



# The Potter Yachter

Newsletter of the Potter Yachters

May / July 2012

## Doo Dah on the Delta



By Carl Sundholm

Every year I look forward to Jerry Barrilleaux's delta overnight sail. This year was no exception. The trip often seems like a time travel trip from the Urban Present to the Rural Past.

I had the overnight sail on my calendar for May 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. I carefully prepared my trusty West Wight Potter 19, Dagmar, the day before and had her ready to go for the drive from the boatyard in Redwood City to the B & W Marina near Isleton, California, in the heart of the Delta just off the Stockton Deepwater Channel.

The next morning I headed up highway 880 which takes you through a not-so-desirable part of Oakland before getting to the Delta. As I was trailering Dagmar up the freeway through this area, I saw a flurry of police car lights on the opposite southbound side of the road and as I neared it was clear that there were about ten California Highway Patrol and police cars scattered along the road with lights flashing and several wrecked cars,

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and at the front was a large black SRV rammed into the center divide. I drove by just in time to see an officer who had drawn his weapon and was pointing it at the suspect screaming "freeze" at the top of his lungs. Mental images of bullets flying and people using Dagmar as shelter in a gun fight prompted me to move on a little more quickly. Sorry, no time to grab the camera and take photos. I was glad to get down the freeway and leave the Urban Present behind and finally see the peaceful Rural Past of the Delta in front of me.

*(continued page 3: Delta)*

**The Commodore's Corner**



Commodore's Corner

Yikes! The sun is shining, the trees are flowering, the birds are singing, and all saying that Sailing Season is here! And, so long as everyone is itching to get out on the water, the Potter Yachter sailing calendar shows some great events on the horizon.

We have the Cruiser Challenge on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, Rich McDewitt's Richmond Day Sail on August 4<sup>th</sup>, Bud Kerner's Delta Day Sail on August 18<sup>th</sup>, and Wes Harrison and Bard Johnson's Huntington Lake North/South get together August 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. So there is a lot to look forward to. Better clean out those Autumn leaves, dust off the boats, and start your engines.

Let the fun begin!

**EVENTS ON THE HORIZON:**

- 07/04/2012 Fourth of July Sail — **CANCELLED**
- 07/14-5/2012 Cruiser Challenge XIII Monterey (Gretchen Ricker)
- 08/04/2012 Richmond Day Sail (Rich McDevitt)
- 08/11-2/2012 6 bridges Delta Overnight Sail (Bud Kerner)
- 08/25-6/2012 Huntington Lake (Wes Harrison, Bard Johnson)



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

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(Delta: continued from page 1)



Our point of departure was B & W Resort Marina. It is located at 964 Brannan Island Road, in Isleton, California, at the intersection of Georgiana Slough and the Moke-lumne River, just north of the Highway 12 Drawbridge, as shown by the aerial photo (from marinas dot com).

Our plan was to proceed down the Stanislaus River, turn right and sail down the San Joaquin River for a ways and then look for the crane on the right side of the river which marked Sevenmile Slough and the entrance to Bruno's Island. The route is shown on this Google Earth map.

B & W has long been a delta resort for family summer vacations, with cabins, boat slips, a store/bar, and a boat launching ramp. B & W has been run by the Deak family since the 1960s when Jim and Joan Deak acquired it, and it is now in the second generation being run by Candy Kelp Deak and Gretchen Deak.

Jerry Barrilleaux, who has been coming to B & W Marina since he was a kid, posted the following story on the trailer sailor bulletin board about those early days:

“When I was a kid every year I looked forward to Shad season at B&W Marina. We would arrive just before dark with an old 5 hp outboard and we would rent a wooden rowboat with a net and washtub. The nets were about 4 feet in di-



ameter made from chicken wire. This was on the end of a long wooden pole. We would troll along the bank with the net lowered over the stern. When you hit a school of Shad you would twist the net and bring up your catch of several fish. When we filled the washtub we headed back. B&W was a busy place, they would count your fish and then clean them. You then went up to the Smokehouse and traded two of your fish plus .25 for one smoked Shad. Every time I go to B&W I think of all the wonderful times I had Bump Fishing all night with my dad.”

(Delta: continued on page 4)

(Delta: continued from page 3)

Back to the present, when I arrived at the B & W Resort Marina, I saw Jerry Barrilleaux, Rich McDevitt, Rob Sampson, and many others setting up their boats, and related my exciting trip through Oakland. Rob looked relaxed after his overnight in the cabins at B & W and ready to get an early start.

At the ramp, I was advised to beware of the ever-present overhead tree branches at the ramp, which had already grazed one Potter mast that morning.

After launching and circling about on the Mokelumne River while waiting for the bridge to open, I could see that the turn-out for the Delta trip was impressive: there were boats including those brought by Jerry Barrilleaux, Don Person, Rich McDevitt, Rob Sampson, Ed Dove, Chuck and Kevin Lee, Jim Smith, and Bud Newhall. After they opened the bridge, we sailed through and met up with David Myers, who had brought Salty Dog up from Bruno's Island, as he was making a day sail of it. He took this beautiful photo of our Potter fleet sailing south down the Mokelumne River. (Note: unless otherwise indicated, all photos by Carl Sundholm).

It was a beautiful sunny day, with the wind right in that "sweet spot." We had a leisurely run down the Stanislaus River as the breeze gradually increased.

By the time we reached the San Joaquin River, the wind amplified to make it a little more sporting and interesting for sailing. There was a lot of fun to be had tacking down the San Joaquin River.



It was so nice that you could just steer the tiller with your fingers and sail within a few feet of your friends while enjoying a relaxing conversation.

By the time we saw the crane that marked the entry to Bruno's Island, we pulled in to Seven Mile Slough.



I saw this massive floating green seaweed muck (which I believe is either *Egeria densa* and/or water hyacinth) by the entrance, which I didn't make much of at the time, but would later cause problems.



(Delta, continued on page 5)

*(Delta: continued from page 4)*



Then we decided we were having too much fun sailing and exploring that we decided to head back out on the river. Here's a photo of Rich McDevitt exploring some dilapidated structures on the south side of the San Joaquin.

When the winds eventually calmed and it became hotter, Rob Sampson, Ed Dove and I decided to head for Bruno's Island, but found the entrance blocked by the green muck. Ed Dove and Rob Sampson were able to get a running start by revving their engines and sliding over it, but when I tried that trick with Dagmar (who is a little broader in the beam than those Potter 15s) she made it halfway through and stuck. I solicited a couple of folks on a houseboat who were watching my plight and threw them a line, which they used to kindly pull me through the muck.



By this time it was getting hotter, so I found a slip for Dagmar. I met up with Jerry Barrilleaux, who is a very lucky (and smart) guy and he said the floating

seaweed muck was not there when he entered the harbor, although it had by now floated by Sunshine's stern.

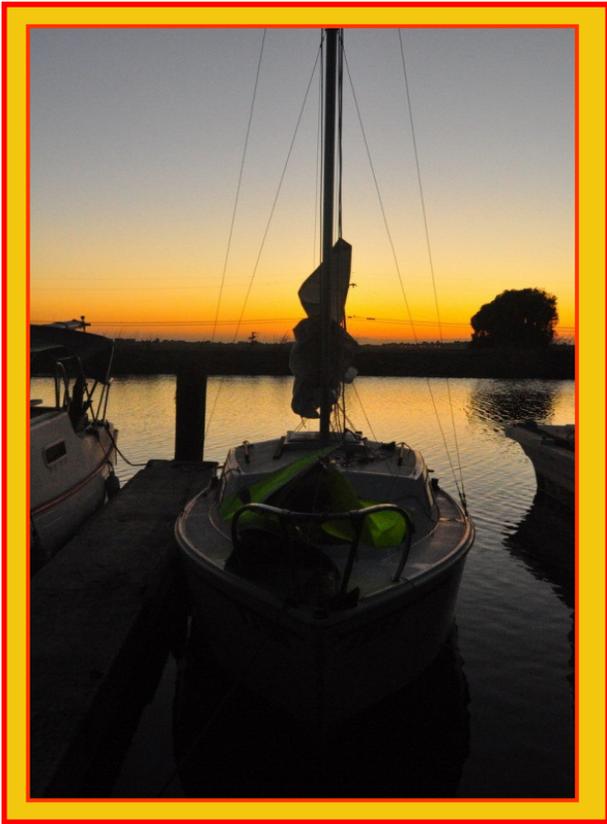
My luck started to improve as I was hanging out with Jerry: as we went down to register, an ice cream truck rolled by, and we snagged some very cold ice cream snacks which neutralized the heat of the day wonderfully. We then found that Bud and Linda Newhall had established a campground with their RV and generously provided a shady home base with cold drinks and vittles for all the Potter Yachters!



We had a great time hanging out in the shade, enjoying the conversation and sipping on our cold drinks. Jerry told some great stories about "Lost Isle," a notorious rip-roaring delta hang out that eventually got shut down. As evening fell, we gathered around a real nice campfire.

*(Delta, continued on page 6)*

(Delta: continued from page 5)



The next morning I woke up to see this beautiful sunrise.

Then we got our boats ready to take off for breakfast and I found that the green floating seaweed muck I had gotten stuck in the day before had left me without a prop on my outboard, just a spindle staring up at me.

Luckily enough, Chuck and Kevin Lee gave me a tow to breakfast at the Spindrifft, and I was able to sail from there out to the Mokelumne River. When it became clear that there wasn't much good sailing to be had on Sunday, everyone started their engines to get back and Jerry Barrilleaux kindly gave me a tow back. We had enjoyed the great sailing weather on Saturday, so this was no big deal. Thank you Jerry, Chuck and Kevin, Bud and Linda Newhall, and everyone who made this a really fun weekend relaxin' on the Delta.

Captain Howie (also know as Harold Goldbrandsen), of the Southern California Potters, posted an interesting story of his childhood at B & W Marina on the trailer sailor bulletin board:

"When I was about 14, I spent a summer month in one of those cabins with my grandparents. They had close friends that kept a fishing yacht in the marina during the summer months and they had a son who was my same age." During the days the adults would go out fishing in the Delta and the kids were left to their own devices at the marina. His friend "had a small 8ft fiberglass dinghy with a 2hp motor (a big thing at that time for a 14 year old) and we would spend our days exploring the local waterways, pulling each other around behind the dinghy on homemade plywood "boogie boards" and scamming the campgrounds for girls of our own age. We had an open charge account at the B&W counter and spent a small (to us) fortune on hamburgers and shooting the arcade bear. We were 'Big Men' at the B&W Marina. The highlight of the summer came when we made friends with the operator of the "Draw Bridge" next to the marina. He had breakfast every morning at the B&W marina and he eventually invited us up to the control booth on the draw bridge and let us open and close it. That was pretty heady stuff for a fourteen year old growing up in the middle of the Mojave Desert. From that summer on I have been a committed boater. - Captain Howie"

B & W is definitely a blast from the past.



# Lake Hennessey “Wake N Bake” June 16, 2012

By Rich McDevitt

Towards the north end of the Napa Valley lays a hidden jewel named Lake Hennessey. The lake is a drinking water reservoir for the City of Napa, so it’s got some heavy restrictions on use, max HP of 10, max boat length of 16 feet, and no water contact (swimming, wading) but it’s a beautiful place and at \$4.00 a day, hard to beat as it turns out to be a jewel off the beaten highways and byways we generally frequent.



Rich McDevitt

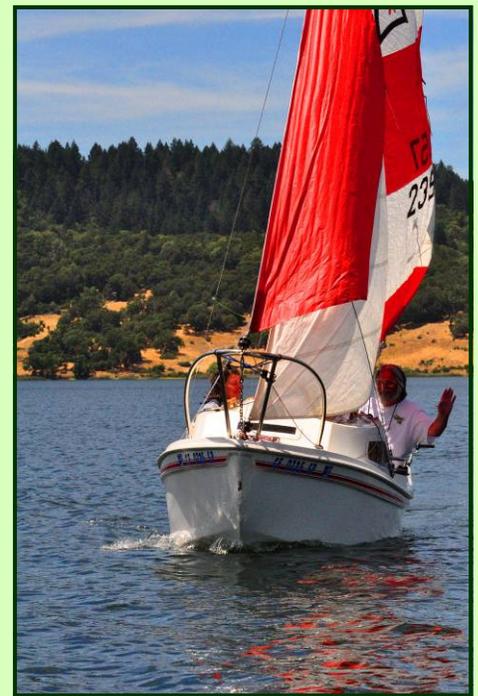
Photo by Carl Sundholm



Steve Potter playing.

Photo: Don Person

I hit the road early (6:30 AM) and had a fantastic early morning drive up Silverado Trail up the Napa Valley while sipping cheap coffee (I’m just not mystified by this \$5.00 a cup stuff because I view coffee like Archie Bunker viewed beer, “it’s not ours, we only rent it for a while”). About 8:45 AM I arrived at the ramp and Don Person was already on site and identifying various

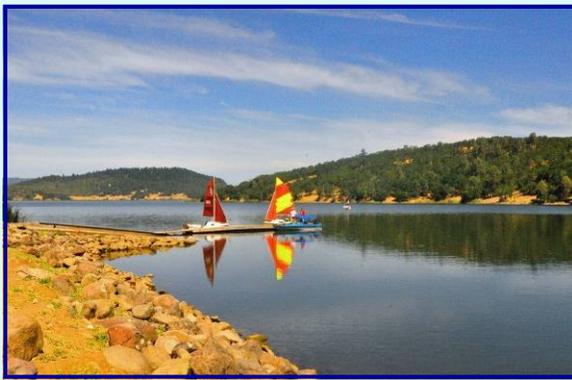


Jerry Kergan. Photo: Carl Sundholm

species of birds. Don was offering up some doughnuts, the body strong but the mind weak ... so I enjoyed one. Don, that was my 2<sup>nd</sup> doughnut in the past 12 months (that’s how I got to over 300 lbs.)! Soon Jerry Kergan with crew Cindy on Lazy Ka, Steve Potter and Commodore Carl with Dory’s boat in tow were all present. Morning winds were real light, Don and I made about a 45 minute journey across the lake and back under fluky winds that peaked at 3 mph. Soon everyone was rigged and launched when reality hit, the borrowed boat’s rudder and tiller were missing in action, so on to plan B and we were on the water, Don and Carl; Rick and I; Jerry and Cindi; with Steve Potter sailing a kayak rigged with foot pedal steering.

It was hot, no it was REALLY HOT and then it heated up and got HOT. The forecast was for every bit of a 100 degrees and we hit 103 to 108, but as it turns out we were fortunate, it was the hottest day of the year so far and on the water the temps did not feel bad at all probably not over 102 J but the sun was *(Hennessey, continued on page 8)*

(Hennessey, continued from page 7)



Fun in the sun.

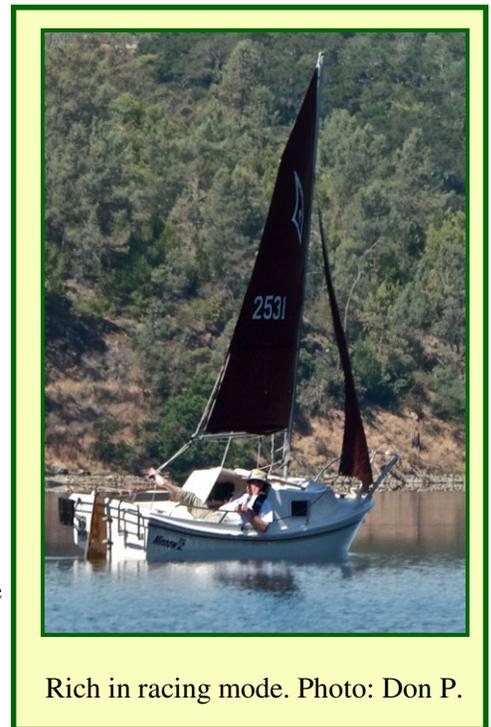
Photo: Carl Sundholm

still letting you know it meant business. We shared some fantastic sailing while it was HOT. Hot winds stayed with us in the HOT 5 to 10 mph range for quite a while so while it was HOT, you could sail anywhere you wanted at a decent speed and the HOT air on the surface of the water was not quite as HOT but it was still HOT. As it turned out, it wasn't much cooler anyplace in Northern CA that day, so we were in a good place to enjoy a HOT day.

No motors over 10 mph, no boats over 16' means no noise right? Well not quite but our noise on this day was quite interesting. A group of folks had set up their base on the shore and spent the day flying re-

remote control planes and a few boats. These people were very good at what they did. Loops, spins stalls, touch and go landings, float planes and beyond. The aerobatics and skill I was lucky to see was quite impressive and entertaining. The noise was not that bad and with a lot of lake under us with a nice breeze blowing, we watched the planes for a while and sailed on.

The Minnow was pulled and made road ready by 4:00. Carl and I had an agenda that did not include returning home that night; we proceeded up into the hills and spent the night at Rick's property, which includes a temporarily shut down winery. We were treated to a chance to take our guitars into a wine storage cave and play guitars in 59 degree air. Fifty-nine degree natural air on a day breaking the century mark all around us, this was truly such a treat I will cherish this Hennessey sail for a long time to come. Why don't we all have a cave to hide in when it's that hot? Batman may have been onto something. The Minnow stored in the Bat cave ... man all I need is Jack Webb for crew and this paragraph will be a real nightmare! "One Adam Twelve, the skipper of the Minnow is either on the rocks ... or asking for something on the rocks ..."



Rich in racing mode. Photo: Don P.

Yes it was hot and a bit of a drive for some of us, but for a first time trial at a new venue for the Potter Yachters, our first club sail on Lake Hennessey was an absolute blast. At times maybe a blast furnace blast, but a blast all the way and everyone in attendance voted to do it again some time.



Jerry Kergan in "Lazy Ka" Photo by Carl Sundholm



# Cruiser Challenge XIII

Monterey, CA July 14<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup>

The main event is two (or three, time permitting) easy-going, friendly cruiser-style races on Saturday. One course is specially designed for new sailors. The whole day is designed for non-racers, so don't be afraid to join us, even if you've never raced before. We'll have simplified regatta rules for non-racers; all you need to know is the ordinary "rules of the road" for sailing. . ([Click here for the Eligibility and Regatta Rules.](#))

After the races, the party begins. Join other participants immediately after the races at the [Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club](#) for hors'd'oeuvres and an open bar. The awards ceremony will begin at 5:00 p.m. at MPYC. Most will be staying overnight at the [Monterey Municipal Marina](#) in Monterey Harbor. After the awards, **dinner will be served at the yacht club. Your registration includes one dinner ticket. Additional awards ceremony dinners can be purchased at the club Saturday evening.**

On Sunday morning, free coffee will be served at the [Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club](#), or you may go to a local restaurant for a full breakfast. There'll be plenty of free time for sailing, socializing, and hanging out at the yacht club on Sunday.

For a detailed schedule for the weekend, [click here.](#)

You don't have to race to join the party. If you'd rather daysail than race, that's fine -- come and join us! Just check off the appropriate boxes on the registration form for the activities you want to attend.

Click here for [On-Line Registration](#)

Click here for [Monterey Information](#)

For more information, contact Pat Brennan, [Secretary@potter-yachters.com](mailto:Secretary@potter-yachters.com)

In July 2011, three dozen boats registered for the regatta. There were skippers of all skill levels and boats of every description -- and everybody had a great weekend! To see what a wonderful weekend we all had at Cruiser Challenge XII here is a video by Sean Mulligan, a Cruiser Challenge XII participant. [Video](#)



Cruiser Challenge XIII  
Monterey, Ca 2012

Potter Yachters 6 Bridges Delta Sail  
 August 11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup>, 2012

This is a two day sail through the Delta, starting in Rio Vista. Launch time is 10:00 am. We will sail through Three Mile Slough to the San Joaquin River, turning to port towards Stockton. We will leave the San Joaquin onto the Mokelumne River and then through the Mokelumne River Bridge to Georgiana Slough. Slips are \$75 per foot. That is \$11.25 for a Potter 15 and \$14.25 for a Potter 19. There will be complimentary hamburgers and hot dogs Saturday night. The marina serves a Sunday Brunch starting at 8:00 am. Lunch Saturday will be on the boats under sail.

We will spend the night at the Oxbow Marina on the Georgiana Slough. Bring your bathing suit, they have a pool. The next day after brunch we will continue up the Georgiana Slough towards Walnut Grove. The first Bridge we will encounter is the Tyler Bridge, followed by the Georgiana Slough Bridge in Walnut Grove.

In Walnut Grove we will join the Sacramento River and head down the river towards Rio Vista. The next bridge we will encounter is the Isleton Bridge in Isleton. Five more miles and we will go under the Rio Vista bridge, back to the start.

The following is wind statistics from Windfinder for Rio Vista.

<b>Rio Vista/Delta (RIOVISTA)</b>													
Statistics based on observations taken between 1/2007 - 5/2012 daily from 7am to 7pm local time.													
Month of year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	SUM
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	1-12
Dominant <u>Wind dir.</u>	↘	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↘	↗
Wind probability >= 4 Beaufort (%)	9	12	18	25	33	43	40	34	16	11	8	10	21
Average <u>Wind speed</u> (mph)	7	7	9	9	10	12	12	10	9	8	7	7	8
Average air temp. (°F)	50	53	59	62	69	75	78	77	77	66	57	46	64
Select month	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Year</u>

I did this sail in the beginning of June, there was almost no wind and the air temp. was 100. Hopefully the temperature and wind will be more average for the sail.

See you there!  
 Bud



Hello Potterers!

I just boat my WWP-15 this month and as I was googling to find more Potter folks . . . I viewed "Its Pinky" in the Potter-Yachters News Letter for March/April 2012.

What a Hoot . . . This is the Potter that I bought !

Pinky has been renamed "Floyd" . . . I am fully aware that a boat should not be renamed, but I don't think that Pinky will be offended.

I bought Pinky/Floyd for three reasons:

Long story short, I am taking time off to Motor, Row, Sail 4 the Cure in the Sacramento - San Joaquin Delta Waterways - approximately 700 miles - their is a total of 1000 miles but not all navigable for my boat.

1. To help my daughter through her grieving for the loss of her mom who died of cancer 2/14/2012,
2. To strengthen the wave of perpetual awareness to find a cure for cancer which began long before me, that a cure is in our reach and it is marked by all cancer survivors.
3. It is my way to accomplish one item of my bucket list (before I die) and at the same time.

You can view a short video made by Deborah a friend of the owner, Ken, of International Marine who I bought Pinky/ Floyd from. [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) search for Joe & Floyd or visit [www.wwpotter.com](http://www.wwpotter.com) and click on their YouTube Link to view "The Story of Joe & Floyd. This is the first of many to come as I embark on my adventure. It is my hope to meet Potter folks along my journey and most importantly to promote awareness to find a cure . . . for cancer .

Best wishes, Joseph





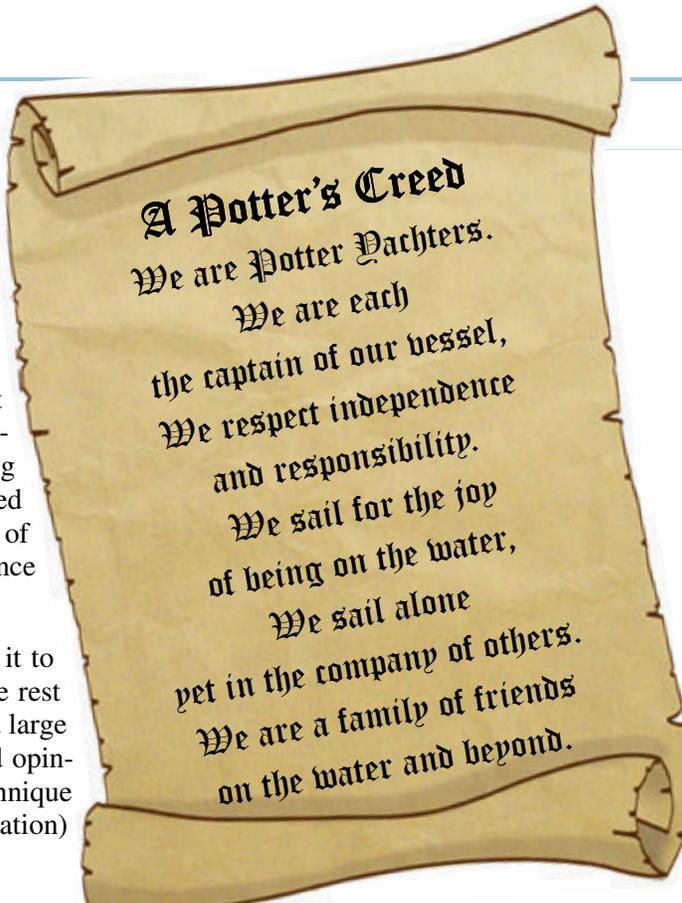
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## With a Grain of Salt

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*



**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.