

# S.T.A.R.S. International

SEPTEMBER 2009

## Larkin High School Agrees on 2-Year Program

In July, senior administrators at Elgin Illinois Larkin High School agreed to a two year S.T.A.R.S. Program. The sell was not in Kevin's typical full-disclosure presentation, rather Ana's evolution over the past 3 years of involvement with S.T.A.R.S. The agreement resulted in an "AWARENESS" table at two days of student registration where students and parents could place their names on a list for review as possible nominees. After two days of registrations approximately 150 students expressed interest, and some parents called Kevin for further information. On top of this list school officials will add their nominees from interviews and provide S.T.A.R.S. with an estimated 250 participants for a tentative

November 2<sup>nd</sup> S.T.A.R.S. Orientation night. Kevin's strategy is to hopefully thin the large group on November 2nd by outlining the 1) Commitment 2) Expectations 3) Guidelines for Acceptance. The reduced group will be assessed through candidate application and interviews by Jan 1, 2010, and only



passing candidates will enter 1 of 3 Discover Scuba sessions planned in January. The 2010 program start date is March 1, 2010 with an targeted June trip to USVI.

## Second Chicago Metro Program

The Director of a Chicago based Boys n Girls club has requested a second Illinois S.T.A.R.S. Program beginning immediately. The facility is well equipped with pool, fitness, and classroom facilities. With no localized staff or schedule currently available, we are proposing the requested program to the members of a dive club on the near west side of Chicago in the coming weeks to locate volunteers. Anyone interested in more information should contact [Kevin@STARSInternational.org](mailto:Kevin@STARSInternational.org) before September 21, 2009. This request for S.T.A.R.S. could result in another 20-40 youth graduating S.T.A.R.S. in 2010.

# Pearl Lake Weekend Activities:

*Advanced Open Water Certification, Night Diving and AI Open Water Evaluations*

## AI Candidate Layne briefs next skill



## S.T.A.R.S. International SDI AI program

Our 2009 sponsorship from SDI has given the opportunity of expanding their knowledge and usefulness to two of our seasoned Divemasters, Layne Holter and Ann Paulsen. Both have completed their exercises on Knowledge Development Presentations, Teaching in Confined Water, and Evaluating Students in Open Water. In the coming weeks they will hone their skills and knowledge of SDI Standards before being upgraded to the S.T.A.R.S. instructional staff. This promotion will double the size of the current classroom teaching staff and prepare Layne and Ann to become official SDI Instructors in a shortened period of time. Good Luck to both of them.

## Kevin presenting Night Diving lecture



## Night Diving Speciality

On August 28/29 S.T.A.R.S. International held its third annual Night Diving Specialty course at Pearl Lake. The rainy weather parted the dampened sky and cool fall temperatures filled the air for two spectacular nights of 30 foot visibility diving. Unfortunately 3 of the 5 registered students were plagued by illness or work but it did not dampen the spirits of the rest of the students and seasoned night divers. The group respectively dove over half the lake in two nights of diving. Matt Schirmacher and Gina Ruta joined the night diving bandits as private students and we are lighting the fire to keep both of them close to the S.T.A.R.S. staff group in the coming year. Congratulations to Gina for obtaining her night diving specialty along with Matt who also achieved his advanced open water certification.

## DiveMaster Candidates Present & Future



## S.T.A.R.S. International Divemaster Program

Our 2009 sponsorship from SDI has opened the door for S.T.A.R.S. Rescue Diver graduates to take the first step forward to becoming Professional Divemasters and S.T.A.R.S. Jr. Staff. But this first group of Divemaster Candidates is a combination of a graduate (Ana) and a current staff member (Irene) Both have completed some significant time in the pool improving their dive skills and assisted with actual training logistics for Kevin and Jacob this summer. In the coming weeks they continue to work on their skills bringing them to Demonstration Quality while continuing to perform alongside our instructional staff doing staff and private training. Following their Knowledge Development this Fall they should be completing their Divemaster certification by the time the 2010 program begins. We welcome their commitment to become better divers and hopefully future leaders on the S.T.A.R.S. instructional staff. Kevin is personally eyeing Ana to become the first graduate to take the helm as a bilingual instructor within the next year. Good Luck Ana and Irene!



## New Divemaster Candidates on the Horizon

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Former graduates have the opportunity to return to S.T.A.R.S. and make a difference once they realize their true potential and direction. 2010 promises hope for 2006 graduate Jesse Chavez and 2007 graduate Matt Mursewick who will turn 18 this winter. As Divemaster Candidates they can join the S.T.A.R.S. staff as Junior members, continue their training and fun while applying their first hand personal growth to lead teenage participants in the 2010-2011 program. Both Matt and Jesse have much to offer besides the enthusiasm to diving and superb diving skills as witnessed first-hand during our recent Night Diving outing on August 28/29. Best of Luck to Jesse and Matt... there are at-risk kids out there that need your guidance and experience.



## Advanced Open Water Staffers

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On August 25 S.T.A.R.S. International added two additional staff at the Advanced Open Water level, Jennifer McGregor and newcomer Dan Guss. Both completed their Deep Dive last with instructor Jacob Johnson after awaiting the warmer waters at Pearl Lake in August. Jennifer (Panasonic Sales) recently helped S.T.A.R.S. by offering a ruggedized Panasonic laptop for the group to use for a fundraising project. Dan, who recently had his first grandson is trying to find time in his busy schedule to balance his new passion for scuba with his grandkids. Dan a grandpa... WOW I bet he loves to hear that! We look forward to more involvement by both Dan and Jennifer in the coming year.



## Donated Equipment for Fundraising

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During August S.T.A.R.S. International was granted three pieces of expensive wood shop equipment by a member of the Huntley Reef Rovers (Mr. Ralph Bounds, former PADI instructor). Ralph graciously gave the equipment to S.T.A.R.S. to use as a fundraising project and we have posted it for sale on E-Bay hoping to give Kevin back his garage in short order and proceed with acquiring new computers for the S.T.A.R.S. regulators for the 2010 season. The Reef Rovers also donated approximately \$1,100 in scuba gear accessories to S.T.A.R.S. at the same time. Thank you for your continued support of our efforts. Frankly the Reef Rovers, Tritons, and Diveheart were the foundation of our elaborate gear inventory and we are forever in debt.