

# WATERFRONT NEWS

South Florida's Nautical Newspaper since 1984

M A Y 2 0 0 8 • Y e a r 2 5 I s s u e 2

## ON BOARD...

Classifieds	▶	26
Commentary	▶	6
Event Calendar	▶	20
Galley	▶	18
Tide Tables	▶	21

## Diving

Boy edges closer to master certification

12

## Waypoints

Mississippi island comes back

17

## New boat storage facilities under construction in Broward

BY BETH FEINSTEIN-BARTL  
Waterfront News Writer

Boat storage in Broward County is going glam as several marinas and shipyards are being redeveloped.

An upcoming spate of projects is expected to bring big changes — a welcome sign to beleaguered captains and boaters who will have more dockage options in an already overly cramped market.

“Broward’s waterfront has been built-out for years,” said Frank Herhold, executive director of the Marine Industries Association of South Florida. “What we’ll be seeing is either expansion, reconfiguration or redevelopment.”

With available waterfront property at a premium, many business owners and developers are making over existing facilities. In some cases, entire structures are being razed and replaced.

Groundbreaking ceremonies have already begun. In early April shovels started removing mounds of dirt, marking the start of construction on a 310-slip dry stack storage facility at the former Hidden Harbour in Pompano Beach. The new facility, renamed Aquamarina Hidden Harbour, is slated to be finished in 2009.

Around the same time, another groundbreaking took place at Harbour Towne Marina in Dania Beach, where construction is due to start on a third dry stack building.

The now-closed restaurant is being demolished in mid May to make room for the 155-slip structure, with room for boats up 45 feet. Completion is scheduled in late 2008, bringing the total number of dry slips on the property to 622, said John Louis, regional manager for the site’s management company, Westrec Marinas.

Other projects are in the pipeline. Industry officials

credit last year’s approval of the county’s boat facility siting plan with allowing much of the development to move forward. Prior to the plan’s passage, permits for construction of new facilities and expansion of existing ones were put on hold.

“It removed a significant hurdle,” said Gordon Connell, MIAASF’s director of association services.

To date, numerous proposals are at various stages of the permitting process. The Broward County Environmental Protection and Growth Management Department has given 16 applications the green light since December and another 30 are under review, said Linda Sunderland, the agency’s aquatic and wetlands resources manager.

All applications combined add up to 1,573 wet and dry slips at condominium, commercial and municipal sites. The numbers aren’t concrete and can change as the permitting process moves forward, Sunderland said.

Based on surveys, there are presently an estimated 10,629 commercial slips and 3,349 slips at condominiums countywide. With 48,000 registered boats in Broward, there’s not enough space to accommodate everyone. The increase in dockage will relieve some of the crunch, Connell said.

The growth will have a positive ripple effect on the marine industry. More slips mean more sales, as well as boost the need for boating related services, said Andrew Sturner, CEO and founder of Aqua Marine Partners the development team behind Aquamarina Hidden Harbour.

The company purchased the 7-acre parcel at 1500 Federal Highway, Pompano Beach, in January. A dry stack structure with 150 slips for boats up to 25 feet was razed to make way

SEE BOAT STORAGE P. 4



## Helping Hospice

The Hospice Regatta 2008 sets sail 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 17, off Fort Lauderdale Beach, to raise funds for end-of-life care for patients and their families. An accompanying Clambake follows that evening at Esplanade Park in downtown Fort Lauderdale. For more information on the regatta call 954-467-7423.

## Final park plan on Flamingo visitor center nearing fruition

BY ARNOLD MARKOWITZ  
Waterfront News Writer

A final plan for remaking the Flamingo visitor center in Everglades National Park is out, with an optimistic completion forecast of 2013.

But the public has an earlier deadline — May 15 — to jump in with their own ideas on a draft of the plan already debated at four public hearings held last December and January.

Flamingo, the base of a superb saltwater fishery, draws South Florida steadies from the Keys across Florida Bay, and from as far north as Palm Beach County, not to mention its less-frequent fans from far away.

Getting there is no cakewalk; once you reach the Florida Turnpike’s bottom end, it’s another hour’s drive to Flamingo — with only a campground and a cold-water bathhouse now for overnight accommodations.

Nobody does all that to visit a place they don’t care much about, said Everglades superintendent Dan Kimball. In agreement were the fishing, paddling, camping and nature-watching public who came out to air their views at the public meetings.

The resulting commercial services plan, or CSP for short, envisioned a joint venture between the National Park Service

and private capital. Its goal is to create lodging, dining and other features attractive to both the public and a concessionaire who will be able to make a profit from it.

There might be some skepticism about that target time of 2013. Five years is awfully fast for government work.

“We know it won’t be easy, but our goal is to work as hard as we can to implement it and get started in 2013,” said Fred Herling, chief of planning for Everglades. “There will likely be an interim five-year contract starting later this year that should begin moving some of the CSP items forward.”

A likely first phase would include a new fleet of eight rental houseboats, more kayaks and canoes, new food service in the marina area where only a small convenience store exists now, two new double chickees near Rankin and Johnson Keys in Florida Bay, 40 parking-camping sites with electric hookups in the RV area, solar-heated showers in the bathhouse and bicycles for visitors to get around the place. The amphitheater where rangers used to give nature talks will be rebuilt.

Next on the preliminary calendar would be 24 new cottages, a gift shop and a tram to Snake Bight at the eastern perimeter of the site.

Eco-tents would come next, 40 of them for

overnighters who like feeling rustic without investing in loads of camping equipment they’re unlikely to use more than once or twice a year. The tents, featuring screen walls, canvas roofs and solar electricity, will be made so they can be dismantled and stored when hurricanes threaten. They’ll be located next to the regular tent sites (130 of those) close to the shoreline.

Finally, the new lodge with its swimming pool, restaurant and lounge would be opened.

Somewhere in that schedule will be fitted housing for park staff and the concessionaire’s employees. Those and other permanent facilities will be built to hurricane safety standards, elevated for flood safety and accessible to the handicapped.

Flamingo will never be the same as it used to be, but all that ought to make it better.

The plan, combining the best and most popular features of three alternatives plans, puts the lodge, cottages and eco-tents near the marina and visitor center, and in an area about one-fifth the size occupied by the ruined lodge and cottages.

The rest of that area, 22 acres, will be restored to its original natural condition.

SEE FLAMINGO P. 4