

# Captain's Blog

December

## On a Gem with No Name



I'm getting new rudder cages! Or maybe used ones? I have the contact info for the manufacturer of the original steel cages. Richard, on the Gemini forums, pointed me in the right direction. Thanks Richard! Another guy on the forums is replacing his cages, and might let me have his old ones. That would be great because new ones are very expensive, and I've been hemorrhaging cash the past couple months.

One of my main concerns about the cages is that my mahogany boards will fit into them. My boards are a slightly different shape than those on the newer Geminis. By fortuitous happenstance, there was a classic gem in the creek with us last night. In the morning, I kayaked over and took a ton of pictures and measurements of the rudder cages. Then I paddled back and got one of my boards. I was able to fit it into the cage. It isn't an exact fit. I'll have to make some modifications to the new cages, but it will work.

I don't know who the other Gemini belongs to. The boat wasn't even named. Whoever the boat belongs to, I apologize for molesting your boat. I did not board the boat. I was able to do everything from my kayak on the water. Recently, there has been some discussion on the Gemini forums about boat security. One guy suggested he would shoot anyone who messed with his boat. I'm glad the boat didn't belong to that guy.

**Sunday, December 2, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

Me too. Of all the reasons why I worry about your trip (hmm, maybe a new sidebar list?), I'd rather not add "possibility of getting shot by territorial Gemini owners."

[Split Decision](#) said...

I'm in heaven! I have football on the tv!

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### Status Report



So, I'm at mile 200 of the Intracoastal Waterway (icw). Mile 0 was at Norfolk. I hope to spend January at a marina in Florida. That will be at mile 717+. According to the gps, I've been averaging 5.5-6.5 mph while motoring, depending on current and wind, etc. I can comfortably motor up to 30 miles a day. More than that and I get too fatigued. It's sort of like driving a car, although I don't have to keep my hands on the wheel all the time. I can scurry into the galley to make a sandwich.

I think I should easily make Florida by January, but I don't want to be in a rush. The trip is as much about the journey, as it is the destination. I won't be crushed if I end up somewhere in Georgia for January.

The traffic in the cut between mile 190 and 200 was the heaviest yet. Most of it was small boat traffic, so it wasn't all that hairy. Although a couple powerboats got uncomfortably close. I felt like I could reach out and touch their bow. I don't know what their problem was. There was plenty of room in the cut.

Also saw a couple pods of dolphins frolicking in Adams creek. That was pretty cool.

And for those of you waiting for me to finally run hard aground, I've done it, sort of... I guess I came in to this inlet at high tide yesterday. I was planning on motoring the last couple miles to Beaufort this morning. But my "too powerful" engine can't get me out of this muck that we're stuck in as the tide

lowers. The tide will start rising again around ten am. Coincidentally, that is when a gale warning goes into effect. Guess I'm stuck here another day.

The picture is me watching football yesterday. It's a little hard to make out the game on the screen. Something about the scan rate of the camera and tv. Reception on the tv was pretty good. It's the first football game I've been able to pick up in the icw. The internet, tv and phone have been pretty sketchy since Alligator River. All that should be a lot better from here on out.

### Monday, December 3, 2007

[Amy](#) said...

Hmm. Georgia in January doesn't sound quite as nice as Florida, but as long as I know where to find you, I'm happy with it!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Don't worry, I'd put odds at 90% that it will be Florida. I'm just sayin'... Savannah or Jeckyl island wouldn't be heart breaking.

[Split Decision](#) said...

And what, no snide remarks about my being hard aground? I'm disappointed in you. You're not on your game today.

[Amy](#) said...

I figured I'd let someone else take the easy shot!  
(btw, no doubt, Savannah or Jeckyl Island would be great...)

[Grampa](#) said...

So what game was it? And who won?

[Split Decision](#) said...

Carolina and San Fran. Vinnie Testaverde and Trent Dilfer were QBs. Dilfer was with the Ravens when we won the Super Bowl. Testaverde is 44! You thought McNair was old.

Thankfully, I was not able to watch last night's Ravens game. I wasn't even able to read the whole article online about the game. It sounded too heart breaking.

[Post a Comment](#)

## This'll Give Ya Scurvy



It's another episode of "Cooking with Capt' Scott". In this week's episode we learn what to eat when we're hard aground and can't make it to the grocery store for fresh vittles. Chop up two or more hot dogs. Boil water for mac & cheese. Toss in mac & dogs.

(Tossing in the dogs now will help kill anything that might be growing on the dogs because you don't have refrigeration. Probably nothing is growing because hot dogs are already cooked and full of chemicals. But we're just being safe.)

Finish mac & cheese per instructions on box. Consume. Warning: do not eat this everyday. There is no vitamin C in this meal, and you will get scurvy after a couple months at sea eating nothing but mac & dogs.

**Monday, December 3, 2007**

Amy said...

There's something else to add to my "worry" list! Scurvy! And whatever you can catch from old hot dogs!

This is truly an adventure for both of us.

Grampa said...

Glad you didn't take Sho-Me with you or catch a cat. One of them may have made it into the stew.

Split Decision said...

I've been thinking that if I run across a kitten on this trip, I might bring it aboard. If so, I'd name it Chum.

[sandy](#) said...

I don't think your stew looks any worse (or better) than your pre-formed burger patties. Cats are natural swimmers, you probably know, and it would be nice to have something to talk to, or swear to.

Sandy

[Split Decision](#) said...

I didn't know that about cats. What I have read is, that like humans, some cats get seasick. Also, I'm not sure what kind of hassles there are about bringing cats into the Bahamas. Anyway, I don't think kitten season is until the Spring.

The preformed burger patties are much more delicious, especially with cheese, mayo and fresh toppings. I don't think you would get scurvy either, if you put that stuff on it.

Maryanne said...

I can't help feeling sorry for you and the depths your food choices are going to...

For Fresh vitamins and salads - consider SPROUTS (next time you can shop) - they are easy to make, and will give you a continuous supply of lovely fresh sandwich fillings, salad stuff, etc.. (Use quite a bit of fresh water, so you need to get imaginative if you are low on water).

Here is a really good web site which advises on CHEAP - refrigerator free supplies and recipes for the boat... Worth a look before you go shopping next.

<http://cruisenews.net/recipes/>

They even have a shopping list

Enjoy

[jen](#) said...

How come no one will say it?!?!

Box mac and cheese with hot dogs is one of my favorite meals!

That said, I'm not sure I could deal with a week or month of it. It sure beats hamburger helper any day!

[Post a Comment](#)

## Beaufort Blows



I decided to come down to Beaufort after the tide rose and I was ungrounded. Big mistake. There is next to nowhere to anchor here and protection from the weather blows. There are two small anchorages. The one I'm in is full of derelict and most likely abandoned boats.

From Dozier's Waterway Guide:

*The Beaufort waterfront is one of the best on the ICW, offering a wide selection of antiques stores, shops and restaurants within a short walking radius.*

If they mean a bunch of knick-knack and t-shirt shops, and a half dozen restaurants, I'm all in. Otherwise, they are smoking crack.

I did walk about two miles and back, to the strip mall area where I bought groceries and some lumber and hardware to make a temporary repair so that I will have two rudders. I'll post a report when I have that done.

Best thing about Beaufort, two dollar shower at the public dock.

**Tuesday, December 4, 2007**

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## Fatigue



Left Beaufort at dawn's early light yesterday. There was a small craft advisory beginning at 11am, and I wanted to get a few miles down the road before that set in. Ideally, the time to go through Beaufort/Morehead City is low tide. You can then ride the rising tide down Bogue Sound. The tide was strong as I went against it. At times I was making less than 4 mph.

I saw a bunch of dolphins as I passed under the bridge at Beaufort. One surfaced so close to the boat that I could have touched it with my whisker pole. I suppose they were feeding on fish pushed through the narrows by the tide.

Bogue Sound is unremarkable. It's just a wide expanse of water whose shores are lined with nondescript houses and McMansions. I'm down where there are some sandbar/islands. They're nice to look at, but I haven't seen any goats on them, as the guidebook suggested I might.

The small craft advisory turned out to be overblown. Maybe the sound is just so shallow that there isn't enough water outside the dredged channel for waves to build up. I spent the night in a tiny inlet. I was as protected as I could be, but the wind still howled and I got another lousy night's sleep. This morning it is very cold, and felt even more so as I made about five miles with the wind at my back. No dodger to hide behind.

I'm at another inlet waiting a couple hours. I want to go through Bogue inlet at low tide. The guidebook suggests the tides can be quite strong through there and I do have to pass under a bridge.

The cold and sleepless nights are beginning to wear on me. I have no heat on the boat. There is a built-

in heat pump, and I have an electric space heater, but I can't use either of those while at anchor. I'm quite jealous of the little heater that Leon and Kim have on their boat. Recently there has been some discussion of this model on the Sailnet forums. I grabbed the picture from one of the postings (L&K, if you have a picture of yours, I'd replace this picture with your picture. I don't have permission to use this picture. And I think the inside of your boat is even nicer than this boat.)

Everyone had nice things to say about the heater. I might have to get one someday when I have more time and money. It's externally vented, so there are no worries about CO and fumes. The model name is Newport, and it is manufactured by Dickenson. It costs about \$700.

The NWS is calling for temps in the 60s and 70s, and calm winds this weekend. They better not be lying.

**Thursday, December 6, 2007**

[Grampa](#) said...

So how did the rudder repair go?

Hope you get the warmer weather and some sleep soon!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Still working on the repair. It's not so easy to get parts when you're on the water. I should be able to get the bolts I need this weekend in Wrightsville Beach.

I'm looking forward to some temps in the 70s this weekend. I'd love to be able to put on my shorts and tevas again, and do some laundry. All of my clothes have been worn, mostly because I've been wearing them all at once: 2 socks, three layers of pants and leggings, uncountable layers of shirts and sweatshirts, 3 or more hats.

I'm a man who wears any hats.

[Amy](#) said...

Do you have the hat you found at the St. Patrick's day parade last year?

[Split Decision](#) said...

Yah, that's my warmest hat. I lost my warm blue stocking cap.

Just got gas at a marina. Waiting for the Surf City Swing Bridge, which only opens on the hour. Also picked up shrimp from a little seafood stand next to the marina. I don't think I could find fresher shrimp.

[Gypsy](#) said...

The Newport Heater works great... mostly. It makes plenty of heat and yes, it is vented outside, but... it does leak smoke sometimes from the glass window and some of the seams. It's also a pain to light. Per Dickinson's suggestion, we dropped flaming bits of newspaper down into the pot where the kerosene or diesel waits. This takes an average of three tries. After many burnings, the paper ashes build up in the bottom and inhibit the flow of fuel into the pot. So, you have to clean it, especially if it burned to hot and carboned up. Be careful... you may get small soot balls all over your cabin. Kim's yellow cushion covers were streaked with black. You also need a tank above the heater to gravity feed the fuel.

Ron has a small Force 10 heater which runs on pressurized kerosene. It seems very efficient and less trouble and the hole in the deck is a third the size of ours. By the way, they make a propane version of the Newport which eliminates all the problems of ours.

At any rate, who cares? It was over 80 degrees yesterday!

Stay warm...

[Split Decision](#) said...

Thanks Gypsy! I replaced the pic with the the picture you sent me of your heater. Grandpa's getting me one for Christmas. It's the propane model, so I don't think I'll have the problems with lighting and carbon build up which you have.

There's been a lot of discussion of the heater and fuel choices on the sailnet forums. I'm still on the same tank of propane that I started off in Baltimore. It's amazing how much fuel is in the tank. I'm sure once I get the heater that I'll blow through tanks much quicker.

[Post a Comment](#)

**Oorah!**



Despite a small craft advisory in effect for the entire day, the weather calmed and the sun came out as I passed through Camp Lejeune yesterday afternoon. Not much action going on at the camp. I heard the distant thunder of what may have been artillery. And saw some helicopters practicing low flying maneuvers.

Anchored a couple miles past the camp. Soon after, a local waterman motored up in his skiff. I was anchored about 50 yards from his dock, and he invited me to tie up to his dock. His four kids had quite a time climbing all over the boat that evening.

**Thursday, December 6, 2007**

[Fred Horn](#) said...

Tonight we are having steaks cooked on sasafras with lobsters - 2 1/2 lbs each, last of the home grown tomatoes, fresh baked sourdough bread which we will enjoy in front of the warm, roaring fire. And for dessert, animal sex and brandy. Hope your enjoying your present surroundings. Will think of you tonight under the flannel sheets and down comforter. Onward thru the fog. Chow baby. Fred and Rose

Ross said...

I think that you'll like the Wrightsville Beach anchorage. I lived anchored out there for an entire summer. Excellent protection and reasonable access to some stores.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Ross, I'd be making my way there at this moment, if it weren't for construction on the Figure Eight Island Bridge. It's closed until 4pm. I'm anchored just north. The water is clear and cold. I might have to jump in for a hot (cold?) second.

If I had checked the link to the Waterway Guide in my sidebar, I would have known that the bridge would be closed, and I would have gotten here for the 1pm opening.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Fred, if I were in Maryland, I'd come over and we could make it a threesome.

In all seriousness, I have been enjoying some steamed shrimp that I bought from a waterside seafood stand, and a cold coors as I motor down the icw. Not much animal sex going on though.

[Amy](#) said...

Glad to hear that, Scott.

Hi Fred!

Ross said...

Wow - if you're jumping into the NC water this time of year then you've gotta have some strong Canadian blood.

Have you seen a "sunshower"? I used this with great success in lieu of a real hot water shower. It's a dark plastic bag that you fill with a couple liters of fresh water and leave out on your deck during the day. The sun heats it up reasonably well and then you can take a quick shower in the late afternoon. You can't wait too long though, because once the sun gets too low then it'll begin cooling off.

Also, I found that if it was a cold, rainy type day that I could heat up a liter or so of water on the stove and mix it in with the water in the bag to get a few liters at the right temp for one of these quick showers.

Here's a link to the West Marine listing for this item:

<http://www.westmarine.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/producte/10001/-1/10001/248311/377%20710/0/sunshowers/Primary%20Search/mode%20matchallpartial/0/0?N=377%20710&Ne=0&Ntt=sunshowers&Ntk=Primary%20Search&Ntx=mode%20matchallpartial&Nao=0&Ns=0&keyword=sunshowers&isLTokenURL=true&storeNum=7&subdeptNum=null&classNum=0>

There is a West Marine in Wrightsville Beach.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Ross, I think I've just been inured by years of having to jump into freezing ass pools for swim practice when I was a kid. I am looking forward to a wet suit which I'm pretty sure I'm getting for xmas.

An old coot at my marina in Baltimore gave me a swimming pool cover bag. It's a long black plastic bag which is filled with water, and used to hold down pool covers. I need to get a shower head to attach to it and make a sun shower.

Passed by the West Marine today when I picked up the bolts I need to finish my rudder project. You are right, Wrightsville Beach is nice. The great weather doesn't hurt my favorable impression.

Scott

[Post a Comment](#)

## Waylaid



Plan A is usually to make 20-30 miles and be at a snug anchorage by early afternoon. In the morning, I study the guidebook, charts, online satellite imagery, weather and tides. Plan A works about 50% of the time.

Yesterday, Plan A was derailed by the Figure Eight Island Bridge being closed from 1-4 pm. During the two hour break I jumped in the water very briefly, then paddled to shore to do some clamming and oystering. I wasn't very successful. Although there were a bunch of exposed oyster beds (It was near low tide), all the oysters looked a lot smaller than the ones you see at a restaurant. If anyone has advice on how to clam and oyster down here, I'd appreciate it.

I got to Wrightsville Beach at sunset. The anchorage here is huge and uncrowded (at least this time of year). The weather is nice, and I'm wearing shorts and tevas. The winds are supposed to be calm all week and temps are to reach to 80 F. I've already had two (count 'em. two) back to back nights of restful sleep. I'm looking forward to a nice string of such nights. Already my aching muscles which have been contracted against the cold for a week, are starting to relax and loosen up.

**Saturday, December 8, 2007**

[Post a Comment](#)

## Bridge Etiquette



There a lot of bridges on the icw. The modern highway bridges have a clearance of about 65 feet. The railroad and older highway bridges open for a sailboat to pass through. Some open at convenience. Most open on a schedule which may be on the hour and/or half. Schedules can be found in the dozier guidebook. When approaching a bridge, you should have your radio tuned to channel 13 (at least in the part of the icw I have passed through. Other areas may tune to other channels).

At all other times, your radio should be tuned to channel 16. I turn my radio on at least an hour before I weigh anchor, and first check the weather channel, and then tune to 16.

As I approach a bridge, I hail the bridge tender. "Such and such bridge, this is south bound sailing vessel Split Decision." The bridge tender will acknowledge. I respond, "Requesting passage during your X:XX am/pm opening."

Usually, s/he will acknowledge in the affirmative, with further instructions. I will respond, "Rodger", and slow my engine and approach slowly so that I will be near the bridge at opening.

Yesterday, that didn't happen. I was informed that the bridge would not be opening on schedule. I anchored off and waited. A little earlier than the newly scheduled opening, we were hailed by the bridge tender to prepare for passage. The other sailboat waiting did not respond. The bridge tender asked me to verbally hail him as I passed his anchorage. I was able to wake the owner from slumber. Good thing, because otherwise he might have spent the night anchored in the channel.

After you pass through the bridge, it is good etiquette to thank the bridge tender for passage.

**Saturday, December 8, 2007**

Fred Horn said...

Scott,

Of course I am the one monitoring your blog for Fred and making comments for him since he just does not get computers. I really enjoy reading your travels. In fact, I cut and paste your entire journal into word, made modifications so that it would not be as long, and printed it out for Fred to read. It does not include the comments for each which would be great but the length of the journal was 38 pages and that was modifying it down from 78 pages. With the comments, I am sure it would be over 300 pages.

Anyway, sounds like quite the adventure. Not one I would be able to make right now. What is the temperature where you are now?

Rose

[Split Decision](#) said...

Rose, thanks for going to all that trouble for poor old Fred. I'm sure the printout is so long because you had to use an extra large font, so that he could read it. I'm sad he won't have the comments. They're my favorite part of the blog.

Scott

[Amy](#) said...

Rose- You are a much better woman than I.

Amy

[Post a Comment](#)

## The Worry List



*Amy blogs again!*

*I'm looking forward to Amy's future post about Christmas in NYC. We walked Manhattan at Christmas time last year. Checked out Macy's, FAO Schwartz, etc. It was really pretty, despite the cold. And now Amy has a new camera. Her future Christmas post may be a little off topic, but it will remind me of xmas past.*

*And now, Professor Amy:*

I am normally a bit of a worrier, and I come by it honestly. Whenever I would tell my mom about what I was up to, or thinking about getting up to, she would shake her head and call me by her pet name for me. These days, I find myself sitting in my warm, dry, office on land, reading this blog, shaking my head and thinking, "Oh, Scott."

Certainly, part of the problem is my lack of boating experience (addressed in my previous guest blog). Most of what I know about boating comes from movies involving some sort of man versus nature plotline. Movies like "The Perfect Storm," and "Titanic." Let me know when someone makes a movie about a calm and happy sailing trip down the ICW, and I'll be the first in line to see it.

Those of you who know Cap'n Scott, and his adventures in ingenuity, may also understand why I worry. This is the man who made eggnog by fashioning an egg beater out of a wisk and a power drill. (The nog was delicious, by the way.) And he dreams of making his own pressure-fryer to make the most succulent fried chicken. I think I'm speaking for others as well when I say that we're a little surprised that he hasn't blown himself up yet.

I've joked with Scott that he needs to add "Amy's Worry List" as an additional side bar on his blog. This

list would be a tribute to the many times when reading his blog makes my stomach clench (and occasionally turn, as in the "cooking with Scott" feature). At present, this list includes: tugboats, small craft warnings, scurvy, Southern belles, and everything on his "Lost to the sea" sidebar list.

More to come, I'm sure.

**Sunday, December 9, 2007**

[Split Decision](#) said...

I don't know of any movies like my trip. I can think of two books which might be good analogues: Huck Finn and The Odyssey. Two picaresque tales. I might have to pick those up again.

For some reason, I've never made it passed the part in Huck Finn where he happens upon the feuding clans. Maybe I'll have to start there and see how much further I can get this time.

Unlike Odysseus, I have gps and good charts, so I pretty much know where I am most of the time.

Farewell my Penelope!

[Amy](#) said...

Stay away from the sirens!

I have plans to go to Manhattan with my camera on Friday afternoon - I'm hoping for good weather...

[Split Decision](#) said...

If I encounter any sirens, I will lash myself to the mast.

[Amy](#) said...

Is that a euphemism?

[sandy](#) said...

You guys. You need an anchorage,soon.  
Sandy

[Grampa](#) said...

Cap'n Scott always comes through. Be happy, don't worry.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Sandy, Unfortunately Amy has this pesky thing call a job. I don't really understand it, but Amy claims lots of people have one. Apparently, it's something that they do during the day instead of sailing.

Amy doesn't have to do the job thing in January, so we'll find an anchorage then. Until then, I suffer in (somewhat) silence.

[Amy](#) said...

Sandy - I like that euphemism even better!

Scott - you kill me.

[Post a Comment](#)

## [Wrightsville Beach](#)



This is a destination. The guidebook speaks glowingly and vociferously about towns which are not worth dropping an anchor at. I'm starting to believe that the niceness of a town is inversely proportional to the amount of page space the guidebook devotes to the town. If it just says that there is an anchorage, and you can get gas and groceries, that's the place to stop.

Wrightsville Beach has a very large anchorage. It also has a small public dock that you can tie up to. You're not supposed to spend the night there, but it doesn't appear to be enforced. How do I know? The guy I was anchored next to disappeared last night, and when I tied up to the dock early this morning, he was there. Using my incredible powers of deduction, I concluded that he spent the night at the dock.

The laundry next to the public dock has been replaced by a restaurant. Too bad. All my cold weather

clothes stink. But that's ok, the weather is warm, and I've switched back to shorts and tevas. There are a few stores and restaurants next to the dock, including a small grocery. The beach is a block away.

There is a West Marine, and hardware and grocery stores about two miles away. About five miles away are all the box stores you need. If you don't have a bike, you can rent one at a shop at the dock.

My only complaint about this area is that the people are not very friendly or nice. It's an affluent area and there are tons of pickup trucks with trailered fishing boats using the public boat ramp. This is a class of watermen whom I'm only fleeting aware of, but they seem to own this area. As a group, they are not very considerate, and some take particular pleasure in making as large a wake as possible with their small boat.

Of course, all this has been amplified by the beautiful weather on a December weekend.

**Monday, December 10, 2007**

### Temporary Rudder



It usually takes me three tries to get some sort of repair or home improvement project done right. The first attempt is often a total disaster which I chalk up as a learning experience. On the second attempt, I usually come up with a product, which if I'm not too fussy, I can live with. The third try is usually the charm.

I'll call this temporary rudder the second attempt rudder. The plan was to build some sort of temporary housing for the mahogany board. After I had bought the lumber and was thinking about how the board would fit, I realized that the board was unnecessary. Instead of buying these pieces of wood and connecting them together, I should have bought a single piece of 2x10. Then I would screw in a half dozen eye bolts which would connect it to the steel rod that it pivots on.

Andy, another Gemini owner who is replacing his rudder cages, has offered me his old cages. I should get them in January when I'm at a marina in Florida. But I think I'll also make another temporary rudder out of a single board and keep it on the boat. If a rudder busts again, I'll have a temporary rudder which I can pop in.

**Thursday, December 13, 2007**

[sandy](#) said...

Hi Scott,  
The rudder may not have been great, but the picture was really good. And, you are not here in cold, rainy, almost sleet MD.  
Sandy

[Split Decision](#) said...

Hey Sandy,  
  
Sitting here barefoot, in shorts and t-shirt, cooking up a huge slab of meat on the grill and listening to tunes.

I am in Georgetown, SC. It's a really cute little town. Wish you were here.

Scott

[Peter](#) said...

From a Gemini owner situated in Auckland, New Zealand- take heart, your blog has many readers even though few comment. It is one of the most pleasant, informative and interesting reads I have found. Your ingenuity is achieving good things and I have no doubt in the ultimate success of your voyage, one we are pleased to share through your narrative. Best wishes. Peter

[Split Decision](#) said...

Thanks Peter. I appreciate the positive feedback. Hope all is well in Auckland.

[Post a Comment](#)

## Forgive Us Our Trespasses



Left Little River early. I had been tied up to the fuel dock at B&W marina behind a huge gambling boat. I got in early enough last evening that I could have ridden that boat out three miles from shore and gambled to my heart's content until the boat returned later in the night. Fortunately, my brain is wired in such a manner that gambling does absolutely nothing for me. Don't get me wrong. I enjoy most vices. But gambling just irritates me. Instead, I just enjoyed the prop wash when the gambling boat left and returned.

I motored for a couple hours in the morning until I reached mile 387.5 on the icw. The tide was against me, and I wasn't making very good speed. At 1:30 or so the tide would turn and I could ride it down the Waccamaw River. The guidebook mentioned Brookgreen Gardens at mile 387.5, and made it sound very enticing. It sounded like an interesting side trip to make while waiting for the tide to turn. Unfortunately, the guidebook also said that the creek leading to the gardens was fenced off.

When I got to the creek, it was indeed fenced off, and No Trespassing signs were posted. I decided that the signs weren't really meant for me and my kayak. (And truthfully, fencing off a navigatable (sp?) creek off a public waterway sounds very sketchy to me. If I were arrested for being on that creek, and I had the time and money to waste, I'd fight the fence.)

I kayaked about half a mile up the creek and found this: [Brookgreen Gardens](#)





**Thursday, December 13, 2007**

sandy said...

Rules are made to be broken, and it looks like you were rewarded.  
Local news flash--new restaurant at Ann and Lombard--Peruvian. Apparently very good and very cheap--a byo place. One half a roast chicken and french fries \$5.00.  
Sandy

Grampa said...

I really like the titles you give to your blog articles. Keep it up (and use them in your book).

Amy said...

Those pictures were definitely worth the risk. I didn't even worry! (Dick, I'm trying to follow your advice!)

Sandy, that Peruvian place was open before Scott left but I couldn't get him to go there with me.

Split Decision said...

Sandy, Amy and I walked by that place and it was empty. I prefer to eat where others are already eating. To make matters worse, their specialty is guinea pig. Those guys were my furry little pets when I was a kid. I can't imagine one as dinner.  
Scott

Grampa said...

Let's see, if pets while you were a kid rules out eating them, you will not be eating snakes, lizards, rabbits, chickens, guinea pigs, mice, fish, dogs, cats, goats, horses, and maybe you should stay away from honey.

[Split Decision](#) said...

I eat about a third of those animals.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Grampa, don't forget Lucky the Duck. We found duck eggs on our old Rainbow sailboat when I was a kid. We brought the eggs home and one of them hatched.

There are a lot more dead and lucky ducks around here today. I was awoken this morning by gunshots. I was told at the marina where I got gas that today is the first day of duck hunting season.

[Post a Comment](#)

### [Crabs for Christmas](#)



I haven't been very successful at living off the bounty of the sea. I've been eating a lot more ham and cheese sandwiches than clam chowder or fish sandwiches. Yesterday, I tied up to a dilapidated dock. When I went ashore to stretch my legs, I found a drainage ditch full of crabs. I may not be the most talented clammer or oysterman, but one thing this Maryland boy knows is crabs. I grabbed my net and scooped these suckers up lickity split. I could have easily scooped up another dozen and more. Maybe that's breakfast this morning.

My favorite xmas album is [Crabs for Christmas](#). Here is the title song: [Crabs for Christmas](#). Oh Little Town of Baltimore is pretty strong, too. The other xmas songs on the album are pretty funny, but the rest of the songs are filler. If you have a Baltimore in your life, and are looking for a xmas gift for him/her, you won't go wrong with this cd.

**Saturday, December 15, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

Those look better than the ones we had at the Admiral's Den!

[Split Decision](#) said...

They weren't the best crabs I've ever had (a little light and watery), but food is always sweeter when it's something you've caught or grown yourself.

It's Admiral's Cup, Amy. Don't want to confuse Sandy. Dollar crabs, outside in the Summer by the Broadway Pier, taste pretty sweet too.

[Amy](#) said...

I knew I was probably remembering that wrong (I always do)...

[Post a Comment](#)

### [Sleepless Nights](#)



I've had a string of nice days and restful nights. It's 4:52 am as I write this. I've been up since 12:45 am. The wind is howling and the rain pouring. The boat is bouncing against the bottom which feels hard like sand. I guess the anchor wasn't able to hold us, or maybe it's just that the tide is low. I'll survey the damage once it's light outside. I guess a lot of the country is enjoying this crappy weather. At least it's warm here.

I did finally capture a picture of a dolphin. It's hard to get a picture of them with the latency on the digital camera. I've seen dolphins almost daily since the middle of North Carolina. Some get quite close to the boat. I've been surprised at the small creeks I sometimes find them in. I mostly think of dolphins as ocean creatures.

**Sunday, December 16, 2007**

[Post a Comment](#)

### **If It's OK with You**



Per the previous post, I've been up since just after midnight. Around 5 am I began to get a sense that the boat was listing. I checked the hull which I felt was sinking, but there was no water in it. I decided that in my exhaustion I was probably hallucinating. Maybe my sense of balance was off. Kind of like when you are in a highway tunnel, and there is no frame of reference, and you can't tell whether you are ascending or descending.

Well the off-balance feeling got more and more pronounced. Dawn and low tide came at about the same time. This was what I found. We dragged our anchor last night with all the wind. This is as hard aground as I've ever been. If no one has any objections, I think I'll stay here a while.

**Sunday, December 16, 2007**

[Grampa](#) said...

Well, maybe you can watch the Raven's game at 1 pm.  
Good luck with the tide.

[Amy](#) said...

Good luck with some sleep, too.

[Split Decision](#) said...

High tide is around 1pm. I should be free before then. Still pretty windy, but I'm going to try to get down to another creek about a dozen miles south.

If I get any game on the tv, it will probably be Jacksonville v Pittsburgh.

[Grampa](#) said...

Go Steelers!!! Unfortunately the Ravens game is being broadcast here, not the Steelers.

[Split Decision](#) said...

That's really funny. I'm watching the Steelers game. Maybe you should be on the boat and I should be back in Maryland.

[Grampa](#) said...

But they both lost. Sad day.

[Post a Comment](#)

## Egg Drop Ramen Soup



I know the picture doesn't look like much, and if I get any comments on this post, they will be ridiculing my cooking. But this soup and a cup of tea are how I start many a cold morning. It's delicious and nutritious. As anyone can tell you, ramen is a salty, yummy, and easy to prepare soup. It just doesn't have much nutritional value. It is an excellent base for adding other stuff like meat or canned vegetables.

A single egg isn't very filling, but it's packed with nutrition. An egg has everything you need except vitamin C (So again, eating this meal, and only this meal for several months at sea, will give you scurvy). When you eat an egg, it's like eating an entire chicken from beak to tail feather. And before you get on your high horse about dietary cholesterol, saturated fat is a much more important factor in determining blood cholesterol. Eating an egg a day isn't going to kill you, like a big juicy steak and a milk shake a day might.

I once got in a heated discussion at a party with a woman about mayonnaise (As my friends and family can tell you, it's sometimes seemingly innocuous things which will set me off, while the ordinary things which start arguments, like politics and religion don't seem to affect me). This woman worked for the [Center for Science in the Public Interest](#). This is a group of busybodies who condemn all sorts of foods as being bad for you. What sticks in my mind is when in the 90s, they got lots publicity for condemning Chinese food. How about just saying that you should eat a varied diet? I don't know anyone who eats Chinese food everyday, except maybe a billion Chinese people, and these people look pretty healthy to me. I don't see a lot of overweight Chinese people.

Anyway, the woman said that around the office they had a saying that "Mayonnaise equals death." In fact, the exact opposite is true. Mayonnaise has every vitamin and mineral you need, including vitamin C. And besides, mayonnaise is a freakin condiment. I don't know anyone who sits down with a spoon and a big jar of mayonnaise and eats the whole thing, like some people do with a pint of Ben & Jerry's.

Mayonnaise, spread on a sandwich adds a lot of flavor and nutrition to that sandwich.

So that's my rant. Fire away in the comments section. Oh, and the recipe. Cook the ramen per instructions on package. Beat an egg. Slowly pour the egg into ramen while stirring the soup. The speed with which you stir the soup will determine the consistency of the egg. I'm not too particular.

**Monday, December 17, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

This is why I sent you off with a jar of mayo packets. Yes, indeed, I know how to look after my man.

[Brianna](#) said...

I like ramen. I am partial to the teryaki flavor. There is actually an entire cookbook devoted to meals that can be made from ramen. I don't have this book though. In my quest to be an adult, I limit my intake of ramen to a few packages a year.

The Ravens lost to Miami yesterday. That is all I am going to say about that. [The Steeler's are currently tied with the Brownies - the Browns might actually make the playoffs. What is this world coming to I ask you?]

Its good to continue to hear that you are still alive. Good luck with the sailing. And have fun too!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Hey Brianna,

Glad to have you aboard again! When I bought this boat and started the blog, I thought it was all about sailing. Somehow the sailing has turned into motoring, and the blog has turned into a discussion of cooking and football.

I hope to wrestle the boat and blog back to sailing when I'm at rest in January.

Go Ravens?

Scott

Ross said...

Hey Scott -  
Sorry to read about your anchor dragging.

Anchoring is one of those topics that sailors can discuss endlessly. None-the-less I'll pass along my 2 cents.

I came to believe that it's best to have one extra good anchor with as much chain as you can manage. I'd always drop the anchor and let the prevailing wind/currents drift me back as I paid out the rode. After I'd let out about 40 feet (when anchoring in waters typically around 15 feet) and then I'd tie it off and put the engine in reverse and run the RPM's up to about 1/2 my typical cruising RPM.

I wouldn't be in a hurry to complete this test because I figured that if there were going to be any holding difficulties then I wanted to learn about them at the beginning so I could pick another nearby spot.

Occasionally I'd find that the holding ground was terrible and would have to move some distance away - but this was rare. I did however have many instances in which the initial test failed but subsequent attempts were successful. I assume that in these cases the anchor had simply failed to dig in.

After it passed the 'reverse engine' test then I'd let out another 20 or 30 feet of rode. This was my added insurance.

Anyway, in using this technique I never had my anchor drag.

Of course, like I mentioned above, a lot of it was probably due to carrying an atypically large anchor for my size boat. I reasoned that since everything was dependent on this one device that an extra 15 pounds of weight to haul up was a small price to pay for the added security.

BTW - glad that you liked Wrightsville. I know what you mean about some of the people being jerks. I spent a lot of time there before it began morphing into its current configuration. It used to be a real low-key type place but then property values started rising and one after another small cottage-like beach houses were torn down and replaced with huge McMansions and everyone now drives a gigantic SUV or truck. Progress! Ha.

Hope you're surviving this spell of cold weather. I guess it's the Yang to all the warm stuff from last week.

Ross

[Brianna](#) said...

If the blog was only about sailing, I wouldn't have anything to contribute. I can count the number of times I have been on a boat on one hand. The most notable voyage was to Staten Island and back (I am sure that is nothing to really boast about here).

So, you can steer the conversation back to boats, but I'll just keep posting about football ;)

And yes, I do realize I spelled the word ramen wrong throughout my previous post. What kind of academic am I?

[Grampa](#) said...

Ok about the raman, mayo, and eggs. I think I may have learned something. But what about getting off your grounding and progress today?

[Grampa](#) said...

PS: when you see anything like center for science in the public interest, you can be pretty sure they aren't scientists.

[Split Decision](#) said...

This post has a very high proportion of scientists commenting on it. If Ross is a scientist, I may be the only non-scientist. Although, I did break out my microscope yesterday and take a water sample.

I did get ungrounded. I should make Charleston today.

Brianna, I'm not complaining about the content of your comments (or your spelling). I'm complaining that because of my broken rudder, I can't post about sailing. And yesterday, I couldn't even post about motoring because I was aground watching football.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Ross, I like the idea about putting the boat into reverse after anchoring. I'll have to try that.

I think it's not so much that the people in Wrightsville are jerks, as I've gotten used to people on the water being so nice. The latest example is the guy at the marina where I got gas in McClellandville. I think his name was Duane and the marina "Devil's Den." Anyway, he insisted on giving me a ride to the convenience store, even though I told him I had my bicycle.  
Scott

[Post a Comment](#)

## Oyster Bed



The tides here are about 4 feet. At low tide the oyster beds are exposed. I would love to be feasting on oysters right now, but they are all pretty small. I learned from the guy at the marina where I got gas, that that's just the way they are.

I had to wait until the highest of high tide to get the boat ungrounded. Even then we did not float off. I had to rev the engine and do some rocking and pushing of the boat. The wind had really driven her hard onto the shore. Fortunately, I was on mud and not an oyster bed.

I'm just north of Charleston now. I'm going to spend tonight at a marina and check out the town. It's been about three weeks since I've paid for a marina. I've gotten pretty adept at the whole sponge bath thing, but the boat does need a power-wash, and I have a lot of laundry to do.

For the past couple days there has been a crackling noise in the hulls. Apparently, the noise is [krill](#) feasting on the algae on my hulls. I'll see if I can get a picture of them for you.

**Monday, December 17, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

Is your next recipe going to be ramen with krills?

[Split Decision](#) said...

If I could catch 'em it might be. So far I've only heard them. They travel in swarms. Might make a good horror movie. Attack of the Krills!

[Grampa](#) said...

Hopefully the crackling noise isn't micro fractures of your hull! If not, kill the krills.

[Grampa](#) said...

Hopefully the crackling noise isn't micro fractures of your hull! If not, kill the krills.

[Post a Comment](#)

### **Be Careful What You Wish For**



I got to go sailing today! Or maybe I should rephrase that as, I had to go sailing today. It was only for a few hundred yards, and maybe I didn't have to do it, but it made everything a little more comfortable while I worked on my conked out engine. The engine died after I had again just passed through a bridge. Where else would it die?

The engine's starter motor has been on the fritz for the past few days. It just makes a clicking sound when I turn the key. So, I've been using the rope pull to start the engine. Of course, the time for the rope to break would be when I'm in a channel just past a bridge, not in the morning at anchor.

Over the years I've used numerous small engines with pull starts, and yet somehow, I've never had to replace the rope on one. The boat engine manual has instructions on how to do it, but I think it's one of those things which is easy to understand if you see it done, but hard to describe in words. It took me a number of tries before I was able to figure out how to replace the rope, rewind the spring mechanism and get the rope pull mechanism reattached to the engine.

Yesterday, I was bitching in the comments about not being able to go sailing, and how the blog has

turned into a cooking and football blog. Well, I got what I wished for, some sailing today. The pic is of a newer Gemini which went through the bridge with me. They didn't have any engine trouble.

Maybe I'll start a small engine repair business when I get done with this trip. I'll certainly have the experience.

**Tuesday, December 18, 2007**

Jen G said...

So I've enjoyed following your adventures down the ICW over the last couple of months. It is a welcome diversion from my (boring) research. But recently, none of your photos have been visible on my computer. It ends up that SonicWall--an internet security filtering company--is blocking your photos on me! Just so you know, I requested that they rate your website as travel content and not block it. What a hassle just to procrastinate!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Hey Jen,

Glad to have you aboard. I do get blog hit counts from Google, but otherwise I have no idea who is reading the blog, other than from the comments. Sometimes, I think it's just Amy, my dad and me.

I don't know why a firewall would be blocking the pics. They're just pictures that I took with my digital camera and uploaded to Google's blog server. I went to SonicWall's website. They have a bunch of different products. Which one are you using?

Anyone else having a problem with the pictures not loading? Or does anyone have an idea why a firewall would block the pictures?

Thanks, Scott

[Grampa](#) said...

Scott, sometimes the pictures don't load, but load later on next visit to the blog. This might have to do with just the speed of the connection, activity on the host server, or maybe your pictures were in the process of being uploaded from you, while the text was faster. It has happened several times.

Now might be the time to search for your engine manufacturer and see if he has a replacement starter motor. Alternatively, you might find someone who can rebuild it. Sounds like the solenoid is working, but the motor isn't. But, it may be something as simple as the brushes need replacement.

[Split Decision](#) said...

I'm hoping that it's as simple as a battery problem. I haven't fully charged the batteries since the last time I was at a marina. Recently, I've had to charge them everyday. While earlier, I only charged about every other day. I've gotten a little more profligate in my electricity use, but not wildly so.

I tried the old trick of giving the starter a good whack, hoping that the motor was in a dead spot, but no luck. I'll replace it in January, if I can't fix the problem myself.

The pictures are uploaded before the text, so that's not the problem. I don't know why they wouldn't automatically be displayed with the posts. I haven't had any problem on my computer. hmmm.

Carla said...

Hi Scott,

Just so's ya know, we follow your blog daily! The pictures load immediately btw. Paul and I also have a Gemini (hull #639) named Isla. We just got her in August, and are looking forward to passages unknown ourselves. You may have seen our posts on the yahoo groups under "crackernoon@yahoo.com". That's what time we get going... Crack of noon! I just today figured out that we can comment on your daily progress! Don't know if that's going to be a good thing for you, but at least you'll know people are reading your blog. Keep it up!

We live in Cocoa Beach, FL. That's due East of Cocoa, FL, Just south of Canaveral. We can hook you up with hot showers, cold beverages and we know where they serve the killer "Paradise Burger"! Try to plan a stop here on your way through.

Carla & Paul Stewart  
crackernoon@yahoo.com

[Split Decision](#) said...

Hey Jen,

Grampa, I'm sure has lots to say about Cocoa Beach. I haven't been there since I was a kid. I have very fond memories of time spent there. When I make it down there this Winter, I would love to meet up with you and Paul.

I seem to be more of a crack of midnight guy, so please don't be offended if I retire early. Perhaps we can find some intersection in our schedules in the afternoon and evening.

Congratulations on your new gem purchase. I am enjoying mine immensely, as I am certain you are too. Good voyages, and happy to have fellow gem owners aboard the blog.

Scott

[Split Decision](#) said...

Oops. Meant to address my comment to Carla. Sorry. Wish this whole blogging thing was easier.

Fred Horn said...

Hey Scott,

Fred and I have been reading your adventures and have been enjoying them alot. I am quite in awe of your repair skills and determination. I think I would have a mile long worry list if it were Fred and give alot of credit to Amy. I really enjoy reading your blogs and then print them out for Fred to read. If I find time, I might figure out an easier way to go back and print out all the comments for him to read.

I think this whole adventure would make a great book. Do you have an thoughts to do that after your back? Also, will you be sailing/motoring back in the Gemini?

I wish there was a way to send you a care package. Fred and I received a ton of grapefruits and neither of us are allowed to eat them (conflicts with meds). Also, we bought a bread maker and I have been making some mean breads.

Not too much to report on our end. Fred did play Santa yesterday at the nursery. We are just getting ready for Christmas and plucking along.

I will get with Fred and have him post something soon. I love your blog and enjoy reading about each day. Its like being there except from the comfort of home.

Take Care,

Rose

Jen G said...

I didn't even know I was using a sonicwall product. At any rate, the photos are visible now. What beautiful crabs!

And don't for a minute think that it is just you, Amy and your dad on this blog. It sounds like there are a whole lot of us regularly checking in on your progress and adventures! I especially like your food entries. Ramen noodles and mac & cheese with hot dogs are two of my favorite meals!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Hey Jen,

I Reprovisioned at Harris Teeter yesterday. It's an upscale supermarket. I think it's mainly a southern chain, so I don't know if you can fine it in New England. I wasn't sure if I would be able to find my white trash favorites, but you'll be happy to know that I'm stocked up on ramen, mac & cheese and hot dogs.

Scott

[Split Decision](#) said...

Rose,

About the repair issues, so far I've found that when there is a will, there is a way. Whether it's replacing a fuel bowl gasket with a toilet bowl gasket, or bungee cording the engine so that it can be turned with a single rudder.

(If I hadn't had the right size gasket on board, I could have cut one from one of the inner tubes on my bike. But while I've got pretty good improvisational skills, my buddy Glen is the king of MacGuevering stuff.)

As to the book issue, the blog is already a book. You printed one for Fred! But seriously, my dad says the same thing, but I don't know if that's just the enthusiasm of friends and family. I'm not a good judge of my writing skills. If someone wants to make me a book or magazine offer, who am I to say no.

I do miss selling xmas trees with Fred. Nothing like hanging around the fire barrel cooking brawts and accidentally setting couches afire.

Scott

[Post a Comment](#)

### **Marinas**

Having spent yesterday doing laundry, shopping and cleaning/organizing/fixing the boat, today's post is another in a string of non-sailing posts. I'm at [Ashley Marina](#) in Charleston. It's the nicest marina I've ever seen. That's not saying much, seeing as I spend most of my time on the hook (at anchor), and my marina in Baltimore was only a step above a trailer park. But over the years, I have stayed at a few dozen marinas, so I feel I'm a somewhat competent judge.

The marina is a little pricey. Two dollars a foot plus electricity. But I've made full use of their amenities, so it's been more than worth it. Laundry is free. I've done five loads. They have a van service. They chauffeured me to the supermarket and West Marine.

Their bathrooms are impeccable. I'm usually happy if a marina's bathrooms are clean and in decent repair. My marina in Baltimore had a porta-potty. This marina has private stone tiled shower stalls, glass showers and upscale fixtures. I'd add a picture of the bathrooms to this post, but I felt a little weird about bringing a camera into the bathroom.

This wouldn't be a bad place to spend January. Their monthly rates are quite reasonable. And Charleston is an incredibly nice town.

**Thursday, December 20, 2007**

[Post a Comment](#)

### **Charleston**



After spending the day before doing chores, yesterday I got to ride my bike into Charleston for some sightseeing. The town is incredibly beautiful. It's just block after block of the most adorable houses you will ever see. Lots of trees and bushes, some in flower even this time of the year.

The picture is of the old City Market. It's four open air buildings filled with vendors' stalls. Most of the stuff was a little too crafty and kitschy for my taste. But it is reasonably priced, and I was able to pick up a few Christmas gifts, including something pretty for my girl.

**Friday, December 21, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

I am all in favor of finding a marina for January with decent bathrooms!

[Amy](#) said...

Whoops - I meant to put that comment under the previous post. Seems a little strange under this one.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Maybe it was a Freudian Slip and the pretty thing you want for xmas is a marina with a nice bathhouse.

[Amy](#) said...

Perhaps. But in my conscious mind, I think I'd like something pretty AND a marina with a nice bathhouse. :)

[Post a Comment](#)

## **The Grinch**

*Apologies for the title, but Amy brought it on herself by not providing one for her guest post. And now the Grinch herself speaks:*

I'm not usually one for touristy activities in New York, but every year I've lived here, I've managed to do the Christmas walking tour of Manhattan. This walk traditionally begins in Herald Square at the Macy's flagship store, and heads north past all of the other big department stores, ending up at Rockefeller Center and Saks Fifth Avenue. Last year, I did this walk with Scott and we ended our evening thawing out over a nice dinner. I know this post takes us even further off course from boat talk, but I thought it'd be nice to share some seasonal cheer from land with Scott.

Mid- to late- December is also the end of the fall semester, filled with grading exams and papers, dealing with students who have finally realized that they are failing my course, and rushing to file grades before I catch a plane to Illinois for the holiday, leaving little time or energy for holiday preparations. Not surprisingly, I tend to be a little cranky around this time, and have on a few occasions actually been referred to as "the Grinch." The Manhattan Christmas walk helps get me into the holiday spirit and ready to drink cocoa, sing carols, and be pleasant to others.

This year, I caught up with my friend Allison who was visiting NY for the weekend. Unfortunately, she did most of the walk during the day before I met up with her after work, and so I caught up with her at the end. We met up at a Thai restaurant in Times Square and then went to Rockefeller Center and Saks. Many thanks to Allison, who as a native New Yorker, is usually loathe to do things like this, and even more repulsed to be seen with someone taking pictures like a tourist. This is why I made her stand in front of the M&M store in Times Square.



And then, she got me back by making me stand in front of the tree at Rockefeller Center.



We did stop short of ice skating at Rockefeller Center, but did take lots of pictures of it and the other decorations.



We ended our walk watching the light show on the facade of Saks 5th Avenue, and taking some pictures of the windows and St. Patrick's Cathedral next door.



Happy holidays to all!

**Friday, December 21, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

I like the title!

Love from your very own,  
Crabby McGrinch

[Split Decision](#) said...

I would have loved to do the walk again this year. For whatever reason, it doesn't feel very Christmas-y down here. Probably because of the weather. There aren't that many lights and decorations, even in Charleston.

fred horn said...

Amy,

nice post. You and friend look like you had a good time. Christmas in New York is beautiful and your pics reminded us of that fact. Maybe next year, you and Scott and take that New York walk together again. Thanks for sharing and happy holidays.

Rose and Fred

[Amy](#) said...

Hi Rose and Fred-  
Thanks so much! I hope you two have a wonderful holiday too!  
Amy

[Post a Comment](#)

## Oh, the Weather Outside is Frightful



But inside it's delightful? Let it rain. Let it rain. Let it rain.

I rarely get seasick, but I felt a bit queasy today when I was folding clothes in the forward berth. And we weren't even going anywhere. We were at anchor in the Charleston harbor. The problem was that the tide runs fast through the anchorage and the wind was coming from a different direction, so those competing forces were spinning the boat at anchor. And the wind was kicking up some gentle swells. Of course with the crappy weather, I had all the hatches closed, so the air inside was a bit stale. I didn't do much all morning but sip Coca Cola.

Between the spinning, rocking and stale air, I didn't feel so hot. Being seasick sucks.

Later, I drove a mile to another anchorage in a creek. I found it at [Cruisers' Net](#). I'd been to this website months ago, but forgot about it. It's now added to the links section of the blog. If I'd come here yesterday, the whole seasick fiasco could have been avoided.

The pic is of a boat hard aground. I took it coming into Charleston. I just thought it was funny. Ok, maybe not so funny to the owner. (There's a fine line separating comedy from drama. Perspective may also play a part.) I could have taken another picture of a small sailboat in the anchorage which had turtled overnight (turtling is when your mast points to the bottom, and your keel to the sky), but I was fighting some wind and waves as I was leaving the tight anchorage and didn't feel confident to multi-task.

**Friday, December 21, 2007**

fred horn said...

Oye fufarufu,  
Heading up to Murphs for a night of bufoonary. May log in there and say hey.

The one time I got sea sick was crossing one island to the next in the Virgin Islands on our honeymoon. My honey sat next to me and said look at the horizon. Meanwhile, the steel band that was going to play on the island was sitting next to us and I did not want to hurl on their instruments.

All is well here. Have a great christmas. Thinking of you.

Ciao,  
Fred

[Split Decision](#) said...

Hello Mr. Fred,

Glad to see that you figured out how to work a computer. Hope checking the blog doesn't give you a heart attack!

Looking at the horizon isn't going to work. I'm at another anchorage and the boat is again spinning around the anchor. It's not as bad as the other day, especially since there isn't the up and down motion, and I have the hatches open.

Say hi to Murph for me. Maybe I'll break out my guitar and playstation (both of which are on the boat), and pretend that I'm there with you guys.

Merry xmas,  
Scott

[ChiliLady](#) said...

Hey

Just wanted you to know – I love your blog! It's very interesting, I love to read it!

Please visit mine (my everyday glamour) too, maybe we can link up? Take a look at it and leave me sum comments there, I would love to hear your opinion

Hope you're okay,

Chililady from Austria

PS: sorry for this spamming ☐ and MERRY CHRISTMAS!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Well Chililady, I'm not sure why a young woman in Austria, whose interests are Kate Moss and Fashion would be interested in this blog. You're not quite the demographic I expected to reach, but I'm glad you you are enjoying the read.

Maybe I'll do a post on sailing clothes and style.

Scott

[Post a Comment](#)

## **Jack, Bob and Chuck**



I often listen to my ipod while I'm driving down the Intra-Coastal Waterway (ICW). I've got some podcasts I listen to including [Car Talk](#), [This American Life](#), [Marketplace](#) and [Big O & Dukes](#). I also listen to a bunch of music on my ipod which friends and family have given me. But I also have a radio on board, and I listen to that too.

In Maryland there is an adult hits station called Jack. It's radio's response to the mp3 player. Instead of playing the same 20 songs from a specific genre over and over(rock, rap, classical, etc), Jack mixes it up with a much larger playlist spanning multiple genres.

I've now become acquainted with Jack's brothers, Bob and Chuck.

The other day, Bob played "I'm Too Sexy" by Right Said Fred. It's a fun song, and there are some lines about being on the "Cat Walk." Fred is talking about models in the song, but I thought it was funny that I was dancing around on my catamaran to the song, so I downloaded it from itunes. Amy gave me a gift card to itunes, but it's linked to her account, so she got an email receipt when I bought it. The next day, I got an email from her that simply said, "Yes you are."

I was listening to Chuck today as I motored along, and he really rocked. There were even a few songs I'd never heard before. I was jamming to Chuck's playlist, dancing around the cockpit and making a spectacle of myself to the pelicans and dolphins who were accompanying me on my journey. I was running fast with the tide. We were doing 8.5 mph at one point while the engine was running at just enough rpms to give me some steering. At a certain point, the engine died. I'd run out of gas.

This happens often enough. I have an internal fuel tank, but I haven't gotten around to cleaning it so

that I can use it. Instead I use five jerry cans which I rotate as they empty.

It's a good thing that I ran out of gas because in my clueless bliss, I had passed my intended anchorage. Changing the gas tank brought me out of this state, and I found that I needed to turn back about a quarter mile.

The pic is some birds I passed when I was listening to Chuck.

**Saturday, December 22, 2007**

fred horn said...

oh to be a pelican and watch Scott dance around his boat to the song "I'm too Sexy." Now that is a sight to see.

Merry Christmas, Scott!

Rose

[Split Decision](#) said...

Thanks Rose! Hope you and Fred have a Merry Xmas. And I hope you'll let Fred off his leash so that he can come down and visit this Winter.

[Post a Comment](#)

**[Bubba](#)**



I'd rather not say where I am. I don't want to defame the place or it's residents. My impression of this place probably says as much about me, as about the town. And truthfully, I really didn't get off the boat to take a stroll about and see the town or meet the people.

I'm in the Carolina Low Country. The ICW runs through a series of rivers which are often connected by a short cut. You run down one river and up the next. The tides here run fast, and I try to time it so that I'm mostly running in the direction of the tide, in which case, the motor is only needed to provide steering and doesn't have to run very fast.

I was running low on gas yesterday. There are not many marinas here(or much of anything else). The marinas listed in the guidebook aren't even on the ICW. The closest one is two miles off the ICW, so that's the one where I decided to get gas.

I pulled up to the tiny creek in late afternoon. There was a short row of houses, docks and boats. From the first house emanated a cacophony of barking. It sounded like the hounds of Cerberus were inside. I thought maybe they were aroused by the sound of my motor. Maybe they thought their owner was returning home. But no, they continued on until nightfall. Probably someone's pack of hunting dogs. Seriously, it sounded like there were a lot of them.

About a hundred yards up the creek is the marina. Well, it's not really a marina. Just a convenience store and fuel dock which I ended up tied to for the night. In the parking lot were a group of guys hanging out around a pickup with it's hood open. Almost a quintessential good ole boy scene.

I had a flashback to an unpleasant experience from my younger days. I was on a solo bicycle trip through Southern Maryland. I had stopped in a small town and bought dinner at the convenience store. I decided to set up camp nearby and spend the night. At dusk, a few guys showed up, and I forget exactly what was said, but it was made clear that they didn't want me around.

Fortunately, there was a phone booth nearby and I called 911. By coincidence, the police had an APB out for me. There was a family emergency, and my dad had called them to keep an eye out for me. (A whole other story.) Anyway, my dad ended up driving down and picking me up, ending my bicycle tour.

The pic is of the moon setting this morning as I left the creek.

**Monday, December 24, 2007**

[Grampa](#) said...

I remember it well. Good judgment in moving out. Stay safe.

[sandy](#) said...

Merry Christmas Scott and Amy. January is almost here. And, Scott it is time to start cleaning.  
Sandy

[Split Decision](#) said...

Now Sandy, don't succumb to stereotypes. I think Amy will agree that of the two of us, I'm cleaner. I'm often scrubbing her stove top when I arrive in NYC. But you are right, the boat is a bit of a disaster.

Just finished my sponge bath and I'm off to town in search of some xmas spirit. Merry Christmas to you and Dennis!

[Amy](#) said...

Yes, indeed, Scott is cleaner than I am. Why do you think I'm trying so hard to get him to live with me?

Sandy - A very merry Christmas to you and Dennis!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Will I be forced to change the name of the blog to the Maid's Blog?

[Post a Comment](#)

### **Weird Christmas**



I need to stop reading the guide book, and apparently the New York Times. I was all excited about Beaufort, SC. I was thinking we'd spend the month of January here. This Beaufort doesn't blow, like the one in NC. But it's not nearly as great as the NY Times makes it out to be in [this article](#). It's just a sleepy southern town with a few blocks of picturesque houses and a short main street. I was hoping to find some xmas spirit here, but the streets were mostly deserted and undecorated with lights or ornaments. The aptly named Church street had churches, but none were holding Christmas morning services.

I was returning to the boat in a poo-poo mood when I spotted a boat anchored uncomfortably close to mine. It almost looked like they were rafted up together. I kayaked over to the boat to see what was up. The young couple apologized for being so close to my boat. They were having engine trouble. I offered to help, and it turned out that I had the parts they needed on my boat. Being able to help someone out on Christmas Day did give me a little bit of a warm feeling.

I was hoping to get a Christmas-y pic for the blog in Beaufort, but I didn't see anything. Some of the houses in Beaufort are listed for sale in the millions. I bet the house in the picture could be bought for a more reasonable price.

**Tuesday, December 25, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

So sad. And we could have used your help herding the nieces and nephews today. Merry Christmas, my dear

[Split Decision](#) said...

Happy Boxing Day! I picked up some more LED xmas lights on sale. The boat is going to be energy efficient and festive all year long!

At anchor in Hilton Head. Still in search of a marina for January.

[Post a Comment](#)

## Strike Four?



I came into Beaufort on Christmas day at just about slack tide. There is a bridge just north of town which I had to pass through. About a half mile north of the bridge was a sign with the hours of bridge operation, radio channel for hailing, etc. It also stated that the bridge was closed on Federal Holidays.

I've seen similar signs at bridges often enough. I guess the Federal Holiday closure thing just hadn't registered in my head. Anyway, there was an anchorage just north of the bridge. From there I rode my bicycle over the bridge to Beaufort. As I neared the bridge house, I saw that there was someone inside.

When I returned from my poo-poo xmas excursion into town, I decided to hail the bridge. The tender answered that he would open the bridge for me. The passage through the bridge was a little hairy, and going through at that time was probably not the best decision. I was running with the ebbing tide into the bridge. But we made it through fine.

At the town anchorage, I turned the boat into the current and put her into idle forward gear. She pretty much stayed put as I went forward to drop anchor. Back in the cockpit, I took the engine out of gear. Instead of just falling back with the current, the boat twisted at about a 30 degree angle to the current. While we had stayed put, the anchor had drifted under the boat with the current. The line was caught on one of the centerboards. I put the engine back in gear, and the line released from the centerboard. We drifted back and the anchor held. All was well.

When I weighed anchor this morning, I found it bent as you can see in the picture. I'm assuming this happened during the incident I just described. I doubt that I'll be able to bend it back, unless maybe I tried the same stunt, but with the anchor line wrapped around the other centerboard. That's now four anchors that I've gone through on this trip.

**Wednesday, December 26, 2007**

[older salty](#) said...

Hey Captain,

Just wanted to wish you and Amy a belated merry x-mas. Sorry it's not christmasy down there. M  
A just came back from N.Y. city the same places Amy had gone to. Wonder they didn't bump into  
each other.

I got another deer on Sat. one more and the freez.. will be full.

P.s. I like your rudders  
see ya older salty-M.A.

[Amy](#) said...

No way! I think we should start a pool on how many anchors you're going to lose on the trip.

(Hey older salty, and MA! Sorry I missed you on Fifth Avenue!)

[Peter](#) said...

Its always been a weak point with Danforth and similar style anchors. Perhaps an engineering  
shop could straighten the shank for you. You may also have learnt an anchoring technique lesson  
here- might it have been better to go further forward, let her drop back while lowering the anchor  
then if it didn't dig in, get into forward gear to allow it to set? (Perhaps the current was too strong  
for this to work?)

[Split Decision](#) said...

Hey Peter, I hope you had a merry xmas. Amy accepted a job at your arch rival alma mater, so  
we'll be neighbors next Fall.

I think you're right about the anchoring procedure. I'm learning a lot of new things on this trip,  
like respect for tides. In the upper chesapeake, they weren't something I had to worry much  
about. Down here, they're the first thing you have to think about.

[Split Decision](#) said...

OS, I'm looking forward to some venison on Memorial Day. I should be back by then. Don't want  
to be down here for hurricane season.

Anonymous said...

Scott, you replied to the wrong Peter. At any rate, the other one gave good advice. Standard  
practice is to lower the anchor until it hits bottom and then let the rode play out, keeping tension  
on the rode, until you have the desired amount of rode out. Then dig the anchor in. Some single  
handers will lead the anchor aft (outside the safety lines) so they can drop the anchor without  
leaving the cockpit. They often lead the rode back to a winch so they can even raise the anchor

from the cockpit.

Peter Y.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Peter Y,

It was just bad decision making on my part. I was in an ugly mood and went through the bridge and anchored when the tide was running fast.

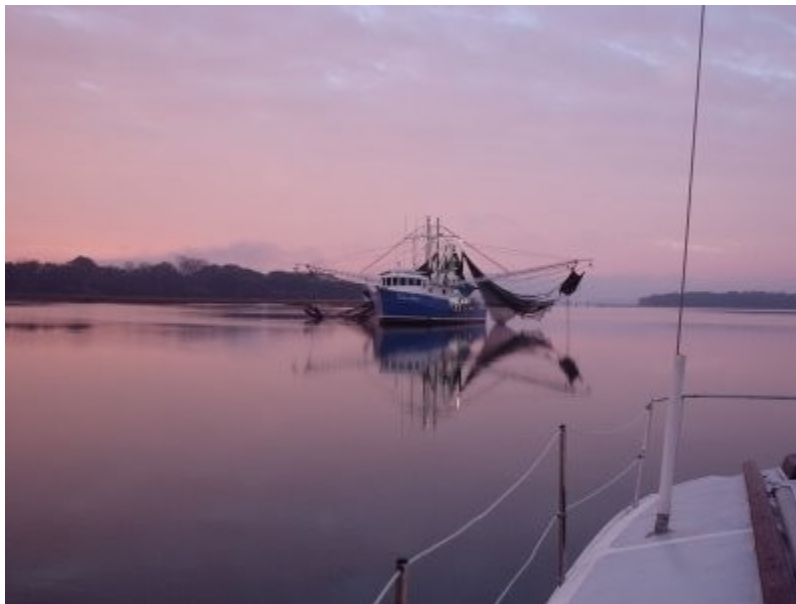
But on the other topic, Amy says that the football games at her new school are fun and so is the tailgating. I'd love it if you'd join us. And I expect I'll be in Portsmouth again.

Scott

ps thanks for the good advice from the first peter.

[Post a Comment](#)

### **Any Port in a Storm**



I've secured a slip at a marina in Hilton Head for the next month. I've instructed Muffy to pack her tennis racket, golf clubs and bikini when she comes to visit in a week or so. I'll give a full report about the marina at some point. It is part of an 1800 acre resort at which we will have full guest privileges. This is the antithesis of my trailer park marina in Baltimore. One thing I did not consider when selecting the marina is that it is surrounded by the Disney section of the resort. Plenty of families and kids, even in off season.

I'll try to keep up with the daily posting. I'm not sure what the topics will be. Some of them may be about golf and tennis. I apologize in advance. I do have lots of repairs to do on the boat, so I'll post about that too.

Pic is of a shrimp boat anchored near me last night. Earlier, I had to avoid him and his nets as he fished around the mouth of the river separating Hilton Head from the mainland.

**Thursday, December 27, 2007**

[Amy](#) said...

Woo-hoo!  
-Muffy

[Post a Comment](#)

### Seashells by the Seashore



Found these shells on my morning run. I haven't been running since my post about the pirate ship in Baltimore. Feels good to stretch my legs. I'll bet I'll be achy tomorrow though.

I've met a few of my dockmates, including Einstein the cat who lives next door, and Sasha the dog who lives two boats down.

I haven't figured this place out yet. In the resort complex are a Marriot, Hilton and Disney enclave. There are also three golf courses, a tennis complex and a bunch of condo and housing complexes.

Some of the areas are clearly public. Other areas have signs that say "Members and Guests only", and others are gated with combination locks. I don't know which areas I as a guest of the marina am allowed in. Am I permitted to use the facilities at the Marriot, or the pool at one of the condo complexes? I'll let you know when I get tossed out of one of these places.

I'm getting readjusted to life on land (re-socialized?). Marina life is much different from life on the hook (at anchor). Now I have to be considerate of others and not play my music too loud or knock about the boat too early in the morning.

There are some benefits like dependable utilities. I do have a post percolating in my head about power and electricity for the boat.

**Friday, December 28, 2007**

[Grampa](#) said...

How would you like to have Bella, Bubba, Wookie, Sho-Me, Shock-in-awe, Odin, Baldur, Skadi, and Squeeler as boat-mates. I'm sure they would enjoy meeting Einstein and Sasha.

Looks like you are going first class. I was there years ago, but that was paid for by Uncle Sam. Enjoy.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Muffs and I will be Wintering in Hilton Head and Summering in Martha's Vineyard this year (no joke). I don't know how we'll manage.

[sandy](#) said...

And all with no rudder and a bent anchor.

I was in Hilton Head and it is beautiful--a perfect spot for January. Also, have friends in MV, so when you go, let us know.

Happy New Year to you both. Where will Amy be next year?

Sandy

[Amy](#) said...

Hey Sandy-

Looks like the Captain and I will be setting up near Richmond next year! And we hope to have room for guests...

[Split Decision](#) said...

Friends of Amy's are getting married in Martha's Vineyard next Summer. I'm not sure when.

We're going to sail up. And I'll likely bum around the coast of New England for a month or two.

fred horn said...

Hi Scott,

Happy holidays! Fred wanted to know when you plan to sail from Florida to the Bahamas?

Rose

[Split Decision](#) said...

Rose, tell Fred that the only thing I can guarantee is that I will be leaving Hilton Head at the end of January. If he wanted to do some sailing/motoring then (depending on whether the rudder situation is resolved), I could pick him up in Savannah or perhaps a little later in Jacksonville.

Otherwise, things are still up in the air.

Fred Horn said...

Scott,

I think he is going to wait until you have a better idea of your schedule and the condition of the boat. What date is Amy joining you and for how long?

Rose

[Split Decision](#) said...

Amy's joining me next week. The report that I can give you now about the condition of the boat and my schedule is probably just about as good as it gets. The boat will be in a lot better condition after a month at a marina than it is now.

I've gone about 600 miles from Baltimore. The Bahamas are about another 600 miles away. I don't know that I have it in me to go that far, especially if I've got to return that distance and more to go to New England this Summer. I also have the move to Richmond on my plate, as well as a few other things.

And as I've learned, adhering to a fixed schedule on the sea is a bad idea. The weather and equipment failures often dictate the itinerary.

[Post a Comment](#)

## Neptune Claus



I was working on another installment of Cooking with Cap'n Scott. It was also going to be part of a series of posts about equipment on the boat. I was going to talk about my gas grill. Unfortunately, the pictures didn't come out well. I wasn't attentive enough to the chicken, and I let the skins get stuck to the grill. When I flipped them over the skin ripped. It was still yummy. Just didn't look good enough for a blog post, especially since you at home can't taste the chicken on the boat. I'll try again later in the week.

**Sunday, December 30, 2007**

Split Decision said...

My condolences to Grampa and Brianna on the Steeler loss to the Ravens. Congratulations on making the playoffs though. I guess I'll have to root for the Steelers during the post season. One bright spot was Troy Smith as QB. I'm so tired of Kyle Boller.

Today is toilet rebuild day. I should have a post about that later.

Grampa said...

Steelers weren't really trying. Starters didn't start. I even switched to watching the Redskins game, which was much more enjoyable.

Note also that Penn State won the Alamo bowl over Texas A&M, so the weekend was pretty good.

[Split Decision](#) said...

Yah, it kind of reminded me of a pre-season game. I was excited that it was on down here, and that Troy Smith was QB.

Happy New Year to everybody. Work on the head not yet completed. It was quite a s\*\*\*y day!

[Grampa](#) said...

And a happy new year to you too. Don't fall overboard at midnight if you are celebrating that late. Marta will wake me up for the witching hour.

GIGO

[Split Decision](#) said...

Naw, the old farts on the pier are getting together for an early celebration. I bought some olives and feta from the salad bar at the Piggly-Wiggly, as well as the champagne of beer. I don't think anyone wants something prepared on the boat while I'm working on the head.

[Brianna](#) said...

Playoffs start this weekend. Its too bad you and Amy can't be here so we can watch the game and eat wings again at that kind of shady bar with the cheapest beer in all of Queens.

Hope the toilet fixing is going well. I imagine jumping into the water now would be rather unpleasant.

And, happy new year to you!

[Split Decision](#) said...

Brianna, I don't know that anyone is going to see your comment posted on this stale thread. I only saw it because I get new comments sent to my email.

It should be warm this weekend, and we'll enjoy watching the Steelers this weekend. (Are they playing? I haven't checked the schedule.) Sorry you can't join us.

I'm going to jump into the water with one of my xmas presents on. (a wetsuit that I asked for.) Although taking care of business with it on might be a little complicated.

[Post a Comment](#)