



# The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Northern California West Wight Potter Club

December 2004

## Sailing & Event Calendar

February 25, 7-9 pm

Tides and Currents of the Bay at OCSC

February 28, 7-9 PM

Weather for Bay Area Sailors at OCSC

March 6 & 7

Docking and Marina Procedures Classes  
RSVP Required.

March 20

Delta Day Sail. Launch at B&W sail to Korth's Pirates Lair for lunch, and return to B&W.

April 2-4

Potter Rendezvous at Coyote Point Yacht Club. Dinner with guest speakers from International Marine. RSVP req'd.

April 24

Salt and Pepper Sail on Estuary. Launch at Estuary Park and/or Grand Ave. Alameda.

May 1-2

Brannen Island to Lundborg Landing @ Bethel Island.

June 5-6

Lake Sail and Overnight Campout at Woodward Reservoir.

July 17-18 SCA Cruiser Challenge in Monterey.

August 7-8 Eagle Lake Sail and Campout.

September 18-19 Tomales Bay Sail and Beach Campout.

October 2-3 Monterey Bay Over night.

November 6-7 Richmond Over night. Sail to Loch Lomond on the 6th and Angel Island on the 7th.

## "Official" Season Ends In Richmond With 16 Boats

November 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> was a huge success for our final overnight sail on the 2004 calendar. Sixteen boats total showed up, there were 4 P19's, 2 Vagabond 17's, 1 Compact, 1 Montgomery, and 8 P15's. Everyone had a wonderful weekend sailing SF Bay. Saturday morning was cool and clear on the drive to Richmond but as I neared the freeway exit the fog was present and heavier towards the water. Others reported similar views as they approached from the west. By the time everyone was rigged, launched, and as several checked in with the harbor master for berths, the fog had greatly dissipated and did

not delay our departure. Winds were light and the tide and currents were no good for Loch Lomond so we set out for Sam's in Tiburon. Docking at Sam's is never plentiful but we decided to give it a shot. We enjoyed a pleasant smooth water sail towards Raccoon straits. Wind conditions were shifty and light and several of us found some holes to sail into but eventually everyone made it OK.

I was preparing the Minnow for arrival at Sam's and thinking of sailing in. I wanted to make sure

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Annual Breakfast & Business Meeting Jan. 9, 2005

The Potter Yachter annual business meeting will be held at the Oakland Yacht Club on Sunday January 9, 2005. Breakfast starts at 8:30 with the business meeting to begin promptly at 10:00. Last year we were finished by noon so we had plenty of time to head to Svendson's or West Marine and spend money.

I am not sure of the actual cost of breakfast but it historically has been around \$7 or \$8 per person. This is an indoor, rain or shine event that does not involve your boat. The OYC is a neat club with great food so since you have little else to do the week after New Years, come on out and have breakfast with the club.

The business meeting is quite painless also.

Tradition holds that each person attending brings a small wrapped gift for exchange. We draw names from a hat and select from the pile of gifts until they are gone. Past items have included books, spare boat parts, T-shirts, marine oriented knick knacks, and all sorts of other cool stuff. Use your imagination.

Oakland Yacht Club is located on the Estuary on the east side of Alameda Island, at the foot of Triumph Street at Pacific Marina.

## From the Commodore

Well, this is it, my final "From the Commodore". Thank you each and every member for allowing me the opportunity to steward our great club for the past two years. The experience was extremely rewarding and helped me to strengthen existing friendships and build quite a few new ones while I enjoyed my addiction to sailing. I have sailed more during my two years as commodore than any other time in my life. In 2004 I made each and every calendared sailing event we had (unfortunately I did miss one of the classes last January or February). It was a real blast with you folks and every event created some great memories that will last a long time.

In the words of Lyndon Johnson, "I do not seek and I will not accept the nomination of my party for reelection". If you don't believe me I'll show you my scar! I guess what I'm trying to say here is we will definitely be installing a new commodore at our January meeting. It has been a marvelous two years but I'm a firm believer in term limits and I feel with new blood comes new ideas, new talents, new leadership, new energy, and enthusiasm. The role of commodore is not a hard one so don't think it isn't for you. You don't need to be an expert on the P-15 and the P-19, sailing, or management to make it work. You just need a few hours a month and a little "push" into nomination. There is an entire crew of fellow officers to assist you along with several past commodores and a fleet of volunteers that work to make it all come together. Honestly, once the calendar is set and events planned, the hardest part is remembering to fly the commodore flag on your boat.

Now as to the rest of the club, the Commodore is only as good as the support we give them. It takes a staff of officers, trip sponsors, scouts, event coordinators, volunteers, and participants to make it all happen so each and every one of us must do our part. Even if an officer position is not for you, there is room for everyone to do something to help out so let's not be shy with our talents.

Our 2005 kick off meeting is January 9<sup>th</sup> at the Oakland Yacht Club (see announcement elsewhere in this newsletter) and I look forward to seeing you there. Bring an appetite and a smile! Fair winds through the holiday season and don't ignore your boats. Even if you're not sailing it, pull back that cover or tarp and look inside the cabin every few weeks. Leaks and mildew are best stopped early and our boats need to know we love them, even in the off season.

*Rich McDevitt, Commodore*

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P-19 #266 *Redwing*

needed. As I looked for the bow line I noticed it had fallen off the bow but was still attached to the cleat. I quickly hove to and grabbed my boat hook thinking I could just snare it and pull it back to the cockpit. No such luck and it appeared to be stuck on the centerboard. Thinking I could retract the centerboard to free it turned my situation from bad to worse as the line was now inside the keel trunk wedged beside the centerboard. After 5 minutes of trying I suspended my activity and furled my sails.

Several boats were now approaching from Tiburon and Jerry gave me the word that we would put in at Angel Island instead because there was not enough room at Sam's docks for the fleet. I made sure my errant bow line was not going to foul my prop, started the Honda and headed off to Ayala cove.

I had been trying to contact Angel Island via cell phone for most of the previous 2 hours to see if the snack bar was still open this late in the season. Lots of recordings but no firm answers from a live human left me optimistic but not positive. Once we arrived at the dock it was obvious why no one in a CA state park can answer the phone, they are all out collecting use fees. After everyone was safely tied up and we had all parted with the \$10.00 per boat dock fee, we ambled up to the snack bar. Pickings were light, salami and cheese, one turkey sandwich (which I quickly grabbed), hot dogs, NO FISH AND CHIPS, and a few other items. Nobody went hungry but Sam's it was not. At least the beer was cold. T-shirts were 50% off and all the rental bikes were for sale. I discovered that the snack bar would be open limited hours until the weekend before Thanksgiving so if you return in the winter pack a lunch.

After a quick lunch we were treated to a fantastic broad reach back to Richmond with unusually flat seas. Since the winds were so light we did not encounter the usual rollers you get as you approach the Richmond entrance. After a nice reach back to the harbor I sailed into my downwind slip at the marina to vindicate my earlier behavior with the dock line which I had freed while tied up at Angel Island.

Several of us spent the night in Richmond. I knew I was outclassed when extension cords started being pulled from P-15's. Later I learned of heaters and many amenities with which the Minnow has not been outfitted with. Disaster occurred during happy hour when a bottle of single malt went overboard. Later I learned that it was not an accident, instead Don Person was making an offering to King Neptune (whom Dick Herman apparently has some kind of personal association with). So Don and Dick should be set to safely sail throughout the winter months.

Dinner at the snooty Italian place was good and Jerry treated us to a magic show in-between courses. We learned about quarters sleeping together to stay warm and aliens assimilating into a deck of cards. You just had to be there. Jerry also has some special way with ropes so the next time you cut a piece of line too short, look up Jerry he may be able to spin some magic on it save you a few bucks.

Sunday's winds were lighter than Saturdays and in fact non-existent as the fleet went a few different directions. Several of us motored around Angel Island staying close to shore and taking in the sights. I followed a fathom line on my mapping GPS and was able to go around most of the island

about 20-30 yards from shore in the light conditions. It was a long motor back to Richmond and the best wind of the day was inside the breakwater. Soon we were back at the ramp and putting the boats away for the trip home.

We had 20 boats last March at our first sail of the season on the delta and finished on a cool November day with 16. What a great year it has been but even though this was the last scheduled sail for the season you don't have to put the boat away. Several of the SF Bay Area local Potter Yachters sail throughout the winter. Impromptu sails take place weather permitting on most weekends. The best way to keep in touch on this is to check in the Trailer Sailor Potter forum at

<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/potter/index.cgi>

If you don't see a sail forming up already just post one yourself and you will usually find a few others that will join you in a day on the water. Locations vary depending on the weather and tides but frequent sails happen on the Oakland Estuary, Redwood City, and Richmond Marinas.



## Places to Sail - Oakland Estuary

### The Wednesday Social Sailing Circle

"San Francisco Bay Area Wednesday sail" - All of you who follow the Trailer Sailor Potter forum have no doubt seen this almost weekly posting by Don Person. Don, our P-15 Fleet Captain, loves to sail and to sail often, so a couple of years ago he invited other Potter Yachters to join him on a Wednesday to sail in the Oakland Estuary. This sail has become an almost weekly ritual for a core of about a half dozen sailors.

Typically, our boats are launched in the Estuary around 9:30 or 10:00 a.m. and we sail to the Grand Marina fuel dock to have coffee and visit with Vic who runs the convenience store. Then we are off to sail up the Estuary towards the Bay until around noon when we decide it is time to head for a restaurant. The Estuary has a number of places to eat. There is, of course, Jack London Square which has a number of good restaurants, and directly across the Estuary is Chevy's. Both Jack London Square and Chevy's have guest docks. But the Potter's favorite spot is Quinn's Lighthouse located in Oakland opposite Coast Guard Island.

We have been to Quinn's so often that when Sandy, our usual waitress, sees us approaching she frequently reserves us a table on the upper deck. Quinn's has a guest dock that is part of a marina with an entrance gate locked on both sides. There is a post on the guest dock with a doorbell button attached. You ring the bell to get someone from Quinn's to come down to unlock the gate. At least we used to ring the bell, until Quinn's owner presented us with our own key. We take

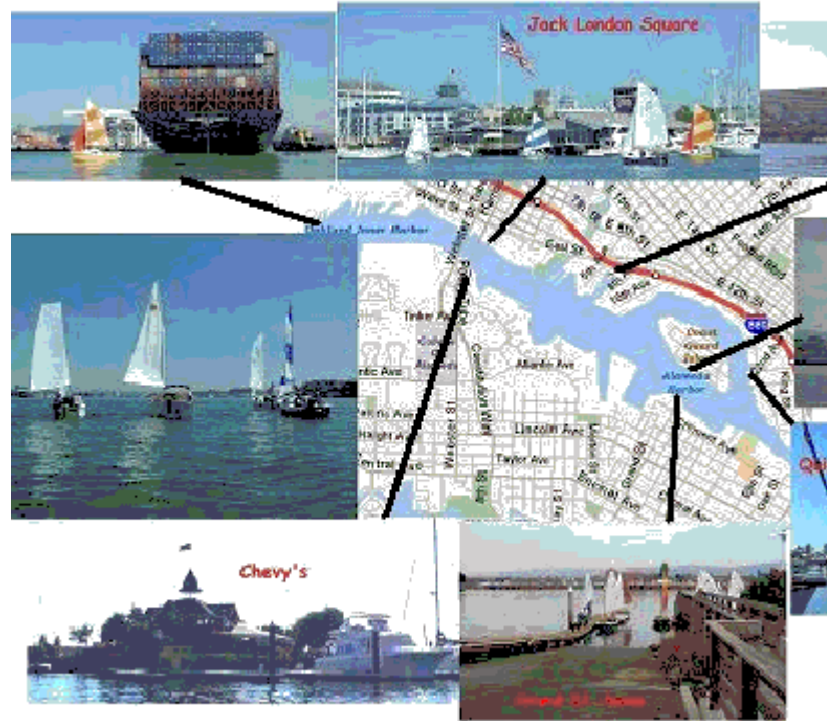
We take our time over lunch because this is more a social occasion than it is serious sailing. Then we return to the boats and set off down the Estuary for what usually turns into a friendly but undeclared race. About 3:00 p.m. it's time to head back to the launch ramp. As we de-rig and get ready to return home someone will frequently remark that it is hard to imagine a more satisfying day.

**Launching:** There are two easily accessible launch ramps on the Estuary. On the Oakland side there is Estuary Park at the foot of Fifth Street. In Alameda there is a ramp at the end of Grand Street. Both of the ramps and the parking lots are free. For a long time our customary launch site was Fifth Street in Oakland, but the city has allowed the dock to deteriorate to the point that it is possible to do serious damage to a boat hull because of exposed bolts, angle iron and other pieces of miscellaneous hardware. We now use Grand Street almost exclusively. It has two well maintained ramps, and a city vehicle maintenance garage is adjacent to the parking lot so there is good security during the week because of the comings and going of police cars and other emergency vehicles. On weekends the lot can become full and even parking on the side streets can become difficult.

**Sailing:** The Estuary is always interesting because of all the activity. There are many pleasure boats of all sizes, both power and sail, Coast Guard cutters and patrol boats, tugs and barges, kayaks, and a fleet of Optimist prams skippered by kids taking sailing lessons sponsored by Encinal Yacht Club. Towards the Bay end of the Estuary is the Inner Harbor, part of Oakland's container port, so you can even meet ocean-going container ships. Being protected, the water is usually flat and the winds are less than found on the Bay. The prevailing westerly wind means that you usually tack down the Estuary toward the Bay and are on a run returning.

**Dining:** Jack London Square has a wide variety of restaurants from Scott's to fast food. There is a guest dock immediately in front of Scott's and another guest dock by the side of Kincaid's Restaurant. Mike Westfield's favorite, when he was able to join us, was the Korean Barbecue. Directly across the Estuary from Jack London Square is a Chevy's with tables outside overlooking the water.

- Then, of course, there is Quinn's Lighthouse on the Oakland shore near the bridge to Coast Guard Island.



A while ago I had an unexpected free Friday afternoon so I took my boat out on the Estuary. Tacking towards the Bay I met a huge power boat appropriately name "River House" because it was the size of a small three-story house. It changed course to pass behind me and as it went by one of the two uniformed crewmen called out, "I thought you guys were only out here on Wednesdays." The Potters' Wednesday sails have actually become part of life on the Estuary. As Don Person says, "all trailer sailors are invited to join us", but whether or not you can join us on Wednesdays the Estuary is always a fascinating place to sail.

*Pat Brennan*



# *The Potter Yachter*

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December 2004

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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 ex-

perience 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*