



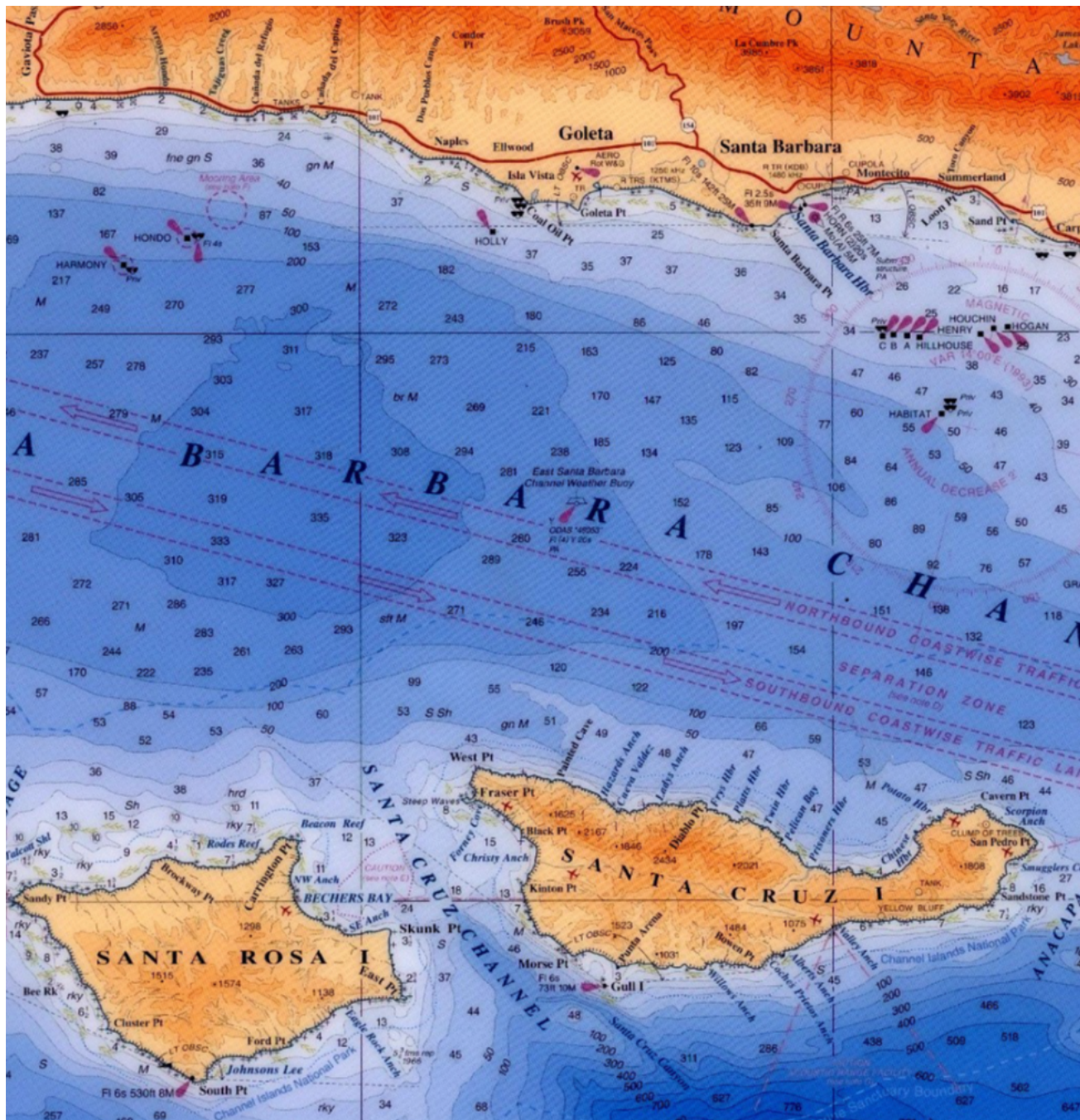
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# Signal Hoist



## Santa Barbara Sail & Power Squadron

### Monthly Newsletter August 2021





## **COMMANDER'S MESSAGE**

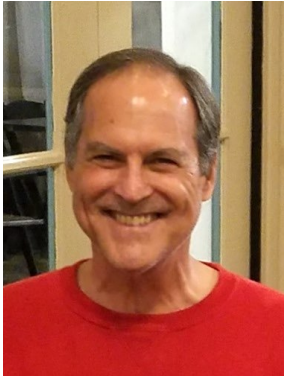
**Cdr. Virginia Johns, P**

The speaker at our July meeting was a big hit. Steve Young's presentation on radar was so well done. He talked about the various features, why you might want to use them, how to set them up on your radar, and had even taken short videos from his own boat out at sea that demonstrated the features in an area familiar to us. I admit that even after all my experience sailing with radar, I had to refer to our Radar manual to find that indeed we had every one of the features he mentioned. There are a few we need to try out!

We are not holding a monthly meeting in August as it conflicts with Fiesta. But there are several fun cruises and activities coming up in August and early September so make sure you read Dennis' Administrative Officer message below. Our September 2nd meeting is our quarterly Business Meeting. All members are welcome. We will be meeting in the Waterfront Classroom and following the local COVID guidelines.

Congratulations to Steve Hodges who had his article Baja & Back published in the Summer 2021 edition of *The Ensign*. All members should have received this via email on July 1. He published an earlier version in our February 2021 Signal Hoist. Our national ABC organization is always looking for good articles to steal (with the author's permission) for *The Ensign*. They found treasure again in Santa Barbara's *Signal Hoist*.

s/v Libertad did join the Santa Barbara squadron fleet on the cruise to Santa Cruz Island in July. Coches Prietos was lovely and I definitely had on my summer smile (more about this adventure further on in this newsletter). I look forward to seeing you at our August and September activities.



## **ADMIN OFFICER'S MESSAGE**

**Lt/C Dennis Johns, AP**

What a great first in-person meeting on July 1. Steve Young spent considerable time reading his manual, preparing photos, videos, and PowerPoint slides for his presentation on Radar for Pleasure Craft. We had a great turnout (about twenty) for the meeting and everyone left having learned something new.

The July 10 afternoon Open Boat Cruise was cancelled. The activity involved the chance of inviting a stranger onto your boat for an afternoon and maybe we aren't ready for that with recent spikes in infections and variants in the news.

Scott selected Coches Prietos anchorage for the July 23-25 island cruise. He was able to motivate two other boats to join him and as expected, other boats were in the anchorage for the weekend. Scott has a report on the weekend and as this was the first outing for Libertad in over 13 months, we have an article about our experience as well.

Some changes in store for August. The main event, Catalina Cruise concluding with the PCYC Cruise/Dinner has been revised. Like everyone else, management of the Pacific Corinthian Yacht Club was excited about California opening up and they overruled our reservation in favor of a welcome back party for their members. Tom Koch will look into rescheduling our weekend at PCYC. But that means our cruise to Catalina has more flexibility. Rich and Peggy are point on this event and they just got back from Catalina, so they may want to revise the dates. If that happens, we might fill the gap with another event — stay tuned.



## Upcoming Activities

**Thurs, Aug 5  
7:30PM**

**Meeting**  
**CANCELED**

**Waterfront  
Classroom**

**Fri, Aug 17-27  
9AM**

**Cruise to Catalina with end  
destination PCYC**  
**TO BE RESCHEDULED**

**SB Harbor**

**Fri Aug 27-29**

**Pacific Corinthian Yacht Club  
(PCYC) weekend**  
**CANCELED**

**PCYC**

**Sat, Aug 28  
5PM**

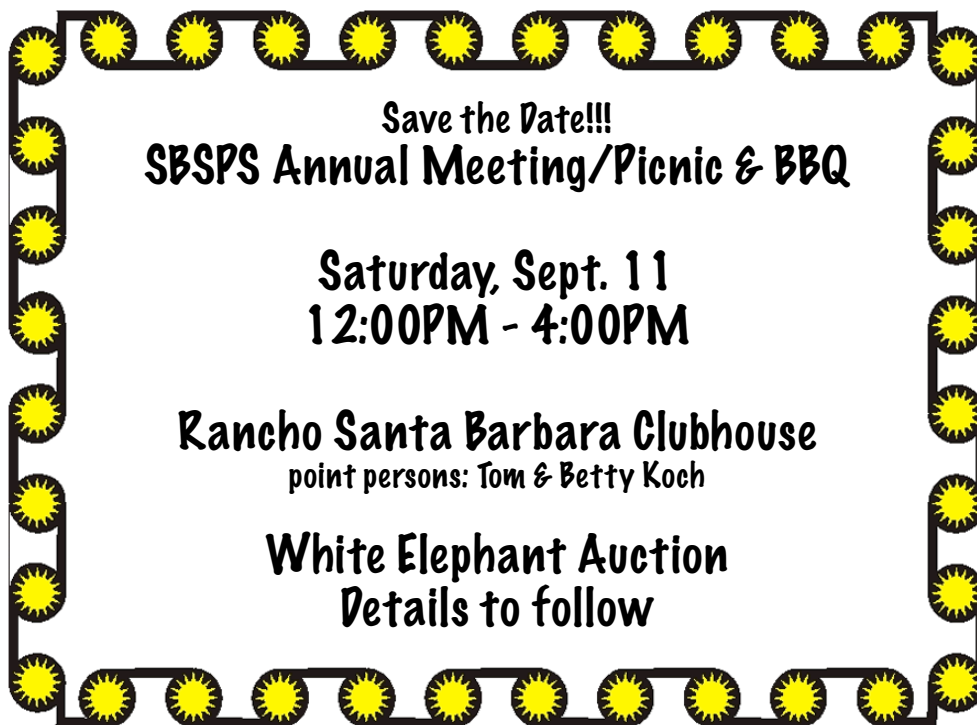
**PCYC dinner**  
**CANCELED**

**PCYC  
dockside**

**Sat, Sept 11  
12PM - 4PM**

**Annual Meeting/BBQ**

**Clubhouse  
Rancho Santa  
Barbara**







## **SEO's MESSAGE**

### **Lt/C John Profant, SN**

Hard to believe Summer is half over. Hope you have had the time to get on the water. I've been busy with other projects and have not had the time to get with our instructors and see how we want to move forward.

Still hoping to put on a course, or maybe it will be a seminar on Weather. We are planning to offer this in the fall. We would like to offer this course/seminar in the Waterfront Classroom but depending on the state of the Covid infections this may need to be done via ZOOM. Steve Hodges will be facilitating this.

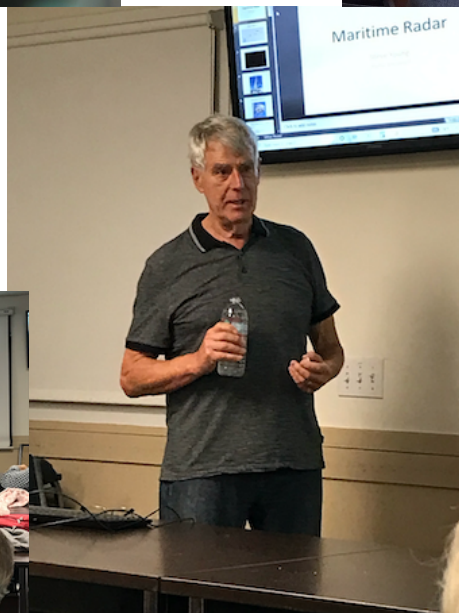
We didn't do any Vessel Safety Checks this month. We are happy to check over your boat to make sure it complies with Coast Guard requirements for safety. If it complies you will receive the 2021 VSC sticker. Just let me know if you want to do it and we can set up a time.

Contact information is [johnprofant@cox.net](mailto:johnprofant@cox.net) or (805) 455-9173.



# Thank-you Steve Young

*Photos from Steve's excellent and well-attended presentation on Radar*



# **Reports from *Benchmark* and *Libertad* on cruise to Santa Cruz**

## **Uneventful (yay!) Cruise to Santa Cruz**

Scott Burns

Benchmark enjoyed sailing about ½ way to Santa Cruz Island, until the wind died and we motored the rest of the way to Coches Prietos. I had Boris Alvis, a friend from Portland, joining me, and Dennis and Virginia came on their boat along with Alec Hardy on his Catalina 25. We had an enjoyable Saturday topped off with other boaters joining us for happy hour. Sunday was calm and hazy, we motored back in 6 hours, with the sun coming out about 8 miles from the mainland.





# Weekend Cruise to Coches Prietos, July 23-25

Lt/C Dennis Johns, AP

Scott Burns was the lead on this event and I'm sure he'll submit a report but this was *Libertad's* first excursion in over 13 months, so we wanted to let everyone know how *Libertad* fared cruising.

Virginia was concerned that we would not be ready to leave Friday morning, there was so much that wasn't done. She was right, we were not "READY". But I pointed out to her that we were not "READY" when we left in 2011 for the rest of the world. Even though not everything worked, we knew that we had incorporated redundancy during our initial setup of the boat, so we figured we had enough running systems to survive a weekend.

Just weeks before we left, we had the electrician hook up a high output alternator to allow us to quickly recharge our house batteries. The day after that installation, the engine wouldn't start. Turns out the alternator put just enough extra stress on the engine starter to blow a fuse. The electrician returned to rewire the alternator so that it would not activate until after the engine started. Nevertheless, the fear that the alternator install was not the cause and the engine would not start was in the back of our minds.

Fortunately, the engine performed perfectly. The next concern was our new dinghy. Never been blown up, so we didn't know how it would fit on the bow like we had hoped. It was actually a few inches longer than our previous dinghy but the length was mostly in the aft pontoons which fit around the main mast, so it fit well! But we weren't done with the dinghy. When we arrived at the anchorage, it was time to complete the inflation and install the oars. I pulled out the bag that had the oars and I realized immediately they had given us the wrong oars. The dinghy had very special oarlock configurations and the oars right out of the bag would not work. These days Virginia and I find that it often takes two brains to make one and she found another bag of parts for the dinghy that made the oars work. Thank you Virginia.

Getting to the anchorage was uneventful. We actually had a nice breeze until we got into the shadow of Santa Cruz Island. After a little over an hour of motoring into a 10 knot headwind we arrived. There were already five boats in the anchorage and three of them were showing two anchors. We



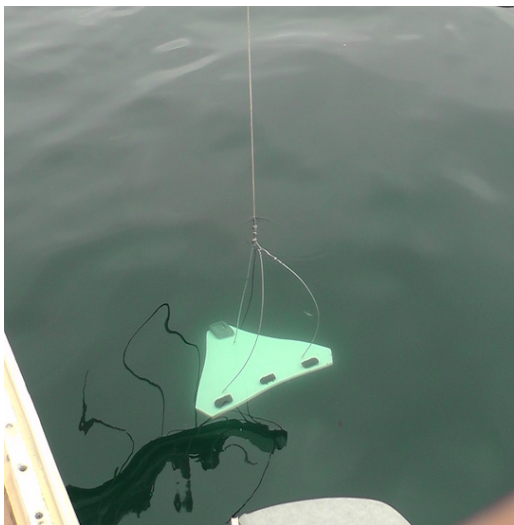
*Around point to south side of island*

tried two spots but were not happy with them so we ended up in 40 feet of water and out quite a ways from the beach. At that time of day the position of the boat was not bad as we were headed into the wind and the swell. But that was not to last. Around 9pm things

changed so that we began to spin and ended up beam to the swell. Should have put out the flopper-stoppers –darn! Didn't get much sleep that night. Between naps on Saturday, we tended to small domestic jobs: cleaning, whipping lines, checking nav lights (they didn't work), and



*Approaching Coches anchorage*

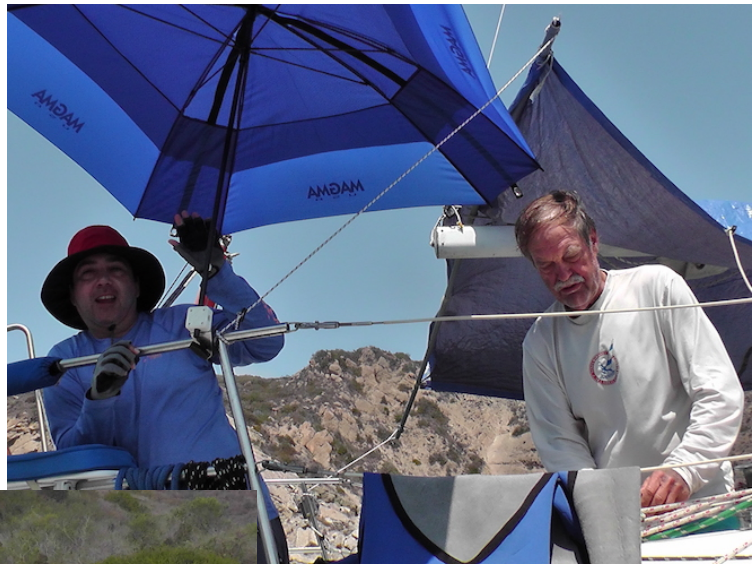


*A bit rolly where Libertad anchored. Flopper-stoppers helped.*

trying to monitor power usage. What we discovered when trying to monitor power usage is that some work needs to be done for us to do that. The Xantrex monitor is not telling us what we want to know about the house batteries. Recalling the electrician when we get back to sort that out...



Later that day, Scott came by to invite us to a happy hour gathering on the beach at 5pm. Of course he'd have wine and others would bring snacks. Because we were quite a ways from the beach, I was wishing I had got the outboard working before we



*Boris and Scott aboard Benchmark*



*Scott inviting all boats to beach happy hour*

left. As a consolation, I received several compliments on being eco-friendly with my man-powered dinghy.

We knew the propane system to the stove was

working (we'd tested that and Virginia cooked mini pretzels in the oven for the happy hour) but we hadn't tested the BBQ. I convinced Virginia to bring steak for me to BBQ Saturday night, so the pressure was on me to BBQ. I had replaced a lot of the propane system, so I was pretty confident and the BBQ did not let me down. We enjoyed a steak dinner and a movie (didn't know if the DVD player was going to work either but



*Party on the beach — all invited*



with a little coaxing it came to life). As we crawled off to bed, we were both wondering if we'd have any power left in our house batteries as we had to run our new inverter to run the DVD player and we didn't know how much power it would consume and couldn't monitor it –see above.



*Arch at east end of Santa Cruz*

The forecast was for little wind on Sunday, so we all got going early and saw not a puff all the way back. The sea was so flat, we performed several tasks of putting the boat away before we entered the harbor, while numerous pods of dolphins entertained us.



*Northeast end of Santa Cruz*

# **Channel Islands cruising notes: Windy, rugged, fun.**

Mike Pyzel

The Channel Islands are just 20 miles off the SoCal coast but offers all you could ever ask for in a cruising area.

Cruising here is as much about anchoring as it is about sailing. Get good anchor gear, a lot of rode (chain or chain & line), use your biggest anchors and be sure they are top quality brand and type. And have at least 300 feet of rode on both ends of the boat and don't be shy about using it. Consider at *least* 5:1 scope for all-chain, 7:1 for chain and line as minimum. Let out more scope if you get nervous in heavy winds.

People commonly use two hooks to anchor bow-to wind and sea. Use a lot of scope on each. If there is a wind shift and the stern is taking a heavy load, pay out more scope on that anchor – it's doing most of the work.

## **Prevailing Westerly Winds**

The Islands are famously windy, especially after two in the afternoon.

The west wind starts by mid-day and covers most of Santa Barbara Channel. Winds close to the mainland are typically light but increase as we get close to the north side of the island. It may be 10 along coast, 15 in the middle, but as soon as we cross the shipping lanes, escalates into the 20 knots plus level and reaches its maximum – perhaps 25 and gusting just outside of your island anchorage.

This schedule is the result of the daily thermal low that develops over the inland parts of SoCal. The accepted wisdom is to arrive at the island by 2PM. Wind and seas continue to develop until sundown when all goes calm again by dark.

## **Getting to the Channel Islands from SoCal.**

You will always have to beat to weather to get to the Channel Islands from anywhere in SoCal. Here's how to make it fun.

**1.** Marina-hop along the mainland. Once you make the Ventura/Oxnard area, you can reach the east end of Santa Cruz and anchor at Scorpion or Smugglers. Head further west to Santa Barbara and you can reach across to

the north shore of Santa Cruz or even Bechers on Santa Rosa. From Bechers, it is a direct early morning 16-mile motor-sail to Cuylers.

**2.** The coastal route to Cuylers from Santa Barbara can be the quickest; Leave Santa Barbara at dawn and motorsail west along the coast for about 20 miles, then reach across direct to Cuylers as the wind begins to show up. You can be anchored in Cuylers for lunch.

**3.** If you bail out at any point along these routes you can head off the wind to any of the best harbors on Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz or Anacapa – all great downwind options.

### **Iconic Santa Cruz anchorages:**

**1. Scorpion anchorage (two of them)** is the epicenter of kayaking at Santa Cruz due to the sea caves at Cavern Point, and the abundant wildlife – seals, birds, island foxes on shore. It is also a popular camping point with hiking trails radiating out to the east and west. Scorpion is the closest island anchorage to Ventura and Oxnard (17 miles) and accessible by sailing close hauled. Or motor southwest from Ventura early until you catch the westerly to make scorpion in a close reach in the mid-day wind.

**Little Scorpion** is located downwind of two white topped rocks visible from miles away. Pull in behind the rocks which block the wind and create a wide anchorage suitable for a dozen boats. Use bow and stern hooks; when the westerly dies down after dinner, an easterly shows up before breakfast so you'll need a well-set stern hook to keep you in place. Room for 12-20 boats.

**Big Scorpion** (on the west side of the white rocks) big enough so you can use a single hook for your stay. Holding in these places is excellent - hooks will dig in well if set with a lot of scope.

### **Story:**

*Anchored fore and aft at Little Scorpion and sleeping out in the cockpit. I awoke and noticed a new arrival with deck lights on, and crew struggling with his anchor. The boat was tangled in the kelp near the white rocks. Wind was east but gentle. I also noticed that the boat previously anchored abeam of us had left. But discovered that the boat in trouble near the rocks was the same Downeaster that was anchored alongside earlier.*

*The pre-dawn easterly caused his stern hook to slip and he was tangled in the heavy kelp dangerously close to the white topped rocks. Start the engine in that stuff and you are fatally tangled.*



*The rescue: We paid out all 350 feet of our stern rode and drifted downwind to within a few yards of the tangled boat. I tied our spinnaker sheets together and rowed over to the Downeaster, gave them the end of the line to secure in place.*

*Rowed back to our boat to wrap our spinnaker sheet to the jib winch and winched all slack out of it. As it went slack, we'd winch it tight again so The Downeaster was gradually pulled clear of the kelp and back into deep water. We stayed connected while he pulled his anchors in and got set up to re-anchor.*

*Both our boats were hanging on our tiny 12# stern Danforth, but had about 10:1 scope, so it never let go even with the weight and windage of our two boats.*

*A take-away here: Winches on an anchored boat can be far more powerful than engines to exert a constant and controlled pull.*

**2. Prisoners Harbor** is a wide open dent in the island just six miles west of Scorpion and has a landing pier for Park Service and Island Packer tour boats. The beach is bordered by eucalyptus trees at the opening of the canyon/bumpy road leading to the 1850's ranch house in the middle of the island. It is still the island's "Port of entry". It is a popular anchorage in calm weather because people can use either a single hook or bow-stern anchors in shallow water (12-20 feet) to stay put. However, the hooks don't always stay in one place. Much of the bottom has grass and silty mud making the bottom slippery for reliable anchoring. Everyone has drag stories about Prisoners.

Prisoners is within easy sailing from Ventura (25 miles), has room for 20-plus boats. Go ashore to relax under the eucalyptus trees or follow the hiking trail connecting Prisoners with Pelican bay, a nearly 2-mile stroll with shade and spectacular views.

### ***Stories:***

*Sharon was a competent skipper of her 50-foot power boat. She had anchored at Prisoners the previous afternoon. She went ashore in the morning and hiked nearly three miles to the center of the island to attend a social function at the old ranch house. At the anchorage the neighboring skipper stayed on his own boat and noted that hers was dragging anchor toward the beach. He knew her boat, tried to re-set but couldn't, so he powered a mile and a half to the west to anchor in Pelican for better holding.*

*Meanwhile Sharon, an avid runner, was jogging down the road to the anchorage and found that her boat was missing!*

*She got word that her boat had been dragging anchor had been moved up to Pelican for a better anchorage just over a mile away. She was re-united by RIB with her yacht.*

*Same day, same harbor: Ten AM standing on the pier at Prisoners I watched a 55-foot power boat moving aft through the anchorage. I figured the owner was shifting his position, but turned and saw him standing in the group on the dock.*

*The boat was dragging anchor toward the beach. He commandeered a RIB and got out to his moving boat, boarded and started winching up the anchor so he could clear it and re-anchor. The 110-pound Bruce anchor was totally fouled with a mass of mud and sea grass.*

*Two take-aways here:*

*A. Don't trust the holding ground at Prisoners if the wind gets up.*

*B. Leave the keys in the ignition just in case!*

### **End stories.**

Prevailing wind flows from west to east at the island, but the canyon anchorages on the north shore of Santa Cruz are oriented north to south which blocks the strongest winds and gives a calm anchorage.

The anchorages on the south side of the island are in the lee of the island and are calmer. All Santa Cruz Island anchorages are subject to canyon breezes in late afternoon.

**3. Pelican Bay** is the Queen of the anchorages with a yachting history since the days of prohibition. Pelican is a quarter-mile wide bay in the north shore, surrounded by sandstone cliffs. Ira Eaton established a "fishing" camp there during the prohibition years. Good hiking, great photo-ops, outstanding diving here and in the rocky coves to the west.

Pelican offers the *most complete* Island Cruising experience in one visit. Room for 15-20 boats, though we've experienced over 60 boats on a holiday weekend. No room to anchor, so we went one mile west to Twin Harbor, with only one other boat for company.

Bow and stern anchoring is the norm so all boats lie head to the westerly.

**4. Fry's Harbor** is three miles west of Pelican. The canyon is about 300 yards wide and 200 yards to the beach, it is always calm in the morning but

gets very windy after 2. Fry's was the quarry in the 1920s where rock for the Santa Barbara breakwater was loaded onto barges and taken 22 miles across the channel to be dropped in place to build the breakwater.

Bow and stern anchoring is required in the narrow canyon, but anchor *bow toward the beach*; afternoon gusts can tumble out of the canyon in a pattern of 15 minutes of flat calm, 30 seconds of 30 knots, 15 minutes of calm. Setting anchors in the gusts requires PhD level maneuvering skills so arrive before 2PM to avoid becoming the entertainment. Too late or too windy? Run downwind to Pelican – everyone else does.

Great canyon hiking, coastal rock hopping along the edge of the bay. Row into the 10-foot wide 200-foot long cave just west of Fry's in the morning. The refracted sunlight illuminates inside of the cave in a spectacular manner.

### **Story:**

*We were motoring along the south side of the island to get around the east end of Santa Cruz so we could sail home to Santa Barbara. At the east end, the difference between the benign conditions on the south side and the boisterous north side are dramatic. While motoring in calm mid-day conditions we took a reef in the main, suited up in foulies, bracing for full Windy Lane blast, and feeling utterly ridiculous so heavily suited up. But immediately after rounding the east tip of the island, we were hit with the full force of Windy Lane and immediately began real sailing; 2-reefs and #3 jib, a dramatic change in just 500 yards. Five miles into our 25 mile crossing, the wind and seas started to ease up, and in another five miles we were in about half way across under full sail. We finished up with full main and big Genoa in 10-12 knots the rest of the way to Santa Barbara. Fabulous sailing.*

*The best part is that I was doing this for a living – showing people how to deal with strong winds and tricky anchorages of Santa Cruz Island.*

### **End story.**

**Diablo Point** is a bump on the north side of the island just west of Fry's, but it has a significant effect on the wind and wave along the entire north shore. Most of the harbors west of Fry's will be windy and lumpy by late afternoon. Those to the east of Fry's will be much calmer.

**5. Cueva Valdez** is an open bay and very popular with cruising groups. But it always gets lumpy and bumpy because it is exposed to the afternoon winds.



If the anchorage is flat calm at five PM, then it will be okay for overnighting. Use bow and stern hooks to keep bow-to the chop. If you get rolled out of your bunk, head to Fry's.

Cueva has a broad beach and a cave where you can land the dinghy through a narrow opening and walk out onto the beach to the other caves. Good canyon hiking, diving.

**Painted Cave** is a must-see feature almost three miles west of Cueva Valdez. Visit in early morning before the wind develops, and stay out if there is any swell. The sea cave is huge and narrow – 120 feet high at the entrance, about 40 feet wide and extends about 900 feet into the island to an 8-foot high arch opening into another inner chamber. Explore by kayak or dinghy. You can't anchor at the cave, so the mother ship will have to idle outside of the cave.

**6. Forney Cove**, is just around the west end of Santa Cruz, protected by low-lying Fraser Point and a reef trailing south from that. Get past the reef. Enter the bay through gaps in the kelp and head north toward the beach at Frazier Point. Anchor between patches of kelp in about 20 feet. There's room for 20 boats on single hooks. The light west wind will hold you in place. Morning is usually calm but slight current can push you northward toward Fraser Point.

The northwest corner of the quarter-mile beach is the preferred dinghy landing point, but time your last dozen yards to beach, lest you get tumbled by incoming waves. Even the two-footers demand consideration. The bottom near the beach must be littered with cameras and sunglasses.

**Potato Patch warning:** This is a rough water hazard caused by north-bound currents encountering south-bound westerly waves between Fraser Point and West Point. The area features pyramidal seas with precipitous gaps between them. Stay a mile away from the west end of the island and Fraser point to avoid this notorious area. Once past the Potato Patch you can turn to enter Forney Cove.

One of the characteristics of cruising Santa Cruz is that the calmest anchorages are often close to the roughest water.

### **The South Side:**

**Smugglers cove** is the first big bay just around the east tip of Santa Cruz. It is famous for the strong westerly wind which pours into the anchorage from the island canyon. But Smuggler's is the go-to place when the westerly

weather gets extreme. You need only one big hook and a lot of scope to stay safely in place.

Every SoCal cruiser has her own Smugglers story featuring howling afternoon and night winds, but they almost always end with waking up in a flat calm bay.

**Coches Prietos** has the best beach on Santa Cruz. The south-facing semi-circular cove is about in the middle of the south shore. Picture perfect, often sunny and almost always calm, good sandy bottom. People use two anchors perpendicular to the beach to keep from swinging.

Great diving, hiking trails are easy-going, a good family style beach.

**Albert's Anchorage** is an easy paddle from Coches around the point to the east, but is very limited in anchoring space.

### **Santa Rosa Island.**

**Bechers Bay on Santa Rosa** is 5-miles wide on the northeast side of the island and offers excellent protection from strong westerlies.

Anchoring at Bechers is simple – head into the bay, aim to the shore to the right of the Park Service pier. The wind will increase as you approach shore, but the wind chop will almost disappear – blown flat. Look for a spot free of kelp. Drop one big hook and let it all run out and set it with maximum scope. The boat will snap to a stop and you've found your spot for the night in 20-25 feet of water.

Being anchored here is one of the best places to curl up in the cabin with a good book or a good friend. You'd understand how Joshua Slocum felt when he was anchored in the Straits of Magellan. Wind will howl through the rigging, the anchor chain will rumble as the boat gives with the gusts. Sunlight will illuminate the turbulent flow of fog streaming over the low hills and interacting with the water before being blown downwind.

Fishermen anchor here in heavy weather for a peaceful night. It commonly blows over 25 knots here from the NW.

### **San Miguel:**

#### **The holy grail for SoCal cruisers.**

San Miguel is the outermost of the Channel Islands and is rugged, wind-swept, foggy. It also has the best harbor of all the islands. **Cuylers** is a mile-wide bay on the north side of the 4 by 8 mile island. It is surrounded by hills and rocky cliffs, has an immense sandy beach and fabulous holding. The east half of Cuylers is studded with rocks and kelp, but the west half is clear

for anchoring in excellent sandy bottom. Late afternoon and nighttime winds howl here, so use a big anchor and maximum scope to stay hooked in. Fog usually comes in with the wind such that your anchor rode may disappear into the fog so the boat appears to be suspended rather than anchored. Mornings are usually calm.

There are a few mini-bays around Cuylers, most with a sandy beach separated by rocky outcroppings. Excellent kayaking country. In the spring the beaches are occupied by colonies of seals, sea lions, elephant seals, rare fur seals - The Galapagos of California.

All the Channel Islands lie downwind from Cuylers, so the return run is a downwind dream. Santa Barbara is 45 miles, Ventura is about 55 miles, all good for a day's run.

### **Story:**

*You may be isolated from the rest of the world at San Miguel, but you are never alone. You'll spot small commercial dive boats tucked in closer to shore. On one morning the skipper of a small dive boat paddled over to us on his surfboard to ask if he could "borrow" a battery to start his engine. We loaded ours onto his board and he paddled back a quarter mile and got his engine started. Assistance takes many forms.*

*On another occasion – New Year's Day way back, the volunteer ranger was pacing back and forth on the beach, obviously focusing on our anchored boat. He seemed impatient and anxious, and finally stripped down to his boxers, swam out to the boat and came aboard. His voluntary time had been far too long and he simply had to talk to someone!*

*Hot coffee and French toast breakfast, lots of stories of his extended isolation on the island gave us a good view of what life is like on an isolated island. A hundred years ago it was hundreds of sheep; today it was just one lonely volunteer ranger.*

### **End story.**

### **Santa Ana escapes.**

**Santa Anas** are sudden northeasters which howl off the mainland at Ventura and Oxnard, and strike the north side of Santa Cruz and Anacapa with fury. These winds nearly always spring up after sunset. The biggest danger is the steep seas which pack into all the anchorages on the north side of the islands.

What was safe is now treacherous, so you gotta move.

**Where to go?** There are three excellent harbors of refuge which keep you safe from Santa Ana seas.

**1. Potato Bay** on the north side of Santa Cruz about a 1.5 mile west of Cavern Point. The U-shaped bay is 100-yards wide by a quarter mile long. It is open to the northwest, but totally protected from northeasters by high cliffs. The sandy bottom ensures good anchoring in a spectacular setting.

**2.** The NE corner of **Chinese Harbor**, just over a mile southwest from Potato under the cliffs of Coches Point. Drop one big hook and you are safe from the waves. Used by fishermen.

**3. Christy anchorage** on the west face of Santa Cruz. Head west around the end of Santa Cruz and anchor off the big beach between Christy Point and Black Point. The wind may blast out of the central valley of the island, but the seas will be flat and the holding ground excellent.

You might also find refuge at harbors along the south side of the island, but if that search fails, continue west to Christys.

*Don't* head to Ventura or Channel islands harbors. That is where the wind is blowing from so you will be powering and pounding into winds and seas all the way across. Head north to Santa Barbara. The NE wind will diminish with every mile from the island until you run out of wind about half way across.

Santa Anas hit the east end of Santa Cruz hardest, and decrease further west. Strong Santa Anas can reach Bechers Bay at Santa Rosa.

### **Santa Ana warning signs.**

A. Warm, dry weather, dry decks.

B. Ultra-clear visibility; stars are clear and steady, lights in the distance are clearly visible.

C. Light westerly winds during the day, even after 2PM.

These conditions don't mean that the winds are going to hit the islands. But be ready for them if just in case.

D. The final warning of the approaching northeaster comes in the form of **new waves from the northeast**. Fishermen say that when the waves hit, you have an hour until the wind follows. It's time to tidy up, grab a coffee, and start pulling anchors. The incoming waves are the final warning.

### **Story:**

*There was a major Santa Ana years ago that hit right after dinner and escalated to over 50 knots – blowing directly into all of the north side harbors. A couple of Nor Cal sailors were anchored in Pelican Bay and were*



*able to sail to safety by heading northwest, at first yielding to the storm on a downwind heading. Within a few miles they sailed out of the strongest easterly blasts, and could steer north toward the mainland. By mid channel they were in light easterly, a period of calm then light westerly for the remaining miles to Santa Barbara.*

*Meanwhile at the islands, the NE winds continued to howl for two more days, putting dozens of boats on the beach at the islands.*

*The lead keel of a Catalina 27 is still imbedded in the rocks at Fry's harbor. The sailors were in a Moore 24 which, when well-handled is a seaworthy boat. Size doesn't always matter.*

### **End story.**

### **Other weather Warnings:**

**1. The Catalina Eddy** can ruin a trip to any of the anchorages on the south side of the islands. This south wind is a spinoff from the prevailing west wind further offshore (south) of the islands. It is always light at 10-15 knots, but always brings a nasty chop into the anchorages on the south side of the islands. Stay on the north side.

**2. South swell warnings.** Mexico hurricanes and southern hemisphere storms (their winter) send sets of big swells which hit the south-facing harbors and beaches. You may experience hours of calm, then a sudden set of swells and breaking seas may roll into the harbor. Then calm again. Anchor in deep water well away from shore if there is a south swell warning, or stay on the north side.

**Southbound Cruiser?** If you are coming down the coast from the Bay Area or northward, take advantage of cruising through the Channel Islands instead of heading for the nearest marina along the coast. You'll polish your anchoring skills for Mexico and beyond. Start at San Miguel – the rest of the world is downwind from there.

END!!

# **A Summer Visit to Santa Cruz Island July 2021**

Steve Hodges, N



We were approaching the ideal anchoring spot in the northwest corner of Pelican bay. As we chugged along, I readied the hook for its plunge and signaled to Susan to go into reverse. After a moment, instead of confirming reverse as usual, she yelled, "the shifter doesn't shift!" In a flash I wondered if we should bail and sail, but it was late, we were tired, and we had an escape plan if I couldn't fix the shifter: it's a sailboat. We weren't moving quickly, so I loosened the windlass clutch, let the anchor go, and scurried back to the cockpit to kill the engine. I went back to the bow, and as Frolic coasted into the wind, the anchor bit. I paid out chain grudgingly as the breeze stopped us and then blew us back. I put out a little more than 3:1 scope in 40 feet, and then increased that to about 4:1 with the snubber line (1/2" nylon three-strand, with a chain hook). Once the load was on the snubber, and our position seemed secure, I let out another 30 some feet of chain, to encourage the snubber hook to stay down (and give some catenary advantage). Back in the cockpit I reconsidered the default plan to deploy the stern hook as is usual in Pelican; a stern hook would make it harder to sail out, and also important, there were only three boats in the anchorage, and all of them 200 yards or more away. We settled about 100 yards from

the west wall, and more than 300 from the point. Since the wind waves wrap into the anchorage, a stern anchor can aim the boat into that and minimize rolling. But a little rolling can be comforting, and it was calm and forecast to become calmer.



And it did become calmer, making several days of gunkholing in our kayaks very pleasant. Our multiple paddles spanned from a little west of Prisoner's to Orizaba. The water was crystal clear and not that cold. We saw quite a few small black abalone shells, but only one alive -- a far cry from when they climbed over each other on the rocks in the tidal zone! Some of the shells had a neat hole drilled in them, perhaps the art of one of the many black oystercatchers that circled us as they sang their loud and shrill song. The bright garibaldis really stood out as they darted among the kelp fronds. And I saw a few striped bass streak by. Santa Cruz Island is a lovely place to visit!







Our impromptu sail across the channel had also been pleasant, with winds ranging, as usual in July, from iron genoa, to reefed main. The wind built as we crossed and, judging by the lack of swell, it was a new breeze. It was warm enough that I was comfortable in shorts and a short-sleeve shirt, even in the wind. As the wind built, the advection fog thickened, completely shrouding the island in mist. As we approached the shipping lanes, visibility was only a few miles; we could see the west-bound ships, but the east-bound ones could only be seen on AIS. Unfortunately, this was literally true as, after more than 20 years of operation, our radar went kaput. Oh well, it's only another couple of boat bucks.... Did I mention that our also-old, but much older, hydraulic backstay adjuster had blown its gasket a couple days before we left, and that Frolic's mast was now supported by a new turnbuckle and a scrap piece of stainless-steel plate? Despite our inability to achieve perfect close-reach trim, we sailed nicely, pretty much at hull speed. Maybe I don't need another adjustable backstay adjuster after all (haha). Anyway, we poked into Lady's but the chop had followed the wind as it veered north of west, so we wandered down the coast and ended up in Pelican.

Our four-day stay in Pelican was thoroughly relaxing. We ate and drank well. Our love of the cockpit awning was re-affirmed. The solar panels kept the batteries full. I was vigilant in watching our position as I knew that, unable to shift the gear box out of forward, I hadn't set the anchor as well as usual. Part of my piece of mind stemmed from that fact that, rather than eyeball, I could measure our distance from other boats and the rocks. Usually I've accomplished this with radar, but our radar didn't work. However, that void was sort of filled, at least in the anchorage, by my new favorite toy: a laser range finder. I had bought the thing to help plan some development in a heavily wooded part of our property, by measuring between tall trees on opposite sides of the impenetrable area. This was the first time I brought the range finder sailing, but I think it will be a standard piece of gear hence, even after I have a functioning radar again, as it is easy to use and accurate (+/- a yard).



And what about being able to use the diesel to do something besides idle along in forward? Frolic's Teleflex combined throttle and gear shifter appeared to have failed due to some combination of corrosion from seawater ingress and a loose set screw; in other words, a general lack of maintenance (my bad). The fix was fairly straight forward and didn't involve too much boat yoga. By the time I was comfortable with the repair, I had disassembled the linkages, cleaned the corrosion, and lubed the morse cables and shifting mechanisms. I also topped off the gear box oil. Susan and I had strategized what we'd do if it came apart again while weighing anchor or after we entered the harbor. But we were lucky, all worked as it should and we had an uneventful motor-sail home.



## Learn About Weather



I received this notice regarding two FREE weather seminars.

Dear Blue Water Mariners, The National Hurricane Center will be hosting their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual live webinars on weather forecasting geared toward blue water mariners. These are available for up to 250 mariners with no cost to participants through GoToMeeting video conferencing. To sign up, register on-line at the links shown below the date/time of each.

### **"Wind and Wave Prediction for the Blue Water Mariner"**

**Noon-1 PM EST, Thursday, August 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**Dr. Chris Landsea**  
**Chief, Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch**  
**National Hurricane Center**  
**Register at:**

**[https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/  
7528406009892549645](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7528406009892549645)**

### **"Hurricane Analysis and Prediction"**

**Noon-1 PM EDT, Wednesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**Dr. Mike Brennan**  
**Chief, Hurricane Specialist Unit**  
**National Hurricane Center**  
**Register at:**

**[https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/  
1007913929576201997](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1007913929576201997)**

*Submitted by Cdr Virginia Johns*

# Who Said You Can't Have Fun at a ABClub National Meeting?

"Why should I attend a National Meeting?" "What's in it for me?" ABClub/USPS National Meetings attendees often hear this from other members. The reason anyone should attend any "meeting" is to have fun! What is fun? With lots of committees and a range of times and dates for meetings, members find time before, in between, and after to meet other members, participate in the group events and even attend the offsite events. Never been to a national meeting? Be sure and sign up as a First Timer! You will be invited to meet national leadership and other First Timer attendees. Traveling with a friend or spouse who is active and attending meetings? Join others for offsite events such as boating and/or kayaking followed by lunch. Don't want to get wet or be outside? Why not join the group for High Tea, or touring the Natural Science Museum? Did you know the Natural Science Museum is the largest in the southeast US? You will not want to miss this!



**2021 Fall Governing Board**  
August 29 - September 5, 2021  
*Raleigh, North Carolina*

In addition to individual committee/department meetings, you can check out some interesting seminars and topics. "Introduction to the New Information Center", "How Not to Recruit", "Your Squadron Activities Hit Parade", "21st Century Tools for Teaching in the Blended Learning Environment" and "Building and Delivering PowerPoint Presentations in Today's Online World" are just a few. The entire agenda is available online.

Opening the meeting is our Keynote Speaker, Kevin P. Duffus. We have all heard about WWII

activity off the North Carolina coast, but I do not think we knew the extent. Come learn about the **War Zone: World War II off North Carolina's Outer Banks**. This speaker is sure to be interesting.

Wednesday evening come join us for Friends Night. We will be gathering for dinner then some fun entertainment with games and challenges. This event is for everyone, and it was a big hit at our last in-person national meeting in 2020 Annual Meeting.

Thursday, September 2, we will all gather for an entertaining **Murder Mystery Dinner Theater!** With a large cast, it is sure to be entertaining and lots of laughs with your friends participating! Can you guess the murderer? It may be someone you know and sitting next to you. Do not let your guard down!

On Thursday and Friday, stop in the Meet and Greet room. This room is for us to have a place to chat, have small group meetings, gather with friends to play cards or other games or just to relax.

If you have never been to the USPS headquarters building, multiple free tours are being offered. The library is a must see!



Saturday offers a busy day of the Governing Board meeting, the group luncheons and ending the conference with a 50's Sock Hop! Yes, go back in time with some of your favorite tunes, and a Blue Plate Special! Costume, sock, and dance contests will provide lots of fun for participants and people watchers.

Also, to help keep prices down, we are offering a fundraiser. **Buy a chance for two free nights** in Ponte Vedra, FL (2022 Annual Meeting) for \$10! Fundraiser is only available in Raleigh at the National Meeting 2022 Annual Meeting display table.

**National Meetings are designed to communicate and share ideas to members, boating community friends, squadrons and districts.** Along with the business, comes lots of opportunities to have fun with our boating friends. It is not all work, but also times to meet others, make new friends, and get to know those you know, more! Come join us and make your post-quarantine time a fun one!

(Check out the National Meeting Reservation site for a list of all meetings and events, meeting details, times / dates and reservations for meals and offsite.  
[https://www.usps.org/php/reservations\\_new/meetings.php?mtg\\_id=40](https://www.usps.org/php/reservations_new/meetings.php?mtg_id=40).)

**We are also looking for new team members!** Contact chair Arlene Anderson ([arlene.anderson47@yahoo.com](mailto:arlene.anderson47@yahoo.com)) for more information. Some work is done at the meeting and some is done before. Some jobs are for a few hours and some are for more. For example, we need volunteers who can use Word and/or Excel, send emails, make phone calls to hotel area businesses, chat with guests at the meeting and more! You won't be disappointed.



The Signal Hoist is the official publication of the Santa Barbara Sail & Power Squadron. Articles of interest to the membership should be forwarded in writing via email to the Editor by the 20th of the month in order to be included in the next issue. We solicit the submission of your articles on safety, boating, cruising, racing, and squadron activities. Accompanying relevant photos are appreciated. We encourage articles by our members. Send us your true or tall tales. Articles, opinions, and advertisements published herein do not necessarily reflect squadron policy or endorsement unless so designated.

<b>Editor:</b>	<b>Peggy Ciolino, P</b>
<b>Proofreader:</b>	<b>Lt/C Richard Ciolino, JN</b>
<b>Squadron Photographer:</b>	<b>Janis Johnson, S</b>
<b>SBSPS Website Manager:</b>	<b>Lt/C Steve York, P</b>
	<b>Lt/C Eric Peterson, AP</b>
<b>Website address:</b>	<b><u><a href="http://www.sbsps.net">www.sbsps.net</a></u></b>