

# The Whale's Tale

Ballena Bay Yacht Club



Alameda, CA

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## The Commodore Report

Kathryn Rees



Here is the trivia question for the day: What do the Ballena Bay Yacht Club By-Laws state that the purpose of the Ballena Bay Yacht Club is? Answer: "To provide for its members facilities, activities and programs that are appropriate to yachting." Well, did BBYC do that in spades in July. Racing, cruise-outs, being on the water, and enjoying the Club for camaraderie, great events and good music.

The Whales' Chase, the Bay Area Multi-Hull Association Regatta, was a wonderful, three day event at BBYC. Racers started arriving with their boats Friday night, hanging out at BBYC Aloha Friday with good music and great food. The first race started after bagels and coffee in the morning, followed by more racing Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, with awards on Sunday afternoon. BBYC loved hosting. Many thanks to our own Race Chair, Gary Helms, and BBYC Director, Ward Fulcher, and those who helped to plan and participate from BAMA, including Commodore Amy Wells and Social/Safety Officer, Truls Myklebust for bringing this regatta to BBYC. "Everyone had a great time on every level. We are already talking about repeating this next year and making this regatta an annual event." Thank you all!

Upcoming events you won't want to miss. At the August 4 Members' Dinner (and the food will be fabulous), Tony Johnson, sailor, author, and circumnavigator, will be presenting his 2 ½ year circumnavigation story. You will hear about and see exotic places, pirates, the hull cracking, harrowing experiences, natural wonders, and much more. You will laugh, marvel, or be on the edge of your seat. He will also be available to autograph his book: *The Captain and Mr. Shrode*.

August 25 brings two major events. First, Ballena Isle Marina is hosting a seminar at no charge:

**Emergencies On Board** from 10:00 to 12:00 noon at BBYC, 1150 Ballena Blve, Ste 151. This Power Squadron seminar will be led by our own Vice Commodore, Lu Abel and will address what happens when confronted by such unwelcome happenings such as a fire on board or a sudden leak. He will cover groundings, fires on board, taking on water, dropping anchor, overboard, and much more. **Please RSVP to Ballena Isle Marina Office by calling 510-523-5528.** There will be coffee and snacks. Then the evening will bring in BBYC's renowned **Island Party**—this is always such a great event! Calling all Parrotheads and Hawaiian shirts—BBYC loves all the islands!

Any of you been tracking the Pacific Cup—the fun race to Hawaii done every other year? Yes, July was the month—at this writing, we don't know the results, but there was a large fleet of racing yachts between 24 and 70 feet. It is a biennial 2,070 nautical mile race from San Francisco to Hawaii. I've been tracking. And the array of repairs while racing is always fascinating—lost steering, broken boom, tiller failure. But the one that takes the cake—toilet seat came off the head, then the portable light took a "header" dropping its batteries into the head which had to be disassembled to unclog. Never a dull moment in sailing!

### AUGUST EVENTS

**Every Friday:** "Aloha Friday" Happy Hour

**August 3:** Friday Night Grillers Race #9

**August 4:** Hot August Nights Dinner and Speaker

**August 17:** Friday Night Grillers Race #10

**August 18:** Colin Williams Dinner

**August 25:** Emergencies on Board Seminar (10am)

**August 25:** The Annual Island Party

**August 28-31:** Bridge Marina YC Cruise-in

**August 31:** Friday Night Grillers Race #11

**August 31-September 2:** Labor Day Cruise-out to South Beach

<http://www.bbyc.org/calendar.html> or download the BBYC app

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## The Vice Commodore Report

*Lu Abel*

In July we continued to welcome new members. Lisa McConnell lives in the Ballena Bay neighborhood and is not yet a boat owner (that's okay, Lisa, we have lots of members who enjoy the club while "between boats," even between "none" and "first"). Frank and Stacy Ferree live in Estes Park, Colorado and are returning Corresponding Members. Please be sure to say hello to Lisa, Frank, and Stacy, introduce yourself, and welcome

them to BBYC if you see one of them at one of our events.

We also have a number of previous new members who will be attending our August 4th membership dinner... A number of members helped staff a BBYC Open House in conjunction with Club Nautique's Summer Sailstice event; thanks to all for your help!

**And remember, any new member that you bring in and sign on the first sponsorship line, your account will be credited \$50!**

## The Cruise-out Report

*Bill Stapp*

The July 4th cruise-out was held at the Benicia Yacht Club where a fleet of three boats had an enjoyable cruise from Alameda. Arriving on Tuesday July 3rd allowed participants who arrived by land yacht to join those who arrived by boat to be nourished by delicious barbecued burgers and ribs prepared by the staff at the Benicia Yacht Club. Following the wonderful meal, the streets were taken over by a parade featuring spectacular cars and marching bands.

On Wednesday, we joined the Rees in *Dawg House* for appetizers and cocktails before adjourning to Sailor Jacks for dinner. Unfortunately the staff at Sailor Jacks was unable to deliver dinner in a timely fashion, oh how they would benefit by a dumbwaiter. After dinner, we were treated to a dazzling fireworks display. The cruise back to Alameda was fairly uneventful.

Our next cruise-out is to South



Beach over the Labor Day weekend. We still have room available if anyone wants to join us. Plans for dinner are being finalized, but rest assured they will be great, replete with music.

Our last cruise out for the year will take place October 12-14 at the Coyote Point Yacht Club. We will join them on Friday night for their regularly scheduled dinner. Plans for Saturday night are still to be made. On Sunday we will depart for Alameda.

# The Port Captain Report

David Paoletta

One of the Port Captain's duties is to stay in touch with clubs cruising in to visit, work with the Social Committee to ensure there are bartenders and chefs to provide victuals and libations in the Ballena Bay YC spirit. I must confess that this month Coyote Point got the better of me and it looked like they might veer off and miss us for another season—I lost contact in the fog and feared ending up on a lee shore. But no, I was informed by the Commodore that Coyote Point arrived as planned. **“LOL! They showed up after all, had a fabulous time, and plan to come again. They loved their experience with us and the Marina. We are scheduled to cruise there in October and they**

**plan to show us a fabulous time.”**

So all's well that ends well—Thanks to all the club volunteers who helped with this visit.

The current line-up is listed below:

- Sept. 15-16; The Potter Yachters
- Sept. 25-26; Caliente Isle YC
- Sept. 30-Oct. 1; Sacramento YC
- Oct. 17-18; Pittsburgh YC
- Oct. 23-24; Benicia YC
- Oct. 27-28; Berkeley YC

I have an old boat and I know many of you do too. Although we might wish for something new and shiny we convince ourselves that good, old boats are superior. The following is reprinted from the Waterborne blog, formally “Young and Salty”.

*20 Things We Like About Old Boats:*

A few of my favorites:

- 1. They're proven. As you may have guessed from your old boat's battle scars, she's probably run aground, french-kissed the dock, and maybe even bounced off an iceberg or two. Yet she's still patiently floating, ready to take you on your next (mis)adventure.**
- 2. Dinner parties in the cockpit are more intimate. With no space to sit, you really do have to choose your friends.**
- 3. Old boats are romantic (or at least that's what we keep telling ourselves).**
- 4. Among other boaters you will never run out of topics of conversation: how your engine is spewing oil, is 30 years too long to wait before replacing the rigging, the mysterious copper wire you found in the bilge. Your landlubbing friends, however, may disown you.**

The Port Captain hopes to see you out on the water soon!

## Happenin' Happenings

**Aloha Fridays Alive and Kickin'—every week!** The beer is cold, the wine is good—and you may be surprised on any given Friday by the bartender special. It might be a blueberry margarita or a Mai Tai—or something else. You might find some great live music, \$3 bar snacks or a \$5 dinner. The views are great, the company fine, and at BBYC, there are no strangers.

**August 4—Hot August Nights International Dinner.** Don't miss this monthly member dinner with a great speaker. Tony Johnson, an avid sailor and Tradewinds' instructor, circumnavigated, then wrote about it in his book, *The Captain and Mr. Shrode*. Their adventures are amazing, daunting, funny, beautiful, and a tribute to the sailor spirit. Plus, we have a great international menu: Vietnamese spring rolls, buttermilk grilled chicken with salad, Brazilian cheese bread and pound cake with berries—for only \$15.

**August 18—our own Past Rear Commodore, Colin Williams, Dinner.** We don't know what Colin has in mind yet. But he is back from Tobago, and we know that it will be great. So stay tuned and watch for your evite.

**August 25—“Emergencies On Board Seminar”—10:00 am to noon at BBYC.** Hosted by Ballena Isle Marina, BBYC Vice Commodore, Lu Abel will cover how to be prepared for common emergencies and how to deal with them—such as groundings, fires, taking on water, steering failures, loss of engine, person overboard, calling for help and more. **Please RSVP to Ballena Isle Marina Office by calling 510-523-5528.**

**August 25—the Annual Island Party.** People always come from far and wide for this anticipated event. This year will be no exception with Deborah Draper at the helm working with her great team, Emily Vought and Lauren Freed. Look for Island

food, music to dance to, Mai Tais and more—so get out your parrot heads, Hawaiian skirts and Beachboy shirts. BBYC celebrates all the Islands.

**August 28-31—Bridge Marina Yacht Club Cruise-In.** BMYC has made their reservations with Ballena Isle Marina. Let's give them a real BBYC welcome!

**August 31-September 2—Labor Day Cruise-Out to South Beach Harbor and South Beach Yacht Club, San Francisco.** Dock your boat next to ATT Park. Not taking your boat? Take the ferry to the Ferry Building and walk over. Hang for a Giants game. Dinner and dancing at SBYC. Dinner at Delancey Street. Explore San Francisco. So much to do and so much to see.

**September 15—Coastal Clean-Up Day.** Come be a part of the community to clean up our beaches and waterways at our end of Alameda. 8:30 am until 12:00 noon, 1150 Ballena Blvd, Parking Lot E, Alameda, CA 94501.

# The Race Report

Ward Fulcher

## Flight of the Multihulls

What a weekend! Gary Helms, our Race Chair, arranged for BBYC to host the Bay Area Multihull Association for a regatta July 14-15, on our "home" course just outside of BIM. The BAMA boats raced an Interclub race Saturday morning, then one race on our course in the afternoon followed by two on Sunday. Helping on the Race Committee (RC) boat gave me a great view of the starts and finishes. Note: you have to watch multihulls real fast!

The first race was on a short course as the winds were light and RC wanted everyone back to the Club in time for dinner. Five trimarans and one cat competed and when you see a bunch of square-headed mains and carbon fiber everywhere you're not surprised to see a PHRF rating of minus 63. Like I said, you have to "watch fast". Sunday's races were run in 10-12 knots at the line and a little more at the top of the course, with the first course being a little more technical

(lots of sets, jibes and drops) and the second being very reach-ey. The first course was 6.02 nm and the first finisher knocked it out in under an hour. The second course was 10.2 nm and the first finish time was 1 hour five minutes. These boats do like to reach. In spite of the quick finishes they were all smiles, so PRO Truls Myklebust can congratulate himself on course selection. What's remarkable is that with ratings ranging from -63 to 45, the regatta results were very tight. For details see: <https://www.jibeset.net/BAMA000.php?RG=T007782569>.

## It Takes A Village

My impression was that the BAMA folks had a good time, and not just on the water. A few of them joined us for Aloha Friday, and found things well underway, with our old friends from Coyote Point (and my old E-Scow skipper from Alameda Yacht Club) swapping stories with BBYC-ers. Truls spotted Kjell Ragnar's name tag and they discovered that they both still speak Norwegian like natives (helps to be one, I guess). Joseph Hassan performed his wizardry behind the bar once again, and Matt Schuessler and Deborah Hawkins had prepared great kebab skewers and the best sticky rice I've ever had. Mark Pavusko

handled the grilling, and a BBYC favorite, Todd Tholke, entertained us for much of the evening.

Saturday's dinner included more of the BAMA folks and fed about 60. Our galley boss for the night, Todd LeCorre, with help from Gwyn Smith prepared a wonderful pasta dinner for all to enjoy. Thomasina Woida was kept very busy behind the bar but as always kept the repartee flowing as well as the cocktails, and the ever popular Desiree and Jeff Jolly rounded out the menu with tasty vocals and guitar work.

The next morning's breakfast, provided by Todd LeCorre, got the BAMA racers and Coyote Point cruisers off to good start.

I hope that we'll see more of BAMA and of CYP. The folks mentioned above, and all the members who showed up to socialize, provided a good path to that result. Working on RC (and working the crowd) gave me flashbacks to my earlier terms as Race Chair and Port Captain and reminded me of the important work done by two of our quietest members, Gary Helms and David Paoletta. Another quiet member, Rear Commodore Tom Burns, averted disaster and panic when our ice machine went all HAL 9000 on Friday afternoon ..... and a good time was had by all!



# Fourth of July, Aloha Friday, BAMA Races and Cruise-in/Race Dinner

*Photos by David Alexander, Cindy Wagner and Thomasina Woida*



*Impromptu Fourth of July festivities.*



*Aloha Friday, BAMA Race and Coyote Point Cruise-in dinner.*



*The long and short of it all.*



*BAMA  
Commodore  
Amy Wells with  
Social/Safety  
Officer Truls  
Myklebust.*

# Be Prepared

*Lu Abel*

**H**ave you ever thought what would happen if you fell overboard? “Yes,” you say, “my crew is well versed in MOB recovery!” But, wait, what if you were alone? “I don’t singlehand!” No, I mean what if you were alone while your boat was tied up at the dock?!

In almost 40 years of sailing, I’ve been overboard from my boat three times. Each time my boat was firmly tied up at the dock!

The first time was when I was carrying a handful of “stuff” down the marina finger that my brand new first boat was tied up to. The finger pointed back towards the marina’s parking lot. Suddenly my eye spied a very comely lass clad in a very tiny bikini exiting from a car in the parking lot. If ever there were a perfect example of the old saying “long walk on a short pier” that was my fate. Splash!

The next time the lifelines on my boat were down. I was squatting and happily polishing the cabin sides when I leaned back—and learned too late that (a) I had gone off balance and (b) my lifelines were down! Splash again!

Those were both a very long time

ago. But the most recent time I was only a few years ago. I was trying to untangle a rope, paying it out as I walked backwards down a finger. Except my path wasn’t straight and I neatly backed off the edge of the finger! Splash! This was on a weekday and there was no one around!

I’ve never had a lot of upper body strength (could barely do the required number of pull-ups to maintain my “employment” by the Army during the Viet Nam war). No way would I be able to grab the edge of the float a foot above the surface of the water and somehow do an above-my-head push-up to get out of the water. Fortunately, I had the presence of mind to realize I could hook a leg on one of my bow lines and use that to lever myself high enough to roll onto the finger. Wet clothes, soaked and now inoperative iPhone, but otherwise alive and well.

That caused me to have some scary thoughts: Suppose, for example, my bow line hadn’t been drooping low enough to allow me to float on my back and hook a leg over it?? And it led me to come up with a

better scheme. West Marine sells a fiberglass “boarding step” designed to have a rope threaded through it; tied off to a midship cleat it allows one to “step up” to a high freeboard boat. I bought one, threaded it with a loop of rope of a length sufficient to put the step about 3 feet below the top of the slip finger, and tied it off to a dock cleat. A foot in the step and I can “step up” enough that my waist will be high enough to allow me to flop onto the finger. Having the step alone is not enough—I also tied off another loop of rope to give me something to grab on to so I can pull myself erect with my foot in the loop.

Last but not least, these two items—the step and the “pull myself up” loop are not in the water growing barnacles. They are both on the edge of the finger, ready to be pulled into the water if ever needed. Note that the line for the step goes under the “pull myself up” loop—otherwise the loop would be trapped behind the step’s line when deployed.

That’s my solution. Yours may very well differ. But give it some thought sometime.