

Home is the Sailor. Home from the Sea.

OR

It's Dark at Night!

By Phil Correll 6/Nov/2015

During the hottest fall days in memory we worked out in the sun
So we could prepare our sailboat to eventually go have some fun.
Eileen made the boat look pretty with a new, thick coat of wax,
While I spent time below the hull to stem the barnacle attacks!
We replaced a leaking thru-hull and sealed it well with gook.
Yes, we cleaned and scrubbed in nearly every cranny and nook!
Safe Cove Boat and RV Storage had cared for Breezin' Up, our boat
Until the fifth of November when we once more set her afloat.
The boat was put into the water at two thirty on the nose,
And in another fifteen minutes you could say, "Well, there she goes!"
The intrepid Captain Phil had visions of grandeur and naval skill
As he headed toward the unknown and a night-time sailing thrill.
Whenever he was able the Captain unfurled the jib for speed
Because the quickest transit possible is just what his vessel would need.
The canal system is twisty, but Breezin' Up managed it with ease.
Several other sailboats were afloat, and I'll describe one, if you please.
As long as a run-on sentence the boat filled the lake right near the lock.
I think the crew was Jehova's Witnesses, but they didn't come to knock.
The boat's name was a biblical quote from the Hebrews part of The Book.

I quickly headed for the canal side lock gate and tried to just not look.
Transiting through the locks has become a single handed chore,
And I don't even fret about it like I used to do on many trips before.
Just a few yards beyond the lock is a narrow, shallow channel path.
Wouldn't you just know it an Out Islander had met the low tide's wrath!
TowBoat US was on the scene with rope and power enough to spare,
But with the line wrapped on the prop TowBoat wasn't going anywhere!
Breezin' Up and I moved past the boats with the due respect and awe.
At least on the entire trip that is the worst incident that I saw.
By five-fifteen I had miles to go and couldn't waste a perfect breeze.
I'd sail on a bit and then just anchor where ever I might please.
The dropping sun was gorgeous with orange rays above clouds of white.
That's when I hatched the notion of sailing through the falling night.
With GPS and a little luck I could find the marks I'd need,
And that would guide me safe to be sure with a fair amount of speed.
As darkness fell I passed the Cape Haze green lighted mark,
So I felt very confident of my spot even though it was quite dark.
The problem that soon reared its head as I swished on through the night
Is that no channel marks at Bokeelia was ever fitted with a light!
I could see the sand bars brightly on the Garmin in the hatchway.
However, seeing the shadows on GPS ain't like seeing markers in the day.
I slowed our speed to just five knots through the waves ahead,
Because hitting a day-mark piling was the calamity I would dread.
Carefully looking to catch sight of just one mark to either side

I managed to clear the sandbar and decided to end my night time ride.

At eight o'clock I dropped the hook into the bottom's sand,

And, I must be honest, I was feeling pretty satisfied and grand.

I anchored north of Bokeelia and rode the waves all through the night,

Because pushing Lady Luck any farther just wouldn't have been right.

At seven thirty in the morning I met Eileen at our new dockside spot.

As far as true adventures to tell you this is all I've got!

