

NEWSLETTER # 16

April 1995

Dear Friends,

Greetings to you all! Georgia and I hope that this letter finds you well, prospering and at peace with the Lord.

We are back once again from the **'high seas'** and at home on the lake, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. How pleasant to be with family and friends again. Shortly after we sent out "NEWS LETTER #15" I began to pack our bags for the trip to South Africa. Packing was a major undertaking for this trip because of all the sailing equipment, electronics, computer, HAM radio & antenna, sextant, GPS, charts, misc. sailing gear, medical supplies and etc. and etc. and etc!! We were allowed to check in two 70# bags each plus our carry-on items. After several pack and repack events I was able to get the four bags to be approximately 65-70# each. What with, four bundles of rope for sheets and halyards, various sheet blocks ('pulleys' for the non-sailor), a main sheet winch, auto pilot, depth sounder, EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicator Radio Beacon), various nautical and computer books, antenna tuner and a 500-watt amplifier for the HAM radio, etc., it was a formidable task. With the four check-in bags done the rest was carry-on. Our **carry-on** (more like **'lug-on'**) consisted of two hard shell waterproof cases (containing a computer, printer and power supply; HAM radio, GPS and misc. electronics), a backpack, a five-foot plastic tube with a HAM antenna inside and all of the charts for the voyage wrapped on the outside complete with a nylon shoulder strap, a duffle bag and briefcase plus Georgia's overstuffed shoulder purse. Needless to say, we prayed a lot that we could get it all on the plane. There seems to be some grace towards those who are going to or coming from boats as we didn't experience near the resistance to our numerous lug on items as we had anticipated.

October 8, we boarded our flight at Spokane, Washington, with plane changes in Chicago and Washington, D.C. The plane changes were a riot and an endurance test for us. I was lugging about 70# of gear and Georgia had about 30#. It seemed that all our connecting flights were diabolically arranged to be at the extreme opposite end of the concourse. With our connections rather tight, we could not afford to slow down and consequently, I would proceed to have a *meltdown*. Anyone who knows me very well can tell you that I prove the theory that the human body is 98% water. As we approached the stewardess at the end of the boarding ramp, she would take one look at this soaking wet, apparent candidate for a coronary and, not even mentioning the vast amount of carry-on we were in possession of, would hurriedly aim us in the direction of our seats.

Jeanette and Sigi met us at the Cape Town airport. They had brought along a small trailer for our baggage, which we quickly filled and then traveled the 80 miles to Saldahna where "PETACH TIKVA" was moored.

It was apparent that work was in progress. We were able to make our way through the 'work' zone, on the deck and in the main saloon, to our cabin and proceeded to settle into our *'new home'*. The cavernous space beneath the double bed consumed a large amount of our less active items. The rest were stowed in the hanging locker and shelving. Georgia was right at work putting up little posters on the walls, setting up our library and making the cabin 'ours'.

The next four weeks were a flurry of activity and a real test of faith. There were some much needed items not yet provided. To list a few: A 10-man life raft; 500 gallons diesel fuel; various food provisions; new foam mattresses for the bunks; a new galley range and USA visas for Vonnie, Sigi and Stephen. Avi and Vonnie needed to sell their cars at the last possible moment so we wouldn't be without transportation.

The first project I tackled was to build a small cabinet to house my HAM radio and some navigational books plus my GPS satellite navigation receiver. The cabinet was also to protect the radio from any stray splashes from the port hole. Then, with some coaxial cable which had been donated for the purpose, I hooked up my 'Spider' multi-band vertical antenna and mounted it on the 'arch' at the stern (back) of the boat. I also built a 20-meter dipole antenna and hung it up in the rigging. One of the first ham contacts I made was with a station in San Diego, California!! He said I had a very good signal there and was amazed that he could even hear someone from South Africa. His report was very encouraging to me! I then tried to contact our friend, Lonnie, in St. Maries, Idaho without success. (I later found out that Lonnie hadn't been able to install his beam antenna until later on in our voyage.)

We made several trips into Cape Town for parts and on one particular trip we were determined to convince the US Consul that they needed to reconsider their refusal to issue Vonnie, Sigi and Stephen visas. Fortunately, just before Georgia and I left Coeur d'Alene, I had asked our Senator, Larry Craig, if he would write a letter of recommendation for our trip into South Africa, which he graciously did. Armed with Senator Craig's letter and with Vonnie, Sigi and Stephen in tow, we descended upon the US Consulate and met with Mark, the head consul. After reasoning with him, through the bullet proof glass, he finally said he could issue one year multiple entry visas and we could pick them up after 4:00pm. I then asked if it would be possible for him to make them three year visas? He said that would not be possible unless we could give him an itinerary of our trip and then he wouldn't be able to get it done until the next afternoon. We could not wait the extra day so I said we would have to take the one year visas so we could pick them up that afternoon. I passed the boat paperwork and applications along with the senator's letter through to him and we left. We climbed into the car, feeling a little down since Avi and Jeanette had been issued three year visas when they flew to the USA and we had hoped these visas would be the same. As we drove away we all prayed and asked the Lord to intervene and that His will would be done. That afternoon I went to pick up the visas and they were just completing them. Back at the car, I handed out the visas and, upon inspection, they discovered that they had been issued **ten year multiple-entry visas!!** Thank you Lord. On our drive back to Saldahna we stopped at the Foam Factory to pick up the six new foam mattress that had been donated for the boat. Thanks again Lord.

In the last week before our departure we went to Cape Town to be commissioned and sent out by the Heyns' church. We also picked up the **16-man life raft** which had been given to us by a company that recertifies life rafts. A big HALLELUJAH! Lord. While in Cape Town, Vonnie's car sold for his asking price and Avi had a prospective buyer for his. We also did the last major purchasing of provisions. Five of us hopped into the Renault and headed back to Saldahna with a trailer load of provisions and a life raft. Avi and Jeanette were delivered to the boat the next day with 300 liters of long life milk and a donation to buy 400 gallons of diesel.

During the last week there was a constant parade of family and friends stopping by to say their farewells. Not knowing whether they would ever see one another again, it was a tender time.

With Mandella, a Communist, as president of the “New South Africa”, there was also concern for those being left behind. Already, there were mass strikes across the country and the Blacks were demanding the houses and jobs that the ANC had promised if they were voted into power. The major eastern cities, Johannesburg and Durban were becoming war zones with gang shootings and militants roaming the streets. With the huge “squatter camps” around Cape Town, we wondered how much longer before these things would break out there.

Usually a sailing vessel would have to clear customs in Cape Town but it would require all of us to appear before the customs officer. We didn’t have transportation, since both cars had sold, so Avi was able to arrange for our clearance from Saldahna Port Control. This proved to be a blessing since we had heard that there were some new regulations concerning private vessels leaving New South Africa. In order to stop the flow of capital from the country they had passed a law that private vessels leaving for overseas would have to put up a bond equal to the value of the vessel. If the vessel did not return within three years, the bond would be forfeit to the government. Since our sail plan was to Luderitz, Namibia, which didn’t require a bond, the question never arose and we were free to go. Praise the Lord!

November 12, Saturday afternoon at 14:00, we dropped the mooring lines for the last time in New South Africa. As we sailed out past the rocky point, which formed the entrance to the harbor, we saw a group of our friends that had driven out the sandy spit and climbed the boulders along the shore to cheer us on and wave farewell. A heart warming sight. Goodbye, New South Africa!

The “VOYAGE” has begun!

The four day sail to Luderitz proved to be a real ‘*shakedown*’ cruise. Every time the boat would take a roll you could hear various crashes and bangs as this or that would come adrift and crash to the floor or rattle in the lockers. It got to be quite a symphony after a while. The crew was busy stuffing pieces of foam or pillows here or there and tying things down. Before we left the dock in Saldahna, I had commented that they check everything and make sure it is properly stowed for sea. Hopefully it wouldn’t take them too long to become ‘sea-wise’. The rolling seas also took its toll on the crew. All were seasick for a couple of days except Georgia and I. We had taken ‘Bonine’ which we had brought from the States and it works very well without any side effects. The rest of the crew were trying locally made anti-motion sickness medicine and also ginger powders, which didn’t prove effective. The medicine that Sigi and Jeanette were using proved to be too strong and would make them very sleepy and lethargic so that Georgia did most of the cooking and serving for the first few days of the passage. Jeanette had thoughtfully prepared the meals for the first few days in advance so they wouldn’t have to spend long periods in the galley cooking, which tends to aggravate seasickness.

Our entry into Luderitz harbor was in 25-35 knot winds and as we lined up with the entrance channel, the wind was on the nose. We started the engine and furled the sails and headed for the Luderitz Yacht Club. The wind was rapidly increasing as we maneuvered to pick up the mooring buoy. Suddenly the engine died and we were adrift. I hollered at the crew to quickly toss the anchor over. We let as much chain run out as we possibly could before hitting the boats down wind of us. As the anchor took hold we swung head to wind and just missed hitting the boat we were drifting towards by 3 feet! A rather dramatic entrance into the yacht club. Avi went below and bled the air out of the engine and got it running again. We motored ahead, pulling up our anchor, and then we caught the mooring and tied up. Our first passage was completed.

The harbor at Luderitz is like a wind tunnel. Every day the wind begins to pick up at around 11:00am. By late afternoon the wind is gale force, 35-40 knots. Although the anchorage is well protected from waves the boats jerk this way and that on their moorings making staying onboard quite uncomfortable. We spent one night on the mooring and in the morning moved over to the pier and tied alongside a fishing boat. This was much more protected allowing us to get to shore much easier and also do some welding and repair. The five days in Luderitz were spent 'properly' re-stowing those things that had '*shaken*' loose during our passage from South Africa and taking care of other items needing changed or modified that had surfaced during the last passage.

Our departure, 10:00 Monday morning, gave us a following wind to push us out of the harbor and into the South Atlantic once again. Our next landfall was to be **St. Helena Is.** approximately ten days sail to the north west.

Once we had cleared the land we set our course due west, clearing the coast of Namibia, which ran NNW, as soon as possible, to get out of the coastal winds and into the SE trade winds. By the third day we were in the SE trade winds and experiencing a lot of rolling which was being induced by the following wind and seas. The crew was feeling better by then and we began experimenting with different sail combinations to try and reduce the amount of rolling. With the two genoas winged out, one to port and the other to starboard, and the mainsail to starboard but sheeted in tighter than normal, the rolling was somewhat reduced and the boat speed was good. We also threw the fish line out to see if we could have some fresh meat and it wasn't long before we hauled in two nice 10-pound tuna for supper. Filleting the fish was a breeze with the new fillet knife I had purchased in Luderitz. Four nice thick boneless fillets from each fish were then sliced crosswise into half-inch thick pieces, dredged in flour and fried in oil, mmmmmGOOD! What a feed. Avi decided that fried fish wasn't so bad after all.

The auto-pilot was working very well but on the fifth day out the boat started to veer off course and we had to grab the wheel and hand steer. The auxiliary rudder, that was operated by the auto-pilot, had bent 90-degrees at the waterline and was trailing along on top of the water. Avi, Vonnie and Stephen were able to unbolt the rudder and bring it on deck where, after five hours, they had been able to weld and repair it and get it operating again! Thank you Lord. Hand steering is not much fun on long passages. The rudder broke and was repaired one more time before we reached St. Helena Is.

The HAM radio was working well and I had been in daily contact with Greg, ZS1GD, in Cape Town. He would relay any messages from the family and friends in South Africa and also keep them informed of our progress. Due to propagation, our contacts in the States were all on the east coast of the USA and they would patch us through on the telephone to our family. When you are bobbing around in the middle of an ocean, it is comforting to hear from your loved ones and be able to share your adventures with them.

We could see the beacon light just before dawn. At 06:00, as the sun appeared over the horizon behind us, the sight before us was a green, mountainous, St. Helena Island. It was 14:30 by the time we had rounded the northeast corner of the island and made our way to Jamestown Harbor. The harbor was an open roadstead on the leeward, north west, side of the island. After several attempts to anchor, it finally took hold and we had officially arrived at St. Helena Is.

The water-taxi bumped alongside as the customs and immigration officers climbed aboard. They were very cordial and efficient and in no time they had completed the paper work and were ready to depart.

We could stay one week and extend another week if needed without any extra cost. The entrance fee of L47.00 was to be paid at the police station.

After our clearance we went across to say hello to Roy and William on the yacht "FAITH" which was anchored nearby. They were friends of ours from Saldanha and had arrived the day before. They had left Saldanha four days after we did and made a straight course for St. Helena. About five days out their wind vane steering broke and there was no way for them to repair it so they hand steered the remaining ten days. They had stood two hour watches the whole time and were thoroughly exhausted when they arrived. They had slept for fifteen hours and were feeling much better and able to smile about their experience. Roy and William were in the process of removing the self-steering rudder mount so they could take it ashore for repair at the machine shop. Their self-steer rudder system was similar to ours.

Avi and Jeanette had been corresponding with the pastor of the local Baptist Church for some time and had been encouraged to come to St. Helena to help him in some outreach on the island. The last letter they had received from this pastor was a total reversal in spirit and was quite discouraging to them. They went to shore, after much prayer, to seek out and meet with this pastor to see why the sudden change in heart. The gist of the conversation, at the doorstep of the pastor's house, was that the islanders were very suspicious of outsiders, especially those who hand out tracts. He was leaving for a sabbatical, the next day, onboard the ship which was unloading in the harbor. There was no possibility of outreach through his church. A bit chagrined, they returned to the boat and we prayed that the pastor's sabbatical would be blessed and that the Lord would refresh and strengthen him for his return to the island and that the Holy Spirit would not be rejected in these churches.

Saint Helena Island is probably most remembered as the exile home of Napoleon (1815-1821). The tour of Napoleon's exile estate was very interesting. Being in exile didn't necessarily mean roughing it. His final years, on St. Helena, were spent in the comforts befitting an exiled emperor. St. Helena's major export had been flax but with the advent of synthetic fibers the flax market dried up. As we toured the island it was evident that the flax mills had been dismantled and the plantations were becoming overgrown or converted into reforestation.

Back in Jamestown, we went to "Anne's Place" for the roast pork dinner we had arrange for the previous day. A few days earlier, Avi and Jeanette had been at Anne's and were introduced to the manager of the local radio station. When he heard that they were sailing missionaries he asked if Avi would come for an interview the following day so he could feature the ministry on the evening broadcast. We were eagerly waiting for the program to be aired that evening. Avi testified of how he had been an active church goer for many years and doing many church projects but one day *he was able to hear* that if you were not 'born a gain' you were not 'saved' (Jn.3:3). On hearing this, he repented and asked the Lord Jesus to take over his life. His life was radically changed and he and his family went into the mission field for Jesus. They had aired the whole testimony without any cuts. Praise the Lord!

Jeanette had arranged to get some fresh produce from the local farmers and the day before we set sail they delivered it to the waterfront. While the women were busy cleaning and storing the veggie's the men were completing the repair and reinforcing of the autopilot rudder. By the following morning everything was ready to go.

Our sail to Fortaleza, Brazil was quite gentle. At the halfway point, we caught up with Roy and William, on "FAITH", who had left St. Helena one and a half days before us. As we pulled alongside of them they

told us that their steering vane had bent and they were hand steering again! We offered to send Steven across to be crew to Fortaleza but they said they could take it easy, being in the trades, and would be all right and thanks for the offer.

Our Arrival in Fortaleza was early Christmas morning. We had been trying to raise the Harbor Master on the VHF to no avail. After repeated efforts to contact him we heard an English-speaking voice, who introduced himself as Jon, saying he would come down to the yacht club and show us where to anchor. Jon arrived on a small scull-boat and directed us where to anchor. He said that he used to help 'yachties', when they would arrive, to check in and find their way around, for a fee. He had been away for three years and was just here on vacation. He just wanted to help us and there was no fee expected. Thank you Lord! Jon invited us to his apartment, just two blocks down the beach, to meet his roommate, Wilson. Along the way, he led us to the local ice-cream parlor and bought us all ice cream cones! That was a blessing for those just off the sea. Both Jon and Wilson are Brazilians in their late twenties. Jon is a professional cook in Switzerland and was waiting for his wife to join him here in Fortaleza for their vacation. Wilson is an international photo-journalist who also had quite a business making up the brochures for many of the resort hotels in Fortaleza.

That night we all went to bed early to try and catch up on some much needed sleep. We slept like logs. About 3:00am Vonnie decided to have a look around the deck and noticed that one of the hatches was open. Then a movement in the main cabin caught his eye. "Is that you dad"? No answer. Then the figure headed for the main hatch and out on deck. Vonnie whistled a warning and Georgia woke up, poked me and said there was a thief on board! I hit the floor running and flew out the hatch. Vonnie was scuffling with the man on the aft deck. I grabbed him from behind and wrestled him to the deck. I held his arms behind his back while Vonnie tried to hold his legs and tie him up. He just would not hold still for us. Finally, Avi and Stephen showed up and with their help we tied him up real good. Sailboats have lots of rope! He definitely was not going anywhere. You can't imagine the amount of hollering that came from the thief. He screamed, "**NO KILL...NO KILL**". That was about all the English he knew. We tried to call the police on the VHF but had the same response as we did with the harbor master. Avi then hopped into the dinghy and went to shore and called Jon to come and help. While waiting for Avi's return we were trying to quiet our unwanted guest. Someone tried to stuff a sock into his mouth to stop his yelling but he kept spitting it out and then he would yell louder yet. Sigi finally looked in the English-Portuguese dictionary for the word 'quiet' and then he understood and quieted down. He then communicated to us that he was thirsty so water was brought and I held the glass while he drank. We then checked for things that might be missing. We found Georgia's fanny-pack and my bible next to the main hatch and Vonnies billfold outside a hatch on the main deck. I checked the thief and he had a screwdriver hidden in his swimsuit. Had he brought it with him...as a weapon? The realization sank home that he was in each of our cabins as we were asleep and we hadn't heard a thing!! **Thank You LORD for protecting us!**

Avi finally returned with Jon and the security policeman from the yacht club. After some questioning, Jon said that the reason he had been crying "NO-KILL...NO KILL" was because quite often, when thieves are caught on the fishing boats near-by, they get tied up with a stone attached and sent over the side. We conferred with one another and decided that since he didn't get away with anything that we would let him go. We laid hands on the thief and prayed that the LORD would use our forgiveness toward this man to change his heart and to stop his thieving. We then loosed his bonds. He was very grateful and shook each of our hands saying ???????. The girls had put several Portuguese tracts in a zip lock baggie

and handed it to him. He thanked them for it, put the bag between his teeth, climbed over the rail, dove into the sea and swam to the shore. *LORD, let Your saving grace be upon that man and his family!*

That morning, Jon helped us check-in with customs and immigration. We found out that we **could not** get visas for Brazil in Fortaleza! We would have to back track 500NM to Recife if we wanted visas! Since we had to repair our radar they issued a one-week permit which could be extended if the repair took longer. Jon and Wilson took turns guiding and showing us around for the next two weeks. They were a real God-sent blessing to us.

Very few people speak English in Brazil! We did find the Brazilians very open and receptive to receive tracts and the Gospel. Fortaleza is an example of opulence in the midst of poverty. The plush yacht club, with its high security walls, was in the middle of the shack town area. The beautiful high-rise destination hotels on the waterfront were backed up to a disintegrating city of 2,000,000+ population with not enough jobs to go around. Very little maintenance is evident, especially as you get away from the waterfront and move inland. If Fortaleza is representative of Brazil as a whole, then this nation is fast approaching collapse.

Wilson asked if he could sail with us to the USA as crew. He had made that trip several times and could be a real help in the Portuguese speaking areas. We all agreed and within a week Wilson had wound up all his business and acquired a US visa (with the help of Senator Craig's letter) by flying to Recife.

After being in Fortaleza for two weeks we were ready to set sail. Wilson went with me on the rounds of the various authorities to get all our clearance papers organized, signed and sealed. About mid-day we hoisted anchor and set our course for the seven day passage to Vista Verde, in the Amazon Delta, including a two day stop at Sao Luis along the way.

I had plotted a number of *way-points* for our entrance into the Delta area because of the shoal sandbars and reefs near the entrance. We had to negotiate a narrow six mile long cut (approx. 1/4 mile wide) between submerged sand bars. Since we had experienced some light winds earlier in the day, daylight was fast disappearing. The wind was moderate from behind us and we were making about 6-knots. We decided to try and make it. If things got to dicey we could find a deep spot and anchor for the night and go on in the morning light. We were just into the cut when we noticed a large spot on the radar screen in a location just behind us. I turned and looked over the stern and there was a very black squall closing in on us! **HERE WE GOOOOOOOO!** With both headsails and the main up we took off. Thankfully the wind was going the same direction as our plotted course. With one of my eyes on the depth sounder, the other eye on the GPS, another eye on the compass and another eye on the water speed, I had to keep an eye on the sails as well to keep them from backing in this very strong wind so they would not self destruct. I didn't know I had so many eyes! We were deluged with a torrent of rain and visibility was about *zero*. My only reference point was the GPS and the one last way-point that we were headed for at the end of the cut. Anything beyond that was anybody's guess since there was no detail on the chart of soundings in the bay. It was flood tide and we were making 12kn through the water and 14.5kn over the bottom. My hands were full keeping the boat upright and on course. *What a wild ride we were on!* I shouted to the crew that we had to get the sails down before we ran out of the cut and possibly onto the ground. They managed to get one headsail down and then tried to furl the other sail but could only get it in part way. The mainsail was impossible to furl with the wind behind us so I rounded the boat up into the wind and we stabilized with the main backed. The headsail was furled and then the main could be furled also. Even with all the maneuvering, we were still on course and going 3kn in the right

direction except we were going backward! We had fired up the engine before heading into the wind so I swung the boat back around and onto the final course. By this time it was pitch black out and the squall had pretty well spent its self. We slowly groped our way along watching the depth sounder very closely. When we were well inside the bay, in 14 meters of water, we dropped our anchor for the night. Earlier that day Wilson had caught a large king fish. It wasn't long before the braai was burning and the fish was cooking. By 10:30 that night we had a feast. What an entrance into the Amazon Delta! Thank You Lord for bringing us safely through!

The next morning we flagged down a fisherman and asked the location of the village. With a sweep of his arm he indicated the direction we should go. We traveled about five miles up river, on the flood tide, dodging fish traps and sandbars as we went. We bore left at the fork in the river, found a deep spot in front of Vista Verde's landing and dropped the anchor. I went ashore to find Pastor John who was to arrange for a ride to Maruda, the town ten kilometers across the peninsula, where our mail and the PAZ mission base was.

Georgia and I went across that afternoon and met Jim and Julie Benson at the base. They were from our home church in Coeur d'Alene and very happy to see us. Jim was in charge of the task of renovating the two story hotel which was recently bought by PAZ (Project Amazon). They plan to use the property as a school to train national pastors for the many new churches being planted through the PAZ outreach in the Amazon Basin

Twenty plus years ago, the Huber Family moved to Brazil with the vision of reaching the tribes and villages along the Amazon River with the Gospel. Their plan was to set up a base on the river and build small steel riverboats. These boats would then be used to reach the remote villages for evangelizing and planting churches. As a village would come to know the Lord through salvation, the leaders would be trained as missionaries and sent out to other villages. They would be given a steel riverboat to help them in this work. The outreach is really multiplying and they have built and given away over sixty boats. PAZ needs volunteers in the welding, medical and organizational areas as well as short term building volunteers. If any of you are interested let us know or contact: PAZ Headquarters, PO Box 913, Morton, IL 61550 Tel (309)263-2299. PAZ is a very diligent and worthy ministry.

Jim and Julie drove us back to the boat the following day and stayed the afternoon visiting with the crew and having a meal with us. It was a good break for us all. Jeanette and Avi went with them to Maruda for the night and in the morning they planned to catch a ride to a larger village to pick up some fresh supplies for the boat.

While anchored in front of the village, the young people would swim or canoe out to see us and also use the boat as a diving and jumping platform. With Wilson's help we were able to communicate with them and give them tracts. It wasn't long before their mothers were coming out to see these missionaries and get some bibles and tracts. On our last day there we had four of their small sailing fishing boats tied off the stern and several families onboard. Georgia brought out her guitar and we sang some songs, gave out more tracts and then said goodbye since we had to set sail with the turn of the tide.

We hoisted the anchor, spun the boat around and headed down river with the outgoing tide. With the main and genoa set, it wasn't long before we were back in the bay and then into the ocean once more. Our heading put us on a broad reach until we could clear the continental shelf, which was about 100

miles wide off the Delta. The next day around noon, about 100nm offshore, we crossed the equator into the Northern Hemisphere.

Just after crossing the equator, a small rain-squall came through. We reduced the sail area by one-third in the main and genoa. I was on deck checking the sails for proper trim when suddenly I felt a strange movement. I looked back at the sails and, before my eyes, the mast collapsed and fell over the port rail into the sea! **OH LORD???** Everyone below deck came streaming topside to see what had made the great crash. Sigi became hysterical when she realized the mast had failed once again. Their first mast had failed two years ago during a squall in Table Bay, Cape Town. Georgia shouted to us that *we needed to pray!* We all gathered together on the pitching deck and called out to the Lord. ***Father have Mercy on us. Give us Your Peace, Wisdom and Strength to do what we need to in this crisis!*** Sigi calmed right down. I was able to formulate a plan to rescue our sails from the wreckage of the mast and Georgia focused the women on getting some hot food prepared for us since we were being drenched by the heavy downpour.

Since the sails were on roller furlers, the sails were permanently attached to the top of the mast which was now 70-feet below the boat. We loosened the foot of the sails from the deck and boom. Next we disconnected all the cables holding the mast except the one attached to the top of the mast and the bow of the boat. This cable was run over the anchor roller and fastened to the bow post. The last cable that was holding the weight of the wreckage was released and the whole mess dropped over the side and was suspended off the bow with the one cable. With the mast now hanging about 85-feet below the surface we began the task of winching it to the surface with the three-speed genoa winch. We could only winch it about 20-feet and then we would have to change our hold and winch again. The mast weighed about one ton and with the surging sea it was difficult work. After several rests and much grinding on the winch, the top of the mast finally broke the surface.

Avi jumped in from the bow to see what he could do. Vonnie and I put on our snorkel gear and jumped in from the stern and swam up to the bow. As I arrived there someone shouted, **"SHARK"!!!** Vonnie clung precariously onto the mast that was surging up and down 4-6ft. Avi just about peeled the paint off the boat trying to climb up the side until Wilson tossed him a line and he was up and out like a flash. I looked around and spotted four sharks out about 50ft. Three were about 7-8ft. and one was about 6ft. They seemed to be more curious than menacing so I asked the Lord to keep an eye on them and me. I took a line and fastened it to the top of one of the sails and then cut the sail loose from the top of the mast. It was quite a struggle to remove the sail from the furling tube but it finally was pulled onto the deck. While I was waiting for the sail to be pulled on deck I heard **"SHARK"!!** I quickly turned around to see the smaller shark heading straight for me. I swung my arms and legs out wide, shouting through my snorkel at the same time, and the shark turned and shot away. He had come within 10ft. More wary, I worked vigorously to free the other sail. It would not come loose from the furling tube. We had to disconnect the cable the tube was on and haul the whole thing onto the deck. I cautiously swam back to the stern of the boat and climbed out of the water. ***PHEWWW!! Thanks Lord for watching over me.*** Back on deck I helped pull the last sail on board. While the rest of us took a break, Avi managed to salvage some of the cables from the top of the mast before releasing it to drop to the ocean floor 100-meters below. We had worked for seven and one half hours.

We fired up the engine and put the boat back on course for Grenada. Once underway, Avi and Vonnie carefully measured the fuel in our tanks so we could figure how much fuel we had and also the fuel consumption in the next 24hrs. It was over 800nm to Grenada.

I went below to get some rest before my next shift and was informed that the two aft cabins had been drenched by several waves coming through the stern portholes! When the mast went over the side it caused the stern to swing into the seas. Before anybody realized it, things got very wet. Georgia had pretty well cleaned things up but I had to remove the sponge mattress and lean it up against the engine room wall to dry and get a couple single mattresses from a front cabin before any rest came.

The next day it was determined that we had enough fuel for 8-days and with the 1-2kn equatorial current we should be able to make it to Grenada. The 6-day passage was not a very comfortable ride. With the mast and sails missing the boat rolled much quicker and sharper. We had to keep the stern ports closed because of the exhaust and so it was very hot in the aft cabins. Sleeping was almost impossible the first few nights. We called on the HAM radio to our friends and family at home and asked if they would pray for smoother seas. The next day the seas improved and our ride was much better. You should have seen everybody's continence rise up when Grenada was spotted. We entered the Port of St. George, the afternoon of the sixth day, made our way into the inner harbor and dropped the anchor with a big sigh of relief from us all.

The next morning we were able to move the boat in to a finger pier isolated from the main walkway of the marina, which was ideal for the repair of the boat. After a couple of days of shore leave, the crew got to work on the repair. We cut away the bent railing and patched some holes in the deck where posts had been tore out, bagged all the sails and cleaned up the deck. Avi was looking for a pole to make a jury rig mast to help stabilize the boat as they motor up the chain of islands to St. Maartin Is. where they planned to find work and possibly a mast.

While we were motoring to Grenada, Avi had told me that he and Jeanette had talked it over and they understood that their stopping to work had not been in the original plan and we were released from having to skipper them all the way to Florida. They could make it on their own if we decided to return home.

Georgia and I decided that it would be best for us to return home. It had already been a month longer than we had originally planned. So after two weeks in Grenada it was time to say goodbye to Avi, Jeanette, Vonnie, Sigi, Steven and Wilson, the remaining crew of "PETACH TIKVA". On Feb. 9, Avi and Jeanette saw us off at the airport and by that evening Brenda had picked us up and settled us in at her house. What a blessing to be back home with our family!

We have since moved to the Kidd Island Bay house and are seeking the Lord for our next step. It has been a joy to fellowship with Brenda, Jack, Isaak and Ian at "The Coeur d'Alene "VINEYARD" and also in the care-group that meets in their home. We went to see Sophie, Wayne, Cody and Rio in Havre, Montana for a couple days and they were doing great. Our grandkids are the greatest joy to us.

This should bring you all up to date with our ramblings and goings-on and what the Lord has been doing in our lives. We hope this letter finds you all prospering and in good health.

The Lord's Blessings on you,

Loren & Georgia Murphy