

KEVO'S BOATING TIPS & MORE

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Yacht/Boat Clubs

One of the things my wife Susan and I love about the Bay and Delta are the numerous yacht/boat clubs and the opportunities they offer to enhance our boating experience. We are often invited to join in the festivities of various yacht/boat clubs. (You might remember my column on the Ebony Boat Club.)

My clients at Pacific Powerboating are usually new to boating. I tell all of them to consider joining a yacht/boat club. They come in all shapes, sizes and each has uniqueness to them. Yacht/boat clubs offer a variety of activities and events as well as some of the best dining on the water. Probably the best thing they offer for new boaters is a resource for information about their new boats and where to get reliable service and repair. Most of the new boaters I instruct are eager to meet and get to know new (boating) friends. Joining a club can be a fast and effective way of meeting new friends with common interests.

What I've noticed about my new boating clients is that they have no idea how to contact, locate or evaluate the value of belonging to any particular club. Also, since they are new to boating, they feel uneasy interacting with what they perceive to be experienced boaters, i.e. club members.

PICYA

Did you know that there are 100 yacht / boat clubs in Northern California? An association called the Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association (PICYA) represents these clubs.

The Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association was established in 1891 as an association of yacht clubs in Northern California. For 84 years they have published the Yachting Yearbook of Northern California, which lists all



The moon rising over "Secret Cove."

member clubs, contact information, Commodores, (past and present) officers, members and the name of the vessels they own. It is an extraordinary resource for information on all member clubs in Northern California.

Landed and Non-Landed Clubs

There are basically two kinds of clubs to choose from: landed and non-landed. A "landed" club has a physical clubhouse or meeting place. These are usually on the water and most likely in marinas. They usually offer banquet facilities, bar, restaurant and docking for members and guests. These come in all shapes and sizes; some are extremely elaborate, including pool, tennis, sailing schools and spas. Others are low-key establishments with few amenities other than the camaraderie of their members.

Some clubs are expensive and very discerning when it comes to admitting new members. Others encourage new members and make it easy (financially and otherwise) to join in on the fun. Some pride themselves for the trophies they display in the foyer of the club indicating the regattas they've won,



Janice Simcoe & Denise Schoeller, Sacramento Yacht Club members.



Sacramento Bayliner Club official banner.



Toys are us! Sacramento Bayliner Club raft-out at "Secret Cove."



Sacramento Bayliner Club raft-out at "Secret Cove."

charitable awards and other accomplishments the club has achieved. Others pride themselves in relation to the great parties they throw.

Reciprocal Privileges

Most Nor Cal PICYA member clubs honor reciprocal privileges for members of other PICYA member clubs. Reciprocal privileges mean you can use membership in one club to use the facilities of other clubs. Each club interprets these privileges differently. One can't assume it is OK to tie up at any club and walk into the clubhouse at will. The best thing to do is to call the club in advance and ask exactly how they accommodate members of other clubs (specifically yours).

Just by chance my wife and I met the commodore of the Sacramento Bayliner Club at a popular restaurant on the north fork of the Mokelumne River, Mr. Geoff Simcoe. He invited Susan and I to join him and his club as guests on a raft-out on the Delta. A raft-out is when club members meet at a predetermined destination and raft up next to one another for the weekend. The Sacramento Bayliner Club is a "non-grounded" club. Members communicate via e-mail and website at www.sacramentobaylinerclub.com.

Since we didn't know anyone in the club we didn't know what to expect. (Neither did they!) In order to join this club you must participate in at least two raft-outs as guests before being considered for membership. When I suggested to Geoff that they ought to make me an "honorary member" of the club on account of my being a "contributing editor" of the *Yachtsman* magazine, he responded: "There is no honor to being a member of this club!" (Nice comeback Geoff!) We knew right then this was going to be a fun outing and we weren't disappointed.

We stocked up on all the provisions we might need and headed out on our yacht, *Her Way*, to meet our hosts at the secret cove. They made me swear not to reveal the exact location of this beautiful spot on the Delta and so I will honor their request.

A Warm Greeting

When we arrived, Geoff and his wife, Janice, warmly greeted us. Club members scampered onto dinghies and across other boats to help us raft up safely.

The first thing I noticed was the participation in this event. Nearly all members of the club were there. This is quite extraordinary for any club I've been associated with and illustrated the functionality of this club and the camaraderie of its members. The next thing we noticed was the abundance of dinghies, jet skis, floaties, kayaks and runabouts tied up to the sterns of the vessels. These folks come prepared! Then I started noticing yachts other than Bayliners. It turns out they are not so picky about your ride. Very cool!

So, usually under these circumstances there is a "pot luck" dinner and this was no exception. We all gathered in the middle of the raft-up and had a great dinner on Saturday night. Everyone was friendly and having a grand time. On Sunday morning they served Mimosas and had their usual meeting addressing club business like insurance and what not. Geoff introduced all guests to the club and they gave us a round of applause.

After that the raft-up broke up one or two boats at a time. We stayed for most of the day and then headed back to our marina thinking these folks are a great bunch of boating fanatics just like us. What a great way to get to know a yacht club. We were looking forward to their next raft-out and anxiously awaited their invitation. We've since been to another event with this club and they treated us just like members.

So this month's tip is to consider joining one of the many yacht/boat clubs in your area. I'm confident you will find the club that fits your needs and wants. To find out about any of the 100 PICYA member clubs, visit www.picya.org and click on "PICYA clubs at a glance." When you find the one you are interested in contacting tell them "Kevo" sent you. If they slam the phone down on you... it probably means we've been there. Ha!

As usual, feedback is appreciated. You can reach me at 925/890-8428 or kevo@YachtsmanMagazine.com.

Be safe and happy boating! ☞