



Almost 100 boats were displayed at the Lovers Key Boat Show Market Seafood Fest. The event took place by the boat ramp across from the state park.  
PHOTOS BY ANDREA STETSON/CORRESPONDENT

# Fifth annual Lovers Key Boat Show Market Seafood Fest raises money for local Rotary Club

**Andrea Stetson**  
Special to Naples Daily News  
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Almost 100 boats filled the field by the boat ramp at Lovers Key State Park for the annual Lovers Key Boat Show Market Seafood Fest.

Nautical items, boating supplies and clothing were sold by 62 vendors. The aroma of kettle corn filled the air.

This local boat show might be smaller than the larger shows in Miami, Fort Myers or Naples, but vendors and customers say it's better because it is local and more personal.

All the money raised from this fifth annual event went to Lovers Key State Park and to the Rotary Club of Bonita Springs.

"We have free parking. It's only a \$5 donation," said Bob Lombardo, event manager. "We are from Bonita and we are in Bonita. It is for the people of Bonita."

Lombardo said the Rotary Club of Bonita Springs organizes the event as a way to raise money for scholarships for students from Bonita.

"I'm very enthusiastic about this," he said.

The event featured creative nautical items such as Fresh Decks, which brought its neon yellow non-skid boat decking displays. There were driftwood carvings, tiles painted with beach and nautical scenes, fish carved from wood and more.

The boat show had the feeling of a small festival with its D.J., magician and food vendors.

Those that attended said they liked the small town feel of the event.

"It is not as crowded and it is not as hard to find a parking space," said Jean Taylor, who spends her winters in Bonita Springs and summers in Vermont.

"We are boaters," said Paula Higbee of Bonita Springs. We came for the combination of the wonderful food and the boats.

"The vendors are more relaxed and have more time to spend with you," said Steve Almeida, who is another Bonita Springs winter resident.

This year the Lovers Key Boat show will be the only small boat show in town. The 13th annual Bonita Bay Boat Show has been cancelled this year.

"We had to cancel. We didn't want to. It is sad," said Tibe Larsen, marina manager at Bonita Bay.



A variety of nautical items were for sale at the Lovers Key Boat Show Market Seafood Fest.



All the money raised from this fifth annual event went to Lovers Key State Park and to the Rotary Club of Bonita Springs.



Almost 100 boats were displayed at the Lovers Key Boat Show Market Seafood Fest.

The marina is constructing a fifth boat barn and with all the construction Larsen said there would be no room for the show and parking this year.

"We will bring it back for 2021," he said.

Bonita Springs will have its largest boat show March 5 to 8. The 31st annual spring show, is celebrating its eighth year being held in Bonita Springs.

This Bonita Springs Boat Show, at the Naples Fort Myers Greyhound Track, will have more than 300 boats on display. The event will have an \$8 per person entry fee.

"It will probably be a little larger than last year," said John Good, show manager. "It is just all the new boats. All the dealers will have all their latest and greatest."



Nautical items, boating supplies and clothing were sold by 62 vendors.