



Saga of the Sailing Hillbillies

Tapp Floyd G

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The "Saga of the Sailing Hillbillies" is a humorous account of the sailing misadventures of an Owensboro, Kentucky couple, Floyd and Elaine Tapp, on their cruise to South America. If the unheard of could happen, it happened to Floyd and Elaine. This refreshing book will have the reader grimacing with fear for the hillbillies' lives one minute and howling with laughter the next.

Floyd and Elaine found the material for their book the hard way-they experienced it. Their dream of quitting the rat race and finding happiness and contentment sailing to islands of paradise turned into a survival escapade. They saw hurricane force winds on their first sail across the Florida Panhandle. No one will ever believe how they made it over the sandbar off Destin and found safe anchorage in these conditions. On another occasion, their first overnight sail, one of the worst non-predicted storms of the century in the Gulf of Mexico stayed on top of them for 30 straight hours. Hurricane Gordon was nipping at their heels on their sail back to Key Largo from the Bahamas. A few months later, three strong weather fronts collided off Mayaguana producing 40 to 50 foot waves and guess who happened to be in the middle of it all. Things started out bad for the hillbillies, and then, got worse.

Floyd's "learn as you attitude" had him learning from his mistakes at a phenomenal rate. How Floyd kept their boat afloat was a miracle. It was even more unbelievable that he kept Elaine with him. Most couples would have called it quits but not the hillbillies. The weather gods finally humbled Floyd. With a severely damaged ego, he turned over the command to Elaine. She was promoted from First Mate to Admiral. She started listening to the weather reports and started making the calls when to pull anchor and make crossings. It was Floyd's overly optimistic mind that would not let him hear a bad weather report-- this kept them in the survival mode on almost every crossing.

One will know this couple quite well after reading the "Saga". Floyd's story telling ability makes it an enjoyable read plus he has written about their misadventures with the hope that something can be learned from the hillbillies' mistakes. The "Saga" is a great "what not to do " book. The inexperienced and the "wish to be's" will get a kick out of reading the "Saga" as well as the experienced sailors.

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