

## **First overnight at Sands Key**

With our successful shakedown cruise under the belt, we decided to go down to Sands Key and spend a Saturday night. After a nice sail down the bay, a sunset dinner and a good night's sleep, we prepared to get underway for the return to Rickenbacker Marina. Oops the Westerbeke diesel would not start. Battery voltage was down to about 12 V and was insufficient to get started. So a VHF call for assistance brought Captain Steve, who gave us a jump start that proved the oil water separator was overwhelmed and making the engine hard to start. After showing me how to drain the water from the Raycor to deliver dry fuel, the engine started and off we went. After a nice sail up the bay, I started the engine and just as we approached the Rickenbacker causeway, it failed again. I had already dropped the mainsail, so we tacked back upwind, Daphne took the helm, and I went below to drain water from the Raycor. After restarting the engine, we turned toward the bridge and managed to get under and turn to starboard toward the marina, finally into the slip before the engine died again. Getting into the slip was impossible without the engine as the spacing between piers was barely a boat length, and a hard reverse with the left-handed prop was needed to swing the stern to port. So we lucked out that engine stayed for the duration. Water in the fuel tank was a gremlin that haunted us for our entire life with Troubadour. Eventually, I made a portable fuel polisher with a pump and Raycor to periodically clean water from the fuel tank. Also at this point I learned the useable voltage range of lead acid batteries, and the importance of a backup/house battery that did not exist on boat at that moment.