

Come Sail Away

From healthcare execs to nautical nomads, one couple finds happiness sailing around the world.

by Laura Thill

No house. No furniture. No telephone. No way! For the majority of those of us over 21 years and ingrained in the American workforce, such a lifestyle might seem unfathomable.

But, for Marcie Connelly-Lynn and David Lynn, former respective vice president of marketing and director of engineering for Burdick (Deerfield, WI), the decision to cast aside their responsibilities meant the freedom to pursue a new life at sea. "Basically, we exchanged our land stuff for nautical stuff," notes Connelly-Lynn, describing the couple's preparations to purchase a 45-foot, 8-inch, 38,000-pound Liberty cutter-rigged sailing yacht and set sail over two years ago. "We have no regrets selling everything. We have no extraneous commitments, which makes sailing less worrisome." Besides, she adds, "Philosophically, it was just stuff."

So, early one May morning in 2000, after years of planning – and sometimes putting off planning – the couple departed from Kemah, TX, and headed straight across the Gulf to Florida. "At the time, I thought, hallelujah, we're finally doing this!" recalls Connelly-Lynn. "I remember the thrill of pushing off the dock. We were really doing it!"

Lifting Anchor

When do a couple of healthcare execs realize it's time to drop the pace and lift the anchor? "One time I asked David when he first became excited about sailing," says Connelly-Lynn.

"He said he never could remember a time when he didn't want to sail." Connelly-Lynn grew up in Massachusetts, but never took an interest in sailing. Lynn, ironically, grew up in Michigan and Colorado. He joined the Navy at 18 years, and received his college and graduate degrees there. Because he was good with computers, however, the Navy decided that was his niche, and never actually gave Lynn an opportunity to board a ship.

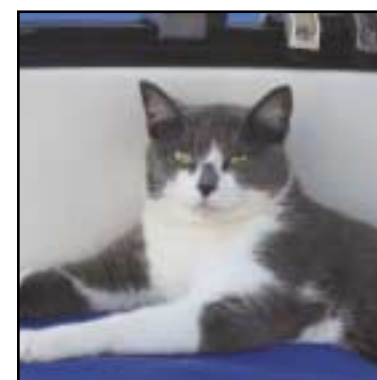
Although Connelly-Lynn wasn't originally interested in sailing, she describes herself as having always been open to new experiences. For instance, after she and her future husband met in the industry, they – along with a friend – started their own spirometry business, which was purchased by Burdick in 1995. At that point, the Lynns agreed to move to Wisconsin and work for Burdick.

Over the years, they discussed Lynn's dream of sailing around the world. With no experience between them, they opted for sailing lessons. In the early 90s, they took a boat out in the Caribbean several times and began talking about retiring at age 50 and pursuing Lynn's dream. "At that point, we weren't sure if it would really happen," Connelly admits.

It took one of life's curve balls to really get things moving: In 1997, Connelly-Lynn was diagnosed with breast cancer. "Everything turned out fine," she says. "But, the experience put me in touch with my mortality. That's when we really started planning financially for early retirement."

In 1999, when Spacelabs (Redmond, WA) bought Burdick, the Lynns felt it was time to move on. Lynn worked for Mallinckrodt (Hazelwood, MO) for a year, while Connelly-Lynn did consulting. Then, when their youngest of three children was in college, they knew the time had come. They sold everything and, with the help of a broker, purchased their boat, the *Nine of Cups* – a name taken from an old tarot card predicting that one's wishes will come true. Together with the ship's sole crew – Jelly the cat ("She's there to catch mice, but doesn't always pull her weight," admits Connelly-Lynn.) – the Lynns departed on the first leg of their adventure at

sea. "Our children probably thought we were nuts selling everything," laughs Connelly-Lynn. "But, they have always been supportive."



Jelly in repose

One of the biggest transitions the Lynns faced at the start of their voyage was bridging the mental gap from a world of budgets, deadlines and the responsibilities of children to a lifestyle where demands simply were not pressing. "Suddenly, there were no decisions," says Connelly-Lynn. "We could stay on an island longer, or change our mind and leave."

And, you guessed it: "We'll never have too much of this," Connelly-Lynn points out. The transition – drastic as it has been – has been made successfully.

Always an Adventure

Over the past two years, the Lynns have turned their voyage into an adventure. Their itinerary has included stops in the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, the Virgin, Leeward and Windward Islands, Trinidad and Tobago to name some. Sure, the trip has had its moments. For instance, in their second year at sea, traveling from Charleston to St. Augustine, they encountered some cold, windy January weather. The boat sped along at nearly 40 knots per hour, leaving Connelly-Lynn sick at sea for about four days. "We still run into bad weather from time to time, but we're much more cautious now. The boat has no heat, so we rely on hiking boots, wool socks, layers of clothes and hot water bottles.

But, the good has far outweighed the bad, Connelly-Lynn adds. "We've had some awesome experiences," she notes, describing

their first sighting of wild monkeys swinging from trees in the Caribbean, their climb up Pico Duarte in the Dominican Republic,

and whales playing off the East Coast of Canada. In the Bahamas, they stayed at the Exumas Land

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Come Sail Away

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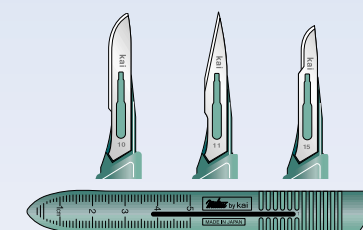
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and Sea Park, a part of the Bahamas National Trust, which protects natural and historical resources there. The daily fee to anchor is a half-day of work. Lynn was put to work on a rock pile, while Connelly-Lynn was employed for her babysitting skills. One of their most overwhelming and emotional experiences, however, was sailing through New York Harbor soon after the September 11, 2001, disaster, according to Connelly-Lynn.

Never Alone

The Lynns are never lonely at sea. "We stay in touch with lots of people," says Connelly-Lynn. "The cruising community is a tight one, since everyone relates to boating issues. By the time we reached Trinidad, we already knew about 100 people."

"We recognize how transient we are," Connelly-Lynn continues. "So, we bond quickly and stay in touch with radios." In fact, the boating community is so tight-knit, Connelly-Lynn describes situations where individuals have delayed their own passage to help one another.

Staying in touch with family, although not always ideal, has been very doable. "We try to plan a long trip back to the States every year," Connelly-Lynn says. "Our children all live in Denver, which makes it easier to visit them. When we see them, we try to spend constant quality time."

Occasionally, the Lynns take a guest aboard. "For David's mom's 84th birthday, we had her join us for a three-week cruise from Newport, RI, through New York Harbor to Baltimore," says Connelly-Lynn. "Others have joined us in Florida and the

Bahamas, as well."

"And, there's always e-mail," Connelly-Lynn points out. "Surprisingly, even the most remote islands can have e-mail links."

In all, the Lynns have loved every day of their endless excursion. "This has been an absolutely wonderful, indescribable experience," says Connelly-Lynn. "I keep journals, but I don't always have the right words to express how I feel." She adds, "We may grow too old for sailing, but sailing will never grow too old for us."

At press time, the Lynns had plans to visit Venezuela and then head west to the Panama Canal. They anticipate being in Ecuador in about a year. To find out more about the Lynn sailing tour, visit www.nineofcups.com ■



People News

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Department of Defense military hospitals and negotiating contracts with group purchasing organizations. He managed, hired and trained sales representatives, maintained the third largest sales volume territory, was responsible for independent distributor purchases, and implemented national marketing programs.

"We are fortunate to have someone of Don's expertise to enhance our diagnostic sales capabilities and further our goal to expand revenues in all products areas," said Vera Leonard, vice president of U.S. sales for Quidel. "He has proven leadership skills and the ability to successfully execute sales growth. We look forward to his taking the Company to the next level in sales and to leading the effort to further expand Quidel's role as the leader in rapid POC diagnostic tests."

Cardinal Health Inc. Names Sari Macrie Senior Vice President

Cardinal Health Inc named Sari Macrie to the newly created position of Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications, effective immediately. She was previously a consultant to Cardinal, as well as to various other Fortune 100 companies. Novoste Corp (Norcross, GA) named Alfred Novak as President, Chief Executive Officer and a member of the board of directors.

He replaces William Hawkins on the board and Thomas Weldon as CEO. Weldon will remain Chairman of the Board. National Distribution & Contracting Inc named Bob Davison as Managing Director for the iLABS Independent Laboratory Dealers organization.

He has over 21 years of experience in the research laboratory supply industry, most recently having served as Vice President/Sales Manager for BVAScientific. iLABS has 21 members across the United States and Canada, and accounts for approximately \$67 million in total sales. McKesson Corp (San Francisco, CA) named Jayant H. Shukla PhD as Vice-President of McKesson BioService's pharmaceutical services division (Rockville, MD). He was previously Director, Clinical Supplies, Informatics, and Scale-Up at Bristol Myers Squibb Pharmaceutical Company (New York, NY). David R. Carlucci was named as President and Chief Operating Officer of IMS Health (Fairfield, CT). He was previously General Manager of IBM Americas. Carlucci will report directly to David M. Thomas, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer. ■

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