving Seattle

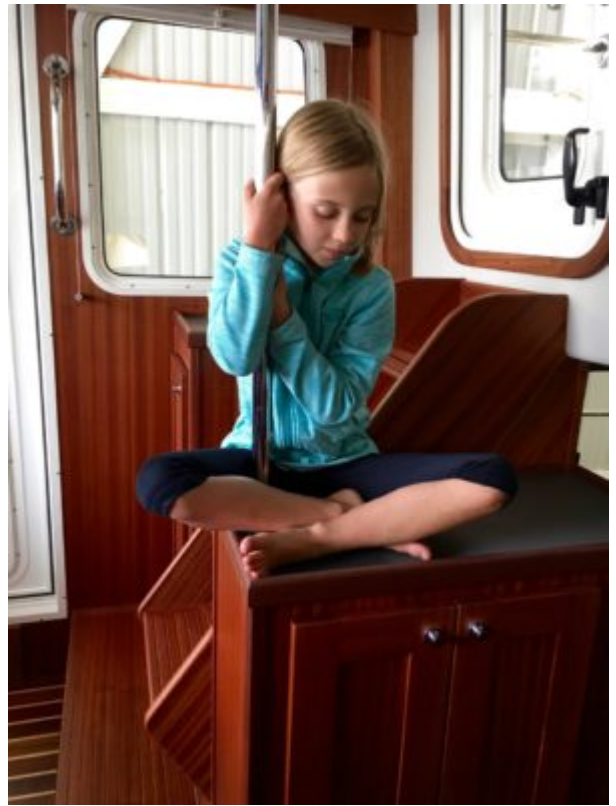












Ava doesn't want to leave!