

A FIRST FOR NORTH AMERICA

Welding course goes down well

By DONNA JEAN NODDIN
for The Daily Free Press

Some may find it difficult to keep their eyes open when under water. For the experienced divers involved in the first underwater welding course on the North American continent, currently being held at Malaspina College, it will be necessary to keep their eyes wide open if they are to work safely in this hostile environment.

The course was created by welding instructor Glen Nelson and will soon become more relevant as time goes on with more oil rigs and, perhaps, offshore gas wells by 1990 in the Georgia Strait requiring such work.

Not designed to teach diving, but designed for experienced divers to add another capability to their list, it is innovative in that until now one had to apprentice oneself and learn the techniques while on the job. There was no other way to go.

Since one must live to reach the job, skill in diving techniques is the first requirement. All these years the millwrights of job of joining footings to piping on a concrete base and pipefitting have been accomplished by divers without trades training and perhaps, just eight or 10 hours' welding experience. The Malaspina course will include approximately 100 hours under-



Instructor Glen Nelson helps Jim Crosson with the watertight seal on his suit

Mark Kaarmaa photo