

NEWSLETTER # 9
United States of America
March 1989

BOAT FOR SALE!!... "AMERICAN FLYER" ...40 FOOT SLOOP
Proven ocean voyager with over 24,000 nautical miles
in the Pacific Ocean.

Dear Friends,

We have made it safely back to mainland U.S.A. and have docked "American Flyer" at Portland, Oregon, and she is indeed for sale.

Our vision for ministry to the peoples of the South Pacific Islands has not changed but has been enlarged. (Although some might say that the amount of snow I have been shoveling off the docks here in Casco Bay might also have something to do with our desire to return to the South Seas).

Georgia and I are settled into my ancestral home on the shores of Casco Bay, Coeur d'Alene Lake, Idaho. We arrived here October 21, 1988 and I am working with my brother, Skip, in the marina and dock building business.

Our vision is to get a larger sailboat (80' to 90') which can carry some relief supplies and cargo to areas that have been hit with hurricanes and natural disasters and also to continue to transport evangelism teams to the remote islands where there is little or no established transportation. It may take several years to get a larger boat but we believe it is the Lord's will and He will provide.

After arriving back in New Zealand from our outreach to Vanuatu we stayed at ORAMA Christian Fellowship on Great Barrier Island where we continued work on the waterfront project and skippered the "Celebration", which is a 47' steel schooner used by the fellowship to haul supplies and personnel to their island community.

In April we flew home to be with Sophie and Wayne for the birth of our first grandson Cody Charles Crismore. It was a real blessing to be there.

At this same time Georgia's father, Charles Finch, was hospitalized with acute anemia and we spent much of our time with him and Helen. We were able to join with the church elders in prayer for his healing and peace of mind. Both Helen and Charles received the Lord's peace and it was beautiful to behold. Fear was gone. Two weeks later, after we had returned to New Zealand, we received news that our "**# 1 CHEERLEADER**", **Charlie**, was called home to his Lord. We sure do miss him but know he is in the grandstands with the other Saints cheering us on.

In New Zealand it was back to work on the waterfront project and retaining wall, also waiting for the approval for the pier to clear government agencies. Georgia and I were praying that if we were to sail back to the U.S.A. the Lord would release us from the work at ORAMA. During a time of prayer and worship at the community we received prayer for guidance and one of the leaders prophesied over us saying the work we were to do there was complete, we had accomplished what the Lord had wanted

and were free to go. Praise the Lord!! The following week we sailed to Auckland to make repairs and stock the boat for the voyage home.

We had been in Auckland several weeks praying for crew when David Price volunteered. He had formerly been at ORAMA with his wife Ruth and three small children but now was working in Auckland in his trade as a butcher. We had lots of help from members of Pacific Yacht Ministries (PYM) in preparing to sail and on June 25, 1988 Dave came aboard with his gear and we sailed from Auckland bound for Fiji.

A boisterous ten day crossing with 25-30 knot winds and 10' to 16' seas brought us into Suva Harbor shortly after dark and as we were slowly grouping our way to find a place to anchor we just about got stuck in the mud. Low tide you know! Then we heard a familiar voice from out of the dark. Terry Small had seen our running lights as we came thru the pass into the harbor and he rowed out to us show where "El Shaddai" was anchored. We motored over and anchored near by and then jumped into our bunks for some much needed rest.

Next morning Georgia was first up and in a few minutes I heard her gently voice saying, "I think we drug anchor last night!" I hopped out of bed to look and we had drifted about a quarter of a mile thru other boats and on towards the reef with our anchor line hanging straight down and the anchor not touching the bottom! We pulled in the anchor and motored back to re-anchor near "El Shaddai". Murray and Robyn were on deck and they called over, wondering where we had gone. I said it had become too noisy there in front of town and we moved further out so we could get some sleep. Later on I had to own up to this little fib and they had a good laugh with us.

We had come to Fiji to pick up our other crew member, my nephew Shaun Murphy, who was to arrive from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho within two weeks. During this time we rafted alongside "El Shaddai" and really enjoyed Murray, Robyn, Rebecca, Nathan and Amanda Frew and their crew Terry Small, all members of Pacific Yacht Ministries. They had sailed up from New Zealand in May to start their ministry with the local churches reaching out to the outer islands and were waiting for some parts for their boat to arrive. We were all invited to go to the village of Vutea on the Rewa River for the weekend and so after several hours bus ride we were let off at the river bank. Shortly a longboat pulled into the landing and it was pastor Les to take us to his village, a twenty minute ride down river. We spent the night there and on Sunday both Murray and I were asked to share at the service. I shared again on Deuteronomy 7:25,26..." you shall not bring an idol into your home..."

A week later Pastor Les came into Suva to tell us of a man in his village who had heard the message on ..."idols and detestable things in our homes..." He had taken the message to heart and had brought some ancient family war clubs to the pastor to dispose of. They built a fire and burned them up and then the man was able to be delivered from a spirit of violence.

Shaun arrived in time to do some coconut tree climbing and some last minute shopping with Dave for friends and family back home. Then it was time for us to set sail for Funafuti Atol in the Tuvalu Islands.

Now with Shaun, Dave and me as the sailing crew and Georgia as the chief cook the sailing was much easier on me and I could get much more rest. It was also necessary to hand steer now because the auto-pilot quit just after leaving Suva. In six days we arrived in Funafuti and spent several days working on the refrigerator which had quit in mid passage. Finally, after trying everything I knew to get it going and a

few things I didn't know, we resorted to calling on the Lord for help and waited. One half hour later the refrigerator started to work and continued all the way to Portland without fail. That worked so good that we also prayed for the auto-pilot to function but for some reason the Lord didn't fix it.?

July 30, we left for Canton Island in the Phoenix Group. It was a seven day beat into 20-30 knot winds and 8' to 12' seas and at about midway in the passage the baby stay on the mast broke! I went up the mast in the bosuns chair to repair the cable and was flung this way and that way as we crashed thru the seas. I was glad that I was used to climbing things. A few scrapes and bruises were my reward for making the repair and we made it to Canton without further problems except the sea water pump gave out. We anchored outside the pass and I jury rigged a 12v electric water pump to replace it and then we were able to motor into the lagoon and anchor. After eight anchoring attempts the anchor held but we waived the usual dive to check the anchor because the lagoon was infested with sharks! Shaun and Dave had fun trying to catch some of the smaller sharks but only managed to loose their bait and hooks.

Canton Island had been used by the U.S. Government as a missile and satellite tracking station until nine years ago when they pulled out all personnel. Now there is only the many buildings and airstrip going to ruin. Living here are twelve islanders from the Kiribati Island Kingdom and they job is to keep track of the few boats that pass through. The islanders took us in and fed us and we shared about the boat ministry. One evening the whole village came to Matia's house where we showed the video of our outreach to Vanuatu and also some of their island which we had taken that day. Then we had a feast. Later we joined some of the islanders for a bible study and the scripture they read was Jeremiah 29:11-14: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile." It was as though the Lord had spoken directly to us and it was a great encouragement that even on this remote island, He would confirm our direction.

We ran out of bread so Matia and his sister Elizabeth came out to "American Flyer" and demonstrated how they made their local bread using coconut toddy for the ferment. It was a pan bread, one of their staples, stick to the ribs type and very tasty.

Matia found some cable clamps for us to make a better repair of the baby stay and also 60 gallons of diesel fuel so we wouldn't be short, if the wind died, on our way to Hawaii. We gave them our remaining Bibles and tracts which they eagerly received. The day we left I went in to shore to say goodbye to Matia who had come to see us off. It was very hot so we crouched in the shade of small bush on the shore of the lagoon to say our farewells and as I readied to leave Matia said to me, "Now I believe in the Lord, because you believe."!!!! What a send off! Thank you Lord!

Fourteen days later, after crossing the equator, dodging a multitude of tropical disturbances, and motoring through several days of calms we arrived at the Hawaiian Yacht Club in Honolulu.

Two days later a small sailboat came in and we went to say hello. Bill was exhausted from his forty day solo crossing from San Diego! When he heard that we were Christians he began to weep. Several days before he had asked the Lord to have some Christians meet him when he arrived in Honolulu. We invited him over to our boat for some refreshment and he told us that he had been an evangelist but

had been running away from the Lord for seven years. Deciding to prove something to himself and friends he bought a little 26' sailboat, outfitted it and put in supplies for the voyage and set sail for Honolulu. With "How to Sail" and "Celestial Navigation Made Easy" handbooks in his hand he embarked on the 25 day crossing. On the 26th day he realized that he was only half way due to storms and calms. Depression began to take hold of him. He could hear voices saying he was not going to make it and that he would go crazy. Despair was gripping him and all hope was gone when a scripture flashed into his remembrance. "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of Power and of Love and of Sound Mind"! (II Timothy 1:7). Bill began to speak that verse and pretty soon he was shouting it and then he tramped around the deck of the boat proclaiming it. His senses came back and he asked the Lord to forgive him for running away and for the Lord to help him to Honolulu so he could get back into the Lord's service. Within several days Bill had sold enough equipment off his boat to buy a ticket back to Tulsa, Oklahoma where he had to clear up a few things. He gave his boat to another solo sailor who was headed for Australia in a little 24' daysailer!

Dave and Shaun had to leave us in Honolulu. Dave, back to his family in New Zealand and we certainly do thank him and Ruth for his faithfulness as crew. Shaun had one day to get back in time for the start of school and Shaun you are a wonderful young sailor and we appreciate all your help. God bless you both for the time and expense you put into this voyage.

Georgia was the next to leave to be with Brenda and Jack for the birth of Issak James Lawlor, our second grandson this year! My job was, as usual, to repair and prepare for the last leg of our voyage to mainland U.S.A. The auto-pilot was repaired and now all I needed was a crew. Georgia and I had been praying as usual for crew and finally Doug Roher called from Montana and said he could crew. Georgia and Doug arrived back in Honolulu the same day on different flights and in several more days we were ready.

On September 28, 1988 at 0830 we set sail for Astoria, Oregon. The first week was spent mostly motor-sailing northward looking for the elusive westerly's. This gave Doug time to settle in to the routine of trimming sails, navigation and watches. As we approached 40 degrees North latitude the wind picked up and we were doing eight knots. For the rest of the passage we were dodging squalls and gales but when the weather man said we had four gales stacked up behind us and coming our way at 25 knots with winds of 35-50 knots we called for help. We had just gone thru a gale of 35-40 knot winds and 18'-20' seas with triple reefed main and storm jib. "American Flyer" came through the storm better than the crew as we were getting tired. I got on the HAM radio and called WA7RBX, Lonnie in St. Maries, Idaho, who had been our contact ever since we had sailed from New Zealand. He called Georgia's mother, Helen, on the phone and we asked her to alert the prayer teams to pray for the weather to improve, immediately, because the gales were bearing down on us. She said she would alert everybody.. We crashed through the night. The next morning the sky cleared and the wind and seas reduced to a more comfortable state. The weather report was that a high pressure had unexpectedly developed over our area and the gales were being diverted to the north of us. Thank you Lord! That evening I contacted Helen, through Lonnie, and told her the results of the prayers and then asked for prayer for our approach to the coast. Being late in October the coast can be shrouded in fog and since we didn't have radar on board we needed clear weather for our approach to the Columbia River and also for favorable conditions to cross the river bar. Helen said she would get into action!

Our final day at sea was in thick fog with one-quarter mile visibility in the morning hours. A Russian trawler passed close by and we had a short conversation on VHF radio. The Coast Guard reports on the Columbia River Bar were for rough conditions and 8'-11' breaking seas at our ETA of 9:00PM. At noon we experienced a large wind shift from the West to Northeast which put the wind right on our nose at 5-8 knots and we were just 40 miles from the Bar. I decided to take down the sails and motor the rest of the way. The wind shift calmed the seas and blew the fog away and late in the afternoon we spied the towering Tillamook Heads on the Oregon Coast. "LAND HO!" By 9:00pm we arrived at the entrance buoy for the Columbia River and radioed the Coast Guard station. They said the conditions had just changed and it would be safe for us to cross the bar into the river. What a mighty God we serve!

By 1:30am, we arrived at the marina in Astoria and there, waiting on the dock to welcome us, was Brenda, Jack and our 4 week old grandson Issak. A beautiful sight indeed! At the hotel Georgia picked up a free newspaper, "Fresh Water News", and the headline article was "The Columbia River Bar, the most treacherous stretch of water in the U.S.A." It went on to say that over 400 vessels have gone down in these waters! It was as if the Lord was driving home what He had done to provide us a safe entrance into our homeland.

Doug had to leave us in Astoria and we sure thank you Doug for all your help and input. God bless you richly.

Two days later we tied up at the marina in Portland where just three years ago, to the day, our mission voyage had begun.

Both Georgia and I believe we have just "spied out the land" and we are ready to return and possess it for the Lord. I believe one of the necessary tools to do this is a larger boat which would enable us to spend extended times in the more remote islands.

Georgia and I thank all of you, our friends, who have shared our voyage over the last three years. Who have been concerned for our safety. Who have prayed for our deliverance from storms and spiritual attack. Who have helped financially. May God bless each and every one of you!

Thankfully yours,

Loren & Georgia Murphy

Temporarily Onshore.