



# The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

March 2008

## Intrepid Potters Venture Beyond the Golden Gate

by Carl Sundholm

In the last official Potter-Yachter Sail of the 2007 season, intrepid Potters sailed from Richmond venturing out under the Golden Gate Bridge into the Pacific Ocean and circumnavigated Angel Island in the process.

On the morning of November 3, 2007 at Richmond Marina, an impressively large fleet of more than 15 vessels appeared on Saturday morning. The boats that I noted showing up for this event included two P-19s (Fleet Captain Dave White and yours truly), many P-14 and 15s (Fleet Captain Don Person, Dan Phy, Jerry Barrilleaux, Rich McDevitt, Steve Potter, and Jim aka Goose), in addition to



several other honorary adopted Potters, including organizer David Mereidth and Kevin, each in their Compac 19s, Jim in his Montgomery 17, Brad in his Vagabond 17, and Dave Kautz in his ODay 19, with crew Terry Riener and son.

After an initial captains' conference on the dock regarding

the possibilities as narrowed by the light winds and tides, it was decided that the conditions were promising for following skipper Dave Kautz's suggestion to circumnavigate Angel Island and cross under and beyond the Golden Gate Bridge.

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With those lofty goals in mind, the fleet headed out of the Richmond Marina. However, when intermittent light winds made for some initial slow, and stop-and-go, sailing, the realization set in that some motor sailing would likely be necessary in order to accomplish any of these challenging tasks given the conditions. I made up my own mind to head straight for the Golden Gate, and proceeded in that direction by wind when I could make some headway and by motor

*(continued page 4: Potters Venture Beyond)*



## The Commodore's Log

**I**t happens every year about this time. The sun comes out, I go outside, and talk to Muddy Duck. I reassure the Duck that I haven't been ignoring her and try to do the little things that make her happy. I start by checking the trailer lights. After that, I jack her up and check the trailer wheel bearings. Fresh grease always brings a sigh of relief. This year I also bought two new tires. Then I pull off the boat cover and touch up paint and check all the rigging. Then I clean her up even though that was the last thing I did when bedding her down in the fall. I like to reassure her that we are in a committed "relationship."

I also hit the books and review the rules of the road. At my age and state of memory, it is a new experience every year. Lately, I've been thinking what I would do in a man overboard situation. I don't have a swim ladder on the stern and doubt I could use it even if I had one. That means bringing the poor sod aboard over the side. I'm thinking block and tackle lashed to the boom. More

on this later.

I hope you notice the new format of the newsletter. Now it is up to us to use it. Short blurbs on any great moments you've had sailing, or some technique or procedure you've developed, or interesting individual you've encountered sailing are always worth sharing with your fellow Potters.

A lot of interesting sails are on the schedule this year, and I hope you can make some of them. I'm all excited about the celebration of our 30th anniversary to be held in May. Also, the Redwood City sail in March is shaping up well. Then there's the sail with the Southern California Potters at Huntington Lake in August along with an interesting lunch being planned on the sail to Loch Lomond the same month. There's more but all are happening because of your sail hosts. Stay tuned for more to come.

See you on the water.



### EVENTS ON THE HORIZON:

Saturday **March 15:** Redwood City Day Sail to USS Thompson. Sail Host: Dave Kautz  
 Sunday **March 30:** Delta Day Sail. B&W Marina to Korth's Pirate Lair Marina. No host.

#### **Other events of interest . . . Tall Ships galore!**

The *Hawaiian Chieftain & Lady Washington* will be in the bay area for the next seven weeks: Feb. 21-March 5, San Francisco; March 6-23, Oakland; March 24-April 6, Redwood City; April 7-13, Sausalito.

The Privateer *Lynx* will visit northern California in a April and May: April 2-17, Monterey; April 19-27; Pillar Point/Half Moon Bay; April 28-May 4, Oakland; May 5-13, Antioch; May 14-21, Rio Vista; May 22-27, Encinal Yacht Club.

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# Snatched From the Maw of the Storm

Contribution by Gretchen Ricker

Our sail boat addiction is well known to our friends and family, so it was no surprise to anyone that Dan and I headed into the lair of this weekend's storm to check out a sailboat in snow laden Truckee. Having spied our query on Trailer Sailor last weekend we were anxious to check her out. Knowing I was leaving town the following Wednesday for almost a week and the owner was starting to get numerous calls on this desirable prize we decided to brave the weather and give it a try.

Why another boat, our friends asked and our children bemoaned? Well, it's a compromise. Aren't all boats a balance of compromise and desirability? Having owned many of the trailerables out there, a few of which still reside in our yard, (our house is real easy to spot), we decided that a Potter 19 answered most of our needs. Yes it has its own draw backs but the advantages far outweigh them.

We never intended to bring the boat home since the weather report showed a 60% chance of snow and towing a boat in the snow is foolish, right? The drive up went from bad to worse as the sun set. We negotiated through Sacramento at night in driving rain. Neither of us see well at night so it was a case of the blind guiding the blind at times. We made it to a hotel in Auburn and prepared for our ascent to Truckee in the early the next day.

The morning weather report gave us some relief. We had a clear window during the day but the storm would curl back up from the south and slam the area after nightfall. The trip up the mountain was thankfully uneventful. We gauged the road conditions and were pleased to see the snow melting as we crested Donner Pass at over 7000 feet. A quick lunch in Truckee and we drove over to see the boat for the first time. I won't drag you through the details of the negotiations. Suffice it to say



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we cut the deal and decided our window of opportunity for snatching the boat from snowy mountain was rapidly closing. The wind was picking up and the sun was heading down to the west.



We stopped twice to check the hubs. They were cool and all seemed well. Three hours later, in the dark and rain we were in traffic on I-80 and nearly to our hotel when Dan heard something. He said it sounded like a train rumbling near us. He rolled down the windows but all we heard was traffic and the hiss of rain. A missed turn took us into downtown Oakland where we became acutely aware of a howling coming from the trailer. Downtown Oakland is NOT a place to stop at night so, with the GPS telling us we were only three miles from our hotel; we gamely hauled the now screaming trailer down through the tube under the bay and into the parking lot of the Hampton Suites Hotel.

Flashlight in hand Dan examined the damage. The bearings were gone, specks of metal fanning out from the oil encrusted wheel hub mute testimony of their total destruction. Well, there was nothing to be done at seven o'clock at night so we checked in, munched cold cereal for dinner, and headed for bed.

Fortune shined the next morning. A West Marine store was only half a block away and the staff was immensely helpful. FIVE hours later we had two new hubs, bearings, and a whole new wheel. We thankfully made it to the last half hour of the annual meeting at the Oakland Yacht Club. Thanks to all who were there for their warm reception and knowing looks as we relayed our trials.

Lesson learned. Don't allow anything to pressure you to rush off with an unknown trailer. The boat looked great, the trailer looked great, but the weak link were the old, unserviced bearings with ten year old grease. We did ultimately make it home safe. Next week the badly damaged spindles will be replaced with new ones and the trailer will receive regular checks for grease and bearings from this point forward.



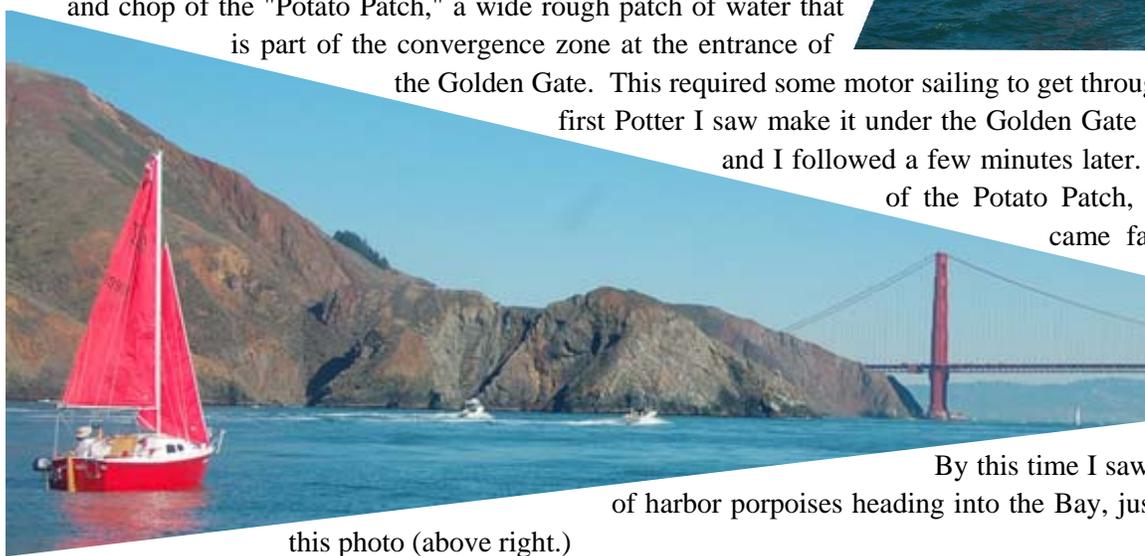
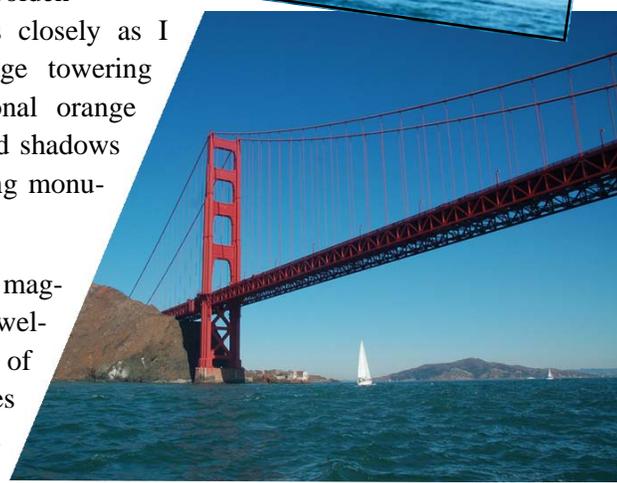
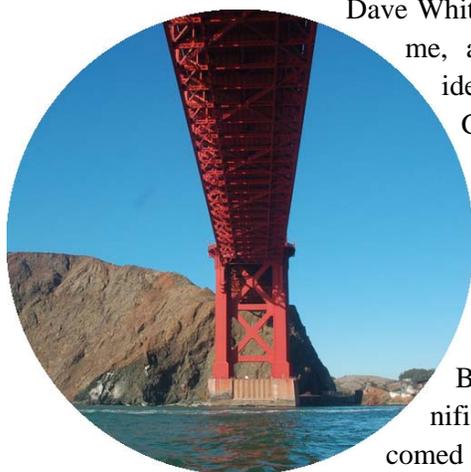
## *The Potter Yachter*

*Potters Venture Beyond (continued from page 1)*

sailing when I couldn't. On the way to Angel Island and Raccoon Strait, I saw Rich McDevitt had taken the southerly route to my port side with the Bay Bridge silhouetted in the background.

I then looked to my starboard and saw the familiar red sails of Dave Whites' Wee Boat just ahead of me, apparently with the same idea of making a bee-line to the Golden Gate, and resolved to follow as closely as I could. The Golden Gate Bridge towering above you, with its international orange color accented by highlights and shadows from the sun, is an awe-inspiring monument from the water.

But as you are looking up at this magnificent sight, suddenly you are welcomed by the Golden Gate as the hull of your boat is rocked and pounded by of the waves and chop of the "Potato Patch," a wide rough patch of water that is part of the convergence zone at the entrance of the Golden Gate. This required some motor sailing to get through. Dave White was the first Potter I saw make it under the Golden Gate at just before 1:00 p.m., and I followed a few minutes later. Once through the chop of the Potato Patch, the water suddenly became fairly calm and sailable.



By this time I saw Dave point out a group of harbor porpoises heading into the Bay, just in time for me to take this photo (above right.)

All in all, I spent more than an hour outside the Gate exploring the Marin Headlands to the north and the area to the south near Baker's Beach, the Cliff House and Ocean Beach, before heading back. Here's a photo of Seal Rocks and the Cliff House from the Water.



*(continued page 5: Potters Venture Beyond)*

*Potters Venture Beyond (continued from page 4)*

As usual, Dave White pushed the envelope and explored beyond the area I covered. He said he got so close to Seal Rocks and the Cliff House that he could hear the noise of the cars and people there.

Others also pushed their vessels through the chop and made it under the Golden Gate Bridge, including several courageous small-but-tough P-14 and P-15s. Below is a great photo by Rich McDevitt of Potter Grand Master Jerry Barrilleaux battling his way through the Gate for the fifth time the 33 years.

David Meredith took this historic shot of Rich McDevitt in his P-15 Minnow cruising back after conquering the Gate.



The award for best quote of this trip has got to go to Rich McDevitt: "Glad we did it. Now I don't have to do it again, and I can finally answer all the "hull kickers" at launch ramps, "do you go out the gate in that" OH HELL YES!



## Sorry You Missed It:

February 16th, a few Yachters were hosted by Pat Brannan at his Alameda home for the purpose of viewing the slide presentation assembled by Don Person for the annual meeting. This was a strictly social gathering for Pizza, a bit of the brew, and lots of conversation on any aspects of sailing that moved us.

Don suggested a little planning might go a long way toward making next year's presentation come off more smoothly. Seeing that planning seems to not be our strongest suit, I thought we might get a jump-start by collecting pictures throughout the year.

In support of this endeavor, your assignment, should you choose to accept it, is to forward your pictures to your newsletter editor to be archived for assembly into a slide presentation for the benefit of all. Send pictures to [jerrykergan@comcast.net](mailto:jerrykergan@comcast.net).

Please send in unedited, full resolution pictures—just as they come out of your camera. Full resolution images will project much better on the big screen.



# Redwood City DAY SAIL to USS Thompson

**Host:** Dave Kautz

**When:** Saturday, March 15th  
10:30 AM Launch Time

**Where:** Redwood City Marina.

**Fees:** \$5.00 Launch fee (bring exact change)

**Meals:** Picnic lunch aboard your boat.  
Dinner at Peninsula Yacht Club (see text)

**Distance:** Out Redwood City channel from the ramp to the Thompson is a bit under 6 miles.

**Phone #s:** Host, Dave Kautz ..... Cell: 650-575-7757  
Peninsula Yacht Club ..... 650-369-4410  
1536 Maple St, Redwood City, CA



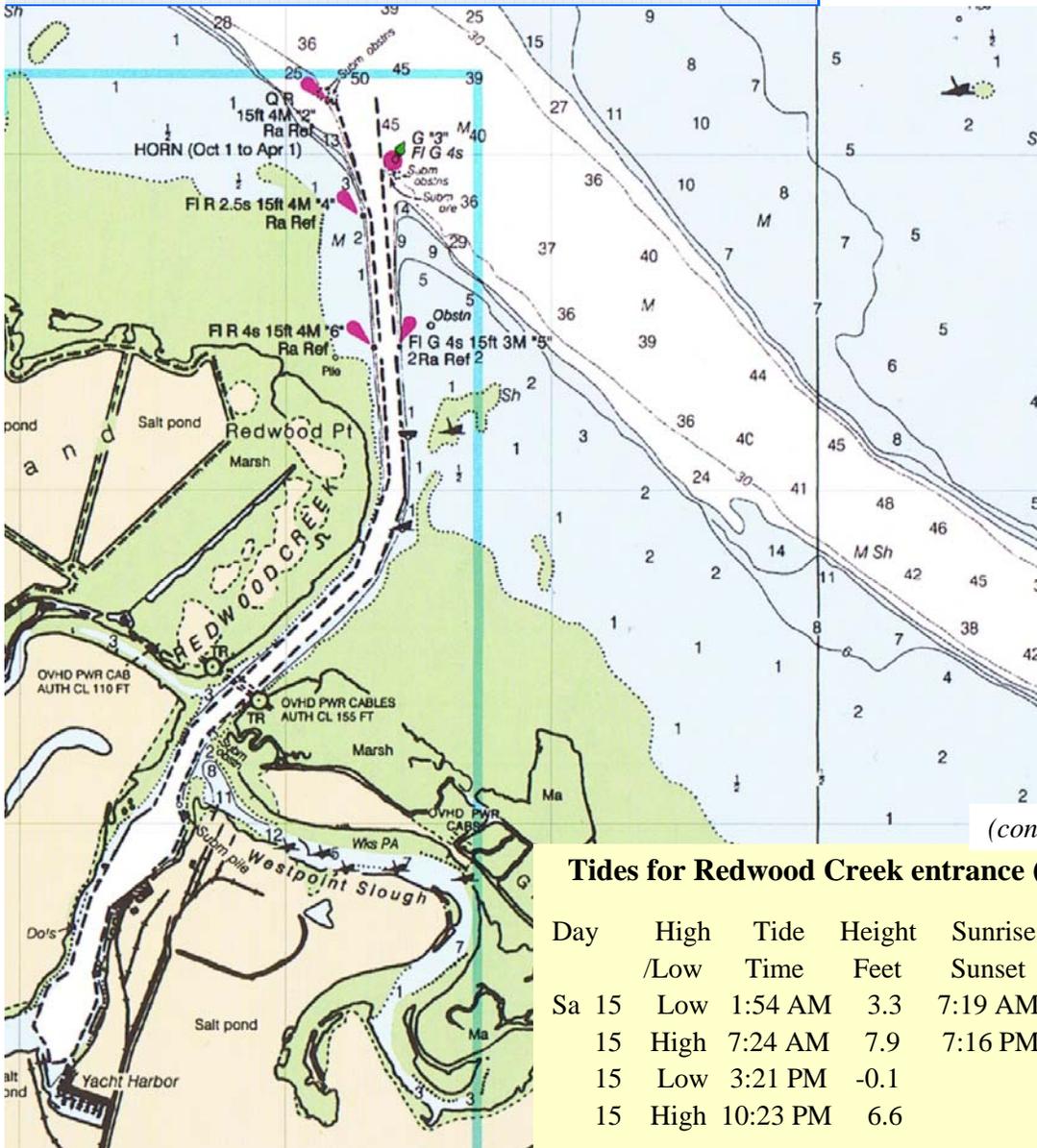
Come kick off the 2008 sailing season with the Potter Yachters on March 15<sup>th</sup> for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual USS Thompson Picnic Sail. Weather and conditions permitting, lets plan to

set sail at about 10:30 AM from the Redwood City launch ramp. Since most of us "found the bottom" last time, this year we'll head farther out the channel to Mark #3 at which point we will turn due East across the Bay for the Thompson. The Thompson should be visible

on the horizon from the channel The 15<sup>th</sup> will have low tide in the mid afternoon (but thankfully, not as low as last year), so plan for mild ebb currents (< 2 kts.) on both the outbound and inbound trips.

Should it be too windy or bumpy for a sail across the open Bay to the Thompson, or for sailors who would prefer not to go that far, Redwood City offers a sailing venue that includes several miles of sheltered water sailing in the Redwood Creek shipping channel, the harbor turning basin and adjacent sloughs. Sailors planning to make the trip to the Thompson should bring

(continued page 8: Redwood City)



## Tides for Redwood Creek entrance (inside) March 15, 2008.

Day	High /Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise /Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible
Sa 15	Low	1:54 AM	3.3	7:19 AM	Set 3:44 AM	55
15	High	7:24 AM	7.9	7:16 PM	Rise 1:05 PM	
15	Low	3:21 PM	-0.1			
15	High	10:23 PM	6.6			

# DELTA DAY SAIL

**Host:** No Host

**When:** Sunday, March 30th  
10:00 AM Launch Time

**Where:** B&W Marina Resort (964 Brannan Island Road, Isleton) to Korth's Pirate Lair Marina (169 West Brannan Island Road, Isleton).

**Fees:** \$15.00 launch & parking at B&W

**Meals:** Lunch at Shoals Café, Korth's Marina or Picnic

**Distance:** B&W to Korth's is about three miles south on the Mokelumne River.

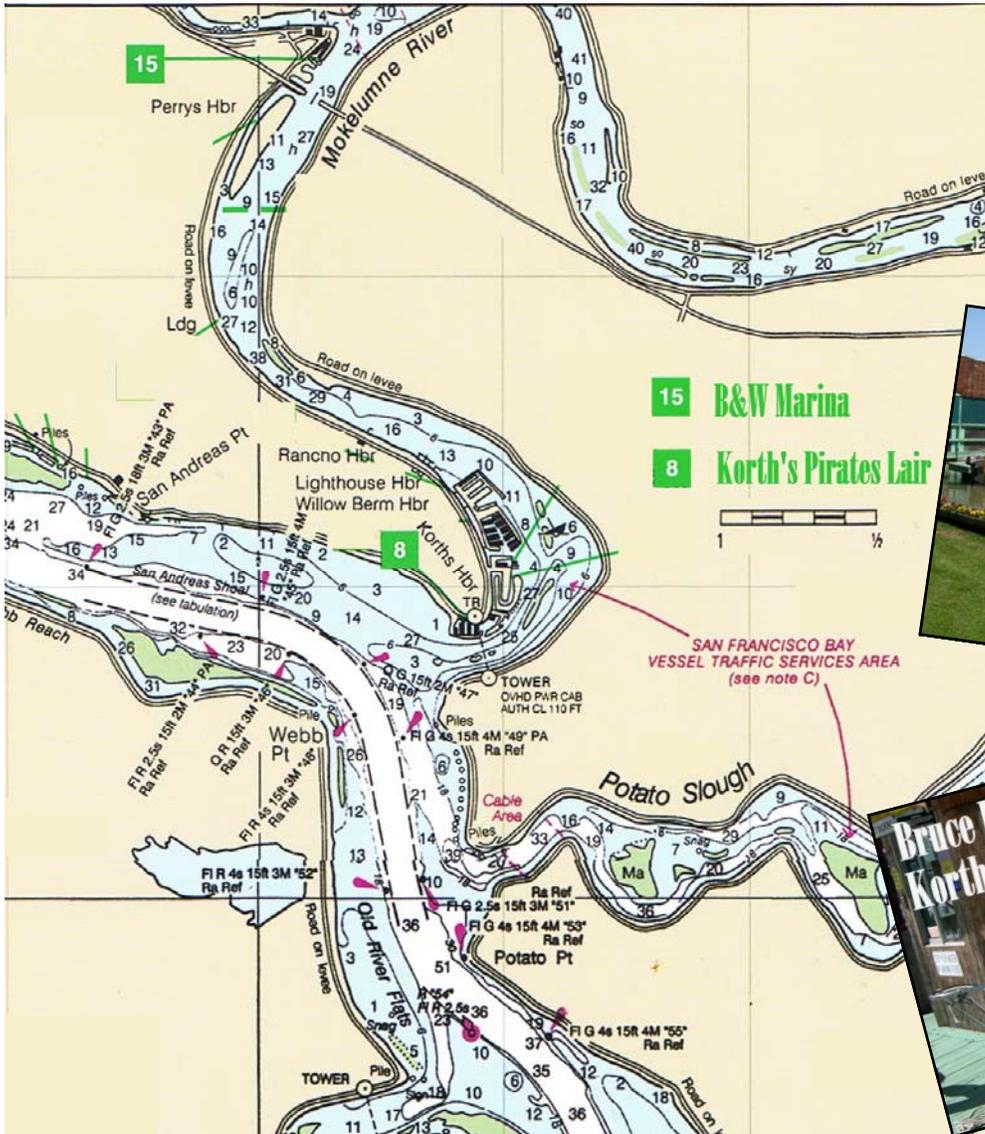
**Phone #s:**  
B&W ..... 916-777-6161  
Korth's ..... 888-776-6464

Sailing on the Delta in the Spring can be fantastic. The weather usually cooperates, and the crowds haven't yet arrived. Hopefully, Sunday, March 30, will be one of those days.

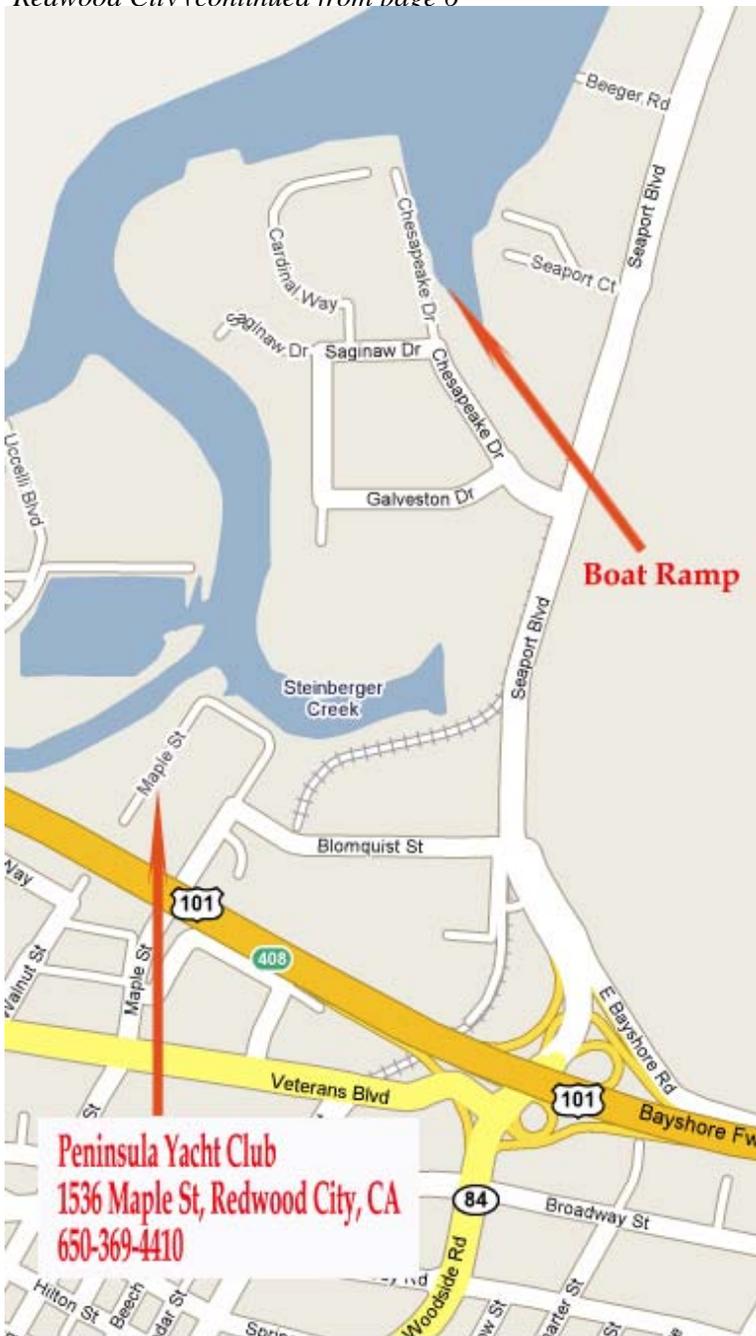
We will launch from B & W Marina around 10 A.M. B & W charges \$15 for launching and parking. From there we will sail under the bridge and head for Korth's Pirate's Cove Marina a short sail away. The Shoals Cafe at Korth's is open for breakfast and lunch, and has a good view from the upper deck.

B & W is located about 20 miles northeast of Antioch. Take CA-4 towards Stockton and merge onto CA-160 near Antioch. Go over the toll bridge and head for Rio Vista. Take Highway 12 east towards Lodi and Stockton. Look for the Delta Loop signs and turn left onto Brennan Isle Road.

Hope to see you there!



Redwood City (continued from page 6)



an anchor, a picnic lunch and a camera. Folks staying close to the harbor can convene for lunch at the Waterfront Restaurant at Pete’s Harbor.

After the sail, we have an invitation to join the Peninsula Yacht Club for their St. Patrick’s Day Dinner and Party. As you might expect, it is Corn Beef and Cabbage and the cost will be \$10 per person. The bar will be opening at 4PM. The Peninsula Yacht Club is located just over a mile from the Redwood City Municipal Ramp. Please see the map (left) for the directions to get there. If interested in attending the dinner, please let me know so I can give the yacht club an approximate head count.

To get to Redwood City, take freeway 101 to the Woodside Rd./Seaport Blvd. turnoff and follow the signs onto Seaport Blvd. Make a left onto Chesapeake Dr .(you will be entering the Britannia Seaport Centre Industrial Park) and follow Chesapeake straight down until it ends – at that point the ramp will be on your right and the parking lot on your left. The launch fee is \$5 which is paid via self-service envelope, so bring exact change. A couple cautions – Like many municipal facilities, Redwood City is suffering from deferred maintenance. The older wooden dock on the south side is showing some damage to the rubbing strip and the rail on which one ties the boats is not secure for it’s full length. The trees adjacent to the turning circle and ramp have grown to the point where some branches The trees adjacent to the turning circle and ramp have grown to the point where some branches are overhanging the roadway enough to catch a mast of an unwary boat launcher. Please be careful.

Come on out and have a good time!

Dave Kautz



## New Event Notice Format

Over the past couple of years, your editor, being relatively new to sailing and the Potter Yachter community, has at times, felt a bit of discomfort venturing to the uncharted locals where Yachters gather. In this issue I am testing a format for event pages intended to make attending club functions a bit more user friendly for folks attending our functions for the first time. The *blue box* is provided as a quick reference for details; hosts will be encouraged to provide their cell phone numbers for day of the event contact. In this issue the format includes a chart of sailing locations and tide table where applicable. My thinking is that these pages can printed and taken along for reference the during the event.

I encourage input from readers in the hope that this format can be made even more useful. Please send your comments and suggestions by e-mail.





Patrick Brennan  
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Alameda, CA 94501

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## With a Grain of Salt

The **Potter Yachter** is a forum for exchange of ideas and information among West Wight Potter (and other mini-yacht) sailors. But we Potter Yachters are mostly a bunch of amateurs finding our way by trial and error and luck.

You will probably find some very helpful tips or ideas in the Potter Yachter that will enhance your sailing experience, but you may also find some ill-advised suggestions or ideas that just don't work for your particular boat, your sailing environment, your level of sailing experience, or your boat-working skills. So please understand that any sailing tutorials, suggested boat modifications, recommended cruises, etc., are the opinion of the author, based presumably on his or her personal experience and judgment at the time the article or letter was written.

If a Potter Yachter believes s/he has a good idea and submits it to the newsletter for publication, we will usually pass it on to the rest of you in the newsletter, but take it "with a grain of salt" and a large portion of your own good judgment, and perhaps get a second opinion before undertaking a modification or cruise or sailing technique you read about in the **Potter Yachter** (or any other publication) - *The Editor*