



2014 Cruise of Sea Dreamer

Commander Mike Gibbons, JN is cruising in the San Juan Islands and into Canada this summer. He sends these periodic email reports that are edited for space. If you would like the full email & pictures email a.schuldt@charter.net .

5/12/14

This is a quick update and new pictures. We are in Fisherman's Bay for some last minute shopping and to put the car in storage for the summer. We should be underway for Garrison Bay by noon today. It will be a week or so before I write again or until something exciting happens.

5/19/14

On Wednesday we took the dinghy around to Roche Harbor for lunch and fuel. The lunch cost more than the fuel. Gasoline was \$4.85 today.

5/23/14

On Friday it started raining. We will stay here over the Memorial Day weekend then head over to Fisherman's Bay so Karen can go visit her brother in Oregon. For the new people, her brother has multiple diseases that are all more or less fatal. She spends one week a month with him. Upon her return we will head north into Canada for a few weeks.

Sunday 5-25-14

Life is great. I woke on Memorial Day Sunday with the calf of my left leg swollen and very sore. I could barely walk. I fooled around most of the day with ice and heat to no avail. Karen came up with a genius heating pad, she heated rice in the microwave and put it in a plastic bag. It is amazing how long it stays warm. Unfortunately it didn't do any good. I criped around the boat most of day and finally looked on the Internet. I saw words like Deep Vein Thrombosis and Pulmonary Embolism. It started to get my attention. I called the local hospital to see if they were open and was told to call 911 to see if they could get me there. English Camp has a parking lot but it is not close to the water. The EMTs came down in a 4 wheel drive vehicle driving around the no vehicles sign to pick me up. I still had to get into the dinghy and walk from the dinghy dock to the pick up area, no easy feat. They drove me up to the main road to meet an ambulance, they could have just driven me to the hospital but that wasn't by the book.

The hospital had one doctor and two nurses on duty. He agreed with my self diagnosis but it turns out that there two possible causes for DVT. One is a blood clot in my knee, the other is a cyst in my knee that burst, called a baker cyst. The only way to tell is by ultrasound. Their ultrasound tech is not there until Wednesday so I don't know which I have. The clot calls for blood thinners the cyst will just go away on its own. Only about 5-10% are cysts so we decided to go with the blood thinners until Wednesday. The only kind I could get were injectable so Karen and I can now have needle parties, she is diabetic.

I could not locate anyone who would drive past the parking lot like the EMTs did so about 2230 I got a taxi to take me back to Garrison Bay. I called Karen to meet me at the parking lot

with a couple of flashlights. When the taxi got to the parking lot there was no Karen. It turns out there is more than one lot. Absolutely pitch black, no lights, and overcast. I sent the taxi away and I waited about ten minutes to get my night vision, and started looking for a way down. I ended up using the light in my phone to find the trail to English Camp I walked down watching for logs, roots, and rocks with my cell phone hoping the battery didn't fail. We ended up getting to the camp at about the same time on different trails.

I staggered back to the dinghy dock and Karen took me back to the boat. Life is wonderful sometimes!

5/26/14

On Monday we got underway and moved over to Friday Harbor Marina where we will stay until Thursday morning. Karen is gone to the only pharmacy in town to get me more blood thinner, the hospital only had two doses, and I go in Wednesday for the ultrasound. If it is a clot then at that time they will give me pills instead of the injectable stuff, to take for the next 90 days or so. Karen has been absolutely great, she has learned how to operate the dinghy and does everything for me and Finnegan. I'm almost glad I married her 40 years ago.

5/27/14

It looks like I am going to hospital in Anacortes. I will let you know what happens someday. Stay tuned for more thrilling adventures.

Mike

June 17

We are back. We are in Friday Harbor on Sea Dreamer. Beat up, and exhausted, but we emerge triumphant. Three day ago I had more tubes in me than a 1950s TV. The short story is that I went to a doctor to have my calf operated on, came down with aspirational pneumonia. Twelve days later after med-evac flights, ferry passages, clandestine delivery of chemicals to a mysterious hotel room, and following a trail through the woods by the light of my phone, we arrived safely home.

All will be detailed in future emails. Some of you know some of the story. One of you received a secret message from the heart of dementia "Ghi". The rest will be revealed in my next installment. I will try to get part one tomorrow as it is mostly already written.

As you can tell I am slightly over dramatic sometimes. :-)

June 18

By now I am sick of listening to myself whine and I bet you are too so I am going to wrap this up. This will be the last update until I do something fun.

The bottom line is that I ended up with pneumonia after the surgery on my leg. The leg was no big deal. There was a hematoma that had developed from who knows what. The surgeon cleaned it out and put in a drain for a few days. The big deal was the pneumonia that put me in hospital for eight or nine days and they only let me go because I bitched so much.

I was still under when I started to throw up getting stomach contents into my lungs. Someone said something about me pulling one of the tubes out but that is still a little vague. Gastric reflux will be the thing that kills me when I go. It's not just a little heartburn, folks.

It's all a little hazy at this point but I spent six days in ICU and three more in a regular room before they finally threw me out. Karen had retrieved her car by the time I woke up, about three days after the surgery. Her and Finnegan rented a room at one of the local inns and had settled in for the duration.

I am still on oxygen that was delivered to the hotel room by a driver who was on his way home after work. Hopefully it will only be temporary. I have a concentrator in the aft cabin and a few portable tanks. We spent all day in the car trying to get back to Friday Harbor, everything around here depends on the ferry schedule and it was a long day.

In any case we are back on Sea Dreamer in Friday Harbor with a place to park the car. We are in the same spot so it is very convenient to the ramp. I am weak but improving, sucking on an oxygen tube as needed. Karen is doing all the work, I don't know how I would survive without her.

We will stay here for at least two more weeks. Toward the end Karen will probably go visit her brother for a week taking Finnegan so I don't have to do much. I am looking forward to starting to cruise again and will probably head to Canada from here.

I am finally feeling like I might live through it. We took the car for a short jaunt around the island. We are planning on moving the boat over to Lopez Island in a few days. Karen is taking the car over tomorrow. She will return on the ferry, the dock is only about half a block away so she can walk back to the boat. Can't say I have done anything exciting but here are a few pictures anyway.



The lighthouse at Kiln Point, San Juan Island



Whale watching spot at Kiln Point



Finnegan and Karin checking Goose Island

[Top of page](#) [Cruising page](#) [Whistler index page](#)

Close