

# Family Day, 2010

*A soggy recount  
from Kathy &  
Alan Reilly*

I would like to thank those who braved the elements to attend our Annual Family Day event. Bob and Deb did an outstanding job preparing for the event and sticking with the plan no matter what happened with the weather. We enjoyed great food and friendly games played under the Pavilion. Some of the children even went swimming (*in the lake, Jay*) We even had a plant exchange and were pleasantly surprised by the variety of plants that Connie bought along. Thanks Connie!

Those who attended had a great time and we look forward to 2011 and NO RAIN!  
Alan & Kathy



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD COLONY AMPHIBIANS

*Lobsters, Shopping & Italian Night*

## Fall P-Town

**PROVINCETOWN, MA** · Fun town! I was so looking forward to P-Town this year. Even my chemo treatment did not stop the fun had by the girl's shopping experience. We frequented the usual hot spots. Several rubber duckies were purchased by Deb and me for our granddaughters. We found ducks that were Devils, Angels, Witches, Cheerleaders and dressed up for Christmas.

Patti brought her list of fudge requests to the Fudge Shop and we couldn't resist the free samples of Pumpkin Fudge. You just have to celebrate the seasons when they arrive here in New England! Where else can you find a back scratcher for \$1 but at the Army/Navy store? Joyce, thanks for walking with me and keeping me out of the traffic!

waiters seemed happy to see them and our service was better this year than ever before. This year we had reason to use the unisex bathrooms at the top of the stairs in the restaurant.

And, Connie discovered that fun fact that there is more to do in P-Town besides diving on THE DIVE WEEKEND ..... lunch ....shopping ..... shopping and etc.

The weather was great and our 1st Italian Night was bellissimo! Mangia!!!! Without having the grill going, .... the smoke it provided ..... the mosquitoes took over and it was an early night for all after enjoying the day's activities.

Lucky to have such great friends,  
*Kathy Reilly*

*More on page 6.*



Fred missed the boat! It was not Joan's fault. She would never miss the girl's lunch or our morning walk before going Downtown.

We did have two special guests with us this year. Fredonia & Bobbi Lee brought a whole new dimension to our lunch table. Our





# prez box

by Henry Cugno

“All good things must come to an end,” and so goes the latest dive season. Although, it wasn’t the best of seasons, we still managed to get in most of our scheduled dives. Many of our weekends were sunny, but the wind managed to keep visibility down for a good portion of the season.

As of this writing, we still have a couple of Friday Night Dives, Joe’s Memorial Dive and the Halloween Dive to go. Some great chances to finish the season strong. Let’s hope the weather cooperates.

Let’s not talk about season highlights just yet because it’s not quite over, but there was one recent dive experience that is the highlight of the season for me so far that I will tell you about. It happened on P-Town weekend this last September. My son, Michael, joined me for the weekend to dive in the clear and cool waters off P-Town. The trip planning actually started a couple of weekends before the actual event when we took on a father-son project to build tank racks for the new truck. We made a trip to Home Depot to get some ideas and decided to make the racks out of PVC. We sketched out some plans and created a parts list. After another trip to Home Depot for all of the supplies, we cut all the pipe and pieced it together to create an eight tank capacity tank rack.

Michael painted the white PVC black and we tested out the system on our drive to P-Town. It worked perfectly.

We were supposed to meet Bill Weedon at Pamet but when we got there, it was blowing a pretty steady thirty (guestimated). When Bill called to check in, I told him what the conditions were at Pamet and he decided to launch in P-Town instead. That was a good decision. Although, the wind was blowing there as well, we were protected by the beach.

We met many of the OCA boats at the ramp and took turns launching while feeding quarters to the parking meters. Thanks to Rick Amaral, who came prepared with enough quarters for all who needed them.

Chris Weedon was scheduled to join us on Bill’s boat but was feeling under the weather so it was just the three of us that set out for a day of diving. We headed to the outside of the point where it was a little rough. Bill was in the water first as Michael and I kept the boat between Bill’s flag and other boats. Bill had a great first dive pulling up 13 lobsters. We decided to try calmer waters on the inside of the point for my first dive with Michael. We started around 30 feet and went as deep as 52 feet. The visibility was great and I could tell that Michael was enjoying himself as he played with every see creature he encountered. There were huge schools of silversides that swam in waves swerving back and forth as one. We visited many toilet bowls and found some large lobsters, all with eggs. As I dug the largest lobster out of one of the bowls, I noticed a school of silversides part and looked into the gap

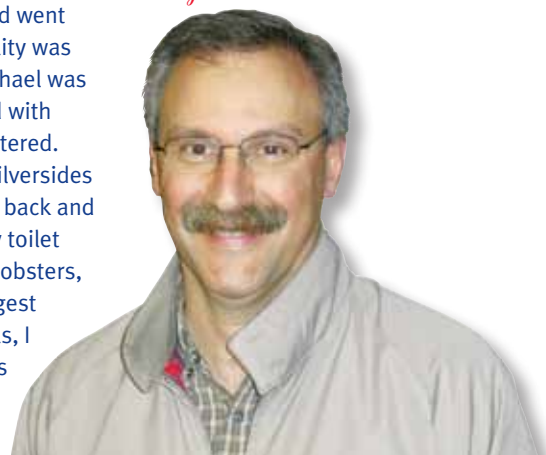
that was created. I saw the silhouette of something large. I caught Michael’s attention and pointed over to the shadow which was now becoming a little clearer. It was a sun fish about 5’ wing span from top to bottom. I’d never seen one on a dive before and Michael had never seen one at all. It drifted away before we could get a good look. I stopped and stayed on the bottom hoping it might come around again. It took a few seconds, but sure enough, it came around to get a better look at us, this time coming closer. Michael’s eyes were like saucers. I’m sure mine were too. When we got back on the boat, I told him what we had seen and he said “that was the coolest thing I’ve ever experienced!”

I don’t get a chance to dive with my kids that much, but I always enjoy it when I do. This dive definitely made my season.

I’ll save the season wrap up for the next newsletter. In the mean time, let’s enjoy what we have left in the dive season.

Oh, and we still have Black-beard’s..... and then Winter Dive Club!

*Henry*



## Boat Ramps

I would like to add a section of the website and the newsletter devoted to “Boat Ramps.” These are ramps that we use and are amenable to our favorite scuba dive sites. I went 12 miles out of my way towing a boat this Saturday looking for the Barn Island ramp. I lost my auto GPS (left it in a rental car somewhere) and the on-line directions I found were not at all clear. So I’ll start with the Barn Island ramp. We can add others, including Wetherill, Salem, Pamet, downtown P-town, Green Bridge in Newport, Ft. Adams, Middletown and Marshfield, MA. The location of the Green Bridge ramp was not that obvious either. I think this would benefit the dive community that may search our site. There is no downside or reason to keep these ramp locations secret. More people diving is a good thing overall for the industry.

*Bill Weedon*

## Barn Island public boat ramp

**Access to** Watch Hill area, spearfishing, numerous wrecks

**Ramp condition** excellent, can put 3 boats in simultaneously, 2 docks

**Parking** ample

**Fee** none

### Directions

- 95 South to Exit 91 (CT)

- At end of ramp, take Left on Taugwonk

- Take 1st left onto Rt 234 East

- Take Second Right onto Farmhoime Rd, follow 1.8 miles to end

- Take Right at end onto Rt 1

- Take Immediate Left onto Green Haven Rd

- Take Immediate Right onto Palmer Neck Rd, follow 1.6 miles to end

**Caution** Palmer Neck will cross over a narrow railroad bridge, followed by a narrow section of road that is only wide enough for one vehicle. Palmer Neck has numerous tree overhangs making it hazardous to trailer a large boat.

**FYI** In the September 2010 issue of *Scientific American*, page 45, they indicate a lobster can live to be **170 years old**. God! I wonder how big it would be? *Dan Baker*

## Adopt a Diver

These last couple of years we have seen a bunch of new members join the club. It’s been a terrific addition with all the new enthusiasms and new personalities. I joined OCA about 10 years ago, and have seen a lot of changes (we’re in our third club house since I’ve been a member), but also a lot of continuity of old traditions and experience. Traditions like the Checker Club, the Dive Banquet, P-Town weekends, etc. We’re really about a lot more than just diving.

But with the new members comes a curiosity about diving, new people who want to learn from the experience of the crusty-old OCA aquanauts, about how, where and when to dive, how to setup their gear, etc. One thing I have learned is that no matter how good a diver you think you are, there’s always something new to learn. Diving is very site-specific, and someone that is familiar with diving another part of the country or world won’t necessarily know what to do around here.

I first started diving in 1998 and joined OCA around 2000. My wife and I were living up in Watertown, MA, and I did a bunch of charters with Cape Ann Divers out of Gloucester, MA, which were great. Then we moved down to RI, bought my first “stinkpot” (boat), and tried diving in Narragansett Bay. The first thing I found is that there’s nothing more boring than diving by yourself. Secondly, even after reading both RI Adventure Diving books, I really didn’t know where to dive or how to plan a dive. Then I joined OCA and everything changed.

I hooked up with Ian Campbell and Jim Brady on a bunch of dives, and we had a lot of fun. I tried to learn as best I could from diving and talking to the more experienced divers, including Dick Will, Ray Baril, and Rocco Santurri to name a few. I also noted with particular care who was catching the most fish and lobster, and so I always tried to get on Rick Amaral’s boat at club dives.



# 3

But now, as a more experience member, I feel that I have an obligation to pass some of that knowledge and experience down

to the newer members. Yes, I would rather be catching lobster (“the booty”) but it’s very rewarding when a new diver gets the hang of it and I, in turn, will have a new buddy. I realize that not all new members are going to want or be able to do the kind of advanced lobster, scallop and/or wreck diving that I personally like doing but we together will figure that out.

In the last year, we have become more aware at the OCA Board level of the responsibility of our club members, particularly boat captains in regard to new members and guests. We now have a liability waiver form that all OCA members are required to sign every year, and that all guests should sign before participating in a club dive. But it is more than that. Before someone gets on my boat, particularly if I have never seen him or her dive before, I am going to make sure that this person is “checked out” for the dive, and is assigned a buddy that is familiar with the dive site and local conditions. Diving is a lot of fun, but it’s a lot more relaxing and enjoyable when it’s done safely. We don’t need to go back to the “buddy lines” of years past, but I think just be more aware of and accommodating to new members until they are “checked out” on the dives that we do.

*Bill Weedon*

OCA Board Member

## OCA OFFICERS

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**Henry Cugno**

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**Alan Reilly** 10-11

**Bill Weedon** 10-11

**Ian Campbell** 09-10

**Fred LeBlanc** 09-10

**Bill Turner** 09-10

O.C.A. meetings are held every Thursday evening at 7:00 pm. Check the web site below for the location of the next meeting. Winter meetings are held the first and third Thurs. of the month from November 1 thru March 31.

We welcome your articles, notes, cartoons and photos for upcoming issues. Feel free to forward them to:

Old Colony Amphibians  
P.O. Box 3742  
Attleboro, MA 02703

or: bill@lanedesign.com

[www.ocascuba.org](http://www.ocascuba.org)

# OCA CALENDAR

### Oct10

**21** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm, Kalipso Dive Shop, Smithfield, RI

**22** Friday Night Dive, Fort Wetherill, 7:00 pm

**24** Joe’s Memorial Dive, Fort Wetherill, 8:00 am, Alan Reilly chairs

**28** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm, Midas Muffler, South Attleboro, MA

**29** Spooky Island Dive, Allen’s Harbor, 6:30 pm, Henry Cugno chairs

### Nov10

**1** Winter Dive Club begins and winter club meetings commence (1st and 3rd Thursdays until April 1st, 2011)

**4** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm, Midas Muffler, South Attleboro, MA

**6** Black Beard’s Cruise, Nassua, Bahamas

**6** Wreck Show, Framingham Keefe School

**18** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm, Kalipso Dive Shop, Smithfield, RI

### Dec10

**2** OCA Meeting, Nominations for 2011 Officers 7:00 pm, Midas Muffler, South Attleboro, MA

**16** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm, Kalipso Dive Shop, Smithfield, RI

A follow-up  
letter from  
Ed Fava

# Isla Mujeres, Mexico

CHICAGO, IL • I am writing this while in O'Hare airport on my way back to Rhode Island. While it has been my plan to return to Rhode Island around this time since going back to Isla Mujeres in June, it feels like my departure was sudden. Maybe it is because we were busy with divers the week before I left, or that I had managed to make it down to Playa Del Carmen for diving a couple of times in the past few weeks, opening me up to some of the potential that Mexico has to offer, or the fun I had been having with some new friends. Regardless of the reason, while I remain ready to get back to the states and look for new opportunities, it suddenly feels less urgent.

One reason why it has taken me so long to put out a new update is that I did not think I had much to write about. I made it through my first big storm here (tropical storm Alex) and had otherwise been chugging along without much incident, for better or worse. With the World Cup and Mexican elections now settled, the normally mellow mood here has gotten even calmer. Business wasn't too busy and for weeks we only sent out a few whale sharks trips. Also, my camera had broken, so that put a stop to my underwater photography. Since my start in Isla I had brought my camera on every dive, so it felt a little like relearning how to dive without it there. Luckily, I was

able to order another one on ebay, though I wasn't able to get down to Mexico before I came back. I really missed taking photos and opportunity it gave me to share what I was experiencing with

friends, family and other people I have met.

While much of the diving I did became very normal to me, though still gorgeous and fascinating, hearing the feedback from the photos I posted and sent out reminded me how lucky I was to be doing what I did. Additionally, the challenge of taking an outstanding photo became a welcome addition to my fairly standard dive itineraries. Knowing that I had the chance to capture an awesome image of an ever

changing reef became a real point of pleasure for me.

Having a fairly limited, though exceptionally beautiful, set of sites I would dive on a regular basis, I became very comfortable on the reefs around me and enjoyed knowing that there was something special to look forward to every time I dove. That is part of the reason why I may be hesitant to return to Isla Mujeres too far in the future. I have heard stories about how the reefs pale in comparison to what they used to be. Knowing the grim and disconcerting outlook for the reefs of the world, I don't know if I could stand to return to a place I remember so fondly and seeing it as a shadow of what it once was. I know I'll go back, but for how long, I am not sure.

As for seeing places while I have the opportunity to, I had the good fortune of being able to dive down in Playa Del Carmen with the owner of a shop ([www.scuba10.com](http://www.scuba10.com)) who used to work where I did at Sea Hawk. A few weeks ago I thought I might be catching a ride on a power catamaran being transported to Ft. Lauderdale and would have to leave on a few days notice, so I quit putting off something I had been meaning to do for a while and got on down to Playa to dive in the cenotes. While the ride to Ft. Lauderdale didn't pan out, the kick in the pants to get down to Playa sure did. For very little money (under \$8 for a round trip on a nice bus from Cancun to Playa Del Carmen) I was able to get down there.

I left early in the morning catching the 6am ferry and a 7am bus to get to the shop in Playa in time to dive. While I knew I was going cenote diving, I did not know which one I would be going to. It turns out I got lucky that day because they were going to a cenote called "The Pit". This is a deep cenote located in the same area as Dos Ojos. We had a planned maximum depth of 42 meters with a planned dive time of 45 minutes, all on air. The cenote, however, has a maximum depth of over 100 meters. That would be for another day. After dropping some snorkelers off at Dos Ojos, the van that brought us down drove another 20 minutes into the jungle over some rough terrain until coming up to the even rougher foot path that led to "The Pit".

We geared up at the van, our guide wearing doubles while the rest of us went with single tanks, and trekked the short way to the opening of the cenote. Our full suits contrasted nicely with the 90+ degree weather that day, but were necessary for the

brisk water we would soon jump in to. And jumping into it we did.

There are two ways to enter "The Pit": The first (and most thrilling) is via a 20+ foot jump at the end of the path. This can be done in full gear, or just in a wetsuit having you gear lowered or thrown (more on that in a moment) to you. The second is to walk a fairly treacherous path to a platform that has been built at the water level. I chose the wetsuit only leap and have no regrets. After getting in the water, however, there came the matter of getting all my stuff.

Our BCs were lowered down via a pulley that has been installed for just such operations. After that, masks, fins and other gear were passed down.

So, a funny story: While transferring fins from the ledge to the water, the divemaster didn't seem to notice that I was using fins that didn't float. In fact, they sunk. Quickly. Or at least one of them did. You see, he managed to toss me my mask and one fin, and while I was passing those off to get ready to catch the second fin, he tossed it down. It landed about 3 feet to my right and quickly traveled 30 meters below me. Good thing there aren't currents in these oversized puddles. So knowing that there wasn't much I could do at that point, I laughed it off and did the dive with one fin, which actually wasn't too bad. We even had a plan to recover my fin, which seemed like a nice little adventure. Unfortunately though, right after we started the dive, one of the three other divers with us began to panic and had to be brought to the surface, cutting out our opportunity to play find-the-flipper. Also, since I didn't notice the panicked diver, I had been continuing down to the area where I thought my fin was. This area has a maximum depth of about 35 meters, but also has a layer of tannic acid that makes a zero visibility situation. So, here I was, the first time in a cenote, with one fin, in a cloud of white smoke 32 meters underwater and am not sure which way is up. Fortunately I remembered to stay calm, look at my computer and recalled that bubbles prefer going up and began limping my way towards the surface until I spotted the divemaster's light. After that we did a tour around the cenote which is really an impressive and highly explorable dive. The differences between it and a reef are stark, especially considering the absence of an abundance of life. After the dive, we trekked out, had some sandwiches, picked up the snorkelers and drove back to the shop.

I had been planning on returning to Isla that evening, but Gerardo, the owner of the shop, offered me

the opportunity to stay the night and to divemaster in a cenote the next day. Well, never mind that I had never divemastered in a cenote before, this wasn't an opportunity I could pass up so I gladly accepted. The next day we traveled back to the same area, though this time to dive in "Dos Ojos." The big difference for me that day was I would be wearing double tanks (my first time ever) and would have a "discover" diver on my arm. While I question the sensibility of bringing uncertified divers into caves, it was my job that day and boy did it put my buoyancy skills to the test.

When you arrive at the entrance of the cenote you start looking for the Hollywood camera crew that must have just left. It is hard to imagine something that beautiful outside of a movie. You are presented with a jungle oasis complete with palms and vines and fresh water that has almost unlimited visibility. While it might not be as deep and daring as "The Pit," the ability to navigate the various caves and caverns of the cenote give it a much higher appeal for repeat diving and a sense of being an adventurer despite being a novice cave diver.

Diving with double tanks for the first time ever and having an uncertified diver on my arm ramped up the adventurer quotient for me, but after adjusting to my gear and diver I was able to enjoy the minimalist beauty that the cenotes present. Seeing the ancient stalagmites and stalactites through the unobscured visibility of the fresh water gave me the feeling of flying through an otherwise dry cave. If it weren't for the bubbles from the regulators and snorkelers above, you could be excused for thinking you were floating in air.

With a maximum depth of about 30 feet, we were only limited by the air in our tanks, allowing us to do two 45-minute dives seeing a good portion of the cenote available to recreational divers. While I do not think I would enjoy diving there on a daily basis, the cenotes present an outstanding contrast and change of pace to the reef diving I had been doing my entire time in Mexico. I even went back a couple of weeks later with a friend and dove in Angelita and Gran Cenote which are both beautiful in their own right. And in case you were worried, they even found my fin, giving me justification for taking off work to head back down.

I am glad I had the opportunity to see these impressive natural treasures before I came back to the states. They were a nice reminder that there are still a tremendous amount of opportunities for a young diver and that while I may love an island, there are still thousands of places left to see and enjoy and maybe love as well.

Before leaving Isla Mujeres I managed to sell most everything I didn't want to bring back and gave away the rest. We had another going away party (I should really leave more often) with fresh fish taken xic (pronounced teeken cheeks), my favorite

dish on the island.

I have to say that I was very lucky to have had the opportunity I did and that I am very gratefully to Bonnie and Ariel, the owners of Sea Hawk who gave me the chance to live and work with them. I will miss the island, my friends there and opportunity to dive and take people diving on a daily basis. I hope I can get back to that lifestyle soon. Unfortunately, finances dictate that I find a job that can allow me to make some more money before going back to the subsistence living of a tropical scuba instructor. As I finish this update I am back in Rhode Island looking for work on a private yacht as a deckhand and divemaster. I am walking the docks in Newport and if I can't find something by October I plan on heading down to Ft. Lauderdale to try my luck there. The idea is to find a job that will keep me on the water, hopefully in the water and let me save some money so I can get back to doing what I love most. And with that, the adventure continues.

Please email me at either [emf@tcmail.us](mailto:emf@tcmail.us) or my new scuba related email address [diveststar@gmail.com](mailto:diveststar@gmail.com). You can also find me on Facebook as Ed Fava or follow me on Twitter as @scubadooba. Who wants to dive? Yours truly,

Eddy



## Wrecks & Recreation Dive Show 2010

Wrecks Home | Speakers | Schedule | Displays | Exhibitors | Sponsors & Prizes | Tickets | Directions | MWDC Home

*"It's not just for wreck divers!"*

The "Wrecks and Recreation" Dive Show 2010

Saturday November 6, 2010

Keefe Technical School  
750 Winter Street  
Framingham, MA

The MetroWest Dive Club is proud to announce the "Wrecks and Recreation" dive show 2010. As always, we will be assembling a world-class line-up of speakers for this year's event.

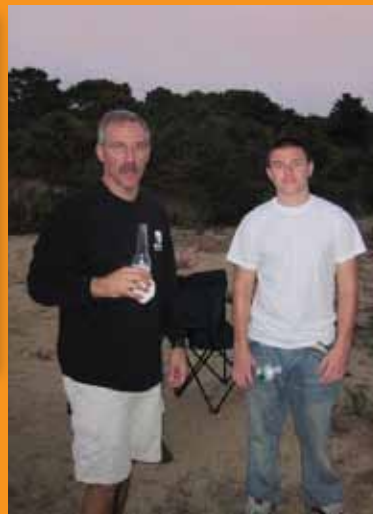
We will be adding more information to this site, such as speakers, exhibitors, and raffle prizes. So check back regularly!

If you have comments or questions, please let us know by emailing [wrecks@mwdc.org](mailto:wrecks@mwdc.org).



Two perspectives.  
One household.

# More Fall P-Town



The summer is over but not the diving. We had 5 boats and 19 divers in the water at P-Town on Saturday. It was blowing pretty good but the air temp was in the 80's and the water was in the 60's.

Jeff put his boat in at Pamet ramp as he cannot launch at the town ramp. Because of the severe winds, it took him almost an hour to get across to the point as there were 5' to 6' swells. The rest of us - Bill T., Bill W., Eric A. and Joel D. - launched at the town ramp without any problems. The vis was good on the inside and I think we all got a few bugs.

The Saturday night feast was "Italian night" so the grill was not needed. The food was great and as always we had more than enough. However, because we didn't have a grill, we didn't have a camp fire after the meal.

Only 7 divers dove Sunday on 2 boats, Jeff's and Bill W.'s, which launched out from Pamet Harbor as it was not blowing as bad as Saturday. However, the air temps were in the 60's. We dove the outside and the inside and again, we all get a few.

If you missed this fall's P-Town be sure to sign up for the Spring Weekend! It is always a great time.

*Bill Turner*

Fall P-Town weekend was great fun! Thirty or so members and family joined in the festivities. Saturday was a bit rough on the water but the weather in town was just right for shopping and eating. No yard sales this time, but plenty of people to watch and pets to pet!! Lunch was great as usual, the shoppers dined at The Patio, a little liquor and a little food were the best of combinations.

Dinner Saturday night was a departure from the usual steak and chicken. We tried an "Italian Night", where everyone brought something Italian, and it was a delicious buffet. We had food and wine worthy of a 5-star restaurant. However the mosquitoes were unwelcome guests at the party, they were obviously hungry too!!

Sunday a small group of divers went out and judging from the booty that came home with, the group did just fine!!

Hopefully everyone enjoyed themselves and the good weather, as we put the OCA bucket away till spring!! Thanks to all who participated in making this weekend a success!!

*Patti Turner*

*Note:*

I would like to thank Bill T. for his great recommendation to launch my boat from downtown. It turned out to be a great decision and perfect timing. Ahh, it doesn't get much better than that... experience rules!

*Alan Reilly*



## Winter Island Weekend 2010



# THE BOSTON SCUBA SHOW



## *The Underwater Club of Boston*

Presents the 60th edition of **THE BOSTON SCUBA SHOW**

**February 27, 2011 - 9 am to 3 pm**

Holiday Inn and Resort (always FREE PARKING)

Junction of Rtes 495 and 20

Marlboro, Massachusetts

Directed by Alan Budreau; assisted by The EMMY Award winning team of Linda and Kerry Hurd

### *Featuring*

The world's acclaimed in-water photographer

**CATHY CHURCH** from The Cayman Islands

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**Hunting New England's Ship Wrecks** with Dave Clancy

**DIVING THE GREAT LAKES** with Dallas Edmiston

Applaud the Paul Revere Spike Award to

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Tickets at \$25 each will be available at the door on the day of the show, or in advance by writing to: Cecile Christensen, 2 Ocean Ave (1-H), Gloucester, MA 01930. Checks payable to Cecile Christensen

[www.ocascuba.org](http://www.ocascuba.org)



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