



# The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Longest Lasting West Wight Potter Club in the World

August 2014

## Cruiser Challenge XV: Fifteen Years and Going Strong by Carl Sundholm



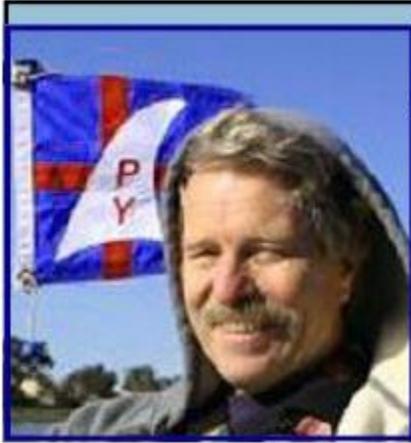
It was fifteen years ago in November of 1999 that our own Jerry Barrilleaux challenged a Montgomery 17 sailor bragging about how his boat could sail circles around a West Wight Potter 19, and the first Cruiser Challenge was initiated in the Oakland Estuary. Jerry and his West Wight Potter 19 *Sunshine* won that race and the Cruiser Challenges have become one of the most anticipated annual sailing events on the West Coast, especially since Commodore Judy Blumhorst shifted the venue to beautiful Monterey Bay in 2003. Thank you Jerry and Judy!

On the Friday before, as I was driving down to Monterey for this year's Cruiser Challenge with my Potter 19 *Dagmar* in tow, I was thinking of all the wonderful times we have had at past Monterey

*(continued on page 7)*

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## The Commodore's Corner

By Carl Sundholm

So how serious a race do we want the Cruiser Challenge to be?

This year's Cruiser Challenge XV in Monterey brought back the recurring competition between the West Wight Potter and the Montgomery sailboats.

While the official ethos of the Cruiser Challenge is that it is not a serious race, but rather an informal and relaxed event aimed at getting together and having fun on the water in Monterey, there is still a detectable undercurrent of sailing competition.

In truly serious racing between different kinds of sailboats, the race times are recorded down to the second and a time-on-time handicapping system is applied to determine the actual winners, which means that the first boat to cross the finish line is not necessarily the winner of the race. The idea is to equalize the sailboats and make sailing ability determine the race outcome.

With that in mind and having a curious mind, I began to wonder how the Potter and the Monty sailboats compared with regard to their rated sailing handicaps.

While there are two different sailboat racing handicapping systems primarily used in the US, the Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (or "PHRF") and the Portsmouth Yardstick numbers (or "D-PN"), the Portsmouth Yardstick is generally used for sailboats 20' and smaller, so it would be the appropriate measure for a race like the Cruiser Challenge. [The conversion formula is  $D-PN = (PHRF / 6) + 55$  and  $PHRF = (D-PN - 55) \times 6$ ].

With a rough par baseline of 100, a Portsmouth Yardstick handicap number is assigned to different sailboat models based upon data and factors including hull shape, length on the water, and sail size, with a higher number indicating a slower boat. Some scales have differing numbers for different wind conditions. According to the US Sailing website, the current base Portsmouth numbers for the Potter and Montgomery sailboats are:

Montgomery 15 D-PN = 108.2

Montgomery 17 (TM) D-PN = 100.7

West Wight Potter 15 D-PN = 138.1

Montgomery 17 Fl. Deck = 95.8

Montgomery 17 D-PN = 104

West Wight Potter 19 D-PN = 105.5

The handicap is applied to the time taken to sail the race course, and the corrected time can be used to compare widely different sailboats on even terms. The formula is easy to use:

$CT (Corrected Time) = ET (Elapsed Time) \times 100 / HC (Handicap)$

Source: <http://www.ussailing.org/racing/offshore-big-boats/portsmouth-yardstick/#sthash.5evz8B0F.dpuf>

The starting point for applying the handicap weighting would be for the race committee to record the actual race times in minutes and seconds for each boat finishing the Cruiser Challenge race course. Presently, only the finishing order is recorded, although in certain past Cruiser Challenges times were recorded (and theoretically race results could be re-computed using the Portsmouth Yardstick). And there is always the question of how do we rate non-standard boats with customized larger masts, booms, and sails?

So, the question is: So how serious a race do we want the Cruiser Challenge to be?

Sometimes getting too serious takes the fun out of the sailboat race, but perhaps just re-instating the recording of the race times for each boat again and noting any non-standard improvements in mast or sail size, instead of just recording the order of finishing might make “Monday Morning Quarterbacking” a little more interesting. But this ultimately comes down to issues of practicality, extra work, and how challenging it would be for the race committee to take down the start and finish time of each boat whilst bobbing around in the Monterey swells. Seasickness pills anyone? – 

Calendar Committee is Accepting Photo Submissions

**Calling All Shutterbugs!**

We need your photos for the Potter Yachter calendar. We’d like to select a total of 13 photos from 13 different photographers. The end of the year is just four months away, and the selection committee needs time to gather, review, and select the photos, not to mention getting the whole thing printed! Send your high quality, digital images to [Don Person](#) (or Carl, Rob, or Phil). You can email them, ship a USB stick by USPS, send them by reliable carrier pigeon, or hand deliver them; just get us some pictures!

Officer's Club		
<b>Commodore:</b> Carl Sundholm sundholm@att.net P-19, <i>Dagmar</i>	<b>P-15 Fleet Captain:</b> Don Person dnjperson@comcast.net P-15, #2472, <i>Sarah Anne</i>	<b>Newsletter Editor:</b> Phil Marcelis sail@marcelis.com P-19, #1487
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<b>Secretary/Treasurer:</b> Pat Brennan pat-brennan@sbcglobal.net ComPac Legacy, #1, <i>Latis</i>		<b>Website:</b> www.potter-yachters.org

Club Events on the Horizon for 2014	
August 2 (Sat)	Richmond-SF Bay Day Sail ( <i>Neil</i> ) <i>Generally intermediate, but depends on the destination and the weather; generally we sail to Angel Island or north to San Rafael depending on the tides, but the closer we get to the Golden Gate or going out the Golden Gate, we are talking advanced; mostly individuals decide for themselves on getting the feel of the conditions</i>
August 9 (Sat)	Dingy Delta Ditch Run – Rio Vista to Lake Washington <i>(NOTE: not a Potter Yachter Event)</i>
August 30 (Sat)	<b>*CANCELLED*</b> Huntington Lake Sail (due to lack of water) <i>Neil has suggested an alternate sail in the Eureka area. See page 15.</i>
Sept. 6 (Sat)	Clipper Cove ( <i>Carl</i> ) <i>Typically an easy day sail with a picnic at Clipper Cove, although it has been intermediate due to wind on occasion</i>
Sept. 27 (Sat-Sun)	Tomales Bay Overnight ( <i>Eric</i> ) <i>Generally easy; the overnight is spent either anchoring-out off Tomales Beach or in the boat pulled up to the beach</i>

Upcoming: Clipper Cove on September 6th  
**Come Enjoy the Sail & Picnic!**

By Carl Sundholm, Sail Host



The Potter Yachters are scheduled to do the “Grand Street Alameda Ramp to Picnic on Clipper Cove Beach” sail on Saturday, September 6, 2014.

We should meet up at Grand Street Marina Boat Ramp around 9:00 a.m. Be sure to bring picnic lunches and supplies, beach chairs, etc. Also bring extra gas in case we have to motor.

**Directions** to Grand St. Ramp, Alameda  
**Take I-880 toward Oakland/Alameda, then...**  
**Southbound:** Exit at 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave/Alameda, merge onto Kennedy St., then follow **Cross Bridge** below.  
**Northbound:** Exit at 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave, U-Turn at the light.  
Take 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave over the freeway, then...  
**Cross Bridge:** Continue slight right onto 29<sup>th</sup> Ave/Park Street, cross Park St. Bridge, then turn Right at Clement Street. Go straight on Clement until it ends and then, Turn Right on Grand Street. Continue straight to launch ramp.



(‘Clipper Cove’ continued from page 4)

## A little Potter-Yachter History of the Clipper Cove Sail

(Reprinted in part from prior issue of the Potter Yachter)

Like so many other ideas for Potter-Yachter adventures, the Clipper Cove sail looks to have been first suggested by Jerry Barrilleaux as an overnighter at a January 9, 1983 lunch at Victoria Station during an Oakland Estuary sail ([Potter Yachter News \(“PYN”\) Jan 1983:1](#)).

The next month, editor Terry Gotcher announced the overnight Treasure Island Cove sail was to take place on March 5 & 6. “This sail will involve an overnight raft-up at Treasure Island cove . . . This overnighter will be a first time at this location for the Potters” and Terry goes on to state it would be a Potter-Yachter “first” for a raft-up overnight (because TI cove is day use only) and a first for a rendezvous sail where people start in different locations. ([PYN Feb 1983:2](#)):

Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate and the first Clipper Cove sail was cancelled twice before finally being rescheduled to May 14 and 15, 1983, when it finally took place despite a forecast of 25 knot winds ([PYN Apr 1983:1](#); [May 1983:3](#)). Bill Wight anchored his 32’ sloop *Forever* in the cove and all the Potters rafted up to it for the overnight. The overnighthers were Bill and Joyce Wight, Frank Winans, Don Bergst, Gwen and Tina Singh, Bill Sprietsma, Terry Gotcher and Jim Kato, and the day trippers were John Graham, Barbara Simpson, Stan Butler, Fred Richter, and Mike Bartunek. ([PYN May 1983:3-4](#)).

After that first one, the Treasure Island/Clipper Cove overnight repeated intermittently until 1989, when it appears that a less than pleasant episode resulted in the overnight not being repeated. The review read: “May 6-7: Treasure Island Cove. Don Bergst, #797; Richard McDevitt, P- 19 #468; Wendell Spence, Montgomery 15, #119; Cy Eaton, #629. Sticky mud anchoring, soggy cockpits, 20 knot winds, pretty good sized waves.” (PYN Jan 1989:1). Jerry Barrilleaux mentioned it as a possible overnight option to the “Chicken Bay” sail in the June 1993 PYN at pg. 1, but it is not clear whether it ever actually occurred.

The next time I found the Clipper Cove sail mentioned was in the [September 2005 PYN](#) at pg. 1, but this time as a day sail from Grand Street Alameda to beach on Clipper Cove for a lunch picnic to observe the jet aerobatics during the October 8th Fleet Week. It received a quite favorable review in the Potter-Yachter ([PYN Nov 2005:4](#)) and appears to have become a staple sail independent of Fleet Week after that. – 



### Member comments:

I remember the 1989 event. It was a raft up, but not much sleeping took place. Cy spent the night sewing his sails by candlelight. The following day conditions were forecast to be worse with a small craft advisory and 25+ winds. I headed back to the Alameda Grand Avenue ramp early the next morning. Others had launched from Berkeley and Emeryville and headed off there also.

Back then Clipper was under Navy control. They had a skeet range out over the water for USN folks to use. Not being so smart I happened to motor right into it, not noticing the pennants. Once they hailed me on a PA and I figured out on the chart what I had done, I moved out post haste with much embarrassment but happy to not be picking buck shot out of my topsides. – Rich McDevitt

Upcoming: Join the Potter Yachters at Marina Bay Yacht Harbor

# Richmond Sail – August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014

[Neil is 'herding the cats' again. Here's the info. – Editor]

It's still "on". Launch from the usual Richmond Inner Harbor. Low tide is at around 10:30am, so it will be rising throughout the day.

Bring a \$10 bill to feed the machine at the entrance to the marina parking lot.

I am going to suggest to the group that we arrive at around 10:00am to rig, and launch at around 11:30ish. Then we can either sail in the inner harbor or go with the current towards Red Rock. I'm not opposed to Angel Island... be sure to bring plenty of cash because there are plenty of opportunities for the park / concessionaires to take your money.

Every year there is typically a group of people that overnight – even arriving Friday. I can't do that myself, but I would suggest that the P19 crowd think about getting there Friday if possible and then you'll be in the water and free to get out and sail if there's enough wind.

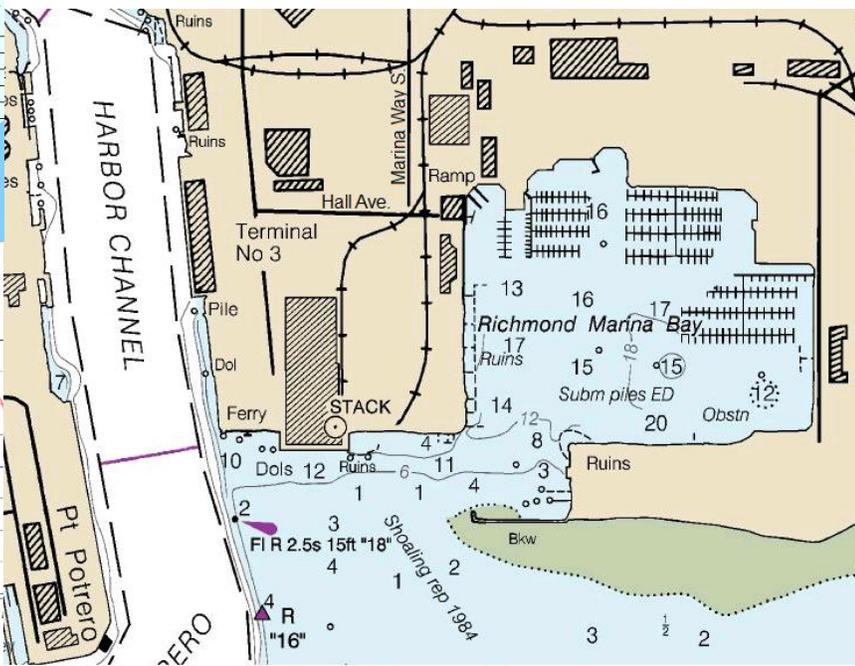
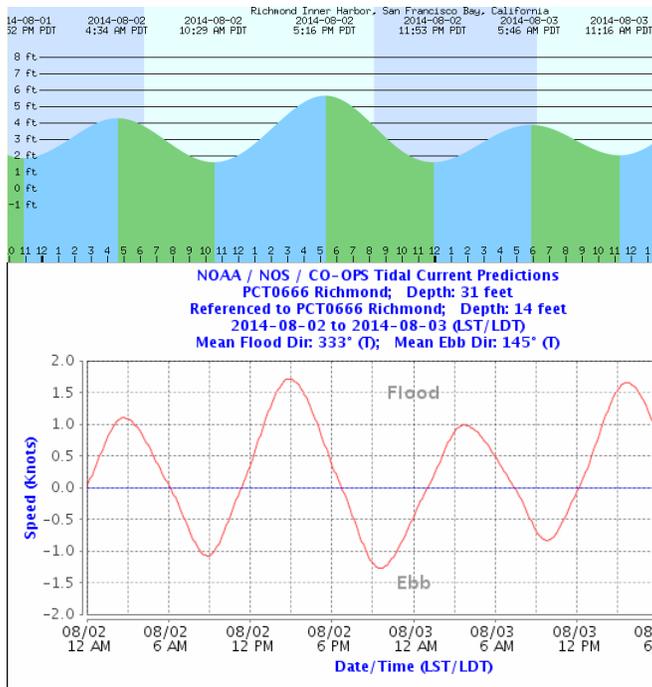
We will monitor CH 68, so keep your ears open for us to herd the cats together.

[It should go without saying, but please charge your handheld VHF and/or cellphone and check your "hardware", especially your outboard motor, to make sure you are prepared for whatever conditions we might encounter. Bring suitable outerwear to avoid getting cold or wet. –Ed.]

The [NOAA Chart for the area](http://www.charts.noaa.gov/InteractiveCatalog/nrnc.shtml) is available online for free: <http://www.charts.noaa.gov/InteractiveCatalog/nrnc.shtml>

We launch at [Marina Bay Yacht Harbor](#):  
1340 Marina Way South, Marina Bay, CA  
Phone: (510) 236-1013  
Hours: Monday - Sunday 9am to 5pm  
Guest slips are typically available:  
\$.50 / foot, minimum \$12 / night

**Directions** to Marina Bay ([www.mbyh.com](http://www.mbyh.com))  
Cross street: Marina Way South and Hall Ave.  
**From Marin:**  
I-580 E across the Richmond/San Rafael Bridge (towards Richmond/Oakland)  
Exit at Marina Bay Parkway  
Turn Right onto Marina Bay Parkway  
Turn Right onto Regatta Blvd.  
Turn Left onto Marina Way South  
**From San Francisco/Oakland:**  
I-80 E/I-580 W  
Take the Pt. Richmond/San Rafael Exit onto I-580 W  
Exit at Marina Bay Pkwy/S 23rd St  
Turn Left onto Marina Bay Pkwy  
Turn Right onto Regatta Blvd.  
Turn Left onto Marina Way South  
**From Sacramento:**  
Exit I-80 at Cutting Blvd.  
Turn Right onto Cutting Blvd.  
Turn Left onto Marina Way South



## *The Potter Yachter*

(‘Cruiser Challenge’ continued from page 1)

Cruiser Challenges and really looking forward to this one.

As I pulled into the Monterey Harbor parking lot, I was again reminded of the absolutely fantastic job that Jim (“Goose”) Gossman has been doing as Cruiser Challenge Coordinator of this event for the Potter Yachters. Normally it is a near impossibility to find a parking place for your vehicle and boat in this crowded parking lot, but there was



Goose with parking spaces cordoned off for the arriving Potter Yachters and other race participants. It is such a pleasure to just pull into a reserved space rather than circling around competing with crazed parking hungry tourists thicker than flies. It was wonderful to relax and chat with good friends and renew old acquaintances without worrying about parking. Goose deserves the utmost kudos for this and many other improvements that have made Cruiser Challenge better each year.

In the parking lot on Friday, we witnessed Stan Sussman’s “not so secret weapon” being raised on his Montgomery 17 *Paintboy*: a very large towering carbon fiber mast that plants directly into a cabin reinforced fitting so that no shrouds are required to support the mast. Now

Stan is one of the best sailors at Cruiser Challenge, so this is a little bit of “over-kill” but it is fun to watch him “push the envelope” to see what can be done along the lines of cutting edge technology.

Feeling a little bit of mast envy, I checked in with the Harbormaster and got *Dagmar* into a slip on the end of B dock. Rafted up with three other P19s and John Chille’s beautiful West Wight Potter 14, *Dagmar* felt right at home.



It was fun to linger and enjoy many conversations with good friends at the harbor, and to watch my daughter, Anna, enjoy the sun aboard *Dagmar*.

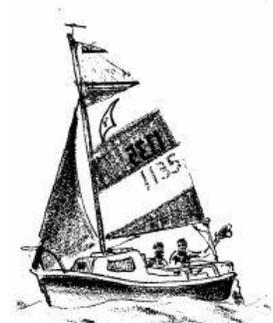


The next morning I arrived at the dock to finish setting up *Dagmar* and headed for the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club for the morning pre-race captains' meeting.

My son, Sam, was not able to make it to crew with me this year, so when Mike Swartz offered to crew with me I gladly offered him *Dagmar's* tiller due to his superior sailing abilities and because it freed me to take photographs. It was really great sailing with Mike and it significantly improved *Dagmar's* finishing position in the race; but I'm getting ahead of myself.

As we headed out, I enjoyed seeing Harry Gordon's colorful new sail which he acquired from our resident sailmaster, Judy Blumhorst of Hyde Sails.

There were also some very colorful entrants this year, including Monty 15 *Eye of Infinity*.



## *The Potter Yachten*

The first race (and as it turned out, the only one that counted), was a straightforward and simple race from the committee boat near the pier to the Mile Buoy and back. However, the unusual wind pattern was an offshore or land breeze from the east to the west. As a result, it was a straight line race with little or no tacking.



Photo by Rob Sampson

The small boats hit the starting line first, with a good grouping of starters.

Bruce McDevitt opened up an early and considerable lead, but Dan Phy and Dave Bacon in *Six* did a masterful job in playing catch up.



Photo by Rob Sampson

When the mid-sized boats hit the starting line, Mike Swartz and I focused on trying to keep up with Jerry Barrilleaux and crew Russell Swartz on *Sunshine*. Initially Dennis Vaders took the lead, but Jerry B was determined to overtake him.



Photo by Rob Sampson



After the buoy, Stan Sussman and Paul Bear in Stan's Monty 17 *Paintboy* employed their not-so secret weapon: their gigantic carbon fiber mast and the massive sail it supported. Although they passed the buoy behind us, the downwind performance of the enormous sail blew them right in front of us.

The finish line was easy to spot from a distance and this made the race much more organized and easy to sail.

After the first race was successfully completed, the second race was never officially finished due to problems that participants had in locating minor buoys and a capsized couple in a Potter 15, which luckily did not result in any injuries.



So, all awards were based upon the first race only, except the guts and glory award which went to the unfortunate couple.

The awards dinner at the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club was very enjoyable and went very well. Eric Zilbert and Lisa Erskine had fun reading out the raffle ticket numbers and handing out the raffle prizes.



Commodore Carl welcomed the troops and talked about the history of Cruiser Challenge. Afterwards, the race winners were announced.



For the small boat class it was (1) Dave Bacon and Dan Phy, (2) Bruce McDevitt, and (3) Jim Kirwan and Dennis Kirwan.

The medium sized sailboat awards were won by (1) Sean Mulligan, (2) Jerry Montgomery, and (3) Jerry Barrilleaux and Russell Swartz.



The large sailboat race winners were (1) Stan Sussman with Paul Bear, (2) Dick Galland, and (3) David and Sharon Soule.

A great time was had by all, and to top it off the day was concluded by a magnificent sunset. (And here are photos from different photographers to prove it.)

The Dory Taylor Memorial Cup Race on Sunday had even better weather and was a complete success, although I was committed to family time at the Monterey Bay Aquarium and was only able to see it from a distance.

We had a fantastic time and thanks go out to Jim “Goose” Gossman, Eric Zilbert, Lisa Erskine, all of our wonderful sponsors, and especially to the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club, Bob Furney, and all the others who helped. Thank you all! – 

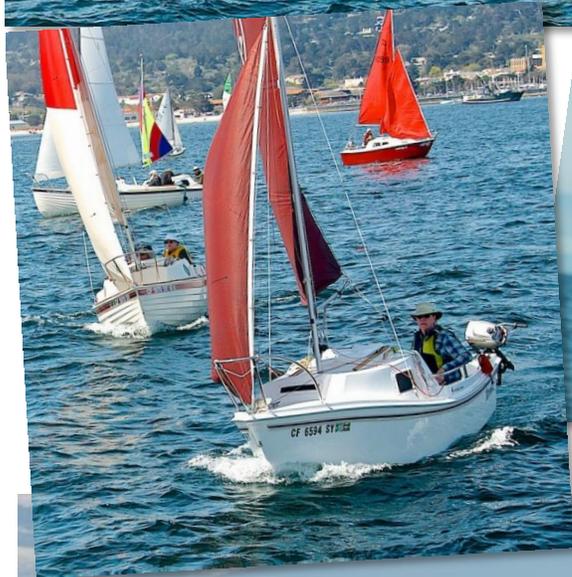


### ***Corporate Sponsor Acknowledgements***

The Potter Yachters sincerely thank those who generously sponsored this year's Cruiser Challenge. Please show your appreciation by sending some business their way. And, mention that you know they supported the Cruiser Challenge! It never hurts to encourage them to continue their sponsorships.

- International Marine
- Small Craft Advisor
- Spyderco
- Montgomery Boats
- Good Old Boat Magazine
- Hyde Sails
- Sage Marine
- RudderCraft

Photos! You know it was a great Cruiser Challenge weekend when people send you so many incredible photos that you can't possibly fit them all into the newsletter. But I'll try...



**Left:** Spectators on One Mile Buoy  
**Clockwise from far left:**  
Rich McDevitt (P15) and Dan Phy with Dave Bacon (Monty 15) at the start; Goose, Rich, Harry, Jerry, and Neil five minutes to start; Jim and Dennis Kirwan and Harry Gordon; everyone heads back to the marina. (Photos on this page by Don Person)





Photos on this page by Rob Sampson





Photos by Don Person (captured in the photo below by Rob Sampson)

From the Forum

Anyone up for Humboldt Bay over Labor Day Weekend?

**TwoCan** 4 Jul 2014, 2:36 PM | Views: 105

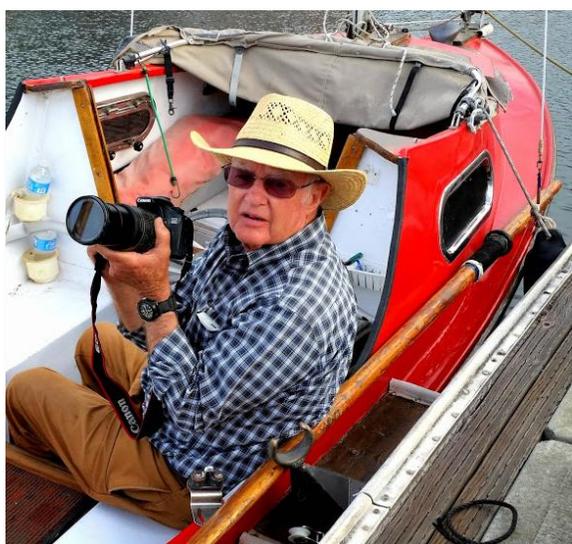
Hey Potter Yachters,

Dan got me thinking about a sailing adventure up in the Eureka area.

Becky and I will be taking *TwoCan* up on Sat 8/30, will get a slip but stay in a nearby motel. Sail on the Bay on Sat afternoon and on Sunday, overnight in town, maybe a walking tour or nature hike on Monday before returning. Group dinner Sunday night?

Anyone else interested? Since Huntington Lake is a no-go, this might be a fun group trip. But *TwoCan* will be there regardless!

Neil



### [Potter Yachter Membership

Join the *Potter Yachters* – the club that has been around since 1978 and, with your participation, will continue to withstand the test of time. We’re really a bunch of nice folks who would just love to have other nice folks join us. Your dues help support club activities and publish the newsletter, so you’ll be sure to know when we’re out sailing, whether that’s in the San Juan Islands, Monterey, the SF Bay, or elsewhere. Annual dues are \$25. Make checks payable to “Pat Brennan”.

Send your payment (with your name and address) to:

Pat Brennan  
1305 Webster Street #C205  
Alameda CA, 94501

See us online at [www.potter-yachters.org](http://www.potter-yachters.org)

**Organized in Northern California in 1978, the *Potter Yachters* is the longest running West Wight Potter club. Membership is open to anyone interested in West Wight Potters and other trailerable microcruiser sailboats.**



Patrick Brennan  
1305 Webster St., C205  
Alameda, CA 94501

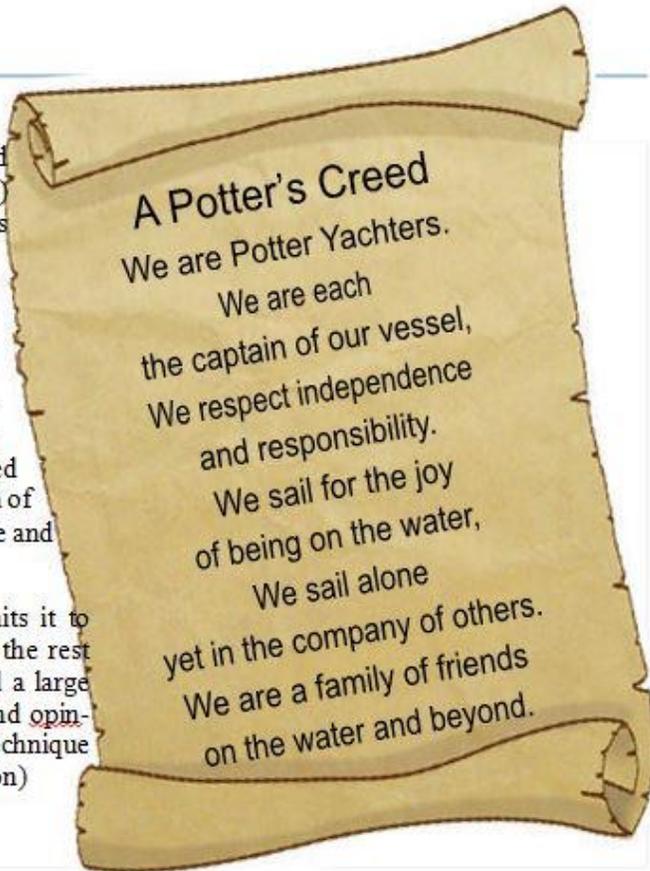
## With a Grain of Salt

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



**A Potter's Creed**  
We are Potter Yachters.  
We are each  
the captain of our vessel,  
We respect independence  
and responsibility.  
We sail for the joy  
of being on the water,  
We sail alone  
yet in the company of others.  
We are a family of friends  
on the water and beyond.