

Pirate News



The 3rd day of April in the year Two Thousand and Twenty One, Mill Town, Florida

Who arrgh the Blackwater Pirates?

The Legend of the Blackwater Pirate Crew

It was the year of 1994 that a weary pirate name of Bones first set foot on the shores of Mill Town, a small village on the shores of the Blackwater River. But as he did so he declared someday he would revisit this pristine location not only to test its fine population, but to reclaim the treasure that he buried along the riverbanks. So it came to pass that Bones did return in the year 2006 and could not locate the treasure he had deposited. In anger, he attacked the city of Mill Town with a band of cutthroats as no one had ever seen before. It was a short battle with the locals and before the dust settled Bones had a local Commissioner Bob Cole walk the plank. It was then that he declared he be renamed Blackwater Bones and his band of pirates be known as the feared Blackwater Pirates! To this day ye can hear the rousing voices of the Blackwater Pirates as the echo through the trees that line the river as the pyrates search for their gold. For it's here that the legend lies, in wait, for eternity. So if you be on the river at night and you see a moving flame, or a rasping voice, its Blackwater Bones and his men, in search of booty.

Who arrgh the Blackwater Pyrates?



Doc Shoals joined the Pyrates in January of 2021. Long time friend of Gin Rummy and Maltease, Doc Shoals decided that he wanted the "Pirate Life."

During the past 2 years the Blackwater Pyrates have added significant numbers to the crew. Over the next several newsletters, I plan to introduce the new Pyrates and reintroduce many of the more seasoned Pyrates.

So, who arrgh the Blackwater Pyrates? Study hard, there may be a test later.



Bear Claw is a neighbor and dear friend of Devil Rae and Leatherneck. She prepares floral arrangements at her store in Daphne, and enjoys the serenity of Paradise Island in her spare time.



Prickly Pear and Popeye have been Pyrates since 2018. They are active members of the "Friday night club" as well as regulars at the Bistro on Wednesday evenings.



Bully and Poppy are longtime Pyrates and close friends with Terra and Clyda (Teresa and Mike McCombs).

Who arrgh the Blackwater Pyrates?



Long John Silver is a 2020 Pyrate and got to know us while singing Karaoke at B-Dubbs. Salty Cracker and Holler Leg introduced him to what it means to be a Pyrate.



El Jeffe is a 2021 Pyrate who enjoys hanging with the Pyrates at the Bistro on Wednesday evenings.



Can you name this group of rascals? The answer is at the end of the newsletter.



Skipper is also a 2021 Pyrate who enjoys hanging with the Pyrates at the Bistro on Wednesday evenings. He has been a long time fan of the Pyrates, but now is finally an Off-Shore Pyrate.

How do you dress like a Pyrate?

April is customarily our opportunity to introduce our newest Pyrates to the world of the Blackwater Pyrates. We celebrate the coming of spring, welcome our newest Pyrates, and share stories of Pyrate lore as we discuss what it means to be a Pyrate. Captains, Officers, Event Leaders and Crew make presentations and recruit the “Pyrate Pups” to aid in fulfilling our missions.



Sail Bad and Sea Salt demonstrate Pyrate attire

Previous New Member Parties have included demonstrations into appropriate Pyrate attire as well as a Pyrate exchange. Legacy Pyrates took the opportunity to “clean their closets” by establishing a “barter and buy” table.

Even some new Pyrates joined in the “show and tell” portion of the celebration by showing off their Pyrate attire and telling everyone where it could be purchased. Some of our more creative Pyrates provided instructions in “pyratizing” your own clothing or even how to create your own from scratch. The event is always fun, educational and entertaining.



Full Throttle and Two Sox discuss appropriate Pyrate attire and where it can be purchased



The Marinator (SasSea and Lucky’s boat) was used to shuttle Pyrates across Ward Basin to the New Member Party

How do you party like a Pyrate?



Stew Burner and Lady Belle hosted the 2019 New Member Party



Sailbad, Barracuda and Dollar Bill enjoy the feast at the 2019 New Member party

Our last New Member Party was held in 2019 and was hosted by Stew Burner and Lady Belle. Pyrates were shuttled via pontoon boat across Ward Basin to enjoy the celebration. Everyone was treated to a pot luck dinner and no one went home hungry.

The 2020 celebration, like most events, was cancelled due to Covid restrictions. Looking forward, we are all preparing for a return to gatherings with our friends and family. The Blackwater Pyrates plan to hold the New Member Party on April 10th and Way Big Tom will host the event. The address is 5720 Lakeside Court, Milton, FL and the event will start at 4 pm.

Determining who classifies as a “new Pyrate” has been decided by the Membership Chair and her Event Committee. Any member who joined after the New Member Party in April of 2019 will be considered a “new member,” and there are plenty that fall into this category. Approximately 35-45 Pyrates joined after April 2019 according to our records. However, we are inviting ALL Pyrates to come join in the festivities.



Capt Fins Up, Leatherneck and Greybeard enjoy a laugh

What does it mean to be a Pyrate?

The Blackwater Pyrates are a community organization in the truest sense of the word. As Pyrates we have 3 core missions, or pillars of our organization. Maritime Heritage Preservation, River Clean Up, and Boater Safety. Everything we do as Pyrates centers around these 3 core missions.

Generally in March we gather to provide a Historical Lecture concerning the Blackwater River area. Due to extenuating circumstances, this year we have delayed our lecture until early September. This event is always fun and informative and addresses the historical significance of the Blackwater River and surrounding communities.

Maritime Preservation

The Blackwater Pyrates accomplish the maritime history goal by hosting an annual lecture whereas the lecture theme revolves around the Blackwater River. Some topics have included shipwrecks, lumber mills and brick factories on the river and even the discovery of the ill-fated Luna expedition of 1559. We further promote maritime history through grants to graduate students attending the University of West Florida archaeology program whose research is related to the Blackwater River.



Previous events have included local members of our community discussing their family history of the area. We have had authors come to read from and speak about their books that were written about the history of the Blackwater River and Communities. Generally, we have our “show and tell” tables set up exhibiting artifacts discovered by local researchers as well as collections from our own Pyrates. These exhibits have included tools from the wooden ship era as well as pictures and a wide variety of memorabilia from a time long past.

This year’s event is planned to include lost communities of the Blackwater River. The Event Leader is Big Al and she is currently researching several great historical accountings concerning the area. It will be fun and very informational. Be sure to join us.

What does it mean to be a Pyrate?

In April and September we gather with our boats, and/or kayaks and canoes, to clean our precious river and basin areas. Our April event (the Lower River Clean Up) coincides with Earth Day, and we turn it into an all day celebration. We gather near Shell Pile Landing (originally called Tampa Landing) at the Kayak Launch in the morning for coffee and pastries. Officially, we discuss our strategies and safety concerns. Unofficially, the posturing begins as the event becomes a competition for who can remove the greatest volume of debris. Annual bragging rights are a great motivator, with a cleaner river reaping the rewards.

By early afternoon everyone returns to the landing to offload their “treasures” and compare “war stories.” Tons of trash are removed every year, including cans, bottles, abandon tents and chairs. Occasionally, we even have derelict boats as well as furniture that require removal. This year April 17th will be the big day, with Big Al and Woody leading the event.

River Cleanup

The Blackwater Pyrates hold two river clean-ups a year. The spring clean-up is held on or around earth day and encompasses the area north of Escribano Point to Cooper's Basin. The fall river clean-up is held in September and is a canoe/kayak trip. This clean-up has in the past included the Blackwater River from south of Cotton Bridge on Hwy. 4 to Blackwater River State Park Deaton's Bridge and Coldwater river south of the Munson Hwy. Bridge to Pucker Point. These clean-ups have resulted on tons of garbage being removed from the river.



In September the kayaks and canoes come out to play. This event is more laid back, both figuratively and literally. The Upper River Clean Up is a 4-6 hour slow roll down the river involving less tonnage of debris and more socializing as the Pyrates create their own “lazy river” environment, culminating in a evening of celebration. This year we plan to camp in the Blackwater River State Park so participants can relax and enjoy an adult beverage after a grueling day on the river. Captain Murky generally leads this event.

What does it mean to be a Pyrate?

Finally, but no less important, Boater Safety. As an organization who honors the waterways surrounding our communities through our missions, we strive to make the water a safer place for ourselves, our families, and our community. Every May a spotlight is placed on safe boating with the observance of Boater Safety Week nationally. The Pyrates plan our annual Boat Inspections and Blessing of the Fleet to coincide with Boater Safety Week.

Boater Safety

The Blackwater Pyrates partner with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 1-7 Pensacola Florida to promote boat inspections and boater safety classes. The boat inspections are normally held on "National Safe Boating Week" and will be performed by members of Flotilla 1-7. In the event the vessel lacks safety items such as personal flotation devices (PFD), whistle, fire extinguisher or registration numbers/letters, the items are provided free of charge by the Blackwater Pyrates. Boater safety classes are taught by Flotilla 1-7 personnel and the Blackwater Pyrates make the public aware of learning opportunities and provide promotional items for active participants. Finally, the Blackwater Pyrates provide Flotilla 1-7 financial assistance.



Leatherneck is the Boater Safety Chairperson and leads the Boater Inspection event by coordinating with the U.S. Coast Guard to conduct free boat inspections. Additionally, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will occasionally join in to provide their inspections in conjunction with our annual event. The Pyrates provide boaters with some necessary essentials (life jackets, whistles ...etc.) as needed.

Suffolk Scalawag is the Blessing of the Fleet Event Leader, and the following pages have a message from him and show pictures of the annual event in process.

What does it mean to be a Pyrate?

Blessing of the Fleet is a Maritime tradition that began centuries ago in Mediterranean fishing communities. The event includes a blessing from local priests and pastors that is meant to ensure a safe and bountiful season. Our event leader is Suffolk Scalawag and below is a brief message addressing both the Blessing of the Fleet and Coast Guard Vessel Inspection events.

Blessing of the Fleet and Boat Safety Inspection

Suffolk Scalawag would like to send an announcement of our *Blessing of the Fleet and Boat Safety Inspection* notice to local churches and would like an email address of Crew members' churches.

Send your addresses to: sjchristopher2010@gmail.com



Blessing of the Fleet

The Blackwater Pyrates is sponsoring a *Blessing of the Fleet* on **Saturday 29 May at 1 p.m.**

Accompanied by our Color Guard and bagpipers, a local pastor will conduct the Blessing at the Memorial Park Boardwalk in downtown Milton. All watercraft whether motor, man, or wind powered - should circle in front of the Milton Memorial Park boardwalk until the Blackwater Pyrate lead boat begins the slow, single file pass-by for individual blessings.

Those wishing to participate in the blessing but do not own a boat may ride with Suffolk Scalawag on his pontoon boat – rendezvous at the Milton Memorial Park pavilion by 12:30 p.m. (12-person legal capacity)

Coast Guard Vessel Inspection

Whether your vessel is motor, wind or man powered, the Blackwater Pyrates -- in conjunction with the US Coast Guard Auxiliary – is sponsoring its annual free water vessel examination day on **Saturday 29 May** from **9 a.m. to 12 p.m.** at *Carpenter's Park* and *Russell Harbor* boat landings in Milton.

Vessels passing the inspection will receive an annual sticker for the vessel acknowledging the pass. As this is *not* a law enforcement inspection, vessels not passing will be given a checklist of deficiencies, but *not* a citation. Within reason and available resources, deficiencies will be corrected free of charge by the Blackwater Pyrates on the spot.

May fair winds and following seas be with you.

What does it mean to be a Pyrate?



Vessels of all shapes and sizes line up on the Blackwater River near the Hwy 90 bridge (Caroline St) for the annual Blessing of the Fleet.

Although not directly associated with the Blackwater Pyrate core missions, the annual event of the Blessing of the Fleet coincides with Boater Safety Week and provides our Pyrates with the opportunity to share with our community a tradition passed down to all sailors.

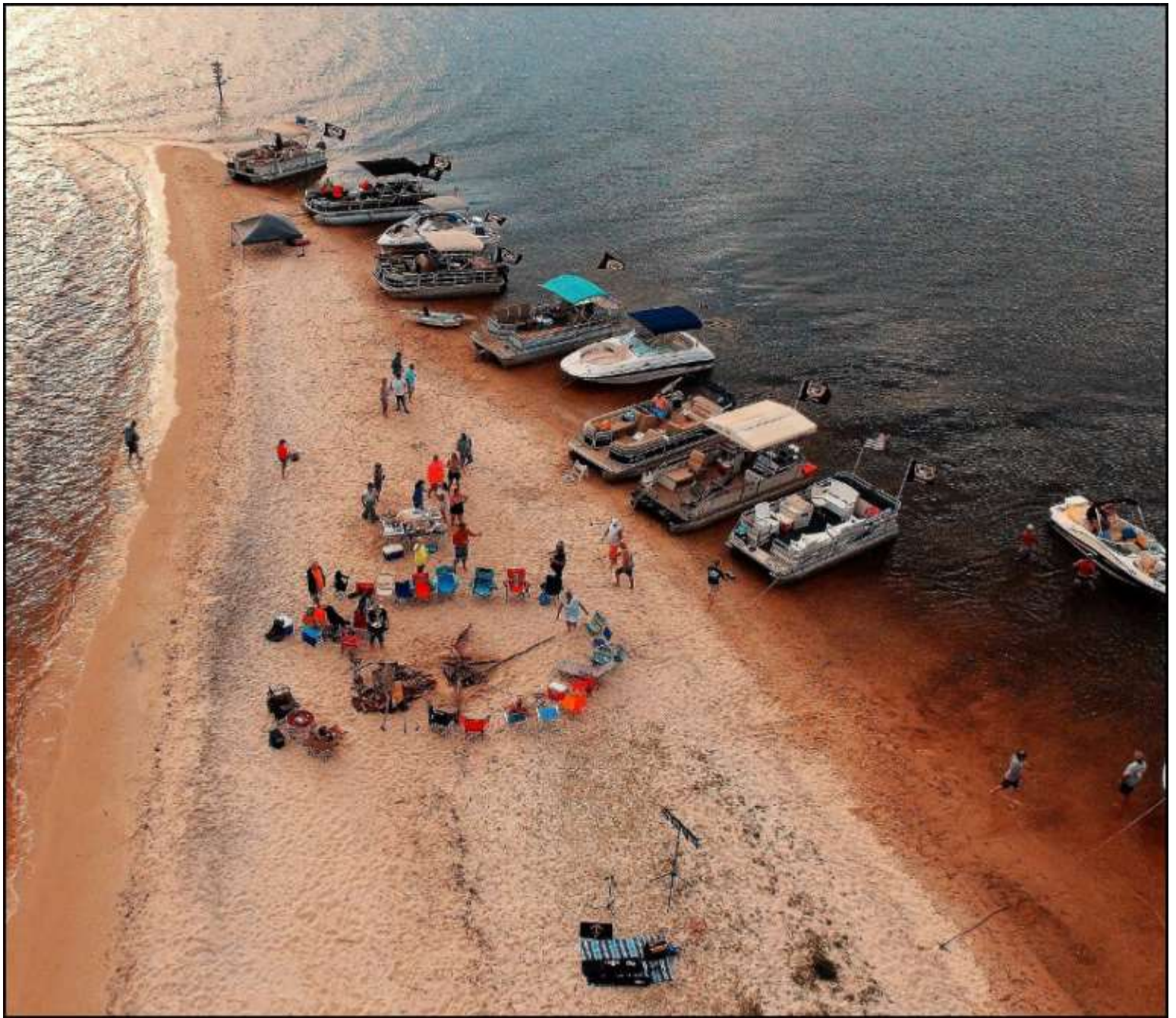
We invite all boaters throughout the community to join in the celebration. We continue to honor the tradition in hope for another safe and successful boating season.

And Finally, a tidbit on Boater Safety

Did you know?

All boats are required by law to have a U.S. Coast Guard approved, readily accessible, properly fitting, and in good condition life jacket for each person onboard. It must be of the correct size for each wearer. Children under 13 must wear their life jacket while underway unless they are below deck or in an enclosed cabin. Boats of 16 feet and over in length (except canoes and kayaks) must also have a throwable flotation device.

How do you party like a Pyrate?



Skull Island Retreat

The Skull Island Retreat is an annual event led by Slim Shady. Although not listed as a core mission, the annual event is a tradition among the Pyrates.

Pirates come from all over the globe (mostly Santa Rosa County) to participate. We secure our vessels to the shores of Escribano Point, or more commonly known to the Pyrates as Skull Island, and celebrate the unofficial beginning of Summer (any excuse to party like a Pyrate). Food, music, adult beverages, and social interaction. That is what it means to party like a Pyrate!! Come join us June 12, 2021.

Who arrgh the Blackwater Pyrates?



Here is the answer to the quiz from page 3; Around the table from front left—Sandy Bottom, Captain Murky, Bear Claw, Devil Rae, SasSea, Captain Lucky, Scribbler, Captain Fins Up, Frenchy, Hands, Say-Dee, Ruby Red, Sand Dollar, Leatherneck, Grog and Calico Kate.

The Pyrates hold a preemptive strike at the Hangar, in advance to holding our General Membership Meetings at this location. Enjoying dining, drinking and socializing.

Blackwater Pyrates 2021

January	February	March	April
13 Booty Council 16 Change of Command 20 General Meeting 30 Milton Mardi Gras Parade	10 Booty Council 17 General Meeting	6-7 Renaissance Fair – Duck Adoptions 10 Booty Council 17 General Meeting	10 New Member Party 14 Booty Council 17 River Clean Up/Earth Day * 21 General Meeting
May	June	July	August
1 Skull Island Retreat (rescheduled) 12 Booty Council 19 General Meeting 29 Boater Safety Week* Blessing of the Fleet USCG Boat Inspection	5 Lighted Boat Parade in Ward Basin 9 Booty Council 12 Skull Island Retreat 16 General Meeting/Duck adoption paperwork and \$\$\$ due	4 Great Mill Town Duck Race*** 10 Lighted Boat Parade/Blues Cruise/Bones Pen (formerly Butchers Pen) 14 Booty Council 21 General Meeting	7 Lighted Boat Parade 11 Booty Council 18 General Meeting 21 Destin Crawl ? Boater Safety Class
September	October	November	December
8 Booty Council 11 History Lecture* 15 General Meeting 18 Upper River Clean Up *	13 Booty Council 16 CBD Farm Experience 20 General Meeting 22/23 Ghost Walk	6 Blues Cruise 10 Booty Council 13 WWSRE 17 General Meeting	1 Budget Meeting 4 Christmas Lighted Boat Parade 15 Caroling with the Pyrates 31 Red Solo Cup

*Core Mission

Revised March 30, 2021

***All Crew Participation

We are Pyrates with a Purpose! Guardians of the Blackwater





Thank you 2021 Sponsors

First Mate \$500

Edward Jones - Derek R. Park, AAMS
Sonny's BBQ (in kind)

Helmsman Level \$100

Angels Care Home Health
Eddie English Trailers
Graceland of Milton
Jones Fence
Milton Garden Club
Mountains & Mermaids
Truly Spoken





Thank you 2020 Sponsors

First Mate \$500

Edward Jones - Derek R. Park, AAMS

Helmsman Level \$100

Advance Insurance of NWFL
Allstate – Darren Spicer
Angels Care Home Health
Axiem International (\$200)
Blackwater Bay Tours (\$200)
Blackwater Bistro
Bypass Market
Bypass Radiator
Gulf Coast LED Lighting
C.M. Smith Mobile Notary Services
Carpenter's Campers
Coastal Canvas of Pensacola, Inc.
DaVita Dialysis
El Paso Mexican Restaurant
Farm Bureau - Greg Cowell
Farm Bureau - John Johnson
Fusion Fine Wine and Spirits
General Electric
Glow Boutique Salon
Hewes & Company LLC
I ♥ Milton
J Hawk Group

Life is Good II
Matt McKeehan Bail Bonds, Inc.
McCombs Electric & HVAC
McKeehan Bail Bonds
Miley's Garage
Outpost Rentals – Kirk E. Abrams
Pace Coins
Pace Veterinary Clinic
Pensacola Bay Brewery
Prissy Peacock
Return to Health - Dr. Snellgrove
Robert O. Beasley, PA
Rollo Seafood
The Liquor Store
The Oval Office
Truly Spoken
Water Works Sprinkler Systems
Waterworks Sprinkler System, Inc.
Young Living Independent
Consultant - Charolett Money-Smith



