

Celebrating 25 Years

LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

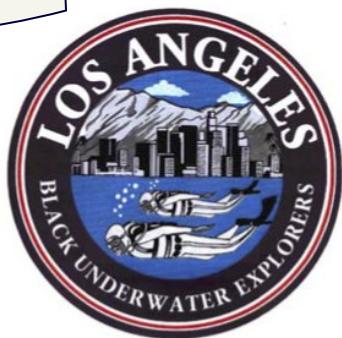


PHOTO OF THE MONTH

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 1
JANUARY 2017



Photographer: Miles Maxey
Camera: Canon Powershot D30
Subject: Headed for Saba
Location: Saba

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START OFF THE NEW YEAR WITH LABUE

Join us for our first LABUE General Membership Meeting of the year at the Natural History Museum on Tuesday, January 10th. 2017 will be a year of challenge and change for LABUE as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary and look forward to another year of great diving and exciting club activities. Learn about of planned activities for the year, including our 2017 Warm Water Dive Vacation. Enjoy our delicious meeting refreshments and friendly member fellowship. Don't forget to join our Meetup Group dive community at www.Meetup.com/LABUEDIVERS/, providing an easy way to keep up to date on all of our dive events and activities.

LABUE IN SABA

BY: S. SCRUGGS

Standing on the beach at the end of the runway in St. Martin looking south, you can barely identify the silhouette of Saba on the horizon. The island is an active volcano and part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands with a population of over 1,900 inhabitants. Saba is easy to overlook just as Columbus did in 1493 and as many visitors to St. Martin have done for years. While Saba remains one of the top ten dive locations in the world, it is still one of the best kept secrets in the Caribbean providing a perfect destination for our 2016 LABUE Warm Water Dive Vacation.

Saba's non distinct appearance contributes to its promise of underwater adventure that makes the diving so incredible. The volcanic origins of the island provide the surrounding underwater landscape with rocky, majestic pinnacles that extend up from the ocean floor to where the natural light

illuminates their summits. Lava tubes and warm water vents attract a variety of sea life from the deep blue up to shallow coral reefs, all within a twenty minute boat ride. It was easy to see how dive sites such as *Third Encounter*, *Twilight Zone*, and *Outer Limits* earned their names as the coral covered pinnacles exploded in brilliant Technicolor with sea horses, turtles, green moray, grouper and countless clouds of colorful reef fish surrounding us.

The culture of Saba is hard to overlook with its rich history proudly preserved by the descendants of Dutch fishermen who have inhabited the island for centuries. Our cab driver was a seventh generation islander who causally navigated the steep pavement that scaled the volcano at fifty degree angles on specially built roads that upgraded the 'S' curve to a 'pretzel'. Every day we drove those roads on

our way to the dive boats and at no time was the ride ever boring. Our hosts at *Juliana's Hotel* provided a living and dining experience that we will be reminiscing about for many years to come and the dive operators were exceptional.

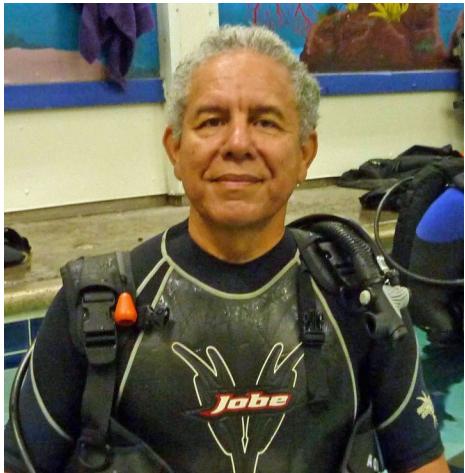
The food was delicious, the lobsters were fat and the renewed friendships were heartwarming. There aren't that many places left for seasoned LABUE divers to visit that are so conveniently located and yet so unspoiled and untainted.

"Once again LABUE planned an outstanding warm water destination trip which allowed opportunities for old friends to get together and a chance to meet new friends, while taking in the breathtaking sites and dining on delicious food" – Denise Barker



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY: RICHARD RICE



Happy New Year to LABUE Members and Friends. In 2017 LABUE will reach a milestone as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary. We closed out 2016 in style by celebrating the Holiday Season at our seventh annual **Holiday Dinner** on December 4th in a warm and festive setting at the Brownstone Bistro. Once again we enjoyed a wonderful celebration of member fellowship, a delicious meal featuring beef rib eye, salmon,

jerk chicken, and more; and holiday door prizes for everyone in attendance. LABUE Members who purchased a ticket also received special member gift certificates redeemable for their 2017 membership dues. We were all in for a special treat, enjoying an outstanding performance by vocalist **Paulette McWilliams**,

the voice behind such iconic stars as Michael Jackson, Quincy Jones, Luther Vandross, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Marvin Gaye and many more. My thanks to our *Holiday Dinner Committee* including **Don Costa Seawell, Beverley Pyne, Kathy Rice, Ellen Hodnett, Cheryl Brock, Clif Williams, Daphne King, and Johnnie Davis** for mak-



ing this event a success. A special thanks to **Pat Williams** who served as this year's *Mistress of Ceremonies*. I would also like to thank those donating door prize gifts including **Jerome Tarver** who donated all of his dive gear including BC, wetsuit, mask, fins, regulator, dive computer, air tanks; and to **Ron Reed** for his donation of a prized steel 80 air tank. We are looking forward to next year's **Holiday Dinner** which promises to provide even more fun and surprises.

Everyone is still talking about our annual **Warm Water Dive Vacation** to the unique Caribbean island of **Saba**, covered in this issue's featured article written by **Steve Scruggs**. Our **Saba** adventure proved to be an enjoyable

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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experience for the 25 LABUE divers and friends who participated. **Saba** offered excellent dive sites, beautiful nature trails, friendly locals, and welcoming accommodations as LABUE took over the popular **Julianna's Hotel & Tropics Café**. We enjoyed hosted parties in the two large cottages shared by some of our members, as well as an elegant "**White Night**" dinner celebra-



tion. We also took the opportunity to host a formal and productive discussion forum on the future of *LABUE*. Our dive package included 11 dives with **Sea Saba's** two comfortable dive boats and expert staff. We also enjoyed daily breakfasts, and 5 gourmet dinners that included a special LABUE "**Lobster Night**" at the **Tropics Café** serving the biggest lobster I have ever eaten, making this trip exceptional dive vacation value.

2017 will be a year of challenges and change as we deal with the reality of an aging LABUE membership and the challenges we face in recruiting the next generation of divers who we must depend on to provide the future leadership of LABUE. Over the last few years we have learned that the future of diving will depend on millennials (18 to 34 years old) who represent the great majority of current active divers. We have learned that this demographic is difficult to attract and get involved. They do not respond to outreach by normal tools that we have relied on such as newsletters, websites, and formal meetings; preferring to communicate using the latest social media tools. We are not the only dive organization facing this challenge as **NABS** and other established dive clubs face significant declines in membership and club participation. Although our membership level since 2010 has increased and has been fairly consistent, we have struggled to attract younger divers into the LABUE.

This has resulted in a decline in participation in local beach and boat dives as our aging members become less active cold water divers. In 2010 we reinstated general membership meeting programs featuring a variety of interesting and informative dive related topics, resulted in improved membership meeting attendance. However, beginning in 2016,

we began to see a significant decline in membership meeting attendance. This is a sign of the challenges we now face.

We will continue to reach out to younger divers by offering free **Discover Scuba, OWI Scuba Certification Scholarships**, organizing affordable local **Beach Dives**, and by expanding our **Social Media Outreach**. In 2017, your **LABUE Board of Directors** will be working to institute changes necessary to ensure LABUE's future, including club leadership restructuring, updating club policies, and streamlining club activities, while continuing to serve our current active membership base. Some of these changes may require changes in the LABUE Bylaws.

We encourage you to support your dedicated LABUE Officers and Board of Directors in meeting the challenges of 2017 with your active participation in LABUE. 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,

LABUE Member Comments on Saba Trip:

"From diving warm seas to traversing 2,000 ft. cliffs, Saba is a Tarpon under the boat" – Dangil Jones

"Having visited St. Martin multiple times without knowing such an incredible island/active volcano was literally within sight provided me an incredibly educational and exciting experience" – Steve Scruggs

"You guys have a fantastic group, it was my first meeting with most of you and I felt welcomed, thoroughly enjoyed diving and vacationing with you all!! Looking forward to more!" – Christiana Brinson

"Wonderful quiet Saba island vacation fun with familiar club faces as well as new faces" – Bettye Linares

"Saba was a very beautiful, unique and crime free island with very friendly locals, great food and beautiful landscape" – Pat Williams

our members, or help fulfill our 2017 mission, please share your ideas it with me or one of the Board members. We value your recommendations. Give me a call or send me an email (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.



2016 LABUE Saba



LOS ANGELES BLACK UNDERWATER EXPLORERS SCUBA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

PURPOSE: In agreement with and support of LABUE's Mission to *Expand the Knowledge and Enjoyment of SCUBA Diving* in our community, LABUE awards ***Discover Scuba Program*** and ***Open Water I SCUBA Certification*** Scholarships. The SCUBA certification scholarships (***Charles Heath Memorial Scholarship and Artie Williams Memorial Scholarship***) are named for two long time club members who exemplified consistent dedication and support of LABUE, and love of the sport of SCUBA Diving.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS:

Discover Scuba - Up to ten (10) LABUE Discover Scuba Program Scholarships may be awarded each year in the form of refund of the paid Discover Scuba fee upon participation and completion of a scheduled LABUE Discover Scuba class.

Open Water I SCUBA Certification – Up to two (2) Open Water I SCUBA Certification Scholarships may be awarded each year in the form of reimbursement of costs, up to \$400, for successful completion of a recognized Open Water I SCUBA certification course offered by any qualified dive shop or SCUBA instructor. The scholarships also include a one year LABUE membership.

AWARD ELIGIBILITY: Those eligible for the ***Discover Scuba Program*** scholarships include selected members of the general public as determined by the LABUE Board of Directors. This may include individuals as well as members of organizations including schools, scouting programs, sports clubs, fraternal organization, professional organizations, social organizations, etc.. Those eligible to apply for the ***Open Water I Certification*** scholarships include paid LABUE Members who are not SCUBA certified; and family members of paid LABUE Members (including spouses, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts and uncles). Members of the general public who have completed any recent or past LABUE Discover Scuba Program are also eligible.

AWARD REQUIREMENTS: Requirements for award of the ***Discover Scuba Program*** Scholarships will be determined by the LABUE Board of Directors. Applicants for the ***Open Water I Certification*** Scholarships must have completed their Open Water I certification during the same calendar year in which the Scholarship is awarded and they must demonstrate their efforts to support LABUE's mission and club, programs, events, and activities as evidenced by any of the following:

- Active attendance and participation in LABUE meetings, programs, events, and activities
- Active participation as a member of a LABUE committee
- Contribution of photos, articles, graphics, and other information to the LABUE News newsletter, LABUE website, LABUE Facebook page, LABUE Blog, or other media.
- Preparation of research paper or school project on topics related to SCUBA diving or other related marine topics including biology, marine ecology, marine technology; or historical topics related to diving such as WWII wreck dive sites or the search for sunken slave ships.

Applications for the Open Water I SCUBA Certification Scholarships shall be submitted by November 1st of each year.

SELECTION: Award of ***Discover Scuba Program*** scholarships will be determined by the LABUE Board of Directors in advance of each scheduled Discover Scuba Program date. Review of Award Eligibility, compliance with Award Requirements for each ***Open Water I SCUBA Certification*** scholarship applicant, and award selection will be made by the LABUE Board of Directors before the date of the December LABUE General Membership Meeting each year.

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.



UPCOMING EVENTS 2017

January 10, 2017 -- LABUE General Membership Meeting - 7:00 PM
 January 24, 2017 -- LABUE Board Meeting
 February 14, 2017 -- LABUE General Membership Meeting - 7:00 PM
 February 28, 2017 -- LABUE Board Meeting
 May 6-7, 2017 -- 30th Annual Scuba Show - Long Beach Convention Center

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMITTEES

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Richard Rice
 (323) 299-3798

Vice President

DonCosta Seawell
 (909) 593-1877

Treasurer

Daphne King
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Secretary

Patricia Williams
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Randy Tillery
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Stacy Wade
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Steve Scruggs
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Membership

OPEN

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Beach Dive

Joe Windolph
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Boat Dive

DonCosta Seawell
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Dive Training & Safety

George Linares (Interim)

Internet Administrator

OPEN

Program Committee

OPEN

Technical Dive Committee

OPEN

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Debora Ewing - Editor

(310) 284-4556

Sharlene Johnson -

Production Manager

Staff Writers -

Steve Scruggs

Dangil Jones

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.

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 1

Meetings

The LABUE meetings are held the second Tuesday of every Month at 7:00 PM in the 2nd floor Education Classroom at the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles.

NEW MEETING LOCATION!

Due to construction in the museum, we will be meeting in the Education Classroom on the 2nd floor. See the attached map for directions from the parking lot.

- Members should park at the bottom of the ramp leading to our below ground level of the car park.
- There is a green wall at the bottom of the ramp. On the right side of the wall is a door. Go through the door. The outside area of our cafeteria will be on the right.
- Continue straight ahead. Walk by the glass entrance pavilion on the ground level, and turn right at the far edge of the pavilion. There is a ground level door going into the museum. Go in.
- The hallway has 2 elevators on the left. Take either one to the 2nd floor.
- Turn right after you get out of the elevator.
- Turn right at the T-intersection. The Dino lab is on the left.
- Go through the double doors into the Education department and walk straight ahead.
- The door to the Education Classroom will be on your left.



Contact Us:

PO Box 90069, Los Angeles, CA 90009

Phone/Fax: (323) 299-3798

Email: info@labue.org

Web Site: www.labue.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For the Year 2017

General Information:

Name: _____ Birthdate: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____
Fax: _____ Referred By: _____
E-Mail: _____
Emergency Contact Name and Phone Number: _____

Certification Information:

Year First Certified: _____ No. of Dives: _____
Date of Last Dive: _____ Warm Water Beach Boat

Certification Agency: _____

Diving Preferences: Beach Dives Boat Dives Warm Water Dives

Membership Category:

Amount: \$30.00 <input type="checkbox"/> for Individual Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
\$45.00 <input type="checkbox"/> for Family Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
\$300.00 <input type="checkbox"/> for Lifetime Individual	\$450.00 <input type="checkbox"/> for 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 risks 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 its members and officers from any and all 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: _____