

# Shipwreck divers show slides at Court

Saginaw's first annual Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival isn't an ode to Gilligan's island or even an encore presentation of "Lord of the Flies."

Instead, ~~three members of~~ local diving club are ready to take you along as they explore underwater shipwrecks in Michigan's Great Lakes.

The adventure, via a slide-show, begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Court Theater, 1216 Court.

Dale Purchase, Bill Atkins and Lewis Pavlovich, all members of the Saginaw Underwater Explorers, ~~one of the oldest scuba diving clubs in the United States~~, travel throughout the Midwest with their slide-show on Great Lakes

shipwrecks.

"Most of the ships went down in the 1800s and early 1900s, and there's a reason for that," Pavlovich said. "A lot more ships were on the lakes then — ships were the primary form of transportation — and a lot of them simply rammed into each other and sunk."

Michigan is the only state that has declared the Great Lakes underwater preserves in an effort to protect the maritime heritage. Florida has portions of its coast set aside to protect its coral reefs.

Wednesday's show will focus on wrecks in Lake Huron and Lake Superior, with a few slides from Lake Michigan as well.

"The shipwrecks have remained surprisingly intact," Pavlovich said. "Last year, we found a wreck that went down in 1867 and it was perfect."

Diving and discovering Michigan's shipwrecks is a chance to bring out the explorer and frontiersman in your own back yard, Pavlovich said.

"I've already dived through 100 wrecks and there is nothing more exciting than working your way into the ship and seeing everything as it stood 100 or more years ago," he said.

Admission to Wednesday's show is \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for students.