



UNDERCURRENTS

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

May 2022

Volume 52, Number 3

May Newsletter and June's Club Meeting

Date: Tuesday, June 14th
Time: 7:30-PM (business)
Social at 7:00

Location: Roosters
Program: Beth VanPelt, Guest Speaker

President's Message

By John Geddes



Are you ready to resume in person meetings? We are starting June 14th at Roosters, we have reserved the back room for our meetings and the Board seem to enjoy their meeting with dinner. So this is the opportunity we all have been waiting for.

Beth VanPelt, manager of Diventures will be our Guest, Beth is going to give us some insight of the Company philosophy and I think what they are doing with water safety.

We sure lost a Grand Lady, a woman of sterling qualities and more, Helen Denham. I thought I had more pictures, but mainly from our BGDC Christmas Parties where she always play the piano and entertained us with a little bit of Christmas Cheer and it was always special. 🚩

The Editor's Notes

By Terri Anderson



It was good to visit Kentucky again in April. It was a special time visiting with club members Alex and Kathryn Fassas for Thunder over Louisville and the static plane display. It's always been a fun family tradition and this year was no different. It was great to get out and back to normal – I had forgotten what normal was like. It's also great to get back to in-person meetings, although I will miss those being in Texas. I hope normal means dive trips will be in our near future!!! 🚩



2022 BGDC Officer's

John Geddes, President	608-0682
Kris Harn, Vice President	333-6911
Kathryn Bowers, Secretary	619-0166
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 Kris Harn



Please join us at Roosters on 2640 Richmond Rd at 7:00 for social and 7:30 meeting or come earlier to eat dinner. This will be our first in person regular meeting!! Hope to see everyone there!!!

FYI: Charlie will be hosting the Pig Roast in July, time and date not set yet. Charlie will be giving some dive gear away and selling some other. Keep an eye on your newsletter, more info to be announced soon. 🚩

From the Treasurer

By Dan Miller



2022 Membership Dues \$10.00
Student with ID
Single & Family (1 diver)
Family (non divers)
Family (2 or more divers)

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](#). 🚩

Secretary's Report

By Kathryn Bowers



Memories of Helen

One of our longtime members Charlie Denham lost his wife Helen on Easter Sunday. Helen was a beautiful woman and a very gracious hostess. I really enjoyed seeing her last summer when she and Charlie hosted the club meetings in their back yard.



Helen and Charlie kept it as nice as any park. Their yard was always beautifully manicured thanks to Helen who did all the mowing. There was also a lovely shaded patio we could all gather on. Helen was usually dressed in something bright and cheerful seated at one of the patio tables when we arrived. She was easy to talk to and seemed to enjoy telling me about the many potted flowers she had on the patio.

Helen loved there flowers and had many. There were several beautiful apricot and crimson hibiscus I particularly admired. I was surprised and delighted when Charlie and Helen arrived for the September 2020 Derby party at our house with one of the hibiscus plants for me. I still have the plant and love seeing it bloom each summer. I know this year I will again think of Helen when my hibiscus blooms. 🚩

Trip Director Report

By Leigh Ann Bowe-Geddes



Finally, the weather is warming here in Kentucky, yet the open water remains cool.

I'm dreaming of submerging in some warm currents a bit south of here. One of dive travel partners is working on researching some Caribbean trips for us to schedule over the next 18 months and has promised pricing and availability information will be forthcoming. Some of the requested information includes St. Lucia, Grand Cayman, Bonaire and Saba. As soon as we have details and board approval, we shall be taking reservations.

If any of you have a desire to venture to distant lands for exotic dive adventures, please contact the Trip Director with your suggestions. Some of us need more time to gear and save up for a big adventure far from home, such as a live-aboard in Thailand, the Maldives, or even a distant domestic trip to Hawaii.

If you are interested in a local weekend trip to one of the Kentucky lakes, drop me an email. We are discussing organizing a weekend to dust off and test our dive gear and enjoy some fellowship and murky diving. 🚩



Webmaster

By Alex Fassas



Spring showers brings May flowers

We have received lots of rain, but no diving happened in our household. Sweet consolation are all the beautiful irises and other flowers that Kathryn so loving cares for at our home. Someone did get the diving kind of wet in recent weeks; Dan and Anna Miller spent a week at Compass Point on Grand Cayman. Although availability of bookings for groups is backlogged there is the occasional room booking available. Dan told me that they had a wonderful time, and all was well at Grand Cayman, except that the Lighthouse Restaurant was a victim of COVID and is closed.



I missed the Kentucky Derby for two reasons this year. Reason 1 – No club member stepped up to host our club's annual Derby Party. Reason 2 – Kathryn and I were in St. Louis for a family funeral. We were able to watch the Kentucky Derby on television from St. Louis but were unable to place a wager. It turns out that Missouri has a state law that forbids online gambling, which includes placing wagers on the TVG App. That

Webmaster Cont.

unfortunate turn of events saved me money, but it was a very exciting race.

Speaking of excitement!! Your club is scheduled to return to in person meetings beginning Tuesday, June 14th, 2022. New location and an exciting program that you won't want to miss. I will leave the details to our club's President and Vice President to communicate.



Special Request!! Help your club by updating your membership profile. If you receive our emails, but do not see your name in the email, then we don't have your name linked to that email address. Use the "Modify Your Subscription" hyperlink found in your email to update your membership information. If you found this newsletter from social media or on our website, then please subscribe to our emails [Subscribe | Bluegrass Dive Club](#). When you get your confirmation email, then please click the link "Manage My Subscription" to update your profile.

Stay wet my friends!! If you can't get wet, then at least have wet dreams. 🚢

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 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.

Thanks to BGDC member Dan Miller for suggesting the subject of this article. We all know and have all felt panic at some point in our lives. It is a very natural survival response. Scuba diving on the other hand is a very unnatural activity. As a result, panic while diving is life threatening. Don't let it happen to you! Here is a great read on the subject of panic prevention while diving.

How to Deal With Panic While Scuba Diving

By PATRICIA WUEST

Google sayings for "cool," and you'll find a plethora of results that could apply to people who strap on tanks, giant-stride off the back of the boat, and drop down into the ocean to explore its wonders: cool customer, cool as a cucumber, and cool, calm and collected. But when a diver panics underwater, you can throw those sayings — and the diver's even-keeled demeanor — overboard.

You may have seen at least one case of panic in a dive buddy — a wide-eyed look, a desperate tug to get your attention, a rapid ascent. And if we're being honest, most of us have personally experienced at least a momentary bout of anxiety.

Safety Information Dir. Cont.

But if you feel panic rising, it's important to keep small things from snowballing into an out-of-control disaster.

"Recognizing the warning signs is the best method to proactively defuse a panic situation," says Kell Levendorf, dive accident investigator for Dive & Marine Consultants International in Florida. If you notice a buddy panicking, "you must be prepared and practiced to control the fight-or-flight mentality by securing the regulator, controlling buoyancy, and safely aborting the dive," Levendorf says.

And if you are being overwhelmed by panic, "the best thing to do is stop what you are doing, take a deep breath, and start to think about what it is you are dealing with," says Liz Parkinson, an instructor with Stuart Cove's Dive Bahamas.

Sometimes this is easier said than done, and as David F. Colvard, M.D., and Lynn Y. Colvard, Ph.D., reported in "A Study of Panic in Recreational Scuba Divers," there are important distinctions to be made in understanding panic.



Recognizing the warning signs is the best method to proactively defuse a panic situation

Losing One's Cool

The causes of panic underwater vary from divers struggling with equipment problems and

task overloading to strong currents and dangerous marine life. Throw in things like poor fitness, peer pressure and fear of the unknown, and you've got the recipe for potential disaster.

In 2000, David Colvard and Lynn Y. Colvard, with support from Sport Diver's sister magazine Scuba Diving, undertook a multiyear study of thousands of divers to examine the incidence of panic while diving and the reasons why divers panic.

"We were impressed with how eager divers and instructors were to talk about their panic dive experience and how much they wanted to help us understand what had happened to them," says David Colvard. Overall, 37 percent of female recreational scuba divers reported a panic experience during a dive, while only 24 percent of male divers reported one.

"We categorized the divers into two groups: those with a history of panic prior to diving and those with no history prior to diving. We subdivided them into those who had a panic on a dive, and those who had not," says Colvard. "Age, years diving, certification level and lifetime number of dives were similar for each group."

The Colvards found that male divers with a prediving history of panic were 1.9 to 2.7 times as likely to panic than those without a prior history; females were 1.4 to 2 times as likely to panic than those without a prior history.

Why It Happens

Panic is a sudden, uncontrollable surge of overwhelming anxiety and fear, often accompanied by wildly irrational thinking and behavior. "It's something that even a seasoned diver can experience," says Parkinson. "Many factors can lead to panic — misplaced equipment, rough weather conditions, diving in a new location, losing your buddy underwater."

The Colvards had to first define what they meant by "panic" before conducting their

Safety Information Dir. Cont.

study. "Because panic can be an imprecise or vague term used in a casual sense, the survey defined a panic experience as 'an intense fear of losing control or dying,'" says David Colvard. "Consistent with a panic attack as defined by the APA, the essential feature of a panic attack is a discrete period of intense fear or discomfort that is accompanied by at least four of 13 somatic or cognitive symptoms ... often accompanied by a sense of imminent danger or impending doom and an urge to escape ... or desire to flee from wherever the attack is occurring."



How is panic defined? Understand the major warning signs

In other words, part of what the Colvards wanted to know is whether the diver made a rapid ascent or another dangerous action in response to feeling panicked.

"Most divers who panicked during a dive reported they remembered their training in how to deal with panic, and used that training," says David Colvard. "Eighty-five percent of those who panicked while diving did not make a rapid or uncontrolled ascent. Even among the 15 percent who made a rapid or uncontrolled ascent, only 5 percent of males and 4 percent of females reported suffering from symptoms of decompression illness." That's the good news. But the reality is that it's a scary feeling to be panicked or to try to help a buddy who is panicking underwater. So how do you deal with it?

Scared Stiff

"Divers who panic sometimes breathe too fast and hard, and may bolt to the surface or forget basic and easy lifesaving techniques that they learned in their Open Water Diver course," says Jo Mikutowicz, managing partner of Divetech on Grand Cayman. Parkinson underscores Mikutowicz's message: "You have the training, so use it."

Colvard recommends that instructors teach diaphragmatic or belly breathing. According to the University of Texas Counseling and Mental Health Center, "Diaphragmatic breathing allows one to take normal breaths while maximizing the amount of oxygen that goes into the bloodstream. It is a way of interrupting the fight-or-flight response and triggering the body's normal relaxation response." Says Colvard, "This way, you can make sure students and divers are calm and relaxed before getting into the water."

Levendorf says that instructors are trained to recognize when a student is about to panic. "We recognize the deer-in-the-headlights look mere seconds before the novice diver spits out the regulator and bolts," he says. "With coaching, this can usually be resolved before they dive in open water." But Levendorf says when panic happens in open water, "it's a far more serious circumstance — the ultimate dive wrecker — and great care must be taken to protect both the diver and the instructor when trying to arrest a headlong flight to the surface."



Safety Information Dir. Cont.

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Pro Tips

If you have a history of panic disorder, you shouldn't dive until the disorder has been treated and is under good control. "Likewise, claustrophobia or agoraphobia is a contraindication to diving," says Colvard. "I once helped an instructor with an open water checkout dive student who had struggled in the pool. We dived, but she did not complete the checkout dives. On the surface she told me that she had taken up scuba to deal with her claustrophobia. I told her she was doing it backward." But if your stress is not related to a disorder, what can you do when you feel anxiety building?

"Stay current with your diving," says Mikutowicz. "If it has been longer than a year, take a refresher before your next big diving adventure to get familiar with being underwater again, as well as how to properly use all of your equipment."

"When you feel panic arising, concentrate on problem-solving techniques, relax yourself, regain your composure," says Parkinson. "And if you are able to communicate with someone, do so."

Karl Shreeves, technical development executive with PADI, adds extra emphasis to the **importance of buddy diving**. "The problem with panic is that once it sets in, it usually requires intervention," says Shreeves. "People rarely calm down and stop panicking on their own. This means a buddy or someone has to intervene, but only if you can do so without getting into trouble yourself, which would only make things worse for you and the diver."

Instructors also teach this mantra: **Stop — Breathe — Think — Act**. Stop swimming for a moment. Slow down your breathing and take deep, even breaths from your diaphragm.

Remember your training — such as what to do in an out-of-air emergency — and then act. 🚩



Bluegrass Dive Club 2022 Calendar

June

14, Tuesday Club Meeting
28, Tuesday Board Meeting

July

12, Tuesday NEWSLETTER
26, Tuesday Board Meeting
Club Pig Roast (Pending)

August

9, Tuesday Club Meeting
30, Tuesday Board Meeting

September

13, Tuesday NEWSLETTER
27, Tuesday Board Meeting

October

11, Tuesday Club Meeting
25, Tuesday Board Meeting

November

8, Tuesday Club Meeting (Elections)
29, Tuesday Board Meeting

December

10, Saturday Christmas Party (Pending)
20, Tuesday NEWSLETTER