



Neptunes Sounding Newsletter

Calendar 2018

2019 Calendar

- 1/1/2019 Club Sober Up
Dive, Pleasure Bay
- 1/8 General Meeting: Discussion of
amendments to Club by-laws
regarding awards
- 1/15 Board Meeting
- 1/22 Diving NC Wrecks, by Rob
Robison; newsletter assembly
- 1/26 Annual Banquet at Common
Market, Quincy
- 2/5 General Meeting:
- 2/12 Board Meeting
- 2/19 Program TBD, Newsletter
assembly
- 3/5 General Meeting
- 3/9-10 Boston Sea Rovers 65th
Anniversary Annual Clinic,
Doubletree Hotel Danvers
- 3/12 Board Meeting
- 3/19 Diving the Philippines by Rob
Robison, Newsletter assembly

ACTIVITIES, ANNOUNCEMENTS, & REMINDERS

• **Dues are due!** Please bring or send a **\$35.00** check, **payable** to the **South Shore Neptunes**, to the next meeting if you haven't done so already. You **cannot vote** without being paid up for 2019!

• **January 1, 2019. Sober Up Dive Pleasure Bay**

• **Jan 26, Annual Banquet at The Common Market (Quincy),**
Cost: \$33.00 pp. cash or checks, payable to South Shore
Neptunes

• **Bonaire Club Dive Trip:** Blackie announced we should save our \$ because he's planning a club dive trip to Bonaire for sometime in the spring of 2020. Details will be spread upon the club at a later date.

• **Underwater Rugby News update by Jay Theriault:** The Boston

Narwhals placed 11th out of 15 teams in the men's division. The Boston team put on a good showing against stiff competition. The team had a good time and got exposure to high-level international competition. The Narwhals were one of only a few teams bringing a coed team into the



men's division with a few members over the age of 60 years old against much younger and stronger competition. Web Page to Champions Cup Berlin and detailed game scores: <www.uwr24.de/championscup> for more photos and videos of the UWR Champions Cup in Berlin.

The next Underwater Rugby Tournament will be played locally in Quincy at the Lincoln Hancock Pool on 2/16,17/2019. The Narwhals will be playing for a first place win to return to Berlin in 2019. Spectators are welcome to come and cheer on the Narwhals and check out the matches, which will be going on all day on both the 16th and 17th of February.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER DIVES

So, You Want to Dive in the Winter, Huh?

Dec. 9 Gull Cove (Portsmouth) RI. This story began a week ago when I received a dive request from Neptune Eric Cantor, who wanted to get wet on Tuesday, Friday, or Saturday this past week. We settled initially on Friday, then changed to Saturday, then not all due to work opportunities for Eric. In the meantime, Neptunes Rich Bowers and Jon Willis wanted to join us on Saturday.

Well, Saturday rolled around, the air temp had dropped to the teens, and I awoke to an email from one of the divers bailing out because of the cold. I took advantage of the opportunity to cancel the dive with the other diver because I had too much going on anyway. I rescheduled it for Sunday morning at Gull Cove (Portsmouth) RI, when Peter Ninh, who is recovering from a bad back injury from a fall off his ladder, was available to beach master for us. Sunday also was a day that Phil LoCicero, a potential new Neptune who has been itching to stay wet this late fall and maybe into the winter, could join in the fun and discover the exhilaration of diving into sub 40° water, too.

At 830 AM on Sunday Dec. 9, 2018, 3 divers—Phil LoCicero, Neptune Rich Bowers and I— assembled at Gull Cove eager to take the plunge, assisted by two beach masters—Peter Ninh and Todd Ayotte, a diver friend of Rich Bowers. The cold being what it is caused Phil's regulator to free flow uncontrollably once he turned on his tank. No one had a spare, so he was SOL on the dive and could only watch from the beach. My recently maintained dry suit inflator hose decided to malfunction, as well, when the air was turned on. Fortunately, Rich carried a spare, and once it was changed out, I was good to go.

Those of you who know me and have followed my dry suit travails will be shocked, I mean shocked to learn that I was not only first to get suited up, but first in the water by 5-10 minutes. Rich had some issues getting into his dry suit for the first time this year and some additional equipment issues I am not aware of.

Once Rich joined me in the water, we dropped straight down into the channel. We were descending at about the same rate when all of a sudden, we weren't. Rich had disappeared. I looked up and there he was trying to drop down again. He was light on weight by about 5lb.. While this was taking place, I was working to capture the dive on digital film and snag photos of passing jellies and bottom-dwelling creatures. Of those only a Boring sponge came into view.

Back on the surface once again, I indicated I was heading back in. My ears cannot take constant up and down experiences without rebelling and refusing to clear. Rich stayed behind and tried to explore the roller coaster submarine terrain for 5-10 minutes before exiting the water, too.



Back: Todd Ayotte Rich Bowers. Front: Rob R, Phil LoCicero, Peter Ninh

His computer read 39°, mine indicated 38° and a max depth of 14'. Vis was @ 15' on the bottom beneath the water column's penumbra.

Many thanks to Peter Ninh, Phil LoCicero, and tech diver Todd Ayotte who assisted us and made all things possible Sunday morning. Also, for the first time since the first three or four dives in my new dry suit, I was completely DRY!!!!!! Wayne Gomer of Diver's Market in Plymouth deserves a shout out for that success! Thanks, Wayne!!

Dec. 15. Circleville (OH) Dive Center (Quarries). Saturday's quarry dive in Circleville's South Quarry was interesting. I checked out my camera gear the night before and discovered that I had forgotten to bring the batteries for my two strobes on the trip, so I bought some new ones. After installing them, I tested each strobe. The first one fired perfectly, but the second did not. So I turned it off and on again, but the blue indicator light turned red—fried. Fortunately, I also had brought along one of my two video cam lights in case of a strobe failure, so all was not lost. This is the second or third failure of a strobe within one year. During the dive, the second strobe died. I don't know if it was the batteries or the cable connection. I'll have to check later on today before going to the shop.



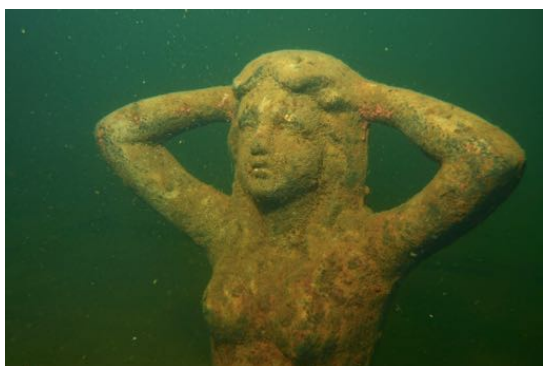
One of the nice things about diving at the Circleville Quarries is that there is a pavilion under which to set up gear and not get it sandy or dirty, and a changing shack in which to keep dry while changing. I arrived a bit early and found some beautiful Brilliant Red Chokeberries to photograph (Left) with my iPhone camera, which framed a look at the quarry we were about to dive.



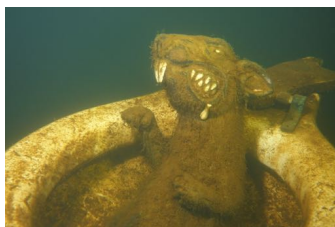
The dive itself was pretty good.

Columbus dive buddy John Skobel and I assembled our gear, suited up,

and headed down. I arrived at the underwater assembly platform first and waited—no John. I surfaced and looked for him, and seeing nothing dropped back down. Still no John, so I resurfaced once again and found him under the pavilion working on his octopus. It had free flowed and



drained more than half his tank on the way down the first time. Once he squared that away, we headed back down, and took the end of the quarry, instead circumferencing normally do. We had a nice easy 30 minute depth at 20', vis. 7-10' murky, highlighted by remains of Donn Ellerbrock beneath the ended the dive, as we began it, in the rain, was no lightning or thunder. We had the entire quarry to ourselves. Very peaceful and enjoyable.



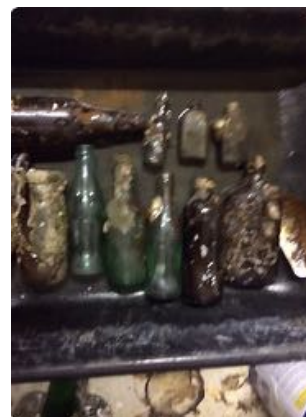
short route around the south the entire quarry like we dive in 38° water, maxing visiting the small ash pile submerged pool table. We made possible because there





Dec. 2. Back River in Hingham. *Story & photos by Chuck Zarba*

Doug Eaton, Rob Vice, and I headed for the Back River in Hingham on a drizzly Sunday morning. It was a damp day, to say the least. With air temps in the low 30s, my hands became frozen again. Haha. It is that time of year again. Vis was 0-1ft. We found the usual bottles, etc. We were just glad to get a dive in, although our dive was only 1/2 hour long. Afterwards, we headed over to Darcys for the post game.



Nov. 24 Morton's Pond, Plymouth. Who's the alien?

Text & photos by Brian and Rob. Saturday morning, with air temps in the low 20s, I met weekday dive buddy, Brian Smith, at Morton's Pond in Morton Park, Plymouth, to make a monthly dive and keep my 2 1/2 year streak of at least one dive in New England every month alive. Although unable to dive because of recent surgery, Brian agreed to diver master me so that I could hop in. Given the cold air temps and potentially cold water, I hauled out and donned my drysuit for the first time since June. I took advantage of the moment to test not only the suit, but also new Waterproof 7mm. mitts https://www.leisurepro.com/p-wpgg73md/waterproof-g1-3-finger-7mm-semi-dry-gloves-medium?gclid=Cj0KCQiA6JgBRDbARIsANfu58Eao5o9aJfrRSbe91riW8-Sy4Q6s75V3ldpRvIUUVWsl6qAC2NFPSwaAt0TEALw_wcB.



Additionally, I wanted to determine if I could use my old merino wool undergarments for warmth successfully, instead of the DUI XM450 Arctic underwear I had purchased with the suit last Christmas, and to see if I could get down with less lead. Mission accomplished on all three goals. I was able to pinpoint a leak that I had been unable to find in the spring, discovered that the warmth of the new mitts was outstanding, as was the effectiveness of my former drysuit underwear, and that I will be able to get down with even less than the 24 lbs. of lead I was

carrying, which in itself was a 6 lb. reduction from what I was using last winter with the new suit and undergarments. What a relief!

The dive itself was unremarkable except for the water temp, which had declined from 52 degrees a month ago to 35°. Vis was 15-20', and the alien was still there. Special thanks to Brian Smith for his dive-mastering on such a cold Saturday morning. Dunkin' D provided post-dive refuge.

September 2018. A Close Encounter of an Electrifying

Kind. *Story by Todd Alger; phot credit unk.* I had a very unusual dive this year that I decided to share with the club in the newsletter. The day was September 16, 2018 and it was the day of the Bay State Council competition dive. I decided that since I was driving all the way to Cape Ann to participate in the completion dive, I would get in a lobster dive before the competition dive. The competition dive was



scheduled to start at 1130am so I figured I had plenty of time for a one tank dive. Last year I caught two really nice big lobster doing the same thing so I was hopeful of getting a big one.

I got to the dive site making good time driving on a Sunday and suited up and jumped in. The water was warm and vis was good. I did not get an exact temp but I would say around 60 degrees and vis around 20 feet. The dive was my normal swim out and search for lobsters. I found and caught few nice ones but nothing I could keep. All too big or full of eggs or notched. It's funny how when you catch a bunch of eggers in a row and then you finally grab a nice lobster without eggs, you get all happy until you see the notch. At certain times of the year it feels like that is a common occurrence.

After swimming around for quite awhile I see that my air is at the point where I need to swim in. So I start swimming in at a pretty good clip but still hunting for lobster. I am swimming up a slight rise in a rock reef and then something very strange happens. I am kicking using the scissor kick technique and suddenly my left leg then my right leg hits something squishy but also substantial and flesh like. I am at first startled then in wonder then scared. What the heck could I have kicked? I am alone and anyway, what I kicked did not feel human at all. This all goes through my mind in milliseconds and my next reaction is to snap my head around to my right to see what it was that I kicked. What I see is an 8 foot torpedo ray swimming away from me at an angle. When I look at it I realize I must have kicked it in the tail area which is substantial. The torpedo ray is swimming away at an angle but I am mentally stunned and not moving at all and he is quickly out of my site. As I resume my swim in my brain is reeling. Why did the torpedo ray swim right into me? He must have been behind me at an angle and maybe thought he was swimming over me but my kicking legs were too close and contacted him. Why did he not shock me? Could he have severely injured me if he shocked me? And of course once it was over, wow that was really cool! I can't believe that just happened!



I have seen torpedo rays in Cape Ann almost every year that I dive up there. Not on every dive but normally once or twice a year and almost always buried in the sand hiding. I think I have only seen them actually swimming once or twice before. I had been looking for them all year but until that day, I had not seem one and was wondering why not. After this happened, I looked up all I could about torpedo rays and now understand the electric part and why I was not shocked. The first thing I checked out was if torpedo rays could kill humans with an electric shock and the answer is no. They can give a very painful shock but not fatal. The other key fact that I

discovered is that in order to 'charge up' to give the shock the torpedo ray must be resting. That is why I was not shocked because the torpedo ray was swimming and using up energy. I believe that is why we often see them in the sand hiding. They are 'charging up' and waiting for prey to shock and eat.

This dive reminded me that the great thing about diving and especially about diving in the ocean is that you never know what can and will happen. We as divers are sharing an environment with wild animals that can appear when you least expect it. My dive had been fun but nothing out of the ordinary, however, a five-second or less encounter made it one of my most memorable dives I have ever been on. For me this experience will motivate me to continue diving as much as I can, and when the dive does not seem to be very good, I know it may turn around at any time and become spectacular.

PARTING SHOTS

Here are a few photographic highlights of the year in diving. For the rest, you will have

to join us at
the annual
**A w a r d s
B a n q u e t ,
J a n u a r y 2 6 ,
2 0 1 9 , a t T h e
C o m m o n
M a r k e t .**



HAPPY HOLIDAYS, EVERYONE!

