

Meeting Interesting People in the Keys Hyperbaric Dick

Story by Rich Peine

One of the benefits of living in Key Largo and writing for the Coconut Telegraph is meeting some of the most interesting people in the country. Dick Rutkowski is certainly one of them.

I first met Dick when my wife Rachel and I were having something to eat and drink at Sharkey's. We were sitting next to Dick's table, dubbed "the table of knowledge", where he was surrounded by friends and cohorts. He invited us over to his table and introduced us around. We spent the next 45 minutes discussing everything from politics to books we had read. Little did we know at the time that we were talking to one of the most influential members of the world's diving community. With all the topics we covered, we never talked about diving.

We later found out that Dick is deeply involved in hyperbaric medicine, which consists of delivering pressurized oxygen to the body. The treatment is needed by divers who come up too quickly and get nitrogen bubbles in the bloodstream (commonly known as "the bends"). These procedures are done in hyperbaric chambers, where the oxygen and pressure can be regulated.

According to his Bio, Dick worked for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for 33 years, retiring in 1985. During that time he served as deputy diving director and was founder and director of the NOAA Diving/Hyperbaric Training and Diver Treatment Facility, where hundreds of divers have been treated. After leaving NOAA Dick started Hyperbarics International, Inc. which conducts training

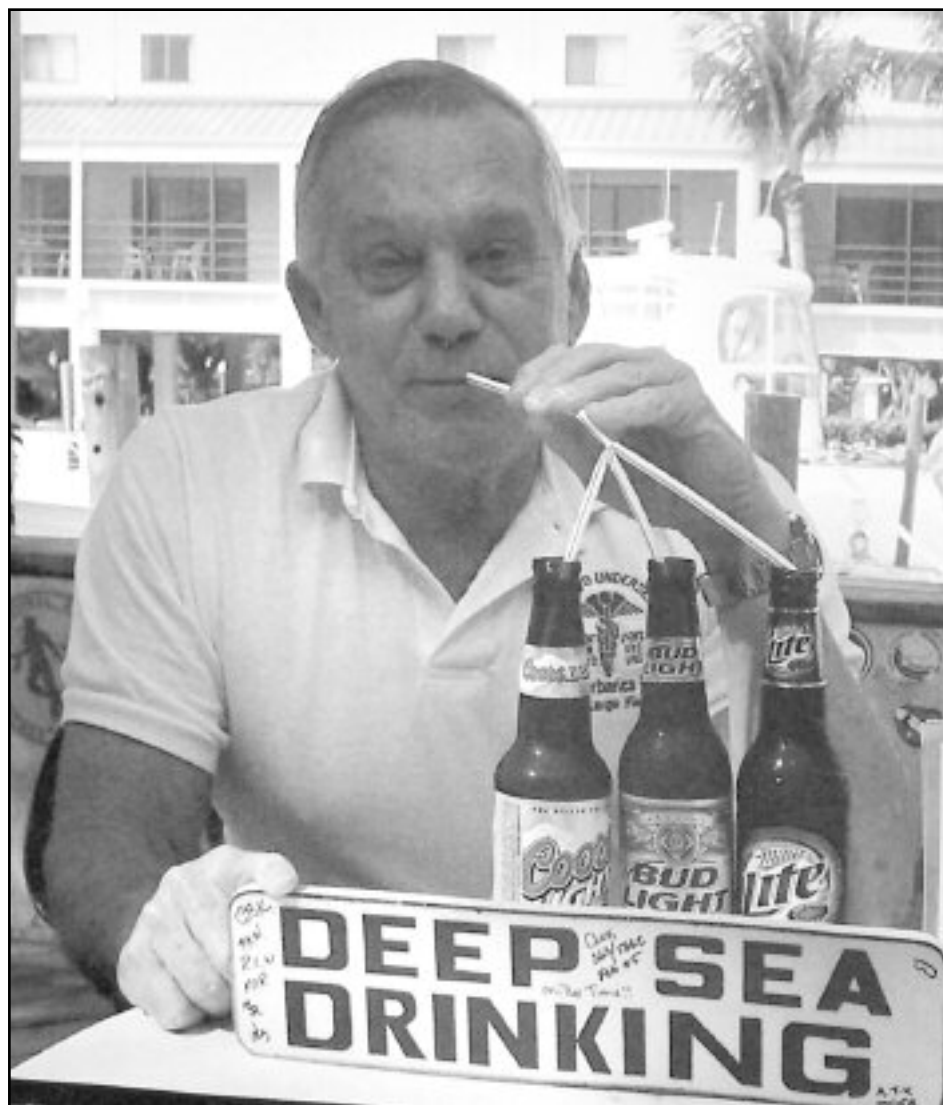
programs on advanced diving and hyperbaric chamber operation for Physicians, EMT's, Clinical Hyperbaric Technicians and other medical personnel. It's located between Sharkey's and Ocean Divers right on the canal.

I asked Rick Ford, Dick's friend and colleague, what was the most influential thing Dick had done for the diving community and without hesitation he said, "Nitrox". Dick started the use of Nitrox, an oxygen-enriched mixture, which allows divers to make deep dives without the decompression necessary when using a standard oxygen mixture. He was roundly criticized by the pundits in the diving world, who said that this stuff would kill divers. The pundits were wrong, and as a result Dick coined the phrase "Science Always Wins over Bullshit".

Dick has won numerous awards for his long and dedicated service to the diving community. Dick was a radioman in the U.S. Navy, and when the Spiegel Grove was being prepared for its sinking off Key Largo, the radio operator's Morse code key from the Grove was presented to him. He was elected to the Explorer's Club as a fellow, had a glacier in Antarctica named after him, and was nominated for a Ph.D. from Florida International University. And those are just a few examples.

Who said that Dick doesn't have a sense of humor? Check out the picture top left. Stop by the table of knowledge and say hello.

For more information about Hyperbarics International, see Dick at 522 Caribbean Drive, or visit www.hyperbaricsinternational.com.



Attention: Scrabbleholics



Scrabbleholics" of all skill levels are invited to join the Upper Keys Scrabble Club which meets Thursdays at 1 PM at the Key Largo Coffee House nestled behind the trees at MM 100.2 oceanside. The Club is free and the members enjoy sparkling conversation in a relaxed, social atmosphere. Weather permitting we play outside in the courtyard but we move indoors in warmer or rainy weather.

Please contact Meredith at 451-3664 for further details.

Demolishing Anger's Walls, Resentment

Anger, when channeled into the pursuit of change, can be a useful tool in our emotional palette. Anger is experienced by most people, some more than others. It is when anger has no outlet and morphs into resentment that it carries with it the potential to cause great turmoil. Allowing us to assign blame for the pain we are feeling, thereby easing it, resentment tends to smolder relentlessly just below the surface of our awareness, eroding our peace of mind. The target of our resentment grows ever more wicked in our minds and we rue the day we first encountered them. But resentment is merely another hue on the emotional palette and therefore within the realm of our conscious control. We can choose to let go of our resentment and to move on with our lives, no matter how painful the event that incited it.

Hanging onto resentment in our hearts does not serve us in any way. Successfully divesting ourselves of resentful feelings can be difficult, however, because doing so forces us to mentally and emotionally

confront the original source of anger. When we cease assigning blame, we realize that our need to hold someone or something responsible for our feelings has harmed us. We thought we were coping with our hurt when in fact we were holding onto that hurt with a vice grip. To release resentment, we must shift our attention from those we resent back toward ourselves by thinking of our own needs. Performing a short ceremony can help you quell resentful feelings by giving tangible form to your emotions. You may want to write down your feelings and then burn the paper and close your ceremony by wishing them well. When you can find compassion in your heart, you know you are on your way to healing.

Free of resentment, we have much more energy and attention to devote to our personal development. We can fill the spaces it left behind with unconditional acceptance and joy. And, as a result of our subsequent freedom from resentment, blessings can once again enter our lives as the walls we built to contain our anger have been demolished.



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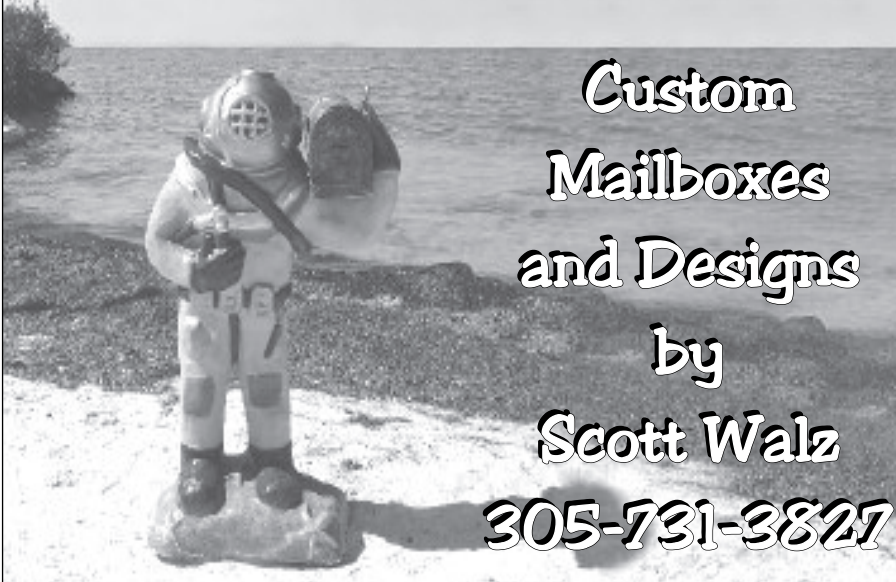
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