



## 2012 Meander on the Bay Cruise Report

**Saturday, September 15** – The Cruise got off to an inauspicious start with the Cruise Captain overheating half a mile from his dock! After consulting with several of the other boats on the cruise, the first night destination was changed to Dun Cove. The benefit of being in a family owned marina is that the marina owner saw us drop the hook, called to see what the problem was and came out with his son to assist. The problem was diagnosed in minutes as a failed drain plug in the cooling system (who puts a PLASTIC plug in a diesel? Yanmar does.). Back to the marina to make a replacement part and, after testing the system out, WHISPER was on her way by 1045. A stiff North breeze powered us out and down Eastern Bay with KARAYA and FISCAL STRAY not far behind. We sailed around Tilghman Island and up into the Choptank, finally furling and motoring into the anchorage. Boats coming from Oxford and Cambridge unfortunately motored most of the way but at least it was not far. Other boats in the anchorage were TRYST, SEA NETTLE and SOUTHWIND. We learned later that VOYAGER (Denny, accompanied by Chuck Ellis, a/k/a the Odd Couple) spent the night on the Little Choptank. They had decided to take advantage of Saturday's breeze to go to Solomons and then were not able to get out of the slip at Tilghman on Chesapeake until 1300 because of low tides. WHISPER rafted with TRYST and the fleet had cocktails on WHISPER. You can in fact get 12 people in her cockpit!

**Sunday, September 16** - The fleet got underway right after the 0800 Captains' Call in a light NW breeze and a beautiful day. SOUTHWIND returned to Cambridge. SEA NETTLE ran aground while raising the hook and reported that they would wait for the tide and try to catch up; SOUTHWIND standing by for a while to assist. It was a nice sail out the Choptank (see photo 038 of TRYST attached). FISCAL STRAY looked good flying a chute while others (namely WHISPER) were somewhat less successful. The breeze faded around noon, so we motored the rest of the way. About 1330 SEA NETTLE called to say they were still aground and would not be joining us that night. The anchorage was in Mill Creek at the mouth of Old House Cove. Boats in the fleet were KARAYA, FISCAL STRAY, VOYAGER, TRYST, WHISPER and GRACE. WHISPER and TRYST hosted a chili dinner for the fleet, with chili and cornbread by Carolyn, salad by Anne and cupcakes courtesy of Jayne. The Commodore dazzled the assembled masses with his LED flashlight while Molly displayed her watch that flashed "GOAL" when she had met her physical activity goal for the day (there were some suggestions that she was setting her goals low to get the flashing lights, which she hotly disputed).

**Monday, September 17** - The forecast was for S 10-15, so as we wanted to get further South we decided to get an early start before going to weather stopped being fun. VOYAGER left ahead of the call. KARAYA and FISCAL STRAY returned to home ports, while TRYST headed South to start their adventure on the ICW. The destination was the Yeocomico to get coverage for the wind and rain forecast for Tuesday. Of course, the forecast wind never appeared, so the remaining fleet motored the whole way, arriving early in the afternoon. We anchored on the West Yeocomico in the bight just past Cedar Point, tucked up to the South shore with high banks

and trees. VOYAGER stopped at Olversons on the South Yeocomico for fuel and elected to stay the night. SEA NETTLE arrived about 1700 having motored all the way from Dun Cove. GRACE hosted cocktails.

**Tuesday, September 18** - A lay day. The forecast was for S 20 - 25 with higher gusts and heavy rain, with Gale warnings and 4-5 foot seas. The rain did not come until afternoon, but the winds were strong all day. A shore trip to the town of Kinsale revealed a few old houses, a nice little town square and not much else, except for Up The Creek Consignments and the proprietor, Bill Whitt. Joanne Miller scored some spring form pans and Bill was something of a raconteur. We declined his offer of his 1998 Caddy to explore. On returning to the boats it was discovered that SEA NETTLE had decided to depart early and was half way across the creek. A quick reanchoring drill solved the problem. VOYAGER joined the fleet just before the rain came around 1300 (see photo 044 of the fleet at anchor). Heavy rain and wind continued until night.

**Wednesday, September 19** - As forecast, the wind shifted from S to NW early in the morning and at the Captains Call we confirmed Crisfield as the day's destination. A bright, sunny, very windy day. On the call VOYAGER, who once again had left early, reported 15-18 knot winds from the North. SEA NETTLE headed to Port Kinsale Marina for fuel (the marina had been closed Monday and Tuesday) and GRACE waited for them. WHISPER put out a reefed main and partial genoa at the mouth of the Yeocomico in N 15-20 and bombed out the Potomac. As we were sailing out, the Pride of Baltimore II was entering under full sail. Quite a sight. The attached photo 050 would have been clearer except that I was not exactly shooting from a steady platform! As we came across the North side of the target ship and headed for Solomons Lump the wind gradually eased so we first unrolled the genoa and then shook out the reef in the main. Finally, a bit North of Janes Island, we went to the engine. VOYAGER was already anchored in the basin at Somers Cove and GRACE and SEA NETTLE came in later. WHISPER and SEA NETTLE took slips at Somers Cove Marina, while GRACE and VOYAGER anchored out. A quick walk around town revealed that the economy has hit Crisfield hard. Despite the condo buildings that went up a few years ago, all you saw were closed restaurants and shops. There used to be three old time hardware stores and now there are none. It is very sad. Cocktails were on WHISPER as we celebrated the Dianiches' membership in CSSM (see photo 053 attached). Somewhere in Crisfield, VOYAGER managed to pick up a very spiffy crabpot (see photo 057) which Denny seemed to think would help with sail trim perched on the coachroof (why else would he have it there?).

**Thursday, September 20** - Based on a forecast S at 10, our destination was Solomons as the crew of WHISPER needed to be sure of getting back to work on Monday. VOYAGER stayed behind as Denny and Chuck wanted to poke around town and then thought they would check out the Honga. WHISPER and SEA NETTLE cast off about 0715 right behind GRACE. The weather was once again beautiful, with lots of sun and mild temperatures. We had a nice sail up Tangier Sound in a following breeze, then around Solomons Lump to Holland Bar Light. As we came out a Navy range boat hailed us, alerting us to firing on the target ship (no need as we could hear it). Mid day the wind died so we motored the rest of the way. WHISPER, GRACE and SEA NETTLE took moorings at Zahnizers. We had an excellent dinner at the CD Cafe (warning for groups - they don't do separate checks). We heard from Denny who confirmed that VOYAGER was on the Honga River, in Fox Creek by Asquith Island, where he reported that he and Chuck spotted porpoises.

**Friday, September 21** - SEA NETTLE elected to stay in Solomon's to visit friends and GRACE also elected to leave the cruise. WHISPER confirmed with VOYAGER by phone a destination of the Little Choptank and got underway around 0900. The breeze was forecast to start light and build by late morning. Again, the weather was spectacular. We raised sail near the LNG pier with a South wind around 10. In a steady South breeze, one long gybe up and across to James Island (with a slight adjustment to avoid a tanker) and a couple of short gybes got us in to the Little Choptank and we reached in and up the river, furling just before Hudson Creek. We anchored in Hudson Creek behind the spit at the mouth of the creek. We had followed VOYAGER on AIS (the only way to know where they were) so we knew they were coming in behind us. The much-reduced fleet had cocktails on VOYAGER. With a forecast S 10-15 with gusts to 20 on Saturday, turning around to NW 10-15 on Sunday, we decided to head for Annapolis in the morning.

**Saturday, September 22** - We watched the sun rise behind VOYAGER (see photo 056 attached) and both got underway about 0700. Coming out of the Little Choptank the wind was a little too much on the nose to sail (SW at 15) until we came around G 5, but then we sailed out briskly across the bottom of Sharps Island before turning North. We gybed up the Bay with VOYAGER not far behind. After threading our way through the racing fleets in the Bay and the mouth of the Severn we picked up a mooring in Annapolis harbor. VOYAGER got the last mooring at about 1330. Denny and Chuck spent the afternoon prowling around Bert Jabin's yard looking at boats (looking, not buying!) while the crew of WHISPER relaxed. We watched thunderstorms come up from the Southwest and slide by inland as the cold front came through and swung the wind around from the South to the Northwest just in time for the trip home.

**Sunday, September 23** – WHISPER got underway about 0800, with no signs of life on VOYAGER as we passed. We had a quick trip down the Bay, staying out of the shipping channel for a passing cable laying ship before gybing over to Bloody Point and up Eastern Bay. VOYAGER left a little later and had a quick trip down to Poplar Narrows – too quick in fact, as the tide was out and they couldn't get back in the slip until Sunday night! Denny – you need to get a workboat to do a little “engine testing” in your slip!

Speaking only for the crew of WHISPER, we had a lot of fun on the cruise and hope that the other members on the cruise enjoyed themselves.

**Participating Boats:**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Nights</u>
<i>Fiscal Stray</i>	2
<i>Ellis Island</i>	1*
<i>Grace</i>	5
<i>Karaya</i>	2
<i>Sea Nettle</i>	5
<i>Southwind</i>	1
<i>Tryst</i>	2
<i>Voyager</i>	5*
<i>Whisper</i>	8

\*One night shifted from Voyager to Ellis Island in recognition of Chuck's cocaptaincy.

Respectfully submitted

Larry Rovin

Cruise Captain

Special Note: For those who are interested, there were several websites and apps that I found very useful for weather and marine traffic while planning the cruise. When you can't wait for the voice on the weather radio to get to the marine forecast, try <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/zone/east/lwxmz.htm> . If you want to see what NOAA thinks the winds will be hour by hour, and how patterns will move across the Bay, go to [http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ofs/cbofs/wind\\_forecast.shtml](http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ofs/cbofs/wind_forecast.shtml) . For general weather information, I like Accuweather.com. If you have an iPad or iPhone, the MarineTraffic app will show you everyone with AIS (including Voyager when Denny has it on) which is useful for figuring out if that thing on the horizon is coming your way. Buoydata will give you the wind information from NOAA buoys and Myradar will let you know if the storm is coming your way. There are several navigation apps out there. We use Navionics as a poor man's chartplotter.