

The Surface Times

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"The Hunt for the Black Toledo"

-Randy Joy, PADI Master Instructor

No, it's not a bad Tom Clancy novel, but one of the most interesting search and recovery dives I've ever performed.

Several years ago the camp ranger at Sid Richardson Scout Ranch (SR2) called me up and asked if I could help them find a lost item at the marina. I'd dove in Lake Bridgeport for the Scout Ranch several times before helping them do repairs on the marina or looking for lost gear, but this one proved to be unique. The item they'd lost? A submarine.

That particular summer camp they had several large radio controlled model boats, and their shining star, a radio controlled submarine, a 1/72 scale model of a Los Angeles

class boat (submarines are referred to as boats). The scouts were given explicit instructions: Don't take the sub to water deeper than 3 feet, as the radio waves for the control systems can't penetrate the water. It only took them a week to forget this rule, and they brought the sub to the marina. Even though it was a radio controlled model, its' size was nothing to dismiss, being over 5' long, and the cost, with all the electronics and hardware was over \$3000. The scouts wanted to dive the boat and then surface it, doing one of those cinematic blasts out of the water and belly-flopping onto the surface.



The sub had some failsafes built in; it was supposed to blow it's little ballast tanks and surface anytime it lost radio signal from the controller. Unfortunately, the boys put the boat in such a steep dive, it shot to a 25' depth (which was too deep for it's watertight seals), flooded the electronics causing it to fail to blow its ballast tanks, and rendered it "dead under the water." That's where I came in.



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Certifying Handicapped Divers & Buddies

By Tim Landers, MSDT

About a year ago I went through the Handicapped Scuba Association's (HSA) Instructor Training Course. HSA is an international organization founded in 1981 and is dedicated to improving the physical and social well being of people with disabilities through scuba diving. Jim Gatacre, who founded the organization, was my instructor trainer.

Either from accident or disease about 15 percent of the population is statistically classified as "handicapped." However, most of these people can safely scuba dive – including paraplegics, quadriplegics, blind, and those with high-functioning brain injuries or mild retardation. That percentage translates to millions of people in the United States who are potential scuba divers but may have dismissed this sport as out of reach.

The HSA student's diving proficiency is based on their ability to assist another diver in the water. For example, Level A divers are certified to dive with one other person; Level B divers must dive with two other able-bodied divers (so each person has a buddy that can assist); Level C divers require two other able-bodied divers where one of them is trained in diver rescue. In this case, the third member of the buddy team is not there to further assist the B or C diver; they are there to ensure the safety of the Level A or above diver (like a PADI Open Water diver) that cannot be assisted by the Level B or Level C diver. Level B and Level C divers are certified as recreational scuba divers and do not have any sport diving restrictions.

Unlike the PADI Open Water course, the HSA Open Water Course includes basic rescue (for Level A) and Marine Life Identification – all students are required to describe and identify one marine life on each of the student's five certifying scuba dives. HSA also has an Advanced Scuba Diver Certification.

HSA also offers the HSA Dive Buddy Course (DBC). This course offers able-bodied divers the opportunity to expand their underwater world to include sharing it with a handicapped diver. An HSA certified Dive Buddy receives nearly as much information and skill training as an HSA instructor except the training focuses on recreation instead of instruction.

During my training I was not only the "instructor" but also experienced simulated issues common to divers with a handicap. At one point I couldn't use my arms and legs to simulate a quadriplegic diver and at another point my mask was completely blocked out to simulate a blind diver. I was amazed how enjoyable diving was with no sight! The feeling of total weightlessness as well as the feel of the hydrilla at Clear Spring Scuba Park was something I had always taken for granted.

Not only does HSA train instructors, divers, and buddies, they also coordinate and conduct dive vacations for people with handicaps. All of the destinations are researched and evaluated for wheelchair accessibility through their resort evaluation program. HSA trained and certified instructors are present on all trips to insure safe and enjoyable experiences.

For more information about the HSA program see <http://www.hsascuba.com>. If you are interested in becoming a certified HSA Dive Buddy or have or know of someone who has a disability but would like to scuba dive please contact me (tim@we-b-divin.com).

Creature Feature



Porcelain crabs, left, are decapod crustaceans which superficially resemble true crabs. They are a good example of carcinisation, whereby a non-crab-like animal (in this case a relative of a **squat lobster**, right) evolves into an animal that only a specialist would know is not a true crab. They live in all the world's oceans, except the Arctic and Antarctic Oceans.





"The Hunt for the Black Toledo"

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The camp ranger had to foresight to go out and actually find spots where the sub might be, using a fish finder and dropping buoys. When I arrived, there were seven markers in the marina. Simple, eh? Descend down, look around, move to the next one. Shouldn't take more than 10 minutes.

As many of you know, there is only one natural lake in Texas (which one is it?). The rest of the Texas lakes were formed when a dam was built on a river - in Lake Bridgeport's case, the Trinity. Since the lake actually has a river flowing under it, it has an interesting thermo cline. At about 15', the slightly murky water becomes what we call in the Search and Rescue business "black water." You can't see your hand in front of your face; you can't tell if a flashlight is on unless it is pressed to your mask. You can read your gauges only by thinking ahead - I carry a Zip-Loc bag full of clear water. Placing it over the gauge, and then pressing it against my mask, I make a clear column of water that I can light up and see the gauge. Your buddy is your tether - this kind of diving is done like Public Safety Diving; you're tethered to a tender on the shore. You communicate by tugs on the rope.

Once you descend down, you lay on the bottom and just move your arms in a sweeping motion to search. Since we had buoys marking the possible spots, I'd attach a short line to each buoy and do a circular search pattern, just like what is taught in the PADI Search and Recovery Specialty. After each unsuccessful search around a buoy, you surface and go to the next. It actually takes 10-15 minutes to search around a buoy because of the water visibility and the debris found in a lake (trees, stumps, canoes, you name it). At 72 minutes, on buoy number 7 out of 7, I felt something

Fall Celebration

For those of you who were unable to come for our fall celebration last weekend, we had a wonderful time. There were eleven folks who took advantage of the free discover scuba. So there are some new dive buddies in the making for all of us!

It turned out that we had prize winning BBQ with home-made secret sauce provided by one of our dive family who regularly wins ribbons around the state in BBQ cook-offs. If for no other reason than this you missed a great opportunity!

Several folks took the opportunity to get into our pool and try out the new Zuma BCD from Aqualung. It is designed specifically for travel and folds up into the smallest package imaginable. Packed with your wet-suit, primary and backup flashlight (with batteries), mask, snorkel, regulator, computer, boat bag, and suitcase it will be

under twenty five pounds. That leaves plenty of room for a couple pairs of shorts and t-shirts.

We are sorry you missed the party, but come by when you can to see the BCD and chat.



Ask a staff member about low cost [Dream Trips](#) while you are here.



Trips for 2009 and Beyond

Cozumel

Christmas, December 25-28

Diver \$1085

Non Diver \$945

Staying at Hotel Cozumel Resort this time. The trip price also includes round trip airfare on American Airlines, transportation to and from the airport, 2 dives on Saturday and 2 on Sunday. Most trips the group opts to add dives so many times we do 3 dives on Friday, 3 or 4 dives on Saturday and the 2 dives on Sunday. Since Friday is Christmas there will be no diving.

Excluding airfare, Diver \$440

Cocos Island

October 25— Nov 06, 2010

Diver \$4235, check web site

A lush, uninhabited island 300 miles off Costa Rica's Pacific coast. Rocky pinnacles surrounding Cocos are beacons for big animals and big action.



St Croix

December 5-12 \$1259+ air

Nekton Live aboard

Up to five dives per day. If you have never taken a dive vacation on a live aboard you have not lived! Make this your first.



Training Specials

Learn to Dive Package

A whale of a deal, tell your friends.

Group Class Tuition, Student Materials, Personal Gear (Mask, Snorkel, Fins, Boots, Bag) chosen from a wide variety of options, and a shorty wet suit. Upgrades are available should you desire.

\$695

WBD Season Pass

Take any or all of the 38 PADI/DAN specialties offered at We B Divin' in a 12 month period. Up to 3 crew packs included.

Get your PADI Master Scuba Diver and your DAN Diving Emergency Specialist.

\$699 — **Unbelievable!**

eLearning

Don't have time to spend in classroom but want to get certified? Sign up for on-line learning. Do all of the classroom on your time at your location on your PC. Then spend 8-12 hours with us in the pool and 4 dives in open water. Package price \$720

Divers Alert Network

DAN Travel Insurance

This is Dan's newest product. I am sure that I have not reviewed every Trip Cancellation and Interruption policy available out there on the market, but this one is very competitive in benefits as well as cost. Also, of course, when we

use this product we are supporting DAN which is always a plus.

Travel insurance is good for those who want to plan a trip but have pending concerns like the health of a loved one. It is very valuable when planning a BIG trip like Galapagos. Many times trips like this

must be planned far in the future and we simply cannot know what life will put on our plate in the interim. So this type of insurance protects us from a total loss.

Check the details from our web site by clicking here

DAN Dive Insurance



A Word from Our Sponsors



Free Airsource

Purchase an Aqua Lung or Sea Quest BC, regulator, Suunto computer and take any scuba training course and receive a free airsource.

Offer valid through 31 December 09



Save \$150 Instantly

\$150* instant rebate on the purchase of a **Cobra, Cobra3, D4, D6 or D9**
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Free backpack and logbook (\$75 value) with purchase of HelO2 or Vyper Air. While supplies last.



**Options Include
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- MK0 Undergarment—\$140
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- Fusion Boots—\$138
- Heat Zippered Hood—\$80
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- Fleece Watch Cap—\$35
- 1 mm Neoprene Cap—\$20
- Quick Draw Laces—\$20

- 5 mm Neoprene Gloves—\$80
- 3 mm Neoprene Gloves—\$70
- 6mm Neoprene 3 Finger—\$80
- Dry Glove Wrist Rings—\$60
- Dry Glove Rings—\$80
- Dry Gloves with Liners—\$48
- Complete Dry Glove Sys \$170
- Short Sleeve Helmet—\$35
- LS Hoodie—\$90
- Ball Cap—\$25
- Traveler Backpack—\$158
- Military Spec. Bag—\$158
- Seal Saver—\$10
- Zipper Wax—\$10

Divers Alert Network

Membership

DAN is the only organization I am aware of that is actively pursuing medical dive research. They provide assistance to all divers (regardless of membership status) through 800 phone numbers and will accept collect calls from anywhere in the world. This alone

is worth our support with membership fees of \$29 per year. The included subscription to Alert Diver is just a bonus.

Dive Insurance

This is the best option for Medical Dive Accident Coverage that I have reviewed. There are three plans from \$25 to \$70 per year covering

not only medical coverage for a dive accident but extra transportation, extra accommodation, lost diving equipment and much more.

I cannot stress enough how valuable it is to have this coverage. Check the details from our web site by clicking here

DAN Dive Insurance



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The Surface Times

We B Divin' is your personal resource for scuba training (PADI), equipment sales, service, and travel.


We pride ourselves on individualized training, especially for people with water related anxieties. Our rental gear includes SeaQuest weight integrated BCD's (women's and men's), computers, and regulators for state of the art training and the ultimate in safety.

Remember, enjoyment and safety are enhanced by comfort and proper fit. We will personally fit you, whether your primary interest is diving or snorkeling.

We offer both group and individual travel opportunities. Both singles and couples are welcome. Singles may ask to room share or can choose the single supplement option. Everyone is welcome - divers, snorkelers, non-divers, shoppers, etc.

Think Outside the Bowl!

There is much to learn, many places to go and much to see.



Come learn with us, go places with us and see with us.



Don't Make a Costly Mistake!

One of Apple's three founders sold his shares back after only two weeks. That 10% stake in the company is now worth \$1.5 billion. How much did he get for it?

- A. \$800 B. \$8,000 C. \$80,000 D. \$800,000

Answer:

A. Ronald Wayne, who created the Apple logo, drew up the first contract and wrote the Apple 1 Manual, received \$800 for his 10% stake two weeks after the company was founded in April 1976.