

The
Adventurers' Club News

Volume 52

May/June 2008

Number 3



There's something about this picture...

The Adventurers' Club News

The Official Publication of the Adventurers' Club of Los Angeles, California

May/June 2008

Volume 52 Number 3
Publisher Robert DeMott #1080
Editor Robert G. Willisroft #1116
PO Box 1087, Los Angeles, CA 91614
(818) 760-9632, (818) 613-9445 Cell; aclaeditor@argee.net
Club Phone (323) 223-3948 (24 Hrs) www.adventurersclub.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DIRECTORY	INSIDE FRONT COVER
ARTICLES	
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PICTURE	1
ENCOUNTER WITH THE USS RUEBEN JAMES	3
THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURER – PART II	5
THE ADVENTURERS' BACKPACK	8
WHAT'S HAPPENING	9
BOOK REVIEW: RIDING THE WORLD	10
THRAWN RICKLE	11
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	11
THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE CLUB	12
FORTHCOMING PROGRAMS	21

PRESIDENT

Robert DeMott
Cell (714)594-8694
[bond_jamesbond_@
hotmail.com](mailto:bond_jamesbond_@hotmail.com)

2ND VICE PRES

Bob Oberto
Bus (818) 237-0670
oberto@jpl.nasa.gov

SECRETARY

Allan Smith
Bus (661) 273-4800
allan@dreamquest.tv

ADDRESS

2433 N Broadway
Los Angeles, CA 90086

1ST VICE PRES

Paul T. Isley III
Res (310) 376-2738
pti@rainforestflora.com

TREASURER

Roger Haft
Res (310) 395-0115
[trainvagabond@
netscape.net](mailto:trainvagabond@netscape.net)

DINNER RESERVATIONS

(323)-223-3948 (VoiceMail)
Deadline: Tuesday Noon

MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 31226
Los Angeles, CA 90031

PHONE & WEBSITE

(323) 223-3948
www.adventurersclub.org

There's something about this picture...

Robert G. Willisroft, #1116

It was the late 1970s. Vietnam was behind us, the flower children of the 1960s had gotten a bit older, but the sexual revolution was still going strong. And with HIV/AIDS still in the future, it was a good time to be an adventurer almost anywhere...but, somehow, I



Bell Ranger helicopter heading into the ice pack

ended up in the high Arctic, spending three summers in the Bering Sea ice pack.

I was serving aboard NOAA's venerable steam-driven *Surveyor*, part of a regional team conducting baseline studies under the aegis of NOAA's Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Assessment Program – OC-SEAP for short (pronounced ok-sep). We were participating in a many-year long program to establish a bio-ecological baseline for this region and others around the world. It was an ambitious program that still is happening today.

For this phase, we were finding specific

species of Bering Sea wildlife, slaughtering a representative sample in order to do parasite and stomach contents analysis, capturing and tagging others, and generally having a wonderful time of high adventure at the taxpayer's expense.

We used our Bell Ranger helicopter daily for forays deep into the ice pack and far along the edge, looking for this or that species to fill in a gap in the study. Simultaneously we were conducting other studies as time and manpower allowed. One of those studies was my study of how ice accumulates from beneath the ice pack. This required flying a hundred miles into the pack, landing, dynamiting a



Capturing a young seal on the way

dynamiting a hole in the ice, and then diving under the ice to take measurements and photographs.

While still near the edge, we managed to capture and weigh a young seal – about ninety-eight pounds

(This Picture continued on page 2)

Something about this picture...

(This Picture continued from page 1)

worth of squirming muscle and blubber. Since we had only the one chopper that was needed for multiple tasks, once the pilot dropped us off, we marked the ice with florescent yellow dye, and he took off for several hours while we conducted our work. We remained in touch by portable radio.

Under the ice, we hammered a peg into the under surface of the ice, and strung a line from there outward about a hundred yards, anchoring that end with another peg. We did the same for several more lines. These served to guide us back to the hole in the event we got disoriented. In fact, it was pretty bright, and we had no trouble finding our way back.

While under the ice, we took some plankton samples for the biologists using a very fine screen net trawl that we towed behind us for several sweeps across the ice under surface. We returned the collected samples in plastic jugs with airtight tops.

On the way back, we spotted two polar bear cubs romping on the ice near a small ice cave. Mama was nowhere to be seen. Apparently, she was out hunting. We landed, and as we did, both



Dynamited hole in the ice with florescent dye marking the spot



Collecting biological specimens under the ice

cubs scampered into the small cave. Since Mom was nowhere evident, we left the pilot in the chopper with the blade spinning, and the rest of us got out to investigate the situation. The copilot crawled into the small cave with his flight helmet and faceplate in place, and grabbed one of the cubs – all fifty pounds of him (or her, we couldn't tell). The little tyke was all claws and teeth – you should have seen the copilot's shredded flight suit and gloves.

While two of us kept a lookout for Mama, the other two tagged the cub's ear, put him in a bag and weighed him (that's how we knew he was fifty pounds), and then I grabbed the cub by its midsection and dropped him a bit away from us in an unspoiled patch of snow, where we took several photos while the cub snarled and spit at us. Then we piled back into the chopper and left before Mama returned to explain to us why she didn't want us fooling with her kids.

Take another look at the cover photo. You will see that the cub has no footprints leading to where he is standing.

Encounter with the USS Reuben James

Fredrick Gary Hareland

Back in 1990 I attended the epic movie, *The Hunt for Red October*, which was probably the last cold war era movie to actually be filmed during the “Cold War.” My Cold War Certificate of Recognition documents the cold war era as 2 Sept. 1945 to 26 Dec.1991, so the cold war was not to last much longer after the movie came out. During the end of this pivotal movie was a



The Reuben James approaching with much too acute an angle

scene that involved what was supposed to be the American Fast Frigate, *Reuben James* engaged in

fake combat with the *Red October*. Little did I know at the time that four years later, I would experience a real life encounter with the actual *USS Reuben James FFG 57*, somewhere out in the middle of the Persian Gulf.

Like so many others who lost their defense related jobs due to the ending of the cold war, I found myself unemployed for over a year, and in desperate need of a job. At the time I had a wife and three little daughters to support, and thought I had just about exhausted all possibilities when I received a telephone call from the Military Sealift Command-Pacific. I had sent them my resume years before, and thought that they had never received it, or that they just weren't interested, and I had long forgotten about them.

When I was offered a job to sail onboard one of their new Kaiser Class UnRep Tank-

ers as the vessels Electronics Technician, I gladly took it. Although I had served four years in the US Navy and four more years in the US Coast Guard, it had been over twenty years since I last served aboard a vessel. Back in 1994 I still possessed a valid Merchant Mariners Document which I had tested for and received back in 1973, just before enlisting in the Coast Guard.

Up until 1998, a USCG MMD was good for life, unless you did something stupid, in which case the USCG would revoke it. This was to be a very fortuitous situation for me because I was still qualified to go to sea simply because I possessed a Mariners Document. Now there are major changes, all of which make life difficult for merchant seamen. MMD's are only good for five years and must be renewed, which takes time and money. Furthermore, our government has been as busy as a one-legged man in an ass kicking contest signing international agreements which make specialized training mandatory if merchant sailors are to be employed. It's been one road block after another for sailors to navigate just to go to sea. Fortunately for me back in 1994 things were not so difficult, and I went back to sea onboard the *USNS Pecos T-AO-197*.

My short lived MSC career began back in January 1994 when I traveled to Oakland California for processing at MSC-PAC's headquarters, which was then located at the old Oakland Navy Supply Center, building # 310. I was processed and cleared for afloat employment, and put into the mariner's pool to await assignment to a ship. I was in Oakland for about five weeks when

(Reuben James continued on page 4)

I finally got assigned to the *Pecos* which was docked in Yokosuka, Japan. I flew from SFX nonstop to Narita International Airport Tokyo and took a navy bus to Yokosuka.



Fireball on Pecos from the ensuing explosion of gasoline cans

I finally caught up with the *Pecos* on February 27, 1994, and signed aboard for sea duty. She was a nice ship with clean lines and really great habitability. I was assigned my own cabin which was huge by navy standards, and it even included my own personal bathroom and shower. Unlike navy ships, which usually had a shortage of fresh water and demanded that the crew take sea showers where you wet down, turn off the water, soap up, and then turn back on the water to rinse off, onboard Kaiser class tankers, Hollywood showers – where you can run hot water as long as you want – were the norm. I once turned some navy helicopter pilots green with envy just by showing them my cabin and bathroom, and letting them know that Hollywood showers were the order of the day!

Pecos wasn't in Japan very long before ship and crew got underway for the Persian Gulf via Singapore, the Straits of Malacca, and Phuket, Thailand. Once in the Gulf, *Pecos* would be busy refueling navy ships on constant patrol on a daily basis. As extraordinary as underway replenishment evolutions may be, we soon began to take them for granted due to the number we performed daily, weekly, and month-

ly. We carried seven and a half million gallons of petroleum products on board our many cargo tanks, and yet were forced to head back into the man made port of Jabel Ali almost every other week to top off our empty tanks. We stayed very busy and refueled a lot of naval ships both US and NATO. Even though the two or three vessels are only about 120 feet apart during the whole refueling process, by far the scariest part is when the navy ships pull alongside. Carriers are especially scary because of their huge size; they start out in our wake and then simultaneously speed up to catch us and transition over to our port or starboard side. It is an awesome sight to watch their approach, becoming bigger and bigger until they overshadow our ship, and to realize that if they misjudge their approach, they could literally run us down and sink us.

It was a beautiful Arabian Gulf Thursday afternoon, May 5, 1994. I was at my underway replenishment (unrep) station just below the port bridge along with my friend Roy Abregon who was the 2nd Cargo Engineer. It was his job to man the expansive cargo console and control the transfer of fuel from *Pecos* to her receiver ship or ships. Roy would manipulate a whole multitude of pump and valve controls while watching numerous tank and pressure gauges, and simultaneously glance out of the seven forward facing windows to check on the hoses and get the big picture. He really had his job down pat and was poetry in motion as he played that consol like a big piano. My job was to assist him if he needed anything, and to stand by just in case any of the elec-

(Reuben James continued on page 7)

The Ultimate Adventurer – Part II

Joe Valencic, #1109

Last month Dave Finnern introduced this tale and wrote: YOU GOTTA WRITE SOMETHING! Don't let my poor characters die from apathy and lack of interest. We received two entries. I have judged that this entry best continues the tale.

"I know its not the greasy food or cheap drinks that brought you here, Thelma. It must be the music, so how about a dance for old time sake?" She raised her head and looked at him through eyes as green as a 10-grade Burma emerald.

"Why not Buck? Maybe I can make up for last time, and you can tell me what you are doing here in this Tasmanian pit."

Once on the dingy wooden dance floor Buck pulled her close and made an intentional awkward first step that put his leg between her thighs. He knew instantly that the slit up the side of the low-cut black dress she was wearing was for easy access to the matched pair of 3 inch long titanium throwing knives she packed in a Kevlar sleeve sewn to her panties. "No intimate secrets for you, Buck," she muttered while tossing her long black hair over her right shoulder.

Buck trusted her about as much as a Nigerian Scam artist but had to find out what she was up to. He turned on his best New York politician charm, and with a grin straight from a Colgate ad, he said, "Thelma, you feel great and you look even better. We have a lot of catching up to do since the *Ning Po*."

Although the *Ning Po* now bares the remains of its camphor wood ribs at low tide in Cat Harbor on the windward side of Catalina Island, it was once the sister ship

to Buck's ultimate treasure find, the *Ning Bob*. It was just a few days after completing the excavation the submerged, mud-filled compartments of the *Ning Po* that Buck first ran into Thelma. Buck spotted the attractive Russian

with big lips and even bigger breasts downing Buffalo Milk specials made with a double shot of 101 proof Bacardi at the Isthmus bar, the local watering hole that serviced everyone from grungy sea urchin divers to spit-shined millionaire yachties.

It was 2 am when they closed the bar and stumbled back to his anchored boat. Buck was cross-eyed drunk thinking he could keep up with a Russian slink who was probably nursed on rotgut Vodka. On the boat he bragged about his recent discovery hoping it could get him past first base. But, his amorous attempts were abruptly halted when his roaming hands encountered two neatly concealed knives. "That's as close as you want to get without loosing a hand," she said as she poured him but another Jim Beam that would be his demise for the night.

When he woke the next morning she was gone, along with some key information that linked the *Ning Po* to the *Ning Bob*. During its illustrious career as a coastal transport, oriental brothel for Chinese political elite, and eventually doomed Cat Harbor restaurant, the *Ning Po* held the secret behind the

(Ultimate Adventurer continued on page 6)

location of world's ultimate treasure ship. It took years of research and months of muck diving to recover it and now, over the course of a single insane evening, one other person on this planet knew almost as much as he did about the location of the *Ning Bob*. He was now again with that person, cautiously slow dancing to an off key piano and knowing full well that rousing her hair-trigger temper could result in a gut full of razor sharp titanium.

He pulled her closer and buried his face in her thick, perfumed hair...it was like dealing with the devil, but he had a plan.

“Sorry about Catalina, Buck, but you had information I wanted. Unfortunately I did not get all the information I really needed so maybe we can not play any more games and work together on this,” said Thelma with a smirk. “I think you get the point, and my knowledge of Tasmania could prove quite valuable. Also, I may be able to help you in another matter. Scuttlebutt around the dock is that your old cockroach partner Finn Davern has a cheap room at the Elephant and Castle Pub just off the south quay wall.”

The bare mention of Finn’s name sent a chill up Buck’s spine colder than a 10-kilo block of dry ice. Buck teamed with Finn years ago on a treasure project in Baja that involved a supposed buried chest of gold under an old abandoned paddlewheel pier. They searched for years in rotten egg smell-

ing black mud made pungent by decaying marine life and sulphur dioxide. Buck thought the only “treasure” they found was a dead body washed in by the incoming tide but rumor had it that Finn returned solo and bagged over a million in gold coins cutting Buck out of a share that was rightly his. Losing his share of the gold was bad enough but Finn boasted about how he tricked Buck in every cheap port bar

he watered in.

“I got a score to settle with that cheating, treasure-hunting bastard,” snarled Buck. “Just hearing that he is in Tasmania gets me madder than a hornets’ nest sprayed with gasoline.”

After a few deep breaths to regain his composure and a few more to get back into the dance beat, Buck’s mind began to focus. He did not think Thelma would be so straightforward in her information. He pulled her closer and buried his face in her thick, perfumed hair. It was like dealing with the devil, but he had a plan. If his plan worked, he would use Thelma’s knowledge of Tasmania to his advantage yet cut her out completely from any treasure share while using the ex-KGB’s feminine talents to get even with Finn. It was a bold plan and he had to act immediately so he whispered softly in her ear.

If this story is to live on, you have to write something. We need about 1,000 words for each installment. Pick up the story where Joe left off and take it anywhere you wish. Just keep the continuity going. If you need to introduce new characters, do so – the more characters the better, so long as we can keep them straight. If you need to kill off somebody, do so, but please keep at least the main characted alive until the end. Also, please keep the writing sufficiently “proper” to maintain the magazine’s resputation.

(Reuben James continued from page 4)

tronics inside that big console went tango-uniform and needed my help.

Roy was attending to last minute details on his all important console, and I was peer-



The Reuben James
breaking away

ing out of the starboard-most window at the sea where we were expecting to see the bow of the *Reuben James* come into view any moment, as she was already off of our starboard side making her approach for refueling station.

Suddenly her bow hove into view but something was wrong, drastically wrong, for her bow angle was too acute and she was on a collision course with our ship. I had observed scores of underway refuelings and knew that her bow should have been traveling parallel with ours by now. I immediately blurted out to Roy, "Holy Cow she's gonna hit us!"

The collision alarm sounded, and we felt a jolt to starboard followed by the general alarm. We were on fire, confirmed when the bridge piped throughout the ship for the fire teams to muster.

I was still craning my neck, still peering out of that starboard window trying to see what had happened to the *James*. It reminded me of a WWII movie as she moved out away from our ship as there were small pockets of fire still burning about her main deck.

Our fire teams were well trained and they got the fire out in a matter of minutes.

Nevertheless, *Pecos* suffered some structural damage when the *Rueben James* fantail collided with our starboard side. Their crew could see that her bow was heading straight for *Pecos* starboard side, and was much too close. In a panic they over-corrected to steer away causing their stern to contact our starboard side amidships. This was the exact location of the only gasoline we carried in five gallon cans affixed to the railing. This gas was for powering our P250 dewatering pumps, and it was this gasoline that ignited causing the fire.

Immediately after the ship secured from her latest emergency, I ran down to the ships library where the public Inmarsat pay phone was located. This was a satellite phone and cost \$3.00 per minute to use, but I had just recently purchased a \$60.00 call card which gave me about 20 minutes of calling time. I phoned my parents in Southern California from the middle of the Persian Gulf to tell them about our harrowing experience, so they wouldn't worry when they heard about it on the news. My father was mostly amazed at the clarity of our phone connection and told me it couldn't be clearer if we were both calling from California. Ship and crew were heading back to Jabel Ali in order to check the vessel for any collateral damages, and to start the repair processes.

Hunt for Red October means a whole lot more to me now, af-



ter having a *Hareland* pointing to *Pecos* real life encounter with the *Rueben James*.
damage

(Letters continued from page 11)

To the Editor:

I have volunteered to coordinate outside activities so we can have more members participate. That would do several things for the club.

1. Increase the feeling of camaraderie.
2. Bring members together to have fun together and participate in more time together.
3. We would learn from other members in their areas of expertise. – Steve Bein (#1057)

Great idea and gesture, Steve. Let's see how it works out. – Editor

To the Editor:

I would first like to compliment you on the outstanding job you're doing with the Adventurers' Club News. It is always a pleasure to receive each new edition and keep up with all the members are doing throughout the world.

While the inclusion of "The Ultimate Adventurer" may very well lower the level of quality that we have grown to appreciate, keep in mind that "The Ultimate Adventurer" series was not my idea, it's all Bob's [Silver] fault. With that disclaimer, you have run the first chapter. Let's see how it goes.

– Dave Finnern (#1065)

Thanks for the kind words. Check out the new character in "The Ultimate Adventurer:" Finn Davern. – Editor

To the Editor:

Thanks, your newsletter is super.

One correction: I did not say no to going to Iraq as a civilian training Marines in the use of GPS. I had just completed my chemotherapy and radiation that had saved my arm from cancer amputation and was too weak to go yet. Your words make me sound like a coward. – Bob Silver (#728)

I am certain no one thinks of you as a coward, Bob – Semper Fi! – Editor

To the Editor:

I was delighted to receive the Adventurers' Club newsletter in PDF form. I had inquired and suggested this a few years ago to cut printing and mailing costs. I was later told that it will never happen and will always be mailed. In any event congratulations on a job well done. – Danee Hazama (#1014)

The Adventurers' Backpack

Peter Jensen, #1101

Last month we gave you a list of the commonly accepted 10-essentials that appears in various publications from time to time, and asked you to supply two more. Here is the list.

1. Pocketknife/multi tool
2. First aid kit
3. Extra clothing
4. Rain gear
5. Water
6. Flashlight
7. Trail food
8. Fire starter
9. Sun protection
10. Map & compass

Peter Jensen added:

11. Duct tape
12. Tweezers

Bob Silver added:

11. Small whistle
12. Signalling mirror

Roger Haft added:

11. 50' of line
12. Walking stick

The Editor adds:

Whatever else is on the list,
I carry a handgun.

We received only these two additional responses to this request. (Nice going, guys! Great participation.)

Remember, the online/email code to access the PDF edition is "acla" followed by the two letter month and two digit year "mmyy" – Editor

What's Happening...

Wooly Mammouth Exhibit Finished!



Pierre Odier (#988) has completed the Wooly Mammouth display. It was originally donated to the Club by Charter Member Joseph Chilberg (#51).

Thank you and congratulations, Pierre!

The 4th annual Mountain Warfare Training Challenge



Bob Iannello (#1100) reports: Fellow Los Angeles Adventurers Club member David Yamada #969 informed me of this event, and as such was directly responsible for all the aches and pains Erick and I experienced both during the event and for the next few days following the event. Thank you David. (This is one of the benefits of the Adventurers Club.)

Joe & Vince test mini-sub



Joe Valencic (#1109) and Vince Weatherby (#1060) run a mini-sub designed by Dick DeMarco through its paces off Catalina with a trawler owned by cinematographer Mike Hoover.

They will be retrieving sunken 50-gallon drums of diesel fuel that were lost along a whale migration route, among other adventures that they will be disclosing in due course.

Vince goes down in infamy

Vince Weatherby (#1060) was selected to play the helmsman on the *SS Queen Mary* in the forthcoming docudrama about a collision between the *QM* and *HMS Curacao*, resulting in a large loss of life on the *Curacao*.

Vince reports that his English accent was lousy, and he had no idea how to handle the helm, but other than that, the filming went just fine.

Congratulations, Vince!

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...."

BOOK REVIEW —

RIDING THE WORLD — The Biker's road map for a seven-continent adventure

Author: Gregory Frazier, BowTie Press, Irvine, CA, 2005 (160p; 6 x 9), ISBN: 978-1931993241

Reviewed extracted from the author's website, with comments by the Editor

R*iding the World* offers aspiring globe riders expert advice on traveling the world by motorcycle. From the only motorcyclist to have circumnavigated the globe four times, literally riding to the ends of the earth—from Dead Horse, Alaska to Ushuaia, Argentina; from North Cape, Norway to Cape Agulhas, South Africa.

Specially outfitted motorcycles have carried him over one million miles and across twenty-four time zones. This unique book has 125 color pictures with sections on routes, budgeting, motorcycle preparation, shipping, sleeping, eating, whether to go it alone, what to take, how to find sponsors and network possibilities.

Dave Searle, Editor of America's prestigious *Motorcycle Consumer News* says of this book, "Gregory Frazier has produced an absolutely essential guide for the world

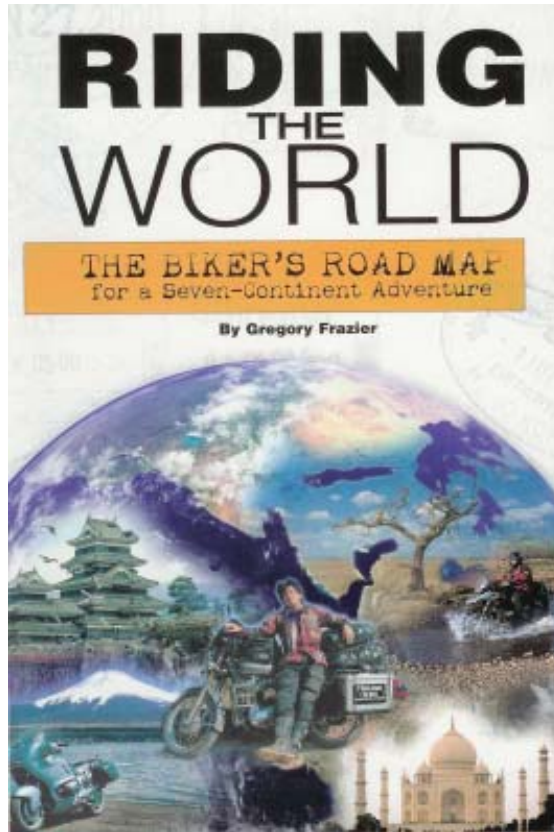
traveler, filled with memorable stories that make irresistible reading. Even if your world trip is still a distant dream, knowing exactly how to go about it can only bring it closer to reality."

David Hough, author of *Proficient Motorcycling and Street Strategies* says, "Whether you're just curious about adventure travel on a motorcycle, or you've decided to pack your bike and go, Gregory Frazier is willing to share his knowledge in *Riding the World*, and he does it in a no-nonsense style that might just make you want to follow in his tire tracks."

Frazier has written a total of twelve books about motorcycling. Read more about his adventures

in this issue's write-up of the May 29 Club meeting.

This book is available where books are sold, online, and from Whole Earth Motorcycle Center, Denver, CO.



THE THRAWN RICKLE

From the Ancient Scottish: thrawn = stubborn; rickle = loose, dilapidated heap

Robert G. Williscroft #1116 - Editor



I continue to ask for help with the magazine. I actually received a response from the wife of a member, and I greatly appreciate the gesture. What I need, however, is an *Assistant*

Editor who will eventually take over the task. What is it with some of you guys? Several of you put in time and effort for the Club way beyond what anyone would expect. But some of you just come and eat and listen.

I'll say it again: The *News* is a vital part of our Club. It is the one link that keeps everybody in touch with Club activities and fellow Club members. It would be a shame to see the *News* come out only infrequently, or not at all. **But if somebody doesn't step up, that is exactly what will happen.**

Lots of letters this month. That makes it fun. We received two entries for "The Ultimate Adventurer" series. Please, someone,

write another 1,000 words for the next edition. Let's keep the story going. Unfortunately, we only received a couple of responses to the Backpack question. I guess it's just more of eat and listen.

The Club is having trouble covering the cost of a monthly color edition. Because I had to consolidate a couple of editions, this lowered the cost a bit, but it still is too expensive. If you like the regular color edition, you might want to consider supporting the cost with a regular donation. Paul Isley is coordinating this effort. We need over \$300 monthly above and beyond what the Board authorizes to meet this expense. So if you like it and have the funds, your \$25 monthly contribution would help a lot. Otherwise we will be reverting to a monochrome edition, with color only appearing in the online version.

Once again, however, this edition of the *News* is brought to you in full color through the generosity of several members, and the Board. Be sure to thank a Board Member the next time you see him.

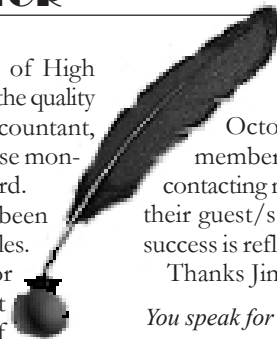
The password for the full color online edition is "acla0806".

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

As a long-time attendee of our Night of High Adventure, I have always been impressed by the quality and professionalism of our event. As an accountant, I am of course concerned that we do not lose money on it and we have done well in that regard.

But for most years the ticket sales have been exceptionally slow for the first months of sales. I remember that the sales were so slow for the 2007 event that a motion was made at the September meeting of the Board of



Directors to consider canceling the event. The motion did not pass.

Ticket sales jumped in September and October primarily due to a push by Board member Jim Heaton. He did a superb job of contacting members and urging them to attend with their guest/s. Jim has done this in the past and his success is reflected in our attendance and revenue.

Thanks Jim for your help. – Bob Zeman (#878)

You speak for us all, Bob. – Editor

(Letters continued on page 8)

THURSDAY NIGHTS AT THE CLUB

May 1, 2008

Bob Zeman (#878)

The reports by those returning from and leaving on an adventure were highlighted by clever remarks from **Bob Hi-Ho Silver** that generated many laughs.

Bill Morse returned from two months in Cambodia trying to get Akira certified to de-mine. The project was on hold for many weeks because a letter from the government was needed. Thankfully, Ed Artis, an officer in Knightsbridge who has spoken to the Club, acted and secured the letter.

Bob Zeman returned from a four-day trip birding in south Texas where he witnessed a fall-out. Birds in migration from Central America fly across the Caribbean on a long journey and if hit by a storm land exhausted in a small area. Bob joined 200 others for excellent views of these tired birds.

Bob also said that he went to the Museum of Iwo Jima in Harlingen. He found out that the pipe used to raise the flag was from a Japanese water gathering system.

Bob and Jane Ianello went to Death Valley and toured Scotty's Castle. There are now three tours and one includes the underground cellars which hold cool air and is pumped up to cool the house. The walls have three levels of insulation.

Steve Bein visited the poppy fields in the Antelope Valley which are in full bloom. He saw a small rattlesnake.

Steve donated a guide to Baja, a book by Ralph Waldo Emerson, a Wilderness Expeditions book and a panorama photo of the Sierras and Alabama Hills in Alpenlight to the NOHA committee for its silent auction.

London Steverson also donated some items from Guadalajara including a drinking cup. He also donated a cap made from a tree trunk in Tahiti.

Rick Flores has accepted chairmanship of Night of High Adventure and advised all to mark your calendars for October 19th.

If anyone has computer skills, **Robert Williscroft** needs an assistant editor for the News.

Don Waters said that the Queens Ball put on by the British United Services Club will be held June 14th.

The Greatest Generation

Bill Mimiaga graduated from high school at 18 and enlisted in the Marine Corps. He spent one tour in Viet Nam, returned and then went back to Nam in 1969.

He was set to retire after 28 years. But the Corps needed someone to hire stevedores in Bahrain. So off he went and found that the Koreans did the best job. After this and 31 years, he retired.

Lying on the beach in Hawaii was nice for awhile but he wanted to be a teacher and has taught special education in Long Beach.

Bill is taking time off from teaching to join a motorcycle ride from May 14 to May 25 across the country. The last day will be in Washington D. C. for Rolling Thunder. The tour stops in small towns where they are welcomed and also at VA hospitals.

Bill is active with Veterans organizations. He noted that Memorial Day used to be called Decoration Day. It helped bring the Union and Confederacy closer together af-

ter the Civil War.

There were problems with the veterans after the Spanish-American War culminating in a march on the capitol. But the country took care of its veterans after World Wars I and II.

Unfortunately, the Korean War vets were not treated well nor were the Viet Nam vets. Congressman Dana Rohrbacher whose father-in-law was a Bataan Death March survivor tried and failed to sue the Japanese government. But now he is trying to sue Mitsubishi and other companies for using American slave labor.

Bill was concerned that our Naval fleet has dropped from 600 ships to 247 and our army has declined from 18 to 10 divisions. We are the world's policeman because we are morally right.

Bill's organization has two 15-passenger vehicles to take patients to VA hospitals.

He noted that Mike Curry has organized Snowball Express which brings in war widows and orphans for a few days at Crystal Cathedral and Disneyland. Next year Jerry Jones will sponsor the event in Texas.

Currently, a widow gets six to eight weeks of life on the base before she has to move back home with her parents.

Bill closed with saying we need to plant the seed of democracy and we can do this best with trade. This will create entrepreneurs.



May 8, 2008

Bob Zeman (#878)

President **Robert DeMott** banged the imaginary gavel and welcomed all.

Bob Walters said that he and **David Lawler** had traveled the BLM areas near the Chocolate Mountains. David was testing for elements in the soil and possible pollution in the mine tailings. Some of the mine shafts are huge and the hills are honeycombed with shafts.

The price of gold has created temptations to open them. There are also bat colonies. They saw many tracks from Patton's tanks and drove down Ogleby Road.

Marvin Garrett returned from a magic show in Las Vegas. One act was terrible in which the entertainer's hair caught on fire. But a later act featured a rabbit going up some steps. Behind the curtain was a ventriloquist who did not want another hair/hare on fire.

Bernie Harris and his wife went up to St. Helena to tour the Castile de Amoroso which is a winery. The castile is complete with moats and rooks and it is dug into the side of a mountain with 900 yards of tunnels.

Paul Isley said that a company is building a submarine for sale with wings, acrylic nose that will go down to 1,000 feet. It will be on display at Santa Monica on Saturday the 10th. The company was going to build a submarine for Steve Fossett to reach the bottom of the Marianas Trench.

Roger Haft is leaving at the end of summer for Spitsbergen in Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Greenland.

Bob Zeman, Rick Flores and others are still cataloging the trophies (heads and horns) in the Club quarters. If anyone has

(Minutes continued on page 14)

personal knowledge of the background of any trophy, please let Bob or Rick know.

Steve Bein donated more items for the NOHA auction – a backwards clock, Navy cup and a sailboat sculpture. He also put together a basket with brandy, sake, Johnny Walker Red Label, and three books.

The Navy two-man submarine

In the 1950s the Navy was concerned that its submarines when detected were helpless – they could not run, could not hide and could not fight back. It called upon William McLean to design a two-man submarine that could be carried on a sub.

When the submarine *George Washington* launched two Polaris missiles while still underwater in 1960, it was shown that a small sub could be launched.

The design facilities were set up at China Lake. The specs were to operate at 400 feet with a crush depth at 700 feet. The sub was to travel at 45 knots. Solid zinc batteries would drive the motor.

The hull was fiberglass with a plastic mold nose. Titanium was too costly, so aluminum 356 was selected. The sub consisted of spheres for steering compartment, batteries and weapons.

Syntactic foam provided 41 pounds of buoyancy per cubic foot. To trim the craft, mercury was moved from one reservoir to the other.

Dick's group also had to design a trailer for the craft and a mother ship. Obtaining all of the materials and expert engineering was difficult but Dick's team was dedicated. Prior to leaving China Lake, two top officers from the Navy inspected and even got into the sub and were highly impressed with its capabilities.

The test went well; nothing leaked and it did have power to reach the surface at full speed.

Members of the team went to Washington DC to expand the program and build more subs. But the man who was number two to the CNO said no. He did not want to fragment the Navy into a seven part – from surface, subs, carriers and both nuclear and conventional.

After the rejection, the team was disbanded. Dick's replacement was given office space for two file cabinets even though Dick had accumulated 16 file cabinets worth of information. The submarine was sent to Kaneohe, Hawaii, and disappeared.

China Lake was started up in 1943 as a response to the German advances in rocketry. We were transporting troops across the Mediterranean near the African coastline. The Germans sunk six in November alone. The biggest loss was the *HMT Rohna* on November 26th which was kept secret for 50 years.

Engineers at China Lake developed the Deep Jeep, CURV and Swimmer devices. One of these was used to recover the hydrogen bomb dropped off of Palomares, Spain.

Dick had served in the military in the China-Burma-India theatre building the Ledo Road. He lives in Ridgecrest and still serves as a docent at the Museum. Both he and Bob Ianello urged members and friends to tour the Museum.



May 15, 2008

Bob Zeman (#878)

First Vice President **Paul Isley** came up with another good program tonight.

But first **Richard Venola** gave us a recap of his four hunting trips in the last three months. He went to North Dakota for a bison hunt. He had to walk on frozen ground.

He then went to two ranches in Texas. The Stasney-Cook Ranch had javelinas and the owner makes most of his money off of oil revenues which he donates to the Episcopal Church. The other ranch was classy and near Corpus Christi. He hunted turkeys.

But his big trip was to Namibia. There is lots of plains game and snakes. He saw a 13-foot python and killed a puff adder on his porch. He also killed a giraffe. A rogue elephant was coming out of the National Park and eating farmers's crops. A notice was put out to hunters with a \$20,000 price tag. One said yes and after two days killed the elephant. The food went to the natives and the money went to the government and the locals and the hunter got some nice photos.

Bob Oberto went free diving for abalone in Bodega Bay. He got his limit of three each day. They were seven-inch reds. But all must be tagged.

Roger Haft, Jim Heaton, Reda Anderson, Steve Peterman and **Bob Silver** all visited with **Nick Batterslee** who his taking his Humvee to the South Pole.

Dave Finnern will do some diving in Lake Tahoe and then go to the Tonopah Dump for a dig.

Bob Zeman is leaving for two weeks in the Four Corners area. He will be going to a slot canyon, exploring for artifacts on a private ranch in Utah and hiking a part of the Colorado Trail.

Steve Bein donated a photo book, knife and a panorama of Arches National Park for the NOHA auction.

Aviation Safety

Mike Barr graduated from the Naval Academy and then flew 150 missions for the Air Force in Vietnam. At 5-6 he was too short for the Navy but two inches above the minimum for the Air Force.

Mike is now a professor of aviation safety at USC and is proud of the fact that 80% of all aviation safety investigators have gone through the USC program.

He was concerned that due to budget constraints, the FAA had cut back on inspections and asked the airlines to self-monitor. This did not work and the whistle blowers came in. American Airlines cancelled 300 flights recently to do inspections.

Mike noted that 24% of fatal airplane accidents are due to runway excursions but only .4% are due to runway incursions. He was concerned that airports are running 30% over capacity at times and that maintenance is being outsourced to foreign countries.

He brought up Sikorsky which went 14 years without an accident then had three in 18 months. The cause was overheating of ball bearings. A warning device with a light was installed.

A culture that focuses on blame and an open reporting culture cannot co-exist.

(Minutes continued on page 16)

Pierre Odier inquired about a flight in Gawatti, Assam, India in which he was the only foreigner among 89 passengers. Mike knew about the accident and said the pilot went to jail. The passengers were held on board for an hour but all were saved.

Flying is not dangerous. But Mike will not fly on a regional airline in bad weather. Outsourcing maintenance is all right with Mike if the FAA inspectors are there to insure that work has been done correctly.



May 29, 2008

Bob Aronoff (#837)

Gregory Frazier rode down from Montana on his bike to give the Club this program tonight. He has a Ph D in economics and once ran a company with 130



Greg Frazier - Biker

employees.

One day he was dealing with various business matters and saw a rider go by on his bike. He junked the work-a-day world,

he says, to be on the open road.

Greg has written twelve books, producing documentary films and videos on motorcycles, and written articles for various motorcycle riding magazines world. Furthermore, he said he normally charges \$2,000 to present the program we saw tonight. Otherwise, as a Native American, he's entitled to all the rights of an American Indian. He lives on the Crow Reservation about 52 miles from Hardin, Montana.



On the Tropic of Capricorn

The first around the world trip by motorcycle occurred in 1913. When Greg made his first ATW trip in 1980, about one hundred had done so. Now well over 200 have done it. The quickest world record is sixteen days. Guinness sets the criteria. Getting involved with law enforcement voids time altogether. Time is suspended at the point you put your bike on a ship or airplane for delivery enroute; time resumes as soon as you retrieve your bike. Greg holds the record for the number of times around the world, currently at four. He's working on a fifth trip.

Trip #1 – Greg was simply looking for good roads to ride his bike and ended up with an ATW trip. He said New Zealand

is a biker's paradise. He spent four years traveling before he came back home.

Trip #2 – A north-south trip, from Prudhoe Bay (Alaska) to Ushuaia (Argentina). His costs ran about \$200 a day.

Trip #3 – Greg decided to using a bike for each continent made on that continent. For North America, it was an Indian (now out of business). For South America it was Amazonas, a Brazilian 16 cc bike. A BMW was for Europe, a Bullet for India, and a Honda 250 cc for the rest of Asia. Back in the USA, he ended up on a Harley-Davidson. Greg prefers a low tech bike as they are easier to handle and repair on the road.

Trip #4 – 3-4 months in the preparation. Greg did a lot of camping to keep his costs down, ate in farmer markets, and occasionally some nights people took him in.

Trip #5 – still happening. Greg was approached by a 63-year old woman with



Greg in the Sahara Desert

Parkinson's Disease. She offered to finance his next ATW if she could go along. He told her it would cost her an estimated \$100,000. They reached an agreement, but Greg laid down some rules: he makes all decisions, no complaints about toilets, it would be a platonic relationship and if her

Parkinsons became an issue, the trip was over. She had one rule of her own: no womanizing for Greg on the trip. She mortgaged her home to raise the money. They are fourteen months and 31,000 miles into the trip.



Greg in Chile

They do one leg at a time. They ended up in Hong Kong for a few days on this last leg, with Greg saying that his companion liked to shop. He said, "I'm a country boy and I want to stay out of cities and hit the open road."

Daily costs for the next leg through South America will be \$150-200 a day the way they are traveling. There are definite fixed costs on an ATW journey: fuel, road tolls, visas, medical insurance, unforeseen matters (bribes, paying off police who might stop them) are fixed expenses before they even go the first mile. His travel companion is now 68 years old, but she's game to move into the next leg to complete her ATW.

Greg says the best bike is whichever one you feel the most comfortable riding. If you go on an ATW trip, whatever you pay for your bike, be ready to lose it – the bike breaks down, is stolen, crashes, and so on.

He owns six Indians, but rides a Kawasa-

(Minutes continued on page 18)

ki because they now sponsor him. English is his main language, but he has picked up a smattering of Spanish and German. He can say “toilet” and “beer” in twenty-four languages.



Greg in Japan

Greg also commented wryly that bikes don't like sand, snow or water – while showing his bike disabled in such conditions. In some countries, he wasn't granted entry although non-American bikers were granted entry. China wants a \$10,000 entry fee (for any biker) plus you have one or two guides that must accompany you all the time and can only go where they take you. Greg is uninterested in paying \$10,000, and would never allow anyone to restrict his routing, so he'll never enter China on his bike he said with a resigned sigh.

Greg had a number of biker admirers as guests of the Club for his presentation. These people dream and yearn to do what Greg has done, and treat Greg as their personal hero.

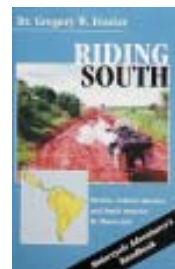
We had a nice turnout numbering around 45 members. As I left the Club, I saw a different Greg who appeared very different from the person I'd seen on stage. He was

totally dressed in a bright yellow slicker outfit – easily seen – zipped up right to his chin, with a yellow helmet. It was quite a contrast from his business attired stage presence. He mounted his steed – a maroon-red Kawasaki parked on the street right in front of the Club's entrance – and was off “on the road” again.

Incidentally, this program was “discovered” by Steve Bein three to four years ago, and followed up by Paul Isley who managed to snare Greg, according to Greg, by promising him a free dinner if he came down from Montana to show us his trips.

Below are four of Greg's recent books.

See this month's book review for a review of his best selling *Riding the World*.



June 5, 2008*Bob Zeman (#878)*

Robert DeMott hosted the recent board meeting on Catalina Island. He and **Paul Isley** flew as passengers on a Cessna 172 piloted by **P. J. Isley**.

Bob Silver said that **Ken Senter** went to Tuva with **Dave Reed** and two others. Tuva is a semi-autonomous republic north of Mongolia. They did some trekking, climbing, and adventuring there.

Jay Foonberg wants to sky dive for his 73rd birthday. Jay returned from a trip to the western Pacific and donated a small vial of sand from Iwo Jima for the NOHA auction.

Bob Zeman returned from 10 days of hiking in the four corners area. He did day hikes to Animas Peak, Colorado Trail, Natural Bridges, Escalante petrified forest and Montezuma Canyon. He was near the place where the last of the dead bad guys was found from the 1998 manhunt.

Dave Dolan is promoting the Explorers Club dinner on June 21st at the Bowers Museum. Attendees will view the Terra Cota exhibit of the Chinese soldiers and hear **Don Walsh** and Stephanie Powers speak. Stephanie promotes the William Holden Wildlife Center in Kenya. Daniel Bennett, president of the Explorers' Club chapter of New York, will also attend. Cost is \$125.

Rick Flores said that preparations are moving along well for our own Night of High Adventure on October 19, 2008 at the Sheraton Delfina in Santa Monica. Get your tickets early.

Reda Anderson is also promoting an event on July 26th with Nick Baggerly who drove his vehicle around the world.

Diving the Titanic

Always entertaining and truly adventurous Reda Anderson told her story of diving on the Titanic.

She got a call from our late esteemed Ralph White to dive the wreck to which she gave a flat out no. But Ralph persisted and she agreed to go on a boat ride with her 11-year old granddaughter, Melody.



Titanic left Southampton on April 10, 1912 and steamed to a point 380 south of St. Johns, Newfoundland and east of New York City where it hit an iceberg.

Reda and Ralph's trip was on the Russian ship Keldysh which took two days to reach the site from St. Johns. Keldysh carries a crew of 83 and two Mir submersibles. Each submersible is 27 feet long, 12 and a half feet wide and 9 feet high. Inside the diameter is about six feet and it can hold three people.

The ship spent five days over the wreck and there was one dive per day. Reda finally decided to go for it on the last day. Melody wanted to go also but the risk was too

(Minutes continued on page 20)

(Minutes continued from page 19)

much. So Reda took along a Scooby doll. In addition, they took along a number of Styrofoam cups which would be carried on the outside arm of the Mir and shrink due to 5,300 psi pressure at 12,000 feet below the ocean's surface.

The Mir is lifted off the mother ship by 18 steel cables and pushed out with the aid of a small boat. The temperature inside was 95 degrees to start but dropped to about 35 degrees Fahrenheit at the bottom. She had on a thin and comfortable wetsuit.

The trip down takes two and a half hours and four hours are spent on the bottom before a two hour ride up and 45 minutes to get out. First there is the sunlight zone, then the twilight zone and then the dark zone. She saw many luminescent creatures and a big red jellyfish. The submersible is not tethered to the ship.

The Titanic split in two and the front hydroplaned down, landing about a half mile in front of the stern which went straight down. Reda could see much debris from toilets to cups, to bags, to parts of items. The bottom is a smooth sandy ooze.

At the place where the wheel used to be are 9 or 10 plaques from previous expeditions. The Mir is quite maneuverable and it toured up and down both sections of the wreck. To aid in rising, the Mir has four systems including pumping water out of the ballast, dropping weights and dropping batteries.



June 12, 2008

Bob Zeman (#878)

The Bobs started the meeting. **Robert DeMott** welcomed all in attendance. **Bob Walters** is back from southwest Washington. There was a late winter and it was snowing in the Cascades.

Bob Oberto returned from Bavaria working with the German space agency studying global warming.

And **Bob Zeman** presented the first draft of the inventory of the Club trophies. Anyone who has input on the origin, donor or background of any trophy should contact Bob.

Roger Haft is going to Boston for an adventure we hope.

Jerry Robinson is going with his wife and daughters to Sydney, Brisbane, the Great Barrier Reef and a bromeliad show. **Paul Isley** will join Jerry at the show.

Shane Berry donated two books on magic by **John Booth** to the NOHA auction. He also donated two other books.

Jim Heaton is selling tickets to NOHA and the speakers expect to be finalized in a few weeks.

Our guest was **Charles Carmona** who dabbles in gemstones. There is an old tourmaline mine in Pala in northern San Diego County in which amateurs dig around.

Sign up for the trip to the Long Beach aquarium on July 12th. One can take a late afternoon tour, then eat dinner and hear a presentation by the director.

Visiting War-Torn Areas

Virginia Hunter introduced her friend **Sara Terry**, a photojournalist who goes into war-torn areas after the troops have moved out. They met at a photographers'

(Minutes continued on page 21)

Forthcoming Programs

- June 5, 2008 – “Diving to the Titanic” Reda Anderson
- June 12, 2008 – “War is only half the story” Sara Terry
- June 19, 2008 – **LADIES’ NIGHT** – “Diving the Marianas Trench” Don Walsh
- June 26, 2008 – “Robotics in extreme environments” Alberto Behar
- July 3, 2008 – DARK
- July 10, 2008 – **LADIES’ NIGHT** – “Long Beach Aquarium – A living jewel for SoCal” Jerry Schnubel
- July 12, 2008 – **SPECIAL EVENT** – “Evening at the Long Beach Aquarium”
- July 17, 2008 – “Junk raft to Hawaii” Jeanne Gallagher
- July 24, 2008 – “The threat of asteroids hitting Earth” Paul Weissman
- July 31, 2008 – “Reality based combat” Jim Wagner
- August 8, 2008 – “First submarine to the bottom of the Red Sea” Mike Sanders
- August 14, 2008 – “The biggest giant squid” Scott Cassell

(Ultimate Adventurer continued from page 5)

conference in Santa Fe.

Sara’s father was a space scientist who worked on the Gemini and Apollo programs. Her photos have been published in the Christian Science Monitor and other media and she is a friend of member Bill Morse.

The war in Bosnia lasted three and a half years from 1992 to 1995 and was settled by the Dayton Peace Accords. Sara arrived six weeks later to view body bags, wheelchair basketball and other devastation. In the valley near Sarajevo, the Serbs killed 10,000 civilians.

But the famed bridge at Mostar has been rebuilt and jumpers jump 80 feet into water with a depth of 25 feet. She showed the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Medjugore. The dedication of the Muslim memorial was moving and many Muslim widows were bowing.

Sara has been to Laos, Sierra Leone, Cambodia, Haiti, Argentina and Uganda.

The war in Sierra Leone went on for 11 years and was caused by big economic corruption and political differences between those in the north-east and the rest of the country.

Amazingly, there has been much forgiveness by the victims to the perpetrators in Sierra Leone and other African countries. Sara witnessed a two-day ceremony with dancing, performances and a bonfire in which the forgiveness takes place.

A trial is continuing against the 10 worst instigators of the conflict including Charles Taylor of neighboring Liberia. But the cost of the trial is close to \$500 million with no convictions yet.

Problems continue in Uganda with the Lords Resistance Army where Joseph Konye backed out of the peace agreements.



The
Adventurers' Club News
PO Box 31226
Los Angeles CA 90031

FIRST CLASS MAIL

May/June 2008