



# MultiMedia

January 2005

The Newsletter of the Florida Offshore Multihull Association

## A Moon Over Venice



by Sid Zipperman

The white flash rivaled the more famous green one in intensity. Allegedly it could be seen all the way to Key West. The Coast Guard reported that the bright light was emanating from the bow of a catamaran sailing vessel named *Catnip*, and registered to a former Commodore of FOMA, who will remain nameless (if you want to sail on his boat again). The target of the 'moon' performed by four adults dropping their drawers was Dan Wallace's Gemini *Double Trouble* as it sailed by, taking a picture of *Catnip*. We have been advised by the Wallace's that the lens on their camera was 'cracked' as a result of the unprovoked 'moon'.

Governor Bush has asked all boaters on the West Coast of Florida remain calm while we try to

'flush' out the wrongdoers. Sadly, Bob Jorgensen, the organizer of this FOMA flotilla to the Venice Christmas Boat Parade on December 4<sup>th</sup> will have his stellar reputation in Holmes Beach area

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## Our Special January Meeting

Everyone, members and guests alike are invited to attend the January 2005 FOMA meeting. Our special guests will be Dick and Jane Santos, who will be thrilling us with more tales and pictures of their eleven-year circumnavigation of the Earth in their home-built catamaran.

If you missed the earlier meeting with the Santos, you are in for a treat, as they are marvelous speakers, and can recite details about places most circumnavigators never see.

The date for the meeting is Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> (our usual Third Tuesday). As usual, we will meet for drinks around 6:00 PM, with dinner around 7:00 PM. Because of the length of the slide show Dick has for us, we may eat earlier than usual.

The meeting will take place at the Oriental Super Buffet. Located on US 60 (Gulf-to-Bay), about 1/3 of a mile West of US 19, on the North side of the road. Home Depot is approximately across the street.

The price is \$16.00 per person, and this includes an all-you-can-eat Oriental and Western buffet, non-alcoholic beverage, tax and tip. Beer and wine are available.

## Our February Meeting

For the February FOMA meeting, we have another long-distance voyager as our speaker.

Captain John Waite, who has sailed more than 25,000 miles single-handed, will return as our speaker. He appeared at our November meeting, but technical problems prevented him from presenting his show about sailing from Florida to New York, up the Hudson, through the great lakes, down the Mississippi, and back to Florida.

We will meet at the Chili's Restaurant located at the corner of US 19 and East Bay Drive, in the Tri-City Plaza.

As usual, we will meet at 6:00 PM for drinks (during Happy Hour) and have dinner at 7:00 PM. Hope to see you there!

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# A Moon Over Venice

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tarnished due to guilt by association.

Apparently the delinquents in question were seen tied up behind his house the night before the incident. Further, crew members from both *Catnip* and Wallace's boat were seen using Bob's car in a trip to downtown Holmes Beach. The motley group, after dining at the luxurious Hurricane Hanks restaurant, had a yen for ice cream and were angered when a search of downtown revealed there was none in the immediate area. Hap Hairston, a new FOMA member accosted a policeman and demanded the location of the local ice cream parlor. Shaken by this unusual request, the officer (after thinking for several minutes) came up with a store named "Dips". Two miles out of town as the closest place. Apparently ice cream is not a biggie in downtown Holmes Beach.

The group headed for Dips ASAP and overwhelmed the place, as five customers at one time more than filled the store to overflowing.

It was suggested that we eat their purchases outside, in case another customer wanted into the establishment. As the FOMAites sat on chairs in front of Dips at 7:30 PM and watched an occasional car go by, they wondered out loud what one did for entertainment in Holmes Beach. About that time, a young lady passed by, and hearing the lament she said "You embrace the calm." Well, now you know the secret of this desolate island.

Other notes of interest from the Venice Christmas Parade weekend:

The wind was great both ways, particularly on Sunday with boats sailing at seven to eight knots the entire way back.

FOMA had four boats sail down plus several

members who arrived by car. This included our youngest member, Maggie Taylor who was accompanied by her parents.

We had nineteen people for dinner at the Crows Nest Marker restaurant. Their food is still the best. The Marina's shower facilities have been upgraded and you can borrow bikes for free if you want to go elsewhere.

Finally one of the most interesting moments was watching nineteen people all trying to get aboard *Catnip* to watch the parade. The boat had the best view of the outstanding parade. There were at least thirty entries, all of which were a worthy site.

Thanks again to Bob Jorgensen for organizing the event. Hope to see you all next December in Venice under the light of the moon!

## The Log of Kismet

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3-4 ft.) barracuda waiting for me under the boat. he hung around as I cleaned the bottom, mostly "mowing the grass beard" when I heard Carole shriek. She had seen a barracuda launch a high speed strafing run at me.

I looked under again and this barracuda is in attack mode, zipping at me from one side and back again in a furious display of aggression. He never actually hit me but he sure cut it close a few times. All this with Carole screaming each time he made a pass at me. I eased over to the swim ladder and got out. The bottom will have to wait. The thrill of it all!

Today we're on course to get to Nassau by mid afternoon (12/14)... not much wind but the forecast for Wednesday is looking grim. North something winds at 25+ knots. Maybe I can send this when we get there.

# A Tale of Two Cruises

*by Charles Joswig*

The month of October was a neat cruise. We (myself and a friend from basic training), motorsailed to downtown St. Petersburg and anchored in the Vinoy Basin, in the early afternoon. We anchored up with Dan and Barb Wallace and then dingyed into town with Captain Dan and met up with our wives. We walked a few blocks to a neat little Indian Restaurant and had a very good but different type of meal. From here we walked over to Vinoy Park and listened to a free concert put on by the Florida Orchestra. The highlight being a fireworks display to the tune of the William Tell Overture. REALLY, REALLY GREAT. Best of all we didn't have to fight the traffic when we left. Just dingy back to the boats and drink a cocktail or two and watch the traffic dissipate.

Sunday morning we got up, ate a leisurely breakfast and motored and sailed back up to Largo.

All in all a very fine weekend.

The month of November we had another neat cruise. This time up to Caladesia Island State Park. We each had our own double wide docking spaces, with power and water (no cable TV hookup just yet) for \$12 per boat plus tax. The park has full bathroom facilities, showers, convenience store, and access to the beach. This time Mary and I had one of the youngsters who has pretty much grown up at our house, Aaron with us. Dan and Barb brought Dan's racing crew (The Budweiser Girls) with them. Rob, Julie and Maggie came over by kayak. This is the largest turnout of any FOMA cruise this year. Anyway at this point I made a few pitchers of mud slides and then we had salad, a pasta dinner, and desert in one of the pavilions and watched the sun go down. After dinner while Captain Dan dingyed

Rob, Julie and Maggie; Mary and Barb cleaned up and got the TV set up for the movie of the night. When Dan returned we watched the movie, anyway the girls did, because Dan and I fell asleep; we tried not to snore too loud. Meantime, Aaron and Dan's racing team were beginning to eliminate all the Budweiser they could find. They were persistent and succeeded sometime after midnight.

Sunday morning, we awoke at daylight, perked up a fresh pot of coffee, had a bowl of cereal and proceeded to head for the beach. Low tide was about an hour after sunup (I don't wear a watch). In case you haven't been shelling in a while, low tide on a Sunday morning is about as good as you can get in this populated world of ours. Being the first footprints in the sand is always a neat feeling and there were a lot of interesting shells, even for a long time Floridian. We then walked the one and a half mile nature trail, and enjoyed all of the info we found on the stands as we walked along, it is very well done. Around lunch time we departed with a 15 to 20 knot wind out of the NE. Once outside, with full sail up, it was just a nice broad reach all the way back to Largo with top speed of nine knots on a Gemini. (It was humming, Uncle Sid).

The reason I have given so much detail is two fold, first Colin said he needed material for the newsletter and second to try to encourage more of our members to come out to these weekend cruises. With Captain Dan as our cruise director he tries to plan events that everyone can get to; with or without a boat. He is also very accommodating with transporting people in his boat or dingy. The cost of these weekend events is almost nothing, the locations are varied so that everyone should be able to participate at one time or another. It sure would be nice to see more participation this year.

# The Log of Kismet

*by Ron Butler*

*Kismet Log #1*

*As many of you know, Ron and Carole are again cruising the Bahamas, this time in Kismet. Ron has agreed to send in periodic reports for us to get jealous from!*

Going again! After a year's delay we finally got our act together enough to actually head out on another Bahamas cruise. Believe me when I say that the Carnival way is much easier.

As I'm starting to write this, we're off Longboat Key headed south. We cast off yesterday (Monday 11/29) about 5:00 PM and settled for anchoring in Clearwater Bay. (Does that count as a "Hudson Bay Start"?)

We pulled hook this morning (Tuesday) and after spending an hour calibrating the new autopilot, headed south ... of course the wind is right on the nose. We found the bottom at least 6 times trying our usual shortcut across the bay in front of the sailing center. We're really loaded with stuff and we're really slow ... probably draw another inch or two as well.

We'll sail all night and give the motor a rest. Besides there's too many crab trap buoys out here to motor sail at night.

The weather's beautiful, full moon or almost one tonight...now if the wind would fair a few degrees north...

Of course, the wind died altogether and we drifted south until about 3:00 AM when a little breeze filled in from the southeast again. By daylight it was motorsail again but we managed to make the Boca Grande swash channel by late afternoon and

anchored by Useppa for the night.

The next day we mostly motored to Ft. Myers Beach where we anchored (it turns out) right next to the dock for a huge casino ship. Can we pick'em or what?

Anyway, we had a problem with a screeching alternator belt this morning. The belt is tight enough but slips when the alternator first starts up due to the heavy demand of the batteries. We decided that we'd better take a spare alternator (we have spare belts). Anyway that prompted a trip to the boat pharmacy (West) for fix. After waiting an hour for a trolley (\$.25 fare) and a fifteen minute ride we found out they don't stock any. The best they could do was Wednesday to earn about \$400....sheesh.

On Friday morning we discussed options and decided to try local automotive shops. After several phone calls and a chat with a local marine repair shop manager, we walked 5 blocks to a NAPA store and paid \$80 for a standard Delco 60 amp alternator that will serve admirably as a spare. We also bought belt dressing, a sticky pine-tar like-stuff that you spray on the belts to give better traction. We tightened the belt (minimally) and sprayed it with the dressing and haven't heard another peep out of it.

We left Ft. Myers Beach about noon headed for Channel Five near Islamorada. This time we decided not to drift and crab pots be damned, full speed ahead. By luck or by prayer we didn't snag any motorsailing all night.

I can tell you that radar is a wonderful thing for night sailing. The only boat we saw all night was the Key West Fast Ferry heading north but we

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tracked him on radar for 5 miles before he passed a quarter mile west of us.

For a change the wind faired to the northeast at about 10 or 12 knots all night. We were off Cape Sable by dawn and feeling our way along the yacht channel.

I say feeling our way because the depth sounder was making readings that had us hard aground (i.e. 2 ft.) in places... yet we never bumped???

By 10:00 AM or so we had cleared Channel Five and by 3:30 we were anchored in the lee of Rodriguez Key near Key Largo. Easily our best day cruising, about 150 miles, maybe 125 in the first 24 hours. Like I said we're not fast but we're slow.

The weather is looking good for maybe a Tuesday (12/7) crossing, we'll see.

This time we're considering entering the Bahama Bank south of South Riding Rock. It is about 10 miles shorter than our usual Gun Cay route to Nassau. It also has the feature of being off the main shipping routes between Bimini and Northwest Channel Light. The plan will be to arrive at South Riding Rock in daylight and then to also arrive in Nassau about daylight. This may involve anchoring out on the banks for a while. If we can be off Chub Cay by dawn then we can probably make Nassau the same day with time to clear customs. But it all depends on the breeze.

*Kismet Log #3*

*Received December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005*

*(I did not receive Log 2, will try and get everyone a copy for next month)*

We decided to spend another day at Cat Cay .... We got a weather forecast for N-NW winds at 15 to 20 kts. for Saturday (12/11)... turns out you can get NOAA weather radio provided your radio has a decent antenna. My West Marine hand-held VHF would get 3 weather channels while our expensive ICOM VHF with masthead antenna wouldn't pick up sticks.

We decided to stay partly because we had several issues to deal with.

The head wasn't flushing properly, the engine was leaking oil at an alarming rate, the A/C wasn't cooling and the steering wheel had a real mushy feel.

A wrench and a hose clamp solved the head issue (we'll leave it at that) and the A/C just needed to have the air bled from the seawater intake line. OK so much for the easy fixes.

The oil leak was most perplexing. I even called Dan Wallace when we were back in Ft. Myers to talk about it. It was steadily getting worse.

When we arrived at Rodriguez we cleaned up a half gallon of oil in the bilge and then maybe another 3 quarts when we got to Cat Cay. The engine holds 11.5 quarts but still that's a major leak. I searched everywhere for the leak, oil filter, valve cover, front, rear, sides... everything was dry except some oozing from the oil breather (but that wasn't enough to leak a quart in 3 years) and of course, the oil soaked diaper under the engine.

Just FYI, cleaning up involves removing black oil soaked diapers from under the engine, wiping everything with paper towels and spending a hour cleaning hands, arms, fingernails, etc.

Anyway, Carole had the bright idea to put a foil

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pan under the engine to catch the oil so we could then put the captured oil back through thus making the engine itself an oil filter. The problem was there's no way to get the pan in under the engine without tipping it up sideways. That means getting it out without spilling its contents would be impossible.

We figured out how to get the pan out without spilling a drop but I'll tell you next e-mail... just to get you chance to guess our solution.

In any case, putting the pan under there turned out to be brilliant, because now when I shined the flashlight under there, in the reflected light, I could just see a trickle of oil apparently coming from the drain plug. While I couldn't see the drain plug, I could just reach it and low and behold the plug wasn't even finger tight. I suppose vibration had loosened it to where it had to be close to falling out. Fortunately had a 19 mm socket and enough room to tighten the plug.

Whew! Since then we haven't lost a drop although we've now used up all of our spare oil.

The steering issue first came to light entering the channel between Gun and Cat in a huge following sea. Just when you need it most...I suspected loose cables.

After removing all the gear from the lazarette, I squeezed my fat arse under the cockpit and watched while Carole turned the wheel against the autopilot. The entire quadrant was wobbling on the rudder shaft! Closer inspection revealed that the two bolts that hold the quadrant clamp together had worked loose and were only prevented from falling out by the eye bolts used to tension the steering cables.

Unfortunately, the cable eye bolts had to be

removed to get a wrench on the loose bolts and even then the wrench barely had room to move an eighth turn. Anyway, an hour's worth of futzing with it and we had it working properly again.

Whew what a day!

Instead of paying \$100 for another night in the marina, we decided to anchor out in the lee of Cat Cay until the NW wind subsided a bit.

We had trouble getting the hook to set properly but we finally found a sandy patch and spent a very lumpy night when the wind shifted to the north at about 15-20 knots.

The next day we waited for the wind to subside which it finally did about noon and about 1:00 PM we decided to head out across the bank.

We motor sailed until about 9:00 PM and then just coasted to a stop and dropped anchor. There's something eerie about anchoring in the middle of nowhere. You wouldn't believe the stars you can see on a clear night out there. The Milky Way was plainly visible.

No sooner than we anchored, we saw the lights of several boats. Checking the radar showed one to be about 3 miles away and headed right exactly at us. We tracked this sailboat (apparently sailing) in to a few hundred yards when we blasted our horn at him (5 shorts) ... and then again before he altered course. Two other boats passed within a mile of us within the hour. Geez, we must have picked the freeway at rush hour...

Anyway, by morning it was flat calm, and we motored to Chub Cay for the night 12/13.

When we got to Chub, I decided to clean the bottom a bit. The water is clear and warm (79 degrees or so). Of course, there was a large (maybe

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