

the Wind Word

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BENICIA YACHT CLUB - PICYA CLUB OF THE YEAR 2025

FOUNDED IN 1977

From the Helm

Commodore Natalie Boltz Keller



As I TAKE the helm as your new Commodore, I want to begin with heartfelt gratitude. This club has been part of my life for as long as I can remember, from growing up within these walls to watching my father serve as Commodore and now having the privilege to continue that legacy myself. It's truly an honor to serve the Benicia Yacht Club and this remarkable community of members, sailors, and friends.

As we look ahead to the coming year, my goal is simple: to build on our strong foundation while continuing to evolve. We have exciting plans in motion, from clubhouse improvements and member events to volunteer opportunities that strengthen our sense of connection. Together, we'll ensure BYC remains a vibrant, welcoming home for everyone who loves the water, the camaraderie, and the unique spirit that makes this place so special.

I want to thank everyone who helped make 2025 such a success, from planning, hosting,



and decorating to attending one of our special events. We had live music 21 times and curated 17 special member events this year! The year ahead promises to be full of possibilities, and I invite each of you to get involved, whether it's volunteering for a committee, joining an event crew, or simply spending more time here enjoying all the club has to offer.

Immediately following our amazing Halloween Party featuring Sixteen Scandals, we hosted BYC's first-ever Comedy Show, and the turnout was fantastic! Jr. Staff Commodore Bob Bohnet secured the talented comedians, and the entire house was filled with laughter. In November, we also took a meaningful moment to honor our veterans, members and friends who have served our country with courage and dedication. Thank you for your service and for the sacrifices you and your families have made to protect our freedoms. We then wrapped up the month with our annual Friendsgiving, graciously hosted once again by Susan Linn, a day filled with incredible food, great company, and true friendship.

Let's raise a glass to a new year of smooth sailing, shared memories, and bright horizons for the Benicia Yacht Club.

See you at the club! 

CLUB EVENTS FOR DECEMBER (AND JANUARY)

Date	What!
4	Race Committee Meeting
5	Benicia City Treelighting
5	Club Open House!
12	Annual Lighted Boat Parade – Sponsored by the Benicia Marina
13	Frostbite Race
14	Club Kids Christmas Party
31	New Years Eve Party
January 1	New Years Day Potluck





400 E. Second Street
Benicia, California 94510

CLUB MANAGER

Office 707 746-0739
Office Fax: 707 746-1052

OFFICE HOURS

Mon	CLOSED
Tue-Thu	12-4P
Fri-Sat	By Appointment
Sun	CLOSED

NORTON LOUNGE & BAR 707 746-6600

Mon-Tue	CLOSED
Wed-Thu	12-9P
Fri-Sat	12-10P
Sun	1-5P

FOOD SERVICE SCHEDULE

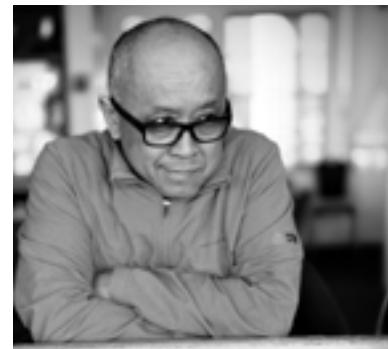
Lunch	Wed-Sat 11:30A-2P
Dinner Menu	Wed-Sat 6:30-8:30P
Sun Bar & Members Potluck	1P-ish

REGATTA ROOM

Wed-Sat 4-8P (By Reservation)

Happy Holidays!

Hello and Happy Holidays. As we wind down the year, we must not forget that there are many things to be done this year. As a club, we have events to host, including our annual Holiday Open House, to be held on the same day as the Benicia Tree Lighting, on Friday, December 5. The Lighted Boat Parade, sponsored by the Benicia Marina, is the following weekend, on Friday, December 12. We look forward to all the lights which will adorn the boats of our members. There are photos of decorated boats scattered throughout this edition of the WindWord. Did you know we have a new mascot? Commodore Natalie Boltz Keller is holding a naming contest with the submitter of the winning name being awarded an as-yet-to-be-named prize (Page 5). This year, a lot of work was done



around the “house” by the House Committee, lead by Randy Normal. Biggest challenge? A new HVAC system, with many members volunteering in various ways. Photo on Page 4.

And, this month wraps up the activities of the PICYA, the Pacific Inter-Club Yachting Association. We won some things! Check out the PICYA report on Page 8.

Have a safe holiday season and please do not forget the needy. -Ed.

Front Page Photo: Dusk on the San Francisco Bay, as seen through the Slot, the Golden Gate Bridge in the distance on November 9, 2025

CLUB DIRECTORY



the Wind Word

DECEMBER 2025

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Officers and Directors

Commodore Natalie Boltz Keller · **Vice Commodore** Joe Kallios · **Rear Commodore** Don Kerr · **Secretary** Randy Norman · **Treasurer** Kris Kastl · **Director** Mark Campbell · **Director** Steve Corwin · **Director** Sue Bittner · **Director** Mitch Kessler · **Jr. Staff Commodore** Bob Bohnet

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CONTRIBUTORS

Albers, Rick.....	8
Boltz Keller, Natalie	5
Boltz Keller, Natalie	6
Griswold, Noble.....	7
Monroe, Kathy	3
Norman, Randy	4
Norman, Randy	8



BYC boats, lit up for the holidays in preparation for the annual Lighted Boat Parade



PHOTOS FROM KATHY MONROE



THANKS FOR THE NEW SCREEN

Randy Norman, House Chair

Thanks to the many members who worked on rebuilding the site screens enclosing the HVAC equipment pads and a special call out to Jim Babcock who kept us on track with construction design and standards. 

▲ **How's that for a screen?**

▼ A stunning sky over the Club during the recent exhibition of the Northern Lights



MEET OUR NEW BYC MASCOT!

THERE'S A NEW face around the club — and he's already making waves! Thanks to a donation by Angela and Rich Grigas, the Benicia Yacht Club is proud to introduce our brand-new club mascot, who's here to bring a little extra charm, cheer, and nautical spirit to our home on the waterfront.

You'll be seeing our new friend dressed up throughout the year — decked out for every holiday and special occasion, from St. Patrick's Day to Opening Day, the Fourth of July, Halloween, and everything in between! He'll be a year-round reminder of the fun, creativity, and community that make BYC so special.

But before we can officially welcome him aboard, he needs a name — and we want our members to decide!

We're inviting all members to submit your best name ideas for our new mascot. Whether it's clever, nautical, historic, or just plain funny, we want to hear it. Drop your suggestion in the "Name Our Mascot" box at the club.

Once we gather the submissions, members will get to vote on the winning name, and the winner will receive bragging rights — and maybe a little surprise prize!

Let's give our new mascot a name worthy of the BYC spirit — and keep the fun sailing all year long! 



"He's wonderful when he's on a boat."



▲ **Cindy Webster and Chad Hummel** at the Halloween Party, October 31.

HONORING OUR VETERANS

Natalie Boltz Keller

The Benicia Yacht Club extends its deepest gratitude to everyone who attended and supported the 35th Annual Veterans Dinner. This long-standing tradition remains one of the most meaningful events of our year — a time to gather in fellowship and express our profound appreciation for the men and women who have served our country with courage and dedication.

The evening was filled with heartfelt moments, shared stories, and a strong sense of community pride. We are sincerely thankful to all who helped make the event possible — from the volunteers who devoted their time and energy, to the members and guests who joined us in honoring our veterans.

Together, we continue to uphold the spirit of service, remembrance, and gratitude that defines the Benicia Yacht Club.

Special thank you to our volunteers, who came out in numbers, to support this event with cooking, decorating, serving, bussing tables, cleaning. We could not do this without you! 🎉



▲ **This is Steve Stults.** Is there anything else to be said?

Bob Hedrick and Beth McDonnell ►



RACING NEWS

Noble Griswold, *Race Committee Chair*

Frostbite Race #1: Light Air, Heavy Current, and a Whole Lot of Fun

THE FIRST FROSTBITE race of the season brought us just about everything—fickle breezes, a stubborn 2-3 kt flood current, and even a touch of sunburn.

With a light 3-5 kt whisper of wind out of the southwest at the start, the fleet set off from the line off the Marina entrance toward the 9th Street (21A) mark and back. But almost immediately after the start, the breeze shut down and the flood increased, sending boats sliding backward toward Martinez.

Warwhoop, E Ticket, and Hurricane Gulch wisely dropped anchor—an excellent call, as the rest of the fleet drifted off like fallen leaves in a river.

About 30 minutes later, the wind teased in from the East. The anchored boats hoisted and got moving again, spinnakers full and sometimes saggy as they crept toward 1st Street. E Ticket grabbed the early lead, with Warwhoop, Hurricane Gulch, and Fog Cutter close behind. Near the 1st Street islands, E Ticket sailed into a patch of strong current and almost no breeze, sliding backward while Warwhoop slipped by to the North and rounded 1st St Islands in first. As E Ticket followed, the flood ramped up past 3 kts. Trying to stay out of the worst of it, E Ticket cut the corner a little too close and were pushed toward the rocks—forcing a split-second crash gybe that cleared the boulders by just three feet. A little too exciting for comfort! From there, the lead swapped again as E Ticket passed Warwhoop, only to be repassed before 9th Street. Warwhoop rounded ahead but had their hands full wrestling the spinnaker down with only two crew. E Ticket executed a clean douse, rounded smoothly, and reclaimed the lead—holding it all the way to the finish with Warwhoop in hot pursuit and close behind.

Vitamin Sea staged an impressive comeback after their drift toward Martinez and secured a solid third place. The remaining three boats were unable to finish and shared fourth. It was fantastic seeing six boats out there shaking off the cobwebs and embracing the challenge of the day - classic Frostbite fun. 

RESULTS

1. *E Ticket* – Noble Griswold
2. *Warwhoop* – Chuck Hooper
3. *Vitamin Sea* – Steve Corwin
4. *Hurricane Gulch* (DNF) – Mark Duane
5. *Woodstock* (DNF) – Jim Smith
6. *Fog Cutter* (DNF) – Steven Griggs

Next Frostbite Race: December 13, 2025

If you've got a sailboat—even if you've never raced—come join us. It's low-key, friendly, and a great way to spend a winter afternoon on the water.

RACE COMMITTEE MEETING

Our first RC meeting for the new season is **Thursday, December 4th at 7:00 PM**. Come help us continue growing our successful BYC Racing Program.



▲ **Frostbite Race 1** Oh boy, looks like the Benicia Doldrums.

▼ A slow day in irons for our fearless (and patient) racers

PHOTOS FROM NOBLE GRISWOLD



1 JOHN ASH
2 MARIE ALEX
3 DEBORAH FROESSEL
4 CRAIG BUTLER
5 BETH FONDOOS
6 JOHN KITCHEN
7 SHELLY SUTTER
8 CAROL LYONS
9 HEIDI GALLAGHER
10 JUDI GIZZI
11 DAVID NALDONE

13 JENNIFER MOORE
14 CYNTHIA SEGUIN
15 CHRISTINA MORABE
16 CRAIG HENNIKE
17 PAM HUBER
18 ALAN CARUSO
19 JOHN MARSHALL
20 DONNA PETERSEN
21 PAUL WEATHERFORD
22 DENISE MCCROSSAN
23 RICK ALBERS
24 RISA CORWIN
25 DIANE FAUSTINO

22 NICHOLAS DEGNAN
23 DONALD KERR
24 IRMA MCINTOSH
25 BETH McDONNELL
26 JAEAME KOYIL
27 BENJAMIN SPITERI
28 MAURA TEMPLE
29 ANN FELDIN
30 ROB MERRICK
31 PAT SHUE

End of Year!

HELLO MEMBERS. THE boating season is coming to an end (but not for the racers) and the BYC PICYA delegates have brought back some good tidings.

At the annual Awards Dinner, held on November 9 at the Berkeley Yacht Club, BYC earned two awards: 1) A Perfect Attendance Award for participation in Delegate events throughout the year, and 2) BYC was awarded a Club of the Year honor. This is an honor for any yacht club which is a member of PICYA. Both awards reflect engagement of the Club and its members in the active boating community of Northern California. You should all be proud of what you have done for the state of recreational boating.

Let's summarize some of the boating achievements of the year which were recognized by PICYA.

1. BYC hosted a talk by the Recreational Boaters of California (RBOC). For the uninitiated, RBOC is a lobbying group that pays attention to boating issues at the state level and advocates on behalf of individuals who enjoy recreational boating. Some of the issues include regulations on anti-fouling paint, E15 fuel requirements, Delta conveyance, handling the Golden Mussel infestation of California waterways, and more. The talk our club hosted raised over \$1000 in donations to help pay for the lobbyists that work for us. Thank you to all members and community members who attended the talk and donated.

2. Jazz Cup Regatta, our annual big race/open house event gave us visibility to the greater Bay and Delta community as it invited sailors from everywhere to participate. Encouraging community participation in our events is a large part of winning a COTY award.

Looking forward to next year, PICYA has asked us, the Benicia Yacht Club to host one of the Delegate meetings for 2026. And not just any meeting but the first of the year. This is an honor for our club. The meeting will be held on February 2 and will surely bring a large turnout. We will keep members posted about details as the date approaches.

In the meantime, our awards are hanging on the west wall at the top of the front staircase. Go check them out! 🎉



▲ Randy Norman, holding the COTY award at the PICYA Annual Awards Dinner.

▼ Rick Albers, holding the other award



BANQUET SPACE IS AVAILABLE AT THE BENICIA YACHT CLUB

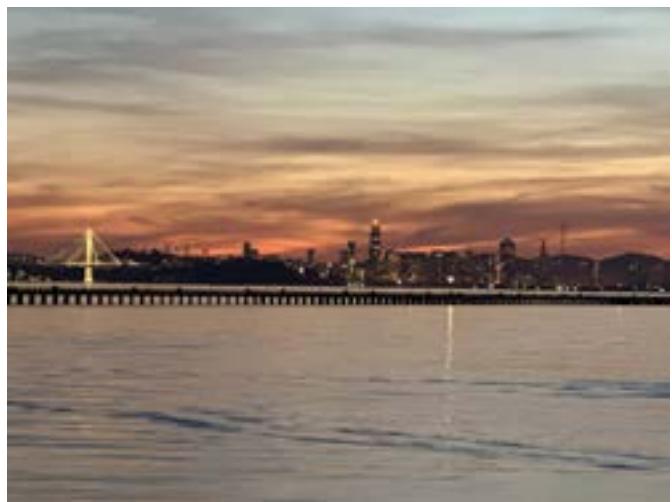
Hold your meeting or special event in one of Benicia's great historic buildings, with breathtaking marina views
You need not be a member of the Club to rent the banquet room, although current members receive a discount on rental fees
Catering and catering equipment are available with the space

Ceremonies can be performed on the club's lawn, facing the Benicia Marina Promenade
Space is available nights, Thursday through Sunday, and days Wednesday through Sunday. Other times may be available

Standup Cocktail Capacity: 150  Seated Dining Capacity (indoor + outdoor): 200  Wi-Fi Internet access

More details can be found at the BYC website:
www.beniciayachtclub.org/catering

You can also call the Club Office: 707 746-0739



▲ Sunset behind San Francisco, with the Bay Bridge



2025 First Saturday
MEMBER CLEAN SWEEP

- Maintain Curb Appeal
 - General Restoration
- Landscape Upkeep
 - Planned Projects

8:00am to 11:00am

First Saturday of each month



Advertise in the Wind Word

Ad Size	Month	Year
2" x 2"	\$20	\$220
Business Card	\$25	\$275
1/4 pg	\$45	\$495
1/2 pg	\$85	\$935

info@beniciayachtclub.org



BY CLUNCH-TIME HAPPY HOUR EXTENDED INDEFINITELY!

Come hang out for a no-stress lunch—Happy Hour runs from 12-3, Wed-Sat.* Save 20+ percent on all house wines and well drinks. Come enjoy a nice meal, some spirits and our great Norton Lounge view. *Excludes during special events



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