

# Diveheart

February/March 2010

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Diveheart  
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## Note from the President

*Jim Elliott*



Dear Friends of Diveheart:

2010 is already shaping up to be an incredible year, with Diveheart very much in the news! [Money Magazine](#) featured a story about me for their March issue. The angle for the story is that I left a successful career in the media to become a volunteer and pursue my passion for growing adaptive scuba diving around the world.

Shortly after the writer wrapped that story up, [CNN/Money](#) contacted me, and then filmed a segment about Diveheart which they have started broadcasting. The film crew came to a Discover Scuba event in Oak Lawn, and watched and visited with some of the divers that best represent what Diveheart is all about (pictures from both photo/film shoots on page 2)



I am incredibly excited about this media attention as we all work to increase awareness about disabled diving and its many benefits.

Marine veteran Greg Rodriguez, who served in Iraq, traveled with me to the Florida Keys for a great adventure. Greg, who sustained a traumatic brain injury, has been diving with us for two years. He was invited to test out an

under-water propulsion system called the Pegasus Thruster. A feature article about the experience appeared in the [Miami Herald](#). Greg's experience with Diveheart will be featured in our April Newsletter.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome our three new members of the board of directors: Patty Warning, Jack Provenzale and Bob Hemedinger. We are very appreciative of their friendship and support!

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming fundraiser to be held on Sunday, April 18 at Ballydoyle Irish Pub and Restaurant in Downers Grove. The family event, which will run from noon-4 p.m., will include live music, a clown, face-painting, silent auction, drawings and more. We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,  
Jim Elliott, president

## Boy Scout Troop 181 Raises the Bar

*By Wendy Foster*

Of the hundreds of boys in Des Plaines Valley Council of Boy Scouts, 15 are part of Downers Grove Troop 181. Despite their modest membership, the Troop was responsible for donating in excess of 4900 service hours over the past year. This is almost half of the total hours generated by the entire council which covers 46 communities. Of those hours contributed by the troop, roughly one-half were service hours for Diveheart. Last month, Des Plaines Valley Council bestowed a special award to Troop 181 for their deep commitment to service. “

Ken Steichmann, assistant scout master for Troop 181 said that the group has a longstanding tradition of focusing on community service, especially in areas relating to veterans.

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Troop 181 first started helping Diveheart at one of the Luau fundraisers. "We've done spaghetti dinners, so knew what needed to be done including bussing the tables, etc," said Ken. Interested in the service provided by Diveheart, Ken said that the Troop decided to volunteer on a regular basis. "We haul gear, help to put the gear into the trailer," said Ken. The scouts learned how to assemble the gear, and after awhile, the older scouts were teaching the younger scouts."



Eventually Ken, recalled, it got to the point where the scouts were able to put the gear together and change out the tanks. "They started to learn the different weights and the kids and their sizes.

The boys started being able to stage the equipment so that when the divers came in, we could hand them their gear and they could get in the water. It also enables the instructors to stay in the water longer," he said. "We have become the muscle for Diveheart."

Eventually, the group decided to learn how to scuba dive with ten scouts completing indoor training, nine of whom went on to become open water certified. "They were excited to do this," Ken said. "Here in the Midwest there aren't a lot of places to scuba dive and really, how many kids around here can say they're open water certified?" Ken said. In addition to the other work the boys were already doing for Diveheart, they now can serve as secondary dive buddies. "They're an extra set of eyes and hands in the water. Diveheart appreciates this as it allows them to spread their instructors out to help more people.," Ken said.

Troop 181 does other service work as well, including visiting vets at Hines VA Hospital, working with Operation Support Our Troops, and more. Diveheart seems to be especially near and dear to their hearts. Ken's 16 year old son Jake who is in the Troop said, "I

like helping the disabled kids. He added, "It's amazing how the kids are so restricted above water and then they go under water and have full range of motion."

Jake has been so inspired by his work with vets through both Diveheart and Hines, that he's considering pursuing a military career after high school.

Ken's fourteen-year old son Nick is also a scout and volunteering with Diveheart. He said he especially enjoys his time in the water with kids with disabilities and with vets. "Everything has been great," he said, "Diveheart teaches them well and they know what they're doing."

Jim Elliott, president of Diveheart is thrilled that the Boy Scouts are so committed to service in general, and Diveheart specifically. "I like that the Troop leaders are instilling this sense of service in these boys at such an early age. It'll always be an important part of their lives," he said. Working with Diveheart, he added, makes it a "win-win situation on so many counts. The participants love to interact with these great energetic kids. And the Boy Scouts are participating in a cool activity, while helping others."

## DIVEHEART IN THE NEWS! *Photos from the Photo Shoots*



# Diveheart Hosts First Adaptive Dive Symposium

Diveheart hosted the first-ever adaptive dive symposium on Friday, February 19 at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare. The Diving with Disabilities Symposium was held in conjunction with Our World Underwater Dive Show, one of the largest dive conventions in the world

The symposium was open to divers as well as people either interested in or currently involved in the dive industry or dive therapy. There was standing room only as people from dive shops rehab hospitals, and veteran organizations came to learn about various aspects of scuba therapy.

"We're at an important crossroads right now. Over the past months adaptive diving has been receiving unprecedented media attention. Furthermore, medical science is increasingly supporting what we in the dive community already know to be true about the benefits of scuba. We believe that disabled diving is going to take off during the next several years and we want to make sure that the industry is well positioned to accommodate this growth," said Jim Elliott, president of Diveheart.

The symposium was co-sponsored by Our World Underwater Dive Show and Midwest Dive News Magazine.

# Diveheart Hosts Spring Fling Fundraiser

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW...for Diveheart's Spring Fling Fundraiser!**

The annual family-event will be held at Ballydoyle Irish Pub and Restaurant, 5157 Main Street in Downers Grove on April 18 from noon-4 p.m.

Join us for food, games, prizes, live entertainment, a silent auction and

drawing. Tickets are \$25/person in advance, \$30/person at the door, kids ages 12 and under free. Admission includes a T-shirt, appetizers from 1-2:30 p.m. live entertainment and more.

**A drawing** will be held for the following:

- 1st Place-\$1000 Visa Gift Card
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place-\$500 Best Buy Gift Card
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place-\$300 Visa Gift Card

Drawing tickets are available for \$5/each of 5 for \$20. Please contact the Diveheart office for information about purchasing tickets. Winners need not be present.

**If you are able to help out with donations of auction items or sponsorships, please contact Janice at [Janice.s@diveheart.org](mailto:Janice.s@diveheart.org) or call 630-964-1983.**

# Simple (FREE) Ways to Help Diveheart

There are ways that you can financially assist Diveheart without spending an extra dime.



The search engine GoodSearch will donate money to Diveheart every time you search the Internet. Just go to [GoodSearch.com](http://GoodSearch.com) and register Diveheart as your designated charity. Then use GoodSearch as your regular search engine. You can even set it up as your home page. There are charitable organizations that earn tens of thousands of dollars this way—so please sign up now!



If you do your online shopping through [GoodShop.com](http://GoodShop.com) participating retailers will donate a portion of the sales back to Diveheart. These include popular retailers such as Amazon.com, Avon, Best Buy, iTunes, eBay, Kohl's, JC Penney and more.

The site also lists coupons and discounts that will save you money, while shopping to benefit Diveheart. It doesn't get much better than this!

Please register with these sites and ask your friends to do the same!

## Upcoming Events

(Cntrl and click at dates for further information)

**Volunteer Committee Meeting:**  
[First Wednesday of every month](#)

**Downers Grove Park District  
Discover Scuba Program:**  
[March 4](#)

**Northeast DuPage Special  
Recreation Association: Discover  
Scuba Program:** [March 7](#)

**Diveheart Military Wounded Dive  
Program:** [March 7](#)

**Diveheart Military Wounded-Great  
Lakes:** [March 10](#)

**Oak Lawn Discover Scuba  
Program:** [March 14](#)

**Diveheart Disabled Dive Training:**  
[March 13 and 14](#)

**Open Discover Scuba Program:**  
[March 23](#)

**SEASPAR Discover Scuba  
Program:** [March 30](#)

**DIVEHEART Spring Fundraiser:**  
[April 18](#)

**For more events and further  
information, visit:  
[www.diveheart.org](http://www.diveheart.org)**

## Shop for Diveheart Merchandise

**There are a variety of retailers that offer items featuring Diveheart's distinctive logo. These include T-shirts, sweatshirts, outerwear. Blankets and jewelry! Please check the Diveheart Store at [www.diveheart.org](http://www.diveheart.org). Proceeds from the sales of this merchandise benefit Diveheart.**