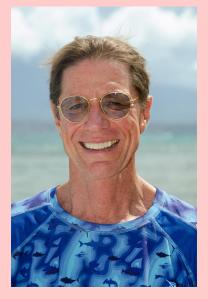
February 2025

## HUPS Newsletter

### February 3, 7-9 pm



### **Up Close and Personal**

### with Mark Strickland

Inside this issue:	
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## **Up Close and Personal**

## Tips for Approaching Shy Marine Life Mark Strickland

February 3rd at 7 pm - Bayland Community Center

### Link to the Zoom broadcast

Meeting ID: 822 2562 5836 Password: 079944

We are happy to announce our February presenter, Mark Strickland. He comes highly recommended by those that know him. His portfolio contains an amazing array of diverse underwater photography including a variety of mammals (humpbacks, dolphins, sea lions, elephants, kids, and pigs... to name a few). But also, astonishingly good macro and wideangle photography can be seen on his Mark Strickland Photography website. You won't want to miss this experience. Arrive early for a good seat. And don't forget to bring your appetite for some after-meeting Mexican food at La Tapatia.

Whether you're obsessed with capturing impactful marine life images or a casual snapshooter, there is no substitute for being physically close to the subject. From tiny gobies to massive whales, many animals are inherently shy, making close interaction difficult. When approached properly, however, most sea creatures are surprisingly tolerant of divers. This seminar will teach you techniques that can turn fleeting glimpses into relaxed, intimate encounters. You'll learn how to approach shy animals, gain their trust, and get close without scaring them away, making every dive a more enjoyable and rewarding experience.

### About Mark:

Mark Strickland's life-long interest in the sea has included over 10,000 dives and careers as lifeguard, boat captain and scuba instructor. His passion for underwater photography has led him to many top dive locales including Thailand, where he spent 17 years as Cruise Director on a series of live-aboards. An avid marine naturalist, Mark has discovered several nudibranch species, including his namesake, Halgerda stricklandi. He is co-author and principal photographer for Lonely Planet's award-winning book, "Diving and Snorkeling Thailand", and his work appears in many publications around the world; editorial credits include Alert Diver, BBC Wildlife, Blancpain's Edition Fifty Fathoms, Conde Nast Traveler, Geo, National Geographic World, Nature's Best, Natural History, Outside and most major dive magazines. His images have also been displayed at the Smithsonian Institution, United Nations Visitor Center, and galleries including the G2 in Venice, CA. Mark leads several dive trips each year to his favorite destinations as part of his job at Bluewater Photo in Culver City, California. For a sampling of Mark's work,

visit www.markstrickland.com





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## President's Message

### by Craig Beasley

This is a throwback to my April, 2024 president's page where I discussed our experiences at Black Sand Resort in Lembeh when we overlapped with a Netflix film crew. We were amazed that they were there for more than 5 weeks just to film coconut octopus behavior. They had more than \$150,000 worth of equipment in the water and worked all day using rebreathers. So what could they be doing?

Well, now we know. The Netflix series "Our Oceans" has dropped on Netflix and all I can say is WOW! There are 5 episodes and at this point we have watched the first 4 and each is spectacular. They have films of animal behaviors that have never been filmed before – multiple instances, in fact. The episodes are each about a different Ocean: Pacific, Indian, Atlantic, Arctic and Southern. We found the Lebeh octopus sequence in the 2nd one on the Indian Ocean.

At this point, I am amazed at what they got even though they had 5 weeks. I think you could work a year and not get what they got. I expect there was some measure of working with the animals, but I don't think there was abuse. Otherwise, I just don't know how you get this behavior on film. But of course, that's why they are the pros.

In any case, I highly recommend this series. It's hard to compare, but I think they outdo the Blue Planet series. You will definitely see some incredible camera work and, for sure, things you have never seen before.

# 2nd Annual A MIXED ARTS FESTIVAL

## Saturday, January 18, 2025

### MATCH PRESENTS MIX-MATCH A MIXED ARTS FESTIVAL

Join us for the 2nd annual **Mix-MATCH: A Mixed Arts Festival**! This one-day event celebrates Houston's vibrant and diverse arts community, bringing together an extraordinary lineup of performances and exhibits that showcase the city's creative spirit.

The 2025 Mix-MATCH Festival centers on collaboration and inclusivity, featuring theater, dance, music, performance art, film, and visual art—all in a single afternoon. Guests can also enjoy **food trucks** and **interactive activities** throughout the day, ending with the MATCH Mixer, a unique opportunity to connect with artists and fellow art lovers.

**<u>CLICK HERE</u>** for a printable schedule.

### **\$40 FESTIVAL PASSES ON SALE NOW**



With a **festival pass** you will have access to any of the performance that you wish to attend along with two drink tickets to enjoy throughout the day!

\$15 single performance will go on sale the first week of January while supplies last.

Please note that each pass is subject to a \$3 service fee at checkout.

MEET THE FESTIVAL PARTICIPANTS (click on the individual names for more information)

Pronoia Theater (theater)

Artemis Hunter (theater/drag)

TORCH (theater)

NMLY.dance (dance)

<u>Karina Gonzalez/David Rivera/Tonya Burton</u> (dance/videography/music)

Indian Performing Arts Samskriti (dance/music)

6 Degrees with George Heathco (dance/music)

The Pilot Dance Project (dance)

Group Acorde (dance)

Brave Little Company (theater)

oh, hooray (music)

Teatro Loft (theater)

Houston Underwater Film Festival (film)

3G Percussion (music)

Silambam Houston (dance/music)

Houston's A.S.S. (music)

lo-fi puppets + stuff (theater)

Ugochi Emenaha (spoken word)

Boomtown Brass Band (music)

Canda (performance art)

Carmenza Perdomo & Ruby Fear (visual art)

Sketch Supercollider (improv/comedy)





### Behind the Scenes at the Houston Underwater Film Festival: an evening with filmmakers

The Houston Underwater Film Festival (HUFF) is a collaboration between local filmmakers, photographers and visual, graphic and decorative artists working with underwater subjects. It is supported and run by the artists and the local dive community. It was founded just as the pandemic hit and fortunately was able to survive and thrive in the aftermath and is now in it's 5th season with the 2025 edition scheduled for April 12-13 at the MATCH. In this short time, it has become a premier International event for films about our Oceans, dance, animation and anything else underwater with last year's event screening 52 films by authors from 24 countries. Artists working in underwater filmmaking are an unusual group, to say the least, each with their own different goals, views and emphasis in their work. Join us for an hour of meeting with a select group of local filmmakers and hear their individual stories as they explain a little about themselves and their work before showing one of their films. There will be a question/answer/discussion period followng all showings.

Our Photo Contest Coordinator, Martin Daniels, was out of town for the January meeting and will present the results of the January and February contests at the February 3 HUPS Meeting.

Those results will appear in the March newsletter.

# **2024 POTY STANDINGS**

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Novice	
Sage Holt	759
Scott Singleton	753
Tiffanie Crumbley	578
Aaron Crumbley	527
Intermediate	
Jennifer Opiela-Miksch	691
Alex Kendig	600
Lynn Zechiedrich	353
Advanced	
Justin Wallace	776
Debbie Mensay	742
Jim Mensay	728
Barry Cline	689
John Van Atta	680
	Sage HoltScott SingletonTiffanie CrumbleyAaron CrumbleyIntermediateJennifer Opiela-MikschAlex KendigLynn ZechiedrichAdvancedJustin WallaceDebbie MensayJim MensayBarry Cline

Click here to view the

**HUPS Photo Contests** 

on HUPSdotORG.

## **2025 Photo Contest Categories**

January	Single Color Focus (Blue, Red, Green, Yellow, etc.)	Subject must be a single color or shade of color, such as: green moray eel, green parrotfish, soap fish, sharks, sponge, coral .
February	Fish Portraits	1 or 2 fish (not critters), side on, angled views, or face-to⊡the-camera shots are what we're looking for.
March	Groups, Sweetlips	Groupers typically have a stout body and large mouth, and can be quite large. Sweetlips also have large, fleshy lips.
April	Long and thin - fish or critters	Any fish or critter that is characterized by long, thin lines.
Мау	Pairs (2 of the same)	Two of the same critters or fish, similar in form, matched or associated.
June	Things that Live in Sand or Muck	Fish or critters that live in sand or muck.
July	Echinoderms (starfish, urchins, sea cucumbers, etc.)	Echinoderms usually have five-point radial symmetry, and include starfish, brittle stars, sea urchins, sand dollars, sea cucumbers, and crinoids.
August	Silhouettes	In Silhouettes the outline and shape of the subject are what is important. A good silhouette should have almost no detail observable in the primary subject
September	Juveniles of Any Species	A Juvenile can be anything that's not a mature adult, preferably fish or critters that are obviously still maturing. Such as: juvenile anglefish that have distinct markings or juvenile spotted drums that need to grow into their fins
October	Corals-Macro (hard or soft)	Coral a tiny soft-bodied animal that typically lives within a stony skeleton grouped in large colonies. The goal is individual polyps, not a reef composition.
November	Reef scenes with diver(s)	Any kind of reef scene somewhere in the shot, and also must include at least one diver.
December	Best of HUPS	NOVICE, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED, and CREATIVE contests: First place winners from each month's Novice, Intermediate and Advanced categories will be entered automatically for judging. The Creative category lets you enter anything you want as long as you do the photography and any special editing.



This article contains photos by HUPS member, Jesse Cancelmo.



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ALONG For the ride

Remoras attach themselves to a shark or other host and hang on.

by Karina Kumar

t's a hitchhiker's life for the remora. The long, thin, slate-gray fish is found almost exclusively catching free rides through the water. The remora, also known as a suckerfish, attaches to a host (often a shark, ray or whale) using the flat, oval-shaped dorsal fin on top of its head. That fin has a soft outer lip for suction and linear rows of rough tissue that create friction for the remora to hold on tight to its host.

"It's like a suction cup on a window or a Nerf dart," says Mark Fisher, science director for the Coastal Fisheries Division at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The remora needs water constantly moving over its gills to survive, so its host helps the remora meet that need without expending its own energy. That host is also the remora's meal ticket — it eats leftover scraps from its host's meals — and sometimes its waste, too.



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COMMON NAME Remora, or

### suckerfish

NAME: Eight species in the genus *Remora* 

### навитат: Tropical

and subtropical oceans around the world

DIET: Small crustaceans, scraps from host's meals, sometimes squid, small fish and floating organisms in the water

DID YOU KNOW? Some species of remora live inside the mouths of sharks or rays. a pretty easy life - just find something big and attach to it and just coast around and wait for scraps or whatnot, and that's it." Fisher says. People used to think remoras were just another parasite, causing harm to their hosts. In fact, remora is a Latin word meaning hindrance. But, despite its strong suction abilities. the remora does

not hurt its host in any way. In some cases, the

"They have

remora helps out its host by eating parasites on the host's skin.

Fisher says the remora's relationship with its host is commensal, which is when one species benefits from the relationship (the remora) and the other is neither harmed nor helped (the host). Some consider the relationship symbiotic, meaning both parties benefit, because of the remora's specialty cleaning service.

There are eight species of remora, all of which are found in the Gulf of Mexico. Their size can range between one and three feet long. Some species will attach only to a whale, while others opt for manta ray. But the most common is the *Remora remora*, which is not particularly picky about its vehicle. It will attach to sharks, whales, turtles, manta rays and even sometimes divers and boats — any large animal (or object) they think will provide them with a smooth ride and some tasty leftovers.

"Once you see one, you will never forget it," Fisher says. "There's just nothing else like them."

If you are trying to find this hitchhiker, you'll have the most luck looking for its ride first.

### Texas Gulf Coast Council of Diving Clubs (TGCC or Diving Council) News

Every diver, every elected or appointed club officer, should plan on attending the TGCC Annual Club Awards Luncheon. It's a major dive community event. The following are some detail about the "Awards Luncheon": This event is the one opportunity for all members of the dive community to get together – hear what was accomplished last year and learn about key issues and projects for the current year. It is the place where the Diving Council, our charity - American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation (ACWA) and the Houston Underwater Film Festival (HUFF) updates everyone. It's the one time of the year when:

Each of our clubs can "break bread" together and celebrate.

Leaders and the critical workers of our community are recognized.

Additions to the community's memorial program are announced.

Time is taken to recognize many of our community's leaders.

We pause a moment to remember those dive club workers who are no longer with us.

Each of us can learn more about the other clubs and members of our community.

The event is Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025.

At Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, near Hillcroft.

Social -11:00 AM Lunch - 11:45 AM. Awards and Presentations – 12:15 PM.

Tickets are \$30. Tickets are available from Frank Burek, Ja Van Pruett and Mark Leiserowitz. Representatives from each of the dive clubs have tickets for sale to their club members.

Each club, and the TGCC will present their awards. TGCC known awards at this time are:

Its 2024 Member-of-the-Year award to Rodney Dwire.

Its 2024 Neptune Award to Betsy Beasley.

Each of the TGCC member clubs will present their 2024 awards at this event.

The Representatives from TGCC's member clubs have chosen the TGCC Officers for 2025 & 2026. They are:

President – Frank Burek 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President (Recognition Programs) – Pee Wee Dwire 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Legislation, Flower Garden Banks NMS monitoring) – Andy Lewis Treasurer – Mark Leiserowitz Secretary – Ja Van Pruett Webmaster – Tom Burns

### Results of TGCC's Neptune Award program 2024:

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Betsy Beasley (11)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Craig Beasley (10)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Ja Van Pruett (8)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – Brion Saathoff (8)

4<sup>th</sup> Place – Rodney Dwire (7)

4<sup>th</sup> Place – Christie Emerson (7)

4<sup>th</sup> Place - David Lenderman (7)

# **Gadget of the Nonth** Kasa Smart Plug HS103P4



Voice control: Kasa smart plugs that work with Alexa and Google Home Assistant. Enjoy the hands free convenience of controlling any home electronic appliances with your voice via Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant. Compatible with Android 5.0 or higher and iOS 10.0 or higher

Smart Outlet Control from anywhere: Turn electronics on and off your smart home devices from anywhere with your smartphone using the Kasa app, whether you are at home, in the office or on vacation

Scheduling: Use timer or countdown schedules to set your wifi smart plug to automatically turn on and off any home electronic appliances such as lamps, fan, humidifier, Christmas lights etc. The Kasa app is free and compatible with iOS 10.0 or later.

Easy set up and use: 2.4GHz Wi-Fi connection required. Plug in, open the Kasa app, follow the simple instructions and enjoy

Trusted and reliable: Designed and developed in Silicon Valley, Kasa is trusted by over 5 Million users and being the reader's choice for PCMag 2020. UL certified for safety use.

## **Click <u>here</u> to view on Amazon**

# Gadget of the Month

# Bring your favorite gadget to the next meeting to share.



## any recent HUPS Meetings?

Click here to view them on our YouTube channel HUPSdotORG



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M-V Fling has been carrying divers out to the World-Class sites at the Flower Garden Banks NMS and beyond! It's by far the best diving in Texas. Come with us to dive in BLUE-WATER and see coral reefs and all the animals there! 726 West Brazos Boulevard, Freeport, TX, United States, Texas (979) 233-4445 info@TexasCaribbean.com Go view this video to get a small view of the Flower Garden Banks: https://

www.facebook.com/100057303948082/videos/422927503937073

To book:

texascaribbean.com



Virtual Tickets for HUFF 2024 are available at the HUFF website....<u>huff.hups.org/shop</u>

Also available....Virtual Tickets from HUFF 2021, 2022 & 2023

Continue to check the website for upcoming HUFF 20204 videos, photos and filmmaker interviews.

HUFF 2025 is April 12-13, 2025.

**American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation** 



### 2025 Supporter Registration

The "American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation" (ACWA) was established by SCUBA divers on March 31, 2023. ACWA is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public non-profit charity. Staffed by non-paid volunteers, ACWA's administrative and donation support is provided annually by members of our community.

Supporter Registration for the "American Charitable Watersport Activities Foundation" (ACWA) is open to Dive Clubs and Individuals who reside in the United States of America. 2025 registration is \$20.

"Supporters" on record for 2023 or 2024 are listed on a "Supporter Master List" and need not complete this form. They continue their charity efforts with their 2025 payment of \$20 to ACWA's treasurer - Mark Leiserowitz (contact information listed below).

New "Supporters" need to complete this form to provide ACWA with contact and IRS reporting information. To join as an individual (must be a certified scuba diver, or a member of a dive club) - fill out the application below. Please print legibly as e-mail addresses will be utilized to keep supporters abreast with the charity's status and your name as identified below, used in any future donation reporting required by you or the IRS.

Dive Club	
	or
Certifying Agency:	C-Card Number:
Make Checks Payable To: ACWA, c 77092.	o Mark Leiserowitz, 5205 De Milo Dr., Houston, Texas
Name:	Phone / Cell Phone:
E-Mail:	
Signature:	

## 2025 TGCC MEMORIAL COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP



The Texas Gulf Coast Council of Diving Clubs (TGCC) plans to award one College scholarships (1 @ \$500) during 2025. This scholarship is given in memory of the many deceased members and leaders of our dive community. It is also awarded in recognition for support of the TGCC Scholarship Program by Rodney Dwire, Alicia Grimes, the Houston Underwater Club, the Houston Underwater Photographic Society, Linda Petty and Russell Ramsey. The purpose of this award is to support the higher educational goal of the members, and their families, who support the dive clubs in the Texas Gulf Coast area. The award will be paid by TGCC directly to the college towards tuition.

#### **Eligibility Rules:**

- Scholarship applicant must be a college undergraduate or graduate student attending college in 2025, or a high school senior that has been accepted to college in 2025.
- The applicant, the parent(s) (biological or through formal adoption), or the grandparent(s) of the applicant, must be an individual member of TGCC or a member of a TGCC member club with dues current in 2025.
- Application (see other side) must be received by the TGCC Donations Committee prior to **June 30, 2025**. TGCC will review all completed applications on July 10, 2025.
- Applicant shall have the high school/college furnish a transcript of grades, courses and class standing.

#### Scholarship General Guidelines:

Scholarship decisions of TGCC are final.

Scholarship winner is expected to keep TGCC abreast with his/her progress in college.

TGCC reserves the right to not award a prize depending upon the number of entries and qualifications of the applicants.

A personal interview with members of the TGCC Scholarship Committee may be required prior to awarding this scholarship.

Confirmation will be by e-mail. Make sure phone and e-mail data provided is current.

TGCC is offering this scholarship as a reward to TGCC members, TGCC member and associate clubs or the children of these members to thank them for supporting TGCC's efforts in promoting safe sport diving. The committee will take into consideration the applicant or applicant's parents involvement in TGCC and member clubs and/or the diving community in general throughout the year.

#### Applications should be e-mailed to the TGCC Donations Committee Chairman:

jfburek@consolidated.net

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### 2025 TGCC MEMORIAL COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP



Applicant's First Name:	Last Name:
Mailing Address:	
E-mail Address:	Phone Number:
High School:	<u>Year</u> Graduated:
Name of college to be attended in 2025: _ (Please enclose a copy of the acceptance	e letter, or current college transcript):
	plicant's grades and academic performance:
Comments and information about the appl	blicant's sports and/or other extracurricular achievement
Description of why the applicant feels h (Use a separate page)	he/she should be selected for this scholarship.
TGCC Affiliation (member of TGCC or TG	-
Applicant Parent G	Grandparent (please circle one)
Affiliate First Name(s):	Last Name:
Affiliate Clubs (TGCC, BAD, CHUM, HUP	PS, Lunarfins, etc.):
Number of Years as member of the <u>above</u>	e named club(s):
List any positions of leadership held by Af	ffiliate:

### Click <u>here</u> to view the Fall 2024 Video Contest



Please transfer files to Betsy Beasley via the free service - <u>WeTransfer.com</u>

## Membership

### **Info for Dues Payments**

\$35 single person membership

\$45 family membership

Payable via PayPal on-line through HUPS webpage or cash/check. If choosing to pay via cash/check, please let us know so we can provide to you a mailing address. https://www.hups.org/join

Contact JaVan Pruett at <u>caladyfish@gmail.com</u>

## SAVE THE HUFF 2025 DATE

### April 12-13

at Midtown Arts & Theater Center Houston (MATCH)



Photo contest entries are due on the Wednesday before the upcoming monthly meeting. Please send them to Martin Daniels at

HUPS\_Photo\_Contest@googlegroups.com

**Address questions to Martin at** 

martin.daniels3@gmail.com

From the Editor.....

Send program ideas to Dennis Deavenport

at ddeavenport@comcast.net

Send workshop ideas to David Lenderman

at underh2o@mac.com

Send newsletter entries to Betsy Beasley

at betsytennis@gmail.com

## 2025 HUPS Dates Bayland Community Center

**General meetings** - Jan 6, Feb 3, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 2, July 7, August 4, Sep 8, Oct 6, Nov 10, Dec 8

### BOD Meetings - TBD times - 2:00-4:00

### Workshops - TBD

The BOD and Workshop dates are likely to change, as needed.

Stay Tuned!



## LOOKING FOR PRESENTERS or IDEAS

Like every year, we are trying to fill our agenda with high quality presentations. But, this year, I am very interested in having some of our own members step up to do a show for the first time.

 Please email me with your willingness to get involved with a presentation. I will get back to you as soon as I can to discuss your involvement.

 Send me any ideas you have for subjects or presenters that you'd like to have do a show for HUPS. What would you like to see?

> Dennis Deavenport ddeavenport@comcast.net

### 2025 Meeting Presentations

Who	When	Торіс	Expanded Topic
Craig Beasley & Others	January 8	"Anything Goes Video Night"	Video clips and short films from HUPSters
Mark Strickland	February 3	Up Close and Personal	Tips for Approaching Shy Marine Life
Nancy McGee	March 3	To be determined	TBD
Chuck Noe	April 7	Diving DEEP in Goodenough Caves	Exploring our limits at 4X Recreational
HUFF Crew	May 5	HUFF 2025 Retrospective	Overview of winning films and events of the weekend
Invited guests	June 2	The arcane art of creating films + Spring Video Contest Winners	Pointers and examples of how to build an underwater film
Various participants	July 7	HUPS in Central Philippines	Review of 2024 HUPS trip to Dumaguete and Central Visayas, Philippines
	August 4		
	September 8		
	October 6		
	November 3	+ Fall Video Contest Winners	
Martin and Mary Daniels	December 8	Christmas Dinner/Best of HUPS, and Creative Contests	Pot Luck Dinner/ Best of HUPS in Novice, Intermediate and Advanced Categories/ Creative Contest







Monthly Meeting 7 pm at Bayland and on Zoom

The Houston Underwater Photographic Society meets at the Bayland Community Center from 7 pm - 9 pm, the first Monday of each month (except Monday holidays). 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, Tx. 77074 Visitors are always welcome!

### **2025 HUPS Officers**

President: Craig Beasley

Vice President: Dennis Deavenport

Secretary: Tammy Allyn

**Treasurer: Debbie Mensay** 

**Membership: JaVan Pruett** 

**Photo Contest: Martin Daniels** 

Video Contest/ HUFF Coordinator/ Newsletter: Betsy Beasley

Workshop Coordinator: David Lenderman

TGCC Reps: Frank Burek, JaVan Pruett and Mark Leiserowitz

Webmaster: Joe Holden

**Trip Coordinator: Joe Haws** 

Historian: Frank Burek

Special Events: Mary Daniels

Merchandizing Coordinator: Sandy Bryan

Moody Gardens Coordinator: David Lenderman

### 2025 HUPS Board of Directors

Frank Burek	Henry Ragland	David Lenderman
Mary Daniels	Monica Losey	Betsy Beasley
Martin Daniels	Mike Greuter	Russell Ramsey
Jim Mensay	Joe Haws	Brion Saathoff

NPS	<u>hups.org</u>
You Tube	voutube/user/HUPSdotORG
facebook 📷	<u>facebook.com/</u> groups/174166478778
(Instantan	https://www.instagram.com/