



# UNDERCURRENTS

Newsletter of the Bluegrass Dive Club / [www.bluegrassdiveclub.com](http://www.bluegrassdiveclub.com)

May 2018

Volume 48, Number 5

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## May's Club Meeting

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**Date:** Tuesday, May 8th  
**Time:** 7:30-PM (business)  
Social at 7

**Location:** **Urban Squirrel Storage**  
**203 Lisle Industrial Ave**

**Program:** Little Cayman

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## President's Message

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*By Tracey Combs*



It is Derby time again in the Bluegrass and the Bluegrass Dive Club is having their annual Derby Party on Saturday, May 5, 2018. So, dust off your hats, bring a few dollars for a bet or two, and get ready for a Mint Julep. I want to send a huge Thank You to Alex Fassas and Kathryn Bowers for hosting the party this year. Please refer to the website for more information. Bring a dish to share a few dollars to play the games. The ham and sodas will be provided, BYOB everything else.

The Dive Trip Committee met earlier this year and is working on a few trips. Little Cayman has been approved and details will be available on the website shortly. The committee is still in the planning phase of a few other trips. As always, feel free to contact a committee or board member with any trip ideas.

In honor of Richard Rabek the Bluegrass Dive Club made a donation to Reef Relief. Reef Relief is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to improving and protecting our coral reef ecosystem. Visit their website for more details at [www.reefrelief.org](http://www.reefrelief.org).

Mark your calendar for the Pig Roast on August 11, 2018. Our next regular meeting will be May 8, 2018 at the Urban Squirrel. You do not have to be a member to attend, everyone is welcome. 🍷

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## The Editor's Notes

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*By John Geddes*



The pics for this month are from Doug in Roatan, the first, third and fourth are the plane the Club was on when it crashed in Roatan in 1990. The others are of the Prince Albert.

Don't forget to bring some cash for the bet sheets that I will have at the Derby Party. 🍷

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## 2018 BGDC Officer's

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Tracey Combs, President	621-4066
Mike Sullivan, Vice President	327-8906
Kris Harn, Secretary	333-6911
Dan Miller, Treasurer	948-5133
Steve Gahafer, Trip Director	229-9408
Rick Stephan, Safety Info Dir.	223-3719
Alex Fassas, Webmaster	582-1600
John Geddes, Newsletter Editor	608-0682

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## Vice President's Report

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By Mike Sullivan



Door prizes this month were gift certificates from Five Guys Restaurant and Raising Cane's Restaurant, and were won by John Geddes and Judy Sullivan. The Board approved a trip next year to Little Cayman Dive Resort. The Program for May will be a video of Little Cayman provided by Connie Goins. 🚩



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## From The Secretary

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By Kris Harn



### General Meeting 4-10-18

A general membership meeting was held on 4-10-18 at Urban Squirrel. 18 people were in attendance. Presentation was given by Mike Sullivan in scuba tanks.

### Board Meeting 4-24-18

A board meeting was held on 4-24-18 at the Beaumont Branch Public Library. Reviewed reports, trips, new and unfinished business. 🚩

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## From the Treasurer

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By Dan Miller



### 2018 Membership Dues

Student (High School or College ID) ..	\$10.00
New Diver (First year only).....	10.00
Single & Family (1 diver) .....	30.00
Family (non divers).....	30.00
Family (2 or more divers) .....	40.00

**Renewal:** Please send payment to the address listed below, please make sure there is a correct indication of your mailing address, phone number and it is very important to indicate an email address.

**Contact / Mail to:** Bluegrass Dive Club c/o  
Dan Miller  
824 Gunpower Drive  
Lexington, KY 40509

**New Members:** Visit the website to fill out an on-line form or to access a Microsoft Word printable form. [CLICK HERE](#). 🚩



## Trip Director's Report

By Steve Gahafer



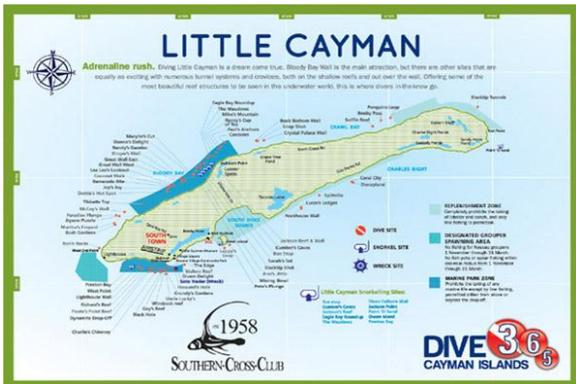
### Africa

This trip is going full steam ahead. We have 12 club members that were able to take advantage of this once in a lifetime trip. They leave on June 10<sup>th</sup> and return on 23<sup>rd</sup>. If you want to see what all they will be doing you can go to the trip page at [Africa 2018](#)



### Little Cayman

The Board at our last meeting approved a trip to Little Cayman for Memorial week May25<sup>th</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup>. Alex is working on getting it put on the website and he will send out an email when it is up. This very nice trip with good rates and should be a great trip to go on. If you have never been to Little Cayman everybody talks about how good it is..... 🚩



## Safety Corner

By Rick Stephan



**Note:** This month's article comes from [scubadiverlife.com](#). It focuses on an academic description of why some divers tend to disallow the rules from complicating their dives. As stated in some recent articles in this column, dive guides are there to provide helpful information about a site, about some safety concerns that are endemic to the area, and the rules of the boat. This is done for a reason.

*Diving deeper, solo, or too long is a common theme among groups of divers who have been diving for many years. A sense of confidence is exuded by "old hands", and sometimes can encourage newer divers to go beyond their own levels of skill. I've certainly done this myself. And, while I've lived to tell about it, I look back and wonder why I did it.*

*In Truk Lagoon, only 5 of our group did the San Francisco Maru dive. The dive staff explained the situation, and each diver was allowed to decide if they wanted to risk this deep dive. We should take this route for all dives, even a 40 footer in sunshine and calm seas: if you don't feel comfortable in doing the dive, don't do it. There will be lots of other opportunities to come.*

*So, remember to evaluate each situation for your own safety. Don't let ego or over-confidence get you into a bad situation. That ain't fun, and*



*Remember, safe diving is fun!*

## Safety Corner Cont.

### Training Fundamentals: The Dunning-Kruger Diver

By Marcus Knight

#### What is the Dunning-Kruger effect, and what role does this condition play in dive incidents and accidents

Often, dive accidents and incidents are due to the Dunning-Kruger effect. We define this as diver error caused by the dissonance between the diver's overconfidence in his own abilities and his *actual* abilities. What are common signs of a Dunning-Kruger diver, and how do you avoid becoming one?

Diving is a very safe sport, with quite a small number of serious injuries and fatalities.

#### 1.6 Characteristics of Dives

Figure 1.6-1 shows the type of diving activity during the fatal dive. Information for the type of activity was available for 66 cases (97%). Two cases did not have activity listed. Forty-five (66% of cases) of the fatal dives involved pleasure or sightseeing, 14 cases (21%) involved spear fishing, hunting or collecting game, and 8 cases (12%) involved training.

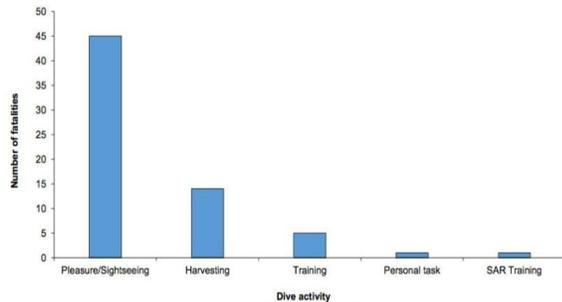
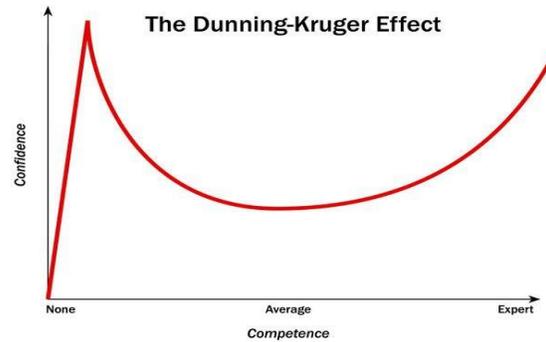


Figure 1.6-1 Diving activity (n=66)

However, according to a recent report by Divers Alert Network, a disproportionately large number of serious injuries and fatalities befell recreational divers on pleasure and sightseeing dives. In fact, 66 percent of fatalities in the 2016 report fall into this category. A considerably smaller proportion of incidents occur in training situations, when experts work within set training parameters. Many accidents are due to diver error, as mentioned. And one of the key drivers may be the psychological phenomenon known as the Dunning-Kruger Effect.



#### ***The Psychology: Unskilled and unaware***

Two Cornell University professors, David Dunning and Justin Kruger, first explained their findings in 1999. Their research indicated a cognitive bias in novices within widespread fields, from tennis to medicine, to chess. The bias presents in novices as a belief that they are much more competent than they really are. As Dunning put it, "If you're incompetent, you can't *know* you're incompetent. The skills you need to produce a right answer are exactly the skills you need to recognize what a right answer is."



These blind spots in cognition leave novices in any given field, including scuba diving, with difficulty recognizing their own shortcomings. This may lead to inflated self-assessments of skill and knowledge level.

#### ***Dunning-Kruger indicators in scuba diving***

Scuba diving is a never-ending learning curve of evolving skills and new technology. Naturally, in those first few qualifying dives, there is much to learn. During the first 10 to 100 dives, novice divers often feel a rush of confidence disproportionate to their competence. The curve of confidence and *perceived* competence (picture above) often peaks in that range. Then, after gaining some

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## Safety Corner Cont.

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knowledge, the diver forms a more realistic assessment of their *actual* abilities. The curve of the diver's confidence drops away as they begin Rescue, Divemaster or technical-diver training.

Subsequently, confidence and competence grow together as a diver gains new skills and experiences over the longer term. Although note that even experts lack the supreme confidence of those at the early peak. They understand that there is always more to learn.



### ***Signs of a Dunning-Kruger diver***

Divers in that initial 10 to 100 logged-dives range are often receptive to advice and open to learning new scuba skills, or receiving coaching. Those at the peak of the early confidence curve, however, often exhibit traits that can frustrate their buddies and dive center staff or, potentially, lead to hazardous behavior. Here are a few signs of a Dunning-Kruger diver: have you (or someone you know) ever exhibited any of these behaviors?

### ***Ignoring equipment advice***

Having the right equipment for your level of diving and environment is key. It would be unwise, for example, to take warm-water rated regulator into cold water. Local instructors, divemasters and dive center staff will often make recommendations based on your planned dives and experience level, whether that's having a reel and SMB, using nitrox, or the suitability of your BCD, regulator, exposure suit or hood.

The Dunning-Kruger diver will often spurn the advice of divers more experienced or qualified in that diving activity or environment. For example, they may insist on taking gloves, a pointer or a shaker — despite a ban in the marine park or advice not to use them from a local guide. Alternatively, the diver may insist that they don't need a hood or gloves in a tougher environment, finding themselves cold as the dive progresses to depth or exposing them to hazards on a wreck dive.

Solution: Listen to the advice of experienced local divers and staff. They know the waters, procedures and suitable equipment for the dives.

### ***Ignoring training course advice***

If you want to advance your diver training, who better to consult than your instructor? They know the training standards, curriculum, and requirements of the various training courses in detail. Especially if they've already completed some training with you, the instructor can give you honest and constructive feedback as to whether you're a suitable candidate.

The Dunning-Kruger diver will often be wholeheartedly convinced they're capable of being a divemaster, instructor or technical diver after their first training dives, despite knowing little of the training standards, curriculum, and responsibilities. Conversely, the diver may be offended if he receives delicate advice from an instructor that he should gain more experience before progressing. The Dunning-Kruger diver will often ignore this advice and push to sign up in the course with an alternate instructor.



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## Safety Corner Cont.

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Solution: While ambition and enthusiasm for further training are admirable qualities, take the advice you receive and learn to walk before you run if so advised. Taking your time can prevent needless risks to yourself and fellow divers in your group.

### **Spurning technique advice**

Sometimes when supervising certified divers, instructors, divemasters and guides will offer advice and tips outside of the confines of a course. This can be on a liveboard or during a guided boat or shore dive. It may be that, having observed the diver in the water, the professional offers advice on technique such as getting in/out of their equipment, buoyancy control, positioning, weighting, finning technique or even tips for diving motor skills such as deploying an SMB from depth more effectively.



The Dunning-Kruger diver will often rebuff, discard or discount advice from the professional diver. They may even, in some cases, attempt to rationalize their behavior or argue that *they're* correct and the professional is wrong. For example, a diver with volatile buoyancy may be convinced the equipment is at fault rather than accept advice from a professional.

Solution: Instructors, divemasters and guides sometimes offer coaching to recreational divers to help make the diver's experience safer and more enjoyable on future dives. Don't be offended if offered advice. These people are trying to help you and your buddies have a better experience.

### **Ignoring the rules (part 1)**

Training agencies set procedures and limits based on data from thousands of training dives, test dives and accident statistics gathered from across the planet. Depth limits, dive procedures and training recommendations filter down to form the ever-evolving training standards we all agree upon. For example, it requires additional training to safely dive beyond recreational limits, inside wrecks or in a drysuit.



The Dunning-Kruger diver will often flaunt training limits — even reveling in ignoring them as a badge of honor. They'll often regard their survival as misguided validation that they have the skills required to repeat the feat. They may also take unsuitably qualified buddies beyond their training limits, putting others at risk as well.

Solution: Agencies carefully research the standards for each training level. They back these up with valid statistical and educational information. If you seek more challenging dives, get the correct training first.

### **Ignoring the rules (Part 2)**

Each diving environment is subtly different. The entries, exits, boat procedures, marine interaction and local etiquette can vary wildly from region to region. The procedures for diving a wreck are different to those for diving a reef. There are hundreds of variables. Local dive-industry professionals define their procedures within the briefings to minimize risks and ensure group safety in coordination with boat crews and local authorities.

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## Safety Corner Cont.

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The Dunning-Kruger diver dismisses the local procedures and instructions in the briefing. They may feel they already have the necessary knowledge or believe their method is superior. This can lead the diver to cause safety issues that he could otherwise easily avoid. Diving headaches such as the diver not entering/exiting the water correctly, signaling as required, being swept away in a current or, alternatively, raising the alarm due to buddy separation, are usually due to the diver not paying attention to (or disregarding) procedures.

Solution: The procedures that are in place exist for valid reasons — to preserve the dive site and, importantly, diver safety. Listen to the dive briefing. If anything is unclear, ask for clarification.

The metacognition we call the Dunning-Kruger effect should cause us all to pause and consider our own actions. The effect may explain the occasionally frustrating overconfidence of some of your dive buddies. Realizing that we're all still learning may help us seek out the best advice and training. We can all improve as divers, becoming safer and more skillful in the water. 🚩



# Bluegrass Dive Club 2018 Calendar

## May

5, Saturday Club's Derby Party  
8, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
29, Tuesday Board Meeting

## June

10-23, Africa  
12, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
26, Tuesday Board Meeting

## July

10, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
31, Tuesday Board Meeting

## August

14, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
28, Tuesday Board Meeting

## September

11, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
25, Tuesday Board Meeting

## October

9, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
30, Tuesday Board Meeting

## November

13, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
27, Tuesday Board Meeting

## December

TBA, Saturday Club Christmas Party

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## Dive Committee Members

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Steve Gahafer – Chairman	229-9408
Tracey Combs	621-4066
Ralph Covington	621-3862
Mike Sullivan	266-4516
John Geddes	608-0682

If you would like to be on the Dive Committee, contact Steve Gahafer, 229-9408