

# AQUANEWS

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## Vandenberg Scheduled to Sink off Key West May 15

After more than 10 years of planning and preparation, project organizers, overseeing the transformation of the a retired U.S. Air Force missile tracking ship General Hoyt S. Vandenberg into an artificial reef off Key West have set May 15 as the scheduled sink date.

The Vandenberg is likely to be the hottest topic discussed in the Florida Keys & Key West booth cluster (#901, 903, 905) at the upcoming Our World Underwater show.

"This is a major event for us, a great opportunity for the health of the reef as well as an economic shot in the arm for the Keys," said Chris Norwood, president of Artificial Reefs of the Keys.

"Tens of thousands of people have been waiting to hear this date."

Currently, the General Hoyt S. Vandenberg is in a Norfolk, Va., shipyard with workers removing environmental hazards, prior to its scuttling in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

Officials with Reefmakers, the project's facilitator, are planning to coordinate towing of the 522-foot-long vessel to Key West sometime in March for final preparations.

The Vandenberg project should provide additional marine habitat and provide a new attraction for recreational divers, to relieve pressure on natural coral reefs.

"Not only do artificial reefs divert recreational user pressure from natural reefs, they also create a valuable habitat and new breeding grounds for the marine environment", said Joe Weatherby of Reefmakers.

"The Vandenberg will provide tools and resources to create sustained educational, social and cultural programs while also generating substantial revenues for the community."

Before it was decommissioned in 1983, the Vandenberg also tracked manned U.S. space missions, beginning with Mercury blastoffs in the early 1960s. The ship "played" a role as a Russian science ship in "Virus," a 1999 motion picture starring Jamie Lee Curtis.

Funding for the project is coming from several local government and private-sector resources including the City of Key West and the Monroe County Tourist Development Council.

## On the Web:

Florida Keys & Key West tourism council:

[www.fla-keys.com](http://www.fla-keys.com)

Reefmakers: [www.reefmakers.com](http://www.reefmakers.com)

Artificial Reefs of the Keys:

[www.bigshipwrecks.com](http://www.bigshipwrecks.com)



## AQUANEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION  
OF THE ROCKLAND  
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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

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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.

# DANGER-DIVER DOWN



THIS FLAG IS USED TO WARN BOAT OPERATORS OF THE NEARBY PRESENCE OF DIVERS UNDER WATER

## **BOAT OPERATORS**

THE LAW REQUIRES YOU TO STAY 100 FEET FROM WHERE THIS FLAG IS DISPLAYED

## **DIVERS**

THE LAW REQUIRES YOU TO DISPLAY THIS FLAG AND STAY WITHIN 100 FEET OF IT.

Sponsored By:

New York State  
Divers Association

For Information Contact:

NEW YORK STATE DIVERS ASSOCIATION  
Membership Services  
SLY HILL ROAD, BOX 204A  
AVA, NEW YORK 13303

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Parks, Recreation and  
Historic Preservation  
Pursuant to Section 35-b  
New York State Navigation Law

Plastic recycling is a sham

by [Kelly Leahy](#)

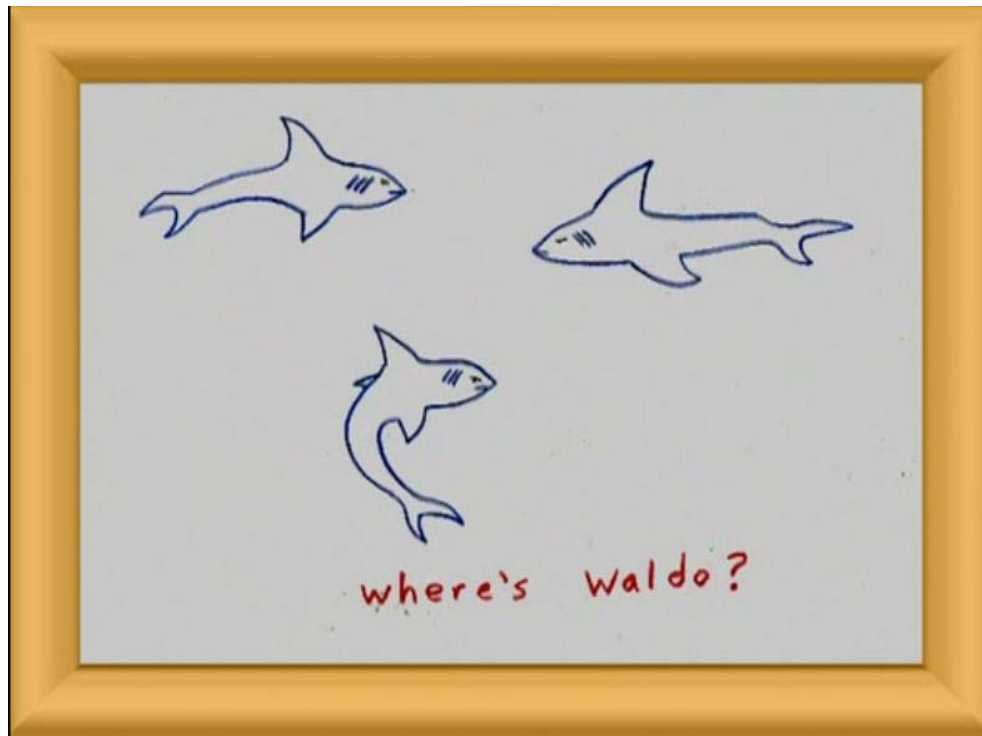
Jan 2nd 2008 @ 11:04AM

Our city-wide recycling program only took plastics labeled #1 or #2 which left #3 - #7 destined for the trash can. I was excited when a new recycling program popped up that accepted all plastics and I have dutifully been placing them all in my blue recycling bin. I have recently found out that very little of my waste gets recycled and much of it gets shipped off the third world countries where it is [burned as fuel](#) or simply [dumped in a landfill](#). Imagine the air quality from all of that burning plastic. Yum.

The truth is that only plastics #1 and #2 are easily recycled domestically and even then they have a limited life as a bag or lumber. Plastics #3 - #7 are generally not recyclable with the exception of [Recycline's efforts](#) to turn plastic #5 into toothbrushes, razors and kitchen gadgets. The rest gets shipped overseas.

Additionally, if a bale of "good" #1 or #2 plastic gets tainted by a #3 or #4, the whole thing is no good and becomes rubbish. There simply is not enough of a demand in this country for recycled plastics as long as virgin materials are plentiful and less expensive to process.

So, what options do we have as consumers? Many of our readers have said it again and again: waste less. This means making smart choices when bringing anything into our homes. Reuse containers, buy in bulk and if you must buy a new jar, go for glass. I will continue to recycle all of my plastics along with making a conscious effort to cut down on my waste all together.



## Sunken Treasures Offer Glimpse of Lost World

By JENNY BARCHFIELD, AP

PARIS - The great port of Alexandria was a bustling trade hub, a transit point for merchandise from throughout the ancient world - until much of it vanished into the Mediterranean Sea.

Treasure hunters have long scoured the Egyptian coast for vestiges of the port, thought to have disappeared about 13 centuries ago. Now an exhibit at Paris' Grand Palais brings together 500 ancient artifacts recovered from the area by underwater archeologists using sophisticated nuclear technology.

"Egypt's Sunken Treasures" features colossuses of pink granite, a 17.6-ton slab inscribed with hieroglyphics, a phalanx of crouching sphinx, pottery, amulets and gold coins and jewelry - all painstakingly fished out of the Mediterranean. Some of the oldest artifacts are estimated to have spent 2,000 years underwater.

"This is not your usual Ancient Egypt exhibit," said archaeologist Franck Goddio, who led the expedition for the European Institute of Submarine Archaeology. "The artifacts have been living together under the sea for millennia - not gathering dust on a museum shelf."

Goddio's team began its search in 1996, using such technology as sonar, depth-finders and sounding equipment. They worked with France's Atomic Energy Commission to develop a device that measures objects' nuclear resonance to pinpoint the exact locations of the port and two other sites, the lost cities of Herakleion and Canopus.

Television screens projecting videos of the excavations dot the exhibit, in the newly restored Grand Palais, a turn-of-the-century building with a vast glass cupola.

While some of the recovered artifacts were slowly swallowed by the Mediterranean as sea levels rose, others sunk during natural disasters, such as earthquakes and tidal waves. Experts think some heavy objects may have slid into the sea when the clay soil gave way under their weight.

A protective layer of sediment settled over most of the pieces, preserving them from corrosive salt water. Other artifacts were not as fortunate. Riddled with pockmarks or rubbed smooth by the tides, these objects clearly bear the mark of their centuries under water.

Some of the oldest pieces, such as a sphinx dating from the 13th century B.C., were brought to Egypt's coast from other regions of the country. Later objects clearly show the influence of the Greeks, who controlled much of Egypt starting in the fourth century B.C.

In an exquisite black-granite sculpture, the ancient Egyptian goddess Isis strikes a quintessentially Pharaonic pose, with one leg forward and arms pressed tightly at her sides. But the sensual drape of her gown, with its delicate folds, belies an unmistakably Greek touch.

The Stela of Ptolemy, a mammoth marble slab standing 19.5 feet high, bears inscriptions in both hieroglyphics and Greek.

Sculptures from the Greco-Roman period show the degree to which the European colonizers assimilated Egyptian culture, and vice versa. In a second century B.C. bust, the Egyptian god Serapis looks just like the Greek god Zeus, with a full beard and curly locks. With its wild expression and frizzy hair, a second century A.D. bust of an Egyptian water god is the exact image of a Roman Bacchus.

One of the most impressive objects in the show is the so-called Naos of the Decades, a hieroglyphics-covered prayer niche dating from around 380 B.C.

The roof of the niche was discovered in 1776 and taken to Paris, where it became part of the Louvre Museum's permanent collection. In the 1940s, archaeologists working under Egyptian Prince Omar Toussoun discovered two more bits - the naos' back and the base. But it wasn't until the recent submarine excavations, which uncovered several more fragments, that archaeologists finally managed to put the naos together again.

"Egypt's Sunken Treasures," which attracted some 450,000 visitors at its first stop, Berlin, closes March 16. After Paris, the show will return to Egypt. Authorities in Alexandria plan to build a museum of submarine archaeology to hold the artifacts as well as new items that archaeologist Goddio's team continues to discover during its twice yearly expeditions.

"There's enough in the three sites to keep us busy for a while - for about the next 150 years, at least," he said.

## Remembering "Birdman"

Anyone who has gone to the NYSDA dive at Lake George knows Bob "Birdman" Bird. It is with great sorrow that I have to announce his passing at an early age of 60, on 12/18/2007. I never had the pleasure of meeting him, but fellow Aquanauts have all told me stories of him and his trusty dog.

It seems that he had a real problem with his legs due to advanced diabetes. About 2 weeks before his death he was working on his furnace when an explosion caused 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns on both his legs. He did not seek any medical help and an infection set in. His sister had him admitted to the local hospital where they couldn't deal with his condition, so they had him air lifted to Augusta Burn Center, where he was listed in critical condition. He passed away just a week later from cardiac arrest.

He was the only person to have made it to Lake George in all over the 27 years that the Albany Aquanauts have run the Rogers Rock Invitational. He received an award on the 25<sup>th</sup> year. Hopefully where ever he is there is a Lake George and a Rogers Rock. God Bless Him.

The preliminary date for the Rockland Aquanauts Annual dinner is April 6<sup>th</sup> 2008. We will be having the dinner at Arthur's Tavern in Emerson New Jersey. There will be prizes again this year for all who attend



## 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

Flower Urchin



Corbis

The small "flowers" on this urchin are tiny venomous pincers that can cause paralysis and even death. Flower urchins have allegedly killed several people in Japan, although a report from WebMD states that documentation in general is sparse and death is probably very rare.



Rockland Aquanauts  
Post Office Box 387  
New City, NY  
10956

February 2008

Vandenberg, Plastic Recycling, Remembering "Birdman", Annual Dinner Date, Membership Dues

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**\*\*There will be NO February Meeting\*\***  
**Don't Forget:**

**OCEAN WRECK DIVERS 20TH ANNUAL  
SCUBA FLEA MARKET  
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH, 2008**

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