

AQUANEWS

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Grand Cayman Officials Say Alcohol and Stingrays Do Mix

from the February, 2010 issue of *Undercurrent*

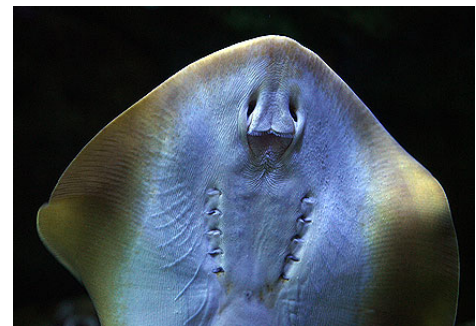
Do the piscine residents of Grand Cayman's Stingray City really need a bar and restaurant floating in their midst? On December 10, Cayman's Liquor Licensing Board granted a retail liquor license and a music and dancing license to Bernie Bush, a local businessman, for the proposed floating bar. But Cayman local Peter Van der Bol told the Cayman Net News that Bush's application was deceptively done because he said the license would be applied at a nearby yacht club, but it then turned into a floating bar.

Undercurrent reader and Cayman local Jack Augsbury wrote a protest letter to radio show Cayman Crosstalk. "What does this say to the children who will visit Stingray City in the future? Here is a beautiful natural setting to safely interact with nature and, oh yes, there is the bar. I have heard the argument that because boaters go there and drink alcohol, then why not a permanent floating bar. There is a huge difference between temporary boaters with personal freedom and a permanent alcohol-dispensing structure."

More than 100 locals and tourists gathered in George Town last month to protest the license. "Even if a clean operation is done, trash will still end up in the water, and you can't swim with stingrays in the wild," protest organizer Natasha Kozaily said. "Putting a bar there is encouraging people to drink beer while they are swimming and they can drown. They can step on stingrays and harm them or get harmed."

Bush says the place will be more restaurant than bar, serving Caymanian dishes to let tourists sample the local cuisine and served with biodegradable cutlery, while drinks will be served in souvenir cups as incentive for customers to hold onto them. He says he won't be anchored in Stingray City and won't be the first to change the family atmosphere. "Half the people have beer or liquor in their hands drinking. So this is nothing new. The fact is it is high time that a local person started to make something out of this so-called piece of pie here in Cayman Islands."

So while it's business pure and simple for Bush and Cayman officials, looks like the underwater residents - - and the area's main attraction - - are the ones who will benefit the least.



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AQUANEWS

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New Consideration in Scuba Gear Purchase by Lada Simek

WEIGHT! In the past things like price and fit were the main variables, but with the recent charges for overweight luggage that airlines are charging, weight has to be another consideration. The climb in cost of baggage will probably not stop and it makes sense. Consider this:

The average passenger weighs something like 175 lbs. The airline pays for the fuel to lift and carry him. The greater the weight, the more the fuel used. A forty pound bag represents a 23% addition, so in a \$400 ticket, that is \$93 additional cost for fuel.

This will apply to you more than you think. As we get older, more of us will become warm water divers and fly south. Therefore, if you are buying any equipment, you should keep the weight in mind.

I was always annoyed that the heaviest item in my checked luggage was my fins. I looked around, but only now some fins are being marketed with weight as a consideration. My Oceanic fins and booties weigh 45 ounces and that is light. Because of knee surgery, I looked for cheap, light foot fins and found a pair for one third of the price. To my great surprise, not only did they not hurt me, but my times for swimming 400 yards were 30 SECONDS FASTER! They weighed 21 ounces, (24 ounces less), and they packed smaller.

Next the BC. My cold water Sherwood weighs 93 ounces in an extra large. I have a tropical BC that weighs 68 ounces and packs in a volume of a loaf of bread. (25 ounces less). I saw a marvelous travel BC recently which folded flat, and was weight integrated with a parachute-type ripcord for weight release. I would buy that in a flash!

All divers bring an equipment bag to carry their stuff to the boat. I have a well made one that weighs 40 ounces, but I still prefer to use my 20 year old, torn net bag because it only weighs 14 ounces, a saving of (26 ounces).

Just in these three items we saved 75 ounces or almost 5 pounds! That could be used for your photography equipment. This should give you an idea for packing light. I did not mention the regulator because that should be in your carry-on bag, but even there you can save, If I need an octopus, I just grab the Air on my inflator hose.

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.

"Alien" Jellyfish Found in Arctic Deep" National Geographic *Month One*

For 2010 we've decided to add a new series of mini articles that have been featured in National Geographic. Every month, another part of the article "Alien" Jellyfish Found in Arctic Deep" will be posted here.

Enjoy!

Blood-Red Jellyfish

December 11, 2009--In the black depths of the frigid Arctic Ocean, scientists on a 2005 expedition found a splash of color: The brilliant, blood-red *Crossota norvegica* jellyfish (pictured). The creature was spotted by a remotely operated vehicle 8,530 feet (2,600 meters) underwater during a two-month National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) expedition to the Canada Basin, the deepest and least explored part of the Arctic waters. Though *C. norvegica* is not a new species, several new deep-sea animals were discovered during the expedition--some of which were announced in recent research papers in 2009. Biologist and team member Kevin Raskoff, of Monterey Peninsula College in California, was surprised at the diversity of jellyfish living in the extreme polar seas. "We knew there were going to be interesting jellies up there," Raskoff said by email, "but the reality surpassed all of our imaginations!" --

Christine Dell'Amore



Photograph by Kevin Raskoff

Attached is a photo of some current and past members. It was taken in Key Largo, Florida on January 28, 2010. It was sought of a R A alumni reunion.

Marty Dick, Ken Lindroth, Bob Zenorini, Mary Ann Lindroth and Peggy Howland.

The Dicks and Lindroths live on Key Largo. Bob & Peggy are "snow birds". Although more windy than desirable, and with numerous white caps, I still got in two days of diving from Marty's boat. He has several "secret spots" which are good for bugs and I caught three which Marcelle used to make Lobster Bisque. Nothing like having a real chef cook for you!

Hope the photo is good enough for the next issue of the Aquanews.

Bob Zenorini



2010 Stony Point Seals

By; Paul Galeazzi Jr

On February 7th 2010 our fellow Aquanaut, Mike Hatala, and many others took a plunge into the Hudson River for a nice brisk swim. Mike has been doing this for the past several years for a charity set up by the Stony Point Seals.

This year the money collected will be shared by two recipients, Samantha Honreman and Lauren Shields. The funds will be used to help with mounting medical expenses.

The Stony Point Seals are a non-profit organization serving the North Rockland Community. The main fundraiser since 1998 is a yearly Polar Plunge in to the Hudson River every Superbowl Sunday at the Grassy Point Seawall in Stony Point. The success of the Polar Plunge is totally based on the generosity of the community and our faithful supporters.

The Stony Point Seals came to be due to a bet and an idea. After a two hand touch football game on a surprisingly warm Superbowl Sunday around 1996 a group of the original seals boasted they could go for a swim to cool down. The bet was made by another seal that the water would be to cold. The seal went in the water and won the bet. This was repeated next year. After the second year one of the Seals wives suggest "if you're going to do that why not do it for a cause". The rest, as they say, is history.

Each year the Stony Point Seals look for a family in the North Rockland community in need of some assistance. They meet with the family and help bring their story to the community. Together with the help of local and business community the Seals have been able to help many families.

The Polar Plunge has become a event the whole Rockland Community looks forward too each year. The number of honorary Seal increases each year. Last year the numbers increased to near 200 swimmers.

So get ready for Superbowl Sunday 2011!



Tongue Tied

The article in the October 2009 issue of the [BBC's Wildlife magazine](#)

A rare parasite which burrows into host fish before eating and replacing their tongues with itself has been found off the Jersey coast.

Fishermen near the [Minquiers - islands](#) under the jurisdiction of Jersey - found the [isopod, a type of louse](#), inside a weaver fish.

Marine researcher Paul Chambers, from the [Soci t  Jersiaise](#), was one of the fishing party and identified the find.

He said he was surprised to find the [isopod](#) away from the [Mediterranean sea](#).

Isopods are normally about 2cm (1in) long and live in fish, surviving on the animal's blood, in warm waters.

'Quite vicious'

Mr Chambers told: "When we emptied the fish bag out there at the bottom was this incredibly ugly looking isopod.

"Really quite large, really quite hideous - if you turn it over its got dozens of these really sharp, nasty claws underneath and I thought 'that's a bit of a nasty beast'.

"I struggled for weeks to find an identification for this thing until, quite by chance I stumbled across something that looked similar in a Victorian journal.

"Apparently there's not too much ill effect to the fish itself except it's lost its tongue."

Experts at the [University of Southampton](#) confirmed that the creature was an isopod and that there had been several sightings of them in [Cornwall](#) in 1996.

Mr Chambers added: "It doesn't affect humans other than if you do actually come across a live one and try and pick it up - they are quite vicious, they will deliver a good nip."



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
2009 & 2010 Dues

Many of our members have not paid their 2009 dues. It would be appreciated if you could pay them as soon as possible so that I can close out the books for 2009.

Also anyone that wants to pay their 2010 dues can do so. You can then take your tax deduction in 2009.

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

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Alcohol and Stingrays Do Mix, Gear Tips, Alien Jellyfish, 2010 Dues

**We are currently looking for a place to have our 2010
Annual Dinner...**

Any suggestions?
