



THE SIGNAL

MARINA BAY YACHT CLUB

Richmond, California

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COMMODORE'S LOG



Thank you for your involvement and participation.

Mike Green,
Commodore

SAFETY FORUM

“If eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, then chronic unease is the price of safety.” James Reason, Managing the Risk of Organizational Accidents.

At the last cruise-out (China Camp) I became personally involved in the rescue of a person who capsized her small sailing dinghy. After the rescue it hit me that I probably saved her life. Erwin Gove, in his boat, and Kasey and I, in our boat, were separately anchored offshore. We were a bit further out than I normally anchor as the tides were extreme due to the full moon.

While we were trying to barbeque dinner (a strong north wind kept blowing out my Magma as the tide kept the stern of the boat to the wind), I observed this person sail by further off shore than us in a small, older dinghy. With the fetch causing sharp waves and about 20 to 22 knots of wind, I noticed she was taking on some water and that she was having a hard time getting the boat to tack through the wind to head back to shore. Something bothered me about what I saw and so I remained uneasy and kept watching. She went another quarter of mile out and capsized. Fortunately my inflatable had the motor already on it and I headed right out to help. No one else seemed to notice in the anchorage.

When I arrived, she (this is when I learned she was a she) was caught up in the sail and the rig, and parts of the boat were floating away in the tide. The boat did not have built-in floatation so it was already underwater, right up to the gunwales. Her primary concern appeared to be about keeping all the parts of the boat together and she began to hand me the mast, centerboard, etc. I noticed she had a central European accent and I told her she needed to get out of the water.

Regardless of how you feel about this Recall of the Governor and the Election, it demonstrates that the democratic process requires participation. The citizens of this State will either decide to retain their elected Governor or decide to replace him. This is the result of a referendum and required people to become actively involved in the process – either to support it or work against it. Clearly there are many Californians who, for whatever reasons, have become motivated to express their interest and views.

The Marina Bay Yacht Club is a community of people. You have a Board of Directors whose responsibility is to represent the best interests of the club and provide the direction to keep the club healthy and therefore, available to the members.

These past two years have been a period of change for the club, largely driven by the new lease agreement with the City of Richmond. This lease provides us with much greater access to the clubhouse while also requiring us to pay costs far in excess of what we paid in the past. If we use the clubhouse regularly the lease cost is good value; if we don't it is not.

The Board is constructing a survey to learn about your interests so we can better direct the business of the club. When you receive it, please take the time to reflect your views and interests. Taking this time and returning the survey is one way you can actively participate in the process of determining the direction of the club.

Another way you can also participate is by joining in the club activities, such as the cruise-outs and monthly dinners. You can also be active in the club by volunteering to staff the club on the weekends.

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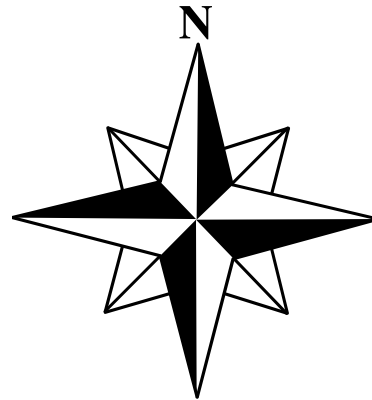
MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

At the Board meeting held on August 16, 2003, the following people were elected to membership in Marina Bay Yacht Club:

- Stuart and Melissa Meighan of Pinole.
- Charlie and Jeff Williams of Redding.

Welcome to the Club!



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- Bernard and Jane Lemke of Ukiah, who sail the Island Packet 40 *Disiderata*. Sponsors are Erwin Gove and Jim Taylor.

(Safety Forum, cont'd)

Once in my inflatable, she admitted this was her first sail in this boat. We had her dinghy's painter and I was able to tow her boat into shore. By the time she was entirely in the boat we were better than a third of a mile off shore. Only when we were 20 yards off the beach did her party even notice she had capsized.

Here was a person who did not know the bay (she could have easily drowned due to the cold water); did not know the boat; did not stay close inshore; was sailing in weather conditions far in excess of the that appropriate for the boat; had a boat that did not have floatation and who was not wearing her life preserver. Her party did not keep an eye on her and her life preserver was ultimately retrieved by another boater far from her spill.

I went back to *Freyja* and tried to finish the barbeque, but found that I was upset by what just happened. I am now convinced that if I wasn't so vigilant and had my inflatable ready that she may have well died. It was clear to me that proper safety preparation is the difference between a fun sail and potential loss of life.

As boaters, we need to be vigilant about safety. I now understand Mr. Reason's statement about chronic unease. That experience will keep me uneasy.

-----Mike Green

FOR SALE

Autohelm ST 2000 Plus Tiller Pilot. See it on page 134 in the West Marine Catalog. I used it three times and then sold my boat. The price is \$450.00 firm!

Call Bill Strong at 510-236-9100. Leave a message if no one answers.

EDITOR'S CORNER

"Writers may not be surprised by this, but in Roman times an 'editor' was the sponsor of a gladiator contest. Back then the word referred to producing a public offering, whether featuring ink or blood."

---from "Random Kinds of Factness"

So let's get those pictures of your boats, preferably under sail, to your editor. Your call----. Ardelle, our Rear Commodore, would also like to have your boat pictures to grace the walls of the Clubhouse.

Secretary Jim Taylor joins me in suggesting that you try receiving the Signal by e-mail. It won't hurt.

-----Editor

CRUISE NEWS

NATARAJA

30 July 2003

Zaikof Bay, Montague Island, Prince William Sound

On Tuesday, July 8th, we fueled up and headed out of the Seward Small Boat Harbor. Our first anchorage is only a few miles south. We start out with a north wind and sunny skies. It is a beautiful warm day and we are in our bathing suits at 60 degrees north! The wind was short lived and we found ourselves drifting backwards, so the engine came on and we powered to our first anchorage. Thumb Cove came highly recommended by many folks on the dock. As we approached, we could see three hanging glaciers and a waterfall. Once the anchor was set, we toasted our first Alaskan anchorage and marveled at the beauty of it.

We spent the next week exploring several other anchorages in Resurrection Bay, which is on the east side of the Kinai Peninsula. The waters are teeming with salmon. They splashed around at all hours of the day and night, practicing I guess for their big journey upstream. In Humpy cove they were especially active. We had tucked into a small nook at the back of the cove where a waterfall emptied. When the tide was up, the salmon were busy hurling themselves upstream. The sea otters were also around to keep us entertained. They would float around as if they had no care in the world. Sometimes they'd be snacking on a crab or a clam. It's amazing to watch how they use a rock held on their bellies to open the shells. What smart little creatures. The sea lions are some sneaky little buggers. One surfaced next to us, looked at us, then swam under the boat. He then surfaced right next to the hull, snorted water, and dove away. We have seen many starfish and some of the freakiest jellyfish. The jellyfish are very bizarre; They look like something that would live 1000 ft. down, really ugly.

Shore-side activities vary by anchorage. In some of them, the mountains come right down to the water, and even at low tide there isn't anywhere to walk around. It was in these anchorages that we were anchored in 90-120 ft. of water. In others, the rocky beaches would show themselves at low tide. There are both brown and black bears. I, of course, am a big chicken and quite spooked to walk into the woods. Even armed with big sticks and carrying out loud conversations when ashore, I am sure I reek of fear. We have seen bear tracks and very obvious signs, but no fuzzy bears yet.

The bird life is spectacular. The most interesting bird has got to be the puffin. They are diving birds and when they surface full of fish, they have a really hard time

taking off. The thing looks like a spastic duck frantically running across the water, wings flapping before it can finally take off. The bald eagles are everywhere, very beautiful and majestic.

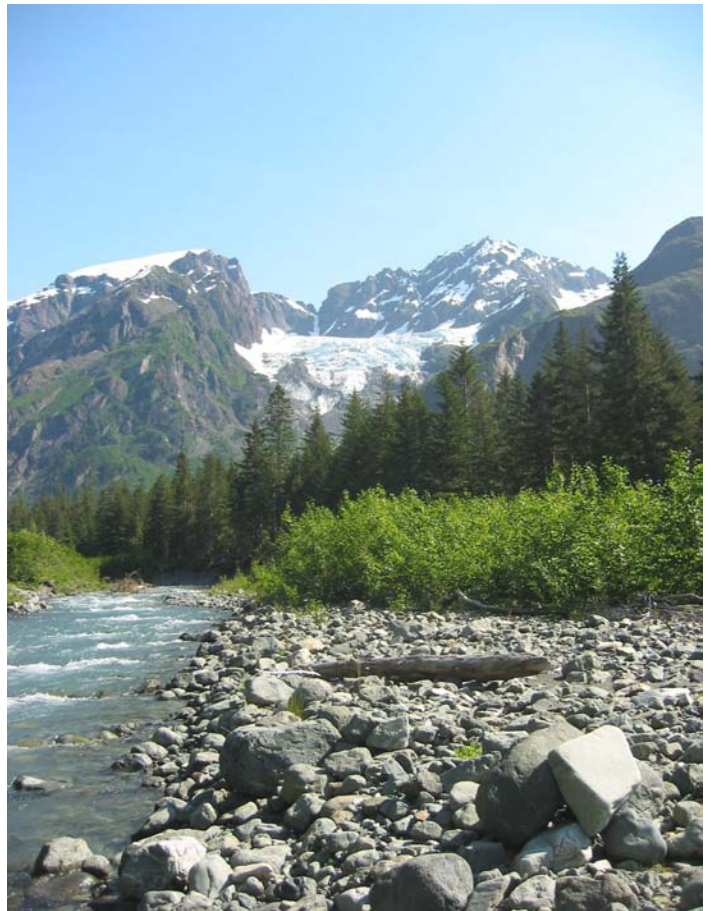
Prince William Sound is our next playground. The anchorage we have chosen, Fox Farm, is about 35 miles away. The winds are light and fluky at the start, but finally fill. Turns into a great day for a sail. The fog and clouds fill in behind us, but sunny skies lie ahead. As we sail along the coast, we spot several glaciers up in the mountains. While looking at one of these, we felt something and then lost steerage. UhOh! What did we hit? Both of us looked around, but couldn't see anything obvious. I looked over our transom and saw our problem. A huge, and I mean HUGE piece of sea kelp was draped around our rudder. By the time I dug out the boat hook, it had slipped off. Our rudder is a skeg mount, so no harm, no foul. A pod of Dall dolphins joins us for awhile, darting back and forth across our bow. I still can't believe how fast these guys are. No whales yet, though.



Dall Dolphin

Fox Farm at Elrington Island has been rated our number one and most favorite anchorage in the northern part of the Gulf of Alaska. The anchorage is landlocked, so therefore very protected. The wildlife is stellar! The best we have seen. We spent several days her, mainly because we need to toughen up a bit in order to sail in the cold and rain, but also because we had a hard time tearing ourselves away from the action. There was a breeding pair of bald eagles and an intruding juvenile who kept causing

grief. There were also quite a few sea otters, a group of four sea lions, and finally---black bear. On our first excursion ashore, Eric kept trying to convince me to follow this narrow little trail through the thick woods. “No way, I ain’t going in there and getting eaten by a bear. No Way! Fine, you go, make me a widow and leave me out here in the wilderness. Fine. I can sail this boat by myself, you just go.” Well, I won that first battle. A little guilt goes a long way. Besides, I had noticed the berry bushes and the really flat spots in the tall grass. I might be a city girl, but I’m not stupid. Well, ok, maybe I am, because about half an hour later he’s got me walking into the woods along another trail. I hear him say “Ohh, that’s a big pile of s - - -! Let’s get out of here!” I am out of there so fast. Eric finds a big stick and we begin talking rather loudly just in case the fuzzy guy is still around; it was a rather fresh pile.



Line Creek and Prospect Glacier

Later, back at the boat, Eric suddenly grabs the binoculars, looks at the beach, then hands them to me and says “There’s your first bear!” Sure enough, there was a black bear roaming the beach. Another one lumbered

across the beach behind us. Next thing you know, we are in the dinghy and headed ashore. Armed with the bear stick, we cautiously walk clear of the tall grass and look down the long stretch of beach on the backside. He's not there. Then Eric motions towards the tall grass and the trees; fuzzy bear is in there. We backtrack to where the dinghy is and go along the backside of the grassy area. There he was, a small black bear, pawing at the rocks looking for treats. The wind was very light, and we were upwind of him, so it was only a matter of time before he smelled us. We snapped a few photos while watching him. Then he smelled us, looked our way, and sauntered off into the brush. Now, you must be thinking we are nuts going after the bear, chicken me especially. But we knew he was small, and a black; we also made very sure we didn't box him in or threaten him by getting too close.

One thing I witnessed while here was the feeding habits of the bald eagle. I always thought of them as birds of prey, swooping down and snagging a fish. Well, I am here to tell you, they are bullies! They sit up on their perch watching the gulls. When they see one score a tasty morsel they fly at the gull in a full on assault. The poor gull, scared out of its wits, drops its meal and flies away. The eagle, talons out, descends on the water and snags it up. Go figure. Speaking of gulls, we watched them eating small starfish. Now there's a sight; they swallow it when it folds itself up, and we could see it moving as the gull tried to get it all the way down.

The sailing has not been all that great. Actually we have motored the whole time in Prince William Sound. There hasn't been any wind. On our way to Whittier we finally spotted our first whales. A humpback launched itself out of the water not far off our bow, then surfaced and spouted a few times before swimming off.

Whittier, our farthest point north at 60 46, was an interesting little town. I contacted the harbor master when we were about a mile and a half out, only to find there was nowhere that we could tie up, nowhere at all, not even for a couple of hours. We stopped in at the fuel dock to top off. I talked with one of the tour operators and had mentioned we needed to do some provisioning, the asked about anchoring in the area. The closest place was like five miles back. He asked the manager of the fuel station, Tim, if he knew of any fishing boats that would be out for awhile, but he didn't. We talked a bit, then he offered to let us stay at the dock and he'd drive me to the market. Wow! What a guy! So, Eric stayed with *Nataraja* and I went to market. Tim gave me the nickel tour of Whittier, that's about all it was worth. It's a tiny place, only about 200 residents. No bank, no post office, just a small market, couple of little restaurants, charter boat offices,

and a train depot. Back at the dock, he told us we were welcome to overnight at the fuel dock. They didn't close until 8 pm, but it had been a slow day. He told us to take the handheld, go for a walk, and get some dinner. He'd call us if we needed to move temporarily. The next morning I baked banana muffins for Tim and his staff, and we headed off to our next anchorage.



Cabin Bay, Naked Island, and *Nataraja*

One thing, which has taken some getting used to, is the tide. The normal is a high of about ten ft. and a low of about one ft. We have experienced a high of 13 ft. followed by a low of minus three ft. When the tide is out, it looks like someone pulled the plug and let the water out. A couple of anchorages had land bridges at low tide, and without knowing any better, one could easily mistake it for a pass at high tide. We ventured to shore on the low tides because the beaches would appear. Looking for hidden rocks when anchoring is made a little easier by the yellow colored kelp that grows on the rocks. The water clarity is quite good, although we haven't been able to see the bottom in anything deeper than 20 ft. The shallower water is home to sea grasses and kelp, and therefore teeming with birds and other critters.

Next stop will be Sitka and Southeast Alaska. We'll keep ya posted!

-----Emmy & Eric, s/v *Nataraja*

Emmy and Eric have been in touch with Peter Schultz (a recent member of MBYC), who now lives in Petersburg, Alaska. They plan to visit him soon.

-----Editor