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OCTOBER 2006

## HEARD ANY GOOD LOBSTER TALES LATELY?

**S**O I LOST MY JOB, and it is lobster season. Life is sweeeeeeeet! I have been lobster hunting since I got certified in 1987. People have various opinions on lobster hunting that may or may not be credible as far as the amount of lobster that are out there. I decided to look at research papers on-line today and made a significant discovery: Scuba divers are not the problem when it comes to lobster populations!

The problem has been with the lobster fishermen who set between 100 – 500 traps per area. They had a tight mesh trap until the 1960s that caught all sizes. The perfect trap caused a 2/3 decline in the California Spiny Lobster Fishery. When DFG changed the rules and made the lobstermen use large wired traps that allowed the shorts to get out, the fishery went back to peak levels of the best harvest, around World War II. So we really have as many lobster as before, but again, the lobster fishermen get most of them. They do not have a 1 hour limit bottom time. ;-)

Opening night was filled with excitement. I belayed my usual consumption of gallons of wine at wine tasting and instead drank coffee—so much coffee I did not go to sleep until 5 AM. I left for Cress / Mountain Streets at 10:30 PM and parked on Mountain. The first thing I heard was the waves crashing on shore with a regularity that mimicked a washing machine. I noticed no other divers around so down to the beach for a wave size estimate and dive-o-mometer reading. Yikes! The sets were coming in from 4 - 6 feet in size and there was ZERO slack time between sets.

As I was down by the Cress promontory, I saw three police officers with the big

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY  
*Konrad Fry*



flash lights. I asked them if it had been pounding all night down here and they said they did not know. Suddenly it dawned on me that they were on the look-out for gay men making out on the beach and not lobster divers ;- ) Heads up gentlemen!

I returned to the top of Mountain Street where Boom Boom Room was rocking and spilling into the street. Hanns, Lance, Ruth Harris and friends were all there. We looked at the surf and swells and went back down to the beach and decided to call it off there. Dr. Debbie and two friends had just checked some sites and had negative comments. John Doyle showed up. Ruth and her gang went to Crescent to see if it was better.

John and I decided to go to Shaw's Cove and see what was going on. We noticed ZERO divers at the most popular spots and only 4 at Boat Canyon. At Shaw's we saw two divers go in. From their lights we determined the surge was at a minimum 10 feet. We found out later it was more like 15 feet of surge! Dr. Debbie and her AoP friends came down and decided NO on Shaw's, but later called and said Boat Canyon looked good....until the swells came in and munched the two divers over the reef on the right. So that was opening night.

Debbie Karimoto had great conditions at Montage and was given 2 bugs by her friends. All she and her buddy saw were apparently shorts but many other divers got lots-o-bugs at Montage on opening night.

Opening Day Mountain Street: Lance and I showed up to see if things had changed. Yes, the sun was shining and now you could see the multitude of surfers! The waves were too big and too tight like an undersized dress at a weight



watchers' meeting! Many others showed up. Ruth Harris and friends showed up and we all said we would dive another day as glumness prevailed.

Monday, I decided to just dive



no matter what happened. I put the word out and we had an excellent group show up at Cress / Mountain. Patrick had problems with his LED light so I loaned him mine. Everything else looked good so we went down to the surf, ready to hunt. The waves were



1 – 3 feet and totally nice compared to Friday and Saturday. I went in first and everyone else followed. As I was self-congratulating on how easy this was going, my fin strap pulled out of both holders Arrrrrrgh.

I had to go back up the stairs and up PCH to my Explorer to get my Schrade pliers and multi-tool to get the thick rubber strap hooked around and through the strap holder/cincher. It took me \_ hour to finally get the thing together and when I got down to the shore again I noticed that all the other divers were right where they had entered the water. It turns out that all the lobster were in 10 feet of water or less and there were plenty to get right there. I went out a little further and did not see any. Then over to Brooks Street and a little shallow and there they were. I saw about 30 total, grabbed 4 but they were all a tiny bit short. After a simple exit, the perfumed air spoke volumes. I was smelling skunk and got skunked. The take: Joe nailed three, Lance nailed two – one, a two-pounder - and Mike got the biggest that looked about 3 lbs!

I am going out again tonight (last Tuesday) before the baited traps get pulled and the population plummets again. Stay tuned for the results. The following pictures (thanks to Hanns Manship) tell our Monday night tale. The giant lobster is from our super SOCDC hunter, Rick Borntreger. He always nails the big ones. Arrrrrrrrrrgh.

-Konrad

*-Konrad*

# “COMING ATTRACTIONS”

## **SOCDC 11 AM Dive:**

Every Saturday email: [kcfry1@yahoo.com](mailto:kcfry1@yahoo.com) for next location.

## **SOCDC October Meeting**

(Quarterly Raffle)

Wednesday October 11th 6:30 PM Fuddrucker's El Toro Road.

### **Speaker: Dr. Bill Bushing:**

**“Munching and Mating in the Macrocytis,”** an overview of the two fundamental activities of any species in our SoCal kelp forests.

## **Girls Gone Diving—Yeah!**

Hey ladies, please join us for the first “Girls Gone Diving” Dive that will take place at the Montage Reef on Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am. We will meet in the parking lot at 9:00am. Please join me and Susan Allen as we launch our new monthly dive, the “Girls Gone Diving Dive”. Be sure to bring a change of clothes that you'd be comfortable in when we head off to brunch at Coyote Grill after the dive.

For more information and to let us know you plan to join us, please email me, Debbie Hill Titus, MD at [debra@divein.tv](mailto:debra@divein.tv).

## **Sun Diver to Santa Barbara Island:**

### **October 22nd**

Email [socdcdiverboat@hotmail.com](mailto:socdcdiverboat@hotmail.com) to signup with Wendy.

SOCDC 2006 Fall Lobster Boat Dive

Sundiver to Santa Barbara Island

Saturday October 22nd

- \$140 members, \$150 non-members includes food, tanks and air, \$45 for non-divers includes food and a great day out on the water

- Sign up by sending an email to [socdcdiverboat@hotmail.com](mailto:socdcdiverboat@hotmail.com).

- Boat bunks are assigned on a first signup and pay, first choose basis.

- Spots are secured by sending checks to SOCDC, PO Box 3687, Mission Viejo, CA 92690

- Boat leaves at 1AM sharp and returns 6PM.

Check <http://www.sundiver.net> for directions to the boat location at Alamitos Bay.

- Can board the night before after 8:00PM

## **Two Harbors Weekend Camp & Dive (Updated info)**

**November 10th - 12th** • Departing from Marina Del Rey on Fri. Nov. 10th at 9:45 am on Marina Del Rey Flyer and will arrive in Two Harbors at 12:00 noon after a short stop in Avalon.

- We will return on Sun. the 12th leaving Two Harbors at 4:15 pm arriving at Marina Del Rey at 6:30 pm.

- Come join us! Trip includes round trip boat fare, 2 Nights / Heated Ocean View Cabin, dinner Fri. & Sat, breakfast Sat. & Sun., 2 tank boat dive on Sat. morning w/ tanks and weights, unlimited shore dives inc/tanks and weights and plenty of island time. Cost is \$182 divers/ \$110 non-divers. Call Lora Cross at 949-279-1546 or email [lcross13@cox.net](mailto:lcross13@cox.net) to make a reservation.

- Snorkel, dive, hike, kayak, swim, sun your self on the beach or hang out at the cafe! There are 21 cabins that sleep 2 people each, 7 have double beds.

## **SOCDC 2006 Xmas Boat Dive Peace to Anacapa Island**

Sunday December 17th

\$90 members, \$100 non-members includes food and air. Need to bring your own tanks on this trip.

- \* \$40 for non-divers includes food and a great day out on the water

- \* Signup by sending an email to [socdcdiverboat@hotmail.com](mailto:socdcdiverboat@hotmail.com)

- \* Boat bunks are assigned on a first to signup & pay, first choice basis.

- \* Spots are secured by sending checks to SOCDC, PO Box 3687,

Mission Viejo, CA 92690

- \* Boat leaves at 7AM sharp and returns 5-6PM.

- \* Check <http://www.peaceboat.com> for directions to its new location in Ventura Harbor

- \* Can board the night before, after 9:00PM

# THIS MONTH'S SPEAKER -

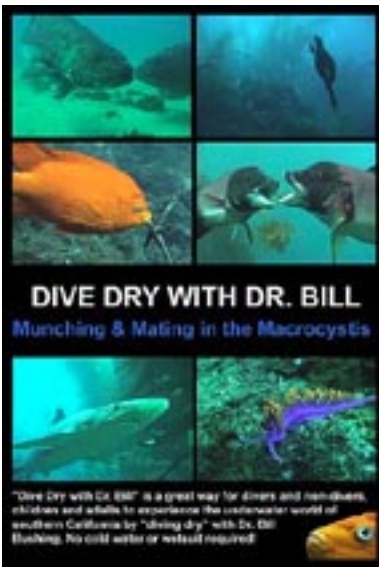
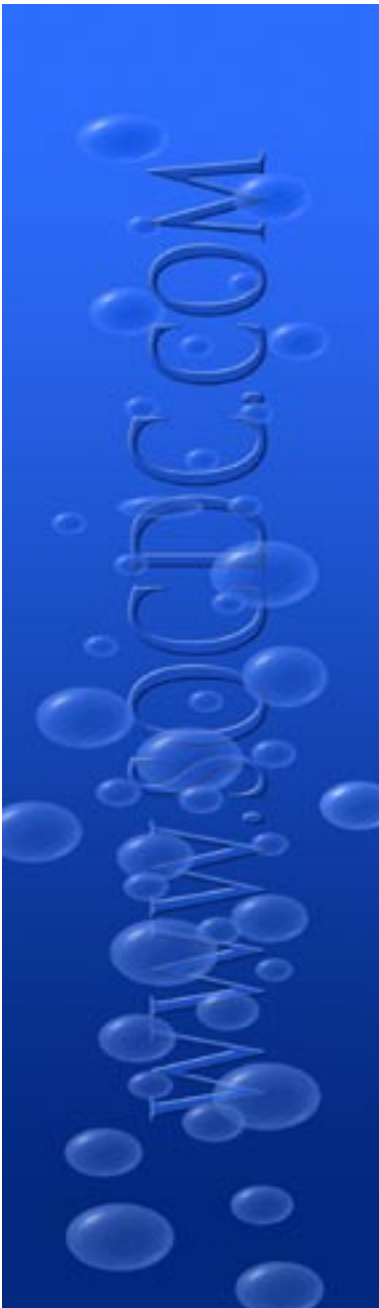
CATALINA ISLAND'S "DR. BILL"! HIS TALK  
"MUNCHING AND MATING IN THE  
MACROCYSTIS," IS AN OVERVIEW OF THE  
TWO FUNDAMENTAL ACTIVITIES OF ANY  
SPECIES IN OUR SOCAL KELP FORESTS.

Dr. Bill Bushing first sucked air from a SCUBA tank in the winter of 1961-62. During the late 1960's he did hard-hat diving and some SCUBA in freshwater lakes and quarries. After graduating from Harvard with biology degree in 1969, he moved to Catalina Island to teach marine biology on SCUBA at a private high school. That year he initiated his scientific investigations of Catalina's kelp forests, looking at the role drifting kelp played in dispersing marine invertebrates to the island. From the 1970's to the 2000's, Bill worked on several projects with the Cousteau's including Project Ocean Search Catalina and their Channel Islands episode in the "Rediscovery of the World" television series for TBS.

Bill received his M.A. and Ph.D. from UCSB. His research focused on the use of satellite remote sensing and GIS to study the changing distribution of giant kelp beds around the Channel Islands. He is considered a pioneer in the use of GIS for scientific study of nearshore marine environments. Bill's 750+ page dissertation makes a great doorstop or cure for insomnia.

His other research and conservation interests include the science of marine reserves. From 1995 to 2000, he served as vice president for science, education and ecological restoration (SEER) at the Catalina Conservancy, owners of 88% of the island.

Bill has logged several thousand dives and dived four of the world's continents with plans to visit the other three soon. Over the past six years he has concentrated on producing a series of educational underwater DVD's, a daily cable TV show on southern California marine life, and writing a weekly newspaper column all under the title "**Dive Dry with Dr. Bill.**" He has published well over 225 scientific papers and popular articles on marine life and conservation. His footage has appeared several times on national TV including a segment on the great white sharks of Guadalupe Island on Guy Harvey's "Portraits of the Deep" TV show. The DVD's and archived columns are available through his educational web site [www.StarThrower.org](http://www.StarThrower.org).





# Maui, Wowee!

*By Debbie Karimoto*

**Congrats to SOCDC member Michelle Grau** who is now Mrs. Steven Hoalton! They decided to get married in Maui so Derek, Erin Hubbard, Dianne Burns (who attended the last Avalon Cleanup with us) & I all made a golf/dive vacation out of it! Everyone had slightly different itineraries but considering how many of their friends and family were there over Labor Day weekend, it went extremely well. There was a huge brush fire that shut down traffic and divided the island into 3 separate parts for more than a day and affected many people's plans but when you're on Maui you learn to just go with it.

The day before the wedding we dived as a large group with 5 divers and 12 snorkelers aboard Lahaina Divers' boat that took us to Lanai. It was a beautiful day but no matter what anyone tells you, it just doesn't work to blend diving and snorkeling off Maui. They'll suck you in on the phone and tell you it will be great for everyone but it isn't. As soon as we left the harbor they told us that the snorkelers were not going to be happy. Can you imagine how that set the tone for the day? Then imagine how happy I was when they connected

me to a fresh tank with 600 psi and then went on a break... grrr!

The same snorkeling/diving thing happened last year when we used Maui Dive Shop and took our non-diving son to Molokini. He and his friend were not

very impressed. I had had high hopes that they would love it so much that they would decide to get certified! No such luck. The huge eel that Rob saw free swimming didn't even do it for him! Lesson learned: don't try to mix divers and snorkelers in Maui.

After two dive trips to Maui, I am now a proponent of smaller boats. Most of this trip we used Prodiver Maui, a six-pack out of Kihei boat ramp, and they were fantastic. They really cater to the needs and wishes of their customers and they use full tanks. The cattle boats just want to go through their routine.

OK, so what did we see while there?? Michelle finally got to see her first shark! She had gotten tired of

Erin and me talking about the various shark species we had seen here and there because she had still not seen even a horn shark! She finally saw reef sharks, although I don't recall if she saw a whitetip, a gray reef shark or both! She saw her fill of eels,



too. We dived at Makena while her fiancé snorkeled above us and I found a stout eel poking out under a pencil urchin. The rest of the eels were mostly whitemouths.

Lanai had nudibranchs and Michelle and Erin were fantastic at finding the tiny little guys! Derek was my eel spy finding big and tiny ones. Some SOC divers we met on the boat also found a Whitley's boxfish and we did a cool swim-through that one of the freediving guys in the wedding party swam through at 45 fsw. Wow! Lanai as a dive destination was not too impressive though. Take me back to Molokini!

The morning after the wedding, Erin and I drove from Ka'anapali down to Kihei to get on the Prodiver boat—another victim!! This time we did Backwall's Eneui and Makena's 5 Caves and saw more sharks, eels and turtles amongst all the other cool critters.

My sister Dj and her husband Steve came to Maui for the last couple days of our trip so we were able to introduce them to the island in 2.5 days. We hiked Iao Valley, dived Molokini and snorkeled Black Rock.

My favorite dive site at Maui still is, without a doubt, Molokini's backwall. I dived the backwall on 5 different days with Prodiver Maui and it was gorgeous and different each time! I kept bringing new recruits along with me so now Derek, Erin, Michelle and Dj have all been there, too! They each got to see the crater as well. Erin also went into her first bubble cave and Michelle did St. Anthony's Wreck with all its tire trash, um... artificial reef.

Between all the beautiful tropical fishes, eels, rays, sharks, corals, nudibranchs, blue-banded lobsters, and turtles I was in diving heaven. It was difficult to get on that return flight. The good thing about returning home is all the photos I can look at to remember it all! Check my gallery for new Hawaii pix. More soon!

Oh, and one more lesson I learned on this trip: Don't forget your integrated weight POCKETS when you take a dive trip!! Duh!

## **3R's - Rocks, Rips, & Reefs**

**Date: Saturday October 14, 2006**

**Time: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm**

**Location: Reef Point (Crystal Cove State Park)**

**Street: 8471 Pacific Coast Hwy,**

**City State Zip: Laguna Beach**

Park at the far south end of the parking lot on the beach side of Coast Hwy (if it is the same as last year!)

Only once per year do we get our very own 3Rs here in Orange County. It is put on by the Greater Los Angeles Council of Divers (GLACD) which includes OC in its territory.

The 3Rs program is a great way to help divers get familiar with many elements of beach diving, especially safe entries and exits. Reading the ocean conditions and learning the local species are other useful elements.

NOTE: You use freediving equipment for this session, NOT scuba gear. Really, all you need is your regular exposure suit, mask, snorkel & fins, but a weight belt with just a few pounds of lead is beneficial as well. Do NOT plan to scuba during this session, although if the conditions are favorable you may want to scuba dive afterward!

Also, bring a beach chair and \$5. Parking fees may also apply depending on your arrival time.

## **Your OC Diving Habits, S'il vous plait?**

I respectfully ask that you complete a brief survey of your dive site preferences and habits at specific Orange County dive sites. This is being conducted on behalf of the cities of Newport Beach and Laguna Beach as part of a larger project on user impacts on three (3) specific sites that are already protected as State Marine Parks or State Marine Reserves.

I think you'll find it easy to complete. Your honest replies will have meaning for resource managers who evaluate and manage our local marine recreational areas.

I hope to get many returns from a good cross-section of the entire diving community. Hunters, freedivers, photographers, lookers, dive pros, researchers... everyone who dives off Orange County by beach or boat should be well-represented in the poll.

The survey will be active throughout October. There is a link to a map at the beginning of the survey that you may find useful. It is anonymous although you can share your contact info if you like.

<http://www.ocdiving.com/surveys/index.php?sid=2>

Safe diving everyone!

*Debbie*

[www.OCdiving.com](http://www.OCdiving.com)



*Ask Dr. Debbie...*

## The Underside of Water: Reflections on the Meaning of Diving

*By Debra A. Hill, MD*

Recently while viewing some old videotape that my husband and I shot in Truk Lagoon, I noticed something about the shots that I hadn't before. Typically I'm focused on what we are shooting of the reef or sea life, but this time I noticed that there were several shots looking from the depths, up to the underside of the water. Some of these were of the diver plunging into the water, some were from the diver's perspective of looking up as they were exiting the water, and some were of just plain old looking upwards to the underside of the water.

I often like to gaze upward to watch the underside of the water as it moves in an inverse manner compared to that of the surface. As I was looking at the video we'd shot in Truk, I began to contemplate the unique characteristics of the underside of water. It is a ceiling, albeit a permeable ceiling, for us when we are diving, and so it also is a door. But, it also reflects back images like a mirror. And, while this underside of water is like a mirror, it is also a window as well that lets us view impressionistic appearing images of what is on the other side—giving a magical appearance to an often unnoticed world above.

I had initially planned to write a more technical and informative article this month about medicines that have their origins in the sea, but decided to save that for the future. Instead I felt that at this time of year when the season is changing, it is a time for reflecting. So I am sharing with you some of the things that I've come to treasure from my experience of diving.

As I began to think of this underside of water being a ceiling, a mirror, a window and a door, I realized that passing from the surface to the underside of the water, through that door allows me entrance into a very special home. I say home, because it is a place for sharing and for visiting with my fellow divers. This home environment affords a connection with others like nothing else on the other side of that watery ceiling. When communicating with my fellow dive buddies

underwater, there are no words spoken. Some might argue that without the ability to speak, that we cannot truly understand each other. But, actually, according to my good friend who has a Ph.D. in Communications, 97% of our communication is nonverbal, and 3% has to do with the actual words themselves.

We all have had times while diving when we had tried to communicate something to our dive buddy, but it seemed that they just couldn't understand. When I think of those times, it's usually been

when I'd tried to communicate the words of my thought, rather than the thought or feeling in its essence. When I've communicated the essence of my thought or feeling, I can tell that I've truly communicated—and it is on a deeper level often than any words could ever indicate. This level of communication can be on a very visceral level and feels like true sharing—human to human.

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of diving with Cathy Kligman at the Aquarium of the Pacific. Cathy had won the opportunity to dive as a guest diver at the Aquarium of the Pacific at

*...while this underside of water is like a mirror, it is also a window as well that lets us view impressionistic appearing images of what is on the other side—giving a magical appearance to an often unnoticed world above.*

last months' Club meeting. I had only met Cathy that night of the meeting and so didn't know much about her at all when she arrived yesterday morning to dive with our Friday Morning Dive Team, of which I am the Team Leader.

While we were suiting up I asked about her dive experiences and she told of starting to dive in 1979 and of being the President of the OBDC. The OBDC is the Old Broads Dive Club. I had not heard about the OBDC before and Cathy explained that they have about 130 members and they meet four times per year and go on fantastic dive trips together. She's dived all over the world—such as Fiji, The Bahamas, the Caribbean, and is going to Palau in February. She also shared that she hadn't been diving in about a year, and that she hadn't been in cold water since 1979.

That was about all we had time to chat about before it was time to “dive-in” to putting gear together and getting into the Blue Cavern Exhibit for our first dive, of the four, we typically do on Friday mornings. Cathy was very open and eager to wearing a thicker wetsuit than she was used to for the warm water diving. She quite matter of factly got suited up in much heavier gear than she is used to, in order to make the first dive into the 60 degree water of Blue Cavern. It was a little challenging for her to walk the distance to the entrance to the exhibit with all that gear. Cathy never complained, and once in the water, it was a dream for her.

I was reminded of the story, “The Night Before Christmas”, when Santa came down the chimney and “spoke not a word”, but went about his magical duties of gift giving.” I felt like a little elf myself as I lead Cathy into the Blue Cavern Exhibit. We cruised around, and she hovered and gazed at a friendly female Sheep head that seemed to almost want to kiss her mask to welcome her to her lovely home here in Blue Cavern. Then there was the Giant Black Sea Bass that came 'round to check Cathy out, but after a quick glance, decided he was off to other things.

The dive was short, about 15 minutes, and then we were scurrying to rinse off and get into the Tropical Reef to feed. Cathy had warned me that she'd had trouble in the past

with weight belts loosening up when wet and beginning to slide off of her straight hips. While in Tropical Reef, in the thick of beginning to feed, I could see her reaching for the ends of her weight belt. Without words, she and I solved the problem and went about the dive. She loved hovering just above the bottom of the exhibit and gazing into the face of the 10 foot long zebra shark. I could almost feel her smile through the water as she peered at a panther grouper nestled in an artificial purple vase coral. As I turned to check on the other divers in the exhibit, I saw that the turtle had come off the sandy bottom and was gliding slowly toward the surface. I signaled to Cathy to take a look. We both watched quietly as this majestic creature moved through the water so comfortably in his watery home. I found myself gazing at the underside of the water as this turtle floated up and noticed the reflections of odd shapes from the reef below and at the same time I could see the squiggly images of the railings around the exhibit and the crane that hangs over the water from the concrete walkway above the surface.

I got to thinking how amazing it is to connect with someone that I hardly know, and connect without words, in this home below the surface, where we shared in silence the wonder of these animals. This underside of water created a home with a window on a world that allowed us to look into the mirror of our own minds and communicate in a deeper wordless way that goes beyond what anyone ever experiences on land. I love the underside of water and always will—it's a wonderful home for sharing experiences.

Happy and Safe Diving!

Yours Truly,

*Debbie Hill Titus, MD*

IMPORTANT SAFETY WARNING REGARDING POTENTIAL REGULATOR FAILURE  
OF SCUBAPRO MK20: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml07/07501.html>.

*Meeting is October 11<sup>th</sup> 6:30*

*Please give your support to all  
of the people who support us...  
the dive shops, Fuddruckers and  
all of our diving friends!*



**Come join us Wednesday Night  
for Good Food and Good Friends!**

