



ARTIFICIAL REEF PROJECT

Hello from the world of Reefballs. I hope everyone had a really super holiday. Well, a new year is upon us now and it's time we all join together and team up to make 1995 a year to be remembered.

As all of you know, the Artificial Reef project has had a long and difficult fight to make it a reality. Many of you have volunteered and been patiently waiting for your time to dive in and participate in this project. Unfortunately, the fight up to this point has been a one man battle of sorts. It has taken time and patience to get through the state and federal red tape, acquire permits, and apply for grants to help make this project a reality. Now the Central Florida NAUI Chapter Artificial Reef Project is a reality. Phase 1 should be complete by the time you read this article. (Phase 1 was to produce 30 balls, transport to Canaveral, and deploy.) Special thanks to Vinny Jones, Robbie Duke, Van Stickle, Chris Johnson, and Joe Detrick for their help during Phase 1. The greatest challenge has been getting the barge to proceed with the deployment. The Reefballs are at the port and waiting.

It is now time for Phase 2. The road for Phase 1 was bumpy, as the beginnings of all great projects are. However, Phase 2 is going to be much smoother. To help make this possible we have joined forces with the Saltwater News team at Port Canaveral. The Saltwater News is owned and operated by Wilson and Alma Love. Along with their creative consultant, Derick Redwine, they are very enthusiastic about the Reefball concept. After Van Stickle and I met with them and others concerned, we decided to team up, and co-operate on the project. Together, we have formed a strong, highly motivated group to pursue the Artificial Reef Project from Port Canaveral.

With the Central Florida NAUI Chapter working in the Orlando area, joined by the Saltwater News team in Canaveral, we combine expertise, resources, and political clout to move the Project ahead. This is much more advantageous than working separately. Imagine the possibilities for our project as the result of this combined effort. Primarily, we will be able to improve the marine environment. The artificial reef will also relieve the pressure on our natural reef systems, while providing new diving sites and improving fishing out of our home port at Cape Canaveral.

The volunteer and financial support that is available are staggering. The possibilities of additional reef sites are endless, and the good we will all be doing for our environment and the marine ecosystem will benefit future generations. With projects such as this, and the enactment and enforcement of Marine fishing regulations and limits, we are all joining together to ensure the future existence of our MOTHER OCEAN.

Larry Beggs



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