

Hunter Family

Just ask the Hunter family

Is it really better in Bermuda?

By Jack Evans

The Intelligencer

It's better in Bermuda! That's the observation of one Belleville family, Don, Patti and Beth Hunter, who spent the past year cruising the Caribbean area on their 39-foot ketch, Prism One.

The Hunters returned home in August, in time for Beth, 14, to start high school. (She had been finishing her elementary level by correspondence courses during the year.)

Interviewed on board their boat at a Belleville dock recently, where they were still living, Patti said: "Reality is starting to sink in. We're still looking for a place to live."

But despite the reality of returning to their normal lives as electrician for Don, school bus driver for Patti and student for Beth, they wouldn't even think of trading their one-year hiatus.

After extensive searching, they bought the boat in 1991 and Don spent the best part of two years trying to restore it to tip-top shape to take their dream trip.

Then in July, 1993 they quietly slipped out of Belleville harbor and headed down the Erie Canal for the Hudson River and New York City.

Their first major open water destination was Bermuda, which normally takes about four days for sailboats. But they were becalmed for four days so it took 10.

"Don refused to start the motor," joked Patti.

They loved Bermuda, they said, spending almost two-and-a-half months there before moving on. "We didn't want to leave there," they agreed. "We met so many friends, including two from Belleville."

The long stay brought a chance for Don to crew aboard another sailboat, much larger than his own, bound for the Azores, a 19-day trip before flying back to Bermuda. But that's another story, Don says.

Their next destination was Guyana in South America but en route they ran into their first spell of rough weather.

"The seas just kept building," said Don. "Finally



Intelligencer photo by Jack Evans

The Hunter family, from left, Don, Patti and Beth.

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