

The First Western Wayfarer Rally

South Okanagan Sailing Association * August 22-24, 2008

It is true, miracles do happen! The West Coast Wayfarers got it together and rendezvoused at the South Okanagan Sailing Association (SOSA) in the later part of August. With four Wayfarers, one CL 16 and their requisite crew of young, elders and in-betweens, great fun was had by all.

Dean and Sandra Chalmers (W3988) and their 4-year-old twins, Phoebe and Ursula, set the stage as hosts to those of us arriving from the coast. Already on the ground to help with the welcome were locals, Gordon and Lucille (CL-16). Harry and Cynthia Bohan (W6738) and their crew, 6-year-old Finn arrived from Vancouver, followed by Nick Parker and his son, Stephen (W982). Friday night was a get-to-know-you time through the sharing of food and drink around a roaring bonfire. There were even marshmallows to cap the evening off – Stephen likes his burnt ... real burnt, charcoal black!



On the beach as the wind fills.

Saturday was a leisurely, dead calm, start (perhaps an Okanagan seafaring tradition?) with a delicious feast for breakfast. Following the clean-up, all the boats were rigged in anticipation of the afternoon punch. Sure enough, Emily Carr's once coined "and the winds came always" proved accurate and a delightful sail was had by all.



Our fearless leader and son fill their sails.

Beating, reaching and running were the order of the afternoon as the group sailed between Summerland and Naramata. A beach landing with an early afternoon picnic lunch was on the agenda in suitable Okanagan fashion with wine, cheese (Sandra's specialty) and bread. It was a delightful stop and a great place to romp. Little did we know that there was treachery buried within the sand for while food and drink were consumed, the Wayfarers and CL-16 were quietly consuming all of the beach's pebbles into their respective centerboard trunks. Needless to say, each boat in turn had to be rolled onto its side so as to remove all the stones. Where is that special tool when you need it? Needless to say, Gordon's project list as the resident SOSA handy man has expanded to task 6,541! In fact, I think the hooked tool should be the standing trophy for the ad hoc race series for the weekend.



Gordon and Lucille “wingin’ it”!

When we arrived back at SOSA, who should have arrived but Roger Youle-White (W7385) from Seattle. His appearance was all the more spectacular considering that he had virtually run out of gas while exploring most the British Columbia wilds trying to find Summerland. To be blunt, Roger has class ... he takes the high road (the Coquihalla)! Who would have guessed that Wayfarers on trailers were four-by-four certified?

What Roger missed in sailing on the Saturday, he amply made up for by regaling SOSA and guests with his stories like:

The Wayfarer engagement ring!

Cheap racing machine: two dudes re-invent Roger’s Wayfarer for the Worlds!

Show and tell: tow a rigged Wayfarer around your block on Independence Day!

Snap-a-mast: the ultimate in the Proctor aluminum Lego masts! Psst..such a deal!

Needless to say, everyone contributed to the yarn spinning around the bonfire as we looked forward to the new day.



Moonrise over Wayfarer and Okanagan Lake.



Sunday breakfast: waffles, whipped cream and fresh-off-the-tree peaches.

Sunday dawned with little cat's paws of wind... just enough to tempt all to hit the water. Of course, a wee race unfolded between some of the boats, namely Roger's W7385 and the Parkers' W982. The old woody held onto first until the last run and then lost by about two boat lengths. I am sure it had something to do with Roger's snap-a-mast and his local crew, SOSA Secretary Pam Hinchliffe!



Roger and Pam slide past Nick and Stephen for the win!

The other Wayfarers, commanded by their youthful crews, seemed to have buckets of fun. We had been warned to watch for the legendary Okanagan lake monster, Ogoopogo, but no one had mentioned the Okanagan orcas that could be found frolicking astern of sail number W3988; the Strait of Georgia doesn't have all the glory! Then there was obviously a pirate attack of the likes of Jack Sparrow, for in no time flat there were adults swimming in the water. I didn't know that the centre thwart on Wayfarers could be transformed into "walking the plank" devices? Ian Proctor thought of everything!



An Okanagan Orca plays in W3988's wake.

Then it was time for some of us to haul the boats out, load them on their respective trailers and head for the coast of lotus land and the Pacific Northwest. True to form, the process was not without its episodes ... at least for Roger. Somehow, on his travels home, he took an unexpected turn at a construction site and found himself traveling at a great rate of knots directly into the path of a solid rock wall. To quote Roger:

“I was doing 55 mph because I thought I was on a highway detour but it turned out to be an unsigned residential detour. The car would not stop in time so I made a tight radius 90° turn and the car skidded to within a few inches of a rock wall. I thought the trailer was going to tip over but the car and trailer stayed in a straight line. Luckily there was no traffic because I ended up on the wrong side of the road.”

So, all's well that ends well. We will see you on the flip side of the New Year at SOSA's Wayfarer/CL-16 extravaganza for some “seriously” good times – Aug. 21-24, 2009.

Nick Parker



Finn at the helm gives the Western Wayfarer wave, see ya next year!

For more pictures of the SOSA Wayfarer Weekend, see:
<http://picasaweb.google.com/RuthAndJulian/WayfarersAtSOSASouthOkanaganSailingOrg>

and

<http://picasaweb.google.com/spud2004/WayfarerWeekend>