Sock Monkey's Big Trip
From Lake Superior to Florida on a sailboat
by the Sock Monkey
Sock Monkey's Big Trip
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Dedicated to my dear wife Margaret, who always knows how to get things done. She talked me in to taking this trip, after I had talked myself out of it.

And to the Sock Monkey, who was not only a good companion, but who was welcomed by everyone he met.
Hi. I am a Sock Monkey, and I live at the historic Gorman House in Ontonagon, Michigan on the shore of Lake Superior. When I heard that Capt. Tom was going to take a sailboat by water from Ontonagon to Fort Pierce, Florida, I knew immediately I had to go along.

I have been told that there are a lot more monkeys in the tropical weather in Florida. It will be a long trip, at least two and a half months.

I signed on as First Mate.

We left the Port of Ontonagon on August 1st, 2012 with a goal of getting to Fort Pierce, Florida, on the Atlantic Ocean by October 15th.
s/v WINDSONG II, A C&C 27 Sloop, Built 1972

WINDSONG has turned out to be a perfect vessel to take to Fort Pierce for a number of reasons. She is small enough to be put on a trailer. Most larger sailboats have to be kept in a marina. WINDSONG has standing headroom and excellent storage. She is easy to sail single handed. Her old Atomic 4 gas engine can be fixed. She only has a draft of 4'-3" which is helpful in shallow water. Her fin keel makes her very maneuverable in close quarters. She has very little bright work, which makes upkeep easy, even in a salt water environment. In short ... she is a winner!
Here I am with my safety line This is going to be fun!
Part I - August 1 to August 22, 2012. The Great Lakes
From Ontonagon to the Erie Canal

From Ontonagon we headed east to Houghton, Michigan and made a short-cut through the Keweenaw Waterway. We went to Big Bay and then on to Marquette, Michigan, where we stayed a few days because of gale winds on Lake Superior.

Then it was on to the Port of Grand Marais, Whitefish Point and to the Canadian Locks in Sault Ste Marie, Canada. This was first lock of the trip. Then down the St. Mary's River to Lake Huron, staying at Lime Island and De Tour Village along the way.

Lake Huron was windy, and good sailing. Sock Monkey was happy. But not for long.

The next large body of water was Lake St. Clair, which was VERY rough. It was slow going in 6 foot waves, until we got into the Detroit River. From Detroit the fast current pushed us down to Lake Erie.

First stop on Lake Erie was Put-in Bay, a island on the west end of Lake Erie. It is a big resort area. We found hundreds of power boats and many sailboats at moorings. Gas was very expensive.

We sailed down the south shore of Lake Erie stopping at various towns along the way: Loraine, Ohio; Fairport, Ohio; Conneaut, Ohio; Dunkirk, New York, Buffalo, New York.
We sailed on three great lakes: Lake Superior, Lake Huron and Lake Erie.
Keweenaw Waterway
Lower Entrance

Big Bay Harbor of Refuge

Very shallow!
Presque Isle Marina
Marquette, Michigan

Ore Docks
Stayed two days because of gale winds on Lake Superior
Presque Isle Marina
Marquette, MI

Below: ore docks next to marina
Grand Marais Harbor

We were the only vessel at the city dock.

A number of small sailboats were at moorings.
Whitefish Point Harbor of Refuge
Very nice vessel with figurehead came in. We all helped find a place to tie her up. There was not much room.

When we were done the owner went below and brought up a case of tequila and gave everyone a bottle.
Whitefish Bay

Bottom Right: Canadian Lock, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario
Canadian Locks, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario
St. Mary's River - Heavy commercial traffic.
Historic Lime Island on the St. Mary's River
Now owned by the State of Michigan
Lime Island lies in the St. Mary's River Navigation Channel at the eastern end of the Upper Peninsula, just upstream from the DeTour Passage.

View from the home above looking at St. Mary's River.
Lime Island was owned by Consolidated Coal, which supplied coal-burning steamers and, later, bunker oil to diesel-powered ships plying the Great Lake.

Tied up to very high wall!
DeTour Harbor
St. Mary's River
Historic DeTour Reef light. At the Mouth of the St. Mary's River, Lake Huron
Presque Isle Harbor
Harrisville Harbor
Harrisville Harbor
Harbor Beach

We moored here
St. Clair Harbor

We had to go through a little draw bridge on the St. Clair River to get in.
The s/v MUNSON which has often visited the Port of Ontonagon
St. Mary's River

We had a STRONG current going the right way!
Detroit Skyline
Detroit River
Tri-Centennial Marina
Detroit, MI
Tri-Centennial Marina, Detroit, MI
Put-In Bay, Lake Erie
WINDSONG at a mooring in Put-In Bay, Lake Erie
Loraine, Ohio Harbor
Water spout on Lake Erie - it came close!
Conneaut Harbor, Ohio
Conneaut Harbor, Ohio
Port of Conneaut, Ohio
A very shallow approach. We were the only sailboat, and tied up at the city dock. A friendly place. Many people stopped by to talk. We found out that he had just missed a great reenactment of D-Day (see next page). There were over 20,000 spectators.
Dunkirk, New York Harbor
Buffalo, New York
Bienvenue!
Welcome!
to the Erie Canal

NEW YORK STATE CANAL SYSTEM
Sock Monkey and Dennis Wardell, owner of the Wardell Boat Yard, North Tonawanda, New York. Located next to first bridge on the west entrance of Erie Canal.
Part I I - August 23 to September 2, 2012. Erie Canal

The Erie Canal is the major component of the New York State Canal system. It stretches from Tonawanda on the Niagara River to Waterford on the Hudson River.

Now with the mast down, WINDSONG was ready for her trip through the canal consisting of many locks and bridges.

The canal is a pleasure boat's dream vacation destination. There are many places to stop and tie up for the night.

During WINDSONG's trip through the canal overnight stops included: Middle Port, Spencer Port, Weedsport, Baldwinsville, Sylvan Beach, iLion, Amsterdam, Guard Lock at the steps, and Waterford on the Hudson. On the Hudson is a wonderful Canal Welcome Center.
Sock Monkey helps take down mast
WINDSONG ready for Erie Canal
Low bridge everybody down ....
Typical lift bridge on Erie Canal
Great bookstore in Spencerport
Got three OZ books
Guard Lock before the "step locks" that go down to the Hudson River
Beginning of the step locks
Erie Canal Welcome Center, Hudson River
Erie Canal Welcome Center
Part III - September 3 to September 10, 2012. Federal Lock at Troy, NY, to New York City

Just south of the Erie Canal Welcome Center the federal lock at Troy the separation between the non-tidal and tidal part of the Hudson River.

Travel along the Hudson is very scenic.

The first port of call was Castleton on Hudson where WINDSONG's mast was put back up. We used the historic crane at the Castleton Boat Club.

Then it was on to: Catskill (where our Seawind VIKING was built), Hyde Park, Stony Point, United States Military Academy, and Liberty Landing in New York City.
Albany, NY
Federal Lock at Troy
This lock is the division point of tidal and non-tidal part of the Hudson River. WINDSONG was the only vessel going through. Lock master saw the Ontonagon hailing port and came down to talk. He knew all about Ontonagon and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Going by Albany we saw the s/v CLEARWATER. We were heading for Castleton on Hudson to put WINDSONG's mast back up.
Sock monkey almost got lost putting up the mast!
Catskill New York  Where VIKING was built.
Catskill, New York
Riverview Marine.
Condos (right) are on the site of boatyard where VIKING was built.
Moored out at Hyde Park for the night
Hudson River just before West Point
United States Military Academy
Stony Point yacht club.
The were real nice!!
Stony Point, Hudson River
BAD storm on the Hudson near New York City
Liberty Landing Marina, New Jersey
View from Liberty Landing Marina

Marina Office
Preparing for racing on the Hudson River
Preparing for racing on the Hudson River
Liberty Landing - view of New York City
View from Liberty Landing Marina
Part IV - September 11 to September 13, 2012. New York City to Cape May

"The New Jersey Problem"

Getting from New York City to Cape May requires a two day jump on the Atlantic. While New Jersey has an Intracoastal Waterway, it is to shallow and has too many low bridges for sailboats.

The jumping of off point is Atlantic Highlands near Sandy Hook. The Atlantic was fairly calm but we decided to make the trip in two jumps. Atlantic Highlands to Atlantic City to Cape May.
Passing the Statue of Liberty on 9/11/2012
New York City Harbor
Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey
Jumping off point on Atlantic to Cape May
Sandy Hook, New Jersey
Atlantic City, New Jersey
Leaving Atlantic City on Atlantic Ocean
Cape May Light
Motoring up the Delaware Bay
Part V - September 14 to September 15
Cape May to Delaware City

Delaware Bay can be a difficult passage. We got lucky, at least for most of the trip.

There was little wind and we motored up the entire bay in one LONG day. It was dark by the time we got to Delaware City.

Sock Monkey is happy!
Delaware Bay

Heavy commercial traffic

1 foot seas
Delaware City Marina on old C&D Canal
Tayor Gandy and Tom Lee - Delaware City
Delaware City Antique Car Show

Tom Lee wishing he still had his MG!
C & D CANAL

BUILT 1824-1829 THIS FORMER 13-5/8 MILE LONG LOCK CANAL CONNECTS THE CHESAPEAKE AND DELAWARE BAYS. NEARBY CHESAPEAKE CITY WAS THE CANAL'S WESTERN TERMINUS AND STEADILY GREW IN THE MID TO LATE 19TH CENTURY SERVING CANAL TRAFFIC.
Part VI - September 15 Chesapeake and Delaware Canal

A vital link in the Intracostal Waterway (ICW) system is the C&D Canal. It provides a 12 mile passage between the Delaware Bay and the Chesapeake Bay. More than 15 million tons of cargo passes through the C&D each year.

Despite some bad current, we found passage relatively easy. One issue is that there no where to stop if one has engine problems.
Part VII - September 15 to October 11
Chesapeake and Delaware Canal to State of Florida Line

The Chesapeake had a lot of crab pots ... to be avoided. We had good sailing weather ... so we sailed. In Norfolk we entered the ICW, but soon got off to do the dismal. Then it was on to North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and finally Florida.
Sailing whenever possible!
Heavy weather at Rock Hall
Bad weather at Rock Hall. They did not charge us!
Solomons Island, MD
Hampton Harbor, VA
Can 36 in Norfolk

beginning of Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway
Norfolk, VA    World's largest naval base.
Sock Monkey says, "Do the Dismal!"
Entry into the Dismal Swamp Canal
forest edges for nesting habitat. Look for them in forested parks, wooded neighborhoods, and along country roads.

Meet Some Migrants!

Yellow-throated Vireo

Black-throated Blue Warbler

Hooded Warbler

Eastern Kingbird

Prairie Warbler

Indigo Bunting

Great Crested Flycatcher

Upland Sandpiper

Purple Martin

Summer Tanager

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

All photographs courtesy of James Parnell
Belhaven Waterway Marina, N. Carolina
Belhaven Public Library
Nice reading room in the Belhaven Library
Free dock, Oriental, North Carolina
Morehead Boat Basin, North Carolina
BLUE CRAB
$6.95
STEAMED
FRESH
MULLET
FILLETS

WA HOO

SHRIMP
21-25 CT
$13.95 LB
FRESH
MULLET ROE
$4.95 #
BLUE

FRESH
Taylor at the helm
Camp LaJeune, North Carolina
Firing Range
Drying out!
The "Rock Pile"
South Carolina

Dangerous section of the ICW in South Carolina where the bottom is solid rock. Many vessels have been damaged in this area.
There are many bridges on the ICW of different types, including quite a few swing bridges. In most cases bridge tenders were helpful.

Taylor talking with bridge master
Near Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Cable car over ICW
Osprey Marina, Myrtle Beach, SC

One of the best marinas in the United States
Salt Marshes
Taylor on the grid!
Beauford, South Carolina
Welcome Ashore

Historic Beaufort Guides & Information

DOWNTOWN-MARINA
Beaufort S.C.

SEA ISLAND CARRIAGE COMPANY
Beaufort, South Carolina

Walking - Boat and Dolphin Tours
Get Your Tickets At
Sea Island Carriage
930 Bay Street
(843) 476-7780
(843) 525-1821

www.SeasIslandCarriage.com
Taylor -- on the grid all the time!
Part VIII - October 12 to October 15
Fernandina Beach, Florida to Fort Pierce, Florida.

The ICW down Florida for the most part, parallels the Atlantic with only a few sounds to cross. The water gets much warmer as does the weather.

The water in the ICW is shallow and one has to pay close attention to the channel markers.
Taylor - Checking his i-Phone!!
October 15, 2012

We arrive at the Fort Pierce City Marina and tie up on K Dock, Slip 11.
K Dock -- WINDSONG with red sail cover
Tropical storm SANDY missed Fort Pierce.

The marina had a number of days of high winds and storm surges. For a few days it felt if I was living in a laundry dryer.
Marina office and gift shop
Ft. Pierce City Marina Reconstruction

PHASE I
ISLAND STORM PROTECTION

$18,888,188

PROJECT FUNDED BY:
Federal Emergency Management Agency

CITY COMMISSIONERS:
Rufus J. Alexander
Reginald B. Seabrooks
Edward W. Becht
Thomas K. Perona
Mayor Robert Benton III
City of Fort Pierce

Waterfront Protection Project

Dock Reconfiguration, Dredging, and Storm Protection Habitat Islands

1. Veterans Park
2. Community Center
3. Amphitheater
4. Art Gallery
5. Boat Ramp Area
6. Tourist Information Center
7. Tiki Bar
8. Marina Square
9. New Public Library

Location	 BTI Authorization	 # of Signs
Southern Manatee	 Lesson# 5300026821	 186
Northern Manatee	 Dedication Deal#	 2493-1421	 56
Hurd's Creek	 Dedication Deal#	 2493-1421	 163
Interior Build	 Dedication Deal#	 2503-1421	 163
Total	 287

TETRTECH EC, INC.
Tiki Bar and Restaurant
Saturday Market in Marina Square
Saturday Market in Marina Square
Saturday Market in Marina Square
Band at a Saturday Market
Craft Market every Saturday across from the marina
November 27
Christmas Lights on Windsong for the Boat Parade