

# THE REEF SEEKER



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## CHAMBER DAY & EVE 2019

Diving is an amazingly safe sport . . . until it isn't. But we're all human and things happen. In fact, a study has shown that 69% of diving accidents are caused by diver error. So the last thing you want to hear is, "Sorry, there's no chamber in the area so there's nothing we can do for you." Fortunately, that's NOT the case in SoCal. Since 1974, divers have relied on the USC Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber to bail us out when things go wrong. And once again, our Chamber is counting on you. And at Reef Seekers, we are proud to not only be involved, but also to serve as Chamber Day HQ once again.

2019 marks our Chamber's 45th year of unbending service to the Southern California diving community. While our Chamber still gets about half of its funding from

L.A. County, Chamber Day & Eve have become the major source of funds to keep our Chamber available to us 24/7/365. And that's why we need you to participate in Chamber Day & Eve 2019 on Wednesday, May 1.

This is our 31st annual Chamber Day event. The first one in 1989 attracted about 200 divers and netted about \$15,000 for our Chamber. Over the years the event has grown to over 1,000 participants by adding Chamber Eve, the *Flying Dutchman*, and the Chamber Challenge. Last year we raised just over \$117,000 for our Chamber. We are justifiably considered the largest single-day scuba charity event in the United States and perhaps even the world.

It's important to know that ALL monies raised go to the Chamber. No administrative fees are deducted from the proceeds, the participating SoCal boats donate their time and services, the manufacturers donate gear for raffle prizes, the Aquarium of the Pacific donates their facility for Chamber Eve (we still have to pay for the food), hundreds of volunteers donate their time, and you (hopefully) donate your money.

Here's what's happening:

- The main event is Chamber Day, which includes two dives at Catalina plus a walking tour of the

Chamber facilities at the Isthmus. The official Reef Seekers boat is the *Cee Ray*, but there are many other boats participating as well. A ticket for Chamber Day is still only \$110 (plus \$30 for food and airfills for the boat). You get the diving, the tour, five day time raffle tickets, and a chance to chat with (and thank) first responders from Coast Guard, L.A. County Sheriffs, Baywatch, and others.

- If you can't take the day off but would still like to participate, we have the *Flying Dutchman* - a mythical boat, yes, but a big part of Chamber Day and the perfect option for those who can't attend in person. And usually - and hopefully this will be the case this year as well - Reef Seekers divers make up the majority of those signing up for the *Dutchman*. "Diving" the *Dutchman* gets you five daytime raffle tickets plus a special limited-edition T-shirt available only to folks who sign up for the *Dutchman*. And we're holding the *Dutchman* price at \$95.

- There's also the Chamber Challenge, which "challenges" our community to raise extra funds for our Chamber through direct donations (mostly \$100 pledges, but also \$500 and \$1,000, and even \$5,000 and \$10,000). You donate, and then - we hope - you challenge your friends to match your generosity.

- Raffle tickets, anyone? Daytime raffle tickets are a great way to go because you don't need to be present to win. Tickets are \$1 each, with discounts when you buy more. This year, you will NOT be able to extra raffle tickets on the boats. You can get them before the event or on the island during your tour.

- Again this year, when you dive any of our participating boats in April, you'll get additional five FREE raffle tickets.

- Chamber Evening, co-sponsored by the Aquarium of the Pacific, wraps things up for the day. Reef Seekers has a table here (10 seats), available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Chamber Evening tickets are again \$120 each, and that includes five evening general raffle tickets and one Grand Prize raffle ticket, which this year is a 9-day "Passport to Paradise" trip with our good friends at Murex Dive resort and Lembeh Resort in Indonesia.

- When you purchase your Chamber Eve ticket, we will also ask you to specify if you want the regular meal (chicken) or the vegetarian/vegan meal. FYI, all the meals are gluten-free (except for the rolls).

- Do you want early access to the Aquarium, a private lounge area, a Chamber Eve t-shirt, two extra grand prize (Indonesia trip) tickets, and free parking? Then sign up for our V.G.D. (Very Generous Diver) Package. This is limited to the first 150 people. For an extra \$75 you get all that plus a private cash bar, private outside lounge/deck area with seating (available to you all evening until 10:45PM), access to the Moon Jellies exhibit, five extra general raffle tickets,

and early access (5PM) to selected areas and exhibits inside the Aquarium.

- For everyone else, the doors open at 7PM. You can explore the Aquarium (as well as the raffle prize and merchandise tables) from 7-8:15PM, dinner is from 8:15-9:15PM, and our program (acknowledgements, short speeches, raffle prizes - MC'd by Reef Seekers owner and Chamber Day Chairman Ken Kurtis) is from 9:15-10:15PM.

- Our raffle structure will be the same as last year. The regular general raffle features a "targeted" raffle with a three special bins for three of our prizes, plus a separate bin for prizes #4-20. You choose where you want to deposit your raffle tickets. Split them up equally, put more in one bin than another, or however you want. For each of the targeted prizes, the name drawn gets that prize. For #4-20, it'll be Pick-A-Prize as we've done in the past, from what's still available on the prize list. There will also be a Blind Bid opportunity, which is a Dive Immersion for 2, in the Tropical Reef exhibit at the Aquarium of the Pacific and donated by the Aquarium

Dive Office.

- The Grand Prize - a fabulous 9-day trip to Manado, Indonesia, with Murex Dive Resort & Lembeh Resort - is again a separate ticket from the general raffle. When you get your Chamber Eve ticket, you'll also receive one Grand Prize raffle ticket. Unless you also purchase the VGD package, this will be the only Grand Prize ticket you'll get. Make you sure you deposit your tickets in the Grand Prize bin at the raffle table.

- The grand finale is the presentation of the overall proceeds check to Chamber Director Karl Huggins, and the drawing of one lucky person who will win the "Passport to Paradise" trip with Murex.

For more information about these can't-miss events, visit our web site at [www.chamberday.org](http://www.chamberday.org). You can sign up there using our secure server, or you can us directly at Chamber Day HQ at 310-652-4990. But make sure you mark your calendar: Wednesday, May 1 and Chamber Day & Eve 2019.



## 2019 DIVING VACATIONS

**March 11-24 • Yap Immersion**

**Mid-May • Bonaire**

**July 6-22 • Indonesia**

**August • Isla Mujeres**



## WHY WE DO THIS

Whether it's a boat, a store, a club, a manufacturer, another organization, or an individual, those of us who work behind the scenes put a lot of time and effort into Chamber Day & Eve 2019 because we believe it's really important to have our Chamber available to us 24/7/365. When a dive accident occurs, getting an injured diver to our Chamber alive means that he/she has an excellent chance of survival and recovery. Knowing this while you're performing first aid, administering oxygen, or doing whatever it takes is a reassuring thought. Our Chamber is an invaluable safety net that we simply don't want to lose. Your participation in any or all of the facets of Chamber Day will help to ensure our Chamber's future. Please go to [www.chamberday.org](http://www.chamberday.org) and support our Chamber.



## AVALON CLEANUP RESULTS

The visibility wasn't too good, but the enthusiasm was high for the 38th Annual Avalon Underwater Cleanup, which was held on Saturday, February 23. This event

## UPCOMING LOCAL DIVES & CLASSES

DAY	DATE	BOAT/SITE	PLANNED DESTINATION	PRICE
Sun.	Mar. 3	<i>Catalina Express</i>	Avalon U/W Park (3 dives)	<b>\$150</b>
Sat.	9	Aqrm of Pacific	Divers Day	<b>FREE!!</b>
Thu.	Apr. 4	Redondo	••• Squid Dive (night) •••	<b>FREE!!!</b>
Sat.	13	Redondo	Navigation dive (single tank)	<b>\$25</b>
Wed.	17	- CLASS -	- FISH ID -	<b>\$25</b>
Sat.	27	<i>Catalina Express</i>	Avalon U/W Park (3 dives)	<b>\$150</b>
Wed.	May 1	Many boats	Chamber Day/Eve benefit	<b>\$120</b>

aims to clean up the general harbor area, and also serves as a fundraiser for both the Catalina Conservation Divers and the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber. (And we play our annual Reef Seekers Miniature Golf Tournament at the conclusion of the event.)

536 people partook overall, which included 425 registered divers (257 through participating dive clubs - kudos to Signature Scuba who accounted for 52 divers), 34 non-divers, and 77 volunteers. All together, over 2700 pounds of trash was pulled from the harbor. And that was in spite of the can't-see-your-hand-in-front-of-your-face conditions.

We're also pleased to reveal that Reef Seekers diver Jeff Reimer won the Grand Prize in the raffle, which consists of a 3-night stay at the Hermosa Hotel in a family room (2- or 3-bedroom place), round-trip transport on Catalina Express, a 2-tank dive on the *Scuba Cat*, and a Tilos dive bag. The overall value of the prize package was around \$2,000. Nice way for Jeff to end the day.

A few of the pictures are on the bottom of page 4 of this newsletter and you can see more shots here: <https://kenkurtis.smugmug.com/Avalon-Underwater-Cleanup/Avalon-Underwater-Cleanup-2019>. And mark your calendar for February 22, 2020, which will be the date of next year's Cleanup.



## DIVERS DAY IS MARCH 9

What's a divers favorite word? I'm going with . . . FREE!!!

So you should be pleased to know that the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach is offering FREE admission to all certified divers on the annual Divers Day, Saturday, March 9, from 9AM-5PM. During that time, you'll be able to chat with folks at various display tables of dive-related groups in the first-floor Great Hall (we'll have a combo Chamber/Chamber Day table) as well as attend the regularly-scheduled diver presentations throughout the day. (Make special note that the feed dives are at 10:30 and 11:15 in the morning, and 2:15 and 3:00 in the afternoon. Plus there's a special Eagle Ray feed at Noon in the Tropical Reef exhibit.) On top of all of that, there will be four dive-related videos that will play in the darkened Great Hall over the course of the day.

In case you've never been, the Aquarium is located right after the end of the 710 freeway. Follow the signs to Shoreline Drive and then right into the Aquarium parking structure, grab your c-card, and come on in. Hope to see you there.

## **INDONESIA BECKONS**

We are confirmed for our return to dive with our good friends at Murex in Manado, Indonesia (NE Sulawesi) July 6-18.

The diving is simply fabulous, offering us a rich combination of both reef and muck diving. The reef dives feature vertical walls, fascinating shallows, and very good visibility. The muck sites - which will include near-Murex sites and a day-trip and three dives to the famous Lembeh Strait - are where you find things like Frogfish, Pygmy Seahorses, Blue-Ringed Octopus, Ghost Pipefish, and many other amazing creatures.

We love staying at Murex. It's

nestled in a wooded area with natural ponds of free-flowing water all around. A few years ago, they moved the main dining area to the shoreline, so meals are enjoyed with the sea lapping a few feet away. Amazingly pleasant.

Because of the air sked in and out of Manado, this is an extended trip. Departure date from LAX is July 6 and we'll return on July 17. We'll likely take one of the new Singapore Air nonstops between LAX and SIN which means we no longer have to overnight in Singapore. That will give us nine nights at the Murex and eight full days of 3-tank dives. Veteran ace dive guide Basrah Tan (aided by Hanny Katingide and others) will shepherd us along. There's also an option each day to do a late after-

noon unguided shore dive on the house reef.

Land portion for this adventure is \$2,995 and that includes airport transfers, double-occupancy room, all meals, all diving, and crew/staff tip. (Single supplement is available and adds another \$325.) Airfare on Singapore Air is running as low as \$1,400 for Economy (which might require a layover) and \$2,600 for Premium Economy (which are the non-stops). Business is also available for just under \$5,600.

We truly LOVE diving this area of the world as there are lots of amazing things to see and everyone at Murex is incredibly friendly and helpful. Give us a call for more info or to sign up: 310/652-4990.

## **PICTURE PAGE - Avalon Cleanup 2019**

*(All pix by Ken Kurtis © 2019)*



**Off  
they go!!!**



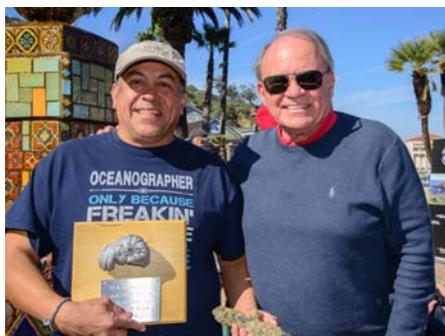
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**Kayak Patrol  
is ready**



**Reef Seekers group  
(Jeff, Amy, & Tim)**



**The Coveted Ken Kurtis  
Silver-Tongued Devil winner**



**Valuable  
treasure**