

PRESS RELEASE:

March 22, 2004

**Underwater Images 2004
Photo/Video Competition-Final Results**

BEST OF SHOW

Sponsored by Aquatic Encounters, the *FeBrina*, and the Walindi Plantation, PNG
Ross Armstrong, Whangerei, New Zealand- Finding Myself

CONSERVATION CATEGORY

First: Veronica von Allworden, Langley, WA- Illegal Net: Galapagos Islands
Second: Bob Spiers, Pinole, CA- Playful Danger
Third: Leslie Richter, Mill Valley, CA- Invaders: Introduced Species
Honorable Mention: Rudy Whitworth, Belleville, MI- Toxic Dump

VIDEO CATEGORY

First: Mike Boom, Oakland, CA- Magnificent Soup
Second: John Bock, San Diego, CA- Shark Island
Third: Sheryl Brakey, Fair Oaks Ranch, TX- I Love the Ocean
Honorable Mention: Walter Marti, Santa Ana, CA- Do Lunch
Mary Anne Pedoto, Cincinnati, Ohio- Analyzing Analao
Daniel McCulloch, Sedona, AZ- Mermaid & Dolphins

WIDE ANGLE CATEGORY

First Place: Marc Shargel, Felton, CA- Translucent Kelp Forest
Second Place: Ernst Seeling, Vienna, Austria- Under the Pier
Third Place: Gary Merritt, Houston, TX- Goldfinger
Honorable Mention: Tibor Dombovari, Miskolc, Hungary- Shark
Diane Hotz, San Diego, CA- Up From the Depths
Richard Howard, Dayton, OH- French Angel Wall

MACRO/CLOSE-UP CATEGORY

First Place: Tibor Dombovari, Miskolc, Hungary- Stargazer
Second Place: Rudy Whitworth, Belleville, MI- Lizard Dinner
Third Place: Tibor Dombovari, Miskolc, Hungary- Snowflake Goby
Honorable Mention: Peter Hartlove, Longmont, CO- Elegant Squat Lobster
Pasquale Vassallo, Naples, Italy- Only One
Marc Shargel, Felton, CA- Kelp Tip

DIGITAL CATEGORY

First: Judy Johnson, Irving, TX- A Beautiful Pair
Second: Terry Siferd, Hilliard, OH- Jellyfish
Third: Casey Canton, Christiansted, Virgin Islands- Lioness
Honorable Mention: Paul Osmond, Weston, FL- Giant Sea Fan Silhouette
Mel Betley, London, England- White Eye Morays
George Bogard, Rockwall, TX- Coleman Shrimp Pair

CREATIVE CATEGORY

First: Fred Heiman, Los Gatos, CA- Jack-In-the-Water (video)

Second: Ernst Seeling, Vienna, Austria- A Nightmare

Third: Ernst Seeling, Vienna, Austria- Help!

FRESHWATER CATEGORY

First: Ernst Seeling, Vienna, Austria- Sunfish

Second: Kat Smith, Houma, LA- Devil's Ear

Third: Ernst Seeling, Vienna Austria- Good Visibility

Honorable Mention: Marc Shargel, Felton, CA- Breath of Fresh Air

Gregory Sweeney, Bokeelia, FL- Amphibious

TOGETHERNESS CATEGORY

First: Marc Shargel, Felton, CA- Photographed as Found

Second: Tibor Dombovari, Miskolc, Hungary- Mouthful

Third: Diane Armstrong, Whangerei, New Zealand- David and Goliath

Honorable Mention: Tibor Dombovari, Miskolc, Hungary- Coleman Shrimp

Tracy Clark, El Cajon, CA- Not Speaking

Marc Shargel, Felton, CA-Romantic Couple

OHIO COMPETITION

First: Don Wickline, Beavercreek, OH- Spotted Anemone Shrimp

Second: Richard Howard, Dayton, OH- Kiss Me

Third: Mary Anne Pedoto, Hamilton, OH- Analyzing Anilao (video)

Honorable Mention: Marc Weiss, Cincinnati, OH-Privilege & Responsibility (video)

Sue Furrow, Blacklick, OH- Posing

Cliff Lemmerhirt, Wapakoneta, OH- Delicate Beauty

From the Director:

Thanks to all entrants, judges, and sponsors. Your participation is an integral part of this competition, and is greatly appreciated. Competitions of this type, share divers' own visions of the underwater world, and serve to promote good conservation practices. They also highlight some of the world's best diving destinations. These winning shots will be posted on our website, www.uwimages.org as soon as possible.

Prizes were set before the judging according to their values and the number of entries in the respective categories. Proceeds go to marine educational and scholarship purposes. This past year we again sponsored former sea turtle fishermen from Baja, Mexico to attend the International Sea Turtle Symposium through the non-profit organization, Wildcoast www.wildcoast.net, where they learned about the conservation of this endangered animal. They then returned home to teach other sea turtle fishermen and local communities about the importance of protecting the sea turtles of the world. Through Wildcoast, we also supported the Fifth Annual Baja California Sea Turtle Group meeting in Loreto, BCS, Mexico in support of East Coast sea turtle conservation efforts.

We are also supporting Mahonia Na Dari, a Nature Conservancy program for students in Papua New Guinea, where they learn true conservation and preservation principles with hands-on experiences.

Lastly, we are supporting the Mel Sheehan Scholarship through the Ohio Council of Skin and Scuba Diving, Inc. (OCSSDI). This scholarship is awarded to a member in good standing of OCSSDI in order to pursue careers related to marine biology, underwater archaeology, and other related fields.

As we are all volunteers in these contests and they are just for fun, we hope everyone enjoyed our friendly competition this year. I'll be looking forward to your entries next year. Safe Diving and Shooting. *Sea Ya!*

Roger Roth