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[News](#)
[Sports](#)
[What's Happening](#)
[Columns](#)
[Family](#)
[Health Zone](#)
[Classifieds](#)

Web
  Site

News

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[News Articles](#) | [Search](#)



### FDU(A) father and son dive

*By Virginia Beaton*  
*Trident staff*

In October 2009, the Fleet Diving Unite (Atlantic) ( FDU(A)) celebrated a first for the CF diving branch.

"We both went in the water to test out some equipment and the opportunity arose for for father and son to go together," stated CPO1 Mark Simonsen, Coxswain of FDU(A).

The father and son in question are himself and his son, LS Matthew Simonsen. LS Simonsen, a Naval Reservist, is a port inspection diver but CPO1 Simonsen said " He's also done the prelim clearance diver selection phase, so that qualified him to go in the gear. Usually Reservists don't get that chance."

In an email to Trident, FDU(A)'s Commanding Officer, LCdr Roland Leyte, said "This was the first time in our diving branch that we have had a father and son conduct a surface supplied dive together while they were both in the CF."

The equipment had been down for approximately a year because of maintenance problems "and this was the first gear-up to get it back online," according to CPO1 Simonsen.

He described the dive with his son as "a special event. I don't get in the water that much, I'm usually doing the paperwork and watching the bubbles. But it's great to get back in the water and back to basics. Especially with this chance to dive with my son."

During the dive, "We only went down about 40 bone-crushing feet." While he was on the bottom, CPO1 Simonsen says he, as the red, or lead diver, relayed to the topside "Tell yellow diver to try to keep up." He describes that teasing comment as "all in good fun. He's a young diver, he's strong and he handled himself very well... It was a good dive, overall. We got a few of the bugs out and it was good for the guys on the surface, it got them back in the process of the protocols of running the dive, and everything else.

After enrolling as an infantryman in December 2005, LS Simonsen later changed occupations and has been diving for two years. "I'd like to go clearance diver and make a career of it," he said. He hopes to be one of the candidates selected for the clearance diver course starting in September 2010.



LS Matthew Simonsen (front row, first on left) and CPO1 Mark Simonsen, (front row, first on right) are the first CF father and son to do a surface supplied dive together.

*photo contributed*