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OPB IS BEST FOR ME

Having owned a few boats, I've come to a conclusion: I prefer OPB – Other People's Boats.

Sure, owning a boat provides that irreplaceable sense of freedom. You can chart your course and turn your helm in whatever direction the wind and water depths allow. You are the master and commander in charge of your destiny. We spent three years exploring distant shores, and I wouldn't trade a day of it.

There's also that sense of pride that comes from looking at your boat and thinking "she's mine – all mine." But, at least with an older boat, it's a hard-won sensation. Everywhere I cast my eyes on our cruising boat, I saw projects past and projects future: brightwork twice re-finished and needing attention for a third time; electronics upgrades, anchor mounts, a windlass and storage reconfigurations; canvas patched and needing patches; an oil or fuel drip in the engine compartment; a drip in a water line or tank – the list was never completed.

I've never experienced that sense of pride aboard somebody else's vessel, unless you count the tall ship where I was part of a crew of volunteers helping with the constant maintenance.

But I have enjoyed the other pleasures of boating. The breeze in my hair and the smell of the salt spray are the same, whether it's my boat or somebody else's. I've found that a day on the water that isn't preceded by several days of boat projects is quite pleasant indeed.

The ultimate OPB experience is FWB (friends with boats). On a several occasions, my friend John has needed extra crew aboard his 22-foot Ensign, *The Other Woman*. What a pleasure to just turn up, help hank on some sails, and chase around the marks for a few hours! Some other friends took us tooling around their canal community in their pontoon boat for another pleasant day.

Good manners require that regular guests offer to assist with any required maintenance or operation tasks and chip in for fuel or other incidentals for the voyage, but FWB sure beats having your own boat and paying for boat slips, insurance and other ongoing expenses.

When you can't score enough on-water time courtesy of your FWB, the next best alternative is to pay for the pleasure. But most people wouldn't buy a cow to get a glass of milk. Fractional ownership or a boating club is an option (see our March 2012 issue) that offers many of the benefits of owning without the hassles.



Or you can rent. In nautical terms, that means a charter. Even if you prefer the dream of ownership, chartering provides a perfect means to experience different types of boats before committing.

In this special theme issue, we look at all aspects of chartering boats – from charter fishing trips to power and sail yacht vacations, bareboat adventures to fully-crewed cruises on megayachts. We explore charter trips on wooden classics to the latest injected fiberglass vessels. And we learn what it takes to become a charter operator with your own boat.

Enjoy, and we'll see you on the water – either on your boat or OPB.

A stylized signature of Rob Lucey in black ink.

Rob Lucey,
Editor
rob@allatsea.net



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PHOTOS BY KATHY ENZERINK



Robert Peek operates the bridge at Deep Creek, Va. (right).

Editor:

(re: 'Rescue a Drowned Outboard,' pg. 32, January issue.) I've dumped 2-stroke 30 and 40hp Yamahas. I took the cover off, pulled out the plugs, turned it upside down in my lap, squeezed the fuel line ball with my left hand and pulled the cord with my right hand until the dinghy was pretty messy with fuel mixture. Then put it back on the dinghy, started it and finished the charter. When the motor is upside down and the throttle is wide open, that opens up the carburetor and rinses out all the salt.

If you're stuck in the middle of no place, this can get you back to the boat.

Thanks,
Jax

I'm sure our readers will appreciate your tip for getting underway again when the outboard decides to go for a dive. Thanks for sharing!

Mr. Lucey,

Just read the article on Dismal Swamp and Lockmaster Robert Peek ('The Life of a Lockmaster,' pg. 28, November issue). We transited twice, and he was a highlight! He invited the six boats at Elizabeth's dock overnight, to come for pastries and fruit in the morning. We all

did, then he checked with traffic north and locked us through. Nice to see your great coverage of this gem. I'm a lifelong boater and also a writer for boating magazines, so thought I'd also ask about how your magazine works. Do you accept outside writers on a freelance basis?

Thanks. Keep up the good work.

Marty Richardson

Thanks for reading. Most of our articles are written by freelance writers. While we have several regular contributors, we always encourage contributions from new talent, and we do pay for articles. Just e-mail me if you have an idea for a story you think might be relevant to your fellow boaters in the Southeast.

CLARIFICATION: A BoatUS report on state tax laws in the November issue (p. 12) said boaters may be subject to sales and use taxes after 60 days in Georgia. State officials have said that they have no specific 60-day rule. Visiting boats on navigable waters are not subject to taxes. Boats brought into the state by residents may be subject to the sales tax, but there is a credit for taxes paid at the time of purchase. Property taxes on boats are only collected from residents of the state. Defer to your tax adviser for your specific case.

All At Sea wants to hear from you! Send your correspondence by email to editor@allatsea.net, or mail letters to: All At Sea, 382 NE 191st St. #32381, Miami, FL 33179-3899

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THIS ISSUE

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COVER SHOT: The *Washingtonian* waits for winter charters at the Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo, Fla. | Photo by Brad Miller

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MOORINGS



ALL AT SEA SOUTHEAST

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WHERE IN THE WORLD?

CONGRATULATIONS WILL
AND THANKS FOR READING
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PHOTO BY HELEN AITKEN

Will Aitken, a student of East Carolina State University, reads the January issue while visiting Dudley's Marina in Cedar Point, N.C.

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Mooring's Expands
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SOUTHEAST NEWS

WATERFRONT HAPPENINGS AROUND THE REGION



RYBOVICH GAINS DRY DOCK

Rybovich shipyard in West Palm Beach, Fla., took delivery of a 3,000-ton floating dry dock in September. Together with their existing 150- and 660-ton Travelifts, the floating dry dock gives the company a broad range of hauling capabilities and the largest hauling capacity in South Florida. "This is a significant development for Rybovich, but also for the South Florida marine industry and the local economy," said Rybovich President, Wayne Huizenga Jr. "We can now offer comprehensive solutions to superyachts that, until now, have only been able to be serviced in the water."

The dry dock allows Rybovich the flexibility of hauling and launching in the deep waters of the Port of Palm Beach. Once a vessel is loaded, work can be performed at the port or, alternatively, the dry dock can be transported to the Rybovich facility in West Palm Beach. The first vessel to use the dry dock was M/Y *Mi Sueno*, a 190-foot Trinity. "Rybovich achieved a flawless lift that seemed so routine as if they had been doing it for many years," said Capt. Glynn Smith. "This is a great step forward for the superyacht service industry in South Florida."

The floating dry dock provides an interim hauling solution until Rybovich can dredge a channel from the Intra-

coastal Waterway to its Riviera Beach facility where it is building a superyacht service and refit facility with a 4,000-ton synchrolift.

To Huizenga, this is not just an investment for Rybovich, but a step forward for the South Florida marine industry that creates more opportunity for jobs and growth. "The ability to haul and service larger vessels will attract more superyachts to the United States and ultimately grow the number of yachts cruising and spending time in the U.S.," he said. "The added demand for goods and services will make a significant economic impact right here in America, creating new opportunities for employment and prosperity."

BENETEAU UNVEILS OCEANIS 55 AT MIAMI BOAT SHOW

Featuring more than 2,000 companies, the Miami International Boat Show draws more than 100,000 boating, fishing and on-the-water enthusiasts each year to view over 3,000 boats, from six-foot water toys to 97-foot megayachts.

The Feb. 14-18 show, produced by the National Marine Manufacturers Association, is divided into three venues: the New Yacht and Power Boat Show at Sea Isle Marina;

OTHER SHOWS THIS MONTH:

- **The 60th annual Mid-Atlantic Sports and Boat Show, Feb. 8-10**, at the Virginia Beach Convention Center produced by the Norfolk Chapter of the Izaak Walton league.
- **The 29th annual Grand Strand Boat and Sportsman Expo at the Myrtle Beach, S.C., Convention Center Feb. 11-13.** This year's show features Swamp-master Jeff Quattrocchi giving educational talks and wrestling a 200-pound alligator three times a day. Visit grandstrandboatshow.com for details.
- **The Mobile Boat Show at the Mobile, Ala., Convention Center, Feb. 22-24.** Besides seeing the 2013 makes and models of boats, attendees can catch the Fetch-n-Fish dog show and seminars by the Saltwater Sportsman Association and Alabama Coastal Fishing Association. Visit gulfcoastshows.com.

Strictly Sail Miami at Miamarina at Bayside; and more boats and vendors at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Both marina sites will feature on-water Discover Boating skill building clinics presented by the Recreational Powerboating Association and the American Sailing Association.

Among the vessels at Strictly Sail event will be Beneteau's new Oceanis 55, which premiered at the Paris Boat Show. Carla Demaria, general manager of Beneteau, and Bruno Belmont, director of product development for the company's sailboats division, will be in Miami for the U.S. unveiling. Designed by

Berret Racoupeau Yacht Design, the Oceanis 55 features a mast set back to enhance balance and performance under sail. The chine extends the full length of the boat to increase speed while reducing the initial angle of heel. Large windows allow natural light to illuminate the interior living spaces. It is available in three, four or five cabin layouts.

For full details about the show, visit Miamiboatshow.com.

ISLANDS TO PROTECT FORT PIERCE MARINA

Thirteen islands are being built in the Indian River Lagoon to protect Fort Pierce City Marina as it continues to recover from damage inflicted by hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in 2004. Barges have been hauling rocks to the site of the future mangrove islands and oyster beds, expected to be complete in May. The \$18.8 million in-shore reef is a pilot project for the state and may eventually be used by other cities. The islands protect the marina, enabling the city to rebuild the outer docks that were destroyed by the hurricanes. The 137 slips in the inner basin were repaired in the first few months after the storms and are fully operational. When the outer docks are complete, the facility will boast 274 floating docks able to accommodate vessels up to 150 feet.

The marina is a popular stop for cruisers, providing easy access to downtown facilities.

"With these islands, we have developed a project where boating, man and the environment can co-exist with future educational research opportunities to study fish habitat," said marina manager Dean Kubitschek.



COURTESY OF FORT PIERCE CITY MARINA

HATTERAS EXPANDS FORT LAUDERDALE PRESENCE

After a couple of slow days due to Hurricane Sandy, Hatteras Yachts reported its biggest single-day attendance in four years during the 2012 Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show. Although the company's convertible lineup was displayed prominently, the newly redesigned 80 Motor Yacht garnered the most attention. The new arch placement, new amidship portlights, and new bow observation lounge are aesthetic improvements – but the dramatic changes are the interior open floor plan combined with additional storage and appliance and amenity upgrades.

The New Bern, N.C.-based company also celebrated the opening of the new Hatteras/Cabo Yacht Center in Billfish Marina in Fort Lauderdale. The center will host customer events and dealer training, as well as provide ongoing access to the company's models.

"This is a great opportunity for Hatteras and our dealer network to work together even closer to make the Hatteras experience come alive for our customers," said Senior VP of Global Sales John Ward. "We will have a convenient location where dealers can bring their customers to see everything

The new 80 Motor Yacht.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HATTERAS YACHTS

from convertibles to motor yachts – all in one location. Until now, the only time that this was possible was during the Miami and Fort Lauderdale boat shows. Now, we will be able to show our craftsmanship and design excellence all year long."

FORT MEYERS BEACH FETES CRUISERS

The Town of Fort Myers Beach will host its 6th Annual Cruiser's Appreciation Day on March 23 at Matanzas Inn

EVENT CALENDAR

Please send future events to editor@allatsea.net. This month and next month's events are currently published here and at www.allatsea.net. Your specific area may or may not be shown based on identified activities for these months.

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03/02/2013 - 03/03/2013

Winyah Bay Heritage Festival
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info@winyahbayfestival.org
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HOUSTON, TX

03/21/2013 - 03/24/2013

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www.southwestinternationalboatshow.com

LAKE CHARLES, LA

02/15/2013 - 02/17/2013

Central Gulf Coast Boat, Sport
& RV Show | Boat Show
www.bacshows.com
info@bacshows.com
337-436-4355

MIAMI, FL

02/14/2013 - 02/18/2013

Miami Boat Shows | Boat Show
www.MiamiBoatShow.com
lberryman@nmma.org
954-441-3227

MOBILE, AL

02/22/2013 - 02/24/2013

Mobile Boat Show | Boat Show
www.gulfcoastshows.com
251-478-SHOW

NEW ORLEANS, LA

03/07/2013 - 03/10/2013

The Boat Show New Orleans
Boat Show
www.boatshowneworleans.com
504-376-3679

PANAMA CITY, FL

03/15/2013 - 03/17/2013

Panama City Yacht &
Boat Show | Boat Show
www.pcboatshow.com
roblynch@rvexpo.net
941-780-0538

SAVANNAH, GA

03/01/2013 - 03/03/2013

Savannah Boat & Outdoor
Show | Boat Show
www.SavannahBoatandOutdoorShow.com
864-250-9713

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02/28/2013 - 03/03/2013

St. Maarten Heineken Regatta
Sailing Regatta
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regatta@heinekenregatta.com
+599 544 2079

ST. THOMAS, USVI

03/22/2013 - 03/24/2013

International Rolex Regatta
Sailing Regatta
www.rolexcupregatta.com
styc@vipowernet.net
340-775-6320

TORTOLA, BVI

03/25/2013 - 03/31/2013

BVI Spring Regatta & Sailing
Festival | Sailing Regatta
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info@bvispringregatta.org
284-494-3286

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

02/08/2013 - 02/10/2013

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adjacent to the dinghy docks, 414 Crescent St. All boaters are welcome to enjoy food, drinks and entertainment. It is free for any cruisers using the town's 70-ball public mooring field with a nominal fee to others. Sponsored by the town's Anchorage Advisory Committee and Matanzas (the upland service provider for the mooring field), the event recognizes the cruisers who have made the field a success. Boaters attending Cruiser's Appreciation Day without overnighting in the mooring field, can use the day dock at Bowditch Point Regional Park and ride the trolley to the event. *For more info, visit www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.*

NORFOLK MUSEUM EXAMINES SEAPORT

Nauticus - home of the Battleship *Wisconsin*, Schooner *Virginia* and Hampton Roads Naval Museum in Norfolk, Va. - has a new exhibit: "Our Mighty Seaport! Imports. Exports." Visitors learn about the world of maritime commerce, discovering what's coming into the local port and what's being shipped from Virginia to far corners of the globe. Families can navigate a tugboat down a busy waterway and receive "real time" information on ships sailing past the Nauticus facility on the busy Hampton Roads waters.

NC FISHERMEN MEET

Sea Grant is sponsoring the 2013 N.C. Marine Recreational Fishing Forum 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. on Feb. 16 at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh. Anglers can meet with leaders from the N.C. General Assembly and the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries to discuss post-release survival of fish, the economic value of the saltwater fishing industry, and the roles of regulatory agencies. Register for this free event and learn more at www.ncseagrant.org/s/recfishforum.

Commercial fishermen will be able to share ideas with experts at the Local Catch Summit, Feb. 21-22 at the University of North Carolina Coastal Studies Institute campus in Skyco. Discussions will center on regional seafood marketing and education initiatives. For updates, visit www.ncseagrant.org/2012localcatchsummit.

Sea Grant also is co-sponsoring a local foods program in Greensboro on Feb. 26. Farmers and fishermen will share their strategies for successfully producing and marketing local seafood, produce and meat to North Carolina consumers. Watch www.ncseagrant.org for updates on these and other events.

MADEIRA BEACH MARINA UPGRADED

The 93-slip Madeira Beach Municipal Marina has a new ship store open daily 7 a.m. to sunset to meet all boating needs



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including fresh and frozen bait. Transient accommodations include free pumpouts, and newly renovated laundry and bathrooms. Visit madeirabeachfl.gov for details.

ARNDT MOVES TO DUNEDIN

Steve Arndt, formerly of Bay Point Marina in Panama City, Fla., has been named director of Marker 1 Marina in Dunedin, Fla. The marina and boat storage facility features 300 feet of lay along transient dockage, private showers and 24-hour security, all within close proximity to the restaurants and shops of downtown and Caladesi Island State Park.

CSS NEUSE MOVES DOWNTOWN

Remnants of the ironclad gunboat *CSS Neuse* – built in 1862 as part of the Confederate Navy's attempt to regain control of the lower Neuse River and retake the city of New Bern, N.C., during the Civil War – have been moved to a new climate-controlled facility in downtown Kinston, the town where the ship ran aground soon after its launch.

The North Queen Street site was purchased by a group of supporters called the Gunboat Association and donated to the state. It is expected to open for public viewing this summer as part of the state's Civil War sesquicentennial




The CSS Neuse replica in Kinston.

PHOTO BY ROB LUCEY

commemoration. Kinston is also home to *CSS Neuse II*, a full-sized, land-bound replica of the 158-foot vessel. A 63-foot scaled replica of the *Neuse's* sister ironclad, *CSS Albermarle*, is docked in Plymouth, N.C.

PALM BEACH HOSTS FLEA MARKET

Bargain hunting boaters will converge on the South Florida Fairgrounds in West Palm Beach Feb. 16-17 for the third annual Palm Beach Marine Flea Market and Seafood Festival. The event includes an auction of boats, vehicles and fishing supplies as well as a new and used boat showcase. It also features a marine arts and crafts festival and live entertainment. Visit www.FLNauticalFleaMarket.com for details. 

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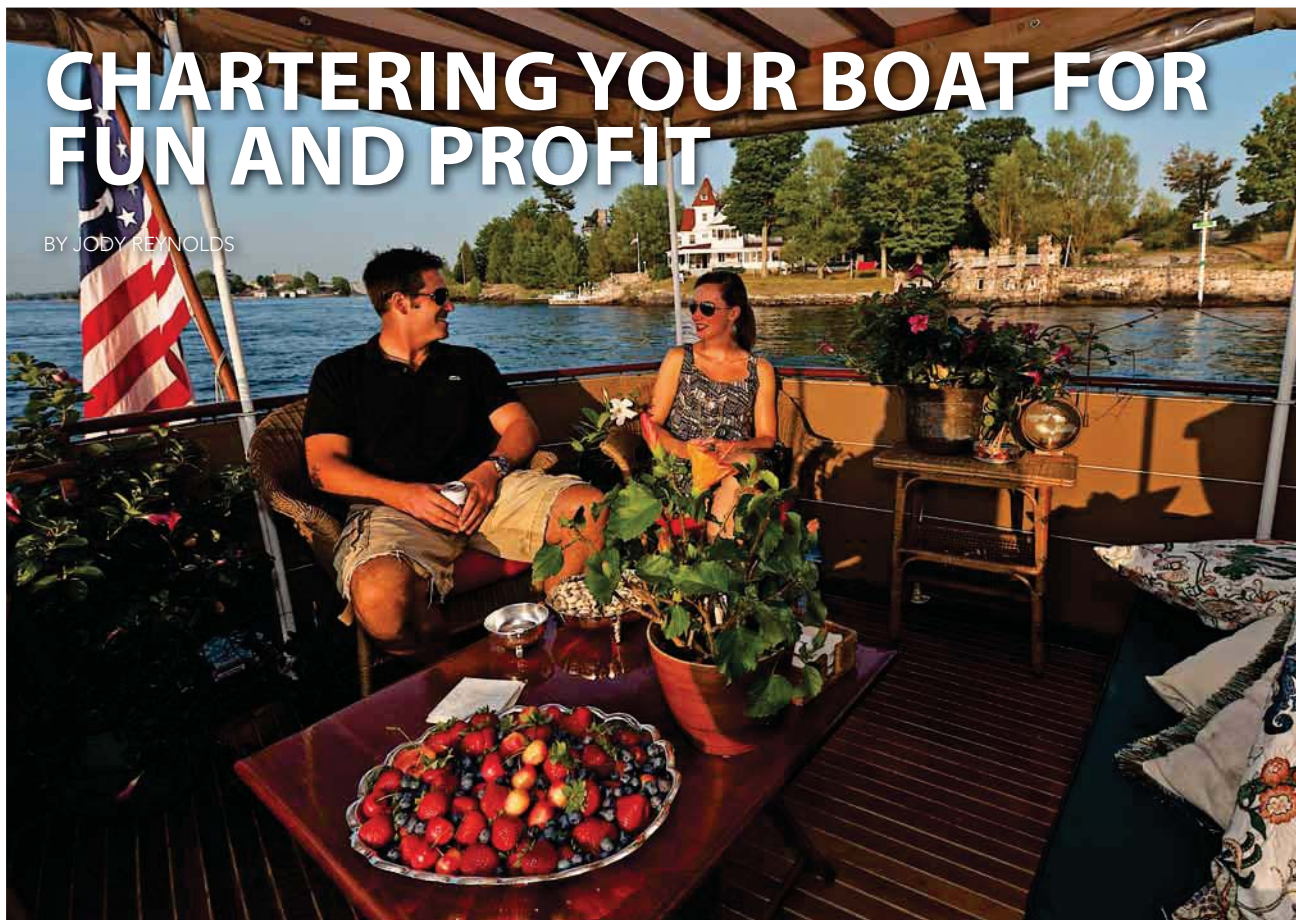
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CHARTERING YOUR BOAT FOR FUN AND PROFIT

BY JODY REYNOLDS



When I mentioned to my partner, Mike, that I was writing an article about setting up a charter business, he retorted: "Anyone who wants to buy a charter boat should a.) have his/her head examined, and/or, b.) have a lobotomy."

Chartering is at best a risky business. Despite the obvious appeal of living and working on the water, not everyone who enjoys boating can survive it.

Almost six years ago, four of Mike's survey/captain/consulting clients began charter businesses. Only one is still in business, and they supplement their income by working with other yachts.

Mike's been in the charter business on and off for decades on yachts ranging from elegant wooden motor yachts, to scallopers, to a floating restaurant. He ought to know better, but he's doing it again. And, for the most part, we're enjoying the hell out of it.

Shortly after meeting six years ago on a yacht delivery (he was the paid captain; I was unpaid crew/provisioner), Mike and I dove headfirst into the charter business by purchasing our 1925 Elco motor yacht, *Hermione*. We had visions of chartering her extensively, but *Hermione* had other ideas. Each time we felt we were close enough with cosmetic and

structural repairs to entertain paying guests aboard, she would break down requiring another visit to the yard.

In early 2011, after repairs were truly under control, we lost the boat in a spectacular fire at McCotters Marina in Washington, N.C. We had already booked a number of charters for the following summer.

Instead of taking our insurance money and counting our blessings, we spent that winter and spring scouring the east coast for another classic motor yacht. We purchased our beautiful *Cygnus II*, a custom-designed 1930 vessel that should have been way out of our price range, in Jacksonville, Fla.

Like any yacht, it needed modifications, but a year later, we find ourselves surprisingly successful in our niche charter business. We specialize in short cruises with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. We also offer waterway cruises which we refer to as "boat and hotel cruises," where guests travel aboard during the day and stay at nice hotels at night (we handle arrangements and luggage transfers).

Our venues change with the season: Winter charters in Vero Beach, Fla.; spring/fall charters in historic Beaufort, S.C.; and summer charters in the Thousand Islands along the Canadian border.


A classic wooden yacht has a specific clientele. They tend to

be older folks for whom the word "recession" has only vague implications. Others are business people entertaining clients and families celebrating events. Since our summer cruises are in an area where people often get married on private islands, we also find ourselves in demand for wedding parties.

It's not easy working on charter boats, and it can put a lot of stress on a relationship. Overall, Mike and I do well together with charter responsibilities, but we thrive on challenging situations.

And quite honestly, while the captain has enormous responsibility, the mate does a tremendous amount of work

between provisioning, cleaning and staging, food prep, service and cleanup.

We have found that our positive attitude and passion for sharing our love of classic yachting has been a huge asset in setting up our charter business. We love making the boat our business, but it's definitely not for everyone. 

Jody and Mike just returned from a Classic Yacht Association meeting. For more information on their charter business, visit www.cygnusclassiccharters.com.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS

Based on our experience, I offer the following observations to anyone foolish enough to contemplate this type of misadventure:

- Don't enter a charter partnership. If for some reason you do decide to partner, make sure it's with someone who doesn't expect to earn passive income from his or her investment.
- If you don't like all types of people, and don't enjoy hospitality, don't start a charter operation. No matter how much you like to entertain, you will find that chartering requires patience and protracted smiling.
- If you are a husband/wife or partner team, do both of you share the same enthusiasm? Chartering is hard work. If you both like sailing, cruising and dock parties, that doesn't mean you'll enjoy the charter business. For one thing, when you charter, you don't have time to cruise.
- If you are natural neatniks, you're way ahead of the game. On the other hand, if you like to leave stuff where it drops, you're in for a big surprise, as charter guests aren't into personal clutter.
- Make sure you can survive for a year or so without income. It may take you that long to get the boat, set it up, and prepare for chartering. Poor weather for a season or a down economy can do in many operations.
- Don't give up everything you own right away if you plan to live aboard. Just store it. You may find that chartering isn't for you.
- Set up your charters as a business (usually an LLC), and make sure you have adequate insurance to cover liability and damage to the vessel.
- Before you buy the boat, force yourself to write a business and marketing plan. If nothing else, this will help you with the IRS (assuming you are writing off your expenses), but it will also help you focus on what's

actual practical versus your yachting fantasies.

- Buy a boat that you like, but make sure it's one that can accommodate the type of yacht charter business you plan to run. If you plan on overnight guests, make sure you have adequate staterooms and functioning heads. If you plan on wining and dining, make sure you have adequate food prep, storage and refrigeration areas.
- Know your boat's limitations. Many boats, like ours, are only approved for six-pack charters. Mike has a 100-ton license, and we can accommodate up to 20 people for dockside events, but under way we take six guests. The exception is a bareboat demise charter contract, under which the charterer leases the yacht and then hires the crew as a separate entity.
- Location. You need to charter in the right location for the niche you plan to fill. Obviously this differs from fishing to sailing to classic cruising.
- Check out the competition. Make sure you take an honest look at the boats already chartering in the waters you've selected. If they are doing well, is there room for yet another yacht?
- Check out all state, local and marina ordinances where you plan to charter. When we were setting up in Beaufort, S.C., we had to appear before the city council. By the time we finished dealing with the state, city and county governments, we didn't have time to charter. We also had to pay the marina 10 percent of our gross. Be mindful of states' taxes on boats that reside in their waters, even if only for a couple of months each year.
- Decide what type of food service you want to offer your guests. We don't sell liquor because of the tax laws. We give it to guests.
- Make a marketing plan. Advertising in vacation guides and talking about the yacht with everyone we meet has also been essential.

PRO TIPS FOR BOOKING A FISHING CHARTER

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JEFF DENNIS



The smiles and fishing memories shared during an offshore fishing charter can last a lifetime.

When the window of opportunity opens up for a little fishing, consider going with a guide, especially when traveling out of town. A local guide can take you straight to the fishing grounds, giving you the best chance for success.

But how do you determine which guide to choose, and how much will it cost? Here are a few pointers on how to manage your own expectations, and help the guide provide those productive memories that you are looking to catch.

Inshore Fishing

Say you have some business travel in a coastal city, and you have one extra day to fish on your own or with a friend

from work. Search out an established tackle shop in that area, and plan to drop by to say hello or at least make a phone call.

Local tackle shops likely have long-term employees who have the experience and knowledge about what fish might be biting during your visit. They might have a favorite fishing guide to recommend. That captain might even be a part-time employee, but they won't mind giving you a second or third option either. This is where communication plays a role. As soon as you speak to the guide, you want to be clear about what species you are targeting, or if you would be happy with any choices like redfish, trout or flounder.

Most fishing guides will be glad to take you after the species you prefer, so if you encounter one that is less than ready

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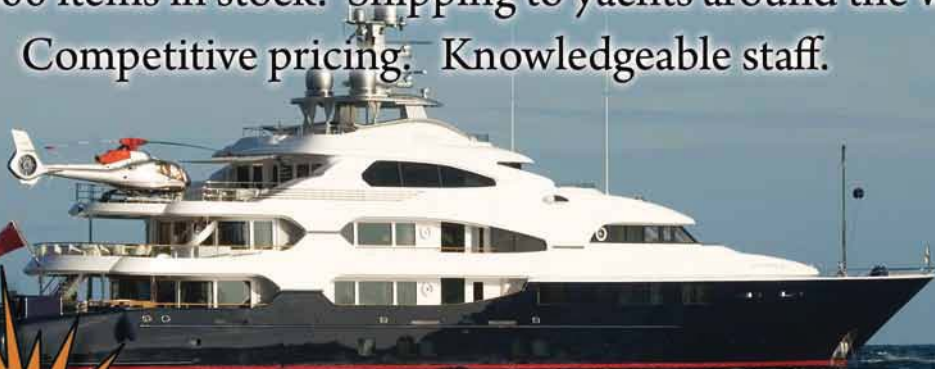
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to help in that regard, it's time to call the next number on your list. However, if they can put you on something that fights good like a bonnethead shark instead of your chosen quarry, then you might want to heed their advice. A rod-bending fish fight always trumps a game fish quest that comes up empty.

Guided fishing trips that last a half day (four hours), can range from \$250 to \$400. Full day guided trips (eight hours) run around \$600. The price is agreed upon before setting foot on the captain's boat, and should cover all of the gas, bait, ice and fishing accessories for the day. Ask questions if there is any doubt. The boat should be clean and fully equipped for safety with life preservers. Customers can bring their own rod and reel, but it is customary that the guide will have all such equipment available.

Depending on the state you are in, the purchase of a fishing license may or may not be required when paying to fish with a guide. The captain's license often covers anyone fishing onboard. It is customary to tip your guide \$20 to

\$50 at the end of the trip to say thanks for the effort. A fishing guide deserving of a tip will hustle around the boat for you to bait hooks, net fish, take pictures and generally help make things run smoothly.

Anglers should remember to bring any food or drinks they prefer, polarized sunglasses, sunscreen and a hat. It is up to the captain to judge if any weather pattern justifies the cancellation of a trip. These fishing captains are on the water almost every day, and they can read the weather maps with authority. They know how to get a trip done safely, and know all the best fishing spots that are protected from the wind on any given day.

Inshore guides in your hometown can also provide great value, since they can be used as a resource to gain valuable knowledge regarding certain tactics. If speckled trout are the main draw in your area during winter, but you can't seem to get one anywhere near your hook, then it might be time to book a charter.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A FISHING GUIDE?

Catching fish every day sounds like a lot of fun. But does one need to be an uberfisherman to become a fishing guide? The answer is that anyone can be a fishing guide – after they pass stringent tests to earn a captain's license for taking people on their boat.

It takes a love of fishing to inspire someone to be a fishing captain. Then it requires salesmanship, business savvy and an affable personality to complete the package.

There are fishing guides who can almost smell fish with a sixth sense, and they are fun to see in action. Some of these top guides can have sponsors for their charter boat, trailer and more. But most fishing guides are lucky if they can get a sponsor for some fishing rods or even for a particular brand of tackle. Some guides wouldn't take anything from a sponsor anyway.

Charter captains are not scared to work some long hours, and when you factor in the constants of the wind and the sun, those hours can take their toll. A popular fishing guide might work nearly 200 days in a row during spring, summer and into fall, but the drop off in business during winter is near universal. If it's a gray day with temperatures in the 40s, not many anglers are willing to pay to shiver in the name of fishing.

A fishing guide must catch the bait each day, and then assist the customer with whatever knowledge is necessary in order to get them catching fish. Sometimes they have a first-time angler on board, and oth-



Capt. Brianna Coffman put the author on this nice redfish.

er trips they have regular customers who are serious about fly fishing. Almost anything can happen from day to day, and once the angler comes aboard, the Captain is responsible for it all – the good and the bad.

When things like broken fishing rods, temperamental outboard engines, and stretches of slow fishing occur, it may not seem like guides are still living the dream.

While there are no guarantees of catching fish on any given trip, fishing guides can generally dredge up a fish even against the odds. That's their job, and they are happy in their work, trying to outwit the finfish and make a customer happy by providing a great experience on the water.

This does not mean its okay to mark and return to their fishing spots – only that they will demonstrate which combination of tackle works well on trout, and then you can add that knowledge to your mental tackle box.

Offshore Fishing

Offshore charters are found in much less quantity than inshore charters. A tight economy, high fuel prices and bottom fishery closures have combined to squeeze offshore captains.

Sportfisher owners will only hire captains with years of fishing experience who have spent time as a mate on offshore boats. With this formula, the cream of the offshore crop has time to rise to the top, and most offshore charters are a safe bet.

While considering at a particular charter service, it should not be difficult to find reports from past fishing trips. Search the Internet for a fishing forum in that town to find out what others are saying.



Most trips involve a captain and a mate for your crew. A half-day, six-hour charter can run from \$1,500 to \$2,000. The half-day option limits the range of your excursion based solely on time.

Your goal is to bring back some fish for the table, not to come back looking like a lobster!

A full-day charter for 10 hours might cost \$2,500, but this will give anglers the best chance to reach and troll fishing grounds for billfish, and pelagic species like mahi and tuna. The price point usually requires more than one angler to help defer the cost, and it is routine for sportfishers to take six anglers on a trip. Often these groups come aboard with the desire to have one of the best times of their life, and if the fish are cooperating, that goal is within reach.

Anglers need to bring their own food and drinks, plus plenty of sunscreen. Long-sleeved shirts, a buff and hat help combat sun exposure. Your goal is to bring back some fish for the table, not to come back looking like a lobster! Deck shoes with non-marking white soles are often a requirement in the transom of the boat. The mate will clean all fish at the end of the day, and a tip for the mate after a long day is a customary way to say thank you. ☺

Jeff Dennis is an outdoor writer and photographer who grew up on a creek in Charleston loving the saltwater, and he contributes regularly to All At Sea Southeast. Read his blog at www.LowcountryOutdoors.com




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WHALE OF A TIME FISHING

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY CAPT. JUDY HELMEY

Capt. Matt Williams and Capt. Kathy Brown did good catching lots of spotted sea trout and red fish.

Even with February being one of the coldest months on the coast there are still plenty of catching opportunities!

Inshore fishing can be very good for red fish, but you need to keep in mind that the water is a lot clearer, causing the fish to be a bit more skittish. When in the fishing mode, I suggest keeping as quiet as possible. A plan is the key to successfully finding and catching red fish.

Pick areas in the sounds where sloughs flow onto bars or flats. The best fishing spots should have at least six inches of water at mean low tide. The best days are going to be those that have a mid-day low tide stage with sunny conditions. I like to fish the bottom of the low tide stage until the water floods the grass.

Another reason why I like to fish low to high tide is the water under your boat gets deeper not shallower. No one wants to spend the day "high and dry" on a sand bar.

For best baits when it comes to the natural stuff, I suggest chunked shrimp and whole mullet cut in pieces like a loaf of bread. I always suggest cutting the bait before heading out. The best place to put cut bait is out in the air and direct sun. This dries the bait sealing in the fishy juices,

This is a right whale doing what I referred to as an "Ester Williams" classic water dance move.



which rings the dinner bell for a red fish once the bait is placed back in the water.

When using natural baits, all you need is 12 to 15 inches of 15- to 20-pound test fluorocarbon leader tied to a small extra sharp circle hook. Cast into the area, let the bait fall to the bottom, and wait for a hit. Before setting the hook, give them time to eat. Here's a great rule of thumb to go by: "The colder the water temperature the lighter the bite!"

Offshore Report

It's offshore trophy red fish catching time!

The secret to catching is to know the deal, which I am going to share with you right now. Most of these trophy red fish that have migrated offshore during this time of the year are in the 27- to 45-inch and bigger range. The best place to start looking is at the near shore Georgia artificial reefs located in up to 50 feet of water. A few artificial reefs off the Georgia coast that have been holding some nice trophy fish include: SAV, DUA, CAT, KC, and KTK.

The best places to anchor are over barges or pallet balls. Since most artificial reefs are no longer marked with yellow reef buoys, when researching coordinates I suggest using only the ones that mark the actual places that you want to anchor. For up-to-date information on Georgia artificial reefs, go to www.coastalgadnr.org/node/2089.

Right Whale Wirls

It's time to do a little whale watching! Right whales need our help. Report sightings of dead, injured or entangled whales to (877)942-5343 or to the U.S. Coast Guard via channel 16.

Over the years I have had lots of close encounters with right whales! During this time of year, the Georgia coast is frequented by migrating adult whales along with their new born calves. After birthing in more southern waters, these beautiful creatures move north while hugging the coast. They are known for staying close to the surface, making them unfortunate navigational hazards.

When navigating the offshore waters during this time, I am always looking for any whale swirls or trails. When a whale is making way, its tail normally causes quite a stir in the water column, especially when it swirls near the bottom. Sediments are moved around creating a target rich feeding environment for bait fish and all sorts of sea birds. Hence, where you have lots of birds diving and dolphins breaking the surface in large numbers, whales could be in the area.

If a right whale approaches you, by law boaters are "required" to move away from the whales. The very next thing that you need to do is contact the Coast Guard or have someone relay coordinates of your whale encounter. The reason is simple: it could save their life! The Coast Guard will contact proper sources so that coordinates can be sent to boats/ships that are navigating in the area of the sighting.

For right whales that you happen upon, please keep your distance. You are required by law to maintain a distance of at least 500 yards. The reason being, a collision with one might cause serious injury or death to the whale. At last count there were less than 360 of these precious mammals left in the North Atlantic Ocean.



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POWERING UP THE MARINEMAX CHARTER DIVISION

BY GLENN HAYES
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY MARINEMAX

Part of the MarineMax charter fleet.
Inset: Raul Bermudez heads up the
MarineMax charter division.

Raul Bermudez had a lot to celebrate when MarineMax marked the first anniversary of its Vacations Yacht Charter Division in October. As vice president of the division, Bermudez has been busy building the charter operation. "It's the best vacation in the world," he claims. "There is nothing else like it."

The Clearwater, Fla.-based company has launched charter fleets in the Caribbean, a luxury yacht charter line, and European canal boats. The Caribbean fleet based out of Cooper Island in the British Virgin Islands currently consists of a dozen Dufour 405 and 425 sailboats and 10 MarineMax 382 power catamarans.

The company is introducing a new luxury line of MarineMax 484 power catamarans designed and produced for the company by Sino Eagle Group in China. The charter version has a four cabin/four head layout and \$50,000 of upgrades including high-volume watermakers, upgraded generators, all electric barbecues and galley stoves, refrigerators and freezers, wireless connectivity, air conditioning, autopilots



and Raymarine e12 navigation systems. Power is provided by twin 330hp Volvo Penta diesel engines with a fuel capacity of 300 gallons.

Twenty of these yachts will be available for charter at a rate of one per month starting in this month. "That boat will change the industry," Bermudez claims. He is promoting and devel-

oping the power catamaran charters as something that differentiates them from the competition.

The charter vessels are all for sale with owners signing a management agreement with MarineMax. The company takes care of maintenance, dockage along and other expenses, then sends the owner a fixed monthly payment each month that is expected to cover the cost of the loan for the first five years. Under this arrangement, owners are entitled to use the boats for up to 10 weeks a year.

Bermudez says this equates to five years of free vacation. At the end of the term, the owners have the option of retaining the vessel, rolling into a new one or selling the yacht through one of MarineMax's 53 locations throughout the United States.



Before joining MarineMax, Bermudez worked at TUI Marine for 12 years, including a stint as vice president of sales. After a break from the industry, recruiters approached him and brought him back to the Virgin Islands to learn about MarineMax and its entry into the charter business. It was not a hard sell, as Bermudez had purchased a boat from them in 2008 and was impressed with "their passion for the water and customer service."

Sitting on a hotel balcony in the BVI's (one of his favorite vacation destinations) overlooking the docks, he decided to re-enter the charter business, and has done so with drive.

Bermudez says there was no such thing as a typical day. With the charter business in its early stages, he performs a variety of functions, from meeting with the staff in the islands to working with marketing and finance at the Clearwater headquarters, and overseeing the call centers that sell the charters and boats in the charter fleet. He also attends the boat shows to help sell the new service, and was making plans for the Baltimore and Miami shows this month.

Bermudez exudes confidence as he says, "In the BVIs, Marine Max Vacations is better than any other vacation out there. Try it with us and you will never go back to anybody else." ☺

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REUNITED, SORT OF

BY CAP'N FATTY GOODLANDER



(L-R) Deb Clausen, Carolyn Goodlander, Pirate Bill, Greg Clausen gather at Fatty's 60th birthday party... Fat Heads all!

We were about six years into our second circumnavigation – within a year or two of our finish – when we started picking up cyber chatter about a family reunion in Great Cruz Bay, our home harbor in the U.S. Virgins. Ruth didn't contact us directly. It was her fellow organizers and other attendees who let the cat out of the bag.

"Your cousin Ruth invited us to the Goodlander gathering," wrote one such person on my website. "And we're sooooo excited!"

"Who else in the family will be attending?" queried another interested party who befriended us on Facebook. "Morgoo? Black Snake? The Sea Siren?"

"We're bringing our Whitby 42 down from Maine – God, those prices at the Westin are outrageous!" e-mailed yet a third.

I said nothing – pretending to be in deep ocean, and out of cyber reach.

As we sailed out of the Med and started transiting westward across the Pond, the communications became more loving. "Your cousin Ruth told us about you swimming away from *Carlotta* as the eye of Hurricane Hugo rolled over you

– with your seven-year-old daughter in your arms! We can't wait to hear such tales firsthand."

Cyber space is such a weird neighborhood. We had just spent years in Micronesia, Borneo and Vanuatu. We weren't used to the easy intimacy of such chatty, too-familiar, too knowledgeable strangers.

Oh, they all seemed nice enough – but still.

"Will Lusty Laura or the Pirate Queen be attending?" asked yet another 'new' Facebook friend, "and will you be autographing copies of *Chasing the Horizon*?"

This is part of the problem of writing your autobiography in your early 30s – everyone knows the grittiest, goofiest details your life story. My entire life is an open book, literally and literarily.

Particularly avid readers begin to form a relationship with the book without realizing that it is one-sided. They slip into believing that their interior monologue is really a dialogue. They alter their reality to include the reader and the writer having shared experiences together – even if the beloved writer is strangely mute on the subject. The fact that there would be a number of such fans at the reunion that Ruth was organizing didn't bother me. Hell, I'm used to that. While I'm



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not a household name ashore in America, being the long-term editor-at-Large of *Cruising World* magazine means that most international sailors know of me – at least by name.

I began to look forward to the event with a mixture of trepidation and anticipation, but was also fully aware the reunion probably would not happen. There was no mention of a date. Ruth never contacted me. Other family members weren't planning on attending.

I expected it to fizzle. I was wrong.

We returned to U.S. soil in January of 2012 and had a large party at Maho Beach on St. John on Feb. 2 for my 60th birthday. Since we'd been away for seven years, I publicized it widely. All were welcome. It was well attended with a number of Fat Heads (what my devoted-yet-daffy readers have self-labeled themselves) attending as well.

The shocking part: two of the vessels attending were there on the island of St. John for the Goodlander Reunion that Ruth had organized. It was to be held in Great Cruz in six days. Ruth was already on-island staying at the Westin.

"Is she okay?" one middle-aged, rum-soaked lady asked me on the beach. "I mean, Ruth's not here, is she? Is she ill? Or jet-lagged? Or just busy organizing that last-minute details?"

I am seldom at a loss for words, but I wasn't sure how to respond. I just stared.

The confusion was apparent on her half-sloshed face. "It isn't... like, a surprise reunion, is it? I mean – I haven't blown it, have I?"

I assured her she hadn't, and asked, as innocently as possible, "Do you have Ruth's mobile number?"

"No," the woman said, "but just call Westin reception, Room 1602."

Did I mention, dear reader, that I don't have a Cousin Ruth, never had a cousin Ruth, and doubt I ever will have a cousin Ruth?

Much of fame – especially the tiny fame of an almost unknown writer such as myself – puzzles me. It is often the 500-pound gorilla in the room. For instance, many people pretend they don't know who I am, which gets confusing when you know they do. You are both pretending to share alternate realities, and that makes for some really weird, disjointed, stop-and-go conversations. But you have to play along with their sham or risk being accused of being egotistical, stuck-up, or worse.

Other folks get argumentative and want to put me in my place. Just as bad, are the deferential folks who concede all without a whimper because my pen is notoriously sharp.

And then there is the small matter of sequence. One of my newspaper features was plagiarized by a local writer I'll call Ben the Borrower. I was a bit shocked, and complained. He

sincerely begged forgiveness and offered a plethora of excuses: he was tired, there was deadline pressure, he was so enraptured of my words he subconsciously wanted them to be his...

I graciously allowed him off the hook. I saved him from being fired and professionally disgraced. A few years later I put the plagiarized story into one of my books, and a number of faithful fans called me up in shock. How could I have so blatantly ripped Ben off, almost word-for-word?

On another occasion, I heard of a brazen sailor cruising the Pacific who had read my *Chasing the Horizon*, and taken all my carefully crafted sea yarns for his own. He didn't write them down. I'd have had him cold if he did. He just retold them conversationally – and, evidently, to good effect. People liked him. A lot. Many still do.

I was bemused, mostly. I took it as a compliment, imitation being the sincerest form of flattery. But a few years later – during my own crossing to New Zealand – a number of skeptical sailors accused me of lying, saying they'd met the *real guy* I was pretending to be – "met him years ago!"

I had had a life. I'd written it down entertainingly with great effort and now was feeling a bit, er, set upon.

"Get a life!" one snarled.

It seemed a tad crazy to attempt to explain to him that I had had a life. I'd written it down entertainingly with great effort and now was feeling a bit, er, set upon. Strange, eh?

Now a "Cousin Ruth" was in town, and the shit was about to hit the fan. Or, perhaps not. It turns out that this Ruth – whoever she was – had her husband and her son with her, as well as her seaborne entourage.

The situation was becoming more complex by the minute. What if Ruth was suicidal? What if rudely and publicly exposing her little charade kicked the flimsy props of her existence out from under her unstable feet?

"Oh, that's silly," said my wife. "Why not just confront her? Our inaction is killing me. We've been mute too long. Why not be pro-active?"

"We do *nothing* right now," I said firmly. "I don't want to spook her or, perhaps, spook myself. Let's face it – Ruth hasn't really done anything legally or morally wrong, at least not yet. She's never even communicated with us. Maybe it is the *others* who are lying about her. I think we should just wait-and-see."

We waited. The Big Day arrived. Nothing. The other 'family reunion' guests anchored in the harbor seemed to purposefully avoid us.

Finally, two days after D-day and three days before Ruth was scheduled to depart, one stopped by and started stammering ... beating around the conversational bush incomprehensively.

"Just spit it out," I said, totally exasperated.

"Ruth is worried."

"About?" I asked.

"Well, as you know she used to drink pretty heavy. And smoke. And snort. Evidently – in the past – you and her had some words. She is totally over it, but worried you might not be. You know Ruth, she is soooo shy. And a lot of time has gone by. You're semi-famous..."

"Did she ask you to speak to me?" I queried, attempting to suppress my anger. The whole scene was beginning to make my blood boil.

"Oh, no! She'd die if she knew," said the informant. "But she's, well, she's Ruth! She's sensitive – so easily slighted. But you know all of that, Fatty. The point I'm trying to make is, do you think you could make the first move?"

The hotel at the head of Great Cruz Bay was originally called the Virgin Grand, then the Hyatt, and is now the Westin. I was anchored there in the bay when it was a deserted, pristine cove in the early '80s and heard the first 'bang' of the society's pile-driver with sadness. We boaters discover cove after romantic cove only to have the people who follow eventually throw us out.

But the Westin couldn't exactly throw us out, as many of the moorings in the bay were 'grandfathered' in. It was a standoff between the boaters (who hated the hotel) and the hoteliers (who hated the boaters). Thus, I felt like I was behind enemy lines as I sipped a G&T and patiently watched the door to Room 1602.

Eventually, three people emerged, one of which could have been the son, and the other the husband. The woman, who I assumed was Ruth, appeared to be in her mid-50s. She had a ferret face, and a nervous, jailbird manner. She seemed to be blinking a lot – as if life was too bright for her.

She ducked and feinted as she walked. There was a slight cringe to her. I was sure I'd never seen her before. Still, she was a human being. They strolled by. I waited until they were completely past, and then yelled sharply, "Ruth!" She whirled to look at me, the fear plain on her startled, contorted features.

I dashed over, and scooped her up. I gaily swung her joyously around like she was a young, giggly girl. "You don't look the slightest bit different!" I laughed aloud. "It is so good to see you again after all these years!" (the end)*

Postscript: Eventually, we (gently, gently) pieced together the truth. Ruth was a friend-of-a-friend who had once met my father. As my mini-star rose, so did her, er, our, cousinhood. We had a wonderful three days together. The pseudo-family reunion was a gas, and, yes, I even sold a few books. 📖

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BY LISA OVERING

COURTESY RJC YACHT CHARTERS

Serenity, a 116-foot Lazzara yacht, can be yours for a charter cruise.

You've seen the gleaming megayachts along the canals and docks in Fort Lauderdale. The champagne is chilled and the Jacuzzi is bubbling as they cast off for posh ports of call, complete with every water toy imaginable and a gourmet menu.

If you've dreamed of cruising in one of these luxury vessels of the rich and famous, that dream can come true – for a price. Chartering is the vacation of a lifetime and pure pleasure for guests, but they require forethought and preparation, not just mega bucks.

Base charter fees run upwards of \$35,000 per week on a 60-foot yacht and over \$200,000 for newer, larger yachts.

Chartering abroad or in U.S. waters requires the most up-to-date information regarding local laws and procedures. A charter broker can help navigate the legal nuances of your contract and negotiate the right price for your crewed charter yacht.

In addition to the charter fee, the charterer must pay for food and beverages and fuel costs for the vessel, its tenders, shore excursions and all water sports equipment. The client or charterer must also pay any harbor, pilot and diver's fees; customs formalities; water, electricity; personal laundry; and all communications costs. Running fees are typically an additional 30 to 35 percent of the base cost of the charter.

A value added tax (VAT) is required in the Med and varies per country. Commercially registered yachts can usually have their charter company claim back the VAT, and are thereby exempt. A privately owned pleasure vessel is subject to VAT. A 4 percent sales tax on the charter fee applies in the Bahamas and sales tax is charged throughout most of the United States according to local and state rates.

Crew gratuities are dependent upon your level of satisfaction, but analogous to a restaurant, at 10 to 20 percent of the base charter fee. The tip is subject to your discretion and customized to the location, as well.

Destinations

Many yachts are in the Caribbean during wintertime and the Leeward Islands are wonderful, as are St. Maarten or St. Bart's.

"The British Virgin Islands are great for families and are well protected from rough waters," says Clancy Weller MacDonald, a charter manager with Camper & Nicholson's. "Many yachts are in the Bahamas and New England during the summer, and this is a great season for the Med. Croatia is very popular, as are Italy and the south of France."

Camper & Nicholson's represents Caribbean-based *Symphony II*, a 112-foot Westport, at \$54,500 per week base charter rate. This yacht won the second place in the an-

nual chef's competition at the Antigua Yacht Charter Show. *Sea Dreams*, a 132-foot Northcoast, charters the Bahamas starting at \$90,000 per week with *One More Toy*, a 155-foot Christensen, charging \$150,000 per week in the Caribbean.

RJC Yacht Sales and Charters offers *Serenity*, a 116-foot Lazzara with a flexible five-stateroom configuration and a plethora of water toys, for Florida and Bahamas charters. It runs \$53,000 per week with eight guests or \$58,000 per week for 10 guests.

"Compared to a cruise ship, these megayachts offer a much higher standard of service, catered to exactly what you want," says MacDonald.

Charterers plan their own itinerary with their captain, and it is much more private than renting a villa and much more high-end than any resort. If you want to be served buffalo mozzarella, truffles, lobster and champagne in the middle of nowhere, it's yours to be had on a charter yacht.

While the price tag may seem steep, you can make an offer and negotiate with the assistance of your broker.

Charter Brokers

Using a charter broker is free, and it is definitely worthwhile to work with a reputable, industry professional who knows the ins and outs of charter contract language and flag state regulations. Your broker also has the expertise to find the best boats.

Nicole Caulfield, a charter agent with RJC Yachts and Charters, personally inspects the boats at the yachts shows in Antigua, Genoa, Newport, Miami and Fort Lauderdale. She also interviews the crews in order to better match charter clients to the right crews and boats.

Reputable charter companies can be found through professional associations like the Florida Yacht Brokers Asso-

ciation and American Yacht Charter Association. You can find charter brokers through yachting magazines and online, as well.

"Get a good rapport with a broker with a solid reputation – one who has been in business for a while and who has an escrow account, especially if you found them on the Internet," Caulfield advises.

Your broker can also help decipher the ABCs of charter agreements and contracts including common documents such as the FYBA (Florida Yacht Brokers Association agreement), 80/20, MYBA (Mediterranean Yacht Brokers Agreement) and AYCA (American Yacht Brokers Association agreement). Your contract should have everything spelled out that you are paying for: operating costs, delays, breakdowns and insurance.

"You should know your rights as a client," says MacDonald. "The broker will help you understand your contract and how to protect yourself from a legal standpoint."

Charter Parties

A charter party is the maritime term for a written charter agreement. Charter parties recognized by international maritime law are demise or bareboat charters, time charters, and voyage charters.

"Demise charters are common in the U.S., especially Florida," says Danielle Butler, a maritime attorney with Hill, Betts and Nash, LLP. "The charterer assumes legal responsibility for the vessel, hires the crew, and pays for all operating expenses."

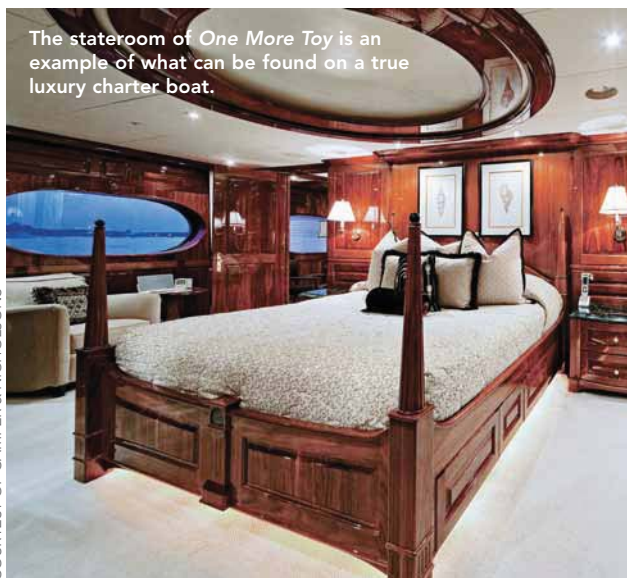
The charterer takes full control of the vessel, its operation and navigation in a demise charter, just short of an outright transfer of ownership. The charterer must maintain the vessel and return in the same condition as received, so it's a good idea to survey the vessel before and after the charter. Liability for contracts and torts of the captain, crew and vessel fall upon the charterer and the vessel as a legal entity. Maritime liens attach to the yacht like a barnacle and the owner's equity in the vessel remains at risk even though the contract relieves the owner of liability.

A time charter is the opposite of a demise charter. The charterer merely rents space on the vessel. The charterer creates the itinerary while the owner retains control, management and navigation of vessel. The owner is legally on the hook for any liability and negligence of the crew.

A voyage charter is just a trip between specific ports of call where the charterer rents space for a length of time. The owner retains control over management and navigation and is legally responsible and liable for the yacht and crew.

Once you've determined the ideal boat for you and walked through all of the options and paperwork with your broker, pop that cork – and get ready to cruise.

The stateroom of *One More Toy* is an example of what can be found on a true luxury charter boat.



COURTESY OF CAMPER & NICHOLSON

CHARTERING THE OLD NORTH STATE

COAST, SOUNDS, RIVERS OFFER BOUNTIFUL
BOATING DESTINATIONS

BY JULES NORWOOD

PHOTO BY PETE DRAIN

Allison Drain takes the helm of
Jazzman, Carolina Wind's Jeanneau
Sun Odyssey 45.2.

“We live in a unique place,” says Capt. Frank Smith. “If we can get people down here for a week or ten days, they can do it all. They can go inshore fishing, offshore fishing, sailing, you name it. We’ve got great bed and breakfasts. It doesn’t get any better than this.”

As a former commercial fisherman, Capt. Frank of Sea Power Charters (seapowercharters.com) knows the waters of North Carolina. And he’s right. The state has something to offer every boater – from sailors to fishermen, novice to expert – there are plenty of chartering options for visitors looking to hit the water.

Fantastic Fishing

Offshore charter captains run sportfishing boats from the Outer Banks, Beaufort and Morehead City, and Wrightsville and Carolina Beach. The state’s position on the Atlantic coast provides world class fishing grounds.

“You’ve got to get out to the Gulf Stream, so we go to Hatteras or Oregon Inlet,” says Capt. Frank. “The state sticks out hundreds of miles into the Atlantic Ocean, and with the Gulf Stream and the Labrador Current, there’s just

great fishing for all kinds of fish.”

He targets fish based on what’s running and where, but the species include wahoo, blue and white marlin, sailfish, tilefish and tuna. He has his favorites, but ultimately he lets the charterers decide the agenda for the day aboard Wild Card, his 35-foot Bertram.

“I want them to participate – this is their boat,” he says. “If they want to rig the baits, they can do that. If you let them do it and show them how to do it themselves, and a fish hits that bait that they tied, that’s it – they’re hooked for life. That’s my world, that’s where I’m happy, and if I can share it with them, and they can have a good time, that’s a good day for everybody.”

Mary Keith Garrett says she grew up fishing in Texas and has fished the Atlantic coast from Florida to Rhode Island. “I’ve had the joy of several trips with Frank,” she says. “Fishing is my secret love, and every time I get the chance, I’ll do it. With the variety of the fish and the quality of the water, North Carolina is the place to go. The anticipation of those really big fish is just exciting!”

Inside the barrier islands (known to as the Inner Banks) is a whole other world of fish. The sounds, rivers and creeks

are home to drum, flounder, speckled trout and striped bass, just to name a few. Inshore fishing guides offer trips for those looking to experience light-tackle sport.

"We have one of the best fisheries for striped bass on the eastern seaboard, the red drum as well," says Capt. Mitchell Blake of FishIBX (fishibix.com). "Our system is extremely diverse in what it has to offer – salt, fresh, high-flow, shallow, deep."

David Emerling, who spent a day fishing with Capt. Richard Andrews of Tar-Pam Guide Service (tarpamguide.com), says they fished for specks and rockfish. "It was a relaxed, pleasant day of fishing with a good level of activity, and with the incredibly beautiful surroundings of our creeks and sounds. I don't think there's an experience that can match it. Being able to share that with my son was just icing on the cake."

Historic Cruising Grounds

North Carolina has much to offer the cruising charterer as well. The Intracoastal Waterway slices right through picturesque settings. Charterers – whether they choose to sail or motor – get a chance to poke around in areas many transient cruisers miss as they pass through the state to points south or north. Countless creeks and coves are great for pulling up to a secluded beach, fishing or anchoring out for a swim and a bite of lunch.

Numerous towns and cities dot the shores, many with history dating back to colonial times. The town of Bath boasts the state's oldest church, built in 1734. The Havens Wharf building in Washington served as a warehouse for merchant ships in the 1800s and was used as a prison by both sides during the Civil War, making it the oldest commercial building still in use in North Carolina. Ocracoke is an island community with only a few hundred year-round residents, many descended from the original settlers who made their living on the sea.

There's Oriental (billed as the sailing capital of North Carolina), Manteo and the Outer Banks, New Bern, Southport, Wilmington, Beaufort, and Morehead City, each with their own attractions and all accessible by boat. The waterways are wide enough and deep enough to sail, yet protected and well marked.

"There are all kinds of creeks you can go in and anchor out," says David Boyuka, who has returned several times to charter sailboats from Carolina Wind Yachting Center in Washington, N.C. "The little coastal towns have great places to go out to eat and get out among the local people. There's lots of history... It's a vacation on the move – a great way to have a unique family experience."

Carolina Wind (carolinawind.com) provides bareboat or captained charters ranging from three-day weekends to a week or more aboard sailboats ranging from 30 to 45 feet, accommodating a range of group sizes and providing plenty of time to visit multiple stops and to sail along the way.

Boat Bumz provides cruises and charters in New Bern and Havelock. In Wrightsville Beach, II Dolphins Sailing (iiodolphins.com) takes passengers aboard a beautiful dark-hulled Pearson 33.

Oriental's School of Sailing (sailingschooloriental.com) offers charters on its 24- and 34-footers; and Bow to Stern Sailing (learnsailing.com) in Oriental provides captained sailing charters aboard a 52-foot Irwin, day charters for up to 34 passengers aboard a 37-foot catamaran, and rentals of smaller sailboats and dinghies.

"When you leave from here, you have great destinations to the north and south, the Outer Banks to the east, or you can stay local in the creeks or travel up the river to New Bern," says Jim Edwards of Bow to Stern. "As soon as you pull out of the basin in Oriental, you have a river that's four miles wide and opens to the sound."

For those who would prefer to cruise a trawler, Cape Lookout Yacht Sales and Charters (capelookoutyachts.com) offers a Mariner 38 named Water Lily, based in Oriental. Cape Lookout and Ocracoke are popular destinations, says owner Sonny Conover. "You have a variety of waterways, from beautiful beaches to gunkholes, wildlife from wild horses to dolphins and sea turtles," he says. "The Crystal Coast of North Carolina, in my opinion, is one of the most beautiful areas for boating that you'll find."

A combined dose of history and sailing is available in Washington with an afternoon or sunset cruise aboard the Jeanie B (jeanieb.com), a 72-foot schooner reminiscent of the working vessels that once plied the waters of coastal North Carolina. "When you look at the natural harbor and the history, there's a tradition of that kind of ship on the waterfront," says the Jeanie B's owner, Dr. Lee Sutton. "Before the trains came, the schooners were part of the town, so I love the romance of that." 🍷



Jim Zolzer, left, and his daughter Jennifer show off a wahoo aboard Wild Card.

PHOTO BY CAPT. FRANK SMITH

CHARTERING IN THE BAHAMAS

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS

BY ELIZABETH MACKAY



COURTESY CATAMARAN SOLSTICE

Liza at the stern.

It's finally time to start planning your dream private charter in The Bahamas. A search online leads to a long list of options – seriously long and not for the faint of heart.

The vast array of options attests to the allure of The Bahamas as a charter destination, with secluded anchorages, short passages, coves sheltered from the wind and waves and hundreds of delightful islands, most uninhabited, and all beautiful.

First, make a list of your 'must haves' and 'would likes.' As with life, do not compromise on your must haves!

Choose Your Destination

Charter options in The Bahamas are as abundant as the 700-plus islands and cays that call themselves paradise. Like the islands themselves, there's a charter option to suit every personality. Fancy a day under sail or a luxurious stay on a mega yacht? Either way, the expression 'no problem mon' applies.

The islands boast unbelievably clear waters teeming with marine life: a boaters' haven, perfect for exploring in the dinghy, enjoying water activities with the family, or lazy days enjoying the sun, a book and a cocktail on the deck or the beach.

The northern-most of the islands lie only 50 miles from the coast of Florida, making access incredibly convenient. Several international carriers fly into the islands, particularly the Abacos, Exuma Cays, and Nassau/Paradise Island – the three most popular charter locations.



Up close and personal with stingrays, Ship Channel Cay, Exuma.

PHOTO BY ELIZABETH MACKAY

The Possibilities

Charter opportunities abound and include days under sail to nowhere, motorboat island hopping adventures, sunset dinner cruises, fishing trips, and private beach picnics on desert islands.

Day charter providers are available from all the main islands, and most established tour companies also offer private charters. If there is a particular tour or experience in which you are interested, go ahead and enquire. Chances are you can find it.

Typical multi-day itineraries range from four to 21 days. There are budget-friendly options for exclusive or non-exclusive seven- to 10-day charters, with or without a crew, on a monohull or catamaran with companies like Navtours (www.navtours.com), a Canadian company specializing in chartering in the Exumas.

The Moorings (www.moorings.com) has a base in the Abacos that provides clients with options for crewed, bare-

boat, sail and power yachts.

Both Navtours and The Moorings qualify clients for bareboat based on sailing experience, so you'll need to submit a sailing resume. Clients of either company can also combine the vacation experience with onboard sailing school.

Going Local

There's no shortage of independent, locally owned and operated charter companies, offering the added advantage of a local crew with extensive and knowledge of local waters, history, culture and interesting sites.

Cliff and Liza Block, owners and crew of Catamaran Solstice (www.sailsolstice.com), with nine years of full-time chartering experience in the Exuma Cays, suggest that understanding and researching your cruising area is crucial, and the crew can offer a wealth of insight.

"Cruising in the Exumas is a bit more adventurous and remote than cruising in other areas of the Caribbean," they add. "If going to a different island bar/restaurant every night and having constant wifi are priorities, then the Exumas are not for you. If you enjoy secluded anchorages, deserted islands and dive sites all to yourself (with an occasional island bar), then the stunning waters of the Exumas will amaze and delight."

To select the right yacht and crew, the Blocks suggest asking questions up front to make sure your expectations can be fulfilled. "On a sailing charter such as ours, the crew is a huge part of the vacation, and you want to ensure a good match," they said.

Crewed or Bareboat

An experienced and personable crew sets the stage for a stress-free charter experience, particularly for the first time charters or those looking to spend more time in the drink literally and figuratively.

A great crew will take care of all your needs and help plan the perfect itinerary that gives you what you want while avoiding the things you don't.

If its bareboat or nothing, then do your homework, follow all safety procedures, and inspect your vessel with the charter company reviewing all equipment prior to departure. Ensure everything is where it should be and in good working condition; don't take anything for granted. Be clear on what equipment is standard and included and what is not.

File your float plan with the charter company and a loved one, and do not deviate from it without advising those who need to know. And most important, do not be lulled into a false sense of security by the gentle breezes and tranquil waters. As every experienced boater knows, conditions on the water can deteriorate surprisingly fast, and the waters of The Bahamas are no exception.

Fishing Charters

If you love fishing, then familiarize yourself with the local fishing regulations to avoid any problems. If a dedicated sport fishing charter is what you're shopping for, the Bahamas are excellent fishing grounds for deep sea as well as light tackle reef fishing.


Capt. Mike Russell, owner of Chubasco Fishing Charters (www.cubascocharters.com), the largest Bahamas sport fishing charter company, advises, "Gather as much information as possible on the available charter operations, talk to the captain or operator, make sure they understand your expectations... Don't go with an operation just because they were recommended by a taxi driver, doorman, guest service personnel or tour rep – most are looking for commissions and will recommend whoever is paying them the most."

A referral by a friend that has fished with an operation is a good place to start. Websites and testimonials from clients are also good. Don't go with an operation just because their price is the lowest. There are reasons their prices are cheaper than other operations, and most of the time not good ones.

Plan Your Itinerary

Fun-filled island hopping adventures can include stops at popular sites like Thunderball Grotto at Staniel Cay where scenes from the 1965 James Bond movie were filmed. Dinner at Staniel Cay Yacht Club is another favorite. Amazing food is served by friendly and competent staff at scheduled sittings announced by bell. Getting up close and personal with stunning coral reefs, swimming pigs (watch out for sharp hooves on inflatable dinghies – these pigs are not shy), grape-loving iguanas, sharks and stingrays, are just some of the wonderful experiences available.

The action at the most popular sites on busy bays can be somewhat overwhelming for those who would rather spend days on deserted islands and nights in solitary anchorages – objectives that are easily achievable.

If it's important to include hobbies and special interests like scuba diving, stand up paddle boarding or fishing in your charter experience, then be sure to choose a company and boat that offer these amenities. While snorkel equipment and dinghies are standard equipment, there are fewer boats that are fully equipped for scuba diving or boast a crew able to give yoga instruction. 

Elizabeth grew up in Jamaica and now resides in The Bahamas where she is an avid hatha yoga practitioner, photographer, sailor, diver, poet and lover of the sea. Her photography, poetry and contact information is available at lightinblu.com

EXPERIENCE RETRO-LUXURY ON A TRUMPY MOTOR YACHT CRUISE

ARTICLE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY HELEN AITKEN



Relax in comfort aboard the *Washingtonian* (top, photo by Brad Miller) or *Windrush* (inset, photo by Capt. Bill Iler).

Modern boats boast fiberglass hulls, prefabricated components and fast engines. But some boaters would rather turn back the clock a few decades to the classic wooden boats built for relaxed, refined yachting.

From 1909-1974, renowned naval architect John Trumpy designed innovative wooden boats starting with ferries, naval patrol boats and trawlers. Later, he designed runabouts and tenders, working up to his distinctive sailing and motor yachts. His yachts stimulate the senses with crisp lines, distinctive hull and bow shapes, “tumblehome” aft sections, wide varnished accent stripes on a white hull, quiet Detroit Diesel engines and a smooth ride. Owners included the titans of industry and eight U.S. presidents.

According to the Trumpy Yacht Association (www.trumppyachts.org), more 400 yachts were built. Today, less than 70 Trumpys remain, including one motorsailer and only two sailboats. Not all of the 70 survivors are pristine, since they require daily upkeep. Most Trumpy motor yacht owners try to use original replacement parts and adhere to period appropriate interiors. The maintenance of a wooden boat includes multiple layers of paint and varnish, and repairing or replacing any wood damaged by worms, rough bottoms, water and salt.

Owning one requires love, devotion and a thick wallet. Not everyone can afford this kind of yacht, but the oppor-



tunity to temporarily experience the Trumpy lifestyle is attainable. Many owners make their yachts available for a few hours, a day, evening, weekend or weekly charter. Destinations and itineraries are personal, with a custom price.

Charter base fees include the yacht, crew numbers and insurance. Additional fees include meals, fuel, dock fees, the function requirements (like a band or cocktail party) while docked or en route, dietary restrictions and special requests. Advanced reservations are needed to plan corporate events, parties, dinners, weddings, short charters and longer cruises during different seasons and locations.

1966 Woodrush

These yachts are expertly crewed, some by their owners, like Capt. Bill Iler and First Mate/Chef Connie Iler aboard

Woodrush, a 55-foot, 1966 Trumpy cruiser the Annapolis-based couple purchased in 2005.

"She reflects the less-formal style of that decade compared to the first half of the 20th century," says Capt. Iler. "We try to be true to the best parts of the 60s and Trumpy style while ignoring others, like some of the greens and other less-spectacular aspects of style from that era. Good style doesn't go out of style, so we've kept the beautiful varnished woodwork and most of the original Trumpy fixtures and furnishings – or near look-alikes."

The classic furnishings are complemented by modern accessories. The *Windrush* experience is like being welcomed to the Ilers' historic home, with all the comforts and individual attention a guest expects. Connie Iler oversees the five-star service onboard, accommodating six guests for day cruises, or four overnight guests.

"It is a three bedroom/three bath home on the water," says Capt. Iler. "Unlike a cruise ship, you determine your own itinerary, and we serve meals and refreshments tailored to your specific preferences. Chartering one of these vessels is probably one of the best ways to experience what it is like to own one."

Their most popular cruise packages are a 3 day/2 night excursion costing from \$2,500- \$3,500, for 2-4 people, or the "Vacation Week" for 8 days/7 nights ranging from \$7,000-\$11,000, for 2-4 people. Cruises run in the Florida Keys, through the Intracoastal Waterway, to the Chesapeake Bay, depending on the season. Visit www.americanclassicyachting.com for details.

1939 Washingtonian

If you would prefer to experience the glamorous, "old money," Trumpy lifestyle, then a cruise on the *Washingtonian* is an option. Built in 1939 for financier AG Drexel Paul, she is one of 20 pre-WWII Trumpys still in service. Owners Paul and Tracy Berger, of Reston, Va., found that John Trumpy apprenticed in the Westervelt boatyard in New York, and Tracy's ancestors helped to train him, so the Westervelt crest is on the stack.


Capt. James Twaddle, with over 30 years of experience in managing and operating these yachts, has the helm. Mr. Berger also has his Captain's license and 100 ton Master and helps out when he's not working as an architect.

Onboard, expect 20th century elegance with 21st century amenities. Sticking true to the original design of the yacht, the exposed curved beams in the saloon and pilothouse and trims are highlighted. Much of the crew quarters, all the lighting and the engines are original. The formal saloon has two navy linen sofas, a 1939-drop leaf Trumpy Captain's desk and an original Trumpy coffee table that converts to a dining table for six people.

Appropriately, there is a portrait of George Washington below deck. "This was on the boat and we thought it was fun, so we left it," says Tracy Berger.

The Bergers are the eighth owners of the *Washingtonian*. The vessel has passed USCG inspections to accommodate up to 29 passengers and two crew for dinners, parties, weddings, business meetings, or a sunset cruise. On weekend cruises, she can accommodate six overnight passengers.

The *Washingtonian* caters events through partner hotels in destinations along the East Coast. An average sunset cruise for 25 people runs about \$4,000, including crew, catering, food/ beverage servers and of course, the sunset, says Paul Berger.

May-October, the *Washingtonian* will be in St. Michaels, Maryland. October-November, she's in Charleston, S.C., area, and mid-November-April, she docks at the Ocean Reef Club in Key Largo, Fla. Visit www.thewashingtonianyacht.com for more information. 

A TRUMPY CAPTAIN'S LIFE

Strolling along the marinas in places like Annapolis, Md., Beaufort, N.C. or Palm Beach, Fla., one expects to see impressive sailboats, yachts and mega yachts. But if you're fortunate to see a Trumpy yacht docked in the marina, you will probably whistle, look a little starry-eyed and say, "Wow!"

"When we're in port, with all the new, huge yachts nearby, people want to look at the Trumpys, not the other ones," says Capt. Ted Schmidt of the Trumpy motor yacht *America*.

Capt. Schmidt, 70, has been on boats for five decades and became a captain 20 years ago. In college he studied philosophy and math, which has given him the right perspectives on life. He has a romantic vibe with eyes that twinkle while he speaks of being at sea.

"I have a familiarity and love of boats, wooden boats and sailing boats," says Schmidt. "I know how a wooden boat should be treated; I watch the repairs and know when things are done right."

The Michigan native and avid scuba diver now resides in Florida, close to the marina where he can attend to the *America* each day. "I'm away from home and it's hard on relationships," he says. While on a charter, 18-hour days are the norm.

On the positive side, he adds there is "no institutional stress, and usually I know more than the boss, who knows little about the workings of the boat. They know how much is spent."

Generally *America* is in Florida December to May and then up to Long Island for the summer. "The boat is part of my life and my home; it's a nice environment in nice marinas with other nice boats to be around," he says.

WILMINGTON WATERFRONT GAINS MARINA COMPLEX

BY CAPT. WAYNE CANNING, AMS

BY AEROPHOTO



The basin will be an integral part of the downtown Wilmington waterfront.

USA InvestCo has begun construction of Port City Marina, a 204-slip property in downtown Wilmington, N.C. The marina is strategically positioned downtown to take advantage of a growing riverfront community and is conveniently located within walking distance of the historic district, offering boaters access to a wide variety of shops, restaurants and other attractions. It is the centerpiece in a development that will include two restaurants and a hotel.

Developers hope to have the first 40 to 60 slips open by late May or early June, just in time for the summer boating season. The remainder will be built out in phases as demand increases. The



The marina will be part of a larger development linked to the historic downtown via the Riverwalk.

COURTESY USA INVESTCO

floating concrete slips are being built to withstand hurricane force winds and tides, making this an attractive hurricane hole for locals and transients alike.

Why now?

In this period of low economic growth when many marinas are only half full, why would someone start construction on a new facility? When asked, Larry Rizzo of Port City Marina answers simply, "To make the best of the bleakest of times." Although this is a bit of an over simplification, the point is they are planning for the future. USA InvestCo is looking at the long-term future of the Wilmington waterfront and believes a marina is a key part of that future. Port City Marina is the cornerstone of a larger plan for a growing community.

The construction site is on the old Almont shipping terminal property and is reclaiming land spoiled by years of industrial waste. The dredging will remove tons of spoiled earth, leaving the site clean once again. The marina will also offer recycling waste disposal for boaters, something that is rare in marinas at this time, making this an all around clean project for the waterfront.

Slips will range in size from 40 to 130 feet, with a mean depth of 10 feet inside the basin and 25 feet on the outside floating docks. For large vessels, the 560-foot-long front dock can accommodate vessels of over 130 feet.

Full Amenities

Complimentary pump out, high-speed wi-fi and cable TV will be available at every slip as well. A third of the slips are being reserved for transient use with the remainder available for monthly or yearly lease. Although not immediately planned, some slips may be available for sale in the future. Both ethanol free gasoline and diesel will be available on the front dock.

A lounge with TV, Internet and laundry is planned, along with a concierge desk and marina store with ATM. An office center will also be available with Fax and copy service, mail and package drop off, and a notary available by appointment for a fee. Local shuttle service to downtown Wilmington and the nearby airport will be available as well.

A unique feature of this project is that it will be tied in with Wilmington's Riverwalk – a city-maintained, public access, scenic boardwalk running along the downtown riverfront through. The section of Riverwalk adjacent to the marina will be called Artwalk and be open for local craft persons and artists to display and sell their crafts. To the north of the new marina, a section called Naturewalk is being built with the help of the N.C. Aquariums. It will focus on the river's natural resources and wildlife.

For more information, visit the marina's website: www.portcitymarina.com.



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THE MOORINGS EXPANDS TO EAST COAST

BY ROB LUCEY

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MOORINGS

The new 3900 features three cabins and two heads, generator and air conditioning.

For the first time, customers of The Moorings can explore the U.S. East Coast by chartering boats from new bases in Annapolis, Md., and Miami, Fla.

"Year on year, The Moorings continues to push boundaries, leading the way with the very best in sail, power and crewed yacht vacations around the world," said Chief Operations Officer Cheryl Powell. "Our 2013 fleet investment is unrivalled in the industry with millions invested in over 45 new yachts, including four new extraordinary sail and power yacht models."

Other expansions for the Clearwater, Fla.-based company in the past year include crewed yacht charters from St. Thomas, USVI, and a new base in Corfu, Greece, bringing

the total number of bases to 27. The Moorings became a pioneer in the charter yacht industry when it began operations in the British Virgin Islands in 1969.

The Moorings is part of the marine division of TUI Travel Group, which also includes the Sunsail and Footloose charter companies, Le Boat (a European canal boat charter company), and the Leopard Catamarans line of blue-water cruising catamarans built by Robertson & Caine in South Africa.

Chesapeake Explorations

The Chesapeake base launched in May at Annapolis Landing Marina, 900 Awald Rd., with a fleet of sail and power

monohulls built by Beneteau in Marion, S.C., and catamarans from Robertson & Caine. A full range of bareboat and crewed options are available from weekend getaways to prolonged explorations of the largest estuary in the United States, stretching 200 miles from the Susquehanna River down to the Atlantic Ocean.

"We are very excited to offer a new cruising grounds in North America, The Moorings Annapolis our first location on the Eastern seaboard," Powell said. "Chesapeake Bay is literally the 'back yard' for so many of our customers. ... The Annapolis Landing Marina was our first choice because of its excellent proximity to many itinerary highlights and because the property presented the most inviting venue for The Moorings customers with a wonderful host of yacht club-style amenities, including a pool, restaurant and picnic area."

Monohulls available for charter include the Moorings 40.3 (40-foot, three-cabin/two-head) and Moorings 42CC (42-foot, four-cabin/two-head center cockpit), both by Beneteau. The new Moorings 3900 catamaran and Moorings 393 Power catamaran also join the Annapolis fleet, both featuring three cabins and two heads, generator, and air conditioning.

Florida Adventures

If the Chesapeake is the back yard of Southeast boaters, then the waters surrounding Miami could be considered the front yard.

The Florida base is located at the Miami Beach Marina, 300 Alton Rd., adjacent to Government Cut, which provides easy water access to the Atlantic and ICW. Ashore, visitors can explore the Art Deco District and trendy South Beach before cruising on to the famed Florida Keys.

Charter customers can plot any number of itineraries with stops in places such as Key Biscayne, known for some of the nation's best beaches and fishing spots; Islamorada, the Sport Fishing Capital of the World; Key Largo, a diving destination with numerous wrecks and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary nearby; or Marathon, a snorkeling wonderland with America's only living coral barrier reef just offshore.

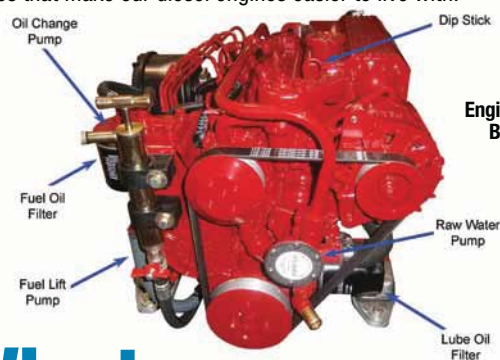
Or just hang out in the Miami area and enjoy the trendy nightlife and incredible views of downtown Miami and South Beach from the deck of your Moorings yacht.

The first two boats available at the location are the 393 PC power catamaran the new Moorings 3900 sailing catamaran, both built by Robertson & Caine. The vessels are equipped with a full suite of Raymarine navigational electronics, anchoring system with electric windlass, convenient dinghy davit with electric winch, twin diesel engines and generator, a wide stepped transom for easy boarding and vertical front windscreens for panoramic visibility.

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GULF FISHING CHARTERS MOVE INSHORE

BY LISA OVERING

Everyone talks about the negative impact of oil on our environment, but the reality is scores of fishing boats regularly tie off fully operating, pumping production platforms in the Gulf where it's not uncommon to limit out on 50 fish in 15 minutes. You can see 50 feet straight down and the rig provides an artificial reef for bait fish that attract big game.

But getting offshore to those fish is pricey considering charter fishermen and their guests are only allowed two red snapper each, in spite of federal fishery councils determining that snapper stocks are doing rather well.

Besides restricting the catch limit, the season itself is very brief for popular Gulf fish like snapper and amberjack. More charter boat captains are moving away from deep, offshore operations toward near shore charters off Chandeleur and the other barrier islands of the Gulf Islands National Seashore.

"Snapper was only open 45 or 50 days this year," says Capt. Mike Adams of Fort Bayou Charters. "The regulations are very restrictive. It costs at least \$300 to get out there."

It doesn't make financial sense to fill up the boat with up to 300 gallons of fuel at \$3.50 per gallon, buy bait and ice all just to catch two fish. If there are three guys on the charter, then they can catch a whopping six snapper.

"It's tough for those charter guys, especially snapper, with such a long run out," says Bobby Carter, chairman of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Billfish Classic. "The snapper population has increased and there are a lot of snapper out there, so I don't see the problem allowing four or five snapper each catch to help the local charter fishermen who are struggling."

For snapper, the average size of the fish has actually increased recently, so fewer fish can be caught before the allowable poundage is harvested. Management goals are set in pounds, not in the number of fish caught.

The National Marine Fisheries Service has set harvest limits and open seasons for the entire Gulf of Mexico, regardless of fish populations that differ drastically between Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. Under a rule published May 30, 2012 by the Gulf of Mexico Fish Management Council, the acceptable biological catch for red snapper was set at 8.080 million pounds for 2013, with 51 percent of the acceptable biological catch allocated to a commercial quota and 49 percent to recreational fishermen.

While anglers debate the government's logic, scientists



Capt. Mike Adams shows some recent catches from the near shore Gulf waters.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FORT BAYOU CHARTERS

claim that bigger fish represent a more abundant commercial and recreational fishery for future generations, therefore the short season makes sense.

With many snapper trapped as bycatch in shrimp trawler nets, Adams and other fisherman feel the rules victimize recreational anglers. "I think some of the people making up the new laws aren't looking at the environment," says Adams.

With limits on tasty speckled trout being more generous, moving inshore to areas like Chandeleur Island, known for its clearer water and grassy beds, is a good bet for charters.

"More captains of smaller boats are moving inshore to save on fuel," says Carter, who notes spectacular fishing off the Katrina Reef, just south of Deer Island. Previously part of the old Ocean Springs Bridge which was dismantled after Hurricane Katrina, the reef has great fishing with trout, sheepshead, flounder and redfish.

Off Venice and further out, tuna abound with wahoo prevalent at the mouth of the Mississippi River. South Louisiana's labyrinth of waterways provides every kind of catch in its wealth of salt, fresh and brackish waters, all within minutes of each other. If restrictions on saltwater fishing continue in severity, there may be more charters based in the freshwater lakes of the Atchafalaya Basin, the largest U.S. swamp wilderness at 595,000 acres.



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GALVESTON BAY RACE GOES CLEAN

BY ROB LUCEY

PHOTO BY JOHN LACY, GBCA



Racers leave a clean wake at the Galveston Bay Cruising Association's first certified Clean Regatta.

The Galveston Bay Cruising Association took a step toward cleaner waters by certifying its first Clean Regatta under the guidelines of Sailors for the Sea. The qualifying event was the 28th annual GBCA Performance Cup Regatta in October, which hosted 30 vessels racing in six divisions.

Clean Regattas certification provides third-party verification that event organizers are doing their utmost to protect the waters upon which people sail. To participate, organizers commit to carrying out at least one Best Practice:

- Trash and recycling collection and disposal.
- No discharge.
- Oil spill prevention.
- Non-toxic cleaning products and bottom paint usage.
- Bottom cleaning and boat maintenance.
- Global warming and carbon offsets.
- Biofuel conversion.
- Use of recycled materials.

Sailors for the Sea, a Newport, R.I.-based ocean conservation nonprofit, marked the seventh year of the Clean Regatta program with more than 150 races throughout the United States operating under its best practices guidelines.

"By making the Clean Regattas Pledge, regattas, yacht clubs, and sailing programs commit to protecting the ocean and local waters, and working to achieve higher environmental standards," said Annie Brett, program lead


from Sailors for the Sea. "The program's growth mirrors the interest among sailors to protect waters for the use and enjoyment of this and future generations.

"If every regatta, sailing program, and yacht club in the world takes this vision to heart and works to effect change in their harbors and communities, we could create a global network of ocean stewards aimed at halting ocean degradation," Brett added. "This is the vision we work toward every day."

For more details about Clean Regattas, including how to carry out each Best Practice, visit sailorsforthesea.org.

Other southeast Clean Regattas have included the U.S. Youth Multihull Championship in Islamorada, Fla.; The Atlantic Cup from Charleston, S.C., to Newport, R.I.; and the Hospice by the Sea Regatta in Fort Lauderdale Beach, Fla.

"The main goals of Sailors for the Sea is to educate and engage the boating community in the worldwide protection of the oceans," said Sailors for the Sea CEO Dan Pingaro. "By providing information, leading education-focused events about current ocean issues, and providing a link between information and the direct action that people can take to make a difference, I know Sailors for the Sea can make a difference."

Philanthropist David Rockefeller Jr. founded the organization in 2004. "As sailors, we have the opportunity and the responsibility to lead by example," Rockefeller said. "Everything we can do on the water can be echoed and replicated on shore for the protection of the world's waters." 

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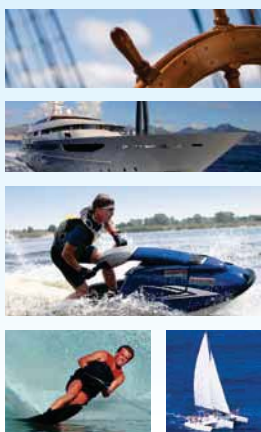
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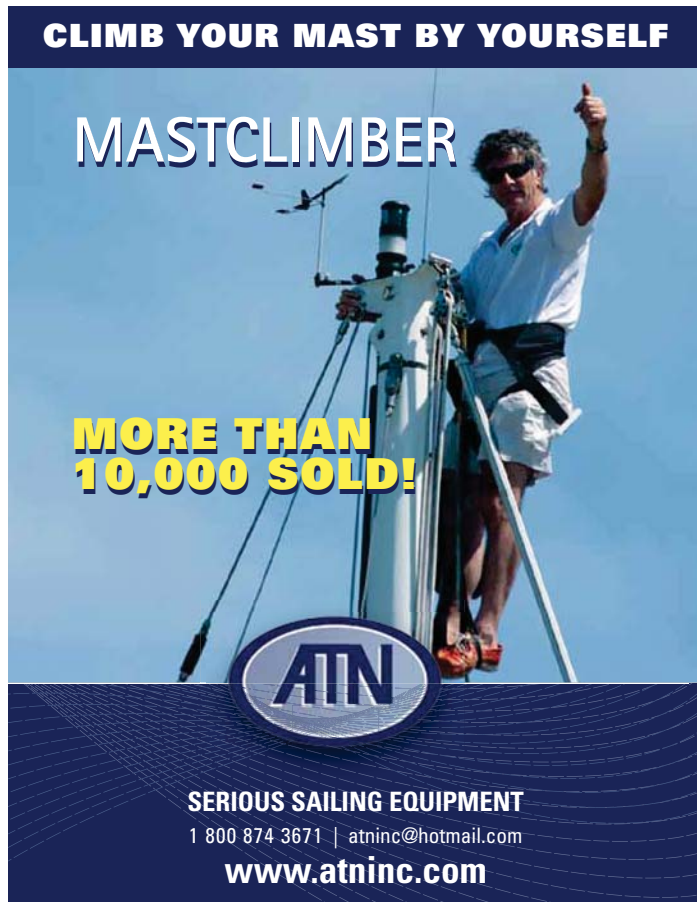
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SOUTHEAST MARINAS

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Jersey City	NJ	Liberty Landing	201-985-8000	15'	200'	520	●	30/100 Amp		●	●	●	●	●	●	16	●	
St. Michaels	MD	St. Michaels Marina	800-678-8980	10'	200' +	50+	●	30/50/100 Amp Single Phase	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	16	FREE	
Deltaville	VA	Deltaville Yachting Center www.dycboat.com	804-776-9898	10'	70'	78	●	30/50 Amp	●		●	●				16	FREE	
Washington	NC	McCotters Marina	877-272-6632	6'	65'	180	●	30/50 Amp				●	●			16	FREE	
Havelock	NC	Matthews Point Marina	252-444-1805	5.5'	50'	110	●	30/50 Amp		●	●	●	●		●	16	FREE	
Morehead City	NC	Morehead City Yacht Basin	252-726-6862	8'-10'	200' +	88	●	30/50/100 Amp	●	●	●	●	●		●	16	FREE	
Beaufort	NC	Jarrett Bay Boatworks	252-728-7100	10'	135'	30'	●	30/50/100 Amp		●	●	●			●	16	FREE	
Charleston	SC	Charleston City Marina	843-723-5098	25	300'	415	●	480v & 208v, 3 phase		●	●	●	●		●	●	16	FREE
Amelia Island	FL	Amelia Island Yacht Basin	904-277-4615	6'	100'	135	●	50 & 30 amp		●	●	●	●		●	●	72/16	
North Palm Beach	FL	Old Port Cove Marina	561-626-1760	15'	200'	202	●	30/50/100 Amp	●	●		●	●		●	16/8	●	
North Palm Beach	FL	New Port Cove Marine Center	561-844-2504	5'	80'	43	●	30/50/100 Amp		●	●	●	●		●	16/8	●	
North Palm Beach	FL	North Palm Beach Marina	561-626-4919	10'	150'	107	●	30/50/100 Amp	●	●	●	●	●		●	16/68	●	
Boca Raton	FL	Boca Raton Resort & Marina	561-447-3474	8'	170'	32	●	200 Amp	●			●			●	●	16	
Fort Lauderdale	FL	Bahia Mar Yachting Center	800-755-9558	14'	un-lim	250	●	30/50/100 Single & Three Phase	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	16	
Fort Lauderdale	FL	Pier Sixty-Six Marina	954-728-3578	17'	290'	127	●	30/50/100 Single & Three Phase	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	16	●
Fort Lauderdale	FL	Hilton Ft. Lauderdale Marina	954-728-3578	17'	un-lim	33	●	30/50/100 Single & Three Phase	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	16	●
Sarasota	FL	Hyatt Regencey Sarasota Marina	941-953-1234	6'	38'	32	●	30/50 Amp	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	16	●
Captiva	FL	South Seas Island Resort and Marina	239-472-7628	10'	120'		●	30/50/100 Amp	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	16	●
Fajardo	PR	El Conquistador Resort & Marina	787-863-1000	12'	70'	35	●	30/50/100	●			●			●		16	●
Canyon Lake	TX	Canyon Lake Marina	830-935-4333		85'	449	●		●			●			●	●	16	
Canyon Lake	TX	Cranes Mill Marina	830-899-7718		45'	250	●			●	●	●		●	●		16	
Austin	TX	Hurst Harbor	512-266-1800		100'		●			●	●	●			●	●	16	

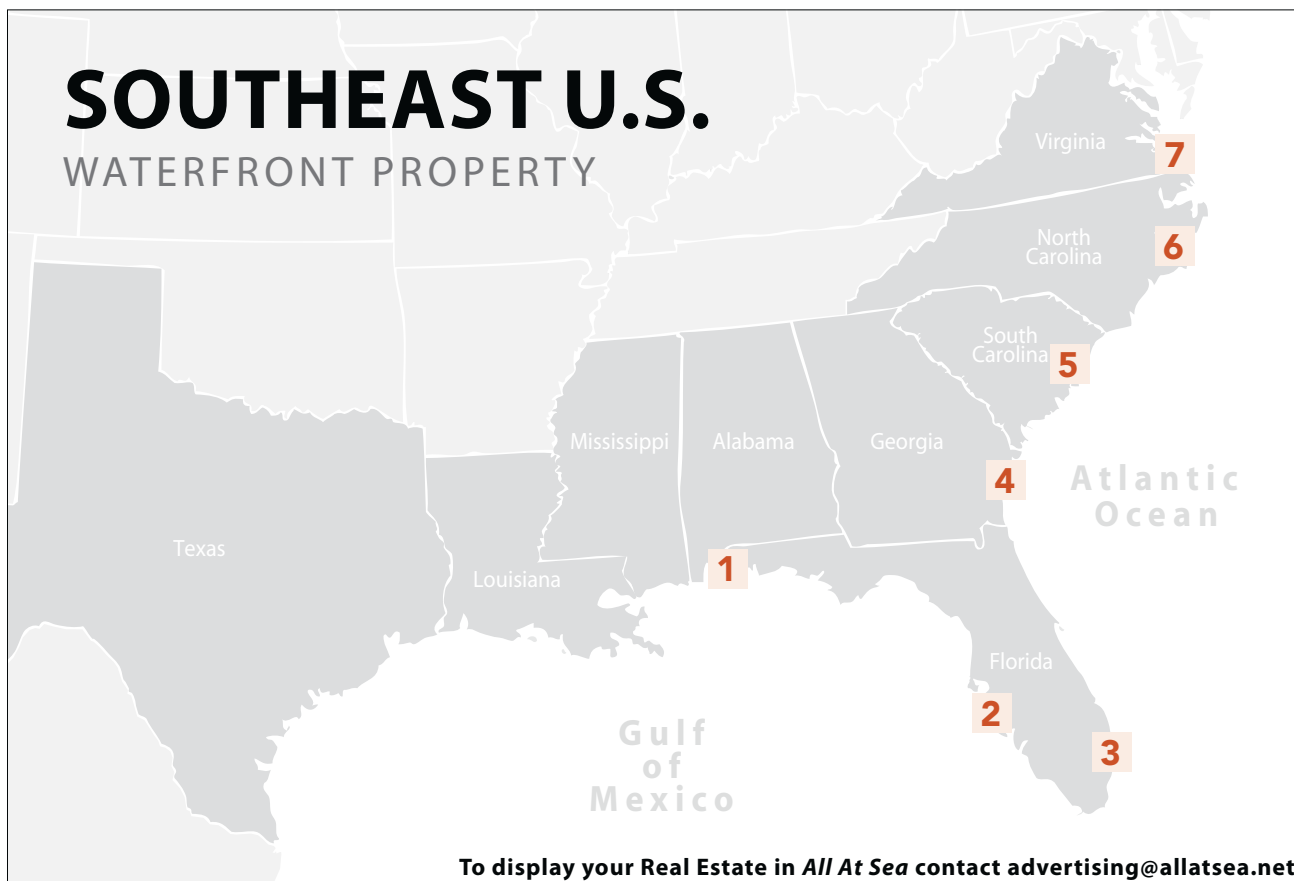
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Jersey City	NJ	Liberty Landing	201-985-8000	9'	75'	19'	no limit	50 Amp	24x7	60 ton travelift	•			•		•	
Chesapeake	VA	Atlantic Yacht Basin, Inc.	800-992-2489	12'	120'	25'	no limit	30/50/100 Amp	24x7	60 ton travelift, 300 ton railway		•	•	•	•	•	
Deltaville	VA	Deltaville Yachting Center www.dycboat.com	804-776-9898	10'	70	19.6'	no limit	30/50 Amp	8-4:30 M-F/ 9-4:30 S	50 ton travelift	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Wanchese	NC	Blackwell's Boatyard	252-473-1803	6'	70'	20'	no limit	30/50 Amp	7-3:30 M-F 7-12 S	70 tons		•	•	•		•	
Washington	NC	McCotter's Marina & Boatyard	252-975-2174	6'	60'	14'	no limit	30/50 Amp	8-5:30 x7	15 tons	•	•	•	•		•	
Oriental	NC	Deaton Yacht Service	252-249-1180	5'	50'	18'	no limit	30/50 Amp	8-5 M-F/ 8-12 S	35 ton travelift	•	•	•	•			•
Minnesott Beach	NC	Wayfarers Cove Marina & Boatyard	252-249-0200	6'	50'	18.5'	no limit	30/50 Amp	8-4 M-F	60 tons	•	•	•	•		•	
Beaufort	NC	Jarrett Bay Boatworks	252-728-2690	10'	130'	30'	no limit	30/50/100 Amp	24x7	50/75/200 ton travelift	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Brunswick	GA	Two-Way Boat Yard	912-265-6944	7'		16.5'	no limit	30 Amp	8-4:30 M-F	30 ton travelift	•		•		•	•	
Amelia Island	FL	Amelia Island Yacht Basin	904-277-4615	11'	100'	19'	no limit	30/50 Amp	8-6 x7	36 tons							
Stuart	FL	Apex Marine	772-692-7577	8'	65'	19'	no limit	30/50 Amp	7-3:30 M-F	65 tons			•	•	•		
Fort Lauderdale	FL	Apex Marine	954-759-7212	9'	90'	22'	no limit	30/50/100 Amp	7-4 M-F	92 tons			•	•	•	•	
Kemah	TX	South Texas Yacht Services	281-334-7245	7'		16	no limit	30 Amp	7:30-4 M-F 8-12 S	37.5 ton travelift		•	•	•		•	•

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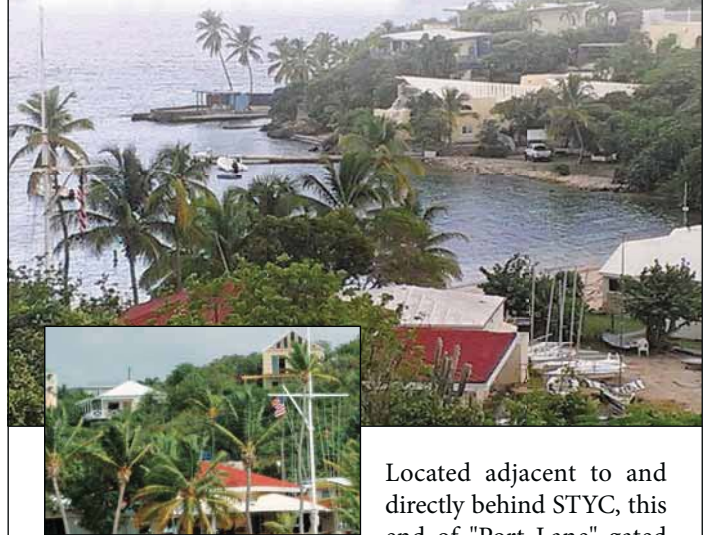
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3



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4 Blythe Island, GA. Nestled under impressive oaks, this 12-acre estate features an 8-slip boat dock with water and power connected. Extensive Turtle River frontage with a panoramic view of marsh and river, it is less than 30 minutes to the Atlantic Ocean, St Simons Island and Jekyll Island. Property includes two houses, a 4 BR/2.5 BA and a 3 BR/2 BA; a fish house, barn with horse stalls, fenced pasture and round pen. A truly private setting with convenient access to I-95. Perfect family compound or subdivided into 4 to 8 lots for future development. \$1,850,000.00

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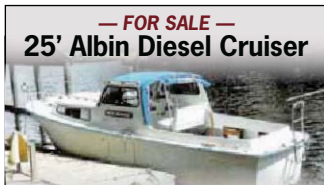


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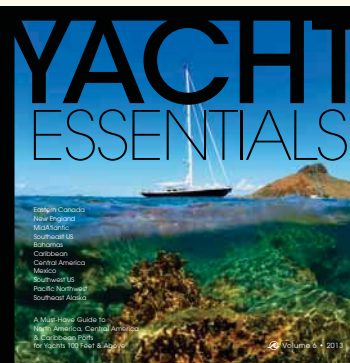
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AN APPRECIATION OF WINTERTIME

BY ANDY SCHELL
PHOTO BY MARIA KARLSSON



There is no end to the sailing season in South Florida. Therefore, there is no beginning either.

It was 2010, in mid-February and Mia and I had sailed the 40 miles from Miami to Pompano Beach offshore in a stiff northerly, riding the choppy seas of the Gulf Stream north. It was downright cold by Florida standards. I was wearing my winter foul weather jacket and a winter hat, complete with earflaps. But we were sailing, something only the heartiest sailors in Annapolis – which I call home – could have said then.

Then again, there is something to be said for the winter hibernation most northern sailors endure. Taking advantage of an unseasonably warm day in January to get out on the water; enjoying a steaming mug of coffee in the cabin of a sailboat warmed by the stove and the company of friends; the feeling during a late-March day that the sun might be just slightly warmer than the day before, announcing the coming of spring, the coming of sailing season.

For the second straight year, I had serendipitously run into my old friend Pete Horner in Ft. Lauderdale. He'd been traversing the globe on a 130-foot schooner and just returned from New Zealand after crossing the Pacific from San Diego. We've been spending the past week reminiscing about our days crewing on the *Woodwind* in Annapolis.

"Growing up in Baltimore, springtime sailing on the Bay was like sudden freedom from a dark, gloomy winter prison," Peter recalled.


During the three seasons that I worked for the schooner, I came to know and enjoy the excitement surrounding the start of sailing season. Springtime is a call to arms of sorts for the crew. The first nice day in March sees all hands gather at Port

Annapolis, where *Woodwind* and *Woodwind II* are laid up, usually side-by-side, 150 feet of sleek hulls in need of green bottom paint. We rip the shrink-wrapped winter covers off with fervor. Two by two we coat the bottom of each boat with antifouling; it takes a miraculous team effort to get the work done in one day.

As the days grow longer and warmer, the pace becomes faster, the crew working to ready the boats for sailing. Sails are passed down from the loft at the workshop, arduously hauled down to the boat and bent on. Fresh coats of varnish are applied to the mahogany trim on deck.

In short, making the *Woodwinds* ready for sail is no different than what the thousands of boat owners on the Chesapeake experience each year. While many of their boats probably won't see the service that the *Woodwinds* do over the course of the summer, the experience of the spring season is virtually identical.

While Mia and I went down to South Florida from Annapolis for a specific purpose, I'd been experiencing a twinge of jealousy thinking about my friends up north and the excitement that surrounds the spring season.

Meanwhile, Mia and I continued working on *Arcturus* in anticipation of a May departure for Bermuda and beyond. The weather remained essentially constant. We never took the sails off, never winterized the engine. It was enjoyable for sure – but I couldn't help but feel that something was missing. To quote a favorite movie line, "Without the bitter, baby, the sweet ain't as sweet." 

Andy Schell is the former editor of All At Sea SE. Follow he and Mia online at 59-north.com.



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