

Outrage Over 'Party Island'

A single empty bottle of 7-up was all they could photograph, and even that looked like it had been staged, in a story by Steve Gibbs of the Free Press. A local that claims to be an environmental activist had made a complaint. Is he really that, or just someone trying to get his name in the paper? Chaining oneself to a bridge and making stupid complaints does nothing for the community; it is an insult and a waste of time. As a result Captain Mark Hutchings, owner of Tow Boat US, who has volunteered for countless things over the years is facing an investigation from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection over a party that wasn't even his! Capt. Mark has 800 letters from people he has helped over the years with their boats, he volunteered for the Speigel Grove Project, and every time you see a fireworks display in the upper Keys you can thank Capt. Mark. He and his crew routinely pick up debris on all the islands. Whenever a friend needs help, Capt. Mark is there. The reason for the investigation? Barges belonging to Tow Boat US were left on the island. "The barges were left there for a short time to clean up the island!" says Don B., "this whole thing is ridiculous!"

The Captain Ron Rico's secret party has been going on for years on a little island off Key

Largo. "Prior to the party a crew cleans up the island, bags and bags of garbage are removed as the island is used by many campers throughout the year," says Capt. Ron Rico. "The stage is there so campers and boy scouts can sleep in their sleeping bags without fear of snakes and bugs," John S. tells us.

So you may be wondering, just who attends this secret party? Doctors, lawyers, bankers, publishers, celebrities, liquor executives, realtors, politicians, air traffic controllers, electric company big wigs, environmentalists, and local business owners to not name a few. After a few hours of fun everyone is taken safely back to shore by boat. The next morning a crew of 25 to 30 people return to the island and leave it spotless. Capt. Mark will not divulge the names of the VIP's, so he is taking all the heat. He has the Free Press and Steve Gibbs to thank for that. "They did not bother to get all the facts" says Capt. Mark, "and I am boycotting all advertising in the Free Press and they are not welcome at my

places of business."

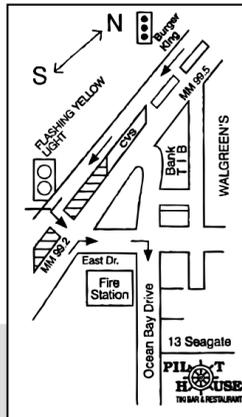


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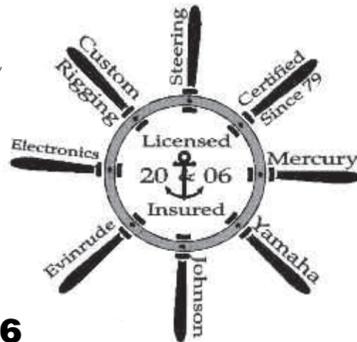
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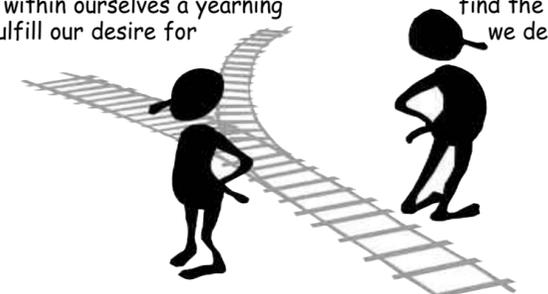
The Direction Of Happiness Leaving a Relationship

One of the hardest decisions we ever make in life is leaving a long-term relationship that just isn't working. When attempts at repairing and working out issues aren't working, it may be time to examine moving on. We are emotional creatures, and when our heartstrings are tied to those of another, separating from that person can feel like an act of courage. It is not something most of us will take lightly, and many of us will struggle with our desire to stay in a relationship that is unfulfilling simply in order to avoid that pain. We may question whether the happiness we seek even exists, and we may wonder if we might be wiser to simply settle where we are, making the best of what we have.

On the one hand, we almost relish the idea that true happiness is not out there so that we can avoid the pain of change. On the other hand, we feel within ourselves a yearning to fulfill our desire for

relationships that are vital and healing. Ultimately, most of us will follow this call, because deep within ourselves we know that we deserve to be happy. We all deserve to be happy, no matter where we find ourselves in this moment, and we are all justified in moving, like plants toward the light, in the direction that leads to our greatest fulfillment. First, though, we may need to summon the courage to move on from the relationship that appears to be holding us back.

Taking the first steps will be hard, but the happiness we find when we have freed ourselves from a situation that is draining our energy will outshine any hardship we undergo to get there. Keeping our eyes trained on the horizon, we begin the work of disentangling ourselves from the relationship that no longer fits. Every step brings us closer to a relationship that will work, and the freedom we need to find the happiness we deserve.



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