

Beth... A quick guide:

This is to acquaint you with Beth and help you on your cruise. Beth is a classic Valiant 40, the same cruiser that won Cruiser of the Decade from Sailing and won a solo around the world race. This very boat has circled the world and survived hurricane force storms at sea. She is designed to be a tool in the hands of an expert yachtsman and sailor. She will take care of you, if you take care of her. The present owner bought her in the spring of 2009 and carefully refurbished system by system. One day (as she has done in the past) she will head out over the horizon for a repeat circumnavigation.

Getting Started

A few quick things to remember....

Beth is close to 30000 lbs fully loaded. You should keep this in mind when leaving and coming into port. Every speed should be slow until you get used to the weight. Nobody should jump off the boat while moving, and none of your crew should try to stop the boat with their body. To do so will result in broken bones. We will go over docking a little later.

The Valiant is a cruising boat. It has a relatively small engine and is meant to arrive at a moderate speed. It is meant to sail, not motor-cruise. Racing the engine (over 2200rpm) will just overheat everything. Instead, plan on plenty of time to reach your destination.

What goes for Beth also goes for her tender Bettie.

Know where the emergency supplies are: They are located in the first locker as you come down the Companionway stairs. The life jackets are there, as well as some foulies. The flares are on the floor there, as well as the flashlights. Your VHF radio is turned on at the navigation station, and is in the Cockpit front locker, next to the GPS. Charts, ships documents and guidebooks are located in the navigation table and in the locker immediately forward and starboard. (across from the refrigerator.)

Go through the pre-trip checklist and checkout.

Load all your supplies. The fridg is forward of the sink. Areas for storing food supplies include the back of each settee, under the small cushions and of course the shelves and lockers in the galley. There is place settings for 6 already there, along with some spices and other odds and ends. Please keep the galley clean, and place a dry towel where the water from the sink will drain on the floor. There is also a lot of storage in the V berth area and the head.

Go through the breaker panels and know what each is for. The bilge pumps operate automatically and manually. There are three. The "freshwater pump" keeps the water pressure to the facets. The hot water works on shore power and is heated by the diesel engine.

Sails: Beth is primarily a sailboat. Do not expect her to power from stop to stop. Instead use your sails, tides and wind data to cruise. Beth has three principal sails a main, jib and staysail.

This combo can be used for many different weather conditions. Until you are familiar with the boat, I would suggest that you sail with a reefed main and staysail. This combo is very stable in all types of water, and it allows you to quickly prepare for many conditions. Main on Lazy Jacks raises easily if pointed to weather. Jib: high footed Yankee for easy sailing. New roller furler, no need to force it. Staysail hank on and raised by the sheet attached to the baby stay. You will probably have to help the Jib over it during tacking unless you have the staysail up.(The two work will together) The steering is new and still a bit stiff, but will often keep a point of sail for a long time.

Dingy: There is a 2010 10' RIB that fits nicely on the front of Beth. (Bettie) Use one of the halyards (the red and white is an extra one) to lift the dingy off the deck and to the water.

We have a new 6 hp Yamaha outboard that planes the dingy with less than 400 lbs on it. It uses Gas-oil mix that should be in the aft cockpit locker in a red gas tank. Alternatively, I like using the oars with the dingy.

Now go through the engine, start it and get use to the controls (preferably with the dock lines in place, then remove the dock lines and enjoy this beautiful boat!

You will notice a lack of electronics. By now you will have guessed that I am a traditionalist. The GPS is also a Chart plotter, dept sounder and a fish finder. The VHF is also brand new. These electronics are not the primary navigation tools. Your own training in charting, running fixes and dead reckoning are you primary source of navigation. The tools to do so are located at the navigation table. Now if you do not want to sail traditionally, that's OK by me, but just have the skills to do so should your GPS decide to take a hike. Therefore I stress:

If you do not have training in Coastal Piloting a 40 foot cruiser, you should not take Beth sailing. A good sailing captain can easily sail Beth, and you as captain are responsible for any damage to the boat. On the other hand, if you have wrestled with common 40 ft cruisers, Beth handles like a dream. In big water she performs like a ocean cruiser's dream...but I digress.

Engine: Beth is propelled by 37 hp diesel. The engine has over 5000 hours on it, so it should be treated with care. It is used to get in and out of port, and for those times when you need to supplement the sail. It was never designed to power through big seas. To start:

Check the oil. This is easier said than done. It is under the alternator on the aft berth side. It is a red dipstick that is hard to get at. I recommend opening the hatch from the aft berth, locating it with a flashlight, and then pulling it out. There is oil in the engine room if it needs a quart (or even a half quart).

Make sure the engine thru hull is open. It is the large thru hull immediately to your right as you enter the engine room. The seawater strainer can be accessed by opening the board in the aft birth (just under the fire extinguisher)

To access the engine room, pull all the stairs from the latter downstairs and put them in the top holder, then unlatch the door with the window in it. There is a light for the engine room on the breaker panel (marked cabin light on lower panel). The engine room is where you gain access to batteries, generator, and engine coolant.

Look at the controls on the steering. One says "fuel" and the other "control" The "fuel" should be straight up, which is all the way pulled back. The control lever is in reverse when all the way back and in forward when pressed down to the metal. Halfway between the forward and reverse is neutral. Place the fuel straight up and the control in neutral (45 degrees from down).

Open the Cockpit locker containing the electronics. Turn on the "FW pump". Just below the switch are two buttons. The left one heats the glow plugs, the second (right side) turns over the engine. Press the glow plugs for 15 seconds, then press the starter. The engine should start within 15 seconds. If it does not, wait a minute and try again. I have not had Beth not start by the 3 or 4th time. If she does not there is something seriously wrong and it is time to troubleshoot.

There is a low pressure oil alarm that will sound until oil pressure is achieved. There is also a buzzer for high engine temp. If either of these alarm keeps up, it is time to call the mechanic.

Life Jackets: there are life jackets, jack lines and flares as well as a bailout bag in the locker starboard as soon as you come down the stairs. There are also flashlights, raingear and other useful equipment. Know what is in your safety locker! The fire extinguishers are located in the engine room, the aft cabin and the head.

Batteries: Beth is equipped with two banks of batteries. One house bank of approximately 200 amp hours and a battery for the engine starting. They can be charged from the engine, generator or marina plugin.

Now this is important. Engine charging will only charge the house bank unless the emergency cross between the house bank and the engine starting battery. That switch is located in the engine room to your immediate left as you walk in. So if I am going to depend on engine for my power for a while, and will turn this switch on when I start the engine, then turn it off as soon as I shut the engine down. This will insure a charged starting battery even if the house bank is down.

Settling Down for the Night: You have had a great day sailing and now wish to retire to a quiet nook or into a marina. If you are going into a slip the procedure is pretty easy. Just call ahead by cellphone or VHF and request a transient slip. Then go slowly into your marina, and use your reverse and forward to come to a near standstill at dockside. Your mates can then step off and secure Beth with her docklines. Electricity is provided by the 30 amp power cord. Connect to the shore power and to the boat. Then turn it on at the shore, turn it on at the connection in the cockpit, then turn it on in the breaker box aft of the navigation desk. Make sure the battery charger is on and your batteries will be fully charged in a couple of hours (both banks!) If you dunk either end of the power cord in the water, wash it off with freshwater, and let it dry for a few hours.

If you are anchoring out, and you have been careful with your electricity, you should have over 13 volts on your batteries. Use for lights and a single anchor light and you will be OK. Family games can actually be more fun than videos. Make sure that you shut off the emergency connect before you use too much of your battery so you can start you engine in the morning. (see batteries) If the batteries get much below 12.8 volts you probably need to charge them by the engine, or pull into a slip and let the battery charger take over, or use the generator

Honda Generator: You have a gas powered generator with a pigtail converter in the Port cockpit locker. You also have a small gas can with premium gas. The generator is pretty easy to start, just plug it in to the outside 30 outlet (the one that usually goes to the dock) and start it up by pushbutton or pulling the cord. It will regulate its own RPM per your ships needs.

The important part of the generator is that being gas powered, neither the generator nor the gas can can not go below decks. The can should be stored on the aft pulpit, and anytime there is gas spilled on the generator, it should be out on the side until it is completely dried off. I think it would be useful if, upon waking up in the morning, the batteries are low and you want to use a bunch of electricity before motoring out. Just pull out the generator and let it charge during breakfast.

Windlass: Beth is has a long anchor rode and a 45 lb CQR. She has an additional light anchor under the propane locker. To get the chain down the top of the windlass unscrews, and the chain can then be brought out of the locker. Remember to take the pin out of the bow spirit before dropping the anchor, and replace it when you are done. Please use the snubber (at the bow pulpit)to take the force from the anchor to the boat. When raising the anchor, start the engine and allow the chain to be raised off the seabed by the windlass. Do not expect the windlass to pull the anchor up through the mud, rather do this by taking as much chain as possible, securing the chain to the cleats and allowing the slow inertia of the boat to pull the anchor out. Some anchors work themselves in over time, so they may need a little time to work themselves out. The windlass can also be run from the forward berth and there is a breaker at the navigation table. There is a pin to secure the anchor once it is place on the bow.

Monitors: There is a multiple monitoring system next to the circuit breakers. You have monitoring of both freshwater tanks, the septic tank and the diesel tank all from one gauge. You have to blow a little air through them first and then measure the pressure. You have to keep depressing the button that you want to measure. The number on the gauge roughly corresponds to the depth in the tank of the liquid being measured.

Beds: Beth can sleep 8 in a pinch, both "shelves" above the settees are really sea berths that you can sleep in if you don't move around much. She seems to be more comfortable though with 6 or less aboard, two in the v-berth, two in the settees and two in the aft berth.

Stove: The propane stove and oven is new and works great. You have to turn on the breaker in the navigation station, the switch above the stove (and aft) in the kitchen, and make sure the propane is on in the propane locker. There are two tanks of propane in the propane locker under the helm seat, so I don't think you will run out. We have had some great meals on Beth, I bet you will too!

Refrigerator: The large refrigerator has a new compressor for 2010. Its on/off switch is a breaker that is under a pillow next to the aft berth and right above the transmission. Have the checkout person show you where it is. It uses up a fair bit of electricity, probably more than any other single thing in the boat. It also has fans that run almost all the time, and are under the aft berth. This is an annoyance to me, so I turn it off at night and keep a bag of ice in the frig. If you keep it on all the time, you are going to have to be careful in your other usage of the batteries. Keep the engine battery separated from the house bank, and only join them together when the engine is running. (see Batteries)

A Quick tour of the engine room: To get to the engine room first turn on the light from the main panel. It is the "House light" that is about two thirds of the way down on the right side. Then take the stairs off and put them in the top stair trap (above the stairs just forward of the hatch). Open the door and immediately to your right is the thruhull and then the Westerbeke power plant. Directly ahead of you is the fuel cleaning and polishing system. To your left is the emergency joiner for the house and engine battery banks. Around the corner are the house batteries. (on your left). Also on your left are some supplies, and Oils/Lubricants.

Fishing and Crab traps: These are on board for your use. Please have a license and replace any lures or equipment that you lose or damage. Crab traps are placed just about everywhere in season, which is a good reason for sailing during the day. Remember that you are on vacation, and you don't have to be somewhere! I like to bump the heavy lures off the bottom it seems like I never know what I am going to catch...

The Cockpit Shower: only squirts a little water right now. I have to do some plumbing...
Cruising Philosophy

The 5% rule: do not go out into weather that has a 5% or greater chance of throwing things at you beyond your abilities. If you want to challenge 20 ft swells for the first time. Please do it on your own boat. If you have to stay in Friday Harbor for an extra day, so be it. Or if worse comes to worse, get the Charter company to get you a captain to sail you home. Sure it is extra, but not near as expensive as damage to your crew or to Beth.

Large Cruisers demand a different attitude than motorboats or even small sailboats. You are voyaging. Use caution and common sense while traveling through this watery wilderness. Reef early. Watch for weather and listen to WX weather at least twice a day. Small boat advisories should be taken seriously. Know your skills and keep a log. Practice Man Overboard Skills...at least three of you should know how to do them. Remember, someone thrown overboard in the Puget Sound Area has only about a half an hour to get out of the water. If they are thrown overboard at night the chances of finding them in that amount of time is small, which is why we forbid traveling at night unless it is an emergency. All people on deck or in the cockpit must also wear life jackets. No exceptions. If conditions are at all rough, tying in your safety harness while topside is mandatory, as is having two experienced people on watch at all times (while sailing.)

Don't mean to scare you Captain, but now that you are serious about your job everyone else will have a great time. You will have fun too. She is a great boat.

Equipment List

45 Lb CQR on windlass

Extra anchor in port cockpit locker

6 bumpers

6 Lines to tie into dock one

on each cleat (2 forward and 2 aft and 2 extra

Mainsail, Yankee Jib and Staysail (port cockpit locker)

Ships documents and manuals (right across from the Levac Head)

Vacuum cleaner in locker below ships documents

Two deep sea fishing rods on overhead.

CD movie player (portable)

AM/FM/CD stereo (small shore power only)

Navigation gear compass, binoculars, charts, two sets of pointer compasses, a hockey puck compass,

Parallel rulers, Nav drafting ruler.

Books: Ships Log, Two guidebooks to the San Juans, A Current guide with this years tide schedule.

Charts many including the San Juans and others.

Dishes: complete set for 6. Also knives, various sizes for cooking and at least 5. Various tupperware containers. Cleaning supplies.

Tools and spare parts in the locker immediately aft of nav station. Should remain closed except for emergencies...

Safety gear: (located in locker next to the cockpit on Starboard side) All sizes of life jackets, including two offshore harness/life jackets and some child's jackets. Ditch Bag contains a GPS (handheld) and Charged VHF (handheld) Should be supplemented with water and flares....

Foul weather gear complete two sets. (Jackets and pants)

Cockpit Teak Box Chartplotter and Main VHF (new)

Starboard Locker: Extra lines of all types and sizes. Emergency tiller. Oars for dingy. Crab trap.

Port Locker fenders, (2) 110v pigtails, Staysail.

8 foot inflatable dingy with seat,

Sextant in Aft Cabin

7.5 horse Yamaha (extra charge)

I sign that I have read this document and abide by Beth's and the charter company's rules. I also agree to tell the charter company about any damage or groundings the boat may have during my time as Captain. _____