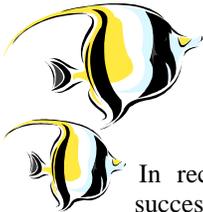


LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

March 2008

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MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION

In recognition of more than 12 very successful years, LABUE will be having **MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION NIGHT!!!**

This night will be a 'thank you' to all members and guests in attendance. It is the membership which has made LABUE the successful club it has become. Without membership support, none of the club's most popular events would ever have taken place. Looking back over the years the highlights have been many: exciting summer events (remember the Juke Joint, the Hawaiian Luau, Jamaica Fest etc?), formal Holiday dinner dances in spectacular settings, annual Club trips to world famous dive locations (who would have dreamed 12 years ago that we would someday be able to completely charter and fill a South Pacific live-aboard boat in Australia like we did last year?) monthly informational speakers and meetings, and full-charter boat dives are just a few of the memories we have shared together. Our meeting on Tuesday, March 11, 2008 will be in honor of the membership and will be very special. It will not be a typical meeting. Without revealing all of the details, the meeting will be a lot of fun for all in attendance. Many lucky attendees will receive prizes, including a \$100 dollar gift certificate to Sports Chalet, several gift certificates to local restaurants and other valuable items. Anyone bringing guests will be given an extra raffle ticket for each guest, thereby increasing the chances of winning one of the prizes. The barbeque chicken dinner and all the trimmings will again be provided by Simply Wholesome. There will also be delicious peach cobbler pie for dessert.. Whether you are a regular attendee or a member who has not been around for awhile, all are invited. Without each and every one of you the club would not be what it is today. This meeting is the Board's way of saying **thank you...one and all**. The festivities will begin at 7pm in the Museum of Natural History in Exposition Park across from USC.



President's Message by Bob Simmons

As mentioned in this month's theme article, Tuesday, March 11 will be Membership Appreciation Night. Our regularly scheduled meeting will be dramatically altered to recognize you, the membership, for your help is making our club become the organization that it is today. Looking back over the years, we all have a lot to be proud of. However, none of our achievements would have been possible if it were not for the members. I always get in trouble when I try to single out someone, deserving though they might be, because there are probably three other people equally deserving and it is not possible to recognize everyone. However, I feel comfortable recognizing our committee structure and the members who take the time to make these committees function at such a high level. Page two of this newsletter lists our committees and the chairpersons. In some cases there are

several other committee members working just as hard as the chairpersons, but their names are not included in the listing. All of the members of our committees deserve a special note of recognition. These volunteers give up a tremendous amount of time to make sure that the club continues to work and improve. While I'm at it, I invite all of you to consider joining one of our committees and making your personal contribution. As we recognize the general membership on Tuesday, remember the extra special work being done behind the scenes by several very dedicated individuals. Thanks to you all....



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

Beach Dive by Debora Ewing

Malaga Cove (Palos Verdes) – The beach dive group will once again return to club favorite Malaga cove for the April Beach Dive. The dive will take place on Saturday, April 5 at 8:00 a.m.. The dive master will be George Linares who also happens to be an instructor. This particular dive site offers a setting which is good for all skill levels, from novice to advanced. There is no charge for parking nor are there any rest-rooms or showers at this site. Malaga cove is an interesting rocky beach dive site which features plenty of critters hiding in the rocky crevices. Being the last LABUE beach dive prior to the club trip to Belize which happens mid-April, makes this the perfect opportunity to fine tune your dive skills and check out your dive gear. If you're interested in signing up for this beach dive, contact me at 310-284-4556 or 909-240-7022.

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
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COMMITTEES

Membership Bettye Linares (661) 729-6626	Ways & Means Debora Ewing (310) 284-4556
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Dive Training & Safety Vacant	Publicity & Internet Francois Desamours (310) 412-8128
Ad/Spec/Tech Vacant	
Phone: (323) 292-8960 Fax: (310) 337-1542 Email: info@labue.org Web Site: www.labue.org	

Easter Egg Dive

Each March, right before Easter, LABUE shares a dive charter with Pacific Wilderness aboard the Bottom Scratcher for an unusual trip to Catalina Island. The event, called the Easter Egg Dive, involves the crew tossing golf balls (ie Easter Eggs) into the ocean surrounding the boat and the divers trying to retrieve as many of them as possible. Prizes are awarded for each ball (egg) retrieved. This dive is always a lot of fun and puts a different spin on what would otherwise be a regular dive. With LABUE only reserving 15 spots, this boat sells out every year. The weather has been picture perfect and the diving has been fantastic. This fun boat will be the perfect time for divers to get reacquainted with the water. But hurry, only 10 spots remain and will sell out fast. Contact DonCosta Seawell at (909) 953-1877 or any Board member to confirm a reservation. Even though most boats are charging more than \$125 for a day dive trip to Catalina Island, LABUE is offering the spots for \$80 to club members and \$90 to non club members. Membership clearly has its privileges. This dive trip will be held on Saturday, March 22.

Belize 2008

Time is running out for anyone interested in joining fellow club members in this year's club dive adventure to the world renown divers' paradise of Ambergris Key in Belize. The dates of the trip are from April 16-23. LABUE is returning to this dive mecca because it has it all as far as dive experiences are concerned. Whatever your preference, you will surely find it in Belize. Large pelagics, including barracuda, sharks, spotted eagle rays, turtles and schooling fish are present in large numbers. Those interested in macro photography will find a variety of tiny critters tucked inside many of the crevices. The coral formations are unique and very interesting. Lastly the water is usually about 82 degrees and the visibility frequently exceeds 100'. The quaint town of San Pedro has plenty of inexpensive restaurants and the food is very good. For a dive getaway week, it is tough to beat the fun and sun which is so much a part of a Caribbean dive trip to Belize. The package includes 7 nights at the Sun Breeze Hotel, 5 days of two tank dives, including an all day adventure to the Blue Hole and Lighthouse Reef, a night dive, airfare from Belize City to Ambergris Key and taxes and fees. Roundtrip air fare from LAX is not included. The package price is \$1068 per person, double occupancy. The single occupancy rate is \$1543. The non diver rate is \$608 when accompanied by a diver. Contact Bob Simmons immediately if you are interested in experiencing what is always a fantastic dive location.



Discover Scuba

Once again, LABUE will be sponsoring a Discover Scuba Program in which participants are introduced to the basic concepts of scuba diving and are allowed, if interested, to try on full scuba gear and perform a controlled dive under the supervision of George Linares, a certified instructor. This introductory session is held in the classroom at Pacific Wilderness in San Pedro. The supervised dive is held at their pool at the same location. This year's event will be on Sunday, April 6, 2008 from 9am to noon. The price remains at \$15. Participants are required to bring swim suits and a towel. Scuba gear is provided courtesy of Pacific Wilderness. It is noted that everyone must already know how to swim. This session is not a swim class. The purpose of Discover Scuba is to give potentially interested applicants a glimpse into the beautiful underwater world and to provide a general introduction into the topics fully covered in a regular certification program. Last year, due to an overwhelming response, the club sponsored the event on two different occasions. In addition to instructor George Linares, and his wife, Bettye, who coordinates the activities, several club members are also in attendance to help out as needed. All in all, Discover Scuba is a great way to expose folks to diving as well as to get acquainted with club members, many of whom started out by attending a similar program. Contact Bettye Linares at (661) 729-6626 to reserve a space in this year's program.



Discover Scuba 2007

Museum Rules

Our club constantly receives new members and guests. These individuals can not possibly be aware of the conditions under which the Museum Of Natural History agreed to let us use one of its conference rooms. One of these conditions is that our attendees are not permitted to stop and enjoy the many exhibits available in the museum. The museum regularly charges an admittance fee to those wishing to view the attractions and facilities on display. Obviously attendees to our meeting do not have to pay this fee and, therefore, are not entitled to roam about the premises. An honor system is in effect but LABUE doesn't want to abuse the privilege. Secondly, our meetings are to be conducted in a business meeting format, which does not permit children not old enough to appreciate the purpose of the meeting. Some of our attendees have unknowingly violated the terms of our agreement. For this reason, it is necessary to review these rules from time to time to ensure that we can continue to use this very fine facility.

Chamber Evening

Each year a fund raiser is held on behalf of the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber. Since all divers rely on these chamber facilities to be available wherever we may be diving around the world, it is our responsibility to help ensure that our 'own' chamber is there and properly maintained...just in case. LABUE proudly supports Chamber Evening by purchasing a table for this dinner event annually held at the Long Beach Aquarium. The aquarium is normally closed in the evenings. However, participants in this event will have full access to all exhibits and attractions, allowing viewers to see the exhibits in the evening light when many fish are more active. Major dive related gifts (regulators, computers, fins, dive bags etc.) are raffled off to lucky attendees. Anyone interested in participating in this year's event, which will be held on May 7, 2008, beginning at 6pm, is required to purchase a ticket for \$90, which includes a full 'sit down' dinner, 2 non alcoholic beverage coupons, 10 raffle tickets and full admission to all of the aquarium attractions. Contact Sharlene Johnson or any Board Member to purchase the ticket.

Membership Renewal

It is time to renew your LABUE membership. The annual dues amount remains at \$30 for an individual and \$45 for a family membership (living in the same household). The first 50 renewing members submitting dues prior to April 1, 2008 will be eligible to receive \$10 LABUE bucks coupons which can be applied towards club attire and specified activities. Also, becoming a club member provides the opportunity for you to pay a discounted price for club boat dives, participate in the club's bi-annual elections, and receive personalized club business cards (5). Each year the club depends on the collection of membership dues to help balance the budget which includes expenses for the club meeting room, boat deposits and other items. Please remit your dues today...

SPOTLIGHT

By Debora Ewing

INTERVIEW OF RICHARD RICE

Richard has been a member of LABUE for over ten years. He is also LABUE's "money man". With Richard handling the funds, no one ever says "show me the money!"

Where were you born? Los Angeles

What is your favorite food? Alaskan King Crab and Lobster. I like these equally.

What would you credit your easy going temperament too? You're one of those folks that everyone likes. I tend to tolerate a lot of different personalities. I have the ability to find good in folks who others think are terrible. Both my wife and I have friends that other people can't stand.

I've noticed that you're an incredible beach diver. Any tips? I think it is a matter of technique and I've had a little bit of practice at beach diving.

How long have you been scuba diving? Do you have any other hobbies or activities? I've been certified since 1971. Sailing is my other hobby. Those are the two things that I have always wanted to do since I was 8 or 9 years old.

How did you find out about LABUE? Through Cathie Roberson who was part of my sailing club. I used to attend LABUE meetings at the Treehouse Restaurant on Centinela.

To date, what is your favorite dive destination? What was your favorite LABUE long distance trip? Tonga (South Pacific); and Belize is my favorite distance trip. *Why Belize?* Because on any given dive you see a greater variety of things than other places.

What is your favorite California beach dive site? Whites' Point.

Now that you're back from Australia, are there any other dive destinations that you would like to enjoy in the near future other than Belize? Either St. Maarten, Hawaii or Cocos Island.

What do you enjoy most about LABUE? I think being in a dive club forces you to dive, especially an active dive club. Without regular dive buddies it is difficult to dive. Most folks need someone to motivate them to dive. I have always had a group of dive buddies or a dive club. This forces you to dive. If it weren't for clubs and dive buddies, I would dive a lot less. I would be like some people who are vacation divers.

Is there anything you would like to see LABUE do in the future that is currently not being done? I think we need to get more people involved in doing things for the club. Currently we are getting older and there will be a point where we won't be as active and may not be able to dive. Unless we get younger folks to take on the responsibility of running the club; the club will die and all of our efforts will have been wasted.

Tell me something that our readers would be surprised to learn about you?

I was the president of a civil rights organization. I was also the lead plaintiff in a class action lawsuit which settled for \$22,000,000.



Reminders:

- ** **Membership Appreciation Meeting—3/11/08**
- ** **Easter Egg Boat Dive—3/22/08**
- ** **Discover Scuba—4/6/08**