

The Mouthpiece

APRIL 2001

THE ACTIVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



APRIL-MAY DIVE SCHEDULE

▶ ▶ ▶ For the yearly schedule please visit www.activedivers.org ◀ ◀ ◀

APR 4-8 FLORIDA SPRINGS

See Article This Issue!

APR 22, SUN AFTERNOON DANIA BEACH \$29.00

Sites include Tracy, Jay Scutty, The Caves, Sunrise Ledges, The Peter, Oakland Ledges, Hog Heaven, Average depth 40-60', visibility 30-50', usually mild currents.

APR 28, SAT AFTERNOON N. KEY LARGO \$29.00

Sites may include: The Christ of the Abyss, the Elbow, N. Dry Rocks, N. N. Dry Rocks, Grecian Rocks, Carysfort, Shark Reef. Average depth 30', usually no current. Average visibility is 30-50' with many tropicals, moreys, cudas.

MAY 6, SUN AFTERNOON TAVERNIER \$29.00 (BBQ \$7)

Sites may include: Conch Reef, Davis Ledge, Hens & Chickens, Little Conch, Capt. Tom's Ledge, 40' Ledge, Fish Trap, Horseshoe. Average depth 30', average visibility 40-60', many moreys, schooling tropicals, unusual pillar corals. **BBQ after dive, see article this issue.**

MAY 12, SAT MORNING BISCAYNE NATL. PARK \$45.00 Tanks Incl.

Sites may include: Rocky Reef, Elkhorn Forest, Ball Buoy, Far Out Reef, Cuda Ledge. Usually no currents, massive corals, small caves. The Keys "Best Kept Secret", only one commercial boat allowed in area. Depth 20-30', vis 30-60'.

MAY 20, SUN AFTERNOON ISLAMORADA \$29.00

Just 4 miles past Tavernier, sites may include: Hammerhead, The Canyon, El Infante, Crocker, No Name, The Valley Aquarium, Alligator. Average depth 30-40', visibility 40-50'. Some current, many fish, shallow wrecks.

MAY 26, SAT MORNING MIAMI BEACH (ADVANCED) \$29.00

Choice of more than 40 wrecks. Some unlike anywhere else: Jet airliner, M-60 Tanks, Tankers, Freighters, Tugs, Barges. Most are intact with penetration possible. Average depth 90', visibility 40-50'. Expect currents and dramatic profiles, many fish. **See advanced criterion this issue.**

Earn Free dives & BBQ

Throughout the year, ADA will offer BBQ's after selected dives. You can enjoy both for free! All you do is volunteer to be the chef of the day - we provide a list of foods, you buy & bring to the dive. After the dive, you & the ADA Safety Officer cook & serve to the hungry divers. It's not too hard, and a great way to go for free! Call Lon & sign up. (ADA will reimburse monies spent for food).

Post-Dive BBQ's \$7

May 6 - Tavernier, June 2 - S. Key Largo

Last year our BBQ's were a great success. A hot delicious meal after an exciting dive is a wonderful way to punctuate the day. Cooking will begin just after we hit (not too hard I hope) the dock, and before you have stowed your gear, your choice of grilled meats will be ready for your enjoyment. Including:

- Grilled chicken, hamburgers, hotdogs
- Soda or beer
- Potato Salad, slaw, chips & condiments

When you make your dive reservation, indicate if you plan to join us (check the dive schedule first to make sure it's a BBQ dive) & include an additional \$7 with your dive schedule reservation payment.

CAYMAN BRAC 2001 JULY

19-23

DIVE THE WORLD FAMOUS
Russian Destroyer & Bloody Bay Wall!

5 days and 4 nights-\$945*

**subject to change until ticketed*

PAYMENTS

Deposit of \$200 due 4 days
after reservation.

\$350 due March 1, \$395
due April 1

CALL LON TODAY!!!
305-251-4975

PACKAGE INCLUDES

- Hotel (double occupancy)
- Round trip air fare
- Breakfast and dinner
- 3 days of 3 tank dives
- Airport transfers (Cayman Brac)

ONLY TWO SPACES LEFT!!

WHALE RAMS ADA DIVER

The following is a description of an event that took place on March 11, 2001, 80 miles north of the Dominican Republic in an isolated and hostile open-ocean environment known as the Silver Banks, where scuba diving is not allowed, only snorkeling. These words are the victims own, but the facts have been verified by video tape produced by a professional videographer who recorded the entire event.

'Twas a lovely day, seas a comfortable 3-5 feet, the sun dancing between fluffy pink clouds. After two days of fruitless searching the open ocean, we could feel it in our bones- today was the day. Today we would finally have our first face-to-face encounter with the object of our quest- the reputed nemesis of the deep, a hump back whale.

Our guide slowed the rubber dinghy and whispered "Enter the water very quietly, they are just ahead." We saw nothing, but did, and they were. There, 90 feet below, were three forms asleep on the ocean bed. If average, the smallest would be a calf born six weeks earlier, 15 feet long and 2000 lbs. The larger mother would be 40-50 feet and 100,000 lbs. The third and still larger would be a male escort. From our Whale Watching 101 orientation we knew the drill from here.

Knowing is sometimes more tantalizing. The escalating anticipation caused a proportional decrease in the diameter of our snorkels, soon we would be sucking air through a soda straw! Then it started, some movement, the smallest. We knew it would be him. Unlike his adult companions who can sleep for 30-40 minutes on a single breath, the baby would be forced to surface every 3-5 minutes. He slowly began his ascent, straight up towards us. But suddenly there was an abrupt and dramatic change of protocol. The baby whale shot upward like a Polaris missile from it's silo. By the way, isn't "baby whale" an oxymoron like "military intelligence" and "jumbo shrimp"?

But I digress, back to the missile. As the distance between us rapidly closed, I came to the frightening conclusion that this missile's laser guidance system was locked on my belly button. The name Jonah flashed in my mind as I braced for the inevitable impact. But HALLELULAH, at the very last second the baby was able to lurch it's head to the right, just enough to miss me! It was a near miss, but the vacuum and turbulence it created shook me till my jowls flapped like a sea gull in a hurricane. Then, strangely, in "freeze-frame time" I saw the body inch past me, frame by frame. With each frame the body tapered toward the end- the tail fluke. I knew that the tail fluke could be equally dangerous, but in my "freeze-frame" state of mind I reasoned "Babies are soft and cuddly, there is nothing about them that can hurt me. A baby whale must be made of blubber or gelatine or something soft." And then BAM! The fluke hit my arm just below the shoulder with a force equal to a Louisville Slugger smashing a long home run. Blubber my ass! More like cast iron!

As the video would later show back at the viewing lounge, I was indeed lucky the whale was able to avoid a "head on" collision and that the fluke just missed my rib cage, which

would have put me on the bench for a long time. My painful but minor injury paled in comparison to the other possibilities. Moaning in my snorkel, I still was able to chuckle as the baby scampered back to it's mother much like a neighbor kid who just put a rock through your picture window. After a few minutes of the reassuring presence of it's mother, the baby again was forced to surface. But this time, much to his credit and to what I believe was an intelligent animal learning from trial and error, the baby gently, and in complete control, surfaced for air. In the next 15 minutes he repeated this procedure three times. But on the fourth, something happened. As he started up, he stopped. I felt a tremor, and then all three forms levitated slowly from the bottom. In a perfectly synchronized ballet, it was obvious all three leviathons were coming up. Slowly but inexorably they grew larger. I held my breath, not knowing what to do next, so I did nothing. They inched closer with their backs to us on a 45 degree angle. Then, just before breaking the surface, all three slowly rolled to their left, which brought us face to face with their port- hole sized eyes. At that instant there seemed to be a connection on some level I didn't understand. But I did understand their tolerance was a gift to us that could and would be revoked without warning, should they deem it necessary. It was clear they were in no mood for nonsense. Who were we to argue with these mountains of flesh and blood just a few feet from our face plates? As they nuzzled the surface their blow holes opened and with a roar of expelled air, out shot copious volumes of water, mist, and whale breath (which would make for a great Listerine commercial). Then with a grace and beauty that belies their formidable bulk, they humped downward into the blue and were gone. Back on the surface, us clumsy humans paddled back to the rubber dinghy, leaving behind a brown slick, but taking with us a new appreciation of our importance, or lack thereof, on this planet. A privilege indeed to have gazed upon one of nature's masterpieces.

Epilogue- Our group of whale watchers included people from four different countries, young and old, professional photographers, and even first- time snorkelers. A naturalist from the California Institute of Science, specializing in marine mammals, was aboard and gave daily lectures on humpback whales, a sterling source of hands-on information. Here are a few of my favorite facts that make these beasts so endearing-

1. An adult hump back is all heart, that is, has a heart the size of a VW Beetle.
2. They are the aerial gymnasts of the whale world, can launch all 100,000 lbs into the air.
3. They are highly intelligent, have developed cooperative fishing techniques such as bubble netting.
4. They sing to us, actually it is a form of communication, another indication of high intelligence.
5. They swim from Iceland to the Silver Banks and back (10,000 miles) without eating.

For me, this trip was unlike any other before and likely to be unlike any in the future. Going eyeball to eyeball with these giants has been permanently etched into my memory bank.

Lon Von Lintel

April B-Days	
Barbara Fox	2
Margaret Davis	3
Deb Schweikart	4
Willis Hand	5
James Schulte	7
David Frank	8
Lee Wood	11
James Breen	12
Julio Raimundez	12
Debra McLaughlin	14
Stavely Lord	17
Robert Alencar	19
Chris Hansen	19
Paul Thatcher	19
Cheryl Bartek	20
Chris Higgins	20
Allen Smith	27

FAST ASCENT RATES CAUSE DECOMPRESSION INJURIES

Dr. Peter B. Bennett, prominent DAN staff physician, has studied decompression accidents in recent years and concludes, along with the European Underwater and Baromedical Society after their study last year, that fast ascent rates are the primary cause of bubble trouble. His recommendations to us sport divers making deep dives are:

1. Slow your ascent rate to ten (10) feet per minute.
2. Make a deep safety stop for 5 min. at 1/2 your max. depth if your ascent rate is faster than 10 feet per minute.
3. Also make a safety stop of 3-5 min. at 15 ft.
4. Your ascent from 15 ft. to the surface should take 1-2 min., not the usual bolt to the boat. This is the time of maximum bubble expansion.

For complete details see the "Alert Diver" March issue. (another good reason to join DAN)

FLORIDA SPRINGS TRIP DIVING-CAMPING MANATEE ENCOUNTERS

April 4-8

ADA members journey north to the Gainesville area to make base camp on the banks of the Santa Fe River. From base camp we will dive several of the fresh water springs, canoe, tube, kayak, and snorkel with the endangered Manatee. For some, the tent camping and the open fire cooking are the highlights of the trip. Yet Ginnie Springs Recreational Area has all the facilities for comfortable, yet still wilderness, camping - hot water showers, full dive center, water craft rentals, convenience store, and even cabin rentals. To see more visit www.ginniesprings.com. For complete details on our plans call Lon at (305) 251-4975.

!!! NEW !!! ADA KAYAK TRIPS

www.kayakfloridakeys.com

To be held at Florida Bay Outfitters
in Key Largo, MM 103.
(305) 451-3018.

Half day - Kayak & Snorkel

Sunday June 3rd. 9:00 a.m.

Garden Cove & North Sound Creek. Meet at Florida Bay Outfitters in Key Largo. Rent or BYK and join us for a paddle to Rattlesnake Key through a mangrove canopy and into the North Sound Creek lagoon. Snorkel and explore the shallow reefs around the key. For more information call Julio 305-551-7545.

Full day - Kayak & Snorkel

Saturday September 8th. 9:00 a.m.

Indian Key State Historic Site.

(Possible snorkeling at the San Pedro underwater archaeological preserve - depending on seas and weather).

Rent or BYK and join us for a short paddle to Indian Key. Snorkel and explore the shallow reefs around the key. Indian Key history dates from the time of prehistoric Indians to the 1830's, when the key was the seat of the newly created Dade County. Jacob Housman bought the strategic key in 1831 and turned it into a busy port of wrecking. In 1838 Dr. Henry Perrine moved to India Key to pursue his interest in tropical botany where he was killed in an Indian attack in the early morning of August 7, 1840. Indian Key has remained uninhabited and Dr. Perrine's plants have grown over the ruins. For more information call Julio 305-551-7545.

Julio Raimundez, *Social Co-Chair*

(305) 252-7035 x3314

julioraimundez@assurant.com

ADA will be offering MORE kayaking trips later this year.



TWO DIVERS LEFT BEHIND BY LOCAL DIVE BOAT

The owner of **Aqua Nut Divers** pled guilty and was sentenced for grossly negligent operation of the dive boat Aqua Nut Divers II that endangered human life.

The sentence was probation for two years and a fine of one thousand dollars. More important, as part of a plea agreement, the owner, using recognized industry experts, must establish and maintain an effective dive safety program, subject to Coast Guard approval. The defendant will make this safety program available to other diving companies. In addition, the defendant must perform community service by organizing and sponsoring a comprehensive seminar on safe diving operations, in coordination with the Keys Association on Dive Operators. The safe diving program will be held in the Keys before June, 2001, and will be open to local dive shops and interested persons. Finally, the defendant will be supervised for two years by the Coast Guard.

On February 22, 2000, the dive boat Aqua Nut Divers II abandoned two recreational divers in the open ocean, five miles from shore, following a series of daytime dives. Experienced divers from California, they rented some equipment from Aqua Nuts and paid for transportation to a popular dive site off-shore of Key Largo and near Elbow Reef. After surfacing from their first dive, they discovered that Aqua Nut Divers II had abandoned them and moved on to a second dive site. The two managed to swim to Elbow Reef Light and climbed the steel tower, sustaining minor injuries. They waited for 26 hours before being noticed by a passing pleasure craft. They were rescued soon thereafter by a Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission officer.

Meanwhile, Aqua Nut Divers II completed its second dive without noticing the missing couple and the vessel returned to Key Largo. Despite finding the divers' dive bags on board the vessel, and discovering that the equipment rented was missing, Aqua Nut Divers made no efforts to determine if the couple was left behind nor did they return to the dive sites.

In a separate Coast Guard administrative proceeding, the master of the Aqua Nuts Divers II, Captain James Evans, agreed to a one-year suspension of his Coast Guard license, with two years probation, for negligence in this case.

www.reef.org

Reef Keeper Inter.

www.reefkeeper.org

Reef Relief

www.reefrelief.org

Fl. Keys National Marine Sanctuary

www.noaa.gov

Reef Check 2000

www.reefcheck.org

Check them out on the internet. Happy diving, Lon

ADA FAMILY FUN ACTIVITIES

By popular request, ADA will be offering some fun new activities that the whole family can join in on. The following activities are currently scheduled. Look for new ones to be coming soon and give us your input if you'd like to do something that's not listed!

March 25

April 4-8

May 6

June 2

June 3

July 22

August 26

September 8

September 23

October 20

November 11

Awards Brunch, Miami

Camping, Gainesville

BBQ, Tavernier

BBQ, S. Key Largo

Kayak trip, Garden Cove

BBQ, Biscayne Park

BBQ, Tavernier

Kayak trip, Indian Key

BBQ, Biscayne Park

Picnic, Biscayne Park

Picnic, Biscayne Park

Many others to be
announced:

Flea markets, Dinner
parties, Your Ideas!

HUMPBACK WHALE DIVE!!

March 10-17 2001

The Silver Banks, off the north coast of the Dominican Republic, is the mating and calving ground for the giant humpback whales. This expedition will be aboard the Bottom Time II, a 90 foot floating resort that cruises at high speed and is very stable with air conditioned cabins and full amenities.

Approx. cost \$2500, includes boat and air fare.
At press time only 5 spaces are left.

Call Lon for details.

HOW TO MAKE DIVE RESERVATIONS

- 1) ✓ Check this newsletter or the annual calendar for upcoming dives.
- 2) ☎ Call Lon at (305) 251-4975 to make a reservation. Please do not leave requests on his answering machine, the trip may be full.
- 3) We will hold your reservation for four (4) days from the date you call. If we do not receive payment within four days, your space may be given to other members. If you wish to confirm receipt, call Lon.
- 4) Ask for details about the trip when you call. Otherwise, details will be given when you call for a weather check. (See "Important Weather Information" this and every issue)
- 5) ✉ Make your check payable to ACTIVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION, not to any individual, and mail to:
Lon Von Lintel, 15305 SW 104 Ave., Miami, FL 33157
- 6) Itemize dates of dives on bottom-left corner of check.
- 7) Do not pay for persons other than spouses or other family members. Include their names on check.

REMEMBER: That family members must have completed individual documentation to register as ADA members.

 <p>CORAL REEF SCUBA</p> <p>Jeremy Earnest <i>INSTRUCTOR • SALES • REPAIR</i></p> <p>4984 N University Dr (954) 748-5105 Ph Lauderhill, FL 33351 (954) 748-6208 Fx www.coralreefscuba.com dive@coralreefscuba.com</p>	<p>JUDY B. WILLIAMS AGENT 11205 S. DIXIE HIGHWAY NATIONS BANK BUILDING, SUITE 220 MIAMI, FL 33156 BUS: (305) 278-8600 FAX: (305) 278-0830</p> <p style="text-align: right;">STATE FARM INSURANCE COMPANIES HOME OFFICE: BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS</p>
<p>Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®</p>	
	

BUSINESS CARD ADS

Space Available

5 Issues \$50
10 Issues \$75

To Place Your AD Please Contact:

Chris Wood (305) 754-6882

Ads from \$7.50/mth

RSD's Top 10

Top 10 Signs That You Have Made Too Many Dives

- 10) You have to put your total number of dives in scientific notation.
- 9) You look back at your logbooks and realize you've spent more time at decompression than work.
- 8) You're permanently prune-fingered.
- 7) Your dive log is available on Amazon.com.
- 6) You have named all the zebra mussels on your favorite wreck.
- 5) You worry that your office elevator is ascending too quickly.
- 4) You've stopped logging your dives because it's easier to just log your surface intervals.
- 3) Your "time to fly" is measured in months.
- 2) Your picture appears on fish identification tables.
- 1) You perform a Valsalva maneuver prior to stepping on a down escalator

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Water Park Planned For Key West

Reef Relief is spearheading efforts to establish the Key West Marine Park. Boundaries will extend from the shore to 600 feet offshore on the ocean side of the island, from Duval Street to just before the White Street Pier. Reef Relief founder Craig Quirolo will direct the project to create a swimmer's lane marked with buoys, and access lanes for existing watersport operators.

Educational signs will be installed along the park shoreline describing local marine life and providing tips for safe snorkeling within the park. The area is a juvenile breeding and nursery ground for the species that later move out to the offshore coral reefs. Plans include placing cement habitats called Reef Balls at the site to attract coral growth.

For more information contact Reef Relief at (305) 294-3100.

Inside this month's issue you'll find:

- **First Dives of the new year - Check out the April - May dives this issue**
- **Cayman Brac - Dive Trip Details**
- **Springs Dive-Camp Trip**
- **New Family Fun Activities - Including Kayaking, Picnics, Camping, BBQ's, and more!**
- **Environmental & Local Issues**

THE Mouthpiece ACTIVE DIVERS ASSOC NEWSLETTER

April 2001 Issue

Dive Trips/Return Address:

Lon Von Lintel (305) 251-4975
15305 SW 104 Ave., Miami, FL 33157

Membership:

Jim Kiernan (954) 752-6234
1653 Cypress Pointe Dr., Coral Springs, FL 33071
nyflash@bellsouth.net

Conservation:

Robert Fox (305) 378-6733
Darryl Blackstone (305) 248-4310

Social:

Julio Raimundez (305) 551-7545
Patricia Hackett (305) 387-0015

Newsletter:

Chris Wood (305) 754-6882
cwood6@bellsouth.net

Website: www.activedivers.org

Email: info@activedivers.org



THINKING ABOUT MOVING? ☎ DON'T KEEP IT A SECRET!

Call Jim at Membership (954-752-6234) *It could save your newsletter.*