

# Palatka Yacht Club

WHISPERS OVER THE WATER

August 2008

## 2008 OFFICERS &

### DIRECTORS

#### Commodore:

Keith Cheshire

#### Vice Commodore:

Gail Hart

#### Secretary:

Karen Blankenship

#### Treasurer:

Steven Huntley

#### Second-Year Director:

Linda Girardin

#### First-Year Director:

Constantine Foltis

#### Past Commodore:

Clark Hoyle

## 2008 COMMITTEE

### CHAIRS

#### Boating events:

David & Linda Girardin

#### Communications:

Constantine Foltis

#### Dinner planning

Dorothy McAfee &  
Karen Blankenship

#### Dinner meeting Programs:

Robert Trail

#### Facilities:

LaVerne Cheshire

#### Fund raising:

#### Improvements & Maintenance:

#### Membership Growth:

Linda Girardin

#### Membership programs:

#### PR:

#### Special Events:

## Commodore's Corner ..... By Keith Cheshire

Well, the Cheshires finally cruised back to good ol' Palatka in our "land yacht", after a fun-filled 9245 miles (and lots of gas!). Unfortunately, we did not make the St. Mary's rendezvous, but from all accounts, those who went had a great time. "Halfback Heaven" is still in drydock with starter problems, but we hope to be back in the water by fall.

Dorothy and her team continue to wow the club with their well-planned club events and dinners. Many thanks to you all. The next onboard event will be the staging and sleeping base for the August 16-17 weekend at the Redneck-Riviera. Boy, we thought we were eating well when we had the caterers, but I do believe our members do it better!!! A tip of the ol' hat goes to Karen for her work in making our galley (and homebrew dinners) more professional as our inventory of kitchen serving ware continues to grow. And for those of you who have not been down in the galley lately, Clay Gillean has wired up our new (to us) galley stove. Thank you Clay!

Guion Lindsay and I need a temporary assistant to do bar setup and teardown in the August & September meetings and other events (except no bar for Red Neck weekend - it's BYOB). Guion will continue to do the inventory and restocking but is temporarily unable to do heavy lifting and movement of supplies from galley to deck and back. If you can help, call me at 328-3420 or email me at [keith.cheshire@mindspring.com](mailto:keith.cheshire@mindspring.com) or [phonefeline41@yahoo.com](mailto:phonefeline41@yahoo.com).

See you at the Red Neck Riviera and our August meeting. .... Keith



## Coming Events

### August 16-17, Saturday-Sunday - Redneck Riviera Sandbar

#### Saturday (8/16)

- Meet at the clubhouse at 10:00 AM;
- Fun at the sandbar starts at 10:00 or whenever you get there;
- Boaters anchor/raft up to the boats with the club burgee;
- 10am shuttle leaves from the clubhouse for those without boats;
- Bring big hats, sunscreen, water floats or chairs (low tide around noon, high tide around 4pm);
- Eat whenever you want, on the boats or at the clubhouse, and bring your own food and refreshments;
- Shuttle back to clubhouse around 4pm or so, earlier if needed;
- Sleep over on your boat, or in the clubhouse with sleeping bag and air mattress, or at home if you prefer.

**Sunday (8/17)** - Same program as Saturday's.

Note: For latest updates or more details, contact Clark Hoyle (649-6795 or [clarkhoyle@mindspring.com](mailto:clarkhoyle@mindspring.com)) or Clay Gillean (904-268-3235 or [chg1100@bellsouth.net](mailto:chg1100@bellsouth.net)).

## Coming Events—continued

**August 28<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) - Dinner meeting** - Aboard our floating clubhouse at Browns Landing. Social hour starts at 6:00 PM, and dinner starts at 7:00 o'clock. The club will provide the main entrée of fried chicken, and attendees should bring hors d'oeuvres, side dishes or desserts. There will be a \$5.00 charge per person to cover the club's costs. The door committee will be Larry & Dorothy McAfee. There is no special program scheduled for that evening. No reservations are necessary.

**September 4<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) - Board of Directors Meeting** - At 6:30 PM aboard or floating clubhouse. Board meetings are open to all PYC members.

**September 13-14 (Saturday-Sunday) - Seven Sisters Raft Up** - On Saturday September 13, we will make our way down the St. Johns River to just south of the Buffalo Bluff Train Bridge to 7-Sisters Islands. All interested persons should plan on meeting at the clubhouse at 1:00 PM on Saturday. Any landlubber types without boats can meet at the clubhouse for transportation to the Rendezvous location, and we will bring you back to the clubhouse before dark. For those traveling on their own later or earlier, here are the navigation directions.

Just north of green channel marker #31 turn Southeast between the islands then south to the Rendezvous location. Contact David or Linda Girardin (328-1774 or [DLBG75@hotmail.com](mailto:DLBG75@hotmail.com)) for a chart of the Seven Sisters area. Since it will still be a hot time of the year, be sure to bring swim suits and floats. There are no land-based activities at this location, so bring plenty of food and beverages for the overnight stay. The next morning we will get up and likely cruise around the islands and then over near Murphy's Island to spend some time at the Redneck Riviera (sand bar).

**Later PYC events** - See the entire 2008 activity calendar published in your April 2008 newsletter and summarized on page 8 of your PYC handbook.

## Past Events

### St. Marys, Georgia, Annual Boating Trip - July 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> ..... By Linda and David Girardin

The weather looked a bit ominous with what was soon to develop into Tropical Storm Cristobal just off the coast of Fernandina. The forecasts were for improving weather as the weekend progressed, so we decided to make the trip to St. Marys, Georgia, on Friday, July 18<sup>th</sup>. The only boat leaving from the Palatka area on the St. Johns River was our boat *Gator Bait*. We departed at 1100 hours for the mighty city of Jacksonville, where we were to rendezvous with Clay and Heather Gillean in *Reel Offroader*.

On our trip downstream, the winds picked up a bit around Green Cove Springs, which made steering around the trap buoys into an obstacle course. We have decided that neon yellow and day-glow orange are the brightest and easiest buoys to spot when there are white caps. As it turned out, this was the "worst" of our weather for the entire trip. Cruising along the river at about 28 mph, we met the Gilleans just south of the Buckman Bridge. It took us just about 2 hours to reach the Landings, where we took a brief stop to acquire a lunch for the "road."

By 1400 hours, we were at our turnoff for the Intracoastal Waterway at Sisters Creek. Harry Gillean had called Clay to report that we should be in some serious rainstorms, which we weren't. We had a few spritzes of rain, just enough to land a drop or two on sunglasses in just the wrong spots. Along the marsh at low tide, we spotted roseate spoonbills, which are beautiful birds. The buoy system has been adjusted near Nassau Sound, which made that crossing a bit quicker than before. The scenery in the marshes was just gorgeous.



Clay & Heather Gillean

Just as we came to the slow-down area in front of the municipal marina at Fernandina at about 1500, the rains

## St. Marys Trip—continued



Merry group at St. Marys—Girardin photo



Linda Girardin & Lana Bunton

came down a bit harder and appeared to be falling fairly heavily at St. Marys, so we installed our isinglass curtains, and the Gilleans donned their rain gear for the remainder of the trip, which took us another 30 minutes.

At the marina (\$25 per night for each boat 25 ft and under), David had logged 98 statute miles from Forrester Point, just north of Rice Creek and near our home. We checked into the Riverview Hotel (\$63 per night per room) and noted with pleasure, that the owners had painted the exterior, opened more rooms, and had fixed the deteriorating balcony, our socializing spot. Meanwhile, Gene and Jeannine O'Connor had chosen a different route to get to St. Marys. They trailored their Panga up I-95, reporting clear sailing and smooth seas on the trip. They were staying with a fishing buddy of Gene's, Marshall and Carol Roland, from St. Augustine and St. Marys.

The traditional activity of cocktails on the veranda, hors d'oeuvres, and swapping tales and lies occurred Friday afternoon while we awaited the arrival of Girardin passengers for the weekend, Ray and Lana Bunton. Need we say that we had a pleasant time? Heather even spotted a beautiful



golden Labrador, a passenger in a golf cart as it went by (this is our entertainment, watching cars, carts, and people go by). As the cart and dog made the return trip, we noticed that the driver was Marshall Roland, who along with his wife Carol, were to be our host and hostess for a cookout on Saturday night. We extended an invitation to Marshall and Carol to join us for dinner at Langs Seafood. He agreed and even made the reservations.

The Buntons finally appeared, having had equally good sailing from Palatka in their Honda on I-95. We allowed them to unpack and fix a cocktail before walking along the riverfront to the restaurant. Several people experienced rock shrimp (what St. Marys is known for) in a variety of ways.

Prior to adjourning to our rooms for the evening, we had agreed to meet at 0800 for breakfast. Andrea and Harry Gillean were to arrive by car midmorning on Saturday, which meant we had all the time in the world to depart for our boating activities for the day.

Saturday dawned beautiful. After breakfast, Clay and Gene launched Gene's boat, and the three boats gathered up at the marina and proceeded to the inlet. We weren't going too far yet, as Clay needed to go back to town and pick up Andrea and Harry. Gene went off in search of fish traveling behind shrimp boats, while the Girardins and Buntons fished in the inlet. No fish were in evidence.

Meanwhile, a Coast Guard cutter and two of the Navy's submarine tender tugboats went out the inlet. Then a pair of Navy inflatables, with machine guns mounted on the bow and stern, went out the inlet. All of this activity was leading us to believe that today we might actually have a sighting of a nuclear submarine going to Kings Bay. As a result, we waited in the inlet for a while, even anchoring off the southern end of Cumberland for a swim. We waited and waited and waited. The Gilleans were all on their way when they had to stop to watch a fisherman try to land a tarpon (after half an hour, he gave up, and turned the rod over to the captain). We didn't want to get too far away from the inlet in case the sub came in, so rather than circumnavigate the island, we went up the Intracoastal Waterway in an attempt to go ashore on Cumberland Island at the Plum Orchard house. The dock was filled with boats, and there was no room for us. Instead, we anchored up off the island and had lunch.



In the Rolans' home

## St. Marys Trip - continued



Cooling off at Cumberland Island

We headed back south again, passing Kings Bay. Up ahead we spotted one of the tugs that we'd seen earlier in the morning. The excitement level increased on all the boats to no avail, as there was no submarine. Then the second tug returned to port, still with no signs of the submarine. Due to the sun and the increased excitement level, we had to go swimming again, so we anchored up on the sand beach on Cumberland close to where we were earlier in the day. Lana and Jeannine searched the beach for treasures such as shells and abandoned anchors.



Wild horses on Cumberland Island



Passenger ferry - J. O'Connor photo

The tide was coming in and soon the swimmers were going to have to swim to the anchored boats, so we decided to up anchor and explore some more.

The time was approaching 1500 hours, and we were expected for supper at the Rolands' at 1730, so the Gilleans and O'Connors headed back to St. Marys while *Gator Bait* explored just a bit more. David



Tractor tug—J. O'Connor photo

navigated across a sandbar in front of a small creek on the southwest end of the island that headed up through the marsh to Dungeness, the ruin managed by the National Park Service. Knowing that the tide was coming in, Captain Girardin had no fear of running aground until we approached the bluff where the residences are, and the water got real skinny. The wake from the boat as he came off a plane forced water ahead of us and stirred up all kinds of bait. The water was just hopping with critters, including shrimp, one of which was found the next day on the boat as we pulled it out of the water at home. The mud flats were shimmering with thousands of fiddler crabs out for a meal. We didn't get as close to the shore as we had hoped, however, the trip was deemed successful. All in all, *Gator Bait* went 50 statute miles on Saturday.



Passing containerships underway - Girardin photo



Schooner in inlet at Ft. Clinch - Girardin photo

The Rolands' house (Carol's grandmother's house) was about two blocks away and situated with a view of the marsh. It was built in the late 1800s and was refurbished by Marshall Roland. Clay was gracious enough to grill the burgers. Our picnic was indoors, as the temperatures were still a bit hot that late in the afternoon. After supper, Marshall entertained us on his home-made electric guitar. Even Lana agreed to help him sing, although we decided that Lana had best keep her day job. We had a sing-along and laughed and laughed and just plain had fun. What a great end to a beautiful day. By the time we headed back to the hotel, the walk was much cooler. Of course the captains had to take a detour and check on their boats at the marina before placing their heads on pillows.

Again, we had agreed to meet for breakfast at 0800 followed by a group photograph of the happy travelers.

After fueling up at Langs Marina (\$4.30 for high test versus \$4.24 in Palatka on the highway), *Gator Bait* and *Reel Offloader* headed out to sea for the return trip. The ocean was flat, with a 1 to 2-foot swell. The trip along the

## St. Marys Trip - continued

ocean side of Amelia Island to Mayport was about 45 minutes longer and 7 miles farther than going through the Intracoastal Waterway. It was an equally pretty ride, though, as on the marsh side of the island.

At Mayport, there were at least 12 large naval ships in the bay. We've seen the carrier JFK there in the past, which dwarfed any other ships at Mayport, but it is now retired. The skies were a bit too hazy to photograph gray hulls tied up to shore. The remainder of the ride back to Julington Creek (Gilleans) and East Palatka (Girardins) was pleasant and uneventful, with perfect weather.

As the saying goes, "you should have been here...."

## Dinner meeting - July 24<sup>th</sup> - As LaVerne and Commodore Keith Cheshire came to



Yummy



their first meeting after a long vacation, fashionably entering after most of the other attendees had arrived, everyone welcomed them back with a rousing "HIP-HIP-HOORAY! HIP-HIP-HOORAY!"



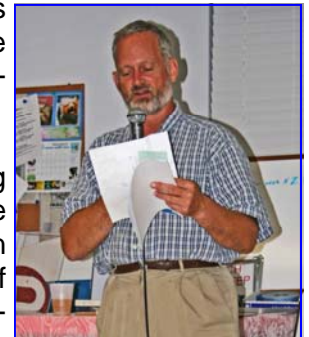
Keith glad to be back

For dinner, Dorothy McAfee and her committee had prepared generous helpings of spaghetti, meatballs, sauce and Italian bread. The members brought a potluck variety of hors d'oeuvres, salads, side dishes and desserts, and we all ate very well. Robbie Brackett won the 50-50 drawing, taking home half of the \$40 pot. This small collection was probably owing to the reduced summer attendance.



Dorothy discussing the next dinners

Keith talked a little about his and LaVerne's trip, during which over the last couple of months they had traveled the country from coast to coast, covering more than 9,000 miles in their RV, at 9-1/2 miles per gallon of gasoline. That's a lot of gas at over \$4.00 per gallon. Since there was no formal program scheduled, Keith said he would like to round out the summer schedule by calling on someone at each meeting to give an impromptu anecdote about any humorous boating experience that person experienced. He chose Steve Huntley to be the first one, but as club treasurer, Steve first summarized the club's financial position, shown below under "Miscellany". Then he described a storm at sea encountered not far from Iceland while motoring across the Atlantic in his 57-foot search and rescue cutter.



Steve with the treasurer's report

The seas were mountainous, and one wave hit the steel pilothouse door so hard that it sent a powerful jet of freezing Arctic Ocean water through the keyhole and across the wheelhouse, that shot him right in the kidneys. What a shock!!!

## Board of Directors Meeting, August 7<sup>th</sup> – The commodore, vice commodore and one Board member were absent, but nevertheless the Board met with a quorum. The items discussed were as follows:

1. Minutes of the previous meeting and a summary of the current treasurer's report were read and approved. One item of unscheduled maintenance stood out: purchase and installation of a new stainless steel circulating pump for the A/C units. Harry Gillean has now restored both our A/C units to full function. In general, the financial picture looks good, but the club must get new members to support the existing loan payments and future capital improvements.
2. The Board approved reimbursing Harry Gillean for his fuel costs in moving the clubhouse to the city dock during the Mug Race in May. He used 72 gallons of hi-test gas at the then-price of about \$4.00 per gallon. Harry was the only one who did the actual towing.

## Board of Directors meeting - continued

3. The Board approved Bob Trail's proposal to repair the club's Sunfish sailboat and trailer (minor expense) but did not approve his proposal to replace the worn sailing rig (\$200 for a used rig in good condition available now). The Board did not feel that it would be justified at this time, considering the limited use that the boat has been having. The Board did approve his proposal to store the Sunfish at the clubhouse, for members to use. It was felt that the best method would be to store the hull upside down on the floating dock, with the rig and other small accessories inside the pilothouse. This convenient arrangement should encourage club usage.
4. In an effort to expand exposure of the club to the community, the Board agreed that its name and tent could be used by a potential Relay for Life Team - "Palatka Yacht Club and Friends." There will be no expense to the club associated with this name use; as the club is not supporting the charity. The team would be comprised of willing club members and their friends. Fundraising would be done by individuals online clearly for the American Cancer Society. The event will be held April 24-25, 2009, at River Breeze Elementary School.
- 5.. Bob Trail also suggested reinstating our club meeting announcements in the Palatka Daily News. Linda Girardin has requested the paper to place an announcement giving the PYC meeting dates for the remainder of 2008.

## Miscellany

### Summary of the Club's Financial Position ..... by Steve Huntley

The Palatka Yacht Club is currently making payments on eleven loans: (1) The re-negotiated "Foolish Four" loan with combined quarterly principal and interest payments of \$1,258.74; and (2) ten individual-member loans with annual interest-only payments. Total is \$1,800 per year.

The individual loans carry a 5% annual interest rate over their 20-year period and may be prepaid without penalty after the fifth anniversary of each. The loans come due at different times: the earliest on 29 May, 2023, and the last on 22 December, 2023.

During last-year's budgeting, an analysis showed that the club would need to accrue \$119.13 per month in a fund paying 5% interest to attain a \$36,000 reserve by December, 2023. If we were to begin next month, the club would need to set aside \$129.51 per month.

The full treasurer's report is posted in the clubhouse on the bulletin board by the door, for anyone interested in more details.

### EPA "Relief Bill" Passed for Boaters ..... By Steve Huntley

Congress passed (by unanimous consent in the Senate) and presented on 25 July to the president for signature, S.2766, the "Clean Boating Act of 2008." This would be better-characterized as an EPA Relief Act for Palatka Yacht Club members and the 13 million recreational boaters in the US.

The bill was introduced on 13 March by Senators Nelson of Florida and Boxer of California. It is short and sweet. The relevant paragraph is:

#### SEC. 2. DISCHARGES INCIDENTAL TO THE NORMAL OPERATION OF RECREATIONAL VESSELS.

Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(r) Discharges incidental to the Normal Operation of Recreational Vessels.--No permit shall be required under

## EPA Bill - continued

this Act by the Administrator (or a State, in the case of a permit program approved under subsection (b)) for the discharge of any graywater, bilge water, cooling water, weather deck runoff, oil/water separator effluent, or effluent from properly functioning marine engines, or any other discharge that is incidental to the normal operation of a vessel, if the discharge is from a recreational vessel."

Had this not been passed, we would have been required - beginning this fall - to obtain separate permits, most with annual fees, for the discharge of engine cooling water, grey water, air-conditioning exchange water, and even weather deck runoff. Yes, even from your 4.5HP outboard!

**Note:** Wayne Beard of the USCG Auxiliary also advised us of the above on July 29<sup>th</sup> - He thanked everyone who wrote, faxed, e-mailed or contacted their representative to support this bill. Also see two other e-mails from Wayne Beard, forwarded to the PYC membership on 7/30/08 , that contain additional information of special interest to boaters. These were too long to include here.

**Dinner Meeting Programs** - Our program Chairman Bob Trail sometimes has a hard time finding presenters with topics for after-dinner programs. We have all taken some interesting trips and done some interesting things in our lives, or know someone who has done so. Many of these experiences would make entertaining dinner meeting programs. They don't even have to be recent. Any member who would like to present or suggest something along this line, contact Bob at 386-649-8710 or [griffinaero@yahoo.com](mailto:griffinaero@yahoo.com). And remember, dinner is free. Also, up to two presenters from outside the club will enjoy their meals as guests of the Palatka Yacht Club. Audiovisual resources are available, and all necessary assistance will be provided.

**Nautical Origins of Common Expressions - "Touch and Go"** - This referred to a ship's keel touching bottom and getting right off again.

**PYC Library** - Anyone who has surplus books, VHS tapes, DVDs, pictures, or whatever, that relate to boating or boats, or even past club memorabilia, could donate them to the club and kept in the clubhouse for anyone to look at or sign out and take home. Contact Bob Trail (649-8710 or [griffinaero@yahoo.com](mailto:griffinaero@yahoo.com)) for more details.

## Announcements

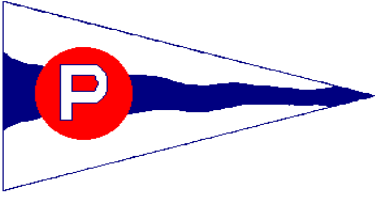
**Club-owned Sunfish** – The Club's Sunfish sailboat is presently stored on a trailer at Bob and Sue Merritt Trail's San Mateo property and is available for any member to use. This arrangement will soon change, as noted in the August 7th Board of Directors meeting article. If interested, contact Bob or Sue.

**Boat U.S. Membership** - Our club members are entitled to Boat US membership while paying half-price dues. Our cost: \$12.50. Contact Steve Huntley at 904-692-2952 or [protopterus@peoplepc.com](mailto:protopterus@peoplepc.com) if you are not already included in this special arrangement for PYC members. There was a mix-up about this for a couple of months, but the arrangement is back on track now.

**PYC Tent** - Any members desiring to reserve the PYC tent, contact Commodore Keith Cheshire at 386-328-3420 or [keith.cheshire@mindspring.com](mailto:keith.cheshire@mindspring.com). The tent is stored onboard the clubhouse when not in use.

**Newsletters** - If you have an e-mail address and are currently receiving paper copies of our club newsletters, you are urged to file your e-mail address with publisher Connie Foltis and arrange to receive your newsletters by e-mail as pdf files. This would lessen the cost and labor of printing and mailing paper copies every month.

Contact Connie about writing an article for the newsletter (ex: a boating autobiography or a description of an interesting trip you have taken) or to place an advertisement or digital photograph in it. Entries should be received



Palatka Yacht Club

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### **Newsletters - continued**

by the end of the first week of the month to be included in that month's newsletter.

**PYC Web Site** - <http://palatkayachtclub.org/> or [www.palatkayachtclub.org](http://www.palatkayachtclub.org)