

May 2022

Ft. Myers/Port Charlotte

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SW Florida's
SNAPPER WRAPPER



Nautical Mile Magazine's
Memorial Day Weekend

**CARIBBEAN SEAFOOD
and NAUTICAL MARKET**

May 28-29-30

See page 11

Photo: Capt. Gregg Mckee



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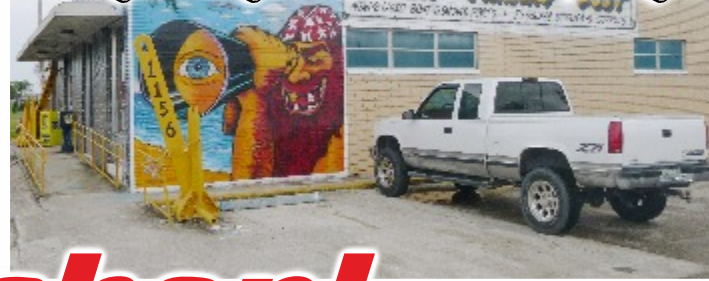


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I had to say good-bye to an old friend last month. Throughout our lives we're lucky to have a small handful of relationships where trust is 100% unquestioned. After 31 years of being the one I could truly count on every time, I finally had to say good-bye to that old mower.

One the business side of life.... Nautical Mile's distribution has hit an all-time high. Our population boom has brought new readership and we're officially "The last one standing." The Nautical Mile turns 20 this summer. In our digital world's dog years that's about 120 for what I do. This monthly "rag" is the only item of its kind in the area we serve, I have no plans to "go digital," and our email event newsletter has doubled in the last year. Everything just keeps getting better.

This business was only a brochure designed as a free place for me to put my boat waxing business (Waxman) back in 2003. One of the best parts of it all is having time flexibility, which I use to explore things I know nothing about.

I love not knowing what's going to happen next, and I wanted to take our new readership for a test-drive, so I announced a "Nautical" event and put almost 300 vendors and 27 food trucks into the Lee Civic Center, which turned out to be the largest event of its kind at the 43-year old facility. Not bad for a first-timer, but it also was not something that would sustain long term.

Like the restaurant business, hosting events is an interesting animal. I'm having fun because it's something I know nothing about. And like the early days with Nautical Mile, it's an opportunity to reinvent the wheel. If I knew everything about it, my events would be boring duplicates of most others. Had I known traditional publishing, the Mile would have been dead years ago, like the competitors we once had. My supporters know that I don't think out of the box. I invent boxes. I take chances, and I often lose. But they like when I lose. They know I'll figure out why, and come back stronger and better.

What's this guy babbling about? A lot of business owners read my column, and those who can read between the lines are able to put this information to work.

Hosting events has stimulated me. It hasn't been as easy as it seemed at first. An event has to provide something people crave, and who really knows what people want. With lies and corruption affecting all of us, in ways we don't even realize, one thing we have in common is a desire for a source of stress relief, even if only for a couple hours. So I'm merging my events into an annual seafood festival on a 3-day holiday

weekend. I prefer something out-of-season to prevent having 5-6 shows all on the same weekend. SW Florida has plenty of year-round residents to pack a venue.

I was first attracted to a nautical flea market. The days of Florida's big nautical flea markets are gone. eBay took care of that. Even the big Dania Market pulled the plug. They may try again, but it's just misc vendors selling misc items. What created that event doesn't exist anymore.

Anyway, I announced hosting a Seafood Festival with a Caribbean Market this month. It's a 3-day event at the 25-acre German American Social Club in Cape Coral on May 28-29-30. Food trucks are offering dozens of unique seafood choices along with other food items, 4 different musicians, a K9 dock-jumping competition, the GASC is opening their international beer-booth, and we mapped out over 100 nautical vendor spaces which sold out weeks ahead of schedule.

It's a for-profit business but considering the theme of the weekend I'll be making a donation to the Brotherhood of Heroes which took off where the Cape Military Museum left off to assist with their Veteran Resource Center. If you find yourself on S. Del Prado in CC, stop by and take a tour. 4522 Del Prado. They even have GI Joe's original uniform on display. Most don't know GI Joe was based on a real guy who was a live model for the figure, and he lives in Ft. Myers. See page 9 for event details.

Robin gave me some market money to play with, a bit like the cash you'd bring into a casino. If I lose it, it wasn't meant to be. I'm curious about a few hunches I have with companies who have the potential to explode based on current trends. My "hunches" haven't paid off in the past, but I'm also not one to give up. I'll either be sending everyone postcards from the Caribbean, or never speak of it again....

This has to do with my occasional look at the world through a "Crystal ball" as I wonder what will be big tomorrow because of what's happening today. Like visualizing where the Internet was going back in 1985 and wondering if that Google-thing would ever take off. Yet a website with a goofy name altered the world's advertising



dollars. Most still think Facebook is about socializing online. Well it's not. Drugs are about getting you addicted to the product, and the drug is the product. Social media is addictive, but it's not the product, and you're not the client. Facebook takes in over \$200,000 per minute in advertising dollars. It's an interesting twist as to how money is created, and I think we're about to see something as hard to understand as electricity with how money changes hands.

Banks were given trillions in 2008, yet none went to the people. Where is it? Something is unfolding, and I don't think it's a crash. It's more of a massive "shift" of money. The wealth gap is widening, the millionaires are now billionaires, and a million is not worth what it was just a few years ago.

What's going to be big tomorrow because of what's happening today? Outside of stocks or investments, consider human behaviors and habits. Other than how rude people have gotten, I see the a future loaded with psychosocially damaged people from what's being pumped into us through public schools, politicians who earn \$200k a year yet are worth a half billion, fake news, and social media.

I've read many times from different sources that the best investment one can make is in themselves. With that, my suggestion would be to avoid the news, boycott social media, read more books, and study social skills. People today are so addicted to their phones they make me think of the frog in boiling water scenario.

Whether you're retired, applying for your first job, getting married, a criminal, just moved to America, or even settled with a long-term career, think about what will exist tomorrow because of what's happening today. If you thought about it yesterday, you'd be better off today. We're in the middle of a huge economic "something" with uncertainty and confusion. It's being branded as "The Great Distortion."

We all have front-row seats to one of the biggest shifts in American history. It's happening right in front of all of us, but are you planning, or are you on your phone looking at jokes on Facebook?

As you contemplate, "I thought this was a fishing paper?" Fooled ya! However, 3rd grade math proves inflation is a lot higher than we're reading about, so if you want to fish, you'd better be planning how to pay for it. Trillions have been pumped into America over the last few years yet people still earn \$12/hour. The fuse is getting short and it's time to wake up. Are you ignoring this because you have a pension? It'll be worth a lot less in a few years....

Change is only bad for those who are effortlessly sitting around waiting for things to get better. Speaking of change....

EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 2022: In a bold and sweeping move to keep up with SW Florida's massive coastal population growth, FWC has received state approval to extend and combine no wake zones with newly regulated no-fish zones along Florida's southwest coast. The effort has received thousands of violent protesters lined up on Florida's beaches as the state attempts to contend with a recent influx of boaters and better help conserve the area's unique fishing resource. As of October 2022, all bays and inlets will be slow-speed including a one-mile beach slow-zone buffer from Naples to Sarasota. A spokesperson for the FWC stated, "*These new zones will enable officer pay raises and add to our daily enforcement of Florida's new and uneducated boaters. With the elimination of wakes in all surrounding waters, it will also help us to hold wiggling fish in order to confirm measurements.*" Just kidding.....

Robin & I are looking to replace a dog we lost a few months ago. Ti was a Doberman who developed a heart condition where meds could only buy a few months of time. Ti & I were close, and saying goodbye to him was the toughest thing I've ever had to do. Meanwhile, we do have Hooper, who is also a Doberman. Hooper is 120# of pleasure and has adopted the role of "Man of the house" with Ti's absence. He's never been to the Keys, perhaps one more trip before only billionaires can visit....

Don't pass up the Seafood Festival this month. It's May 28-29-30 at the German American Social Club in Cape Coral. There's about 350-feet of food trucks with quite a variety of seafood, live music all 3 days, almost 100 nautical vendors from all over Florida will be offering a unique shopping experience, the GASC is opening up their international beer-booth, and SW Florida Dock Diving is competing all 3 days. This is where dogs compete in an exciting jumping competition on a 100-foot platform. People travel and register dogs from all over Florida to compete. It's quite a show. General admission is \$10, free parking. Military ID, retired or active, gains free entrance all weekend, and re-entry is half price all weekend.

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On the Cover

Capt. Gregg Mckee, he's not kissing it, he's telling it a secret...

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Nautical Mile
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www.miacc.org

Ft. Myers Seafood and Music Festival
www.SeafoodFestivals.com

Englewood Seafood Festival
www.ParagonArtEvents.com

Bradenton Boat Show
www.bradentonboatshow.com

Ft. Myers Home & Remodeling Show
ProfessionalShowManagement.com

February:

"Reel in the Sunshine" Fishing Expo
www.SunshineAce.com

Everglades Seafood Festival
EvergladesSeafoodFestival.org

Punta Gorda Boat Show
PuntaGordaBoatShow.com

Big Boy Toyz Expo
www.bigboytoyzexpo.com

Punta Gorda Seafood & Music Festival
www.SeafoodFestivals.com

LaBelle Swamp Cabbage Festival
www.labelleswampcabbagefestival.org

March:

Ft. Myers Beach Shrimp Festival
FortMyersBeachShrimpFestival.com

Marco Island Seafood and Music Festival
MarcoIslandSeafoodFestival.com

Naples Kid's Fishing Clinic
www.MIACC.org

Bonita Springs Boat Show
www.GoBoatingFlorida.com

Mullet Toss and Seafood Festival
www.PineIslandChamber.org

April:

Ft. Myers Crab & Music Festival
www.SeafoodFestivals.com

Suncoast Boat Show
www.SunCoastBoatShow.com

Cortez Stone Crab Festival
www.SwordfishGrillCortez.com

November:

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Sarasota Boat Expo
www.SarasotaBoatExpo.com

Englewood WaterFest Boat Races
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Nautical Mile Magazine's 2022 NAUTICAL FEST CARIBBEAN SEAFOOD and NAUTICAL MARKET

NauticalFest - Cape Coral Memorial Day Weekend - See page 9

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It's sticky, hot, windy, Jesus has risen, fed on the flesh of the living and receded back into his hole until next spring... It's TARPON TIME KIDS!!! I'm officially allowed to scoff at redfish for the next five months.

This time of year is when Charlotte Harbor gets #lit (as the kids say). Water temps are steady in the mid to upper 70's and bait is everywhere. Not that I use it, I'm a snobbish jerk that likes to do things the hard way, BUT, it gets the area fired up. Combine the influx of bait with the flight of the snowbirds and our waterways will be filled with less boats and many gigantic happy fish. The exception being this poor lady who's remains I found floating in the middle of the harbor after becoming somebody's lunch. I was fortunate enough to stumble upon the leftovers of a great hammerhead's meal the other day and pulled it up for a closer look.

I DO NOT RECOMMEND reaching into the water to grab a half eaten fish when there is still a fresh cloud of blood bigger than your skiff in the water... I am stupid. You are not. The fact that a fish can run down an adult tarpon (I estimate the one in the photo to have been around 110-120lbs) in open water is supernova level mind blowing (take notes Stephen Hawking). While I missed the predation, which would have been cool to see, I was allowed the opportunity to take a look at my favorite frustration "up close and personal". If you're unaware, it's illegal to remove a tarpon over 40" from the water so any chance to see one up like this is one that should be taken. The sheer muscle mass and beauty of this thing when I pulled it out of the water still has me in awe and gave me an even greater respect for these fish we are so lucky to have in our waters. This leads me to my next topic! Leaders and ethical fishing. A dissertation from a captain.

Tarpon fishing in Florida is a one billion dollar (that's right) annual industry, the capital of which happens to be in Charlotte harbor. Undoubtedly, the sport fishing capital of the world is Islamorada but the king reigns supreme right here in our backyard. Tarpon, as well as our other inshore gamefish should be handled with care when landed, or even hooked for that matter. I recently had a chat with a local captain at a ramp and asked how he did that day. He went two for seven. Two

tarpon made it to the boat and five fish were "sharked" in a half day trip. No bueno kids. If sharks are that prevalent then it's time to move. For the sake of your hands and most importantly for the fish. Having an exit plan when a large predator comes into frame is crucial. In shallow water, dropping your engine and starting the motor can prove effective for thwarting toothy critters. So there's one option. You can also open the bail/back way off on the drag and let the fish run for dear life. That at times works in moments of crisis. I prefer to just clamp down on the reel and break the bad lady off. The best part of tarpon fishing are the hookups and jumps anyways, so screw it. Give the fish a chance to swim by next year. Think of it like when you were 11 and one of the Disney actors gave you a wink and blew you a kiss during the daily afternoon parade... You know you're a badass and don't need to tell your friends back in Saskatoon. That victory turkey leg never tasted so good.

In order to have the ability to break a fish off I like to build a "fuse" into my leaders. For spinning gear I don't spool up my reels with anything heavier than 20lb test braid. I do use a small shot of leader (either mono or fluorocarbon) anywhere from 30-60lb's that I then use to tie to whatever lure I'm tossing. Maybe a D.O.A. baitbuster in red and white for example (put that in your pocket and use it when the time is right folks #thetimeisnow!!!). Twenty pounds doesn't sound like much, but when it comes down to brass tacks it's a pretty big number. Most grown men can't efficiently pull more than 12-15lbs of dead weight off of the ground with a fishing rod. I put a pulley on my workbench to practice fighting fish and it's an eye opener. My friends and I get good laughs when we try (admittedly after too many beers) to lift a gallon of water off the ground. It's incredible how much using angles and the taper of a rod can make a difference in fighting a fish. I'm beginning to meander like the damn Susquehanna river here.... Oh yeah, fuses, leaders, and leader fuses! This is why I'm not allowed in hardware stores unsupervised. It's a mess.

Fly leaders for the poon....The K.I.S.S method works best for me "keep it simple stupid" (no wonder I have self esteem issues). Whether or not you use mono or fluoro is up to you. Keep in mind that fluorocarbon is more dense than mono so



it will sink faster. From what I understand it is less visible under water so I've been leaning towards that lately for the "bite section" of my leaders. In any case, I like to have as few knots as possible in my leader and still have that "fuse" that I was talking about earlier built in. So here's the super secret "Gandalf telling Frodo what the ring was all about" leader formula that I use for tarpon. I use an 8ft section of 50lb mono/fluoro for the butt (the part that attaches to the fly line), followed with a 15-20" section of 20lb mono/fluoro, and tie that to a 12-15" section of 60lb material as a "bite tippet". My connection knots are the "Slim Beauty" which allows you to tie a thinner diameter line to a heavier one without first tying the "bimini twist". That's it, baby! Go throw at some sleeping giants.

That's all I've got at the moment kids, my mind is jostled from the excitement that

comes with tarpon season. Sorry for the wandering thoughts. If you'd like to toss feathers and fur at monster snook and tarpon over the next forever months (I'm not moving any time soon) please feel free to give me a call and set something up. I'd love to take you out for a spin! Keep an eye out for Jim's events around the area, they're always a blast. Barring a booked trip or three I'll be hanging out at the seafood festival at the end of this month. Come say hey! Until then stay safe on the water, pet your dogs (they're the best.... sorry "cat people") and smell some roses!

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Capt. Gregg McKee

Welcome to May and Tarpon Season 2022 is off to a great start so far. The fish are everywhere and I'm busy chasing them six days a week. (I promised the family I'd take Saturdays off this year.) Since my fellow writers will be covering tarpon extensively in this issue, let's talk about something completely different this month.

Cobia are one of the most popular species for both inshore and offshore anglers all over Florida. They check all the boxes that make a highly prized gamefish. Cobia can grow to 100 pounds or larger, but most are about half that size. They're powerful fighters that will hit almost anything that moves, especially live crabs, and are easily one of the best tasting fish that swims. Even though cobia are a commercially targeted species, their population is in great shape. The only negative thing you can possibly say about cobia is that they're kind of ugly. The big ones look just like a dark brown shark with a blunt head but no teeth.

Here in our part of SW Florida, cobia are most common around the deeper reefs and rockpiles out in the Gulf of Mexico. If you see them for sale in the local fish markets, that's where they came from. For those of us who exclusively prowl the inshore flats, cobia are a much less

frequent catch. I'd usually come across them in the winter and spring on the bright sandbars of Matlacha Pass. My anglers would hook a handful each year on both fly and artificial and every once in a while, a legal-size cobia, which is 33" long at the fork of the tail, would hit a popping cork while we were trout fishing. They were never a reliable target and I considered boating one a real bonus.

I'm not exactly sure what changed, but this spring the cobia floodgates opened up and I've been seeing them all over the flats on both sides of Pine Island and parts of Charlotte Harbor. Even better than seeing them is catching them, and that hasn't been a problem either recently. As I mentioned earlier, most cobia are eager to eat, especially when you spot them hanging with stingrays. This is the most common way to find them on the flats. Stingrays are also crab eaters and hunt almost exclusively by smell. When they pass a buried crustacean, they furiously start beating the bottom with their wings to uncover their target and inhale it whole. This also flushes out other hidden prey

that become easy pickings for anything following them. It's not uncommon to find a small school of cobia hanging on top of decent size stingrays, ready to nail anything that shoots out from underneath them. We call these fish hitchhikers and they love to eat.

In this situation, the cobia are expecting food and will grab almost anything dropped in front of them. They usually won't stray too far from the ray so it's important to cast right at them. I tell my anglers to actually aim for the head of the stingray and let the bait simply fall until it gets noticed. If you're throwing a live crab or shrimp, it's almost a guaranteed eat. With a fly or other artificial it can take a bit of coaxing. If a school of cobia are hitchhiking on the ray, it's been my luck that the smaller fish get to the bait first.

Once hooked, you can expect a couple of quick, long runs and then settle in for a brawl next to the boat. It can get even worse if you net or gaff a big cobia before it's worn out. They're famous for going

berserk in the cockpit and breaking gear if they get loose before being subdued into the cooler. But a legal-size cobia is one fish definitely worth bringing home. They're delicious no matter how you prepare them, even raw, and cobia ceviche might be my favorite dish ever. There's a reason these fish sell for over \$20 a pound at the market.

I've landed big cobia off Pine Island while targeting everything from trout to tarpon over the last six months and if this trend continues, I'm hoping to soon be able to tell my anglers, "We're going cobia fishing today." Best of luck out there.

CAPT. GREGG MCKEE

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Let's Go Fishing!

Captain Van Hubbard

Spring has been windy and frequent cold fronts; I'm optimistic May will finally calm down. We have had Spanish mackerel whenever winds allowed us outside to pursue them. I've heard about kings but not seen any myself, just haven't had the opportunity on the few calm days. We can expect to enjoy good mackerel action with some kings and barracuda as waters clear up. Some cobia have blessed alert fisherman.



We are already catching a few tarpon around Boca Grande Pass on squirrelfish and shrimp. Bait crabs are always good if you can afford them, prices can scare you. With fish and sharks in the Big Pass note that some are moving in and out all the time; you need to do is stumble into them. May offers prime time silver king action and it continues through June. We have fish and people so figure out how to work into a productive system or make it harder for everyone!

Snook are still closed but whatever fish we have will be heading towards the Gulf on their spawning run. Enjoy the action; please don't feed them to dolphin! Handle release fish with wet hands and be fast to give them the best chance to grow up and spawn. They might reopen snook in September if stocks are recovered? I'm seeing lots of smaller fish and a few trophy mothers.

Redfish? FF&WCC is still debating new redfish rules currently. Maybe we know at next meeting.

Trout are okay with many smaller ones. I recommend using de-hookers rather than touching these delicate fish. The rattle and/or popping corks really help IF you work them properly. Keep your slack out and twitch them frequently for best results. Live natural baits are great but soft plastics will get it done if necessary.

Offshore; AJs open up offshore now, try it if you are feeling frisky! These are powerful fish and will test both anglers and their gear. Live baits are best, but butterfly jigs produce action too. Break out the big guns here they are strong and want to get back to their safe structure.

Red grouper and various snapper, but not red snapper, are open. Regs change here so use fish rules for up-to-date info. Expect tighter grouper rules soon. I like to target the smaller snapper and enjoy a lot more action. Use 20# spinning gear and minimum terminal tackle with fluorocarbon leaders. Live shrimp are great but squid and cut bait work too. Be patient and enjoy tasty treats for dinner.

Get kids out fishing any opportunity we can. They need to experience our great outdoors rather than being hooked on their phones. Teach them about our outdoor activities, it's now or never for them.

CAPTAIN VAN HUBBARD

**(941) 468-4017
captvanhubbard@gmail.com**

View from the Marina

by Barb Hansen

Let's be Safe!

The popularity of boating has grown dramatically during the period of the international pandemic. Boat sales are off the charts and our cruising family has grown and continues to do so as more and more families and friends discover boating.

While this is great, these new members of the boating family have to remember the importance of safety as they enjoy this new endeavor. Coincidentally, we are soon to celebrate National Safe Boating Week near the end of May. This is a great time for boaters old and new to make the most of their boating adventure by being responsible; brushing up on their boating skills and properly prepare for the boating season.

Organizers of this campaign note "The best boating experience is safe boating." The Safe Boating Council, a nonprofit dedicated to helping create a safe boating experience for all boaters and the lead organization of the Safe Boating Campaign wants boaters to "have fun on the water, make memories with your family and friends – all while boating responsibly."

U.S. Coast Guard statistics show that drowning was the reported cause of death in four out of every five recreational boating fatalities in 2020, and that 86 percent of those who drowned were not wearing life jackets.

There are many options for boaters when it comes to choosing a life jacket. When selecting a life jacket, a boater should check that it is U.S. Coast Guard approved, appropriate for the water activity, and fits properly.

The National Safe Boating Council recommends these tips for boaters:

- Take a boating safety course. Gain valuable knowledge and on-water experience in a boating safety course with many options for novice to experienced boaters.
- Check equipment. Schedule a free vessel safety check with local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or U.S. Power Squadrons to make sure all essential equipment is present, working and in good condition.

- Make a float plan. Always let someone on shore know the trip itinerary, including operator and passenger information, boat type and registration, and communication equipment on board.

- Wear a life jacket. Make sure everyone wears a life jacket – every time. A stowed life jacket is of no use in an emergency.

- Use an engine cut-off device – it's the law. An engine cut-off device, or engine cut-off switch, is a proven safety device to stop the boat's engine should the operator unexpectedly fall overboard.

- Watch the weather. Always check the forecast before departing on the water and frequently during the excursion.

- Know what's going on around you at all times. Nearly a quarter of all reported boating accidents in 2019 were caused by operator inattention or improper lookout.

- Know where you're going and travel at safe speeds. Be familiar with the area, local boating speed zones and always travel at a safe speed.

- Never boat under the influence. A BUI (Boating Under the Influence) is involved in one-third of all recreational boating fatalities. Always designate a sober skipper.

- Keep in touch. Have more than one communication device that works when wet. VHF radios, emergency locator beacons, satellite phones, and cell phones can all be important devices in an emergency.

The Council offers additional information on various safe boating educational options as does the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. Please take the steps necessary to familiarize yourself with the basics of safe boating.

We want you to be part of our cruising family for a long time. So, please be safe!

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SOLUNAR TABLES

Fish and game are all affected by the moon, and your success might be predictable in the Solunar tables. **Mark "Ole Deadeye" Rackay**

By the time I was 12 years old, I was never without a fishing rod or a hunting rifle in hand. This made it awkward in certain social situations like church or taking a shower, nevertheless, I was truly blessed to spend all my waking moments in pursuit of fish and game. The only hindrance in the mix was school.

I had left school early, or just skipped it altogether so many times, with the excuse that I was "sick" that the principal would have charged me with truancy, had he not been convinced that I was on my deathbed with a terminal illness.

By the time I was in my 20's tragedy struck, and I found myself with a full-time job, wife, kids, mortgage, taxes, or as Zorba the Greek once said, "The full catastrophe." All of these obligations brought an abrupt end to my time afield, as I am sure many of you can relate.

At that stage of life, called being a grown-up, which incidentally, my wife says I have yet to reach, anytime spent outdoors in pursuit of fish or game should be done at peak times when the game is moving, and fish are feeding.

Any outdoor person worth their salt will tell you it is all about time of day, sunrise or sunset, wind direction, barometric pressure, weather systems, incoming or outgoing tides, slack tides, moon phase, and the list of potential excuses goes on ad nauseum. If I were to wait for all of these things to line up, I would never get out and fish or hunt.

Apparently, this is not a new problem. A gentleman by the name of John Alden Knight was plagued by never being off

work when the fish were biting. He was always on the river a day late, with the "you should have been here yesterday" crowd was around. You know those folks, always off work at just the right time.

Knight started collecting data on factors that affected fishing and hunting, including some folklore. He used information about the sun and the moon, hence the name solunar, sol for sun and lunar for moon. He compiled a list of 33 factors which control or influence the day-to-day behavior of fish and game. In the end, all but 3 factors were rejected.

The 3 factors he kept were the sun, moon and the tides. The position of the sun and the moon, relative to each other, proved to influence when fish and game were most likely to be moving about. In addition, the time of moonrise and moonset, and moon directly overhead or directly underneath, all created activity times.

Knowing when the sunrise and sunset times are is important to everyone outdoors because that is a general activity time for fish and game. For hunters, tides are not a factor, as they use the alignment of the sun and moon to determine when game is most likely to be moving.

Solunar tables predict 4 periods of game activity, 2 major and 2 minor, every 24 hours corresponding to the moon's position relative to the earth, and the sun's position relative to the earth and moon.

Major periods are the longest, spanning up to 90 minutes. The major occurs when the moon is directly overhead or directly underneath. When the moon is midway between the 2 majors, a minor activity



comes forth. The minor can be as active as a major, but for a shorter duration, often lasting up to 45 minutes.

If the major or minor coincides with a sunrise or sunset, the activity can be off the charts. Those are the perfect times for you to be in the woods or on the river. If you can plan your day around those times, you will have the best opportunities to score.

A solunar table can dictate an increase in activity due to a full moon, or the moon being directly overhead, but other things can cause the game to be more active or less active. Weather is the biggest factor in letting the air out of your day planned around the solunar tables.

Overall, a solunar table can be a tool when planning an excursion into the woods or waters. Just keep in mind they are not completely accurate in that they do not provide adjustments for environmental conditions such as the weather. Be sure to incorporate weather forecasts in conjunction with your planning.

Are the tables accurate? Generally. Tides, for example, are affected by the topography of the coastline. The times can vary by as much as 20 minutes or more along the same stretch of the coast. It would be impossible for the tables to incorporate this into their predictions, so

don't set your watch by the tables as it is a guide only.

If you are still not convinced, try keeping a record of when you had the most fish or game activity during the day, and compare it with the charts later. Keep it up for several months and I think you will find these tables are quite accurate and helpful in the field.

The problem I found with the tables was that the best days of the month were always days that I had to work. My boss did not accept the "I feel sick" routine, so I always had to stay. That left weekends for hunting and fishing, but as luck would have it, the tables are lousy for the weekend. Just my luck. At least I will have an excuse for not catching anything.

Mark Rackay is a columnist for several newspapers and is a feature writer for numerous sporting magazines. A world-class saltwater angler and an avid hunter promoting ethical and fair chase hunting and fishing, he travels the world in search of adventure. Feel free to contact him on his personal email for questions, comments or story ideas.

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MAY ON THE WATER

Capt. Bill Russell

This month we get our first dose of summer Florida weather as days are becoming hot and sticky. With the warm weather the month of May offers great fishing possibilities.

This is the best time to hook into a tarpon, as they move into southwest Florida waters by the thousands. Look for them a short distance off the beaches, around the Gulf Passes and bridges, plus throughout the inshore waters. Tarpon eat a wide variety of bait, however at times they will not eat anything you offer. Live baits including crabs, Atlantic thread herring, pinfish, and large shrimp are top choices while a variety of cut bait including mullet, ladyfish, and catfish tails hook more than their share. Tarpon are a challenge as many times you can fish around hundreds of fish using all the best baits and never get a strike. When hooked a big tarpon may take a couple of hours with angler applying hard pressure to wear them down and get them boat side. Make sure you are physically up to the challenge before attempting to battle one.

Sharks large and small are roaming the inshore waters, around the Gulf Passes, and offshore around schooling baitfish and reefs. Large hammerhead and bull sharks follow tarpon schools awaiting their next meal. Spinner and blacktip sharks are almost identical in appearance, and both offer an incredibly hard fight, often with a great aerial show. If you are fishing an area and hooking ladyfish or mackerel, you can be assured sharks are nearby. A chunk of ladyfish is sure to get attention, use a minimum of a foot or two of wire leader to prevent cut offs.

Spanish mackerel is an under rated fish that gives an excellent fight as they are super-fast and strong. If iced down when caught and eaten fresh, they are very good on the table. Good numbers of schooling mackerel frequent areas just outside or inside the Gulf Passes, around bridges, and artificial reefs within sight of land. Either trolling or casting silver spoons with a fast retrieve is the top method for consistently hooking mackerel.

Mangrove snapper may be our tastiest fish and at times the most abundant. As our waters warm, snapper in the Gulf of Mexico move closer to shore, plus many relocate to our inshore waters. What snapper lack in size they make up for in tenacity and food value, plus they may be the easiest fish to target. Many anglers catch their fair share from land while targeting bridges, docks, and piers. Live shrimp is the top bait, a small hook and light leader is often necessary to fool their keen eyesight.

This spring has given us good snook fishing and the bite will continue through the month of May. Many are on the move, as they head to areas in and near the

passes for their upcoming summer spawn. Snook may range in size from little guys barely over a foot long to big girls over forty inches. Snook will pounce on a variety of lures plus live oily baitfish, including scaled sardines or pilchards, Atlantic thread herring, pinfish and pigfish or grunts. Redfish are caught from many of the same areas as snook and with the same baits.

Sea trout are plentiful across the inshore grass flats and will eat a wide variety of lures and live baits. Trout are primarily a sight feeder, so your best success comes from fishing areas with clear water. They often run-in schools if you catch one there should be more nearby.

For a variety of fish, nearshore artificial or man-made reefs are a great place to look. Here you may hook into about anything from smaller fish like snapper to huge goliath grouper and everything in between. An assortment of tackle from light to heavy, a variety of bait, and an open mind is the key to taking advantage of what these areas offer on any given day. Reefs are a great place to experiment and try different things while keeping your eyes open for unexpected visitors. Permit should make their way to many of the reefs this month. While they will eat a live shrimp, they seldom pass on a small live crab.

May will give us consistent days of great weather with blue skies and light wind. Our summer afternoon thunderstorm pattern will kick in so always keep an eye on the sky to stay ahead of an approaching storm. Warm weather and the potential for great fishing, what's not to like about the month! Hope to see ya on the water.

Make sure and keep up to date with fishing rules and seasons in the area you fish, as they change often. You can visit www.myfwc.com for all current state and federal regulations.

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NAUTICAL MILE

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Tarpon Hunters:

The "Tarpon Hunters" are based in Lee County and the oldest two fishing clubs around. They focus on how-to education and proper catch and release tactics of one of the world's greatest game-fish; the Tarpon. There's a club in Cape Coral and one on Ft. Myers Beach. Monthly meetings, annual picnics and an educational workshop in February. Find the Ft. Myers Beach club on Facebook: @FMBTHC Cape Coral: CapeCoralTarponHunters.com

Nautical Mile Magazine:

Back in 2003 the Nautical Mile was one sheet of paper listing resources as a service to boating and fishing enthusiasts in Cape coral. Soon it became a brochure, then a newspaper, and now is a quarterly magazine covering all of SW Florida. The Nautical Mile is the only product of its kind on the coast for fishing, boating, and coastal living in SW Florida. NauticalMileMagazine.com

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26.45.830 / 82.50.860

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2- Roatan Express

26.20.358 / 83.22.027

This 180 ft. Steel hulled offshore supply ship made numerous trips between Tampa and Honduras before sinking in rough seas appx. 80 miles west of Ft. Myers on Sept. 31, 1992. The captain and one passenger lost their life.

3- Sulphur Queen

On the morning of Feb. 4, 1963, this 524 ft. tanker disappeared off the west coast of Florida en route to Norfolk, Va. Debris was recovered two weeks later off Key West, no trace of its 39 man crew was found.

4- Fantastico

26.17.775 / 82.50.082

The "No-Name" storm of 1993 claimed more ships than Hurricane Andrew. The Honduran freighter Fantastico slipped beneath the waves on March 13 as it carried a load of fertilizer from Miami to Tampa. Of the 10 crew members aboard, only three survived. The 205 ft. Freighter sits in 115 feet of water about 50 miles out of Ft. Myers.

5- Pegasus Wreck

26.33.130 / 82.43.415

This 110 foot steel Tug-Boat and eventual gambling casino office was sunk as an artificial reef in 1999.

6- Paddlewheel

25.53.320 / 82.17.510

The wreck of a stern paddlewheel steamer, known locally as the "Paddlewheel", rests upside down in 80 feet of water off Naples. The only clue to its identity is a pressure gauge that was manufactured in 1898.

7- Baja California

25.21.522 / 82.31.901

This 265 foot freighter was en route to Guatemala in July, 1942 when a German U-Boat put two torpedoes through her hull just before midnight. In 10 minutes, the ship turned on its side and sank in 115 feet of water between Ft. Myers and the Keys.

8- USCGC Mohawk

26.33.146 / 82.43.423

The 165-foot World War II Coast Guard Cutter, "Mohawk" was the last

remaining ship of the Battle of the Atlantic. The Mohawk was laid to rest in 90 feet of water on July 2, 2012 at 12:36 PM roughly 28 nautical miles off of Sanibel Island on Florida's southwest coast, creating the first Veterans Memorial Reef dedicated to all U.S. veterans. The wreck/reef is the new home to untold numbers of fish and other invertebrates living in the Gulf of Mexico.



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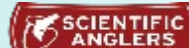
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Tarpon Time!- I've always found decent tarpon fishing within a week of seeing my first white butterflies. This year is no exception. I saw one the other afternoon and the next morning I caught 3 smaller ones on the docklights. Been hearing of and seeing a few videos of some local caught large fish but I haven't been out looking. If the dreaded wind lay down, go out and take a look around at the usual haunts. They'll be there. My tarpon streak has continued. It is now up to 27 months of catching at least one tarpon each month.

Spinning Reel Maintenance— I fish daily and own way too many spinning reels. I used to have a terrible time keeping them running correctly. My daily routine was to spray down the rods and lightly mist the reels with fresh water. At one point, I was losing a lot of fish when my braid was breaking relatively frequently without having a ton of heat on a fish. I couldn't figure out why. One day I was telling a buddy about my issue and his immediate comment was "Did you check your roller bearings?" Sure enough – frozen. Got my roller bearings replaced and kept up with my normal daily misting routine but added in a monthly take roller bearing apart and lubricate. This helped some but was still having fairly frequent roller bearing failures. I talked to a guy who services reels for a living and told him my program and his immediate response was to stop rinsing with water altogether and just wipe down with a corrosion inhibitor. He

recommended CorrosionX but there are many out there. Now I just spray a microfiber cloth with CorrosionX and wipe down the whole reel and try to force some into roller bearing area. I put the cloth in a zip lock bag and seal it when I am done. After a few times spraying with CorrosionX and keeping the cloth sealed in a zip lock, it will stay saturated with the stuff for a long time. I only need to give the cloth a quick spray a couple of times a month. Since I have started on this program, I have only had one roller bearing fail in 2 years. This is on 8 reels that get used regularly.

Tailing Redfish— This used to be my primary fishing endeavor before we had the influx of dirty water and back to back red tide years. Seemed like regularly tailing fish disappeared for a few years after these events. Nice to see they have made a comeback even with the die off of seagrasses. It is super exciting stalking individual and pods of fish and trying to get them to eat an artificial bait. You would think it would actually be pretty easy to catch one if you could find them as they are actively eating if they are tailing. Not so much. So many factors go into not getting an eat including, them never seeing your bait as their heads are buried in the



Life on the Water

Tim Gleason



grass, getting fouled on the grass in the shallow water, the fish spooking for innumerable reasons and my favorite, them attacking a topwater bait but missing it. Fishing a topwater bait seems fairly counter intuitive for a fish with his head buried in the grass but I've found this is a great way to get their attention, as well as one of the most exciting was of fishing for tailers. Probably the most effective way to get bit using an artificial bait is to use a Gulp shrimp rigged weedless and dead stuck around a tailer. Not the most exciting methodology and you catch catfish sometimes but very effective. If all else fails and you really want to catch one, a chunk of ladyfish rigged on a circle hook is deadly. With any type of lure/bait there is a fine line between placing the bait too close and spooking the fish and too far away that they never see it. I have found the most effective method is to cast about 10 feet or more past the fish and either swim the topwater right over the fish or in the case of the Gulp shrimp of bait chunk reel it slowly right into about where the fish is with your rod tip held high and then let it sink and wait for the bite. Seems like best tailing conditions are the LOWS. (low light, low tides and low winds) Happy hunting.

Does Anyone Miss Keeping and Eating Fish? – Was catching redfish the other day and it dawned on me that I hadn't harvested a fish (and ate it in a forever). Kinda made me miss having a fresh grilled piece of fish or some ceviche. Our fishery is in pretty decent shape in general. I personally think this summer, redfish should be put back on the menu, even if you tightened the slot, and snook should follow suit after the summer spawn. I still won't take many fish but every once in a while would be nice.

Presummer Bait- If it is too windy for tarpon fishing, I will look around for significant concentrations of glass minnows and fry white bait bunched along mangrove shorelines of points and creek entrances. The snook are usually never far behind. This is a situation where a fly rod really shines. You can create very small flies that really match the look of these small baits. Twenty plus snook mornings are not uncommon. If you are not a fly person, rig up the smallest artificial you can cast and do the same thing. Any small plastic in white or baitfish colors should do the trick. A suspending hard bait like a MirrOlure Catch 2000 would also work. It is really a sight to see when a school of snook goes ballistic on a bait ball. Nothing will be happening and then all of a sudden, 20 to 50 snook will be blowing up bait, flying out of the water and generally wreaking havoc. Even if you don't catch anything, it is worth the price of admission just to see that alone. If you can get your bait into the mayhem, just start it moving and hang on.

Well that's it for this edition. Enjoy the summer. See you out on the water. Feel free to stop by my Instagram account (@timgleasonphotography) to see what is happening in my fishing world. Look forward to sharing more Life on the Water next month.

TIM GLEASON

760.310.3541
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TIM GLEASON
PHOTOGRAPHY

PORTFOLIO DIVERSIFICATION

Why It's Important To Diversify Your Investments

“Diversification” is probably one of the first terms you see whenever you read about strategies for smart investing. But are you clear on exactly what it means to have a diversified portfolio and why you should care?

Diversification Defined

Diversifying your investments simply means making sure all of your money isn't in just one financial “basket”. Instead of investing in a single security, diversified investors put their money into a variety of different stocks, bonds, mutual funds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs).

The idea is that if one of your investments goes down in value, there's a good chance that another investment will go up in value. In this way, diversification helps you keep your financial life in balance. Diversifying may help you earn a little more on your investments, but the greater value is that diversifying helps reduce your risk of losing money.

What Kinds of Investments Make Up a Diversified Portfolio?

There are many different ways to diversify your money. The most basic type of diversification is by asset class. For example, your investments might be comprised of 70% equities (investments in stocks) and 30% bonds (fixed-income-type investments). The exact diversification approach you use will depend on your time horizon—when you'll need to withdraw your money—and your risk tolerance.

You can also diversify your investments using a mix of other factors:

Geography: You could invest in both U.S.-based and international funds. Within your international funds, you could diversify further by investing in both established financial markets and less-developed countries (known as “emerging markets”).

Investment style: One mutual fund or ETF might focus on investing in stocks or funds that are currently undervalued—a strategy known as value investing. Another fund might focus on

investing in companies that have a consistently strong earnings record. Owning a mix of funds that adhere to different investment strategies is another way to add diversification to your portfolio.

Company size: In the investment world, companies are placed into different stock groupings based on their market value. Companies with a very high market value are considered “large-cap” companies, mid-range companies are “mid-caps”, and lower-valued companies are “small-cap” firms. When you diversify your portfolio by company value, you might invest in a mix of large-, mid- and small-cap stocks or stock funds.

Industry sector: Well-diversified investors ensure that their money is spread over a number of different parts of the economy, such as health care, technology, manufacturing and so on. Why? When one industry is lagging, chances are good that another industry is steadily earning.

How do I make sure my portfolio is well diversified? Mutual funds and ETFs already have a certain amount of

diversification baked into them because they invest in a range of companies. In addition, these funds clearly lay out their investment strategies—including their diversification priorities—in their prospectuses. Finally, each fund's name usually includes a clue about their strategy. For instance, it might be called the Acme Emerging Markets Bond Fund or the Acme Small-Cap Stock Fund.

It can be tough to diversify your portfolio on your own. Some investors diversify too broadly, which can limit their ability to outperform the market. A Financial Advisor can help you optimize your portfolio to achieve the right level of diversification as part of a strategy that is based on your risk tolerance, time horizon and individual goals.

Looking to have someone in the world of finance have a fresh look at your portfolio? Call Amanda Pflanz, financial advisor with The Florida Gulf Group at Morgan Stanley

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Financial Planning Specialist
Morgan Stanley Wealth Management
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BOB'S WORLD

P/C Bob Moro, AP

Here Comes the Aerocaster!

When the unprecedented red tide and blue green algae blooms slammed into Southwest Florida's coast and its estuaries in the wake of hurricane Irma in September of 2017, scientists and health and environmental agencies were caught unawares. These blooms had been documented here since the 1700's. But with relatively mild and infrequent outbreaks, the toxic effects on sea life and humans weren't front and center in our minds. At the time, the EPA said evidence of significant harm was too limited to suggest it could definitively cause cancer; and many if not most researchers could not agree that algal neurotoxins could be linked to diseases such as Alzheimer's, ALS, and Parkinson's. The scientific community has now ratcheted up their research, about the threats these blooms pose for human and sea life. Still, not everyone is on board with what science is telling us. Even today, you can google "Florida Department of Health (FDOH) warning about HABs (harmful algal blooms)" and get this quote: "The smell can cause respiratory irritation, but is not harmful to your health." Really?

While we wait for FDOH to catch up with the rest of medical science, we now know that there is significant evidence that HABs-including aerosolized HABs can cause serious respiratory, neurological, and other harms to humans. Wind and wave action release waterborne toxins into the air. The American Lung Association warns of respiratory damage from these airborne toxins. But how do we measure our exposure to them?

Meet the Aerocaster! Manny Aparicio is a Florida native and current member of our sister squadron-the Sanibel-Captiva Sail and Power Squadron (SCS&PS). He also serves on the Board for Calusa Waterkeeper, (CWK) and is one of their Rangers-volunteers who provide



information to Waterkeeper John Cassani about area water conditions. He's also the co-inventor of the Aerocaster and its predecessor, CWK's ADAM, (Airborne Detection for Algal Monitoring), and they are game changers-first of their kind devices used to measure HAB toxins in the air around us.

We sat down for a 4-hour interview aboard his gorgeous Hinkley36 "Picnic Boat".

"I've never seen an airborne HAB effort as comprehensive as ADAM, which John Cassani initiated. He told us it was critical that we get the facts-and the science-right. It would have cost us \$300 for just one test of one toxin, so John reached out to Dr. Paul Cox, a world expert in this area with a deep concern for South Florida. He's providing tests of eight different toxins across more than 20 samplings captured by ADAM thus far. For free. We plan to share these results soon," Manny said.

"A CWK Board member said: 'Sometimes you have to act before all the details are in,' In 1964 Surgeon General Luther Perry didn't have all the data we eventually gathered about the harmful effects of smoking, but he knew enough to put warning labels on cigarettes, and that saved lives," Manny explained.

Manny deferred praise to the many area scientists and coastal advocates who he said are truly

leading the way: Dr. Mike Parsons, head of FGCU's Water School and member of the Governor's Blue Green Algae Commission, Dr. Paul Alan Cox, head of the Brain Chemistry Labs in Jackson Hole WY, and Research Scientist Dr. Richard Bartleson at Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, (SCCF) along with colleagues at SCS&PS and CWK.

The Aerocaster looks like a fishing pole, festooned with an air pump, tubing, a collection filter, and small debris screen poking out the top. It's currently outfitted to measure aerosolized red tide toxins, with a GPS device to record its track location when deployed by boat. Using its own battery, it can sit in a rod holder and collect samples for 4-8 hours during trips.

Joanne Heroy-Giller is Past Commander of SCS&PS and a creator of its environmental committee, aptly named "WaterWater Committee". Islanders always have a special connection with their marine environment, and Joanne keeps her squadron at the forefront of efforts to preserve their habitat. Committee volunteers work closely with SCCF, their Coastal Watch program, and CWK, where she and several squadron members are Rangers. She's a guide at Ding Darling, grows mangroves in her back yard, and plants mangrove propagules among the fossilized shells she harvests in coastal areas devastated by Irma. For her, Manny's Aerocaster was a perfect fit. But her first introduction to it didn't go well.

"He scared me to death with his first contraption! He had this huge pump with hospital air hoses popping out everywhere. I said: 'Manny, we gotta make this more

user friendly. Something the people of Sanibel would be willing to use on their boats. Like a sabiki stick! A hollow rod that looks like a fishing pole where you can run that tubing inside and have it pop out the top of your filter.'"

"She's the mother of Aerocaster," Manny acknowledged. "She knew how to take my plan to do air sampling on boats and make it appealing to boaters."

"He's wonderful," Joanne said. "So smart, kind, and humble. We want to work with the other squadrons to deploy Aerocaster, and not just keep it for ourselves. My hope is that eventually someone will be able to take one out to a beach the day before the grandkids come so we can find out if the air is safe for them to enjoy the day."

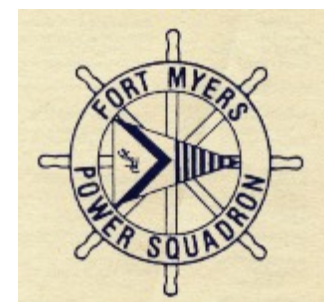
Manny brings a long and impressive work history to these projects, using his PhD and career in biology, engineering, AI, and patent applications to help design and apply for patents for ADAM and Aerocaster. This guy is brilliant, but I can't tell you much about the company he founded in 1999-Saffron Technology. "We worked with special operations teams and national security agencies. Let's just say we connected the dots to find the bad guys and help keep America safe." He wouldn't say more, but he's a patriot. I think I read about Manny in a Vince Flynn novel. "Now it's time for Environmental Security!" said Manny.

I hope to see you all at the Seafood Festival & Nautical Market, German American Social Club on Memorial Day Weekend!

P/C BOB MORO, AP

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An apple a day!

Kathy Thousand



An apple a day just may keep you healthy; and also knowing which preventive Medicare apples to get! According to the 2022 Medicare & You handbook, Part B covered services that are marked with an apple beside them are preventative services available to you. Let's take a look:

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening (one time if at risk);
- Alcohol misuse screening & counseling (usually one screening per year);
- Bone mass measurement (bone density, usually every 24 months);
- Breast cancer screening (mammogram, usually every 12 months);
- Cardiovascular disease (behavioral therapy with your primary care doctor);
- Cardiovascular disease screenings (usually every 5 years);
- Cervical & vaginal cancer screenings (usually every 24 months);
- Colorectal cancer screenings (one or more of 5 different tests may be covered);
- Depression screening (usually one per year);
- Diabetes screenings (up to 2 per year);
- Diabetes self-management training (you must have diabetes);
- Flu shots (one shot per season);
- Glaucoma tests (once every 12 months for at risk);
- Hepatitis B shots (one shot for at risk);

- Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection screening (for at risk);
- Hepatitis C screening test (for at risk);
- HIB screening (for at risk);
- Lung cancer screening (for at risk);
- Medical nutrition therapy services (if you have diabetes or kidney disease);
- Obesity screening & counseling (BMI of 30 or more);
- Pneumococcal shots (2 shots);
- Prostate cancer screenings (PSA test every 12 months);
- Sexually transmitted infection screening & counseling (every 12 months);
- Smoking & tobacco-use cessation (8 face-to-face visits);
- Welcome to Medicare preventive visit (within first 12 months that you have Part B);
- Yearly wellness visit

Wow! That's a lot of apples! Why not use them all and bake a healthy apple pie?

KATHY THOUSAND

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H²OPTIONS

Jim Griffiths

I've quoted too many times "They didn't come here to go hiking" in reference to how people are attracted to living on the coast even if they're not an avid boater. It's a lifestyle, it's a scent in the air. It's just knowing the beach is only a mile away, even if you don't go there regularly. It also means no shoveling snow!

Many new residents I meet want to get into boating but they have hesitations. There's costs, they don't live on the water, storage and maintenance, nautical knowledge, servicing an engine, trailering, etc. There's nothing like owning a boat and being able to use it whenever you like, but there's a lot to consider while owning a boat, like that first dog you got your kid....

Cape Coral has bragged about its 400+ miles of canals, but that's not so impressive anymore since our massive population boom has consumed most of it. Some of the newer residents just figure they'll rent a boat occasionally, or like a plane, find a friend with a boat. Well there's some good news for those on the nautical fence looking for another option.

I don't make personal recommendations often, but I do recommend looking into this one:

Boat Clubs are nothing new. You join a club, pay an annual and/or a monthly fee,

and get to use boats as you wish. America still sells "Bigger is Better." So the big sales pitch is that they have boats all over the country. But if you're not planning to visit Whitefish Bay, Iowa, anytime soon, "big" means nothing. You set up camp here, and you want to boat here.

During any crisis, whether it be a recession or a pandemic, there's opportunity. This is when the real "thinkers" come out. A local boat dealership, as opposed to crying over inventory challenges, got creative and developed their own boat club with a focus on living here & boating here.

The first thing addressed was legitimate objections, like how new residents may not be totally comfortable captaining a boat, or not knowing the local waters. Memberships include a practical orientation half-day on the water with a licensed captain to learn about the boat, navigation, emergencies, rules of the waters, docking, and performing driving maneuvers, plus you can reserve a captain for more advanced training if you would like!

As a member the boat is waiting for you if you get a craving to make beach runs, you can take visitors out on the water while they're in town, watch Dolphins jump in your wake, plus there's 48 boat-access restaurants here in Lee County. Now THAT's a Bucket List!

All of the perks of getting nautical without storage fees, maintenance, engine service, electrical issues, cleaning, etc. Even towing service is included, but you most likely would never need it because the boats are new and maintained in-house.

This isn't a written ad, it's a personal recommendation from me to our readership because I know how many people would love to take advantage of being on the water but either don't want to own a boat, or they're just not ready to buy one. Some are ready, but they don't know if they want a pontoon, a deck-boat, or an open fisherman. With this, the company is working on a program where if you do fall in love with a specific boat, there's a purchase-option where it can be yours.

And we're not talking about boats with faded fiberglass and moldy seats. Look at the photo below, some of them cost over \$100k and they're stored indoors nightly. They have toys like depth finders and digital charts, and there's an onsite captain to show you how it all works. If you like a specific boat, like one geared for fishing, you can request the same one regularly, plus they're working on an overnight program so if you have company in town it can be in your backyard.

The main advantage of a larger club is the stability of the company, which is why

smaller clubs have failed in the past. Well this is covered; this Boat Club has been developed by the Boat House in Cape Coral, which is the largest Hurricane Deck Boat dealer in the world and a multi-million dollar operation with other dealerships around the nation. Trust is a big deal, there's a lot of fly-by-night %#*& going on out there, and a lot of companies duck out of the wind while others lean into it during something like a pandemic. The future is promise to no one, but I always buy stocks in a recession, I never pass up a bathroom, and I trust companies who get creative in uncertain economic times, as opposed to those waiting for a storm to pass. The Boat House isn't going anywhere anytime soon.

You don't have to bring your credit card, and you don't have to be ready today, but if this interests you, call Noelle directly and sit at her desk, ask some questions, have a look at the boats, and see if this is for you.



**Boat Club Contact:
Noelle Wilson**

**Noelle: (239) 549-2628 #2152
Noelle.Wilson@boathouseh2o.com**





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Marine Communications Systems explains the different types of radios and communication options.

Electronic Navigation gives you basic information on the various electronic devices available today that help you navigate and select routes.

Radar for Boaters gives you basic information on radar.

Sail - information on sail terminology, the types of sailboats, and operation.

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ROBIN'S
RANDOM
thoughts
robin griffiths

It's been 10 years...

Life leads us in some interesting directions. I have been fortunate to have traveled around the world, lived in a foreign country, met many diverse individuals, experienced a wide variety of personalities, cultures, and enjoyed grand adventures. Then I met someone who changed my life.

Ten years ago, on May 5, I was officially attached to a very special person. For most of my life I have been independent, but I didn't have that special someone who had my back, encouraged me, spoiled me, found ways to surprise me and taught me new ways to look at my work, problems, future, and lifestyle. Jim is that person. He has been my cheerleader, friend, and partner. He is by far the most creative, fun, and thoughtful individual I have known, and we have both grown together. I am a very lucky lady.

I have watched many people over my lifetime and notice a few things that stand out about individuals and relationships. We are all unique and have traits that make us who we become. Some traits are genetics, such as our DNA. Also, our physical makeup of race, nationality, height, weight, eye, and hair color make us different from others.

But we also have other traits that make us who we are. These pieces are like parts of a puzzle giving us our depth and shapes, who we are inside but do not necessarily define us because we can improve, change, and refine these qualities as we grow in our life's journey.

Here are a few of those traits that make you unique in this world:

Attitude - This is where you perceive life. Your attitude influences the people around you and can pull them in the direction of your influence, whether it is positive or negative. You have a choice of how you present yourself with your attitude.

Personality - Every experience you have has guided you through the world. Every thought, skill, triumph, and failure molds you from the time you are born. Every emotion and thought you have is based on your life. No one else is going to respond to what you've experienced with the same emotions and thoughts that you have. No one is going to make the same choices that you make. Your personality is yours and yours alone.

Habits - Carl Jung famously said, "You are what you do, not what you say you'll do." And his words largely speak to how our actions and habits determine the person we become.

Creativity - This is a spark that inspires. Each person has their own creativity gifts that influence and create a vision of what is special or beautiful.

Perspective - We each see the world differently. We attend concerts, see movies, and experience other events coming away with a different outlook than others. Others can influence our perception, but we generally have an initial perspective that defines us.

Passion - We all have a feeling that is as individual as we are, whether that passion is for people, pets, careers or causes. We show our passion in various ways and depths.

Communication - We each communicate individually. It may be loud, soft, eloquent, simple, emotional, or with enthusiasm. Some of us enjoy talking to as many people as possible, while others prefer only talking to the ones we feel comfortable and close to. Regardless, we talk our whole lives, and our situations often affect how we share our thoughts and needs, which makes us unique.

Humor - Our sense of humor or lack of is another trait that makes us unique. We can show humor in many ways, including how we can laugh at ourselves.

Taste - Personal choices from the way we dress ourselves to the food we eat - our taste shows our personal uniqueness.

Discovering another person's unique personal traits can be fun, challenging, and eye-opening. You may even adopt some of those characteristics as your own. If we can learn to accept one another's uniqueness while not trying to influence and change, we may find our life fuller.

I am grateful to have you in my life, Jim. Here is to another ten years of support, fun, laughter, love, and discovery.

Robin Griffiths

RAGRIFFS@gmail.com

"Your uniqueness is what makes you special, and that is beautiful." - Nia Jax



Robin Anne Griffiths is a certified master development coach, personal trainer, behavior change consultant, and yoga instructor. She specializes as a movement instructor for senior populations. Her mission is to help with living a fuller and healthier life as you age. Her Better You Series is three unique programs tailored to help with positive changes in diet, fitness, and life direction. She works with groups and individuals on life transitions to create personal balance – physically and mentally.



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Random Thoughts...to become engaged, learn, grow, and achieve more in all aspects of life.

Robin has spent a lifetime building relationships that has included working with a variety of personalities and business organizations. She is a published author and writes for a variety of blogs and publications.

As a certified master coach and ACE personal trainer, Robin specializes in helping people who are on a journey for change. Her work includes helping women though life transitions for self-improvement and to create personal balance physically and mentally.

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ROBIN ANNE GRIFFITHS

For the Love of the Sport

Yaidel Martinez

Kayak Fishing Safety- The Busy Boating Season Is Here

May is here and summer is fast approaching! Those chilly mornings are long gone and warm sunny weather is here to stay. The fishing has been outstanding, the peacock bass are loving the warmer weather and the inshore species are in full swing! This climate makes for the perfect day out on the water, but for us kayak anglers that means extra boating traffic to worry about. Around this time of year I like to emphasize the importance of always being safe while kayak fishing. I like sharing some of my experiences and the gear I use to have a safe kayak fishing trip!

Let's begin with the gear! To me, being prepared and having the right gear is key to a successful day out on the water. The most important piece of equipment is a PFD, whether you use an inflatable or a standard PFD, leaving the dock without one is a huge mistake. Personally I like the NRS Chinook Fishing PFD, they offer tons of pockets and straps to store fishing tackle or my cell phone, and not to mention how comfortable and lightweight they are. The next piece of equipment is a proper kayak

flag. Keep in mind that kayaks sit very low to the water and many times they can be hard to spot, having a high-vis flag will make it easy for another boater to spot you no matter the conditions. When it comes to kayak flags you have many options to choose from, some even come with a built in light for those early mornings or late afternoons, you can also go the route of building one DIY style with simple parts from your local hardware store. Lastly and oftentimes one of the most overlooked pieces of gear is a simple whistle or sound signaling device. I personally attach one to my PFD and therefore never leave the shore without one. This simple yet very critical piece of equipment can be a lifesaver at times, you want to make sure to have a way to easily communicate to incoming vessels or even to call attention when in distress.

When it comes to safety gear you can go as simple or as complex as you want, from EPIRBs, to VHF radios and even satellite phones. Some of this gear might seem overkill for a simple day of paddling, but it

all depends on how you're going to spend your day out on the kayak. One important thing to consider is to always be aware of your surroundings. Especially during the summer months when the boating traffic is at its peak, make sure to always keep your head on a swivel and stay alert.

Overall, the most important thing is to have a fun memorable day out on the kayak. But when it comes to staying safe it's key to always use best practices to prevent any issues. Lately I have been noticing more and more kayak anglers out on the water which is awesome and I'm really looking forward to what this summer has to offer when it comes to our amazing kayak fishing! If you would like to learn more about kayak fishing in Southwest Florida check us out online at reelfinsflorida.com.

Also, don't miss out on the Seafood Festival & Nautical Market at the German American Social Club in Cape Coral happening this Memorial Day Weekend.



Hope you enjoyed and until next time, tight lines!

YAIDEL MARTINEZ

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Scales and Tales

Sophie McKee

The Brown Anole



Hello everyone! Sophie here with this month's scaly creature, the brown anole. This cute little lizard is the most common reptile here in Florida. I'm sure most of you see them every day as soon as you walk outside. They're everywhere! You'll see them running across your sidewalks and yards and I bet a lot of you have even had them get into your house. Don't worry if that happens because they are totally harmless.

Brown anoles are not native to Florida. They are another invasive animal that originally came from the Bahamas and Cuba on cargo ships. In fact, they were probably the first invasive reptile to come here because they were seen over 150 years ago down in Key West. Now they are found all over the state and up into Georgia. They have even spread to other countries in Asia, probably from hiding in crates of Florida oranges. They are great climbers and are at home in trees or on the ground.

Male brown anoles can grow up to 8 inches long and are much darker than the smaller females. During their mating seasons you can see the boys puffing out their bright red throat pouches, which are called dewlaps. They do this to impress the females and tell other males to keep away. They will also grow a ridge down their back and tail to make themselves look bigger. This is really cool and I think it makes them look like little dinosaurs. Males are very aggressive with each other and will fight for territory but it's usually over quickly and they rarely get hurt. The female anoles lay one or two eggs at a time every few months. The babies hatch after about six weeks and are only an inch long

but they're very quick and stay hidden on the ground until they're bigger.

Brown anoles only eat insects and are no threat to people or our pets, so don't be scared if you see your dog or cat messing with one. They have chased away most of the native green anoles which were once common all over Florida and now it's rare to see those much prettier lizards at all. But brown anoles are also a good source of food for our native birds and snakes so that helps keep their population under control.

I've been catching brown anoles for a long time but they don't really make good pets. They are very fast and will bite quickly but their teeth are small and don't break the skin. If you grab one by the tail it will snap off right away and start wiggling like crazy. This distracts a predator and hopefully lets the lizard escape. The tail will grow back but usually much shorter. They don't like to be handled but brown anoles are easy to keep in a small aquarium as long as you don't put two males together. I've seen them for sale in some pet stores it doesn't make sense to own something that I can find running all over my backyard.

If I see a really nice looking brown anole, I still try to catch it, especially if it's inside our pool cage. I'll usually handle it for a little while and then let it go in our garden to eat bugs. Hopefully, you'll do the same thing. Thanks for reading and see you next month with another scaly Florida creature.

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Tales from the Riverbanks

Bill F. LaPlante II

IT'S MAY ALREADY.

For horse racing fans worldwide--especially folks around Kentuckiana (Southern Indiana and Louisville, Kentucky area) MAY means DERBY DAY.

It's the biggest horse race in the entire world. Having covered nearly a dozen of them I can tell you it's "truly a unique experience." Even the Queen of England showed up a few years ago, after saying for decades it was on HER bucket list. Surrounded by a human wall of security guards Liz wore a flowered bonnet like the other gals! Some say she wanted to GET MY AUTOGRAPH. I would have given it to her, had she asked. And there are horses too--racing for multiple millions in cash and the right to strut the famous saddle blanket of red roses around the winner's circle near the tote board. I'll NEVER FORGET the DERBY DAY I was with ABC's #1 sportscaster Jim McKay (legendary host of "The Wide World of Sports"--"The Thrill of Victory, The Agony of Defeat" you may remember as the show's trademark tag line) on the roof of the press box at The Downs--as in Churchill.

I'd brought my wife up the rickety ladder which led from the press box to the roof where our network camera--just one of five in those days--was positioned to catch the finish line for the live coverage. We, me and the Mrs., were about to head down the ladder, having seen the incomparable view of the entire track from the ABC vantage point--soon to be shared with the entire world LIVE via television as the race concluded. Well, seems the wooden tripod (this was YEARS AGO, remember) was a tenuous duo when combined with the aging roof of the structure... covered in asbestos shingles in that day.

As we approached the ladder to make our exit Jim forcefully whispered--"NO, not now--you might shake the camera." So we delayed our departure from the roof until AFTER the finish line shot had been shared with America and all the U.S. Navy ships at sea via armed forces network. The queen and the small army of security agents attending her KNEW NOTHING OF HOW WE AVERTED DISASTER ON THE ROOF that DERBY DAY. Or, at least that's the way I remember it.

Time to start this monthly message with a SPECIAL TIP for the upcoming Memorial Day weekend--right handy in Cape Coral:

It's a tasty trip combining FOUR of our FAVS--live music, seafood, suds, and art from the seas! DO GET YOURSELF AND YOUR SEAFOOD FARING PALS to the CARIBBEAN SEAFOOD FEST & NAUTICAL MARKET, May 28-30 at the German American Social Club, on Pine

Island Rd., Cape Coral OR is it really on Pine Island? It's close enough to be there... though it is east of the Matlacha Bridge. Event profits will benefit LOCAL VETERANS... so eat, drink and be merry!

Looking forward to sharing YOUR FAVORITE SPOTS to eat, drink, fish and have fun along the Caloosahatchee, Peace and other rivers. Meantime I've been out on my own, enjoying the great weather and strong sunshine, all along the rivers. I have a couple of nice seafood spots, where the food is extra fresh and tasty--local finds you might want to pick up your next fresh fish meals--serving blue crabs in several recipes, including the hard-to-find SOFT SHELLS. I mean how can you go wrong with a spot just yards off The River (with a dock nearly in the backyard) and racks of fresh fish, shrimp and blue crab in the cooling cases? You can even take some home and cook it yourself--as long as you don't OVERCOOK IT and dry it out.

I won't share THIS SPECIAL SPOT--with a unique name--UNTIL ONE OF YOU GIVES ME YOUR FAVORITE SPOT or two. This isn't a one-way street you know. So PLEASE send your special place(s) to me at: bill@mediaalliance.com That's the key to unlock the "secret seafood spots of SWFL."

When I get yours I'll gladly give you the complete lowdown--including menu--of this special, fresh seafood spot I've just visited. And the prices are right at this friendly place--sauteed, blackened, fried or grilled. YOU GET TO PICK! Can't beat eating fish that slept in saltwater just last night.

While waiting for you to share YOUR FLAVOR FAVS, I've been back near the Riverbank in LaBelle again--actually a lovely half-hour drive along North River Rd. east of N. Ft. Myers. That's where I found Blueberry Blush Farms. They NOT ONLY HAVE FRESH U-PIC blueberries on high bushes, also Kombucha--Eagle River brand made from these most local of all blueberries.

Here is WHY YOU SHOULD EAT BLUEBERRIES:

Basically they're Low in Calories--High in Nutrients.

The two most common types--high bush, most common cultivated variety in the US, including here is SUNNY FLA. & low bush.

A single cup serving of blueberries contains 4 grams of that all-important fiber the docs are always telling us to get more of AND nearly one-quarter of the Vitamin C you're supposed to get each day. They're also



about 85% water, and a full cup contains only 84 calories, with 15 grams of carbohydrates.

Calorie for calorie, this makes them an excellent source of several important nutrients--low in calories--high in fiber, vitamin C and vitamin K.

BTW- LaBelle's Blueberry Blush Farms--southern most BB farm in North America--also offers "NATURAL FRUIT BLUEBERRY POPSICLES"--available til they run out AND locally hand made berry-themed pottery. This stoneware is special and would make a great gift for a house (or boat) warming.

P.S. Don't forget to share your spot(s) as that's the key to getting the lowdown on the seafood place I rave about in the

middle few lines of this story. Meanwhile, pick some healthful blueberries and slug down vitamin-packed blueberry kombucha--Blueberry Blush Farm awaits. BTW, NO ONE noticed I slipped in "CROC" in place of the word "GATOR" in last month's column. That's my little April Fools joke on the readership, I guess.

Seems I just might need a personal editor to keep me on the straight and narrow--it took several overpaid folks to do that during my NYC writing days more than a few weeks ago.

BILL F. LAPLANTE II

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Get Moving to Get Younger: The Exercise - Longevity Connection

Annie Bush

It's Springtime so that means it's time to get outside and get moving! Did you know there is a direct connection between Exercise, Brain Health and Longevity? It makes sense, doesn't it: The more you move the better you feel – but keeping a strong, healthy body keeps your brain sharp, and adds quality to your years. Bottom line for all you fishing enthusiasts: If you physically cannot get in and out of your boat, you'll be enjoying the view from the shoreline.

I co-host a weekly program on the "USA Global TV" channel on YouTube called "Loving Longevity". On April 8, we interviewed Dr. Joseph Maroon, Neurosurgeon, Consultant for the Pittsburgh Steelers, Author, and Triathlete at the age of 81!!! I'll share some of our conversation about exercise, and also what others say about how exercise improves sleep, improves brain function, and extends your healthy lifespan!!

First off, before you think you have to start doing triathlons, you do not: According to Dr. Maroon, start with just 30 minutes of walking, five times a week. Dr. Dale Bredeesen recommends aiming for 8900 steps a day for cognitive longevity.

To get even more brain and longevity benefits, add little sprints into your walk: For 30 seconds, walk or jog as fast as you can to get your heart rate up, then go back down to your normal pace for a couple of minutes, then repeat this cycle throughout your walk. This is called High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) or Moderate Intensity Interval Training (MIIT) depending on how fast you go. If you wear a Fitbit, Apple Watch or Oura ring which measures your heart rate, you want to get up between 85%-95% of your maximum heart rate (MHR). To calculate your MHR, subtract your age from 220, then multiple by 85% and 95% to get your target range. If you are taking medications to lower your blood pressure, this calculation does not apply because the medication is artificially controlling your heart rate. Contact me for the alternative way to get your heart rate up.

As you get older, resistance training (muscle building) becomes more important so you do not "muscle waste". Folks who develop loss of muscle, or "sarcopenia" are more likely to suffer more severe bodily injury in the case of a fall (getting in or off your boat). The company, Lifewave, makes a patch which stimulates stem cell production specifically in muscle called X49. More on that later.

Think about adding in simple "Chair Squats" throughout the day. Get a good, sturdy chair, like a dining room chair, and put it up against the wall. Literally sit down



as far back in the chair as you can go, and then, keeping your chest as high as possible, stand up. Viola, you just did a squat! Do one set of 10 during a television commercial break, then work up to two sets of 10, and then three sets of 10. The research shows strengthening your quadriceps and your glute muscles are the most beneficial for brain health. Out on a walk – stop at a nearby bench and do your squats!

Why Am I Sleeping Better?

Aerobic exercise stimulates your "Glymphatic System" which enables you to get into your "Deep" sleep cycle. What does this mean? When you first fall asleep, you most likely go into your Deep sleep cycle, where the brain retracts ever so slightly, and is flooded with cerebrospinal fluid, which washes away the damaged cells, including amyloid plaque (the buildup of which is a sign of Alzheimer's). Ideally, you are in the Deep sleep phase for around 1-1/2 hours each night. If you have a sleep tracking device (Fitbit, Apple watch or Oura ring), check to see how much Deep sleep you are getting. You can tell if you are not getting enough if you wake up in the morning, and don't feel like you are rested – it's because you are waking up with the same damaged, garbage brain cells you went to bed with.

Exercise also increases your serotonin levels which will help you sleep.

Why Am I Feeling Better?

According to Dr. Maroon, exercise boosts your immunity and reduces your inflammation – which is the underlying cause of most diseases from heart disease, cancer, diabetes, to Alzheimer's and other forms of cognitive decline. As for your DNA, exercise helps protect your telomeres from shortening and accelerating aging. On the end of your

chromosomes you have "telomeres" which protect your genes. Think of them as the plastic caps on the end of your shoelaces. You want the caps to stay as intact and as long as possible. If they start to shorten, just like your shoelace starts to fray, your chromosome is more susceptible to damage, and you start to develop diseases.

Aerobic exercise also increases blood flow to your body and your brain, which releases endorphins which elevate your mood. Yoga and Pilates are great for balancing GABA levels to reduce anxiety, according to Dr. Eric Braverman.

Why is my Memory and Focus Better?

First off, exercising increases the size of a part of your brain called the hippocampus. It is in the hippocampus where long term memories are stored, so you want the biggest one you can have.

Now to get a little into science – exercising also increases what is called "Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor" or BDNF which is a protein or growth factor which serves as the "Miracle Grow" for a process called neurogenesis, or the growing of new brain cells. So the best time to do any type of "cognitive" tasks is after you exercise, because you have just laid down the fertilizer to grow the new brain cells. It's one of the reasons why they say the morning is the best time to exercise, and then go off to work. If you listen to



something on your earbuds while you walk, add the cognitive bonus by making it something you are "learning" not merely listening to. This is called "dual tasking" because you are learning while you are exercising.

You can also do cognitive drills while you walk – time to do your multiplication tables – forward and backward from 100. Also do your alphabet forward and backward, then every other letter forward and backward. If you don't do something cognitive in conjunction with the exercise, the BDNF will deteriorate.

Want to preserve the muscle you have and even build more muscle? David Schmidt, CEO of Lifewave, developed a nontransdermal patch which stimulates the stem cells specifically in muscle tissue. Just like when certain wavelengths from the sun hit your skin, and your skin converts them into Vitamin D, when your body heat hits the crystals inside the patch they convert to light wavelengths and are absorbed into your skin. Your skin then transports these wavelengths to stimulate stem cells to protect and create muscle tissue. The result is activation of your very own stem cells without injections, traveling out of the country, high cost, drugs or side effect.

You can go to www.lifewave.com/timelessaging to get your patches, or for wholesale pricing, contact me at yourttotalbody@yahoo.com. Let's start moving and getting younger (and healthier) today!!

ANNIE BUSH



Annie Bush, Certified Brain Health Coach
and Owner of Your Total Body LLC. She
can be reached at 941-468-7091 or
yourttotalbody@yahoo.com

In the last year we have seen an influx of new homeowners moving to Southwest Florida. Many of these new residents have yet to experience the “rain with a name” that we experience during hurricane season. May 1st to the 7th is National Hurricane Preparedness Week. The official hurricane season begins June 1st and as of this writing NOAA has not issued a formal prediction for 2022.

During the first week of May you will see lots of stories about getting yourself and your home ready before any hurricane is forecast. If you have never been through one of these events don't ignore the messages. If you are also a boat owner its time to consider what you are going to do with your boat in the event of a hurricane. Working out a plan now for your boat is easy. BoatU.S. has a basic one-page worksheet that can help you think through the decision you need to make to make and execute an effective plan for your boat.

BoatU.S. also has online a sixteen-page guide to help boaters understand the decisions they are going to have to make. Here are some of the things boaters in southwest Florida need to think about. First many boaters don't realize that their insurance policy may have some requirements for what they expect you to do. So pull out your policy and read it through. If it is ambiguous or confusing call your agent and ask for clarification. One person I know who lived on a canal was required to secure his vessel in the middle of the canal, something that was impossible at his location.



Next is the question of where you plan of keeping your vessel, on land or in the water. There are multiple decisions to make for each option.

On land the first question is where will it likely be the safest. Are you keeping somewhere storm surge won't hit it? Are you moving it inland or to a storage building? If its outside, will it be secured in some way it won't be blown away? If on the water, are you keeping it on a lift, tied to a dock or heading to a “hurricane hole”? Each requires different considerations for securing your vessel. A factor to be considered is wind.

Hurricane winds typically rotate clockwise and hurricanes approach Florida from the southeast crossing from the Atlantic Ocean or from the southwest if coming up from the Gulf of Mexico. This is where

understanding the impact of the winds, based on the types and sizes of structures that may be near your vessel can make a big difference.

People who live on canals need to take into account that Florida has over the years changed and updated their building codes. Newer roofs on homes are designed to push winds up and over the home. What goes up must come down and if the winds come down on an older style roof it may let the wind continue directly into the next building or across the canal with significant force. Your boat may be a target due to roof line differences. Besides the wind velocity and direction, you also need to consider the water. Water is measured in the amount of predicted rainfall and the amount of water pushed on land by storm surge. Coastal counties in Florida all publish flood and surge zone

maps. Look at yours now so you can compare it to any predictions for any given storm. The closer your vessel is kept to the Gulf the higher the surge. Understanding the typical dissipation of the surge as predicted by the flood and surge zone maps will help with your decisions.

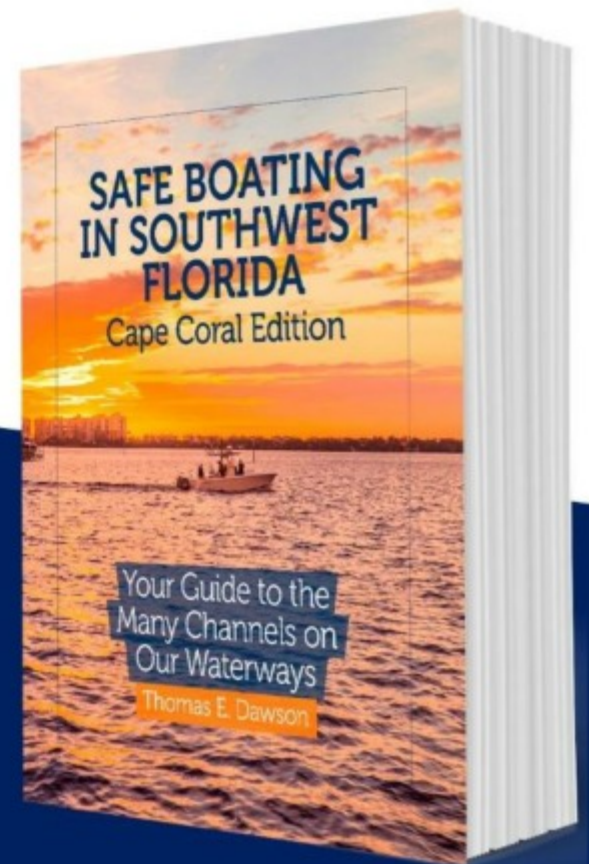
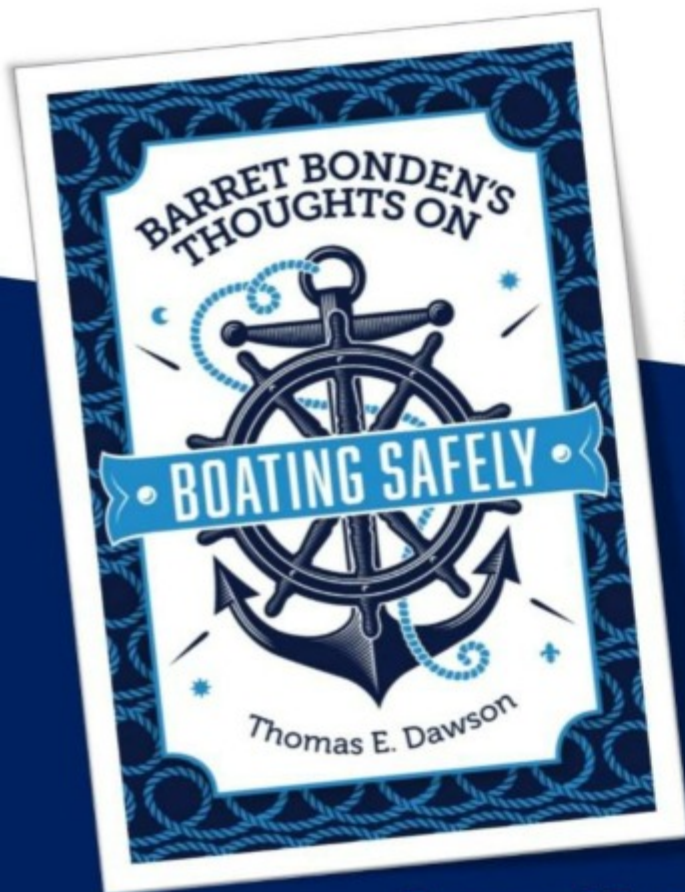
If you are one of our many new residents talk to your neighbors that have been here awhile. Consider visiting America's Boating Club Cape Coral's website ccsaps.org, there on the Community Services page you find some Hurricane Preparation Information. Please get informed early and make your plans now, hurricane season isn't over until November.

For more thoughts on boating safety pick up a copy of Barret Bonden's Thoughts on Boating Safely available from Amazon. If you are new Lee County also consider Safe Boating in Southwest Florida. This book guides you down the Caloosahatchee River from the W.D. Franklin Lock and Dam, up Matlacha Pass, down Pine Island Sound, across San Carlos Bay and into Matanzas Pass.

In the meantime, “Stay safe on the water” and I look forward to seeing you at the next Nautical Mile event.

Thomas E. Dawson teaches America's Boating Course at America's Boating Club Cape Coral, classes are available monthly through June 2022 and will resume in September 2022.

THOMAS E. DAWSON
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Available on Amazon

Work-Boat Becomes Lifeboat in Marine Unit Turtle Rescue

On Friday, April 8th, at approximately 10 AM, a call to the Lee County Sheriff's Marine Unit prompted a series of events that culminated in the rescue of a 300-pound loggerhead turtle from the waters of Estero Bay, with a key element, along with the manpower responding to a distress call, turning out to be a seldom-used utility boat owned by the marine unit. It was first thought that the turtle had been struck by a boat, injuring it in such a way that it prevented the animal from submerging since it allowed air to build up under its shell. We learned later that there may have been other mitigating circumstances, but the inability to dive was real. Untreated, the animal would not survive.

One of the respondents, Deputy Josh Deering, explained the circumstances, noting, "We received a call from the Lee County Communications Supervisor. An FWC biologist had contacted the supervisor seeking our assistance in locating an injured sea turtle that was floating around Estero Bay near the Hyatt Regency at Coconut Point. Following the call, Marine Lt Chris Nyce began marshaling the forces and making a plan on how we were going to rescue this large sea turtle by getting it onto a boat without causing further injury to the turtle or one of us."

He continued, "Noting the size of the animal, the need for ample workspace, and for an efficient way to safely remove the animal from the water, Lt Nyce decided to use a boat we refer to as the Munson. The Munson is one of our special operations vessels. It's primarily used for loading and unloading large equipment and wildlife. It has a door on the front which can be lowered with a winch. Once the door is lowered you can drive a vehicle onto it or pull anything onto it with easy access."

Ultimately, two boats responded to the scene, the Ambar, with Lt Nyce and Deering onboard, who located the turtle, while the Munson, which arrived about forty-five minutes later, was manned by Sgt Matt Ansell, Deputy Kolby Mann, and Deputy Matt Woodby, with all five eventually joining forces on the Munson. This particular incident saw the Munson being launched at Cape Harbor since it is routinely stored on a trailer.

Deputy Woodby added, "It was pretty foul weather, but we made good time, while Josh (Deering) and the Lieutenant had already left to try to locate the turtle on the Ambar. The Surveillance Unit had



launched their drone and were actually searching for it from the air, as well. The original call was filed by a ferryboat operator who spotted the turtle on his regular route. Apparently, he saw it the day before and reported it to FWC. They searched for it, but it had moved and they couldn't locate it that evening. Then we got the call to respond the following morning."

Deering described the rescue procedure, observing, "We slowly approached the turtle, trying not to scare it. We didn't want to spook it or get it agitated. Then we came up from behind it, lowered the door on the Munson, and got close enough to get hands on it. We grabbed it from behind because we didn't want to risk injury from it biting us. We just basically pulled it up onto the door, cranked it up a little bit so it couldn't escape, and then slid it back toward the helm of the vessel. We then closed the door completely to assure it couldn't get out."

Despite its ordeal, the animal appeared to be in pretty good shape, despite not being able to submerge for a long period of time, and there were no cracks in its shell. It was breathing and alert. Deering then allowed, "We transported it to a nearby boat ramp, where we contacted the biologist who arranged for CROW (Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife) to pick it up."

CROW responded and took it to their location on Sanibel Island, where it was determined that the turtle was apparently suffering from 'Bubble Butt Syndrome.' He shared this printed explanation- 'Impacts with boats can result in shell and skull fractures and what is known as Bubble Butt Syndrome, a condition caused by the creation of air pockets beneath the shell which results in the turtle being unable to dive because it is too buoyant and permanently floats on the surface.' Though the condition turned out to be a variation of the Syndrome, as noted earlier, it was not necessarily caused by a boat strike,

after an examination by CROW found other evidence.

The bottom line is that if the turtle, identified as an almost three-foot long loggerhead, weighing close to three hundred pounds, had not been removed from the water, its fate would have been sealed. Deering observed, "It was malnourished and tired, and you could tell that it had been out there for a while."

When an animal is sent to CROW, the proper treatment is prescribed. Seriously injured turtles or manatees can be sent to Sea World, Sea Tampa, or a similar agency. Because the injury was not as severe as first feared, the turtle was treated by CROW and will be returned to the waters in the area when it is safe to do so.

Thus, the loggerhead turtle, which species has a typical life span of around thirty-three years and is an important part of the sea life in Lee County waters, was spared from an untimely demise through the efforts of the marine unit.

If you would like to see part of the rescue, a member of the PIO staff, Nestor Montoya and a photographer, accompanied the crew on the Munson and shot some footage. You can access the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xf8isKzHvT8>.

Since I have made reference to the turtle not necessarily being struck by a boat, I would like to share the following details provided by CROW Public Relations and Marketing Director Haillie Mesics, which explain what happened when the turtle was taken to CROW headquarters on Sanibel. "The adult female Loggerhead Sea turtle was admitted when it was found floating. Upon admission, two veterinarians found two feet of fishing line emerging from the cloaca. Radiographs (x-rays) revealed a hook in the gastrointestinal tract. The turtle was placed outdoors in our sea turtle house in one of the tanks for supportive care, where hospital staff monitored the fishing line to see if she could pass it on her own. Today (April 12), radiographs revealed that the hook had not moved on its own and surgery has been scheduled to remove the hook later this week."

"Floating or 'bubble butt' occurs when gas becomes trapped in the gastrointestinal tract causing the hind end to float to the surface. In this specific situation, if the hook has perforated the gastrointestinal tract, it may have released air into other



parts of the body, causing her to float, which is definitely a serious concern. When a sea turtle is floating, it makes it hard for them to dive below the surface, which inhibits their migration, feeding, and other natural behaviors." In addition, it could be struck by boats or other watercraft with devastating consequences.

A follow-up call to check on the turtle's condition produced a detailed response from Haillie Mesics on Thursday, April 14th. In layman's terms, today the turtle was taken into surgery for hook removal. The hook was located within the gastrointestinal tract. As feared, it had punctured the intestine wall causing fluids to leak into the abdomen which resulted in the floating (bubble butt) during the rescue. The perforation is concerning because there was considerable infection found near the perforation. The hook was removed, along with any remaining fishing line. After 6 hours of veterinarians breathing for her, she started breathing on her own and is recovering in our temperature controlled reptile room!

This episode brought to light the value of having a craft like the Munson, which proved its worth and versatility in this event. Deputy Deering pointed out that the boat was given to the marine unit by the Lee County Department of Natural Resources, which had replaced theirs with a bigger vessel, thus making the Munson expendable. It had been used by the DNR as a buoy tender, among other things. The craft is twenty-eight feet long and powered by two 200 horsepower Mercury outboard motors. It has 14 feet of deck space and the door at the front is six feet wide. (See photos).

Significantly, the Munson, which was previously stored away from the water on a trailer some distance from the marine unit headquarters at Cape Harbor, has since been moved to a lift in nearby Tarpon

Point Marina, which recently became available, eliminating the time-consuming process of taking the boat to the boat ramp for launching, making response time demonstrably quicker in an emergency. Deputy Mann pointed out, "The lift became available when one of our other boats was moved to Captiva. We retrofitted it so we could use it for stuff like this." The boat is also used to transport machinery, equipment, and vehicles like four-wheelers and side by sides to isolated islands or locations under Lee County jurisdiction which are hard to access by land.

This particular incident had a potentially happy ending, but with the increased number of boats plying the area's waters and the reality that more situations involving wildlife are a certainty, any means available to assist the marine unit in ministering to the needs of the victims is a definite asset. For now, the Munson fits that mold quite nicely, and the marine unit will take full advantage of it.

As a cautionary note, if you should encounter an injured sea animal, with manatees and turtles some of the most frequent victims, avoid contact with it, but, if possible contact FWC at 863-648-3200 to report it and provide a location using channel markers, landmarks, or coordinates if your vessel is equipped to do so. It would be much appreciated.

DAVE SULLY
dlsully99@aol.com

**Lee County
Sheriff Dept.
CSU Unit**

The Best Boating Club In SW Florida Cape Coral Cruise Club

By John Queen, Past Commodore

The Cape Coral Cruise Club offers boaters unique cruising opportunities to a variety of destinations in SW Florida. Each month, the Cape Coral Cruise Club takes a scheduled cruise to a different marina in SW Florida and stays there for several days enjoying the amenities and hospitality of that area. We do that nine times a year along with an extended cruise each Spring and take a break during the summer months of July and August.

Our cruising club is the only club for boaters that owns a private island on the on the Caloosahatchee River. Our private island is located a few miles east of the Franklin Locks near Alva. We hold monthly gourmet picnics the first Saturday of the month at our island.

Some of our members take their boats to the island where we have docking and power accommodations for up to 16 boats. Many of our members who take their boats to the island for the monthly picnic arrive a few days earlier and enjoy cookouts, card playing and just good ol' friendship with their fellow club members. Others drive to our nearby lot on the day of the picnic where we keep a club owned pontoon boat to transport them to the island. Our pontoon boat is operated by Coast Guard licensed captains who are also members of the club.

Our island is an amazing place to be! It's old Florida at its best. We have a covered pavilion that seats up to 70 people for meals, restrooms, a fully furnished kitchen, and a large garage with plenty of tools and equipment to maintain our property. Of course, we also have a sophisticated security system to protect our assets when the island is vacant.

When we're not at the island, we enjoy cruising together to a variety of SW Florida marinas. Some of our popular destinations include Pink Shell at Fort Myers Beach, Legacy Harbour in downtown Fort Myers, and South Seas at Captiva. Our monthly cruises generally depart on Tuesdays and returns on Fridays. During our monthly cruises, we have games, contests, educational seminars, and lots of food to share.

We also have an extended cruise each April. Our extended cruises are usually 7 to 10 days in duration. The club has journeyed to many great destinations such as Miami, Georgia, up to Tampa and beyond, Key West, and even to the Bahamas!

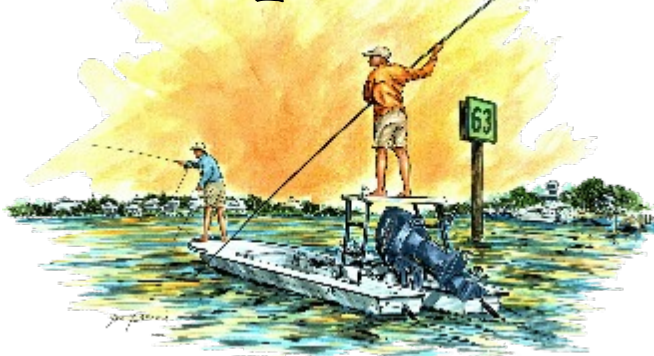
The Cape Coral Cruise Club is a great club to join if you live in Lee, Collier or Charlotte counties and have a power boat with overnight sleeping accommodations. For more information, contact our Membership Chairman Terry Carlson at (239) 770-6955, or visit our website at: www.ourgrouponline.org/CapeCoralCruiseClub.





First Quarter - May 8
 Full Moon - May 16
 Last Quarter - May 22
 New Moon - May 30
 First Quarter - Jun 7
 Full Moon - Jun 14
 Last Quarter - Jun 20
 New Moon - Jun 28
 First Quarter - Jul 6

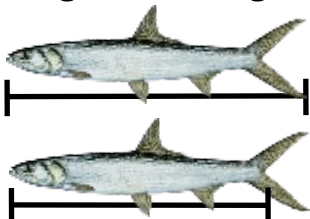
FISHING IN SW FLORIDA



Tournament Calendar
www.Fish-Florida.com

MEASURING A FISH

Length vs Fork-Length



"Length" is established by physically pinching the tail making the fish as long as possible. "Fork-length" is the tip of the nose to the inner fork of the tail.

"Slot-size" is when a fish requires being over a certain length but not longer than another. For example, if a fish SLOTS at 18-27, it means no harvesting fish under 18" and none over 27"

Legal and accurate-to-date information for Florida's fishery is managed by one office; www.MyFWC.com.

Local bait and tackle shops do an excellent job at keeping up with current information, laws and regulations, and recent changes.



Fishing License :

(Current November 2021)

Resident Annual: \$17.00
 Resident Five-Year: \$79.00
 Non-Resident Annual: \$47.00
 Non-Resident 3-Day: \$17.00
 Non-Resident 7-Day: \$30.00

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Shore Fishing requires a license:

A shoreline saltwater fishing license is only available to Florida residents. Nonresident saltwater anglers must purchase a nonresident saltwater fishing license regardless of whether they fish from shore or a vessel.

All charters and some piers include a license. Detailed questions and answers at: www.MyFWC.com

CONSERVATION GROUPS



- Babcock Ranch**
www.babcockranchecotours.com
- Conservancy of SW Florida**
www.conservancy.org
- CROW**
www.crowclinic.org
- FGCU Vester Marine Lab**
www.fgcu.edu/cas/centers/vestermarine
- Florida Watermen**
www.floridawatermen.org
- Gasparilla Island Conservation**
www.thegicia.org
- Havenworth Coastal Conservation**
www.havenworth.org
- Save the Manatee Club**
www.savethemanatee.org
- Mote Marine Laboratory**
www.mote.org
- Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary**
www.octagonwildlife.org
- Peace River Wildlife Center**
www.prwildlife.org
- Rink2Reef Oyster Restoration Program**
www.rink2reef.com
- Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation**
www.sccf.org
- Clearwater Aquarium**
www.seewinter.com
- Gulf Coast Conservation**
www.conservationfoundation.com
- Florida Aquarium**
www.flaquarium.org
- Institute for Saltwater Heritage**
www.cortez-fish.org
- Turtle Time**
www.turtletime.org
- Sarasota/Bradenton Rehabilitation Center**
www.wildlifeinc.org
- Calusa Waterkeepers**
www.calusawaterkeeper.org
- Lemon Bay Conservancy**
www.lemonbayconservancy.org
- Sea Grant, Manatee Extension**
www.flseagrant.org
- Gulf Shellfish Institute**
www.gulfshellfishinstitute.org



Florida's Fish & Wildlife Commission (www.MyFWC.com) publishes an annual guide with detailed information about current regulations, size limits, marine life updates, license and permit information, law enforcement updates, plus permanent and temporary rule and law changes. Free at bait shops, download, or use the app: www.FishRulesApp.com



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Where fishing info and lies are FREE!

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