

FROM THE HELM

THE **PGI FISHING CLUB** IS A PART OF THE
PUNTA GORDA ISLES CIVIC ASSOCIATION (PGICA)

FEBRUARY 2026



By **FRED DEMELLA, President**

Valentine's Day is here! Make sure to take care of your love and if you love fishing, then read on! Days are getting longer, local waters are starting to heat up and along with that, so is the fishing! After a cool windy winter it's time to get the boats ready for spring. This time of year anglers can look forward to targeting many different species. Whether it's in the back water flats, the neighborhood canals, the bars or deep holes of Charlotte Harbor, near shore reefs or off shore deep in the Gulf there should be action.

If you are a fisherman, you have to be excited and if you're not a fisherman but want to become one, check out the PGI Fishing Club.

We have guys and gals who are experienced in all manners of fishing in this area. By joining, you not only gain access to the expertise of many anglers, but can enjoy the fun and camaraderie of fishing. Many members have boats to get you there and the knowledge to help target species to make your angling experience great.

Becoming a FC member automatically enters you into the Ladder of Achievement. This is a prescribed goal to catch the many different species available in the area along with points for notable size fish. It is a fun way to track your development towards the goal of Grand Master Angler.

PGIFC has monthly meetings to explore various topics and fishing news. Fish of the month contest is a fun way to target species you may not always fish for and prizes are awarded. There are friendly fishing contests with prizes for designated catches. PGI fishermen enjoy more than just fishing. We also have special events like Holiday parties, picnics, weekly happy hours and other fun gatherings.

We meet the second Tuesday of the month (except July and December) at the PGI Civic Association at 18:00; all are welcome to attend a meeting. You may also choose to attend our weekly happy hour where many local fishing trips are planned. Currently we are meeting at the Elks new Tiki on Wednesdays at 17:00. You do not need to be an Elk to attend happy hour.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday February 10th, 6:00 p.m., at the PGICA meeting room, 2001 Shreve Street

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FISHING REPORT For JANUARY

By Paul Whiting

The weather did not deter our anglers! Forty (40) catches were reported last month, compared to 27 in January of 2025.

We experienced colder than usual temperatures, with some days dipping into the high 30s. We also had several very foggy mornings, making the high speed journey to the Gulf more of an adventure than usual!

The conditions kept our winds up and temps down with fish often shutting down as well during the cold passing fronts.

Those who ventured farther offshore between the fronts found Red Grouper very willing to bite with 11 Red Grouper catches up to 31" reported. Less affected by the temps were the fish of the month, Sheepshead, which boasted 11 catches up to 19.5". A few Sea Trout and Snook rounded out our predominant catches this month.

Everyone is anxious to return to our normal winter days in the 70's and get back on the water again. Spend those cold evenings and windy days respooling your braid, tying on new leaders and cleaning up your tackle box. Be ready when the fish say "come get me!"



In Charlotte Harbor, January 2026

FISH of the MONTH

JANUARY: SHEEPSHEAD



FEBRUARY: GROUPER



MARCH: SPANISH MACKEREL



APRIL: SNOOK



MAY: COBIA



JUNE: JACK CREVALLE



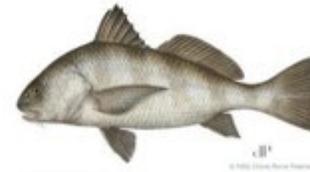
JULY: SHARK



AUGUST: TARPON



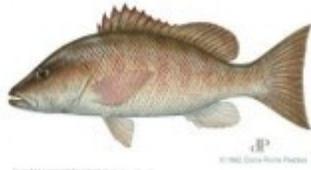
SEPTEMBER: BLACK DRUM



OCTOBER: REDFISH



NOVEMBER: MANGROVE SNAPPER



DECEMBER: SPOTTED SEA TROUT

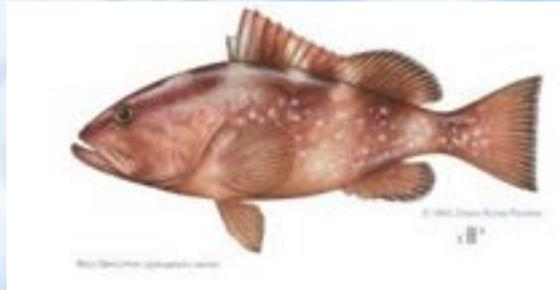


Fine Print: See "Fish of the Month Contest Rules" here: <http://pgifishingclub.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Fish-of-the-Month-Contest-Rules-Rev-7-021220.pdf>

Fish of the Month For FEBRUARY

Location, Description, Tips, Tackle and Bait

GROUPEL



DESCRIPTION / SPECIES:

Red and Gag Grouper are the most common types to catch in our area. For the most part these are bottom or near-bottom dwellers, often hiding under ledges or other hard structure and hard bottom.

TIPS / TECHNIQUE / LOCATION:

- **Off Shore:** Most offshore anglers will drift or anchor over hard bottom, looking for ledges or craters and abrupt changes in depth. Depths can range from 80 feet and deeper for keepers, but smaller fish can be found in the 40 foot range.
- **Inshore / near shore:** Smaller Gag grouper can be caught throughout the harbor by submerged structure; Alligator Reef, the rocks by Fisherman's' Village / Laishley, the docks by Boca Pass, and channel markers. Pitch a shrimp. Trolling a stretch near the reefs, or the pass, orange rocks by Cayo Costa, and near shore by submerged structure has also been successful; with several results in keeper size gags.

TACKLE: A stout 6' conventional rod and reel with 40lb braid will get the job done. Use enough weight to keep the line vertical to the boat, it's hot uncommon to use 8 to 12 ounces of lead. Use a drift sock or 5-gallon bucket if needed and adjust weight as needed based on the drift. Use a size 8 inline circle hook for live bait, as grouper have big mouths.

BAIT: Live squirreelfish, pinfish, small grunts, frozen sardines, squid, and octopus will work. Grouper are not fussy eaters. The live bait can be found in the Gulf in 35 to 50 feet of water and caught using a Sabiki rig.

THE BITE: The bite is a hard tug on the line. Not a tug and run, but a tug. Reel 5 or 6 cranks to get the fish off the bottom and you are set. It's key that enough weight is used to keep the line vertical, if your line is telescoping away from the boat that gives the fish a better chance to swim back into structure.

Club & Individual Fishing Statistics



REPORTED CATCHES as of 1/31/2026 and FISH OF THE MONTH (FOM) RESULTS
40 total fish turned in (2000 points) by 20 different anglers

FOM (SHEEPSHEAD)

Women

1st - Jan Holm- 12.0"

TIE 1st - Donna Sullivan - 12.0"

2nd / 3rd - None

Men

1st - Fred De Mella - 19.5"

2nd - Bobby Bretts - 18.0"

3rd - David Morgan - 16.0"

TIE 3rd - Allen Wade - 16.0"

Achievement Categories

Club Hat

None

Silver Pin

None

Snook Pin

None

Tarpon Pin

None

GMA Star

None

Bronze Pin

None

Gold Pin

None

Redfish Pin

GREG WIDNEY

GMA

None

Isles trophy winners for 2025:

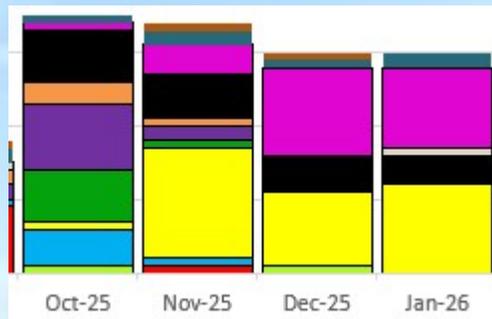
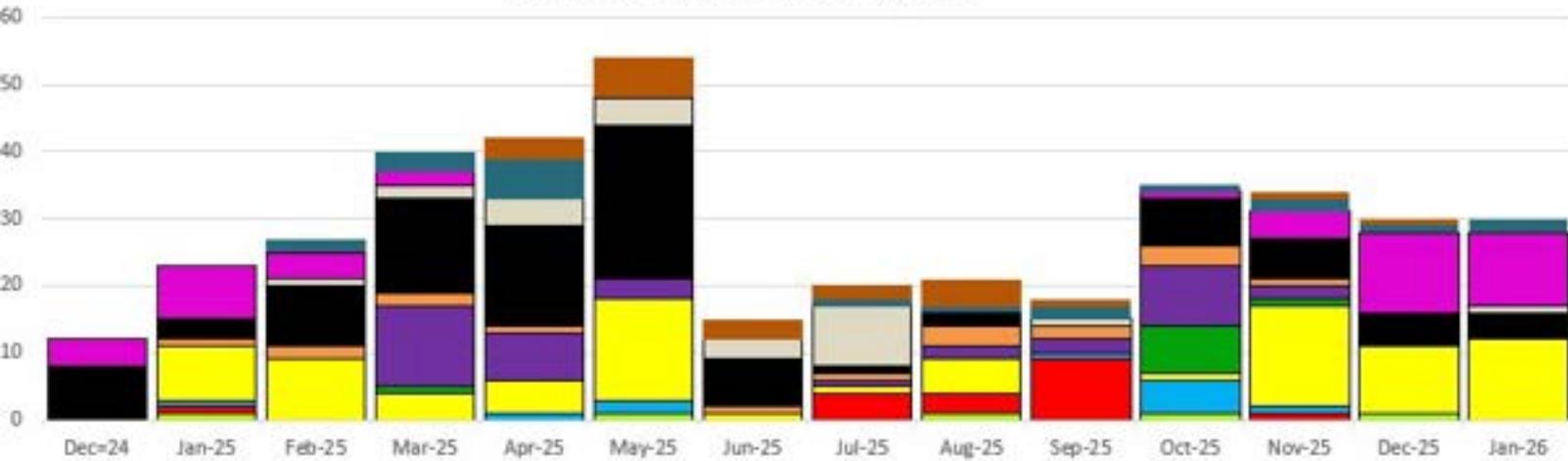
Men: **MIKE WHITE** with a 48.5" Black Drum, which was 94.2% of the old record

Women: – Tie with **ELAINE BRETTS** and **DONNA SULLIVAN** both catching 24" Seatrout which was 90.6% of the old record

WHAT'S BITE'N



14 Month Catch History
(Number of Fish Recorded Each Month by Species)



Last 4 Months



Recorder's Data

Monthly Performance

	November	December	January	
Anglers	22	18	20	↑
LOA Awards	6	4	1	↓
Fish Recorded	57	38	40	↑
Points Recorded	1700	2,400	2,000	↓

TROPHY RACE (Men)

OVERALL CLUB RECORD	SPECIES NAME	MEMBER NAME	RECORD LENGTH in INCHES	DATE CAUGHT	MEMBER NAME	2026 LENGTH in INCHES	2026 DATE CAUGHT	% OF RECORD
X	Amber Jack	Joe Udvari	53.5	2019				
	Black Drum	Mike White	51.5	2019				
X	Cobia	Rich Kale	66.0	2022				
X	Grouper	Tom Hamilton	39.0	2003	Greg Widney	30.5	Jan 21	78.2%
X	King Mackerel	John MacLeman	52.0	2012				
X	Redfish	Mike White	47.0	2020				
X	Seatrout	Rich Brennan	29.0	2009	Fred De Mella	19.0	Jan 15	65.5%
		Aaron Wagner	29.0	2012	Allen Wade		Jan 13	
X	Sheepshead	Mike White	26.0	2022	Fred De Mella	19.5	Jan 14	75.0%
X	Snook	Mike White	49.0	2023	Tim Locke	23.0	Jan 30	46.9%
X	Spanish Mackerel	Carl Leicher	30.0	2012				

This Year's Leaders in BLUE

XX Denotes New Club Record

New Entries This Month are in RED

TROPHY RACE (Women)

OVERALL CLUB RECORD	SPECIES NAME	MEMBER NAME	RECORD LENGTH in INCHES	DATE CAUGHT	MEMBER NAME	2025 LENGTH in INCHES	DATE CAUGHT	% OF RECORD
	Amberjack	Darlene Madsen	40.0	2017				0%
X	Black Drum	Christine Fontaine White	52.0	2022				0%
	Cobia	Joanne Landaker	50.0	2008				0%
		Marilyn McGregor	50.0	2013				
	Grouper	Dianne Bukowski	37.0	2018	Donna Sullivan	31.0	Jan 7	83.8%
	King Mackerel	Nancy Pearson	40.0	2022				0%
	Redfish	Donnie Brennan	38.0	2008				0%
		Missy Becker	38.0	2008				
	Seatrout	Joanne Landaker	26.5	2011	Jan Holm	18.0	Jan 7	67.9%
	Sheepshead	Dianne Bukowski	22.5	2021	Donna Sullivan Jan Holm	12.0	Jan 6	53.3%
	Snook	Missy Becker	42.0	2013	Joanne Widney	22.0	Jan 9	52.4%
	Spanish Mackerel	Missy Becker	28.0	2007				0%
		Lynn Reeves	28.0	2019				

This Year's LEADER in BLUE

XX Denotes New Club Record

New Entries This Month are in RED

2009	Rich Brennan, Christine Jordan	2018	Joe Udvari, Dianne Bukowski
2010	Kel Krotzer, Margie Hofman	2019	Joe Udvari, Lynn Reeves
2011	Greg Chestnut, Joanne Landacre	2020	Mike White, Dianne Bukowski
2012	Jim Quorollo, Rose Ann McCaffrey	2021	Rich Kale / Tim Gibbons, Dianne Bukowski
2013	Steve Landacre, Missy Becker	2022	Rich Kale, Christine White
2014	Vinnie Madsen, Margie Hofman	2023	Mike White, Wanda Zimka
2015	Bob Mays, Karen Lodge	2024	Mike White, Cathy Hunt
2016	Gary Reeves, Rose Ann McCaffrey	2025	Mike White, Elaine Bretts, Donna Sullivan
2017	Rich Kale, Darlene Madsen		

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD	LIFETIME LEVEL I SNOOK	LIFETIME LEVEL II REDFISH	LIFETIME LEVEL III TARPON	GRAND MASTER ANGLER	
						GMA	TOTAL STARS
Andy Athens	Jeff Bellairs	Gary Adams	Paula Arnold	Doug Arnold	Frank Barrett	Jeff Barnhart	★★★★★
Kathlene Avila	Joanna Boeckl	Jack Botbyl	Carl Cucco		Rick Brown	Ron Baxter	
Sherry Barrett	Marc Boeckl	Steve Fritz	Mark Cummins	Doug Du Fresne	Dick Conant	Fred Benson	
Trudi Baxter	Todd Brooks	Ken Garden	Mary Heins	Jenny Goodell	Mike Dougherty	Larry Benz	★
Tori Brown	Anne Careau	Dale Hall	Chuck Henry	Bill Guenther	Marv Dyrstad	Rich Brennan	★★★★★★★★★★
Bob Critchfield	Don Cummins	Bill Hess	Tom Hunt	Ken Hardesty	Theresa FitzGerald	Donnie Brennan	★
Colleen De Mella	Ron Deroche	Karen Lodge	Larry Kissner	Jack Howarth	Ed Girzi	Bob Bretts	★★★★★★★★★★
Tom desEnfants	Yvette Du Fresne	Joe Lombardi	Michael Knipe	Julie Kale	Bob Mays	Elaine Bretts	★★★★★★★★★★
Sharon Dyke	Kathy desEnfants	Sonia Nelson	Jim LaRocca	Jonathan Landon	Diana McKenna	Dianne Bukowski	★
Mike Endres	Tony Destefano	Cheryl Panetta	Marie LaRocca	Mark Lee	Nancy Pearson	Joe Bukowski	★★
Richard Farmer	Tamara Dillman	Glenn Ranfos	Tom Lodge	Marty McCaffrey	Lynn Reeves	Jim Crawley	★
Ted Flanders	Joanell Dyrstad	Steve Trego	Sherry Moerke	Rose Anne McCaffrey	Jack Spies	Fred De Mella	★★★★★
Chris Gibbons	Richard Embury	Greg Widney	William Neff	Dennis McKenna	Mark Storm	Mark Dillman	
Frank Grazier	Joe Esposito	Sheree Wolfinger	Gary Selzer	Gary Moerke	Gretchen Sunderland	Dick Doster	
Renee Gibbons	Ted Flanders	Wayn Nelson	John Simonieg	Chip Peterson	Karen Udvari	Randy Douet	★★★★★★
Bob Giffin	Gary Frost	Greg Widney	Ed Verminski	John Saitta	Allen Wade	Dave Dyke	
Sheryl Hatch	Tim Gibbons	Lenny Ziimka	Greg Widney	Craig Setter	Rich Willingmyre	John Fitzgerald	
David Hatch	Art Goodell		TWierzbanowski	Paul Whiting		Christine Fontaine	★
Tom Hay	Jim Gregory			Greg Widney		Bob Gariepy	★★
Scott Hutchins	Randy Hall		RED = Awards	Joseph Zurad		John Gettinger	★★★
Raymond Iannucci	Roz Hickey		This Month			Mike Gilger	★★
Jack Jonaitis	Don Harter					Tom Hickey	★
Dennis Jones	Jack Hinnenthal		Club Hats			Jim Hoffman	★
Fran Krausman	Larry Hofmeister					Margie Hoffman	
Buddy Krauss	Dave Joe					Jan Holm	
Jim Kunard	Shep Johnson		None This Month			Cathy Hunt	★★★★★
Patti Kunard	Lisa Kellythorne					Bud Johnston	
Richard Larson	Mike Knipe					Cindi Johnston	
Tim Locke	Ron Kruse					Rich Kale	★★★★★
David Morgan	Denys LaChance					Dennis Krausman	★★★★★
Bob Mueller	Kevin LaPointe					Kel Krotzer	★★★
Patricia Nalipi	John McFarland					Carl Leicher	
Ann Northen	David Morgan					Joe Maillet	
Connie Nowicki	Mike Nalipi					Pete McGregor	★★
Tony Nowicki	Randy Page					Bill Muir	
Chuck Pearson	Kim Pflaum					Jude Panetta	★★★★
Bruce Peterson	Paul Robinson					Tom Parsons	★★
Chris Pflaum	Lyle Ross					Gary Reeves	
Chris Pollinger	Hezzie Samons					Rick Sarkisian	★★★★★★★★★★
Dan Roda	Mike Sandling					John Stockinger	★
Doug Salminen	Deb Sarkisian					Donna Sullivan	★★★
Mark Schruer	Tom Schmitt					Ron Topper	★★★★★★
Alan Schulman	Gary Skillicorn					Joe Udvari	★★★★★★★★★★
Jess Searle	Lynne Stockinger					Aaron Wagner	
Miriam Taylor	Don Taylor					Mike White	★★★★★★
Patti Topper	Mike Trost					Jeff Wilson	★
Beth Watkins	Roxie Trost					John Wolfinger	
Joanne Widney	Mike Wagner						
Wanda Zimka	Stella Wagner						
	Greg Widney						
	S Wierzbanowski						
	Tom Youngblood						
	Wanda Zimka						

**LADDER
OF
ACHIEVEMENTS

JANUARY
2026**

(BOLD star = earned this year)

JANUARY RESULTS

MASTER ANGLER

MASTER ANGLERS TOURNAMENT, 2026 STANDINGS

PL AC E	AMBER JACK	BLACK DRUM	COBIA	GROUP -ER	KING MACK -EREL	RED- FISH	SEA- TROUT	SHEEPS -HEAD	SNOOK	SPANISH MACK- REL
1st				Donna Sullivan	31.0			Fred De Mella 19.0 Allen Wade 19.0	Fred De Mella 19.5	Tim Locke 23.0
2nd				Greg Widney	30.5		Jan Holm	18.0	Bobby Bretts 18.0	Joanne Widney 22.0
3rd				John Saitta	27.0		David Morgan	16.0	Allen Wde 17.0	

New this month are shown in Red



SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

FEBRUARY 2026

WELCOME FEBRUARY!

What do we love besides fishing....

warmer weather !!

HAPPY HOUR

EVERY WEDNESDAY

5PM

AT THE ELKS CLUB

GENERAL MEETINGS

General meetings are held on the
second Tuesday of each month

Mark your calendar

(Except NO July or December Meeting)

HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE
FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING ON

THE 10th!

AT PGICA



Membership Report For January 2026

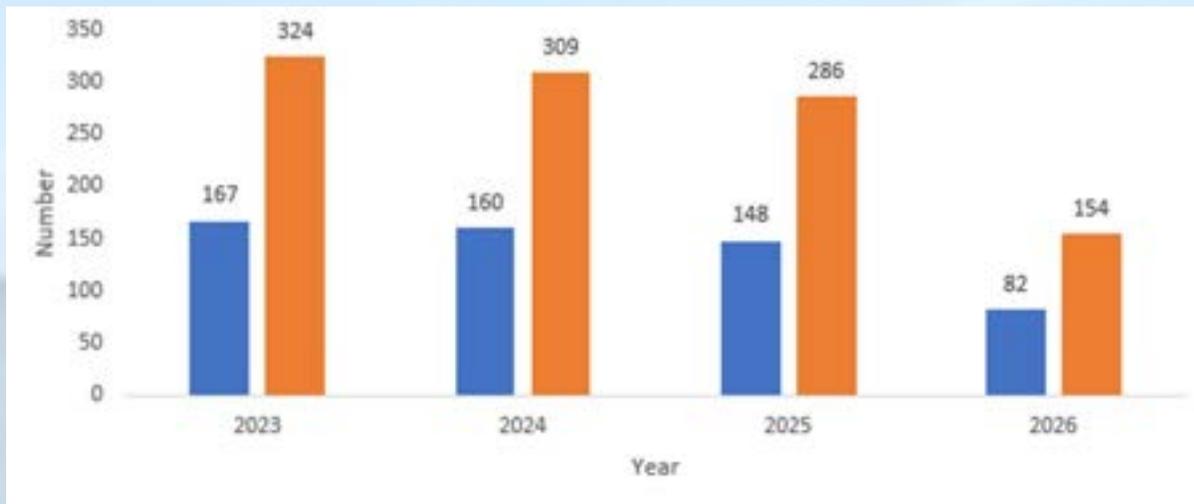


Please renew your membership if you are a long term member. You may do so at next weeks monthly meeting or drop a check at the PGICA for the Fishing Club.

We are gaining new members over the last several months. The snowbirds are returning. So if you are at a Fishing Club gathering and see a new face, please welcome the new folks and introduce them to the seasoned members. The member benefits from the club tournaments and Ladder of Achievement and fishing knowledge gained from the monthly technical meetings and social gatherings.

We have brought the PGICA Club Express into the PGI Fishing Club so now you can renew membership with a credit card by logging into the PGICA website. You can reset your password if you have forgotten your previous one. Members can also renew by check or cash at a Fishing Club meeting or by dropping off payment at the PGICA Club House at 2001 Shreeve.

If you owe payments to any PGICA club or event, then a red \$ will appear at login. Click the red \$ and pay the dues you might owe. Please let me know if you think there might be an error.



The membership report is per January 28, 2026 records. We are significantly ahead of January 2025 and 2024 membership renewals. The credit card payments seem to help.

The household cost is \$30 per year and membership has benefits, including: tournaments, Ladder of Achievement, fishing contests, great social activities and education at our general meetings.

Questions or corrections? Contact: Tim Locke, Membership director, membership@pgifishingclub.org

MEMBER WELFARE

THE PGI FISHING CLUB IS A CLUB OF THE PUNTA GORDA
ISLES CIVIC ASSOCIATION



We care! If you become aware of someone in the club that needs a reach-out for any reason, please let the Board know.

Your family of friends care about you.



CLUB LEADERSHIP



OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT	FRED DEMELLA	president@pgifishingclub.org
ACTING VICE PRESIDENT	GLENN RANFOS	vicepresident@pgifishingclub.org
TREASURER	LISA ROSS	treasurer@pgifishingclub.org
SECRETARY	PATTI KUNARD	pattijmk@comcast.net

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

ADVERTISING	<i>Vacant</i>	advertising@pgifishingclub.org
COASTAL CONSERVATION ASSN	BOB MAYES	cca.cmac@pgifishingclub.org
FISHING EVENTS	<i>Vacant</i>	fishingevents@pgifishingclub.org
GREETERS	<i>Vacant</i>	greeters@pgifishingclub.org
MEMBERSHIP	TIM LOCKE	membership@pgifishingclub.org
NEWSLETTER	JIM KUNARD	pattijmk@comcast.net
RECORD KEEPER	PAUL WHITING	recordkeeper@pgifishingclub.org
SOCIAL EVENTS	<i>Vacant</i>	socialdirector@pgifishingclub.org
WEBMASTER	RICHARD EMBURY	website@pgifishingclub.org

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS



It's fun to succeed! **One of the great things about our club are the members we have who are willing to take new members out for a day of fishing to help them learn our waters.** Below is a list of members that are willing to host you for a fishing trip in our local waters:

- **Gary Burgess (Harbor Only), g2873477@hotmail.com**
- **Gretchen Sunderland (Harbor Only, especially for beginner women), gretchensun2@gmail.com**
- **Fred De Mella (Inshore or Offshore) fdemella@gmail.com**



Contact them through email to arrange a trip.

Members, if you want to take another member out on your boat, please send your contact information to: president@pgifishingclub.org

CLUB LINKS

THE PGI FISHING CLUB IS A CLUB OF THE PUNTA GORDA

ISLES CIVIC ASSOCIATION



CLUB WEBSITE: <http://pgifishingclub.org>

**CLUB FACEBOOK: <http://facebook.com>, then
search for pgi fishing club**

**FISHING CONTEST RULES: [http://
pgifishingclub.org/wordpress/?page_id=30](http://pgifishingclub.org/wordpress/?page_id=30)**

**GENERAL INFORMATION: [http://
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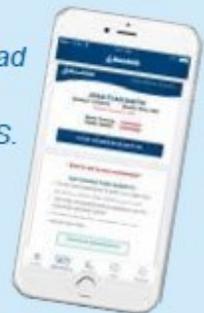
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Home



Beer, Wine & Cocktails
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Food Menu
Tradition meets Flavour



Darts
A Game of Skill & Beer

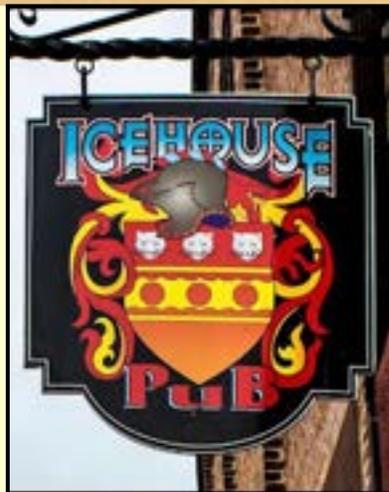


Shopping
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About
The Icehouse

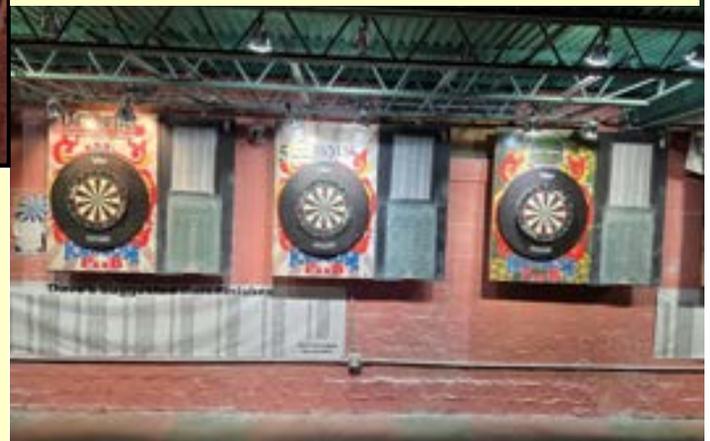
Built in the 1890s, the structure was used as an ice plant for the fishing industry. Hurricane Charley all but destroyed the building when it tore the roof off and the south wall collapsed, but the building's owner's refused to demolish this South Florida landmark pledging to rebuild it and-they-did.



If an English pub-style meal is what you crave, then the Ice House Pub should be your dining destination, with a full British themed menu of such staples as Fish 'n Chips, Cottage Pie, Bangers and Mash and the American favorites Cheese Burgers, Steak Sandwiches and Giant Salads.

"God made beer because he loves us and wants us to be happy"

Benjamin Franklin



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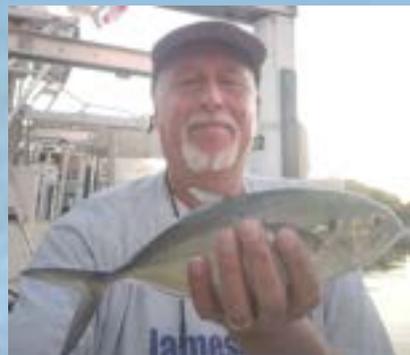
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