

PACIFIC PUDDLE JUMP PROFILES, PT II —

We've been lucky enough to visit many places where sailors tend to congregate, but we've never been anywhere that sees a more international mix of globetrotting sailors than Panama.

Celebrating its 100th year of operation this summer, the Panama Canal is the ultimate funnel through which adventurous sailors from Europe, Africa,



Most kids love outings with their mom and dad. So this Colorado family's boat seems particularly well named: 'Field Trip'.

the Caribbean, the Eastern Seaboard of the US and elsewhere must pass en route to dreamy landfalls of the South Pacific.

As regular readers know, we call their initial SoPac migration from the West Coast of the Americas to French Polynesia the Pacific Puddle Jump. And every year we co-host PPJ Send-Off parties at both the Vallarta YC in Mexico and the Balboa YC in Panama. Having introduced you to the Vallarta jumpers last month, we'll give '15 minutes of fame' to the Panama contingent this month. By now, many of them are at least midway through the 3,000-mile passage to the islands, and some of the early birds have already arrived.

Field Trip — Antares 441
Mark & Sarah Silverstein
Castle Rock, CO

Although Colorado isn't exactly a huge yachting center, Mark and Sarah somehow were bitten hard by the cruising bug a few years ago. During the two years since they bought the aptly named *Field Trip* in Buenos Aires, Argentina, they've sailed north through the islands of the Eastern Caribbean, all the way up to Maine, then back down again and

across the belly of the Caribbean to Panama.

"Mark always wanted to go to the South Pacific," says Sarah, "and he's been trying to convince me for a while." Apparently she's been won over, especially since daughter Elizabeth, 8, and son Michael, 6, seem totally at ease with their vagabonding lifestyle. They'll cruise to New Zealand, then reassess.

Grace — Panda 40

Paul & Judy Meaney, Seattle, WA

If you think you have to be a lifelong sailor to enjoy cruising, listen to Paul and Judy's story. "We didn't get into sailing until we were in our mid-50s," explains Paul. "Never learned to sail; never had a



'Grace'

boat. But we took a couple of lessons and away we went." And so far, so good. Based in Seattle, they've now been out for four years.

Polynesia and the South Pacific? "It's a bucket list thing," they say.

Taitonga — Alubat Ovni 395
Christian & Dagmar Sahr
Frankfurt, GER

"I read some books and saw some films about the South Pacific," recalls Christian, "and to me it looks like paradise on Earth."

"He said, 'I want you to sail around the world with me.' How could she say no?"

He and Dagmar both love traveling, but as he says, "If we had to stay in hotels every night, we couldn't afford it. Traveling by boat, of course, is a lot more reasonable. But it's a long, long way to reach the destination." Especially in this case.

Now in their third year of cruising, they'll slowly work their way to New Zealand, but they're in no great hurry to get there.



ALL PHOTOS: LATITUDE / ANDY

Qi — Contest 46

Thomas Runte & Gaylyn Morgan
Hamburg, GER

Many Puddle Jumpers have decades of experience, but not this pair. Thomas, who hails from Germany, began his adventures on the water just two years ago. Six months later he and Gaylyn met, when they both signed on to a sailboat on a crossing from Spain to Malta. She's a native New Zealander who was raised in Australia.



'Qi'

Apparently sharing crewing shifts led to romance because before Gaylyn knew it, Thomas made an unusual proposal: "He said, 'I want you to sail around the world with me.'" How could she say no?

Despite their relative inexperience, they've already traveled successfully more than 5,000 miles from the Med to Panama. As you might imagine, their plans are open-ended.

Sandgroper — R&C 46 cat
Derek Crosby & Anne-Marie Haynes
Freemantle, AUS

We have to say that *Sandgroper* is one of the more unusual boat names we've heard in a while. Perhaps it has to do with the fact that catamarans can bring their bows right up to the beach.

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Derek and Anne-Marie are not long-time sailors, but after retiring they chartered a boat on the Queensland coast for the whole family to enjoy. "We thought, 'Yeah, this is how we want to spend our retirement!'" They bought this Robertson & Craine cat out of The Moorings fleet on Tortola, and as Derek says, "We've survived 40 knots so far, so I guess we're doing all right."



'Sandgroper'

Andiamo — Islander 36
David & Maureen Trumble
Newport Beach, CA

"David's been wanting to go to deep water ever since we got the boat," says Maureen. That was six years ago, and they took off cruising shortly afterward.



'Andiamo'

"I'd read all those sailing mags that made cruising sound like fantastic stuff — you know, beautiful women stretched out on deck sunbathing. It wasn't until we got out there that we realized how challenging cruising can be." But

Posed in front of the Balboa YC anchorage at the Pacific end of the Canal, these voyagers were psyched up for the 3,000-mile crossing.

those challenges haven't dissuaded them from jumping the puddle. In fact, when we met them, they could hardly wait to get started.

North Star — Tayana 52
Steve & Kim Watford
Clearwater, FL

Steve and Kim began this extended cruise with participation in the 2009 Caribbean 1500. Although they've been out for five years, it sounds as if they're just getting started. "Underwater photography is our passion," Steve explains. "We dove all over the Caribbean, and now we're looking forward to seeing what the South Pacific has to offer."



'North Star'

They were both smiling and happy when we met them, but probably weren't so cheerful a year and a half ago. That's when North Star got hit by lightning, wrecking many of her onboard systems. Only recently did they complete all the related repairs

at Panama's Shelter Bay Marina, on the Caribbean side of the Canal.

Li'l Explorers — Hughes 58
The Winter-Grant family
Channel Islands, CA

We'd have to scour the PPJ archives to be certain, but we're pretty sure that Courage and Shannon (aka Dad and Mom) are setting a Puddle Jump record by bringing their six (!) kids along as crew. They range in age from Cassidy, 15, to little brother Integrity, who is only a year and a half.

Shannon apparently started getting excited about this cruising fantasy 10 years ago during her Bora Bora honeymoon. But Courage has had the bug his



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whole life. Back in 1972 his parents built a Piver 48 tri and took off with their kids. The original plan was to do the South Pacific, but that never happened, as they opted for the Caribbean instead.



The 'Li'l Explorers' crew, minus one.

Courage and Shannon followed his parents' lead in 2012 by buying this Kurt Hughes-designed cat, which had been sitting unfinished for 20 years. They launched her a year later and took off with their kids three months after that. The interior is still unfinished, but there'll be plenty of time for that in some distant anchorage.

Dragonfly — Hughes 60

Al & Jill Wiggington, Zionsville, IN

Al and Jill's big cat is also a Kurt Hughes design (as is *Latitude's* 63-footer *Profligate*).

As noted in our February *Letters* section, as Al and Jill travel the South Pacific

they'll be pursuing an unusual agenda. The founders of the medical relief organization Sea Mercy chartered *Dragonfly* several years ago, and the couple was so impressed by the nonprofit's operation that they agreed to serve as a floating healthcare clinic in remote areas of the South Pacific. This year, they'll be hosting medical teams on rounds in Tonga, Fiji and beyond.



'Dragonfly'

Jean Marie — Mikado 52

Walter Baumgartner & Jacqueline Goddard-Baumgartner Cowes, GBR

Although *Jean Marie's* homeport is Cowes, as Walter explains, "We've come from South Africa, so we like strong wind." They get plenty of that around the Cape of Good Hope. But he and

Jacqui say that after setting sail together in 2007, they had a glorious trip up the South Atlantic to the Caribbean, with moderate breeze all the way.

The story of how Walter, a Swiss national, got to South Africa will have to wait until another time, but we can tell you that he's owned this French classic since 1978. Although he worked in the boating industry for decades before retiring, he claims that Jacqui, a relative newcomer, is *Jean Marie's* captain.



'Jean Marie'

Bandit — Moody 46

David Morgan & Brenda Webb New Zealand

As with many of the Puddle Jumpers that we meet in Mexico and Panama, David claims that island-hopping across the South Pacific has been a lifelong dream. "Not me," says Brenda. I'm just

going along for the ride." "Yeah," says David, "I'm sort of single-handing with my wife aboard."

We have to believe, though, that Brenda is more involved than she lets on. After all, this



'Bandit'

duo has been cruising successfully since buying the boat in Europe five years ago. They're now heading back home to New Zealand, but seem to be open to distractions along the way.

Sundancer II — Savage 42

Ian & Helen Potter, Sydney, AUS

As they set sail for Polynesia, this cheerful Aussie couple is on the home stretch of a nine-and-a-half-year circumnavigation. They left Sydney in 2005.

It's often hard for such well-traveled voyagers to pinpoint their favorite spots, but Ian and Helen were quick to mention their explorations of Turkey's Turquoise Coast as well as navigating the French canals from Marseilles all the way



'Sundancer II'

to the English Channel (after dropping their rig). "At times we only had about 8" of water beneath the keel," explains Ian. And during a drought they got stuck and couldn't move until winter, but the memories remain precious.

Now they're eager to make some new memories jumping the puddle.

Shakti — Norseman 447

Mike & Rosie Seidel, Brisbane, AUS

"The name *Shakti* means female power in Hindu," explains Mike, "which tells you everything about the boat. This is the admiral," he says as he introduces Rosie.

After falling in love with a sister-ship in Asia, Mike and Rosie tracked down *Shakti* in Trinidad a year and a half ago, via *YachtWorld.com*.

The couple has been cruising seriously since 2008. "We only did weekends before that," says Rosie. The beauty of being based at Brisbane, of course, is that it's a great jumping off point for cruising the Great Barrier Reef and Indonesia.



'Shakti'

The Southern Cross — St. Francis 44 **Catherine Kimber & Peter Chataway Port Adelaide, AUS**

"We've been told by a lot of circum-navigators that French Polynesia was their favorite part of the trip, so we're really looking forward to it," says Catherine, who is listed as the captain.

They left Adelaide (on the country's south coast) seven years ago, and will eventually return there. But they're in no hurry. "We told our parents and children we'd be away for 10 years, and we've only been away for seven, so we've got a ways to go yet." Their current game plan is to spend two seasons in the South Pacific, then head up to Asia.



'Southern Cross'

Amiable — Amel Super Maramu 53 **Steve & Liz Coleman, Hobart, AUS**

Sailing on their friends' Amel 53 inspired Steve and Liz to search for a similar hull.

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They found *Amiable* in Martinique a year ago, and are now heading home to Hobart with those



These Aussies are 'Amiable'.

friends with the *Amel*, *Duncan* and *Eva* along as crew. Some sights along the way will be familiar for these owners, as they previously clawed their way east from Tasmania as far as Western Samoa via the Roaring Forties — that's definitely the hard way to get there.

Evenstar — Hallberg-Rassy 53
BJ Porter & Kathleen Woodruff
East Greenwich, RI

According to BJ and Kathy, their fantasizing about this cruise began a decade ago. Their current timetable is scheduled around their kids, son Will, 16, and daughter Danielle, 13. "We wanted to do

this before Will goes off to college." His goal is to be a yacht designer, and he's already spent some quality time with Bob Perry.



'Evenstar'

We asked Danielle what her friends back home thought about her big adventure: "They think it's cool. In fact, one of them said she'd like to stow away and come with us."

Given the family's timetable, they've got about two years to play before young Will has to rejoin the real world.

Ukulele Lady — Shearwater 39
Nick & Lynette Marvin, Durban, ZAF

Although neither Nick nor Lynette plays the ukelele, they've grown to like the name given to their South African-built sloop by her previous owner — especially since they're bound for the birthplace of the uke, Polynesia.

Having left Durban in 2006, they're intentionally taking their time to work their way around the world. If you're contemplating making the trip up the South Atlantic to the Caribbean someday, this pair chooses the word "wonderful" to describe it. "It really was a very easy trip."

Dances with Dragons — C&N 58
Wayne Harris & Tigs Lankester
Port Aransas, TX

"I've been around once already," says Tigs, "so I'm showing Wayne the way." Tigs, who's English, was out for six years on her previous circumnavigation. Wayne, on the other hand, has been dreaming about such long-haul cruising ever since he was a young man. Now, having bought this big Camper & Nicholson ketch in 2012, he finally gets his chance.



'Dances with Dragons'

The couple set sail from Texas in mid-January, made a pit stop at Isla Mujeres for a quickie bottom job, then beelined it for Panama. Future plans are open-ended.

"I'm sort of singlehanding with my wife aboard."

Tehani-Li — Tayana 52
Karel Dimitri & Phil Tenney
Brisbane, AUS

Karel and Phil picked up this boat in Barcelona, began cruising in 2008, and have out ever since. Even though they're now heading west toward Australia, Karel clarifies, "We're not necessarily taking the boat back home. Australia is just on the way to somewhere else!"



'Tehani-Li'

They'd always intended to do longterm cruising, Phil explains, but somewhere along the way their cruising goal expanded into doing a complete circumnavigation. Don't expect them to cinch down their docklines permanently any time soon.

Argonaut — Berckemeyer 54
Frits Draijer & Marian Jongboom
Den Oever, NED

Clearly one of the most unusual boats in this year's fleet, *Argonaut* was

custom built of aluminum in the Netherlands in 2006. Although specifically built for cruising, she has features normally only seen on serious racing machines: a lifting keel, water ballast, double rudders, a dinghy garage and running backstays rather than a fixed backstay. They've been out since 2011, and are still loving every inch of this one-off 54-footer.



'Argonaut'

After two tours of the Caribbean this Dutch couple is now eager to make new landfalls in the South Pacific.

Moana Roa — F-P Bahia 46
Laurie & Sonia Haynes
Fremantle, AUS

It's probably safe to say that *Moana Roa* has something on board that no other PPJ boat can claim: a professional guitar teacher. He was brought along specifically to advance 14-year-old Travis' musical career. His brother Beau is 12, and sister Kara is eight. Instructor Joel, who's twentysomething, ponders, "Whoever thought playing guitar would take you to Tahiti?"

Having bought this big cat in Martinique, the family has now been cruising for two years. They have to be back in Australia by November, but we expect



Meet the 'MoanaRoa' crew.

to see them July 4 at the Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous, as Laurie is an outrigger canoe coach. "I wouldn't miss it!" he says.

Island Fling — Island Spirit 36
Rian Hattaya & Alim Sur
Fethiye, TUR

Although there are probably thousands of sailing yachts in Turkey, we rarely meet Turkish sailors out cruising — especially those with the experi-

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ence of this happy couple. Now working on their second circumnavigation, Alim and Rian published a book about their first rounding, and they regularly submit articles to a Turkish sailing magazine.



'Island Fling'

Between trips they spent a couple of years in Turkey, but say they "have no real roots there" these days. Evident by their big smiles, they say, "We feel like kids when we get out traveling by boat." The focus of this lap around the planet will be to travel slowly and "return to the best places we discovered last time."

Sangreal — Tartan 34

Ken & Gail Kleinhoff, Olympia, WA

If you're wondering, the name refers to the Holy Grail. And after chatting with this adventurous pair, it sounds as though they've been in pursuit of that sacred chalice ever since leaving the Olympic Peninsula in 1999. Thus far, their travels have taken them to Hawaii, the Line Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Australia, across the Indian Ocean, around Africa, to St. Helena, Ascension, Fernando de Noronha, Brazil, French Guiana, Devil's Island, north to St Maarten, across the Atlantic to the Azores, to the Canaries, back to the Caribbean and on to Panama — and they're eager to see more. Next stop, Marquesas.



'Sangreal'

Rewa — S&S 65

David Irvin, Pretty Marsh, ME

This lovely Sparkman & Stephens-designed, Abeking & Rassmussen-built aluminum ketch has changed hands a couple of times since we last saw her during the 1999 Baja Ha-Ha. Her current 'steward' is David Irvin of Maine, who's excited to bring her back to the Pacific.

"When I was in my 20s," he explains, "I was first mate on a 100-ft schooner that sailed from Maine to Australia. It was a great trip, but I remember thinking to myself, 'When I grow up I want to do it again in my own boat, on my own timetable.'"

He's recruited a jolly crew for the



Capt. David and the jolly 'Rewa' crew.

crossing: his old buddy from Maine, John Correa, a Belgian sailor named Paul Vanhauwere and American expat Jan Ahlman. She now lives in Panama City, having opened a B&B, Panama City Connection, that caters to cruisers' needs. "They shanghaied me," she says with a laugh, "because somehow they got the idea that I was a great cook."

Cetacea — Cheoy Lee MS 53 **Tony Wessendorff & Gail Corrigan** **Houston, TX**

Despite the fact that Tony refers to his boat as a "big ugly Cheoy Lee motorsailer" we'd bet he loves her, as he and Gail have owned her for 13 years. It wasn't until a year ago, after Gail sold her company, that they finally got her out into blue water.

"We've known for a long time we wanted to go sailing," says Gail, "but we didn't really know where we wanted to go." Tony's vote was for the South Pacific.

They are among the few crews that went to the trouble to visit the French Embassy in Panama to apply for a "long stay visa" of 6 to 12 months. Normally, non-EU citizens only get 90 days, which isn't nearly enough to explore French Polynesia's archipelagos. (All boats, however, can stay for up to 18 months.)



'Cetacea'

Outsider Australia — Ocean Cat 49 **Ian James & Wendy Shields** **Yamuna, AUS**

Although Wendy and Ian are typical outdoorsy Aussies, they didn't get into sailing seriously until they moved aboard their previous boat in 1999. Two years ago someone made them an offer on it that they couldn't refuse, so they decided to take advantage of the strong Australian dollar and fly out to the East Coast to buy this Henry Lucke-designed cat. They say they're still amazed at how fast she is.

Now, as they anticipate the 7,000-mile homeward run to Australia, their most immediate goal is to try to avoid sailing any more to get here [to Panama] — from the East Coast to the Bahamas to Cuba to here."



'Outsider Australia'

"We expect we'll have a good time on the crossing," says Ian. "After all, the Pacific is 'our water.'"

Jakker — Jeanneau 42.2 **Tony Erens & Jacqueline Jeurissen** **Genk, BEL**

Like many international cruisers we meet in Panama, Tony and Jacqueline found they really loved exploring Panamanian waters — after all, outside the narrow zone of development that abuts the Canal, the country offers many spectacular cruising venues such as the San Blas Islands and the Bocas del Toro region. This Belgian couple stayed a year and still didn't see it all.



'Jakker'

They left their home waters in 2010, crossed the Atlantic to Martinique, and have explored several islands that are off the usual cruiser milk run, including Cuba and Haiti. Their intention is to circumnavigate, but they're in no hurry to get back home to Europe.

Calista — Bavaria 38 **The Apukov family, Liverpool, GBR**

Although *Calista* flies a British flag, her owners are originally from Russia. Vladimir, his wife Oxana and son Alex, 20, migrated to Malta years ago, but they are now on the move again, heading for their new home in Auckland, New Zealand.

Unlike the many cruisers who have no time constraints, the Apukovs are making a fast, no-nonsense sprint to the land of the Kiwi. They left Malta in November, made a beeline across the Med and Atlantic to St. Lucia, then sailed nonstop to the Canal.

They don't intend to dilly-dally in the

MEET ME IN PAPEETE



The Russian crew of 'Calista'.

South Pacific islands either. "We plan to make three stops," explains Vladimir: Nuku Hiva, Tahiti and Tonga." To each his own.

Mystic — Albin Ballad 30 Mark Bryant, Houston, TX

"I've wanted to do this since I was 18," says Mark, a singlehander who set sail from Texas seven years ago. The backstory: "Right after high school I helped build a ferro boat, but passed up the chance to crew it, and I've regretted it all my life."

Now that he's finally got the chance, he hopes to complete a circumnavigation. "I want to do the whole circle. It doesn't matter if I make it or not. Trying is what's important to me."

Windance III — Privilege 435 Vernor & Christina Kritzer, AUT

Although their boat shows a hailing port of St. Vincent, Vernor and Christina are originally from Austria. Having been out for seven years, they've become well acquainted with the seemingly carefree cruising life.



'Windance III'

"We are slow movers," explains Christina, "so it takes us a while. We have to put our feet down and

see what is happening and enjoy where we are. Then we move on when we've seen enough.

Judging by that, it may take them decades to explore all that the South Pacific has to offer.

Kalliope — Tayana 37 Gregg & Deborah Burton, Clark, CO

It must have taken Gregg and Deborah a while to acclimate to the tropical heat, as they've been living in Western Alaska. They are no strangers to blue water voyaging, though. Both circumnavigated in the late 1980s from Southern California.

Despite her Colorado homeport, the couple picked up *Kalliope* — which is

named after the Greek goddess of poetry and song — in Washington. Like many Panama Puddle Jumpers, they'll stop along the Ecuadorian mainland and in the Galapagos on their way west.

Gregg says he's thrilled to get out cruising again, as he's had a thirst for deep-water adventures since he was 10. "We lived in the Florida Keys then, and I somehow got hold of an old wooden rowboat that someone had put a sail on and lee boards." He's moved up substantially since then.

"I want to do the whole circle. It doesn't matter if I make it or not. Trying is what's important to me."

Jack Tar — Beneteau Oceanis 473 Pete Newman & Carol Rose Mooloolaba, AUS

Borrowing the slang term for salty sailors of the British Empire — *Jack Tar* is an appropriate name for this couple's boat, as they've been sailing for more than 50 years.



'Jack Tar'

"We enjoy the interaction with other cruisers," says Carol, "and we're looking forward to seeing the Pacific Islands." Having bought this boat seven years ago, they plan to finally bring her home to Australia by October.

Novae — Fountaine Pajot 48 cat Stefano & Helen Piviali Fremantle, AUS

Although Stefano is originally from Italy and Helen is from Scotland, they've long considered themselves to be Australians, having migrated there 33 years ago.



'Novae'

They picked up this big cat from the F-P factory in La Rochelle, France three years ago, and they're taking their sweet time getting

her home. Actually, once they reach the country's east coast, they'll still have a 3,000-mile trip ahead of them — over the top and down the west coast to Perth. "Of course, we may visit Indonesia on the way, and perhaps also northwestern Australia's Kimberly region, where you find beautiful uninhabited fjords."

Aros Mear — Norseman 447 David & Gitte Bushby, Dundee, GBR

David and Gitte arrived at the *fiesta* breathlessly, just as we were about to turn off our recorder and have a beer. They'd somehow gotten the party time wrong.

Although they began cruising aboard this Bob Perry-designed sloop three years ago, Gitte explains, "We've been cruising during summers for 30 years" out of their base in eastern Scotland.



'Aros Mear'

Oddly, although they are both excited to see the South Pacific, they may take a radical diversion before heading west.

"We actually like high-latitude sailing," says David, who seems fit as a fiddle at age 80, "So we're still debating whether to go down to Chile first and explore the fjords." That would mean they'd probably circumnavigate the South American continent before arriving back in Panama and finally heading west.

Ah, the life of a full-time cruiser. So many destinations to choose from.

We hope you enjoyed meeting this international cadre of cruisers as much as we did. We hope to catch up with many of them again this summer and hear about their passages at the annual Tahiti-Moorea Sailing Rendezvous, July 4-6 (put on by *Latitude 38* and several South Pacific partners). Look for our report on that event in the August edition, then our recap on the fleet's crossing experiences in September.

If it's finally going to be *your* turn to jump the puddle next season, free registration will begin in November at www.pacificpuddlejumps.com.

— *latitude / andy*

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