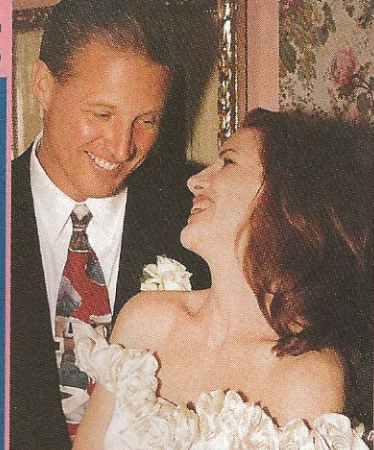


EXCLUSIVE: Melissa Gilbert's surprise wedding

JANUARY 16, 1995 \$2.49

People

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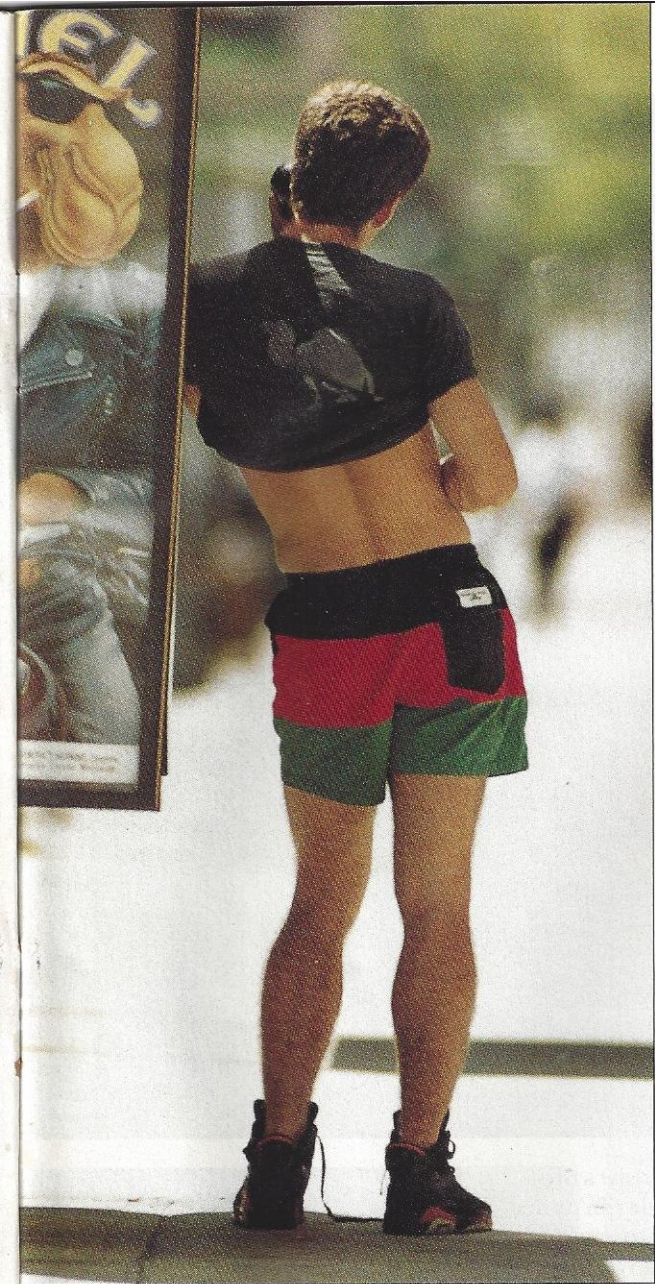


With groom Bruce Boxleitner

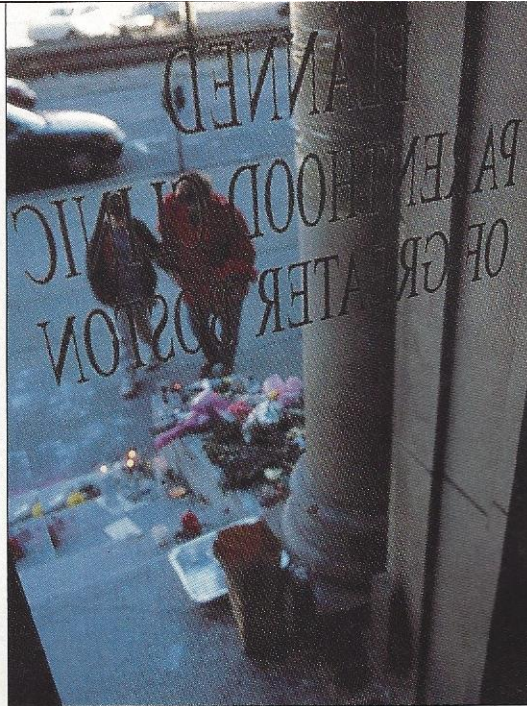
JFK JR. ON HIS OWN

In a year of upheaval, he lost his mother, quit his job and broke up with Daryl Hannah. Is he a man with a plan or a dreamboat adrift?





A-C PHOTOS



BROOKS KRATZ/SYGMA

DEADLY RAGE

“He was a stick of dynamite fixing to go off,” says a coworker of John Salvi, the loner accused of the murders last week of two abortion clinic workers.

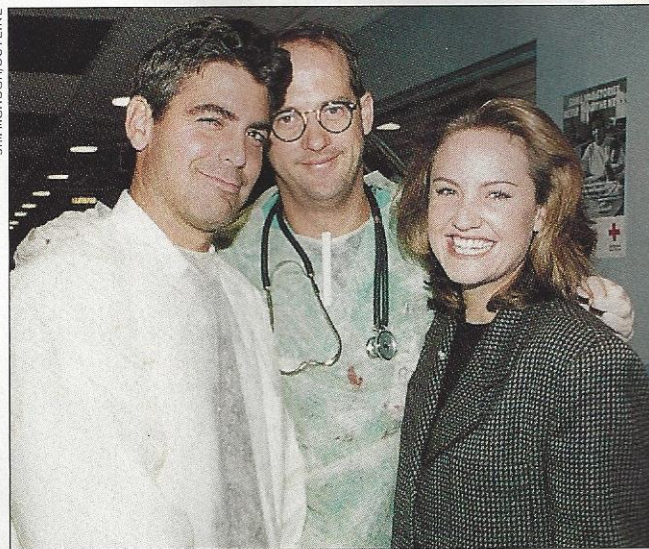
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TOP DOCS

► “You start to believe you can do the real thing,” says *ER*’s George Clooney (left, with Anthony Edwards and Sherry Stringfield) about the hit drama.

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JIM MCHUGH/OUTLINE



INTRODUCING • 70

Repairman by day, garage-rocker **Jack Logan**, along with **Kelly Keneipp** and other pals, has turned his after-hours hobby into a *Bulk* hit

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One Life to Live soap star **Susan Haskell** suffers daily for her art, but it has earned her an Emmy

TEACHER • 79

Thanks to California’s **Jim Gatacre**, the disabled can learn to get back into the swim—through scuba diving

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Some like it hot, but the U.S. Postal Service preferred it a little tamer when it picked its **Marilyn Monroe** stamp

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Brothers **Rand** and **Robyn Miller** are the brains behind *Myst*, the hot new CD-ROM game

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The **Timisis LifeClock** tells you something you may not want to know—how much time you have left

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Lights! Cameras! Intubation! **Anthony Edwards**, **Sherry Stringfield**, **George Clooney** and the rest of the *ER* staff give prime time a dramatic shot in the arm

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With his hyperkinetic act and goofy props, **Carrot Top** is no garden variety comedian

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TAKING THE PLUNGE

The disabled are reborn in Jim Gatacre's scuba class



THE START OF any scuba dive is always exciting. But for the group of eight about to

tumble into the warm, turquoise Caribbean sea from a 40-foot boat off Little Cayman island, it is doubly so. As members of the Handicapped Scuba Association, they shed more than just their street clothes when they enter the water: they shed their disabilities too. "It's total freedom," says Doug Sheridan, 43, a retired computer repairman from St. Louis who became a paraplegic after a 1974 car crash. "In everyday life there are so many obstacles—stairs, doorways too narrow for a wheelchair. This is one area where there are none."

Freeing the handicapped from the shackles of disability has been for 14 years the mission of Jim Gatacre, 53.

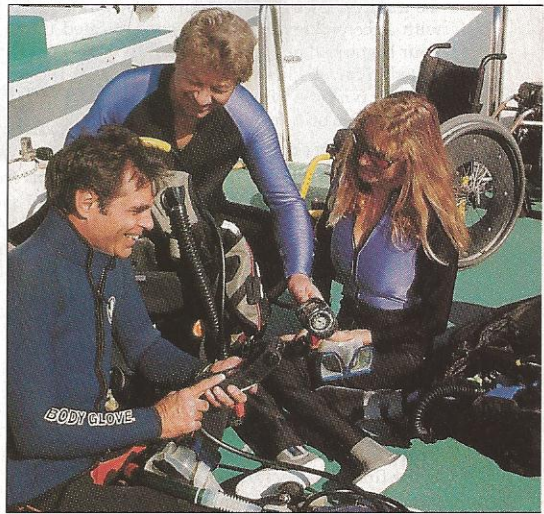
Disabled himself in 1972—he lost partial use of his right arm in a freak accident—Gatacre helped create a diver-training program for the disabled at the University of California, Irvine. Then in 1981 he formed the HSA, which has grown to include some 2,000 members in 30 countries.

"Diving is a normalizing thing," says Gatacre later, sitting under a palm tree back at the dive resort on Cayman Brac. "Our divers are around other divers, drinkin', hangin' out—and it gives them a real sense of accomplishment too. They do it despite their disability."

The oldest of four children, Gatacre was reared in Oak Park, Mich., outside Detroit, by his mother, Dorothy, a switchboard operator, and his stepfather, Harold, who owned a speedometer repair shop. (He never knew his biological father, who died in a German P.O.W. camp.) Gatacre began snorkel-

▲ **Quadriplegic diver Julie Mora Perez (right) gets a helping hand from her husband, Zeke.**

▼ **Jim Gatacre (center) puts Perez and Terry Luxembourg through an equipment check.**



ROGER DONG

ing as a kid in nearby Cass Lake. "I was always diving down with my mask," he says. "Of course, all I ever saw was mud."

After he finished high school in 1960, Gatacre did a three-year stint in the Army—then worked as a roofer to support his new wife, Christine, and daughter Sheri, now 30 and a waitress in San Bernardino, Calif. Divorced in 1968, he married present wife Patricia Derk, 51, a magazine writer and psychic, in 1969.

Then in 1972, Gatacre—who had moved to San Francisco to attend the University of California, Berkeley—fell asleep one night on the couch after a few beers. He awoke 12 hours later to discover that his right arm, pinned under his body the whole time and deprived of blood flow, was swollen and numb. By the time doctors opened the arm to relieve pressure, the swelling had already damaged nerves in the arm, resulting in paralysis down to the fingers. With therapy, he has regained about 50 percent mobility of the arm, but, he says, "just the simple matter of opening a can of soup became incredibly frustrating."

Gatacre was distressed at the



◀ Since wheelchairs are useless on the narrow passageways of the boat, able-bodied crewmen must assist divers (such as Joe Hallmark, who is a quadriplegic) to the dive platform.

➤ "Jim's disability sensitized him to others," says Patricia, reading her husband's cards at home.

thought that he would never be able to realize a lifelong dream to learn to scuba dive. But the following year, a friend at UC, Irvine, where Gatacre had transferred to study marine biology, mentioned he was starting a class to teach paraplegics to dive. Astonished that people with far greater disabilities than his could learn scuba, Gatacre was em-

boldened to become a diver himself. His first outing off Catalina Island, he recalls, "was spectacular, like flying over buildings. Diving was rehabilitative for me, physically and mentally."

Gatacre helped teach his friend's UCI course, but it was only offered a few times. Then in 1981, five years after graduating, Gatacre, living in San Cle-

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Recognize the ice cooler in this picture? Surprisingly enough, there isn't one. What you see instead is a Koolatron, it replaces the traditional ice cooler, and its many limitations, with a technology even more sophisticated than your home fridge. And far better suited to travel. Plus, the innocent looking portable refrigerator before you is also a food warmer.

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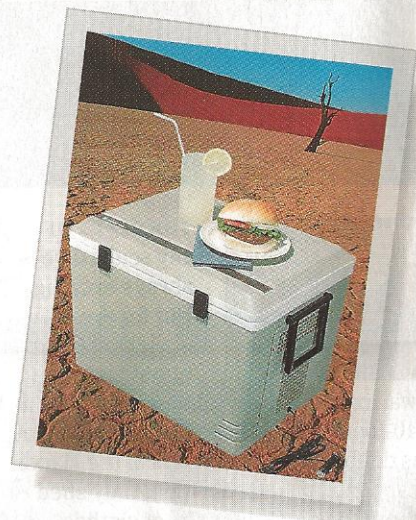
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ROGER DOING

mente and working in roofing sales, set out to create his own program. It's a six-week course in which disabled divers must complete 10 hours in the classroom, followed by 14 hours in the pool, a 300-yard swim and five open-water dives.

The buddy system is crucial to diving, and HSA members are rated on

their ability to assist another diver: Level A divers can do anything an able-bodied diver can do—most paraplegics, with full use of their upper body, fall into this category. Level B and Level C divers need two buddies. Level C divers, including most quadriplegics, also need help operating their equipment and moving through the water.

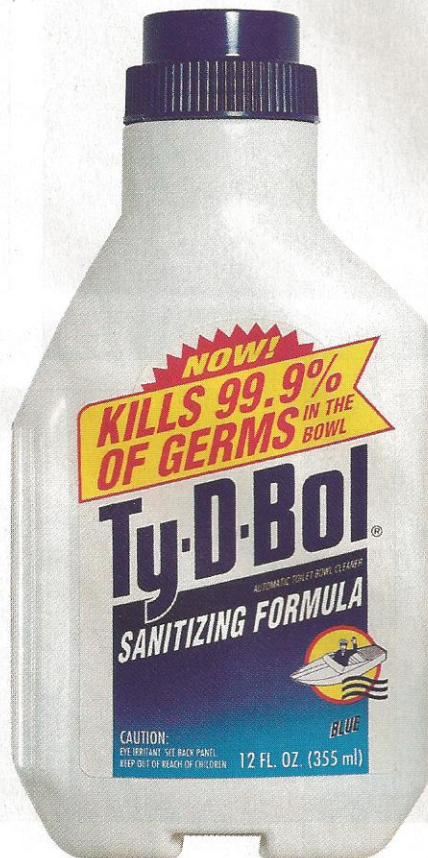
All handicapped divers must be assisted in and out of the water. They get carried to the diving platform, where they are tumbled over the side of the boat to begin their dive. But disabled divers require no special gear. "One of the hardest things for our members to do, because of dexterity and mobility problems," says Gatacre, "is take their mask off underwater, put it back on and clear it [in order to purge it of seawater]. But we have a variety of exercises to deal with this problem."

To date, Gatacre has schooled more than 900 instructors in the special needs of disabled divers. "I tell the instructors," says Gatacre, "this is the most selfish thing you'll ever do, because you'll get so much out of it."

Indeed, the excitement on the dive off Little Cayman is almost palpable. It is as if the notion of disability has been left onshore. "When I'm at home, I'm the only gimp in town," says quadriplegic diver Julie Mora Perez, 35. "But when I'm on these trips, I feel mainstream. It may sound stupid, but I feel cool."

■ WILLIAM PLUMMER

■ TOM CUNNEFF *in the Cayman Islands*



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