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Map of Grounds



CORTEZ F.I.S.H. FESTIVAL 2016

MUSIC SCHEDULE

Saturday February 13th

10:00 - 10:30 am:	Shanty Singers
10:45 - 12:00 pm:	Manatee River Bluegrass Band
12:00 - 12:15 pm:	Awards and Introductions
12:30 - 2:00 pm:	Eric Von and Cavalier Life Band
2:30 - 4:00 pm:	Soul-R-Coaster
4:30 - 6:00 pm:	Razing Cane

Sunday February 14th

10:30 - 12:00 pm:	Soupy Davis and The Band
12:30 - 2:00 pm:	Doug Deming & Jewel Tones
2:30 - 4:00 pm:	Jim and Karen Band
4:30 - 6:00 pm:	Jason Haram

Sunday afternoon 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM Eric Von performs on the Bratton Store Porch

**Take time to join John Stevely for Dock Talks beginning at 11 AM
at Cortez Bait and Seafood on the loading dock**

Also stop by the BoatWorks, The Cortez Cultural Center and Maritime Museum Admission is FREE



A message from the president

Dear Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival guests,

I would like to take this opportunity to not only welcome you but to thank you because without your support and attendance F.I.S.H.(Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage) simply could not do all we do to actively achieve our mission. We are “Dedicated to the promotion, education and preservation of Cortez and Florida’s commercial fishing and other traditional maritime cultures including the environment upon which these communities depend.”

It is with great pride that we host this Festival as our annual fundraiser. This year, we celebrate 34 years! We are thrilled to have you with us and to share the many exciting things going on in Cortez which you will learn about in this program. Read on to discover the unique sights and sounds, a bit of history on the Village of Cortez, details about the Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage (F.I.S.H.), and the F.S.H. Preserve.

2015 was a great year. Here are a few highlights:

The Preserve Restoration: In 2000, F.I.S.H. purchased 93 acres of land and shoreline just east of the village. This shoreline is of significant environmental value to the fishermen and industry (commercial fishing) on which this village was founded. Over the years, F.I.S.H has restored small sections of the property. In 2014, the first phase of total restoration began, thanks to a \$250,000 Southwest Florida Water Management District grant, in partnership with Sarasota Bay Estuary Program and Manatee County. Phase two was completed in July of 2015. We look forward to partnering again with Sarasota Bay Estuary Program to complete the Preserve restoration.

Legal support: Thanks to the enthusiastic support of our membership, F.I.S.H. intervened in two environmentally important court challenges to protect sensitive shorelines from destruction, recognizing that these are the very areas on which the livelihoods of our residents depend.

Fisherman’s Hall: Fishermen’s Hall underwent a significant restoration and is now available for community events.

We look forward to an exciting year in 2016. Join us today! F.I.S.H. Membership is only \$10. Visit www.cortez-fish.org for more information.

Again, thank you for your support. It is greatly appreciated and we couldn’t do it without you. Enjoy the festiva

Kim McVey
President Kim McVey

The Solution...



...for a Changing Environment.

Why “It takes a Fishing Village”: A Timeline

The long history of the preservation movement in Cortez is filled with organizations and events that have combined almost serendipitously in the ongoing battle to preserve some of “original Florida”. Cortez fights on a daily basis to remain the Village that doesn’t want to become “the Village **that was** a commercial fishing village”. The following events are milestones along that long road:

- ❖ The Organized Fisherman of Florida (OFF) is organized in the early 1960s with Cortez having a charter chapter. OFF seeks to assist legislators and regulators with fishing matters and to protect the rights of fisherman in communities that are threatened by encroachment from waterfront development.
- ❖ In 1983 the Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival is organized by the local chapter of OFF to “bring good attention to the commercial fishing industry” as a reaction to negative publicity commonly printed in the press from members of the recreational fishing industry. Income from the festival is returned to the Fishing Community.
- ❖ Cortez Village Historical Society (CVHS) is formed in November 1984 “to preserve the history and protect the future of this special unique Florida Fishing Village” as reaction to population growth and development that threatens to encroach upon the community.
- ❖ In 1985 CVHS receives a Florida Endowment for the Humanities grant and produces a “Community Portrait”, a survey of the first families and their survivors in Cortez. The book Finest Kind is published about the Village by local author, Ben Green.
- ❖ The Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage (FISH) becomes a prime mover in Cortez preservation after it is organized in May 1991 as an amalgamation of Cortez Aux. Fire Co., CVHS and OFF. FISH’s Mission is: “Dedicated to the promotion, education and preservation of Cortez and Florida’s commercial fishing and other traditional maritime cultures including the environment upon which these communities depend.”
- ❖ In 1991 the oldest commercial building in Cortez, the 1890 Bratton Store, is rescued from demolition, in a last ditch community effort. The building sits on a mover’s trailer until 2005 when a Selby Foundation Grant and a Community Development Block Grant are awarded to move and rehabilitate the building on the Maritime Museum site, beginning in 2006.
- ❖ In 1992 the Village achieves a vital Historic Overlay District when it is listed on the County, State, and National Registers of Historic Places. The book Cortez Then and Now is published in 1997 based upon the National register research. A Humanities Council Grant is awarded that funds exhibition panels and oral histories depicting lives of fishermen. The book ‘Fogs Coming In’ is published by local author, Doris Green. That same year the Miller/Schewe Net Camp is acquired and preserved with County funding.
- ❖ In 1995 the Net Ban is legislated and Cortez loses half its fishing business within two years. The cultural impact is devastating.
- ❖ The local Volunteer Firehouse is taken over by FISH in 1996 and becomes a Community and Daycare Center. Donation of the Sailors Haven property follows shortly. A State and Federal Commercial Enterprise Zone Program causes strong negative reaction to any government programs and it is rejected by the community.

- ❖ In 1999 FISH purchased the 93-acre F.I.S. H. Preserve property when the owner, Mrs. Schewe, generously agrees to hold the mortgage. Over a three-year period the bulk of the Preserve's land is acquired. Additional parcels have been purchased. Funds for the purchase are derived from grass roots support, FISH Festival proceeds, and a mortgage.
- ❖ In 2000 Cortez becomes part of The Waterfronts Florida statewide program. The village decided not to go with development of tourism as the primary source of income. It does not want to become "a community that was a fishing village". Funding from the program allows erection of a Fisherman's Memorial monument in Oct 2001 and the development of community design standards to protect Cortez from new development. The Cortez Vision Plan is adopted by Manatee County and placed in the Land Development Code in 2005.
- ❖ FISH obtains funding from US FISH and Wildlife, Ocean Trust and Sarasota Bay National Estuaries Program to begin restoration of the FISH Preserve as a natural habitat in 2004-5.
- ❖ In 2005 FISH obtains a 2nd Humanities Council grant for "In Their Own Words" an anthropological photo journalism project that makes comparisons between Cedar Key and Cortez as examples of Fishing Communities that have survived the negative impacts of the Net Ban.
- ❖ The Communities preservation effort continues in Cortez as FISH purchases the Church Of God property located on 124th St. W in 2009. Renovations have become and the property is now known as Fishermen's Hall.
- ❖ 2010 the FISH Board of Directors partnered with Manatee County to place a Conservation Easement over the FISH Preserve. This was done out of an abundance of caution to maintain its protected status in perpetuity.
- ❖ In October 2012, in partnership with Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, Manatee County and with a \$250,000 grant from the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the first major phases of the FISH Preserve Restoration plan began and was completed in June 2015.



Linda Molto Serigraphs Cortez Fl (941) 794-5919

The F.I.S.H. Preserve

While you are here at the festival take a break from all of the action and stroll into the F.I.S.H. Preserve. It is the 93 acre tract of land just east of the festival site. You may have already parked there. The Preserve is bounded on the north by Cortez Rd. and extends southward into Sarasota Bay. The Maritime Museum and 119th St. W. for the western boundary.

You will discover walking paths that traverse coastal uplands, old mangrove forests and newly restored habitats. Kayak trails flow beneath the bridges and connect to the bay. A traditional wooden boat shop, the F.I.S.H. Boatworks can be found along Cortez Road at 116th St. Nearby a historical cottage has been restored and is now home to the Cortez Cultural Center. These along with the Florida Maritime Museum make up an environmental, historical and cultural campus just waiting to be explored.

The land that comprises the F.I.S.H. Preserve was subdivided into lots in the 1950's. A few lots were sold but most of the tract remained in a single party ownership. Only one house was ever built. It was built by Harry Swathwood in the late 50's. Mr. Swathwood was the Cortez Postmaster and he built the home as his family residence. That home is now the F.I.S.H. Boatworks.

When artist Robert Sailor, a world class weaver, died in the late 1990's his family was agreeable to sell his property to the community. This is the 1912 Cortez School and about 4 acres now house the Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez. Manatee County Government stepped up at the behest of the community and purchased the real estate and secured funds for the restoration of the building and grounds.



Left: December 2014 aerial of 93 acre FISH Preserve Restoration Project. Project done in partnership with Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, the Southwest Florida Water Management District and Manatee County Government. The first of two phases this project provides a substantial beginning to the 98 acre restoration. Below: Full Conceptual Restoration Plan for the FISH Preserve.



Conceptual design for the 100-acre FISH Preserve near Cortez, Florida



The F.I.S.H. Preserve

Continued

An important element of environmental repair was to re-establish tidal flow between the school house ponds and Sarasota Bay. The representative for the county were unable to negotiate a deal with the property owner to the south to acquire the necessary parcel for the tidal connection.

Soon after a few of the leaders of F.I.S.H., particularly Linda Molto and Karen Bell, had a discussion and decided it made sense to talk

with Mrs. Schewe the current owner of the large tract of land and to ask her if she would be willing to sell it all to the community. In early 2000 she said YES! A price of \$250,000 was agreed upon. The Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage (F.I.S.H.) made a sub-stancial down payment and completed the purchase in less than five years using funds generated by the Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival. Subsequent festivals have enabled the purchase of out parcels, those lots sold in the 1950s, as well as funding improvements and the environmental restoration of the F.I.S.H. Preserve.

Throughout the process F.I.S.H. has had generous support from volunteers, Manatee County Government, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program, the Southwest Water Management District, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and other agencies. These partnerships allowed F.I.S.H and the community of Cortez the opportunity to purchase and protect 93 acres of essential waterfront habitat. Restoration continues and the community of Cortez understands the environmental value of this land and will to protect it for future generations.



Susanna Spann

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A Festival'S History



For more than three decades the Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival has generated significant revenues that have enabled the Village to acquire conservation lands, Restore coastal habitats, preserve history, and contribute to cultural awareness and education. However, the first festival,

held in 1983 had no financial goals, other than perhaps avoiding financial ruin.

It all started in 1982 when Mark Taylor, a third generation commercial fisherman from Cortez was serving as a State officer for the Organized Fishermen of Florida (O.F.F.). His travels exposed him to pro-active ideas from around the State. One of these ideas was that fishing villages were holding public events to increase awareness about where seafood came from and the ever increasing burden of governmental restrictions.

Presidents Day, Monday February 21st, was selected for the first Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival. Traditional Christian values held so strongly in the Village, made Sunday inappropriate and the five fish houses operating at the time all had fully busy Saturdays leaving Saturday out as well. The parking lot at Bayshore Seafood (now Cortez Bait and Seafood / N.E. Taylor Boatworks) was made available for that first one day festival. It was held only in the small portion of the parking lot between the two boat basins where the Cortez Kitchen now stands. Entertainers performed from the deck of a boat moored in the west basin. The food consisted of a fish fry put on by the community. Educational displays were used and informative talks about types of fishing boats, gear and methodologies were given by Marine Extension agent John Stevely. John continues in this role today through our 'Dock Talks' held during the festival and as one of the festival organizers, even though he has now retired from his Marine Extension duties.

The second year of the festival brought a small expansion in food choices and inaugurated the art show with seven artists participating. It was the third year which saw significant changes.

In 1985 the festival was changed to Saturday of Presidents Day weekend to reach a larger crowd. For several reasons it also made sense to move the event to the west end of the village on the waterfront. The entertainment stage was set up on the Star Fish Co. loading dock and the festival radiated out from there.

For twenty five straight years the festival continued at this location, expanding in scope and scale. Because of some bad weather scares and huge attendance it became obvious after about ten years that a two day event was needed. Since the mid 1990s the Cortez Commercial Fishing Festival has followed the two day format and continues to be held on Presidents day weekend in February.

In 2011 the festival returned to it's original location at the east end of the Village. This location provides a closer link to the Florida Maritime Museum which opened in 2007 and showcases the adjoining 93 acre F.I.S.H. Preserve.

It is interesting to note that the iconic Festival T-Shirts have been around since the first Festival.

Each year the shirt features original artwork based on that year's theme. Most, but not all, of the Festival T-Shirts carry the year designation. The following page provides a glimpse at many of our past designs.

This year's festival is like all of it's predecessors BIGGER & BETTER, showing why for the last 33 years it "Takes a Fishing Village" to put on the Festival voted Best in Manatee County for the last 15+ years.

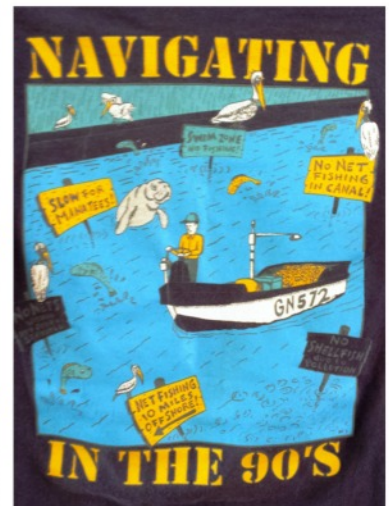
Welcome!

Festival Pictures over the years!



Festival T-shirt Designs over the Years

Below is a small sample of the many T-shirt designs put together over 33 years of the festival. Each design was chosen for its interpretation of that year's festival theme. The perfect example below would be the "Navigating the 90's", the design was meant to emphasize the many regulatory hurdles commercial fishermen faced in the 1990's and still do today. One of the most popular designs was the 2010 "White Boot Ready" White Boots, often referred to as Cortez bedroom slippers, are regular attire for commercial fishermen. Each year F.I.S.H. reaches out to artists throughout the Community to come up with the best festival t-shirt design and this year 2016 was no exception. Rob Reiber, the art instructor at Manatee High School, submitted the winning design for this year's theme "It Takes A Fishing Village". Not only was his design used on the Festival T-shirt and poster but each year because of the generous support of a local artist, Suzanna Spann, a monetary prize was given as well.



A Brief History of the Village of Cortez

"When my maternal grandfather, William Thomas Fulford (Capt. Billy) and a handful of others came to settle Hunter's Point in the 1880's there were no permanent houses built at that time - only temporary shacks nearby along the water's edge that had been used at the time by Key Westers or Bahamians who were known to be here as early as 1879. They salted their huge catches of mullet for shipment to Cuba." The opening paragraph of Doris Green's book "Fog's Comin In" is the perfect beginning of this short history of this fishing village. In the 1880s, five fishermen from Carteret County, NC bought tracts of land on Sarasota Bay. In 1891 there were twenty people living in "Fishermen Town" on Hunters Point. The name was changed to "Cortez" when the residents applied for a Post Office. More relatives from NC arrived as did the Capo and Mora families. In 1921 the Culbreaths arrived.

With their fierce pride in work, respect for God and love of family the residents of this small village have survived the Influenza Epidemic of 1918, the devastating Hurricane of 1921, the Great Depression of 1930s and 65 men and women going off to fight in World War II in 1941-42.

New challenges such as 80 % of fish habitats being destroyed by coastal development and the 1995 Net Ban have brought concern about the future. Working together, using new methods of harvesting and creating new markets ,i.e. stone crabs, the Cortez Fishing Industry survives The past year this industry harvested seafood valued at \$14 million dollars. Thousands now eat at the dockside restaurants and tour the bays and visit the Maritime Museum. There were 20,000 attendees at the last Commercial Fishing Festival.

The families' valuing of religion, education and community welfare was critical to survival. The first building for worship was built in 1910. The one room school was built in 1895. The first teacher, Mrs. Williams, taught until she was 85 years old. The new red brick school building was built in 1912. The Volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1958, the CVHS in 1984 and FISH in 1991.

The Fulford Hotel, operated by Sanders Fulford, was the first to welcome visitors. On that land, the first Cortez Trailer Park welcomed "the Tin Can Tourist in the 1930s. Today the residents of the park are valued community volunteers.

The current residents in the last twenty seven years have saved the village from a marina that would have blocked the channel, from a high rise bridge and a waterfront developer. The challenge today is the promotion of harvesting of fresh Florida Seafood instead of importation of un-inspected seafood from other areas.



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F.I.S.H

Boatworks Program



As stated in the FISH By-Laws, one of the objectives of FISH is to educate the public about the histories of boat building along the Florida coast and encourage and develop a traditional wooden boat building program. To meet this objective, FISH has established a Boatworks located at the corner of 116th Street W. and Cortez Road in the FISH Preserve perimeter.

Formerly known as the Wilkerson property, the old house located on this property has been completely renovated and now serves as the work shop for the program. The work shop contains all of the tools normally found in modern and traditional boatworks. These include a table saw, drill press, disk/belt sander, band saws, planer, cut-off saw, drills and the many miscellaneous hand tools used in boat building and restoration.



Sallie Adams (left) is an example of a boat built by our Boatworks and the Esperanza (right) is a Cuban Refugee Boat restored by the Program



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Cortez Village Historical Society

The Cortez Village Historical Society (CVHS) was founded in November 1984 by Dr. Mary Fulford Green, a native of the village. Its purpose is to preserve, collect, and distribute information about Cortez, Florida. CVHS also works to foster a greater appreciation for the fishing heritage and way of life of its community.

CVHS has published a number of books about Cortez Village: Finest Kind, A Celebration of a Fishing Village by Ben Green in 1985. Fog's Comin' In by Doris M. Green in 1992. Cortez – Then and Now by Mary Fulford Green, Ed.D. and Linda Molto 1997. There is also What's Cooking in Cortez a cookbook published by CVHS in 2007. A series of children's books that incorporate Cortez Village history has been written by native Joseph B. Crawford. Nathan and the Stone Crabs in 2011, and Adrianna and the Spanish Sardines in 2013.

Cortez Village was added to the Historic Registry of National Places in 1995 and has over 90 historic homes labeled on the walking map of the village. A community picnic is organized each year and held on Miller's dock near the old Fulford Fish House. CVHS plans to continue emphasizing the importance of its fishing heritage and maintaining its unique waterfront community.

The Cortez Cultural Center will open in February 2016 just east of the Florida Maritime Museum in Cortez off of Cortez Road. It will be housed in the 1940's Monroe Cottage which was donated by the city of Bradenton Beach. Renovations of the cottage included new walls, floors, rewiring, lighting, and adding a wheelchair ramp. A new roof is in the works. Exhibits will focus on the people and history of Cortez Village. These displays will focus on the walking map of the village, the local Grand Old Opry music, veterans uniforms and records, the Albion Inn, the role of women in Cortez history, genealogies of early settlers, artwork featuring Cortez, and the life of early Cortez families. Come visit us during the Cortez Fishing Festival and view our exhibits. We are located in between the Florida Maritime Museum and the FISH Boatworks just west of the parking lot area for the festival.

Cortez Village Historical Society / PO Box 663, Cortez, FL 34215 cortezculturalcenter@gmail.com



Above left and right: Moving day, the Monroe cottage comes over the bridge from Bradenton Beach to it's new home at 11655 Cortez Rd. W Cortez.

Almost ready for it's grand opening the new Cortez Cultural Center will be home to exhibits focusing on the history of the village families and the commercial fishing industry on which it thrives.

Fishing for Freedom Manatee Chapter



In 2013, a group of fishermen, in Cortez, had a meeting on becoming organized. After much discussion and a vote, we joined Fishing for Freedom and the Wakulla Fishermen's association In Wakulla, Florida. We have been working to reestablish some of the fishermen's rights which were lost in the 1994 net ban. Unfortunately we lost a very lengthy court battle in the 1st District Court of Appeals, against the State of Florida and the FWC (Florida Wildlife Commission). However, Since then numerous additional battles have and continue to be fought in the courts. Trying to help the fishermen, who supply fresh seafood to the Florida and numerous states, has become a key fight our Organization has dedicated itself to.

January 1, 2015, Fishing for Freedom of Manatee County, became incorporated and on June 8, 2015, we received our 501(C)(3) status. Over the last two years we have become very involved in the community. We have partnered with Organizations such as F.I.S.H. and Keep Manatee Beautiful to do what we can to serve our community and better our environment. In May and June we held two Coastal Clean ups; the First Annual Cortez Kitchen clean up, and the Palma Sola shoreline clean up. These two clean ups yielded the removal of 7800 lbs coastal garbage and debris.

As an industry we have our struggles and locally one of the big ones as been white roe mullet culling. However we do not run from these issues we are meeting them head on and working with our State Legislators and FWC (Florida Wildlife Commission) seeking solutions.

Fishing for Freedom, is a 501(C)(3) non-Profit organization whose mission is:
(1) Maintain and increase the health and Viability of Florida's commercial fishery by Protecting the ecosystem on which marine Life and fishermen rely. (2) To ensure the Right of the fishermen to provide a reliable, sustainable, wild caught source of seafood. (3) To educate the public on the healthy Seafood products that Florida has to provide.

Please join us, help us to continue to move Forward. Your donations are tax deductible and welcome. They can be sent to: FFF c/o Mark Coarsey President, 5117 17th St. Ct. E.

Bradenton FL 34203 and visit us on FaceBook by searching Fishing for Freedom Manatee Chapter.



The Florida Maritime Museum



The Florida Maritime Museum is located in the historic fishing village of Cortez and is housed in their 1912 School House. The building served Cortez as a school, community center and hurricane shelter until 1961. It eventually became the private residence and studio of renowned weaver, Robert Sailors, until his death in 1995. In need of restoration and sitting vacant, the residents of Cortez rallied to ensure that the building was preserved. It was purchased by Manatee County in 1999 and assigned

to the Manatee County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller's Historical Resources Department to manage. After restoration, the building was opened to the public as the Florida Maritime Museum in 2006.

Founded on the importance of the regional commercial fishing industry, the Florida Maritime Museum tells a number of stories pertinent to all aspects of Florida's maritime history and folkways, with a special emphasis on Cortez. The quaint fishing village has retained its charm, and continues to be a key site of commercial fishing.

Museum exhibits include historic photographs, boat models, tools, instruments, and other historically significant material relevant to Florida's maritime culture and history. The museum is also home to a research library that includes a variety of books, plans, logs, diaries, periodicals, letters, records and related archival material. Hours are Tuesday-Saturday 9am-4pm and admission is free. Information about upcoming classes, events and exhibits can also be found online. FloridaMaritimeMuseum.org (941) 708-6120



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Turner Maritime Challenge Program



The Turner Maritime challenge at Cortez (TMCC) was established in 2010 under the umbrella of the Florida Institute for Saltwater Heritage (FISH). In 2013 The Turner Maritime Challenge at Cortez became it's own Non-Profit 501 (c)(3). Partnering with the Boy Scouts of America becoming the Manatee County Chapter of Sea Scouts. The Sea Scouts program helps coed youth develop skills such as team work, self-reliance and pride.

By partnership with the Boy Scouts' Sea Scouts Program The Turner Maritime Challenge at Cortez reaches out to the youth of Manatee County

interested in Scouting on the water. As of 2015, the Turner Maritime Challenge at Cortez has 8 youth between the ages of 14 to 21 enrolled in its sailing program. In this program the participants learn historically traditional skills of seamanship taught in both the traditional classroom setting and by taking part in on-the-water instruction. We welcome all boys and girls ages 14 to 21 to come and join us in the seafaring experience which The Turner Maritime Challenge at Cortez offers.

The goal of Turner Maritime Challenge at Cortez is to offer youth programs that address two main areas in the lives of our youth: (1) improved academic performance and family involvement, and (2) enhanced workforce development, all the while learning old world ways of sailing and having fun.

Interested in joining or donating to The Turner Maritime Challenge at Cortez please call (941) 792-8200. The Turner Maritime Challenge at Cortez is one hundred percent funded by tax deductible donations of boats, tools, time and money.

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