

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IN UNDERWATER IMAGES COMPETITION IS APRIL 1, 2008 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: Carol Kender scuba.one@hotmail.com or 614-226-6709

April 1, 2009 is the deadline for entries in the 12th annual Underwater Images Photo/Video Competition. The Underwater Images competition is a non-profit corporation registered in the State of Ohio with all proceeds from this competition going to marine conservation, educational, and scholarship purposes. For complete details on eligibility, rules, and entry forms visit the official competition website at www.UWIMAGES.org.

Categories include Conservation, Majestic, Togetherness, Macro (Open & Novice), Wide Angle (Open & Novice), AND two video categories. One of the two videos categories is an exciting new development and a cooperative venture with the Imaging Foundation. "We have an army of fantastic videographers and photographers patrolling our oceans every day. We want to harness that energy" says Georgienne Bradley, its director. "Divers can use their work to stand witness to the state of our oceans" Georgienne Bradley and Jay Ireland will be the judging chairs of the 2009 Underwater Images competition. Imaging Foundation will launch a dedicated environmental imaging contest this spring.

Although based in Ohio, this competition is international and the prizes reflect an international flare. Included among the prizes is the Best of Show prize sponsored for the 12th year in a row by the MV FeBrina and Walindi Plantation in Papua New Guinea. First Prize awards also include dive trips to other resorts in Papua New Guinea, Honduras, the Solomon Islands, the Cayman Islands, Bonaire, Hawaii and Indonesia. In addition there are numerous awards of diving equipment and gift certificates from sponsors.

The major international charities that the Underwater Images Competition has supported for over a decade include Mahonia Na Dari and Pro Peninsula. At DEMA 2008 Roger Roth and Carol Kender presented a check for \$4000 to Mahonia Na Dari. Max Benjamin accepted the check on behalf of the non-profit group. Mahonia Na Dari ("Guardians of the Sea") is a Nature Conservancy program, which has been working to protect Papua New Guinea's abundant biodiversity by teaching their own instructors and students the importance of sustainability of their own natural resources through hands-on experiences.

Pro Peninsula is a conservation organization dedicated to empowering communities in Baja California, Mexico to protect and preserve their environment, with their main focuses being on a Sea Turtle Conservation Network which has gained international attention. Since 1998 Underwater Images has contributed significantly to each of these organizations. The third beneficiary for 2008 is DiveHeart, a not-for-profit organization that facilitates scuba training for physically challenged children and adults.

A partial list of other prize sponsors includes: Bilikiki Cruises Ltd. In the Solomon Islands, Tufi Dive Resort and Loloata Island Resort in PNG, Anthony's Key / Bahia Tours in the Bay Islands of Honduras, Captain Don's Habitat in Bonaire, Divi Flamingo Dive Resort in Bonaire, DiveTech and Cobalt Coast Resort of Grand Cayman, Nekton Cruises, Stuart Cove's in the Bahamas, Wakatobi and Pelagian Dive Resort, Matava Ecoo-Adventures Resort in Fiji, Kungkungan Bay Resort and Tasik Ria Resort in North Sulawesi, SMY Ondina, Kararu, Maluku Dive Resort, and Archipelago Resorts & Fleet in Indonesia.

Manufacturers who have consistently supported the competition include: Ikelite, Ultralight Control Systems, Diving Unlimited International, ReefNet, Sherwood/Akona, Exploration Design, Omega Aquatics, Gates Video Housings and Pinnacle Aquatics.

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