

Seagate and Wild Blue Alaska Cruise – Sunday, June 22, 2008

The new crews have arrived and their lazy vacation has turned into a dawn-to-dusk ordeal as they roll out at 5AM for the long cruise to Warm Springs Bay. It's overcast and rainy for a change and the boats power through flat seas with a 1-knot current working against them. Along the way we see many whales and commercial fisherman.



*(Commercial “seiner” fisherman deploys net in Chatham Strait. The net, identified with white buoys, is between main vessel and skiff. Eventually the net is pulled into a big circle and the catch is reeled in.)*



After 8 hours motoring down Chatham Strait we came to beautiful Waterfall Cove on the east side of Baranof Island. The Kasnyku Falls are 400 feet high and we saw it 6 miles beforehand.

*(← Kasnyku Falls. Awesome!)*

*(Even Seagate is better looking with the Falls behind it. →)*





The new crews arrived yesterday on appropriately named airline *Wings of Alaska*. These *Wings* brought four crew for Wild Blue.

(← *Marianne and Vince Fonte, Chuck and Carolyn French the new Wild Blue cruisers.*)

Marianne and Vince Fonte and Carolyn and Chuck French are the Benson's friends from San Luis Obispo. The Fonte's are semi-retired long-time residents of SLO town. The French's also are semi-retired and grew up in SLO. Vince, Chuck and Alex are buddies from the local Wednesday night poker game.



(← *Lori and Denny Haythorn, Margie Cates and Craig Leeds, the new Seagate cruisers. The Haythorns also cruised last week but are pretending to be new crew.*)

Seagate added two new crew: Margie Cates and Craig Leeds of Westchester, CA. Both are friends from the California Yacht Club where Craig is a Past

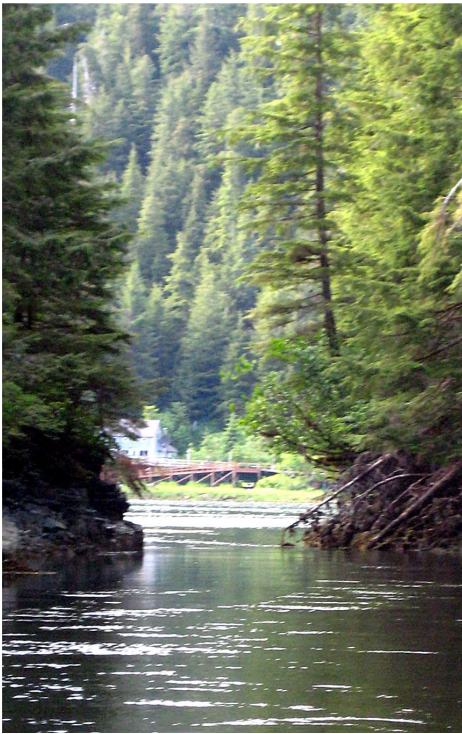
Commodore. Craig runs the UCLA Aquatic Center and Margie is with the Special Olympics. Both are National Rowing Champions and accomplished sailors.



*(The boats at anchor with stern tie to shore.)*

Warm Springs Bay is about 6 miles beyond Waterfall Cove. We pulled into the Bay about 2PM and anchored the boats in the south cove with a stern line to shore. This anchoring method is

used when there is limited swinging room for one anchor. After the anchor is set, a long line is run out from the boat's stern using the tender, around a convenient tree and back to the boat. When ready to pull the anchor, one just unties one side of the stern tie, and then pulls on the other. The freed line just eases around the tree and back to the boat.



With the boats secure, we set crab traps close to a nearby creek outfall and started the prawn trap soaking in deeper water further out in the Bay. We piled in the tender for a ride ashore. On the way, we entered Salty Lagoon, a saltwater lake that refreshed only at high tide. The tide was up as we squeezed through the tight entrance.

*(← Tight entrance to Salty Lagoon in Warm Springs Bay.)*



*(Bear on shore at Salty Lagoon. →)*



Things were especially quiet in the Lagoon. Not paying much attention, we slowly motored around until we noticed a good-sized Brown bear at the Lagoons end. “Bear fear” prevailed and most wanted to leave. It took a bit of persuasion to stay long enough to get a photo from afar.

Out we zoomed and landed at the Warm Springs Bay dock. The dock is the landing for the tiny, 10-home 1-store community of Baranof. Like many small Alaskan towns, the main street is an elevated boardwalk. The boardwalk leads to a wide, 100-foot waterfall fed by Lake Baranof. A ½ mile hike up another boardwalk takes you to the Lake, the Warm Springs baths and the top of the waterfall. We had a great walk, always yelling and clapping hands due to bear fear. We passed on the warm springs this time.

*(← This really is a “stairway to heaven” for those that love pretty lakes, warm springs and waterfalls.)*



(← *Baranof Lake is quite picturesque. It feeds a 100-foot high waterfall.*)

At the end of the day, we pulled the traps. No prawns but we did get a bottle of Francis Ford Coppolla wine in our crab trap. There was a message in the bottle. We think a boat near us planted this message. It's name starts with an "S".

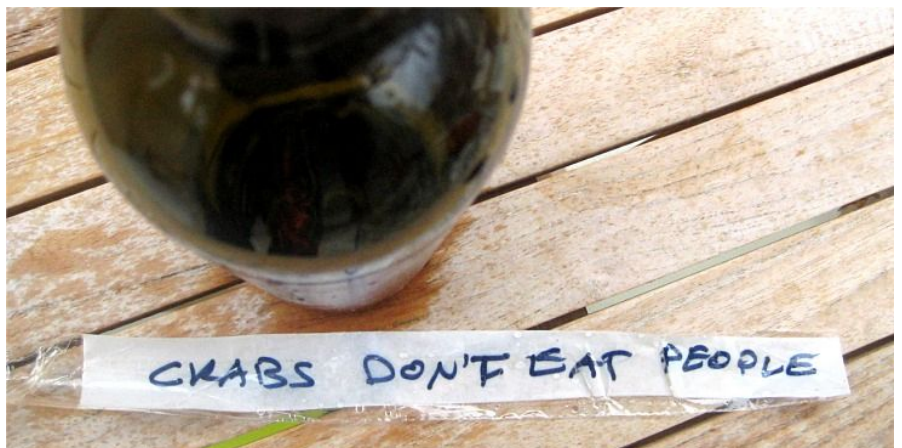
Tomorrow we can sleep in as our destination requires careful planning due to the tide height. We need to leave at 11:30AM to get the flood tide when entering Keku Strait at 2:30PM. We'll anchor at high tide deep into the Strait at 6PM. Sweet dreams.



(← *Granite soaking pools fed by warm sulfur springs. You can watch the waterfall while you soak!*)



(Crab trap with bottle.)



(Bottle with message.)