



Sounding

Newsletter of the South Shore Neptunes

Calendar 2021

8/29 Club Dive 8AM at former clubhouse
 9/? BSC Treasure Hunt TBA
 9/7 General Meeting 7PM Zoom
 9/12 Club Dive 8AM at former clubhouse
 9/14 Board Meeting 7PM Zoom
 9/18 River Run 11 AM
 9/19 BSC Picnic at Stage Fort Park
 9/21 Evening Program TBA
 9/25 Club Dive 8AM from former Clubhouse
 10/2 Neptunes Flea Market **CANCELED**
 10/2-3 Boston Sea Rovers 8 AM
 10/5 General Meeting 7PM Zoom
 10/12 Board Meeting 7PM Zoom
 10/17 River Run Rain Date
 10/20-22 RAGNAR Race Fund Raiser
 10/19 Evening Program TBA
 10/24 Club Dive from former clubhouse 9 AM
 11/2 General Meeting 7PM Zoom
 11/6 (Sat) Club Dive 9AM at former clubhouse
 11/9 Board Meeting 7PM Zoom
 11/16 Evening Program TBA
 11/28 Club Dive 9AM at former clubhouse
 12/5 Club Dive 9AM at former clubhouse
 12/7 General Meeting 7PM Zoom
 12/12 Club Dive 9AM at former clubhouse
 12/14 Board Meeting 7PM Zoom

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACTIVITIES, & REMINDERS

- **Underwater Rugby hours:** Wednesday nites 8:00-9:30 PM at Westwood HS pool. Club member Tori Steffie is moving to Florida—The SSNeptunes wish her the very best—and has a Women's #10 Henderson wetsuit 7/5 mm suit and Aqualung BC available. Contact **Joe Gomes** if interested. Also, Joe Gomes is working on a history of underwater rugby and needs photo credits and any sorts of media that could help him illustrate the sport across time. He can be reached at: <jsgomes@gmail.com>

- **Club General and Board Meetings are now in-person at The Common Market in Quincy at 7PM**, but will also be available via Zoom. Club members are encouraged to attend the meetings in-person and order food or drinks before or after the meeting to support The Common Market for providing us free meeting space. **Please note: All Club activities and programs listed on the Calendar are live now**

- **Bay State Council: Angelo** has resigned as president. Jim Nannery, VP, will be in charge until new elections are held. **Blackie** will man the booth at this fall's Boston Sea Rovers Clinic.



- **Boston Sea Rovers Clinic, Oct. 2-3, 2021.** The Sea Rovers Show is an annual event with workshops, daytime presentations, and world renowned international film festival. Tickets are on sale now, and discounted hotel rooms are going fast. The festival is being held during peak tourist season in New England, so the rooms often fill up fast, and non convention rates are high. The discounted room rates will be available until August 26th or until the group block is sold out. Click here for the online program, ticket, and hotel information: <<https://bostonsearovers.com/clinic-home/>>. BTW, the Neptunes will be at the show with our own table in the exhibit hall, so drop by, say Hi, and let's talk diving!

- **Newsletter:** To help add interesting content to the newsletter during these unusual

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Calendar 2021-22, cont.

12/21 Elections

2022

- 1/1 Sober Up Dive Pleasure Bay
- 1/4 General Meeting 7PM Zoom
- 1/11 Board Meeting 7PM Zoom
- 1/16 Club Dive 9AM from former clubhouse
- 1/18 Evening Program TBA

times, please send me (robisonr25@yahoo.com; or newsletter@southshoreneptunes.org) any first-hand accounts, stories, photos, or both about your exploits as a Neptune for potential publication. Photos or clippings enhance stories, so please include them if you can. Don't forget to provide contact info in case I have questions.

- **Don't forget** to visit the **club store** at <https://bit.ly/SSN-Store> for the latest in club swag.

A Special Thank You

John Blackadar wants to extend a special thanks to all those who have helped him recently with transportation to and from the hospital and to take care of various and sundry issues. In particular, he mentioned **Bill Burchill, Paul Greene, and Bill Walker**. John's daughter, **Debra**, was hospitalized after being struck by a car while bicycling, and his wife, **Catherine**, is in the hospital to address an infection caused by gall stones. The Neptunes extend our best wishes to John and his family for a speedy and full recovery!

RECENT DIVING

Boat Dive Boston Harbor. Sunday, August 8. *Story and photos by Tommy Lo*

BMy day started with a text waking me up at 5:43 AM, (Dude wedding last night with an open bar. I did not get to bed until after 1am) RR is canceling and not bringing the Commando up to Quincy to dive with us. I got up looked in the mirror and did not like what I saw. Marie told me to stay in bed, but I said, "I'll drive the boat and I'll see how I feel when we get to the dive site."



I met **Todd, Ken, Paul, and Doug** 8:00 a.m., at the Quincy Yacht Club. We loaded up and headed out. Five divers with their gear and I was only able to go about 21Knots. It was flat calm out, the only waves came from other boats. On the way out there were numerous fish, most likely striped bass, jumping out of the water as we passed Paddock's Island. There was a boat diving off the Brewsters that looked like Al's boat; it looked as if there were divers in the water, so we kept on going and stayed away.

First dive we anchored in 20ft of water. Vis was about 15 ft, water was cold. Lots of lobster trawl lines everywhere. Had to watch you did not get

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Happy Diving

From

JOHN & KATHY BLACKADAR



Paul Greene (Previous page) and lobster haul

tangled in them. Todd, Ken, Paul, and Doug did not do well catching lobsters. I was the only one who did well. There were lots of Tautogs and a few flounders. Some small schools of perch as well. Paul got his dive flag tangled in a lobster trawl line and his flag line broke. Todd later went down and retrieved Paul's flag and what was left of his line.

Second dive was made at the [Roaring] Bulls. We anchored in 25 ft. of water. Vis was about 15 ft. The tide turned while we were in the water doing our dive. My plan was to anchor and swim into the shallows. Good thing I did not follow my plan. The first lobster I caught was a 2.8lbs (My dinner last night), so I went off and bagged some more lobsters.

After returning to QYC, Ken and I had a quick burger, while Todd, Paul, and Doug went to Darcie's to meet up with Chuck and Jeff after their dive. Ken and **Jay** met up with the other Neptunes at Darcie's, too. I would have had Chuck and Jeff meet us at QYC for burgers and beer, but I had to run and knock a few things off my Honey do list. Anyway, I'm glad this weekend is over; now I can get some sleep.

Dusk Dive at Plymouth Long Beach. Friday, August 6. *Story & photos by Rob Robison.* Prospective Neptune **Patrick Larivee** and I met at Plymouth Long Beach @ 6:30P.M in order to make an afternoon dive. The parking lot was full—cars were double and triple parked—despite the Recreation Department's having opened the beach road to the four wheel drive recreation area in order to alleviate congestion.



After gearing up and lumbering down the steep ramp and across the sand, we waded into the water to finish putting on our fins. A beach full of onlookers watched with avid curiosity. Once my dual 4500 lumens video cam lights were turned on, we submerged and the beachcombers could visualize our underwater trajectory by following the sunlight emanating from the two powerful lights.



We glided slowly across the sand, home to many small Longwrist Hermit Crabs, juvenile Green and Rock Crabs, and other tiny creatures. As we approached the dip in the beach, carved out by advancing and retreating waves, covered with various algae, seaweeds, and kelps, Patrick spied a clutch of squid eggs. Shortly thereafter, we passed on to another sand plain and spotted a mobile phone resting on top of

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the sand, which must have been deposited there by accident by some unfortunate boater, surfcaster, or bather.

We made a slight course adjustment and immediately found the rock sand line, which we followed in an easterly direction. We saw sugar kelps and Spiral Rock Weed, and a few Club Tunicates that had yet to be overtaken by the omnipresent suffocating

Compound Sea Squirts. There were more Rock Crabs, too, and on the return a lobster or two ventured out to the edges of their protective caves.

Darkness was falling, as we hit the sand once again, drawing the dive to a close, where we spotted what must have been an enormous hatching of brine shrimp that literally coated the sand in every direction. Their darting movements were so numerous and quick, it was almost dizzying to behold. A couple of ice cold Coronas and a delightfully flavorful fried shrimp plate finished off a great afternoon/evening dive. Patrick and I will be diving into it again very soon, that's for sure.



Diving Loblolly Cove. Sunday, August 1. *Story & photo by Chuck Zarba*

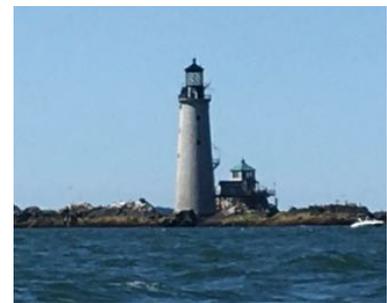
Doug Eaton, Jeff Finnell, prospective new member, **Rob Foley**, and I met in the parking lot of our former clubhouse at 7:00 AM and drove north to Rockport's Loblolly Cove, where we made two dives. Dive 1 focused on the rock structure in the center of the cove, where we saw an abundance of stripers at low tide. Dive 2 also began in the center but evolved toward the deep end where the larger bugs reside. Rob Foley found a superb extra large egger. I caught 3 keepers. We had a great time on another glorious day in the water.



L-R: Doug E, Rob Foley, Jeff Finnell, Chuck Z

Gra ves Light. Saturday, July 31. *Story & photo by Chuck Zarba*

Saturday morning clear blue sky beckoned as **Todd Alger, Tommy Lo**, and I loaded our gear on Tommy's Privateer and headed out toward Graves Light. In the early morning air seas were a bit bumpy and made for slightly uncomfortable diving on our first plunge. By the time we regrouped for dive 2, the waters had calmed significantly. We apprehended numerous lobsters—I caught 4—and brought them in for questioning, and then some.



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Two Ohio Quarry Dives. Tuesday July 27 and Weds. July 28. *Story & photos by Rob Robison.*

I packed up my dive gear and luggage grip and drove west to Columbus and Circleville to spend time having lunch and visiting with my very good friend and dive buddy, Rick Blaine, and diving with other former Ohio dive buddies, John Skobel and Chuck Niece, in the twin quarries of Circleville's Dive Center. Todd Tomlinson, the dive vendor owner, was on hand, and we caught up on the goings on as well. Also, I took advantage of this unfortunate situation to see our daughter, Lindsey, in Columbus and a few other close friends, too.

Back to the story: Unfortunately, the one we dive the most, the South Quarry, has become infested with a pernicious weed, called Bladderwort, which has choked off many sections of the quarry, limiting visibility and even clogging the water's swimability in various places within the quarry's confines. Webster's tells us bladderwort is a carnivorous plant:

"The bladderwort genus contains 220 widely distributed species of plants characterized by small hollow sacs that actively capture and digest tiny animals such as insect larvae, aquatic worms, and water fleas." Still, there are sights to behold. In some parts it would seem as though the water was as clear as in the Caribbean,



Top to bottom: Biliard rack; John S in EMT cab; Looking up thru Bladderwort jungle; John S checking out coffee mugs on motorboat



Top to bottom: John S & Chuck N; panfish; Jolly Roger Diver; John S & Rick Blaine sharing stories

while in others, it was worse than one could ever reasonably expect.

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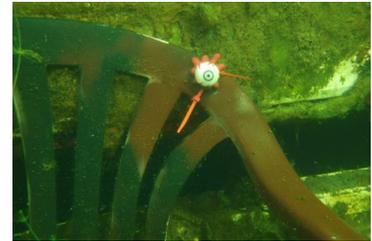


Getting in or out? View through a conduit (Below)



As we exited the water, Rick joined us, as did John Skobel's wife, **Davie**, and we all repaired to Roosters to sample its famous chicken dishes for lunch and some good old fashioned kibitzing.

The next day, John Skobel and I returned and joined up with former dive buddies John Guegold, Brent Bautista, Chuck Walters, and some others new to me, to dive the North Quarry, where the overall vis was remarkably better. Rick told me to be sure to notice all the fish he had stocked in the quarry to enhance it's appeal, which I did, in addition to the rehabbed large conduit, used for overhead environment swim-through practice, and all the other familiar



Eyeballing a chair; JS exiting a conduit (Below)



toys, so to speak.

It was wonderful seeing and diving with old friends, and above all, being there for an ailing dive buddy who is near and dear to my heart. We are all pulling for you, Rick!

The Old Post Office. Saturday, July 24. *Story & photos by Rob Robison.*

Prospective new Neptune club member, **Patrick Larivee**, and I met up at the Marshfield Town Launch in Brant Rock 's Green Harbor around 9 AM. We loaded up Commando, my 15.5' Zodiac, launched her, and headed out toward what we thought would be a great dive at

Beadle Rocks; however, we weren't the only ones trying to take advantage of the beautiful weather. By the time we reached the desired anchor spot, the area was filled with lobster boats, fishing boats trolling long lines, and others casting from their sport boats. Not wishing to find ourselves snagged by wayward lures on such a glorious Saturday morning, we turned around and motored back in the direction of Brant Rock, dropping anchor in front of the Old Post Office.



Clockwise: Dulse bouquet; Patrick Larivee, Sargassum Weed





Clockwise: FourPoint Forbes Star regenerating 5th arm; juvenile winter flounder; anchor rode and chain; "flying" Forbes Star

Patrick helped me suit up, finished his own effort quickly, and rolled in. I followed suit, executing a backward roll as well. The surge, swells, and outgoing tide made swimming the short distance to the anchor line a small effort, but once we snagged the down line, it was an easy drop along the rode to the bottom.



We found the anchor resting peacefully at the end of its 15' galvanized chain, unmolested by the tug on the line from above. I reset the flukes so they were solidly embedded in the sand, and we set off hunting for lobsters, flounder, and other sights in 21' - 23' of 68° water. The vis was a paltry 5' - 7' at best. Still, we managed to discover a number of flora and fauna: Sea Whips, Dulse clumps, Rock Weed samples, young Forbes Starfish, a dropped lobster claw--Patrick wrestled with one that could have been a keeper but was too far back in its hole to extricate without doing it harm--and a very juvenile flounder.



All too soon, we had exhausted the small reef area we had landed on and headed back to the surface. Both of us had a lot going on the rest of the day and needed to get



going. Still, we enjoyed a fine dive together and agreed to dive into it again with the next break in the weather.

Looking Back

My Dive Story. *Story & photo by Peter Speen, Life Member*

Getting Certified

Let's start at the beginning, Paul Adler certified me in NAUI's open water program back in November of 1972 when East Coast Divers was operating out of the back of his parent's garage in Brookline, MA. I'm sure his parents were surprised each month at their higher than normal electrical bill and thankful that scuba tanks weren't launched into their neighbor's back yards with "healthy fills". According to my life member plaque, with Paul's introduction, I joined the

Neptune's in 1974. The early years were special as the veteran divers including John Blackadar, Bill Burchill, Ernie LeBlanc, Dana Williams, Paul Greene, Jimmy Walker, Roy Chamberlain, Bob Massarelli and others provided lots of guidance and entertainment. I can still feel Dana Williams tapping me on the shoulder with another one of his not "politically correct" jokes. This was around the time that the City of Quincy with John Blackadar's finesse transferred the ball park building to the dive team. I remember the basement was really wet, and with the help of club members, we rehabbed the building and installed plumbing, electrical, and the beer fridge!

As a novice diver, I made my first warm water dive trip to Jamaica in 1974 with Paul Greene. We dove off the same dive boat that the author James Jones did. As told, this was his inspiration for his novel "Go to the Widow-Maker." What I clearly remember was a bounce dive to 210 ft in Montego Bay that was incredible for its visibility and demonstration of "Martini's Law". On the way down, my pressure gauge imploded and the needle stuck at 1100 psi. Needless to say, reality sobered me up when I noticed this and fortunately Paul and I landed upstairs safely.

U.S. Navy

In 1975, I enlisted in the U. S. Navy for submarine duty. After finishing basic training at Great Lakes, sub school in Groton, CT and navigation electronics training in Virginia Beach, I was assigned to a sub out of Pearl Harbor (USS Sam Houston) where I spent the next four years making seven, seventy days patrols. What was great about my boat was the number of sport divers in the crew. As it turned out, my roommate Walt was a seasoned FL diver and we maximized our off crew time diving. I remember we had 4 scuba tanks and two 16ft ocean kayaks in our apartment. These kayaks were made for diving, with one tank cut out in the rear, and another under a waterproof hatch in the front. We would dive while towing our boats around Oahu. During this time, Walt and I were fortunate to take a couple of trips on the dive boat "Spirit of Adventure" located on the Big Island of Hawaii. At 90 ft long with multiple compressors, it was a diver's dream boat. There was one trip where we met the editor of Skin Diving Magazine, Paul Tzimoulis, who was writing an article about Hawaiian diving and the Spirit of Adventure. His wife Geri was his underwater model and she patiently posed for hubby as he took pictures with his Nikonos film camera. BTW, those trips cost us \$100 ea. for a weekend of diving, meals, and a stateroom! Before I forget, there was one dive on the WWII submarine Blue Gill purposely sunk in 130 ft of water by the Navy off of Lahaina harbor. The Navy sank it for underwater rescue training and was on the bottom for 13 years before being raised and sunk in deep water. My dive on this boat was one of the most incredible dives I ever made. The bright blue water with unlimited visibility illuminated the 312 ft sub from the bow to stern. Here are some pictures of this sub when it was sunk off of Maui.

<http://www.maui-scuba.com/wrecks/bluegill.htm>

The Dive Team

As a dive team volunteer (before and after the Navy), the Quincy Quarry dives were the most challenging (and scary) of the numerous recovery dives I made on the team. Roy Chamberlain and I made a 150 ft dive in Swingle's Quarry in 1983 looking for 17 yr old Paul Gooch. The viz was zero, as we could barely see the beam of light from our 100,000 candlepower lights. After the first unsuccessful dive, it was determined to pump down the quarry 100 ft. I remember being lowered in a crane bucket (Paul Greene operated the crane) with Jimmy Walker to take rope soundings. With about 60 ft of water left, we would look again in a couple of weeks. During this time, mother nature and physics reclaimed the quarry. A 100 ft section of granite wall (above the waterline) collapsed, no longer supported by water, destroying the loaned pumps and our hopes to find Paul Gooch. We were very, very lucky we weren't diving the day the wall collapsed.

Getting Wet Again!

In 2019, my wife Amy and I moved to Vero Beach, FL. I wasn't planning on diving again after injuring my Achilles tendon in 2009 and turning 67 this year. So, after 12 years of not diving, my daughter Rachel visited us in our new home from California. BTW, she remembers as a kid going to the outings with Blackie running the kids games. In the mean time, Rachel completed her open water certification through SSI in CA a couple of years ago, but had little ocean diving experience. Besides wanting to visit mom and dad, Rachel really wanted to get a dive in with me. Was I ready for diving again? Quite honestly, I wasn't sure I was mentally or physically ready, but a dream dive with my daughter couldn't be passed up. To keep fit, I've been doing laps in our community pool, so I'm not that out of shape. The other challenge was I have no dive gear and I knew little about FL dive spots. Even though I live on the Treasure Coast where Mel Fisher has his museum and found a lot of his Spanish galleon treasures, everyone seems to dive further south. After talking with my local dive shop I realized the best dives were south of me about 70 miles in the Jupiter/West Palm area where the Gulf Stream hugs the coast. Diving in the Gulf Stream is a drift dive where 2-3 knot northerly currents are typical. I hooked up with a dive shop in Jupiter called Scuba Works (<https://www.scubaworks.com/>) and their 36 ft. dive boat, Divocean. Since we both needed to have our dive certs scanned by the shop, I managed to find both my NAUI and SSI Nitrox certs cards. I also downloaded the NAUI and SSI apps to my iPhone. I had to contact both NAUI and SSI to get my digital records downloaded. Apparently, digital records weren't available in 1972 or 1999 when I took my Nitrox course - who knew!

So, on June 12th Rachel and I headed south to the dive shop to get outfitted for wet suits and gear. Since Rachel didn't have her Nitrox certification, we were using air while the rest of the divers were breathing Nitrox 36. I was thinking I'd be more comfortable wearing just a shorty as the water temp was 83 degrees. The dive shop recommended a full 3 mm suit for both of us. This avoids major scrapes when drifting across coral heads at 3 knots. The other new piece of gear for me was a dive computer. Note to self; buy one with a large font so it can be read underwater!

The dive site was about 5 miles from shore and downtown Jupiter was plainly visible. Our dive boat left the marina with 15 divers and two tanks per diver. This boat is rated for up to 22 divers, but with 15 divers and 3 foot seas, it felt crowded. Our dive master checked everyone's computer to make sure we were set up correctly. All gear was stowed for the quick trip to the dive site. Our first dive was in 95 feet of water and we needed to return to the surface with 1,000 psi. Our dive master briefed us about the area and let us know if we saw sand rather than coral, how to reposition ourselves as we drifted north. I did a drift dive in Cozumel years ago, so I know what to expect. The dive master carried a flag should we need to find him, everyone else carried "rescue sausages" (surface marker buoy) as required by Palm Beach County. After 12 years of no diving, it took me a few minutes to clear my ears, make sure Rachel was comfortable, and head down to the coral reef. The vis approached 80 to 100 ft. and I felt like I'd done this before. I was very comfortable and any age related concerns quickly faded. Rachel was ecstatic and was filming everything with her GoPro video camera. The amount of marine life was totally unexpected. Between the first dive and second dive to 75 ft., we saw several sharks, man-sized Giant (Goliath) Groupers, and a couple of 100+ pound sea turtles. Others on the trips said they saw 10 – 20 sharks. With all my warm water dives in Hawaii and the Caribbean, I've never been in the water with that many sharks. It was a bit scary, but wonderful!

Getting back on the boat was interesting. Basically, the boat went north of us and we drifted into the stern. When the boat helper asked me to take off my flippers and hand them to her, I just smiled. My body said no, so I pulled myself up the slippery aluminum ladder like a hungry baby seal. I've enclosed short video of our dive.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cn_S-2uuGg08YXhZprDV7gLLyRVLmSDT/view?usp=sharing

What's next? Well, Rachel is coming back in September, so I'm looking for another dive boat to try. She just got Nitrox certified and I'm looking forward to making my first Nitrox dive (yup, certified over 20 years ago and never tried it). Will I buy my own gear? Honestly, I don't know. Should Rachel move from CA to FL (hint, hint), I think I would buy a lot of things I hadn't planned on. But, whatever happens, it was the best dive I ever made.



PARTING SHOT and THOUGHT



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SOUTH SHORE NEPTUNES *Information Page*

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