



UNDERCURRENTS

Newsletter of the Bluegrass Dive Club / www.bluegrassdiveclub.com

January 2020

Volume 50, Number 1

January's Club Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 28th
Time: 7:30-PM (business)
Social at 7

Location: Bronte Bistro
Lexington Green

Program: DVD on Belize Aggressor

President's Message

By Mark Kidd



Just got back from BVI where Stella, Adam, Anna, Bruce and Margie Sims friends from St Louis and I enjoyed my first Cat trip from Tortola.

I now know why we have so many from the club make it there so often. Great weather warm water and good company made for a wonderful experience.

Adams friend Anna Lowes a snorkeler for years now took a resort dive class. She was so excited about the marine life eels, turtles, lobsters and other fish I was transported to my first saltwater dives many years ago.

So many of us have had the privilege of diving the best dive spots in the world. Seeing everything from whales to arrow crabs. Now the club has two of the best dive sites in the Caribbean scheduled with Bonaire in March

and Belize in July. The prices for these experiences is a bargain well worth the time to explore. Invite someone to a dive club meeting and maybe a trip.

Keep wet! 🚩

The Editor's Notes

By John Geddes



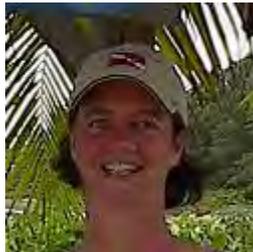
Ready to go diving? Some great dive coming up, come to the meeting and check the web out.

Pics for the month come from our Secretary; I believe she talks about them in her article. 🚩



Vice President's Report

By Kris Harn



I look forward to seeing you all at our January meeting at Bronte Bistro. We will have appetizers/snacks at the meeting.

If you have information on a potential dive trip. We would love to hear from you. Please contact us or come to a meeting and let us know what kind of trip you would like to go on. 🚩



2020 BGDC Officer's

Mark Kidd, President	221-7104
Kris Harn, Vice President	333-6911
Kathryn Bowers, Secretary	619-0166
Dan Miller, Treasurer	948-5133
Trip Director - Open Position	
Bart Bertello, Safety Info Dir.	502-299-3656
Alex Fassas, Webmaster	582-1600
John Geddes, Newsletter Editor	608-0682

From The Secretary

By Kathryn Bowers



How do you take a winter break?

For my husband and myself, it was spelled, "Bahamas". We have just returned from 8 days in the Bahamas, where we had the opportunity to visit 2 of the 700 islands that make up the Bahamas. We spent 3 days at the Sandals Emerald Beach on Exuma, Bahamas and then travelled to Harbour Island, just off the coast of North Eleuthra, Bahamas for 5 more days.

A first trip to an all-inclusive resort for both of us. Sandals will not be a on the list of places to host an AA meeting, that is for sure. The accommodations, landscaping, pool, beach and many restaurants and bars made for a time. We wanted to do some diving while we were at Sandals. Yes, the diving is included at no charge. The wind and seas were too rough during our stay and no diving happened.

On Harbour Island, we stayed at the Runaway Hill Inn (<http://runawayhill.com>). This beachfront, 12 room Inn was just what we needed after the Sandals experience. Did I mention 3 miles of pink sand beach? After arriving by water taxi from North Eleuthra, we found our rented golf cart, which would be our chariot for the next 5 days. Luggage loaded and off to Runaway Hill Inn. The various Bahamian cooking, fresh lobster, grouper and conch, and several very foodie restaurants was more than I expected. I wish that I could still hear the sounds of the Atlantic making its music on the windward shore of Harbour Island. We will go back there. Find out more about Harbour Island here:

<http://harbourislandguide.com> or Google for more references

From The Secretary Cont.



I am so sorry to share this news of our 78 degree travels, while many of our friends were grizzled with 14 degrees, snow, and rain back home. I highly recommend a winter break; it is good for the soul. It is not too late to join the club for Bonaire, leaving February 29th. 🚩



From the Treasurer

By Dan Miller



2020 Membership Dues

Student (High School or College ID) ..	\$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](#). 🚩

Webmaster

By Alex Fassas



Yahoo Groups email list changes & info

Some of you may recall that the group email platform that the club uses is Yahoo Groups. Yahoo Groups was both a group web-based message forum and group email platform. In December 2019, Yahoo ceased offering the web-based message forum part of the Yahoo Groups product. The group email platform is the surviving offering and we will continue to use it. It is hard to complain about FREE, which is what the Yahoo Groups service is. I have no statistics on whether any of our club users preferred to use the web-based message forum to read their club mail.

If you have any issues with Yahoo Groups club email, please reach out to me, at webmaster@bluegrassdiveclub.com. We maintain 2 email lists; the first for club members and the second for club guests, who have expressed an interest in following what our club is up to. Being on the club guest email has been a path to membership for some of our members. The guest email list is open to anyone to subscribe. You can subscribe to the guest list by sending an email to: bgdc_guests_subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Subsequently you can unsubscribe by sending an email to: bgdc_guests_unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Our club email list is a restricted list, and membership to this list must be granted. If you are a club member and need to add your email to the list, you may reach out to the webmaster or send an email to:

bluegrassdiveclubsubscribe@yahoogroups.com I don't know why anyone would ever want to, but if you need to unsubscribe from the BGDC club member email list, send an email to: bluegrassdiveclub_unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com



Dive Accident Insurance Versus Travel Insurance: Do You Need Both?

More than one-third of travelers purchase travel insurance, according to a study reported by *Travel + Leisure*. Many have some travel protection from their credit card company for rental car damages, flight delays or trip cancellation — provided the rental car, flight, etc. was booked using that card.

As a diver, you may have wondered, *what's the difference between dive accident insurance and travel insurance — and do I need both?* The short answer is yes, you need both.

Very few travel insurance plans cover scuba diving incidents... The full article can be found here:

<https://www.diversalernetnetwork.org/emailView/anding/accidentVsTravel19/index.html> 

Safety Information Director

By Bart Bertello



I Learned About Diving

Safety From That

My mission is to provide you relevant safety information for your use. Each article will focus on a specific safety risk. I will draw from my experience, hopefully yours, and the dive community to highlight real risks that we must be aware of. So, if you see or hear of something that we could all learn from, please pass it to me. There is nothing like first-hand experience to drive a point home. This month's lesson is:

Survive a Silt-Out

I'm presently reading a fascinating book by Jill Heinerth called *Into the Planet, My Life as a Cave Diver*. Jill is a renowned cave diver, explorer, and filmmaker and I've seen some of her work on National Geographic. She has experienced silt-out countless times but each time it gives her pause. As I'm reading about one of her experiences, I have a pause. This past summer, I followed my dive buddy into a wrecked RV at the bottom of Pennyroyal Quarry in Hopkinsville. Although we were both trying to be careful, it became a silt-out. We easily got out of it, but neither of us were really prepared for it. Silt-outs are never fun. And silt-out is one of those proven triggers that can result in a fatal accident. It is also a condition that every active recreational diver will experience once in a while, be it in a shallow cave in the rocks, a harmless looking swim-through on the reef, or an easy venture into the open cargo hold of a wreck.

I found this article that covers silt-out well. It will happen to you. It really is to be expected as a normal part of diving. Be prepared for it. See ya down there.

By [Thomas Grønfeldt Senger](#)
Dive in Magazine

Safety Info Director Cont.



Credit: Malcolm Grima

Would you know what to do if you get caught in a silt-out with almost zero visibility?

Silt-outs are what happens when we kick up the fine sediment that we often find in enclosed underwater areas, such as inside wrecks or caves, as well as sometimes on the bottom of open water as well, and in particular in lakes or quarries.

Silt is technically a type of granular material that is finer than sand, and is often light and flurry in feel when dry, much like the type of flour you'd use for baking, and a more slippery feel when wet.

As it is very light, it is easily disturbed by movement, either from waves, current, or a diver's body or equipment. It is often carried by water currents, and accumulates inside enclosed areas that are protected from currents, which is why we very often find it in caves and wrecks.

The fact that it is easily disturbed is what can create a silt-out.

A silt-out happens when someone touches or kicks up a large amount of silt, degrading

Safety Info Director Cont.

the visibility to often zero. Inside a silt-out you can literally not see your own hand in front of your eyes.



The silt similar to baking flour is causing visibility problems for these divers - Credit: littlesam

Dangers of a silt-out

Silt-outs tend to happen near bottoms and inside wrecks or caves. But they can also happen in any confined area like narrow channels or trenches, swim-throughs, tunnels, and tubes.

Because the visibility decreases instantaneously to next to nothing, it can cause uneasiness or panic in divers, even experienced divers.

Silt-outs can cause uncontrolled ascents, or, if near a drop off, descents, as well as buddy separation. Inside enclosed water spaces, it can be fatal, as was demonstrated only too well a few years ago in the Grotto Rosso in Italy, where a group of divers, including their guide, drowned inside the cave after becoming disoriented following a silt-out.



This bottom part of a wreck is a potential Silt-out waiting to happen - Credit: Paul Vinten

With no visibility, it is hard to find your way out of a wreck or a cave or a swim through, which can cause panic, which in turn leads to more frantic movement patterns, worsening the silt-out.

Avoid silt-outs

The best thing to do about silt-outs is to avoid them altogether.

Your finning technique, buoyancy, and horizontal trim is critical in this respect. The preferred finning technique in areas where silt is present is the bent-knee cave diver or frog kick. Good buoyancy control will mean that you don't accidentally hit the bottom (or the ceiling of a cave or wreck, where silt also can be lodged). Horizontal trim, the ability to stay level in the water, will help keep your legs and fins off the bottom, where it can disturb the silt. If you unable to trim, do not enter potential silt-out conditions.



Good finning techniques and proper buoyancy can help prevent Silt-outs - Credit: Marcus Bay

Be prepared!

Whenever you head into a cave or wreck, you should always have adequate training, and make sure you bring a powerful dive light (which can help cut through the silt, offering some orientation), as well as a line attached outside the entrance to the cave or wreck. This will allow you, in case of a silt-out, and you are diving in low visibility, to follow the line back to safety.

For most of us who are not cave or wreck divers, whenever you move into a shallow

Safety Info Director Cont.

overhead, a swim-through or tube, narrow channel, or open hold of a wreck, take a moment to assess the situation. If you are with a group, be aware of the added danger of silt-out. Crowded conditions greatly increase the likelihood of a silt-out so space out and take your time. Let the conditions clear; don't blindly follow someone into a silt-out cloud.

Get out of a silt-out

Should you find yourself in the midst of a full-on silt-out, there are **a number of things you can do to get out safely.**

1. Stay calm. Silt-outs are scary, but panicking will only make matters worse. Stop, breathe, and think.

2. Maintain your depth. This won't be a problem if you're in a fairly small area, such as inside a wreck's living quarters, but in large cargo rooms, or inside large caves, it can be trickier, and in particular in open water. Notice any pressure changes in your ears from increasing or decreasing pressure, and try to bring your dive computer or depth gauge close enough to your eyes to read it.

3. Make your way out carefully. If you're in open water, or have enough room overhead, try ascending slowly until you come out of the silt cloud. Be careful you don't ascend too fast, as the silt-out can make it hard to discern your ascent rate. **Use the bent-knee cave diver frog kick to avoid kicking up any more silt.**

4. If you're inside a wreck or cave, you should have a line reel with you, and you should follow this line out.

5. If you're on a very shallow penetration without a line reel, like a short swim-through or venture into the cargo hold, try scanning around for anywhere in the cloud where the cloud seems even a little bit lighter than elsewhere, as this is probably the light zone around the entrance (provided you're still within visual contact of the light zone).

One final tip: keep attention to your bubbles.

It is in fact possible to be disoriented enough in a silt-out to not be able to tell the difference between up and down.

But thankfully, bubbles always rise, so noticing which way your bubbles go when you exhale can help you keep your bearings.

That's it. Silt-out is a part of diving. Know how to prepare for it and deal with it. 🚩



Up Coming Trips

By Alex Fassas



We have 3 club trips on the calendar so far for 2020. The good news is that, as this article is being written, there is still room to sign up for all 3 trips.

Georgia Aquarium 2020 Dive Trip

In less than a month, your club is adventuring to the Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta, Georgia. Besides the world class aquarium exhibits, the southern hospitality, food and activities that Atlanta has to offer, it is a guaranteed opportunity to dive with Whale Sharks and Manta Rays. But wait, there is more, we are going to learn about and dive with Closed

Circuit Rebreather dive equipment. Can you say, "No Bubbles"? Two bucket list items in one trip. There are 5 club members signed up to for the Georgia Aquarium Dive with the Whale Sharks, Closed Circuit Rebreather Experience on the weekend of February 21-23, 2020. Although we have released our reservations, 2 tickets remain for Sunday, 2/23/2020 dive. First come, first served. Sign up now, you club has group rates! Trip info and registration link can be found here: <http://bluegrassdiveclub.com/2019/12/gorgia-aquarium-rebreather-dive-2020-trip/>

Bonaire 2020 Dive Trip

Did you read the Secretaries article about taking a Winter Break? Do YOU need a Winter Break? Look no further, your club has 8 people travelling to Bonaire for Caribbean diving, warm sun and beach. Although the trip registration deadline has passed and we have released our block of rooms, there is still time to sign up to join your club for this trip. Rooms and rates are not guaranteed, but we

will try to secure the same rate, if possible. Trip info and registration link can be found

here: <http://bluegrassdiveclub.com/2019/12/bo-naire-2020-trip/>

Belize Aggressor IV Liveboard Dive Trip 2020

Join other club members for a super value on a Caribbean liveboard dive trip. By value, I mean, the club has secured some low rates, easy to book accommodations, no bunk beds, for some of the finest Caribbean diving to be found. The Aggressor IV will be leaving port on July 4-11, 2020. The opportunity for up to 35 dives during this week at sea. The accommodations, diving, meals and beverages are all included. If you have been wanting to do a liveboard trip, don't let this opportunity slip by, trip info and registration link can be found here: <http://bluegrassdiveclub.com/2019/12/belize-liveboard-2020-trip/>

Bluegrass Dive Club 2020 Calendar

January

8, Tuesday Board Meeting
28, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting

February

11, Tuesday Board Meeting
21-23, Georgia Aquarium
25, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
29-7, Bonaire

March

10, Tuesday Board Meeting
24, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting

April

14, Tuesday Board Meeting
28, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting