

# PARADISE DIVE CLUB



VOLUME 17, ISSUE 1  
JANUARY 2008

[WWW.PARADISEDIVECLUB.ORG](http://WWW.PARADISEDIVECLUB.ORG)



## President's Log by Steven Trainoff

Attention fair weather divers, I'll let you in on a little secret. The best Channel Islands diving is in the winter! That is, of course, if you dodge the storms.

At the risk of encouraging everyone to become as big a procrastinator as me, one of the advantages of diving in your hometown is that you can look at the weather reports and decide, at the last minute, if conditions look good. When you go on a dive vacation, you typically plan months (even years) in advance. When the trip finally materialized, you get whatever conditions you get. Not so, when diving locally.

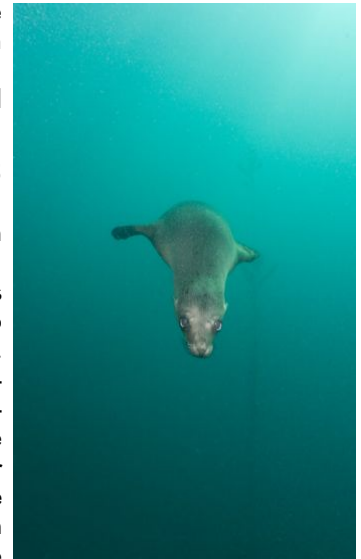
Case in point was my trip to San Miguel on Saturday, Jan 19<sup>th</sup>. The big storms early in January had passed so on Thursday, Jan 17<sup>th</sup>, I signed up. Conditions were absolutely ideal; I can't imagine a better nexus of sun, wind, waves, and vis.



In some sense, the trip began with the end of work on Friday. I headed out to the Beachside Café for the PDC deco stop. We had a great time watching the beautiful sunset and chatting. Then around 8pm, my dive buddy and I headed out to the boat to sign-in and pick out our bunks.

The boat was pretty full with about 25 divers, most of whom were hunters. There were only 3 photographers on board. I had several goals for the trip. I

wanted to do some wide-angle photography since it is much harder than macro, and conditions are rarely conducive. San Miguel, with its abundance of pinnipeds should be an ideal place to practice. The second goal was to test out the dry-gloves that Gretchen gave me for my birthday. The DUI zipgloves are outrageously expensive, but the hope was that they would help me manipulate my camera. In particular, I wanted to practice with them in preparation for our upcoming trip to dive Alaska and the Inland Passage this summer. The last goal was to trim in the weighting of my drysuit. My current setup has 20lb in the BC weight pockets, 8lb in the upper trim pockets, and 2lb on my ankles. This works fine for keeping my balance, but I don't like the ankle weights. There is only 1lb on each leg, but that is an extra pound that you have to push through the water on every kick cycle. Instead I bought a weight belt. I am not changing the overall weight, just its distribution on my body.



When fiddling with the camera, it is important to have the diving be second nature. In general, I believe that one should only make small changes to your gear configuration to keep down the number of variables, but on this trip I was changing a lot of things simultaneously.

The trip out was amazingly smooth. The channel was like glass, and the sky was clear and cloudless. After a dramatic sunrise, we pulled up to Wilson's rock. My buddy and I suited up and over the side we went. Wow! The vis was 60ft and the wall was sheer and covered with sea life. I followed my buddy down into the depths. I rarely dive deep on our local waters since it usually just gets cold and dark. This time it got dark (since we were in the shadow of the rock), but didn't get particularly cold. The temp at 100ft was 54F. What a great spot. We slowly spiraled our way up the wall and at 30ft the greeting committee came out to meet us, a little late, but full of energy. A big group of sea lions were dive-bombing us and literally swimming rings around us. I was getting low on air so holding onto the line for my safety stop; which made it almost impossible to use the camera at the same time. Oh well, at least I enjoyed the show.

They moved the boat to Simonton's cove. This time I was ready for the sea lions, but they decided to say away, until I was swimming back to the boat on the surface. Even so, they were turning summersaults and playing the dive-bomber game. What fun. On the next dive a friendly juvenile delinquent came up and tried bite my left strobe. I don't know what was particularly interesting about my left strobe, but he seemed fascinated by it. Now I had the opposite problem, I couldn't get far enough away from him to get a decent portrait. That is the frustration and fun of underwater photography.

My other goals were a mixed bag. The new weighting configuration worked great. I had better balance and could even roll upside down or lie on my back. The new "dry" gloves were a disappointment. My hands were toasty warm until they leaked. I am a bit surprised because until this point, my suit has been like the Sahara desert. It hasn't leaked a single drop until trying the new gloves, and I am positive I installed them correctly. Let's see what DUI has to say about it.

We ended up doing four dives on an absolutely perfect winter day. What could top it off? How about a pod of grey whales spouting right next to the boat, or perhaps a picture perfect sunset over the glassy water? So, the next time you decide that "winter" diving isn't for you, think about this perfect day. I know I will.

## Galápagos Trip - Ray and Stacy Janik

There's an old saying that you should be careful what you wish for, because you might get it. The implication, of course, is that things don't often work out the way we think they will. Sometimes they do, though, and then you get sayings like "trip of a lifetime," and "dream come true."

Those of you who've been around for awhile might not be able to remember a time when Stacey and I weren't talking about going to the Galápagos. We booked the trip, aboard the Peter Hughes boat *Sky Dancer*, in 2005 when they were offering discounts at the Long Beach Scuba Show. Even though we couldn't make it to the show, we were able to get the deal with some help from our old friends at Island Dreams Travel, with whom we'd traveled to Palau and Yap a few years earlier. We tried to get a trip in 2006, but all the dates we could accommodate were completely booked, so we signed up for a trip in 2007, and commenced boring everyone we knew—especially our fellow divers—by dropping this fact into conversation whenever we could (Nice dive; wonder what the diving's like in the Galápagos, where we're going). Fortunately, our friends are fairly tolerant, although around the beginning of this year, as the trip was actually approaching, some were asking, "Haven't you gone yet?" After lots of waiting and planning and careful packing, we headed off and, after a relatively uneventful trip, arrived in Quito, where we stayed overnight before hopping to Guayaquil, on the coast, then to Baltra Island, and just like that, we were in the Galápagos.



We spent our first two days in the southern part of the area, where we got in a few dives at North Seymour Island, which is right next to Baltra, which is also known as South Seymour. As we moved about the archipelago, we learned that most islands have at least two names, which adds a little fun when trying to reconcile information from different guidebooks and people. The weather was sunny and clear, although a little cooler than I'd expected. The cold currents mixing in the area keep the weather much more temperate than tropical. Although they weren't the "main event" dives, they were very interesting, and we got to see a wide variety of fish, from small gobies and wrasses to scorpionfish and guinea fowl puffers in various color phases to octopuses and white-tip reef sharks.

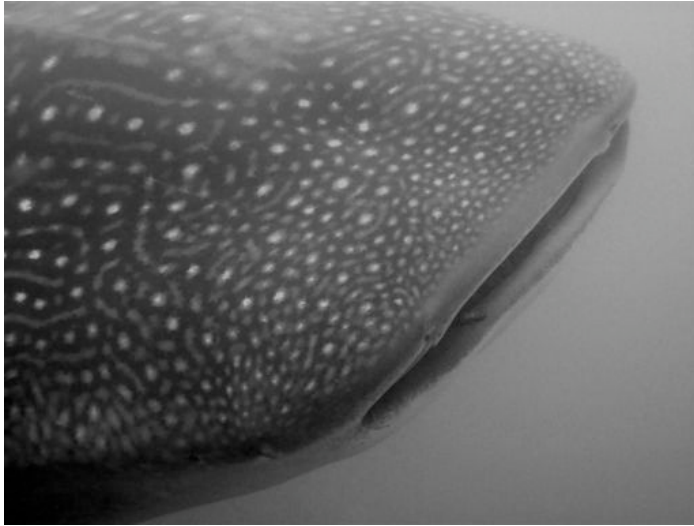
We also got to do our first land excursion, also to North Seymour. Despite being prepared for the essentially barren nature of the islands, I still found it a little hard to reconcile their equatorial location with their desert appearance. Like many earlier voyagers, I found myself thinking there had to be some water and more greenery on the island, but there wasn't. The islands are relatively young, and volcanic. Aside from some scrub, and a light coating of dusty soil, they are a world away from the island paradise featured in your typical dive vacation brochure. The land excursions are limited to marked paths, and any group of visitors must be accompanied by a licensed guide. Ours was Jaime, who, along with being a great divemaster, was also very well versed on every animal we saw on each of our land trips. In spite of the inhospitable conditions, wildlife was abundant. On display were numerous bird species and the famous marine and land iguanas. Both species had been singled out for lots of abuse by visitors from Darwin on, who all seemed to find them particularly hideous, but Stacey and I thought they were about as charming as one could hope a reptile to be. The marine iguanas—unique among lizards—swim and forage for algae in the waters of the archipelago. Ashore, they spend most of their days sunning to recoup heat lost in the chilly water. We saw them in large groups as well as singly splayed on a particularly sunny patch of rock or sand. The land iguanas are much larger and strikingly colored.



After our walk, we re-boarded the ship, which then headed northwest to the far corner of the archipelago. The crossing was a little bumpy—no worse than a swell-y crossing to the Channel Islands, but quite a bit longer. By morning, we were approaching Wolf Island for a day of diving. There, I got my first glimpse of scalloped hammerheads. As the first one passed close by where our group was perched on a ledge of lava rock, I was struck by their otherworldly appearance, even more striking in person than in any picture I'd seen.

At first they were a bit intimidating, but over time I really came to enjoy diving with them. They were skittish and kept their distance, but if you picked a lucky spot, like a corner or outcropping, one would occasionally make a closer approach. We also had to get used to large numbers of morays

that didn't keep to their hidey-holes during the day. This was the first place where we dived where they were out cruising the reef. We also saw Galápagos sharks, African Pompano, and Bluefin Trevally, among other abundant fish. Our



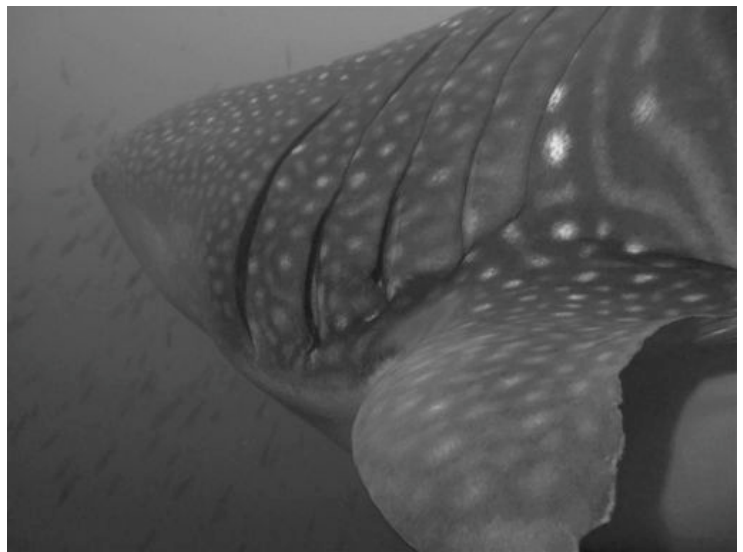
second dive added cruising eagle rays and several green sea turtles to the growing list of sightings. Our last dive at the site was at dusk (permission for night dives had been canceled shortly before we began our trip) and featured many nocturnal species coming out as their diurnal opposites tucked in.

Overnight, we moved to Darwin (also known as Culpeper), about 20 miles away, where we would do the bulk of our dives for the trip. The island itself is small, steep-sided, and uninhabited. For the purpose of our trip, it served mainly as the backdrop for nearby Darwin Arch, a rocky structure a few hundred yards from the island. We did over a dozen dives at the same site on the arch and, although this might sound like it could get boring, that was never a problem. Before our first dive, we were briefed on the possibility of strong currents moving us away from the site and

issued emergency beacons to go with our (required) air horns, safety sausages, and whistles. It was a good reality check, but we found the conditions very manageable for most of our dives.

The arch drops down to a rocky ledge swept by currents that bring large pelagics like tuna and sharks, including the biggest fish in the ocean, the whale shark, affectionately called "big señor" by our dive guides. We would drop down, position ourselves on the ledge, and peer intently into the water hoping to spot a whale shark. On our first dive, we watched hammerheads, many more eels, and several turtles swim by before Jaime, our guide, signaled, and a whale shark swam right in front of our group. Eventually it was determined that this was a medium-sized specimen, but he was plenty big. It's one thing to know something is big, but quite another when something the size of a small bus swims silently, effortlessly past you and lets you get close enough to touch it (or get whacked by its tail if you aren't paying attention). Over the next several days I was repeatedly struck by the contradictions of these fish. They're huge, but like a lot of the largest animals in the ocean, they feed on the tiniest krill. They seem to move slowly, but by finning as hard as I could, I could only keep pace for a minute or two before they pulled away. Their markings seem flamboyant, but their countershading and polka dots provide supremely effective camouflage. With the larger specimens, one end seemed to disappear into the blue if I was at the other end. Several times, we would swim out to see one when another would appear nearby, and we would signal frantically to a fellow diver who was unaware of the huge fish right behind him. We also learned that whale sharks move up and down the water column with no consideration of diver safety. Several times I found myself near the max depth for my nitrox, or realizing I was rising way too rapidly for safety while swimming alongside one.

Our hope had been to see one whale shark. In more than a dozen dives at the site, we were lucky enough to see them on almost every dive. After the thrill of seeing our first, we were treated to dives where we saw them in pairs, one after another, and in groups of up to five. As the trip progressed, we got better at timing our approach to pass close by the head and eye and then slowly let them cruise off. We also relaxed enough to begin to appreciate the many other attractions of the site, such as huge schools of wrasses, more hammerheads, and dolphins—including one that visited our group, hanging inverted above us as we waited for big señor to show.



Even as we started to feel like nothing could top our experience, we were in for another treat. After a dive I logged as featuring "several" whale sharks (I'd stopped trying to keep count), we spotted spouts from our panga. Leonardo, our driver, radioed to the boat: "Ballena!"

And we headed over for a little whale watching. A few minutes later, as we approached the shallows near the main island, the big humpback swam alongside our Zodiac, and slowed while we hurried back into masks and fins (and the coolest-headed divers grabbed cameras) and rolled back into the water. As if being this close to another huge magnificent animal wasn't enough, we quickly realized this was a mother-calf pair, and our excitement pretty much went through the roof. Although they swam off after only a minute or so, this was another unforgettable moment in a growing list for the trip.



We did several more dives at Darwin after this, with ever-improving sightings and close encounters. Our last dive was at the main island, very shallow and close in, to swim with Galápagos sea lions. Once thought to be the same as our California species, they've recently been determined to be separate, but swimming with them was as much fun as it always is. It was fun, too, to watch divers who had never had the experience marveling at their speed and agility underwater.

We took a break from diving with a trip to San Miguel. Our land excursion featured more birds—herons, oystercatchers, and a Galápagos hawk; more iguanas—these larger and redder (from eating different algae) than we'd seen at Seymour; a fur seal; and among the many sea lions, a mother who had just given birth. She was urging her pup, still with its umbilical and afterbirth attached, to get into a small tidepool and start swimming, refusing to let it feed until it did so.

We headed back to Wolf for several more dives that, although whale-shark-free, still offered new experiences. We spotted a small Pacific octopus swimming in the open on the reef, harassing and being harried by a number of fish. We watched as it changed shape, color, and texture with eye-popping speed before releasing a cloud of ink and burrowing into the rocks. Also putting in appearances: several eagle rays, swimming by in slow-motion formation; huge schools of hammerheads (on one dive, I stopped counting at 100), and on a wall dive, a drift through a school of barracuda that completely engulfed us. We finished at Wolf with a deep dive to see the red-lipped batfish, a weird (even for the Galápagos) bottom dweller that "walks" on the sand with its pectorals. They live below 80 feet, so we had only a few minutes of actual bottom time. Fortunately, they're plentiful, so we all got to see them. Unfortunately, they're tricky to photograph, so you'll have to google them.

We finished up with a couple of dives at Marshall (aka Isabella) Island, back in the southern part of the archipelago. Divers on the previous trip had seen orcas there, and we were hopeful. The water was much colder and the vis much poorer. The orcas might have swum right by, but there was no chance of seeing them. Given all that we had seen, though, we certainly couldn't complain.

Our last stop was Santa Cruz—aka Indefatigable, if you're still keeping track. It is the most populous island, home to a small but growing town as well as the Darwin Research Station, where the international community coordinates the scientific monitoring of the islands. The station runs a captive breeding program for the several species of tortoises that are severely endangered, and also provides a home for full-grown specimens that have been returned from zoos and private collections. These tortoises are not returned to their native islands in order to protect the resident populations from possible infection or parasites, so we had the opportunity to closely view these prehistoric creatures, a few of which were quite possibly alive when Darwin originally visited.



After ten days of diving and exploring, even an unplanned layover on the way home couldn't take away from the knowledge that we'd been lucky enough to experience a true trip of a lifetime.

For more photos from our trip, please visit [www.janik.smugmug.com](http://www.janik.smugmug.com) and click on "Travel & Diving."

# Paradise Dive Club Events

## March

March 1-2 Kayaking in Morro Bay

### PDC Holiday Party 2007

Many thanks to everyone who turned out for the party! We all had a great time. Also, many thanks to Scuba Santa for taking time out from his busy schedule to meet all of our junior divers! Pictures by Paul Weakliem



Left: Connor and Zack Bursek

Right: Joey Macko



Left: Jonathan Weakliem

Right: Lily Crestfield



## For Sale

Canon 24-105mm f/4 L lens, \$800. The warranty can still be sent in.  
Contact: Stephen Lewis, DVM, 968-4300

# Product Recall

thanks to Laurel Mehler for providing this information

## **NEWS from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, December 11, 2007**

### **ROMI Recalls SCUBA Regulators *Due to Drowning Hazard***

Name of Product: Oceanic and AERIS SCUBA Regulator First Stages

#### **Oceanic Regulator First Stages:**

Model CDX5

Certain serial numbers from 30202856 through 51312641 and purchased from May 2006 through October 2007

Model FDX10

Certain serial numbers from 51408026 through 51411813 and purchased from May 2006 through October 2007

Models CDX, DXi, DX3, DX4, and TDX5

All serial numbers and serviced from May 2006 through October 2007

#### **AERIS Regulator First Stages:**

Model AT400

Certain serial numbers from 30200036 through 51311560 and purchased from May 2006 through October 2007

#### **Balanced Diaphragm:**

All serial numbers and serviced from May 2006 through October 2007

The model and serial numbers are stamped on the side of the body or on the body's rubber covering.

**Sold at:** The items were either sold or repaired at authorized Oceanic and AERIS retailers nationwide from May 2006 through October 2007. The items sold for between \$300 and \$500.

**Manufactured in:** United States and Taiwan

**Remedy:** Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled regulator first stages and take them to any authorized Oceanic or AERIS dealer for a free replacement part.

**Consumer Contact:** For further information or to determine if your specific unit is affected, contact ROMI toll-free at (888) 636-9390 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. PT Monday through Friday. Oceanic customers can send an e-mail to [service@oceanicusa.com](mailto:service@oceanicusa.com) or visit the firm's Web site at [www.oceanicworldwide.com](http://www.oceanicworldwide.com). AERIS customers can send an e-mail to [info@diveaeris.com](mailto:info@diveaeris.com) or visit the firm's Web site at [www.diveaeris.com](http://www.diveaeris.com)

To see this recall on CPSC's web site, including pictures of the recalled product, please go to:  
<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prereel/prhtml08/08127.html>

**Available in Technicolor!**

Passed newsletters have been added to the Club website  
and are now available for viewing in **COLOR!**

# Reminder!!!! New Rules For 2008

"If you have an abalone report card for 2007, remember you are supposed to mail it back (even if unused)! The address is on the back of the card" - Paul Weakliem

## **REPORT CARDS REQUIRED FOR ALL FISHERMAN, INCLUDING CHILDREN, PIER FISHERMAN, AND FREE FISHING DAYS (EFFECTIVE IN EARLY SPRING)**

Any person fishing for, or taking the five species listed above, is required to have an appropriate report card in possession. Specifically, this report card requirement is for all persons including those exempt from license requirements, such as those under 16 years of age, those fishing from a public pier, or those fishing on free fishing days. Report cards are also required for lifetime licensees.

## **NEW ABALONE TAGGING REQUIREMENT (EFFECTIVE IN EARLY SPRING)**

Each abalone report card now includes 24 detachable tags, one of which must be affixed to any abalone taken in the sport fishery. The date, time, and location of each abalone taken must be recorded on both the tag and the card. Every abalone must be tagged immediately after exiting the water, and each tag must be securely fastened to the shell of the abalone by passing a "zip tie," string, line or other suitable material through a siphon hole in the shell. While abalone taken and tagged by a cardholder may still be given to another person, the rules require that all abalone possessed must be tagged. This means that even if the person checked with an abalone in possession is not the person who actually caught the abalone, the tag must link to the record on the cardholder's card that harvested the abalone. This regulation will help to ensure that all abalone are taken within daily bag and possession limits. Refer to the new regulations for complete reporting and tagging requirements.

## **SPINY LOBSTER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS (EFFECTIVE IN FALL 2008)**

People fishing for, or taking spiny lobster, will need to have a lobster report card in possession. The purpose of the new reporting requirement helps to monitor recreational catch, effort and the gear used in the recreational lobster fishery. Refer to the new regulations for complete reporting requirements.

# Local Dive Calendar February 2008

Truth Aquatics 962-1127 call for prices, boats, and specific destinations, or go to their website; [www.truthaquatics.com](http://www.truthaquatics.com).

1 day dive to Santa Cruz, 6am dep., 2/3, 2/10

1 day Outer Islands, 4am dep., 2/2, 2/9, 2/22 (bug specific dive!)

2 day dive, 4am dep., 2/2, 2/23

3 day Island Hike, 1/2 of the boat is Truth Aquatics, 4am dep., 2/9

3 day limited load dive, 4am dep. 2/22

3 day dive, 1/2 of the boat is Truth Aquatics, 4am dep. 2/16, The Truth and the Vision both have trips on 2/16

4 day dive, 1/2 of the boat is Truth Aquatics, 4am dep. 2/1

# PDC Thursday Night Dives!

To find out where the group will be diving, or to be added to the night dive e-mail list, sign up at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PDC\\_midweek\\_dive](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PDC_midweek_dive), or send e-mail to [PDC\\_midweek\\_dive-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PDC_midweek_dive-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

## Membership

\$25/year for individuals, \$40 for families. Membership runs May-April and includes a monthly newsletter, free air-fills, and other benefits. For details or to join, contact Noah Philips at [nphilips@gmail.com](mailto:nphilips@gmail.com)

## Newsletter

Send newsletter items to Gretchen Beckert [gbgreymutt@cox.net](mailto:gbgreymutt@cox.net)

## Website

[www.paradisediveclub.org](http://www.paradisediveclub.org)

## Dive Club Officers

President	Steven Trainoff	571-1622
Vice President	Geof McFarland	685-6001
Treasurer	Mark Silva	453-2001
Secretary	Jim Axtell	685-9025
Membership	Noah Philips	<a href="mailto:nphilips@gmail.com">nphilips@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter	Gretchen Beckert	571-1622
Circulation	Ovidio Mora	683-4999
Sgt at Arms	Akiles Ceron	564-1230
Entertainment	Mark Bursek	564-1923
Historian	Cheryl Weakliem	967-2827

## Join the coolest club in town!

1. Monthly meetings with entertainment.
2. raffle prizes (we all need new dive stuff)
3. Great dive buddy pool
4. Beach and boat dives, AND weekly night dives
5. Club BBQs, and other activities
6. Free air-fills and gear discounts at local dive shops
7. Right to proudly wear the official PDC T-Shirt (nobody has a logo as cool as ours).



P.O. Box 21311  
Santa Barbara, CA 93121

### Sponsors!

#### Aquatics

5822 Hollister Ave  
Goleta, Ca 93117  
805-967-4456

#### Blue Water Hunter

117-D Harbor Way  
Santa Barbara, Ca 93109  
805-564-6677

#### Truth Aquatics

301 W. Cabrillo Blvd.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
805-962-1127

#### Anacapa Dive Center

22 Anacapa St  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
805-963-8917

### Meeting Place

The January 29th meeting will take place at  
Petrini's Restaurant in Santa Barbara.  
14 West Calle Laureles.

Feeding frenzy at 6:30pm, meeting at 7pm

*Many thanks to our sponsors for their generosity including air-fill donations and gear discounts!*