



The Potter Yachter

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

Jan/Feb 2017

Potter Yachter of the Year: Phil Marcelis!

Rob Sampson presented the Potter Yachter of the Year award to Phil Marcelis at the annual meeting of the Potter Yachters on January 22, 2017. The inscription reads,

2016

*Potter Yachter of the Year
Phil Marcelis*

Newsletter Editor, Adventurer, Family Man

Just before presenting the award, Rob said a few words about the recipient, "This Potter Yachter has not been with the group for a long time, only since 2013 but he has left a lasting impact. He is a family man, an enthusiastic Potter Sailor and explorer and most importantly to this group, he is the editor of our newsletter.

The newsletter is the chronicle and collective memory of the Potter Yachters (Lord knows some of us could use a better memory). The newsletter helps to keep us informed and excited.

Phil has been a tireless champion of the newsletter, and the newsletters he puts together are excellent. He has also taken on managing the Cruiser Challenge Website, and just this year he has taken over the Potter Yachter website from Mike Westfield. (He also knows how to make a mean Gin and Tonic.) For these reasons, Phil Marcelis is this year's Potter Yachter of the Year."

Congratulations, Phil! — 



Rob Sampson (right) presents the award to Phil Marcelis

It's time to pay dues (\$25/family) – Now accepting PayPal.

Mail a check to Pat (see *Potter Yachter Membership*, page 7) or send it by [PayPal to your friend](#) pat-brennan@sbcglobal.net indicating "2017 Potter Yachter dues" in the notes.

Ship's Stores for sale. Send orders to Pat Brennan:

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 our 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
- Sailing Calendar for 2017..... Page 3
- Upcoming: Book Talk at OYC..... Page 4
- Report: Annual Meeting Page 5
- Upcoming: St. Pat's Day Sail Page 6
- Report: Treasurer's Report..... Page 7
- Potter Yachter Membership Page 7



The Commodore's Corner

By Eric Zilbert

As a child I was incompetent. So are we all as children. And, as most children do, I became more competent in many things over time. I learned my ABCs. I learned to tie my shoes. I learned to read and write, how to swim, and how to ride a bike. All these things I mastered by the age of 8. But I was still horribly incompetent when it came to performing with a ball. I don't know if it was an issue with my eyesight (astigmatism) or if I was just ungainly.

The fact was I was no good at these games and everyone could tell. As a fourth grader I was last to be picked for any ball game, and each time I demonstrated my ineptitude my grade 4 colleagues did not spare me from their opinions regarding my performance (Good work, four eyes!).

At about this time I discovered that, compared to my peers I was doing distinctly better at math and science. I decided that I would apply myself somewhat in these areas, and the resultant goal was to have the highest score of any boy in class on any academic chore given to us. This, as you might imagine, worked out pretty well for me in the long run.

However, the competition with myself to achieve competence in things never went away.

At about the same time that I became an academic predator, I learned how to sail in the L.A. County Jr. Lifeguard program. I was pretty good and managed to win second place in the regional Sabot race for my age group in 1966. I have been hooked ever since, and though I feel competent in most regards, every once in a while things go south and I need to regroup and rethink the approach to the situation that gave rise to a feeling of incompetence.

I say all this to introduce the topic for this essay, "safety competence." On our Potter outings and whenever we sail, safety is a big concern. My goal is generally to get through the excursion with no injuries, no fatalities, and no equipment damaged. Where safety is concerned, competence means being prepared, and all of us are well aware (or should be) of the more common equipment and procedures that allow us to survive our sport: What to do in a man overboard situation, how to fit a life jacket, keeping some flares and a first aid kit on board. I would like to suggest several additional safety procedures and equipment that contribute to safety competence, based on my experience:

1. **SUNSCREEN.** I think the greatest danger to the sailor is not drowning, nor even being hit in the head by the boom. It is sunburn. Skin cancer is no joke and too many people my age (see above and do the math) have it. One of my early girlfriends died of melanoma in her early thirties. Therefore, safety competence means using sunscreen and getting those around us to use it as well, even if we wear excellent hats, even if it is cloudy. When sailing, the UV rays are coming from every direction. I always feel incompetent when I or one of my companions gets burned to a crisp.
2. **ANCHOR.** A second piece of safety equipment I've added to my boat is a small Danforth anchor attached to the transom, ready to deploy at a moment's notice. I adopted this practice after being swept by currents into the rocks on Angel Island and getting my motor started just in time to avoid going aground.
3. **STROBE.** A third item I have added to the boat is a strobe light for use at night. I got this after David White decided to pass a kidney stone on the Tomales sail, and the coast guard helicopter could not identify our location, despite the waving of flashlights, etc. The strobe came in very handy on our last trip to Tomales. Read all about it in the piece I wrote for the last issue of this publication.
4. **VHF RADIO.** Finally, if you have a VHF radio, TURN IT ON when you sail, particularly when you are sailing as part of a group, and USE IT to tell people if you get into trouble. On a trip to Catalina in 2001, six boats set out from San Pedro; three P-15s and three P-19s. The 19s arrived first, of course, and two of the 15s arrived later. Then we waited, and waited. Repeatedly, we hailed the missing boat, to no avail. Being Potters, we went for drinks and dinner about 5-ish, thinking our missing comrade had turned back. When we returned to the boats, he was in the anchorage! Turned out he had dismasted, and had to re-rig in mid channel. His radio was off, and he never thought to call for help. Clean forgot he had a radio!

This piece is already too long, so I will end with this: *Every departure is voluntary, every return mandatory!* Safety competence means being prepared and making use of the resources we have so that we do return, every single time.

The Potter Yachters

Sailing Event Schedule for 2017

01/22/17	Sun	Potter Yachter Annual Meeting	
02/12/17	Sun	Talk on <i>A Boat Called Scamp</i> and on self-publishing (Bonus talk on writing fiction afterwards)	Dick H/Dave B
03/18/17	Sat	St. Patrick's Day Weekend Sail and Dinner at the Peninsula Yacht Club in Redwood City with Overnight Option	Carl S
04/08/17	Sat	Richmond Sail and Strictly Sail Boat Show. (Boat show is Thursday through Sunday, April 6-9, 2017)	Pat B
04/22/17	Sat-Sun	Benicia Sail with Optional overnight and/or Mini-Cruise	Goose
04/29/17	Sat-Sun	Moss Landing/Elkhorn YC Sail with Overnight Option	Bud K
05/20/17	Sat-Sun	Delta Overnight Sail	Jerry B
06/03/17	Sat-Sun	Woodward Reservoir Overnight	Herman W
06/17/17	Sat-Sun	Union Valley Reservoir Overnight	David W
07/22/17	Sat-Sun	18 th Annual Cruiser Challenge in Monterey	Mike S/Gretchen
08/5/17	Sat	Beardsley Lake (<i>new venue</i>)	Kevin C
08/19/17	Sat	Richmond Sail/Overnight [possibly to Angel Island]	Jerry B
08/26/17	Sat	Lake Hennessey Sail	Rich M
09/23/17	Sat	Alameda to Clipper Cove Picnic Sail	Carl S
09/30/17	Sat-Sun	Tomales Bay Overnight Sail	Eric Z
10/14/17	Sat-Sun	Moss Landing to Monterey Sail and Overnight	Bud K
10/28/17	Sat-Sun	Delta Bridges Sail and Overnight	Bud K

* Reservoir/Lake sails are subject to modification or cancellation depending on drought conditions.

**Caveat: Sailing can be a dangerous activity so please be careful and keep an eye on your fellow sailors. Participation in any Potter Yachter 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 Yachter participants and the Potter Yachters relating to any such injury or damage. Have fun and sail safely.

Upcoming: Sunday, February 12, 2017 - Breakfast and Book Talk at Oakland Yacht Club

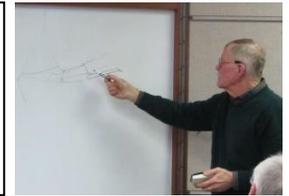
Boats, Books, and Sailing – A Talk by Dick Herman and Dave Bacon

You're invited to join us at Oakland Yacht Club on February 12th at around 10 a.m. in the Regatta Room of the Oakland Yacht Club. As usual, OYC offers a tasty breakfast starting at around 9 a.m. (The [breakfast menu](#) can sometimes be found, with [directions to the club](#), on their website: www.oaklandyachtclub.net)

Dave Bacon and Dick Herman will give a talk about their boats and their books. Dave's *The Gentle Art of Pottering* is a cult classic and Dick's *A Boat Called Scamp* relates how the Scamp came to be. Afterwards, Dick will offer some tips on writing fiction if anyone feels the muse has landed on their shoulder. Copies of their books will be available.



Archive
Photos of
Dave Bacon's
Talk about 2
years ago.

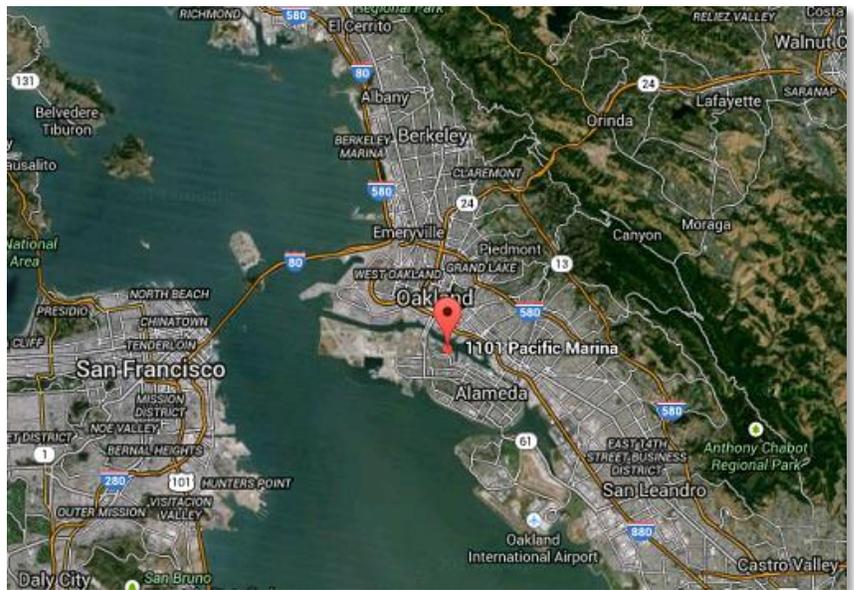


It would be a treat to hear just one of these eloquent speakers present a topic, but to have them both in the same place at the same time is simply an event that you will not want to miss. See you there! — 

From the North (Berkeley, Bay Bridge)
take 880 S and exit Jackson Street
turn left off the ramp and go under the freeway
turn left on 8th Street
turn 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
turn right on 7th Street
turn right on Webster Street
take the tunnel into Alameda (aka Posey Tube)

From the Posey Tube
keep left and go over the overpass
turn left at Atlantic Ave.
turn left at Triumph Street
the club is located at the end of the street.
parking is in front of the club house



Club Events on the Horizon

[Event Calendar](#)

- Feb 12 (Sun) Book Talk at the Oakland Yacht Club (Dick H & Dave B)
Brunch around 9 am followed by the talk around 10 am (Potter Time) in the Regatta Room.
- Mar 18 (Sat) St. Patrick's Day Sail with Dinner & Overnight(s) (Carl S)
easy to intermediate, depending on how far out into the Bay we go and on how windy it is; Peninsula YC in Redwood City is inviting us to St. Pat's Dinner on Friday as well as hosting dinner for the Potter Yachters on Saturday and offering free dockage for attendees.
- Apr 8 (Sat) Richmond Sail and Strictly Sail Boat Show (Pat B)
easy to intermediate, depending on how far out into the Bay we sail. Boat Show is Thursday through Sunday (April 6-9). We'll plan on doing a "sail-by" (with horns!) on Saturday afternoon.
- Apr 22 (Sat-Sun) Benicia Sail w/ Optional Overnight and/or Mini-Cruise (Goose)
intermediate when wind picks up; folks usually overnight at the dock; chance for possible mini-cruise before and/or after in the style of a MessAbout. (Maybe the 1st Annual SF-MA!)

Report: Annual Meeting Members Gathered at OYC

The annual meeting of the Potter Yachters convened on January 22, 2017 at the Oakland Yacht Club in Alameda. OYC provided a tasty breakfast – as always – where we dined in sight of our Potter Yachter burgee hanging proudly with all the others. Afterwards, we adjourned to the Regatta Room for our meeting.



Commodore, Eric Zilbert



Commodore Rob Sampson ran a great meeting and kept everything well within the time allowed. He asked for new members to introduce themselves (of whom there were several!), and then turned it over to Pat for the Treasurer’s Report (included elsewhere in this issue). That segued into a vote on keeping the dues at \$25 (approved), a vote on the officer nominations as proposed (likewise approved, see **Officer’s Club** below), presentation of the Potter Yachter of the Year award, and a review & approval of the Sailing Calendar, before we adjourned the meeting and held the traditional gift exchange.



It was wonderful to see all the familiar faces and even better to meet some new ones who we’ll hopefully be getting to know better over the course of many, many future sails. It was a great way to spend the morning! —



Seated (from left) Alan Koepf, Bruce Mossman, Don Person, Danny Ward, (partial) Ruth McWherten, Bruce McDevitt, Larry Tkach, *Goose*, Craig Smith, Dick Herman, Sumanth Sukumar, Judy B, Cynthia Shallit, Pam Griggs, Carl Sundholm. **Back Row** (from left) Joan Savarese & Ted Tome, Dick Galland, Mike Trueman, Mike Swartz, Clint Rood, Dave Kautz, David Myers, Kevin Crowder, Herman Ward, Dan Phy, Alan Roberts, Rich McDevitt, Dave Bacon, Randy Anderson, Jim Hunt, Bobbi & Bud Kerner, Jon Barber, Jon’s +1, Dave Blumhorst, Jerry Barrilleaux, Rob Sampson, Harry Gordon, Eric Zilbert, Mark Sabin, Rebecca Corrigan, Dave Candey, Phil Marcelis, George Corrigan, Dave Norris, Pat Brennan.

Officer's Club

Commodore:

Eric Zilbert
ezilbert@cde.ca.gov
P-19, #629, *Riptide*

Vice Commodore:

Rob Sampson
PY.Commodore.Rob@gmail.com
P-15, #367, *Espero*

Newsletter Editor:

Phil Marcelis
sail@marcelis.com
P-19, #1487, *Family Time*

P-15 Fleet Captain:

David Bacon
dbacon2636@me.com
P-15, #2636, *Ah Tiller the Fun*

P-19 Fleet Captain:

Carl Sundholm
sundholm@att.net
P-19, *Dagmar*

Webmaster:

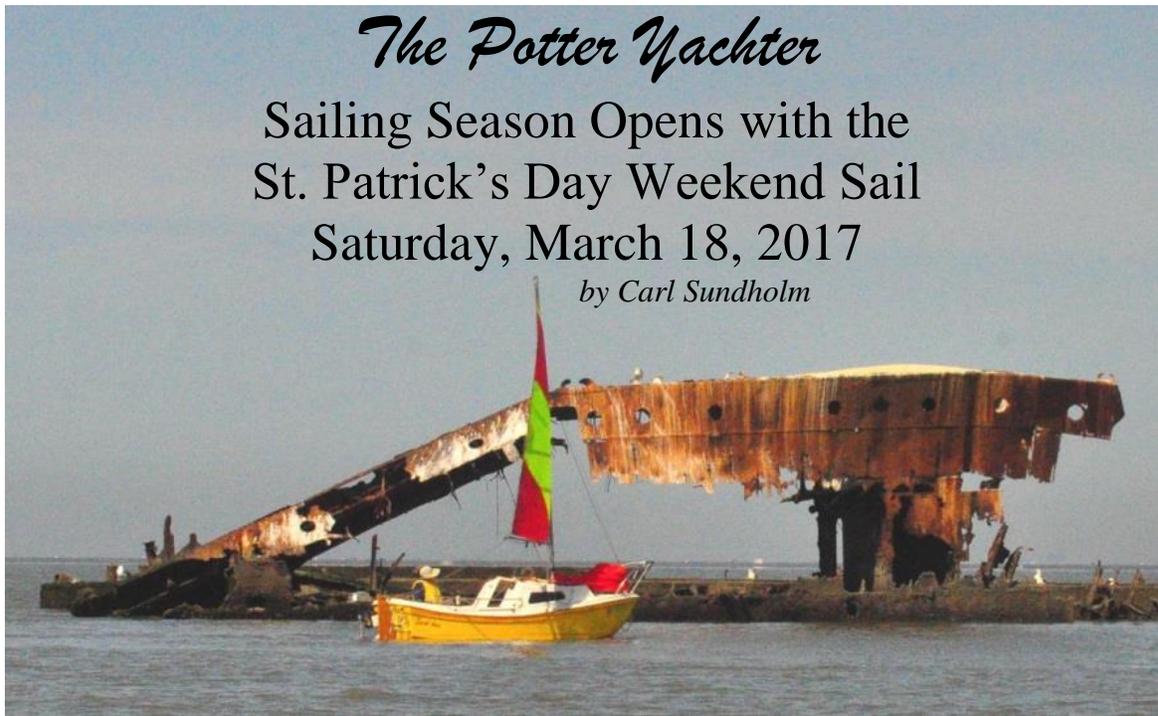
Phil Marcelis
sail@marcelis.com

Secretary/Treasurer:

Pat Brennan
pat-brennan@sbcglobal.net
ComPac Legacy, #1, *Latis*

Website & Facebook:

www.potter-yachters.org
fb.me/PotterYachters



As the sailing season draws nigh, sailors' thoughts drift towards getting back out on the water, and for Potter Yachters that typically starts with the Redwood City sail.

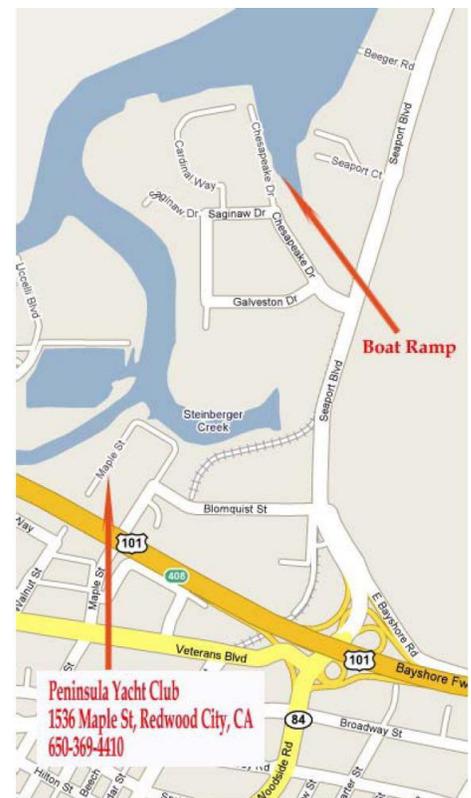
This year we will meet at the Redwood City Marina Boat Ramp at 9:00 a.m. The tides are not propitious, with a high tide of 7.3 at 5:00 a.m., a low of 1.3 at 11:50 a.m., and a second high of 6.0 feet at 6:00 p.m.

Weather permitting and subject to last minute changes at the captains' meeting, we intend to set sail out onto San Francisco Bay for a picnic anchorage out to by the U.S.S. Thompson wreck. The tide will be low at the exact opposite time we want it to be high, so we will see how close we can get, since the Thompson is in very shallow water. Meet up around 9:00 a.m. and there may be a brief captains meeting at the ramp to confirm the plan for the day. Remember to keep your radio tuned to Channel 68. We will sail out Redwood Creek to the Bay, and if upon reaching the Bay the weather is hospitable, we will continue sailing out to the wreck of the USS Thompson for anchoring and lunch. If we get blown away by too high winds on the Bay, we will make it a day sailing around the Redwood Creek estuary.

As an added attraction, the tall ships Lady Washington and Hawaiian Chieftain will be holding a battle sail on the bay outside Redwood Creek.

Peninsula Yacht Club is holding another St. Patrick's Day Dinner and Dance, but this year they have decided to hold it on Friday, March 17th instead of the usual Saturday evening of our event. If you can make it to the St. Pat's dinner and dance, you will not be disappointed. To arrange for free dockage, contact the Port Captain at 650-369-4410.

Directions: Highway 101, Redwood City, take the Woodside Road/Seaport Blvd. Exit, take Seaport Blvd. eastbound (towards the Bay). To get to the Ramp continue on Seaport Blvd. until you take a left on Chesapeake Drive and follow it to the end where there will be a parking lot on your left and the ramp on your right. Park in the lot, get an envelope to pay the ramp and parking fee, leave the sticker in your car with the trailer and you're good for the day. — 



The Potter Yachter

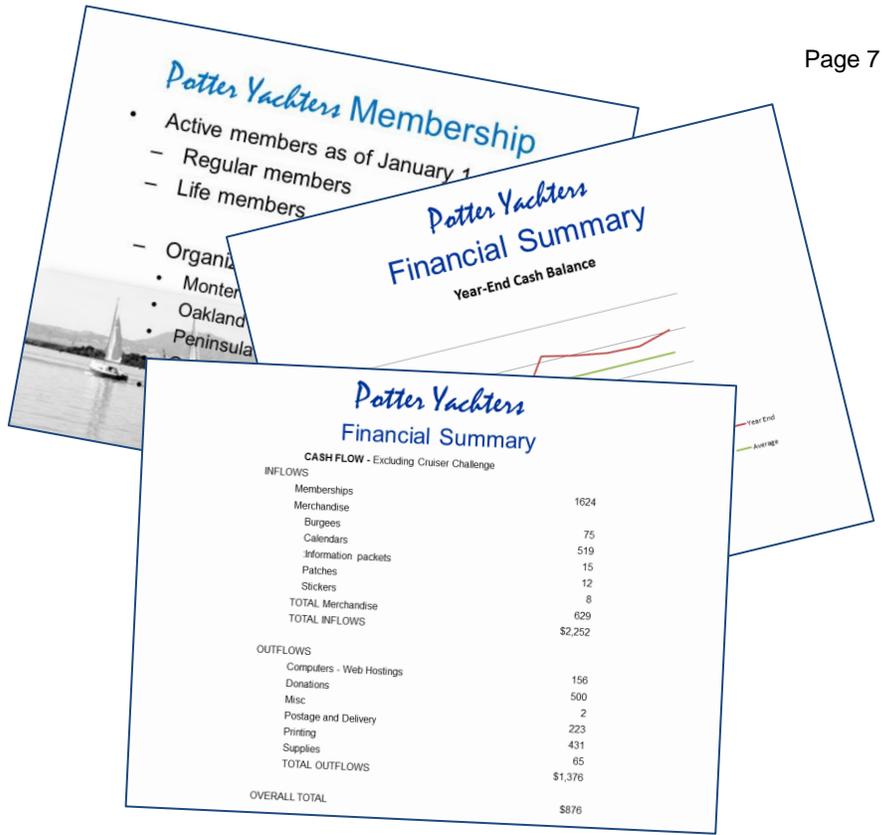
**Report: From the Treasurer
We're Still Afloat!**

Pat Brennan made a PowerPoint presentation at the annual meeting about the state of the club finances. You'll be happy to know that our group has paid all its bills and still has money left!

Here's a rundown of the numbers: Income from Dues & Merchandise= \$2,252. Expenses (Donations, Events, Printing, Postage, Webhosting, and Inventory Changes)= \$1,376. Cruiser Challenge registration fees covered the event expenses, except for unexpected net loss of \$311 which was due to fees not incurred in previous years. Year-end cash balance is around \$5,000, which is about \$500 over our 9-year running average. We voted to hold the club dues steady at \$25 per family.

As of Jan. 1, 2017, the club has 69 regular members and 3 life members: Don Bergst, Darrell Sandeen and Gwen Singh. Out-of-state members include Nevada (3), Oregon (1), Arizona (1), New York (1), and Michigan (1). Skippers self-reported 68 boats in our fleet. Of those, 54% are **small** (<=15'), 34% **medium** (>15' but <20'), and 12% are **large** (>=20'). The majority (60%) are reported as *West Wight Potter*, 12% *Montgomery*, 9% *ComPac*, and 19% are *other*. We share reciprocal club privileges with Monterey Peninsula YC, Oakland YC, Peninsula YC, Coyote Point YC, and Elkhorn YC.

[Any mistakes in this report are the editor's. -Ed.]



Potter Yachters Financial Summary

CASH FLOW - Excluding Cruiser Challenge

INFLOWS	
Memberships	1624
Merchandise	
Burgees	75
Calendars	519
Information packets	15
Patches	12
Stickers	8
TOTAL Merchandise	629
TOTAL INFLOWS	\$2,252
OUTFLOWS	
Computers - Web Hostings	156
Donations	500
Misc	2
Postage and Delivery	223
Printing	431
Supplies	65
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	\$1,376
OVERALL TOTAL	\$876

Eight Bells – from Alice Murphey

We have enjoyed your newsletter from the other coast, and our WWP 15 *SE'IDTE* (Irish for 'Windblown') here on the lakes and Chesapeake Bay. Unfortunately, life seems to go to its natural chaos with the death of my husband. Thank you for allowing us a well-cherished membership to a gran flotilla of Potters. To all West Coast Potters... cherish breathing and all that comes with such – keep the wind to your back while you pee and sail well.

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. Annual dues are \$25 per family.

Make checks payable to "Pat Brennan", or use PayPal to pat-brennan@sbcglobal.net, or try this link: <http://www.paypal.me/WPatrickBrennan/25> and include "Potter Yachter Dues" in the notes.



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

Send your payment (with Pat Brennan
your name and address) to: 1305 Webster Street #C205
Alameda CA, 94501

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.



Patrick Brennan
1305 Webster St., C205
Alameda, CA 94501

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*

