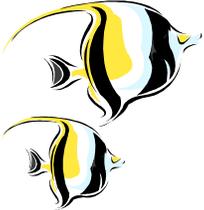


# LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

May 2007

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## AUSTRALIA NEARS SELLOUT!!!

As everyone is by now aware, the club trip this year will be an exciting 5 day 4 night live-aboard to The Great Barrier Reef and The Coral Sea in Australia aboard The Spirit of Freedom ([www.spiritoffreedom.com.au](http://www.spiritoffreedom.com.au)), a 120' vessel based in Cairns. When the club made the initial arrangements, the Board felt that the trip would be a success if 10 members signed up. To date, 24 members have registered ensuring that this will be the grandest and most enjoyable of any the 11 club trips from past years. Imagine waking each morning already moored directly above the dive site and being able to choose your personal dive profile for the day in these spectacular waters. Some divers (DonCosta Seawell for instance) will get in more than 16 dives during this time period. Food will be plentiful and tasty. The cabins are spacious and each contain a private bath. The dive deck is specifically designed for the comfort of the divers and has been thoughtfully laid out. The service provided by the friendly and attentive crew will round out the perfect vacation. At this point, there is still room for 2 more passengers. Because of the large number of travelers, the rate for the live-aboard has dropped for everyone. The last 2 individuals will likely be charged \$1120. Airfare must be arranged privately and can currently be secured for \$1568 for departures out of LAX. Since the airlines are allowing a stopover in Fiji without an increase in airfare, several divers will be spending an optional 4 nights at The Pearl South Pacific in Fiji for \$849, including 3 days of 2-tank dives, continental breakfasts and all transfers. Some members will also be adding a few days sightseeing in Cairns, the entry to the Australian outback, and Sydney. The suggested package for this optional portion of the trip is \$1079. If diving The Great Barrier Reef and The Coral Sea is on your list of sites to visit, this trip is a great way to go...especially with so many friends. Contact Bob for additional details.



### President's Message By Bob Simmons

Every year we schedule a getaway to Catalina Island. While the main diving is completed on Saturday, some members make a weekend of it, arriving on Friday afternoon and departing on Sunday. Some of these divers will possibly get in a dive or two late Friday afternoon and early evening. This year's event is scheduled for May 11-13 (See Debora Ewing's Beach Dive Article).

This trip to Catalina is especially easy for those who prefer walking down stairs directly into the waters surrounding Casino Point. This protected preserve is home to a wide variety of sea life and is also on the main thoroughfare for fish, such as giant sea bass passing through the area. Visibility is normally in the 30-50' range. The thick kelp forest has been photographed many times and is regularly featured in countless magazines and news articles. While LABUE annually enjoys a warm water trip to an exotic locale, we

are fortunate enough to have some of the best diving in the world at our back door. Catalina is also an excellent place to work on improving your dive skills. In recognition that this year's event will end on Mother's Day, those spending the weekend will be back on the mainland in plenty of time to enjoy that early afternoon brunch with Mother. For those who choose to come up on Friday, there are several hotels priced to fit any budget available. Following the morning dives on Saturday, the group always enjoys a fun luncheon and a hardy dinner. Contact Debora for additional details. Diving Casino Point is a great way to enjoy beach diving in a beautiful setting.



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

**Beach Diving by Debora Ewing**

LABUE will visit Catalina Island to dive Casino Point from May 11-13. Some members will start diving as early as Friday afternoon and follow it up with a night dive. Others will wait until Saturday morning to dive. This is a unique opportunity to hang out with club members over the weekend or to simply come over on Saturday. Casino Point is LA County's best beach dive site.

**Fathers' Day Dive (Newport).** LABUE's Annual Fathers' Day Dive will take place on Sunday, June 17 at Big Corona. George Linares will be the dive master. The briefing will happen at 8:00 a.m. After the dive we plan to picnic at the beach so bring your picnic baskets and we can enjoy the afternoon together. If you're interested in signing up for either of these dives, please contact me at (909) 240-7022 or [dewing@mayerbrownrowe.com](mailto:dewing@mayerbrownrowe.com) and I'll add you to the list of divers.

**Next Meeting**

The next LABUE general membership meeting will feature a glimpse into the Volunteer Dive Program at the Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific. Many members have visited the aquarium over the years and have often seen divers feeding the fish, cleaning the tanks and doing other necessary tasks. Some LABUE members have even been among the volunteers selected to be a part of this exciting team of divers. However, most members don't really know much about the program or how to get involved. Ken Kurtis, coordinator of the Volunteer Dive Program, will be the speaker at the next club meeting and will discuss this subject in detail. Ken will cover the program's concept, the duties of the volunteers and, most importantly, how one can get involved and perhaps become a member of the dive team. Whether interested in actually diving in the huge tanks among all the beautiful creatures or simply wanting to know about the 'behind the scenes' workings of the aquarium, this program will be very useful and tremendously interesting. Ken, a long time dive instructor and owner of Reef Seekers Dive Company, has spoken at our meetings in the past and is always very entertaining. His presentation will include photos of the aquarium and its many unusual exhibits. The meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, May 8, will be held at The Museum of Natural History on Exposition Blvd across from USC. It will begin at 7:00pm. Mark your calendars now.

**Boat Dive by Shannon Tanner**

The boat dive committee is offering as many diving opportunities as possible to ensure our members continue to get in the water. With these offerings we would like to clarify some of our terminology to ensure we set the expectation of what each dive means and what you can expect to see. Being that the cost of boat diving is ever increasing the **LABUE Boat Dive committee** has located the most economical prices we could find. Most of the dives offered are scheduled through dive shops or other dive clubs, therefore they cannot be considered as a **LABUE Diving Event**, nor are they sponsored by LABUE. With this type of dive we have chosen to call these low cost non-sponsored dives as a **"Dive Opportunity"**. As many of you have seen there is a wide range of prices from the high \$90's to the really high \$200's and everything in between. Our listed dive opportunities on [www.LABUE.org](http://www.LABUE.org) are all well priced dives in the \$90-\$100 range so please **act early and act quickly** if you want to take advantage of this low cost diving, these spots won't last long.

**New Terms: Dive Opportunity** – a boat dive being held by any party other than LABUE. Dive Opportunities provide you with the chance to dive with a diverse group of people, potentially some being LABUE members and others not.

**LABUE Diving Events** – these trips are sponsored by LABUE and the primary group of people on the boat will be LABUE members. These trips may have friends and family of LABUE but the goal is to get our club members on these boats to celebrate the spirit of our dive club.

The committee is always available to answer any questions you may have. We hope to see you on a boat be it a LABUE Diving Event or a Dive Opportunity.

**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 (213) 229-5190
Sharlene Johnson (310) 915-3931	George Linares (661) 729-6626
Shannon Tanner (818) 992-7902	

**COMMITTEES**

Membership Bettye Linares (661) 729-6626	Ways & Means Debora Ewing
Beach Dive Debora Ewing (213) 229-5190	Boat Dive Shannon Tanner (818) 992-7902
Dive Training & Safety George Linares (661) 946-1516	Publicity & Internet Francois Desamours (310) 412-8128
Technical Diving Quinal Johnson (562) 929-4977	
Phone: (323) 292-8960	
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Web Site: <a href="http://www.labue.org">www.labue.org</a>	



### Chamber Evening

Several LABUE members attended the annual "Chamber Evening" event held on May 2 at the Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific. This event is a fundraising dinner in support of the hyperbaric chamber located on Catalina Island. LABUE was a table sponsor at this "sold out" event. The LABUE participants were as follows: Robert Simmons, Johnnie Davis, Johnnice Cox, Sharlene Johnson, Mudada Mthuzeli, Johannes Kepler, Quinal Johnson and Debora Ewing. Also, though unable to attend, Shannon Tanner made a financial donation to the event. Prior to having dinner, everyone toured the aquarium to better appreciate the unique as well as the ordinary sea creatures featured in the various tanks. Prizes worth several thousand dollars were raffled off. This year's event raised over \$95,375.00 on behalf of the Catalina Island Hyperbaric Chamber and LABUE was pleased to be part of this very worthwhile effort.



#### MAY

- 02 CHAMBER EVENING
- 08 7:00 PM – General Meeting
- 11 Catalina Weekend
- 22 Board Meeting

#### JULY

- 13 7:00 PM – General Meeting
- 27 6:30 PM-Board Meeting

#### JUNE

- 2/3 SCUBA SHOW
- 12 7:00 PM – General Meeting
- 17 Father's Day Dive
- 26 Board Meeting

#### AUGUST

- 04 Beach Dive
- 14 7:PM—General Meeting
- 28 6:30PM Board Meeting

### Web Site Registration

The newly updated club website: [www.labue.org](http://www.labue.org) has several new and useful features designed to improve the club's communication with its membership. The site is a work in progress and will continue to be under construction for the foreseeable future. One important aspect of the new site is the membership roster feature which allows members to be registered and submit a brief profile about themselves and their dive interests. Members are required to register themselves to be included in this listing. To date, out of over 150 possible listings, only 38 members have registered. To maximize its usefulness as a buddy list, everyone should register. It is easy to do. Simply go to the website and follow the registration instructions. The goal is 100% participation. Take time to register today.

### On Line Store

The new website has added another feature...an **online store**. Although the final design is not complete, members can purchase any of a growing number of LABUE club items. Payment is made through the Paypal system. In the past, members had to be present at a club function to purchase an item. That requirement is no longer the case. From t-shirts to caps to jackets, everything is now available on the web. In the near future, the club decals, dive jackets, business cards and other club merchandise will soon be added to the list. Francois is working hard to keep the website up to date and to create as many useful items as possible for its use. Anyone having any comments should contact him at (310) 412-8128.

### Time to Renew

All LABUE members are required to renew their membership beginning January 1 of each new year. The regular dues is \$30 for an individual and \$45 for a family membership. Since the club restructured in 1996, the dues has remained the same. Despite the fact that costs for everything have increased, the club has managed to rearrange it's budget in a way to remain fiscally solvent while keeping the nominal membership rate at \$30. There are many benefits to being a club member, including reduced boat dive costs, opportunities to network with great people, very informative programs and, most importantly, the opportunity to participate in the sport of scuba diving with year 'round friends. Those members who have been around for awhile have a lot of good memories of the many trips the club has taken to warm water destinations and this year's trip to Australia is sure to be the highlight of them all. Although a small amount, the \$30 dues starts it all. Take time today to renew and help the club to continue to grow and improve.

### Meeting Refreshments

The Membership Team is generally responsible for providing the very tasty 'after meeting' refreshments. Each month a variety of refreshments are offered to attendees. The club usually absorbs the cost of these goodies although, from time to time, members of that team or otherwise donate something to our 'spread.' As a reminder, everyone is reminded that anyone should feel free to bring something to share with fellow buddies. In fact, such contributions are always welcome. To make sure everything is well coordinated, anyone bringing refreshments is asked to check with Bettye Linares(661 729-6626), Membership Committee Chairperson, 3 days in advance to avoid duplications.

## Australian Live-Aboard

When the Board first announced last December that the 2007 club trip would be a live-aboard to The Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea in Australia, the response was totally unexpected and actually amazing. The initial guarantee to the Spirit Of Freedom management team was for 10 individuals. With a capacity of 26, it was felt that LABUE having 10 divers would give the club a presence. Members begin submitting deposits on a steady basis and as of press time, 24 people have committed to participate! LABUE will now have the entire boat! In addition, many travelers are planning to extend their vacation with a diving stop in Fiji and touring the Outback out of Cairns and the glamour of Sydney! The party will be out of sight, half way around the world! Two spots still remain for anyone interested in joining in the fun. The following members have signed up so far:

Bob Simmons, Artie Williams, Debora Ewing, Charles Heath, Francois Desamours, Eric Shepard, Bob Dansby, David Robinson, Johannes Kepler, Richard Rice, Sharlene Johnson, Randy Tillery, DonCosta Seawell, Akkia Chin, Kenneth Trapp, Clifton Williams, Pat Williams, Deborah Baker, Don Pilkinton, Tish Ragland, Carla Dixon, Salim Jordan, Paula White, Sharlen Campbell.

## White Water Rafting

LABUE will be organizing a white water rafting trip to the American River from July 13-15 of this year. The two day trip will feature camping on the banks of the river, plenty of good food, flush toilets, showers, electricity and, of course, exciting rafting down the river. The American Rive is a class three rafting experience. Beginners and intermediate rafters will have a great time enjoying the ride and socializing with fellow LABUE members during the entire trip. The price of \$280pp includes an 'already pitched' tent, food for all three days and skilled guides on each raft. Breakfasts includes various combinations of eggs, omelets, pancakes, meats, beverages etc. Lunches include deli-type sandwiches, fruits, cookies. Dinners include steaks, salmon, chicken and all the appropriate trimmings. Rafters may drive themselves to the campground, approximately 1 hr east of Sacramento, near Lake Tahoe or, if enough people are interested, charter a bus from Los Angeles. Contact Shannon Tanner for more information at (818) 992-7902.

## Discover Scuba by George Linares

This year's DISCOVER SCUBA activity was awesome!!! 10 participants were supported by 12 club buddies in attendance. Bettye got everyone signed in and Bob started Saturday's program with a warm welcome then turned over the podium to me. DonCosta Seawell, Angela Yarbrough, Daphne King and Juanita Sanchez all had the thrill of watching their friends experience scuba for the very first time. Debora, Quinal, DonCosta, Joe, Mike and fellow instructor James Thomas all joined me in assisting the participants in the pool. Needless to say - 'everyone' had lots of fun. "I never thought it was so easy - breathing underwater with the regulator". "It's not as hard as I thought". Just a couple of statements made after the activity was over and we all gathered in the classroom for de-briefing. So, we look forward to next year's event. Surely, while each of you continues to share LABUE's activities with each of your family and friends, we are bound to capture a few who 'never thought it was so easy'. We invite each of you to continue your support and share the wonders of the ocean with your family and friends. Thank you.



## Reminders:

- \*\* **General Membership Meeting—5/08/07**
- \*\* **Catalina Weekend—5/11/07**
- \*\* **Father's Day Dive—6/07/07**