

INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF THE BLUE GAVEL DISTRICT 14

FOG LOG

Volume XXXXVII Issue II

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

March 2004

George C. Knies DIRECTOR

Our "Change-of Watch" (Crab Feed) took place at the Island Yacht Club, Alameda on Saturday, January 31, 2004. Our new D-14 President Rich Ahlf did a magnificent job organizing and preparing the dinner. There were more than 130 attendees including a rowdy group from the Single Sailors Association, BAMA (Multi Hull Association) and many more crab lovers. Lynette Breed assumed duties as D-14 Vice President and her husband Russ agreed to serve another term as Web Master. It was a pleasure to have our International President Larry Foote and his charming wife Carol in attendance along with Vern Bendsen, Commodore PICYA and his wife Linda. We had many of our D-14 Past Presidents and Directors join in the festivities.



Vern Bendsen (Commo. PICYA), Larry Foote (Int. Pres. IOBG), Lou Haberman, (Past Dir.), George Knies (Dir. IOBGD-14), Lynette Breed (VP IOBGD-14), Rich Ahlf (Pres. IOBGD-14), Larry Draper (Past Dir.).

We are looking forward to our next D-14 event at South Bay Opening Day, April 3rd, 2004. D-14 has been a sponsor of this event for many years and has presented a IOBGD-14 Junior Sailing Trophy. Our President or Director serves on the Boat Parade judging committee for

various Boat Parade awards. This year D-14 will award an additional trophy for best decorated junior entry *Flags and Pennants* in the decorated boat parade in honor of Ward Cleaveland.



Lynette Breed (VP IOBGD-14) receiving check for Ward Cleaveland Trophy from Rich Ahlf (Pres. IOBGD-14), Larry Foote (Int. Pres. IOBG), George Knies (Dir. IOBGD-14) holding Declaration of Trust



George Knies accepting plaque for two years service as President and one year service as Director IOBGD-14

South Bay Opening Day

The 66th Annual South Bay Opening Day will be held Saturday, April 3, 2004. Organized by south bay yacht clubs in conjunction with the Port of Redwood City, 2004, this year's event will celebrate the theme "Bridge to the Future", honoring our youth. The festivities will take place in the Port of Redwood City and Redwood Creek turning basin. There are several new attractions this year.

The FREE on-water events begins with the arrival of the USS Potomac (Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential yacht) at 9:30 AM, followed at 10:00 AM with outrigger, rowing shell races, a youth sailing regatta and a parade of Law Enforcement Vessels. These will be followed immediately with the blessing of the fleet and decorated boat parade. Nearly 200 boats are expected to participate this year, and awards will be given for both theme boats and for "flags and pennants" categories

Two new awards, which will be presented for the first time, have been established for Youth entries. The first is for flags and pennants. The Ward Cleaveland Trophy will be gifted to the South Bay Opening Day Committee by the **International Order of the Blue Gavel District 14**, to honor our first Director, Ward Cleaveland. Ward Cleaveland, a local Boating Icon, passed away in February.

Special D-14 Event will occur on April 3, 2004. We will be taking the "**Ward Cleaveland Trophy**" to Redwood City for the South Bay Opening Day festivities in the USS Potomac from *Jack London Square*, Oakland. All members of D-14 are invited to join the group. The *USS Potomac* will be sailing from Jack London Square at 7:30 AM to arrive at the Port of Redwood City to start the festivities. The *USS Potomac* will depart for its return trip at 4:30 PM. Tickets are: Round trip @ \$60 per person, \$30 for a one-way trip. Contact Ticket Web at www.ticketweb.com or call (866) 468-3399. Further information contact George Knies at (925) 939-0230.

USS POTOMAC Lineage

The *USS Potomac* was built in 1934 as the Coast Guard cutter *Electra*. The 165-foot vessel, weighing 376 gross tons and cruising at speeds of 10 to 13 knots, was commissioned as a U.S. Navy vessel in 1936, renamed the *USS Potomac*, and served as Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential yacht until his death in 1945. As former Assistant Secretary of the Navy, FDR had a deep

love of the sea and the Navy tradition. He hated to fly and preferred to travel by train or ship throughout his presidency.

The *Potomac*, a special vessel with special passengers, a paraplegic since he was stricken in 1921 with polio at the age of 39, FDR's greatest fear was being caught in a fire and being unable to escape. He therefore preferred the *USS Potomac*, an all steel vessel, to the all-wood *Sequoia* after his inauguration. A hand-operated elevator was installed inside a false stack, and the president – who had developed an extremely strong upper body – was able to use ropes and pulleys to move the elevator up and down between the saloon and upper boat deck.

After FDR's death in April 1945, the *Potomac* began a long and ignominious decline from her former role in world affairs. After many adventures and many owners – including Elvis Presley at one point – she was seized in 1980 in San Francisco by U.S. Customs for her role as a front for drug smugglers. Towed to the destroyer pier at U.S. Naval Station Treasure Island, the proud vessel's hull was pierced one night and she sank.

The *USS Potomac* Resurfaces – Back to Her Old Glory she was re-floated by the Navy two weeks later, she was sold to the Port of Oakland for just \$15,000. The Port of Oakland spearheaded a cooperative effort with organized labor, maritime corporations and dedicated volunteers to complete a \$5 million restoration.

Opened to the public in 1995, the Association for the Preservation of the Presidential Yacht *Potomac* now operates this National Historic Landmark as an active memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the momentous times through which he led our nation.

Modern Piracy and Terror on the High Seas

George C. Knies

Yes Virginia, piracy flourishes today. Piracy tends to flourish most where the economy is bad, the government control is weak and the indigenous people have a boating tradition. Other factors stimulating piracy are coastal waters, in narrow seas, in harbors and in the approaches to choke points. Here is where there are many ships and so waiting and watching offer huge potential for reward. Piracy today is a brown- and green- water phenomenon.

In 1970 while on a day sail in a US Navy Recreational Department *Rebel Sloop* in Subic Bay Philippines my Flight Surgeon, John and I were boarded by three bonka-boat pirates brandishing knives. With a knife at my throat I quickly surrendered my Ray Ban sunglasses and navy pilots issue wrist watch, while John, eyes bulging out, reluctantly gave them his newly purchased Rolex. Our property claims against the US Navy for failure to warn of a danger not normally associated with sailing failed, based on the argument that in that area piracy was an accepted inconvenience and commonly known by the vast majority of residents and visitors.

The most infamous location for piracy is the Malacca Strait and nearby seas. Working in these waters are criminal syndicates, political movements, and even many off-duty corrupt military and police units that are called, "lost commands." One-third of the world's trade passes through the Malacca Strait. Challenging safe passage there are Islamist groups in Indonesia, Malaysia and the southern Philippines. Unlike their Middle Eastern counterparts they are island and coastal people. There are partnerships between pirates and terrorists, just as there have been between drug smugglers and terrorists.

One of my former partners sailed around the world. He returned to the U.S. periodically leaving his yacht at major ports. One of these return breaks was prompted by

the wait for a convoy assemblage of yachts for passage through the Malacca Straits under armed protection by former British commando types and Gurkhas.

Several months ago I had a telephone conversation with a yacht club friend who is a merchant seaman. He has been sailing from Oakland to North Korea and Bangladesh carrying grain. He reported that while at anchor one night in the Malacca Straits, pirates climbed their anchor chain and engaged in an automatic weapons fire-fight with the Gurkhas that had been hired by the shipping line. In spite of exercising every precaution of lighting, posting extra watches, traveling in company, ensuring communication and even laying out fire hoses for repelling boarders, the pirates keep coming. The ultimate safeguard has been the hiring of security teams.

Examination of Insurance claims during the past fifteen years revealed a multitude of piracy attacks on commercial vessels and even U.S. Naval supply vessels. The yachting community is more aware of this issue due to the reporting of pleasure craft boardings and murders in the many international pleasure-boating publications. The reporting of commercial piracy has been on the radar screen of many institutions, however the media has been

reluctant to publish the incidents because of commercial interests and unresponsive governments either engaged in the act or embarrassed by their inability to cope with this burgeoning problem.

Where Old Ships go to Die!

From "Marine Update" January 2004

by George C. Knies

Somewhere off the coast of India tonight, a small flotilla of doomed ships waits for high tide. From the shore, their forms are silhouetted on the horizon by the moonlight: a super-tanker, warship, Auto-ferry--nearly 20 in all. They have come from every corner of the world to this spot. In the morning light, they will fire their engines for the last time, and hurl themselves onto the beach.

Welcome to "*Alang*", where old ships go to die.

I spend a lot of time talking about new ships, but today I thought you might be interested to know about this odd little corner of the world where so many ships end up, the granddaddy of all ship-breaking yards.

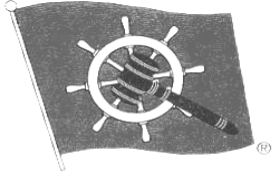
"*Alang*" is first and foremost a beach with an eccentric tidal system--high tide happens once every 2 weeks. Every high tide brings a new delivery of old ships,

beaching themselves like wayward whales. When the tide recedes, the workers descend, and the dismantling begins.

First, everything that can be detached is removed; beds, tables, ovens, carpets, etc. Then the engines are dismantled and removed piece by piece. Then the hull and body slowly unravel one section at a time, under the blowtorches of 300 workers.

Ships are built from the bottom up, hull first, but they are chewed up starting at one end, as taller and taller cross sections are removed. Everything is salvaged--steel, pipes, ducts...everything. Much of what is removed is trucked directly to customers, and the rest ends up in a string of roadside warehouses near the beach.

"*Alang*" is one of the most dangerous places on Earth to work, with 13 deaths in the past 3 months. Workers are exposed to hazardous wastes and toxic gases from the ships they harvest, but the poor and desperate still flock there for jobs. As many as 40,000 workers dismantle more than 350 ships per year.



International Order of the Blue Gavel District 14

CALENDER OF EVENTS 2004 Visit Web Site www.IOBGD14.org

DATE	MEETING	TIME	PLACE
Jan. 31	Change-of-Watch D-14	6:00 P.M.	Island YC Crab Feed
Feb. TBA	Regional Meeting		Tampa Bay, Florida
Apr. 03	Opening Day So. Bay USS Potomac cruise	10:00 P.M.	Sequoia YC join the parade of boats. IOBG Dist 14 Awards, cruise-in
Apr. 25	Opening Day S. F. Bay	10:00 P.M.	San Francisco City Front, Clipper Cove Tie-out
Jun. 3-6	Portland Rose Festival Spring Regional Meeting		Portland Oregon; visit web site: www.IOBG.org www.RoseFestival.org/ for details.
Jul. 04	Watch Fireworks from Treasure Island/Burgers and Beer at the T.I. Yacht Club		
Aug. 06	Board & Delegates Meeting		Oakland YC luncheon
Aug. TBA	Summer Regional Meeting		Marina del Rey, California
Sep. 24	Board & Delegates Meeting		Oakland YC luncheon
Sep. 27	Wheelchair Regatta,	1000 hrs.	Encinal, Y.C.
Oct. 09-10	Fleet Week Dist. 14 Cruise-in Treasure Island Y.C., watch Blue Angeles (TBA) from Treasure Island. BBQ Ribs Treasure Island 5:00 P.M. Bar open noon to		
Oct. TBA	Annual Convention & Regional Meeting		Buffalo, New York, area
Jan '05.	District 14 Change of Watch		Island Y.C. Installation of new Officers

DISTRICT OFFICERS

Director: George C. Knies *President:* Rich Ahlf *Vice President:* Lynette Breed *Secretary/Treasurer:*
TBA

Dates are subject to change * Flyers for reservations and events will appear in the District 14 quarterly Newsletter "Fog Log", and on Website IOBGD14.org

INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF THE BLUE GAVEL

District 14- San Francisco Bay Area

Membership Application and Renewal Form 2004

(Please clearly complete, if "none" please so state.)

I hereby apply for (please circle one): (New International membership) - (renew my membership) - (do not wish to renew my membership) in the International Order of Blue Gavel and District 14 for 2004.

Past Commodore Name: _____ Spouse/Companio _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____
 H. Phone: _____ W. phone: _____ Fax: _____
 Cell: _____ Email: _____ Efax: _____
 Full Name your Commodore Yacht Club: _____ Year: _____
 Complete Yacht Club Address: _____
 Yacht Club Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Current Yacht Club affiliation, *if different*: _____ Address _____
 _____ Current Yacht Club Phone: _____
 Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

_____ I am a member in good standing of the aforementioned yacht club.
 _____ I am no longer a member of the aforementioned yacht club or am not currently a member of a yacht club, but would like to be listed as a "member at large".
 _____ I am transferring my membership from District # _____.
 _____ I am a joint member of District 14 and District # _____. My primary District where I pay my international dues is District # _____.

I wish to receive notification of meetings and my newsletter via E-mail USPS Mail.

I am interested in participating or assisting in: Social Events Wheelchair Regatta Regional
 Representative District Representative Representing my yacht club chapter Educational Events

Dues Structure:

New Member Initiation (for first-time member)	\$10.00
International Dues	\$30.00
District Dues	\$15.00
<small>(New members will remit \$55.00, renewing members will remit \$45.00, + dual district membership \$15.00)</small>	

Optional Donations for District Projects

Wheelchair Regatta	<small>(Please indicate amount)</small>	\$ _____
IOBG Humanitarian Foundation	"	\$ _____
PICYA Chispa & Youth Regattas	"	\$ _____
Northern California Women's Sail Seminar	"	\$ _____

Total amount remitted \$ _____

I agree to abide by the rules and by-laws of my chapter, my district and the International Order of Blue Gavel.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Send to District 14 Treasurer : Rich Ahlf , 63 El Molino Drive, Clayton, Ca 94517 * E-mail rahlf@sbcglobal.net (unless this application is being submitted with a New Charter Club membership application.) R-12/2