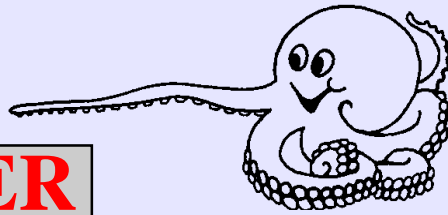


THE **REEF** SEEKER



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April 1, 2010



CONDOS TO BE BUILT AT SANTA BARBARA ISLAND

Through a clerical error, the California State Coastal Commission has granted approval for condominiums to be built in the middle of the Rookery at Santa Barbara Island.

The error occurred when no one noticed the word "Island" on the condo permit application. "We thought they were building in the city of Santa Barbara," said a staffer who wished to remain anonymous. "And we gave it a quick approval because we figured no one would notice another condo project there."

Unfortunately, with this permit in hand, work on the project has already started. The first units are being built in the corner near where the Elephant Seals hang out. The developers actually consider that to be a selling point of these units.

"Our residents will be able to observe the wildlife up close, from the comfort of their balconies,"

said a spokesman. "And we have a noise abatement program in place where all the Elephant Seals will be shoed back into the water at night so their barking won't affect our residents." When it was pointed out that "shooing" them might be a violation of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the same spokesman said, "So who's going to file the complaint? The Elephant Seals??? I doubt it."

When all three phases of the project are done, roughly 90% of the existing beach and breeding grounds will be displaced by the condos. When asked what would happen to the sea lions who call the place home, one of the developers said, "It's a big island. I'm sure they'll learn to cope. And maybe they'll get a free meal every now and then when someone barbeques and has some extra. But we'll let them use our pool as long as they can punch in the gate code."

Although the building will continue, the developers still need to get an occupancy permit which would have to be issued by the Channel Islands National Park Headquarters (since SBI is part of Channel Islands National Park). If you'd like to try to help slow this down, call Park Headquarters at 805/658-5700 and tell them you are adamantly opposed to building condos in the middle of the Rookery at Santa Barbara Island.



AVALON HARBOR TO BE DRAINED

The City of Avalon has announced that they're going to drain the water in Avalon Harbor and refill it with "new" water to hopefully improve the visibility as well as reduce contaminants in the harbor. This will likely affect Avalon's adjacent Underwater Park as well.

The drains - which are right under the Green Pleasure Pier - were opened at midnight and, because these are high-volume drains that were installed years ago for just such a purpose, it's presumed the drainage will be completed by Noon today (Thursday, April 1). At that point, the Avalon Fire Department's hoses will be used to refill the harbor and it's expected that the project will be completed no later than 6PM Friday night.

But if you're planning a trip to Avalon or a dive in the Underwater Park this weekend, you might want to confirm with the Avalon Harbormaster that the harbor has been drained and refilled. You can call them at 310/510-0535 to find out the current status of the project.



CENSUS GOES TOO FAR

You probably know that the U.S. Government is conducting the once-every-ten-years-census, and today's the day you're supposed to turn in your census form. But did you know how far they've gone?

The Census is run by the Department of Commerce and since they're in charge of counting people, they decided they should count other things too that have an effect on U.S. commerce. This year they've decided to count fish.

But the way they're going to do it is highly questionable. They've leased huge trawlers with purse seine nets and plan to essentially pull every fish from the ocean and count them, and then return them to the water. But they won't necessarily be returned to where they were taken from.

"This gives us a chance to rebalance the fish populations," says Census Bureau Director Robert Groves. "We can help achieve a balance of nature that Mother Nature herself hasn't been able to achieve." Needless to say, many people are skeptical that this will work. There's also grave concern as to how many fish may die while being out of the ocean or waiting to be relocated. Groves says not to worry.

"Your government has built huge fish relocation ponds all over the

country," Groves says, "for exactly this purpose. When this is all over, those ponds will then be turned into community swimming pools. And because this was done with Economic Stimulus money, it's win/win all the way around."

Except for the fish. Groves concedes there may be casualties. "But that's why we've built state-of-the-art flash-freezing facilities at every relocation pond and have already struck deals with Ralphs and Vons to buy the fish that die. And after our project is done, those flash freezing plants will be turned into public ice skating rinks so it's win/win all the way around."

Many are not convinced, myself amongst the doubters. If you ask me, the whole thing sounds rather . . . fishy.

STAR TREK DIVE

Here's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity: Paramount Pictures is dismantling old *Star Trek* sets but they're also trying to make a little bit of money off of it before they have to totally scrap everything.

So what they've decided to do is take a full-size mock-up of the

Starship *Enterprise* which is currently housed at Stage 51 on their Hollywood lot and - because this is also where they film underwater sequences for other movies - they're going to flood Stage 51 and give us a chance to "dive" the *Enterprise*!!! Is that too cool for words or what???

Reef Seekers has secured exclusive rights to this special dive. It is happening THIS weekend both Saturday AND Sunday but we've only got a limited number of slots available each day. Cost of the dive is \$200 and here's what you'll get:

- Your picture taken with cardboard cutouts of Kirk, Spock, and Picard
- A one-hour dive exploring the *Enterprise* allowing you to "go where no man has gone before"
- A special dive light that looks like a phaser
- A neoprene beanie with Spock-like-ears attached to the outside
- . . . and a "Dive Long and Prosper" t-shirt

If you want to go, call us right away at 310/652-4990 and reserve your spot. This is one of those offers that seems too good to be true and you don't want to miss out.

2010 DIVING VACATIONS

May 21-29 • Bonaire

July 9-18 • Yap

August 2-5 • Channel Islands

CERTIFICATION CARD RECALL

Both PADI and NAUI have announced a recall of any certification card issued since April 1, 1995, due to a possible defect in the thickness of the card. Though this does not affect all certification cards issued, it affects many. However, there's a way you can check to see if your c-card is affected.

First, soak the card in hot water for about one minute. Then towel it dry. Now hold the card up to a bright light. If you can see the light through the card, then it's one of the defective ones and must be immediately returned to PADI or NAUI for replacement at no cost to you. (If you don't want to do the test yourself, you can take your card to your local dive shop and they can perform the test for you.)

The defect stems from the card manufacturing process, which PADI and NAUI both say has been corrected. But it seems that the cards were made by the same people who manufactured gas pedals for Toyota so extreme caution is being urged. Better safe than sorry.

DEEP DIVING CAUSES BALDNESS

It makes sense when you think about it. When we're diving deep (say, deeper than 100') we're under increased pressure. Scientists have now discovered that that pressure actually pushed hair follicles back IN to the scalp. Deep diving repeatedly or over long periods of time can damage the follicles to the point where they simply don't come back out and it makes the

UPCOMING BOAT & SHORE DIVES

Sun	Apr. 18	<i>Cat. Express</i>	Avalon Underwater Park	\$95/100
Sat	24	<i>Great Escape</i>	San Clemente (Pyramid)	150/155
Wed	28	Redondo	Night Dive	5/10
Wed	May 5	<i>Cee Ray</i>	Chamber Day benefit dive	\$90
Wed	19	Redondo	Night dive	5/10
Sat	June 5	Redondo	Redondo Canyon (day dive)	5/10
Sun	13	<i>Cat. Express</i>	Avalon Underwater Park	95/100
Wed	16	Redondo	Night dive	5/10

Prices are listed as 14-day advanced purchase/regular. Food/air included all trips. All diving to be done on compressed air only - no nitrox. Fuel surcharge may apply.

diver bald. Interestingly, it only seems to affect male divers.

You can see this time and again on dive boats where divers are sporting a shiny pate and while they may claim that they shave their heads, if you downloaded their dive computers, you would discover the real truth.

So if you're a male, have a good head of hair and want to keep it that way, remember this: Deep diving destroys follicles. Stay shallow so your hair will maintain its body, sheen, and luster.

Need more proof? Look at these heads:



END NITROGEN BUILDUP

Are you tired of having to decompress or doing a “safety” stop to get rid of that pesky nitrogen that builds up in our bodies on dives? Well, your days of hanging at 15' while singing “It’s a Small, Small World” in your head are now over.

Introducing Nitro-Gone, the first pill scientifically proven to eliminate excess nitrogen in the body. Take one Nitro-Gone pill before every dive and eliminate nitrogen build-up. Nitro-Gone’s patented formula makes your body a nitrogen repellent and, during the dive, you’ll actually be oozing nitrogen instead of storing it.

You’ll even see this for yourself because Nitro-Gone causes a re-

verse osmosis to take place and anywhere you’ve got exposed skin (like your face or your hands), that becomes the nitrogen’s portal out of your body. You’ll see tiny micro-bubbles oozing from your skin and harmlessly drifting away. That’s your proof that Nitro-Gone’s working. It makes the Nitrogen . . . Gone!!!

So say goodbye to cumbersome dive computers and pesky dive tables. Think you’ll need a six-hour Chamber “treatment” if you get bent??? Not with Nitro-Gone. It simply takes the worry - and the nitrogen - out of diving.

Nitro-Gone is now available at finer dive shops everywhere and comes in single-day 4-pill/4-dive packets, and the convenient I’m-Going-On-Vacation 20-pill/20-

dive packet. And if you’re a senior, try Nitro-Gone/Silver, packed with extra calcium and natural Psyllium Fiber that senior divers need.

DISCLAIMER

For those who are veterans of this newsletter, you already know what I’m going to say here. For those of you who are new to the newsletter, welcome to our annual April Fool’s edition. We hope you enjoyed reading the stories as much as we enjoyed writing them. And just to be clear: Nothing that you’ve read this month (except for this disclaimer & the trips) is true. Which part of “April” and “Fools” was unclear to you?????

PICTURE PAGE - Arles, 4/1/1890

(All pix by Vincent Van Gogh © 1890)

**Recently-discovered painting
by Vincent Van Gogh
that was actually painted
underwater!!**



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