

LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

January 2009

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LABUE IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers is currently accepting deposits for the 2009 club trip to the Philippines. From October 24-31, 2009, LABUE will enjoy spectacular diving in the pristine waters that have made the Philippines a must-do dive destination.

For 8 days and 7 nights the club will be housed at the Atlantis Resort in Puerto Galera. This all inclusive resort is located 70 miles south of Manila and has more than 35 world class dive sites within a 15 minute boat ride. Without exaggeration, Puerto Galera is truly one of the last great undiscovered dive destinations in the world. The nearly 5 mile reef boasts a bio-diversity **exceeding that of the Great Barrier Reef and the entire Caribbean combined.** It is easy to see why Atlantis has long been a favorite of European and Pacific Rim divers. In addition to excellent diving in some of the most pristine waters and reefs in the world, the Atlantis Resort is very close to outstanding 'muck diving' sites in which all sorts of pretty, macro critters are readily visible. It is a common occurrence to see several different species of small creatures on every dive. The Atlantis Resort has a full service spa on site and is 3 minutes from a local gym. It also serves as the hub of many activities for the snorkler and non-diver alike. The on site restaurant is well known for its great food featuring both local and international cuisine.

A great reason to go to the Philippines is the value received for the US dollar. Right now, everything is priced very favorably for the U.S. Tourist. The price for the dive package, based on double occupancy is \$1350.00, not including airfare from the USA. The non-diver rate is \$1140.00. Single Person occupancy pricing is \$1650.00 for divers and \$1440.00 for non divers. Since the second payment is now due, anyone wishing to participate must remit an \$800 deposit with \$400 nonrefundable. Contact Bob Simmons for additional information at 323 292-8960.



President's Message by Bob Simmons

I recently enjoyed a meeting in my living room with Vernon Beard, president of the National Association Of Black Scuba Divers (NABS), to discuss LABUE's status in NABS. Although LABUE has always had members in NABS, our participation as a club for the past 8 years had been very low key. I honestly told Vernon that I was not sure of our status in NABS because, despite several attempts on our part, we had never heard whether or not our application submitted a few years ago to be a NABS club had been accepted. After researching the matter, Vernon discovered that LABUE was one of several clubs whom had never received any form of notification from NABS regarding their club status. To correct the omission by previous administrations, LABUE was presented a plaque acknowledging that our club was accorded Charter Club Status by the NABS Board of Directors in 2003. As a further gesture, the club fees required to maintain Charter

Club status for 2009 were waived. **So, let it be clear that LABUE is formally a part of the NABS Family as a Charter Club.** I have renewed my personal membership and I believe that all Board members will also join NABS, although that decision is made individually. I feel that Vernon is firmly committed to enhancing NABS and making it truly a great organization. He also promises that NABS will be more transparent and receptive to input in the decision making process. I am excited about working with Vernon and urge everyone to recommit to NABS. Membership applications are available from the NABS Website...www.NABS.org.



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

Beach Dives by Debora Ewing

LABUE's January beach dive was held as scheduled at Redondo Beach (Veteran's Park) on Sunday, January 4, 2009. The divers included Sharlen Campbell, Bryant Turner, Mike Dillard and Tony Linton. The beach support was provided by Johnnie Davis, Debora Ewing, George Linares (Dive Master), Bob Simmons and and Joe Windolph. The pre-dive assessment for this dive was determined to be good. The surf was calm and the water cool. Visibility in the water was approximately 10 feet with water temperature a brisk 52 degrees. Although the dive was ordinary in terms of sea life encountered, the real fun on this one was everyone enjoying each other's company. After the dive, most of the group went to El Toritos Restaurant on the Redondo Beach Pier for drinks and brunch and had a very enjoyable early afternoon. The next dive will take place on Saturday February 7 at White's Point. More information to come...

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Robert Simmons (323) 292-8960	Vice President Francois Desamours (310) 412-8128
Treasurer Richard Rice (323) 299-3798	Secretary Debora Ewing (310) 284-4556
Sharlene Johnson (310) 915-3931	DonCosta Seawell (909) 953-1877

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Membership Bettye Linares (661) 729-6626	Ways & Means Debora Ewing (310) 284-4556
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Membership Renewal

LABUE has been in existence for many years and the \$30 membership renewal fee has not changed in all that time. Even though costs have gone up, the Board has made it a priority to reduce club expenses (such as sending this newsletter via e-mail instead of regular mail) wherever possible. Nevertheless it is imperative that members renew their membership as these funds represent the major source of club revenue. Membership enables one to participate in club activities at a discount and is a requirement for club subsidized activities such as boat dives and the upcoming club trip to the Philippines and Hong Kong, China. Everyone is asked to do their part by renewing today.

January Club Meeting

The January Club meeting was very successful. The purpose of the General Membership Meetings is to give members an opportunity to interact with each other, keep informed about club activities and be exposed to various aspects designed to help everyone improve their skills. The meeting will be held at the Museum of Natural History on Exposition Blvd across from USC and will begin at 7:00pm. They are also a great way to keep in a 'diving' frame of mind. The meetings are always interesting and fun. In addition to an interesting video featuring diving in Fiji, including some of the places club members have visited, the first five attendees won door prizes of club decals. Furthermore, Richard Rice was the lucky person to win a raffle prize of a \$25 dinner gift certificate to The Red Lobster. Similar Gift certificates will also be raffled at the February 10 meeting.

E-Mail Updates

Over the past several months, it has become obvious that the LABUE data base of members and their respective e-mail addresses on file contains several errors and is missing information. In an attempt to bring the membership and e-mail data base up to date, an effort is underway to verify that the club has the latest information for its members. In addition, it appears that several members were completely and unknowingly dropped from the system when the club data base was hacked a couple of years ago. The Board is sorting everything out to ensure that the club data base is current and that all members are regularly receiving LABUE's electronic communications.



Belize 2008

Philippines Update

Following are the names of the 21 individuals whom have secured reservations for the club trip to The Philippines October 24-31, 2009:

Debora Ewing	Johnnie Davis
DonCosta Seawell	Doralyn Seawell
Bob Simmons	Tina Houston
Denise Barker	Wayne Wright
Richard Rice	Lamont Johnson
Randy Tillery	Cheryl Tillery
Pam McField	LaVerne McField
Charles Heath	Rhonda Willis
Patti Glenn	Salim Jordan
Eric Shepherd	Myra Shepard
Luster Ingram	

The initial 10 rooms plus the additional 5 rooms requested have sold out. Since a few more members have indicated their desire to be part of the group, a request for 5 more rooms has been made. At this point, \$800 will be required to confirm a reservation, with \$400 being non refundable. Contact Bob Simmons for additional information. Since the club is traveling in peak dive season, the hotel will sell out well in advance. It is imperative that reservations be made ASAP to ensure a spot.



Belize 2008

SPOTLIGHT
By Debora Ewing

INTERVIEW OF SHARLEN CAMPBELL

1. **What Influenced you to get into diving?** Discover SCUBA w/George & Bettye Linares. Actually, I had never even considered diving before DonCosta Seawell invited me to George’s Discover SCUBA class. Once there, I wasn’t going to get in the water because I had just gotten my hair done and I didn’t want to get it wet. Then I thought, I’ve come an awful long way not to at least check out the experience of breathing on SCUBA. Once I did, I was hooked like a “big mouth bass.” The rest is LABUE history.
2. **What do you enjoy most about LABUE?** The camaraderie and how helpful and sincere everyone is.
3. **Is there anything you would like LABUE to offer that is currently not being offered?** More liveaboard trips.
4. **What is your favorite California dive site?** Anywhere in Laguna Beach.
5. **What is your occupation away from diving?** Office Manager/Legal Secretary at a small law office in downtown L.A.
6. **What long distance destination would you like to see LABUE offer the club?** I’m open. Anywhere warm and tropical or cold and where there’s BEACH DIVING. Enough w/boat diving ugh! [Although I’m not too particular about going to the Philippines w/the Club. The Philippines is not a place I’ve always wanted to visit.]
7. **What other hobbies do you enjoy?** SAILING! I could be on a sailboat for life.
8. **What famous person do people tell you that you favor most?** No one has every said I looked like someone famous, except when I was a freshman in high school, a junior told me I looked like Diana Ross. But that’s because he wanted me to be his girlfriend. I didn’t believe him.
9. **Where do you get your energy?** God given heredity and caffeine.
10. **You’re such a positive person. How do you maintain your pleasant personality?** Wow! Thank you for the compliment. To answer your question, God given heredity and to always view my glass as ½ full no matter what.
11. **Where were you born?** South Central Los Angeles, but I grew up in West Covina, CA.
12. **Tell me something that LABUE’s membership would be surprised to know about you.** Good question. There’s a 41 yr. age difference between my Mom and my Dad. And if my Dad were still alive, he’d be my dive buddy. So what he’d be 110, age is just a number.



<u>Reminders:</u>	<p>** General Membership Meeting—2/10/09</p> <p>** Philippines Trip Reservations—On Going</p> <p>** Renew Membership Now</p>
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