

Deep Sea Digest

Winter 2007



Texas Gulf Coast Council of Diving Clubs

Inside this issue.....

**What's
New.....1**

**Club
Reports.....2**

**Scuba
News.....3**

Recipes.....4



Texas Gulf Coast Council of Diving Clubs (TGCC) meets the second Thursday of every odd month at 7:00 PM. Come join us at
Bayland Community Center,
6400 Bissonnet,
Bellaire, Texas

Have you visited us online?
Check us out at: <http://www.tgccdiving.org>

Congratulations to our Scholarship winners

TGCC has awarded two \$500 college scholarships for 2006. Sarah Cancelmo, attending DePauw University and representing HUPS & HUC received one of the scholarships. Alice McDonald, attending Texas A&M University and representing CHUM Club was the other scholarship winner. Congratulations to both of them.

TGCC 2007 Banquet

The TGCC 2007 Banquet will be at Chabucca's in Webster on **February 3, 2007**. Ticket price will be \$30. Save the date. It will be a great time to socialize with your friends and fellow divers in all the area clubs.





Trashfest T-Shirt Design competition

TrashFest is retiring our beloved “Super Scooper” mascot after many good years of service. We’re inviting you to help design his replacement. Get the details on the TGCC website, <http://www.tgccdiving.org>

Flower Gardens Management Plan Review

The Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS) recently held public open houses to educate the public on their operations and to solicit public input. Here’s the TGCC response:

- (1) TGCC, in response to a question or concern of Flower Gardens Bank make-up supports the existence of existing Flower Gardens Banks with the addition of additional platform diving.
- (2) In response to varied usage of the Flower Gardens Banks, TGCC supports continued use of recreational use with the exception of fishing on the coral caps of the banks.
- (3) In reference to increased use of the FGNMS, TGCC feels that increased use is probably overexaggerated, but supports the addition of Sonnier and Geyer Banks to the FGNMS.
- (4) TGCC feels that FGNMS concern of user conflicts is not warranted.

For the rest of TGCC’s response to FGNMS questions/concerns, go to the Council Website:

<http://www.tgccdiving.org>

CLUB REPORTS

BAY AREA DIVERS:

January 31 – Regular Club Meeting
February 6 – Board Meeting
February 10 – Mardi Gras Parade
October 20-27 – Roatan Trip
<http://www.bayareadivers.org>

CHUM CLUB:

January 8 – Regular Club Meeting
January 20-21 Caney Creek Shipwreck Dive
January 25-30 Belize Trip
February 24 – Rodeo Run
May 5 – Dragon Boat Races
<http://www.chumclub.org>

Houston Underwater Club

January 17 – Board Meeting
January 19 – Regular Club Meeting
February 14 – Board Meeting
February 16 – Regular Club Meeting
March 14 – Board Meeting
March 16 – Regular Club Meeting
March 31-April 1 – SeaSpace 2007
April 28-May 5 – Aggressor Trip
June 30-July 7 - Curacao Trip
<http://www.hucscuba.org>

Houston Underwater Photographic Society

January 20 – Photo Workshop with Marty Snyderman 10AM - 4PM
February 5 – Regular Club Meeting
March 5 – Regular Club Meeting
April 2 – Regular Club Meeting
May 19-26 – Cayman Islands Trip
<http://www.hups.org>

Lunarfins

February 15-28 – Maldives Liveaboard
March 15-24 – Fiji Trip
April 22- May 4 – Brazil Trip
May/August – Bill Jones Cozumel Trips
<http://www.geocities.com/lunarfins/>



Diver wants to sink old US Navy ships off California coast

CYBER DIVER News Network
by **JULIE SCOTT**

Recreational scuba diver Dr. Harry Wong thinks he has the perfect solution to the Navy's dilemma of what to do with its vast stockpile of rusting, decommissioned war ships: sink them at sea. The Portola Valley-based chiropractor and nutritionist is president of California Ships 2

Reefs, a group of devoted scuba divers, scientists and engineers whose avowed goal is to sink "20 ships in 20 years" off the California coast. If they succeed, the result will be an underwater playground of artificial reefs that would attract enough riotous marine life to make Jacques Cousteau jealous.

A report prepared by the National Defense Research Institute for the U.S. Navy in 2001 demonstrated that after exporting them, reefing the ships was the second most economical way to dispose of them.

Wong now has his eye on the 75 mothballed vessels held by the U.S. Maritime Administration at a shipyard in Suisun Bay. Fifty of those vessels are scheduled for scrapping, said agency spokeswoman Russell.

<http://www.cdnn.info>.

Rigs to Reefs

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/water/habitats/artificial_reef/overview.phtml

Rigs-to-reefs is the heart of the Texas Artificial Reef Program. The heart of the Texas Artificial Reef Program is the recycling of obsolete petroleum platforms into permanent artificial reefs rather than allowing them to be taken ashore as scrap. Rigs make ideal artificial reefs because they are environmentally safe, are constructed of highly durable and stable material

that withstands displacement or breakup and already support a thriving reef ecosystem. The decline in oil and gas activity in the Gulf in the 1980's resulted in an increased number of rigs being scrapped. Recognition that these de facto reefs provided a valuable habitat and should be preserved lead to the creation of comprehensive planning guides for artificial reef development.

In Texas, the Artificial Reef Act of 1989 directed the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to promote and enhance the artificial reef potential off Texas. To fulfill this purpose, the Department developed the Texas Artificial Reef Plan Texas, adopted by the Parks and Wildlife Commission in 1990. The Artificial Reef Program is guided by that Plan and the recommendations from a citizen-based Artificial Reef Advisory Committee.

To date, 87 offshore petroleum structures have been donated by cooperating oil and gas companies. Currently, the Artificial Reef Program receives 50% of an oil company's savings from converting the jacket to a reef instead of taking the structure to shore where it is salvaged. Federal law requires de-commissioned structures to be removed for salvage if they do not participate in the ARP. The Rigs-to-Reef Program is a mechanism for preserving the complex biological communities unintentionally created by the pursuit of oil and gas in the Gulf of Mexico. These funds received are used to finance research, administration, maintenance, liability, and construction of new artificial reefs. The funds also make the Texas Artificial Reef Program self-sufficient, with no need for taxpayer dollars.

The pursuit of oil and gas resources has led the resource recovery industry further offshore as each oil and gas field becomes depleted and as technologies have developed and increased the capacities to operate in deeper waters.

Currently, major oil companies are focusing on developing oil and gas fields in waters greater than 3,000 feet deep. The Texas continental shelf is shallow for many miles, particularly on the upper coast, and traveling to deeper waters for recreational pursuits is time and cost prohibitive.



Beer Salmon

Recipe courtesy Sandra Lee
<http://www.foodnetwork.com>

1 (12-inch) tail piece salmon fillet (about 1 1/2 pounds) 2 teaspoons garlic salt
3 tablespoons brown sugar 4 tablespoons butter, cut into small pieces
1 small red onion, thinly sliced 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer

Preheat grill to medium-high heat.

Using aluminum foil, create an oblong cooking tray (approximately 13 inches by 8 inches by 2 inches) to be placed directly on grill. Place salmon fillet in center of tray. Season first with garlic salt, sprinkle with brown sugar, and then cover with pieces of butter. Top with sliced red onions. Pour beer of choice into tray to just below the highest point of the fillet. Cover tray with aluminum foil to envelope fish completely. Place tray on grill, cover with lid, and grill for approximately 8 minutes or until just cooked through.

All advertisements in Deep Sea Digest represent TrashFest 2006 sponsors! Thank you to all who donated prizes and made TrashFest 2006 a tremendous success!



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