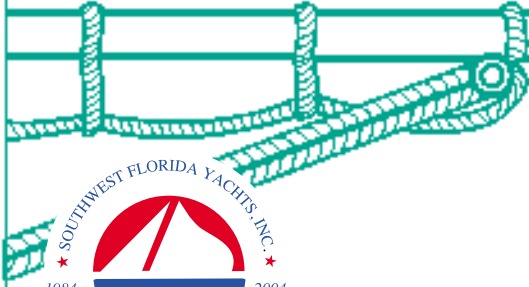
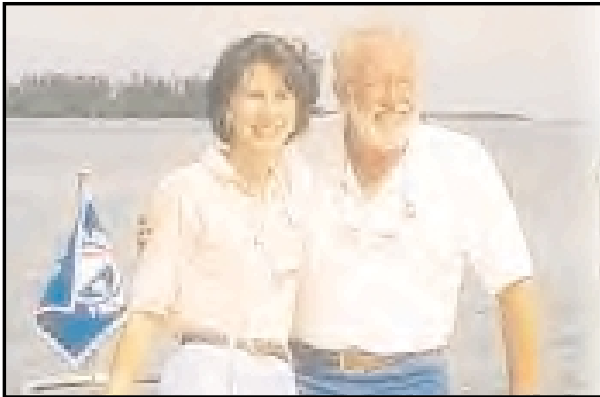


THE YARDARM™

A Publication of Southwest Florida Yachts, Inc.



FROM THE HELM



ANY SEASON IS A GOOD SEASON TO CRUISE IN FLORIDA!

As we write this in February it is 81 degrees in N. Fort Myers and zero in Chicago. We remind ourselves not to call our boating friends in Chicago, Indianapolis or Milwaukee (or anywhere else "up north") and brag about our Florida weather. We've done that before and most of the responses can't be repeated. One friend said, not kindly, "Do you feel better now?"

Here in Southwest Florida, on the beautiful Gulf of Mexico, winters are wonderful. Everybody knows that. But we are here to tell our readers up north and around the world that our summers are darn nice, too. No, we're not having a heat stroke.

On your typical summer day here in paradise, you'll wake to a thermometer reading 75°. Mornings are nice. By late afternoon the temperature will have risen to 92°. Clouds grow in spectacular formations and darken. It rains. Then the rain stops and the sun comes out again. And the air is cool and clean. The clouds move out into the Gulf. The sun sets behind those clouds and shoots colored beams across the wide horizon.

It's a good time of the day to be on a boat or a beach. Up north when somebody asked what we did in the summer, the standard reply was, "If it falls on a Sunday, we have a picnic." Remember last summer? For much of the eastern half of the country, it was one of the wettest and chilliest summers in many years, ruining many boating weekends. Don't let it happen again. Get on a plane. Fly south. You could be soaking up

You're invited to a "Berth" Day Party!

Southwest Florida Yachts, Inc. was "born" on July 13, 1984

Please join us for our 2-year-long "Sail-A-Bration" of 20 Years of Yachting Excellence!



20% Off All Charters!

July 13, 2003 through July 13, 2005

* minimum 5-day charter rate
charters must begin on or after 7/13/03 and end on or before 7/13/05

Plus...

All Sail and Power Students who graduate from our School between July 13, 2003 and July 13, 2005 will receive a Free Weems & Plath Navigation Kit

* Limit one per customer regardless of number of classes taken. Graduation gift does not apply to 2-day S101 or First Mate classes.

warm sunshine and floating on blue water in the boat of your choice.

So, come join us for our 20th "Berth-Day Party!" Go cruising. Bring your children and grandchildren. Celebrate the seasons on the water!

-Vic and Barb



Welcome Aboard Mike Koester



Captain Michael Koester
Licensed Florida Yacht Salesman

Captain Michael Koester has joined the SWFY Yacht Sales and Brokerage team. He is a licensed Florida Yacht Salesman and a Merchant Marine Officer with a Masters 50 Ton - Inland/Great Lakes license with commercial tow and sail endorsements. His cruising portfolio includes experience on the Great Lakes, inland rivers, Gulf of Mexico, and the Pacific, including the Hawaiian Islands. Yacht cruising, both sail and power, has been his leisure time passion. He sails a ketch-rigged Nauticat 38 built by Finland's Siltalia Yachts. Mike's 30-year business career had included successful entrepreneurial startups and high profile positions of sales management, most recently as national sales manager for Reser's Fine Foods, Beaverton, OR.

www.swfyachtsales.com

Your Passport to Yacht Sales & Brokerage



Boats of the Month

**POWER
SALE PENDING**



**1966 HATTERAS 50'
MOTOR YACHT
\$145,000**



**1983 GRAND BANKS
42 EUROPA \$225,000**



**1997 BAYLINER 3988
\$155,000**



**1987 CRUSADER 34'
FISHERMAN \$48,000**



**2001 CHRIS CRAFT
210 \$20,000**



**1985 IRWIN 38
CENTER COCKPIT
\$59,000**



**1993 HUNTER VISION
36' \$75,000**



**1979 HUNTER 33'
\$21,000**



**1996 32' BENETEAU
OCEANIS \$81,900**



**1979 LANCER 28'
MKII \$12,000**

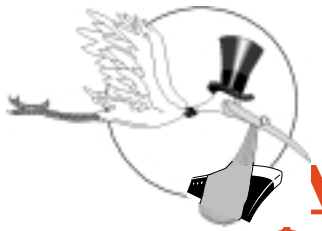


Dick Bennett
Licensed Florida Yacht Salesman



Capt. Vic Hansen
Licensed Florida Yacht Broker

For more information about any of these fine yachts or about the Southwest Florida Yachts brokerage services call Capt. Vic Hansen, Dick Bennett or Capt. Michael Koester at **800-262-7939** or **239-656-1339** or email **SWFYACHTS@aol.com**



BERTH ANNOUNCEMENTS



RATES PER WEEK
Winter - \$3,718
Summer - \$2,975

NEW TO OUR FLEET “FINAL SEA-LECTION” Jefferson 42 Motoryacht

Name: “Final Sea-lection”
Type of Vessel at Berth: Jefferson Motoryacht
Length at Berth: 42 feet
Weight at Berth: 28,000 lbs.
Equipment: Twin Cummins 250HP diesels, generator, Air conditioning and heat, Refrigerator with freezer, Stereo with CD player, Central Vac, Color TVs, Icemaker, Garmin chart plotter/GPS, Radar, Inflatable dinghy with outboard, and much more!



RATES PER WEEK
Winter - \$3,239
Summer - \$2,590

NEW TO OUR FLEET “HIGH LIFE” Grand Banks 36 Trawler

Name: “High Life”
Type of Vessel at Berth: Grand Banks Trawler
Length at Berth: 36 feet
Weight at Berth: 24,000 lbs.
Equipment: Single Ford Lehman 120HP diesel, Air conditioning, Refrigerator, Generator, Propane stove with oven, Color TV/VCR, Stereo with CD Player, Garmin GPS with chart, Autopilot and more!

This Yacht is being chartered in Florida between Nov. 1 and May 1 of each year.



RATES PER WEEK
Winter - \$2,398
Summer - \$1,919

NEW TO OUR FLEET “WIND SONG” Hunter 34 Sloop

Name: “Wind Song”
Type of Vessel at Berth: Hunter Sloop
Length at Berth: 34 feet
Weight at Berth: 11,403 lbs.
Equipment: Yanmar diesel, Air conditioning, Refrigeration, Propane stove with oven, Color TV, Stereo with CD player, GPS, Autopilot, Avon dinghy with outboard and more!

YACHTS WANTED!

We have a critical need for additional late model Sail and Power Yachts to join our fleet. If you currently own a yacht that you may not have the time to use, or wish to purchase a boat now as your “floating retirement plan”, give Vic or Barb Hansen a call.

With our sail and power courses, and sail and power charters, the demand for yachts exceeds our supply! Those of you who have called for charter or course availability and have been told, “we have nothing available for those dates”, know that we need more boats soon to meet the demands of the 2004-2005 season!

If you would like some income to help offset the cost of boat ownership, or wish to have your investment in a yacht protected by having regular usage and proper maintenance, you might want to consider charter yacht ownership.

For more information on our charter yacht ownership program, please call us at 800-262-7939 or 239-656-1339.

VHF: Boating's Comedy Channel

By Barb Hansen

"Bridge tender, bridge tender, please open the bridge NOW. We are coming too fast"

The things you hear on the marine radio. Some days, channel 16 is like the comedy channel. It would be even funnier if the stakes weren't so high. I don't know if the vessel in question made it under the bridge or crashed into it. I don't want to know. It's not nice to laugh at another's misfortune.

Another time Vic and I overheard this exchange between a vessel and a towing company.

"We need assistance."

"Where are you located?"

"We are over here."

"Where is that?"

"We are over her by these mangroves."

As Dave Barry would say, I am not making this up.

There have always been abuses on the marine radio network but since recreational boats no longer have to have a VHF radio license, the problem seems to have gotten worse. Our boat's radio typically squawks like a convoy of semi drivers yakking it up in CB lingo. Gotcha ears on? Gotta copy? Roger that, good buddy.

Jees. Give a guy a transmitter, and he becomes a disk jockey. This problem is akin to the skipper who gives the microphone to his ten year old who keeps his finger on the transmitter button for long minutes at a time, effectively blocking the use of the VHF system for all in that transmission area.

Sometimes a skipper will kindly remind the offenders that the FCC and the Coast Guard have direction finders that can track VHF and that they are subject to some very stiff fines. Abusers are getting off cheaply. At the very least, a false "may-day" interrupts the flow of law enforcement and sends helicopters and vessels and their crews to the scene at a very high



cost. Worse, what if a vessel had a real emergency while the Coast Guard was off on a wild goose chase?

On the other end of the scale, not life threatening thank goodness, are the words some pull out of their head when spelling unusual words because they don't know the standard marine phonetic alphabet. Instead of Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta, we hear A as in Apple, B as in Burger, C as in Cheesecake and D as in Doughnut. Would you think that somebody on that boat is hungry?

FYI, for the rest of the international marine phonetic alphabet, read the last paragraph.

Here's another one from the repertoire of Vic Hansen. This guy call the Coast Guard and tells them he's got a problem. He tells the C.G. "You need to get rid of all these boats hanging around my boat." He failed to mention that his wife(?) was on the forward deck. Nude.

VHF is a proven system to help protect lives and property on the water. To be successful it requires the cooperation of all who use it. The protocols are not that difficult to learn. Recreational users are to monitor and call other stations on channel 16. When you establish contact, you switch to a working channel to talk - 68 or 69, 71 or 72, or 78. Be brief. There's more, of course, and you can get it with a Google search on VHF radio protocol. Sailnet.com has a good article in the cruising section called "VHF Radio: Usage and Etiquette."

Oh yes, the rest of the phonetic alphabet Echo, Foxtrot, Golf, Hotel, India, Juliet, Kilo, Lima, Mike, November, Oscar, Papa, Quebec, Romeo, Sierra, Tango, Uniform, Victor, Whiskey, X-ray, Yankee and Zulu.



From the Mail-Boat



Dear Vic & Barbara,

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for helping us to have a great cruise between Christmas and New Years 2004.

The boat (42' trawler: Maretta Rose) was in great shape and provided a venue for a very enjoyable cruise from Ft. Myers to Venice and back.

We would only suggest that you reconsider renaming the boat "The Dolphin Magnet" as we had sightings of over 100 dolphins with at least 80 of them jumping and surfing in our boat wake. They had almost as good a time watching us as we had watching them.

-Bob and Donna Sherer, Indiana

Dear Vic & Barbara,

I wanted to express my thanks and appreciation for the professional manner in which you and your staff went the "extra mile" to offer us a wonderful sailing experience on the Florida West Coast. (They) were wonderful boats to sail and our family very much enjoyed our time on and off the water.

-William Walters, Colorado

Dear Vic & Barbara,

After completing the cruising courses last week and talking with Dick about the possibility of buying a boat to put in your fleet, I just want to let you know how satisfied I was with the overall experience.

The condition of the Grand Banks 36 that we used for the course was excellent, and Ralph was an extremely knowledgeable instructor. Even more important than his knowledge was his ability to communicate and train.

Finally, everything about your operation was very professional and top notch. I have chartered other types of boats (sail and power) at various location and have never experienced the consistent professionalism and attention to detail that your organization exhibited.

-Ed Preston, Florida

Dear Vic & Barbara,

Had a wonderful time - your entire operation is something you should be proud of! (The) courtesy of the entire staff is "unique" in today's business climate"

-Mark and Peggy Anderson, Florida

Excerpts from "The Great Escape"
This article appeared in the November/December 2003
Issue of Lakeland Boating Magazine.

THE GREAT ESCAPE

BY BING O'MEARA

Charter a powerboat or learn the ropes in a floating classroom on Florida's Gulf Coast

Contrary to the popular myth, not all Friday the 13ths are unlucky.

It was on a Friday the 13th in 1984 that Vic and Barb Hansen sealed the deal on Southwest Florida Yachts, a chartering company, and its sister division, the Florida Sailing and Cruising School.

Both Vic and Barb are transplants from the Midwest. Before moving to Florida, Vic had been working for American Airlines in Chicago and delivering yachts for their owners in his spare time. In 1981, he was offered a job managing the charter fleet for Southwest Florida Yachts.

At the same time, Barb was working in sales management for SC Johnson out of Racine, Wisconsin, with Florida as her territory. On one of her trips south, she met Vic and they started dating. Their relationship grew and then one day Vic called Barb in Racine and told her he had an opportunity to buy Southwest Florida Yachts. He suggested she move down to Florida and they buy the company and get married. And so they did, taking over SWFY on that fateful Friday the 13th and getting married the same year. They will celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary as well as the 20th "berth-day" of owning Southwest Florida Yachts next year.

There's a saying that applied to the Hansens: If you do what you love to do, you will never work again.

Today, their thriving operation consists of a charter fleet of 10 yachts: six Grand Banks trawlers (from 32 to 42 feet) and two Krogen trawlers (36 and 42 feet long), as well as a Jefferson 42 and a Bayliner 3988. They also charter a fleet of sailing vessels out of Burnt Store Marina, in nearby Punta Gorda.

The company's other division, the Florida Sailing and Cruising School, offers 25 courses for beginner, intermediate and advanced mariners. This is an unusual academy in which students live aboard a vessel while they take courses in handling and maintenance. "Real-world, real-time, hands-on learning" is how the Hansens describe their operation.

Powerboat instruction ranges from three to six days, with classes limited to four pupils per vessel. The ultimate offering is the eight-day offshore powerboat course, which includes a cruise to a place such as Key West.

The courses range from around \$900 to about \$2,600 for the eight day course.



For folks in the market to buy a new boat or who feel they need to improve their skills to do more extensive cruising, I would highly recommend his school. Navigating an offshore vessel is very complex and learning from professionals in a disciplined atmosphere definitely gives you a leg up.

For a complete reprint of this article, please give our office a call at 800-262-7939 or 239-656-1339.

IN MEMORIAM



We lost a dear friend, fleet yacht owner, avid cruiser, and all-around good guy on October 1, 2003. Tom Smith, along with his wife Ann, owned Columbine, our Krogen 42 trawler. They were charter clients of ours before they decided to pursue their dream of owning a Krogen 42 trawler. With Vic's help, they found and purchased Columbine in 2000. Tom would spend hours researching just the right gear for the boat, talking to other Krogen owners, and, during those long Colorado winters, reading about the tropical destinations they planned to cruise to when they retired. Tom loved the boat, a good margarita, the sunset, and especially, Annie. Tom's time aboard Columbine was too short, but Annie still plans to pursue their mutual dream of enjoying time on the boat. And so we toast a blue margarita to our friend Tom! We are certain he is having a pleasant and peaceful cruise.

Cruise! Alaska!



An Alaskan anchorage.

Introducing....

Charter Adventures: Alaska & Florida

Welcome to the world of chartering yachts in some of the finest cruising waters in North America.

Many of you already know about the beautiful cruising grounds of Southwest Florida. From sugar-sand beaches to world-famous resorts, we offer cruising in a true tropical paradise! Well, now we are pleased to offer you cruising of a different style and in a different climate...the crewed charter yachts of Alaska! We have teamed to introduce you to the joy of chartering a private yacht year round for your vacation experiences. These are not "charter boats" or cruise ships! We have joined with the founder of Alaska Charter Yachts, V. Joyce Gauthier and the owner operators of Alaska Charter Yachts because we know that there are times you want warm waters and pristine beaches of Florida, and times you want the cool weather and spectacular scenery found in Alaska. So do WE. Both groups have a commitment to training and sharing our skills by making your cruise the learning experience you desire as well as an enjoyable trip. Fully crewed charters in Alaska offer the finest experiences from gourmet food (some of which you get to catch yourself) to exceptional nature photography and sea kayaking experiences.

THESE ARE NOT CRUISE SHIPS, but cruises for real boaters and people who love to travel off the usual routes, those into soft-adventure travel, and people who do not want the experience of a cruise ship program yet dream of exploring the islands and the waters of Florida and Alaska.



A whale greets charterers underway.

These are trips to be shared with your family and friends instead of a few thousand strangers. We do NOT specialize in shopping, resort fare, or

artificial experiences. We DO specialize in making your vacation a unique experience.

If you prefer warm-water cruising, Southwest Florida Yachts offers bareboat or captained power and sailing yachts aboard trawlers, motoryachts, and sailboats, from approxi-



The 65 ft. "Ursa Major".

mately 30 to 42 feet, year round! You might also choose a sail or power training course where you can live on board and experience cruising first hand!

Whether in Florida or Alaska, you and your crew will delight in the adventure, relaxation, and beauty that a charter provides. There is no better way to, at a leisurely pace, get to know the waters and wildlife of a region, scenery and people, and celebrate the joy of just being on the water and messing around in boats!

Southwest Florida Yachts is pleased to now offer you the opportunity to cruise in two distinct areas of the country. And we are pleased that the owners and operators of Alaska Charter Yachts are offering special pricing to our clients. We are working with approximately ten yachts, from 40 to nearly 80 feet, to bring this offer to our customers. There is a yacht to meet a variety of charter needs and budgets!

The Alaska cruising season is limited to the months of May through September, depending on the yacht and charter area.

For more information on our "Cruise Alaska" program, please give us a call today!



Call or write for our complete Alaskan Cruising Brochure

CHRISTMAS ON THE JOSIE

by Fred Neill

We left Burnt Store early on December 22 and headed south. For my wife Jill and grown son Fred it was the latest of a lifetime of cruising adventures. But for our daughter-in-law, Bethany, it was the first time on a sailboat. We needn't have worried, but setting out you never know. The wind was following, and we set wing-on-wing soon after passing Charlotte Harbor marker 4, and ran all



The crew keeps watch on the horizon.

the way to the ICW. Then we jibed to a port tack toward sheltered water close in Part Island. We explored the shore and found hun-

dreds of horseshoe crabs, all about the size of a quarter, birds and red and black mangroves. The shelling was pretty good, too. But the best part was a river otter that swam back and forth impatiently about 10 feet from us until we left the area. After a dinner of steak and a good wine we settled in for a quiet night at anchor. The next day we sailed down toward Sanibel. Along the way we saw so many dolphins that Bethany was really excited. At one point I took her to the bow pulpit to watch, and an eight foot dolphin came up under our bow and played back and forth in our wake. She was absolutely HOOKED.

We spent the next night on the hook just outside the inlet to Tarpon Bay, and that afternoon we explored the rookeries of the Ding Darling Wildlife Refuge. The next morning was Christmas



Fred at the helm.



"Josie" all aglow for Christmas!

Eve, the weather was getting bad, and the wind was against us, so earlier plans for Miller's Marina got scrapped. We called Terry at Cabbage Key, and he had a space. What a great decision! At Cabbage Key marina, we were all enchanted by the remoteness, the quiet, the amiable staff, and the food. It is truly "cheeseburgers in paradise". We strung Christmas lights all around the lifelines to help set the mood. Christmas morning we exchanged gifts, then cooked eggs benedict and baked cardamom bread. In the warm afternoon, we watched nesting ospreys fishing in the channel, visited with other cruisers, and enjoyed the warm showers.

The day after Christmas it was blowing pretty hard, and after negotiating the narrow harbor, we headed out for a day of buried lee rails and exciting tacks. Wahoo sailing in Charlotte Harbor. That night we tucked into our slip in Burnt Store and planned another day of great sailing before heading back to cold country. The following week Bethany was looking at prices on a sailboat. As she said, "You said you see dolphins. I didn't know you meant EVERY DAY!"

This was really a great Christmas. Thanks, SWFY!

Editor's Note: Thanks, Fred for sharing your story with all of us!

**Southwest Florida Yachts Video
NOW on CD-ROM!**

**"Sailing & Cruising
PASSPORT TO EXCELLENCE"**

Give us a call at

800-262-7939, or visit

our website and click

the video request form!



SOUTHWEST FLORIDA YACHTS
 INC.
HAPPY "BERTH" DAY TO US!
 Celebrating 20 Years
 of Yachting Excellence, 1984-2004

Sail Charter Rates Per Week *Power

Cal 24 (Daily)	\$200	Grand Banks 32 (2)	\$1914
Hunter 29	\$1191	Krogen Manatee 36-Single	\$2590
Island Packet 31	\$1683	Grand Banks 36-Twin	\$2877
Beneleau 32	\$1683	Venturer 38 Power Cat	\$2975
Island Packet 32	\$1683	Bayliner 3988	\$2877
Nightwind 35	\$1683	Spindrift 40-Twin	\$2877
Hunter Vision 36	\$1919	Krogen 42-Single	\$2975
Jeanneau 40	\$2553	Grand Banks 42's:	
		Classics (2)-Twin	\$3334
		Europa-Twin	\$3334

**20th Anniversary
Sail-A-Bration**
 20% off all Charters!
 July 13, 2003 - July 13, 2005

Charter Website: <http://www.swfyachts.com>

FLORIDA SAILING & CRUISING SCHOOL

Sail & Power Cruising Courses

ASA Sail Courses — Basic Sailing to Advanced!

3-Day	101 & 103	\$795/person
7-Day	101, 103 & 104	\$1595/person

Power Courses — Single & Twin Engine

3-Day: Single Eng.	\$895	Twin Eng.	\$1095
6-Day: Single Eng.	\$1595	Twin Eng.	\$1895

MORE COURSES AVAILABLE! ALL LEVANDAYS! CALL FOR COMPLETE BROCHURE!

School Website: <http://www.flisailandcruiseschool.com>

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AHOY MATEYS!

CALLING ALL SWFY CHARTERERS & STUDENTS OF THE LAST 19 YEARS

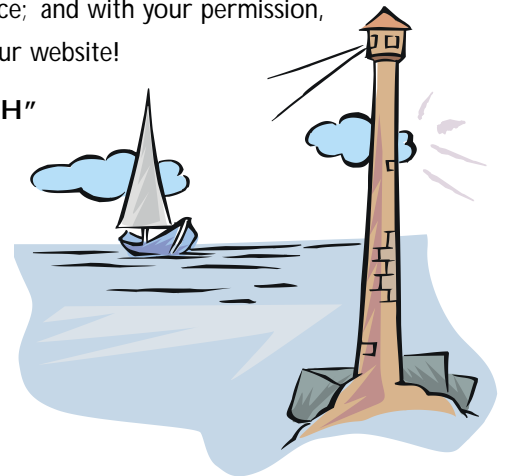
2004 is our 20th Anniversary, and we want you to help us celebrate this milestone! If you have chartered with us or taken a sail or power boating course, we invite you to send us your "Favorite Southwest Florida Cruising Memory."

Just send us a paragraph describing your best SWFY cruising experience; and with your permission, we'll post it on our website!

HAPPY "BERTH" DAY TO US!

Photographs are most welcome, along with your story.

(Photos may not be returned, so please send duplicates.)



SOUTHWEST FLORIDA YACHTS

FLORIDA SAILING & CRUISING SCHOOL

3444 Marinatown Lane, NW
 North Fort Myers, FL 33903

1-800-262-7939

239-656-1339

Fax: 239-656-2628

Email: SWFYACHTS@aol.com



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