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## **REEF BALL UPDATE**

By Todd Barber, President & CEO, Reef Ball Foundation, Inc.

The Charles H. Kirbo Memorial Reef, sponsored by the Kirbo Charitable Trust, was deployed on June 4th and 5th in St. Augustine and Jacksonville. Over 500 Reef Balls were deployed with another 200+ units left with the High School Program in St. Augustine for continued deployments in the 2000-2001 school year as part of the on-going aspects of this project. Numerous articles and TV segments were associated with the deployments and will be available on the web site soon. World record free diver Tanya Streeter was on hand to give the high school students associated with the project a motivational speech entitled, "Redefining Your Limits".

The Reef Ball Family of companies wishes to publicly thank the Kirbo Charitable Trust and Kathy Kirbo personally for all the hard work and funding associated with achieving this truly monumental deployment of Reef Balls.

The Charles H. Kirbo Memorial Reef is now the largest designed artificial reef memorial in the world!

This reef was built to honor the late Charles H. Kirbo, Sr. who was an attorney from Atlanta, Ga. who served as an adviser and lawyer to President Jimmy Carter, was a trustee of the Carter Center and a trustee of the T. M. and Irene B. Kirbo Charitable Trust. A plaque placed on the reef will honor his life's accomplishments as a lawyer, statesman, W.W. II Veteran, farmer, fisherman and conservationist.

It is estimated that this reef will create 120 million pounds of ocean life over the expected life span of the reef ( 500 years) of which over half will be fish. It will also provide educational and research opportunities for the greater Jacksonville area. Local high schools, colleges and community organizations, such as Jacksonville University, Jacksonville Reef Research Team, St. Augustine and Mandarin High Schools will utilize the Kirbo Memorial Reef as a site to conduct scientific studies.

The Reef Ball Foundation has been assisting the educational efforts of students around the state. As a result of their support, as well as the contributions of numerous local businesses, the Reef Ball Project at

Mandarin High School was the recent recipient of the National Sea World/ Busch Gardens Environmental Excellence Award as the most innovative project in the Planet Ocean category. In addition, the St. Augustine High School Sea Explorer Program won the Reef Ball Foundation Educational Project of the year for 1999.

With over 400 projects worldwide, the Reef Ball Foundation is making a big splash to help save the world's ailing ocean reefs and contribute to the educational efforts of students interested in marine science and preserving their oceans. The foundation's projects range from the Boy Scouts of America's High Adventure program in Islamorada, Florida to the government of Sarawak's marine sanctuary for sea turtles in Malaysia to Instituto Ecoplan's habitat restoration project in Brazil.

The Reef Ball Coalition is looking for 4 students to fill up the second session of the Turks and Caicos educational trip for High School students July 18th - 31st. Call [1-800-813-5731](tel:1-800-813-5731) for information.

The Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission sent in a request to the Army Corp of Engineers for a variance to allow the use of tires that are not embedded in concrete to be used in an artificial reef off Pensacola. Worldwide scientists, fish managers and artificial reef professionals have recognized the dangers associated with non-concrete embedded tires moving during storm events damaging natural reefs, littering beaches and even endangering human lives. We hope that all concerned parties will voice their concerns about the use of non-embedded tires as artificial reefs.

We applaud the Atlantic States and Gulf States Marine Fishery commissions for producing a position paper for the Army Corp against adopting such a variance.

*Visit The Reef Ball website at [www.reefball.com](http://www.reefball.com) for more interesting facts about Reef Balls.  
Extensive revisions are occurring at [www.reefball.com](http://www.reefball.com), please excuse the construction and check out  
the new features.*

*Sections are being added for Kids, A Coalition trip and others.*

*The Reef Ball Coalition: [www.reefballcoalition.org](http://www.reefballcoalition.org)*

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