



Stu News Newport

Tom Johnson's Newport Beach News and Community Forum

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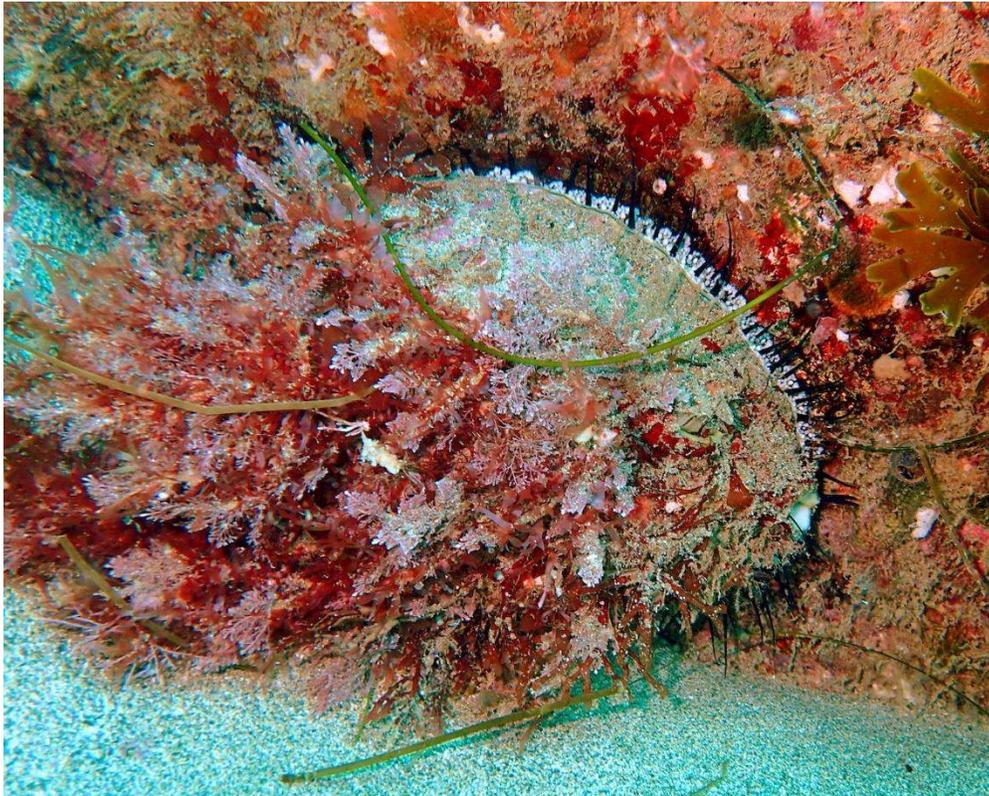
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Nostalgic Abalone Feed benefits ocean restoration projects

On Friday, Aug. 2, the nonprofit Get Inspired hosted its “2nd annual Abalone Feed” at Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort. The event was a re-creation of a nostalgic social gathering that was commonplace in Orange County in the 1950s, like clam bakes and lobster boils the Northeastern U.S. In that bygone era, at the end of a long summer day of frolicking on the beaches of Big Corona, Crystal Cove, or Doheny, sounds of ukulele music could be heard along with the pounding of abalone meat.



Click on photo for a larger image

Photo by Susy Horowitz

An adult abalone under the sea

“Abalone was once so plentiful along our coastline, you had to step over them to get to the water,” said marine biologist Nancy Caruso, the host of the event. The tasty one-shelled mollusk is related to snails and lives in our coastal kelp forests. Seven species of abalone once teemed the shores of California. After decades of overfishing and disease, California waters now have two endangered species, three species of concern and two in decline. It is now illegal in the state of California to harvest abalone for any reason.

The “Abalone Feed” was attended by 110 guests and included live music, an historian from the Surfing Heritage and Cultural Center, and storytellers who remembered the “good old days” of collecting and eating abalone from our shores. Attendees dined on farm-raised red abalone grown on The Cultured Abalone Farm in Goleta, Calif.



Courtesy of Nancy Caruso

A baby abalone that is growing and nearly ready to be planted in the ocean

Get Inspired is a nonprofit organization conducting ocean restoration projects along the 42 miles of the Orange County coast.

“We started by restoring the kelp forests, then we started growing white seabass and we are now growing and restoring green abalone to our coast,” Caruso explained.

And that’s not all. Caruso has done all this work with the help of almost 12,000 kids and 350 volunteers. “If the community does not have a stake in the restoration, it will not be successful,” she said. “The next generation must become the caretakers of our coastal ecosystem.”



[Click on photo for a larger image](#)

Courtesy of Nancy Caruso

Among the littlest baby abalone growing up on the farm

Caruso hopes to expand the restoration programs to include pismo clams, sea stars and other abalone species. The sold-out event raised \$6,200 which will be used toward the purchase of a boat for these projects.

For more information or to donate to Get Inspired, call 714.206.5147, email nancy@getinspiredinc.org and visit www.getinspiredinc.org.