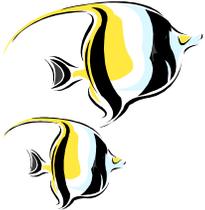


LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

FEBRUARY 2006

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TIME TO RENEW

All LABUE members are required to renew their membership each year. The renewal period is from Jan 1 thru March 31. Members who have not renewed prior to April 1 of a given year are considered delinquent and are not eligible to receive club benefits.

The efforts made by the Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers to control expenses have resulted in the club being a very financially viable organization. The most important component in the club being able to meet its expenses is the annual dues collected from all members. For most members, the dues is \$30, and has remained unchanged for the past 11 years.

LABUE makes a strong annual effort to balance its expenses with its revenues. The Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Debora Ewing, annually presents several revenue/expense scenarios to the Board and the Board then determines the club's activities based on one of the presented options. The most important component of all of the revenue options is the revenue generated from membership dues. It is for this reason that the collection of dues is vital to the club's financial health. The Board feels that the club members should have the primary responsibility for ensuring the club's well being. Over the years the club's expenses have changed and now include paying rent for a monthly meeting facility, website hosting fees, subsidizing boat dives, miscellaneous business fees, meeting refreshments and financial participation in a variety of functions designed to improve both the dive environment and enable continued research to improve the safety of the sport.

Bettye Linares, chairperson of the Membership Committee, and her teammates are in working to ensure that all members renew. Do your part and renew today knowing that you are helping a great organization become even greater.



President's Message

How's it going? Everyone uses this phrase very casually when greeting someone. The same phrase, though, can easily apply to all of us and our diving experiences. LABUE is a dive club, first and foremost. Even though we have many non dive related activities, our primary purpose is to encourage members to dive and to make it easier for them to find other individuals with similar interests.

So, how's it going? I, along with all other members, just received Steve Scrogg's note announcing the 2006 boat dive schedule and notice that he has put together a wide variety of boat dive opportunities. Even more astonishing is the very low prices being charged to 'current' club members for the various boats. LABUE has managed to work into the budget a program to subsidize the costs for the boat dives. More members are diving as a result and having more fun.

I am following the ever growing number of beach divers and the expansion of the sites they dive. More impressive is the fact that a major goal of the beach dive group is to ensure that newer divers receive special attention and are guaranteed to be assigned to a more experienced diver. Anyone looking for help with his skills get it at the monthly beach dives. In a couple of months we will be going to the Cayman Islands for another exciting club trip to a very exotic dive location. Diving can't get any better. Yes, things are going well with LABUE. Hopefully things are going as well with you, if not, we're there to help out.



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

Next Meeting

The next club meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14 at the Museum of Natural History in Exposition Park, across from USC. Part one of the presentation will discuss the reasons why one needs to be fit to dive and what is actually meant by being fit. Many divers are, in reality, Fit To Sink. Part 2 will be a recap of a recent Cave Diving Experience enjoyed by our three speakers. They spent time in some of the many caves off the Florida coast and have great photographs to share. James Thomas an instructor with Pacific Wilderness, will be joined by Sean Boggues and Scott Reese, two very well qualified divers in making the presentation. As always, there will be ample time for questions. The Program Committee, chaired by Sharlene Johnson, has put together another outstanding presentation. The meeting will begin at 7pm. Plan now to attend.

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Beach Dives

by Debora Ewing

WHAT A DIVE! Woods Cove turned out to be a wonderful dive site. This dive took place on *Superbowl* Sunday (February 5). Not only did we have excellent weather but the underwater visibility was great!

Lately the visibility in Orange County has been 15 to 20 feet. The bottom terrain offered many holes for lobster and other bottom dwellers to hide in. Large lobster were spotted in every nook and cranny. A few of the lobsters must have known that we didn't have our fishing licenses as their bodies were fully exposed. There was also a two foot horn shark relaxing along the rocks.

Of course the usual garibaldi, kelp bass and, I can't forget my favorite, the sea urchin, were out in full force as well. The divers were Santi Hall, Sharlene Johnson, Johannes Kepler, Tevis Verrett, Ed Persley, Louis Emile, Deanne Emile and myself. Shore support was in full force as well.

On shore were Bettye and George Linares, Jackie Hall and Johnnie Davis. The beach dive scheduled for March will take place on Saturday, March 4 at Whites Point (San Pedro).

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding any of the above-mentioned events at (213) 229-5190.

Boat Dives by Steve Scruggs

Welcome to a new year of what LABUE hopes will be a fun and exciting season of boat dives in Southern California.

The task of the Boat Dive Committee is to offer attractive opportunities to encourage you to practice the sport that led you to join LABUE and we feel that 2006 has the potential to be our best year ever. In a club filled with both veteran as well as newly certified divers, it has been a challenge over the years to create single events that appeal to a diverse membership such as ours. However, we've met the challenge head on and the 2006 boat dive schedule reflects our efforts to better serve you by offering attractive benefits such as price rates far below the current dive shop prices, charter boats exclusively for LABUE members and the opportunity to be surrounded by divers you know and trust.

The new boat dive schedule will be distributed at each meeting and details will be periodically distributed by e-mails throughout the year. The next boat dive will be the March 25th Easter egg dive on board the Bottom Scratcher dive boat at Catalina Island. As a LABUE member, this dive will cost you \$70! By comparison, local area dive shops are now charging up to \$120 to dive Catalina Island due to increased fuel costs.

This being the first dive of the season makes it a special dive for two reasons. It will give you an opportunity to find out if your equipment is working properly as you begin the new season and before you take off for the Cayman Islands club trip. And it will also give you an opportunity to see if your body is working properly after a long sedentary winter of physical inactivity. LABUE exists to help you enjoy the sport you love, so help us help you by participating in dive activities that will not only make you a more competent diver but one who can fully appreciate the opportunity that has been placed within your grasp.

Discover Scuba by George Linares

This year LABUE's DISCOVER SCUBA program will take place Saturday, April 15, 2006 from 9am until noon at the Pacific Wilderness Dive Shop in San Pedro. Again this year, we will look forward to introducing this wonderful sport to those individuals who feel they're interested in learning something new and exciting. Please be sure to invite your co-workers, friends, family to participate in a brief orientation of scuba and a 'hands on' experience with gear in the pool – along with several other 'experienced' club members. Applications will be available at the upcoming club meetings – cost is \$15.00 per person. I am sure that many of you have friends whom might want to get a brief introduction to scuba diving. Discover Scuba is the perfect opportunity. Contact me at either (661) 729-6626 for additional information and to confirm your spot.

Catalina Cleanup

The Avalon Harbor Underwater Cleanup is an annual dive event held in Avalon Harbor at Catalina Island. This year's date is February 25th.

The event has grown over the past 25 years to become one of the most publicized and popular dive events in Southern California. It is the only time of the year when diving is allowed in the harbor. The goal is to remove as much trash from the Harbor as possible and prizes are awarded for the most unusual recoveries.

Last year 500 divers participated. The proceeds of the Avalon Harbor Underwater Cleanup benefit Catalina Conservancy Divers and the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber. Catalina Conservancy Divers is a support group of the Catalina Conservancy, a non-profit organization dedicated to the stewardship of Catalina Island through a balance of conservation, education, and recreation.

The Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber is a life support recompression chamber on Catalina that is available to serve the thousands of divers who frequent the Catalina waters. LABUE consistently supports the Catalina Cleanup. If you are interested in the unique experience of diving Catalina Harbor, contact Quinal at (562) 929-4977 for more information.

Thoughts From The Membership Committee

by Bettve Linares

At this time we want to remind each and every 'buddy' to be sure to remit your 2006 membership dues. The renewal period commences as of January of each year. You can retrieve an application from the club's website (www.LABUE.org).

We invite you to be among the first 50 to renew prior to April 1st and you will be eligible to receive LABUE bucks – a \$10.00 club certificate which you can use towards the purchase of a club boat dive spot, club attire or club activity. While you are at it, why not 'contact' an old buddy and make plans to attend the next club meeting?

Another thought: have you thought about a particular club committee you would like to join? If so, contact that committee's chairperson for more information. Still another thought: Look up the club's bylaws to familiarize yourself with how the club functions. Last thought: Feel free to bring refreshments to share with the membership after the general meetings. Simply contact me to advise of your plans. Thank you for your continued support.

Happy Valentine's Day!!!

