



President

Michael Ring

Presidents Log

The Other Side Of The Planet

So I was sitting at my office back about a month ago when an email arrived from Dan Lindsay that contained a forwarded email from a friend of his. The friend had just had lunch with a local oral surgeon who had a trip planned to the Maldives on a live aboard and still had a couple of spots available to fill. Dan thought I might be interested, so he sent the email to me. He was right.

I immediately contacted the source, Dr. Robert Kiken, and found out that it was true, there was a spot that I could sign up for. Well, it only took me the time to get permission from she who must be obeyed to decide to join the group. If I could get an airplane trip I would be on board.

After a few days working with Bob's travel agent, I was signed up and ready to go. The anticipation was palpable. I couldn't wait. Not only was I getting to go to the other side of the planet (The Maldives are 12 hours ahead/behind Pacific time with daylight savings factored in) but this would be my first live aboard trip. Woo hooo!

The group was mostly people in the dental and health care business. Dentist. Orthodontists. Pediatric dentists. Oral surgeons. I knew none of them. They did not know me. Would I fit in with such highly intelligent and professional people? Would I be dignified enough for the group? Would they be able to stand my twisted sense of humor? Were my teeth clean?

As the date approached I received an email indicating that there would be a pre-trip dinner at Bob's house. I was invited so I would meet most of the group. A few were from out of the Santa Barbara area. As emails were exchanged I started to get a feel for the people I would be diving with. To make a long story short, from the emails exchanged I immediately realized these people were just like me. Diving enthusiasts who had sucked in a bit too much Nitrous Oxide! I loved it. I would fit right in.

Finally, the day of the trip arrived. The plan was that one of the group had rented a limo to take us to LAX. I was the second stop. They were to arrive at my house

around 9 a.m. I was packed and ready to go the night before. Sitting at the table having breakfast with my wife around 8:15 I got a call. They were around the corner and would be at the house in minutes. Realizing they were early, I rushed to get all of my stuff ready, and there they were. A limo and an SUV for the luggage. Wow! This was intense.

Out the door I went with my bags, and off to the next home. Well, the next people were not going to be ready until 9:30. Our first layover, and we hadn't even left Santa Barbara yet. Ok, I can do this.

As we waited at Bob's house for him and his to finish getting ready I realized – Crap, I forgot my passport! I had to rush home to get it or I was not getting on that plane. Not a very good first impression.

After that glitch was corrected, off we went to lala land. Arrival at LAX was easy. We loaded onto the plane and took off. The flights took us to Tokyo, Singapore and then Male, the capital of the Maldives. The layover in Tokyo was brief. However, we had a full day in Singapore. We checked into a hotel, at 1 a.m., and planned to meet for breakfast, then check out the island nation.

As I awoke in Singapore, I opened the curtains to



see the most unusual building I have ever seen. They are building a new casino that is three 55 story towers in a row, with a huge boat like structure on the top, with its

own oasis! What the? It looked like Noah's Ark. I guess they take global warning seriously there! Weird.

So what do you do in Singapore? If you are with this group, you go to a mall. Say what? Yep. They wanted to go shopping. Ok. So we go to a mall. As we walk in I see Tiffany's, Cartier, Gucci, etc. I began to think I was out of my league. Ok, I am out of my league at Walmart, but you get my drift. We spent two hours or so at the mall. Fine. We still had lots of time before the next flight. What should we have done? Spit on the sidewalk and see if they really cane you?

Next we visited an Asian Museum that was quite interesting. It covered a very large array of artifacts from many different lands in Asia. It was truly enriching and informative. But hey, this was a dive trip, so let's move on, shall we?

After another long flight we got to Male. The island itself is absolutely covered in buildings. There is such limited space that no spot of land is free. While we did not land on Male itself, as the airport is one island over, you could see that Male was not the place to go unless you wanted more shopping.

We were shuttled over to another island which is the home of the Kurumba Resort. A very lovely place. We each had our own bungalow with an open air bathroom. Very nice. The temperature was about 89 degrees, with 75 percent humidity. The rooms were all air-conditioned, except for the bathrooms.

We spend a day and a half at Kurumba. Four of us got on a boat and did an afternoon dive. The water was 85 degrees! That's right, 85 degrees. Ahhhhhhhhh.

The next day we were ferried back to the airport island to get picked up by our dive boat. Everyone was excited to get the diving part of the trip started in earnest. It was a short trip over to the place that would be our home for the next 8 days. As we approached our boat, The Manta Cruise, we all were thrilled that the boat was still floating and looked great. We got on board and took our stuff to our assigned cabins. It was a spacious place (for a boat) with 9 cabins for the 16 of us. Each cabin had its own bathroom, with shower. The cabins were air conditioned, although the bathrooms were not. You see, we would leave our windows in the shower open a bit for circulation, so it did not make sense to run the A/C there.

There was a full lounge, with fully stocked bar, etc., amidships. There were four levels on the boat, the top being the sun deck. Our dining room was at the stern. A long table for 18 people. That is also where we got our pre-dive briefings. There was a separate boat that we

would dive from, called a Dhoni, where we left all of our gear. It had its own compressor and provided Nitrox if you wanted it.

We departed the home island and went out in search of submarine splendor. It was not hard to find. The diving was fantastic. We saw manta rays, whale sharks, octopus, dolphin, white tip sharks, hammer head sharks, moray eels, lobster, crabs, turtles, grouper, sting rays, file fish, seahorses, pipe fish, puffer fish, multi-colored coral, lion fish, scorpion fish. The list goes on and on and on. Did I mention the water was 85 degrees?

The viz varied depending on where we were. Some locations were over 100 feet. Other spots it was about 50 feet. The current was intense in many places. Some dives we had to hook onto the reef and hang on for dear life. Other spots we just drifted along and watched as the beauty passed us.

The crew was fabulous! Our meals were well planned and well prepared. The one thing that was a bit lacking was a diversity of snacks between dives. Mostly they gave us packaged cookies. We had three dive masters. The lead from Belgium, and the other two, one from France and one local Maldivian, were all very skilled and wonderful people. The people who we met at the local spots we did stop at were very friendly. Our local dive master, Fathu, was a fantastic diver and wonderful human being. He is credited with locating one of the best spots to dive with manta rays in the world!

One night the plan was to have an on island picnic for dinner. They found the appropriated deserted island, (there are many) and anchored off shore. We went for our afternoon dive while the crew went to set up. When we were shuttled over, we saw that they had spent hours carving a sand sculpture of a whale shark, with all the proper coloration. That was our dinner table! Wow! It was such a great touch.

We generally did three dives a day. The first was at about 6:30 a.m. We would then get back to the boat and have breakfast. The second dive was at about 10:30 a.m. Then back for lunch. The afternoon dive was normally around 2:30 p.m. Then we would shower up and relax on board for the rest of the day. Some days we had to travel quite a distance between dive spots, as much as four hours. On those days, we did night dives instead of the afternoon dives.

The group was simply fantastic. Everyone was very friendly and welcoming. The collective sense of humor was hilarious. They adopted me into the group without hesitation. Who knew?

If ever given a chance to go there again, I will not hesitate. While it is a long, long, long travel to get there, it is worth the hassle.

And in case you are interested, yes, there is a Club sticker on the bridge of the dhoni!

Marine Tech Day at SBCC

by Ray Janik

We started the morning with a hardhat dive to 500 feet.
On air.

Not really!!!

Anyone expecting a testosterone-fueled day of derring-do when PDC spent the day at the City College Marine Tech building might have been a little surprised to begin the day with coffee, pastries, and a little time in the classroom. This was more interesting than it may sound,



though, as we got an overview of what students learning to be commercial divers today could expect, and how that has changed from the slightly more...colorful escapades of earlier heydays (my personal favorite: the bends-tempting coffee break between a long, deep dive and hours of decompression in a topside chamber). Commercial divers today work not only in the oil industry but, as Program Director Geoff Thielst put it, pretty much anywhere there is water: conducting research, inspecting infrastructure, and performing maintenance and repairs anywhere from oil rigs to inland water towers. Students in the program receive training in diving as well as a host of other skills

such as seamanship, engine repair, first aid, welding, and R.O.V operation. As an aside, we learned that they love duct tape even more than the rest of us, and that nobody but Geoff is allowed to coil the garden hose at his house--because commercial divers all coil hoses exactly the same (or as Geoff says, "right") way. Based on my regular battles with the "never-kink" hose in my garden, I was again reassured that I would most likely make a crappy commercial diver.

Following Geoff's overview, Don Barthelme gave a safety briefing focusing mainly on the chamber ride we were going to take, from descent to a pressure of 120 feet through our safe ascent, safety stop, and an additional stop breathing oxygen to our return to ambient pressure.

Dan Vasey introduced us to the equipment we would get to try out: helmets and band masks with tethers supplying air and communication, as well as a brief history of their development from the original hard hats we've all seen in the movies. All three instructors reminded us of the strong connection of both the Santa Barbara diving community and the City College Marine Tech program to every aspect of commercial diving. Even though there isn't a lot of it actually done in the area, the



founders of the companies that created the equipment and provided the divers from the time the industry really took off in the late '50s and early '60s were largely in

Santa Barbara. Even today that connection remains strong.

Once we were thoroughly briefed, we headed down to the work area for some hands-on time with the gear we'd been hearing about. First up: a chamber dive to about 120 feet. Four of us packed in to the inner section of the chamber for what we were told would be a gentle pressurization to about four atmospheres. It quickly became obvious that "gentle" is a relative term, at least for me. I was clearing my ears pretty much continuously for



the whole descent and could just barely keep up with the pressure buildup. Mechanically creating pressure is *loud*, which also added to the fun of popping one's ears every one or two seconds. Seeing all the physics we learn about when we get certified in action over the course of the dive was fascinating, though. On our descent, the air warmed rapidly, and after about 100 feet, we all sounded like Donald Duck with a head cold when we talked. While some in our group felt narced, I'm pretty sure I would have found this just as hilarious at sea level. The ride up was a safe ascent, complete with a safety stop, some pure oxygen at twenty feet, and more physics; this time we got rapidly cooling air and condensation. I wouldn't say the ride was fun, but it was certainly interesting, and an experience I'm glad I got to have without *needing* to have it.

After our deep dive, it was off to the shallow end of the pool (so to speak) for a chance to try out the cool toys...I mean. sophisticated tools used by trained professionals. With the help of the staff and student volunteers, we got to suit up with our choices of a variety of helmets and full-face masks. The setup is surprisingly simple. For the helmets, first comes a neoprene collar with a metal ring to mate to the helmet. The bandmasks just go on over the head. Once that's on, it's connected to the umbilical with air, communication line, and pressure hose to monitor depth (we'd be bottoming out at about 5 feet in the tank); then a harness to connect the umbilical and carry a bailout bottle; then a weightbelt.

Thus equipped, we got a quick lesson in how dependent a diver is on surface support as we were led by our tethers as if they were leashes up to the ladders that went into the tanks--there's pretty much no way to walk around trailing that stuff without either falling down or knocking someone over. We'd been warned that the tanks were unheated, but it was surprising to feel how big a difference it made having a helmet keeping your entire head dry. Once in the tank, we were free to chat with our tenders, strike heroic poses, and wave to observers through the tank's portholes. The staff had also, thoughtfully, placed a pipe "puzzle" with a variety of connections on it for any interested diver to disassemble and reassemble. After taking as many dives as we wanted, we wrapped up and most of the group headed off to continue decompressing at the Beachside Cafe.

Thanks to the Marine Tech faculty for sharing their stories with us, and also to the program's students who volunteered to help us with chamber rides and pool dives: Chris Duffy, Alan Freitas, Jessica Frost, Ben Gordon, Eric Kvale, Tyler Metzger, Tyler Rae, Omer Sfar. and Oliver Wolfe.

What are you looking at?

Free Marine Life ID classes!



Tired of not knowing who's who on your underwater adventures? Learn how to identify many of our California fish, invertebrates and algae in these fun, informative and **free** classes. Also learn how to do REEF (Reef Environmental Education Foundation) surveys and become part of this worldwide citizen science program. This class will change the way you dive!

•California Fish ID:

- Saturday, June 5th, 10am-2pm, Long Marine Lab, Santa Cruz
- Wednesday, June 23rd, 6-9pm, Ocean Institute, Dana Point
- Thursday, June 24th, 6-9pm, Aquarium of the Pacific, Long Beach

•California Invertebrate/Algae ID:

- Friday June 25th, 6-9pm, Aquarium of the Pacific, Long Beach

•Practice Survey Dives, experienced or new surveyors all welcome!

- Friday, May 14th, Sundiver Express. Special for REEF: \$95
- Sat, June 26th, Sundiver. Special for REEF: 3 tanks \$100
- Sign up and pay for dives by calling Sundiver at: 562-594-6968**

•Sign up for one or any combination of events online

•Classes are informative, fun and **free**, but registration is required.

•Taught by Janna Nichols, REEF Outreach Coordinator

•Sponsored by REEF, with support from Aquarium of the Pacific, The Ocean Institute, UCSC Long Marine Lab and Sundiver .

More info and online registration here:

<http://www.pnwscuba.com/critterwatchers/calclasses.htm>

Aquarium of the Pacific
The Ocean Institute



UCSC Long Marine Lab
Sundiver

Santa Barbara Dive Rescue Workshop

***Saturday, May 8, 2010 at UCSB
Enrollment is Limited!***

DONATION: \$25 For additional information, contact Workshop Coordinator Ed Stetson at Ed@StetsonDiving.com. Students may register in advance at Aquatics, Anacapa Dive Center, Blue Water Hunter or Truth Aquatics/Sea Landing.

Online credit card and Paypal payments are accepted by visiting the [REGISTRATION](#) page. Checks are also accepted and are to be made payable to **Diving Foundation of Santa Barbara** and mailed to *Ed Stetson 15 East Padre Street Santa Barbara, CA 93105*.

All Proceeds will Benefit the Nejat Ezal Memorial Diving Scholarships at UCSB and SBCC.

COURSE: A non-certification class, taught by local volunteer diving instructors. Open to certified scuba divers of all skill levels. Students may do as much or as little as they wish. The goal is to get some divers back in the water, while teaching everybody about accident prevention and rescue. Divers must provide their own diving equipment, pool wet suit, octopus regulator or secondary air source, one full tank with protective boot, and a weight belt with soft or coated weights. Students with medical conditions (respiratory problems, high blood pressure, etc.) **MUST** have a medical doctor's letter of clearance prior to using scuba. An optional Dive Rescue, DAN Oxygen Provider and Nitrox certification is available. Certification will require additional lecture/ocean sessions, plus a fee paid to and contracted with an individual instructor. Info at class. **NOTE:** Dive Rescue Certification is a Prerequisite for Divemaster, Assistant Instructor and Instructor Courses.

LECTURE (8:00 – 12:00) UCSB Marine Science Institute Auditorium

· Diving Safety Review: **Eric Hessel, UCSB Diving Safety Officer; Mike Anghera, UCLA Diving Safety Officer**

- Boat Diving: **Glen Fritzler, Owner Truth Aquatics**
- Medical Aspects of Diving: **Dr. Tom Millington, Hyperbaric Physician**
- Neurological Assessments: **Dr. James Lynch, US Air Force / Hyperbaric Physician**
- Introduction to Oxygen Administration & Nitrox: **Don Barthelmess, SBCC Marine Diving Technology Instructor**
- Helicopter Evacuations: **Ed Stetson, UCSB Scuba Instructor**

POOL (1:30 – 4:00) UCSB Campus (Old) Pool (not the Rec Cen Pool) Maps and Pool Parking Info Available at the Lecture

Skills Review and Updates, Diver Assists and Tows, Emergency Ascent Review, Panicked Diver on the Surface, Unconscious Diver on the Surface and Bottom.

RECEPTION (6:00 – 9:00) Harry's Plaza Café "Ranchero Room" Banquet Room

3313 State Street: Hors d'oeuvres, No Host Bar, Dinners available.

Santa Cruz Campout

We have reserved group campsite "C" at Scorpion Harbor Campground on Santa Cruz Island for Friday and Saturday evenings July 23 and 24. Total cost \$80.00. Contact [Rich Cirincione@ngc.com](mailto:RichCirincione@ngc.com) for more info.

On the Calendar

Earth Day-Coastal Cleanup

April 24th Tajiguas Beach Cleanup Sat morning at Tajiguas with bar-b-que and shore dive at Refugio afterwards. Meet at Refugio (on other side of river at end of parking lot) 8:30am for coffee and donuts. Tell the ranger you are there for the cleanup and park for free.

Platform Grace Rig Dive

We are working on a rig dive with Truth Aquatics. They haven't scheduled one yet. We have indicated that the club would buy 10 to 15 spots if they can arrange it.

PDC Meetings

Watch your email for our new monthly meeting location. Petrini's won't be available after April

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, or send e-mail to 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 Sharon Coffield at:

membership@paradisediveclub.org

Newsletter

Send newsletter items to Jerry Sorich at"

jasorich@cox.net

Website

www.paradisediveclub.org

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)

Dive Club Officers

info@paradisediveclub.org

President	Michael Ring
Vice President	Akiles Ceron
Treasurer	Jim Axtell
Secretary	John Kushwara
Membership	Sharon Coffield
Newsletter	Jerry Sorich
Circulation	Rich Cirincione
Entertainment	Steve Trainoff
Webmaster	Stuart Ponder
Sgt At Arms	Steve Senesac

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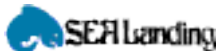
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22 Anacapa St.
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805-963-8917

Meeting Place

The April 27th meeting will take place at
Petrini's Restaurant in Santa Barbara.
14 West Calle Laureles.