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PINE ISLAND *Continued from Page 5*

The island's current population of approximately 9,500 year-round residents is for the most part congregated in four basic communities:

MATLACHA: Pronounced Mat-la-shay, this sleepy fishing village still reflects the charm of days-gone-by, with bait shops, seafood signs, fishing nets drying in the sun, and shrimp boats, common sights year-round. Actually a small island in its own right that connects Pine Island proper to Cape Coral via bridges, Matlacha still depends on commercial fishing for its livelihood, as it has for decades. The old wooden swing bridge at Matlacha (finally connecting Pine Island with the mainland in 1927) is known as the "fishingest bridge in the world" and its more modern replacement, completed in 1968, continues to be a popular spot for anglers, with impressive catches of snook, redfish, trout, sheepshead and mangrove snapper, recorded year-round.

See **PINE ISLAND** *continued on Page 35*