

August 2010

# The Nauti News



**Homestead Yacht Club**

[www.homesteadyachtclub.com](http://www.homesteadyachtclub.com)

Our 25th Year of Boating Fun

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## HELP !!!

**This Plan, if implemented, will greatly restrict your ability to anchor in the University Dock/Sand Bar area. Submit your comments to the Park Service prior to September 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

Biscayne National Park

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Florida

Mooring Buoy and Marker Plan  
Environmental Assessment

July 2010

The cover page features a dark header with the park name and logo. Below is the title and date. Three small inset images are arranged horizontally: a mooring buoy on a post, a manatee's head, and an underwater view of a mooring line. The main image at the bottom shows a white mooring buoy floating in the water, connected to a boat's rope.

# Commodore's Comments

Hello Everyone:

I am overwhelmed by the positive responses I have gotten from many of you about my email of last week in regards to the NPS park plan to try to keep us from enjoying our park. Of all the people I have spoken to, I have not found one person who is in favor of this plan. I hope by now most of you have filled out a comment sheet on the NPS web site as I had asked you to do. I just got off the phone with David Kennedy at Boat US. He is the head of their Government Affairs Committee. He shares our concern for the new rules that the NPS is trying to put in place to restrict anchoring in the park at our favorite areas. I have forwarded to him all of our documents about the situation here in South Dade. He assured me that they will be issuing an alert by tomorrow about this situation. He wholeheartedly agreed, that the only way to stop or delay this ridiculous attempt to keep us out of our park, is by volume of complaints and comments against this plan. If you haven't already done so please comment on your displeasure about this situation. The only answer is "Alternative A" no action at this time. Everyone in your household, your friends, your neighbors, and non boaters alike should go to the web site and comment. We will have a detailed discussion about this at the meeting. Please try to make it on Monday August 30.

Our next event at Sunset Harbor in Miami Beach is Labor Day Week End. Please let me know if you plan to come as they are still holding some slips for us.



I hope to see every member at our next meeting to discuss this very important issue in depth.

Larry Roesch

## Editor's Notes

As most of you know, over the past several years, I have attended nearly all of the public meetings the Park Service has held to discuss their plans for Biscayne National Park. This has included their Master Plan, their Fishery Plan, and most recently, the Mooring Buoy and Marker Plan. I have repeatedly asked Park personnel if there is any truth to the rumor that they intend to install mooring buoys in the Bay and was always told NO. Then suddenly, under the guise of protecting Park resources and public safety, mooring buoys show up in this latest plan as a means of restricting the number of boats in several areas of the park, including the University Dock/Sand Bar area. As stated by Commodore Larry, if you have not yet submitted your objection to this plan, please do so before the Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> comment deadline. You can submit your comments in writing on one of their comment forms or by going to their web site and completing the form there. The link to the comment form is:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/commentForm.cfm?documentID=35785>

Details about the public meeting, earlier this month, are included later in this newsletter. Offering your comments is sort of like voting, if you don't vote you really have no right to complain later and if you don't bother to comment on their plans, you really have no right to complain later when the restrictions start.

Bill Zinn, Editor, [sunbil@aol.com](mailto:sunbil@aol.com)

## **Minutes of August Meeting**

Meeting opened by Cmdr. Larry at 7:30 p.m. on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Dockmaster Mike McCrink was not in attendance. Cmdr. Larry welcomed guests....Jon Strandhagen, who came the farthest, from Guam, and Leslie Thornton's parents. Minutes of last meeting, June, were accepted as read in the newsletter. Treasurer's report given by Dee Riley showed an opening balance of \$4,922.79 and a closing balance of \$4,926.79. Full report appears in the newsletter.

Kudos to Cmdr. Larry and member Neil Burell for coming to the aid of a fellow marina patron whose anchor line was cut by a speeding boat inside the anchorage off Elliot. Where's a ranger when you really need one? Cmdr. Larry also brought to our attention a meeting taking place on August 3<sup>rd</sup> in Florida City to discuss a plan by the park service to "handle" the sandbar at Sands Cut and the anchorage at Elliot with mooring buoys and markers. If you would like to review the "plan" and/or submit an online comment go to <http://parkplanning.nps.gov> If you object to being unable to anchor at either of these spots....let them know.

Our membership chairman was not in attendance, however, Cmdr. Larry reports that we still have 36 members. He further reports that we have new patrons in the marina and reminds us to let new people know about our club and invite them to join us.

Nothing to report from Bill Zinn, newsletter, Sandy Zinn, roster, Jan Mayer, sunshine committee. Telephone Committee Liz Phillips is doing a great job.

A raft-up is scheduled for the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month. E-mail will go out as the date gets closer. September Labor Day weekend is a cruise to Sunset Harbor. October 22<sup>nd</sup> is the date for the October Halloween event chaired by Lisa Vari.

50/50 of \$40.00 won by Joy Scherer. We sang happy birthday to Leslie Thornton, Sharon Roesch, Buz Strandhagen and Dave Giuliani.

No new business....meeting closed at 8:30 p.m.....Next meeting will be August 30<sup>th</sup> so we do not infringe on Labor Day Weekend.

Respectfully submitted, Claire Strandhagen, Secretary

# **TREASURER'S REPORT**

## **HOMESTEAD Bay front YACHT CLUB**

BEGINNING BALANCE JUNE 1, 2010: 4922.79

**INCOME :**

50/50	25.00
Dues	79.00
Total	104.00

**EXPENSES :**

Room Fee	100.00
Total	100.00

ENDING BALANCE JUNE 30, 2010: 4926.79

SUBMITTED BY: Dee Riley, TREASURER

Note: The June event at the Anchorage was attended by 13 members, and thanks to the generosity of the attendees, cost the club nothing.

## **Non-Ethanol Gas**

If you need non-ethanol gas for your boat or other equipment, the following link, provided by Bob Larson, will take you to a site that lists all of the stations in the country, all states, which provide non-ethanol gas:

<http://pure-gas.org/index.jsp?stateprov=FL>

In the Homestead area it lists Redland Grocery at 26400 SW 187 Ave.

## **Next Club Meeting**

In order to avoid a conflict with the Labor Day Holiday in September, our next monthly meeting will be held on August 30 rather than September 6. Please attend if at all possible.

# **Park Service Mooring Buoy Plan**

**By Bill Zinn**

On August 3<sup>rd</sup> several members of the Homestead and Black Point Yacht Clubs attended a public meeting in Florida City to review and comment on the Park Service's Mooring Buoy Plan for Biscayne National Park. The Plan involves mainly the use of signage, markers, and buoys to protect the reef, ship wrecks, and grass beds within the Park. The Park Service explained their basis for developing the Plan and then the public was invited to offer comments. Several members of both Yacht Clubs addressed the meeting. There was almost universal agreement with the idea of placing more mooring buoys in the vicinity of the reef and the ship wrecks and not permitting boaters to drop anchor in those areas. The proposal to add additional signage and channel markers within the park was also well received. However, there was unanimous objection to the portion of the Plan which calls for the use of mooring buoys to control the number of boats that congregate on weekends and holidays at the sand bars near Stiltsville and Sands Cut, and in the anchorage near University Dock. Superintendent Lewis stated that he did not have a sufficient number of rangers to adequately patrol those areas on weekends and that he actually feared for the safety of the rangers when they have to respond to an incident at the Sands Cut sand bar. The majority of the discussion and public comment centered around the Sands Cut sand bar and at times it was hard to believe that the Park Service personnel and the members of the public were talking about the same area. The Park Service describing the area as an out of control collection of drunks engaged in frequent fist fights, knife fights, etc while the members of the public referred to it as a family friendly shallow water area where they can take their kids and enjoy family time together with friends. Some addressed the fact that they had gone to the sand bar with their parents when they were children and they now take their children there and they don't want to see that enjoyment taken away. Most acknowledged that the west end of the sand bar can get pretty noisy and rowdy at times, but encouraged more law enforcement as the way to control that, rather than virtually closing the area to public access and punishing all because a few misbehaved. It was also pointed out that with the possible exception of some trash, the boaters who congregate at the sand bar are not damaging any park resources because the sand bar is cleaned/restored with each change of the tide. Several speakers expressed the opinion that if boaters are not permitted to use the Sands Cut sand bar, they will just find somewhere else in the Park to congregate, probably somewhere where they are actually damaging park resources. Regarding the University Dock anchorage area, it was pointed out that this is a well established and marked anchorage area and that the bottom there is virtually a waste land, with no vegetation. It was suggested that rather than try to limit anchoring in that area, the Park's efforts should be concentrated on areas such as the grass bed north of Sands Key where the anchoring of boats can actually damage something. After much, largely repetitious, discussion was concluded, Superintendent Lewis thanked everyone for attending and stated that several issues had been raised which will require serious review before they proceed with the plan. As it is presently written, the plan does not specify a number of buoys to be set up at any of the Elliott Key locations other than Billy's Point where there are supposed to be ten buoys. In response to an e-mail from the Black Point Yacht Club, Superintendent Lewis advised that they envisioned approximately 70 buoys in the University Dock area. He concluded his e-mail with the statement that they want to "provide the opportunity for people to enjoy and experience one of the natural wonders of our nation." I have trouble understanding how putting 70 buoys in one area can contribute to the natural beauty of the area. This plan has the potential to significantly impact how you enjoy boating in the Park, so if you have not yet submitted your comments, please do so before the September 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline.