

May 15, 2012

Dear Pops and Mom,

Well my spring has been full of adventure! Early in March Marv and Ardy came to La Paz to spend a month and a half aboard Talion. Bill Lilly showed up the same day and after getting groceries and spending the day getting ready we headed out. Every year I go over to the mainland Mexico to do the Banderas Bay Regatta but for various reasons I never have time to see anything but the Puerto Vallarta area. I had heard so much from friends about a place called Barra Navidad I



*Barra Navidad is not that much further south but it was still great to finally see it*



was determined to check it out this year. It was over 350 miles across the sea and down the Pacific which went by very fast as the wind was behind us most of the way. Bills girlfriend Judy flew in to meet us and we had a great time exploring the town and the surrounding area.

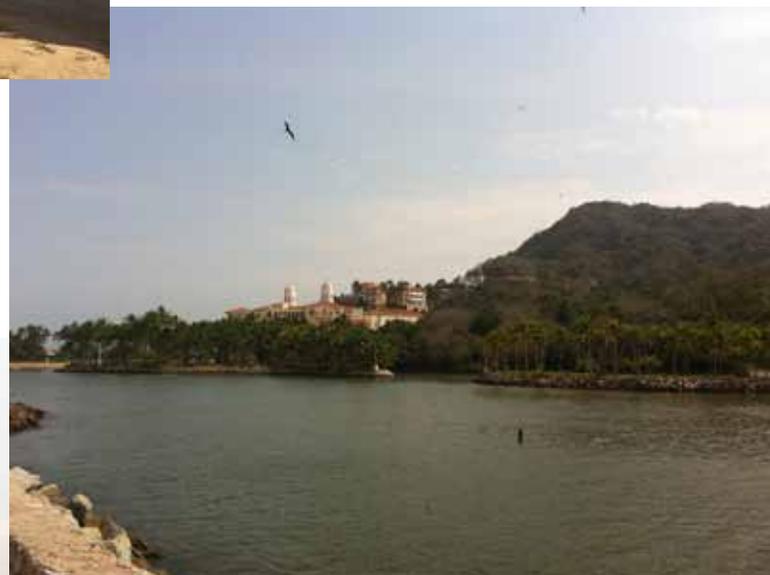
*We walked to this beautiful hotel. From there you could see the (prohibitively expensive) marina and way off in the distance the anchorage where we were.*



*Most of the town is on a peninsula with the ocean on one side and the bay on the other.*



*The entrance is a very shallow, very narrow, and not very well marked channel. But once inside the anchorage it is very well protected.*



*After a day of sightseeing and tracking down some hard to find items at various little grocery stores we had lunch at this very picturesque little spot.*



After a couple days we worked our way north towards Puerto Vallarta. We stopped in a couple more bays with small towns before we headed around a very windy point called Cabo Corrientes. It was there that the webbing at the top of the mainsail broke which caused the sail to slide down the mast. Bill and Marv spent the



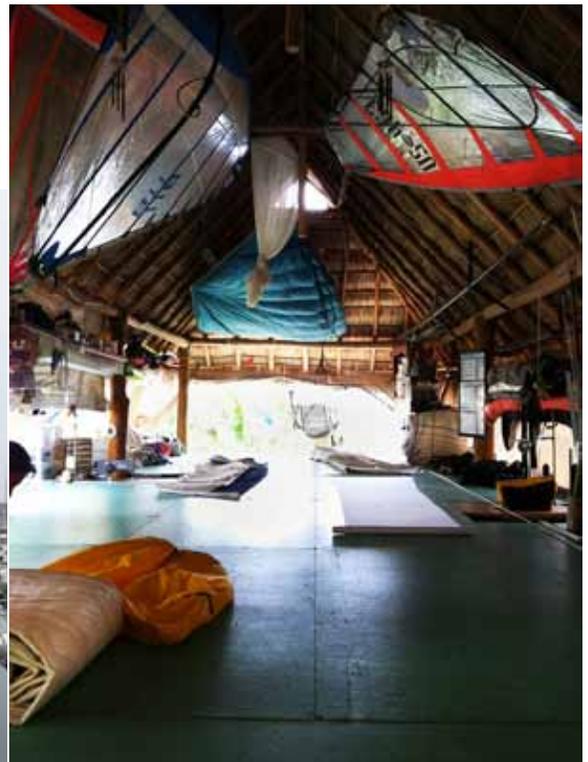
*Bill attempting to catch a fish and then finally spending the day hand stitching the sail.*



day sewing through the very thick cloth so we could get the sail back up. After fixing that the alternator quit working so we were not charging the batteries. We decided to skip our next stop and go to the old marina that is closer to the city of Puerto Vallarta for repairs.



*The older marina in PV is getting run down.*



*The sail repair shop!*

Then we went across the bay to a town called La Cruz. It has a new marina and boatyard and is fast becoming the sailing and sailboat racing center of Mexico. The next day we took a bus ride to a town called Sayulita. There we met up with Jen who had done the Baja Ha Ha on Talion.



*Sayulita is a surfing town and Jen (being a California girl) is an avid surfer. When we met up with them she was walking through the streets carrying a huge surfboard!*

*It was a great day and fun to see another place I had only heard about.*



Jen and her husband are in the process of moving from Reno, Nevada to Sayulita.

*Crazy Bill insisted on buying a bottle of wine in the little store for the bus ride back! Only in Mexico!*





*When we were in La Cruz a friend from Portland came over. He had just done a race from San Diego to Puerto Vallarta. 10 years ago we built the boat for him when I worked at Schooner Creek! The next day we watched it get pulled out of the water and put on a truck for the ride back home.*

Enough of the sightseeing already... it is time to go sailboat racing! We moved Talion over to Paradise Village Marina which is the center of the regatta and the location of the Yacht Club.

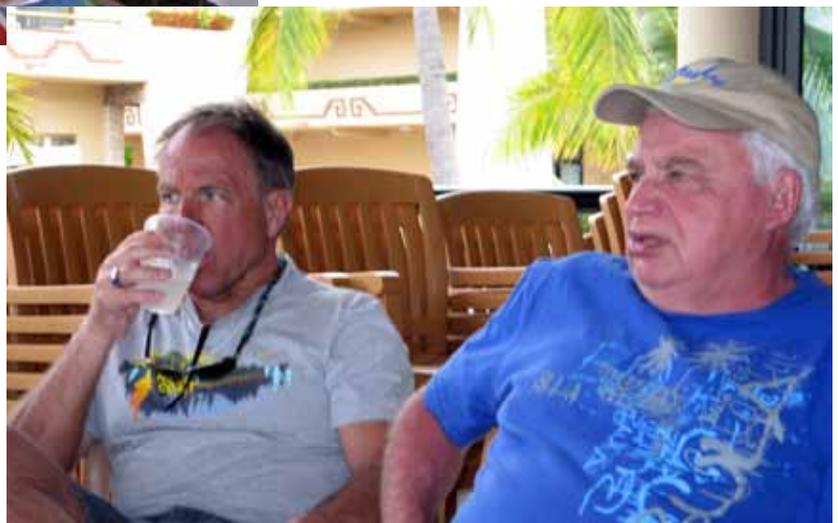


*The house they rented was just beautiful with a fabulous view of the water.*



They have half price moorage for the event so I don't want to miss out on that! Some of the crew came in a little early. They

were 4 guys from Portland that I have known and sailed with for years. They rented a house in La Cruz so we went over for a visit. It was a fabulous place but it was a half an hour from the racing and the yacht club so it was a little hard for them driving back and forth and fighting the traffic.





*Second from the right is Jack Fawcett. Do you remember when Jack and Bridget were in California years ago and we went to look at a boat that was for sale?*

We had 12 people for crew this year and most of them flew in from Portland just to do the race.

We went out into the bay a day early on Wednesday for a practice day to get everyone working together and then the races were Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Out of the three races we ended up tied for first with two other boats but when they figured in the tie breakers we got third.

It was a great time and good to see and race with old friends again... and there is always next year!





*Unfortunately my plane was a little late and I missed my flight so this was my bed for one night.*

Marv, Ardy and I quickly blasted back to La Paz as I only had a few days before it was time to head to Colorado and float the Grand Canyon.



I had always done the Grand Canyon in the summer and this was to be my first spring trip. I am glad I brought warm clothes because it was very cold for the first few days but it finally warmed up and by the end it was nice and hot. This trip was also longer than I had ever done. In the old days they allowed 18 days and then in recent years lowered it to 16 days. Fewer days makes it hard

*We were a cold group! We wore every piece of warm gear we brought!*



because you have to row a lot more, get up early and pack up the boats, and skip layover days (days where you just stay put one night). If you

*I love to row and even though this boat is huge it still rows pretty well.*





*There was someone camped at the camp we wanted to hike from so we camped below and the hikers got a ride up river on the big boat.*

do a trip in the off season like April you can take as long as 21 days. It turned out we needed the 21 days as the days are so much shorter it is

still hard to make miles every day. We did manage to get in a few layover days though. Another first for this



*This was Al's Grand Canyon river permit. He waited 17 years on the waiting list to get the permit!*

trip was it was the first Grand trip for the new, big motor rig. And just as we expected it proved to be the

perfect Grand Canyon boat. We put our stands on it so we could shut off the motor and row which also turned out to be a great idea. Not only for safety reasons (just in case the motor quit during a rapid) but because it is good exercise. Without the motor we would motor awhile and then wait for

*Jeff was very patriotic this year sporting a huge American flag.*



the row boats to catch up. With the oars we keep up just perfect. We hiked quite a few canyons. One canyon called Havasu has a hike up to a waterfall called Beaver Falls. You have to get up really early and get the boats loaded to get there in time as the hike (which involves some climbing and some crossing the fast moving creek) takes 2 hours each way. We were right on schedule that morning and after securing the boats about half of us hiked up to see the falls. When we were about 100 yards from our destination a great big Indian in uniform stopped us. He said



*Havasus Creek has striking blue water and many pools to take a swim.*

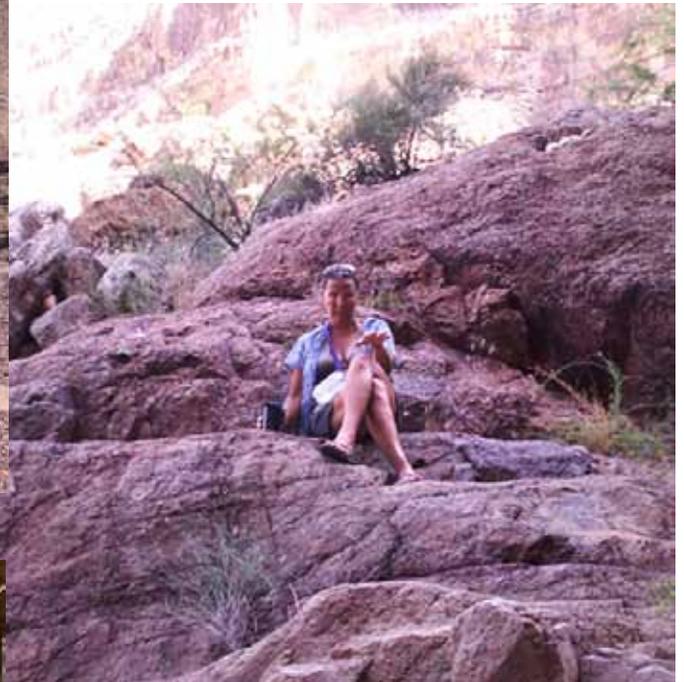


*Phantom Ranch is about half way down the river. It is the only civilization you see on the whole time. There are mule trips that take people down from the rim. It has cabins to rent, a restaurant, and a place to mail you a postcard!*

there was now a fee to enter the Indian land at Beaver Falls. He wanted \$35 per person. Well first off who would have cash on them after hiking up from the river? And second we were only going to stay for a half an hour.. thats over a dollar a minute! So after a peek around him we headed back to the boats.



*The hikes up the side canyons are really something at this time of year. It is not as hot as in the middle of the summer, there is more vegetation and lots of creeks that are dry in the summer have water.*



*I think almost every cactus has a flower on it in April!*



This year we had three gal kayakers along. They did pretty well and kayaked most of the rapids with the exception of one who pretty much rode on a raft with her kayak the whole time. I can certainly relate to that. In the old days I wanted to try kayaking and spent hours and hours paddling and practicing. I kayaked one river

*Above is Angie kayaking a rapid. To the right are the two gals kayaking and Jane riding on the raft with her kayak.*

with Dale and did pretty well. Then came a trip down the Grand Canyon. I spent most of the time for the first three days upside



down in rapids. The water was just too big and bigger than I had ever kayaked in. So

on the fourth day we put the kayak upside down on the back of the raft and I laid on it like a sun porch for the rest of the trip. So much for my kayaking career!



*Angie in a rapid on an inflatable surfboard called a paddleboard. You are supposed to stand up and paddle with this long paddle. She had a little trouble standing during rapids!*



*And another great thing about the motor boat on the Grand is we went through all the rapids first and then could motor up and watch the row boats go through.*

After the trip I was invited to go on an overnight river trip down a section of the Colorado called Westwater. Matt



*Angie and Carrie taking a rest out of the sun. It was hard to believe we were seeking shade after being so cold during the beginning of the trip.*

Flores invited me. I knew Matt from rafting with Dale years ago and he and his wife went on the trip in 2006 to scatter Dale's ashes. It was good to spend a couple days catching up with all that is new in the Flores family.

Now I am back to the boat getting ready to head your direction. I will be in the USA in the beginning of June. As soon as I get there I'm heading to Portland for a month for Elliot's graduation and to spend some time with family and friends. Bill has found me a mooring in Newport Harbor for that month and I am hoping to stay longer as it is a very good price. Can't wait to see you again!



*Matt and his wife Jen have had 2 kids since that Grand Canyon trip in 2006*

Love, *Patsy*