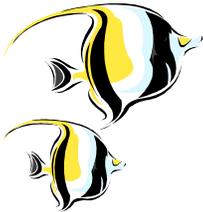


LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

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WHAT A TRIP!!!



The first ever LABUE club charter of a live aboard vessel is now history. As everyone knows by now, the club chartered the entire 120' Spirit Of Freedom luxury yacht for 5 days in Australia. The trip began with 12 members getting a head start by diving in Fiji for a few days. The hotel in Fiji and the diving was excellent as always. The stay in Fiji was highlighted by the world famous shark dive in the Bega lagoon. Following these five days, 23 LABUE members met in Cairns Australia to participate in the trip of a lifetime. From the time everyone boarded the 'Spirit' to the time of disembarkation back in Cairns 5 days later, everyone had a grand time. Every morning started off with a pre-breakfast of fruits, cereals, rolls, etc and was followed by the first dive of the day. After a full breakfast, it was time for a second dive which was followed by snacks. Then it was back into the water for the third dive which was followed by lunch. A fourth and fifth dive were possible before and after dinner. The diving was fantastic with the water temperature at a consistent 81 degrees and visibility averaging above 75' and calm seas. The club dove both the outer Great Barrier Reef as well as The Coral Sea with its magnificent Osprey Reef. The varieties of colorful fish and corals were endless and breathtaking. Imagine waking up and simply jumping in the water with the reef already there. The crew was very attentive and friendly. They made the difference between a good trip and a fantastic trip. Finally the food was excellent. The club was pleased to learn that this was only the second full boat charter the boat had had during the past year and the crew really had a great time working with us. After the live aboard, many members toured Cairns and later Sydney before returning to Los Angeles. All in all, it was a trip of a lifetime. LABUE was definitely in the house...big time!!!

President's Message By Bob Simmons

We finally made our South Pacific live aboard happen and, from all accounts, everyone seemed to have had a great time. The diving was fabulous as was the weather. The crew was overly friendly and the food was great. However, what I want to focus on in this article is the way in which we interacted with each other. Several folks had different itineraries but the first large group of 12 people met in Fiji for the five days preceding the live aboard. The camaraderie amongst each other was obvious from the beginning. That same spirit continued throughout the entire trip including the final days in Cairns and Sydney. Thanks to Akliia Chinn, who brought her ipod along with her huge song library, we were able to establish the musical mood from the beginning. Clifton Williams celebrated a milestone birthday while on board the Spirit of Freedom and we had all the appropriate music. The party eventually

turned into an old school soul train line. Even the crew joined in the line. They later told me that they had never had a group dance on board, let alone take over the entire galley! Several members got serious over chess matches...again members of the crew joined in. Then, of course, there were the dominoes. New member Eric Shepard and Tish Ragland seemed to be the new king and queen of the bones...certainly in terms of trash talking. The trip was fun in many ways, not the least of which were the many personal interactions which can only happen on a LABUE trip. I can't wait until the next one.



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

Warm Water Trip for 2008

Because of the lateness in the year and the expense of the Fiji Australia trip, the Board decided to stay closer to home (ie The Caribbean) for the 2008 club trip. After a lengthy process, it was decided to return to Belize in 2008. The club visited San Pedro on Ambergris Cay several years ago and had a great time. Belize is known for its canyons, spectacular coral formations and large pelagics. It is always rated among the top 10 dive destinations in the world and for good reason. Whether it is viewing large spotted eagle rays or bull sharks while diving the world famous Blue Hole, Belize offers something special. There are also land options available for non divers. The final details will be announced soon but the trip will be in late April and should be priced between \$1500-\$2000. Start saving now.

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Beach Dives by Debora Ewing

The last LABUE Beach Dive took place at Crescent Bay (Laguna) on October 7. The weather was picture perfect and the surf was manageable. Sharlen Campbell and Bryant Turner led the dive. This was a very easy dive site for all levels of divers. This dive also served as a last chance for the folks going to Fiji and Australia to check out not only themselves but their gear. The divers were Richard Rice, Sharlen Campbell, Deborah Baker, Bryant Turner and myself. Sharlene Johnson was the dive master. On the shore were Joe Windolph (along with his son Josh and his cousin) and Johnnie Davis. It is every diver's responsibility to keep his or her skills sharp. I look forward to seeing you at the next beach dive which will be at Fisherman's Cove (Laguna) on Sunday, December 2. Please bring plenty of quarters for the parking meters. Dive Master Sharlene Johnson will give the dive briefing at 8:00 a.m. This site will also be a very easy dive location for all levels of divers. It is located between Divers' Cove and Shaw's Cove and is near convenient restrooms, water fountains and picnic tables. If you're interested in signing up for this dive, please let me know at (909) 240-7022 and I will add your name to the list of divers. I look forward to seeing you there.

Next Meeting

The next LABUE General Membership Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 13, 2007, at the Museum of Natural History on Exposition Blvd across from USC. Since many of us just returned from a fantastic club dive trip to Fiji and Australia, there will be photos and stories galore of what was the greatest trip LABUE has ever held. Everyone is invited to look at the beautiful photos of the underwater world-both above and below the surface. This trip opened up a whole new arena for club travel and you will want to come and hear what all the excitement is about. Club travel will never be the same. Our travel horizon has definitely expanded and many more exciting trips to the Indonesian region of the world will be planned. The diving is absolutely unbelievable. The fact that so many of us participate in these trips makes them even that much more enjoyable. If you did not make this trip, you will certainly want to make plans now for future trips. The meeting will begin at 7pm. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

Steal A Gift

Last year the club had a 'Steal A Gift' activity during its Christmas meeting. It was so much fun and so well received, that it has been decided to repeat everything this year. The 'Steal A Gift' will again be held at the club meeting in December. Basically, all participants are asked to bring a gift costing in the \$25 price range. One by one, each participant is allowed to 'steal' a desired gift currently being held by someone else. After a few rounds, all of the more desirable gifts have changed hands several times before a final round is conducted. The gift each participant has in his possession at the conclusion of the game is his to keep. This a fun game and the more participants there are, the more fun everyone has. Get your gift and bring it to the December meeting.

LABUE in Australia 2007



SPOTLIGHT
By Debora Ewing

INTERVIEW WITH SHARLENE JOHNSON

Sharlene is one of LABUE's most active and dedicated members. She's a dive master also volunteers her time as a member of the Board.

Where were you born? Winfield, Kansas

What is your profession? I am a detective with the Los Angeles Police Department

I notice that you're in incredible shape. How do you maintain your level of physical fitness? I get up every morning three hours before I must leave for work and I work out at home.

Tell me something that our readers would be surprised to learn about you? I love science fiction and B horror movies.

If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be? Kansas, I miss the wide open spaces. If I could move Kansas to the coast, I would be in heaven.

What are your future goals and aspirations? I am in the process of refining my work goals. I am very happy with my personal life. I have met my goals insofar as diving is concerned. What else is there; other than just being healthy and happy?

What is your favorite food? Sashimi (Yellow Tail)

How did you find out about LABUE? Through the California Dive News. I called several dive clubs and I didn't get a return phone call. When I called LABUE, Robert Simmons answered the phone and the rest is history.

What is your favorite activity while diving? Following my buddy.

What is your favorite dive warm water dive destination that you've enjoyed thus far? Domenica. That was my first warm water trip. There were so many things that I saw that I hadn't seen anywhere else. *What is your favorite local dive site?* Shaws' Cove. If you dive Shaws on a clear day, you can be on the far west end and see many beautiful things. Swimming through the crevice is always fun as well.

What is your favorite LABUE activity? The full club charter boat dive.



