

September 2011



The Nauti News

Homestead Yacht Club

www.homesteadyachtclub.com

Our 26th Year of Boating Fun

Card Sound Bridge



Did you know that this used to be a wooden draw bridge and the only route to the Keys?

Commodore's Comments

HYC Membership,

My computer seems to be up and running for the moment--so like the meetings, I will try to keep it short and sweet. I look forward to seeing all of you at the October 3rd meeting, we have some interesting things planned for the next few months, and if you don't want to be volunteered in absence, please try to make it.

Who wants to be the Commodore next year? Stay safe, be careful, and try to have fun anyway.



Dave G.

Meeting Reminder

Our next meeting will be on Monday, Oct 3rd at the Capri

Editor's Notes

There are no event photos for this month's newsletter so I have included some historical info about another local landmark. This time it is Card Sound Road and Bridge. I knew that this was the first and for a while only route to and from the Keys, but was surprised to find that it was never designated as US-1. That designation was not used until after the 18 mile stretch opened. I was also surprised to find out that for about 25 years (1944-1969) there was no Card Sound Bridge and the 18 mile stretch was the only route to and from the Keys.

We have all chuckled during each meeting when our Commodore asks who wants to be Commodore next year. Well it is about time to start taking that question seriously (not that our Commodore wasn't serious). The end of the year is rapidly approaching and we need to be thinking about a Bridge for 2012. The Bridge consists of four positions, Commodore, Vice Commodore, Secretary, and Treasurer. There are also the many support jobs such as Newsletter, Sunshine, Roster, Membership, etc which must be filled. If you would like to try your luck at one of the positions, let Commodore Dave know. If you think someone would do a good job in one of the positions, talk to the individual and at least let the Commodore know so that he can exercise his "Powers of Persuasion"

Bill Zinn, Editor, sunbil@bellsouth.net

Minutes of September 2011 Meeting

Meeting called to order by Cmdr. Dave at 7:00 p.m. on September 14th.

First order of business was a big thank you to Larry and Sharon for the great time we all had at our last get together. Special thanks from Cmdr. Dave (and Ted) to Sandy for her great deviled eggs. They appeared even though Sandy and Bill did not.

Cmdr. Dave reminded everyone there are only three more months left in this year and again, DOES ANYONE ELSE WANT TO BE NEXT YEAR'S COMMODORE?

December Event: Key Largo Boat Parade was mentioned. Larry Roesch volunteered to bring his boat down so everyone could climb on and watch the parade but no one had much interest in decorating and entering. More to follow.....

November Event: Will be held the Saturday after Thanksgiving at the Anchorage. Plan is to cook turkeys but will need to have some boats there. More information on room rates, etc. for those who wish to attend either by boat or car will be in future e-mails and discussed at our next meeting.

October Event: A river cruise was discussed at last meeting, however, no further information was volunteered.

Treasurer's Report presented by Dee Riley. Opening balance \$4,903.64, ending balance \$4,861.34. Full report appears elsewhere in newsletter.

No County Rep. from the marina at this meeting. Our liaison person, Buz, reports nothing new. They are waiting to see who will take the food concession and expect it to be open by the end of November.

Larry will call Carmine reference our change of watch. He's shooting for the 7th of January and is trying to book entertainment.

Larry also spoke about the meetings being held with reference to Biscayne National Park. He suggests that if you are interested in fishing, you should go on the web site to check the maps posted as no fishing areas. He further mentioned that you can register an opinion on line. The discussions do not include markers and/or buoys at this time.

The October Event: Dock party hosted by Cmdr. Dave and his wife. Further details to follow. 50/50 of \$22.00 won by Vice Cmdr. Bob Larson. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Claire Strandhagen, Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

HOMESTEAD Bay front YACHT CLUB

BEGINNING BALANCE AUGUST 1, 2011: 4903.64

INCOME:

50/50	23.00
Total	23.00

EXPENSES:

August Event	65.30
Total	\$65.30

ENDING BALANCE AUGUST 31, 2011: 4861.34

SUBMITTED BY: Dee Riley, TREASURER

NOTE: The BBQ in the Keys was attended by 15 members and 2 guests. The cost to the club was \$65.30.

Card Sound Bridge

I would imagine that almost all of our members have either driven across or boated under the Card Sound Bridge. Most probably do not realize that at one time this was a wooden draw bridge and was the first land route to the Keys.

Like most things in the Keys, creation of Card Sound Bridge began with Henry Flagler and his railroad. In 1904 Flagler hired William Krome to find and survey a route for the railroad from Homestead to Key Largo. Krome selected a route southeast from Homestead, across the shallows between Little Card Sound and Barnes Sound. Flagler subsequently decided that it would be quicker and cheaper to run the railroad south across the Everglades to Jew Fish Creek (the 18 mile stretch). Of course at the time Flagler did not know of the existence of Lake Surprise and the need to cross it. As it turned out, Krome's route via Card Sound would have been quicker and cheaper.

Once the railroad was completed into the Keys development and the population began to increase. It soon became obvious that there was a need for a vehicle route between the mainland and the Keys. In 1922 Dade and Monroe counties began a joint project to construct a road to the Keys. Monroe county wanted to build the road next to Flagler's railroad across the Everglades, but Dade county insisted on a route via Card Sound in order to support fishing in that area. Dade county eventually won the argument and it was agreed that Dade county would build a road from Homestead/Florida City to Card Sound (using Krome's original route) and Monroe county would build a wood drawbridge and a road to connect to the existing roads on Key Largo. Construction on what is now Card Sound Road began in June 1924. The road and the bridge were nearly completed when on September 18, 1926 a hurricane caused extensive damage to both. The bridge was then redesigned to raise it a few feet higher and construction resumed. Finally on January 25, 1928 the 2800 foot wooden drawbridge was opened for traffic. It was soon possible to drive from the mainland to Key West, even though it involved several ferry trips due to the lack of highway bridges.



Building Wooden Bridge

In 1935 a hurricane virtually destroyed Flagler's railroad in the Keys. The damage was so extensive that he elected to abandon the project and sold the railroad right of way. It was then decided to use the railroad bridges, which were not damaged, and the roadbed to construct a continuous (no ferries) vehicle road to Key West. Part of this project included laying a paved road over the railroad roadbed on the 18 mile stretch from Florida City to Key Largo. This was completed in 1942 and the stretch was opened to vehicle traffic. This quickly became the primary route to the Keys. With very few vehicles now using the Card Sound bridge, both the bridge and the road soon fell into disrepair. In 1944 fire damaged the bridge and then in 1947 the structure was damaged by a hurricane. Monroe county then removed what was left of the wooden bridge and all that remained was two causeways with nothing in between them. It remained this way, with the 18 mile stretch being the only land route in and out of the Keys until the 60s. At that time real estate development on north Key Largo (think Ocean Reef) and concern about a second evacuation route prompted the construction of a new Card Sound bridge. The present concrete bridge, with 65 foot clearance, was opened in 1969.

In conjunction with the construction of the original wooden bridge a small community sprang up on the Dade county side of the bridge. Initially it was the bridge tenders and a few fishermen, but eventually grew to include three restaurants, boat rentals, etc. These people were essentially squatters, but the state eventually offered them the option of obtaining leases for the property. The community grew to over 100 people of which at least 30 were registered voters. Finally in 1979, Dade county took action and evicted everyone who did not have a valid lease. One of the establishments that existed then and still exists is Alabama Jack's. He had a valid lease

and also, his building was actually located in Monroe county, not Dade county. It is the first building on the Monroe county side of the county line. Alabama Jack, whose real name was Jack Stratham was from Sumpter County, Georgia and not Alabama. He said that he was one of several Jacks working on a construction job and because of his strong southern accent they started calling him Alabama and the name stuck. He started out with a fishing shack and boat dock for weekend use which eventually grew into a full time home and restaurant. There have been several owners since the original Jack, but it has remained the most well known place on Card Sound Road.



Alabama Jack

Bill Zinn, Editor, based on info in various historical documents and writings.

Change of Watch Reminder

Mark your calendar

Saturday, January 7th

Capri Restaurant

Food, Drinks, Music, Dancing