

First trip on Zephyr, our Island Packet 380 - October 2022

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This is different from the other trip recaps that I have documented. This is a giant (and a bit scary) step forward for Corrie and I. We tend to err on the side of going forward with our ideas rather than regretting holding back. Some of you reading this already know us, and some of you reading this might be other Island Packet sailors hearing about us for the first time. I started sailing in April of 2018 when I took the beginner sailing class at Lake Manawa Sailing in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Since then I've taken every opportunity to learn more about sailing, go on more adventures, and share sailing with others. Corrie started sailing in 2019, when we got our Rhodes 22 which we named Zephyr. Since then, we have taken classes and done bareboat charters in Galveston Bay, Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, San Francisco, San Juan Islands, San Diego, Florida Keys, Maine and the Chesapeake. We really enjoy going on sailing trips together and with friends. I also skipper a Snipe for dinghy racing, and am the bowman on a Capri 22 for cruiser

racing. I am also an instructor with the Lake Manawa Sailing School. Sailing and the sailing community has become a big part of our lives in a very positive way. We started sailing a few years after our daughter Maddie passed away from brain cancer in 2015. We've been grateful to have something positive to do and we know Maddie would want us to keep making the most out of the time we have.

We plan to do more long term cruising in the future. Scheduling trips has become more of a challenge due to unpredictable schedules. We wanted to go ahead and invest in the long term boat that we could spend all our vacation time on, and go to on short notice. This way we could get to know the boat and how to operate and maintain it over time so when we're ready for longer term adventures, we'll be ready. After looking at another boat that didn't work out, we found an Island Packet 380 which was a good value... and it was already named Zephyr like our Rhodes 22! We worked with Terri Ivans as a buyer's broker and she helped us through the process. The purchase process was an adventure all of its own - with negotiation, insurance, finding a marina slip, etc. Terri was very helpful every step of the way. We bought the boat in Connecticut, but we are keeping it at Morningstar Marina in Little Creek in Norfolk, Virginia which is at the mouth of the Chesapeake. We chose that location since there are a lot of options for sailing north in the bay, south down the ICW, or north/south along the coast. Cost, airport access, and risk of storms also factored into the decision of where we would keep the boat. We can always move the boat to another location later.



A bit about the boat: It's a 2001 Island Packet 380. It was owned by one couple for 20 years and then another person bought it but turned out that sailing wasn't for him so we bought it after he only owned it for a year. It has fairly new sails, an engine in good condition with 1600 hours, dinghy & davits, and some solar power. It has had some upgrades along the way, but also needs some attention. We have a sizeable project list that I will probably document as we go. Doing a lot of projects on our Rhodes 22 is what gave me the confidence to take this on. Eventually this may turn into a blog and may be even some videos, but for now I'm just going to document some things on Google Docs the way I have on prior trips.



Now it's time for the recap of our trip south. We hired Captain Jeremy Vaught and his mate Captain Brian Poe of [Sea Savvy Yacht Delivery](#) to help us take the boat from Connecticut to Virginia. With the weather starting to turn in mid-October when we started the trip, it was very helpful to have their expertise onboard and we learned a lot from both Jeremy and Brian.



I arrived a couple of days early to get the boat ready. Corrie, Jeremy, and Brian arrived on Friday, October 14 so we provisioned that night and made final preparations. Below is a recap of the trip in three segments.

We departed at 0900 on Saturday, October 15. We motored down the Long Island Sound until the wind picked up and we unfurled the sails. For a while we sailed and then kicked on the motor as necessary. It got breezy and we were close hauled with a wind out of the south. There were quite a few boats out sailing since it was probably



one of the last warm sunny Saturdays in the fall. We also spotted several regattas including some big boat racers and a couple different dinghy fleets. We rolled up the sails and motored through the neck of Long Island Sound down into NYC through the East River. We reached up to 9.9 knots speed over ground as we had the ebb current pushing us through Hell Gate. There are some confused seas where different rivers collide.

As we continued down the East River, we passed by the condo that we stayed at while in NYC with Maddie for treatment at Memorial Sloan Kettering, and we recognized the giant neon Pepsi sign across the street. I had actually drawn a picture of that view while sitting next to Maddie doing artwork together. Below you can see a photo of Maddie sitting at the window with the view of the East River, then there's the picture I drew of the scene from that vantage point and on the right you can see the view from the boat (from a bit different angle) on our trip on Zephyr. We'll always be grateful for the memories we had together there. We also got a photo of the Statue of Liberty at night, which reminded me of one of our favorite photos of Maddie (both shown below).



We had to stop in NYC Harbour to wait for southerly winds to pass so we anchored by the Statue of Liberty after traveling 60 nautical miles from Milford, CT. It was a beautiful view of the skyline, but a rocky anchorage due to the ferry wakes. When we weighed anchor, there were two cables hooked. These were in a different place than marked on the chart. We managed to free them using some docks lines to maneuver the anchor so that the cables fell off. Who knows exactly what they were, but I'm glad we didn't cut out any cables going to Ellis Island! We departed on Sunday morning at 0300 and continued south. This was a pretty mellow day weather wise, with not much wind and mild temperatures. We caught a glimpse of a humpback whale, a right whale, a couple of pods of dolphins, and a sunfish. The sunfish (shown below) was the most unusual wildlife sighting of the trip. We ducked into Atlantic City at 1900 after a 91 nautical mile trip from NYC and got a slip at the marina. We got a bite to eat at the casino and then went to sleep. We spent Monday in Atlantic City waiting for some nasty south winds to pass.



We departed Atlantic City on Tuesday at 0330 and continued south. We had fresh westerly winds, often over 15 knots and at times gusting to well over 20. Since we wanted to get to Norfolk before the winds turned against us, we kept the boat moving fast and kicked on the motor if we got below 6 knots speed over ground. We got up to 8 knots speed over ground while under sail at times, with some brief periods over that. We managed to cover 180 nautical miles in 27 hours and arrived at our marina in Norfolk at 0630. The chart plotter and radar (probably both 20 years old) stopped working, but we already planned to replace those. The boat sailed well and we were happy with covering a lot of miles in a day. After a light breakfast at a nearby coffee shop, Jeremy and Brian headed out to catch a flight home. They even helped tidy up the boat before departing.

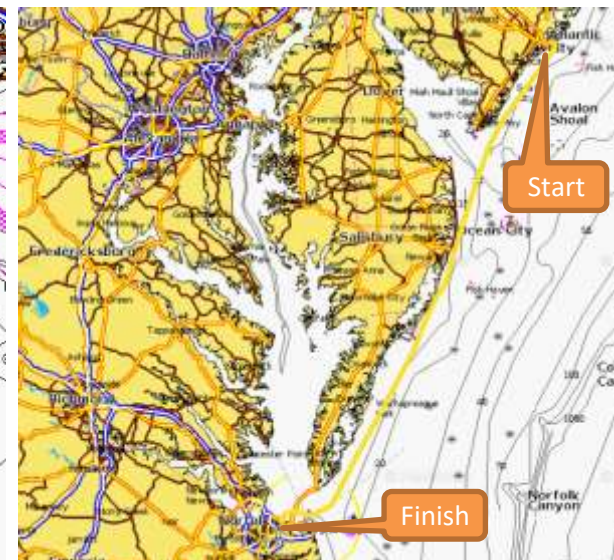
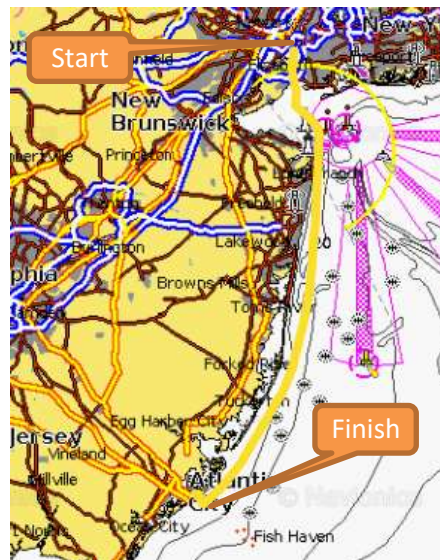
For the next few days, Corrie and I worked on boat projects and got to know the area. We took the sails down and stowed them for winter. We also got to know a few of our neighbors, including Steve who is right next to us on a boat that he just bought. I happened to see that boat on stands earlier that summer when it was for sale in Rock Hall, MD. We also met Andy, a power boater in a slip nearby that was going to be checking out a Rhodes 22 sailboat that was for sale. It is indeed a small world in the sailing community. We headed back to normal life in Omaha on Saturday but we'll return to Norfolk around Thanksgiving for some more boat projects and to get the boat ready for winter. Then in the spring we'll be tackling a number of projects and working with a local rigger and

boat yard.

First Segment
Milford, CT to NYC
60 NM

Second Segment
NYC to Atlantic City, NJ
91 NM

Third Segment
Atlantic City to Norfolk, VA
180 NM



Here are a few more photos from the trip including Zephyr at our slip in Morningstar Marina in Norfolk after we took the sails down for the season, a nice looking boat we saw while underway, and the NYC skyline view from the anchorage by the Statue of Liberty.

