

THE REEF SEEKER



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April 1, 2016



CATALINA EXPRESS TERMINAL CHANGE

Catalina Express, the main transporter of people back and forth to Catalina, has announced a major change in how they will use the Long Beach and San Pedro Terminals. To alleviate boat congestion, the Long Beach Terminal will now be used strictly for departures to the island, and the San Pedro Terminal will be used strictly for arrivals from the island. For those doing a day trip, it means that now you'll leave out of Long Beach and return the same day to San Pedro.

The reason for this is that the City of Long Beach has instituted a new Catalina Arrival Tax of \$5 per person. However, there is no similar departure tax. By shifting all arrivals to San Pedro, which has no arrival tax (at least not yet), Catalina Express will save a lot of money.

When it was pointed out that people driving to Long Beach but arriving back in San Pedro would still have to go back to Long Beach to get their cars, Catalina Express

spokeswoman Ima Keating said they've worked that out. "We've hired a bevy of valet parkers who will take your car from Long Beach and drive it to San Pedro and park it in the huge lot there. When you return," Keating said, "you simply go to the valet stand, get your keys, and they'll tell you where your car is parked."

Keating also said there was a way under this system to get your parking for free. "Since we'll need so many valets, a number of them will need a ride back to Long Beach. So for anyone who gives at least two of our valets a ride back, we'll comp their parking in San Pedro."

Another way to make your parking money back, according to Keating, is to let the valet use your car during the day. "Most of our departures are in the morning with an evening return, so the valets don't have anything to do during the day. So many of them have become Uber drivers. If you let them use your car for their Uber pickups while you're over at the island, when you get back in the evening, they'll split their tips with you and that should easily cover your parking."

The new system goes into effect today, Friday. If you're traveling this weekend, you might want to call to see what's what.



L.A. KINGS NEED YOUR HELP

With the NHL playoffs looming and having already secured a spot, the L.A. Kings are in need of some diver assistance. Specifically, they need divers who are certified for ice-diving as they need people to check for any holes or imperfections under the ice at Staples Center prior to the start of the playoffs.

They won't really be paying anything for doing this, but they do say that the divers who do this - they'll need two, plus a surface support crew - will be given tickets to each of the home playoff games and that those seats will be in section 101 which is center ice and right behind the Kings' bench. (I've sat there before and the seats are fabulous for the die-hard hockey fan.)

To apply (the deadline for applications is Friday evening at 5PM), call the Kings general office in El Segundo at 310/535-4500 and ask to be connected to The Ice Man. (If the receptionist doesn't know who that is, explain why you're calling.)

Good luck and good diving!!!



DIVE WITH THE DONALD

You've got a chance to do a dive with Donald Trump. The Trump campaign has announced a contest called "Make American Diving Great Again" where ten winners will get to do a dive with Trump. The kicker is that you'll be diving all the water hazards at Trump National Golf Course in Palos Verdes. After the morning dive, everyone will have lunch with Mr. Trump where he'll point out which of you are losers as divers. After lunch, those who play golf will then be treated to 18 holes on this championship course.

To enter, you must do it through Twitter (Trump's favorite form of communication it seems) which means your reason for getting chosen is limited to 140 characters. But make your entry at Donald Trump's actual Twitter account (@realDonaldTrump) and explain why you should be chosen. (If you have a golf handicap, include that as well.)

Trump recently got certified. "I think I was the greatest student they ever had," he said recently, "and I'm a fabulous diver. My buoyancy is tremendous." Ironically, Trump got certified in Cozumel. "It made perfect sense because I had a business deal down there, and they've got wall dives in Cozumel. So how ironic is it

that I did it on a wall in Mexico. And I even got them to pay for the wall . . . dives!!!"

Entry deadline is this Friday so don't let this one pass you by.



FISH-SITTERS NEEDED

The Aquarium of the Pacific has a dilemma. They've got to drain the Blue Cavern exhibit over the weekend and there's no room in any of their normal holding tanks for the fish that reside there. So they're reaching out to the general public in hopes that people will volunteer to be fish-sitters over the weekend, and bring the fish back to AOP on Monday when Blue Cavern has been re-filled.

They're willing to pay \$10/fish/

day so you'd pick the fish up Friday and end up with three days pay per fish. Take as many fish as you think you can handle and that way, you can make some real money. The only caveat is that you have to promise not to eat the fish (especially true for the Yellowtail and the Sheephead) while they're in your care.

Also, the larger fish - the three Black Sea Bass and the Leopard Sharks - will likely need to be put in a pool. Because they're large, the Aquarium will pay \$25/fish/day for those. It's also recommended that you have a salt-water pool. However, if you don't, a regular pool may work and they'll simply give you a couple of boxes of Morton's Salt to add to your water to make the fish comfortable.

If you're interested in helping out, please call VP of Husbandry Perry Hampton at 562/951-1717 as soon as possible so he can get the process going.



2016 DIVING VACATIONS

August 1-6 • Isla Guadalupe

August 13-20 • Isla Mujeres #1

August 20-27 • Isla Mujeres #2

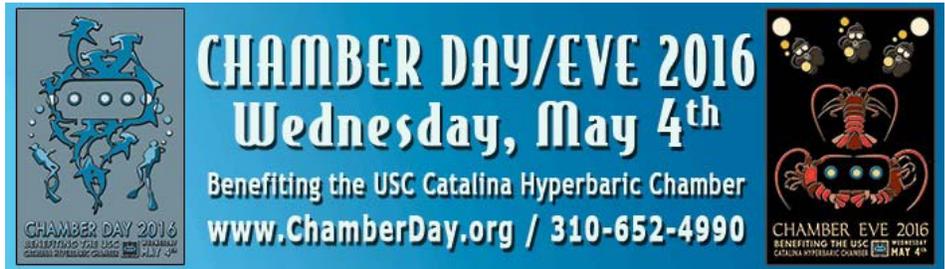
November 3-18 • Maldives

HIGH TIDE OUTLAWED BY ASSEMBLY

With the damage to homes caused lately, especially up in the Ventura area, from waves breaking on the beach during some of the El Nino-generated storms, the California Assembly recently considered a bill to provide financial assistance to those affected by the weather. However, during the ensuing floor debate, things took an interesting and decidedly non-scientific turn.

During the debate, Assemblyman Eddie Swell (R-Torrance), started going on about how some will claim this is all due to global warming and climate change (which he considers to be a hoax) and then he suggested that the solution was not to throw money at the problem but to realize that most of the damage occurred during high tides so the obvious solution was to outlaw high tide. "It's a simple solution people: If there's no high tide, there's no damage, and there's no need to throw money at a problem that doesn't exist." And somehow, by re-titling the bill the "Californians for Equal Tides Act" (CETA), he was able to get it passed on a party-line vote.

Despite the fact that scientists testified that you can't simply vote high tide out of existence any more than you could vote gravity out of existence, the bill will go into effect on April 1. As there is no enforcement action associated with it, it's unclear on what the ramifications will be but this is a good example of your government at work, and something you might want to keep in mind come November 8 this year.



CHAMBER DAY/EVE 2016
Wednesday, May 4th
Benefiting the USC Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber
www.ChamberDay.org / 310-652-4990

CHAMBER DAY 2016
BENEFITING THE USC CATALINA HYPERBARIC CHAMBER MAY 4th

CHAMBER EVE 2016
BENEFITING THE USC CATALINA HYPERBARIC CHAMBER MAY 4th

POWERED SNORKEL

For those of you who have trouble clearing your snorkel, TUSA now has the answer. It's called "The Blaster." It attaches to a small tank of air on the back of your mask strap. Anytime you need to clear the snorkel, there's no more of this pesky inhale and then forcefully exhale. That's SOOOOO old-fashioned and much too difficult for today's modern diver. Instead, you just push a little button the side of the snorkel and a blast of air from the tank forces all the water of the snorkel. Be sure to ask your dive retailer about "The Blaster" which should be in stores soon.

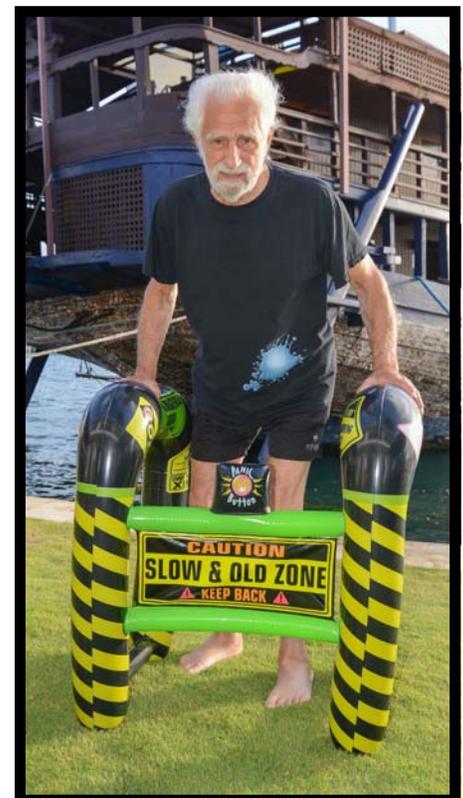
NEW BC FOR OLDER DIVERS

There's a brand new concept in BCs (aimed at the aging diving market) currently under development and we had a chance to see it in action on our recent trip to Yap. It's known as the "Walker Compensator" and while you would think that it's so named because of the person who created it, it's actually got that name because it serves as both a BC underwater and an inflatable walker on land. (Remember, it's aimed at older divers.)

Underwater, you slip into it much

as you would a normal BC although it wraps around you more than usual. When the dive is over and you're back on land, now it turns into an inflatable walker which is especially useful for those divers who are having trouble getting around. The only glitch is that when you put your full weight on it, it tends to collapse. And if you blow it up with enough PSI to support body weight, it explodes. So they've still got to work that part out.

We were delighted to see that the tester in Yap was none other than legendary diver Joe Liburdi (who still gets around pretty good at the ripe young age of 86) as you can see from the photo below.





CATALINA UNDERWATER STATUES

Seeing the success of the Cancun Underwater Museum as well as other underwater statue collections in various parts of the world, the Avalon City Council has voted to create their own version of that and they've even commissioned sculptor Jason deCaires Taylor to do it, since he's the guy who's done the other ones as well.

The new statue collection will be

placed in a sandy area just outside the current boundaries of the Underwater Park (which will then be extended) on the northwest corner towards the *Valiant*. Best of all, they want to use real local divers as their models so everything will have a local feel. (Taylor does this on his other statue installations as well.)

To be considered, you need to submit a headshot (against a plain background) to the Avalon City Manager before the deadline, which is coming up soon. Headshots should be in JPG form, no larger than 2000 pixels high, and you can choose to be smiling or not. E-mail that shot to Avalon Interim City Manager Denise Radde at this e-mail address: dradde@cityofavalon.com.

CHECK YOUR CALENDAR

This edition of the newsletter gets harder and harder to write every year because more and more of you know that it's coming. But hopefully, I might have been able to hook you even for just a moment when you started reading.

If you haven't caught on by now, you might want to take a look at your calendar and see if "April 1" has any meaning for you. And then you might pause to think if there's any connection between that and stories that simply sound unbelievable. (But the trips are legit.) Hopefully you've enjoyed what you've read and if you still haven't caught on: April Fools!!!

PICTURE PAGE - Over-exposed pictures

(All pix by Ken Kurtis © 2016)



Whale giving birth



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Man riding a Great White Shark



The Green Flash



New diver with perfect bouyancy



Bigfoot underwater chasing a unicorn