



From Slip to Service: Camp Pendleton's New Harbor Master

By Tammy Taunt



© 2026 Mike Savage
Mike Savage, Camp Pendleton Master and T-Dock slip renter at the harbor entrance.

Every morning, before most offices open their doors, Mike Savage is already on the water. The newly appointed Harbor Master of Camp Pendleton's Del Mar Basin doesn't commute by car or gate pass alone—he dinghies to work after driving to his own slip in Oceanside Harbor, across the boundary where civilian and military maritime worlds meet. For Savage, a lifelong sailor, diver, and ocean devotee, it's not just a commute. It's a statement.

"This is kind of living the dream," Savage said. "I've spent my life on the water, and now I get to do what I love—and help others discover it—every single day."

A Working Harbor With a Family Feel

Del Mar Basin operates Wednesday through Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Savage's days are hands-on from the moment the docks open. Each morning begins with dock crews hosing down the piers—necessary thanks to the nearby helicopter operations that kick up persistent dust—followed by preparing the marina's rental fleet for a steady flow of sailors, kayakers, and boaters.

The harbor runs with a staff of six full-time employees, supported by additional personnel during events. While modest in size, Savage says that's exactly what makes Del Mar Basin special.

"I walk every dock, multiple times a day," he said. "I know the people, I know their pets. It's more like a family than a facility."

(Continued on page 3)

Use Extreme Caution

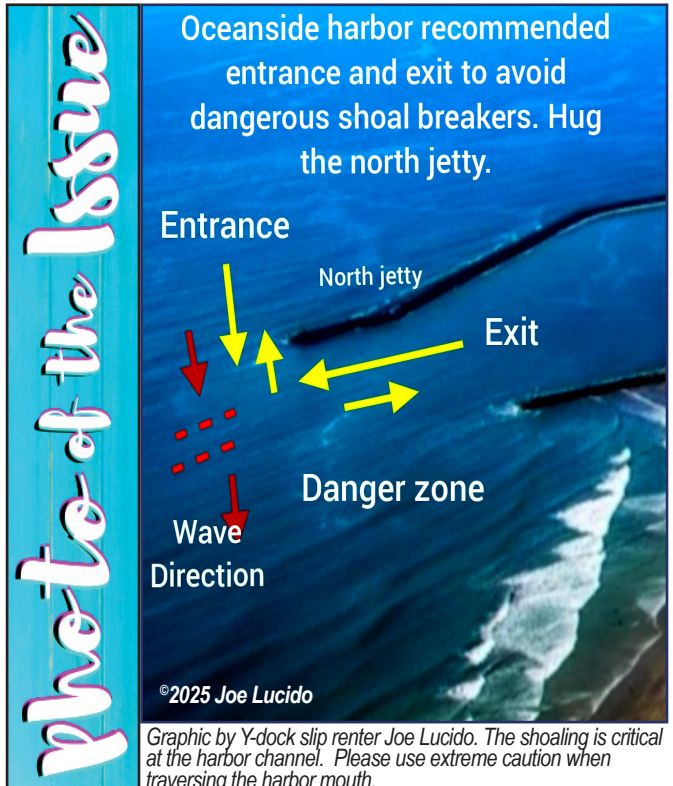
Boating is often times viewed as a whimsical way to spend a day out on the water, hopefully in the sunshine frolicking around. That is the view of a person who knows nothing about commanding a vessel on the open water. The reality is very different for sure!

This winter the Oceanside Harbor channel is extremely dangerous. Last week the depth at the entrance in some spots was as low as 5 feet, two hours before low tide! The cause is shoaling. Since September, there have been a larger number of south swells and storms that have deposited a larger than normal amount of sand in the mouth of the harbor. The last dredging was May 2025. The built up of this sand is called shoaling, which causes a deformation of waves that are steeper, bigger and less predictable. Shoaling can also cause boats to get stuck or damaged by running into sandbars that have formed at the most dangerous part of the harbor entrance.

The City of Oceanside and Camp Pendleton (among other officials) formally requested an emergency dredge of the harbor channel in late November to the Army Corps of Engineers, which is the agency required to keep Oceanside and Del Mar basin channel's safe for navigation, just after two boats capsized.

I spoke to the USACE project manager Brian Kim.

(Continued on page 5)



From the Helm...A Note from Joe



With the holidays behind us and the new year underway, the harbor has settled into its winter rhythm. We hope many of you were able to come out and enjoy the beautiful Holiday Light Parade, hosted once again by the Oceanside Yacht Club. It was a great way to close out the year and see the harbor illuminated for the season.

January and February are typically quieter months around the docks, and that slower pace offers a great opportunity to enjoy the harbor and coastline in a different way. After a busy holiday season, this is also a good time to wrap up decorations, check lines and dock gear, and take care of small maintenance items that can be easy to overlook during the busier months. Cooler temperatures and lighter foot traffic often make winter an ideal season for projects that don't require peak-season conditions. Harbor staff continue regular inspections and upkeep throughout the winter, and we appreciate everyone's help in keeping slips, docks, and common areas orderly and safe.

Winter also offers some of the best boating conditions of the year in Oceanside. Crisp mornings, clear skies, and uncrowded waters make for excellent sailing and cruising opportunities. Whether it's a quiet morning sail along the coast, a short afternoon outing, or simply spending time aboard enjoying the calm atmosphere, these months are a reminder of why Oceanside Harbor is such a special place year-round. As always, please keep an eye on weather and sea conditions, plan accordingly, and ensure your vessel is properly prepared before heading out.

On behalf of Harbor Administration, we wish you a smooth start to the new year and hope you find time to enjoy the water during these quieter months. Thank you for being part of the Oceanside Harbor community and for your continued cooperation and care of the harbor during the winter season. Without your support, the Jewel of the North would not shine!

Joe Ravitch
Oceanside Harbor Manager

January 2026 HBAC Report

By Liz Rhea, Chairwoman, Oceanside Harbor Beaches Advisory Committee (HBAC)



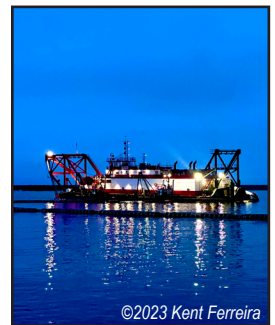
I hope everyone had wonderful Holidays. I will be providing updates throughout the year on progress with the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Before the holidays LAFCO met with representatives from the City and the Harbor stakeholders. It was determined that a consultant needs to be hired to assist with the specialties of a harbor district and an enterprise fund. The next meeting will be held on January 15th with the same participants, with the intent that a consultant will be acquired.

Then the work begins. After the upcoming meeting, I will be asking for help from you, the stakeholders in the harbor. This will include helping LAFCO understand the needs and goals of the Oceanside Small Craft Harbor District (OSCHD) and its stakeholders.

On January 5, 2026, the Harbor and Beaches Advisory Committee (HBAC) held a Special Meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the "Harbor Dredge Schedule Update." This presentation was given by Jayme Timberlake, Oceanside Coastal Zone Administrator.

The major change for the upcoming year is a proposal for two (2) separate dredgings to be held in 2026 as part of a pilot program. It was stated that the end result of this pilot program is a better understanding of what time of year the dredge should be performed on an ongoing basis. The proposed timing for the first year of the pilot program, which may be 2026, is to dredge in the spring and then again in the fall.

A representative from the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), Brian Kim, explained that for the first year of the program, the USACE will dredge part of the sand from the harbor in the spring and then do an analysis closer to fall to see if another dredge is needed. Another factor to determine if there will be a second dredge is if there are funds from Congress available in 2026 for the pilot program. This issue is tentatively scheduled for the February 4th meeting of the Oceanside City Council. Please join us for the next HBAC on February 16th at 5pm in the Oceanside City Council Chambers.



Manson dredging at night.

OCEANSIDE, CA • Serving Oceanside Harbor Since 2000 •

RELIABLE BOAT CLEANING SERVICES

Hull Cleaning + Anode Replacement

RBC SERVICES

service@rbchullcleaning.com
760-525-6711

CHIC'S CUSTOM CANVAS

chicbrammer@gmail.com

(760) 277-5808

Sail Covers Strataglass Windows Repairs Dodgers & Biminies

And so much more!!

PACIFIC COASTLINE ESCROW

Helping Agents Close with Confidence

Jen Spellman, a Senior Escrow Officer at Pacific Coastline Escrow with extensive experience in both residential and commercial transactions. I handle everything from refinances and short sales to foreclosures, mobile homes, and bulk sales.

My approach is built on clear communication, responsiveness, and smooth, on-time closings.

Servicing San Diego County, Riverside and LA County

Reach out today to discuss your next escrow!

Jen Spellman
SENIOR ESCROW OFFICER

Cell: 310.795.4359
Office: 310.465.2323 x 2368
Jen@PacificEscrow.com
PacificEscrow.com

From Slip to Service: Camp Pendleton's New Harbor Master (con'd)

(Continued from page 1)

That sense of community extends beyond recreation. Dock parties mark departures, Marine Corps birthdays are celebrated dockside, and sailors regularly stop Savage to ask advice about rigging, sails, or engines. "It's a family of sailors," he said. "That's what makes this place unique."

Growing the Next Generation of Sailors

Much of Del Mar Basin's mission centers on education and access—particularly for military families. Through the Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) program, children as young as seven learn to sail independently, often returning year after year to advance through progressively challenging classes.



"Seeing a kid start in an entry-level boat, then come back the next year ready for the next step—that's incredibly rewarding," Savage said. "We're raising future sailors."

The marina supports this mission with an impressive behind-the-scenes operation, including a wood shop, sail loft, engine shop, and full rigging facility used to maintain the fleet. Volunteers and liveaboards frequently pitch in, reinforcing the harbor's collaborative spirit.

Safety, Stewardship, and Security

Operating within a military installation brings unique responsibilities. During heavy swell, fog, or high winds, Savage and his team may escort boats in and out—or shut the harbor entirely. "We're not afraid to close if safety requires it," he said.

Environmental stewardship is also central to the harbor's role. Del Mar Basin actively supports eelgrass monitoring and works closely with agencies such as California Fish and Wildlife, Border Patrol, and Homeland Security. The water quality, Savage noted, is noticeably cleaner than neighboring harbors, aided by natural circulation and strict waste practices.

Bridging Camp Pendleton and Oceanside

As both the Harbor Master and an Oceanside Harbor slip renter, Savage occupies a rare position—one that gives him a first hand understanding of how the two maritime communities can better connect.

Historically, interaction between Camp Pendleton and Oceanside Harbor has been limited. Savage hopes to change that by building partnerships around sailing programs, regattas, whale watching, diving, and special events.

"We're right next to each other," he said. "It makes sense to work together—share ideas, coordinate programs, and support each other."

Plans under consideration



Camp Pendleton Harbor Master Mike Savage at his post in Del Mar Basin ©2026

include joint regattas, expanded youth sailing opportunities, closer ties with Oceanside's charter and whale-watching operators, and even the potential revival of a dive program on base.



Del Mar Basin, Camp Pendleton

A Harbor Master Who Lives the Life

Savage's daily dinghy ride is more than a charming anecdote—it reflects his philosophy of leadership.

"You can't run a marina from behind a desk," he said. "You've got to be out here, walking the docks, talking to people, getting your hands dirty."

For the Marines and their families, boaters, and service members who call Del Mar Basin home, that approach is already making waves. And for Savage, the journey from his Oceanside slip to Camp Pendleton each morning is a reminder that the best way to lead a harbor is to spend as much time as possible on the water it protects.

Did You Know?



Are you a slip renter? Do you have a Facebook account? Did you know there is a Facebook page just for Oceanside Harbor slip renters? It's a great place to find out what is happening and a way to meet your fellow matey's. You can request access here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/648762865686210>



Tammy Taunt publishes *The Crews News* as a community service with help from the boating community. It is not for profit and every advertiser helps with the cost of publishing. While every attempt is made to be accurate, no liability is assumed for errors.

The Crews News invites letters, suggestions, tips and ideas to the editor. We will print just about anything, but reserve the right to refuse anonymous, slanderous or libelous letters or articles. Please include your name, dock and type of vessel (sail or power). Prior issues can be viewed here: <https://tammytauntrealestate.com/oceanside-harbor-news>

If characters are described in *The Crews News* they are purely fictional. Any similarity to anyone living or dead is purely coincidental.

The deadline for advertising is the 20th of the month. Liability for errors in advertising is limited to the value of the ad.

The Crews News can be reached by email at: OceansideCrewsNews@gmail.com

Marine Safety Unit Concludes a Strong 2025, Prepares for an Active 2026

By Tyler Berry, Beach Lifeguard Captain, City of Oceanside



The Oceanside Marine Safety Unit (MSU) concluded 2025 with strong operational performance while maintaining continuous monitoring of conditions at the harbor entrance and throughout the unit's service area. These efforts supported safe maritime operations during a year of high public activity.

MSU also supported a safe and successful Oceanside Parade of Lights, working alongside local mariners to ensure an enjoyable event featuring dozens of decorated vessels and thousands of spectators.

In recognition of exceptional service, MSU Sergeant Mattison will be awarded the Oceanside Fire Department Medal of Valor. The award honors his heroic actions during an extreme rescue on July 4, 2025, when he responded to a personal watercraft accident near the North Jetty. Sergeant Mattison successfully rescued an adult man and a child who had been thrown into the water near the rocks under hazardous conditions.

2025 Marine Safety Unit Service Activity

- Total marine responses: 524
- Vessel assists and rescues: 156
- Medical and trauma responses: 127
- Water rescues: 127
- Law enforcement and safety contacts: 2163
- Vessel/dock inspections: 418



Looking ahead, the Marine Safety Unit is preparing for another busy year. The Oceanside Lifeguard Academy begins on February 21, 2026, training the next generation of lifeguards to serve our coastline and waterways.

Community members are encouraged to visit or contact the Marine Safety Unit at any time. We remain committed to our mission of embracing families and safeguarding communities as we move confidently into 2026.

Respectfully and steady as life goes,

Tyler Berry
BeachLifeguard Captain

Use Extreme Caution (con'd)

(Continued from page 1)

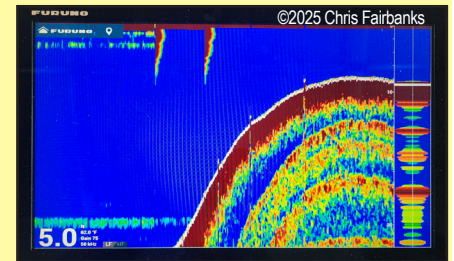
He stated that although an emergency dredge has not yet been granted, there is a third survey of the channel on January 12, 2026. The results of this survey will determine the final decision as to whether or not an emergency dredge will happen. If a decision not to do an emergency dredge is made, then the course of action is to try to do the usual dredge earlier than the annual April/May timeframe.

Kim also said that the bid for a dredging contract for the next 4 "cycles" will be posted on January 21st. Dredging companies have 30 days to submit their proposal, and it takes approximately another 30 days to assign the contract. This contract does not include an emergency dredge, should one be awarded, Manson would most likely be the dredging company that would do the emergency dredge.

If you are an inexperienced boater, if you are not a confident boater, if you do not know how your boat maneuvers in all conditions whether it is wind related, water related or any other on-the-water situation, please do not traverse the harbor channel until conditions improve.

If you do decide to take that chance, here are some things you might want to do first:

- Inspect your vessel closely to make sure all is secure.
- Check out the San Luis Rey Squadron's live camera on the harbor entrance. Here's the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvGUq-pPny4>
- Check all weather conditions including the Marine Weather Forecast
- Talk to other boaters, if you know a commercial boat captain, talk to that person.
- Before traversing the channel take your vessel to the turning basin and watch and wait to determine:



December 31, 2025 -- Sonar from Oceanside Adventure's Nala before low tide.

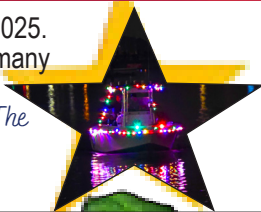
Can I get out safely? • Can I **return** safely?

Oceanside Boat Parade 2025



The 2025 Christmas boat parade was held December 13, 2025. The weather was one of the best we have experienced in many years. The turnout of boaters to ready their decks did not disappoint. Enjoy this photo essay. Words and photos by *The Crews News* editor Tammy Taunt.

This year's boat parade drew a large crowd. The amount of people enjoying the night's fun have not been seen on these docks during a Christmas parade in many years! Welcome back!



...except most assuredly the mice!



And after all of the evening festivities, it was quiet all through the harbor. Not much was stirring....



Jingle All the Way Regatta

By Steve Rhodes

You could almost hear them singing *Joy to the World* during this year's Jingle All the Way regatta as A fleet failed to appear gifting B fleet the opportunity to own the day.

It was, as most winter races are, a super light wind event. There was barely enough breeze to get their sleds moving, let alone airborne, but these festive competitors gave it their all in a B fleet beat down that would end with each sleigh getting their first ever first place!

Chris and Harper down in race three, making the Schindler's settle for second place.

Beth Sobel and Mary Anderson, obviously quick studies, and not to be out done, posted a race four bullet, in OYC's club tub *Kamea* once again placing Chris and Harper in second place.

Congratulations to these racers for their first 1st place wins! Our fleet is absolutely thrilled to have them out enjoying themselves in these worn out tubs that we love so much. It's an honor to have them.

Torrey is looking to purchase a Lido for himself. If anyone has one they'd like to part with please let us know.

Our next race, the *Not So Frosbite*, will happen on Jan 25. You're all welcome to join in. It's free!!! Just show up at the launch ramp, and you'll be signed up. It doesn't get any easier than that. Until then: I hope you had a Merry Christmas and happy New Year!! Stay safe, and we'll see you in the water.



©2025 Steve Rhodes
Chris and Harper Schindler in Cool Beans

Chris Schindler in his slick sled *Cool Beans* somehow got his son Harper to crew for this regatta. It might have been his Christmas present??? They started their day with two bullets in what might have turned into a blowout.



©2025 Steve Rhodes
Jay Ligotino and Torrey Parker in Simone

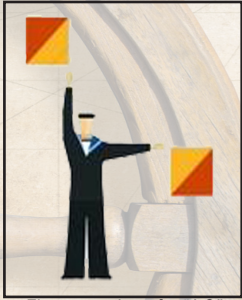
Jay Ligotino borrowed Pat Brickner's sleigh *Simone* and with new crew Torrey Parker found a new gear, or, a way to slow



©2025 Steve Rhodes
Beth Sobel and Mary Anderson in Kamea

Nautical Nostalgia: What is a Semaphore, You Ask?

Written By Chris Taunt



Flag semaphore for "J-O"

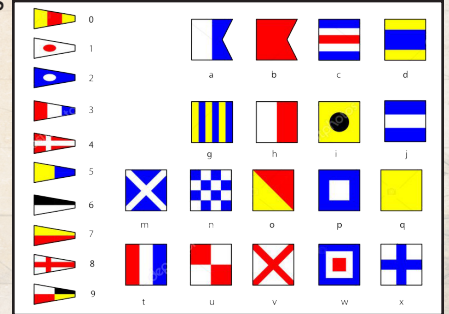
Semaphore refers to any form of non-verbal, visual communication used on land or at sea. This can include several techniques such as colored flags, lights or colored paddles.

Boat flags or signal flags have been used since the Roman empire. Originally, they were used to send messages to both ships and to people on land. This is called Flag Semaphore, which is a system of flags, circular paddles or even hand signals. Flag Semaphore originated in 1866 as a handheld version of the optical telegraph system.

The first semaphore system uses two square flags that look identical, one held in the right hand and one in the left. The square flags, which are red and yellow, are divided diagonally. The two flags are held in various positions resembling the face and hands of a clock. Each letter of the alphabet and has a different "clock" position.

The second flag semaphore system employs a set of unique signaling flags called International Maritime Signal Flag System. Each unique flag represents a specific letter of the alphabet and numbers 0-9. These flags are hoisted aloft to spell out words, codes, numbers or specific actions represented by two or three flags in a specific order. For instance, the "A" and the "C" flag, flown in this order, sends the message "I am abandoning my ship."

Flag semaphore is still used to this day during naval underway replenishment at sea and is acceptable for emergency communication and when radio silence is in practiced and secure visual communication is required. Flags are used in the daytime and lighted wands are used at night. Directional lights can also be used day or night employing morse code.



International Maritime Signal Flag Semaphores System.

Each issue we will learn more about the history of where some nautical terms come from. Enjoy!

This & That

• **Oceanside Harbor Collective** The Crews News has kept you informed on the LAFCO study of the City of Oceanside and the Harbor District. Part of this study includes a component of open discussion between LAFCO, harbor stakeholders (slip renters), harbor users, Oceanside citizens and even tourists. In

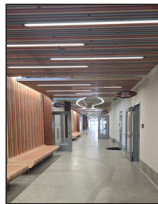


person meetings will start soon. Please join the discussion on Facebook here:
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61573055190072>

• **Harbor Village** Thankfully the lighthouse was turned back to its better shade of white and red. The yellow color was just not appropriate for a lighthouse of any kind! The painting is finished.



The new hallway corridor is very nice looking. It's definitely a different vibe and doesn't smell rancid anymore! Check it out! I did check with harbor management and was told the property management company were the ones who made the decisions on the new color scheme



for the harbor village. Does anyone else feel that it is a little odd that a management company is able to change the colors of an icon of the entire city? Would a renter of a home be able to change the color without permission from the landlord? Hmm....curious.

A Plea for Help!

To my Dear Reader,
First of all, thank you for your continued support. Secondly, **I NEED HELP** with the creation of this publication. I have been asking for help for at least a year. I am at a crossroads where if I can't get help, then this publication may not happen as often or as in-depth any longer. It has affected my health due to the stress. I do not want to give up because it is a project I very much enjoy. I also hope it is valued by at least the slip renters. For 28 years now, this publication has been the beacon of information for the harbor community. It would be sad to see it extinguished.

I need someone who would be willing to help me write, like a reporter or an assistant. Someone I can count on. I do not pay myself, so I cannot pay you. Experience is **not** a requirement. This is all non-profit. Don't be shy! Please write to me here: oceansidecrewsnews@gmail.com or you can call or text me here: (619) 857-6233. Thank you.

Tammy Taunt

KEN'S CUSTOM REEL SERVICE & REPAIR

We're on the spot when you need us, and fast!

- Reels and Rods Service and Repair
- New and Used Rods and Reels
- Accessories

(760) 967-7335

1351 Harbor Drive North
Located in Oceanside Harbor Village

HARBOR FISH & CHIPS

(760) 722-4977

Oceanside Harbor Village
276 Harbor Drive
Oceanside, CA 92054

Sit along the waters edge and enjoy authentic fish and chips, fish tacos and seafood.

OCEANSIDE

Family Owned and Operated since 1969

Oceanside Marine Centre, Inc.
For Service...It's Worth the Trip!

Repower is Our Specialty

YANMAR
INTEGRA YACHTS
VOLVO PENTA
MERCURY HONDA
MerCruiser
WESTERBEKE
Universal
Engines & Generators DIESEL MARINE ENGINES

(760) 722-1833
1550 Harbor Drive North
Oceanside, CA 92054

- Parts - Service - Warranty
- Full Service Boat Yard
- Trailer Boat Service
- Highly Qualified Technicians