

# LOG of 'MIMI'

## VOLUME 5



### **FLORIDA KEYS - TENNESSEE SUMMER 2004**

#### **CHAPTER 2 – MOBILE ALABAMA**

##### **Grand Mariner Marina**

##### **Friday June 4, 2004 – Temple, TX**

L80-L90 P/Cloudy & Windy S/Showers & T/Storms Late

Unusual late departure; the flight to Mobile is shorter than to Miami... 1:45 – 5pm. We pick-up the Enterprise and negotiate a pick-up return at the Grand Mariner... works out nice. 'MIMI' was hot ... lots of trash in Dog River and the strainer choked and tripped the breaker. We got it fixed... the strainer had grown 'hair,' good thing we had a back up. It's time for celebration... a smoke with Rum & Coke (G&T tall for Betty) followed by Crab Claws & Shrimp ('Buttermilk Babies') at the Grand Mariner... all adds up to an early 'crash.' In a weak moment, Betty agrees to be up early (while it's cool) to help wash 'MIMI.'

##### **Saturday June 5, 2004 – Docked Grand Mariner, Mobile, AL**

M70-L90 P/Cloudy SE10-15 S/Showers & T/Storms Late

You gotta believe it... Betty is up before 7:00am and a great wash it is... 2 hours (could have been 1 ½ but Betty ducked out early to watch the French Open finals and talk to Rachel... needed a Ruffin update) saved \$175.00... the going rate here, which was \$55 more than we paid in the Keys or anywhere else! Now its time to pick-up the packages we had shipped here; new Genset pump, dock lines (to replace the over-sized ones) plus stuff we didn't want to carry from Texas, including the pump repaired by H&H Plastics in Temple. Jim installs the repaired pump, washes the engine room and bilges while Betty grocery shops... including Oysters, Shrimp and Yellow Fin Tuna.

With everything put away, J&B decide 'Mud Bugs' (Crayfish) would be great for lunch. Down the Dauphin Island Parkway 'DIP' and the tunnel under the Mobile River to I 10, but only find take-out, so we settle for the 'Original Oyster House.' It must be good because there are few parking places in the lot... good service and we're served right away. Oysters on the half shell are good, but they only serve 12 (not 13) (great flavor – not as good as Gilhooly's in San Leon, TX (near Kemah) but real good. The raw are followed by 12 (not 13) fried... must be the best ever and Betty has a fried Oyster Po Boy... stuffed!

On the return ... it's a gotta do stop at West Marine; a small store, its probably the 1<sup>st</sup> time we've ever been the only customer in a WM! Back at the 'MIMI' we're ready for Ralph's arrival tomorrow so its relaxing time ... Jim is reading 'Frozen Water Trade' by Gavin Weightman, a gift from Larry Manning, is about Frederick Tudor (the "Boston Ice King") who, in the early 1800's launched a business of harvesting ice near Boston and shipping to southern cities, Cuba, the Caribbean, the West Indies and beyond. Later,

‘Smarty Jones’ places second at the Belmont... no ‘Triple Crown.’ Most everyone, including the winners owner was disappointed.

Email not working... is this good or bad? Must be bad! After the big and late lunch, we’re not very hungry but we’re at Grand Mariner and end up splitting Seafood Bisque and a combo platter Shrimp (‘Buttermilk Babies’), Fried Oysters & Crab Claws. The Grand Mariner is packed and doing a huge business... no surprise – great food!

President Reagan died today at 93... Dan Rather had tears (must have learned crying ‘on demand’ during the Clinton years). All TV programming was suspended for Reagan stories... very moving. He was a great man... the ‘Great Communicator.’ His best lines included ... “There you go again” in the Carter debate, “Mr. Gorbachev tear down this wall” and “Win one for the Gipper.” Jim is reading ‘How President Reagan Changed My Life’ by Peter Robinson, Reagan’s speech writer that wrote the ‘tear down this wall’ speech. Good book.

Ralph is at granddaughter Stacy’s (Jimmy & Sara’s daughter) engagement party tonight or he would have been here yesterday. Jeanne will meet us with Janet & Larry Steidle near Blue Springs.

### Sunday June 6, 2004 – Docked Grand Mariner, Mobile, AL

M70-U80 P/Cloudy SE5-10 S/Showers & T/Storms

It is a beautiful 74-degree morning with a light breeze, not a bad way to begin a one-week cruise. Unfortunately the weather is changing and it’s raining by 9:30am. Ralph catches an early flight and arrives in Mobile at 10:40. Wal-Mart... veggie’s and a case of Foster’s... Oh! Oh! Checker won’t sell to us before 12:00 noon... we leave it and should be okay, if Betty doesn’t have too many, morning ‘Red Beer’s! She calls as we reach the parking lot – horseradish ... gotta have it for the Oyster red sauce.

Undocked and away in steady rain at 12:30pm; most of it is east of our course and the rest of the day is cloudy ... but no rain. Sixteen miles up the bay, through Mobile, the engines are steaming; it’s the first time this much.

It’s Sunday and there are a lot of small boats and a dozen towboats with barges, so there is a lot of ‘slow bell’ (idle speed)... now there’s not as much steam??

The River is up about 10’ from recent rains so we must keep a close watch for logs and flotsam. With a flooding current, the engines are working hard to maintain 25 knots (28 mph) so we cut back to 20 and arrive at our first anchorage ... **Old Lock #1** at 6:30pm. We quickly drop the hook in this beautiful small off-river cove with little or no current.

There’s lots of rain on the radar, but its 12 miles east and moving away from us, so we’re okay and its time for cocktails with raw Oysters appetizer, followed by grilled shrimp in ‘Cajun Power Sauce.’ ADD’s and it’s suddenly 10:00pm and we turn in.



<M100> **Monday June 7, 2004 – Anchored Old Lock #1, Mobile River, AL**

M70-L90 P/Cloudy SE5-10 S Chance S/Showers & T/Storms with Lt Fog early

Anchor up at 7:20am. It's a late start but Ralph needed recovery time from the long travel day yesterday.

<M116.7> **Coffeerville Lock**, the first of seventeen, at 8:00am. The Coffeerville lockmaster is notorious for being 'difficult' with pleasure boaters and today is no exception. The quoted "1/2 hour delay to get it ready" turns into 1 1/2 and then a port tie-up is required for no reason, so lines and fenders must quickly be moved from starboard.

We're finally in and up ... lockmaster drag's it out and takes another 10 minutes to start the gate opening... but it's a beautiful day to be on the river and we soon forget the SOB. We pass 7 or 8 tows with barges and an old paddle wheeler, 'Oh Susanna.' We passed some of these barges yesterday... a hair & hound thing because they go all night.

<M213> **Demopolis Lock** (1:45pm). We're feeling un-lock lucky because there is a tow just a couple miles behind and commercial traffic has lock priority over pleasure craft. But we were lucky after all and the gates are open with a Nordic Tug 'Thomas B' already tied off. The Nordic Tug is a small pleasure boat that looks like an old tug boat; pretty but small inside, slow and rocks and rolls a lot.

We're meeting and overtaking towboats with barges all day; it's a little tricky sometimes in the hairpin turns of the river. Radio contact is a must and the tow captains determine which side and where we pass. Often the tow and barges will virtually block the channel. Down bound tows are often at the mercy of the current and have the right-of-way over up bound tows. We give them all a wide margin and a lot of respect.



<M216> **Demopolis Yacht Basin** 2:15pm fuel stop. Trinella ('Trina') is still the dock master and a friendly face. It's a slow pump... 576 gallons. Its hot and still so it requires several Fosters; we're finally away at 4:00pm.

At 5:00pm and 10 miles upstream we anchor in the upper end of 'Rattlesnake Bend' ... just in time for cocktails with smoked oysters and cheese snacks. It's a pretty place with not much current.

575.6 - 1.609 - 926.14 P/270.6, S/270.3, G/

Grilled (rare) Yellow Fine Tuna steaks followed by 'our' favorite movie 'Water World' ... we last maybe 30 minutes and turn-in. We made about 125 miles today... not bad for so many locks.

<M224> **Tuesday June 8, 2004 – Anchored Rattlesnake Bend, Tombigbee River, AL**

M70-L90 P/Cloudy Light & Variable

P/271.1, S/270.8

We didn't sleep well, due in part to numerous logs and trash hitting the boat. Upstream storms have increased the water level and current during the night. Rattlesnake Bend is part of the twisting Tombigbee River bypassed in numerous locations when the Tenn-Tom Waterway was built. Here it loops and connects with the main channel in 2 places. It took extra time to dislodge all the logs and branches from the chain rode before the anchor is up and we're away at 6:45am. We 'dodge logs' and trash most of the morning with a steady stream, we cross the channel near every bend to find 'cleaner' water. The engines are steaming a lot... it must be the dew point and high humidity??

Construction of the Tenn-Tom waterway was the largest earth-moving projects in U.S. history. Started in 1972, it required excavation of 310 million cubic yards of earth, the equivalent of nearly 100 million truck loads. By comparison, the Suez Canal was 104 million cubic yards and the Panama Canal 210 million.

10 locks along the waterway raise/lower vessels a total of 341 feet. The 'Divide Cut' that connects the Tenn-Tom with Pickwick Lake was one of the most challenging. The 27 mile long 280' wide, 12' deep channel required removal of 150 million yards of earth which took 7 private contractors 8 years to complete.



'Divide Cut'



The waterway, completed in 1984, cost nearly \$2 billion to construct and provides a commercial and recreational link for the Tennessee and upstream rivers with the Gulf of Mexico and beyond.

We spot a partially submerged run-about... and take the picture for evidence that our wake had no part in the sinking. It's a fairly common scam on the river. Crooks team with 'local yokels' ('cops') to file against large boat owners for wake damage. Another ploy is to 'hide' behind bridge abutments and claim 'swamping' caused by big boat wakes... gotta be really careful.



- <M266.1> **Heflin Lock** (Formerly '**Gainesville**') at 9:00am, the 1<sup>st</sup> lock of the day. Towboat 'City of Greenwood' is in the chamber, going up and the lockmaster says it'll be a 35 minute wait, with tow 'Melanie D' to bring down. While waiting, 'Hour Time' (56' Viking Sport Fisher) transporting from Florida to Sturgeon Bay, WI, arrives and joins the wait... that turns into 1-¼ hours. We're finally out at 10:45am. The river is 13' above normal level and running a 2-knot current. 'Hour Time' cruises at 30 knots so she takes the lead but its hair and hound thing as we catch up at each lock and travel most of the day with her.
- <M306.8> **Tom Bevel Lock** and right in at 12:35 and out at 12:55pm. The river is 3' above normal here.
- <M334.7> **Columbus Lock ('Stennis')** and 'lock lucky.' We're in at 2:35 and out at 2:55pm. The locks are close together as we gain elevation here. The lockmasters communicate with each other and in most cases are standing ready.
- <M357.5> **Aberdeen Lock** we're right in at 3:40 out at 4:05pm. We put in a call to Midway Marina for a slip... we figure it's about 2 hours away but marina manager says it more like 3. He turns out to be closer at 3 ¼.
- <M371.1> **Amory Lock** we have a 15 minute wait for a tow coming down and we're in at 5:05 out at 5:20pm. The crew is grumbling about the long day and cutting into happy hour.
- <M376.3> **Wilkins Lock** and with only a 5 minute wait, we're in at 5:40 out 6:05pm. Now there's whining about hunger.
- <M391.0> **Fulton Lock** is the last for the day and just a mile below Midway. We're in at 6:55 out 7:15pm and fifteen minutes later at **Midway Marina**. There's no room at the fuel dock so they put us in a covered slip... have to lower 4 antennas. The 'MIMI' is all secure by 8:00... long day (170 miles and 7 locks). The Genset is steaming and will have to be investigated in the morning.

Cocktails, begun in Fulton lock, continue while grilling burgers and talking to a guy J&B met here in October 2001, while aboard the 'Bitter End.' At that time he filled related his problems with Bluewater; while trucking his new 52 footer, they hit a bridge ... "small repair job" they said... then the bottom job came off... he documented, repaired and then sued Bluewater. Now we learn the new owner of Bluewater (a lawyer and daughter in-law of the former owner) came to the small claims court hearing and threaten him to settle for half of his \$5,000 claim or get nothing... He settled. George Kirby, our friend from Florida, who keeps is Bluewater 58 in Ft. Lauderdale, is in a lawsuit with Bluewater because the hull on his boat delaminated and was coming apart.

Hamburgers piled high with Vidalia onions and tomatoes with Wasaby sauce were proclaimed the world's greatest, hunger or real no matter, we all went through them with a lot of yum-yum's!! 15 minutes of Water World and we're done for the day.

<M224> **Wednesday June 9, 2004 – Docked Midway Marina, Fulton, MS (Tenn-Tom Waterway)**

M70-L90 P/Cloudy Light & Variable

P/271.1, S/270.8

Up at 5:15am. We slept well with no logs hitting the boat. The first order of business is to check out the Genset for the cause of the steaming. The strainer is clean, but little water coming through. Finally found the problem; a piece of soft driftwood had been sucked in and lodged in the sea cock. It was quickly extracted using the universal tool... a coat hanger! Some trash was cleared from the other strainers and we're ready to move to the fuel dock by 7:00am. Unfortunately there's no one awake until 8:00 or 8:30am so we have a wait.

While waiting, we meet Neal Pleasant ('24 karat ') Lakewood Yacht Club, Kemah, TX and his friend from Louisiana ('Outbound'). Undocking they perform a very strange maneuver... might be Louisiana style?. They were on the long dock with 'Outbound' on the end, and instead of backing away, he tried to turn around in the narrow channel, right up against the stern of '24 Karat', pushing him down on us, a 6" miss.

After checking the fuel pump (small hose and would be very slow) and pump-out, we decide it's a 2 hour delay so we pull out and call Rankin Lock hoping to get in with 'Outbound' and '24 Karat.'

<M403.5> **Rankin Lock** and right in (with 'Outbound' and '24 Karat') at 8:15 and out at 8:35am. It's going to be a beautiful day through the 'ditch.'

<M407> **Montgomery Lock** by 8:55am and wait for others. They're in at 9:10 and we're up and out 9:25am.

<M412> **Whitten Lock** in at 9:45 and out at 10:15am, it's a 90' lift. The bit (floating tie-up) is close to the upstream gates and Betty says "no way" and "the gates are going to hit us when they open"... don't think so... they open out... and they did. From here, it's an easy cruise to **Pickwick** where we fuel at **Grand Harbor Marina**. Skipping Midway was a good decision to... hi-speed pumps and a good pump-out here.



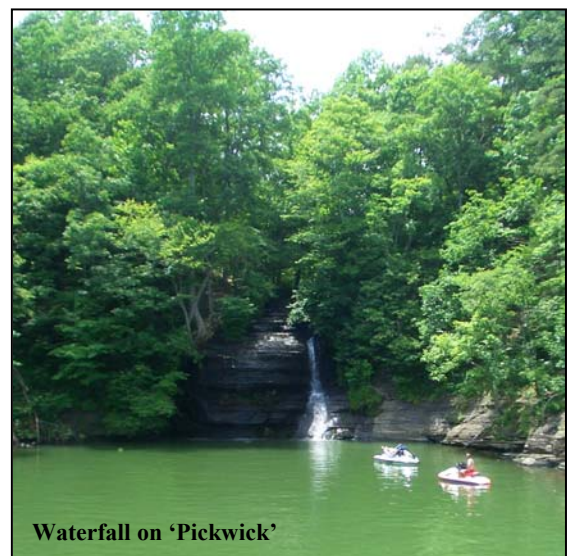
552.67 - 1.677 - 927.93 P/288.1, S/287.9, G 599.5

<M450> **End of the Tenn-Tom Waterway joins the Tennessee River at Mile Marker <215>**

<M217.2> 1<sup>st</sup> stop for sweaty bodies... 1-½ miles above Pickwick at '**Waterfall Cove**;' It's small with a beautiful waterfall in the end. There are several deck-boats and a couple of beached Jet Ski's. Our swim is awesome. Betty jumps out when a small fish takes a liking to her and nibbles a little too hard. After a relaxing cool-off in the water... we depart for a favorite anchorage about 5 miles upstream.

Anchor (alone) and more swimming... an early 2:30pm stop is welcomed after 13 hours yesterday.

Ralph & Ralph dink around and check depths and explore nearby coves and the channel along the south shore. It was created when the old Colbert canal waterway (before the present lake was created by the Pickwick Dam). Construction, by hand and mules, started in 1890 and was finally complete and useable in 1911. This early lock was equipped with one chamber with a lift of 24'.



Pork roast on the spit with fresh green beans and sweet potato's... early enough to catch the end of Water World. (It took three nights).

<M230> **Thursday June 10, 2004 – Anchored ‘Ross Branch,’ Pickwick Lake, MS (TN River)**

M70-L90 P/Cloudy Lt Variable SC/Showers & T/Storms

P/271.1, S/270.8

Up at 6:00am and found the trim tabs were low on fluid. We suspected the problem but weren't sure until we got beyond the heavy river current. We had no small funnel, so made due using a zip lock bag with small hole in corner; slow but it worked. Still no email Xingular connection and Xingular cell phone has hardly any signal along the river. We're away at 7:45am.

<M259.4> **Florence, AL and Wilson Lock** at 9:00am. The lockmaster estimates a 1-½ hour wait... setback... worse yet... it ends up 2 ½ hours. We're finally in at 11:30 for the 93'-5" lift and out at 12:10.



Waiting to 'Lock-up' Wilson - 93'-5" Lift

<M274.9> **Wheeler Lock** and we find we're having a truly 'unlucky day locking.' We finally get the green light after a 2-hour wait and we're in at 2:35 and out at 2:50pm.

With all the delay and not many miles today, we're tired and hot so the decision is made to stop early, at '**First Creek,**' a beautiful creek with a large cove at the entrance, just off Wheeler Lake above Joe Wheeler Lock. 'Fighting Joe Wheeler,' was a West Point graduate who resigned from the army and joined the Confederates and became a senior cavalry general, later serving 7 terms as congressman.

The water was warm but the swim was great. 'MIMI's' boot strip got scrubbed and she looks great! Chicken on the spit for dinner followed by Ronald Reagan memorial service on TV and early to bed.

<M277> **Friday June 11, 2004 – Anchored ‘First Creek’ AL, TN River**

M70-L90 P/Cloudy Lt Variable SC/Showers & T/Storms

P/296.9, S/296.7, G/641.7

Anchor up at 7:00am... the heavy Alabama clay mud sticks to the anchor and is difficult to remove. Engines are not steaming today???

<M349> **Guntersville Lock** arrival at 10:00am, in by 10:10 and out 10:35

<M424.7> **Nickajack Lock** arrival at 1:50pm, in 2:00 and out 2:15

<M427> **Little Cedar Mountain Cove** and anchored by 2:30pm and swimming by 2:35! It's cooler water and very refreshing. This place is so beautiful more than remembered! The Dinghy battery is low and needs a jump-start. Two Ralph's dinked around and check out the bat cave and nearby park. Across the river is a CSX train track; frequent and huge trains go by... 100+ cars! The dink is covered in diesel exhaust so we wash

(‘Roll-off’ is a great product for this). Now we’re going to need a new cover... the 1-year old canvass, rotten from salt sea and sun, ripped when Ralph ‘horsed’ it down.

We have Smokes, Rum & Cokes and Rod Stewart’s oldies for happy hour. The Ronald Reagan Simi Valley funeral service at the Ronald Wilson Reagan Library with a golden sunset was impressive and moving. It was a moving service with eulogy by his children Ron, Michael, and Patty Davis.

<M427> **Saturday June 12, 2004 – Anchored ‘Little Cedar Mountain’ Nickajack Lake, TN**

M70-L90 P/Cloudy Lt Variable Showers & T/Storms

P/304.6, S/304.3, G/666.4

Another beautiful day in paradise! But it’s a slow river on Saturday with all the fishermen early and pleasure boaters later. We’ll make Watts Bar tomorrow, where Janet & Larry Steidle (and Jeanne) ‘Loose Wire’ (‘Marine Trader’ Trawler) will cruise down from Blue Springs to join us. Good thing too for we have just one more day of Fosters and other provisions are running low. Ralph called in an order during the ‘slow bell’ (idle speed) through **Chattanooga**



**Anchored - Little Cedar Mt.**

where the ‘River Bend Festival’ is running from June 11 through the 19<sup>th</sup>. Ross’s Landing is being moved downstream with numerous improvements. Chattanooga is beautiful from the water and more improvements are coming. Xingular cell signal is 1 bell and still can’t connect with wireless email.

Good Friend Will Steeves (from Dallas and Lake Belton) called this morning. He and wife Kay are cruising near Jekyll Island, GA with Susan and Ray Cope (Panama City, FL) on Ray’s trawler. They’re having a great trip with good weather and because Ray likes anchoring, they’ve only stopped in marina’s for fuel. Way to go!

<M471> **Chickamauga Lock** (lockmaster was nice... unusual for this lock!) in at 12:00 out 12:15pm and right over to **Chickamauga Marina (‘Erwin Marine’)** for fuel – pump-out – water & trash drop. Two guys come over to look at the ‘MIMI’... a friend is taking delivery soon on a new ‘Neptunus 64’ and they wanted to see what a Neptunus looks like. We took on just enough fuel for the next few days and will load up at Blue Springs.

175.01 - \$1.59 - 278.27

From here it’s a short run to ‘Ralph’s Cove’ discovered by Ralph just this year. He couldn’t believe he’d never known of it after having sailed this lake for years before moving to Blue Springs Marina on Watts Bar Lake.

Arriving at 2:00pm, there are 7 boats on the hook with swimmers. The best part of the cove, about a half mile long, is narrow enough for good storm protection but wide enough for lots of scope with plenty of swing clearance. A few dead Pine trees are visible here... most have fallen since 2001 when the Pine Beetle devastated Pine trees in this area.

It’s a good thing it was a short run; it was hot at the marina... looked like a contest... who can get in the water first... it’s better and cooler than at ‘Little Cedar Mountain.’ It’s a good time to check the trim tabs... they’re still not right. More fluid is added; now they go down more, but still don’t seem to operate correctly... do not extend far enough or fast enough??

We have plenty of time to relax and read... Ralph naps (loudly). There are a lot of late afternoon build-ups (Cumulonimbus clouds) with rain showing on the radar, about 12 miles north. We have Pork roast (Betty thought it was Beef so we have two on this trip) on the spit for dinner. 'Pirates of the Caribbean' and Jim made it all the way on just one showing... must have been good.

<M491.3> **Sunday June 13, 2004 – Anchored 'Ralph's Cove,' Chickamauga Lake, TN**  
M70-L90 - Cloudy Lt Variable, 30% Chance Showers & T/Storms P/310.0, S/309.8, G/691.6

Only 3 boats spent the night in the cove with 'MIMI.' Rain threat drove most away. Ralph informs us it rained pretty hard during the night... probably around midnight with lots of lightning. J&B slept through it, which is good and bad... the cabin is directly under the galley and amidships so it is well insulated from rain noise and wave action.

With a short run today we get a late 10:45am start.

<M471> **Watts Bar Lock** and a brief 10-minute wait and in 11:50 and out 12:10pm. Our plan was to anchor in 'Moon Cove' (so-named after 17 sail boaters 'moon' Dick & Jeanne as they depart for the coast on the 'Jeanne') but decided on '**Sunset Cove**' because there is additional 'swing' room and thunderstorms are forecast. We're anchored at 12:40pm. Larry, Janet and Jeanne arrive at 2:15pm and we off-load provisions before a quick swim. It's mostly cloudy but warm.

Larry & Janet's Sea Bass steaks are grilled for dinner... delicious! ADD and DVD 'The Poseidon Adventure' Jim & Betty are the only ones to see the end!!! It makes the 'all-time 20 worst movie' list. The radar indicates light rain about 4 miles to the West.

<M537> **Monday June 14, 2004 – Anchored 'Sunset Cove,' Watts Bar Lake, TN**  
L70-M80 - Cloudy Lt Variable, 40% Chance Showers & T/Storms

Rain sprinkles at 7:00am with heavier rain about 2 miles to the southwest. Captain Ralph up at 7:00am, Ralph at 9:00, Jeanne and Larry by 10:00, Betty and Janet by 11:00!! The day is spent alternating between swimming, reading, napping, etc. Captain Ralph decides to rest the Genset after 5 days; it's a good time to check-out the inverter (it converts 12 volt to 120 volt for a limited time and limited uses). It's the first time to use it and it powers the refrigerator, freezer, water pump, and lights and it does a fine job.



Jeanne, Janet & Betty – No Help Needed!

Smokes, Rum & Cokes and Jimmy Buffett for happy hour... followed by outstanding beef tenderloin, furnished by Larry and grilled on the spit. For Janet, she's Italian, we watch 'The Italian Job' DVD. It's light rain as we turn-in.

<M537> **Tuesday June 15, 2004 – Anchored 'Sunset Cove,' Watts Bar Lake, TN**  
L70-M80 - Cloudy Lt Variable, 60% Chance Showers & T/Storms

Rain most of the night, no wind... according to Ralph. Betty does breakfast at 10:30am; bacon, scrambled eggs, Cantaloupe, muffins, OJ and Red Beer... naptime? 'Loose Wire' heads back to Blue



'Loose Wire'

Springs and about 12:30 the 'MIMI' does too, checking out several good anchorages on the way; 'Skinny Dip,' 'Safety Harbor,' and 'Martin Branch.'

At Blue Springs, first stop is the fuel dock for fuel, pump-out and trash drop. Fueling was delayed for about 20 minutes while a rain shower passes through.

565.6 @ 1.59 - 904.39 P/314.8, S/314.5, G/745.5

Our slip is a covered 70 footer at the end of the new dock... what used to be way out by the old silo. Nearly complete the new dock is really nice. Unfortunately the Osprey that was nesting atop the silo, moved on because of all the construction activity, hopefully to return next year. Because of the cover, 'MIMI's' satellite TV doesn't receive the signal, so that's a project. Our plans are to spend until September on the Tennessee

'MIMI' is all secure so it's time for a dip in the 'pool', which is the slip for Ralph's 'D.J. Explorer,' which is out getting a bottom job. The 'pool' is across the dock from 'Loose Wire' and Larry & Janet's patio (filled-in behind the boat, next to the dock walk-way). The water is great and we meet several dock neighbors, 'C.D.' and Larry (his wife is over-due) who is good with computers. It's leftover's for dinner aboard 'Loose Wire.' It's 10:00pm... where does the time go when you're on the water? No movie tonight.

### <M547.5> Wednesday June 16, 2004 – Docked, Blue Springs Marina, Watts Bar Lake, TN

M70-M80 - Cloudy S10, 40% Chance Showers & T/Storms

Dick & Jeanne return to Cleveland, TN to tend to some things and will return tomorrow. Jim attempts to log on to the Blue Springs wireless T1 email system with no success... looking for a teenager... perhaps Larry Luke (local computer wiz) can give us a hand! Boat chores... lots to do, including washing... diesel smoke trip accumulation. Betty does inside cleaning and laundry.

### Thursday June 17, 2004 – Docked, Blue Springs Marina, Watts Bar Lake, TN

M70-M80 - Cloudy S5-10, 40% Chance Showers & T/Storms

Transmission oil change is on the agenda, but not enough oil... need 5 gallons. Attempted to remove and clean the Transmission suction strainers... gotta have Neptunus input. Also, need to change Genset Racor... but need diesel to fill the new filter... no diesel can. Not making much headway this morning. Turns a 10-minute job into an all day project... not unsurprising when it takes a half a day to change a boat light bulb.



Oh! Well! It's time to grocery shop.

It's a short drive to Kingston in the Blue Springs Courtesy Car. A small red gas can will have to do (couldn't find a yellow one for diesel). Back to work changing the Racor... and figure out the fuel filter container can be filled with fuel (after replacing the cartridge) by simply opening the fuel cut-off valve! We'll return the gas can.

Ralph and Jeanne return in time for cocktails. David Magill and wife Angela ('Illusions') from Houston stops by to say hello. They are spending the night at Blue Springs and going on to Knoxville tomorrow. Grilled burger's and corn on the cob followed by ADD's on the 'Loose Wire' patio.

## Friday June 18, 2004 – Docked, Blue Springs Marina, Watts Bar Lake, TN

M70-M80 - Cloudy S5-10, 30% Chance Showers & T/Storms

An 'evaporation' day on the 'MIMI;' time just evaporated! Still no wireless email connection... Need help! Ralph out and about while the girls drive to 'Sweetwater' for some shopping. Captain Ralph changes Genset oil & filter and cleans the Electric-Chef grill... someone needs to invent a self-cleaning grill! It took 1-½ hours. Ralph & Ralph enjoy a late lunch of Blackened Grouper sandwiches with cold Fosters at the Crow's Nest. Nap time.

Larry Luke comes to get the MIMI connected – we haven't had email for 2 weeks... installed 'Netgear' to connect to the T1 wireless here... connected, but not working. Captain Ralph doesn't even know how to get email on the web unless it is through 'Outlook'... need more help! C.D. tries to help... his laptop is doing it, but ours is not... Oh! Well!



Swim in the 'Loose Wire' pool and meet a lot of the week-enders. Nice group. Good dock. Janet had her nails done in Kingston and picked-up a 3 Fosters 12-packs... Alright! Larry Luke's wife Rachel delivers in 1 week... she didn't stay long; they live just 10 minutes from here. C.D.'s daughter Jennifer arrives... gorgeous! She's going to be on the TV show 'Fear Factor.' Local Chevrolet dealer, Dave & Connie Kirk (dog 'Camero'); they have an 80 Somerset houseboat ('Caddy Shack').

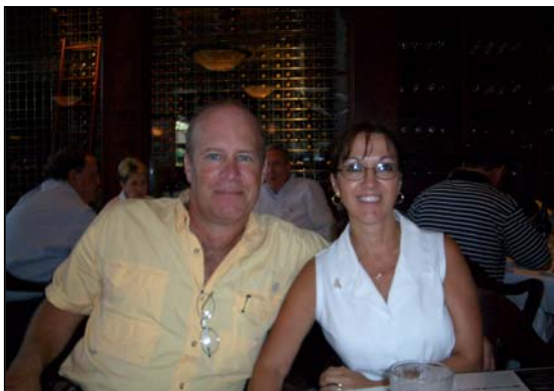
Jim does a tour of the 'MIMI' for 8. Dinner at the Crow's Nest with Tee shirts & custom label seasoning salt and coarse pepper courtesy of the Steidle's. The guitarist Tom Santelli was good and did good impersonations. There were lots of good folks and fun. We met a guy who was on the dive team that discovered and recovered the 'Atocha' a Spanish Galleon that sunk off the Florida Keys September 6, 1622. In January at Key West, Jim purchased one of the 'pieces-of-eight' coins from the wreck and had it made into a pendant for Betty's birthday. Small world.

## Saturday June 19, 2004 – Docked, Blue Springs Marina, Watts Bar Lake, TN

Blue Springs, TN: M70-M80 – P/Cloudy, Lt & Variable, 30% Chance Showers & T/Storms  
Temple, TX: M70 – L90 – P/Cloudy, SE 5-10, S/Chance Showers

It's another beautiful morning... just a light 5 minute shower around 7:30am. Today is 'make ready' for departure this evening. There's always more to do than it seems there should be. We're finally complete at 4pm with time to spare for a short swim before we drive to Knoxville at 6:00pm.

Dinner with Dick & Jeanne and Larry & Janet in Knoxville at 'Edison Park Steakhouse;' Jeanne wasn't feeling up to it. The food was great – drinks a little pricey but they were double's?? Larry drove up ... good thing, Janet can drive back! We're dropped at 'Comfort Inn' and in bed by 9:30pm!





## **Sunday June 20, 2004 – Knoxville, TN – Temple, TX**

TN: M70-M80 - Cloudy S5-10, 40% Chance Showers & T/Storms

TX: M70-M90 - P/Cloudy, SE 5-10, S/Chance Showers

It's a 4:30 'wake-up' for the 6:15 American Eagle Regional Jet flight. With a good DFW connection, we're back by 9:45am. and in the office by noon (on Sunday)... you 'play, you pay' and it's worth it!

Finally able to open email and there was one from our Faro Blanco friends with the following pictures of Butch Niebur receiving a hair cut... his first in 5 years... for dock neighbor Jane Rifkin. What's next? Shoes?

## **Saturday July 3, 2004 – Temple, TX**

Jim and Jane Rifkin emailed this morning letting us know they begin their cruise to the Chesapeake next Sunday and in October, when they return, they are vacating their Faro Blanco slip (with 'Tiki Hut') and will keep 'Sanborn' at their condominium nearby. Of course, a request was immediately called in to dock master, Ron Fairbanks, for their slip; his reply "you got it." For us, its mixed emotions; we will enjoy their slip and Tiki Hut, but we'll miss Jim & Jane as neighbors... and their 'catch of the day' we've become accustomed to. Jane placed the following conditions on their slip regarding Buff (Butch & Cathy's 15 year old Irish Setter); he is to:

1. Get two treats each day
2. Get ice with his water
3. Get at least three petting's each day
4. Have space between the Coconut tree and the Buttonwood hedge for his lookout
5. Must be free to perform his lizard patrol work

We can handle that... no problemo! Jim & Jane will have open invitation for evening cocktails in the Tiki Hut.



Jim Rifkin in the 'waiting room'



More Photo's of the cruise from the Key's to Tennessee  
<http://www.imagestation.com/album/?id=4286433821>