

September

2019



The Southern California dive world suffered a great loss this past week. The tragedy of the loss of so many lives on the Conception has I think affected everyone in our dive community. I struggled to put words on paper to express how this loss affected me, and I presumed, all other people, not just divers, I was at a loss. On Thursday, the 5th, I read the following thoughts from Allison Vitsky Sallmon and I thought it appropriate to share here.

By Allison Vitsky Sallmon September 5, 2019

The Southern California—and worldwide—dive community was rocked Monday morning when news of a fire aboard the Truth Aquatics liveaboard M/V Conception broke. Five crew members survived the fire, but there is no sign of additional survivors among the 34 others aboard Conception.

Allison Vitsky Sallmon is an award-winning underwater photographer, founder of the non-profit Dive Into the Pink and frequent contributor to Scuba Diving and Sport Diver. She has been diving off of the Conception since moving to Southern California in 2007, and took the time to offer her thoughts about the local dive community in the wake of the Conception tragedy.

I can't separate myself from personal sadness as I write this, but this isn't about me.

It wasn't about me when my phone started ringing with texts and calls very early Monday morning, family and friends checking in on my safety (many divers throughout California experienced the same deluge). It



September 10 Club Meeting
Graziano's Italian, Yorba Linda 6:30

September 15 Beach Dive
Crescent Cove 7:00 AM

October 5 Boat Dive Oil Rigs
Sundiver Express

October 8 Club Meeting
Grazianos Italian, Yorba Linda 6:30

October 27 Beach Dive
Fisherman's Cove 7:00 AM Annual
Pumpkin Dive



wasn't about me when stories began to emerge in the media (some of them, quite frankly, ridiculous). It wasn't about me when people began touching base with each other on Facebook ("Who was offshore this weekend? Where is everyone?").

And it definitely wasn't about me when names began to trickle out, names of people I knew, names of people I didn't know, names released piecemeal during the workday and then texted to me by a friend, finally adding up to so many texts that I had to abruptly leave a work meeting in tears.

It's about divers, and it's about California divers in particular. It's about being helplessly, hopelessly addicted to the Pacific, which taunts us cruelly at times with marginal visibility, uncomfortable swell, or both, only to abruptly turn around and grant us a blessed flash of calm, blue clarity—just enough to feed our obsession and pull us back again and again, even when those good conditions slip back into hiding and stay for months.

It's about a group of friends on the water for a long weekend holiday, about fathers and daughters, about families sharing their love of the ocean, about a well-known, well-admired trip leader. It's about an off-duty crew member getting a comfortable and well-deserved rest in a bunk, and it's about a few individual scuba fanatics who just wanted to spend some time diving.

It's about unparalleled marine life, being surrounded by a huge pod of dolphins one minute, dozens of sea lion pups the next, and a swarm of pulsing jellyfish the next. It's about towering kelp and glowing anemones and nudibranchs of every conceivable shape and size.

It's about being aboard one of California's amazing liveaboard dive boats (for the unfamiliar, perhaps a bit more like glamping than a tropical luxury experience), happy divers jostling in the seats around you as you excitedly discuss your last dive, your next dive, and your planned dates for another trip out to the Channel Islands.

It's about arguing drysuit versus wetsuit depending upon season. It's about noting where the gummy bears are hidden in the salon (and sneaking over to grab a few extra red ones when no one's looking). It's about knowing the captain and crew by name because you see the same men and women on every single trip for years and years, and you've witnessed firsthand how hard they work and how

very much they care about their boat and every single diver on it.

Days have passed, and we are still glued to news outlets and to social media, encompassed by this local hurricane that has effectively blocked out the outside world. How could this happen here, in our own waters, with our own people, on a boat we have known and loved well, with a captain and crew we trust implicitly?

We watch in disbelief as the investigation continues, pulling in Coast Guard, law enforcement, rescue and safety people from all over the state, and all kinds of others—and we can see from their faces that they are exhausted, that the situation is terrible beyond comprehension.

We draw diagrams for our non-diving friends and try patiently, calmly, to explain that yes, we have been on board, and that oh yes, we have felt very safe. We read extensive debates, some points arising from people who don't dive, who haven't ever been on a boat, who maybe just don't get it.

We see cruel comments. We do our very best to hold our tongues, although it is hard, so very hard. We dream of the Pacific and think to ourselves, "My God, what I would give to be doing a giant stride off of that entry platform right now?" We pray hard for a miracle, for some comfort for the families, for peace for the crew and captain, for everyone involved to feel our love and our sorrow and support (sometimes sobbing in the bathroom as we do).

We reach out for each other, comforting people we know only by name, hugging random acquaintances, and making sure to tell our closest dive buddies how very much we love them.

We take time, every single day, to do anything we can to help each other ease a pain that seems so private, so draining, so unimaginable.

And most of all, we make plans to get back into the ocean, to honor a loss that deserves to be honored in the best way we know how, in the best way we can. Because in the end, it's about divers, and it's about California divers in particular.

September Speaker Bob Fulkerson, Fiji Trip Pictures and Video

In August a group of our members traveled to Fiji for a 10 day diving trip. The reports from their adventures were glowing. The diving was great, the accommodations were superb, the food was delicious and the people were friendly and gracious. Bob will showcase the videos he took and talk about the trip, the diving and the adventure. We are sure to hear from the rest of the group also as to their adventures, impressions and stories.



Fiji Dive Trip, August 2019

From Silvia

Paradise in Fiji - Highlights

The Fiji trip at Paradise Resort on the garden island of Taveuni was a great success for the club this year, 10 nights in the resort's bures, gourmet food with changing menus each day, and the famous Fijian hospitality, couldn't be better! Some of us fell hard for the 2 resident Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs, Brownie and Beethoven. On the very first day of diving, we went to the Cabbage Patch and the Great White Wall (some white and lots of purple coral). A quick list of the sites from the Rainbow Reef included Dakuniba Pass, The Zoo, Pandora's Box, Nuku Reef, Coral Garden, Storm Warning, Lone Rock, The Fingers, Dolphin Bay, The Arc, Jerry's Jelly, and some we went to twice. Visibility was 100 feet plus and the snorkelers saw plenty, including more turtles than the divers. Plenty of fish and healthy hard corals along with soft corals, carpet anemone with clown fish, abundant white tip reef sharks, more than one encounter with sea snakes, barracudas, giant clams, garden eels, moray eels, nudibranchs, and leaf fish, to name a few. The dive operation was first rate, complete with storytelling "Mike", part of the boat crew, regaling us with stories of the Fijian culture during dive breaks. Most of us visited the International Date Line, and all of us enjoyed a trip to the island of Kioa, where we watched a cultural presentation from the Polynesian people who settled there. Of course there was Kava and even the skeptics took part – our own Kurt Jensen volunteered to be the Chief's Spokesman, which essentially means he told us to drink up. The other divers and snorkelers we met were friendly and entertaining, in their own ways – some of us had the experience of waiting for a diver's 30 minute decompression stop – yep a new Suunto, all was well in the end... Watch for opportunities to see the diver videos being shown at our club meetings!



Upcoming Dives

Beach Procedure

To save Martin the hassle of getting to the dive site and having to abort because no one is there we have initiated a RSVP protocol. If you are participating in our beach dive, E-mail Martin at n1diver@aol.com or call at 714-833-9167.

September Beach Dive Crescent Cove September 15 7:00 AM

The options at Crescent Bay are numerous. To the South are reefs with large crevices, one of which leads over to neighboring Shaw's Cove. There are times when the surge in this passage is very strong so enter with care. On the North side is another reef which is a fun place to traverse. Beyond the reefs here lie Seal Rocks, a pair of rocky spires on which Sea Lions "haul out" to rest and sun themselves. Here you may have the opportunity to cavort with these playful and graceful mammals. They love to dive, zoom right at your face and pull up just at the last second, mouth open, blowing bubbles.



The fish life at Crescent includes Opaleye, Garibaldi (of course), Surfperch, and other usual suspects. Depths here range from 10 to 25 feet with vis in the 15 to 20 foot range.



October Beach Dive Fisherman's Cove October 27 7:00 AM

This is our annual Pumpkin Dive

Fisherman's Cove (AKA Boat Canyon) is a small cove with a tiny beach, well protected from the surf; the sand drops off quickly. Portions of the reef can be shallow, but are generally 15 to 20 on average. Around the base of the reef, in the sand the water depth is about 25 to 30 feet. Skirt along the edges and look for the many large cracks that lead into the reef.

Mermaids Grotto is a hole in the reef off Fisherman's Cove. The cracks leading to the grotto are only about 3 feet wide, or just wide enough for a diver to pass through. The top of the reef is at about 15 feet and the bottom of the cracks and holes are at about 25 feet. Not a huge vertical drop, but enough to make it fun.

The site is populated with the usual Laguna Beach residents, Garibaldi, Sand Bass, Opaleye, Zebra Perch, small gobies, rockfish, urchins, Octopus, rays and nudibranchs. A very enjoyable place to dive, especially at night.

To get to Fisherman's Cove in Laguna Beach turn south at the traffic light on Beverly street from PCH. The signal has a sign for Beverly street, but when you turn south you are going onto Cliff Drive. The road forks immediately on Cliff drive, stay to the left going onto Cliff Drive and go about 200 yards. The staircase to Fisherman's Cove is just before the last apartment building (looking south, towards the beach). The steps to the cove are just past (or before, depending on where you parked) the entrance to Divers cove right next to the apartment building.

Boat Dive The Oil Rigs October 5

A group of our members are taking the Sundiver Express to dive the oil rigs off Huntington Beach. Tanks are included, no need to bring your own. Aluminum 80's are standard but smaller tanks are available upon request. Fresh fruits and greens and vegetarian selections are served between dives.

Contact Barry Bloch by E-mail if you are interested. divingwetdog@yahoo.com.

Make your reservations directly with Sundiver either through their website <http://sundiverinternational.com/dive-boats/> or call them 562-370-0059.

See you there.

California's oil rigs are in an open water habitat that is wild, beautiful and unique – true to California's form. Be prepared when diving out there, always bring a signaling device, pay attention to the dive briefings, and stick to your dive plan. Due to the nature of the dives, newly certified divers are encouraged to become advanced divers through experience and certification before signing up for one of these trips.

The diving of oil rigs done by a live boat drop in open water near the platform. Diving these underwater marvels can get tricky, and advanced diving skills are needed to ensure safety in the open ocean. But for those adventurous souls that want a different experience, this is it.

What makes the oil rigs a must-dive is the multi-dimensional reef system – it's a truly unique experience, and environment. When I think of the oil rigs I can't help but think of "the beauty and the beast". From the surface, the beast appears as an intrusive ocean-going eyesore with its industrial appearance and labyrinth of catwalks, pipes and cables. The beauty part is what lies beneath. The vertical pylons extend from the sea floor and are joined together by interlocking crossbeams. Every inch, nook and cranny are covered with life. Layers of brittle stars,

barnacles, anemones and corynactus, metridium, red and gold gorgonian adorn the pillars and beams. The interior of the structure is a vast open area, filled with the silver-black-silver movement of blacksmith. The scene is stunning, and fish are swaying in one direction then suddenly back again.



Cozumel Warm Water Trip With SCUBA World

SCUBA WORLD 1706 N.Tustin, Orange CA.92865 (714)998-6382 fax (714)998-2560
 SCUBAWWW@AOL.COM

OCT 26-NOV 02 2019 (7 nights)

Location: Cozumel, Mexico

Resort: Sunscape Sabor (\$200.00 BONUS RESORTCREDIT PER ROOM*)

Dive Operator: Dive House-5 days X 2 Tank Boat Dives

Food: Sabor all inclusive, food, drinks, alcohol,

Not included: Air, taxi, Airport Transfer, nitrox, equipment rental, additional dives, resort/dive tips, travel Insur, Marine park fee

*****All Price quotes below reflect a cash/check discount*****

7 NTS DELUXE TROP GARDEN	PRICE	7 NTS DELUXE OCEAN FRONT	PRICE
Double/Diver pp	\$902.00	Double/Diver pp	\$1099.00
Single/Diver	\$1166.00	Single/Diver	\$1353.00
Non diver subtract pp	\$415.00	Non diver subtract pp	\$415.00
7 NTS DELUXE OCEAN VIEW		Extra nights are available	
Double/Diver pp	\$1012.00	Garden pp/dbl on request	Single
on request			
Single/Diver	\$1287.00	Ocean view pp/dbl on request	Single on request
Non diver subtract pp	\$415.00	Ocean Front pp/dbl on request	Single
		on request	

9 NIGHT OPTION AVAILABLE ON REQUEST Oct 24-Nov 02 2019

Nitrox is available at a per tank rate

Night dives are available at an extra fee

Sunscape Sabor Cozumel is located right along the beachfront, just 15 minutes from downtown Cozumel and 20 minutes from the airport. Families, couples and singles will enjoy all-inclusive privileges with a variety of amenities and activities throughout the resort including limitless access to dining at four restaurants and national and international alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages at three bars and lounges.

Sunscape Sabor Cozumel offers 218 spacious and finely appointed guest rooms and suites. All rooms feature air-conditioning, flat screen satellite cable television, hair dryer, mini-bar refreshed daily, coffee maker, alarm clock, iron & ironing board, electronic safe, private bathroom, balcony or terrace, and either one king bed or two double beds.

Sunscape Sabor Cozumel offers guests four delectable restaurants including three a la carte restaurants and a snack bar. In addition to international cuisine, guests will enjoy endless domestic and international beverages from three different bars and lounges.

* **Sunscape Sabor Resort Credit:** \$200 USD resort coupons that can be redeemed as: Spa treatment coupons are broken down in two coupons worth \$40 and one coupon worth \$20. Only one coupon can be redeemed per spa treatment. To use coupons for romantic dining, one \$40 coupon and one \$20 coupon may be combined, resulting in a total discount of \$60 off one romantic dining experience. When using coupons towards wine purchases, only coupons worth \$10 may be used and cannot be combined, therefore one \$10 coupon can be applied toward one bottle of wine. Warning timeshare presentation may be required.

Club Information



Monthly club meetings with speakers and raffle prizes
Monthly Newsletter
Land-based Club activities and events for the whole family
Organized local dives
Resort warm-water trips
Good dives and good buddies
Membership costs are as follows .

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New Membership:
Single \$40 pp
Family \$50 (couple/family)
Renewal:
Single \$30
Family \$40

membership renewals are due in February for all current members. New members dues will be prorated depending on the month they join the club

Club Board Members

President

Speakers/Webmaster
Vlad Ilinsky
vilinsky88@gmail.com

Vice President

Publicity/Social Media, Warm Water Trips
Silvia Swigert
silviaswigerts@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Membership/Newsletter
Alf Johnson
alfjohnson1@gmail.com

Beach Dives

Martin Carreon
n1diver@aol.com

Warm Water Trips

Monica Villegas
rescue1grl@gmail.com

Boat Dives

Barry Bloch

Board Member Emeritus

Randy Garzes

Club Contact/Social Media Information

Website

Sharkbaitdiveclub.org

Facebook

SharkBait Dive Club - SoCal

Twitter

@sharkbait diver

Scubaboard

Scubaboard.com