

LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

NOVEMBER 2005

Volume 10 Issue 11



GRAND CAYMANS...Last Call

This is the final call to those who may be considering participating in a spectacular dive trip in 2006. As has been previously announced, the LABUE dive trip for 2006 will be to Grand Cayman Island, the largest of the three islands comprising the Cayman Island chain in the Caribbean Sea. From April 20-28, 2006, the club will be housed at the Sunset House Hotel, the only resort in the Cayman Islands designed by divers, operated by divers, for divers. It is also the only hotel in the Cayman Islands which has its own coral reef with modern and ancient shipwrecks in shallow water right off shore. The package includes roundtrip airfare from Los Angeles, 7 nights accommodations (double occupancy), 5 days of 2-tank dives, unlimited shore diving, daily breakfasts and transfers. As an extra, Bettye Linares, after a very successful BVI trip, has again agreed to do research and provide dining and entertainment options to everyone in attendance.

The Cayman Islands are consistently rated among the top 10 dive destinations in the world, where underwater visibility is regularly in the 75-150ft range and can reach over 200ft. These islands have a huge variety of sea life and corals but are best known for having the best wall diving in the world. Water temperature is reliably in the low 80's. With the availability of unlimited shore diving right on the premises, some divers will easily complete 20 dives or more during the 6 potential dive days.

The terms of the trip are included in the attached flyer. Anyone interested must submit a signed application along with a \$400 check. As with LABUE's previous trips, \$250 of the deposit is non refundable. If you are interested being part of an exciting week, act immediately as the trip will close November 30, 2005. Many LABUE members have been to the Cayman Islands several times. The reason is simple...Great Diving! Don't miss out. Sign up today...



President's Message

Looking back over the year, it occurs to me that LABUE has exceeded the Board's expectations in every way. The club is financially stable and can easily support its expenditure program. The Program Committee has made sure that we have had a string of very interesting and informative presentations at our meetings and the average meeting attendance continues to grow. The Beach and Boat Dive programs have had another banner year with ever increasing participation. Even though the club subsidizes some of the boat dives to club members, Steve Scruggs, Chairman of the Boat Dive Committee, proudly points that revenue from boat dives has ensured that, despite the Club's subsidies, the boat dive program will be in the black this year. The Membership, Dive Training and Safety and Ad/Spec/Tech Committees have all implemented programs and procedures

which have made us stronger. The Ways and Means Committee, in its first year of operation, has provided regular updates of how we are doing vs our initial plans, helping us to avoid unpleasant surprises. Our website, maintained by the Internet Committee, continues to be a major draw to non members looking for a club like ours which offers a wide variety of dive related activities. These committees are the reason why LABUE continues to expand its offerings. As always, I am forever grateful to all committee members for their hard work and commitment to make LABUE be all that it can be. Well Done!!!



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

Beach Diving by Debora Ewing

The next LABUE Beach Dive will take place at Divers Cove (Laguna) on Sunday, December 4. Please bring plenty of quarters for the parking meters. Mike Dillard will give the dive briefing at 8:00 a.m. This is a very easy dive site and is a perfect opportunity for all levels of divers to work on those skills. Divers Cove is a very shallow site which features many underwater ledges. This site is located at Heisler Park which has convenient restrooms, water fountains and picnic tables. The Beach Dive Committee recently held its Annual Meeting and planned LABUE's beach dive schedule for 2006. There are a variety of dive events in store for next year, including two out of the region weekends. Then of course, the Cayman Island trip offers the ultimate in beach diving opportunities. Join in on all the fun.

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LABUE Oilrig Dive by Steve Scruggs

On Sunday October 30th six LABUE members were onboard the Sea Bass to dive the three oil rigs off the coast of Long Beach. Due to sandblasting maintenance on one of the rigs we were only able to dive Ellie and Ellen with a third dive being a revisit to Ellie, the favorite of all the divers for that day. The weather was perfect with clear blue skies blanketing an ocean as smooth as glass with moderate swells and just enough current to work up a sweat. This was a perfect day to experience one of the unique diving wonders of Southern California.

The dive began with a giant stride off the back of a "live" boat because it is illegal to tie a line to an oil rig and the anchor is worthless in seven hundred feet of water. Diving in the open ocean under the rigs affords a diver the opportunity to experience pelagic encounters in a pristine environment that is normally not found close to shore. The giant metal support beams have served as a protected artificial reef for over ten years and as a result, the beams are covered with a thick layer of *Corynactis*, *Metridiums* and aggregating anemones, hydroids, brittle stars, bryozoans, crabs, uncommon nudibranchs, sponges, feather duster worms and tunicates. Mollusks such as mussels, jewel boxes and giant scallops are abundant. In simple terms, it's like flying between ancient Greek columns encrusted with thousands of glistening jewels with sea lions playfully nipping at anything they can grab. The conditions are so ecologically perfect that one can easily envision this as an underwater Garden of Eden. For this reason alone, every diver should make a point to dive the rigs at least once in his diving career. Those friends that inquire why we dive only see the oil rigs from a distance as ugly, giant behemoths rising eighty feet above the ocean surface, but only a select few get to see the wonders that lie beneath. THIS is why we dive.

**Thumbs Up to LAFD!!!**

On November 8, LABUE members were treated to a special presentation by two members of the Los Angeles Fire Department. Al Casal and Al Perez, members of the LA City's dive team based in the LA Harbor, combined to discuss the various aspects of the elite 24 member group. They kept the audience in awe as they described the types of situations they encounter, their role in the war against terror and the general readiness of the unit to respond to any of several types of emergencies.

A highlight of the evening was the demonstration of some of the types of equipment they use and they even showed how it is possible to get suited up in their dry suits in less than 3 minutes. Club members were also given the opportunity to 'try on' the special mask the unit uses, which comes complete with underwater communications. The enthusiastic interest of attendees was evidenced by the large number of questions which followed the presentation. LABUE thanks the LAFD for allowing these two gentlemen to take time out to be with us at Tuesday's meeting. It was a job well done!

RLS & ASSOCIATES

ROBERT L. SIMMONS
LABUE MEMBER

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HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Message from the Membership Committee

By: Bettye Linares

The Membership Committee would like to take this time to thank each and every buddy who renewed their 2005 membership. Thank you so much for your continued support and efforts in helping to make LABUE the best dive club in the Los Angeles region. We truly appreciate your prompt attention to your renewal efforts. In so doing, you are helping LABUE attain its goal to provide a variety of diving and social activities (numerous beach dive opportunities; exciting boat dives; fun events such as the 'fish fry', and, not to mention tasty refreshments after each General Membership Meeting.

We could not offer all of these activities without your support. To our 'new' members – again – welcome. On behalf of this committee & club, I hope you have found us to be all that you had looked for in a dive club. We encourage your continued support. If you have ideas or suggestions, please forward them accordingly. Your input is important and we're always seeking 'new' ideas. Every 'buddy' is invited to 'bring a friend' to our monthly General Membership Meetings, and planned social activities.

We have another fun year planned just for you. Get your divin' calendar ready!!! Most importantly, everyone, plan now to renew your 2006 membership. We're currently accepting dues. Again for 2006, we are offering 'LABUE bucks' to the first 50 renewing members submitting their dues prior to April 1st. So, enjoy. We look forward to diving with you and seeing you at the December 14th meeting.

WHY SHOP AT REEF SEEKERS?

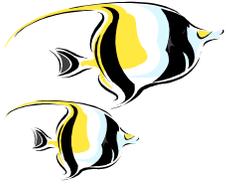
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Christmas Stocking Stuffer

The Holiday Season is a time to look back at the blessings we have all received and appreciate how lucky we are. In what has become an annual tradition, LABUE will conclude the year with a special social event to be held on December 14 in our regular meeting location.

Most of the activities will be kept a secret until the actual day. However, everyone is invited to participate in the club's annual Christmas Stocking Stuffer. The idea is to bring a Christmas stocking stuffed with items useful to divers, but not exceeding a combined total of \$25 in value.

Participants will be randomly paired with each other and the gifts will be exchanged. Bettye Linares is again coordinating the stocking stuffer and promises that everyone in attendance will have a lot of fun and come away with a better sense of what being a member of LABUE is all about.

Steve Scruggs and Shannon Tanner are coordinating the evening's other, very fun type, activities. The refreshments for this evening will be extra special as well. Come to this meeting and share in the Holiday Spirit with all of your dive buddies and friends. Contact Bettye for additional information. See you there!!!

Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER

- 05 Beach Dive—Shaw's Cove
- 08 7:00 PM – General Meeting
- 19 Boat Dive
- 22 Board Meeting

DECEMBER

- 04 Beach Dive—Divers Cove
- 13 7:00 PM – General Meeting

