



wind & currents

Newsletter of the San Francisco Boardsailing Association

Spring, 2002

Tips For The New Season

Ready For Spring?

The weather is starting to turn. Hopefully we are thinking about saving some of those sick (of work) days for the water instead of the snow. It's spring and windsurfing is getting ready to call out to the masses, rather than just the few "winter die hards" that have had a few great days already (those brave, frozen, lucky dogs!!!)

The shops and schools are getting ready for the upcoming season. Are you? Yes, you have things to do, too! It's time to move those snow chains, flares, extra blankets, shoes, jackets, and 1.8 gal of extra gas out of your car. Take time now to think about the following and you won't feel as stranded and helpless out on the water the next time you get caught "without your harness" (with your pants down).

1. Stop by your local windsurfing store, pick up some line. Replacing downhaul and outhaul lines is elementary. But when was the last time you changed the INHAUL line on the front end of your boom?
2. Clean up your favorite fin with a little filler and sandpaper. If it's too much work or beyond repair, replace it with the same make and model. Either one will help rekindle your relationship with your board.
3. Give your board a little TLC. Make sure it hasn't gotten damaged during the winter. Check for cracks and repair them before you

4. Make sure you're comfortable on the water and most importantly IN the water. Winter can sometimes make those wetsuits, harnesses, life jackets and helmets a little snug. Always overdress in the beginning of the season even if it's a tight fit. I always dress for being comfortable in the water (wet) and not on the board. This keeps me motivated and raises my sailing level by encouraging me to try harder maneuvers.
5. Taking a private lesson or two right away is a big help. It will "clear out the cob webs" sooner and help you avoid developing BAD HABITS that last you the ENTIRE season.
6. "How goes the battle?" Make sure your safety equipment is also in great shape! Sailing with an uphaul is a must and extra line taped to your spreaderbar or boom arm comes in handy during self-rescues. A small knife and flares don't hold up to the elements forever; make sure both are in working order. Check your first aid kit. Restock the water-oriented first aid supplies that may have been used up last season.
7. Renew your local club membership. Your association is working for you and needs your support! When things go bad . . . Never

(continued on page 6)

Vote For Your Board!

Election of SFBA board members will be held in July via a ballot in that month's newsletter. There are currently eight board members up for re-election. Nominations for a ninth board member are encouraged and are being accepted up until June 1, 2002.

Serving on the SFBA board is a great way to make a difference in shaping the Bay Area environment. If you are interested in serving or know someone who would make a good candidate, please contact Rick Paillon, rpaillon@cwnet.com.

To be nominated for the board one must be a current member of SFBA, have paid 2002 dues and affirm that he/she is willing to serve.

Current board members running for reelection are: Peter Thorner, Nancy Peck, Suzanne Suwanda, George Haye, David Nelson, Benita Zimmerman, Richard Zimmerman, and Rick Paillon. Officers are elected from among the board members by the board.

If you have any questions, please contact Rick Paillon.

Spring Party!

SFBA is planning a spring party — details available soon at www.sfba.org.

And if you're available to help out, please contact Suzanne Suwanda (suwanda@earthlink.net).

Keep your eye on the website for party date and venue.



Eastshore State Park

The planning process for the new Eastshore State Park continues. The park will extend along the shoreline north of the Bay Bridge and will include parts of Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Albany and Richmond. SFBA members have been actively exploring the possibility of having a new windsurfing launch on the Albany Bulb, which is closer to the wind line than Point Isabel. The Albany landfill extends out toward the "Olympic Circle" area and has potential for a great high wind launch site. While there has not been any opposition to a launch itself, some groups are opposed to vehicles on the Bulb. The SFBA has been working to educate planners so that they understand that allowing for one relatively small parking area can open up thousands of acres of the Bay to those who want to do more than stand on the shore to admire the view.

The road to the Albany Bulb already exists and a parking area could take up less than one acre on the 40 acre Bulb.

The planning process will also shape the improvements that will be made to the Point Isabel site. For more info, contact Sue Beyer - sabeyer@attbi.com, (510) 525-8157

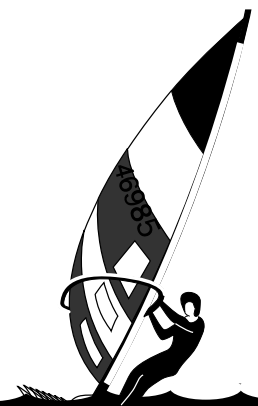
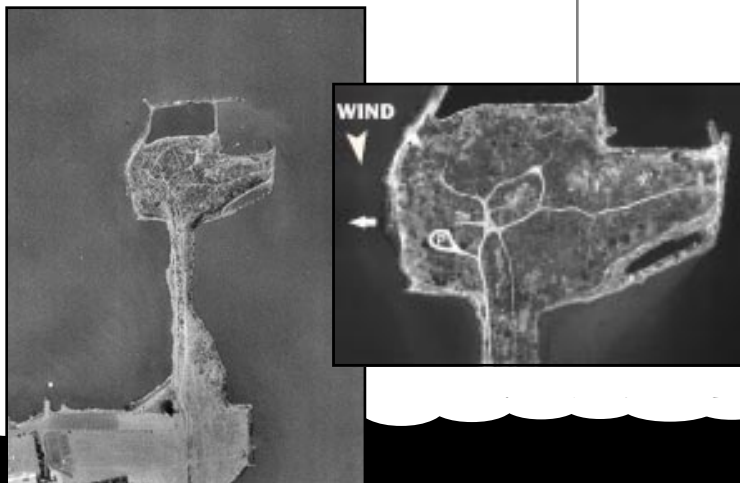
Coyote Point

The process of developing a new master plan for Coyote Point Park is continuing. After considering all of the surveys and public comments, San Mateo County Parks has presented a plan that includes a number of improvements. The good news is that the plan calls for the construction of a restroom with a wind block and showers to be located at the north end of the area where windsurfers park. The plan also calls for a new concession building farther back from the shoreline but in roughly the same area as the current building.

The plan will only be finalized after it goes before the Parks Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Windsurfers must show up at the Parks Commission and the Board of Supervisors later in the process to make sure that the bathroom/shower facility stays in the plan and to push it as a priority so that it gets funded earlier rather than later. Such an effort could be the difference between seeing the new facility in 2 years instead of in 5 or 10 years. The next public meeting will be before the Parks Commission in 4-6 months – please check www.sfba.org for updates and meeting dates.

RioVista/Sherman Island

Many windsurfers have expressed concerns about the water quality in the Delta. State regulators will review a policy that has exempted agricultural businesses from state clean-water regulations since 1982. There are currently no limits on agricultural discharges of pesticides and fertilizers in the Central Valley. Sampling of Delta waters by CALPIRG and Pesticide Action Network found pesticides levels that are toxic to aquatic life more than half of the time. The decision to review the policy and to commit new funds for monitoring and testing was made following the filing of a lawsuit by Waterkeepers (the parent of SF BayKeeper and DeltaKeeper - see www.sfbaykeeper.org), Earthjustice, and CALPIRG. If you have a health problem as a result of contaminated water, please report it so that WaterKeepers can document conditions that adversely affect windsurfers, kitesurfers, and the marine life that shares our waterways. In the Delta, please contact Bill Jennings of DeltaKeeper at (209) 464-5090. In the Bay Area, contact the BayKeeper/DeltaKeeper hotline at (800) KEEP BAY.





SFO Cited for Pollution Again; Still Pushing to Pave the Bay!

San Francisco Airport is still pushing to pave more of the Bay for runways, despite recent global and local developments. This defies logic, fiscal reality, pollution laws and public opinion.

Landfill has already reduced the Bay's size by one-third. SFO's runway expansion would cover an area twice the size of Treasure Island. It would destroy fish, wildlife and water quality by dredging toxic muck, and dumping a mountain of dirt in the water.

The airport has just been cited as a chronic Bay polluter for spewing cyanide, sewage and other toxics into the water at least 50 times, after failing to upgrade its wastewater plant. How can the airport say it can't afford to obey pollution laws? It has already spent \$64 million on lobbyists, spin doctors and consultants to push for runways in the Bay. Now SFO wants to spend \$200 million more on the project, although it faces a \$100 million

budget deficit this year. Actually building the runways could cost \$10 billion and take a decade to complete.

In November, San Franciscans said clearly that they don't trust political appointees to protect the Bay. Proposition D passed by a 3-to-1 margin, giving the people a vote on massive Bay fill projects. But airport officials are bent on filling the Bay. It is time to halt these plans, Save The Bay, and develop regional transportation solutions that protect what we hold dear. That's how the Bay Area has preserved its special quality of life and natural resources. We are better off today with the Marin Headlands, Crissy Field and San Bruno Mountain as open spaces, not dense development. We still have some Bay left because we rejected the plans to dam it, fill all its shallow areas and leave only a narrow river.

Runways in the Bay are out of step with what the region needs, what the public wants, and what the airport can afford. Halting SFO's Bay paving project is the only responsible course. With a perspective — I'm David Lewis.

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Thank you to David Lewis, executive director, Save the Bay, for permission to reprint this Perspective which aired on KQED-FM, Monday, 1/14/2002. For more information visit www.savesfbay.org.



Photo: Ken Hartz, Rider: Steve Sussman

Celebrate the Bay

This April, Bay Area Earth Day will “Celebrate the Bay” at festivals from Gilroy to Golden Gate Park, from Santa Cruz to Sacramento, and from the South Bay to Berkeley. Volunteers will restore wetlands and riparian habitat, clean up creeks and beaches, and plant trees and native plants.

In keeping with the exceptional diversity of the Bay Area, over 40 organizations will be organizing and participating in a wide variety of Earth Day events this spring—truly providing something for everyone. Activities include hands-on restoration projects, hikes and kayak outings, educational forums, and just reflection and connection to nature.

Why Protect the Bay?

The Bay may be the physically defining feature of our region, but its values often remain hidden. Bay Area Earth Day 2002 provides an opportunity to appreciate the value of the Bay-Delta estuary, and to articulate the current issues facing our Bay and our watershed.

Ecological value. San Francisco Bay is the largest and most ecologically important estuary on the U.S. Pacific Coast. Its unique ecosystem, created by the confluence of fresh

and salt water in the Bay-Delta estuary, provides critical habitat for over five hundred bird, fish and wildlife species. The wetland and riparian habitat of the Bay estuary supports fifty percent of threatened and endangered species in the Bay Area, and over seventy percent of commercial and recreational fish species. San Francisco Bay is also one of the most important stops along the Pacific Flyway for migratory waterfowl.

In addition to providing valuable wildlife habitat, wetlands and creeks also provide economic benefits, recreational opportunities and generally contribute to a higher quality of life for residents of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Recreational value. But for many residents, the Bay is most valuable for its contributions to their quality of life. San Francisco Bay, wetlands and creeks are frequented by recreational fishermen, kayakers and canoeists, birdwatchers, nature photographers, hunters, windsurfers, environmental educators and their students, hikers and sailors.

Celebration, Exploration and Restoration

Whether we enjoy a view of the Bay out our window, or windsurf across the waves;

whether we go for lunchtime walks along the Bay Trail, or kayak the inland rivers of the Delta, the Bay is part of our lives.

The San Francisco Bay Estuary contains 90% of the remaining coastal wetlands in California, and most of the state’s potential sites for coastal wetland restoration. But those wetlands will not recover without our attention. It will take time and work to counteract the effects of development and urbanization. Our efforts will determine the health and the future of our Bay.

So join us in the celebration, exploration and appreciation of our Bay, and take part in its protection and restoration—this Earth Day, and in years to come.

* * *

Thanks to Jessica Nusbaum, coordinator of the regional Bay Area Earth Day Coalition, for this contribution to the SFBA newsletter. She can be contacted at (650) 962-9876 x302 or earthday@acterra.org.

At press time, the one event at a board sailing site is the Berkeley Bay Festival: <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/marina/marinaexp/bayfest.html> If you would like to volunteer to set up a SFBA table at the Berkeley site, contact Richard Zimmerman (windrider@ProtectOurBay.com), or Jessica (see above). There may be an event centered around Coyote Point also but that has not been confirmed. Monitor the Earth Day web site (www.BayAreaEarthDay.net) for more information.



Message from the U.S. Coast Guard

The 1000-yard security zones around San Francisco and Oakland International Airports are still in effect. These zones are now clearly marked by white/international orange informational buoys.

The Coast Guard continues security patrols and active vessel escorts among other activities dealing with Port Security and requests our assistance monitoring activities out on the water. Places of particular interest are:

- * Bridges
- * Entrances to tunnels
- * Power plants
- * Water intakes
- * Oil facilities
- * Chemical facilities
- * Fuel docks
- * Military bases

What we should look for:

- * Fishing or hunting locations not typically used for fishing or hunting
- * Unattended vessels
- * Unusual boat characteristics
- * Any aggressive activities
- * Unusual filming activities
- * Unusual diving operations
- * Recovering or tossing items into or onto the water or shoreline
- * Unusual number of people on board
- * Lights flashing between boats and shore at night
- * Frequent trips between some of the above points of interest

Please continue to report any unusual or suspicious activity to the Coast Guard via telephone (415-399-3451) or VHF radio or simply contact 9-1-1. The reports you make

may save your life or many in the area and could be key to fighting terrorism in our waters.



Security Zone at SFO



The sun was setting at the end of another great windsurfing day at Crissy Field. The wind had died quickly and the tide was ebbing hard. I was scanning the water with my binoculars to make sure that all the swimming windsurfers would make it back to the beach. Just as I was thought everyone was accounted for, a worried windsurfer came up to borrow the binoculars. He scanned all the sails in the water but none was the right color. A quick check revealed that the missing windsurfer's car was still in the lot and his street clothes in the car. I loaned my VHF radio to the concerned windsurfer and he contacted the Coast Guard. As they were gearing up for a nighttime search and rescue mission, the missing windsurfer showed up with an unusual story...

Chad (name changed to protect the innocent—or is it the guilty?) had been sailing near the north tower of the Golden Gate Bridge. He was having blast launching big jumps off the large rolling swells... until he landed a big jump and snapped his board in half. He was farther west than any of the other windsurfers and no one was close enough to hear him. Chad quickly realized that he was going to have to act fast and swim to the Marin Headlands to avoid being swept out to sea. He realized that the rig would only slow him down, so he ditched it. He kept one piece of the board for a flotation device and started swimming crosscurrent for shore. He was already out past the Golden Gate Bridge.

While swimming for shore and riding the ebb farther out to sea, he was relieved to see a Coast Guard vessel heading in his direction at high speed. His relief was short lived. The boat came within 100 yards and then slowed and turned away. Confused, Chad watched and waited, but they didn't come any closer. He started yelling, but could not get the attention of the crewmembers on deck. He saw the crew haul three windsurfers and their gear out of the water, one after the other. Chad hoped he had been spotted, but once the last windsurfer was out of the water, the vessel sped away. Realizing that he again held his fate in his own hands, Chad started a steady swimming rhythm. He was elated to make the Marin Headlands with some light to spare, and scrambled up the winding dirt trail to the roadway just in time to startle and amuse two Italian tourists on their motorcycles. They were riding their way across the USA and were glad to have an opportunity to meet a local and learn about his strange customs. Chad rode back across the Gate in high style.

Some days later, I relayed Chad's story to the Commander at Coast Guard Station Golden Gate who said he had good news for Chad. The day

after Chad's ordeal, a Coast Guard crew recovered a windsurfing sail and half a board from the Potato Patch, about 5 miles outside the Gate. A passing boat had found the gear and called the Coast Guard. Because they did not have the details of Chad's ordeal, they launched a search and rescue operation. They ultimately called off the search when there was no additional report of a missing person.

Chad did escape with his life and, ultimately, his gear. There are a few lessons that come from his story:

Keep the Coast Guard Updated.

It is important to report people in distress to the Coast Guard and to call back immediately when that person is safely onshore and whenever gear is abandoned or recovered. Keeping the Coast Guard apprised prevents an unnecessary rescue operation and could also get your gear back.

Wear a Warm Wetsuit.

A warm wetsuit is your life insurance. Chad spent a long time in the water, but was wearing a wetsuit that was heavy enough to keep him warm.

Carry a Whistle.

If Chad had carried a rescue whistle, he might have ridden home on a boat and avoided a long swim.

Carry a Light/Strobe. Chad made it to shore before dark, but just barely. Once night falls, your chances of being found on the water are very low, even if they know your general vicinity... unless you have a light source. A strobe is ideal, but even a flashlight helps. The helicopter crews use light enhancing goggles that make your small light look like a landing beacon. Reflective tape will also greatly increase your odds of being spotted if the rescuers are using searchlights.

Consider Carrying a Radio. If Chad had carried a radio, he could have called for help. We all know that the Coast Guard is not a taxi service, but it is important to keep all your options open. We should all recognize our limits when setting out, but the fact is that anyone who sails offshore can end up in trouble.

All of this leads to some thoughts about VHF radios. More sailors than ever are choosing to carry waterproof VHF marine radios—which hold up better on the water than cell phones. In an emergency, the VHF radio will allow you to talk directly to the Coast Guard dispatcher

and to the crews on any rescue craft. The one serious limitation is that VHF radios only transmit on a line of sight basis. In most parts of the Bay, this is not a problem.

Anyone who sails well offshore should consider carrying a radio both for personal safety and as a community service. I have carried a radio for five years now. While I have not had to call for my own rescue, it has allowed me to call in help for others and to report reckless behavior by boat operators. The radios generally cost from \$150 to \$250. Here are some recommendations:

Buy a submersible rated radio.

This is the highest level of water resistance. Even the submersible rated radios can suffer water damage, but they hold up better and last longer. Make sure that your radio has a warranty and hang on to your receipt.

Carry your radio in a waterproof pouch.

Even though the radios are "waterproof," they can eventually fail from water damage or corrosion. If you find moisture in your waterproof pouch or if you carry your radio wet, make sure to rinse it with fresh water after each session.

Transmit from a waterproof pouch.

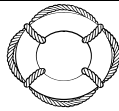
In high wind, radio transmissions can be difficult to understand due to noise from wind hitting the microphone. With a properly designed pouch, you use the radio in the pouch and the bag blocks the wind.

Invest in a good battery. Many radios use the older Ni-Cad battery type. These batteries do not hold a charge as long and have "battery memory effect" that results in greatly reduced operating times if you don't discharge and recharge your battery frequently. Instead, get lithium-ion or nickel-metal hydride (Nimh) batteries. While these may cost more, they will greatly reduce the likelihood of a dead radio in your rescue pack when you need it.

Test your radio regularly. VHF marine radios can fail under tough use. Sometimes the failure isn't obvious. Transmit and receive a brief test call on Channel 9 to ensure that your radio is in good working order.

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Use a distinct call name.

There have been instances where two windsurfers were calling the Coast Guard at the same time and identifying themselves only as ‘windsurfer. Use a call sign that includes your name and location and repeat your call sign with each transmission: “This is windsurfer (or kitesurfer) Smith off Crissy Field reporting....” Only one party at a time can speak, you must end each transmission with the word ‘over’ so that the other party knows when they can speak.

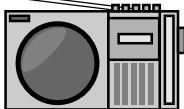
Use Channel 16 in Emergencies.

Channel 16 is for emergency use only and is monitored by the Coast Guard and many civilian boat operators. Once you have contacted the Coast Guard, they may ask you to switch to another channel to keep channel 16 clear. This will usually be Channel 21A (twenty-one alpha) or 22A (twenty-two alpha). If you are not sure if a situation is an emergency, it is often better to make the call rather than wait until things become worse, especially if it is near sunset. The Coast Guard can make a decision based on circumstances.

Use Channel 9 for non-emergencies.

Channel 9 is for recreational boating use. You can use this channel to communicate with other windsurfers, kitesurfers, or boaters while on the water. In you are in a difficult situation that does not qualify as an emergency, you may be able to get non-emergency assistance by contacting nearby boats on Channel 9.

Comments or questions? – thorner@sfba.org



(Tips continued from front page)

sail without a buddy. Both of you can give each other sailing tips of the water. Sailing with some one who’s better than you will also help you get to the next level sooner. Just remember that if your buddy goes in for the day, you should, too. When somethin breaks it’s usually when I decide to take “one last run for the day.”

Never sail out farther than you want to swim back. If you do have to swim back, quickly decide whether you should derig your sail or swim in as is. Don’t second guess yourself! You’ve just made an educated decision so stick to it! [Unless you are (quickly) told otherwise by someone trying to help you.]

If your mast breaks, keep all of your parts! (A warranty is only good when you have broken pieces to exchange.) Quickly slide the top of the broken part out of the luff sock (the ripped luff sock will get worse if you don’t). Then slide the pointy end through one of your front footstraps toward the tail. Keep the broken parts parallel to the board. This secures the mast to the board 90% of the time, even if you take a tumble in the surf. Now you can decide to derig the rest of the sail or swim it in from the nose of the board.

If your fin goes for a deep swim, KEEP your clothes (harness) ON! I hear all the time about how someone once read: “You should tie your harness to the tail of the board for resistance and slog in.” I think a harness manufacturer wrote the article because most of the people I’ve talked to lose their harness and then need to replace both. TOO MUCH time is also spent drifting while trying to secure the harness to the tail. Unfortunately it’s a slow slog in

and the harness—9 times out of 10—becomes untied and so waterlogged that it sinks like a brick. However, now that your harness is missing, you are forced to slog in unhooked whether you like it or not...

Here’s the sailing part of the article you’ve been waiting for: While slogging in (with your feet straddling the mast foot) sink your windward rail for some lateral resistance if you find yourself headed up wind of where you launched. The wrong beach is better than no beach!

Sometimes swimming in with everything is not an option. If you decide to get rid of something, I recommend the deep-6-ing the sail. Remember a board is the closest life preserver around and the rig will eventually sink. I like sticking with both because you have a BIG, BRIGHT flag to wave and will sometimes drift less with a rig attached.

One last thought: You should be able to uphaul every board you take out on the water!! I uphaul more than I waterstart even on 75 liter boards!! At 165 lb. a board is actually less affected (bounced around) by the chop if it’s under water!! Stand by for more tips in the next newsletter!! Happy sailing, and “poof” gone!!

* * *

Jason Voss is an equipment tester for Windsurfing magazine and an instructor at various sailing sites in the San Francisco Bay Area for Delta Windsurf Co. (916-777-2299) in Rio Vista. He’s sponsored by Aerotech, Exocet, Fiberspar, Epic Gear, Pro.Limit, and Sticker Rush.

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Events Calendar

APRIL

Fri 12 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

Sun 14 - Swap Meet at Boardsports Marin

Fri 26 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

Sun 28 - Swap Meet at Boardsports Berkeley

MAY

Sat & Sun 4-5 Elvstrom Zellerbach (IMCO Only)

Fri 10 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

Sat 25 - Swap Meet at Da Sign / RVWA

Fri 31 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

JUNE

Sat & Sun 1-2 - Windfest at Coyote Point

Fri 14 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

Fri 28 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

JULY

Sat & Sun 6-7 - SF Bay Challenge

Fri 12 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

Fri 26 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

AUGUST

Fri 9 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

Sat & Sun 17- 18 San Francisco Classic, hosted by St. Francis Yacht Club

Fri 30 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

SEPTEMBER

Fri 13 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

Fri 27 - SFYC Twilight Series 5:30PM

OCTOBER

Sat & Sun 26-27 - Fall Olympic Classes (IMCO Only)

St. Francis Yacht Club Race

Office: 415-563-6363

See <http://www.calcupevents.com/>

for race schedule updates.

Numbers You May Need

Keep this with your sailing gear:

U.S. Coast Guard Emergency
(415) 399-3451
or VHF Channel 16

U.S. Coast Guard Station
Golden Gate
(415) 331-8247

Report Water
Pollution/Health
Impacts: BayKeeper
(800) KEEP BAY

To Assist Research,
Report Whale
Sightings: Oceanic Society
(415) 409-4729 (GRAY)

Report Injured Marine
Mammals:
Marine Mammal Center
(415) 289-7325 (SEAL)



Board Elections



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Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
Paid
Concord, CA
Permit no. 346