



Soundings

February-March 2024

Newsletter of the South Shore Neptunes

Upcoming Events

- 4/2/2024 General Meeting
- 4/9/2024 Board Meeting
- 4/14/2024 Club Dive
- Speaker Night:
- 4/16/2024 Shipwrecks of the Great
Lakes by Monty Fitzpatrick
- 4/28/2024 Club Dive
- 5/1/2024 Bay State Council Meeting
- 5/7/2024 General Meeting
- 5/11/2024 Club Dive
- 5/14/2024 Board Meeting
- 5/26/2024 Club Dive
- 6/2/2024 Club Dive
- 6/4/2024 General Meeting

Spring is here and there's lots going on. Check the club calendar on the website or the Facebook page for the latest details!

Are your dues paid!? If not, you're late, reach out to treasurer@SouthShoreNeptunes.org to catch up.

Register your Membership Profile or login at:
<https://members.SouthShoreNeptunes.org>

Or scan the QR Code below:



Please send your reports, gear for sale, stories from years ago or anything else that you would want to have in the newsletter to: newsletter@SouthShoreNeptunes.org

April 16th Speaker Night

Crossroads of Commerce: Shipwrecks of the Great Lakes

by

Monty Fitzpatrick

A narration and video presentation shot during a technical dive trip to the Mackinac Straits and Michigan's Upper Peninsula areas. The video features the history and current condition of the brig Sandusky (Lake Michigan), the steamship Vienna (Lake Superior), and the bulk carrier Cedarville (Lake Huron).

Presenter: Monty Fitzpatrick is a co-owner of the Scuba Shack of CT, a PADI 5-Star dive shop located in Rocky Hill, Monty is a dive and technical dive instructor and Boston Sea Rover who organizes the Annual Public Safety Update dive workshop for police and fire at the annual Sea Rovers clinic.

February General Meeting Summary

February 6

- **Old Business**
 - Banquet - January 27th
 - Close to 70 people and The Common Market said everything went well on their end
 - Ragnar - Rob Foley
 - Moneywise, they are aware we were shorted. The previous coordinator was replaced.
 - Looking at taking three spots again and the finish line
 - Speaker Nights
 - Quincy Police on February 20 at the Quincy Yacht Club. They will bring all their equipment and how they use the sonar and things. Bob Bell will also be there.
 - Reach out to Rob Robison for any guest speaker thoughts
- **New Business**
 - Bay State Council
 - Trying to get volunteers for Sea Rovers and may set up a meeting to figure out a plan. Jay put together the new booth.
 - Committees - check in
 - Marketing: Proposing purchasing equipment for the display booth for Sea Rovers and future shows/events.
 - Sponsor Program
 - Sponsors, have you been in touch with your sponsorees?
 - Club Dive
 - Sunday, February 11 and Sunday February 25
 - Polar Plunge for Special Olympics - Saturday, February 24
 - Adrienne and Bruce signed up
- **Motions**
 - Board Motions to spend up to \$400 on 4" patch, to vote. Jay moved, seconded by Doug. Motion Passed
 - Motion to dispose or sell the old booth by Jay..., Motion Passed
 - Motion for up to \$2000 to spend on marketing materials by Jay. 19 yes 8 against. Motion Passed (first vote)

Solo Trip to Bonaire - January - Van der Valk Plaza Beach Resort

50 ft+ viz, 80°F

Story and Photos by Jason Brown

Dive Report: Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean (3 dive days, 8 dives total)

Early in the year most years, my wife and I plan a trip to a warm destination. By late January, the cold wears thin, and, I especially, am looking for a break. I had heard about Bonaire from the diving community, both through the Neptunes, and through the dive shops I have used in Massachusetts (East Coast Divers in Brookline, and AST Scuba in Pittsfield).

This year, my pick was to spend four and a half days in Bonaire. The Neptunes are quite familiar with the place, and I am thankful for the suggestion of the Plaza Resort and Toucan Diving. I liked that everything was available on the same campus, and that there were boat dives easily available from there. I was traveling by myself, so I didn't have a reliable dive buddy for shore dives.



The Plaza itself was fine, as nice as I expected. The food was decent, and my room was huge for just one person! I think I caught the resort in the middle of renovations; there is a huge building under construction along the main road, part of which is the new restaurant that just opened in December. There appears to be a new main lobby and guest rooms coming, as well, but they are still a construction site.

I planned three dive days, filling them up with as many boat dives as I could do, leaving the appropriate surface interval for my flight home. I normally fly with United, and went down through Newark (fastest way), and returned via Houston (about 4.5 hours longer).

Most of the boat dive sites were located around Klein Bonaire, the small island on the West side of the larger island. On the last day, the boat did go to sites near the Salt Pier, and the Hilma Hooker shipwreck, (although the wreck was 50 feet below us). The visibility was excellent at over 50 feet.

The sea life was very active at the dive sites, with parrotfish, filefish, and barracuda swimming around. I even came within a few feet of a Moray Eel – on one dive, the dive master pointed to something in a nearby outcrop of coral; I swam over to see what it was, and when I saw the eel, I quickly reversed course.

The water temperature was steady at 79-80 deg F. The air temperature was 85 deg F every day, but Bonaire has a constant 10-20 mph wind, and that makes a boat dive much cooler than diving from the shore. I found that after a 50-60-minute dive, I couldn't stay warm on the dive, or on the boat for the surface interval, or the ride back to port with the 3mm wetsuit from the rental shop. Luckily, I brought my 7mm wetsuit with me, and I used it on five of my dives, with no problems! I had to be firm with the Toucan Diving staff to give me the weight I needed for the 7mm. They claimed that "no one needs a 7mm", but I did overhear two different dive masters complain how cold they were on these same dives, so I am confident I made the right choice for my comfort and safety.

I captured the highlights of my dive experience with my GoPro, creating a 5 min video showing the highlights – 2:30 shows the Hilma Hooker shipwreck (at a distance), and 2:40 shows the Salt Pier.

You can view the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imM_69wpzFo

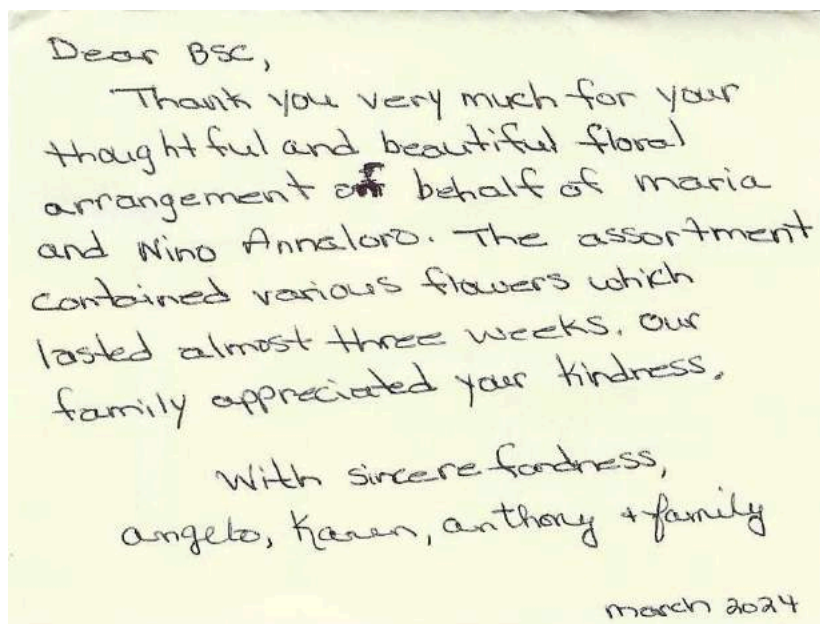
My solo trip to Bonaire was a great experience. The island exceeded my expectations, offering warm weather, crystal-clear waters, and close diving opportunities. I thought that Toucan Diving overall ran a good operation, and I would dive with them again.

<https://www.plazaresortbonaire.com/>

<https://www.toucandiving.com/en/diving/>

Jason Brown

West Roxbury



Honduras Eagle Ray Photo ID Project - <https://www.ilili.org/>

South Shore Neptune gets to name an Eagle Ray!



Matthew Ramos, South Shore Neptune, took the photo (left) of a spotted eagle ray on a recent trip to the Caribbean and apparently found one that has not been named, according to the Honduras Eagle Ray Project in the Bay Islands. Matt is naming it after his wife Terry.

Congratulations, Matt!!

—Rob Robison

March General Meeting Summary

March 5

- **New Members**
 - John DeMasi III, Unanimously voted a member of the South Shore Neptunes
 - **Old Business**
 - Speaker Nights
 - March 19 - U-853 will be the talk this month and Blackie will try to get some artifacts from members too. Suggested getting donations to put Bill up in a hotel/dinner to come talk. (Ok to use the yacht club by Tommy Lo)
 - Ragnar - Rob Foley
 - We are signed up for the three spots and the finish line
 - TRP Winging It Competition - Rob Foley
 - \$25 from the club like last year is a possibility
 - Polar Plunge for Special Olympics: Bruce, Evan and Adrienne
 - Not a pleasant day, water was choppy and a long event. Outgoing tide and the coast guard only let 30 people go at a time with over 400 people.
 - Hull LifeSaving Museum Talk - Adrienne
 - Spoke to a woman's rowing team which was nice
 - Sea Rovers - March 16-17 - Adrienne
 - Volunteers - sign-up list and online. Work a few hours at the table and you can use the passes for a session.
 - **New Business**
 - Budget (recommendation from the Board)
 - Presented and covered the Marketing Committee and IT budget requests with much of the budget already spent (~\$670 already spent).
 - Motion to accept as presented Black, Seconded by Doug. Motion Passed
 - CPR Training - Calvin Stephenson
 - \$20/person - pre-registration up to 12 people (2 hours) likely the Brockton Armory nights and dates
 - BLS (Basic Life Support) is another one he's looking into
 - First aid will be free, maybe a donation
 - Patches
 - 200 came in.
 - Motion to table pricing to the board meeting - Rob Vice. Motion Passed
 - Marketing
 - John Blackadar - Tom Guild donated a \$100 gift certificate
 - John Blackadar - Looking to set up a jacket buy, ~\$140 for the jackets with name on front.
 - Jay mentioned a store in Braintree that does much of our current online store
 - Bill Burchill - Does the club want to do a blood drive again, the club used to do it every spring. Bill Burchill will set it up if the club wants to do it.
 - Bear Cove Park - Park Ranger
 - Museum Hours - First opening Sunday, March 10 from 10am-1pm
 - Might try for a cookout/museum visit
-

Club's Largest Fundraiser - Volunteers Needed

Ragnar Road New England Race - May 17-18

Most people are familiar with Ragnar but for those that are unfamiliar with Ragnar it is a company that plans and hosts relay races around the country. They have a big operation that requires countless volunteers and staff to complete the races. Fortunately for the club there is **financial compensation for volunteering** so the club has been able to use this race as a **major fundraising event**.

The Ragnar Road New England race is attended yearly by of over one hundred teams of 12 (or less) that start in the town of Groton, CT and end in Quincy, Ma. The Race is 200-ish miles long and makes its way through three states (CT, RI, and MA), again, relay-style.

The Neptune's last year were able to volunteer at 3 exchanges and the finish line raising just under \$3000 at these sites alone. I hope we can at least do that again this year. We will be volunteering at exchanges (relay points) on May 18th. Our earliest exchange begins at 5:30 AM. This is a 10-to-12-hour commitment per the race schedule but often times is closer to 8 hours. That being said, this is still a fun day to be hanging out with fellow Neptune's and earning some money for the club. It should also be noted that money earned participating in this event will help to keep the costs of other club events down.

Group Engagement: Ragnar will add \$50 to your donation for group engagement: Dress up! Decorate your Exchange! Engage with the runners through music or other fun ways. These are ways to earn additional donations for your groups.

Fundraisers: Ragnar will add \$100 to your donation for group fundraisers. Your group keeps 100% of sales! If your group hosts a food fundraiser (must register your fundraiser prior to the event). The \$100 to your group is to supplement costs and show our appreciation for your efforts for our runners. Organizing a fundraiser is a huge opportunity to support your group and we are here to offer tips and suggestions to make it as successful as possible. Goodies, warm and cold food and beverages depending on the weather/time of day.

There is no pressure to participate in a theme, dress up or fundraiser. If you are interested in participating this year, please reach out to me, Rob Foley, by phone or email. Please let me know if you are interested in doing a dress up and I can place all those people at the same exchange.

Email: r.m.foley256@gmail.com

Phone: 781-710-3149

 **Want to see your story here, Email newsletter@SouthShoreNeptunes.org** 

Recreational Lobster Regulation Update

It has come to the attention of the Bay State Council that Massachusetts is proposing to change Recreational Lobster regulations.

Proposed changes will affect commercial and recreational harvest requirements.

New regulations would increase the minimum size requirements with two increases over the next 5 years, and there will be a Maximum size cape of 6-3/4" for the outer cape region.

Divers that hunt lobster in our coastal communities should be made aware of these possible changes in our near future.

The first change will implement an increase in the minimum allowable catch size from 3-1/4" to 3-5/16" starting on January 01, 2025.

Then an additional increase from 3-5/16" to 3-3/8" on January 01, 2027.

The Bay State Council has no opinion on this matter as this does not affect ocean access for divers and falls outside of our charter.

The public is given the opportunity to comment on these changes, and other information can be found at the following link:


https://www.mass.gov/info-details/proposed-amendments-to-division-of-marine-fisheries-regulations?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

March 30, 2024 - Boynton Beach, Florida



Doug Eaton, Paul Greene and Todd Alger meeting up for a two tank charter with Splashdown Diver's

More stories and pictures on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/SouthShoreNeptunes>

 Don't see your story here ? Did you Email it to newsletter@SouthShoreNeptunes.org ? 

South Shore Neptunes



Information Page

Want to **Go Diving** and **Need a Buddy**?
 Call or Text the **Club Hotline: 617-804-5637**
 Email: info@SouthShoreNeptunes.org

Don't forget to visit the club store: <https://bit.ly/Neptunes-Store>

Update your profile/access the membership roster via the Membership Portal:

<https://Members.SouthShoreNeptunes.org>

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SplashdownDivers.com

Boat diving off the LoggerHead and Delta's Splash
Recommended by Paul Greene