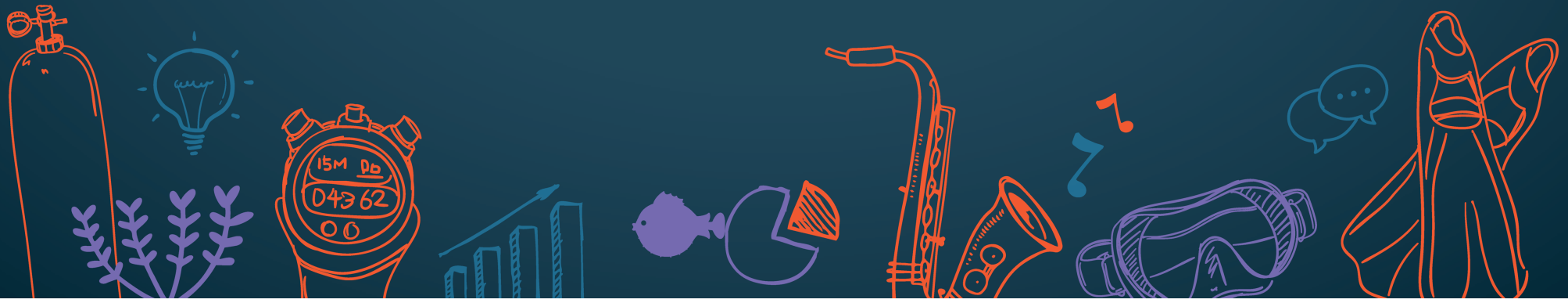
DEMA SHOW® 2026

Harnessing The "Gray Tsunami" for Your Dive Operation

Gil Zeimer, Scuba Storyteller



About Me

- My name is a mnemonic:
  ”Gil” like fish gill (but one “l”);
  “Zeimer”, like ”Alzheimer”
- 3rd-generation San Franciscan;
  live in San Rafael, CA
- Mixed marriage: I dive; wife doesn’t
  (negotiate our vacays)
- 50 years: Award-winning advertising
  writer, journalist, and blogger
- Age 77: Still an active senior diver

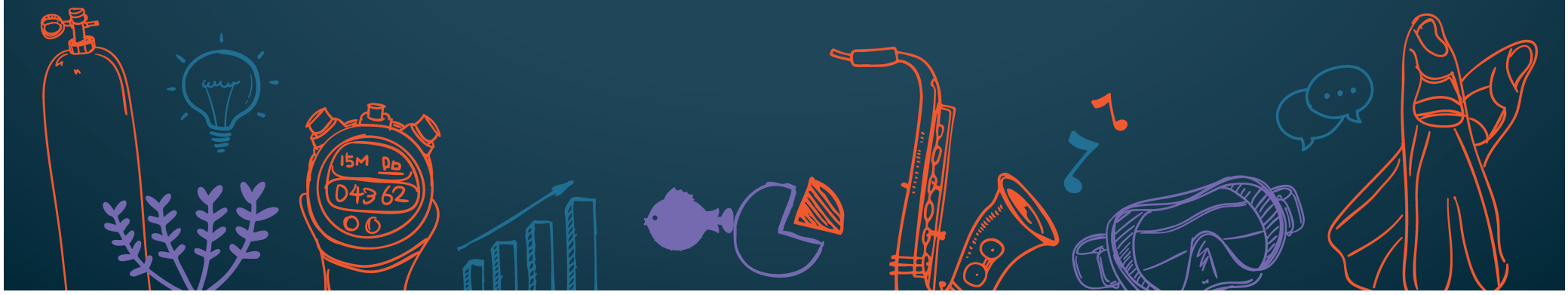


About Me

- 41 years as PADI-certified diver
- 34 years as a "Scuba Storyteller"
- Published >300 stories in > 25 magazines/websites
- Featured presenter at DEMA (4x today) and Scuba Show (3x)
- Author's Corners today @ 11:00 am & 2:00 pm: Booth 100; Best Pub #722
- "25 Ways to 'Blue' Your Business & Make More Green", 3:00 pm, Room 292



(WTF Is The "Gray Tsunami" (What Are The Facts)?



A Huge, Growing Demographic Shift

- Started in June 2024's issue of SDIM: — More clicks than any other story
- 2020 U.S. Census: > 73 million Baby Boomers — America's second-largest age group
- Worldwide = Approximately 1.1 billion Baby Boomers
- AARP: Every day in the U.S., 10,000 people turn 65
- That's an awful lot of seniors who could become your customers

DEMA: 2024 Fast Facts: Recreational Scuba Diving and Snorkeling & 2023 Diver Survey



The "Gray Tsunami" for Divers

- Among 2.5 million U.S. divers and 6.0 million worldwide, **divers aged 55+ account for 40%**
- = **2.4 million divers globally**
- According to Cline Group Market Studies, American senior divers **spend approximately $3.8 billion annually**

DEMA: 2024 Fast Facts: Recreational Scuba Diving and Snorkeling & 2023 Diver Survey



The "Gray Tsunami" for Divers

Compared to those ages 21 to 34, divers 55+:

- **Had 151% more friends** who called themselves divers
- Were **434% more likely** to make a hard goods purchase in their last dive retailer visit
- Were **330% more likely** to have purchased travel in their last visit
- And **were 198% more likely** to have been certified locally

Source: DEMA, 2023 Global Diver Survey



The "Gray Tsunami" for Divers

- Again, in the U.S. alone, this Gray Tsunami of scuba divers **spends approximately $3.8 billion annually**
- **A huge revenue stream** from divers that you may already know
- That's **40%** of an estimated global industry size of **$9.5 billion in annual sales**



Source: Cline Group Market Studies

"Gray Tsunami" Case Study

- MarinScubaClub.org north of San Francisco – **84 members**
- Most members are 60-80; still hyper-active divers
- One guy dove into his 90s
- Members plan multiple tropical and local cold-water trips per year
- Recent years: California, Hawaii, Mexico, Caribbean, Palau, Maldives & Philippines

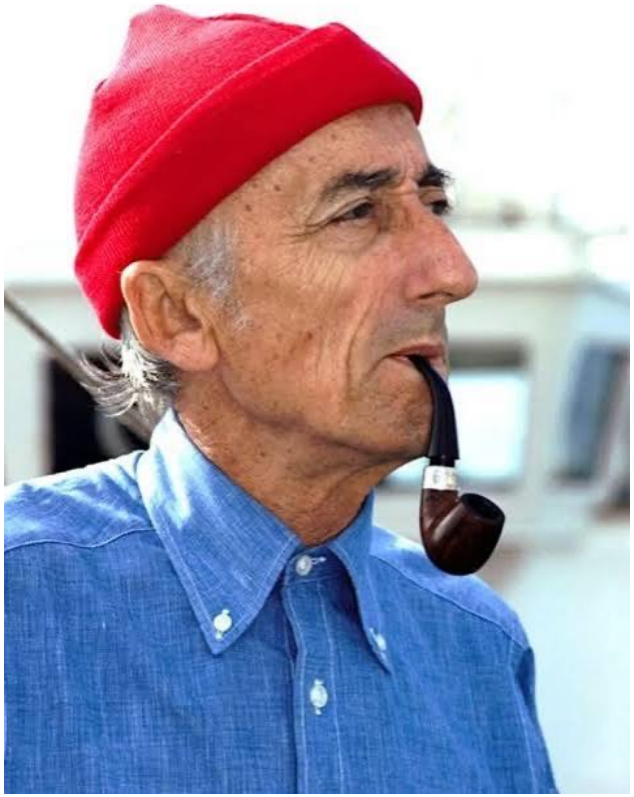


The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Jacques Cousteau: Dove for 60+ years

  Co-invented the Aqua-Lung

  Thousands of dives

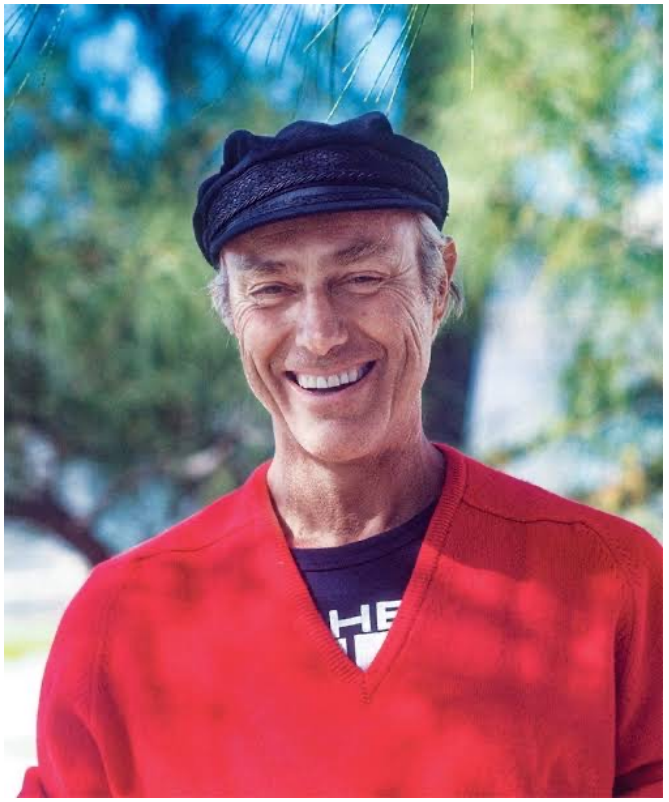


The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Stan Waterman:
  Dove for 80 years
  until he was 90

  Lived to 100

  Underwater film pioneer
  and Emmy-winning
  cinematographer:
  "Blue Water, White Death"



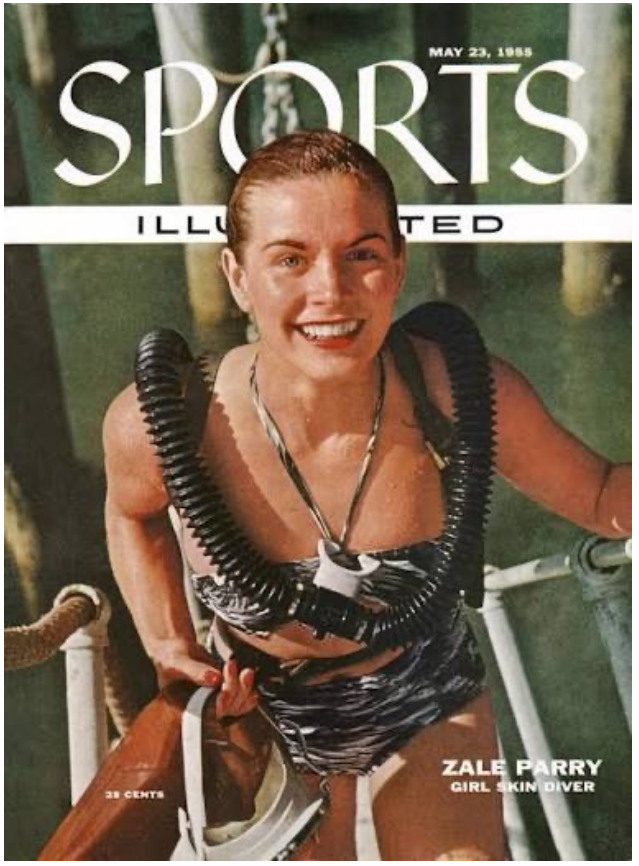
The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Zale Parry:

  "The First Lady of Diving" passed at 93

  Started scuba diving in 1951; dove for >70 years

  First woman on "SI" cover and record-holder for deepest dive (209 feet)

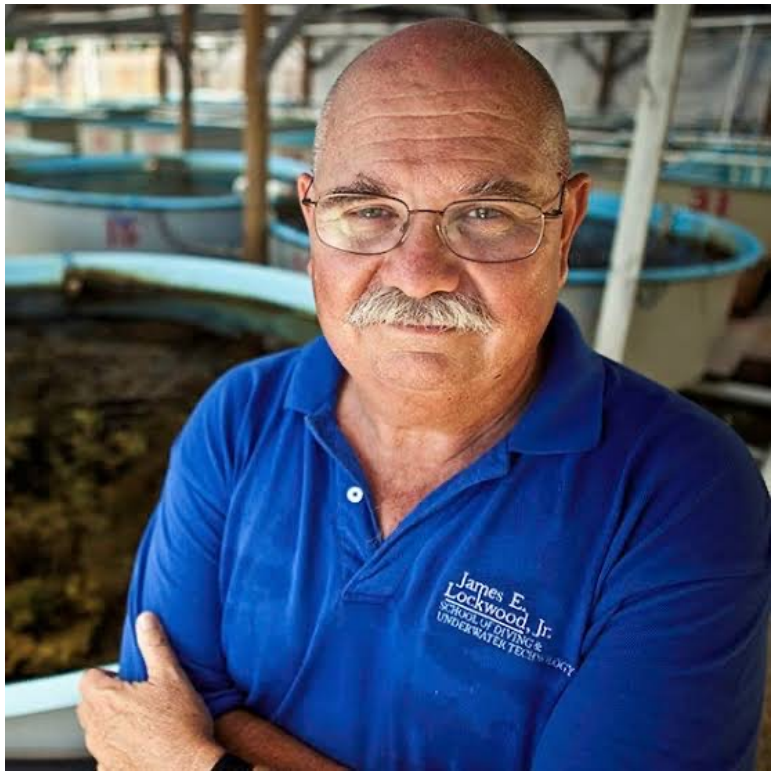


The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Dr. Alex Brylske:

  Still active at age 74

  Amassed about 6,000 dives over six decades



The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Dan Orr:
  Retired president of DAN

  At the spry age of 78, he's logged over 10,000 open water dives across 62 years

  Even leads Citizen-Science Expeditions to Antarctica

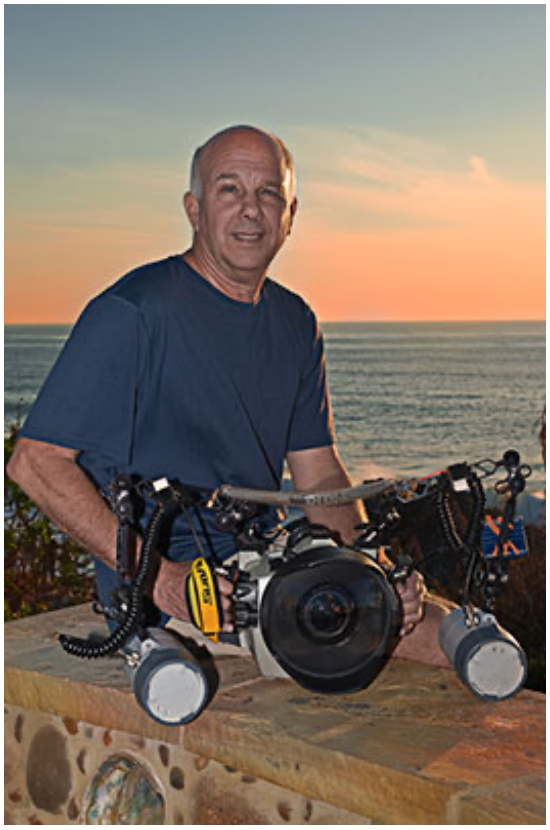


The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Marty Snyderman:

  At 76, he's still a world-class Underwater Photography Ambassador for Atlantis Philippines Dive Resorts and Liveaboards

  He's amassed north of 15,000 dives



The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Jeff Bozanic:
  NOGI Winner,
  NAUI Hall of Honor

  Age 69: diver for 54 years

  5,512 dives/5,612 hours u/w

  255 polar dives



The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Margo Peyton

  60 years old

  Three Halls of Fame, Ocean Ambassador, Founder of Kids Sea Camp and Family Divers

  PADI instructor for 37 years; certified more than 8,000 children

  > 6,000 dives



The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Neal Watson:
  International Scuba Hall of Fame Member, AKA "The Diving God"

  Now 86: Active diver for >73 years

  Founder/operator of Neal Watson's Bimini Scuba Center (for 50 years)

- Record holder: 66-mile underwater swim (19.5-hours; used 40 tanks)

- Tens of thousands of dives



The "Gray Tsunami" -- Notables

- Dr. Sylvia Earle:

  Affectionately named "Her Deepness": marine biologist

  Now 91: Getting wet for more than 70 years

  Pioneer in submersibles

  Deepest walk on the sea floor

  > 7,500 hours logged u/w



My "Gray Tsunami" Experience

- **Dive Log In My 70s**
  2020: Little Cayman: 17 dives

  2023: Cozumel: 11 dives

  2024: Western Carib: 6 dives

  2025: Palau: 17 dives

  2026: So. Caribbean: 5 dives

  2027: Tahiti or Fiji



The Vibrant "Gray Tsunami"

- This mature, growing, vibrant audience should not be ignored
- We may have aches, pains, and surgically replaced joints, but we also have IRAs and SS income
- Advertise and market to us for advanced certs, new gear, and multi-generational family trips
- We have lots of time to dive, and we tip handsomely



The Vibrant "Gray Tsunami"

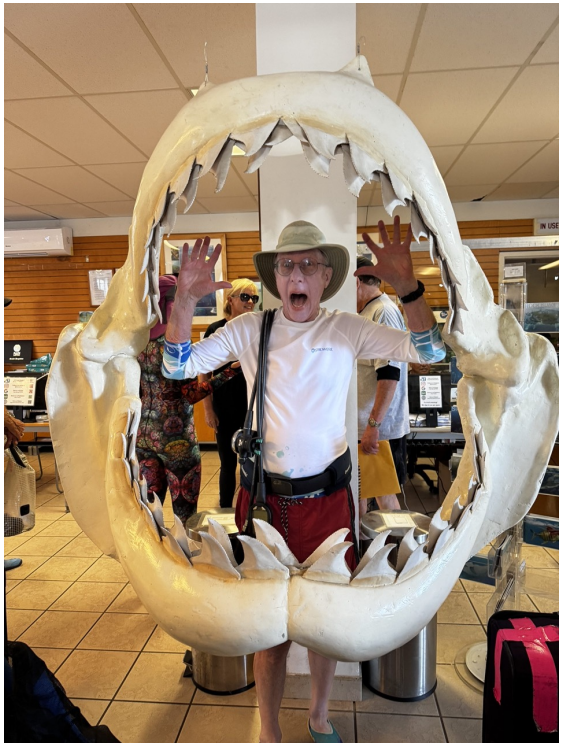
Any questions?

Get in touch re: speaking engagements, blogs, social media, and FAM trips:
gil@zeimer.com

Follow me: linkedin.com/in/zeimer/

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instagram.com/gilzeimer/



About "Scuba Storyteller"

- 65 of my favorites over 32 years
- Funny headlines & enticing ledes
- Available at Best Publishing: Booth #722

Wholesale Discounts:
5-12 books: 20% savings ($15.99)
13-24 books: 30% savings ($13.99)
25+ books: 40% savings ($11.99)



About "Scuba Storyteller"

- "Waterlogged Proposals"
- "Warm Memories of Hypothermia"
- "A Little Kelp With My Friends"
- "Low Anxiety: Getting Narked in Belize's Great Blue Hole"
- "The Day I Rode a Manta Ray"
- "Maui March Madness: Honeymooning With Humpbacks"
- "Jaws at 50: This Shark Still Has Legs" (Wendy Benchley interview)
- "My Dive Buddy Wears Diapers"



Reviews for "Scuba Storyteller"



- "If you're a dive retailer, a liveaboard operator, an instructor, or just a passionate diver, this is the book for you." – William Cline, Publisher, SDIM (from the Foreword)
- "Gil's book is illustrated with anecdotes, short personal stories, and real-life examples." – Dan Orr
- "At times, I was laughing so hard, I nearly peed in my drysuit." – Jeffrey Bozanic
- "I love your book! It's inspiring, entertaining, and enlightening." – Margo Peyton, Founder of Kids Sea Camp

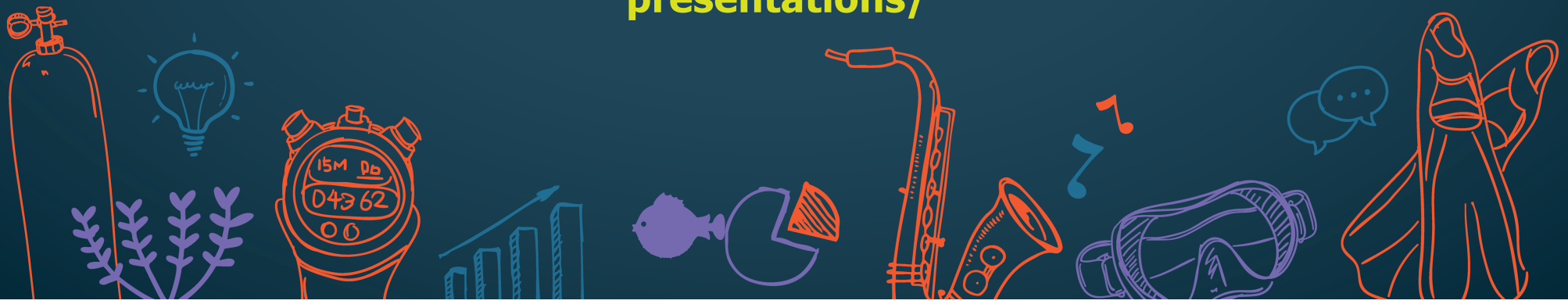
>50 reviews at www.ScubaStoryteller.com



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