



'DILLO DIVER

GOIN' DOWN SINCE 1984



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www.scubadillo.org

March 2005



To Live- or Not-to-Live-Aboard in T&C (Turks & Caicos, of course)...by Tom Ray

New Members

Chuck Rogers
Lynette Rogers

THIS MONTH'S BIRTHDAYS

Jim Quinn	3/4
Michael Greig	3/5
Laura Greig	3/13
Bob "Fishhead" Hughs	3/19
Jima Watson	3/26
Douglas Gamel	3/27
Theresa Jacob	3/31

There is a definite place in recreational diving for live-aboard trips. For example, if there is little to do on shore, if primo diving is a long haul by day boat, if max bottom time is a consideration, and if you find that constant back-and-forth motion day and night nurturing, consider checking in to a "boatel."

Provinciales – *Provo* in local speak – is one of eight islands comprising Turks & Caicos, and it qualifies as just such a place ... for diving a live-aboard, that is. Case in point, the island tour took only two hours, and that included a leisurely lunch. Other than a smattering of more expensive restaurants and Tommy Bahama-like shopping, there's little to do or see ... even the palm trees are imported. There is diving just off Provo, but those in the know agree that the best diving is hours south, off the deserted islands of West Caicos and farther on to French Cay. And I like diving and rocking, so live-aboard it was.

Fourteen guests and six crew cohabitated the Turks & Caicos Explorer Ventures 121-foot vessel for a week. That's roughly six feet per person, and at 5'8", I had several inches to spare and was more than comfortable. Guests were evenly split between Canadians and Americans, arrived as couples or singles, and ranged in experience from new to professional divers. The typical routine was breakfast at 7, dive at 8:30, snacks at 9:30, dive at 11, lunch at 12:30, dive at 2, snacks at 3, dive at 4:30, dinner at 6, dive at 7:30. It's a sensible alternative if you want to max eating, sleeping and dive time because there's no wasted travel.

We made more than two dozen dives, which as promised, did get progressively better as we headed south. The walls grew more dramatic and big critters more plentiful and less shy. The first series of dives off Northwest Point on Provo, for example, seemed more like checkout dives – comparatively shallow and sparse. At best we saw sharks racing out of visibility. In subsequent dives we saw "up close and personal" Reef Sharks (closer than this diver's ever seen), Spotted Eagle Rays, mammoth Stingrays, and we even managed to find Pipehorses. But overall, don't expect to find seascapes teeming with soft coral, big schools or juveniles. Do expect to see more than usual numbers of rays and sharks along vertical walls. The final night dive off French Cay at a site appropriately named *Rock 'n Roll* was one I won't soon forget.

No bigger than a country block or two and in the middle of nowhere, French Cay, famed as an uninhabited bird sanctuary, slopes down and out gradually below water to the reef wall before



Inside This Issue

A Word From Your President	2
To Live- or Not-to- Live Aboard! By Tom Ray (Continued)	2
All Club Swap & Shap!	2
San Marcos Cleanup/Easter Egg Dive & 7th Annual Crawfish Boil!	3
2005 Dive Schedule!	3
2005 Officers and Board of Directors	4
Next Meeting and Upcoming Events	4



Don't forget the Troops. They need our prayers and donations ongoing.

You can go to the following websites for ideas of things to send including your letters of support.

Www.abcactionnews.com/iraq/shoebox.shtml;
www.operationshoebox.com/



A Word From Your President



Jeff Colvin — 2005
SCUBADILLO President

Hello everyone, it's March 2005, and another Artic Dive is history. On behalf of the club, I wish to thank The Diving Rebels for another great event. The Rebels have invited The Dillos for the last few years, and again this year made the Artic Dive a tri-club event with The Reef Riders. I'm really glad to have gotten to know and share a close friendship with Rebel President Steve Ogden. Since he knows that I have a snake phobia, he makes sure everyone keeps them away from me. Each and every year at this dive, I get the chance to improve my peripheral vision, as I keep a close watch over the area around me mak-

ing sure it is FREE of SNAKES!!

As a club, we now have several activities on the horizon, and so, the time is now. "Ladies and Gentlemen, Start Your Memberships"! As always, we allow guests to participate in most of our events, because we know they will enjoy themselves and probably join the club. As for the regulars, we need your membership dues in order to finance these same events. Joining the club now will cover your membership through December 2005, so if you just haven't gotten around to it, please take care of this as soon as possible. Laura Greig, our club Treasurer, is getting out enrollment forms to all non-renewed members soon, so help your club by showing that you support your board, officers, and our beloved Scubadillo Dive Club.

I am truly saddened once again, to receive notice that another dive shop has closed its doors. We Be Divin' closed on February 19th. Course Director, Judy Kay, gracefully thanked all of the store's customers and supporters, as she looked to the future with new adventures. I know that all Dillos are saddened by this most recent demise. I wish the folks at We Be Divin' good luck, and once again remind our members and readers of this Newsletter, we need our dive shops. When you buy on line, you are taking some business away from a local shop. It is indeed something to think about. I'm Jeff Colvin, and I am your President.

(To Live-or Not-To-Live Aboard)—Continued from page 1)

plunging 6,000 feet into the "abyss." We had already dived this site in the afternoon and so were somewhat familiar with the lay of the reef. But night dives by nature can conjure anxieties suppressed only hours earlier. Nor was this a leisurely dusk-into-night dive; it was fully dark. Add to that anxiousness entering a bottomless abyss, and ...well, you get the picture. Almost. There were sharks too. I knew I shouldn't have seen *Open Water!*



Reef sharks, attracted by the boat lights, swaggered just below surface. Entry was more a giant *leap of faith* than a stride. My pragmatic side assured me that my buddy would be slower and much more tasty than my sinewy old bones. So doing my best to time the parade of fins below, I jumped in. Blessed relief, the sharks parted at my splashdown. A couple of quick, nervous looks around, and we kicked and descended toward and beyond the wall to the shallows. Typical night stuff – octopuses, turtles, squid, crabs, lobsters, an eel and lots of stars – entertained us the next 40 minutes ... but then it was time to go back. I wondered if the sharks would be waiting.

The current had really picked up – hmmm, Rock 'n Roll – and if you didn't grab a stern line, you might blow past the "Inn." So we clutched the two weighted ropes lowered for just such conditions to make our safety stop. It was a long three minutes. At least half a dozen reef sharks, worked into a feeding frenzy, darted all around, among, and through us, barely avoiding contact. I was living a *National Geographic* special, without the shark cage. Three minutes to the second and we were out of the water, anxious to talk about the dive...well, the safety stop. Crew members, meeting us with warm towels and hot chocolate, talked about the sharks from their vantage point; in their excited state, the sharks were breaking the ocean surface, seemingly working up the courage to ask for a handout (sorry).

This is a dive, and experience, that a live-ashore diver most likely never would have experienced.



Emerald Sea Divers First Annual ALL CLUB Invitational Swap 'N Shop! April 17th

Mike Dunst has graciously committed to having the Emerald Sea Divers First Annual ALL CLUB Invitational Swap 'N Shop to be held April 17th from 10 am to 5 pm on the front parking lot of Emerald Sea Divers retail location, 1002 North Central Expressway, Suite 501, Richardson, TX 75080; 972-669-3483; www.emeraldseadivers.com. The invitation to the participating dive clubs is to bring their unwanted gear to swap with other participants and by the way, Mike Dunst will also have some sale items. Emerald Sea Divers will be cooking FREE hot dogs and hamburgers plus offering soft drinks for sale. If you have been diving very long, you probably have accumulated an excess of some items and this would be an excellent opportunity to swap that gear to someone else and get something you DON'T have! See you there!

March Speaker is Mr. Walter Davis!

Our March speaker is none other than Mr. Walter Davis, owner of The Scuba Shop which is located at 14440 Midway, Dallas 75244 (972-404-8797) a few blocks off LBJ Freeway. Walter has been diving the world for many years and has accumulated thousands of wonderful images of everything under the seas imaginable. Walter will be showing us one of his marvelous underwater shows at the March meeting and hopefully recounting some of his favorites diving tales. Walter leads trips mostly to the other side of the world in places like Indonesia, Bali or the Red Sea but does offer some local (Caribbean) trips as well. He teaches photography and diving. Come join us for a breathtaking view of the undersea world through the eyes and lens at the March Dillo meeting held at the Midway Point Restaurant at the intersection of Midway and LBJ and if you haven't met Walter, now's your opportunity! Details of some of Walter's trips are in the Who's Diving Insert on our website. Check it out!

7th Annual Scubadillo Crawfish Boil April 10th, 2005 Winfrey Point Once Again!

Come join us on April 10th at Winfrey Point on White Rock Lake for the 7th Annual Scubadillo Crawfish Boil from 2-6 pm. Admission is \$25 in advance for members and \$35 for all others and at the door for everyone! You will be getting sweet, succulent tails of juicy Cajun crawfish, accompanied by potatoes, corn-on-the-cob, mushrooms and sausage! If you prefer not to partake in the cracking of the crunchy cru stations, there will be plenty of tender, tasty grilled chicken breasts to please your pallet. Oh, Beverages! There will be several kegs of beer plus a "mean margarita machine". For the designated drivers, we will provide liberal amounts of soda and bottled water.

We will have great prizes, a silent auction with such items as restaurant certificates, dive gear, apparel and more! As usual, we will have plenty of Mardi Gras BEADS and Zydeco Cajun tunes. A good time will be had by all! You can buy your tickets at the March and April meetings plus anywhere else you can catch Mona. Maps can be found on the website with this event. www.scubadillo.org **See you there!!!**

San Marcos River Cleanup/Easter Egg Dive-April 2nd and 3rd

Don't forget this annual festival and pilgrimage to kick off the new dive season with a good time, prizes and good food. For details and maps, go to the Scubadillo website at www.scubadillo.org. Hope to see you there and get a prize for LARGEST group!

2005 Scubadillo Diving Schedule

March 12th	St. Patrick's Day Parade
April 2nd, 3rd	San Marcos River Cleanup/Easter Egg Dive. River cleanup Sat. at City Park, 9 am, BBQ provided by the City of San Marcos. Easter Egg Dive at Rio Vista Park. Camping at Leisure Camp & RV Park Reservations 1-800-248-4103
May 21st, 22nd	Lake Murray-Luau theme with cookout by Steve Sadler. Event and camping at Marietta Landing.
June 11th, 12th	Guadalupe River Tube N Dive
July 23rd	Day Dive at Clear Springs Park in Terrell, TX.
August 20th	Training-TBA
September 17th	End of Summer Fun Event.
October?????	Trashfest in New Braunfels. Comal River Cleanup. BBQ hosted by city of New Braunfels. Cheap hotel camping. Roadway Inn \$31.95 1-800-967-1168.
October 15th, 16th	Pumpkin Dive. Tyler State Park. Oktoberfest theme hosted by Gael Murdoch. Reservations: www.tpwd.state.tx.us 512-389-8900
November 11th to 14th	COZUMEL!!!!

2004 SCUBADILLO OFFICERS

PresidentJeff Colvin
Vice President Steve Partain
Treasurer Laura Greig
SecretaryStacey Burton Ellis
Sgt. At Arms Steve Sadler
Dir. Of Club Affairs Mona Valentine
Newsletter Editor..... June Hallman

2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All above officers, plus
Phil Ray
Sonny Gaither
Gael Murdoch
Kim Penny
Annette Evans
Barney Thibodeaux

Future Speakers: Throughout the year, we will be bringing you more speakers to talk about great dive sites, underwater photography, manufacturers' reps to show us the latest innovations in dive equipment and much more! Don't miss a meeting!

Next Meeting:

When: Thurs, Mar. 3rd, 2005 7:30 p.m. (Social Hour 6:30)

Where: Midway Point Restaurant,
NW corner of Harvest Hill & Midway

Speaker: REALLY. The Walter Davis! Come Join us!
Walter's underwater slide shows should not be missed!

Upcoming Events

What: St. Patrick's Day Parade

When: March 12th, 2005

Where: Greenville Ave & Park as a starting point.

What: San Marcos River Cleanup & Easter Egg Dive!

When: April 2nd, 3rd, 2005

Where: San Marcos, TX See website for details

Www.scubadillo.org.

What: 7th Annual Scubadillo Dive Club Crawfish Boil!

When: April 10th, 2005; 2-6 pm

Where: Winfrey Point! Yahoo!



SCUBADILLO Dive Club
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