

NAVARRE BEACH YACHT CLUB NEWS

MAY 2018



Commodore's Comments...

Ahoy Shipmates!

What a month this has been! A fantastic trip east that Bill Geyer, our Sail Boater at Large reports. We were wonderfully missed by a tropical storm, and Bob Holmes is hosting a RAFT UP this next weekend in Big Sabine to sub for the one the storm prevented. Anyone who missed the Butt Roast, missed the boat. Very sincere thanks to John and Melissa Myran for hosting at their home, and to Dave Villane, the premier butt auctioneer, and the slave-driving Chef Chuck Howard. Fantastic day and very active month. Hope you will join us for the next meeting June 4th at 6:30 at Juana's.

Commodore Ken



Cruise to Port St Joe

I originally planned a cruise to the East or to the West by myself, however, I always enjoy company so I mentioned this to a couple of friends at the February club meeting and they said I should announce this and make it a club cruise. After looking at the normal weather and wind patterns for April, I settled on a cruise to the east as far as Port St. Joe. Sue put out the word and I was expecting about a half-dozen members that would be interested. It ended up being 15 boats signed up, WOW!!!! Was I surprised, so I went to work on a schedule that would basically let the boats come and go as they pleased, but with firm reservations in the Panama City Marina and at the Port St. Joe Marina and with plenty of time to make it to the marinas. (Firm schedules do not belong on any vessels.) I should add, that a couple of the boats cancelled out a couple of days before the departure and some would be leaving late and try to catch up, so this whole thing with scheduled marina stops took several emails and phone calls to keep the marinas advised of who's coming and who's not. This is always very important, so the marinas can utilize all their space. Ken Rudzki on *Chantey* would not be starting with the rest of us but planned to catch up by the time we reached PSJ. Also, Steve Rudzki on *Cat's Away* let me know he would be starting late and would catch up in PC or before.



The cruise was to begin on April 21st with the first anchorage at Spectre Island, and to have an island cleanup at about two in the afternoon. I arrived the day before and Ralph Thornburg on *Last Fling* was also a day ahead. I observed about a hundred people partying on the island so figured if these people party here they should leave a clean wake themselves. At this time, I received word from John Myran on *Passion*, and Chuck Howard on *Credo*, that they were headed west due to the ESE wind and their 50-plus foot masts can't get under the bridges. Their plans were to try and catch up to the rest of the fleet in Panama City. On Saturday the 21st other boats started arriving in the anchorage, including Steve Theis on *S and S*, Joe Halsted on *Indecision*, Wayne Hillis on *Just Tri-N*, Bill Muir on *Hippokampos*, Mike Breton on *This Is It*, Dan Kline on *Misty Too*, and Patti Burt on *Justduet*. (Please forgive me for not listing all the spouses and crew members, from here on out I will just refer to the boat name when possible.) At about two o'clock Mother Nature was about to make her presence known in the way of a major storm front coming. I passed the word that I was not comfortable with riding it out at Spectre Island and thought Boggy Bayou was a safer place to be and so headed in that direction. *Hippokampos* at this time was having engine problems along with his auto pilot not working right, so he decided to head back. I also noted when he first set his anchor towards the eastern end of Spectre he pulled up some kind of huge iron piece of junk and with some assistance from a fellow sailor deposited it back where it came from.



After arriving in the north end of Boggy Bayou, *Indecision* set his anchor and offered *Just Tri-N* and myself to raft up with him to ride out the storm. All the other boats decided on a couple different marinas in Boggy Bayou. When the wind started to increase to over 20 knots, *Indecision* thought it best to increase the scope on the anchor, this put us really close (within 10 feet) of the shoal behind us. We were all nervous about this, so it was time to dig out the charts and look at options. Tom's Bayou was within two miles with good protection all around; we broke up the raft and let *Indecision* go ahead so we could again raft up. Once his anchor was set *Just Tri-N* led by myself headed into Tom's Bayou, I was about to raft up once more when *Indecision* pointed out that *Just Tri-N*'s engine quit and they anchored at the entrance in about one foot of chop and strong winds. We were all glad they had the anchor ready and were able to get a good set quickly. I was able to maneuver my boat *K.I.S.S.* (keep it simple stupid) close enough to *Indecision* for Joe to jump on. We made a tow rope ready and after three attempts were able to get close enough to *Just Tri-N* to toss the tow rope. Wayne quickly attached it to a cleat as we applied power and then Wayne had to pull up the anchor as fast as he could, he really did good by showing super-human strength to get that anchor up, it was really set good. We were able to tow *Just Tri-N* up to the side of *Indecision* where the crew had fenders set and grabbed lines to make the raft up. I was then able to go to the other side and our three-boat raft up was once again complete. We were able to ride the storm out totally protected while there were tornado watches, water spouts, and a lot of rain. All our boats received a nice fresh water wash down by Mother Nature.

The next day turned out beautiful with sunny skies and fair winds from the ESE which made for a close reach down Choctaw Bay with a couple of tacks. This is where *Misty Too* turned back due to work commitments. And the power boats *S and S*, *Last Fling* and *This Is It* cruised down the bay towards the "ditch" and into West Bay and PC. Now we were down to six of us going east and two to the west. I will let the west-

ward sailors tell the own story, but from what I heard they had a really great cruise. Word was received back that they had encountered strong ESE winds in West Bay and would be anchored up in the south end of the bay. *Indecision* and *Just Tri-N* had passed me up in the bay as I was fishing and going slow, fishing not catching. At the beginning of the ditch, *Indecision* saw that *Just Tri-N* was still trying to get his engine to run. Maybe Wayne should rename the boat "*Still Trying.*" This is where *Indecision* took him in tow through the whole 18 miles of the ditch and into West Bay to anchor. I arrived later and found a secure anchorage among the other four boats. *This Is It* decided to go straight to PC and a hot shower ashore. Then just before sundown here comes *Cat's Away* with Steve and Juana, they caught up to us with some fast sailing and motoring. Come morning with much lighter winds, we all set sails or motored to the PC Marina where the marina staff met us and helped with dock lines and fenders. By this time, *Just Tri-N* figured out a way to apply CPR to his engine and made it to the marina on his own; Wayne and Michelle took turns continually pumping the fuel line bulb to keep it running. Great hand and forearm exercise. In the afternoon Kevin Rudzki arrived so he could drive Juana back for other commitments; a lot of logistics involved in this cruise by all. Then later we got word that *Hippokampos* was on his way to the marina with one engine out, so there were a lot of us out to help him with lines and to fend him off the dock. Now we are back up to eight boats, not counting Kevin. All this has been fun so far, even with minor engine problems and typical boat problems encountered by some of our cruisers.

After a small conference with part of our group it was decided on dinner out at Bayou Joe's, just a short walk away. Amazingly we had a gaggle of 17 headed to the restaurant and were all seated together; it looked like a club meeting. What a hoot, so many friends and fellow sailors eating, talking and of course drinking. Later we all meandered back to our boats and plotted the next day's course.

Three of us, *KISS*, *Just Tri-N*, and *Cat's Away*,

headed to Crooked Island for a couple of nights, and some beachcombing. We three anchored at the far west end of the bay, so it was a good hike through the shrubs and brush to get to the beach. On the second day *Cat's Away* decided to move to the east for better access to the beach and some kite surfing. *Indecision* had a scheduled appointment time to be in Indiantown on the Okeechobee waterway, so he headed straight to Apalachicola, then Dog Island and



Photo Credit: Roger Adams

points south. Meanwhile, I think *Hippokampos* may have finally got both engines to run for a while and limped back west and to home in Holley. *This Is It*, *Last Fling*, and *S and S* spent another day and relaxed in PC.

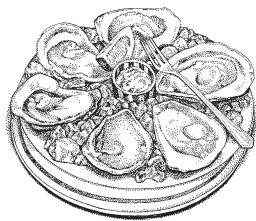
We had reservations at the Port St Joe Marina for the 28th of April for all the boats still in our cruise. I have to add that Lisa at the marina went way out of her way to accommodate our changes to the schedule. We actually arrived in PSJ on the 27th and all tied up on both sides of the lay along.

About 6 p.m. *Chantey* came steaming in. Ken and Cheryl sailed, motored and finally caught up with the rest of what was left of us. Having their main mast cut down to allow them to get under all the 50-foot bridges has evidently made *Chantey* also sail faster. They had put in some really long days in order to catch up and went to bed early for about a 14-hour sleep.

It is now Friday the 28th and all our power boat friends have started departing for home to meet other obligations; we wished *Last Fling*, *S and S*, and *This Is It*, a safe voyage back. *Last Fling* went to Apalachicola for a day of fun. Now we were down to four boats in our fleet, so we decided on a final dinner out that evening in the Dock Side Café right at the marina. There were

six of us: Steve, Ken, Cheryl, Wayne, Michelle, and myself, it was a great group and as much fun as when we had 17 for dinner. The next day *Cat's Away* left for home so he could get ready to go to the Bahamas. You probably wonder what happened to Juana. Well, Kevin drove his boat from Navarre to PC just to pick her up and take her back to Navarre to meet obligations there, what a brother-in-law! Then *Just Tri-N* headed to Apalachicola. Wayne reported that his engine only quit four or five times on the way, and Ralph on *Last Fling* said he saw Wayne pulling on the starter cord in Lake Wimico. I guess he didn't apply CPR often enough. *Chantey* and I spent another day in PSJ and relaxed, went walking and just enjoyed the town and some of the fare.

Next day, April 30th, I left early to start heading back to Navarre, and *Chantey* headed to Apalachicola for a few days and to gorge on oysters. I think Ken said he ate four dozen at one setting; Wayne was nice enough to leave some for him.



I had a very nice motor boat ride through the ditch back to PC and anchored in Pearl Bayou for the night. *Just Tri-N* called and said he would catch up to me tomorrow. Meanwhile that night a friend that lived across from Pearl picked me up to have dinner at their home in Parker Bayou. A very good treat. Next day, I had enough wind to sail through St. Andrews Bay where I finally caught some fish, two Spanish Mackerel and a Blue Runner. Now *Just Tri-N* had caught up to me, so I told them we have enough fish for dinner together in Hogtown Bayou. Wayne and Michelle kept their engine going with CPR as we found a peaceful spot to drop the anchors, then my engine started sounding funny and I discovered it was no longer pumping water. Oh well, I'll worry about that tomorrow, it was time to fix rice and fry fish, (and drink a beer of course). A wonderful meal with great company that furnished some fine wine to accompany the

fish. The next morning after cleaning up the dinner dishes I watched *Just Tri-N* motor away and set sail. Once they left it gave me enough swinging room to hoist my main sail and sail off the anchor, the wind was just perfect for a broad reach west through Choctaw Bay. I called a friend that was on his boat at the Fort Walton Yacht Club, explained my engine problem and he said he would catch me at the T-dock as I slowly sailed by, no damage to the boat and no injuries. I had called ahead to a marine repair shop and located the parts I needed in Gulf Breeze; my wonderful wife drove to get them then delivered them to me at the FWYC. My buddy and I were able to cram the one-hour repair into a five hour episode, but the engine now was pumping water again. Although I'm not a member of the FWYC I appreciate that they allowed me to dock there and spend the night. As it turned out, I again had good wind to sail back to Navarre. Unfortunately, there is no way to really tell all how much fun this cruise was, you would have to have been there. Maybe next time you will be there.

Until Next Time,

Bill Geyer

Sail Boater at Large

