



UNDERCURRENTS

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

February 2021

Volume 51, Number 1

March's Club Meeting

Date: Tuesday, March 23
Time: 7:30-PM (business)
Social at 7:00
Location: Zoom Meeting
Program: TBA

President's Message

By John Geddes



Here we are in another new year, but as we know it is not your normal year for diving or anything else. From last year we found that the Board could not perform at a full time status. So if you don't know by now, we are having Zoom meetings every other month and the Newsletter on the opposite months and I'm sure that Bart our Safety Information Director will have some great articles.

We are going to try something new with Zoom meetings, to have people in the dive industry to inform us about what is going on and the future of our hobby. So if you know of anyone interested in being a guest speaker with us let Kathryn our Vice President know.

If you would like to be a Guest writer in the Newsletter on your experience in the hobby submit an article to Terri Anderson our Newsletter Editor for her review. 🚩

The Editor's Notes

By Terri Anderson



If you are reading this, it means I have succeeded in putting my very first newsletter together. Please feel free to use the link at the end of this article to email me any pictures you may have of recent or past club trips, or any articles you would like to share. Pictures always make us fondly remember wonderful trips from the past, as well as increase anticipation for future trips. Our last club trip was a fun one to Bonaire the first week of March 2020, just before everyone was locked down. We do not have any underwater pictures to share but enjoyed many aspects of the island. We need to encourage more underwater photographers to join us on future trips! Bonaire was a fun trip with Terri Anderson, Gavin Gerondale, Kathryn Bowers, Alex Fassas, Demetrius Fassas, Dale Anderson and Dan and Anna Miller. There were lots of Pink Flamingos in Bonaire. Some of us are ready to go again soon! 🚩



Pink Flamingos in Bonaire March 2020

2021 BGDC Officer's

John Geddes, President	608-0682
Kathryn Bowers, Vice President	619-0166
Kris Harn, Secretary	333-6911
Dan Miller, Treasurer	948-5133
L. A. Bowe-Geddes, Trip Director	553-6251
Bart Bertetto, Safety Info Dir.	502-299-3656
Alex Fassas, Webmaster	582-1600
Terri Anderson, Newsletter	502-791-4088

Vice President Report

By Kathryn Bowers



Welcome New Member Jim Cunningham!!!

New Member Profile, Jim Cunningham

I recently had the pleasure of talking with the club's newest member, Jim Cunningham.

Jim is a native Kentuckian, former CPA and Manufacturing Manager, who also taught school, math, as well as a few other occupations but is currently retired who makes his home in Lexington. Jim holds an Open Water certification from PADI which he completed in Hawaii in 1984. As well as Hawaii, the Cayman Islands and Cozumel, Jim has been diving in the southern United States, in Florida and the Keys. What I found most interesting in Jim's travels was his diving in the Kelp beds off the coast of California. The mention of kelp forests sent me down an internet rabbit hole. I am really not a fan of cold water diving so figured that was something I'd never do. I mentioned this and Jim said he didn't remember it being that cold. That seemed counter to what I thought I knew so I felt like the kelp beds were something I needed to explore.

All I can say is Jim must have been really entranced by the kelp because my research said Kelp thrives in water from 5° to 20° C (42° to 72° F). I don't know about the rest of you but in my book, water colder than 72° is ccc-Cold. I would have to be in a pretty cool dive spot to not notice I was that cold! Perhaps this may be something I need to



Jim Cunningham

reconsider (with a possible rental dry suit). I found some really interesting things out about kelp and the danger it faces from a warming ocean but I need to get back to Jim. If you would like to follow me down the kelp forest rabbit hole because really, what else do you have to do, you can find the entrance here (<https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/visit/ecosystems/kelpdesc.html>)

Back to Jim, the supposed subject of this article. Jim has 3 children, a grown son, Chase, who lives in nearby Harrodsburg and two teenage daughters, Lesley 17, and Carlie 15, who live with him. All three of Jim's children are divers however they haven't been able to experience any international diving. He's looking forward to taking them to Cozumel or the Cayman Islands.

I asked Jim if he was interested in pursuing any advanced certifications and he stated the Advanced Open Water and Perhaps Deep Diver. He mentioned he had just finished reading "Into the Planet, My Life as a Cave Diver by Jill Heinerth (why yes, this is a good place for another rabbit hole, I'm so happy you recognized it) The book starts "IF I DIE, it will be in the most glorious place that no one has ever seen. I can no longer feel my fingers in my left hand. The glacial Antarctic water has seeped through a pin hole in my formerly waterproof glove. If this water were one-tenth of a degree colder, the ocean would become solid. Fighting the knife-edged freeze is depleting my strength, my blood vessels throbbing in a futile attempt to deliver warmth to my extremities." ...

Vice President Report

By Kathryn Bowers

(If you're hooked you can find it at Amazon https://www.amazon.com/Into-Planet-Life-Cave-Diver/dp/0062691546#reader_0062691546)

I don't believe Jim has any great desire to cave dive but I do believe he is a lifelong learner and believes you add years to your life by adding life to your years. The final anecdote Jim left me with was this, he was telling a friend about his many hobbies and said that SCUBA diving was his favorite. His friend asked if he went a lot and he replied "not really". His friend said "well, you need to fix that". Let's hope Jim's association with the Bluegrass dive club helps him get back in the water and fix that as well as share the beauty of the undersea world with his children.



Secretary's Report

By Kris Harn



The Bluegrass Dive Club had a board meeting on January 19, 2021. We are waiting for next board meeting for minutes to be approved.

On January 26, we had a regular meeting on zoom. John, Kris, Alex, Kathryn, Charlie, Noel, Mike, Rick, Jim, Dale, Terri, and Gavin attended. So nice to get to see and talk to everyone. Minutes remain to be approved at next board meeting for the regular meeting.



The Dock at Captain Don's Habitat Bonaire

Trip Director Report

By Leigh Ann Bowe-Geddes



Greetings, fellow divers. As the new Trip Director, I have a few pieces of information to share with the club.

As you are all aware, travel for the BGDC has been nonexistent for several months due to Covid-19 restrictions and precautions. It has been a dark and difficult time for us all, and we are hoping that we shall be able to safely travel as a group within the next few months.

At present, we have only one trip on the books for 2021.

*August 7th through 14th – We have reserved 6 spots on the [Belize Aggressor IV](#) live aboard. This is reputed to be a fabulous week of diving, with onboard comforts and great underwater life to see. Registration is now open for this trip.

I am new to the position of Trip Director. Input from the entire club regarding desired dive locations would be greatly appreciated. My contact information is in the newsletter. Please email me and let me know your favorite dive destinations, or any bucket list dive destinations you would like the club to pursue.

Until we can be together, stay safe, and dream of rising bubbles.

Leigh Ann



Sunset in Bonaire March 2020

From the Treasurer

By Dan Miller



2021 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



Watery Thoughts from the Web

*“What a long strange trip it’s
been.”* (credit to the Grateful Dead)

Your Dive Club has moved our email communications away from the now defunct Yahoo Groups platform and we now use a Newsletter plugin from our website to send emails with news, announcements, and information to our members and interested guests. We began using the new email platform on 12/19/2020. If you have not been receiving our emails, then please subscribe by visiting this link <https://BluegrassDiveClub.com/subscribe>.

If you have visited our website on or after 1/24/2021, then you have noticed a change in how we will be presenting new news and information content on the site. As the work on the new website layout gets more complete, we will still keep a special link so that you can see the former website and the SCUBA bubble diver and the Fish eating a small fish GIF’s. Check out our news blog on the website at <https://BluegrassDiveClub.com>.



**Demetrius Alexander Fassas In Bonaire
2020 jamming at a local club – which was
Fun for ALL!!!**

Safety Information Director

By Bart Bertetto



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 increase our awareness for improved safety. 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:

Get Your Safety Sausage Here

Note from Bart: After my last article on the danger of boat propellers, Dan Miller suggested I expand on the use of a Surface Marker Buoy (SMB), better know as a safety sausage. After 40 years of diving, I started carrying a sausage just a few years ago. I got the message from one of the wisest divers I've known, our late friend Rick Rabek. We were returning to the boat after a dive and as usual those of us with plenty of air left were circling around the shallows burning it off. Well, we had wandered some distance from the boat and when it was time to head back, Rick and I popped to the surface to get our bearings. We were in open water and he immediately deployed his safety sausage pointing out the other dive boats at the site. We dropped back down to about 10 feet and headed to the boat towing the tube. Back on board I remember thinking how smart that was and I've dove with one ever since. Here is an article that covers both visual and audible surface signaling well.

SURFACE SIGNALING DEVICES FOR DIVERS

Surface signaling devices are an essential piece of diving equipment. In what circumstances might you use one and what options are available?

By [Marcus Knight](#)

Many agencies' beginner-level scuba courses now introduce surface signaling devices to new divers — and rightly so. A surface signaling device is a vital piece of equipment for all divers, for both logistical and safety reasons. In what circumstances would you use one, and what options are available?



WHY MIGHT YOU NEED A SURFACE SIGNALING DEVICE?

Within the confines of a swimming pool during training, a surface signaling device may seem silly. However, when your

diving moves to an open-water environment, a good surface signaling device may help you maintain contact with the dive boat or shore, mark your location, or — in the worst-case scenario — help you signal for assistance or rescue when in distress.

There are multiple scenarios when you might use a surface signaling device. Some of the most common are:

- Marking your location on the surface for boat traffic at busy dive sites to ensure you're clearly visible to vessels moving in the area;

Safety Information Director

By Bart Bertetto

- Signaling to the boat or shore to let them know where you've surfaced at the end of a drift dive so they know where to pick you up;
- Signaling your location in the event that you become lost or separated from the group and surface in an unexpected area;
- Signaling for assistance in case of an emergency or rescue situation when a member of the dive team requires urgent medical attention;

It is important to note that some signaling devices are meant to notify others of your location, whereas others are to be used only in an emergency situation.



Most introductory dive training courses recommended that each diver carries a minimum of one audible and one visual surface signaling device. But what does this mean? Let's break it down:

AUDIBLE

Every diver has an in-built audible signaling device: their voice. In an emergency, yelling loudly for help is an instinctive and sometimes effective option if your hands are occupied and you need to raise an alarm. In calmer conditions or over a small distance, calling for help may work. However, over a considerable distance at sea, in wind and waves, or over

the rumble of a boat's diesel engine, a diver calling for help is unlikely to be heard.

Many jackets, wings and snorkels have a simple whistle built into them. Divers can also buy a whistle separately as an accessory. While seemingly very low-tech, a whistle's high-pitched sound can carry over a greater distance than a human voice. Accounting for the small financial outlay, a whistle is an inexpensive and effective audible signaling device to carry as part of your standard equipment.

The loudest commonly available audible signaling device is the air horn. You'll usually connect this device to the low-pressure hose of your regulator and, at the press of a button, it emits a very loud blast. Air horns don't need batteries or charging before use and with prices beginning at \$40 USD, they're relatively inexpensive too. You can hear some of the more-effective air horns over distances of up to 0.5 miles (0.8 km), which means rescuers or boat crew may be able to hear you even when visual signals are ineffectual due to poor light, waves or foggy conditions.

Although it doesn't need batteries, the air horn's main drawback is that it is powered by the gas from your tank. Therefore, in the event of an out-of-air emergency, the air horn is powerless.



VISUAL SIGNALING DEVICES

Every beginning diver learns not to wave their arms around in the air at the surface unless there is a genuine emergency. Much like shouting for help, a waving arm is the most

Safety Information Director

By Bart Bertetto

basic and instinctive form of visual surface signaling that — regardless of where you are in the world — notifies other divers and surface crew that you need help. In calm conditions and at close quarters, waving your arms may be successful. However, at a distance, in waves or in poor light, doing so is not useful or effective.

Aside from other devices on this list, the next logical visual signaling device is your fin. Removing a fin and waving it above your head creates extra height that may make you visible in rolling waves or at a greater distance. However, with an average set of fins weighing 5 to 6 pounds (2-3 kg), waving one above your head is not only tiring, but wearing only one also compromises your movement in the water. And, if your fins are not brightly colored, they may not be easily visible to onlookers.

Alternately, signal mirrors are inexpensive, easily available, and you can use one signal the boat or shore from a significant distance. If you're on a tight budget, you can even stash an old CD in your BCD pocket for emergencies. Of course, a mirrored surface is only useful in bright weather and is useless in low light, fog, or on a night dive.

For night dives and poor visibility, artificial light is the best option. Carrying an underwater light and a backup light means you'll not only be able to light your path through the water, but also have a way to signal the boat or shore at the surface. You can also use your torch to light up a surface marker buoy to give it a bright glow by holding the light close to the SMB, or inside the SMB on open-ended versions.

In addition, many modern lights feature an SOS setting that signals the distress call in morse code. LED strobes that emit a blinking

light are also very useful; not only are they effective in keeping groups together in low-visibility and night-diving conditions, but they

also flag your position until safely back on dry land.

The most common, and essential, surface signaling device is the [surface marker buoy](#), also called a safety sausage or SMB. Available in a range of sizes and options, this long tube is often colored orange and you can inflate it orally by using your alternate-air source or with your LPI hose depending on the model. SMBs are often larger, better constructed and have more features as you move up through the price increments; some even have reflective strips or strobes. Larger SMBs may be up to 10 feet (3 m) long. Attach a short length of bright nylon cord that can be coiled and stowed with the SMB. This so you can tether it to you if, for example you are swimming with it, below or on the surface.

Your choice of SMB will usually depend on where you want to store it on your equipment during the dive and the conditions in which you will be diving. Of course, the more volatile or challenging the conditions — and greater the wave height — the more substantial the SMB should be in order to be seen.

Finally, and most importantly, you must practice with your SMB occasionally. Practice in a pool or in the shallows as soon as you get it. Make adjustments as necessary so you'll have no problems when you need to use it.



See ya down there, hopefully sooner than later,
Bart



Bluegrass Dive Club 2021 Calendar

February

23, Newsletter

March

9, Tuesday Club Meeting
23, Tuesday Board Meeting

April

27, Newsletter

May

11, Tuesday Club Meeting
25, Tuesday Board Meeting

June

22, Newsletter

July

13, Tuesday Club Meeting
27, Tuesday Board Meeting

August

24, Newsletter

September to December TBA

Doug's Dream

By Alex Fassas

On Thursday, 1/28/2021, the Roatan, Honduras community got a new dive site named "Doug's Dream".

The plans to name a memorial dive site in honor one of the Club's founders, Doug Geddes, who passed from this life on 10/2/2020 has come to completion. Thank you to his friends on Roatan, led by the efforts and direction of Karen Slaughter-Bogart. In this issue, please find some photographs commemorating the commissioning of the Doug's Dream dive site. Karen said it best in the last line of her post below.

The post on Facebook by Karen Slaughter Bogard and with Susan Geddes on 2/3/2021

said, "Thursday, Doug's Dream was officially a dive site. A small group of us planted the marker (many thanks to Buck Beasley and Chrissie Bowen for making the marker and arranging everything with the Marine Park).

It's a great site on the north shore with tons of fish and beautiful coral. It was a very bittersweet dive--much rather have been diving with Doug Geddes than commemorating his dive site."



Doug's Dream

By Alex Fassas

