



Election 2001!

Well the end of the 20th Century is in sight, and 2001 beckons, along with a new slate of Club officers. Positions to be selected by democratic vote at our January 2001 meeting include President, Vice President, Newsletter Editor, Treasurer, and Membership Director. At our November meeting you can indicate your interest by placing your name in nomination. 60 days of politicking should be enough! Rumor has it that there are already new Reef Divers who have hinted that they might be inclined to seek and accept the positions of President, Newsletter Editor and Treasurer from the present incumbents, so make your interests known early.

It has been a good year for the San Francisco Reef Divers!

Our new meeting place in the Presidio has been a great success, with its excellent parking, location and high quality space. Lets hope our lease can be extended for another year.

We increased our use of the Internet for internal club communications but also as a way of introducing our organization to new divers and prospective members. We even have our own web site and domain name!

Our membership numbers and financial security has never been better. (Editor's note: at least until I send my bill!)

The Reef Divers have or will have had in 2000 four successful Charter Dive Boat trips this year on the Monterey Express, The Cypress Point and The Peace, several well attended dive and campout weekends at Russian Gulch State Park and Gualala Regional Park, a successful abalone luncheon fundraiser, and done lots of beach diving in Monterey, Pt Lobos and The North Coast. Plus there is more to come!

Most importantly it has been a safe year of diving at all club events, although one of our members suffered from a severe case of decompression illness on an independent dive that should never have been attempted. I am however happy to report that he has made a strong recovery, and while some permanent injury may remain, he has been able to return to limited diving. So please everyone be careful and use good judgement when planning and executing your dives.

And let's see that 2001 is an even better year for our club!

--Curt Degler

The Reef Rap

October 17th- October General Meeting, featuring a Member Swap/Sale.

October 21st- Day trip of Kayaking on the Petaluma River in Sonoma. Bill Palmer and Ann Gilmore are the leaders for this event. (415) 664-6618. Check Page 3 for detailed information.

October 28th - Day trip of Diving to Cemetery Reef in Sonoma. Robert Johnson leads. (415) 337-8430
More information on Page 3.

October - Yucatan: Due to poor weather, the trip to Akumal has been postponed to a later date.

November 4th - Annual Salmon drift dive at Nimbus Dam. Frank King coordinates. (650) 368-1921.

November 21st - November General Meeting

December 19th - December General Meeting

Plan an Event! Summer is over, but we all know that is just the beginning of our prime diving season! Talk to Curtis or me to schedule and publicize it.

Join the E-mail Discussion site! The club forum on egroups is getting good use now. In addition to reminders of upcoming planned events, members have used it to put together short notice dive trips. You can join it at <http://www.egroups.com/group/sfreedivers>. If you have any questions about how to join or use his forum, e-mail Curt Degler at cdegler@best.com.

Be a Buddy! If you are thinking about going diving on a date when no club activities are planned, you can always call up some people and see if others are up for water. If there are errors in your entry, please contact Loretta at 415-305-7517 or by email at lorettalowe@earthlink.net.

Be an Author/Photographer! I need your story reports on club events! I also welcome UW photos that had good contrast (for B&W printing). If you travel away for diving, we also want to hear about your experiences. Details for submission are on the back page. Please don't send Word documents! Text only please- there are too many silly viruses attached to MS documents.

GARAGE SALE!

October Meeting Entertainment:

Please make note that the entertainment for Tuesday 10/17/00 will be an Opportunity to Swap or Sell Used Diving Gear with other Club members, although non-diving gear can also be brought into the exchange if desired. If it's sitting in your closet and you don't really think of it as backup gear, why not put it back into circulation!?! (But don't mistake this for the traditional White Shark gift ritual for Christmas!)

In addition we need volunteers to help paint and otherwise fix up the Presidio Alliance building and our meeting place in particular. The work will begin around 3PM(although late comers will certainly be welcomed) and will continue through the Club meeting and Dive Gear Swap and Exchange. Dinner and snacks will be provided to the volunteers. Curt Degler is the coordinator 707-570-0457
cdegler@best.com

Test your fate at *Cemetary Reef*

Explore Cemetary Reef, south of Stillwater Cove on the Sonoma Coast, on a pre-Halloween dive. On Saturday, October 28, 2000, we will set out from Stillwater Cove and paddle south about one mile to the reef, which is a house-sized (3 stories) rock about 1/4 mile off-shore. There are adjacent rocks that I have not explored, but have been described to me as similar to this one. It stands in 55' of water and comes to within 20' of the surface. This may sound like an advanced dive, but it welcomes beginning adventurers. It's too far to swim, so you need to beg, borrow, or rent a dive board for this trip.

Kayakers come along for the paddle and if you drop over the side, the top of the rock is covered with kelp and such for snorkelers. Free divers can explore the rim and sides as well as their own abilities and limits with a supportive group led by Robert. Let's meet, explore & dive.

Call me at 415/337-8430
Robert Johnson

Or a more leisurely paddle on the River...

Join Bill (Palmer) and me (Ann Gilmore) for a kayak paddle on the Petaluma River on Saturday, October 21st. Meet at 9:00am at Pappa's Greek Taverna, We will put in at 9:30am and paddle up to the city of Petaluma. There we can paddle around or check out the waterfront stores and alehouses. Around 11:45am we will paddle back to Pappa's, with the current, and lunch there about 1:30pm.

Suggestions of what to bring: sunscreen, dark glasses, a visor, a snack, water and consider bringing a change of clothes for lunch. Your kayak and gear, \$, booties, wet suit bottoms, you need your arms free to paddle but sitting in the wet can get cold. Remember, it probably will be warm but the wind or fog might come up, so bring a windbreaker and wear layers. Cycling or sailing gloves are nice but not necessary. Bring a length of line, "a painter," to tie your kayak up when we stop to eat/sightsee. You don't want to be up the river without a kayak! You can put extra clothes in a dry bag or securely in zip lock bags in a fanny pack and throw it in the tank well of the sit-on-top kayaks.

No kayak? Give Jim Vallario a call, I think he may have one or two you can borrow or know someone who does. Or rent one at California Canoe and Kayak or somewhere else. Hope to see you there! Call me if you're coming. Ann (415) 664-6618

Directions to Pappa's Greek Taverna 5688 Lakeville Road (707) 769-8545
Take Highway 101 north; exit on to Highway 37, Vallejo/Napa. Go 5 1/2 miles to Lakeville Road, at the stoplight; turn left on to Lakeville Road. Go 6 1/2 miles, after you clear the Eucalyptus grove you will see a red barn and a blue mobile home beyond it. The restaurant is there. Turn left into a large gravel parking lot. Lost? Not sure? Give 'em a call, Lana is very nice.

But if you want more adventure...

Frank King leads the annual trip out to the Central Valley for the annual drift downriver to greet the salmon. Jump in the water (bring your wetsuit!) and get up and personal with the five foot fish. Reefers meet at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery and can plan to be in the water for about 3 hours. Talk to Frank at the meeting or give him a call! (650) 368-1921 or fkk@leland.stanford.edu.

Lake Tahoe, dive, camp and play -- September 8 thru 10, 2000

Lake Tahoe has an average surface elevation of 6,225 feet above sea level. It is 22 miles long, 12 miles wide and has 72 miles of shoreline. The lake's greatest depth is 1,645 feet making it the third deepest lake in North America and the tenth deepest in the world. There are over 37 trillion gallons of water here. To put that in some sort of perspective, if you drained the lake, it would cover the state of California in 14 inches of water and with normal rainfall, take 14 years to refill.

That's the background for those of us who met at Lester Beach at D.L. Bliss State Park for a weekend of diving, camping and playing. Gerda and I drove up on Friday and spent the day exploring the area and getting settled into our campsite at D.L. Bliss State Park. Norm was right; the weekend after Labor Day, things start to slow down, the campgrounds aren't particularly crowded and the beach is busy, but not overflowing.

Saturday morning we wandered down to the beach, commandeered a table and waited to see who else would show up. While we waited for the rest of the crowd we struck up a conversation with the many Sacramento Sea Horses who were in attendance. As advertised, Norm pulled into the parking lot at 10:00 am along with Frank Matzkies. We waited for an hour to give any other Reef Divers a chance to catch up and join us, but we finally decided to suit up and head for Rubicon Point. This is when I discovered that my weight belt had not made the transition from my garage to the Blazer. There must be some reason that I made up a wallet sized laminated 'list of gear' card. Anyway, the Sea Horses came to the rescue with a loaner weight belt. We geared up and paddled the USS Rubber Ducky to Rubicon Point. The Rubicon Wall is marked by a spectacular granite cliff that rises two hundred feet above the lake. Below the surface, it drops off some eight hundred feet into an inky blue without bottom, the dive was spectacular. O.K., there were no pelagics, soft corals or sea bass, but the sheer majesty of the cliff face dropping off into the unknown was breathtaking. Along the way, silvery cascades of fingerlings came rushing down the cliffs like a living waterfall. In between the rocks, crayfish the size of lobsters winked at us as we swam by. We kept our dive to between fifty and sixty feet, the equivalent of sixty five to seventy eight feet at sea level, as we made a leisurely exploration of the wall.

Our dive lasted a little over half an hour with a leisurely stop around ten feet while we looked for crawdads and explored the spaces among the boulders. It was my first freshwater dive and I'm already looking forward to doing it again next year. Returning to the beach we spent a lazy afternoon swimming, tanning and bantering with the Sea Horses. Their parting gift was a plate of crawdads, boiled pink and ready to eat. I think this may have been Frank's first experience with crayfish. I don't think he appreciated my suggestion that he 'suck de little brains out'. Mudbugs: they're not just an acquired taste, they're an adventure.

Sunday, we all headed for Eagle Lake. A nice leisurely wander into the Desolation Wilderness, sort of a misleading name for such a beautiful piece of real estate. So that's how the weekend went: great company, good food, terrific weather and a dive that I can only describe in spiritual terms. So for those of you, who missed the dive, don't make the same mistake next year. For those who scoff at the spiritual, hey, you weren't there.

—pierre

My last 7 dives... bhushan mudbhary

Puerto Madryn, Argentina, May Something, 2000. What a place! Provided the perfect refuge to just hangout after days of being on the road in desolate parts of Patagonia. PM is also Patagonia, technically speaking. In fact it seemed most of Argentina is Patagonia for that matter. I wanted to dive, which in winter is logistically tough thing to do, since all dive shops close for the winter. Except one, a little outfit called ScubaDuba I think, run by a wonderful couple. They agreed to take me diving in the bay. So next day, in the morning I hooked up with them. They were actually excited to take me diving, one of me and three of them! It was as if I was a great excuse to do some out of season diving for them as well. We dove a modest wreck and a ledge. Saw salmon among other things. The lady tried out a dry suit for the first time. I helped her with the valves underwater every now and then. Surface time we chatted on the boat and had some snacks and soda. I told them about Monterey and how I actually missed being back amongst familiar friends and waters. I practiced my broken Spanish. So here I was a stranger amongst them, and yet I was maded to feel right at home. The money I paid for the privilege was so well spent. Like I said, divers are so darned friendly.

North Carolina, July Something, 2000. Too wimpy to dive the deep U boats with rental gear and unfamiliar buddies, I opted for something more modest, diving the 70ft ledges. I called around and the folks at Bottom Time Divers in Wilmington set up the dive for me. I rented equipment from them. They even went out of their way to accommodate me by coming up with mask, snorkel and fins for me which they do not rent. What diver would so up without? Me. The proprietor was an ex Special Services/Forces guy and he and I had such a good talk. He had been all over the world with the Army. An ex Navy seal came by to



La Paz Bull --Kathy Kennedy



--Kathy Kennedy

pick up tanks for his entire family while we talked. Seems like everyone in Wilmington has commando training in their background. We talked about Monterey, which he had dove. And he filled me in on what the ledge would be like etc.. He loved diving, and he loved to talk to divers. As I do. The dive turned out swell. The captain was an experienced diver. There were only four of us on his six pack boat. When one of us, a fresh water diver from Michigan, showed up without his weight belt, but with plenty of anxiety about salt water and the creatures lurking therein, we were all pretty nice to him. I even said, "if anything happens, can I have your dive watch?", just kidding. But he dove with us. The captain dove with us as well, and went spear fishing. The capn' and I ended up buddying with the Michigan fellow. Plenty of fish. In fact tornadoes of fish. Baracudas. Lots of tropical fish, due to the warm current. Divers are easy to get to know and basically have fun with.

Carmel River Beach, Early August 2000. I wanted to go diving. Of course, the Reef Divers were within calling distance at this point, but I was staying down in Scotts Valley, and the club dive was full. So, what does one do. I headed off to a diveshop in the neighbourhood. I serviced my equipment and found out that they were diving the next day. FinDig they called it. Basically the shop provided a divemaster to coordinate a dive outing once a month. So off we went to Carmel River Beach. Most of us had never met before, but as expected was no problem. We had two dim, cold and surgy dives. I was back in familiar waters, and as it turned out with friends.

Monastery Beach, Late August 2000. Now I was with Reef Divers again. So finding a dive buddy was a breeze. Mike, whom I had never met before, and I drove down to Pt.Lobos. After all I had bragged about how you could dive Pt.Lobos without a reservations on a week day. Boy was I wrong. At least this day, we were too late. Couldn't get in. So I spinned the whole thing and said, hey, what a great day to go diving in Monastery, which wasn't rough this day. It was Mike's first dive in that infamous beach. We stumbled, mainly owing to my navigation skills, but put in a dive. A challenging dive, but we lived and were happy that we did it. And Mike will still go diving with me. Divers never learn.

I dive because diving is fun. I like being underwater. I enjoy the fish and plants and the coral. But, people are a component too. Divers seem to have less than their share fair share of a..holes and jerks. But then, I wasn't on the Channel Island trip :)

Policy Reaffirmment for Point Lobos Diving

September 29th, 2000
All Point Lobos Divers

I am writing this letter in response to some problems we have been having with the dive reservation system at Point Lobos. We set up this reservation system in October 1995 as a response to the problems divers were having with the Mistix reservation system. The goal of our reservation system was to have a simple fair system that paid its own way. We adjusted the system a few times and it has worked well for five years.

A problem has arisen because of our own laxness in abiding to three of the original standards. A normal dive team consisting of two divers. Reservations are made under the names of one of the team members. Reservations are not transferable.

An example of the problem was this last weekend. Among the fifteen dive team reservations were two fairly large groups of divers. One team consisted of 9 teams. The reservations were made under nine different names. That was just fine. The problem was that four of the "team leaders" didn't show up. The nontransferable reservations were transferred to four other people. The second group had two reservations. The divers did not arrive as a group. They trickled in. Each person would say they were on such-and-such reservation and that the person who had made the reservation was unable to come. In the end the person who made the reservation did come, but three earlier arrivals had used all three spaces on the dive team. We concluded with having a total of seven divers on two teams.

Rather than getting a bigger hammer, we are going to step back a few years and do a better job of making the reservation system work. The system was originally set up as a service to all of the divers, not just the individual teams or the clubs. There is no reason that it can't continue to do so.

When you make a reservation, make it for two divers. There will be occasions when a group of three friends want to dive together. We don't want to stop that group from diving at Point Lobos so we will reserve for a team of three divers. If a group of six people want to dive together, they will need three reservations, not two. (You may think that this is a way for us to make more money. It isn't. We will be just as full with fifteen teams of two as we would be with fifteen teams of three.)

Two months is a long time to plan ahead. If plans change and the dive team leader is not going to be able to make the dive date, give Judy a call at Point Lobos and we will substitute a new team leader. This had been greatly abused by dive clubs. Try and do better and give Judy a week or two of notice. She doesn't work every day. If the dive date comes around and the team leader doesn't show-up, that reservation will not get other divers in to the park.

I would appreciate your comments on the Point Lobos Diver Reservation System. If it does or doesn't work for you, let me know. This system was first developed based on divers suggestions. The basic rules for diving at Point Lobos such as buddy teams and restrictions on fishing will not change but the operation problems can be addressed by the Rangers here at the park.

Respectfully, Glen McGowan Supervising Ranger

About SFRD (San Francisco Reef Divers): 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. There is a general Club meeting on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm. We meet at the Presidio Alliance Building, Room B, 563 Rucker Street, The Presidio, San Francisco. Rucker is the first left after entering via the Lombard Gate Entrance.

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SFRD

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Reef Diver Times

c/o Jason O'Rourke

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