



## **“Just a Little Farther”**

On Tuesday Aug 30<sup>th</sup> – After 3 nights in Seattle, we decided to head over to Blake Island for a little more nature before going home. All of Blake Island is a state park and full of nature so close to home. Deer roam the island, and raccoons are everywhere. We got tied up at the dock in an extremely tight spot but all went well.

We decided to go for a hike around the island. Julie, not feeling the greatest, reluctantly agreed to go. I didn't know exactly how far it was all the way around the island but I thought it was a fairly quick hike so we started the journey.

I soon realized it was going to be a longer trek than originally thought but I pushed on saying nothing. After about 45 minutes I started hearing complaints from the back of the line, “I agreed to go on a SHORT hike, are we almost there” Julie said. Julie had a cold the last few days and was getting very tired. I decided to use my phone and Google maps to see how far we still needed to go. Oh boy, not good, we were only almost  $\frac{1}{2}$  way around the island! Again, I decided to keep this info to myself and Skylar. Skylar said “Dad that's not good, mom doesn't feel well”. Against my better judgment we both kept quiet, only saying “we are getting there, lets

keep going". No use in turning back now I thought, we are almost  $\frac{1}{2}$  way around, in retrospect a bad decision.

We arrived at a nice little beach where we all relaxed for a few minutes before taking off again down the trail. Julie started getting really tired and her anger toward my decision started flowing. I was forced to reveal my decisions and break the silence. We had at least another 2 miles to go and suddenly Julie got really angry! Skylar thought it was all really funny but it was not a good situation for me. After a little breakdown, I gave a pep talk and we pushed on with steam coming out of Julie's ears.

We finally made it back to the boat after almost a 5-mile hike. Julie crashed in silence and I just kept my mouth shut.

Some friends of ours called and decided to come up to Blake for the night. We all had a great time talking boats and hanging out on the dock.

After 2 nights at Blake Island we fired up the engine for the last time for the short 2-hour cruise back home to Tacoma. No one wanted to go home. We all just pictured ourselves turning back north for more adventures. There's nothing quite like spending that much time on a boat with your wife and kids. Its challenging at times but its amazing how much closer you become. The kids gain so much experience in self reliance. On the water, bad decisions and lack of attention have higher consequences and that teaches them (and me) a lot about life. I am so thankful for this time and experience with my family and love that they feel the same way.

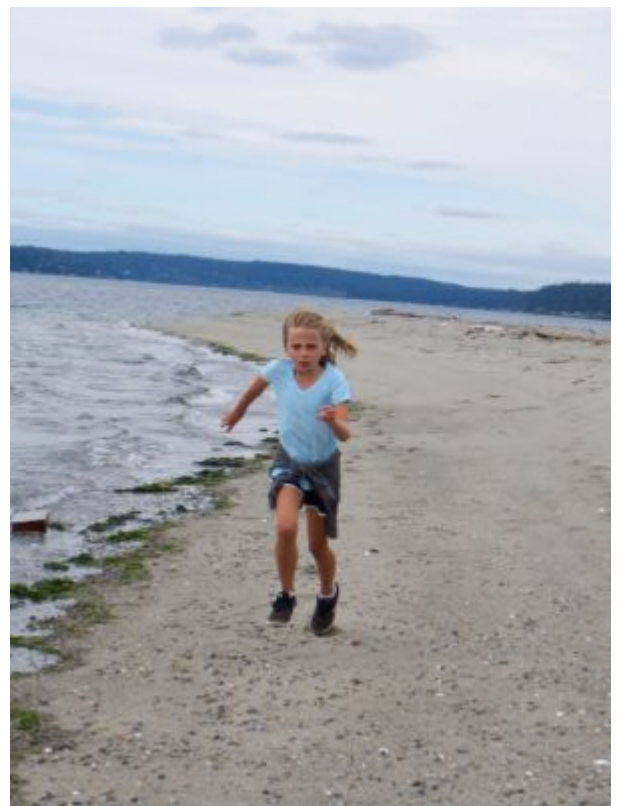
On September 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, after 35 days out, we arrived back to our boathouse in Tacoma.



Leaving Seattle







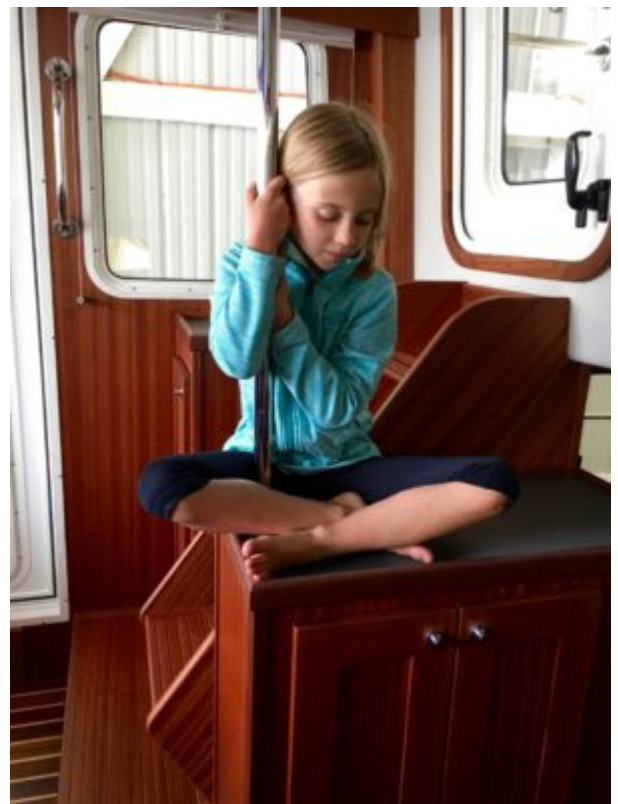












Ava doesn't want to leave!





# **“How Could People Survive Here”**

Sat Aug 27th – We arrived in Seattle for a few days of school clothes shopping. This is a tradition for us, we always end our big summer boat trip in Seattle getting the kids new clothes for before school starts in just a few days.

Having been out on the water for 30+ days you get used to nature and the wilderness. Seattle is always somewhat of a culture shock after the experiences on the water. As we arrived in Seattle and walked up to the city there was all kinds of city life going on. Ava took it all in then looked up to Julie and I and honestly said “how could people survive here!”.

We don’t have cable TV at home, so one of our traditions is to download the whole season of Deadliest Catch and watch it on our summer boat trip. This year Ava and Skylar really got into it (not super appropriate for Ava but with a 15-year-old brother there is only so much you can do). They loved the new guy Sean Dwyer on the F/V Brenna A. Ava especially thought he was the coolest guy ever, and loved that he treated his

deckhands nice, didn't smoke, and "didn't swear much".

I knew the boat was moored somewhere in Seattle during the off season so I decided to see if it was in town. A quick search on the internet revealed the boat had just come home a week ago and was now moored at Fisherman's Terminal. On Sunday around noon we caught an Uber to Fisherman's Terminal to try and catch a glimpse of the Brenna A. Keeping our intentions a secret from the kids we told them we were going to lunch. After lunch at the terminal we set off on a "walk around the docks" in search of the famous boat.

Not more than 5 minutes, Julie spotted the boat! Then we told the kids what our real intentions were for coming here and Julie revealed that she spotted the boat. Ava got super excited and just stared at the boat in awe while we took some pictures. As we got closer we noticed a familiar face in the pilothouse. It was the real Sean Dwyer and he gave us a wave! A minute later he actually walked off the boat and down to say hi. Ava turned red with excitement while she told him all the reasons he was the best Capitan on the show. "Well, I just really like you because you don't smoke, you don't swear, and you don't slap people in the head if they fall asleep at the wheel!" He laughed, said "thank you" then continued to talk with us for a good 10 minutes about all kinds of things. He was a very nice guy and we were grateful he took time to meet us. Ava was especially excited, she couldn't quit talking about it, saying "I met Sean Dwwwwyyyyyyer, I met Sean Dwwwwyyyyyyer" in a little tune.







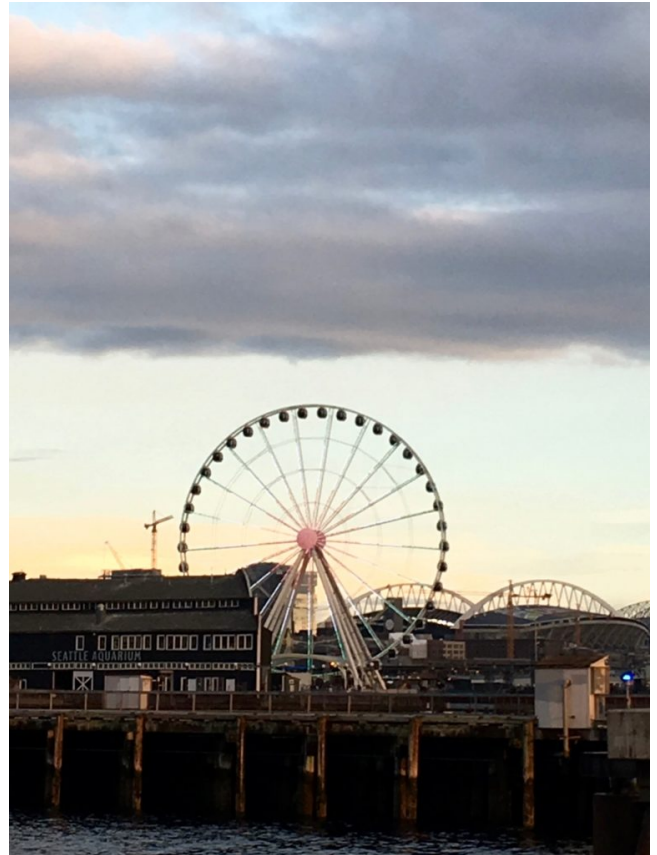






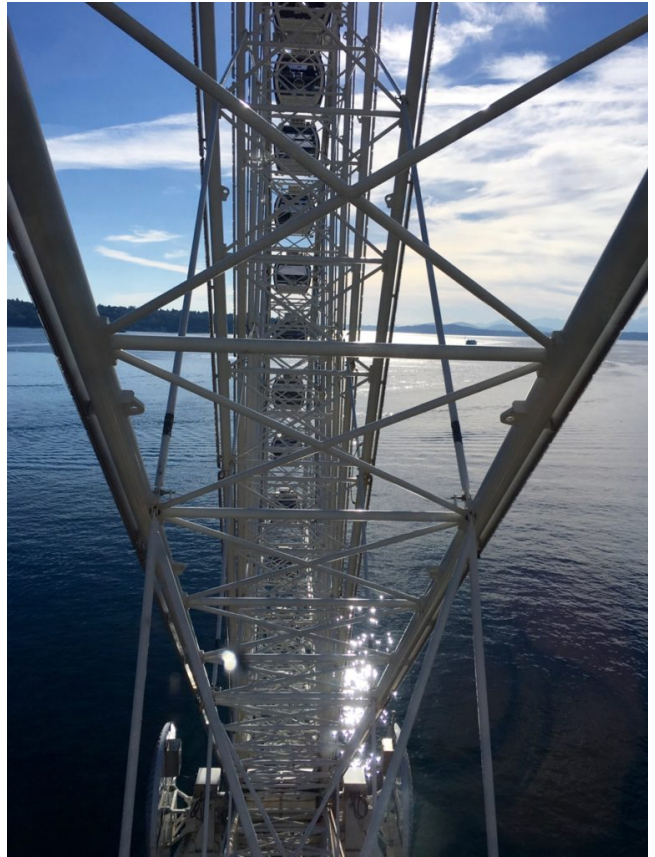




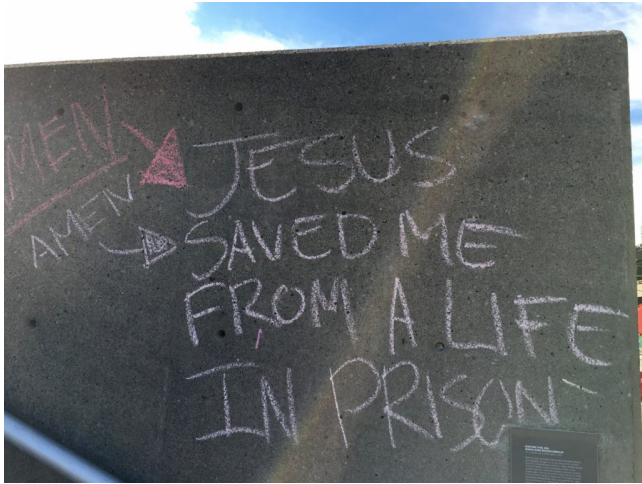




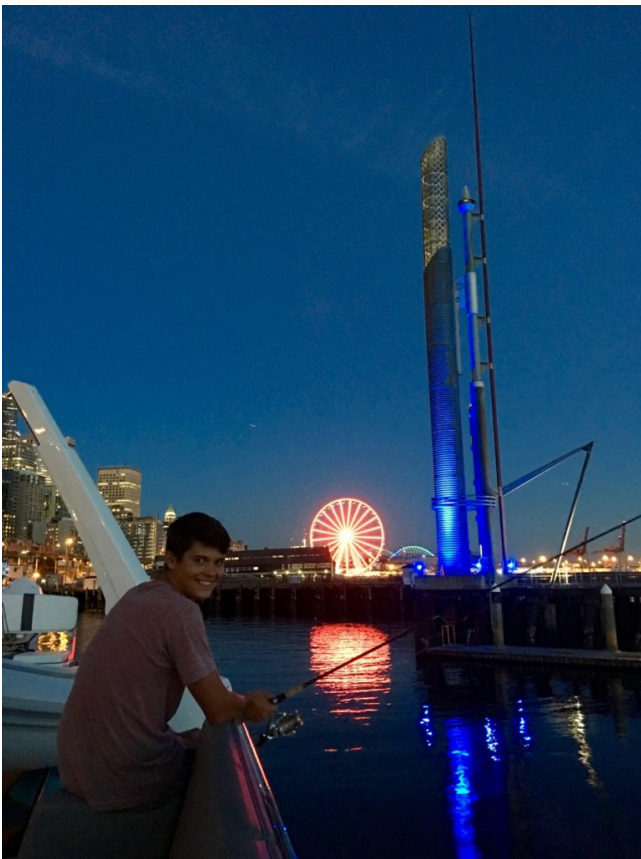














## South Bound

Thursday Aug 25<sup>th</sup> – After a relaxing morning at Spencer Spit, we decided to head for Anacortes just across Rosario Strait. Our generator needed an oil change and Anacortes was just the place to do it. After getting tied up, Skylar and I went into town on some rickety old bikes the marina loans you. They have baskets perfect for loading up the supplies we needed. Back with the goods, we got the oil changed in the generator and some maintenance done on our watermaker.

We all went for a nice walk in town and had dinner out. That evening we decided to do a family dock walk. We love doing dock walks, looking at all the boats, what we like about them, what we don't, what we would change, etc. By the end we all have our own idea of the "perfect boat".

The next day we fired up the Cummins and headed south through the Swinomish Channel. We were officially out of the San Juan Islands now and it was a little sad knowing our trip was about to end in a few days. We had a quick stop at the American Tug docks where one of our refrigerators got installed after getting repaired. Then we pressed on, cruising south down the west side of Camano Island. Looking at the chart I saw what looked like an ok, fair weather anchorage off Camano Island



called Elger Bay. It was very exposed to the south but the weather was fairly good with 10 knots of wind out of the North. There was not another boat anchored in the bay but we decided to spend the night anyway and got a good set on our anchor. There were some crab pots in the bay so Skylar and I decided to set one ourselves.

At dusk we went out to pull the pot. Lucky us, we had 2 nice size legal crabs in the pot! We chunked them in the boat and headed back. When we got back I decided I wasn't up for cleaning just 2 crab and we needed to take off early tomorrow. Back we went to the crabbing grounds to give the crab to a nice man we met out on the water. He was crabbing himself but welcomed the addition to his catch!

We had a calm night but the next morning we woke up to building winds out of the south. The boat was starting to get rocked around a bit so we pulled anchor and headed south for Seattle. The south wind continued to build as we passed Langley, then Edmonds, all the way to Seattle.





