

HUPS December 2010 Holiday Party

Monday December 6, 2010

By Jim Mensay

Yes, this is a cut and paste from last year's (and the year before's) newsletter, only the date has changed. Put everything else on hold for an evening and come share some food, fun, fotos, fellowship, and stories. This will be our annual HUPS Holiday Pot Luck Dinner. We will eat some good food, view the Best of HUPS photo contest and have an opportunity to visit with fellow HUPS members. HUPS will provide the meat and if you have not already signed up to bring a food dish please contact Mary McDonald - mmm5426@yahoo.com.

All present at the meeting will enjoy the Best of HUPS contest. This will be an audience judged contest. We will have the "regular" categories of Advanced, Intermediate and Novice and we will also have the special "creative" contest. This is always a great meeting with many old friends turning out. It will be lots of fun. Be sure to come a little early to help set up.

As usual our meeting will begin at 7 PM- Bayland Community Center - 6400 Bissonnet. A map can be found on the back of this newsletter.

Borneo Recap

By Jim Mensay

Wow! Was this a presentation on a Great destination or a Great lesson on how to plan for a trip, take it, and then show it to others in an entertaining way. Or Both!

December Photo Contest

By Dennis Deavenport

Don't forget that the annual Best of HUPS photo contest takes place at the December meeting. Everyone is encouraged to enter 3 images in the following categories:

Novice
Intermediate
Advanced
Creative

Any image that has not previously won in a Best of HUPS contest or an international contest is eligible so dust off those winning images from the monthly contest or ones that you like but have never entered and send them in.

The Creative contest is an "anything goes" competition. Any image with an Underwater Theme is eligible. Creative editing is not only allowed but is encouraged. The only conditions are that the entries (1) must be taken (or created in some way) by the contestant and (2) must have a general underwater theme. In the past, the entries in this category have been outstanding.

Thanks to Greg & Alicia Grimes for reminding us of all the details to think about and do before we even pack our dive gear and cameras.

This was really a tutorial on "everything you should know and do" to have a successful trip. The slide show was incredible and we left wanting to plan our next trip to Borneo and Sipidan.

Thanks Greg and Alicia for capping off a really Great year!

President's Message

Closing Thoughts

By Tom Collier

HUPS 2010 is now at an end. 2011 will usher in some new officers with exciting new ideas for our club. Our organization is fortunate to have the breath of members willing to devote the time and energy necessary to keep HUPS on the move. But before we talk about the future, let's discuss the past.

The last 3 – 4 years have been very, very good to HUPS. Digital photography continued its explosive growth. Compact digital cameras closed much of the gap that DSLRs enjoyed while the capabilities of DSLR cameras also grew. Plus, u/w housings became readily available for almost any camera you chose. The result was that good pictures were easier to capture by nearly everyone. The catch is that we are mainly interested in u/w photography and no matter what equipment we use, the principles of good u/w photography have not changed very much with technology. Therefore the benefits of HUPS have been in great demand. The officers lucky enough to be in place during this time have done a great job of corralling the energies and maintaining the interest of our membership.

Our past officers and committee chairpersons have created an environment in HUPS for our membership to learn and share their passion for u/w photography. Through venues such as our monthly meetings, workshops, photo contests, organized dive trips and outside events, HUPS has become a staple of interest for those club members who enjoy diving and u/w photography as one of their recreational highlights.

However, we want to avoid the fate of some organizations that grow in popularity and then start to decline and membership interest wanes as the organization gets stuck in a stale routine. New leadership for our club offers the opportunity for new avenues of retaining the interest of our membership. And we will have new leadership aplenty!

Tom

2011 Officers, Directors & Committee Chairpersons

By Tom Collier

Jim Mensay – President. Jim brings his leadership experience of serving the past two years as Vice President and Board member. He also offers up an excellent 'stage presence' that will be a great addition to each of the monthly meetings.

Greg Grimes – Vice President. Greg offers us the possibility of an exciting entry into video presentations at future HUPS meetings. Greg has been the Workshop chairperson for the past two years and will also continue in that position.

Tom Collier – Treasurer. I promise not to spend it all in one place.

Tammy Allyn – Secretary. I think Tammy has been the secretary since I have been a HUPS member. She has also been a Board

member, Member of the year and Lifetime Achievement award recipient. If it is not broken, don't fix it.

Alicia Grimes – Membership and Newsletter. Alicia is going to assume the duties of the Newsletter Editor as well as continue to be the Membership chairperson.

Mary McDonald – Moody Gardens Photo Gallery. Mary is going to assume the Chairperson duties of this important committee. The Moody Gardens photo gallery has been an exciting aspect of HUPS during 2010 and Mary has been an integral part of that success.

Our 2011 Board of Directors will consist of: Jan Baughman, Frank Burek, Dennis Deavenport, Mike Greuter, Kandace Heimer, Ken Knezick, Mary McDonald, Russell Ramsey, Henry Ragland, Mike Fernandez, Sandy Bryan and Wendy McSwain.

With this much interest in our club, how can 2011 not be a successful year for HUPS?

Membership Renewal

By Alicia Grimes

The weather is getting cooler and our thoughts are moving toward the Holidays, family gatherings and end of year chores. One of those more pleasant chores should be your renewal of you and your family's membership to HUPS. This year's membership will be \$35.00 for individuals and \$45.00 for your entire family, which is quite a deal when that includes monthly meeting and presentations as well as specialized workshops, website forum and monthly newsletter. This year you have three ways to renew your membership; the first is, at the next few HUPS meetings, the second is by printing the membership renewal form from the HUPS website at

<http://hups.org/Members%20and%20Officers/Membership%20Application.html>.

and mailing your check to **P.O. Box 270056 Houston, TX 77277**

Or you can even renew with our Paypal link on the website. www.hups.org.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at Alicia@theworldinaflash.com.

Member Spotlight - Joe Nicklo

By Alicia Grimes

I know we are told that as children that there is a time when we must put away our childish things and grow up! But there are those around us, myself included who like to hold out on the grown up stuff as long as possible, those people are called Peter Pans. Our travels this month as promised from our previous article is taking us into the mind of Joe Nicklo, who is proud to admit to being a little bit of a Peter Pan which is not a bad thing.

Joe began his life in a mining town of a population of 3,800 people and his high school graduation class consisted of 27 people total. In 1984 he began diving with his first dive being in the cold Comel River in the Hill Country. As he progresses through his diving career he added photography underwater. His first camera used film and could take a total of 127 shots. Joe is currently using an Olympus 5060 digital as loving it. He is holding out for

the new DSLR until the price comes down along with the housing.

For those of us who know the Joe, we all know that he is blessed with a bit of a wanderlust and that wanderlust has taken him to many amazing places. The part of the world that currently has his heart besides his lovely Lynn is Bali, Bali, has Joe stated” has so many photo opportunities because of its culture”. The HUPS group will get a chance to experience that if you are going on the trip in May 2011. When Joe takes his photography gear underwater he loves to head to Lembeh Straits because of the macro creatures that are living in all kinds of interesting places. The fun part is trying to find them and then getting them to cooperate in order to get that desired shot. He is always on the hunt for a whale shark and well as a Red Lipped Batfish with a mustache these critters so far have not made it into the Nicklo photo album.

Joe has served in many capacities at HUPS and he is a big fan for what HUPS has done for both Lynn and himself. He really enjoys the camaraderie as well as the workshops and mentoring. He advises new members and those who are considering becoming one to join because within no time your photography will really take off and improve. “Hups as Joe stated” is full of people who are just as passionate about photography as their love of the creatures below”.

As in previous interviews in this series I have asked our lifetime members to tell us a great travel story, here is Joe’s. All divers have a fear of being left at a dive site with no boat in sight, this happened to Joe while diving in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Joe was on the Peter Hugh’s Star Dancer doing a shallow dive in Jack’s Jurassic Park a dive site near a small remote island. After enjoying his dive for 90 minutes he surfaced only to realize that the boat was not around in fact it looked to be about 3 miles away. Joe did not panic as he was in shallow water and near an island, but it was decision time. He could swim to the island where they still practice cannibalism or just hang out and hope someone returns for him. In his mind he was thinking I have camera and dive gear that might be of interest to the natives, This he thought might save me from being the “meat in the stew pot”. He had thoughts of the natives dancing around the pot of “ Joe” stew with a smell of onions in the air. Luckily as all of these images danced in his head he saw the boat returning ready to launch a skiff thanks to his dear friend Jesse Cancelmo who sent out the alarm that Joe was not in his cabin, nor at lunch. Here is a lesson for all us - dive with friends as they will always save us from becoming someone’s else’s dinner whether above or below the water. Thanks Joe for your time you provided in this article and we look forward to more stories from your travels in Never Never Land or just our world.

Dive Trip News

By Tom Collier

BALI, INDONESIA

May 27 – June 5, 2011

2 nights in Ubud

7 nights and 6 days of diving at the all inclusive Scuba Seraya Resort

More information available on HUPS forum

\$1,250.00 per person (dbl occp), Airfare not included

Trip leader – Tom Collier

2 spots available

FLORES – ALOR, INDONESIA

June 5 – 15, 2011

Komodo Dancer live-aboard

9 days of adventure diving

\$3,355 per person (dbl occp), Airfare not included

Trip contact – Tom Collier

10 spots available

Final Photocontest Results - 2011		
NOVICE		
1st	Kandace Heimer	670
2nd	Lance Glowacki	586
3rd	John VanAtta	491
4th	Mike Brower	325
5th	Jan Baughman	311
Intermediate		
1st	Kay Collier	698
2nd	Paul McDonald	675
3rd	Debbie Mensay	616
4th	Mike Greuter	614
5th	Jim Mensay	609
ADVANCED		
1st	Jackie Reid	750
2nd	Tom Collier	745
3rd	Ken Knezick	718
4th	Dennis Deavenport	700
5th	Ken Bean	333

Important Dates

Put them on your calendar

December 6

HUPS Meeting - Holiday Dinner pot luck and Best of HUPS Contest

February 7

HUPS Meeting - TBA

April 4

HUPS Meeting - TBA

January 10

HUPS Meeting - Whale Sharks of Holbox, Mexico & Bald Eagles of Alaska - Gary Harris

March 7

HUPS Meeting - TBA

May 2

HUPS Meeting - TBA

Upcoming Monthly Photo Contests

Each month we will have Advanced, Intermediate and Novice contests. For complete contest rules checkout: <http://www.hups.org>

December - Best of HUPS

March - Blue Water

January 2011 - Eyes and/
or Teeth

April - Negative Space

February 2011 - Sea-
horses & Pipefish

May - Odd-shaped Bottom
Dwellers

December Contest

The December contest is the great annual Best of HUPS Contest. See page one of this newsletter for the scoop. You can't win if you don't enter!

Descriptions of all 2011 contest topics and rules can be found on hups.org.

Entries for the monthly contest should be emailed to photocontest@hups.org at least **48 hours prior** to the meeting. This mailbox is reserved for entries only. If you have a question regarding the digital contest send your email to ddeavenport@comcast.net or underh2o@mac.com. Complete contest rules can be found at <http://www.hups.org>. **Please be sure to adhere to the file naming instructions.** If you do not follow all the rules for digital entries your images will not be judged.

Contest Results

November - Wide-angle

Advanced

1st Tom Collier (2 tied)

2nd Dennis Deavenport, Jackie Reid

3rd Dennis Deavenport, Jackie Reid, Ken Knezick

Intermediate

1st Kay Collier

2nd Mike Greuter (2 tied)

3rd Paul McDonald

Novice

1st Kandace Heimer

2nd John VanAtta (2 tied), Kandace Heimer, Lance Glowacki

3rd Kandace Heimer

Thanks to Door Prize Donors

By Tom Collier

A special "Thank You" to the HUPS Holiday Party door prize contributors. So far, this list includes:

Ken Knezick, David Lenderman, Oceanic Ventures, Vickie Brower, Mary McDonald, Sandy Bryan and Kay Collier. We have received a wonderful variety of items and truly appreciate the generosity of our annual contributors as well as the new participants. A complete listing of donors will be in January's newsletter.

HUPS Photo Contest Winners for 2010

By Dennis Deavenport

This year was another good one for the HUPS Photo contest. For the first time, we split up our photographers into 3 groups: Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The old category of Compact Digital was abandoned after 2 years in favor of this new format. It appears that the experiment was a success with a large number of Intermediate contestants entering great images month after month.

In the Novice division, Kandace Heimer won over newcomer Lance Glowacki (2nd) and a hard-charging John VanAtta (3rd). The high quality of the entries in the Novice group just goes to show how well HUPS is doing in fostering underwater photographic skills. Mike Brower took 4th place with Jan Baughman showing well in 5th.

The Intermediate division was hotly contested throughout the year with Kay Collier finally winning by only 23 points over Paul McDonald. The couple of Debbie Mensay (3rd) and Jim Mensay (5th) showed that the contest can be a family affair. Mike Greuter slipped into 4th, just 2 points behind Debbie.

The Advanced contest went back and forth between Ken Knezick (the early leader), Jackie Reid (the last one standing), and Tom Collier (pushing hard at the end). Jackie continued his run of winning or tying for first for well over a decade. Tom was only 5 points off the lead at the finish line but couldn't out-point Jackie for the win. Ken took 3rd place and was consistently in the top throughout the year. Dennis Deavenport finished 4th and our friend from New Zealand, Ken Bean, finished in 5th.

We are looking forward to another successful year in 2011 with new contestants and old stepping up to take their swings.



Intermediate 2nd place - Mike Greuter; © 2010

Attention HUPS members! You have a vested interest in this – It affects your diving and photography!

By Frank Burek

The proposed rules and plan detail, parts of which are discussed below, are on the HUPS web site. Your comments about them can be made directly from the HUPS web site, or by e-mailed to fgbmanagementplan@noaa.gov.

The Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS) has released a draft management plan (DMP) covering the next five to ten years. Part of that plan has also been released as proposed rules. This is the time for you to “weigh in” with your opinion.

The proposed rules (Federal Register/ Vol.75, No. 204 document is referenced) - Last chance to make sure they’re intent and wording is clear.

- 1) Issue - “Rays and Whale Sharks” - Page 65257, II. 4.; page 65258 & 65259, II. D.; page 65260 III. “Regulation to protect rays and whale sharks”, page 65260 & 65261 part 922.121 and 922.122
Our comments – The scope is too expansive. They discuss Mantas but want to cover “all” rays (for example – if while you are passing near a buried sting ray and it decides to move – you have violated a reg.). The normal behavior of these creatures’ is not factored into the violation decision. As proposed, diver/creature interaction is minimized and most of the creatures’ communication clues are considered support for law enforcement charging the diver with a regulation violation (creature making physical contact with diver or boat, etc.). Their definition of “attract or attracting” is OK but the “Summary of the Proposed Revisions”, “Classification”, “Definitions” and “Prohibited” sections need significant corrections for aspects dealing with “touching or disturbing”. Their use of a touching study from Cayman Islands and statement that the loss of energy a creature suffers in these encounters with divers can affect their overall health is really pushing reality.
- 2) Issue – Alpha Flag – Same Federal Register, same pages as above.
Our comments – Most divers don’t recognize the Alpha Flag. Recommend both the Alpha and Diver Down Flags be flown.
- 3) Issue – Same Federal Register, page 65260. The wording in the proposed rules states that “the divers’ experience will not be significantly altered by these rules”.
Our comments – If that is the intent, the regulations need to be reworded to support this “no change in diver experience”. A regulatory observer, who relied only on the information provided by these regulations, would come to conclusions that no experienced diver would. Because of a lack of clarity in the proposed regulations about these creatures behaviors, and specific instructions on how to handle a creature initiated interaction - What is a normal interaction, would be misconstrued as disturbing the creatures. Since the proposed rules do not tell the whole story, the vessel operator and/or divers thus bears the total responsibility.

The DMP - Opportunity to comment before final plans are made and regulations proposed.

- 4) Issue – Sanctuary Expansion - Boundary expansion and modification, with boundaries based on the critical habitat area and a 500-meter buffer zone, includes modifying the existing boundaries of East and West Flower Garden Banks and Stetson Bank, and adding Horseshoe Bank, McGrail Bank, Geyer Bank, Bright Bank, Sonnier Bank, Alderdice Bank, MacNeil Bank, Rankin Bank, and 28 Fathom Bank.
Our comments – Great, Sonnier, Bright and Geyer Banks can provide dive opportunities.
- 5) Issue – Expansion of present mooring system to cover those diving areas.
Our comment – Great! Eliminates anchor damage and increases diving safety.
- 6) Issue - The Vessel registration system and collection on information on actual diver’s (visitor’) use of the FGBNMS. (2 reporting systems)
Our comments – Good, the FGBNMS needs to have actual user information to make sound management decisions.
- 7) Issue - The “Diving Impacts” study.
Our comments – As proposed it would use the mooring buoy areas and compare them with other areas of the banks that have similar depths, but no mooring buoy access. We believe the present mooring buoy system properly managed diving impacts, and therefore we expect no significant findings.

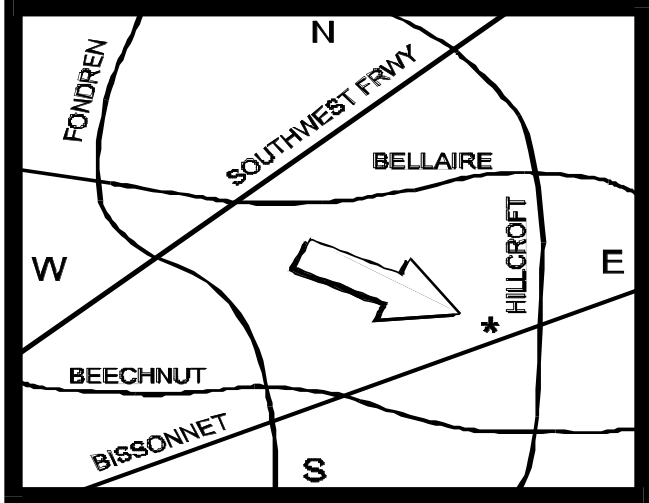
What should you do? You should comment! That lets them know that you are aware and care about what they’re doing.

Tell them whether you support adding these additional banks. Comment on “Rays and Whale Sharks” – Ask for a rewording to better define and limit it to “Manta Rays, Mobula Rays and Whale Sharks”. The proposed rules should also provide proper guidance on breaking off such interaction when they become intrusive or dangerous for these creatures. Failure to follow the “break off guideline” would be a rules infraction, not the creature’s indications (leaving the divers, turning way, moving a short distance away, shuttering, etc.) that it is breaking off contact. The same for when one of these creatures make physical contact (touching) with you - not following a “back off procedure” should be the legal issue, not the fact that the creature made physical contact.

There is a difference between divers swimming along with them verses pursuing or disrupting them. There is a difference between an underwater photographer angling for a picture and pursuing or disturbing these creatures. If this swimming behavior or photographing practice can be misconstrued under the proposed regulations, they need to be rewritten!

The Houston Underwater Photographic Society meets the first Monday of the month at 7:00 PM at Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, near Hillcroft. Social time begins at 6:45. Visitors are always welcome.

*** BAYLAND COMMUNITY CENTER**



<http://www.hups.org>

2010 HUPS Officers

President Tom Collier

Vice President Jim Mensay

Secretary Tammy Allyn

Treasurer Henry Ragland

Membership/Promotions Alicia Grimes

Photo Contest Deavenport

Newsletter David Lenderman

TGCC Rep Frank Burek / Debbie Mensay

Web Master James Heimer

Workshops Greg Grimes

Trip Coordinator - Tom Collier

Historian Frank Burek

Special Events Jan Baughman/Greg Grimes

Board of Directors

Jan Baughman

Frank Burek

Dennis Deavenport

Greg Grimes

Mike Greuter

Kandace Heimer

Ken Knezick

Mary McDonald

Russel Ramsey

**Underwater
Images**

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