

Gladys Benson, my extraordinary mother-in-law, was the inspiration for many other women in the Tucson Sailing Club to get out there and go cruising. When I first met Gladys she was in her 70s and still sailing the Sea of Cortez in Sailing Solution, her O'Day 27. I know many sailors in the Club have fond memories of sailing with Gladys. When Gladys retired from sailing, her son, Jim, bought her boat. We continue Gladys's legacy by sailing the Sea of Cortez as often as we can.

Gladys is now in her 80s and lives with her other son, Allen, and his family. Though no longer able to sail, Gladys loves to hear the stories and see the pictures from our trips and reminisce about her many adventures at sea.

Some people have asked: "Where did the name Sailing Solution come from?" This is my brief interpretation:

Ode to Gladys

By Leslie Benson

A lady named Gladys had dreams of the sea
But living in Tucson there was no sea to see.

Husband Jim said "Please don't suffer and wail
We'll get down to San Carlos and learn how to sail!"

A Venture 22, an Aquarius 23 were great for awhile,
But even they did not always make Gladys smile.

Jim passed away; Gladys had to move on.
Though heart-broken, her love for sailing was not gone.

Like many great sailors Gladys still had a need
For a boat that was bigger and could go at great speed.

A boat that was handsome, not just an illusion;
Gladys finally found her perfect.....Sailing Solution.

This poem was created as Jim and I sailed from Willard Bay on Tiburon Island to Estanque, an amazingly picturesque tiny volcanic island off the southern coast of Isla Angel de la Guarda in the upper Sea of Cortez.