



WCTSS

NEWSLETTER

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Ron Hoddinott Editor

Cedar Key in November

Once again, the Squadron's November Cedar Key event attracted sailors from all over the country. It's beginning to look like the May Small Boat Meet part 2. But that's OK, because the place is so great for small boat sailing with the five islands right off the city docks, sandy beaches, and restaurants that continue to get better each year. Add that to the plethora of places to stay, from Bed and Breakfasts, to Motels, to Condos, to Campgrounds and you have an almost perfect sailing weekend get-a-way destination!

The Island Place, which used to be the hub of activity in the area, is devastated, but we were allowed to use its beach as a staging area and an overnight stop for a few. Ted Jean and I shared a condo right across from the Island Place, and we saw people going into the upstairs rooms, so it's not totally gone, and the Chamber of Commerce says it may be back in business by May. There is a large two story structure being built next door where the old Gulfside Motel used to be, which will be part of a large University research station. The city docks appear to be fully functional. We used the outside dock and with two people carefully guiding the launched boat around the submerged concrete and pilings, were able to launch and retrieve the boat.

Friday we had time to unpack, contact Tony's to reserve the back room for the Squadron, and check out who was arriving over by the docks. We found Lonnie Black with Paula and his Swann Beetle Cat, Dennis and Carol Marshall with Duckling, and Boyd and Rebecca, new members, who were setting up their new to them Potter 15 "Lil Dipper." Also met new members Eric Rodriguez and family who were there with a MacGregor 19. Simon's motorhome with the Goat Island Skiff was parked in the lot, but he wasn't around until later.

The wind was almost nonexistent on Friday afternoon, but we saw a few boats that were based over at the Old Fenimore Mill Condos going out as the tide was rising. On yes, the tides. The mid to high tides that we've come to depend on to sail on previous outings were mostly night time affairs, so we learned to pick our way in the shallows of low to mid tides during the days. We saw Rex and Kathy's Kathleen, and the Sarasota Cat of Glenn Osoling, as well as the prototype SeaPearl of Kent and Barbara Bleakley. Also out there were a few melonseeds, Roger's CLC NE Dory, Spray, and Michael Jones' stretched Windmill, Malu.

We had set the dinner time at 5:15, but the tides kept people out on their boats until 5:30 or 6:00, so the evening crowd at Tony's started off small but grew to about 21 folks. As usual they did a great job on the food, and the service was stellar! If you've never had Tony's Clam Chowder, you must at at some point in your life, give it a try. It is actually a World Champion Chowder - twice!

Saturday was cool but sunny and the winds were a bit better. Dom and Sandra Romer launched a Precision 15 that they'd just purchased! Ted and I got his Bay River Skiff by B & B Yacht Design launched and we drifted and motored over to Atsena Otie Key with three other boats. Ted had never rigged the boat, and we wondered if the first owner ever sailed it, as the sails were new and the running rigging was missing until Ted fixed it up recently.

The main mast was sticky in the deck hole, but WD-40 solved that problem. I think Ted had put some epoxy paint inside the hole, and that really tightened it up. For about an hour Lonnie's Swann Beetle, and Dennis' Duckling Cat Boat and Ted's BRS sailed almost in formation, tacking and sailing against the incoming tide together like a flight of Pelicans. Great fun, and good for taking photos. Ted found his skiff quite stable compared with his SeaPearl, and it had room for two to stretch out. He still has some minor tweaking to do to make her sail better though.

Before long we looked back towards Atsena Otie Key and saw a fleet of small boats heading that way or tacking back and forth in the waters around it. Fairlie Brinkley was scooting along with his lovely Melonseed, one of the prettiest I've seen. Rod Hazard was there with his SCAMP, Puffin. Michael Jones' Malu, Kent and Barbara's Two Bow, and Ray Bauman's Allure, a just finished Melonseed by Rex and Kathy Payne. Steve Churchill from Tennessee was sailing his SeaPearl - his first time at Cedar Key. Bill Whalen and Steve Kingery brought their sailing canoes up from Crystal River. A covey of Windriders were zipping around. Jim Brown the designer of the Windriders was on the beach. Hugh Horton sailed out with his Buffelhead Canoe, and Meade Gougeon had his latest canoe for the Everglades Challenge going very fast as well. The multi-colored sails of Ida Little and Michael Walsh's sailing canoe were spotted, and Simon Lewandowski had his go-pro camera up on the top of his lug spar taking video of all the beached boats and folks.

I know I didn't see everyone, but I have a list of 30 boats who I know were there! That's a pretty good turnout in my book. We were told that the Chamber of Commerce has recognized our existence and wants to put on a "Cocktail Party" for us the next time we come. Hugh Horton is in charge of checking that out.

There was a bit of confusion about Saturday night's dinner destination. On our web site we had specified the Island Hotel for Saturday night, but so many of the folks who went to Tony's on Friday wanted to go back so we went back there. Some followed the web site, and ended up at the Island Hotel. Sorry for the confusion. I hope your dinner was good too. During Saturday night's dinner, Glenn Osoling came in with a package to give to me. A nice card was on it. I was shocked! It turned out to be a finely made half hull model of a SunCat hand made of wood that Glenn made. Glenn has a long association with the SunCats. I am so impressed with the gift and the gesture! The model is now proudly displayed on our fireplace mantel! Thanks Glenn!



Simon sailing his Goat Island Skiff.

Meade's Island - December 2016

by Ron Hoddinott

This gathering was originally suggested by Dimitri Krinos as an opportunity for the children in the club to get together around a campfire and cook hot dogs and make smores before the Holidays, and after school was out.

A few of our members couldn't wait until the Sunday - Tuesday that it was scheduled for, and sailed out Thursday through Saturday. Dan Roeder was out on Friday, and Lonnie Black spend a couple of nights out there as well with his Swann Beetle Cat. They sent back photos via Facebook, and it got the rest of us excited about going. With the holiday preparations I felt lucky to get away on Sunday and return on Monday!

I launched at the Belleair Ramp on Sunday about 10 am, and had a wonderful sail with increasing south to southwest winds of about 15 knots with gusts a bit higher. Nomad enjoyed those winds on the stern and picked up her skirts and skimmed along at 6 - 6.2 mph most of the way. Letting the auto tiller do most of the steering, I got relaxed and a bit lazy and didn't want to start the motor and lower sail just to go under the Dunedin Causeway Bridge! Checking the chart I saw that there was 24 feet of clearance for my mast, and gaff. No problem. I guess I forgot that those numbers are for Mean Low Tide, and we weren't there yet! The numbers on the bridge fenders can usually be believed, however, and as I approached at 6 mph, I saw that I only had 20 feet of clearance. I wasn't sure I could get the whole rig under the bridge, and didn't have room or time to lower sail and start the engine. With seconds to spare as I approached the bridge, I let the peak halyard fly, lowering the top of the sail, just as the big sail decided to jibe. With a loud crash, over the boom went as I leaned hard on the tiller to make sure she didn't head up into the west side of the bridge! An unexpected jibe like this is a lubberly thing to let happen aboard, and I am ashamed to have allowed it. The only damage suffered except to my pride was my Ritchie Compass went over the side as the main sheet grabbed it and flipped it overboard while whipping across the bridge deck! I am humbled once again by the power of the wind. Later on, Dan Roeder informed me that the chart height of the bridge was at mean HIGH water, so I would have been fine, and he is correct. That's something I almost never worried about with my SeaPearl, and always worried about with my larger keel boats!

Arriving about 1 pm I discovered that I was the first boat to arrive. I knew that Ed and Becky were on the way, as I'd seen them launching at the Seminole St Ramp on my way north. I anchored where I thought was a good spot, but there were a lot of rocks on the beach and after St. Somewhere came in and launched to my west, I moved over there, where there was a very smooth sandy beach to wade to.

Before long we started to see other Squadron boats arriving. Kent and Barbara Bleakley's SeaPearl Two Bow sailed right up to the beach with Glenn Osloling and his wife also aboard. Simon Lewandowski sailed his Goat Island Skiff in after a brisk sail from the "mud ramp" at Pop Stancell Park. Scott Birdwell's Astus 20 trimaran came sailing in and anchored out. The JF Bedard sailed his Montgomery 17 towing his Ozona dinghy behind him. JF brought his son Joshua and friend Benjamin. So the kids had the beach. We kept looking for Dimitri who had suggested and planned the dates for this outing and wondered where he was. No worries. He'd gone out into the Gulf and sailed out and around Three Rooker's Bar before heading back to the anchorage! Seeing another SeaPearl come it I guessed that it was Kevin Riley, and it was!

Becky and I got a good fire going and the sun was starting to drop in the sky, which is one of the drawbacks of sailing this time of year! I waded back to Nomad and made dinner quickly so I wouldn't have to do it in the dark. It was my usually foil of pre-cooked rice with a can of chicken and some soy sauce and pepper. Not too bad, and filling. Anyway, the weather calmed down and we had a great night both afloat and at the campfire where hot dogs and smokes were made and enjoyed! I went back to listen to the Bucs game, which they lost, but they managed to make it interesting!

On Monday the wind was still. That's right. There was absolutely NO wind.

(Meade's Island cont)

I walked to the bow to see my anchor line and chain resting on the anchor. After cleaning up and having coffee and breakfast, I raised the anchor and motored down the waterway being ably steered by the tiller pilot. The weather was just about perfect during the whole weekend, and it gave me a chance to get away from the hustle and bustle of Holiday shopping and home decorations, which awaited me when I returned. I really enjoyed launching and hauling out at the Belleair Bridge ramps, and was even able to put the rig away in the shade of the bridge with a cool breeze blowing under it!

St. Somewhere, Dimitri and Nico, and Kevin Riley's SeaPearl went to Caladesi Island Marina for a day at the beach and a nice overnight at the marina before heading home on Tuesday.

10,000 Islands Jan 11-14

by Ron Hoddinott

Wednesday 1/11/17

Launched at Goodland Boating Park. Left home at 6:30 - arrived at 10:30.

No sign of Watercolors, so we launched and motored out toward Coon Key and Coon Key Light in Gullivan Bay. Ed asked me to take the lead while he took the rear and Shorebird stayed between us.

The wind was out of the east so we motored along at 4 - 4.5 knots. After an hour or so, Gomez Point came into view, and I headed into the beach. Our normal spot was taken by a large group of canoes. I cruised by slowly and counted 9 souls on the beach. It turned out to be Outward Bound. I circled back to the other two boats and suggested that we move our base south about a hundred yards. Ed anchored and Then came by to take my stern anchor to the beach as I eased my bow anchor off from the bow. The tide was almost fully high, so we expected to constantly have to wade out and let the stern anchor line out.

We set up on the beach and enjoyed the afternoon. Cool breezes from the east and a glorious sunset on the way down. We spotted another boat coming toward us from the same direction that we'd landed. It did turn out to be Tom and Christy in Watercolors. I helped them with their stern anchor and while doing so, Nomad went aground. It took four of us to move her out to deeper water with great effort. We didn't pick the best spot along the shore. There is a serious sandy shelf that we anchored on. Further to the west, where the Outward Bound group was located there is deeper water closer to shore. We'll move over there when we come back from sailing today.

Thursday 1/12/17

This morning I got up about four am to eat some oatmeal and have coffee. I'm keeping a careful watch on the tide, as I don't think I'm out far enough to avoid going aground again, but I'd have to put a buoy on my stern anchors and motor out before that happens. There's to be a very low low tide in a few hours, and we'll probably all be stuck until 10:30 or so. Temperatures were very fine for sleeping last night. About 55 degrees and light winds. Slept well when I was asleep. Oatmeal and coffee for breakfast.

About 6:30 the tide was at it's lowest and Nomad rolled down to lie on her side completely out of the water. I climbed out over the stern and walked the beach to look for the best place to anchor. As I'd expected it was down where the Outward Bound group was camped yesterday. I built a small cairn of coral rock to mark the spot beyond which we should not anchor. The shore was much steeper here, so we wouldn't have to go so far off the beach to find deep enough water to stay upright. I then sat down in my chair, and watched the water come back in, which it did in a few more hours. Not quite upright, I climbed back into Nomad and cheered as she sat back up right on her lines. So after lunch we were all itching to go for a sail. Tom and Christy aboard Watercolors and I wanted to go, and Becky Combs decided to go along with me, while Ed stayed with their two doggies. Paul and Joyce were satisfied to stay on the beach, read and enjoy the solitude. We sailed out into Florida Bay toward Gomez Point which sticks out about a half mile from Panther Key. Wind was out of the east and about 10 knots with gusts to 15. We carried full sail and heeled gently to the breeze with Nomad putting her shoulder down plowing the seas. Trying to head up and cut the corner at Gomez Point we scraped the centerboard and had to fall off and leave the mark to port.

(10,000 Islands Cont)

Gaining deeper water we headed up a bit more. After an hour or so we headed back in and Ed was waiting on the shore to hand us our stern anchor line before we headed out to drop the bow anchor.

For dinner I made a Mountain House single serving of Beef and Noodles, which turned out to be excellent! A hunk of French bread rounded out the meal. After cleaning up we cleared a space in the sand for a small campfire, and began watching the sunset which again promised a green flash which failed to appear even though the sunset was awesome! With the fire blazing we noticed a small boat heading right for us. As it neared we noticed two masts. Turned out to be Dennis Bradley with Egret! We guided him to a safe spot on the beach and he joined up at the fireside. Always an excellent story teller, we enjoyed listening to his tales and catching up with his exploits. Some time later we retreated to our boats and spend a pleasant night afloat. No grounding this time, in much deeper water.

Friday - 1-13-17

Everyone woke up ready to sail down to Tiger and Picnic Key for lunch. After a breakfast of cold cereal and milk, I readied Nomad for the short hop down the coast to the lovely cut between Tiger Key and Picnic Key, so named for it's beautiful white sandy beaches on it's south west side entering the islands. We had a close reach to round Gomez Point off of Panther Key and then a closer reach to follow the chain of islands down to cut between the islands. Down here it's hard to tell which island is which, so a mapping GPS is a godsend. Before the days of chart plotters, I used to use the latitude lines on the chart which shoot out from the different islands to give an accurate picture of which island I was passing.

Just as we were nearing Picnic Key the wind headed us about 15 degrees, and since we were within a mile of the entrance, I just lowered sail and powered in towards the opening. I was about a half mile ahead of St. Somewhere and Watercolors, and farther ahead of Dennis in the Egret as he had left after we did. I couldn't see Paul and Joyce in the Peep Hen, and found out later that they had turned around. I circled around in front of the opening waiting for St. Somewhere to join me. Watercolors was enjoying the sail and tacked until right in front of the opening. Going in we spotted a camp of canoeists and a solo kayaker on the outer part of the beach, all fishing. I came around to where the beach was out of the swift incoming current and nosed Nomad into the beach. Jumping off to put the anchor in the sand I saw St. Somewhere swiftly cruising in. They anchored stern to the beach so they could easily get off with their doggies. Watercolors came in and also backed into the beach. Their little white West Highland terrier jumped off and almost made it to the water before I grabbed her. Daisy loves the water, but the swift current in the pass would have taken her into the Everglades. Christy Somehow her life jacket fell off the boat, and while I watched her on the beach, Tom and Christy took off after it, having to go about a quarter mile before hooking it with a boat hook. After they were all secured, we watched as Dennis grounded the Egret on the beach and showed off his crew, a large stuffed Winnie the Pooh! He says it gets a lot of attention tied to the mast as he cruises the ICW. We took a walk down through the mangroves to where the fishermen's camp was located and chatted with them a while. They had rented canoes for the weekend, and had a nice tent camp set up. It looked like three young couples having a great time.

We didn't stay long after returning to the boats as it was pushing 2 pm. Heading out of the pass and looking back I saw what looked like stormy weather headed our way from the NE. It eventually overtook us and turned out to be smoke from a big Everglades fire. Going back was a downhill sleigh ride. Nomad eventually caught up with St Somewhere just as we rounded the tip of Gomez Point. There was a huge sloop anchored in the cut which I had to go around while lowering sail. Paul was on the beach to hand me my stern line as I came in. My engine was giving me fits idling and the quitting at just the wrong moment, which made for an interesting exercise in getting the bow anchor out and secured without running into anyone.

Paul was messing with his engine, and needed some kind of pin that had fallen out of the shift linkage.

I had one, but it was too long and couldn't be secured in place. He finally "fixed it with a short length on line, at least temporary. Two folks from the 45 foot Sabre came ashore in their inflatable to inform us that their cruising club was arriving tomorrow with nine boats and they were going to have a fine party and bonfire on the beach. I told them they were welcome, and that it's a very large beach. They were an interesting and apparently wealthy couple who had enjoyed cruising in company with others similarly outfitted. This was a warm up cruise for their club. Their next outing was to the Dry Tortugas, and then over to the Bahamas for two months in the spring and before hurricane season.

Christy offered to feed me dinner and I accepted. She made a lovely soup - Ginger Pumpkin, and then a rice and beef dish which went down well and was very tasty. By then Ed was calling to me to light the fire, but by the time I got there it was blazing. We had just enough wood to keep it burning until about 9 pm. Tom Steinmetz, who had arrived while we were at Picnic Key, brought some wood to help out and while we were at the fire, we spotted a light, and it turned out to be Chris Benke in his Precision 165. Christy brought out her Taylor Baby guitar and she and I both enjoyed playing some tunes. Dennis played his Chromatica harmonica and we tried to guess the name of the song. He plays great, but knew a lot of songs that we didn't know apparently. Something to do with a Methodist upbringing in Minnesota ..

Saturday Jan 14th

7:30 am with a very low tide in about an hour. I seem to have enough line out to not go aground, but I've already eaten breakfast and cleaned up. So if I start to go aground, I'm ready to push off. You've got to have a lot of anchor line and at least two anchors down here especially in January with a full moon. We're seeing five feet of tide, which is quite a bit for this coast line. I Plan on leaving after I pick up around the campfire and stow my stern anchor aboard. I think Paul and Joyce Myers will be leaving also aboard the Peep Hen Shorebird.

Shorebird and Nomad both left the low tide anchorage at 8:30, and carefully negotiated the shoals to the Gulf. There was a five to ten knot breeze to push us along, but Paul wanted to make good time, so they motored while I motor sailed. Making sure we had enough distance from the low tide shoreline, we sailed for almost two hours in a gently increasing wind out of the east-northeast. We closed with Coon Key about 10:15. Paul and Joyce went in first to see how busy the ramp was at Goodland Boating Park. I hung back a bit. They radioed to let me know that it was pretty busy, but there were openings. I circled around, and at one point anchored off to the east out of the way, but still within sight. They got tied up to a floating dock on the end of the ramp and waited for their chance. After they pulled out Joyce radioed me to come in to the dock as well. By then, about 11 am, their was almost no activity at the ramp. I came flying in with lines ready, the tide and wind both pushing Nomad. Paul and Joyce took my lines and slowed down a rowdy Nomad. I had to use my extension for the hitch to avoid putting tires in the water, but there was no problem sinking the trailer even at dead low tide! What a ramp!

After making Nomad ready for the road, and greeting Jack Dirkes who arrived with his SunCat, About Time, and suggesting to Captain Gerry that he launch his canoe at Port-of-the-Islands, we took off for the Tiki Hut. Got there about 1 pm and were able to park in the little area right across the street. Paul and Joyce and I enjoyed a great lunch while listening to some live music.

I think we left there about 1:40 or so, and started home. Out on 41 heading west I spotted Dimitri and his MacGregor X heading toward Goodland! My trip home was made more interesting by I-75 being blocked by an accident, but my new Garmin GPS informed me and rerouted me through Sarasota and Bradenton to avoid a one or two hour delay sitting on the highway. Still got home before dark about 5:37.

Phase two of the 10,000 Island Rendezvous really began the day we left - Saturday! We'll hear from those who came for the weekend, or stayed on for that part.

Dates for your Calendars *(see note)

1. Feb 4th/5th - Lake Harris - a Lake County Park and Lake - possible overnigher - good anchorages. Come to sail for the day or sail and overnight on your boat! Lake Harris is a large lake with two Islands on the east side near the ramps at Hickory Point Recreation Area, just off Hwy 19 (NOT US 19) Launch at 10am and have lunch at the Hideaway on the NE corner of the lake just NE of Long Island. Then sail back to the ramps for a take out or sail to HorseShoe Island for a good anchorage for the night. Usually launch around 9:30 at Hickory Point Recreation Area. Beware the trees on the way from the set up area to the ramps. Raise your masts AFTER lining up for the ramps. Deepest water is on the farthest two or three ramps. After launch sail west and the north toward Hideaway Restaurant to the NE of the north tip of Long Island. There is more space on their docks than it looks so come in if you can. If you go it too far keep an eye on the trees!

2. Feb 15-17 - Valentine's Sweetheart Sail - Take your sweetie sailing - Wednesday through Friday. Launch at Seminole Street Ramp in Clearwater, and sail north about 5 miles to Caladesi Island. Get slips for two days. Grill out at the Pavillion both nights. Daysail the loop around Caladesi and Clearwater through both passes if weather permits. Long walks on the beach and hiking trails! The Gedunk has hamburgers, hot dogs, ice cream and Coronas! Ed and Becky Combs leading the charge on this one.

3. March 4th - Saturday at DAWN - Start of the Everglades Challenge! We have three Squadron members in the race this year! Bill Fite - SeaPearl MoonShadow, Meade Gougeon - Sail Canoe , and JF Bedard with a new design - a 15 foot Cat Ketch with cabin! All vessels start above the high tide line, and shove off for Key Largo at dawn! (Best to visit with the racers on Friday March 3rd in the afternoon.) After the start, those of us who are NOT racing to Key Largo will convene at the Sea Horse Restaurant on Pass-a-Grille Beach. It opens at 8 am. We'll have a nice breakfast together.

4. March 17th - 18th - Cayo Costa Cruise - Come to Pelican Bay on the north end of Cayo Costa Island on Friday March 17th for our Springtime rendezvous. Bring your hot dogs, and marshmallows for evening cookouts and great fun around the evening campfire. Sail and return to Pelican Bay on Saturday, and return home on Sunday or Monday. Launch from Eldred's Marina in Placida [http://marinas.com/view/marina/2218 Eldred %27s Marina Placida FL United States](http://marinas.com/view/marina/2218_Eldred%27s_Marina_Placida_FL_United_States) ,or the Ramp at Bokeelia. Launching at Eldreds you have to cross Charlotte Harbor to get to Cayo Costa. Driving further and sailing less is launching at Bokeelia - a county ramp. 7290 Barrancas Ave, Bokeelia, FL 33922 - 239-283- 0015 (Lavender's Landing Boat Ramp)

Some even like to launch in Punta Gorda at the lovely Laishley Marina where you can leave your vehicle and trailer for free. But it's a longish (25 mile) sail to and from Cayo Costa so bring plenty of fuel if you should need to motor back. <http://www.laishleymarina.com/gallery.php>

5. April - 22-23 - Great Florida Gulf Coast Traditional Small Craft Festival at Sarasota Sailing Squadron! The Sarasota Sailing Squadron will be hosting the festival in partnership with the Florida Gulf Coast Traditional Small Craft Association.

There is room for RV's & vans, tent camping and plenty of local lodging options. The SSS has a hoist, multiple ramps and plenty of beach to launch from. If you sail in, dock space can be provided.

There is no fee for the event and pre-registration is not required, but to help with planning we **request that you email your intentions with number of people attending and boat details to: fgtsca@gmail.com** Full schedule of events will be announced later.

6. May 5th, 6th 7th (Friday - Sunday) - CEDAR KEY SMALL BOAT WEEKEND! Line up your reservations at the many hotels, condo's and B &Bs for the big gathering of Traditional Small Craft, canoes, kayaks, and daysailors (mostly). Some larger shallow water craft can make this trip, but there are a lot of sand bars and some oyster bars (the kind you can scrape your bottom on) to be aware of. Got a small boat? Bring it! Go to the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce Website for accommodations to line up yours today! The Island Place is still under reconstruction, but maybe will be open by May - Keep Checking![The Island Place](#)

The Faraway Inn is now OPEN after the hurricane damage has been repaired: [The farawayinn.com](http://TheFarawayInn.com)

The Cedar Key B & B: [cedarkey bed and breakfast](#) (cozy rooms)

Park Place - right across from the City Park :[Park Place](#)

Old Fenimore Mill Condos for rent: [The Old Fenimore Mill](#) (low tide beach - best for small boats)

***NOTE: This is not a complete list of our events. Our Facebook Page is active with members creating ad hoc events all the time. Join the WCTSS Facebook Group to get involved and go on more adventures with the WCTSS.**