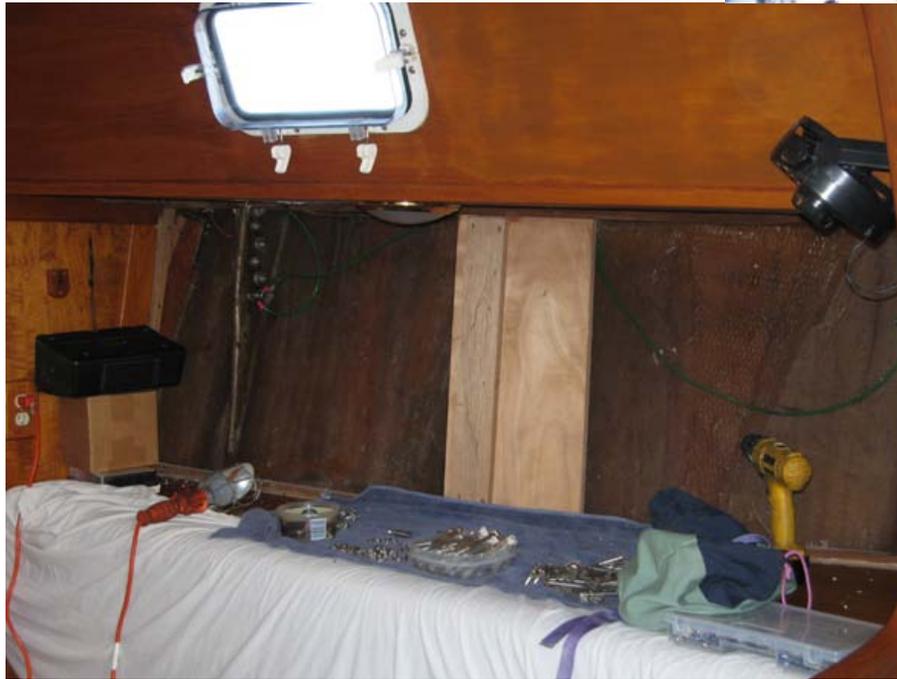


Dear Pops and Mom

December 12, 2010

Here is the reason I had to have a major delay in my letters. After the whirlwind of getting ready for the Baja Ha-Ha in San Diego, the sail down the coast, getting ready for the gals, and then the 6 days with 4 women aboard I had about a day and a half before my major project started. You remember Jo? She is the gal from Nova Scotia with the 25 year old son Dylan. Well Dylan came down to Mexico from New Zealand about 2 months ago with very little money. With Jo's income it has been hard for her to feed him and they knew after that East Cape Regatta they would have 3-1/2 more weeks before they both head up to her fathers house in San Diego for Christmas.

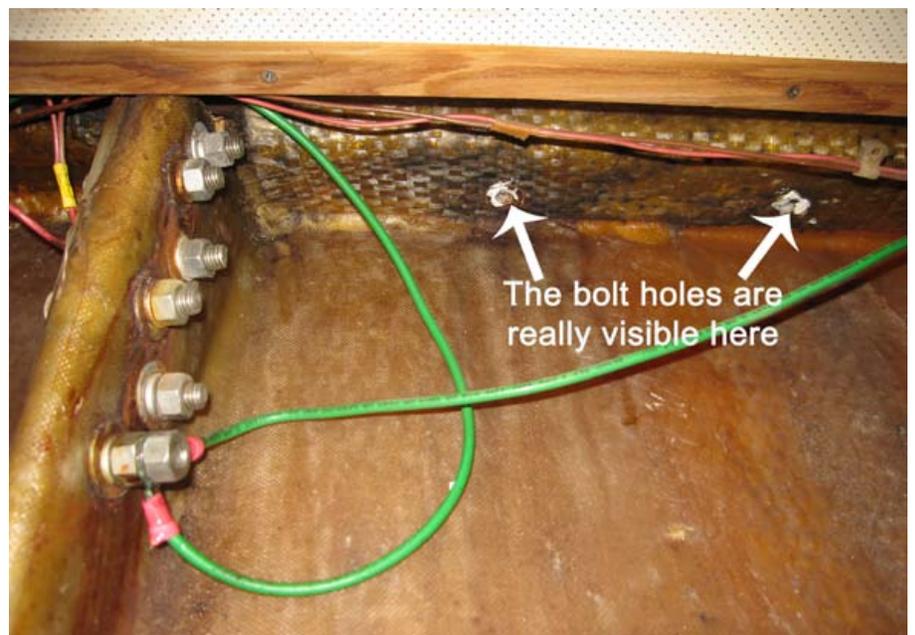


*Tools tools everywhere! I try to protect the interior by covering the upholstery and varnish with towels, sheets and pads.*

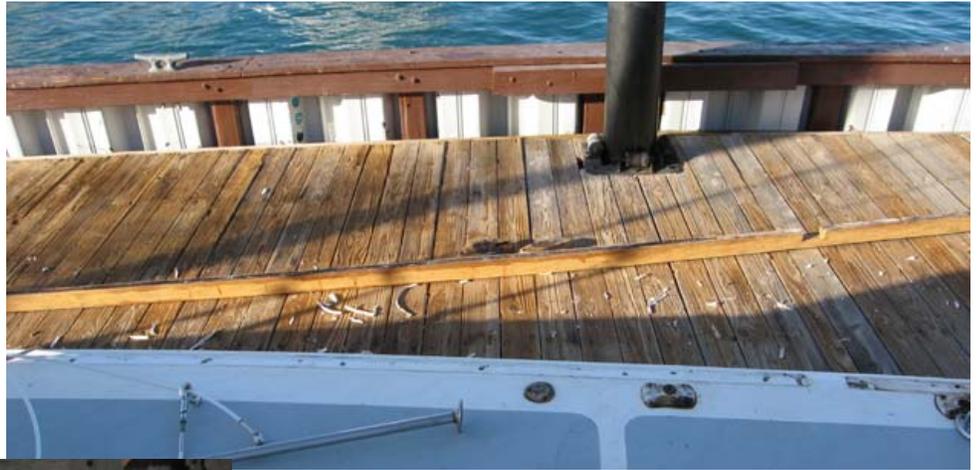
It is not legal for a non-Mexican to work in Mexico without going through an extensive and expensive permit process so it is very hard to come down here and support yourself. Dylan had worked a little for a few boaters waxing their boats, house sitting (or boat sitting I guess) and whatever he could get away with without getting into trouble with the authorities. He had no place to stay and no income lined up for the next 3 weeks. My project for the months of November and December was to stop the deck leaks. The first and

*This is where the TV and bookshelves usually are*

hardest undertaking was to take off the toerail and re-bed it. While doing that I needed to re-bed the stanchions. The toerail is basically a 50 foot 2x4 setting on edge on the outside edge of the deck. It is bolted through the deck with 8" long 3/8" bolts. Each bolt has a teak plug on top of it and it is all finished in varnish. When we first bought the boat we removed both toerails because they had some dry rotted areas. Dale and I took the rail off and a woodworker at Schooner Creek scarfed in new pieces of teak to repair it. We then re-bedded the rail with a caulk called "Lifecaulk"



which is the recommended caulk for the Pacific Northwest but (according to woodworkers down here) not the proper caulk for the desert conditions in Baja. The toerail has been leaking so badly on the trip north to San Diego I have to remove everything from every locker and rinse the salt off. The underside of the toerail is in the same area as the stanchions so we were doing them too.

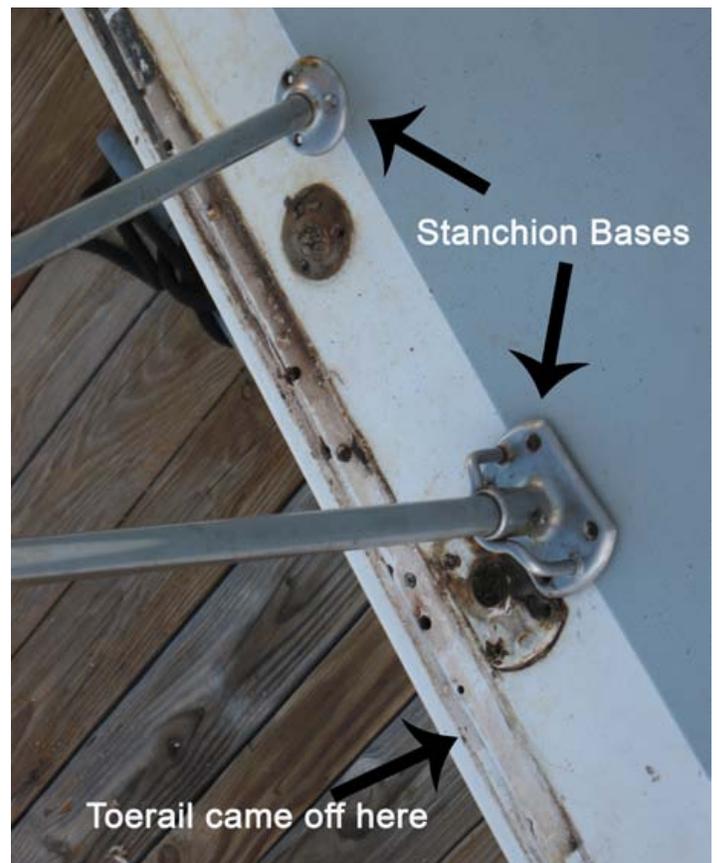


*The interior cabinets & the stuff inside the cabinets.  
I tried to make it look tidy but what a mess!*

encased in fiberglass and encased in the cabinetry so Dylan had quite a bit of work to do below. We wanted to be sure it was done right this time. I finally through the use of vice grips and wrenches managed to get the bolts out of each hole. There were 70 bolts. Then I drove putty knives and chisels under the toerail to separate it from the deck and suspended it with lines from the lifelines slowly raising it up from the deck. It is so long and wobbly I did not want it to break. Finally when it was completely apart from the boat we enlisted the help of 4 guys around the marina and lifted it to the dock. Once on the dock I stripped off the old varnish with a heat gun and epoxyed some small areas that

*Here is the rail on the dock waiting for me to fix it*

After talking to Dylan and Jo it seemed like a perfect match. Dylan would work on Talion for room and board and we would get started right away so we could finish in plenty of time for him to get to San Diego for Christmas. We did one rail at a time. The first toerail was started on Tuesday, November 15. In order to get at the nuts on the bottom of the bolts we had to disassemble every cabinet. Everything that was inside the cupboards and in the hanging lockers needed to be removed. After the stuff was moved and cabinets taken apart I drilled out the teak plugs from the top and cleaned up the holes while Dylan took the nuts off the bottom of the bolts. Then he hammered the bolts up. Some bolts were



had chipped or broken off in the process. Meanwhile Dylan removed the bolts from the stanchions which again required quite a bit of fiberglass removal and chiseling away at cabinets for access. We cleaned up all the old caulk from the boat under the toerail and under the stanchions and the re-bedded all the stanchions with new super strong caulk called 5200 and with new bolts. With the stanchions on we were able to put caulk on the rail and with the help of 5 others fit the toerail back on the boat. We then spent the entire day getting each of the 70 bolts seated back into the holes and the nuts tight with washers and lock washers. While the rail was off I had run a die down each bolt and a



*Shelly showed up early to help*

tap through each nut so we were sure the nuts would go on easily. Still, it was quite a fight to get it together but we did it. We decided our theme for the project was perseverance! The next day we reassembled the cabinets and I put everything away. WOW that was a lot of work but we were very proud of ourselves as we did a good watertight job. It took one week of working hard every day to do it. It was now Tuesday and 2 days till Thanksgiving. Of course I had invited 15 people for Thanksgiving dinner so I had a boat to clean. Lucky for me Jo (Dylan's Mom) is an awesome chef and volunteered to do all the cooking. Thursday morning she showed up and created the best Thanksgiving



*Jo doing the cooking and Shelly's husband Jody carving the bird*

feast ever. I contributed Dales favorite cranberry jello salad Mom gave me the recipe for years ago. There wasn't enough room inside the boat to seat everyone and still have room on the table for the food so we went up to the marina office, borrowed tables and chairs, and set them on the dock. It was a perfect place for a dinner party. The food was fabulous and the company too. To top it all off another fabulous sunset. We went inside Talion for homemade pumpkin and apple pie while all the ladies did the dishes. The next morning I think the boat was cleaner than it was when they got here.



*Not enough room inside at the table? No Problem!*



Dylan and I took a couple days off before we turned the boat around and started working the other side. This side went much easier as there were not as many cabinets and hard to reach areas. We managed to finish by Monday, December 6 with a break on Sunday. On Sunday I spent all day volunteering for Subasta (that means auction in Spanish). It is an annual fund raiser put on by the Marina de La Paz and the local cruisers. There is an auction of donated items, a bazaar selling clothing and household stuff, booths selling

*What a feast and what a group!*

art, food, crafts, plants and about anything else you can think of. Every year I help out selling the clothing. The clothes are donated by the gringos and the customers are the Mexicans. It is just crazy as hundreds of women are pawing through all these clothes, shoes, sweaters, coats and t-shirts. The set up starts at 7 am, the sale starts at 9 am,



*My neighbor Fred is 80 years old and last year bought a 40 foot sailboat. He just sailed the boat from La Paz to Hawaii then back to San Diego and down to Mexico with the Baja Ha-Ha all by himself!*



*It would help if i knew more Spanish but somehow I manage to get through it every year.*

everything goes for half price at 2 pm. Then for the last hour of the sale each article goes for 10 cents. By 4 pm it is over and there is very little left. Then about an hour to clean up the mess and the day is over. Whew!



*In red at the top are the islands we went to*

For his hard work I had told Dylan I would take him and his Mom out to the islands so he could sail, snorkel, hike, and swim with the sea lions. Jo got the groceries while Dylan and I finished the boat. We were away from the dock by noon. We ran up to a cove called Ensenada Grande and got there in time for sunset. The next morning we got up early and hiked up a hill... well... Jo and I hiked halfway up then Dylan scampered up the rest of the way. Then we pulled up the anchor and went up to Isla Los Islotes where there is a Sea Lion colony. There is a lot of coral around the islands and it is very deep so I motored around while they took the dingy in and snorkeled. I think Dylan was in the water for 2 hours. He had a blast swimming and diving with them. They are apparently very playful if you swim with them rather than just float on the top of the water watching. Then we anchored in a bay called Calita Partida and Jo and Dylan went exploring ashore. The next day we had great wind and sailed all the way back to La Paz. Dylan drove the whole way with a huge grin on his face. It was a good ending to his visit to Mexico and a great ending to a project for me. I'm now getting ready to head to cold Colorado for Christmas. Keep an eye out for your present... it should arrive via UPS!

Love,  
Patsy

