



TIME TO SAY ‘ASTA LA VISTA, BABY’ TO ANOTHER SFRD VICE PRESIDENT.

What is it with this position? Is it that the club’s election is around the corner and the only way to get out of it is to leave the country? Did the early Cypress Sea boat dives get to him? Is he really missing Hagis that much?

Well, no matter what the reason, the SFRD VP position seems to be Teflon coated, it certainly doesn’t seem to stick.

Last year Frank Matzkies, this year Peter White.

Many of us had met up with him over the last two years, sharing some great diving adventure in Monterey, Carmel, North Coast and as far down as the Channel Islands – full of fun and jokes and tall tales.

**ALL THE BEST TO YOU PETER! AND DON’T WORRY,
WE WON’T FORGET YOU – NOT WITH A FACE LIKE
THIS!!!**



LAST MINUTE NEWS FROM THE ENTERTAINMENT CZAR

Last month (August) was our special month of multi-directional diving. People and divers were scattering off to all manner of destination--cold water, warm, temperate, what have you. We have a versatile group, ready for anything.

And, since nearly everybody was gone (you may have noticed), for those of you who showed up for the meeting, you were your own entertainment. (I hope I said that right.)

So, keeping in that tradition, for those of you who show up for this month's meeting (September), please be sure to bring something entertaining from your travels.

I don't know about you, but I've certainly got some stories to tell. If you have pictures, great. If you have scallops, please bring them. We will be happy to eat them for you. Ken



DER STAMMTISCH



There's nothing like a three-day weekend to help you recover from that first week back to work following a vacation. I have a theory about vacations, a week doesn't qualify, that's nothing but an extended long weekend. Two weeks, that's the minimum, the Einsteiger Klasse. The problem with two weeks is that everyone knows you'll be back soon, so unless there is some eminent threat of bodily harm or your wastebasket is on fire your colleagues just pile everything with your name on it into your "In" basket and ignore it. Three weeks, this is great, you start to relax, your getting over the bout with food poisoning and you'll be able to continue working on your tan as soon as those blistered areas clear up. Three weeks does present a bit of a moral quandary though. Three weeks is long enough to have elicited a certain number of complaints about one or two of your projects, maybe even a call from the VP's secretary. So while your enjoying yourself at the swim-up bar, you know one of your colleagues is desperately trying to deal with the cost estimate your put together on a "Post-It", the one with the chewing gum wrapped inside. That leaves four weeks as the ideal vacation period. Any more time and you might as well not bother to go back. Four weeks is long enough for everyone to calm down about the cost overrun caused by your estimate. Your pet project, the one which had slightly less chance of achieving flight then a lead balloon has been canceled due to "positive movement" by your companies bankruptcy negotiations. Best of all while you where gone, there was an ergonomics assessment and someone ordered one of the fancy Dot-com chairs you always wanted in your cubicle.

That brings me to our Alaskan adventure aboard the Nautilus Explorer www.nautilusexplorer.com. (It was only two weeks and I am still working on my 'in basket') Those of you who are regular readers, will remember that we made a similar voyage last year. Well, we liked it enough to go again. The Nautilus is a great way to explore the Inside Passage.

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2003 SFRD OFFICERS

President	Gene Kramer	(650) 359-2785 genekramer@pacbell.net
Vice President	Peter White	(415) 775-2052 plw@dataconnection.com
Treasurer	Pierre Hurter	(415) 285-6293 saltwaterwolf@comcast.net
Webmaster	Curt Degler	(707) 570-0457 cdegler@aquagraphy.com
Newsletter Editor	Gerda Hurter	(415) 285-6293 saltwaterwolf@comcast.net
Entertainment Committee	Ken Gwin	(415) 648-7046 artfxsf@aol.com
AMCR Representative	Gene Kramer	(415) 339-2785 genekramer@pacbell.net
CenCal Representative	Bill Galarneau	(510) 451-2370
Membership Chairperson	Armin Luggen	(415) 479-3240 armin@luggens.com



**Payments for membership and activities
should be mailed to:
Pierre Hurter
515 Diamond Street
San Francisco, CA 94114**

REEFER RAP

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
01 - New Year's Day Dive - Point Lobos 11 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat 15 - <i>General Meeting</i>	05 - Officer's Meeting 08 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) 15 - Ed Cooper Memorial 19 - <i>General Meeting</i>	05 - Officer's Meeting 09 - Pt. Lobos 19 - <i>General Meeting</i> 22 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat 29 & 30 - Pt. Lobos
APRIL	MAY	JUNE
02 - Officer's Meeting 04 through 06 - Abalone Opener 16 - <i>General Meeting</i> 26 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat	07 - Officer's Meeting 21 - <i>General Meeting</i> 24 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives)	04 - Officer's Meeting 18 - <i>General</i> 21 - Monterey Beach Dive Coordinator: Pierre - 415.285.6293 22 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) TBD - Abalone Closer
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
02 - Officer's Meeting 11 - 13 North Coast Weekemd 16 - <i>General Meeting Meeting</i> 26 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives)	01 - 03 Abalone Opener Salt Point Statepark 06 - Officer's Meeting 20 - <i>General Meeting</i> 16 - 20 - Channel Islands	03 - Officer's Meeting 05 - 07 Lake Tahoe Dive 13 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat Coordinator: Pierre - 415.285.6293 17 - <i>General Meeting at SINBAD's</i> 19 - 20 Abalone Campout Coordinator: Jack Dietzen 415.566.0703 20 - Monterey Beach Cleanup Coordinator: David Clayton drc@astound.net
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
01 - Officer's Meeting 04 - Alcatraz swim/paddle Coordinator: Pierre - 415.285.6293 11 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat Coordinator: Pierre - 415.285.6293 15 - <i>General Meeting</i> <i>Officer Nominations !!!</i>	04 - Officer's Meeting TBD - Annual Sea Ranch Weekend 19 - <i>General Meeting - Officer Elections</i> 23 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sun Coordinator: Pierre - 415.285.6293 TBD - Abalone Closer	03 - Officer's Meeting 13 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat Coordinator: Pierre - 415.285.6293 17 - <i>General Meeting - Christmas Party</i>

**THE SALT POINT STORY:
ABALONE SEASON RE-
OPENER 2003**

by Kathryn Klein

Charter club member Ursula Bernhart was at Salt Point State Park early on Friday, August 1, prepared to hunt the mighty red abalone and to serve as the 2003 Abalone Season Re-opener Campout Coordinator. And a fine job she did -- as usual, fun was had by all.

Joining Ursula early enough on Friday to do a bit of ab diving, was new club member Mark with wife Tina and 2 1/2-year old Andrew. Mark's sortie was successful and made a major contribution to our traditional Saturday night potluck.

By Friday evening, Frank and I had arrived, as well as Deborah Gilmore and her friend Karen who was visiting from Santa Barbara, and the ever-intrepid Maria Mistos. Where, we all wondered, were the usual suspects: Rudy, Vinnie, Ray Will, and the rest of the old Reefers? Even Curt Degler had other plans -- climbing Mt. Shasta we heard.

Early Saturday morning, Don Davis showed up with some friends who were headed for a Guerneville wedding, but he managed to get some ab diving in with the rest of the group.

Meanwhile, Frank and I set out to launch the Tin Can, planning to put in at Timber Cove, just three miles down 101. But the Tin Can was more than the Timber Cove beach launch could handle, so we kept going down the coast, back to Bodega Bay where there are two public boat ramps that could adequately

accommodate our boat. The weather was fine and the ocean was flat and it took Frank exactly the same amount of time to motor back up the coast, making a bee line for Gerstle Cove, as it did for me wend my way back up windy 101 to rendezvous.

Frank had gone in for some abs just north of Gerstle Cove, while I entertained a Fish & Game Warden and a State Trooper who pulled up along side the Tin Can. After determining that we were, indeed, "sportsmen" and not poachers, they chided us for having scuba tanks on board. We knew the rules requiring us to not have scuba gear on board while ab diving, but we had interpreted that to mean that as long as we had no regulators or other equipment, it was okay to leave our tanks onboard. The officials informed us that having seen the tanks, they had to check us out and we had, thereby, cost the system time and money... The upshot: no scuba equipment of any kind - - even incomplete -- should be on board a boat from which you are ab diving.

We headed back to Gerstle Cove and anchored the boat there while we went to eat a late lunch at our campsite. By the time we got back, it was mid-afternoon and we found Gene Kramer and Robert Miche there cooking up sizeable abalone snack.

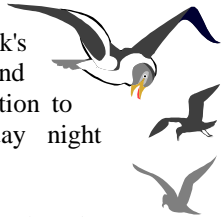
Frank and I had those scuba tanks on board the Tin Can to use up -- actually, they were only partial tanks, left over from our diving the weekend before in Carmel Bay where, by the way, we saw a wonderful Wolf Eel right out in the open, sinuously wound between some rocks and some kelp -- but that's another story.

Deb and Mark came along and Mark did a little spearfishing, bagging a nice-size Vermilion Rockfish and a China, too. Frank and I did some sightseeing. Although the viz was only a murky 10' and the top of the rock we were touring was surgy at 30', it was clear that this was a very interesting spot. Alas, abalone -- big abalone -- virtually littered the bottom at 40-50'. There was lots of invertebrate life and lots of fish. Mark reported having seen the biggest ling cod of his diving career, unfortunately (fortunately for the ling, in my opinion!) he did not get a shot off at it.

Saturday night's dinner was the traditional abalone feast, although there were only 8 of us to enjoy it.

On Sunday morning, we were relieved to find that the Tin Can had ridden out the night anchored in Gerstle Cove and was still there. Maria, Mark, Jim (who Mark had met at the campground on Saturday), Frank, and I went back out to seek out the perfect secluded shallow spot where abalone might abound. We didn't find anything as shallow as we might have liked, and the abalone were not as plentiful as we had seen them at 40' but those who hunted (everyone but me) bagged their limit.

After cleaning up the camp, Frank and I headed back down the coast -- Frank by sea and I by land and did the distance in nearly the same amount of time again -- less than an hour. We will definitely be on the lookout for calm seas on weekends to come, when we can put the boat in at Bodega Bay and head out for some North Coast adventures.





ALBION CAMPOUT AND ABALONE QUEST

For those of you who managed to miss out on the last two campouts, here's another chance. The San Francisco Flipper Dippers are hosting a campout in Albion.

Albion sits on Highway One ten miles south of Mendocino Village. More specifically it is located at Latitude: 39.223N and Longitude: -123.767W. It is the first of a series of small villages built on coves that you encounter going north on Hwy 1 after leaving the Navarro river and Highway 128. It is about a three-hour drive from San Francisco.

In 1853 English sea captain W. A. Richardson, having married the daughter of the Mexican commandant in San Francisco and subsequently being awarded a land grant of the territory between the Garcia River and Big River, sailed into a small bay at the mouth of a river, and named it Albion, the ancient name for Britain.

For more information call Jack Dietzgen at 415.566.0703 and learn how you can set sail for Albion.



MONTEREY CLEAN UP DIVE WILL BE ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2003.

Participation is free and you do not have to pre-register but it is helpful to the planners to know how many are coming so that they can order enough food for the BBQ.

For complete details visit our website at: <http://www.jadecarver.com/cleanupdive.htm>

If you are interested in attending please send an email to David Clayton drc@astound.net (not required)

The Harbor Clean Up email list will keep you posted right up to the day of the dive.

**AB SEASON RE-OPENER,
AUG. 1-3, 2003.**

by Ursula Bernhart

It was a great weekend for camping at Salt Point, sunny and warm, with barely a breeze. In addition to myself, there were Debra and friend Karen, Maria Misthos, Marc and Tina Linowitch with their cute little boy Andrew, Kathie Klein and Frank King with their sturdy boat. Gene Kramer and daughter, who is also a diver (sorry, I wish I could remember her name) plus Robert Miche made a brief appearance at our campsite Sat. afternoon to prepare a quick abalone repast before heading home again.

The rest of us went to Fisk Mill Cove Saturday morning. This continues to be a productive place after many years of heavy use by abalone divers. The abs generally are not huge, but quite plump and meaty. There was a bit of a surge, but the water was clear enough to see the bottom if you stayed in the 8-12' range, and there were abalone at the depth. (It was low tide). Enough were brought up for a terrific dinner that evening. Frank King took several divers out on his boat in the pm for a scuba dive, while Maria and I got the abs ready for cooking on their return.

On Sunday morning we all took off for another abalone hunt. Frank had his boat waiting in Gerstle Cove and motored up a stretch towards Stump Cove. Turns out it wasn't that good a spot for abalone. I met a couple of old diver friends at the campground entrance and went back to Fisk Mill Cove with them. I had only done 2 or 3 dives in the past 3 years and noticed how my abalone spotting and catching skills have

deteriorated. By my second dive this weekend I finally managed to grab two of them and it was a special treat when I cooked them at home a couple of days later for some nondiving friends who had long been wondering when I'd have them over for abalone again.

I'm thinking of organizing another ab diving weekend in the fall before the season ends on Nov. 30. Anyone interested? (We do have a Sea Ranch weekend tentatively scheduled for early November, which also will provide excellent opportunities for abalone diving).



**AUGUST
MEETING**

by Ursula Bernhart

I arrived at Sinbads ten minutes late for the meeting, only to find our meeting place deserted. Robert Miche and Bhushan Mudbhary greeted me from the bar, then Anthony Singleton showed up and we decided to start the meeting, joined by Susan, a prospective new member. Most of the usual crowd was off on the Channel Islands boat dive, Pierre and Gerda diving in Alaska, and this being a popular vacation time, perhaps a few others were lolling on the beach somewhere else. Susan regaled us with tales and photos of her recent dive trip to Cabo hour before declaring the meeting closed.



“SUSSING OUT ALASKA”

by Gerda Hurter

I am slowly descending down the anchor chain to the top of a pinnacle and continue on down over the rim of the sheer wall, finally coming to a stop at 110 feet. Looking up I see the towering rocks I passed and my and Pierre's air bubbles hurrying to the unseen, distant surface above.

While letting air into my dry suite to minimize the squeeze, and quite a squeeze it is!, I communicate with Pierre that I am ready to start our exploration of the drop-off. The water is still and calm and we glide effortless along, keeping the topography on our right. Octopus, Wolfeels, Metridiens were mentioned as the highlights and I patiently move the light beam of my Dive Rite HID light over the encrusted surface and inside large cracks and tiny crevices. Again I let air into my dry suit to mitigate the squeeze. Pierre motions to ascend to our next higher depth plateau to stay within our non-decompression limits and after checking my gauge and my computer we continued our exploration. The squeeze though seems to be persistent, weighing heavily on my chest. The motor of the skiff high above is cranked on and seems to be getting louder and louder as it gets more and more high pitched ... “what the)(&\$#”... as I sit up in bed and Sammy (our cat) catapults off my chest I see Pierre turn off the alarm.

“Didn't Pierre and I just step off the plane in Juneau? What happened to the glaciers and the bears? “Didn't we just dive

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“Suss Out” – from page 6

Wooden Island and watch a baby humpback breach?” “Where have the last two weeks vanished too?”

As usual the time seemed to race by, but leaving us with wonderful memories of another excitement filled adventure in the Pacific North West on board the Nautilus Explorer.

As last year, the boat and its accommodations, as well as the crew were exceptional and made this trip very pleasurable. And this despite the many equipment failures (flooded lights, cameras and broken dive computers). But what better group to travel with then with friends of Capt. Phil (yes our very own Cypress Sea skipper) who seemed to have spare equipment tucked away in every fold of his dry suit (under) garments.



Capt. Phil getting ready

The group got along quite well with many tears of laughter shed, for the tales were tall and bold, describing the healing touch of ones spouse by her stapling a split forehead together again, a romantic first date which resulted in the disintegration of a 4wheel drive by being hit by a train while another ended up in a Mexican Jail.

We heard it all and as you can well imagine, Pierre blended in just perfectly!!!

The days were filled with lots of activities which besides diving (2 to 3 a day depending on slack times) included: morning shintido exercises swimming with Icebergs, kayaking, swimming with salmon and bears. Well, we seemed to alternate who was in the pool, like, snorklers in, bear in, snorklers scrambling out, bear catches salmon and leaves water, snorklers in, designated fisher (Jeff) casts net, misses snorklers, catches salmon, bear gets exited, bear in, snorklers scrambling out... well you get the gist.



Mr. Ito & Henry K. practicing shintido

We were fortunate enough to have two biologist and a naturalist on board which turned our shore excursions into great scavenger hunts - I am still trying to determine what phylum the oar and aluminum floats belong to that I found - and the in between dive off-gassing periods into fun knowledge exchange sessions, endearingly called ‘Nap Time with Jeff’. (to get an idea check out/buy Jeff and Jennifer Mondragon’s Book on Kelp, “Seaweeds of the Pacific Coast”, a Sea Challengers publication available at your local dive shop) What better way to learn about the stuff you saw on your previous dive or to look out for on the next!

Talking about diving. Diving was great. Even though, the giant

pacific octopus was elusive for me – not for the rest of the group who seemed to have an encounter every other dive, or so they claimed. I got drawn in and exited by various creatures and plants, my favorite being the Nudibranchs. Their coloration and shapes are spell binding. Red Flabelina as tiny as 5mm, with their gills gently waving in the current, to shoe size 10 Orange Peels. Most spectacular though were the Gold Dirona’s (they look just like our Alabasta nudibranchs but are reddish with white edges). We found a colony of 50 to 70 covering an area of just a square meter. It sure makes you wonder how delicate such a creature can survive in those current swept waters.

And so the time just flew by, eat, nap, eat, eat, nap, nap ... oh, that’s Sammy’s schedule. For us it was, eat, dive, nap, dive, nap time with Jeff, eat, hug a grizzly, dive, dive, eat, nap ... you know, it just was Tickity Boo (see Pierre’s Stammtisch for definition)!

To get an idea of all the things we saw under water I suggest you go to the following websites and check it out:
<http://www.metridium.com>
<http://mondragonphoto.com>



yours truly - gerda

Stammtisch – from page 2

At 116 feet she is large enough to provide comfortable quarters for the twenty some odd quests while retaining a sense of intimacy.



Nautilus seen from a Cessna floatplane

The diving itself is done from a 36 foot skiff, the Indy short for Indefatigable. With three outboards, one's a jet; you get to and from the dive sights quickly and with enough room for you and all of your gear.



Indefatigable

You set up once and that's it for the trip.

There's something about Alaska that keeps drawing you back, this was my third trip and Gerda's 2nd and I'm sure it won't be our last. Imagine a state almost 2 ½ times the size of Texas, nearly 20 % of the landmass of the entire lower 48, "the outside" and yet with a population of only about 640,000. To put that into perspective, San Francisco has a population of 730,000 and we are nowhere near the size of Texas.

The first Europeans to see Alaska where members of Vitus Bering's 1741 Russian

exploration, they liked what they saw and stayed on, making Sitka their capital. The Russians eventually sold Alaska to the United States in 1867, in what was then widely referred to as "Seward's Folly." During the war, WWII for those who don't remember when we used to number them, the Japanese occupied Attu and Kiska Islands in the Aleutian Chain. The Alaska Highway was built in 1942 as part of the war effort. Finally on January 3, 1959, Alaska became the 49th State. The name Alaska comes from the Aleut for "a great country." I would say that they got it right.

We started our adventure in Juneau, where we arrived on a beautiful sun drenched Saturday. We had decided to fly up the day before our embarkation so that we could explore a bit, hike to the Mendenhall Glacier on Sunday morning.



Aerial scene from Cessna Floatplan

The flight to Juneau had been uneventful and we spent the afternoon prowling the tourist haunts downtown. I debated buying a mink jockstrap with a matching bikini for Gerda, but I was gently but firmly informed that it would be "inappropriate." One thing about Juneau, it has some great hardware stores. Alaskans clearly take their tool emporiums to heart, fish smokers, Xtra Tuff boots, plug-in engine block oil heaters, enormous impact wrenches and of course reloading and fishing gear. I could have spent the day

in the hardware store around the corner from our motel and would have, but Gerda dragged me back outside into the sunshine. Brian, who along with his better half Elaine had come over from Ireland for their second Alaska adventure was similarly mesmerized by the place. He had already purchased a dozen "jubilee clips"; radiator clamps to us and was eyeing a crescent wrench that must have been a good four feet long when he was dragged out as well.

Sunday morning we rendezvoused in the lobby of the Aspen Lodge for our glacier foray. Armed with Xtra Tuff boots, cameras, film and the every present bottled water we headed off for the trailhead in a Keystone Cops convoy. We managed to find the trailhead after having explored a dead end road or two and headed off. The hike was great; good trail most of the way, with a little cross-country bushwhacking towards the end. The glacier itself is pretty impressive, the constant flights of helicopters overhead reminded me of "Apocalypse Now." I half expected the choppers to launch a barrage of rockets, but apparently they no longer do that, something to do with an Environmental Impact Report. Anyway, we had a great time, crawling deep into the blue belly of the glacier itself. Having run out of film and memory cards we headed back to town and something to eat.



South Sawyer Glacier/Tracey's Arm

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Stammtisch from page 8

After asking at the motel we ended up at “Donna’s” for lunch. It turned out to be an excellent choice, any greasy spoon that proudly advertises “breakfast served all day” is almost always a good bet. The biscuits and gravy lived up to my expectations. Now I know there are some that will sneer, but biscuits and gravy with a couple of eggs, over easy and shimmering in grease and a side of bacon, this is the ideal breakfast. I’m not talking about the wall paper paste that all to many places pass as the real thing, no, I’m talking about the rich, sausage chunks, made that morning, artery hardening delight. Two other dining classics of the quintessential American greasy spoon are chicken fried steak and the Monte Cristo, the sandwich not the cigar. Donna’s offered it all. Following Brunch, I packed my Xtra Tuff beer can coolers in my bag along with a six-pack of Alaskan Amber and prepared to come aboard the Nautilus Explorer and begin our journey.

We made our first dive on the wreck of the Princess Kathleen, a ship that had the misfortune of sinking in 1952. On the positive side everyone was able to literally step of the boat and on to shore before she went down. That evening we went on a reconnaissance run to “suss out” the situation at Sweetheart Falls. Armed with mosquito nets, repellent and a Hawaiian throw net, we made our way into bear country. The throw net is worth a couple of words on it’s own, to get an idea how it works visit ... <http://www.castnets.com/throwinghelp.asp>. Armed with his trusty net, Jeff managed to bag a passel of salmon on our first visit. Laden with fish and mosquito

bites we vowed to return the following day.

Tuesday, armed with cameras, mosquito nets, toxic repellants eating away at the seals of our dry suits we set off towards Sweetheart Falls once again, this time to swim with the bears. It’s not that we planned it that way, but “the best laid plans O’ mice and men gang aft aglay.” Besides the brown bears, what we would call grizzlies; we shared the pools with thousands of salmon, a few of which latter joined us on our trek back to the mother ship. Back on board the salmon where quickly dispatched, like the T-shirt in Juneau promised, “catch-em, beat-em, clean-em, and smoke-em.” Jeff had the salmon covered with his secret sauce and in the smoker lickity split. Meanwhile the salmon eggs, buckets of them, were stripped from their backings, rinsed in sea water and then marinated in sake with a touch of soy sauce. I have to say that salmon roe, mixed with white rice, say a 50/50 mix, rivals biscuits and gravy as the ideal breakfast food in my book. This could readily become my “breakfast of champions”, it surely beats Menudo.

This being an expedition, we did more than just dive, we also participated in a wide variety of cultural activities. In Sitka Gerda and I headed off to the Pioneer Bar with Captain Mike’s admonition in the back of our minds, “sit with your backs to the wall, it’s safer when the bottles start flying.” Must have been the Xtra Tuffs, we fit right in, even had someone pull up on our way down and ask directions to the Post Office. Once at the Pioneer we debated the merits of various beers as well as which was better for snakebite, a Snowshoe, Wild Turkey with a

peppermint schnapps float, or DeKuppers, Mango Pucker with a vodka back. Alas, I will never remember what the outcome of that debate was.

In Baranoff we went Hot Springing next to an icy waterfall and at the General Store picked up a clean T-shirt as well as molasses for the making of spruce beer. The old T-shirt was to eventually do double duty in straining spruce tips, once the sock we started with proved not up to the task. Spruce beer for the uninitiated can probably only be fully appreciated by someone who has gone three years without access to the Pioneer or similar bar. We decided that it was probably a last ditch effort by Captain Cook to stretch the rum ration a bit further. For tasting notes and recipes, send me a stamped self-addressed envelope with a twenty dollar bill and I’ll get back to you.



Seals on icebergs/ Tracey’s Arm

In Ketchikan we explored the historic red light district and drank and caroused at Annabel’s’ until last call. I have to add that they closed the bar down at 10:00 so that may not have been as adventurous as it first comes across. I did however learn more about the sex lives of whales then I ever imagined anyone would know, let alone care to share with a group.

In my constant thirst for knowledge I managed to broaden my vocabulary as well. First I’ll

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always be able to remember the order of classification, you remember, kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus and species. It's easy, "King Phillip came over for ginger snaps" or Megan's slightly racier "Kinky people come over for group sex." Either way, this is one question I'll be able to ace the next time I have to take a biology exam. Then there are the linguistic nuances between American and Canadian speech, "suss it out" for reconnaissance, "tickity boo" for A OK and my favorite, "dickdo" for what we might call a tool shed. I also learned the German equivalent thanks to Joerg; there it's called a "Spiegeleierbauch." And of course the Irish contribution, "jublee clips" for radiator clamps.

My other main pastime, aside from power napping was eating. Thanks to Jeff's killer instincts the smoker seemed to be forever full of salmon in various stages of smoky perfection. Kim, the ship's cook was constantly

tempting us with a variety of freshly backed goods, both with meals and in-between. We ate home backed bread, feasted on roasts, lamb, crab, halibut and salmon and had a different soup at every meal. I happen to be a big soup fan and these were delicious. I was in culinary heaven, puréed carrot, potatoes and leek, fish chowder, you name it, we ate it. There were also a variety of meatless dishes, lots of veggies and fresh fruit for those whose waistlines were overtaking their elastic pants or who don't eat meat. Turns out that a key ingredient in the BBQ sauce was whiskey, no wonder I kept going back for seconds.

Perhaps best of all we had a good group on the ship. The crew were wonderful and this year Mike had his wife, daughter and son on board. Emily reminded me of the Eveready battery bunny, she seldom seemed to wear down. Charlie had the sweetest smile I've seen in a long time though on occasion when his sister's

attentions became too much he would let out a howl. Bryan and Kevin, brothers and intrepid explorers rounded out the younger set. With ages ranging from almost one to eleven it added a whole new set of perspectives to the group. I just wish I had a picture of Kevin's face when I mentioned that Kim had made peanut butter squares with chocolate frosting as a snack. There is nothing quite as serious or intense as a young man on a mission. The peanut butter squares were delicious, I had at least four, well OK, maybe five.

Two weeks without a cell phone, television, e-mail or newspapers, now that's a vacation. I do have one question, are Ben Affleck and J-Lo still getting married? The only magazine I saw onboard was People, what can I say. Until next time, dive deep, dive safe and when in doubt remember WWMND (what would Mike Nelson Do)?



FELINE ANTI CAVIAR POACHING AGENT KILLED, WAS IT A CONTRACT HIT?

Police in Russia have been using a cat named Rusik to help them sniff out fish smugglers in the Caspian Sea. Caviar smuggling is big business here and sturgeons are being hunted to the brink of extinction.

Rusik had walked into the local police station about a year before as a stray kitten. The staff adopted him, feeding him scraps of fish confiscated from local smugglers. But now, Rusick has come to a tragic end, run over by a car. Did I mention that the car belongs to a local smuggler? Local officials are investigating.

THE RUBBER DUCKIES ARE COMING

It's not quite the midnight ride of Paul Revere, but thousands of rubber bathtub toys, beavers, turtles, frogs and of course rubber ducks, have been drifting for more than a decade. In the near future, they are expected to come ashore in New England.

The toys have been adrift since some 29,000 of them fell from a storm tossed container ship in route from China to Seattle almost 11 years ago. They floated along the Alaska coast, reaching the Bearing Sea in 1995 and Iceland some five years later. Some of them headed for Europe, the rest have been heading for our coasts.

A reminder that some 10,000 containers fall off cargo ships every year. How's that for flotsam and jetsam?



The San Francisco Reef Divers is a not for profit community organization dedicated to safe sport diving and the preservation of our ocean resources. The San Francisco Reef Divers general meetings are open to the public and are held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at Sinbad's, located at Pier 2, Embarcadero Street, SF, CA 94111 (For driving directions and a map for this location, visit our club web site: <http://www.sfreefdivers.org/>.)

We highly encourage you to also support the other organizations listed below when you pay your annual dues. (Please indicate your membership options with the checkboxes below.)

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> San Francisco Reef Divers (SFRD) | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abalone Marine Resource Council (AMRC) | 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central California Council of Diving Clubs (CenCal) | 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sonoma County Abalone Network (SCAN) | <u>10</u> |

Show your support for all four! \$60

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Home Phone: (____) _____ Work Phone: (____) _____
Email: _____
Diving Certification Agency: _____ Level: _____ Number: _____
SFRD Membership: <input type="checkbox"/> New member <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
Are you a member of Divers Alert Network (DAN)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Please select the method of delivery of your monthly club newsletter (<i>Choose one</i>):
<input type="checkbox"/> I will download the newsletter via the Internet from the SFRD website (default)
<input type="checkbox"/> I want the newsletter mailed to my home address

Please make checks payable to “**San Francisco Reef Divers**” and mail to: Pierre Hurter, SFRD Treasurer, 515 Diamond Street, San Francisco, CA 94114



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 3rd Wednesday of the month at at Sinbad's, located at Pier 2, Embarcadero Street, SF, CA 94111. Meet at 7:00pm for socializing, drinks and food and 7:30 pm for club business and entertainment. For more information, visit <http://www.sfreefdivers.org/>.

SAN FRANCISCO REEF DIVERS
Reef Divers Times
C/O Gerda Hurter
515 Diamond Street
San Francisco, CA 94114