



# E-SLATE

## American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS)

### EDITORIAL NOTE – March 2015

Welcome to the March E-Slate. In this edition we continue our new article series, *Do You Know*, have a letter from the President, include updates on the strategic planning process, AAUS Instructor renewals, rebreather workshop, 2014 statistic submissions, and open nominations for the 2015 BOD elections and Conrad Limbaugh award. We welcome news, announcements, job postings, program highlights and images of underwater work at [aaus@disl.org](mailto:aaus@disl.org). Current and past issues of the E-Slate are available at [www.aaus.org](http://www.aaus.org).

### Do You Know...

Thank you to all who participated in the recent strategic planning surveys. Initial review of these surveys indicated that many AAUS members were either unaware of, or misunderstood some member benefits or AAUS policies/procedures. In an attempt to increase awareness and provide clarification, we will be including a targeted informational article in each month's E-Slate. If you would like to see specific issues or questions addressed, please send them to the AAUS office for consideration.

### Institutional Pricing

As a benefit to our Organizational Members and their scientific divers, a number of equipment manufacturers have generously extended special pricing discounts to AAUS members. Oceanic, Hollis, Shearwater, and Nautilus Lifeline are currently participating in this program.

Follow the link below to see more details about these vendor discounts. Note, that you must be logged into your Organizational Member Profile to download and view the price lists. As such, you must contact your DSO or other authorized OM representative to view these pages. Also note that all orders must be placed through the OM DSO.

More information is available at

[https://secure.aaus.org/institutional\\_pricing](https://secure.aaus.org/institutional_pricing)

Thanks to these manufacturers for their generosity!



### Letter from the President

This has been an exciting month with a significant amount of activity within the AAUS Board of Directors and the science diving community. I recently returned from an extremely productive three-day AAUS strategic planning workshop on Catalina Island, which was followed by what was by all accounts a spectacularly successful rebreather workshop and symposium co-sponsored by the National Park Service, NOAA, DAN, and the AAUS. Reports on both of these events are included in this issue of the E-Slate. The Board of Directors has been and will continue to be extremely busy with refining, costing-out, and prioritizing the strategic plan; other time-sensitive issues on the table include recent requests that the AAUS weigh in on the OSHA vs. Landry's case. As always, the Board is also engaged in the usual business of keeping the lights on: gathering statistics, vetting new Organizational Members, fundraising, scholarships, working with Symposium organizers, and communicating with members.

I am constantly impressed and inspired by the dedication with which your all-volunteer Board of Directors works for this community, and I'd like to extend my personal thanks to the standing Board, past members, and to the members of the strategic planning committee for all of their past and continuing efforts. I also want to gratefully acknowledge Thom Skalko's invaluable assistance throughout the strategic planning process and for steering the committee in productive and collegial discussion as facilitator at our recent workshop. The staff of the Wrigley Marine Science Center on Catalina did a magnificent job of hosting, and, as always, none of this would be possible without Heather Fletcher! I can't thank her anywhere near enough for all she does for the Academy.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who participated in the AAUS member and diver surveys. Your input was vital. Communication from membership and stakeholders is key to the planning process and to moving the Academy forward. If you have comments or concerns at any point, please contact the Board. We want to hear from you.

### NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### AAUS BOD Call for Nominations

The 2015 AAUS Nominating Committee is now accepting nominations of individual members to stand for election for President-elect, Secretary, and one Director-at-Large position on the AAUS Board of Directors. Commencing on January 01, 2016 the elected Director-at-Large candidate will

serve one three-year term, President-elect and Secretary serve two-year terms. An electronic poll will open on May 01 and close June 30, 2015. Instructions and information at [www.aaus.org/announcements#2015nominations](http://www.aaus.org/announcements#2015nominations)

### **AAUS Instructor Renewal 2015**

Attention AAUS Instructors! It is time for your annual AAUS-ITI Instructor Renewal. You should have already received a renewal package (paper and/or electronic) from ITI. You must renew as an Instructor with International Training (ITI) to maintain status as an AAUS Instructor and to be able to register and certify AAUS divers.

*Paper renewal-* if you received a paper renewal package, you can complete the necessary information and submit the annual instructor renewal fee (\$160) via snail mail.

*Online renewal-* if you did not receive a paper renewal package, or if you prefer to renew online, you may complete this process on the ITI-SDI/TDI website ([www.tdisdi.com](http://www.tdisdi.com)). To do so, login to your Instructor Profile, and then choose 'Tools', 'Renew Membership' from the menu bar. Complete the necessary information and submit the annual instructor renewal fee (\$160) online with a credit card.

#### *Facility Renewal-*

As an AAUS instructor you must submit a paper [Facility Renewal Form](#) if you are the primary instructor/facility administrator at your AAUS facility but a fee\* will not be charged this year.

If you are an AAUS instructor and the primary instructor/facility administrator at an SDI/TDI Training facility, you must submit a separate paper [Facility Renewal Form](#) for that SDI/TDI training facility but a fee\* will not be charged this year.

*\*A facility renewal fee is only required if you are an AAUS instructor and the primary SDI/TDI instructor/facility administrator at an industry/retail facility.*

Specific questions regarding the annual renewal process or online interface should be directed to ITI. General questions about the AAUS Certification Program should be directed to the AAUS Certification program coordinator (Chris Rigaud, [crigaud@maine.edu](mailto:crigaud@maine.edu)) or the AAUS office (Heather Fletcher, [aaus@disl.org](mailto:aaus@disl.org)).

### **AAUS Member Statistics Submission**

It is time for submission of organizational member (OM) 2014 scientific diving statistics to the AAUS database. Even if your OM is using the web based dive log system, you must still print out a summary report, review it for accuracy, and submit it to the website below. OMs admitted in 2014 are not required to submit stats for 2014 but if you have them for the full year and would like to submit contact Jim Hayward

([ucbdiver@berkeley.edu](mailto:ucbdiver@berkeley.edu)) or Mike Dardeau ([mdardeau@disl.org](mailto:mdardeau@disl.org)). Statistics are due Jan 1 and are late after Apr 1. Please visit [stats.diveaaus.com](http://stats.diveaaus.com) to submit your stats.

### **2015 Conrad Limbaugh Award Nominations**

Nominations are now open for the 2015 Conrad Limbaugh Memorial Award for Scientific Diving Leadership. This award is presented annually to an individual who has made a significant contribution to diving safety and diving leadership on behalf of the scientific diving community. It is open to any past or present member of AAUS. Nominations are sought from the AAUS general membership, and selected candidates are voted for by the AAUS general membership. Current BOD members are not eligible during their term of office.

Please complete the online submission form at [www.aaus.org/conrad\\_limbaugh](http://www.aaus.org/conrad_limbaugh) or submit the names and contact information for nominees, along with a one-paragraph justification, to John Heine, AAUS Awards Committee, by email to: [jheine@ucsd.edu](mailto:jheine@ucsd.edu). Nominations close March 31, 2015. A list of previous awardees can be viewed on the submission web page.

### **New DSO Orientation**

This program is designed to provide an orientation for new Diving Safety Officers and for existing DSOs who would like more information and an update on particulars of running an AAUS Diving Safety Program at their respective institutions or organizations. Also open to non AAUS organizations who would like more information about AAUS. This one day workshop will be held at Northeastern University's Marine Science Center on April 27, 2015. The cost is \$100. Registration is now open at [www.aaus.org/2015\\_spring\\_new\\_dso\\_orientation](http://www.aaus.org/2015_spring_new_dso_orientation).

### **AAUS Strategic Planning meeting**

The AAUS Strategic Planning Committee\* recently met at the Boone Conference Center on Catalina Island for a facilitated three-day workshop and planning session to reaffirm, refine, and refocus the Academy's vision, mission, and goals, and to direct the Board's activities for the next five years. This meeting followed a year-long process of soliciting and analyzing input from membership and stakeholders (results of [survey 1](#) and [survey 2](#)). Based on this input and the outcomes of the strategic planning session, the current Board does not anticipate a major shift in its purposes and goals within the next five years; the strategic planning process identified many of the same issues as previous Boards, and the current plan is built upon and strengthened by these earlier efforts.

The primary pillars or goals identified by the planning committee are as follows. The current order does not imply prioritization.

Ensure Scientific Diving Program Quality Control, through continued vetting and implementation of the Organizational Member Scientific Diving Accreditation Program, improving understanding and communication of AAUS diving standards, and development of improved program management tools.

Improve Collaboration between the AAUS and Stakeholders, through expanding member services and increasing communication.

Promote Scientific Diving Education, through enhanced certification of divers, development of a certification process for DSOs, adding value to the Symposium, utilizing a wide range of media, and maintaining the AAUS scholarship program.

Ensure AAUS Revenue Stream and Resources through a variety of means, including facilitating the function and presence of the AAUS Foundation, securing external funding, reviewing Organizational Member and Individual Member dues, and increasing number of individual members.

Ensure Efficient Operations of the AAUS, through establishing a full-time benefitted position for the Office Manager.

Advocating for the Scientific Diving Community, by maintaining and distributing statistics and representing the interests of scientific diving in the legal/regulatory community.

The committee also identified strategies, timelines, and individuals who will spearhead these efforts. The full Strategic Plan will be vetted through the Board of Directors, who will cost out and prioritize the different initiatives. The plan will be finalized at the April meeting of the Board in Boston in April 2015. Following the meeting, the plan will go out to membership for a 60-day comment period, after which the Board will make any necessary additions or changes. Throughout this process the Board will continue working to refine and revise the plan based on member input, and we will have a full five-year plan in place for presentation to the membership at the AAUS Symposium in Key West in September 2015.



*\*Present at the Catalina planning meeting:* Mike Dardeau, Heather Fletcher, Rick Gomez, Jim Hayward, Elliott Jessup, Liz Kintzig, Pema Kitaeff, Amy Moran, Narineh Nazarian, Lora Pride, Chris Rigaud, Steve Sellers, Thom Skalko, Tim

White. *On the planning committee but not able to attend Catalina meeting:* George Peterson, Jen Smith, Diana Steller

### **OSHA vs. Landry's**

The AAUS Board of Directors has recently received two inquiries, one from the Pacific Northwest DSOs group and one from Landry's Aquarium, regarding an AAUS Organizational Member and pending OSHA litigation.

In response to these inquiries the AAUS BoD has initiated the following process:

1. 2/19/15: Sent acknowledgement to both groups stating we are aware of the situation and it is under active consideration.
2. Continuing factfinding process and reaching out to stakeholders to determine the best course of action.
3. Advisory Committee consisting of past AAUS Presidents tasked with evaluating specific responses and making a recommendation to the BoD.
4. The BoD will evaluate input and develop an appropriate response. Target date: May 2015.

### **Rebreathers and Scientific Diving Training Workshop**

*Steve Sellers, National Park Service*

From my perspective, the Rebreathers and Scientific Diving Training Workshop conducted February 16-20, 2015 at Wrigley Marine Science Center on Catalina Island was an overwhelming success. The topics covered and the input from the 50+ participants exceeded expectations and continued to strengthen the foundation for the use of this technology within the scientific diving community. The guidance information generated from the meeting will include recommendations for future initiatives to address a number of clearly important topics that could not be resolved in this forum.

While I have been given the credit for initiating this most recent effort regarding rebreathers in scientific diving, I want to acknowledge there were others on the organizing team who, in my opinion, did much more than me to make this program a success. I wish to personally thank: the National Park Service for allowing me to pursue the concept of bringing this group together. Dave Conlin and Brett Seymour, your support and input really helped sharpen the focus leading up to the training workshop. Greg McFall and NOAA, without you involved this would not have happened, or if it had the results would have been greatly diminished. Amy Moran and the AAUS Board of Directors, thank you for providing funding to help address issues that fall beyond the pale for the support available from agencies like NPS and NOAA, and thank you, thank you, thank you for the loan of the immense talents of AAUS Office Manager Heather Fletcher. There is no possible way we would have met the aggressive time line we set for this effort without her help, guidance and input. Divers Alert Network provided both

funding and support that continue to demonstrate DAN's commitment to diving and diving safety, and was a lynchpin in the success of this workshop.

To the other presenters (Simon Mitchel, Neal Pollock, Richard Pyle, Phil Short, Liz Kintzing, Jeff Bozanic, Doug Kesling, Jeff Godfrey, and Brett Seymour), thank you for the fantastic slate of presentations, your time and effort leading up to the program, and thank you in advance for your continued work to submit your manuscripts for the timely release of the proceedings. Thank you also to the attending participants for your questions and insights during the training, your willingness to engage during the straw-man session, and for your quick and timely feedback when the draft straw-man results are circulated for review and comment.



*Photo courtesy of Greg McFall*

Kim Farkas, thank you for your talents as stenographer and your willingness to work us into your busy schedule. Next time around we will see about the installation of rheostats for some of the participants to enable you to slow down their rapid fire delivery and reduce the risk of hand cramps.

A special thanks to our hosts, Wrigley Marine Science Center. Director Marinelli, whatever you are paying your folks for their efforts on behalf of the Center, I can assure you they earn it and more. I can think of no better venue for this workshop and would highly recommend others to contact the Center for similar efforts. Eric Castillo, Gordon Boivin, Karen Erickson, Karl Huggins, Juan Aguilar, Mark Van Liew, Jose Platas, Sean Conner, thank you and any other staff members I have unintentionally left out for the care and feeding of our group, and your willing flexibility with logistics in all phases of the process leading up to, during, and after our time there. The title of world class cat herders only begins to describe your talents.

Neal Pollock and Jeff Godfrey, I am not sure I possess the words to properly thank you for your efforts regarding this workshop. I am honored to have worked with you on this and

would gladly do so again on anything you would have me at the table on.

To the greater community, things are coming out of this effort that rebreather divers and non-rebreather divers will find useful and informative. Plans are shaping up for follow-up efforts and related presentations at the AAUS symposium this fall. I would encourage you to watch for these, place them on your calendar and participate if you can.

### **Update on Pressed Steel Tanks (PST)**

DEMA has received numerous calls regarding the impending expiration of the Special Permit from the US Department of transportation (DOT) under which Pressed Steel Tanks were produced. The Special Permit was issued in 2011 and expired on January 31, 2015. DEMA has been in contact with the DOT and, working with Professional Scuba Inspectors ([www.pscylinders.com](http://www.pscylinders.com)), has obtained a copy of the NEW Special Permit which expires in 2018. This means that all PST tanks with the neck stamped with SP9791 or E9791 which are visually inspected and within hydrostatic test date are valid and may be filled (or hydrostatically tested as needed). For more information, see this [Special Permit](#) on DEMA's website.

## **STUDENT OPPORTUNITES**

### **Ecology & Conservation of Kelp Forest Communities**

Hopkins Marine Station, Stanford University in Pacific Grove, California is offering an intensive, hands-on course, June 22 – July 24, 2015, that uses daily SCUBA dives, lectures, & labs to study the biology & ecology of invertebrates, fishes, and seaweeds that live in these "rain forests of the sea". Students gain practical diving/research skills including identification of species, use of a variety of underwater sampling techniques, statistical analysis of field data. Must be SCUBA certified (Advanced/Open Water II) and have own diving gear (AAUS Scientific Diver Certification is not required but desirable). Application deadline is April 15, 2015. Application available

<http://hopkins.stanford.edu/applications.html>

For more information contact [watanabe@stanford.edu](mailto:watanabe@stanford.edu) or [judy@stanford.edu](mailto:judy@stanford.edu).



### **Coral Reef Ecology Field Course**

The 2015 Korallion Lab ([www.korallionlab.com](http://www.korallionlab.com)) coral reef ecology field course will be held August 13-22 and August 22-31, 2015. This course is designed to provide students of any level with a sound foundation in ecological concepts, survey techniques and experimental design in field research applied to coral reef ecosystems. Please email Dr. Michael

Sweet at [m.sweet@derby.ac.uk](mailto:m.sweet@derby.ac.uk) for any scientific issue regarding the course. For any other information on the course and availability please email [info@korallionlab.com](mailto:info@korallionlab.com).

### **MTS 2015 Scholarships**

Marine Technology Society is pleased to announce 2015 opportunities for students that are interested in marine engineering and/or marine technology. Please visit the MTS website for detailed information, including application requirements. [www.mtsociety.org/education/scholarships.aspx](http://www.mtsociety.org/education/scholarships.aspx)

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Danbury Dive Medicine Conference**

The fifth annual Danbury Medicine Conference at Danbury Hospital, Connecticut will be April 11, 2015. The diving community meets with the medical community and first responders to discuss the many aspects of Diving Medicine and Diving Safety. For more information contact [Raquel.Rodriguez@wcthn.org](mailto:Raquel.Rodriguez@wcthn.org)

#### **CCSDA 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Diving Symposium**

The Coastal Carolina Scientific Diving Association will hold its 6<sup>th</sup> annual Scientific Diving Symposium on Friday, March 27, 2015, hosted by the North Carolina Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores. The symposium is held annually and is open to all scientific divers, scientists, and educators who work in or around Carteret County, NC and contribute to expanding knowledge of marine and estuarine environments. Symposium goals are to allow scientific divers to meet and exchange information with other divers on methods, techniques, and research that requires the use of SCUBA; to share knowledge of safer and more efficient diving and research methods; and to educate non-diving scientists and educators about ways SCUBA diving might enhance their success. If you are interested in attending or presenting, register and/or submit your abstract at <http://goo.gl/forms/oFpUIXRHQ1> by March 13, 2015. For more information, visit <http://ccsda.blogspot.com> or email [ccsda.info@gmail.com](mailto:ccsda.info@gmail.com).

#### **NBDHMT DMT Courses at Aquarius Reef Base**

Aquarius Reef Base's DMT training program, to be held March 30-April 4, 2015, provides a focused didactic and practical training that addresses recognition, stabilization and treatment of decompression and other diving-related injuries. These topics represent core curriculum, as does the necessary invasive skills that permit optimal medical management. Additional course content includes decompression procedures, chamber operations, and marine life injuries. All training will take place at the Reef Base shore facility in Islamorada, Florida. More information at <http://www.aaus.org/announcements#NBDHMT DMT>

### **JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Full information and application instructions for the following jobs can be found at [www.aaus.org/job\\_board](http://www.aaus.org/job_board)

#### **Reef Check Foundation**

*Southern California Volunteer Coordinator*

The mission of the American Academy of Underwater Sciences is to facilitate the development of safe and productive scientific divers through education, research, advocacy, and the advancement of standards for scientific diving practices, certifications, & operations.

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