Beneath the Sea

A non-Profit, our Mission is Education, our subject:
The Oceans of our World



Those who know the Beneath the Sea show know the stimulus it creates in a diving market awakening after the cold months of winter.

We opened the show on Friday with three well-attended special events. "Butch" Hendrick led his timely Public Safety Divers symposium themed "How to Work Together," drawing a room full of professionals and newcomers.

Next door to Butch, the Diving and Science Symposium gathered First Responders and veterans with the theme: "Bringing Calm to Chaos." This year, the hyperbaric chamber's increasing role in reducing PTSD has attracted the men and women who work on the front lines of these problems.

Cylindex taught a course on cylinder safety at Beneath the Sea. Friday for the Cylinder Assessment Technician (C.A.T.) course—HAZMAT-, OSHA-, and DOT-compliant training with interactive eLearning and hands-on instruction.

Capping the special Friday events was Beneath the Sea's own Marine Careers Day. One hundred and twenty plus high school and college students attend a day of talks from dive professionals, resort owners, and educators on how to prepare oneself for a marine career and, the all-important, how to get a job. There were hands-on activities on how to work on material underwater in low-light conditions; then, the future and the application of robotics and their management in underwater situations. Smiles and participation are Beneath the Sea's reward for this daylong get-together, and we are still basking in the glow of that Friday. A glow, we found in the "Thank you, see you next year," goodbyes.

Well received too was our Friday night fund-raising Champagne reception and dinner, hosted by our own Maria Hults, Show Producer, who presented Captain "Bobbie" Scholley, USN (ret.), our Legend of the Sea, Peter Hughes, Diving Pioneer, and Divers of the Year: Mary Connelly, Anna & Ned DeLoach, and John Stella. Maria has a light touch, and the formality of the occasion did not chill the warmth of the party and its friendships.

We opened our doors on Saturday for the main Beneath the Sea event. We had a floor of expectant exhibitors, mermaids who wanted to display their pearl-diving skills, an Ocean Pals Pavilion waiting for interested children to tour the porpoise training facility, hear sea stories, color tidal animals, and similar events. But it was the expectant exhibitors we were most concerned about. This is to be expected. We are an organization of volunteers who have created Beneath the Sea these past 47 years out of our love for diving and the local dive community, and to support our Scholarship fund. Fingers crossed, we held our breath as the doors opened.

People came. Divers came. Our seminars were full, our speakers pleased, our staff pressed to every corner of the Meadowlands Exposition Center, running all those errands that keep a staff busy during a busy show time. Yes, it was not the swarming crowds of 8,000 we had hoped for, but it was a respectable showing of attendees that spoke well for the continuing health of scuba and adventure here in the northeast.

The important question was: What do the Exhibitors think? Delightedly, both Scubapro and Huish had decided to exhibit. Major manufacturers are always important at a dive show. So we asked our exhibitors how their show was. What we heard was: "It was a good show for us. The people we spoke with were involved, interested, they were divers, they traveled, and we wrote business."

Those are the words every showman wants to hear: "We wrote business."

Saturday night's Awards Banquet was hosted by Barry Lipsky, President, LIDA. Barry is a very popular figure in the New York dive community. The banquet only added to that popularity when he began the program, leading everyone in a heartfelt "God Bless America."
Sunday was as usual. The door was slow, the churches full of Palm Sunday worshippers, the streets full of people demanding "No Kings," and traffic at a standstill.

There were a few downs, but the ups were encouraging to our determined band of volunteers. Sunday evening, over a staff dinner, all were excited to start planning for next year's show. We will be a week later than usual as Easter is the last weekend in March. Our dates are April 2, 3, 4, 2027. Watch this space for more information, and visit our website: beneaththesea.us

If you exhibited this year, thank you. We hope you will join us next year. And if you tried another show this year, we hope you will come back. We heard you were missed.

Lastly, we would be remiss not to offer a heartfelt thank you to all our volunteers. Without them, Beneath the Sea would not be able to function.

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