

We are sorry to report that the PPJ rally vessel *Lucky Dog* lost its rudder Wednesday, which ultimately led to the crew's decision to abandon ship yesterday.

The Vancouver-based Catalina 470 suffered a complete loss of steering near Lat 4.48.8S Long 129.49.2W (roughly 650 miles from the nearest Marquesas landfall). But there was no obvious breakage of its twin-helm system, autopilot controls or quadrants, and no sea water ingress. Using an underwater camera, owners Dan Streiff and Jeanne LeBlanc-Streiff, eventually confirmed that their rudder was gone. Their rudder post had sheared off, leaving only a cylindrical stub approximately one foot long protruding below the hull.

The situation was conveyed to US Coast Guard JRCC Honolulu, which has rescue coordination jurisdiction in that part of the Pacific. They looked for commercial vessels that might be able to offer assistance, but initially found none. However, a quick look at the PPJ fleet tracking map showed that the Hermosa Beach-based Hylas 46 *Beleza* was roughly 85 miles behind *Lucky Dog* on a very similar track, and they were willing to rendezvous and take *Lucky Dog's* crew aboard.

*Beleza* being at that location at that time was truly serendipitous, as owners Chris and Michelle Maler would have been much farther down the track if they hadn't volunteered to bring fuel to the dismantled Westsail 43 *Niniwahuni* late last month.

*Beleza* is now sailing toward landfall, with anticipated arrival in several days. Meanwhile, *Lucky Dog* was left to drift with both her AIS and inReach tracker active, and her running lights lit, as requested by Tahiti JRCC (which has taken over jurisdictional responsibilities). Other shoreside resources, including the TahitiCrew staff, are standing by to deal with bureaucratic issues, and a number of fellow cruisers in Hiva Oa and Nuku Hiva are looking at local vessels capable of retrieving *Lucky Dog* and towing her to port.

We applaud the generous spirit of the *Beleza* crew and other helpful Fr Poly cruisers, and we salute the calm professionalism of the USCG and Tahiti JRCC officers, who are always standing by to assist in maritime emergencies.

We are extremely hopeful that this story has a happy ending, so Dan and Jeanne can continue their cruising dreams.

— Andy Turpin, PPJ