

**Follow along with us as we cruise onboard our
56' Ocean Yacht.**

Somewhere on the Water

January 15, 2022 – Saturday - Day 38

Southport, NC to Osprey Marina, Myrtle Beach, SC

Hello!



Thank you for checking in! We appreciate that you are following along with us.

So far this trip it has become my daily mission to have my computer on, open to a new blank page so I can document our itinerary as we are living it.

Today, because it is Saturday I do not have to worry about too many interruptions so I put my computer on the counter in the galley so that I could stand next to Mark who is driving from the main helm station. It would allow me to type, talk, film, photograph without having to return to the salon table, turning my back on the action.

Unfortunately, today's notes got deleted. I am sad about that because I remember documenting a lot of conversations that we had about tides, currents, the rock pile, etc. I am going to do my best to recreate it for you now.

The reason I am telling you is not to disappoint you that you may not be getting the best of our day, but to let you know that shit happens and I am going to try to recover the best I can. Thankfully my photos were not deleted so that will be a good resource to recreate the day.



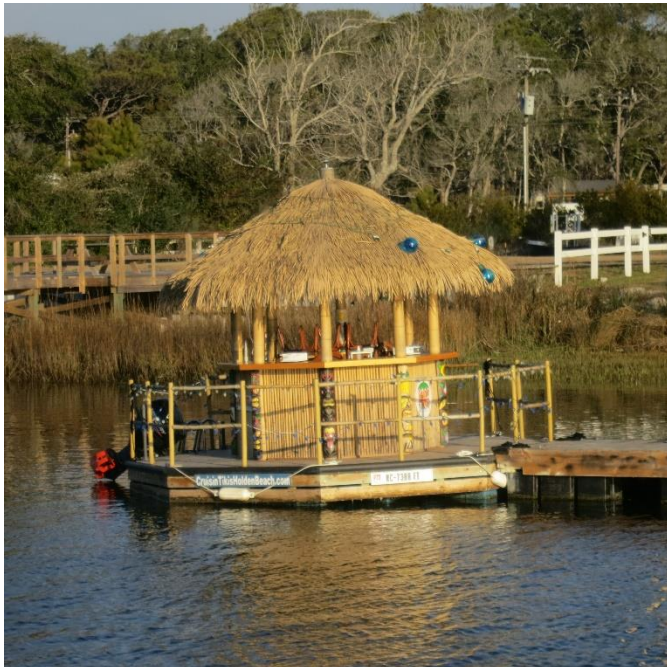
We had another beautiful sunrise this morning. We are cruising from Southport, NC to Myrtle Beach, SC. We may stop at Barefoot Marina. We may keep going to Osprey Marina. Depending on how the day goes.

This part of the ICW is called the Cape Fear River. Upon entering the Cape Fear River yesterday we were bombarded with obstacles. Ferries, tugs pulling barges, pleasure boaters, etc. Today, the river narrows, and with little to no wind, we should have an easy cruising day. EXCEPT for the dreaded Rock Pile. More on that later.

We cruise through Oak Osland this morning. Lined with colorful homes, some with, some without docks. The sun shines a golden glow as we marvel at the calm water and take note that for a Saturday we are the only boat on the water.



It is still early, about 8:45 a.m. and we are leaving Oak Island passing by Sheep Island where there is a channel of water that allows access to the Atlantic Ocean, and here it is where we witness a dredging operation. I took a video. A much different operation than the dredging we saw in the ICW near Carolina Beach yesterday. <https://youtu.be/VQss2iubOq8>



Holden Beach was a fun community.
We saw this tiki boat.
cruisintikisholdenbeach.com

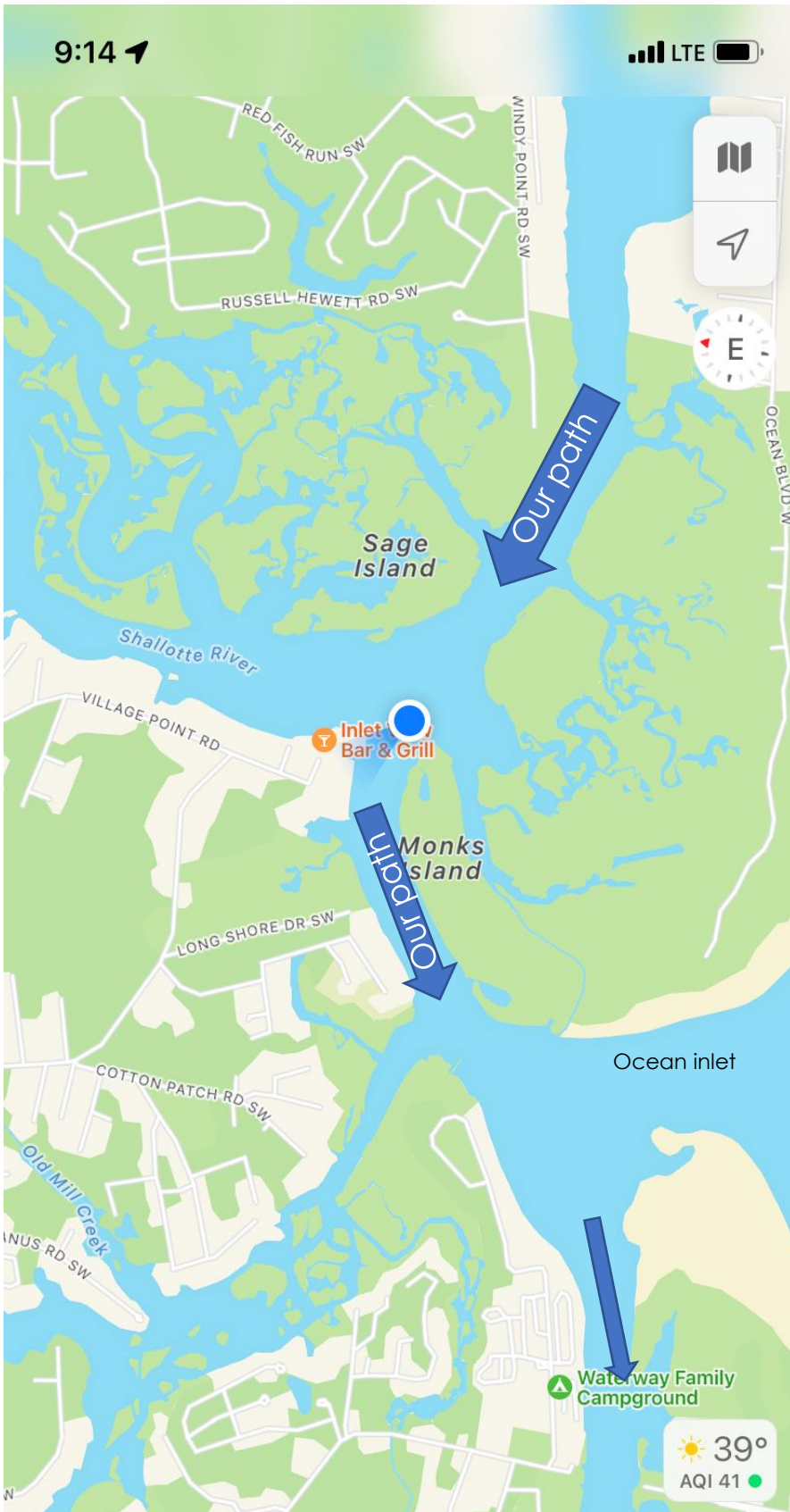
We also saw this.

A boat deck
turned into a
?sundeck?

Check out the
slide!



Not the first time, nor the last time we will see a sign like this. Rocks, shoals, lookout, there is something you do not want to hit right here.



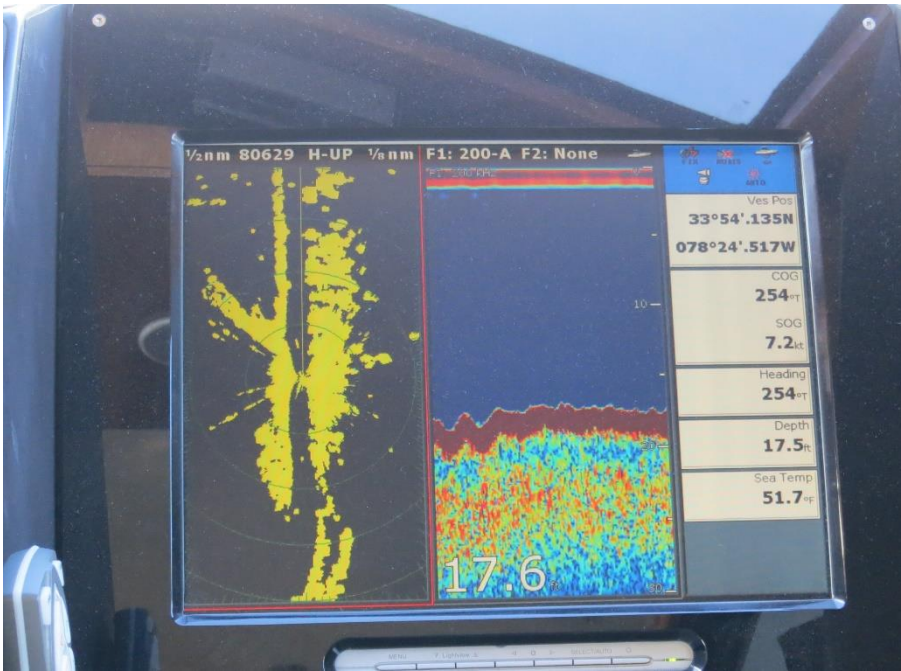
When we leave Holden Beach, we pass another inlet that leads out to the Atlantic Ocean and off to our right the Shallotte River. Every time we pass by an ocean inlet, our current changes.

Anywhere there is an inlet if it is an incoming tide (water flowing from the ocean) we are going against the current coming up to the inlet, but then after we pass the inlet we are going with the current.

If the tide was outgoing to the ocean we would cruise with the current until we get to the inlet and then against the current after passing the inlet.



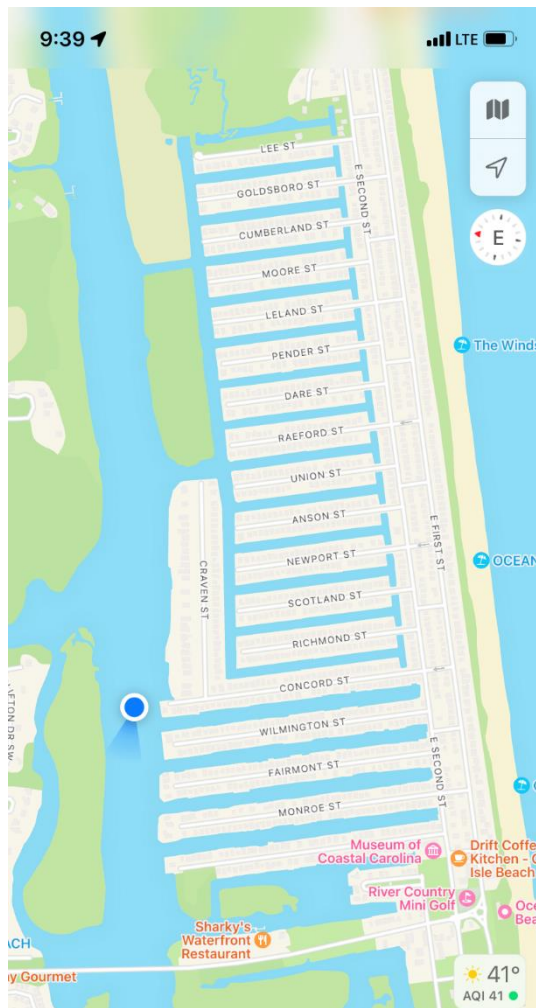
This is looking back over our 'shoulder' up the Shallotte River.



Today Mark has changed the display on the screen of his multifunction display. Meaning it is one unit with integrated functions. Ours happens to have radar, sonar, (depth finder), GPS, chart plotter, onboard cameras.

You have seen in previous days that it is typically set as just the depth finder/sonar. Today it is a split-screen to show both the depth finder/sonar and the radar.

That is because today as we get closer to the infamous Rock Pile, Mark will use the radar to see as far ahead as possible. More on the Rock Pile later. Mark has found that this is useful when making a blind turn in the Intracoastal to line up on the next marker.



As we continue to cruise south through Ocean Isle Beach, NC there are several 'fingers.' They seem to be man-made waterways lined with houses & docks.

We are the blue dot on this map and the picture above is looking straight into one of the 'fingers.'

10:49 a.m. we cross the border to South Carolina!



We are catching our first glimpse of North Myrtle Beach, SC. We have a couple of sharp turns as we cruise by another ocean inlet near Waties Island and stay on the ICW.

More like a 4-way intersection with a left turn taking you to the ocean, a right turn taking you to Calabash via the Calabash Creek, or staying straight through the S turn along the Intracoastal.

Confused? Me too, that's why I am not driving the boat!





Finally another boat!
He did not have to hug us quite so close though!

It is not long before we come to Little River and the Big M Casino!

The Big M Casino is South Carolina's only casino offering two luxury yachts.

Big M Ship I is not cruising at this time. Big M Ship II offers slots, roulette, and card tables cruising from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$20 pp or

\$30 pp with a meal! 5-days per week! Evening cruises are available 3-nights per week from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Opening in 2008, the boat needs to cruise 3-miles offshore before gambling can begin due to SC laws. Land-based casinos are illegal in SC. The ships have a capacity of 450 people each.





They are loading this boat getting ready for the 11:00 a.m. departure

There are people!
Can you see them?



Those look fast & furious!



A pretty eclectic group of boats docked here. Fishing boats, new modern speed boats, pontoon boats, casino boats. A little bit of everything!

There are some restaurants in this area with fun names: Crab Catchers, Daddio's Pub, Patio's Tiki Bar & Grill, Snooky's on the Water.



This is Governor's Lighthouse.

We cruised by this lighthouse about 11:30 a.m.

Little River is a small fishing community 20-miles north of Myrtle Beach. Known for its fresh seafood, charter boats, centuries-old live oak trees, and yes, now home to the casino boats.

Little River boasts to be one of the most unique villages of the Grand Strand. I had to look that up. Even though we made South Carolina our home for a couple of years back in the late 90s/early 2000 I had not heard of this term.

The Grand Strand refers to a large stretch of beaches on the coast of South Carolina. From Little River to Georgetown. The nickname Grand Strand dates back to 1949. -googled it and summarized what I read 😊

Back to the Lighthouse for a moment:

Commissioned in 1984 by Governor Richard Riley. This small, aptly-named lighthouse was built to honor all South Carolina governors, past and present. It stands at the end of Coquina Harbor.

The Governor's Lighthouse is a facsimile lighthouse, meaning that it was not built by a government agency and cannot be used as a navigational aid. Although a prominent local landmark, the lighthouse is on private property and is for use by the residential community's residents and their guests only.

<https://www.scpictureproject.org/horry-county/governors-lighthouse.html>

We are still in Little River; going through a no-wake zone takes a long time and we needed to hail the Little River Swing Bridge for an opening.



Just before the swing bridge, we saw SEA THUNDER. Could be fun! We also saw a sign for Freedom Boat Club, which made us think of our friend Kelly. Hi Kelly!



Things were going well for us today so we decided to cruise by Barefoot Marina and continue to Osprey Marina which is located on the south end of Myrtle Beach.



In between Little River and our final destination for today is the infamous *Rock Pile*. It has been joked that the Rock Pile is a rather good source of income for local repair businesses due to the narrow canal and rocks that lie just below the surface of the water.

Before entering this perfidious canal Mark did a *securite* call over the VHF. After sufficient time with no response, we moved through the Rock Pile portion of the ICW without incident.

According to: <https://cruisersnet.net/>

The “Rock Pile” is a man-made canal-like section of the AICW, officially known as the Pine Island Cut, running between Little River and Waccamaw River. The canal is narrow and lined with submerged rocks and a rock shelf, just a foot or two below the water’s surface.

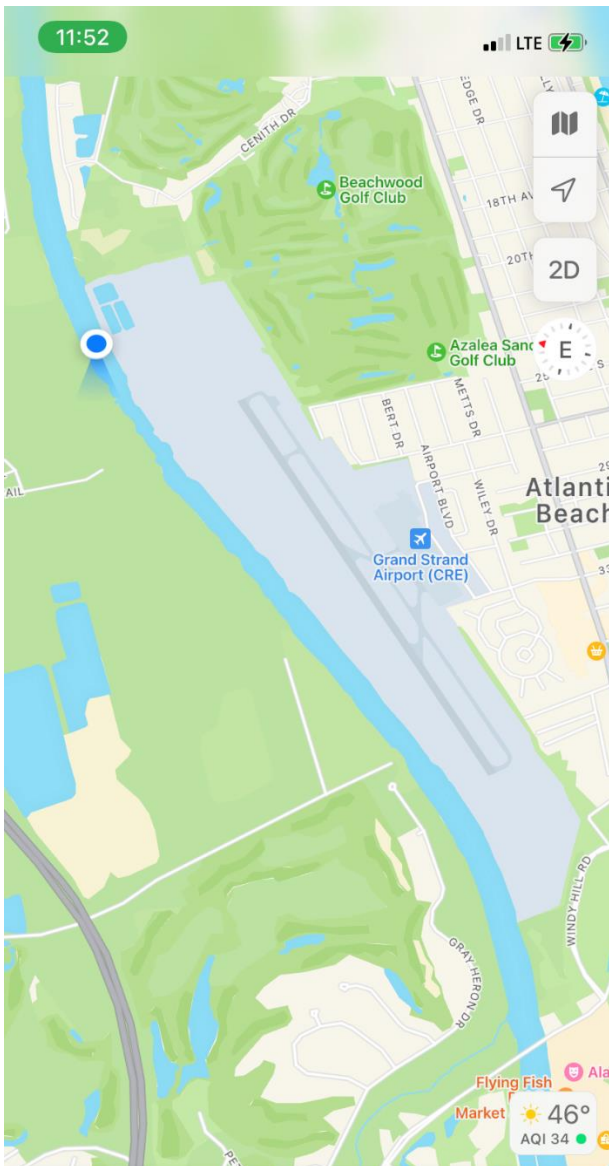
When the USACOE was building this portion of the AICW in the 1930’s they encountered a solid shelf of granite. The Corps simply blasted through this obstruction, but, over the years, the soft silt above and below these rocky

outcropping has washed away, making the canal now appear wider than it really is. Also, over the years, many portions of the rock shelf have broken off, and left all sorts of underwater rocks waiting to trap keels and underwater hardware. Cruisers are urged to hold as close to the mid-width of the Pine Island Cut as possible, and announce their presence on VHF in case large commercial traffic is approaching, which could force you out of the channel's mid-line and onto the "rocks," especially at high tide when the rocks are fully submerged. Our suggestion is to keep a sharp lookout for rocks and IDIOTS!

What is Securite in maritime communication?

The use of the safety signal implies that the station making the call has an important navigational or meteorological warning to transmit. All stations hearing the safety signal shall listen to the safety message until they are satisfied that the message is of no concern to them.

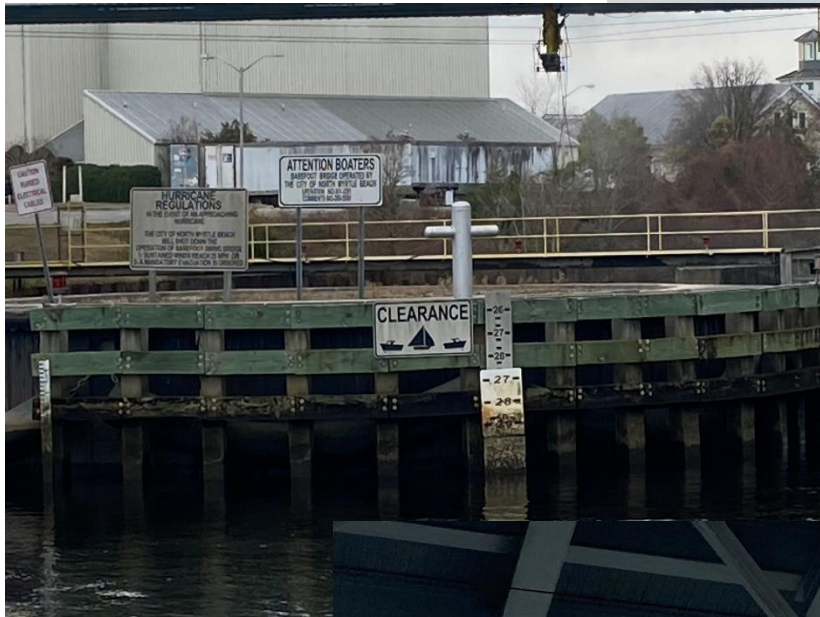
<https://maritimesa.org/nautical-science-grade-11/category/11-4-4-communications/11-4-1-distress-and-safety-communications-at-sea/11-4-1-6-safety-message-securite/>



Between 11:52 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. I took several photos from Grand Strand Airport through Barefoot Landing Bridge.

Barely clearing the Barefoot Landing Bridge, a swing bridge that would not open for us because we are 29' tall and we can clear the 31' clearance. Located at ICW mile marker 353.

These workers are painting I believe. They were friendly with a wave and smile as I stood on the bow going under it.





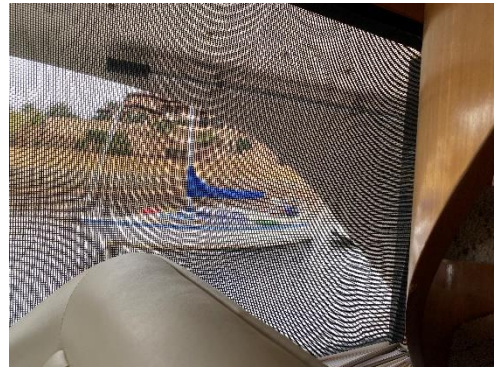
Once we get through this commercialized area we are in a narrow area of the ICW with a few golf courses and not much else.





(looks like a jetski raft to visit the restaurant)

We pass a couple of sailboaters that looked cold. It is not too warm or sunny out on the water this afternoon.





By 2:00 p.m. we are arriving at the Pine Island Bridge, a drawbridge dating back to 1937. In 1987 the bridge was declared unsafe and closed. After 10 years and \$5 million, the bridge was reopened to railroad traffic. However, again declared unsafe was closed to all traffic, including train traffic and remains in the open position.





Blackbeard himself would roll over in his grave if he saw this!

Blackbeard's Pirate Cruise:

Fun for the Whole Family. A fun-filled **adventure** with sword fights, singing, a chase on the high seas and water cannon battles for **treasure**. <https://www.myrtlebeachpiratecruise.com/>

As today's adventure continues, we come up to a few miles of residential communities lining the banks of the ICW. These people look to be enjoying life with their "decked out" patios ready for a party. Unfortunately between the residences, the watercraft rental businesses, resorts, etc. comes trash. Like this long-lost flamingo float, and an abandoned sailboat.





Our last bridge of the day! Socastee Swing Bridge.
Having read a little bit about this bridge, depending on what website you visit it was finished in 1935, opened in 1936 and was the final leg of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway to be completed.

Just after passing through this swing bridge. We arrive at Osprey Marina. Well, we were a little hesitant of turning into its entrance. Thankfully no banjos were playing, so we turned into the inlet.





Phew! We made it, and it looks great. Isolated and protected. Just what we needed. Watching the weather and knowing that incoming high, gusty winds were predicted for the next couple of days, this will be our safe haven until the weather passes. We took on fuel here at the dock then Mark had to back us stern-to into our slip.

\$1.00 per foot and a minimal electric charge. Once we tied up; extra lines, Mark and I walked around, saw the sheep in the neighboring field, visited the Marina Office and store, and checked out the bathhouse. Water hooked up!!!

While we were fueling up we overheard M/V August 15th come over the dockhand's radio. He was coming in for the night. Mark had visited with August 15th upon arrival to Southport yesterday about our itinerary. Not wanting to get up and out as early as we were planning, they were going to make the trip on their own. Mark had mentioned to me that he saw him moving around onboard his boat this morning while we were getting ready to leave so he must have left shortly after us to have arrived at Osprey Marina minutes after us. Guess who else is here? The Four Knotts!

We met the Four Knotts back at Coinjock Marina, NC. Seeing them inside the Marina Office (which is also a store and seating area with a tv), the Captain of the Four Knotts told us how that when they came up to the last swing bridge, the Socasett Swing Bridge with only just a few seconds left before opening, a car crashed through the safety gate. It took a couple of hours for that accident to get cleared making their arrival at the marina after sunset. Unfortunately due to the darkness of the evening, they hit some debris causing an unwater through-hole fitting to break leaving a hole in the boat. Arriving safe and sound to Osprey, they are planning a run on Monday to a Marina that can fix it.



OMG - a better part of two days to rewrite this day. I shall learn my lesson and take extra care that I do not accidentally delete another blog day.

Taking notes as we go is so vital to keeping the already slow process a little bit smoother.

