



The Professional Captain: Cruising Chronicles of Captain Don Fleming

Captain Don Fleming is well known on the Hudson River and the Sound for his on-board training in docking, maneuvering, navigation, and electronics. He holds a USCG Master of Oceans license for power and sail up to 100 tons and a Masters of Education. He has over thirty years experience as a professional captain and as an educator. He is available for private onboard instruction. For additional information call 914-941-3998 or visit www.captaindonfleming.com.

Sailing Around the World



As you know the title of this magazine is *Boating on the Hudson & Beyond*, but have you ever thought about how far beyond, the "...& Beyond" part really goes? Sometimes it is the Canadian reaches of Lake Champlain or the Western Tier via the Erie Canal, and sometimes it's "Cruising Chronicles" to favorite harbors in Long Island Sound and New England, or yacht deliveries from places like the Chesapeake or Jersey Shore sometimes in snowstorms and freezing conditions. This time, however, we're stretching the meaning of "...& Beyond" about as far as it can go.



Captain Chris Connolly and first mate, Ashley Sherry.

By the time most people read this, a young Hudson River couple, born and raised in Croton-on-Hudson, will have already slipped their moorings for the start of an ocean cruising voyage that will take them completely around the world.

Captain Chris Connolly, who will turn twenty-five the day before their departure on December 1, 2008, and his first mate and high school "sweetheart" Ashley Sherry have been dreaming, planning, and working intensely for many years to prepare for this monumental adventure of a lifetime.

Bermuda & the Bahamas

The voyage plan is to sail *Mooneshine*, their Fast Passage 39 cutter, to Bermuda first. Accompanying them on this leg will be another avid sailing couple, Steve Perry, the well known yacht surveyor and restoration specialist, and his cruising enthusiast wife, Mary. After a short layover in Bermuda, Chris and Ashley will set out on their own for the Bahamas with a planned landfall at Great Abacos. Then it's on to Nassau and Paradise Island where they will celebrate the Christmas Holidays with family. After that, the two adventurers will roam through the beautiful Bahamas seeking out the more remote and less traveled islands in a carefree fashion until late February of 2009.

The Panama Canal & the South Pacific

Intentionally bypassing the Caribbean, which they feel is "tainted" with overdeveloped tourism, they hope to transit the Panama Canal by late March or early April. Once in the Pacific, the first stop will be the Galapagos. Then it's a long three thousand mile sail down from the equator through the Doldrums into the South Pacific to pick up the southeast trade winds to the Marquesas Island Group.

They then plan to cruise and explore, in a spontaneous and surreptitious manner as much of French Polynesia, the Society Islands (which contain Tahiti and Bora Bora), the Cook Islands, and the Samoan Group (which contains the international dateline and Fiji). Chris's dad, Bob, and his mom, Diana, plan to re-join the adventurous Argonauts in Fiji. Ashley and Diana look forward to celebrating their arrival to the "other side of the world" by showering themselves in Diana's very appropriate to the occasion, beverage of choice, "Fiji Water".

New Zealand & Beyond

After leaving family behind once again, they will sail southeast to the higher latitudes of New Zealand, hoping to arrive by December 1, 2009, to avoid the six month monsoon season. They look forward to taking advantage of the southern hemisphere summer exploring this area and perhaps the western coast of Australia until early May of 2010.

They will then follow the trades once again to Indonesia and perhaps Java, Borneo, Malaysia, and who knows? Eventually they will cross the Indian Ocean to either the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Mediterranean; or to South Africa, the Cape of Good Hope, the South Atlantic, Brazil and eventually home; or maybe not, depending on their whim and fancy.

You can follow their adventure on line @ www.sailblogs.com/member/moonshine. In addition, I hope to bring you periodic updates in these "Cruising Chronicles" as their planned three to four year voyage unfolds.

On behalf of everyone at *Boating on the Hudson & Beyond*, and I am sure, all the readers of this column, I would like to wish these two courageous, modern day explorers, "God's Speed for a safe voyage". Perhaps we can expand our own horizons vicariously, stretching the "...& Beyond" in our lives through them.

May All the Warmth and Peace of the Holiday Season Be Yours.

"Quick's the word and sharp's the action." See you next time from wherever the winds blow us.

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Why Are They Doing It?

When asked "What motivates you to Sail Around the World?" Chris and Ashley said,
"We're young, we're prepared, and we want it so bad."

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