

The Scuba Sports Club of Westchester, New York Our 41st year—serving the local and northeast dive community

Scuba Sport Club's Summer/Fall 2016 Newsletter



The Anchor Line
Tom Butcher, President



Welcome to the Summer/Fall 2016 issue of The Scuba Sports Club Sea Swells Log. We welcome all members of the diving community to contribute, so please

contact Gary Lehman at gary.a.lehman@gmail.com with your article! Our Club Newsletter includes articles about our Club's diving and social calendar; our diving adventures, social/educational events, equipment and health issue discussions, and profiles on some of the more colorful and intrepid characters in our local diving community (of which there are many!) and other features of interest.

*We have a diverse and far-ranging edition in this issue, and we hope you will find these of interest and we welcome your feedback as always. **Top STORY: TSSC in CUBA !!!!!!!***

One of the great things about this job as Newsletter Editor is the chance to get to know members of our Club and community a bit better. A lot of times we get together at the Club general meetings, events, Beneath The Sea annual dive convention/expo, and while on dives, but sometimes we just don't have enough time – and there are too many distractions - to get to know our fellow Club members a little better. I highly recommend making the opportunity to do so. What wonderful folks are in our Club!

In this issue we sit down with **Pat Considine** to pow-wow; Pat is a familiar face to all of us. Who can forget his smiling face in the bright blue drysuit at our beach cleanups, and Pat sporting his PADI sports windbreaker with all those PADI patches and insignias and chevrons and such at BTS! Pat and I spoke recently about his journey to MSDT – Master Scuba Diver Trainer. He had a long and hard-won success in his quest, and readers are sure to be captivated, inspired by and in awe of his successful work towards earning MSDT. Pat wrote a great backgrounder on his 'scubaholic' endeavors; and then we get some additional, personal interaction in which we get behind the scenes with Pat and get to know him better! Anyhow, grab your gear and jump in, the water is getting warmer and more colorful every day (well, maybe not exactly around the Northeast of the US, but it definitely is SOMEWHERE on this wonderful Earth !

Gary

PS: Thank you to all the contributors! There is a lot of great photography from these trips; it isn't possible to always identify who took which photos without a lot of research because the photos sometimes come off Facebook. So *collective thanks* for all who submit photos, bringing the trip to life for those who couldn't be there!

I joined our Club roughly five years ago. Over the past five years, only two Directors of that remain on the current Board. This shows new members are willing to get involved - which is great for the Club. New thoughts and ideas has kept this Club alive. I expect there will be open positions next year. With that in mind, I invite any member to join the Board for 2017. Other Clubs are run by only 4 officers, TSSC splits the load with thirteen Officers and Directors to help allow the Club to operate easier. The Club needs all the member to participate, not just a few. If you have any interest in joining or helping the Board, please let any Director know. Next year's Board will be formed over the next few months to provide a smooth transition for the next year.



The Club has offered more trips this year than I can remember: three trips to Florida (Keys/West Palm), a local trip to Gloucester, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and a trip to Cozumel in October. I hope next year is as busy as this year. If anyone has a dive recommendation, please share them.

Regardless of where you like to dive, please continue to dive. To be better divers, please keep training and improving your skills. We don't have gills. So, we need to remain diligent keeping our skills current and monitoring our situational awareness to continue to enjoy diving safely. We can always improve. Lucky for us, there are many shops in our area that offer great gear and great training. Take advantage of them. The Open Water class is very involved, teaching us a lot of things which we were unaware of as non-divers. It is also the "intro" class. At times, it seems the more I learn about diving, the less I really knew about diving. Butch Henderson's class in "Movement in the Water" was eye opening. In Open Water classes, you are taught to "Flutter Kick". Butch focuses on swimming like a fish. One skill is to push the water against your body or fin to control your movement. Teaching you how to turn your body without waving your hands around. Turning efficiently reduces air consumption, and makes you more stable in the water.

In closing: Thank you for making this Club the best we can. Your continued attendance and interest in the speakers and your fellow divers has helped this Club to continue for over 40 years. I hope to see you at our Club meetings, our Deco Stop and future trips. I hope all your dives are enjoyable and safe.

Tom
The Prez

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TSSC CLUB OFFICERS and DIRECTORS 2016.

(Please contact any of us with any concerns or recommendations)

President	Tom Butcher
Vice President	Al Miller
Secretary	Denise Blais
Membership	Nick Lappano
Dive Planning	Jack Ricotta
Treasurer	Cindy Fisher
Program Director	Allan Rios
Director at Large	Mike D'Angelo
Executive Director	Katelynn Krack
Past President	Bob Bak
Newsletter	Gary Lehman
Environment and Legislative	Judy Dronzek
Education and Safety	Bob Bak
Social Director	Open
Legal Advisor	Robert Schragger
Founder	Zig Zigahn
Co-Founder	Soliman Shenouda





Diving, Deco Stops and Event Planning Calendar for Remainder of 2016



What is on the radar ?

(We always love to hear new ideas!)

Event	Contact	Date
Cozumel at Occidental	Jack Ricotta	October 15-22
Sea Stories at Explorers Club	Gary Lehman	November 12, 2016
Holiday / Christmas Party	Cindy Fisher	December 3, 2016
Rockefeller Center Tree and dinner excursion	Denise Blais	Tentative 12/10
Millbrook Winery	Denise Blais	TBD
Hayride	The Team	TBD
Long Island Film Festival	Gary Lehman	January 27, 2017



TSSC Goes to CUBA !

June 5-12, 2016

Denise Blais



Cuba, Continued from Page 4 , 1st column

Sunday, June 5th-Departure Day

Early morning wakeup call at 2:30 am to get to the airport for our 7:00am flight to Miami. No traffic on our way to the airport and a very easy time getting through security. Hardly anyone was around. Once we arrived in Miami we went to Terminal G to meet up with the Guardian Scuba group. While we were waiting we noticed that there were several kiosks for people to pay to get their luggage wrapped up in plastic. Apparently, people traveling to some countries were concerned about their luggage being broken into. One in particular was peculiar to us. A man with a flat cart with several car doors on it walked up to one of these kiosks to get them all wrapped in plastic. We asked where he was headed and sure enough it was Cuba.

The group decided to grab some food and drinks so we headed to a bar. Our flight started out being 15 minutes late. Little did we know that tropical depression Collin was right over Havana. Florida was also issuing flood and storm warnings as the depression was due to hit FL shortly after. Our flight to Cuba was supposed to leave @ 4:30 pm. At 5:40pm we were told that we had to wait for the weather to improve in order to leave. I was not looking forward to this bumpy flight, but just wanted this weather to clear up so we could leave. Many of us were getting antsy. Finally at 6:15pm we boarded our flight. Surprisingly it was a 737 plan with 3 seats by 3 seats with about 56 people aboard. I was expecting a puddle jumper of some sort.

We arrived and were able to walk into the airport before the skies opened up. We have to go through a security area where they x-rayed your bag and you went through the metal detector. The interesting part was all the people working this area were women with short skirts and fishnet stockings. This was a little surprising for airport security attire. The building was dimly lit as most places we would encounter on the trip. The bathrooms no matter where we went seemed to be lacking toilet seats and toilet paper. So keep that in mind if you travel there. Carrying your own toilet paper is a must! As we were waiting for our luggage it started to pour outside. We knew that because we could hear it on the metal roof which was leaking like crazy causing puddles within the airport. Good thing we brought rain jackets.

Monday, June 6th Kara's Birthday

Up early at 6:15 for a buffet breakfast before our antique convertible car ride tour around Havana. The hotel would convert US dollars to Cuban CUC's \$100 at a time. \$100 got you about \$87 CUC's. Everyone was so excited to see the cars we would be touring in. They were all special to us but after having toured the city these old cars are everywhere. It was like going back in time.

Our first stop on our tour was Hemmingway's house. We arrived a little early before it was open and took pictures and looked around the neighborhood. Al had brought some Yankees hat's to give out to some of the kids. One girl didn't really know what it was. But there were other kids that knew exactly who the Yankees were and were very appreciative of the gift.

We had a gentlemen give us a tour around the house. We couldn't go in but got a lot of history of the house. At this house Hemmingway had a lot of dogs. Which is still the case today. There are 4 graves in the back of the house where some of them are buried. Hemmingway's boat "The Pilar" was in the back of the house on display. Many animal heads were on the walls as he was an avid hunter. At the end of the tour they had Pineapple Mojito's for us to buy. They were crushing the sugarcane for its sugar right there to put in the Mojito's. They were so good!!!

We went to another location famous for where Hemmingway was inspired to write "The Old Man and the Sea". We found a local artist that we bought some art from and visited the bar where Hemmingway would hang out. We finished just in time as it started to rain again.

Next we went to a nice restaurant for lunch where we had more mojito's. When in Cuba you have to have mojito's! The meal was really good. We celebrated Kara's birthday, then off to a walking tour around Havana. Luckily, the rain stopped long enough to allow us to walk around. We got to see some very historic buildings and hear lots of stories about Cuba.

Cuba, Continued from Page 4 , 2nd column



As we drove around that day Jack was talking politics with our driver. The driver and the people we passed seemed very happy and excited that we were there. Not sure if it was obvious somehow that we were from the US or not. We learned that many of the people there have no issue with the US but the older generations still seem to remember how this all came about and are less willing to let go.

Back at the hotel we got ready for dinner out in Havana which was about 15 minutes away. We went to El Floridita's for a daiquiri. Apparently, they are famous for their daiquiris.

The Floridita became a haven for Cuba's leading personalities - including merchants, politicians and for most celebrities living in or passing through Havana. Such names include several of Hollywood's greatest - Errol Flynn, Ava Gardner, Gary Cooper and John Wayne. Hemingway had such an impact and influence to this "Bodeguita" that a bust in his honor was placed over his favorite stool when he won the Nobel Prize. To this day, people still gather to the Floridita to have excellent cuisine, and to taste the famous daiquiri - however, the most popular reason people go is to absorb the aura and the mystique left by Papa. Although the smoke from many people smoking forced a few of us to leave, but not before getting a picture next to Hemmingway!

Every restaurant we went to seemed to have at least a 3 piece band playing local music, giving us the real experience of Cuba. We grabbed a cab back to the hotel that night that had a puddle on the floor in the back seat. Old cars have many leaks!

Tuesday-June 7th

We were all careful about not using water from the faucet, even to brush our teeth. But some still got sick, nothing too serious though to ruin the trip. Today we left Havana to go to Maria la Gorda to do some diving. It was about a 4-4 1/2 drive to get there. We ran into a large group from Scuba Radio the night before who were also going to Maria la Gorda. There was a check out dive planned once we got there. While the weather in Havana had cleared up, as we headed to Maria la Gorda the rain began again and was pouring almost nonstop.

When we arrived at MLG at 3pm there was a lot of confusion. They had a big welcome party for us with glasses of champagne ready. But there was a whole bus trying to check in at the same time. But it didn't take long. We lugged our stuff to our room and were told to meet back at the lobby for instructions on the checkout dive. However, when we arrived in the lobby there were several more buses that arrived with a much larger party with dance crew welcoming them all.

Finally, some went on the afternoon check out dive but the weather was still rainy. We were all really hoping that the weather was going to clear up soon as it was putting a damper on the trip. There were parts of the resort that were flooded due to all the rain and the mosquitoes were relentless!

Wednesday, June 8th

Of course it was raining again! We got a late start as they put us on a boat that didn't leave until about 10:30 am. We were all concerned how we were going to get all our dives in for the day. We only completed 1 dive by 1:00 pm. They came back to the hotel after every dive to get new tanks. So this ate up a lot of time. We got 2 more dives in after lunch and finished at about 6pm. Dinner was normally not served until 8pm so Jack, Steve and I went for a Mojito at the lobby bar. You could get a small but strong mojito for \$3.50 CUC's. Can't beat that price! The nice lady bartender made us a free daiquiri to share before her shift ended. Manny then showed us a map of Cuba and explained other parts of Cuba where people go diving to see sharks etc.

Some members went on a night dive that night. They came back at 9:30-10pm. The weather did seem to clear up a bit and the water was really calm in the afternoon.

Cuba, Continued from Page 5 , 2nd column



Friday, June 10th

What a hot day! We had three great dives, some to personal deepest dives. We tried looking for John's camera, but still no luck. We had some drinks before dinner and took some group photo's with the Club's sign, wearing our new t-shirts that Al had made up for us.

After dinner they were going to show the various photos that were taken as part of the photo contest, but we were all too tired to stay up that late. Luckily we were later given a DVD with all the videos and pictures from the week.

Saturday, June 11th

Time to head back to Havana! We left Maria la Gorda around 9:00 am. On our way back we stopped off at Tierra de Bajo which is a tobacco farm. What a nice place! They explained the involved process of what goes into growing the tobacco, harvesting the leaves, the drying process, the pressing and rolling process and how to best store the cigars. It was very impressive! We were able to buy some cigars directly from them for \$8 CUC's each. The same cigars would cost about \$25-\$30 CUC's once back in Havana. I think the other tobacco farm we were supposed to go to and have lunch was closed. So many of us were really hungry by the time we got back to Havana. But we brought some snacks and shared them.

We showered and invited our group up to our room to finish off the remainder of my birthday rum before going out for dinner in Havana. We were surprised to get another group of old fashioned cars to drive us to dinner and then to a fort for a canon ceremony that is done every night. This time they were hard tops. We had a nice dinner outside and made it just in time for the ceremony. On the way back we went to the place where Chavez and Castro pictures are lit up on the side of the building, which is often shown on tv.

Thursday, June 9th

Today was my birthday! Finally the sun had come out and it was a beautifully hot day! Nothing seems to dry due to the high humidity. Lots of big spiders in the bathroom to watch out for. There was a mother dog on the grounds that had three puppies that would hang out on the property and were super friendly. There were many cats as well. One mother cat had two kittens that we fed because they looked so skinny. It was common for her to be nursing her babies in the middle of the walkway to the cafeteria.

On the dive boat they sang happy birthday to me a couple times. The second time the crew gave me a large bottle of the 7 year old aged Havana Club rum. Unfortunately, John from Guardian Scuba lost his dive camera on one of the dives. We tried looking for it but no luck!

That night I went on a night dive. This is where Al got railroaded by a barracuda that got spooked by several people shining their lights on him. It really took the wind out of him. He continued the dive for a bit but decided to end it early. We were all glad he was ok!! We saw lots of large crabs.

At dinner that night I went to the table where our crew was eating to share shots from the bottle of rum they had given me for my birthday. Also shared some with our group as well. After dinner they brought over two cakes, one for Kara and one for me for my birthday and sang happy birthday again. What a birthday!

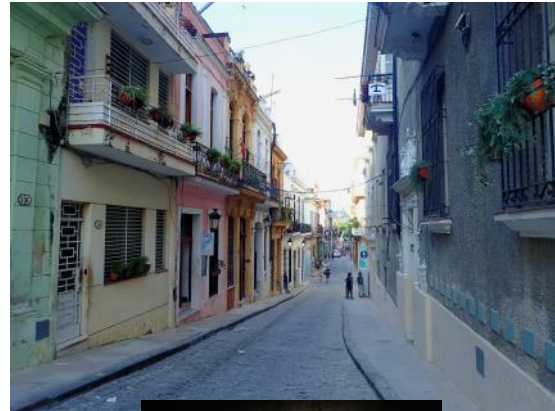
At night they had entertainment at the lobby area. At one point Kara and I were asked to go to the front where they announced our birthdays and gave us each a gift of 4 Havana Club glasses which we had been looking to buy the whole trip. What luck! The entertainment there went until 2 or 3 in the morning! But we were all too tired to stay up as we had more diving to do!

Cuba, Continued from Page 6 , 2nd column



Sunday, June 12th

Time to fly home! It was just our NY group that had to leave early in the morning. So we headed to the airport, but the driver dropped us off at the wrong terminal and needed to get another taxi to bring us there as it was too far to walk. We all got through security with no issues. Some of us did some last minute shopping to use up our CUC's. We bought a small supply of Havana Club rum, t-shirts and gifts for people back home. We all made it back safely!





TSSC at Buddy Dive, Bonaire

By "MacGyver" (aka Nick Lappano)



Bonaire 2015, Continued from Page 8 , 1st column

I hadn't been to Bonaire for a few years and I readily jumped on board for the Club trip when Al Miller put it together last year. So it was with great anticipation that I joined 17 fellow divers, mostly TSSC members, for a week at Buddy Dive in October (October 10 thru Saturday October 17, 2015).

Most of us flew out of Newark on October 10th on a 9 am United Airlines flight and arrived in Bonaire at 1:30 in the afternoon. We were picked up by the buses sent by the resort and arrived at Buddy's by 2:30 pm. We checked in and filled out all of our paperwork and proceeded to the dive orientation.

Our bags were taken to our rooms and left outside the doors for us. I was sharing # 306, a three bedroom unit, with Jack R. (my roommate), Al, John, Denise B. and Katelynn. It was a great little group and we got along wonderfully.

All divers in Bonaire are required to attend a dive orientation to familiarize ourselves with the regulations concerning SCUBA diving in the local waters. The authorities have established a diving paradise and they want to make sure that visitors do not do anything to spoil it. Normally the orientation is given in the morning, but since we had such a large group, Al had persuaded the dive operations manager, Augusto, to schedule a special afternoon orientation just for us.

Coleman, one of the instructors, took us through the dive operation showing us everything which we needed to know to enjoy a week of fun diving. We were then able to do our checkout dive at 5:15 pm so that we were ready to start diving first thing on Sunday morning if we wished to do so. The checkout dive is mandatory. It allows us to check out our gear, weight, etc. on the house reef before going out diving at the other sites.

With the info in my dive log from my last warm water trip, I was able to lock in my proper weight configuration right away. I would use 10 lbs. with my ½ mil wetsuit and 13 lbs. when using my 3 mil wetsuit.

Some of the others were not so lucky to have such information at their fingertips so the orientation dive offered them an opportunity to determine what weight would be appropriate for each of them.

I used the 3 mil for night dives since the water tended to be 3 or 4 degrees colder at night. Plus my core temp was probably a little lower after 3 or 4 day dives. For all dives I kept my head somewhat protected with my trademark Skull and Crossbones SCAP.

With our package we got breakfast, one two-tank boat trip each day and unlimited shore diving. To take advantage of the shore diving we also were provided with a van to drive to any of the numerous shore diving sites. These sites are marked by the iconic yellow rocks which are used to identify the dives sites in Bonaire, We also could dive on the house reef using the tanks which were available 24/7. Both air and nitrox were available for our use. Free nitrox was included for those of us certified for enriched air.

We started diving in earnest on Sunday. I managed to squeeze in a shore dive in the morning on *Buddy's Reef* before the entire group went out on a two-tank afternoon boat trip. Since we had a large group we had the boat all to ourselves as we would on every boat dive for the week.

On this day we were on *The Dive Buddy* and our crew consisted of Batista as captain with Coleman serving as mate and Elena as dive master.

The procedure for boarding and gearing up was a little different from other places I've been to in that we passed our gear to the crew on board and then had to sit in place at our stations while the boat left the dock (which the boat was vigorously bouncing against). After leaving the dock we THEN proceeded to quickly assemble our kits and check our enriched air mixes. I personally would have preferred to gear up in a more leisurely fashion before embarking, but the rough surge at the dock made that impractical.



Bonaire 2015, Continued from Page 8 , 2nd column

On this first afternoon we dove “*Cali’s Spot*” and “*Just a Nice Dive*” recording about an hour’s bottom time on each dive. The underwater visibility was excellent at about 70 to 80 feet, quite a welcome change from the usual visibility up here which as we all know is often limited to a couple of feet. No one made any night dives the first evening since the Giants were playing on Sunday Night Football. The “*306 Gang*” went to dinner at a casual second floor restaurant in town which specialized in ribs and then went back to our apartment to watch the game. We were happy with making that choice since the Giants won.

The next day, Monday, we actually made three boat dives on *The Dive Buddy* with the same crew. We dove “*The Hilma Hooker*” and “*Something Special*” in the morning and “1,000 steps” in the afternoon. The “*Hooker*”, Bonaire’s signature wreck dive, is an easy dive despite its 100 foot depth to the sand. There is virtually no current and it is easy to navigate to and from the ship in the clear water. There are a number of fish on the wreck including the ever-present tarpon. One can circumnavigate the entire hull on one dive as most of us did on this occasion.

After dinner, Katelynn, who was always ready to dive, joined me for a night dive on the house reef, where we would make all of our night dives during the week. The wreck of *La Machacha*, a 40-foot fishing boat, lies upside down about a 10-minute swim north of the resort, and that was our turnaround point. We swam to the wreck, which was at the edge of the drop off so the bow is at 30 feet and the stern is at 50 feet. We explored around it for a little while and then headed back south. There was a thick rope running along the sand from the dock out to the reef’s edge and we would use this as a navigational aid to return to the dock at the conclusion of our dive(s).

Tuesday morning we piled into the van intending to make a shore dive to the “*Hilma Hooker*”. John was kind enough to drive even though he was not going to dive. When we got there however, the entry was a little intimidating for some of the group since there was a significant step down of a few feet under water at the entry point. To avoid any

potential for injury, we checked for another site and ended up making a dive at “*Windsock*”. We used some large rocks and debris to set up our gear and to keep it off the sand. We assisted each other in donning our scuba units and made an easy shore entry. We got in a nice long one hour dive. We swam out to the edge of the reef and dropped down to a depth of 60 feet while experiencing the usual marine life including some large mutton snappers and a blue parrot fish as well as schooling striped grunts. Since most of us were new to shore diving of this nature (no tables or benches to don and doff our gear) we were pretty sandy when we got back into the van and made quite a mess. Even so, we still stopped on the way back to the resort for some excellent gelato at the urging of Denise and Katelynn.

In the afternoon we dove “*Sharon’s Serenity*” and “*Leonora’s Reef*” for these dives we switched boats, using *The Coral Buddy*. This was a change from *The Dive Buddy*, which despite being the newest boat in Buddy’s fleet, seemed to be experiencing some engine problems.

After the “*306ers*” returned from dinner at a pizza place recommended by Al and John. Katelynn and I made another night dive at the house reef, entering the water at 10:30 pm. On this dive we encountered a large number of tarpon who seemed totally unfazed by our presence and came quite close, even swimming right in front of us. This was a bit of a change in behavior from the last time I was in Bonaire when the tarpon were always around, but usually just out of sight. Now they were practically posing for the camera.

There were no boat dives scheduled for Wednesday so that day was devoted to shore diving, shopping etc. After breakfast the group (from our unit) made a shore dive on the house reef. We logged about an hour and maxed out our depth at 72 feet. Along the wall we spotted a couple of spotted morays. Although not as big as their larger green cousins, the spotted variety seem less intimidated by divers and are easier to approach and therefore photograph.

After this dive, most of the group headed off to go shopping, etc. but I chose to stay behind to make a few more dives on the house reef.



Bonaire 2015, Continued from Page 9 , 2nd column

That afternoon, after the trip to town, the tech diving group which was at Buddy's for the week was having a rebreather demo session. Unfortunately I did not take advantage of the opportunity but a few of our group, including Jack R. and Katelynn tried out these bubbleless breathing devices. While both demonstrated an ability to use the rebreathers, Katelynn was especially adept and was specifically pointed out by her instructor for her abilities.

Wednesday night was the "group" night dive with the "306 gang" going out together. This way, everyone got at least one chance to experience the underwater domain at night. We entered the water at 9:30 pm which was late enough to see some night action. Most of it was provided by the tarpon which had now become like our dive buddies. We also saw some lobster, more spotted moray eels and yellow stingrays. We explored the wreck for about 15 minutes. There were arrow crabs, banded coral shrimp and more lobster hiding within the twisted metal. The current on the way back made it an easy return to our exit point.

On Thursday we took the van to *Bachelor's Reef* for a shore dive. There were a couple of concrete tables (with matching platforms) which we were able to use to gear up. The tricky part was the entry and exit. There was a staircase leading down to the beach but it ended about three feet short of the sand so we had to balance on a big rock to get down and back up. Among other sea creatures we saw a group of squid (fascinating cephalopods) and a large eagle ray.

After the dive, two of the group fell while climbing up on the rock to get back to the stairs. Although wearing full SCUBA units no one was hurt. We did have to scramble though to retrieve some dislodged gear from the surging surf before it was washed away. Learning from our previous shore dive, and with the added convenience of the aforementioned tables, we were much better at getting rid of sand before getting in the van and it was a much "cleaner" ride back compared to Tuesday.

In the afternoon, on the Coral Buddy, we dove "Karpata" which is one of the few sites which is sort of a wall dive (Most of the Bonaire sites have more of a "slope" profile rather than a "wall".) with quite a variety of fish. Then we motored to "Petrie's Pillar" for a dive there.

That evening Al and I made a final night dive, although our entry was delayed for a while due to equipment issues. Luckily, we were prepared with enough back up gear to remedy the situation. Upon finally entering after 9:45 we made the most of it with a dive of over an hour. For a change of pace we heading south for a while before turning north and going past Buddy's back to the *La Machacha*. On this dive we were constantly accompanied by tarpon which are becoming less and less wary of divers as evidenced by one actually swimming right up to Al and bumping into his Go Pro video camera.

Friday was our last day of diving and we enjoyed another breakfast before going out on the boat, but there was something different this time at breakfast as one of the staff was checking us in by room number. On all the other mornings we simply walked in and grabbed our food. Another difference was that on this morning we were not allowed us to remove any food from the restaurant. There was a sign posted on the wall saying that breakfast could not be removed from the restaurant but there had no one there to enforce this rule on previous days when many of us would grab some fruit and maybe even a sandwich to eat later. Poor Katelynn got collared when she was trying to leave with some "contraband".

For our dives that morning we were assigned back to *The Dive Buddy*, the boat which we had used on Sunday and Monday. We were made aware that its engine problems had gotten worse when we were informed that we would be unable to go to the "Salt Pier" as previously planned due to the fact that one of the boat's two engines was not working. The "Salt Pier" is at the south end of the island and it would have taken too long to get there.

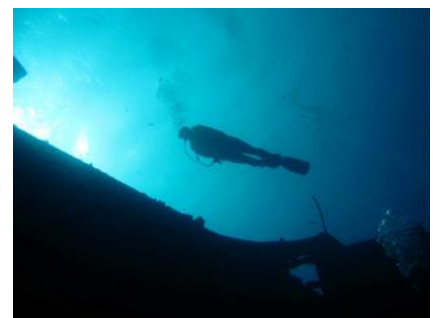
It became clear that there was indeed a problem with the boat's power when it took us an hour to make the three-mile trip to our first dive on Klein



Bonaire, "Monk's Haven". This is usually a quick fifteen to twenty minute ride. After that we moved to "Carl's Hill", another Klein Bonaire dive site, for our last dive of the week. This site had a wall which ran from 30 feet down to about 80 feet making for a nice last dive. We then took an unintentionally leisurely trip back to the resort once again due to the engine issue. We had hoped to get back by 12:30 pm to do some sightseeing etc. However we didn't dock until almost 2 pm and the time lost eliminated some of those options so we spent most of our time cleaning and drying our gear.

The weather was cooperative that afternoon with sunshine and warm temps and I had no problem getting my gear dried before going to the onsite barbecue dinner which is held every Friday. This provided a great way to wrap up the week with plenty of food, drinks and musical entertainment, all with the sun setting over the horizon.

Despite a few issues with the boat and some minor mishaps which can always be expected on a dive trip it was a fun week with good friends and dive buddies. The weather was cooperative and the warm water and excellent visibility made diving, as usual at Bonaire, a pleasure. There were no emergencies and no one (as far as I know) got hurt. We had quite a few great dives and other experiences. As always, being with fellow TSSC members makes the week all the more enjoyable. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for a great adventure





Curacao Escape, April 16-23,2016

Tom Butcher



TSSC club members Bob Bak, Cindy Fisher, Mark Mays, Donna Mays, Tom and Regina Butcher participated on this Curacao adventure! This was my first trip to Curacao, and it did not disappoint. Curacao is part of the Dutch Antilles, one of the ABC islands. Very similar to Bonaire. Some feel Curacao is better than Bonaire, I give the edge to Bonaire. Curacao is a wide island, oriented east to west. Bonaire is an "upside down letter L". The north-south part of Bonaire blocks the east-west winds, making sea conditions for most of the diving calmer. Curacao does not block the east-west winds. Although winds were light, there were times sea conditions impacted which dive sites we could visit. We did visit most of the sites Curacao is known for. The reefs are in great shape, and in shallow water, so our dives could be longer. Since we were diving from a boat and needed to follow a schedule, everyone agreed to limit their dives to 1 hour.

Ocean Encounters was the dive operator for the resort. Excellent professional crew; they had a satellite dive shop at our resort, making it easy to meet the boat daily. They catered the dive sites to our interest. They are a great dive operator for new and seasoned divers. The water around the island is a marine preserve. Ocean Encounters and the other dive shops work hard together to reduce the lion fish population, and their efforts are helping a lot. I hope they can keep it up. We still saw a lot of lion fish everywhere. I wish they would let us help reduce the population. We could help, but only on a paid dive to cull the schools. I could not fit it into the schedule.

Our first dive was the tug boat. Great dive to start the week. Your choice of shallow or deep. The wreck is mostly intact, providing cover for thousands of bait fish. The main cabin was so packed with fish, that a diver could not enter. We started on the reef, eventually finishing on the wreck. We saw a huge diversity of fish and critters on this dive and every dive. The reef is very healthy. I saw many adult drum fish, one of my favorites. Almost every dive, we saw banded shrimp, speckled and green morays, sting rays, turtles, puffer fish, stone and scorpion fish and octopus to name a few. Not aware of anyone seeing sharks or eagle rays, although they were in the area.

The Mushroom Forest - This is a "must see" site. This site is on the far west of the island, so to get there involves a long boat ride. The winds kicked up a bit the day we went. Nice ride out with the wind at our backs, the ride back however was challenging. We were on a 46 ft. Newton. We had to stop for some of the waves on the return trip.

The Mushroom Forest was created by some reef eating bacteria, eating the lower edges of the reef. The coral heads look like mushrooms. The bacteria appears to have died off, as the reef is still healthy. I got some amazing videos on this dive of cleaner shrimp and a slipper lobster, and two very large green moray Eels. We found three in the same spot.

On the return trip, we did a surface interval at the *Blue Room Cave*, another "must see" for the trip. The *Blue Room Cave* is a natural cave with the ceiling a few feet above sea level. The cave goes about 100 ft into the island, water is about 20 ft deep. You have to enter the cave a few feet under water, or risk having a wave push you into the cave ceiling. The water in the cave is a very pretty blue, from the sun light in-directly lighting the cave from underneath. With every wave that covers the cave opening, the pressure in the cave builds. You have to pay attention to your ears.

One day, we dove the Superior Producer. An empty cargo ship sitting up-right at 100 ft to the sand, not far from a shallow reef. Very easy wreck dive, wide open cargo bays.

I did a shore dive almost every day. The reef off the resort was surprisingly very interesting. The area 200 ft. around the reef opening was bare, but teeming with fish. Once you got far enough from the reef opening, the reef looked like every other dive. In great shape and full of sea life. With every return to the dock, we were greeted with a school of reef squid. If you remained still, they would get very close. I had a few squid swim between Bob Bak and me. A few times, they were within a few feet of us. I watched on pair of squid act like a "husband/wife" pair. The larger squid came very close to the camera; the smaller squid was quickly flashing different colors until the other squid moved away. Then the smaller squid appeared to "chew out" the larger squid in a multi color show, as it returned for



Curacao 2016, Continued from Page 12, 2nd column

another pass at me. They eventually moved on, after our short encounter. I had a squid encounter with every day shore dive. I almost wanted to go thru my air quicker to see them again.

I did a shore night dive with 2 divers that have never done a night dive. We had a great time working the reef, until I saw the hunters out for a meal. The small specked moray was not happy with my light following its path, so I moved on. I wish I had a spear for the two lion fish working the reef in pairs like reef sharks do. Over all, we had a great time.

On the last day, we rented some dune buggies. We were 10 miles from the dunes on the west shore. It was fun driving as a group thru town to the dunes. This is another "must do". One down side is that you will return with a layer of dirt covering you. You need to purchase a scarf to keep the dust out of your nose and mouth.

We stayed at Sunscape. Very nice all-inclusive. It was hard to not gain 5 lbs. that week. The food was great; the pool bar was inviting. Can't wait until I can return for another visit.



(Photo courtesy Ocean Encounters)



(Photo courtesy Ocean Encounters)





TSSC's West Palm Beach Florida

8/25-8/29 2016! Denise Blais



Thursday, August 25th

We caught an 8:50 am flight out of Westchester County Airport. The flight was pretty smooth. After renting our car, driving to our hotel (Springhill Suites), checking in, we went to restaurant 84 by the water where we met up with Steven Reichenbach. After lunch we took a trip over to ForceE dive shop where Jack and I purchased 1 mm Mares skins. While getting ready for dinner that night there was a thunderstorm that came through. Lightning struck a side walk outside the front lobby of our hotel. It made several people scream and jump a bit! We met Sandra Green from Guardian Scuba at Two Georges at the Cove restaurant for dinner where we enjoyed some good seafood while watching a never ending thunderstorm that came through.

Friday, August 26th

We all got up for a good breakfast where we met up with Steve Medwid who had arrived late on Thursday evening on his own. We headed over to Diversity to do a day of 2 morning and 2 afternoon dives. The two morning dives consisted of visiting Chalfonte and Boca Artificial. These dives were the first of several dives I needed to start my Master Diver certification with Sandra Green from Guardian Scuba. The afternoon consisted of visiting United Caribbean and the Sea Empress. Here I got to practice going through the entire wreck while Sandra silted things up a bit and later practiced my thumb reel skills by tying off in a couple spots and following my way back on my line while reeling the line back in. Melissa worked with Sandra on decompression dive protocols and dive computer signaling and information, so this was a great opportunity to get some instruction time in! Melissa addressed the deco dive with the air she had. All of us were diving Nitrox while Melissa was diving on air, because she had only planned on diving in the mornings. But some of our dives were deep and we could spend longer at depth. After our afternoon dives we all headed over to Duffy's -- a sports bar chain in FL for dinner.

Saturday, August 27th

Again we started our day with a nice breakfast and then headed off to Boynton Beach with Starfish Scuba. The waves were stronger this day causing a member of another group to get sick and almost fall off the boat as she leaned over. Luckily Steve Medwid and I were there to catch her! The boat for this set of dive trips was rather unpleasant as we were consumed with diesel exhaust fumes making it difficult to be almost anywhere on the boat. But the staff was very nice and very helpful. Getting off and on the boat was a bit of challenge also due to the waves. In fact, Al was knocked sideways as he did his giant stride off the boat and ended up hitting his left hip and thigh on one of the dive ladders. Luckily he was ok but sustained a couple of nasty scratches and bruises on his leg.

The dive sites we visited on this morning were *Noula Express* and *Castor* which was a wreck dive where goliath grouper are known to gather. *Castor* was the last of my certification dives for Master Diver certification and probably the most favorite dive for all who came on the trip. Seeing 20+ goliath groupers and experiencing the cool wreck at a depth of approximately 106 feet at its stern was something we all wanted to go back to for another dip. Al somehow managed to lose his Go Pro that was around his wrist after getting caught up in the ascending line at the beginning of this dive. But luckily the captain who had to go down and remove the line we all used to ascend and descend from the wreck was able to find and retrieve his camera. Needless to say Adam received a nice tip from Al that day!

The afternoon dives were *Table tops* and *Boynton Beach Ledge*. These sites were great! We got to see a bit of everything. A shark, a few turtles, puffer fish, trumpet fish, drum fish, lobsters, parrot fish among some of them. The reef was very active with lots to keep you entertained. Melissa, Jack and Al were all able to catch some lobsters but I wasn't able to nab one myself. I guess I need more practice!

After diving was done for the day we all headed over to Two Georges restaurant for a nice dinner and cocktails. The dive boat for the next day had already called to ask if anyone wanted to cancel at

West Palm Beach 2016, Continued from Page 14,
2nd column



no charge because seas were expected to be between 3 and 4 ft. which was bigger than the waves we had experienced this day. So many of us called and canceled while Jack and Steve Reichenbach were holding out to see what the weather would be like. But since the majority of us weren't ready to deal with such large waves the dive shop ended up cancelling all dives for Sunday.

All the dives we did on either day were all drift dives. Steve Medwid and I got to practice our safety sausage launching skills for the boat to come and get us. I learned that it's harder than it looks but definitely worth practicing for when you might need it.

Sunday, August 28th

Since we were not diving this day we slept in and had a late breakfast. Since it was still sunny but windy we decided to hang out by the hotel pool while our dive gear dried out. We planned on having some of the lobster that was caught for lunch. Luckily there was a big grill by the pool that we were able to use. Sandra came over with her boyfriend and some prepared lobster tails and enjoyed some steak and lobster for lunch. Later that night we all went over to Sailfish restaurant for a nice final group trip dinner.

Monday, August 29th

Again we slept late this morning and packed for checkout of the hotel. While Melissa was hanging out with friends of hers in FL and Steve Medwid had already left for his trip back home, the rest of us planned to go to the shooting range with Steven Reichenbach. After doing some target practice we headed over to Frigates for some lunch. Then off to some dive shops to get some last minute shopping in and then we were off to the airport for our 7:40pm trip home. We found going in and out of the West Palm Beach airport was very easy and didn't take much time at all.

Overall it was a great trip with great company and great diving! We look forward to going back again! Now on to the next trip to Cozumel in October!





(THANKS MELISSA FOR ALL THESE AMAZING PHOTOGRAPHS, YOU ARE AN EAGLE EYE!)



ZIKA – What Northeast Divers Need to Know

Gary Lehman



Aedes Albopictus - Tiger mosquito

Zika! the very term itself gets people agitated and ill at ease. What do we know about 'zika'? It is a virus, and infected mosquitoes are responsible for transmission (like with the West Nile virus). Infection with zika sometimes results in mild or even no symptoms (in as many as 80% of cases); but in other cases, infection brings fever, red eyes, joint pain, and headaches which usually last no more than seven days. In a small number of cases, nerve damage resulting in muscle weakness and interruption of the human nerve network (called Guillain-Barré syndrome) has been reported. The worst consequence of zika is that severe handicaps can result to fetuses. Zika used to be restricted to Africa and Asia, but the virus managed to migrate and flourish in those warm, blue Caribbean waters to which we scuba divers flock (especially during those cold Northeast winters which will be soon upon us...). That is why we decided to take a closer look in this issue of *Sea Swells*, and review salient facts that we ought to keep in mind.

Public health issues sometimes get sensationalized and get ascribed to them unwarranted 'pandemic' status. Some of that has been observed with the zika virus, but due to an outbreak of the disease in Brazil in 2015, the World Health Organization has in fact declared zika a 'Public Health Emergency of International Concern'. This designation identifies zika as a public health crisis of potentially global reach. (Other diseases of this designation have included polio, Ebola and swine flu). The clear and present worst threat regarding zika is to women of child-bearing age, and who are or anticipate becoming pregnant. Zika is spread by mosquito bites, blood transfusions, and sexual activity. There is at the time no effective vaccination. Thus the mitigation for this disease is reducing the likelihood of being bitten by mosquitoes by wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants and using insect repellent, avoiding blood transfusions, and use of condoms.

Zika, Continued from Page 16 Column Two

A good question: how many zika infections affected the athletes during the summer Olympics in Brazil? Prophets of doom offered an apocalyptic vision before the Olympics. In the event, there were actually *zero reported cases of zika* amongst athletes this summer. (However, since the virus can linger in the system for months, it is conceivable that infections might yet surface, however as time passes that this increasingly unlikely). Probably the BIGGEST impacts of the zika virus are 1) economic, given that fear of contracting zika is reducing tourism significantly in the Caribbean and Mexico (which has already been hurt by fear of drug gang violence), and 2) lifestyle changes to the local populations, which have to deal with the potential of zika infection 24/7/365 unlike us divers, who come down for only a week or two. In fact, many Latin American countries have advised women to avoid pregnancy until the disease is better understood (obviously a hugely-controversial proposal...), so the societal impacts are concentrated in those warmer regions which are most susceptible to the *Aedes aegypti* - Yellow Fever mosquito.

Several leading bio-tech firms are working hard at creating an effective vaccine. It will take several years to develop a commercial product, but testing on rhesus monkeys is proceeding and promising results have been registered. Hi-tech firms are also getting in to the act with studies on ways to genetically modify male mosquitos to pass along killer genes to control the spread; as well as lo-tech initiatives such as the case of Brazil, which mobilized 200,000 troops to spread the word about reducing standing water breeding locations to help reduce the reduce the *Aedes aegypti* population over time.

So for now, our take-away is that when in warm, blue water regions wear long-sleeve shirts and pants; use insect repellent; make sure at night that the mosquito screens are closed and intact; and avoid blood transfusions while in higher-risk areas. Given that 80% of those infected suffer *zero* symptoms, and taking the precautions noted above, there is no reason for zika to affect any of our upcoming scuba trips to warmer climes!



Aedes aegypti
Yellow Fever mosquito

For further information about the zika virus, refer to these websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>

<http://www.diversalertnetwork.org/medical/articles/89>

<http://who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/zika/en/>

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/zika-virus-threatens-u-s-from-abroad1/>

and the United Nations Briefing page:

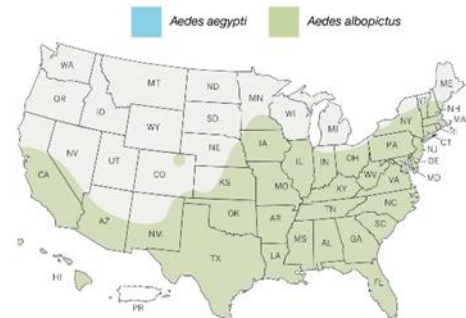
<https://hr.un.org/page/zika-virus>

CDC's Response to Zika
ESTIMATED range of *Aedes albopictus* and *Aedes aegypti* in the United States, 2016*



Aedes aegypti mosquitoes are more likely to spread viruses like Zika, dengue, chikungunya and other viruses than other types of mosquitoes such as *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes.

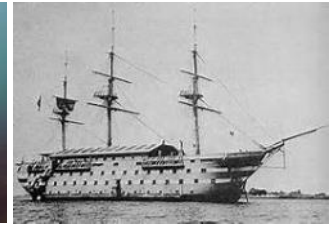
- These maps DO NOT show**
- Exact locations or numbers of mosquitoes living in an area
 - Risk or likelihood that these mosquitoes will spread viruses
- These maps show**
- CDC's best estimate of the potential range of *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* in the United States
 - Areas where mosquitoes are or have been previously found



* Maps have been updated from a variety of sources. These maps represent CDC's best estimate of the potential range of *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* in the United States. Maps are not meant to represent risk for spread of disease.



Gloucester Seal Dive August 13-14, 2016 Tom Butcher



The TSSC team of Bob Bak, Tom Butcher, Steve Medwid, and Phil Sylvestre (along with some members of a collaborating dive club) sojourned to Gloucester Massachusetts to visit with the native seal population; they did not disappoint! The seals were skittish at first, swimming off when they first spotted us. Since we had a patient group of divers and since stayed in one area, the residents returned to play with us. The pups were very playful, the Mom's came by to keep a wary eye on us. Gladly, I did not see any bulls. With seals, if the seal is bigger than you are, stay away. Most of the group were on the morning and afternoon boat, so we got two visits with the seals. They were more playful the second trip, although visibility was about half of the first dive. Several of us had the seals start nibbling our fins, move up to nibble on a leg. Some had them nibble on an arm. I have several videos of them "kissing" the camera. One seal was so friendly with the camera that I was concerned that they would take the camera with them! There were many great action shot and video opportunities. We did find one of the wrecks that gave the Salvages its name. There was not much left of the wreck, and the seals were more interesting.

Sea conditions were milder than the prior year. The winds were light and going offshore. We started with 1 ft. to 2ft. rollers; these reduced as the day progressed. The boat ride out to the dive site was pleasant and sunny. Water temp was a balmy 64°F this year. Two years ago, it was a 'slightly cooler' 44°. This was the difference between an early July visit after a long offshore wind bringing up the colder water below, and an August visit. I prefer August to July.

Chester Poling - On the return trip to the dock, we visited the *Chester Poling*. This was a coastal tanker/cargo ship that hit the rocks in 1977 during a bad storm, and split in two. She sank within sight of the famous Gloucester Fisherman Memorial statue ("those in peril on the sea"...). We dove the stern, sitting upright on the sandy bottom in about 100 ft.; the bow floated away is in much deeper water. The water temperature at depth was 50°F. If you visit the area, *find a way* and make the time to dive this wreck. The stern is in great shape. Plenty of sponges and worms decorate the wreck. There is a resident wolf eel who can be typically found on the sand where the boat split, but sadly he was not home. This is a very easy ship to penetrate, although we chose not to on this trip.

We made six great dives this weekend. The last dive was on the *USS New Hampshire* in about thirty feet of water. I tried my luck at retrieving a brass torsion rod from the hull. Once again, I was denied. These are harder to get than I thought. My 3 lb. hammer could not free a rod. I might have to resort to using a hacksaw, like the others. We managed to find copper sheeting from the hull buried in the reef. Bob found some complete nails, I only found nail fragments.

USS New Hampshire has an interesting history. She was authorized in 1816 by Congress as a 74-gun ship of the line; her keel was laid down in 1819 at Portsmouth Navy Yard (which is near to her final resting place); but she was built at the cusp of the steamship age - and ultimately served the Union during the Civil War as a supply and depot ship. After the Civil War she was clearly obsolete, but continued to serve as a sailing training ship through the end of the First World War, and sailing the *USS New Hampshire* was the way thousands of American Navy sailors were taught about the ocean, wind, waves, ship handling and seamanship. Commodore Dewey (aboard *USS Olympia*, "You may fire when you are ready, Gridley" during The Spanish American War, at the Battle of Manila Bay) learned to sail aboard *USS New Hampshire*, along with thousands of other cadets. Sailors of the ships of President Theodore Roosevelt's Great White Fleet which circumnavigated the globe in 1907-1908 --- proclaiming the US's entrance as a world power with an blue water Navy --- were trained aboard *USS New Hampshire*. Sometimes, when we dive wrecks we can be spellbound by the diverse historical importance of the wrecks, and what they represent!

In any event, it was an inspiring and exhilarating weekend and we look forward to diving with the seals again next year!



**TSSC's Gloucester, Massachusetts Seal Dive
August 13-14, 2016**



*Great photos by Bob Bak
(with Tom's camera!)*



Pat (on right) with TSSC member Jack Kurz at BTS 2014

Front and Center...

Pat Considine !

(By Pat Considine, interviewed by Gary Lehman)

Pat: I have been in love with scuba diving for many years. I used to do resort dives in the Caribbean whenever I was there on vacation. We went to St. Thomas, Cayman Islands and Bermuda for vacations, and I did the resort courses there. Given the fact though that I was working night shifts for over thirty years, I never had a good opportunity to buckle down and get certified. I was finally Open Water certified seven years ago in 2009. At that point, I became really got 'addicted' to diving, and joined two dive clubs: TSSC in Westchester and the Rockland Aquanauts. (Eventually, I joined *yet another* club, Aquatic Explorers in Poughkeepsie. As members of these local clubs, we dove locally; the limited visibility in our beautiful tristate area lakes and Long Island Sound dives did not deter me! To be sure, I have enjoyed diving and cleaning up Hessian Lake at Bear Mountain and even diving Minnewaska, where the visibility admittedly left something to be desired!

I wanted to broaden my diving experience in the years after first becoming certified, and I pursued more certifications including Advanced Open Water, Nitrox, drysuit diving, wreck, and deep diving, and finally PADI Rescue diver in 2010. In 2012 I advanced to PADI Master Scuba diver. I was committed to further advancement, and I started Divemaster training with my friend James Bayreuther. I earned Divemaster in 2014.

There is always more and more to learn in scuba diving! Accordingly, I became a TDI tank Visual Inspector and PADI Advanced Technical Trimix Gas Blender - since I had accumulated a pile of tanks, and I wanted to learn how to inspect and O2 clean my gear. While working as a Divemaster for 2 years, I enjoyed working with and assisting scuba students. Over time, I recognized that my calling was to continue to the next step – and become a PADI Open Water Instructor! I felt confident that I had much of the knowledge already directly or indirectly cooked into my scuba diving experiences and instincts.

Was I ever in for a rude awakening as to the amount of knowledge I still had to master ???! I found myself quickly submerged into many books I had already read - from Open Water manuals to Advanced Open Water, to Rescue, Divemaster and to various Instructor and medical manuals.

I started my road to PADI Instructor during the winter 2015/spring 2016 season first by working on Assistant Instructor training (AI) with my Instructor Development Center (IDC) staff Instructor Jim Bayreuther, learning presentation skills, viewing and creating PowerPoint presentations over four separate Saturdays. At the point I officially started my Instructor (IDC) training on April 17th with a full day of training at Adventure Scuba in NYC under Course Director Peter Hearn. The staff included four assistant staff Instructors, and for every weekend afterwards all the students were training at either Scuba New York or Dutch Springs every Saturday and Sunday for full days.

We had to do a lot of presentations. This was a particular challenge for me, because in my line of work and in my personal experience up to that time, I had done 'zero, zilch' public speaking and presenting. In fact, just about every part of this PADI IDC was a brutal challenge for me, presenting new obstacles and 'speed bumps' at every turn. But like anything, if you are out of your comfort zone and if you keep plugging away at your goal, eventually your performance improves and things start to get slightly easier. My presentations picked up fluency and effectiveness in the opinion of my instructors, and I was pleased with my progress too.



Front and Center... Pat Considine !

In my IDC course there were only two people studying to become instructor, Nicole Zelek and myself. During each session I was trying to catch up to Nicole, because she is a gifted and natural teacher. I had a bit more diving experience but she was radical on the presentations! Our days would start out by doing Prescriptive training presentations (more on that later), and then we would have pool sessions and open water sessions where each Instructor would roleplay being our student or Divemaster. Naturally, there were multiple complications and problems thrown into every scenario; we had to quickly develop a degree of situational awareness, quickly spotting and correcting problems. A typical emergency presented is a regulator out of a student's mouth; this causes them to panic and bolt for surface. Very nerve wracking! We definitely needed to understand how to quickly manage such a scenario.

But when it was all said and done, we students and instructors alike all had a lot of fun, we bonded with each other, and we made new good friends. There was a vast amount of knowledge achieved. PADI – similar to the other training agencies in this regard —emphasizes that Instructors adhere to the organization's teaching standards, and that instructors-in-training follow carefully-scripted step-by-step guidelines in dealing with students. Deviations from the standards are definitely frowned upon. After two months of training every weekend, I was ready to proceed to the daunting PADI Instructor Examination.

This exam is a full two-day multiple area exam conducted in Bethlehem, Pa. Talk about nerves! I only got about two hours of sleep the night before the exam. The test starts at 7AM on a Saturday, beginning with registration then proceeding to a three-hour two-section test covering six broad subjects. This exam is followed by a one-hour preparation period to prepare the dreaded prescriptive teaching presentation. The subject is given to the exam takers with a one-hour preparation period. We were obliged to present for ten minutes speaking in front of our group; interacting, teaching and reinforcing the subject. My topic was Project Aware. This was a big challenge for me, but in the end I was satisfied with my performance and scored well with 4.7 out of 5.

We then had our lunch and proceeded to a local high school, for a three-hour pool session. Here, all demonstrated skills had to be 'Instructor quality'; and of course there were complicated scenarios thrown into each skill set assessment. And so, only after this full twelve-hour day concluded were we able to get some sleep -- before proceeding to the *next* part of exam- a full day at Dutch Springs. The open water segment consisted of various teaching skills on the underwater platforms. Our skills performance at the Dutch Day was required to be at near-perfect 'Instructor quality' levels, which was particularly challenging with the Surface Rescue procedure. Given that there were only twelve students taking the IE test, the second part went very quickly. However, there was a high degree of anguish going over all parts of the exam with the evaluator, to see if we had passed or failed. An Instructor Examination (IE) is a two-day evaluative program that tests an instructor candidate's teaching ability, dive theory knowledge, skill level, understanding of the PADI System, and attitude and professionalism. PADI IEs are standardized and conducted by specially-trained PADI Instructor Examiners But thank the Lord I passed with pretty decent marks. However, passing does not automatically mean you are an Instructor right away – you still have to become a EFR/CPR Instructor which involved another full day of training! Completing the EFR/CPR training positioned me finally to become a PADI Open Water Instructor on June 10th, 2016.



Front and Center... Pat Considine !

But.... I wasn't quite done... I decided to also become a Technical Diver in 2016, so after 3-days of training at Dutch Springs in November 2015 (followed by a full week of technical dives in Pompano Fla.) in March 2016 I became a PADI Deep Technical diver certified to 185 ft. depth. Buddied up with my Technical Instructor we did a couple of Trimix dives to a depth of 200 ft. - which was in preparation for my intended next step in 2017 as full trimix diver. Due to the expense of trimix though I do not think I will be doing many trimix dives. However, I have to admit I thrive on the challenge and I am happy being in the water. Naturally I prefer a nice warm Caribbean location, but I also find the frigid diving in December in Cape Ann, Mass invigorating! By training and number of dives, I have earned adequate situational awareness to make the choice to do those dives in a drysuit, but if any TSSC divers wanted to do those dives in a wetsuit, just let me know – after all, I can perform CPR!

I would like to wish everyone a terrific new dive season with all the great Club trips which we have lined up, and safe diving to all my friends at TSSC and all those with whom I have trained and bonded over the years!

Sea Swells Interviews Pat Considine

What is your favorite dive destination?

Bonaire, with its limitless shore diving and variety of underwater environments, it is just beautiful and a great place for divers. There are also lots of reefs and wrecks so something for everyone and at all levels! And also the Finger Lakes region as well as the St. Lawrence seaway hold many historic locations which are explorable and inspiring to see! Civil War-era USS Vickery is one example which is a challenging but very rewarding dive!

What is your favorite, most magic moment underwater?

Probably the best was diving with my younger son. We were in Bermuda and we dove the tugboat there. Together we explored all around and in the tugboat wreck and had a true father/son bond inside the bridge at the captain's chair. Just great!

But having said that, there were so many others! On our Club's Bonaire trip, I remember having perfect neutral buoyancy inside a school of sergeant major jacks. I was not a predatory fish from their point of view and not a threat, so they did not go into any kind of evasive maneuvers. It was truly amazing being there in the middle of hundreds or thousands of jacks. Some did try to scare me away and I thought it was the cutest thing that these beautiful little fish with no teeth to speak of, were trying to scare me away!

Diving with reef sharks and black-tips was also an incredible creature, providing an opportunity to observe them out close and person in their own environment and marveling at their beauty. The strangest and most amusing moment was watching these enormous groupers literally pushing the sharks out of the way trying to get to the bait boxes used to attract fish! (I bet they would not have been quite so brave if the sharks were 14-foot tiger sharks!)

Why did you torture yourself earning MSDT?

I admit asking myself that on occasion. But it always comes back to how much I enjoy working with students. I enjoy bringing them to the sport of scuba diving, and watching their faces light up underwater as they experience the wonders under the water. I enjoy watching them grow as divers, and master new skills, and begin to learn to work out problems for themselves under our watchful eyes to make sure they stay safe. That makes it all worthwhile!



Front and Center... Pat Considine !

What are your professional plans regarding diving?

Well the economics of the profession are such that being a diving instructor at this level is not a viable full-time profession, and not enough to pay the bills. So it is not to get rich, it is to be with students and teach them and see the joy of discovery and learning the sport of scuba diving, and safely enjoy their underwater time. I do however want to at least make back my expenses and that is certainly an achievable objective.

What is your nightmare scenario with students?

Underwater panic can be dangerous to all involved. Something as simple as a thermocline or a failed mask clear can set off a panic attack. Students and inexperienced divers can do strange things suddenly and dangerously. We train very hard to spot precursor conditions which might lead to panic, but also train to control and manage it. I previsualize many student situations and will react automatically to the wide range of situations. I am confident in my training and in my ability to bring underwater situations to a successful and safe conclusion for all. Even seasoned divers can sometimes do stupid and dangerous things though. We should all live by the rule 'plan the dive and dive the plan'... winging it underwater can be a recipe for disaster. When a regular dive suddenly turns into a DEEP dive requiring decompressions stops, and those have not been planned out, that can be very dangerous for the diver and for the dive buddy. So these are the 'stare at the ceiling' scenarios with which dive professionals and trainer have to live...

What is prescriptive teaching which you mention in your article?

PADI has a proprietary instructional method which integrates all aspects of scuba diving into an interlocking experience. Having a safe and enjoyable experience scuba diving is not JUST diving safely, but the whole panorama of experiential components, such as having your own equipment to learn it and know it intimately; having wonderful and appealing dive destinations suited to individuals' interests; being part of a community of divers so that there is a self-supporting and bonding experience; having your friendly dive shop as your vendor and partner; and of course, keeping your equipment in best operational condition. This is the essence of PADI's prescriptive teaching method, and we as ambassadors of diving to the scuba community can really help progress the sport by positioning diving as an integrated experience across all these aspects.

You mention Project Aware....What is that?

PADI has long recognized that the marine environment is WHY we scuba dive. Ever since the very beginning, everyone who ventures underwater marvels at the breadth and beauty of marine plant and animal life. PADI embraces advocacy for marine environments and instills this basic building block into training. All divers and all instructors must be mindful to protect the marine environment, and be somewhat (or significantly) aware of good and bad situations. For example, NOT destroying - accidentally or otherwise - underwater coral formations which may have taken decades to develop.



Front and Center... Pat Considine !

Why do you think that there are fewer young people coming into diving?

Diving is fun. We all need to dive more. The sport of diving is in healthier status in other parts of the country, which are nearer to warm blue water. These cold green water here in the northeast are not as appealing to most people. Of course, this is because they have never been face to face with seals off Isles of Shoals, or else they would not take that position! Nevertheless, our own Dive Planner Jack R. is doing a superb job planning out our dive adventures and this will help secure and expand our membership rolls with such an outstanding lineup of exciting dive adventures with the great group of people here in our Club. Perhaps this is just a cyclical phenomenon, and over time, more young people will start returning to diving. Hope so anyhow, as much for their sake as ours!

Finally, ... so, tell us... what are your Dream Dive Destinations?

Definitely whale shark diving, possibly off Isla Mujeres or better yet, Utila in Honduras! And ... of course... cage diving with white sharks off Guadaloupe Mexico! Ay Caramba! I will stay INSIDE the cage, thank you. And, ANY dive with my friends in my Clubs and those with whom I have trained. Because that is really the best dive – to have a great and safe dive with friends!





TEK-2-TEK Talk Around the Dive Shop

DAN's Alert Diver Application for Smartphone/iPhone/ iPad Gary Lehman

Many members of our Club are members of DAN (Diver's Alert Network) and in general, everyone who IS part of DAN *highly recommends it*. DAN provides a 24/7 state-of-the-art dive medicine inquiry and emergency response hotline; coordinates dive accident care; conducts post-incident reviews and analysis; promotes dive research and supports marine environment advocacy; and provides a terrific magazine called *Alert Diver*. DAN also provides leading travel and dive/dive equipment insurance; I have personally used DAN insurance not only for diving but also believe it or not *mountain-eering* in Russia (I did NOT want to wind up in a Russian Army field hospital <or worse> if injured while climbing Mt. Elbrus in the Caucasus range...).

The quarterly arrival of *Alert Diver* magazine is always welcomed in my house! Like many of us, I savor each issue and never really want to recycle those magazines because they are so rich with relevant, inspiring, and important information about dive locations, marine life, equipment, techniques, stunning photography, operators, incident analysis (I could go on and on...). Personally, I extract the particularly compelling articles and keep them. Admittedly, this is not exactly *efficient*...

DAN's Smart device/Smart phone application to the rescue! Imagine having electronic access to all *Alert Diver* applications right there on your smart device! Well now you can rock and roll and have at it. Use the "App Store" icon on your Smart device (mine happens to be an Apple iPhone 6 running the latest version of IOS, and I will assume that there is the same or an analogous method to access via Android). Once in App Store, click the magnifying glass icon to type in and search for "Alert Diver". You will then be offered an opportunity to click the blue box "GET" (which will install the application on your smart device). Then click the green box to "Install". (Depending on your setup, you may have to sign in to the iTunes store... in my case, I typed in my iStore password and was on my way...). Over a high speed network connection, it takes less than sixty seconds to download and install... Then click the box that says "Open". You get an attractive splash screen and are asked if you wish to receive notifications. (I chose 'yes'.)

To install the application on your PC, cut'n'paste this link to your browser, click, download and install:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/alert-diver/id480608662?mt=8>

Then you will be treated the selections of each of the quarterly Alert Diver magazines dating back to 2011! What a joy and thrill to see all those wonderful magazine covers again! The Spring 2016 issue took less than sixty second to download and once downloaded, it offered by viewable videos as well as a search function for the topic or search objective of interest. You can also bookmark and add personal notes/memos to particular pages. The Search icon is the magnifying glass on the upper right. I searched for 'decompression sickness' and got twenty-one hits just in this issue alone.

If any of the resulting search 'hits' look of interest, merely click the item which catches your eye, and the article page will blossom onto your screen with the search target result highlighted in yellow. You can then read the page(s) and paragraph(s) in context to understand the "why's and wherefore's" and context of the appearance of the search target (in this case, "decompression sickness"). Sometimes the results might be distressing or disturbing, but in this one particular random case I was delighted to discover that *red wine* and *chocolate appear to have beneficial medicinal effects related to "decompression sickness" owing to their anti-oxidant qualities!* (something called 'resveratrol' in red wine...) ...OK so... Lindt dark chocolate nuggets and chianti for everybody! (At this point I will hasten to add that this newsletter in general and article in particular is not intended to provide any formal dive-related medical education or information).

While we are on the general subject of DAN and smart devices, I realized that I had not included the DAN emergency phone numbers in my own smart phone contact directory. I have now corrected that lapse (and you could do the same and hopefully this will help that!).

DAN Emergency Hotline (collect calls accepted)	1-919-684-9111
DAN Medical Info	1-919-684-2948
DAN TravelAssist	1-919-684-9111
DAN toll free	1-800-446-2671
General Info	DAN.org/contact



Featured Creatures: The Swimming Crab

Rick D'Amico

The Swimming Crabs — Family Portunidae

In our region, we have three species of swimming crabs (Family Portunidae). They are the blue crab, *Callinectes sapidus*; the green crab, *Carcinus maenas*, and the lady crab, *Ovalipes ocellatus*. As their name implies, they are frequently found swimming through the water column, unlike other crabs whose adult life stages live on the bottom. A trait of the Family Portunidae is that the last pair of walking legs have been modified into paddle-shaped appendages, called swimmerets, which allow them to swim. They generally swim sideways, but they can also swim backwards and forward. They each play a role in our local marine/estuarine ecosystem.

The Blue Crab

The blue crab, sometimes referred to as the "blue-clawed crab," has recently become relatively plentiful in Long Island Sound. It has been speculated that with the water temperature in the Sound increasing by a couple of degrees, it has become a desirable habitat for the blue crab. They are found in coastal waterways and estuaries along the western Atlantic Ocean as far north as Nova Scotia, and as far south as Uruguay.

It is relatively easy to identify by its bright sapphire blue color in its claws and the sharp points along the outer edges of its carapace (They swim sideways and I've been jabbed by their spines when I was diving in Chesapeake Bay, where they're relatively abundant). Its scientific name, *Callinectes sapidus*, means "savory beautiful swimmer."

The blue crab is an important food species for humans. It is a highly sought-after crustacean in the mid-Atlantic region of the U.S., and a staple of the Chesapeake Bay fishery.



The blue crab,
Callinectes sapidus

Blue crabs feed on juvenile mollusks, such as oysters and clams, and by doing so assist in controlling population growth in the mollusk population. They are omnivores (capable of eating plants and meat) however, and have been known to feed on algae and marsh grass. In addition, they are known to feed on other crustaceans, recently dead fish, and worms.

Besides humans, blue crabs are fed on by larger fish, birds, and sea turtles. Juveniles also serve as food for other crustaceans

The Green Crab

The green crab is actually an introduced species to our area, although it has become well established in the local marine/estuarine environment. Originally native to the North and Baltic Seas, it was introduced to the East Coast of the US approximately 150 years ago, possibly in the shipworm burrows in the hulls of wooden ships. While we are not sure how it was introduced, there are a number of natural and human-driven causes that were possible.



The green crab is an effective forager and can easily open bivalve mollusk shells. It is also quicker than most other crabs and is adept at gathering food. It also is capable of eating a wide variety of foods.

They are able to adapt to a wide range of temperatures and salinities. It can tolerate salinities between 4 and 52 parts per thousand, which means it can handle water that is saltier than ocean water. It can stand water temperatures between 32 degrees F and 86 degrees F.

In addition, they are very prolific—one female green crab can produce up to 200,000 eggs in one reproductive cycle. Because they can swim, they're very mobile, which also increases their range.



The Swimming Crab Cont'd from Page 26 Column Two

For these reasons, the green crab has become very well established in our area. They are believed to be largely responsible of the decline of the soft-shell clam fishery in Maine, as they feed heavily on them.

Their predators include large fish, seabirds and turtles. In fact, they are considered an important food for the endangered Kemp's Ridley sea turtle during its spawning migration through Long Island Sound. They are frequently used as bait for fluke and tautog fishing.

In our area it grows to 2-1/2 inches long and 3-1/2 inches wide. It varies in color from green to brown or red. It may be distinguished by five "teeth" or spines along the front rim of the carapace.

Ironically, this invasive species of crab is being impacted by a more recently introduced crab. The Asian shore crab, *Hemigrapsus sanguineus*, introduced to the East Coast in 1998, has become an established invader and has reduced the population of other crabs in the area.

The Lady Crab

The lady crab is relatively easy to identify. It's rounder than other Portunids in our region. Its carapace is yellow-grey or light purplish, and is covered with purple spots. Sometimes its color appears iridescent, particularly in light.



Like the blue crab, it is a nocturnal predator, coming out at night to feed. By day, it often buries itself in sand with only its eyestalks sticking up from the sand, but by night it

actively swims through the water column seeking food. They are scavengers, eating both dead and live fish, crabs, juvenile clams and other invertebrates.



Their predators include fish, birds and other crabs. Its shell is softer than other Portunid shells, so it is more susceptible to predation. This may also explain their aggressive nature, as they must defend themselves to prevent being another critter's meal. Unlike the blue crab, the meat of the lady crab isn't considered appetizing, so there is no commercial fishery for it.



Viking Ship *Draken Harald Harfagre* Comes to New York City!

Gary Lehman

The Scuba Sports Club had the exciting opportunity to go aboard the Viking ship *Draken Harald Harfagre* on September 18, 2016 in lower Manhattan, and attend a presentation by the owner, captain and crew at NYC's Explorer's Club the following day describing the ship and crew's trans-Atlantic voyage in May 2016



Visitors to Viking ship Draken at North Cape marina were inspired by the intrepid, historic journey of this Viking longship!

The Adventure

This inspiring project began in 2008 with a dream by Norwegian entrepreneur Sigurd Aase – to build a Viking longship of the kind sailed by Scandinavian Vikings and explorer Leif Erikson 1,000 years ago - using traditional methods and materials - and sail it to the archaeologically-confirmed Viking landing spot L'Anse Aux Meadows (located at the northernmost tip of the island of Newfoundland in the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador). The ship was to be named *Draken Harald Harfagre* – named “Dragon” after Harald Harfagre, who was the first king of Norway and who unified Norway into one kingdom in the years 870-930.

Imagine a Viking ship - true to the original - sailing across the North Atlantic along the same route taken 1,000 years earlier by the Vikings, whose landing on North America predated Christopher Columbus by over 400 years! Aase's inspiration in his own words:

“The aim of the Draken Harald Harfagre project is to explore the world and embrace the Viking spirit – to look beyond the horizon and seek adventure and to inspire people to take on challenges.”

There were daunting challenges to this endeavor. For one thing, there were no naval architectural plans for such a vessel. As a guideline, there were smaller, ceremonial Viking ships uncovered at Norwegian burial sites, and remains of cargo ships. However, these ships were not intended for blue water (oceanic) use, rather only coastal use. Viking-era ships uncovered at Roskilde Fjord in Denmark in the 1960's also provided further guidelines for ship construction techniques, as well as examples of artwork carved into the vessels. There were also circumstantial indications of Viking longships' appearance, gleaned from 1,000-year old paintings, the stories recounted in the Norse sagas (narrative in poem or prose in an archaic Norse language, depicting legends, historical events and mythology, written the 1200's and 1300's) and even some extant provisioning logs.

The Challenge Another big challenge was figuring out how to sail such a vessel. Scandinavians are expert seamen - but modern sailing ships have distinctly different hull and sail configurations, and the sailing characteristics of these Viking longships with a single square sail would be profoundly different than modern yachts, barques, or other sailing ships. But what this venture had in its favor was that the world's leading tall ship sailors are an elite and close community - word quickly spread about this venture, and all the very best tall ship sailors from all over the world vied for an opportunity to crew aboard this ship on this historic journey.



Viking ship Draken , at North Cove Marina NYC

To get the project moving forward, Sigurd Aase contacted the top three traditional shipbuilders in Norway with the proposal. Intrigued, they collaborated and put forth plans to proceed, creating a build plan (the ship was to be built with only traditional materials, and by hand) and performance modeling plan. The best Norwegian woods were identified for use for different ship components. Three small ships (each progressively bigger and scaled up) were built to gain crew and build experience with construction methods and sailing characteristics. A supercomputer in the USA was also used to perform the structural dynamics and finite element modeling for ship performance. The ship was built in the town of Haugesund in western Norway, which is Sigurd Aase's home town. On March 2010 construction of the largest Viking ship to sail in modern times began, bringing together traditional shipbuilders, craftsmen, historians, artisans, and engineers working with wood, tar, hemp, iron nails, and silk for the sail.



Draken (dragon) instilled fear amongst enemies!

And what about a captain? Given the requirement for the highest standard of seamanship, the unknowns and the challenging North Atlantic sea conditions, only a top-tier captain of exceptional leadership and skill would have the capability to bring together the team to accomplish this momentous voyage. Captain Bjorn Ahlander with many years of tall ships sailing experience was selected for this challenge, and he brought with him several top sailors and seamen/seawomen who had crewed under him on prior ships. Together they formed the core team of sailors of about 17 sailors, and recruited another 17 deckhands from among the world's best sailors.

Historical Voyage Takes Shape

With the completion of the ship in 2012, sea trials on *Draken* were conducted over two years in coastal areas. One of the most challenging was successfully completed in March 2014 over blue water to the town of Largs on the west coast Scotland (a town which had been raided by the Vikings a thousand years ago; fortunately, there was no residual ill will for past indiscretions), and then on to England.

And on April 26, 2016 the historic trans-Atlantic voyage began, with the month of May being the only month of the year with favorable prevailing easterly winds. The ship made first landfall in Scotland, proceeding to the Faroe Islands, then in succession Iceland, Greenland, and completing the trans-Atlantic crossing on June 1st at St. Antony in Newfoundland. Historians broadly agree that the Vikings ventured well into the interior of what is today Canada and the US Great Lakes region. There is even speculation that they extended their journey as far south as the Gulf of Mexico (it is hoped that at some point archaeological evidence and even organic remains with DNA potential might be discovered to validate the theory). *Draken Harald Harfagre* ventured forth following the route of her predecessors and sailed up the St. Lawrence Seaway to Quebec, Toronto, Ohio, Michigan, Chicago, Greenbay, Duluth, and back out, arriving in NYC on September 15. She will depart and overwinter in Mystic Seaport, Connecticut. The plan is to sail her back next year.

Haze Gray and Underway

The Scuba Sports Club had the opportunity while aboard the docked ship and at the Explorers Club to mingle with crew members, the voyage photographer, and the captain. Their experiences were captivating and greatly fill in the details of this historic voyage!

Many questions were posed by visitors to the ship and at the Explorers Club about the voyage details. There was no 'below deck', just a tent where the off-duty crew slept in their sleeping bags. There was a four-hour watch system in effect, around the clock. There was a *small* cubbyhole for biology breaks. There was an engine aboard, rarely used and only when crew safety considerations dictated.

Crew safety was paramount to the captain for this expedition. A chase boat was employed for emergencies. Sailors aboard *Draken* wore high-visibility survival suits which would have kept them safe until rescue by the chase boat in the event of man overboard. Stormy weather was carefully tracked and if possible avoided by waiting out the storm system in port. However, sometimes this was not possible, and the African proverb "Calm seas do not make a good sailor" proved true via the seamanship and fortitude of crew and captain. Navigation was in part accomplished by a 'sunstone' – a mineral stone which polarizes light revealing the position of the sun on cloudy days, celestial navigation at night, clouds, waves, wildlife...and intuition. At up to 10-12 knots at times! Traditional methods were used, but cross-checked by the latest gear installed aboard. Icebergs? Yes, those were encountered frequently, especially on the latter part of the journey. A glancing blow would not have been fatal to the ship but conceivable a head-on collision at speed might have been. However, wood does not become brittle like steel or fiberglass, and is better able to withstand the shock of collision with an iceberg. Nevertheless (not wanting to test any good Norwegian wood resiliency characteristics) during the passage through icy sections, the crew watch would be doubled and speed reduced to avoid a collision. And what about food? Master chef Jan Gullbrandsson's fare was universally appreciated for its excellence, especially under such adverse conditions – two hot meals a day and hearty porridge for breakfast!

TSSC asked crew and captain what the 'biggest surprise' was. The answer was unanimous... the unrelenting cold (understandable given the perpetual exposure to the wind, sea spray, and rain). The captain at first indicated that there *were* no surprises; that the shakedown trials had effectively surfaced issues and procedures for correction. Then, Captain Ahlander reflected further, indicating one surprise - the value of a good carpenter- *because so many things became broken during the arduous voyage*. Hemp rope frayed under stress, necessitating ad hoc repairs and circumventions.

Draken Harald Harfagre has an international crew of 34 sailors, about half of which were core professional staff, and the other half were rotating volunteer deckhands. The international and mixed-gender crew reflected the multinational adventures of the Vikings and their egalitarian society. The ship is 114', 27' beam, weighing eighty tons, and with a 3,200 square foot sail.



"Good Norwegian Wood" used aboard Draken!



Norse god Odin dispatched two ravens to reconnoiter the area around his ship to report on local conditions and enemy ships - but Viking Ship Draken Harald Harfagre's two ravens take flight in spirit only!



Norwegian artisans emulated designs found on unearthed Viking ships on Draken



Hemp Ropes aboard Draken

We also asked captain and crew about their readings and personal preparation for their "Viking" (which roughly translates to 'journey'). Of course the Norse sagas were part of the preparation, but also the journals of Sir Francis Chichester aboard *Gypsy Moth*, predecessor Norwegian explorers Roald Amundsen who explored polar regions aboard the ship *Fram*, and Thor Heyerdahl who conducted the *Kon-Tiki* expedition in 1947, sailing 8,000 km across the Pacific in a small hand-built raft built from traditional materials from South America to the Tuamotu Islands, proving the feasibility of westbound migration across the Pacific. And some crew members studied the logs and journals of Ernest Shackleton in the Antarctic on *Endurance*.

Viking Ship, Continued from Page 31

Shackleton observed that a fine crew is as important as a stalwart ship in expeditionary ventures; an observation heartily endorsed by all Draken crew members who took inspiration from Shackleton!

The Scuba Sports Club proclaims a hearty **Skål !!** to the intrepid sailors of *Draken Harald Harfagre*, congratulate all who planned and crafted this historic voyage, thank them for energizing us all to pursue our dreams and undertake challenges towards our personal best, and earnestly wish *fair winds and following seas* to all future adventures for owner, captain and crew!



Can take 20 deckhands to sheet this square 3200 sq foot sail!

So who were these Vikings a thousand years ago? Popular conception has maintained through the ages that Vikings were rapacious marauders who raided coastal towns, pillaging, murdering and carrying off everything not nailed down and striking terror in the hearts of nearby coastal communities away from their Scandinavian homelands. This was only in part true (rule of law had not “yet” taken hold completely in human history, and the Vikings were no more or less brutal than terrestrial raiders). But this violent behavior in fact is only part of the story. ‘Vikings’ were those who ventured out to sea to find new land, but Norsemen (those who lived in Scandinavia) were also fishermen, artisans, craftsmen, farmers, and poets as well as seafarers. The Vikings ranged far and wide from their Scandinavian coastal towns engaged in trade all through the British Isles, across the Atlantic as we have seen (500 years before Columbus), throughout the Baltic and into the Mediterranean, Near East and even Africa. Cultural traces and artifacts have been found in all these regions. The sea lanes plied by the Vikings presaged world-wide British maritime dominance such that “the Sun never set on the British Empire”. Women’s egalitarian status in Viking times is reflected in ship’s company: 50% of *Draken’s* crew on average were women sailors

A Visit to a True New Jersey Gem – The NJ Maritime Museum in Beach Haven

Gary Lehman

Here in the Northeast of the US we might not have warm, blue water but -- we have cold, green water! And we have historic wrecks, amazing sea life including seals, sharks and whales to marvel at. And best of all - we have the unique New Jersey Maritime Museum in Beach Haven – where many wonders of maritime history, culture and scuba diving in New Jersey and the northeast can be explored!

TSSC had the honor and pleasure of visiting the NJ Maritime Museum (NJMM) recently. Deb Whitcraft, Curator and President of NJMM greeted me warmly and I was escorted through the Museum by David Swope, Research Volunteer. Everyone with an interest in NJ/northeast maritime history, culture and scuba diving will quickly be immersed in the richly informative and rewarding exhibits and resources of the Museum!

NJMM was founded ten years ago in its newly-constructed home in Beach Haven near the bay side of Long Beach Island (LBI). Beach Haven is a seaside resort village located on LBI, a 20-mile long barrier island oriented south-southwest to north-northeast about two miles off the southern New Jersey coast. Since its founding



ing the Museum has grown into the revered focal point for NJ and northeast maritime historians and scuba divers who have devoted their time, energy and personal donations of artifacts to this singular Museum.

Visitors and researchers benefit from log data of maritime biology and events including weather, marine advocacy and environmental protection, ship wrecks and other maritime accidents, and artwork (some recovered from wrecks) stretching back many years. These exhibits and data are meticulously maintained, analyzed and displayed by the devoted curatorial and research staff. Much of the incident/event data has been carefully digitized and catalogued for cur

NJ Maritime Museum in Beach Haven, NJ

rent and future benefit of researchers the world over. This is an ongoing, extensive effort embarked upon in 2011, with currently over 5000 maritime

incidents carefully documented and accessible for review and analysis using Google Fusion and other state-of-the-art data access methods. This effort not only makes this a unique, worldwide internet-accessible repository, but also protects the documentation for the future. The Museum is also mapping the better-known shipwrecks in the NJ/NY vicinity in order to document their location and debris fields for future generations of scuba divers and researchers. Thus maritime archaeology also is a prominent objective of the museum, chronicling the importance of maritime commerce in this area through the discovery and display of artifacts recovered off the bottom.



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Documentation and research at NJMM

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Conference Room at NJMM

Exhibits are drawn from all over the NJ/NY metropolitan maritime community. So many of these unique exhibits caught our attention, that it is just not possible to give a full account!

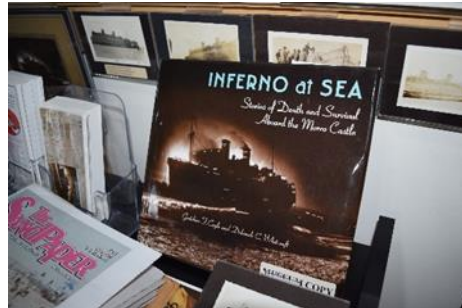
NJ Maritime Museum , continued from page 33

But to mention a few: visitors can marvel at the unopened bottles of 100-proof Kentucky bourbon recovered off the *Lizzie D*, a tug boat serving as a rum-runner during The Prohibition Era which sank in 80' of water off Atlantic Beach Inlet (offshore nearby Brooklyn, NY) due to unknown circumstances in 1922. (Reportedly, bottles containing this solution were “chemically assessed” upon discovery of the wreck in 1977, and the contents were determined by shared consensus of all those engaged in the effort to be uniquely and highly suitable for their originally-intended purpose!) There are also artifacts from wrecks many of us have dived on over the years, such as *USS San Diego* and *U-853* to name just a few. Exhibits include items retrieved from the *Andrea Doria*. Even ordinary details, such as pharmacy bottles from the infirmary and artillery from *USS San Diego*!

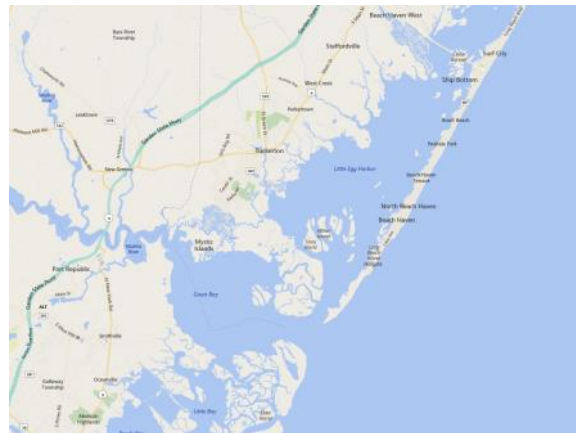
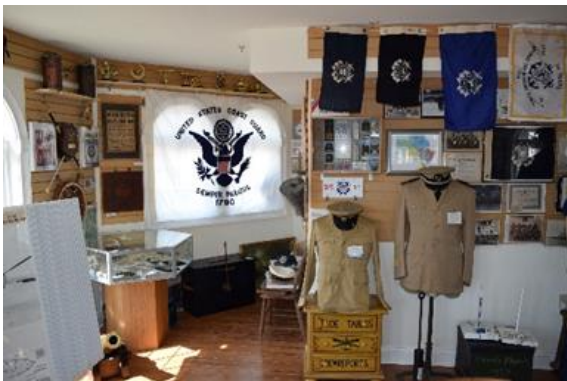


Kentucky Bourbon off the wreck of the Lizzy D

A first-floor room is dedicated to the devastating ship fire which destroyed the passenger ship *SS Morro Castle* with grievous loss of 135 passengers and crew. Deb Whitcraft and Gretchen Coyle have written the definitive account of the ship's fire (*Inferno At Sea – Stories of Death and Survival Aboard the Morro Castle*) which documents the disaster, the subsequent beaching of the burning ship at Asbury Park, and the many passenger ship procedural measures and marine safety enhancements which were instituted in the wake of the disaster.



Another room is reserved to honor the men of the U.S. Life-Saving Service (the precursor the U.S. Coast Guard). The men and women of USCGS risk their lives, putting themselves in harm's way in the service of mariners in distress under the most dangerous weather conditions. This room celebrates their efforts in our region, and is informative and inspiring! *Semper Paratus! Always Ready!* To which we say, 'Thank you to all the Coasties!'



Many scuba divers in the NJ/NY diving community had the privilege of diving the boat Garloo out of Captree State Park on Long Island (and before that, the Wahoo) captained by the venerable Captain Hank Garvin, who passed away in May 2015. Captain Garvin pioneered safe wreck diving techniques and brought the joy of diving to a whole new generation of scuba divers. He was rough and tumble on the outside, but had un-

bounded concern for those in his charge and his crew. He was beloved by so many in the diving community. A permanent tribute to Captain Hank Garvin was dedicated in April 2016 at the Museum complete with videos and his entire, extensive collection of wreck artifacts which were donated by his family to the Museum for all to behold and draw inspiration from. For those who knew Captain Garvin personally or ever dived from his boat, this memorial exhibit celebrating his life and times is a true "must do", and a way to reconnect with the Captain across time and space.



Admission of the Museum is free, as is the library and high speed wifi internet access. Be sure to visit the gift shop for books, Museum-logoed apparel and treats of every kind. The gracious, engaging staff at the

Museum cordially invite all inquiries at 609-492-0202 or via email to info@njmaritimemuseum.org. The team encourages checking for the many active events and monthly presentations at NJMM at their website and Facebook at www.njmaritimemuseum.org and www.facebook.com/NJMaritimeMuseum. The Museum is open all summer of course, and also during the weekends during winter months (and on weekdays by appointment).

And for those who have a personal connection to Long Beach Island, a visit to the Museum and LBI is likely to stir long-lost but cherished memories. I caught my first fish – a blowfish – off the pier at Andy's Bait 'n' Tackle shop in Barnegat many moons ago (and was happy to set it free, watching it swim away). And photos of Beach Haven's graceful three-masted schooner 'Lucy Evelyn' (she burned down in 1972) stirred memories of my childhood and family joy of long-ago summers on LBI with my family, which over the intervening time has sustained the effects of the circle of life, to which we are all ultimately subject.



While in the area visiting the Museum, sojourners can stroll the bustling main street of Beach Haven, browsing galleries, shops, mini-golf and other entertainment for kids. And then explore *all* of Long Beach Island, offering miles of inviting, world-famous beaches to get some sand between your toes. There are fishing boats, marinas aplenty, seafood restaurants to suit every budget and occasion, many options for accommodations, and enjoyable and historic Barnegat Lighthouse State Park at the north end of the island. Visitors are thus all set up for a glorious few days on Long Beach Island! It is a good bet that a visit after Labor Day (if you can arrange it into your family schedule) would be especially rewarding, with reduced numbers of vacationers after the start of the school year. Boaters and divers have plenty to explore - and for fishermen (especially after Labor Day) Barnegat Marina serves as the kickoff for offshore overnight fishing trips for the seasonal tuna species of albacore and big eye, colorful and acrobatic mahi-mahi and the other species which inhabit the richly-diverse continental shelf marine biome of the offshore Hudson Canyon. Thus any time of the year, Long Beach Island has plenty to offer - so after your visit to the Museum grab your sunscreen and see you at the marina!

100th Anniversary of the Matawan, NJ Shark Attacks

Gary Lehman

The Scuba Sports Club was privileged to attend the July 6, 2016 Shark Awareness mixer and presentation co-sponsored by the New Jersey Maritime Museum and the Princeton-based Shark Research Institute. Several of the world's leading experts on sharks, the Matawan attacks and NJ maritime history were present, including Deb Whitcraft (Curator and President of NJMM); Dean Fessler (Education Director of Shark Research Institute); Marie Levine (Executive Director of SRI and Women Divers Hall of Fame member); Captain and teacher Stephen Nagiewicz who is also a noted NJ maritime historian, marine archaeologist and Explorers Club Executive Director and author of *Hidden History of Maritime New Jersey*; and distinguished supporters and members of the NJ maritime community.

Opening comments were provided by Dean Fessler, who admitted to being somewhat conflicted on account of being a forceful advocate for sharks by advancing public understanding about the nature of sharks (*and* the ongoing human destruction of the species) - and on the *other*



hand, commemorating the four very real (and one near) fatalities resulting from the 'twelve days of terror' off the coast of New Jersey in 1916. A skeptic might ask... "If sharks are *not* mindless killers, then *why are we commemorating four dead off NJ?!*" The answer of course is that sharks are apex predators; there is necessarily predatory behavior associated with sharks; predations and 'bite investigations' have to be placed into species-specific context; and these behaviors have to be understood and taken into account with our interactions with sharks so as to avoid appearing to be their natural prey (whether fish or marine mammals) and inadvertently triggering an attack. The most poignant moment of Dean's presentation was when he called for a moment of remembrance for

the four lives lost 100 years ago during those sultry twelve summer days. Dean then related that after one presentation to some school children, a little girl came up to him, saying that she had always been terrified of sharks and considered them evil; but that after hearing Dean's presentation she now wanted to *help them, save them and study them*. The crowd thereupon burst into applause over the great work that SRI does, changing youngsters' perceptions one kid at a time, and correcting public perceptions slowly but surely. Hat's off to SRI!

July 1 – July 12, 1916 Attacks

Most of us know the story. The novel and movie *Jaws* (1974/1975) was co-inspired by the 1916 New Jersey attacks and by Stan Waterman's ground-breaking film *Blue Water, White Death* (1971). On July 1, 1916 Charles Vansant (age 25) was attacked by a shark in Beach Haven NJ (on Long Beach Island). His lower legs were shredded with massive tissue loss, and he bled to death before getting to the nearest hospital at Toms River. On July 6th, another attack (40 miles further north along the New Jersey shore), Charles



Bruder (27) was swimming out beyond the breakers and was attacked with a bite to the abdomen and severance of both legs. Rescuers reached him and had a tug of war with the shark over Bruder. He was variously reported to have bled to death in the rescue boat or on the desk of the fancy Essex and Sussex hotel where he was bell captain. Fast forward to the early afternoon on July 12, and to Matawan Creek where further attacks took place...

Site of the Charles Vansant Shark Attack

If this was the same shark which attacked Bruder and Vansant, it would have traveled north along the shore, west around Sandy Hook, and headed west for a total of approximately 24 miles, finding the entrance to Matawan Creek and will have swam up the creek approximately 2 miles inland from the coastal village of Keyport. There a (perhaps *the*) shark encountered three boys in the water, and made a predation against young Lester Stillwell. The other boys ran into town screaming. Tailor Stanley Fisher (age 24) and two other individuals responded to the scene. Fisher discovered the shark feeding on Stillwell's body and attempted to wrest the body from the shark, at which time he was grievously wounded by the shark with deep bite to the thigh which severed an artery. Despite having a tourniquet applied, Fisher died en route to Long Branch Memorial hospital. Half an hour after the Fisher attack, two brothers and a friend were swimming further east in the same creek, heard about the attack, and were scrambling out of the water. Too late for 12-year old Joseph Dunn however, who was grabbed by the shark as he attempted to exit the water. Adults in the area – alerted to the upstream attacks – responded in a human chain and had another tug of war with the shark over Dunn, who was badly bitten but survived after treatment at a nearby hospital and fully recovered.



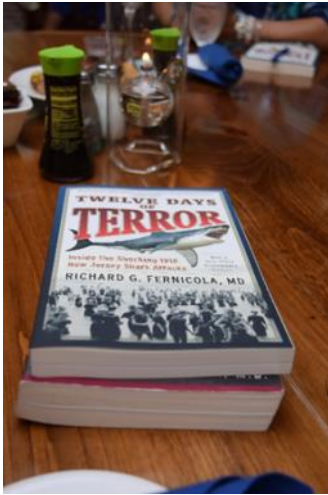
Long Beach Island Historical Museum, Beach Haven NJ, just a hundred yards from the Vansant attack of 7/1/1916

Today's travelers on NJ's Garden State Parkway would have no idea that all this transpired in the sleepy, marshy, non-descript tidal creek at mile marker 119.8 near Matawan, just east of the Parkway...

Bull Shark? White Shark? Same Shark or Different Individuals?

Both of these species were capable of the attacks. Bulls are well-known to navigate upstream into brackish water, and thus might be under high initial suspicion. However, it is now known that white sharks (among others) *also* have variously-ranging ability to tolerate brackish water while in search of prey, especially for short periods. Dr. Fernicola, author of *Twelve Days of Terror – Inside the Shocking 1916 New Jersey Shark Attacks* noted during his presentation that a drought in 1916 caused the volume of fresh water to be reduced resulting in higher salinity due to increased intrusion of ocean water from Raritan Bay up Matawan Creek. Therefore, a white shark is not ruled out on the basis of brackish water. In fact, the balance of evidence seems to swing to a white shark for *all* the attacks off the beach and in the creek, given the hunting method, the 'tug of war' behavior, and descriptions taken at the time from witnesses describing a flash of a white underside. During the frenzied shark hunting which followed these attacks, a juvenile 8' white shark was caught by a drift net in Raritan Bay (Matawan Creek flows into it). The shark's stomach contained fifteen pounds of human flesh (reportedly so, but apparently never forensically confirmed, and was this in fact *recently-ingested* human flesh?). With this discovery (if true), it seems increasingly likely that a single white shark was responsible for all the attacks. We all now know that sharks (and white sharks in particular) are intelligent; if they find a predation strategy which works for them, they will stick with it.

As to why the shark(s) were making predations in the area, Dr. Fernicola indicated that the US was shipping cattle to our Allies in war-torn Europe, then embroiled in the carnage of the First World War. Many cattle were dying from the excessive heat and were being dumped overboard. Was this attracting large sharks? There were (and are) also meat processing facilities in that part of NJ serving the NYC restaurant industry, and offal might have been occasionally or continuously dumped into surrounding waters. Was this juvenile white shark unable to feed on the offshore carcasses due to presence of *larger* sharks, and thus following the scent trail into the Matawan Creek in search of meat processing scraps? This we cannot know at this point in time. (What *we do know* is that dumping animal carcasses will attract sharks; the Sharm El Sheikh attacks of 2010 by oceanic white-tips and mako were found to be triggered by the offshore dumping of animal carcasses).



Dr. Fernicola indicated to me that we might definitively advance the understanding of the shark species (and whether it was a single rogue shark) by exhuming the bodies and conducting a forensic investigation. Under the best circumstances shark tooth fragments might be retrieved from the human remains, and DNA extracted to compare shark tooth samples from different victims. If there were no shark tooth fragments, potentially tooth marks or bite patterns might yet be discernible by forensic experts to help identify the species, and whether it likely was the same or different sharks. However, exhumation of bodies is typically only permitted for murder investigations, and scientific curiosity is not sufficient to justify the procedure. On the other hand, Dr. Fernicola advises, if a wave of shark attacks occurred either off the NJ shore or off Chatham, Massachusetts (where a growing population of white sharks make predations off the proliferating (and protected via Marine Mammals Act) seals, *then* exhumation of the Matawan victims for forensic analysis might be warranted.

However, as Dean Fessler (who has dived with white sharks outside a protective cage) has so sagely, convincingly and definitively asserted, *time itself has established that sharks are not killing machines, and that we humans are NOT on their menu*. For had this been the case, Dean concludes, the Global Shark Attack File administered out of Princeton by the Shark Research Institute staff would clearly demonstrate a growth in *predations* commensurate with radically increased human presence in the water, rather than what can be legitimately characterized as the usual case of occasional, sporadic investigatory bites by whites and other species.

The Scuba Sports Club thanks New Jersey Maritime Museum and SRI for an engaging and informative evening, and wishes 'fair winds and following seas' to the NJ Maritime Museum and the Shark Research Institute for all their endeavors benefitting the maritime and marine communities of NJ and NY and the marine environments and wildlife we all cherish.

Dive News Network and The Scuba Sports Club Collaborate!

Dive News Network - more formally known as SCUBA and H2O Adventure online magazine-- is an industry-wide, internet-based national publication devoted to serving the sport of scuba diving. This is accomplished in various ways: providing monthly online newsletter featuring informative and entertaining articles about dive locations, gear, experiences, dive education, resorts, marine advocacy, scuba diving "ways and means", gear, photography, tips and techniques – in short, all aspects related to our sport which together form the fabric of our scuba diving life in particular and enjoying aquatic sports in general.

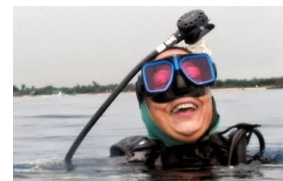
Another major contribution is that ScubaH2O is the 'resources hub' for businesses, products, service providers and consumer (and even commercial) customers -- creating 'access paths' between all participants in this industry and sport. The Scuba Sports Club is proud to support the work of Dive News Network; in fact our Club shares these objectives from a northeastern US point of view. We encourage all our TSSC members to provide articles related to the above subjects in furtherance of the objectives stated above. Gary Lehman is the focal point for this ongoing effort and he can be reached at gary.a.lehman@gmail.com. In recognition of our partnership, The Scuba Sports Club now part of the DNN networks and affiliates. We have and will continue to link our websites together and easy and shared access. Thanks DNN for your service to our great dive community, and to all our readers for being divers and for your enduring support!



Plus



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