



For Immediate Release

Diamond Springs, CA

SNUBA® & SUB SEA SYSTEMS®: TWO COMPANIES ALL AT SEA

With friends that look like Nemo and Flounder, why wouldn't you want to share these cute little fellas with the world above? It seemed like the only logical thing to do for Patrick Stafford, Michael Stafford and Jim Mayfield; three men equally passionate about all things aquatic. The Stafford brothers and Mr. Mayfield have evolved their passion for the underwater world into businesses that incorporate a variety of innovative recreational products and touring activities, as well as an active conservation program.

After stints in the military service for the Stafford brothers and Mayfield's apprenticeship with his inventor father... and college for all, they joined together in 1985 to found Sub Sea Systems, Inc. The inaugural product line featured submersibles and semi-submersibles of varying sizes designed to dazzle and enlighten tourists of all ages. SSS built the first US constructed commercial vessel that at the time was the first vessel to be purchased in ten years by South Korea. Matt Flynn, director of foreign investment with the State of California Trade and Commerce Agency, stated "South Koreans are big in shipbuilding...the fact that they would import a ship is quite a testament to the quality of work they're doing at Sub Sea Systems."

Determined to produce a closer encounter between humans and marine creatures, the founders established Snuba International, Inc. and created Snuba®, a system that goes way "beyond snorkeling" and allows any neophyte the ability of diving down twenty feet, unencumbered by an air tank on his or her back. Treasures may be found at six feet, nine feet, or even fifteen feet; whatever depth is most comfortable for the novice diver. The air source remains floating in a raft on the surface while attached hoses supply air to the submerged divers, and a certified Snuba Guide entertains, educates and guides you throughout the entire tour. Snuba offers the freedom to explore a living, palpating universe where the terrain is as vivid as a kaleidoscope, and where a cast of swimming characters is constantly performing a new production. Until the advent of Snuba, the ever-changing show could only be enjoyed by certified scuba divers.

By the end of the nineties, Sub Sea Systems introduced Sea Trek®, a futuristic program that enables participants to "take a walk on the wet side." Although the idea of wearing a seventy-pound helmet may at first sound unappealing, the designers and technicians at SSS were able to work out all the watery kinks and produce an evolved, futuristic version of the original brass diving helmet. The state-of-the-art, injection-molded Sea Trek helmets are placed on the guests' shoulders as they descend down a vertical ladder. As guests become fully submerged in the water, the weight of the helmet becomes just enough to allow guests to comfortably walk along the sea floor. There are no tanks or challenging equipment involved; the helmet is designed for comfortable stability—even when you trek under a sea turtle and gasp! A group of up to ten can walk twelve to twenty feet and more under the surface, with a certified staff of Sea Trek Guides and safety personnel.

The global success of both Snuba and Sea Trek has brought the mantle of multi-million dollar



royalty based profits to the entities. Together, they are in over one hundred locations around the globe. Snuba International, Inc. and Sub Sea Systems, Inc. are world-renown for superior marine constructed products, futuristic design and engineering, first-class customer service, and extensive graphic design, marketing and technical support. The companies are also the largest provider of cruise line shore excursions throughout the Caribbean. In an industry that gauges success by its history, safety record and bottom line, SSS and Snuba have effectively established themselves as world leaders. Within these achievements lies perhaps the more important aspect of sustainable business practices.

Snuba and Sub Sea Systems' sense of responsibility toward the marine environment, so essential to their success, have lead the companies to create Reef Alliance, a program emphasizing conservation awareness, education, and sustainable business practices. Reef Alliance is an ongoing commitment of the companies, its licensees and tour operators, the communities they are based in and the guests they bring into the sea. Coral reefs occupy less than one quarter of one percent of the earth's marine environment, yet they are home to more than a quarter of all known fish species. Participants and communities are educated in how to conserve and respect these thrilling and fragile natural ecosystems. In 2009, Reef Alliance held its first annual Reef Alliance Day coinciding with International Earth Day—April 22nd. Operators all over the world participated in local beach and reef clean up projects. Snuba Honduras won the 2009 Reef Alliance Award for collecting over 400 pounds of trash and debris, and enlisting the help of over 40 volunteers, including staff, community members and Snuba participants. This year, Reef Alliance members will participate in a community project that focuses on educational awareness among local school children, ages 10-12.

A cogent step toward connecting the curious tourist with the marine world has taken the company to newer heights with collaborative efforts involving Eric Bogden; an extremely well respected marine biologist and marine mammal behaviorist. SHARKS! Interactive, LLC was established to entertain, educate and dispel the misconception about sharks, the most feared predator of the sea. Did you know that you are more likely to be struck by lightning than attacked by a shark? For those of us who have emotionally survived the reruns of "Jaws," the idea of commiserating with a gentle nurse shark has merit. That is how SHARKS! –came to be; an educational and entertaining encounter with the legends of the sea. Currently operating at Dolphin Cove, Jamaica and Xcaret Park in Riviera Maya, Mexico, the program has opened the minds of many by holding, touching and exploring with these grand animals.

In the latter part of 2008, Mr. Bogden shared his expertise in training and caring for dolphins with the employees of Xel-Ha eco-park in the Riviera Maya, Mexico. Xel-Ha and Sub Sea Systems collaborated to create the world's first interactive Dolphin Trek® program. Dolphin Trek allows guests to experience the dolphin's world while wearing Sea Trek helmet diving gear. (The dolphins think the guests are pretty funny looking in their astronaut-like helmets!) The duration of the tour is one hour; guests learn to communicate with the majestic animals using hand signals, and observe how they play, jump, dive and make bubbles underwater. While underwater, some guests also receive a dolphin kiss and are escorted back to the entry ladder via dorsal fin! It must be a very happy world for the dolphins, since nine baby dolphins have been born in the past year at Xel-Ha!

Snuba International and Sub Sea Systems are ever evolving, ever reaching marine recreation companies—the dream of three young men with mutual passions. Today, Michael Stafford bears the



title: Chairman of the Board / Founder of Snuba International, Inc. and President and CEO of Sub Sea Systems, Inc. Jim Mayfield is President and CEO of Snuba International, Inc. and Chairman of the Board / Founder of Sub Sea Systems, Inc.

In the spring of 2002, Patrick Stafford— dreamer, doer and founder— passed away at the age of 54. But, his dreams live on. At Mr. Stafford’s request, his ashes were strewn over the many seas he had come to know, and where the sunlight of his life’s work always shines.



Snuba®



Sea Trek®



Nautilus, Sub Sea Systems®



Dolphin Trek®



SHARKS! Interactive

Additional original photos are available.

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