

Living on

When these sailors decided to take on the world, multihulls were their boats of choice. We talked to them about moving aboard, living on board and experiencing fascinating things along the way

FREEDOM AND ADVENTURE

Ann and Alec Waring

Port of Origin: Auckland, New Zealand

Boat: *Shamal*, Seawind 11.6

As cruisers, we're free to pick up our anchor and move our home from one gorgeous sandy and secluded bay, port, town or city to the next. Of course, it's also about the adventures we have along the way—the people we meet, sights we see and the food we taste.

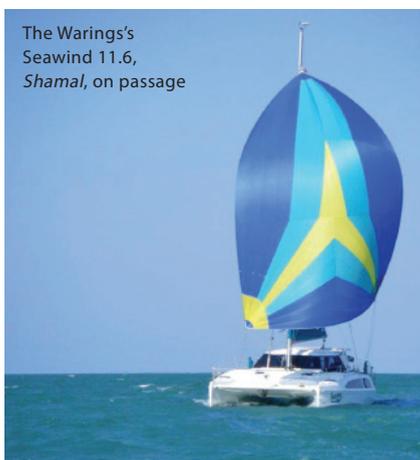
Our cruising lifestyle made us realize how cluttered our lives were on land and that we don't need to be surrounded by possessions to be happy. On board, we have only the basics, plus a few luxuries such as a washing machine, but there isn't room for many belongings.

We're blessed with good health and loved ones who stay in touch. And now, with email and Skype, we can keep up with old friends and our entire family. What more could we ask for?

We began this journey in 2004 when my husband, Alec, decided we should take a year off from work and travel so we visited Iran and Zambia. Soon after, he completed a RYA Yacht Masters course and plans progressed from there.

In 2006, we saw the prototype of a 38-foot Seawind at the Auckland Boat Show, placed our order and picked her up in Sydney one year later. We moved

aboard straightaway, before we even knew how to start the engines and back out of a slip. Even though we'd had a 25-foot trailer-sailer 25 years earlier, it was a lot less boat than this, so we were a little unprepared to sail our new floating home. Fortunately, the Seawind team and a few experienced friends gave us instructions, and we spent three months cruising north along the Australian coastline to ensure we were ready to sail across



The Warings' Seawind 11.6, *Shamal*, on passage

oceans. Our first trip was across the Tasman Sea, a notoriously tricky region. We reached Lord Howe Island in three days. The next leg, 1,000 miles to the Bay of Islands, took a week.

While at sea we like to fish, read and listen to music. I also enjoy sewing. Our Seawind has a wonderful galley with big windows so I can watch the world go by

while I bake and cook.

Somewhere along the line, we decided we didn't want to return to work. Once we had the boat, it seemed like we had invested too much money to just let her sit in a marina unused. So, we rented out our house in New Zealand and set off to sail around the world.

We'll keep cruising at least until we complete our circumnavigation, and I suspect we'll sail beyond that. It's a wonderful journey, and there are still so many places to visit on our passages back to New Zealand.

When we first set sail, I don't think anyone was worried about us, but some thought we would be back shortly. Now that we've proven we're cruising for keeps, people often say they wish they could do it too, but that it's too hard to cut ties with traditional life. We did it, though, and we don't have any regrets.

We started this adventure with no perceived ideas that one place in particular would be better than another. Every stop has been interesting, even if challenging. We've met incredible people, warm and welcoming strangers who are willing to lend a hand. People have invited us to their homes for meals, offered to take us to get fuel and shown us local sights and markets.

We're enjoying the ride for now, but sometimes I think we're going to need an additional lifetime to see all of our incredible planet. shamalsadventures.blogspot.com

ANN WARING,
SHAMAL

"We'll keep cruising at least until we complete our circumnavigation, and I suspect we'll sail beyond that. It's a wonderful journey"

the Water

By Christine Hayes

LIVING THE DREAM

Michael "Miki" Barzam

Port of Origin: Delaware, USA, originally from Israel

Boat: *Two Oceans*, Maxim 380

I've been sailing since I was 14, and with time, I came to realize I wanted to spend my retirement at sea. I would go so far as to say that I became a bit obsessed with the idea of it. Upon retiring from my job as an airline captain about seven years ago, I bought *Two Oceans*, a Maxim 380 catamaran designed

she is still working. Our relationship is based on respecting each other's dreams, and then helping them become reality. Although she's joined me for some two-to four-week trips, my cruising partners are typically friends or even friends of friends. I once even completed a passage with a man I'd just met in Fiji.

Mayotte, to Mozambique. Singlehanded sailing is gratifying and keeps me on my toes, but there is definitely an added element of danger. You really have to take care with whatever you do on the boat. I always sail with crew on long passages, simply because I think it's safer.

I love all of the places I've visited, but the Pacific is truly fantastic, especially spots like Vanuatu, Micronesia and Palmerston Island. I've been equally touched by the views in the Marquesas in French Polynesia, the volcanic Galapagos Islands and whales swimming past in Mozambique.

Frankly, I miss very little about living on land, although I don't see enough of my family, especially my grandchildren. I also miss cultural events, like classical music concerts and yoga, which is nearly impossible to do on the boat. However, the benefits outweigh the drawbacks, so I plan to cruise as long as I'm healthy and enjoying the experience.

There are two main downsides to cruising: the mindless and idiotic bureaucracy involved with constant travel and the technical problems that so often arise on the boat. Somebody once defined cruising as "doing maintenance in exotic places," and I've had enough snags to agree.

Still, these issues don't prevent me from doing what I love and loving what I do. I love cruising because I'm always close to nature and far from the fatigue of everyday goings on. I live a healthier life, surrounded by clean air on the open ocean.

catamarantwooceans.wordpress.com



The author's catch of the day (left); *Two Oceans* at anchor

by Alex Simonis, and set out to circumnavigate. Reactions from those close to me varied between incredulity, admiration and indifference. Some even thought I was mad.

My wife was fully supportive but forthright about how much (or little) time she was planning to spend on board because

Occasionally I'll singlehand *Two Oceans*, in part because when I set out on this adventure, I was determined to keep sailing, even if I was short on crew. This determination has led me to sail three passages by myself: from the U.S. Virgin Islands to Grenada, from Honduras to Panama, and from Madagascar, via

Living on the Water

Spending quality family time together in Grenada



FAMILY FIELD TRIPS

Mark and Sarah Silverstein

Port of Origin: Castle Rock, Colorado

Boat: *Field Trip*, Antares 44i

About three years ago, my wife, Sarah, and I decided to quit work, buy a boat and sail full time. I sailed on my father's Sunfish as a kid but had never tried bluewater sailing before buying *Field Trip*, our Antares 44i cat. Sarah had never been sailing at all, and she prepared for the voyage by taking some sailing classes. Then, off we went!

I don't miss much about life on land,

the Panama Canal and into the South Pacific with our ultimate goal being New Zealand. We may even spend some time in Indonesia. The culture in Australia and New Zealand won't be too different from America, but Indonesia will be an entirely new experience.

What do I love most about cruising? I love being with my kids and watching them grow up. Before sailing, I traveled

afternoons are for playing and exploring. On board, they draw, work on art projects, read and play games just like any other kid. Unlike other kids, they also fish, sail, swim and go on dinghy adventures. Ultimately, as with me, their favorite part of being cruising kids is being together as a family.

Every year we check up on how everyone feels about continuing before we plan our next voyage. And thus far, every year,

we decide to keep sailing. I don't imagine us moving back

MARK SILVERSTEIN,
FIELD TRIP

"The hardest part is actually setting off. The second hardest will be going back home"

except maybe the ability to go to a Bed, Bath, and Beyond easily. And while my wife misses her friends, we've made a lot of great new friends while sailing.

We have sailed all the way up the East Coast to Maine and found Massachusetts, especially Cape Cod, to be exceptionally great. Our favorite place of all has been Brazil. From here, we're stopping in Colombia, Panama and the Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador. Then, we'll make our way through

for work a lot, and now we're together 24/7. It's wonderful to be out there with just our family, seeing things for the first time, not worrying about the hustle and bustle that controlled our lives before.

Of course, we have to keep the kids focused on school. Sarah has a master's in elementary education, so she teaches the kids for three or four hours each morning and also helps other cruising parents with curriculum. The hardest part is obtaining all of the necessary books! After school, the

for at least three years.

We've been lucky in that we haven't had an particularly frightening weather, or any experiences with piracy. Rather, the scariest moment of our adventure was the day we left the dock for the first time after cutting ties with our former lives. If anybody is considering taking up the cruising lifestyle—just do it. The hardest part is actually setting off. The second hardest will be going back home. **svfieldtrip.blogspot.com**



The author and his wife at the helm; getting ready to explore the island

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Dave and Mary Margaret Leu
Port of Origin: Dana Point, California
Boat: *Leu Cat*, Lagoon 440

When we started talking about moving aboard a boat and sailing around the world, most of our friends and family assumed it was just a dream. Many people talk about making huge lifestyle changes, but few follow through. Once we sold our house, though, the plan became real, and the overwhelming reaction was shock. Our children, then in their late 20s, were very excited for us. They were self-sufficient and didn't necessarily need us around, but at the same time I think they were a little nervous and sad to see us go. That's when I came up with the idea of a daily blog report, so the kids would know what we were up to.

I've been sailing since the 1960s, and my wife, Mary Margaret, and I began sailing together 36 years ago in college at the University of Michigan. Our thirst for a more adventurous lifestyle grew as we aged. We started seeing friends encounter health issues and were reminded of life's uncertainties. That's when we bought our Lagoon 440 catamaran.

Now, the dream is to circumnavigate. We started in the BVI and have now sailed to the South Pacific. Sailing to the South Pacific was perfect, because once you arrive, there are so many types of

islands, reefs, fish and cultures to take in. It's easy to jump from island to island; French Polynesia is divine.

For me, this life is all about the adventure that's right around the corner. Once we drop anchor and are at an island or cove for a week or two, I start getting antsy to explore the next island. Mary Margaret's favorite part is having our home with us as we travel. She's able to stay a self-proclaimed homebody, plus avoid the packing and unpacking cycle of traditional world travel.

When we're sailing, Mary Margaret enjoys reading and listening to music. My favorite song while underway is Christopher Cross's "Sailing," but I mostly focus on watching the waves and the wind, adjusting the sails and plotting our routes.

We've felt relatively secure since we began our adventure. On the six-day passage from Bora Bora to American Samoa, we entered the South Pacific convergence zone, a large area of unstable weather, and experienced seven major squalls a day plus seas greater than 20 feet. Since then, we've become comfortable with how seaworthy *Leu Cat* is, and I can't think of another scary moment we've had since.

We imagine ourselves sailing into our early 70s before retiring back to land, and

we aren't really looking forward to that day. It will probably be tough, because living on the sea is such an adventure.

One of the real treasures we've discovered is our restored faith in mankind. As we go from country to country, everyone we meet has been remarkably friendly, generous, curious and all-around wonderful. In New Zealand, a woman offered her home to us when our family visited. In Ecuador, I asked a man for directions and instead of explaining, he walked us to the shop we were looking for. We've also developed a new appreciation for the United States. We have an amazing income structure, and even the poorest people in America are richer than many people around the world.

It's difficult to identify the best moments of our journey. In Mo'orea, we were swimming in the anchorage when sting rays swam up to us. Scores of them circled around until it looked like Mary was wearing a skirt of stingrays. She exclaimed, "They feel like velvet!" It was the most remarkable thing I've ever experienced. Later, while swimming in Tonga, we noticed a pod of whales coming up behind us. About 15 feet back, I saw a two-ton whale reach deeper and swim below me. It was absolutely breathtaking. sailblogs.com/member/leucat/

Living on the Water



Bella Luna arrives in Florida after sailing from the Bahamas (left); the author and his wife enjoying the view from Santa Maria Beach in Long Island, the Bahamas



FORGING FRIENDSHIPS

Gordon and Debbie Moon
Port of Origin: Toronto, Canada
Boat: Bella Luna, Antares 44i

Our Antares 44i catamaran, *Bella Luna*, is my dream boat. We've always loved to travel and to sail and we finally decided to combine the two and do it all at once. We've been living on her for a year and a half, but the process of moving aboard has taken 15 years total. It began with financial planning, researching and choosing a model, outfitting the boat, and finally planning our route. It was about six years ago that we got serious about the plan. We hail from Canada, so everything about the route was based around getting to nicer weather and avoiding hurricane season.

We don't have a specific time that we plan to stop cruising, just an agreement to respect each other's decision to continue or return to land. Right now we have so many places we want to experience that I can't imagine stopping any time soon. We originally thought a five-year plan would allow for a full circumnavigation, but that doesn't mean that five years is a hard stop.

We've already hit a couple of dream destinations, like Clarendon, a quiet anchorage on Long Island in the Baha-

mas. We dropped anchor in 20 feet of water which was so clear it seemed you could read a book that was lying at the bottom of the ocean. Our plan was to stay there for one night, but we loved it so much, we stayed six more. We loved Grenada and the Windward Islands, too. One of my favorite sights in the Caribbean was the Baths, a unique collection of enormous rocks on Virgin Gorda in the BVI. You would think they were just dropped there from the sky; it's beautiful. We were also enamored with the Spanish Virgin Islands off of Puerto Rico, so much so that we're definitely going back.

The majority of our friends and family are excited for us; some are living vicariously through us because they love the idea but don't think they could do it themselves while others think our lifestyle is too dangerous because of pirate activity. But I believe they're no safer on land than I am on the water. There are home invasions, murders and assaults all the time; it's just not called piracy when it's on land!

In the past 18 months aboard, I was most afraid during a passage from Brazil

to Grenada when we didn't see land for 13 days. As we crossed the equator, we were hit by a few very strong rain squalls. Actually, I wouldn't say I was afraid per se, but definitely nervous about three storms in particular that came through. When you're 250 miles offshore, you're a long way from help.

We never seem to have a dull moment while underway, and keeping busy isn't a problem for us. I can't carry a tune, but we love listening to music to pass the time on long passages. One of my favorite songs to crank on the water is "Toes" by the Zack Brown Band. It's all about letting everything go and leaving it behind.

Although we've seen a lot of beautiful places so far, my favorite part of traveling is connecting with people. We've met some wonderful folks along the way, from all over the world, and made friends despite the language barriers.

We're enjoying a very relaxed lifestyle and we feel so blessed that we were able to financially plan for it. We're lucky to own this boat and see different parts of the world that you don't get to see at a resort. svbellaluna.blogspot.com



Jo Anne and John soak up the sun (left); Free Bird has been their home since 1998



PUSHING BOUNDARIES

Jo Anne and John Gilchrist
Port of Origin: Virginia Beach, Virginia
Boat: Free Bird, Lagoon 42

We knew we didn't want to spend our lives in suburbia, so we chose the adventurous, exciting, beautiful and sometimes scary life of live-aboard cruising.

I started sailing as a teenager with lessons on a Sunfish, then mastered daysailers before settling on cruising-sized boats. In October 1998, when our kids were ages 8 and 12, we bought a boat and began our journey aboard *Free Bird*.

My favorite part of cruising is seeing new and foreign places from the water, especially little places that can't be accessed without a boat. I've also grown to appreciate the sensation of taking myself outside of my comfort zone, though sometimes I can only fully appreciate those moments in hindsight.

I definitely miss easy access to daily

comforts like washing machines, air conditioning and grocery stores. But then I consider how boring life would be on land, without the opportunity to experience places like Hog Cay in the Ragged Islands of the Bahamas. The cay itself is uninhabited, and the beaches are the most beautiful I've seen. Nearby there's a little settlement called Duncan Town where there is access to supplies, groceries and cell service. You could live anchored off this remote island and still communicate with family and keep stocked up!

While at sea, satellite radio is a great source of entertainment for our family. We listen to music and a variety of talk shows. When the kids lived with us, we would play games like Scrabble and Monopoly and card games for pennies.

I used to wonder what the kids would

think about their years at sea when they looked back on them. Now I know they enjoyed them tremendously, even though they were very ready to go to college when the time came. They look back and relish having had a unique teenage life.

We don't know when this adventure will end, but I realize that at some point, you get older, and living aboard gets too physical. Still, I think we have at least another 10 years of cruising left in us.

Some of our non-cruising friends don't understand our way of life, and our parents still think we'll "get over it pretty soon." In fact, no one believed we would last more than a year. We definitely surprised both them and ourselves by cruising and living aboard *Free Bird* for as long as we have. Here's to more sailing adventures! *

JO ANNE,
 FREE BIRD

"I've also grown to appreciate the sensation of taking myself outside of my comfort zone, though sometimes I can only fully appreciate those moments in hindsight"