

# LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers

OCTOBER 2004

"1999 NABS Club of the Year"

Volume 9 Issue 10



## SPECTACULAR FIJI

Most members of The Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers returned from the club dive trip to Fiji this past weekend.

Suffice it to say that the trip was a tremendous success!!!

The diving was good and everyone in attendance experienced a totally different underwater environment. For one thing, most club divers are familiar with the approximately 400 species of fish which exist in the Caribbean. In the South Pacific, there are over **1300** species of fish.

For one week, the entire Koro Sun Resort was transformed into a LABUE village. Whether it was hiking the back trails, playing volleyball, golfing, bike riding, enjoying spa treatments or karaoke make believe, the pleasant relationships developed with the Fijian people there was an added bonus. The Fijian people were very friendly and went out of their way to make their guests feel special. By the end of the week, virtually every staff person was calling the club members by their first name.

Another highlight had to be the visit to the nearby Fijian village. LABUE members were greeted by the village Chief and participated in a Kava ceremony. The trip attendees had previously decided to bring school supplies, books and other items of use to the village children. Needless to say, the villagers were overwhelmed by the club's generosity. As a show of their appreciation, about 40 village children came to the Koro Sun Resort on the last night to serenade the club members with several local Fijian songs. It was a very moving evening...far too difficult to describe if you weren't there.

The final touch was the local resort staff serenading LABUE members with the traditional Fijian farewell. Because of the relationships developed, this trip to Fiji will easily be the most memorable of all the club trips. All of the club trips have been fun. But Fiji was special.



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### President's Message

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At the upcoming club elections to be held in November, the four officer positions as well as the three current 'at large' positions are available to eligible candidates. Article 4 of the club Bylaws clearly defines the requirements which must be satisfied in order to qualify as a candidate. These qualifications were developed to help ensure that potential candidates have clearly demonstrated their commitment to the club and its objectives. The requirement that a candidate have been a LABUE member for the two years preceding the election year allows club members to become familiar with the abilities, motives and attitudes of potential candidates, increasing the likelihood that the best candidates will be elected. In addition the Bylaws require that candidates have served on one of the club's standing committees for at least one year. The purpose of this provision is to allow potential candi-

dates an opportunity to demonstrate their work ethic.

Our Board is a working Board. All Board members are expected to contribute a substantial amount of personal time and energy. One of the reasons LABUE has been so successful is because the Board is usually comprised of individuals willing to work and be actively involved in the club's activities. With the new year approaching, now is the time for you to consider joining one of the standing committees, which may lead to your becoming a Board member. Being on the Board is not for everyone. However, for those individuals who want to help LABUE become even better, becoming a Board member is the ultimate opportunity. Your participation is welcomed and encouraged!!!

Bob Simmons

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

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**Next Club Meeting**

The next club meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 12 at the Museum of Natural History in Exposition Park, 900 West Exposition Blvd, across from USC. James Wiley will be making the presentation on Lobster hunting. James has earned the nickname of Captain Hook because of his hunting skills. With the beginning of Lobster season at hand, this meeting is the perfect opportunity to learn how to succeed in capturing this very elusive and speedy creature. James will have a live lobster to aid in his demonstration. Among the subjects covered will be how to determine if the lobster is 'legal' and the proper permits required. He will also discuss his techniques on how to approach and actually capture a lobster. This particular meeting is always very popular and a true learning experience. Plan now to attend. The meeting will begin at 7pm.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President Robert Simmons (323) 292-8960	Vice President Donna Wilson (310) 337-1541
Treasurer Richard Rice (323) 299-3798	Secretary Debora Ewing (213) 229-5190
Denise Barker (562) 423-4974	George Linares (661) 941-1516
Steve Scruggs (310) 876-1260	

**COMMITTEES**

Membership Bettye Linares (661) 946-1516	Fundraising James Wiley (310) 477-2389
Beach Dive Debora Ewing (213) 229-5190	Boat Dive Steve Scruggs (310) 876-1260
Dive Training & Safety George Linares (661) 946-1516	Publicity & Internet Donna Wilson (310) 337-1541
Technical Diving Quinal Johnson	

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**2004 Club Charter Boat Dive by Steve Scruggs**

The closest world-class warm water diving is a short flight to Cozumel, but on September 11<sup>th</sup> thirty-three LABUE members and friends experienced three warm water dives a short boat ride away on the front side of Catalina Island under warm, sunny skies with water as flat as a southern flounder. Cold under water thermoclines were a welcome relief in water that approached seventy-five degrees with visibility of over sixty feet and abundant marine life that included everything but the five hundred pound black sea bass that managed to elude us on this trip. The Great Escape dive boat was filled to capacity as we visited Ship Rock, Bird Rock and Emerald Cove for three great dives that satisfied everyone. The Ad-Spec-Tect members were able to enjoy their specialty dives and still be on the same boat with everyone else including those who chose to hover in sixty foot depths. Several divers were turned away on the days leading up to the sold-out trip thanks to the below-market, subsidized price tag LABUE is able to offer it's members. Club membership continues to have its rewards as long as we continue to support ourselves by coming out and participating in club sponsored events. Thanks go out to all those who supported our latest boat dive which will pave the way for even better boat dive opportunities in the years to come as we bask in the "warm" water of Southern California.



**Shaw's Cove Beach Dive by Debora Ewing**

On Saturday, November 6, 2004 LABUE's annual Mid-day and Twilight Dive event will take place. For those members who would otherwise participate in beach dives were it not for the typically early start times, this day is perfect. The first dive briefing will take place at 2:00 p.m. and the second dive briefing (twilight dive) will take place at 4:00 p.m. Sleep in and still be on time. What a deal! The twilight dive is for those who have already become certified as advanced divers (with night dive training). This site is excellent for all skill levels. As a reminder, Shaw's Cove offers free parking but no toilets or showers. Please contact me at (213) 229-5190 to sign up. The Beach Dive Committee is in the planning stages which will result in next year's calendar of beach dives sites. If there is a site along the California coastline that you'd like us to schedule as one of our monthly dives, please let me know ASAP.

## **HOLIDAY GIFT EXCHANGE**

Bettye Linares has organized a holiday buddy gift exchange to take place at the December club meeting. All those who would like to participate are asked to bring a stocking stuffed with dive-related gifts that can be fun but useful.

The suggested value of the stocking items is between \$10 - \$15. Upon arrival at the club meeting each buddy will receive a number which will have a matching number issued to another buddy. Each participant will hold onto their stocking until the end of the general meeting at which time Santa Bettye will call the numbers and the stockings will be exchanged. What better way to get into the spirit of giving than with those whom you've shared such wonderful experiences throughout the year.

This will be the second time LABUE has held a stocking exchange. Last year's exchange was fun and very popular for all who participated.

If you have questions, call Santa at 661-946-1516.

## **Dive And Camp Weekend**

The first LABUE dive/camp weekend to Refugio State Beach near Santa Barbara is completely sold out. Quinal Johnson, member of the Beach Dive Committee and Chairperson of this event reports that there are no more camping spaces available in the 4 Sections LABUE has reserved. The Beach Dive committee has worked hard to make this dive/camp weekend a success and it appears that everyone in attendance will have a great time. Bettye Linares, coordinator of many of the weekend's activities reminds attendees to plan to arrive early enough on Friday evening to be able to leave the campsite by 6:30pm for the 7:00pm dinner and show at the nearby Ranch. The cost of this evening is included in the package price which everyone paid. Each year LABUE strives to respond to the varied desires of its members. This Dive/Camp weekend is another example of trying to be responsive as well as trying something different.

## **Holiday Gala**

For the past several years, LABUE has held a very successful and fun-filled Holiday Christmas Gala. For a variety of reasons, the event will not be held this year. It is hoped that circumstances next year will be such that the Holiday Gala can again be scheduled with the confidence that club members will once again create an overwhelming demand for the tickets.

# *Calendar of Events*

## **OCTOBER**

- 12** 7:00 PM – General Meeting
- 15** Beach Dive—Refugio Santa Barbara Campout Dive
- 26** 6:30 PM – Board Meeting

## **NOVEMBER**

- 06** Beach Dive—Shaw's Cove
- 09** 7:00 PM – General Meeting
- 23** 6:30 PM – Board Meeting

## **DECEMBER**

- 05** Beach Dive—Redondo
- 14** 7:00 PM – General Meeting and Holiday Celebration

## **Club Trip for 2005**

As announced previously, LABUE will return to the warm and inviting waters of the British Virgin Islands for the 2005 club dive trip. The club will lodge at the Prospect Reef Hotel for 8 days and 7 nights from April 21—28th. The Prospect Reef Hotel has a dive operation on site and maintains excellent diver support facilities.

The package includes 5 days of two tank dives, with the opportunity to purchase additional dives as desired. The waters of the BVI's are known for their warmth, clarity and excellent variety of tropical fish, coral reefs and shipwrecks. In fact, the wreck of the RMS Rhone located near the hotel is considered the premier wreck in the Caribbean. The Rhone sank in a hurricane over 135 years ago and was split into sections. The enormity of the wreck requires at least two dives for the most enjoyable experience. The diving of the RMS Rhone is included in the package.

This trip will be the 9th annual club dive trip. Each one has been fantastic both from a dive point of view and from a camaraderie point of view. If you missed Fiji, this is another opportunity to join in the fun. The diver package price including air from Los Angeles is \$1625 and the non-diver price is \$1250.

In addition, and only available to those who attend the club trip, there will be limited space available on a one week bare boat sailing and diving trip throughout many of the lesser known BVI islands. Please contact Donna for additional information and to sign up for the club trip, and if interested, the sailing extension.



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**Reminders:**

- \*\* General Membership Meeting—10/12/04**
- \*\* Dive/Camp Weekend—10/15/04**
- \*\* Board Meeting—10/26/04**