

Rosa Linda Román (00:29):

Hello, and welcome to New Mexi-Castaways. I'm Rosa Linda Román, and I am recording this in early April, 2017 in the Grand Bahama Bank in the middle of the night. I think it's like two o'clock in the morning. Yep, 2:41 to be exact and I have not slept yet. Maybe 15 minutes of sleep. For those of you that are new to the show, I live on a sailing catamaran with my family. The boat is called the Dawn Treader and we have three kids, Ahava is 12, Ziva is 10 and Samuel is six. And that we also have a German shepherd who is almost a year. She'll be a year next week. So, yeah, I'm on watch. And the reason I'm on watch, it was not planned. So, this is actually the least fun kind of watch because usually when you're on watch you take turns sleeping.

Rosa Linda Román (01:31):

But both Nathan and I, Nathan is my husband, and the captain, also the doctor, and a million other things, but normally we would take turns sleeping and then being on watch. But unfortunately, we were not planning to be going at night right now. We anchored at a place called Mackie Shoal. It's basically just a shallower area in the middle of nowhere in this Grand Bahama Bank. We are traveling from Nassau to Bimini, and then, on to Florida. We have been here in The Bahamas just under four months. Coming up, it's going to be four months, I think. Let me make sure that's it. We left in December 13th, January, February, March. Yep, I'm coming up on April, 13th of April, four months that we've been cruising in The Bahamas and had many wonderful adventures. It was cut short because we ran into an issue with an immigration officer who decided that he did not want to renew our request for extension on our permit, which usually is a pretty standard automatic thing, no big deal. But at least that's what I've been told and our experience in the past, because we've lived on a boat about seven years ago and came to The Bahamas as well. But anyway, so we are now heading back to Florida to let things reset and then, we can always come back to The Bahamas later. Hopefully, we will. It's definitely one of the most special places we've ever been.

Speaker 1 (03:30):

**[INDISCERNIBLE 00:03:28]**

Rosa Linda Román (03:30):

Oh, somebody is calling.

Speaker 2 (03:32):

Morning, standby.

Rosa Linda Román (03:35):

That's somebody on the radio at this hour and-

Speaker 1 (03:41):

Yes, I can see your green light, so I'm going to go ahead and pass you on your starboard side rear on westbound motor vessel on, of course, of 285 degrees.

Rosa Linda Román (03:55):

Huh? Westbound, that's us also. And we are westbound.

Speaker 1 ([03:59](#)):

Roger that. Do it [**INDISCERNIBLE 00:03:59**].

Speaker 2 ([04:04](#)):

Have a goodnight.

Rosa Linda Román ([04:06](#)):

So, you guys get to listen into a little traffic there. Right now I'm looking at these boats and we have a system called AIS. I think I don't even know what it stands for and it's way too middle of the night to even try. But basically, that is a system that sends out a signal to let everybody know who is on the water and what boats are near you, and if you're going to have a an intercepting point, and if so, it'll send off an alarm. What you just were hearing was one boat telling the other that they were going to pass them, so they must be heading an opera opposite directions. Just a second ago there was a boat on my AIS and it just disappeared.

Rosa Linda Román ([04:58](#)):

And that's always kind of a creepy, scary feeling when it's just gone, and you're not sure why. But anyway, we are just cruising at a depth of 20 feet and there is one up there. Pop back in and move the cursor over to see if I can... sorry about the noise, to see if I can see what the ship is before it disappears again. And that one just says AIS target. It doesn't actually tell you what it is. And then, that's the only thing to worry about for now. So basically, on watch all I'm doing, I'm really not doing a lot of autopilot. It has a [**INDISCERNIBLE 00:05:38**] course . So let me back up and tell you about why we're cruising right now. The plan was to go from Nassau to Chub Cay, spend the night somewhere near Chub Cay in the Berry Islands, and then, make the journey across the Grand Bahama Bank today, no tomorrow.

Rosa Linda Román ([06:02](#)):

But once we started going today, oh, it's all a blur, yesterday, once we started going on Saturday, we were making really good time. We had a little bit of a wind behind us, so we tried to take advantage of it cause the seas were calm. And so, we continued into the Grand Bahama Bank and there's no islands between Chub Cay and Bimini. And so, you have to just anchor in the middle of nowhere, but there's these things called rhumb lines, which is where all the big boats go through. It's not R-U-M, which is what I thought it was when I first heard the term it's R-H-U-M-B, I rhumb lines. I'm not sure what that means and we have no Wi-Fi here, so I can't look it up for you. But anyway, so you're dropping anchor in the middle of this ocean, basically. I mean, it's shallow. It's not like the ocean, but it's called the Grand Bahama Bank and it's an eerie feeling to just be on the hook as the term is common lingo, I guess, you say. So, yeah, it's a little unsettling to begin with to be on the hook. I got to keep an ear out for the radio, so let me turn this up because I am on watch. No, I don't want to change that, I want to change the volume.

Rosa Linda Román ([07:45](#)):

Okay, sorry. I need to make sure I know what I'm doing, because obviously I need to hear if anyone has an issue or is coming across our path. There is one boat in front of us, which it feels like we're getting closer to based on this chart, but Nathan assured-

Speaker 2 ([08:09](#)):

Hey, you guys come through the Northwest channel. **[INDISCERNIBLE 00:08:13]**. Was it kind of nice or how was it over there?

Speaker 1 ([08:20](#)):

Oh, it was **[INDISCERNIBLE 00:08:20]**.

Speaker 2 ([08:22](#)):

Oh, okay, great. Yeah. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Speaker 1 ([08:25](#)):

Okay, ciao. Goodnight.

Speaker 2 ([08:28](#)):

Goodnight.

Rosa Linda Román ([08:30](#)):

So there's a conversation one captain asking another what it looked like through this one passageway that they're going to be heading through. So anyway, we did anchor. We found a group of sailboats in this one spot by Mackie Shoal, a little off of it actually. We were heading toward this place called Mackie Shoal, which is more shallow than the other areas around it, so we figured that'll be good because the big ships not come through there. And we were maybe an hour from our planned anchorage. And again, there's no islands. It's not like you're tucking behind an island like you usually would anywhere else. But we saw this cluster of four sailboats at anchor a little ways from there. And with the thought that, you know, there's safety in numbers, we would just kind of join the crowd. And we figured they knew something we didn't.

Rosa Linda Román ([09:23](#)):

We tried to hail them on the radio to see if they would respond and we could ask them if it was a good place to anchor, and also we didn't want to like intrude if it was like a group of friends traveling together, and they didn't really want a boat with kids nearby and a dog, but nobody ever answered their radio. Even though they did, we could tell the boat name from the AIS system. Two of the boats had their AIS on and we got their boat names and we hailed them, but they never responded. So, we ended up dropping anchor after sailing from basically early morning when we left Bay Street Marina in Nassau to about 4:30 PM-ish. And then, so then we said, well, let's just, maybe it was later, I don't even remember, but we dropped anchor along with this cluster of sailboats.

Rosa Linda Román ([10:18](#)):

And it was so beautiful and flat, which by the way, now that I'm talking to you, it is again, which is nice because a while ago, so we dropped anchor, we saw a beautiful sunset, grilled hot dogs, had a nice dinner as a family. And then, Nathan went to sleep and I was frustrated because I was looking forward, he travels a lot and he's been really gone a lot. And so, I was looking forward to just having an evening of good conversation and just kind of hanging out before we head back to Florida and, you know, be in the thick of everything again. This anchorage was nice because you cannot see any city lights from that point. It's just the ocean, and it was beautiful, and the stars were out, it was an almost full moon, and everything was calm.

Rosa Linda Román ([11:10](#)):

Well, anyway, Nathan went to sleep, but the girls and I, and Samuel joined in, the girls and I brought a mattress from the guest room up on the upper deck, and lots of blankets, and snugly stuffed animals and whatnot. And we were going to sleep under the stars and it was so pretty. And we thought, "Well, this is probably going to be our last time to do this before we're out of The Bahamas and in civilization again." So, we were lying there, and I probably slept for half an hour. But all of a sudden, just really suddenly this current shifted and started just rocking us back and forth, back and forth. And we're a catamaran, which means we don't like a monohull. Monohulls, you know, they'll sway from side to side a lot more significantly than we do. And we were just, you know, rolling back and forth to the point where I kept I... the reason I wasn't sleeping is I kept worrying that one of my daughters was going to like roll off the edge of the boat.

Rosa Linda Román ([12:15](#)):

And it wasn't realistic probably, but still I was not sleeping. And then, all of a sudden Nathan came upstairs and was like, "This is ridiculous. This is awful. This is uncomfortable." And he said, "We might as well just go." And so we did. We pulled up anchor and we actually put out the jib, which is the forward sail here on the boat. And we were sailing a little bit, but then we had to make a turn and now the wind is not in our favor. So, we are now cruising motoring at 6.6 knots. And Nathan has gone down below to go to sleep, to catch some sleep while he still can. I'll be better at napping in the morning if I need to and he needs a lot more sleep than I do just between the two of us where he really...

Rosa Linda Román ([13:08](#)):

We've been together for 20 years and I've always said he really needs 10 hours sleep. I remember when I met him and he would say he needed, you know, sleep and he'd get like eight hours, which to me is like way tons of sleep and it wasn't enough. And I realized he's happiest when he has 10 hours of sleep. I usually am happiest when I get about seven, six or seven, but I usually get like five, four or five. So, I'm okay right now. So, I figured he better go down and get some sleep while he, well, the sleep getting is good and the children are sleeping. That's a bonus. And I figured I'd just stay up and talk with you guys. So, I'm going to take a break and get a glass of water which is always a weird feeling to go down below when no one else is up on deck and leave the helm unattended. It's fine because obviously we are on autopilot, but yeah, it's a kind of a creepy feeling and another ship just popped up on my radar. So, I'm going to check that out and then I'll be right back.

Rosa Linda Román ([14:23](#)):

All right. So, I decided not to go get a glass of water because this boat that came up on my radar very fast is the same boat you were just hearing on the conversation a minute ago and they're coming up fast. I'm able to see on their AIS that, let's see, it says it's called Motor Yatch Angelica. And it is 0.353 nautical miles away heading in our general direction. And it says TCPA, which I think is the time to intercept. I don't know for sure is seven minutes, 27 seconds. Yeah, I'm going to have to just pay attention and see what I see. I can't see anything yet. There is a light coming at me, so yeah, I don't even know what to do. I hate that, but I know she's paying attention. So, you got about six minutes and 50 seconds to intercept.

Rosa Linda Román ([15:48](#)):

I'll see if they called us. I'll untangle my chords so I can still monitor the sound. I think that is mistake I've made in the past where I just recorded, and then, later I played it back and I'm like, oh my gosh, it's just

crackly and terrible and a little wiggle of a cord here or there, and I cannot get you guys some decent sound. So, I'm trying to be more mindful of that. While I'm waiting for this boat that's coming in our direction, which I'm surprised it hasn't set off an alarm or something. It kind of scares me that it didn't and I don't know why I don't. This is something that has come up a lot on this trip that I don't know enough about this boat and what to do and how to handle it to feel comfortable, basically, to feel comfortable, period. Basically, I've been depending on Nathan to... he always captains and always moves the boat, but there are many times where I'm realizing I really need a better understanding of what I need to do in situations like this.

Rosa Linda Román ([17:06](#)):

So, I'm looking and it looks like they're coming right on our, so I think I do green to green. But anyway I met a woman in Nassau who was helping coach another.... She teaches like in a certification course for sailing. And she was going to join a family on their boat there in the very islands. They were going to go from Nassau to Berry Islands and she was going to teach the wife and a friend who flew in all the systems of the boat and just go through everything so that she would have more confidence, a better understanding of what to do. And I would feel a lot better if I had any idea what to do in this case. I don't know if I should wake up Nathan, but anyway, I think I need that kind of training. I'm going to just call him. Angelica, Angelica, Dawn Treader.

Speaker 3 ([18:24](#)):

Angelica back to the vessel calling.

Rosa Linda Román ([18:28](#)):

Hi. I just wanted to make sure you see us.

Speaker 3 ([18:31](#)):

Yep. I see you over there **[INDISCERNIBLE 00:18:32]**.

Rosa Linda Román ([18:35](#)):

Excellent. Just making sure. Thank you.

Speaker 3 ([18:38](#)):

Yep, roger that, have a nice evening.

Rosa Linda Román ([18:41](#)):

You too. Okay, they see us. I guess that means they won't hit us. It's a creepy thing to be out here on the water. And I can see lights, but I can't make out distance. It plays tricks on you in the middle of the night. And so, you know, you could be looking at a light that's a hundred miles away or a light that's in this case one minute and 59 seconds away. So yeah, I'm hoping that they know to avoid us because I don't even know what I would do if they don't. It's weird that there's no alarm that went off. I know I said that already, but you're just hearing my rah stress and worry as now I can see them getting closer.

Rosa Linda Román ([19:45](#)):

Yeah, they are passing me... they're not going to hit us. Yay, yay for that. And it's one minute till they pass us, and then, the zoom in. Yeah, so we're good. They're just going to pass right by us, but it is really close for me. I guess it's not even a worry for them. I see two vessels, actually. I see two green lights,

which means they're towing a dinghy. I wonder if I could get a picture of that so that I can put it in the show notes. It's like middle of night. You probably won't be able to tell what I'm taking a picture of, but yeah, there they are. There's Angelica passing me. All right. I'm going to take a little video so you can kind of see where we are, so maybe I can show you since you've listened into this.

Rosa Linda Román ([20:55](#)):

That little purple triangle is that little tiny dot out there. Let me see if I can zoom in so you could actually see it. If you see anything, it doesn't want to focus, but those little tiny dots are a boat called Angelica and it's probably their dinghy behind them. So, yeah, and when I put the AIS, let me see if I can do this without ruining the picture. And if you're listening to the podcast, you'll have to go look at the show notes and I'll post this video so you can see what I'm talking about, but I'm going to go over here and show you, this is AIS. Let me zoom in here so you could see what I'm doing. All right, so that's the AIS signal for that boat. And when I select it, it pulls up information about that boat. So, you can see Motor Yacht Angelica, and then, it's the TCPA before ahead of time, which was time to intercept, basically.

Rosa Linda Román ([21:59](#)):

But yeah, it shows that they're going 18 knots. We are not. We are going 6.8 knots and at a heading of 290 degrees. And the depth is, it says here 20 feet. Yep, that's the depth. That is correct. So, let's see what happens when I click on are... so you can see, let's say I click on our self, focus, there we go. It just says chirp point, it doesn't say our boat. Anyway, okay. So, if you've been listening to this, I know that makes absolutely no sense unless you go and actually see the video. But basically, we just came within, you know, I don't know a football field, two football field lengths from that other boat, which is very stressful to me, way too close for my comfort. I'd like everybody to stay away from us in the middle of the night. All right. So, now that you're just kind of listening more and more to my rambling thoughts in the middle of the night. Let me see what else I'd like to share with you. I am going to go down and get that glass of water, and then, I will be right back.

Rosa Linda Román ([23:23](#)):

All right, I am back and not only did I get a glass of water, but I also got a Toblerone dark chocolate, because I figured if I am going to have to be on watch at 3:16 in the morning, I definitely need dark chocolate. Don't you agree? So, welcome back. It is really nice and calm right now. No crazy waves. The sky has these like poofy clouds that are a mix between like white, although, everything looks gray right now, but between what are probably white clouds, and then, some gray darker clouds that look like they could threaten some rain, but there is the moon peeking through, and every now and then it hits the water and looks just divine and beautiful. So, I thought I'd talk to do you about our Bahama adventure. And then after that, I'll talk a little bit about what next.

Rosa Linda Román ([24:32](#)):

But first I want to eat a little Toblerone. It is delicious. That's something Nathan always brings me, chocolate, when he comes back from the U.S.. It's funny, this week, we had a fun experience. Fun, I don't know if that's right word, but when we were in Nassau there was a grocery store, a shuttle that picked us up at the marina, took us to Solomon's Fresh Market. And it was like, we had arrived at Disney World by the reaction of the kids. They were so excited to see this well-stocked grocery store. I mean, it was like a U.S. style grocery store, but like, like a trader Joe's or even more than that. More like, I mean, decadent really, that's all I can think of now after having been in these places where, you know, you're

lucky to get milk or eggs, and now this had like... it literally had an entire aisle of cheese, just cheeses, every kind of cheese you have ever wanted was there.

Rosa Linda Román ([25:35](#)):

And my daughter Ziva and Samuel too, were just like, they just couldn't believe it. They were just squealing with delight about the cheese. And it's funny because you forget how much you take for granted until you don't have it, right? And so, we didn't realize how much we've done without when we've been out here sailing. Now, different islands have restaurants, different islands have different levels of stocked grocery stores, but the prices are always high wherever you eat outside of your boat in The Bahamas. And even on your boat, if you have to buy the stuff in The Bahamas, because obviously everything has to be imported from somewhere else, not everything, but most things. So, groceries were a big one. That was a big part of our experience, figuring out what to eat, where to eat. When we started the adventure we thought for sure, we were going to catch lots of fish.

Rosa Linda Román ([26:33](#)):

And in all of the four months, we caught two little want to be fish that somebody told us were not good eating even, and you should just throw them away. And we ended up eating them and they turned out to be good, but that was it. It was like we had enough for a little fish dip ceviche, and that was it in the whole four months, so that was a shame. We even tried to keep stuff tonight, I mean today, but we don't have the lines for this kind of fishing. We could if this area, supposedly, has some of the best fish that we could want. They have wahoo and other fast moving fish, but our lines would never hold that. So, one of the things we're doing heading back to Florida...

Rosa Linda Román ([27:19](#)):

So, I always try to think of like the silver lining or as Natalie Goldfein from My Habit upgrade taught me, find the gift in a thing. And so, any bad situation or seemingly bad situation has a gift to offer if you can just pay attention. And so, finding the gift and being kicked out of the country, which is how my husband likes to put it, which just makes me laugh because he's like, "Yeah, my wife's a fugitive. She's got to leave the country. They kicked her out." He really is getting a lot of airplay on that one. He enjoys telling everybody that. But anyway for me, the gift or the silver lining in that is that there's a lot of things that we had been putting off doing on the boat that we were just like, "Okay, we'll just continue our sail and enjoy The Bahamas further." But once we realized we were heading having to head back to Florida, I mean, we probably could have fought it and all that, but we just said, you know, let's head back, let's do what we got to do. Take care of what needs to be handled.

Rosa Linda Román ([28:27](#)):

And among those things, our trampoline, which is the forward part of our boat has these two rope areas called trampoline. So, they're not trampolines for jumping on, although generally, if they're in good shape, you can walk all over them and even a kid could jump on them and it wouldn't be a problem, but ours are completely threadbare and have holes, gaping holes in them. So, we have to have those replaced. So, that's one thing. We are adding solar panels and that's going to be a big part of it because I think I've talked about in the past, you know, running the generator every time you want to use to charge your batteries is not the best way to do it and solar panels work very well generally on a boat because you're usually going to tropical.

Rosa Linda Román ([29:21](#)):

Well, not everybody, but we on a boat that I would be on there's always sunshine. I'm not big on cold. In fact, I'm sitting here and I don't know what the temperature is, but I'm wrapped in a blanket. I've got my foul weather gear, which is like a rain sturdy, like wind rain jacket on. And I'm in The Bahamas. It's not that cold anyway. So, if it's up to me, we're staying in warm weather. And that'll be something we'll talk about next, what to do this summer. So anyway, we're heading back. We're going to do the solar panels, the trampoline, I would love to get our septic system completely overhauled because it is horrible and it is the number one thing I don't like about our boat is everything smells in the bathrooms, all three bathrooms smell.

Rosa Linda Román ([30:16](#)):

And I just think that the lines are old and... they're not that old. I mean, they're 2012 and this is 2017. So, five years is not that old, but I don't know. I think that they were neglected and everything smells and I can't stand. For that I'd rather get rid of the boat than have it smell like sewer every time you walk in into the guest bedroom. So, that's something I really I'm going to push for. What else do we want to do with the boat? Bottom cleaning, and usually, you know, stuff like that. I think Nathan said we need to do some re-rigging our sails, which of course, we had them rigged or re-rigged after the fire on the boat next to us and all of that, that happened. But I don't know, you said there's something else that needs to be fixed, which I don't remember what it was.

Rosa Linda Román ([31:08](#)):

Yeah. I mean, mostly that kind of stuff. We really need to come up with kind of a bigger plan of what we want to do. We are more kind of change day by day, kind of people. And think about what, like, yesterday we were convinced that we were going to head back to the Abacos, which is north east side of the Bahamian islands and visit our friends in Hope Town and visit with another boat by Baila, which is another sailboat that has teens or pre-teens onboard. And also, a little girl around Samuel's age that we really get along with them., so we were going to try to connect with them because Monday is Passover and we have our Seder, which is a dinner that you recount or retell the Exodus from Egypt, the Jewish people when they were released by the Pharaoh. And it's basically retelling the story of Moses through a dinner or a Seder anyway.

Rosa Linda Román ([32:09](#)):

So, we're so used to hosting a big gathering for that, for our Seders, and this is going to be the first time I think that it's just the five of us. And that's a little strange because it's more of a community meal it's not really intended to be just you. So, that was weird. And we were looking at connecting with friends in Hope Town and some other sailing friends to have people with us at our Seder, and that was going to be our plan. And then, all of a sudden looking at the weather, we realized we could not do that. All the winds were pushing us in the exact opposite direction. And so, unless we want it to be severely uncomfortable, we would have to change our plans.

Rosa Linda Román ([33:00](#)):

Another possibility that we were toying with was trying to connect with a boat named Totem, which I was really looking forward to getting to meet. They have three kids aboard, older, more like my oldest daughter's age and up, but they've circumnavigated, and they have lots of stories I'm sure to tell and share. And their wife or lady on the boat is, I think you say her name Behan. Anyway, she wrote a book called Voyaging With Kids. And so, I just was looking forward to picking her brain and sharing stories. So, yeah, we couldn't do that because they, for the same reasons, had to go in the direction of the wind and

they had been in the Berry Islands and we were in Nassau, and so, our paths did not cross as we thought they would.

Rosa Linda Román ([33:53](#)):

And that's kind of how it goes. When you live on a boat, you get excited when you're going to see other boats with kids, and then, the plans change. And there's a lot of heartbreak that happens for our kids when they don't get to see the people they thought they were going to get to see. And we say goodbye to a lot of people. So, in a way it's good because it teaches them how to, you know, adjust to change and me too, not just them. Obviously, when Nathan came home and all I wanted to do is talk, that's because I don't have a lot of chance for social connections. Mostly I'm talking to myself and trying to get the children to listen to me without the benefit of another adult anywhere in my circle of influence. So, yeah, that's a big priority. I think whenever we have the chance to connect with other kid boats, we make sure to do so.

Rosa Linda Román ([34:47](#)):

So, that's a little bit of what we've been up to, our route in the past four months as we went from West Palm Beach over to the Abacos, as I just mentioned. And then, from the Abacos, we went to Eleuthera, which is a beautiful lot of natural beauty in Eleuthera. And we had a blast jumping into a thing called an ocean hole, which is basically a big circle in these, like you walk along through the little town, and then, you follow the sign to ocean hole. And then, there's this circle hole in the ground that is so deep. They can't measure it. And you jump in and the fish are there and you swim with the fish. And we had a blast. Our dog, Nala, jumped in after us, everybody swam, and swam, and swam. So, that was fun.

Rosa Linda Román ([35:38](#)):

So, that was Eleuthera and that's when miss Allie who had come with us, we had a babysitter, Allie Miller came with us for all of December and the beginning, the first week in January, but she had to get back to college. And so, we stayed in Rock Sound in Eleuthera, so she could catch a flight out of there. And we said goodbye to her there. So, that was sad. We really enjoyed having her. And the good news is now we have a guest room. The bad news is now we don't have help. And also, just going back to the, having another adult to talk to, it was very nice. So, that was the Eleuthera. And then we went across to Exumas, which is another chain of islands, kind of in the center of The Bahamas, more like the southern center. And we only went to the top of the Exumas at that point, that was Higginbourne Cay, which was a beautiful place.

Rosa Linda Román ([36:38](#)):

We anchored, we saw nurse sharks in the wild. I mean, it was really cool. And then, we went back to Nassau, and Nassau was basically the place we received guests and where Nathan flew out of. That was something that he had to do frequently. So, Nassau has a good airport and we found a marina there, Palm Cay Marina that we stayed at for like three weeks. And my daughter started training because she's a competitive gymnast. And she started training at the gym in Nassau called Nassau Nastics. And then, the other two kids started doing gymnastics at the same time, which was wonderful. Everybody was doing something off the boat that kept their attention and burned off some energy. So, that was very nice. And I'm grateful to Nassau Nastics for letting us participate and let everybody be there. So, that was Nassau.

Rosa Linda Román ([37:34](#)):

Then Nathan came back and we sailed down the chain of the Exuma because starting, I think, we skipped Highbourne Cay on the way back. We went to Shroud Cay, which is the Exuma Land and Sea Park. And at first we were intimidated to go there because we were afraid. They warn you like vehemently that you can't take anything out of the park, not one shell, not one stick, nothing. And we were like, "Oh my gosh, what if our six year old happened to put a shell in his pocket? Or the dog, you know, came on board?" They threaten to not only find you, but they can confiscate your boat and you have like 48 hours to get out of the country. So, we were like, "Yeah, I don't think we want to go there." But in the end we did go there because so many of our friends who also are on boats with kids raved about it. So, we ended up going and it was beautiful.

Rosa Linda Román ([38:27](#)):

You take your dinghy or a kayak and you go up this river in the middle of this tiny little island. And then, it comes out onto the sea and these very big crashing waves and it just was stunning, really beautiful. So, that was Shroud Cay. And then, we headed south to Staniel Cay and Staniel Cay was one of the highlights of the trip. It had something called thunderball, thunder bolt, something like that, under ball grotto is what it was, I think. That was a place that you dive into a cave and come up the inside of the cave. And it's like a coral reef and a cave all at once. And it's beautiful. So, that's Staniel Cay and that's also the place where you've probably heard they're famous for having pigs that swim out to your boat and they live on the beach right there.

Rosa Linda Román ([39:21](#)):

So, yeah, that was Staniel Key, that was a beautiful experience. I'm not a big fan of pigs, but other than that, it was a nice experience. And then, we continued on to George Town. All the way we stopped for a weather systems and whatnot, but we got to George Town and excuse me, it is so early, late, it's hard to believe I used to party till this time, because now I'm just wanting to go to sleep. Anyway, we went to George Town and we arrived in George Town just as it was the time of the regatta, the George Town sailing regatta. And it was really a cool experience. We really enjoyed that. We didn't see a lot of the races, but just a lot of people there, lots of different boats, everybody helps each other out and they have a little beach called Chat N' Chill or Volleyball Beach where they have volleyball net set up and they have a little like grill restaurant there, and so, you and lots of picnic tables and a rope that kind of swings from this tree.

Rosa Linda Román ([40:28](#)):

And the kids were just like jumping out of the tree and swinging on this rope, and it was great. It was the gathering place. George Town is the gathering place of The Bahamas. And you have a little bit of that I think in Hope Town. Although, from what I gather Hope Town was more like where we've met other kids, but that's where we met other kids on land. Like, a lot of our friends who actually live in Hope Town have kids now. And Hope Town was more for like land-based friends, but George Town is where we met lots of cruising friends and got to know a lot of the other kid boats that we hadn't done before. Before that, really in the Abacos and the Eleuthera, we did not encounter many other kid boats.

Rosa Linda Román ([41:12](#)):

So, it was really fun. We had some epic Shabbats, which is our Friday night dinner where we had 20 plus people on the boat just toasting and sharing, breaking bread and just, you know, being together, what else? Oh, and that's where my kids went to the George Town Primary School for three weeks. That was also a place where Nathan flew out of. So, he flew out of Nassau and he also flew out of George Town.

Then after that we received our guests, the Cramptons flew in and came to George Town. After that, we sailed from George Town up to Nassau with the Cramptons on a very rough crossing. And we ended up then going to Atlantis. After the Cramptons left, we received my sister, Sarah and her family with Edgar and my nieces and nephew. And then we stayed at Atlantis for a few days, probably four days. And then, finally we moved to Bay Street marina. So, that is pretty much the summary of our Bahamian tour. And now question is what next? I will chat more about that after the break.

Rosa Linda Román ([42:26](#)):

Okay, I'm back, and yeah I'm still just as tired and nothing much out there, which is great. And the moon is now fully out of the clouds, so I can see much better around me, which makes me feel better. So, now, we go back. I really liked the idea of doing our Passover Seder here in The Bahamas, on a remote island. We got everything we needed on board to do that. Nathan brought back matzah, which is the unleavened cracker bread that you eat for 10 days on Passover and that's because it commemorates the haste with which the Jews left Egypt, and so, they couldn't wait for their bread to rise. So, you eat matzah for 10 days. So, we needed matzah and we were going to try to make it. The kids and I were like, "How do we do that?" So, we were looking up ways to make matzah, but then, Nathan found it in, I think El Paso, Texas. He was able to get some, oh, no, I think it was Florida and brought that over.

Rosa Linda Román ([43:26](#)):

And we got the supplies at that grocery store for charoset, which is apples and oh... and he brought over the walnuts. So, there's this delicious apple walnut dish that you make called charoset and it represents the mortar between the bricks that the Egyptians had to use to build the pyramids and when they were slaves, I'm sorry that while they were in Egyptian Jews, right? And so, we got the stuff to make that. We got the stuff to make like hard boiled eggs, that's part of it, a lamb shank, that's another part of it, bitter herbs, we got parsley, and we actually got Brussels sprouts because it was supposed to be something that doesn't taste good and we don't like. Other people use I think like some kind of bitter lettuce, but anyway, we just do things a little differently, and we're definitely not orthodox, but I do like our family's traditions.

Rosa Linda Román ([44:25](#)):

And a lot of them are new, relatively new traditions and not the Seder and not Shabbat because his parents did that. But a lot of it you kind of develop your own. And so, one of the things I was really looking forward to was being on a remote island for our Seder. We did that once when the girls were little. We were on a remote uninhabited island for Halloween and it's one of the holidays they most remember. And they were very little, they were two and four, but just the ability to do it creatively instead of having the ability to run down to party city or some other place to get supplies or publics to have to get creative and make things that you otherwise would depend on the store for. So, I was looking forward to that, but there's a few factors that are causing us to rush to Florida instead of staying on an island somewhere in The Bahamas and then go to Florida.

Rosa Linda Román ([45:29](#)):

And the number one thing is that my kids, after my sister visited, they got the idea that they would like to go visit the cousins in Chicago. And my sister works for United, so they can get buddy passes and go stand by. But the timing is such that if they don't go like Tuesday or Wednesday after Passover, Passover's on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, they'd have to go because that's the most likely time they'll have a seat available. And it's Easter week and spring break starts for Chicago schools, which is

where my family lives. So, they are going to try to get to Chicago and we looked at flight options. And if our choices were to either stay in Nassau for several days so that they can fly out of Nassau or head back to Florida and have them fly out of there. A big part of why we decided to go that route besides the weather and just, you know, there's a lot of reasons we needed to head back anyway is the immigration issue.

Rosa Linda Román ([46:40](#)):

We had from Monday, which will be Passover is on the 10th, we would have one week left that we would have to be out of the country by the deadline of 17th. So rather than extend it and drag it out, we decided to go for it and head back. The other thing is, Nathan's kind of in a, you know, once he decides what's... and I'm kind of this way too, I guess most people are, but once you kind of made the mental decision then he's done and he's ready to go. He's kind of a man of action, which is what I love about him and also what drives me a little crazy. So now, we are heading over to Bimini. We have to stop there for fuel, maybe stop at a restaurant, and then, we make the big crossing to Florida, and then, we'll see what we want to do next.

Rosa Linda Román ([47:29](#)):

It looks like we're going to be heading up the east coast. It's something we've never done. And I mean, I've been to different cities on the east coast, but the kids have never been really to explore except when they were really little and we've never been there or anywhere like it while homeschooling, and homeschooling is a totally different experience for me. And going up the east coast of the United States lends itself to a lot of potential learning experiences about American history and being able to visit these historic sites and really explore in a way that we would not be able to do that, you know, elsewhere, or if we were in a regular traditional school. So, it's an opportunity, the fact that we have to get back and all that we might as well just make the most of it. So, what we're talking about now is heading up the east coast for the summer, maybe all the way up to Maine, possibly Nova Scotia, but we're just taking it bit by bit. That's pretty much the story of our lives bit by bit.

Rosa Linda Román ([48:28](#)):

So, as of right now the theory is that we're going to head up the east coast, but I'm not giving up on my dream, my plan, my hope that we will sail to Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, where my father is from. He lives in Chicago, but a lot of my extended family is still in Puerto Rico. And, you know, I've always been very close to my family, even though we don't see each other a lot. I'm eager to get there and spend some time on the island that I love so much. And it has so many things that we have been needing to figure out. It has options there. Number one is that it has an easy in an easy out airport and it's part of the U.S.. So, people don't have to mess with, you know, getting passports and stuff necessarily. So, that's one thing.

Rosa Linda Román ([49:22](#)):

The other thing is gymnastics. They have a good gym there, and hopefully, Ahava would be able to train at their gym. And then what else? Oh, they have a synagogue, a reform synagogue there where potentially Ahava could do her bat mitzvah because she is 12. She'll be 13 next January. It's kind of the coming of age celebration for each member of a congregation. Each young person has a bar or bat mitzvah. And it's kind of the transition between childhood and adulthood. So, we've been struggling with what to do about that. Sorry, I'm waning. I know I'm like rambling because I'm tired. So, you guys are like, I used to call my mom or Nathan's mom when she was alive whenever I was like driving and

tired, I'd call so I'd have someone to talk to, to keep me awake, but I can't do that because I'm in the middle of nowhere, and so, you guys are my someone to talk to.

Rosa Linda Román ([50:19](#)):

So, I'm sure you guys all are not listening by now and have hung up the phone. Anyway, so yeah, we've been wondering because all the kids have been going to the synagogue in New Mexico in Albuquerque, and they had a date for her bat mitzvah scheduled. And then, the Kantor who we love very much was like, "Well, I really need that date for someone else and we'll just have Ahava study and get ready to do her bat mitzvah once you guys get back." Well, there's no guarantee we're coming back. If it's up to me, we're not, or at least we're not coming back full-time. So, Ahava definitely doesn't want to wait for her bat mitzvah and really there's other options, so there's this synagogue in Puerto Rico that helps work with families that are interested in doing a bat mitzvah or bar mitzvah away from their home congregation.

Rosa Linda Román ([51:19](#)):

So, I have to call them this week or I guess I'll have to wait until after Passover, but we're going to try to figure out if we can have Ahava's bat mitzvah in Puerto Rico, which would be great, because then my family could come. We could have the excuse to sail over to Puerto Rico. I know my family would visit me there. And hopefully, Ahava could also train at the gym there. Now, Nathan, isn't convinced about this big grand plan of mine because he's worried about the big crossing. I'm pretty sure that's the main concern. And you know, the reality is when we were just at anchor right now where we were rolling and it was so uncomfortable, I can understand why, because that's like big, wild, crazy ocean that we're talking about. Not just a small 25 feet deep Bahamian Bank. It's definitely wild ocean. And he worries about crossing the ocean in this boat. All right. I'm waning. I think I'm going to wrap this up. I want to talk more, but I can't. I'm falling asleep. Thank you guys for listening, for being my sounding board. If you like these episodes and you want to hear more, please drop me a line at [rlr@newmexicast.com](mailto:rlr@newmexicast.com) or if you're so inclined, and you do like this podcast, you can always leave a review for me in iTunes. I'm Rosa, Linda Román, and this is New Mexi-Castaways.