

# AQUANEWS

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## On The Road with Max Max Estroff

Once again, but for the grace of G-d, I cheated death last November, by driving my new Towne Car which undoubtedly and significantly increased my chances of survival. I hit, according to the tow truck operator "the biggest buck I ever saw" doing 72 miles per hour on cruise control on the New York State Thruway just south of Kingston.

Seven months of physical therapy later found me ready to dive again. So in the beginning of July with all my gear I drove down to Florida to dive with Captain Leo on the "Deeper" out of Boynton Beach. Nice easy drift diving at 60-70 feet, warm water and visibility. The type of low anxiety diving one needs to reacquaint oneself and ones body to this stress test we subject ourselves to in the name of sport. I had hurt my shoulder in the accident and for me the question was, "Can I still do this"?

Two days diving, one day off, was the routine. I dove 5 days with Captain Leo. The water was warm, 84 degrees and the visibility was around 50 feet on most dives. Eight of these dives were in the 60 foot range, the exact type of diving I needed to relax, breathe right and enjoy what we do in this great environment of South Florida. The wrecks of the "Captain Jack" at 85 feet and the "Castor" at 101 feet were occupied by at least 4 Goliaths each. These wreck dives were done at opposite ends of my 9 days down here.

During the week the boat left about 10 a.m. Two instructors showed up with 16 students for their first open water dives. On site, I jumped in first, carrying my own flag and got back on the boat 60 minutes later. The students were preparing for their second

dive. The instructor was giving a briefing "We all jump in together, we all go down together, and we all come up together". As I sat there watching and listening to him I thought to myself, how are they going to stay together? In they jumped, the instructor first, and 8 students following. Within moments, between the surface current and the boat moving away, one of the group got separated from the others, and was in obvious distress. Next thing I knew I was flying thru the air and slicing thru the water at maximum (no pun intended) effort. I got to the kid, flipped him over on his back and calmed him down. His air was off, so I turned it on, got him breathing and off I sent him to join his group. I then had to swim back to the boat. Once back on board both the mate and Captain Leo came over and said "great job". The really great thing was that having stressed my shoulder to do this, I was pain free. Not even a hint of pain. I soon geared up and did my second dive. 49 minutes later I returned to the surface. The boat was right there waiting for me. I took my gear off and went over to this young boy and asked him what had he learned? His reply was "make sure my air is turned on" and I added that no one else should touch it.

After the boat docked and all my gear was back in my jeep I went to find Captain Leo to find out what time the boat was leaving the next day. He asked if the parents had thanked me. My reply was "what parents?" I thought he was alone. Turns out he and both of his parents were taking the class. I never saw the parents or associated anyone with the kid. His instructor never acknowledged me either. Captain Leo, however, was really nice as always and the

*(Continued on page 3)*

## AQUANEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION  
OF THE ROCKLAND  
AQUANAUTS ORGANIZATION.  
WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS &  
PHOTOGRAPHS ARE ALWAYS  
WELCOMED & ENCOURAGED.  
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THE MONTH

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### OCEAN WRECK DIVERS 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SCUBA FLEA MARKET SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

Please visit EmbroidMe, at the below location, to order garments with the club logo. You may order and purchase just about any garment that they sell at not only our club discount but tax free.

Just see any sales person and tell them that you are from The Rockland Aquanauts, and then shop until you drop. You would never believe the amount of items that they sell and the quality of many of them. Turn around time depends on the items ordered.

The board wants you to know that the club does not receive any of the money. All the savings goes directly to the members. The club paid all set up fee's up front to keep your costs down.



### EmbroidMe-Nanuet

Phone: 845-627-7711 Fax: 845-627-7707

E-Mail: [nanuet@embroidme.com](mailto:nanuet@embroidme.com)

Website: [www.embroidme-nanuet.com](http://www.embroidme-nanuet.com)

27 N. Middletown Road — Nanuet, NY 10954

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.**

## On The Road With Max

*(continued from page 1)*

next dive I did with him was free.

The one day I did not dive with Captain Leo I dove with “Lady Go Diver” out of Deerfield Beach. A fully equipped dive shop, with custom nitrox mixing available, it is a really great boat. The logistics, however, are very poor to get on and off the boat, because they use a public dock in a public park. With too many people and so much gear, it’s a lot of risk unless you are with a group. You need someone to watch the gear, someone to park and someone to retrieve the car. There was poor organization on the boat and in getting divers into the water. The mate, between trying to be funny and also instructing someone else on how to be a mate while getting tanks on board did not pay close enough attention to the oncoming divers need to spread out all their stuff. These boats down here almost always have new divers on board. They need nurturing but the experienced divers also really need to be observed.

Why was it necessary for me to go to the Captain and ask him to tell the guy with the spear gun to remove the business end out from beneath my BC? Why weren’t the 2 spear fisherman’s guns placed into those tubes I see on all of these boats? Well it was time to dive. We went in by twos as fast as possible. Wouldn’t you know it? I am right behind the guys with the spear guns. The captain dropped us so close together, so he could easily keep us together and follow the flags. I could easily see the silhouette of the guys with their long spear guns.

Now, it was a typical drift dive in 80 feet of water along side a ledge at the sand interface. Swimming against the current and coming straight underneath me was a Stingray with two Cobias right with it. A Cobia to a guy with a spear gun is like finding Spanish gold lying on the sand to a first time diver. All I could think about was where was the guy with the spear gun? As I found him he was turning and was about to shoot, me. As I am seeing this unfold, my UK1200 with 8 brand new D batteries blasted his face mask. What a pity, I ruined his shot and the gesture he gave me and my bright orange gloved gesture I returned left no doubt of our feelings towards each other. Back on the boat I was not going to be a typical guy from the Bronx and decided not to say anything. Rivka, my wife, would have been proud of me. It was not to be. The local started in with me, we had some words, people got very uptight and the mate had to get between us and calm things down. All in all it was a very interesting day.

How did I get here to this type of operation? Our good friend, Uncle Vinny (as my girls know him) dove with them for a day or two and said they treated him right, so I figured let me try them and it’s not as far as Boynton Beach. So there is no doubt in anyone’s mind, this is not a place I would recommend.

Taken all together I had 12 great dives. My shoulder felt fine and my confidence about diving returned. It’s not about if, it’s back to when will I be diving again.



## Loose Batteries No Longer Allowed in Checked Baggage

Effective January 1, 2008, spare lithium batteries--extra batteries not installed on devices--will no longer be allowed in checked baggage. Spare lithium batteries may be packed in carry-on baggage and lithium batteries installed in a device may be packed in either checked or carry-on, as long as the battery is installed in the device.

TSA provide some safe tips for travel batteries:

Keep batteries and equipment with you, or in carry-on baggage--not in your checked baggage! In the cabin, flight crew can better monitor conditions, and have access to the batteries or device if a fire does occur.

Buy batteries from reputable sources and only use batteries approved for your device--avoid counterfeits! A counterfeit battery is more likely to cause a fire in your equipment--costing you more in the long run, and compromising safety.

Look for the mark of an independent testing or standards organization, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

Do not carry recalled or damaged batteries on aircraft. Check battery recall information at the manufacturer's website, or at the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Only charge batteries which you are sure are rechargeable! Non-rechargeable batteries are not designed for recharging, and become hazardous if placed in a battery charger. A non-rechargeable battery placed in a charger may overheat or cause damage later.

Only use a charger compatible with your rechargeable battery--don't mix and match!

If original packaging is not available for spare batteries, effectively insulate battery terminals by isolating the batteries from contact with other batteries and metal. Do not permit a loose battery to come in contact with metal objects, such as coins, keys, or jewelry.

Place each battery in its own protective case, plastic bag, or package, or place tape across the battery's contacts to isolate terminals. Isolating terminals prevents short-circuiting.

Take steps to prevent crushing, puncturing, or putting a high degree of pressure on the battery, as this can cause an internal short-circuit, resulting in overheating.

If you must carry a battery-powered device in any baggage, package it to prevent inadvertent activation. For instance, you should pack a cordless power tool in a protective case, with a trigger lock engaged. If there is an on-off switch or a safety switch, tape it in the "off" position.



## World War II submarine found off Alaska

### AP

The mangled remains of a vessel found in the Bering Sea are likely those of a World War II submarine that disappeared with a crew of 70 off the Aleutian Island of Kiska.

The discovery of the USS Grunion culminates a five-year search led by the sons of its commander, Mannert Abele, and may finally reveal the mysterious last moments of the doomed vessel.

"Obviously, this is a very big thing," the oldest son, Bruce Abele, said.

A remotely operated vehicle snapped pictures and captured three hours of video footage of the Grunion on a rocky underwater slope north of the volcanic island, according to another brother, John Abele, who was in Kiska Harbour with the search team.

The submarine lies 300 metres below the surface and had been crushed by water pressure, said Abele.

"The most surprising thing was the damage," he said.

"It was much more than we or anyone else imagined. Initially it was very hard to recognise as a ship."

The hull had imploded so severely that the interior, including bunks and a dive wheel, were clearly visible, Abele said.

No human remains were found.

The search team hired by the Abeles, Deep Sea Systems International, said no identifying markings or lettering could be seen, but the location and appearance of the vessel indicate it is the missing sub.

"There's a 95 per cent chance that this is the Grunion and a less than five per cent chance that it's not," said Christopher J Nicholson, general manager of the company.

"The fact that they actually found this in an expanse of ocean is really pretty spectacular."

The Grunion patrolled Alaska's Aleutian Islands during the early months of World War II.

Her last official radio message came on July 30, 1942 and described heavy enemy activity at Kiska Harbour.

Until a few years ago, the clues to the Grunion's disappearance were too fragmented to justify a search.

After receiving more information from a model ship builder in Japan, the Abeles launched an initial expedition to Kiska in August 2006.

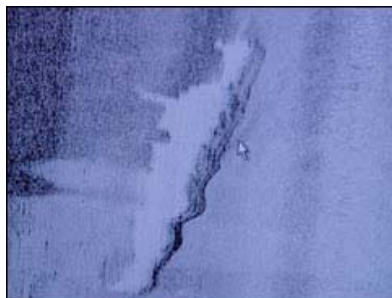
Sonar images of a sub-shaped silhouette prompted a second journey this month.

A forensic engineer and other experts will use the footage to piece together the Grunion's final hours and figure out why it sank.

The search crew of 17 plans to spend several more days looking for sunken Japanese ships in the area.

"Actually seeing the burial site was touching and in a way rewarding," John Abele said.

"It provides a closing and hopefully an answer to the unknown."



## FLORIDA KEEPS THE MANATEE ON ENDANGERED LIST FOR NOW

By : Jessica Gresko – Associated Press

Key Largo, Fla. – Manatees will remain on Florida's endangered species list for now.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission decided yesterday to delay a vote on removing the manatee from the list until the commission can review the animal species classification system.

The commission did not specify when the classification review may be done.

"Delisting the manatee has basically invoked concerns over the listing process," commission chairman Rodney Bareto said.

The commission had been considering whether to reclassify the manatee as a "threatened" species instead of "endangered."

Manatees have been on the state endangered list since 1979. This year's annual census recorded about 2,800 of the gentle animals in Florida water, up from around 1,300 counted during the first survey in 1991.

State experts say the aquatic mammals are no longer at imminent risk of extinction, the definition of endangered.

Reclassifying them as threatened – describing them as facing a high risk of extinction – is more appropriate, state officials said.

It would not mean a change of protection enjoyed by the species, and the manatee would continue to have federal endangered status.

The state protections are largely based on creating slow speed zones for boaters to protect the animals from collision.

The biggest threats to the species are the loss of their favored warm-water habitats and boat propellers.

The commission on Wednesday did approve a conservation plan that calls for statistically sound methods to estimate the manatee population and monitor trends.

The plan also calls for developing ways to prevent future manatee deaths due to habitat loss.

That includes the potential loss of warm water habitats created around power plants as well as springs where manatees thrive.

Manatee advocates said they would have preferred the commission vote definitively not to move the manatee off the endangered list, but said they were happy with Wednesday's outcome.

"This is probably the best outcome we could have had," said Patrick Rose, executive director of the Save the Manatee Club.

Wildlife officials were to vote on manatee reclassification in September, but that was postponed at Gov. Charlie Crist's request so newly appointed commissioners could study the matter.

Crist said he was pleased with the commission's actions.

"Their action will keep the manatee on the endangered list and make sure that we continue to focus public attention on preserving this unique and important environmental treasure," he said.

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Rockland Aquanauts Organization  
2008 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 their 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

## Deadliest Sea Creatures

### Irukandji Jellyfish



Brian Cassey, AP

A fully grown Irukandji jellyfish lies next to matchsticks for size comparison in a lab in Cairns, Australia. The Irukandji is a type of box jellyfish. The stingers on its box and tentacles can cause a syndrome that can be fatal. Victims get severe backaches or headaches and shooting pains in their muscles, chest and abdomen. In rare cases, the victim suffers pulmonary edema. These jellies live in north Australian waters and along the Great Barrier Reef.



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**January 2008**

On the Road With Max, Travel Alert, Manatees, WWII Sub, Membership Dues

**\*\*There will be NO January Meeting\*\***

**Happy Holidays Everyone!  
Have a safe and Happy New Year**