



The Right Balance

SCOTT AND JANE YOUNG CUSTOMIZED THEIR NORTH PACIFIC TRAWLER 44 SO MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS WOULDN'T LIMIT THEIR LONG-RANGE CRUISING PLANS

By Kim Kavin

Scott and Jane Young wanted to go farther, but at first, they couldn't quite figure out how to get there.

After they sold their business in 2016, the longtime boaters thought about putting some serious miles under their keel. They'd seen a TV show about great train rides, including one up to Alaska, which inspired them to check out the option of chartering a boat in that region. On Canada's east coast, at their home port of Fredericton, New Brunswick, they had a Downeast-style Wilbur 34 with a cabin for overnighting, so they knew they liked being out on the boat together. But the price of a long-term charter in the Pacific Northwest gave them pause. So did the lack of boats with the kinds of features Jane needed

to manage the balance issues that multiple sclerosis causes.

So, they decided to build Hull No. 5 of the 44 sedan model by North Pacific Yachts. They wanted single-level living, along with everything else required for the couple to take on a big cruise. That meant asking the British Columbia builder for customizations.

"A year before we got the boat, we were out in Washington and we walked through a similar boat that was owned by somebody else," Jane says. "We went step by step to see where I'd like handholds or thicker coaming on the tables so I could run my hand along them. There are no thresholds when you go into the heads; it's all level so you don't have to step over anything."



The Youngs also asked North Pacific Yachts owner Trevor Brice to swap out the flybridge ladder for proper stairs, and to add a wider starboard-side door at the stern so Scott can easily move a wheelchair in and out, instead of having to lift it up and over the bulwark. "There was never, ever a question of, 'Do you really want that?'" Scott says.

SCOTT AND JANE YOUNG



Brice says those kinds of customizations are all in a day's work at North Pacific Yachts. Since the company opened in 2004, it has built around 165 boats from 44 to 59 feet long, averaging seven to 10 new hulls per year.

"We are flexible," Brice says. "Almost all our options have come because people asked for something different. They ask for something, and we figure it out."

Many North Pacific boat owners end up running the whole U.S. East Coast or the entire Great Loop, or from Washington state to Alaska, Brice says. That's exactly what the Youngs aimed to do after they took delivery in March 2021 of *Wolastoq*—a native name for "beautiful river" that runs from Maine into Canada. *Wolastoq* has a single 250-hp Cummins whose sweet spot is 7.3 or 7.4 knots, burning 3.2 gallons of fuel per hour. It

was plenty fast, and nicely economical, for the couple as they set out to explore amid the pandemic.

During summer 2021, they stuck to the waters of British Columbia near the shipyard. Then, with border restrictions eased in summer 2022, they cruised up to Alaska and explored Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve with friends on board. Both of those summers, they also returned to their home port in Fredericton, New Brunswick, to explore the East Coast aboard their Wilbur.

This past summer, they were ready to go even farther, so they shipped the North Pacific 44 from British Columbia to Southeast Florida. "We used it in Florida and the Bahamas, and then came up the East Coast. We just got home in May," Scott says. "This was without a doubt our biggest cruise. In 2015, we

The galley and salon are on the same level, which gives Jane fewer tripping hazards and more mobility.

went down to New York, up the Hudson, out to Lake Ontario, turned around in Georgian Bay and went back. That was a good cruise that summer, but nothing like this. We were gone this time for four or five months before getting home."

Scott's favorite part of the East Coast cruise was the way the topography changed every three to four days, from Florida's flats to the Carolina grasslands to the busy bays all around the Chesapeake. He also thinks their timing was impeccable: before all the summer crowds descended on waterways throughout the Northeast.

"Once we got up to New York City, we were there the second week in May, and it was pretty quiet, which was OK by us," he says. "We went out to Block Island, where we'd been before. The marina wasn't open. There was nobody there. It was really different cruising."

The weather didn't always cooperate, he adds. "It was a cool spring. We went from T-shirts and shorts to holy crap it's cold." But they couldn't get enough of the winding scenery and other sights that were new to them.

Jane really liked seeing the military ships being retrofitted at the docks in Norfolk, Virginia. "You don't realize how big they are until you see a fighter plane up on top of one and it looks like a little Volkswagen bug," she says.

A lot of their time is spent in the tender, Scott adds. "Because of mobility issues, we're not going hiking," he says. "We put the tender down and go exploring. Most of it is going up a creek, looking at nature. In Norfolk, you're looking at the nature of these big, steel beasts."

Overall, they say cruising the West Coast has shown them more spectacular scenery, but they like the social aspect of East Coast cruising with marinas and restaurants—and easily accessible help wherever they need it. Next summer, they hope to cruise in and around Nova Scotia to Bras d'Or Lake and then onward to Newfoundland.

"It's a long ways from Key West to Newfoundland. It's a long coast," Scott says. "We've done a lot of miles. And it's all good." 📍