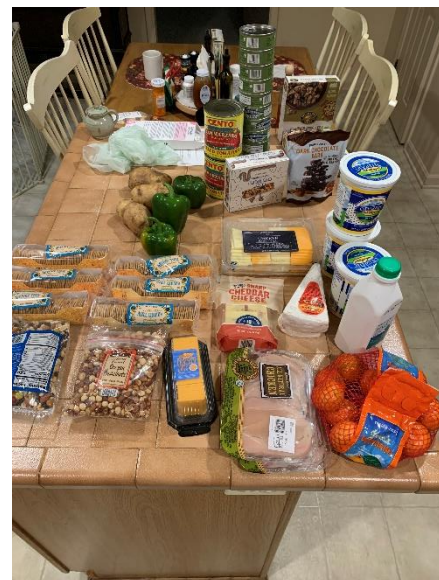


After having missed out on 2023 Chesapeake Bay long cruise (week long) due to bad weather, we jumped on the chance to undertake another week-long cruise in 2024. This year's cruise was planned together with our sailing friends from Magothy River Sailing Association (MRSA) between August 31 and September 7, and was focused on exploring Choptank River and its tributaries.

After the usual planning, provisioning, SV Island Time was ready to take us out on the Bay one more time;



Weeks' worth of provisioning



Almost had a cast away

Saturday August 31 – Day 1 – We left our home around 11 AM and got underway from our slip at Belvedere Yacht Club (BYC) at 1:15PM. The wind was mostly from the south, as we traveled south toward West River (as usual, wind was on the nose, again) Last year we installed a Lazy Jack system on our main sail, which enables us to raise and lower the main sail even for a short duration and we motor sailed with the main sail up out of the Magothy River, turning south toward our destination. We arrived at West River around 6PM, the MRSA flotilla of 5 boats were already enjoying the happy hour. We dropped anchor in front of the Pirates Cove and settled in for the night.

Distance traveled – 21 nm



Sunset at West River/Galesville



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Sunday September 1st – Day 2

After morning coffee on board, we pulled up anchor and left West River at 8AM. It was an overcast day with mild wind conditions. Once we cleared the ever-present crab pots at the mouth of the West River, we turned south and turned off our engine, sailing with Head and Main sails at a comfortable 5.5 kts. After about a half hour of sailing, we lost all of our electronics, first momentarily, then permanently. A quick investigation pointed to a very weak house battery and we switched the battery selector to ALL and kept it there for the rest of the trip. In order to give some boost to

the battery bank; we turned on the diesel and motor sailed the rest of the way.

As we draw only 4 feet of draft, taking a short cut through Knapps Narrow is an option of SV Island Time, instead of rounding the tip of Tilghman Island, which adds at least an hour to travel time. We dropped our sails and entered the narrows, ever so carefully from the bay side, where shoaling occurs every season and markers are adjusted accordingly. We hailed the bridge operator on VHF channel 13 and requested opening. We were told over the air that “the bride was not available” We asked several times what that meant, whether the bridge was temporary out of operation or something else and finally got the clarification that “there are pedestrians crossing the bridge and it will not open until they are through” which we would not expect. The bridge was opened for us and we entered the Choptank river. Our flotillas rendezvous point was at San Domingo Creek, right behind St. Micheals and we arrived there around 2PM. There were several other boats already at anchor, and we moved around a bit until we found a spot safely away from all others. Set our anchor, lower our dingy and made a dash to St. Micheals to get some provisions. A light rain in town did not damp our sprints, just got us wet. We returned to our boat and joined MRSA Happy Hour (aka 5PM) on SV Chapter Three, joined by crews from SV Mariah, SV Dark Star and SV Coquille

After happy hour, we returned to our boat for the evening

Distance traveled – 28 nm



Fishermen working the Bay



***Going through Knapps Narrows – Thank you
4ft draft on SV Island Time***



***Captain Joyce picking out just the “right spot”
to drop the hook***

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Monday September 2nd – Day 3

Left San Domingo around 9:30, the forecast was calling for strong winds from the north. We raised the self-tacking staysail and put the first reef in the main as a precaution. The winds were not as strong as predicted, we shook off the reef on the main and continued to sail with the staysail. Our destination was Tred Avon River, Plaindealing Creek (across from Oxford)-, which was only 13 miles away. We decided to sail around a bit in the open area before heading toward Oxford. Thanks to our shallow draft, we found a quite spot to anchor in a small cove where no other dared to come in. Riding the dingy in choppy seas, went ashore for a flotilla dinner at historic Robert Morris Inn. Including the people who came by land, we had dinner with 18 people.

Distance traveled – 13nm plus couple hours' worth of joy riding



It was a glorious windy day on Choptank River



Due to our shallow draft, we had our own "private cove" to drop the hook



Captain Joyce at the wheel



Having group dinner with all cruisers in the historic Robert Morris Inn.

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Tuesday September 3rd – Day 4

Pulled anchor before 9, and drove to the fuel dock for pump out. The approach to the dock did not receive the top marks (from our Captain), room for improvement, after pump out and getting ice, we headed east toward La Trappe Creek. Due to short ride and wind on our nose, we ran the engine all the way to our destination. We had not been to La Trappe creek before, a very quiet cove right inside the narrow entrance with a sliver of land. We were joined by four other boats from the MRSA flotilla. Took a dingy ride around the cove and saw a bald eagle sitting on top of a tree. Got to shoot video from the dingy of the anchorage. The sunset was breath taking.

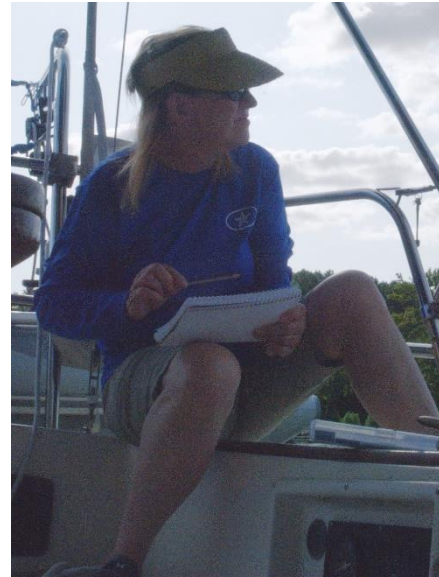
Distance traveled – 8nm



What a lovely place La Trappe Creek was



Flotilla Happy Hour rafting up



Captain Joyce working on her nautical scenes



Dinner is served

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Wednesday September 4th – Day 5

We woke up to a beautiful sun rise and enjoyed cups of coffee watching the wildlife on the shore. The day turned windy and we had a short sail ahead to Cambridge, a town we had driven through many times by car on our way to Ocean City MD, but never visited by boat. The group had made reservations at the Cambridge

Municipal Yacht Basin, which was our only marine stay during the trip. One of the boats in the flotilla had Cambridge as their home port and we followed them into marina. A very helpful staff member guided us into a transient slip on the bulkhead and were able to top off our batteries. We walked around town and visited shops, had lunch and returned to our boat for relaxation. In the evening, we went to dinner as a group and had a great time. When we returned to the marina, one of the fellow cruisers had a misfortune and was faced with a medical condition, which required a trip to ER.

This also signaled the end of the large flotilla. Two cruisers left the next morning, and one stayed at their home port. We continued with one other boat on the rest of the trip.

Cambridge is a beautiful town and we are looking forward to visit soon.

Distance traveled – 5 nm



Cambridge became a new favorite place to visit, we will come back soon

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Thursday September 5th – Day 6

When the number of the boats continuing on the trip dropping to two, we made some changes to our trip itinerary and decided to go as far west as possible on the Choptank River. Thus, we selected Dun Cove as our destination

for the day. The wind got stronger overnight blowing near 15kt from the north, our departure from the slip was less than perfect, but we managed to get underway without causing any damage to our boat or others.

With a strong wind blowing from the north, we had a great run under beam reach and hit our hull speed of 7.1 kt several times during our trip. Our speed was never less than 6.5 kt and by far this was the best day of sailing on the trip. We had been to Dun Cove before and picked an anchorage protected from north near a farm house. Later in the afternoon, we were joined by the other boat and spent the afternoon together, enjoying happy hour.

Distance traveled – 20 nm



The flotilla has gone down to two boats with early departures had a lovely evening at Dun Cove

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Friday September 6th – Day 7

We had already decided to make a final run back to West River and meet for dinner with Joyce's sister & brother-in-law. Following an uneventful passage through the Knapps Narrows, we arrived in Galesville and dropped anchor in front of the Pirates Cove restaurant . Came ashore on dingy and met with family in Pirates Cove. After dinner we retired early and planned our final leg of our journey back home.

Distance traveled – 20 nm



***Heading back home, going through Knapps
Narrow west bound***



***Final stop at Pirates Cove, meeting Beth & Jeff
for dinner***

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Saturday September 7th – Day 8

Had a slow start in the morning and wanted to pump out our holding tank before heading back home. We waited until the fuel dock opened and approached it with care and this landing received the approval from higher authorities. After the pump out, we motor sailed home as the weather was starting to turn ugly. We arrived back at Belvedere YC early afternoon and started to unload the boat. That itself took some time and we got back home to a very happy Logan, who had missed us.

Distance traveled – 22 nm

We had a great time on our 2024 journey and hope that you can join us next year out on the water

All the best

Joyce & Ziya Gun

SV island Time