



the Good LIFE

Rinaldi dives with sharks in Florida.

John Rinaldi takes the plunge

By Corrinne Hess, staff writer

While on vacation in 2012, John Rinaldi was bicycling around the island of Hawaii when he saw a sign that said "Discover Scuba Diving."

He decided to try it out.

"I was scared to death," said Rinaldi, who is president of Real Time Automation Inc. in Pewaukee. "I was even scared in the pool."

But Rinaldi decided to embrace the fear and live in the moment. Less than a year before, two of his friends, who were both in their 30s, had died suddenly.

"My friend told his wife he wasn't feeling well and laid down and died," Rinaldi said. "My other friend's 17-year-old daughter went to wake him up and found him dead in bed. You can't wait and say 'someday,' because someday may not come."

Moments before jumping into the water for his first scuba dive, Rinaldi looked down and saw a giant sea turtle swimming by; he was amazed at the beauty

below him.

Once under the sea, his scuba instructor put a small octopus on Rinaldi's arm and took his picture.

"It was so warm and peaceful down there," he said. "I decided then I would do more of this."

Rinaldi has gone scuba diving about 60 times since that first time in Hawaii, mostly diving in Florida. He has had some bad experiences and some scary ones. Once, while diving in West Palm Beach, Rinaldi found himself very close to a shark.

"If you act like food, they will treat you like food," he said.

Rinaldi stayed perfectly still, and the shark turned away when it was about six feet from him. The scare has not kept him from the water.

"You have to live the best life you can," Rinaldi said. "You could have five minutes left or 50 years. You never know when death will want to find you." ■