

# The Rebel Yell

A Newsletter for the Diving Rebels - One of the Oldest Scuba Clubs in Texas - Established 1958

May 2009

## 2009 DIVING REBEL BOARD

Keith Weber, President

Mark Estill, Vice President

Selena Woodward, Treasurer

Ellen Fourton, Secretary

George Bartulevicz, Activities Director

Johnathan Bowman, Sr. Board Member

Mark Stonebridge, Jr. Board Member

## Appointed Positions

Danny Bouska, Webmaster/Newsletter

Linda Magnuson, Historian

To contact one of the Club's officers,  
please visit our website at:

[WWW.DIVINGREBELS.ORG](http://WWW.DIVINGREBELS.ORG)

or send an email with your  
question(s) and/or comments to:

[info@divingrebels.org](mailto:info@divingrebels.org)



## MEMBERSHIP MEETING Wednesday – May 6, 2009

**Meeting Time**  
**6:30pm Social**  
**7:15pm Meeting**

## What's Inside?

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## May Meeting Program

Don't miss our fellow Texas diver from the Scubadillo Dive Club speaking to us this month. Our own stimulus package will be delivered.

See more information on Page 2

## Upcoming Events Calendar

- May 6 Monthly Membership Meeting
- May TBA May Outing
- June 3 Monthly Membership Meeting
- June 20 Mid Year Party
- July 1 Monthly Membership Meeting

## President's Report

Hey Rebels,

Some exciting changes are in the works. You'll find a shortened meeting time as we compress the agenda. In response to comments we are going to try to get out earlier. However, to do that, we will need to shift some activities. Raffle tickets and Rebel wear fines will be handled more in the social time with the last opportunity to buy tickets falling during the Jr. Board Member's time slot. The break has also been reallocated to more useful activities. I'll be interested to hear what you think.

And speaking of what you think, the 2008 survey results are tabulated. There were no big surprises for the meeting survey results. The most useful feedback was on the meeting format and length. Obviously, those comments have been acted upon as we try the new agenda.

We now have survey results from 03, 05 and 08 which make trend analysis a little more possible. For example, in 2003, about 70 % indicated they would attend 9 or more meetings and we are now at 80%. We can tell that from the squeeze in the room sometimes as our membership grows and the percentage attendance increases. Another interesting item is about speaker topics that are consistent in the top 4, but bounce around in rank among themselves over time. It indicates to me that our tastes change and that having a survey is a good snapshot of the preferences of the Club membership at a point in time.

As for the event survey results, they document the trend we have seen. For 03 and 08, we have about 65% indicating attendance at 6 or more outings compared to 05 where we were at 80%. The desire to drive in hours has gone down for monthly outings as expected, but the significant drop was for 3 day outings going from 80% willing to drive 5 or more for 2003 and 2005 to 84% wanting to drive 5 or less in 08. That is something I felt was happening, but didn't want to believe. It is nice to have it in black and white. We will definitely take that into consideration as we plan the activities for 2009 and into 2010. The economy is also reflected in our survey as the max that we all plan to budget for an outing has gone down by half. According to the responses, the trend is for shorter trips with one overnight leading with almost 54% and two overnights and day trips neck and neck for 2008 compared with 79% for the two overnights in 2005 and in 2003, 87% preferred overnight rather than day trips. I think the survey underscores our current trouble planning outings – we don't want to go far, pay much, or stay long and have good visibility. That combination just simply does not exist right now.

Overall, I am very pleased with the participation. We had 20 respondents with many good suggestions and the most written text answers in the surveys' history. Comparatively, we had 23 submitted in 2003 and 16 in 2005. In terms of percentage of membership, those are pretty strong numbers for a voluntary survey.

Learn, adapt, DIVE,  
Keith

### **May Membership Meeting Speaker David Prichard - Diving the USA**

While most divers would love to travel to tropical international destinations for dive vacations, the economic recession has caused many divers to rethink their travel plans and consider less expensive alternatives closer to home. In his presentation "Diving the USA," David Prichard will cover all of the major US diving destinations in not only the continental United States but most of its territories around the world. David, and his wife Lily Mak, are contributing editors to Dive Training and Wreck Diving magazines and published in other dive/travel magazines as well. They have traveled to many of the destinations covered in the presentation when they are not teaching scuba diving. David also invented the Vari-Fit Snorkel Keeper which is sold at many area dive centers and at his website at [www.enchantedsea.com](http://www.enchantedsea.com).

I saw Mr. Prichard's presentation at the Scubadillo meeting in February and felt it was well put together and quite informative. I thought it was timely and Dave was gracious to accept my request for speaking at our meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup>. So let's pack the house and find out about some of our old haunts with a fresh perspective while keeping an eye for some new possibilities.

## May Outing 2009

We seem to have some trouble getting this one coordinated. Many of the Board members have conflicts with our usual Memorial Day weekend outing. The rest of May is hit and miss for us and we had hoped to have an Outing Magnifico step up to handle the month's event. To date that has not occurred and the outing has not been set.

My suggestion would be to have a day trip outing to Tyler SP. Unfortunately, May seems to be a busy month for the Board and we are leaving it up to the membership to help determine a good weekend for the majority.

So speak up and go diving.

## **Diving Rebel Mid-year Party June 20, 2009**

The call is out for all Diving Rebels, veteran or newbie, to attend the mid-year party. With the visibility of local diving in such a sad state, our trouble with Mother Nature this year and the largest non-diver outing attendance other than the Christmas party, the Board opted to host the party at a residence. George Bartulevicz has graciously offered up his home. Directions and maps will be available at the meetings and will be in a Holler closer to the event.

So bring a swim suit for playing in the pool and your best dress as a hula person and let's get shakin'. We will be having a Polynesian luau theme. We'll have some games to play, perhaps a contest or two, a raffle and of course the ever popular mingling. We are planning on being there from 10am – 9pm with the meal time probably falling as lunner (most likely closer to lunch than dinner). More details to follow as they come together.

Mark your calendars and plan to be with us for fun, food and fellowship. While not one of our big anniversary years, the traditional mid-year gathering is always a good time. The Board would certainly like to see you all there.



## **Birthdays**



May 1 Jimmy Atkinson  
May 6 Doug Sheppard  
May 14 Steve Ogden  
May 17 Rita Simpson  
May 20 Mark Stonebridge

## **Anniversaries**

May 13 Danny and Jill Bouska  
May 14 Mark and Michele Estill



## **A Rebel Welcome to New Members Joining in March 2009**

Michelle Melillo  
SDI Master Diver  
Godley, Tx

Say "Hi" to Michelle and give a  
Rebel Welcome to our newest  
member!

## **Don't forget Diving Rebels Caps and T-Shirts On sale at any monthly meeting!**



BLACK



NAVY & NATURAL



NAVY

Merchandise sold to Diving Rebels Members Only

## Post trip report – Tyler State Park, April 24 -26, 2009

by Keith Weber

We had a good turnout despite the rain and threat of storms. And the visibility was amazing considering the number of wet days they've had in the area. I estimate in some places vis was 6ft with most of the trek averaging about 4ft. Catfish were very scarce this year and the turtles didn't seem as populous as in prior times. However, we did see some nice bass of different varieties. The cove across the lake from the lake view camping area was a virtual fishery, thick with juveniles.

The divers included Mark Stonebridge, Jim and Linda Magnuson, Danny and Daniel Barentine and me. Helping on the shore were Selena Woodward and her granddaughter K C along with Kelly Barentine. Calvis Hawes stopped by for a visit as well.

I am sure you will hear stories, but I claim the fifth. Even though the park ranger made me move my vehicle and my tent, I maintain I did nothing wrong. It was worth it for the great view of the lake from my cot for Friday night. At least until the rain rolled in and I was awakened after star gazing with a light rain on my face. I was up in a flash and the rain-fly in place in no time, blew off, and put on again with a little more care. Just in the nick of time too as the rain grew heavier and the wind blew it along. The temperature was pleasant and as the wind died and the rain was lighter, the sleeping was good and went deep into the morning for most of us.

It cleared and around 10am, life was circulating around the campsite. It rained lightly just in time for lunch so out came the tarps and rope. The rest of the outing was overcast, but pleasant. We hit the water about 2 or 3 I think – time wasn't really relevant.

I was reminded of one of the reasons I like being in the Club. I dove with new divers and we zigzagged across the lake as we practiced navigation. I thought of my first dives there and the nurturing I received from experienced Rebels as I too was the leader of the zigs and zags. I can only hope I did as well helping others enjoy the sport.

Daniel was able to try out the regulator he won at the Christmas party - after strategically moving up next to Jim and Phyllis Kirchhoff who were on a streak. He gave the reg a good workout and you'll have to ask him how it breathes.

We all concurred that the outing was really great and the first started breaking camp a little after 10am Sunday with the rest of us straggling along behind – thinking already of when to come again.



## Tyler State Park Outing Pictures



"Fishing for Divers"

## Whale Sharks – An Experience of a Lifetime

Picture yourself, sitting on the gunwale of the dive boat, about a mile off the coast of Utila Honduras. You have your mask and fins on and snorkel in your mouth as the boat captain circles a swirling school of feeding fish. Your anticipation mounts and suddenly, the Divemaster shouts “GO!” You slide into the water as quickly and quietly as possible. Your view is obstructed as you are surrounded by thousands of small and large bubbles, then suddenly the water clears and directly in front of you, face to face, is a 35’ Whale Shark. The creature looks at you for a moment and with a disconcerting motion, turns and swims away, not real fast, but with a few sweeps of his giant tail, he disappears into the blue. You’ve just experienced what very few divers get to see other than in pictures or on video. You’ve been face to face with the biggest fish in the sea!

Whale sharks are commonly known as gentle giants and the scientific name for whale is Rhincodon typus. The word rhincodon means file teeth or rasp teeth and refers to the numerous rows (11 or 12) of small teeth that total several thousand. Whale sharks are true sharks as they have a cartilaginous skeleton, several external gill openings and lack gas bladders. As previously notes, Whale sharks are also the largest fish in the sea. The first whale shark was found, examined and described in Cape Town, South Africa in 1828.

Whale sharks are filter feeders and have a cylindrical body, a broad head and a large mouth. Several lateral ridges run down the length of their bodies. In the grooves between the ridges are lateral lines, which are bands of nerves that help the shark sense the speed, size and shape of an object moving through water. They have white undersides and dark backs with pale spots and lines, a coloration that may be used as camouflage. Whale shark newborns measure about 24 inches. The largest, regarded as accurately recorded, was caught on November 11, 1947, near the island of Baba, near Karachi, Pakistan. It was 41’6” long, weighed more than 47,300 pounds, and had a girth just over 7 yards. The smallest and youngest ever found was located on March 7 2009 when a project leader from the international conservation organization WWF and others in the town of Donsol in the Philippines heard that a live whale shark was being offered for sale at a nearby beach. Expecting a stranded giant, the rescuers found instead a 15-inch shark leashed to a stake in the mud like a neglected puppy. The discovery of the baby whale shark could help protect these rare giants by shedding light on where whale sharks are born. After photos and measurements were taken, the young whale shark was freed, as it was released into deeper waters.



Whale Sharks can be observed in several locations around the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The Flower Gardens are paid visits by these magnificent animals during the latter part of the summer, beginning at the end of July. From June thru early September they can be seen around Holbox Island Mexico in the state of Quintana Roo near Cancún. Utila Honduras is known as the “Whale Shark Capital of the Caribbean” as whale sharks can be spotted their year round with the best chance to see them in March and April. Though none of these locations can guarantee that you will see a Whale Shark, your chances of seeing one or several are better at Holbox and/or Utila. Whale Sharks can be observed at many other locations around the world. Ask Judy about her experience with Whale Sharks in Galapagos!

Despite their size Whale Sharks are very difficult to find, yet on the trip described in the first paragraph, the group saw three Whale Sharks in one day. It is reported that Jacques Cousteau only saw two Whale Sharks in his entire life time. Little is known about their activities or population size, but several monitoring programs are helping fill these knowledge gaps. Listed below are just a few of these programs.

Project AWARE: [www.whalesharkproject.org](http://www.whalesharkproject.org)  
Ecocean: <http://www.whaleshark.org/>  
Utila Whale Shark Research: <http://www.utilawhalesharkresearch.com>

You can check out these sites to learn more about Whale Sharks, but what better way to learn about Whale Sharks is there than to join us on a trip to Utila to see them for yourself and be part of the Utila Whale Shark Research Project during the Whale Shark Research Week of April 10-17, 2010.

As of publication of this newsletter, there are 4 spaces available for the trip in April of 2010. For more information on how you can be part of this exciting trip, contact Danny at: [dannyb@lonestardiver.com](mailto:dannyb@lonestardiver.com)

## Scuba News from Around the World

Mark Estill submitted this video of some orcas working together to get a meal.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3xmqbNsRSk>

### Whale Sharks need wider protection against over-fishing

<http://www.newswise.com/articles/view/550895/>

Whale sharks, the world's largest fish, are imperiled by over-fishing in parts of its ocean range. New research shows little genetic variation across widely separated tropical oceans, underscoring the need for wider protection against over-fishing. "Our data show that whale sharks found in different oceans are genetically quite similar, which means that animals move and interbreed between populations," said Schmidt, one of the researchers. "From a conservation standpoint, it means that whale sharks in protected waters cannot be assumed to stay in those waters, but may move into areas where they may be in danger."

### Ultra-Rare Shark Caught and Eaten

<http://www.enn.com/wildlife/article/39617>

A megamouth shark, one of the world's most elusive species, was caught, carved up and eaten by fishermen from a town in the Philippines, the environmental conservation group WWF said. So rare are megamouth shark sightings that each find is given a number - this one, caught by fishermen from the coastal town of Donsol, was only the 41st ever seen or captured in the world.

### Code red: How coral reef fish keep in touch?

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20227021.400-code-red-how-deep-reef-fish-keep-in-touch.html>

Coral reef fish give off red light. Is this part of a private system of communication that is proof against eavesdroppers?

### Scientists Decode Mysterious Green Glow of the Sea

<http://scrippsnews.ucsd.edu/Releases/?releaseID=970>

Many longtime sailors have been mesmerized by the dazzling displays of green light often seen below the ocean surface in tropical seas. Now researchers at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego have uncovered key clues about the bioluminescent worms that produce the green glow and the biological mechanisms behind their light production.

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## June Meeting Speaker

Come hear our fellow Rebel, Mark Stonebridge give a slide show style presentation of his dive experiences.



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