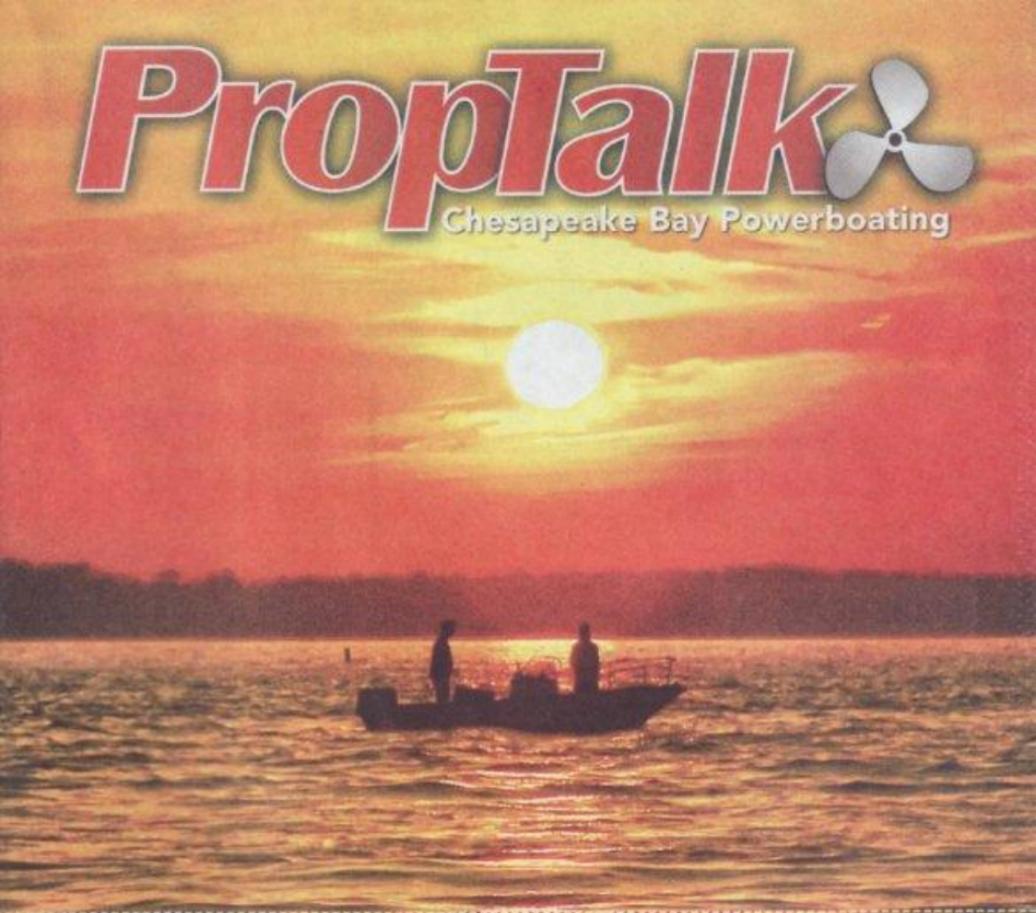


PropTalk



Chesapeake Bay Powerboating



Beat the Heat Summer Cruising
Powerboat Racing Left Turn Only
Bay Watersports Wakeboarding 101

July 2012

FREE

Out of My Mind

by Ruth Christie

Range of Motion: "Move Forward, Momma"

After 26 some-odd years of cruising all over the Chesapeake Bay, we got really smart and bought an early Christmas present last September. A Tohatsu 9.8 has replaced the old, leaking, impertinent, long-shaft outboard we had "stolen" off our Merit 25. The new outboard is head and shoulders above the old one, which had the temperament and usefulness of a toddler long overdue for a nap. After buying it on sale online, we'll have it serviced each year by Chuck Holm III at Casa Rio Marina in Mayo, MD. Thanks, Chuck, for recommending the new motor to us.



Jim and Nicholas Christie head to Vera's Beach Club Restaurant & Marina to pick up Uncle Don.

That outboard runs our 11-foot dinghy and four occupants like a champ. When we're ready to plane, I move forward to sit on the bow, captain Jim nudges toward amidships, the kids hunker down and hang on in

the middle, and we hit it. Once we arrive at optimal cruising speed, everybody resumes their original positions and sits back to enjoy the ride and the view.

What surprises me the most is how much that new outboard has expanded our range of motion. Already this season we have seen many more parts of Saint Leonard and Tripple creeks, the three creeks that feed Solomons harbor, and the Rhode, Tred Avon, West, and Wye rivers. The Tohatsu enables us to view, up close, the flora, fauna, houses, and other buildings onshore and explore new-to-us shallow spots all over the place.

Taking a needed break from limited onboard amusements, the kids like riding waves and putting their hands in the water, while everyone enjoys seeing places we've never been able or willing to get to. The dinghy/motor combo also enables us to access restaurants and other amusements onshore while anchoring out. So far this year, we've dinghied into Schooners in Oxford for a Mother's Day lunch, tied up to the dock at the Tiki Bar in Solomons (purely for hydration purposes), hit Vera's Beach Club Restaurant & Marina for lunch and an island drink on the beach, and dinghied from a mooring buoy in Annapolis to Eastport and beyond. Now, we look forward to a season of parking our cruising boat in a lovely anchorage, unleashing the dinghy, zooming all over the place, and exploring more places at "see level."

A Cruiser's Top 10 Things To Bring on a Dinghy Ride

1. **Paper or Plastic**—The dinghy's up-to-date registration. (Most of our pesky numbers either disintegrated or fell off already, almost as soon as we had "adhered" them.)
2. **"May I See Your ID, Sir"**—Your driver's license.
3. **Sit On It**—At least two throwable cushions for safety and comfort for the navigator's back and butt.
4. **Line Up**—Two dock lines for tie-ups and whatnot.
5. **Strap On**—Life jackets on all bodies.
6. **Stuff It**—A backpack, because you never know what you will find onshore, including pantry provisions, liquor cabinet replacements, chocolate milk... The options are endless. (Our backpack also contains baseball caps [visors point forward, not over the nape of one's necks], extra sunscreen to re-smoother skin that hasn't seen sun for a while, bug spray [a real lifesaver for one of our kids who is the dream dinner of horseflies, mosquitoes, no-see-ums, and other winged pests], icy cold beverages for all ages snug in their huggies [or koozies, if you will], portable snacks for the younger crowd, our wallets, and our cameras.)
7. **Where Am I?**—Nautical paper charts.
8. **Ugh, Something Smells**—Gas/fuel for your journey.
9. **Shady Characters**—Sunglasses.
10. **Sock It To Me, Baby**—Good walking shoes with socks. No sock-less crocs, flip-flops, or other nonsensical footwear allowed. What's with kids and their shoes these days?! Whatever happened to arch supports?

What's Not on the List?

OK, I didn't include the two oars that are attached to our dinghy for backup propulsion purposes. But, do you see any cellphones, iPads, iPods, or Kindles on my top-10 list for a dinghy-based adventure? Nope. And you never will.



Well... This certainly wasn't on our list in Solomons. We think she just needed a break from the drakes. She visited until dark.