



Selfish or Self Care?

by Dawn Wiggins, Ed.S.

I got my oil changed last month. It was only 1,800 miles overdue. I had reasons, oh I had excellent reasons. "I live on an island. I can't be without my car. It takes too long. It's not that bad yet. If something were wrong, the check engine light would come on. Ugh, my husband should handle this." Sound familiar? Unfortunately, we use the same thinking when tending to personal maintenance. "It's too hard. I can't spare the time. I don't like to exercise. My bloodwork looks fine; I don't need to change my lifestyle yet. This pill should numb the pain." Your excuses are just that. Excuses. The bottom

line, if you don't change the oil, the engine explodes. Have you exploded lately? Have you melted down because you're overwhelmed, overtired, over-worked? Have you shouted at your spouse, your children, yourself? Or, do you silently simmer? Compounding matters, you're more concerned with your overdue oil change than the chatter in your mind. You're more willing to over-extend yourself than your vehicle. When did your vehicle become more important than YOU? Consider this a loving invitation to reprioritize. I love you. Will you love you?



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Conch Characters



Congratulations Jessi Behrendt and Lolo Ornelas of Blackwater Siren, 1st Place winners of the Key Largo Cook Off for Soups & Chowders. Photo by Kelly Hershey.



Chef Mitch of Gilbert's Resort carves some prime rib for a holiday party. He's single, ladies!



Lorelee Carpenter shows the sunset reflected through a crystal ball at Playa Largo. Photo by Denzel Flegelson.



Blackwater Siren crew enjoying their employee Christmas Party.



DJ Mel T of Sun 103.1 helps Michael Trixx with his floating table trick at Gilbert's.



Congratulations to Justin Rivas (left). This former server at Gilbert's is a new Monroe County Sheriff's Deputy!



Margo Arnold, Cricket and Serenity Magee, Eric Deland at the Elks' annual Children's Christmas Party. Everyone had a good time!



Marcy Scott shows off the giant barracuda she caught!

The Mangrove Galley
by Sandi Mieszczenksi

Sandi's recipes are featured here monthly. For previous issues go to <http://www.theconchtelegraph.com>.



My husband created this delicious but easy soup. It is better if prepared the day before, and we found that mixing the onions such as yellow, sweet, and red make a nice combination.



PAUL'S FRENCH ONION SOUP

- ¼ stick of butter
- 3 to 5 finely chopped garlic gloves
- 1 large diced onion
- 5 cans of beef broth
- 3 cans of consume
- 1 ½ cans of water
- 5 large sliced onions
- 2 tablespoons of catsup
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- Sprinkle of salt
- Sprinkle of cayenne pepper
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup of sherry (optional)



Melt the butter in a large stockpot. Sautee the garlic and diced onion. Add the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Then simmer until the onions are tender. Refrigerate overnight then heat the next day.

Cut French bread into ½ inch slices. Lightly spread extra virgin olive oil on each side and sprinkle with granulated garlic. Bake under a low broiler until slightly browned on both sides.

Ladle the soup into oven proof crocks placing the bread on the top. Add a slice of mozzarella on the top of the bread and broil until the cheese is melted and bubbly. Enjoy!

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