

WIND WORDS

Newsletter of the Convair Sailing Club

November • 2024

Hats Off To A Young Sailor



Enzo took his dad out in the E 192. It was a great day for a sail on San Diego Bay and Enzo, a pretty smart kid, didn't plan to let it go to waste. It went well. He may make it a regular thing. *R*



Enzo demonstrates proper tiller handling.

Ensign Ocean Race



Ensign racing for 2024 concluded with the annual ocean race off Coronado Island on October 19th. We were all looking forward to brisk winds and challenging conditions like last year's ocean race! Sadly this was not to be. Early winds were at 3 Kts at the highest and frequently dropped to near zero. Because of this, the Race Committee wisely modified the course by pulling in the Reaching marks from their original. *Continued on Page 2, Column 1.*

Victory Nationals Regatta at Mission Bay Yacht Club

Contributed by Commodore Sandy Leon



Photo: Joe Rollinson

The 2024 Victory 21 Nationals were sponsored by Mission Bay Yacht Club on October 12 and 13. Thirteen boats registered and *Continued on Page 4, Column 1.*

CSC Mourns The Loss Of Alex Leondis



Alexander Fredrick Leondis - 1929 / 2024

Long-time CSC member Alex Leondis passed away on September 20th. He is survived by two children from his first wife Blanche Leondis: his son Paul and daughter Lisa. From his second wife Marny Lee Leondis: Diana Larsen and Vaughn Dearing.

Interment at Miramar National Cemetery is set for Nov. 25, 2024 at 1:30 PM. CSC members are welcome to attend.

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Convair's Sandy Leon and Tom Bedford take Second Place trophy at Victory Nationals.

Continued from Page 1, Column 3.

inal half mile off the center of the course.

In spite of these modifications and the improved wind in the later part of the day, the race ran very slowly and some boats were trapped in areas of no wind for a period of time.

The E 722 experienced engine trouble and relied on the E 2 to tow them to the course. Apparently, this was all the help they needed. They had a relatively slow start but relentlessly moved forward, taking a decisive lead in the final leg.

E 2 finished dead last. This put them in a great position find the E 722 near sunset, under sail, south of Ballast Point in winds below 3 Kts. "Apparently the reason we sailed today was to make sure the E 722 arrived in time to clobber all of us and then tow them home before dark." said E 2 crew mate Jeff Nelson.

Dave and Craig's victory is impressive when you learn they were short a crew member and could not fly their spinnaker. And even more impressive when you consider that the race required **four spinnaker launches** by their competitors!

See page 7 for race results 

Race Data

Ensign Ocean Race		October 19, 2024						
PRO: Sandy Leon with Steve Forbes								
Start: Approx 12:45								
Boat	Skipper	Spin	1st	2nd	Finish			
722	Frank	none	1:39:52	4	2:50:51	2	3:29:22	1
323	Paul	blue/yellow	1:38:34	2	2:48:14	1	3:30:14	2
192	Terry	green	1:38:18	1	2:54:11	3	3:35:47	3
1122	Hector	orange	1:38:55	3	2:56:22	4	3:40:42	4
2	Tracy	blue/white	1:42:40	5	3:01:03	5	3:42:54	5

As shown below in Sandy's race day stats, Frank and Craig came in 1st place in Saturday's ocean race. Congratulations ! They climbed their way to victory from 4th place in the first leeward round, to 2nd, and finally to 1st. And, for those who may not remember, Frank and his crew also won the 2022 Ocean Race

Annnd, They're Off!

Talk about irony. It's often said that races can be won and lost at the starting line. This is more so in sailing because of the competition that takes place jockeying for position during the interminable six minute countdown.



So here's the final irony. Look at the photo at bottom of the page taken from the E 2. They are a long way off because they started first. You can see the E 1122 on the left just

ahead of the E 192. The E 323 is just crossing the start line followed closely by the E 722. Now look at the race data above. The five boats finished in the exact opposite order!



The E 2 was first off the start line and captured this shot of the other boats choosing a different tack. *Everyone is going wrong way but us!*



In January of 2024 the V 633 was renamed the Leondis in thanks for his contribution to CSC.

Alex started work at age 13 as a grocery store delivery boy at his father's fruit market and another nearby store. By age 16 he was an assembler at an engineering firm earning \$0.75/hour. During the summers of 1945-47, Alex was a lifeguard in Chicago on the shores of Lake Michigan, and told stories of rescue boats pitchpoling in huge waves during storms.

He attended Northwestern University on a ROTC scholarship, earning a BS in Mechanical Engineering in 1952, while participating in Pistol Team, College Algebra Club, Tau Beta Pi Honorary Association, ASME professional society, interning at the Brooklyn Naval Shipyard, and working in Northwestern's engineering research lab.

From 1952-1955, Alex served on the U.S.S. Shields, as Chief Engineer, in the Korean War. Whenever the weather got very hot, he would remind people that in Korea, he promised God that if he didn't freeze to death, he would never complain about being hot

again.

During the war, he met his first wife Blanche, in Japan. He was on R&R and she was teaching children of service members stationed there. He maintained friendships with his shipmates, and he and Marny enjoyed traveling to annual Shields' reunions up until 2017.

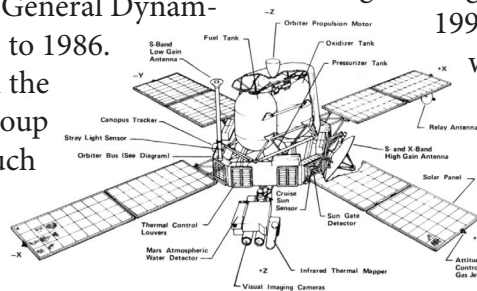
He briefly worked at General Electric Company in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1955, focusing on stress and torsion problems and vibration analysis of motor and generator components for locomotives.

After his part in the war, Alex attended the Illinois Institute of Technology (1955 – 1956) and earned a Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering. Afterwards, he joined Douglas Aircraft Company in Long Beach as Research Engineer from 1956 to 1958.

Then, the important part that eventually led him to sailing!

Alex accepted a job with Convair Astronautics-General Dynamics from 1958 to 1986.

He worked in the Dynamics Group on projects such as: the Surveyor and Viking missions, using the Atlas, Mercury, Centaur and Titan rockets, on issues including flutter, buffet, drift, slosh, and POGO. He made numerous trips to Florida Mission Control to help launch various rockets and at least one Apollo mission. He served as program manager for the Large Advanced Space System computer program and received a special award from NASA for the Tetrahedral Truss



Viking 1 Space Probe

Simplification Analogy in 1980. During these years, Alex became Chairman of Voters Organized to Think Environment (V.O.T.E.) which passed Proposition D in 1972. This proposition limited building height to 30' along the coast in San Diego County. Alex stayed with it from gathering signatures on petitions, to speaking at public hearings, through various lawsuits and appeals, being ruled unconstitutional by a Superior Court judge in 1973, until it was finally upheld by the California Supreme Court in December of 1974.

After retiring, he was coaxed back to General Dynamics at twice the pay, and worked part-time from 1986 to 1993. During his "retirement," he also served as an engineering instructor at San Diego State University in 1987.

Somehow, and this part is not as clear, Alex was hired by Analex Engineering Firm from 1991 to 1994. Records show he was sent to Russia to consult about POGO in 1997, so he may have still been working. This was despite having had a stroke in 1995 where

he lost the ability to speak. He worked hard to regain his speech prior to this trip.

Sailing became Alex's passion. He joined Convair Sailing Club in 1977 and was still racing in 2023. At age 93 he still drove to the docks to take sailboats out. Sailing was more than a hobby for Alex; it surpassed all previous hobbies, such as: skiing, dancing, hiking, growing fruit trees, and fixing

Victory Nationals.
Continued from Page 1, Column 2.



Joe Rollinson & John Killian secure 1st place.

Photo: Joe Rollinson

raced. That would be eight from MBYC, three from the Central Valley and two from CSC.



Sandy Leon and Tom Bedford secure 2nd place.

Photo: Joe Rollinson

Six races were scheduled with no throw out. The race was held on the ocean off Mission Beach. MBYC provided the race committee with multiple assisting boats.

On Saturday, the wind appeared to be around 8 to 14 Kts. There was a two-foot swell and the water was rough. Crews got wet, as did anyone who sailed too close to leeward of another.

Matt and Laura Bonander, from Fresno Yacht Club have their names on the Championship trophy twice. They did exceedingly well on Saturday, gathering in all three first place finishes, typically by a good margin. Sandy and Tom



Mike Norton & Bruce Plutchack in Mike's 565

Photo: Joe Rollinson

in the 648, finishing the day in second place with 10 points. Joe and John, racing for CSC, but also members at MBYC and using their own MBYC boat, #383, finished the day in third with 12 points, with another MBYC boat directly following with 13 points.

Sunday was a bit different, as is often the case when racing at MBYC. The wind dropped to 4 to 6, with a three-foot swell and calm water. It was often a struggle to keep the boats moving, especially downwind with sails hanging and the swell causing the sails to flap fore and aft. Only two races were sailed due to time constraints.

Matt and Laura, whose boat appeared to prefer wind over no-wind, added 19 points to their Saturday total of 3, and finished in third place with 22 points. Sandy and Tom continued to race well, adding 9 points and retaining second place. But Joe and John excelled in the light air, taking a



Richard Bistany & Graig Unger

Photo: Joe Rollinson

first and a third and adding their names to the Championship Trophy for the fifth time.

How competitive was the racing? Six different boats earned first or second place finishes. Joe and John won the championship with 16 points over five races! Second and third were 19 and 22 points.



Doug Diepholz & Terry Edlund

Photo: Joe Rollinson

See page 7 for race results.

The 2025 National Victory Regatta will be sponsored by CSC.

Time to start planning. 🏁



Tom Bedford, Sandy Leon, John Killian, Joe Rollinson, Laura & Matt Bonander

Photo: Joe Rollinson






October Race Results


October Victory Race Standings.

Skipper	Place	Points
Sandy Leon	1	25
Ryan Drobek	2	36
Peter Wells	3	46
Terry Edlund	4	48
Bruce / Robert	5	54
Craig Unger	6	70
James Walker	6	70
John K / Joe R	8	84
Dan Battiste	9	86
Tom Bedford	10	91
Fred MacDougall	11	108
Jack Cabeen	12	115
Gregory Herbster	13	117
Greg Roberts	14	119
Joe Curran	15	124
Hugo Day	16	126
Doug Bass	17	131
Tabor's Pirates	18	140
Bob Lewis	19	149
Omar & Amy	20	167
Rajeev Jain	21	176
Mark Baker (MBYC)	22	187
Kim Carter (MBYC)	23	188
Fernando Valera	24	191
J Otto / D Gayon	25	199

2024 Victory Nationals Regatta Race Results

October 12 & 13, 2024

					R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4	R 5	Total
1	Team Joe/ John Rollinson/ Killian 	383	Pinchy Cabrones	MBYC	3	3	6	1	3	16
2	Sandy Leon Tom Bedford 	648	Liberator	Convair SC	2	5	3	7	2	19
3	Matt Bonander Laura Bonander	127	None	Fresno YC	1	1	1	10	9	22
4	Michael Tabler Kyle Tabler	209	Plum Duff	MBYC	9	2	4	2	11	28
5	Larry Schmitz Aaron Sturm	262	Tres Amigos	MBYC	11	7	7	6	1	32
6	Missy Hansen Rod Hansen	428	My Black Pearl	Fresno YC	6	4	11	3	8	32
7	Doug Diepholz Terry Edlund 	60	La Chuparosa	MBYC	8	8	8	5	6	35
8	Don Bonander Wendy Bonander	414	None	Stockton SC	4	9	9	11	4	37
9	Paul Schwichteberg Larry Schmitz	199	Free Martini	None	5	6	2	12	13	38
10	David Love Kim Carter	552	Afortunado	MBYC	10	10	5	8	5	38
11	Mark Baker John Coffman	640	None	MBYC	12	dnf	10	4	7	47
12	Mike Norden Bruce Plutchack 	565	Checkmate	MBYC	7	11	12	9	10	49
13	Richard Bistany Craig Unger 	610	None	Convair SC	13	12	13	dnf	12	64

 Indicates at least one CSC member on board.

What a difference a week makes!
Craig Unger, with teammate Frank Long came from behind to win the Ensign Ocean Race!

October Ensign Race


Boat	Skipper	SAT 16 Mar	SAT 20 Apr	SAT 18 May	SAT 15 June	SAT 20 July	SAT 17 Aug	Ocean 19 Oct	Throw Out Adjust	Total
192	Terry	2	1	2	1	6	2	3	-6	11.0
323	Paul	4	4	1	2	4	3	2	-4	16.0
1122	Hector	6	3	7	3	1	1	4	-7	18.0
2	Tracy	1	2	5	5	3	4	5	-5	20.0
722	Frank	5	5	3	6	2	5	1	-6	21.0
453	Bob	3	6	4	4	6	6	6	-6	29.0

Series Scoring: Lowest total score for series wins

DNC	Did not come	# boats + 1
DNS	Did not start	# boats + 1
DSQ	Disqualification	# boats + 1
DNF	Did not finish	# boats + 1
JNS	Justified not start	# boats + 1

His contributions to Convair Sailing Club over the decades are legion. He was a key volunteer from the beginning, serving on the board in various capacities including as Commodore. Among his many contributions were: His many years serving as the Chief of Racing, work on establishing the CSC Rule Book, his many years serving as an instructor, his help establishing relationships with Torrey Pines Sailing Club, Mission Bay Yacht Club, Southwestern Yacht Club and Fresno Yacht Club.

He also served as Fleet Captain, becoming an expert in boat maintenance.

Alex was a very successful racer having won the Shotwell Sailor Of The Year in 1983, 1989 and 2009. "He talked to his sails", says Harry Smith. "It's one of his secrets to success." He was also a long time coach of the SuperSloopers where he helped develop their routines and communications. For more on Alex's contribution to the club, see the January 2024 *WindWords*. 

Testimonials And Reflections From Convair Members

It was a pleasure and an honor to learn from Alex. He will be very much missed.

-Jose Otero 

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If you did not know Alex..he had a clock. It was just a regular clock but Alex had re-engineered it so the minute hand counted seconds and the hour hand counted minutes. He used it for racing. It hung on the cuddy. During one race I fell on the clock.. There was a lot of blood and the clock was in pieces. Back at the dock Alex pointed

me to the first aid kit which was followed by stitches at urgent care. I took weeks to repair but Alex had his clock completely re-built by next Thursday.

I only sailed with Alex during the last four years of his sailing career so I'm sure I only got a glimpse of the true Alex. But the glimpse told a lot. He was precise, "pull your main sheet in one inch" or "I want the inner tell-tale to flutter 50% of the time". Alex had a gauge to measure the draft of the mainsail. He would quickly tell me if I was off course, to make sure to attach the cathodic protection to the rudder and to never, never let the sails touch concrete.

We often sailed without many words. Much was simply understood. There were times though he laughed. When things went wrong, like they can when sailing, Alex had a short laugh which meant, that happened, let's get over it and win this race.

He will be greatly missed.

-Jim Walker 

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Several of us enjoyed sailing with Alex many times. He was a fine sailor to be sure. I'm grateful that he was at the Superslooper party at your home just a few weeks ago.

Alex was the very definition of an "Old Salt", yet he had a kind heart.

-Bill Burch 

• • •

I had the honor and pleasure of sailing with Alex on several occasions over the past 15 years, and in my mind, he was the iconic Convair Club member. If you were lucky enough to pick up some of his sailing techniques, share them with those who missed out. His contributions to the club throughout his life were immeasurable, including maintaining the fleet, volunteering, board positions, racing and the Thursday Sloopers.

But beyond the sailing, my favorite memories were hearing about the early days of the Club, his interest in abolishing the US Electoral College, and learning that he served in the Korean War. When I realized that he was the same age as my father, I came to appreciate the fact that Alex lived an extraordinary, long, fulfilling life in style.

-Dan Hildebrand 

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I am so glad I had the opportunity to see Alex one last time at Harry's and Sandra's party recently. It is truly sad to hear of his passing.

I can't say I knew Alex as well as some of the members in the club, but I did get the opportunity to sail with him several times. I also knew about the old clock that hung from the cuddy door that he used and cherished as his unique timepiece in racing.

He was the epitome of a crusty old sailor, and I mean that in the most endearing way, because he was a man I came to admire for his sailing abilities, if not respect highly. He was formidable and knew the craft of sailing like none other. He told me once, when asked, that he had been sailing since he was 7 years old and had experience building boats. I believe he lived to sail. He loved it, and as he battled courageously with his health issues in the past few years, we all began to realize how much effort he put into the Thursday sailing sessions.

My wife Nancy & I extend our sincere condolences to his daughter and other family members.

-Peter and Nancy Kern 

• • •

I was lucky enough to sail with him my very first time racing with Convair. I was so intimidated just because of his reputation for both expecting and delivering perfection. I had recently built a clock from a kit and a stitch-and-glue sailboat in my garage, so we hit it off right away. That clock was such a unique conversation piece. He could somehow inspire both intimidation at his tremendous ability and complete self-confidence in my own rudimentary skills.

So sad to hear this news.

-Michael Messner 

• • •

*"A great tree has fallen
in the forest,
and those in his shadow
have been crushed
in his falling.*

*There is a great hole in the sky
where he once stood,
and none shall grow so great as
to fill it"*



SAN DIEGO

Marine Navigation Class

Date : Wednesday, October 2nd, 2024 weekly for 10 weeks

Time : 6:30 – 9:00 PM

Place : San Diego Yacht Club, 1011 Anchorage Lane, San Diego, CA

Cost : \$75 for USPS members, \$95 for non-members

Contact : Doug Bass (dougbass1@gmail.com)



Marine Navigation is the first course in the sequence of USPS courses on navigation, covering the basics of coastal and inland navigation. This course focuses on navigation as it is done on recreational boats today and embraces GPS as a primary navigation tool while covering enough of traditional techniques so the student will be able to find his/her way even if their GPS fails.

The course includes many in-class exercises, developing the student's skills through hands-on practice and learning. Ten classes of three hours each normally are scheduled for presentation of this course. In addition the students have seven days to complete the open book exam.

Topic: Marine Navigation Class

Time: Wednesday, October 2nd, 2024 06:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Registration: <https://www.usps.org/cgi-bin-nat/eddept/800/getregformx.cgi?L-18142>

