



# Northern California Rainbow Divers (NCRD)

# Buddy Line

May 2009

## Rainbow Divers Annual BBQ & Swap Meet *(mark your calendars)*

*Sunday July 26th, from 3 -7 p.m. in East Bay!*

Join fellow Rainbow Divers for our annual BBQ and swap meet. This is always a fun event and opportunity to hear about upcoming trips and hang out with divers.

This year the BBQ will be in the east bay at Fenev & Robin's house in the Berkeley Hills.

Want to:

- ◆ meet more club members
- ◆ catch up with old friends
- ◆ hear about fun dive spots
- ◆ give away or pick up some used gear
- ◆ get more connected with NCRD?

**Join us for all this and more!**

NCRD will provide BBQ entrees (chicken, sausage & burgers) and soft drinks. Please bring any beer or wine you like, and a salad, side dish or dessert to share. Bring dive gear you want to sell, give away, or trade.

An evite will be sent to the NCRD buddy list with more details.



## Tim Shannon Memorial Fundraiser



July 2008

Tim Shannon, long time Rainbow Diver and local dive planner in 2008, passed away this winter from cancer. In cooperation with his family and his "other" dive club, the San Jose Flipper Dippers, NCRD is organizing a fundraising dive trip on Memorial Day. Cypress Charters, associated with Any Water Sports in San Jose, is donating a dive boat

trip at cost, and the divers are paying our usual nonprofit fee. Together we will raise over \$1000 for The Health Trust of Santa Clara county.

*(www.healthtrust.org)*

Many members who cannot make the boat have asked if they can still contribute? We'd be delighted to forward your tax-deductible donations to The Health Trust in Tim's name! To participate, please make a check out, in any amount, to The Health Trust, and forward it to NCRD

Diveplanner, 601 Wellsbury Way, Palo Alto CA 94306. Checks that arrive before Memorial Day will be presented to The Trust along with the money raised from the boat.

Thanks to Any Water Sports & Cypress Charters for their generosity and to all the Rainbow Divers for remembering Tim in this way. He was a wonderful diver and club member and led us on many great Monterey and North Coast adventures!

*Continued on page 6*

## President's Corner by Peg Stone

I like to say that I am “president and chief bottle washer” of NCRD. Rainbow Divers is a group of people that like to go diving. We’d all like to hang out with each other, share photos (and tips on how to get better ones), find good dive buddies, go on great local and longer trips together, and dive, dive, dive. Sign me up! That’s why I joined NCRD and that’s why I keep coming back, year after year.

Of course, there are some necessary “chores” to keeping the club healthy and happy. Contrary to popular opinion, being on the board is not a high and mighty position. It does not require years of campaigning to get here. Divers would rather be diving, and that’s the way it should be. But we hapless souls who want to keep diving with our favorite people (queers, if I may use that term broadly to include all of us in the club, meaning it as a high compliment) sometimes end up as trip arrangers, bottle washers, newsletter editors, web masters, membership managers, program chairs, and all sorts of other odds and ends. It isn’t a thankless job, exactly. I thank myself a lot for doing it.

When my mother wasn’t saying to me “I’d like to wring your neck!” or “you weren’t born in a barn!” or the dreaded “wait till your father gets home!” she occasionally remarked that “many hands make light work.” And I’d

like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers, most not on the board (the clever devils), whose many hands keep the good ship Rainbow Divers afloat and underway. Take a moment to look at the masthead, if you will, and see the list of your many fellow divers who take time to help out with the ‘bottle washing’ behind the club’s activities. If you want a chance to get to know some fine fine people, have a few laughs, and help out, volunteering is easy. Drop me a note. Or talk to anyone else on the masthead that you might have met. There’s lots of stuff to do: little things and big things. Something that, I guarantee, will fit your talents.

Here’s one idea: help staff our booth at Gay Pride Day. We run a booth every year, to let the LGBTQY community (did I miss a letter? Sorry!) know that we’re here, we’re queer and we’re going diving. And that, hey, they should come along. Dive, learn to dive, hang out with divers, and have a good time. Staffing the booth is a ton of fun: you get to meet some really cute people, talk about diving, get the scoop on what’s going on trip-wise with the club, talk about dive gear, flirt, and ... well, you get the picture: it’s a blast! It takes an hour or two at an event that you want to go to anyway. So why not? Drop me a line. My email is always open!



### Northern California Rainbow Divers, Inc.

#### BOARD MEMBERS

*President*, Peg Stone  
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*Treasurer*, Lisa Malachowsky  
treasurer@rainbowdivers.org

*Secretary*, Sharon Ponder  
secretary@rainbowdivers.org

*Board Member-At-Large*, Feny Mathews

*Board Member-At-Large*, Mike Miller

*Board Member-At-Large*, Ralph Wolf

#### VOLUNTEER STAFF

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*Webmaster s*, Greg Doolittle & Joe Wofford  
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#### TRIP LEADERS

Sharon Ponder, *Red Sea/Egypt—2009*

Lisa Malachowsky, *Kararu—2010*

<http://www.rainbowdivers.org>

#### CLUB POLICIES

Board meetings are held once a month and are open to any member in good standing. If interested in attending, please contact any of the Board members listed above for location.

Membership dues are \$35/year, \$55/year for domestic partners at the same address and \$20/year for a newsletter-only subscription to addresses >150 miles from the SF Bay area.

Advertising is available for \$8/month to club members for a business card-size ad, or for \$10/month for non-club members. If you are interested in advertising, please contact the editor. NCRD does not warrant, recommend or guarantee the products or services contained in advertisements in this newsletter.

Unless otherwise noted, all monies paid for club-sponsored events are non-refundable.

## Rainbow Divers Celebrate Thanksgiving in Palau

by Mike Miller & Peg Stone

Fourteen NCRD members woke up on November 27, 2008 grateful for a lot more than turkey. Palau, a diver's dream come true, stretched before them off the bow of the comfortable new Ocean Hunter III. Ulong Channel, Blue Corner, Jellyfish Lake, German Channel, Big Drop Off, New Drop Off: each day offered amazing underwater delights. Sharks, rays, fantastic invertebrate life, currents: a fantasia in motion entranced everyone everyday. Several divers headed to Yap before joining the rest of the group in Palau. Others came to Palau a day early and enjoyed kayaking and snorkeling among the emerald islands that studded the tropical ocean. The kayakers visited a number of World War II sites, including pill boxes and harbor embankments constructed by the Japanese.

We stayed at the Palau Pacific Resort, by far the nicest resort on



Palau Pacific Resort by Mike Miller

Palau, and the only one with a beachfront. Catering to Japanese tourists, it offered, among its amenities, multitalented toilets (scenting and washing options, for example). This gave new meaning to the phrase "porcelain god!"

The crew of the Ocean Hunter were very accommodating and knowledgeable. The dive masters worked hard to choose the best dive sites based on the interests of the group and the currents, tides and lighting. We visited one site twice, hoping to see a manta ray at a cleaning station. Disappointed, we were about to leave the second time when we were finally rewarded by the awesome sight of a huge manta ray gliding in! As a special treat, a feather-tail sting ray rose off of the sand just below two divers as we turned to leave. Every dive offered special rewards like this.

What is paradise like? Here's a sample from one diver's journal: "This is our first full day aboard the Ocean Hunter III, and I have to say THIS IS THE WAY TO DIVE! Wake up at 6am, have some coffee and sweet danish. Dive for an hour on an incredibly beautiful reef wall that extends from 30 feet to 900 feet below the



Ocean Hunter III, by Mike Miller

surface, drifting in the gentle current for a mile or two before surfacing and being picked up by the chase boat. Return to the OHIII where a full breakfast of eggs, sausage, bacon, toast, peanut butter, bagels, cream cheese and more are waiting. Make the second morning dive at Turtle Wall, where we saw hawk-billed turtles and the first of many sharks. Return to the ship and have a wonderful lunch while we all talk about the first dives of the trip, then out again to Turtle Cove, where we didn't see any turtles, but got to dive down through a small cavern and saw a huge lobster hiding on one of the ledges. Back to the ship for fresh brownies and fruit smoothies, then out to the Ngedbus Coral Gardens, where we ran into some playful cleaner shrimp and saw a few of the well-camouflaged Leaf Scorpionfish. Back to the boat again for some light snacks (nuts, chips,

Continued on next page

and fruit), and then a night dive was offered – I declined, as I'd quickly come to realize that four dives a day is more than enough for me. We watched "No Country for Old Men" in the ship's salon, then off to bed."

The photographers and videographers had a field day! Fifteen to twenty sharks on one dive, a coral-banded sea snake on another; huge Napoleon wrasse; chambered Nautilus; turtles –

the list seems endless. Here are some of the photos our mariners brought back!

All photos below by Mike Miller.



*Well posed Nautilus*



*Hawksbill Turtle*



*White Tip Reef Sharks*



*Chandelier Cave*



*Anemone*



*Mandarin Fish*



*Jellyfish Lake*



*Manta Ray*

## Cold Water Diving Corner (Cypress Sea, March 2009)

Peg Stone had the dive yips bad, as she hadn't dived for six months. Ralph rigged for macro, but still had good luck using a focusing light to improve the reliability of autofocus in super-macro mode on his C-7070. Lauren, our newest cold-water convert, had recovered from a nasty encounter with Monastery waves the day before and took to boat diving with grace and aplomb. Sharron and Lisa brought along their doubles and disappeared into the deep. And the usual cold-water suspects gathered for the treat of excellent late winter/early spring diving.

In March, the weather is always chancy, but we hit the calm before the storm. The bay was bouncy and green, but the farther



south we went, the flatter and bluer the water became. When winter diving is good, it is very very good, and we had a fantastic day of it on this first day of spring. Captain Mark had a full boat and no afternoon charter, so

he gave us the treatment. We went well south of Pt Lobos, had long surface intervals, plenty of food, hot drinks and snacks, took detours for whale and dolphin watching and of course, excellent dive sites with 80 feet of viz!

The marine mammal display had even our seasoned captain scratching his head in awe. After seeing several groups of Rizzo dolphins tearing along, we found two separate groups of gray whales (parents and, we think, babies), floating and flopping in the water, with Rizzos dallying about nearby. Were the whales mating? Engaged in a teaching moment with the babies? Whatever it was, the Rizzos and the gray whales had an interspecies thing underway. And the humans cut the motor, drifted in, and joined the interspecies interaction. Amazing!

The dive sites offered invertebrate life galore, including gorgonians and hydrocorals; strawberry



and coral cup anemones coating every available surface; and monster anemones including white metridiums in clusters. Rockfish peered at us sulkily and kelpfish slipped



by on their urgent tasks. Crabs scrambled through the kelp and along the rocky

substrate, disguised in various amusing ways.

On deck, we tried our best to warm ourselves with soup and hot drinks. Was it 44 degrees? 45? We all agreed that whatever temperature the ocean was that day, it was COLD! Everyone except Peg went for all three dives, however. She, alleging a bad back, curled up in the wheelhouse and slept for several hours, showing either her age or an unexpected intelligence.



We got back to the dock much later than usual, with big grins pasted all over our faces.

All photos above by Ralph Wolf.



## Exotic Indonesia, Kararu, 2010

by Lisa Malachowsky

On March 10, 2010, you could be gazing out over tropical seas, basking in the sun on the teak deck of a custom-built dive boat. Or you could be at work.

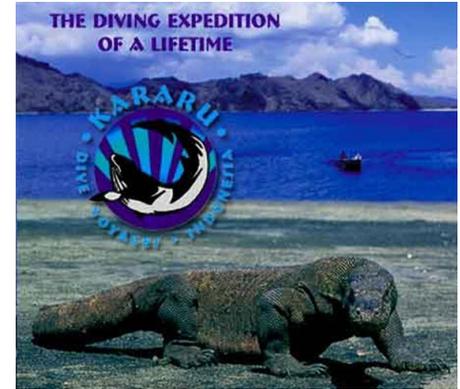
### *Is there a choice there?*

In March of 2010, Rainbow divers will set sail on Kararu Dive ship Cheng Ho for a great trip to Komodo. Lisa Malachowsky, our veteran of many trips to Indonesia, will be leading this live-aboard vacation designed especially for the club! She's arranged a special, adventurous itinerary with her friends at Kararu far exceeding their standard offerings, including doing some exploration of the waters around Selayar and Komodo. Komodo is a well-known destination with a famous abundance of marine life ranging from nudibranchs to large sharks and Manta Rays. Selayar is less

explored and more adventurous. The trip offers pristine waters with wall diving and largely untouched reefs. Few divers in the world have ever seen these spots! Lisa visited here in 1997 and found it outrageously rich in marine life.

The dates for this trip are March 10-22, 2010. The trip will begin in Bali, start diving in Sumbawa, head to Komodo, pass through Selayar and Taka Bonerate National Park, and end up in Maumere.

The cost of this trip is dependent upon the class of cabin you choose. Lisa will provide details for all this upon request. The costs for NCRD club members range from \$3740 to \$4240 (airfare from the US to and from Bali is NOT included). Nitrox is available on board for an extra fee



of \$200 for the entire trip per person. And it should be noted that this trip is considered an experienced diver vacation so please review your diving resume with Lisa as soon as possible if you want to go.

So come with us for a "Diving Expedition of a Lifetime"!!! Deposits are being taken now. Call or email Lisa for details. Lisa's phone: (925) 759-4360 or email her at:

[treasurer@rainbowdivers.org](mailto:treasurer@rainbowdivers.org).

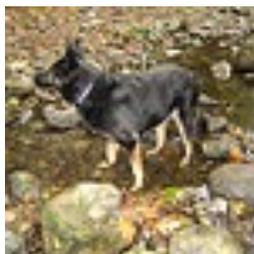
Also check out Kararu at [www.kararu.com](http://www.kararu.com).



## In Memory of Tim Shannon



July 2008



Samantha—Dive Mascot



Monterey 2006



Monterey 2006

## Diving For Life (DFL) 2009

by Kelly Thiemann



Diving for Life returns to Bonaire for its 18<sup>th</sup> annual Jamboree, September 19 – 26, 2009. DFL visit number four to Captain Don’s Habitat promises terrific diving 24-7 at the shore diving capital of the world: and 24-7 gay friends and play time as well!

The house reef in front of Captain Don’s is one of the best dive sites on the island. You can get up at dawn, grab a tank, grab a buddy and head off to watch the reef wake up; then do your two boat dives off of Klein Bonaire and return to the house reef for a

night dive to hunt with the tarpons.

For \$1,660 you get six days of two tank dives, unlimited shore diving, accommodations and meals for seven nights along with tips, taxes and marine park fees. Plus LGBT parties and friends from around the world.

The island’s other features include a National Park for hiking, pink flamingos that fly to Venezuela every evening and mountains of sea salt – pink of course.

A large part of the DFL experience are the fundraising activities.

There’s a “fun” in fundraising, eh? Plus terrific deals: how about a silent auction with dive trips at reduced prices; a live auction – who can forget last year’s tankini? and a raffle with chances to win dive equipment and other interesting and fun items. Funds raised go to support local LGBTQ health related organizations.

Do good, dive well, party hard, and come join the fun – where else can you wake up to the sound of a braying donkey? Or is that a moan in the next room?



## Ocean Film Festival

By Josh Schechtel

The San Francisco Green Festival held a one-night-only showing of the best of the Ocean Film Festival in mid November. This was a great opportunity to see some of the best independent films anywhere about oceanic themes. The films ranged from 3 minutes to 30 minutes long, from places as diverse as Hawaii, Puerto Rico, New Zealand and Brazil, and covered topics ranging from environmental issues to the zen of white water kayaking.

While topics and film styles varied, all the films shared great production values and important lessons about humankind's relationship with our oceans.

Some of the highlights in an outstanding lineup included films about a group of surfers in Puerto Rico who saved their surfing reef from the US Army Corps of Engineers; an amazingly photographed journey through the world of nudibranchs; a locally-produced documentary about the

fate of the world's sharks; a visit with a body surfing school for kids in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro; the story of one man's 30 year struggle to save sea turtles in a small Mexican village; and the story of people and seals learning how to share a beach in southern California.

The Ocean Film Festival is in its sixth year. Check out their website [www.oceanfilmfest.org](http://www.oceanfilmfest.org) later this year for a schedule of upcoming events.



## 2009 / 2010 Calendar of Upcoming Events, Local Diving & Dive Trips

### Events

**NCRD Annual BBQ & Swap Meet, Sunday**, July 26th, from 3-7 p.m. in East Bay. Evite with details to follow.

**California Academy of Sciences! Aquarium Dive Volunteers** needed. For more information, go to: <http://www.calacademy.org>

### Local Diving

**May 24th**, shore dive, Butterfly House

**May 25th**, boat dive, Cypress Sea, fundraiser in memory of Tim Shannon

**May 27-30th**, liveaboard, Channel Islands

**June 6-13th**, Belize Liveaboard (NCRD & Undersea Expeditions team up)

**June 20th**, shore dive, Coral Street & BBQ lunch. Non-diver family & friends welcome!

**June 21st**, shore dive, Pt. Lobos / Whaler's Cove

**July 17-19th**, shore diving, Lake Tahoe, get your Altitude Diver Specialty certificate

**August 22nd**, boat dive, Big Sur Day Trip

**August 23rd**, shore dive, South Monastery Beach

### Far Away Dive Trips

**September 19-26, 2009**

***Diving For Life.*** Captain Don's Habitat, Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean

**October 1-17, 2009**

***Red Sea/Egypt.*** Live-aboard and land tour—**SOLD OUT**—wait list only

**March 10-22nd, 2010**

***Kararu***, Indonesia. Liveaboard, send in your deposit now to hold your spot!

**NOTE:** Events and dive trips may have changed since this printing—please see latest details at [www.rainbowdivers.org](http://www.rainbowdivers.org) and click on **Calendar**



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