
Random Scatterings

News on line and in letters

I was browsing across the web headed for **Burt Jones and Maurine Shimlock's Secret Sea** web site. I remembered the address had something to do with "wet fun," so I did a search. Careful now, <http://www.wetfun.com/diving.shtml> leads to Chanucy's diving links — Secret Sea, US Divers, Scubpro, Diver's Alert Network, and so forth. However, one wrong turn leads to Chanucy's Wetfun erotic links — Nude of the Week, Girls Girls Girls, Playboy, Hustler, and so forth. One of the two link pages was called Wet Fun, the other Real Wet Fun, but I can't remember which was which.

Diving **Honduras**? Keep your eye out for doubloons. The Honduran government says some 20 Spanish galleons, carrying as much as \$3 billion in gold and silver, went down in their waters. So politicians agreed in May to court international financing to find the treasure so they can pay off their \$4.1 billion foreign debt. One example: the galleon San Roque, leading a fleet of ships back to Spain, sank in 1606 with 180 cases of gold and silver coins, 520 bars of silver, 100 gold ingots, and 10 sheets of gold weighing 100 pounds each. The wreck is in only 22 feet of water. Foreign companies have offered to dive for it, but will give Honduras only 35 percent of what they recover. Give 'em 50 percent and you may get a deal.

More live-aboards are adding Nitrox. Peter's new *Sun Dancer II*, which is scheduled to start service in Palau in January, has joined that list. Avi Klapfer's ***Ocean Hunter in Cocos Island, Costa Rica***, has not only added Nitrox, but will also offer Nitrox courses and rebreather trips.

Remember when we told you about Patricia Cornwell walking into a dive store in California and launching into a shopping rampage, buying two head-to-toe sets of serious gear: AGA full face masks, OTS communication devices, USD Computers, Polartec Skins, and everything else you can imagine? Well, her latest novel, ***Cause of Death***, is out (from Putnam), and in it the chief medical examiner is spending New Year's Eve below the icy surface of a river investigating the fishy death of Ted Eddings, a scuba-diving investigative reporter for the Associated Press.

According to *Marine Watch*, when a 17-foot, **4,000-pound great white shark** was caught and drowned in a swordfish net, the nearby sea lions appeared to be thrilled by the trapped shark and started to make love to each other. Inside the shark's stomach they found a 300-pound sea lion and a four-foot-long six-gilled shark.

These guys are from Austin, but I swear I don't know them. **S-CUBED Enterprises** is selling a cool little wafer-thin flashlight just a little larger than a credit card that's tested to 125 feet. Retail is \$10 (512-301-2823). Like me, they are probably located in Texas because all the coral reefs in the world, representing only 0.17 percent of the ocean floor, cover an area roughly the size of Texas.

Eastman Kodak swears that unless your film speed is 1000 ASA or higher, you don't need to worry about the airport X-ray machine fogging your film. In the U.S., that is; outside the country, Lord knows what they're using. To be on the safe side, be sure to hand-pass your film around the X-ray machines once you leave the States.

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