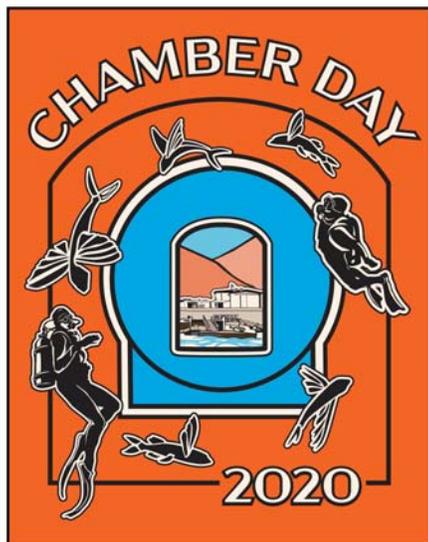


THE REEF SEEKER



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March - 2020



CHAMBER DAY & EVE 2020

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 here 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.

2020 marks our Chamber's 46th 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

are still 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 2020 on Wednesday, May 6.

This is our 32nd 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 almost \$122,000 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. A ticket on one of the participating boats for Chamber Day is still only \$110 (plus \$30 for food and airfills for the boat). You get the diving, the tour (for those who have done the tour before, there will be some non-tour options as well), 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. "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, \$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. You can get them before the event or on the island during your tour. Raffle tickets will NOT be sold on the boats).

- 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. 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 again a fabulous week of diving in Yap with our good friends at Manta Ray Bay.

- When you purchase your Chamber Eve ticket, we will also ask you to specify if you want the regular meal (beef again this year!!!) 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 (Yap 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, early access (5PM) to selected areas and exhibits inside the Aquarium, and a special Major Prize drawing available ONLY to those holding VGD tickets.

- 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) 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 Blind Bid opportunities, which include a Dive Immersion for 2 in the Tropical Reef exhibit at the Aquarium of the Pacific, donated by the Aquarium Dive Office.

- The Grand Prize - a fabulous weeklong trip to dive Yap with the Manta Man himself, Bill Acker, and Manta Ray Bay & Yap Divers - 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 Yap trip.

We cannot underscore enough how important this event is to keeping our Chamber on financially sound footing. Chambers are expensive to run and they serve a very limited population so it's politically easy to decide not to fund them. We can't risk losing ours.

For more information about these can't-miss events, check us out on Instagram (new this year): @usc_hyperbaric_chamber. Or you can visit our web site at www.chamberday.org. You can sign up there using our secure server, or you can call Chamber Day HQ at 310-652-4990.

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, May 6 and Chamber Day & Eve 2020.

2020-2021 DIVING VACATIONS

May 15-23 • Bonaire

August 1-8 • Isla Mujeres

October 17-28 • Murex (Indo)

Jan. 14-22, 2021 • Socorro

DIVING AND THE CORONAVIRUS

Needless to say, this is a very fluid situation that is evolving rapidly so hopefully whatever I say here (being written Saturday afternoon) is still valid and accurate when you read this.

In the U.S., there now appear to be 65 confirmed cases, 28 of which are in California. The first U.S. death was reported Saturday in Washington state. Worldwide, there are roughly 80,000 reported cases, 79,000 of which are from mainland China. South Korea reports a little over 3,100 cases, there are 1,100 from Italy, close to 1,000 in Japan, and 600 in Iran. Singapore and France are each around 100, and all other countries reporting are well under that. There have been a little over 2,900 deaths reported (2,800 of those from China).

This obviously will affect diving travel as places like Singapore, Tokyo, Seoul, Manila, Hong Kong, and others are travel hubs to get to prime diving locations. While some countries have announced blanket bans on people from China being allowed in, it's unclear how this would affect anyone who's merely a transit passenger. Logically, you would think a passenger transiting through the Narita airport outside of Tokyo does not pose the same risk as someone actually living in Tokyo and getting on a plane in Narita. But there seems to be a very fine line between an abundance of caution and hysteria.

At Reef Seekers, we're monitoring the situation as best we can. And, as I mentioned above, it's a very fluid situation where things

UPCOMING LOCAL DIVES & CLASSES

DAY	DATE	BOAT/SITE	PLANNED DESTINATION	PRICE
Sat.	Mar. 7	<i>Catalina Express</i>	Avalon U/W Park (3 dives)	\$150
Thu.	12	Redondo (Vets)	••• Squid Dive (night) •••	FREE!!!
Sat.	14	Diver's Day	Aquarium of the Pacific	FREE!!!
Wed.	Apr. 1	- CLASS -	- FISH ID -	\$25
Thu.	9	Redondo (Vets)	••• Night Dive •••	\$25
Sat.	18	<i>Catalina Express</i>	Avalon U/W Park (3 dives)	\$150
Sat.	25	Redondo (Vets)	Navigation dive (single tank)	\$25
Wed.	29	- CLASS -	- TABLES & COMPUTERS -	FREE!!!

are changing daily if not hourly. We have some of our folks going on an Indo Aggressor trip in April and some of them are transiting through Taipei and Hong Kong and then into Bali. We're not sure how that will affect their travel plans. Aggressor put out a statement mid-week from CEO Wayne Brown indicating that while there were no issues with their destinations (so they're not canceling trips at this point), they have noted increased health screenings at some places for incoming travelers.

We have a Bonaire trip coming up in May and we're simply going into a holding pattern on that one to see what develops in the coming weeks. Beyond that, we have Isla Mujeres in August and Manado, Indonesia, in October and hopefully this will all be over by then. You should evaluate whatever travel plans you may have in the near future. Calls to your travel providers would be prudent to see what's what.

I think this will all start to settle down in a week or so and by that, I'm not trying to minimize any concern or downplay the severity of the situation. But I think governments and airlines will quickly get a better handle on what to do and how to screen people. I'd expect things like a temperature scan of arriving passengers and more of a grilling in the Immigration lines

about where you've been and how do you feel. These seem like reasonable and fairly unobtrusive steps to take.

In terms of what can you personally do (and this applies whether you're traveling anywhere or not), it seems like the best advice is to frequently wash your hands with soap and water. The virus can't penetrate skin but will enter through your nose or mouth so the other piece of the advice is - although I realize this is hard to do - avoid touching your face with your hands. Other common-sense things to do are that if you think you might be sick, even if you don't think it's COVID-19 (the official name), do some self-quarantine and stay home until you feel better. The general quarantine time seems to be 14 days and it seems if you actually get sick, the standard is three days of no fever and no sickness once you feel better. Hand sanitizer (good luck finding some though) and disinfectant wipes are also good things to keep in your virus-fighting arsenal.

Again, not to sound like this is being downplayed, but it seems like the world is fairly quickly realizing the potential seriousness of this and is taking pro-active steps to stop the spread and to treat those already infected. We'll keep you alerted if we hear of any dive-specific changes down the road.

CHAMBER EVE 2020 - THE V.G.D (VERY GENEROUS DIVER) PACKAGE

We have been asked in years past if there was a way to get into the Aquarium earlier than 7PM so you'd have more time to walk around. And there is when you purchase the V.G.D (Very Generous Diver) Package. This is a \$75 add-on to your Chamber Evening ticket. You cannot buy this as a stand-alone item.

But if you're interested in getting into the Aquarium early, getting free parking, having a private exclusive area in which to hang out and mingle, plus a lot more, then

this is the package for you. And this year, we're sweetening the pot a bit with a special Major Prize drawing open ONLY to V.G.D. ticket holders. But it's limited to 150 people so if this floats your boat, don't dilly-dally.

Here's what the V.G.D Package includes:

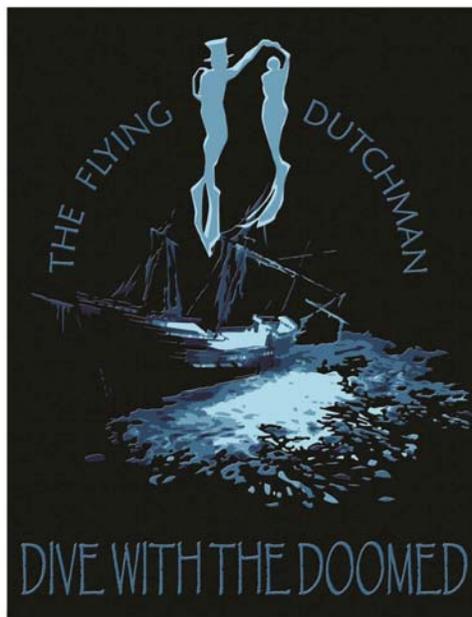
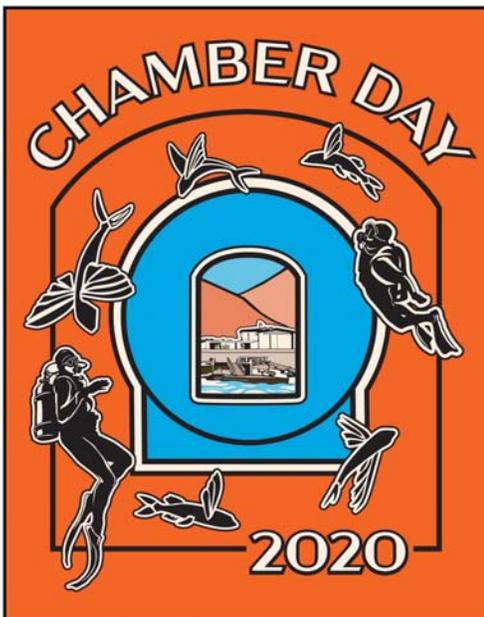
- Free parking in the Aquarium parking structure
- Early-access to the Aquarium (starting at 5PM) through a private entrance
- Private outside lounge area with plenty of chairs and sofas
- Private cash bar
- Moon Jellies exhibit access (on the lower level) 5:00-8:00PM
- Hot & cold appetizers 6:00-8:00PM

- Five additional general raffle tickets to use however you want
- Two additional Grand Prize diving-in-Yap raffle tickets (you won't be able to buy more)
- Special V.G.D.-only Major Prize drawing (still working on the specifics)
- Chamber Evening short-sleeve t-shirt
- Outside lounge & bar area open until 10:45PM
- Limited to 150 people

You can get this for an extra \$75. When you sign up for your Chamber Evening ticket, make sure you also get the V.G.D. Package because once we've gotten 150 people signed up for it, that will be it. Call us at 310/652-4990 or sign up through our secure server at www.chamberday.org.

PICTURE PAGE - Chamber Day/Eve 2020

(All pix by Ken Kurtis © 2020)



CHAMBER DAY & EVE 2020 - WEDNESDAY, MAY 6
www.chamberday.org 🇺🇸 IG: @usc_hyperbaric_chamber
CHAMBER DAY HQ: 310/652-4990