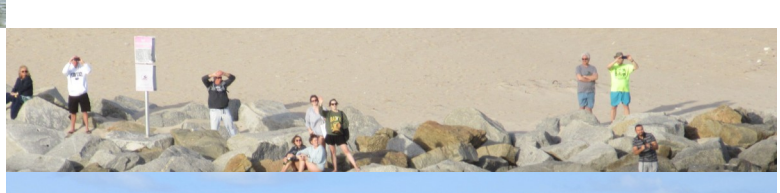
Happy New Year & Welcome 2018!!!! Brrrrr!!!!!!

I know it is winter, but what happened to the SC moderate winter temperatures?? Isn't that why we moved here? I know, the whole country is feeling this freeze. Some of the first pictures here demonstrate the experience. I felt so sorry for the ducks, and other water foul, with the frozen ponds, etc. Someone actually witnessed a flock of geese rescuing a member stuck in the ice on the lake by breaking the ice around it with their beaks. That cold snap lasted for about a week or more. I took a picture of our frozen pond, which is the back drop of the "Happy New Year" above.

Well, the bulk of this Newsletter will be focused on our Caribbean Cruise, which was two weeks long because we did the Western and Eastern Caribbean. The ship came back into Port Everglades before going back out on the second phase. This gave us two weeks on the *Regal Princess*. There were about 500+ passengers who did both East and West. Needless to say we have loads of pictures, so sit back and enjoy!!!

The first picture of the cruise is our view of at least 4 or 5 other cruise ships in Port Everglades. It is not unusual for more than one ship of the Princess Cruise line to be in port at one time. If so, you can expect ships to play "The Love Boat" theme with their horns, which is really neat!!! Needless to say, people love to watch these ships sailing in and out of the harbor. Once on our way, there was a 'Sail Away' party on deck 16. This is where the popular outside pool and hot tub are located, along with a fountain. The first stop on both cruises was Princess Cays, which is owned by Princess. There is a sandy beach there, equipped with what ever you need for enjoyment. The crew had a cook out for guests to enjoy in the afternoon. Tender boats from the ship brought people back and forth. The picture on the right shows some of the beach, the ship away from the beach and a couple of tenders going back and forth. We left Fort Lauderdale on Sunday, and arrived at Princess Cays on Monday. Tuesday was spent at sea. The last picture on the right side was taken while we were at sea. Two cruise ships off in the distance, we believe the one closest was a Carnival Ship. Water was a little choppy, with the white caps.



Princess says.. "Come Back New!!"

During the Western Caribbean cruise, we also stopped at Ocho Rios and Cozumel. We were scheduled to stop at Grand Cayman but, because of the high winds, we could not. During the Eastern adventure, we stopped again at Princess Cays and then stopped at St Thomas and St Maarten, with 3 days at sea. Remember, most of these Islands were hit with the hurricane this past year! Some were able to come back quicker than others. They certainly needed the business of the cruise ships, no question. I can't imagine winds over 200 miles an hour!!! We did not take any tours this year, but did go off ship and walked around the areas within walking distance of the pier. Below is a picture of St Thomas and a couple of St Maarten.

The rest of the pictures are on board the ship, celebrating sail away... the Captain's Champagne Waterfall….the Balloon Drop...the Beatle Entertainment as well as other ship entertainment...Food carving demonstration..and last but not least a picture of Bob & I with Captain Fabrizio Maresca. We attended the Captain's Circle party and won a bottle of champagne which we shared with our dinner guests. The Captain's Circle if for people who cruise regularly with the Princess Cruise Line. We are at the Platinum level.

Princess Says... "Come Back New!!"

This last picture was taken by a couple, Jim & Roberta, who dined with us at our table for eight in the Allegro formal dinning room. We stayed at the same table both weeks enjoying new dinner companions on our second week. The first week we brought our newly won champagne to dinner to share with everyone.