



The Potter Yachter

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

August 2023



After Action Report: Catalina with the SoCal Potters

By George Corrigan

*Santa Catalina—the
island of romance,
and what more
romantic group than
the Potters to pay it a
visit.*

Four NorCal Potters
headed for SoCal on
Saturday, June 17th for the
annual SoCal Potters Trip to
Catalina Island. We had

planned to caravan down, meeting up on, I- 5 but Eric Zilbert's trailer needed an emergency repair and Goose, Rebecca and George, caravanning together, somehow never linked up with Phil Marcelis. Oh well, starting off not quite as planned. After six hours of driving, we decided to stay over for the night along the way so that the caravan could avoid the worst of LA traffic by entering the area early Sunday morning.

Goose had decided that staying at Los Alamitos Bay Marina in Long Beach would be more elegant than staying in San Pedro and we were hoping for a wonderful breakfast when we got there. Goose knew the area well since he had lived there for 18 years. What we failed to consider was that it was Fathers' Day and once we parked our boat trailers and located the breakfast restaurant, the wait for a table was 1.5 hours. So, breakfast turned out to be bagels from a nearby grocery store instead. (Story continues page 4)

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

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
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>

Also in this issue:

Commodore's Corner	page 2
Events on the Horizon	page 2
Upcoming: Loch Lomond	page 3
Report: Catalina	page 6
Report: Benicia to Napa	page 9
Lesson's learned	page 12

The Commodore's Corner



By Phil Marcelis

We've had a lot of changes to our sailing calendar recently where several cancelled events have left a few holes in the schedule. But that just means you have a chance to work on the boat! Or maybe get your Boater Card. You

know, every California boater will need one of these cards by the end of next year. But why wait? Some states already require every boater to have the

card. Canada requires boat operators to have proof of passing a NASBLA-approved course regardless of age or citizenship, and this qualifies. Besides, it's a safety course, and it's never a bad idea to be reminded of a few things. Admittedly, I was surprised that there were one or two new things I learned.

It doesn't have to take much time (the minimum time to complete an approved course is 3 hours) and most online courses allow you to stop and start whenever you want. I did my course during some vacation time in a bunch of 20-minute sessions. BoatUS members get the course for free through BoatUS Foundation (which uses a different login ID from your regular BoatUS membership). You'll still pay California \$10 for the ID, but it saves you the course fee. Here's how:

1. Click "I have not completed my education" for an Application ID here: californiaboatercard.com/applynow/
2. Provide the Application ID when signing up for the course here: <https://courses.boatus.org/>

Click the "Enroll Now" button where it says "State Specific Boating Safety Course" and complete the checkout.

Fill out the forms with the Application ID from the previous website. Take & pass the test to get your Boater Card.

I'll see you out on the water!

Regards,

Phil — 



Club Events on the Horizon

potter-yachters.org/calendar

August 12th

Monterey: Cruiser Challenge--XXIV

Alan Koepf

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.

August 12-13th

Delta Doo Dah (Delta Bay Marina)

Non-Potter event

—

August 19-20

Rio Vista to Prospect Slough (anchor out)

Eric Zilbert

Cancelled!!

Cancelled!!

Cancelled!!

September 16-17

Loch Lomond

Goose Gossman

Join us for a nice day or two of sailing on the bay and good food at Andy's Market

Sept 30 – Oct 1

Moss Landing to Monterey

Bud Kerner

Beginning to advanced sail depending on weather conditions. Keep an eye on the forecast and join us for a nice trip to Monterey and back!

Upcoming: September 16-17, 2023

Loch Lomond Sail & Overnight

Sailhost: 'Goose' Gossman

Join the PYer's for a sailing event at [Loch Lomond Marina](#) in San Rafael. The marina is now owned by [Safe Harbor Marinas](#). The site includes [Andy's Local Market](#) adjacent to the launch ramp and Loch Lomond YC. Their incredible buffet, salad, wine, sandwich, Italian Ice cream bar is sure to please all Potterers... so plan on having meals there.

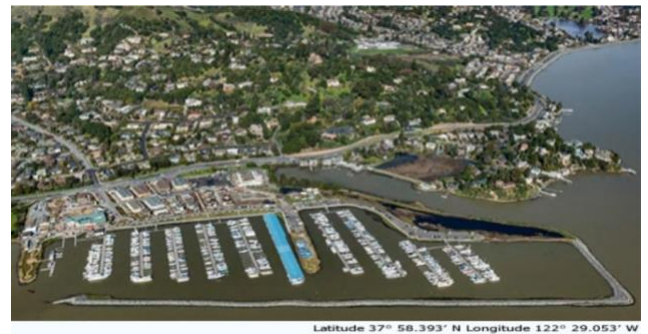
There is also a dog park, kids' playground, and walking paths.

Launch in Loch Lomond or sail over from Richmond or some other location on the bay.

Reserve your guest slip through [Dockspot](#). Guest slip fees are reasonable. There is excellent sailing not subject to the full force of the Bay winds and fog, plus interesting scenery along the Marin waterfront, including China Camp, the San Rafael Canal, and several cool islands near the Richmond bridge. Hopefully many of us will make a weekend of it.

Please let me know if you are coming so the marina can arrange trailer storage.

Goose



Latitude 37° 58.393' N Longitude 122° 29.053' W



(Catalina report continued...)

Phil and Eric had made it to San Pedro and planned on meeting us on the water on sometime on Monday morning. We rigged the boats, launched them, and found our slips in the marina, a beautiful place with not a derelict boat in sight, but also not many fathers out on their boats for Fathers' Day. Maybe they were in the breakfast restaurant.

As we settled in to wait for Gary Nitta and his crew, who were meeting us at the marina, Goose started having issues with his motor on Regale. He decided he needed a new fuel line. Fortunately, we were within walking distance of a West Marine store, and after fixing the fuel line Goose blew up his dingy and found it had a leak. After a few more trips to West Marine the dingy worked good enough. It would need pumping up a little every day during the trip.

By this time, we were worried that Gary was not at the marina. Goose went back to the boat ramp to find out where he was and if he needed assistance. He was there alright however, since this particular boat was new to Gary it was taking him longer to rig and launch.

Monday morning, we set sail for Santa Catalina. The weather was overcast, and the water flat with virtually no wind at all—typical for June conditions. We motored up along the Long Beach Harbor breakwater to meet up with Phil and Eric. As it turned out we would not see them until we arrived at Two Harbors on the island later in the day, although we chatted with them over the radio during the crossing. Phil had needed to tow a SoCal boat back to San Pedro to help fix its motor, so he was delayed a bit. Eric and his son were ahead and arrived at Two Harbors before us.

We motored across the San Pedro Channel towards the island at about 5 knots per hour. Gradually the overcast burned off as the sun came out. Dolphins played about in the water near us as other boats; passenger ferries, fishing boats and various pleasure craft made their way to and from the Island. It was glorious! From about 7 miles out we began to pick up the island on the western horizon and the notch in the island's mountainous terrain that indicated the Isthmus was ahead; we were on course. Our three boats, Regale, Horizon Bound and Wabisabi stayed within sight of each other for the four- and one-half hour crossing. The wind, if there was any at all, was very light and towards the end of the passage we motor sailed as best we could. And then we were there. The harbor master at the village of Two Harbors was ready for us with string line anchorage assignments.

After all the boats arrived and settled in Goose provided taxi service to anyone from the string line to the shore. This kept him very busy. Following a good night's sleep, the activities of island life set in- snorkeling, kayaking, hiking, bathing, going to the lone store and gift shop, a trip to Avalon on a jet boat, a golf cart tour of Avalon compliments of Phil, a visit to the town center by a buffalo and a whole lot of storytelling. Dining highlights included BBQ game hens, ceviche, sausage, locally caught fish, and homemade spaghetti sauces at potluck events on the beach, all washed down with generous amounts of exotic cocktails.

(Continued next page...)



In Avalon we walked over to the historic Casino and took in all its visual glories. Now almost 100 hundred years old it is in superb condition; worth a trip to Avalon to see that alone. And, by the way, we settled the question of gambling at the Casino; there never has been any gambling there. Casino simply means “meeting place” in Spanish. Vegas ripped off the word casino for their gambling joints in the 1940s.

Following five nights at Two Harbors on Saturday morning it was time to make our way back to the mainland and deal with returning to Northern California. Goose, Gary, George and Rebecca set out for Shoreline Marina in Long Beach whereas Eric,



Evan and Phil went to San Pedro. Leaving early from Two Harbors with a gentle breeze at our backs we sailed smoothly for some time until the wind increased a little and for the next three hours, we scooted over the swells on a broad reach under sail alone at about 5 knots: pure pleasure! The sun was out, the air was warm, and many boats going here and there decorated the sparkling blue waters. Could have stayed out there forever.

Shoreline Marina turned out to be in the heart of Long Beach with the historic Queen Mary berthed there and a Princess Cruise Ship as well. It was a highly secure marina with many locks to get on the

docks and two to use the restrooms. It was good we were very tired because the night was noisy with a Rave was going on near the Queen Mary and I think they were filming a crime show with helicopters and police car sirens next to the Marina.

The next morning, we were on our way back to the boat ramp at Los Alamitos Bay to pull our boats out and head for home. I only wish this trip didn't include the nine-hour drive home. Goose, George, and Rebecca did it in two days again with a (nearby feed lot) smelly stop at Harris Ranch Resort (probably won't do that again). We also stopped for a pea soup breakfast at Anderson's Famous Pea Soup Restaurant. Pea soup for breakfast? Why not!!

All in all, it was a grand adventure and maybe after another year of rest we may tackle it again. Thanks to Goose for encouraging the NorCal Potters to participate in this event and thanks to the SoCal Potters for welcoming us with their gracious good cheer and company.



Report: Catalina Island Sail

A peaceful adventure just “26-miles across the sea”

by Phil Marcelis

As the song says, that’s where “Santa Catalina is waiting for me.” Actually, from our launching point of San Pedro, it’s about 20 nautical miles, so that “26” must be statute miles. Wherever it is, San Pedro was a great starting point for this trip.

I actually made the long drive on Saturday, June 17th and stayed in a motel. I was well-rested the next morning to have breakfast with Eric and Evan, and then we drove over to the ramp. The wide launch ramp has a full-length dock and ample parking (a bit pricey at \$120 for 8 days).

Cabrillo Marina gave the Potter Yachters a group discount, but it would still have been a nice place to spend the night even at their normal rate of \$2/ft/night. David, Ron, Tim, Eric/Evan, and I headed out of there. At dinner on Sunday night, we had some discussion of whether to leave early to get to the island before the wind and seas built up, or to leave later and meet the Long Beach contingent, who had further to go. We heard that they probably wouldn’t reach us until 10 or 11, so we remained mostly undecided until the next morning. Ron, Tim, and I finally decided that we were ready to go by about 8am, so why not? Good thing we got an early start!! Tim developed engine problems within the first 10 minutes of

Catalina Island – June 2023

Attendees:

- David Anton – P-19, *Just Right*
- George & Rebecca Corrigan – P-19, *Horizon Bound*
- Ron Dietel – Precision 165, *She said no*
- ‘Goose’ Gossman – Modified P-18, *ReGale*
- Phil Marcelis – Catalina 22 wing keel, *Merri Time*
- Gary Nitta w/ Serenity & Lilly – P-19, *Wabi sabi*
- Paul Trim – P-15, *Shark Bait*
- Stuart Walker – Catalina Capri 18, *Miss Adventure*
- Tim Webb – Spindrift 22, *Rum Line*
- Eric Zilbert w/ his son Evan – P-19, *Riptide*



motoring out of the marina, so I towed him back to the launch ramp, that being the closest dock. After much fiddling with the fuel system and taking turns pulling the starter until we each tired out (eventually swapping out everything from the supply hose to the gas in the tank) we finally got him running. It was 11:15am by that time, and the folks from San Pedro who were going to leave “later than us” had already made it out past the Long Beach Harbor Lighthouse.

We had just enough wind to fill the sails, so we motor-sailed to keep the speed up. After a few hours, the breeze filled in enough to cut the engine for a while, but then it dropped and swung around unfavorably.

(Continued next page...)

Eventually we approached within hailing distance of the Harbor Patrol and we each took turns calling on Channel 09 for a spot on the stringline “in Isthmus Cove” (for \$46 per night). They asked for the registration (CF number) as well as length and draft of boat, then assigned a number on the stringline close to the beach where you pick up a pole with that number on it and attach a line to your bow, then follow a smaller line aft to a stern tie. It makes sense after you’ve successfully done it once. The harbor patrol is there and monitoring Channel 09 for anyone who needs help.

Once fully tied up, we inflated our respective dinghies and headed to shore to check out the surroundings and to enjoy a Happy Hour and dinner at the resort-like restaurant. The place even has a convenience store and two bars, not to mention two separate bathroom buildings with showers in each (\$2 for 3 minutes).

The next morning, I kayaked around Isthmus Cove while some of the others slipped their mooring and sailed over to Emerald Bay for some



Tied to the string line in Two Harbors



snorkeling. The water was so clear, I could see way down into the reefs where schools of fish cavorted around. By all accounts, it was a relaxing way to spend the day. That evening, we had a group dinner by the picnic tables near the beach.

(Continued next page...)



Just around the corner from the store and restaurant, we came upon a bison. There are various signs to warn visitors about them. Apparently, they raise their tail when they want to signal that they're "annoyed." This big guy slowly looked over at me then slowly went back to grazing while just as slowly raising his tail. I guess even with my telephoto lens, he still thought I was too close.

A group of us took the fast ferry over to Avalon for a couple of hours. We had just enough time to ride a rented golf cart to the aviary and a few other points of interest before stopping at the Fish & Chips place on the pier for lunch while waiting for the return ferry.

The sail back was mild and uneventful. I was able to edit and narrate some video on my phone while having a little lunch snack and looking at traffic through my binoculars every so often. It



wasn't until after 1pm when I

got close to the lighthouse that the wind really picked up. I stayed one more night at Cabrillo Marina, as did Eric and Evan, and headed home the next day.

Check out my short YouTube video, if you're interested: <https://youtu.be/iwvT2l3dn5A>

The weather was wonderful, it was not at all crowded on the weekdays, and the water was fine for a short swim to the beach where it warmed up significantly. This was a very enjoyable trip which I can highly recommend. Can't wait until next year!



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*

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Report: Benicia to Napa Sail
Another Fine Cruise to Napa
 Story and photos By Goose Gossman



With the weather (and life) returning to normal (sort of) most sailors launched in Benicia Friday, got slips at the marina, and enjoyed a fine meal at a nearby waterfront restaurant. Saturday morning was relaxing, as the prescribed departure time of 11ish meant Larry's stubborn trailer bunk repair was no problem. By not leaving too early, we would catch the last of the ebb current on the Carquinez Strait before the next flood tide would sweep us up the Napa River. Most boats motorsailed with reefed mainsails into the 12kn + wind, and lumpy ebb chop for about an hour before passing under the Hwy 80 Carquinez bridge and reaching the confluence of San Pablo Bay and the Napa River.

As promised, the current shifted in our favor, and the wind mellowed as the gaggle sailed towards the Mare Island Strait Bridge. We radioed the bridge operator, and with choreographed precision, made it through in one pass. At this point, I'm sure everyone exhaled, sensing that the adventure was real. We would quickly sail under the Hwy 37 bridge, with the view beyond the heavy traffic above opening up to a vast watershed leading to Napa. Beautiful and serene... but dare not ignore the channel markers!

Bolstered by the building flood, we reached upriver at 5-7kts in champagne conditions for another hour. As we approached the last bend of "open water," Constantinos cut it too close, and ran "amud" (it's soft mud, not ground). Fortunately, they were able to start their motor and back off, although a jammed halyard made it difficult—rendering them unable to lower sails. Upon reaching the Napa Valley marina, with the current moving strong, I played my cards a little too closely, and managed to find the mud too. It happens! Fortunately, it's so soft that even my electric motor with a folding prop managed to back us off free.

It was around 3pm, so four hours for the 15+ miles. We had the guest dock reserved, so after checking in, there was plenty of time to relax before the Potter-Yachter sponsored pizza party on the dock. A few of us walked around the "Boatyard of broken dreams," while several naps were taken. Constantinos' crew was flying his drone, and all was copacetic. My wife Gale arrived with the feast, and when the sun set, our bunks were very welcoming. (Continued next page...)



Benicia to Napa Participants:

- Dan Phy – *Six*, Montgomery 15
- Jon Barber – *Ol' 44*, Montgomery 17
- George and Rebecca Corrigan – *Horizon Bound*, WWP19
- Goose Gossman – *Grace*, Nimble Kodiak 24
- George Wehrfritz – *Betty Sparrow*, Sparrow 16
- Constantinos Laliotitis and Sean S – *Full Monty* – Montgomery 17
- Larry Tkach – *Groovin'*, Montgomery 15
- Charlie Jeremiahs – *Red X*, Mac 26X
- Alan Koepf – *Kim Yvonne*, WWP 19
- Mark Sabin – *Half Fool*, Compac 16

Sunday morning the coffee tasted great, and there was no need to rush. Walking around the boatyard I saw an old boat friend, who had circumnavigated with her husband decades ago. They survived a typhoon, blowing 60-90 knots for three days by using their toilet as a bilge pump after their pumps failed! Sig and Carol Baardsen. Sig has passed, but she was fixing a smaller boat to sail to Baja. Hard core!!! Hey, we were doing Baja style cruising in Napa! It's a lot closer, and in many ways, not that different. Wine too.

The trip back was also good, but different. Leaving at 10ish there was plenty of ebb left to get down river, even with the light breeze. Sailing stalwarts Jon and Dan both had some issues, which were overcome without trauma.

Apparently, *Ol' 44* wanted to kiss the railroad bridge goodbye (see account below), and the bridge's personal eddy obliged as they entered the tunnel of love and sucked them into a piling. A little further down, Dan ran amud, and with the tide still going out, there was concern that he might be there for a long while, until the next flood tide floated him. Fortunately, I called Charlie (who lives on the river nearby), and he went to pull him off. Apparently, he got stuck too, but after a while, and 50 horsepower, they got freed.

Meanwhile, everyone else had a nice sail down the river, and were circling around waiting for Jon and I so the bridge could open. Dan would miss this opening, but he was doing


fine on his own. When back at the confluence, the wind was blowing in the teens, with pretty bumpy leftover ebb slop, but some surfable moments. Except for Dan, I was last, but still in sight of Big George. Going under the Carquinez bridge is always exhilarating, and as often as not, there's a ship coming or going in the strait. We all did good calling it out on our radios and keeping clear. Not even one horn blast from the ship meant we were doing it right. If you get 5 blasts, you're in danger.

(Continued next page...)





George Wehrfritz sent along these photos of the sailing conditions on the river Sunday as the fleet returned to Benicia.

After the ship passed, I jibed, and just to keep me modest, the backstay and topping lift decided to hook the boom. It was blowing 18-20, so after a few tries jibing back and forth trying to steer and tie knots with one hand, I headed over to hide in calmer water to sort it out. It was nice of Big G. to call and check on me. All fixed, and we all made it in around 3ish...except Dan, who pulled in just after 4. — 



Flirting with the Bridge!

Story by Jon Barber

Napa Valley Marina

Sunday July 9, 2023

All boats, except mine had left the dock. In preparation for my departure, I had raised my main and put in a reef. I always attempt to dock bow to the wind. This helps in making sail before leaving the safety of the dock. Because of this I was able to sail away without starting my Honda. This later proved to be a mistake.

The channel outside the marina is narrow, and the breeze was on my nose. I took this as a challenge and began short tacking down the river. With each tack my upwind progress encouraged me to continue. Tacking intervals were at 10-15 seconds. No time to cleat the jib, I just wrapped the jib sheet around the winch and got ready to do it again.

Knowing the wind near the bridge might get fluky, I decided to start the motor.

Bad idea!

Had I continued, I might have cleared the bridge without motorized assistance. Leaving the helm, the current and countering wind conspired to pin me against the bridge abutment. Held fast, I had a chance to sort the motor and get it started. Even in full reverse I was held there by the sails. Dropping them allowed the boat to move off the abutment.

My next challenge was to make sail. Once past the bridge, the wind increased substantially. I motored toward the nearest dock so I could moor and get the sails up. My first attempt to dock failed. By then the dock owner had come down to lend aid. Thus tethered, I put things in order and continued the short tacking.

After another 20 or so short tacks, I got to where the river widened enough so the tacking was less frequent. I saw the fleet up ahead, rounding the next turn. One boat, though, was out of place and *definitely* out of the channel. Dan Phy had run aground!

A heaving line was made ready by making a fender fast to one end of my anchor rode. Heaving to, I made several attempts to get a line down to Dan, without success. I was concerned about going aground, and with the need to arrive for a bridge opening with the other boats in mind, I left Dan aground on a falling tide. Sorry, Dan. I hope you had ice for G&Ts!

The rest of the sail was relatively uneventful. I kept Navionics close at hand and made sure to STAY IN THE CHANNEL!

Goose planned both legs of our trip with great care. Saturday, we left Benicia on a falling tide, arriving at the Napa at slack and “rode the escalator” up the river to our destination.

Returning on Sunday, the ebb was with us down the Napa; again, we arrived at the confluence at slack to be swept by the flood to Benicia. If you have ever been on the bay or rivers and disregarded the currents, you know how important this planning is. It can be the difference between a successful trip and a frustrating one.

Thanks, Goose! — 





'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

