



Lunarfins Scuba Club

Lily Douglas

August 20th — Video games about Scuba Diving

Did you know that there is a whole world of video games about Scuba Diving?

Here is the upcoming question for our August Lunarfins monthly meet-up: Why play a game on a screen when you could just be underwater in the real world? There are many reasons. Time, money, access, and physical ability are all factors in a person's ability to enjoy the world of scuba, and video games provide an engaging window into that world no matter who you are. There are horror games, action games, and gentle "cozy" games that offer unique virtual underwater experiences that may entice players to take the plunge into the real world of scuba, as is the case with this month's speaker, Lily Douglas. Join her for a tour through the deep and exciting world of underwater video games at our next monthly meeting. There will be science fiction, fantasy, and ancient underwater civilizations to discover. You may even be able to play some games yourself if you come in person!

Lily Douglas is an industrial designer and artist from Asheville, North Carolina. She received a BFA in Industrial Design from the Rhode Island School of Design and has been working at the Center for Design and Space Architecture at Johnson Space Center for 4 years. She has been playing video games ever since her sisters begrudgingly agreed to let her play on their PlayStation 2 in the early 2000s and has enjoyed many games ever since. Lily is a relatively new diver who one day hopes to dive in the ocean, since it seems much nicer than the Texas freshwater lakes she is used to. She currently lives near downtown Houston with her partner, Shafi, and their cat, Chai.

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[pwd=YUtDMkdGdkhzVHRleFdwrfGTOpWL1hTdZ09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83674642772?pwd=YUtDMkdGdkhzVHRleFdwrfGTOpWL1hTdZ09) ID: 836 7464

2772 Passcode: 076802



Lunarfins Board Meetings

are held every other month on the 2nd Thursday of the Month. Our next meet will be on **Sept. 12** if you want to attend contact Brion Saathoff at <brionsaathoff@icloud.com> before 7:00 PM. on day of meeting to get the zoom access code.

It will be a ZOOM Meeting

If you have an item to bring before the board, contact any board member to get on the agenda.

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Annette & Pete Hasbrook,
Mike Peters,
Ja Van Pruett,
Cindy & Tom Reuland,
Brion Saathoff,
Justin Wallace,
Peggy Widaman



Lunarfins
P.O. Box 57514
Webster, TX
77598-7514



Membership

2024 Membership dues are now being accepted from **April 1st, 2024 to March 31st 2025**

“The renewal form and dues payment is required as soon as possible prior to April 1.

Please bring the form (below) to the next meeting or mail it in.

Please fill in all fiANelds completely so that records can be verified this time around.

Don't forget to check your interest (s) and if you want to be included in the directory.

Membership Application

<https://www.lunarfins.com/>



Events Calendar

(Tentative plans)

Aug. 20th. — General Meeting Lily Douglas — Video Game in Scuba Diving

Aug. 24th.— Bay Area Divers Scuba Poker Run (p.11)

**Sept. 17th — General Meeting — Robert Iching Yin
"Still Diving "**

Sept. 14th. — Beach Party (p.11)

**Oct. 15th — General Meeting — Dan Tirtowidjojo—
“Diving in Raja Ampat”**

Oct. TBA — Get-to-gather Tookie's Seafood

**Nov. 19th. — General Meeting — Jim Ritterhoff
— Marine conservation deployments FORCE BLUE**

**Dec. 1st. — Annual Christmas Party — Opus Grill—
5 pm (p.25)**

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Brion Saathoff
Vice President	Ja Van Pruett
Secretary	Frances Boutin
Treasurer	Cathy Straham
Social Director	Mike Peters

APPOINTED

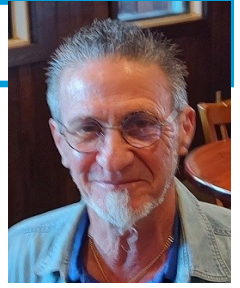
Media Manager	Dennis Deavenport
Training information	Jessica Lee
Trip information	PJ Campagna
	Jessica Lee
TGCC Representative	Tom Burns
Advisor	Dennis Deavenport
Advisor	PeeWee Dwire
Advisor	Mike Peters
Newsletter	Ja Van Pruett
Website	Tom Burns

**Do you have
any ideas for
event or**

**Topics for
Speakers for
2024?**

**Please share
them with
any of our
officers.**

Lunarfin's President's Notes



Hello Lunarfin's,

I hope everything went well with any repairs and cleanup from Beryl.

Mammoth lake took a pretty big hit and Jason had damage to his house also, there is a Go Fund Me site on the Mammoth Face book page that Ed Kelleher with SDI, (Scuba Divers International) has started if anyone is interested in helping out, Jason is very involved in our local community.

It was a mad rush to help people get their services rebuilt and electrical repairs before we headed out to Manilla nine days later. When we arrived there, it seemed like we had jumped out of the pan and into the fire as we now found ourselves in the target zone for super storm Gaemi, fortunately for us the flight to Dumaguete picked us up two days before the storm hit.

The seas were chopped up at the Azores resort for the first part of the week, but it did not keep us out of the water (getting on the tenders were a little challenging at times).

It was a great adventure, good friends, new friends, awesome diving, and a well-run operation.

I hope you can join us on Tuesday August 20 at Southshore Grille for a presentation by our own Lily Douglas on video games about Scuba diving, it will be an interesting way to keep oneself involved in our sport when we can't be out there in person, it's always a pleasure to see her smiling face at the meetings.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the Bay Area Divers scuba poker run at Mammoth Lake on Saturday August the 24 it sounds like a lot of fun and a great opportunity to dive and visit with folks/friends that we don't get to see very often. All contest fees will be donated to the ACWA, American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation, this is a GCCA sanctioned event, I hope you can join me there. if you did not fill out a waiver online at the spring checkout dive then you will need to do it before you get there.

"Great news", for those of you that don't frequent the Kemah area around Toookie's, as I came home from taking Micah back to east Texas on Sunday, I found the new 146 bridge open, and it looked like the traffic below was much better. As this area is a favorite haunt for our Lunarfin's family it is a blessing to not have to worry about that traffic nightmare. Have a great month see you soon.

Fins up, (please)

Best Regards,
Brion Saathoff
2024-2025 President!



**Happy Birthday! to
anyone that has
a birthday this month!
May your day be wonderful!**



Our General Meeting — South Shore Grille

Be sure to check out their menu

<https://soshoregrille.com/league-city-south-shore-grille-food-menu>

August 20th., 6:00pm

Come at 6pm—and order, 6:30—announcements & social

Speakers start at 7:00 pm

2800 Marina Bay Dr. League City TX 77573

Lunarfin's Raffle — Let's Make Some Money

Lunarfin's will be offering raffle items at meetings. Tickets will be very reasonable and the items raffled off will be interesting and worth having. The first raffle was a 16" x 20" print donated by Dennis Deavenport. It is mounted on foam board or Gator Board and ready to frame. Dennis is donating lots of his photo's. Each month will be a great item. Bring a few extra dollars to the meeting to help Lunarfin's make some money.

Your friendly Board of Directors

New Product NEWS —To protect your skin

Safe Sea Jellyfish Sting-Blocking Sunscreen, SPF 50+ Lotion 4oz, Waterproof, Biodegradable, Coral Reef-Safe – Body and Face Sunscreen, Anti-Jellyfish and Sea-Lice sting protection.

- **LONG-LASTING AND WATERPROOF** – Rely on Safe Sea sunscreen for guaranteed protection. Safe Sea is very water-resistant, You don't need to re-apply so often as in other sunscreens.
- **CARE FOR CORAL** – Protect your skin and safeguard the ocean with your reef safe sunblock, Safe Sea. This biodegradable, Oxybenzone and Octinoxate free sunscreen do not harm marine life, unlike other popular brands.

Can be found on Amazon.



About our Members

Prayers are Needed

Peggy Widaman

Peggy lives in Ft. Worth, and she use to come down every year for our Christmas party, her brother was Randy Widaman, he passed in 2021. There is a reef named after him. We need prayers for Peggy, in late December, she was at ER when she called, they told her she needed to see an oncologist right away. Well, it's took 3 months to get her started on Chemo. Peggy had a mass in her Colon, and they have to reduce it before surgery. Peggy was in the hospital for 2 week having surgery and has been back in the hospital several times since then. Now the doctors are taken her off of Chemo and given her time to enjoy the rest of her life. We are planning a trip to New Orleans, originally we were going to visit some of my family, plans changed.



This was taken in 2011 when Karen won this award.

Karen Clark

I am 70 ½ and have had a wonderful full life! Got certified as a diver around 1967, dove the Galveston offshore rigs frequently, Stetson Bank and the Flower Gardens usually in our 30 ft sailboat FREENEASY. Made around 10 offshore races to Vera Cruz and Isla Maheras and took our time cruising back. Raced FREENEASY many times in Galveston Bay, had many Lunarbins parties on the old Redfish Island. Needless to say, I was out in the sun a lot. So, I am very lucky to only have cancer surface now.

Some of you may recall when we were supposed to have a Lunarbins party on the Texas City dike recently. The morning activities ran late closing the dike to us. Our party moved to a nearby park. Those there may remember I keep disappearing to our van. I felt terrible. At 5PM I got a call saying my 3rd neck biopsy showed cancer. Monday when I was able to call doctor office was told could not schedule surgery for

3 weeks. Said NOT acceptable in too much pain. The surgeon called me 5pm Tuesday and told me to come 8AM and he would work me in. Feel sorry for those scheduled as he spent much time with me which made it a very late day. When the surgeon came back for a 3rd time as cancer tests showed still present took more out but said he had to stop as my right side at high risk for paralysis. 30 minutes later I could barely lift my right leg and arm. Asked if it would improve and he said probably not. Well while he was attending to other patients for the next 2 hours, I prayed to everyone dead and lots of friends. Worked. My right arm cannot be lifted much past the shoulder, but I can live with that. The surgeon got me as a patient in MD Anderson where I have chemo for a year. Hopefully the last one this Dec.

Since then, I have had around 6 skin cancers removed by a local surgeon with one to go. Hopefully no more will appear. George went in with me for many of my surgeon visits and he noted suspicious places on George's body for cancer. Since then, he has had several removed. George is ecstatic after a recent nose surgery which on the 3rd attempt to get all cancer had an explosion of blood. Very messy but now George can BREATHE easily.

About our Members

Dennis Deavenport & Brion Saathoff



About our Members (Continued)

The last day of our HUPS Atlantis Resort and Atlantis Azores dive trip. Along the way our 16 met some great people, saw amazing things like thresher sharks, whale sharks, a scary tiger shark, and more strange creatures than you can believe.



Thresher sharks are magnificent, beautiful and other worldly creatures. They are shy and rare. We are very lucky to have seen them. They used to be seen at Monad shoal but are now at Kimud shoal. Amazing! View in horizontal wide format. [#threshershark](#) [#kimudshoal](#) [#monadshoal](#)



Dennis Deavenport - It's always a special time when a new 'best friend' shows up in my life. Brion is that constant ray of sunshine wherever he goes. Sitting with him right now in the Mabuhay hospitality lounge in Manila after two weeks of diving in Dumaguete, the Philippines. On our way back home.



About our Members (Continued)

Pete and Annette Hasbrook & Cindy & Tom Reuland

July 19th, NAL-JSC had a great Apollo 11 55th Anniversary Social. Annette and I were extremely fortunate to have a rockstar Apollo panel discussion composed of Apollo astronaut, Fred Haise, Apollo Flight Director Gene Kranz, and Apollo EECOM (Emergency, Environmental, and Consumables) Officer, Bill Moon, who happens to be the first minority to work in Mission Control. Lots of fun stories and pearls of wisdom shared. One tidbit of info from Gene Kranz for folks who are interested in getting more stories is the suggestion to check out Flight jacket night stories that the Smithsonian has available on YouTube. These are lectures/stories where the featured speakers are accomplished leaders in aviation and spaceflight. Pretty neat!



Cindy & Thomas Reuland

Tom enjoyed talking with 5-time former NASA astronaut Bonnie Dunbar at the ICES 2024 conference. We both worked at Rockwell International Space Systems Division in Downey, CA in the 1980's. That was the design center for the space shuttle. 7/24/24



About our Members (Continued)

Justin Wallace

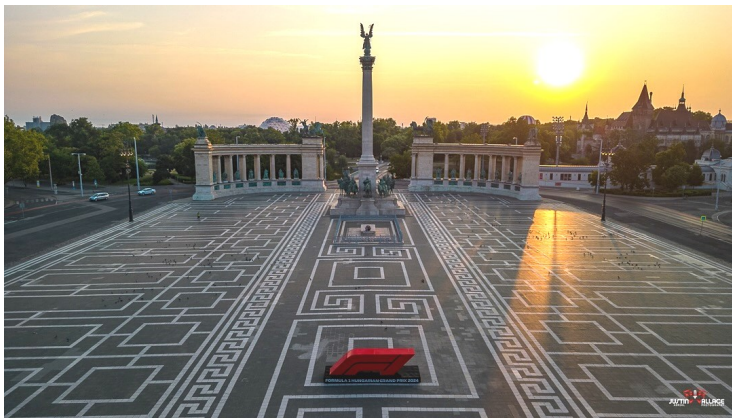
and where is he today? Trip started July 17th?



7-17 Frankfurt Germany



Dreikönigskirche (Frankfurt am Main).



7-19 — 7-27 Budapest, Hungary



*7-20 -F1 Grand Prix, Hungaroring,
Budapest*

About our Members (Continued)

Justin Wallace



7-20—7-27—F1 Grand Prix, Hungaroring, Budapest—Another mission accomplished!



7-23 is with Carl Grenz in Budapest, Hungary.



7-25 Bratislava, Slovakia



2526 Bratislava, Slovakia

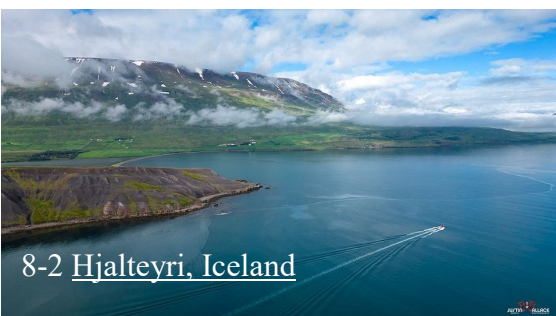
7-29 Salzburg, Austria · Râmnicu Vâlcea, Romania



7-27 Hohensalzburg Castle, Salzburg, Austria



8-1 Hvolsvöllur, Iceland-Seljalandsfoss



8-2 Hjalteyri, Iceland



8-3 Hjalteyri, Iceland - Wolffish of Arnarnesstrýtur



8-11 Akurey, Rangarvallasysla, Iceland

Bay Area Divers Sanctioned Scuba Poker Fundraiser

Bay Area Divers Scuba Poker Fundraiser

**Benefitting the American Charitable
Watersport Activities Foundation.**

August 24, 2024

10:30 AM to 2:30 PM

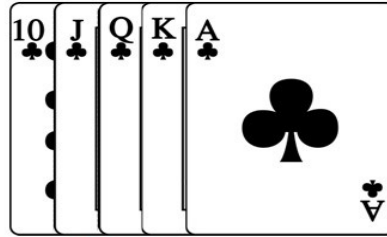
Mammoth Lake, Lake Jackson, TX

Entry Fee* \$15.00

\$5.00 for B.A.D. members

*Park Admission not included

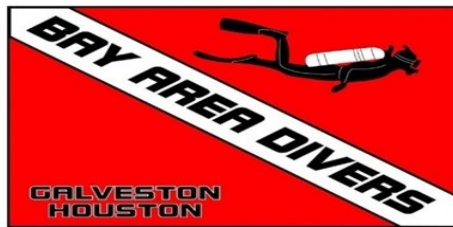
All contest entry fees and contributions will be donated to ACWA



- Diving
- Games
- Prizes
- Food



Visit bayareadivers.org
for more information



Beach Party— Texas City Dike

Sept. 14rd @ 10:00AM

Hello everyone! Just a quick note to let everyone know about the Beach Party. It will be Saturday, Lunarfin's is supplying water & drinks. Don't forget to bring your chairs, umbrellas & lunch



Shipwreck Discovered in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary: *Star of the Sea* foundered in

July 2, 2024 —*Researched by Editor*

The **Star of the Sea** was a schooner built in Bath, Maine in 1887 and originally named the Katie J. Barrett. In 1890, the ship was rebuilt after grounding in Nauset, Massachusetts and renamed the Star of the Sea. In October 1911, the ship ran aground at French Reef in the Florida Keys while carrying lumber from Pensacola during stormy weather. Initial reports said the ship was only lightly grounded and could be saved, but this was not the case. The shipwreck's remains today consist of the metal fittings used in its construction, as the wooden hull is no longer visible.

On February 15, 1890, the four-masted schooner 'Katie J. Barrett' was driven ashore on Cape Cod. The 964-ton ship had been built at Bath, Maine by William T. Donnell just three years earlier. She was sailing off Nauset, Massachusetts when ferocious winds pushed her well up on the sand of an offshore bar. Although the schooner was only a short distance from the Orleans Life-Saving Station, the waves were too rough for a lifeboat to be launched. The wreck was also too far to be reached by line shot from their gun. The surfmen hurried into Orleans harbor and launched a boat from the Humane Society house. [The Humane Society in those days rescued stranded mariners not cats and dogs.] They managed to get out over the harbor bar where waves were not breaking as badly. Captain Angus McLeod and his crew of nine were nearly exhausted but taken safely ashore. Katie J. Barrett lay on the beach for another seven months before the wreck was purchased by Boston parties. Using strong tugs working at extremely high tides, the schooner was worked offshore. She was kept afloat by filling her hold with empty casks. Katie J. Barrett was towed to Boston and rebuilt. She came out of the yards now renamed 'Star of the Sea'. Unfortunately, the gods of the sea take what they want. On October 26, 1911, the schooner was again driven ashore. This time by a hurricane in the Florida Keys. She was abandoned and became a total wreck. The attached image is a photo from the archives of the Penobscot Marine Museum showing Katie J. Barrett aground at the southerly end of Nauset Inlet.



This boiler is a feature that helped narrow the identification of the wreck to Star of the Sea.



Brenda Altmeier/NOAA Gayle Patrick, an architect by trade, will create a final itemap of the wreck area from individual sketches

A new shipwreck has been identified in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, thanks to the help of 18 instructors and advocates from the nonprofit organization [Diving With a Purpose](#), who joined NOAA researchers to document the site at French Reef off of Key Largo.

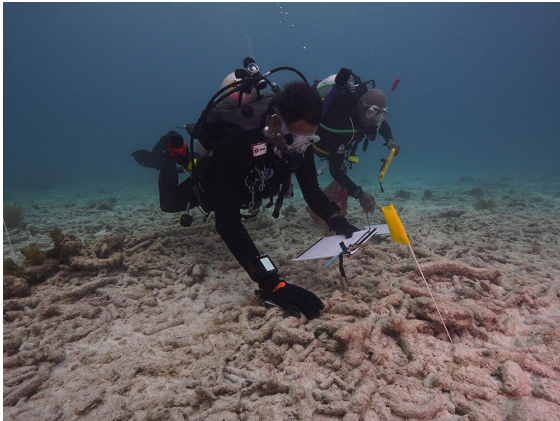
The four-masted *Star of the Sea* was carrying lumber from Pensacola, Florida when it grounded at French Reef in the Florida Keys in October 1911. Using historical records, sanctuary researchers identified the names of almost a dozen ships that wrecked on French Reef in the 19th and 20th centuries, corresponding with the general time frame of artifacts found there. Detailed recording by the Diving With a Purpose team revealed several artifacts, including the remains of rigging and a steam boiler, which most closely matched what would be found on a large schooner. The only vessel of this kind lost at French Reef was *Star of the Sea*, which was built in Bath, Maine in 1887, and was originally named *Katie J. Barrett*.

"The wreck is largely unknown to the current Keys community," said Sanctuary Maritime Archaeologist Matthew Lawrence. "It's not in a spot where most people dive, snorkel, or fish, even though it is easily accessible. It's great to bring an unknown story back to life, with a touchstone like a shipwreck to give it physical presence."

Diving With a Purpose members practiced taking measurements of a mock wreck site on land before going into the field. Photo: Brenda Altmeier/NOAA

Shipwreck Discovered in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary:

Star of the Sea foundered in 1911 (Continued)



Diving With a Purpose members practiced taking measurements of a mock wreck site on land before going into the field. Photo: Brenda Altmeier/NOAA

Divers working the wreck came to the Florida Keys from as far away as South Africa for the week-long activity, which began with extensive land-based training. The Diving With a Purpose team was half composed of instructors or instructors in training who had experience in underwater mapping, while the other half had never done this kind of work before. Divers were divided into teams assigned to a specific section of the shipwreck, making dozens of sketches and hundreds of measurements that will soon produce a detailed, site map drawing (stay tuned to the [Florida Keys shipwrecks page](#)).

The wreck site, scattered across 250 feet in 20 feet of water, has also been digitized into a [3D model](#) from more than 2,500 individual images. The shipwreck is one of more than 800 historical sites [located within sanctuary waters](#). It is nicknamed the "Cable Wreck" due to the snarled pile of wire rope rigging at the site.

The team took hundreds of measurements on the Key Largo site. Photo: Matthew Lawrence/NOAA



Photo:

to: Diving With a Purpose

Diving With a Purpose is a [long-time partner of the National Marine Sanctuary System](#). Congratulations and thank you to the team that worked on the mapping project for *Star of the Sea*!

One of the goals of the National Marine Sanctuary System is to provide opportunities for people to learn about our nation's maritime heritage through experiencing it themselves. Historical sites within Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary are open to diving and snorkeling. Please help conserve our maritime heritage and do not damage or remove historical resources. If you discover a historical resource within Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, do not disturb it. Instead, make note of where you found it and then [provide this information to sanctuary staff](#). Be a good steward; take only pictures and leave only bubbles.

New artefacts found on 'holy grail of shipwrecks' off Colombia



The Colombian government has started exploring a sunk 18th Century Spanish galleon dubbed the “holy grail of shipwrecks”. The South American nation has also declared a protected archaeological area around the San José galleon. New artefacts have been uncovered on the 18th Century Spanish galleon dubbed the “holy grail of shipwrecks” off the coast of Colombia.

The San José ship belonged to the Spanish Navy and was sunk by the British in 1708 as it was heading to Colombia's port city Cartagena loaded with tons of gold and silver coins.

The shipwreck was discovered at a secret location in 2015 but the first robotic exploration only began in May 2024. It is estimated to be laden with as much as £16bn. As of today, at 06:00AM UTC sixteen billion vn dongs is equal to **\$635,599.91 (USD)** in treasure.

The researchers said the latest haul is an "unprecedented set of archaeological evidence". Among the new finds are an anchor, glass bottles and a bedpan, according to a statement from the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History.

The ship, whose ownership remains contested, was carrying one of the largest amounts of valuables ever to have been lost at sea when it was attacked just outside of the Colombian city of Cartagena. It is carrying chests of emeralds and some 200 tons of gold coins.

At the time, the vessel had been transporting its precious cargo to the Spanish king to help pay for his war against the British. Almost 600 crew members went down with it in the Caribbean Sea.

"Results of this exploration have revealed an institution set of archaeological evidence, which has greatly expanded our knowledge," the institution in charge of exploring the wreck said in a statement.

Alhena Caicedo, the director of the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History, said it included "a series of new materials that we hadn't seen before".

"Among other things, pieces of wood or parts of the ship's hull, at least remnants indicating that there was wood there, and traces of possible anchors," she said. "Other types of items found include nails, bottles, jars and some different materials like glass and ceramics."

The Colombia President Gustavo Petro has made recovering the shipwreck a priority before his term in charge ends in 2026. But there is an ongoing debate over who owns the treasure.

Spain claims the San José is a "ship of state" as it belonged to the Spanish navy when it was sunk and its contents are protected under a UN convention Colombia is not party to. But indigenous Qhara Qhara Bolivians claim the riches were stolen from them. And US-based salvage company Sea Search Armada has taken Colombia to the UN's Permanent Court of Arbitration, seeking £7.8bn is equal to **\$8,541,888,655.39 (USD)**, over claims it first discovered the vessel more than 40 years ago.

The first stage of the research project - described as a "characterisation phase" - will use remote sensors to generate images of the site to build an inventory of the archaeological material on the seabed.

Underwater robots will also take readings around the shipwreck, which will be used to inform academic studies, the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History said.

Subsequent phases will depend on what comes to light in this first phase of the project, it added.



Coral Disease at Flower Garden Banks

Tissue Samples Show Coral Disease at Flower Garden Banks is Not Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease

June 24, 2024

During a monitoring cruise from August 30-September 2, 2022, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary and National Coral Reef Monitoring Program divers observed a coral disease outbreak at East and West Flower Garden Banks. Initial analysis showed that symptoms were similar to the dreaded Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) affecting reefs in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, including lesions and tissue loss.

Over the following months, divers enacted an emergency action plan to treat corals with antibiotics, photograph impacted corals, document their locations, and collect samples and other data. Coral disease experts then began reviewing this information to either confirm or rule out the presence of SCTLD and guide the next steps.



Sanctuary staff treated diseased corals with an antibiotic paste, which was placed around the edges of disease areas to try and prevent the disease from spreading. Photo: Kelly O'Connell/NOAA

Many coral diseases can be similar in appearance, which makes diagnosis difficult. So, scientists have been hard at work trying to develop a [case definition for SCTLD](#), which would clearly identify specific characteristics of the disease and how it can be diagnosed. This means looking beyond the outward characteristics of diseased corals and examining the histology, a microscopic study of the

coral tissues.

Thanks to all of this hard work, we can now say that the disease outbreak at East and West Flower Garden Banks was not SCTLD. The tissue samples from the diseased Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary corals did not match the case definition. The assumption now is that the 2022 disease outbreak

was a form of white plague disease. As yet, there is no case definition for white plague disease, but there is hope that this can be developed using previously preserved samples from past outbreaks of the disease.

A diseased brain coral observed in Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary during the initial disease outbreak in September 2022. Photo: NOAA/NCRMP



The Good News: White plague disease is not as lethal or as quick-spreading as SCTLD.

The Bad News: Any disease outbreak is a sign that things aren't what they should be on the

reef.

More About Coral Diseases

With names like white plague, white pox, black band, dark spot, and yellow band, it's clear that coral diseases are named for their appearances—but, what else do we know about them? [NOAA's Coral Disease Health Consortium website](#) goes into the details.

Coral Disease at Flower Garden Banks (Continued)

Oldest Recorded Rhodoliths Discovered in Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

April 23, 2024

Rhodoliths at a depth of 338 feet (103 meters) were collected by the remotely operated vehicle *Mohawk* from a tilefish pile at Elvers Bank in September 2022. Photo: NOAA/UNCW

Oldest recorded what? Rhodoliths. hey're colorful calcareous nodules of coralline red algae that form around marine rubble (e.g., shells, corals, and rocks), and they are important for structure and three-dimensional habitat in marine environments. Other organisms like corals, clams, scallops, and algae attach to rhodoliths, and they provide refuge for the early growth stages of commercially important fishes.

Sarah Olmstead, a master's thesis student at The University of Alabama has [discovered what appear to be the oldest documented rhodoliths](#) to date, and they were found at East Flower Garden Bank and Elvers Bank at [mesophotic depths](#) (about 130 to 490 feet) in Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, located in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico. The oldest rhodoliths found in this study were from Elvers Bank, and were found to have nucleation points that formed roughly 9,500 to 14,800 years before present. That

A large, fused rhodolith collected from Elvers Bank at 338 feet (103 meters). Photo: Sarah Olmstead/University of Alabama

In addition to the old age of these rhodoliths, the study also shows that they grew slowly and took so long to get to their current sizes, that any major ecological damage to the area would make it impossible for them to recover within human timescales. Olmstead's findings drive home the importance of protecting such habitats from possible human harm. While these rhodoliths are found within protected parts of the national marine sanctuary, there are still many rhodolith beds that exist outside of current sanctuary boundaries.



[NOAA scientists report mass die-off of invertebrates at East Banks](#)



Sport divers on the *M/V Fling*, diving in the Gulf of Mexico 100 miles offshore of Texas and Louisiana, were stunned to find green, hazy water, huge patches of ugly white mats coating corals and sponges, and dead animals littering the bottom on the East Flower Garden Bank, a reef normally filled with color and marine life. The reef, which is part of [Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary](#), is considered one of the healthiest anywhere in the region.

Divers Found a 3,000-Year-Old Statue at the Bottom of a Lake—With Fresh Human Fingerprints

It might have been used in some kind of ritual.

Sent in by Mike Peters

At the underwater archaeology site of Gran Carro di Bolsena in Aiola, Italy, divers found an ancient clay figurine pegged to be from the 9th or 10th century BC.

The ritualistic-looking item was discovered within what was once the residential area of the stilted town.

Experts hope the rudimentary statuette gives them a better understanding of Italian life in the Iron Age.

A clay figurine has spent millennia incomplete, waiting at the bottom of a lake for its long-dead craftsman to finish the Iron Age-era statuette.

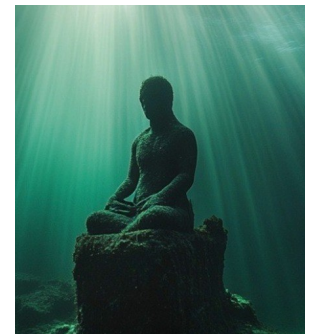
During work at the underwater archaeological site of Gran Carro di Bolsena in Aiola, Italy, researchers pulled the rudimentary clay creation from the volcanic Lake Bolsena. The unfinished clay figure of a woman, dating from between the 10th and 9th centuries BC, looks more like a first draft than a ready-made piece of art. But just because the clay worker didn't fully finish the figurine doesn't mean there aren't plenty of clues available to show how it fits into Italian life in the Iron Age.

The feminine-looking, palm-sized statuette is so fresh that it “still shows the marks of the fingerprints” of its maker, according to a translated statement from the Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts, and Landscape, part of Italy's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, and the imprint of a plot of fabric under the chest offers the best sign that the figurine was likely “dressed” at one point.

Cultural heritage experts say the figurine is reminiscent of something they'd normally discover in funerary finds, but the divers working at the site found this statuette in what was once a residential area. Still, it could have offered ritual uses, whether as a domestic piece or associated with a home of rituals within the residential core.

The Underwater Archaeology Service team gets credit with the discovery, but preserving the find and bringing it back to the surface came thanks to the Italian Cultural Property Restoration team working with government divers.

The volcanic rich area Gran Carro di Bolsena has a bit of an unknown history. Divers have helped to start piecing together that history, which wasn't really on the archaeological radar until 1991 when researchers showed that the pile of shapeless stones that make up Aiola are linked to the presence of hot thermal water springs, and that wooden poles and ceramic fragments on the southwest side of the lake tie to the early Iron Age. There may be at least four other similar, albeit smaller, rock formations in the same lake, showing the power of the springs that spew gas and minerals in temperatures as hot as 40°C.



American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation



2024 Supporter Registration

The “American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation” (ACWA) was established by SCUBA divers on March 31, 2023. ACWA is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public non-profit charity. Staffed by non-paid volunteers, ACWA’s administrative and donation support is provided annually by members of our community.

Supporter Registration for the “American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation” (ACWA) is open to Dive Clubs and Individuals who reside in the United States of America. 2024 registration is \$20.

“Supporters” on record for 2023 are listed on a “Supporter Master List” and need not complete this form. They continue their charity efforts with their 2024 payment of \$20 to ACWA’s treasurer - Mark Leiserowitz (contact information listed below).

New “Supporters” need to complete this form to provide ACWA with contact and IRS reporting information. To join as an individual (must be a certified scuba diver, or a member of a dive club) - fill out the application below. Please print legibly as e-mail addresses will be utilized to keep supporters abreast with the charity’s status and your name as identified below, used in any future donation reporting required by you or the IRS.

Dive Club _____

or

Certifying Agency: _____ C-Card Number: _____

Make Checks Payable To: **ACWA, c/o Mark Leiserowitz, 5205 De Milo Dr., Houston, Texas 77092**

Name: _____ Phone / Cell Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

2024 TGCC MEMORIAL COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP



The Texas Gulf Coast Council of Diving Clubs (TGCC) plans to award one College scholarships (1 @ \$500) during 2024. This scholarship is given in memory of Jack Allyn, John Anderson, Soodabeh O. Babcock, Randy Gray, Mike Griggs, Greg Grimes, Jean Himes, Anne Millioud, Clint (Dwight) Moore, Richard Mork, John Petty, Cynthia Ann Ramsey, Jackie Reid, Mary Lou Reid, John Ringrose, Wanda Roark, Peter Schmidt, Katie Springs, Margie M. Straight, Frank Strausborger, Michael Szewczyk, Randy Widaman, Ted Wimprine, Kenneth Young and Dick Zingula; deceased members of our dive community. It is also awarded in recognition for support of the TGCC Scholarship Program by Rodney Dwire, Alicia Grimes, the Houston Underwater Club, the Houston Underwater Photographic Society, Linda Petty and Russell Ramsey. The purpose of this award is to support the members who support the dive clubs in the Texas Gulf Coast area. The award will be paid by TGCC directly to the college towards tuition.

This year we had six (6) exceptional applicants. Two representing HUPS, one from CHUM, and three from Lunarfins. Their credentials included such things as being a certified diver; having grades and extract circular histories of such caliber that their college provides some financial support; having unique linguistic skills; strong technical majors; to demonstrating both athletic and academic excellence.

TGCC's 2024 Scholarship application stated that "The Texas Gulf Coast Council of Diving Clubs (TGCC) plans to award one College scholarships (1 @ \$500) during 2024". However, once the review was underway the Council decided all applicants warranted support from the dive community. Each will receive a \$500 award. This was based upon:

- ☐ The strength of their applications.
- ☐ The outstanding credentials of the new college freshman applicants.
- ☐ Our desire to support promising students
- ☐ Our desire to support our member clubs; their members, children and grandchildren.

The selection of our scholarship award recipients; and the review of their accomplishments, hopes and dreams is a highpoint in this Diving Council's year. Our scholarship awards are an investment in our community's future.

The following awards were made and will be sent to their respective schools:
Recipient Amount Club Club Member School

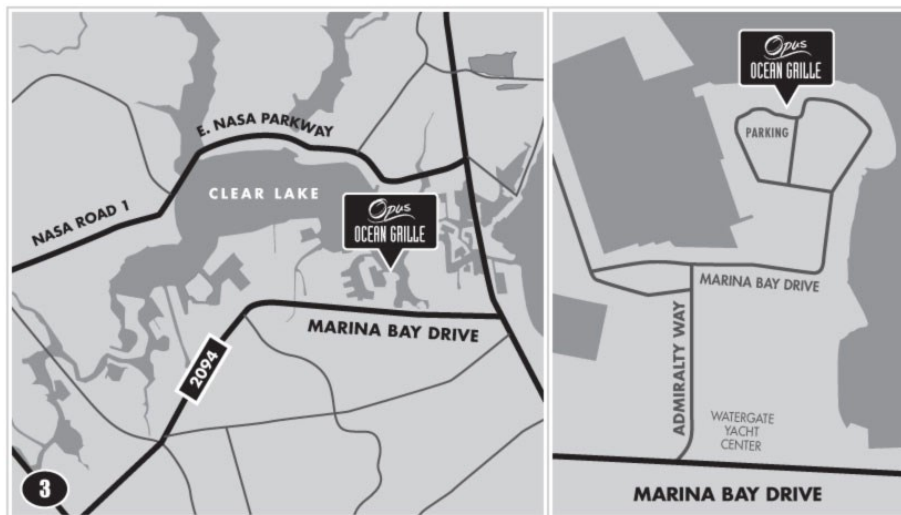
Tamra Saam	\$500	CHUM	Tamra Sam	University of Houston (Downtown)
Charles Moran	\$500	HUPS	Russell Ramsey	University of the South (Sewanee)
Zoe Haws	\$500	HUPS	Joe Haws	St. Mary's University
Kimberly Sanders	\$500	Lunarfins	Bob & Christine Sanders	Occidental College
Elizabeth Gorman	\$500	Lunarfins	John Gorman, Jr.	Cornell University
William Kochan	\$500	Lunarfins	Mike & Mary Smith	University of Arkansas

TGCC personally thank each of you, and your clubs, for the support you've given the Council and its Memorial College Scholarship program.

2024 NASA Lunarfins Christmas Party

December 1, 2024

5:00PM, Second Floor



OPUS OCEAN GRILLE

1510 Marina Bay Drive, Building 124

Clear Lake Shores, Texas 77565

Opus Ocean Grille offers a variety of your favorite fresh seafood dishes; from oysters on the half shell, Alaskan King Crab, Chilean Sea Bass and much more!

Located within the Watergate Yachting Center in Clear Lake Shores, our waterfront dining experience makes for a perfect brunch, or evening out with Friends and family.

Be sure to bring a White Elephant Gift

I need a good head count by November 28th.

Please RSVP: Ja Van Pruett, text or email

281-229-8631 or caladyfish@yahoo.com

<http://www.opusoceangrille.com/>

Go check out the menu and pictures.

The Lunarfins Scuba Club was organized in 1963 by a small group of divers who worked at the Manned Spacecraft Center, as Johnson Space Center (JSC) was known back then. The club grew primarily through the sponsorship of SCUBA training classes, local dive trips and social activities. Since that time, membership has broadened to include anyone interested in diving. The majority of our members are in some way affiliated with NASA but this is not a requirement for membership and we have members from all across the board.



Lunarfins

P.O. Box 57514
Webster TX 77598-7514

281-851-5206

webeditor@lunarfins.com

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/687047211312336>

Website:

<https://www.lunarfins.com/>

TGCC

<https://www.tgccdive.org/>

TPWD reefs:

https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/habitats/artificial_reef/



You should have been at Mom Alone Mexican Restaurant



RSVP is an initialism derived from the French phrase "Répondez s'il vous plaît", meaning "Please respond", to require confirmation of an invitation. The initialism "RSVP" is no longer used much in France, where it is considered formal and old-fashioned. [Wikipedia](#)

We have an event set aside from our meeting. We would like for our members to please respond. We will have some kind of get together away from our meeting each month. PLEASE LET US KNOW. We had reversed the July event for 15 people and only 6 called and came.

Trips Offered by Dive Shops etc.

Captain Beard Charters

1011 Casco Rd – Freeport TX

captainbeardcharters.com/index.shtml



Island Dreams

10245 Kempwood Dr E119 – Houston TX

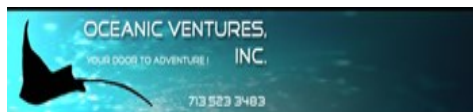
www.divetrip.com



Oceanic Ventures

5808 Newcastle Dr. – Houston TX

oceanicventures.com



REEF Trips

Dive Vacations That Count – Key Largo FL

reef.org/trips



Texas Dive Center

364 FM 1959 #D – Houston TX

txdivecenter.com/



Giggin' Marlin Dive & Swim

4502 Almeda Rd – Houston TX

gigginmarlin.com



Maximum Scuba

134 Gulf Freeway North – League City TX

maximum-scuba.com



Outside The Asylum

15015 Westheimer Rd #H – Houston TX

otadiving.com



Sport Divers

20814 Gulf Fwy #60 – Webster TX

sportdivers.com



Texas Scuba Adventures

2315 Mechanic St #120 – Galveston TX

texasscubaadventures.com