



# TOPSIDE

NOAA Diving Program News - October 2009

## End of an Era

### ON THE EVENT OF LAURIE BARBER'S DEPARTURE FROM THE NOAA DIVING PROGRAM

I have been a NOAA diver since 1978 and I have seen a lot of people come and go through the NOAA Diving Program. For the past 20+ years Laurie Barber has been a fixture at the Dive Center. Over the past two decades many of us have come to rely on Laurie's consistent high level of performance of her duties. It's always been reassuring to have Laurie handling things - amidst the names of people coming and going she was like an anchor, something that remained the same and didn't change. We have come to rely on her vast experience, knowledge, and historical perspective relating to the Dive Program. Although I have worked in a "field office" my entire career rather than at the Dive Center, during Laurie's tenure at the NDC I have always had the impression that if Laurie was taking care of something, it would get done correctly and on schedule.

Laurie's moving on kind of marks the end of an era for me. I remember when Morgan Wells moved on and Cliff Newell took over as Director, and when Cliff retired Dave took over from him. There have been a vast number of XO's from the NOAA Corps who have cycled through the Dive Center, and although most did a good job, it was always a very positive thing to have Laurie around while the new guys were being broken in.

Well, after all these years it's time to bid farewell to Laurie, too. We old timers will miss you as I'm sure a lot of the younger folks will, too. Best of luck to you as you finish off the final few years of work with NOAA, and many thanks for all of your help and good work over these many years. You will be missed.

-Gregg Gitschlag  
UDS -NMFS Galveston



## September Working Diver Training



NDC would like to congratulate the following NOAA personnel on the successful completion of the September 2009 Working Diver Course — ENS Bryan Began,

David Franksen, Lynn Asbeck, Keith Brkich, Ian Colvert, ENS Jasmine Cousins, Erin Looney, Bonnie DeJoseph, LCDR Joel Dulaigh, Marie Ferguson, Loren Scott Godwin, ENS Kyle Jellison, Frances Lichowski, Amanda Linville, Kirk Loeffler, ENS Michael Marino Kaylyn McCoy and Stephanie Floyd.

The staff at NDC would also like to thank CDR Mark Pickett, CDR Robert Kamphaus, LTJG Caryn Arnold, Nick Tolimieri, Clyde Kakazu and LTJG Chris Skapin for their support during class.



## September Divemaster Training



Congratulations to the NDP's newest Divemasters - Tane Casserley, Thunder Bay NMS; Kristin Ciciel, AFSC Auke Bay; Kelly Gleason, NMSP PMNM; Joe Hoyt, Thunder Bay NMS; Victor Simon, NWFSC; John Olson, NMFS Anchorage; ENS Ryan Wartick, NOAA's Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Stan, USACE.



## SEP News

The word on the streets is that you can expect to start seeing the new Atomic SS1 alternate air sources arriving in your PO Boxes beginning next month if all goes according to plan. The SS1 will take the place of the Sherwood Shadow (that yellow one) that you are currently using and love so much. We realize that although the SS1 may be taking the Shadow's place in the gear locker, it can never take the Shadow's place in your heart but we are confident that the SS1 superior performance and enormous price tag will win you over. All kidding aside, we do expect great things from the SS1. You will receive one with your annual replacement regulators (sorry October people). It will arrive attached to the BC inflator and instructions on what to do. Please read the owners manual and make sure you are comfortable with it before diving. Let me know if you have any problems or comments. I always appreciate feedback, both positive and "constructive".

~ Lisa Glover  
SEP Technician



## Update from the NOAA Diving Safety Officer

*Divers* – A proposal for the development and execution of the Diving Unit Safety Assessment (DUSA) program has been submitted to OMAO HQ for approval. Once approved, the final stages of development will take approximately five months to complete. It remains a requirement for all Unit Dive Supervisors to complete and submit the annual unit inspection checklist. The due date for submitting the reports to the LODO is January 15. Please ensure that the current version of the NDP Unit Diving Inspection Checklist is being used by downloading the updated checklist from the NDP website ([www.ndc.noaa.gov](http://www.ndc.noaa.gov)). If you have any questions concerning the new inspection requirements please contact Steve Urick at [steve.urick@noaa.gov](mailto:steve.urick@noaa.gov) or (206) 526-6223.



## The Lionfish are coming!

NOAA divers from the Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research (CCFHR) based in Beaufort, NC responded to a request by Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS), to estimate the extent of lionfish presence in deep water areas off of Key West. The three day mission was successfully conducted by NCCOS and NMFS lionfish researchers aboard the M/V Peter Gladding, a NOAA owned and jointly operated vessel with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The dive operation was supported by personnel from the Advanced Diving Technology Division of NOAA's Undersea Research Center in Wilmington (NURC). NURC provided the technical support, topside supervision, DMT medical response capability, and hyperbaric treatment equipment. FKNMS and FWC provided the M/V Peter Gladding as the primary dive platform and also a secondary vessel to act as a mobile chase boat. FKNMS also provided shore based staging facilities and staff for safety diver and vessel operations support throughout the mission. The technical divers used advanced diving protocols and trimix breathing gases to conduct surveys of three artificial reef locations - the Vandenburg, the Curb, and the Wilkes-Barre - within FKNMS from 150 to 247 fsw. Divers used diver propulsion vehicles (DPV's) equipped with built-in DV video cameras to efficiently document each artificial reef location and the associated marine life. All video and still imagery will be provided to FKNMS to aid the development of a comprehensive lionfish eradication plan for FKNMS. During these preliminary surveys no lionfish were observed at these locations, supporting the idea that the invasion within the FKNMS appears to be in its early stages.

~ Brian Degan, NOS/NCCOS/CCFHR



## \* RECALL NOTICE \*

Si Tech AB of Sweden has issued a voluntary recall of Dry Suit inflation hoses for removal of a flow restricting plastic insert. The insert can become dislodged causing a restriction in air flow. There have been six reported incidences of the inserts dislodging, including one death of a diver in LA. The suspect hoses have a 3 digit batch code beginning with either U, X, Y or Z stamped on the threaded hose end. If you have a Si Tech hose with a batch code beginning with these letters or you physically see an black, blue or green insert in your hose end, please discontinue use and contact NDC immediately. For more information you can visit Si Tech website at [www.sitech.se](http://www.sitech.se) or contact the NDC.



From left to right - Brian Degan (CCFHR), Scott Donahue (FKNMS), Roldan Munoz (CCFHR), Christine Addison (CCFHR), Doug Kesling (NURC), Paula Whitfield (CCFHR), Scott Fowler (NURC), Brett Harrison (CCFHR), Raul Pena-Lopez (M/V Peter Gladding), Alicia Farrer (FKNMS), Tiffany Davis (M/V Peter Gladding), and Lt. Joe Scarpa Capt. (M/V Peter Gladding).

Photo credit—Karrie Carnes (FKNMS)



NOAA Diver Paula Whitfield uses a DPV equipped with built-in DV video camera to document marine life.

Photo credit—Doug Kesling (NURC)