

LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

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CAVE DIVING THE CENETOS

LABUE members and friends are in for a special treat at the next General Membership Meeting. Dai Jones, of Underworld Adventures, will be the guest speaker. His topic will be on cave diving in the Quintana Roo region of the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico. While most everyone is familiar with the spectacular reef diving in Cozumel, there is another lesser known but just as spectacular dive adventure awaiting those lucky enough to travel to this part of the world. Beyond the world renowned Caribbean reefs of Cozumel exists an equally spectacular and incredible system of underwater caves called Cenotes. A ferry ride away from Cozumel and a 35 minute drive from Cancun, the Cenotes are a magical kingdom of stalagmites and stalactites which can be explored safely by all levels of divers if provided with comprehensive and professional training. This program, which will not be an instructional guide to cave diving, will revolve around a collection of beautiful photos that illustrate the awesome scenery which awaits those whom venture into this thrilling aspect of diving. Dai Jones, a leader of many 'expeditions' into the Cenotes, will discuss the many facets involved in exploring the Cenotes including underwater photography. He will spend a portion of the presentation familiarizing everyone with the type of training required to properly attempt true cave diving. The Cenotes contain both caverns (overhead environment with periodically spaced openings to the surface) and caves (overhead environment without any surface openings) in wildly varying arrays.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 14 at the Museum of Natural History on Exposition Blvd across from USC. It will begin at 7pm. For anyone considering a top level dive experience, diving the Cenotes should be high on the list. See you there...



President's Message

This past weekend was another highlight of 2007. It was Catalina Day in which members of our club travel to Catalina Island for a day of diving at Casino Point. This annual event is sponsored by the Beach Dive Committee and is always a big success. Even those of us, like myself, who no longer venture too far into beach diving have no excuses to not making this one. With the ladder constructed several years ago, the entry and exit is as easy as, well, walking down the stairs to the water level and sitting down. This year was a particular challenge to us because the event was originally scheduled for the same weekend as occurred the Catalina fire. As a result, all of our promotional rates and literature had to be redone and, in some cases could not be recreated. Nevertheless, even though there a few last minute cancellations, Sharlen Campbell, George Linares (Dive

Master), Debora Ewing, Rodney Fostes, Ron Reed, Mudah Mthuthuzeli, Johannes Kepler, and Bettye Linares were all in the water. As usual, Johnnie Davis provided ample shore support and was seen advising divers on how to properly adjust their gear. By the way, Johnnie does not dive. A highlight of the day was Charlen Campbell's completion of the dives and course requirements needed to obtain her Advance Diver Certification. Congratulations to Charlen!!! She should fit it just fine on the upcoming club trip to Fiji/Australia. All in all, it was a great day and we look forward to next year's event.

Bob Simmons



Dedicated to Expanding the Knowledge and Enjoyment of Scuba Diving among African Americans

Beach Dive by Debora Ewing

On Saturday, August 4, LABUE's Beach Dive Committee held the August beach dive at Shaw's Cove at 3:00 in the afternoon. The night dive took place around 7:30 p.m. Several folks participated in the dives. At this dive, Sharlen Campbell took center stage beginning her advance training dives. There was very little surf to speak of and the water temperature was quite pleasant. There was also plenty of shore support. Everyone in attendance had a great time. The next LABUE dive will be the club charter on Saturday, September 8 on board The Great Escape. Additional information is provided in another article in this newsletter. Time is running out and we must fill up the boat. Please contact me or any Board member for information as soon as possible. My cell phone number is (909) 240-7022. Contact me anytime, as I look forward to hearing from you.

Boat Diving by Steve Scuggs

The club charter boat dive is scheduled for September 8, 2007. You will be allowed to board the Great Escape dive boat, which is located at Queen's Wharf in Long Beach, as early as Friday night September 7th after 9:00pm. The boat will depart promptly at 6:00am. The cost of the trip for club members is \$90 but two weeks before the dive we will open the boat to the public for \$100 in order to ensure a sellout. This low cost covers three dives at Catalina Island with complete meals and air refills but be sure and bring your own tanks and weights. Every year this boat dive is special because it reminds us all what LABUE is all about...friends getting together to dive. Only in a club such as ours could we ever hope to charter our own boat. Because we are a non profit organization, we can offer this day of diving aboard one of the premier dive boats in Southern California for 30-40% less than local dive shops. If you have never experienced the camaraderie which happens when LABUE charts its own boat, you are missing something special. Everyone is invited, but don't hesitate, this boat will surely sell out. Send your money to the club address on your newsletter as soon as possible or pay at the next club meeting on August 14th. Call me or any Board member if you have any questions.

Club Raffle

Francois Desamours, club Vice President, recently moved to Virginia on a new job assignment. Francois will remain on the Board as much of his work revolves around maintaining the club website. Before leaving he was contacted by someone who donated a couple of tanks to the club. The Board has decided to raffle off the tanks at the General Membership Meeting. Prior to the raffle, the tanks were 'hydro'ed by Pacific Wilderness at no charge to the club. Anyone who owns a tank knows the expense involved in the periodic need to 'hydro' a tank. Pacific Wilderness has been a sponsor of LABUE for years and this is just one more example of how they continue to help the club. Thanks goes out to Jeff Smith (owner of the business) and his entire staff. Pacific Wilderness is located in San Pedro and always offers club members discounts on purchases. Next time you stop by, gave Jeff a thanks... As a footnote, these tanks were originally built prior to 1990. Most stores, including Pacific Wilderness, will gladly provide air fills, once they have been properly inspected. Sports Chalet, however, chooses not to go through this process and will not fill the tanks.

File Photos



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Discover Scuba by George Linares

I am proud to share with you that the August 4 DISCOVER SCUBA II activity was a success! A total 'sell-out' (if we can claim) of **37** (that's correct...**37**) people were in attendance including **22 participants - making this session our largest turnout ever!!** When the fact that this was our second Discover Scuba session of the year (another first) and the fact that we had in access of 20 participants in the earlier session, the numbers become even that much more impressive.

The Dive Training & Safety Committee thanks - DonCosta Seawell, Rosalyn Hisle, Mike Dillard, Pam McField, Randy Tillery, Artie Williams and Sharlen Campbell - all for their supportive efforts with inviting 'guests'. DonCosta, Randy, Artie and Joe all helped me in the pool while Pam and Mike assisted setting-up the gear. Sharlen was our 'poster-child' as she participated last April (although she had not planned to 'get wet') and has now completed her Advanced class and is now a fully certified advance diver. When one considers that she had never been in the water before April and in October she will diving the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea on our club trip, it makes the accomplishment that much more special. Of course, I thank my wife, Bettye, for her usual 'keeping track' of attendees, collecting payments, distributing hand-outs, keeping me on schedule, and most of all, being able to commission the Wenchell's donut shop to provide a couple dozen assorted donuts for refreshments (and, thank you, Joe, for the all important pick-up and delivery).

Overall, we had a fun day - everyone was excited about participating. I will share with you later as to how many commit to sign-up for the open water training scheduled to start next month.

Lastly, thanks to the LABUE's Board, for their approval to provide another opportunity to the public to 'DISCOVER SCUBA'. We can only anticipate next year's activity with even more excitement.



George Linares Member Board of Directors (and wife Bettye)
 Chairman Dive Training & Safety Committee



Reminders:

- ** **General Membership Meeting—8/14/07**
- ** **Charter Boat Dive—9/8/07**
- ** **Australia/Fiji—10/25/07**

Ron Reed (Cont.)**What would you like to accomplish or experience in this life time?**

To be able to help anyone in need that I can possibly help. I feel comfortable doing for someone else. Currently, I am visiting a Jewish convalescent home on Adams and Western. I visit a couple of ladies there. I try to take them some roses to cheer up their room. Even if I don't have anything, I feel good when I can give to someone else.

Looking at your life, if you had it to do all over again, what would you do differently?

I would have probably stayed married. I think foundation comes about through a relationship that is long ranged. That is the biggest mistake I made.

When you were a small child, what did you dream about doing as an adult?

As a child, I was very athletic. I was on a swim team. I wanted to be like Lloyd Bridges, scuba diving. I also thought that I should be into computers. Years ago, my mom sent my high school yearbook to me. I wrote about my dream of becoming a scuba diver and also working with computers.

What are your non-diving related goals for the future?

I would like to start a trucking company or get into higher level management and eventually have a good retirement and travel wherever I want to go and enjoy good friends like those in the dive group. It would be nice to be able to enjoy my friends without having to go to work.

You seem to be very physically fit. How do you maintain your physique and stay in such good shape? What advice would you give to others regarding getting into better shape.

I try to stay true to the fact that I am getting older, you definitely have to stay active as you age. I work out at Bally's and I also go on three mile walks. I am conscious that if you are going to sit at a desk everyday you must at least walk a mile. You must like the way you look. You must be impressed enough with yourself to want to keep it. You must first have to have in your mind that you want to look and feel better. I am in a bike club also. I do multi-level workouts. Activity keeps you in better shape. One of the worse courses is sitting around. I believe in these three things: (1) being comfortable with what you see in the mirror; (2) being active; and (3) you must get out and walk if you don't do anything else; or join a physical club like diving.

Do you have any hobbies other than scuba diving?

I am in a bike club. I am also in the G35 and G350 club (car club). I am also part of a bible study class that I attend every Tuesday.

What do you think of women taking up the sport of diving?

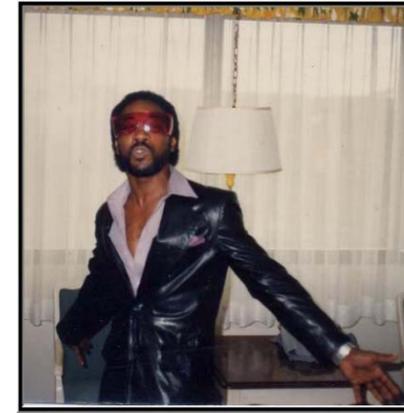
I think it is absolutely great because it shows that women are more independent now. You might find that the ladies now outnumber the men in our diving club. I think it is a good social draw for the ladies. Diving is great for a ladies mental and physical sides and also great for their confidence.

Do you have any comments or thoughts you would like to add?

I feel that LABUE is an outstanding group as far as bringing educated and intelligent individuals together. Being able to see God's beauty underwater without the fear of not being able to survive and being able to enjoy it. Since I know that God is with me when I'm diving, I have the confidence that I'm going to return.

LABUE SPOTLIGHT by Debora Ewing...12 questions

Ron Reed has been a valued member of LABUE since 1999. He has well over 150+ dives. Once you've had a conversation with Ron, you never forget it.



Ron MacDaddy Reed 'Yesterday'



Ron ??? Reed 'Today'

Ron, how did you find LABUE and what was your first impression of the group?

I was at Sports Chalet and a black man asked me if I knew there was a black dive club. This man was not a member himself but he gave me LABUE's website. I went on-line, attended a General Club Meeting and signed up for the next beach dive which was going to take place at Refugio. At that time, I was doing all my dives with Sports Chalet. After meeting the LABUE divers, I started diving mostly with LABUE. I thought you guys were fantastic! You and Bettye Linares awesome divers....putting your fins on in the water and all. I was trying to be macho but seeing you and Bettye walk out into the surf actually inspired me to want to be part of the group. I didn't think a lady could do anything better than me.

Wherever you go, people always seem to get excited to see you. You are obviously the life of the party. What do you attribute your popularity to?

I think it's feeling comfortable with people in the dive club. I have never been around any member of the dive club who thought they were better than me although some of them have professional lifestyles but they are still down to earth. Because the members are so open and easy to get along with this opens me up in feeling comfortable. When you're comfortable you can be yourself.

Where were you born?

Tulsa, Oklahoma. Tulsa, Oklahoma is so far away from an ocean it's a shame!

What famous person do you feel you most closely resemble?

Eddie Murphy is the person people tell me I resemble. At one of my jobs there was a homeless guy would always go... EDDIE, EDDIE, here is Eddie Murphy!

What is your profession?

Computer Specialist at IBM.