

Volker's 2012 Atlantic Crossing Adventure

The beginning.....

RE: Congrats

Inbox x



phil jones pwjonesfp@verizon.net
to me

Jan 31



Dear Volker,

We are finalizing our passage plans and would like to ask if you are interested and available in doing the Atlantic passage from Gibraltar to Newport, RI with us. Following is our float plan, with weather and crew related layovers in the Canaries and, although brief, in Bermuda:

ATLANTIC PASSAGE		
May 25	Gibraltar	Depart by June 1st
June 6 th	Canary Islands	Depart by June 10 th
June 26 th	Bermuda	Depart by July 1 st
July 7 th	Newport RI	Home port

We will be a crew of 5 with three watch captains sailing on four hour rotations for the Atlantic portion. Guest and crew may add an additional two to our Gibraltar-Canary and Bermuda-Newport legs respectively.

I would welcome your experience as part of the pool of talented crew we've put together. If this interests you I look forward to discussing particulars with you.

Best regards,

Phil

Our ride – Venturous (ex. Marietta)



After the purchase, the yacht was renamed “**Venturous**”.

- Radio Call Sign: MMSI # WDG2961
- Country of Registry: USA
- Homeport: Newport, Rhode Island, USA
- USCG Documentation: #1237887

Vacation slip filed and approved on 2/5: Thur 6/7 to Fri 6/29. Flights booked on 2/11/2012.

The Crew

- Phil Jones, owner, 67, Annapolis, MD
- Beaumont (Beau) Rogers, 52, Madisonville, LA
- Bill Hughes, 63, Annapolis, MD
- Bill Richardson, 70, Annapolis, MD
- Harry Privette, Captain, 75, Annapolis, MD (brought on for insurance purposes)
- Volker Petersen, 52, Lakeville, MN

The Trip

Venturous made landfall in the Canary Islands in Las Palmas on Gran Canary on 6/6/2012 at 7:42am. Due to a broken halyard that required some parts to be shipped in, I joined the crew on Friday 6/8 in the Marina Muelle Deportivo de Las Palmas on Gran Canary after another 30min flight from Tenerife to Gran Canary. The new halyard arrived today – ready to be installed.

Saturday 6/9/2012

Slept great the first night on board. After breakfast we put the stay-sail in the sail bag and put the cover on the main sail. Worked a bit with Bill H. to try to resolve the TXM fault of the AIS system. We can receive but can't send our AIS signal. Gave me a good feel of the boat size. Went to town with Phil and Bill H. They needed to get money and wanted to buy some Cuban cigars. Had lunch at the beach on the north-west side of Las Palmas. Lazy afternoon with reading, espresso, and apple cake.

Sunday 6/10/2012

Rented a car with Beau and the 2 Bills and left at 9:30 for a round island excursion. Went clockwise thru the tourist towns of Telde and Maspalomas. Maspalomas is huge with condos resorts all packed together at the southern tip of Tenerife. Beach is a huge dune area (Dunas de Maspalomas). We stayed overnight in the old fishing port town of Puerto de Mogan. Nice afternoon at the pool bar with great dinner at the hotel. Complete stay with dinner and breakfast was about Euro 65.

Monday 6/11/2012

Left Puerto de Mogan and went along the very rugged coast to head inland up the mountain. Lunch in the port town of Agaete. Scenery switched from very rugged and desert dry coastline to lush green / tree lined mountains as we went over the mountain ridge onto the windward side. We went over the mountain ridge of Montana Morena (1,655m) and stopped in the small town of Cruz del Herrero for coffee. The bar was a house built into the mountain with the back part of the bar with bar mountain side rock. The Gran Canary climate is pretty much split along a line from the North-East to the South-West with the windward (Las Palmas) side being overcast / wet and the leeward side sunny and dry.

Phil bought the crew a farewell departure steak dinner. Great evening!

Tuesday 6/12/2012

Last day for final preparations before Wednesday's departure. Beau and Bill R. did the shopping, Bill H. and I reviewed operation of the water maker, fire- and bilge-pumping system.

Day 1 - Wednesday 6/13/2012

Left Las Palmas Marina at 06:10am with 25-30kn NNE. Main with 2nd reef set in industrial harbor. Engine quit. Beau got it restarted (bleeding the fuel lines) while we were headed back in to set anker. After engine quit/got restarted a second time after another 20min running we started course around the north side of Gran Canary toward the southern tip of Tenerife and the harbor of Puerto Colon to pick up Captain Harry Privette. Beau and Bill H. continued to work on the engine and in the end found an open valve in the fuel system that allowed air to be pulled in thru a pump.

We went under engine, stay sail, and 2nd reef main toward Puerto Colon. Saw 2 dolphins at noon. Moored at the gas dock at 5:15pm. Harry was on board by 6pm. Dinner on board and left the dock by 8:30pm to sail thru our first night.

Left the harbor at 20:30 with course Bermuda. Watch teams are Bill H. / Harry P., Beau / Bill R., and Volker / Phil.

Dinner: Stew and potatoes

21:00-24:00 watch.

Day 2 - Thursday 6/14/2012

Morning shift with Phil from 6:00-9:00. Wind from the North 35kn, gusting to 40kn. Boat made 10kn with peaks of 12kn. Overcast with sun coming up toward the end of the watch. Beau and Bill relieved us. Went straight to bed to catch some sleep. Bill H. and Harry took the 14:00-18:00 watch. I went up the mast in 20kn wind to retrieve a lazy-jack line that had come loose. Wind clocked throughout the day toward East. At end of our 18:00-21:00 shift we reduced the sails for the night (1 reef and stay sail). Major adventure getting the stay sail up with Bill R. Sail was wrapped around forestay. Both of us took a bath on the foredeck up to our waists.

Dinner: Cheeseburgers and salad.

06:00-10:00 and 18:00-21:00 watches.

Day 3 - Friday 6/15/2012

Uneventful night shift from 3:00-6:00. Beau made scrambled eggs and bacon for breakfast. Wind shifted further toward the East and weakened to around 15kn. Ran with main and Genua all day. Had engine running for 2.5 hrs to get hot water and batteries recharged. Second shift from 14:00-18:00 was uneventful. Phil was cleaning the main water intake to allow the cold water to be pumped to the refrigerator compressors. Success, brought refrigeration back on line temporarily before it crapped out again. Shifted all the food to the bar fridge in the salon. Will work on the refri-system tomorrow.

Dinner: stir fry and rice.

03:00-06:00, and 14:00-18:00 watches

Day 4 - Saturday 6/16/2012

Took a shower and had a great leisurely breakfast. Set clocks 1 hour forward and increased Bill and Harry's watch and Phil and my watch each by ½ an hour. Set Genacker during our day shift from 10:30

to 15:00 (after time change 14:00). Genacker got us 1/2kn speed over the Genua but required constant trimming (in 10-12kn E winds). Bill H. and Beau worked all morning on the refrigerator cooling pumps, aft grey water system, and the generator. Generator is still not running (planning to continue the troubleshooting in the morning), all the rest is fixed. These guys are truly amazing in getting these systems up and going. 16:30 engine shaft came out of the key position after shutting down engine after battery recharge. After evaluation of all our options we secured the prop shaft with sail ties and went on.

Based on weather forecast from the Commander Service we jibed and went south to find better air.

Dinner: sausage and vegetables.

00:00-03:00, 10:00-14:00, and 21:00-24:00 watches.

Day 5 - Sunday 6/17/2012

Quiet night with low winds (E 9-12kn). Generator is still out. Bill and Beau's trouble shooting lead us to isolate the problem to the control panel. We will call the manufacturer tomorrow. Wind picked up at 1pm to 12-16kn, course 225. Afternoon was used to continue to work on the shaft problem. By 16:45 had the shaft back again in the keyway. At this point in time we don't believe that we can run the engine since we don't appear to have a functioning pressure plate (that transfers the prop thrust into the boat and not the gear box). Problem can only be further investigated with the boat out of the water. But we have stabilized the shaft and further reduced the potential of the shaft slipping out of the boat and water coming in. Still plan to call Volvo Penta and Southern Wind Shipyard for more advice on the shaft.

Dinner: pizza and beer!

06:00-10:00 and 18:00-21:00 watches.

Day 6 - Monday 6/18/2012

Good wind (E 15-18kn) on our early am watch (0300-0600) and made 7.5kn on course 187. At the end of our watch we jibed onto new course 275 toward Bermuda.

Beau made us nice egg and ham breakfast. Everyone is in better mood due to the favorable winds and great sailing conditions. Phil pushed all of us to get the engine going. Phil got advice from the Southern Wind Shipyard and the Annapolis Volvo Penta mechanic. Final temporary repairs done by 18:30 and first trial run went well. We are confident enough to put engine in gear. Worst case scenario would be too much thrust being transferred to the gear box and risk damaging the gear box. Outside help feels confident that this is will not be the case. Will give it a try in the morning.

Dinner: just hot dogs after a very busy day

03:00-06:00, and 14:00-18:00 watches.

Day 7 - Tuesday 6/19/2012

Saw a freighter cross our bow at 8:20 from port to starboard about 9nm ahead. Based on our course during past 12 hours readjusted our heading and continued with 7+kn toward Bermuda. Venturous clocked the first 1,000nm of our anticipated 2,800 journey.

We started the engine in gear and at 1,700 rpm at 12:30 due to decreasing winds (8-12kn NNE) coming from the high pressure system at 30N and 40W. We increased the engine rpm to 2,000 rpm/min at 17:00.

Shower after my midday watch. Called Kim to let her know everything is fine.

Another freighter crossed our course (305) with heading 248 9nm ahead at the 21:00 watch change.

Dinner: Pork chops with rice and asparagus for all of us to enjoy in the center cockpit.

00:00-03:00, 10:00-14:00, and 21:00-24:00 watches.

Day 8 - Wednesday 6/20/2012

Wind picked up to 20+kn (NE) around the 6:00 watch change. Due to the “pull” from the sails the prop started to pull the shaft out of the key slot again. Put boat into the wind to de-power the boat, killed the engine, and got the folding prop to fold up. After short assessment of the damage we decided that our only option was to disassemble the coupling and attempt to repair this issue for good. Previously Beau didn’t want to go this way due to the lack of proper tools. After 3 hours of hard work (with nothing holding the shaft in the boat and me keeping the boat dead in the water) we got everything done. At 9:30 we went on our way under sail in 20kn winds from the NE. It took us another 3 hours to clean up the boat. Everyone is very exhausted. I’ve covered Beau’s watch who did the most work during the repair. We have the shaft back in the key-way and secured it with the original nut that came loose on Saturday. The team locked the shaft nut in place by damaging the threads on the shaft. Not pretty but (hopefully) effective and preventing the nut to come loose (ever) again. It was a minor miracle to get the coupling dis- and assembled with the available tools on board.

Engine on at 22:00.

Dinner: Red Beans and Rice for all of us together in center cockpit.

06:00-10:00 and 18:00-21:00 watches.

Day 9 - Thursday 6/21/2012

No wind, all sails down, engine day. Saw a freighter pass us on port (7kn away) on our 3am watch. Beau and Bill saw a yacht on their 6am watch.

The tuna stick came out at 10am. Crew is looking forward to having some fresh fish today. No such luck, when the line came out at 18:00 we had caught no fish but one hook less. This one did get away!

Preparing the boat for the storm to hit on Friday night / Saturday. Forecast calls for 35-40kn winds from the NW (on the nose) and 8-12ft seas with some squalls.

Dinner: Pasta Bolognese again for all of us in the center cockpit.

03:00-06:00, and 14:00-18:00 watches.

Day 10 - Friday 6/22/2012

Autopilot crapped out on us at 22:00. Hand steering for now. Boat keeps the course very well and makes the hand steering relatively easy. Reef 1 set at the 10:00 watch change, reef 2 set at the 15:00 watch change. Boat is handling the 30kn wind from the SW well (dead on the nose).

Dinner: beef stew.

Went to 3 hour watch schedule: 00:00-03:00, 9:00-12:00, and 18:00-21:00 watches.

Day 11 - Saturday 6/23/2012

Winds are stable (SW 27-33kn) and we continue on course 305. Last night we crossed our rhumb line to the north. Due to the current wind from the SW we can’t stay on the rhumb line. Phil and I had the

watch from hell (12:00-15:00) going thru a thunderstorm front with 40kn wind and driving rain. We had to fall off to weather that front. At the end of the shift we had all man on deck to redo the main reef since the rain had accumulated in the sail and pushed it off the boom. Took good 30 min of hard work. Drying out after my watch. After the thunderstorm front we went thru sunshine and 25-30kn winds from the SW. Less than 1,000 miles to go. 6/30 flight departure from Bermuda is in reach. The only risk factors are the 2 tropical fronts Chris and Debbie. Started the engine at 20:00 to supplement the wind and help us stay on course.

Dinner: turkey stir fry.

03:00-06:00, 12:00-15:00, and 21:00-24:00 watches.

Day 12 - Sunday 6/24/2012

Beau and Bill had another watch from hell with 3-4 squalls and winds gusting to 35-40kn. I helped Harry and Bill to douse the stay sail and tack onto starboard tack after the wind had clocked to N. We're now on course again toward Bermuda.

Changed board clocks by 1 hour during the 10:00 watch.

Had a great breakfast watch with Phil and started to dry out the wet close. We went back again onto our original 4 hour day watch schedule. The autopilot likes this starboard tack and is working fine. However, I don't believe the tracking error (fault 103) has been resolved.

Bill H. found a flying fish on board. Fish on!

Weather: it's a race between us and two fronts (cold front and tropical depression Debbie) to Bermuda. We made the decision to go for it. Fuel is getting low and we need one full day of sailing to help us build some fuel reserve. We're running under engine (2,000 rpm) at 6.6kn.

Dinner: Steak, fries, and salad

06:00-10:00, and 18:00-21:00 watches.

Day 13 - Monday 6/25/2012

Debbie is now projected to track NE over New Orleans and it doesn't seem to be of danger to us anymore. Chris has reformed, but is well to the north of us. Good news from the weather front from the Commander.

Saw another ship (lights on the horizon and confirmed with AIS as M/V Bluemoon) going across our bow 13nm ahead on course 54.

Great night for star gazing. The Milky Way rotation clockwise and appears on our 292 course to be moving stern to bow on port (and bow to stern on starboard) thru the night watches. Visibility of the stars is so good that we can see the reflection in water.

At the end of our 3-6am watch the engine dropped suddenly from 2,000 rpm to 1,400 rpm with black smoke coming from the exhaust. We first thought we had a problem with air in the fuel. That didn't prove to be the case. After 3+ hours troubleshooting still no answer. Beau called one of his buddies in New Orleans to try to get us shore support. In the meantime we're crawling along under sail at 3-4kn.

Troubleshooting leads us to a faulty fuel injector. We have no spare on board. Thus, continue to limp toward wind / Bermuda.

Watched seagulls all afternoon fishing behind our boat.

Portuguese Man of War (stinging jellyfish with half-moon shaped air bubble that keeps them on the

surface) are still plentiful. They have been a constant part of the sea life on this trip.

Dinner: Chicken Curry on rice

03:00-06:00, and 14:00-18:00 watches.

Day 14 - Tuesday 6/26/2012

Saw a ship on 3:00 watch (Benguela, cargo ship course Portsmouth) and on 6:00 watch (Les Mans Express, cargo ship).

Wind continued to clock toward SSE allowing us to fly the light weight Genacker. It increased our boat speed by approx. 1kn. Shut down the engine at 9:30.

Around noon we got the tuna out stick again. Within first 5 minutes one of the seagulls hit the lure and got hooked. When we reeled her in she broke lose just before reaching the boat. All 3 seagulls left for a while, but came back later on. However, they stayed way clear of the lure.

Afternoon watch for Beau and Bill was very hot. I brought out the A/C (used bucket to wash / cool down the teak in the cockpit. Evaporation also cooled down the air. Got 100k bonus points. Continued to shoot the breeze with the boys while peeling the potatoes and onions for dinner. Fun afternoon!

Dinner: Potato casserole and meatloaf

00:00-03:00, 10:00-14:00, and 21:00-24:00 watches.

Day 15 - Wednesday 6/26/2012

Sailed for past 24 hours under Genacker. Wind continued to clock and increased to 14kn. Great Sunset and Sunrise watches. Great sailing.

Tuna stick was back out at 8:30 and Beau made pancakes for breakfast. Great start into the day. 550nm to go. No catch for the day.

Changed the clocks another hour. One more hour to go until Bermuda. Beau and Bill carried the add'l hour on their watch and again got very hot. I relieved Bill earlier to give him a chance to cool off in the shade of the main.

Dinner: Salad, Pizza, and beer

06:00-10:00 and 18:00-21:00 watches.

Day 16 - Thursday 6/28/2012

Already running for 48 hours under Genacker (generally with 8-13kn winds from the S) making good progress toward Bermuda. Wind clocked and allowed us to get within 10 degrees of our straight course to Bermuda (310m). Called AT to extend my vacation by 2 days. Wind clocked even further to SSW in the afternoon allowing us to head straight for Bermuda which is 359nm away at 18:00.

Tuna stick is back in action since 10:00.

Dinner: roasted chicken (out of the freezer, prepared by Gaile) with rice and green beans.

03:00-06:00, and 14:00-18:00 watches.

Day 17 - Friday 6/29/2012

The wind continued to clock and build to 18-21kn forcing us to douse the Genacker at the end of our midnight watch – after flying the kite for 65 hours straight. The Main and Genua continue to carry us

forward at approximately 1-1.5kn less.

Bill and Harry found a “duck tape fix” for the autopilot. The taped 2 winch handles as weights to the starboard side of the steering wheel to add additional momentum to assist the autopilot.

Wind continued to increase (remembrance from tropical storm – ex Hurricane Debbie) to 25kn from the SW. Furlled the Genua and put the 2nd reef into the Main at noon. Still making 7.5kn straight to Bermuda.

Ran out of fresh water in the am. Phil is working on getting the water making system up and running. Made fresh water all afternoon. Beau developed new exercise routine (see video clips).

Heavy rain and wind gusts up to 40kn throughout the night. All 3 night watches got drenched. Had to get up in off-watch to raise the main to get the water out of the 2nd reef..

Tanker bound for Corpus Christi crossed our course 18nm ahead during our 21:00 watch.

Dinner: Cheese Burger

00:00-03:00, 10:00-14:00, and 21:00-24:00 watches.

Day 18 - Saturday 6/30/2012

Started the day with more rain. By 8:00 no wind, started the engine at 9:30 and got all sails down. Unfortunately we broke the lazy jacks on both sides. Huge mess getting the main down. Everyone is trying to dry out.

Wind picked up to W 10-13kn by early afternoon. Finally sails up again and an end to the bobbing thru the swells at our reduced engine speed of 2.5kn.

At 6:30am a ship went astern with course 64 degree about 16nm behind us. Starting to pick up Bermuda Radio.

Dinner: Leftover night

06:00-10:00 and 18:00-21:00 watches.

Day 19 - Sunday 7/1/2012

When got up for our 3:00 am watch we're 20nm out of Bermuda and called Bermuda Radio to advise them of our pending arrival. Killed the engine and de-powered the sails to time our arrival with the dawn. Changed the clocks to Bermuda time and stayed up with Beau and Bill while Phil crashed for the final hour before arrival at the Sea Boy and St. George harbor approach. Pretty exciting making landfall after 18½ days.

7:30am docked at Customs dock. 8:30 docked at the old cruise ship docks.

Went to town for breakfast and then cleaned the boat and dried the Genacker. Finalized the arrangements for the folks to work on the boat (diver to check the prop / shaft, Volvo Penta mechanic to work on the injectors, Northern Light guys for the generator, plus an electronic / hydraulic specialist for the autopilot). Afterwards we went to the Whitehorse Tavern for drinks and lunch. Walked thru St. Georges – most stores closed on Sunday.

03:00-06:00 watch as my last one for this trip.

Changed the return flight to Monday and got a \$300 refund. Great deal.

To Do upon return:

- Send Phil and Bill H. link to OpenCPN
- Send all of them Dropbox invite and set up a shared folder for them
- Check out The Commander weather
- Jim Cornell Atlantic routes