

Volume 2019, Issue 1

January 2019



TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL SAILORS - FOUNDED IN 1984

# TASS Topsider



## Commodore by Jay Leggett

Hi TASS.

Yes, over the first 35 years of TASS we have seen lots of progress and many things are quite different than "the way they used to be". We no longer register by paper or navigate solely with paper charts, most of us use Navionics on our electronic devices and I always have issues finding a stamp to mail a letter, because so much of our day to day lives has shifted to an online / digital world. Some have traded old sails in for newer materials to carry us through the winds faster and more efficiently. In 2018 we progressed from a very cumbersome and outdated online membership database tool to our new website software. Moving forward with up to date technology we now have greatly reduced hand written and time consuming administrative such as membership renewals, event, race and sail registrations which also eliminated many mistakes and confusion and we have gone green by making all events visible through the online calendar on the web. Realtime information, updates and digital photography allows us to share our stories on the TASS website and keep the information refreshed much more up to date.

Progress also means your Board has been busy looking at how we prepare TASS for the next 35 years, so our great sailing and social traditions are passed on to future generations. With the technology available to us today we have all become busier than ever. Our once very single member demographics have expanded to extended families, broader interest, additional hobbies with seemingly less free time, so we have to pick and choose where we spend time more carefully.

Over the past few years the Board has spent serious discussion time and energy on this topic in an effort to continue the cohesive



## **Commodore - Jay Leggett—continued**

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closeness of our club while being mindful of the fact that members have diversified significantly. Recently we asked you to participate in our survey about the locations and frequency of our meetings and the value you derive from the weekly meetings. The poll gave us great insight and there was a slight majority of votes supporting one monthly detailed information update meeting in Houston and Kemah, with the remaining two Thursday meetings in Houston being more of a casual social event, perhaps at different locations each month. Yes, we also saw a slight majority for perhaps a different venue in each location to offer more of a variety in food and beverage. You have challenged the board with your voice. If you have a favorite restaurant that you frequent near our current meeting locations; reach out to their manager to see if their facility would work for TASS to provide a no charge space for 20-35 people to meet on Thursday's from 6-8pm. It's VERY HARD to find an accommodating restaurant WITHOUT a "room fee", so let your Board know if you have any location suggestions, that would be a good fit for TASS.

*Beginning February 2019, we will undertake a variation of our meeting schedule and we want to be sure it is clearly communicated far in advance so that you can adequately prepare your schedules AND add these monthly "business" meetings to your calendar NOW so you won't miss out connecting with your TASS family and getting a first-hand update on what's happening in TASS.*

*The Kemah meeting will remain set on the 1st Thursday of the month and Houston will have our "business" meeting on the 3rd Thursday of the month. For now, the locations of THESE meetings (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday's) WILL NOT CHANGE!*



*What is the expectation of the meeting? The meetings will become our MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING with an agenda of an overview of important dates, events and updates. Additional we are planning to bring value to existing and potential new members by incorporating guest speakers, "mini" trainings or short presentations, guided discussions which benefits us as a sailing organization which is what our charter states. We also want to set TASS apart from other clubs by appealing to potential new members with a variety of activities, in addition to our mainstay of local regattas and leisure sail experiences. We also want to continue to offer the opportunity to learn more about sailing to expand your sailing skills with an ACTIVE ORGANIZATION.*

So, what becomes of the other Thursday's in Houston. The Thursdays other than the 3rd Thursday will become Social Gatherings (which might change from month to month –

## **Commodore - Jay Leggett—continued**

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**SO CHECK FOR UPDATES ON THE TASS CALENDAR.** Come as you are, visit, chat, dine and bring conversation, but there won't be a business portion to the meeting. We still want to encourage that SOCIAL element as many enjoy a weekly gathering and, in that respect also hope to alternate the location to bring you the variety in food and drink you desire. SO you'll need to keep up to date by reading the weekly TASS Blast and the monthly Topsider, as well as checking our online calendar for up to date changes. The Board is working out more details on this but we need a little more time AND help from our members with your ideas, to solidify our 2019 calendar. Our FIRST priority for January 2019 is to complete the Board Elections by the end of the month. We still have time for 2019 TASS Board nominations, so consider running for the Board to help our great TASS family continue to grow and by spreading information via word of mouth so please be sure to tell other TASS members and guests that your intent to support and attend the MONTHLY TASS BUSINESS MEETING(s) on the 1st Thursday in Kemah @ Iguanas Rajas and in Houston on the 3rd Thursday @ Barry's Pizza. We will update the TASS calendar online so you can always check there if you forget where to go & when. We hope to see a higher headcount at our monthly Business Meetings and could use your help moving forward by not just attending and BRINGING A GUEST, but also by spreading the word as you can write these dates in stone.



Your help in making the new monthly meeting format and all our events a success is vital and greatly appreciated, so signup early, and think about who you can invite to join you at a TASS event as we endeavor to offer our members so much more in 2019 you will have no excuse but to participate.

Again, I want to thank the 2018 Board AND all those that have served TASS over the past 35 years for their dedicated hard work to make TASS the great sailing "family" it is today. Making progress (and change) is NOT EASY and this Board has been very involved and dedicated to progress and future of TASS. Cheryl Morville shared some very heartfelt thoughts at the December Kemah meeting, "TASS is the FAMILY you have chosen, not just the one we were born into", so think about what you can contribute to TASS in 2019, whether it's serving on the Board for a term or two, or maybe organizing a single social event - we look forward to seeing YOUR ideas, so put on your thinking cap and reach out to us.

## Vice Commodore - Urs Rathgeb

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2018's Commodore's Cup is just barely a couple month's behind us, and we are already planning for a busy 2019 Racing Schedule.

First and foremost though, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to John Klumb, who will serve (at least) another year as Race Czar, and I look forward to work with him on the race program

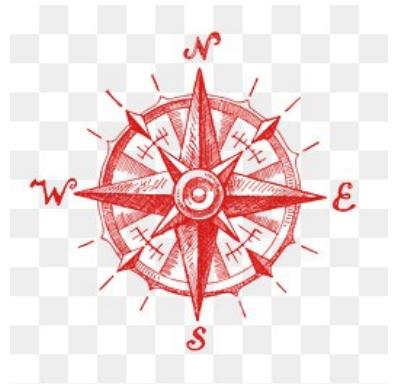
Once again this coming year, TASS will – besides members who are signing up their own boats – participate in the GBCA Icicle Races with a Charter Boat. The series will include races on each Saturdays in January (January 5, 12, 19, 26), with the final race scheduled for February 9. We are looking for crew willing to take an active hands-on participation on the charter boat, Tarah Shell, which we have reserved for these five Saturdays. Because we have set a limit to the number of crew signing up, cost per sail will be \$60.00 for members and \$70.00 for guests. After the race, we will meet at GBCA for rum and a snack. The race dates are posted to the calendar and registration for all races is open online. If you would like to hone your racing skills and join the crew on any of the race dates, please sign up early as space will be limited to 7 persons per race.

Also, I am happy to announce the TASS racing schedule for the 2019 season. The races are posted on the calendar, and we will make them available for sign up as we approach the respective dates, prior to Friday before the race. John Klumb will also be responsible for assigning boat handicaps and he will need to know your boat's PRF information prior to the race. If you are racing with a new boat, a new entry to TASS racing, or your boat situation has changed, please send your boat informant to [race@sailtass.com](mailto:race@sailtass.com).

TASS boat members will register and race for free. We are encouraging non-members to race with us so if you have friends in the racing community who wish to put their boats and crew through some fun practice races, TASS race series is a great place to participate. We have coordinated our schedule with other clubs in the Galveston Bay area to minimize any overlap dates and conflicts. Non-members registration will be \$20.00 per race.

Following the 2019 Race Calendar:

TASS 2019 Race Series		
MONTH	DAY	TASS Event
MARCH	16	Crazy Irishman Chase
APRIL	27	Race - Theme TBD
MAY	11	Race - Theme TBD
JUNE	1	Carol Becker Race
SEPTEMBER	21	Fall Equinox Race
OCTOBER	26	Totally Pink- Conquer Breast Cancer
NOVEMBER	9	Commodore's Cup

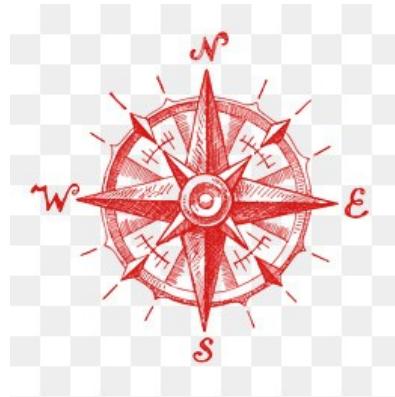


## **Vice Commodore - Urs Rathgeb—Continued**

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Following tradition, after race gatherings will also be planned and locations and race themes will be posted as we get closer to the season opener.

Please check the calendar online at [www.sailtass.com](http://www.sailtass.com) to register for races and race parties. We look forward to a great season and the finally with the Commodore's Cup in November and the announcement of the Commodore's Cup Winner at our annual holiday party in December 2019.

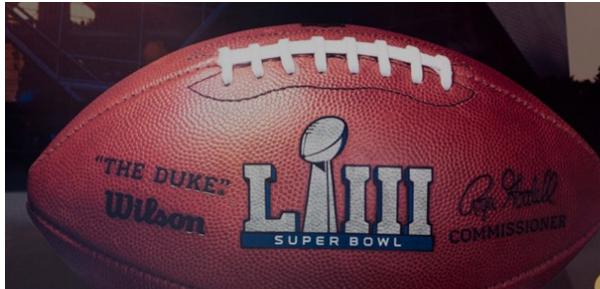


## **Social Director—Joanne Moschella**

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I hope that everyone had a wonderful Christmas and joyous Happy New Year! With the first of the month event of our great Christmas Party, the rest of the month was pretty quiet due to personal events and shopping to do.

We started the New Year with the Annual Black Eyed Pea Contest at Lois Geyer's home. She is writing about the event as the Houston Chronicle came down to do a story about our club.



The next event scheduled is going to be The Super Bowl Party hosted by Mark Langley. I am finalizing plans with him and will get it posted to the calendar. I will also try to get a movie night and dinner scheduled later this month up in Houston. If someone will volunteer to host the same type of event in Kemah, I will be glad to promote it on the calendar as well. Please contact me so I can assist you.

As many of you know, I am stepping down from the Board but I will still be very active in the club. I will be glad to train and assist an incoming Social Director for the job. It is truly worthwhile as you get to know the membership and I have acquired many dear friends from the experience. I have so enjoyed serving you these many years and will still be seeing you in the future.

Fair Winds and Safe Seas!

Joanne Moschella

## Social Director—Joanne Moschella—continued

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By Lois Geyer

### Black-eyed Pea Contest and Party

This year's party was attended by 24 members and guests. Also the Houston Chronicle sent a reporter and photographer to cover it!! I was so excited to get publicity for the club! Well, some facts were a little skewed: see article which I did not approve before printing.

Nancy Kahlden won the coveted pea trophy with her pea recipe. Laura Marlin Placed 2<sup>nd</sup> and Jim Blanc's peas were 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you to the Peggy Garcia and Dana Chapman for judging.

Good peas, good friends and good luck for TASS 2019!

### The Houston Chronicle visited the Black-eyed Pea Contest

LOCAL // HOUSTON CHRONICLE

### Luck and the high seas: Black-eyed pea contest rings in new year

Robert Downen Jan. 1, 2019 / Photos: Elizabeth Conley, Houston Chronicle / Staff photographer (shorten edit for Topsider by Commodore)



DICKINSON — Numbers 1 and 6 were the first to go. They lacked flavor. One had hamburger in it.

And Number 8? Dayna Chapman liked it "as far as a casserole goes."

But this was the Annual Black-Eyed Pea contest. And the crucial ingredient appeared missing.

"It's not a black-eyed pea," she said with authority. "It's a casserole."

Chapman turned to her notepad and etched a line through Number 8, occasionally sipping from a tall glass of Riesling while Peggy A. Garcia munched cornbread and compared the texture and flavor of the contest entries.

Soon, the two judges had presented their decision to the 30 or so members of the Texas Association of Social Sailors that made it to this year's event. Number 2 was the winner. "Two has the peas and ham. Not a bunch of extra junk," Chapman concluded.

## Social Director—Joanne Moschella—continued

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The contest has been a New Year's Day tradition for the sailing club since 1996, when Bob Simmons first etched the name "Sunrise" — his sailboat — into the wooden, plastic bean-adorned trophy for which the members compete each year. It's based on folk traditions that date back to the Civil War, when food was scarce in Southern states and black-eyed peas were a sign of good fortunes.

Things have changed with the sailing club's contest over the years, however. It used to be held after a night of partying on the club's various boats, offering a chance to ring in the New Year with food and friends and without the need to drive home. But then, Waterford Harbors slowly constructed piers, forcing the contest onto land.

"We were young and crazy back then," Geyer said.

This year the gathering was held in Lois Geyer's Dickinson kitchen.

### Trust, camaraderie and responsibility

The club, too, has changed. What was once a singles-only club has now seen more than 100 of its members get married. Together, they've sailed schooners across the world. They built trust, camaraderie and shared responsibility.

"The friends you made here will be your friends for life," one member said. Decades of memories of friends, seas and peas.

Mark Langley agreed. He's seen his fair share of the sea since helping found the club. There have been dozens of trips to San Francisco; a week-long battle with a hurricane in the Indian Ocean; and helping many of the club members become certified skippers, serve on the TASS Board, and even help some study for their U.S. Coast Guard skippers certificates.

He likes the parties, sure. But that's not why he was at Geyer's house Tuesday, surrounded by friends who refer to him as "the 'best skipper ever.'"

"It's about the long-lasting friendships and learning things on the water," he said.

The crew has grown in years and sailing experience together, too.

Younger people, the members say, just aren't interested in social clubs the way they once were before the Internet, not clubhouses, became the gathering place for many communities.

That means fewer interactions with our members and their vast sailing experience, and therefore the younger crowd makes assumptions about what they do or don't do.

"They assume we're old farts and don't have any fun," said Laurie Marline. "And boy, are they mistaken."

The New York native moved to Texas in 2012, and is now engaged to Henry Pine, who still goes bungee-jumping and takes his bride-to-be on excursions to China or Portugal.

"He's like Peter Pan," Marlin said, as Pine took a first bite of her black-eyed peas.

"They're edible. Different," he joked.

# **Membership Director— Patricia GUMBS**

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**TASS Membership is 157  
Strong and growing!**



Hello Tass as we approach the end of 2018 and are about to begin 2019 I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful and blessed New Year.

Please welcome Bill Turner and Karen Gertz.

## **TASS Membership Renewal Due**

Renewal for January is around the corner, if you have let your membership lapse, it is time to log on and renew. It is easy the website does all the work for you, just log in and follow the prompts.

We value all our members please remember this is your club, we encourage everyone to give us input on events you would like to see in the New Year. Contact us via email or let us know at the meeting. The Board is working on events for the coming year we are hoping to have some exciting events in 2019.

View the website calendar for upcoming events. Check the web for time and location.



**HAPPY NEW YEAR TASS**

**Happy Birthday to our January Members**



Member Name	Birthdate	Member Name	Birthdate
Dorothy Lee	2	Dayna Chapman	26
Malcolm Jones	3	Denise Hanrahan	27
Marsha Lutz	3	Augie Lipsanen	29
Britt Babcock	16	Clark Southmayd	31
Bruce Rose	20	Yvette Perry	31
Michael Vaughn	21	Charles Hanson	31
James Ewell	23		

## **Webmaster, Social Media—Thann Dauterive**

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Here we are in 2019 – how did that happen so quickly.

My message this month to our members is about your account and profile update. We have many members that have not ever logged into the new TASS membership system. When you finally try, there is a panic about the system working {or not}, or your password is missing etc. This always seems to happen when you are trying at the last minute to register for an event or to pay your membership dues.

SO, why not start off 2019 by going to TASS – [www.sailtass.com](http://www.sailtass.com) – login and if you have NEVER used the system select FORGOT PASSWORD. Follow the instructions given on the computer screen. It is really easy if you do the play by play. This will set up your password and THEN when you are ready to register for the Anniversary Party or any other event, BINGO, the system will be ready for you. Be sure to ACCEPT THE WAIVER at the bottom of the profile page too.

Updating your profile. It has been called to my attention that the data base is missing or has old information about YOU!

Well, this too is where you can help. You log into the system just like you do any online system. You have a profile of information about YOU just like the bank or credit card company or doctor's office has information about you.

If you find a BLANK field in your profile – please fill it in. If the information is incorrect, please {EDIT} it and correct the information. All this information can be maintained by you. This really helps us keep up with any changes in your information.

Should you have issues, do not hesitate to contact me. I take calls and email on this topic a lot and happy to help walk you through the process to log on. You will have to update your password or profile sooner or later as your renewal membership will arise at some point.

Looking forward to some great posting and photos covering the news of 2019 in TASS on the website. Be sure to check the site frequently.

## **Webmaster, Social Media—Thann Dauterive**—continued



**Friends of TASS – It takes a village to run a tribe.**

### **Announcement: Summer Sailstice Opportunity from Sailing Angels.**

TASS members are enthusiastically invited to participate in the Sailing Angels 2019 "Summer Sailstice" event on Saturday, June 22, 10 am – noon, on Galveston Bay.

This event will provide outings via sail or motor boats to the entire special needs community as well as our military veterans and their families.

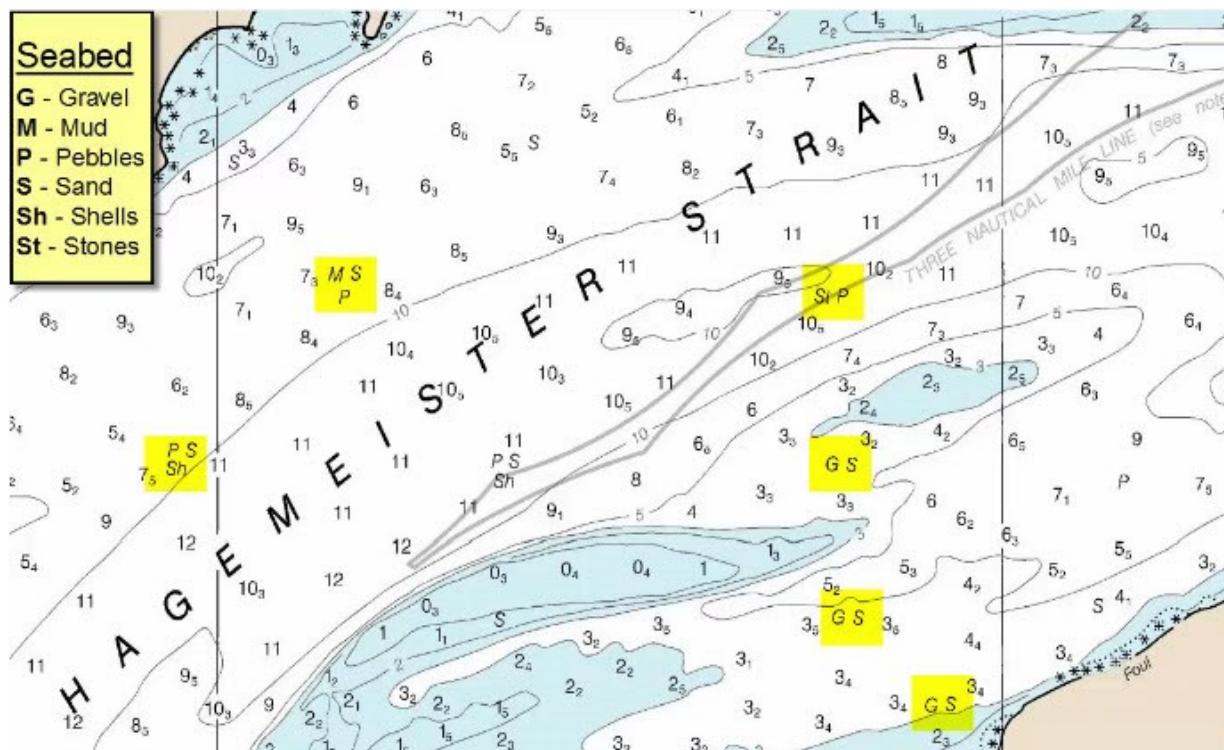
If you would like to participate, or have questions, please send an email to: [DebbieHughes@sailingangels.org](mailto:DebbieHughes@sailingangels.org) or call 281-732-9789. Let her know if you want to crew, or if you have a motor or sailing vessel. Your early response would be appreciated (now is good!) for planning purposes with the families.

*Note: The "Summer Sailstice" is observed worldwide and is held annually, near the time of the "Summer Solstice", to celebrate sailing/ being on the water.*

This little corner of information has become popular since I have started sharing information about some of our friends in the community and their activities. Supporting community activities makes us a stronger tribe.

# Tech Sailing Talk

Did you know that if you can read sea bottom chart navigation symbols, this will help you when you anchor or go aground. This skill could even save you lots of money if you choose to clean and paint your bottom--without a haul out!



Know the most common seabed symbols used on nautical and electronic charts throughout the world. This chart shows just a handful of the dozens of seabed symbols and abbreviations you may encounter when sailing or cruising. Read more below.

Sea bottom abbreviations tell you about the texture, color, and type of material. Navigation charts always show the type of material, such as sand, clay, or oyster shell, but could show texture and color from records gathered hundreds of years ago...

## Sailor's Tale from Long Ago

In the days of the square riggers, sea captains collected and shared depth and seabed information with each other.

Even today, the leadline has a place on the small cruising boat. No other device can tell you the type, texture, and color of the seabed with every cast. (Illustration courtesy of Wikipedia).



Stand by, On the Next-Mark!

## Tech Sailing Talk—continued

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A ship that approached an island landfall in thick, pea-soup fog could tell the distance off the reefs with the aid of an armed-lead.

The lead-line was the original depth sounder. Cylindrical in shape with a long marked line--it had a hollowed-out bottom.

The boatswain would smear a coat of tallow in the hollow so that a sample of the bottom would stick to the lead.

Then, he was sent as far forward as possible to "cast the lead". The lead was cast and the line eased until it became slack upon contact with the bottom.

The boatswain read the sounding from the marked line, pulled up the lead, turned it over, and examined the embedded sea-bottom sample.

Was it yellow sand? Or brown sand mixed with bits of shell? Or black mud? He shouted back the sounding, texture, and type of bottom to the Captain.

"By the mark 6! With white sand and shells, Cap'n!" This sequence continued, sometimes for hours. From this, the learned captain determined his distance off the "ship-killing" breakers ahead.

### Use This Five-Factor Seabed Strategy

Understand the nature of the seabed you sail over to make the best decision when you anchor, go aground, or careen your hull. With this knowledge, you will have the skill and confidence to...

- \* Choose the best bottom for anchoring
- \* Select the right type of marine anchor
- \* Decide how to anchor in poor bottoms
- \* Locate an ideal spot for careening
- \* Take the right action when grounded

## Tech Sailing Talk—continued

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Let's take a look at each of these five factors, use the seabed table, and determine how to use this in most any small boat cruising situation.

CHART SEABED ABBREVIATIONS		
Bottom Type	Bottom Texture	Color/Contrast
S—Sand	f or fne—fine	wh—white
M—Mud	bk or brk—broken	bl or bk—black
Cl or Cy—Clay	sy or stk—sticky	bu—blue
Sh—Shells	so or sft—soft	gn—green
Grs—Grass	h or hrd—hard	yl—yellow
K—Kelp		gy—gray
Rk or Rky—Rocky		br—brown
Co—Coral		lt—light
Co Hd—Coral Head		dk—dark
Blds—Boulders		
Oys—Oysters		
Ms—Mussels		

Know these bottom types, textures, colors, and contrasts. Most charts only show the bottom type. Others give you more detail with texture and / or color/contrast. (Illustration from ["Seamanship Secrets"](#)).

### 1. Choose the best bottom for anchoring

Which three of these twelve bottom types would be your choice for the safest anchorage for a marine anchor? Sand, hard mud, and clay give your sailboat anchor the best chance of a good, solid set.

Look at the second column at the bottom two abbreviations. Many charts show so or sft; h or hrd--alone, without a bottom type. Locate the closest bottom type within a mile. For example, if you see S within a mile of a hrd abbreviation, there's a good chance the bottom consists of hard sand. An M would mean hard mud.

### 2. Select the right type of marine anchor

Most any anchor will hold in protected waters in hard or sticky mud or clay. Cruisers in island anchorages often dive on sand bottoms to make sure the boat anchor buries up to the top of the shank. Lightweight boat anchors--like the Danforth--hold well in most sand, mud, or clay bottoms.

## Tech Sailing Talk—continued

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If you have any doubt whatsoever about the quality of the sea bottom (too soft, too hard), amount of swing room, or protection from the elements, use one or more larger plow or claw anchors (the CQR, Delta, or Bruce). Follow this golden rule of anchoring: "*When in Doubt, Get the Plow or Claw Out!*"

### 3. Decide how to anchor in poor bottoms

If you must anchor in soft bottoms (sand or mud), grasses, or any of the hard bottoms shown, take extra precautions. Use the heaviest anchor aboard with a trip line (see "Related Articles" below). Put out a second anchor or send down a sentinel in tight anchorages with less swing room or heavy marine weather. If necessary, rent a mooring for the night.

### 4. Locate an ideal spot for careening



This skipper careens a small cruising sailboat with anchors in a calm harbor.

World cruisers realize the cost benefits of careening the hull for cleaning and painting where haul outs are expensive--or non-existent!

## Tech Sailing Talk—continued

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To careen, you must find a bottom that will provide a firm, but soft cushion--such as sand or grass. The tidal range should be large enough to cause the location to dry out at low tide.

Position the boat to heel over so that the deck faces away from the incoming tide. This prevents flooding the decks and below decks.

Cushion the low side to protect the hull. Scrape, clean, and paint the high side. When the tide comes in, turn the boat around, and repeat the process.

In calm, protected waters you might be able to stand the hull upright. The keel must be strong enough to support the weight of the sailboat hull. Use anchors or timbers to keep the boat straight and the weight distributed.

### 5. Take the right action when grounded

All of us go aground sometimes--but the initial action you take makes a big difference (see "Related Articles" below). You need to know the type of bottom right away. Mud, sand, and clay aren't problems for most small cruising boats in protected waters.

But any bottom can turn dangerous in choppy seas, ground swell, or areas with lots of boat wake. If you ground on a hard bottom, determine the type of bottom from the nautical chart or take a bottom sample with a lead line. Next, check for damage below the waterline. If you have a crack or hole, stay put! Repair the damage with a temporary patch before you back off that shoal to prevent flooding.

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Know these simple abbreviations to increase the safety and security of your small cruising boat. That way, you will be able to choose a perfect anchorage, take the best action when grounded, or even save big \$\$\$'s on your next haul out!

## TASS Officers

February 2018—January, 2019

Commodore .....	Jay Leggett commodore@sailtass.com .....	713-459-0094
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Secretary .....	Shirley Nicola secretary@sailtass.com	
Webmaster, Social Media .....	Thann Dauterive webmaster@sailtass.com	
TASS Topsider—Editor .....	secretary@sailtass.com	

## TASS Membership Fees

New .....	\$65.00
Out-of-town/state .....	\$30.00

We're on the web:  
[www.sailTASS.com](http://www.sailTASS.com)

## Meetings

Will be changing  
effective 2/1/2019

Every Thursday Night

6:00 pm—Social Hour

7:00 pm—Meeting

Check the calendar at  
[sailtass.com](http://sailtass.com) for details

## TASS Sails

Leisure Day & Moonlight sails

\$50/members; \$65/Guests

Day sails depart at 12 or 1 pm till 5  
or 6 pm

Moonlight sails depart at 6 pm till 11  
pm

## Crew Training Sails

\$ 65 — \$ 85 Price depends on  
level of course presented