

10,000 Islands continued...

quickly changed into warm clothes and went back to the campfire! Steve and Ginny were most kind and helpful and had made themselves a snug little beachorage complete with hearth, tent, and boat, but they were still getting organized for their long long cruise. Steve was actually working on some fittings on the boat. I got chilled and decided to turn in for the night. It was about 6:30 pm. After forcing a poor choice of MRE down, I made up my bunk with air mattress, sleeping bag and pillows and was down for the night. One good thing was that with all the wind and cool weather, there were no bugs!

The next morning, Steve and I took a walk out to the southern point of the island and by the time we returned there were boats arriving from their safe nightly anchorages. A few had decided to bag it, and went back to Port-of-the-Islands for electricity and space heaters. The rest of us enjoyed the warming sun, played with the dogs, and sat by the fire. Steve and a few others went to a nearby beach and gathered oysters. Ginny produced two pots from inside "Thurston", and we steamed the oysters. They were excellent! Just cooked enough to make them easy to open up and slurp. Most folks stayed until sometime after noon, when the winds again began to threaten the boats on the lee shore. Steve broke out his piano accordion, and we enjoyed listening to a real virtuoso.

This time I decided to go out to an anchorage, so that in the morning, I could get away, and not be stranded by the tide, if the weather continued to be bad. Anchored out with Kentucky Ken, and Nick between two mangrove islands, Ken and Brenda invited me over to their Mac X for lunch. After downing a beer and a great ham sandwich (Thanks Brenda!), Ken ferried me back to Whisper in his new inflatable kayak. Ken said that he's going to take it out to the Marquesas after he gets to Key West. I hope he meant aboard his boat!

That night I broke out my fleece and nylon "sportsman's blanket" to put on top of my 30 degree sleeping bag. I also had extra clothes on, a wool hat and gloves. Staying down below in a SeaPearl for 12 to 13 hours to escape the weather isn't much fun, so in the morning, after a good breakfast and cleaning up, I fired up Mr. Honda and took off for Port-of-the-Islands. Most of our fleet wasn't far behind!

Sadly, I must report that Nick Lackey broke his wrist while getting his boat back on the trailer at the marina. He called from a Gainesville Hospital to make sure that I know that Terry Poling and Dave Forrester were in his words "Golden" to him, in getting his boat on the trailer, and his gear packed up for the road. He drove straight to the hospital and couldn't even operate the turn signals with his left arm! Get well Nick! News that Terry Clements had cut a finger badly reached me also. He had to retire from the cruise after the first day.

The extended cruisers got rooms in the motel, and stayed for a few days longer waiting for the weather to improve. From the photos it looks like they enjoyed their time there!

So, even though we turned out a total of ten boats, it would seem that those who stayed home probably made the better choice!

Everglades Challenge Changes

I have had to withdraw my name from the participants in the Everglades Challenge this year. I have a minor (umbilical hernia) surgery coming up, and don't know if I'll be able to perform well enough to compete. Bill Fite will instead be going with Jonathan Arthur. Godspeed, MoonShadow.

I didn't realize it last month, but another of our WCTSS members has thrown their hat in the ring for the EC this year. Paul Myers has decided to enter Brogan, his SeaPearl 21 into the race. He's going with a long time friend, who I haven't met.

Also entering, for the first time will be Meade Guegeon, of West System Epoxy fame. Meade is planning to sail his "Yellow Thing", that he brought to Cedar Key last year, the 300 miles to Key Largo. If anyone can do it, he can. If any one else from the Squadron is attempting the Challenge, please let me know.

The Squadron will still be on the Ft. DeSoto EAST beach before dawn on Saturday, March 6th to see them off, and then meet afterwards at the SeaHorse Cafe for Breakfast on Pass-a-Grille Beach. Hope to see you there.

Additional March Cruise Added!

As soon as last month's newsletter hit your mailboxes, I got a call from Dodie and Paul Waggoner. "What happened?" they asked. We don't see a March cruise to Cayo Costa? Of course it was just an oversight, and I added it to our list of events on our web site. Thanks for your quick response Dodie! I now know that our members actually READ the newsletter!

Two WW Potter 15's for Sale?

Those of you who cruised with Frank Florin, either on the east coast or at Cayo Costa, will remember his well outfitted yellow WW Potter 15, ZunZun. Frank informed me that this well equipped and maintained (garage kept) 15 is for sale. Ill health of both he and his wife make this a necessity, unfortunately. I'm putting an add on our web site this weekend listing all the equipment. Frank is asking \$6200 for his lovely boat. His cell phone number is 954-288-0815.

Seems to me that there is another Potter 15 that should be up for sale as well... hmm.. would that be Jose's boat?

