

The
Adventurers' Club News®

Volume 55

June 2011

Number 6



Photo – Virgin Oceanic

***Deep Flight Challenger – Virgin Oceanic's
Full-ocean-depth Minisub***

The Adventurers' Club News

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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE*Larry Schutte #1121 - President*

I mentioned this at the Chris Welsh meeting, but I'll say it again. How about' those Navy Seals? Yea baby! We don't care what

version of the story finally ends up as the official record. It takes large "huevos" to drop into hostile territory in those modified Black Hawks. I'm just reading about the canine, Cairo, who was instrumental in helping with the mission. He was wearing a \$25,000 bulletproof vest. Now that's what I call tax dollars well spent!

As I write this, Ralph Perez, #1150, is on the PCT near Big Bear Lake. He blogs that the rain is a minor problem but confidence is high! Good luck Ralph. Do it to it!

Bill Burke, #1157, is at the North Col on the China side of Everest at 23,000 feet. The weather broke, so the Chinese fixed new summit lines. Burke is feeling confident. They should be at camp 2 by the 19th, and then to the summit.

[Ed. Note: Bill was forced to turn back to site 3.]

In my opinion, it's been a phenomenal year at our club. The presenta-

tions have been outstanding, attendance has been up, and the camaraderie has been excellent. Congratulations to Manny Gomes, #1151. This stuff takes a lot of coordination, especially when you have a business and a life to run at the same time!

New members are bringing a refreshing dynamic to the club and there are several more guys in the process of membership who I know will embellish our club and our values in the correct manner.

June will start out with a joint meeting with The California Wreck Divers featuring Wilf Blum who owns Deep Blue Marine, a shipwreck salvage company. Should be a good one.

Thanks to Tom Oedy #1113 for the lead. Consult the web calendar page for the rest of the month. It's all good!!

I'm seeing on the latest P&L Statement that there is still a balance of seven thousand dollars in outstanding dues. Please take care of this at your earliest convenience. As you know, dues are the lifeblood of the club. If you can, give a little more. Even though I'm exempt from dues, I chipped in \$500.00 this year instead of the usual \$350.00, and it felt really good. Also, as I mentioned in my last post, remember the club in your will. Give some back to the club that provides great programs for you week after week.

Virgin Oceanic and the Challenger Deep

Frederick Gary Hareland (#1138)

The US Census Bureau estimates that there are over 6.92 billion people on Earth. Only 5,000 have climbed Mount Everest the highest mountain on Earth, only about 500 have gone into space, only twelve have walked on the moon – but only two have been to the deepest part of the

Official US Navy Photo



The Trieste – Reached bottom of Challenger Deep on January 23, 1960

ocean, the Challenger Deep at 35,813 feet below the surface of the Pacific. One of those men, Jacques Piccard, died in 2008 at age 86, leaving the other, 79 year old retired submariner, US Navy Captain Don Walsh, Los Angeles Adventurers' Club member #1042.

Photo – Don Walsh



Club member Don Walsh (left) & Jacques Piccard on the bottom at 35,813 ft

Dr. Walsh earned his Ph.D. in Physical Oceanography from Texas A&M University, and is a well-established and respected oceanographer, explorer and marine policy specialist. Walsh was named one of the world's great explorers by *Life Magazine*, and in April 2010 he was bestowed the National Geographic Society's most prestigious honor, the Hubbard Medal. Surely this makes him unique among living persons, but he may soon have to share his uniqueness, if Britain's Sir Richard Branson and California businessman and entrepreneur Chris Welsh have their way.

Photo Virgin Oceanic



Virgin Ocean's Deep Flight Challenger

Under the umbrella of Branson's newly formed Virgin Oceanic, these two men are collaborating with Graham Hawks, designer and builder of *Deep Flight Challenger*. They intend to send *Deep Flight Challenger*, the world's only full-ocean-depth submersible, back to the bottom of Mariana Trench. This is all just fine with Don Walsh, who not only predicted that another person would soon join his

exclusive club, but openly welcomed the possibility. This was a real scoop for Adventure Club members given

Photo Fred Hareland



Don Walsh (foreground) with Richard Demarco, project engineer for 1960s China Lake submersible Moray

to us during Don's last talk to the club on the history of submersibles and deep ocean exploration. So now that the project has been blessed by "Mr. Challenger Deep" himself, let's talk about the challenges that the new team will face.

At this extreme depth the pressure is over 1,000 atmospheres, which represents over 13 million pounds of pressure on the submersible's hemispherical quartz dome. This equals the weight of three space shuttles or 8,000 elephants standing on a Mini-Cooper compact car.

When Don and Jacques made their historic eight-hour round trip in the pressure sphere of the *Trieste* on January 23, 1960, they were riding in a fifty-one-ton high tech elevator known as a bathyscaphe (deep boat). The pressure sphere was supported

by huge floats filled with 22,500 gallons of gasoline, and used releasable lead shot to control decent and ascent. From the bottom, sonar voice communications traveling at one mile per second took seven seconds to reach the surface and an additional seven seconds for the surface response to arrive back at the *Trieste*.

Sir Richard and Chris will be flying one at a time to the bottom in a very high technology underwater vehicle that uses hydrodynamic forces to propel itself down, and, unlike the *Trieste*, it weighs only four tons compared

Photo Virgin Oceanic



Looking much like an aircraft – Virgin Oceanic's Deep Flight Challenger

to the fifty-one ton *Trieste*. It has a fifteen mile range – ten times the range of conventional submersibles, an underwater speed of six knots, and – like an aircraft – three axis maneuverability. Chris refers to it as an underwater FA-18. Controlling this underwater aircraft will be more like playing a video game however, because it uses video game controls in lieu of stick and rudder. Chris, who is an accomplished pilot, says no problem; he can go back to his earlier days of playing video games to fly the sub just fine.

(Virgin Oceanic continued on page 4)

(Virgin Oceanic continued from page 3)



Like other submersibles, *Deep Flight Challenger* consists of pressure hull, floatation, batteries, external electronics, and thrusters. Most of the craft, including the wings, are free flooded to equalize the tremendous pressures, but the pressure hull must remain at one atmosphere to protect its single occupant. This life supporting capsule is a cylindrical carbon fiber composite tube capped on the bottom with a titanium hemisphere and on the top with a clear quartz crystal hemisphere. The pilot is bolted inside this capped

Photo Virgin Oceanic



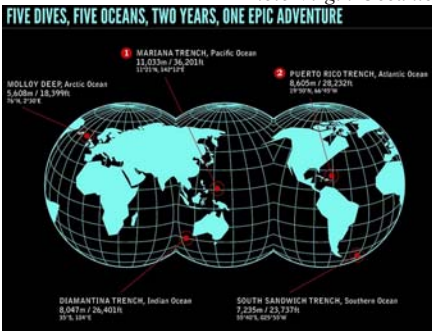
Chris Welsh & Richard Branson atop Deep Flight Challenger

tube which is canted at an upward angle on the surface but can change to a definite down angle while diving. Lest you think that this underwater venture is just for adventure's sake, it must be mentioned that Virgin Oceanic, was formed mainly for human exploration and for scientific research. In fact VO has quite a list of high-profile scientists who are even now inventing, designing, and building various underwater scientific sensors and hardware.

This is not just a one-shot deal. Thereafter, Branson intends to visit the deep spots of all the other oceans: Puerto Rico Trench

at 28,232 feet in the Atlantic, Diamantina Deep at 26,401 feet in the Indian Ocean, South Sandwich Trench at 23,737 feet in the Southern Ocean, and Molloy Deep at 18,399 feet in the Arctic Ocean.

Photo Virgin Oceanic



My friend Gene Hart accompanied me to the May 5, 2011, Los Angeles

Photo Fred Hareland

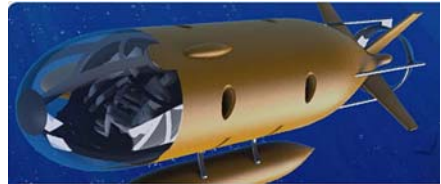


Chris Welsh making nice with the Club Polar Bear

Adventurers' Club weekly meeting in downtown LA. We traveled to their Broadway meeting place to hear Mr. Chris Welsh who is the Chief Pilot for this very impressive Virgin Oceanic project. Chris's talk was most interesting and informative and I look forward to following his progress as the Virgin Oceanic team makes history. Chris was gracious enough to let me to take his photo with "Freddy" the Greeting Polar Bear who said "Ouch!"

[Ed. Note: Virgin Oceanic has two serious competitors, DOER's Project Deepsearch, and Triton Submarines' Triton 36,000. Like Deep Flight Challenger, Deepsearch is a composite vehicle but built along more traditional lines with several observation ports. Triton consists of a transparent glass sphere. Unlike Deep Flight Challenger, both these vehicles can carry more than one passenger.]

Photo DOER



DOER's Deepsearch

Photo Trident Submarines



Triton Submarines' Triton 36,000.

LAKEMBA – the Harry Pidgeon legacy

Ed Boden (#659)

One of the all-time great single-handed world circumnavigators was an American named Harry Pidgeon. He was the second sailor to have sailed around the world alone and the first to have done it twice, both of them aboard a 34-foot Seagoer class yawl named *Islander*. On his third attempt, however, this time with a wife, he came to grief in the New Hebrides Islands when caught at anchor by a typhoon. *Islander* was wrecked beyond repair although Harry and his wife, Margaret, survived the disaster. They returned to Southern California where he built a smaller version of *Islander*, a 26-foot Sea Bird class yawl that he named *Lakemba* after an island in the Lau Group of the Fiji Islands. Harry Pidgeon headed off On The Great Adventure in 1954 at 85 years old.

My sailing started in 1952 when I purchased a 15-foot sloop that was kept at the Fleitz

Brothers Marina in San Pedro, CA. Harry Pidgeon's *Lakemba* was tied up at the California Yacht Anchorage, just across a narrow channel from where my little sloop was tied up. One of my real regrets is that I never got around to his boat to pay my respects before he passed away. Procrastination won another round.

By 1962, I had acquired enough sailing self-confidence to begin my own single-handed circumnavigation and traveled to Europe where I purchased a 25-foot Vertue sloop. I renamed her *Kittiwake*. She had been strongly constructed of wood in 1952 by an excellent boatbuilder on the south coast of England and was equipped with a small, two-stroke, two-cylinder gasoline engine. *Kittiwake* was such a handy little vessel under sail that I rarely used the en-

gine other than the time that it took to cross France by river and canal with



Harry Pidgeon aboard *Islander* after his second circumnavigation. (George Bonnell)

Photo CZ Martin



Harry Pidgeon on the *Islander*

the mast down and secured on deck. To say that the engine was troublesome is a kindness so, after the transit through the Panama Canal, I removed the engine in Balboa and gave it away. From that point, *Kittiwake* was pure sailboat.

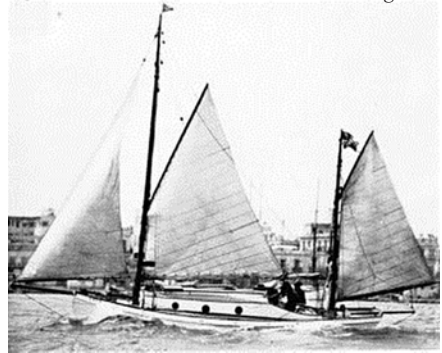
By November of 1967 I had sailed halfway around the globe and had arrived in New Zealand. One port-of-call at was Whangerei, about twenty miles up a narrow, twisting river. With a fair wind (“fair” to a sailor is a wind from behind), that would not be a problem and working sailing craft had made the passage for generations – sometimes spending many hours aground on the putty! I had a usable slant of wind for most of the passage up the river, but occasional twists in the river made some legs into an up-wind beat. One such occurred at a particularly narrow stretch and I became stuck on a mud bank. A passing power boat offered a tow which I gratefully accepted, since it was less than an hour until sunset and I still had several miles ahead of me.

There were a half-dozen or so sailboats tied up to the dock when I arrived in Whangerei at the end of the tow rope. A convenient place to drop the tow was alongside a small yawl about the size of *Kittiwake*. I recognized the design of the yawl as being a Sea Bird, the same as Harry Pidgeon’s last boat. Thinking, “I wonder,” I looked at the stern and there was the name, *Lakemba*!

Harry Pidgeon’s last boat had been

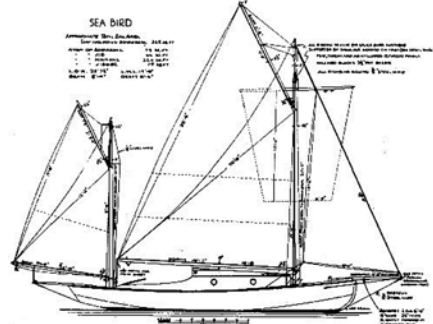
sailed out from California by a young American and, apparently, had made quite a good passage of it, until he’d been overtaken by a storm not far off the east coast of New Zealand. He’d been swept by a big sea that half-filled the little yawl because, as I recall, she

Photo Rudder Magazine



A Sea Bird yawl under partial sail didn’t have a self-draining cockpit (one which will empty itself without filling the remainder of the boat.) I no longer remember most of the details of how he managed to survive, but he managed to secure a tow and *Lakemba* was safely tied up in Whangerei when I, too, arrived at the end of a tow rope.

Photo D.M. Goodchild



Sea Bird Yawl – Lakemba plans

What's Happening...

Oberto announces 5th annual Soaring Day

Photo Soaring Academy



Bob Oberto (#1124) announced the Club's fifth-annual Adventurers' Soaring Day at Crystal Glider Port will take place on Sunday, June 5, 2011.

For more information, contact Bob at Bob@BobOberto.com (310) 923-5779, or any board member

Invitation by Adventurers' Club of South Africa

Photo Jimdo



Six places remain in an expedition to study South African rock art in different South African locations. The expedition will be working inside a game reserve and visiting areas normally closed to the public.

For more information, contact: <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=124980354222246>

Bill Morse invites Club member participation

Photos Bill Morse



Aki Ra's "kids"

Bill Morse (#1130) is considering a program for Club members who want to come to Cambodia and see the work he and his colleagues are accomplishing.

This would include an exclusive tour of Aki Ra's Landmine Museum, dinner with Aki Ra, a tour of Angkor Wat National Park with a certified guide, visits to local villages to see the "real Cambodia," a trip to Phnom Penh to visit the Killing Fields, and (if possible) a visit to a mine field to see and understand what the aftermath of war is really like. For more information or to offer your support, contact Bill at 011 855 15 67 41 63 (remember, he is 14 hours ahead of LA) or bill@wmorse.com.



Hackleburg tornado spares Rick Jackson in Winfield

Photo Mitchell Harris



The Hackleburg tornado

Rick Jackson manages the Club's website. He lives in Winfield, AL, just thirty miles from Hackleburg, leveled by an EF-5 tornado on April 27.

This tornado stayed on the ground for 132 miles, ripping a path up to 1.25 miles wide, with confirmed wind speeds of more than 200 MPH. Debris from Hackleburg was found ninety miles away.

The Tornado passed within twenty miles of Winfield. The power went out in Winfield for eighteen hours when the tornado severed a main power feed. Winfield was like an oasis in the midst of all the destruction as surrounding communities came there for fuel and supplies.

Photo Hackleburg, Alabama



Swath of destruction through Hackleburg

Danee Hazama and Pacific Voyagers underway...

Photos PacificVoyagers



Pacific Voyagers arrive at Fakarava

Following several weather-related delays, Danee Hazama (#1014) and the Pacific Voyagers are underway. The fleet of seven Polynesian-type canoes rendezvoused in Fakarava and then departed to Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas. From there they will sail throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

For information about this cultural and environmental project, and to track Pacific Voyager movement, go to pacificvoyagers.org.



Fakarava sunrise

Editor's Note:

Each month we will feature recent activities of members and friends on this page. Please send your material along with any photos to the Editor by email or snail mail. Designate it for "What's Happening..."

Robert G. Williscroft #1116 – Editor



This month we examine an epic race commenced over fifty-one years ago by member Don Walsh (#1042) and Jacques Pic-

card, when they settled into the buff-colored ooze at the bottom of the Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench. Their record remained unchallenged until Steve Fossett announced in 2005 that he was underwriting the design and construction of a modern full-ocean-depth submersible to return at long last to the deepest spot in the ocean. Sir Richard Branson took up the challenge when Fossett was lost. Fred Hareland (#1138) supplies us with the details in his fascinating article.

Many of you have sent me your updated bio information and photos, and I thank you for that. Please remember to write out your bio in full right in your email, even if you have only a couple of changes; and include the best digital photo you have. I've received several emails with nicely formatted bios attached. Please do not go to that effort. I have to remove all your formatting so I can put your text into my template for the loose-leaf book. Email your bio to aclaeditor@argee.net. If you don't have email, then put it in the U.S. Mail. Please don't put it off!

Remember to purchase a copy of the Club's second Adventurers' Club book, *Tales from the Adventurers' Club – Off the Beaten Path*. You can purchase it at the Club or by contacting any Board member. Expect to be able to purchase the book online in the near future.

Up here in the Lewis-Clark Valley and the surrounding Palouse, Camas Prairie, and the mountain ranges, we have a record snowfall. Reservoirs behind Snake River dams are filling to overflow. The Snake and Clearwater rivers are higher than normal, and the Salmon is a raging torrent. In about a month, you can experience some of the most challenging white-water rafting found anywhere in the world! Should you be interested in taking up this challenge, contact me by phone or email. I can arrange for a rafting trip-of-a-lifetime.

You may have heard about the introduction of grey wolves back into Idaho and Montana. That didn't work out as planned, so Idaho is planning a major wolf hunt in the near future. Call me if you want to get in on this.

We received several Letters-to-the-Editor this month – Thank you! But, you guys can do better than that. Your regular input is what makes this magazine a monthly value for both yourself and all the other members. Please let me hear from you.

The password for the online full-color edition is “*acla1106*”.

BOOK REVIEW — TURNING THE TIDE

Ed Offley, Basic Books, New York, NY, 2011, 512 p; 9 X 6 hardcover. ISBN: 978-0465013975.
Review by Editor – adapted from public sources and material supplied by publisher.

The World War II struggle against Nazi Germany was decided not on the battlefields of Europe, but along trade routes of the North Atlantic. There, Allied merchant vessels carrying millions of tons of precious supplies from North America to Great Britain found themselves preyed upon by “packs” of German U-boats, in a protracted clash of arms known as the Battle of the Atlantic.

It was the deadliest naval conflict in history: Most of the 2,919 Allied merchant ships lost to the U-boats went down in the North Atlantic, and tens of thousands of merchant seamen, naval gunners, and civilian passengers perished. The U-boat crews fared even worse: Of 1,149 U-boats, 711 were lost in combat. Of 39,000 U-boat sailors, only 11,510 – fewer than one in three survived the war. The losses were high because the stakes were even higher. If the U-boats had managed to sever the lifeline between the United States and Great Britain – as they seemed poised to do in late 1942 – Germany could have denied the Allies their springboard into the European continent.

In *Turning the Tide*, veteran military

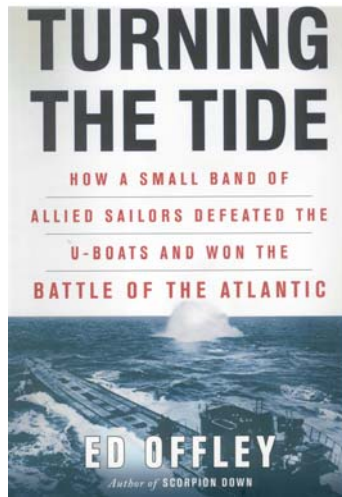
reporter Ed Offley describes how, during a twelve-week period in the spring of 1943, a handful of battle-hardened British, Canadian, and American servicemen beat back the Atlantic wolf packs.

Using extensive research in German, British, and American archives, and interviews with survivors on both sides, Offley thrusts the reader into the heart of the action – from the navigation bridges of British and American escort warships, to the main decks of Allied merchant ships in convoy, to the claustrophobic

control rooms and wave-swept bridges of U-boats stalking their prey.

Offley also portrays the bureaucratic struggles that raged behind closed doors at both the Allied and German military headquarters pulling back the curtain on critical Allied efforts to crack the German Enigma codes, and Germany’s own code-breaking successes.

A thrilling tale of heroism and hardship, *Turning the Tide* is also the harrowing story of how the Allies nearly lost – and finally gained – victory in the Atlantic, and ultimately in Europe itself. Available wherever books are sold.



THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE CLUB

April 14, 2011

Marc Weitz (#1144)

Returning From Adventure

Neil Mandt #1152 – was in Japan to shoot a documentary when the earthquake hit. He was in an elevator at the time and was not hurt. The documentary is called, “Strangers in Danger.” It’s about people who travel and do dangerous stuff.

Bob Oberto #1124 – Was in Taiwan for a conference and then went to Fiji for some island diving.

Those Leaving on Adventure

Bob Zeman #878 – Going to southern Utah to see the petroglyphs and the spot where Aaron Ralston lost his arm.

Jay Foonberg #1126 – traveling from Las Vegas to Denver to see if he can avoid getting altitude sickness.

Other news – The evening started with a shark video, provided by Steve Bein, showing a brave, female diver hypnotizing a shark.

The Voodoo Trail

Jim Dorsey was asked to pinch hit and give a presentation since the scheduled speaker, a holocaust survivor, was a no-show. Jim Dorsey spoke about his trip to West Africa. Back in August, Jim gave a similar presentation about this trip with his travel companions, Pierre Odier #988, Michael Gwaltney #1128, and Alan Feldstein #1094.

This trip was an exploration of voodoo culture in West Africa. Benin is

the birthplace of voodoo, and 60% of West Africans practice voodoo. Here voodoo is not seen as the dark magic depicted in movies, TV, and novels. West African voodoo is about communion with the spirits and the natural world. The darker voodoo we are familiar with is derived from slaves brought to the Caribbean under extreme circumstances. The misery of this experience transformed the fairly benign West African voodoo into the darker Caribbean voodoo.



Photo Jim Dorsey

Jim Dorsey with
Taneka Voodoo
priest

Legends of zombies and voodoo dolls come from Caribbean voodoo. In 1905, U.S. Marines came back from Haiti and wrote books about voodoo, bringing this imagery to western culture. West African voodoo focuses on the health and welfare of individuals and their communities. In West Africa, houses and villages are designed with the tenets of voodoo in mind.

Jim began his trip in Lome, Togo. In West Africa, people visit witch doctors, called mambos, seeking cures to their and their children’s ailments.

A mambo gave Jim his business card, just as a western doctor would.

Animal remains, called fetishes, are thought to possess powers useful in practicing voodoo. Sadly, the use of animal fetishes has led to the extinction of many animals in West Africa. Gorillas, lions, and other large mammals once roamed West Africa, just as they do in the east. Their presence is no more. Now, animal remains must be smuggled in from East Africa to meet the demand of voodoo practitioners.



Photo Jim Dorsey

Jim Dorsey at Voodoo House

Jim and his companions visited the home of a mambo. Like a scene from a movie, the home was filled with statues, fetishes, potions and gri-gri. “Gri-gri” are items used to protect people against evil spirits. While performing their magic, mambos often use gun powder to create a flash for dramatic effect.

In West Africa, a large group of parked cars by the side of the road may indicate that a voodoo dance is happening in the bush. Jim and his companions found such a dance. The dancers work themselves up into a trance through hours of furious danc-

ing till they reach communion with the spirits. Many of the participants are in costume, representing visitors from the spirit world. A woman in black and a woman in white represent opposite perspectives of the spirit world.

Natural phenomena can also serve as holy voodoo locations. A tree struck by lightning makes a perfect spot for voodoo sacrifices. Here, practitioners make their offerings to the spirits in the hope of having their prayers answered or in thanks for a granted prayer. The type of animal sacrificed depends on the wealth of the family: A poor family may only sacrifice a chicken, while a richer family might offer a goat. Jim met a family sacrificing a goat to thank the spirits for helping their son get into university.

Jim’s spiritual well-being was nearly terminated due to a run-in with one of the walking dead. The walking dead are members of a secret society with their own language. The members wear costumes that hide their identities and remain anonymous to their communities. When these costumed figures hit the streets, residents flee in fear. For if one is touched by the walking they are soon condemned to death themselves. To protect the citizens from this fate, a man with a stick accompanies the walking dead to keep hapless citizens away. Unfortunately, Jim was touched by one of these walking dead. However, he is still with us today due the quick thinking of a mambo. Using a lion’s femur

(Minutes continued on page 14)

covered with shells like an airport metal detector wand, he was able to free Jim from the curse of death.

Mixed in with the voodoo tradition is modern-day Islam. So modern, that most mosques featur an automated call to prayer. From here, Jim traveled to central Benin, otherwise known as the heart of voodoo. Here



Photo Jim Dorsey

Animal parts for Voodoo

they met a mambo who had the power to fly and make it rain. Asked by Jim if he could fly, the mambo replied that it was too nice a day to show off.

The modern world has crept into the voodoo world for both the good and bad. Mambos now carry cell phones and travel by car. On the positive side, movements against female circumcision are gaining momentum. Opposition to circumcision, once considered sacrilege, grows stronger as more mambos speak out against it.

Voodoo influences home design in West Africa. Voodoo homes look like faces with the door as the mouth. Evil spirits entering through the mouth-door

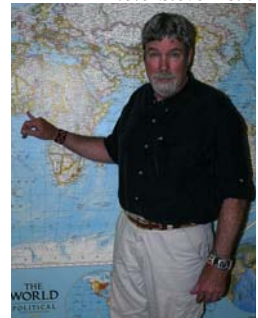
are eaten by the home to prevent them from harming its inhabitants.

Jim and his companions visited a remote village where the homes are built on top of one another without space for streets or alleys. The homes were painted in black and white geometric designs with mud and dung used for plaster. They pitched their tents on the roof of a room. Jim's flash photography confused the lady of the house; the flash caused her to run out each time thinking it was going to rain. A shrine in the middle of the village held its soul. Legend has it, that if something were to happen to the shrine, the village would be no more.

Jim & Co's last stop was to visit a boy king of the Gan. Here, in a hut, were effigies of the twenty-seven previous kings. These effigies were available to offer advice to the current king whenever he sought their counsel. When they met the king, he was about twenty and quite up on world affairs. In reaching him, Jim & Co had to leave their car on the road since it couldn't make it all the way. When the king realized this, he offered to drive the men

Photo Steve Bein

back to their car in his 1966 Nissan. The king drove like a maniac on the dirt roads, sending pedestrians diving out of his way.



April 21, 2011

Marc Weitz (#1144)

Returning from Adventure

Alan Feldstein #1094 – Went paddling from Marina del Rey to Santa Monica following a school of dolphins. A fog bank rolled in causing them to lose the shore or any sense of direction. Using a compass – which, once revealed that he had one, made the situation less perilous than had been presented – they made it back to shore safely.

Steve Lawson #1032 – Visited a shipwreck near Niagara Falls.

Allan Smith #1069 – Visited the Sea of Cortez with Chuck to see whales and dolphins.

Steve Bein #1057 – Completed a 2,000-mile drive to Montana and back.

Leaving on Adventure

Larry Stern #1112 – Going to Southern Africa to visit the big game reserves.

Bob Zeman #878 – Leaving Thursday to hike the Four Corners.

Ralph Perez #1150 – Will be hiking 2,655 miles from Mexico to Canada for five months along the Pacific Crest Trail. Follow his travels at www.trailjournals.com/about.cfm?trailname=10459

Other announcements

Brian Cruikshank was admitted to the Club as member #1158. He is a photographer and has traveled to forty-nine countries.



Judge David Carter

Ed. Note: On October 29, 2009, Judge Carter dismissed the case Barnett v. Obama – a legal attempt to establish Obama's ineligibility for the presidency.

Listed as a “Distinguished VIP” on the Club calendar due to security concerns, the speaker was Judge David Carter. Bold and energetic, David Carter is a federal judge with a price on his head for tough rulings against the Mexican Mafia and the Aryan Brotherhood. The judge came to speak about his work in Afghanistan and Pakistan helping to build an effective and corruption-free justice system as the foundation for a strong and sustainable democracy.

Judge Carter came to the club through member Ralph Perez who knows Chris Hermans, the head of emergency preparedness for all the courts of Southern California. Judge Carter served in Vietnam and was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart before going to UCLA for law school.

Judge Carter seeks to establish the rule of law in post-Soviet countries and in Pakistan and Afghanistan. He believes that the American, adversarial system leads to a fair result. Alexander de Tocqueville was amazed by our jury system, calling it a civic lesson to each person who serves. Few other countries have such a system. People are more likely to accept decisions handed down by a jury of their peers than judges or other officials.

(Minutes continued on page 16)

The judge grew up in a country living in fear of the Soviet Union and believing that someday he would be fighting in the streets of Moscow. The judge hopes to avoid facing this kind of fear in the future. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia established a jury system and a bar association. The new system succeeded initially. In 1997, 20% of jury trials ended in acquittal, up from 1%. This caused a shock within the community. As a result, governors began trumping these decisions, putting potentially innocent people in prison. In the town of Archangel, a prosecutor would phone in his verdict as a part of what was called “telephone justice.”

Describing the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the judge started by saying the Pakistan-Afghanistan border is arbitrary. In the 19th century, Afghanistan and Pakistan were controlled by the UK. It was their decision to create the border irrespective of tribal territories or customs. Locals routinely cross the border without concern for the international frontier. During the Cold War, both the U.S. and the USSR fought for Afghanistan’s friendship. In the 1950s and 60s, Afghanistan modernized its justice system from Sharia law. Afghans wanted to join the world by creating civil law.

Today, everything is negotiable under the Jirga system. This system thrives due to the harsh and hilly landscape. With plenty of places to hide

and the difficulty of reaching these locations, the local Jirga system functioned. The Mujahidin was formed to fight Soviet occupation. Eliminating this rebellion was difficult due to the terrain. Judge Carter showed a number of stunning photos of Afghanistan’s landscape – both beautiful and forbidding. To this day, the U.S. has former Soviet pilots flying missions because of their knowledge of the landscape.

Arriving in Afghanistan by DC3, security was tight for the judge and his entourage. Blackwater provided most of the security. They “armored up” with bulletproof vests and were driven from the airport in an armored vehicle with a helicopter above, providing protection.

Much of the Jirga system seems arcane to us. Women’s rights remain in the dark ages. A woman who is raped needs four male witnesses in order to prosecute. The judge believes that empowering women is the key to defeating the Taliban.

The judge met with a group of judges and asked the group if any of them were taking bribes. No one raised their hand. Asked if they knew someone who has taken a bribe, all hands went up. Part of the judge’s program is to work the phones for grants to send Afghans to western law schools. Once a judge, it is very difficult to avoid the systemic corruption. Tribes often call the local judges traitors. One of these western-trained

judges was soon accused of taking a bribe. Judge Carter believes he was set up by the tribes in order to remove him from the bench.

One strategy to overcome this is to have these western-trained judges work within the Jirga system. It is arrogant of the west to force their justice system on this culture. Most of the tribal leaders are good people. A hybrid system that works with the tribes may be the answer. Most conflicts are over property rights. This subject can be dealt with at the tribal level. Although the Americans are hated for killing Afghans, the Taliban is doing the same.

Judge Carter stressed the importance of keeping Pakistan a democracy, saying that a fundamentalist country with a nuclear weapon is our worst nightmare. In contrast to Afghanistan, Pakistan is run by judges known to be non-corrupt. Working with Pakistan to prevent proliferation is a major goal. Approaching the Pakistanis diplomatically is the key. Everyone wants security.

Judge Carter sees his being a judge as a key to the success of his trips because no one is looking to him for money as they do from visiting politicians. Asked by an audience member why he chose to work in Afghanistan and Pakistan when there is so much injustice in the world, the judge responded that his experiences in Vietnam colored his views. He felt like he and our other soldiers were

abandoned there by the leadership. He has unfinished business. Creating a stable legal system and subsequent democracy will allow our troops to leave Afghanistan. Asked about his thoughts on the Afghan leader, Hamid Karzai, the judge did not think much of him, saying that the Pash-tun tribal leaders often choose a weak leader so they can control him. Finally, the judge was asked about Libya. The judge responded that he hates fighting wars halfway.

Photo Steve Bein



April 28, 2011

Bob Zeman (#878)

Larry Schutte welcomed all. **Bob Walters** said that there were reports of bears in his neighborhood in southwest Washington but the barking of the dogs usually keeps them away. Recently, he went outside to investigate and he was soon visited by a sow and her two cubs.

Jay Foonberg told all to be aware of gas siphoning going on at LAX.

Bill Morse said that Aki Ra and his group have cleared 190,000 hectares of land mines in Cambodia. This enabled 4,900 persons to settle there. Money has been raised to improve the orphanage for the youths. Aki Ra was named one of CNN's heroes.

Ric Flores and **Shane Berry** hiked in the Mecca Hills east of Palm

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Springs. They viewed painted canyon and saw the grinding of rocks caused by movement along the earthquake fault. Ladder canyon has ladders to access the waterfalls.

Neil Mandt is producing a television series. He is interested in places of danger in Spain, Vietnam, and Bolivia.

Our editor **Robert Williscroft** is finishing up the bios of all members. Send him your new bio if your number is more than 1097 and update your old one if you are 1097 or less.

Jeff Holmes remarked that the individual who introduced Judge Carter the week before, had an interesting background himself. He was from Belgium and highly trained in terrorism and counter-terrorism.

Vince Weatherby said **Roy Roush** left the hospital and is on antibiotics.

Vietnam War – 1968

Sid Hallburn introduced our speaker. Both have been active in the Freedom Foundation in Orange County, speaking to youths and groups about their military experiences and values learned.

Sgt. Frank Orzio served as a Marine for the first nine months of 1968 in Vietnam. He served in I-Corps, southwest of Da Nang in the Rocket-belt area, also known as Happy Valley.

He was a squad leader in “Suicide Charley Company” of Chesty Puller fame. He took part in Operations Swift, Worth, Charley Tower, and the Mameluke Thrust.

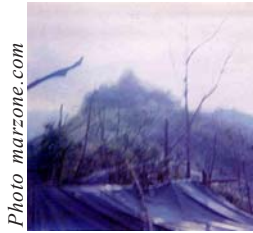
In September, he was wounded by a rifle, and then his truck hit a land mine. He lost a leg and parts of his hand. His heart stopped beating. He was in a coma for three months, but after seventeen months of hospitalization and recuperation he was able to get around on his own.

During his second week in Vietnam, his position was overrun and he was involved in hand-to-hand combat. Later, his battalion of 158 men occupied hill 502 and was surrounded by 3,000 North Vietnamese Army regulars. After three days, the enemy disappeared and he still does not know how he survived.

His ribbons include Vietnam campaign, Vietnam cross of gallantry, combat action, presidential citation, two purple hearts, Vietnam purple heart, and good conduct.

He believes that some of us give up our tomorrows so others can have their days. His presentation was interspersed with slides of combat going back to the Civil War.

Frank is an ordained minister and the founder of wounded warriors



Hill 502 – Vietnam



NVA tunnel – Vietnam

ministry. He visits veterans who have been wounded, and is saddened by the disfigurement he sees. He said that returning vets get excellent medical treatment, but claims take a long time to process.

His normal day was to rise at 4 am and do a sweep until 11. Often there were skirmishes.

In retrospect, Frank says we won the battles, but we lost face. He disagrees with the policies of the politicians.



Photo Larry Schutte

May 12, 2011

Bob Zeman (#878)

President **Larry Schutte** welcomed gentlemen and lady adventurers to our Club tonight.

Ken Freund told of his trip to Ethiopia with **Jim** and **Irene Dorsey**. They climbed the Erta-Ale volcano in the Danakil desert and went to the salt mines. They also saw 500 to 1,000 camels lined up in a salt caravan. In the Rift Valley, they viewed fumaroles and boiling pools or hot springs.

Bernie and **Devera Harris** took a cruise up the coast to Vancouver, B. C. and then over to Seattle.

Vimal Gairola returned from Istanbul (touristy) and Tunis. His movements there were restricted due to the number of soldiers around.

Bob Zeman returned from two weeks hiking in the Four Corners

area. He went near Blue John Canyon, but did not go in because it was highly technical and required ropes.

Alan Feldstein and **Diane** went to the top of the Golden Gate Bridge on an elevator. It was windy, so there were no clouds and no fog. The view was great. They were 500 feet above the road and 700 feet above the water. The cost of the bridge was \$35 million. Predictions were that thirty-five workers would die, but only eleven died due to safety nets, hard hats and sobriety tests.

Patti Balian spent a month in Switzerland near Zurich.

Jay Foonberg is going to San Francisco to run the Bay to Breakers.

Ken Freund leaves in June to attend the 24 hours of Le Mans.

Cheetah Conservation Fund

Alan Feldstein introduced Dr. Laurie Marker. She grew up in southern California and Oregon. She at-

Photo CCF



Dr. Laurie Marker with a cheetah

(Minutes continued on page 20)

tended UC Davis and has a Ph.D. in zoology. She is the recipient of many awards including the Lowell Thomas Award of the Explorers' Club and Time Magazine's Hero for the Planet.

Dr. Marker is the founder and executive director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF).

Photo Mike Crowther



Running cheetah pair

Cheetahs are built for speed and can reach seventy miles per hour. They often have litters of four to five cubs, but the infant mortality rate is high. In the last century cheetah numbers have decreased approximately 90%. The wild population is thought to be less than 10,000 today. Cheetahs have become extinct in more than sixteen countries where they once roamed free.

Dr. Marker first visited Namibia in 1977 to conduct research on the re-introduction of captive born cheetahs into the wild. She learned that conflict between livestock farmers and cheetahs was causing hundreds of cheetahs to be killed annually.

She moved to Namibia in 1991 to aid their survival. She turned a hum-

ble research station into an internationally recognized research and education center.

Her approach includes teaching farmers ways to prevent predation of their livestock, educating people about the importance of predators in a functioning ecosystem, and restoring and opening up habitat for cheetahs and their prey.

CCF has reintroduced 600 cats to the wild. It is looking to reintroducing cheetahs to India where the population went extinct in the 1950s. The DNA genes are almost the same between the African and Indian animals. A survey in Angola found two cheetahs after they were thought to be extinct.

Scat detection dogs are well trained in finding cheetah scat. Other dogs are used by farmers to protect livestock by barking.

Photo CCF



Dr. Laurie Marker with a cheetah

CCF also is harvesting thorn bush to make compressed fuel logs. Thorn bush has encroached upon and destroyed the cheetah's native grasslands. This restores cheetah habitat

and provides jobs and fuel for cooking and heat.



Forthcoming Programs

- May 26, 2011 – Pierre Odier – Mongolia on Foot to U.S. via Siberia
- June 2, 2011 – Wilf Blum – Shipwrecks
- June 9, 2011 – Mike Simmons – Astronomers Without Borders
- June 16, 2011 – Jim Dorsey – The Omo Valley of Ethiopia, Land Where Time Has Stopped
- June 23, 2011 – Captain Woody – Circumnavigating the World
- June 30, 2011 – [open]
- July 7, 2011 – [open]
- July 14, 2011 – [open]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

Earlier today we were contacted by an Australian nurse who works in-country. She told us about an orphanage in Domnakloug Village in Battambang Province (Cambodia). They bought 0.7 hectares of land last year to expand their work. They were assured it was FFE (free from explosives). So far they have found 7 landmines.

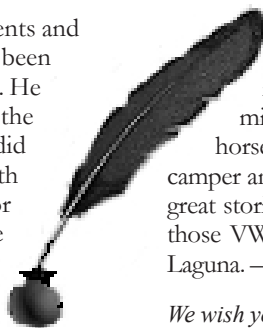
31 kids live at the facility, and local villagers cut through the land all the time. They have a 2-story building and a well for the village on land that could very easily kill them.

People ask me why I came over here. Does that tell you why. And every single day is an adventure. – Bill Morse #1130

Your work is humbling, Bill. Thanks for what you do! – Editor

To the Editor:

I just wanted to add my two cents and say that I think Larry Schutte has been doing a fantastic job as President. He has been leading by example; at the last meeting, I witnessed as he did his usual presidential duties with aplomb, set up and ran the AV for the speaker, made sure that the camera had film and found a person to record after the meeting had started, and made everybody



laugh with his quick wit and charm. All this and he is cochairing NOHA this year! Come on guys lets do our part and volunteer to help out this hard working man in any way we can.

– Rick Flores (#1120)

Thanks, Rick. Are you guys listening? – Editor

To the Editor:

Great job on my article.

In May I was in Russia for Victory Day and a day at Star City watching cosmonauts train.

In Sep I leave for remote Caucasus trip. – Bill Altaffer #1095

Thanks, Bill. Stay safe on your Caucasus journey. – Editor

To the Editor:

Thank you all. I have lots to get caught up with but first the 20 miler day from the border to Mt. Laguna. That was my first, and

Moose and I saw 3 rattlers. Last night

I got another club speaker; his name is Mendorider. He has 48k equestrian miles and has also done the PCT on horseback. He is 75. He invented the VW

camper and made the Adventure Van. He has great stories on their world venture in one of those VW cabs. Tomorrow I leave from Mt. Laguna. – Ralph Perez (#1150)

We wish you God's speed, Ralph! – Editor



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