

PARADISE Dive Club

October 2004

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Volume 10, Issue 10



President's Log

by Patty Bryant

October is fast approaching, and that means hurricane season will come to an end and lobster season will begin. It also means that a new PDC year begins with the election of board members at our September 28 meeting. This will be my last president's log as I will soon be a "past

president," joining the ranks of all the past presidents before me. Barring any unforeseen election scandals, Ray Janik will be taking over presidential duties for our next year of diving adventures. I know that I am leaving the duties of PDC president in very capable hands.

I know that for many of you, lobster season is your "favorite season." Those sumptuous crustaceans await you, so I'm sure the Wednesday night dives will be well attended in the month of October. We'll have a couple of events to celebrate this special season, so be sure to check out the details elsewhere in this newsletter.

October also means that the fall season is upon us and with it comes Halloween, and you know what that means...you guessed it, the Annual Interclub Underwater Pumpkin Carving Contest! The contest will be on Saturday, October 30, at Goleta Beach. Come on out and try your hand at carving that winning pumpkin. Mark the date on your calendar; we'll have all the details in next month's newsletter.

As my year as president comes to a close, I have mixed emotions about passing the torch. On the one hand, I am somewhat anxious to be relieved of some of the responsibility that comes along with the position. On the other hand, being president of the PDC has been a great experience for me, and I have had a lot of fun over the past year. I have met a lot of great people that I probably would not have met if I had not been president. Thanks to all of you for giving me the chance to make this journey, and a big thanks to all of my fellow board members for supporting me along the way. I hope all of you have enjoyed our adventures this past year as much as I have.

Here's to another great year in the life of the Paradise Dive Club.



Paradise Dive Club cleans up, with more than 730 lbs. of trash collected at Tajiguas on Coastal Cleanup Day, September 18—photo by Stacey Janik

Join the club, enjoy the benefits

- ∂ Monthly meetings with entertainment
- ∂ Raffle prizes (who doesn't like prizes?)
- ∂ Great dive buddy pool
- ∂ Beach & boat dives, including weekly night dives
- ∂ Club BBQs & other activities
- ∂ Free airfills & gear discounts at local dive shops
- ∂ Right to proudly wear the official PDC t-shirt (because we do have the coolest logo)

Mark your calendars...

We meet on the last Tuesday of the month

Rusty's Pizza

(in the lighthouse)

10 East Cabrillo Boulevard
Santa Barbara, CA

6:30 pm - social hour

7-8:30 pm - feeding frenzy, meeting,
raffle prizes, entertainment



Bulletin Board

- Some of you may remember the presentation given last year by Ron Clough, head of the Shark and Ray Count Divers. It's tagging season again, and divers will be in the water every weekend for the next several months. He is looking for volunteers for the marine monitoring stations or the video and photography projects. For more info, visit www.sharkandraycount.com, or contact Ron at 805-654-6400 x 3201 or biolab@earthlink.net.
- Paul Weakliem shared this story about some would-be abalone poachers who had a very bad day: www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/newsletter/0904.html#poachers. Paul commented, "If I recall from what the folks up there said, these abs were taken from where we dive in Elk—so I'm glad the book got thrown at them! Actually, regardless of where they took them from, I'm happy!!"
- Cheryl Weakliem came across an interesting study of how lobsters navigate in darkness using an internal magnetic compass, called "The Lobster's Compass," in the January 2004 issue of Discover magazine. The article is available to subscribers only online, but contact Cheryl if you'd like a copy, or check out another article on the same research at http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/01/0106_030106_lobster.html.
- The Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival is coming to town. They are presenting "Best of the Fest" at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History on Thursday, 9/30, and Friday, 10/1; for info, see www.sbnature.org/events/jhwff.php. Annie Crawley highly recommends the October 1 documentary on hippos, "Mzima, The Haunt of the Riverhorse." (Annie is helping coordinate the Jackson Hole Digital Symposium 2004, which is being held here in SB in conjunction with the film festival and is for people who are interested in the technology side of the industry; to learn more about the symposium or sponsorship opportunities, contact her at acrawley@lobofilms.com or 964-2132.)

Paradise Dive Club Officers

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| President - Patty Bryant | 684-6342 |
| Vice President - Mark Silva | 969-2014 |
| Secretary - Dan Lindsay | 964-5020 |
| Treasurer - Denise Foxwell | 962-8113 |
| Membership - Bruce King | 452-7590 |
| Publications - Stacey Janik | 637-4487 |
| Sgt at Arms - Mark Dombrosky | 647-5245 |
| Entertainment - Mark Bursek | 564-1923 |
| Raffle - Ralph Goldsen | 681-0400 |
| Webmaster - Ray Janik | 637-4486 |
| Historian - Cheryl Weakliem | 967-2827 |

Sponsors:

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| Anacapa Dive Center | 963-8917 |
| Aquatics | 967-4456 |
| Blue Water Hunter | 564-6677 |
| Truth Aquatics | 962-1127 |

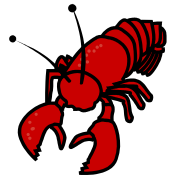
Visit our Web site at <http://kelp.chem.ucsb.edu>

E-mail newsletter articles to sjanik@gmail.com

Membership: \$30/year (May-April); \$25/year for renewing members. Includes monthly newsletter. A complimentary subscription will be provided to dive clubs that reciprocate with a subscription to their newsletter; contact the membership coordinator at kingbh@cox.net for details.

Lobster Opener

by Dan Lindsay



For those not booked on a boat this coming Friday for the opening night of lobster season, you are invited to join the rest of the Paradise Dive Club as we work our way through the kelp-lined washing machine. We'll rendezvous at 11:45 p.m. Friday the 1st of October at Butterfly Beach. There is a decent crop of bugs there (we've been checking) and it's a fairly simple entry. (Parking is also a breeze at that hour.) Recall that Butterfly Beach is NOT the Biltmore—it's on the same road, but further to the west (see image link at www.californiacoastline.org/cgi-bin/image.cgi?image=3302&mode=sequential&flags=0&year=2002).

Parking restrictions begin at 2 a.m., but by then we should all have had a chance to catch our allocation of seven bugs apiece!

For those not lucky enough to get all seven at midnight, you can join us again at the Biltmore (that's the beach, not the hotel and restaurant) for a second go at it Saturday afternoon. We'll go in around 3 p.m. Parking will be a challenge, so factor that into your timing.

At the conclusion of all this nonsense, you're welcome up to my place to boil or barbeque those little critters. It will just be a very casual affair, with the usual lobster and beer (neither black nor white tie required). I'm in the foothills above Patterson at 5593 Camino Cerralvo (a.k.a Rancho del Ciervo). Plan to be there by around 6 p.m.

Welcome to our new members!

David Hardee, Mark Morris, and Lance Rennka

Fiji (or, How I Spent my Summer Vacation)

story and photos by Steven Trainoff

A new product is released at work, but ahead is an 11-hour flight, five time zones, the international date line, and two long bus rides. At the end is a three-mile dirt road, and the crystal blue waters of the South Pacific. Fiji, the land of cannibals and Captain Bligh's historic open-boat journey, beckons. Bula!

We arrive at the Wananavu Beach Resort around noon and have a quick orientation before crashing in our bure. Wananavu is on the northernmost tip of Leva Vitu, which is the largest island in Fiji. According to the guide book, Fiji is a collection of 332 islands (at low tide, and 300 at high tide), with a population of around 750,000. About half are indigenous Fijians, who own most of the land. The other half are Indians, brought to Fiji around the turn of the century to work in the sugar fields. Now mostly they are shopkeepers and businessmen. The resort accommodates around 45 people, and our group, organized by Anacapa Dive Center, is 30. We have come halfway around the world to meet people from all over California...



Top of the coral bommie at the Vatu-I-Ra Passage

The next day we hit the water. The dive operator is Kai Viti, owned and operated by Mike and Julie Trussell, who also are originally from Santa Barbara. Mike used to crew on the *Peace*. The locals are complaining about the cold water and poor visibility. It is 78°F and the visibility is only 60-80 feet. We don our 3mm wetsuits and hit the water. Colors abound, with amazing soft corals and schools of fish. I rethink my earlier thought. We came half way around the world to dive in an aquarium! Our first dive is at Pinnacles, followed in rapid succession by Dream Maker, Breath Taker, Golden Dreams, and the Maze. The dive sites are only 20 minutes from the harbor and are mostly sandy bottom at about 120 feet with enormous coral heads rising to within a few feet of the surface. The coral "bommies" all have mooring lines to minimize impact on the reef. There are wondrous swim-throughs and photo-ops galore on the walls.

I can tell why this area has historically been so treacherous for boat traffic, but what is bad for boaters is good for divers. There are light currents that keep the water clean and occasionally bring in pelagics. Although the pelagics are here and we spot a few whitetips off in the distance, as well as some schools of barracuda, the real treasure is the macro world. There is a wide variety of nudibranchs with wild, unreal colors. There is blushing coral that turns completely white in a surprising wave when you touch one

part. There are morays and turtles. There are butterflies and angels. There are anthias and pipefish. I even get a decent photo of an elusive frogfish. There are so many fish that I can't even hope to identify them, even with my massive photo ID guide.

Midweek, we take an hour-and-a-half trip out into the Bligh waters to the Vatu-I-Ra Passage. The crew scares us with stories of rough seas and treacherous currents. It turns out to be sunny and calm, with hardly a breath of current. Our compensation for the trip is Black Magic Mountain, teeming with life and 150-foot visibility.

By the end of the week, some are getting burned out and choosing to lounge by the pool, but a group of die-hards are diving every day. We do a night dive, and it is the only dive for which the batteries on my camera fail. Oh, well, I enjoy the scenery. In the afternoons, we do a little island exploring. We visit a local village and see just how poor the natives really are. Many are still plowing fields with oxen and harvesting their sugar cane by hand with machetes. They even have a cute narrow-gauge sugarcane train that is still in use.

The Fijians are wonderfully welcoming. Even strangers on the street stop to smile and wave at the passersby. Maybe this has to do with the ritual kava drinking, maybe it has to do with their cannibalistic past (hmm, he looks tasty...), but maybe it is just that being so far out in the Pacific, they are happy to see some new faces. I don't know, but everyone we meet is very sincere and friendly.

As our trip draws to a close, we dive on the wreck of the *Ovalau*, which was a 200-meter-long inter-island ferry that sank on August 23, 2003. Evidently, the attitude of "singa-na-linga" (no worries) applied to the repair of a leak in the engine compartment. It is now upside down in 80 feet of water. Gretchen and I do our first penetration dive on this wreck, since the site has a couple large compartments with many clear entries and exits. Because the wreck is so new, there is very little growth on it. Although there was no loss of life when it sank, all of the cargo is still intact. It is a favorite local dive spot since one of the trucks in the hold was carrying 800 cases of Fiji bitter. I doubt it is any good after a year in 80° water, but it is free for the taking!



Steven on the wreck of the Ovalau

The vacation winds to a close all too quickly, and now all we have are memories and photos. A group of us have pooled our photos on a Web site at <http://glass-eyephoto.smugmug.com/FIJI>. Check it out.

Going Digital

article & photos by Michael O'Connell

Diving at Anacapa with *Spectre*. What could seem a more routine day of diving? But what we all love about diving is the unexpected, the way the apparently routine can produce surprises. First off, the vis was 60 feet or more on the south side of the island. Then the water temperature was 72°, warm enough to prompt Carl Gwinn to leave his hood and gloves on the boat and pretend he was in Hawaii again. The critters were all the usual suspects. But then Doug Klug told about the 200+-pound black sea bass that not only allowed him to take lots of pictures but swam alongside him as he headed back to the boat, like a giant friendly dog.



Carl Gwinn diving without a hood in warm Anacapa waters

For me, the break with routine was seeing what kind of pictures I could get with my Canon Power Shot 500 digital camera in the housing I had just bought. Alongside Carl's and Beth's mighty Nikons in their Ikelite housings and twin strobes, my little camera looked like a toy—the knobs are all blue and yellow, and I could fit it into my BC pocket when I strode off *Spectre's* deck. I decided not to use the camera's flash, since backscatter seemed inevitable. But in the relatively shallow depths of Surveyor's Rock, Cathedral Cove, and Garden Spot, there was enough available light to snap the garibaldi, sheephead, and kelp bass. One of the latter allowed me to get multiple shots of him.



This kelp bass was ready for its close-up

I found that the principal challenge was the slow shutter speed that was necessary (probably around 1/50), but since pixels are cheap, I could shoot lots of pictures and end up getting a surprising number of good ones. What I found interesting is that digital appears initially to “see” differently from my eye or from film; right out of the camera and into the computer, things looked mostly blue/green. But the colors were actually there. After a few seconds of playing with the software, all the colors that my eye remembered appeared on my screen. It seemed magic, rather the way I remember when I did black and white enlargements in the darkroom as a kid.

And I don't think I've ever been looking at my pictures before my dive gear was dry. Is diving ever routine?

August 15 Conception Trip

by Cheryl Weakliem

A group of 11 PDC members went out to Santa Cruz Island on August 15 for a day of diving together. It was only my second boat trip since JD came along, and I was happy to share the day with some old and new dive buddies. We were on the *Conception* with Captain Jerry at the helm, and he put us at two different dive spots.

The weather was great, and we had a smooth ride out across the Channel. When we anchored up at the first site, you could see the vis was going to be good. The water had that clear blue-green color and looked very inviting. There were a lot of spear guns on the boat, but when I came back with some nice-looking scallops, most of those were left on the boat for the second dive. Between the two sites, divers got more scallops, a few fish and lots of good sightings. There was a HUGE sand dollar bed and a large number of bat rays that were reported back on board. There was also a large seal that entertained a few of us at the second dive site.

At the end of the day, I found myself just snorkeling around for a bit before we had to be back on the boat. Some chose to do a short fourth dive. I wasn't cold and the water was just so great that day, I didn't want to leave. It was one of those days you hope to have at the islands. On the way back, Jerry took us to Painted Cave. It's been a long time since I was there, and it was the first for many on the boat. With a fairly low tide, Jerry got the boat pretty far into the cave. Both the cave and his boat maneuvering skills were quite impressive. On the ride back, it was nice to have our group around to relive our adventures and keep the trip going even though the diving was done for that day. It's great to be able to dive out at the islands, but even better when you can do it with a great group of friends.

July 4 Vandenberg Trip

story and photos by Paul Weakliem

We all anxiously awaited the call on Thursday—was the Vandenberg campout with the Aqualliers on for the July 4th weekend?!? Patty sent around the e-mail that yes, it was! We packed up our gear, finding that the 4Runner was much smaller than the VW van, which was out of commission. After checking in at the gate, we came over the hill and got our first view of the ocean—and it looked flat! Well, from 400 feet up, at least. After a nice drive past the launch complexes we arrived at the boathouse, and there were already lots of Aquallier RVs set up. Mike and Laurel came back with reports of great visibility from the offshore reefs, and some other divers said that even inside the breakwater was not bad.



Taking the inflatables out to the south reef

We opted to play at the beach, as it was getting late. Jonathan and Joey had a good time playing in the water—they didn't seem to notice the cold! After our BBQ dinner, Ray suggested a trek up to Honda Point where the Navy destroyers went aground in 1923. We all jumped at the chance and piled in a few cars. It was a beautiful evening, and we clambered down to the shore. There were still some large pieces of wreckage on the beach, and in the surf—quite remarkable after 80 years. It was fascinating to see a unique place in history. We also went around the corner to another spot where some other wreckage was in the surf on a sandy beach. The waves actually looked fairly small, so we immediately decided that we must dive there the following day!

Early (well, not too early) the next morning we went back to Honda Point, and four divers suited up to go in. The surf had built a little bit during the night, but it was still doable, although not just an easy stroll-on-in entry. Vis wasn't very good here and a strong surge, coupled with some rocks jutting up, suddenly made for a less-than-casual dive. It was certainly clear that this was a bad place to bring a destroyer into! We did find a few small pieces of wreckage, and afterwards, looking at a book, we realized we had been quite close to at least one of the big wrecks—but in 5-foot vis, it's easy to miss! Still, it was great to dive a spot that one can get to so rarely.



Justin & Jonathan at Vandenberg

After lunch, the inflatables were launched from the boathouse and off to the “south reef” they went. Cheryl was using Paul's BC and reg, and his excessive use (or lack of care?) caught up with her as the high pressure hose blew out. She spent an hour snorkeling around and talking with another Mike who was out there fishing. The divers reported great vis—out in 50 feet of water, it was a bit different than the shore dive that morning! Meanwhile, back at the boathouse, Jonathan delighted in following around the kids and his buddy Justin.

That evening we had another BBQ; everybody had plenty of food to share, and we caught up with the Aqualliers. There was a sad note for this weekend, though. Unfortunately, this was to be the Tarr family's last outing—Ray was being transferred to Montana. We will all miss them—they are loads of fun, and Ray was always the extremely gracious host! **Good luck to the Tarrs!**

That night (July 4) we drove home, stopping on the way to watch the Lompoc fireworks by the side of the road, and looking forward to the next time we would all get together to go diving.

October Boat Dives — Get on Board!

- Saturday, October 9, on the *Explorer*, 8am departure, \$85. Call Anacapa Dive Center, 963-8917.
- Sunday, October 10, on the *Spectre*, 10:30am departure, includes a night dive, \$79. Call Aquatics, 967-4456.
- Sunday, October 23, on the *Spectre*, 7am departure, \$79. Call Aquatics, 967-4456.
- Saturday, October 30, on the *Explorer*, 8am departure, \$85. Call Anacapa Dive Center, 963-8917.


September Meeting Entertainment

At our September 28 meeting at Rusty's Pizza, Tim Graham will present a DVD movie and digital image slide show from his recent trip to the Turks & Caicos.

Tim says, “Imagine turquoise blue waters, desert islands, and outrageous sunsets, not to mention a plethora of underwater marine life. Come see the best of what the Turks & Caicos Islands have to offer. It will reek of Bohemia (or is it Bahamia?)”

October 2004

Don't Forget...
MONTHLY MEETING
September 28
and October 26
 at Rusty's Pizza

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | | | | 1 Midnight dive for lobsters | 2 Lobster season opens |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 Blood drive | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 |  | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 Pumpkin carving contest |
| 31 | | | | | | |

Upcoming Events

- Board member elections at September meeting
- October 1-2: Lobster season opener—midnight dive Friday at Butterfly Beach, 3pm dive Saturday at Biltmore
- October 8: Blood drive at Shoreline Park, 4-7:30 p.m., followed by BBQ & potluck (for questions or to RSVP, e-mail Jerry Sorich at jasorich@cox.net)
- October 30, 10am: Halloween pumpkin carving contest at Goleta Beach

Wednesday night dives

To find out where the group is diving or to be added to the night dive e-mail list, contact Dan Lindsay at edgy01@aol.com/964-5020, Carl Gwinn at carlgwinn@yahoo.com/968-5694, or Mark Silva at 969-2014.



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