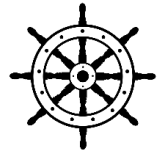




The Mizzen



Class Afloat 2022 - 2023 Student Newspaper. Volume 7: April 15

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Drew Cunningham

The Mizzen's Paradigm: consent, diversity, accuracy, quality, student perspective, representing ourselves, our peers, and the people and places we visit with respect.

Reflections from Aloft

Eric S.

Nothing in the world
is as soft and yielding as water.
Yet for dissolving the hard and inflexible,
nothing can surpass it.
The soft overcomes the hard;
the gentle overcomes the rigid" (Tzu 78).



Imaged by Eric S.

Six months at sea challenged, transformed, humbled, and promoted the growth of all that embraced this unique experiential learning opportunity. While we travelled to new territories, we were simultaneously exploring our inner mental and intellectual landscapes: questioning, confronting, recognizing, rejecting, understanding, and accepting. Nominal categories like teacher and student dissolved and united the community with a common purpose: to become a learner. Like water, we became flexible and adaptable: new duties and responsibilities were assumed, sail training and Night Watches were completed with resoluteness, and at each port, we cast off old stories and limiting views through cultural education. As we near Bremerhaven, we wonder: can a ship and its crew return to the same port? The voyage will end, graduation will come and go, and our individual journeys will continue: "I unsettle all things. No facts are to me sacred; none are profane; I simply experiment, an endless seeker, with no past at my back" (Emerson 304).

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Selected Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, edited by William H. Gilman. New American Library, 1965.

Tzu, Lao. *Tao Te Ching*, translated by Stephen Mitchell. Harper Collins, 1988.



2nd Semester

Macy Shepard

I have been living on the Alexander von Humboldt II for just over 80 days, many of which have been days at sea without the connection and pressures from the outside world. I joined Class Afloat second semester and immediately got thrown into the sailing aspects of the program. Was it overwhelming at first? Yes. Am I chronically fatigued? Also yes. But the memories which will last a lifetime are far from limited. January 2023 was the first time I stepped onto a barque or any tall ship to be exact. Everything was confusing at first as the rigging was foreign, the commands were in another language, and everything was ten times larger than what I was used to. The wind remained constant and the overall principles remained the same, but I was starting from scratch. The weeks quickly passed by and my knowledge of the ship and how things worked on and below deck became clearer and clearer. Through many stressful weeks of studying, I completed my Ordinary Seamen (OS) exam, which granted me the title of OS. Two months from the date of arrival, I became a crew due to the many hours I devoted to the ship which allowed me to have a sufficient understanding of everything around me. My sailing journey didn't start here on the ship though, my first time on a sailboat was well before I could walk when I went with my Poppy (grandfather) and my parents. When I was around the age of five, I started going out in a training dinghy called an Optimist with my Poppy. This was my eye-opening moment in which I knew sailing would be a large part of my life. I had been on boats before this time, but never had I taken the roll of the helm taking control of the tiller, sheets, and sail. Finally, I had the freedom and the power. As the years progressed, I began to partake in lessons, and eventually began partaking in the racing aspects of sailing. Presently, I compete in the ILCA 6, formerly known as the Laser Radial and Coach in Canada CANSail 1 – 4. Sailing is where I am at peace, as well as a state in which I feel most at "home." While I'm out on the water, the wind blows through my hair making all problems from the outside world seem so miniscule. As the waves crash against my body, my thoughts are cleaned and clear. The salted water of the cool concentrated sea washes all my worries away making me pure and whole again. My Poppy was a role model and is the reason sailing is so important to me, although he may not be here with us today, I can still see him when I'm out on the water. I can feel the warmth of his smile as the sun beams stretch across the beautiful blue skies even on my darkest days. He fills my sails with fresh air and pushes me to go far and travel to new great destinations. Whenever I'm out on the water, whether it is introducing new individuals into

continued.

the sport/lifestyle, out leisurely, training, or competing, my heart skips a beat. This is where I am meant to be. A home may be a place, but my home is the mindset I have while I'm out doing the water activities that I love the most.



Memories

Anonymous

Memories grasp only a sliver
The truth of our experiences
are written in the creases of our faces and minds
from the reactions and absorptions
of fragments of moments.

And as we take our leave
from a place in time
where life expelled experience onto us
and memory fails to story tell
the creases remain to fill the blanks.

The intangible and the tangible
Pieces of skin and soul
created by love and loss
map the places we've been
with such complex subtlety
that we spend years
mapping out the ones we love.

So, as a moment, place or person takes its leave
there's no need to feel that it may escape you
as the importance of its presence
is written in the map of you.

And as you grow old and droopy
the map will bud in the places
that hit your heart
and if you look closely into yourself
you will be reminded of a fragment of a moment
by merely seeing who you've become.



Time to Say Goodbye

Liv

As we come to the end of our sixth month aboard the Alex II, I spoke to some Floaties about their highlights from the voyage, and what they will be taking with them.

What will you miss about life aboard?

"The views," "being on watch," "how easy it is to spend time with everyone," "my bunk," "the ocean," "hammock and sunbathing parties on deck," "climbing to the top of the rigging," "not living out of a suitcase," "the camaraderie between students and the crew."

What will you be happy to see the back of?

"The dishpit," "my energy being drained," "the benches in the mess," "backschaft (especially when the sea state is high)," "lack of sleep," "shouting commands in German," "night watch."

What good piece of advice would you offer prospective Alex II residents?

- Blankets: they are cozy and versatile! Lunch? Class? Movie night? Cold mornings at colours? Everyone loves extra warmth. Honourable mentions: a toque and your pillow.
- The "ship you" is different to the "land you." Emotions and interactions are pressurized, so keep this in mind: be kind, and think before you speak.
- Marie Kondo your wardrobe. Hooks, dividers, packing cubes, and hanging shelves are your secret to finding the perfect fit for any occasion.
- Kindles, hard-drives, and games, e.g. poker sets, offer hours of entertainment while being luggage friendly.
- An additional towel and washable mesh bags make for a stress-free laundry day.
- Make sure to bring layering options to deal with changing climates and weather.
- Portable chargers, fans, and decorations will elevate your bunk to elite level.
- A positive mindset is a game changer. The practice of seeing responsibilities as privileges instead of chores, will enhance your experience.
- Time aboard will fly. Spend as much time soaking up the amazing scenery on deck while you can – especially the Caribbean sunshine!
- Bring a camera to document this epic journey and some decent ear buds to take a break from it when necessary.
- Pack more socks.

The atmosphere aboard in this last week has been a strange mix of relief, sadness, and celebration. It seems all too soon that we are about to depart this ship we have come to consider our home. I have had many homes during my years: family homes stuffed with cozy memories, student **continued**

homes that taught me the joys of dealing with landlords, slugs, and mice, and bungalows with gardens full of vegetables, and apartments with incredible views. But I have never had a home as incredible as this green ship. I have never had a home that has transported me to such beautiful places. Or one with so many housemates! I have never had a home where dolphins and whales pop by to say hello. Or a home that pushed me into walls like a pinball. I have never had a home that has taught me so much; about sailing, about myself, and about living harmoniously (most of the time). Or a home with a 37.5 meter pinnacle, from which I can see nothing but water. I've never had a home that I have trusted so completely to deliver me safely, even as the waves the size of hills loomed behind the stern. I have never had a home as functional, as fascinating, as wild, as isolating, as green, and as totally engaging of all my senses ever before. I have never had a home like the Alex II, and I likely will never again. I feel wholly privileged to be a small part in the legacy of this extraordinary ship.



An Anthology of Haikus about Ship Life

Pamela Fuller

The Mess: A Haiku

Dishes are flying
Stinky milk in the warm fridge
Eating Nutella

Sea Sickness: A Haiku

Curled up in a ball
A mad dash to the toilet
It's time for dinner

Don't Distract the Helmsman: A Haiku

It's very windy
I am really off course
I can't see

Conquering Fears: A Haiku

Three points of contact
Climbing high to touch the sock
I hope I don't fall

Secret Laundry: A Haiku

Laundry bag in hand
Big dryer door hits my head
It's time for night watch



Parent Port

Pasha Jones

This semester's parent port was in Dublin, Ireland.

Everyone hurried to the deck as we made our way down the river. It was so exciting to see all these teenagers shaking with anticipation to see their moms and dads; the people who we've lived with our whole lives, who we've argued with, who have embarrassed us, who we've disobeyed. But going a week without them was probably the hardest thing I've ever had to do, let alone two whole months.

We finally spotted a crowd of people waiting at the dock, jumping, screaming, and waving. We returned the jumping, screaming, and waving then climbed up the masts. We finally got close enough to talk to them and some of the students were even surprised by an unexpected parent.

It really amazes me how much they do for us. I mean, I've probably only made my parents' lives more difficult, yet they still were the ones that got me to Class Afloat and were excited to do so. They are like automatic best friends that I got when I was born, and the best part is that I never have to worry about them not being there because they're literally my parents.

It's such a relief to know that they're waiting for me and are just as excited to see me as I am excited to see them. I can't wait to hug my parents/besties/benefactors.



The Master Poet

Anonymous

The page soaks in the letters
Yearning for meaning
To create something
To change someone

A phrase startled by age
Wisdom into words
Molding emotions
Into life

The master of placement
Can fuse side glances
Into stories

Fairy tales they'll say
But the eyes never lie

A poet keeps record
Of every snob, sneer, and sneeze
For only a poet's pencil
Can make words bleed into paper



The 6 – 8 Watch

K. Fawcett

This is an archived piece, written in January 2023: location – sailing in the Caribbean, British Virgin Islands.

I've had the pleasure of doing the 6 - 8 watch the past couple weeks. I've never experienced so many unique watches in a single voyage. While some days are filled with hard work, the sunrise and sunset never fail to amaze me. A couple nights ago, we all stood next to the bowsprit watching for a green flash as the sun turned the sky above the British Virgin Islands golden. Yesterday, in the evening, I watched in awe again as the sun set over the horizon, illuminating the clouds with vivid stripes of UV rays. The view was accompanied by some wonderful music arising from the Alex II's huge drum and a crew member's ukulele. It was a very magnificent feeling, the smell of the sea and feel of wind on your skin, all of the senses combined invented a magical moment.

As much as I love the sunsets, mornings with this watch have also created some really special memories. The weather in the morning is always so unpredictable. Do I wear my giant jacket, rain gear or a sweater and shorts? It's only been a 4 - day sail, and I swear we've faced numerous types of weather, but only for a short period of time in the mornings. The days have been relatively sunny and calm here with the odd gust of wind and clouds. I love the changing weather and unpredictability of the morning. When we first go on deck, it's pitch black, at exactly 6 a.m. the stars and moon are still radiating in the sky. The sun usually peaks its head over the ocean around 7 a.m. On previous mornings, it has risen behind a low set of clouds and paints the sky a mixture of pinks, purples, and blues. As the time progresses, the clouds vary in shades of pink and orange as the first sunrays bounce off the white puffs. This morning the weather was much different. The sky was filled with its usual stars, the Big Dipper, Orion's belt, etc. However, there was a large dark shape crowding the western half of the sky. As we continued to set sails and "klaar deck," raindrops could be felt prickling the skin of my fellow watchmates. I was worried we wouldn't get to see the sunrise, as this is the thing I most enjoy while carrying out my sailor duties. At 7 a.m. the rain slowed to a drizzle and a huge orange circle could be seen casting light out over the open water. As the rays met with a dark wall of clouds and rain, a rainbow appeared, arching over the Alex II. It seemed like something out of a movie: a pirate ship looking vessel, fighting its way through a precarious storm, all of the sudden finding itself floating calmly through a rainbow on the other side.



Flying – Sailing – Writing

Lars Reinhold, DSST Crew Member

How a journalist joined the Alexander von Humboldt II – and why it's a dream job.

Before I tell you, dear Floaties, about how I became a journalist and turned my hobby into my profession as editor-in-chief of an aviation magazine, a few brief sentences about myself. I am 37 years old and have been sailing the Alex II since 2019. My first trip took me from Lavrion near Athens in Greece to Palermo in Sicily. The experiences of this eleven-day trip – sailing through the Corinth Canal, in which our ship completely disappeared along with its masts, steering through the Strait of Messina, where one helmsman followed the next, and passing Stromboli, whose lava-spewing crater was an unforgettable sight at night – completely infected me with the “green virus.” Only three days after my return, the next cruise was booked, and I spent Christmas with the Alex II off Tenerife. In 2021, I experienced the legendary piston seizure trip, where a failure of the main engine in the Kiel Canal only came off without further damage to the ship due to the extremely professional actions of the regular crew, and in the summer of 2022, I passed my Ordinary Seaman's exam. The trip with Class Afloat from Dublin to Antwerp is my sixth on the Alex II, from which it is easy to conclude that you all probably know the ship better than I do. Apart from some of the secrets that you only find out if you meet the right people on board.

My path into journalism

I didn't follow the classic path expected of a passionate journalist. No school newspaper, no freelance work, no enthusiastic photo assignments on the outskirts of football pitches in small villages. No, the decision to earn my living through writing and photography was rather spontaneous. Originally, I wanted to join the German Air Force technical service to tinker on aeroplanes and live my passion for technology and aviation. But after passing the officer candidate exam, the medical check ruled out this career path because of an allergy – service in the air force was impossible. Alternatively, crawling around in the dirt or sitting in a tank? No thanks. A brief analysis of my own abilities followed. Apart from insatiable curiosity and the desire to communicate, there was admittedly not much left. Sure, if you've spent half your youth helping to renovate your parents' house, you have certain manual skills, but with A-levels, you should somehow be able to continue at university.

It should be added at this point that access to the journalism profession in Germany, as in many other countries, is not subject to any restrictions. In Germany, the experience of the Nazi era, when only people loyal to the regime were allowed to work as journalists and the press was thus brought into line with the Nazis, led to the right to freedom of expression being enshrined in the Basic Law. So anyone can call themselves a journalist and publish anything they want in speech, writing and pictures, as long as they do not violate the law. The only thing is that the content is not necessarily true, but more on that later.

So I took a look at the study guide. A thick green book in which you can find everything from A for Arabic studies to Z for zoology that promises a university degree. Under J I found what I was looking for: Journalism. At two universities in Germany, one could study the academic study of journalism, and in Leipzig, a large and popular city among students only 60 kilometres north of my hometown Gera, I found the perfect offer: a diploma programme with a supplementary second major. One could choose from more than 20 subjects here, and thus acquire not only mediation but also a professional competence.

The prerequisite for the degree was passing a two-day aptitude test, in which a four-part written test and a one-hour group situation interview with an examination board had to be completed, as well as a six-week internship in a media editorial office. And that was, in fact, my first encounter with practical journalism. I completed the internship in the cultural editorial department of my local newspaper and learned the basics of the business: defining topics and finding the right interviewees, preparing and conducting interviews, taking photos for illustration, and finally sorting the collected information and putting it down on paper in a structured way. My first article was a presentation of a book in which a photographer had compiled pictures of trams that, through the surroundings also depicted, gave conclusions about the time in which the photographs were taken. This may not sound very spectacular, but, admittedly, I was a bit proud of my first article. And I still have it, of course, cut out and filed away in a folder. Concert reports, cultural news, and reviews of new music albums or books followed, and at the end of the internship I could be sure I had understood the basics.

Theory and practice in my studies

When I began my journalism studies in October 2005, I finally immersed myself fully in the world of the media. In basic **continued**

seminars, my fellow students and I learned how to systematically research and find and evaluate sources, what forms of presentation there are and what functions journalism has in a democratic society. Later on, the seminars became more and more specialised, dealing specifically with practical fields of print, television and radio journalism as well as departmental journalism from news, reportage and culture, to reporting from war and crisis zones. We were able to use the institute's own teaching editorial offices and regularly publish our contributions on channels such as a weekly university page in a Leipzig newspaper, a magazine on local television and the university's own radio station Mephisto 97.6. Parallel to the training in practical journalism, we completed seminars on historical and systematic as well as empirical communication and media studies to complete our theoretical tools. This period also included several internships that took me to newspaper and magazine editorial offices as well as to a television editorial office. In my second subject, I studied musicology and dealt mainly with the sociology of music, ethnomusicology and music in the Third Reich. I also took seminars on music and sound technology and even one on the theory of techno. After only seven semesters, I had enough credit points for the Magister Artium.

Practical semester at the local newspaper

One point in which the Leipzig journalism programme differed from comparable university programmes was the integrated traineeship. In Germany, this means practical training in journalism in an editorial office. For this, we were released from our studies and worked full-time for at least one year as trainee journalists for pay. During this time, I worked for a small local newspaper in the town of Wittenberge – right in the middle of nowhere between Hamburg and Berlin, whereby "nowhere" is to be taken more than literally in this case. Here I had the great fortune to be part of a highly professional editorial team and to learn the necessary tools for my professional life from experienced colleagues – an experience from which I still benefit today. In addition to the classic local topics such as news from the rabbit breeders' club or city politics, I also got the chance to tackle really exciting topics. I accompanied fire brigades on their missions, experienced the Elbe floods in 2012 (the editorial team was awarded the German Local Journalism Prize for its reporting on this) and was allowed to accompany the German submarine U31 on a transfer trip, as Wittenberge had taken over the sponsorship of this submarine a few years earlier. One planned year turned into two and a half in the end, before I returned to university, collected my last credits, and graduated with a written exam and a thesis on the topic of quality in local photojournalism.

A diversion to the dream job

Already at the end of my traineeship, I had the offer to return to my newspaper editorial office as an editor, and as an entry into the profession, it suited me just fine. A perspective with a fixed salary, that was quite tempting in 2013, when small newspapers were cutting more and more staff. I worked for two more years as an editor and deputy editor until the province became too small for me and I looked for alternatives.

Via some detours, I then came to aerokurier, the most versatile magazine for General Aviation in the German-speaking world. In 2008, I had started training as a glider pilot in an air sports club and had gained some flying experience. Nevertheless, it was a leap in the deep end to take over an established editorial office directly as head and to virtually rebuild it, as the publishing house had undertaken a radical restructuring and dismissed all but one of the previous editors. So I was able to implement a lot of my own ideas for modernisation, change the picture language and give articles the space they deserve in my opinion. I also continued on my aviation path, acquired the flight instructor and aerobatic licence as well as the rating for touring motor gliders.

What does an editor do?

For those of you who are interested in the journalistic profession, I would like to give you a brief insight into my daily work. Perhaps the best thing about the job is that you don't have to be an early riser. Most print editorial offices, whether they are daily newspapers or magazines, rarely start before 9 am. And you don't have to go out in the middle of the night – as you do on the Alex – unless the fire brigade calls with information about an important assignment. Then you should go there to get the best photos.

At the daily newspaper, the pages that are still empty in the morning must be filled by late afternoon, which means that there is a lot of work pressure here. Research from the desk, phone calls to sources, in between one or more on-site appointments with a photo session and then back to the editorial office to get everything into layout. Yes, today's editor is usually also a "layouter" and designs their page themselves using special editorial programmes. The next morning, they start again

continued

with empty pages.

In magazine journalism, things are a bit more relaxed because the editorial work is done with much more advance notice. In the case of the aerokurier, we have a short-term plan of two weeks, within which all the layouts for the magazine are created, and then another week for the texts and corrections. Each of my two colleagues takes turns reading the other's texts and making comments, and finally there is a final check by a Germanist who, as a former pilot, is also well versed in the subject matter. Barely ten days later, the magazine is on the newsstand. The medium-term planning runs for four to twelve weeks, during which the research and photo sessions for the big stories take place. Finally, there is long-term planning, in which ideas for topics are collected and implemented when the conditions are right.

For me, this means that I look for topics suitable for our readers, contact the protagonists and we make a rough schedule. Mostly it's about interviews with interesting pilots or owners of interesting aircraft. The challenge is to find a day when the interview partner has time, a second aircraft is available for the photo flight and – the crucial point – the weather is suitable. Then I let myself be briefed on the peculiarities of the aircraft and do two or three take-offs myself to get a feeling for how the aircraft flies. I usually record these impressions on a dictaphone or make short notes during the flight. Then comes the photo flight. This means: armed with a camera, I sit in the open door of another aircraft and set the scene for the object around which the article revolves as dynamically as possible. This requires a high level of flying skill from the two pilots, because really good photos can only be taken in close formation. Once that's done, another photo session on the ground follows, in which I also include the owner and take a portrait of them together with their aircraft. Finally, we're talking about their relation to their plane and I complete my notes.

Then it's time to structure the notes and turn them into an easy-to-read, exciting text. In combination with the photos, this usually results in articles of six to eight pages. A similar approach is taken with portraits of interesting aviation companies such as aircraft or accessories manufacturers, flight schools or air sports clubs as well as competitions.

Every now and then, however, there is also a chance for a scoop in the special interest journalism that we do. In my case, this was our extensive dossier on the air taxi start-up Lilium, in which we were able to prove, thanks to consultation with renowned aeronautical engineers, that the postulated performance of the Lilium Jet is hardly possible in the projected configuration. This article earned me and my team the Hugo Junkers Award for outstanding aviation journalism. To this day, my personal highlight of a career that began with an article about a book of tram pictures, you remember.

Journalism today: more difficult and more important than ever

Would I go down the same path again? I think so. If you are curious, like to question things and have a soft spot for language, you can have a professional future in journalism. However, the job has also become much more demanding today than when I did my first internship at the daily newspaper in 2004. First of all, there are many more publications today. Daily newspapers, magazines, TV and radio stations have been joined by countless blogs, podcasts, video channels, etc., which sometimes deliver high-quality content. However, there are just as many channels that pursue an agenda that is not about presenting things as they are, but in a way that benefits certain interest groups. At the latest since the presidency of Donald Trump – who made working with targeted misinformation while simultaneously discrediting serious media reporting as fake news an agenda – it's clear that it is no longer enough to simply deliver a good story. More than ever, the story must also be substantiated with reputable sources. Part of the problem is the sometimes disastrous media literacy of recipients, who sometimes believe a blogger story without sources more than the elaborate research of a team of professional journalists, simply because it fits better into their world view.

Nevertheless, if you enjoy researching and writing, give it a try. Ask your local newspaper if you can do an internship. Find out if the job suits you, and if so, apply for a good journalistic training. And, who knows, maybe we'll see each other at a press conference one day as colleagues. I would be delighted!

Thank you for letting me be a part of Class Afloat. And thanks for motivating me to write down my career for The Mizzen.

By the way: I can't quite stop writing in my private life. Under the domain www.dertraumvomfliegen.blog there are regular aviation stories. Because as the saying goes: "Only flying is better".



aerokurier

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Full Circle

David Green

The Alex II has come home after another epic circumnavigation of the Atlantic Ocean. Six months ago, we eased the mooring lines and slipped out into open waters with eyes wide open to the possibilities of what has to be one of the most exciting, challenging and unique school experiences you can imagine. Our crew changed along the way; new Floaties arrived for semester two, others left, and the German Stamm Crew changed at every port, but the Alex II kept sailing, its generator thrumming, the bow purling the waters where the dolphins played and the hull holding fast above the fathoms that fell beneath us. Our experiences here were unique, and when we each return home we will struggle to communicate what this journey felt like, how it moved us and how it took us beyond the mere lines the ship traced on the charts.

As the Bremerhaven sea-lock opened and we motored towards the Kloska building where familiar faces were waving us home - Tom, Bruno, Olaf, Kai - I spotted Arne, a Watch Lead who spent five months with us on the last Class Afloat voyage. I was thrown back to that last turn of this circle, when a different crew was counting off the final few fractions of a nautical mile to the last harbor and the end of their ocean adventure. I brought them each to mind, remembered a laugh or a smile we had shared along the way, and for a few moments they were there with us, sharing this unique feeling in different slices of time. I gazed up at the mast and was reminded of a story in which a sentinel chestnut tree gazes down at the drama of four generations of unfolding hopes, joys and tragedies, the family evolving, the people passing through like chapters who are convinced they are the whole book.

The Alex II celebrated its 250,000th nautical mile on our trip. How many other hands have hauled the lines, fired the dish-pit hose and clambered into the rigging to furl its sails? How many have been moved by the winds it has caught or the waves it has broken? How many other souls have called it home and felt the sadness of leaving her behind? We treated her with care. We filled her with laughter. We wrote a good chapter; we were a solid crew.

Last night, the Floaties opened The Legacy Chest and reflected again on the treasures left for them by previous Floaties. They left their own keepsakes, mementos and words of wisdom too. The chest is now sealed and waiting. In a few months time, another Class Afloat crew will step onto the gangway of the Alex II with their seabags packed to bursting, their hearts set on circumnavigation and their gaze set on the vastness of the oceans. They will write their own chapters and make their own way, but when they break the seal and open the chest, they would do well to pay heed to the first line of the credo they find there, a simple invocation that all sailors hold fast to as a foundation of binding in all voyages: "look after the ship, and the ship will take care of you."

We may have stumbled a few times - who doesn't - but this year we held true to the spirit of the credo, and in so doing we blurred the edges of what was meant by 'the ship'. It isn't just the steel of the hull and the flapping canvas of the green sails; it's all the people we meet and all the places we go. In the final reckoning, the ship is everything and everybody, and the challenge we carry with us as we leave is to keep the spirit of what we achieved here alive in the communities we build and in the way we perceive the world. If we can see and feel the ship in everything we do, we might just have a chance of achieving what we all hope for in our heart of hearts: making the world a kinder and more connected community for the next crew that steps into it.

So now, to Switzerland. Fresh mountain air. Alpine woods. Glacial streams. Space and time; the cabins will be huge and the night watches are over. The final backshaft is completed. There will be no lines to haul. But there is still much to do. The Stamm crew, who taught us to sail and became our fast friends, are fixing the broken hinges, welding the jackstag to the soldier and readying the vessel for its next adventure. There were tears on the quay. Numbers exchanged. Promises made for future sails. Chapters waiting to be written.

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel”
(Maya Angelou – What I Have Learnt).

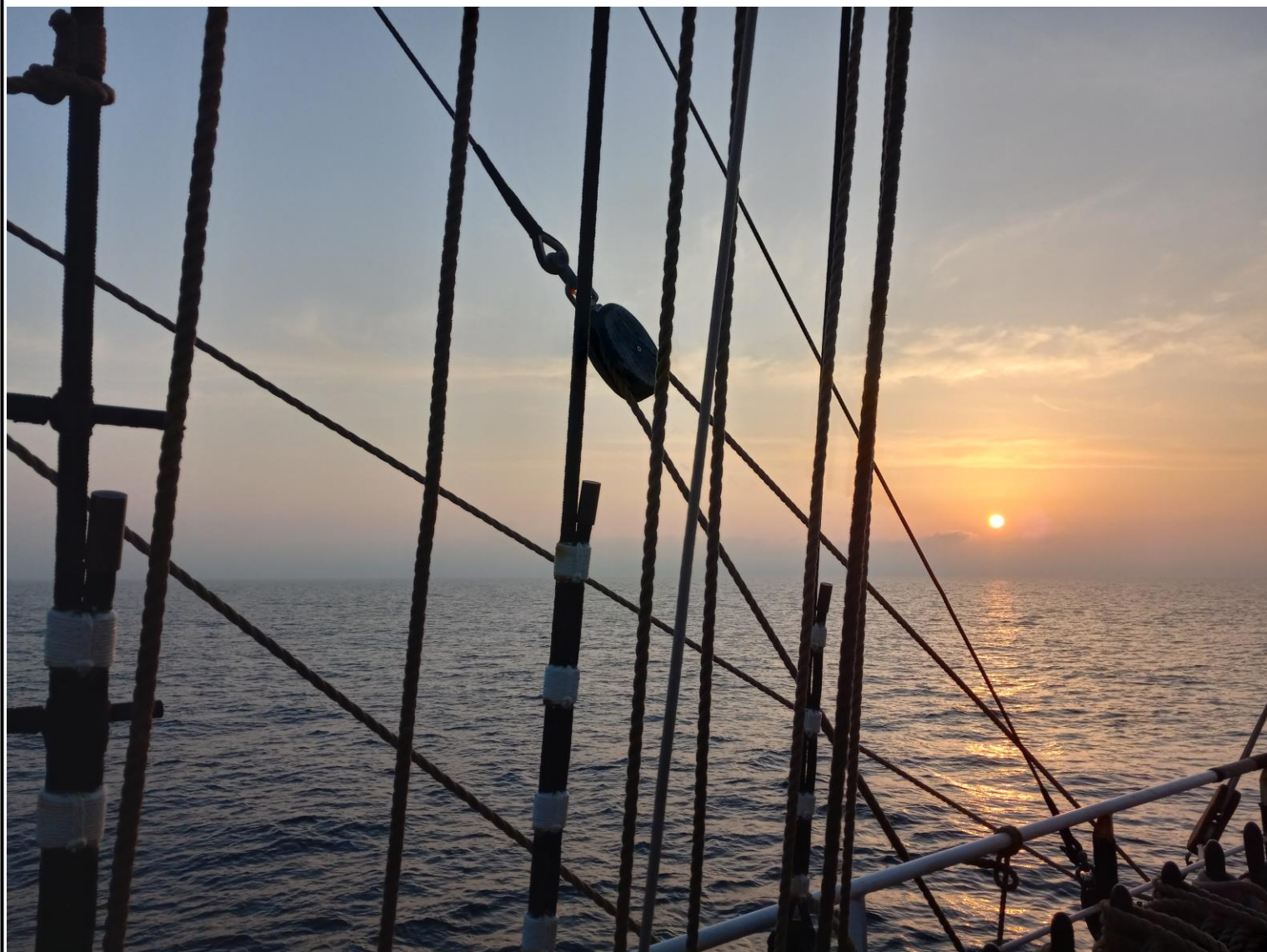


Image by Eric S.

