



# International Scuba

GETTING YOU THERE... STARTS HERE!

Volume 6, Issue 4

April 2006

## Getting Ready for Dive Season

Howdy Divers,

I hope you didn't over indulge on St. Patrick's Day, we hope you had a memorable time.

We wanted to let you know what is going on in the coming weeks. We are keeping busy!

First of all, please join us in the 5th anniversary of owning the shop on **April 29th**. We will have custom wetsuit folks, vendors, some fun educational seminars, trips specials, demo days, scuba reviews, great food, and best of all great company.

In May we are participating in 2 outdoor events. May 6-7 is the **Outdoor Expo** on Lake Grapevine. On the 19-21, we are

participating in the **Grapevine Main Street Days**.

As always we are traveling to favorite spots. Look on the web for some fantastic Cozumel trips. Memorial Day you can go for as little as \$699 a diver. Then there is the awesome Bonaire trip for \$1475 in September. I think that is the cheapest I have seen either destination in years. Don't wait until it sells out and you miss out. We just closed the June 16-19 trip as 150 seats sold pretty much finishes the plane. Way to go Travel For You crew. We still have a few Twister Jul 7-10 spots left and same for Jack FM 28-31. We hope one of these trips is appealing to you and that

you are ready for some fun. Finally, we have 2 spots left on Palau in Feb 2007. Don't miss the opportunity of a lifetime. Also, Brian plans on conducting some Tec Deep programs as well.

I wanted to take a minute to say thank you for making these last 5 years so awesome. We look forward to the next 5 years and beyond to having fun blowing bubbles.

~ Patti

## Class Schedules & Trips— at a glance:

### WEEKEND:

- APR 8-9 TERRELL
- APR 22-23 BLUE LAGOON / TERRELL
- MAY 6-7 TERRELL
- MAY 20-21 TERRELL
- JUNE 3-4

### WHERE TO:

- MAY 13-14 FLOWER GARDENS
- MAY 26-29 COZUMEL
- JUN 9-12 COZMEL
- JUN 16-23—TEXANS IN COZUMEL
- JUL 7-10 COZUMEL WITH STEVE HOLY TWISTER 96.7
- JUL 28-31 COZUMEL JACK FM
- OCT—WAKATOBI
- FEB 2007—PAUUA OCEAN HUNTER



## Our World of Divers Continue to Grow

### Junior Open Water & Open Water (White Belt)

Janet Bennett  
Paul Bennett  
David Ciszewski  
Suzanne Fleming  
Cody Reynolds  
Justin Reynolds  
Karen Forman  
Richard Harper  
Amanda Peterson  
Laura Peterson

### Enriched Air

Dale Rogers  
Chad Meyer  
James Whitworth  
Steve Whitworth

### Equipment

Alex McNally  
Jim Pasant

### Dry Suit

Chris Armstrong  
Darrell Gardner  
Rebecca Dezarn

### PPB

Jim Pasant

### DPV

Jim Pasant

### Emergency First Response

David Green

### EFR Instructor

Frank Young

### DAN O2 & PADI O2 Instructor

David Ponder

### DAN Adv O2 Instructor

Gervaise Henry  
David Ponder

### DAN On-site Neuro Instructor

Gervaise Henry  
David Ponder

## Inside this issue:

Spring Time is Time	2
Milestones	2
Bonaire	3
CD Corner—Time is Flying	4
Creature Feature— Grouper	4

# International Scuba

## Spring Time is Here!

The smell in the air, the temperature is getting nice, the trees are getting green, and daylight savings time as sprung forward. These are the nice things about spring. Of course it is also a reminder that we need to make sure we are ready for all the activities we have planned for the summer. I wanted to go over some of the things you will need for your diving pleasure and safety.

**Gear Servicing:** If you take good care of your gear, it will take good care of you. If you haven't already done so, now is a good time to get your gear in for its annual service. This includes your regulator and BCD. If you use an Air Source or equivalent (inflator/alternate air combination), remember it's a regulator and needs servicing. More importantly it's the one you will use if your buddy is out of air, so you want to keep it in good working order. Also don't forget about battery changes in your computers.

**Save-a-dive kit:** Now is a good time to check it out and make sure it contains everything you need. Here are a few spare items you will need: mouth piece, mask strap, fin strap, fun strap buckle, tie wraps, o-rings, defog, spare batteries (computer, lights, etc) and a scuba-tool. If you have any specialty items such as cameras, or lights remember about the little things that can go wrong that are easy to keep spares of.

**Safety items:** Make sure you have everything to keep your kit streamlined (clips, retractors, etc). Don't forget a whistle, safety sausage or other surface signaling device. A dive knife or shears are always a good thing. Especially if you are diving anywhere that fishing has

taken place. A dive knife will allow you to cut through monofilament with a flick of the wrist. No you don't need that big knife strapped to your calf. Get a small one that will hook to your BCD, inflator hose, arm, or weight belt or BCD strap. If you are diving any unique locations, ask about safety items that are considered standard practice for the area.

**Review:** How long has it been since you've been diving? It may be time to come in for a scuba review. One of our assistants will be happy to help out. You may want to also check out your gear after servicing and make sure you are happy with the adjustments made. It's easy to readjust after getting out of the pool, much harder on the dive boat. Remember, except for working around classes, the pool is open if you want to check out gear or do a quick self review.

**Training:** Now may be time to extend your training. Remember our philosophy is that we will train any course at open water that can be done at the site. Do you want to extend your bottom time? The Enriched Air Diver course will help you out. Need help with buoyancy, then Peak Performance buoyancy is for you. How long has it been since you have been trained in First Aid/CPR. We hope you never need it, but if you do the Emergency First Response course will get you there. Remember it is recommended to get retraining in First Aid/CPR every two years to keep up with practice and get any new changes.

**Gear:** If you need gear, we can come up with a package just for you. For regulators and BCD we highly recommend coming in for a few hours and getting in the pool to try various models out. Remember it doesn't matter how it fits on the showroom floor, but how well you like it in the water. Don't forget we also offer a 6 month interest free layaway plan.

**Travel Plans:** Have you looked at our trip board lately? It's full. I can't believe how many places we are going this year. Most of them are all inclusive (Air, hotel, diving, and meals). If one of them doesn't fit your schedule, we can arrange a non-group trip for you as well. I don't know about you, but I never feel like I can come back from a dive trip unless I have the next one in the works.

If you haven't been in to see us lately, come in and see the changes. Don't forget about the open house either. It's always a good time. We have great specials, and good food. It's our way of saying thanks to all of you for supporting us.

~ Brian

Of course it is also a reminder that we need to make sure we are ready for all the activities we have planned for the summer.

## Milestones—number of dives recognition

10 Dives

25 Dives

50 Dives

75 Dives

100 Dives

150 Dives

200 Dives

250 Dives

300 Dives

350 Dives

400 Dives

500 Dives

600 Dives

700 Dives

## Bonaire

Bon Bini (Welcome),

A diver's paradise! Even the Bonaire license plates reflect what many divers have come to know first hand. Recent studies by Dr. Callum Roberts and the volunteer group REEF have shown that Bonaire's fish population is the most diverse in the Caribbean and ranks among the best in the world.

Bonaire is located in the Dutch Caribbean off the coast of Venezuela, outside of the hurricane belt. Unlike many Caribbean destinations Bonaire gets little rainfall and maintains a temperature of around 82 year round. The topography has more in common with Arizona than the lush tropics. This leads to superb visibility and plenty of sun.

Take a look at any of the polls conducted by your favorite dive magazines and you'll find the undisputed shore diving capital of the world is Bonaire. Most reefs begin within 50 yards of the shoreline in approximately 25 feet of water. Forget the dive boats and the 8:00am departures. You'll be diving from the tailgate of a Toyota Helix Pickup. Air fills are done via drive thru air fill stations. Best of all there are no schedules to keep to. Bonaire is home to "Diving Freedom 24/7". There are over 85 dive sites marked by large yellow rocks alongside the road with names painted on them such as Oil Slick Leap, 1000 Steps and the Hilma Hooker.

Aside from shore diving what really puts Bonaire on the map is the variety and abundance of fish of every type. My favorite site is called "Something Special" and provided an astounding amount of hard to find fish all in one spot. We counted 5 frogfish of every color 4 types of eels a squadron of squid and ping-pong ball sized juvenile trunkfish along with huge purple tube sponges and orange elephant ear sponges.

The reefs are part of a protected marine park that has set the standard for conservation throughout the world. Every diver participates in a mandatory checkout dive to become comfortable and get orientated with the many aspects to Bonaire diving. There are several wrecks notably the Hilma Hooker a 235' freighter scuttled in 1984. It's located in the sandy area of a two reef system both reefs are well worth the dive by themselves they are literally teeming with fish and

huge soft corals. We saw two large red seahorses just off the bow and eagle rays regularly patrol the channel between the reefs.

With diving available 24 hours a day we found ourselves becoming night diving addicts. Jumping in from the house dock provided outstanding sights including Charley the Tarpon (or one of his many cousins) that will guide you on your night dives. Tips are expected and consist of casting your light upon Charley's dinner. In exchange you have a 6'+ guardian fish for an escort. You can expect to see lots of eels on every dive but at night they really come out in droves.

No trip to Bonaire is complete without the World Famous Town Pier night dive. Dive masters lead you thru a maze of coral encrusted pilings to see the rich collection of macro sea life making it a photographer's nirvana. Some of the residents include seahorses, spotted drums of all sizes, weird crabs, sleeping turtles, orange cup corals exploding with color and tiny creatures not found in the Fish Id books yet.

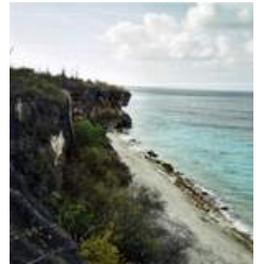
With all of the great diving it's easy to forget to surface. When you do dry off there are superb places to eat with colorful locals around to make things even more interesting. Many restaurants offer free slideshows with guest speakers each night of the week. On one surface interval we stopped for an ice cream and found the famous Capt. Don holding court out front. Capt. Don is responsible for bringing diving and later the marine park to Bonaire. Pick up his book to learn more about his exploits of pioneering diving on Bonaire in the 60's "guaranteed to be 85% true"!

When your final day arrives a trip to the mangroves is a sure fire way to perk up the departing diver. Drive past the mountainous salt pyramids and pink flamingos to Lac Bay where Bonaire's mangroves are the nursery that provides the rich diversity on the reefs. A Snorkel of the mangrove provides a peek into the early stages of a fish's life. Protected between the roots of the mangrove trees

are inch long barracuda darting about and other juvenile fish that look much different than they will when mature on the reef. Along the bottom of the bay near the mangrove upside down jelly fish lay with their bottoms facing up to catch light in the shallows.

There is diving to draw the interest every level of diver from newly certified to the most advanced. Bonaire also provides an ideal location to use Digital Photography, Fish ID, and Nitrox diving among other specialties.

See you in diver's paradise!



~Rich

ASIDE FROM SHORE DIVING WHAT REALLY PUTS BONAIRE ON THE MAP IS THE VARIETY AND ABUNDANCE OF FISH OF EVERY TYPE.



Please visit our website. We do our best to keep it up to date. Let us know what you think about the site and the newsletter. An important part of our success has been the friendships developed among customers and staff. That's part of why we dive.

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## CD Corner — Time is Flying

It really does seem like yesterday that the corporate world gave me an ultimatum that I had to move to Atlanta or find something new to do. I spent countless hours looking for a job. For those of you who remember what was happening in the job market in Spring of 2001 then you can understand. I don't regret not moving (except that Karen, Keith and Rachael Smith live there now—Jeremy too) as I dress for work each morning in shorts and mostly flip flops. Aah the life! Then reality set in after 9/11 and we had to turn things up a notch to continue to be successful. We continued what we do best within the family and persevered—we even grew when that wasn't the industry norm. Then Mike Rowe pushed me out of the nest and said go be a Course Director. I can't believe it is coming up on two years for that and I have had success in each of the Instructor exams so far (11 so far). Not too bad for a rookie.

We are well on the way to having the credentials of a Career Development Center. That means crem-de-la-crem within the PADI system. We already hold the awesome honor of being the only

National Geographic IDC in North Texas. Then become a CDC, we need 2 course directors and several career based programs in place that are offered in conjunction with each instructor exam. We are working hard on that aspect.

We have secured some aquatic center contracts around town that our Divemasters are working on there is a glimpse of one of the programs. We have plenty more to conquer.

With a fantastic staff in place, 19 divemaster candidates on the board, and a looming IDC, we are soaring to places we never thought we could go.

Stay tuned and jump on board our fast moving train, uh boat I mean.

~ Patti



## Creature Feature — Grouper



Goliath



Nassau



Black

Okay, we've all seen these guys whether we are shallow or deep. We know they are grouper but often we can't tell which ones they are—especially if the light is acting strange.

Let's start with the big guy on the top of the list. He has been known as a "Jew Fish" forever but to be politically correct we call them Goliath Grouper. They can grow to be 8 feet long and can be found at depths up to 100 feet. How is that for narcosis to see an 8 foot grouper with a mouth the size of a VW bug. Most of the ones we see are around 4 or so feet but still have large mouths.

Next in line is the Nassau Grouper. He can grow as large as 4 feet which is also still intimidating. He has pretty soft colorings of grey and brown unlike his big brother who looks rough and scaly. We see lots of these guys under overhangs on mid-deep reefs in Cozumel.

Last but not least is the Black Grouper. Given the right light and size, he is often mistaken for other family members. That really isn't fair to those of us who are trying to learn Fish ID for our specialty. Most of the time very dark in markings but make him really pale with fin tips dark and there he is.

All of these family members can be found in Florida, Bahamas, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico as far north as Bermuda to Massachusetts, and south to Brazil. The big boy is reclusive and tends to hide in case, wrecks and under ledges. Consider yourself lucky to feast your eyes on a once common occurrence on dives.

Most of these guys are shy and will simply move out of your way. Not knowing if they can eat a VW makes me not challenge them that is for sure.

~ Rich