

AQUANEWS

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Oriskany sinking set for May 17

William Rabb

PensacolaNewsJournal.com

Published - March, 2, 2006

If all goes according to plan, the Oriskany will sink to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico on May 17, and scuba divers could be allowed on the decommissioned aircraft carrier as soon as two days later, local and Navy officials said Wednesday.

"To all those disbelievers who said this would never happen, I accept your apologies," joked retired Vice Adm. Jack Fetterman, who has spearheaded the effort to secure the famed Navy ship, during a meeting on the project at the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Oriskany, which saw duty in the Korean and Vietnam wars, will become the first aircraft carrier to be scuttled deliberately as an artificial reef so close to shore -- 22.5 miles south of Pensacola.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency gave final approval for the sinking last month. Navy officials said Wednesday that the ship should return to the Pensacola Naval Air Station next Wednesday from Texas, where it rode out the 2005 hurricane season.

Work will begin shortly to clean it up and prepare it for sinking, said Capt. Pete Frano, commanding officer of Pensacola NAS. Navy and county officials outlined several key points about the sinking, which has been three years in the making and is expected to draw hundreds of tourists annually:

No one other than workers will be allowed on the ship while it is being prepared for sinking, and while it is being towed to sea.

No ceremonies will be conducted when tugs begin towing the Oriskany out to sea, probably around May 15, because explosives already will be on board.

Instead, a special ceremony for former crew members and invited guests will be conducted May 13 at the National Museum of Naval Aviation at Pensacola NAS.

Private boats will be allowed to witness the sinking but must stay at least a mile away from the Oriskany at all times. The sinking will commence at first light on May 17, and it could take all day for the ship's hull to fill with water.

The 48- to 96-hour wait period is necessary before diving is allowed to make sure no material breaks loose from the 888-foot carrier. Security boats will be on hand to keep divers away until safety is assured, officials said.

The coordinates of the sinking location are: 30 degrees, 2 minutes north latitude, and 87 degrees, 0 minutes west longitude, said Robert Turpin, Escambia County's chief of marine resources.

National Geographic filmmakers are expected to document the entire preparation and scuttling process.



AQUANEWS

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WELCOMED & ENCOURAGED.
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THE MONTH

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Next Meeting: Tuesday March 14th, 2006

6:30-9:30 pm at the **Palisades Mall**

Level 4, East End

The Adler Community Room

West Nyack, NY

March 14th shall be our kick off meeting of the year. We will be returning to the Palisades Center in West Nyack. We shall be in the Adler room on the 4th floor level by the skating ring.

We will also be bringing many items for sale at really reduced pricing. Maybe you can find something that you may need for diving or reading.

If you have something that you may want to sell or trade, bring it.

The meeting shall begin at 6:30 pm. We shall also be ordering Pizza and soda's for all!

See you there.

Directions:

The Palisades Mall is located on the New York Thruway (I87 and I287 at exit 12 West Nyack, Route 303). You can't miss it.

The Adler Community Meeting Room is located on the 4th level (top floor) at the east end of the Mall, directly above Filene's. The Adler Room - and other meeting rooms - are in a hallway leading to the Ice Skating Rink (also above Filene's).

The best and easiest way to get into the mall is to drive into the underground parking area. Proceed to the east end of the parking garage to parking areas "M" or "N" near the "East Mall Entrance". Take the escalators in the East Mall Entrance all the way to level 4. When you come off the escalator, turn around and you are looking right at the Ice Rink.

Members of the Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc.

We need articles for our newsletter! Any help is appreciated.

Contact our webmaster webmaster@rocklandaquanauts.org

Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc.

Mission Statement:

To provide, promote, and advance environmental protection, care, and voluntary clean-up of waterways by any and all lawful means; to promote the importance and care in every manner possible by environmental awareness and otherwise; to purchase, print, publish, and circulate literature to promote the importance and care of the waterways and the work of the Corporation. To perform all acts the Corporation may deem appropriate or advisable in such operation; to establish, provide, and voluntary clean-up waterways, to encourage, support and subsidize the cleaning and protection from pollution.

Annual Dinner 2006

The Rockland Aquanauts are going to have their Annual Dinner on Sunday, April 9th, 2006. The Dinner will be held at Arthur's Tavern, 214 Kinderkamack Road, Emerson, New Jersey, 07630. Their phone number is 1-201-265-5180.

Appetizers will be served from 4:00 pm until 5:00 pm and dinner will be served from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm.

There shall be door prizes as well as awards. Don't forget to get your log books over to Allan Block for bottom time rewards. The date for this has been extended until the first week in March.

They must be sent to Allan before the first week in March. Contact Allan for more details at allanjblock@yahoo.com

The cost of the Dinner and appetizers shall be 17.00 for Members and 27.00 for the first Guest.

Please send your checks to the treasure as follows;

The Rockland Aquanauts
c/o Paul Galeazzi Jr.
4 Greensward Drive
Valley Cottage N.Y.

“Deep Sea 3D”

<http://www.imax.com/deepsea>

By, Paul Galeazzi Jr.

Tonight, myself and some fellow Aquanauts went to see a special advance screening of the IMAX Movie, Deep Sea 3D. As they promised they transported the audience below the oceans surface, without getting any of us wet.

Only as divers can we really appreciate this beauty which we all have seen in person, under the Oceans depths. These are the films that help promote the reason why people take up the sport of diving.

I for one would recommend this film for anyone to see. It shows the beauty of life below the Oceans that we must try and preserve for many future generations to come.

We must take a stand and stop all the pollution that jeopardizes these reefs as well as all life in our Oceans, which many people take for granted.

OCEANS BECOMING MORE ACIDIC THAN WHEN DINOSAURS DIED

TerraDaily, Feb. 21, 2006

By Staff Writers
Agence France-Presse

Honolulu, Hawaii (SPX) Feb 21, 2006 -- Research shows increased carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere are rapidly making the world's oceans so acidic they could cause a mass extinction of marine life similar to one that occurred 65 million years ago when the dinosaurs disappeared.

"The geologic record tells us the chemical effects of ocean acidification would last tens of thousands of years," said Ken Caldeira, of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C. "But biological recovery could take millions of years. Ocean acidification has the potential to cause extinction of many marine species."

Caldeira presented his findings at the American Geophysical Union/American Society of Limnology and Oceanography meeting on Monday.

He explained that when CO₂ from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas dissolves in the ocean, some of it becomes carbonic acid, which over time makes ocean water more acidic. When carbonic acid input is modest, sediments from the ocean floor can buffer the increases in acidity.

At the current rate of input, however -- nearly 50 times the natural background from volcanoes and other sources -- it overwhelms the buffering mechanism, Caldeira said, adding that previous estimates suggest ocean pH values could drop by as much as half a unit in less than 100 years, from the natural level of 8.2 to about 7.7. On the pH scale, lower numbers mean a more acidic liquid, while higher numbers are more alkaline.

A significant drop in ocean pH would be particularly damaging to the corals, which use calcium carbonate to make their shells. Under normal conditions, ocean water is supersaturated with this mineral, making it easy for such creatures to grow, but a more acidic ocean would more easily dissolve calcium carbonate, putting the coral and related species at particular risk.

Caldeira said the last time the oceans endured such a drastic change in chemistry was 65 million years ago, at about the same time the dinosaurs went extinct. Though researchers do not yet know exactly what caused the ancient acidification, they do know it was connected to the cataclysm that wiped out the dinosaurs.

In addition, he said, the overall pattern of extinction in the ocean is consistent with ocean acidification. The fossil record reveals a precipitous drop in the number of species with calcium carbonate shells that live in the upper ocean -- particularly corals and plankton. During the same period, species with shells made from resistant silicate minerals were more likely to survive.

"Ultimately, if we are not careful, our energy system could make the oceans corrosive to coral reefs and many other marine organisms," Caldeira said. "These results should help motivate the search for new energy sources, such as wind and solar, that can fuel economic growth without releasing dangerous carbon dioxide into the environment."

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Diver survives 75 hours at sea

By Peter Williams

08 February 2006

<http://theaustralian.com>

A DIVER was found alive today after floating for more than three days in chilly seas off New Zealand, catching and living off raw sea urchins and crayfish.

When Robert Hewitt, 38, went missing at sea on Sunday, his family prayed to the Maori god of the sea to give him back. A massive search effort had been undertaken to find Hewitt, one of eight on a charter trip to Mana Island, in Cook Strait. He had entered the water alone after his dive buddy returned to their boat.

Police said the father of two survived without water thanks to his training and experience as a former NZ navy diver. "Miracles do happen and it pretty much happened this afternoon," said police area commander Inspector John Spence. "It's a hell of a long time without water.

"Three days in the sea is a long time, especially on the third day when the conditions were very bad and to find him is just fantastic."

Hewitt was in hospital in Wellington tonight suffering from dehydration and hypothermia. He was spotted by a police launch and plucked from waters near Mana Island in the often treacherous Cook Strait this afternoon.

He was wearing only the bottom half of his dive suit when rescuers found him. In the trip to shore he talked and joked with his rescuers, spoke by phone to his fiancée Rangi and was greeted by family members at shore before being taken by ambulance to hospital.

The family was "ecstatic" after all but giving up hope of him surviving after Hewitt failed to surface from the dive. "Monday felt surreal when we thought we had lost him," said Hewitt's brother Norm, a onetime rugby All Black.

"Today feels surreal. Our prayers have been answered." He said the past three days had been the toughest of his family members' lives.

"All along I've said we've got to get Robert home, either way," Norm Hewitt told TVNZ. "We always knew, bro, we always knew you were coming home to us. We look forward to seeing you," Norm said in a message to his brother.

Hospital trains for Oriskany diving injuries

Sean Smith

PensacolaNewsJournal.com

The soon-to-be-sunk aircraft carrier Oriskany is expected to become a prime divers' playground, but local hospitals and emergency officials are bracing for dive injuries.

Baptist Hospital will be the only local facility with a hyperbaric chamber to treat civilian dive injuries. The chamber at Pensacola Naval Air Station is for military divers.

The Baptist chamber, currently used to treat wounds and other ailments, will be ready for dive injuries by April or May, Dr. Kelli Wells said.

The treatment of dive injuries is a very involved process that requires enhanced training as well as 24-hour staff, she said. "What we're doing is increasing the level of training," she said. "We'll treat dive injuries as they occur, but my real desire is that we get information out there to prevent the injuries."

Currently, emergency crews divert dive-injury patients to hospitals in Mobile and Panama City, which each see about a dozen dive-related injuries a year.

The 32,000-ton, 888-foot long Oriskany, to be sunk before June 1, is expected to rest at about 210 feet down, 22 miles southwest of Pensacola Pass. The superstructure will be at about 60 feet and the flight deck at about 130 feet -- the limit for recreational divers.

"There are a tremendous amount of unknowns," said Navy Cmdr. Ward Reed, director of the hyperbarics program at the Naval Operational Medicine Institute at Pensacola Naval Air Station. "What we do know is it's going to be pretty far out, and it's going to be deep."

Most dive injuries occur from decompression sickness -- dubbed "the bends" -- which is caused by surfacing too quickly. "In order to see more of the Oriskany, divers will have to reach significant depths, and that increases the risk," Wells said. "If divers alter their plan and stay longer than they should, they run out of time and then return to the surface too quickly, and they get sick."

For a typical dive to 130 feet, divers have five to eight minutes from the time they leave the surface, said Reed, who has been advising local emergency officials for 18 months.

"You get enough time to get down to the flight deck, touch it and look around," he said. "Then it will be time to leave."

Bay Medical Center in Panama City also is gearing up for a potential increase from the 10 to 12 dive injuries it treats each year, spokeswoman Christa Hild said.

The Warrington dive shop MBT Divers is preparing a multimedia briefing on the Oriskany and plans to take certified advanced scuba divers there, owner Jim Phillips said.

Oriskany dives should not create too many problems because divers will be advanced, Phillips said. Escambia County's artificial reef program includes more than 110 reefs in the area -- most of them at less than 100 feet.

"As long as they put forth a reasonable effort to follow the guidelines, everybody should be fine," Phillips said.

Robert Turpin, chief of Escambia County Marine Resources Division, said safety was in the forefront as Oriskany plans were made.

The ship has been stripped of anything of value, he said. The superstructure, which will be at a shallow depth and likely will be teeming with sea life, may well be the most attractive part, he said.

But Turpin, who has logged more than 2,500 dives, said caution still will be critical when diving the Oriskany.

"It is an advanced dive -- it's not for the newly certified, not for the inexperienced," he said. "Divers are pretty smart, and they are very well trained. When you put a tank on your back and a mask on your face, the only thing between you and disaster is yourself. "There's nothing inside the Oriskany worth dying for."

<http://www.pensacolanejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060228/NEWS01/602280321/1006>

Stingray Divers

Dive on the best-rated live-aboard, Odyssey Adventures to see the “ghost fleet” of Truk Lagoon, unquestionably the world's best shipwreck diving destination. The number, variety, and size of the wrecks and the spectacular marine life that grows on them are unequalled. In February of 1944, the US Task Force 58 attacked Japan's fortress of Truk Lagoon. More than 400 Japanese planes were wiped out and some 50-60 ships were believed sunk in this Micronesian lagoon (one hour flight from Guam).

Boat departs

9/10/06

To

9/17/06



Cost Odyssey. Boat fee PACKAGE PRICE \$ 2495.00 plus air fare
Air fare \$1530.00

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And transfers, included, plus one night in Blue Lagoon Hotel,
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Contact: www.stingraydivers.com
Email: info@stingraydivers.com
762 Grand Street, Brooklyn, New York, 11211

Phone 718-384-1280
Fax 718-302-0465

This is a **“Proposed”** Dive schedule
For
Hessian Lake, Lake Sebago, Lake Welch

Hessian Lake

Saturday June 3rd 2006 at 9:00 AM
Sunday July 9th 2006 at 9:00 AM
Saturday August 5th 2006 at 9:00 AM
Sunday September 10th 2006 at 10:00 AM
Saturday September 30th at 10:00 AM
Sunday October 8th at 10:00 AM
Saturday October 14th at 10:00 AM

Lake Sebago

Saturday June 24th at 9:00 AM
Sunday July 23rd at 9:00 AM
Saturday August 26th at 9:00 AM

Lake Welch

Sunday September 17th at 10:00 AM

As soon as the schedule is approved by the Park Commission an official list shall be posted

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Rockland Aquanauts Organization 2006 Dues

I guess it is that time of the year again, Membership Dues are due.
Last year all our members received much more than they gave out to the
Organization.

As usual you will be receiving a tax donation for the first \$25.00. All members
who attended the Annual Dinner not only received money off their own dinner
but they also received money off theirs guests dinner. Everyone whom
attended also received prizes, some worth many times the cost of their Dues.
Don't forget the Annual Picnic as well as all the BBQ lunch's after the Lake
Dives.

So please send in your \$42 dues early to;

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
c/o
Paul Galeazzi Jr.
4 Greensward Drive.
Valley Cottage New York
10989



**Rockland Aquanauts
Post Office Box 387
New City, NY
10956**

March 2006

Oriskany sinking date set, "Deep Sea 3D", "Proposed" Dive Schedule, 2006 Dues, Annual Dinner

****Next Meeting March 14th 2006****

**6:30pm at the Palisades Mall
Level 4, East End
The Adler Community Room
West Nyack, NY**

Directions Inside