

DELTA DOO DAH 7

At the end of last year's Delta Doo Dah feature story, we promised big changes for 2015, and indeed Delta Doo Dah 7 was like none other. Heck, even the Delta itself, where change comes more slowly than it does in the faster-paced Bay Area, does not stand still.

Among the changes affecting sailors was a salinity dam that blocked the western entrance to False River (a popular shortcut and entrance to Franks Tract and Bethel Island), and produced strong currents in and around Fisherman's Cut.

Besides the new dam, various bridge closings, planned and unplanned, forced sailors to adapt their routes. Keeping a rigid schedule in the Delta is not always possible — or desirable.

One side effect of the drought was a positive one for Delta businesses: With so many California lakes closed to recreational boating due to low water levels, trailer boaters came to the Delta, where they could still launch.

A change enjoyed by many Delta Doo Dah sailors was the opening of Owl Harbor's beautiful and comfortable new marina building, celebrated at a festive Tahiti-themed party on June 13.

Change also came to the Delta Doo Dah. For starters, we combined our Kick-off Party with Delta devotee Craig Perez's Delta Cruising Seminar at Richmond Yacht Club on May 16.

More change followed in the ensuing months. Perez, the commodore of RYC, came up with a plan for three Doo Dah runs up the San Joaquin River. The first would be part of the Delta Ditch Run from RYC to Stockton Sailing Club. Five DDD entries cruised to Stockton with the Cruising Division in the newly coined 'Doo Dah Ditch Run', and four more entered racing divisions. SSC followed up the windy, exhilarating run with the usual great Saturday night party, Sunday morning omelettes and awards, and a Sunday afternoon BBQ.

The second run to SSC stopped at Owl Harbor in Isleton on July 18. The marina hosted a BBQ/potluck and movie on the green that evening, followed by a complimentary breakfast on Sunday morning. SSC welcomed Doo Dah participants that evening with a casual supper.

In August, for the first time, we made Pittsburg YC an official stop, where we enjoyed the club's usual Friday night dinner. From Pittsburg, sailors continued on for some nostalgia at SSC's Hot Summer Nights, a classic car show with oldies, burgers, fries and root beer floats.

The Delta Doo Dah also joined Tiki Lagun Marina to celebrate Summer Sailstice at a potluck on June 20.

Since this year's Delta Doo Dah retained a strong DIY element, we'll let the sailors pick up the tale:

Itzayana — Beneteau Oceanis 331 Liam Wald & Jane Wong, Santa Cruz

"We were part of the Doo Dah again this year and had a great time as usual," writes Liam Wald. "We've been going to the Delta every year (sometimes twice) for the last 10 years or so, and our fa-

vorite destination has been Three River Reach.

"This year when we got there I thought that it was odd that there were no other boats anchored, as it has been typical to see anywhere from 5 to 20 others. Luckily we were going in at high tide, as we found that the depth under the 6-ft keel was 1.5-2 feet. The tide was going to drop more than that, leaving us in the mud. In years past there was usually at least 3-4 feet under the keel



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ALL PHOTOS LATITUDE / 'DOODETTE' CHRIS EXCEPT AS NOTED

at low tide.

"We buggered out and found a little spot on Potato Slough, where we met some other Doo Dah'ers and had a great time of it. Have you heard anything else about Three River Reach?"

We posted Liam's question on Facebook (www.facebook.com/deltadoodah). "The whole Delta is now like this due to the drought," responded Doo Dah vet Eli Myrick. "With no fresh water flowing out, the tides are more extreme."

Fantasy — Islander 36 Gene & Cheryl Novak, Alameda

We left Alameda on Friday, July 3, and met up with the Islander 36 group at Benicia Marina. We conveniently viewed the Benicia Fourth of July fireworks from our boats and could also see the Concord fireworks through the dodger windows. From there we headed to the Pittsburg Marina, which was way too windy and had a strange surge, so we went to the Delta Marina in Rio Vista,

which had much better protection. That week it seemed even windier than what we find in the Slot, so we stayed hunkered down. My daughter Melissa and granddaughter Madison joined us on Wednesday evening, and we ate at the reopened and fantastic Point Restaurant at the marina.

Thursday we headed through Three-mile Slough and had the bridge-tender open the bridge, much to the amazement of my granddaughter. She was beside herself with glee as the bridge-tender waved down at us from his lofty perch.



Clockwise from top left: Sailing up New York Slough; Rosalyn, Mike, Mecala and Zachary from 'Emily' at the Owl Harbor BBQ; after the Doo Dah Ditch Run, Larry Samson of 'Summerwind' got a Doo Dah shirt at SSC; at their family reunion the Hurdles and Najarrs model theirs; no wind but good reading on 'Mental Floss'; Annalee, Michelle, Luke and Dan of 'Miss Conduct' at Pittsburg YC's Friday night dinner; Doo Dah vet 'Odyssey' sailed in the Doo Dah Ditch Run; Craig "yes, this is your commodore" Perez demonstrates an alternative way to wear your PFD; Jennifer and Kerry of 'Alafair' brought a different ride to SSC's Hot Summer Nights.



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We had a nice motor past the new salinity dam at False River, continuing on to another stop in Pittsburg. We had to visit the New Mecca, but also found a great place for breakfast in the marina, the Country Skillet. It's only been about 30 years since our last visit, so to us the remodeled marina was a great improvement, and the staff was friendly and helpful.

On Friday we headed back to Benicia Marina, where we were to meet up the next day with Melissa's husband Aaron for the trip back to Alameda. It was a great trip back with no breakdowns and lots of wind in the Slot. Everyone enjoyed the trip. Our advice to potential Delta cruisers: "Just Doo It."

American Beauty — New York 36 Sam Neustadt, Tammy Forrest, David Suder, Casey the Wonder Dog Richmond

American Beauty left Richmond on July 24 and stopped in Benicia, False River, Three River Cut, Mandeville Cut, the Mokelumne River, Owl Harbor and Walnut Grove — and stayed up-Delta six weeks longer than planned!

We love Owl Harbor and the surrounding anchorages. The marina itself is awesome, well managed with plenty of perks — where else do fresh eggs, veggies, outdoor movies and popcorn come with the berth? The raft-up with friends on Three River Cut under the full moon was truly a night to remember.

We returned from Rio Vista with the ebb, but were surprised at just how challenging it was to sail through Suisun and San Pablo Bays in a big blow: The strong headwind and the ebb current converged to stir up quite a chop. Next time, if the winds are blowing, I'll avoid max ebb.



"Bring your water toys!" say the Silvas of 'Lucy'. Stand-up paddleboards and kayaks are modern Delta toys popular with both adults, such as Patty Silva, and kids, such as young Ben.



I'm A PreCursor — MacGregor 25 Bryan & Cindy Blagg, Ceres Brady Bunch — MacGregor 26D Mike & Karel Brady, Gustine Buon Amici — S2 9.2A John French/Ed Dietz, Stockton

The plan was to pull three MacGregors to Stockton from Ceres (a town south of Modesto in Stanislaus County) on Friday morning, June 19, and launch at Buckley Cove by 10 a.m. *Buon Amici* is part of Stockton Sailing Club, so we would meet up with John and all leave together from Buckley Cove. Our first stop would be Sugar Barge on Friday night. The next day we would head to Antioch City Marina. Sunday morning

we would push across to the Sacramento River side and Delta Marina in Rio Vista. Monday we would call for an opening of the Threemile Slough Bridge and head to Owl Harbor. Then on Tuesday, we'd have a long sail back to Stockton to stay the night at SSC. Wednesday we would load up the MacGregors and head home.

Three roadblocks stood in the way of the plan:

1. Mike and Karel realized they had a wedding to go to on Saturday the 20th in Monterey. This was fixed by having someone come to Sugar Barge and drive them to the wedding and back, leaving their boat at Sugar Barge an extra day and rejoining the group in Rio Vista.

2. John found he had no crew for the trip. This was fixed by Ed Deitz leaving his own boat at home and joining John on *Buon Amici*. Ed, as always, brought a couple of his grandkids, Jonathan (16) and Katherine (12) to help out.

3. Due to the wedding, the tow vehicle for the 26D was not available. This was fixed by having Ed pull the 26D to Stockton.

Friday morning came. Five miles from the I-5 turnoff for SSC, Ed called Mike to tell him that a wheel was smoking on the trailer and he had pulled off the highway. We turned around and went back to where he was and decided it was a brake issue, so we cooled it down and went at a slower pace. We had to stop three times to get the brakes to release and cool on the way to Buckley Cove.

I have never had a group so determined to go that every little thing that came up just meant we had to find a solution and everyone would help.

Low water and the False River temporary dam did change our route plans and made us use Fisherman's Cut

Delta Doo Dah 7 Fleet

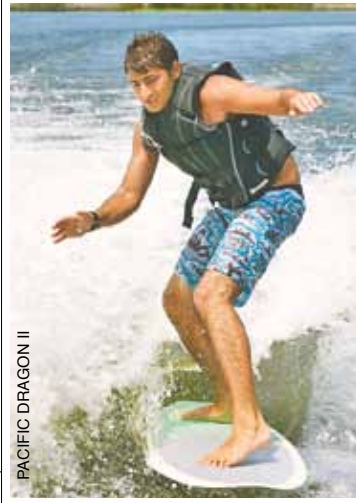
Adelina.....	Cherokee 32.....	Mark & Susan Ford.....	South S.F.
Alafair.....	Catalina 30.....	Kerry & Jennifer Scott.....	Richmond
American Beauty.....	New York 36.....	Sam Neustadt/Tammy Forrest.....	Richmond
Annie.....	Sprague/Pratt 33.....	Jeff & Annie Cook.....	Richmond
Appilonia.....	Beneteau 393.....	Volki Felahy.....	Richmond
Aquavite.....	Catalina 34.....	Stu Jackson.....	Alameda
Barefoot.....	Islander 28.....	Mary Kraybill.....	Vallejo
Beautiful T-K.....	Albin 48.....	Jim Haussener.....	San Leandro
Brady Bunch.....	MacGregor 26.....	Mike & Karel Brady.....	Gustine
Buon Amici.....	S2 9.2A.....	John French/Ed Dietz.....	Stockton
Cerridwen.....	Fantasia 35 MkII.....	Carey & Heather Shine.....	Benicia
Deliverance.....	Hunter 41AC.....	Dan Swett/Tom Trebelhorn.....	Half Moon Bay
Emily.....	Ericson 27.....	Mike Gill/Mecala Fitzpatrick.....	Alameda
Endless Summer.....	Catalina 42.....	David & Michelle Opheim.....	San Rafael
Ergo.....	Ericson 35 MkII.....	Scott Cyphers/Hana Bauguess.....	Richmond
Ergo.....	Express 27.....	Chris Gage/Erika Anderson.....	Richmond
Evenstar.....	Ranger 23.....	Gregory Towers/Jillian Cripps.....	Emeryville
Fantasy.....	Islander 36.....	Gene & Cheryl Novak.....	Alameda
Folalier.....	Beneteau 370.....	Mark & Sherri Rinkel.....	Richmond

Grand Finale.....	Grand Banks 32.....	Jim & Mimi Cornelius.....	Belvedere
Green Flash.....	Beneteau 323.....	Stephen Yingst/Christins Barasch.....	Sausalito
Hobo.....	Columbia 26 MkII.....	Lewis Keizer/Marie Lumazar.....	Alameda
I'm A PreCursor.....	MacGregor 25.....	Bryan & Cindy Blagg.....	Ceres
Idle Eyes.....	Islander 36.....	Brett Butterfield/Laura Burkhart.....	Sausalito
Irish Blessing.....	J/24.....	Chad Peddy.....	Alameda
Iron Genny.....	Grand Banks 42.....	Jared Brockway/Genevieve Peterson.....	San Francisco
Itzayana.....	Beneteau Oceanis 331.....	Liam Wald/Jane Wong.....	Santa Cruz
Jammin.....	Catalina 36.....	Jim Forrest/Mary Coleman.....	Alameda
Jazz.....	Celestial 48.....	Russell Best/Christine Iverson.....	Kona, HI
Juniper.....	Pacific Seacraft 40.....	Scott Askew/Viviane Valvezan.....	San Francisco
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La Vida.....	Catalina 320.....	Mike & Joan Mellon.....	Marin County
Lucy.....	Beneteau 361.....	Daryl & Patty Silva.....	Alameda
Mai Pen Rai.....	Islander 36.....	Noble & Barbara Brown.....	Vallejo
Makai.....	Hunter 26.....	Rick & Marcia Adams.....	San Diego
Marrakesh.....	Express 34.....	Craig & Ann Perez.....	Richmond
Mas Tiempo.....	Islander 30 MkII.....	Dave Cowell.....	Owl Harbor
Mental Floss.....	Olson 30.....	Robert Sesar & Roberta Montero.....	Benicia
Mi Amor.....	Islander 36.....	Arnie & Louise Gallegos.....	Richmond

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LUCY



PACIFIC DRAGON II

Yes, it gets hot in the Delta. But what the hey — the water's right there for cooling off. Clockwise from top left: Bruce and Henry float along behind the Beneteau 361 'Lucy'; Rami wakeboards behind a 21-ft jet boat, the water taxi for the Gemini 105M cat 'Pacific Dragon II'; Katherine and Jonathan on the way back to SSC behind the S2 'Buon Amici'; crew from 'Mental Floss', 'Alafair' and 'Sea Wolf' cool in Potato Slough; water cannons do the trick during a wind-challenged cruise from Pittsburg to Stockton.



BUON AMICI



MENTAL FLOSS

instead of the False River route. This would be a little hard for Mike since this would be his first use of the boat and Karel's first sailing trip. To help them with the route they would take on Sunday, the other two boats headed to Antioch on Saturday, taking pictures at each turn with a text message telling them which way to go. So, with his tablet app, Delta map, and step-by-step instructions, Mike only had to call once to verify a turn. All three boats got to the Threemile Slough Bridge within 10

minutes of each other and then made the quick run to Delta Marina.

The year before, our 10 hp motors would only make about 4 mph on the run to Sugar Barge, and the other days last year we had no wind. This year we did 6-8 mph to Sugar Barge and 8 mph under sail to Antioch. We even hit a 10 downwind, surfing the waves on the Sacramento River.

Each night was a different marina and dinner out. The grill on top of Sugar Barge hit the spot after Friday morning's

troubles, with everyone sitting at the table knowing we were actually doing this Delta trip. The night in Antioch at the Riverview Lodge restaurant we had surprise guests of Katherine's parents for her birthday. The staff was great and really made us feel at home. In Rio Vista it was Foster's Big Horn Café with more surprise guests of Ed's other son's family. I think the surprise guests were Ed's way of getting a ride back to the marina each night after dinner while the rest of us walked.

Midnight Madness ..	Bluewater 52	Greg Jones/Kathleen Dinnel-Jones ..	Oakland
Migration	Catalina 36	Chuck & Mary Ann Herman	Alameda
Miss Conduct	Columbia 36	Daniel Zempel/Michelle Petroelje ..	Oakland
Miss Fit	Catalina 22	David & Jenni SanGiovanni	Humboldt Bay
My Girl	Newport 30 MkIII	Rich & Carolyn Watson	Coronado
Noa Makani	Catalina 36	James Rutherford & Kimberly Trotter ..	Alameda
Now & Zen	Newport 30-II	Tony Bourque/Patch Garcia	Richmond
Odyssey	Bristol Channel Cutter ..	Wayne & Karen Edney	Richmond
Pacific Dragon II	Gemini 105M	David & Maha Hurdle	Benicia
Polé Polé	Ericson 29	Adam Katz	Oakland
Pyewacket	Catalina 34	Ralph & Penelope Hyde	Vallejo
Ranger	'37 Stephens 36	Bill & Sue Wells	Isleton
Resolute	Hunter 33	Jason & Eric Kopps	Richmond
Sea Wolf	Hunter 376	Christopher Mendonca	Vallejo
Shearwater	Ericson 36C	Dave & Kelly Kendall	Benicia
Shellback	Catalina 30	John & Doreen Abbott	Richmond
Sir Leansalot	Hunter 40	Tom & Lynn Lueck	Stockton
Stickeen	Bodega 30	Lee Richardson/Pam Reeves	Richmond
Stink Eye	Laser 28	Jonathan Guttoff/Christine Weaver	Richmond
Thetis	Ericson 32	Steve Andersen	Little Venice Isl.
Toucan	Tanton 43 cat ketch	Kevin Belcastro/Susan Liebert	Owl Harbor

Touché	Jeanneau 42DS	Pip & Jill Ziman	Alameda
Twilight	Catalina 30	Neil & Judi Larson	Hidden Harbor
Two Truths	PS Dana 24	Bob & Betsy Sharf	Berkeley
Varekai	Mainship 34T trawler	John & Dolores Dovano	Alameda
Vector	C&C 38-2	Bill & Lida Rathbun	Berkeley
Vita Nova	Aries 32	Daniel & Katie Retz	San Francisco
Waterhorse	Newport 28	John Zolck/John Wood	Sausalito
Windmill	Catalina 30	Jennifer Mengel/Doug Jarmer	Alameda
Yo Mi Esposa			
y Summerwind	Catalina 30	Larry & Dorothy Samson	Stockton

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At Owl Harbor we had a potluck on Mike's new boat with tri-tip steak and BBQ chicken sandwiches. For our last night we made our standard trip to the Old Spaghetti Factory in Stockton so Ed could have ice cream.

Usually after a long trip it feels good to be heading home, but we had such a good time it was sad to see it end.

Annie — Sprague/Pratt 33 Jeff & Annie Cook, Richmond

Annie departed Richmond on July 17 and stopped at Vallejo YC, Owl Harbor, Mildred Island and Benicia. We loved the hospitality at Vallejo YC; the welcome, facilities, friendliness, parties and gatherings at Owl Harbor; the serenity of Mildred Island; and the overall sense of having traveled somewhere while close to home. The sunsets and sunrises are unlike anything on the Bay. Due to a mechanical problem with the raw-water pump, we were unable to make it to the party in Stockton on July 19.

This third trip, we felt more adventurous and willing to stick our nose into small coves and back bays.

Our advice to future Delta cruisers: The sailing can be challenging, as you can encounter larger waves and stronger winds than you might imagine. Bring a good awning — the bigger the better — and a windscoop. Explore, explore, explore. Buddy boat.

Two Truths Pacific Seacraft Dana 24 Bob & Betsy Sharf, Berkeley

On July 30, Bob, Alex von Rospatt and Anna von Rospatt (age 11) departed Berkeley, catching the big flood, and spent the night at Owl Harbor after a wonderful downwind sail. (If you have a slow boat like ours, playing the currents can make a huge difference.) Betsy joined us there, and we said goodbye to Alex and Anna.

On July 31, we sailed a meandering route to Stockton Sailing Club and spent the night there. The next day we sailed into downtown Stockton under the fixed bridge, just to confirm that our mast would indeed fit. Our clearance was just a few feet, which looks sort of scary. We stayed that night at Tiki Lagun.

The drawbridge on the Turner Cut, just south of Tiki Lagun, was broken the morning we were to pass through, which meant a longer way around to Mildred Island. This was not a big deal, but it taught us to check ahead for bridge closures. We spent much of the follow-



'Annie's winning hand and 'Endless Summer's lowball hand (a four of clubs that went swimming) from the season-long poker run. Prizes were souvenir decks of cards.

ing day swinging on the hook at Mildred Island. We hadn't been there before, and it is now our favorite anchorage.

After another night at Owl Harbor, we motorsailed to Benicia. Our son Eli met us there and drove Betsy home after dinner. Bob singlehanded back to Berkeley on August 4.

Owl Harbor remains our favorite spot. We were worried that the new building would spoil the rustic simplicity of the place, but the architect did a wonderful job in creating a modern new facility with wonderful amenities that is still in keeping with the homey ambiance of the place. Owl Harbor must have the best showers of any marina in the Delta. Maybe in the whole Bay Area!

Deliverance — Hunter 41AC Dan Swett, Tom Trebelhorn, Joe Hill Half Moon Bay

We departed Half Moon Bay on June 13, stopping at Richmond YC, Owl Harbor, Walnut Grove and Rio Vista, then back home via RYC again. This is the same San Diego crew that has done the Baja Ha-Ha three times with this boat.

First I want to thank the commodore of RYC for doing the complete briefing. It answered many questions.

One surprise occurred at Walnut Grove when one of our crew sleepily stepped off the boat into mid-air without a PFD, took an unplanned dip under the dock, and fortunately was quickly and safely recovered. Our favorite restaurant was the famous Al the Wop's in Locke.

Next year we will make the run to Tiki Lagun.

Endless Summer — Catalina 42 Dave & Michelle Opheim San Rafael

As you can see by the one and only card that you dealt us at the bar at Stockton Sailing Club, we had a great

time in the Delta again this year. We spent a lot of time in the water, and it just so happens that the four of clubs didn't handle the water sports as well as we did. I found it in the pocket of my swim trunks once they dried out.

At the time of this writing (August 20), we're in Georgiana Slough, having gone the long way from the Bedrooms as both the Mokelumne River Bridge and Tyler Island Bridge were out of service on Tuesday when we wanted to transit them. With Tyler Island Bridge not having an ETA, we decided to go back out to the main ship channel to Threemile Slough, up the Sacramento River to Walnut Grove, and thus into the Georgiana. It was a nice ride, though a couple of hours longer than our intended route. But hey, it's Delta Time! And the two-for-one lobster at Giusti's in Walnut Grove was worth it.

Since this year's rally had a Vegas-style, 'What happens in the Delta stays in the Delta' theme, and because poker runs are popular with stinkpotters in the Delta, we decided to create a poker run of our own and handed out Delta Doo



Captain Madison, age 8, gets a turn at the helm of her grandparents' Islander 36 'Fantasy' on the way from Rio Vista to Pittsburg.

Dah-branded poker cards to participants at all of the official events.

As with other editions of the Delta Doo Dah, number eight will keep what worked this year but simplify as needed. Check in with www.deltadoodah.com after the New Year to follow developing plans for the 2016 rally. For more pictures from cruisers, see our photo gallery at <https://latitude38events.smugmug.com/Delta-Doo-Dah-2015>.

— *latitude/doodette' chris*