



Gouk's Excellent Adventures on Dirt Free continue...

March, 2018...The Great Loop

... a continuous waterway that includes part of the Atlantic, Gulf Intracoastal Waterways, the Great Lakes, Canadian Heritage Canals, and the inland rivers of America's heartland. Anyone who completes the journey is then named an official 'Looper.'

Hope you will all join us on our next adventure which starts in Fort Worth, Florida and heads north up the Intracoastal Waterway to the Hudson River, then the Erie Canal. Then west across to Lake Ontario (stopping in Port Credit for a few months) then through the Great Lakes and down the Mississippi to the Tennessee River along to the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway which flows back down to the Gulf.



Bucket List Item...

Finally getting to see the Great Dismal Swamp, a large swamp between Norfolk, Virginia and Elizabeth City, North Carolina.





Here we go!

Our starting point is Florida, West Palm Beach. Arrived Saturday March 17th from the Bahamas to Bilge Soup.

We were just entering the inlet when the engine did something funny and we limped our way in. And what a surprise when we opened the engine compartment. The bilge pump was not operational as it was full of rice and the food in the basement compartment was lazily floating around. Our fresh water accumulator was leaking and our water pump was fried.



Recipe:

200 gallons of fresh water (heated by the engine)
1 dozen exploded beer
Two boxes of rice

6 exploded sodas
Raman noodles to taste



We killed the shop vac, but it lasted just long enough to empty the bilge.



Now here we sit for now waiting for a mechanic and a slip at Riviera Beach Marina, because of course the boat show is just starting and everyone is full and busy. \$400 at West Marine at least gets us two (independently wired) automatic bilge pumps and a newly installed accumulator and water pump. Now to wait and see what it has all done to the engine. Wallace is thinking a timing belt perhaps.

So lunch and a beer at Rafiki Tiki lounge sounded about right for us.

Then we checked in with Customs, \$19 to enter the country (highway robbers). \$75 to leave and \$19 to come back. Anyway we are here now with our cruising permit in hand waiting to start the loop.

Sign of the Day:
Good to know :)



March 23rd

Went walk about yesterday and discovered Manatee Cove. There were two of them lounging about here. Newborns weigh in at about 100 pounds and they generally grow about 1200 pounds They can live for up to 60 years, but rarely do as many times they are victims to boat propellers or cold weather/water.





5 fingered hands !

Signs of the Day:
Also good to know!





March 24th

We have a slip, yes... now we need a mechanic. Unbelievable prices at Riviera Beach Marina. \$1700 for the month, as well as another \$1700 security deposit and to add insult to injury another \$14 a month for wifi which we were picking up for free in the anchorage.

Biding our time washing down the decks and windows and installing a series of bilge pumps. We are on the list for two mechanics neither of which we have heard from since.

