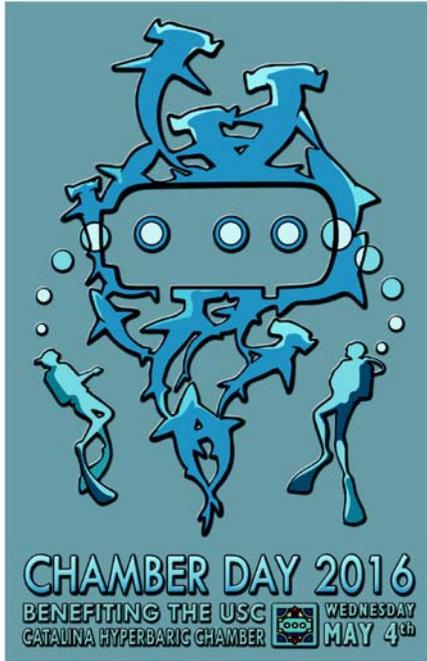


THE REEF SEEKER



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May - 2016



CHAMBER DAY IS UPON US

I always think of Dickens at this time of the year: It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. Chamber Day represents the one day a year when the entire diving community - divers, shops, clubs, manufacturers, training agencies, and others - all come together for the greater good of the entire community. That's the best of times.

On the other hand, and certainly on a personal level, it's a hell of a lot of work. There's a lot of logistics and minutiae going on behind the scenes (and has been for six months - we start working on this in December each year) that you never see but which all helps to

make the whole thing run fairly smoothly and seamlessly. However, it's rather time-consuming. That's the worst of times.

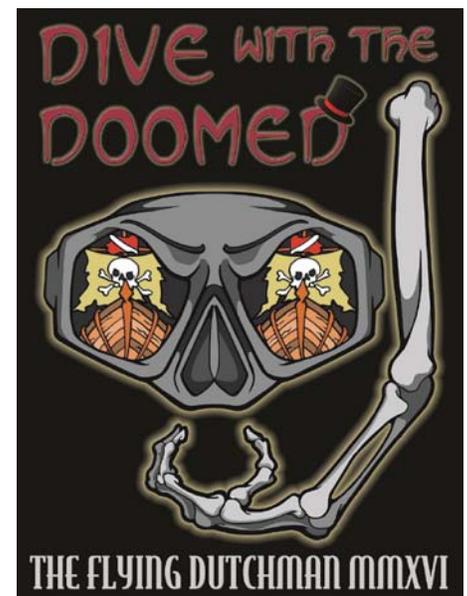
But it's all for a good cause. I have always been one to believe strongly in public service and giving back to the community that supports you and from which you make a living. That's why when I was doing a fair amount of TV work, I was quite happy to be associated with KCET. And that's why, with all that diving has given to me, I'm happy to have been part of the MLPA process, volunteer at the Aquarium of the Pacific, and to chair Chamber Day each year. (Besides, I can't seem to find anyone willing to take over from me.)

This is a really good and worthwhile event. And I'm proud not only to be a part of it, but to see the strides we've made over the years.

Sadly this year, it looks like we're going to slip backwards a bit, perhaps as much as 20%. We know it's still a tough economy for many of you and we just hope you'll give what you can. But our Chamber is the ultimate non-partisan player: We don't care who you are, where you came from, or what your belief system is. If you need our help, we're there for you. And we hope you'll be there for us on May 4 as well.

Even though we're only a few days

away, there are still some things you can do to have a positive impact on the final outcome.



THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

For those who can't take Wednesday off, we have the perfect solution—sign up for the *Flying Dutchman*. In nautical lore, the *Flying Dutchman* is bad news as it was the name of a mythical ship doomed to sail the seas forever and never reach port. But from a Chamber Day perspective, the *Dutchman* is a good thing because it helps us raise more money for our Chamber and gets you a unique T-shirt.

Our *Flying Dutchman* is the answer for folks who can't get wet

on May 4 but who want to say they “dove” the event. You won’t really go anywhere but you’ll get all the other benefits of Chamber Day participation. An “on-board” raffle will be conducted, just like on all the other boats, and you’ll get a T-shirt—but yours will be unique. (And the consensus is that this is the best *Dutchman* design ever.)

Cost for the *Dutchman* remains at \$95. This includes your T-shirt, on-board raffle ticket, and 5 Chamber Day raffle tickets. It’s a great way to participate if you can’t get away for the day. We generally have over 100 people “dive” the *Dutchman* each year and we’re hoping that 2016 will be no exception.

To sign up for the *Dutchman*, go online to www.chamberday.org or call *Dutchman* HQ at 310-652-4990.

THE CHAMBER CHALLENGE

Each year the SoCal diving community raises extra funds for our Chamber through the Chamber Challenge. These funds are vital to the operation of our Chamber. It’s a simple concept: you make a donation and then “challenge” your friends and associates to do the same. Last year was an incredible year, with over \$65,000 in Challenge donations so we’ve got our work cut out for us.

Although contributions of any amount are welcome, we have a tiered level of donations, as follows:

Diamond – \$10,000
Platinum – \$5,000

Gold – \$1,000
Silver – \$500
Bronze – \$100

All Diamond, Platinum, and Gold donors will receive special recognition from our Chamber for their donation. Contributions can come from individuals, clubs, stores, boats, publications, and others. Contributions can also be made in someone’s memory, either as an individual, or grouped together for a larger total. If the company you work for has a matching grant program, Challenge donations usually qualify.

Donations can be made either through our secure server at www.chamberday.org or by calling 310-652-4990. Cash, check, and credit card are all fine.

BUY T-SHIRTS & OTHER GOODIES AHEAD OF TIME

Once again this year you can buy extra T-shirts and other Chamber merchandise ahead of time online at www.chamberday.org. You can choose from either our Chamber Day 2016 shirt or our Chamber

Evening 2016 shirt—or you can save yourself the trouble of deciding and get both. In years past, the evening shirt was available only at the evening event, but it’s now available online to anyone who wants one. (And the Evening shirt is available in both long- and short-sleeved versions.)

You can have the shirt shipped to you (for an extra \$5) or you can pick it up on May 4, either at the Chamber or at the Aquarium of the Pacific. There’s no charge for pickup.

Be sure to get your T-shirt today and wear it with pride, knowing your donation is helping to keep our Chamber strong.

SECURE SERVER

Once again this year we are offering you the opportunity to sign up for Chamber Day and Chamber Eve activities through the Internet and our secure server. (If you choose to use this option, please make sure you provide your phone number and e-mail address where prompted.) Credit card charges that go through our server will appear on your statement as “USC Col-

2016 DIVING VACATIONS

August 1-6 • Guadalupe

August 13-20 • Isla Mujeres

August 20-27 • Isla #2

November 5-14 • Maldives

lege of Letters Arts.” Rest assured that all donations go directly into the Chamber’s operating account.

You can also use your credit card when you make purchases over the phone at 310-652-4990. All charges done this way will be billed through Square and should appear on your statement as “Reef Seekers Dive Co.” which is simply the billing agent. All the monies are transferred immediately to the Chamber’s account.

OTHER THINGS

- We’ve got our fabulous third trip to Guadalupe Island coming up August 1-6. It’s your chance to go nose-to-nose (from inside the protection of a cage) with Great White Sharks. It’s a really cool experi-

ence. Call us at 310/652-4990 for all the details or check out the website.

- We’ve also still got room on our Maldives trip in November. It also means we’ll be out of the country on Election Day so no matter which side of the political fence you straddle, absence of campaigning should be a big inducement.

- There’s a very serious coral bleaching event going on right now in the Great Barrier Reef. Estimates are that as much as 93% of the GBR is being affected and that it all could have a devastating long-term impact. Bleaching events are not readily predictable nor well-understood so this one will require closer scrutiny.

- Looks like no one noticed our

typo in our Chamber Day materials (or you’re being incredibly discreet). Be sure to check out the full *Flying Dutchman* poster and see if you can spot the error.

APRIL REPORT

It’s harder fool you guys each year because you’ve come to expect April 1 shenanigans in this newsletter. But it seems we did get a few of you to worry about how you’d get from Long Beach to San Pedro with the Catalina Express terminal changes. And some of you photogs out there expressed your appreciation for the over-exposed shots at the end, which were really just white squares. Hopefully you enjoyed reading it as much as we enjoyed writing it.

PICTURE PAGE - Chamber Days past

(All pix by Ken Kurtis © 2016)



**Air 5
being viewed (2008)**



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**Readying the
t-shirts (2010)**



**Ken in penguin suit
with penguins behind (2013)**



**The only 3 - ever - Chamber
Directors (2014)**



**Tasty meal in the Great Hall
of AOP (2015)**