

# 2011 NABS Club Of The Year

# LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers



## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 12  
DECEMBER 2013



Photographer: DonCosta Seawell  
Camera: Nikon D200  
Location: Philippines  
Subject: Turtle

### LABUE Holiday Meeting

Join us on Tuesday December 10th for our Special General Membership Holiday Meeting. The more people the merrier, so bring your family and friends for this festive evening highlighting 2013's busy year of activities, travel, and diving. There will be plenty of time for socializing and snacking on tasty Holiday refreshments provided by LABUE. Back by popular demand, we will be playing the "Steal-a-Gift" game. Everyone is invited to bring a wrapped gift (limit \$25 value) and join us for this evening of fun. If you missed our fabulous December 8th Holiday Dinner, we will continue the party with our Holiday Dinner. Don't miss it!!!

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**MEMBER'S CORNER: LABUE MEMBERS VISIT THE PHILIPPINES**

BY DONCOSTA SEAWELL

As an extension of the club trip to Kapalai, Malaysia, three LABUE members continued their journey by travelling from Malaysia to the Philippine Island of Cebu for some additional diving and fun. DonCosta Sewell and his wife, Doralyn, spent a week at the Magic Island Resort in Cebu, joined by Symphorosa Williams. The specific motivation was to dive with whale sharks that are known to visit area year-round. They were not disappointed. The trio got to snorkel with the giant fish "up close and personal." The Magic Island resort discourages scuba diving with whale sharks, though some operators allow it. So the encounters were at or near the surface. This worked out well for Doralyn who is a non-diver, but snorkels quite often.

Magic Island is a small, family

owned and operated, all-inclusive resort, meaning meals are included, but beverages are not, except coffee and tea. The ten (10) chalets are clean and well-maintained and will accommodate up to 24 people. They are small, but comfortable, with hot showers, air-conditioning and 110 v power outlets that don't require adapters. The currency in Cebu is the Philippine peso which exchanges at 42 to 1 with the US dollar. English is spoken extensively. The Dutch owners cater to Dutch, German and American clientele. The resort staff is quite friendly, flexible and accommodating. Meals are taken at a common dining room with breakfast and lunch to order. Dinner is family style with a variety of cuisine that was always appealing and tasty, with generous portions. Massage, pedicure and

manicure is available on an appointment basis for quite reasonable fees.

The dive operation at the resort is a first class, PADI certified enterprise. There are three outboard powered dive boats fitted with outriggers that keep them stable in choppy seas. These boats accommodate up to eight (8) divers with one divemaster leading a group of four. Equipment is initially set up by each diver at the dive center, then loaded on and off the dive boat by the dive crew that also changes tanks during surface intervals. Snacks of papaya and pineapple are served between dives in the morning, with hot tea and fresh water also available. After two morning dives, the boat returns to the resort for lunch before going out again for an afternoon dive. However, if the

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

BY: RICHARD RICE



**2013 is almost history as we celebrate the end of an exciting year with our LABUE Holiday Membership Meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup> featuring food, prizes, and fellowship.** With the Christmas Holidays fast approaching, some of you may be considering adding a new underwater camera to your Holiday wish list. Based on the response to LABUE's Annual Photo Contest, many of our members have become avid

underwater photographers interested in improving their skills and equipment.

Do you aspire to dive to take photographs; or do you just want to take some decent photos while you are diving? If the latter is true, a compact digital camera system may suit you well. I have been recommending compact digital cameras and housings to LABUE members for several years; most have opted out of bulky and complex SLR based cameras and UW housings in favor of these simple and reasonably priced systems. The term "Point and Shoot" used to describe many compact digital cameras is misleading. While all are capable of fully automatic point and shoot operation, many have the same advanced exposure controls and features available in digital SLRs, including *minimal shutter delay, aperture priority, shutter priority, manual settings, macro settings, adjustable white balance, exposure histograms, program modes*, and under-



*water color correction adjustments.*

Last year, I wrote about the highly regarded **GoPro Hero 2** with Dive Housing as a viable entry level UW camera option. The new **GoPro Hero 3** was introduced this year with additional features and an even smaller size. These are the tiny cameras that take the spectacular high definition

videos that you may have seen on YouTube. They feature a 170 degree wide angle lens which is ideal for UW photography, 2 hour video recording time per battery charge, and simple fixed focus "point and shoot" still photograph capability of up to 12 MP at a cost of less than \$400 including photo/video light and accessories. A number of entries in this year's LABUE Photo Contest were shot with GoPro cameras.

The "point and shoot" camera that now stands above the competition is the new **Sony RX100 II**. The amazing Sony **RX100 II** boasts a full 1inch sensor size, 20.9 MP resolution, an

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Continued from Page 2*

80-25,600 equivalent ISO range, RAW image capture, 1080p hi definition video, and other advanced features rivaling the best digital SLRs

currently on the market. The solid **Canon Pow-**



**ershot** series (**S95, S110**) and **Panasonic Lumix DMC-LX7** remain as sound "point and shoot" choices.

Prices for these cameras range from \$750 to \$1000, including UW housings.



Another option that LABUE members may want to consider is a waterproof camera such



as the **Olympus Tough TG-2**. This is a splash proof pocket camera that can be used alone

for swimming, snorkeling, boating or other wet activities (rated up to 50ft); or it can be used in Olympus Underwater Housing PT-053 (rated up to 130ft) for SCUBA diving. Price for the camera and housing starts at less than \$700.

If you would like to see a detailed comprehensive review of 2013's Best Underwater Compact Cameras with details on the specific features you should be looking for, take a look at <http://www.backscatter.com/learn/article/article.php?ID=57>.

Whatever your final UW camera system choice; one thing that you

will quickly learn is that there will probably be an improved version available months after you make your purchase. Don't let it bother you. If you are satisfied with your camera's features and the pictures it takes, you made the right choice.

**2014 is an election year for LABUE**, with LABUE Officer and LABUE Board of Directors positions to be determined next Fall. If you are interested in determining the direction

and future growth of LABUE, I invite you to seriously consider running for an officer or board position during next Fall's elections. If you are interested in lending your labor, experience, or organizational skills to LABUE on any of our committees, your participation would be more than welcomed. If you would like to recommend an activity or event that would benefit the community, our members, or help fulfill our 2014 mission, please share your ideas with me or one of the Board members. We value your recommendations. Give me a call or send me an email ([labue@sbcglobal.net](mailto:labue@sbcglobal.net)) to share your ideas and thoughts on how to make LABUE a better dive club and to let me know how you can help us in these efforts.



## PHILIPPINES

*Continued from Page 2*

morning dive sites are farther away from the dive center, the fresh-cooked lunch is trucked in to the nearest spot to which the boats may anchor. Nitrox is available for a nominal cost, with each diver checking the EAN percent on each tank daily.

This trip extension served as a scouting enterprise for LABUE. The owners indicated their intent to open another, similar resort in 2015 on the island of Bohol. The new resort will have many activities available for non-divers, making it an attractive option for a future LABUE warm water destination.



## HAITI WATER PROJECT

BY: DENISE BARKER

Long time LABUE member Denise Barker, along with three fellow Link Sisters from the Harbor Area Chapter traveled to Haiti as part of their International Trends and Services Program (ITS). They arrived in Haiti, the poorest country in the western hemisphere, to assess the need, make local contacts, and determine the next steps in order to provide meaningful assistance. It was immediately determined that Fresh Drinking Water was the most basic need for that country.

Water is of major importance to all living things. Water is up to 60% of the human body, the brain is composed of 70%, lungs are nearly 90%, bone is 22% and blood is 83% water. In 2011, 6,000 people died



from waterborne diseases in Haiti. Some of the water problems are caused by human waste contaminating the water used for drinking, cooking and cleaning. Approximately 5,000 of the 6,000 who died of waterborne diseases were from an outbreak of Cholera.

The ITS group focused its efforts in the Les Cayes area. Les Cayes is located in the southwestern area of Haiti, approximately a 4 hour drive from Port Au Prince. The estimated population is less than 100,000 people. Major export trade concentrates mostly on coffee and sugarcane. They are the world's largest supplier

of Vetiver, an ingredient of perfume, exporting in excess of 250 tons annually. Our Haitian Host was Father Colbert Estil and his family. He is the

Priest-in-Charge for Mission des Cayes at St. Sauveur Church. Father Colbert is responsible for 11 churches and 7 schools.

Through Harbor Area Link Chapter fundraising efforts, individual member donations and a collaborative effort with the National Trends Committee and Health Committee, the International Trends and Services committee was able to purchase the construction of one Water Well, as well as, repair an existing Water Well in Faucault. Additionally, the group brought eight (8) suitcases totaling 400 pounds of donations. They bought all of the school books Camp Perrin K-6 School were in need of and were available at the book store. In addition, they purchased jewelry from female entrepreneurs in an effort to expand their business. Our LABUE member Denise Barker was able to conduct a Transfer of Knowledge mini-workshop to assist entrepreneurs in continued product development.

The group also purchased 3 school uniforms for less fortunate students so they would be allowed to attend school. They sponsored six (6) Micro Loans for potential businesses to develop sustainable projects. Lastly the group provided partial salary for a Nurse's Aide to all schools in Father Colbert's parish.

All of the above was completed in three (3) days on the ground. The group is happy to report that within a week of their return, both Water Wells had been completed. Now that partnerships have been established in

Haiti, the Harbor Area Chapter is planning some major fundraising opportunities to strengthen the chain of friendship globally and to continue to be of service in Haiti. Possible future endeavors include officially adopting Camp Perrin School, purchasing more school uniforms, provide treated water for classrooms, provide meals for the school, additional micro lending loans, and provide a stipend for teacher's salaries. Additional goal is to conduct a S.T.E.M (Science, Technology, Electronics and Mathematics) Conference at the Business and Tech-



nology Institute in Les Cayes. Lastly, the Harbor Area Chapter would like to purchase the construction of another Water Well outside of the school perimeter. The classes end at 1:00pm each day because there is no running water. The challenge is that it is a mountainous area with a lot of rocks and the company would need to dig about 250 feet to reach water. A hand pump will not work well that deep and



an electric pump will need maintenance and someone to pay the monthly electric bill. Currently they are exploring the possibility of a solar pump.

It is the hope of the Harbor Area Link Chapter to sponsor another trip to Haiti in early 2014, in an effort to complete some of the proposed goals. The major fundraising event to finance these activities will be held at the Petersen Automotive Museum on Saturday, January 25, 2014. If you would like additional information, please contact LABUE member Denise Barker at cdeniseb@earthlink.net.

**MEMBER'S CORNER 2: DIVING SAINT MARTIN AND SINT MAATEN**

BY STEPHEN SCRUGGS

Saint Martin is an island in the northeast Caribbean approximately 190 miles east of Puerto Rico. The island is divided roughly 60/40 between France and the Kingdom of the Netherlands with the two parts roughly equal in population. It is one of the smallest islands divided between two nations, a division dating to 1648. The southern Dutch part comprises Sint Maarten and is one of four constituent countries that form the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The northern French part is an overseas collectivity of France. Collectively, the two territories are known as "St-Martin / St Maarten". The island is located south of Anguilla and northwest of Saint Barthélemy (Saint Barth). In 1493, Christopher Columbus embarked on his second voyage to the New World. According to legend, Columbus sighted and perhaps anchored at the island of Saint Martin on November 11, 1493, the feast day of Saint Martin of Tours. In his honor, Columbus named the island San Martin. This name was translated to Sint Maarten (Dutch), Saint-Martin (French) and "Saint Martin" in English.

I arrived in Saint Martin 500 years, 11 months and 22 days after Columbus during the rainy season and only two weeks before his arrival was celebrated on November 11, 2013. My travel group consisted of members of the Water Babies Sailing Club and LABUE dive club and I was looking forward to my first warm water trip in almost a year. Our plan was to sail for seven days with one dive on Saint Martin, one dive on Anguilla and one dive on Saint Barth. The water was a balmy 85 degrees and the visibility averaged 50-60 feet. Because of the weather and open ocean conditions on some dives, the dives proved somewhat challenging on occasion. One of our dives was from a large inflatable while the other two were from small dive boats, but the five foot swells made getting back on the boat an adventure within itself. It was like putting your bare foot in the stir-

rup of a bucking horse while removing and holding your boot in one hand. The ladder and the motor were crashing down in rhythm within inches of your body. It was fun! Our dive master warned us that the current might get so bad we may have to turn around. It got bad but we never got the signal we were looking for. It was fun too!

LABUE members Richard Rice, Sone-Seere Wilson, Symphorosa Williams and myself, along with our crew LABUE members Tina Houston and Stacy Wade and LABUE Discover Scuba graduate Henry Jones, all enjoyed the challenge and the beauty of sailing and diving around this island made up of two countries that accepts euros and dollars in return for vast diversity of food and culture unlike few we've ever seen.

**BOAT DIVING?**

If you decide to sign up for a boat dive and you want a LABUE dive buddy, please contact DonCosta Seawell at 909-593-1877 or [doncosta1@msn.com](mailto:doncosta1@msn.com) with your trip details and he will convey that information to the club so that anyone who desires to join you will be aware.

**DIVER NEWS**

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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Know of any member Certification announcements? Please notify Debora Ewing at [dewing@proskauer.com](mailto:dewing@proskauer.com)

**CHECK OUT THE LABUE STORE**

**Our hats and polo shirts are beautifully embroidered!**



Makes a great gift!!



**Above long and short sleeve t-shirts have the same front/back design layout!**

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**Look great on the boat or beach with official LABUE apparel including T-shirts, Polo Shirts, and Baseball Caps.**

**T-shirts and Baseball Caps are in stock and are available in most sizes at \$20 each. Check out the LABUE Store at [www.labue.org](http://www.labue.org) to place your order, or you may purchase items at the monthly membership meeting.**



## NEWSLETTER ADS

LABUE is offering newsletter ads for nominal prices. The price structure is as follows:

- \$15 for a quarter page ad (per month);
- \$20 for a half page ad (per month);
- \$30 for a full page ad (per month).

If you're interested in purchasing an ad, please contact Debora Ewing at (310) 284-4556.

### PHOTO OF THE MONTH



**Reminder: Please e-mail your photos for the "Photo of the Month" contest. You just may see your photo on the cover of an upcoming edition of the LABUE News! Please e-mail photos for consideration to [dewing@proskauer.com](mailto:dewing@proskauer.com).**

## UPCOMING EVENTS 2013

December 8, 2013 -- Annual Holiday Dinner

December 10, 2013 -- LABUE General Membership Meeting - 7:00 PM

January 14, 2013 -- LABUE General Membership Meeting - 7:00 PM

January 28, 2013 -- LABUE Board Meeting

**HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

From the LABUE Newsletter Staff

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### President

Richard Rice  
(323) 299-3798

#### Vice President

Tina Houston  
(213) 359-2131

#### Treasurer

DonCosta Seawell  
(909) 593-1877

#### Secretary

Patricia Williams  
(619) 459-0944

#### Members at Large

Lamont Johnson  
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Steve Scruggs  
(310) 795-0851

Joe Windolph  
(818) 209-2504

### COMMITTEES

#### Membership

Tina Houston (Interim)  
(213) 359-2131

#### Ways & Means

Debora Ewing  
(310) 284-4556

#### Beach Dive

Joe Windolph  
(818) 209-2504

#### Boat Dive

DonCosta Seawell  
(909) 593-1877

#### Dive Events & Trip Planning

Tina Houston (Interim)  
(213) 359-2131

#### Dive Training & Safety

George Linares (Interim)

#### Internet Administrator

Francois Desamours  
(703) 463-6857

#### Website Editor

Steve Scruggs  
(310) 795-0851

#### Program Committee

Keenon Adamson

#### Technical Dive Committee

Open

#### Youth Committee

Joe Windolph  
(818) 209-2504

#### Newsletter Staff:

Richard Rice - Publisher  
Debora Ewing - Editor  
(310) 284-4556  
Sharlene Johnson -  
Production Manager  
Staff Writers -  
Steve Scruggs  
Dangil Jones

## Meetings

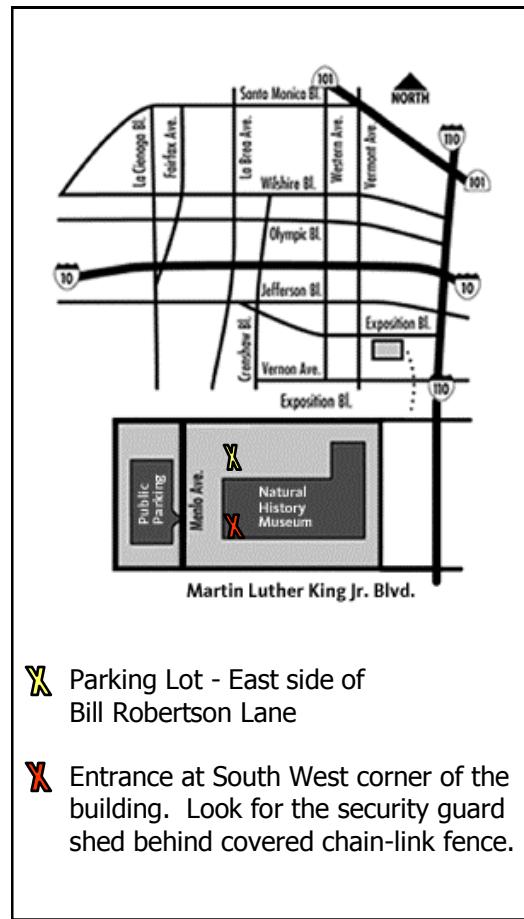
The LABUE meetings are held the second Tuesday of every Month at 7:00 PM in the Times Mirror Room at the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles.

## Directions

The Natural History Museum is located in Exposition Park, at 900 Exposition Boulevard between Vermont Avenue and Figueroa Street.

From the 110 (Harbor) Freeway, take the Martin Luther King Boulevard exit and head west towards Vermont Avenue. Turn right (north) on Menlo Avenue. Make a left into Exposition Park Lot 3.

Please visit the Museum website for more information at [www.nhm.org](http://www.nhm.org).



## Contact Us:

PO Box 90069, Los Angeles, CA 90009

Phone/Fax: (323) 299-3798

Email: [info@labue.org](mailto:info@labue.org)

Web Site: [www.labue.org](http://www.labue.org)

**In consideration to the many LABUE members who are unable to download large files on their computer, we will be limiting the number of photographs included in our newsletter. To accommodate our many excellent photographers, we will begin posting additional photographs on the LABUE website for your viewing pleasure.**

P.O. BOX 90069, LOS ANGELES, CA 90009

(323) 299-3798 (Phone and Fax)

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For the Year \_\_\_\_\_

### General Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Referred By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Certification Information:

Year First Certified: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Dives \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Last Dive: \_\_\_\_\_  
o Warm Water o Beach o Boat

### Agency Certification

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Diving Preferences: o Beach Dives o Boat Dives o Warm Water Dives

Amount: \$30.00 o Individual Membership o New o Renewal

\$45.00 o Family Membership o New o Renewal

\$300.00 o Lifetime Individual

\$450.00 o Lifetime Family

Please make checks payable to: "Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers" or "LABUE"

### WAIVER

I \_\_\_\_\_, hereby apply for membership in the Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers (LABUE) and agree to abide by all club rules, I acknowledge that I will be voluntarily participating in LABUE events with full knowledge of the potential dangers of scuba diving and diving related activities. In consideration of your acceptance of this application and my membership in LABUE, I agree to assume all risks of bodily injury, death or property damage, arising out of or in connection with my participation in LABUE activities. I also agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless LABUE and their members and officers from any liability arising out of or in connection with my participation in LABUE activities. I further agree that this release and indemnification is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the laws of the State of California. I have carefully read this release and fully understand its contents. I sign this release of my own free will and with full knowledge of its significance.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_