

*Happy Golden Anniversary, PYC!*

MAY 11, 2009

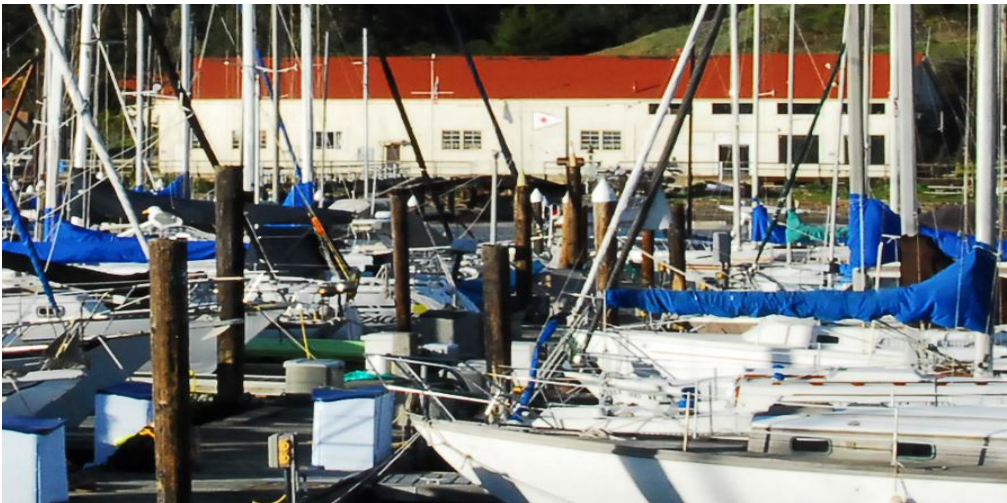
# P RTHOLE

Presidio Yacht Club / Travis Marina

## It's Been 50 Great Years, PYC...!

It was 50 years ago that the Presidio Yacht Club was organized as an activity of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation program of the US Army at the Presidio of San Francisco. The date was May 11, 1959 and the club's first commodore was Lt Barton A. Goldman.

During its first year, the club occupied an old mess hall building that was located next to the current Coast Guard facility on Horse Shoe Cove. In those days, there was a row of buildings housing troops as well as medical and dental facilities. All of those buildings have since been torn down to provide parking. The club moved into its present location in 1960 and has occupied Building 579, Fort Baker ever since. (*Cont. below...*)



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The marine facilities in Horseshoe Cove had originally been installed by the Army during World War II to support Army Engineer activities in the San Francisco Bay, primarily as a base for boats tending the submarine net across the Golden Gate, as well as ferries to Angel Island, Oakland Army Terminal, Fort Mason, Hunters Point, etc.

When the club moved into Building 579, they had a shell of a building and slowly started building a yacht club with surplus material. The Galley was put together with surplus from the Letterman Army hospital kitchen. During the 1960s, the docks, marine railway and crane were gradually repaired and renovated by the club members to accommodate recreational boats when the military requirement for them ended. (*Cont. pg. 2...*)



Club membership was initially limited to active duty and retired military personnel, which was later expanded to include civilian employees of the US government and members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. For fifty years, most of the maintenance, to include deck and dock-building, has been performed by the members on the monthly work day.

Up until the early 1970s, the club was a “bottle club,” meaning you brought in your own bottle and put your name on it. They did serve draft beer which was included in the dues.

The bar offerings have expanded considerably since then and it is now open to the general public, but the sense of history remains strong with elements added over the years, such as the burgee collection and photos of past commodores.

One of the most prominent clubhouse fixtures is the round table donated by Hap Arnold, Jr (COL Arnold also donated the bell mounted on the post outside on the south side of the building). He was one of the early commodores of the club -as well as USAF Gen Hap Arnold's "Black sheep". All of Arnold's other sons were Air Force officers, but Hap Jr. joined the army. When Arnold, Sr. retired from the Air Force, he bought a small ranch in Sonoma on a road that became named Arnold Drive.



Most recently, former commodore Don Kavanaugh initiated a campaign to replace the old, worn-out bar stools. Funded entirely by donations from past bridge members, the new oak stools are another reminder of the self-sustaining spirit and pride of PYC members.

The club was accepted as a member of the Pacific Inter-Club Yachting Association (PICYA) in 1960 and has participated in PICYA activities since then. PYC member and former commodore Manny Mier was the PICYA Commodore in 2006. Most recently, the club has enjoyed a string of 5 consecutive years of top three finishers in the Opening Day parade. In addition, we have maintained active racing, cruising, sail training and social programs and welcomed other yacht clubs and their members for over fifty years.



The spirit of competition remains strong in the PYC with the Baxter-Judson Racing Series. During the 1970s and 80s, the Baxter Series and Judson Trophy were run as separate programs, but were merged in 1992. The Lady Skippers Race has also been a competitive tradition for the last 30 years.

Every year the club selects the Yachtsman of the Year who is awarded the Phifer Trophy. The Phifer Trophy was donated to the Presidio Yacht Club by Mrs. Heloise Phifer to honor her husband, Rear Admiral Thomas Phifer who was a long time club member and avid boatsman. This award is presented to honor the person who contributed most to the goals and ideals of the PYC.

(Cont. pg. 3...)

One of the first PYC sail training programs was run by Peg Kampe - a no-charge, informal program she called the "Cal gals" for the wives of members. However, the current sail training program can be traced back to Gene Erickson and one of the Saturday morning bull sessions around the round table. He ran it for at least the first year, then others--most notably Alan Johnson and Bernard Vash --carried the torch, further developing the program that many current and past members owe their start in sailing to.



The Travis Marina Rent-a-Skipper program was another unique initiative conceived and started by long-standing PYC council member Jack Machun, to provide sailing opportunities for those who want to get out on the Bay, but don't have the training or skills to take a boat out on their own. Thanks to the many PYC volunteer skippers this continues to be a popular program with Travis AFB personnel, families and friends.

When the Presidio of San Francisco was closed as an Army installation in 1994, sponsorship of the club was assumed by the 50<sup>th</sup> Services Squadron of Travis Air Force Base, which continues to supervise our activities. When East Fort Baker became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 2001, Travis AFB began operating the marina on a lease from the National Park Service. This unique relationship has helped preserve a San Francisco Bay institution that continues to make history. Here's to 50 more years, PYC!

*History contributed by Mary Jane Hutchinson, Dan Mahoney & Manny Mier,  
and compiled by Mike Schripsema. ◆*





**Photo by Herman Privette. [hprivette@aol.com](mailto:hprivette@aol.com)**

Commodores of the PYC: Back row, left to right: Lowell Olson (2009), Mary Jane Hutchinson (2002), Tom Fahey (1995), Charles Ricard (1971), Jane Piereth (1994), Robby Robinson (1977), Jon Rolien (1984), Jack Gordon (1999), Don Girkout (1984), Mac Vogelei (1982), Don Kavanaugh (2005). Front row: Barbara Larsen (1997), Henriette Gordon (2003), Manny Mier (1998), Dan Mahoney (1986), James Geiger (1968), Marcia Stern (2006), Steve Peters (2007, 2009)

## **Commodore's Corner**

*By Steve Peters, Co-Commodore*

1959 – 2009: The 50 Anniversary of the Presidio Yacht Club. Our celebration on May 9<sup>th</sup> was a huge success. We had eighty members and guests for dinner including sixteen Past- Commodore's.

Many people were involved in making this event a success. Manny and Pat Mier organized everything and saw that every detail was perfect. Their guest list included not only PYC members but Officers from Travis Air Force Base as well as Politicians from our district and State. Schedules prevented most of these people from attending but we received important official regrets acknowledging our club and existence.

Manny gave a brief talk about the club and made appropriate introductions. The menu was well thought with marinated salmon, glazed chicken and vegetarian dishes imaginatively prepared by Chef Bill Jones from the Martinez Yacht Club with help from his sous-chefs Marina Faconti and Jean Besse.

Mary Jane Hutchinson and Hazel Caldwell shopped for entrees and prepared hors d'oeuvres, salads and desserts. Part of the dinner package was a commemorative wine glass and burgee pin both documenting our historic milestone.

For those interested there are still some glasses available for \$5.00 and pins for \$3.00. For information please contact Manny Mier at [mpmsail@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mpmsail@sbcglobal.net) or 415.383.1259.

It was wonderful to be part of a celebration consisting of long time members who showed an obvious sense of pride for how far PYC had come in the past fifty years, and the possibilities that lie ahead of us in spite of obvious obstacles. ◆

### From the Marina Manager

By Louis Canotas

Greetings from Horseshoe Cove, Travis Marina; the home of the Presidio Yacht Club. It is an absolutely gorgeous morning down here. Light breeze, in the 60's, the first sailboats of the day going by.

I'm feeling more optimistic than I have in quite some time. Attendance to the dinners, and work day itself is up considerably from just 6 months ago. A particularly fine event was the 50th anniversary bash we had in May. I give most of the credit to our enterprising bridge. Their energy and enthusiasm is certainly a breath of fresh air. Added to that is our expanding profile in Marin. We host weddings, birthday parties and music on the weekends.

Best of all is a recent note from the Park Service to the Air Force stating that they are willing to extend our lease to Sept of 2011. Although this is hardly a long term lease, it is indicative of progress. I humbly submit that we, like the economy, have passed through our low water mark. Green shoots indeed! ◆



For calendar of events & live music, go to [www.presidioyachtclub.org](http://www.presidioyachtclub.org).

### Sail Training Information

By Jack Machun

The Basic Keel Boat (BKB) sail training program for 2009 has been revised to lower the cost for active duty personnel and other qualified personnel. By not offering ASA certification the cost of attending the four day course was reduce from \$265 to \$100 for active duty personnel and \$165 for all others that qualify for PYC membership.

If a person that successfully completes the BKB course wishes to get ASA certification he/she can request the opportunity to challenge the ASA certification by passing the ASA written exam and the on the water competency test. The cost for the ASA certification is about \$100 plus the cost of renting the boat.

Most of the volunteer instructors have been qualified as ASA instructors. Those that have not been ASA certified instructors have a great deal of sailing experience. The main purpose of the program is to provide an opportunity for active duty personnel to learn to sail at low cost. We have scheduled one 4 person class per month and can increase it to two classes if there is sufficient demand by active duty personnel. Non-active duty personnel can enter the program on a space available basis.

The class start dates for the remainder of 2009 are as follows:

July 11, August 8, and September 12. The 4 day course is on two consecutive weekends. Make up days will be scheduled in October for those who missed classes because of a call to duty. ◆

## Greetings from the Vice!

By Jason Funk, Vice Commodore

I have just got returned from fifty days in Africa. I was deployed to the small country of Djibouti with my Air National Guard unit. Because of the timing of the deployment I have missed some of the club's best events and some great weather. One of the events I missed during my deployment was the club's golden anniversary, which I hear was tremendous.

I also missed the Opening Day on the Bay parade. We had one boat in the line-up. It did not win a prize, but it was very well decorated. The theme this year was "Legends of the Sea", so we made a pun with the theme and combined it with a notorious set of advertisements you sometimes see on late night television. Our entry was "Mermaids Gone Wild". More pictures were posted on the PICYA web site. Thanks go to Mary Jane Hutchinson, Laura Marks, Mark Tishler, Steve Peters, Meg Lam, and Don Kavanaugh for all the work they put



into the dressings and participating in the parade.



Before I deployed I was able to launch the first two races - March and April. They were well attended with racers, but unfortunately not well attended by the wind. Both races were pretty much a bust with some of the calmest winds I have ever seen on the bay. Obviously, that cannot last so I encourage everyone to keep coming out to race.

I did get one day off during my deployment and took advantage of a dive trip to Musha Island in the Gulf of Tadjoura, just off the Gulf of Aden. The boat we cruised out on was the Deli Valletta, a 70+ foot was a sailboat without any sails. Apparently she once expected with boats that long. The sad thing was she had some canvas, but all such stuff has since been removed. I asked the Captain about this and he simply told me that the masts were too old and he did not trust the strength of the rigging. Okay, fortunately the hull and the motor seemed to be in good shape! As we transited the port of Djibouti I happened to notice several yachts anchored out. I don't know if they are owned by people living in Djibouti or belonged to cruisers just passing through. (Probably both.) I understand that Tom and Amy on Sandpiper did not stop in Djibouti preferring to make stops in Yemen and Eritrea instead. ♦



### **A Quick Note from the Rear**

*By Mark Tishler, Rear Commodore*

The annual "PYC Crab Feed" was held in February and we had a sellout crowd. The Superbowl Sunday potluck was fun (even though I did not win any money). In March, we celebrated St. Patrick's Day with a delectable dinner of Corned Beef and Cabbage prepared by Don and Carla Kavanaugh. In April, the Beauchamps again hosted a gourmet "April in Paris" dinner for us. May was the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary dinner which was well attended. Manny Mier arranged some very interesting presentations.

As always, I want to thank those who volunteer to prepare these dinners. It does require a lot of time for preparation, but some of the happiest faces in the place are always in the kitchen. Hmmm - that is where we keep the wine!

Upcoming events include a the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration and an Italian dinner in August. The annual 4th of July celebration will feature boat rides, grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, salads and chips for the all inclusive price of \$7.00 (children 1/2 price).

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve as your Rear Commodore. ◆

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### **Notes from the Port Captain**

*By Jack Gordon*

The last few work days have been very productive to the tune of flotation replaced on 4 fingers, with a little carpentry work. This is large part is due to Louis spending money, and Zack preparing the floats so they only need to be installed - we could not do two each workday otherwise.

We also cleaned the debris off a portion of the dock and if I may say a word to all: **DON'T DRAG FLOATING TIMBER UP ONTO THE DOCKS. JUST TIE A PIECE OF LINE ON IT AND MOVE IT TO AN OPEN SPACE, END OR MIDDLE SO IT CAN EASILY BE TOWED OUT TO THE BUOY.** This will save you lifting it out of the water, and the work crew throwing it back in. Note that I'm not saying let it float around to jam into the docks or your boats, just secure it in the water and it's much easier to deal with.

Workday progress included also repainting and cornering the paint shed (AKA Hazmat storage), cleaning up after ourselves on the beach, repairing the connection between two dock sections on the N/S dock, and of course, setting up the two fine dinners of April & May (50th anniversary). Manny Meier did us proud on the 50th. We also recovered a NOAA buoy that floated in - may get a reward for that.

Future problems: tubs now cost \$170 each - we generally use five per finger. The main docks are sagging, we need to get more flotation under them. I am informed the electrical system is slowly coming apart. So, nothing especially new in 50 years. ◆

The PYC's Anniversary Celebration was a great success. We did a lot of recollecting that evening. First of all, we had two charter members in attendance: Reverend Palmer Wilkins, Col, US Army and Jim Geiger, MD, Col, US Army.

Palmer met with me a couple of times and has a wealth of info. He is an interesting guy who put in a career as a career artillery officer. Since the National Guard was in dire need of chaplains, he went to school and entered the chaplains corps. He became a charter member while at the Presidio and lives in Novato with his wife.

James Geiger got off active duty and had a career as a surgeon in San Francisco. He commented that his wife did not like the beret he wore in his commodore photo of PYC in 1968 and she still does not like it now. Both he and Palmer commented that they had some real good times in those days but lived with the threat of being thrown out because someone else in the Army wanted the building. Lets back up a bit. They did not move into the present building until they were in an old mess hall building that was located next to where the Coast Guard is now. In those days there was a whole row of buildings housing troops, medical and dental clinic and who knows what else. They have all been torn down to provide parking.

Several of our first commodores were all proud members of the 5th Infantry Division which was known as the diamond division. Yup a big red diamond. Google it and you will find pages of how famous it is. They wanted a big diamond that covered most of the burgee. Apparently, there was a compromise and we have our present burgee as a memento of the 5th Infantry Division.

Jim Earhart and I have long discussed which of us two joined the club first, we only knew it was the early 70's. Well not too long ago, I found an old trophy plaque. It was the old "DIP" award and one name said Jim Earhart 1970. That did it, he is the winner because I joined in 1971 shortly before I bought my boat. The DIP award will be revived and presented to any club member who somehow finds themselves in the bay accident.

I related the evolution of all the yachting activities that we participate in and continue including our string of 5 consecutive years of winning in the PICYA Opening Day Parade. I also praised Louis for the operation he is now running as manager, and Doc Kraft, a PYC member, for playing dance music for us.

The evening could not have happened without my lovely wife Pat who went through 10,000 photos, and made the posters that had a photo of all 50 commodores and more. Dave Peixotto, COL ret., former council president who served as co-MC with me, gave a splendid power point presentation of then and now using a lot of photos from Jennifer Schripsema and some new ones. Mary Jane who was in charge of the dining room, although we had a guest chef from Martinez YC, Bill Jones. Dan Mahoney provided photos and history. Robby Robinson, provided moral support, photos and history. Thanks to all who helped in big and small ways for working together to give a memorable evening! ◆

**Photo by Herman Privette, pbprivette@aol.com**



## Team Sandpiper Update

By Tom & Amy Larson, USCG Retired

Happy 50th PYC from St. John, US Virgin Islands! In the last 'Porthole' issue Sandpiper was blazing across the Atlantic 100 miles from making landfall in Barbados. Mid-Atlantic Sandpiper 'almost' lost her mast when the bolt holding the lower shrouds to the mast sheered in half and only stayed up due to a quick jury rig.

We were very pleased to arrive in Barbados, our first Caribbean landfall, where we found the locals to be really friendly and we found lots of great Caribbean Rum to drink. We also found a tiny boat yard that was able to pull Sandpiper's mast off and we were able to make repairs and have the mast back on in two days. We enjoyed Barbados so much we ended up staying several weeks enjoying the local hospitality.

Sandpiper then upped anchor and headed straight downwind for an overnight sail to Bequia Island that is part of the Grenadine Island chain. After clearing in and spending a few days watching all the charter boats coming in and out, we sailed thirty miles to the world famous Tobago Cays National Park where we spent time anchored off its five small deserted islands surrounded by coral reefs and clear turquoise waters.

From Tobago Cays it was just a short motor across the channel to one of our favorite stops at Union Island. Union Island is a true Caribbean experience with very few tourists about and really friendly locals who were very willing to show us a good time. From Union was another short motor to the sleepy island of Carriacou, which is part of Grenada and is another island that most tourists do not visit, leaving the island to the locals and us.

From there was a 30 mile sail down Grenada's windward side arriving to St. Davids Harbor where we took part in Grenada's annual Classic Yacht Regatta where we got the opportunity to sail aboard one boat that was built in 1939 and another in the 40's. I'm not sure we would ever want to own a classic wooden boat because one of the boats I was racing on sprung her bow planks and had to be hauled out of the water before she sank, but it was a real treat to sail aboard these old ladies.

We spent time exploring Grenada's many bays and anchorages and then had Sandpiper hauled out to have her spruced up. Our last haul out had been in Thailand and Sandpiper's waterline had taken a beating after crossing the Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Mediterranean and Atlantic. After 5 days Sandpiper had new bottom paint, new blue paint on her upper sides and several coats of wax on her gel coat making her look like new again.

We cleared out of Grenada for an overnight sail to St. Lucia arriving under the world famous volcanic Pitons. We worked our way up St. Lucia's leeward coast to anchor in Rodney Bay where we spent several weeks. We met up with old Coast Guard shipmate and PYC dock mate Chris Allaire who was working his way across the Caribbean in an opposite direction from us. PYC 'Bartender Bob', you will be pleased to know your old dinghy that you sold us and we gave to Chris years ago as it was too big for us, is still in great shape out here in the Caribbean! We also were visited by Amy's mom and boyfriend who were staying ashore right off where we were anchored where we were allowed to crash their pool daily.

(Cont. pg. 10...)



From St. Lucia we made a perfect 300-mile passage with winds right off the beam at 10-15 knots of wind to St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. This was Sandpiper's first American landfall in almost four years and it was sure nice being somewhere where everyone speaks English, US dollars come out of the ATMs, all prices are in US dollars, and there are US post offices. After a short visit to St. Croix we sailed thirty miles to where we are presently anchored in St. John US Virgins.



with many white sand beaches without a resort in site. With Amy's sister visiting us here we anchored off Cinnamon Bay, then sailed across to the British Virgin Islands just three miles away to legendary Foxy's on Jost Van Dyke, Soggy Dollar Bar and then Tortola before completing a circumnavigation of St John.

We stayed in St. John while we decided if we should stay for the rapidly approaching hurricane season, or keep heading for continental United States. With us trying to decide our future in less than a week, we decided to stay and purchase a small turn-key charter business that has

been in operation for the last 18 years. After a certain amount of frustration, we got a business loan figured out and we are now the happy owners of Sadie Sea, a tour boat here in St. John.

It's been four years on a 35ft sailboat sailing west around the world, covering over 28,000 nautical miles, visiting 30 countries and five continents, and we now are calling St. John "home". St. John grew on us quite quickly as it has a real sense of community. People are quite friendly and after just a short amount of time we have met most of the island. Come visit us and we will guide you around the waters surrounding St. John and we'll show you why it is called the "Jewel of the Caribbean". Flights to the Caribbean are quite cheap right now so we expect to see you here soon! Check us out at [www.sadiesea.com](http://www.sadiesea.com)! ◆



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## Recreational Boaters of California (RBOC) Update

By Doug Hipsley (Submitted by Pete Van der Werff)

Directors of RBOC gathered for their quarterly Joint Board Meeting on 10 June 2009 at the Corinthian Bahia Yacht Club. Ray Tsueyoshi, Director of Cal Boating was our special guest. Major points of discussion were:

(a) RBOC has successfully fought off again the elimination of Cal Boating. It was rejected by a 5-0 vote of the Senate Natural Resources and Water committee on June 11<sup>th</sup>. What is the Governor going to do next to try to eliminate Cal Boating?

(b) RBOC opposes a proposed requirement from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for coastal marinas to have a permit to operate in coastal waters. RBOC rejects their proposed requirement based on numerous other studies not supporting their science. They want to apply their findings in San Diego to all coastal marinas in the state.

(c) RBOC opposes the proposed increase of ethanol in the gas supply from 10 to 15 percent. Studies by the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) have shown an increased negative impact on marine engines using ethanol-based fuel. Remember the MTBE controversy a few years back?

(d) RBOC supports continuous testing of anti-fouling bottom paints without using copper. There is still no viable replacement of copper based anti-fouling paint. The issues range from alternatives being too expensive, to not doing an adequate job protecting the environment.

(e) RBOC continues to monitor the closure of waterways caused by the Quagga and Zebra Mussels infestation. We support reasonable inspections and education of boaters and launch ramp operators. . This is a major reason that there is a need for adequate bottom paints.

RBOC is **supporting**, **opposing**, or **watching** numerous other local, regional, or state legislation, as well as proposals from regulatory agencies that impact recreational boating. We are **supporting** bills that include removal of abandoned vessels from waterways, increasing the age of children wearing life jackets, and increasing the consequences for boaters driving under the influence. RBOC is **watching** proposals that impact boaters in the Delta, use of boats in the jurisdiction of State Parks, and other issues impacting boats and boating operation.

Every year RBOC honors the Legislature of the Year. The winner this year is Senator Barbara Boxer for her support in opposing additional discharge permits for recreational boaters. Thank you Senator Boxer!

*Recreational Boaters of California [RBOC] is a nonprofit governmental advocacy organization that works to protect and enhance the interests of the state's recreational boaters before the legislative and executive branches of state and local government. Find more information at [www.rbo.org](http://www.rbo.org) .◆*

**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Presidio Yacht Club or the US Air Force.

BARBARA BOXER  
CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEES:  
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May 9, 2009

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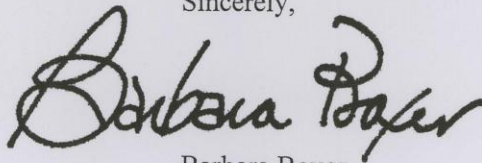
Dear Friends:

Please accept my warmest greetings as you celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Presidio Yacht Club. I hope you have a memorable time at this special event.

Since its inception in 1959, The Presidio Yacht Club has inspired many Californians to explore the world of sailing around the San Francisco Bay; and has provided military service members, their families, and members of the public an opportunity to engage in diverse outdoor recreational boating activities while promoting environmental stewardship. I thank the staff and volunteers for your tireless efforts and strong commitment to preserving the Presidio Yacht Club's facilities for all to enjoy.

I send my best regards on this memorable occasion. I wish the Presidio Yacht Club many more years of success!

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator

BB:mah

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County of Marin

# CERTIFICATE OF COMMEMORATION

Given to

## The Presidio Yacht Club

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Club's founding  
With gratitude for your continued stewardship of the historical military legacy at  
Fort Baker, your on-going partnership with the National Park Service  
and for sharing this local treasure with all



Dated at San Rafael, California  
This 9<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2009

Charles McGlashan  
Supervisor, Southern Marin  
Marin County Board of Supervisors

