

# P<sup>ORTHOLE</sup>

Presidio Yacht Club / Travis Marina



First Quarter 2016

Cover photo: New Year's Eve

### **Good-Bye To 2015!**

We had a nice turnout for the November Change of Watch Dinner. A delicious stuffed pork loin dinner was prepared for us by Past Commodore and current Council Secretary James Pennington, which was served to perfection with wild rice, lemon/bacon green beans, appetizers, salad, wine and dessert. With Past Commodore/Past Council President Jason Funk overseas on deployment during this particular event, some of the Change of Watch Ceremony details may have been overlooked, but a fun time was had by all who attended, and much excitement for the coming year abounds!

In December, we were again treated to an amazingly tender and flavorful beef brisket Holiday Dinner prepared for us again this year by member Dan Potash and his lovely friend Ann Marie. Served with roasted potatoes, sauteed brussel sprouts, appetizers and wine and dessert, a more festive gathering of friends could scarcely be imagined. A new toy drive was held in exchange for raffle tickets at this event and, thanks to the donations of our attendees and the efforts of our Active Duty Council Member Chris Grewell and his wife Emily, a nice bag of “loot” was collected for Christmas delivery to many children of young military families stationed at Travis Air Force Base, courtesy of Presidio Yacht Club.

New Years Eve was a real hit this year! A terrific, near sell-out crowd was treated to another of James and Vicki Pennington’s out-of-this-world Prime Rib or Stuffed Salmon dinners. James and Vicki, along with friends Chris Pollock and Brad Delahanty cooked an amazing feast, while James Earhart, Jason Funk, and Shannon Elms set up the tables and dining room. And With 24 of this year's 70+ guests traveling in from Travis Air Force Base to enjoy dinner this year, as well as swing dancing to the Lonestar Retrobates upstairs until midnight, the crowd was in the mood to party -- and party they did! At midnight, the view was crystal clear for the fireworks across the Bay in San Francisco. This year's NYE dinner guests were an especially lucky group, too, because the Pennington’s are hanging up their NYE-dinner-prep aprons on their 2015 high note. Our many, many thanks to them, again, for their years of dedication to making the annual PYC NYE event such a special delight for so many!

- Shannon Elms

### **Coxless Crew**

Some of you may remember the Coxless Crew. For those of you that don't, this is a row boat crewed by four women who set out to row across the Pacific to Australia with stops in



*NYE feast being prepared. [Pennington]*

## CALENDAR

### February

13 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
CRAB FEED! 6 PM.

### March

12 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER. 6 PM.  
20 BAXTER-JUDSON FIRST RACE. 11 AM.

### April

9 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
SAILING HEALS SPECIAL EVENT.  
APRIL IN PARIS CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.  
17 BAXTER-JUDSON SECOND RACE. 11 AM.  
24 OPENING DAY ON THE BAY.

### May

14 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
MEXICAN CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.  
15 BAXTER-JUDSON THIRD RACE. 11 AM.  
27-30 PETALUMA CRUISE-OUT.

### June

11 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
CHICKEN PICCATA CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.  
18 WOMAN SKIPPERS' RACE. 11 AM.

### July

4 FOURTH OF JULY BBQ. 11 AM  
9 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.  
17 BAXTER-JUDSON FOURTH RACE. 11 AM.

### August

13 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.

21 BAXTER-JUDSON FIFTH RACE. 11 AM

### September

10 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.

18 BAXTER-JUDSON SIXTH RACE. 11 AM.

### October

8 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
OKTOBERFEST CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.

### November

12 TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
AWARDS AND CHANGE OF WATCH. 6 PM.  
CLUB DINNER. 7 PM.

### December

10 WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
TRAVIS MARINA WORKDAY. 9 AM - 1 PM.  
CHRISTMAS CLUB DINNER. 6 PM.  
31 NEW YEAR'S EVE.

This is what we have planned, but the calendar is always subject to change. Visit the web site for the most current calendar.

Hawaii and Samoa. They launched from our Club on April 20th 2015, but had a rough start. They spent over a week paralleling the coast making no headway. Then both of their solar chargers packed up. That created a potential safety issue (as well as not being about to follow their journey) so they diverted to Santa Barbara for repairs. After about a week back on land they set out again. They made it to Hawaii and then to Samoa. And just a few days ago they landed in Australia! Mission complete! See them at "[www.coxlesscrew.com](http://www.coxlesscrew.com)".

- Jason Funk

## Sail Training

The Travis Sail Training program is now American Sailing Association (ASA) affiliated. Travis Marina is now an ASA sailing school!

There will be an ASA Instructor Qualification Clinic (IQC) at the club on March 18-20 (Friday evening and all day Sat-Sun). The class will be limited to 8 students. If you are an experienced sailor interested in giving lessons to novice sailors, here is your chance. There is a fee for the Instructor certification,

but Alan Johnson is willing to teach the IQC at no cost for himself so that will greatly reduce the cost to you. (If you attend the IQC you owe Alan a beer.)

Just to be clear, you don't have to be an ASA certified instructor to help teach the classes. An ASA instructor will have to sign off on the paperwork for the students to get ASA certification. So, even if you can't make it to the IQC, any help you can provide teaching is always appreciated.

The 2016 sailing class schedule is posted and Travis AFB will start advertising for students. Lessons are open to anyone with a U.S. military identification card. Last year we managed to get by with one boat for each class, but with the ASA affiliation we may get more interest so we may need two boats and two instructors every day for the classes this year.

The boats themselves are in good shape. I check them every weekend. We will have a spring cleaning when the weather allows in March or April. I'll schedule a training sail when weekend weather allows.

Thanks to everyone for volunteering.

For more information, visit "<http://sites.google.com/site/travissailtraining>" or e-mail "[travissailtraining@gmail.com](mailto:travissailtraining@gmail.com)".

- Steve Mahaley

## History

Installment 2 of this history of these fortifications noted how, as the world slid towards WWII, the coastal fortifications around San Francisco Bay were significantly upgraded. The most significant upgrades were the mounting of 12" and 16" "surplus" naval guns as shore-based artillery, mostly outside the Golden Gate.

The Army also prepared to emplace minefields across the outer reaches of



Fort Baker just before WW II. [GOGA]



*Chefs Chris Pollock and Brad Delahanty [Pennington]*

the Bay. By today's standards these mines were terribly primitive, requiring electrical cables to connect them to concentrators, and from there to shore control stations. To service some of the mines (magnetic) the army commandeered crab boats from the local fishing fleets. These boats were well suited to the mine servicing task, since they were constructed of wood and held together by brass screws.

Minefield tending is the genesis of Fort Baker's Building 679, now the home of the Travis Marina and the Presidio Yacht Club. The need to service and repair the boats doing the mine work led to the establishment of a small craft boatyard at Horseshoe Bay, the closest "safe harbor" to the Golden Gate. This boatyard transitioned over time to be what we see now, less items that have been removed

haul-out railway the draw-works of which were under what is now the marina office. There was a crane, capable of lifting 10 tons, the platform for which is the ruin offshore off the west end of Building 679. The crane was operable into the early 1990's, having been reconstructed partly by the 801st Engineer Battalion (Port Construction) in the 1980's. There was a fueling station next to the crane. It disappeared in the 1950's due to safety concerns.

At its wartime apex, Building 679 had the existing small boat railway, a larger

The Navy was responsible for the submarine net that ran (approximately) from Yellow Bluff, just east of the Marina over to Crissy Airfield at the Presidio.

Based upon the fortifications erected at Forts Baker, Berry, Cronkhite (north side of the Golden Gate), and at Forts Scott and Funston (south side), the Coast Artillery did not regard aerial attack as likely. The Pacific Ocean providing a barrier to bombers. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor disabused them of that perception, and caused a near panic on the West Coast.

As it turned out, the Army possessed a considerable amount of anti-aircraft artillery, search lights, etc. To re-assure the public, there were public deployments of these weapons in and around San Francisco after December 7, 1941. Fortunately for the Army and the public, their effectiveness was never tested.

Aside from a few false alarms, the armaments around the Golden Gate never fired a shot in anger. The much-feared Japanese attack on the West Coast never materialized. The Japanese fleet was too busy securing the Indonesian oil fields, Burmese rubber, and conquering the Philippines to bother with America. They had crippled the U.S. fleet and thought they had nothing to fear from the U.S.

Amazingly, six months after the Pearl Harbor attack, the Navy's aircraft carriers, which had been absent from Pearl Harbor on December 7, ambushed the Japanese fleet sent to capture Midway Island. That battle, in which the Japanese lost 4 carriers to the U.S. Navy's 1, gained the U.S. Navy the initiative. From then on, Japan was on the defensive. That the U.S. prevailed at Midway was, as Admiral Spruance said, "luck, not the result of planning."

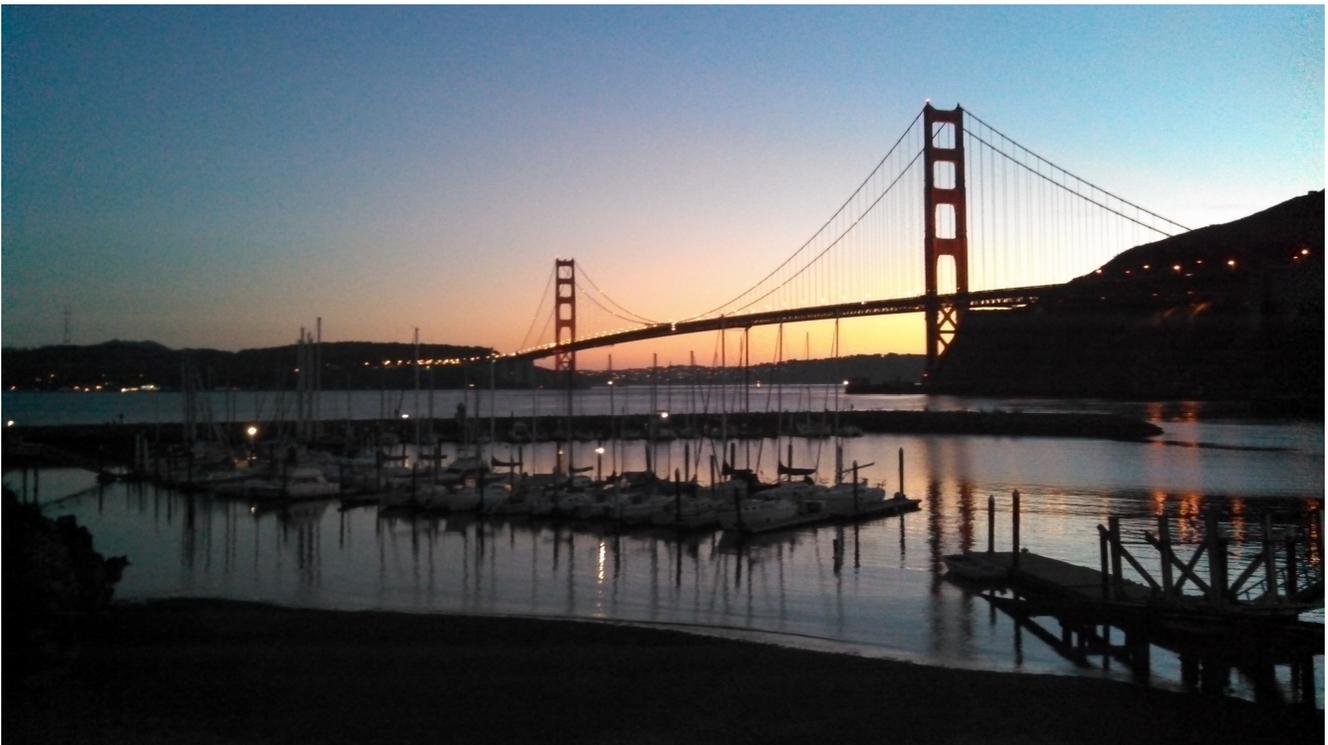
The Navy's gaining the initiative in the Eastern Pacific made the harbor defenses of San Francisco redundant, because of both the Navy's resurgence and the changing nature of warfare. However, the Coast Artillery did not recognize their redundancy immediately. After all, defending the harbor of San Francisco against an unlikely threat was much better duty than lobbing shells at the Japanese on some nasty tropical atoll.

The Harbor Defense San Francisco (HDSF), the command tasked with manning and servicing the batteries and minefields, persisted through the end of the war in 1945, although with ever-diminishing manpower (many administrative tasks were taken over by the Women's Army Corps) and many non-HDSF missions such as assisting with South American harbor defenses.

The end of World War II brought an end to the HDSF. The Coast Artillery limped along with the Presidio as its "home" and training facility until the consolidation of the Army, Navy, and Air Force into the Department of Defense in 1947. In the shuffle, the Coast Artillery was eliminated. In 1948, the the HDSF batteries were decommissioned.

But the HDSF mission morphed into air defense of the Bay Area. That is a story for another time.

- Jim Earhart



*The best view is at the Club!*

## The Rear View



2016 is off to a swimming start! While we continue to recover from the flurry and excitement of the holiday events, we are focusing our attention on assisting outgoing Commodore Springer with her preparation for the traditional Past Commodore Luncheon, and gearing up for the Annual PYC Crab Feed coming up on February 13, 2016, which is always a sell out! Our Vice Commodore Steve Hocking and his wife, Council Treasurer Marika Edler, will again indulge us in a high-energy dinner of fresh-to-table boiled crabs, salads, sides, wine and dessert for which they are expressly putting out a call for kitchen help with cooking, cracking, and serving on the night of the event!

Speaking of volunteering ... I know that we are all appreciative to those who volunteer to plan, set-up, prepare, and serve at these dinners for us all. It does require a lot of time for preparation, but can also be a lot of fun. Did you know that your fun and friendly PYC Dinner Committee is always in need of more volunteers to come forward to help plan and prepare a meal, or just volunteer to help the other planners and organizers execute all the various the tasks that need to be done on the day-of the events? The more participants we have, the more fun, and the easier the work is, for everyone. If you are interested in helping out, email your availability and ideas to "rearcommodore@presidioyachtclub.org" or you can go on-line to see what kind of help is requested for whichever dinners you are available to attend, and sign up for a slot at "<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e084aaaa723a4fd0-dinner>".

On March 12 we will celebrate pre-St. Patrick's Day with a traditional Corned Beef dinner prepared by Past Commodore Don Kavanaugh and his family, and one of our lovely prospective new members, local sailor and French expatriate Sarah Sherif Gambin and her friend have graciously agreed to prepare a fabulous French-inspired April meal for us celebrating "Springtime in Paris." For May, we are in the process of planning a Mexican-themed dinner with the help of some more friends of the club, and Past Commodore Mark Tishler has agreed to prepare his legendary Chicken Piccata for us in June.

I am very much looking forward to seeing and meeting more of you at these upcoming events, and thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Rear Commodore.

- Shannon Elms

## Please RSVP

It's the plague of dinner party hosts and hostesses everywhere, especially for large gatherings. How many are coming to dinner? Who will show up? Who might not?

We all see the emails with the "RSVP" buttons, and the "Advance Reservations Required" admonitions. But then, we all think to ourselves we are just one or two people, and it doesn't make that much difference if we show up or not, right? Besides, what if I RSVP and, something better comes up? Well, it does make a difference for Presidio Yacht Club. The Club has a small budget, and we want to manage it as carefully as possible - for all of us. Imagine dinner reservations for eight and 25 show up to eat! Or in our case, reservations for 28, and 45 show up? How does PYC manage it? Remember, we are not a restaurant. We can't just use the food tomorrow or "next time." Our events are usually several weeks apart, and we don't have long-term food storage facilities at the Clubhouse.

The day we go shopping for the dinner, we always recheck the RSVP's, e-mails, figures, rumors, and guesses and do our best to shop for the extrapolated number of guests. Why do we do all this? Because we don't want to run out of food. Most of the time, it works, and we rarely run out of food. But it's always a gamble whether the extra people will show up or not. And way too often, we find we have purchased too much food. Imagine the extra cost! Imagine the waste of money and food. When that happens, the food is thrown or given away - wasted. And the Club's wasted food, is all of our wasted money.

Please, be kind to your Club's budget and your volunteers, and RSVP! Better yet, RSVP and prepay. Prepaying not only saves you money on your reservation (prepaid reservations are now often discounted), but it really helps keep general costs down because we don't have to use general fund monies to "front" the shopping costs until we can collect at the door, and we are better able to predict what we need, and how much to purchase. And don't worry, if you learn in advance of the event that you can't make it to an event you prepaid for, just let us know. If you tell us as soon as possible, we will always work with you to effect a refund, or a credit toward a future event!

Another added benefit of prepayment? Less time and energy spent by your ever-hardworking event volunteers trying to count heads, and seats, and raffle tickets, and generally ensuring money is accurately collected for each dinner. This makes the event more enjoyable for everyone involved, including the volunteers, and allows that time and effort to be channeled to toward making the events themselves more fun and exciting!

- By Shannon Elms

**Contact information:**

Jennifer Hinkel, Commodore  
Steve Hocking, Vice Commodore  
Shannon Elms, Rear Commodore  
Jason Funk, Porthole Editor

Presidio Yacht Club  
Post Office Box 248  
Sausalito, CA 94966

[www.presidioyachtclub.org](http://www.presidioyachtclub.org)  
[presidioyc@gmail.com](mailto:presidioyc@gmail.com)

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