



UNDERCURRENTS

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

October 2017

Volume 47, Number 10

October Club Meeting

Date: Tuesday, October 10th
Time: 7:30-PM (business)
Social at 7
Location: The Racquet Club
3900 Crosby Rd.
Program: TBD

President's Message

By Tracey Combs



Happy Fall Fellow Divers. I hope that you have enjoyed your summer and spent a lot of time underwater. We had a group that went to Belize at the end of September. We did a lot of diving and had a great trip. I can't wait to see the video and pictures from the trip.

The Trip Committee will be meeting soon. We still need someone to fulfill the Trip Director position. If you are interested, please contact me or John Geddes. If you have a suggestion or a bucket list location, please share your ideas. We are always interested in suggestions. Contact me or one of the committee members.

Bluegrass Dive Club is on Facebook. I am not very skilled on Facebook. If you would like to help out, please let me know. Feel free to share your pictures and videos. Don't be shy!! Our elections will be held in November at the regular meeting. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, October 10 at 7:30 pm at the Racquet Club. Guests are always welcome. I hope to see you there!! 🏊

The Editor's Notes

By Steve Gahafer



Wow we just got back from our Belize trip. We had a great time with a great group of people. We ate some very good food. I know it's a shock - the Dive Club eating, but we ate at a variety of places from a "restaurant Hookah Bar" on the beach to tables with white table cloths. We had great Dive Masters leading our dives and saw a large variety of life. This month's pictures are mainly mine. Next month I'll be sure to get some pictures from others on the trip. 🏊



2016 BGDC Officer's

Tracey Combs, President	621-4066
John Geddes, Vice President	223-7926
Mike Sullivan, Secretary	266-4516
Dan Miller, Treasurer	948-5133
Doug Geddes, Trip Director	621-3178
Rick Stephan, Safety Info Dir.	223-3719
Kim Hudson, Webmaster	614-937-1955
	Khudson4974@yahoo.com
Steve Gahafer, Newsletter Editor	229-9408
	sagahafer@gmail.com



Vice President's Report

By John Geddes



Congratulations to Judy Sullivan on the Papa Johns and Alex Fassas for the Star Bucks gift cards.

Welcome our two new members, Arron and Jennifer. Hope to see them back soon.



As always, still working on the program as of deadline. So stay tune.

Something else on my mind -
Nominations for BGDC Officers 2018:
Elected positions include:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Trip Director
- Safety Information Director
- Newsletter Editor
- Webmaster

All elected positions are open to nominations. Nominees for elected positions must be in good standing (dues paid), have been a member for at least one full year and be at least 21 years of age. Please contact the Nominations Committee if you like to serve on the Board.



Noel trying to help out the bartender a little



Lunch at the "restraunt and Hookah Bar"

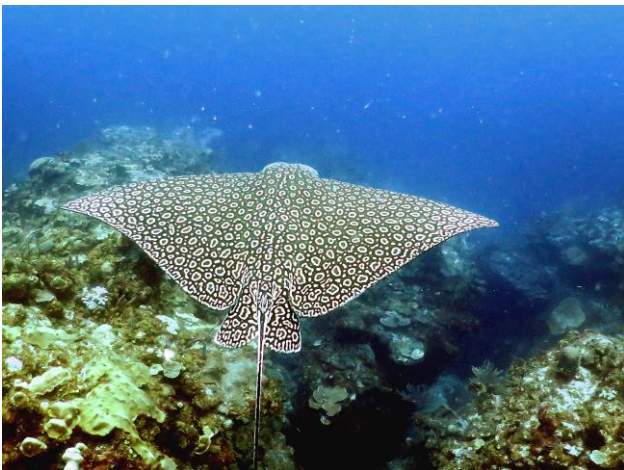
Trip Director's Report

By Doug Geddes



CURACAO 2018

Another great trip being offered by the dive club to one of the best looking islands in the Caribbean. This should be a great check out dive for the upcoming Africa trip for those that haven't been in the water for a while. This trip is now up on our website at [Curacao 2018](#). Check it out. It is a great place for non-divers also, so bring some friends to paradise.



AFRICA DIVE & SAFARI 2018

This trip is going full steam ahead. Several people have already purchased air so if you still need to do that we can give you some suggestions. If someone finds a great fare, please share it with us, so others might join you, but you need to make sure it works with the times we need to arrive in Africa. I will try and get that info out to you. **We still have a room or so reserved, but if they call we will have to give it up, so if you are on the fence, please consider grabbing it before it is gone.** Check the website [Africa 2018](#) 🇳🇬



Sherri, Tracey and Terri enjoying after dive drinks



From the Treasurer

By Dan Miller



2017 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](#). 🚩



The group at Elvi's for dinner

From The Secretary

By Mike Sullivan



BLUEGRASS DIVE CLUB GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

A General membership meeting was held on September 12, 2017 at the Racquet Club on 3900 Crosby Road. A presentation was made by John Geddes of a DVD on a Club trip to BVI in 2005. The Club Christmas Party will tentatively be held on December 9th. Please bring a dish to serve 12 people. The Club will furnish the meat and sodas. The board will meet on September 19th at the Beaumont Public Library at 3080 Fieldstone Way at 7:30 PM.

BLUEGRASS DIVE CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Tuesday, September 19, 2017

A Board meeting was held on September 19, 2017 at the Beaumont Branch Public Library. The Club Pig Roast has been closed-out. The Dive Assure site is linked on our website. A reminder that an Africa trip payment is due October 15th. Members need to consider a nomination for Club Trip Director. The board will meet on October 24th at the Beaumont Branch Public Library on Fieldstone Way at 7:30 PM. 🚩



Safety Corner

By Rick Stephan



Remember, safe diving is fun!

Note: I remember watching old movies where the doting parents encourage their daughter to find and marry a doctor. Well, with all the medicines that are now readily available in the grocery or drug stores, everyone has the potential to prescribe their own medicines. (I wasn't encouraged to marry a doctor, but I did find a nurse!!)

This month's article, from scubadiving.com, explores potential problems from taking over the counter medicines while diving. We all have seen dive buddies self-medicating on the boat, before the boat, the night before, etc. We've spent our hard earned money on this trip and we are NOT going to let a little congestion prevent us from diving, are we?? That indeed is why many drugs that were prescription-only just a few years ago are now available right on the shelves. Pharmaceutical companies continue making advances, and put their older stuff out for the consumers. (With the exception of Sudafed, of course, which has worked its way back behind the counter, thanks to the entrepreneurial spirits of our meth lab operators!)

Think twice before 'borrowing' some prescription drugs from a dive buddy. Yes, they may be stronger than your OTC medicine, but the prescription was (hopefully) done by a doctor who understood the physiology and past medical history of the patient. He doesn't even know you!

The message is this: read the precaution labels on the drugs, pay attention to drug interactions, and, if you feel so bad you think you need to take multiple drugs, it might just be better to sit

out a dive and bake the bugs out of your system in a lounge chair next to the pool!

As always, remember - safe diving is fun!



Playing in the water after lunch

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.

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.



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-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.



Alex & Kathryn enjoying the music on the beach

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 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.



Jimmy and Lisa hamming it up

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 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. 🚩



The World Famous Chicken Drop

Bluegrass Dive Club 2017-2018 Calendar

- June 13 General Meeting
- June 27 Board Meeting

- July 11 General Meeting
- **July 22** [Dale Hollow](#)
- July 25 Board Meeting

- August 8 General Meeting
- **August 12** [Annual Pig Roast](#)
- August 29 Board Meeting

- September 12 General Meeting
- **September 23-30** [Belize](#)
- September 26 Board Meeting

- October 10 General Meeting
- October 24 Board Meeting

- November 14 General Meeting
- November 28 Board Meeting

- December TBD **Christmas Party**

- January 9 General Meeting
- January 25 Board Meeting

- February 13 General Meeting
- **February 10-17** [Curacao](#)
- February 22 Board Meeting

- March 13 General Meeting
- March 29 Board Meeting

- **June 2018 10-23** [Africa](#)



Dive Committee Members

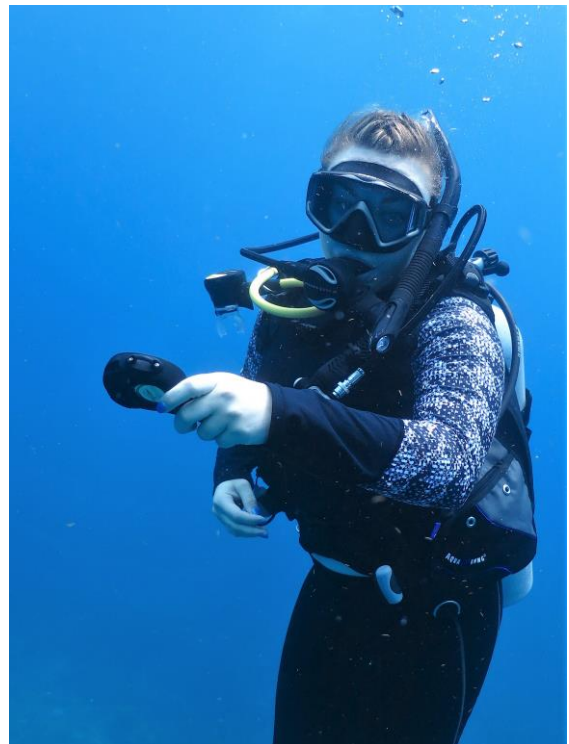
Doug Geddes – Chairman	621-3178
Tracey Combs	621-4066
Ralph Covington	621-3862
Mike Sullivan	266-4516
Ed Sullivan	C@Meeting
John Geddes	223-7926



Tracey reppin the Bluegrass Dive Club at Palapa's



The main mode of transportation for the week



Natasha on her safety stop