



www.bluegrassdiveclub.com

January's Club Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 11th
Time: 7:30-PM (business)
 Social at 7
Location: The Racquet Club
 3900 Crosby Rd.
Program: John's DVD in Chuuk

President's Message



2005 looked like it was going to be smoother sailing than 2004 but that was not the case.

Just about the time we see hurricane recovery efforts starting to make headway in the Caribbean we have the tidal wave shatter the lives of so many in the Indian Ocean.

Let us pray for the lost and those living who will bear the suffering for many years.

On a happier note the Kidd Family loved having the 50 or so to our home for the Christmas party. We had about half a dozen new faces this year and missed some of the party regulars. Plans are underway for next year, look for some changes, we hope the construction was not too much of an inconvenience.

Remember Saturday January 8th we will be going to Somerset to freshen up our dive skills, check equipment, and fellowship at Divers Den Dive Shop.

The heated indoor pool will be open from 2 - 4 PM.

If you would like to carpool or convoy we will leave McDonald's located near Wal-Mart on Nicholasville and Man-O-War around noon.

Finally, we will have John Geddes give a program on his October Micronesia trip at the January meeting. This is a must see audio visual experience for those preparing for the official club trip and anyone interested in corals, marine life, and the greatest wreck dives in the world.

Look forward to seeing you! □

Mark

New for 2005

By Rick Stephan

Remember your first open water dive class? We all learned some hand signals to make sure we could get some information to and from our buddies, but it pretty much was basic - are you OK? I'm OK. I'm low on air, etc.

As we became more experienced, especially if we had a regular buddy, we developed our own "language" to indicate something we had seen or wanted. The problem happens when we go on a club trip and get paired with a buddy for the first time. Communication is limited to the basics, or anything we can develop between the dock and dive site.

To provide a better way of managing this, we're going to start a new program at the regular dive club meetings. Each month we will present a few new signs so that BGDC members will all be exposed to the same signs and will be able to communicate better underwater. Come to the meeting and expand your "vocabulary." □

Divemaster's Report

By Doug Geddes



CHUUK/YAP 2005

Time to pack your bags, it is finally here. It is hard to believe that a year and a half has gone by so quickly. Remember to double check your passport and make sure you have 6 months left on it. I guess everyone has sent back their forms to Ultimate Dive Travel. If not, you might want to call me. Don't forget about Sat. the 8th if you want to check out your gear before we go. John Geddes will be talking to us about the do's and don'ts about what we need to bring or not bring along with us. We should be getting our packet from Ultimate Dive Travel and I will be handing tickets and such out at the next meeting. You out of town travelers will be sent your tickets, if warranted. Remember to pack only what you need. Luggage space on dive boats is limited. Any questions drop me a line or give me a call.



Autumn Geddes at the piano for a little Christmas music

COZUMEL 2005

This trip is also fast approaching. It is still not too late to jump on, but time is about up for getting on our air travel portion. We will have to release them by Jan. 14th. We still have around 40 persons going and this number seems to change weekly. Check out our website if you have an interest. I will be needing to put together a rooming list soon. If your form didn't specify a roommate, I will try to match you up as best as I can. I will forward a list to those persons before I send it in and let you OK your mate. You couples have no choice, sorry. You can wife swap there.

If you get bored with ocean diving while there, you might consider a side trip to Cancun and do a Cenote dive in a clear open cave setting. I tried it for my first time while in Cancun a month ago and loved it. (We will have to put together a trip for sometime in the future) I will bring in a CD to show what it is like at a future meeting. Any questions about the trip, drop me a line or give me a call.

THIALAND M/V AQUA ONE

If anyone is interested, Ultimate Dive Travel sent me a special they had on the liveaboard out of Puket, Thailand. The dates are Feb. 21 - 28. Of course this was sent to me before the earthquake, but is still available and should be fine to dive there now. The damage in this area was not as great as some of the others. The price for the week was \$2695.00 including air out of LA. If anyone has an interest, drop me a line. I checked about hooking it on to our trip to Chuuk, but the cost was way too expensive since it was in the Indian Ocean and really not that close to Chuuk. Oh, well a later time. But, anyone that might have time, check it out.

GALAPAGOS 2006

Not much more to say about this trip that hasn't been said already. If you haven't put your name on the waiting list, you might want to. We have had someone already do so. You don't want to get too far down on the list, if you really want to go. Check out the website for details. We will give out more information about our travels, as we get closer. Any questions drop me a line or give me a call. □

The Editor's Notes

By John Geddes



A "Big Thanks" to Mark and Stella for hosting the Christmas Party. It was great to come together during this time of the year to celebrate the Season, share in food, drink and fellowship as some of this month's pics will indicate.

□

From the Treasurer

By Kit Hudson



2005 Membership dues to be paid in January.

Student (with student id).....	\$	10.00
Single & Family (1 diver).....		30.00
Family (2 or more divers).....		40.00

Renewal: Please send payment to the address listed below. And 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 or Mail to: Bluegrass Dive Club
% Kit Hudson
231 Stourbridge Rd.
Versailles, KY 40383
(606) 873-4974
kithuds@iglou.com

New Members: Fill out & mail enclosed form at the end of this newsletter. □

Safety Corner

By Rick Stephan



Note: All right folks! 2004 is history and a new dive year is ahead of us. Time to get ready for diving again! This Internet article focuses on how to prevent and/or treat symptoms that may affect different areas of your head – ears, sinuses, eyes, and brain. Each area can be affected in ways making your dive less safe or even impossible. By following these tips, you can enjoy the dive better and keep yourself out of harm's way.

Now That's Using Your Head

Dive better and safer by taking care of your noggin
By John Francis



Remember, safe diving is fun!

Equalizing Made Easy

What to do if the old "pinch your nose and blow gently" isn't getting the job done? Start sooner. "By the time you feel pressure in your ear it's almost too late," says Ned Branch, a PADI instructor. "You need to start equalizing before you feel the need for it."

Remember that equalizing is a matter of opening your Eustachian tubes, those hair-like pathways that run between your middle ear spaces and throat. The tubes have one-way valves at their entrance, and blowing very slightly against pinched nostrils or moving the right throat muscles will open them. But if you wait until the pressure on the tubes is too great, they clamp shut, making it impossible to equalize.

Here's how to make equalizing easier. First, check that your Eustachian tubes can open before you even get in the water. All you have to do is swallow. If you hear a "click" or "pop" in each ear, you know you'll be able to equalize, because that pop is a puff of air that's been forced by your tongue up a Eustachian tube and is hitting an eardrum. No "pop" means the tube is blocked.

Next, equalize repeatedly in the hours before you get in the water, by swallowing while pinching your nose. Blow gently if you need to, but don't brutalize those tiny tubes, as that can cause mucus to secrete and block them.

In the water, the last thing to do before leaving the surface is to "prepressurize" your ears with a gentle pinch-and-swallow or pinch-and-blow. That gets you a little ahead of the game, and you need that head start because the pressure on your ears builds fastest in the first few feet of descent. Try to equalize at two feet and again at four feet down. If you're not equalized at six feet down, you may not be able to equalize at all.

Equalizing is also easier when you descend feet first, as rising air in your Eustachian tubes automatically moves toward your ears, not away from them. And if you look up toward the surface, you'll stretch your neck and help open the tubes.

Safety Corner Cont.

Swimmer's Ear

Got an itch inside your ear? It's otitis externa, or "swimmer's ear," an infection of the outer ear canal caused because constant immersion washed away the waxy film that normally protects it. Now the skin stays wet and starts growing bacteria. After itching comes redness and pain. There are both prescription and over-the-counter eardrops to prevent and treat it, by drying the skin and killing the bacteria. Divers Alert Network reports divers have had luck with a home brew: a 50/50 mix of white wine vinegar and isopropyl alcohol. Tilt your head, fill one ear, and hold it there for five minutes, then do the other ear. If this doesn't work, or if pain spreads to your jaw and cheek, see a doctor.



Noel and Kit

Diving with a Cold

You've got the sniffles but you didn't fly to Cozumel just for the nightlife. Can you dive? First question, can you equalize your ears? Often, a cold means mucus that blocks your Eustachian tubes. Obviously, if you can't equalize, you can't dive.

And are your sinuses blocked? They're the same problem: Sinuses are air spaces in your skull connected to the outside world by passages that can become blocked. A sinus "squeeze," on descent or ascent, can be painful. You'll feel it behind your eyes or just above them, or just above your incisors.

Second, what medication are you taking for the cold? All of them have side effects that hit some of us harder than others. Antihistamines can make you drowsy while decongestants like pseudoephedrine can cause excitability, restlessness and dizziness. These effects can be magnified by pressure at depth.

There's another problem with decongestants. When they wear off they often have a rebound effect and cause more congestion than before you

took them. This could cause a "reverse squeeze" if it wears off as you begin your ascent. Use a decongestant that works for 12 hours to be sure it won't wear off when you make a second or third dive later in the day.

Remember this advice when diving with a cold: (1) be sure you can equalize your ears; (2) minimize your medications and take only those meds that you know you don't have an unusual reaction to; (3) keep your dives a bit shallower and shorter; and (4) descend and ascend slowly to make equalizing as gradual as you can.

Vision Correction

Nearsighted? Farsighted? Most two-window and four-window masks can be fitted with corrective lenses, either from the manufacturer (usually in 1-diopter increments) or can be custom-made to your prescription. SeaVision USA, www.seavisionusa.com, is one source. The company even makes bifocal lenses.) By the way, you don't want the same prescription as your glasses for land, because the water itself acts as another lens. Choose lenses 10 percent stronger if you're nearsighted, 10 percent weaker if you're farsighted.

You can also get color correction. Water filters out much of the red, orange and yellow frequencies, so a lens which filters out some green and blue (it will look pinkish-red) will restore the correct color balance. Color correction is not as important for your eye as it is for your camera, however, because your brain will go pretty far to restore the correct color balance and boost the red and orange frequencies without the help of a colored lens.

Can you dive safely with contact lenses? Lasik? You can dive with either. Be extra careful about contaminating your soft contact lenses, as seawater under the microscope looks like something out of a bio-warfare lab. After Lasik surgery heals, pressure (from depth) is no problem. However, the older radial keratotomy (RK) surgery, still used for some conditions, weakens the cornea, and there is at least a theoretical risk it could collapse if you have a serious mask squeeze.

Nitrogen Narcosis

Though Cousteau called it "rapture of the deep," probably no one has tried to kiss a fish because of nitrogen narcosis. Forgetfulness and confusion are more typical signs, with some silliness or anxiety, depending on your mood. It is caused by breathing any inert gas under pressure, though

Safety Corner Cont.

some gases are more narcotic than others. Helium is less narcotic than nitrogen, and xenon is so narcotic, even at the surface, that it's used as a surgical anesthetic.

No one knows exactly how narcosis (or anesthesia, for that matter) actually works, but it apparently interferes with the chemical-electrical signals passing between nerve cells in your brain. Anesthesia, in fact, is probably the best description of what nitrogen narcosis is doing to you: silliness, forgetfulness and confusion are normal way stations before anesthetic unconsciousness. Not the best state of mind for diving. Narcosis is entirely dependent on depth, though each diver may have a different narcotic threshold, and various drugs can inhibit or promote it.

You can't really prevent nitrogen narcosis other than by staying shallow. You can make it go away pretty quickly just by ascending, sometimes only 10 feet or so.

What's the depth where narcosis is likely to be noticeable? About 100 feet, though tests show some divers to be slightly narcosed at only 30 feet.



Underwater Panic

Though panic may be the single greatest danger to divers, it is relatively easy to avoid. A panic attack almost never arrives full-blown and unannounced. Panic is usually caused by having to deal with a sequence of individually small problems, each of which leaves a residue of stress behind to accumulate. At some point the accumulation reaches the breaking point.

For divers, the stress-building usually starts before you get wet. For example, on the way to the dive site, you hit a traffic jam, then find the parking lot is full and discover you've forgotten your after-dive jacket--and where's your C-card? Then in the rush to gear up, you make mistakes, jump in, find

the water is freezing and the vision is lousy. Next, your tank valve gets caught in kelp and your mask floods. If you begin to feel overwhelmed and panicky, the mask flood wasn't the cause, and neither was the kelp nor the traffic jam. All those stresses together caused your panic. To prevent panic, you should anticipate and avoid the accumulation of stress-causing problems.

The pre-dive stresses are easiest to avoid. For example, don't start the dive day tired, late and poorly organized.

Once in the water, the best stress avoiders are to breathe deeply and swim slowly. Pay careful attention to your buoyancy control because if you can remain stationary and you can breathe, you can take more time to deal with, say, a flooded mask. And when in doubt, stop. Take a deep breath. Calmly think the situation through. And then, and only then, act.



When Diving Gives You A Headache

An occasional headache is probably meaningless, but what if you almost always surface with pain? There can be lots of reasons.

A dull, nonthrobbing ache in the back of your head is often a neck problem caused, for example, by a tank mounted so high on your BC that you have to bend your neck an odd way to keep from hitting the valve with your head. Sharp pains above, below and behind your eyes are likely a sinus squeeze, maybe a side effect of a cold. Failing to equalize your mask can cause a headache, as well as the bloodshot eyes and bleeding nose that so alarm your dive buddy. Cinching the mask strap too tightly can also cause a headache.

Cold water can also be the culprit in causing your headache. Your head chills more easily than the rest of your body because there's so much blood flow just under your scalp and so little fat protecting it.

Caffeine and tobacco can cause headaches under water, even when they don't on the surface. It's

Safety Corner Cont.

possible that pressure at depth magnifies their effects, as it does for many drugs. Dehydration is another cause of a headache.

A more serious cause of headache is carbon dioxide retention. Maybe you had to fin very hard so your breathing became short and rapid. Those short, rapid breaths mostly recycle "dead" air and don't wash out CO₂. When you're working hard, it's important to force yourself to take deep breaths. □

Bluegrass Dive Club 2005 Calendar

[Print out and post in your favorite place](#)

January

- 8, Saturday Divers Den 2 - 4pm
- 11, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- 25, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 25, Tuesday Newsletter Deadline 11pm
- 31, Monday Start Yap & Chuuk Trip

February

- 8, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- 29, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

March

- 1, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm
- 8, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- ??, Saturday Banquet
- 29, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

April

- 1, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm
- 12, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- 26, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 29, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm

May

- 7, Saturday Club's Derby Party
- 10, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- 31, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

June

- 3, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm
- 14, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- 28, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 7/1, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm

July

- 1, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm
- 12, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- 26, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 29, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm

August

- 9, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- ??, Saturday Club Pig Roast
- 30, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

September

- 2, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm
- 13, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
- 27, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 30, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm

October

- 11, Tuesday Club Dinner / Meeting
- 25, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 28, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm

November

- 8, Tuesday Club Meeting (Elections)
- 22, Tuesday E.C. Meeting
- 25, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm

December

- 10, Saturday Club Christmas Party
- 30, Friday Newsletter Deadline 11pm

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

