

MM Summer Blue Sheet 6 August 15, 2013

WHEN THE DINGHY GOT TOO HEAVY TO LIFT And the Angel of Insight

I've often said that when I couldn't lift our dinghy from the beach to the bulkhead I would have to give up sailing.

Day before yesterday that day came. I needed help, a final push, to teeter the little boat to the top of the wall. It was a semi-traumatic moment of realization. I'm not the man I used to be. Probably never was! Another strong hint of mortality. So it's time to stand back and wonder how my grandchildren can do it with no problem.

I've known that I couldn't or shouldn't sail forever. As it is my sailing has gone a dozen years beyond expectations. Have never fallen from the boat. Can do everything single handed. Am able to sail to the buoy and snag the anchor line. One pull can still start the outboard. In fact, I can still sail pretty well.

I just can't lift the dinghy onto the bulkhead.

Here's the whole story. That dinghy was built with young Patrick's help more than 15 years ago. It's pretty tiny. The boat needed to be small enough to carry as far as low tide which can be 200 feet out. But it needed to be big enough to carry me and another moderate sized passenger. It has worked well. The boat has held together until fairly recently when the bottom began to wear through. It leaked.

I repaired the bottom by crafting on a sheet of light plywood. Glue, screws and fresh paint. It probably didn't add 30 pounds. The little boat now carried me without leaking and I can still carry it on my back from the shore to our bulkhead. They tell me I look like a turtle. But I need help with the final lift.

In the dark of night when I deal with deep problems like theology and the impact of aging on my preferred life-style, the angel of insight appeared. I don't actually know much about angels. It's more likely that neurons in my brain get into action trying to solve my problem. Anyway, after the neurons or the angel of insight did its thing, a thought surfaced in my brain:

"Why the hell do you think you need to lift that boat up on the bulkhead? It's past time you did that kind of thing anyway. Just anchor your raft closer to shore and slide the dinghy on top of it. No lifting required."

I murmured *"Why didn't I think of that?"* and went back to sleep.

So last time out to the sailboat to read and nap (there was no wind for sailing) I rowed back to our raft moored close to the beach and slid the dinghy easily on and tied it down for the night. I topped off my accomplishment with a nice self-congratulatory swim.

So I'm still sailing. I will keep sailing as long as I can climb the steps to the bulkhead and the remainder of the 100 steps it takes to get up to the cabin. When I can't do that anymore? — Well, we'll have to see what the angel of insight says when that time comes. One moment at a time dealing with whatever comes next.

—Art Morgan, August 15, 2013

Note: We have had several people report that email messages sent to a-morgan@peak.org are not going through. This problem may have been going on for several months. If you have had rejections from that e-mail address, write me via Jean's e-mail which is j-morgan@peak.org.