



www.bluegrassdiveclub.com

October's Club Meeting

Date: Tuesday, October 12th
Time: 7:30-PM (business)
 Social at 7
Location: The Racquet Club
 3900 Crosby Rd.
Program: Brad Waller-Underwater
 Archaeology and Paleontology

President's Message



First let me thank Tom Myers for his program on the Galapagos Islands.

It was great to see where we may be taking the club in the next couple of years.

Blue-footed Bobbies have always been my favorite bird.

On a more serious note I want all of us to remember those who are working to rebuild their lives in the islands. I know many of you have seen the images coming from Florida, but images from the Caymans are incredible scenes of the power Ivan displayed.

Please take a moment to think of these people, some of whom we know on a more personal level.

The Club has been invited to the Ski club Halloween Party more info to come in the newsletter hope to see you there.

And the club will have a great program on fossil diving this month by Brad Waller.

In addition we will have a video on Bonne Terre Mine our October dive trip.



Tom with President Mark

John Geddes will have a DVD on his Chuuk trip, so be prepared for a fun meeting. □

Mark

The Editor's Notes

By John Geddes



Chicken does Chuuk. Once again my little buddy is by my side and here are a few of our photos above the water. We have a DVD from the Odyssey and will be showing this at the meeting. So, for the ones that are going to Chuuk in February, you might want to see what you're in for.

Would like to thank Tom from the M.O.A.V. Dive Club out of Houston, TX for letting me come aboard and welcoming me as one of their our. □

Elections

Don't forget next month at the regular meeting this will be a dinner meeting and elections. If you are going, you need to check-in with Kit to reserve your dinner.

Divemaster's Report

By Doug Geddes



YAP and CHUUK '05

Because of Ivan the terrible, Kathy Parks had to withdraw from the trip. We wish her well in getting her life and others back to normal. (If you would like to help the Cayman people, give a Kathy a shout. They could use all the help they can get, money wise that is.) Jim Hammes has been added to take Kathy's place. We look forward to Jim getting back into diving with us. If you are still thinking about going on this trip, check out our website for details. Then put your name up on our waiting list. As we just found out, things do change. Also, John Geddes just got back from his free trip to Truk and loved it. He will be talking to us and showing his DVD from the Odyssey, hopefully soon.

Cara from the Odyssey



The DVD Premier

COZUMEL '05

We are now up to 38 persons and counting. There are still rooms available and some air also. Don't wait too much longer to add on to this trip, if you need air. The rooms should not be a problem. Check out the website for further details about the trip. You need to fill out the reservation form and send \$100 deposit to be considered on the trip. If you haven't sent in the waiver form yet, you can also do that. We are looking forward to this as another hugely successful club trip. Where else can you go and have so much fun and be with people you know? □

Safety Corner

By Rick Stephan



Remember, safe diving is fun!

Note: *I know a lot of you have seen the movie "Open Water". There are bad things that happen when you dive in open water and don't get back to where you need to be, when you need to be there. I remember a number of dives where others in our group have come up to me and signaled that they didn't know where the boat was. Several times, I just pointed straight up – we were directly under the boat! Other times, I wasn't quite so sure, but I generally knew which direction it was. This article from Rodale's provides some ideas for how a diver can do a better job in knowing where they are. Getting back to your exit location, whether it is on a boat or shore, is a very important safety consideration.*

Never Get Lost Again: A 4-Step Program

Lost under water? We can help. Lost in the Wal-Mart parking lot? You're on your own.

Fear of getting lost—knowing where you are and how to find your way back to the dive boat—is a significant source of stress in diving. And while few divers get so lost as to constitute an emergency, just the anxiety of not knowing the way home is enough to ruin your dive.

So Why Do I Get Lost?

Why is it that you can find your car in the Wal-Mart parking lot, but as soon as you put your head under water you're disoriented? One reason is that underwater landmarks are less familiar. When you can put the name "Lexus" to those silver thing two rows to the left of your car, you're more likely to remember it.

Another reason is the way underwater navigation is taught, as if the subject began and ended with the compass. The ability to follow a rectangular search pattern back to your starting point has almost nothing to do with how most of us actually dive and get lost. In fact, the compass is a valuable accessory, but you usually don't need to keep your nose on it to find your way.

And maybe the biggest reason divers get lost is the follow-the-leader nature of so much resort diving. Just as dominant divers can produce dependent buddies, dive guides can produce

disoriented divers. Ever try to remember the route the car took when you were riding in the back seat?

The keys to finding your way around under water are observation and mental imaging. Do this:

Overlooking Truk Lagoon



Gun emplacement by the Japanese

Step 1: Make a Mental Map

Before you get wet, you want to be able to picture a map of the dive site in your head. The best way to do that is to sketch a real map on a dive slate. Sometimes the simple act of making the map helps fix the picture in your head, even if you never look at it again. And you can always refer to the slate underwater.

Start with the Divemaster's description of the site, and don't be reluctant to ask questions. Mark depths to the bottom, if they are known. Be sure to mark the location of the dive boat, or your entry point from shore. Add your own observations. Many of the most prominent features under water, like reefs, walls and kelp beds, will be visible from the surface. For example, the color of the water will indicate deep or shallow, so you should be able to trace the top of a wall if it's not too deep. Coral heads will look brown or black. Pay special attention to surface indications of features that may be "landmarks" under water, like a detached rock or a sharp angle in the reef.

If you're diving close to shore, the shape of land above water often indicates the bottom contour. A steep cliff dropping into the water probably continues to drop steeply under water, for example. A partially submerged rock that's steep on one side and gradually sloping on the other will probably have the same shape below the surface.

Finally, mark down the direction of the current and the position of the sun with arrows. If the visibility is reasonably good, you will be able to see the sun under water. If it is not directly overhead, the direction to the sun and the shadows it casts can be direction indicators.

Tips

To see into the water better, get as high on the boat as possible, use polarized sunglasses, shade your eyes and look away from the sun.

A compass can help. Draw your map with north at the top of the slate. Under water, all you have to do is turn it until the compass needle points toward the top of the slate. Now, what's to the left on the slate is to your left in reality, and so on.

Another compass trick: Take bearings from the boat (or entry point) to the prominent landmarks you identified, and write them down. The reciprocals are return routes to the boat.

To see which way the current is flowing, look for the ripples around a stationary object like a mooring pole or the anchor chain as it emerges from the water. Don't be fooled by surface waves, which usually flow with the wind, not the current. Don't like to carry a slate? Think of it like training wheels—a temporary expedient. When you get better at observing your surroundings and assembling a mental map, you can probably dispense with it.

The other end



This gun was never fired at the US

Step 2: Plan a Route

If you're worried about getting lost once you're under water, plan a route through the dive site and try to stick to it instead of wandering randomly. Draw the route on your map and note which landmarks you'll pass along the way. An out-and-back route presents the least chance of disorientation because you pass the same landmarks coming and going. It's not as boring as it sounds because those landmarks, while recognizable, will look different from the other direction.

Tips

Often the dive boat will not be anchored over the dive site itself, but will be a little offshore from the dive site. Plan to end your "blue water" transit at some landmark you'll be able to recognize later—like a rock that juts out from the reef.

Safety Corner Cont.

Record the compass bearing to the landmark; the reciprocal will bring you back to the dive boat.

If there is no such landmark, you may be able to make one with a small pile of rocks (no coral, please) or a spare dive weight. Follow a convenient compass course to the site and stack up a few rocks in a prominent place when you get there. Remember its depth. This will be your takeoff point on the reciprocal course. (Knock down the pile when you leave it for the last time.)

An out-and-back route need not be a straight line. You can instead follow the wall, or a bottom contour, or a chain of landmarks.

Step 3: Stop Before You Go

Once you've entered the water and descended to the bottom, or to the point in the water column from which you'll begin the first leg of your planned route, stop. Look around you, at the bottom and out toward the limit of visibility.

Use your compass or the direction of the sun to orient what you see to your map. Note the depth at the anchor. Note the trend of the bottom: which direction is shallower water, which direction is deeper? Feel the direction of the current. Add all this to your mental or physical map.

Look for unusually shaped rocks or coral outcrops or sponges out in the distance and try to remember them. If you're off-course on your return to the anchor line, you may find one of them and know where you are. Find which way you'll go on the first leg of your route. Look for a landmark you can aim for.

It's also a good idea to pause after your descent, to recheck your equipment and your buddy adjust your buoyancy and generally calm down. Use that moment to also get your bearings.

Tips

Descend head-up and, as much as possible, facing the same way to retain your sense of direction.

Define the direction of the bottom's slope by looking for the "fall line." That's the direction a ball would roll downhill.

If you're making a blue-water transit to the dive site, count fin kicks to give you an idea of distance. On your return you should find the anchor line with the same number of kicks, give or take 10 percent.

Captain Lenny doing a dive briefing



and the M.O.A.V. Dive Club

Step 4: Follow a Chain of Landmarks

The key to staying oriented is observing your surroundings, and the enemy of observation is constant motion. Too many divers think they have to keep moving constantly, like sharks. When their eyes drift across the bottom, each rock, each sponge gets the same glance and no single thing stands out. Their surroundings become a slow-motion blur.

Instead, think of your route through the dive site as a series of legs from A to B to C and so on. Look ahead to the most prominent landmark near the limit of visibility, the next outcrop or corner of the reef or freestanding rock. That's "B." When you reach it, pause a moment and look back at "A." That's what this leg will look like on your return (assuming an out-and-back route). Now look ahead to choose landmark "C" and start toward it. When you reach landmark "C," pause, look back at "B" and so on.

Tips

Before you go far from a landmark, glance back for a look at the other side of it close up. It may look very different.

Often, the most noticeable landmarks are things that don't belong, like bits of trash. (You might pick up the trash on your return route.)

If a landmark is not large and obvious, noting its depth will help you find it again. Maintaining a constant depth for most of your route simplifies navigation.

Along the way from A to B to C, check your compass or the direction to the sun. Often, a reef or wall curves gradually. You may think you're swimming in a straight line and in fact make a circle.

Learn to identify the common corals, sponges, fans and other stationary life forms where you dive. When you can put a name to something and know its identifying characteristics (like that silver Lexus), it is more likely to stick in your mind.

Safety Corner Cont.

You're Lost: Now What?

You got excited trying to follow that shark, got "off the trail" and now you don't know where you are? The first step is to relax and check your gas supply and your depth.

You probably haven't paid any attention to your compass during the chase. But if you know that shallower water has been to the west and you're now over the deep blue, go west to find bottom. Likewise, if the bottom is now shallower than before, go east. Your goal is to find bottom at the same depth as before you wandered. If you haven't been using a compass, the direction of the sun may give the same clue.

Once you find bottom at the depth of your last landmark, return in the direction from which you came (putting the reef on your left instead of your right, for example) until you recognize a landmark.

If you don't recognize anything in a reasonable time, stop a moment and take a deep breath. Are you sure you're going in the right direction? Are you sure you're at the right depth? If all else fails, surface—slowly and with a safety stop—and get your bearings before wandering too far.

Tips

Nature's hint: Ripples in a sandy bottom normally parallel the shore. The steeper side of the ripple will be toward shore.

If you give up and surface to look for the dive boat, don't assume the first boat you see is yours. More than one diver has swum off in the wrong direction, to the wrong boat. Scan the full horizon, take a compass bearing to your target and descend to about 15 feet to make the transit.

Debrief yourself when you're back on the dive boat. Why did you get lost? Where did you get lost? What can you do better next time?

Information Broad



For crew names, dives of the day and for the week

Technology to the Rescue

You might think there's a technological solution to underwater navigation. There isn't one yet, though there have been attempts.

Ultrasonic locator. This is the most successful electronic navigation aid for divers so far. The Uwatec "Neverlost" and the Desert Star "Scout" are two examples. Each includes two parts: a transmitter you attach to the boat, the anchor or wherever, and a receiver you carry with you. The receiver tells you the direction, and in some cases the distance, back to the transmitter. It's good for finding your way back to a fixed point, but crude for any other purpose, like figuring out the bearing to the reef. Look for a review of all these devices in an upcoming issue.

GPS. Sorry. GPS, which reads signals from an array of satellites, is phenomenally accurate on the surface, but the signals are too weak to penetrate the water.

Digital compass. It's really a magnetic compass, but with a digital readout. The face displays "240?" for example, instead of an arrow. Several of these have been introduced in the last few years, but have failed to take hold in the market.

The Mystery of the Compass

Actually, it's simple. Every compass has only three parts: a rotating dial that always points north, a body that you can point wherever you want, and an adjustable ring (the "bezel") that's just a memory aid for the difference between the first two.

Numbers may be marked on the dial or the body—it doesn't matter which. Their only purpose is to measure the difference between where the dial points and where the body points. Typically, you rotate the bezel until its mark aligns with the north mark on the dial. To find the same course again you don't need to remember a number, just align the marks.

Tips

Make sure the dial is rotating freely. If you don't hold the compass level, the dial will bind up and not give a true reading. To check, rotate the compass body in your hand. The dial should not move.

Fine-tune your buoyancy before taking a compass reading. If you are fighting to maintain your position in the water column, you will be distracted and more likely to get a false reading.

Safety Corner Cont.

The back of your instrument console may not be the best place to mount your compass. The high-pressure hose is often short and always stiff, and can make it harder to hold the compass level and point the body accurately. Try mounting it on your slate or on your wrist or holding it in your hand (clip it to a retractor).□

Part of the Crew



Cara and Shasta

Bluegrass Dive Club 2004 Calendar

October

- 12, Tuesday Club Meeting
- 26, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 29, Friday Newsletter Deadline
- 30, Saturday LSSC Halloween Party

November

- 9, Tuesday Club Meeting/Dinner (Elections)
- 30, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

December

- 11, Saturday Club Christmas Party

2004 BGDC Officer's & Staff

Mark Kidd, President	266-2276
Carol Call, Co-Vice President	253-3992
Dan Miller, Co-Vice President	948-5133
Bob Shepard, Secretary	263-0165
Kit Hudson, Treasurer	873-4974
Doug Geddes, Divemaster	224-3197
Rick Stephan, Safety Office	223-3719
Mike McCann, Webmaster	255-3937
John Geddes, Undercurrents Editor	223-7926

Co-Vice President's Report

By Dan Miller and Carol Call



We've had 4 new members join the club recently and 2 members (Richard Brinkman & Kevin Culp) that have renewed. New members are:

Patrick Buxton
Hays Ellis
Nelson & Lisa Griffin
Sybil Cheap

From The Secretary

By Robert Shepard



Regular Meeting Minutes

Kit gave the treasurer's report. As of 9/1/04 there is \$8,217.95 in both the unreserved and reserved funds.

We welcomed Sybil Cheap as a new member to the club.

Doug Geddes discussed the 2005 Yap/Truk trip. The trip is full, but a standby list has been created.

The 2005 Cozumel dive trip still has space available. Anyone wanting to go on the trip should give a deposit to Kit.

The Nov. meeting will be a dinner meeting and the elections will be held. Anyone wishing to be on the board should notify Mark.

The annual Christmas party will be 12/11 at Mark & Stella's home.

Tom Myers showed slides of his trip to the Galapagos.

Sept. EC Meeting Minutes

Mark, Mike, Dan, Kit, Rick, Doug and I met at Doug's shop.

From The Secretary Cont.

The 2005 Truk/Yap trip has an opening. There is still a waiting list for anyone interested in going.

11/15 is the due date for the final Truk trip payment.

38 people have signed up for the 2005 Cozumel trip.

Voting will be held during the Nov. general meeting.

The Nov. dinner meeting will be at the Racquet Club.

The EC voted to purchase a DVD/VCR player. □

Just a beautiful ending



to a great day of diving

LSSC Halloween Party

Halloween Party
Saturday, October 30th, 2004
8:00 pm

It's Halloween Party Time again!

The annual LSSC Halloween Party will be held at the Palomar Hills Clubhouse from 8:00 pm till midnight. Tickets are \$8.00 in advance, \$10.00 at the door.

Wear your scariest/goofiest/most elegant costume you can find. Costumes will be judged and prizes awarded.

The club is providing a DJ, snacks, soft drinks, decorations, and good cheer. BYOB, please.

Volunteers are needed to help decorate the clubhouse for this event.

For more information, to purchase advance tickets, or to volunteer, contact Cathy Greer, c.greer@insightbb.com, (859) 224-1162.

Some of the MOAV Guys gearing-up



Directions to the Palomar Hills Clubhouse:

- From New Circle Road, take Harrodsburg Road south.
- Turn right onto Man O' War Boulevard (Palomar shopping center will be on your right).
- At the first traffic light turn left on Lyon Drive into the Palomar Hills subdivision.
- Continue on Lyon Drive as it curves to the left.
- Turn right, after passing the fountain, on Palmetto.
- The clubhouse is the first building on the right.

As we are debarking



Captain Lenny and wife Cara, operations manager