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Ron and Nancy Goldberg, MV Duet N50 02/28/2016



Ron and Nancy at The Exuma Land and Sea Park, Exuma Cays, Bahamas

So, Ron and Nancy please tell us a little something about your cruising to date and where you have been so far?

Our cruising experiences began in the Caribbean back in the early 90's. We took a charter course at the Annapolis Sailing School. We were newbies with no experience, but somehow the charter company in the British Virgins managed to mix us up with another couple who actually had done a lot of cruising. They ended up with a captain on their boat, whereas we were given the keys and told to have a fun week.

As we departed the marina we could hear the other couple asking why they needed to have a captain. Perhaps it was a bit selfish of us, certainly it was naïve, since we had very little idea what we were doing, but we remained quiet, raised the sails, and took off on our first solo cruising adventure. Providence smiled upon us, we and the boat managed to survive unscathed, and our cruising resume now had real world experience on it. Subsequent bareboat charters were easy to arrange, and we spent many happy vacations sampling the unique (but unfortunately disappearing) pleasures of the various Caribbean islands. We were hooked on the concept of seeing far-away and exotic places on our own boat.

Our first boat was a Monk 36, named Voyager. We spent several years cruising her on the Chesapeake Bay and learned lots of lessons in a relatively forgiving environment. These lessons included how not to pump out a holding tank (do not remove the hose attached to tank itself), why we shouldn't take Bonine for seasickness (we get drowsy and crash into things), how bumpy the entrance to the Potomac river can be in an opposing wind and current situation (too bumpy for Monk 36s) and how wonderful cruising can really be.

We then threw caution to the winds, bought a Nordhavn 46, sold our house, moved aboard and set off for the wild blue yonder. Initially, the wild blue yonder was the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) southbound. We traveled first to Florida, then to the Bahamas, then back to the Chesapeake. During these trips we had all sorts of adventures, ranging from breakdowns in places that were remote (three weeks in the Berry Islands waiting for a fuel lift pump for the main) or sophisticated (a bad fuel delay in Charleston). Regardless, we had a wonderful time.



Duet in Hopetown, Abacos, Bahamas



Ron and the dogs, Eleuthera, Bahamas



Just back from a snorkeling trip, Exuma Cays, Bahamas



Pumping out the dinghy, Bahamas



Making new friends, Fort Pierce, Florida



Exercising the dogs, Key West, Florida



Woman driver, Key West, Florida



Waiting out a storm on the hook, Berry Islands, Bahamas

In addition to all this cruising, we also did a lot of work on the boat. While Nancy enjoys cruising, Ron really enjoys working on the boat. We had our 46 for 8 years and scarcely a year passed that we didn't perform a major upgrade of some kind. We still remember the first time we tried to fix something on the Monk. It required a ratchet wrench. Neither of us had any idea what that was, so we went to Sears, where a nice guy in the Tools Section took pity on us.

Since then Ron has never looked back. He has actually done a number of rather advanced jobs, including installing paravanes on the 46, which we believe was probably a project too far, but it did get done and they worked just fine. You can read about our time aboard the 46 at [DUET](#). Our 46, Hull #50, is now named Salish Aire and is based in Seattle and her blog is [SALISH](#).



Installing the new paravane poles



Working in the 46's engine room



Off to fetch parts, Washburn's Boat Yard, Maryland



Tracking down a leak



Some projects required slightly more interesting outfits than others



Test fitting the new radar



Admiring the new radar installed



Polishing, which Nancy seemed to do an awful lot

After 8 years of boat projects, interspersed with about 10,000 miles of cruising, we decided we needed a change. We bought a house at Lake Tahoe and sold the 46, as we didn't plan to continue boating. That idea quickly evaporated, and in 2012 we bought the second Duet, a Nordhavn 50. This time around, we kept the house, and now we split our time between Duet and the mountains.



The new Duet

Over the last three years, we have done some extensive refitting of Duet, including reworking the bonding system, adding an at-anchor flopper stopper, upsizing the Naiad stabilizers, adding a Steelhead crane, redoing the bottom, upgrading the anchor platform, redesigning the electrical system for better performance on the hook, etc.

This time around, we had a good part of the work done by yards, rather than by Ron, so that we could go cruising before the turn of the millennium. That said, Ron did do a few things, along the way. Actually, more than a few, but who's counting.



There's nothing like a new alternator



Testing the new Rocna



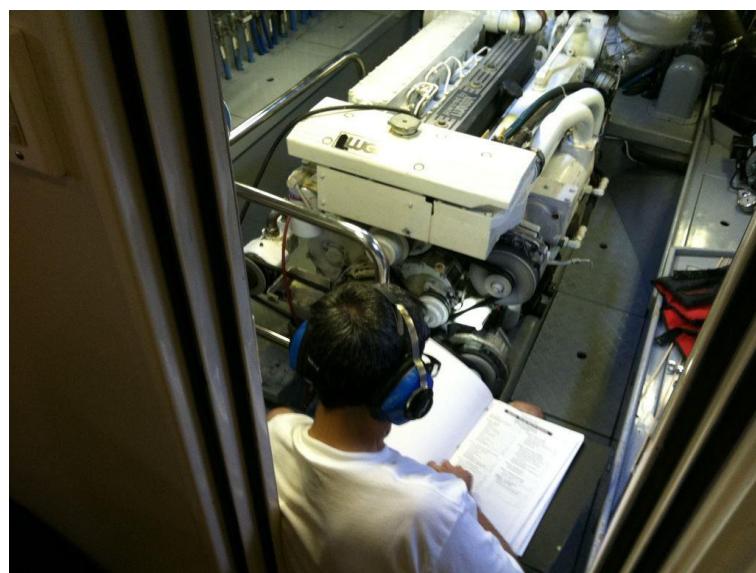
Wiring the new heads



Working on the crane



Servicing the dinghy engine



Reading the main engine a bedtime story



Napping after a long day refitting

Finally, it was time to go cruising. We took Duet north to Alaska in the spring of 2015, and really enjoyed spending the summer there. In the fall, we set off south with the CUBAR rally, from San Diego to La Paz, Mexico. Currently, Duet is in La Paz, and we will be spending the winter, cruising the Sea of Cortez.



In the fog on the Columbia River, Oregon



Coming into Malibu Rapids, Princess Louisa Inlet, BC



Chatterbox Falls, Princess Louisa Inlet, BC



At anchor, SE Alaska



Ron testing his survival suit



Nancy all set to go kayaking, Dundas Bay, SE Alaska



Monterey, California



Night off the coast of California



At anchor in Mexico

Why did you choose Nordhavn?

We think that PAE has made some of the most rugged and dependable ocean-capable powerboats available on the production market. We first visited Dana Point in 1992. We knew nothing, it was obvious, and the exceptionally honest broker we met with correctly advised us to buy a simple power boat first. We did, our Monk 36. A great little coastal cruiser and fabulous training for the more complex systems of the Nordhavn 46 we purchased several years later.

What has been your cruising highlight so far?

It is very difficult to pick one particular experience as a highlight. We get our biggest rush from achieving something on the boat together, a night passage, a difficult rapid, a tricky harbor entrance, the list goes on. That said, there is nothing like the calm of evening, in a beautiful anchorage, with a well set hook.



Sunset in Mexico

Ron, do you travel with animals on board?

We did, on our N46. Two sophisticated world traveling yellow Labrador Retrievers, named Tristan and Maggie. They introduced us to many people. Since they left us, we have not had pets, as we are thinking of visiting countries where it is difficult to take a pet. We do miss the dogs and are always looking for a pet fix along the way.



Tristan and Maggie, on piloting duty



Tristan on lifeguard duty



Maggie undergoing some personal maintenance

In your past life what did you and Nancy do?

Nancy worked in the software industry. Ron is an anesthesiologist, and continues to work intermittently when we are home.

Nancy and Ron if there is one thing you each do that irritates each other what would that be?

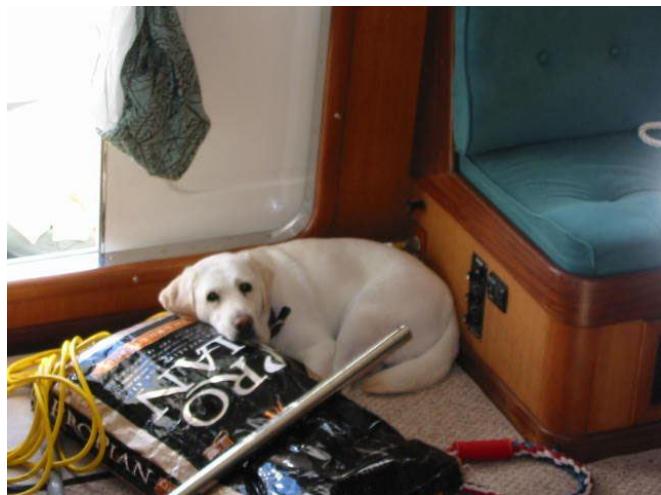
One of the things we learned early on, when we first started south down the ICW from the Chesapeake to Florida, was that we communicate in completely different ways. Ron, when stressed, stops talking completely, while Nancy never stops. It took us more than a year to figure this out and communicate it to each other. Since then we have learned to accommodate each other's' peculiarities.

These days, when we are entangled in a boating situation, Ron remembers to say "acknowledged" to let Nancy

know he heard her. Nancy, meanwhile, tries not to talk, other than to pass on relevant information as necessary. We aren't perfect at this by a long shot, but figuring it out together has definitely improved our cruising experience.

Onto irritating things, have you ever run out of something while at sea that has caused problems?

We have never actually run out of anything, although we will admit that, towards the end of a long cruise, we do tend to eat rather odd meals, composed of whatever is left over. Nancy tries very hard not to run out of things, which often means that we have too much of one thing. Ron, for example, would be very happy if he never saw a can of corn again. He does still enjoy, however, a peculiarity of Nancy's storage system, which requires that most items be removed from their identifying boxes and stored in square plastic containers. This means that when we make a milk pudding, for example, he gets to pick an unlabeled package and the flavor is a surprise.



Dogs need provisions too



How much will actually fit in a pickup truck?



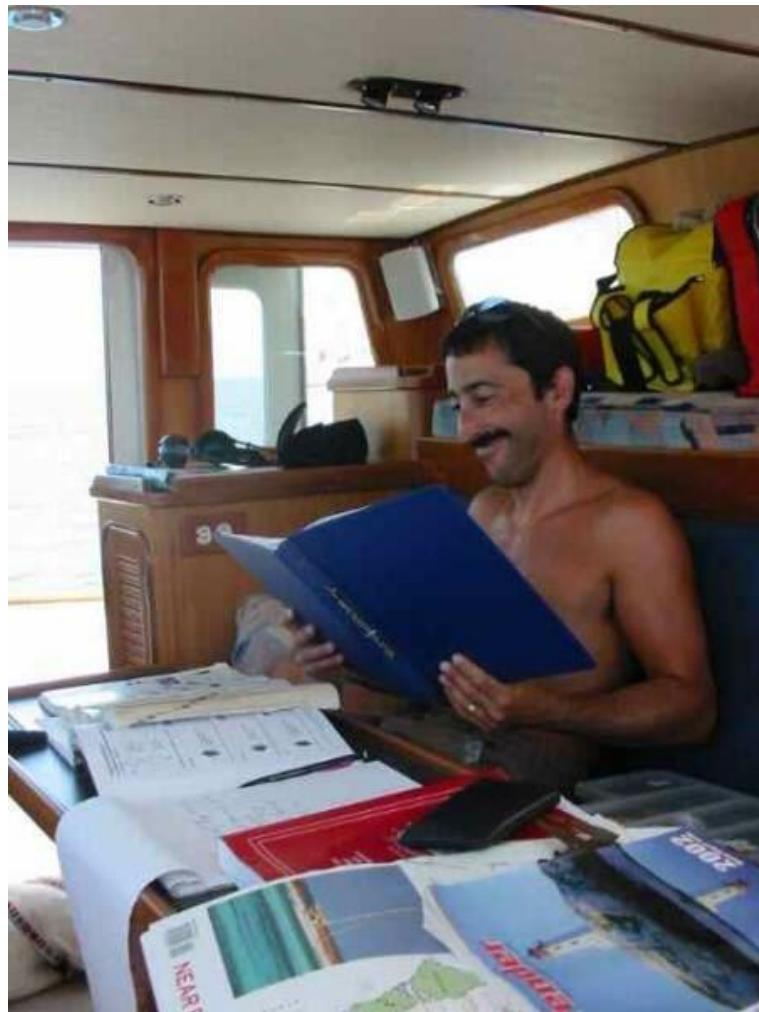
It is impossible to have too many spares



You can also never have too much oatmeal!

Would you describe yourselves as more hunters or more gatherers?

We are definitely both gatherers. Nancy spends lots of time wandering around supermarkets looking for new types of vegetables (not corn) and things that don't need refrigeration, while Ron can spend hours in a chandlery or Lowes looking at solutions for problems the boat hasn't developed yet. Ron even reads parts catalogues for recreation.



Captain Shopper



It's all in the packaging

Why did you name your vessel Duet?

When we bought our Monk, we just kept the name she came with, which was Voyager. But, when we got the Nordhavn 46, we felt strongly that we should name her something that was appropriate to us.

Nancy is the planner and Ron is the technical side of our cruising team. We tell people that, without Nancy, we would still be on the dock “preparing” the boat. But, without Ron, we would have sunk long ago. Our skill sets are complimentary and allow us to experience the pleasures that are unique to cruising one's own boat to faraway places. Thus, while we can't recall how the name “Duet” was originally suggested, it is a great fit for us and how we cruise.

What other names did you consider?

Frankly, it's been so long since we named the 46, we don't remember.

What's the funniest thing that has ever happened to you while at sea?

One year we were entering the St. Mary's River, at Cumberland Island, on the border between Florida and Georgia, from the ocean. It was night, but we had been in there before. It is a well-lit, ranged and frequently dredged inlet, as it is the entrance for the Kings Bay nuclear sub base.

We were chugging along, coming in from quite a ways offshore. We were both awake, as it was around 8 or 9 at night and we expected to be in before midnight. We identified a large target on the radar, just outside the river entrance. Once we got closer, it called us on the radio, identifying itself, via a young female voice, as

Navy Warship #X, keeping station at position Y. Keeping station meant it was going around in a big circle, right in front of the river entrance.

We asked permission to enter the river, which was granted. So we traveled slowly, ever so slowly, towards the warship, which continued to travel a roughly rectangular loop around its station. This was not long after 9-11. There were strict new rules dictating how close one could approach to a military vessel. However, we were crawling at less than 4kts against an outgoing tidal current, while the military vessel was traveling about 15kts. To us, we seemed trapped, unable to exit the rectangle without breaking the approach rules.



So we hailed the warship and asked permission to exit their station keeping pattern, since we literally couldn't move fast enough to get out the way before they came around again. The warship, after a moment of silence, during which we expect the entire bridge crew was laughing themselves silly, gracefully granted us permission to exit and moved carefully out of our way.

The next morning, while we were sitting at anchor at Cumberland Island, we saw the reason for our warship; a nuclear sub was coming into Kings Bay. Another exited later in the day, so it must have been a busy time for Navy Warship #X.



Submarine at Cumberland Island, Georgia

What's the biggest mistake you have ever made on the water?

This is an easy one as both of us came up with the same incident unprompted!

One year, we were headed south in the 46 and were entering the Wrightsville Beach anchorage from the southbound ICW side. It is a tight entrance and quite crowded, as there is a marina on the corner, with a busy fuel dock. We had been there before, it was late in the day and we were just looking forward to getting the hook down and taking a break.

As we came to the corner, we noticed a dredge on the opposite side of the narrow channel leading to the anchorage, level with the marina. He seemed to be stationary, it was late in the day, and we thought dredging operations had stopped for the evening. The boat ahead of us passed him with no fanfare. So we assumed (this is a bad thing to do in boating, as it is in most things) that we could also just pass on by, without checking with the dredge.

Experience is such a valuable teacher. For example, until this day we did not understand how some dredges use a network of underwater cables to operate excavating equipment on the seafloor and to move the pontoon between its various anchoring points. Contrary to our assumption, it turned out that this dredge was still operational.

We had already begun our turn into the narrow channel, with the docks of the marina to port and the dredge pontoon to starboard. To our horror, directly across our path, we could see a wire cable slowly lifting out of the water. At the same time the dredge pontoon, which was considerably larger than Duet, was approaching us from our starboard side, thereby threatening to crush us between him and the marina docks.

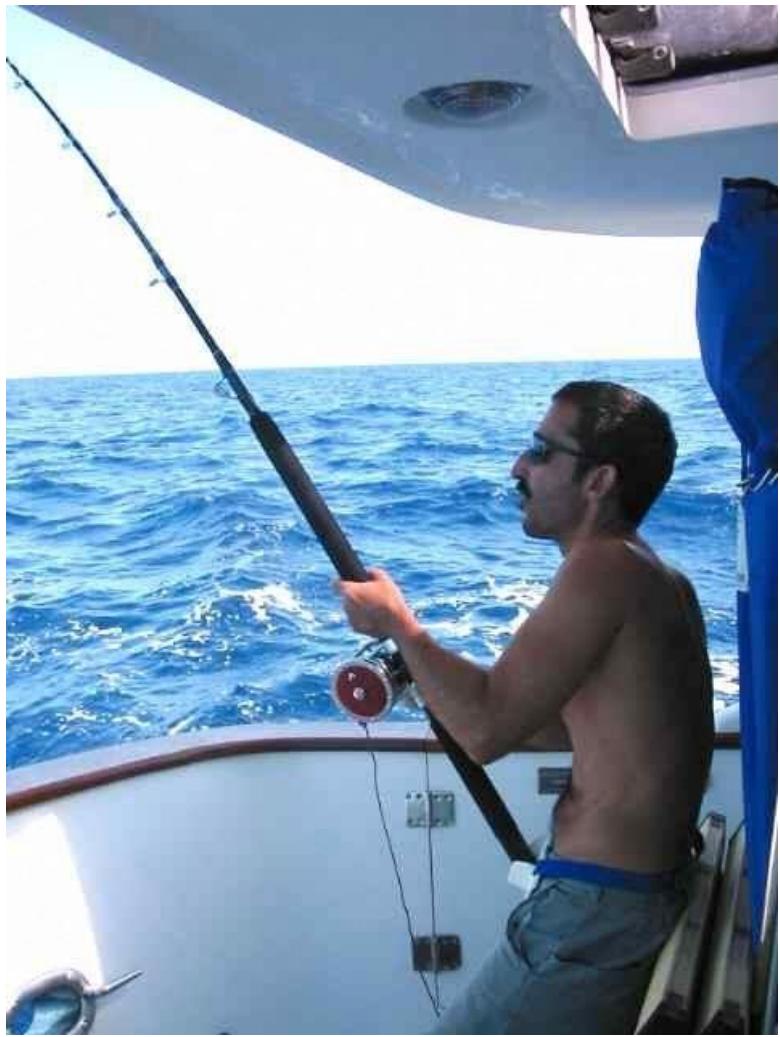
To this day we don't know how Ron managed to turn the 46 around in the narrow space between the advancing dredge to our starboard, the marina to our port and the rising cable at our bow. Suffice it to say that folks in the marina were pointing at us and yelling, while the dredge workers, who had suddenly noticed us, were waving their arms and also yelling. But turn her Ron did, and we roared out of the narrow channel, back into the main ICW channel at almost full speed.

After we slowed down, and the adrenaline wore off, we approached the channel again, called the dredge on VHF channel 13, clarified that we would be passing and traveled safely by him to the anchorage.

This was a big learning day. First, we learned a little about how dredges work, an interesting topic best explored from the safety of a computer screen rather than the pilot house of one's trawler. Second, we learned that we should always contact dredges or other commercial vessels working anywhere near us, if we have the slightest doubt about what they are doing. Third, we learned that we should talk about what we think we see, as both of us were uncertain about what the dredge was doing before we even got there, but neither of us said anything. In this case, Nancy had actually mentioned that she saw a puff of smoke from the dredge's stack, as we were making our turn, but she didn't push it, so Ron just kept going.

What's the one lesson you wish you had learned before taking on the Pacific North West?

How to fish! We were good fishermen in the Bahamas, but either the fish are smarter on the West Coast or we have gotten dumber with age. Regardless, during our entire three months up north we caught only one tiny halibut. We felt so bad for it we threw it back to grow up into a big halibut, which will then be caught by someone who knows what they are doing.



Ron catching a fish, Exuma Sound, Bahamas



Ron reading about fishing in SE Alaska, which didn't seem to help

Tell us a little something about Duet?



Duet off the Pacific Coast of Mexico

Duet is a Nordhavn 50. She was built in 2000 and we are her third owner. She was commissioned in Dana Point, traveled to Mexico and then north to Seattle, where she spent her life until we bought her. She had been to Alaska at least once before she joined us, but she spent the bulk of her time in the San Juan's and BC. Her previous names were Molokai and Loreley.

Duet has a bulbous bow, which makes her quite fast and efficient. It does have one downside; in head seas it is quite noisy. She is a wet exhaust, which allows more room in the salon. Funnily enough, her hull is the same color as our 46, namely putty, which looks like a light tan, except in certain light, when it appears yellow. Duet normally cruises at about 7.5-8 knots, and has a range of about 3,000 miles at slower speeds. She is capable of cruising at 9 knots if you want to pay the fuel bill.

We have put 6,000 miles on Duet since we got her and we can honestly say she is a super boat. The 46 is one of the best boats PAE has ever built, but we must admit we like the slightly larger, slightly faster 50 better. As someone once said, the 50 is like Robert Southey's Three Bears "This one is not too big and not too small". For us, she is the perfect couple's cruiser.

What are you afraid of?

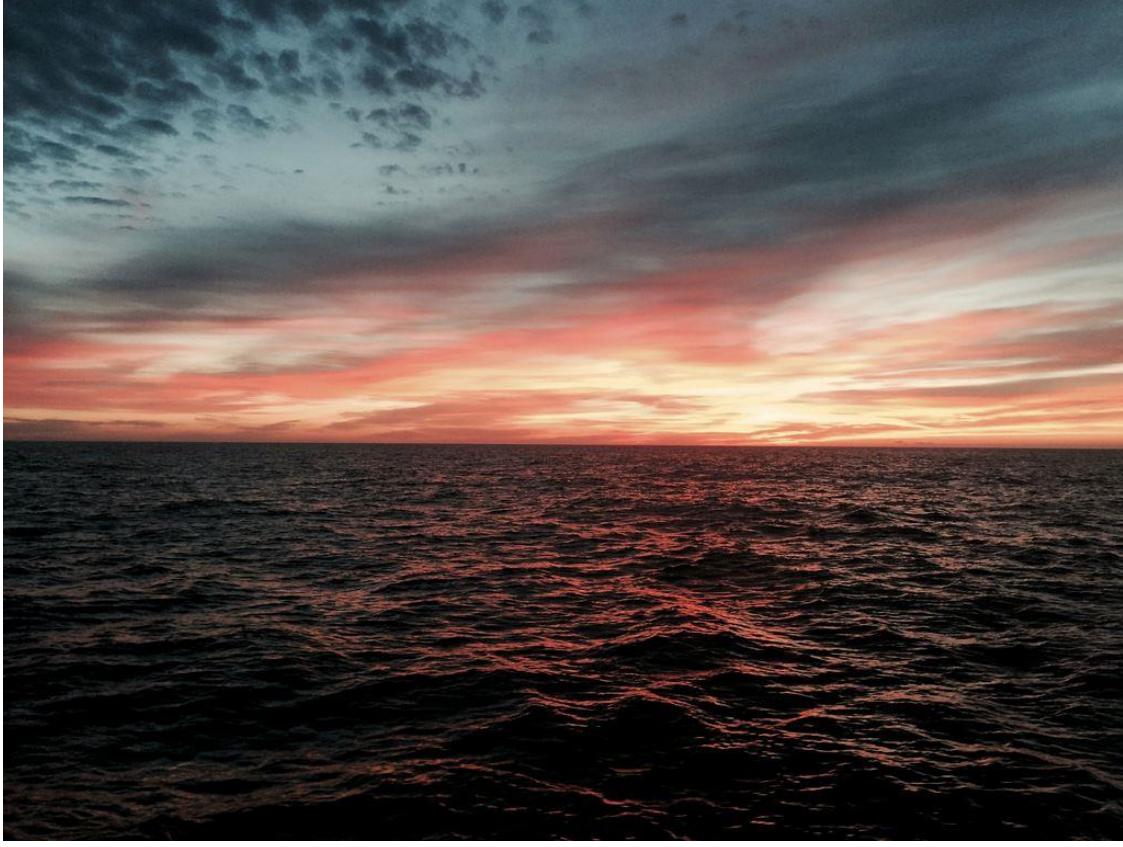
Ron

Sudden silence while traveling offshore, sharks and running out of time.

Nancy

Running out of time and running out of food. I'm not a big fan of spiders either.

What's your favourite photo ever taken while at sea and why?



This picture was taken on our trip south from BC to San Diego, California. It is a sunset, just another sunset offshore. We have actually stopped taking pictures of the sunrise and sunset offshore, they are so beautiful each time that if we didn't stop we wouldn't have room for anything else on the camera drive.

What would you never leave behind (besides each other) when heading out to sea?

Ice cream, frozen Snickers bars and Racor filters.

Nancy tell us something about yourselves that nobody knows?

This is a tough question. Ron and I have been together since 1978, so I can't actually think of anything he doesn't know about me. I'm not sure if that is good or bad, frankly. Almost everyone knows about my predilection for frozen Snicker's bars, so there's no secret there.

Most people probably don't know that I spent my summers between the ages of about 11 and 15 working for a large animal veterinarian in rural England. My parents are English, so I got shipped over to the grandparents every summer. Somehow I ended up with the vet, helping deliver calves, file horses' teeth, give large (and often belligerent) sows injections and wading through acres of mud. Every day we went out, and we never knew exactly what we would find at the next farm when we arrived. It was good preparation for cruising.

And finally, where to next?

We plan to spend 2016 close to home. 2015 was a busy boating year for us, so this year we will goof off and keep Duet in Mexico. We will cruise the Sea of Cortez this winter and the Mexican mainland next winter.

After that, who knows! There is a vague plan of potentially crossing the South Pacific in the spring of '17 or

'18, or, conversely, going through the Canal. As our friends know, our plans are written in sand, at low tide, so your guess is as good as ours.

Thank you very much for your time, we will be watching this year's progress closely.

Good luck with your travels!

Duet's blog site can be found [HERE](#)

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