



Neptunes Sounding Newsletter

Happy New Year

Upcoming Events

- 1/19 yearly planning meeting
- 1/20 7:30pm BSC meeting
- 1/26 Movie Night Out
- 1/30 **AWARDS BANQUET**, Common Market \$30
- 2/2 7pm General Membership Mtg
- 2/7 Club Dive, meet at 8am
- 2/9 7pm Board Meeting
- 2/16 General Membership Meeting
- 2/21 Club Dive, meet at 8am
- March 5-6 Sea Rovers

Doug Eaton as President

Mike Vaughan as VP

Jeannine Willis as Secretary

Theresa Czerepica as Treasurer.

Board: Todd Alger, John Blackadar, Ken & Teri Hayes, Jay Theriault, Rob Vice, Deb Osborn, Joe McAndrew, Tom Guild

Alternates: Tommy Lo, Rob Robison, Rob Christianson, Carl Yngve.

January 1, 2016. New Year's Day Dive (by Rob Robison)

Pleasure Bay in Boston Harbor was the scene of our New Year's Day dive, the first plunge of the New Year. I was accompanied by Brian Smith, a South Shore dive buddy of mine. As we exited the expressway and moved from Morrissey Blvd., past the traffic circle, and on to WJ Day Blvd. around 8:15 AM, spectators and L Street Brownies, psyching up for their annual New Year's morning quick dip into the harbor's icy waters, began lining up near the bath house at L Street and the boulevard. A TV station's van was parked nearby so their reporters and cameramen could record all the action, and a police or harbormaster's aluminum-hulled RIB was positioned in front of the bath house awaiting the swimmers and securing the area.

Meanwhile, further down the road, the lot for Pleasure Bay was nearly empty, so there was plenty of parking space available and we had the bay all to ourselves. The air was clear and cold and a few joggers, walkers, and bicyclers coursed the causeway that frames the bay. As we began assembling our gear and suiting up, Peter Ninh, Rich Bower, Rob Vice, Tony Alger, and others began to arrive. Doug Meyer and his son, Matt, and eventually Mike Vaughan made their appearances as well. We were preparing to dive, when a state trooper pulled into the lot and tried to tell us we could not shellfish in the bay, but added he was not returning.

Because Brian had a brunch to get to by 11, he and I hit the water right away for a very short 30-minute dive in the harbor's 42° water. Visibility gradually improved to about 5' or so by the time we reached a depth of 20'. Not much was moving except a tiny green crab scurrying across the sandy bottom creating a mini sandstorm in the process. Those who had the time to dive for a longer period than we and farther out in the bay reached depths of 28' – 32.' They found visibility extending up to 10' in places. With one exception everyone recorded bottom temps of 42°. Mike Vaughan recorded 42° everywhere he went on his 61-minute dive, except for a bottom temp of 41°, which he found briefly in one of the holes he was working in while pulling out 6 nice lobsters (one weighed 3.7lbs!) and a plate shard with markings indicating it dates back to the late 1800s. Peter added 4 more to the total and also recorded a 61-minute dive. Tony

Ross Kessler was a guest at the last Bay State Council meeting and spoke of the various groups that are impacted by towns/residents that try to restrict the public's access to the beaches. Ross's role is Public Access Coordinator for the Recreational Fisheries Program of the Division of Marine Fisheries. His role is more for the fishing public than divers, but access issues for divers would also impact recreational fishermen. One of our action items led Mike to attend the Mass Bass meeting in Dec. and met Mike Jones & Patrick Paquette. They have ~500 members. Patrick regularly goes to the state house. We're inviting them to the BSC meeting on Jan 20. Patrick also is involved in Mass Buggy group. basicpatrick@aol.com. 781-771-8374.

Alger topped off the the morning's haul with one of his own. Rich Bower and Rob Vice returned to shore with a bevy of bottles encrusted with sea growth, one of which contained a live eel pout. Theresa Czerepica, Steve Bonarrigo, and Paul Alger appeared during the morning as well to watch the proceedings and take photos. My favorite comment of the morning was Mike Vaughan's, who remarked, that "the water was down right balmy for this time of the year." I couldn't agree more: Very refreshing if not bracing.

While we were returning to our street clothes and putting away our gear, a small contingent of adults and a few of their children appeared on the Pleasure Bay beach to make their New Year's Day plunge without all of the folderol that accompanies the L Street Brownie experience. They hopped in and out faster than jack rabbits. One child was clearly in pain from the shocking cold experience. I was in pain just watching them.

After the dive we all headed out to Jay Theriault's house in Milton for a great lunch spread of baked ham, shrimp, quiche bites, and much much more. A large number of Neptunes dropped in to socialize and watch the Bruins flail helplessly against the Canadians at Gillette Stadium, while a few of us college football fans watched the Ohio State Buckeyes bludgeon Notre Dame in the Fiesta Bowl. THANKS, JAY!!!

Those of you who stayed home missed a wonderful day of activity and camaraderie. It was a great way to kick off the New Year. Regardless, have a great New Year everyone, and start making plans now to dive into it as soon as possible. The water is fine!

THINGS DIVERS SHOULD NEVER DO

by Dr. Thomas Powell:

In the world of scuba diving, everyone has thoughts and opinions about what divers should or should not do every time they hit the water. Sometimes these opinions are based on experience and education. On other occasions, these opinions may be based on hearsay developed from online reading, dive boat scuttlebutt, and even fear. The reality is that scuba diving is largely a sport based upon common sense. For this reason, the following are sensible suggestions of things divers should never do, based entirely on common sense.

Never neglect your equipment!

Diving is an equipment-intensive sport. We as humans do not naturally breathe in the underwater realm, but it is amazing how many divers do not clean, care for, service, or even perform pre-dive checks on their equipment. Scuba equipment is designed and employed to keep a diver alive underwater. When we head

to the water, we need to prepare our equipment to dive, and then work with a buddy or perform an independent equipment check. If valves are leaking or O-rings are faulty, we need to fix these issues before we enter the water. Following a dive, we need to remember to clean and store our equipment where it is safe and protected. Factors such as extreme temperatures can ruin seals, soft products, and even the O-rings in our life support gear. Finally, we need to pull the gear out on occasion to make sure everything works. If things are faulty, we do not want to find the problem right before we hope to head to the water. This is why proper service and maintenance are critical. Remember to swing by your local dive shop when the time is right and make sure everything is functional and up to date. We want to have fun diving, not deal with life-threatening issues. Your gear allows you to participate in the sport, why would you not want it to be in top shape?

Never dive outside of your comfort zone or beyond your limits!

We have all heard this one many times. Every training agency teaches the concept that divers should always dive only within the scope of an individual's personal training, experience, and comfort level. The honest truth is that this is why training exists. Over many years, forerunners of the dive industry took risks and made educational leaps that the rest of us get to avoid. The knowledge of the past has led to the development of training programs that allow divers to advance through various skill sets at a comfortable and sensible pace. The reality is that we dive to have fun. Unnecessary risks do nothing but hinder the enjoyment of scuba diving. If we want to try something new in any activity, the best method is to find someone with experience who can teach us how to safely enjoy ourselves. Diving is the same way. If you feel you are not prepared to perform a dive, then do not partake in the dive. If you wish to try the type of diving that concerns you, take the leap with a dive professional who can guide you and help keep you safe while you try something new. The worst place to realize you have made a mistake is when you have gone too deep or penetrated too far with no ability to plan an emergency recovery, with no one there to assist you in a proper fashion. Dive training classes are designed to let you work through problems, fix issues, and recover yourself all while under the watchful eye of a professional educator.

When you feel bad or just "aren't feeling the dive," call the dive!

We always hear of divers who joke about diving when they feel bad. The diver may have been hung over, sick, or just emotional. Each of these factors hinders enjoyment underwater. If you are physically ill, you need to take time to recover before you get wet. Why push yourself and risk dealing with other physiological problems underwater? Similarly, if your head is not in the dive because you are worried or too emotional, you immediately elevate your personal risk factors. Will you remember to monitor your computer? Will you keep an eye on your buddy? Too many people often feel they paid for boat time or the chance to be near the water, and they choose to dive even though they are not physically ready for the dive.

We always have tomorrow. Enjoy the underwater world when you feel better. Otherwise, how much enjoyment can you really be having if you are miserable?

Never assume!

Unless you are diving prototype equipment or in a location untouched by man, there are few occasions when you will ever find yourself performing a dive or type of dive that has not already been performed by someone else. In scuba diving, we are taught to plan our dives in advance, carry the proper equipment, and partake in training essential for the types of diving we do. Despite these factors, there are many occasions when a diver may find his or herself making an assumption. Do not make assumptions about diving. We carry equipment that tells us how much gas we have and how long we can remain at certain depths. When these data-providing instruments fail, we are taught to call the dive and ascend. If we are unclear about what is going on, call the dive and discuss your concerns back on dry land. You can always perform the dive again later. If you are a new diver making assumptions, this only leads to habits that must be broken later, or they could cause life-threatening problems. Again, do you think divers who explore new cave systems make assumptions and shoot from the hip? Or do you think they plan for every factor possible and dive within limits that allow them to bailout if needed? In many cases, dives of this type may require days of preparation with preceding dives, but these are the steps needed to avoid unnecessary risks and basic assumption about what might happen underwater. As you progress through levels of training, remember to be clear about what you are learning, how to handle problems, and how to gather and use critical information as needed. If you do not learn these concepts at each level of dive education, fixing problems may only become more dangerous as you progress further into scuba diving.

So we have discussed caring for our equipment on all levels, diving within our limits, diving when we are physically prepared, and avoiding assumption. Each of these concepts is very basic and can be derived from any common open water course. The reality is that many of us get comfortable and complacent with years of diving. Sometimes, things like training can even be used to bring old divers back into focus by reinforcing safe habits that have slipped by the wayside with time. In close, diving of any type is supposed to be fun. Even the divers who dive to explore, push limits, or reach goals choose to perform these tasks because they have a desire and a drive to do so. Many of the people who have been diving for the past 40 or 50 years can tell you about bad habits they have seen, what to avoid, and the things they will always do because not performing certain tasks caused friends to be lost. As a diver, take the time to listen to those with experience, but then employ some common sense. Be safe and maximize your potential fun underwater! Do not cut corners and always try to learn more so that you can better understand your sport.

Dr. Thomas Powell - Owner/Instructor Trainer - Air Hogs Scuba, Garner, NC
