

## Delta Cruise 2011

Just getting ready for the Delta cruise can be a real challenge for some of our boats. I want to give big kudos to Carol Anderson. She had boat problems the majority of the time and never gave up and returned home as many would have done. To start off, her boat, Danish Diva, had manifold riser problems, the steering was frozen and the head had problems which had to be fixed before she could start the cruise. See her article in the September newsletter for more detailed information.

The Sunday before the cruise, Tim and Darlene Grady on Simply the Best, sailed over to Vallejo Marina so they could start the cruise the following Friday with the Parkers. On the sail over they discovered they had contaminated fuel which caused the filters to be clogged. They could not start their engines. They sailed as far as they could and used Vessel Assist to bring them to their berth in Vallejo. Tim got it fixed by borrowing a "fuel bladder" which allowed them to by-pass the fuel tank.

On Friday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, the Party Animal and Simply the Best left Vallejo at 5:30 AM heading to the first stop at Pittsburg. A few days before the cruise, Gregg Waugh sent out information regarding activity at Port Chicago. He said, **"The government ship "TSGT JOHN A. CHAPMAN" is presently docked at Port Chicago pier 3. There is a security zone in the area and vessels may be directed to use the "North bypass Channel" when transiting. Just prior to entering the area you can call "MOTCO PATCOM" (Military Ocean Terminal Contra Costa = Patrol Commander). Call on VHF 13 and ask for preferred transit route (Either via main channel or the North Bypass Channel). They will advise you which route to use."**

When they reached Port Chicago, Neal called on the radio and they told him which channel to use. He was heading for that channel when the Coast Guard Boat with lights flashing and a man behind a machine gun, approached our boat. It looked like we were at war! They told us which channel we were supposed to use and Neal told them he already knew and was heading for that channel. Neal told him the boat behind us was with us. It didn't make any difference; the Coast Guard then went to Simply the Best and told them the same thing. Below are pictures of the Armed Coast Guard boat and the ship they were protecting. This ship was being loaded with ammunition and was headed overseas.



The Party Animal and Simple the Best arrived around 10:30 am in Pittsburg. Meanwhile, around 10:30 am Danish Diva, 19<sup>th</sup> Hole (Steve & Tina Powell) and Toranaga (Jim and Lynda McGuire) left Petaluma and around noon DeeLuxe Too (Keith and Dee Jones) left Vallejo with their granddaughters aboard. They all arrived about 3:30 pm at Pittsburg.



After everyone arrived, it was time to have cocktails and visit each other. Before long it was time to walk over to the Pittsburg YC for dinner. The food was excellent and the drinks plenty.

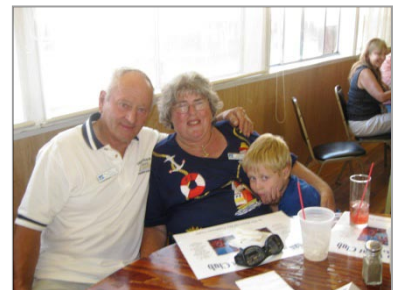
Instead of joining the fleet in Pittsburg on Friday, Don and Gloria Roberts and their grandson, Dillon, went to Antioch to meet up with an old high school buddy of Dons.

The next morning (Saturday) Carol Anderson's bilge pump broke and she had to stay later than the rest of the group to get it fixed. Around 10:30 am the rest of the fleet left Pittsburg to sail to San Joaquin YC. Don waited for our fleet to get close to Antioch and then joined the group. The Party Animal was the lead boat and on the sail over we heard from James Keller on the Albatross and they were heading to anchor out at Mandeville Cut before joining the fleet the next day at Moore's.

That morning, Al & Shirley Alys on the Shirley Ann left B & W and were waiting for the fleet to arrive at San Joaquin YC. Once we started to arrive, the San Joaquin Port Captain, Tom Gaines and Al & Shirley helped the fleet dock. There was a strong current at that club causing a bit of a challenge coming in. Before long, Carol Anderson in the Danish Diva arrived. Everyone did a great job docking and we were safe and sound. The yacht club opened up early and we went up for drinks before dinner. Dinner was great. San Joaquin YC is always a nice place to visit.



San Joaquin Yacht Club



Sunday, the next destination was Moore's Riverboat for the power boats and Willow Berm for the sailboats. Moore's Riverboat is too shallow for the sailboats. The Keller's on Albatross joined the group at Moore's. Simply the Best and The Party Animal went to Willow Berm and Gregg & Sandy Waugh on Rochambeau were already there (they had arrived the day before). Unfortunately Party Animal and Simply the Best arrived around 11 am and the docks were full. They had to hang out going back and forth until the boat that was in their spot left. Party Animal came in first with Simply the Best coming in behind them. Darlene Grady's mother and cousin drove down to Willow Berm to bring the Grady's ingredients for filling Julie's Jug and they stayed for dinner. Her mother drove Tim and Darlene to Moore's and Neal took Diane and the Waughs on his Zodiac to Moore's. Our whole group gathered in the patio at Moore's and had a great dinner. Carol Anderson's crew, Keith and Randy, had to leave after dinner.

# Pictures of Moore's Riverboat



Monday morning the group headed out to Delta Yacht Club. Carol didn't have any crew, so Dee Jones went aboard to assist Carol. Al Aly's lead the power boats and Neal lead the sailboats. The power boats arrived first followed by Rochambeau, Party Animal and Simply the Best. Later than day the Blues arrived. We had 11 boats on Monday and Tuesday.

The weather at Delta YC was just perfect. Warm enough for swimming but not so hot you would die. People relaxed, read books, played Mexican Train, played golf and played bocce ball.



On Tuesday afternoon, Neal took his Zodiac to pick up Carol's girlfriend, Randy at Helen and Herman's and then immediately went back to Helen and Herman's to pick up Connie Tudor and Todd Mendoza (they stayed on James and Nancy Keller's boat). While Neal was playing Taxi, Dee, Diane and Dee's granddaughter, Abi, baked two sheet cakes for Neal. It was his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. Diane and Dee decorated the inside of the club with Happy Birthday flags and signs. Diane passed around a birthday card for everyone to sign. Gregg Waugh had a surprise seeing a friend of his that belonged to Delta YC. Gregg decided to bring out his guitar and entertained the group.



Then Diane made an announcement that it was Neal's birthday and the group sang Happy Birthday to Neal with Gregg leading. Bella Blue made Neal a crown and a homemade birthday card. Neal got a couple gifts and some other cards. To him the best part was that Forest Blue bought him some ice cream so Neal could have it with his birthday cake.

On Wednesday the Roberts, Gradys and Waughs left leaving 8 boats for Wednesday and Thursday.

On Wednesday morning, Neal and Keith decided they wanted to check out the next scheduled stop, Westgate Cove, to make sure it was clear of weeds enough for us to anchor out and also to check out Paradise Point. They took off in the Zodiac and were back a couple of hours later. Their decision was there wasn't enough clear water (without weeds) at Westgate Cove for our number of boats. Much discussion was made on where we should go.



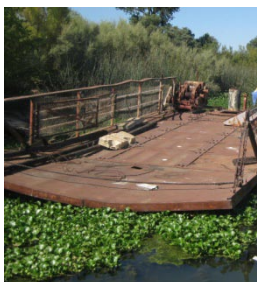
Nearly every day the ladies played Mexican Train. Diane's dog, Tiki, loved to join in on the games.



Others would gather under the trees to visit with each other, read or sit around the pool. Delta Yacht Club is indeed one of our most favorite places to visit.

On Thursday morning, Neal took Connie and Todd back to Helen and Herman's in the Zodiac. When Neal tried to start the engine on the Zodiac to come back to his boat, he turned the key and nothing happened. His starter solenoid was bad. Fortunately a mobile marine mechanic was right there and offered to fix it. He first had to tow a houseboat and offered to give Neal a ride back to the Delta YC. The mechanic had to go to Paradise Point to buy the solenoid and he had it fixed by 11am the next day.

The Jones' granddaughters, Abi and Ele, (this is truly how their names are spelled) had to go home to get ready for school. Someone from the DYC had a larger dinghy than Neal's Zodiac and offered to take them to H & H. At the same time the Jones had two of their good friends, Merle and Robin, waiting to be picked up to join the cruise. So goodbye to Abi and Ele and Hello to Merle and Robin.



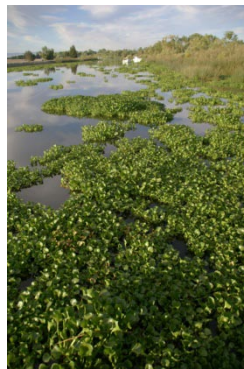
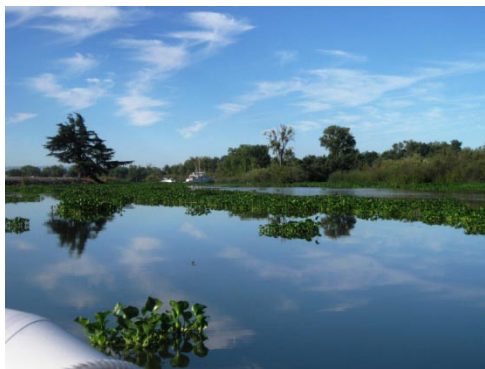
Meanwhile, since Neal's Zodiac was not available, Keith decided to take his dinghy to check out the other anchoring locations that Al and Neal were talking about. He checked out Hog slough which had an old broken down barge that the boats could tie up to.



Later that day our group had a surprise visit by Cathy Lehmann and her daughter, Harriet. They stayed a little while and Cathy played bocce ball. It was very nice to see them.



Friday, our sailors had to say “Goodbye” to Delta Yacht Club and head to Hogs Slough. Linda Blue and Elliott went back home and Forest & Bella continued with the group for another day. The McGuire’s are not fond of rafting out so they headed to Stockton for a few days. Neal and Diane took the Party Animal to Helen & Herman’s to pick up the Zodiac and decided to do some laundry and have lunch. They arrived a couple hours later in time for an impromptu cocktail party on the Robert’s boat.



The water hyacinths were everywhere. The current was pretty strong and the plants floated by.

The next morning, when Neal and Diane woke up and looked outside of their boat they discovered their Zodiac was missing. PANIC!!! They looked up and down the back of our boats and down the water as far as they could see, but no Zodiac. Diane was afraid it was stolen. Neal yelled over to Keith’s boat (which was at the other end of the raft out) and told Keith to get his dinghy ready, they needed to go look for his Zodiac. Keith was acting like he didn’t know what Neal was talking about. Forest Blue was tied next to the Party Animal and said he was leaving that morning but would leave immediately and help go look for the Zodiac.

Apparently around 11 pm the night before Keith hear the people in a boat close to his getting excited. He asked them what was going on and they said our Zodiac was loose and drifting down the water. They were planning on dropping their dinghy to go after it. Instead Keith got into his dinghy and saved the Zodiac. The next morning, he moved it to the side of his boat so that Neal and Diane wouldn’t be able to see it. He was doing it as a joke. After he saw how upset the Parker’s were, he took his dinghy over to Neal’s boat and told him he had it. What a major relief. Somehow the boat wasn’t tied securely.

In the afternoon, Neal, Keith and Keith’s friend, Merle, took the Zodiac to check out our next two stops. Unfortunately on the San Joaquin, some boats went by them making large wakes that tossed and turned the

Zodiac. Keith bounced up and down hard and hurt his back. He was really hurting by the time they got back to the boats.



Then around 3:30 PM we all heard a loud bang. Everyone looked around and it was Don Robert's boat anchor that hit the barge they were tied to. His boat must have moved but no damage was done.

The water was fairly clear (except when the water hyacinths came by) and not very cold. Everyone had fun swimming.

Around mid day, Forest and Bella Blue left the raft out. He said they would try and join us again at Paradise Point.

When Forest left we had two more boats join the fleet. Taking the Blue's location in the raft out was Tom Griffith and Carrie on Chez Tomas and on the other side of DeeLuxe Too was Scott Sibbald and April Chapman on the Blue Flu.



That evening, the Jones and the Parker's hosted a cocktail party on DeeLuxe Too. Lots of good food and drinks. This was the first "Official" cocktail party of the cruise. Tom Griffith handed out his "Coffee Drink Menu". He made special fancy coffee drinks for everyone each morning.



On Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, we headed for Paradise Point. Neal couldn't go the same route as the other boats because there was a bridge the others could go under but he could not (you know, that tall mast on sailboats have can really be a problem). Neal turned down a slough that looked OK at first sight and the depth was deep enough according to the maps and GPS. However, as he started down the slough, there were tall weeds growing under the water. It looked like he was going over a forest. Then the boat went aground in the weeds. The weeds wrapped around his props and weeds were sucked into his air filter and the engine got over heated and died. He went down and cleaned out the air filter. It was just full of weeds. He then kept putting the boat into reverse to get the weeds off the prop. Finally the boat slowly moved and he got out of that slough. When he reached Paradise Point he dove under the boat and cleaned the remaining weeds from the prop.

Neal's boat wasn't the only boat having problems. Forest Blue contacted us and he was having engine problems and would not be able to join us. Carol Anderson was still having problems with her engine. Don Roberts had been helping her get her engine started each day. He put on jumper cables from one engine to the other. It seemed to work. Carol's friend, Randy, had to leave until the next day.



Paradise Point was a fun place. They have tables under the gazebos where we played Mexican Train.

They have a great restaurant that is closed Sunday nights, but they opened just for us for dinner. The food was great.



The decision was made not to go to Windmill Cove because the water was shallow and there is no electricity on the gas dock (where a couple of boats would be docked) so Tower Park was chosen as a replacement. Originally we were supposed to go to Westgate Cove because Tower Park is very close and folks could dinghy over for provisions, ice, etc.. When we decided not to go to Westgate, we lost a place to stock up on food. The group seemed to want that.

Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, Dee Jones joined Carol on her boat for the ride to Tower Park. Once they arrived at Tower Park, Danish Diva and Chez Tomas stopped to get gas at the fuel dock. Toranaga (Jim and Lynda McGuire) were already at Tower Park, docked on the outside. They started helping the boats come in. The Shirley Ann came in first and next was Blue Flu. Chez Tomas was having problems with one engine and hung out for awhile. The currents at Tower Park are strong so Keith offered to bring Carol's boat (Danish Diva) inside the dock. Tom's engine seemed to start working correctly so he came in next to Danish Diva. DeeLuxe Too tied up on the outside by Toranaga and Party Animal came in and side tied. All was well.



Dave, Beth and Julie drove down for the day and stayed for dinner. Folks went their own way for awhile. Some had lunch; others did laundry and took showers. A good time to stock up the boats.

We all gathered at the restaurant for dinner. It was Jim McGuire's birthday and we sang to him at dinner.

The next morning, Carol's friend, Randy came back. Toranaga and DeeLuxe Too decided to leave the group and to start back home. Keith was still in some pain with his back from the dinghy ride. They stopped at Pittsburg with the McGuire's and got fuel and had a pot luck dinner and spent the night. The next day the McGuire's went home to Petaluma and the Jones went to Benicia for dinner and spent the night. The next day the Jones continued to their home berth in Vallejo

The next day (Tuesday, Aug 16<sup>th</sup>) we left from Tower Park and sailed over to Mildred Island.

Mildred is always a favorite raft out location.



The first night, Tom Griffith had a cocktail party. Again, Tom always shows a lot of "Class" on the food he makes.

Don & Betty Schauer had their boat anchored at Mildred when we arrived. They preferred to stay where they were but did come over by dinghy for Tom's cocktail party.

Ted and Sherri Adams were due to meet the fleet this day. Diane tried to call him on the radio and by phone a number of times with no answer. They were starting to get worried when, around 7PM they showed up with Mac and Francesca Smith aboard. They joined the rest of the group on Tom's boat.

The next morning, Wednesday, Scott and April had to leave. Folks went swimming, fishing, took rides in their dinghy's and Neal and Diane took potty runs for their two dogs. The days just flew by.



Friday morning leaving Mildred Island the group said “goodbye” to Al & Shirley Alys. They headed back home. Americana (Adam’s boat) and Chez Tomas (Tom Griffith’s boat) headed to Driftwood. On the way, the RPM on Tom’s engine started going up and down by 600 to 700 rpm. He shut it down and went to Driftwood on one engine.

Carol Anderson and the Parker’s decided to go together. Around the top of Frank’s Tract in over 20 feet of water, the Party Animal started to have engine problems. The engine kept trying to die. Once again below the water, weeds, weeds, weeds. They had to drop an anchor and Neal had to dive under the boat and remove the weeds from the prop. He also had to clean the air filter. The engine still wasn’t working correctly. They had to run the engine almost at an idle and moved with the current. Fortunately the current was going the direction they needed to go. They had Carol continue to Driftwood and they went to Bethel Island to get it looked at. When they arrived at Bethel Island, he saw there were more weeds on the prop. All he could guess is they picked up more weeds on their prop immediately after he last cleared it.

They continued their trip to Driftwood and finally arrived around 4 pm. The trip should have only taken about 2 hours but it took them 5 ½. They were happy to be there.



Driftwood Yacht Club was very friendly and opened their club early for our group. They put on a great dinner and afterwards had music and dancing. Levi and Gail Swift drove down to join the group.



The next morning everyone decided to leave early. The Americana, Chez Tomas and Party Animal all left around 8:45 am. Danish Diva pulled out around 9:30 am. About 1 ½ hrs Tom started to have the same problem and ended up coming home on one engine.

Shortly after the Party Animal left the marina, they started having engine problems AGAIN. Diane noticed when they were leaving the marina there were a lot of weeds under the water they had to go over. The engine seemed to run for a while on low speed but then even it was cutting out. They kept going slowly hoping to make Antioch. Neal was afraid it was something more than just weeds. Neal put the engine in reverse and gave it a lot of power and it ran smoothly backwards. So he actually started going backwards towards Antioch. Diane called Antioch to warn them they were coming in and had engine problems. They said they would be waiting for them. Once they got to the opening of the marina, Neal turned the boat around and tried going forward. It did and they were able to dock. Carol Anderson stayed with them the whole time in case they needed her and stopped at Antioch. By this

time the winds were coming up and there were small craft warning for the afternoon. They all decided to stay at Antioch for the night and start off first thing in the morning.

They went to dinner and had a good night sleep. Since Carol needed to take her boat back to Petaluma and the Parker's boat home is Vallejo, Carol decided to ask her friend, Keith, to come down and help her sail to Petaluma.

The next morning both boats left around 6:30 am with no problems. The water was calm. No engine or weed problems.

The Delta is a lot of fun and you really get to know each other so much better. As you can see it can also be a little nerve racking when your boat has a problem. That comes with boating and there have been many stories through the 30 + years of the yearly Delta Cruise out.