

Living Dockside

by Ginny Jones

Everybody in the Keys knows the sailboat people, whether it's seeing them come and go out of the marinas or seeing them dinghy in from a boat out on the hook. Some of you may be curious of their choice of lifestyle, or jealous, or just sick of seeing them. Me, being a person living on a sailboat at a dock, I might just have a little insight into the whys and hows of some of this. Let me tell how I became one of the "boat people."

I come from the corporate world; pumps, pantyhose, eight-to-five crowd. We've all been there, living for the weekend. I decided to retire a little early, to quote a friend, "everyone should retire early and often." It wasn't a simple or an overnight decision; I had a mortgage, debts, and an aging mother to take care of.



So it was a two-year plan Get the house ready to sell, get rid of the accumulation of years of being a landlubber. I have been in love with sailing since I have been an adult, reading every cruising and sailing magazine in publication that I could get my hands on. So it was easy to see myself on a sailboat cruising around the world, or at least the

Caribbean. I took up the mantra of "not going to need that on a sailboat," whenever I was cleaning out the house, the garage, my personal life.

I have been here in the Keys living on my boat for almost ten years; it is a daily adventure. Living on a vessel on salt water is one of the harshest places you can live; salt water being very corro-

sive by nature, then you add electricity to the mix. Now not only do you have to worry about keeping the water on the outside of your hull, you have to worry about stray electrical current leaking out of your boat or somebody else's vessel. Why is that a bad thing? Stray current corrosion has been known to eat underwater metals away in a matter of hours. Boats sink at the dock and out on the hook every year due to this condition. Believe me, many a day I ask myself, "What were you thinking?"

So I've made my coffee, I'm up in the cockpit watching the sunrise over the Mangroves, listening to the wild green parrots of the Keys scream at each other as they fly overhead, looking down into the calm, sometimes clear water of my lagoon... and remember why I chose this place and this unusual lifestyle.

Artist of the Month: Daisy Ellis, Upper Keys Belly Dance Instructor



This month's featured artist is a performing artist. Daisy Ellis is an Upper Keys belly dance instructor, performer, and choreographer. She lives in Tavernier and has been belly dancing since 2004.

With a background in ballet, Daisy first became interested in belly dancing during the Shakira craze. After years of training, she began performing onstage and found a genuine passion for the art of belly dancing.

Because there are so many regions of the world that practice belly dancing, there are many different forms, such as Assaya/Cane Dance, Gypsy, Egyptian, and Turkish style. Following training and performing, Daisy began instructing and teaches the Egyptian and Turkish styles of belly dance.

Most recently, Daisy has formed the Key Largo dance troop which meets to practice in the Pilates in Paradise studio space in Key Largo. She is working in collaboration with percussionist and the Upper Keys Hand Drummer George Parker. George has added a few musicians to balance sounds with the grace and elegance of the

performing dance art, creating what they call Culture in the Florida Keys Drum and Dance Collaboration.

Daisy aspires to grow this collaboration as well as her classes and studio spaces.



Daisy's Key Largo belly dance troop performed in March at the first annual Seafood and Art Show in Islamorada. Her next major performance is at the Miami Belly Dance Convention & Gala on August 26.

If you're interested in seeing Daisy perform, joining the belly dance movement, or have any questions about class times and locations, please contact her via email floridakeysbellydancer@gmail.com or call 786-368-7438.



Key Largo Rotary & Coral Shores Interact Team Up for a Successful Event



L-R: Jessie Gunthner, Lyra Ramos, Melissa Helpfrey, Mary Washam, and Jessenia Fiallo

The Key Largo Rotary Club and their student-based organization, the Interact Club offered volunteer support for the 2 Shoes Annual Walk/Run for Down Syndrome. Several students were walking buddies with these exceptional kids. The

Club also donated funds to purchase iPads with interactive keyboards to aid in their education.

Rotary, with 1.2 million members in more than 34,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries, brings together a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to tackling the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges.

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