



Family Reunion

Friday July 29th – Sunday July 31st After a successful midnight anchoring experience we woke up to sunny blue skies. All morning long we worked on little boat projects. Julie and Ava laid out on the bow reading books until Ava decided it was time to go tubing. We pulled her around until her arms couldn't hang on any longer then we got ready to go to dinner at the Boathouse with Toodie, John, Jeff, Shannon and Sophie. We all had a great dinner together then Ava stayed the night at the cabin while Julie and I kayaked in the dark back to the boat for the night.

The next day was the official start of "Hinckley Family Fun Days". Everyone came from all over the state, Bellingham, Yakima, Sumner, Bellevue and Portland to spend time with family and have some fun. Nancy brought Skylar so he could join our voyage. The kids played in the water and we shuttled people out to see our boat. Always a big hit for the kids is the rope swing. They swung for hours taking turns until their little arms couldn't take any more. Skylar was the official head of camp. He kept the fire going strong and the camp organized. Families pitched tents for the night but Skylar, being the so called Mountain Man he thinks he is, slept in his sleeping bag on the dirt, in full view of the

stars.

Sunday morning everyone got back together for a nice breakfast then said goodbye.

We all had fun spending time with family we don't get to see all that often. Thanks to everyone who put so much work into a successful reunion but especially John and Toodie who open up their cabin every year to the chaos that is "Hinckley Family Fun Days".

At around 2:15 on Sunday we pulled anchor and set off back north for the start of our summer boat trip. But, before we go much further we need to ditch this 18' boat we are pulling. We thought it would be so much fun to have on our trip but as much fun as it would be, its also a total P in the A! Thinking about it back there while towing and always having to deal with it when docking or anchoring is difficult. We were able to see what its like having it tied to the big boat while anchored. If there's any wind or wakes from passing boats the little boat bounces all over the place in the waves. We would be more limited on our anchorage choices and if unexpected wind comes up it could easily cause damage. Too much stress! So, we made the decision to drop it off at our boathouse in Tacoma.

After dumping the boat, we motored north to Blakely Harbor on Bainbridge Island to anchor for the night. This was a beautiful first time anchorage for us that has a view of the Seattle skyline. It was awesome at night looking at all the lights! Tomorrow will be an early start for the long run to La Conner!





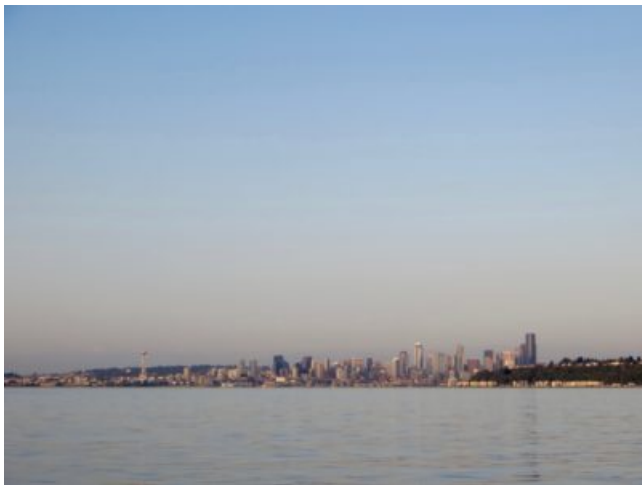








We are off!!





Can't Get Going

Thursday July 28th – We've been planning our big summer boat trip for the last few months. Having a new boat to deal with has been a lot of work figuring everything out. We planned to make our first stop Oro Bay on Anderson Island to do some crabbing for a couple days before heading to Julie's family reunion in the South Sound. Our mission every year is to stock up on as much crab as we can for a good family feast. Most years we do pretty good but this year our poor planning was going to cost the family a feeding frenzy. Our plan was to leave Wednesday morning but we just couldn't get the boat all stocked and ready. Thursday morning came and went as we packed up the car for our final load to the boat.

5:25pm we were finally able to shove off. We decided to tow our 18' center console boat behind the big boat this trip so we had a fast boat for extended exploration and fishing. In order to get the little boat hooked up someone has to drive it to open water to meet the big boat so we can hook up the tow line. Skylar is skipping this leg of the trip because he was with a friend at Suncadia. Julie suddenly realized Skylar wasn't there to Capitan the little boat like he usually does. "I can't do it! I can't do it!" She said over and over. "I've haven't even driven the boat yet". Once she was done freaking

out she gathered the courage and jumped in the boat to make her way through the yacht club and past the ferry to open water. She did a fantastic job but not without a couple heart racing moments. As we pulled out she passed the Coast Guard and then she passed the Police boat. She doesn't have her boaters license and she was sure they knew it!

After all the hustle to get going, we couldn't get free yet. First, we needed to go down the Foss Waterway to get fuel in the boat. 1 hour and 498 gallons later our 640 gallon fuel tanks were full. 7:25pm we actually started our trip heading south. Our plan was to make it to the Pirates Cove where we always anchor for the family reunion but that was almost 4 hours away. Boating in the dark is never fun but we decided to just keep going. The sun set over the Olympics giving us an amazing sunset as we just kept motoring into the night. Radar and GPS position showing on our charts we cruised with limited visibility until about 10pm when it truly went black. No moon light, nothing. We were totally piloting by interments but even that doesn't help you with logs in the water. We crept along at 4 knots while Julie sat out on the bow looking for anything in the water. We made it into Pirates Cove at 11:10pm and for the first time ever, anchored the boat in total darkness but the water was dead calm. It was a fun adventure but not something we want to repeat.

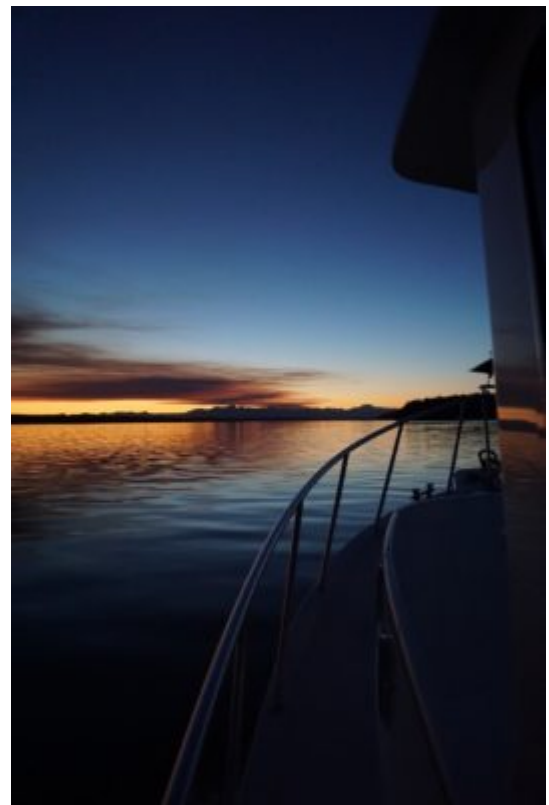


Coming into the Foss
Waterway for fuel





Beautiful sunset, but its
getting dark and we are
still a long way from our
anchorage!







Community Gathering

After leaving Hope Island we headed for Boston Harbor just a couple miles away. We anchored out in front of the bay then made some lunch. Boston Harbor marina has a cool, once a week, dinner on the docks. They only have one thing on the menu and its sponsored by a local brewery who sets up a beer cart. Enchiladas were on the menu tonight so we headed up to check it out. People came from everywhere! All these little boats swarmed the area trying to find a place to tie up and get some food. We had a great time and it was fun to watch what seemed like the whole little community getting together for dinner on the docks.

The next day some friends of ours invited us to dinner at their house in Gig Harbor. They have a buoy out front that we can tie up to so we jumped at the chance. But first we needed to bring some food so we hopped in the Edgewater and headed back to Olympia for the farmer's market. We had a great time having dinner with friends then the next day we motored back to the Yacht Club. The kids revolted over being out for the 4th of July. They thought their life was going to end if they didn't have fireworks so we gave in and went home.

It was a successful shakedown cruise. Everything was slow and

relaxing as we learned a lot about using our new boat.



