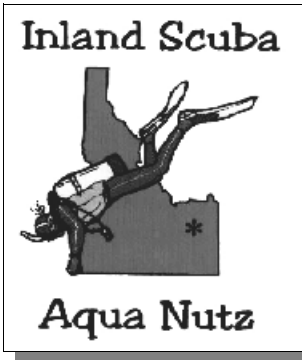


Inland Scuba News

January 2001 Volume 8, Issue 1

Promoting and organizing scuba diving activities, serving the local community, and sharing information about scuba diving.



Blue Lake

My name is Jeremy McOmber. I am eleven years old and certified. I went to the Aqua Nutz dive at Blue Lake. Blue Lake is located in Nevada. The road going into Blue Lake is very bumpy and muddy in some spots. The place where you camp is a desert. To get to the Lake you have to load all your stuff in a wheelbarrow and go on a boardwalk to the Lake. There is also a dock. When you're scuba diving and you stay in one spot too long it will start to make the visibility bad. There are fish in the lake. The fish are about six inches long. The water is about eighty degrees. The part I liked most was sticking my arm at the bottom and having it sink to my shoulder. The Lake is thermally active at the bottom. The maximum depth of the Lake is about fifty-five feet. There are also sculptures to see at the bottom of the lake. This is what Blue Lake is like and what I liked most.

—Jeremy McOmber

Club Beat

It's always interesting belonging to clubs of various kinds. Personalities often make or break a club and the Aqua Nutz Scuba Club is no different. We have so many interesting people and personalities that I think that is what makes our club so much fun.

We always have many ideas about future events, some good, some crazy. This year is no exception. The Aqua Nutz are an adventurous lot and have many fun activities in the works. As well as the old tried and true adventures, we will be trying new things this year (like some more warm water diving!). Everyone has his/her favorite activity, so if you are a new member of the club or thinking about joining, talk to the other members to hear their opinions.

As we have since the inception of our club, we will be combining fun events with community service. We will be doing the water cleanup in Sept, and hope to do an event with donations benefiting the Eastern Idaho Hospice. We need all the

help we can get with all of our activities. There is always a lot of planning involved with each event, and even though we have 100+ members now, not everyone goes to every event. Many times, the same people plan, set up, and take down at every event. You'll have to ask what "setting up" and "taking down" means (too complicated for this small space!).

In any case, the Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz are looking forward to another great year with great activities and getting to know more fun folks.

Take a look at the dive calendar and start planning your events!

Happy New Year and Happy Diving!

We wish to acknowledge those individuals and businesses whose time, efforts, and donations made this past year such a success. Thanks to all!

About the Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz

The purpose and mission of this club is to promote scuba diving and snorkeling for individuals who live in and around the Idaho Falls area, to promote and organize scuba diving activities, to serve the local community, and to share information about scuba diving.

ISAN meets the second Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at Papa Tom's Pizza on Woodruff Ave. All interested individuals are encouraged to join. Dues are \$10.00 per year for individuals and \$25.00 for family memberships. Membership not only gains you a voice in club direction and activities, but also gives you a discount on the cost of participating in club activities and rental of equipment, not to mention meeting interesting and fun people!

Sign up at Inland Scuba today!

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2001 Calendar

March						
Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	30
31						

May						
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27	28	29	30	31		

June						
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July						
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28	29	30	31			

Jan. through March– call shop or look at website for activities.

March 31 – Underwater Easter Egg Hunt at Belmont Hot Springs. Hunt for prizes in warm water and interesting visibility.

May 18,19 – Safety Expo. ISAN will educate the public on dive safety issues, such as boating and divers as part of the annual INEEL Safety Expo.

May 26-28 – Blue Lake. Dive the deserts of Nevada. Rental equipment limited, reserve early.

Early June – Blue Heart. Dive the crystal blue springs near Haggerman, ID. Clear but cold.

June – Rescue Dog Training tentatively set for Father’s Day weekend; check with shop for details)

June 2-10– The Bahamas!

July 30-31– Live-Aboard Catalina. Leaving the 29th.

Aug. 11 – Navigation Picnic and Poker Run at Ririe Reservoir.

Aug. 18 & 19– Firehole River– Treasure hunting and lots of fun.

September 8 – International Beach Clean Up. Help us keep our waterways clean.

October 27 – Pumpkin Carving Contest. Try your hand at underwater carving.

Oct.-Dec.– Underwater family photos with Santa at the Aquatics Center.

August						
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September						
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30						

October						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Club meets 2nd M on. of each month.

Join us on one weekend evenings from mid June through Fall at Ririe reservoir. Inland Scuba will be offering specials on equipment rentals. Check at the shop for a specific dates.

2000 Poker Run

Happiness (in Idaho at least) is a hot sunny day with 70 degree water and 15 foot visibility. Such were the conditions at the 2000 Poker Run, held at Ririe Dam on August 5. About 32 divers navigated a marked underwater course, picking up poker chips at points along the way. An unmarked course was also provided for the adventurous. The poker chips were exchanged for cards and prizes were awarded to all, best poker hand first. Katie Hayes won the first prize, a regulator. An outstanding pot luck dinner followed, with the entrée provided by the club. After a truly fine day the sunburned, stuffed, tired group headed home as the sun went down. This is definitely a don't-miss event. Mark your calendars now for the 2001 Poker Run, scheduled for Aug. 11 at Ririe Dam.

—————Gary McConnell

Beach Clean-Up

The morning broke with discernable signs of autumn. The cool crisp air forced the gathering into a huddled mass outside of dive central. In one swift organizational motion, something akin to a riot, the mass divided to conquer. I sauntered across the street to join the dive ladies (AKA Kathy and Sheila) headed to Four Bay launch near Johns Hole bridge. As the sun burned away the clouds overhead it warmed we three divers struggling to don our wetsuits that we wished were dry suits. With a photographer nearby, volunteers loitered on the shores awaiting the treasures from yonder Snake.

Suited, we slipped into the cold water to discover the river's Secrets, Diver Down. Air temperature 58 degrees, visibility...pea soup. And you ask why? Why ask why, we just love to dive. Full suit, hood and gloves. 15 mph breeze.

—————Mike Adams

Nervous Mom?

First, let me say that I have only been a certified diver for about 10 months. In that time, I have experienced some of the most exciting events in my life, with many more to come. With my excitement came many conversations with my 2 children, 3 & 7, about what I was doing and what it was like. My 7 year old daughter, Jessica, took interest in my scuba adventures most and always seemed to have tons of questions when I returned from an outing. When I brought my class books home she spent time looking at all the pictures and asking about them. From the start of my certification I knew that Jessica would have to be certified as well when she reached age 10. She was disappointed that she had to wait that long.

After returning from a Live-aboard trip in California, Keith told me about his SEAL program and that Jessica, even though she was only 7, could still attend and learn the basics of scuba. Little did I know that what Jessica was about to learn would be not only new and exciting to her but would also be new and TERRIFYING to me! Jessica, only having 1 summer of swimming lessons is by far a long way from being a good swimmer. That made me a bit apprehensive, but Keith assured me she was ready, so I told Jess that we were off to class. Jess couldn't wait to get to the pool. She paid close attention in class and to the movie, with constant questions but it was the pool that she most wanted. The first night was a nightmare. Before the class was over I asked Patty and Keith if they really thought she would make it. She cried because she didn't want to put her face in the water. Of course, I pushed her, wanting her to catch on and basically "just do it". That was when I realized that I needed to step back and allow Keith to do his magic. By the end of the class, Jessica had put her snorkel on w/the mask and Each week Jessica became more comfort-

(Continued on page 4)

Store Hours

Inland Scuba will be closed Saturdays because of open water outings. The shop can be opened on Saturdays by special appointment, and is open weekday evenings until at least 7:00.

Need an Update?

Has it been a long time since you were in the water? Inland Scuba offers update classes on Friday nights. The update is a review of new diving equipment and technologies, and a complete review of basic diving skills. Pool dives are done at 9:00 PM at the Idaho Falls Aquatic Center. It doesn't hurt to get into the pool for an evening just to swim around and get the ears working again. This is a good opportunity to freshen up your skills before attending any dive activity, vacation, or trip. Call Inland Scuba today to make arrangements.

Know Someone Who Would Like to Dive ?

Do you know someone who would like to learn to dive? Share this newsletter! Open water diving classes are offered on Friday nights. Classes start at 6:00 PM, and include pool sessions after the classes at 8:30 PM. These classes have a six week cycle, and start frequently. Home study classes are also available for those who have

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529-2636

Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz
Dive Club website: www.srv.net/~inscuba

(Continued from page 3) Nervous Mom?

able in the water with her equipment. Jeanie, her instructor was great, very patient, end extremely nice to her. Before I knew it, Jessica was swimming around under water with a regulator in her mouth like she had been doing it forever. She seemed to be catching on faster than I did, I'm ashamed to say. But I'd like to think it's because she has no fears, unlike her poor mother. :)

By the time Jessica actually donned a BC and tank, my nerves were shot. I got in the pool with her that night and I was, to say the very least, SCARED TO DEATH. All I could think of was my baby going to the bottom of the deep end of the pool and losing her mask or regulator. This was not the case at all. Jessica, her instructor and Keith played on the bottom of the shallow end for awhile, but Jessica was anxious to go deeper and kept signing that she wanted to go to the bottom of the deep end. Down they went. She did it like a pro. She cleared her ears like a pro. Once on the bottom, she spent her time collecting all the torpedoes. Not wanting to share with anyone, she packed around several in her arms, throwing on occasionally just to hurry over and grab it before anyone else could get it. I was so excited. My thoughts were: YIPE, I now have a permanent dive buddy! The one major thing I learned from this whole experience as a mother was: DON'T FIX IT IF IT ISN'T BROKE!!!! Especially at the bottom of a deep swimming pool.

Yes, I admit I tried to fix Jessica's mask. But the strap was clear down around her neck and all I could think about was it filling with water and Jess freaking trying to get to the surface. I know now however that this was not the case. Actually I was doing more harm than good. Jess was comfortable with her mask the way it was, and now I know this. Thanks to Keith.

Jessica is so excited to learn more and get completely certified. She wants to go to the ocean with me and see the brain corals, marine life and bright colored fish. She brags to her father, cousins and friends at school about how she scuba dives and the new and exciting things she is going to get to see. Now my only fear is how empty my wallet is going to be with 2 of us diving. :)

Keith had her putting her face in the water and actually swimming around.

Those of you with children around this age, don't be discouraged by the age or ability to swim. I highly recommend this. Thanks Keith and Jeanie for an exciting experience that Jessica and I will NEVER forget.

Lake Mead

Sensory experiences abound at Lake Mead and Las Vegas. It all started when I neglected to tell Sam just how hot it would be. After the drive with air conditioning and then stepping out to the street into 113 degrees, he was hot. So... Finally it was decided to stay since we drove that far anyway. Fri. night we were going to meet at Treasure Island after/ before the ships sinking. Aye thar laddy. We were there at the appointed time (me on time!) and still no one we knew was there. Maybe they found their own amusements, i.e. visiting young/old friends, staring in wonder, shopping (of course) and the ever popular gambling. Oh well, everyone will meet in the morning at Excalibur for the food fest. We all ate to our gluttonous delight and then drove to the marina.

Hauling all the gear to the waiting boats and over the carp (ugly fish, kill one of those uglies and you'll be spending your hard earned winnings on a spendy fine), still a cool morning temperature of 86 F was not all a problem for all the toting to and fro. Finally all the gear is loaded, last minute clothing changes done, and running so not be the last ones on the boat, and we're off. Our illustrious Capt. Keith just had to make sure we were all ready to get wet, so the first wave that happened along suited the purpose. Capt. Jim on the other hand went through high and dry. (On the way back to the dock was another thing, since the pontoons had holes!). The lake loomed ahead. Benny got right into the spirit and showed off his highly practiced water skiing technique on the front of the boat. Soon Mike, Sheila and Brett had to try this out. Brad and Corey were out of luck. (Ah Mom).

The first dive was to the sailboat at 90 ft. Tied off to the buoys we all prepared to dive, dive, dive. Sam decided this sen-

(Continued on page 6)

Classes and Programs from Inland Scuba

American Red Cross – Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz have signed up with the American Red Cross to offer classes. We have several instructors who can certify the First-Aid and CPR for the different programs the Red Cross offers. Students must be ISAN members club to participate. The price of the courses vary and most are taught in 4 or 8 hours.

DAN O2

Scott Hughes from Teton Aquatics in Jackson Hole, WY, is offering the Divers Alert Network (DAN) Oxygen Provider Course at Inland Scuba. The course is a one night class with a cost of \$35.

Field Station Operator (FSO)

This course is divided into three areas; Cylinder Handler, Scuba Station Operator and Fill Station operator. The Cylinder Handler course is designed for anyone who owns their own cylinders. The other two programs deal with the fill station operation in addition to cylinder handling. DOT guidelines, fixed and portable station operation are reviewed. These programs do not involve mixing Enriched Air Nitrox. Mixing procedures are reviewed, but a gas mixing certification is not given. These classes are free.

50 States Dive at Ririe.

Ririe reservoir was Idaho's dive site. Keith Christensen dove with Charles Ballinger a dive Journalist and world Traveler.

See http://www.dive50states.com/slide_show.asp?id=37 for the complete article.

Photo #1

Jeremy's giant stride/Blue Lake courtesy McOmbers

Photo #5

First class of SEALS with Instructor courtesy Keith & Patty

Photo #2

Getting pumped up for clean-up courtesy Keith & Patty

Photo #6

The Catalina Crew courtesy Keith & Patty

Photo #3

Betty manning the Safety Expo Booth courtesy K&P

Photo #7

Easter Egg Hunt @Belmont courtesy K&P

Photo #4

Bug Signal @120 Ft. Cayman Brac courtesy Bryans

Photo #8

Preparing for dog training courtesy Keith & Patty

(Continued from page 4) Lake Mead

sory experience wasn't to be his, so I tagged along with Garth and Kathy. (Thanks guys). The water had great vis and was warm 82 on top and 60 at sailboat depth. After a couple trips around it, time to start back up along the line. Getting back into the float boat was a challenge. All in and set to do the next dive, a house boat at 50 ft. Gear up, jump in and follow the line down around and in and through the house boat. Watch out for John with his camera; smile-flash those pearlies—totally awesome. Load up and off to view the Hoover Dam and dive along the banks. Brett and Mike go deep and dark or is it dark and deep anyway? Bad boys—know better, but who can blame them? Load up and back to the docks, check the sunburn; unload, back to town and off to Ex-calibur for the dinner show.

Keith did great getting front row seats; Patty showed the proper way to bang the table, while John show the proper thanks to Keith's pate. Mike really got into the show, several times the actors momentarily stopped due to his comments, they all wanted to see who belonged to that voice that was upstaging them. Merlin the magician was having too much fun including our row, pointing out a couple of mouths drooling, but hey guys, you were enjoying the scenery and drooling, too!

Dinner, show, and Kodak moments taken, it's roller coaster time, at least for the foolhardy that want to try to lose their dinner. Waiting to have the front car for the best view, the screamers had their 3 minutes of thrills. Those of us who have now had plenty of sensory overloads for the day call it just that, while the die-hards keep at it. Tomorrow, off to Catalina or destinations unknown. Worth a day at Lake Mead. Oh yeah, totally sensory!

—————Shelley Dye

Pumpkin Carving

We had a fairly large group for the pumpkin carving Oct. 28. A blend of novices, first timers (outside Ricks pool), and more advanced divers looking for a good time. After my initial submersion to certify in the shallow water, I had my doubts. I would be continuing my scuba skills. The low visibility was, to say the least, nerve-racking! My buddy, Nicole Siepert, and I were only inches apart, but we could not see each other. The saying "reach out and touch someone" took on a whole new meaning for me. Every few seconds I had to reach over and reassure myself my buddy hadn't deserted me. Certifying in the deeper water was much better and those of us who had felt a little panicky relaxed and really began to enjoy this new adventure.

Next, for us beginners came the pumpkin carving. We scooped and scraped out our pumpkins on the dock. Patty buddied up with me. Wendy Morris donated her pumpkin to Andrew Bressler and his mom, Wendy. The five of us went down to the platform. Wendy Morris held the bag for the pumpkin scraps. Andrew and I carved our pumpkins while our buddies held them. They were very, very brave people. The pumpkins turned out quite humorous, so many different faces, some you could actually tell had faces! Ha! Well, I can honestly say a good time was had by all, including me.

—————Heidi Smith

Diving the Crater

I hadn't planned on taking the advanced class, but after completing my open water dives at Belmont Hot Springs I wanted to challenge myself and go deeper, maybe even twice as deep. So I signed up for the advanced class a week before the "Crater" dive.

The crater is a "hot pot" inside a large mound of rock. A tunnel leads to Caribbean blue water, 70 ft. deep and 90-96°. The diameter of this pool of water is about 40 ft. The crater is located at the Homestead Resort in Midway, Utah.

We dove the crater on Sat., Dec. 2. There were 13 in our group, Keith & Patty and their two sons, Rex & Terry Fisher, Heidi Smith, and some guys from Idaho Falls I didn't know. The day of the dive

Madison River-Firehole

This year the Firehole event had a great turnout. Even though we arrived after a dive group from Montana had scoured the waters, the diving was still wonderful. We were all hoping that the people diving off the cliffs and swimming were wearing too much jewelry. The water was lower than usual with a temperature of about 73°F. Most of us overcame the challenge of conquering the three bowls to the top plateau without drifting off.

The Aqua Nutz Club and its members supplied dinner. Everything from hamburgers, cookies, salads and drinks were for all. Some of the more adventurous stayed the night at the Madison Campground with the bears, passing around S'mores and dive stories. After the scheduled trip a few of us snuck back up for a few more trips.

In September the water level was higher and swifter, and the temperature was a lot lower—53°, BRRRR. There was nobody else around which made this trip more enjoyable on the last couple sunny days. We were even able to find treasures. Next time we go, come along with us, just bring enough neoprene to stay warm.

—————Kathy Parker & Chris Trubl

the weather was a balmy 40° with the sun shining. Before we began our dive we assembled in a lodge a short distance from the entrance to the crater and signed our lives away on the dive release liability form. Then we quickly assembled our equipment and took it to the dive platform in the crater. I noticed I was the only one who took in an extra tank. I know my limitations—I am an air-sucking dog. Then it was time to change into swimming suits. In the tunnel leading to the crater there was a changing area, basically a curtain. The alternative to this was walking to a bathroom about 50 yds. away. I have little pride, so I changed behind the curtain. Several other guys did as The gals preferred the bathroom.

(Continued on page 11)

Recognition

Century Divers

Terry Johnson
Gary McConnell
John Wear

Master Divers

Mike Adams
Phil Stirn
Michelle Stirn
Bruce Horton
Mark Bennion
Rick Stowers

K-9 Divers

Aaron Jaynes
Mike Ancho
Rick Stowers
Brett Banks
Benjamin Meyer
Garth Nelson
Jerry Johnson
Richard Hollinger
John Mahlum

Stress and Rescue

Benjamin Meyer
John Stumph
Mark Bennion
Brett Banks
Phil Stirn
Michelle Stirn
Mike Adams
Shelley Dye

Dan 02

Ben Meyer
Garth Nelson
James Westwood
Steve Bryan
Greg Kerbs
Jeannie Kerbs
Mike Merrill

SEALS

Jeremy McOmber
Kory Christiansen
Nathan Kerbs
A.J. Oakey
Jordon Stone
Justin Sadler

Advanced Open Water

Christopher Trubl
Brett Banks
John Mahlum
Kirk Hayes
Michelle Stirn
Phil Stirn
Rick Nielsen
Bradley Christensen
Jim Schiffler
Benjamin Meyer
Reed Miller
Michael Adams
Stephen Somers
Sheila Accord

Open Water Divers

Matt Severson
Brooke Griggs
David Green
Jerry Parker
Larry Henderson
Jolana Green
Tyson Lane
Heidi Bauer
Bryant Larson
Garron Clifford
Mark Young
Brent Mendenhall
Brian Anderson
John Surerus
Mike Mahlum
Travis Kerbs
William Somsen
Terri Fisher

Inland Scuba starts it's 6th year in January. Congratulations and kudos to Keith and Patty Christensen.

Open Water Divers (cont)

Kerry Brown
Brett Banks
Suzan Mendenhall
Steven Roth
Linda Hawley
Wendy Morris
Rick Barnes
Vance Hawley
David Porter
Matt Rydalch
Randy Gravatt
David Robinson
Shawn Bitter
Shari Hadlock
Terri Robinson
Chris Trubl
Jonathon Wheeler
Ryan Schaugaard
Sheila Accord
Joshua Wheeler
Nicole Siepert
Heidi Wheeler
Randall Wheeler
Heidi Smith
Marissa Call
Jill Bryan
Aria Bryan
Paul Mills
Kirk Polatis
Raymond Fink
Freedom Kerbs
Greg Polatis
Chris Evans

Open Water Divers (cont)

Robert Nothum
Trent Vanleuven
Stephen Sommers
Kevin Hilbourn
Dalin Vanleuven
John Aring
Kristina Hilbourn
Benjamin Siler
Cory Bingham
Julie Hadlock
Sloan Scott
Cherese Somsen
Rich Hadlock
Jordon Scott
Randy Somsen
Adam Piper
Mitch Scott
Eric Erickson
Mike Staton
Tyerel Giles
Tami Erickson
Wayne Nelson
Jeremy Mitchell
Brian Thompson
Oliver Roberts
Joe Cummings
Debbie Thompson
Amanda Roberts
Garn Herrick
Ron Klinger
Ben Skidmore
Nita Klinger
Jan Skidmore

The Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz now have over 100

cont. from pg. 10) store news.
of 8-10 year olds. In the spring we joined the Boy Scouts of America and started our own Venturing Crew. We have our adult staff in place but haven't got the youth part going yet. That's coming, though! This program is for boys and girls age 14 and up.

Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz

The Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz club entered into its third year and doubled in membership with over 100 members joining. Not only has the membership increased, so has the number of people who have participated in activities sponsored by the club this year. The club is more than just a bunch of people that go diving. The club has participated every year in the Safety Expo in May. One year we were at the cancer "Relay for Life". This year the club is planning to sponsor the SCUBA OLYMPICS, with donations going to Hospice of Eastern Idaho. Another activity we participate in is helping to train the search and rescue dogs at the Water Workout. The club has taken over the activity for the International Coastal Clean-up with Inland Scuba has been a part of since the store opened in 1995. Check out the calendar for 2001 activities.

Community Education- District 91

This fall we started offering "Try SCUBA", "Snorkeling", and "Scuba Seal" through Community Ed. These classes are held on Wednesday nights. Check the calendar for dates in 2001.

EITC

The last several semesters we have offered open water certification on Wednesday nights through EITC. The Try Scuba will be on Jan. 17 and classes after that.

Ricks College/BYU Idaho

Again we will be offering classes at Ricks College through continuing ed. There will be two classes in the spring. These classes are on Thursday nights, so the store will close early on Thursdays. These classes start on Jan. 25.

DAN O2

The store is a sponsor for DAN O2, with Scott Hughes from Jackson as the instructor. Again, classes are arranged upon request.

American Red Cross

Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz is a sponsor for the American Red Cross. Greg Kerbs is one of our instructors for First Aid and CPR. Classes are ar-

MORE PHOTOS!

Kelp bed diving at Catalina-courtesy Sand Dollar Diving Website.

Deep diving (130 ft.)-Jill, Karla, Aria-Cayman Brac. Courtesy of the Bryans.

Entry point- Firehole River Diving. Courtesy John Layman website.

Stoplight Parrotfish hanging out by fan coral.

Courtesy Steve & Karla Bryan

The Inland Scuba Aqua Nutz have many fun activities, as you can see. Members also take off on their own to see the world. There have been individual trips to Jamaica, the Bay Islands of Honduras, and the Cayman Islands (and probably other places that I haven't heard about). We love to hear about your trips, see your photos, and learn about new places. Come to the club meetings to share your information and see what else is going on. Happy diving!

Open Water—cont.

William Brown, Sr.
Morgan Meyers
William Brown, Jr.
Blaine Walker
Frank Jarvis
Sham Jarvis
Rodney Bartlome
Brian Morris
Joneric Bohman
Hilary Vickers
Tori Gallup
Dawn Blankenship
David Gallup
Michael Adams
Corinne Callister
Troy Weston
Jennifer Wardell
Kristin Weston
Hillary Landon
Brian Beck
Aubrey Vandewiele
Eric Pankau
Julianne Rees
Mike Whatcott
Tonya Ricks
Andrew Bressler
Tony Smoot
Wendy Bressler
Bob Pfaltz
William Conway
Eric Hanson
Rex Fisher
Joanne Lucey
Wendy Morris
Doug Conway
Larry Henderson
Richard Hollinger
Rick Stowers
Heidi Smith
Terri Fisher
Rex Fisher
Frank Munoz

Nitrox

Dennis McArthur, Jr.
Phil Stirn
Michelle Stirn
James Westwood
Benjamin Meyer
Dustin Robinson
Reed Miller
Rick Nielsen
Richard Hollinger
Brett Banks
Garth Nelson
Jay Brewer
Ben Haber
Ken Haber
Mike Adams

Ririe Dive Park

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) is nearly two years into the three-year process that will yield an approved Resource Management Plan for the Ririe Reservoir. The final Plan will define how the reservoir is operated for the next ten years. Of major interest to the scuba diving community is our proposal to create a dive park. Under the current proposal objects would be placed in the underwater park for the enjoyment of scuba divers. The park was not in the original plan, but was added due to the involvement of quite a few divers. Although the park is part of the current plan, it is not a done deal. The Draft Environmental Assessment was released in December 2000, with comments accepted until February 13, 2001. The Draft Resource Management Plan will be released for comment in June 2001, followed by the Final Environmental Assessment and NEPA Decision in Aug. 2001. The Final Resource Management Plan is scheduled for release in Oct. 2001. If everything goes well, the dive park could be established during the summer of 2002. But there are no guarantees. At any point the dive park could

be dropped from the agenda, especially if there isn't sufficient public interest. The process is sensitive to public comment. So we must stay involved. This year we made our presence known by attending the public meetings and providing numerous written comments. If we continue participating in the process, approval of the dive park could actually happen. Please watch the club's monthly meeting minutes for continuing information on the dive park proposal. Please participate along the way. There will be a public comment period at the Shilo Inn on Jan. 30, 2001 at 7:00 p.m.

Shop News

Y2K is over. We had a busy year, with several new programs. Patty and I started off the year in Jan. with a trip to DEMA in Las Vegas. The buzz was "youth" and scuba. The Recreational Scuba Training Council (RSTC) lowered the age for certification to age 10. The dealers responded by making equipment for the age group.

New Training Agency

We signed with Technical Diving Institute & Scuba Diving International. TDI will allow us to offer technical classes as we get trained to teach them. SDI allowed us to certify 10 year olds as well as offer an Advanced Certification Course. SDI also recognizes the K-9 specialty.

Youth Programs

After returning from DEMA, we designed and promoted our own youth program and named it SCUBA SEAL. SEAL stands for: Skill, Equal, Academics, Learned. This program is directed by Jeannie Kerbs, who really enjoys working with this age group of and the Venturing Crew which is directed by the Boy Scouts of America. SEALS is for 8-10 year olds, and Ventures is for boys & girls 14 and up.

Bay Islands, Honduras

During April of 2000, Michelle and I visited the Island of Roatan for a great week of diving and enjoyment in the warm Caribbean climate. The Island of Roatan is the largest of the Bay Islands and is just North of the mainland of Honduras. The Bay Islands belong to Honduras, but because of some of the early settlers, the primary language is English instead of Spanish, which is the main language on mainland Honduras.

I became interested in Roatan after reading an article in Scuba Diver magazine. The article described the bargains available to lure divers back to the Bay Islands after Hurricane Mitch discouraged a lot of people from traveling to Honduras. Actually, the Bay Islands weren't hurt much during the hurricane and any damage was quickly repaired. It really was a bargain. I selected the Fantasy Island Resort that turned out to be *the* Fantasy Island of the TV show. It is a 16-acre island a bridge off Roatan and is beautiful and lush with tropical vegetation. For about \$100/day and unlimited shore diving. Actually, the shore dives were from a gazebo with a cable that led to an airplane and a shipwreck. Air tanks were delivered to the gazebo at any time upon request.

Airfare costs a bit more than other places, but since we wanted to go during school break, we were locked into a higher rate. Normal travel is from Houston International (make sure you fly the right one, there are two) either through Belize or directly to Roatan. The primary airline is called TACA, but despite its questionable reputation, we arrived just fine with all of our luggage.

Upon arrival, we were required to attend a dive briefing. It is an SSI operation, so we spoke the same language. Complete medical coverage was provided for a \$2/day donation. The office, complete with hyperbaric chamber, was next to the dive shop. We were assigned to a dive boat with a dive master and boat captain. Each dive was made from our boat, which allowed us to leave our gear onboard all day. At the end of the day, we

we rinsed it in a nice big dunk tank and stored it in a room that was part of the dive shop.

The dive sites were varied and we went to a new site for each dive. The more famous sites, Mary's Place and Calvin's Crack had openings in the coral for a great swim-through. Most of the dives were on the south side of Roatan, but one day we also dove the north side. The dives were led, but the dive master always gave us the option to make our own dive and find our way back. There were lots of big groupers, yellow stripe fish, and parrot fish. We also saw barracuda and an 8 ft. nurse shark. Shortly before we arrived, our boat group saw a 12 ft. marlin on one dive. I thought I was going to use up my air tank from laughing on one dive when a Remora tried to find a home with one of us. It went for Michelle's leg and she thought I was grabbing her. It was a persistent thing for the whole dive. We did do a lot of wall diving and the joke on the boat got to be, "I sure hope this is going to be another wall dive".

It was a great trip and one we would highly recommend. We met a lot of great people from the U. S. and from several foreign countries.

—————Phil Stirn

Catalina Adventure-Inland Scuba Style

As the title indicates, it was an adventure to say the least! From our mad race to the coast from Las Vegas to the waiting Sand Dollar Dive Boat, it was from start to finish a memorable experience.

We arrived thinking the roads from Las Vegas were filled with non-stop non-thinking MORONS. Then we overshot the exit, had to go back up the coast to find the dock. We were even trapped outside the dock area by the walking Barnum & Bailey's Elephant Pack! I was thinking that there was no way we were going to get on board & that the last 10 hours were for naught when we found an alternate route. Whew!

When we met our captain we knew immediately that we were in for a wonderful time. We were assigned our sleeping quarters & bunks by Our Dive Mistress (Queen of the Boat, Lady of the Tub...Patricia). We quickly realized that we had all packed way too much of everything. The next time

we'll take 1 extra shirt, sleepwear, 2 swimsuits, and a towel for the shower. Forget the fashions, all we did was eat, sleep, dive, eat, dive, eat, dive. You get the idea. The highlight of the eating was the request of Patty to have halibut for a dinner & our captain said, "I think we have some FROZEN PATTIES IN THE FRIDGE!" Patty was sad and asked how fresh. Our captain donned his gear & dropped out of site, returning in about 30 minutes with, not one, but 2 20# fish he had speared! I'm not fond of seafood, but I've never tasted anything to equal it. Yum! Can't wait till next time. There was food prepared for us coming back from every dive, as well as the regular 3 meals/day. No one can say they didn't get enough to eat, unless it was Brad. I swear the kid never fills up!

We left Catalina about 11 p.m. & watched the shore disappear. We woke to the gentle swaying of the boat & greeting of the smell of good food & the barking of dogs off in the distance. Dogs? Sea Lions! The diving was good & we dropped down onto a reef consisting of layers & layers of brittle star fish. Kathleen & I saw a bat ray watching us as we swam into a gentle current, and lots of fish and the miracle of great visibility.

We then pulled up anchor, went to the other side of the island to dive in view of the harbor seals & lots of aquatic life. Each ocean dive makes better divers of the whole group. The next dive everyone went different directions, so all had great stories. My bride & I opted to go to a cave to see if we could navigate there with a substantial current in our faces and get back. When we had 1/2 tank of air left, we headed back and literally coasted back to the anchor line.

Then on to Catalina Island got diving with the sea lions! What a remarkable adventure that was to have them come right up in front of you & bark under water. They are so agile and acrobatic it was fun to just sit on the bottom and watch glide by. Some did a night dive—John Mahlum is the authority on that one. Those of us on the surface noted some navigational problems when they ended up banging on the bottom of a boat docked for the night and the occupants were awakened by the incessant pounding. We laughed & tried to discount the disorientation as a faulty compass.

We dove in kelp beds, too. What a fun thing to write about in our logbooks.

One of the last things the captain did was take individual pictures of us to put on his website. Our dive group was great. We now have new friends from New York & California. —Garth Nelson



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Inland Scuba News

(Continued from page 6) Crater

After everyone assembled on the platform it was time to be assigned partners. I was assigned Brad Christensen, Keith & Patty's 14 yr. old son. I was assigned Brad for air sharing reasons. Keith & Patty know I use a lot of air.

We were told before diving not to go below the wagon wheel at 45 feet. This was to keep the sediment from being stirred up at the bottom. I don't think anyone followed that rule.

For my first dive with Brad, we descended slowly to about 45 ft. I was a little nervous and as the adrenalin started shooting through my body I sucked some serious air. Not seeing the wagon wheel, we descended deeper, going to 55 ft. I couldn't seem to stay neutrally buoyant so I kept playing around with my BC. While down there, I saw some divers going even deeper, it looked like some went all the way to the bottom. I found out later they were having trouble staying neutrally buoyant as

well.

After 14 minutes of swimming around and enjoying the deep we headed back up. After a 5 minute stop at 20 ft. we were at the surface. We were the first two up. When we got to the surface, I noticed that I had used half my air. I was at 1470 pounds. Brad had used about 500. After resting on the surface we began our second dive. There were several of the divers that hadn't surfaced yet. This time we descended to about 45 ft. and found the wagon wheel. It wasn't long before we heard Patty using her noisemaker to get the attention of those who hadn't surfaced yet. With a little urging from Brad they headed to the surface. As Brad & I ascended, I noticed I had about 700 pounds of air left, so breathed off of Brad's tank during our safety stop. After a 20 minute safety stop (and a new tank for me), We descend to 45 ft. At that depth we swam through some hoops and found a tra-

peze bar and just laid back on the bar until we were horizontal and relaxed until it was time to ascend. When we reached the surface I had 2300 pounds left after a 17 min. dive.

It was then time to go, the two hours of diving really went by way too fast. Brad was a great partner, I let him lead out and he did a great job of controlling our diving times and ascents. His 50+ dives experience really showed.

The crater was great fun. I want to do it again. This was the first time I had used a dive computer. It was very nice. I finally had most of it figured out by the end of the day.

I'm afraid I'm hooked on SCUBA. Let's see, I have one more dive at Belmont to complete my advanced certification. I can't wait. Did I tell you about the day I made 7 dives at Belmont? Well, that's another story.

—————Doug Conway