

In January 2016, we were still at the Holiday Oceanview Marina in Samal, a good place to leave our boat unattended the year before. Now, we prepared the boat to move away for good from this area that sadly came in the news during the kidnapping of four of our friends, Sept. 2015 by terrorists, a situation well known in the Sulu Sea. In February, we left for what can easily become a difficult passage against wind and current along the East side of Mindanao. We took our time with few overnight passages, timed each leg to get favorable winds & current when possible and arrived one month later in our new protected anchorage, Tambobo Bay, this time in Negros Oriental in the famous Visayas group of Islands. We are still south enough that typhoons rarely hit this area and when they do, being in a well-protected bay, we would have a minimum of waves and not as much wind. Luc found some old abandoned mooring and promptly built a secure typhoon mooring. This would be our base during the year. Lots of sailboats are moored around us (most of them with absent owners at some time) and it is fun to be part of the local international sailing community, many of whom we knew from before! The place is quite isolated but that means little pollution, crime, noise. Once a week, we generally take a bus or van to go shopping to Dumaguete about 1 hour away. 3 times a week, it is possible to go to a small local buffet dinner organized by local families who cater to yachties and friends ... many are older foreigners cruisers with young Filipina girlfriends or wives.

Late March, Luc flew back to Indonesia for 10 days, this time to Sabang in Sumatra to welcome the yachts still sailing in the Blue Planet Odyssey ... from 6 yachts only 3 at this time because 2 yachts decided to be transported by cargo to the Mediterranean to continue their round-the-world that way and one gave up for health reasons. Early May, Luc flew back to Sumatra for another week but this time in Padang to help the fleet to get ready for the Indian Ocean passage towards Mauritius. In between, we did some small boat maintenance projects and enjoyed life here with Zonne and Zotke, our 2 new Schipperke companions.

In June, we decided to go on a 10-week mini cruise in the Visayas going as far or staying close depending of our mood and interesting things to do everywhere we visited. We did not have to sail very far to enjoy our shore visit. Just in Siquijor Island, barely 30 nautical miles (48 km), we found the people and the nature very interesting. So we ended up filming natural attractions and tourism activities to promote local tourism ... later, to even produce a new 'souvenir DVD' sold to tourists with any profit going to literacy efforts in local schools. Moving to Bohol, just another 40 nm away, we did more visiting and filming ... this time without any support of the local tourism office (too bureaucratic here!) but we did film and promote a local attraction park who benefit an otherwise isolated local community. Jackie got a small leg wound infected in a bad way and it took some anesthetics for her to finally support a thorough cleaning of the original infected wound by a doctor at the local hospital. Luckily for her, now, the leg is completely healed and only skin discolorations are silent witnesses to that long fight against bacteria or virus! Luckily for us, the winds were favorable for us to come back to Bonbonon to store Sloepmouche before flying to Europe!

Early September, Luc flew to Brussels for a few days before flying to La Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean. This was a perfect opportunity to finally see his parents, family and some friends after 10 years of away from Europe! But we have to note that weekly emails and frequent skype calls over the years made the reunion feel like we all had seen each other just the other day, not a

decade ago! So Luc went to la Reunion, this time a new destination to discover, to welcome the 3 yachts in the Blue Planet Odyssey arriving from Mauritius where they spent a few months, mostly going home. Thanks to luck, Luc met local French sailors and in no time (2 days!) was able to take care of the arriving sailors like he was a native ☺ Luc & the cruisers enjoyed the landscape of the island with top road infrastructure (tnx to EU!) and 1000 km of hiking trails. Beautiful nature on that island.

After giving the departure to the fleet towards South Africa, Luc met Jackie who just arrived in Brussels (she had not seen Luc's parents for about 20 years!) After 2 days in Brussels we both left for the Canary Islands. The reason was for both of us to be part of the Cornell Sailing team organizing the Barbados 50 sailing rally, (departing and cruising the Canaries Islands for 5 weeks, cruising the Cape Verde Islands, near Africa and arriving later in Barbados for the 50<sup>th</sup> nation birthday of this Caribbean nation.) During the 6 weeks Jackie was gone from the boat, we hired a young local Filipino to come daily on our boat to take care of Zonne & Zotke. He did a great job, really caring for them ... taking them sometimes for a swim or to the beach. The rest of the day, they slept in their usual doghouses or around and guarded their boat! Now, back to us in the Canaries! With Jimmy Cornell himself (famous nautical writer & rally organizer), his wife Gwenda and daughter Doina, and a nice French couple, Pascal & Pascale, ex-cruisers themselves, we organized all the events planned for over 100 people of all nationalities on 33 different yachts in several of the Canary Islands. We gave them seminars of many aspects of sailing, inspected their boats to make sure they would safely cross the Atlantic and organized many social events. We had a chance to discover Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Tenerife, La Gomera & La Palma islands.

After, we gave the fleet the departure for a 5-day passage to Cape Verde, everybody went home except Luc who flew via Brussels to Mindelo, on Sao Vicente Island. What a pleasure it was to work with Lutz, the Mindelo Marina owner and his team to welcome the B50 fleet. After a few days of events organized in Mindelo that included a great group of musicians & dancers, Luc hopped on one of the catamarans in the fleet to coordinate an innovative 12-day cruise around 5 of the Cape Verde Islands. For the last leg back to Mindelo, Luc even had the pleasure to sail on the sole trimaran in the fleet, unlike ours, this one is very fast!

Jackie saw a second time her 'beaux-parents' in Brussels before flying back to the Philippines. Renato, our dog caretaker did an excellent job so Zotke, Zonne and the boat were fine when Jackie came back. So fine that Jackie later let Zotke convince Zonne to start a family! Since she is on her way to be 2 years old, it was safe enough. Then Luc came back after a few more days in Brussels visiting family and friends for a third time in 3 months. Luc had a real pleasure meeting some very close friends as well as great friends not seen in more than 20 years! From former school teacher colleagues to diving buddies with even a school mate from 50 years ago ... makes one realize we don't get any younger even when thinking about scuba diving since 1974 by example!

On the 19 December, we even got an early Xmas present! Zonne delivered 3 beautiful Schipperke puppies, named after friends of ours or by Luc's mother: Jimmy, the boy, and Nera & Baby, our 2 girls! Of course, they will probably get other names from their permanent family. Zonne was amazing, not a whimper of pain or an air of distress throughout the whole process.

Jackie kept wondering when she was going to start labor! She's the perfect mother, so diligent and careful. The vet was impressed when she instinctively let strangers touch her knowing that they were there to help, not harm.