

Joe Pasquale Memorial Dive

FORT WETHERILL, RI - About 12 OCA divers braved the fall elements to honor the late Joe Pasquale. The outdoor temp wasn't bad at all and the water was still in the mid-50s -balmy! However, nothing could touch the visibility that Sunday morning... we're talking coffee milk! It was so bad, Fred LeBlanc lost a fin and it took all of us about 15 minutes to locate it and this was next to the shore in the shallows. Needless to say, it was a quick dive but a fun OCA event with yummy bagels and coffee to wrap up the dive.



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD COLONY AMPHIBIANS

Appropriately named the "Rocco Trip" by Bill Weedon & Henry Cugno

FL Keys Dive Trip

KEY LARGO, FL - This past November marked the start of what we hope becomes an OCA tradition. A few OCA divers decided to head down to the Florida Keys to visit Rocco Santurri and do some warm-water diving. This trip has appropriately been named the "Rocco Trip". Bill Weedon and Henry Cugno headed down from Providence on Southwest, Mary Schroth flew down from Boston on Jet Blue, John Garzia drove from Vero Beach, and Janet MacCausland flew in from Andros, the Bahamas. We all converged on Rocco's condo in Key Largo Wednesday night. Rocco and his wife Criss had arranged separate condos for the guys and girls. When we arrived Wed night, our refrigerator was stocked with a case of beer, two bottles of wine, two bottles of champagne, margarita mix and a bottle of tequila, plus chips salsa, and crackers. **What hospitality!**

Thursday morning, Rocco and Criss took us out to one of their favorite breakfast destinations, the Hide Out, for a typical laid-back Keys breakfast, after which we checked out some of the local dive shops. We then headed back to the condo to get ready for our afternoon diving on the Spiegel Grove. "The Grove" is a 510 foot landing-ship-dock (LSD) intentionally sunk as an artificial reef in May, 2002 in 130 feet of water. It originally went down on its side much to the chagrin of the planners who literally spent millions planning for and sinking the wreck, but was righted accidentally by Hurricane Dennis in 2005.

We started by checking in at **Island Ventures** of Key Largo. We got there at 12:30 for a 1pm departure and went through the usual paperwork including the verification of SCUBA certification cards. The plan was to make two dives on the Spiegel Grove. Island Ventures was the only operation willing to accommodate our wishes and would prove to be even more accommodating later on in the trip. Captain Jim motored the dive boat Diversity away from the dock promptly at 1pm and headed for the Spiegel Grove.

The visibility on the Grove was about 30', which is a bit unusual and not that great for this wreck, but made sense given that Hurricane Ida had made its way through the Keys about a week before our trip. The sky was overcast





prez box

by Henry Cugno

Unfortunately, our summer dive season is on its way to becoming a good number of distant memories. What a great season it was for the OCA.

From beginning to end, this season was one of the best in recent memory. Local club events were well attended and many of us made trips to exciting locations outside New England (see the article on the Keys trip in this issue). The OCA has even extended it's range to Mexico – way to go Ed Fava in Isle Mujeres! We look forward to your reports from paradise.

Continuing on the plus side, the Winter Dive Club season has barely begun and we are now starting to build our way up to the next banquet on January 30th. That means all of you need to submit your ideas for Foggy Mask awards to the nearest Director on the Board of Directors. Suggestions for Diver of the Year and New Diver of the Year will also be welcome.

With this year's participation in club events at an all time high and the recent increase in club membership, these two awards may be more difficult than usual to decide, so your input will be important. Don't forget to dust off those artifacts for the Artifact of the Year voting and print up your artwork for the Photo Contest.

You may have heard that, this year, the club VP, John Stanford, is getting some help from a few people who have volunteered to be on a committee to assist in the work necessary to put on the same quality of event that we had last year. That won't be easy but our 50th year has been full of successes and I'm sure that the banquet will be no different.

Also need to start thinking about nominations for club officers. Nominations happen this month with elections occurring the first meeting of the new year.

Beyond the dives of the Winter Dive Club, we

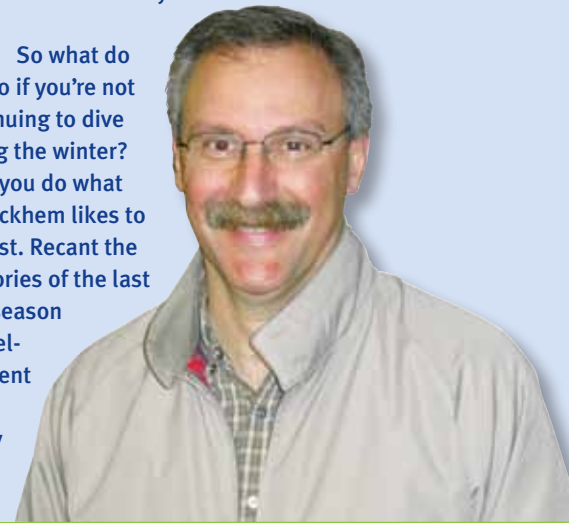
have the Holiday Party on December 19th and the New Years Dive to look forward to. Once again, Bill Weedon and his lovely wife Deirdre will be our hosts for the Holiday Party. They have given up their home for this event in the past and have proven to be very gracious hosts.

Let's hope for good weather on New Year's Day but not too good. Need to make sure the folks who do the plunge in their skivvies after the dive are making it worth all of the ooooohs and aaaaahs that they get!

So what do you do if you're not continuing to dive during the winter? Well, you do what Ed Packhem likes to do best. Recant the memories of the last dive season (embellishment is pretty much

required) and start talking up what's coming up next season. This is a Blackbeard year coming up after all. Have you made your contribution to the vacation fund lately?

Henry C.



The purpose of the Old Colony Amphibians is to further the sport of skin and scuba diving for the enjoyment of its members while at the same time promoting safety and sportsmanship.

OCA OFFICERS

- PRESIDENT **Henry Cugno**
- VICE PRESIDENT **John Stanford**
- SECRETARY **Bill Lane**
- TREASURER **Terry Carragher**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ian Campbell** 09-10
- Bill Turner** 09-10
- Fred LeBlanc** 09-10
- Jim Cherubini** 08-09
- Max Arias** 08-09
- Jim Brady** 08-09

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

OCA CALENDAR

December 09

- 3** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm at Ian's Midas shop in South Attleboro. **Nominations for officers begin.**
- 17** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm at Kalipso Dive shop in Smithfield, RI **Nominations for officers continues**
- 19** Annual OCA Holiday Party, Bill Weedon's home, 6:30pm cocktails, 159 Shadow Brook Drive Warwick, RI 02886 401-885-1948

January 10

- 1** Annual New Year's Day Dive, Fort Wetherill, 11:00 registration, Treasure Hunt at noon.
- 7** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm at Ian's Midas shop in South Attleboro. **Elections for officers take place.**
- 21** OCA Meeting, 7:00 pm, location to be determined. Check the website.
- 30** 51st Annual OCA Banquet, Chelo's on the Waterfront, 1 Masthead Drive, Warwick, RI **Invitation enclosed.**

Halloween Dive 2009

ALLEN HARBOR, RI - This year's Halloween Dive was one of the best in recent years. The weather was mild and so were the seas.

We gathered at Allen Harbor in Davisville at around 6:30pm for our yearly trek to "Spooky" Island. The true name of the location is Gould Island and it is located just north of the Newport Bridge in Narragansett Bay. The "spooky" nature of the island is derived from the eerie feeling you get when approaching the island and reinforced by the structure under water. It is a torpedo testing site for the Navy and, as far as I know, is still used from time to time.

Bill Weedon had Jim Brady and Randy Shore on his boat along with Bill's brother, Chris who came along for the ride. Alan Reilly had Max Arias on his boat and this would be their second dive of the day as they were out with Bill Turner and his son-in-law Jay Broulard earlier in the day. Jeff Davis had Eric Alphonse, Bob Riecke and me on his boat.

The ride over was smooth and we soon started trying to anchor in the north cove by the torpedo testing building. It was the wind against the tide so anchoring was a bit fussy but we all managed to settle in.

Because it's dark early at this time of year, we didn't have to wait around before getting suited up. We quickly donned our gear and splashed one diver after another until all were in the water. All except for Alan Reilly who was not comfortable with the anchoring conditions. He remained on the surface and patrolled while Max made his dive. I have done this many times when on my boat. Sometimes, it just feels like you should remain dry and keep an eye on things.

As I mentioned earlier, the structure is "spooky". There are a lot of twisted metal girders that create an overhead environment that many divers simply won't dive on. These girders are the remains of a long pier that once stretched out eastward from the torpedo building. The structure seems to change frequently as storms, tides and currents reshape things. I usually try to swim right under the building as I have had luck with larger lobsters there but

on this night I found my path difficult to navigate as it seemed there were more obstructions than usual. I ended up swimming across the old pilings to the north side of the former pier and proceeded down to where the girders die into the sand and mud bottom at about forty five feet. I started seeing lobsters. At first, I could tell they weren't keepers but as I swam east I picked up keeper after keeper. The visibility was good for this site at around ten to fifteen feet. The water temp was 55. I was very relaxed on this dive and was able to get some great bottom time returning to the boat after everyone else had finished their dive.

The results weren't bad for this season. No one hit the limit, but most of us came back with good numbers. This season has seen fewer keeper lobsters than previous seasons. There seems to be a slight decline every year.

After all divers were up, we gauged our lobsters for the last time, banded them, changed out of our gear and headed back to Allen Harbor where Bill Turner and Jay were waiting. They had a fire going and the food ready to serve by the time we pulled into the ramp.

Unfortunately, there had been some excitement in the parking lot while we were on the dive. Apparently, some young folks decided to have some fun with their cars resulting in damage to Jim Brady's car. The teenagers were tearing up the dirt lot kicking up stones that shattered a side window on Jim's car. Luckily, Jay saw the whole thing and had the presence of mind to record the license plate number. The police came by to take a report and matched the license plate with the description of the vehicle with an address. Hopefully, Jim will get the repairs taken care of by the teenagers who should have learned a lesson.

We didn't let that incident ruin our outing. We quickly turned our attention to the hot dogs, chips and beverages that we devoured while replaying the dive for one another. Once the hot dogs were gone and the fire dwindled, we packed up and called it a night. Another successful Halloween dive to "Spooky Island". Here's to many more!

Henry



SI Tech Recalls Diving Suit Hoses Due to Drowning Hazard; One Death Reported

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Name of Product: Diving Air Hose for Dry Suits
Units: About 65,000
Manufacturer: SI Tech AB, of Brastad, Sweden
Hazard: The hose con-

tains an insert that can dislodge during diving and restrict air flow to the diver, posing a drowning hazard.

Incidents/Injuries: SI Tech has received six reports of hose inserts dislodging, including one that was involved in the death of a diver in Los Angeles, Calif.

Description: This recall involves a dry suit inflation hose that connects a diver's dry suit to the air supply and allows for the

pumping of air into the suit to set up a positive pressure arrangement to help keep it watertight. The hose contains an air flow restricting insert that may be either black, blue or green in color. The batch code is stamped on the threaded metal end of the hose. They were sold with dry suits and also sold separately. Contact SI Tech for a list of batch codes included in this recall or visit the firm's Web site, www.sitech.se

Sold at: Diving equipment retailers and distributors nationwide from July 2006 through February 2009 for about \$45.
Manufactured in: Sweden
Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using diving equipment that contains the recalled low pressure inflation hoses and contact SI Tech for the location of an authorized dealer for a free repair which involves removal of the hose insert, or to receive instructions

on how to repair the hose.
Consumer Contact: For additional information, contact SI Tech at (877) 348-3529 anytime, visit http://www.sitech.se/pages/default_uk.asp?ArticleID=8109, or email the firm at http://us.mc586.mail.yahoo.com/mc/compose?to=recall@sitech.se

Continued from front cover.

Florida Keys Dive Trip

and it was a bit windy Thursday, but the forecast was for the weather to improve throughout the week, which it did. The current wasn't bad on the first dive, which was made at around 90 feet for 36 minutes. Water temp was 79.° Our dive plan was to stay together (all 6 of us), which didn't work out due to the conditions. We did manage to stay together as a herd somewhat, but it was more or less a SADSO (same-day same-ocean) dive. A couple of us saw the American Flag and Conch Republic Flag on flagpoles at the back of the wreck. The wreck was inhabited by large blue parrot fish, plenty of large barracuda and other large fish that looked like the Pacific pargo. This was a great dive.

After a one hour surface interval, we made our second dive. Captain Jim let out more of the tag line behind the boat so that we could reach the next mooring ball behind us. This would lead us to a point closer to the bow of the wreck. This was an 87 foot dive for 34 minutes. Visibility and water temp were the same. We worked our way from that point on the wreck back to the mooring ball that Diversity was attached to and finished the dive there. Another great dive.

After the dive Thursday, we again headed back to the condos, showered up, and Rocco treated us to a nice happy hour with frozen margaritas. We had dinner at the Bayside Grill, which was really pretty excellent. This was one of the "fancy restaurants" in Key Largo, which means dressing up in shorts and a polo or clean T-shirt. We had appetizers of Cracked Conch followed by entrees of fresh fish including Mahi Mahi, etc. We talked about going out for drinks afterward at the Caribbean Club, but Criss smartly suggested that we save it for another night since we had a big day planned on Friday with a long drive and an all-day charter.

Friday was supposed to be the highlight of our trip, and in many ways it was. Rocco had arranged a "six-pack" charter called **Bonsai** based at Garret Bight in Key West. We had the boat booked all day, and the plan was to do two dives on the Vandenburg in the morning, come back in for lunch, then do another two shallow wreck or reef dives in the afternoon. The Vandenburg was originally commissioned as the "USS General Harry Taylor" on May 8, 1944 and converted to a missile range instrumentation ship to be renamed "General Hoyt S. Vandenburg on July 13, 1964. She was sunk as an artificial reef on May 27, 2009 in 140 feet of water.

We left Key Largo at 6am, and arrived at the boat in Key West at 9am. We stopped along the way at a nice coffee and breakfast shop called LeeAnn across from Marathon Airport. It took us about an hour to get our gear loaded and setup, get a boat and dive briefing from Captain Peter, and fill out the mandatory dive release forms.

The dive boat was a 26' World Cat with brand-new twin 115HP 4-stroke Yamahas on the back, which moved us efficiently and comfortably out of Key West Harbor. The wreck is only 7 miles offshore, but we had to wind and twist out of the harbor, which added a few more miles to the trip. When we got out of KW harbor, we discovered that our desired path out to the wreck put us right in the middle of a staging area for offshore powerboat racing that was going on that day. The Coast Guard directed us around the race, which added another 5-10 miles or so to our trip, but we got to see the fast boats racing up close, along with helicopters buzzing only about 50' overhead filming the race.

We finally got out to the Vandenburg late morning. We took a mooring ball that was attached to the main superstructure of the ship, and we parked next to a large 150' or so long diveboat named Spree which appeared to be tied into the bow of the ship. There was a current at the surface running Southwest, or from bow to stern on the wreck. Captain Peter ran a "granny line" from the mooring ball to the stern of our dive boat, Bonsai. We decided to modify our buddy plan this day and team up in pairs of two and really stay together, since this was an unfamiliar wreck. Bill and John were the first ones in, and had to literally pull themselves along the granny line and down the mooring line due to the current. Bill got down to the surface of the wreck and discovered he didn't have his 16-lb weight belt on. So he went into the wheelhouse just below the mooring line with John and actually did a "ditch and don" and took his wetsuit off inside the wreck. John was a bit confused by this maneuver, but took Bill's wetsuit and headed for the surface after going through much of his air supply dealing with the current. Bill followed him up, and they passed the rest of the group along the way who were just coming down the mooring line. No one quite understood why John was coming up with a spare



wet suit, but after seeing Bill on the way down, we figured it out. Mary, Janet, Rocco and Henry made it to the deck of the Vandenburg but were not able to stay together. Rocco and Henry made the dive at a max depth of 114 feet for 28 minutes with a water temp of 78° and visibility of about 30 feet. This wreck is worth many dives. From the dish antennas to the wheel house to the passage ways to the electrical room, there are numerous places to explore and be amazed. The wreck is already inhabited by a variety of sea life in case you need more to see. After dive computers signaled time running short, Rocco and Henry surfaced to find the balance of the OCA group safely on board the Bonsai.

After the first dive, we spent a reasonable surface interval before deciding to make another dive. John, Mary and Janet sat out the second dive, while Bill, Rocco and Henry descended into the abyss for another adventure. We made the second dive at max depth of 93 feet for 28 minutes with a water temp and visibility same as the first dive. The current had picked up a bit. What an incredible dive it was, sort of like a time warp swimming around and through the various satellite antennas, some of which were 50 feet in diameter. Henry and Rocco had a close encounter with an eight foot moray midway through the dive. After the second dive on the Vandenburg, Mary, Janet, John and Bill did a shallow reef dive in about 30 feet of water. Bill saw a small reef shark, spiny lobsters, and a descent sized green moray eel. The harbor was now open. Captain Peter got us back in quickly and allowed us to utilize his parking lot as we toured old Key West.

We stopped in Jimmy Buffet's Margaritaville for a couple of drinks and apps in old Key West after the dive. Then we jumped back in Janet's minivan and headed back up to Key Largo, which is about 100 miles and a 2 hours drive. Along the way, we stopped at a place called Porky's for a BBQ dinner and to visit an old friend of Bill's named "Rocketman," who entertained us with a few tunes including a request for Buffet's "He Went to Paris," which is a true story about a guy Jimmy Buffet met in the Keys, according to Rocketman, and his own original song "It Ain't Easy Being Keysey" (a difficult word to spell never mind sing).

Saturday, we arranged an afternoon charter out of Key Largo to the Duane, a former Coast Guard Cutter which sits in 125 feet of water. Once again, Island Ventures made special accommodations. There were two other divers besides our group that were on the charter. They were not qualified to dive the Duane so Island Ventures arranged a two out of three dive excursion including the Duane. One dive was available on the Duane and two dives available on reefs. This way everyone got what they wanted by choosing two out of the possible three locations. The conditions were absolutely perfect for the Duane dive, with zero current and about 100 feet visibility. Bill and Rocco were the first ones on the wreck, and explored several swim thrus from bow to stern. This was an advanced dive that, due to the conditions that day, was an easy enjoyable dive for anyone. After the Duane, we did another couple of reef dives, and Janet took lots of pictures.

Henry skipped the Duane dive, and booked his own bone fishing charter in Islamorada. This has been on the list for a long time. He met a guide by the name of Andrew Moret at the Lauralie (a restaurant/bar) at noon and headed out to the ocean side of the island. After locating the quarry, the guide gave careful instructions and coaching. These fish, nicknamed "grey ghost" are one of the most difficult to catch on a fly but that's what makes the challenge. Finally, after many attempts Henry hooked, played and released his first bonefish on a fly rod. For a small fish (5 to 6 pounds), it lived up to it's reputation as a fighter and ran at least four times getting into the backing of the fly reel each time. This trip was now complete.

Saturday night, we enjoyed a wonderful dinner at Mrs Mac's, which looks like a little hole in the wall next to Rocco's place, but wow, what a meal, and terrific service. Don't ever forget to try the frozen key lime pie when you're at Mrs. Mack's. It's the best anywhere. We went out for a couple of pops at the Caribbean Club afterwards and another bar called Sharky's, then hit the rack.

Sunday morning, Rocco's stepson Kenny and his wife Lainie put on the most wonderful gourmet brunch. If you know Kenny, you know that he's kind of famous for this sort of thing. Henry broke the ice with the first Bloody Mary, and we all feasted on eggs benedict, scrambled eggs, home fries, fresh bacon, home made macaroni & cheese, fruit, pastries, and more. This was a wonderful end to a very successful trip. Rocco and his family showed us what hospitality is all about.

And let's not forget our dive operators. Island Ventures in Key Largo and Bonsai in Key West are the people you want to dive with when in the Keys. Let's hope that the "Rocco Trip" becomes an OCA staple event. *Bill and Henry*



Friendly Island, beautiful diving and plenty of Rum! by John Stanford

Grenada Dive Trip

GRENADA - Karen and I signed on to a trip to Grenada during the week of November 13-20th with the group from International Scuba in Wolcott Connecticut. My main interest in diving Grenada was to dive the wreck of the Bianca C, a 600 foot Italian cruise ship the caught fire and sank off of St. Georges harbor in 1961(of course the promise of nice reefs, friendly people and copious amounts of Rum and Carib Lager were inviting as well).

We left JFK on Air Jamaica and arrived in Grenada early in the morning on Saturday and were swiftly delivered to our home for the week, True Blue Bay Resort <http://www.truebluebay.com>. Checkout the website for pictures of the hotel. The dive operation was right on the premises so it was a short walk to the boat. The hotel was really nice, the staff was great and there were two pools to come back to after a hard day of diving.

Each day consisted of waking up at around 6:00 am, then going down to open air dining area which was right on the water and adjacent to the dive operation. Steaming hot cups of coffee were followed up by fruit, cooked to order omelets or Belgian waffles. With our bellies full we had about a half hour to get our cameras and other stuff together and meet at the boat dock at 8:30. We brought our gear to the boat on the first morning but we never carried it again for the rest of the week. The crew unloaded, rinsed and had it ready for us in our dive bags on the dock each morning.

Our first dive on Saturday (we were barely awake at this point) was on the Wreck of the Veronica, a scuttled inter-island cargo vessel. She is in 60' of water and is covered with orange cup coral. We then spent the rest of the day trying to relax.

During the rest of the week we did two morning dives each day plus a night dive and a third dive on our last dive day (Thursday). We dove the following reefs: Purple Rain, Moonscape, Shark Reef, Wibbles Reef, Glovers Reef, Kohanee (yeah we made plenty of jokes about this one), and Lighthouse Reef. I group them all together because they all pretty much looked the same. They were sloping coral reefs starting in 40' and going down to 80' to 100'. While they were very healthy with lots of live coral and beautiful sponges, they were not the dramatic walls of Cayman, Palau or Cozumel. They were more like what you would see in Bonaire or the Virgin Islands. Never the less there were a lot of fish, Eels, Turtles and Nurse Sharks. All dives are conducted as live boat drift dives. We also dove the wreck of the Shakem (we nicknamed it the Nervous wreck) another inter-island Cargo vessel that sank in 2001 on a voyage from Trinidad to Grenada, when its load of cement shifted and she capsized. This is a very pretty dive with lots of coral and sponge growth.

The main event was when we made our dive on the Bianca C. The current really moves over the wreck so you basically hit the water and make a free descent to the stern. This wreck is HUGE! When I say huge, add 100' to the Spiegel Grove and you have an idea of it's size. The Stern broke off and is lying on its starboard side which is where most of the dive starts. You are in 120' of water. From there you can swim down the bottom of the swimming pool at about 130' (the sea bed is about 170' deep). From the swimming pool you swim over the remains of the superstructure, smokestack and then on up to the bow where it is safe to do a short penetration. It is an awesome experience to swim through the chain locker on out the access doors and then look up at the immense bow above you! From there it is a short swim over to the nearby reef where you complete your deco or safety stop while drifting over the reef. All our dives were on 30% Nitrox mix. which is provided at no charge.

In addition to the diving, we toured a 200 year old Rum distillery, visited 2 waterfalls, an abandoned airport complete with planes discarded after the 1983 US Invasion of the Island, rainforests, Forts George and Frederick and numerous little towns. I can't say enough about the people, they were all friendly and very helpful. I would highly recommend Grenada as a spot for you future dive vacations.

John Stanford



Come celebrate 51 years of Skin & SCUBA Diving with the Old Colony Amphibians



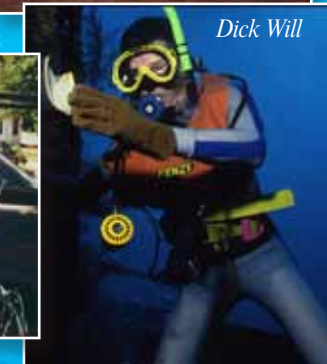
Bob Cartier



Rocco



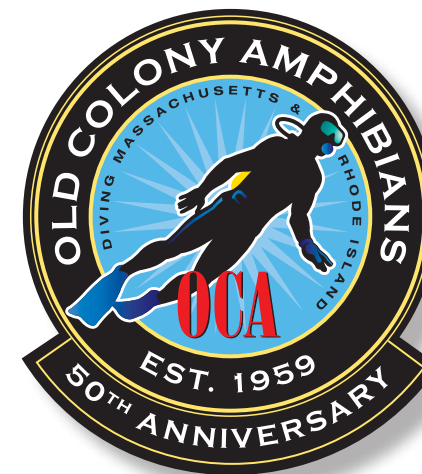
Ed Packhem



Dick Will

- A 50-year Retrospect of the OCA
- Diver of the Year Award
- New Diver of the Year Award
- Biggest Fish Awards
- Biggest Lobster Awards
- Photo Contest
- Artifact Contest
- Board of Directors Raffle Table
- Foggy Mask Awards

January 30, 2010
Cocktails & Hors D'oeuvres 6:00 - 7:00 pm
Dinner 7:00 pm
Awards Ceremony to follow
\$46 per person
Chelo's on the Waterfront
1 Masthead Drive
Warwick, RI 02886



I (we) look forward to celebrating the past 51 years of the Old Colony Amphibians at the Annual OCA Banquet.

Name _____

No. of persons attending _____ Phone _____

e Mail _____

\$46 x _____ = \$ _____

All reservations must be received with payment no later than January 22, 2010. Make checks payable to "O.C.A." c/o John Stanford, 108 Bow Street, Jamestown, RI 02835



Joe's Memorial Dive, left to right:
Charlene and Chris get suited up;
Chris after the dive;
Randy shows off his unique "changing" suit;
OCA members enjoy coffee and bagels after the dive.



www.ocascuba.org



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AMPHIBIANS**
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