



# The Potter Yachter

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

Nov/Dec 2023

## Delta Bridges saved the Best for Last By Bud Kerner



The 2023 Bridges sail is in the books. I am not sure, but this could be the 12<sup>th</sup> one I have organized, and by far it was the best sailing Bridges we have ever had. There were some years that included a section of white-knuckle sailing, but this year was well-balanced. We sailed from the Rio Vista Bridge to the Isleton Bridge in a brisk wind. Not far from the Rio Vista Bridge, *Hoot*, the pontoon boat I was on developed engine trouble. I made an on-the-water transfer to Goose's P19, and *Hoot* headed back. *Hoot* has been the backup boat on a number of Bridges sails. It has towed several boats over the years, including mine

(Story continued pg 5)

## 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  |
| Upcoming: Annual Meeting | page 3  |
| Proposed Event Calendar  | page 4  |
| Report: Moss Landing     | page 9  |
| Annual Meeting Agenda    | page 12 |

## The Commodore's Corner



By Phil Marcelis

Since this is the November/December issue, it's appropriate that I express gratitude for this wonderful group of sailors. My time as commodore is coming to an end but as I reflect on the previous years, I really am thankful for all the club members who came to the sails, offered advice, wrote after-action reports, and socialized with fellow members, to name just a few things. All of this makes the club something that I truly believe newcomers would benefit from. The camaraderie is really the

driving force, and I can't count the number of times that I've gained confidence just from seeing the more experienced sailors in action or by talking over possibilities, like what to do when your rudder breaks or you're getting pushed into a rocky shore and the engine won't start. I'm so glad I met these people!

Remember to attend the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> at Oakland Yacht Club. (See detailed announcement elsewhere in this issue.) We need to have enough members attend the meeting to have a quorum in order to elect officers/directors, so if you can't make it in person, you can send an email to Goose or myself giving the Secretary your permission to cast a vote on your behalf. Or join the Zoom meeting on Jan 7:

Join [Zoom Meeting Here](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/102404993) or type the link below into your browser

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/102404993>

Meeting ID: 102 404 993 / Passcode: 004259

Regards,

Phil — 

### The 2024 Potter Yachter Calendar will be available at the Annual Meeting!

A select team of highly trained specialists drawn from the Potter Yachters' ranks has been carefully combing through the year's photos, judging such mundane things as composition, location, pixel density and other aesthetics, and have finally narrowed it down to several of the best pictures the Potter Yachters have to offer.

Please pre-order your very own Potter Yachters Calendar for purchase in person at the Annual Meeting for \$20. Or make your check for \$25 out to "Potter Yachters" and mail it to the Secretary to reserve a copy to be mailed to you.



## Club Events on the Horizon

[potter-yachters.org/calendar](http://potter-yachters.org/calendar)January 7<sup>th</sup>

Annual Meeting, Oakland Yacht Club

Phil Marcelis

The meeting starts at 9:30 am, ending around 1:30 pm. They are no longer requiring vaccination cards, but they aren't open for Sunday Brunch yet. The club is working on food. We will meet to elect officers and discuss the sailing calendar. [Zoom Link](#)

Upcoming: Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024**Annual Club Meeting at Oakland Yacht Club****You're Invited!**

The 2024 Potter Yachter annual meeting is on the horizon!

Mark your calendar for Sunday, January 7.

We will shove off at 9:30 and discuss the usual subjects and plan for the coming season. Remember to bring a nautical gift for a gift exchange if you are so inclined.

The Oakland Yacht Club is hosting us again this year.

1101 Pacific Marina

Alameda, CA

They will be serving brunch between 10 and 12 (the chef assured me they would accommodate us if the meeting runs longer than expected).

You can pay your annual dues (\$50.00) at the meeting or

Send a check to:

Potter Yachters

Jim Gossman

865 West I Street

Benicia, CA 94510

Those wishing to bring their boat may call OYC to arrange for an overnight stay at their dock. (You can find [directions to the club](#) on their website: [www.oaklandyachtclub.net](http://www.oaklandyachtclub.net))

Any members who joined within the last year (and prospective members) are specifically invited to attend this meeting. Sometimes we get a little caught up in sailing off in different directions and don't get to meet new members at the monthly sails. This is the perfect opportunity to introduce yourself, meet like-minded sailors, and let the rest of us enjoy your company. It's also when we sit down to get a treasurer's report, nominate officers, and discuss the future sailing schedule. If you can't attend in person, attend over [Zoom](#).

I hope to see you there!



From the North on 80/880 S (Berkeley, Bay Bridge) take Broadway/Alameda exit, turn right on 5<sup>th</sup> at Broadway head to Alameda (see Tube below)

From the North via 980 (Walnut Creek) take Jackson Street, turn left under freeway turn left on 8<sup>th</sup> Street, then left on Webster Street follow directions from the Posey Tube (below)

From the South (San Jose, Castro Valley) take 880 N to Oakland and exit Broadway turn right onto Broadway, then right on 7<sup>th</sup> Street turn right on Webster Street for the tunnel

From the Webster Street/Posey Tube keep left and turn left at Marina Village Pkwy turn right at Independence & left at Triumph Street the club is located at the end of the street. parking is in front of the club house





# Potter Yachters

## Proposed Event Calendar for the 2024 Sailing Season

| <u>Date</u>    | <u>Location</u>                               | <u>Coordinator</u> |
|----------------|---|--------------------|
| Jan 7          | Potter Yachters Annual Meeting                | Jon Barber/Goose   |
| Feb 17-18      | Richmond (Angel Island)                       | Eric Zilbert       |
| March 16-17    | St. Pat's Sail? (Location TBD)                | Mark Sabin         |
| April 13-14    | Richmond to OYC Overnight                     | Eric Zilbert       |
| April 27-28    | Moss Landing (Elkhorn YC)                     | Bud Kerner         |
| May (11 or 18) | Benicia to Napa (Opening Day on Strait w/ YC) | Goose              |
| May 16-19      | Westpoint Harbor (Boat Show)                  | TBD                |
| May midweek    | Woodward Mid-Week Sail                        | Jon Barber         |
| June 8-9       | Union Valley Reservoir or New Melones         | Kevin Crowder      |
| June 23-30     | Catalina Island Sail (Cabrillo Way Marina)    | Gary Nitta         |
| July 6-7       | Loch Lomond                                   | Goose              |
| July 20-21     | Huntington                                    | Jim Hunt           |
| Aug 10         | Monterey: Cruiser Challenge-XXV               | TBD                |
| Aug 24-25      | Spicer Reservoir                              | Jon Barber         |
| Sept 21-22     | Tomales Bay                                   | Eric Zilbert       |
| Oct 12-13      | Moss Landing to Monterey                      | Bud Kerner         |
| Oct 26-27      | Lake San Antonio                              | George Wehrfritz   |
| TBD            | 2025 Annual Meeting, Oakland Yacht Club       |                    |

**\*Note:** All dates, places, and coordinators are preliminary or proposed unless in **bold** to indicate "confirmed".  
Reservoir/Lake sails are subject to modification depending on water level.

**Caveat:** Sailing can be a dangerous activity so please be careful and keep an eye on your fellow sailors. Participation in any Potter Yachters event constitutes agreement that each participant, and their guests or crew, assume all risk of any injury or damage they may suffer relating to any such event, and waive any claims of ordinary negligence against other Potter Yachters participants and the Potter Yachters relating to any such injury or damage. Have fun and sail safely.



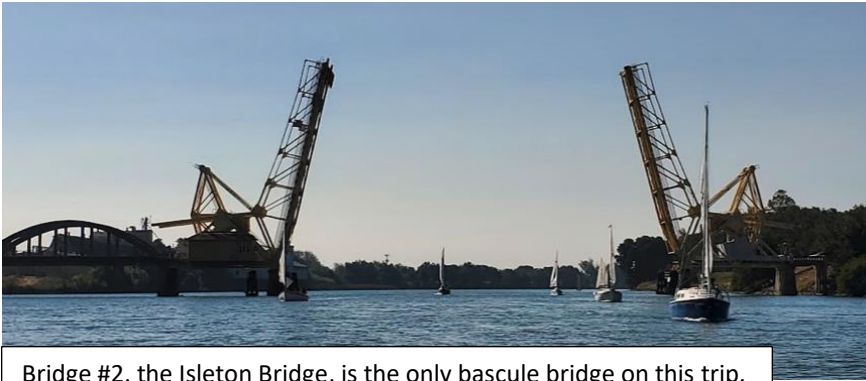
Bridge #1 was the Rio Vista Bridge—a vertical lift bridge connecting the mainland with Brannan Island over the Sacramento river via Highway 12. Conditions on the Sacramento river were quite sporting. Most boats tied in a reef for this short stretch of water. After about 2 miles, the fleet turned right to follow the Sacramento River channel up towards Walnut Grove.

Conditions improved as we reached up the Sacramento River towards our second bridge.



Gerry Nolan and Art on Hoot

As we reached up the Sacramento River channel, we kept looking back to see if we could spot *Hoot*, but she seemed to be missing. It wasn't until we got farther up the channel that we heard she had had to turn back due to engine trouble and that Bud had transferred over to *Regale* to sail with Goose.



Bridge #2, the Isleton Bridge, is the only bascule bridge on this trip. It connects Grand Island with Andrus Island via Highway 160.

The Isleton Bridge turned 100 years old the day before we arrived. After the Isleton Bridge, we turned to port and had the wind on our noses. Steve, in his beautiful Sanderling Cat boat continued to tack up the river. It was hard to make progress against the ebbing tide. They still made it in time for lunch. The rest of us motored to Ko-Ket Resort for lunch.

We motor sailed to the Georgiana Slough. I actually missed the entrance to the slough—there were red buoys and signs saying no boating. It turns out it is some sort of electronic device to discourage salmon from entering the slough. Their survival rate is much higher on the Sacramento River.



Bridge #3 is the Georgiana Slough bridge, a steel girder swing bridge built in 1962. This bridge connects Andrus Island to Tyler Island across Georgiana Slough.

On the Georgiana Slough, Larry in his Montgomery 15, got too close to the shore and had an encounter with a tree branch. I had looked back just as it happened, his bow lifted way up out of the water. For some reason after the mishap, his engine would not restart. Goose with his 50-horse engine on his P19, towed him to the marina. We passed through the last two bridges of the day to Ox-Bow Marina for our overnight. The Potter Yachters provided dinner of pizza which my better half Bobbi delivered from Rio Vista. (continued next page)



Our last bridge on Saturday was the Tyler Island Bridge, another swing bridge. This bridge connects Andrus Island to Tyler Island over Georgiana Slough via Tyler Island Road.

Interestingly, Andrus Island and Brannan Island appear to be one larger island. Unlike most of the other islands in the Delta, they are only separated by Jackson Slough which is mostly a ditch and doesn't truly cut the two islands apart. A cursory search shows that many maps disagree as to the actual boundary between the two "islands."



Sunday morning, we discovered the marina, unlike what I was told, was not supplying a continental breakfast. Luckily there was enough pizza left over that we had pizza for breakfast. Mark Sabin Supplied coffee. Thanks, Mark.

Goose had a spare Honda 2.3 horse outboard in their camping van. They put that outboard on Larry's Montgomery and he used it for the rest of the sail.



The Oxbow Marina with it's distinctive palm trees. It was founded by Lloyd Korth who also founded Korth's Pirates Lair.



Our fifth bridge of the trip was the Mokelumne River Bridge, a swing bridge that connects Andrus Island to Bouldin Island over the Mokelumne river via Highway 12. This bridge is currently undergoing a multi-year upgrade which will add 4 foot shoulders to the bridge and upgrade the approaches at both ends.

Once we were on the Mokelumne River, the wind came up and it was a very nice day for sailing.



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Our sixth and last bridge of the trip was the Three Mile Slough bridge, a lift bridge which connects Sherman Island to Brannan Island across Three Mile Slough via Highway 160.



*Hoot* rejoined us after we passed under the Three Mile Slough Bridge and headed back up the Sacramento River towards Rio Vista.

The fleet motored down the slough to the Mokelumne River and passed Route 12 Bridge to the San Joaquin. There was excellent sailing on the river and we sailed all the way to the Three Mile Slough where we encountered a two-mile-an-hour current against us. Once through the last bridge and back on the Sacramento River we sailed back to Rio Vista.

What makes any sail you host a great sail is when all the boats that started finished. This was a great sail. I am not counting *Hoot* of course. — 



#### Delta Bridges Participants:

- Goose Gossman and Bud Kerner – *ReGale*, WWP 18
- Dick Herman – *Gizmo*, SCAMP
- Larry Tkach – *Groovin'*, M15
- George and Rebecca Corrigan – *Horizon Bound*, WWP 19
- David and Sharon Soule – *Nighthawk*, Balboa 21
- Steven Hartman and Stefan Jaquet – *Parson's Ghost*, Marshall Sanderling 18
- Mark Sabin – *Half Fool*, Compac 16
- Jerry Dolan & Art – *Hoot*, Party Barge



## Report: Moss Landing to Monterey Sail Cavorting with Whales

by Phil Marcelis

Kim and I had just spent “family weekend” on the East Coast at our kid’s college, right after trailering the boat back from Canada. It was three days until the Moss Landing to Monterey sail (scheduled for Sept.30-Oct.1) when we looked at each other and asked, “Are we ready for more sailing?”

Of course, the answer was “Yes!” and lucky for us, the boat was still on the trailer from the Canada trip – lucky because the new home has been a slip in Berkeley Marina since May.

George was just pulling into the parking lot as we arrived around 1pm on Friday the 29th, and Bud was already there with Steve ready to help him raise the mast. We said our hellos and again puzzled over the parking fees (the credit card reader was working, so I paid for the launch and then for parking with 3 separate “24-hour” tickets that I lined up on the dash, even though they all had the same date. The iron ranger had envelopes if you were paying cash). This is the first time I’ve seen these really big signs saying “citations issued” for those not displaying a parking permit, so I guess they’re getting serious about it – just not serious enough to make it sensible. Then the conversation turned to the weather forecast, which I had avoided mentioning up to that point. It was looking like a gale might be crashing our party, and that was enough to convince George to tow the boat home and get a good night’s sleep, hoping to launch in the morning if weather improved. (Little did he know that his trailer would succumb to bearing failure and poor *Betty Sparrow* would not be returning the next day.) By 5:30pm, in blustery winds but



*Kim with Merri Time at the ramp*



*Seven boats rafted up at EYC's guest dock*

some sun poking through the overcast, we had seven boats tied up to the guest dock at [Elkhorn Yacht Club](#), whose Port Captain, Brian Ackerman, and other members are so welcoming of our group. After a few drinks at the yacht club with EYC members, we went next door to the [Sea Harvest](#) for dinner and then called it a night.

We woke up on Saturday to strong wind readily apparent even at the docks, although the sky was a cheery, bright blue. A few of us took a walk over to the bridge to get a better view of conditions at the entrance, while Eric and Goose – the brave souls in our group – pointed their bows out the entrance to see what the sea state was like.

(continued next page)

They returned very shortly to say, “It’s rough.” In addition, it had obviously rained overnight and there were a few dark clouds visible in the distance over Monterey, so given all this, we opted to forego the “to Monterey” part of our weekend and enjoy the club’s truly wonderful hospitality. The lounge with TV and fireplace was at our disposal, and they had cookies and brownies to share since their scheduled race was cancelled and only a few crews were courageous enough (or crazy enough?) to even show up.

Unfortunately, Bud awoke with a pain in one foot and he did something to his other calf while rigging, so he thought it best to go home and get these checked out. Once he got his boat on the trailer in the parking lot, the rest of us worked like ants on a donut so that it took under twenty minutes to de-rig and he was ready to drive away. (I followed up with Bud and he said he’s getting back to normal.)

Steve, Kim, and I walked over to [Phil’s Snack Shack](#) for lunch and checked out the weather along the way. The entrance to the marina was still looking a little rough, though the full force of the prediction didn’t materialize. Still, we were thankful for this gem of a “port in a storm.”

### **Moss Landing – October 2023**

#### **Attendees:**

- Jon Barber – Monty 17, *OI’ 44*
- ‘Goose’ Gossman – Modified P-18, *ReGale*
- Steven Hartman – Marshall Sanderling, *Parson’s Ghost*
- Dave & Francesca Kautz – O’Day 192, *Trailer Trash*
- Bud Kerner – P-19, *Cat’s Meow*
- Phil & Kim Marcelis – Catalina 22, *Merri Time*
- George Wehfritz – Sparrow 16, *Betty Sparrow*
- Eric Zilbert w/ his son Evan – P-19, *Riptide*



*Reveling in a quick job well done*

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*Entrance to Moss Landing Harbor*




Jon and Goose had lunch at the docks while Eric, Dave & Francesca de-masted *Trailer Trash* and went motoring around Elkhorn Slough to observe the wildlife. It was a relaxing afternoon.

Eric unhooked his trailer and drove us to dinner Saturday night. Thankfully, the aforementioned trailer problems didn't stop George and his wife from joining us at a new restaurant called [Woodward Marine Market](#) by the fuel dock in the south harbor. We talked about how it turned out to be an okay day, and we MIGHT have sailed it... but hindsight is 20/20 and we all felt we made the right call. Sunday was predicted to be a very nice day for sailing.

By Sunday morning, we were down to just three boats: *Riptide*, *ReGale*, and *Merri Time*. Eric dove in the 60-degree water to retrieve his tiller, which had slipped overboard while he tried to adjust the hinge bolt. The excitement collected a bit of a crowd on the docks. After a hot shower, he decided to get *Riptide* back on the trailer so he could drive home after lunch. We used that as an excuse to pile everyone onto *Merri Time* for some whale watching. And what a display! Swarms of fish boiled the water near the harbor entrance, dolphins were seen herding fish in every direction, and humpbacks were surfacing two at a time (or more) in several areas near the harbor end of Monterey Bay's deep-water trench that terminates in Moss Landing. Visitors on the whale watching boats were whisked from place to place, but often didn't need to move very far before whales popped up. Several kayakers were treated to a whale surfacing within smelling distance. (Okay, having had a whiff of the fishy spray once, maybe the olfactory treat wasn't a particularly appetizing one for them.)



Eric needed to get home, while the rest of us planned a Monday departure and were looking forward to burgers and beer, so we prepared to slowly make our way back towards the harbor entrance when Eric exclaimed, "My hat!" Thus began "The Great Hat Overboard Drill" of the weekend. It only took two passes before Goose rescued the wayward hat using a boathook. Ah, great times in Moss Landing! (Bet you wish you had been there!) — 

**Agenda for Jan-2024 Annual Meeting****Welcome to New Members and Guests****Commodore's Report****Secretary/Treasurer's Report****Election of Director-Officers****Nominations received:****Commodore: Jon Barber****Vice Commodore:****Secretary/Treasurer: Jim "Goose" Gossman****Appointees:****Newsletter Editor: Sharon Soule****P15 Fleet Captain: Bud Kerner****P19 Fleet Captain: Eric Zilbert****Webmaster: Phil Marcelis****New Business****Presentation of Potter Yachter of the Year Award****2024 Sailing Schedule****Other New Business?****Adjournment followed by optional gift exchange****Officer's Club**

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Commodore:<br>Phil Marcelis<br>Catalina 22, <i>Merri Time</i>      | Vice-Commodore:<br>Jon Barber<br>Montgomery 17, <i>Ol' 44</i>                    | Newsletter Editor:<br>Sharon Soule'<br>Balboa 21, <i>Nighthawk</i>                |
| P-15 Fleet Captain:<br>Bud Kerner<br>P-14, <i>Splash</i>           | P-19 Fleet Captain:<br>Eric Zilbert<br>P-19 #629, <i>Riptide</i>                 | Webmaster:<br>Phil Marcelis   |
| Secretary/Treasurer:<br>Jim "Goose" Gossman<br>P-19, <i>Regale</i> | Website:<br><a href="http://www.potter-yachters.org">www.potter-yachters.org</a> | Facebook:<br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/PotterYachters">PotterYachters</a> |







'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

