



## REFLECTIONS

2008 Delray Beach, FL Rendezvous October 31 - November 2

Here are reflections based on e-mails from our YahooGroups site, which was our forum at the time.

Mimi and I would like to thank everyone who attended the Rendezvous. We hope each and every one had a great time. We were blessed with many first time participants and hope they will continue to join us each year. We really missed seeing others that we have met at previous meets. Hope everyone made it home safe and sound. We look forward seeing you in Annapolis next summer!

Byron and Mimi  
FBA 423019 H  
Delray Beach, Florida

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Rob Cutchins

Okay, folks. I'll be the first out of the gate (of many, I'll bet) to give you a basic rundown of this year's event.

Byron Smith & Mimi Rizek were in charge this year, and boy!, did they pull off a whopper of a success.

While Jamie and I arrived Wednesday at noon, most arrived between late Thursday afternoon and Friday. Getting there early allowed us to meet up with Mimi and Byron, get started on the final touches to a few things and spend some quality time with them before the crowds arrived. Also early were Jim Wick, Bob Bothum, Whitney Pillsbury and John Clarke. We wasted no time in getting familiar with the eateries. As Whitney put it, "We seem to be marking our days by the 'feedings'." We ate, and ate and

ate. And Delray Beach has some fine eateries like Grainers where we dined on some great food. Already, things were shaping up to be memorable.

Thursday, we found ourselves refining some of the last minute details, and enjoying Delray. Members began to trickle in, and get comfortable with a true Commander Club meet. Folks were fast making friends with other folks, talking technical, talking "life" and really getting to know one another. Byron and Mimi offered up an evening cruise to "The Banana Boat" restaurant, which made for a magnificent time. Great camaraderie, great food (yes, another 'feeding') and a super cruise.

(Note: Byron's work, on his 42', is phenomenal!!! He and Mimi have put together a 42' that looks and performs incredibly well)

Friday saw the official registration begin. Friday night's big shindig took place at "Boston's on the Beach", where heavy hors d'oeuvres were served, and the masses began to really get into the fellowship aspect with one another. We were originally expecting about 40-45 folks, and by Friday night, we were delighted to serve over 60 individuals at Boston's.

Saturday was a busy day for those working the event. While preparations were being made for the Saturday night dinner and show, others were meandering down the docks to look at the beautiful examples of "Florida Commanders" present. The owners of these vessels were great hosts, and delighted to discuss their boats and their ownership of them.

In addition to the registered guests, we were delighted to add even more folks on for Saturday night. Mimi worked her magic (and her superior hosting skills) to get the caterers to bump up the numbers, and by the time we were ready for the grand finale, we were looking at an event that brought in over 70 folks.

Cocktails aboard "Malabu II" at 4PM (thanks to Mimi and John Clarke for making the unplanned Costco trip). At 6PM, hors d'oeuvres were served, followed by a scrumptious dinner that included both Tequila chicken and an encrusted fish (don't remember the type). Add to that, wonderful side dishes, and we were once again treated to a super 'feeding'.

The Commander Club then presented Byron and Mimi with their "Award of Appreciation" for all the hard work they put into making such a successful event (along with a nice gift card to one of Mimi's favorite restaurants to enjoy as a "wind down"), then the "Award of Distinction" given to Greg Gajcak for his continued support and inspiration to all club members.

5 framed prints were auctioned, bringing in some very generous proceeds to the club's "kitty", along with a raffle for items generously donated by Jim Wick/Bob Bothum of LPX Parts and Chris Craft Corporation.

The evening's awards highlight went to Founding member, Dick Morland for his tireless contributions to so many over the course of the club's 9 years in operation. The award, a beautiful mahogany clock, was presented to Dick by one of his "students", Lawrence Neisler, former Board Member, and longtime club member/supporter. It was a very poignant moment.

The "Grand Finale" to the evening was a movie, filmed, assembled and edited by our own, Whitney Pillsbury. It was part history of the Commander, part history of the club, and chocked full of interviews

with many of our very own members, as well as Chris Craft "longtimers" (employees) over the course of the last several rendezvous events. By the end of the film, most of the attendees had laughed, cried and cheered. A moving and touching presentation that all who saw it will surely say was "priceless".

Having been to nearly every rendezvous, I can say that I wonder, each year, how we could possibly top the prior year's event. With the hard work and impeccable accommodations worked out by Byron and Mimi, the dedication from my fellow EC board members, and most importantly, the support of all the members who attended, I can say that the 9th Annual Chris Craft Rendezvous was a resounding success.

If you were not sure whether you would enjoy such a get together, or your calendars wouldn't permit your attendance, please know that you missed something very special this year. You must plan to be present, next year, for our 10th Annual Rendezvous. Planning has already begun. It will be unlike any other, and you will not want to be sitting on the sidelines wondering "what we're up to". You'll want to be present, you'll want to be in the thick of it, and you'll want to soak in the entire experience. It is worth your time, your money and your support!

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Fran Rose

Let us not forget the beautiful T-shirts, with an artist's rendering of the lovely Colony Hotel and even lovelier 55' Chris Craft, replete with Dick and Maureen Avery aboard, she "draped" in her gorgeous hand-made skirt. I believe the honorable Mr. Cutchins did say that more of these will be made available. Rob and Jaime were in the lobby every night, checking in our members, box of shirts to one side, box of name tags to the other. There was a huge poster, identical to the picture on the T shirt, in the lobby of the hotel all weekend, with the itinerary affixed for all to see. Whit was rushing around, "cooking" his video for us, hopefully taking some time to enjoy some of the fine weather we had. There were many behind-the-scenes people at work for this fine rendezvous. I wish we could give them all an award, for all of their hard work and efforts, but I will say this...thank you to all of you who made this a memory-treasured weekend.

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Chris Orphal  
Chief Commander

Wow, what an event!

First and foremost, a big hats off to Byron and Mimi for hosting this year's Rendezvous in Delray Beach!

Nearly 70 members from locations across the country converged starting mid-week... a very good turnout considering the travel involved, and I can honestly say that I don't think there was a member in attendance that didn't say they had a great time!

I mentioned this to everyone on Saturday night, but I'll say it again because it's true... one of the best parts of the meets are the people. I've met more people that I'm happy to call friends... friends that I'll know for a long time to come. Of course, one of the worst parts of each and every Rendezvous I've attended (and there's 7 of them under my belt now)... there's never enough time to talk to all of the members that attend like I'd want to. This year was no exception.

I don't want to cover again what Rob has put into great words, but some quick mentions... This year's awards, well deserved, and I believe they surprised their recipients... in a good way. Dick Morland, Greg

Gajcak, and Bryon & Mimi have certainly deserved their attention... and I'm sure I speak for a great many when I say thank you for contributing to the best darn boat owner's club out there.

Whitney certainly put together a heck of a film... for those that weren't there to see it, you truly missed a great documentary.

All in all, it's great. I look forward to seeing the pictures and hearing tales from others that attended... I had a great time, as I always do, and I was glad to see the many "first time" attendees... it was a pleasure to meet you all!

Happy Commanding!

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Greg Gajcak  
1971 35 commander express  
CEVICHE  
Chicago, Illinois  
Hello all,

I just wanted to send a big thank you to Byron and Mimi for being spectacular hosts. The facilities were great and so was the food. I really was happy to see Byron's handy work on the interior of his 42 commander. Very Impressive.

What an absolutely great time. The area was beautiful and it was so nice to meet so many new faces that I have heard of but had never met. I only regret not arriving earlier to spend more time meeting others.

Dick and Maureen Avery are always a major highlight and this was no exception. They are always the celebrity guests at these events.

Also, being able to be present to see Dick Morland receive his award was particularly great as I am certainly one who has benefitted from his wisdom and assistance many times over the last several years. He was the one that came up with the idea of using centerless grinding to make a standard cutlass bearing fit our bastard struts and therefore allow for easy upgrade to 1.5" shafts during mine and Lawrence's recent repowers. Thanks Dick! Wishing you well with the new running gear/hip that you will get this week.

Oh- I think those in attendance can share how impressive Whitney's Documentary/Film was to everyone. It was easily apparent how talented he is and how much work that must have taken. What fun that was.

Last, a thank you to the Executive Committee for the surprise and award they gave to me. I was very surprised and feel very flattered still. I showed my wife and 3 kids as soon as I returned home and my kids are still convinced that I must have bribed club management. They are always most interested in the collector shirts from the meets and this held true again.

Thank You again to all responsible for the meet and for those in attendance that made it so much fun. Already looking forward to Annapolis in July.

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Bill & Maureen Zeller  
38 SF "Chowderhead"  
23 Lancer "Redhead"

A couple of quick thoughts out loud;  
This year was Maureen and my first sojourn to the Rendezvous. I was blown away! What a great group!  
Some qualities that make this fellowship work so well  
Talent  
Volunteerism  
Commitment  
Passion

I won't mention names because the preceding emails did. I came away from Delray Beach validated, it's a good feeling to know that we are not the only Commander Nuts.

One other thing, with all the talk... I thought you people drank more.

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Michael Yancey Nov 4, 2008

I want to thank everyone who worked to put on such a great 2008 CCCC Rendezvous. I know if I try to list everyone who had a hand in it, i would miss many who worked diligently "behind the scenes".

I know there were many people involved but specifically I want to thank Byron and Mimi for taking on the task of hosting this large group and making everyone feel welcome. This was Denese and my first opportunity to attend and we are already making plans to hopefully attend next year's Rendezvous.

Being an inland lake boater in Oklahoma, the opportunity to get with other Commander owners that have a passion for these classics does not come along very often.