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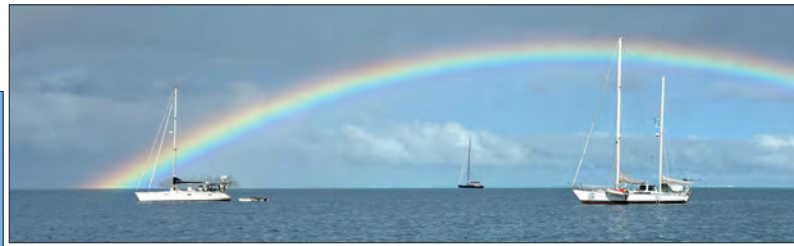
VOLUME 571 January 2025

WE GO WHERE THE WIND BLOWS

*Bowman 45 — Seattle to SF Delivery
Rosie G — South to St. Somewhere
Champs 2 — One Designs and BAMA
Max Ebb — Marks and Obstructions*

CHANGES IN

PHOTOS PENDRAGON



— "Seaquester completed her second winter in Mexico in April. If we can ever get fully retired, I think I could get used to being a snowbird," writes Bill Leone of his and wife Cheryl's San Diego-based Beneteau 423. "Banderas Bay remains a wonder: wildlife, restaurants, a vibrant cruiser community, beer can races, and of course the Banderas Bay Regatta at the end of the winter cruising season."

In early April, *Seaquester* headed out to sea. "We sailed directly to the NASA-supplied coordinates for the total eclipse path on April 8," says Bill. "With sextants, eclipse glasses, box viewers and cameras ready, we had an otherworldly adventure navigating to the centerline of the path of totality and experiencing a total eclipse without obstructions, traffic, hotels or a crowd."

After a wonderful winter, it was time to bash back home. Unlike many owners, Bill says he's come to enjoy the trip back, as there's always a surprise or two. "The bash was a little trickier this year. We had stopped in Bahia Santa Maria (which we normally skip) due to weather. But that meant we needed to refuel between there and Turtle Bay. We'd been running the engine a little harder, and it turns out

Above left: 'Pendragon' bashes to another last-place finish in Banderas Bay — but who cares? Inset: Jenö and Scott. Above right: 'Roam' in Marina Taina, Tahiti. Owners Pam and Jim (inset) will be back aboard this month for more cruising. Top: Spectacular rainbow in Raiatea.

a "few" extra RPMs equates to a lot less fuel efficiency. But, thanks to Patsy Verhoeven's recommendation, we found a source for fuel just north of Bahia Santa Maria. After a mid-ocean transfer — three 12.5-gallon jugs of diesel floated over to the boat and siphoned — we were back at it. We made a couple more stops to wait out weather in Abreojos and Turtle Bay, checked out in Ensenada using the really great service at Cruiseport Marina, left Ensenada after dinner, and were in San Diego for breakfast.

"For this winter, we're staying in San Diego. The Hot Rum Regatta series at SDYC is super-fun and it is nice to be in familiar surroundings for the winter.

"This coming year I'd like to do some California coastal cruising before going back to Mexico. We feel incredibly lucky to be able to do these things and continue to meet great people along the way. We probably should've started doing this years before we did."

— Scott and Jenö Brigham of the Valiant 40 **Pendragon** are back in Montana after a great trip on the 2024 Ha-Ha. "After exploring the Sea of Cortez close to La Paz, Jenö and I sailed down to Banderas Bay for the BB Regatta. We had our good friend Tom Verburt come down to help us race our Valiant 40 around the cans. We had one good race, but as expected, and as a true cruiser, we finished last in every race. Who cares? We were there for the fun, and the yacht club did not disappoint. They put on a well-organized, fun regatta. We loved La Cruz and stayed there diving and eating tacos for another two weeks before sailing north to San Jose del Cabo.

"Another good friend, Bill Perry, flew in and we headed out in early May for the clipper route back to San Diego. We had a tremendous, one-tack passage with waves up to 14 feet and winds between 18-25 kts. We used Commanders' Weather for our routing and forecasting, and highly recommend the team of Oliver and Faith, who worked with us along the way.

I cracked my tailbone, and our toilet seat broke loose, but that was it for a great passage of 10 days. We sailed roughly seven of those days and

LATITUDES



FOXFIRE



PHOTOS FOXFIRE



PHOTOS ROAM



MARK ALBERTAZZI/INSETSEAUQUESTER

motorsailed with the main and staysail for two to three days to improve our angle and comfort. We arrived with almost two-thirds of the 125 gallons of diesel still in the tanks.

"We put our 49-year-old Valiant 40 back in her slip in Ventura and immediately started the huge project of peeling her decks down to the laminate and re-glassing. As of this writing, the painters have just completed the last of three coats of Awlgrip primer, and will finish the painting of the deck and cabin house in about three weeks.

"We headed back to Whitefish on December 4 for the ski season that starts on the fifth. Our plan now is to complete the painting project, re-install the hardware, and begin prepping for our next adventure. If there's is a 2025 Ha-Ha, we'll do that, and then punch out with the Pacific Puddle Jump to the Marquesas Islands and then down to the Tuamotu Archipelago. Our plan is to cruise these two South Pacific destinations, sail back to Hawaii, and then head on to the San Juan Islands. We will then circle back to complete the trip in Ventura.

"We've already started getting *Pendrag-on* ready for the big trip, with new deck

Above: 'Seaquester' at San Diego's popular Hot Rum winter series. Inset: Bill and Cheryl. Top center: 3/4 of the 'Foxfire' partnership (l to r, Dan, Mike and Aidan) relax in the cockpit. Top right: 'Foxfire' crewman Pat doing plankton collection at the equator. "Pat set this up with a research professor on the East Coast," says Mike. "We photographed the plankton haul and sent it to him."

hardware, new Lewmar Ocean Series hatches (to replace the old wooden ones), a new watermaker, and a complete set of new offshore sails from Ullman Sails in Santa Cruz."

— After a stellar crossing from Los Frailes to Nuku Hiva, Mike Casey and various partners in the Sausalito-based Perry 56 **Foxfire** (the other partners are Don Winglewich, Aidan O'Sullivan and Lisa Whitaker) moved quickly to the Tuamotus "in order to bask in the warm clear waters of this magnificent island chain," says Mike. Stops included Fakarava, Toau, Rangiroa, and Makatea. "With easy access from Tahiti, we were able to collect a few friends and make new friends with boat hikers for our atoll excursions," says Mike. Free diving quickly became the priority experience.

Due to short stay visas, *Foxfire* had to keep moving on to the Society Islands.

"Raiatea was an excellent stop for boat repairs and provisioning. Huahine proved to be our favorite island for its laid-back culture and super-friendly locals."

Then came the difficult decision whether to leave *Foxfire* in French Polynesia or continue west to the Cooks, Tonga and Fiji. Papeete won out. "*Foxfire* is happily berthed in Marina Taina as our partnership regroups and formalizes a new cruising plan for 2025," says Mike.

— Also currently in Marina Taina is Jim and Pam Yares' **Catana 472 cat Roam**. The couple headed home to Danville for the holidays, but will be back aboard in January. "We'll bend on the headsails, fill our freezer with cooked meals and fresh food, and head east as the weather permits," says Jim

Roam had a wonderful season, highlighted by a spectacular sail across the Pacific, crossing the equator during the solar eclipse. Upon arrival, "There was something for both of us," says Jim. "Pam loved the beauty and food scene in Mo'orea and Bora Bora. I loved the dramatic landscapes of the Marquesas and the pristine solitude of the Tuamotus. Both of us enjoyed snorkeling these warm, clear waters with their abundant

CHANGES

marine life. I rekindled my long-dormant love of scuba diving by getting recertified in Tahiti.

"It was also great fun to have our kids spend a few weeks with us sailing the Society Islands.

"Our insurance company wants us east of 150W until May 1, so we'll bide our time back in the Tuamotus and Marquesas, visiting the places we liked and a few we missed," continues Jim. "We might head down to the Gambiers if the timing and weather allow.

"Once cyclone season winds down, we'll continue west — Cook Islands, Tonga, Fiji, and finally New Zealand."

Readers — Look for more "Where Are They Now?" contributions next month.

Cruise Notes

• The '24 Ha-Ha was the third for Scott Smith and Mary Culley of the Santa Cruz-based Beneteau First 42, **Coyote**. But as for everyone else, the weather forecast that closed out the final activities of the Ha-Ha also threw a wrench into their post-rally plans. Rather than head up to Puerto Escondido — where their crew



'Coyote' at anchor. Inset: Mary and Scott headed up to La Paz when an approaching weather system closed out the final Ha-Ha activities in Cabo.

Jason and Denise would catch their flight back to the US — they instead hunkered down in La Paz to wait for better weather.

As with many cruisers who find themselves in similar situations, it worked out for the best. "We certainly found the fun in La Paz, which has plenty of great food, gorgeous street art, and lots of pleasant walking," says Scott. Also most welcome: the need to rest, refuel, and reprovision. As an added bonus, Mary and Denise



COYOTE

were able to properly celebrate their genuine accom-

plishment of having stood midnight watches from San Diego to Cabo on their own!

After the weather blew through, and Jason and Denise found transportation to the airport at Loreto, *Coyote* headed to Espiritu Santo and Isla Partida. "These islands are not only part of Mexico's national parks system, they

are listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites," says Scott. "Typical to Baja California and the Sea of Cortez climate, they are very dry. Plants and animals that live here need to be extremely tenacious to survive."

How tenacious?

"We actually saw some goats as well as some feral cows come to the water's edge at dusk — and drink salt water! At first we couldn't believe it, but a conversation with a local guide (leading a kayak trip) confirmed this was the case!"

• We're sorry to report that Charlie Knape lost his Hans Christian 43S ketch

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