

I LOST MY LITTLE BLACK SOCK, BOO HOO

By Bill Levine – a long time member of the SF Reef Divers and Norm's Nemesis

Hold the presses, Keith (a fellow Sacramentan) and I have survived each other for another two weeks of cave diving in Florida. Yes, we did get run over by a hurricane, or maybe it was a tropical depression. I guess when a hurricane doesn't take Valium, it becomes a tropical depression, right?

We spent the first week of our trip in the Panhandle area of Florida. Most of the better caves are located under a lake about 60 miles west of Tallahassee. This is partially a natural lake caused by discharge of 4 or 5 large magnitude springs, but it has also been dammed to maintain a consistent shoreline for construction. We rented a bass fishing pontoon boat for five days so as to get to all the better springs under this lake (about 4.5 miles long by about ¾ mile wide) plus to give us a floating platform to suit up from and dive from, and of course, to hold our lunch for us. I won't bore you with the diving other than it was dark, darker, and darkest. We dove solo and with up to 4 tanks each. Long dives, long decos, long time frames between meals!!!! Although I have been told that you can eat oranges while on a deco hang. Big deal, but if you could eat some ribs or pizza, then you would have something!

Every afternoon we would be hit by a thunderstorm. Keith and I, both being from the Sacramento area, find these immensely enjoyable. However, during one of these events, the lightning strikes were right on top of us. We were sitting in a lake on a metal boat wondering if this was the most dangerous part of the trip. It turned into a

full-blown ten-minute squall. It was all we could do to tie ourselves to the boat and keep most of the gear on board. We lost all our towels and Keith lost a sock. Not a neoprene-latex type sock, just a ratty old black sock that he bought in 1970 and wears under his booties. I can't remember the last time I saw a grown man cry. Since the gasoline was supplied for the rented *SS Minnow*, we spent the later afternoon of each day combing up and down the lake looking for his sock, and asking people on passing watercraft if they had seen it. He even asked back at the place we rented the boat and the dive shop where we got our tanks.



Keith crying on the *SS Minnow*

We next traveled halfway across the northern portion of the state, arriving near Gainesville, to attend the

annual meeting of the Cave Diving Section of the National speleological society. The evening before the meeting was a social (euphemism for hot dogs and beer.) We got together with some old friends, had some beer, had some more beer, had a little more beer, etc. We had a few discussions on mutual acquaintances that died over the past year. Bummer.

The next day was a full day of lectures on "What If" scenarios. None of the scenarios dealt with the issue "what if I am too hungry to spend time on a deco hang?" That was a major misstep on their part. But guess what Keith started asking people? Need I say it? We both won lots of t-shirts and talked with manufacturing reps while getting some free stuff from Dive Rite.

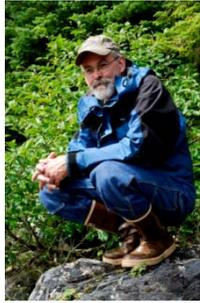
Then we hooked up with two friends from New York and Oregon for the next week of diving in the Gainesville area. We stayed together near the Suwannee River. We would have breakfast

Continued on page 6

REEFER'S RAP

| JANUARY | FEBRUARY | MARCH |
|--|---|---|
| <p>14 - Sanctuary Dive Boat - K Dock - 08:30</p> <p>18 - Movable Feast - Homeroom - in Oakland</p> | <p>15 - Movable Feast - Greenburger's in San Francisco</p> | <p>7 - 11 - Cozumel, Mexico</p> <p>21 - Movable Feast - Pi Bar in San Francisco</p> |
| APRIL | MAY | JUNE |
| <p>01 - Abalone Opener - ???</p> <p>14 - Sanctuary Dive Boat - K Dock - 07:30</p> <p>18 - Movable Feast – Steelhead Brewery in Burlingame</p> | <p>12 – 13 Dive Show - Santa Clara Convention Center</p> <p>12 - Sanctuary Dive Boat - K Dock - 07:30</p> <p>16 - Movable Feast – Chabaa Thai Cuisine</p> | <p>04 - Scuba Show - Long Beach - scubashow.com</p> <p>09 - Sanctuary Dive Boat - K Dock - 07:30</p> <p>20 - Movable Feast - Check our Yahoo Site for Location</p> <p>TBD - Abalone Closer</p> |
| JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER |
| <p>14 - Sanctuary Dive Boat - K Dock - 07:30</p> <p>18 - Movable Feast - Check our Yahoo Site for Location</p> | <p>TBD - Abalone Opener</p> <p>12-14 - Channel Islands - Jim Vallario - 415.566.0784</p> <p>18 - Movable Feast - Check our Yahoo Site for Location</p> | <p>08 - Sanctuary Dive Boat - K Dock - 07:30</p> <p>19 - Movable Feast - Check our Yahoo Site for Location</p> <p>24 – Colorado Dive Show - Denver – divechronicles.com</p> |
| OCTOBER | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER |
| <p>13 - Sanctuary Dive Boat - K Dock - 07:30</p> <p>17 - Movable Feast - Check our Yahoo Site for Location</p> <p>22 - UK Dive Show - Birmingham - diveshows.uk.com</p> | <p>21 - Movable Feast - Check our Yahoo Site for Location</p> <p>TBD - Abalone Closer</p> | <p>19 - Movable Feast - Check our Yahoo Site for Location</p> |

STAMMTISCH



By Pierre
Hurter

In our
ongoing
pursuit of
worthwhile
places to eat
and drink we
found
ourselves at

Heaven's Dog on Mission Street next to the new Federal Building in the SOMA Grand Hotel. That they describe themselves as serving Chinese food and pre-prohibition drinks and are located in a hotel calling itself "Grand" goes a long way in describing how much this neighborhood is changing. I'm still not wandering around at night, but at least there are food choices other than liquor store microwaved burritos.

What caught my attention was the e-mail received from Open Table a few days later asking me to rate our dining experience. One of the categories was "Fit for Foodies" ... what the heck does that mean? Fellow diners left feedback along the lines of "Incredibly creative menu" "Exceeded our expectations", "Evoked surprise" and perhaps the most rousing endorsement "Would come back".

Heaven's Dog was good by the way, great cocktails, try the Wall Street, composed of Old Bardstown Bourbon, Della Christina Nocino, Punte Mes, Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur, Winter Bitters or a None but the Brave, Delord Armagnac, Lemon Juice, Alspice Dram, Ginger. I'll add that Death in the Gulf Stream and Oaxacan Firing Squad sounded intriguing as well, but you can only taste so

many drinks before objectivity begins to taper off faster than the ice cubes are melting in your empty glass.

Back to "Fit for Foodies", what's the criterion? I've been to In-N-Out Burgers more than half a dozen times; does that mean they are in that exalted category? Dr. Johnson, poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer once opined on the topic of food a subject of subsistence, manners, pleasures and diversions "Some people have a foolish way of not minding, or pretending not to mind, what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously, and very carefully; for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly, will hardly mind anything else."

Food culture is something you hear a lot about lately, just a few Sundays ago I was reading about great moments in cheese technology, extolling the progress we've made as we've progressed from Velveeta, first introduced in 1918, to the Cheez Whiz of the early 50s defined by the Urban Dictionary as artificial cheese one chemical away from being saran wrap. There are several subsidiary definitions, most of them curiously enough with sexual connotations, but I'll leave you to pursue those on your own. Spray Cheese, my personal favorite, and Kraft Singles, the individual wrapped slices of homogenous yellow goodness. That's one extreme of the experience, and I'll admit to a weakness for certain manufactured, processed and thoroughly industrialized food products, so what!



It's worth noting that spray cheese, or Easy Cheese, isn't really shot from an aerosol can, that would

require that the cheese be combined with a propellant to vaporize when sprayed. The Easy Cheese can contains a piston which squeezes the cheese out as a solid blob when you push the nozzle. That's what that little rubber plug on the bottom of the can is for, to fill the can with propellant. The can technology was developed in 1975 by Jean Hardt, a Swiss engineer working for Swiss Aluminium Ltd. Another gift to mankind brought to you by the Swiss. It's not just about chocolate and the pocket knives, there is so much more.

The other end of the spectrum is when you are accosted by "artisanal" or my current favorite "house made". What exactly does that mean? I'm all for "House made" ketchup featuring free range tomatoes and the finest of organic ingredients, but isn't ketchup a processed food? The same can be said for many of the things I love to eat and drink. A good scotch or a rye whiskey certainly has traveled a long road from the rye swaying in the field. Look at the humble grape, turned to a liquid fit for sacramental purposes.

The great thing about living in the Bay Area and particularly San Francisco is that I can push past the old paradigm that told me I can have food that is fast and good, but not cheap, or fast and cheap, but not good. I can

Continued on page 4

Stammtisch from page 3

have it all, on that note I'm going to run downstairs and pick up a chicken *banh mi* with a little extra *nouc cham*, from the food cart next to my office. They're delicious and at only \$3.50 for a lunch in the heart of the financial district hard to beat.



Food has always been on the forefront of change in America. Our early food traditions came largely from the English, Scottish and Irish protestant immigrants, boiled, baked and bland and often taken as a sign of religious piety, in contrast with fancy or seasoned foods, surely a form of sensual indulgence of the worst sort. In the south you had a wonderful collision of African, English, French, Spanish and indigenous foods. One thing we have always had in common was an abundance of meat and alcohol. By the early nineteenth century adult men were drinking more than 7 gallons of hard spirits a year.

The influx of large numbers of German immigrants brought marinated meats, beer, sausages and of course beer often associated with celebrations, the beginning of the picnic. To this day coleslaw, hot dogs, donuts and hamburgers feature mightily in many American diets.

The early twentieth century brought with it large numbers of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. At about the same time as muck racking

journalists started to take a look at the burgeoning industrialization of the food supply, the beginnings of food as a cultural battleground, the need to "Americanize" and show the progress you were making through the foods you ate started to make an appearance..

To me the dark ages of food coincided with a period when food was becoming ever cheaper and more available to everyone. Kindly looking women in lab coats touting the virtues of highly processed meals neatly packed in aluminum trays that carefully segregated your Salisbury Steak from your corn and peas and could be popped into the oven and plunked onto TV trays without Mom having to spend the day slaving away in the kitchen over a hot stove, who could possibly object to that?



The culture wars around food are back and with a vengeance. As has often been the case, the food we eat can mean many things, it can be a way to show your disdain of the corporate industrialization of food, insisting on free range, grass feed and locally sourced. Or maybe, as a signifier of status, real or imagined, as when you casually mention that you regularly dine at (fill in the blank) and are on almost intimate terms with both the *maitre d'hôtel*, insuring a "good" table as well as the equally important *sommelier*, whose ministrations can help take the sting out of the bill.

Well, I'll leave the culture battles to someone else, who has time? I'd rather be at Wise Sons Jewish Deli on 24th in the Mission trying to decide between a Rueben, Pastrami or Roast Beef on rye with a side of chopped liver and a plate of pickled vegetables and a smoked trout salad washed down with an egg cream soda... and what will you be having?

Closer to a diving related topic, the father of a work colleague recently passed away. He had served in the Coast Guard and been an avid diver. In going through his father's things, Bill found a bag that held his dad's gear, "I don't know what's in it, but if you would be interested ... " I'm a curious person and finding things that have been tucked away in a shed or garage for a long time always has a special appeal to me. Like the stash of newspapers I once found, the front page featuring the curious Japs Bomb Pearl Harbor, Declare War on U.S. and Britain" or "Lindbergh Baby Found Dead" the color photographs displaying that surreal hand tinted look of the times, who could resist?

The bag was a big, ugly, black square shape with an outer sheath of vulcanized rubber and weighed a ton. There were straps everywhere, O.D. green as befitted its military heritage. It had clearly spent the last few years in a garage; it had that strange old rubber smell and when I started to undo the buckles, feed pellets rolled out. Inside was an old surf mat, carefully patched in more than a few places, a weight belt, no wonder it was so heavy, a collection of fins, snorkels, a cast aluminum "bug" gage,

Continued on page 5

Stammtisch from page 4

everything you needed to patch a wetsuit and there on the bottom of the bag, an Aqualung DA regulator looking remarkably pristine, the hoses still flexible though checkered and the metal body showing light pitting, the "Made in France" sticker still legible.



It was like opening up a time capsule. The bag was an early version of the dry bags they sell at REI, but works much the same way, you roll up a sleeve and then strap it closed. Every item I picked up reminded me of growing up in Southern California and spending time at the beach when not watching Mike Nelson in Sea Hunt. The weight belt had a White Stag label on it, a company that along with the Sportways dive knife were big vendors for dive gear in the early 60's and 70's and all located in southern California. The weights are all stamped Donnell St. Joe Michigan, and have an interesting "quick" change series of slots molded in. You would thread the belt through the slots and then squeeze the slots closed, probably with a hammer or two by four. The masks, one a *Super Pinocchio Brevetolo Cresi Sub*

made in Italy the other an *Espadon Compensator* made in France, even the fins, stubby Italian *Cressi Rondine's* evoked a time when SCUBA was an exotic pastime. The Aqualung DA regulator was, according to one of the vintage scuba gear websites I visited, manufactured between 1960 and 1961. Parts are available and working through Ken and Franko I may have a lead on a fellow diver who likes to work on and dive vintage gear, I see a tune-up and new hoses in the future. Mike Nelson, move over.

If you saw this car cruising down the road you were not hallucinating, the amphibious car, dubbed Project Sea Lion is available at Fantasy Junction a car dealer in Emeryville which deals in some very interesting cars. The Sea Lion's claim to fame is that it can do 125 miles an hour on land and 45 miles an hour in the water. Originally built to beat some sort of record or another it's now available for tooling around Lake Merritt or maybe Point Lobos and at \$295,000 who could resist? I'm always half toying with the idea of getting a dive boat, this way I wouldn't need to tow it.

Finally this sad news, the National Ocean Service crushed my hopes and dreams that mermaids just might be real. They went so far as to update their website with a devastating statement reading, "No evidence of aquatic human aquatic humanoids has ever been found."

And here I thought that anything I saw on TV, particularly on a show like MSNBC's Animal Planet "Mermaids: The Body Found." Had to have some kernel of truth imbedded in the story line. Thank God they have left the

Merman alone; by Alfred Lord Tennyson

*Who would be
A merman bold,
Sitting alone,
Singing alone
Under the sea,
With a crown of gold,
On a throne?*

*I would be a merman bold,
I would sit and sing the whole of
the day;
I would fill the sea-halls with a
voice of power;
But at night I would roam
abroad and play
With the mermaids in and out of
the rocks,
Dressing their hair with the
white sea-flower;
And holding them back by their
flowing locks
I would kiss them often under the
sea,
And kiss them again till they
kiss'd me
Laughingly, laughingly;
And then we would wander
away, away
To the pale-green sea-groves
straight and high,
Chasing each other merrily.*

*There would be neither moon nor
star;
But the wave would make music
above us afar –
Low thunder and light in the
magic night –
Neither moon nor star.
We would call aloud in the
dreamy dells,
Call to each other and whoop
and cry
All night, merrily, merrily;
They would pelt me with starry
spangles and shells,
Laughing and clapping their
hands between,
All night, merrily, merrily:
But I would throw to them back
in mine*

Continued on page 6

Stammtisch from page 5

*Turkis and agate and almondine:
Then leaping out upon them
unseen
I would kiss them often under the
sea,
And kiss them again till they
kiss'd me
Laughingly, laughingly.
Oh! what a happy life were mine
Under the hollow-hung ocean
green!
Soft are the moss-beds under the
sea;
We would live merrily, merrily.*



That's it for this month. We have a dive scheduled for the 14th aboard the Sanctuary, more on that in the next edition. To end on a food and drink related quote;

There is no such thing as bad whiskey. Some whiskeys just happen to be better than others. But a man shouldn't fool with booze until he's fifty; then he's a damn fool if he doesn't. – William Faulkner



Little Black Sock from page 1

together, then those two would sometimes dive another less “intriguing” cave while Keith and I would do a little more “interesting” type staged bottle, long deco hang, solo cave dive. Then we would meet for dinner. The last part of the week, the guy from Oregon left so the guy from

New York joined Keith and I until he developed some back issues, so Keith and I continued doing our own thing. During the first part of this week, we got run over by the hurricane, or semi-hurricane. I think it was named Hurricane Bluto.

During the Bluto incident we figured the safest place was underwater in a cave. And you know what, we were not alone in our thinking. The cave we decided to go to was in a county park. We got there, hardly able to see out the car windows, and found about six other cave divers thinking the same thing. We all got in our wetsuits and dry suits first thing. You had to kind of lay over the tank valves to hook up the DIN connections to avoid getting water in the first stages. Even in the car, the rain was blowing sideways. The diving was fine, but when you surfaced, you could hardly tell the interface between the spring surface and the air. The regulator stayed in your mouth. I would say it was good for washing off the gear, but we were in fresh water already.



Hurricane diving, a new specialty from your friends at PADI

The next day was one of the greatest dives of my life. We decided to go back to the same cave as we knew the roads were still open and the flow in this cave was not going crazy. However, we failed to remember that there is an open quarry

nearby that has direct flow into this cave system. The visibility had gone to mud.

Basically, the same group that was there yesterday was there today. They realized what they were in for but at least wanted to try. Almost all of us went in together except for Keith, who is always 30 to 60 minutes behind everyone else. I had four tanks with me so I was planning on doing some DIVING. We all got into the front of the cave, when two of the guys turned. One guy put in a line and advanced, along with his buddy and two other guys. About 150 feet into the cave becomes a small crawl-swim through that is about 100 feet long. The visibility at this point went from a muddy 3 to 4 feet, to a muddy 3 inches. Everybody turned except me (and Keith who was still in the parking lot.) One of the guys who bailed left a temporary line in for me, as even though this is the entrance portion of the cave, you could not see any light. I swam myself and all my tanks through the long crawl and the visibility got even worse. I could see my gauges only if I held them almost touching my face mask. There are many lines in this system that are left in place and I knew by feel, depth, and direction, which goes where. I left my tanks off along the way as they got low. But I tied them to the lines so I would be able to find them on the way out. I left markers and directional arrows on various lines throughout the system as everything was done by feel and there was no room for any mistakes, no matter how small. I finally got way back into the system after crawling through some other tight areas.

Sometimes lines are in real small

Continued on page 7

Little Black Sock from page 6

areas and if you have to be touching the line since you can't see it, you have to swim through some really nasty grabbing spots, all by feel. You could not get off the line and hope to ever find it again without some hair-raising moments in-between. After about one hour I realized what part of the cave I was in simply as the depth reading hit 105. It is only about five feet of water above me, then about 85 feet of rock, then about 15 more feet of the Suwannee River above that. My deco was way past anything I wanted to deal with and I was still heading in. I could not see the beautiful big room I had just entered. Since I haven't figured out that ribs and pizza thing yet, I decided to turn. I was able to find all my tanks on the way out, I kind of knew the general areas by depth and how long it takes to swim. But one thing worried me, I had a very long deco and my O2 bottle was near the entrance to the cave, which was now completely blacked out. I had not tied it to a line due to some logistics problems. Without the O2, I am sure I had enough gas on me for the long deco but the O2 cuts it roughly in half. Let's not forget the ribs and pizza thing. I followed that last temporary line out of the cave, and even though I was near the entrance, I could not even see where the mud got lighter, the visibility had gotten worse. I did my twenty foot deco stop with no problem. I would switch to O2 on my ten-foot stop. Now I had to find it. I wear two technical deco meters on all cave dives. However, they read about a 6-inch difference. I knew that when they were both reading 18 feet, three feet to the right I had wedged in my O2 bottle. I hit 18 feet on both meters, felt to my right, and found it.

When I had surfaced I was surprised to not see Keith. I figured, if he was in the cave, I would have run across one of his tanks, or him. I found out later that he had gone in way after me but had taken a different route, there are many routes in this cave system. We missed each other plus we dropped out tanks in different passages.

The hardest part of this dive was keeping the regulator in my mouth as I kept on wanting to yell "I LOVE THIS SHIT!!!!!!" I really do! One of my greatest dives! I don't think Keith was as thrilled by it as I was, but he enjoyed it too. Those other dry suit wearing weenie cave divers probably went right home and wet their beds. The county closed the cave to cave divers after Keith got out.

I'll leave the lights on for you.



AH, EVEN MORE ESKIMO COOKING

by Ken Gwin

While we might be content with our local fare, what with all trendy vegetables and all, let's not forget those to our north that live without a sprig of arugula.

Life can be tough sometime for the hunter/gatherer crowd. Of course, there was that recent story of one of our SF Giants'

players taking a few days off during the All Star break to go fishing in Lake Tahoe with his son and a fellow teammate.

Apparently, they were up at the break of dawn and easily landed an eight pound trout soon after. Not too bad.

The interviewers on the radio wanted to know if this was a "catch and release" thing or did they cook him up and eat him?

The player explained that the chef at this resort offered to prepare and cook the fish. It was something they were happy to do as part of their hospitality service. (I also have the feeling this may also have something to do with leaving things up to the experts.)

He reports that the chef served them breaded fillets with a splash of lemon. But even with this perfection, the player confessed that additional adjustments were needed, something easily achieved with an item he always carried with him—a pocket flask of Cholula.

I prefer the green capped sauce myself.

Anyway, I would think this snappy sauce would be difficult to find in Alaska in 1952, back when our little cookbook was written. So, it probably serves as an example of how pampered we are in our modern times and what it must have been like in those "good old days."

So, for this round of adventures in Eskimo cooking, again from the Eskimo Cookbook prepared

Continued on page 8

Eskimo Cooking from page 7

by the students of Shishmaref Day School, we will focus on simple main courses, those staple items one might find, common in the every day.

Wilfred Obruk offers one of his favorites—and one of mine—rabbits.

“Take off fur from rabbits and clean them. Cut them up and wash. Put into cooking pot, adding plenty of water, and salt to taste. Boil about half an hour.”

Seems simple enough.

Maybe something a little more exotic. Bert Tocktoo offers his recipe for squirrel.

“Take fur off from squirrels and take out the small intestines. Clean. Put squirrels in cooking pot. Add salt as much as you want. Let them boil until done.”

Again, seems simple enough.

Maybe we could try something even a little more exotic, perhaps something not found on the regular menu.

Parmigan small intestines by Alma Nayokpuk might just fill the bill.

“Cook the small intestines about 5 seconds in

boiling water. Old men and women always want to eat them.”

Wow.

Martha Stewart and all those chefs on TV have made our lives so much more complicated.



JULY’S BLAST FROM THE PAST

Once again *You are There*, this time its July 1973 and there was no article from the series, *Far Under the Cold Kelp*.

This newsletter will have no *Far Under the Cold Kelp* simply because the man in the black rubber suit is still bouncing in and out of hospitals. Emmett is now in St. Joseph’s (room 200) with a kidney stone. The nurses will never “feel” the same. Any visits or cards I am sure will be appreciated, as they were very much so two weeks ago.

Spindrift

The Sea Shadow (IX-529) the world’s first Stealth Ship is heading for the scrap yard

Some of you may have seen the Sea Shadow a few years ago during Fleet Week. The stealth vessel was built by Lockheed at their Redwood City facility; hidden inside the Huges Mining Barge (HMB-1) The ship was the brainchild of the Defense Advanced Research Agency (DARPA), the U.S. Navy and Lockheed.



The HMB-1 has its own unique history. The barge was originally built in 1973 as part of Project Azorian (a subset of Project Jennifer), a top-secret effort by the Central Intelligence Agency to salvage the remains of a Soviet submarine, the K-129 from the ocean floor near Hawaii. The HMB-1 was designed to be submerged under the Glomar Explorer (which was also in Suisun for a time) to bring the submarine to the surface and to conceal the wreck from prying eyes from view, but that's another story.

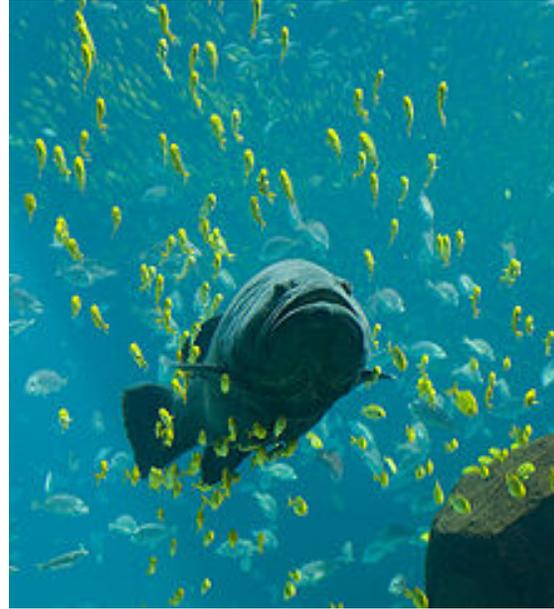


Though sometimes referred to as the USS Sea Shadow, she was never commissioned as a U.S. Navy ship. The Sea Shadow along with the Hughes Mining Barge have been in Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet in Benicia since 2006. The Navy's been looking for a buyer or museum for the ship with no luck.

So if you have a \$10,000 down payment you could be the next owner of what in its day was a \$195 million dollar ship. Just remember, Tomorrow Never Dies

Cameron Diaz has a close encounter with a "Like Really Big Grouper"

It seems that Cameron Diaz is a fellow diver. Apparently, during a recent vacation in Cozumel the There's Something About Mary actress had an encounter with an angry Grouper while scuba diving with friends.



During an appearance on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, she recalled, "It was probably the size of a Volkswagen Bug. And he's down there and he has these big old lips and somebody said, "Oh you should pet him."

"I'm rubbing its lip and I'm like, 'Oh my God, this is amazing!' I'm looking into its eyes, we're having this whole moment and all of a sudden it (inhaled) and I go (flying inside)... The only thing that stopped me was literally my neck.

"I'm like inside this fish, and I'm looking at him, he's looking at me and I'm like, 'What's gonna happen here?' And he... (spit me out) and I go flying backwards. And I have, like, a (oxygen) tank on and everything and I'm, like, rolling backwards in the water. So that was really good times."

Lawsuit blames BP's Gulf pollution for divers' injuries, suicides

David Hogan a commercial diver who worked in the Gulf of Mexico following the BP disaster has filed a lawsuit blaming his health problems and two of his colleagues' suicides on the oil and chemical dispersants used to break up the slick.

He has been diagnosed as suffering from neurotoxicity related to chronic and cumulative exposure to chemical and heavy metals associated with the Gulf oil spill.



Hogan worked for Specialty Offshore, which contracted with oil and gas companies operating in the Gulf of Mexico to perform jobs including repairing and maintaining oil and gas lines.

The divers worked for several weeks in heavily contaminated water. One diver experienced health problems while the work was underway, and eventually the entire dive team developed health problems. Two of the divers have since committed suicide, according to the lawsuit.

The companies named in Hogan's suit are BP, Halliburton and Transocean, which were involved in the failed Deepwater Horizon well; Nalco, the manufacturer of the Corexit chemical dispersants used on the BP spill; and Specialty Offshore, Conoco Phillips, Xplore Oil and Gas and Stuyvesant Dredging, for whom Hogan did diving work.

Shark attacks teenage paddle-boarder off Catalina Island

A young paddle boarder had a close encounter with jaws. The 15-year-old girl was paddle-boarding off the coast of Santa Catalina Island this weekend, when a shark decided he'd take a nibble; fortunately her board was the only casualty.

The girl was with other paddle-boarders some 200 yards from shore in a remote area of the island about a mile from the Avalon area when a shark bit her paddle-board several times Sunday morning.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department said that shark encounters are extremely rare in the area, but they will be patrolling the area with lifeguard rescue boats to keep watch for other sharks.

Chinese set diving record



Chinese scientists have taken the Jiaolong a manned submersible named after a mythical sea dragon to a depth of 23,015. That contrasts with the American manned submersible, Alvin, which is currently capable of 14,764 feet.

Department of Fish and Game and Orange County Bust MPA Violator



A Riverside County man was fined \$20,000 and sentenced to a week in jail for poaching lobsters inside a marine protected area. This marks the first resource crime conviction since the MPA's in Southern California went into effect on January, 1 of this year.

Marbel Para, of Romoland was found to be in possession of 47 spiny lobsters of which all but five were undersize. In addition to the fine, Para was sentenced to three years probation, forfeiture of his SCUBA equipment and give a "stay away" order from the Laguna Beach State Marine Preserve



Come and join Us!



San Francisco Reef Divers (SFRD)

\$25

Please make checks payable to "San Francisco Reef Divers"
and mail to:

Pierre Hurter, SFRD Treasurer, 515 Diamond Street, San
Francisco, CA 94114

We encourage you to also support the other organizations listed



Central California Council of Diving Clubs (CenCal)

\$15

<http://www.cencal.org/join.aspx>



Sonoma County Abalone Network (SCAN)

\$10

<http://www.abalonenetwork.org/donate>



SINCE JANUARY 1ST 1973

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO REEF DIVERS (SFRD):

The *Reef Diver Times* is the official newsletter of the San Francisco Reef Divers, a not for profit community organization dedicated to safe sport diving and the preservation of our ocean resources. Membership is \$25 annually, dues payable to "SFRD". The General Meeting is held the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Location is announced one week prior to the meeting. Please check our yahoo site for details <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sfreefdivers/> We meet at 7:00pm for socializing, drinks, food and club business. For more information, visit <http://www.sfreefdivers.org/>.

SAN FRANCISCO REEF DIVERS
Reef Diver Times
C/O Gerda Hurter
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