



The Potter Yachter

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

July 2024

Report: New Melones Reservoir was the hottest sailing around

By Kevin Crowder Photos by Kevin Crowder and Jim Hunt



It was a hot time on New Melones Lake as the Potters met to sail on the first weekend in June. The high on Friday was 97 degrees, but fortunately, the wind was nice for sailing. Four boats showed up at first: Phil M, Alan K, Jim H and me. Later, we were joined by one of my local friends from the marina, Greg Soniger on his Hunter 22. As we were all getting started, Alan's dagger board winch lock failed. It whacked him in the hand and he got a pretty bad injury. So, we tied his boat up at the marina, and he headed to Angels Camp Medical to get it cleaned and bandaged. He was able to join us later, on Jim's boat. (Continued on page 5)

Please renew your [membership](#). (Dues \$50/family)

Mail a check made out to Potter Yachters to Potter Yachters, 3710 Lone Tree Way, Suite 493 Antioch, CA 94509

Ship's Stores for sale. Order from Potter Yachters:
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)

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The Commodore's Corner



Half the year has come and gone, and with it half the sailing schedule is behind us. Of those seven past sailing events, I have enjoyed four. These venues I have all visited before, some more than once. Each time the adventure differs. The weather, the tides the wind are all variables, as are the list of boats found at the launch ramp ready to meet the challenges of the new day.

Sailing is by nature a sport of uncertainty. Robert Manry, a newspaper man from Cleveland, who sailed his 13.5' boat, *Tinkerbelle* across the Atlantic put it this way:

“A sailor must be a bit fatalistic.
He must be prepared to accept what comes, from flat calm to hurricane
And must train himself to enjoy the conditions he gets
If he doesn't get the conditions he enjoys.”

I remember a morning of flat calm off Moss Landing. I was headed to Monterey with a small flotilla of Potters. My boat sat becalmed near the entrance buoy. Sails slatted, the boat bobbed around, and I wished the breeze would fill in. I still had some lukewarm coffee and as I sipped, I began to notice that I was not alone. All around me the life of the sea made itself known. I fleet of pelicans sailed by; sea birds dipped the water for a meal. Fishes jumped; mammals pursued them. A feeding frenzy began as a school of sardines surfaced, only to be devoured by all kind of creatures. The wonder of nature never fails to amaze.

Had the breeze immediately propelled my little vessel toward its destination that morning, I might have missed the show. The breeze did fill in that day and together we all romped down to Monterey. But, for an hour or so as I waited, I was treated to a world view few may ever see.

So, bring your boats! Slog through suburbia with boat in tow; suffer the freeway snarls, the blown-out tires and ruined wheel bearings. Launch and rig; I know, it's all quite a lot to deal with. But once the hard work is over, the quiet work of the world has a chance to be known, if we only will take the time to see.

Fair winds (or no winds, as the case may be)
See you on the water?

Jon —



Club Events on the Horizon		potter-yachters.org/calendar
July 13-14	Loch Lomond	Goose Gossman
Join us for a nice day or two of sailing on the bay and good food at Andy's Market.		
July 27-28	Huntington Lake	Jim Hunt
Considered to be one of the best sailing lakes in California. The wind comes up at 10:00am and blows until 5:00pm. Conditions can be anything from easy to advanced depending on the weather. <i>Note: this is a date change from the original calendar!</i>		
August 3 rd	Monterey: Cruiser Challenge--XXV	Alan Koepf
The races will be Saturday the 3 rd but join us for sailing in Monterey Friday through Sunday or sail over from Moss Landing if you are so inclined. Details coming in the July Newsletter.		
September 14-15	Tomaes Bay	Eric Zilbert
Great family sail! Generally easy, often windy, overnight out anchor, in boat or on beach, or in tent with individual permit.		

Cruiser Challenge XXV returns to Monterey on August 2-4th, 2024

Sail Host: Alan Koepf



The [Cruiser Challenge](#) is happening in Monterey again in 2024. This year's Challenge will be similar to the 2022 race. It will be a fun "around the buoys" event in Monterey Bay. Those who wish to sail over from Moss landing are welcome to do so, but the "headquarters," as it were, will be the docks in Monterey.

There's no pre-paid parking; however, you can use Monterey's [Parking Guide](#) to help you park your vehicle and trailer. If you arrive early or late enough, you should have no problem finding a pull through space right at the boat ramp. You need to pay for your parking using the ParkMobile app now. You can download it to your phone from the app store. It costs \$16 per day for a vehicle and trailer.

For those sailing from [Moss Landing](#), there is usually plenty of parking available. Follow the link for more information and be sure to pay the "Iron Ranger" before departing – you'll return on Sunday. Those who choose to do this sail should remember that it's not an official part of the program and are cautioned about the potential risks associated with open ocean sailing.

Friday evening: Sailors and their guest(s) are welcome to join up on the docks for happy hour. We can then decide whether to order take out on the dock or head to one of the local restaurants.

Saturday: Format TBA. Our vision is to have one or two fun "around the buoy" races in Monterey Bay. The



rules will be limited to the USCG "Right of Way" rules. There will be a skippers meeting in Monterey (probably on the docks) before the race Saturday morning as well.

As always, safety is paramount, and don't forget, this is a "friendly" sailing event! Please be sure to go over the [Recommended Gear and Safety Guidelines](#) and have a working VHF radio for communication. After the races, when all boats have returned to port, we will hold some sort of awards ceremony and dinner–format also TBA.

Departures usually begin on Sunday, while some may leave on Monday to avoid Sunday traffic on the Bay Area Freeways. Whether you drive, sail, or hitch a ride – just get back safely!

[You can register here!](#) We will see you soon.



[Directions](#) to Monterey Municipal Harbor/Marina

From north of Monterey:

Take 101 South to 156 West
Continue through Castroville onto Hwy 1 South
Take Pacific Grove/Del Monte Ave. exit
Turn right at Fisherman's Wharf/Figueroa St.
Then turn left towards the launch ramp

From south of Monterey:

Follow directions above using Hwy 101 North, or
Take Hwy 1 North, exit Aguajito Rd. (exit 401A)
Turn left at the first signal light (Aguajito) then
Go under Hwy 1 and across Fremont St.
When the road ends in a "T" (can't go straight),
Turn left at the signal light (onto Del Monte Ave)
Turn right at Fisherman's Wharf/Figueroa St.

Harbormaster: (831) 646-3950; night 594-7760

[Municipal Marina layout maps](#) are available in the [Harbor & Marina Department](#) on www.monterey.org

Cruiser Challenge XXV Schedule

Friday, August 2

Arrive in Monterey: pay for slip and parking
Gather at the docks for Happy Hour
5:30 pm: Dinner

Saturday, August 3

Before 9:00 am: Arrive and Launch
10:00 am: Skipper's meeting
11:00 am: Start of first race
Lunch on the water
1:00 pm: Start of second race
4:00 pm: Happy Hour on the docks
5:00-ish: Awards on the dock

Sunday, August 4

Sailing, sightseeing and relaxing
Retrieve and depart

(New Melones continued from page 1)

We anchored out both nights near shore. I had brought an inflatable dinghy and we used it to provide rides to *Blue Moon*, Jim Hunt's 23, which became our evening hang out and mother ship. Phil brought out his banjo and tried to play, but found that with the heat, it was way out of tune. So, we exchanged stories of raccoons and boats and watched the deer on the nearby shore.

New Melones Lake participants:

- Jim Hunt – *Blue Moon*, Santana 2023
- Kevin Crowder – *Aurora*, Com-Pac 19
- Alan Koepf – *Kim Yvonne*, WWP19
- Phil Marcelis – *Merri Time*, Catalina 22
- Mike Heumann – WWP15
- Jon Barber – *Ol' 44*, Montgomery 17
- Steve Hartman – *Parson's Ghost*, Marshall-Sanderling 18
- Mike Kennedy – Com-Pac 19
- Greg Soniger – Hunter 22



Kevin's beautiful *Aurora* resting at anchor

Saturday was a little cooler. Thank goodness. I had a touch of being over heated. We were joined by new member Mike Heumann with his P15, Steve Hartman in his beautiful Sanderling 18, and John Barber. We sailed the whole lake. We all gathered for a second evening on Jim's 2023 for shade and drinks and boat talk. It was a good time. We even had Mike Kennedy and a friend of his join us Saturday overnight on another Com-Pac19.

Sunday, about mid-morning, a nice wind filled in. We all had a great sail before pulling out and heading our separate ways.



Ouch!!



Phil--tuning the banjo





Kevin's inflatable raft made a nice shuttle for the other boaters.

Mike H, Steve H, Mike K and friend, Kevin C, Greg S at dinner Saturday night



Officer's Club

Commodore:
Jon Barber
Montgomery 17, *OI' 44*

Vice-Commodore:
Eric Zilbert
P-19, #629, *Riptide*

Newsletter Editor:
Sharon Soule'
Balboa 21, *Nighthawk*

Small Boat Fleet Captain:
Bud Kerner
P-14,

Large Boat Fleet Captain:
Jim Hunt
Santana 2023, *Blue Moon*

Webmaster:
Phil Marcelis

Secretary/Treasurer:
Phil Marcelis
Catalina 22, *Merri Time*

Website:
www.potter-yachters.org

Facebook:
[PotterYachters](https://www.facebook.com/PotterYachters)

*Boater Education***It's Time to Get Your Boater Card***By Phil Marcelis*

Did you know that the State of California requires boaters to have a Vessel Operator Card? I'll give you step-by-step instructions on how to get your training for free, in the section below.

The [California Boater Card](#) shows that its holder has successfully taken and passed a NASBLA/state-approved boater safety exam. They've been phasing in this requirement over the past 7 years, and as of January 2025 it's mandatory for ALL boat operators to have this card, regardless of age. There's a free course available at [BoatUS Foundation](#) but there are other NASBLA-approved options out there. There's even one that makes the whole process a [gamified interactive course](#) which can be completed in under 3 hours. The various NASBLA-approved courses charge anywhere from \$20 and higher, but BoatUS offers a free course. The state charges \$10 to mail you a plastic card for your wallet, but that's the only charge.

Before you get started with your online classes, you should take a look at the [ABCs of California Boating](#) booklet from the Department of Boating and Waterways (DBW). It has a LOT of good information, and when I periodically review it, I'm always surprised to find something I'd forgotten. If you want a hardcopy but don't want to print the online version, you can often find the booklet at a marine chandlery or the fishing section of a sporting goods store.

Just as an aside... if you start looking at various websites online, you may run across a statement that sounds like the Boater Card is only needed if your engine is 15 HP or bigger... and you may think, "Hey! My sailboat only has a 5 HP. I'm in the CLEAR!" But that's clearly not correct. See the LEGALESE section below, or just take my word for it and get the card anyway.

THE STEP-BY-STEP (Check out [this short video](#), if you'd prefer to watch instead of read)

Step 1. Apply for California Boater ID at www.CaliforniaBoaterCard.com

- Enter your application details: Type NEW (\$10), your name, address, and other details.
- Click CONTINUE and then select "I have not completed my exam yet".
- Click CONTINUE and check that you used the name that's on your passport or driver's license, then checkmark the legal declarations, and then click CONTINUE again.
- Select your method of payment, and pay the fee
- Write down your Application ID (California Boater ID) displayed on the next page

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Get on Board!

Apply Now!
CaliforniaBoaterCard.com

Step 2. Register with BoatUS at courses.boatus.org/course/id/BTUS100S

[Note that the **BoatUS Foundation** is a non-profit that's separate from *BoatUS*, so you don't automatically have an account with them just because you have an account at BoatUS towing.]

- Select your state from the dropdown menu: CALIFORNIA
 - Click ADD TO CART
 - You have two alternatives to change the automatically included donation:
 - Click the red X next to the donation amount to delete the donation from your cart
 - or click the dollar value to change the amount if you actually want to donate
 - Then click CHECKOUT NOW.
 - Login. Or if you don't have an account with **BoatUS Foundation**, then click *register*
 - Make sure your name matches your passport or driver's license, as in Step 1 above.
 - Enter your California Boater ID number (from Step 1) on the registration page
 - You'll get an email from BoatUS with info on how to return to the course if you logout
- If you have trouble with BoatUS Foundations website, try [their support center](#) for answers.

Step 3. Complete the course

- The course consists of about 6 lessons with a 10 question quiz after each section
- It can take anywhere from 4 to 8 hours (non-stop) to complete the course
- You can stop and start anytime; it may be more comfortable to do one lesson per day
- You'll receive a temporary certificate of completion when you pass the course

Step 4. BoatUS will send your Application ID (Boater ID) to California for verification

Step 5. You will receive a confirmation email from the State of California when your application is accepted, and your card will arrive in the mail within 60 days.
That's it!

THE LEGALESE

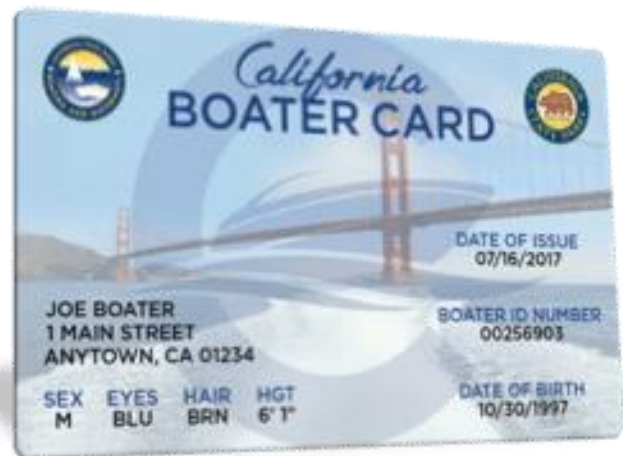
California Harbors and Navigation Code (CHNC)

Section [678.11](#) subdivision(b) states: *a person shall not operate on waters subject to the jurisdiction of the state a vessel that is propelled by an engine, regardless of whether the engine is the principal source of propulsion, unless the person has in his or her possession a vessel operator card issued by the division.*

Subdivision (c) has eight exceptions which include vessel operators who are temporarily in California but meet the operator requirements of their home state, or those who are operating a rental boat, for example. There's also an exemption for a person who is operating a vessel under the direct supervision of someone 18 or older who is in possession of a California Boater Card.

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CHNC 678.11 clearly states that a Boater Card is required regardless of the size of motor and whether or not the motor is the principal source of propulsion. Confusingly, and possibly as a leftover from before 2018, when the state had a different boater education program, the California Parks Department has [a statement on their website](#) (repeated on more than one [Boater Education](#) site) which seemingly indicates that the Boater Card isn't required for boats with a motor of less than 15 hp. They say: *California law requires a person to be 16 years of age or older and in possession of his/her California Boater Card to legally operate a vessel powered by a motor of 15 hp or more, including personal watercraft (PWCs).*




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However, if you look at the actual text in the legal documents, you'll see that this is an incorrect paraphrasing of the combination of rules about the Boater Card and *CHNC Section 658.5*:

(a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), no person under 16 years of age shall operate a vessel powered by a motor of greater than 15 horsepower, except for a vessel that does not exceed 30 feet in length and is designed to use wind as its principal source of propulsion, or a dinghy used directly between a moored vessel and the shoreline or between a moored vessel and another moored vessel.

(b) Except as provided in subdivision (a), no person 12, 13, 14, or 15 years of age shall operate a vessel powered by a motor of greater than 15 horsepower, or a vessel that exceeds 30 feet in length and is designed to use wind as its principal source of propulsion, unless the person is accompanied in the vessel by a person who is at least 18 years of age and who is attentive and supervising the operation of the vessel.

It seems that the authorities were trying to emphasize the fact that you have to be at least 16 years old to operate a PWC on their lakes, and that you need a Boater Card, too.

You can spend hours on the Internet (like I did), scouring the forums for everyone's combined knowledge built from anecdotal accounts of emails to various authorities... But, the short story about all this is just take the course, get educated, and carry the boater card with you whenever you go out on the water. — 

THE URLS (in case the links above aren't clickable, just copy and paste into your address bar)

Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUqp35iH54s&t=42s>

BoatID <https://californiaboatercard.com/about-the-card/>

Course <https://courses.boatus.org/course/id/BTUS100S>

Game <https://www.ilearntoboat.com/california/>

ABCs <https://dbw.parks.ca.gov/pages/28702/files/abcfulldoc.pdf>

Law1 <https://codes.findlaw.com/ca/harbors-and-navigation-code/hnc-sect-678-11/>

Law2 <https://law.justia.com/codes/california/code-hnc/division-3/chapter-5/article-1/section-658-5/>

Parks https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28985

Educat https://www.boat-ed.com/california/boating_law/

Support <https://boatus-foundation.my.site.com/support/s/topic/0TO6e000002eLICGAU/getting-started>



From Facebook:



Potter Yachters

We're in [Latitude 38!](#)

Check out the article [here](#).

 **Latitude 38 Magazine**
a day ago · 🌐

Jim 'Goose' Gossman often sends us updates of the [Potter Yachters](#) sails, such as the Potters' recent cruise in SoCal. "Just woke up to a spectacular sunrise on Potters' annual Catalina sail. My best-ever dolphin encounter teared me up." [West Wight Potter Sailboats](#)

LATITUDE38.COM
Potter Yachters and Dolphins Share Offshore Cruise to Catalina
The Potters Yachter's recently enjoyed a memorable offshore cruise to Catalina, complete ...



Potter Yachters
3710 Lone Tree Way, Suite 493
Antioch, CA 94509

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

