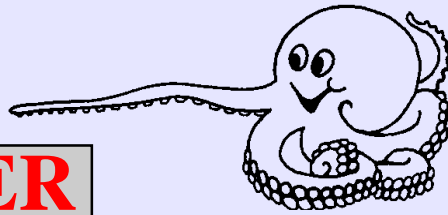
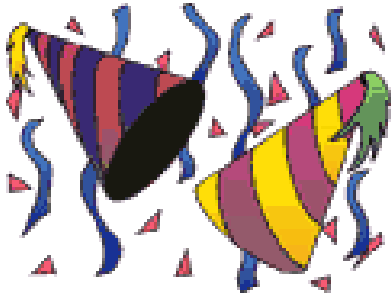


THE REEF SEEKER



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January - 2010



HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

Welcome to the future. Hopefully you said a proper goodbye to 2009 and appropriately welcomed in 2010. It's going to be an interesting year on a number of levels. Perhaps the most interesting and most directly affecting all of us will be the economy. It looks like we might finally be bottoming out or slowly pulling out of the recession. For the dive industry as a whole, 2009 was again a fairly bleak year with an overall decrease in sales, numbers of people getting certified, and numbers of people diving. Perhaps as consumer confidence starts to build back up, that trend will reverse itself. If not . . . well, we'd rather not think about that yet.

As far as Reef Seekers specifically goes, we've been weathering the economic turmoil fairly well. (Ironically, it looks like losing our lease at the end of 2006 might have been a blessing in disguise as switching from a brick-and-mortar to a diving-only business has actually worked out fairly well. Of

course, lopping off \$200,000 in annual fixed overhead makes a big difference.) We had a bit of a dip this year which was partly due to the economy and partly due to my schedule but not a big deal.

I'm really looking forward to 2010. There will definitely be changes but there are many exciting things happening, many of which I'll be detailing in this newsletter.

And once again, I want to thank you for doing business with Reef Seekers. Whether it's off the beach at Redondo, down the stairs in Avalon, off the side of the Great Escape, or at some exotic dive location halfway around the world, our goal is to provide you with the best diving experiences that we can, and we continually appreciate the fact that this seems to strike within you a responsive chord.

So here's to a great 2010 on all kinds of levels!!!



2010 BOAT SKED

On page 3, you will find the official Reef Seekers boat schedule for 2010. (You should have re-

ceived this as a separate e-mail this past Thursday as well.) There are some changes you will note - some significant, some not as much. Here's what you'll find:

FEWER BOATS - Our sked last year did not anticipate divers diving less often. As a consequence we ran a number of boats light and had to cancel some others. That's not good for us, the boats, or for you. So we've cut the schedule roughly in half this year and instead of running a trip every other week, will generally have one boat per month.

LOWER PRICES - We've reduced our targeted profit margins on boats which results in lower prices to you. Comparing our 2009 Regular Purchase prices to our 2010 Regular Purchase prices, they're 13-19% cheaper in 2010.

GREAT ESCAPE - They're now the only charter boat we're booking. We have no trips scheduled for the *Sea Bass* or the *Cee Ray* in 2010. This is nothing against those two boats as we've always had a good time with them. Most of it is dictated by the economics of a reduced schedule and having to turn a profit on boat trips.

STATEROOMS - No changes here. You can still reserve *Great Escape* staterooms ahead of time for an extra \$10/diver. (For the 5-

- continued on page 2 -

day trip, staterooms will be an extra \$50/diver, give the length of the trip.)

AVALON TRIPS - We've added five trips to Avalon's Underwater Park (not counting the U/W Cleanup in February) to our boat trip schedule. This gives us an opportunity to dive Catalina's frontside as well as we can run these trips with as few as four people.

REDONDO DIVES - You'll notice a bunch of Squid, Night, and Beach dives as part of the dive schedule in 2010. Again, we can do these with just a few divers, even as few as one.

FIVE-DAY AUGUST TRIP - We're very excited to have been able to work out a Monday-Friday 5-day trip on the Great Escape in August. Best of all this will be a limited load - 20 divers plus 4 DMs. We've got a great tour of the Southern Channel islands planned, generally 5 dives/day, and we even included the crew tip in the overall price. If this goes well, we'll try to make this an annual thing.

EARLY PURCHASE - The Early Purchase Price is now good up until 7 days before the trip. (Previously it had been 14 days.) This was a change we made in September and we'll stick with it.

REEF SAVER & AFFILIATED CLUB DISCOUNT - It's now a flat \$5/trip (\$25 on the 5-day trip in August). More on that rationale in a separate article.

That's about it. We may have fewer boat trips but we've still got plenty of opportunities for you to go diving and we hope you'll be availing yourself of as many of them as possible.

REEF SAVER CARD CHANGES

There are some changes that will take place with our Reef Saver Card but the underlying principle remains the same: The card pays for itself very quickly and it's a way for us to "reward" our more loyal customers with slightly better prices. Here are the new Reef Saver Card caveats:

COST - Now just \$15 for individuals and \$25 for couples (and we don't care how you define "couple").

BOAT DISCOUNTS - The discount on boats trips will now be a flat \$5/trip rather than a percentage of the trip price.

FOREIGN TRIPS - The discount now applies to foreign trips as well, starting with our Bonaire trip in May, at a rate of \$5 off per diving day, so basically it'll save \$25-30 off each foreign trip. This formula will also apply for our August 5-day trip on the *Great Escape*.

REPAIRS - You will now receive \$5 off labor on all repairs plus you'll still receive a 10% discount on required parts.

BEACH DIVES - For those Redondo escorted dives (Night &

Beach) where we're charging, signing up under the Early Purchase (\$5) plan will mean, with your discount, these excursions are still free to you.

In some ways the Reef Saver Card in 2010 will actually be a better deal than it was in the past because you have a chance to make back an amount far beyond what it will cost you for the card. Of course, how often you use it is up to you but the more you use it, the more valuable it becomes.

AFFILIATED DIVE CLUBS

All the benefits of a Reef Saver Card apply if you're a paid-up member-in-good-standing of an affiliated dive club. These include (but are not limited to): Aquarium of the Pacific Dive Team, Barnacle Busters, Blue Water Divers, Burbank Dive Club, Douglas Dive Club, LABUE, Laguna Sea Dwellers, Lost Patrol, Pacific Explorers, Sole Searchers, and West LA Dive Club. If your club's not listed here, have your club president contact us and we'll get your members included.

2010 DIVING VACATIONS

**February 7-13 • Florida
(Manatees & Caverns)**

March 12-21 • Socorro

May 21-29 • Bonaire



IMPORTANT STUFF YOU NEED TO KNOW

Tickets are fully refundable with 14 days or more notice.

8-13 days notice, future trip credit.

7 days or less, no refund/credit.

But if we sell spot, refund is issued.

All diving must be done within recreational sport diving limits: depths 130' or less, no-deco bottom times, and standard compressed air used as a breathing gas.

Limit one scuba tank per diver.

Pony bottles do not count as a second tank.

All of our *Great Escape* trips have a limited number of staterooms (bunks with a door), reservable for \$10/diver extra.

Boat landings & locations:
Great Escape - Queen's Wharf (LB)
Cat. Express (SP) - San Pedro
Cat. Express (LB) - Long Beach
 Driving directions on our website.

Phone reservations are accepted on all trips and will be held for up to 72 hours.

After that time, unpaid reservations can be cancelled without notice.

All destinations are dependent on weather and may be changed at our sole discretion w/out notice.

You must show your certification card at sign-in. No c-card, no scuba diving.

A general briefing is conducted on each trip and is mandatory for all divers.

We generally try to offer 4 dives on all boat trips but sometimes, due to various circumstances, we may only be able to offer 3.



REEF SEEKERS DIVE CO.

2010 SoCal DIVING

Also on-line: www.reefseekers.com

Prices listed are for early purchase (spots must be *paid in full* 7 days or more prior to the trip) and regular purchase (spots paid in full less than 7 days before trip). Early Purchase saves you \$5. Reef Saver discounts (\$5) apply to both prices.

Get a Reef Saver Card (\$15) & save \$5 each trip

DAY	DATE	BOAT/SITE	INTENDED DESTINATION	PRICE
Wed.	Jan. 6	Redondo	••• Squid Dive •••	• N/C •
Saturday	16	<i>Cat. Expr</i> (LB)	Avalon Underwater Park	\$95/100
Wed.	20	Redondo	••• Squid Dive •••	• N/C •
Sunday	31	<i>Great Escape</i>	San Clemente (frontside)	150/155
Wed.	Feb. 3	Redondo	••• Squid Dive •••	• N/C •
Wed.	17	Redondo	••• Squid Dive •••	• N/C •
Saturday	20	<i>Cat. Expr</i> (LB)	29th Avalon U/W Clean-Up	\$125
Sunday	28	<i>Great Escape</i>	Santa Barbara Island	145/150
Wed.	Mar. 3	Redondo	••• Squid Dive •••	• N/C •
Wed.	24	Redondo	••• Squid Dive •••	• N/C •
Sunday	28	Aqrm. of Pac.	Annual Diver's Day	Free to divers
Saturday	Apr. 3	<i>Great Escape</i>	Farnsworth/Cat backside	130/135
Sunday	18	<i>Cat. Expr</i> (SP)	Avalon Underwater Park	95/100
Saturday	24	<i>Great Escape</i>	San Clemente (Pyramid Cove)	150/155
Wed.	28	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Wed.	May 5	All boats	Chamber Day 2010	\$90
Wed.	19	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Saturday	June 5	Redondo	Redondo Canyon (daytime dive)	5/10
Sunday	13	<i>Cat. Expr</i> (SP)	Avalon Underwater Park	95/100
Wed.	16	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Saturday	26	<i>Great Escape</i>	Santa Barbara Island	145/150
Wed.	July 7	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Sunday	25	<i>Cat. Expr</i> (SP)	Avalon Underwater Park	95/100
Saturday	31	<i>Great Escape</i>	Catalina (Ship Rock & more)	125/130
Mon-Fri	Aug. 2-6	<i>Great Escape</i>	Cat/SBI/Nick/SCI/Farn (5-Day)	\$1249
Wed.	11	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Saturday	14	Redondo	Redondo Canyon (daytime dive)	5/10
Sunday	29	<i>Great Escape</i>	San Clemente (backside)	150/155
Wed.	Sept. 8	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Saturday	25	<i>Great Escape</i>	Farnsworth/Cat backside	130/135
Wed.	Oct. 6	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Sunday	24	<i>Cat Expr</i> (SP)	Avalon Underwater Park	95/100
Saturday	30	<i>Great Escape</i>	Santa Barbara Island	145/150
Wed.	Nov. 3	Redondo	••• Night Dive •••	5/10
Saturday	13	Redondo	Redondo Canyon (daytime dive)	5/10
Saturday	Dec. 5	<i>Great Escape</i>	San Clemente (frontside)	150/155
Wed.	15	Redondo	••• Squid Dive •••	• N/C •

Reservations: (310)652-4990

(If you get the machine, please leave a message.)

NEED RENTAL GEAR? GET A 20% DISCOUNT AT HOLLYWOODIVERS, OCEAN ADVENTURES, & SCUBA HAUS (SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY)

NICK ICORN SPEAKS AT SOLE SEARCHERS

Scuba icon Nick Icorn will be the speaker January 11 at the Sole Searchers meeting in Pasadena.

Nick was part of the first formal Underwater Instructors Course. He holds Instructor certifications from the YMCA, Los Angeles County, NAUI, SSI, PADI and NASDS. In 1969 he became the first Executive Director of PADI developing programs and standards. He worked for many of the US diving manufacturers including US Cavalero, Ocean Dynamics, Healthways, US Divers, and Sherwood Selpac as an engineer helping in the design evolution of diving equipment.

His honors include two NOGI awards, the DEMA Reaching Out Award, The California Scuba Service Award, the Conrad Limbaugh Memorial Award, International Legends of Diving Award, and is a member of the NAUI Hall of Honor. Nick will add one more to that list as he will be inducted into the Scuba Diving Hall of Fame in Grand Cayman in mid-January.

Nick loves talking about the evolution of diving and has an extensive collection of dive equipment from over the years, which he frequently displays at various scuba functions.

For more info and directions, go to this website: <http://www.solesearchersdiveclub.com/>. The meeting starts at 6:30 and Nick will speak around 7:30PM.

AVALON CLEANUP IN FEBRUARY

We always look forward to the Avalon Underwater Cleanup. This year, that date is February 20.

We'll leave at 6:15AM out of Long Beach which gets us there in plenty of time for the 10AM start.

Cost this year to go with us will be \$125 (no early Purchase or Reef Saver discount) which covers the boat, taxi, Cleanup event fee (dive, t-shirt, raffle ticket), and gear storage post-dive or transport to the UW Park for afternoon diving. (And we'll have our traditional Miniature Golf Championship following the awards ceremony.)

It's not too early to get signed up. Give us a call at 310/652-4990 and get your name on our list.

PICTURE PAGE - The 2010 Rose Parade

(All pix by Ken Kurtis © 2010)



***We loved the wizard
and the origami dragon***



P.O. Box 11634
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WWW.REEFSEEKERS.COM



***The kids from Shanghai
were still skating at the end***



***We also really liked the
snowboarding dogs***



***Who thought this outfit
was a good idea??***



***Hands-down favorite:
Fish from Downey***