



The Potter Yachter

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

July 2023

In Memorium: Pat Brennan



Story begins pg 3

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

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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>

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The Commodore's Corner



By Phil Marcelis

Sunrise and sunset make for some spectacular newsletter photos. Some mornings waking up on a Messabout in the Pacific Northwest, I can recall the crisp air and the expanse of water with few boats on it and the anticipation of sailing somewhere - anywhere - with a group that I'm happy to call buddies. One of Pat Brennan's favorite paintings was apparently "Impression, Sunrise" by Claude Monet. I'm sad that he's no longer with us, but I have fond memories of him from our sailing trips together. He was the club's glue for many years as he brought his organizational skills to bear while serving as Secretary/Treasurer. He will be sorely missed. Perhaps one way to honor him is to go out and experience another sunrise surrounded by friends and boats.




As I write this, I'm at Cabrillo Marina getting ready to join several other Potter sailors for a trip to Catalina Island. This is my first time sailing to Catalina on my own boat and I feel that excited anticipation again of starting a trip with many unknowns.

Sitting here in the marina, flanked by Potter Yachters, I reflect for a

moment on the impact the club has had on my sailing. My P-19 was the first boat I owned and there was a steep learning curve. I was lucky to benefit from the club's knowledgeable members every step of the way; from broken rudder to leaky centerboard to overheating engine... a list too long to convey here. Pat was the Secretary/Treasurer when I joined in 2012. That seems like so long ago, and although I sold my P-19 and now sail a Catalina 22, the friendships I've made with club members remain.

The sun is poking through the mist here, and it's time to prep for the day's sail to Catalina Island. Fair winds!!

Regards,

Phil — 

(In Memorium continued...)

On June 9th, 2023, the Potter Yachters lost one of our long-time members and friend to all, Pat Brennan. Pat joined the Potters in 1998 and served as the Club Secretary/Treasurer from 2004 to 2018. He wrote [this article](#), that might interest you, about sailing his Potter 15, *Eaglet*, in the October 2003 newsletter.



From Dick Herman: We lost a good buddy

Pat was one of the original six Suspects on the first Messabout. It was September 2003, when six of us headed north for Fair Harbor in South Puget Sound. Don and Judy Person were in *Sarah Anne*, Dan Phy in *Asap*, John Wheeler in a P-15 (no name as usual), I was in *Muddy Duck*, and Pat in his P-15, *Eaglet*.

We only spent five days on the water, but, oh, the memories! I shall never forget the time at Boston Harbor, which is a story in itself, or when we sailed under the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, more or less in formation. It was raining when we reached Arabella's Marina at Gig Harbor. They had a fire in the lounge going and coffee waiting for us. And

there was that golden moment at Gig Harbor when we pulled out. Jennifer, Don and Judy's daughter, had brought a carton of coffee and we all stood around, ready to head home, but no one wanted to say goodbye. We were the most fortunate of friends, Suspects all. Pat will be missed, but not forgotten, and I know he has found safe harbor.

From Don Person:

A true friend and sailing buddy. We will very much miss him.

Fair winds to all,

From Carl Sundholm:

Words cannot express how much we value Pat's unique personality, intelligence, creativity, loyal friendship and selfless service to us all.

All the best,



From Eric Zilbert:

He has been a true friend and helper for lo these many years.

From Rob Samson:

Pat was a great guy and wonderful friend. He helped me a lot during my time as commodore.





From Dan Phy:

In between Potter Events, I would sometimes head down to Alameda just to visit with Patrick...casual dinners, and more than a few breakfasts!... Also, I have lobbied Phil to dedicate this year's MA-XX to Patrick... A true Officer & Gentleman, Good Sailing Friend, an original "Suspect"... Fair Winds Across the Bar...Dan

From Bud Kerner:

I was commodore for three years. At the beginning of each year, I would ask Pat if he would be Sectary/Treasure again. If he had ever said no I would have said no also. Pat ran the Potter Yachters. He was just a great guy and will be missed.
Bud

From Commodore Phil:

Dear Potter-Yachter members,

I'm sad to pass along this news, received from Carl Sundholm, that Pat Brennan passed away on June 9th after a swift bout with pancreatic cancer. Pat was more than the person we heavily relied upon as Secretary/Treasurer for over 15 years. He was also a treasured friend, a stalwart sailing buddy, and remained calm and unflappable through most anything. We will miss him dearly.

Condolence cards can be sent to his daughter, Elizabeth. She says they are planning to have a memorial in August, the details of which will be shared when she has them.

If you need the address, contact Phil.

Fair winds,

Phil Marcelis, Commodore
Potter Yachters



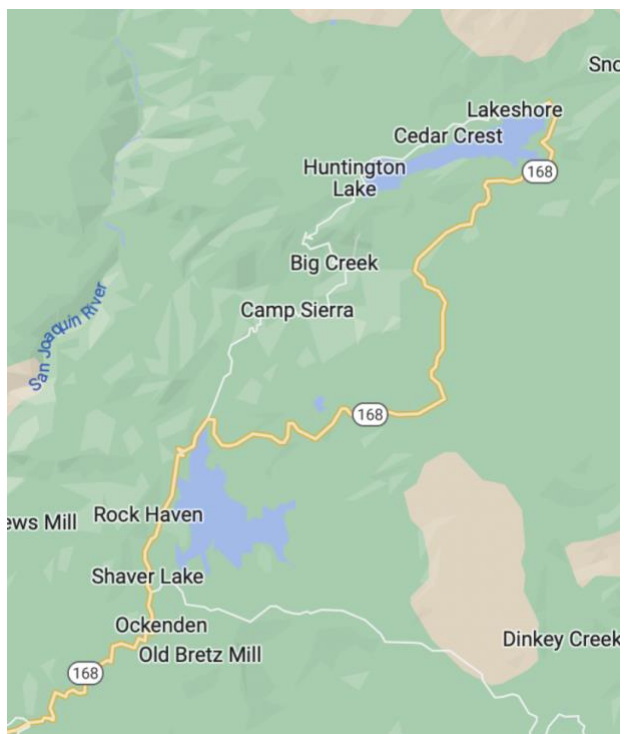


Fair winds, Pat,
and following
seas.

Club Events on the Horizon		potter-yachters.org/calendar
July 7-9	Benicia to Napa	Goose Gossman
<i>Depending on wind and tides, this can be an intermediate sail. Launch in Benicia and sail to Napa. Stay overnight at the Napa Valley Marina followed by a sail back to Benicia on Sunday.</i>		
July 22-23	Huntington Lake	Jim Hunt
<i>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>		
August 12 th	Monterey: Cruiser Challenge--XXIV	Alan Koepf
<i>The races will be Saturday the 12th but join us for sailing in Monterey Friday through Sunday or sail over from Moss Landing if you are so inclined. More details below.</i>		
August 12-13 th	Delta Doo Dah (Delta Bay Marina)	Non-Potter event
-		
August 19-20	Rio Vista to Prospect Slough (anchor out)	Eric Zilbert
<i>More details to follow in the August Newsletter.</i>		

Upcoming: Huntington Lake

Join The Potter Yachters for a high Sierra sail on beautiful Huntington Lake, July 22 and 23. Located east of Madera on highway 168, the Lake is at 7800 feet above sea level so be sure to have your tow vehicle ready for the climb (you may want to have a look at your trailer bearings, too, to avoid fun by the side of the road). Remain on highway 168 past Shaver Lake (Tollhouse Rd). For some reason, Google maps will route you thru Big Creek on a very narrow and twisting road.



I have docked at several marina there and can recommend:

[Rancheria Marina](#)

62311 Huntington Lake Road
559-893-3234

At the East end of the lake:

[Huntington Lake Resort](#)

Address: 58730 Huntington Lake Rd
Phone: (559) 326-6687

There is a ramp and restaurant (with a very limited menu) at this location.

A good launch/ park facility is available. The last time I launched there the fee was \$10.00.

[Ramp info:](#)

Anchoring out is also a possibility.

Around 10am the wind begins to blow from the east and depending on how hot the valley air gets, can build to sporting! Count on wind until 5pm.

Huntington Lake is considered to be one of, if not the best sailing Lake in California. Don't miss it!



Cruiser Challenge XXIV returns to Monterey on August 11-13th, 2023

Sail Host: Alan Koepf



The [Cruiser Challenge](#) is happening in Monterey again in 2023. 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, we have a downloadable [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.

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. Organizer Alan Koepf has volunteered to act as the committee boat on his Santana 2023 *Napili Breeze* to keep track of starts and finishes this year. I'm sure he would love to have one or two volunteers to help him with

Cruiser Challenge XXIV Schedule Friday, August 11

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

Saturday, August 12

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 13

Sailing, sightseeing and relaxing
Retrieve and depart

[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



this. 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.



Report: Morro Bay

It was a small group, but they had a good time

Sail Host: Pete Evans, photos: Mark Weinberger

Only three boats made it to Morro Bay for this year's sail. Pete Evans the sail host, Mike Schwartz from Monterey, and Mark Weinberger and Dan Cassina who drove all the way from San Diego.

The Ironman 70.3 Morro Bay was scheduled for Saturday and there was confusion over whether and/or when the bay would be open for boating. This was the first time for this event in Morro Bay and the logistical wrinkles were not all worked out. The sailors wisely chose to

stay on shore rather than risk interfering with any swimmers and just hung around and talked.

The weather on Sunday turned out to be much better for sailing than Saturday anyway. Participants chose to sail inside the bay most of the day and did not venture out into the ocean.

Mark's tricked out P15 (with spinnaker) was faster than mine (Pete's), much to my disappointment. Lots of seagulls, pelicans, otters and seals milling about as usual. We raced up and down the bay, testing our rigs and generally loving the freedom of being on the water with other sailors.

Mike, Mark, and Pete on the dock



Morro Bay – May 20-21, 2023

Attendees:

- Pete Evans – P-15, *Hisako*
- Mike Swartz – P-19, *Burgundy Splash*
- Mark Weinberger & Dan Cassina– P-15, *Potty Mouth*



Mark W and Dan C on *Potty Mouth*



Pete and friend on *Hisako*

Report: Delta Sail

Amtrak train *almost* takes out sailboat...

As told by Gerry Nolan and George Wehrfritz

Photos: Jon Barber and Sharon Soule'



George Wehrfritz sailing *Betty Sparrow*

Seven Potters signed up for the sail to Antioch and return to Rio Vista. Five Potters made it to the start line. Winds and tides were favorable leaving Rio Vista; however, fishing boats were returning due to rollers and uncomfortable boating near and around the Rio Vista bridge and dock area. The short three mile sail down the Sacramento River got the group off to a good start. They turned off the Sacramento River and under the raised Three Mile Slough bridge. Conditions were ideal. Motors were quieted as they sailed down the slough. The Antioch Bridge was in sight. Then the real adventure started.

Anyone who has sailed the stretch of the San Joaquin River near the Antioch Bridge knows that conditions near the bridge are often sporting. No matter what the wind is doing elsewhere, it always seems to blow there, and this day was no exception. Coupled with a strong ebb tide, this can create large waves as well. As the fleet approached the bridge, the wind and waves began to pick up. George W reported that the wind and waves were knocking him over onto his rub rail with a double reefed main and working jib up even though he was hiked out.

Rio Vista to Antioch – May 2023

Attendees:

- Jon Barber – *Ol' 44*, Montgomery 17
- Bud Kerner, Gerry Nolan and Ted – *Cat's Meow*, WWP19
- George Wehrfritz – *Betty Sparrow*, Sparrow 16
- Eric Zilbert – *Riptide*, WWP 19
- Dave Isler – *Sea Dog*, Montgomery 15
- David & Sharon Soule – *Core Sound* 17

According to Gerry “Four boats were in the lead passing under the Antioch Bridge. *Cat's Meow*, Bud's Potter 19, opted for an east side passage of a mile long island sitting west of the Antioch Bridge. That side of the island seemed to have more motor boaters speeding along to get out of windy and turbulent waters. Tacking to get past the island made me glad that Bud was at the helm. Ted was a great backup while I deserted and went below deck. From this point on until getting to the Antioch harbor all I remember was hanging on. Our helmsman had his hands full.” (continued next page)





George and Dave chose to sail through the center span and struggled on towards the Antioch Marina through truly difficult conditions. Visibility and communications were both a problem as they searched for the marina through the wind and waves. According to the wind data, the sustained winds that day were from 19-23 knots with gusts well into the 30s. George reported that he was able to douse sails during a lull near the Antioch Fishing Pier and proceed under motor. Eric was waiting on the dock to congratulate him when he arrived. Dave made it in a few minutes later.



Bud, Ted and Gerry on *Cat's Meow* prior to "the incident"

In the meantime, Bud and company dropped sails about half a mile from the Antioch harbor and attempted to proceed by motor, but apparently the motor failed. Details are sketchy, but Gerry reports that they almost ended up with a headline that would have read AMTRAK TRAIN SINKS SAILBOAT. Eric and Jon began to mount a rescue attempt on board *Riptide*, bringing Jon's motor to the troubled boat as a backup. Fortunately, the sailors on *Cat's Meow* were able to salvage the situation and make it into the marina under their own power. It is not clear what or whether the boat actually hit something or what the damage may have been, but according to Gerry, "Thankfully everyone escaped with a few bruises and a couple of scratches and a sprained wrist." (continued next page)



The Delta Sail crew Saturday morning in Rio Vista

Later, the group met for dinner at Smith's Landing Seafood Grill. They report that the Antioch Marina provided ideal accommodations and facilities and would recommend it highly for future sails.

Sunday morning's return sail was nowhere near as exciting. Bud pulled out *Cat's Meow* at Antioch, but the rest of the boats sailed back to Rio Vista. The wind didn't pick up until they reached the Sacramento River and even then, was quite moderate. Sharon and David Soule sailed down from Rio Vista on their Core Sound 17 to meet the fleet just north of Sherman Island.

At our next gathering Potters, Eric, Jon, Bud, George, David and Ted can fill in the details that may have not been suitable for printing. A good time and great two-day sail on the Sacramento Delta. Mark your calendars for this sail on next year's Potter calendar.



Jon Barber demonstrates how the motor boaters do it

Officer's Club

Commodore:
Phil Marcelis
Catalina 22, *Merri Time*

P-15 Fleet Captain:
Bud Kerner
P-14, *Splash*

Secretary/Treasurer:
Jim "Goose" Gossman
P-19, *Regale*

Vice-Commodore:
Jon Barber
Montgomery 17, *Ol' 44*

P-19 Fleet Captain:
Eric Zilbert
P-19, #629, *Riptide*

Website:
www.potter-yachters.org

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

Webmaster:
Phil Marcelis

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

Report: Redwood City Sail

An Enjoyable Weekend at Westpoint

by Phil Marcelis

Westpoint Harbor was again a great place to enjoy the South Bay for a weekend getaway. When I arrived on Friday, June 2 around 9am, I found George rigging his beautiful Sparrow 16. Dan arrived sometime after that to take care of office paperwork before launching around noon and we three were all sailing by 1pm. It was windy enough that reefing wasn't a bad



idea, so Dan headed out with one already tucked in. George was playing with sail shape and used the wind to his advantage while I took multiple photos of his jib from all different angles. After an hour or two, I sailed the short way back to the marina to see if Alan had arrived. (This is what's nice about Westpoint Harbor... it's just a few minutes off the main channel.)

Sure enough, Alan showed up and launched just in time for Happy Hour on the party barge. The harbormaster's office staff really made us feel at home and ensured that we had use of the party barge and as much propane for the BBQ as we could use.

George cooked up some tender steaks and provided a tasty salad for dinner at 7:30pm. What a guy! And we sat around and told lies, enjoying each other's company, until it was time to retire for the night.

Saturday morning, with the wind already filled in by 9am, we braved the low tide and sailed into the main channel. It was at least a 1.5 knot incoming current, and after tacking several times in the main channel without gaining much ground (sometimes even losing a little), we collectively decided to power past a couple of daymarks and eventually set sail again toward the wreck. Once I anchored there, Dan and George rafted up alongside and George made his sandwich. (Continued next page)

*Happy Hour snacks!*

Westpoint Harbor – June 2023

Attendees:

- Alan Koepf – P-19, *Kim Yvonne*
- Phil Marcelis – Catalina 22, *Merri Time*
- Dan Phy – Montgomery 15, *Six*
- George Wehrfritz – Sparrow 16, *Betty Sparrow*

After lunch, we had another glorious sail back and returned to the party barge for a pizza delivery. That was our dinner, along with the normal Happy Hour drinks. We broke up only when the wind became so great that the party barge walls weren't enough to block it anymore.

The next morning gave us a gorgeous sunrise and I made preparations to sail back to my slip at Berkeley Marina. Dan decided to keep me company by sailing halfway and then returning to Westpoint. I guess the wind blew itself out the previous night because there wasn't much of it and we had to motor. As bad luck would have it, it was a much lower tide than even MLLW, so we just ran the slow bell and inched our way out of the harbor.



Although the area in Westpoint Slough is a wide, shallow shelf, there's a dredged channel leading between the harbor and the main channel, which luckily offered 3-4 feet depth even with the -1 foot tide. Once past that, we throttled up and made 3.5 knots the entire way... out past the bridge and then some, until there was enough wind to cut the engine. At some point, we motored up to a SAILDRONE which was slowly eeking its way towards the Bay Bridge. It was tacking back and forth and barely making any headway, but it was definitely moving. Such an interesting sight.

And with that, Dan decided to head south to find the wind (which darn near blew him away), and I found my wind in The Slot as I neared my slip in Berkeley. It was a great weekend!!





'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

