



## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

As the year winds down to the end, we all look forward to the upcoming holidays, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Year, and even the Super Bowl. It's hard to believe that another year is about to pass by. With all of the normal daily responsibilities, we forget to look back and see all of the good things that we have accomplished.

### **Great Memories:**

The State Freediving Championship was held in early Spring (April)

The three WWC local dive tournaments were held throughout the Summer

The 41<sup>st</sup> Southern Open State Spearfishing Championship was held in September

The Shutter Open Underwater Photography Tournament was held in September

The startup and continued improvement of our Web Site FSDA-WCC.Com

The FSDA has grown to nearly 300 members. Approximately 50 of those were gained through the Southern Open/Shutter Open event. Thanks to you many volunteers. None of these memories would have occurred without your help.

Our last event of the year is the "Awards Banquet" and Christmas party. It will be held at the Carlouel Yacht Club on Clearwater Beach, on Dec 5. The dining halls will be decorated to the hilt for the holiday season. Get your gang together and join us! Congratulations to all of the competitors and the top five finishers for the year. Tom Morris and John Schmidt have completed a "Massive Task" as the Competition Chairpersons. We owe them a special "Thanks" for the wonderful memories they have given us. They are presently working hard to see that the memories to be experienced next year will be even greater. They have implemented many features to make them enjoyable for everyone. If you haven't participated in the events be sure to give them a try next year. – Dave

## **DATE TO REMEMBER**

**WCC BANQUET & CHRISTMAS PARTY  
FRIDAY DECEMBER 5**

## **FROM THE EDITOR**

All of the Bulletin information is now on our web site in full color. It includes a calendar of events, club articles, tournament schedules, entry forms, results, photos, weather, and links to other sites of interest. Tom Morris and John Schmidt have put a lot of effort into working with the designer to develop a "first class" site. Information is kept current and can be accessed at any time, from anywhere. [www.fsd-wcc.com](http://www.fsd-wcc.com) Now that this facility is in place the hard copy distribution will be limited to those members who do not have internet access. Hard copy will be sent to the competition sponsors.

## **"SPECIAL NOTICE"**

**This will be your last issue of the Bulletin unless you act now!!!**

**Members without internet access must complete, and send me the following form to continue getting Bulletin hard copy after this issue.**

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To: Art Pearson  
1466 Southridge Dr.  
Clearwater Fl 33756

I do not have internet access. Continue to send the me the Bulletin hard copy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## ROWDIES

Competition time! Can you believe a live shell display? What better way to have a great shell and not kill the animal inside. It is no small feat to lug the aquarium, water, shells, etc to a meeting but Steve and Ruth Kisco were up to the challenge. The regular shell collections for display were great ones with Steve taking 1<sup>st</sup>, Ruth 2<sup>nd</sup> and Pat Fredette 3<sup>rd</sup>. Also judging was done on SOS (save our seas) and the Man Made and Natural Artifacts.

Lori Smith took the SOS contest again, Pat Fredette's real old wine bottle was judged 1<sup>st</sup> place in the man made artifacts, and a really big megledon tooth found by Steve Kisco took 1<sup>st</sup> in the natural artifacts. Congratulations every one!

Photos for the contest were turned in at the next meeting and the Best of Show winner is Steve Kisco with his great fixed focus picture of a basket star wearing a scuba mask. This is the photo he entered in the SOD and won 1<sup>st</sup> place there also. All other winners will have their photo's on display at the Christmas party on 12/06/03.

Congratulations go to Ruth Kisco for being the Top Female Diver in the SOD! Great job Ruth!!

Two garage sales are planned this year to boost our club treasury. Pat F will host one Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> and Ann Howe will host the other one in Feb or March. We are also looking at raising the club dues to \$35 per person including FSDA membership and \$40 for family.

### Rowdies On The Go -

Nine great white sharks were spotted – two were approximately 14 feet long!! It is Halloween (not celebrated



in South Africa.) Bobbie Jo Roe and Sonia Smith were in the cage trying to get them to pose for pictures. Believe me, they don't pose! We weren't the lucky ones in the cage when one sharpened his teeth on the metal bars and punctured the heavy plastic float fastened there – DARN – that would have made Halloween

memorable! (No we didn't find his tooth stuck in the float.) But the ones coming up to us were close enough to reach out and touch. The boat crew threw out the huge tuna heads used for chum and drew it right up to the cage to show them where the crazy divers were waiting.

Cape Town's Atlantic Ocean water was cold but who felt that with the excitement of the close encounter of these huge creatures! The cage this dive operation used was an improvement over the one Bobbie Jo was in last year. We had a bar all along the inside just off the floor that we could hook our toes under to try to get steady enough to take a picture. They wanted us to breath hold instead of possibly scaring off the sharks with scuba bubbles – I need to practice and increase my time. I don't make a good free diver, I'm afraid. My best shark pictures are topside from the boat. We waited anxiously for one to pose jumping out of the water but that didn't happen either. The following pictures show them chasing the elusive tuna head bait.



Needless to say we really had an exciting trip. Our great tour guide, Craig Milner, also arranged a chance to dive in the Kelp. That was really neat! You could tell I wasn't used to the wet suit I rented – it took a lot more extra weight than I originally thought I would need. We made an “easy” shore entry with a good amount of surge, which was much easier when I went back and added a lot of extra weight. I am glad that Craig was very familiar with the dive spot and lead the way. I'm not claustrophobic but I could easily get confused as to the direction although we were in a shallow spot – easy enough to check where we were by popping to the surface. Just right for a first time experience. I saw real colorful urchins, coral and fish there. Definitely two experiences I'd like to repeat.

South Africa is a great fantastic land of contrasts. We toured from Cape Town to Kruger National Park where we went on a 5 day photo safari. We tried to photograph it all but that is another story. Come on over and I'll be glad to share my 3,040 pictures and Bobbie Jo has a thousand more than I do!

Have Mask – Will Travel, Sonia



## Summer with the Seabunnies!

Well, the dive season might be winding down, and the social season is just starting. But we Seabunnies have been keeping busy above and below the water!

Mary T hasn't been diving in two weeks, but hopes to get out again this weekend. The last time she was out in the Gulf, legal grouper were still scarce and the seas were rough. She and friends dove until dusk. The last dive produced a multitude of Hogfish. Hogfish schools came out by the hundreds as the sun was setting! It was a beautiful sight! She took her limit on the largest Hogs, leaving the smaller ones for another year. The only problem was, the sharks showed up too!! One of her dive buddies had to spear a large lemon shark in self-defense. Sounds like a really exciting dive adventure!

Mary B and Lisa S just got back from their big Tahiti trip! A large rollerblading tournament is held on the island every year, and they just thought this was a great excuse to get in a little pacific diving too! They participated in a rollerblade half marathon in Tahiti Iti one day, and then spent the rest of their island time kayaking, diving, and snorkeling! One time, they kayaked out to watch the humpback whales, which surfaced as close as 20 feet from Mary and Lisa. The whales scared the living \_\_\_ out of Mary!! The second day on the beautiful island of Moorea, Lisa went with some other friends on a dolphin/whale excursion and again spent an hour and half with momma, baby and daddy whales!! Mary and Lisa did a little hiking up to two waterfalls on two islands. They scuba dived off Moorea - one dive was a shark feeding dive! The pacific tropical fish are so beautiful and different from the Caribbean tropical fish. They did find some beautiful shells while diving and snorkeling off the Motu's near their beach bungalow. They also participated in Tahitian wedding! Lisa got to dance with the Tahitian dancers! And even petted the sacred blue eyed eels that were living in the stream on the property on Tahiti Iti. The eels were freshwater and friendly about 3-4 feet long and used to being fed and petted. It was an awesome incredible vacation!

Rita had to stay away from the water for six weeks due to her Lasik surgery. But those eyes are now nice and sharp for exploring the Keys. Exactly three weeks (doctor's orders) after the surgery, she was down under with the Spiegel Grove again in Key Largo. She dove it a month after it was sunk, then six months later, now a year later and says the progression of growth on it has been fantastic! It's getting old and crusty – and that's a good thing!! Large schools of fish are calling it home. Many large barracuda patrol around it. And they did see a huge Hogfish poking around too. The next day they dove the “Eagle” another great ship lying on it's side. But the Eagle was broke into two parts during Hurricane Georges, and one part is a lot deeper now. A huge Goliath Grouper has set up home there. This ship was sunk in 1985 so it has a lot of growth on it and great photo opportunities. Rita checked out a different dive operation this time – the “Minnow” ([www.hmsminnow.com](http://www.hmsminnow.com)) and no, Gilligan was not on the boat. This is a great little six-pack boat with all the comforts of the big boats, but no cattle. Run by a retired NY cop and his wife, they whisk you out to the sights before the cattle boats show up and give you plenty of time to enjoy your dive. Key Largo offers a wealth of great diving opportunities and always a good time.

Lisa T, Lisa S and her husband John participated in the Southern Open Derby. John won “Spearfishing Champion of Florida” as well as “Diver of the Day,” and also came in first place for cobia and snapper.

The Photography contest was awesome! Winning Seabunnies are: Michelle – 3<sup>rd</sup> place fixed focus, Pat F – 6<sup>th</sup> place wide angle, Lisa T – 7<sup>th</sup> place wide angle, Peggy – 6<sup>th</sup> place open macro, and Lisa S – 1<sup>st</sup> place open macro.

Adrienne and husband Dave hosted the annual “Casinoween” Party this year, and everyone had a great time. There were bumble bees, dark angels, genies, and even little red riding hood showed up! Lisa S won best costume, and it took everyone over  
SEABUNNIES (CONT)

two hours to figure out who she was! Leslie sang Karaoke, and promises never to do that again! Adrienne and Dave put a lot of effort into the games, and everyone came out a winner! Thanks again for a wonderful time!

Paula T and husband Lee sponsored a “boat sleepover” at Caladesi Island on 11/15. Happy hour was at 4p, progressive dinner at 5p, with a lovely sunset at 5:39p. The weather warmed up for the weekend and the waters were still. Many boats came and everyone had fun!

SeaBunnie meetings have been very interesting. One was our “market” meeting, where members and friends of members sold unique items. Who says you can't have a productive meeting and go shopping at the same time?

Another meeting, we hosted a speaker from the Tampa Bay Estuary program. Since its inception, the Program has sponsored groundbreaking scientific research into the bay's most pressing problems and secured more than \$1 million in grants to assist in the repair and restoration of the  
SEABUNNIES (CONT)

bay. Tampa Bay, Florida's largest open-water estuary, stretches 398 square miles at high tide. Popular for sport and recreation, the bay also supports one of the world's most productive natural systems. Estuaries like

Tampa Bay, where salt water from the sea and fresh water from rivers and uplands mix, are nurseries for young fish, shrimp, and crabs. More than 70 percent of all fish, shellfish, and crustaceans spend some critical stage of their development in these nearshore waters, protected from larger predators that swim the open sea. This was a very informative and educational meeting.

The annual SeaBunnie cookie exchange party will be held on Wednesday, 12/10, at Betty's house. As usual everyone will bring their favorite cookies and try for the Best Tasting and the Best Looking awards. Then the goodies will be exchanged so each SeaBunnie will take home a variety of Christmas cookies. Every year each SeaBunnie also brings a gift for a needy child. This year the Salvation Army will distribute these gifts to the many children in our immediate area who for one reason or another would have no or very little Christmas. In the past the Bunnies have been very generous and many gifts have been collected.

This is a time for the Bunnies to feel the spirit of Christmas by sharing their cookies, bringing gifts for needy children, and enjoying the Christmas fellowship with other Bunnies.

On other club business: Anne is once again selling Entertainment discount books as a fundraiser for the Seabunnies. And we all love to wine and dine, so come to a meeting or call Anne and get your 2004 copy!

Other upcoming events are: Sea Bird Sanctuary visit, Annual Judging Party, and Seabunnie Banquet.

On a sad note, our hearts go out to Peggy G on the tragic loss of her daughter. All her many friends offer their sympathies and assistance during this difficult time.

The Bunny Board standings to date:

Grouper: Lisa T - 7.7 lb, Lisa B - 10 lb, Lisa S - 12 lb, Sandy C - 14 lb, Lynn J - 14 lb, Mary T - 25 lb.

Snapper: Sandy C - 2.2 lb, Lisa T - 2.5 lb, Mary T - 3.5 lb, Lisa B - 4 lb, Lynn J - 4 lb.

Hogfish: Sandy C - 3.1 lb, Lisa B - 4 lb, Lisa T - 4.5 lb, Lynn J - 4.6 lb, Mary T - 8 lb, Lisa S - 12.5 lb.

Amberjack / Cobia: Lisa T - 25.5 lb AJ, Mary T - 14 lb AJ

Sheephead / Trigger/ Flounder: Sandy C - 1.2 lb sheephead

Lobster: Lisa T - 1 1/4 lb, Mary T - 4 lb, Peggy L - 6 lb.

Save our Seas: Lisa T - 2 pts, Mary T - 3 pts, Michelle - 3 pts, Rita - 10 pts.



**Submitted: Bill Hardman**

**The Annual SPUC Superbowl Party & Feast**

The 2004 Superbowl will be held on February 1, 2004. The SPUCs want to invite all WCC members to attend our Superbowl Party.

The cost is \$10 per person and it includes all the: beer, sodas, fish, chicken, hotdogs, burgers and covered dishes. Kids under 12 years are free and welcome. The Minnreg building, our party site, makes it easy for parents to keep an eye on the little ones and still have time to talk and relax a little.

If you want to attend please contact Charlie Hogge, V.Pres. at 727-525-7107 (home), or Bill Hardman, Pres. at 727-560-0757 (cell).

**What's Going On?**

**PENDING ISSUES THAT THREATEN YOUR SPORT OF SPEARFISHING AND FISHING**

A new section of the SPUC website called "The Spyglass" has been setup to distribute information in regard to the recent Gulf of Mexico grouper and hogfish restrictions. And the recent spearfishing restrictions proposed on Gray's Reef off the Atlantic Coast of Georgia.

**All these issues are of a timely nature! Please get involved now – because every voice and letter counts. To view Spyglass: go to [www.spearfishingspuc.org](http://www.spearfishingspuc.org) then click on the Spyglass button at the top of the page. For any questions contact, SPUC Secretary, Dennis O’Hern (727) 391-3969.**

**Paul Kerr and Dennis O’Hern left on December 1<sup>st</sup> to attend the Atlantic Council meeting in Kingland, Georgia. The SPUCs voted to pay for their way to and from the meeting. Hopefully, their lobby efforts for the FSDA, SPUCs and all other fishermen and spearfishermen will be successful.**