

# S.T.A.R.S. International August 2007

We would like to recognize Melissa Hungness of Amcore Bank for facilitating a \$2,500 donation to S.T.A.R.S. Thank You!!!!



Ty and Jacob give instructions to the kids on some final pool skills.

### Upcoming Dates to Calendar:

Alumni Event #1 Search & Recovery Dives @ Pearl Lake - August 5

EFR Class - August 13 & 14 6-10 pm Crystal Lake Amcore Bank

Alumni Event #2 Camping/night dive @ Pearl Lake

- August 24/25 (2 night stay)

Rescue Diver Academic Session - September 13

Rescue Diver Pool Session - September 14

Alumni Event # 3 - September 16

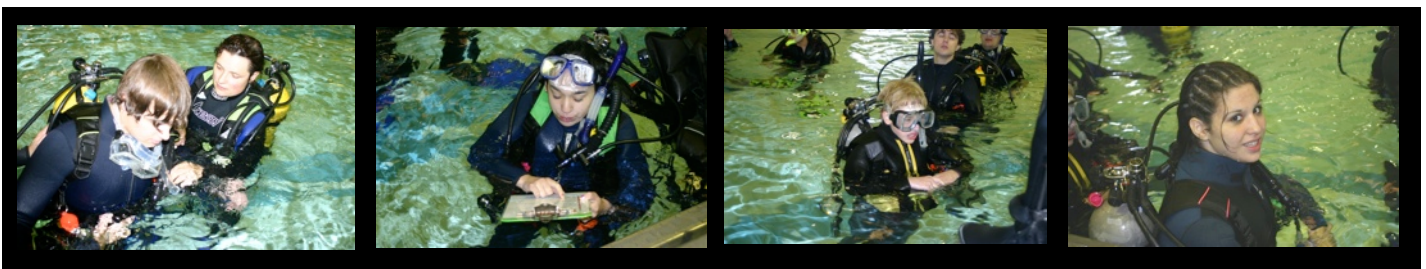
Fall Carnival Fundraiser - September 14-16 (more details to follow)

*We are actively looking for volunteers to staff the ticket booths on Friday (4-11 pm), Saturday and Sunday (1-11 pm). We have two ticket booths to schedule with 2 hour time increments. If you can help out please contact Ann @ [Ann@STARSIInternational.org](mailto:Ann@STARSIInternational.org) or cell (815)404-6439.*

### Printer cartridges and cell phone recycling

Please forward any used print cartridges (ink jet) and retired cell phones to Jacob. Jacob is collecting these items to be mailed in and recycled saving landfill space. Jacob will receive a check back for the value of the items recycled.

Bring any collected items along on August 5th.





Fellow S.T.A.R. gazers,

This week has led us to a milestone in the 2007 STARS program, the Open Water Evaluation Dives!! Although a lack of funding hampered our coveted aspirations for an exotic trip for the staff and kids to beautiful TCI, we were blessed with beautiful TCI-like weather the entire week. I was just sure that Capt. Dave, Melinda and Jim were all thinking of us each day as we slid into our 7mm wetsuits to brave the chilly waters of the Midwest.

Our expected number of participants took another unexpected hit just prior to the dive week with 4 youth dropping from the ranks (1 emergency medical, 2 deep water fears, 1 use of excessive force outside the program). We were left with 3 of the best kids to head into the water with (Matt, Nick and Mr. Brandon T). Out of the final 10, four somehow miscalculated that we would ever dive in anything greater than waist deep water (silly me) and realized their demons before we would have taken them to the lake or ocean.

We started the week off with a big group breakfast at IHOP before heading to Sea Level Diving and outfitting with updated gear for the week. The provider of our rental gear/trailer unexpectedly sold it 4 days prior to our dives which left us looking for an alternate source of gear for the kids. Although the gear was higher priced at \$210 per person for the week, it was exceptional gear and it went a long way to improving the kid's confidence in the water. Matt was so confident he wanted to be a Tech diver he actually wrote to John Chatterton and asked him to resume active teaching to coach him!! Too funny.

Due to discounts received while at Pearl Lake we chose to dive there for the first 3 days, with 3 dives done each day. We completed the Open Water certifications by Tuesday morning and started Advanced Open water that same day. Two of the kids (Brandon and Nick) had ear equalization issues on Monday and Tuesday that were resolved with medication by Wednesday. Wednesday they completed their deep dive and Advanced Open Water certification and the kids had done all 9 required dives plus 1 additional fun dive. Ty and I were assisted by Jimmy and Jay on Monday and Tuesday, and Ann and Gil on Wednesday which eased some of the logistics and earned the DMCS their much needed internship dives.

## S.T.A.R.S. Spotlight

### Benno & Mirjam IJtsma

#### 1. What got you started in diving?

**Benno:** Mirjam and I went on a summer vacation to Turkey and did one of those introductory classes there and after that I started diving.

**Mirjam:** After we went to Turkey, I thought, this is nice, but not really something for me. When Benno joined the dive club, the members of the dive club made me very enthusiastic. Now I really enjoy diving.

#### 2. How long have you been diving?

**Benno:** Since 2004

**Mirjam:** I really started diving in 2005

#### 3. Current level of certification

**Benno:** Adv. Open Water (45 dives)

**Mirjam:** Adv Open Water (25 dives)

#### 4. What locations have you dove?

Several fresh water lakes in the Netherlands and also in the salt water delt of south western part of the Netherlands. In the US we have been diving in Pearl Lake, Haigh Quarry and Devil's Lake, WI.

#### 5. What do you do for a living?

**Benno:** Commodity Manager in the corporate purchasing department of Phillips Electronics.

**Mirjam:** Project Manager for Hyva Corporation, a Dutch company that just started in the USA 1.5 years ago and sells hydraulic cylinders for dump trucks and dump bodies.

#### 6. Do you have any hobbies or interests?

**Benno:** Diving! Our new house in Woodstock

**Mirjam:** Also working on my website, doing digital photography, unfortunately I do not have very much time for those hobbies.

#### 7. What is your favorite food?

**Benno:** Applebee's

**Mirjam:** You can wake me up for Dutch liquorices and make my day with a lunch from Panera.

#### 8. Favorite movie from 2007?

Apocalyptic or Wild Hogs (it's just funny)

#### 9. Last book you read?

The Odyssey by Clive Cusler

#### 10. Favorite band?

**Benno:** Toby Keith

**Mirjam:** BLØF

Thursday we piled into 4 vehicles and drove across the state to Haigh Quarry for simply a fun day of diving. 2 of the kids did a deep dive with Ty to over 80' (golf clap) and then proceeded to dive throughout the day with excellent visibility. Tina Haigh offered us some additional discounts to help our group out with costs that day and we took the kids to dinner before arriving back in Elgin at 9 pm.

Our next set of dives is the weekend of Aug 5/6 when the kids will undertake the Search and Recovery Specialty. Any of you that would like to also get that certification please advise Jacob and he will order you your required book. It will involve 4 dives on one day that weekend, and you must be Open Water certified to complete it. Class cost for the staff is about \$45 + the normal diving costs.

Jay Mendez is already looking at the second alumni event at Pearl Lake which may include an overnight camping trip 4 night dives and a bunch of day time dives that weekend. It will award the kids their third Specialty (Night Diving).

The parents met last week to review some fund raising ideas to get their kids to TCI yet this year.... regardless of the size of the group. I think we will do a Boat Diving Specialty there and Fish ID! That would make the kids Master Scuba Divers by Fall if they log 50 dives.... INCREDIBLE.

All of you did a great job to get the kids this far... you would have been really proud to see them in the water.....

Kevin Vaughn

Thanks to all the volunteers...Ty Varner, Det. Rob Hartmann, Det. Jimmy Mendez, Jay Mendez, Gil Valencia and Ann Paulsen. Also a great big thanks for all the moms that sent along yummy treats throughout the week.

## The gorgeous sunset at Pearl Lake



Looking for an opportunity to help out the S.T.A.R.S. program and enjoy a lifetime of memories? Visit [www.outoftheshoebbox.com](http://www.outoftheshoebbox.com) for a special offer (valid until 9/30/07) and move those pictures out of the shoe box and into living color. A percentage of the proceeds from the special offer will be donated to stars. Click on the hammerhead (compliments of Brandon T.) for more details



Day 4 dives at Haigh Quarry



Ty Varner - Assistant Instructor

## Quote of the Month

"No wind blows in favor of a ship without a destination."

