



The Official Newsletter of  
THE SCUBA SPORTS CLUB

August 2006

## ANCHOR LINE

The current edition of *Undercurrent* published an article that was a compilation of prior *Undercurrent* articles, stories from divers that have been adrift at sea and an article that was published in the British magazine *Diver*. Though most divers that get separated from their dive boats are recovered within a few hours facing conditions of hypothermia, dehydration, high swells, severe weather conditions and panic can take their toll.

So what should you do if you find yourself adrift at sea? Reviewing the *Undercurrent* article the following guidelines are provided:

**1. Stay together.** If you surface away from the boat stay with the other divers. However, be careful in heavy swells as there is a risk of injury from bouncing off one another's equipment. Keep your equipment on – divers have reported their position in the water was more comfortable with the tank, inflated BCD and weight belt in place. Obviously, one needs to use their discretion depending on the circumstances.

**2. Protect yourself from the elements.** The biggest danger divers face is the cold. Remember from your basic open water class that body heat loss is 25

times greater in water than it is in air. Recognize that your exposure suit is a type of shelter protecting you from heat loss. If diving with a hood or other head protection don't remove it. Avoid motions that increase your blood circulation, because they increase body heat loss as well. If possible, assume a fetal position, raise your knees, cross your legs, tuck in your elbows and cover your face if you can. Huddle with your buddy to keep warm. This not only encourages face to face contact it is good for morale and improves your chances of being spotted.

Sunstroke is also a danger. Try to shade your head and protect your eyes from the bright reflection of the sun on the water. Don't drink the salt water as it will increase your rate of dehydration. Do not retain urine. As difficult as it may seem try to remain calm and focus on the positive.

**3. Location.** Don't swim for shore unless you know you can make it. Maintain maximum buoyancy to float high. Use whatever means possible to display your position as there are many devices on the market for attracting attention in an emergency situation, i.e.,

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## ANCHOR LINE, CONTINUED

safety sausages, strobes, whistles, air operated audio alerts, reflective CDs, etc. If the water is shallow, attach weights to any line you may have and drop it to the bottom to act as an anchor and keep you from drifting.

**4. Don't Get Lost in the First Place.** Dramatic changes in currents, boats breaking down or becoming untied are main reasons divers get separated from their boats. Add to that diver error – not remembering how to get back, running out of air too distant from the boat or failing to carry any signaling device.

To prevent yourself from being left behind consider:

a. Ask another diver on board to ensure that you are on the boat before it departs and offer to do the same for him.

b. If you and your buddy plan to stray from the dive leader during the dive, let the dive leader and captain know. Create a directional plan, including a time you plan to return to the boat and let the dive leader and Captain know.

c. Don't dive if you aren't comfortable with the conditions.

d. Carry rescue aides. Signaling flags – a day-glo yellow pennant was consistently spotted at more than 1.2 miles to 1.8 miles. Surface marker bouys (SMBs) safety sausages come in different colors and lengths, manual or tank fed inflation. Rescue streamers which are brightly colored and lie on the surface of the water and are visible to the naked eye from an altitude of 5,000 feet.

Powerful lights and strobes are vital when it's dark. Lights that produce very bright beams are visible 2.5 miles in daylight and up to 5.4 miles in darkness. Don't forget the whistles, horns, reflective CDs that were mentioned earlier.

e. Another option available is brightly colored dive gear. Consider purchasing yellow or orange gear or a brightly colored hood. Also, brightly colored fins can be waved to attract attention. The object here is to be seen, not make a fashion statement.

f. EPIRBs. Emergency position indicating radio beacons are small electronic devices that transmit distress signals to aircraft and ships and are becoming standard issue at remote dive sites. Expensive, but I imagine the price will drop eventually.

The bottom line is to know where you're diving, who you're diving with, have the proper equipment and training for the location, communication with the dive staff personnel and the other divers on the boat. Make sure the other divers will recognize your absence rather than letting the boat depart without you. Should you get left behind, following the guidelines in this article may help you survive until rescued.

**Don Reynolds  
President**



**The Official Dive Club of  
BENEATH THE SEA**

# AUGUST MEETING

**8:00 pm, Wednesday, August 9, 2006**  
**Suzanne Garrett of the**  
**environmental organization**  
**OCEANA**

**Suzanne Garrett** works for deep water coral protection as project manager for Oceana's Stop Destructive Trawling campaign. She earned her Master's degree in Marine Policy from the University of Miami, where her research focused on shallow water corals conservation. She began diving four years ago, when she was certified in South Florida. She is now a PADI advanced diver, with plans to continue through Divemaster.

**OCEANA CAMPAIGNS TO PROTECT AND RESTORE THE WORLD'S OCEANS.** Their teams of marine scientists, economists, lawyers and advocates win specific and concrete policy changes to reduce pollution and to prevent the irreversible collapse of fish populations, marine mammals and other sea life.

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## UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

**August** – Canoe trip on the Delaware River, Saturday TBA. TSSC Picnic @ Todd's Point 8/23 (a repeat of a terrific party!)

**September** – Regatta/B-B-Q Saturday 9/2. Ft. Wetherill 9/24. White Water Rafting. (Dates to be announced)

**October** – Pasta Night before the meeting 10/11. Bike trip Saturday 10/7

**November** – Harvest Brunch, Pete's Saloon Sunday 11/5.

**December** – Wine Tour 12/15 -> 12/17 Dec Social/Holiday Party Saturday 12/9.

# SUMMER PICNIC

Our club picnic will be held in Greenwich again this year on August 26th. This event is always a highlight of the summer, very well attended and lots of great food.

Tickets are now available; you can't get into the park without one, and will be available on a first come first serve basis. Ticket prices are \$10.00 each, children under 5 are free. As information, the price of the admission for the park ticket and reservation for the picnic area has increased.

I'll have tickets available at the club meeting Wednesday evening or if you send a check to the address below, for the number of tickets you want, I'll return them by mail.

Don Reynolds  
5 Church Street  
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

This is always a fun day and I hope to see you there.

Additionally, our picnic is a follow up on TSSC-BTS Day at Dutch Springs scheduled for August 20th. That should be another great event you shouldn't miss.

**Don Reynolds**  
**President**

# DIVE SCHEDULE

Date	Location
Aug 20	Dutch Springs, Bethlehem, PA
Aug 27-28	<i>Giant Stride</i> , Rye, NH
Sept 9-11	St. Lawrence Seaway
Sept 24	Ft. Wetherill
Oct 15-16	<i>Giant Stride</i>

## TSSC-BTS DAY

DUTCH SPRINGS QUARRY  
August 20<sup>th</sup>

Join us on Sunday August 20 for a day of diving, water sports in the aqua park, The Sky Challenge climbing wall and high ropes course, BBQ and just a general day of fun at Dutch Springs in PA's Lehigh Valley.

We've got the pavilion reserved for the day and grills are available. Ocean Pals will be setting up their booth so we can let everyone know what TSSC and BTS are looking forward to and trying to accomplish in the future. Bring a salad, desert or something delicious to share with your dive buddies.

Hook up with other club members and carpool. Bring your families and friends so we can storm the park ! Wear your TSSC or BTS T-Shirts and make a

statement. Our club banner will be flying from the pavillion!

Remember that anyone utilizing the activities at Dutch is required to sign a waiver when entering the park. The waiver can be downloaded at the Dutch Springs website [www.dutchsprings.com](http://www.dutchsprings.com)

This is the first time the club and BTS have joined together to celebrate a day at Dutch Springs. Some of us are heading out on Saturday so we can set up bright and early Sunday morning at the park. There are hotels/motels in the vicinity as well as camping at Dutch but reservations are suggested. Hopefully, we'll see you there.

## BONAIRE'S WILD SIDE

Last year while waiting on line at Bonaire's airport to depart, I started talking to the gentleman in front of me. He was wearing a t-shirt from Larry's Wild Side Diving. He started telling me about Larry, an ex-navy SEAL diver and captain from Canada. Larry has customized a Zodiac boat to handle dive trips on Bonaire's windward side, where nobody seems willing to dive. He told me about the schools of tarpon, dozens of eagle rays, and large turtle he saw. To me it sounded exciting and something different, so I was determined to look Larry up on my next trip there.

I hadn't planned on returning to Bonaire so soon but our niece had decided she finally wanted to become a certified scuba diver. So we thought what better place to take her to than Bonaire for her first experience diving. Our niece is a

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## BONAIRE, CONT.

teacher whose vacation time is limited to the high season; even so Bonaire is still inexpensive. While at BTS this year I was walking around and I saw a booth with whom else but Larry himself in the flesh. We got to talking and I made reservations for the 6 of us that traveled together. I booked an afternoon with 2 dives for \$100.00.

After 4 days of shore diving we were ready to make our way to the wild side. We drove over to the Sorobon fishing docks, at the southern end of Lac Bay where we met Larry and his dive master, Martin. The diving can be quite challenging in the rough waters outside of the reef at Lac Bay so we got an extensive dive briefing about how we would do our entries into the water and for climbing back on board. Larry handed out safety sausages to each of us in case we got separated from the group. We geared up while the boat was at the dock and were given our seat assignments before we disembarked. For the entry into the water, when Larry pointed at us, we did a simple back-roll off the side of the boat. Our first dive was a drift dive at a maximum depth of 80ft. During the dive we saw the biggest turtle I have ever seen in Bonaire. It was a nice relaxing dive in a moderately moving current. We saw a few more turtles (one just seemed to be sleeping under a ledge), half dozen green morays, and a couple of eagle rays towards the end of our dive. After our safety stop we ascended one at a time to the Zodiac which was waiting for us. The boat has sections on each side that deflate and a ladder is thrown over. This is done with such precision you would think you were

diving on the other calm side of the island.

For the surface interval Larry takes you for the short ride into the calm bay and onto shore where we relax and talk about the exciting dive we just had and what our options are for the second dive. We chose what Larry calls the Blue Hole. It is a 45ft deep depression that you can swim all the way around in about 40 minutes, making for a perfect dive. The first thing you notice while descending is the dozens of enormous tarpon that are hanging around. They seem to be in a transcendental state, letting you swim right up to them. As you swim around you look into every opening in the reef and see a large green moray in their usual menacing pose with their mouth open. Just before we were about to end our dive we were treated to a sighting of two African pompanos cruising through the hole. They were a male and female, both a couple of feet in length. The male had beautiful streamers on top of his dorsal fins that ran the length of his body. According to our divemaster Martin, seeing one is a rare occurrence, so we were especially privileged to see a pair of them.

These are the kinds of dives where I wish I were an underwater photographer. I actually had Don's Reefmaster camera that he had loaned me, but I forgot to open the lens cover before the dive. I clearly have a long way to go as an underwater photographer.

I am looking forward to my next trip to Bonaire. I plan on doing the early morning dives with Larry. I feel that there is a greater chance of seeing even

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## **BONAIRE, CONT.**

more marine life on that side of the island returning from a night out on the reef. I usually don't like to return to the same destination so often but Bonaire has so much to offer, from the numerous dive sites all along the coast, to Washington State Park at the north end of the island, to the world class wind surfing out of Lac Bay. It is a quite island without much night life (which is perfect for us after a day of diving).

You can visit his website for more information.

<http://www.larryswildsidediving.com/>

**Jim Sacci**