



The Potter Yachter

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

Aug/Sep 2021

After-Action Report

Benicia to Napa, May 2021

by Goose Gossman

Photo: Phil Marcellis



The Potter Pod ambles west, fighting current under the Carquinez Bridge.

When the upcoming Delta sail on Memorial Day weekend was cancelled because host Jerry Barrilleaux said the waters were choked with invasive plants, we decided to head up the Napa River instead. In 2019, after the Benicia Sail, a bunch of us sailed there and discovered a venue perfect for Pottering. And 2021 proved that wasn't an anomaly. We sailed from Benicia, down the Carquinez Strait, up the Mare Island Strait, and onto the (See Napa continued on page 4)

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 (just shows the burgee; no text)
Patches	\$ 2.50 (Both round and burgee shaped)
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>

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The Commodore's Corner

By 'Goose' Gossman

Well, just when we thought we were safe, the Covid rat threatens to spoil our fun again. Needless to say, I've been taking maximum doses of Potter meds all year to stay sane. A schedule change Memorial Day had 14 boats head to Napa from Benicia, for a fantastic weekend. In June, I missed the Union Valley Sail, but was able to go to Catalina with the SoCal Potters, hosted by master chef Gary Nitta. It was a fine time, a taste of "real cruising", and something to look forward to. Long Beach harbor and Alamitos Bay are really interesting, too. In July, six boats sailed into Loch Lomond to meet up for another sweet weekend. *Cruiser Challenge 21* is here, with about sixteen boats signed up. Some will be sailing in from Moss Landing, while others will launch in Monterey. Rather than day-sails, cruise-ins seem to be the style lately. It's always rewarding to safely pull into a new destination, and say "cheated death again". At CC, there will be some competition for bragging rights... although "most whale sightings" might be the best reward.

Potterdom is alive and well! This year we've had a flood of 12 new members!! Please welcome **Dan Henderson** - San Francisco; **Ted Piersen** - Benicia; **Chris & Sylvia Guinon** - Benicia; **Don Charles** - Novato; **Mat & Tom Simmons** - San Rafael; **Lavonne Wesner** - Brigantine, New Jersey; **Howie Stevens** - Vallejo; **Chris Otanez** - Santa Barbara; **Stanley Rawllins** - Faywood, New Mexico; **Gary Nitta** - Ridgecrest; **David Anton** - San Diego; **Carl Jones** - Sacramento. Wow!


George and Rebecca Corrigan have kindly been working on updating our roster, and will be mailing them out in the near future. We are also looking at having an in-person annual meeting in late November or early December; hopefully at Oakland YC or Benicia YC.

Lastly, we have another event change: P15 legend (and Lake Hennessey host) Rich McDevitt has sold his boat! Damn!! He will be really, REALLY missed!! ... DAMN!

Luckily, the day I learned this, I got a call from Ed Stancil (of Redwood City's Peninsula YC – home to their fabulous St. Patrick's Day feasts of days past), and invited us to their new outpost in the Delta on Aug 13-15, as part of *Latitude 38's Delta Do Dah* event. "Free? Yes. Thank you!" Details coming...

Hope to see you all out there soon!

Regards,

Goose — 



Soakin' up the Catalina Island sun with the Potter sailors of SoCal

Club Events on the Horizon

potter-yachters.org/eventcalendar

- | | | |
|------------------|---|---------|
| Oct 2 (Sat-Sun) | Moss Landing to Monterey Sail | (Bud K) |
| | <i>intermediate to advanced; overnight at docks; open water sail <u>not appropriate for beginners</u></i> | |
| Oct 30 (Sat-Sun) | Delta Bridges Sail | (Bud K) |
| | <i>generally easy; motoring (bring fuel); intermediate when windy; overnight at docks</i> | |
| TBD (Sun) | Potter Yachters Annual Meeting | (Goose) |
| | <i>we were prevented from gathering in-person last year. Maybe the Oakland Yacht Club will be open and we can see each other this year. Regardless, club business still needs to be taken care of, and "the show must go on."</i> | |

Join Our Sail from Richmond to Angel Island

Sailhost: Jon Barber



Join the Potter Yachters for a sail to Ayala Cove on Angel Island, Saturday, August 28. A departure time of 10am from [Marina Bay Yacht Harbor](#) should put us at the dock in Ayala Cove by 1:00 pm, in time for a rest and lunch. There is a [Cafe and Cantina](#) on the island. I have yet to eat there. After lunch, a sail back to Richmond and a slip for the night should complete the outing, though some may want to undertake further adventures.

Contact the marina office for a slip if you plan to overnight.

Marina Bay Yacht Harbor:

1340 Marina Way South, Richmond, CA 94804

Phone: 510.236.1013

Fax: 510.236.1957

Hours: 9am to 5pm Monday – Saturday

There are several dining options within walking distance of the slips at Richmond.

I will attempt to post tide and current predictions a week before this trip on the Trailer Sailor website. Look in the [West Wight Potter Forum](#).

The conditions in Raccoon Strait can be fierce. Winds do tend to build later in the day.

Hope to see you there! —

Directions from San Francisco/Oakland:

I-80 E/I-580 W

Take Pt. Richmond/San Rafael Exit onto I-580 W

Exit at Harbour Way North (Exit 9B)

Turn right onto Cutting Blvd.

Turn right onto Marina Way South

Directions from Sacramento:

I-80 W towards Oakland/San Francisco

Exit at Central Ave. (Exit 14A)

Turn right on Central & merge on I-580 W to San Rafael

Exit at Harbour Way North (Exit 9B)

Turn right onto Cutting Blvd.

Turn right onto Marina Way South

[The machine for the ramp parking area no longer takes quarters. After much theft, they replaced it with a new machine that only takes credit cards. Or you can buy an annual pass in the form of a key-fob for \$300. –Ed.]

Participation in Potter Yachter events is subject to the guidelines published in [Jan-Feb 2021 PYN](#), page 3.

Officer's Club

potter-yachters.org/officer_mail.html

Commodore:

Jim 'Goose' Gossman
P-19, *ReGale*

[Contact this person](#)

Vice Commodore:

Phil Marcelis
P-19, #1487, *Family Time*

[Contact this person](#)

Newsletter Editor:

Phil Marcelis
Catalina 22, #15270

[Contact this person](#)

P-15 Fleet Captain:

David Bacon
P-15, #2636, *Ah Tiller the Fun*

[Contact this person](#)

P-19 Fleet Captain:

Eric Zilbert
P-19, #629, *Riptide*

[Contact this person](#)

Secretary/Treasurer:

(temporarily vacant)
Contact Goose or Phil

[Contact this person](#)

Webmaster:

Phil Marcelis
Webmaster@potter-yachters.org

Website: www.potter-yachters.org

Facebook: fb.me/PotterYachters

(Napa continued from page 1)

Napa River, landing at the Napa Valley Marina.

A baker's dozen (13) boats departed Benicia around 10:30 am Saturday for the 15+ mile cruise up into wine country. Most launched and got slips at Benicia Marina by Friday, for a casual beginning to the long weekend. Because of extreme low tides, a few boats launched at the 9th street ramp (which is steeper/deeper) than the marina's ramp.

Waking to a crisp, clear morning, we rallied on the water to catch the remaining ebb down the strait to the confluence off of Mare Island. As we approached the Carquinez Bridge, we could see Charlie Jeremias heading towards us on his Corsair trimaran *Stingray*. He would escort us upriver, as an honorary Potter. As planned, we arrived just as the tide changed into a flood, which would whisk us up to our destination. The winds were 8-12k, and combined with the favorable current, meant we were making great time. With temps in the 70s, wind on our beam, and not a single non-Potter-Yachter on the water, it was sheer bliss. It's not that we are selfish, but more ironic, to have seemingly private access to such amazing geography. Lucky indeed!

Napa - May 2021

Attendees:

- Jerry Barrilleaux – *Sunshine*, P19
- Don Charles – *Camino*, Sage 15
- George & Rebecca Corrigan – *Horizon Bound*, P19
- Kevin Crowder – *Aurora*, ComPac 19
- 'Goose' Gossman – *Grace*, Nimble 25
- Chris Guinon – *Sea Gypsy*, P15
- Charlie Jeremias – *Stingray*, Corsair 24 Trimaran
- Alan Koepf – *Kim Yvonne*, P19
- Phil Marcelis – *Merri Time*, Catalina 22
- Dan Phy – *Six*, Monty 15
- Rob Sampson – *Mud Hen*, Ranger 21
- Mat Simmons – *Wee Flea*, P19
crew: Tom and Nathan
- David & Sharon Soule – *Nighthawk*, Balboa 21
- Eric Zilbert – *Riptide*, WWP 19

After passing the Navy shipyards, we were fast approaching the Mare Island Bridge, so I called the operator on



VHF (Channel 13) to request an opening. With years of practice on previous Delta bridge sails, we closed ranks in unison, and entered the lower Napa River. Passing the abandoned submarine pens, and under the Highway 37 bridge we went... where the river spreads out into a vast watershed several miles wide. While it looks like open water, staying in the marked channel is prudent. All those birds aren't walking on water! Even so, a few boat's keels got a free Napa mud bath, but to not to worry, the silt is soft, the tide was rising, and everyone was fine. When this happens (not if), quickly steering towards the center of channel before losing momentum usually works. If dead in the water, ease sails, start motor, and back off with keel still down.(if you just lift keel too soon you might be blown further into shallows). If that doesn't work, raise keel as you back off, being sure sails

are eased. If you're really, REALLY stuck, drop your anchor to prevent yourself from drifting further in (if tide is rising), and wait for the tide to lift you enough to back off.

After a couple hours of sublime sailing, we turned up the narrowing river, past some waterfront homes, to the Napa Valley Marina and Boatworks. Up ahead, I could see a few boats were getting mud baths entering the marina; including Charlie (who lives on the river and has sailed it hundreds of times). I was the last boat, playing

“Mother Goose” on *Grace*, my Nimble Kodiak electric motor-sailer. As I powered up to enter the marina I realized that my prop was fouled! With the current carrying me rapidly upstream, I hailed Charlie for a tow....but before he pulled alongside, I realized that I could still go in reverse. Being a double-ender, I was able to make headway against the current, and steer backwards all the way into the marina and guest dock. Piece of cake! As I cleared the entrance, I saw Alan valiantly freeing himself, and watched our two newest members helping each other, with Don (Sage 15) pulling Chris (P15) off the mud. A bit of a comedic satire, it was more proof of the power of the Potter Pod. Well-earned beers were shared, and all was good.

After socializing on the dock we embarked on a tour of the marina’s grounds, home of a vast “boatyard of broken dreams.” Sad, but very interesting.

Sunday we piled aboard *Grace* and *Stingray* for the 5-ish mile cruise to lunch in downtown Napa. We had planned to go all the way to the city guest dock, but low water forced us to pull into the Napa Yacht Club, who graciously allowed us to tie up. I stayed with the boats, while everyone else walked or Ubered into town. The port captain even invited us back!



Upon our return to the marina, we hung out, Jerry did magic for Mat’s son Nathan, and a few rested. Gail and Rebecca drove to town, and brought back delicious pizza the club provided for everyone. After eating, Phil conducted a ceremony to re-name and christen his new boat, a Catalina 22, now called *Merri Time*. He played his banjo while we tried to see how many Potterers could fit on *Grace*.



Monday morning we cleared out just after 9am to catch the current back to Benicia. The wind was light, so we needed to motorsail a good part of the way. We arrived back at the confluence of Mare Island and Carquinez straits before

the tide changed, so the last leg up to Benicia was a slog (or motorsail). When I was under the Carquinez Bridge (Hwy 80), *Grace* was on a treadmill, making less than a knot. Phil and the Soules had caught a back-eddy close to the C&H sugar mill, and were long gone. When I got there, the current was not doing what the tide table promised, and it took twenty minutes to sail under the two bridges. (For once, I chose not to motorsail just to see how it would be). After I





made it past, I heard on the radio that a tanker was headed our way. When I could see it, I was just a couple hundred yards from the bridges, but off to the south side, and safe. However, I could see two boats (P19s of Alan and Mat) still under the north side of the bridges... which was the side the tanker was headed to. HOLY CRAP!!! I called them, panicked. The tanker was moving faster than you can imagine, and would be at the bridge in less than five minutes... and it took me twenty to get through. Even making way laterally (cross current) was difficult. Apparently they got their engines going, and Mat made it to the northwest side of the channel safely, while Alan got to the southeast side

(which is where eastbound traffic is supposed to pass) having had to let the current sweep him backwards behind the west side of the bridges. The ship never sounded five blasts, indicating they could see that we were responding properly. Always make deliberate and obvious actions to communicate your intentions. Mat later told me that he had also called the ship on Channel 13. Great job!

In the following hours, the cats had scattered, and the Napa sail was in the books. A few of us went to dinner, and a couple boats stayed over 'til morning. It was a fantastic time, and we "cheated death again"!

It took me 3.5 hours to get there, and 5.5 hours to get back. On the way home we did see a couple other boats out, but we still dominated the waterways. That's just what we seem to do. — 🚩



Rob ambles toward the spot where *Stingray* is reversing into a side-tie.

Photos of Napa Sail

by George & Rebecca Corrigan



More Photos of Napa Sail


By Phil Marcelis



Delta Sail in lieu of Lake Hennessey

Sailhost: Goose



Launch Friday at [Rio Vista public ramp](#). Free. Stay over at [Delta Marina](#) (where it's also possible to launch for a fee); dinner at [The Point restaurant](#). Saturday late morning sail to the new outpost of Peninsula YC at [Delta Bay Marina](#) on the Delta loop. Free guest dock. BBQ hosted by PYC in conjunction with *Latitude 38's Delta Doo Dah* boats. Free, but donations good. Delta winds can be very strong (30+ knots) in summer (typically at night, sunrise, and sunset) so it's not the right time for beginners to sail there. Mid-day it usually backs off, so that's our window if it's cranking. Please let me know who's coming — 

Directions to the public boat ramp in Rio Vista:


- From Antioch, Take Hwy 160 north to Hwy 12 west
- From Hwy 5, go towards Lodi then take Hwy 12 west
- * Once on Hwy 12 west, continue over Rio Vista Bridge, then follow signs to Downtown Rio Vista making a hairpin turn right onto Hwy 84, and immediate right at N Front St., continue until Montezuma Street and turn left toward ramp.
- From the West, take Hwy 680 or Hwy 80 toward Fairfield, then take Hwy 12 east.
- * Once on Hwy 12 east, continue until N Front St (just before the Rio Vista Bridge) and continue on N Front St., then go until Montezuma Street and turn left toward ramp.

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After-Action Report

Fun at Union Valley Reservoir!

by Kevin Crowder

Well, it was a fun time, June 19/20. Warm to hot but we had afternoon wind. Seemed to start building by 11:00. We anchored in what we call [wedding ring cove](#). But where we anchored in the past was high and dry. We had 3 boats rafted and the others paddled over in their kayaks. Swimming was nice and refreshing after good afternoon sail. Then, we had a few gin and tonics with Eric's excellent salmon hors d'oeuvres. Man, I enjoyed myself! Cooked steaks for Ed, Eric and myself and some corn on the cob shared with the crew of *Blue Moon*. Sunday had an interesting sail along the dam. Wind was blowing into the dam. Fun sail! — 

Union Valley Reservoir - June 2021

Attendees:

- Kevin Crowder - *Aurora*, ComPac 19
- Ed Hultgren – *Alma Stenbom*, Monty 17
- Jim Hunt – *Blue Moon*, Santana 2023c
crew: Alan Roberts
- Dan Phy – *Six*, Monty 15
- David & Sharon Soule – *Triple Cross*, Cross18
- Eric Zilbert - *Riptide*, WWP 19



Upcoming: October 2-3, 2021

Moss Landing to Monterey

Sailhost: Bud Kerner



The Potter Yachter

Here's another chance to gather with fellow Potter Yachters for a sail to Monterey. If you haven't been there with the Potter Yachters, you don't know what you're missing, so plan on joining us for a weekend of good food, good sailing and good friends. Weather permitting, we will have a group sail from Moss Landing to Monterey on Saturday the 2nd with an overnight at the docks of [Monterey City Marina](#). October is usually very pleasant on the bay. There is very little fog and moderate wind. That said, one never knows for sure, including [NOAA](#), what the weather might be.

We'll sail back on Sunday the 3rd, if the weather holds, otherwise we will shuttle our trailers from Moss Landing to retrieve and derig in Monterey.



EYC's guest dock in Moss Landing is available Friday and Sunday, for those of us who would like to launch on Friday and stay over after returning.

We will plan on gathering in Moss Landing on Saturday, so we can all be in the water by 10 am. Usually the morning breeze starts to fill in at this time. The sail is approximately 13 NM, and we should be in Monterey by about 4 pm.

I will reserve slips for us in Monterey. Please let me know by Friday October 1st if you plan to make the sail. Monterey Harbor monitors channel 5 and when you get close to the harbor you can call them on your VHF radio. They will tell you what slip you are assigned to. That is much easier than tying up at the small dock next to the launch ramp and going to the office for assignment.

There's plenty of trailer parking in Moss Landing, but the fee schedule is a bit confusing. Once you decide what to pay, you put exact change into the "iron ranger" using the envelopes provided. Our best guess so far is that it's about \$35 for launching and two days of parking. It's a long walk to the Harbor Master's office if you need to make change. See the [August 2016 Potter Yachter \(page 11\)](#) if you want a firsthand account of this trip. Of course the option is always available for anyone who wants to launch at Monterey and sail out to greet us there.

It should be said that Monterey Bay sailing can be challenging, so it's not recommended for beginners. Keep in mind that YOU are the final authority on whether you can make the trip, so study the chart, check on the weather, and be ready to drive your boat to Monterey, if necessary. We'll probably go to the [English Pub](#) for dinner Saturday night, unless Covid changes the plan. Looking forward to seeing you in Moss Landing! —

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:

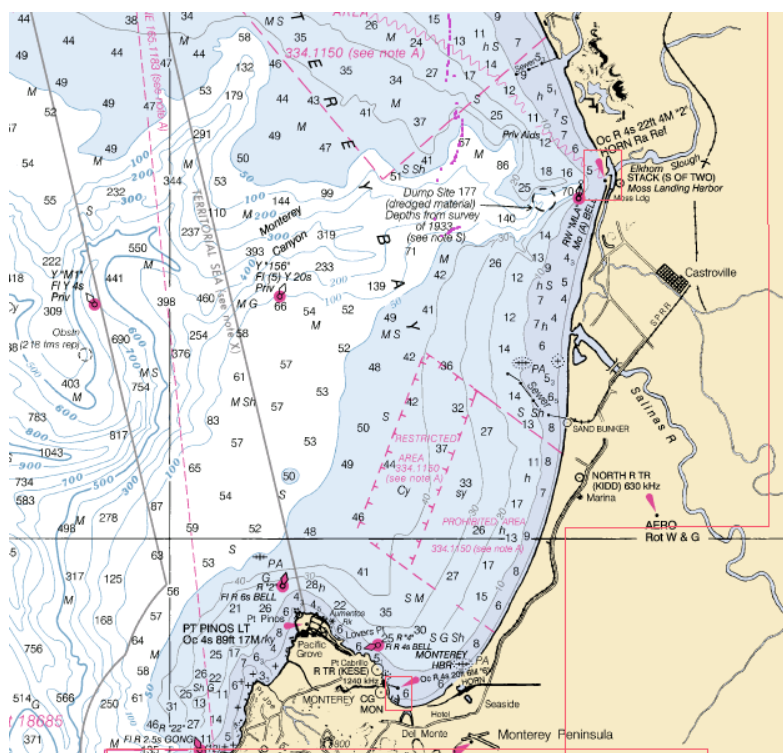
take Hwy 156 West, exit onto Hwy 1 North at Castroville, just past the famous power plant stacks, go over the bridge and turn left into the parking lot.

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



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

Tomales Bay Overnight



The Tomales Bay *Potter Yachter* Trip doesn't have a sailhost this year. Folks would typically launch from the ramp at Miller County Park [near Nick's Cove](#), located on the east side of Tomales Bay. The fee to launch is \$5.00 (plus \$5.00 for overnight parking in a space in the parking lot).

No permit is needed to anchor out or sleep on your boat while beached, although you must have a porta-potty on the boat in both cases.



The entrance to Tomales Bay is a legendary hazard due to large sleeper waves that may break in the entrance. Transit the area quickly and don't anchor there. For more information about Tomales, see: <http://www.dbw.ca.gov/pages/28702/files/TomalesBay.pdf>

Those who decide to attend can refer to typical info on page 8 in the [Aug/Sept 2019 newsletter](#).

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Not Much Skill Anchoring

I just found your club's newsletter articles. I do a lot of overnighting at the docks like you all do, but when I anchor I never get any sleep. I worry the boat will end up dragging into the rocks. I'd love to see an article of your more experienced member's advice about anchoring.

[Good idea! Anyone with anchoring advice, please email me! Until I compile responses into an article, my advice is anchor near muddy banks. See the [March issue, page 7](#). -Ed.]



We need photos for the 2022 calendar! E-Mail the calendar committee (calendar@potter-yachters.org)

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 can join us on sails in person or vicariously through our stories. As of 2021, annual dues are \$30 per family.

Make checks payable to "Jim Gossman", or use PayPal to treasurer@potter-yachters.org, or use the link <https://www.paypal.me/PhilMarcelis/30> and include "Potter Yachters Dues" in the notes.



Or see us online at:
www.potter-yachters.org

Send your payment (with Jim 'Goose' Gossman
your name and address) to: 865 West 'I' Street
Benicia, CA 94510

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.



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

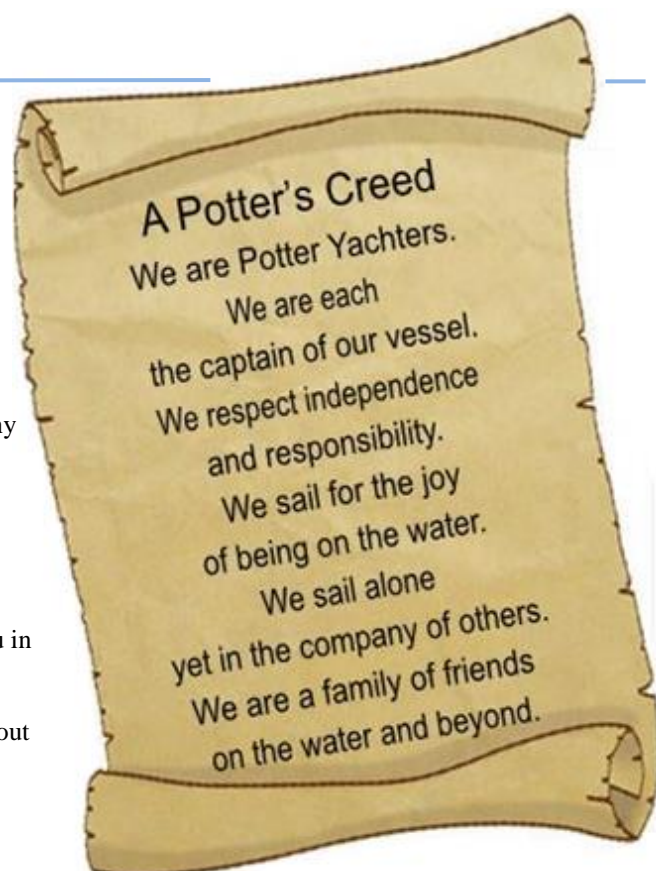
With a Grain of Salt

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



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.