



UNDERCURRENTS

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

April 2014

Volume 44, Number 4

April's Club Meeting

Date: Tuesday, April 8th
Time: 7:30-PM Meeting
Social at 7
Location: The Racquet Club
3900 Crosby Rd.
Program: Philippines in 2012

President's Message

By Tracey Combs



Happy Spring everyone. Hopefully we are one step closer to warmer weather and more diving. Don't forget to share all of your "Bucket List" dive destinations with Doug Geddes or someone on the Dive Planning Committee. We will be researching and planning over the next few weeks and we want your ideas!

We will be having our annual Derby Party on May 3rd at Mike & Sherry McCann's home. Make sure you check out the web site for all of the details and directions to their house. As always, bring a dish to share and some extra cash for those bets. Derby Hat anyone???

Our next meeting is Tuesday, April 8th. I hope you can join us for some great conversation, education, and entertainment! 🏊



The Editor's Notes

By John Geddes



The photos last month were underwater shots from Noel Hall on the Yap and Truk trip. This month we are going topside with some pics from Doug Geddes. 🏊

Derby hat shopping in Yap?



2014 BGDC Officer's

Tracey Combs, President	621-4066
Corrine Mulberry, Vice President	913-0892
Mike Sullivan, Secretary	266-4516
Dan Miller, Treasurer	948-5133
Doug Geddes, Trip Director	224-3197
Rick Stephan, Safety Info Dir.	223-3719
Mike McCann, Webmaster	255-3937
John Geddes, Newsletter Editor	223-7926

Vice President's Report

By Corrine Mulberry



The April program will feature the BGDC's trip to the Philippines in 2012. We've been trying to schedule this program for quite awhile – it was a fabulous trip and we're looking forward to seeing both land-based and water-based pictures. Hats off to Doug Geddes for putting the program together for us!

If you have diving information or destinations (past or potential future trips) that you would like to present at a Club meeting, I would love to hear from you. Please contact me so that we can put you on the calendar. 913-0892 or mulberryc1@gmail.com

At last month's meeting, we welcomed **Don Mitchell** and **Lisa Bradley** to their first BGDC meeting. Thanks to member Brian Elkins for bringing these two Harrodsburg/Herrington Lake residents to the meeting! Don, who works in the field of Information Technology, is both Advanced & Nitrox certified and has logged over 100 dives. His most recent dive trips included local diving in Herrington, Cumberland and Dale Hollow. When asked where he would like to go diving, he responded "Blue Waters". Great answer! Lisa is Open Water & Nitrox certified and has logged in about 30 dives. Her most recent dive was Herrington Lake late last summer.

WELCOME Don and Lisa!!

And here's some more news about these 2:

- They joined the BGDC before the meeting adjourned! Woo Hoo
- Don is going to retire in July. 'Nuther Woo Hoo
- Don & Lisa are getting married in Florida in May! The biggest Woo Hoo! 🚩

Trip Director's Report

By Doug Geddes



GRAND CAYMAN 2014

There has been some recent activity on this location. We have around 10 persons that have either added or are waiting to add on to this great dive location. The airfare keeps changing daily and I found good fares out of Louisville on US Air for under \$500. Might not be there now, but keep watching. Delta has been as low as \$542 but is currently over \$700 with a lot of seats available, so I expect it will come back down. Please don't get left off this great trip. The water will be warm and clear, so this will be a great time to go. Ask your non-diving friends if they would like to join you. The prices are great for them. Just go to our website and check it out.

Free for all the money you can carry home



DIVE TRIPS???

It seems the dive committee is getting stale with ideas about where to go. If you know of a place you have on your bucket list, just let me know. We will be meeting soon to discuss next year's trips of which we have none on the books for 2015. 🚩

From the Treasurer

By Dan Miller



2014 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](#). 🚩



From The Secretary

By Mike Sullivan



25 February 2014

BGDC Board of Director's Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 PM. In attendance were: Tracey Combs, Corrine Mulberry, Mike Sullivan, Dan Miller, Doug Geddes, Rick Stephan, Mike McCann and John Geddes.

Dan went over the February 25th Treasurer's Report. A Final copy of the 2014 Budget was distributed. Dan will supply tax information by this weekend to Mike McCann to file the Club taxes.

Corrine indicated that the Chuuk video will be shown at the March meeting. The Philippines video will be shown at the April meeting and no video yet for the May meeting. One boat has been reserved for the Dale Hollow weekend. The Membership Form has been revised so there is only one version.



Mike McCann has corrected names in the database and has sent invitations through Yahoo. He is having problems with the individuals being added to the member roster after accepting Yahoo invitations.

The McCann's will host the Club Derby Party this year on May 3rd.

From The Secretary Cont.

The Club Pig Roast will be on August 16th. A motion was made by Mike Sullivan to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.



11 March 2014
General Membership Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:41 PM. There was a little bit of an abbreviated meeting since the meeting room had no lights. Dan reviewed the February Treasurer's Report.

Corrine introduced two visitors, Linda Bradley and Don Mitchell who signed-on as new members. Linda Bradley and Mark Kidd won the door prizes.

Doug announced that the San Salvador trip was cancelled since only one person had signed-up, but may be revived later if there is a greater interest. He spoke briefly about the September 2014 Grand Cayman trip. John Geddes has seen a Delta flight out of Lexington for \$546. Doug indicated the Trip Committee will meet soon to discuss to locate a destination for the Spring 2015 trip.

Rick spoke on the importance of staying healthy for the long trips required to visit and dive the Pacific to include staying hydrated and avoiding individuals during flight that appear to have coughs and sniffles.

The video for this month was the Chuuk trip in January 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM. 🚩

Dale Hollow Dive Trip

By Corrine Mulberry



The July 12th & 13th Dale Hollow Dive scheduled and details are posted on our website. Mark your calendars and sign up early. This is a fun and relaxing weekend on the lake and an opportunity for local and inexpensive diving. \$20.00 per person/per day secures you a spot on the pontoon boat.

There is a maximum capacity of 12 people on the 10'x 30' double-decker pontoon boat. The BGDC has reserved one pontoon boat. If trip sign-ups exceed the boat capacity, another pontoon boat will be reserved, if it is available. Sign up early to ensure you have a spot on the boat. Deadline for signing up is June 11th.

We're in the money?



In terms of lodging, I have made reservations at the Dale Hollow State Park Campground for Friday July 11 and Saturday July 12th at site L0002 for me and my little tent. I would encourage you to make campground reservations (near the L Loop) or lodging reservations at the State Park NOW if you are interested in this trip. (Lodging reservation cancellations are quite liberal, so it doesn't hurt to sign up now while you can get a room. By April, all rooms will likely be booked.) 🚩

Safety Corner

By Rick Stephan



Note: Topics for this column are often tied to current events pertinent to the BGDC (at least I try...). On the recent Yap/Truk trip, we had several divers stricken with maladies requiring trips to the doctor and prescription medicines to abate their symptoms. However, there were many divers who had slightly less distressing illnesses, from upset stomachs to persistent coughs, and so forth. Our intrepid travelers brought out the stashes to help their buddies – an impressive array of drugs that not too long ago could have stocked a local pharmacy for a few months. (OK, I'm exaggerating a bit, but it WAS impressive!)

While we all know that each of us is responsible for our own diving safety, we assume that somehow the manufacturer of the over-the-counter (OTC) drugs knows that we are taking several at a time and are scuba diving to 90 feet in a sub-tropical environment the morning after consuming several adult beverages. Well, they don't know that, only YOU do. So, be cognizant of the interactions that your OTC drugs have, with other drugs, alcohol, and so forth. (The manufacturers DO put that information on the package, but you have to actually read it!)

Also, be aware that if you suddenly start taking a med during your trip, you will not have validated how it affects you. It might make sense to take a morning off to see if the drug makes you nauseous or drowsy. It would be much better to find that out while on the boat than when you get to the end of a tank at depth. Also, alert your buddy, so they can help keep an eye on you. Drug affects may vary at depth, so if you're fine at surface, you may have different results at 100 feet on that wreck.

So, please review this article from scubadiving.com. It talks about different categories of OTC meds and some things to know about each. Also, consider your overall health and mindset and how that may vary from trip to trip over the years. (I know my physiology is not the same as it was 20 or even 10 years ago.) Knowledge can help you be safer,



Remember, safe diving is fun!

This sign is from the last trip in 2007



Mind Your Meds

By Selene Yeager

If you needed certain serious medications a few decades ago, you'd have likely gone to your doctor. Today, it's consumer-heal-thyself for many common afflictions as increasing numbers of formerly prescription-strength remedies have gone over-the-counter. Today, more than 700 of the OTC meds you can toss in your cart at the local grocery store contain active ingredients and dosages that were once available by prescription only, and we're popping these pills in record numbers. Nearly 80 percent of Americans throw back an OTC medication (most popularly pain relievers) at least once a week, according to a 2002 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association, and scuba divers are no exception.

Safety Corner Cont.

A 2002 study published in Wilderness and Environmental Medicine found that one-quarter of the diving public takes prescription medications daily. Though no one has done a similar study of OTC pill intake, it would likely reflect what you see in the general population, says Kevin S. O'Toole, M.D., director of the hyperbaric medicine department at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. But unlike prescription meds, which most divers declare when getting clearance to dive, OTC remedies fly (or in this case dive) under the radar, which can have potentially disastrous consequences if you don't use them properly.



If you're taking multiple meds, you need to think about how the side effects of each drug you're taking will interact with the others. While it's generally safe to take more than one type of single-symptom medication at a time (Advil for your headache and Sudafed for your sinuses, for example), beware mixing multi-symptom meds (for instance, cold/cough formulas with sinus/headache pills), as there can be crossovers in the active ingredients. And always read the labels to be sure you're not taking medications with similar side effects as combining them can make these effects stronger. At the minimum, you should take all medications or OTC cocktails on dry land first to monitor how they affect you before you take them on a dive trip.

There are four main categories of OTC meds that you'll normally find or use on the dive boat--some are commonly abused; some come with dangerous side effects. See "Meds Makeup" for a breakdown of the OTC brands

common on the water, their active ingredients and side effects.

Ear-Clearing "Meds"

Anytime you use drugs to get past an ear-clearing problem, there's a risk of the drugs wearing off, possibly causing a painful reverse squeeze on ascent. However, chemical clearing assistance is widespread in the diving community, and this category comprises the common remedies divers use and abuse to ease their ear-clearing woes.

Decongestants generally come in two forms: pills and sprays. Usually, pills contain pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine, and nasal sprays come in phenylephrine or oxymetazoline formulas. Cough/cold medicines often contain these same decongestant drugs along with other active ingredients. Allergy medicines are antihistamines, which, unlike decongestants, don't unclog your sinus passages, but rather work preventatively to keep allergens from clogging them in the first place.

Taking combinations of these drugs and/or taking more than the recommended dosage in the fight against ear-clogging congestion can be bad news if you don't first check the labels. A 2001 Harris survey conducted for The National Council on Patient Information and Education found that only 34 percent of adults could identify the active ingredients in their usual OTC remedies. If you're taking more than one type, you could be overdosing--or at least increasing your odds of suffering side effects. For instance, if you take a multi-symptom cold medicine like Contac to help fight off some sniffles, then spoon down Robitussin to quell a cough, you've just taken a double dose of phenylephrine, which can cause dizziness, headache and nausea.

The same Harris survey also reported that about a third of adults actually "overdose" intentionally, taking more than the recommended amount in hopes of knocking out their symptoms sooner. Bad idea. Sudafed--one of the most commonly used decongestants--is considered a mild central-

Safety Corner Cont.

nervous-system stimulant (it's one of the ingredients in the stimulant scourge methamphetamine), and its side effects include excitability, restlessness, dizziness, weakness and insomnia. Large doses can lead to more dangerous side effects, including cardiovascular collapse and convulsions. "If you have underlying heart disease, it can be very risky to use more than you should before diving," O'Toole says.

"Stacking"--taking chemically different drugs that offer the same effect-- is another common dive-boat practice. If you're going to stack drugs to clear your ears, just make sure you don't double up on active ingredients, O'Toole cautions. One "safe stack" is Sudafed coupled with an OTC nasal spray because the spray works on the sinuses locally and isn't absorbed into the rest of the body. O'Toole recommends using regular Sudafed (taken as recommended) rather than the 12-hour extended-release tablets because the 12-hour meds take longer to kick in. Nasal sprays work fairly quickly, so it's best to take them just before gearing up. When stacking antihistamines and decongestants, take the allergy medicines the night before your dive; then take decongestants as you normally would on dive day. And of course, be sure to test drive any and all meds on land before you dive on them.



Seasickness Meds

These are another biggie on the boat. There are a couple of prevalent OTC options,

generally Bonine or Dramamine. Both have the same intended effect--preventing seasickness--but they contain different medicines with different side effects.

In studying the effects of both Sudafed and Dramamine under pressure, O'Toole asked 30 experienced divers to take either one of the meds or a dummy pill 45 minutes before a simulated 66-foot dive in a hyperbaric chamber. The researchers tested their memory, verbal ability, manual dexterity and heart rate before and during the "dive." While Sudafed had some minor effects, it didn't place the divers under any inordinate risk at depth. Dramamine, on the other hand, dramatically lowered the divers' cognitive functioning to the point where O'Toole deemed it unsafe for scuba, even when taken as directed.



If you're going to take one of the common OTC seasickness meds, try it out well before the dive. If you feel at all doopey or drowsy on land, don't dive--you'll feel even worse in the water. Some people even take their seasickness meds the night before a dive for a sound night's sleep (being well-rested can help keep seasickness at bay).

If you plan to use medication to help clear your ears, it's best to stay away from any standard seasickness medications altogether, as the combination can considerably increase the side effects of both. In this case, it may be safer and more effective to take ginger capsules, which shouldn't cause complications with decongestants. Ginger has long been known as a natural way to reduce cold sweating and vomiting and ease nausea and vertigo. Some researchers have reported that ginger is as effective as Dramamine in

Safety Corner Cont.

controlling seasickness. Take one gram (1,000 milligrams) of powdered ginger four to six hours before boarding and another dose one hour before departure. After that, you can re-dose every four to six hours as needed.

Pain Relievers

These are a staple for many divers and non-divers alike: Tylenol for headaches, Advil for inflamed joints, Aleve for achy backs and Bayer for a little extra heart disease prevention. But the very reason people take Bayer (active ingredient: aspirin) for their hearts is one reason to consider leaving it behind when you dive. It thins your blood, which isn't dangerous under normal circumstances, but if you have an embolism or other accident that causes profuse bleeding, you could lose significantly more blood than normal. Other than that, there's not much to worry about when taking pain meds while diving. Just stick to the recommended dosage because long-term abuse can lead to stomach or liver problems down the road.

Anti-Diarrhea Remedies

Whether you call it Montezuma's revenge or just traveler's stomach, if you travel, it's only a matter of time until you get hit with belly rumbles that'll send you running for the head. There are two main OTC brands for diarrhea treatment: Imodium, which physically slows the flow of fluid through the bowel, and Pepto-Bismol, which balances the fluid in the bowel and binds to diarrhea-causing germs. Both work well. Just be aware that too much Imodium can cause constipation and cramps--not ideal for diving. Overall, Pepto-Bismol is the gentler of the two remedies, and it's probably the best bet for a mild case of traveler's stomach. You obviously shouldn't dive if your diarrhea is out of control or part of a more serious illness. There are no inherent side effects that make diving on either of these medications dangerous.

Read the Labels

Because very few drugs are studied under pressure, you'll need to do a little research on your own, O'Toole says. Luckily, in most cases, that's no more difficult than reading the labels. Look for active ingredients and possible side effects. In today's environment of prime-time drug ads that deliver a laundry list of sometimes startling side effects with a cheerful voice-over, we've become largely desensitized to some of the bad stuff even good drugs can do. Before you dive on a drug, check the label for side effects that could interfere with your dive.

Beware of dizziness, nervousness, jitteriness, anxiety and other similar side effects, as well as nausea, diarrhea, headache and other symptoms that could distract you from your dive, O'Toole says. "Anything that can cause sedation or drowsiness is clearly not good for diving." If you shouldn't drive on it, you shouldn't dive on it.



For Men Only

We've all seen the commercials for enlarging prostates, but have we made any connection between them and our dive world? Men over 50 commonly experience this condition, which eventually leads to difficulty or increased frequency of urination, though it can be so gradual that we don't realize the changes over time.

We older divers should take a closer look at the side effects listed for both Sudafed and Benadryl--trouble urinating shows up on both

Safety Corner Cont.

lists. The highly effective prescription seasickness remedy scopolamine (the patch) sports similar effects. When it's laid out in front of you, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that inherent peeing problems combined with drugs that add to this difficulty can cause issues.



Oblivious, I used both the patch and Sudafed on a recent live-aboard trip. Two days in, my diving ended abruptly in a Mexican hospital with a bladder swollen to twice its normal size and unable to purge itself. I was toxic and close to disaster.

The choice for older men should be clear: Seriously evaluate the condition of your health and the impact of all the side effects of your medications--OTC or otherwise--lest you find yourself on an examining table mourning a ruined dive trip and trying to make sense out of what a doctor speaking a foreign language plans to do to you. 🚫



Bluegrass Dive Club 2014 Calendar

April

8, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
29, Tuesday Board Meeting

May

3, Saturday Club's Derby Party
13, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
27, Tuesday Board Meeting

June

10, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
24, Tuesday Board Meeting

July

8, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
12, Saturday Dale Hollow Diving
29, Tuesday Board Meeting

August

12, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
16, Saturday Club Pig Roast
26, Tuesday Board Meeting

September

9, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
13, Saturday Grand Cayman
30, Tuesday Board Meeting

October

14, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
28, Tuesday Board Meeting

November

11, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
25, Tuesday Board Meeting

December

13, Saturday Club Christmas Party

