



The Potter Yachter

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

April 2023



Stealing the Test

*After Action Report: Richmond Sail
Story and photos by George Wehrfritz*

I appreciate why most Potter Yachters opted not to deploy for a weekend of rain and night time temps dipping into the 30s. When, on Friday morning (Feb 24th) I picked up a cell call somewhere north of Gilroy, it was Eric Zilbert phoning to inform me that his schedule had changed. Foliage of some variety had fallen in his yard overnight and needed clearing, so he wouldn't

be in Richmond that day as planned. Had I still been back home in Salinas, perhaps our conversation would have yielded a mutual surrender to lousy weather, but I was "on the road" as I told him – and he would be too, he assured, but not before early Saturday. (Continued on page 5)

Please renew your **membership**. (Dues \$50/family)

Mail a check made out to Potter Yachters to Goose Gossman, 865 West I Street, Benicia, CA 94510

Ship's Stores for sale. Order from Goose:
Show your colors! Fly an official Club Burgee on your next sail!

Burgees	\$25.00
Bumper Stickers	\$ 2.50
Patches	\$ 2.50
Info Packets	\$20.00 (Primarily P-15 information)

Or head over to the CafePress website and buy a Cap, Stein, or T-Shirt with the club logo on it.

Visit: <http://www.cafepress.com/potteryachters>

Also in this issue:

Commodore's Corner	page 2
Upcoming: Moss Landing	page 3
Upcoming: Poker Regatta	page 4
Report: Storm Damage	page 6
A look back	page 7

The Commodore's Corner



By Phil Marcelis


When I ask members why they joined the Potter Yachters, the most popular answer is “the people”. It’s just great to get out and talk with people who enjoy sailboats as much as I do. My non-sailing friends don’t quite “get it”, and it’s not from a lack of trying to introduce them to it. That sense of sailing camaraderie can often be difficult to find, and I’m noticing it more and more as the weather deprives me of my scheduled sailing opportunities. Thank goodness for the “Virtual Potter Yachters Happy Hour” every Friday at 5pm. (Yes, we’re still doing those! Joining is easy; just click [HERE](https://bit.ly/3PTLSWb) or type this into your browser: <https://bit.ly/3PTLSWb>)

The latest casualty was Coyote Point Rec Area and Marina which was severely damaged by the recent storm. Since their electrical system is needed to pump wastewater up and out of the park and marina restrooms, they had to close the entire area for several days before and after the St. Patrick’s Day weekend. That effectively cancelled our sailing event scheduled for that weekend, and I only just recently finished a corned beef on rye sandwich which represented the last of Kim’s meal preparations for that weekend.

In other news, Morro Bay Yacht Club came back with their finalized calendar and we found that their dock would be quite full on our scheduled visit there on April 22-23. After some discussion, we decided to reschedule that event for May 20-21. Hopefully the weather will be warmer and we’ll have even more fun.

Well, my boat has inched its way from behind the fence on the side of the house to a more prominent location at the head of the driveway. At this writing, I’m looking forward to a trip out of Richmond on April 1st to spend the night at OYC. I only hope that the weather doesn’t make an “April Fool’s Day” joke! Let’s all cross our fingers... and I hope to see you there!

Regards,

Phil—

Club Events on the Horizon		potter-yachters.org/calendar
April 22-23	Morro Bay—Rescheduled!	
This event has been moved to May 20-21		
April 29-30	Moss Landing	Bud Kerner
Come join the Potter Yachters for two days of whale watching and sailing. Both days we will sail out of the Elkhorn Yacht Club in Moss Landing. Monterey Bay is not a bay—it is the ocean. This time of year, it can be very sporting. For this reason, your skill level should be intermediate to experienced.		
May 5-7	Stockton Sailing Club Poker Regatta	Mike Kennedy/Jon Barber
Sail the San Joaquin. Assemble the perfect poker hand. Maybe win a jackpot!		
May 20	Delta Doo Dah Kick-off (Richmond YC)	Not a Potter event
The Delta Doo Dah is a do-it-yourself summertime cruising rally on the Delta. Enjoy meeting and socializing with fellow fleet members.		
May 20-21	Morro Bay	Pete Evans
Launch at the Morro Bay launch ramp and stay at the Yacht Club. Depending on wind and tides, this can be an intermediate sail.		
May 26-28	Rio Vista-Antioch	Gerry Nolan
Depending on wind and tides, this can be an intermediate to advanced sail. Launch in Rio Vista and sail to Antioch via Three Mile Slough and the San Joaquin River. Overnight in Antioch. Return to Rio Vista via Broad Slough and the Sacramento.		



Upcoming: Moss Landing Overnight – April 29–30, 2023
Join us at Elkhorn Yacht Club
 Sail Host: Bud Kerner



Come join the Potter Yachters at the [Elkhorn Yacht Club](#) for a weekend of sailing with the whales in Moss Landing. The Elkhorn Yacht Club has once again made its guest dock available to us Potter Yachters. The sail is officially Saturday and Sunday, April 29 and 30th, however, in the last few years, most boats have launched on Friday.

There is a new credit card pay station. The new station is closer to where the kayaks are, it only takes credit cards.

Friday night, there are appetizers from 4-8 at the Yacht Club. Saturday there is a hamburger and a drink for \$8. You cook your own hamburger.

There is a very nice restaurant in the parking lot. The Sea Harvest is open from 11 am to 7 pm. Let me know if you are coming for a day sail, or will overnight.

Directions to Moss Landing, CA
 For your GPS, the yacht club address is:
 2370 CA-1, Moss Landing, CA 95039.
 The club is right next to the ramp parking.

From San Jose, take Hwy 101 South:
 take Hwy 156 West, exit onto Hwy 1 North
 at Castroville, just past the famous power
 plant stacks, go over the bridge and turn
 left into the parking lot.

From Santa Cruz, take Hwy 1 South:
 turn into the parking lot just before the
 power plant stacks and before the bridge.

[Elkhorn YC](#)
 (831) 724-3874

See you on the water!

Bud — 



Photo credit: Vicki Anderson



Join us for the Potter Yachter Poker Regatta

At the Stockton Sailing Club. May 5-7th, 2023

Sail hosts: Mike Kennedy and Jon Barber

Arrive Friday night or Saturday Morning as your schedule permits.

Launch at the [Buckley Cove Launch Ramp](#). There is plenty of parking.

4911 Buckley Cove Way Stockton, CA 95219 (209) 937-8539			
Rates			
	Monday - Thursday	Friday - Sunday	Disabled/Over 62
Vehicle with Trailer	\$13	\$15	\$10
Overnight Fee	\$7	\$8	\$4
Park Area Day Use	\$3	\$3	\$3
Annual Pass	\$200	\$200	\$135


Sail or motor around to the [Stockton Sailing Club](#). The club has a dinner at six on Fridays with a main course, salad bar and usually dessert. The cost per person for dinner is a \$10.00 suggested donation. We will locate on A dock which is the first dock after entering the Harbor. Arrivals can take any open slip on A dock. There is a long-distance double-handed race that weekend, so we need to keep the

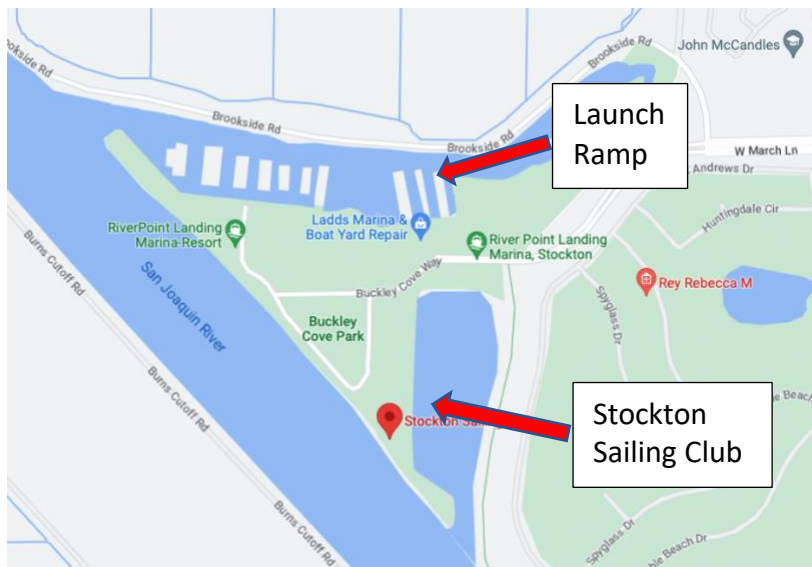
harbor side dock and crane dock clear. If we fill up the A dock slips, we can overflow into other vacant slips as directed by Harbor Master, Jim Dale.

The fee is \$50 and includes the \$10 entry ante for the Poker Regatta. Make checks payable to SSC Sailing Foundation. Proceeds go to sponsor the Junior Sailing program.

On Saturday the skipper's meeting will be at 10:00 in the clubhouse and information regarding the Poker Regatta will be distributed. The idea is to sail to two or three locations, dock the boat, locate the participating business rep and pick up a card and continue on. One card per boat will be given at the skippers meeting. Three cards picked up along the course and the fifth and final card back at the dock before six. Best hand wins. It depends on how many boats participate as to the value of the pot. SSC members will also be participating.

Announcing of the winning poker hand/boat will be in the retreat area at 7:00. Live music will occur and a byob and byochow (potluck) will ensue.

Probable attendees should email [Mike Kennedy](#) with their name, number of crew, boat name and make/model by May 1 as this would help with planning. — 



Directions to [Buckley Cove Launch](#)

For your GPS, the launch ramp address is:
4911 Buckley Cove Way
Stockton CA

From North of Stockton, take Hwy 5 South:

Take exit 476, W March Ln. Head West on W March Ln 2.1 miles to Buckley Cove.

From South of Stockton, take Hwy 5 North:

Take exit 476, W March Ln. Head West on W March Ln 2.1 miles to Buckley Cove.

Richmond Sail Participants:

- George Wehrfritz and Eric Zilbert – *Betty Sparrow*, Sparrow 16




(Richmond--continued from page 1)

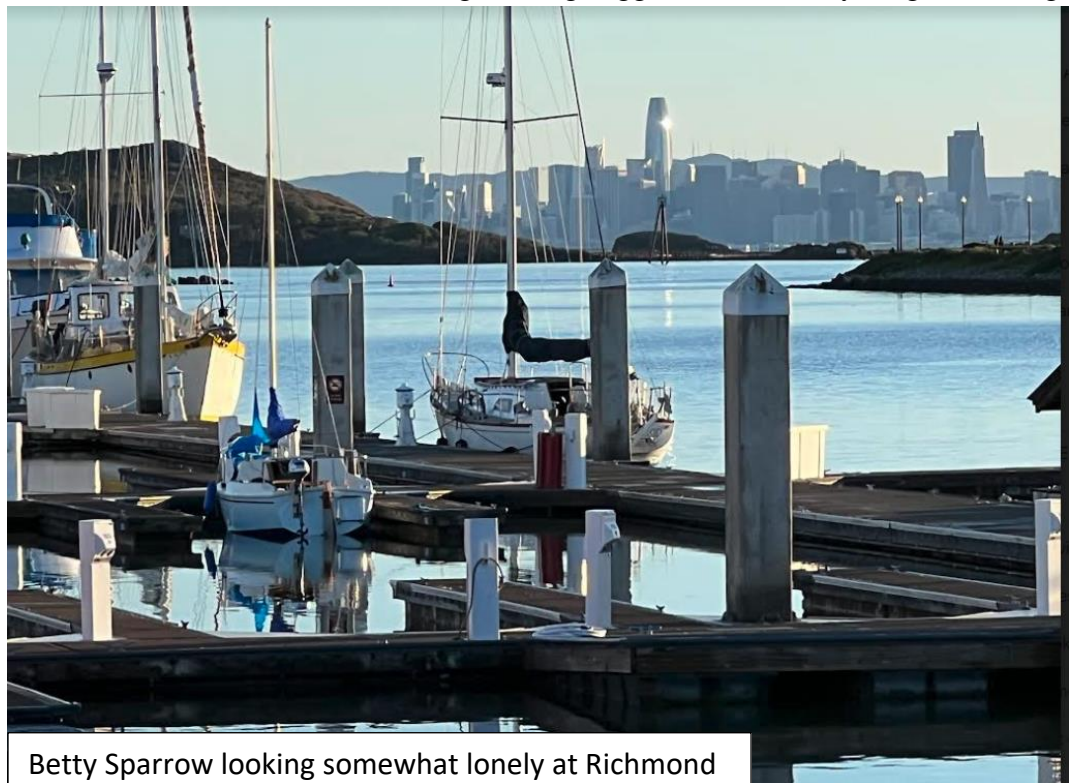
True to his word, our newly rebranded Large Boat Fleet Captain rolled into Richmond on Feb. 25, *Riptide* in tow. But with the weather promising to turn ugly again overnight, we opted to leave his boat on the trailer and sail together aboard my Sparrow 16, and to depart Richmond that evening to evade the coming storm. So, with Goose and his faithful companion, Abby, bidding us fair winds, we set out into the bay to inaugurate the 2023 sailing season.

A single photo neatly encapsulates the day. In it, Fleet Captain Zilbert imparts the finer points of sailing in light wind on a reach, reclined comfortably between safety line and tiller, left foot elevated on the ottoman-height companionway, beer in hand. For the record, he drank but a single can while at the helm as we sailed from Marina Bay across to Paradise Cay and

back. Seemingly, we grabbed much of the fair weather on offer in late February. Calm seas, wind 5 knots, clouds interspersed with occasional sunbeams. This brief gap separated two “atmospheric rivers” – the tail of one lashing California until midday Friday, a second forecast to land sometime before Sunday dawn. For a novice like myself, single-handing alongside experienced Potter Yachters is like going to school.

Whenever possible, I watch from my cockpit, seeking to understand what others are doing and why. Sailing with experienced skippers is even better – like stealing the test, yet in a socially acceptable way. And so, our Large Boat Fleet Captain took the helm, and I served as crew – garnering suggestions on everything for sailing near much bigger boats to utilizing my (newly installed!) cabin-top jib sheeting, or how best to deploy the whisker pole. Eric, once an actual sailing teacher, mixed instruction with stories of best and worst sails, and club yore.

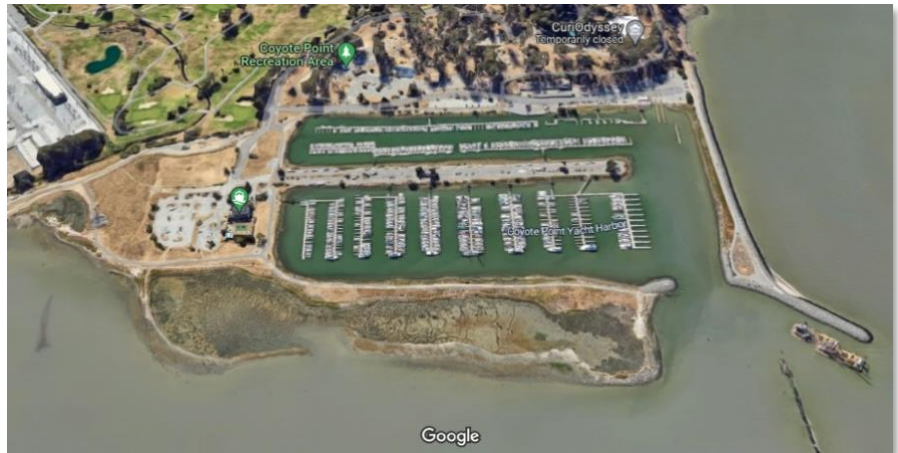
Even without a fleet on the water, or sporting winds to test our skills, or any particular destination in mind, Pottering on San Francisco Bay between crazy storms kicked off the sailing year in style, I think. — 



Betty Sparrow looking somewhat lonely at Richmond

*Report: Storm Damage***Weather Ravages our Marinas***By Phil Marcelis*


A dock floated down the Oakland Estuary with several sailing dinghies moored to it. Coyote Point Recreation Area suffered electrical system damage from fallen trees, which has effectively closed the marina until further notice. A houseboat broke free of its moorings and washed up onto Jack London Aquatic Center's dock with a keelboat being pushed up onshore.



Welcome to the month of March in 2023 and the effects of another “atmospheric river” to hit the Bay Area’s normally wonderful sailing grounds. For three straight Tuesdays in a row, the area was hit with heavy rain and high winds gusting to 80 mph. Just to give you an idea of the severity, there were reports of windows blown out of San Francisco high-rise buildings and widespread power outages lasting more than 24 hours spanning from Berkeley to Hayward and San Francisco to San Mateo. Trees proved to be a major cause of electrical system damage. With no power to run sump-pump equipment during the heavy rain, flooding caused even more damage for some properties. That was apparently a concern at Coyote Point where the restroom facilities rely on pumps to manage wastewater, and marina tenants were asked not to spend any time on their boats because it wasn’t known when the pump-out station would be working again. The first notice of “a few days for repairs” turned into an acknowledgement that “damage was more extensive than the first inspection revealed so we’ll be closed until Monday”, which cancelled our March 18th *St. Pat’s Sail* that weekend, and the latest news on their website is that the park is closed “through April 7 due to a power outage and fallen trees throughout the park.”

A possible silver lining is the funding that may become available to make repairs. The pier at Seacliff Beach in Aptos was severely damaged with half of it being ripped away by waves in a storm on January 5th. The campground at Seacliff also suffered catastrophic damage and was a complete loss, according to the superintendent of state parks for the Santa Cruz District. Crews finally demolished the rest of the pier at the end of March and public meetings will be held to determine whether it will be rebuilt. President Biden visited the area during his January 19th trip to survey damage and issue disaster declarations.

It's not exactly related to the weather, but the city of Pittsburg is moving forward with a project to upgrade the public boat launch after having received a state grant to design the project, the Bay Area Newsgroup reported in March. The city is now applying for a \$3.65 million state grant to build out the project. Perhaps some adventurous Potter Yachters might go check out the launch ramp to see if we can add it to our repertoire.

I know we need the water, but a major storm every week is starting to be a bit much. I guess we can think of it this way, though: summertime sailing will seem that much better! — 

Where were you then?

A look back at the archives...

By Sharon Soule

Forty years ago, it was April 1983. David and I were in the throes of last-minute planning for our wedding and move to Carson City, Nevada. Our trusty sailing vessel was a Glen-L 12 christened, *The Digger One* (don't ask), that David and his friends had built in his parents' garage in Concord. Our home waters at the time were mostly Del Valle Reservoir, San Pablo Reservoir, and the Delta (usually launching at Sherman Island). We were at least 5 boats and almost 30 years away from *Nighthawk*—our first actual ballasted boat, large enough that we could spend the night on comfortably. We were aware of the existence of West Wight Potters at the time, having seen a few at the local boat shows, but even if I thought they were kind of cute, they were way out of our post teenage, pre-career price range.

So, let's hop into the Way Back Machine and take a look at the Potter Yachters of 40 years ago to see what they were up to. The newsletter was typed—no photos. The title was "Potter to Potter." It was the halcyon pre-internet-scammer days where phone numbers were listed right at the top. The outgoing commodore was Jerry Barrilleaux and the news items were about how bad the weather was, new members, and upcoming events. They held their annual lunch on April 9th at the Encinal Yacht Club in Alameda, where they elected new officers Barbara Simpson, Commodore; John Ockes, Secretary/Editor; and Frank Winans, Historian.


"Commodore Jerry Barrilleaux called the meeting to order, over the objections of all present. The first order of business was the selection, drafting, shanghai, and voting of new officers. The results of which were unanimous for each office."

Some things haven't changed!

After the elections, discussion turned to planning future sails. The next planned sail was on May 14th and 15th to Treasure Island Cove. This sail had originally been planned for March but had been cancelled twice due to bad weather. For those of you who weren't around in 1983, it was a big snow year in the Sierra. David and I began our married life that April by enduring a nightmarishly long slog over Donner Pass in a snowstorm. I was driving a 1978 Toyota Corolla Hatchback that turned out to be a hilariously inappropriate vehicle for the snow—even *with* chains. No wonder! The snowfall at Donner Pass that year was 55.91 feet, a record which was finally broken this year with 56.44 feet as of March 15th. Sounds very familiar. At least the club has succeeded in holding at least two sails so far this year although after hearing about the Richmond to Angel Island sail, maybe it's really only one and a half.

In other news, the club had decided to host their June 4th and 5th sail at Woodward Reservoir. The first club sail there looks like it took place in 1979 meaning that the club held sails there for over 40 years!

Finally, the Potters were planning to publish a "How To..." booklet titled The Many Ways To Potter, compiled by the members. I wonder if one of our long time Potters might have a copy stowed away somewhere. I'm sure it would be an interesting read.

So how about you? Where were *you* 40 years ago? Were you sailing? Stuck in the snow? Have any photos to share? I'm sure our readers would love to hear about your adventures too. — 



Not hauling a boat trailer through those drifts anytime soon!



Best view of the bay—from the deck of a sailboat.
Photo credit: George Wehrfritz

Officer's Club		
Commodore: Phil Marcelis Catalina 22, <i>Merri Time</i>	Vice-Commodore: Jon Barber Montgomery 17, <i>Ol' 44</i>	Newsletter Editor: Sharon Soule' Balboa 21, <i>Nighthawk</i>
P-15/Small Boat Fleet Captain: Bud Kerner P-14,	P-19/Large Boat Fleet Captain: Eric Zilbert P-19, #629, <i>Riptide</i>	Webmaster: Phil Marcelis
Secretary/Treasurer: Jim "Goose" Gossman P-19 <i>Regale</i>	Website: www.potter-yachters.org	Facebook: PotterYachters



'Goose' Gossman
865 West I Street
Benicia, CA 94510

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

