



Anne Judge, Membership Director
 The Scuba Sports Club
 2 Pine Mountain Road
 DANBURY CT 06810

February Meeting

8:00 pm, Wed, February 12

Now A Days Restaurant
 500 Commerce Street
 Hawthorne, NY

Lada Simek presents
Select Topics
in Maritime History

See page 7 for more details



Chris Sundahl enjoys a summer day on the ocean during last year's TSSC North Carolina dive trip. Now's your chance to sign up for this year's trip! See page 7.



TSSC 2003 Diver of the Year Bob Schrage hovers along a wall off Little Cayman Island. Read all about this honor in next month's Sea Swells Log.

Sea Swells LOG

The monthly newsletter of
 The Scuba Sports Club

February 2003

the anchor line

A Vision for TSSC

As president for this year, with the help and enthusiasm of TSSC's directors, I am going to make radical changes to improve club services and make this the best possible club. Our goal is to inspire the club's members so that they will dedicate their time to:

- **Eagerly attend the monthly meetings**

Program Director Michael Prange is working hard to have the 2003 program include well-known speakers and interesting topics. The business portion of meetings will be shortened. The meetings will be moved to a location with a more appealing environment.



- **Compete to fill TSSC scuba trips**

Club trips will appeal to the interests and skill levels of club members. The scuba trips will be scheduled based upon your input, as expressed in the questionnaires that accompany your renewal forms. Dives and trips will be publicized well in advance, in an informative manner so members will learn of their attractions. Diving will continue to be conducted under the safest conditions at the least cost. Diving with the club should improve members' commitment to and knowledge of dive safety.



TSSC will continue organizing beach cleanup activity as a service to the community.

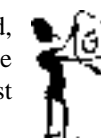
- **Participate with their families in social events and enjoy the camaraderie**

The club will offer a wide variety of social events that are entertaining and affordable, not only for members but also their families. Social Director Zsa-Renae Ho-Hsang with her team promise that we will never have dull ones.



- **Read and enjoy the newsletter**

Newsletter Director Anne Judge is going to edit and produce a polished, informative newsletter. It will inform the members of what is happening in the club and connect them with the scuba world. It will include articles of interest to the members.



Our vision for TSSC is that members will value TSSC services to such a degree that they will position them as a high priority in their own lives, and feel proud to belong to TSSC.

Soliman Shenouda

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Director-at Large Gregg Macaulay speaks with Izzy Tahil.
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Bob Bak had a great summer of diving without getting on a plane! Read about the wonderful diving in our own back yards.
- ▀ **Coming Events**6
The year's just beginning, but there are already activities to sign up for—visit the Maritime Industry Museum at Fort Schuyler, or sign up for a trip to Baja California or North Carolina.

calendar highlights

- ▀ **TSSC February Meeting**Feb. 12
Lada Simek will share some fascinating tidbits of maritime history. See page 7.
- ▀ **Tour of the Maritime Industry Museum**March 8
Lada Simek has arranged a tour of this museum at historic Fort Schuyler. Details are on page 6.
- ▀ **La Paz Dive Trip**April 5-12
A great trip at a great price, but you have to reserve by Feb. 5! See page 7
- ▀ **North Carolina Trip**July 21-25
This wildly popular trip is being repeated once again. Sharks, wrecks, great vis, warm water. This trip always fills—so reserve your place now! See page 7.



THE SCUBA SPORTS CLUB

P.O. Box 644
Rye, NY

<http://BeneathTheSea.org/TSSC/>
TSSC@BeneathTheSea.org

OFFICERS

President Soliman Shenouda
Vice President Bob Bak
Treasurer Paul Dengler
Secretary Pat Forgac
Past President Ben Brush

DIRECTORS

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Dive Operations Vadim Ternovski
Education/Safety Rick D'Amico
Enviro/Legislative Rick D'Amico
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Public Relations Judy Klotz-Simek

LEGAL ADVISOR Robert Schragger

FOUNDER Armand Zigahn

CO-FOUNDER Soliman Shenouda

Submissions to Sea Swells Log may be made in electronic or paper form by the 20th of the month. Electronic submissions (email) are preferred and should be sent to

SeaSwells@BeneathTheSea.org

Submission of paper copy should be sent to

Anne Judge
2 Pine Mountain Road
Danbury, CT 06810
Fax (208) 485-4641

Please call or email to confirm fax receipt. For information send email to SeaSwells or call Anne at (203) 778-3584.

club business

Directors' Meeting Highlights

January 2, 2003

•**Dive Schedule:** Jeff Pagano will finalize the dates and coordinate with other club activities.

•**Programs:** Michael Prange has lined up speakers for January and March. He plans to arrange speakers as far in advance as possible, at least 2 months, to allow sufficient time for publicity.

•**Budget:** Paul Dengler is collecting budget requests from all directors to prepare a club budget for the year.

•**Social Events:** A preliminary list of social events for the year was discussed.

•**Newsletter:** There will be several regular columns, including a member-of-the-month article and safety articles, and more promotion of upcoming dives.

•**General Meeting Location:** Requirements of a new location were discussed, and the Open House Party (mid-April) spoken of as a deadline for the move.

January General Meeting Highlights

January 8, 2003

On January 8 TSSC began its new year with a new slate of directors and a great presentation that taught even an experienced diver a thing or two!

Our new **president, Soliman Shenouda**, started the meeting by introducing the new directors, allowing them a few minutes each to describe their plans for the year.

Social Director Zsa-Renae Ho-Sang is putting together an action-packed year for us, and is soliciting new ideas for even more fun.

Dick Smith is leading the annual pilgrimage to the North Carolina wrecks this July and has room for 12 people. This trip is filling fast, so get your deposit in to **treasurer Paul Dengler**. (See the article inside the back cover of this newsletter.)

Gregg Macaulay is leading a trip to La Paz, Mexico April 5-12 for about \$800 for hotel and diving. This is not a club trip, but Gregg is offering club members this excellent deal. (See the article inside the back cover of this newsletter.)

Membership Director Anne Judge handed out renewal forms, and will mail the remaining forms soon. These forms are individually customized with your personal information to make the renewal process easy for you. This is a labor-intensive task, so please don't make Anne go through the process again—return the form you received from the first mailing! And don't forget to sign your waiver—no diving without it!

Anne is also our **newsletter director**, and wants lots of trip reports and photos to enliven the newsletter. This is your chance to share your adventures with your friends at TSSC. Have your articles in by the 20th of the month.

Vice President Bob Bak inaugurated the *Dive Shop of the Month* program with a short presentation by **Mike** of Captain Mike's Dive Shop in City Island, NY. Captain Mike's has just installed a new gas facility that can handle any mix from nitrox to trimix.

For more information on any of these topics, visit the club web site at BeneathTheSea.org/TSSC.

Following a brief coffee break with cookies (nice touch, Soliman!), our program for January was presented by our very own **Gregg Macaulay**, a PADI course director. He showed us how to care for our dive gear between seasons or between dive trips. Gregg has led lots of dive trips and seen lots of gear problems—if you think you've seen it all, he's probably seen more! He drew on this wealth of personal experience to explain how a little preparation can save your dives from common mishaps that might strike gear ranging from masks to booties and from regulators to drysuits. Gregg livened things up by giving away dive gear such as dive lights, mask straps, BCD cleaner, etc. (donated by **Captain Mike's Dive Shop**) throughout the presentation. Thank you Gregg for an excellent presentation!

coming events

North Carolina

July 21-25, 2003

This summer TSSC is repeating its incredibly popular trip to Morehead City, North Carolina. Enjoy warm water, great visibility, sharks and just great diving aboard one of Olympus Divers' comfortable boats. Twelve spots have been reserved for The Scuba Sports Club.

The cost for diving will be approximately \$340. The cost for accommodations will range from \$90 to \$600. Call Dick Smith at (914) 769-9394 for details. To reserve a spot, send club treasurer Paul Dengler (PO Box 116, Goldens Bridge NY 10526) a check for \$36.50 made out to "TSSC."

Dive Baja — La Paz, Mexico

The Cortez Club • April 5-12, 2003

Act fast! These rates expire February 5!!

Greg Macaulay has arranged a trip to La Paz, Mexico this spring. Though not a club trip, he is inviting club members to come, and offering them the benefit of special pricing he has arranged. To sign up, contact Gregg Macaulay at (203) 746-4983 or GMacaula@juno.com.

Come with us and enjoy adventure at its very best! The Sea of Cortez, called "the world's aquarium" (by no less than Jacques Cousteau) is home to schooling hammerhead sharks, whale sharks, blue, grey, and orca whales, sea lions, and giant Pacific manta rays, to name just a few.

Your dive expeditions begin at The Cortez Club's private jetty, built at the tip of a beautiful cove 5 km from the center of La Paz, an exciting yet unspoiled city.

The Cortez Club is Baja California's first international scuba diving and water sports center. They stock the latest water sports equipment including scuba rental equipment, sea kayaks, windsurfers, sail craft, and 12 fully-equipped, custom-built, high-speed dive boats that will get you to the dive sites in a third of the time.

The Cortez Club is based at the La Concha Beach Resort, a beautiful five-star hotel on the shores of the finest cove in La Paz. There are a divers' bar, 2 pools, 107 air-conditioned rooms and a large activity program for you to enjoy when you're not diving.

Upon arrival, you will be picked up at the airport and transported to your hotel and you need not touch your dive equipment again except while diving. They will take care of the mundane tasks of loading and

assembling your gear. Following each dive they will wash, dry and store your gear for you. This frees you to enjoy the club!

Hotel incl. taxes; double occupancy
8 days/7 nights \$315.35

Diving including taxes
4 days/3-tank boat dives \$414.00
4 days/2-tank boat dives \$368.00

Airfare must be arranged on your own. You can fly in to La Paz (LAP) but this requires traveling through Los Angeles (13 hours). We are flying directly from Newark (EWR) into San Jose Cabo (SJD) on Continental Airways (6 hours) and then taking transportation north to La Paz (\$75 round trip).

Nitrox/enriched air is available and I will check pricing. Draeger Dolphin/Atlantis semi-closed rebreathers and training are also available.

For more information on these facilities visit their web sites at CortezClub.com and LaConcha.com.

A \$100 deposit is required to hold your spot. **I am holding additional rooms until February 5. Anyone signing up after that date will pay the normal, higher rate.**

February Meeting

8:00 pm, Wed, February 12

Now A Days Restaurant
500 Commerce Street
Hawthorne, NY

Lada Simek presents
Select Topics
in Maritime History

You'll learn a lot from Lada, including

- Some types of primitive watercraft
- Construction of ships since 900 BC
- How we escaped speaking Arabic
- The day that 40,000 men died at sea
- Medieval vessels of war and trade
- The Viking ship and its construction
- Some terrible design mistakes
- Square riggers vs fore-and-aft sails
- Some terrible design mistakes
- and all about a ship that
 - killed her designer
 - drowned her captain
 - sparked a mutiny
 - suffered a major explosion
 - survived a terrible storm
 - bankrupted three companies
 - proved to be haunted
 - but succeeded in doing a job no other ship could

You dive from them, you dive to them, now learn more about the history of ships!

... and look who will be speaking at future meetings!

March 12 Bill Hamilton
April 9 Dr. Erik Larsen, MD

Directions to Now A Days

500 Commerce St, Hawthorne
(914) 769-1817

From New York City: Take Henry Hudson Parkway North to Saw Mill Parkway North.

From Southern Connecticut: Take I-95 to I-287 West to Exit 3, Sprain Brook Parkway North. Go to Saw Mill Parkway North.

From Tappan Zee Bridge: Take I-287 East to Exit 8 and then to Exit 1, Saw Mill Parkway North.

Exit 27 (Marble Avenue/Thornwood) on the Saw Mill River Parkway. (Note: Exit 27 is a traffic-light controlled intersection.) After the exit, turn right at the next light and proceed under the railroad trestle to traffic light. Turn right onto Route 141. Proceed 1 mile. Now-a-Days is on the left.

By Train: Take Metro North Railroad Harlem Line to Hawthorne. The train station is on Commerce Street. Now a Days is on the opposite side of the same street, two blocks north.

coming events

Visit the Maritime Industry Museum

11 am, March 8, 2003

Lada Simek has arranged a guided tour of the Maritime Industry Museum at historic Fort Schuyler in Throggs Neck, New York. Even if you have been there before, it's worth going again because there are always new exhibits and changes!

We will meet at 11 am on March 8th inside the pentagonal building, which is hard to miss.

The library of the academy which is next to the museum is a pleasant place to spend an hour. Interested in shipwrecks? They have hundreds of listings. Ship design, records? They have thousands.

For more information, email Lada at lada@prodigy.net or call (718) 884-4611.

To top off the day, **Gus Barry and Debbie Eckert** welcome all TSSC members who will be at Fort Schuyler to join them for lunch following the tour at their home, which is very near Fort Schuyler (right off Pennyfield Road). To help them plan this event, please RSVP by emailing DeborahLEckert@aol.com or calling (718) 792-1191 (home) or (212) 455-2677 (work).

Directions to Fort Schuyler: Take Route 95 to 295, the Throggs Neck Expressway. Take the **last** exit, marked Pennyfield Ave. Follow the exit road around and go to the traffic light at Pennyfield Ave. Make a left and go to the end.

Go through the gate (the guards will let you in) and continue following the water until you come to the fort. Meet at the flagpole, or, if it is cold, inside the lobby. The tour is free.

Dive Safety Program

9 am – 4 pm, May 3, 2003
Westchester Medical Center
Valhalla, NY

Mark your calendars! This event is *free*, but space is limited. Refreshments will be served. More information will come. Co-sponsored by Beneath The Sea. Contact Armand "Zig" Zigahn at (914) 961-2088 or Zig4BTS@aol.com.

Member of The Month

Izzy Tahil

At every club meeting this year I will be talking with a member, old or new, about diving—just a few questions about their favorite diving and recent adventures, and what they think the club should improve upon. Don't be afraid! I don't bite (too hard); this is our way of introducing you to other club members whom you may not have had an opportunity to meet yet.

At the January meeting I had a chance to spend a few minutes talking with **Izzy Tahil**. He only recently joined the club, but I have seen him at almost every meeting and he always has a smile on his face because he is here to talk diving. He was a warm water diver but recently started diving up here in the New England area with his dive buddy Vadim Ternovski (another new member and a new director). They are both in the process of getting drysuits and look forward to the upcoming dive season, so look for them both on clubs outings.

Izzy would like to see more dive training programs offered so he can build his skills and join trips like the upcoming North Carolina wreck diving trip. I'm sure with the number of instructors in this club that our new education/safety director, Rick D'Amico, will be able to plan training to meet Izzy's and the club's demands!

I look forward to seeing and talking with you at the next club meeting.

Gregg Macaulay
Director at large

Get TSSC Stuff!

Show your club spirit with TSSC decals and patches! Stick-on plastic decals are \$1, and sew-on cloth patches are \$3. You can pick them up at any club meeting from Director-at large Gregg Macaulay.



education and safety

Education & Safety Corner

Club president Soliman Shenouda has asked me, your new education/safety director, to put together a series of quizzes about diving safety for the newsletter. I'll have a different theme every month, beginning with a basic one:

Cylinders

- 1) Scuba cylinders are required to be visually inspected _____.
- 2) Scuba cylinders are required to be hydrostatically inspected _____.
- 3) During hydrostatic testing, the internal pressure of a cylinder is raised to _____ of the service pressure.
- 4) Cylinders should be stored in _____ position.

Speaking of cylinders, now that it's the off-season for diving (apologies to those drysuit divers who dive year-round), it is the perfect time to get any necessary inspections for the upcoming season. Do it now and avoid the late-spring rush!

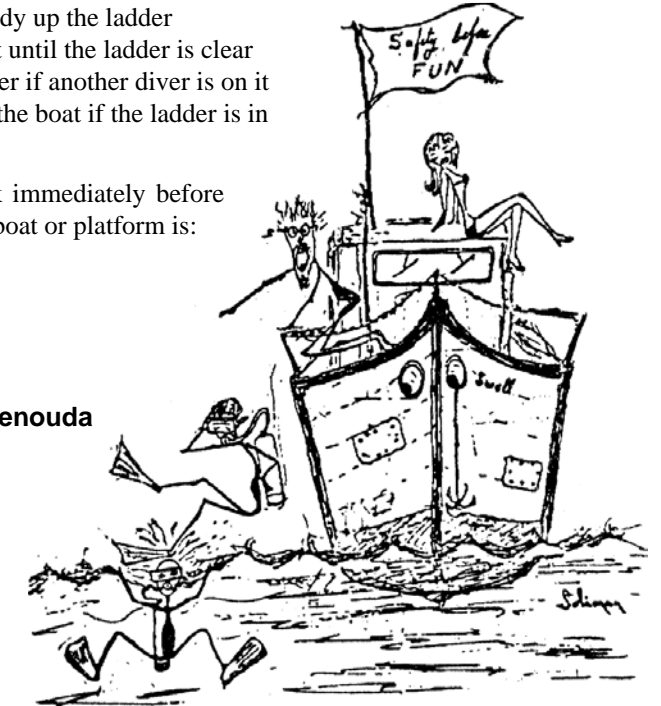
Rick D'Amico
Education/Safety Director
Usamarbiol@aol.com

More Safety Questions

These are two questions found in Skin Diver. Refresh your memory on scuba safety!

1. When waiting in the water to exit onto a boat via a ladder, a diver should:
 - (a) follow his or her buddy up the ladder
 - (b) remove fins and wait until the ladder is clear
 - (c) stay clear of the ladder if another diver is on it
 - (d) climb up the side of the boat if the ladder is in use
2. The last thing to check immediately before entering the water from a boat or platform is:
 - (a) air supply
 - (b) reserve position
 - (c) area below
 - (d) mask adjustment

Soliman Shenouda



Answers to Education/Safety Quiz: (1) yearly, or more often if deemed necessary; (2) every five years, or more often if deemed necessary; (3) five-thirds (4) the upright



Santa and his elves delight at the Children's Hospital of the Westchester Medical Center. Beneath the Sea's Ocean Pals and their Sea of Tomorrow Society held their annual Holiday Splash party on December 12, 2002. Santa, four New York Rangers, and a host of entertainers brought holiday spirit the children. Singing, coloring, magic, guessing games, cookies and gifts kept them busy. Thanks to Lucille and Ed Smith, Peter Riekstins, Billy Rigo, Christopher Sasso, and Brian Smith, as well as to sponsors Mares and Pepsi Cola.

Area Dive Shops

This list is provided as a convenience to our readers. TSSC does not endorse any shop.

Westchester Dive Center
500 North Main Street, Portchester NY
(914) 937-2685

Aqua Visions Scuba Ltd.
126 Mamaroneck Avenue,
Mamaroneck NY
(914) 381-1884

Captain Mike's Dive Center
530 City Island Avenue, Bronx NY
(718) 885-1588
http://CaptainMikesDiving.com

Cougar Sports
917 Saw Mill River Road, Ardsley NY
(914) 693-8877

The Dive Shop
265 Federal Road, Brookfield CT
(203) 740-9166
http://TheDiveShopOnline.com
Sherri@TheDiveShopOnline.com

Marsh Scuba Supply
91 Lauer Road, Poughkeepsie NY
(845) 452-8994
http://MarshScuba.com
Marsh_Scuba@worldnet.att.net

Orbit Marine Sports Center
3273 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport CT
(800) 395-3483
http://OrbitMarine.com
OrbitDive@aol.com

Pan Aqua Diving
460 West 43rd Street, New York NY
(800) 434-0884
http://PanAqua.com
NYstore@PanAqua.com

Pan Aqua Diving
461 Federal Road, Brookfield CT
(888) 388-3483
http://PanAqua.com
CTstore@PanAqua.com

Rex Dive Center
144 Water Street, Norwalk CT
(888) 260-DIVE (3483)
http://RexDiveCenter.com
DiveShop@RexDiveCenter.com

Scuba New York
2037 Central Park Avenue, Yonkers NY
(914) 779-2966
http://ScubaNewYork.com
Info@ScubaNewYork.com

A New England Dive Summer

by Bob Bak

There is one word to describe the diving we had this summer in New England. That word is *fantastic*!!

Wet? But wasn't that the plan?

This summer started out on a wet note with a dive out of New London aboard the *Atlantis* with Captain Gary Cellis. The trip originally was scheduled to go to the wreck of the *Onondaga*. Due to the violent rain, wind, and lightning that early June morning, Pete Fenninger, Jack Pereira, Captain Gary, and I knelt down on the docks on the edge of the Thames River with Dunkin' Donuts coffee in hand, and prayed to Lloyd Bridges to stop the rain and flatten the seas. He promptly did so. We soon started out to see if diving would be possible, less three not-so-hardy divers. Upon the advice of Captain Gary we choose to dive a wreck of an oil tanker in a gully of about 80 feet. Diving one of the three sisters proved to be an exciting wreck. No current, dark, 15–20 feet of visibility, good structure, and good marine life made this a nice dive at the beginning of the summer season. We had to pry Jack off the wreck. He has a bad habit of taking the regulator out of his mouth and trying to eat the mussels whole underwater. In spite of this, all came up safe and sound.

On the second dive that day we headed inshore to a protected site to dive a downed WWII P-47 single-seat fighter. The plane had crashed shortly after takeoff on a mission protecting the coast of Connecticut. The dive was in about 25 to 30 feet of water, with visibility of about 2 to 5 feet. You could feel the history all around. I came back to the boat to find Jack eating a raw mussel. A good day of diving with good friends.

Cape Ann—a sure thing

The next trip of the summer was a two-day dive in Gloucester, Massachusetts. The trip started out with a late Friday night drive up to Cape Ann Camp Site with Jack Pereira and Pete Fenninger. There we set up the tent around midnight,

though you couldn't tell due to the solar flare-up Jack had started in the fire pit. I had to break out the SPF 45. We then went to sleep—after Pete handed out the earplugs.

The next morning we had a short tour of Gloucester and breakfast. We then met the *Daybreaker* and its captain Fran Marcoux and first mate Brian (his son). At the docks we met Greg Macaulay and Rob, from Maine. The mission: scallops! We headed south to Eagles Ledge and Cat Island for those elusive scallops. The first dive was in about 70 feet of water at a cool 50 degrees. We descended as a group, with the exception of one diver who had psychological—or was that regulator—problems. Quick-thinking boat captain Fran did a fast change-out of regulators while standing on the ladder. After some quick counseling he was on his way. On the bottom lay scallops, spread out but there. Soon one or two pelicans shot to the surface with booty tied securely to their bottoms. It was a team effort.

The second dive seemed to be a washout. But in the last minutes of the dive Greg and I found the mother lode—scallops the size of frisbees! Well, maybe a *tad* smaller. I kept looking at my computer. We were in 35 to 40 feet of water with my air getting low. Finally it came time to say, "I can always dive another day." So with thumbs up we slowly ascended to the surface. We found the others had also been successful.

After dividing the booty we did what any self-respecting diver would do and headed for that famous spot in Gloucester, The Crows Nest. There we had a few lemonades with the locals and listened to them tell us of those gods, the Red Sox. We then returned to camp to clean up. Some of us (Jack) did not have drysuits.

Next it was off to dine on mass quantities of seafood and horns at Lobsta Land. Then back to the campsite where we witnessed another solar flare. Jack proceeded

to cook up crabs for a midnight snack. All was calm.

The next morning we scrambled for the boat just 5 minutes away. Jack, Pete, Rob, Ray, and I headed out to be the first on the wreck of the *Chester Poling*. We suited up quickly and down we went. The descent was quick to the break at midship. There we toured the wreck. I have dived the *Poling* a dozen times. This time I saw parts in the hold I had never seen before. A small shark accompanied us. Marine life was abundant but the time too short. After a long safety stop we were on to our next adventure.

The second dive of the day was on the *USS New Hampshire*, sister ship to the *USS Constitution*. This ship is encased in sand and history. Her copper cladding and spikes were forged in Paul Revere's foundry. She came to lie burning off Graves Island on July 22, 1922. Her ribs poke out of the flat sand bottom at 35 feet. The area is teeming with lobsters, crabs, and sea stars. This was a long enjoyable dive. Ask Jack; I don't think he has come up yet.

After the dive we toured Rockport, then returned to The Crows Nest for more lemonade and to watch the Red Sox walk in the winning Yankees run. Ahhh! What a perfect day!

Scallop fever

The third trip of the summer season brought us once again back to Cape Ann in search of the elusive scallop. Once again Pete Fenninger and I and I made a late Friday evening start. But no solar sunspots this time! Jack "Asimov" Pereira chose to drive up in the morning. Also Chris "3:01 from Larchmont to Gloucester" Sundahl came up that morning. When we got to the docks, there stood our Vice Grand Pooh-Bah Soliman Shenouda. We were joined by Michael and his son from Carmel, NY, and another couple from Worcester, Mass. Both were regulars on Captain Fran's boat.

A New England Dive Summer *continued from previous page*

The first dive was out to a trench that started at 80 feet and ran to about 150 feet. At some points in the dive you could touch both walls. Filled with anemones, schools of fish, sea stars, and small rock eels, it looked as if it were cut by Neptune himself.

After a slow ascent and safety stop we were off to Halfway Rock for our second dive. It was beautiful! This large rock rises over 100 feet from the ocean floor to the surface. Within a minute into the dive Jack was prying large mussels off the rocks, enough to fill a large mesh bag. We cruised at about 40 feet taking in large lobsters with claws the size of my hand, stripped bass, eels, urchins, crabs, and all types of sea life. This was a site bursting with diversity. Everyone on board saw something different.

On the cruise back to Gloucester, Jack hung his bag off the stern to clean the mussels only to find they were different. They were the "evil bad" orange type, not the good Long Island type. So he threw most of them back. Good thing no locals were around, hey, Jack? So ended a perfect day.

Not quite! Next it was off to Lobsta Land where we ate our fill of seafood and hooves, and met that international star of diving, Ms. Vreni "I'm going to freeze my tush off in a wetsuit" Roduner, for last call. We wanted to go out but alas "The Kid" just could not stay awake.

The next morning, with coffee in hand, we boarded the boat again. Jack had left for home, but now Vreni was here to search for *scallops!* The first dive proved to be interesting, thanks in part to 70-foot depths and boat traffic. We descended together but soon found it was hard to follow in a dust cloud. The scallops were there, though in disappointingly small quantities. Soon lift bags and pelicans shot to the surface. When we boarded the boat we looked at our take and vowed to do better.

On the second dive we *did* do better. Fran dropped us in the middle of a bed of scallops. Within minutes the first pelican

flew to the surface, then another and another. The best part was that we were in 25 to 30 feet of water, and so had a lot of bottom time. There we were, surrounded by scallops the size of hubcaps. Well, maybe a *tad* smaller. Everyone surfaced apart. There were safety sausages and dive flags all over. Everyone was grinning from ear to ear.

On the way back Michael and Captain Fran cleaned the scallops before we hit the dock. Fran showed everyone how to cut and roll out the scallop. One diver even took back some full scallops home to his sushi chef to make him a special dish like thousand-eye soup or something. What a great day. We made a leisurely drive back to Brewster that night. Brewster, Mass. that is. *Oops!*

Seal of approval

The fourth trip of the summer season was to Rye, NH and the Isles of Shoals. The mission: *seals*. It was a cool overcast Saturday morning in the late part of August. Those who journeyed up were Pete Fenninger, Vreni Roduner, Zsa Renae Ho-Sang, Vadim Ternovski, Izzy "not Ziggy" Tahil, Bob "not Bak" Beck, and I, Bob "not Beck" Bak. There at the Rye Marina we met our boat *The Giant Stride*, Captain Rob, and our ever-so-helpful divemaster Julie. Upon boarding the boat, and misdirecting a whale-watching tourist to an old lobster boat, we were on our way—up and down, up and down—to the Isle of Shoals. I have to give "the youngsters" a lot of credit. These three new divers, under adverse conditions and not feeling well, suited up and did the dives.

The first dive was at the cribs. These are a series of stacked timbers which form the pilings of an old cruise ship dock. In the cribs are lots of lobsters and other creatures. All of a sudden I see Vreni with her arm up to the shoulder in a timber going after a lobster. No fear! The next thing we saw was a school of striped bass. Everywhere we looked there was sea life. The dive was probably only to a maximum of 30 feet.

Back on board we looked forward to the next dive. The second dive was a seal dive off Duck Island. There we broke up into smaller groups and set out in search of our quarry. It took all of about two seconds to find them. At one point I watched Bob Beck with a seal nearly crawling up his back. A little later I saw Vadim playing with one. I think he touched her. All in all it was a good dive.

Once back aboard the boat we honed our math skills: 7 divers - 6 divers = 1 diver (not around). We immediately started a visual search since he had not yet paid. In the distance, somewhere near Newfoundland, we saw an itsy bitsy orange float. On getting closer we saw it was Pete and not an Avon raft floundering in the water. After helping him aboard, less one weight belt, we headed off to Rye. That evening we spent in a deluge of rain at a nearby campground. We did escape for a while, as we dined on lobster and scallops at Newland's.

The next morning was a beautiful day. Flat seas and sunshine. Unfortunately we had lost a few divers along the way. So it was only Vreni, Bob Beck, and I who again went in search of seals. We did one dive on a long undersea wall, interesting but uneventful. The next dive was back to Duck Island and seals. I had a little weight belt problem at the beginning of the dive, but after putting it on I had no problem going down. Seals, seals, and more seals—they were all over the place! I sat in one spot for over an hour and played with four seals the whole time. What a wonderful experience. Bob Beck even had a seal sit in his lap! Beat that!

I would like to personally thank all those divers on these trips for making this a memorable summer of diving. I am sure we will all talk about it for years to come. Look in future issues of the Sea Swells Log for more stories on this coming year's dives.

