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SPECIAL FEATURE: NORDHAVN 40 ATLANTIC CROSSING

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Nordhavn 40 Atlantic Crossing

M/Y Embracing Life

This isn't a story about a small boat crossing the Atlantic, but is about the owner with the determination to do so. This is about the journey, the destination, and the man standing behind the wheel. Well, to be precise, the man is sitting not standing, and the wheel has been replaced with a joystick. The transoceanic vessel's name is *Embracing Life*. Philippe Guglielmetti not only embraces life, but he wrote a book titled [Embracing Life After My Stroke](#). Boating is not new to Philippe, but crossing oceans in his own yacht is. We commonly hear the expression amongst mariners that "It's about the journey, not the destination" and that for sure is an aphorism that applies to Philippe.

SPECIAL FEATURE



While the destination is a story in itself and is a homecoming to which a hero's welcome awaits him, the journey is one of determination, of setting new goals, and with maintaining the self-discipline and grit to make those goals achievable. Philippe Guglielmetti founded Integra, an ecommerce business that he later sold to Verizon that staffed eleven hundred employees in ten countries. Being a serial entrepreneur, Philippe has been a guest speaker on *Ted Talks*.

EMBRACING LIFE AFTER MY STROKE

A STROKE SURVIVOR'S STORY

Philippe Guglielmetti and Corinne Chapman
Foreword by **Scott Rome, M.D.**



Includes pictures illustrating my journey
and a list of the products that helped me

Philippe was interviewed for a YouTube video in Cannes in 2008 and again in 2010 when he featured his yachts at the Cannes Yachting Festival. Yes, Philippe was also a boat builder, and as CEO of Arcoa Yachts, he saw them through many successful production years. Philippe moved his family to San Francisco in 2014 to establish a 3D printing company.



It was the move to San Francisco that became the home base for most of Philippe's subsequent journeys. To make sure we fully understand Philippe's mindset, as a healthy young man turning forty, he decided to do research on what maladies might await him. He was astonished to find so much information on strokes. Ten years later, in early May of 2015, Philippe flew from San Francisco to Manhattan to attend a 3D printer show. From there he flew to Paris for a few fundraising events and it was in a taxi traveling alongside the Louvre that he suddenly felt tingling in his leg. Philippe recalled his earlier research and calmly told the taxi driver that he was having a stroke and he would surely die if the driver did not immediately get him to a hospital.



After a week in ICU, Philippe was transferred to a hospital room where his wife Florence, who of course had immediately joined him in France upon hearing the devastating news, set about making the sterile room feel like home. In addition to a picture of their three children, Florence set up a 3D model of the Golden Gate Bridge next to Philippe's hospital bed. The Golden Gate bridge became a goal: Philippe, who was one of the rare survivors of a devastating pontine hemorrhagic stroke, was determined to not just see the bridge again, but to cross it. So here is Philippe at the age of fifty with a tracheotomy, feeding tube, and communication with raising one finger or two and he is formulating his plans for walking across the Golden Gate Bridge.



While Philippe's next major goal was to travel solo to France, he knew he would need to build up to it both confidence-wise and physically, mostly assuring himself of overcoming the hurdles with sound logistics. So a trial run was made with the family in tow by setting a shorter end point. A trip to Vancouver was the new goal, a trip that necessitated the practice of handling luggage as well as clearing customs. The family went along and as expected, mission successfully accomplished.



Philippe's daily training included intense swimming, pilates, dancing, and physical therapy in preparation not just for daily living, but so Philippe could keep expanding his goals. Then it was time for his trip alone to Paris. Loaded with key chains from the Golden Gate Bridge, Philippe visited the hospital staff expressing his sincerest appreciation while all welcomed him with utter amazement.



Subsequently there was the family trip to the Baja. Philippe spent a month at an Ashram in Texas. This was shortly followed with a trip to Costa Rica although Philippe learned that jungle hiking was not a skill he could easily master. It was a subsequent trip to Iceland that Philippe realized he fared best when in tropical climates. In June of 2020, five years after his massive stroke, Philippe and Florence moved to Miami. Living on a canal in Miami, watching the boat traffic and enjoying our year-round near perfect weather, Philippe decided it was time to think about boats again.



When Philippe first contacted me for my services as a Buyer's Broker, he told me the three manufacturers he had selected as being his choices for an ocean-crossing trip he had planned. There was a 2001 Nordhavn 40 that was in South Florida that seemed to meet all of his requirements. It was at the dock that I first met Philippe and Florence. Unfortunately it was high tide, so boarding at the owner's dock was difficult. What was difficult for me was impossible for Philippe. So Florence and I boarded while she took videos with her phone to report back to Philippe who was waiting in the car. After the viewing, we went to a restaurant to discuss the plans over lunch.



I have a twenty-seven year old daughter who has Down syndrome. I have been entrenched in the world of special needs for decades and am quite comfortable being around those who need extra help or assistance with accommodations. Yet, watching Philippe abandon the onboard inspection of a boat he was considering purchasing and then watching Florence lift the wheelchair out of the car so we could use the handicap ramp to enter the restaurant, all brought back the realities of the difficulty of the situation. And I had my doubts. While Philippe's recovery had been nothing short of miraculous, and he had pushed so hard to maximize his capabilities, he still was a stroke victim and had ongoing complications like proprioception problems and intense muscle spasms.



The acceptance of those with special needs has been given a name: inclusion. A politically correct alternative to saying a person has special needs is to say that they don't have a disability, but rather they have different abilities. And patience and perseverance are certainly two of Philippe's newly learned abilities. It was at lunch that Philippe gave me a copy of his book Embracing Life After My Stroke. After I got home and read the book, I became a believer in both Philippe and his latest goal: to cross the Atlantic Ocean, not only on a boat under its own power, but one under his power as well.



On January 24th, we attended the survey on the 2001 Nordhavn 40. The previous owners had taken excellent care of their yacht during their many years of ownership. I think this boat was one of the two best-conditioned, best-maintained brokerage yachts that I have surveyed that had years of usage and thousands of miles under her keel. Florida Nautical Surveys did the hull survey and JAS surveyed the single engine and generator. We made sure the haulout was at a location that made boarding easy for Philippe who saw his almost new-to-him yacht for the first time when we went for sea trial.



On February 3rd, six weeks after my first phone call from Philippe, Philippe and Florence closed on their Nordhavn 40, fka *Kemo Sabe*, and now lovingly renamed *M/Y Embracing Life*.



The bottom has been painted (with Micron CS) and new zincs installed. New electronics have been installed including a Simrad AP44 autopilot control system with RPU 160 hydraulic steering pump, NAC 3 processor, a Precision-9 compass, and a FU80 surface mounted steering control lever.



A Yanmar 3YM 30hp wing engine has been purchased and installed. Transmission is ZF. Of course the auxiliary prop was also installed. A stern thruster is currently being added.



Simultaneous to the yacht getting ready for the ocean-transiting excursion, so has Captain Philippe. The daily deliveries include necessities such as captain's chair, Mustang life jackets, Viking offshore life raft, Iridium phone, exercise equipment, and more. Philippe's physical therapist and pilates teacher are training him for exercises and strengthening while onboard. Charlene, Philippe's friend and nurse from France will be dockside in Miami assuring that all medical issues can be addressed and planned for. The shoreside crew in addition to Florence will include a weather forecast service and video calls with an experienced yachtsman who has several Atlantic crossings under his keel. A short shake-down trip to the Bahamas is planned for Philippe, Adelaide, Jeanne, and Dominique to test all systems and to make any necessary adjustments. I think the trip to Bahamas is really to test out all of the fishing equipment they have loaded onboard.



Philippe ends his autobiography Embracing Life After My Stroke with the following (excerpted):

“Before my stroke, I did it all. I skied, hiked, mountain biked, drove motorcycles, yachts, and went scuba diving...My recovery has allowed me to embrace that I don’t need to be the same man I was before. I have transformed...I can’t write, drive, nor stand for very long...Over the past five years I have fought for my independence. Those goals were the stepping stones of my journey. My message is that it is possible to defy the odds.”

Bon Voyage, Captain Philippe! We eagerly await the news of your arrival in Europe and your successful transatlantic

crossing!!

Story by Judy Waldman



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An advertisement for the 118 TRADITION yacht by Cheoy Lee. It features a small image of the yacht on the left, the text "118 TRADITION" in large red and white font, a red button that says "DISCOVER MORE", and the Cheoy Lee logo on the right.