

# Tiller Tales

Gulfstream Sailing Club

June 2021

## FROM THE HELM

*Eric Kobrin, Commodore*

The May 8th Dinghy Run was our first club-wide on-the-water event outside of North Lake since the start of the pandemic over a year ago. It was our best attended event since we started having in-person activities again.

I almost missed it.

I've accumulated three dinghies, each in a worse state of disrepair than the previous. Our Walker Bay 10 had been mostly submerged for a long time. Our Avon, which must be kin to the Cat that Came Back, had become a nest for carpenter ants. Then there's our ill-fated 15ft inflatable Saturn Kaboat. It was fun while it lasted, but gave up the ghost at a previous dinghy run; all the glue turned to dust, returning the dinghy to its original form, a pile of colorful vinyl sheeting.



*Commodore Eric Kobrin*

The repair of the dinghies provided plenty of learning opportunities, but those are stories for another day.

Each dinghy fell into disrepair for its own reasons, but their state didn't bother me until it was time for the dinghy run! As has happened so many times before, an upcoming club event is what drove me to get my boat in ship shape. This is important. If not for the club sailing events, I rarely find the time to sail. My boats sit unused, and they don't take disuse well. The club keeps me sailing in more ways than one.

And we keep the club sailing.

The pandemic halted all in-person club activities. Many of us kept things going over Zoom in the intervening year. It was great to be able to see our snowbird friends out of season -- so much so that we'll be including remote attendance for meetings where possible. We're a sailing club, but we weren't doing much sailing together in 2020.

Right up to the start of the dinghy run I was struggling to get at least one dinghy moving under its own power, and eventually threw in the towel and joined the dinghy run by car

*Continued on page 2.*



*Past Commodore Mike Sawzak with Commodore Eric Kobrin at the Dinghy Run.*

### 2020 Officers

**Commodore**.....Eric Kobrin  
**Vice Commodore**.....Linda Gossett  
**Rear Commodore**.....David Notman  
**Treasurer**.....Ben Bowen  
**Secretary**.....Kay Harrison  
**Lake Director** .....Luis Oliveira

### 2020 Governing Board

Mary Brown  
Paul Hinden  
Robert Schudy  
Phil Decker, Past Commodore

### 2020 Committee Chairs

**Auditing**.....Linda Gossett  
**Crew Pool**.....Open  
**Cruising**.....Open  
**Legislative**.....Sam Walker  
**Membership**.....Ben Bowen  
**Nominating** .....  
Brenda Kobrin & Sandra Hinden  
**Ocean Race** .....Dave Notman  
**Programs**.....Open  
**Publicity** .....Phil Decker  
**Regatta**.....Linda Gossett  
**Science**.....Robert Schudy  
**Ship's Store** .....Open  
**Small Boat** .....Luis Oliveira  
**Social** .....Mary Brown  
**Tiller Tales Editor**.....Kay Harrison  
**Trophies**.....Mike Sawzak  
**Website**.....Ben Bowen

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## FROM THE HELM

*By Commodore Eric Kobrin, Continued from Page 1*

at its midpoint. The company at lunch was great and I really enjoyed the second half of the run aboard Kay and Phil's electric inflatable dinghy.

We keep each other sailing.

The club is a construct that exists in our minds. So long as enough of us could remember the sailing days before the pandemic, we were still a sailing club, only temporarily confined to shore. Our shared memories and our hopes sustained the club's existence. A tree that was once fruitful can fail to yield a harvest for a season, but still return to health after the drought has passed.

Now we're back!

We've restarted the in-person happy hours. We've had a Beach Bash. We had our Dinghy Run. And this month we had our first in-person general meeting!

That'll have the club back to where it was just before the pandemic -- exactly as many of us remember it. As I remember it. It makes me happy.

Some of our members have club memories that go further back, when we were all a lot younger and our club was much more active. Those days predate my membership, but the hope of their return keeps our "old guard" around and involved. Nothing stays the same for ever, but some of those old stories sure sound like fun, and worth a shot at a repeat performance.

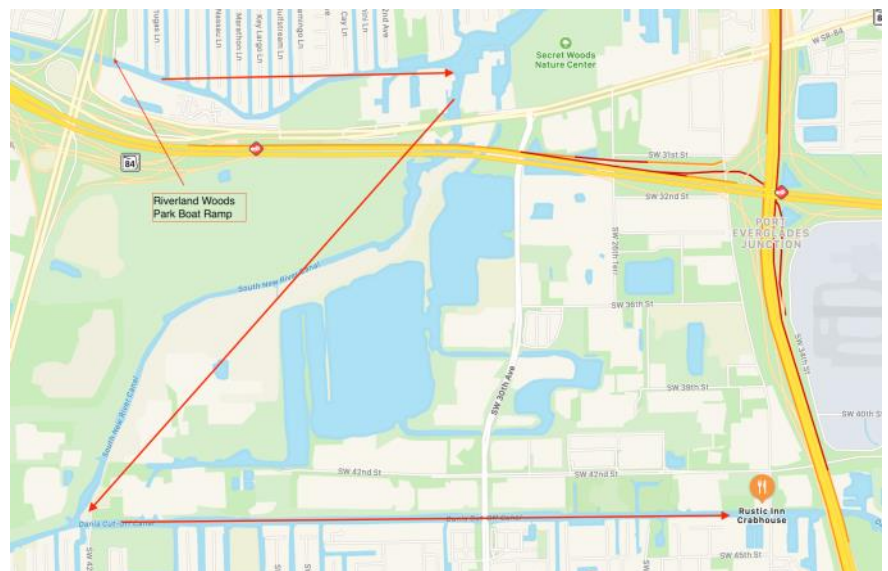
As we work to restore the club to how it was, it would be great to reach further back to when it had a stronger racing and cruising fleet. When it had closer ties to other local sailing organizations.

This is also a chance to choose to go in new directions. We can have members join by video when out of town. We can learn from the Lake Program, which experienced less of a dip and a quicker regrowth than the rest of the club activities. Our Lake Program sailors even drove down to Miami and raced victoriously against the Coconut Grove Sailing Club!

We can take the best of the past days of the club and add in some modern touches. We can work together to get our fleet away from docks and trailers and back in motion. We can include people from outside the immediate area who will show up to crew or to bring their vessels in town for a season. We can have more small-boat events where the usual happy hour attendees can get some on-the water and face-to-face time with our vibrant lake sailors.

Looking forward to the rest of 2021, we'll have some challenges. We've lost friends and loved ones. Members have moved away or moved on. We've weathered the worst of the storm and the outlook is bright. It's time to rebuild the fleet, replenish the ranks, and get to work creating a new set of lasting memories of the Gulf-stream Sailing Club!

*Your Commodore,*  
Eric Kobrin



*Here's the route for the Dinghy Run. See story and photos on page 3.*



## THE DINGHY RUN RESTARTED MAY 8

*By Past Commodore Phil Decker*



Phil Decker and Kay Harrison restarted the annual Dinghy Run on May 8, 2021. The Dinghy Run had a year off in 2020 due to COVID restrictions. Three boats departed the Riverland Woods Park Boat Ramp at 10:30 AM and motored through the canals and back channels of Fort Lauderdale as only a dinghy can do. As is the custom, we rafted up at the infamous Ouzo Tree for a picnic and shots of ouzo. The Ouzo Tree is in secret location disclosed only to participants, in a backwater channel in the middle of nowhere, far from the prying eyes of law enforcement personnel.

After our stop at the Ouzo Tree, we motored to the Rustic Inn Crabhouse for a fine lunch. The Rustic Inn has a dinghy dock and good ladder for access to the restaurant. Several GSC members who could not join

us on dinghies drove there and met us for lunch.

Following lunch, we all motored back to the Riverland Woods Park Boat Ramp. There were no casualties or sunken boats this year. Other than Phil and Kay, participants included Commodore Eric Kobrin, Vice Commodore Linda Gossett and son-in-law Jerry, Rear Commodore David Notman, Past Commodore Mike Sawzak, Past Commodore Luis Oliveira, Past Commodore Ben Bowen, Mari Guarda, John and Carol Lucas, Alex Demyanenko, and Brooke Weed.





# THE DINGHY RUN REDUX, CONTINUED

*More photos from the May 8 Dinghy Run*





## GSC JOINS BROWARD COUNTY WATERWAY CLEANUP

By Past Commodore Phil Decker

Several GSC members participated in the annual Broward Waterway Cleanup in March. Participants chose a Broward Waterway, logged their haul on a smart phone app, and shared photos online. The event was spread out over the whole month of March and did not involve getting together at central gathering places due to COVID restrictions this year. Participants received a customized t-shirt and well-earned pride for giving back to the boating community in this way. This year, **Mark Stella, Mary Brown, Doug Brown, Kay Harrison, and Phil Decker** took part in the annual cleanup.



## MIAMI SAILING WEEK

*By Lake Operations Director Luis Oliveira*

Back on March 19 and 20 five of us trailered our Sunfish to the Coconut Grove Sailing Club (CGSC) to participate in the Miami Sailing Week, two days of racing.

There were a total of (8) individual races planned and according to the notice of race (NOR) if less than that were sailed there would be no throw outs, we only raced six races, so all races counted.

We launched from CGSC and had to sail 1.9 nautical miles to the race course, that alone was equivalent to a full day of racing at the Lake, but we enjoyed every minute of it.

The race course was upwind/downwind twice, just like we do at the Lake, except each leg was a mile long and with no boats anchored, a real pleasure to sail.



The conditions on the bay for both days were pretty light to medium breeze, the first race was delayed a bit for lack of wind and even then it was so light that five boats didn't finish in the 30 minutes after the first boat crossed the line, as stipulated by the sailing instructions.

A few times both days the Race Committee had to postpone races to change the course as the wind shifted several times. Sunday the breeze was stronger and the waters of the bay a bit choppier, which was a challenge

for our group, particularly when the breeze was light, but we managed to do well as a group.

We greatly enjoyed sailing in the open waters of the bay and were very thankful for the hospitality and camaraderie of CGSC. We hope to go sailing with them again soon.

### Race Results

1.	Luis Oliveira	GSC	2, 4, 2, 1, 2, 2	13 Pts
2.	Rui Claudio	GSC	3, 2, 5, 3, 5, 1	19
3.	Bob Weinstein	GSC	1, 1, 9, 6, 1, 3	21
4.	Alex Sellar	CGSC	4, 3, 1, 10, 7, 4	29
5.	Ahcene Iddir	CGSC	TLE, 6, 4, 2, 8, 5	33
6.	Jack Loving	GSC	TLE, 7, 3, 4, 6, 6	34
7.	Jack Campo	CGSC	5, 5, TLE, 5, 3, OCS	39
8.	Enrique Soto	GSC	TLE, 9, 6, 7, 4, 7	41
9.	Enrique Guitart	CGSC	TLE, 8, 8, 8, 9, 8	49
10.	Hector Santini	CGSC	TLE, 10, 7, 9, 10, 9	53



# THE 2021 BEACH BASH

April 24, 2021





## BEACH BASH PHOTOS, CONTINUED

Photos by Eric Kobrin and Kay Harrison



## Join Us for Happy Hour

at

### The Quarterdeck

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### Dates to Remember

- Happy Hours at The Quarterdeck.....June 8 & 29
- June General Meeting\* .....June 15
- Skippers' Meeting for Racing Program.....June 22
- July General Meeting\* .....July 20
- Key Lime Sailing Club Outing - Key Largo.....July 23-26

*\*Meetings are the third Tuesday of the month.*

**Join your fellow sailing club members at  
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*July 23-26, 2021*

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## BAHAMAS CRUISING RULES

*Follow the Rules in Foreign Countries—from BoatUS*

*Recent boardings in the Bahamas, one of the most popular destinations for East Coast boaters, has cruisers wondering what to expect*

BY CHARLES FORT

In April 2018, Angela and John Hallbauer, a couple from Florida who has cruised the Bahamas for years, were boarded by the Bahamas Customs and Border Patrol while anchored at the remote island of Great Sale Cay in the Abacos. According to the Hallbauers, one of whom is a retired attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice, seven agents boarded their boat, inspected their paperwork, and began to, as the couple put it, “aggressively go through” their lockers and drawers.

The agents found a discrepancy in the number of declared shotgun shells (for a gun kept onboard for security) reported to Bahamian



officials on entry. At that point, they told us, things got more aggressive. The couple said the agents told them they would have to go back and appear before a magistrate in Freeport, Bahamas, and possibly spend six months in jail if they did not pay a \$300 cash fine, on the spot.

The Hallbauers said they were told that this type of inspection was “a new policy” started in early 2018 and that border agents were now going out to remote islands. The couple also said the agents could not cite any guidelines to show that the fine was legitimate. The Hallbauers, both in their 70s, said they were terrified and had to scramble to find the cash before they were given a receipt and allowed to go. They noted that several other boats in the anchorage were also boarded by the same agents.

While this was an unfortunate – and very intimidating – event for the couple, their experience is a good reminder for foreigners who cruise the Bahamas or other ports outside of the U.S. The couple’s bullet miscount was likely an innocent mistake, but firearms laws are very strict in the Bahamas, as they are in many parts of the world. The miscount could have meant the missing ammunition had been fired during the couple’s visit, or that it was sold to, given to, or stolen by someone local – all serious infractions. In this case, the fine certainly may have been legitimate and allowed them to continue their trip without having to return to a magistrate’s office on another island.

While boardings in the Bahamas may seem unusual to visiting boaters, it’s likely because of the vast area officials have to cover, and stretched boarder-agent staffing, that recreational vessels are not frequently boarded. But it does happen, and visiting boaters need to be prepared for it.

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## **BAHAMAS CRUISING RULES**

### *Follow the Rules in Foreign Countries—from BoatUS*

Even though the agents may have been aggressive and were not able to cite an established fine structure in the Hallbauers' case, it's important to note that the officials did give the couple a receipt for the \$300 cash fine. Boardings may be becoming more frequent as officials try to make sure foreign visitors are following Bahmanian rules to the letter.

### **So, what are the rules?**

Part of the problem may stem from the lack of easily accessible information about regulations in the Bahamas. While the official Bahamian website has information about how visiting cruising boats must declare all guns and ammo on board, there is nothing about fines, especially on-the-spot fines that may be levied by agents in remote islands. However, the website for the U.S. Embassy in the Bahamas points out that the Bahamas has recently increased both the penalties and sentencing for violators of local firearm laws. It is unclear if any of these changes apply to other violations. As of press time, numerous emails and phone calls from BoatU.S. to various Customs officials and other Bahamas government offices inquiring about new policies and fines went unanswered.

BoatU.S. spoke to Sarah Lewis, co-author with her husband, Monty, of Explorer Chartbooks, the most comprehensive set of guides and charts of the Bahamas. She had not heard of increased boardings but isn't surprised about any ramping up as officials check for firearms and drugs. "The Bahamas Defense Force is their first line of enforcement," she said. Lewis could not speak for the validity of the \$300 amount paid by the couple but did say that, over the past two years, customs has become a bit more uniform in the fees it imposes.

"For instance," she said, "check-in fees used to depend on when and where you checked into the country, PLUS overtime and transportation costs of the agents – if the check-in was after hours or in a remote location. An official once told me that these fees were 'at the whim of the officer,' and I used that quote in our guidebook so boaters would be prepared." Lewis also said, "The greatest abuse was the 'flexibility' of the cruising permit fees. Monty and I always give boaters the same advice, that in the Bahamas you need to abide by the rules to the letter, make sure your paperwork is completely accurate, and be as polite as you can to the officials."

### **Our advice**

In today's world, it's doubly important to painstakingly obey all laws of foreign countries that you might visit. Make sure your documents and manifests are 100 percent accurate. Keep in mind that in other countries you may not have the same rights, such as due process, as we have in the United States. If you break the law, the results may not be what you expect at home, nor will you be given any "passes" for not knowing the rules.

If you're faced with an instant fine in the Bahamas, your choice is to pay it on the spot or appear before a magistrate. If you don't think the fine is legitimate, after you pay it, contact the Bahamian Ministry of Tourism ([tourism@bahamas.com](mailto:tourism@bahamas.com)).

*Author: Charles Fort is a former associate editor and head of consumer affairs at BoatU.S.*