

Dear Pops and Mom,

April 16, 2011

I hope this letter finds you well. It is starting to warm up in Baja so it seems like I have been a little less productive this month.



*The bearing allows the mainsail to furl inside the mast.*

The trip across from Mazatlan was not exactly without its issues. When we raised the main-sail it slid down the mast as if the halyard (line that holds the sail up the mast) had broken or come undone. We pulled the sail down and the end of the halyard was still at the top. Someone had to go up the mast.



*Once back in La Paz the halyard got stuck halfway up the mast. Eli volunteered to retrieve it.*

Alison's husband Dave volunteered so we put him in the bosun's chair and sent him up. Once up he discovered the bearing at the top had come apart. Eventually he figured out how to slide it down so we slowly lowered him while he pulled and pulled to get it down. Sure enough it was in 2 pieces and all of its little plastic ball bearings were missing. On the trip across the wind and seas are normally from the north or the right side of the boat. Talion is uncomfortable in those conditions so we raise the main to stop the rolling from side to side. We had no way to furl the main but could still raise and lower it although it took all of us to make that happen. So with the sail up we motored and motor sailed across to La Paz.

We got to La Paz with a couple days to left of their vacation so we went over to Todos Santos for some art galleries and shopping. Always a favorite with the women but I am afraid the guys wished I would have left them on the boat with a bucket of soap, a hose, and

*He didn't have any luck so we sent his (much lighter) Mom Celeste up and she got the job done!*



some ice cold beers!

The next day I drove to Cabo San Lucas to drop that crew off and pick up the next, Celeste and Eli. Celeste is a friend of the river rafting crowd in Colorado. She is the head of a high school in Boulder and a very interesting gal. I really don't know her that well but we had talked a few times at parties. She said she is very interested in sailing and her son (who I had never met) is so curious about sailing he got a scholarship to an Outward Bound Sailing School. When she told me



*We did get some time for sailing and exploring even without the mainsail.*

that at Christmas I suggested she and Eli come to Baja for some sailing. She loved the idea and made spring break reservations. Celeste spent 2 years in Guatemala and speaks perfect Spanish so it was fun having a translator. We sailed to the islands, hiked for miles, they snorkeled, we sailed some more, and played many rounds of dominoes. I love sharing my life with land lubbers!

I dropped them off in Cabo and looked forward to over 3 weeks of the boat to myself before the next guests. Then I got an email from a friend, Glenn, who has had his boat in Mexico for the winter season many times. Glenn also sails on Profligate on the King Harbor Race in July with me every year.

Glenn said he was arriving in La Paz in a week to spend the following week with a cruising family he had gotten very close to. We had all fallen for this family of Mom, Dad and 3 girls. Glenn found out they have a cat and he is allergic so he asked if he could bunk on Talion. We had a great week and ended up taking both boats out to the islands for a couple nights of more hiking, snorkeling, and dominoes.

*It might have been spring break but Eli's homework was still important. When I dropped them off at the airport I told him to "get a haircut, pull up his pants and turn his hat on forwards".*

*I'm not sure he found the humor in my suggestions...*





When I was in La Paz in the early 90's we used to play volleyball every Wednesday afternoon. It was always fun and great exercise. Now they play Mexican Train Dominoes every Thursday afternoon. If you can't beat 'em join 'em so I am learning to play the game. I am still a beginner and couldn't quite beat the 11 year old but I am working on it. Maybe some day I will play with the adults.

After Glenn left it was time for the La Paz Bay Fest. Bay Fest is put on by the local cruisers and starts with a sailboat race. Then there are 4 days of seminars, games, volleyball, bocci ball, dingy races, raffles, silent auction, etc. Every year Shelly and I put on a man-overboard training class on Talion. Shelly is an awesome instructor and teaches everyone what they need to rig up on their boat to get a person first back to the boat and then aboard. We took out almost 50 people in 2 sessions. That was a full day! Talion didn't do the sailboat race this year because of the main furler problem so I jumped on Eros which is Shelly and Jody's boat. It was a fun day with lots of wind, then no wind, and then wind again. It was great to race on someone else boat for a change and it was also great to spend time with Shelly's partner in La Paz Yachts, Mike Rickman. He is a good racer and fun to race with... I will get him to crew sometime.



*Not really sure why I thought hiking across the island in the heat would be a good idea. I suppose it was good exercise but I was sorry I went!*



*The Conger family have a catamaran named Don Quixote. A catamaran is really wide with the mast right in the middle so swinging from the halyard and dropping into the water is something new for the kids. They spent hours at it on Talion. The next day we went to Los Islotes where Glenn (in the hat) took them out so the whole family could swim with the sea lions. Even 11 year old Aeron loved it. After Glenn went home Don Quixote, kids, cat and all, left to cross the Pacific Ocean and move to New Zealand.  
I will miss them!*



Ever since Colin rebuilt the engine Talion has been motoring 1 knot slower than usual. I had José (the diver that cleans my bottom) adjust the prop (with Colin's direction) to get more speed but it still only goes about 5 1/2 to 6 knots. When Glenn was here he convinced me that I need to pull the boat and get the bottom painted. That has not been done since I left Portland and the paint is wearing off. Jose says it all looks good under there and that all I need to do is have him clean the bottom every 6 weeks but with the prop issue I think it is time. I priced boat yards from San Diego to Puerto Vallarta and the



*Man overboard training on Talion. We have a volunteer jump into the water and then teams take turns retrieving. There is a device called a Lifesling which is a floating buoy on a long line that is thrown into the water and then dragged around in a circle to snag the overboard person. Next the class hoists the person aboard with a block and tackle which is the tricky part. It is a very popular class, fun to put on, and very important for everyone to be prepared for.*



*The blindfolded dingy race was hilarious! Aeron didn't know her right from her left so we tied red and green ribbons on our wrists and she shouted red or green to me.*

best deal I could find is right here. They quoted me \$1,000 to haul the boat out, pressure wash it, sand the bottom and apply the bottom paint. It does not include the paint but 2 months ago I found a really great price (better than I used to get when I worked at Schooner Creek) on 4 gallons of the same paint that is on the bottom now. So I was all set but then... at Bay Fest there was a silent



auction for 50% off on a bottom job at that same yard. Figuring that is worth \$500 to me I bid on it and won for \$300. Yay! I just saved \$200! I went back to the boatyard to schedule the haul out and the manager showed me his blank appointment book. No appointment necessary! No wonder it was so cheap.



*Zoom, zoom and I am on a plane to Puerto Vallarta.  
It is such a beautiful view of La Paz from the sky!*

Right after Bay Fest I got a call from my friend Scott in Puerto Vallarta. He asked if I would like to crew for him on Gan Eden in a few days from Puerto Vallarta to La Paz. All expenses paid and he would pay me \$200. Yessiree! That was Monday night and on Wednesday morning I was on the plane. Scott met me at the airport, we stopped at the grocery store, then to dinner, and we left PV by 8 pm.

The weather prediction was for light winds until Friday morning so Scott set us on a course to Bahia Los Frailes which is the closest point of land between Puerto Vallarta and the Baja. Gan Eden cruises at 10 knots so it seemed like it would be easy to get to the bay before the wind came up. He decided to tow the dinghy which is 12 feet long with a 50 horse engine and is more like

*Gan Eden is really more like a power boat with two huge engines, an inside helm station, giant bedrooms, huge living room and kitchen. I am not sure why it has a mast!*



a ski boat than a dingy. The other option was to carry it on the foredeck. As luck would have it late Thursday night about 30 miles from Frailes the wind picked up to 30 knots on the nose and the seas were huge. I learned something I will never have to use. When you are going 10 knots and it gets rough it is a smoother ride if you slow to 8 knots. I just wish Talion could go 7 knots! I came on watch at 4 am after very little sleep with the pounding into the waves. A half hour later Scott looked back. The dingy was gone. There had been 2 lines tied to it but the eye bolt in the bow pulled out. We retraced our course and searched and searched but could not find it with the radar in the dark. When



*The deck has plenty of room to put that big dingy on and next time they will put it there as they have vowed to never tow it again.*

it got light we continued to search but nothing. We went into Frailes for a nap and some dinner and then headed towards La Paz. Once in cell phone range Scott called his owner who was very upset. He loved that little boat. Then Scott called other skippers and charter boat owners that were out of Cabo San Lucas and told them to keep an eye out for it. The day we got into La Paz Scott got a call.

*It even looks like a power boat. It is only 15' longer than Talion but is so much bigger inside and out. It is a lot of work and needs a hired skipper.*

Someone had found it. It was missing it's stereo (it is quite the boat) and it's gas tank but otherwise was in great condition. So Scott borrowed a truck and trailer and picked it up yesterday. He got lucky!

Now that I am back home I am completely living on the mooring which makes it hard to be productive with limited water and electricity but it is something I need to become accustomed to. Colin showed up to install the generator (which will help with the power and water) but when he started it he still was not happy with how it ran. So it is back out and who knows when I will get it.

Craig and Jennifer came back from the mainland and Craig spent a day disassembling the mast and furling system. It is all apart waiting for my next crew to show up with the little plastic balls.

Next week I head up with a gazillion other boats to Loreto Fest and then back down to La Paz with the Sea of Cortez Sailing Week. Then it will be time to get the bottom done, close up the boat, and head for Colorado for the summer. Hope everything is going great with you and yours!

*The boom is off and the furling system is apart.*

