

The Buoy Tender

Marker Buoy Dive Club | Seattle, Washington
August, 2011



Uepi Island Reef by Bobby Berenson

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

[Jim McGahey](#)

Things have been finning along smoothly at the executive level of the club, despite losing our Treasurer. Many thanks to Randi Weinstein for taking that giant stride to fill the treasurer's position for the remainder of the year.

For those interested, club board meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the University Heights Building. Ask any officer for directions. Members are always welcome to attend to watch, but participation is limited.

Not only did Ross Smith move away and vacate the treasurer's slot, but he also left a vacancy for a monthly REEF article for the newsletter. Ross just achieved his REEF Level 5 rating, then moves. He moved to the Portland area with his wife.

Stepping in to fill Ross' shoes are Joyce and Fritz Merkel. Thanks to them for keeping up the REEF portion of the Buoy Tender newsletter. And don't forget the Thursday night REEF dives.

Saturday, Aug 20th was the annual Edmonds Moonlight Beach Adventure. The diving portion was headed by our own Christine Scott, and we had 8 critter collectors, plus Randy Williams and cable wrangler Gene Coronetz doing an underwater audio visual presentation. Randy had a video camera and mask with comm. unit, so kids could ask him questions. We brought lots of gear, including the projector, sound system, and portable 110v power supply.

Almost 300 kids and parents enjoyed poking critters in the wading pools (the critters didn't seem to mind TOO much), and many watched the live video projected onto a wall panel of the club's shelter. I hope you can join us next year and help make this a special night many young prospective divers will remember for a long time.

Next meeting, Wed, Sept 7th, our own Karin Fletcher will give a program on her critter program. Karin is an amazing resource of knowledge about marine critters, especially nudi's. Rumor has it she's even found new species, but more on that at the meeting.

When you need a microscope to see some of her recent collecting, you know she has eyes that work like nudi-magnets. Does she really spot the nudi's? Or does she locate them with a special nudibranch radar mechanism? Maybe she'll share a secret or two Wednesday night.

Rumor has it there's a new underwater photography magazine coming out in September. Our own Dan Clements has the scoop, as he's the editor, publisher, et al. Maybe he will share more details at the Wednesday meeting.

Jim McGahey



Up-Coming Meeting & Announcements

SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING: KARIN FLETCHER

Karin Fletcher will be our September speaker. As Jim noted in his column, Karin is a micro-critter finder extraordinaire! She will share her passion for these amazing creatures

Looking ahead to future meetings, Tom Schaffer will be talking about Whale Sharks at Isla Mujeres, Barry Dunford will be making a return visit, and Scott Christopher will make a Lake Huron presentation.

So come join us the first Wednesday of each month! Great programs and a wonderful way of keeping up with your diving friends.



UPEI ISLAND RESORT (SOLOMON ISLANDS) BY Bobby Berenson

On July 16th, my wife and I embarked on what would be a 4 day journey to the Solomon Islands and a 10 day diving vacation at the Uepi Island Resort. It was three travel days and we lost another day due to crossing the International Dateline.

Our trip started out with a late afternoon flight to Los Angeles. After going through customs we boarded a flight to Melbourne, Au. However, we had to stop in Auckland, NZ and spent 5 hrs checking out the airport. After boarding a different airplane we headed to Melbourne. After a layover in Melbourne we finally headed to Brisbane, where we would be able to get a decent meal and sleep in a warm bed. The next day it was back to the airport and back through customs to board a flight to Honiara.



Honiara is the capital of the Solomon Islands and is on the island of Guadalcanal. From there it was

another flight to Seghe. We were met in Seghe by an employee from the resort and taken by motorized canoe across the Marovo Lagoon to the resort. It was a 25 minute ride to the resort.



This place is on the island of Uepi and is owned by the resort. Uepi Island Resort is what is called an "Eco-resort." In other words, it is self-sufficient by growing some of its own vegetables and has a very elaborate rainwater collection system. The water is double filtered and is safe to drink. The staff is from a nearby village. They are paid about a dollar an hour, but their families are all taken care of by have all medical and education taken care of by the resort.

The resort is also in the process of building a new school. They work basically Friday to Friday and work a week on with a week off. The coral reefs are dive on the list that we did not do and I did not mind. I do not need to descend down to 140 feet and shoot across the channel. Most of the dives were along the shore of the island and were approximately 5 minutes away by boat. There were some dive sites farther away and these took about



thirty minutes to get there. Since other people own some of reefs away from the resort a fee is added to cost of the dive.

The coral reefs are right on the shoreline and they lead to walls that descend down to around 6000 ft or so. By not allowing people to dive unguided this has kept the reef system in great shape. You can snorkel right on the edge of the resort or go out in the boat and while people are diving you can snorkel.

There are 2 dives set up each day and an occasional night dive if enough interest. Depending on the number of divers, and if you are new to the resort, different dive sites are picked. Usually Jill or Grant (the owners) will decide and even the divemasters are given the chance to decide which site is better for the conditions. Night diving had a splash time of

6:30, which would ample time to dive, clean up, and still have dinner with some of the guests.

My wife Irene had done some research and had written down a list of the dive sites we wanted to dive. They accommodated us and there was one We did not see as many pelagics as we hoped for, but reef fish were abundant. The reefs were a mixture of hard and soft coral and the formations were amazing. The swims throughs and caves could have been longer.

It is interesting that as you go along the shoreline in the boats that you can see the top part of the reef and in a few minutes later you would be diving along the walls formed by these reefs.



I finally got to see some cuttlefish and some eagle rays, but the rays were too far away to photograph. A couple of times, I did see a ray swimming towards me and as I was poised to get the shot, it would veer off and swim away. I don't know why but some of the sites had more of the larger fish than others.

After 10 days of vacationing and 20 dives each, it was time to return home. All in all the memories of this place are etched in my mind. We have other places that we would like to dive in the future, but Uepi Island Resort is a place we hoping to return.

SOLOMON ISLANDS



BLAKE ISLAND STATE PARK KAYAK DIVE BY Gene Coronetz

Drew Collins was the instigator of this particular foray, and did we have fun!

The structure of the reef lies roughly between 2 moorings at the east and west ends, about 2 football fields' lengths from shore. We did this as a shore dive, which worked out well as the south wind & surf picked up markedly as we entered the water to dive.

We swam south to the 60 ft contour, then west until we found structure. At 50 ft, we encountered a lone boulder that had a big GPO under it; we returned to that very same boulder, quite by accident, on the return leg.



This surprised me, and indicated that the west flowing flood must have had back eddies which conveyed us eastward as we ascended the slope at the last third of the dive. The kelp continued to stream west throughout the dive, verifying the flooding of the tide.

The concrete & boulder debris loomed up ahead and we were pleased at the quantity of fish present. Black rockfish and lingcod dominated the area. small painted greenlings and plump kelp greenlings

appeared. Copper, quillback and brown rockfish were plentiful in the rocks. I caught a plump buffalo sculpin for Drew to photo, but it bolted as soon as I slowly opened my grasp in front of the camera. I did not especially notice any nudibranchs, but Kevin later reported many.

Giant plumose anemones covered everything, making the whole scene quite beautiful. Drew reported the equivalent feeling of being in "Hog Heaven" for all of the subjects he found to photo.

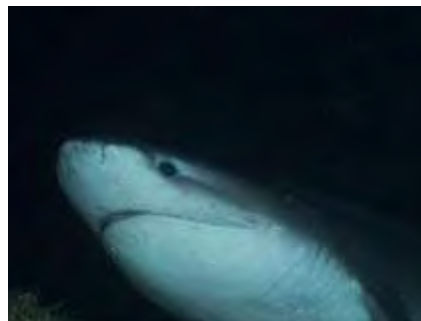
We all really enjoyed the dive, and decided that this would definitely be a fun weekend campout and dive destination. Non diving family members could kayak to the park and roam the island. Tillicum Village offers native cultural entertainment and baked salmon for dinner, or you could enjoy camp fare.



Kevin carried a 30 cf pony with "deco gas" (40 % Nitrox) clipped to his harness. This struck me as a good idea and very practical. When you are out on a kayak dive, you are fairly remote, and you do not have room to carry the 'DAN' style boxed oxygen kit.

BARKLEY SOUND SHARK WEEK BY Dan Clements

Six of us made the trek to Port Albirni for a week of diving with Rendezvous Lodge on Barkley Sound. We had a great time, made all the more memorable with Jim Boon, Carl Baird, John Dorsett, and Jay Sprenger chasing a six gill. Jay took the shot to the right just before "boinking" the 3 meter shark on the nose to keep it from swimming between his legs. After the dive Jay had an acute adrenaline rush, and spoke non stop for 90 minutes!



PHOTOGRAPHY CORNER

Cover Shot

This month's cover shot and lead article are courtesy of Bobby Berenson. Bobby and wife Irene recently returned from an outstanding dive trip to the Solomon Islands. Sounds like a great outing!

World Wide Photo "Walk"

For Club photographers of all levels, October 1, 10:00 AM, Cove 2, is the location for the [World Wide Photo "Walk"](#). Lots of prizes, and a great chance to meet other underwater photographers. After the dive we will be meeting at Jack Connick's Optical Ocean shop of Westlake for post processing, file up-loading, and snacks. Come join us!



DIVE CALENDAR

Date & Time	Location and Contact Information	Notes
Sept. 3 (Sat) Meet: 10:00 AM Splash: 11:00 AM	Redondo Beach - Des Moines, WA Jim McGauhey	All Divers
Sept. 4 (Sun) Meet: 12:00 PM	Titlow Beach - Tacoma, WA Hiller West	All Divers
Sept. 4 (Sun) Meet: 3:15 PM	Day Island Wall - Tacoma, WA Fritz Merkel	Advanced Drift Dive - Current
Sept 17 (Sat) Meet: 11:30 AM	Point Hudson - Port Townsend, WA Doug Miller	All Divers
Sept. 18 (Sun) Meet: 9:00 AM	Sunrise - Gig Harbor, WA Joyce Merkel	Current
Sept. 24 (Sat) Meet: 3:00 PM	Skyline - Anacortes, WA 2.8F > 4:34PM > 1.2E Fritz Merkel	Int - Advanced Possible Current No facilities
Oct. 1 (Sat) Meet: 10:00 AM	Scott Kelby Underwater Photo Walk Seacrest Cove 2 - Seattle, WA Dan Clements	Photographers
Oct. 2 (Sun) Meet: 2:00 PM	Day Island Wall - Tacoma, WA Fritz Merkel	Advanced Drift Dive - Current
Oct. 2 (Sun) Meet: 10:00 AM Splash: 11:00 AM	Edmonds Underwater Park Jim McGauhey	All Divers
Oct. 8 (Sat) Meet: 2:45 PM	Skyline - Anacortes, WA 2.4F > 4:25PM > 1.4E Fritz Merkel	Int - Advanced Possible Current No facilities
Oct. 29 (Sat) Meet: 1:30 PM	Saltwater State Park Joyce Merkel	All Divers

SAFETY CORNER

Entanglement by Jerry Effenberger

Al and John were returning from a great late afternoon dive, each approaching a remaining 900 psi. Visibility was a normal Pacific Northwest "summer-time" 10'. All of a sudden Al noticed that his slow but steady kick cycles were producing no forward movement. John, unaware of his buddy's predicament, continued on and soon disappeared from sight.

Al was facing a diver's worst nightmare – entanglement! An unseen fishing net had found its way around the exhaust valve of his dry suit and also wrapped itself firmly around the outside of his left fin strap.

Quickly remembering his Open Water training he breathed slow and deep, making a special effort to not exacerbate the situation by twisting and turning. Ahhhh....my dive knife! That will do the trick.

He did his best, but found it was inaccessible. It was located on the outside of his left calf and he just could not reach it with his right hand. Dive Shears!!! That will work. Al did his very best....but again failed. His shears were carefully tucked away in the left, and tightly zippered, BC pocket. Now at 400 psi, near panic, Al breathed a huge sigh of relief as his buddy reappeared.

This story has a happy ending, but it certainly could have been otherwise. Diving in cold Pacific Northwest waters requires use of heavy gloves and thick wet or dry suit that significantly reduce dexterity and mobility. Special consideration must be given to placement of accessories that may be crucial in one's self-rescue.

Ideally, dive knives and dive shears should be located so as to be easily accessible by either hand. Discovering they are not at the time an emergency arises could be fatal. Don't let this happen to you!

Next time you suit up for a dive take a little time to make sure your "self-rescue" equipment is located so that it can be conveniently accessed under any circumstance. Somewhere along the centerline of one's body is a primary location for consideration. As an added measure of safety, make sure you know its location and can easily access it in extremely low visibility or even total darkness

Finally, think about the location and accessibility of your Alternate Air Source – not for someone else's use – but for you. I know, I know, that's not what you were taught. It is almost a certainty, however, that an out of air and panicked diver will take the regulator that you are breathing from, leaving you completely breathless. Be prepared. That Alternate Air Source is your very best chance of surviving another divers out of air experience.

Zeagle Inflator Stuck by Dan Clements



We were on our second day of diving in Barkley Sound a few weeks ago, and I momentarily lost sight of my dive buddy Jay. I was just getting ready to surface from about 70 feet to look for him when he reappeared. I did not think anything about it until we resurfaced.

Back on the boat Jay indicated that he went to add some air to his Zeagle Ranger BCD, and the valve stuck in the open position.

He remained calm, tried to unstick the valve without success, then began dumping air and trying to further slow his ascent by trying to swim downwards and increasing his profile by spreading his arms out.

After a relatively quick ascent from 65 feet Jay was able to free the stuck valve. It appeared to be operational, so he followed John and my bubbles back down and completed the dive with us.

This brought back memories of the inflator valve on my Ranger sticking a couple of years back. In talking about this incident with Jerry Effenberger and Bobby Berenson, it turns out they had experienced the same thing.

My suggestion for Zeagle owners is to either have your BCD regularly serviced, or unscrew the inflator hose assembly and thoroughly clean all the parts. Salt water is hard enough on valves, but the addition of sand and other material from shore diving can contribute to improperly functioning inflator valves.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



REEF STATION

I hope you all know club member and Treasurer, Ross Smith. He has been the person leading the club's participation as a REEF Field Station. We

are one of only a few dive clubs in the country and the only one in the Pacific NW to be a REEF Station. Ross is the one who volunteered to do all the work to get the club set up. He then partnered with Rhoda Green to put on REEF classes and to lead REEF Survey dives. Not to mention he's been writing this and the "Critter of the Month" articles for the newsletter.

The reason I bring this up, you may have noticed I am writing the article this month. That is because unfortunately for us, Ross and his wife Shelby have almost completed their move to Portland.

Ross intends to join us for south end dives so thankfully we will still see him. However, he had to give up his excellent work as Treasurer and head of our REEF Station. He was so good that both Fritz and I have agreed to fill his position. Hopefully we can keep things going and with twice the people do at least 1/2 the job.

Thanks so much Ross for all you've contributed to the club!

Speaking of REEF, don't forget that you don't have to be level certified to turn in REEF surveys. Just be sure to only identify the critters you know. No guessing. If you are interested in being certified and need to take one of the REEF classes contact Rhoda, Fritz or I. We're not planning any classes for a while since we seem to have covered the majority of people who are currently interested but if we get enough new interest we might schedule one. If we're not having one, we'll find out for you who currently is.

REEF CRITTER OF THE MONTH: SPOTTED RATFISH BY Georgia Arrow, REEF Level 5

Snake Prickelback, *Lumpenus sagitta*, Pacific snake prickelback, Pacific snakeblenny, eel-blenny

Here's a fish you are very likely to see this time of year. Look for them when you are going over sandy or muddy bottom terrain. The picture was taken on a very recent August night dive.

Snake Prickelback's range from Alaska to central California, and are generally 6-10 inches, up to a maximum of 20 inches. They are found in depths from 3 to 680 feet. Their habitat is sandy or muddy bottomed areas. Most abundant in summer to early Fall when they migrate to the shallows. Can be found in deeper water in winter and spring.

Slender, long, snake-like appearance. Silver under color with mottled gray to grayish-brown markings. Fin which runs from just in back of the head to the tail fin. Long anal fin that runs 3/4 of the length of the body. Wedge shaped tail fin is separate from dorsal and anal fins. Have prominent pectoral fins that they perch on.

Especially during the day they are very skittish and will dart away when approached. However, often at night a dive light seems to cause them to stay still



They have dash like bars along the length of the sides of their body. Have only one dorsal and they can be closely approached. Best time for attempting a photo.

Look for dashed markings along its body in regular intervals. One dorsal fin. Often lay slightly curved. Don't confuse these with a Bay Goby which have very similar coloring but are smaller (Max 4 inches). Easiest way to tell the difference is that the Bay Goby, like all gobies, has two dorsal fins instead of one.

NAME THAT CRITTER by [Karin Fletcher](#)

Sea spiders are marine arthropods, but are not really spiders. They vary in size from 1-10 mm, but can be up to 70 cm. There are 1300 species of sea spiders, most of them found in the Mediterranean and Caribbean. Because of their small body size they have no need for either lungs or gills and respiration occurs through the exchange of gas throughout the entire surface of their bodies.

Sea spiders feed by using their long tongue, or proboscis, like a straw to suck fluids from invertebrates such as anemones, sponges, hydroids, bryozoans and, in the South Pacific, nudibranchs. Smaller sea spiders also have hooks on the tips of their legs that keep them anchored when feeding.

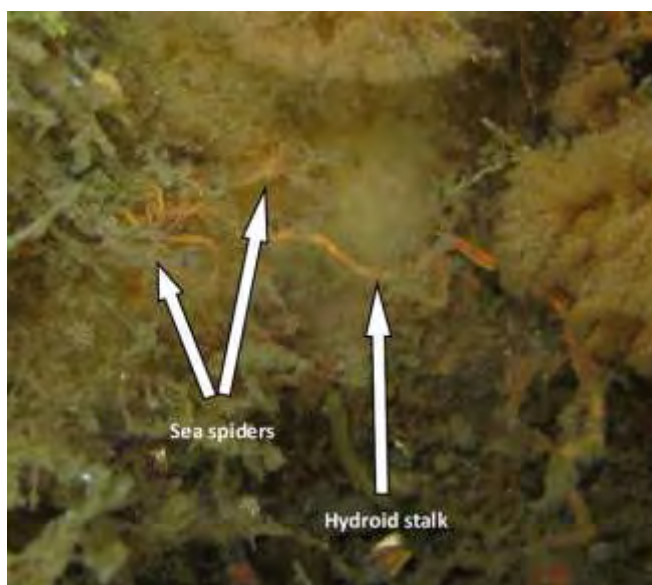


In other parts of the world, sea spiders can be brilliantly colored, but in the Pacific Northwest they resemble the habitat in which they live and are often practically impossible to spot. Even the large "daddy-longlegs" sea spider is hard to spot.

One of the primary habitats for sea spiders in the Pacific Northwest is within the tangle of "roots" of pink mouth hydroid colonies (Ectopleura). The pink mouth hydroid stalks are tan or orange and criss-cross each other and the sea spider with its spindly legs appears to be just another bunch of hydroid stalks.

In the Pacific Northwest, sea spiders are often found with nudibranchs but it is unclear whether or not they prey on them or just share the same food sources.

Sources: Wikipedia - [Sea Spiders](#)



DIVES & TRAVEL

(JOIN FELLOW MARKER BUOY MEMBERS ON LOCAL & EXOTIC DIVE OUTINGS)

September 9-13: Port Hardy with [Frank Scarabino](#)



- Click on image to visit site

Trip cost approximately \$1,300 CDN. Total of six divers, four slots are currently available.

Mamro is a 52 foot live aboard owned and operated by Dan and Debbie Ferris. Price includes boat, breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, aluminum 80 tanks, weights, pillows and towels.

You will need to bring a sleeping bag, dive gear, and any photography equipment you may want to use.

First day up to three dives, other days up to four dives, last day two dives. There is an excellent write-up on Wetpixel about Alex Mustard's visit and dive with Mamro last year.

October 22-29: La Paz Mexico with [Scott Geitler](#)



Trip cost is \$1,399, which includes diving, meals, room, and airport transfers. This does not include airfare. This is an underwater photography workshop with Scott Geitler and Todd Winner.

Warm water, whale sharks, pelagics, sea lions. Join Drew, Jay, Rick, and Dan on this outing.

September 26-30, 2012: [Hornby Island](#) with [REEF](#)



Trip cost is \$857 CDN, plus \$150 US for REEF program fee. Join REEF staffer and critter ID expert Janna Nichols next year at this spectacular diving location. Janna will teach you everything you ever wanted to know about Pacific Northwest fish and invertebrates at this premier temperate water diving destination! Contact [Dan Clements](#) for info.

October, 2011: Fiji with [Judi Brooks](#)



Staying at Wananavu Beach Resort and diving the Bligh waters and Sailstone reefs, Oct. 2-8. Transferring to Kadavu Island, staying at Matava Resort and diving the Great Astrolab Reef, Oct 8-15. Options include staying at both resorts, staying at only Wananavu or staying only at Matava.

CLASSIFIED

ACCOMODATIONS

MAUI CONDO: Great for divers. Ground floor, 1/4 mi. from B&B Scuba in Kihei. Centrally located to divesites.

EDUCATION



Book: Critters, Creatures, & Kelp. This book describes the Edmonds Underwater Park and its history, along with photos and descriptions of major fish, invertebrates, and plants. Price is \$19.95 from the web site. Contact [Dan Clements](#), 425.418.8755 for more information.

INSTRUCTOR MEMBERS



GREG WILSON – NAUI,



Jerry Effenberger –PADI
Master Scuba Diver Trainer
Edmonds Underwater Sports



Randy Williams - TDI/SDI Open Water -
Advanced Mixed-Gas Instructor
NAUI Technical Instructor



Rhoda Green - PADI

Scott Christopher- Multiple Certificatons
SDI /TDI/ NAUI/NACD/ PADI/ DAN,



Kim Thomas – NAUI
Northwest Sports Diver

Why Take Lessons from a Marker Buoy Instructor?



Marker Buoy instructors have dived in many different places with many different people. Just take a look at a younger Gene Coronetz in the photo left.

While obtaining his NAUI Celebrity Dive certification he had the opportunity of buddy breathing with the likes of Lloyd Bridges and Zale Parry!

Club instructors also work to make us all safer divers. They convinced Gene to quit smoking, and, as the photo shows, dropped Gene's post-dive libations from three beers to a single bottle.

Dive safe: dive with Marker Buoy instructors!

ABOUT MARKER BUOYS

[The Marker Buoy Dive Club](#) of Seattle meets 7:00 PM, the first Wednesday of each month at the [Sunset Hills Community Center](#) in Ballard. The Marker Buoy Dive Club is one of the most active dive clubs in the Pacific Northwest. Membership level is around 150. Our members include some that are new to diving or to the Seattle area. Many have over 1000 dives in their log.

In addition to hosting many dives each month, monthly meetings are held at the Sunset Community Center in Ballard. Monthly meetings give members an opportunity to give reports on club dives of the previous month, information on upcoming dives, and occasionally slide and video presentations of dives. A guest speaker related to scuba diving, the marine environment, or something of interest to divers is featured every month. Club-sponsored activities include over 100 dives each year, dive planning parties, an annual picnic at Woodland Park, and an annual banquet.

GENERAL CLUB POLICIES

CLUB ROSTER

The Marker Buoy Club Roster lists each member's name, address, phone numbers and email address. The purpose of the list is for diving - to find a buddy for a spontaneous dive, to drum up interest in your forthcoming sponsored dive, or let people know if there has been a change in dive plan. No commercial use is permitted. If you have information to change on the roster contact Scott Brockenbough

DIVER'S ED

The club will reimburse members \$15 for successful completion of advanced certification courses that increases the member's competency and safety. Limit of 3 reimbursements per club member per calendar year. Courses that qualify are advanced diver, rescue diver, dive master, instructor, nitrox, DAN O2 Provider, and initial First Aid & CPR (non-renewal). Reimbursement for other courses subject to board approval. Just show proof of course completion to Ross Smith, Treasurer, for your reimbursement.

WEIGHT BELT REPLACEMENT POLICY

The club will reimburse any member who ditches weights in what they consider an emergency during any dive, anywhere. The reimbursement is for replacement cost of all items ditched and not recovered, up to a maximum of \$150.

SPONSOR A DIVE, EARN AN AIR CARD

Dive hosts receive an Air Card good at local dive shops when 6 Marker Buoy members participate on the dive. The Club Oxygen Kit counts as a buddy as long as one member of the party is O2 trained. Limit of 1 Air Card per club member per calendar month. The club has two O2 kits - currently with Fritz & Joyce Merkel and Gene Coronetz.

YAHOO GROUPS MARKER BUOYS

Join our members only on-line web group! Find a last-minute dive buddy, ride, or directions to a dive, trip reports, as well as our roster and newsletters: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MarkerBuoys>, or email MarkerBuoys-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

MARKER BUOY 2011 BOARD

President: [Jim McGauhey](#)

Vice President: [Darren Curtis](#)

Secretary: [Scott Brockenbough](#)

Treasurer: [Ross Smith](#)

Programs: [Gene Coronetz](#)

Newsletter: [Dan Clements](#)

Webmaster: [Doug Coutts](#)

Fundraiser: [Nathalie Curtis](#)

Refreshments: [Catherine Knowlson](#)

TREASURER'S REPORT by [Randi Weinstein](#)

As of the end of July 31, the Marker Buoy checking and PayPal balances stood at \$4,624.87. Air card inventory as of the end of June are as follows: Underwater Sports- 7, Fifth Dimension- 3, Lighthouse- 0, Starfish Diving- 1, Northwest Sport Diver- 1.
